



SAR Consultancy



Security Information Bulletin: Nigeria

IN THIS ISSUE

Summary of Security Situation

by our Senior Analyst

The Security Situation in Nigeria is multi-dimensional and complex. It is influenced, for the most part, by perceived political, economic and social injustice, which results in a high level of violence throughout the country. This violence is exhibited in differing dimensions and to differing degrees from state to state and region to region. This level of unrest and complexity provides the environment for more opportunistic types of criminal and militant activities to take place. Deconstructing the relationships between all these factors and influencers is very difficult and contributes to the complexity that surrounds the security situation in Nigeria. Another dimension which adds to this complexity is the diversity with regard to the actors at play throughout the country. Violence is perpetrated by a wide range of groups, such as insurgents, militants, nomadic herdsmen, cultists, and ordinary criminals, notwithstanding the allegations of security force involvement and alleged political

interference. This interplay of actors makes it difficult to determine the perpetrator and the victim in many cases. Nigeria is a country with specific needs, both development and increasingly, humanitarian, therefore access for international and domestic NGOs and developmental organisations is a must. It is a country with a potential for great growth in a wide number of commercial areas; as a result it is an attractive country to commercial organisations. These access requirements, coupled with the security environment, results in a need for up to date and thorough analysis of the security situation across the country on a regular basis. Forecasting the likely evolution of the security situation for the short and medium term can be difficult, due in part to the influence of underlying elements of a political, economic and social nature, which impact differently throughout the country. Nonetheless, the presence of existing trends and patterns can assist greatly in strengthening the credibility of forecasts.

June 2018 – June continued the patterns and trends of April and May for the most part. The official line continued to assert that the situation in Borno was significantly stable enough for IDPs to move home, despite a number of serious incidents that would question the logic of such advice. However, similar to the last two months now, it is no longer only the North East that is raising significant interest. The middle belt and violence there in, is a significant cause for concern, or at least it should be for the Nigerian authorities. The loss of life in this area is currently higher than that caused by Boko Haram and there is not likely to change any time soon. That said, in the past such violence has had a season nature, so this may result in short term reductions. Given where in the country such violence is occurring, coupled with abductions for ransom in the same area, many travelling through Nigeria, should re-examine their security plans. SAR recommends close monitoring of the situation, as it is likely to be dynamic.

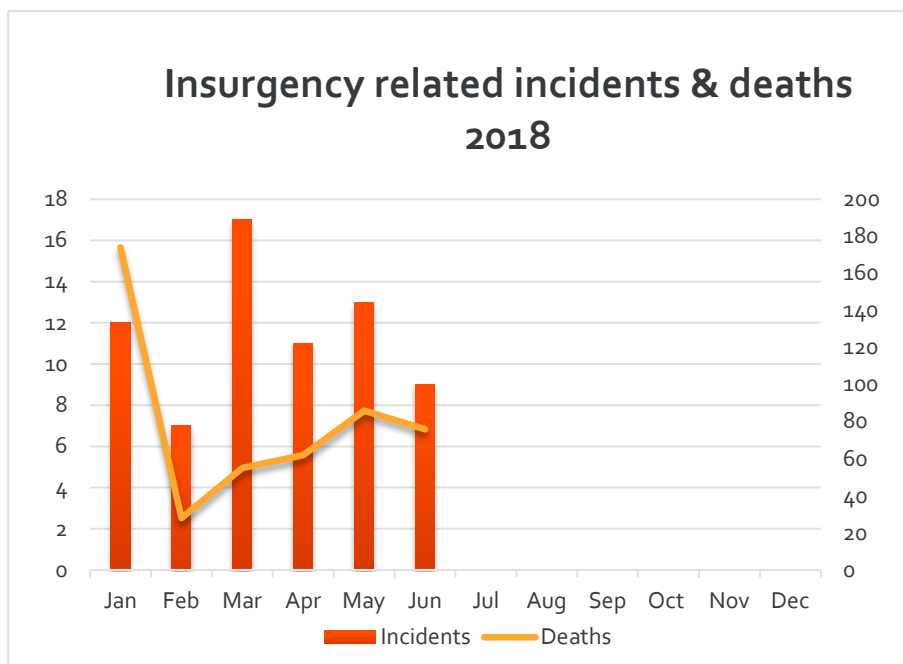
North East Nigeria & Boko Haram

With the exception of one, incidents this month attributed to Boko Haram were confined to Borno State. This is nothing new, the highest percentage of incidents of this nature have occurred in Borno State, despite a proven reach further afield. This reach was evidenced during the month, with reports of arrests made by the DSS of members of Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) in Abuja back in April, but reported in June.

Incidents this month in Borno continued to take on a number of guises. Three suicide attacks were reported in Maiduguri, in which two people and four attackers were reportedly killed. In a more serious incident, over five suspected suicide bombers reportedly detonated their devices killing over 35 people in Damboa LGA. A further seven were reportedly killed in Diffa, Niger, when three alleged members of the groups detonated devices.

Boko Haram were also blamed for attacking a village in Madagali, Adamawa State in which they reportedly set a large part of the village on fire. This incident resulted in a clash between militants and the Nigerian military. The group were also blamed for the deaths of over 25 people in incidents in Konduga, Damboa and Nganzai during the month.

As in similar months, Boko Haram did not have free reign throughout the state. The military and security forces continued their operations against the group. Approximately, 50 militants were said to have been killed in these operations. It is not clear, if any members of the security forces were killed or injured in any of these incidents. Based on past incidents, it is highly likely that some were killed in related clashes. Such operations and their perceived successes has resulted, at least in part, in the Nigerian chief of army staff, Lieutenant General Tukur Buratai, announcing that Boko Haram no longer pose a threat, and as a result, encouraged IDPs to return home. However, as incidents continue and lives lost, one would wonder whether this is the correct advice, at this time.



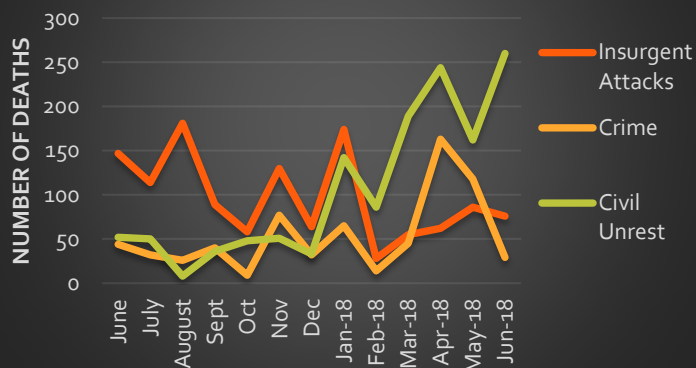
Assessment & Forecast: Despite calls for IDPs to return home, given a perception that Boko Haram no longer pose a risk (not the first time such assertions were made), analysis of the incidents this month illustrate something different. That said, it is acknowledged that attacks are not evenly distributed across the state and therefore, there may be areas where people can return to, but many of the known hotspots from the past, continue to be hotspots today, thereby suggesting that such areas are not yet safe for return at this time. Furthermore, given the range of MO and continued scope of the group, there is still enough to suggest that they have the capacity to conduct attacks and claim a significant loss of life. Despite a desire to have people move home, this risk should not be dismissed or overlooked. Similar to last month, it is advised that even where a reduction in incidents is recorded for a consistent period of time, this should not be taken for granted for success. The group have shown in the past, on more than one occasion, that they have the ability to pull back, re-group and re-emerge as a force to be reckoned with after periods of quiet. It is unlikely that the future will be any different. As a result, SAR continues to recommend that anyone considering to travel to or through the North East conducts a detailed risk assessment that considers the dynamic conditions of the region at present.

Loss of Life*

This month saw a significant increase in deaths associated with middle belt violence, with numbers far outweighing deaths associated with either the insurgency or criminality. Given these numbers, this violence really needs greater investigation and concerted effort to reduce the loss of life in this region. Deaths associated with Boko Haram remained relatively stable this month, which may be a sign that the government's operations are having a more sustained impact. Only time will tell if this is the case.

**As with incident numbers, it is acknowledged that exact death rates in the aftermath of incidents in Nigeria are hard to assess, the graphs included provide only an indication of the trends.*

Deaths attributable to Incident Type



Middle Belt Violence

Incidents in the middle belt continue unabated this month. The majority of these continue to be attributed to herdsmen and farmer clashes, but similar to previous months, little evidence is provided to substantiate such claims. However, similar to last month, when security forces reported on their intervention, they largely reported action against bandits. This divergence is indicative of the lack of clarity as to what exactly is happening in the middle belt at present and the nature of the violence being reported.

Very few states avoided incidents this month, but some were targeted more than others. For example, as in previous months, Benue State reported a large proportion of these incidents, with Logo and Guma LGAs worst hit. Approximately 30 people were reportedly killed in about 7 incidents, two of which were soldiers. Security forces reportedly killed a further five, suspected bandits, in the state in response. Another hotspot in the past for such incidents is Plateau; June was no different. However, despite this one incident in June really shocked the state. Over 100 were reportedly killed in Barkin Ladi and Riyom LGA in clashes, said to have been between herdsmen and farmers. However, this is unlikely to be so clear cut. Over ten others were reportedly killed in other incidents within the state.

Additionally over 16 people, 3 of whom were said to have been policemen, were reportedly killed in Nasarawa State. With soldiers killing six herdsmen in the state. Over 20 people were killed in a small number of incidents in Adamawa State.

A little further away from the traditional middle belt states known for such incidents, a slightly different pattern emerged. Interestingly, the actors on these cases, were labelled as militia and/or bandits, rather than herdsmen. This was very evident in Zamfara State where over 40 people

were reportedly killed. Additionally, soldiers reportedly killed over 25 bandits in the state during the month.

Incidents also occurred in other states, over 20 people were said to have been killed in Kaduna State; 5 in Kogi, around 10 in Taraba, and 5 in Bauchi. Further west, a small number of people were reportedly killed in a prison break in Niger and over ten people were said to have been killed in a clash in Sokoto.

Forecast: *Incidents of this month, continue in the same vein as last month. The majority of incidents continue to be attributed to Fulani herdsmen, but as was the cause last month, when the security forces report clashes between themselves and others, they largely report the other party as bandits. That said, incidents occurring outside the traditional states known for this violence are increasingly attributed to bandits. However, there still seems to be an absence of detailed analysis on such incidents and especially in regard to providing a cross state comparison. Without this, questions raised last month, will continue to remain unanswered, such as who is responsible for such attacks, and if not herdsmen, why are herdsmen being wrongly blamed for involvement? Does reporting the involvement of herdsmen serve a vested interest to perpetuate a narrative that demonises herdsmen? Another element this month is highlighted by the incident in Plateau State, which reportedly resulted in the deaths of over 100 people. This incident raises questions about how easy it seems for such militants to conduct their attacks, with relative impunity. This is reinforced by the increasing geographical reach of this violence, thereby impacting more and more of the population. Therefore, from a practical level, SAR recommends that risk assessments for the region are reviewed and adapted in light of an apparent new aggressor and change in targets.*

Criminality, Cultist activity & Violence

Cult related violence was reported in the South South during June, with over 15 people reportedly killed in two incidents in Cross Rivers. A further three female students were said to have been abducted in Akwa Ibom, also attributed to cultist activity. This was followed by reports that two policemen were killed by cults, also in Akwa Ibom. Interestingly, further north, 8 people were reportedly killed in a cult clash in Oturkpo, Benue. Other violence in the South during the month included the deaths of three soldiers and one other in a clash in Bayelsa. Whilst, the police reportedly killed seven in Ibadan, Oyo. It unclear as to what exactly happened, but reports suggest that the clashes occurred when the police tried to remove butchers from their market.

Niger Delta Region

Things were relatively quiet and calm in the Niger Delta Region during June. The government seem to be reinforcing their commitment to the region through actions that are designed to create future success and prosperity, resulting in a relative calm. This commitment is coming at a time, when the Nigerian crude oil production is increasing, which could be indicative of confidence in the region. However, such peace and progress is likely to be tentative and very fragile, with some operators and analysts in the sector advising the government not to take it for granted and to continue to honour its commitment through intervention to the region.



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Providing peace of mind in changing security environments

Are you confident in your level of preparedness?

Most professional organisations working in Nigeria take security very seriously, either by providing an in-house security service or by contracting security services from a third party.

However, how many of you have tested your level of preparedness and your security architecture in place.

- How confident are you that it would withstand an attack?
- How confident are your staff that they know how to respond?

We, at SAR, can conduct this assessment for you, and can test in a controlled manner exactly how prepared you are. SAR provides an objective independent assessment service. Don't wait for an incident to realise things don't work as planned.

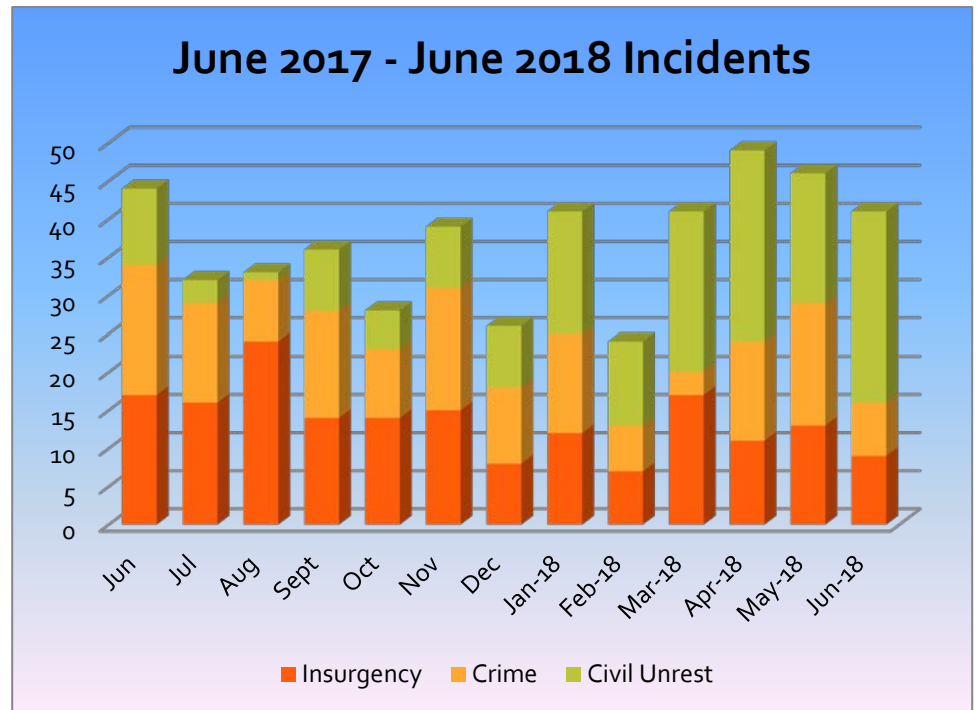
Contact us at SAR to discuss your next audit; you have a duty of care to your employees to ensure your security infrastructure is fit for purpose.

Piracy

Only a small number of piracy related incidents were reported in Nigerian waters this month. For example, 3 suspected pirates were killed in Bayelsa State. The exact details of this incident are unclear at this time. Such incidents continue to illustrate the risk of piracy in the Nigerian waters. This is something echoed by shipping companies, which are reportedly examining the need for greater insurance for those moving goods into or through the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) given a perception of increasing risk. This perception may not be wrong. For one, MarTrack data shows an increase in the level of piracy incidents in the GoG compared with 2017. Interestingly, this report suggests that the gradual rise in oil prices may be fuelling this increase, especially with respect to attacks on oil tankers, given their perceived value.

Abduction & Kidnap

As in similar months, abductions continued throughout June. While such incidents are not uncommon in Nigeria, some incidents still shock. A cluster of these occurred this month in Kaduna State. Approximately 30 people were reportedly abducted in a number of incidents along the Birnin Gwari roadway, when armed gunmen stopped a number of vehicles and abducted their occupants. Two people were reportedly killed in these incidents. The motive behind these incidents is believed to be ransom related. Another person was reportedly abducted in Ukum, Benue State. Two others were said to have been killed in this incident. Police reported killed three suspected kidnappers in Taraba State. Reports suggest that the police responded to intelligence which identified their hideout.



Incidents of Note in early July

Gunmen reportedly attacked and killed 7 police officers on 3 July in the Galadimawa area of Abuja. It is unclear as to what motivated this incident. The police have announced that they will increase patrols and checkpoints within the city, especially at night. However, SAR advises that anyone in, or visiting, Abuja to exercise caution in their movements.

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We would like to thank you for taking the time to read this bulletin. We hope you found it interesting & informative.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at info@sarconint.com to discuss any part in greater detail or to discuss how we may be able to help reduce your exposure to any of the risks mentioned within.

Furthermore we are very happy to receive feedback on your thoughts regarding the bulletin. Hope to see you again next month.

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