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Nigeria's Security Situation Analysis Report

An 18 Months Report of Violent Conflicts in Nigeria from the
Nextier Violent Conflict Database (January 2021 – December 2021)
and (January 2022 – June 2022)

Nextier



Insights from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project
ASSTF	Anambra State Security Trust Fund
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CJTF	Civilian Joint Task Force
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESN	Eastern Security Network
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTI	Global Terrorism Index
IAS	Igbo Apprenticeship System
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IEP	Institute of Economics and Peace
IPOB	Indigenous People of Biafra
ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
ISIS	Islamic State in Syria
ISWAP	Islamic State in West African Province
JTF	Joint Task Force
LGA	Local Government Area
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
NAF	Nigerian Air Force
NEC	National Economic Council
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NLTP	National Livestock Transformation Plan
NPF	Nigeria Police Force
NSAG	Non-State Armed Group
OPHK	Operation Hadin Kai
PCVE	Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism
RUGA	Rural Grazing Area
SARS	Special Anti-Robbery Squads
UMBC	United Middle Belt Congress
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNTFHS	United Nations Trust Fund For Human Security
US	United States

Executive Summary

Nigeria is enduring a rise in insecurity.¹ While armed actors establish new killing fields, regular violent hotspots have continued to record new incidents.² The key violent drivers are either distinct to regions or cut across various locations. For example, there is increasing banditry in the Northwest and Northcentral regions, insurgency in the Northeast, violent secession agitations in the Southeast, and gang wars in the Southwest and south-south zones. Furthermore, there are pockets of extra-judicial killings³ and communal wars⁴ nationwide. The age-long farmer-herders crisis has also lingered, adding to the security and socio-economic challenges in the conflict area and beyond.⁵ Nigeria's violent crisis continues to deepen with new incidents and increasing fatalities.

Violent conflicts in Nigeria have birthed new consequences, further reinforcing the nation's security threats. Several communities have been turned into piles of ruin, with their residents forcefully displaced. The affected population face a significant humanitarian crisis, which increases their vulnerability to armed conflicts as potential perpetrators and victims.⁶ The Nigerian state's ability to uphold the social contract is significantly threatened by the proliferation of non-state armed groups (NSAGs).

Successive governments have implemented different strategies and programmes. While the federal government deployed kinetic and non-kinetic measures,⁷ some state governments created regional and state-level quasi-security units to complement traditional security agencies.⁸ The government extended peace deals to armed groups, especially in the northwest northcentral and south south

regions.⁹ Yet, there are brazen attacks on hard and soft targets.¹⁰ Non-state armed actors continue to threaten Nigeria's ability to serve as a security guarantor to its citizens. Given the terror trajectory across the country, various self-defence militias have emerged with mixed results. In this period, Nigeria experienced a spike in the number and activities of armed actors.

Starting in 2020, Nextier has maintained a database of violent conflicts in Nigeria. The database tracks violent conflicts such as banditry, terrorism, extra-judicial killings, farmer-herder incidents, armed robbery, cultism, piracy, secession agitation, and communal clashes. The Nextier Violent Conflict Database aims to provide detailed insights into violent conflicts in Nigeria for research, policy advocacy, development and security. It is Nextier's objective that reliable data should inform policy actions. Therefore, the database is a veritable source for crucial sector players and decision-makers seeking to deploy evidence-informed prevention and mitigation strategies in addressing Nigeria's rising violent conflicts.

This report presents tracked Data from Nextier's Violent Conflict Database from January 2021 to June 2022 (18 months). There are two sections in the report (Part A and B). Part A covers the period from January to December 2021, while Part B covers the period from January to June 2022. Charts are used to analyse tracked data, and statements are backed up by pertinent literature. The paper highlights Nigeria's existential security concerns and offers workable answers to the country's security and development problems.



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-
- ¹Agusto & Co. 2022. The Economics of Insecurity: Nigeria's Rough Patch - Agusto & Co. Ltd. [online] Available at: <<https://www.agusto.com/publications/the-economics-of-insecurity-nigerias-rough-patch/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ²Nextier. 2022. Nigeria's Most Violent States - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/nigerias-most-violent-states/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ³Nextier. 2022. Responding to Violence. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/responding-to-violence/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ⁴Nextier. 2022. Unending Communal Wars. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/unending-communal-wars/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ⁵Nextier. 2022. 'Return to Farm'. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/return-to-farm/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ⁶Ajimotokan, O. and Igbintade, W., 2022. Addressing Nigeria's Humanitarian Challenge. THISDAYLIVE. [online] Thisdaylive.com. Available at: <<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2021/08/23/addressing-nigerias-humanitarian-challenge/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ⁷Guardian. 2022. Military to combine kinetic and non-kinetic approach in tackling banditry - Buratai. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/military-to-combine-kinetic-and-non-kinetic-approach-in-tackling-banditry-buratai/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ⁸Ajimotokan, O. and Igbintade, W., 2020. 23 States Run Local Security Outfits as Groups Demand Decentralised Policing. THISDAY-LIVE. [online] Thisdaylive.com. Available at: <<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2020/01/13/23-states-run-local-security-outfits-as-groups-demand-decentralised-policing/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ⁹Nextier. 2021. Amnesty: Price for Peace? [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/amnesty-price-for-peace/>> [Accessed 18 August 2022].
- ¹⁰Ibid, 9

Definition of terms

- 1. BANDITRY:** We refer to organised criminal activities committed by “Bandit groups” in Northwest and Northcentral Nigeria. The Nigerian government officially declared two bandit groups (Yan Bindiga and Yan Ta’adda) operating in the Northwest region as terrorist organisations. However, reports indicate that there are about a hundred 100 bandit groups.
- 2. TERRORISM:** We refer to the violence caused by “terrorist groups” in the Northeast, Northwest and parts of Northcentral Nigeria.
- 3. FARMER-HERDER CONFLICT:** We refer to the armed clashes between “farmers” and “Herders” across Nigeria.
- 4. EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS:** We refer to the deliberate killing of a person or people without legal authority across Nigeria. In this report, we categorised both unlawful killings by state actors and mob action as extra-judicial killings.
- 5. SECESSIONISM:** We refer to the violence associated with the calls to withdraw parts of Nigeria from the larger entity. This report captures violent activities in Southwest and Southeast Nigeria, where the calls for secession are pronounced.
- 6. CULTISM:** We refer to violent clashes between rival cult groups and state security personnel across Nigeria.

PART 1

January 2021 – December 2021

Introduction

Insecurity has greatly affected governance and economic growth in Nigeria.¹¹ According to a report, violence is having a negative economic impact on at least eight percent of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).¹² The Nigerian government has spent at least ₦8 trillion on security provisions in the last six years since 2021 without achieving the desired results.¹³ Also, the state governors appear to be overwhelmed. Many governors have stated in different fora; that they are not the chief security officers in their states.¹⁴

The year 2021 was pockmarked with attacks on various rural communities. For instance, banditry in the Northwest and Northcentral regions transitioned from raids on vulnerable communities to large-scale ransom kidnapping of school students and brazen attacks on targets, including military installations. Sometimes, bandits send letters of impending attacks and extort levies from terrified communities.

A key feature of contemporary armed conflicts is that civilians have become combatants and primary victims. In Nigeria, villages, streets, and schools have become battlefields.¹⁵ As a result, self-help and group-level armed defence systems are increasingly responding to secure violent hotspots.¹⁶ As more civilians are involved in combat, security forces and innocent lives are lost.¹⁷ From the North to the South, activities of armed men have led to bloody shootouts, protracting crises, and complicated security situations.

In many rural communities in Nigeria, violent conflicts limit access to farmlands and disrupt livelihood sources. Due to this challenge, food insecurity across Nigeria looms.¹⁸ Also, cities are not left out. Research shows that rural-urban migration may contribute to social and economic problems, including urban insecurity.¹⁹

¹¹Onime, B. (2018). Insecurity and Economic Growth in Nigeria: A Diagnostic Review. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 14(4), 377. doi: 10.19044/esj.2018.v14n4p377

¹²Adekoya, F. (2021). Nigerians pay more for insecurity as economic impact hits ₦50tr. *The Guardian*. Retrieved 22 February 2021, from <https://guardian.ng/news/nigerians-pay-more-for-insecurity-as-economic-impact-hits-n50tr/>

¹³Amata, D. (2021). Buhari spent ₦8 trillion on security in the last six years still could not quell Boko Haram or Bandits. *Dataphyte*. Retrieved 22 February 2021, from <https://www.dataphyte.com/latest-reports/security/buhari-spent-%E2%82%A68-trillion-on-security-in-the-last-six-years-still-could-not-quell-boko-haram-or-bandits/>

¹⁴Abaenogbe, T., 2022. Insecurity: Why State Governors are not Chief Security Officers but ceremonial heads. [online] *Daily Post Nigeria*. Available at: <<https://dailypost.ng/2021/02/04/insecurity-why-state-governors-are-not-chief-security-officers-but-ceremonial-heads/>> [Accessed 8 September 2022].

¹⁵Abdulaziz, A. (2021). Amid insecurity, North battles to keep children in school. *Daily Trust*. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://daily-trust.com/amid-insecurity-north-battles-to-keep-children-in-school>

¹⁶Nextier SPD. (2022). 'Need for Arms'. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/need-for-arms/>

¹⁷Nextier SPD. (2021). Counting the Costs of Violent Conflicts: Examining Nigeria's South-East Region (Part 1). Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/counting-the-costs-of-violent-conflicts-examining-nigerias-south-east-region-part-1/>

¹⁸Nextier SPD. (2020). Food for War and Peace. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/food-for-war-and-peace/>

¹⁹Nextier SPD. (2020). Insecurity and rural-urban migration. Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/insecurity-and-rural-urban-migration/>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].

Banditry



1.1. Background

The activities of bandits are building-up dire humanitarian consequences. These consequences range from injuries and deaths to the destruction of livelihoods, services and displacement of residents. Bandits' activities in 2021 were dominant in Nigeria's Northcentral and Northwest regions. Before the onslaught by bandits, reports indicate that a terrorist organisation trained some bandits.²⁰ This development suggests an alignment between terrorism and banditry. It exacerbates the risk of a spike in both violent conflict forms. The bandits' violence in 2021 elicited both

combative and non-combative responses from the Nigerian government. Some affected state governments discarded the peace deals hitherto negotiated with some bandit groups and focused on a full-blown military action.²¹

1.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in 2021, there were 354 banditry incidents and 2,247 deaths in Nigeria's Northwest and Northcentral regions.



2021



354

Banditry Incidents



2,247

Deaths



Nigeria's
Northwest &
Northcentral
regions

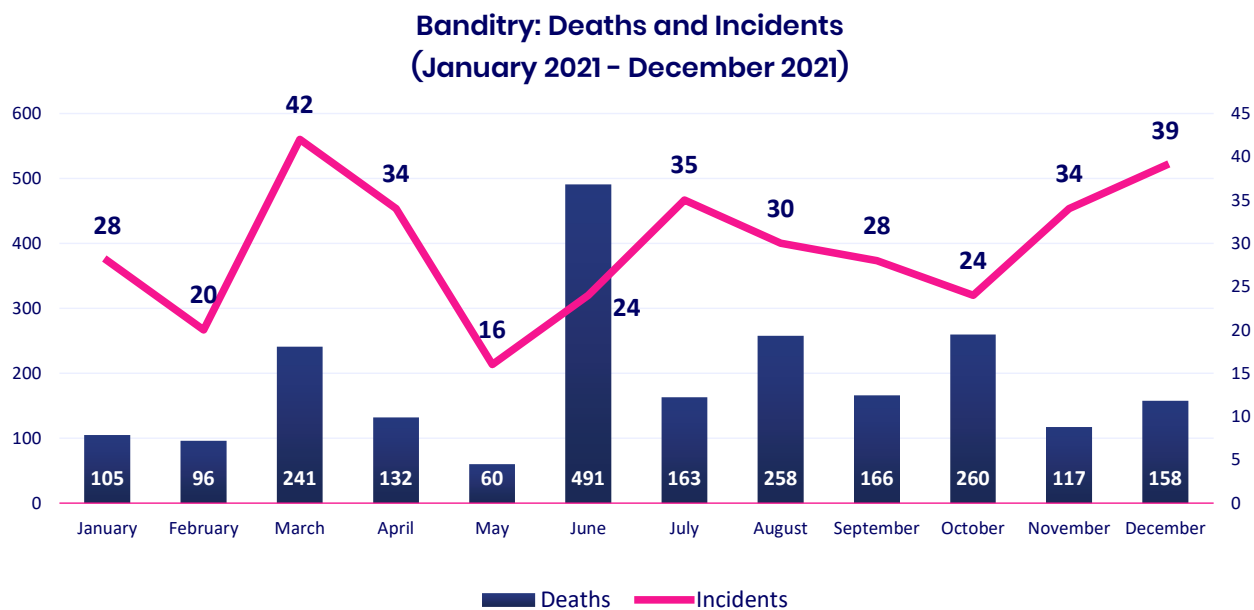


Figure 1: Banditry: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 - December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

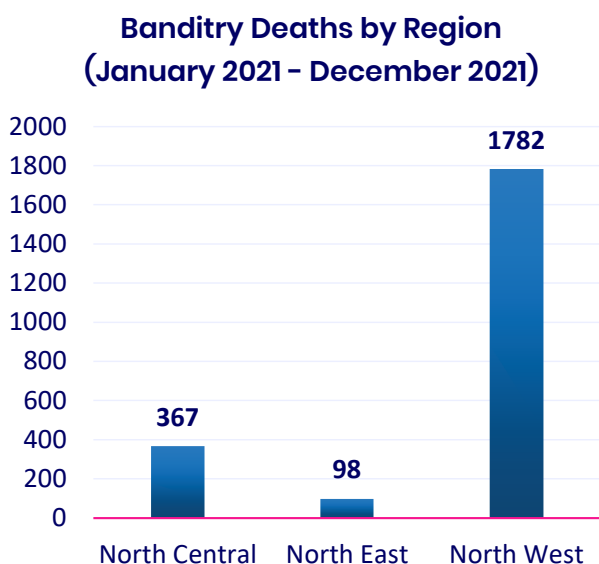


Figure 2: Banditry Deaths by Region (January 2021 - December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

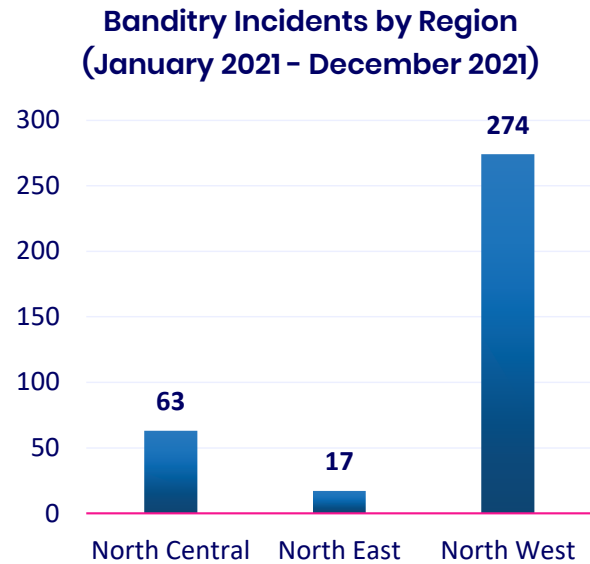


Figure 3: Banditry Incidents by Region (January 2021 - December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

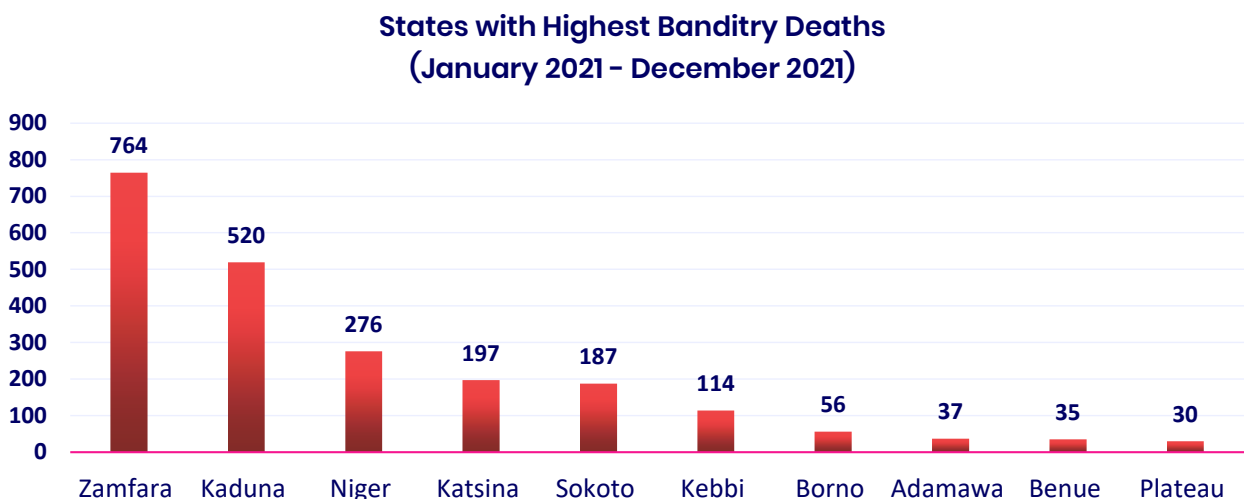


Figure 4: States with Highest Banditry Deaths (January 2021 - December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Banditry Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

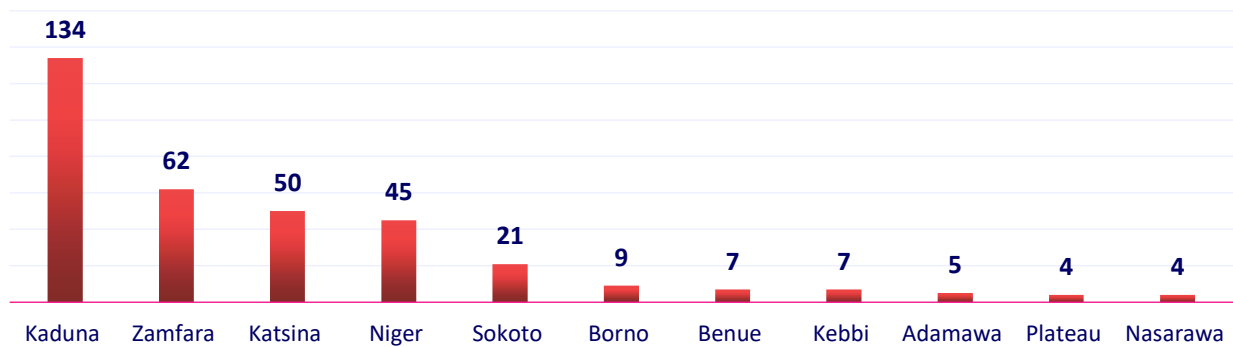


Figure 5: States with Highest Banditry Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Banditry Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

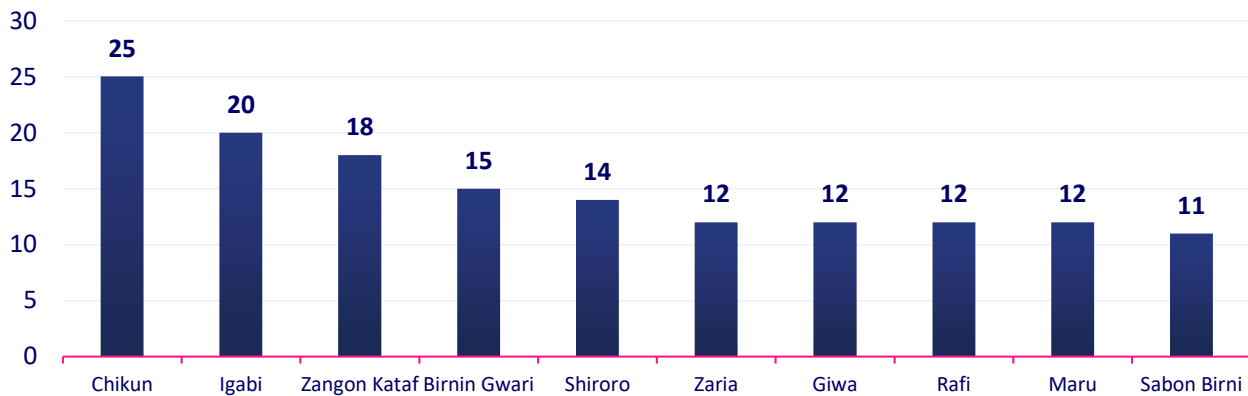


Figure 6: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Banditry Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Banditry Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

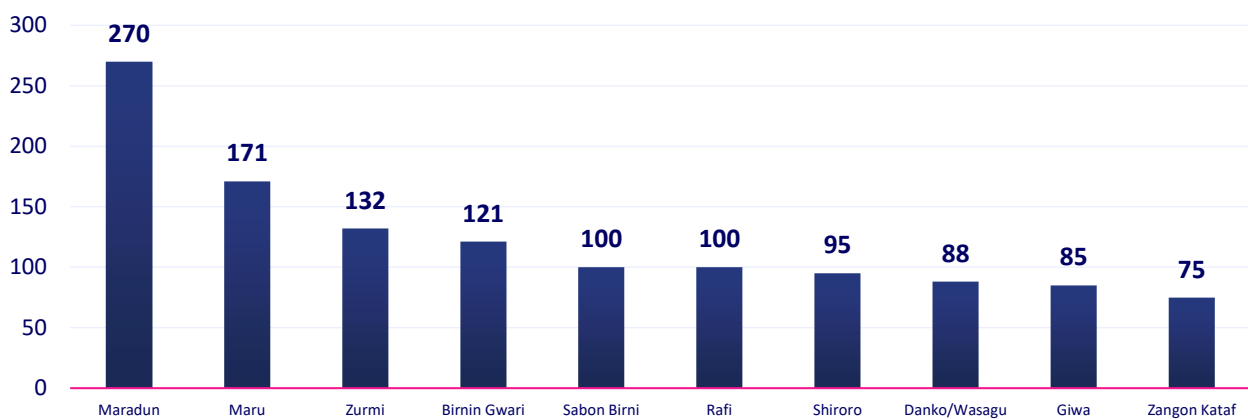


Figure 7: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Banditry Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

1.3. Key Drivers of Banditry in 2021

One of the factors responsible for the rise of banditry is the deteriorating farmer and herder relations. The sparse accessibility of grazing routes, pasture and water has become a deadly source of conflict.²² Furthermore, banditry is exacerbated by ethnic differences between the Hausa and Fulani groups in Zamfara. Following the 2013 murder of a Fulani leader, the Fulani retaliated by killing scores of the Hausa people.²³

Subsequently, waves of attacks and counter-attacks on both sides have escalated the conflict. As a result of the unending hostilities, the Fulani and Hausa groups established ethnic militias and armed vigilante organisations to prosecute their group wars.²⁴ These groups have killed many innocent people and destroyed the homes of innocent citizens.

Furthermore, the government's failure and inability to contain growing conflicts in Nigeria have made it easy for various criminal groups to establish and institutionalise their notorious activities.²⁵

1.4. Key Responses

The government has deployed several strategies to end banditry. Yet, the activities of bandits have continued to thrive. In 2016, some state governments offered money as compensation to known bandit leaders in exchange for peace.²⁶ States like Sokoto, Zamfara, and Katsina provided amnesty for the renunciation of banditry and the surrendering of firearms.²⁷ President Muhammadu Buhari declared Zamfara state a no-fly zone and announced a ban on all mining activity in the state in March 2021.²⁸ However, the security situation did not significantly improve.²⁹ In addition, the government advised families against paying ransom to bandits for the release of their relatives in captivity. This strategy was an attempt to make kidnapping for ransom less appealing. They argued that bandits use proceeds from kidnapping to fund their operations.

The Nigerian Senate debated the Terrorism Prevention Bill 2021, which proposes to make ransom payment a felony punishable by 15 years in jail. This bill is yet to be passed. However, this proposed bill has been laced with criticisms. Some critics cite the lack of faith in security forces' abilities to rescue kidnapped victims. In September 2021, the

government cut communication lines in Zamfara, parts of Katsina, and Sokoto states to weaken the interaction of bandits and improve the military crackdown.³⁰ Still, reports showed a continuation of bandit operations.³¹

1.5. Successes and Challenges

The deployment of Tuscano jets aided the government's onslaught on bandits. According to reports, in August 2021, military bombardments with the jets killed no fewer than 78 bandits during the operations.³² In December 2021, the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) component of Operation Hadin Kai launched attacks on ISWAP armoury bases at Kusuma and Sigir, Borno State. A known bandit commander, Abou Sufyan, and some of his fighters were killed. Despite these efforts, concerns have been raised over the loss of innocent civilians caught in the crossfire of airstrikes. According to a report, at least 20 fishermen were killed accidentally in a Nigerian military strike in September 2021.³³ The military raids may have yielded some results but not the desired security.³⁴

In January 2021, 300 Nigerian Army Women Corps soldiers were deployed to the dangerous Abuja-Kaduna highway.³⁵ This deployment was done to supplement the ongoing security efforts on the road. As a result, the road was free of bandit attacks for the first month of deployment. After that, however, in what appeared to be a shift in target by bandits, the Kaduna-Kajuru-Kachia road recorded increased attacks.³⁶

1.6. Policy Options

- Government should enthrone fairness and ensure the equitable distribution of resource among ethnic communities in the Northwest. Peace-building interventions must be designed to unite rather than divide ethnic communities.³⁷
- There is a need to leverage local intelligence in fighting banditry. In the past, local intelligence sources have availed security agencies of information about bandits' hideouts, food and fuel supplies, and information networks.³⁸
- Efforts should be made to ensure coverage for vulnerable communities by democratising local government councils, community associations, and cooperatives to promote inclusion.³⁹

- ²⁰Tribune Online. 2021. Boko Haram terrorists now training bandits in Kaduna, other North-West states Military sources. [online] Available at: <<https://tribuneonline.ng/boko-haram-terrorists-now-training-bandits-in-kaduna-other-north-west-states-military-sources/>> [Accessed 5 August 2022].
- ²¹Abubakar M. (2020) We've pulled out of peace agreement with bandits. Premium Times. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/nwest/395913-weve-pulled-out-from-peace-agreement-with-bandits-katsina-governor.html>
- ²²The New Humanitarian. 2021. How do you end banditry in Nigeria's northwest? [online] Available at: <<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2021/01/19/Nigeria-bandits-peace-zamfara-fulani-pastoralism>> [Accessed 5 August 2022].
- ²³Vanguard. 2021. BANDITRY: It's Hausa-Fulani war, Zamfara traces origin of hostilities. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/04/banditry-its-hausa-fulani-war-zamfara-traces-origin-of-hostilities/>> [Accessed 5 August 2022].
- ²⁴Ibid
- ²⁵Hamza, M. (2021). Remote causes of banditry. Dailytrust. Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://dailytrust.com/remote-causes-of-banditry>
- ²⁶The Conversation. 2022. Nigeria's banditry: why 5 government strategies have failed. [online] Available at: <<https://theconversation.com/nigerias-banditry-why-5-government-strategies-have-failed-181208>> [Accessed 6 May 2022].
- ²⁷Premium Times Nigeria. 2019. North-West governors grant amnesty to 'bandits', herders. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premium-timesng.com/regional/nwest/344330-north-west-governors-grant-amnesty-to-bandits-herders.html>> [Accessed 6 May 2022].
- ²⁸The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. 2022. Buhari declares Zamfara no-fly-zone, directs ban on mining activities. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/buhari-declares-zamfara-no-fly-zone-bans-mining-activities/>> [Accessed 10 May 2022].
- ²⁹Vanguard. 2021. Why we stopped negotiations with bandits. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/08/why-we-stopped-negotiations-with-bandits-%E2%80%95fg/>> [Accessed 6 May 2022].
- ³⁰Sotunde, A. (2021). Phone blackout imposed on Nigerian state amid crackdown on kidnappers. Reuters. Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/phone-blackout-crackdown-kidnappers-reported-northwest-nigeria-2021-09-06/>
- ³¹Nextier SPD. (2021). Showdown with Bandits. Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/showdown-with-bandits/>
- ³²Olatunji, J. (2021). NAF jets destroy bandits' camp, kill 78 in three-day bombardments in North West. Tribune. Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://tribuneonline.ng/nafe-jets-destroy-bandits-camp-kill-78-in-three-day-bombardments-in-north-west/>
- ³³The Guardian Nigeria News. 2021. Nigeria air strike kills 20 fishermen. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria-air-strike-kills-20-fishermen-sources/>> [Accessed 1 April 2022].
- ³⁴Okoli, C., 2019. What can be done to fight rural banditry in northern Nigeria. [online] The Conversation. Available at: <<https://theconversation.com/what-can-be-done-to-fight-rural-banditry-in-northern-nigeria-122776>> [Accessed 5 April 2022].
- ³⁵Premium Times Nigeria. 2022. El-Rufai receives 300 female soldiers deployed to secure Abuja-Kaduna highway. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/nwest/439190-el-rufai-receives-300-female-soldiers-deployed-to-secure-abuja-kaduna-highway.html>> [Accessed 6 May 2022].
- ³⁶allAfrica.com. 2022. Nigeria: The Country's Banditry - Why 5 Government Strategies Have Failed. [online] Available at: <<https://allafrica.com/stories/202204230095.html>> [Accessed 6 May 2022].
- ³⁷Nextier SPD .(2021). Effective Community Dialogue: Responding to the crisis in Nigeria's North-West region. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/effective-community-dialogue-responding-to-the-crisis-in-nigerias-north-west-region/>> [Accessed 23 March 2022].
- ³⁸Iro, A. and Oarhe, O., 2021. COUNTERING BANDITRY IN NIGERIA: EXAMINING THE CONTRADICTIONS OF PROGRESS. [online] Nextier-spd.com. Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/countering-banditry-in-nigeria-examining-the-contradictions-of-progress/>> [Accessed 5 April 2022].
- ³⁹Punchng.com. 2021. Need for effective strategies to defeat banditry. [online] Available at: <<https://punchng.com/need-for-effective-strategies-to-defeat-banditry/>> [Accessed 10 May 2022].

Terrorism



Image by Al Jazeera

2.1. Background

The impact of terrorist activities like suicide bombings, kidnappings, and the destruction of lives and livelihoods have continued to make Nigeria an undesirable destination for foreign investments.⁴⁰ Terrorist activities have displaced about 3 million people and caused approximately 350,000 deaths in Northeast Nigeria.⁴¹ According to a Nigerian Emergency Management Agency report, insurgents have destroyed about 254 schools in Northeast Nigeria. A situation that has forced about 120,000 students to drop out of school.⁴²

However, in 2021, a new trend in terrorist activities emerged. Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram, blew himself up to avoid capture and control by the Islamic State West African Province (ISWAP).⁴³ To exert influence, ISWAP, led by Abu Musab al-barnawi,

seized control of all territories under the late Abubakar Shekau. In addition, ISWAP arrested 30 top commanders loyal to the late Boko Haram leader.⁴⁴ This influence created a leeway for the ISWAP to strengthen its hold on vulnerable communities. For instance, farmers and residents embroiled in the conflict began to pay Zakat (taxes) to ISWAP.⁴⁵ In addition, there are reports that they adorn Nigerian military uniforms and set up checkpoints along certain roads to collect “tolls” from drivers.

2.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in 2021, there were 64 terrorist incidents and 456 deaths in Nigeria's Northeast region.

Terrorism: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

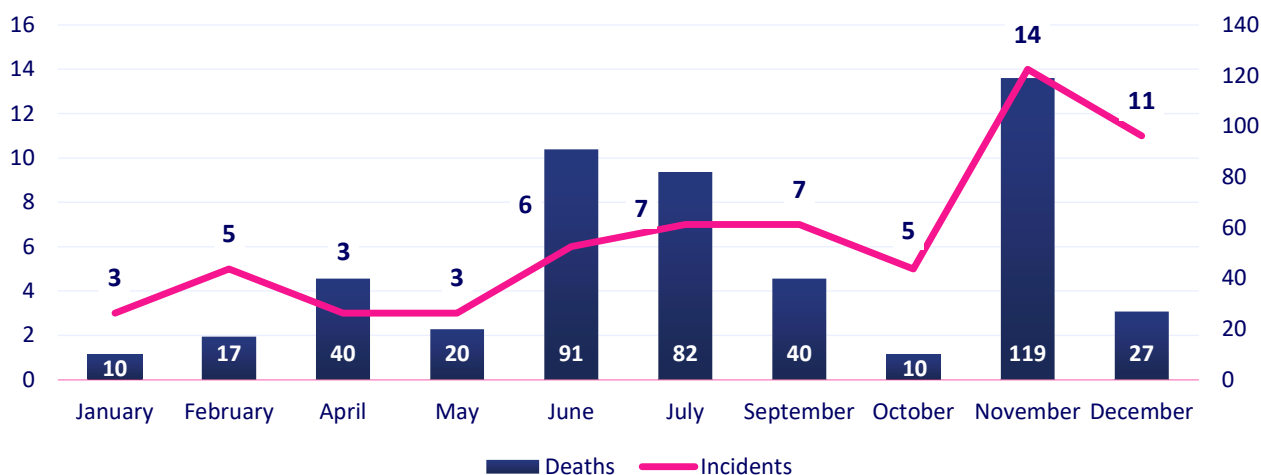


Figure 8: Terrorism: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Terrorism Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021)

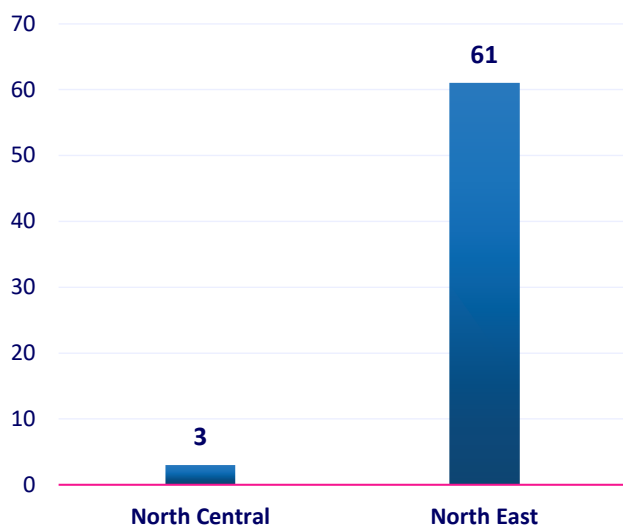


Figure 9: Terrorism Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Terrorism Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021)

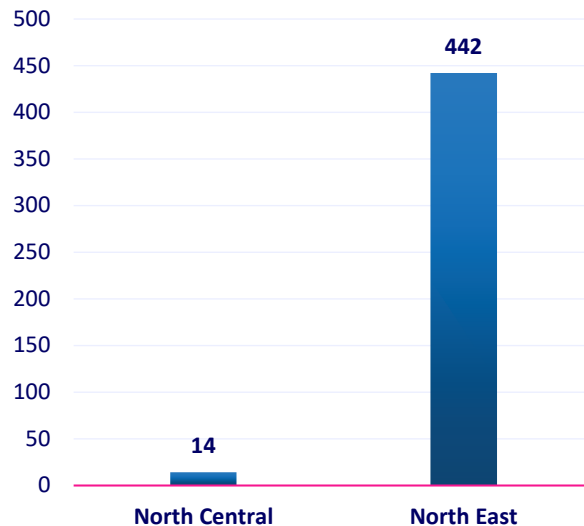


Figure 10: Terrorism Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

⁴⁰Imhonopi, D. and Urim, U., 2022. THE SPECTRE OF TERRORISM AND NIGERIA'S INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER IMPERATIVE. [online] Core.ac.uk. Available at: <<https://core.ac.uk/display/79124497>> [Accessed 10 May 2022].

⁴¹Council on Foreign Relations. (2021). Boko Haram in Nigeria | Global Conflict Tracker. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/boko-haram-nigeria>

⁴²GRANVILLE, C., 2020. The Impact of Boko Haram Insurgency on the People of Borno State. [online] ScholarWorks. Available at: <<https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/8896/>> [Accessed 10 May 2022].

⁴³Premium Times Nigeria. (2021). Boko Haram leader, Shekau, dead as ISWAP fighters capture Sambisa forest -- Report. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/462774-boko-haram-leader-shekau-dead-as-iswap-fighters-capture-sambisa-forest-report.html>

⁴⁴Kingley.O. (2021). Albanawy appointed ISWAP/Boko Haram leader, arrests 30 Commanders loyal to late Shekau. Vanguard. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/05/albanawy-appointed-iswap-boko-haram-leader-arrests-30-commanders-loyal-to-late-shekau/>

⁴⁵allAfrica.com. (2021). Nigeria: ISWAP Currently Collecting Taxes in Borno. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://allafrica.com/stories/202111150018.html#:~:text=Farmers%20and%20other%20residents%20of,Daily%20Trust%20has%20reliably%20gathered>

States with Highest Terrorism Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

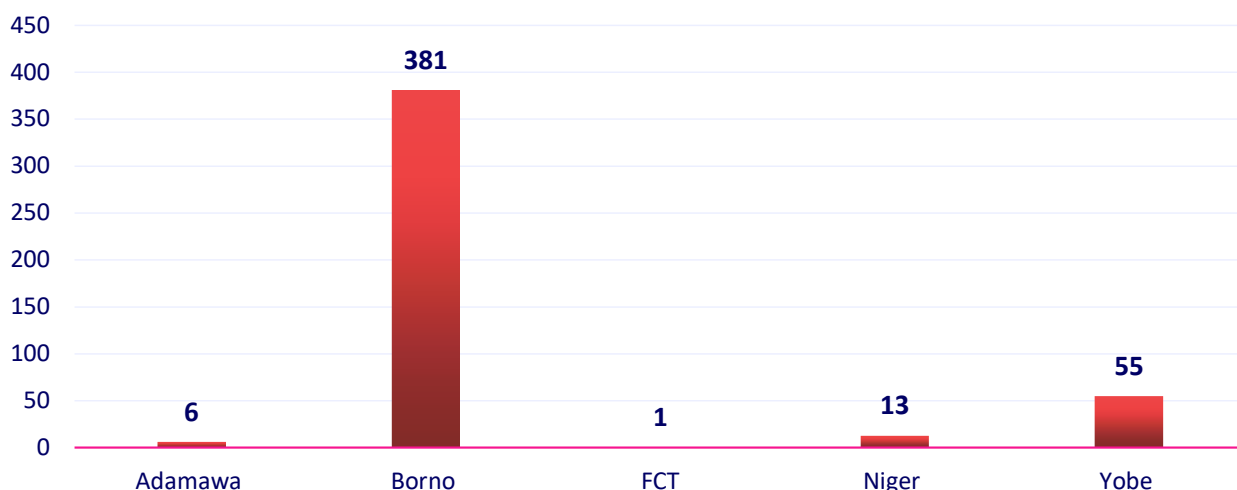


Figure 11: States with Highest Terrorism Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

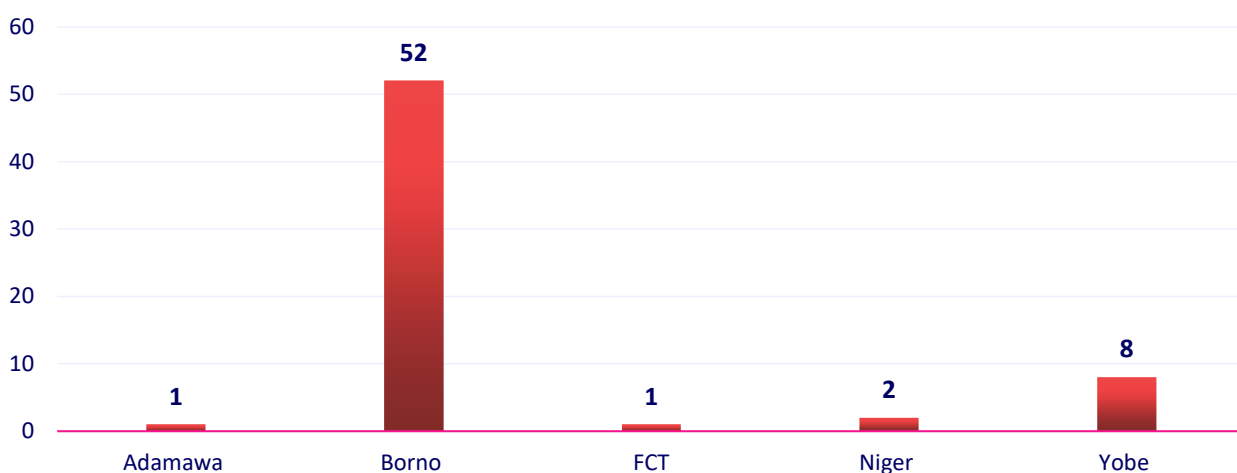


Figure 12: States with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

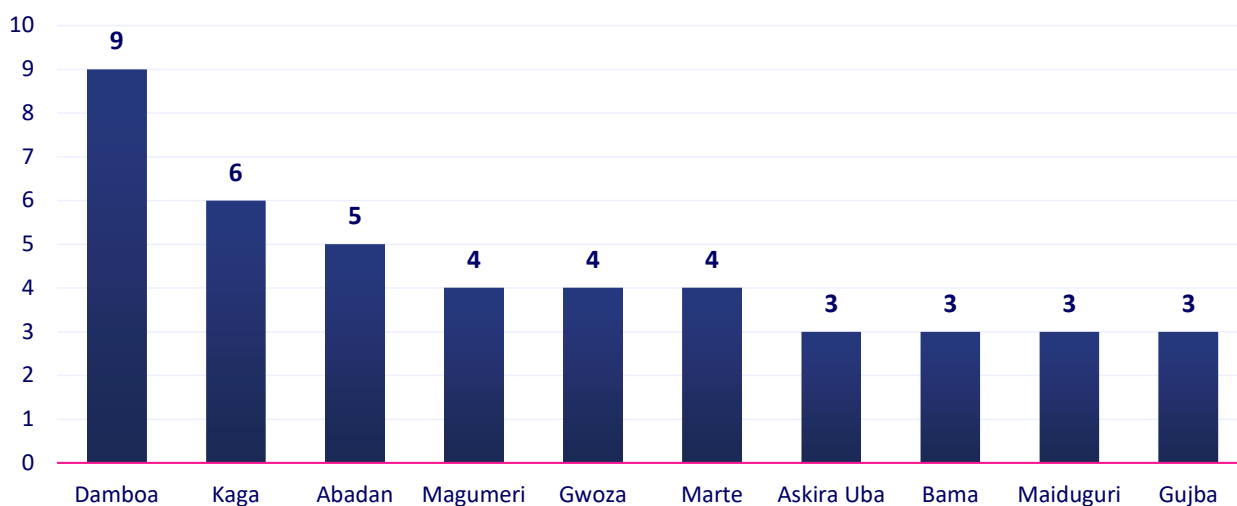


Figure 13: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

**Top 10 LGAs with Highest Terrorism Deaths
(January 2021 – December 2021)**

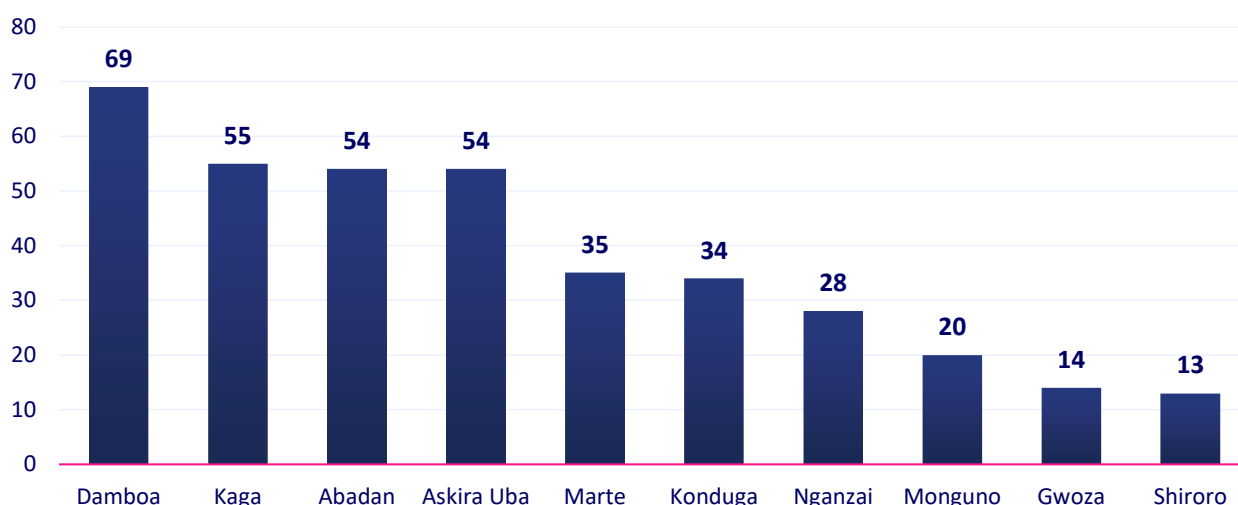


Figure 14: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Terrorism Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict

2.3. Key Drivers of Terrorism in 2021

Several factors are responsible for terrorism in Nigeria. Corruption, poverty, unemployment, religious extremism, and illiteracy are among these factors. Research shows that most residents in the Northeast are impoverished and susceptible to joining terrorist groups to survive. Also, the impact of external terror groups operating in Somalia, such as the Islamic State in Syria and the Levant (ISIS or ISIL), Al-Qaeda, and Al-Shabab, is another factor influencing terrorism in Nigeria. These foreign terror groups inspire vulnerable persons to indulge in terrorism.

2.4. Key Responses

Some scholars argue that non-military alternatives are a viable means of addressing the fundamental causes of terrorism and achieving long-term peace. For example, as part of its efforts to end terrorism, the Nigerian government launched “Operation Safe Corridor” to integrate low-risk terrorists. The program’s goal is to rehabilitate terrorists who have repented. After completing the programme, the defecting members receive vocation training and access to civic education to become valuable members of society. So far, at least 881 repentant Boko Haram fighters have been processed out of the rehabilitation program since 2016. Conversely, the federal government has prosecuted over 1,500

accused terrorists in four years, with 400 being found guilty.

Furthermore, the federal government of Nigeria has committed considerable resources to end terrorism. For example, the government allocated 675 billion to acquire guns and equipment and train 8,000 soldiers. Additionally, the Nigerian military received other weaponry from China’s Norinco, which had been ordered under a \$152 million contract, comprising VT-4 main battle tanks, SH-5 self-propelled howitzers, and other equipment. Additionally, the Nigerian military is at the forefront of leading the international coalition against ISWAP in West Africa. According to a report, the Nigerian army eliminated scores of ISWAP-Boko Haram terrorists suspected to be responsible for destroying power transmission towers at Malanari along Maiduguri-Damaturu Highway.

2.5. Successes and Challenges

Military counter-terrorism has recorded some successes. In a report, Nigerian troops of Operation Hadin Kai killed over 120 Boko Haram insurgents and arrested more than 50 in various operations across the Northwest and Northeast regions. Between May 20, 2021, and January 6, 2022, troops from Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK) killed 950 Boko Haram/ISWAP terrorists in the Northeast.

Nevertheless, terrorists have remained focused on their goal of perpetrating heinous crimes.

Terrorists have continued to indoctrinate and recruit more members despite the military onslaught and amnesty for repentant terrorists. In 2021, the federal government of Nigeria announced that terrorists were recruiting and radicalising vulnerable Nigerian youths through social media. Also, communities affected by insurgent attacks are hesitant to accept repentant terrorists. According to a report, most aggrieved community members doubted the sincerity of ex-terrorists repentance. This mistrust led them to forbid ex-combatants from being reintegrated into their communities.

2.6. Policy Options

- The government and stakeholders must

collaborate with local and international anti-money laundering agencies to curtail terrorist financing. In addition, the Central Bank of Nigeria's cashless policy can be optimised to monitor and track suspicious transactions.

- Also, the government must collaborate with subnational governments to monitor and halt the proliferation of small arms and light weapons through capacity building for security agencies, especially those in charge of border control.
- The country's political elite must rise to the challenges of governing and implementing developmental projects, social initiatives, and people-oriented programmes.

⁴⁶Osewa, O. (2019). TERRORISM IN NIGERIA: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCE AND PANACEA. *International Journal Of Legal Studies (IJOLS)*, 6(2), 341-366. doi: 10.5604/01.3001.0013.7423

⁴⁷Ibid, 6

⁴⁸The Conversation. 2022. Nigeria has a plan to de-radicalise and reintegrate ex-terrorists. But it's flawed and needs fixing. [online] Available at: <<https://theconversation.com/nigeria-has-a-plan-to-de-radicalise-and-reintegrate-ex-terrorists-but-its-flawed-and-needs-fixing-168766?msclkid=d6e2ee04d07f11eca7c4cea68e708bd7>> [Accessed 10 May 2022].

⁴⁹Nextier SPD. (2021). Stopping the Vicious Circle. Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/stopping-the-vicious-circle/>

⁵⁰Falaju, J. and Nzor, E., 2021. 1,500 suspected terrorists prosecuted in 4 years— NSA | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] The Guardian Nigeria News. Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/1500-suspected-terrorists-prosecuted-in-4-years-nsa/>> [Accessed 1 April 2022].

⁵¹Vanguard. 2021. Boko Haram, Bandits: FG earmarks N675bn for procurement of arms, ammunition. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/01/boko-haram-bandits-fg-earmarks-n675b-for-procurement-of-arms-ammunitions-says-ndume/>> [Accessed 19 July 2022].

⁵²Vanguard. 2021. Nigerian military receives tanks, artillery from China. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/03/nigerian-military-receives-tanks-artillery-from-china/>> [Accessed 19 July 2022].

⁵³Vanguard. 2022. X-raying Nigerian Army's unmatched record in counter-terrorism. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/04/x-raying-nigerian-armys-unmatched-record-in-counter-terrorism/>> [Accessed 11 May 2022].

⁵⁴Premium Times Nigeria. 2021. Nigerian military aircraft bombard terrorists, kill many, destroy gun trucks. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/468896-nigerian-military-aircraft-bombard-terrorists-kill-many-destroy-gun-trucks.html>> [Accessed 11 May 2022].

⁵⁵Vanguard News. (2022). CSO commends Nigerian army, says decisive offensives against terrorists yielding results. Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/02/cso-commends-nigerian-army-says-decisive-offensives-against-terrorists-yielding-results/>

⁵⁶Premium Times Nigeria. 2022. Nigerian military eliminates 950 terrorists – DHQ. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/504389-nigerian-military-eliminates-950-terrorists-dhq.html>> [Accessed 1 April 2022].

⁵⁷Umeh, K., 2021. Boko Haram, ISWAP recruiting via social media, Monguno alleges. [online] The Guardian Nigeria News. Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/boko-haram-iswap-recruiting-via-social-media-monguno-alleges/>> [Accessed 1 April 2022].

⁵⁸Taylor & Francis. 2022. "Take them to Government House or Aso Rock": Community receptivity to reintegration of Operation Safe Corridor's deradicalised Ex-Boko Haram members in Northeastern Nigeria. [online] Available at: <<https://www.informahealthcare.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311886.2021.2015884>> [Accessed 4 August 2022].

⁵⁹Nextier SPD.(2020). Less Funds, Less Violence [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/less-funds-less-violence/>> [Accessed 23 March 2022].

⁶⁰Ojewale, O., 2021. Rising insecurity in northwest Nigeria: Terrorism thinly disguised as banditry. [online] Brookings. Available at: <<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2021/02/18/rising-insecurity-in-northwest-nigeria-terrorism-thinly-disguised-as-banditry/>> [Accessed 11 May 2022].

⁶¹Nextierspd.com. 2021. Ending Terrorism in Nigeria. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/ending-terrorism-in-nigeria/>> [Accessed 11 May 2022].

Farmer–Herder Conflict



Image by The Guardian

3.1. Background

The conflict between farmers and herders has become a prevalent security issue in Nigeria. This crisis has evolved from impulsive reactions to planned lethal attacks.⁶² It has led to displacement, unrest, food insecurity, low agricultural output, and unemployment. In 2018, more than 1,500 people were killed while others fled their homes due to the escalating farmer-herder violence in Northcentral Nigeria.⁶³ At first, these clashes were predominant in the Northern states of Taraba, Benue, Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa, and Adamawa. However, recent reports indicate that the farmer-herder conflict has spread to all parts of Nigeria.⁶⁴

The conflict over grazing land and the scarcity of resources may be blamed for this dilemma.⁶⁵ The depletion of land resources can be linked to the increasing urbanisation and the unfavourable effect of climate change.⁶⁶ The nonchalant disposition of the government has not helped the situation.⁶⁷

3.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in 2021, there were 86 farmer-herder incidents and 451 deaths in Nigeria.



2021



86
Farmer-Herder
incidents



451
Deaths



In Nigeria

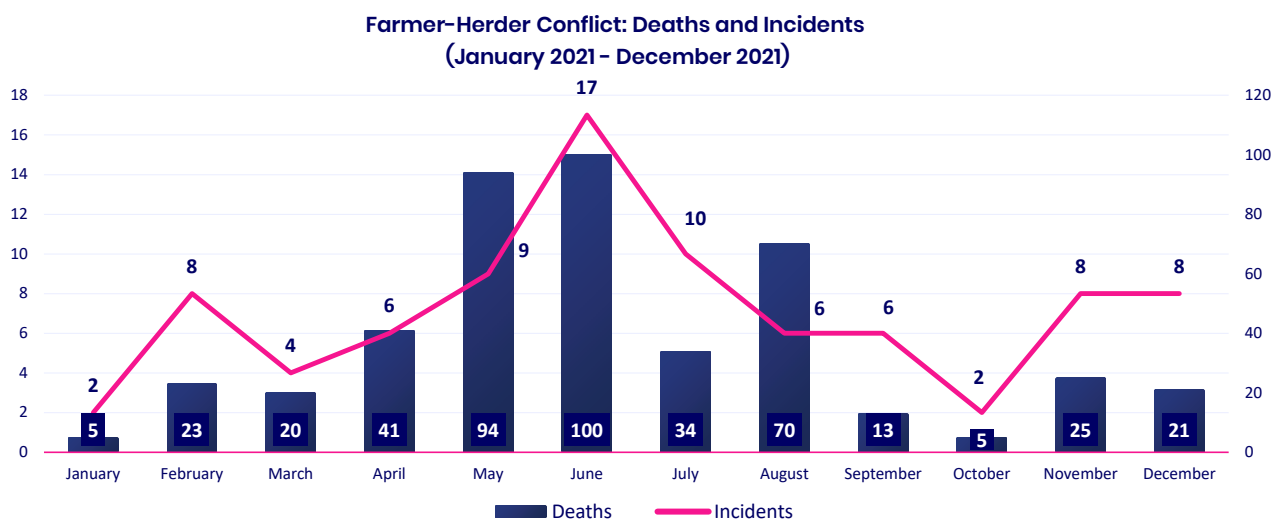


Figure 15: Farmer- Herder Conflict: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

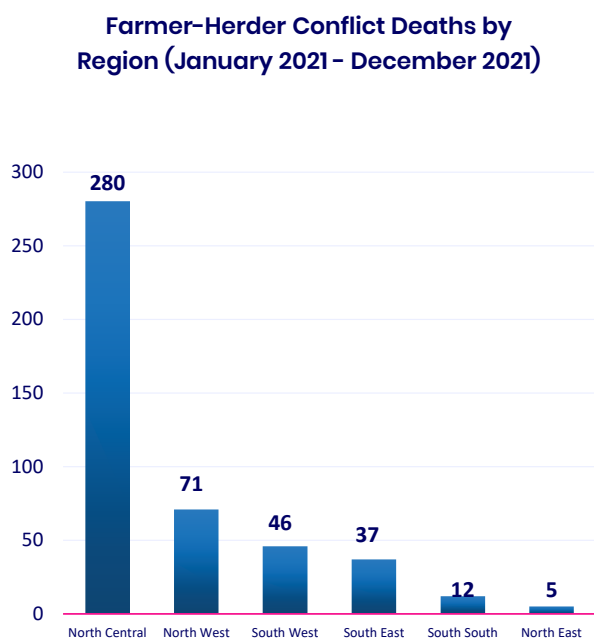


Figure 16: Farmer- Herder Conflict Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

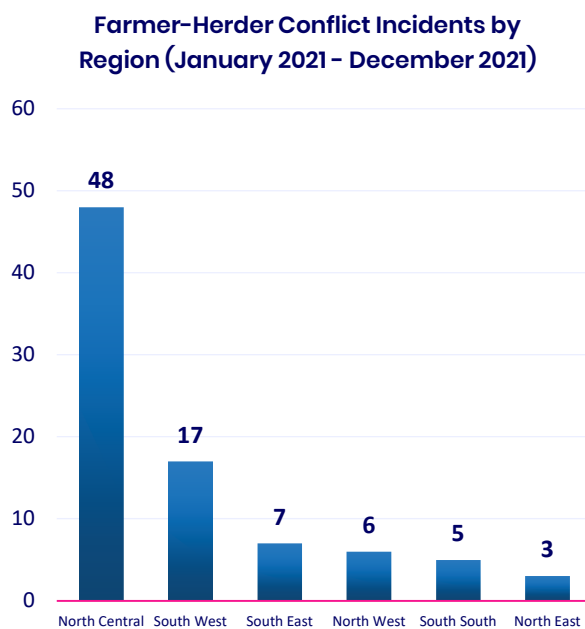


Figure 17: Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

⁶²Crisis Group. (2018). Stopping Nigeria's Spiralling Farmer-Herder Violence. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/262-stopping-nigerias-spiralling-farmer-herder-violence>

⁶³Crisis Group. 2018. Stopping Nigeria's Spiralling Farmer-Herder Violence. [online] Available at: <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/262-stopping-nigerias-spiralling-farmer-herder-violence>> [Accessed 12 May 2022].

⁶⁴Isola, O., 2022. Herdsmen and Farmers Conflict in Nigeria: A Threat to Peacebuilding and Human Security in West Africa | Africa Up Close. [online] [africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org](https://africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org/herdsmen-and-farmers-conflict-in-nigeria-a-threat-to-peacebuilding-and-human-security-in-west-africa/). Available at: <<https://africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org/herdsmen-and-farmers-conflict-in-nigeria-a-threat-to-peacebuilding-and-human-security-in-west-africa/>> [Accessed 6 August 2022].

⁶⁵ACCORD. 2021. Understanding the Herder-Farmer Conflict in Nigeria – ACCORD. [online] Available at: <<https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/understanding-the-herder-farmer-conflict-in-nigeria/?msclkid=53773d8ad14211ecb29ba22b60db36ff>> [Accessed 11 May 2022].

⁶⁶Ibid

⁶⁷Osumah, A., 2021. The Impact, Effects and Government Response to Herdsmen-Farmers Conflict on National Integration in Nigeria | Afribary. [online] Afribary. Available at: <<https://afribary.com/works/the-impacts-effects-and-government-response-to-herdsmen-farmers-conflict-on-national-integration-in-nigeria>> [Accessed 11 May 2022].

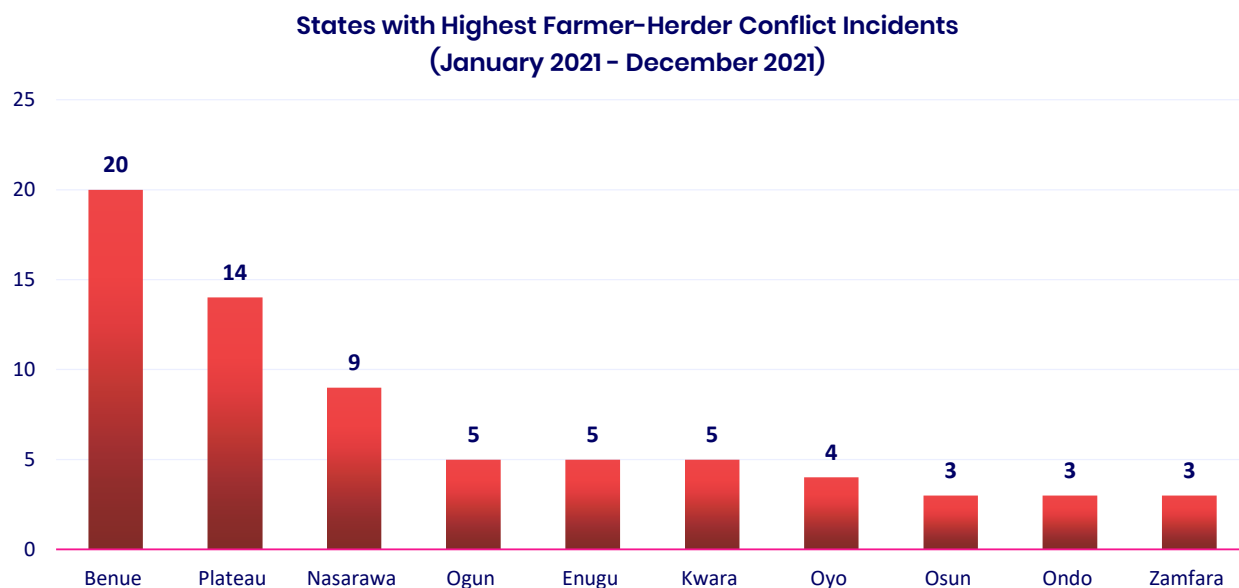


Figure 18: States with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents (January 2021 - December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

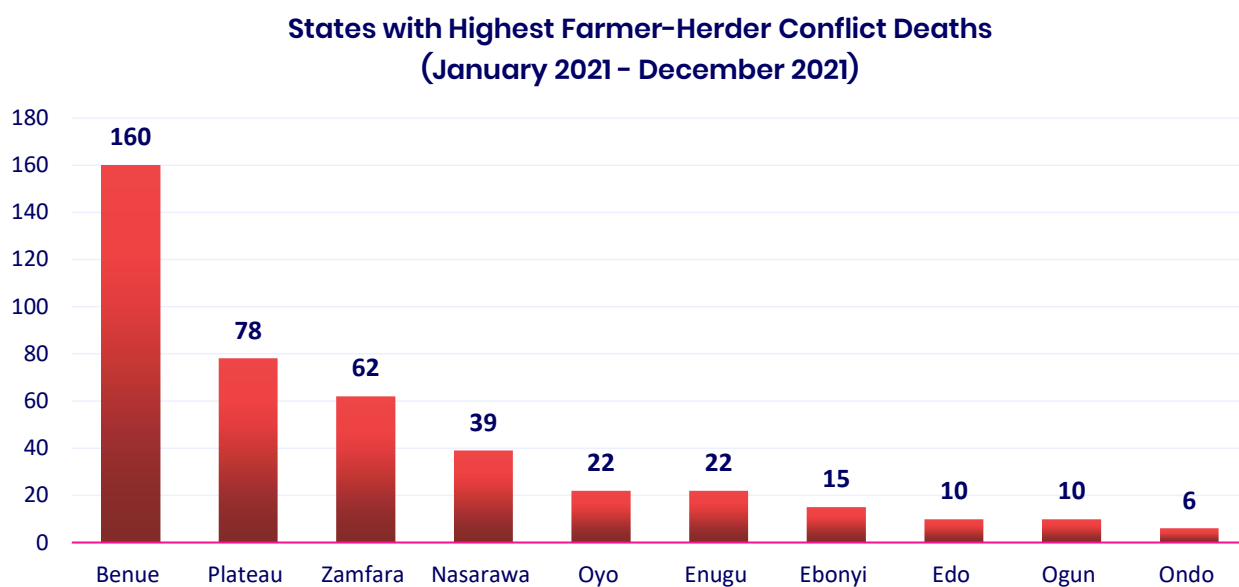


Figure 19: States with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths (January 2021 - December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

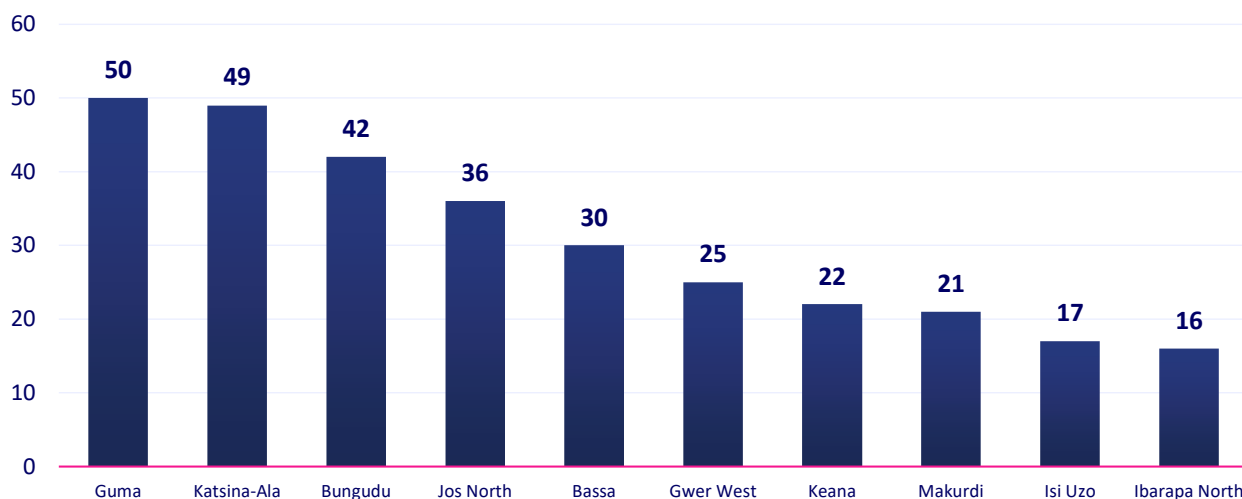


Figure 20: LGAs with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

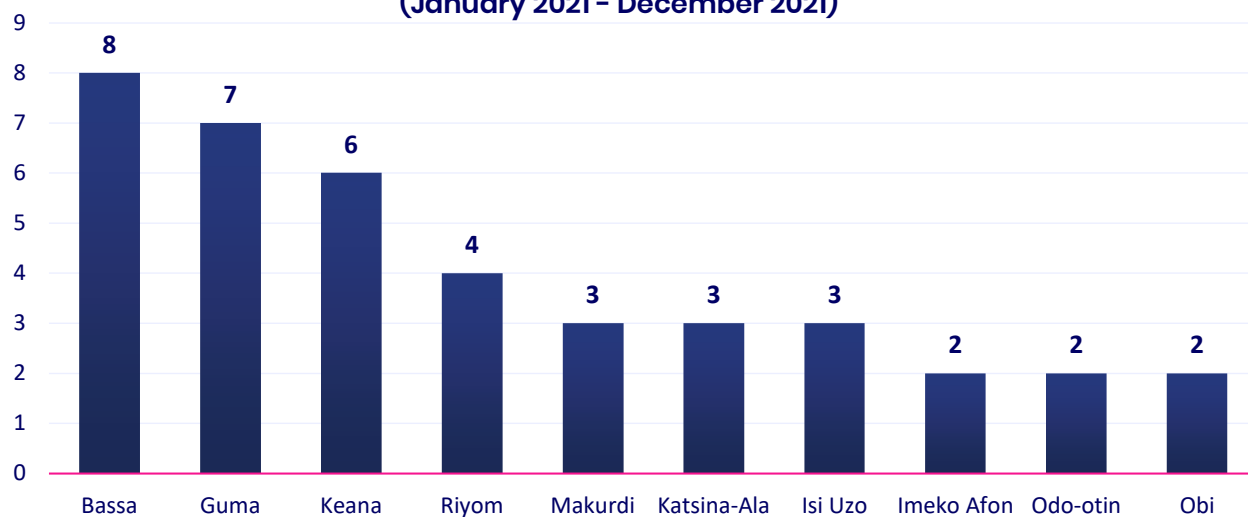


Figure 21: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

3.3. Key Drivers of Farmer-Herder Conflict in 2021

There are arguments that the most common enabler of the farmer-herder crisis is crop damage⁶⁸ by livestock.⁶⁹ However, other significant triggers of farmer-herder conflicts may include depleting farming space, climate change⁷⁰, loss of grazing reserves, and cattle rustling.⁷¹ Furthermore, the population increase and struggle for scarcer resources is another enabler of this conflict. According to the United Nations, Nigeria's population was about 33 million in 1950 but increased to over 192 million in 2018. The report predicted that Nigeria's population would reach 364 million in 2030 and 480 million by 2050.⁷² The population growth has put a strain on the land and water resources needed by the conflict actors. In addition, the strengthening of border security by Benin Republic, an ECOWAS member state that shares a border with Nigeria, has contributed to rising tensions.⁷³ Benin Republic has tightened its borders and made cross-border grazing illegal to defend its sovereignty. This makes pastoralists' cross-border mobility impossible and makes herders susceptible to intimidation, racketeering, and other forms of abuse.

3.4. Key Responses

The Nigerian government has introduced measures like the National Livestock Transformation Plan (NLTP)⁷⁴ to pre-empt this violence. The NLTP aims to persuade pastoralists to switch to passive livestock production practices, increase productivity, and eliminate herder-farmer conflict.⁷⁵ However, Nigeria's federal and state governments are battling to implement the plan. Inadequate political leadership, misconceptions about its goal, and pervasive insecurity are factors impeding the realisation of the NLTP.⁷⁶

On their part, the international development agencies have shown interest in ending this conflict. For example, the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) is committing resources to enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships to support the implementation of the National Livestock Transformation Plan.⁷⁷ The UNTFHS has initiated several dialogues to mitigate the farmer's and herder's crisis in Nigeria. Also, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been training farmers and herders on alternative feed production.⁷⁸ This empowerment of alternative animal feeds

production is implemented in pilot states like Benue, Nasarawa and Taraba States under the "Integrated Approach to Building Peace to Farmers-Herders Crisis Project".

3.5. Successes and Challenges

The closure of transhumance routes, loss of grazing land and the increased south-ward movement of pastoralists have increased conflict with local communities.⁷⁹ In 2016, a bill for the Rural Grazing Areas (RUGA) settlement was introduced in Nigeria to increase agriculture yield from livestock farming and reduce constant confrontations between herders and farmers. However, the National Assembly rejected the bill because it favoured one particular profession and ethnic group above the other.⁸⁰ Also, State governors in the Southeast dismissed the plan and stated that they would not give out lands in their states.

Nevertheless, in a report, Yemi Osinbajo, the vice president of Nigeria, explained that the Nigerian government did not intend to forcibly take land to establish ranches and grazing zones or hand over territory to herders. According to him, the aim is for willing states to set aside land and work with investors to develop commercially viable ranches or animal production centres with federal government support.⁸¹ Conversely, critics argue that the Nigerian government is incoherent with its plan to introduce the RUGA settlement alongside the NLTP.⁸²

3.6. Policy Options

- As the government focuses on implementing agricultural reforms, it is also critical to focus on stabilising farming and herding communities. The government must seek assistance from development partners to identify and support indigenous peace initiatives.
- To reduce tensions, local and foreign media should report the farmer-herder crisis fairly.⁸³ Efforts should be made to avoid biased reporting.
- The government should establish channels for local farmers and herder's association to gather and share relevant security information with the security agencies for timely resolution of conflict.

- ⁶⁸Brotem, L. (2021). The Growing Complexity of Farmer-Herder Conflict in || West and Central Africa – Africa Center for Strategic Studies. [online] Africa Center for Strategic Studies. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://africacenter.org/publication/growing-complexity-farmer-herder-conflict-west-central-africa>
- ⁶⁹Daniel, O., 2021. Climate Change and Farmers-Herders Conflict in Nigeria. [online] New Security Beat. Available at: <<https://www.newsecuritybeat.org/2021/11/climate-change-farmers-herders-conflict-nigeria/#:~:text=Regional%20factors%20in%20Nigeria's%20farmer%2Dherder%20conflict&text=The%20study%20says%20that%20activities,and%20water%20access%20for%20livestock.>> [Accessed 5 August 2022].
- ⁷⁰Ebata, U. (2018). Understanding the Herder-Farmer Conflict in Nigeria – ACCORD.. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.acCORD.org.za/conflict-trends/understanding-the-herder-farmer-conflict-in-nigeria/>
- ⁷¹Crisis Group. (2017.) Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict. [online] Available at: <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/252-herders-against-farmers-nigerias-expanding-deadly-conflict>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].
- ⁷²Akpoghome, T. and Adikaibe, E., 2019. HERDSMEN AND FARMERS CONFLICT IN NIGERIA: A QUEST FOR PARADIGM SHIFT. [online] Oer. biu.edu.ng. Available at: <http://oer.biu.edu.ng/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/HERDSMEN_AND_FARMERS_CONFLICT_IN_NIGERIA_-_Theresa.pdf> [Accessed 12 May 2022].
- ⁷³Ibid
- ⁷⁴Crisis Group. (2021). Ending Nigeria's Herder-Farmer Crisis: The Livestock Reform Plan. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/302-ending-nigerias-herder-farmer-crisis-livestock-reform-plan>
- ⁷⁵Vanguard. 2021. Nigeria's herder-farmer conflict could escalate if NLTP fails. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/05/nigerias-herder-farmer-conflict-could-escalate-if-nltp-fails-icg/>> [Accessed 1 April 2022].
- ⁷⁶Crisis Group. 2021. Ending Nigeria's Herder-Farmer Crisis: The Livestock Reform Plan. [online] Available at: <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/302-ending-nigerias-herder-farmer-crisis-livestock-reform-plan#:~:text=In%202019%2C%20Nigerian%20authorities%20launched,country's%20lethal%20herder%2Dfarmer%20conflict.>> [Accessed 1 April 2022].
- ⁷⁷Legit Ng. 2019. UN takes steps to end farmers/herders crises in Nigeria. [online] Available at: <<https://www.legit.ng/1246023-un-takes-steps-farmersherders-crises-nigeria.html>> [Accessed 13 May 2022].
- ⁷⁸Food and Agriculture Organisation. 2021. Sowing seeds of peaceful coexistence between farmers and herders | FAO in Nigeria | [online] Available at: <<https://www.fao.org/nigeria/news/detail-events/ar/c/1418113/>> [Accessed 6 August 2022].
- ⁷⁹Premium timesng. (2018). How to resolve herdsmen crisis - Nigerian Working Group. (2018). Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/255364-resolve-herdsmen-crisis-nigerian-working-group.html>
- ⁸⁰Ibid,9
- ⁸¹Economist Intelligence, 2022. Government struggles to resolve herder-farmer conflicts. [online] Country.eiu.com. Available at: <http://country.eiu.com/article.aspx?articleid=246506408&Country=Nigeria&topic=Politics_1> [Accessed 4 April 2022].
- ⁸²Adesoji, B. (2019). Why the RUGA settlement initiative never made economic sense. Retrieved 22 March 2022, from <https://nairametrics.com/2019/07/04/why-the-ruga-settlement-initiative-never-made-economic-sense/>
- ⁸³Ibid

Secessionist Struggles



4.1. Background

Nigeria is experiencing substantial secessionist crusades across many locations, especially in the southern part of the country.⁸⁴ However, the movement for a Biafran nation, currently championed by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), remains the most daring. The group has created a parallel regional security apparatus known as the Eastern Security Network and is canvassing for the realisation of a sovereign state. Also, the Southwest has seen an increase in calls for secession from the Yoruba Nation movement, which has generated a lot of controversy and tension in the region's six (6) states.⁸⁵

In the Southeast, security agents and government properties have remained the primary targets of gunmen who ambush

personnel and formations to kill, destroy and cart away weapons.⁸⁶ Although in response, security agencies have consistently labelled these gunmen as IPOB members. The group has constantly denied responsibility. Consequently, security agents have continued to raid suspect camps to annihilate and arrest criminals.⁸⁷ However, there have been reports of human rights violations and extra-judicial killings, complicating the crisis.⁸⁸

4.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in 2021, there were 235 secessionist-related incidents and 433 deaths in Southern Nigeria.



2021



235
Secessionist-
related Incidents



433
Deaths



Southern
Nigeria

Secessionist Struggles: Incidents and Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

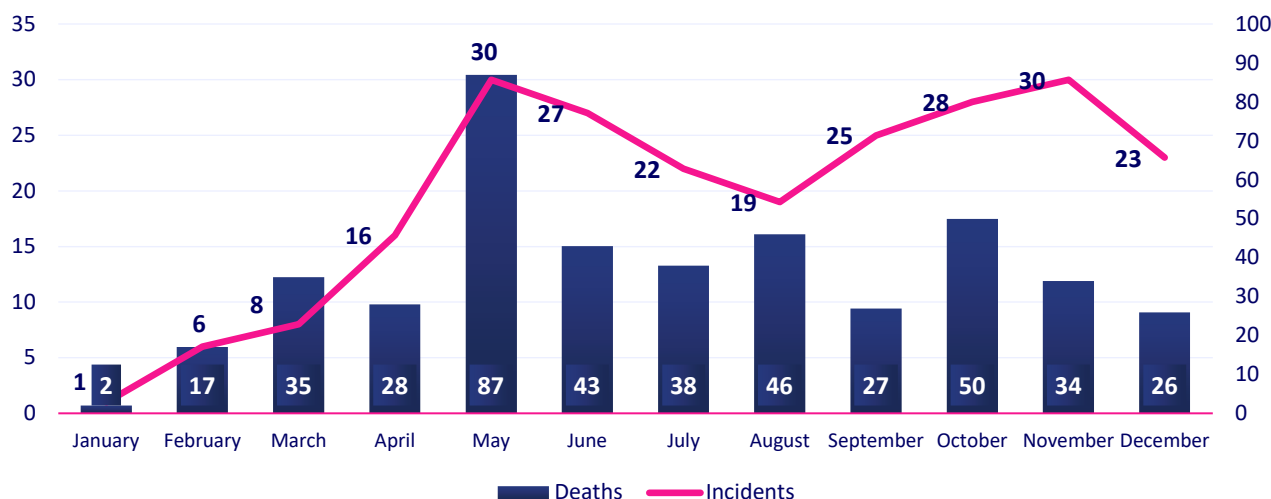


Figure 22: Secessionist Struggle: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Secessionist Struggles Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021)

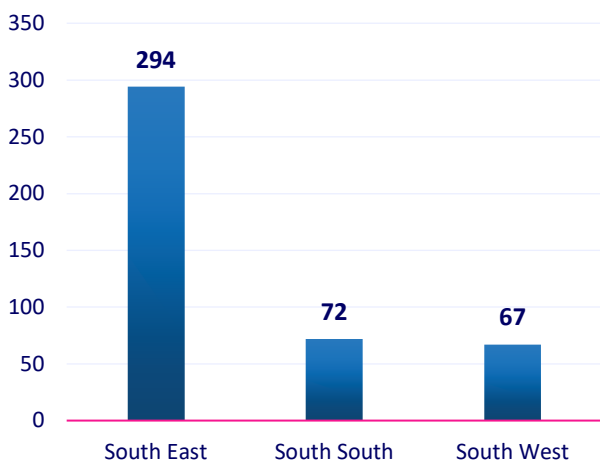


Figure 23: Secessionist Struggle Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Secessionist Struggles Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021)

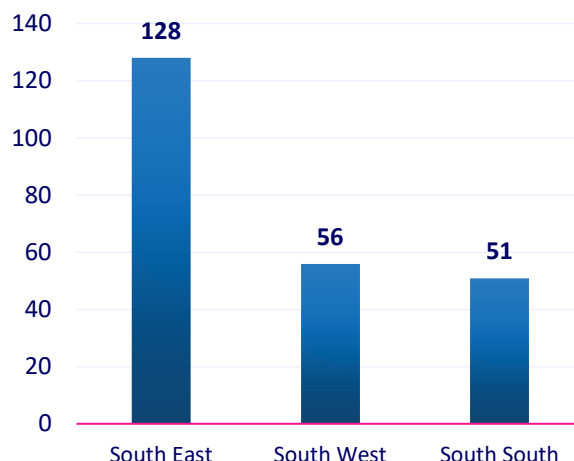


Figure 24: Secessionist Struggle Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

⁸⁴Nextier SPD. (2021). Addressing Secession Agitations. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/addressing-secession-agitations>

⁸⁵Kabir, A., 2021. Sunday Igboho threatens to disrupt elections in South-west. Premium Times Nigeria. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/461836-sunday-igboho-threatens-to-disrupt-elections-in-south-west>

⁸⁶Ujumadu, V., Oyadongha, S., Una, E., Iheamnachor, D., Onuegbu, C., Oko, S. and Odu, I. (2021). Why gunmen target security formations, personnel in South East, South South. Vanguard. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/05/why-gunmen-target-security-formations-personnel-in-south-east-south-south>

⁸⁷Alozie, C. (2022). Police raid suspected ESN camps, kill 3 commanders, arrest 9 in Imo. Vanguard. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/02/police-raid-suspected-esn-camps-kill-3-commanders-arrest-9-in-imo>

⁸⁸Yakubu, D. and Eromosele, F. (2021). IPOB: HURIWA makes case for Imo state. Vanguard. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/08/ipob-huriwa-makes-case-for-imo-state>

States with Highest Secessionist Struggles Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

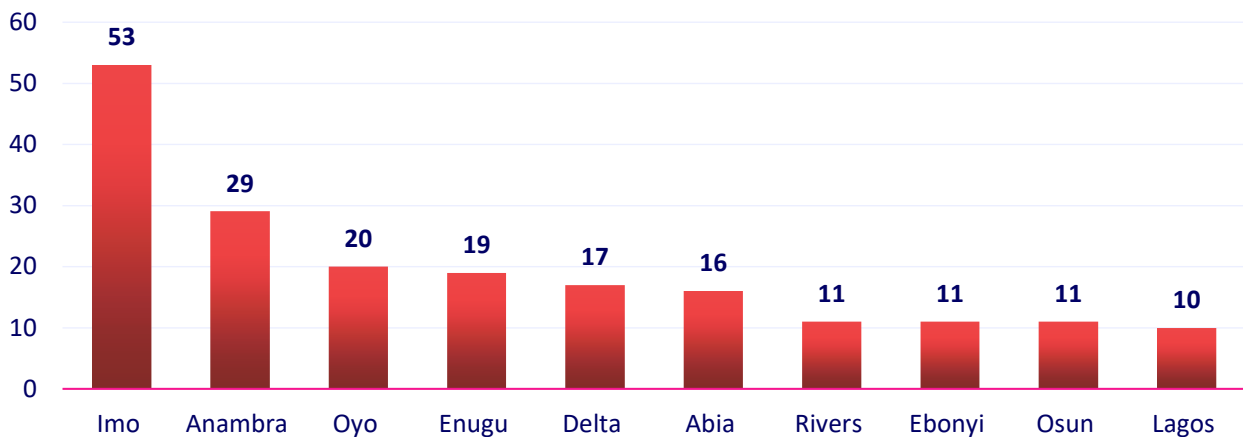


Figure 25: States with Highest Secessionist Struggle Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Secessionist Struggles Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

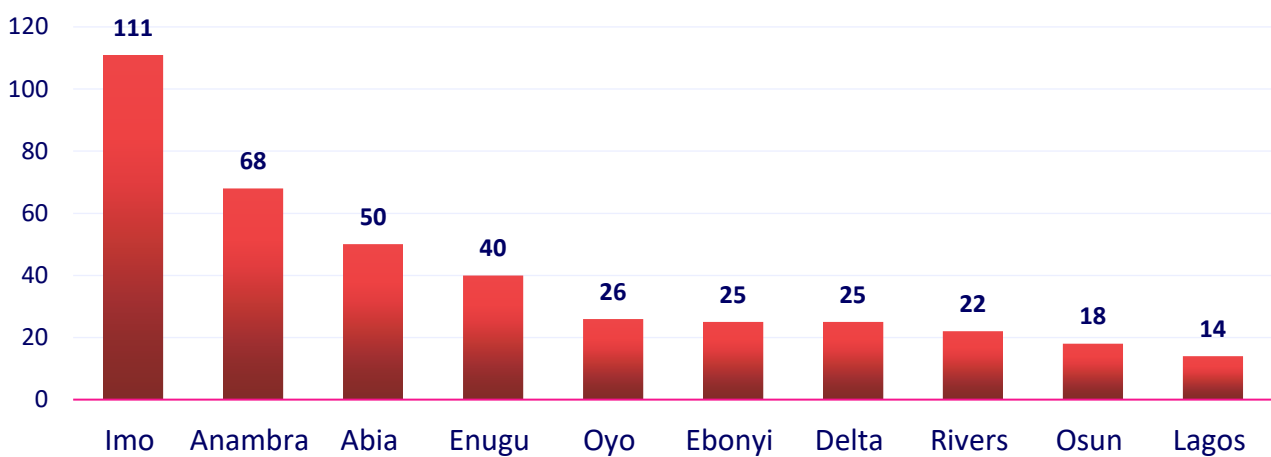


Figure 26: States with Highest Secessionist Struggle Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Secessionist Struggles Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

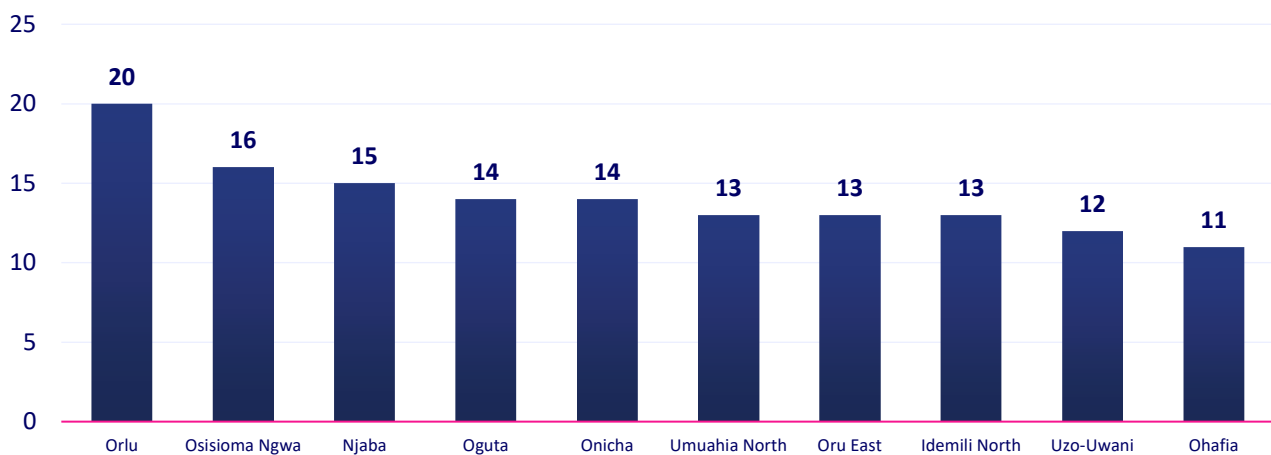


Figure 27: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Secessionist Struggle Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

**Top 10 LGAs with Highest Secessionist Struggle Incidents
(January 2021 – December 2021)**

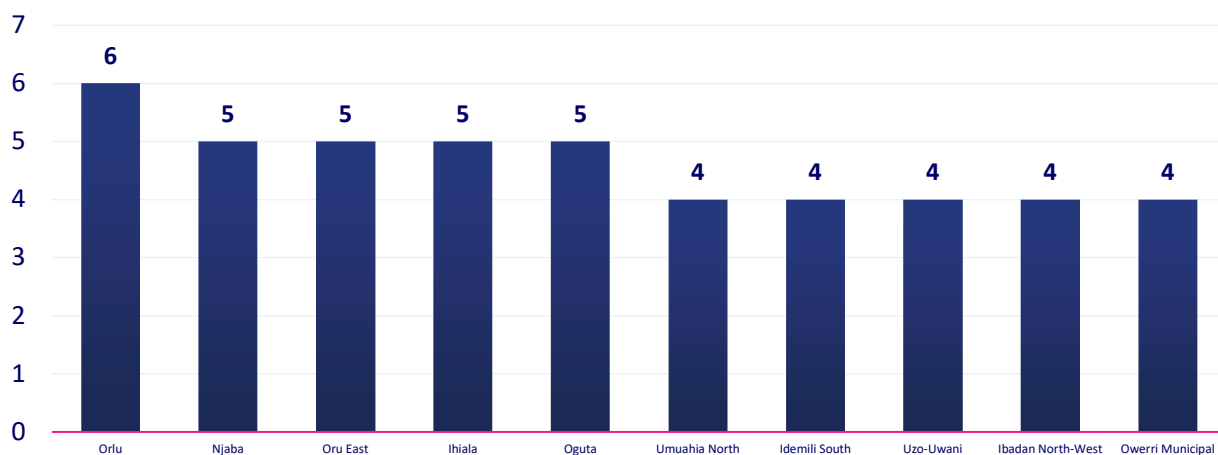


Figure 28: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Secessionist Struggle Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

4.3. Key Drivers of Secessionist Struggles in 2021

There is a wrong impression that Biafra is the only separatist threat in the country. However, there are other secessionist movements across Nigeria, like the Niger Delta Republic and the Arewa Republic. Insecurity and allegations of discrimination by the federal government influence separatism. In the Southeast, for example, severe security-service techniques fuel separatist aspirations.⁸⁹ Nigeria appears not to be interested in resolving ethnic grievances conclusively.⁹⁰ The absence of a sense of belonging and ownership among some ethnic groups has resulted in calls for separation and degenerated attacks by armed gangs.⁹¹ While certain regions have a stronghold on power, others seem marginalised. Also, some scholars attribute the constant clamour for secessionism to the abysmal federalism performance. They argue that Nigeria maintains a centralised but weak system. The federal government's hold on exclusivity contributes immensely to Nigeria's structural problems.⁹²

4.4. Key Responses

The typical response of Nigerian governments to separatist agitations over the years has been to label them “criminals”. The government sends law enforcement agencies to use force to quell agitations. Unfortunately, this frequently results in casualties, escalating ethnic tensions, and hardens separatist agitators. Amnesty International, for example, accused the Nigerian military of carrying out

a “campaign of executions and violence” that resulted in the deaths of at least 150 peaceful (separatist) protesters.⁹³

The foremost agitators in the Southeast and Southwest, Nnamdi Kanu and Sunday Igboho, have been charged to court and are held in custody. This step follows many requests for the administration to consider a political solution to the issue. Nigeria's Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, suggested that the Federal Government seek a “political solution” to the situation sparked by separatist agitations.⁹⁴ However, President Muhammadu Buhari has maintained that he will not interfere in the agitator's trial.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, leaders from the affected regions have continued to affirm their commitment to dialoguing with the government to find a lasting solution to the cascading violence.⁹⁶

4.5. Successes and Challenges

The clampdown on agitators has not yielded the desired results. The continued rise in attacks on government buildings and security personnel validates this argument. According to a 2021 report, suspected IPOB/ESN members destroyed approximately 20 police stations and election commission offices in Southeast Nigeria.⁹⁷ The government's response has mainly been combative. Experts insist that communication and genuine dialogue are potent instruments for resolving conflict.⁹⁸

The government's readiness to work with the separatist organisations will demonstrate its openness to citizens' participation in

establishing a lasting peace process that may be used in other situations with similar problems.⁹⁹ State governments in the Southeast and Southwest had set up security outfits to combat the existential security threats affecting their respective regions.¹⁰⁰ While the federal government frowns at this development,¹⁰¹ the Southwest, for example, has effectively recruited, trained, and deployed personnel to secure the area, whilst the Southeast is yet to show similar commitment.¹⁰²

- The international community should show concern and partner with the Nigerian government to seek non-violent ways of addressing secession struggles.
- The government and relevant stakeholders should deploy conflict expert groups to mediate the process of communicative engagement.¹⁰⁴

4.6. Policy Options

- The Nigerian government must address marginalisation issues by ensuring equal public goods and services distribution.¹⁰³

⁸⁹Campbell, J. and Quinn, N., 2021. What's Behind Growing Separatism in Nigeria?. [online] Council on Foreign Relations. Available at: <<https://www.cfr.org/article/whats-behind-growing-separatism-nigeria>> [Accessed 3 April 2022].

⁹⁰Adibe, J., 2017. Separatist agitations in Nigeria: Causes and trajectories. [online] Iosrjournals.org. Available at: <<https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jef/papers/Vol11-Issue3/Series-7/C1103072132.pdf>> [Accessed 3 April 2022].

⁹¹Ibid

⁹²Council on Foreign Relations. 2022. Nigeria's Unitary Federalism. [online] Available at: <<https://www.cfr.org/blog/nigerias-unitary-federalism>> [Accessed 23 May 2022].

⁹³Adibe, J., 2017. Separatist agitations in Nigeria: The way forward. [online] Brookings. Available at: <<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/afri-ca-in-focus/2017/07/17/separatist-agitations-in-nigeria-the-way-forward/>> [Accessed 23 March 2022].

⁹⁴Vanguard. 2021. Separatism: Buhari's 'political solution' must go beyond Kanu, Igboho. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/12/separatism-buharis-political-solution-must-go-beyond-kanu-igboho/>> [Accessed 23 May 2022].

⁹⁵Premium Times Nigeria. 2022. Despite Buhari's remarks, South-east leaders working on political solution for Nnamdi Kanu – Ekweremadu. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/504738-despite-buharis-remarks-south-east-leaders-working-on-political-solution-for-nnamdi-kanu-ekweremadu.html>> [Accessed 24 May 2022].

⁹⁶Paradise. 2022. Despite Buhari's remarks, South-east leaders working on political solution for Nnamdi Kanu – Ekweremadu. [online] Available at: <<https://theparadise.ng/despite-buharis-remarks-south-east-leaders-working-on-political-solution-for-nnamdi-kanu-ekweremadu/>> [Accessed 24 May 2022].

⁹⁷Aljazeera. (2021). Nigeria accused of 'ruthless' crackdown in restive southeast. [online] Available at: <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/5/nigeria-accused-ruthless-crackdown-restive-southeast>> [Accessed 23 March 2022].

⁹⁸Emeruwa, C., 2021. Buhari asked to dialogue with Nnamdi Kanu, IPOB. [online] Daily Post Nigeria. Available at: <<https://dailypost.ng/2021/09/06/buhari-asked-to-dialogue-with-nnamdi-kanu-ipob/>> [Accessed 4 April 2022].

⁹⁹Nextierspd.com. 2022. Southeast Conversations. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/southeast-conversations/>> [Accessed 4 April 2022].

¹⁰⁰Daily Trust. 2021. South East Governors Launch Regional Security Outfit. [online] Available at: <<https://dailytrust.com/breaking-south-east-governors-launch-regional-security-outfit>> [Accessed 23 May 2022].

¹⁰¹Sahara Reporters. 2020. BREAKING: Nigerian Government Declares 'Operation Amotekun' Illegal | Sahara Reporters. [online] Available at: <<https://saharareporters.com/2020/01/14/breaking-nigerian-government-declares-%E2%80%98operation-amotekun%E2%80%99-illegal>> [Accessed 23 May 2022].

¹⁰²Sahara Reporters. 2021. Unlike Amotekun, Ebube Agu Was Built On Sentiments, Ohanaeze Ndigbo Says | Sahara Reporters. [online] Available at: <<https://saharareporters.com/2021/06/17/unlike-amotekun-ebube-agu-was-built-sentiments-ohanaeze-ndigbo-says>> [Accessed 23 May 2022].

¹⁰³Nextierspd.com. 2022. Looking Beyond Repression. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/looking-beyond-repression/>> [Accessed 4 April 2022].

¹⁰⁴Nextier SPD. 2020. Between Communicative Engagement and Secession Movements - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/between-communicative-engagement-and-secession-movements/>> [Accessed 13 September 2022].

Extra-judicial Killings



Image by Foundation for Investigative Journalism

5.1. Background

Police brutality is a topical issue in Nigeria.¹⁰⁵ However, beyond the unconstitutional activities of some security agents, extra-judicial killings by members of the public manifest as mob attacks and jungle justice. Communities in Nigeria have set up local vigilante groups to take control of securing lives and property in their surroundings. In carrying out these self-imposed tasks, many innocent suspects have been killed or permanently injured in various forms or degrees without facing a courtroom.¹⁰⁶ Agnes Callamard, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extra-judicial Executions, described the situation in Nigeria

as an “injustice pressure cooker simmering”.¹⁰⁷ Extra-judicial executions are propelled by the delays in Nigeria’s criminal justice system and allegations of corruption in government institutions.¹⁰⁸ These issues lead to public trust deficits in the government, lawlessness and reactive response to crime.

5.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in 2021, there were 46 extra-judicial incidents and 226 deaths in Nigeria.



2021



46

Extra-judicial
Incidents



226

Deaths



In Nigeria

Extra-Judicial Killings: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

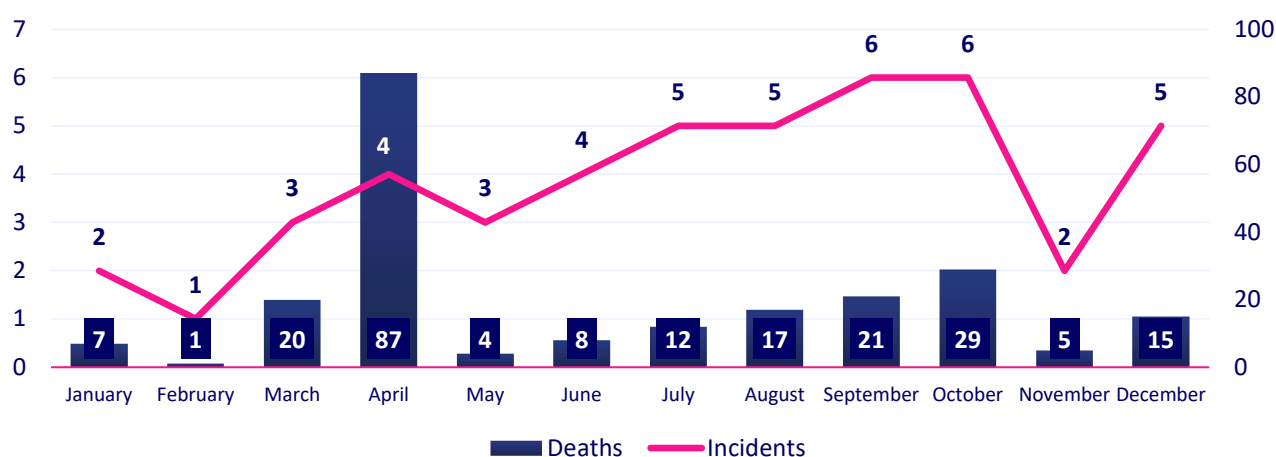


Figure 29: Extra-judicial Killing: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021)

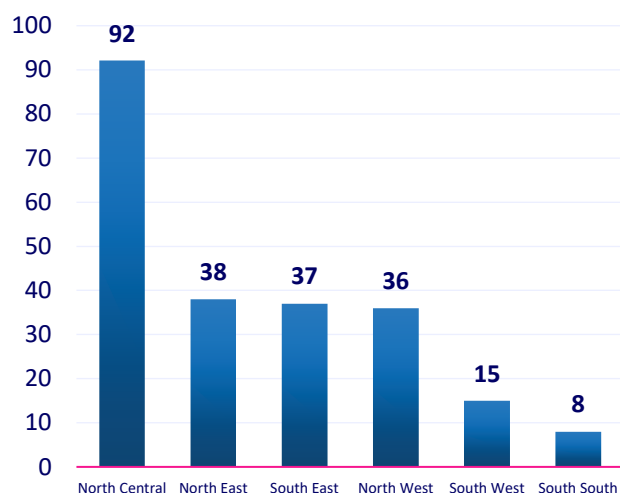


Figure 30: Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021)

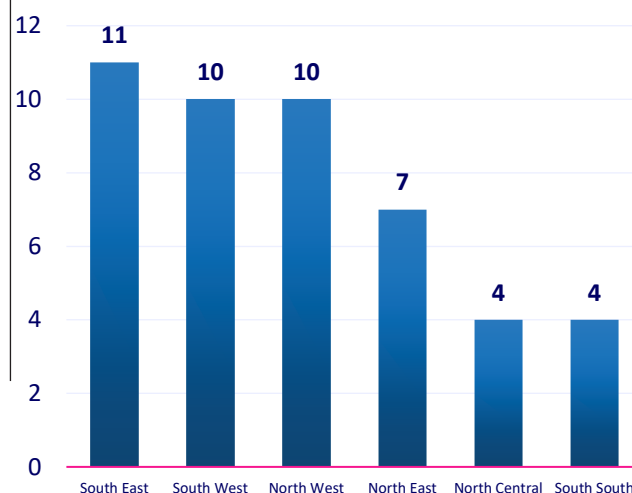


Figure 31: Extra-judicial Killing Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

¹⁰⁵Nextierspd.com (2021). "More than Ending SARS". Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/more-than-ending-sars>

¹⁰⁶ibid

¹⁰⁷The Guardian. 2019. Appraising legal framework against extra-judicial killings in Nigeria | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/features/law/appraising-legal-framework-against-extra-judicial-killings-in-nigeria/>> [Accessed 24 May 2022].

¹⁰⁸MARUF, N. 2017. South East Asia Journal of Contemporary Business, Economics and Law, Vol. 12, Issue 4 (April) ISSN 2289-1560 2017 EXTRA JUDICIAL KILLINGS: | Course Hero. [online] Coursehero.com. Available at: <<https://www.coursehero.com/file/116151217/LAW-65pdf/>> [Accessed 24 May 2022].

States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

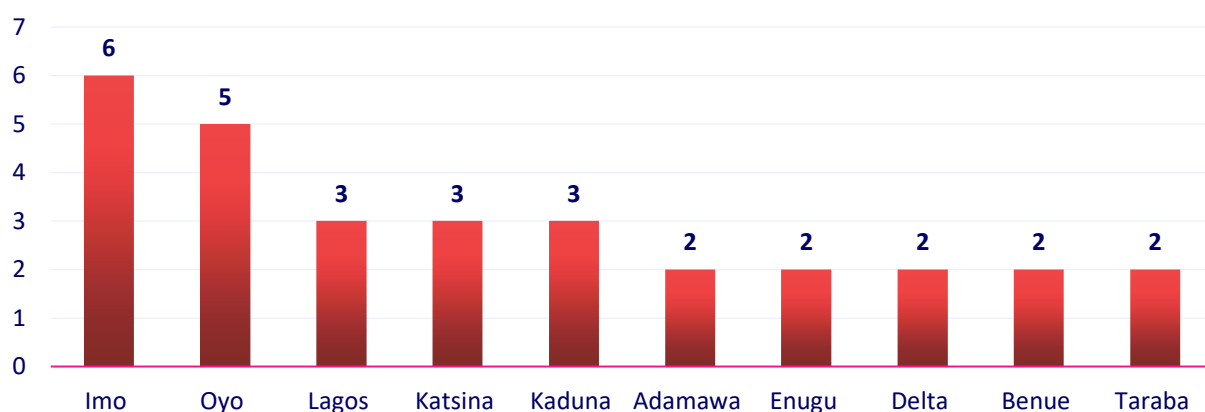


Figure 32: States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

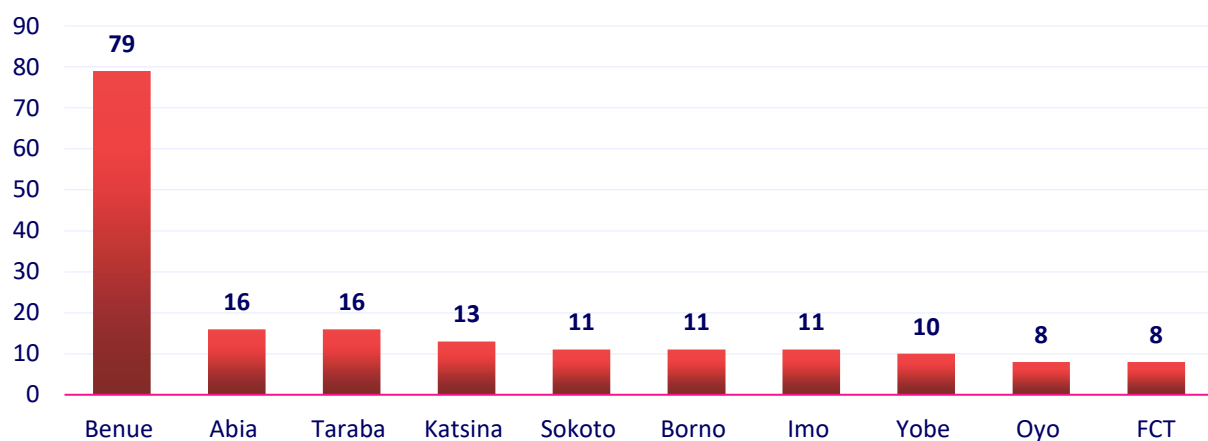


Figure 33: States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

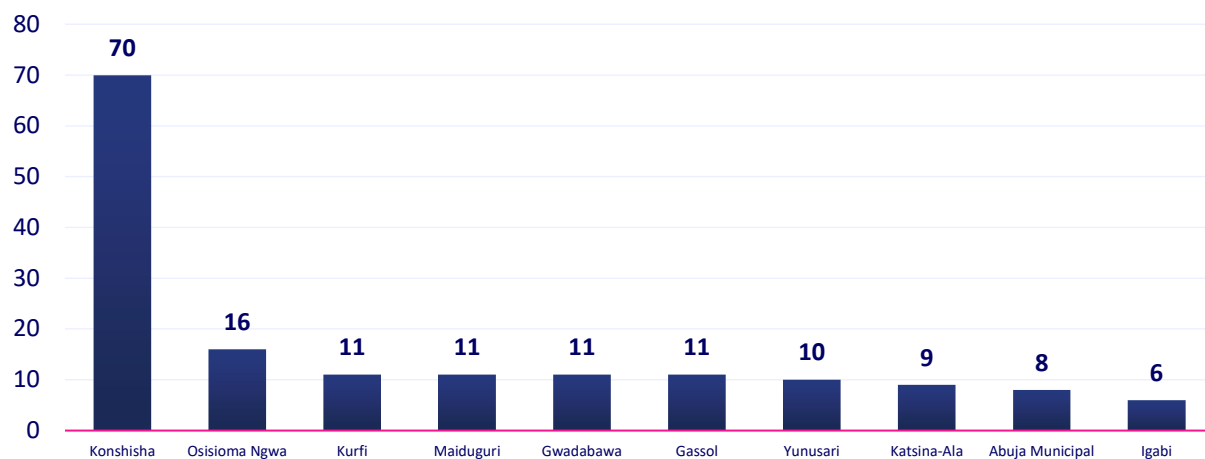


Figure 34: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

**Top 10 LGAs with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents
(January 2021 – December 2021)**

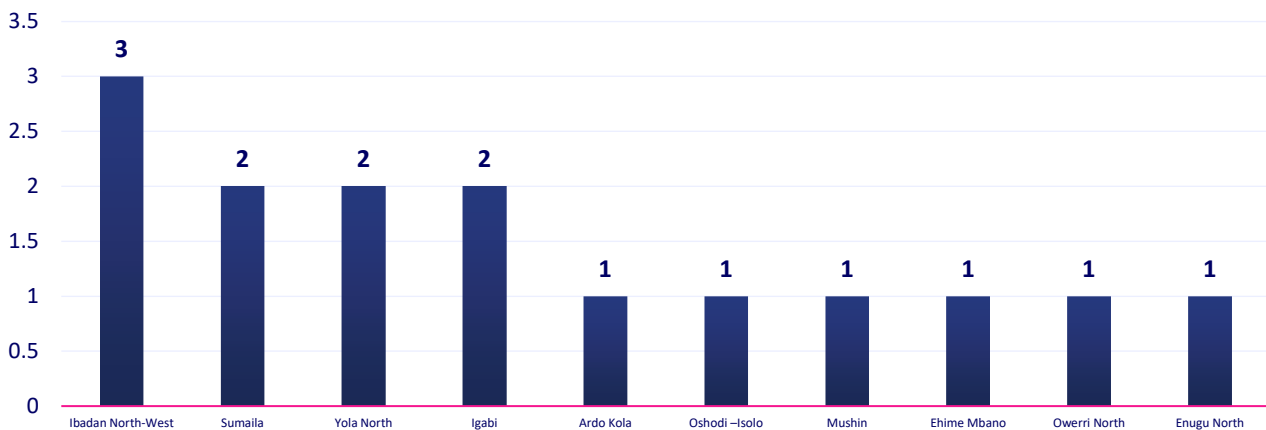


Figure 35: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

5.3. Key Drivers of Extra-judicial Killings in 2021

Mistrust between security agencies and citizens is a significant cause of extra-judicial killings. Some scholars attribute the root causes of extra-judicial killings to the government's deliberate intent to violate citizens' fundamental rights and a lack of interest in protecting citizens.¹⁰⁹ Other drivers of extra-judicial killing include poor training of security officers, insufficient accountability, and little recourse to due process and the criminal justice system.¹¹⁰

5.4. Key Responses

Specific legal frameworks exist to bar security agencies from committing extra-judicial killings. Some of them include the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, the Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Act, the Penal Code and the Nigeria Police Act.¹¹¹ These frameworks clearly described how and when the police should employ lethal force in their operations.

Following protests against police brutality in Nigeria in 2020, the National Economic Council (NEC) directed the immediate establishment of State-based Judicial Panels of Inquiry to investigate complaints of police brutality and related extra-judicial killings to deliver justice for all victims of the dissolved Special Anti-Robbery Squads (SARS) and other police units across the country on Thursday, October 15 2020. According to a report by CLEEN

Foundation, they observed a high compliance rate by states in setting up judicial panels of inquiry. For example, 81 per cent represented 29 states, and FCT complied with the federal government's directive for states to set up judicial commissions of inquiry.¹¹² In addition, the government has made several statements condemning extra-judicial killings in Nigeria. For instance, President Muhammadu Buhari, 2018, cautioned against Illegal detention, extra-judicial killings, torture, and violations of fundamental human rights.¹¹³ But unfortunately, the problem of extra-judicial killings has continued to thrive.¹¹⁴

5.5. Successes and Challenges

The Nigerian government disbanded the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) in 2020 to discourage extra-judicial killings by security agents across the country.¹¹⁵ Despite this development, reports indicate that extra-judicial killings have continued. For example, in Osun State, a police officer shot and killed a rig operator protesting the abuse and injury of a driver. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) called for the prosecution of 35 police officers indicted in a report of the Presidential Investigation Panel on allegations of human rights violations against the disbanded Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).¹¹⁶ Yet, the authorities have failed to prosecute a single officer from the notorious Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS).¹¹⁷

5.6. Policy Options

- The government should prioritise comprehensive security sector reforms and restructure the criminal justice system.
- The government should consult citizens to determine what conditions compel them to accept and cooperate with the police. Unending calls for police reform should result in long-term, citizen-centred institutional changes.¹¹⁸
- The government should strengthen implementation of the administration of criminal justice act to reduce the rate of suspects who die in custody.
- The government and stakeholders should deepen civil-military relations to build trust between the security agencies and civilian communities.

¹⁰⁹Ezeikpe, I. (2018). View of EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS AND POLITICAL CRISIS IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC. Retrieved 23 March 2022, from <https://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php/SS/article/view/652/634>

¹¹⁰Thenationalnews. 2022. Extrajudicial killings in Nigeria are a symptom of weak governance. [online] Available at: <<https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/extrajudicial-killings-in-nigeria-are-a-symptom-of-weak-governance-1.910576>> [Accessed 4 April 2022].

¹¹¹Ibid

¹¹²Cleen Foundation (2020). Report on Judicial Panels of Inquiry on Police Brutality and Extra-judicial Killing by the police and other security agencies in Nigeria. (2020). Retrieved 23 March 2022, from <https://cleen.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/REPORT-ON-JUDICIAL-PANELS-OF-INQUIRY-INTO-POLICE-BRUTALITY-AND-EXTRA-JUDICIAL-KILLINGS.pdf>

¹¹³The Guardian. 2018. Buhari warns Police against torture, extra-judicial killings | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/buhari-warns-police-against-torture-extra-judicial-killings/>> [Accessed 24 May 2022].

¹¹⁴Ibid

¹¹⁵Reuters (2020). SARS ban: Nigeria abolishes loathed federal special police unit. Retrieved 23 March 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54499497>

¹¹⁶Premium Times Nigeria. 2020. NHRC calls for prosecution of 35 indicted police officers by AGF. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/421711-nhrc-calls-for-prosecution-of-35-indicted-police-officers-by-agf.html>> [Accessed 4 April 2022].

¹¹⁷Akinpelu, Y., 2020. Despite violations, Nigeria failed to prosecute any SARS officer in three years — Amnesty. [online] Premium Times Nigeria. Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/399892-despite-violations-nigeria-failed-to-prosecute-any-sars-officer-in-three-years-amnesty.html>> [Accessed 4 April 2022].

¹¹⁸Nextier SPD .(2020). "More than Ending SARS". [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/more-than-ending-sars/>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].

Cultism



Image by Washington Post

6.1. Background

Cults and gang-related activities pose a growing security risk to Nigeria's youth.¹¹⁹ Nigerian schools, particularly tertiary institutions, have been breeding grounds for violent cults and gangs for decades. Cults groups have also infiltrated communities and have begun to recruit members from elementary and secondary schools.¹²⁰ Thriving cult groups and expanding membership base pose serious security concerns for Nigeria. Cults are available armed groups that can be hired by those looking to instil terror in society.

For instance, some scholars argue that some Nigerian elites are linked to cultism, militancy, and political thuggery.¹²¹ The main point of this concern is that cult groups provide soldiers for hire for the political class.

6.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in 2021, there were 49 cultism incidents and 99 deaths in Nigeria.



2021



49
Cultism Incidents



99
Deaths



In Nigeria

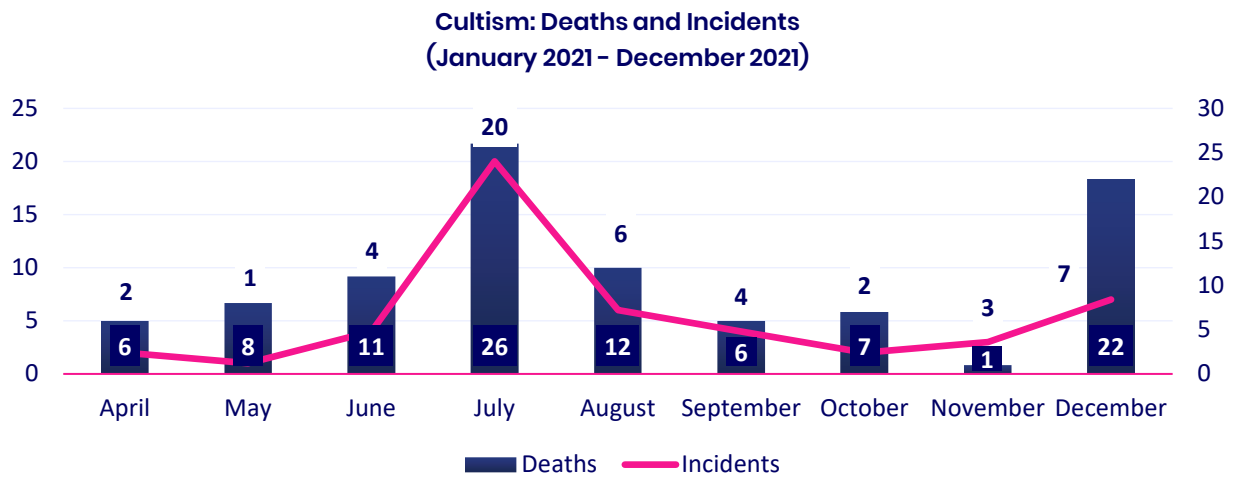


Figure 36: Cultism: Deaths and Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

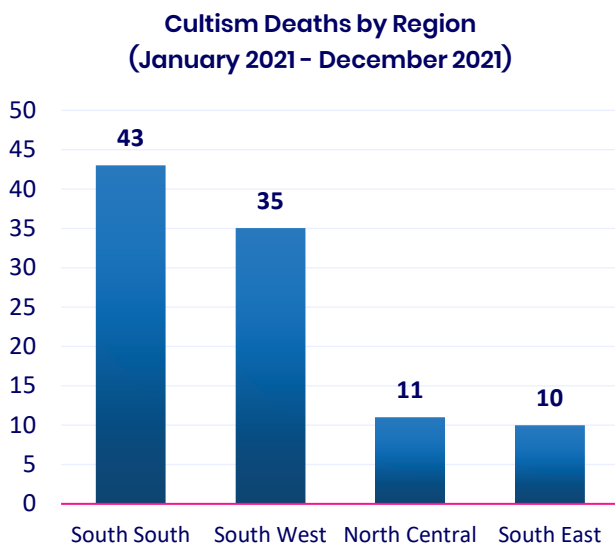


Figure 37: Cultism Deaths by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

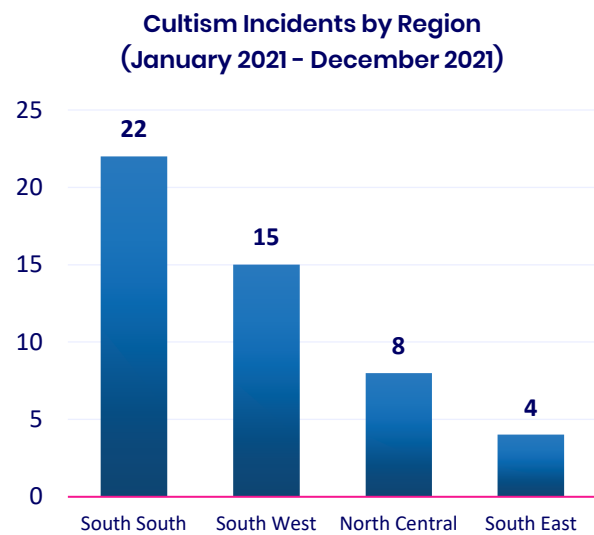


Figure 38: Cultism Incidents by Region (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

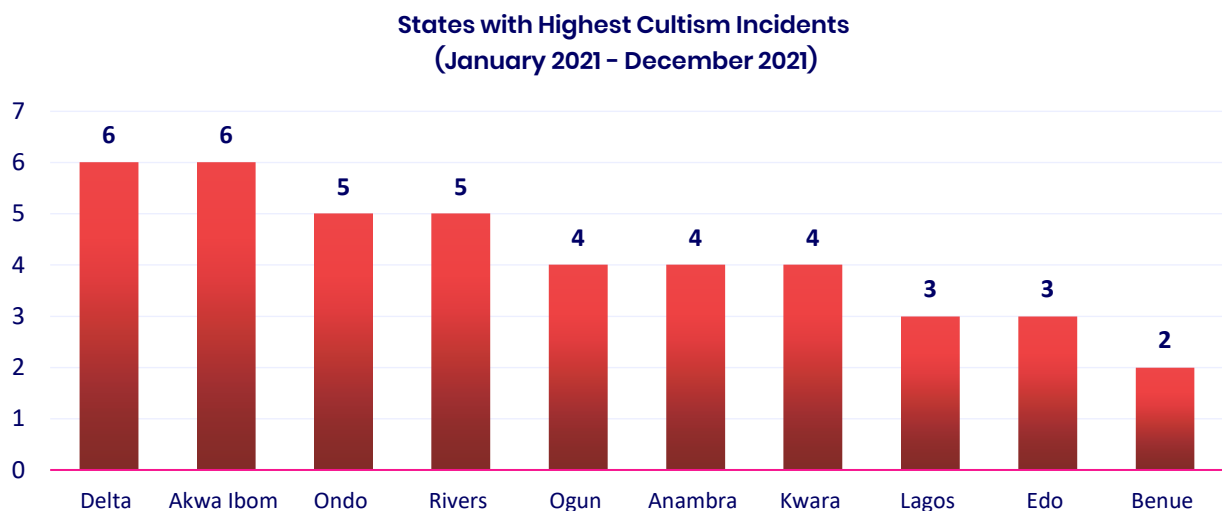


Figure 39: States with Highest Cultism Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

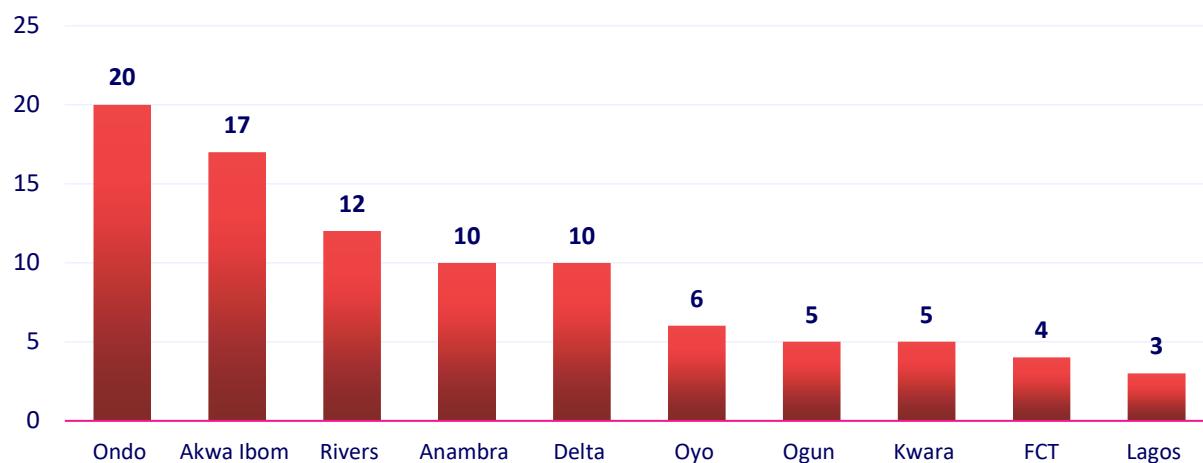


Figure 40: States with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021)

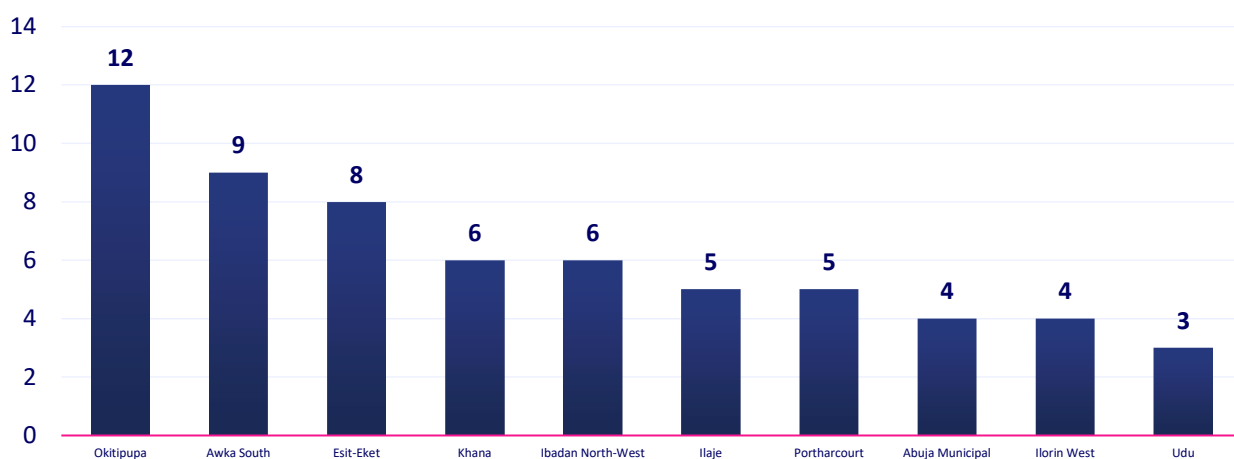


Figure 41: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Cultism Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021)

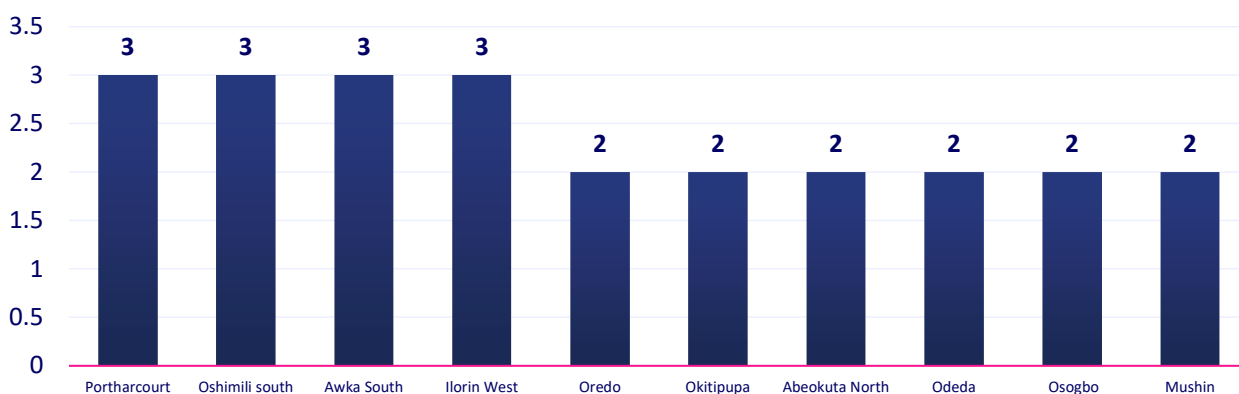


Figure 42: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Cultism Incidents (January 2021 – December 2021) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

6.3. Key Drivers of Cultism in 2021

Arguably, cultism is caused by a lack of parental education, peer pressure, drug abuse, emotional instability, and failed political leadership. Unfortunately, the Nigerian government has done little to address this issue threatening national security and development.¹²²

6.4. Key Responses

Several state governments have introduced stiff penalties against cultism. For example, In December 2021, the Lagos State House of Assembly passed an anti-cultism bill that mandates a 21-year sentence for anyone who is a cult group member or solicits members of an illegal society.¹²³ The bill also stipulates that anyone who assists or protects a cultist is guilty of a crime and faces 15 years in jail. In 2020, the Akwa Ibom State government proscribed 65 cult groups to enhance the state's security, attract investors and secure the youths.¹²⁴ Similarly, in 2018, the Bayelsa State Government introduced the Secret (cult) Societies and Similar Activities Prohibition Amendment Law was passed, imposing a 20-year prison sentence on violators.¹²⁵

6.5. Successes and Challenges

Government effort has not yielded the desired result as cult clashes persist. For example, on March 21 2022, two persons were killed and many injured after suspected cultists resumed hostilities in the Ijanikin area of Lagos State.

6.6. Policy Options

- To combat the prevalence of cultism, the government, civil society organisations, faith-based organisations, and cultural institutions must lead a value re-orientation campaign. A multi-stakeholder approach is required to redefine social norms and values. To win the hearts and minds of young people and redirect their focus toward meaningful ventures, relevant stakeholders must champion value re-orientation conversations in communities, schools, faith-based and cultural platforms.¹²⁶
- As a nucleus of socialisation, the family must play an important role by bringing the conversation of cultism to the family discussion table.

¹¹⁹Nextier SPD. (2021). Ending Cultism and Gang Wars. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/ending-cultism-and-gang-wars>

¹²⁰Adebumti, A. (2021). Taming menace of cultism in primary, secondary schools | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/features/taming-menace-of-cultism-in-primary-secondary-schools/>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].

¹¹⁹Nextier SPD. (2021). Ending Cultism and Gang Wars. Retrieved 23 February 2022, from <https://nextierspd.com/ending-cultism-and-gang-wars>

¹²⁰Adebumti, A. (2021). Taming menace of cultism in primary, secondary schools | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/features/taming-menace-of-cultism-in-primary-secondary-schools/>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].

¹²¹Nche, G. (2019). Cultism in Rivers State: Causes, Faith-Based Organizations' Role and the Setbacks - George C Nche, 2020. [online] SAGE Journals. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0265378819878212>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].

¹²²Ajibola, J., 2020. Cultism in Nigeria [Causes, Consequences, and Solutions] | Info, Guides, and How-tos.. [online] Explain.com. Available at: <<https://explain.com.ng/topic/cultism-in-nigeria-causes-consequences-and-solutions/>> [Accessed 23 March 2022].

¹²³Premium Times Nigeria. (2021). 10 top things to know about Lagos Anti-cultism Law. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premium-timesng.com/news/more-news/499253-10-top-things-to-know-about-lagos-anti-cultism-law.html>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].

¹²⁴Vanguard. 2020. Gov Emmanuel proscribes 65 cult groups in Akwa bom state. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/03/gov-emmanuel-proscribes-65-cult-groups-in-akwaibom-state/>> [Accessed 30 May 2022].

¹²⁵Punchng. 2018. Bayelsa sets 20-year jail for cultists. [online] Available at: <<https://punchng.com/bayelsa-sets-20-year-jail-for-cultists/>> [Accessed 30 May 2022].

¹²⁶Nextier SPD. (2021). Soldiers for Hire. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/soldiers-for-hire/>> [Accessed 24 March 2022].

PART 2

January 2022 – June 2022

Introduction

In 2022, violent conflict has continued in all parts of Nigeria. Recurrent crises in 2022 include secessionism, banditry, terrorism, cultism, extra-judicial killings, and farmer-herder conflict. For example, Southeast Nigeria is burdened by ‘unknown gunmen’ terror and secessionist aggression.¹²⁷ For example, a report showed that between 11th and 13th April 2022, about 31 people died, and properties were destroyed due to gunmen operations in Ebonyi and Anambra state. Despite the decrease in terror-related deaths, Nigeria recorded the ninth highest number of persons killed by terrorist incidents worldwide.¹²⁸ In Northeast Nigeria, the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) carried out several attacks in 2022. For example, ISWAP committed two suicide attacks in Taraba State on April 20th and 22nd, 2022, killing six people and injuring 28 others.¹³⁰ Despite the continued violence, there are plans to return and resettle the displaced population.¹³¹ For example, in March 2022, the Borno State government resettled 20 communities to their original homes.¹³²

Bandits are rampaging vulnerable villages in Northwest and Northcentral Nigeria. Tracked activities by bandits include village raids, sexual violence, ransom kidnapping, killings, and large-scale livestock rustling. The recurrent violence affects the livelihoods of about 21 million people in Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Sokoto, and Zamfara states.¹³³ Despite security Key Responses, banditry incidents and fatalities have continued. According to a report, some bandits link their resort to violence to police and judicial officials’ corruption and incompetence.¹³⁴

Additionally, insecurity has displaced many farming communities and hindered cultivation. This situation has deterred agricultural supply and increased the cost of agricultural goods. Nationally, the cost of essentials like beans and tomatoes has increased by 253 per cent and 123 per cent, respectively, since July 2020. A measure of beans (known as mudu) cost 73 cents (₦305.48) in July 2020, but by July 2021, it was going for \$2.16. (₦900). Other goods, including bread, onions, and cassava flour, have increased exponentially.¹³⁵

¹²⁷Nextier SPD. 2022. Fleeing Violence - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/fleeing-violence/>> [Accessed 2 September 2022].

¹²⁸Statista. 2022. Topic: Terrorism in Nigeria. [online] Available at: <https://www.statista.com/topics/7396/terrorism-in-nigeria/#topicHeader__wrapper> [Accessed 15 June 2022].

¹²⁹prnigeria.com. 2022. Incursion of ISWAP: A Major Security Setback. [online] Available at: <<https://prnigeria.com/2022/02/10/incursion-iswap-major/>> [Accessed 15 June 2022].

¹³⁰Sahara Reporters. 2022. 20 Suicide Bombers Prepared By Boko Haram, ISWAP To Attack Nigeria During Last Days Of Ramadan To Enter Paradise – Counter-Insurgency Expert | Sahara Reporters. [online] Available at: <https://bit.ly/3Qr6Lcv> [Accessed 15 June 2022].

¹³¹Daily Post Nigeria. 2022. Boko Haram: Borno to return 1.8million IDPs, refugees to 19 communities. [online] Available at: <<https://dailypost.ng/2020/08/04/boko-haram-borno-to-return-1-8million-idps-refugees-to-19-communities/>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹³²Ibrahim, H., 2022. Borno govt shuts down camps, returns IDPs to homes. [online] Daily Trust. Available at: <<https://dailytrust.com/borno-govt-shuts-down-camps-returns-idps-to-homes>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹³³ACAPS. 2022. Nigeria Northwest Banditry | ACAPS. [online] Available at: <<https://www.acaps.org/country/nigeria/crisis/northwest-banditry>> [Accessed 15 June 2022].

¹³⁴Kaduna, G., 2022. Unpunished crimes, poverty, others fuel banditry in Nigeria’s northwest — Report. [online] Premium Times Nigeria. Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/521768-unpunished-crimes-poverty-others-fuel-banditry-in-nigerias-northwest-report.html>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹³⁵Ewing-Chow, D., 2022. In Nigeria, Terrorism Has Become A Major Threat To Food Security. [online] Forbes. Available at: <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/daphneewingchow/2022/02/28/in-nigeria-banditry-has-become-a-major-threat-to-food-security/?sh=11077fde61c3>> [Accessed 4 August 2022].

Secessionist Struggles



1.1. Background

The secessionist agitations in Nigeria raise serious concerns and have continuously thrown the nation into a state of instability and disintegration. At the very least, a significant amount of resources and lives have been lost during these agitations. The indigenous groups have consistently asserted that they have legal standing to secede under international law without considering the implications of their claims or seeking a critical reading of the so-called international law.¹³⁶

For instance, in February 1964, the Tiv people of Benue State, Nigeria, agitated to secede from the country. According to Isaac Shaahu, the spokesperson of the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC) in the Northern House of Assembly threatened to leave the North and the federation as a whole. In his words "We

will be an autonomous nation, not affiliated with anyone". More people live here than in the Gambia and Mauritania combined. Shaahu was indignant over what he believed to be the Tiv people's exclusion from the formal political system and harsh repression in Tiv territory.¹³⁷

Mounting communal violence and insecurity in Nigeria appear to bolster separatist groups around the nation. The Indigenous People of Biafra, a group that supports an independent state in a region of Nigeria that attempted to secede more than 50 years ago, is one of these groups.¹³⁸

Nigeria's South East region was unquestionably peaceful,¹³⁹ but it has recently become a seedbed of violence involving non-state actors, security agents and innocent civilians.¹⁴⁰

Escalating violence in the Southeast is hampering economic progress and social order. According to a report, every time there is a sit-at-home, the Southeast geopolitical zone loses about N10 billion Naira.¹⁴¹ Cities like Onitsha, Aba, and Nnewi are core manufacturing and commercial hubs that are negatively impacted by the insecurity in the region. Manufacturing accounts for 31 per cent and 30 per cent of businesses in Aba and Onitsha. These commercial centres are also export routes to Central and West African nations.¹⁴² Violence is a drawback to education in the region. While pupils, students, and teachers in various parts of the country attend school, their southeast counterparts do not attend school on Mondays to avoid the wrath of overzealous members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).¹⁴³

The Southeast governors established 'Ebube Agu,' a regional security organisation, to address the zone's security concerns. However, mistrust and lack of coordination to tackle the insecurity has limited the outfit's performance. In October 2021, the then governor of Anambra State, Willie Obiano, said he deliberately decided to stay away from the Southeast Governors' Forum meeting because some of his colleagues allegedly sponsored the current insecurity in his state.¹⁴⁴

1.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in the first six months of 2022, there were 259 secessionist-related incidents and 324 deaths in Southern Nigeria.

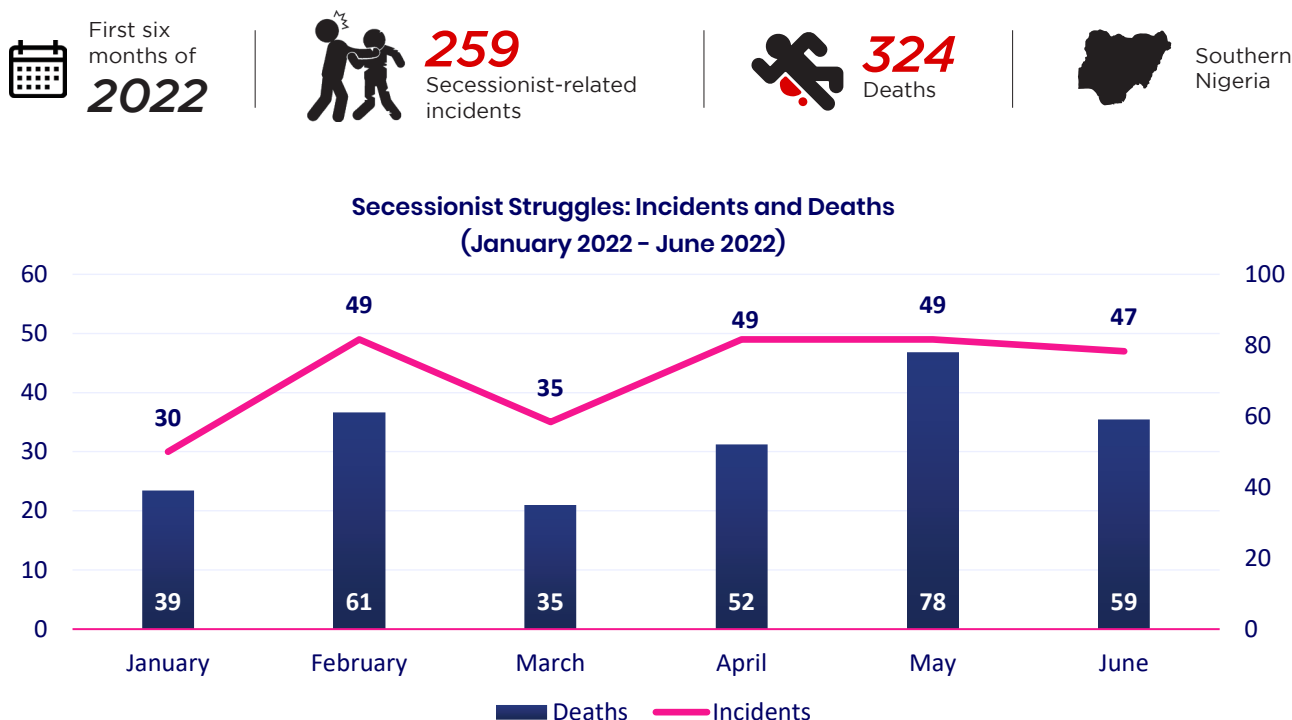


Figure 43: Secessionist Struggles: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

¹³⁶International Journal of Humanities and Social Science. 2019. Sense and Nonsense in Secessionist Agitations in Nigeria: Implication for National Integration. [online] Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353482905_Sense_and_Nonsense_in_Secessionist_Agitations_in_Nigeria_Implication_for_National_Integration> [Accessed 1 August 2022].

¹³⁷Head Topics. 2021. The chequered history of secession in Nigeria | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] Available at: <<https://headtopics.com/ng/the-chequered-history-of-secession-in-nigeria-the-guardian-nigeria-news-nigeria-and-world-news-21023476>> [Accessed 1 August 2022].

¹³⁸VOA. 2022. In Nigeria, Rising Insecurity Leads to Growing Separatist Calls. [online] Available at: <https://www.voanews.com/a/africa_nigeria-rising-insecurity-leads-growing-separatist-calls/6206192.html> [Accessed 1 August 2022].

¹³⁹Daily Trust. 2022. Southeast most peaceful in Nigeria – Enugu CP. [online] Available at: <<https://dailytrust.com/southeast-most-peaceful-in-nigeria-enugu-cp>> [Accessed 6 June 2022].

¹⁴⁰Ojewale, O. and Onuoha, F., 2022. Violence in Nigeria's south-east demands a holistic response. [online] Premium Times Nigeria. Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/527413-violence-in-nigerias-south-east-demands-a-holistic-response.html>> [Accessed 6 June 2022].

¹⁴¹Vanguard. 2021. IPOB: South-East loses N10bn in every sit-at-home. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2021/09/ipob-south-east-loses-n10b-in-every-sit-at-home-gov-umahi/>> [Accessed 11 June 2022].

¹⁴²Ojewale, O., 2022. Violence in Nigeria's south-east demands a holistic response - ISS Africa. [online] ISS Africa. Available at: <<https://issafrica.org/iss-today/violence-in-nigerias-south-east-demands-a-holistic-response>> [Accessed 6 June 2022].

¹⁴³Blueprint. 2022. IPOB's sit-at-home order as drawback for South-east school kids. [online] Available at: <<https://www.blueprint.ng/ipobs-sit-at-home-order-as-drawback-for-south-east-school-kids/>> [Accessed 13 June 2022].

¹⁴⁴Sahara Reporters. 2021. Governor Obiano's Confession That Fellow South-East Governors Sponsor Killings In Anambra Vindicates Us – IPOB | Sahara Reporters. [online] Available at: <https://bit.ly/3958Bzd> [Accessed 6 June 2022].

Secessionist Struggles Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

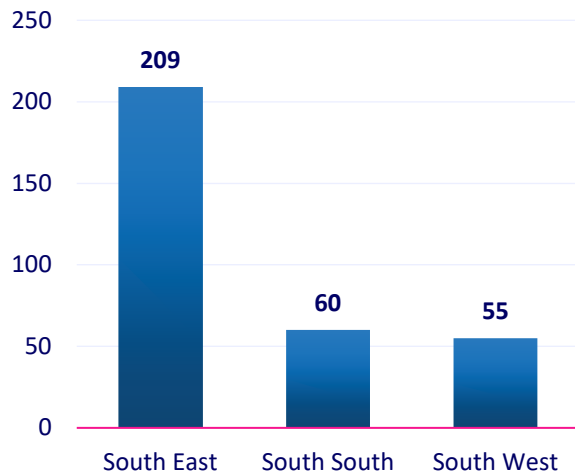


Figure 44: Secessionist Struggles Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Secessionist Struggles Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

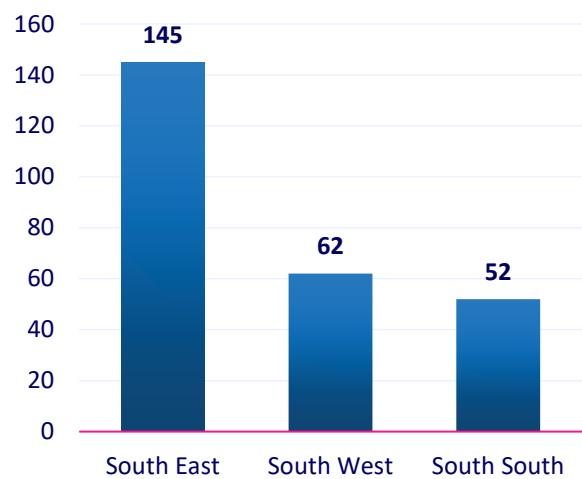


Figure 45: Secessionist Struggles Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Secessionist Struggles Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

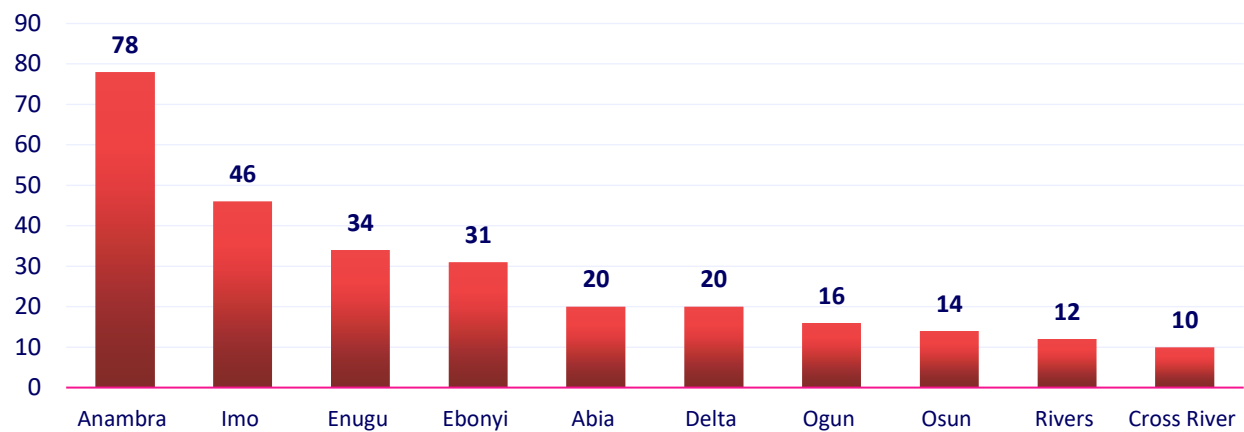


Figure 46: States with Highest Secessionist Struggles Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Secessionist Struggles Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

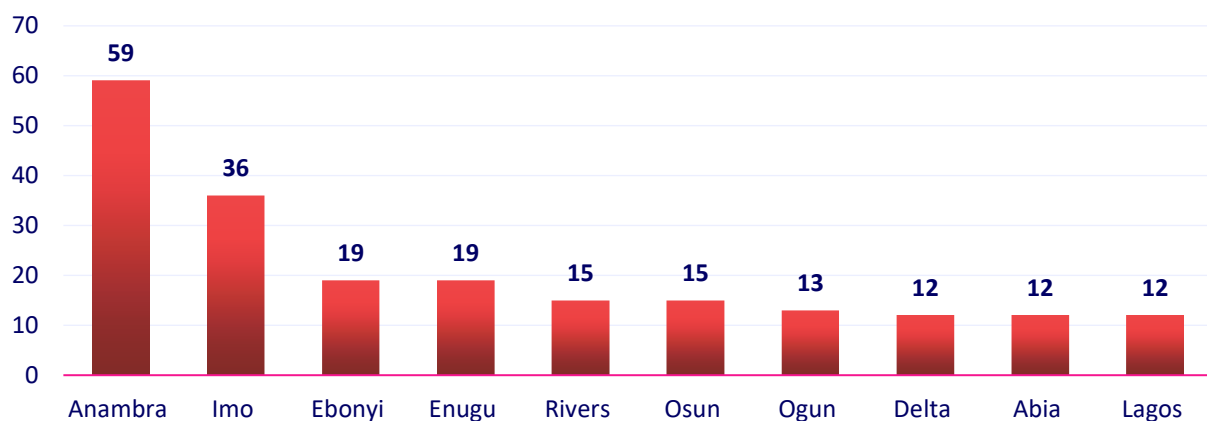


Figure 47: States with Highest Secessionist Struggles Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

**Top 10 LGAs with Highest Secessionist Struggles Deaths
(January 2022 – June 2022)**

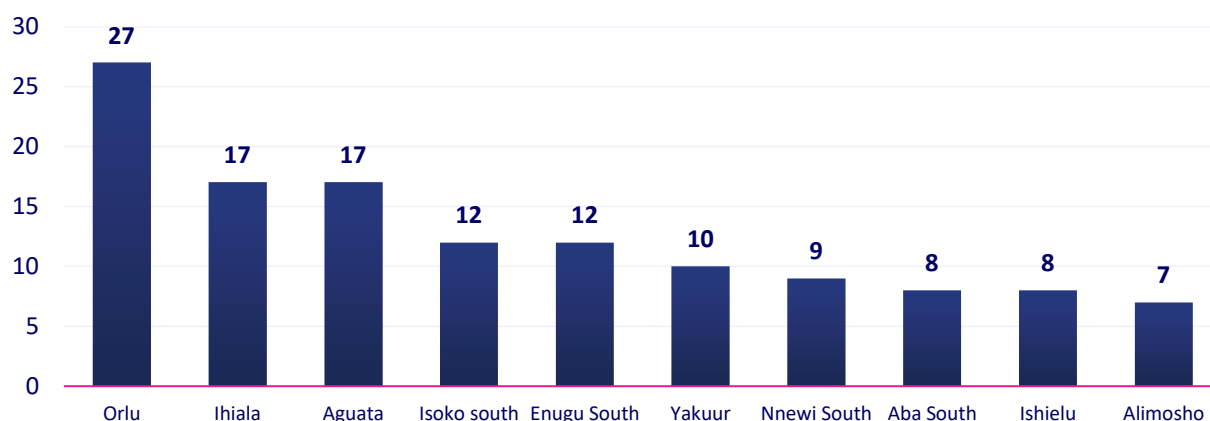


Figure 48: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Secessionist Struggles Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

**Top 10 LGAs with Highest Secessionist Struggles Incidents
(January 2022 – June 2022)**

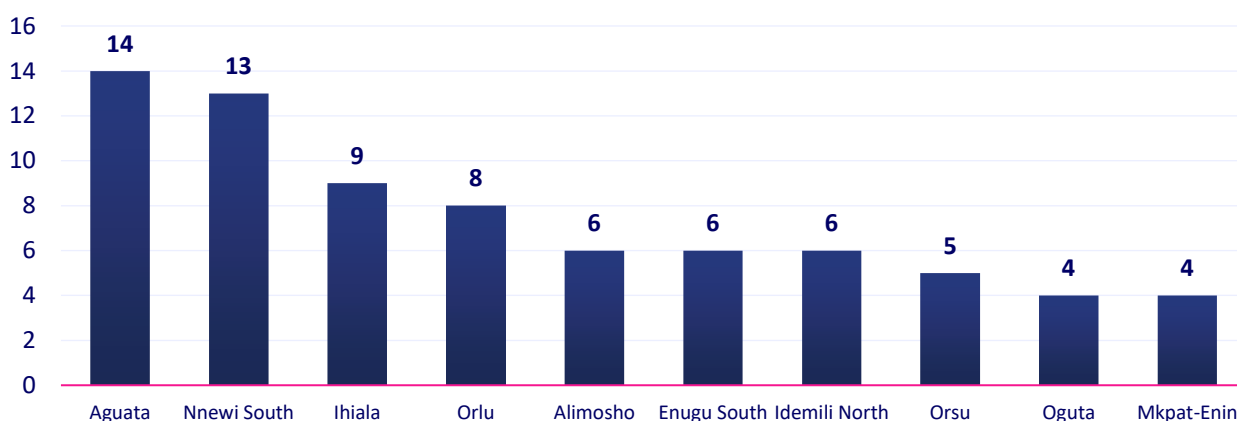


Figure 49: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Secessionist Struggles Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

1.3. Key Drivers of Secessionist Struggles in 2022

Some scholars link the rise in secessionist movements in Nigeria to the concentration of resources among a few elites. Despite coming from various ethnic and religious backgrounds, elites stoke ethnic and religious tensions to preserve their wealth.¹⁴⁵ According to Ibeanu et al. (2016), there are three explanations for repeated agitations. They include: 1) those that emphasise ethnic rivalry and separation, 2) those that emphasise economic discontent, and 3) those that emphasise state-society relations.¹⁴⁶ Generally, they cite the violent counter-response, the pronounced marginalisation and the spread of false narratives as the drivers of secessionism.

1.4. Key Responses

The federal government of Nigeria is relying on its combative clampdown on IPOB/ESN as the way out to resolve the growing conflict.¹⁴⁷ For example, in March 2022, the Nigerian Army raided a hideout used by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Orsumoghu, Ihiala Local Government Area of Anambra State. In the first half of 2022, Anambra became the hotbed of violent conflict related to the IPOB secessionist movement. The state has deployed kinetic interventions such as destroying criminal hideouts.¹⁴⁸ Also, the government launched the Anambra State Security Trust Fund (ASSTF) to raise funds to boost security agencies' operational effectiveness. However, while these kinetic interventions have yielded

results, they do not necessarily address their root causes. Furthermore, the Anambra state government constituted a 15-man committee for truth, justice and peace.¹⁴⁹ The committee was tasked with determining the crisis's scope, drawing a road map, and offering suggestions for long-term peace and security in Anambra State and the South East.

1.5. Successes and Challenges

Although the president has the authority to end secessionist calls, the administration has not exhaustively explored alternative approaches to solving the problem. Besides the failure to explore alternatives, the Southeast region is suffering fatal economic blows caused by the violence. Before the increase in insecurity, the South-Eastern states competed with other Southern states in revenue generation.¹⁵⁰ For example, Anambra recorded a foreign investment inflow of \$10.02 million, making it the sixth highest capital importation destination in Nigeria as of 2020. The statistic is notable in light of the state's efforts to entice foreign investment in a year when the COVID-19 epidemic disrupted the global economy.

1.6. Policy Options

- The state governments should collaborate with the private sector to establish skill acquisition hubs nationwide that will accept youngsters and give them skills in various fields to start human capacity development programmes.
- The government can facilitate partnerships between the communities and experts/consultants in various fields to be appropriately guided in project selection and implementation to ensure value for money while allowing communities to choose and implement their projects.
- The government can weaken this arguments for secessionism by committing to transition from the perceived lopsided federal political structure to one that reflects a true federal character.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵The Conversation. 2021. Economic inequality lies behind growing calls for secession in Nigeria. [online] Available at: <<https://theconversation.com/economic-inequality-lies-behind-growing-calls-for-secession-in-nigeria-84620>> [Accessed 9 August 2022].

¹⁴⁶Ibeanu, O. and Iwuamadi, C., 2016. Biafra Separatism: Causes, Consequences and Remedies. [online] Academia.edu. Available at: <https://www.academia.edu/30799378/Biafra_Separatism_Causes_Consequences_and_Remedies> [Accessed 9 August 2022].

¹⁴⁷2022. Troops Swoop On IPOB/ESN Hideout In Anambra, Recover Arms, Other Dangerous Weapons. [online] Available at: <<https://www.channelstv.com/2022/03/28/troops-swoop-on-ipob-esn-hideout-in-anambra-recover-arms-other-dangerous-weapons/>> [Accessed 13 August 2022].

¹⁴⁸Nextier SPD. 2022. Deepening Non-Conflict Interventions for De-Escalation of Violent Conflict: Exploring other Steps to Peace in Anambra State, Nigeria - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/deepening-non-conflict-interventions-for-de-escalation-of-violent-conflict-exploring-other-steps-to-peace-in-anambra-state-nigeria/>> [Accessed 11 August 2022].

¹⁴⁹Vanguard. 2022. Insecurity: Soludo constitutes 15-man committee for truth, justice, peace in Anambra. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/06/insecurity-soludo-constitutes-15-man-committee-for-truth-justice-peace-in-anambra/>> [Accessed 11 August 2022].

¹⁵⁰S., Y., Ehinmilorin, E. and Popoola, O., 2022. Renewed Biafra Secessionist Agitation in South East, Nigeria: The Implications on Economic Developments and National Integration. [online] iiste.org. Available at: <<https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/DCS/article/view/58321>> [Accessed 11 August 2022].

¹⁵¹Nextier SPD. 2021. Addressing Secession Agitations - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/addressing-secession-agitations/>> [Accessed 13 September 2022].

Banditry



2.1. Background

Banditry is spreading across the board. Activities of bandits are spreading beyond Northwest and Northcentral to include Nigeria's neighbour, the Niger Republic.¹⁵² Bike-riding bandits move along crisis locations such as the Nigerian states of Sokoto, Zamfara, and Katsina and Niger Republic's Baban Rafi Forest. In a report, bandits attacked a community in Niger Republic and kidnapped 91 people and rustled 2,735 animals.¹⁵³ About 51 million CFA francs (roughly €77,500) were paid as ransom. Bandits have continued to devise strategic ways of causing harm. Also,

within Nigeria, a Kaduna-bound train from Federal Capital Territory was ambushed by alleged bandits who bombed its tracks. The bandits abducted dozens of passengers during the raid, and an unknown number of people died.¹⁵⁴

2.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database recorded 200 banditry incidents and 1,769 deaths in the first six months of 2022.

First six months of
2022



200
Banditry Incidents



1,769
Deaths



Nigeria's
Northwest &
Northcentral
regions

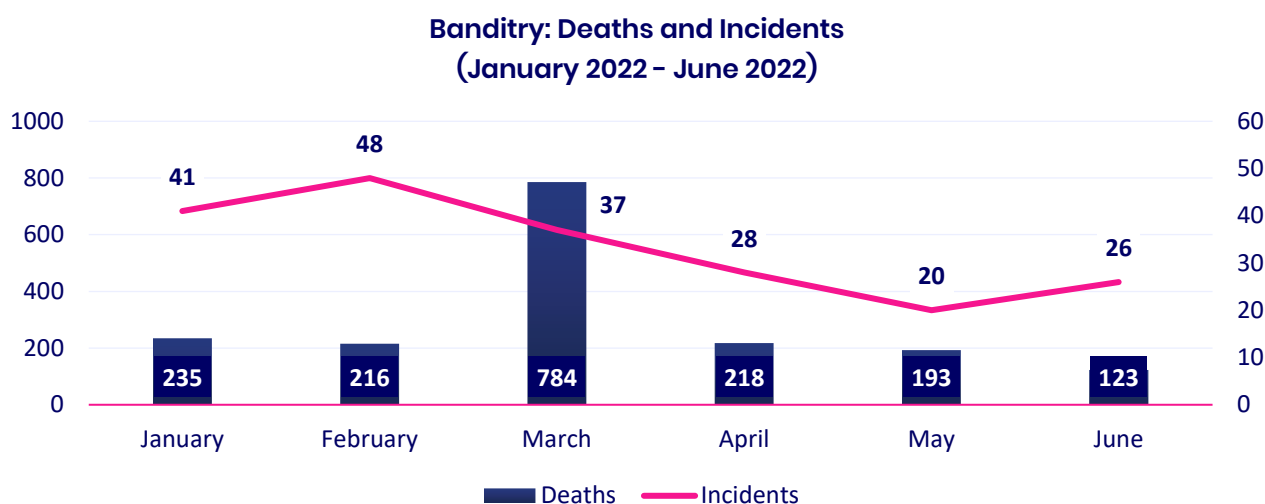


Figure 50: Banditry: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

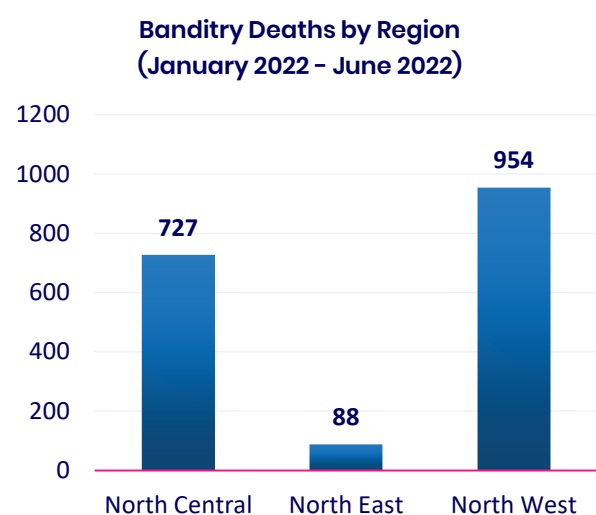


Figure 51: Banditry Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

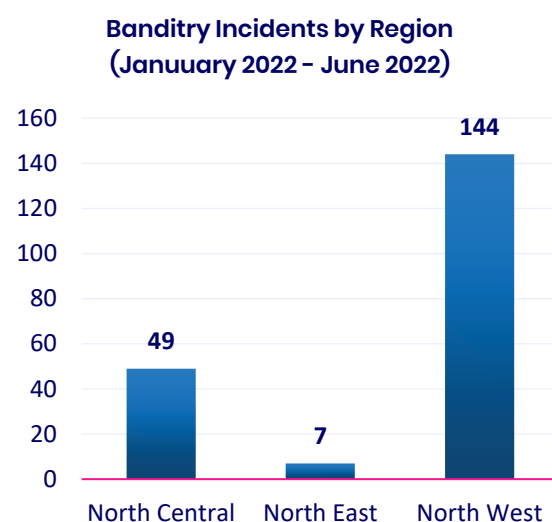


Figure 52: Banditry Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

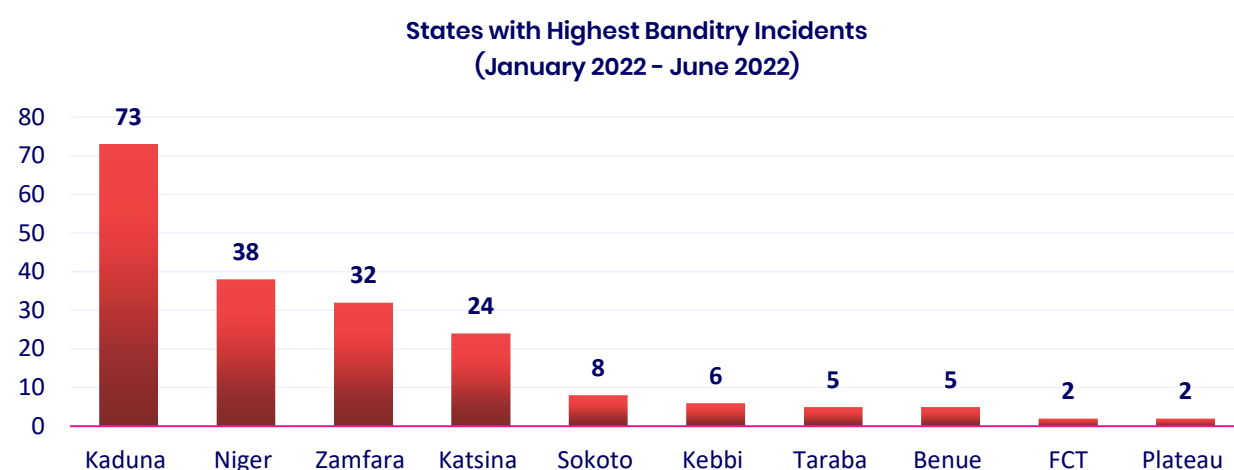


Figure 53: States with Highest Banditry Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

¹⁵²DefenceWeb. 2022. ISS: Organised banditry is destroying livelihoods in Niger's borderlands - Available at: <<https://www.defenceweb.co.za/security/civil-security/iss-organised-banditry-is-destroying-livelihoods-in-nigers-borderlands/>> [Accessed 21 June 2022].

¹⁵³Premium Times Nigeria 2022. ANALYSIS: Banditry in Northwest Nigeria spreading to Niger, destroying livelihoods - Premium Times Nigeria. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/530147-analysis-banditry-in-northwest-nigeria-spreading-to-niger-destroying-livelihoods.html>> [Accessed 21 June 2022].

¹⁵⁴Egbejule, E., 2022. Who are the 'bandits' terrorising Nigeria's 'Wild Wild West'? [online] Aljazeera.com. Available at: <<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/3/29/who-are-the-armed-bandits-of-northwest-nigeria>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

States with Highest Banditry Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

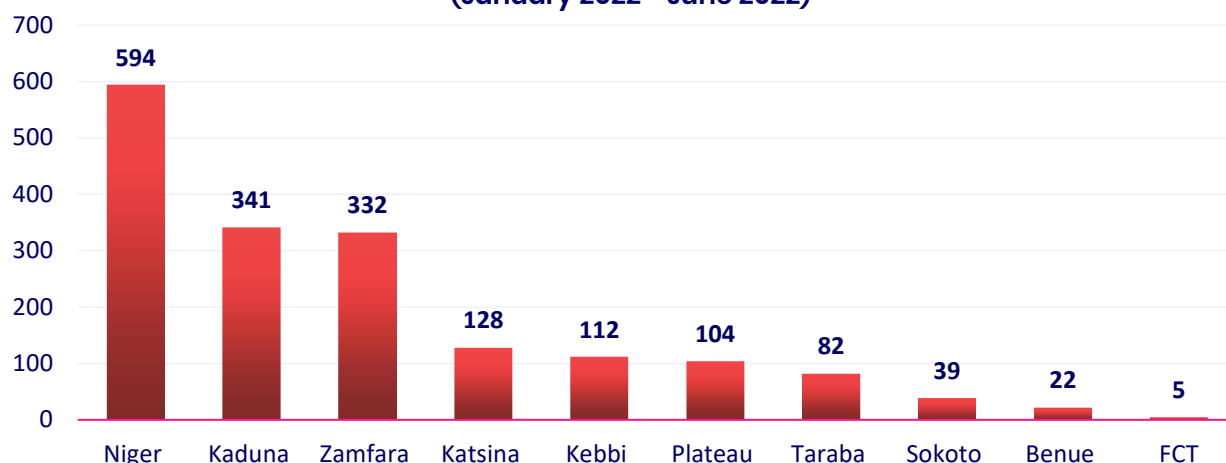


Figure 54: States with Highest Banditry Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Banditry Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

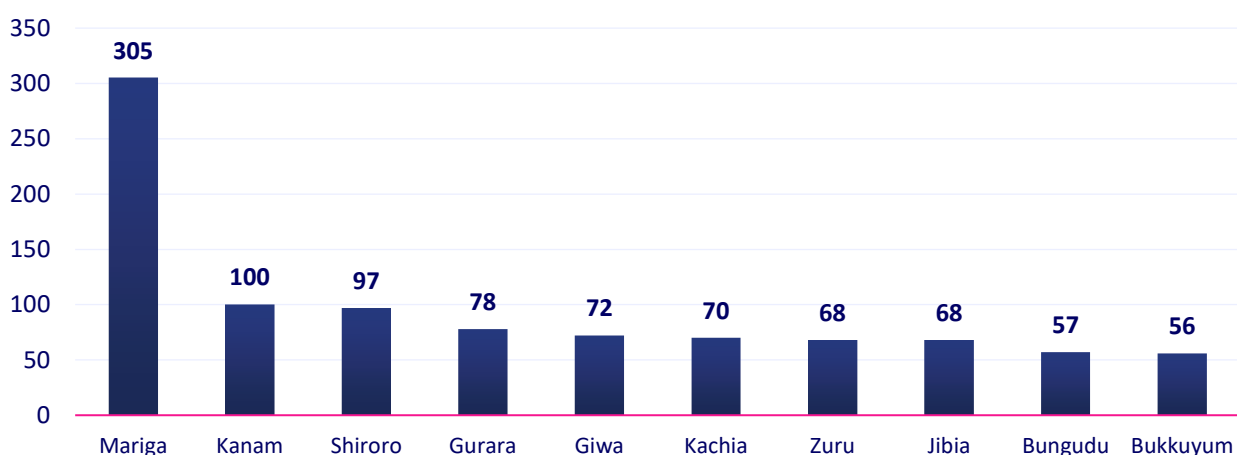


Figure 55: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Banditry Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Banditry Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

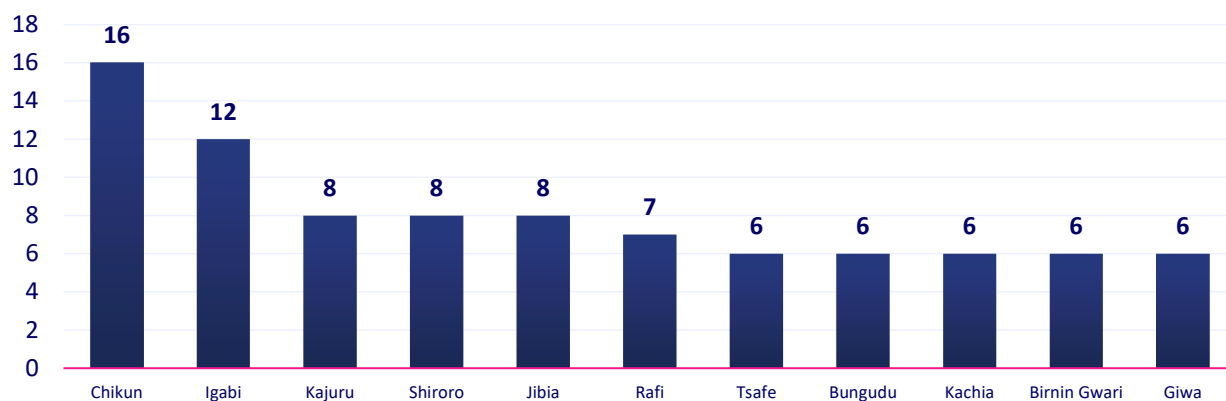


Figure 56: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Banditry Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

2.3. Key Drivers of Banditry in 2022

The 2021 critical drivers of banditry have continued in 2022. Additionally, ransom kidnap has arguably become a business venture for bandits. In June 2022, bandits kidnapped 29 wedding guests in Zamfara state and demanded ₦145 million before the victims were released. Also, forests in Northwest and Northcentral Nigeria serve as a breeding space for bandits. They are vast, complex, and egregiously under-policed. Some of these forests are next to the region's many porous borderlines. These forests shield many illegal and criminal activities.

2.4. Key Responses

In January 2022, the federal government of Nigeria officially declared two bandit groups operating in the Northwest region terrorist organisations and published them in the country's gazette. The Federal High Court in Abuja issued a verdict in November 2021 directing the federal government to label the criminal operations of the Yan Bindiga and Yan Ta'adda bandit groups as acts of terrorism.¹⁵⁵ With the declaration, Nigeria has to battle two other terrorist organisations beyond ISWAP and Boko Haram. Arguably, it will require reform of the country's security framework, including increasing hires for security agencies.¹⁵⁶ The Nigerian government had previously claimed that restrictions on selling specific military hardware, particularly the US-made Tucano jets, impeded its resolve to combat banditry.¹⁵⁷ This development heralds a full-scale campaign against bandit gangs responsible for widespread crime in Northwest and Northcentral Nigeria.

Recently, Zamfara State, Nigeria, urged its citizens to buy guns to protect themselves from bandits. While some arguments favour the call to bear arms, others believe it is an abdication of the government's role that may snowball into the problem of mass shootings

as seen in the United States of America.¹⁵⁹

2.5. Successes and Challenges

Reports have shown that the security forces have continued to arrest and neutralise bandits.¹⁶⁰ However, it appears that their efforts are insufficient. Bandits' activities have escalated despite the government's increasing crackdown on them. In a recent report, the Chief of Army Staff noted that the Nigerian Army is assessing the nation's security framework to close gaps that have been found and develop the necessary fighting spirit among troops to counter threats.¹⁶¹ More troubling is the allegation of sabotage levelled against some soldiers. In a report, the Chief of Defence staff noted multiple instances of soldiers arrested in connection with bandits and terrorist activity.¹⁶²

2.6. Policy Options

- To end banditry, the government must address the mounting problems of out-of-school children and youth unemployment.
- The government and development partners can study perpetrators and victims to gather evidence for crucial responses. The study can help to understand why peace deals for bandits did not work.
- An evaluation of security initiatives in the region in light of the conflict's current dynamics will also be helpful. Government cannot isolate the situation in the Northwest if the problems are systems-based.
- Mediation training for leaders is rarely a perfect or quick fix. It won't end all of the violence that afflicts these neighbourhoods. However, strategic investments in local leaders' mediation abilities can help avoid conflict escalation, end violent cycles that have persisted for decades, and create more peaceful neighbourhoods.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁵Ejekwonyilo, A., 2022. UPDATED: Nigerian govt gazettes declaration of bandit groups as terrorists. [online] Premium Times Nigeria. Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/504177-just-in-nigerian-govt-gazettes-declaration-of-bandit-groups-as-terrorists.html>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹⁵⁶Fatunmole, M., 2022. Security experts explain implications of branding Nigerian bandits as terrorists | The ICIR. [online] The ICIR. Available at: <<https://www.icirigeria.org/security-experts-explain-implications-of-branding-nigerian-bandits-as-terrorists/>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹⁵⁷The News. 2022. Gazette empowers Nigerian govt to launch full war against bandits. [online] Available at: <<https://thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2022/01/06/gazette-empowers-nigerian-govt-to-launch-full-war-against-bandits/>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹⁵⁸Premium Times Nigeria. 2022. Terrorism: Buy guns, defend yourselves, Zamfara govt tells residents. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/539237-terrorism-buy-guns-defend-yourselfes-zamfara-govt-tells-residents.html>> [Accessed 4 August 2022].

¹⁵⁹Authorityngr.com. 2022. Zamfara Residents: To Bear or Not to Bear Firearms? - THE AUTHORITY NEWS. [online] Available at: <<https://authorityngr.com/2022/07/12/zamfara-residents-to-bear-or-not-to-bear-firearms/>> [Accessed 4 August 2022].

¹⁶⁰Dailypost. 2022. Troops neutralize bandits, recover arms, ammunition. [online] Daily Post Nigeria. Available at: <<https://dailypost.ng/2022/07/27/troops-neutralize-bandits-recover-arms-ammunition/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

¹⁶¹Vanguard. 2022. Bandit Attacks: We're reviewing security architecture to bridge observed gaps, build fighting will of troops — Army. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/04/bandit-attacks-were-reviewing-security-architecture-to-bridge-observed-gaps-build-fighting-will-of-troops-army/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

¹⁶²Peoples Gazette. 2022. We have evidence Nigerian soldiers work with bandits, terrorists: CDS Irabor - Peoples Gazette. [online] Available at: <<https://gazettengr.com/we-have-evidence-nigerian-soldiers-work-with-bandits-terrorists-cds-irabor/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

¹⁶³The Conversation. 2022. Training local leaders in mediation can reduce violence: positive results in Nigeria. [online] Available at: <<https://theconversation.com/training-local-leaders-in-mediation-can-reduce-violence-positive-results-in-nigeria-183746>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

Terrorism



3.1. Background

The deaths attributed to Boko Haram violence have substantially decreased since the group's activity peaked in 2014.¹⁶⁴ Boko Haram has been pushed out from several Northeast Nigerian and local governments by the Nigerian army in collaboration with neighbouring countries like Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. According to the 2022 Global Terrorism Index (GTI), Nigeria improved from the fourth position in 2021 to sixth in 2022.¹⁶⁵ In line with this, the Nextier Violent Conflict Database showed a reduction in violent incidents and deaths in 2021 and the first half of 2022. Beyond the decrease in incidents and deaths, insurgent groups still control some communities in Northeast Nigeria and may continue to launch attacks despite facing significant resistance.¹⁶⁶ In May 2022, about 45 farmers were killed by ISWAP militants in Rann,

a small community in Borno, Northeast Nigeria, harvesting their crops. Along with military operations against terrorism, the government and development partners are working to rehabilitate and resettle the Northeast. For instance, the UNHCR sent 2,000 tarpaulins and other relief supplies to 500 families that managed to escape a fire at the Muna IDP camp in Maiduguri that claimed three lives and over 1,300 shelters.¹⁶⁷

3.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in the first six months of 2022, there have been 61 terrorist incidents and 584 deaths.

Terrorism: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

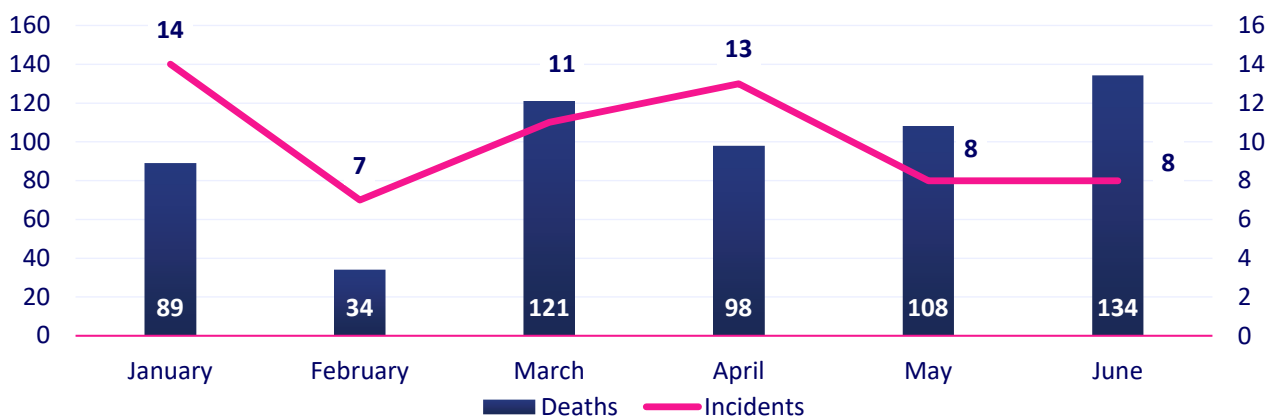


Figure 57: Terrorism: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Terrorism Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

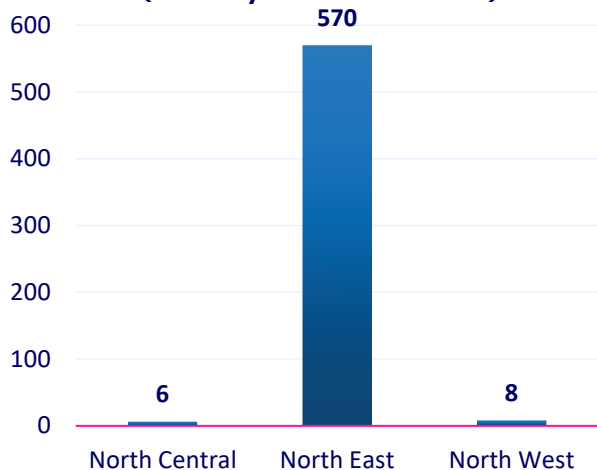


Figure 58: Terrorism Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Terrorism Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

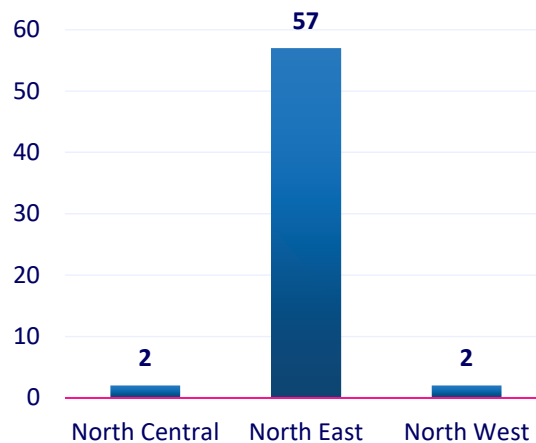


Figure 59: Terrorism Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

¹⁶⁴ Global Conflict Tracker. 2022. Conflict with Boko Haram in Nigeria | Global Conflict Tracker. [online] Available at: <<https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/boko-haram-nigeria>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹⁶⁵ Pulse Nigeria. 2022. Nigeria ranks 6th in 2022 Global Terrorism Index. [online] Available at: <<https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/nigeria-ranks-6th-in-2022-global-terrorism-index/rpzz6c5>> [Accessed 19 July 2022].

¹⁶⁶ Crisis Group. 2022. Nigeria: Women and the Boko Haram Insurgency. [online] Available at: <<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/nigeria-women-and-boko-haram-insurgency>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

¹⁶⁷ UNHCR Operational Data Portal (ODP). 2022. UNHCR Nigeria: North-East Nigeria Operational Update February 2022. [online] Available at: <<https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/91429>> [Accessed 18 July 2022].

States with Highest Terrorism Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

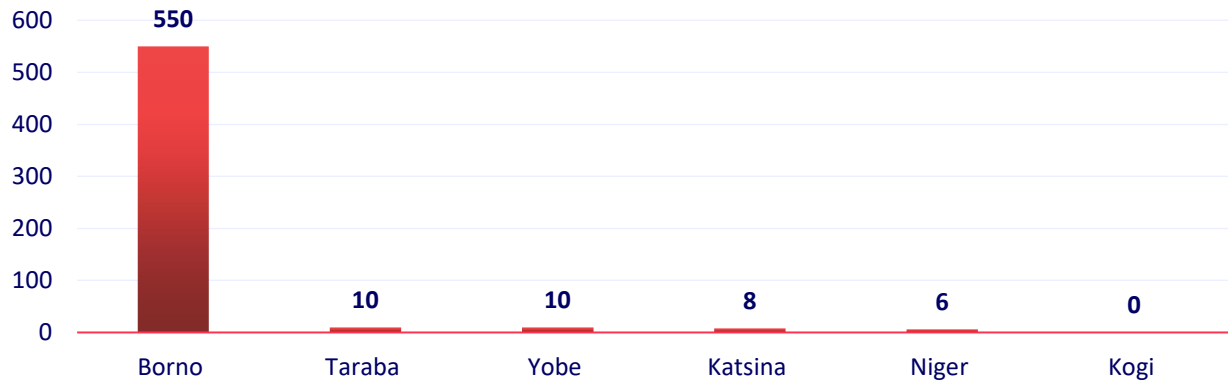


Figure 60: States with Highest Terrorism Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

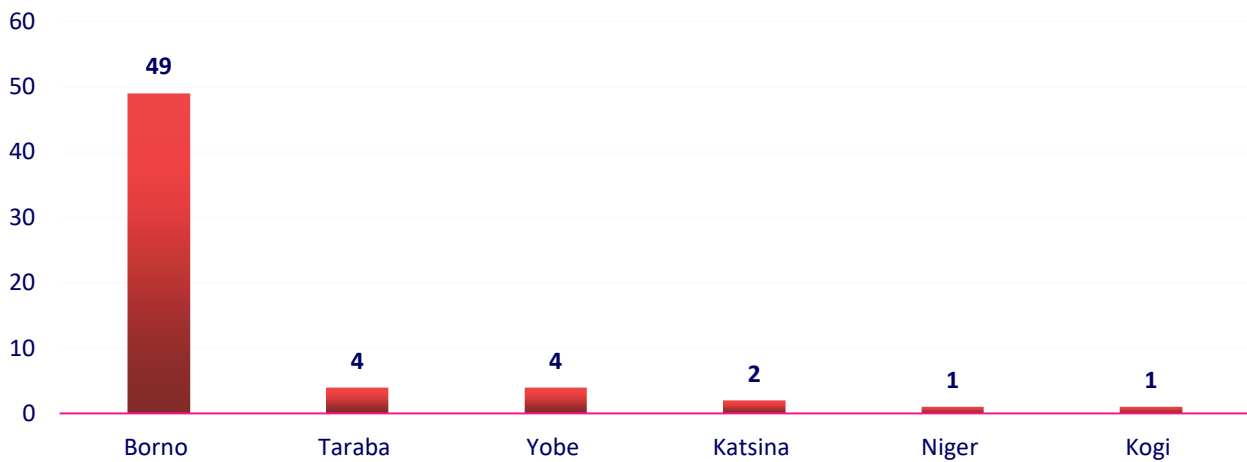


Figure 61: States with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Terrorism Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

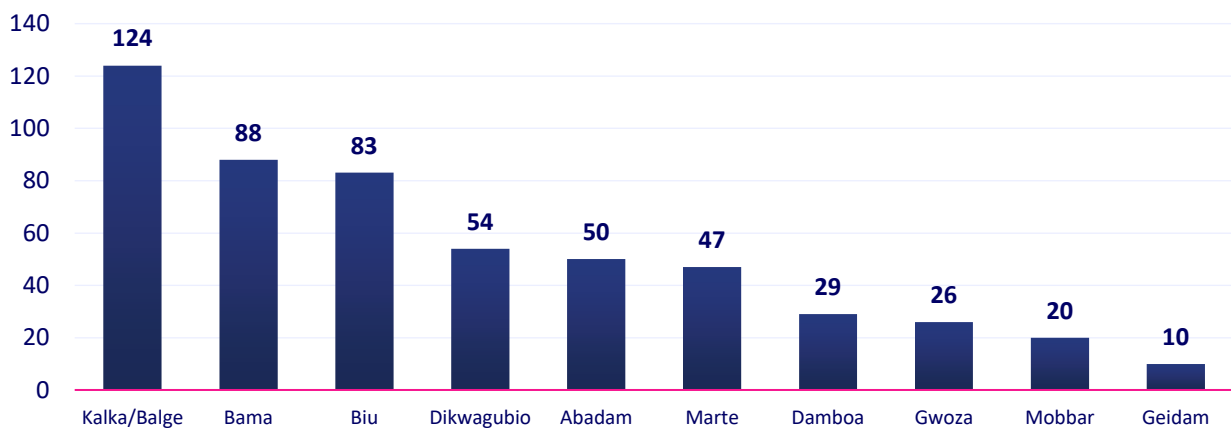


Figure 62: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

**Top 10 LGAs with Highest Terrorism Incidents
(January 2022 – June 2022)**

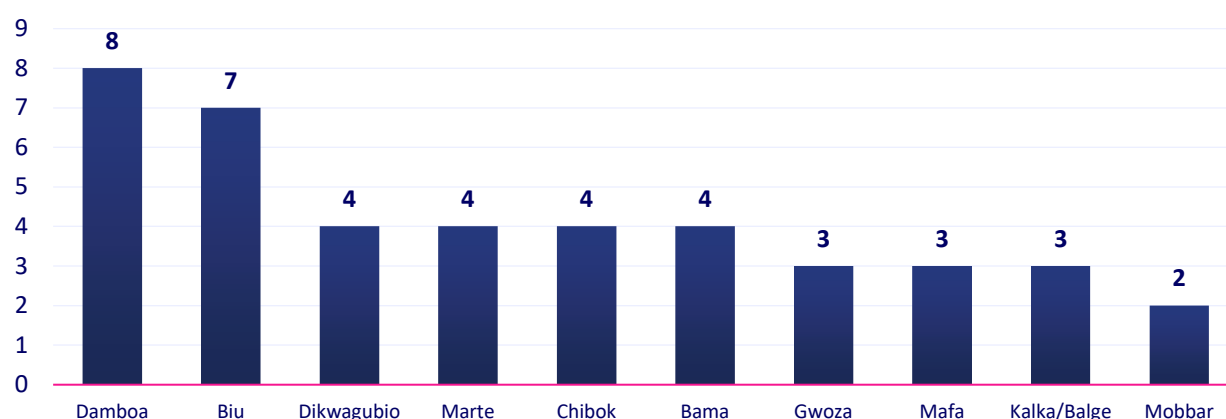


Figure 63: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Terrorism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

3.3. Key Drivers of Terrorism in 2022

Terrorism is caused by injustice, political conflict, youth bulge, and unemployment. For instance, the unemployment rate in Nigeria is predicted to reach 33 per cent in 2022. While the specific rate for those between the ages of 25 and 34 is anticipated to be 37.2 per cent.¹⁶⁸ The high youth unemployment and poverty rate is fuelling Nigeria's insurgency.¹⁶⁹

3.4. Key Responses

The Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted non-kinetic approaches to confront terrorism and combat insurgency. To improve peace-building and resilient communities across the nation, non-state actors and security personnel have collaborated and received training on the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism (PCVE).¹⁷⁰ Also, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has supported the Nigerian government and its various relevant ministries and agencies to effectively activate the 19 universal legal instruments against terrorism, along with the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

3.5. Successes and Challenges

The ongoing measures to tackle terrorism may not be sufficient to end terrorist activities. There are claims that the Ansaru group, which has primarily been an outlier on the terrorism threat landscape, may return to Nigeria.¹⁷¹

According to a recent report, Ansaru's increased involvement linkages to other violent extremist organisations and its capacity to influence local populations through its "hearts and minds" campaign are troubling signals. The organisation is thought to have given guns and other assistance to the bandits responsible for attacks in Northwest Nigeria. Reports of police operations on a bandit camp in Kaduna State's Kuduru forest, with which Ansaru is associated, lend credence to this assertion.¹⁷² In 2022, Nigeria reduced its purchase of arms and ammunition, despite the apparent surge in violent activities and the likelihood that it might worsen as the 2023 election draws near.¹⁷³ According to the National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria imported arms and ammunition worth ₦4.89 billion in the first quarter of 2022, representing an 86.8 per cent decrease compared to the ₦37.09 billion spent in the corresponding period of the previous year.

3.6. Policy Options

- The government needs to show political will and investigate the funding of insurgencies there. A robust international effort to criminalise the financing of terrorism has been supported by the Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999). Legal action and asset confiscation against violators will serve as a deterrence. Cutting terrorist money flows will significantly improve the odds of victory for the Nigerian military, MNJTF soldiers, and

Civilian Joint Task Force personnel (CJTF).

the community level.

- The government should sustain efforts at demobilising, rehabilitating, and reintegrating “low-risk terrorists.”
- The government should strengthen and elevate the role of traditional institutions to ensure that organised governance is felt at

¹⁶⁸ Emmanuel, O., 2022. Nigeria Cannot Grow Economically With 35% Unemployment Rate - Peter Obi - Tekedia. [online] Tekedia. Available at: <<https://www.tekedia.com/nigeria-cannot-grow-economically-with-35-unemployment-rate-peter-obi/#:-:text=In%202022%2C%20the%20unemployment%20rate,to%2034%20at%2037.2%20percent.>> [Accessed 19 July 2022].

¹⁶⁹ Ayitogo, N., 2022. Boko Haram fuelled by youth unemployment, poverty - Buhari. [online] Premium Times Nigeria. Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/466844-boko-haram-fuelled-by-youth-unemployment-poverty-buhari.html>> [Accessed 19 July 2022].

¹⁷⁰ The Guardian. 2022. Insecurity: FG intensify non- kinetic measures to curtail violent. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/insecurity-fg-intensify-non-kinetic-measures-to- curtail-violent-extremism-in-nigeria/>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁷¹ Oyero, E., 2022. ANALYSIS: Ansaru's comeback in Nigeria deepens terror threat. [online] Premium Times Nigeria. Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/534042-analysis-ansarus-comeback-in-nigeria-deepens-terror-threat.html>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁷² Daily Post Nigeria. 2020. 250 bandits killed as police invade terrorists' camp in Kaduna. [online] Available at: <<https://dailypost.ng/2020/02/05/250-bandits-killed-as-police-invade- terrorists-camp-in-kaduna/>> [Accessed 5 August 2022].

¹⁷³ Nairametrics. 2022. Nigeria's weapon import falls to N4.9 billion in Q1 2022 despite rising insecurity. [online] Available at: <<https://nairametrics.com/2022/06/06/nigerias-weapon- import-falls-to-n4-9-billion-in-q1-2022-despite-rising-insecurity/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

Farmer-Herder Conflict



Image by Africa Centre for Strategic Studies

4.1. Background

The protracted battle between farmers and herders is unsettling many Nigerian communities. Many individuals have been forced out of their homes with their livelihood sources destroyed.¹⁷⁴ According to a 2021 Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) report, Nigeria has lost about 8,343 persons to the farmers-herders conflict since 2005. The focal point of these conflicts has undoubtedly been Nigeria's Northcentral area. Violence between the two factions has claimed more lives than the Boko Haram Islamist conflict in the Northeast.¹⁷⁵ The violence has affected rural communities, endangering Nigeria's stability and food security. Dispute over access to land and water between farmers and herders has jeopardised food production in various areas of Nigeria. In some areas of Africa's most populated nation, starvation is already brewing.¹⁷⁶ However, the violence is quickly escalating and reaching

the south and other regions of the nation.¹⁷⁷ For example, In the Southwest, a 77-year-old farmer narrowly escaped death when suspected herders attacked him on his farm in the Akoko North-East Local Government Area of Ondo State.¹⁷⁸ In the Southeast, gunmen attacked a cattle market and killed 8 businessmen and 51 cows. Despite these clashes, President Muhammadu Buhari believes agriculture is a significant economic driver for Africa's most populous country.¹⁷⁹ The president's recommendation entails avoiding potential hazards in rural and uncontrolled areas. Additionally, rationalising the president's stance might require considering policy initiatives to resolve the farmer's and herders' conflict and security operations in the flashpoints. However, the persistent violence in the hotspots and the lack of approval of those policies hurt the president's argument

4.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in the first six months

of 2022, there have been 38 farmer- herder incidents and 181 deaths in Nigeria.



Farmer-Herder Conflict: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

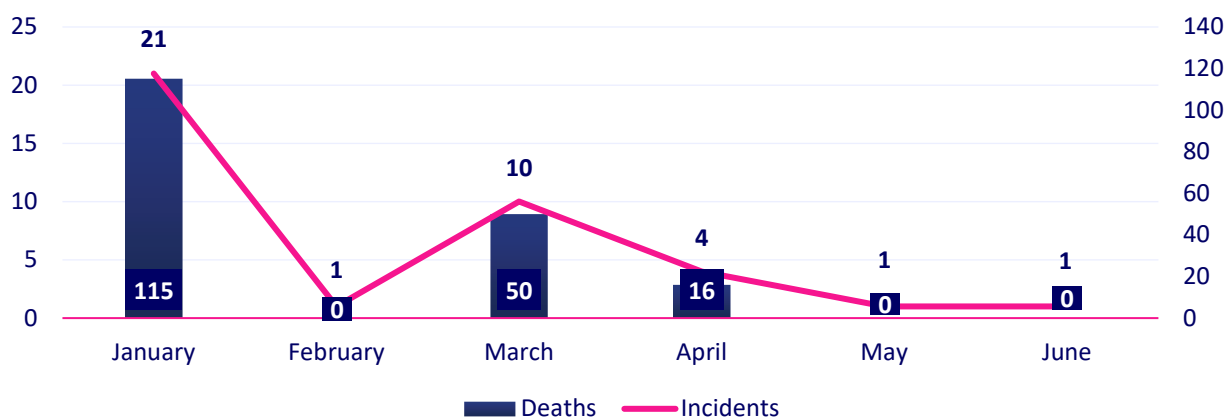


Figure 64: Farmer- Herder Conflict: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

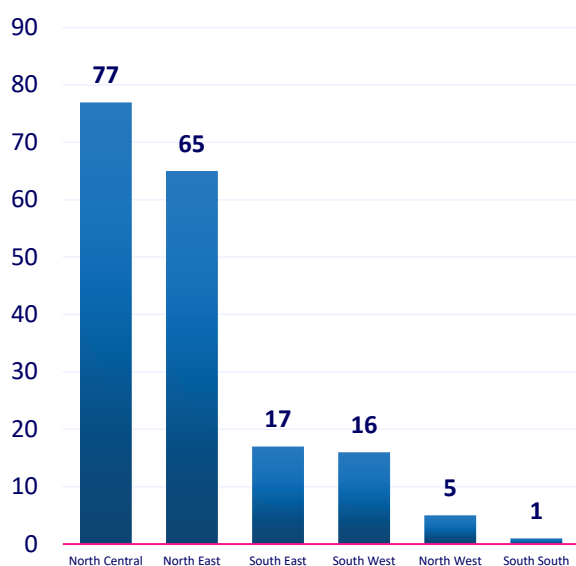


Figure 65: Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

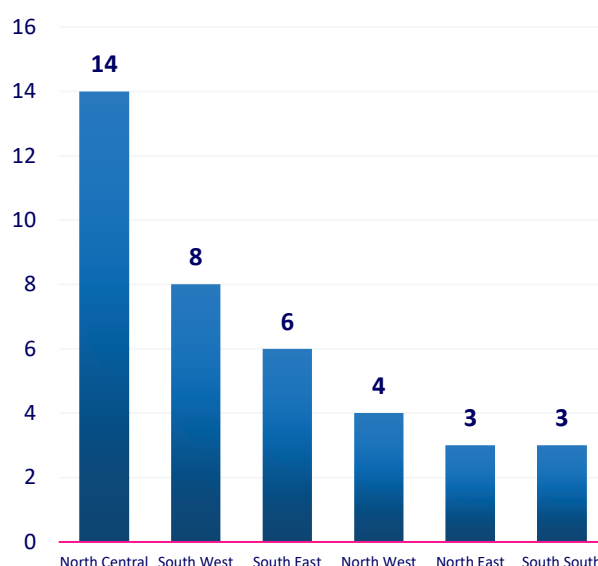


Figure 66: Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

¹⁷⁴ Daily Trust. 2022. Prolonged farmer-herder conflict and food security in Nigeria. [online] Available at: <<https://dailytrust.com/prolonged-farmer-herder-conflict-and-food-security-in-nigeria>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁷⁵ Crisis Group. 2021. Nigeria: Livestock reform is key to solving farmer-herder conflict. [online] Available at: <<https://www.africanews.com/2022/02/02/hunger-crisis-looms-in-nigeria-amid-conflict-between-farmers-herders/>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁷⁶ Africanews. 2022. Hunger crisis looms in Nigeria amid conflict between farmers, herders. [online] Available at: <<https://www.africanews.com/2022/02/02/hunger-crisis-looms-in-nigeria-amid-conflict-between-farmers-herders/>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁷⁷ Babatunde, A., 2022. Northeast Nigeria's Humanitarian Situation May Worsen Without Urgent Help – UN Official - HumAngle Media. [online] HumAngle Media. Available at: <<https://humanglemedia.com/northeast-nigerias-humanitarian-situation-may-worsen-without-urgent-help-un-official/>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁷⁸ Punchng.com. 2022. Herders attack Ondo farmer with machete for refusing money request. [online] Available at: <<https://punchng.com/herders-attack-ondo-farmer-with-machete-for-refusing-money-request/#:~:text=A%2077%2Dyear%2Dold%20farmer,to%20demand%20money%20from%20him.>> [Accessed 4 August 2022].

¹⁷⁹ Nextier SPD. 2022. 'Return to Farm' - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/return-to-farm/>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

States with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

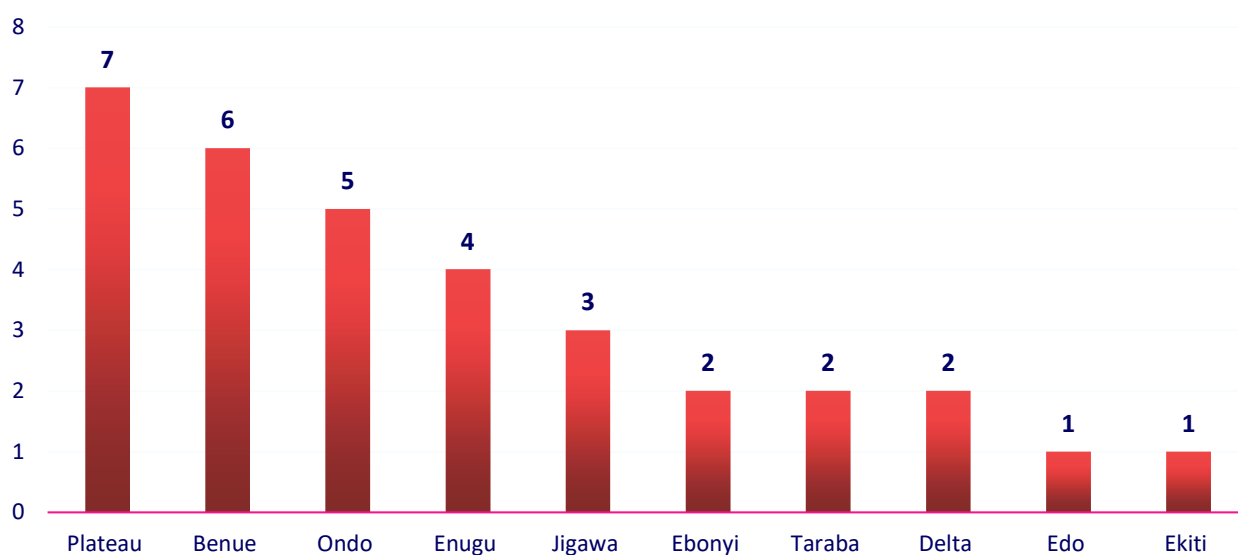


Figure 67: States with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

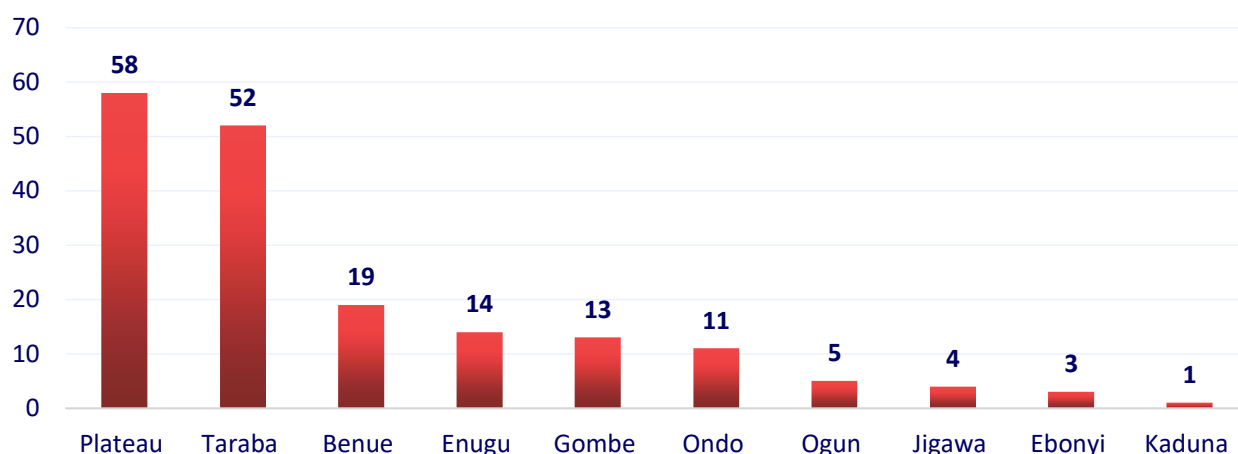


Figure 68: States with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

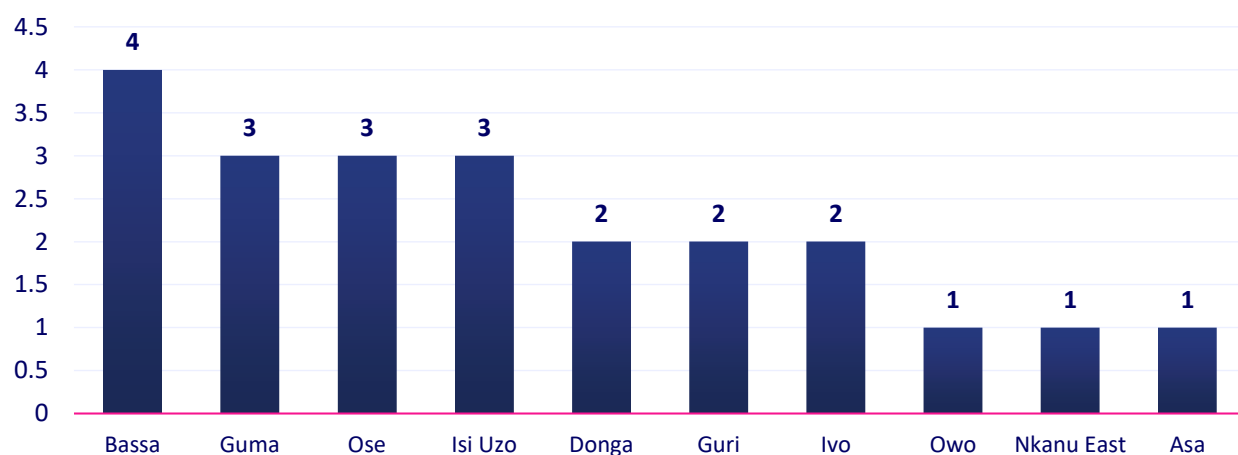


Figure 69: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Farmer- Herder Conflict Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

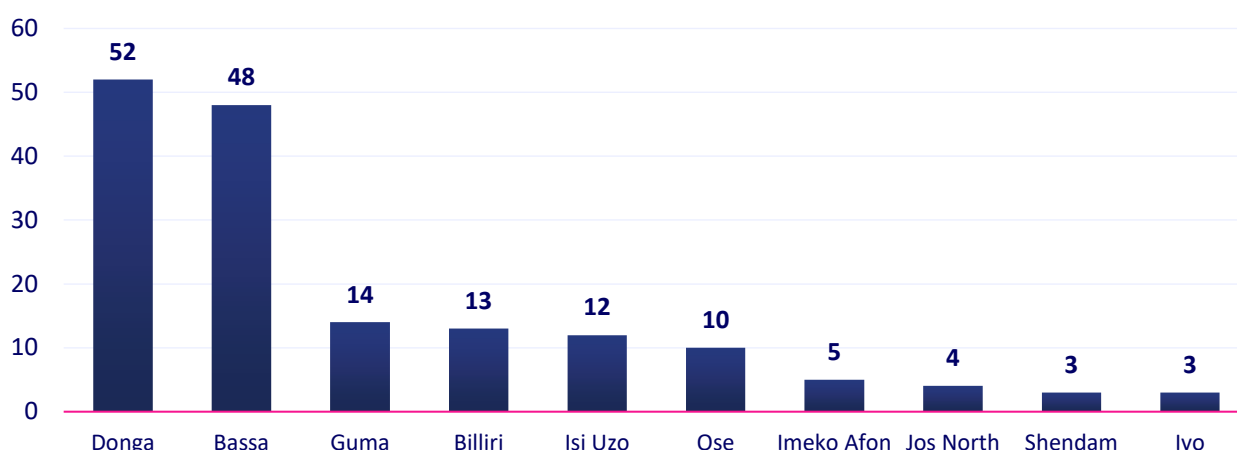


Figure 70: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Farmer-Herder Conflict Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

4.3. Key Drivers of Farmer-Herder Conflict in 2022

The conflict between farmers and herders over access to land and water has long been a problem but has reached critical levels.¹⁸⁰ Traditional dispute resolution procedures have been less effective in some regions. Land use and resource availability changes, rising socio-economic inequality, and declining community trust drive conflict. Crop damage from passing animals is the primary source of farmer-herder conflict. Although established local conventions outline how such disagreements ought to be resolved, this method is not always practical. In addition, many herders have had their grazing land converted to farms. The rural population has increased significantly, making it more difficult for their livestock to access pastures.¹⁸¹ According to a report, herders are concerned that their rights to resources are not respected when compared to those of farmers.¹⁸² As a result, they have often been disregarded. This situation has exacerbated the encroachment of cultivated land into grazing regions. Similarly, decisions regarding land usage are commonly made without pastoralists present, thereby cutting them out of the process.¹⁸³

4.4. Key Responses

Some state governments have taken critical peace-building steps to avert further clashes between farmers and herders. Given their ability to influence state policy in support of solutions resulting from local peace processes, these organisations lend credibility to those processes. For example, since the conflicts in Riyom and Kaura crossed the boundary

between Kaduna and Plateau. Kaduna State Peace Commission and Plateau State Peace Building Agency collaborated and organised the first meeting with traditional leaders of bordering groups like Aten, Takad, and Fulani tribes in 2019 for a shared goal of a brighter future for their people.¹⁸⁴ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), also known as a Commitment to Peace Agreement, was signed in Riyom by the three warring communities of Aten, Atakar, and Fulani in Plateau State. The goal was to promote community conversation so that communities could keep in touch with one another and explore solutions to their long-standing problems resulting in the loss of lives and property.¹⁸⁵

4.5. Successes and Challenges

The Middle Rima Valley Irrigation Project in Sokoto State is one example of the federal government's investments. The initiative offers irrigation facilities for 5,360 hectares of farming operations that take place all year long. On the one hand, farmers in the irrigation project view herders as a group that harms crops and irrigation infrastructure, such as canals. Herders, on the other hand, consider the initiative as creating enclosed areas that limit their access to natural resources and alter their way of life. As a result, the farmlands and irrigation infrastructure have become contested zones.

4.6. Policy Options

- The government and stakeholders can encourage more communication and interaction to promote social cohesiveness, and advocacy programmes should take

advantage of data on conflict patterns and trends.

and conflict resolution, including all parties, should be part of the solution.

- Investments in the private sector public-private partnerships allow the organised private sector to work with state governments to establish ranches. The same kind of cooperation existing in other agricultural value chains should be used for animal husbandry.
- Government can create a structure for community peace and security. Community architecture for peace and security will help in the early detection and resolution of future crises. Platforms for communication

¹⁸⁰ Premium Times Nigeria. 2020. Resource competition, not ethnoreligious persuasions, main cause of farmers, herders conflict - Report. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/393991-resource-competition-not-ethnoreligious-persua-sions-main-cause-of-farmers-herders-conflict-report.html>> [Accessed 5 August 2022].

¹⁸¹ Africa Center for Strategic Studies. 2021. The Growing Complexity of Farmer-Herder Conflict in West and Central Africa – Africa Center for Strategic Studies. [online] Available at: <<https://africacenter.org/publication/growing-complexity-farmer-herder-conflict-west-central-africa/>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁸² Ibid

¹⁸³ [SPI. 2020. Herders and Farmers in Nigeria: Coexistence, Conflict, and Insurgency. [online] Available at: <<https://www.ispionline.it/en/publicazione/herders-and-farmers-nigeria-coexistence-conflict-and-insurgency-25447>> [Accessed 5 August 2022].

¹⁸⁴ Reitman, M. and Hemen, T., 2022. Amid Nigeria's Violence, a Local Peace Process Advances. [online] United States Institute of Peace. Available at: <<https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/02/amid-nigerias-violence-local-peace-process-advances>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

¹⁸⁵ GURARA ACCORD. 2020. Aten, Atakar, Fulani Communities Sign Commitment To Peace Agreement. [online] Available at: <<https://guraraaccord.com/aten-atakar-fulani-communities-sign-commitment-to-peace-agreement/>> [Accessed 21 July 2022].

Extra-Judicial Killings



5.1. Background

In Nigeria, human rights breaches have persisted under a variety of circumstances.¹⁸⁶ Members of security forces have been accused of acting in ways that routinely undermine their integrity, including extortion, extra-judicial killings, excessive use of force, cruel treatment of detainees, and even using their power to punish rivals in interpersonal disputes. In addition, during police operations, there are numerous wrongful killings. According to a report, Security forces reportedly killed 13,241 Nigerians between 2011 and 2021 without justification.¹⁸⁷ Nigerians are yet to fully experience the positive effects of Nigeria's long-standing ratification of various UN agreements on human rights, such as June 28, 2001, the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.¹⁸⁸

Instead, events throughout the years have demonstrated that dread, anxiety, and mistrust are prevalent during interactions between officers of the Nigerian security forces and civilians. According to Phinos and Collins (2019), when a soldier is kitted and equipped, the average citizen perceives the soldier as a monster who is frightening. As a result, the cruel treatment of people by security agencies has become the standard practice.¹⁸⁹ There is a misconception that only the police or other security organisations carry out extra-judicial killings.¹⁹⁰ However, any murder carried out by the state, a person, or a vigilante without a court's approval is considered an extra-judicial killing. For instance, a recent report indicated that at least seven friends, including two siblings, were allegedly extrajudicially executed by members of the Ebubeagu state security

outfit at Awomamma community in Oru East Local Government of Imo state on July 17 2022.¹⁹¹

5.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in the first six months of 2022, Nigeria has had 23 extra-judicial incidents and 48 deaths.

First six months of
2022

23
Extra-Judicial
Incidents

48
Deaths

In Nigeria

Extra-Judicial Killings: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

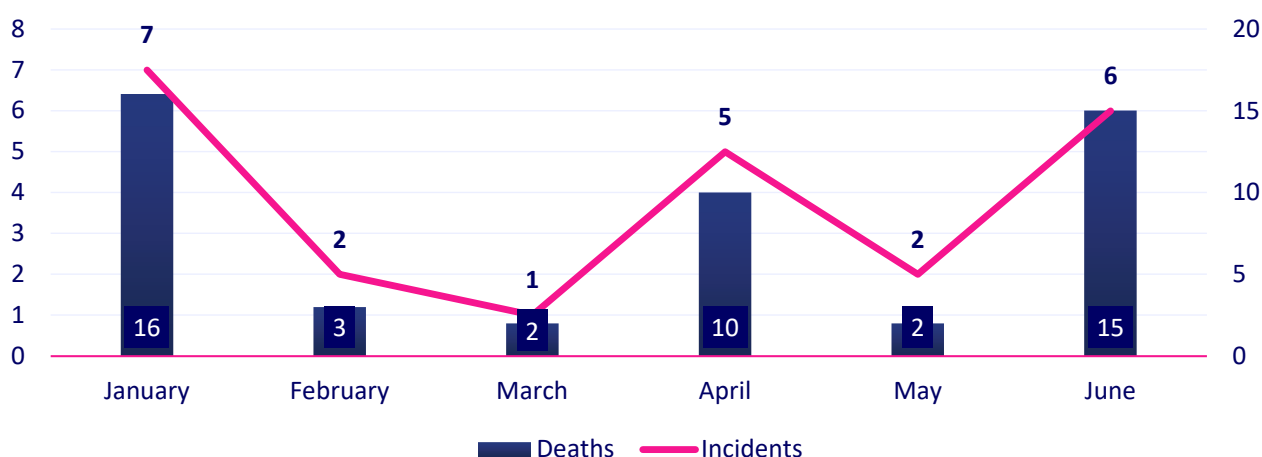


Figure 71: Extra-judicial Killing: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

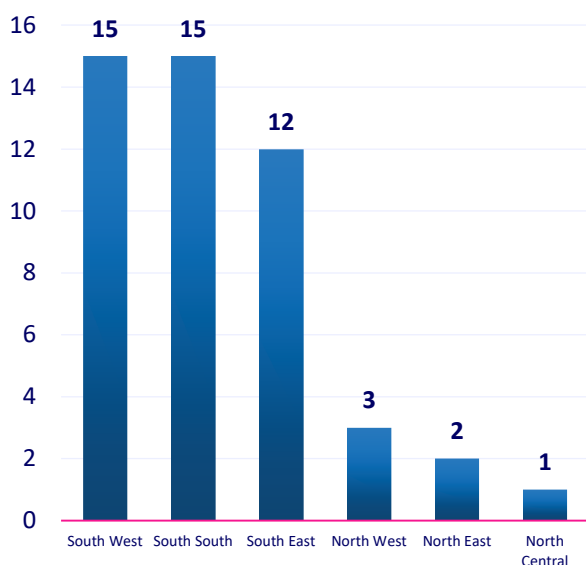


Figure 72: Extra-judicial Killing Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

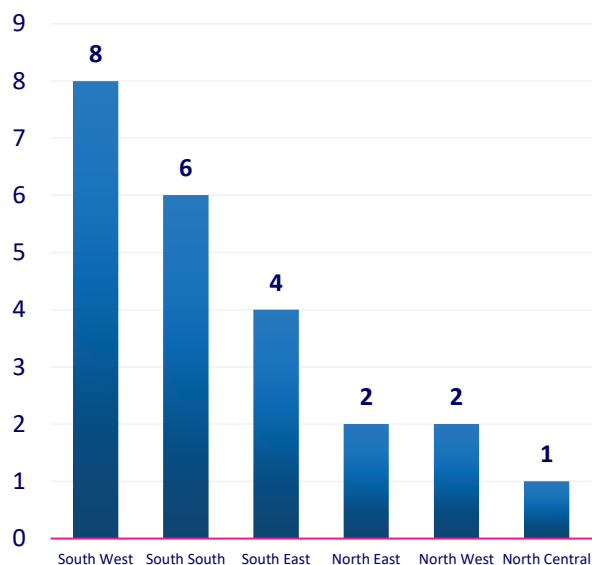


Figure 73: Extra-judicial Killing Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

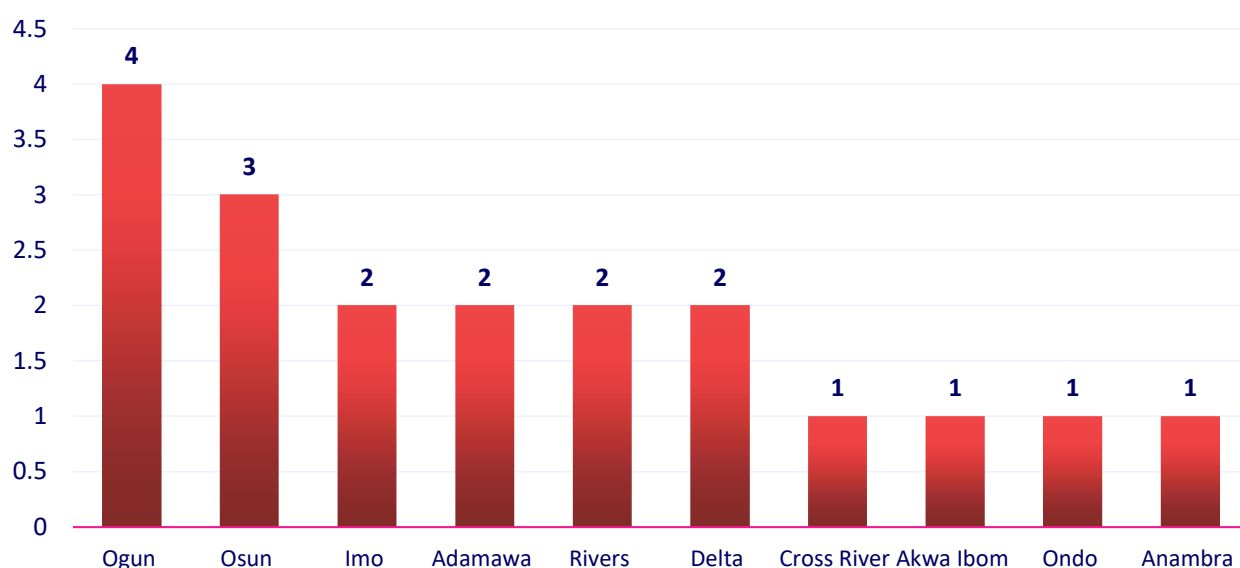


Figure 74: States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killings Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

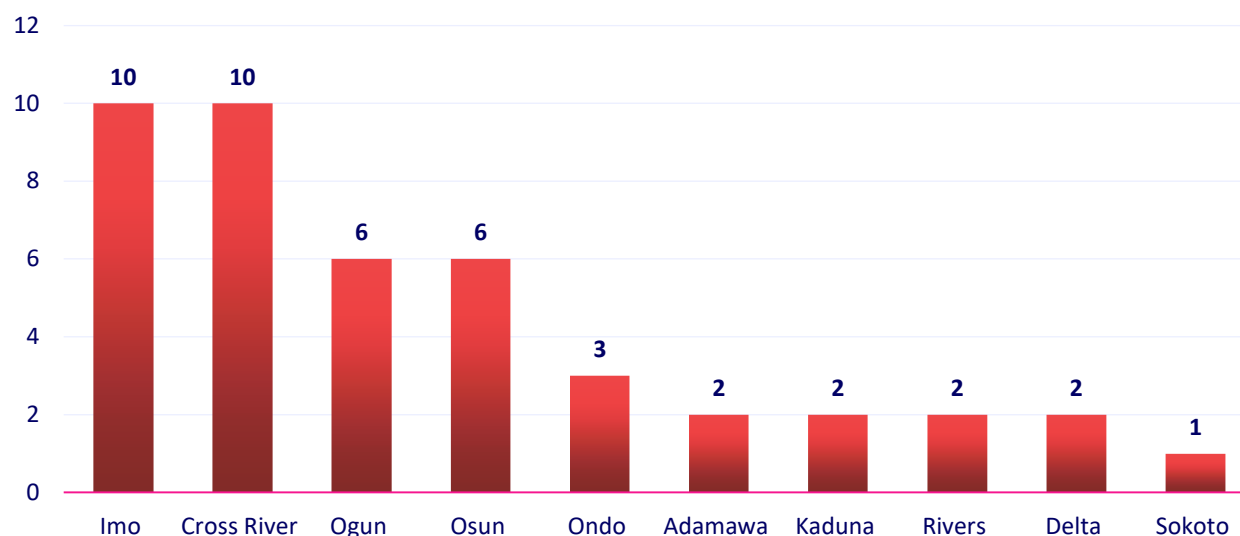


Figure 75: States with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

¹⁸⁶ Imoudu, M., 2022. Post Endsars Protest: Exploring Subjective Perception of Police Victims in Lagos, Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*.

¹⁸⁷ The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. 2021. '13,241 Nigerians unlawfully killed by security forces in 10 years' | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/13241-nigerians-unlawfully-killed-by-security-forces-in-10-years/>> [Accessed 26 July 2022].

¹⁸⁸ Uprdoc.ohchr.org. 2021. TORTURE AND EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS IN NIGERIA. [online] Available at: <<https://uprdoc.ohchr.org/uprweb/downloadfile.aspx?filename=62&file=EnglishTranslation>> [Accessed 27 July 2022].

¹⁸⁹ Okocha, D., Achenyo, A. and Ola-Akuma, R., 2022. NETIZENS PERCEPTION OF NIGERIAN SECURITY AGENCIES' REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW MEDIA. [online] Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Desmond-Okocha/publication/360240490_Netizens_Perception_of_Nigerian_Security_Agencies_Representation_in_the_New_Media/links/626aa1c9d99ac24cc4715a91/Netizens-Perception-of-Nigerian-Security-Agencies-Representation-in-the-New-Media.pdf> [Accessed 26 July 2022].

¹⁹⁰ Lawaspect. 2022. Extrajudicial Killings in Nigeria. [online] Available at: <https://lawaspect.com/extrajudicial-killings-in-nigeria/?utm_source=pocket_mylist> [Accessed 28 July 2022].

¹⁹¹ Vanguard. 2022. Extrajudicial executions by Ebubeagu under guise of tackling insecurity in S-East must stop – Amnesty International. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/07/extrajudicial-executions-by-ebubeagu-under-guise-of-tackling-insecurity-in-s-east-must-stop-amnesty-international/>> [Accessed 25 July 2022].

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

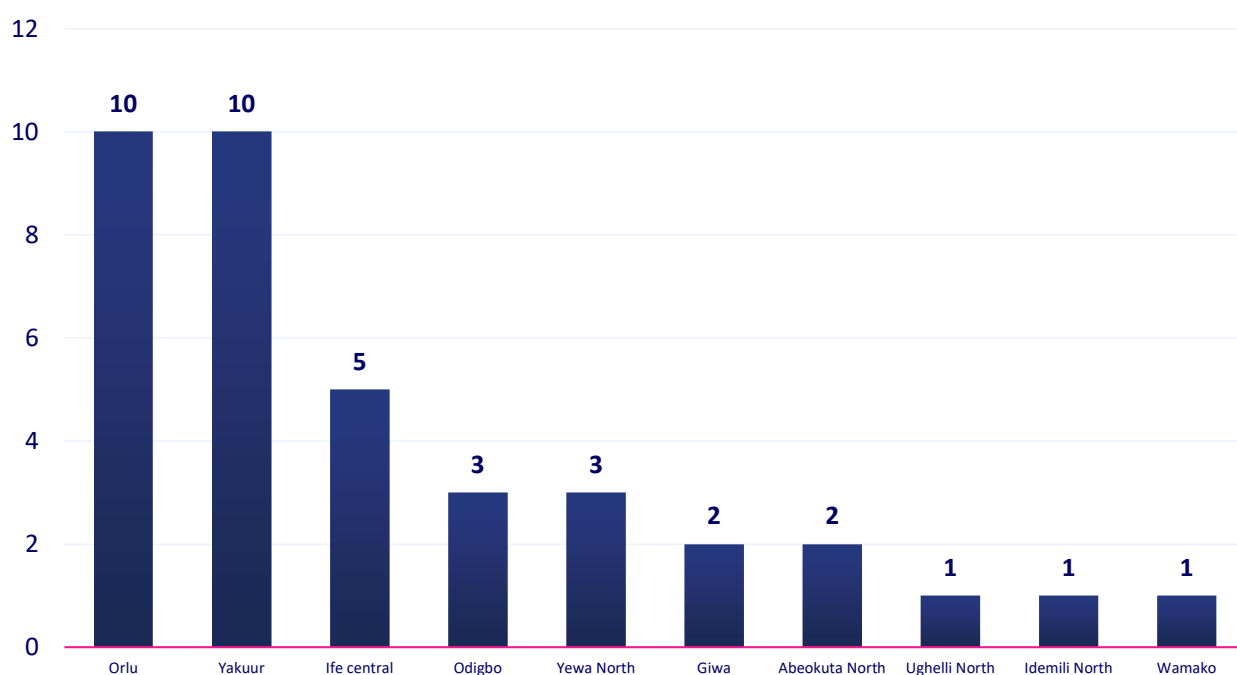


Figure 76: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

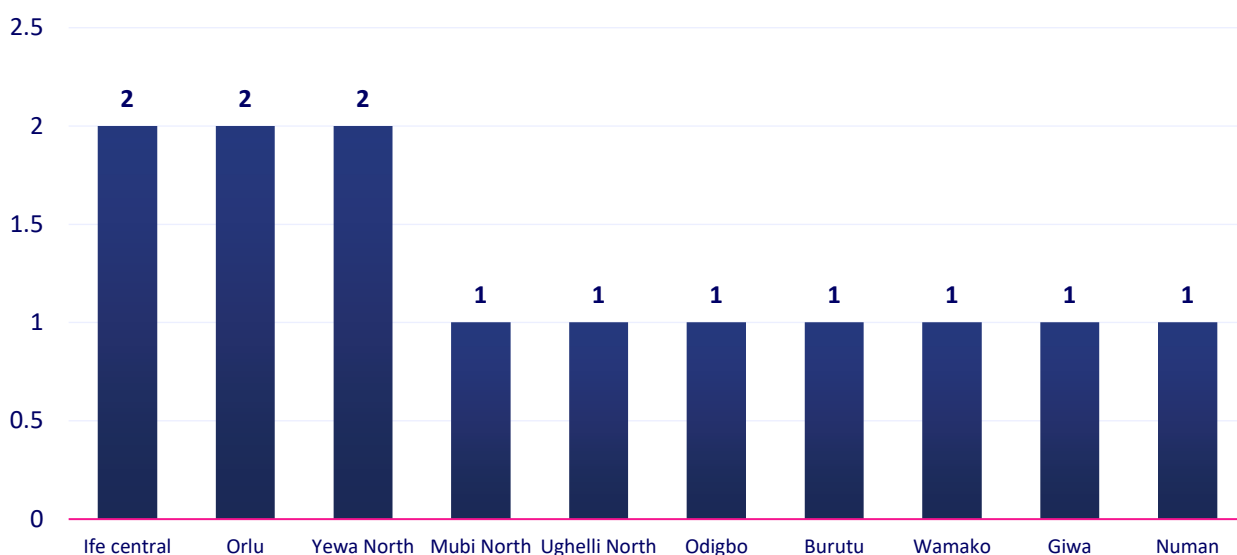


Figure 77: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Extra-Judicial Killing Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

5.3. Key Drivers of Extra-Judicial Killing

Several factors drive extra-judicial killings in Nigeria. The failure to thoroughly investigate the use of lethal force, deaths in custody and allegations of extra-judicial executions is a

determining factor that propels other cases. The low level of firearms oversight inside the Nigerian Police Force directly contributes to the high number of extra-judicial killings. Police officers register their weapons and book ammunition. When they return to the police station, they have to account for the ammunition they have used. However, a police

officer can avoid accounting for firearms and ammunition by paying a bribe.¹⁹²

The government and security agencies must compile evidence to hold those responsible for human rights breaches accountable. According to international norms, police must implement a reporting system to track an officer's firearm use. Everyone impacted by the use of force or a firearm, including dependents, family members, and legal representatives of those who were slain, is also entitled to an independent process, such as the legal system.¹⁹³

5.4. Key Responses

Interventions against extra-judicial killings seem to be championed by Civil Society Organisations. Through awareness creation and advocacy, the government is reminded of their constitutional role in stopping extra-judicial killings.¹⁹⁴ Notably, petitions, lawsuits, and protests nudging the government to act have also been led by CSOs. For instance, hundreds of CSOs, advocates for human rights, and members of the Nigerian Bar Association descended upon Osogbo, the capital of Osun State, in April 2022 to protest the incessant extra-judicial killings by the state police command.¹⁹⁵ The immediate provocation was the killing of a technician by the police for refusing to give them the money.

5.5. Successes and Challenges

The Nigerian government severely frowned on extra-judicial executions but has been unable to end the problem.¹⁹⁶ According to a 2021

report, about 500 soldiers and military officers have been court-martialled in the last 3 years due to indiscipline. The Army personnel were court-martialled for various offences across the country, including extra-judicial killings, manslaughter and sexual abuse. Sadly, the numerous military personnel subjected to disciplinary action also indicate a high rate of system rot that requires fixing.¹⁹⁷

5.6. Policy Options

- The government should create an effective framework that regulates and supervise pseudo-police institutions to prevent other security challenges from being created to address existing ones. While regional and national efforts are focused on creating security units, sufficient mechanisms should be set up to guarantee adequate training for potential members, oversight, and evaluation of their operations.
- Addressing incidents of extra-judicial killings and police brutality should be a proactive engagement. The wide-reaching conversations by young Nigerians on police brutality should open opportunities and programming on youth engagement in the face of the exponential rise of security threats, dwindling public commitment to collaborate in crime-fighting and maintaining a safe and peaceful society.¹⁹⁸
- Government must seek a more robust and people-friendly approach in reacting to the agitations against police brutality.

¹⁹² Killing at will: Extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings by the police in Nigeria. 2009. <https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/killing-will-extrajudicial-executions-and-other-unlawful-killings-police-nigeria>. [online] Available at: <<https://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/killing-will-extrajudicial-executions-and-other-unlawful-killings-police-nigeria>> [Accessed 28 July 2022].

¹⁹³ Ibid

¹⁹⁴ Blueprint. 2022. #EndSARS Anniversary: Extra-judicial killing of Nigerians increasing, CSO laments. [online] Available at: <<https://www.blueprint.ng/endsars-anniversary-extra-judicial-killing-of-nigerians-increasing-cso-laments/>> [Accessed 30 July 2022].

¹⁹⁵ Online, T., 2022. NBA, rights activists, CSOs, others stage protests against police extrajudicial killings in Osun. [online] Tribune Online. Available at: <<https://tribuneonline.ng/nba-rights-activists-csos-others-stage-protests-against-police-extrajudicial-killings-in-osun/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

¹⁹⁶ Ibid

¹⁹⁷ The Guardian Nigeria News. 2022. 500 army officers court martialled in 32 months, alarming, says HURIWA | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/news/500-army-officers-court-martialled-in-32-months-alarming-says-huriwa/>> [Accessed 28 July 2022].

¹⁹⁸ Nextier SPD. 2020. "More than Ending SARS" - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/more-than-ending-sars/>> [Accessed 13 September 2022]

Cultism



Image by BBC

6.1. Background

Cultism is a social scourge that is inflicting enormous damage in Nigeria. As of 1999, over 56 cult groups were active in the 133 higher education institutions.¹⁹⁹ Secondary and even primary schools are not left out as cult groups are rapidly infiltrating them.²⁰⁰ More worrisome is that some security agents have been linked to cultism. In a recent report, a police officer was seen in a viral video singing, dancing, and waving a rifle in support of a specific fraternity (cult).²⁰¹ The economic implication of cultism is far-reaching and dynamic. According to a report, market vendors, cart pushers and hustlers in popular markets like Ladipo in Lagos are forced to join cult groups to gain a footing. Persons who do not join cult groups are intimidated, harassed and deprived of their earned money.²⁰² In recent years, many cult members have denounced their membership in cult groups in Nigeria. For instance, in 2016, at least 222 cultists resigned their membership in Edo and Delta states,

Nigeria.²⁰³ On September 18, 2017, about 850 denounced their participation in several cult activities in Akure, Ondo State.²⁰⁴ Additionally, 557 members of cults in Rivers State accepted peace and turned in their firearms to authorities in December 2020.²⁰⁵ However, the body language of the political class does not encourage these denouncements. Cult groups are readily available armed groups to be hired by people seeking to unleash terror in society. According to a report by Nextier, cult groups are available soldiers for hire to politicians or others seeking to achieve undue gains or disrupt electoral processes.²⁰⁶

6.2. Current Status

Data from the Nextier Violent Conflict Database shows that in the first six months of 2022, there have been 54 cultism incidents and 127 deaths in Nigeria.

Cultism: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

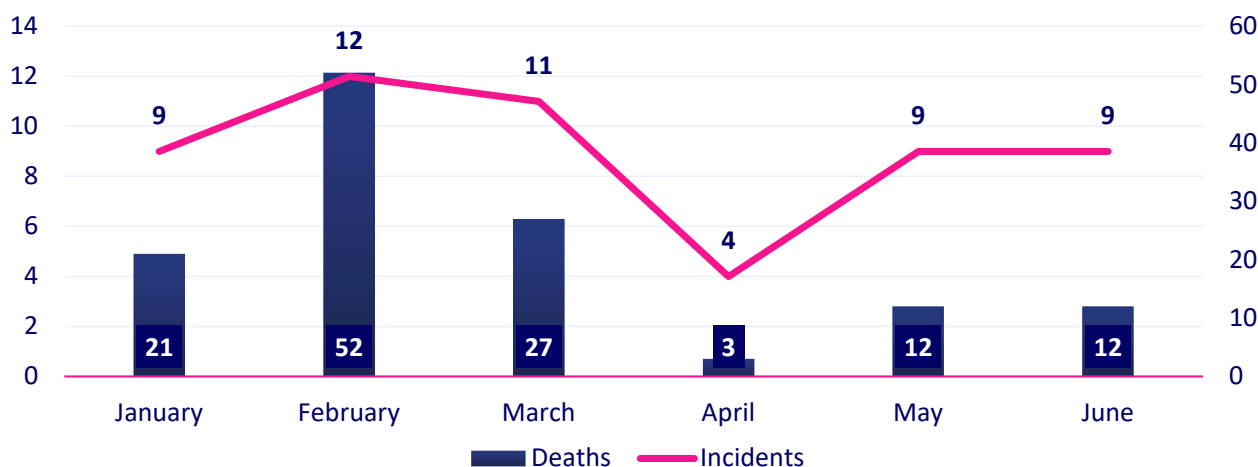


Figure 78: Cultism: Deaths and Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Cultism Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

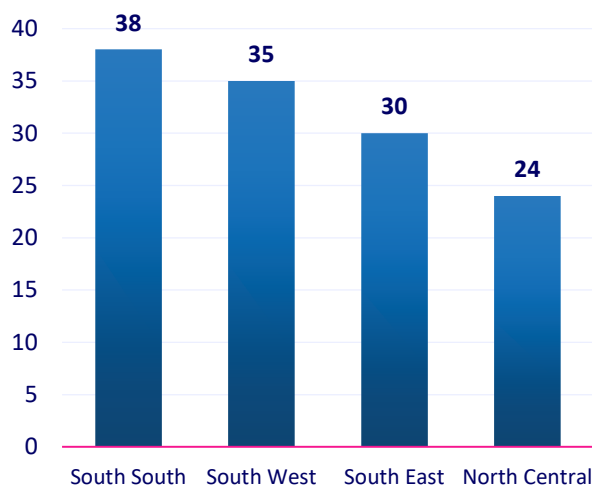


Figure 79: Cultism Deaths by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Cultism Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022)

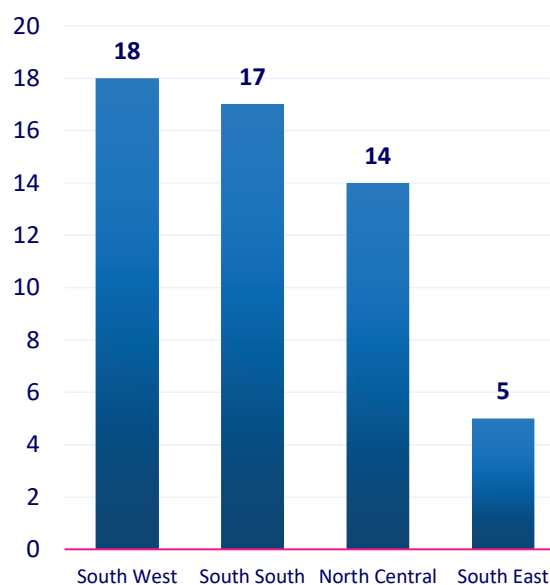


Figure 80: Cultism Incidents by Region (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

¹⁹⁹ Cyprian, E., 2008. CULTISM IN THE NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: INCIDENCE, CAUSES, EFFECTS AND SOLUTIONS. [online] Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281275497_CULTISM_IN_THE_NIGERIAN_EDUCATIONAL_INSTITUTIONS_INCIDENCE_CAUSES_EFFECTS_AND_SOLUTIONS/link/55de2bbf08_ae45e825d39973/download> [Accessed 29 July 2022].

²⁰⁰ Vanguard. 2019. Cultism spreading to primary, secondary schools, Reps raise alarm. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/07/cultism-spreading-to-primary-secondary-schools-reps-raise-alarm/>> [Accessed 29 July 2022].

²⁰¹ Punchng.com. 2022. Cultist policeman arrested in Ebonyi, faces sanction. [online] Available at: <<https://punchng.com/cultist-police-man-arrested-in-ebonyi-faces-sanction/>> [Accessed 29 July 2022].

²⁰² Vanguard. 2022. Hustlers open up on cultism in Lagos market. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/04/hustlers-open-up-on-cultism-in-lagos-market/>> [Accessed 29 July 2022].

²⁰³ Nigeriannewsdirect. 2016. 222 renounce cultism in Edo, Delta - Nigeriannewsdirect.com. [online] Available at: <<https://nigeriannewsdirect.com/222-renounce-cultism-in-edo-delta/>> [Accessed 29 July 2022].

²⁰⁴ Nextier. 2021. Beyond Cult and Gang Group Renouncement: What's Next? - Nextier SPD. [online] Available at: <<https://nextierspd.com/beyond-cult-and-gang-group-renouncement-whats-next/>> [Accessed 29 July 2022]. ²⁰⁵ Ibid ²⁰⁶ Ibid

States with Highest Cultism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

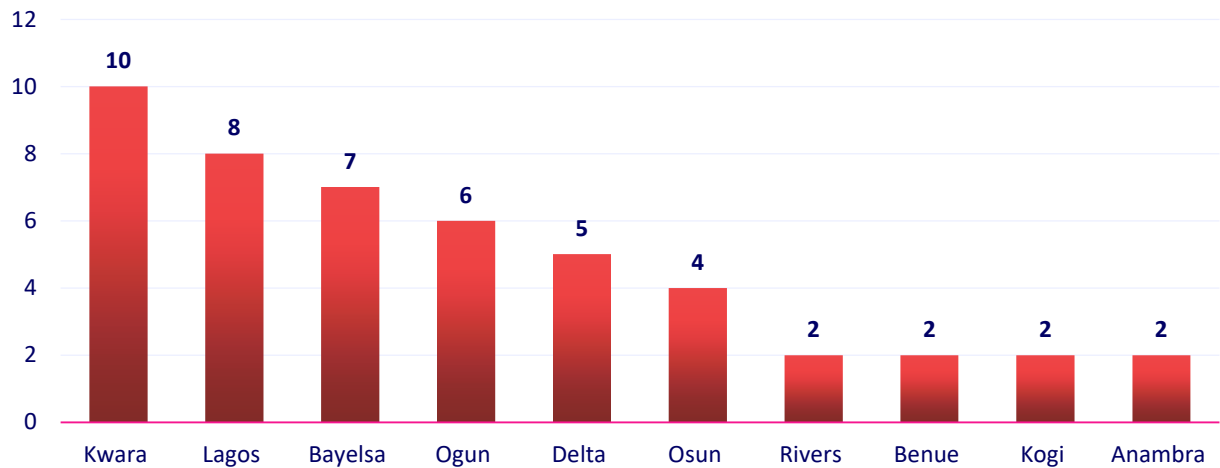


Figure 81: States with Highest Cultism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

States with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

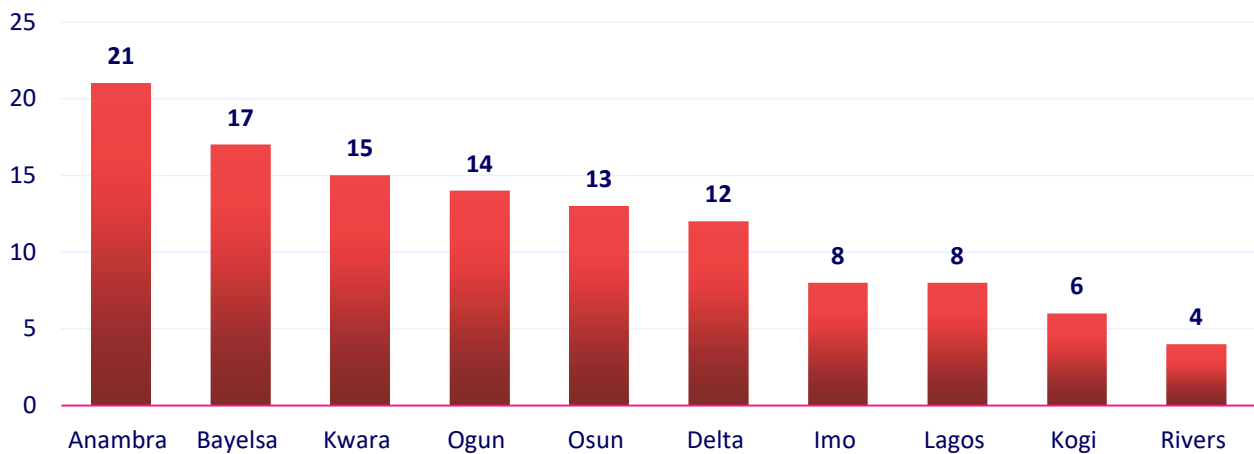


Figure 82: States with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Cultism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022)

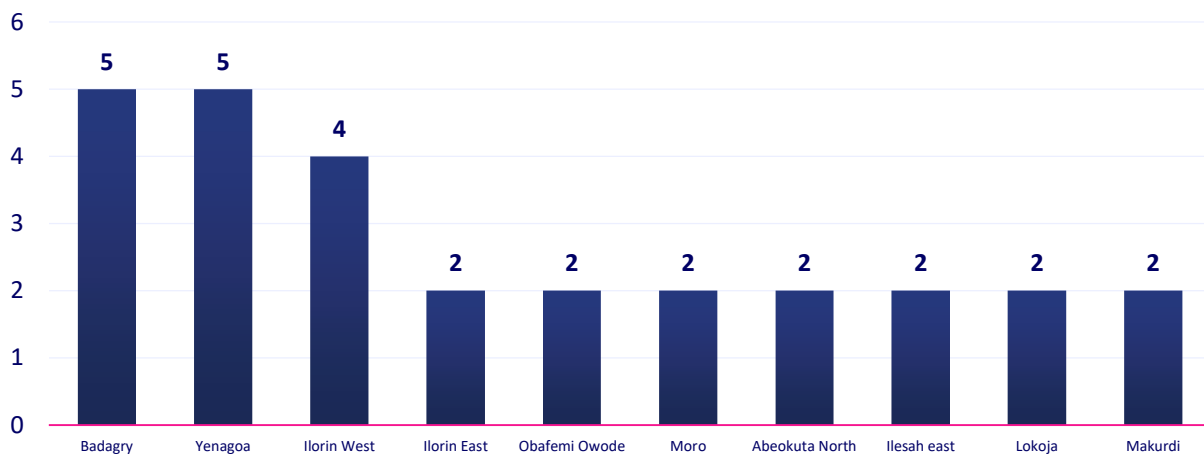


Figure 83: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

Top 10 LGAs with Highest Cultism Deaths (January 2022 – June 2022)

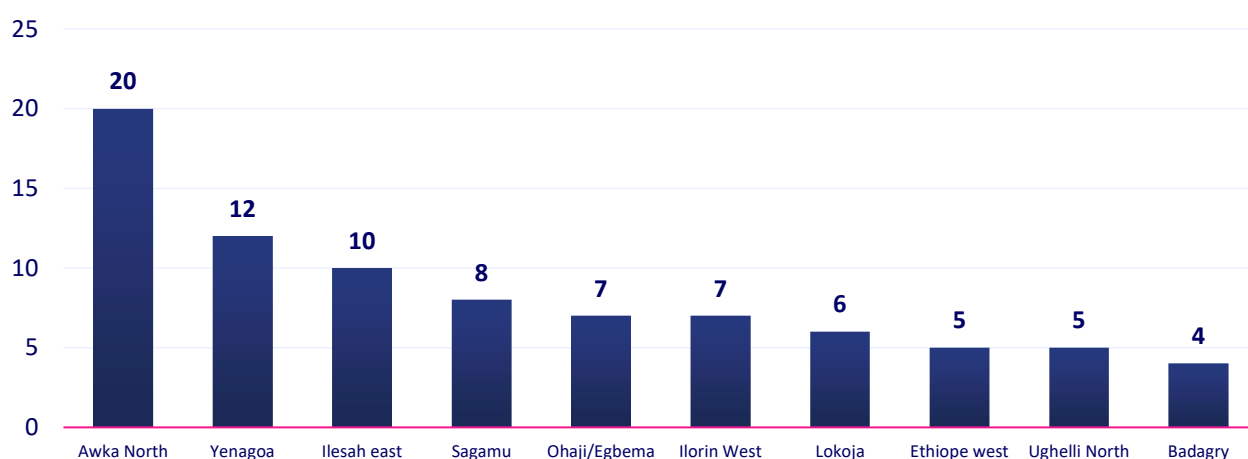


Figure 84: Top 10 Local Government Areas with Highest Cultism Incidents (January 2022 – June 2022) Source: Nextier Violent Conflict Database

6.3. Key Drivers of Cultism in 2022

According to research by Nnajieta and Ahamefula 2015, they identified several drivers of cultism.²⁰⁷ These causes include:

Search for responsibility: Some college students join cults so they may provide services to the other members. For instance, some students may join cults to protest what they see as discrimination against their fellow members on campus.

Search for Satisfaction of One's Aspiration and Needs: Some college students turn to cults to fulfill their needs, aspirations, and desires. As an illustration, a student might be a member of a cult whose primary goal is to guarantee that its members succeed in their academic exams.

Search for Security: Many tertiary students, particularly women, join hidden cults to protect themselves, while some men join to keep their partners safe.

Search for Social Identity: Students who want to be popular join cults. They aspire to become well-known and viewed as influential individuals. For these students, belonging to a cult group is a way of achieving prestige and greatness. They believe that they could influence decisions on campus and that they could as well dictate the pace during the students' union and student representative elections.

6.4. Key Responses

Some state governments have initiated a search for cultist to rid their states of cult activities. For example, the Edo state police command detained 30 alleged cultists²⁰⁸ in July 2022 for their involvement in cult-related fights and activities in the city of Benin. In Lagos state, about 456 suspected cult members of different cult groups terrorising Lagos were arrested.²⁰⁹ While some of the arrests were made during supremacy clashes among rival groups, others were arrested for offences ranging from robbery, rape and murder. A law ably backs these detentions

²⁰⁷ Nnajieta, C. and Ahamefula, E., 2015. Poverty and Cultism in Our Contemporary Society: Implications for Nigerian Students. *African Research Review*, 9(2), p.24.

²⁰⁸ Thisdaylive.com. 2022. Police Arrest 30 for Alleged Cultism in Edo - THISDAYLIVE. [online] Available at: <<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2022/07/08/police-arrest-30-for-alleged-cultism-in-edo/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

²⁰⁹ Vanguard. 2022. War against cultism in Lagos: 456 suspected cultists arrested in 2021. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/01/war-against-cultism-in-lagos-456-suspected-cultists-arrested-in-2021/>> [Accessed 29 July 2022].

by the Lagos State House of Assembly that stipulates a harsh punishment for cultists and those who support them. While 21 years imprisonment is the penalty for cultists, a 15 years penalty awaits those involved in forming an unlawful society.²¹⁰

6.5. Successes and Challenges

The federal government has recently tried to charge law enforcement agencies to confront cult groups seeking to disrupt peace and bring disorder head-on before they gain strength. On the other hand, state governments, such as those in Lagos and Akwa Ibom, have introduced legislative bills and executive orders against cultism.²¹¹ Also, the house of representatives suggested the formation of anti-cultism vanguards across the country.²¹² However, the meteoric rise in cult activities shows that the government is not doing enough to combat cultism.²¹³ Only Lagos state has made considerable effort to end cultism.²¹⁴

6.6. Policy Options

- The menace of cultism requires a multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach.

On the multi-sectoral level, the Nigerian government must tailor kinetic measures to address the threats posed by cult activities to secure lives and investments. In addition, policy measures are required to improve services such as rehabilitation centres as a non-forceful approach to cater for members of cult groups in prison or those seeking therapy.

- The government, civil society organisations, and religious institutions must champion a value re-orientation campaign to fight the prevalence of cultism. A multi-stakeholder approach is necessary to redefine social norms and values. The loss in the value system must be traced back to the family. According to an article, gaps in family values and positive parenting impact young people, social stability, and the safety of society members. Therefore, new discussions at the family level are essential. Relevant stakeholders must champion value re-orientation conversations in communities, schools, faith-based and cultural platforms to win the hearts and minds of young people and redirect their focus towards meaningful ventures.

²¹⁰ Premium Times Nigeria. 2022. 10 top things to know about Lagos Anti-cultism Law. [online] Available at: <<https://www.premium-timesng.com/news/more-news/499253-10-top-things-to-know-about-lagos-anti-cultism-law.html>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

²¹¹ Vanguard. 2022. Buhari directs Police, security agencies to end cult killings in Ogun. [online] Available at: <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2022/03/buhari-directs-police-security-agencies-to-end-cult-killings-in-ogun/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

²¹² Orderpaper. 2019. Reps Call on Govt to Set-up Anti-Cultism Vanguard. [online] Available at: <<https://orderpaper.ng/reps-calls-on-govt-to-set-up-anti-cultism-vanguard/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

²¹³ Amnesty International. 2020. Nigeria: Rise in Cult Related killings in Rivers state. [online] Available at: <<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/01/nigeria-rise-in-cult-related-killings-in-rivers-state/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

²¹⁴ The Guardian. 2021. End of the road for cultists in Lagos? | The Guardian Nigeria News - Nigeria and World News. [online] Available at: <<https://guardian.ng/opinion/end-of-the-road-for-cultists-in-lagos/>> [Accessed 31 July 2022].

Conclusion

Adequate security is essential for any society's growth and stability. It entails defending individuals and communities against threats and attacks. However, insecurity seems a tough hurdle for the Nigerian government to scale. Sadly, the growing trend of one or more dominant conflict types in every Nigerian region narrows government interventions.

In 2021, several security issues resulted in the violent loss of lives and properties, with banditry causing the most pain. Banditry has wreaked unimaginable havoc on people's livelihoods and has placed the Northwest and Northcentral in the lead as the regions with the most violent casualties. The once peaceful Southeast and parts of the South-south steadily grew into a theatre of war with attacks

and clashes between the "unknown gunmen" and security agents. Nigeria's future may be uncertain due to the growing security threats. Beyond retaliatory engagement with non-state armed groups, the government should seek to comprehend the current dynamics of insecurity, including the proliferation of arms and armed fighters. This understanding should also include recent drivers of armed conflict and structural vulnerabilities that may fuel violent clashes across the country.

As the 2023 elections draw near, proactive peace-building measures and early warning mechanisms should be in place to address grievances and fierce group rivalry. Building peace is a sustainable effort to promote tolerance and prevent war.



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