



Country Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

NIGERIA

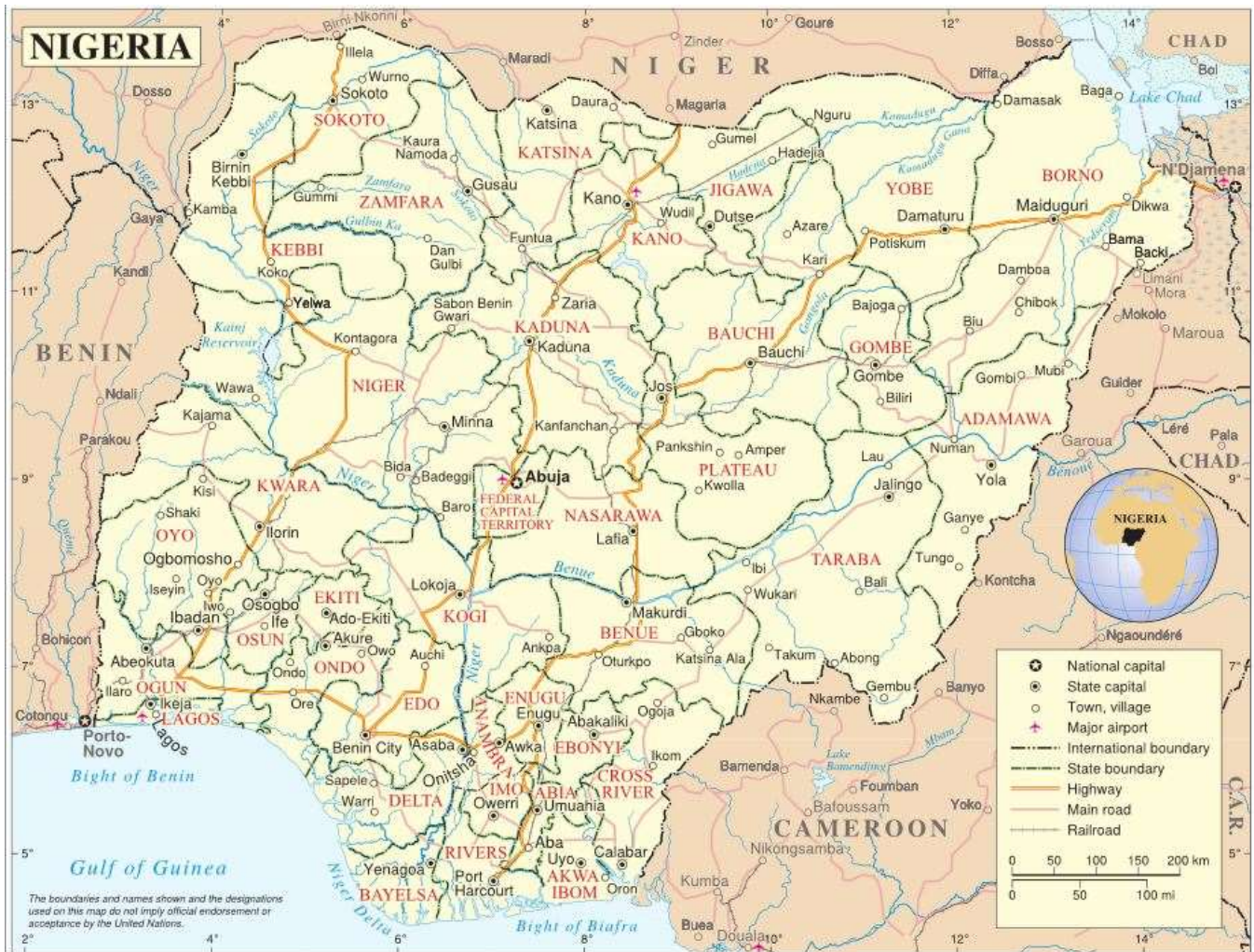
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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project
AfDB	African Development Bank
APC	All Progressives Congress
AU	African Union
CJTF	Civilian Joint Task Force
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
CRA	Conflict Risk Assessment
CRVA	Country Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
CWEENS	Christian Women for Excellence and Empowerment in Nigerian Society
DPA	ECOWAS Directorate of Political Affairs
DPKRS	ECOWAS Directorate of Peacekeeping & Regional Security
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPF	ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework
EWD	ECOWAS Directorate of Early Warning
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female genital mutilation/cutting
FOMWAN	Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria
GBV	Gender-based violence
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GSDRC	Governance and Social Development Resource Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IFIs	International financial institutions
IMN	Islamic Movement of Nigeria
IncReps	ECOWARN's Incident Reports
IPOB	Indigenous People of Biafra
JTF	Joint Task Force
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGA	Local Government Area
MACBAN	Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association
MASSOB	Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Nigeria Delta
MOWASD	Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
NDA	Niger Delta Avengers
NDHS	Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey
NDLEA	National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

NPC	Northern People's Congress
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
P4P	Partnerships for Peace
PDP	People's Democratic Party
PIND	Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta
REWARD	Reacting to Early Warning and Response Data in West Africa
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SARS	Special Anti-Robbery Squad
SD	Standard Deviation
SitReps	ECOWARN Situation Reports
SEMA	State Emergency Management Agency
SNA	Stakeholder Network Analysis
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
VGN	Vigilante Group of Nigeria
WHO	World Health Organization

Message from the President of the ECOWAS Commission

The 15 Member-States of the ECOWAS Community represent a thriving region of the world, with a population of approximately 366 million and a rich human and topographical diversity. From the coastline to the mountain peaks of Fouta Djallon, across the Sahara and the mangroves of the Niger Delta, ECOWAS is home to diverse families, communities, and nations.

Over the last decade, the region has witnessed significant progress in lifting the standard of living for millions. However, along with the richness of natural resources, human capital and great opportunity, there are also challenges to contend with such as natural disasters, pandemics, ethno-sectarian tensions, and security threats caused by extremism and terrorism.

Global developments and changes such as advances in technology, human migration and climate change, have added new levels of complexity, presenting new challenges for strategic planning and preparedness as we look ahead to the future.

This is where Early Warning plays a critical role in helping ECOWAS to understand the changing dynamics so as to strengthen decision making and early response at the regional and national levels. The Country Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs) serve as an important resource in this regard. These reports are useful for strengthening the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework action plans as well as to serve as reference materials for an in-depth understanding of the human security dynamics in our Member States, and for our partners across the region.

I therefore invite national stakeholders, all ECOWAS institutions and our partners to make use of these reports for the entrenchment of peace and progress for the benefit of the Citizens of ECOWAS.

Jean-Claude Brou
President of the ECOWAS Commission

Statement from the Vice President of the ECOWAS Commission

ECOWAS takes pride in finalizing this CRVA report which aims to identify structural vulnerabilities, event driven risks and existing resilience factors in each Member State of the Community. Indeed, this is a remarkable feat towards boosting the African Peace and Security Architecture of the African Union, with ECOWAS setting the pace for the development of an African-owned data set that can be tapped into to enhance human security analysis and accurate forecasting to assist policymakers to make informed decisions on pressing issues in the region. This information can be used as a baseline for ECOWAS and its partners to inform early warning and response efforts, particularly in this time when Early Warning and Response Mechanism is being deployed at the National level.

The CRVA research leverages ECOWARN data—gathered by Field Monitors—to establish a country baseline for monitoring patterns and trends across human security pillars. By comparing ECOWARN data to other data sets, and complementing quantitative data with qualitative findings, the assessments also help the Early Warning Directorate of ECOWAS to gather more robust data that is rich, reliable and empirical. The resulting findings are more representative in terms of geography, time, and theme for each country and needs to be updated periodically.

ECOWAS will consolidate this achievement by applying the knowledge and skills embodied in the CRVA Manual. My conviction for this emanates from the fact that the training of all EWD staff in the development of the CRVA Index, which marks the climax of transfer of knowledge and skills from the USAID REWARD technical staff to ECOWAS, will allow ECOWAS to independently conduct future CRVAs. Already, the EWD has initiated a process to put to practice the defined methodological framework to conduct Regional Risk and Resilience Assessment in the Lake Chad Basin, thereby serving as the first pillar in implementing the decision of the joint ECOWAS and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to engage communities in peacebuilding processes.

We hope the Member States of our Community take ownership of this report and anchor development and peace initiatives upon it, in addressing the risks and vulnerabilities in their communities. As we decentralize Early Warning and Response to the ECOWAS countries, the Commission stands ready to accompany each Member States in the implementation of the actionable recommendations embodied in the CRVA report.

Finda Koroma
Vice President, ECOWAS Commission

Preface

The ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate has made giant strides in the practice of data driven early warning, through the qualitative and quantitative analysis of incidents and situations from multiple sources, with the added benefit of original data generated through the ECOWARN system. Indeed, the Center's state-of-the-art technological tools places it at a vantage position to monitor and analyze risks and vulnerabilities in the ECOWAS region, cutting across the key areas of human security.

ECOWAS has played, and continues to play, a critical role in the monitoring of threats to human security across the region including the Sahelo-Saharan, Mano River, Gulf of Guinea, Lake Chad and Senegambia conflict systems to improve response for the prevention and management of conflict escalation.

Beyond a narrow focus on violent conflict alone, and consistent with its mandate to promote the socioeconomic and political integration of the sub-region, ECOWAS applies a human security lens with a view towards enhancing the well-being of the population in accordance with the ECOWAS Vision 2020. Thus, this report highlights risks, structural vulnerabilities and resilience factors across five dimensions (demographic, economic, security, governance and rule of law) at the national and sub-national levels.

Each CRVA report represents a myriad of perspectives and experiences from affected stakeholders including community leaders, civil society, administrative officials, security agents, traditional and religious leaders, just to mention a few. In this way, the CRVA report serves as a strategic document to provide an overview of the human security challenges in each ECOWAS member state as well as the social and institutional resilience factors that can help manage those challenges.

We hope that this report will be useful for strategic planning in addressing issues of human security as well as to provide insights to a multitude of stakeholders including policy and decision makers in the public and private sectors for conflict-sensitive engagement within the region.

Dr. Abdou Lat Gueye
Director, ECOWAS Early Warning

Executive Summary

From 2016 to 2019, ECOWAS collected quantitative and qualitative data in Nigeria to better understand the structural vulnerabilities that may exist, and how those vulnerabilities affect the everyday lives of individuals and communities. This research was done in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Reacting to Early Warning and Response Data in West Africa (REWARD) project, as part of a broader assessment of the entire West African region. As part of this process, a series of focus group discussions and interviews were conducted in September 2017 in Nigeria to contextualize the findings and to learn more about resilience factors that mitigate risk and promote human security. The purpose of this report is to summarize these insights and perspectives, so that national stakeholders can build on their successes, and also to serve as a baseline for ECOWAS's monitoring of patterns and trends. The report provides an overview of national and subnational vulnerabilities, risks, and resilience factors, as well as conclusions and recommendations.

The CRVA was conducted by ECOWAS to update and expand upon the Conflict Risk Assessment (CRA) 2013-2014 country reports. To better understand the sub-national patterns and trends, the research design began with a desktop study involving a social network analysis based on a survey of peace and security actors in the country and a scoping of experts to be consulted during the fieldwork. This was followed by a Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis of patterns and trends in escalation dynamics and a quantitative analysis of relative structural vulnerabilities by country and human security pillar.

In Nigeria, high levels of vulnerability were found in the areas of Politics/Governance, Population/Demographics, and Security, while moderate levels of vulnerability were found in

Economics/Resources, and less vulnerability was found in the Rule of Law.

Challenges included issues related to the Boko Haram insurgency in the North, communal and farmer/herder issues in the Middle Belt, and militancy and cult violence in the Niger Delta. Perceptions of corruption, and political violence, including electoral violence were also noted as were resource-based challenges relating to the political economy of oil extraction, environmental degradation, and the growth of illegal oil bunkering.

However, there were also strong social and institutional resilience factors for effective dispute resolution and peacebuilding in Nigeria. NGOs and civil society organizations have played an important role in peacebuilding initiatives, awareness raising campaigns, and economic development programs. Vigilante groups, community-based groups, and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) are also viewed as key sources of resilience and security.

The following report aims to provide an overview so that regional and national stakeholders can have a clear picture of the challenges faced by the country, as well as the capacities that can be leveraged and built upon for the promotion of sustainable human security in Nigeria.

Though risk/incident data naturally fluctuates and may therefore have changed since the publication of this report, the structural vulnerabilities are reflective of medium- and long-term trends. These reports focus on the identification of structural vulnerabilities and resiliencies, and how they may impact upon events and developments as they occur.

Introduction

Research Process

The CRVA assesses structural vulnerabilities, event-driven risks, and social and institutional resilience factors according to five human security pillars as identified by ECOWAS in a 2016 scoping paper.¹ The pillars are: 1) Economics and Resources, 2) Politics and Governance, 3) Population and Demographics, 4) Rule of Law, and 5) Security. Findings in this report describe how risks flow from vulnerabilities in the context of Nigeria both within and across the five pillars. In recognition of the fact that violent conflict has underlying social, economic, political, and security drivers but expresses itself differently depending on the context, a holistic human security framework was used in this assessment, and will be used for the CRVAs in all ECOWAS member states. Furthermore, the analysis also breaks out gender considerations and external factors as cross-cutting issues that need to be

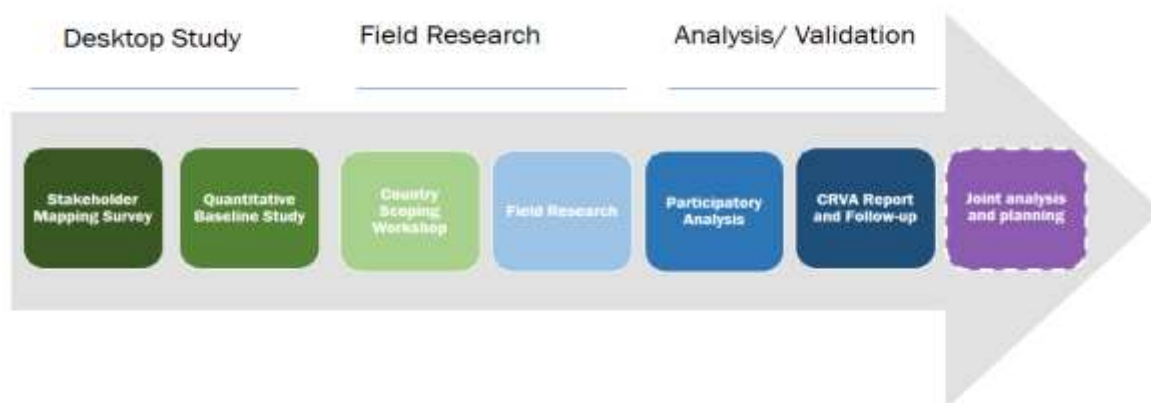
understood for effective early warning, planning and response.²

As shown in the graphic below, the research was conducted in three main phases: Desktop Study, Field Research, and Analysis and Validation.

Phase 1: Desktop Study

The Desktop Study included a preliminary assessment of structural vulnerabilities, event-driven risks, and social and institutional resilience factors.

For the assessment of structural vulnerabilities, the research used data from dozens of sources, including ECOWARN Situation Reports (SitReps). Drawing on these pre-existing data sets,³ a CRVA Index was created to measure the relative levels of vulnerability across five human security dimensions in Nigeria.



¹ The EWD Scoping Paper was developed by ECOWAS to help inform the CRVA process, with the human security pillars identified based on best practice approaches such as ECOWARN guidelines and the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) framework.

² EWD Scoping Paper on “Risk Assessment of Five ECOWAS Pilot Countries: Côte d’Ivoire, Mali, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, and Burkina Faso”

³ Data sources used in the development of the CRVA Index include Global Integrity, the Economist Intelligence Unit, the

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Transparency International, Freedom House, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Armed Conflict Location and Event Database, World Bank, the Center for Security Studies ETH Zurich, Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index, Political Terror Scale, United Nations Refugee Agency, Uppsala University, UN Statistics, and Institute for Economics and Peace.

For the assessment of event-driven risks, event data, including from ECOWARN's Incident Reports (IncReps), was triangulated against data from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) to estimate the locations and type of conflict issues at the sub-national level over time. Using multiple sources allowed for cross-validation, the filling of gaps, and the ability to identify trends in indicators and sub-indicators using queries and key word searches.

For the assessment of social and institutional resilience factors, a survey was deployed to all of ECOWAS's in-country contacts to learn more about the peace and security actors working to manage and reduce risks and vulnerabilities in the country. Respondents (including representatives of religious institutions, public sector actors, civil society, youth groups, and development actors, among others) were also asked to name organizations that they have partnered with in the last two years on issues of peace and security. Data was then uploaded to a Stakeholder Network Map for quantitative analysis and to identify leverage points, spheres of influence, and social capital. Based on this analysis, key technical experts were identified and were contacted for the next phase of the research.

Phase 2: Field Research

The Field Research began with a scoping workshop in Abuja. Using the Stakeholder Network Map, highly-networked technical experts were convened in a workshop to validate the initial desktop findings and suggest a way forward for the qualitative analysis in the field. The Scoping Workshop was also used to tailor and sensitize the broader research questions and the Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) instruments and questionnaires based on local context. Additionally, the Scoping Workshop also served to attain references and contacts for key actors and stakeholders in the field who would be consulted over the course of the next two weeks during the KIIs and FGDs. Thus, the desktop study

phase informed the research questions that needed further context and validation in the field, as well as the sample of respondents to be engaged (what was asked, where, and to whom).

A team of experts and researchers then conducted an in-country assessment between September 20th and September 30th, 2017 with participants from the states of Abia, Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Delta, Imo, Gombe, Kaduna, Plateau and Rivers. The team traveled to the various hotspots identified in the desktop study and validated in the Scoping Workshop to interview key stakeholders affected by violence and with knowledge of local context and capacities. This team included representatives from the ECOWAS Directorates of Early Warning (EWD) and Political Affairs (DPA), as well as participants from USAID and affiliated experts. The KIIs and FGDs conducted during this in-country assessment collected qualitative data and information regarding various perspectives on structural vulnerabilities, event-driven risk factors, and social and institutional resilience factors relating to the different conflict issues across the country. These transcripts have been collated, streamlined to reduce repetition and vagueness, and categorized for analysis and prioritization during Phase 3.

Phase 3: Analysis and Validation

After the quantitative, GIS, and survey data was validated and contextualized in the field, and the qualitative data was collected, organized and summarized, this report was drafted and was then validated by ECOWAS and USAID. This report will serve as a baseline and resource for more targeted early warning products and analysis/planning towards strategic and operational prevention of human insecurity within the country of Nigeria as well as associated conflict systems more broadly.

Terminology and Conceptual Definitions

In this CRVA report:

“Vulnerability” is defined as any structural factor that has the potential to be a conflict driver. These can include such things as youth unemployment, poverty, inequality, climate, patronage, demographic factors, etc.

“Risk” is defined as any event-driven factor that has the potential to be a conflict trigger. Risk factors can include specific controversies or events such as disasters or elections that may occur.

“Resilience” is defined as any social or institutional factor that has the potential to help mitigate or manage risks and vulnerabilities. These include political, cultural, and community leadership with significant social capital to influence conflict dynamics in a constructive way, including public sector, private sector, religious institutions, civil society, opinion leaders, development workers, etc. Resilience factors can include institutions that play a stabilizing role in the short, medium, or longer term.

The CRVA analysis was conducted according to the framework depicted in the figure below, whereby event-driven risk factors flow out of the structural vulnerabilities (per the red downward arrow) while social and institutional resilience factors mitigate and prevent those risks and vulnerabilities (per the green upward arrow).

For ECOWAS, this framework is useful in that it is aligned with the existing ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF), which is a strategic tool to strengthen the human security architecture in West Africa. Key to the ECPF are the categories of **“Operational Prevention,”** or measures applicable in the face of crisis, and **“Structural Prevention,”** or measures that ensure that crises do not arise or re-occur. The CRVA framework is aligned with the ECPF such that identified Vulnerability Factors are to be mitigated by Structural Prevention measures, and Risk Factors are to be mitigated by Operational Prevention measures. This alignment is important for the utility and actionability of this report by users in West Africa.



Literature Review

A Human-Centric Approach to Early Warning

In academic literature, the human security lens to conflict early warning is a change from the more state-centric approaches that were in vogue throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Historically, early warning was focused on prevention and mitigation of conflict between states. In the post-Cold War period with a surge in intra-state conflict, early warning was focused on identifying the drivers and impacts of civil conflict on states. At that time, analysis focused on terminology of state “collapse” and “failure,” emphasizing impacts to neighboring countries or regions, and perpetuating a comparative paradigm of poverty and limited economic growth and conflict in contrast to more developed countries.⁴

However, as a more interconnected human and global security approach emerged in the 2000s, conceptions of state fragility and conflict analysis evolved in both development aid and policy approaches. As the Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC) describes, “At a very broad level, fragility is the result of a dynamic interplay between internal factors (including violent conflict, poverty, economic and structural conditions, weak formal institutions), and external factors (including international political economy, regional and global insecurity).”⁵ While not discounting the role of the state as a key vehicle for managing and preventing conflict, the human-centric approach looks first and foremost at the impact of demographic, economic, political, and security conflict drivers on individuals and communities as well as the role that a wide variety of social and

institutional factors play in preventing conflict. Thus, the human security framework provides a holistic approach to understanding different threats that affect individuals’ lives, whether this is through conflict, health, food, environment, or other social, political or economic factors.

The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security outlines a human-centric approach to security in five principles: 1) *People-centered*, with a focus on protecting basic human freedoms; 2) *Multi-sectoral*, encompassing a broad understanding of threats and causes of insecurity; 3) *Comprehensive*, taking into account different types of individuals’ security from economic to social; 4) *Context-specific*, emphasizing the need to analyze specific conflict contexts and root causes of insecurity; and 5) *Prevention-oriented*, highlighting locally tailored risk prevention and mitigation measures through early warning mechanisms.⁶ This focus on cross-cutting issues and situation-specific analysis and response are central to the CRVA process and broader objectives of integrated conflict early warning and response by ECOWAS and its partners. For the CRVAs, this involves identifying conflict risks, vulnerabilities and resiliencies across the human security pillars of Population and Demographics, Politics and Governance, Security, Economics and Resources, and Rule of Law.

Many indices and development frameworks have emerged for measuring resilience and fragility, from the Fund For Peace’s *Fragile States Index*⁷ to the African Development Bank (AfDB) and World Bank’s *Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA)*⁸ and Mo Ibrahim Foundation’s *Index of African Governance*.⁹ Today, leading international development actors and multilateral

⁴ “Defining and measuring state fragility: a new proposal”, Ferreira, I., The Annual Bank Conference on Africa, June 2015

⁵ “Topic Guide on Fragile States”, Mcloughlin, C., Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC), August 2009

⁶ “Human Security in Theory and Practice”, Human Security Unit, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations, January 2009

⁷ Fragile States Index, The Fund for Peace

⁸ Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA), World Bank and African Development Bank (AfDB)

⁹ Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Mo Ibrahim Foundation

agencies such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the AfDB have also produced strategies, practice areas, and tools, which seek to address the drivers of fragility. The AfDB, for example, has a 2014-2019 Strategy for *Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa*, with a focus on building member state capacities and focusing on “fragile situations rather than fragile states alone.”¹⁰

As the AfDB Strategy notes, however, “there is no single solution and no predefined ‘toolbox’ for addressing fragility.”¹¹ Older academic and policy conceptions of “state failure” used analysis centered on “traditional, state-centric conceptions of security that focused primarily on the safety of states from military aggression,” as outlined in a 2009 paper by the United Nations Human Security Unit. Newer models of analysis have taken on a broader human security lens, which was in “response to the complexity and the interrelatedness of both old and new security threats – from chronic and persistent poverty to ethnic violence, human trafficking, climate change, health pandemics, international terrorism, and sudden economic and financial downturns. Such threats tend to acquire transnational dimensions and move beyond traditional notions of security that focus on external military aggressions alone.”¹²

Thus, a human-centric approach, as opposed to a state-centric approach, is important for analyzing risks and vulnerabilities to society for robust early warning and response mechanisms. Human security provides a holistic approach to understanding different threats which affect individuals’ lives, whether through conflict, health, food, environment, or other social, political, or economic factors. As such, the CRVAs seek to draw upon the more dynamic and interrelated aspects of risk and vulnerability, which look at capacities and

pressures within a society with a view to identifying structural vulnerabilities, resiliencies and risks across key human security pillars. As defined by the United Nations General Assembly, “human security is an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood, and dignity of their people.”¹³ This approach is also in line with the ECOWAS Vision 2020 which seeks to promote peace, prosperity, and cohesion across the region,¹⁴ and includes a focus on strengthening many human security aspects within member states.

Research Questions

Based on the initial desktop findings, the team developed a set of framing questions broken out by the five human security pillars. These framing questions were not asked verbatim in the field, but rather informed the design of the KII and FGD instruments. These instruments included simple, open-ended questions intended to prompt a discussion during which respondents could express their opinions, experiences, and perceptions about the ways in which they had been impacted by vulnerabilities, risks, and resilience factors in Nigeria.

Security: What role do the security forces play in managing or worsening political unrest, insurgency and criminality? Are they legitimate, representative, and professional? What role do vigilante or community-based groups play in security provision? To what extent does the existence of the CJTF or vigilante groups undermine the perceived legitimacy of security forces? Are there other conflict drivers such as land disputes, resource competition, or organized crime? Are there cross-border, maritime, or

¹⁰ “Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa, 2014 – 2019”, AfDB

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² “Human Security in Theory and Practice”, Human Security Unit, OCHA, United Nations, January 2009

¹³ General Assembly resolution 66/290, October 2012

¹⁴ ECOWAS Vision 2020: Towards a Democratic and Prosperous Community, ECOWAS, June 2010

transnational threats? What have been the impacts of insecurity on local communities?

Population and Demographics: To what extent are ethnic polarization or regional identities salient factors in the socio-political landscape? What role do youth play in social, economic and political life? Is a disproportionately large population of disenfranchised youth putting a strain on urban resources or public services? To what extent are adverse climatic conditions affecting food security and security in general? What role do women play in social, economic, and political life? How effective is family planning in terms of access and policy?

Politics and Governance: What are some challenges for state legitimacy and national cohesion, particularly given the historic salience of regional identities? What are the prospects for peaceful democratic transitions in future elections? To what extent do perceptions of corruption and nepotism in government erode the legitimacy of state institutions and electoral process? To what extent does the provision of services impact perceptions of government legitimacy? What role do women and youth play in politics and decision-making processes? What role does civil society play in politics and governance?

Economics and Resources: To what extent has volatility in commodity prices (especially oil) negatively impacted the most vulnerable groups? Has this been a driver of food insecurity or conflict? How has the recent economic recession impacted communities? To what extent has insecurity impacted economic productivity? How does climate change affect local communities? What role does natural resource management and land tenure play in social cohesion? What role do illicit economic activities (e.g. oil bunkering) play in the local and national economy? What role do the extractive industries play in the economy? What role do women play in the economy?

Rule of Law: To what extent is the judiciary independent of the executive? What role does the

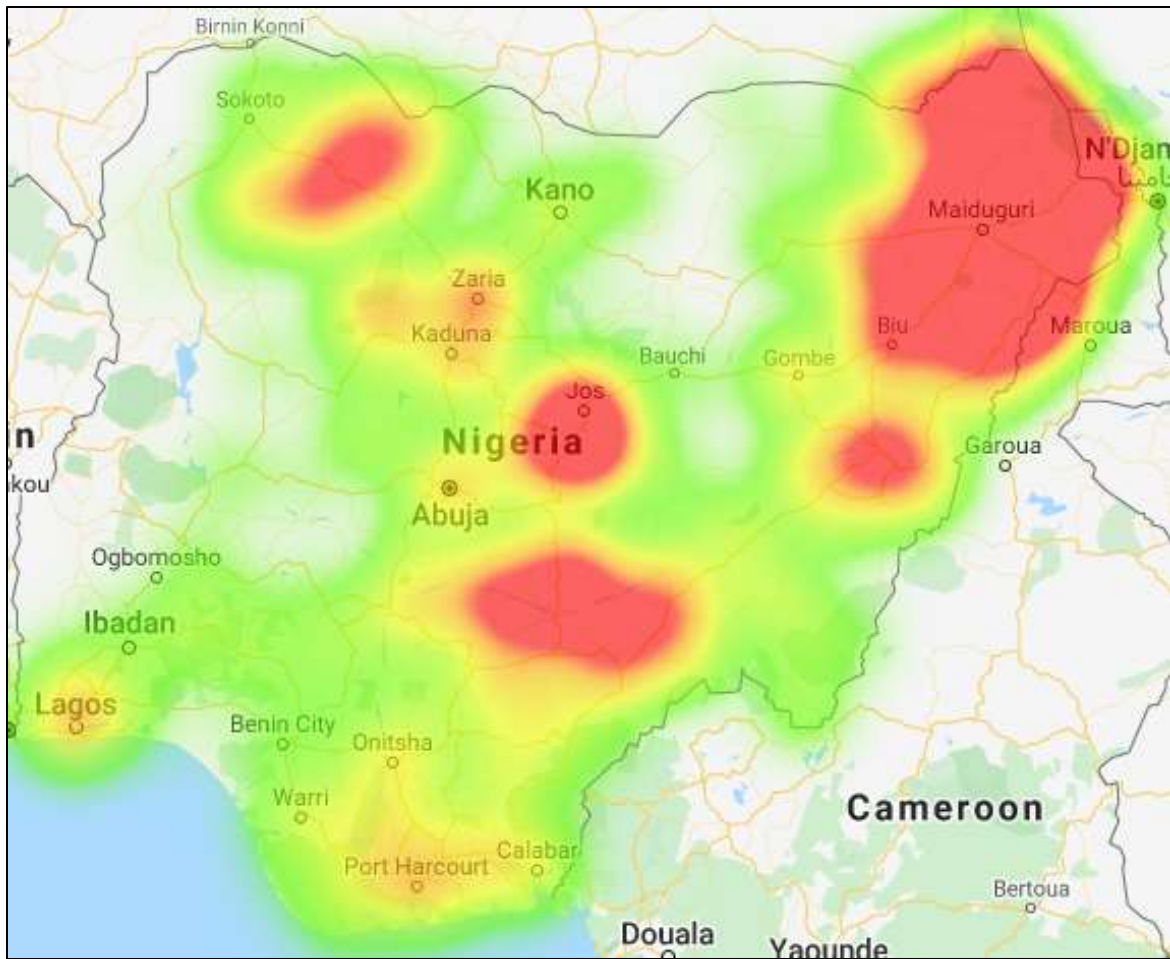
judiciary play as regards questions of justice and impunity? Is there access to justice and legal services throughout the country? Is there reliance on alternative/traditional dispute resolution mechanisms? Do people resort to mob justice? To what extent do communities rely on police and security forces to provide justice?

Description of the Sample

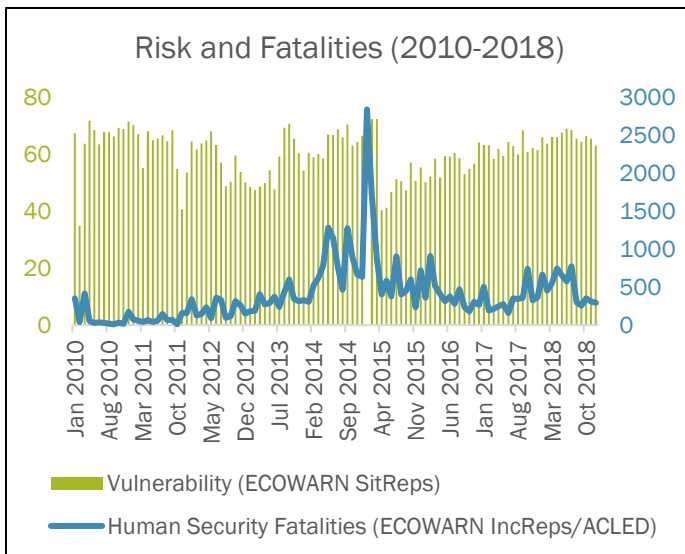
Data collected and analyzed for this research included hundreds of ECOWARN SitReps, ECOWARN IncReps, ACLED event data, and a scoping survey, as well as transcripts and notes from FGDs and KIIs in the field. Other sources, integrated to form a vulnerability index (the CRVA Index), included Global Integrity, the Economist Intelligence Unit, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Transparency International, Freedom House, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Armed Conflict Location and Event Database, World Bank, Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index, Political Terror Scale, United Nations Refugee Agency, Uppsala University, UN Statistics, and Institute for Economics and Peace. A complete breakdown is included in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

ECOWARN data shows a sharp improvement in 2015 after the election in terms of structural vulnerability (as measured by taking an average of each month's SitReps scores), and in risk/escalation dynamics (as measured by monthly fatalities). Since 2015, although the escalation dynamics are not as acute as they were previously, the structural vulnerabilities have been rising once again.



The heatmap above shows hot spots of human security-related fatalities between 2015 and 2018.

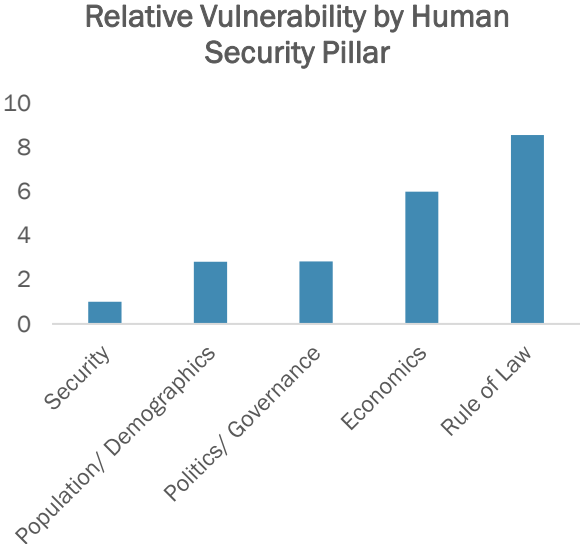


The graph above shows the trends in risk layered against vulnerability. The y axis on the left (0-80) shows the level of vulnerability with a score of over 60 reflecting higher levels of vulnerability. The y axis on the right (0-3000) shows the number of humans security-related fatalities by month.



The map above shows the locations where fieldwork was conducted in September 2017.

The CRVA Index, shown below, indicates that in Nigeria, the human security pillar that exhibits the most severe levels of vulnerability is Security. Data suggests that Rule of Law is less structurally vulnerable. In the graph below, the lower the score on the y axis (0-10), the more vulnerable the human security pillar.



Event data shows hotspots, patterns and trends at the sub-national level. These include issues of insurgency in the northeastern region, farmer/herder conflicts in the Middle Belt, separatist agitations in the southeastern region of Nigeria, and communal violence, criminality, and militancy in the Niger Delta. Field research was undertaken to qualify and contextualize these findings through Key Informant Interviews (KIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This report seeks to layer, triangulate, and juxtapose quantitative, GIS, and qualitative data in a way that is accurate, meaningful, and representative. However, limitations to this analysis include the two- year date range for the event/GIS data and the seven-year date range for the ECOWARN SitReps. If there are conflict cycles that fall outside those parameters, there will be

constraints on the ability to analyze those patterns in this report. Furthermore, this research sought to ensure representativeness of the sample of stakeholders engaged through KIs (44 prominent individuals) and FGDs (34 focus group discussions). To the extent that these stakeholders were representative, they added vital contextualization and validation of the desktop research.

Scope and limitations also apply to the use and purpose of the study. The CRVA reports support the objectives of ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF). In particular, the CRVA reports identify vulnerabilities across the human security pillars in order to inform structural prevention. Structural prevention, as defined in the ECPF, comprises “political, institutional (governance) and developmental reforms, capacity enhancement and advocacy on the culture of peace.” While this report can also be used to inform operational prevention, which includes “early warning, mediation, conciliation, preventive disarmament and preventive deployment using interactive means such as good offices and the ECOWAS Standby Force,” it seeks primarily to identify the key areas of structural vulnerability at the national and sub-national levels for strategic planning by ECOWAS and other partners in the peace and security space. However, inasmuch that operational prevention can be informed by patterns and trends in the event-driven risk factors highlighted in this report, the CRVA should serve as a baseline analysis of dynamics that are closely monitored over time. Thereby, in addition to informing strategic planning on structural vulnerability issues, the CRVA will also inform early warning products such as weekly, monthly, and quarterly situation reports that inform analysts and potential responders as to heightened conflict risk across one or more indicators, and propose recommendations on response. The CRVA reports can also be used as a foundation to inform more detailed case studies around identified risks, vulnerabilities and resiliencies for a country of interest or concern.

While many reports that seek to identify structural vulnerabilities and resilience factors focus almost exclusively at the national level, ECOWAS seeks to support a more decentralized early warning and response infrastructure across the region. As such, the CRVA reports also take into consideration dynamics at the sub-national level. These sub-national factors are critical to consider as they help analysts and potential responders understand the context in which specific events (risks) are occurring, which may be markedly different from the national context. A mapping of sub-national level risks, vulnerabilities, and resiliencies can also help inform strategies for engaging at the local level for structural prevention. In particular, as defined by the ECPF, taking “measures to ensure the crises do not arise in the first place or, if they do, that they do not re-occur.”

Finally, as also noted in the ECPF, conflict in West Africa tends to be highly interconnected, which often leads to cycles of violence that cross borders and can keep countries emmeshed for decades. The CRVA reports, covering all fifteen member states of ECOWAS, are also useful in helping to inform and understand the dynamics of specific regional conflict systems, such as those that occur across the Mano River and Sahel. These regional conflict systems are influenced and interconnected not only historically and culturally, but also share many of the same structural vulnerabilities that give rise to risks and the eventual outbreak of violence, decade after decade. Thus, the CRVA reports present an opportunity to view not only the specific national and sub-national factors that lead to structural vulnerability and heightened risk, they also help highlight the nature of regional conflict systems, and the need for a holistic and systemic lens in both analysis and response.

Country Background

Nigeria gained independence from Britain in 1960. In 1963, the First Republic (a parliamentary and federal system) was established under a new president, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe.¹⁵ In the decades that followed, Nigeria has become a major power in the region, although internally there has been periodic spikes of conflict over resources and the state control.¹⁶

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with about twice as many people as the next largest country, Ethiopia. It is very diverse, comprising 250 ethno-linguistic groups.¹⁷ Social and economic pressures contributed to ethno-religious, and by extension political, conflict within the country. The tensions amongst political groups and their respective ethno-religious factions within the different regions reached a tipping point in January 1966 when there was a coup by Christian Igbo officers.¹⁸ The Igbos were, in part, rebelling against the agenda of the Northern People's Congress (NPC), led by Sarduna Ahamadu Bello, which favored the spread of Sharia law in Northern Nigeria.¹⁹ This coup was followed by a counter-coup led by Hausa, Fulani and other minorities under Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, alongside the Muslim leaders.^{20,21} The violence and fear of regional domination, alongside long-standing desires for secession by regional leaders since independence, culminated in the Igbo-dominated Eastern Region seceding from Nigeria in May 1967.²²

The next thirty years were a period of political instability in Nigeria, with a series of coups and military regimes.²³ In 1975, Gowon was overthrown in a coup led by Brigadier Murtala Ramat Mohammed, who was soon assassinated and replaced by Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo.²⁴ Elections in 1979 brought Alhaji Shehu Shagari to power, but in 1983 Major-General Muhammadu Buhari seized power.²⁵ Two years later, Ibrahim Babangida led a counter coup. Babangida oversaw a transition to civilian rule, although his administration only allowed for two political parties.²⁶ Elections were held in 1993, but Babangida annulled the results, an unpopular decision that led to his resignation.²⁷ In November 1993, General Sani Abacha took power.²⁸ During his rule, Abacha severely curtailed political activity and suppressed opposition.²⁹ One high-profile case during this period that captured international attention was the execution of writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists in 1995.³⁰

Stresses continue in part due to the disaggregation of the state into progressively more federal administrative units.³¹ With the disaggregation came a fracturing of regional partnerships across the major ethnic groups who had maintained

¹⁵ "Nigeria: History", The Commonwealth

¹⁶ "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", International Crisis Group, December 2010.

¹⁷ "Between War and Peace: 50 years of Power-sharing in Nigeria", Rustad, S., Centre for the Study of Civil War, PRIO, June 2008.

¹⁸ "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", International Crisis Group, December 2010.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "The Nigeria-Biafra War: Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide", Heerten, L. and Moses, A.D., Journal of Genocide Research, August 2014.

²² "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", International Crisis Group, December 2010.

²³ "Nigeria: History", The Commonwealth

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Nigeria Hangs Playwright, Eight Activists", Buckley, S., The Washington Post, November 1995.

³¹ "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", International Crisis Group, December 2010.

control over the minority groups.³² For example in the Northern region, there were 19 states in 1996, up from 6 in 1967. As a result, the Hausa-Fulani efforts to establish a regional unity collapsed.³³ The state and the political system at this time developed systems of patronage, which generally favored the educated and connected Hausa or Fulani individuals,³⁴ which in turn furthered regional tensions.³⁵

The Nigerian economy grew quickly during the first decade of the twenty-first century, achieving an average GDP growth rate of five to six percent between 2000 and 2011 and overtaking South Africa to become Africa's largest economy.³⁶ In 2014, however, a decline in global oil prices and insecurity in the northeast and south of the country contributed to a series of economic shocks and the country fell into a recession.³⁷ In 2016 the country reported a GDP growth rate of -1.54 percent.³⁸

The socio-economic effects of developments in the 20th century continue to be a source of insecurity within the region. One such development was a shift towards the oil industry as a dominant sector,³⁹ a shift which has left a large portion of the population unemployed, especially in rural areas. As of 2011, the industry accounted for 85 percent of government revenue and around half of the country's GDP.⁴⁰ As a result, the government often intervenes to support the industry over local communities.⁴¹ A second development were policies like import liberalization which left few protections for local industries.⁴² Combined with an

under-funded state and poor public services the Nigerian people have been left poorly educated and with a lack of opportunities. Weak governance institutions remain a predominant risk factor, preventing necessary public policies from being implemented to address these issues.⁴³ Institutional degradation has been due to the legacy of autocratic and military regimes under the Muhammadu Buhari in the 80s, Ibrahim Babangida from the late 80s to early 90s, and Sani Abacha in the 90s.⁴⁴

Since the early 1990s, the state has been the center of political conflict over financial resources.⁴⁵ Government authorities have become more powerful, displacing traditional leaders, which in turn has furthered the patronage system and corruption.⁴⁶ Paradigmatic of this issue is the perception among the youth population that social mobility is a question of access to politics power. Furthermore, a vast majority (85 percent) of the population believes that corruption in the country has worsened between 2011 and 2013.⁴⁷

The high levels of corruption extend to broader issues under rule of law and security. The government has been known to not investigate and prosecute human rights violations, especially from the military and police.⁴⁸ In one such instance, reported by Amnesty International, security forces killed at least seventeen Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) supporters ahead of a political demonstration.⁴⁹

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ "The Challenge of Job Creation in Nigeria", Alemu, Z. G., African Development Bank Group, 2015.

³⁷ "Nigeria Economic Outlook", African Development Bank Group

³⁸ "GDP growth (annual %)", World Bank

³⁹ "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", International Crisis Group, December 2010.

⁴⁰ "Political Economy of the Petroleum Sector in Nigeria", Gboyega, A., Søreide, T., Le, T. M., and Shukla, G. P., World Bank, August 2011.

⁴¹ "Oil Conflict and Accumulation Politics in Nigeria", Omeje, K., Wilson Center

⁴² "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", International Crisis Group, December 2010.

⁴³ "Nigeria: Assessing Risks to Stability", Lewis, P. M., Center for Strategic and International Studies, June 2011.

⁴⁴ "The Dysfunctional State of Nigeria", Lewis, P. M., Center for Global Development

⁴⁵ "Oil Dependence and Civil Conflict in Nigeria", Oyefusi, A., June 2007.

⁴⁶ "Northern Nigeria: Background to Conflict", International Crisis Group, December 2010.

⁴⁷ "Nigeria's Corruption Challenge", Transparency International, May 2015.

⁴⁸ "Nigeria 2016 Human Rights Report", U.S. Department of Justice

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Security issues, especially in terms of land and tenure rights, have paralleled the demographic and economic issues. Conflict in the North and Middle Belt region between Muslim Fulani pastoralists and Christian farmers has been further aggravated as a result of growing environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and pressures from a growing Nigerian population.⁵⁰ Within the southern region of Nigeria, a decades-long conflict has simmered between local communities and oil companies.⁵¹ Rebel groups, such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Nigeria Delta (MEND), have launched physical attacks on oil companies in protest of economic and environmental damage (e.g. degradation due oil spills impacts fishing and farming).^{52,53} Furthermore, the Niger Delta region experiences high levels of other types of insecurity, including armed robbery, oil bunkering, street crime, and drug trafficking.^{54,55,56} A significant drive of this insecurity is the predominance of cult and gang violence within the region. The groups are also tied to community leaders who use them to instigate violence during elections in order to achieve certain political outcomes.

A recent major security issue is the terrorist organization Boko Haram, which is a Hausa translation for “Western Education is Forbidden”.⁵⁷ The group was formed by young Islamic scholars in the 1990s in northern Nigeria. At first, the group’s motives were to overthrow the government due to the high levels of corruption and its seemingly Western characteristics.⁵⁸ The insurgency group advocated for the creation of an Islamic state purged of any Western influence such as universities.⁵⁹ From the 2000s to the present day, the group’s change in leadership has resulted in more militant and criminal behavior.⁶⁰ This includes attacking UN and Nigerian government buildings, as well as Muslim and Christian individuals⁶¹ creating great insecurity within the region,⁶² highlighted in the number of internally displaced people, which is estimated at around 2 million.^{63,64,65} The issue is in part a culmination of other risk factors mentioned earlier – i.e. unemployment, poverty and a lack of education.⁶⁶ A large proportion of the group’s recruits are young boys who have been sent to religious schools and end up begging for survival.⁶⁷

⁵⁰ “Land Conflict, Climate Change, and Violence in Nigeria: Patterns, Mapping, and Evolution”, Conroy, S., NSRP

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ “Oil Conflict and Accumulation Politics in Nigeria”, Omeje, K., Wilson Center

⁵⁴ “Between War and Peace: 50 years of Power-sharing in Nigeria”, Rustad, S., Centre for the Study of Civil War, PRIO, June 2008.

⁵⁵ “Countries/Jurisdictions of Primary Concern – Nigeria”, U.S. Department of State

⁵⁶ “Illicit Trade: Undermining Development”, The Global Initiative against Transnational Organised Crime and Black Market Watch, December 2015.

⁵⁷ “Insecurity in context: The rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria”, Barna, J., The European Union, July 2014.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ “About OCHA Nigeria”, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

⁶⁴ “Nigeria Emergency Operations”, International Organization for Migration

⁶⁵ “Nigeria IDP Figures Analysis”, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

⁶⁶ “Insecurity in context: The rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria”, Barna, J., The European Union, July 2014.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

National-Level Vulnerabilities, Risks and Resiliencies

Based on desktop research using the ECOWARN and ACLED data sets, among others, surveys of peace and security actors in key regions in Nigeria, field research that included KIIs and FGDs, and participatory analysis by the CRVA field research team, the following national-level risks, vulnerabilities, and resilience factors were identified:

Structural Vulnerabilities	Security <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Political violence• Cultism• Criminality• Sexual abuse and exploitation• Insurgency• Porosity of borders• Proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW)
	Population and Demographics <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tensions between ethnic and religious groups• Population growth; low rate of family planning; forced marriage• Food insecurity• Climate change and environmental degradation
	Politics and Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Underrepresentation of women and youth in political decision-making• Perceptions of corruption and nepotism among political actors• Ethnic and religious polarization during elections• Perceptions of poor governance and lack of transparency• Perceptions of clientelism and nepotism• Manipulation of youth and women by politicians
	Economics and Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High rate of youth unemployment• Poor infrastructure and inadequate access to social services, including education and healthcare• Poverty• Lack of economic diversification• Impacts of economic recession• Barriers to financing and credit facilities for women• Illicit economic activities, including drug trafficking and oil bunkering, and cyber-criminality

	<p>Rule of Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of corruption, bias, impunity and ineffectiveness within the judiciary and security forces • Lack of resources for the judicial system
<p>Event-Driven Risks</p>	<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boko Haram insurgency and counter-insurgency activities • Herder-farmer conflicts • Criminality • Vigilante activity <p>Population and Demographics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displacement due to conflict • Conflicts between ethnic and religious groups • Land- and resource-based conflicts <p>Politics and Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections and political violence <p>Economics and Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic recession <p>Rule of Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents of corruption
<p>Social and Institutional Resilience Factors</p>	<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigilantes, community-based groups and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) • Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin • NGOs and civil society organizations' activities • Local, traditional and religious leaders • Anti-cult initiatives • Peacebuilding and dialogue programs • Youth-focused training and empowerment programs • Finance and credit programs targeting women and youth • Media Sensitization • Deployment of Nigerian security forces into volatile areas • Government initiatives to address farmer-herder conflicts • Implementation of national CVE action plan • Existence of herders and farmer associations for the promotion of dialogue



Population and Demographics

- Existence of legal texts and normative frameworks on gender, equity, and women's rights
- Government initiatives to curtail desertification through afforestation programs
- Actions of local, regional, and international actors to address food insecurity

Politics and Governance

- Policy initiatives such as the Federal Character Commission to enhance inclusion in governance and political processes
- Existence of legal frameworks, policies, and institutions to tackle corruption
- Existence of community-based traditional and religious institutions

Economics and Resources

- Existence of vibrant informal economic sectors
- Existence of social safety net initiatives

Security (Most Vulnerable Pillar)

Vulnerabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political violence • Cultism • Criminality • Sexual abuse and exploitation • Insurgency • Porosity of borders • Proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW)
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boko Haram insurgency and counter-insurgency activities • Herder-farmer conflicts • Criminality • Vigilante activity

Vulnerabilities and Risks

Over the past two decades, Nigeria has faced violence and insecurity in three key areas: the insurgency by Boko Haram in the Northeast, rising militancy and criminality in the Niger Delta, and intercommunal conflicts in the North Central and Middle Belt regions.

At the start of 2015, Boko Haram had seized control of over 17 local government areas (LGAs) across three states and were responsible for an estimated 6,000 civilian fatalities alone in 270 attacks in the northeast of Nigeria.⁶⁸ According to data from ACLED, 2015 was the deadliest year since the group began coordinated attacks against Nigerian government and security forces in 2011. In addition to the states in the northeast, Boko Haram insurgents also mounted attacks in Abuja, Kano and Nasarawa, killing dozens. They also claimed responsibility for attacks in neighboring Cameroon, Niger and Chad. However, following a West Africa multi-nation military campaign started in early 2015, and a realignment of military forces and strategy following the election of President Muhammadu Buhari in March of the same year, by

the end of 2015, the government had announced Nigeria’s “technical” victory against the militants. The militant group was reported to have been significantly downgraded in its ability to mount attacks against both security forces and population centers using conventional weapons or tactics. In addition, the government reported that the group had been driven from several states, including Yobe and Adamawa, and had either fled across the border into neighboring countries or been confined to Borno State in Nigeria.

Fieldwork participants in the northeast cited the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency as the primary security concern in the region. Additionally, the insurgency has contributed to a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the growing insecurity of these populations has become an increasing security concern. Overall, the ICRC, estimated that the total number of IDPs in Northeast and North Central Nigeria is approximately 2 million people, making Nigeria host to the sixth largest IDP population in the world.⁶⁹ According to interviewees, IDP camps suffer from high rates of criminality and sexual violence. Boko Haram’s continued presence in the

⁶⁸ “The brutal toll of Boko Haram’s Attacks on Civilians,” Uhrmacher, K. and Sheridan, M. B., The Washington Post, April 2016.

⁶⁹ “Internal Displacement in North East Nigeria: Operationalising the Kampala Convention in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states”, International Committee of the Red Cross, December 2016.

region has also led to increased arms proliferation there.

Despite having been routed from key areas and significantly diminished in their capacities, throughout 2016 and into 2017, Boko Haram continued to wage attacks against Nigerian security forces, the community-based Civilian Joint Task Forces (CJTF), and regular citizens using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and other crude weaponry. These were often deployed with suicide bombers; an increasing number of whom were women and girls recruited to attack markets, transportation depots, mosques, and IDP camps.⁷⁰ In 2016, over 550 civilian fatalities in an estimated 51 attacks were attributed to Boko Haram insurgents, according to ACLED data. Although there has been a significant decline in the number of attacks and in the fatalities recorded since 2015, Boko Haram remains one of the most significant threats to human security and livelihoods in the northeast of the country.

In the Niger Delta, beginning in 2016, there was a notable rise in violence and general insecurity not witnessed since 2009, when the first phase of militancy in the region ended. According to a February 2017 report by the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives the Niger Delta (PIND), conflict dynamics in the Niger Delta are primarily fueled by an intersectional mix of criminality (including robbery, piracy and kidnapping), cult and gang violence, election violence, ethnic and communal violence, and land disputes, all of which feed into and are exacerbated by the resurgence in militancy. Throughout 2016 and into 2017, militant groups, including the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), continued to mount attacks in several key Niger Delta states against critical components of the country's oil infrastructure, slowing or stopping operations and leading to a decline in Nigeria's crude oil output. At the same time, the impacts of these attacks were worsened by an overall

downturn in global oil prices, with both factors contributing to heightened economic insecurity in the Niger Delta and likely contributing to increased criminality.⁷¹

Compounding the complex nature of violence and insecurity in the region, there are noteworthy reinforcing dynamics between various conflict drivers. For example, cult groups have again been militarized during the current insurgency, as they were in the violence leading up to the Amnesty in 2009 that ended the first wave of militancy. Fieldwork participants in the Niger Delta emphasized the prevalence of cult violence in the region. Cult groups have reportedly been mobilized by politicians during election cycles to intimidate opponents and gain votes. Interviewees stated that little has been done to address the violence and reported perceptions that cult groups are able to act with impunity because of their connections to politicians and traditional leaders. Intercommunal tensions in the Niger Delta have also at times drawn in various cult and criminal groups, who become polarized amid group-based tensions. According to reporting from PIND, in this environment of heightened socio-political fragmentation, more than a dozen groups from many different ethnic compositions spanning the wider Niger Delta region had emerged as of mid-2017. And unlike the first wave of militancy, in the current environment, groups often espouse different, occasionally competing, demands and employ different tactics from sabotaging oil infrastructure to engaging in various criminal pursuits including oil bunkering, piracy, and kidnapping for ransom.

In the Niger Delta, as well as parts of southeastern Nigeria, the resurgence of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), were also linked to violence and insecurity in 2015 and 2016. Following the arrest of IPOB

⁷⁰ "Confronting the Unthinkable: Suicide Bombers in Northern Nigeria," Taft, P. and Lawrence, K., The Fund for Peace, February 2016.

⁷¹ "History Never Quite Repeats: Militancy in the Niger Delta", PIND, NDPI, and Fund for Peace, February 2017.

leader, Nnamdi Kanu, in late 2015, demonstrations and clashes with security forces have become more frequent and more lethal. Kanu was released on bail in April 2017, although this has done little to deescalate tensions in key Niger Delta and southeastern states.

Interviewees discussed the Nigerian military operation in Abia, nicknamed “Operation Python Dance,” stating that it has been an ongoing driver of insecurity. Several fieldwork participants expressed frustration with military operations, citing perceptions of extrajudicial killings and arbitrary detentions of the members of IPOB. Interviewees also discussed low levels of trust in formal security forces, especially in the Niger Delta, citing perceptions of complicity in criminality, corruption, and lack of resources. Some communities have begun to rely on mob justice as an alternative.

In the Middle Belt and North Central regions, inter-communal and ethno-religious conflict have led to cycles of conflict that have turned deadly over the years, causing widespread insecurity and destabilizing urban and rural population centers. In the Middle Belt region, pastoralist conflict between farmers and nomadic herdsman looking for grazing land frequently erupts into violence, with reports of civilian deaths as well as the widespread destruction of property and farming land. These pastoralist conflicts often take on an ethno-religious dimension, pitting Christian farming communities against Muslim pastoralists, and one ethnic group against another. Fieldwork participants stated that communal violence over land has been driven by unclear border demarcation and boundary disputes, as well as other issues such as chieftaincy disputes.

Additionally, the spread of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria, from the Niger Delta to the Middle Belt to the Northeast, have also contributed

to the lethality of pastoralist conflicts, as well as other lethal violence in the region. According to an April 2017 report by the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), pastoralist-related violence was deadlier than even the Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast in 2016, with an estimated 1,425 civilians killed in clashes between farmers and herdsman.⁷²

Violent crime, especially kidnapping and armed robbery, was cited throughout the fieldwork as an ongoing security concern. Additionally, violence against women and girls continues to be a key vulnerability throughout Nigeria. Interviewees reported high levels of rape and domestic abuse, stating that perpetrators often include family members, teachers, or trusted community members. Several participants stated that when incidents of rape or assault occur, women are reluctant to report due to social stigma.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

In the fieldwork, participant identified vigilante, community-based groups and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) as sources of resilience and security in some states, stating that they have successfully decreased criminality. Additionally, NGOs and civil society groups were cited as resilience factors, because of their involvement in peacebuilding initiatives throughout the country. Peacebuilding and dialogue initiatives led by civil society organizations and local communities have proven effective at a small-scale in mitigating conflicts between herders and farmers. Interviewees also discussed anti-cult groups, stating that they have been a resilience in preventing youth involvement in cults. Some participants stated that religious leaders have played an important role in countering the messaging of Boko Haram.

⁷² “Nigeria’s New Threat: Guns, Cows and Clashes Over Land”, Onubogu, O., U.S. Institute of Peace, April 2017.

Population and Demographics (Second Most Vulnerable Pillar)

Vulnerabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tensions between ethnic and religious groups• Population growth; low rate of family planning; forced and early marriage• Food insecurity• Climate change and environmental degradation
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Displacement due to conflict• Conflicts between ethnic and religious groups• Land- and resource-based conflicts

Vulnerabilities and Risks

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with a population of more than 185 million people.⁷³ It is a highly ethnically and religiously diverse country, with no one group making up a majority of the population. The largest ethnic groups are the Hausa-Fulani (estimated to be 29 percent of the population), the Yoruba (21 percent), the Igbo (19 percent) and the Ijaw (10 percent), followed by the Kanuri (4 percent), Ibibio (3.5 percent), Tiv (2.5 percent), and hundreds of smaller ethnic groups.⁷⁴ Muslims and Christians each make up around half of the population, with indigenous and other religions making up less than two percent of the religious population.⁷⁵ Religious and ethnic divisions roughly correspond to geographic divisions in the country; the North is largely home to Muslim groups such as the Hausa-Fulani, while the Southwest is home to the Yoruba and the Southeast is home to the predominantly Christian Igbo.

Nigeria has a history of sectarian violence, and conflict continues to occur along ethnic, religious and geographic lines. In many cases it is difficult to separate ethnic, religious and regional conflicts or grievances, as many of these identities overlap. In the Middle Belt states such as Kaduna and Plateau, violent inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflict has occurred between Muslims and

Christians. In the Niger Delta, the resurgence of pro-Biafra sentiment has relied on a discourse of secession based on the region’s ethnic and religious makeup. In Cross River State, fieldwork participants highlighted the prevalence of an “indigene vs. non-indigene” divide among ethnic groups. Throughout the country, the rhetoric of a North-South divide continues to be salient, particularly in areas where ethnic or religious identities correspond with geographic disparities in resources or services.

Key population and demographic issues identified by fieldwork participants also included youth unemployment, population growth, forced and early marriage, and inadequate access to infrastructure and services. Drug use and the abuse of substances such as codeine cough syrup were also highlighted as a concern, particularly in the Northeast region where vulnerable populations turn to drug use to cope with trauma and stress.

The high rate of unemployment and lack of economic and vocational opportunities for the youth population were key vulnerabilities highlighted by participants in the fieldwork. Nigeria has a large and growing youth population: in 2017, 44 percent of the population was under the age of 14 while only four percent was above the age of

⁷³ “Population, total”, World Bank
⁷⁴ “The World Factbook: Nigeria”, CIA

⁷⁵ “Global Religious Futures Project: Nigeria”, Pew Research Center

60.⁷⁶ As of 2012, around 11.1 million youth between the ages of 15 and 24 were unemployed, and a majority of these were located in rural areas.⁷⁷ Interviewees throughout the country asserted that youth unemployment is a primary driver of criminality, extremism, and drug use in Nigeria.

Concerns around youth unemployment are further exacerbated by Nigeria's high rate of population growth and low rate of family planning. Nigeria's population is growing quickly at a rate of 2.62 percent per year,⁷⁸ and a 2017 report by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs projects that by 2050 Nigeria will have surpassed the United States to become the third-most populous country in the world.⁷⁹ Interviewees throughout the country highlighted potential risks associated with population growth, including increased pressures on social services and resources and an increase in criminality or extremism. The use of contraception and family planning remains low. Although fertility rates have declined since their peak in 1980, the total fertility rate for Nigeria was 5.6 children per woman in 2015.⁸⁰ Contraceptive use remains low, although knowledge of family planning methods is relatively high. In the 2013 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, implemented by the National Population Commission, 85 percent of all women and 95 percent of men reported knowing at least one form of contraception, but only 16 percent of women reported using any form of contraception.⁸¹ Rates of contraceptive use are lower among rural women, and the North East and North West regions reported the lowest levels of contraceptive use among married women (3.2 and 4.3 percent, respectively).⁸² Limited access to reproductive health services, cultural stigma, religious norms

⁷⁶ "World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision", UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

⁷⁷ "Youth Unemployment in Nigeria: A Situation Analysis", Akande, T., Brookings, September 2014.

⁷⁸ "Population growth (annual %)", World Bank

⁷⁹ "World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision", UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

⁸⁰ "Fertility rate, total (births per woman)", World Bank

and low levels of education are prominent barriers to accessing contraception. In addition, 55.7 percent of married women in Nigeria reported that their husbands made their healthcare decisions without their input, impeding their decision making around family planning.⁸³ However, interviewees in several regions noted a growing acceptance toward family planning due to economic pressures caused by the recent recession.

"Many people have 4 wives, 8 children per wife averagely. So many families are suffering due to this lack of family planning, this is where some of the challenges come in. There are not adequate resources to take care of all these children."

- Women Leaders, Bauchi State

Forced and early marriage was also a concern identified by fieldwork participants. As of 2013, 42.1 percent of women age 18-22 were married before the age of 18, and the mean age at first marriage was 15.9 years.⁸⁴ In northeastern Nigeria, interviewees reported that forced and early marriages are particularly prevalent in IDP camps, where families encourage marriage to cover up cases of pregnancy, rape and sexual abuse.

Throughout the country, fieldwork participants expressed concerns around inadequate access to quality social services, namely education and healthcare. There are significant disparities between healthcare resources in rural and urban areas, as many of the country's hospitals are located in state capitals and larger urban areas.⁸⁵ In addition, poor funding at the local level,

⁸¹ "Nigeria: Demographic and Health Survey", USAID, 2013.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ "Social Institutions & Gender Index: Nigeria", OECD

⁸⁴ "Basic Profile of Child Marriage in Nigeria", Chata, M. and Quentin, W., World Bank, March 2016.

⁸⁵ "Infrastructural Distribution of Healthcare Services in Nigeria: An Overview", Ademiluyi, I. and Aluko-Arowolo, S. O., Journal of Geography and Regional Planning, May 2009.

mismanagement and a lack of training and material resources have often resulted in inadequate primary health care at the local level throughout the country.⁸⁶ The northeast region of Nigeria has historically seen the lowest numbers of secondary and tertiary care facilities,⁸⁷ and the ongoing conflict in that area has further taken a toll on healthcare facilities. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that one-third of the 700 health facilities in Borno State have been totally destroyed and another third are nonfunctioning.⁸⁸ In addition, insecurity and displacement due to conflict has reduced access to routine medical care, including immunizations and prenatal and neonatal care. Interviewees also identified expensive healthcare costs as a barrier to accessing services and cited examples of health workers charging patients for services and medications which are supposed to be free or subsidized.

“On this, I will say the government is trying [doing their best]. There are health care facilities in southern Kaduna and there are drugs but unfortunately, the health workers demand money for drugs even when it is clearly written on the label that the drugs are free and not to be sold.”

- Religious Leader, Kaduna State

Similarly, in the area of education, geographic and gender disparities persist. The northern zones have lower rates of primary school enrollment and higher percentages of out-of-school children than zones in the south.⁸⁹ Literacy rates and the net primary school enrollment rate for girls in Nigeria

remain below that of boys, and girls are less likely to complete secondary and tertiary education.⁹⁰ Women and girls in rural areas also face lower rates of literacy and education compared to women and girls in urban areas.

In the Northeast, fieldwork participants highlighted the conditions of the internally displaced persons (IDP) in the area. As of August 2017, there were more than 1.6 million IDPs displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency,⁹¹ with the highest numbers in Borno State.⁹² Interviewees from Borno State reported that IDP camps in the region often face poor sanitation, disease outbreaks, and limited access to potable water and healthcare. In addition, participants in Borno and Adamawa reported that the IDP camps have seen high levels of crime, drug abuse, and sexual violence and rape.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Fieldwork participants reported that civil society organizations are involved in peacebuilding, humanitarian aid delivery, economic development and awareness-raising around issues such as family planning. In Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, one interviewee particularly highlighted the work of FHI 360 on family planning.⁹³ In some regions, religious and traditional leaders play an important role in promoting peaceful interfaith relationships and easing social tensions. In Abia and Imo States, several participants viewed the large youth population as a potential driver of economic growth or positive engagement in politics rather than a vulnerability factor. Youth-focused programming, including school programs to discourage recruitment by cults and criminal groups, is also a source of resilience.

⁸⁶ “Assessment of Primary Health Care Facilities’ Service Readiness in Nigeria”, Abayomi, S., BMC Health Services Research, March 2017.

⁸⁷ “Infrastructural Distribution of Healthcare Services in Nigeria: An Overview”, Ademiluyi, I. and Aluko-Arowolo, S. O., Journal of Geography and Regional Planning, May 2009.

⁸⁸ “Full impact of devastated health services in north-eastern Nigeria revealed by WHO report”, World Health Organization, December 2016.

⁸⁹ “Girls’ Education in Nigeria”, British Council, 2014.

⁹⁰ “Girls’ Education in Nigeria”, British Council, 2014.

⁹¹ “Nigeria Situation”, UNHCR

⁹² “Nigeria”, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

⁹³ “Nigeria”, FHI 360

Participants in the field research reported that civil society groups and NGOs are a source of resilience in the country, especially regarding sensitization around issues such as FGM, family planning, and early marriage. Government agencies and initiatives working to improve infrastructure and

social services were also highlighted as resilience factors. Additionally, women's groups have played an important role in awareness-raising activities around social issues. Interviewees also reported high levels of social cohesion between ethnic and religious groups throughout the country.

Politics and Governance (Third Most Vulnerable Pillar)

Vulnerabilities

- Underrepresentation of women and youth in political decision-making
- Perceptions of corruption and nepotism among political actors
- Ethnic and religious polarization during elections
- Perceptions of poor governance and lack of transparency
- Perceptions of clientelism and nepotism
- Manipulation of youth and women by politicians

Risks

- Elections and political violence

Vulnerabilities and Risks

Fieldwork participants stated that mistrust in the national government and a lack of legitimacy of state governments due to widespread perceptions of corruption and nepotism are key political vulnerabilities in Nigeria. Some participants also reported poor infrastructure and a lack of public services such as water and electricity, stating that these concerns contribute to feelings of disconnect between local populations and the state and national governments.

Women continue to be significantly underrepresented in politics and decision-making processes. According to a report from the National Bureau of Statistics, in 2015 only 7.5 percent of seats in the National Assembly were held by women.⁹⁴ In addition, six of the 36 cabinet members were women.⁹⁵ At the state and local levels, women are similarly underrepresented: women held only 5.6 percent of seats in State Houses of Assembly in 2015, and made up 4.4 percent of Local Government Chairpersons.⁹⁶ In 2015 Aisha Alhassan of Taraba State made history by becoming the first female governor in Nigeria’s history. Fieldwork participants stated that a lack of awareness and civic education has undermined

female political empowerment. Additionally, women often lack the resources necessary to participate in the political process.

Legislation around promoting gender equality has also been shut down within the government. The 2010 Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill was rejected in 2016 on the grounds of violating ‘certain biblical and sharia principles’.⁹⁷ At the same time, there remain no restrictions on female members being able to run for political office or vote.⁹⁸

Recent elections have been deemed competitive and mostly free from interference, and the 2015 elections marked the first transition of power to an opposition party at the national level.⁹⁹ However, the electoral process in Nigeria continues to be hindered by political violence, reports of vote-buying or intimidation, and logistical challenges.¹⁰⁰ Youth – including members of cult groups – are often involved in political violence, especially in the Niger Delta. Some interviewees reported low confidence in the electoral system, stating that elections are rigged, and votes do not matter.

⁹⁴ “2015 Statistical Report on Women and Men in Nigeria”, National Bureau of Statistics, November 2016.

⁹⁵ “Nigeria 2016 Human Rights Report”, U.S. Department of State

⁹⁶ “2015 Statistical Report on Women and Men in Nigeria”, National Bureau of Statistics, November 2016.

⁹⁷ “Nigeria’s gender equality bill was rejected. Here’s why we’re still hopeful”, Sambamurty, N., ONE, March 2016.

⁹⁸ “Nigeria 2016 Human Rights Report”, U.S. Department of State

⁹⁹ “Freedom in the World 2017: Nigeria”, Freedom House

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

“Politics in Nigeria is a very dirty game, the way our politicians are carrying out politics has made good people to stay away. They have made politics a do or die affair where people are willing to kill to achieve their ambition”

– Youth Leader, Warri, Delta State

Corruption and a lack of transparency continue to hamper governance in Nigeria. Transparency International’s 2016 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Nigeria 136th out of 176 countries.¹⁰¹ This pervasive corruption has contributed to a lack of confidence in elected officials. In one survey conducted by Afrobarometer in 2014-2015, 70 percent of Nigerian respondents reported that public officials are more motivated “to serve their own political ambitions” than to serve the people.¹⁰² In the same survey, 67 percent of respondents reported that they “disapprove” or “strongly disapprove” of the performance of their representative, and 63 percent reported that they “disapprove” or “strongly disapprove” of their local government councilor’s performance.¹⁰³

The characterization of the Nigerian state as a ‘rentier state’ provides clarity on why such low levels of legitimacy and poor levels of governance persist. This is particularly evident with regional administrations in the Niger Delta region where the oil industry is particularly prevalent.¹⁰⁴ Weak institutions are evidenced through a lack of regulation, for example around environmental regulations (e.g. Oil in Navigable Waters Act of 1968) and a lack of rights afforded to local communities to govern its natural resources (e.g. Land Use Act of 1979).¹⁰⁵ Interviewees from the Niger Delta reported perceptions that politicians profit from oil exploration, while local populations receive little benefit from the industry.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Fieldwork participants reported that civil society groups and NGOs have been resilience factors, specifically citing awareness activities about female political participation. Civil society has also played an important role in educating the population on legislation and clearing up misunderstandings or misinformation.

¹⁰¹ “Corruption Perceptions Index 2016”, Transparency International, January 2017.

¹⁰² “Job performance of MPs, local councilors: Are representatives serving voters or themselves?”, Aiko, R., Akinocho, H., and Lekorwe, M., Afrobarometer, September 2016.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ “The Rentier State: Oil-related Legislation and Conflict in the Niger Delta”, Omeje, K., Conflict, Security & Development, January 2007.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Economics and Resources (Fourth Most Vulnerable Pillar)

Vulnerabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High rate of youth unemployment• Poor infrastructure and inadequate access to social services, including education and healthcare• High rate of poverty• Impacts of economic recession• Barriers to financing and credit for women• Illicit economic activities, including drug trafficking, oil bunkering, and cyber-criminality
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic recession

Vulnerabilities and Risks

Nigeria has one of the largest economies in Africa, and has one of the highest GDPs per capita in the region. The Nigerian economy is heavily reliant on revenues from the extraction of oil and natural gas; these sectors comprise around 35 percent of GDP, 90 percent of export revenues, and a majority of government revenues.¹⁰⁶ While the extractive industries play a key role in the economy, more than two-thirds of Nigerians rely on agricultural production for their livelihood, including crop cultivation, fishing and animal husbandry.¹⁰⁷ The growth of the agricultural sector is hindered by challenges such as land pressures, poor access to credit, inadequate irrigation infrastructure, and insufficient storage and processing facilities.¹⁰⁸

Despite the country's status as an economic powerhouse in the region, much of the Nigerian population continues to face endemic poverty and underdevelopment. The UN Development Programme's Human Development Index ranked Nigeria 152nd out of 188 countries in 2016, and more than half of the population lives below the poverty line.¹⁰⁹ Malnutrition is particularly acute in

the Northeast due to the ongoing humanitarian crisis caused by the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency. At the end of 2016, UNICEF estimated that 400,000 children in northeast Nigeria were at risk of severe acute malnutrition.¹¹⁰ The World Food Programme also reported that 4.7 million people in the Northeast are currently in need of emergency food assistance.¹¹¹ Throughout the country, agricultural production has not kept pace with population growth, leading to more dependence on food imports and greater vulnerability to food insecurity.¹¹² The economy has been in a recession since 2016, and fieldwork participants throughout the country reported that the resulting rise in food prices has seriously impacted food security, particularly in rural areas. The recession has also impacted salaries, and participants in several regions reported that civil servants have worked for months at a time without receiving a salary. Although the economy is slowly rebounding,¹¹³ the longer-term impacts of the recession continue to affect populations throughout the country.

¹⁰⁶ "Nigeria facts and figures", Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ "Nigeria at a glance", Food and Agriculture Organization

¹⁰⁹ "Human Development Indicators: Nigeria", UN Development Programme

¹¹⁰ "400,000 children in north-east Nigeria at risk of severe acute malnutrition", Vittozzi, K., UNICEF, December 2016.

¹¹¹ "Nigeria", World Food Programme

¹¹² "Nigeria at a glance", Food and Agriculture Organization

¹¹³ "Africa's two largest economies are making a comeback", Kazeem, Y. and Chutel, L., Quartz Africa, September 2017.

“An average village person is always in recession; people don’t eat food as before. In fact, the main threat to rural dwellers in Adamawa today is that poverty is on the increase as the recession continues. Something urgent needs to be done about this.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Adamawa

Insecurity has also taken a toll on development and on the productivity of the Nigerian economy, both by reducing economic activity and by redirecting funding towards mitigating and responding to conflict. For example, a 2015 study by Mercy Corps estimated that four Middle Belt states that were affected by farmer-herder conflicts lost out on an average 47 percent of taxes – Plateau State alone lost an estimated 75 percent of potential state revenue.¹¹⁴ According to Mercy Corps, a sustained peace between herders and farmers in the Middle Belt could result in US \$13.7 billion in macroeconomic progress.¹¹⁵ The Institute for Economics and Peace has also calculated that “violence containment” is costing Nigeria 5.5 percent of its GDP.¹¹⁶ In both the Northeast and the Middle Belt, fieldwork participants reported that insecurity and displacement had forced businesses to close and prevented farmers from accessing their fields, affecting livelihoods and food security. In Adamawa, interviewees also reported that the influx of IDPs fleeing the Boko Haram insurgency had raised prices for food and goods in the state.

Nigeria has also been impacted by climate change, environmental pressures, and increasing competition for land and resources. Fieldwork participants identified flooding, desertification, deforestation, soil erosion and changes in rainfall

¹¹⁴ “The Economic Costs of Conflict in Nigeria”, Mercy Corps
¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ “The Economic Cost of Violence Containment”, Institute for Economics and Peace

¹¹⁷ “Land Conflict, Climate Change, and Violence in Nigeria: Patterns, Mapping, and Evolution”, Conroy, S., NSRP

patterns as key vulnerabilities, and noted that these trends have decreased agricultural outputs. Environmental pressures are also closely linked to conflict in the country. The Middle Belt region has seen perennial land-based conflicts between pastoralist and herder communities, for example, and oil spills in the Niger Delta have created tensions over impacts on the health and livelihoods of local communities.¹¹⁷ There are concerns that, as climate change intensifies and competition for land increases, these conflicts could become more common.

“Farming and fishing are the main Rivers occupations but with the advent of oil/gas, this has resulted in the pollution of water, land, air for over three decades.”

- Civil Society Leader, Rivers State

Women remain underrepresented in formal employment in Nigeria, both in the private and public sectors.¹¹⁸ Fieldwork participants noted that barriers to women’s economic advancement include poor access to financial services and credit. In addition, women face discriminatory practices around inheritance and land ownership.¹¹⁹ In the Northeast, for example, only four percent of women own land compared to 52 percent of men.¹²⁰ As noted above, women and girls also have lower rates of literacy and school enrollment.¹²¹ However, women do reportedly have increasing access to financing programs operated by civil society groups and the Nigerian government. For example, in a meeting with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MOWASD), government officials highlighted the Ministry’s involvement in supporting grassroots economic cooperatives for

¹¹⁸ “Gender in Nigeria Report 2012”, British Council

¹¹⁹ “Social Institutions & Gender Index: Nigeria”, OECD

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ “Girls’ Education in Nigeria”, British Council, 2014.

women that have benefitted more than 6,000 women in more than 20 states.

Youth unemployment also remains a pressing concern in Nigeria. Fieldwork participants throughout the country connected the high rate of youth unemployment to criminality and drug abuse and noted that poverty increases youth vulnerability to recruitment by extremist or criminal groups or manipulation by politicians.

“Growing up as a little boy, we looked up to our mentors. When we went through school, jobs were looking for us, rather than us looking for jobs. The present day, unemployment is the order of the day. A dull mind is a devil’s workshop. If the youths are not engaged [this leads to violence]”

- Development Worker, Delta State

Nigeria is also vulnerable to illicit economic activities, including drug trafficking (primarily cocaine and heroin *en route* to European

markets),¹²² human trafficking,¹²³ and arms trading.¹²⁴ Particularly in the Niger Delta, oil bunkering – the practice of tapping pipelines to steal oil for smuggling – is a key concern. In 2015, it was estimated that 15 percent of Nigeria’s daily oil production is lost to oil bunkering, costing the government up to \$1.7 billion per month in lost revenues.¹²⁵ According to participants in the Niger Delta, however, oil bunkering is often viewed as a source of resilience for local communities by providing youth with employment and income.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

According to interviewees, NGOs and other civil society organizations are involved in economic development. Financing and credit programs aimed at the economic empowerment of women and youth are also a source of resilience. In addition to the cooperative program identified by MOWASD, one civil society leader in Bauchi State particularly highlighted the work of the Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) in promoting women’s education and economic advancement.¹²⁶

¹²² “Transnational Organized Crime in the West African Region”, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2005.

¹²³ “2016 Trafficking in Persons Report: Nigeria”, U.S. Department of State

¹²⁴ “Transnational Organized Crime in the West African Region”, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2005.

¹²⁵ “A Primer on Nigeria’s Oil Bunkering”, Campbell, J., Council on Foreign Relations, August 2015.

¹²⁶ “Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria”, Georgetown University

Rule of Law (Least Vulnerable Pillar)

Vulnerabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perceptions of corruption, bias, impunity and ineffectiveness within the judiciary and security forces• Lack of resources for the judicial system
Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incidents of corruption

Vulnerabilities and Risks

Interviewees during the fieldwork identified a lack of confidence and mistrust in the judiciary as a widespread concern across the country, citing perceptions of corruption, bias, impunity, and ineffectiveness. Corruption is widespread in Nigeria, which affects the functioning of both the security forces and the legal system, and undermines accountability. Forty-five percent of respondents in a 2014/2015 survey by Afrobarometer said that most or all judges and magistrates are perceived as corrupt, and 40 percent of respondents who had had contact with the court system reported having paid a bribe.¹²⁷ In the same survey, only 38 percent of Nigerians reported that they trust courts of law “somewhat” or “a lot.”¹²⁸ Fieldwork participants also noted that the judiciary is not perceived to be independent of the executive, and that access to justice is often hindered by slow processing times. Rule of law institutions in Nigeria are hampered by lengthy

“Not all the people would like to take their cases to the police or security forces do so. But some do, and most of the time you hear people say that only those that have influence in government are relying on police, because they can control them with their power or influence. You’re untouchable if you’re from a royal family because those are the elite.”

- Islamic Scholar, Bauchi State

¹²⁷ “Ambitious SDG goal confronts challenging realities: Access to justice is still elusive for many Africans”, Logan, C., Afrobarometer, March 2017.

detention times, allegations of arbitrary arrests, understaffing and a general lack of resources.¹²⁹

As a result of this low level of confidence, fieldwork participants reported that local populations often turn to local or traditional leaders to mediate disputes, or choose to pursue justice through alternative courts such as Sharia commissions, or paying deities in their communities to adjudicate their case. This has also, in some cases, contributed to the phenomenon of mob justice in Nigeria.

Fear around reporting on issues of gender-based violence, particularly rape, was a salient issue across Nigeria. With a culture of silence influencing low reporting, many women during fieldwork interviews detailed the reluctance of police to take rape allegations seriously – with cases of the police laying blame on the survivor when trying to make a statement at a police station. Similarly, the cultural taboo of talking about rape to traditional leaders such as chiefs led one FGD participant in Delta State to surmise, “Women face being ostracized if they report [rape] to the chief. You better stay on your own and shut your eyes.” This lack of faith in either formal or informal judicial systems to address issues of gender-based violence remains a significant vulnerability within the country.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Fieldwork participants highlighted the important role played by local and traditional leaders in

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ “Nigeria 2016 Human Rights Report”, U.S. Department of State

dispute mediation as a source of resilience. However, several interviewees did note that the legitimacy of these traditional institutions is undermined when local leaders are perceived to be corrupt or co-opted by the interests of the state or

politicians. In several regions, NGOs and civil society organizations are also involved in awareness-raising around legal rights and access to justice.

External Factors

Nigeria is actively engaged with a number of regional organizations, including ECOWAS, and the AU, and also belongs to multiple international organizations such as the UN, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The expansion of the Boko Haram insurgency to the neighboring countries of Cameroon, Niger, and Chad continues to cause concern for the potential of renewed cross-border attacks in the northeast region. Due to an interplay of factors, including Nigeria's implementation of the 2013 State of Emergency, subsequent crackdown efforts, Boko Haram's quest for territorial expansion, and the fluidity of Nigeria's northern and eastern borders, the aforementioned countries now function as "rear operating bases" from which Boko Haram attacks are carried out.¹³⁰ Boko Haram's regional and international association with al-Qaeda affiliates and the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) also pose an ongoing security risk.¹³¹ Nigeria is involved in regional and international counter-terrorism operations, including the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) of the Lake Chad Basin countries and Benin¹³², and the U.S.-backed Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership.¹³³ Drug trafficking, human trafficking, and the growing small arms and light weapons (SALW) trade – including Nigeria's role in wider regional criminal networks – are also security concerns in the country.

In the area of economics, Nigeria is impacted by changes in global commodity prices and the

activities of international financial institutions (IFIs). The World Bank has funded a number of projects in the country, such as an initiative to strengthen the mining sector's contribution to the economy¹³⁴ and a project to support and enhance the agricultural yield of small and medium scale farmers.¹³⁵ Particularly in the Niger Delta, Nigeria is also the site of oil and gas operations run by a number of multinational corporations (MNCs).

Finally, Nigeria faces pressures from environmental degradation, stemming from human activities such as deforestation. Nigeria is also vulnerable to the effects of global climate change, including changes in rainfall pattern, cycles of drought and flooding, coastal erosion, and sea level rise.¹³⁶ As the Nigerian economy is reliant on the oil and agricultural sectors, these climate pressures have the potential to exacerbate economic vulnerabilities, and negatively impact food security and livelihoods.¹³⁷

¹³⁰ "Boko Haram: Recruitment, Financing, and Arms Trafficking in the Lake Chad Region", Zenn, J., Combating Terrorism Center, October 2014.

¹³¹ "The Regional Problem of Boko Haram", Comolli, V., Global Politics and Strategy, July 2015.

¹³² "African-led counter-terrorism measures against Boko Haram", European Union, March 2015.

¹³³ "Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership (TSCTP)", U.S. Department of State

¹³⁴ "Nigeria: Mineral Sector Support for Economic Diversification Project", World Bank

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ "National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action on Climate Change for Nigeria", Federal Ministry of Environment, November 2011.

¹³⁷ "Climate Change Adaptation and Conflict in Nigeria", Sayne, A., U.S. Institute of Peace, June 2011.

Gender Considerations

Women in Nigeria continue to face gender disparities and discrimination in both private and public life. Politically, women remain underrepresented in decision-making positions at the national, state and local levels. As noted above, a 2015 report from the National Bureau of Statistics found that only 7.5 percent of seats in the National Assembly were held by women.¹³⁸ In addition, six of the 36 cabinet members were women.¹³⁹ At the state and local levels, women are similarly underrepresented: women held only 5.6 percent of seats in State Houses of Assembly in 2015, and made up 4.4 percent of Local Government Chairpersons.¹⁴⁰ In addition, women remain underrepresented in judicial institutions. Women made up 26.2 percent of judges at the federal and state level and 37.4 percent of lawyers in Nigeria in 2015.¹⁴¹ Despite continued disparities in political and decision-making positions, however, some women do play an important role in exerting political pressure through Nigerian civil society, as evidenced by the high-profile Bring Back Our Girls campaign.

During interviews throughout the country, interviewees in the three regions stated that women have little political representation on the local or state level, but, to vary degrees, they play a role in political organizing, and were cited as a voice for restraint and peaceful behavior around elections. However, in certain regions, particularly in the northeast and parts of the Niger Delta, other participants said that women's knowledge about the electoral system was low and that their support could be bought by small material items, such as tomatoes and salt. Some noted that prevailing cultural and social norms, particularly in more religiously conservative areas, curtailed the ability

of women to become involved in the political sphere and that doing so would be perceived as threatened the cohesion of the family. Others interviewed, both in the men and women's FGDs, said that there were prevailing stigmas attached to women who "put themselves out in public and away from the home too much," and that those who ran for political office or attempted to challenge the status quo were often shamed by their communities for being "loose" or "disrespectful" to societal structures.

Despite these stigmas, many interviewed over the course of the field work noted that women have been a social resilience factor promoting peace during elections and organizing community discussions and town hall meetings about contentious issues such as land tenure. Participants in the Middle Belt and Niger Delta regions said that the involvement of women in politics had grown slowly and that, especially during elections, women can "sensitize the general populace to be peaceful, avoid violence and be of good behavior."

Economically, women remain underrepresented in formal employment, both in the private and public sectors. In 2007, only 32.5 percent of women were employed in the non-agricultural private sector.¹⁴² Barriers to formal employment for women include social and family pressures and lower levels of education and training.¹⁴³ In addition, many women face barriers to land ownership due to customary inheritance practices that privilege male inheritance. One report found that men are five times more likely to own land than women, despite the fact that women make up a majority of the rural workforce.¹⁴⁴ As a result, many women work in the

¹³⁸ "2015 Statistical Report on Women and Men in Nigeria", National Bureau of Statistics, November 2016.

¹³⁹ "Nigeria 2016 Human Rights Report", U.S. Department of State

¹⁴⁰ "2015 Statistical Report on Women and Men in Nigeria", National Bureau of Statistics, November 2016.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² "Gender in Nigeria Report 2012", British Council

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

informal sector, which offers lower wages and fewer labor protections.

During interviews conducted in the field, participants agreed that although women earned significantly less than men—if they are paid at all—and often worked much harder, they are one of the most important factors in the economic growth of Nigeria. Focus groups in the Middle Belt and the Niger Delta also mentioned that women have been effectively starting co-ops to save money to start their own businesses at a much higher rate than in the past. They noted that this is not only due to more opportunities becoming available at the national and local levels, but also the successful entrepreneurship efforts of women themselves, who often band together to finance each other as a start-up in markets and elsewhere. Although this was viewed as a positive development, many interviewed stated that it has not necessarily translated into greater empowerment or freedom in their societal structures or within their families. In the words of one woman interviewed: “Women in Nigeria, we are always suffering and smiling at the same time.”

Women throughout the country also face high rates of gender-based violence (GBV), and few states currently have legislation prohibiting sexual violence.¹⁴⁵ In 2015, the National Assembly passed the Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act, which aims to comprehensively address all forms of violence and discriminatory practices against women. However, the federal nature of the Nigerian state means that the VAPP Act is only applicable in Abuja FCT until states pass their own legislation.¹⁴⁶ In addition, in 2015 President Goodluck Jonathan signed a bill banning female genital mutilation (FGM). It is estimated that around 25 percent of Nigerian women have undergone FGM.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ “Nigeria 2016 Human Rights Report”, U.S. Department of State

¹⁴⁶ “Why Nigeria’s New Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act is Only the Beginning”, Anarado, C., Ventures Africa, June 2015.

During the field interviews in parts of the Niger Delta, the issue of FGM, both its prevalence and the negative impact that it has on women’s health and livelihoods was discussed in detail. Despite it being banned, it remains highly prevalent in certain states, both in the Niger Delta as well as in other parts of the country. Women in focus groups also confirmed that national level legislation, like the VAPP Act, has not been implemented or, in most cases, even discussed at the state level. Many women mentioned that they were unaware that it even existed and doubted that it would have any impact on their lives unless there was a greater push by local leaders, particularly traditional and religious leaders, to introduce it to their communities.

In terms of gender-based violence (GBV), over the last five years, reports have included incidents of rape and sexual violence, domestic violence, child abuse, abductions, crime, and violence due to insecurity. Data shows that sexual abuse, domestic violence and child abuse in Nigeria is most often perpetrated by known and trusted men and boys, including male family members, neighbors and authority figures including religious leaders and members of the security forces.¹⁴⁸

Finally, GBV was identified as the main vulnerability for women and girls in the three focus regions (Middle Belt, Niger Delta, Northeast). Rape, particularly rape of underage girls, and other forms of GBV are widespread, and participants in the Women’s FGD in the Niger Delta reported that the prevalence of GBV had, in some communities, led to the implementation of a 6 pm curfew. These women also highlighted the vulnerability of street children to sexual abuse and early pregnancy. Many interviewees noted that, despite the pervasive nature of GBV in the region, survivors often face social stigma and family pressure to

¹⁴⁷ “Nigeria’s female genital mutilation ban is important precedent, say campaigners”, Topping, A., The Guardian, May 2015.

¹⁴⁸ “Impacts of Conflict, Violence on Women and Girls in Nigeria’s Plateau State”, Taft, P, Blyth, H, and Murphy, C., The Fund for Peace, November 2016.

marry the perpetrator or settle cases out of court. One participant reported that police often question the victim's credibility or fail to effectively follow up on reported cases of GBV. These factors have contributed to an environment in which GBV is routinely underreported and, when it is reported, rarely punished.

Women and girls are also deeply impacted by conflict and insecurity in Nigeria, both through direct violence and through indirect consequences such as loss of livelihood and displacement. In the Northeast, women and girls have been particularly impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency and counterinsurgency operations, as Boko Haram tactics commonly include mass rape, abduction, and forced marriage. The most high-profile of these abductions was the case of the so-called Chibok Girls in 2014, when Boko Haram abducted more than 200 girls from a school in Borno state. Women and girls have also notably been used by Boko Haram as suicide bombers in Northern Nigeria, a trend which has grown since mid-2014.¹⁴⁹ During interviews in the northeast, both women and men noted various tactics employed by Boko Haram insurgents to lure vulnerable young women and girls into becoming suicide bombers, including preying on girls displaced in IDP camps, families that are in dire financial need, and the utilization of various other psychological tactics to compel their participation. The Boko Haram insurgency and counterinsurgency operations in the Northeast have also led to mass displacement in the region, with the UN estimating that 1.7 million people are internally displaced in northern Nigeria by the insurgency as of July 2017.¹⁵⁰ Displacement can interrupt girls' education and make women and girls more vulnerable to economic and physical exploitation and abuse.

¹⁴⁹ "Confronting the Unthinkable: The Complex Dimensions Behind Women and Child Suicide Bombers in Northern Nigeria", Taft, P. and Lawrence, K., The Fund for Peace, February 2016.

¹⁵⁰ "Nigeria Situation", UNHCR

¹⁵¹ "Impacts of Conflict, Violence on Women and Girls in Nigeria's Plateau State", Taft, P, Blyth, H, and Murphy, C., The Fund for Peace, November 2016.

In the Middle Belt and North-Central Nigeria, women and girls have also been impacted by intercommunal violence, including herder-farmer conflicts. Although overall levels of violence have fallen in the Middle Belt in recent years, past and ongoing displacement due to violence can have long-term effects on women and girls due to loss of livelihood, disrupted education and economic disempowerment, which in turn increases their vulnerability to abuse.¹⁵¹ Data analysis by the Fund for Peace has also found that Kano state also has a particularly high level of sexual and physical abuse of underage girls, which was confirmed during interviews held in the region. As of late 2016, more than 40 percent of all conflict-related incidents involving women and girls involved girls under the age of 18.¹⁵² As noted above, many of these cases involved male family members or neighbors, but a majority took place outside the home, including in schools, shops and places of worship.¹⁵³ This highlights the vulnerability of women and girls not only in their private lives, but also in public spaces. In interviews in the Northeast and Middle Belt, women noted that even the simple task of going to a community well, carrying firewood for cooking, farming on communal plots, or visiting a toilet outside of their homes, made women vulnerable to attacks. As one participant noted: "In Nigeria, there truly are no safe spaces for women and girls."

The Niger Delta states have also reported high levels of gender-based violence – in fact, in 2016, Rivers state reported the highest number of incidents affecting women and girls. In addition to sexual abuse and domestic violence, women and girls in the Niger Delta continue to be affected by criminality – including armed robbery and abductions - and cult and gang activity.¹⁵⁴ There

¹⁵² "Child Sexual Assault and Violence in Nigeria's Kano State", Taft, P. and Blyth, H., The Fund for Peace, October 2016.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ "The Abuse of Trust in Nigeria's Rivers State", Taft, P. and Blyth, H., The Fund for Peace, October 2016.

have also been reported cases of women affected by political and electoral violence and abuses by security forces. Interviewees in the Niger Delta noted that women in the region have effectively mobilized and advocated for their safety and rights in public and private spaces, but without wider societal support – both in terms of legislation that’s implemented and enforced as well as from within their own communities – they are only able to do so much to affect change.

Despite the enormous risks and pressures to their health and livelihood that women and girls face every day in Nigeria, many women, as well as men, noted that they form one of Nigeria’s most essential resiliencies. From the critical economic roles that women and girls perform both inside and outside the home, to their ability to mobilize quickly and effectively across ethnic and social groups, to the successful efforts to enact legislation like the VAPP and advocate for change, to the rise of women-founded and managed businesses and cooperatives, women form “the backbone of Nigeria,” according to one interviewee. One man, in

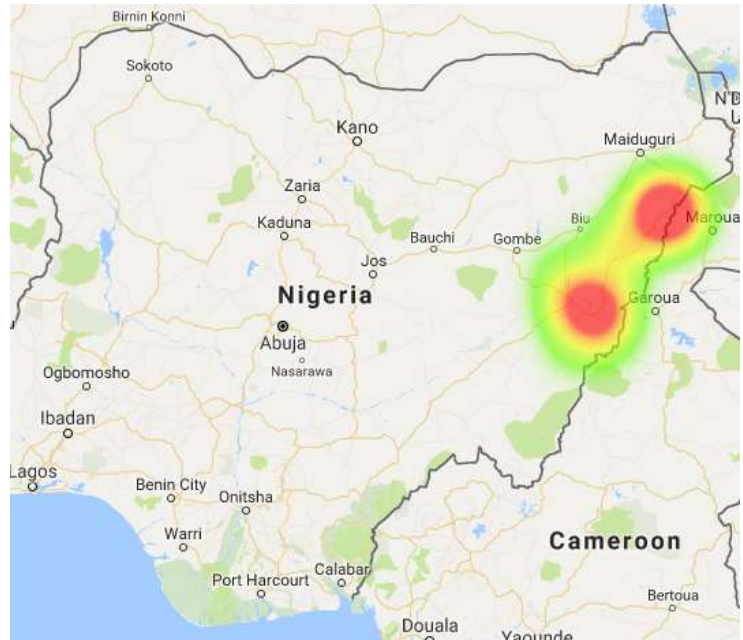
an interview conducted in Abuja, noted that it was a female doctor in Lagos that had, essentially, “stopped Ebola in its tracks” and that, “women here are much more formidable than men, nine times out of ten!” Another interviewee noted that what holds women back most often cannot simply be attributed to men, as women in many parts of the country “enforce outdated patriarchal notions of power and control just as much, if not more so, than men.” However, as interviews with civil society advocates throughout the country highlighted, the more information that is made available to women and girls, the stronger they become in advocating for their own rights. Nigeria’s “culture of silence,” when it comes to GBV and discrimination must be eroded from “the inside out,” said one woman interviewed in the Middle Belt. Similar sentiments were echoed in the Northeast and the Niger Delta as well. Essentially, many participants said, when women and girls in Nigeria are given the information, resources, and community support that they need, they become the single most powerful agents of change for their societies and, by extension, the country as a whole.

Sub-National Level Vulnerabilities, Risks and Resilience Factors: Observations by Region

Northeast Region

Adamawa State

Adamawa State is located in northeast Nigeria, along the border with Cameroon. It also shares borders with Borno, Gombe and Taraba States. As of 2012, Adamawa State had a projected population of 3.7 million people.¹⁵⁵ Like other states in northern Nigeria, the population of Adamawa is majority Muslim and the largest ethnic group is the Hausa-Fulani. Primary economic activities in the region include fishing, livestock raising, and farming, including the production of cash crops such as cotton and groundnuts.¹⁵⁶



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Poor infrastructure and limited access to social services
- Poverty
- High rates of unemployment
- Underrepresentation of women & youth in political decision-making
- Perceptions of corruption and nepotism among political actors
- Ethnic and religious divisions
- Underutilization of family planning and high rate of population growth
- Gender-based violence
- Climate change and environmental pressures, including desertification and decreasing rainfall
- Food insecurity
- Perceptions of corruption among judicial institutions and security forces
- Lack of confidence in judicial institutions

¹⁵⁵ "Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012", National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

¹⁵⁶ "Adamawa", Encyclopedia Britannica

Event-Driven Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boko Haram insurgency and counter-insurgency activities • Herder-farmer conflicts • Economic recession
Social and Institutional Resilience Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigilante groups • NGOs and civil society organizations • Local and traditional leaders • Social media

Security

The primary security concern identified by fieldwork participants in Adamawa State is the ongoing Boko Haram insurgency in the northeast region. Interviewees attributed the rise of Boko Haram to grievances stemming from widespread poverty, unemployment and a lack of education, noting that Boko Haram members often distribute money and gifts as a means of recruitment.

The Boko Haram insurgency has contributed to a large number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Adamawa State¹⁵⁷, and fieldwork participants reported that IDP camps in the region suffer from high rates of crime and sexual violence. Participants in both Women’s Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) highlighted the prevalence of rape and forced marriages in the IDP camps. Others noted that living conditions in the IDP camps are often poor, and that material and financial resources intended for the camps are sometimes diverted due to corruption.

In addition to the Boko Haram insurgency, security concerns in Adamawa State include criminality, drug abuse, sexual violence, and herder-farmer conflicts. Interviewees in the Men’s FGD identified a gang known as Yan-Shilla as a security threat due to their involvement in drug abuse, rape, and criminality in the region. Participants noted that many of the members of Yan-Shilla are young boys

who have dropped out of school or have no education.

In response to these security threats, many communities in Adamawa State have formed vigilante groups, and interviewees reported that these groups are largely viewed as contributing positively to security in the state. Participants said that vigilante members are often considered to be more effective and less corrupt than the police and other security forces. Vigilante groups are also reportedly involved in mediation and the settlement of civil cases.

Population and Demographics

Adamawa State is one of the most ethnically diverse states in Nigeria, with an estimated 80 ethno-linguistic groups.¹⁵⁸ Although inter-group tensions do not appear to be a primary source of conflict in the state, ethnic and religious identities have historically been a salient point of division and have been manipulated in the political sphere, particularly during election periods.¹⁵⁹

Key issues identified by fieldwork participants include youth unemployment, poor infrastructure (particularly roads) and limited access to social services such as education. Several interviewees identified unemployment and low levels of education as contributing to youth involvement in criminality and vulnerability to radicalization and

¹⁵⁷ “Nigeria”, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

¹⁵⁸ “Adamawa State: Election Security Threat Assessment”, CLEEN Foundation, January 2012.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

recruitment by Boko Haram. States in northeastern Nigeria have historically suffered from lower rates of education and health infrastructure, and insecurity in the region has further exacerbated this trend by destroying or forcing the closure of schools and health clinics, and displacing populations.¹⁶⁰ One recent report from the World Bank has estimated that the conflict has caused more than US\$ 57.9 million (₦11,595 million) in damages to education infrastructure and US\$21.1 million (₦4,213 million) in damages to health infrastructure in Adamawa State.¹⁶¹

As noted above, Adamawa State has also seen a significant influx of IDPs due to insecurity in the region. Fieldwork participants reported that this migration and the establishment of IDP camps in the state has contributed to greater insecurity and criminality, and has put pressure on resources, including access to food.

Finally, Adamawa has experienced high rates of population growth and has an above-average fertility rate.¹⁶² Women in the state have an average of 5.8 children and only four percent of women reportedly use contraceptives.¹⁶³ Participants in the Women's FGD reported that family planning is becoming more widely practiced in the state due to economic pressures caused by the recession. Forced and early marriage were also highlighted as a concern in the state, particularly in IDP camps.¹⁶⁴

Politics and Governance

Fieldwork participants in Adamawa State expressed a sense of marginalization and disconnect from the state and national governments, citing grievances around poor infrastructure, unpaid salaries for civil servants

and unfulfilled campaign promises. Participants in the Men's FGD also stated that government bodies have failed to be proactive in addressing conflict and development concerns, instead taking a "fire-fighter approach" once crises have escalated. Manipulation along ethnic lines, endemic corruption and nepotism among politicians and political appointees were also identified as primary concerns.

"The people of the north are mostly abandoned and neglected by the politicians. Most of the politicians don't even know the problems of their people. The road from Yola to Bauchi and other related infrastructures are very bad. Politicians use the people for their campaigns and abandon them."

- Women's focus group discussion, Adamawa

Women and youth remain underrepresented in formal political decision-making in Adamawa State. Interviewees in the Women's FGD noted that while women are active voters, they often lack the opportunities and support to hold political positions.

Economics and Resources

The economy of Adamawa State is primarily agricultural; important crops include cotton, groundnuts, maize, yam, cassava, rice, and more.¹⁶⁵ Fishing and livestock herding are also prevalent.¹⁶⁶

Interviewees identified the recent economic recession, as well as ongoing poverty and unemployment, as a primary concern in the

¹⁶⁰ "A Child Protection and Education Needs Assessment in Select Communities of Borno and Adamawa State", Plan International, September 2017.

¹⁶¹ "North-east Nigeria: Recovery and Peace Building Assessment, Volume III" World Bank, 2016.

¹⁶² "Rapid: The Change We Seek", Adamawa State Government

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ "A Child Protection and Education Needs Assessment in Select Communities of Borno and Adamawa State", Plan International, September 2017.

¹⁶⁵ "Adamawa", Encyclopedia Britannica

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

regional economy. Participants reported that the recession, as well as the influx of IDPs due to the Boko Haram insurgency, has raised food prices and increased food insecurity in the state, particularly in rural areas. In urban areas, civil servants are reportedly underpaid or sometimes work for months without salaries. One interviewee also reported that economic frustrations may drive youth to engage in criminality or make them

“Things are very expensive in the market and people are complaining bitterly. People now cook and eat once in a day.”

- Women’s focus group discussion, Adamawa

vulnerable to recruitment by Boko Haram.

Food security and agricultural outputs in Adamawa State have also been impacted by the effects of climate change and environmental pressures such as changes in rainfall and increasing desertification. In addition, shifts in climate patterns and desertification have reportedly exacerbated conflicts between herders and farmers in the state.¹⁶⁷

Finally, participants in the Men’s FGD noted that youth in Adamawa State lack programming and financial support for economic development. Women reportedly have greater access to bank loans and financing, including programs run by NGOs. Interviewees reported that government programs and development initiatives intended to address unemployment or provide vocational training often suffer from mismanagement and corruption.

¹⁶⁷ “Drought worsens deadly battle between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Nigeria”, Akinwotu, E., The Guardian, January 2017.

Rule of Law

Mistrust of rule of law institutions is high in Adamawa State, and fieldwork participants reported that the court system (and to a lesser extent, the Sharia courts) is perceived to be untrustworthy and corrupt. Interviewees cited a lack of independence for the judiciary, corruption of judges and security forces, a lack of accountability for politicians and security force abuses, and slow processing times as key concerns. Several participants also noted that much of the population in Adamawa State lacks knowledge of their legal rights and called for greater awareness-raising and empowerment in this area.

“[The] poor justice system [is] creating violations, grievances, radicalization, violence and crisis.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Adamawa, Yobe and Yola

As a result of this low level of confidence in the judicial system, local communities turn to local and traditional leaders to mediate disputes. Participants in the Men’s FGD also noted that NGOs play a role in providing information and raising awareness on rule of law issues.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

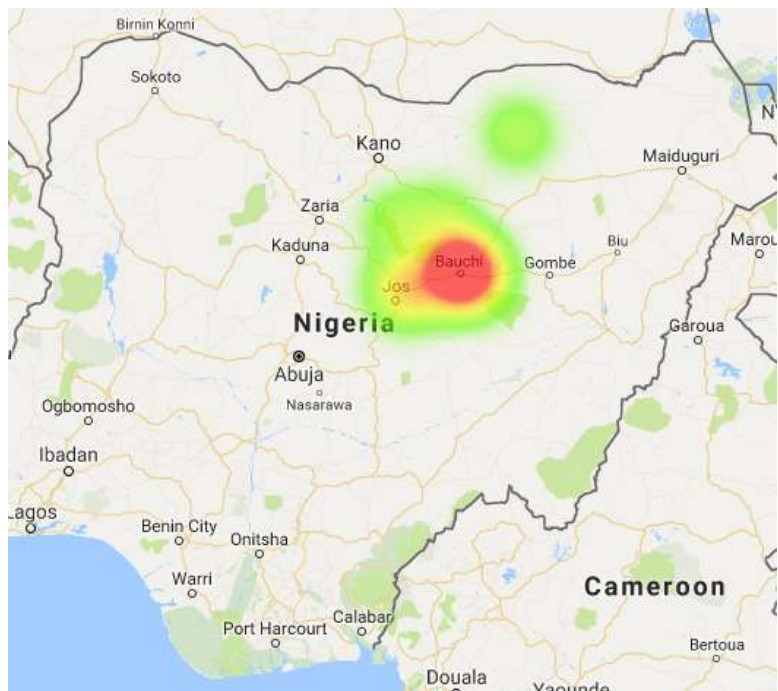
Despite the risks and vulnerabilities detailed above, fieldwork participants in the FGDs and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) identified several sources of resilience in Adamawa State. Vigilante and other community-based groups were perceived to play a positive role in security provision in the state, and have contributed to a decrease in criminality in some areas. NGOs and

civil society groups are involved in peacebuilding, economic development and awareness-raising efforts in the state. Local leaders, including village and district heads, also play an important role in dispute resolution in lieu of the court system.

Finally, interviewees in the Men's FGD in Adamawa viewed social media positively for its role in increasing communication between politicians and local communities.

Bauchi State

Bauchi State is located in northeastern Nigeria, and shares borders with the states of Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna, Plateau, Taraba, Gombe and Yobe. As of 2012, the state had a projected population of 5.5 million people.¹⁶⁸ The state is home to a number of ethnic groups, including the Hausa-Fulani, and a majority of the population is Muslim. As of 2008 the state had the highest total fertility rate in northeastern Nigeria – 8.1 children per woman.¹⁶⁹ The economy of Bauchi State is dominated by livestock-raising and agriculture, and the state is one of the largest cotton-producing regions. The state is also home to a number of mining sites, including tin and columbite operations.¹⁷⁰



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Perceptions of corruption among security forces
- Lack of training and professionalism among security forces
- Inadequate infrastructure and social service provision
- Perceptions of corruption among political actors
- Underrepresentation of women and youth in political decision-making
- Lack of elections for local government chairmen
- High rates of youth unemployment
- Gender-based violence
- Lack of family planning and high rate of population growth
- Poverty
- Food insecurity
- Unequal distribution of resources
- Climate change and environmental pressures
- Perceptions of corruption in the judicial system

Event-Driven Risks

- Herder-farmer conflicts
- Criminality
- Food scarcity
- Economic recession

¹⁶⁸ “Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012”, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

¹⁶⁹ “2008 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS): North East”, UNICEF

¹⁷⁰ “Bauchi”, Encyclopedia Britannica

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

- Vigilante and community-based security groups
- NGOs and civil society organizations
- Religious and traditional leaders
- Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms

Security

Key security concerns identified by fieldwork participants in Bauchi State include herder-farmer conflicts and criminality perpetrated by gangs (particularly the Sara-Suka gang). Bauchi State has been less affected by the Boko Haram insurgency compared to other states in the Northeast; however, the state has seen an increase in internally displaced persons (IDPs) and participants reported the presence of Boko Haram insurgents in Ganjuwa LGA in 2016. One interviewee also noted that drug trafficking is a concern, given the state's relative proximity to Cameroon and the country's and state's porous borders.

Fieldwork participants expressed mixed attitudes toward security forces in Bauchi State. While some respondents reported that security forces enjoy cordial relationships and collaboration with local communities, others highlighted the prevalence of corruption and a lack of professionalism or training as factors that undermine their effectiveness.

"The police protect only well-known people. When community issues happen, you will see them far later, and they will come only when clashes have already taken place. They are not protecting the less-privileged."

- Woman Leader, Bauchi State

As a result, communities in Bauchi State often depend on vigilante or community-based groups to ensure security. Vigilante groups enjoyed favorable views among fieldwork participants and were seen as having positively contributed to security at the

local level, particularly in preventing violence by gangs such as the Sara-Suka. As one interviewee said, "the people have more confidence in the vigilante than the military. There are no language barriers and communities understand them easier. ...The vigilante provides the guide to the military due to their knowledge of the terrain and local language." Interviewees also noted that vigilante groups often collaborate effectively with the police and other security forces. Multiple participants identified a group known as the "Committee", which was described as: "A joint task force of Islamic paramilitaries, Christian groups, police, military, and all the ethnic groups in the region," which were seen as being particularly effective. However, several respondents expressed concern around the lack of accountability for vigilantes, who are sometimes involved in cases of mob justice.

Population and Demographics

Fieldwork participants reported relatively peaceful co-existence between ethnic and religious groups in Bauchi State. While ethnic and religious divisions were previously a source of conflict in the state, interviewees generally felt that these tensions had dissipated in recent years. Religious groups, traditional leaders, NGOs, and local and state government were largely credited with working together towards more sustainable peace by

"In the past there were some clashes between Christian and Muslim. But poverty and hardship and conflict, like that of Boko Haram, has brought everybody close to each other. Now there are no more religious clashes in Bauchi, there is more coherence. Sometimes, leaders meet each other to talk."

- Woman Leader, Bauchi State

sensitizing the public on issues that previously caused tensions to erupt into conflict.

Youth unemployment was a key concern identified by fieldwork participants. Interviewees reported high rates of drug use among youth, and highlighted their vulnerability to manipulation by politicians or recruitment by criminal gangs or extremist groups such as Boko Haram. As one civil society leader said, “Some youth joined Boko Haram because they provide jobs to the people, who later send money to their families and relatives.” Participants also noted a lack of government programming aimed at reducing youth unemployment or facilities to provide substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation.

Bauchi State has seen a high rate of population growth, and the state has the highest total fertility rate in the region, at 8.1 births per woman.¹⁷¹ There are concerns that the growing youth population could further exacerbate the state’s economic and security challenges. Family planning is underutilized, although interviewees reported that economic pressures, as well as awareness-raising campaigns, have resulted in a growing acceptance of the practice. Polygamy, rape, gender-based violence, and early marriage are also concerns facing women in Bauchi State.

“There is low level of awareness on the issue of family planning in the rural areas. They believed that it is a western way of life, therefore people reject and embraced Islamic teachings on family.”

- Humanitarian Aid Worker, Bauchi State

¹⁷¹ “2008 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS): North East”, UNICEF

Politics and Governance

Fieldwork participants broadly expressed a sense of frustration around issues of poor infrastructure and service provision in Bauchi State, and around the prevalence of corruption and nepotism among political actors. One interviewee reported that traditional leaders collaborate with civil servants to place family members on the payroll as “ghost workers”, while another noted that infrastructure projects are often implemented according to whether politicians get kick-backs from the contracts, rather than according to the population’s needs.

“There is frustration from communities. Life has changed but people don’t see change in their life.”

- Woman Leader, Bauchi State

A key political issue raised by fieldwork participants was the perceived legitimacy of local government chairmen, and the desire for local government elections. The Bauchi State governor has appointed local government chairmen since 2008¹⁷², rather than holding local elections, and several interviewees expressed concern that this system of appointment decreases the accountability and legitimate mandate of local leaders.

Women and youth remain underrepresented in political decision-making in Bauchi State, although women’s representation has reportedly increased over the years. While youth and women are both active in voting and mobilization efforts during election periods, interviewees expressed that politicians “used and dumped” these groups after the elections. Participants also noted that unemployed or poorly educated youth are

¹⁷² “State of Democracy in LGAs: How state govt run local councils in Bauchi”, Edeh, S., Vanguard, April 2013.

vulnerable to manipulation and incitement to violence by politicians ahead of elections. Civil society organizations have reportedly played an important role in advocating for women's political representation. As a woman leader said, "Without the help of civil society, our voice would not be heard in this state." Women were also stated as having an important role as peacebuilders within the state, conducting trainings and mobilizing youth for positive changes.

Economics and Resources

Key economic concerns identified by fieldwork participants in Bauchi State include poverty, inflation, unemployment and food insecurity. The recent economic recession has reportedly raised food prices and increased poverty in the state, with one interviewee remarking that "some households sometimes do not cook for three days. The price of garri is almost that of rice." As of December 2016, more than 800,000 people in Bauchi State were classified in the "stressed" or "crisis" categories of the *Cadre Harmonisé*, which measures food insecurity.¹⁷³ Interviewees expressed concern that food scarcity could lead to conflict in the future, and noted that agricultural outputs have been negatively affected by climate change and environmental pressures such as desertification and flooding.

As noted above, youth unemployment was another commonly cited problem negatively impacting the economic and social progress of the state. The lack of employment for youth has increased concerns around their involvement in drug use and criminality, as well as their recruitment into gangs such as the Sara-Suka. Fieldwork participants repeatedly stressed the need for vocational training and job creation to employ the large youth population to avoid greater insecurity in the state.

¹⁷³ "Food and Nutrition Insecurity in North-east Nigeria", OECD, December 2016.

The distribution of resources and funding was also an economic concern identified by fieldwork participants. One interviewee criticized the poor allocation of funds to local governments by the state government, noting that this has led to civil servants working for months at a time without a salary and contributes to inadequate service provision. While oil and mining operations remain relatively limited in Bauchi State, there are also concerns that these operations do not adequately benefit local communities.

"So many youths are unemployed and that serves as potential threat to the state government. This is the reason why they go into drug abuse and other criminal activities. The system has frustrated the youth. The government has not provided facilities for legitimate economic activities. They are used during electioneering campaigns and dumped."

- Humanitarian Aid Worker, Bauchi State

Women play an important role in the regional economy; however, their activities tend to be limited to petty trade, domestic work and other work in the informal sector. Due to the prevalence of poverty and increasing economic pressures, interviewees identified a growth in prostitution in Bauchi State. However, civil society organizations are reportedly involved in promoting women's economic empowerment. One civil society leader particularly highlighted the work of the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) in promoting women's education and economic advancement.¹⁷⁴

Rule of Law

The judicial system in Bauchi State was generally described by fieldwork participants as being corrupt, subject to the wishes of the executive

¹⁷⁴ "Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria", Georgetown University

branch, biased toward the wealthy and politically-connected, and expensive to access. The prisons in Bauchi State are also overcrowded due to slow processing times. As a result, interviewees reported that many people choose to resolve disputes through mediation by traditional leaders, or access alternative courts such as the Sharia Commission. One participant noted that the Sharia Commission is even utilized by Christians.

“People prefer to meet the council of elders, rather than reporting a matter to the police, because the traditional leaders or the chief may resolve the conflict at the time you raise the complaint, but the police may take advantage of the complaint to collect money.”

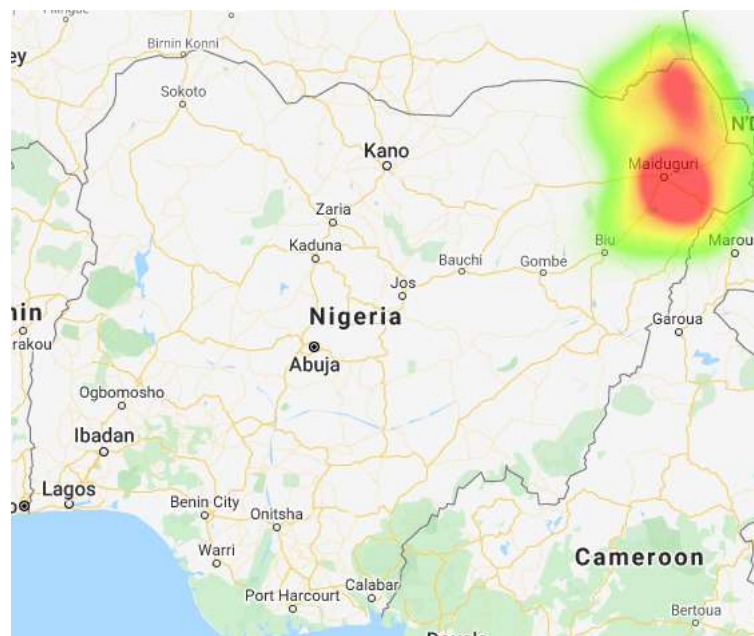
- Woman Leader, Bauchi State

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Participants in the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) identified a number of sources of resilience in Bauchi State. In the area of security, vigilante and community-based groups, such as the joint task force known as “Committee”, are viewed as contributing positively to security at the local level. Civil society organizations and NGOs play an important role in awareness-raising, advocacy and service provision in a number of areas. The Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) was particularly identified as working to promote women’s economic empowerment in Bauchi. Finally, local, religious and traditional leaders are key actors in dispute resolution and in easing social tensions.

Borno State

Borno State is located in the far northeastern corner of Nigeria, sharing borders with Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Internally, the state also shares borders with Yobe, Gombe and Adamawa States. As of 2012, Borno State had a projected population of 4.9 million people.¹⁷⁵ The largest ethnic group in the state is the Kanuri, and a majority of the population is Muslim. The local economy is dominated by agriculture, as well as livestock herding and fishing on Lake Chad.¹⁷⁶ In recent years, Borno State been heavily affected by the Boko Haram insurgency and counterinsurgency operations by the Nigerian military.



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Poverty
- Flooding and soil depletion negatively impacting agriculture
- Forced and early marriage
- Youth unemployment
- Lack of access to schools and healthcare facilities
- Proliferation of weapons
- Widespread drug-use
- Perceptions of poor governance, lack of transparency and high levels of corruption
- Perceptions of corruption in judicial system
- Mistrust of security forces
- Lack of sanitation and high crime surrounding IDP camps

Event-Driven Risks

- Abductions of youth and vulnerable populations by Boko Haram
- Gender-based violence
- Attacks by Boko Haram

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

- Religious leaders
- Vigilante Groups/Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF)
- Inter-community dialogue
- Civil society organizations and aid agencies

¹⁷⁵ "Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012", National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

¹⁷⁶ "Borno", Encyclopedia Britannica

Security

According to fieldwork participants, the key issues in the area of security are the Boko Haram insurgency and the growing insecurity of IDP populations. Boko Haram has been responsible for continued attacks on civilian population centers, and participants reported that they continue to abduct youth and vulnerable populations, including women, to turn them into forced fighters, suicide bombers, and insurgents. With Boko Haram operating in the region, participants also reported a growing war economy due to the increased proliferation of weapons in the region. The ongoing fight against Boko Haram has also led to the politicization of youth in the region, according to some respondents. The resulting insecurity has also led to a large IDP population, and respondents reported that there is growing discontent among these populations due to a lack of assistance, abuses by security forces, and issues with sanitation, drug use, gender-based violence, and crime.

“There are young boys with very powerful weapons in the Northeast. Boys of 13-15 years with sophisticated weapons destroying communities in the region.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Borno State

Participants also reported local perceptions that security forces are corrupt, as well as perceptions that they may be in collaboration with Boko Haram. Some participants also mentioned that security forces are ill-equipped and inadequately trained. This has led to the creation of vigilante groups and Civilian Joint Task Forces (CJTFs), who have been working in conjunction with security forces to address the lack of capacity. Participants reported that these groups have a cordial relationship and general trust with security forces, even though some of the vigilantes are involved in petty crime. Despite this, there have been calls for greater

community policing, though the CJTF is already very powerful and could be a source of insecurity in the future, according to some respondents.

“The success of military operations in the NE is partly attributed to the CJTF due to their knowledge of the local language and the geographical setting of the region. The CJTF know the BH members because they are their former associates.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Borno State

Many respondents also expressed a need for a long-term solution, saying that there are low perceived levels of state legitimacy, and, in terms of the insurgency, that wider issues of “rejection and poverty led to rebellion”. While the CJTFs have reinforced military operations in the area, fieldwork participants mentioned that community rehabilitation is needed along with initiatives aimed at Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and deradicalization programs. Participants noted that these programs need to be more culturally relevant with local ownership because there is often a tendency to reject western notions of how to combat violent extremism and how to address the root causes that lead to its growth.

Population and Demographics

The key issues discussed by respondents in Borno State are high levels of unemployment and lack of schooling, forced and early marriage and low rates of family planning, the issue of reintegrating women captured by Boko Haram, and the problems of insecurity, health and sanitation surrounding the IDP camps. Many participants mentioned the insecurity in the region as the main reason that levels of education are low. Some reported that schools have been destroyed, and students and lecturers both have been kidnapped and institutions of learning continually targeted. Poverty also contributes to the low levels of

education, with some participants noting that there are not enough public schools and private schools are expensive. Some participants also reported the issue of youth and female unemployment, noting that there is also a lack of training and entrepreneurship skills.

“Women don’t go to school due to the insurgency. Some schools are destroyed, there are a lot of students and other children kidnapped but nobody is talking about it. Some lecturers were kidnapped, people were indiscriminately kidnapped.”

- Women’s focus group discussion, Borno State

Many participants reported that forced and early marriage is an issue, particularly in rural areas of the region, and women also face a high fertility rate. Cultural and religious restrictions mean that there are low rates of family planning. Recent economic pressures, however, have increased the acceptance of family planning, according to some participants. Child spacing in particular is increasingly accepted, but respondents mentioned there is still difficulty in accessing contraceptives.

Field participants also mentioned many issues surrounding the IDP camps related to sanitation and health as well as the security of women. Some participants mentioned issues with recurrent diseases, lack of potable water, and lack of sanitation surrounding the camps and a general lack of access to healthcare. Participants reported that women in IDP camps often face unwanted pregnancy and rape, increasing rates of HIV. High levels of crime and abuses by security forces were also discussed by participants. Drug abuse is prevalent in the camps, with some respondents noting drug use is particularly high due to the insurgency and amongst disenfranchised women. Borno State has also faced difficulties with the reintegration of women and children who had been

captured by Boko Haram. Respondents explained that many of these women and children have already endured trauma, and they continue to face discrimination within their communities.

“The women that were under the captivity of Boko Haram who were later reintegrated in the society suffer discrimination. They were called wives of Boko Haram and their children also called children of Boko Haram. Some of them due to such discrimination feel it is better to be with the Boko Haram than with their immediate communities. This are basically issues that center on how the society look at them. The women also ask questions about who will marry them after knowing their predicaments and background. The children of rescued women are rejected.”

- Women’s focus group discussion, Borno State

Politics and Governance

Fieldwork participants in Borno State cited perceptions of poor governance and corruption as key issues. Respondents in the women’s focus group discussed the perception that that state lacks legitimacy in the region and has been unable to provide for the basic needs of society. Most participants expressed the feeling that politics in the region are overly focused on Boko Haram and the counterinsurgency. As such, local capacity for governance is perceived as weak. Some participants stated that there is a serious disconnect between the citizens and the state, with some reporting perceptions that politicians are motivated by self-interest and others reporting that the government implements projects without involving local populations. Additionally, a lack of transparency and accountability, high levels of corruption, and mismanagement of resources are also political vulnerabilities in Borno State. Civil society organizations have been involved in

humanitarian relief, but participants reported that they have faced allegations of corruption as well.

The oil economy in Nigeria has also presented problems in Borno State, especially as exploration begins in the region. Participants in the men's focus group discussed the prevalence of the North-South divide, stating that the southerners "see the northerners as parasitic". They also stated that some believe the possibility that the Boko Haram insurgency is sponsored by southerners who want to stop oil exploration in the area. Participants reported that Boko Haram had been responsible for the killings and abductions of staff from the University of Maiduguri, which is a partner in the oil exploration. Because of the ongoing insecurity in the region, local elections have not been held since 2011.

Women and youth have also been facing inadequate representation due to issues surrounding the insurgency. While women are increasingly represented with maybe two or three councilors per local government area (LGA), participants reported that women still face high barriers to politics because many are illiterate, stemming from the difficulty of completing education or attending school during the insurgency. Participants also discussed the perception that youth are both mobilized and manipulated during political campaigns.

"The northern politicians have the notion that what the youth could do is nothing but to be employed as thugs. Considering the population of the youth they are key figures to the success of any election in the country. The youth are used negatively in the state. They are used on ad-hoc basis, after elections they continue with different criminal activities in the state."

- Men's focus group discussion, Borno State

Economics and Resources

Respondents reported that the insecurity in the region has had widespread negative effects on the economy, which is mostly agricultural. The insecurity has stopped people from farming, increasing food insecurity in the region. Some participants discussed the need for humanitarian aid, while others felt assistance should focus more on vocational and entrepreneurship training in order to build capacity and empower the population.

"The insurgency caused the collapse of small and large businesses. This has contributed to the increase of the youth poverty in the state. There is the need for the rehabilitation of the youth in the region."

- Men's focus group discussion, Borno State

Participants also discussed issues with inflation, high poverty rates in the region, and high rates of unemployment for both youth and women. Women are very involved in commerce but face barriers to accessing financing. According to the men's Focus Group Discussion (FGD), certain cultural and social traditions can prevent women from taking part in economic activities, also adding that "the belief is that there are certain economic activities that are left to women."

Respondents in the women's focus group reported that, while farmer/herder conflicts are not much of an issue, Boko Haram was responsible for destroying farmlands. Just as the insurgency has negatively impacted agriculture in the region, some participants reported that it has hurt businesses in the area. They feel this has contributed to poverty in the state. Other participants felt the insurgency has also allowed for the development of an economy of war and a black market that wants the insecurity to continue so they can continue to benefit. Borno State also faces issues from climate

change, with some participants reporting that flooding and soil depletion are impacting agriculture and contributing to food insecurity.

Respondents from the men’s focus group also reported that gum arabica, gold and other mineral deposits have been found in the region but they are not being extracted. Nigeria had begun to investigate the possibility of oil in this region as well, sending teams for oil exploration into the Lake Chad Basin. However, the Minister of State for petroleum resources has since postponed exploration following a Boko Haram attack on oil workers and the Civilian Joint Task Force.¹⁷⁷

Rule of Law

Fieldwork participants in Borno State described perceptions of corruption and the strong influence of the executive within the judiciary as key vulnerabilities. One participant reported that governors appoint judges and that incidents of impunity are high. The women’s Focus Group

“People used to turn to traditional and religious leaders for dispute resolution, but they have lost trust because these leaders are corrupted by politicians.”

- Women’s focus group discussion, Borno State

discussed the perception that the judiciary is not independent and stated that “justice is given to the highest bidder”. Many participants felt that alternative justice mechanisms are also corrupt, with some saying that traditional leaders are also under the influence of corrupt politicians. Participants in the Men’s Focus Group discussed the need for judiciary reforms, stating that there are delays in processing and defunct laws. At times, security forces have been involved in the mediation of disputes amongst civilians, according to some respondents.

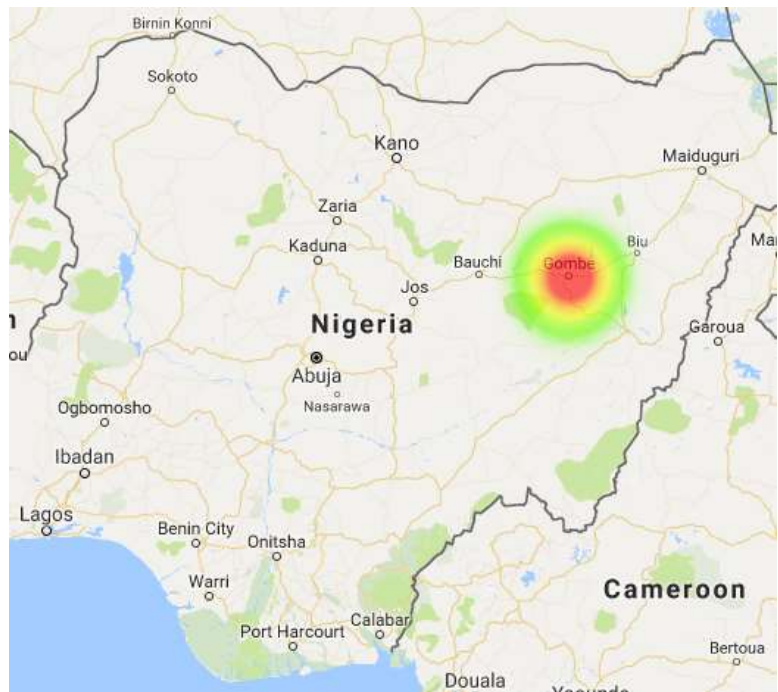
Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Despite the vulnerabilities and risks detailed above, participants in the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and FGDs identified a number of resilience factors. Religious leaders were identified as playing an important role in countering the messaging of Boko Haram by preaching counter-narratives to extremism in the mosque. Vigilante groups and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) were also cited by many interviewees as contributing positively to security. Intelligence-gathering and inter-community dialogue similarly play a positive role in counterinsurgency operations. Finally, aid agencies and civil society organizations that provide assistance to vulnerable populations, including IDPs, the elderly, disabled, and women, are a key source of resilience.

¹⁷⁷ “Boko Haram Blocks Oil Exploration in Northeast Nigeria”, Campbell, J., Council on Foreign Relations, August 2017.

Gombe State

Gombe State is located in the center of the northeast region, and is surrounded by the states of Borno, Adamawa, Taraba, Bauchi, and Yobe. As of 2012, the state had a projected population of 2.8 million people.¹⁷⁸ The largest ethnic groups in Gombe State are the Hausa-Fulani and the Tera, and a majority of the population is Muslim. An estimated 80 percent of the population is engaged in agricultural production and the state is also home to several mineral deposits, including limestone, gypsum and uranium.



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Perceptions of clientelism, nepotism, endemic corruption and bias among political and governmental officials.
- Perceived corruption in the judicial system; lack of confidence in the judicial system; impunity
- Perceived bias in the governance structure, particularly along regional, ethnic and tribal lines
- Under-representation of youth and women in the politics
- Lack of autonomy in local government structures, perceived state interference
- Uneven allocation of resources, diversion of allocated resources
- Lack of employment and vocational opportunities for youth and women
- Youth unemployment and impoverishment as a driver of insecurity
- Political violence, notably the involvement of youth
- Poor provision of public and social services
- Economic recession and fragile economic recovery
- Climate pressures and environmental degradation

Event-Driven Risks

- Criminality
- Gender-based violence

¹⁷⁸ "Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012", National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

- Religious leaders
- Marshall Youths
- Traditional leaders
- Security personnel
- Non-state security services: community policing, vigilantes, hunter groups
- Civil society organizations
- Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms

Security

According to fieldwork participants, a climate of insecurity persists in Gombe State, primarily stemming from sustained trends of religious intolerance and extremism, criminality, and social injustice. Interviewees noted that while there have been incidents of land-related conflicts, including herder-farmer clashes, these reports have been less widespread than in other parts of the country. The role of youth in perpetuating the cycle of insecurity was identified as a major concern. Fieldwork participants, citing the example of the Kalari Boys, described how political elites have used insecurity to expand their power bases by employing youths as tools of political violence and intimidation. As one participant in the Youth Focus Group Discussion (FGD) stated, “there is no freedom of speech as these violent youths will attack you.” Despite this, interviewees noted that Gombe State has some resilience factors that help counter these threats. In particular, they identified the initiatives to counter political violence by religious leaders and the use of former youth enforcers as vigilantes.

Security forces were viewed as being generally present in the state. However, perceptions about the capacity of the security apparatus to contain the ever-growing threats of insecurity were negative. One respondent noted “the security personnel are trying their best in the state, but a lot needs to be done.” Issues pertaining to trust between security forces and civilians were also identified as challenges.

Although there is no Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in the state, as there are in other parts of the region, participants held that alternative security sector structures, in particular non-state apparatuses, such as independent vigilante groups, have been essential in securing the state. Community policing systems, specifically vigilantes, were highlighted by some respondents as resilience factors. Described by one interviewee as “very active”, these community-sponsored vigilantes were cited as collaborating with security personnel and bolstering their capacity. However, some fieldwork participants warned that reported cases of impunity, which continue to persist despite the institution of screening tests, the inclusion of “retired criminals” in vigilante ranks, and the inability of the state to successfully reintegrate vigilante groups after the end of the Boko Haram insurgency pose risks. Traditional rulers and local chiefs were also identified as additional resilience factors, primarily because of their fast-moving dispute resolution processes. As a female leader in a key informant interview

“The major threat is that what would happen to the large number of the youth that formed up the vigilante groups after the menace of insurgency in the North-East. The reason is that these guys are trained to kill and also adequately earned. This could be another major threat in the future. They could either be a new group of insurgents to emerge or rapid increase in crime and criminality in the region.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Gombe State

expressed, “People prefer to report any kind of criminal activities within the state to the traditional rulers and local chief than reporting to the security forces due to the rapid response by their chiefs and leaders.”

Finally, although Gombe State endured attacks by Boko Haram in 2015,¹⁷⁹ and purportedly sometimes functions as a hideout for insurgents¹⁸⁰, interviewees noted that the spillover effect of the insurgency was marginal. Issues specific to youth impoverishment as a driver to join the Boko Haram insurgency were noted. As one respondent in the Women’s FGD stated, “there is no doubt about the fact that the insurgents seized the opportunity of rampant poverty amongst the youth to recruit members.”

Population and Demographics

Fieldwork respondents cited that youth unemployment, which functions as a driver of insecurity, had fostered issues of criminality such as those related to drug abuse. Although interviewees highlighted the availability of state-run youth employment programs, particularly the employment of youth as marshals, they also expressed that the mismanagement of such initiatives has undermined their capacity to effectively address youth unemployment. As one respondent stated, “Most of the youth employment programs were designed to fail in the state, because of the misplacement of priorities and lack of interest.”

Participants also expressed concern with the state’s public services, especially the education sector. Highlighting the lack of well-trained teachers and the high levels of illiteracy and school dropouts, some fieldwork respondents identified a connection between low quality education and insecurity. As a traditional leader in a key informant interview stated, “Solving the education challenge

in the northeast and the poverty issue will stop rich criminals using youths for Boko Haram purposes.”

“The religious leaders need to be sensitized on the significance of family planning, so that they could help in the mobilization of people in this respect. They are in a better position to educate the people on the issues of child spacing. Unfortunately, even the recession and other economic hardships are not teaching people lessons.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Gombe State

The nexus of insecurity and its impact on the health sector have also been profound. This has, included the kidnappings of medical doctors, high rates of maternal mortality (which was identified as the highest in the region in one key informant interview), and limited access to healthcare, primarily due to a lack of healthcare facilities, especially for women. These concerns, as well as lofty health expenses, were all identified as further indicators of the state’s poor infrastructure for the provision of social services. Issues specific to the female demographic, such as family planning and spacing between children, were also noted during the fieldwork. Although some interviewees expressed that such practices were increasingly accepted by the female population of Gombe, the lack of awareness and support among other demographic groups in the state was cited as a challenge.

Politics and Governance

Feelings of mistrust in the government were prevalent during interviews with participants from Gombe State, primarily stemming from widespread perceptions of political corruption. One participant in the Men’s FGD expressed, “corruption is the only

¹⁷⁹ “Nigeria troops repel Boko Haram attack on city of Gombe”, BBC, February 2015.

¹⁸⁰ “Army raids Gombe hotel for Boko Haram terrorists”, Vanguard, March 2017.

factor that unites Nigerian elites across the different regions and ethnic groups.” Fieldwork respondents also reported that bias along regional, ethnic and tribal lines; the lack of meritocracy in the leadership appointment process; low tolerance for criticism; and the diversion of allocated resources were additional vulnerabilities.

“The worst form of corruption is the diversion of materials meant for IDPs. This is the most common corruption across the northeastern part of Nigeria. There are instances where many women at the IDP camp are using a single pant. If one uses it, she will remove and wash to be used by another woman the next day. Those provided by the government and other donors are diverted and sold in the markets.”

- Women’s focus group discussion, Gombe State

Interviewees also noted that good governance was further hindered by the operational structure of the three governmental tiers. Although fieldwork participants held somewhat favorable perceptions about the federal government’s performance, the performances of the local and state governments were widely-perceived as poor. In particular, the lack of autonomy in the local government structure, stemming from state governmental power to appoint local government chairmen and the unwillingness of the state government to financially equip their local level counterparts with allocated resources, were cited. In a key informant interview, a traditional leader explained, “Governors who appoint LGA chairmen don’t want to provide resources to them and to equip LGAs to avoid empowering them.”

Participants also expressed concern about the under-representation of youth and women in the political arena. For fieldwork respondents, the lack of mentorship opportunities for youth and their engagement in political violence were highlighted as undermining factors to youth political

empowerment. Although respondents reported that there is a growing political consciousness among women, they also expressed that a lack of widespread awareness about related issues, in particular education, and a lack of mobilization across all demographic groups were detriments to female political empowerment. As one participant in the Women’s FGD recounted, “There is free education from primary to junior secondary school in the state, but a lot of women are not aware of these privileges, particularly in the rural areas.” Non-state actors, including civil society organizations, were identified as promoting awareness and mobilization initiatives. However, some interviewees reported that financial constraints have undermined their effectiveness.

Finally, although historical identity issues were viewed as fundamental challenges to national cohesion, participants also cited that the willingness of power seekers to use such challenges as another medium through which their self-interested agendas can be pursued had aggravated the problem.

Economics and Resources

Uneven and poor redistribution of resources, inflation, limited access to economic resources, the lack of entrepreneurial activities for youth and women, and limited access to loan programs for women were highlighted as key economic concerns in Gombe State. Fieldwork respondents also reported that poor infrastructure, which was attributed to a lack of budget and decision-making autonomy within the local governments, as well as to state government interference, had further undermined the economic viability of the state.

A primary issue of concern expressed by most fieldwork participants centered on the country’s most recent economic recession, the first in more

than two decades.¹⁸¹ Although Nigeria has recently emerged from the recession, fieldwork participants reported that Gombe State, particularly its rural areas, continues to experience the lingering effects of the downturn.¹⁸² Respondents noted that the recession and the fragile economic recovery¹⁸³ had resulted in an increased amount of street beggars. These lingering effects of the economic downturn also had wider societal impacts. For example, a participant in the Men's FGD noted that the recession had led to more broken marriages.

Finally, Gombe State is also susceptible to climate insecurity, stemming from flooding, drought, famine and late rainfall. Environmental degradation, caused by human activities such as over-cultivation and deforestation, was also identified as a vulnerability and driver of food insecurity. For fieldwork participants, the government's efforts to address the issues of desertification and reduced agricultural yields have largely been inadequate and ineffective. As one participant in the Men's FGD cited, "There is a policy against deforestation, but it is not working at all in most parts of the state."

Rule of Law

The pervasive climate of impunity, perceptions of political corruption, perceived bias along religious, tribal and ethnic lines, slow-moving adjudication processes, improper handling of rape cases, and the lack of judicial independence were all identified as undermining the rule of law in the state. However, there was a general level of confidence in the ability of police and other security officers to effectively function as instruments of dispute resolution and mediation.

Perceptions about the ability of other structures in the country's pluralistic legal system to effectively fill the gaps and lapses in the statutory rule of law

framework were weak. Fieldwork participants stated that non-state judicial structures, in particular, sharia courts, maintain parallel jurisdiction over cases such as gender-based violence, but are marred by perceptions of corruption and nepotism. In addition, the mediation system of traditional rulers was viewed as faulty. As one respondent noted, "traditional rulers are not performing to expectations, but in the villages, they are trying their best."

This general lack of confidence in Gombe State's pluralistic rule of law structure has contributed to a reliance on the alternative dispute resolution services provided by civil society organizations. Although its use was described as infrequent – "only in extreme cases" – mob justice was also identified as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism that aroused confidence in some members of the local population.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Despite the vulnerabilities and risks listed above, Gombe State has a number of social and institutional resilience factors that help mitigate these risks. Fieldwork participants particularly identified the role of non-state security services such as traditional institutions and community policing structures in securing the state. Marshall Youths and religious leaders, through their preaching initiatives, were also identified as being capable of addressing the threats and risks posed by youth enforcers like the Kalari Boys. Civil society groups and NGOs, especially those involved in awareness activities about female political participation, were also viewed as positive resilience factors. Security and police officers working in dispute resolution were also viewed as resilience factors.

¹⁸¹ "Nigeria struggles to balance finances ahead of 2017 budget approval", Reuters, March 2017.

¹⁸² "Nigeria exits recession but recovery fragile", Reuters, September 2017.

¹⁸³ "Nigeria accelerates revenue strategy after exiting recession – finance minister", Reuters, October 2017.

Recommendations for the Northeast Region

Security

The Nigerian government should work with regional and international partners, as well as local vigilante groups, to address larger regional trends of extremism and insecurity in the region. CSOs, local governments and security forces should work with affected IDP communities to improve security in IDP camps. CSOs can work with local communities and security forces to promote trust and encourage relationship-building. The Nigerian government, regional and international partners and CSOs should work with security forces and vigilante groups to train these actors on operational best practices and human rights standards. The Nigerian government, with support from regional international partners, should enhance the institutional and operational capacity of the police and military forces, including improved training and provision of material resources. CSOs, regional and international partners and the Nigerian government should support locally-designed and contextually-relevant CVE/deradicalization programs, enlisting the support of local religious leaders and/or local civil society organizations.

Population and Demographics

Civil society, the private sector, and donor organizations should support vocational training and job creation initiatives to engage the region's large youth population. CSOs and government agencies should support substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation programs for affected individuals. Traditional leaders, local government and civil society organizations should facilitate sustained dialogue and interactions across political, ethnic, and religious divides. Local and state governments, international donors and civil society organizations should expand access to education, affordable healthcare and other social services, particularly for women, vulnerable youth and IDPs. International donors and the national government should support effective and

transparent humanitarian aid efforts for refugees and IDPs in the region, particularly in the provision of food assistance and healthcare. International donors, CSOs and the Nigerian government should support long-term psycho-social and economic rehabilitation efforts targeting individuals, particularly women and youth, affected by the Boko Haram insurgency. The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and civil society organizations should work with regional and international partners to promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence, early and forced marriage and family planning.

Politics and Governance

Regional organizations, CSOs and the Nigerian government should support both internal and external initiatives for good governance and transparency at the local and national levels. The Nigerian government and political parties should work with local civil society organizations to promote youth and women's involvement in politics. Local and regional governments, as well as CSOs, should carry out awareness raising campaigns with emphasis on civic education for youth and women. The local, regional and national governments should work to improve relationships with local communities through greater visibility and improving social service provision, particularly in the areas of healthcare and education. CSOs should support inter-group dialogue across ethnic, religious and regional lines, with a focus on reducing political tensions.

Economics and Resources

CSOs and financial institutions should support and expand micro-financing programs and training, particularly in support of women and youth-led initiatives. International financial institutions (IFIs) can lend greater support small to medium enterprises, such as those aimed at sustainable agricultural production. Programming and initiatives aimed at increasing agricultural

resilience to climate change and increasing food security should be of particular importance.

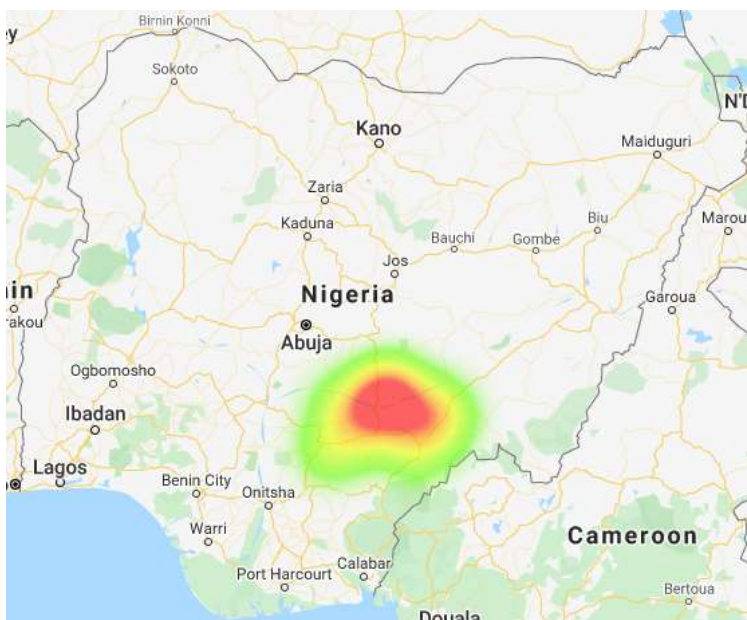
Rule of Law

CSOs and the Nigerian government should promote efficiency, independence and transparency within the formal justice system. Local and international NGOs and civil society organizations should support programs that provide oversight, provide legal assistance to vulnerable populations and protect women in both traditional justice mechanisms and in the courts, particularly in gender-based violence cases.

Middle Belt Region

Benue State

With a population of over 4 million people, Benue State is one of the top 10 most populous states in Nigeria, made up primarily of Tiv, Idoma, and Iggede ethno-linguistic groups. It lies along the southern bank of the Benue River which sometimes floods during the rainy season. Serious flooding occurred in 2012 and 2017, displacing over 100,000 people. Generally, in Nigeria, the poorest states as measured by GDP per capita are located in the North and the richest are in the South. Benue, which is among the Middle Belt states, is in the middle of the income spectrum. More than 75 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture and fishing, including the production of cash crops such as soybeans,



shea nuts, maize and rice.¹⁸⁴ Mining operations for lead and limestone, as well as mineral deposits of tin, marble and niobium, are also present in the state.¹⁸⁵ By tradition, most are farmers. There has been a rise in conflict over land and resources between farmers and herders, especially since 2011, along the northern border with neighboring Nasarawa State and as far south as Kwande LGA near the border of Cross River. Moderate levels of election violence have occurred in Benue State in both 2011 and 2015 election cycles, suggesting that it should be monitored for election violence mitigation in 2019.

Structural Vulnerabilities

- Large youth population
- Health facilities
- Primary education facilities
- Governance
- IDPs

Event-Driven Risks

- Inter-communal farmer/herder violence
- Election violence
- Gender-based violence
- Seasonal Flooding

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

- State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA)
- Civil Society Organizations
- Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association (MACBAN)
- Women in elected leadership

¹⁸⁴ "Benue", Encyclopedia Britannica

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

Security

Respondents stated that in cases of political, communal, or criminal violence, there is often an inadequate security response. Some highlighted the need for additional marine police to intervene in cases of attack from the waterways. Others alleged human rights violations on the part of the Joint Task Force (JTF), the military inter-service operational team, deployed to address issues of militancy and terrorism.

Communal Violence: Semi-nomadic Fulani pastoralists often graze their cattle along the riverbank in the low-lying *fadama* areas where there are shallow aquifers. This brings them into frequent contact with farmers, which has led to increasingly lethal disputes over the last five years. Respondents explained that historically pastoralists would pay a fee to the traditional rulers for permission to graze their livestock but that this practice has slipped in recent times. Reported incidents include killings, sexual violence, and even suspected cases of chemical weapons being used.¹⁸⁶ Given these dynamics, the ECOWAS Treaty on Transhumance Protocol which allows pastoralists to cross borders to find pasture for their cows, sheep, or goats, is controversial with some farmers.

Political Tensions: With regard to political tensions, in the runup to the 2011 election, Benue was among the states considered to be “on alert” by the military due to a rise in kidnapping and violence. Then, months after the election, several people were killed in clashes between the two major parties over the killing of a popular opposition leader. In the 2015 election cycle, several politicians and party activists were also killed.

Sexual Violence: When rape or assault occur during communal clashes or other incidents, respondents said women are reluctant to report, due to stigma.

¹⁸⁶ “Experts fear use of chemical weapon in Benue killings”, Abah, H., Daily Trust, April 2014.

Population and Demographics

Aside from ethnic and communal tensions between farmers and pastoralists, another significant risk in Benue State is flooding. Most recently in August 2017, 100,000 people were reportedly displaced¹⁸⁷. One respondent highlighted that prior to this recent flood, the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) had collaborated with civil society organizations to develop a disaster preparedness plan, including identifying waterways and houses built on water channels. However, implementation, including resettlement and compensation for residents in the flood zone has not yet been completed. IDPs mostly stay with relatives. Those that cannot stay in camps set up by the government to serve those affected by violence and flooding. Challenges associated with the humanitarian response to IDPs include ensuring that the camps are secure and knowing when and how to shut them down in a way that doesn’t expose the beneficiaries to harm.

According to respondents, other vulnerabilities in Benue include maternal mortality, poor health facilities, a lack of medicines, poor primary schools, climate change and desertification. Outside of the main urban areas, the harsh terrain makes it difficult to provide essential services and respond in cases of emergency.

Politics and Governance

Benue was a People’s Democratic Party (PDP) state going back to the beginning of the Fourth Republic (1999). But in 2015 voters elected an All Progressives Congress (APC) governor for the first time, as APC’s Muhammadu Buhari took the presidency as an unprecedented democratic transition swept the country. Respondents also said that since this transition, women have had a higher profile as candidates in the state including one woman who ran for governor, although she

¹⁸⁷ “Buhari speaks on Benue flood that has displaced over 100,000 people”, Premium Times, August 2017.

lost. Since the 2017 local government elections, there are several LGAs with women chairpersons, including the capital, Makurdi, which has women as both chair and vice chair. At the national level the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill was rejected by the Senate in 2016 on religious grounds but some are mobilizing to revive it.

In addition to a higher profile of women in politics, youth have also been increasingly engaged in Benue using social media. However, along with that empowerment, respondents said that the government monitors social media for hate speech, which sometimes takes on a partisan aspect and has a chilling effect on public dialogue.

Respondents also highlighted that there tends to be inter- and intra-party conflict in Benue State. People vote along ethnic lines and minority groups are excluded. In an attempt to address some of the ethnic tensions in the state, the legislature passed a controversial Anti-Open Grazing Law in 2017, which would prohibit herders from grazing their cattle unless they were replaced with ranching. Due to the sensitivity of the issue, particularly with the Fulani pastoral communities, there has been a delay in the implementation of the law and a call for more sensitization.

Sometimes there is a low functioning or mismanagement of government, such as the diversion of relief materials in cases of disaster.

Economics and Resources

Benue is in the middle of the income spectrum nationally (the poorest states are in the North and the richest states are in the South). Most of the population make their livelihoods through agriculture. Respondents noted that one challenge to economic development for small-sized enterprises is access to finance. Insecurity and flooding further exacerbate economic stress; food barns are burned and crops destroyed. Meanwhile,

¹⁸⁸ “Why I cannot pay salaries in Benue state – Gov. Ortom”, Duru, P., Vanguard, October 2017.

state workers have gone on strike due to unpaid salaries, which the governor says is due to the recent recession and low oil prices.¹⁸⁸

Rule of Law

Respondents noted that access to justice is sometimes too expensive for the poor. Others said there is a perception that the justice system is sometimes manipulated or corrupt. As a result, they rely on traditional dispute resolution mechanisms where a local chief mediates, or in some cases vigilantism or mob justice.¹⁸⁹

Legislation has been passed which would prohibit open grazing by pastoralists, but it is being challenged by the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN). Some are calling on civil society to do more engagement with the Fulani to build trust and understanding around the law and how it will be implemented.

There is sometimes impunity in cases of sexual violence because incidents are not reported for fear of stigma.

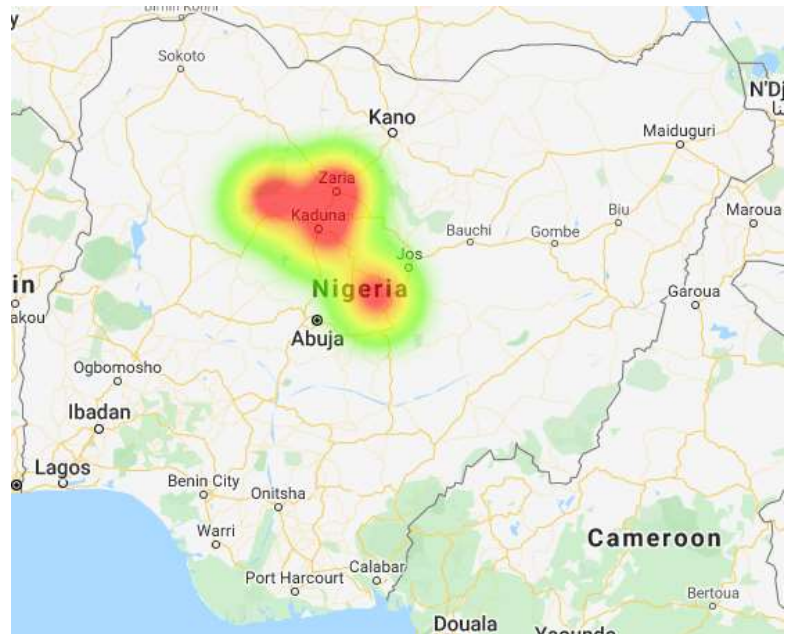
Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Community leaders and civil society organizations play a very important role in managing the risks and vulnerabilities in the state. Civil society works with the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) for disaster preparedness. Community leaders play a key role in conflict management and resolution between farmers and herders. Given the fact that legislation is sometimes not well understood by affected communities (including the Anti-Open Grazing Law, the Gender and Equal Opportunities Bill, and even the ECOWAS Treaty on Transhumance Protocol) civil society plays an important role in sensitizing the population to clear up misunderstandings or misinformation which could otherwise lead to violent conflict.

¹⁸⁹ “3 Suspected Armed Robbers Lynched in Benue”, PM News, April 2017.

Kaduna State

Kaduna State is located in the Middle Belt region in north-central Nigeria, and shares borders with the states of Katsina, Kano, Bauchi, Plateau, Nasarawa, Abuja FCT, Niger and Zamfara. As of 2012, the state had a projected population of 7.1 million people.¹⁹⁰ The population of Kaduna State is multiethnic; in the north of the state, the majority-Muslim Hausa-Fulani are the largest ethnic group, while the south is home to a number of smaller and predominantly Christian groups. Cash crops produced in the region include cotton and groundnuts, among others, and the state is home to several key industrial and manufacturing centers.¹⁹¹



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Perceptions of corruption in the security forces
- Inadequate training and resources for police and security forces
- Criminality
- Religious and ethnic tensions
- Land- and resource-based conflicts
- Gender-based violence (GBV)
- Poor or inadequate infrastructure, including healthcare
- Perceptions of marginalization in Southern Kaduna
- Lack of local elections
- Underrepresentation of women in political decision-making
- Youth unemployment
- Food insecurity
- Perceptions of bias in the judicial system

Event-Driven Risks

- Herder/farmer conflicts
- Elections
- Conflicts between religious groups

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

- Faith-based communities
- Community-based vigilante groups
- Local leaders and elders
- Dialogue and mediation initiatives between herders and farmers

¹⁹⁰ “Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012”, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

¹⁹¹ “Kaduna”, Encyclopedia Britannica

Security

The primary security concern identified by fieldwork participants in Kaduna State was conflicts between herders and farmers in the region over access to grazing land and livestock encroachment on cultivated fields. In addition to competition for resources, herder-farmer conflicts in Kaduna often take on a religious dimension, as herders are typically Muslim and farmers are generally Christian.¹⁹² Several interviewees reported that herder-farmer conflicts have increased in the state over the last several years. Over 800 people were killed in southern Kaduna in 2016 due to herder-farmer conflicts, and thousands more have been displaced.¹⁹³ Participants in the Women's Focus Group Discussion (FGD) also highlighted a December 2016 incident which resulted in massive casualties, displacement, and the destruction of more than 1,000 homes and churches.¹⁹⁴ Insecurity has reportedly forced schools to close in some parts of the state and has impacted food security by destroying crops and keeping farmers from accessing their fields. Insecurity and displacement also increases the economic vulnerability of local populations, particularly women, due to the destruction of assets such as farmland or livestock, or the loss of household breadwinners.¹⁹⁵

“When they come, they burn our houses, kill the men, rape our women and girls. We don’t sleep with our eyes closed.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Kaduna

¹⁹² “The quest to build an ‘early warning system’ to stop Nigeria’s Muslim-Christian violence”, Sennott, C. M., Public Radio International, March 2014.

¹⁹³ “Farmer-Fulani Herder Violence in Benue, Kaduna, and Plateau States”, ACAPS, March 2017.

¹⁹⁴ “808 Killed in Southern Kaduna Attacks, Says Catholic Church”, Shiklam, J., This Day, December 2016.

¹⁹⁵ “Impacts of Violence on Women and Girls in Kaduna”, Taft, P., Blyth, H. and Murphy, C., The Fund for Peace

¹⁹⁶ “‘Leave Everything to God’: Accountability for Inter-Communal Violence in Plateau and Kaduna States, Nigeria”, Human Rights Watch, December 2013.

Other security concerns in Kaduna State include religious and political violence, criminality, cattle theft, drug use, rape and sexual violence, and the abduction of women and children for ransom. Kaduna State has a history of religious and political violence. In 2000, when the government of Kaduna moved to introduce Sharia law into the criminal code, fighting between Muslims and Christians left as many as 5,000 people dead.¹⁹⁶ Two years later, an article published in *This Day* newspaper that was perceived to be blasphemous by Muslims led to ethnic and religious violence and reprisal attacks.¹⁹⁷ Following the 2011 presidential elections, post-election violence between Muslim and Christian communities also left hundreds dead and destroyed property.¹⁹⁸ In addition to inter-religious violence, there are also sectarian tensions between Sunni and Shia Muslim communities. More recently, in December 2015, the Nigerian army clashed with members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) in Zaria, contributing to concerns around that group’s potential radicalization.¹⁹⁹

Cattle theft is also a common occurrence and is most prevalent in remote or forested areas such as the Kamuku Forest.²⁰⁰ Cattle raids are often violent or lethal, involving murder and kidnapping or rape of women and girls.²⁰¹ There is also evidence that cattle theft in northern Nigeria has been used to fund or supply insurgent groups such as Boko Haram.²⁰²

Women and girls in Kaduna State are vulnerable to gender-based violence, including domestic violence and rape. Sexual abuse and rape of

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ “Nigeria: Post-Election Violence Killed 800”, Human Rights Watch, May 2011.

¹⁹⁹ “New Risks on Nigeria’s Shiite Fault Line”, Obasi, N., International Crisis Group, December 2015.

²⁰⁰ “Herders against Farmers: Nigeria’s Expanding Deadly Conflict”, International Crisis Group, September 2017.

²⁰¹ “Cows, Bandits and Violent Conflicts: Understanding Cattle Rustling in Northern Nigeria”, Olaniyan, A. and Yahaya, A., Africa Spectrum, 2016.

²⁰² Ibid.

underage girls is common in school buildings or on campus by teachers or school employees in exchange for school supplies or grades.²⁰³ As noted above, women and girls are also vulnerable to gender-based violence in the course of inter-communal conflict or cattle thefts.

Multiple respondents expressed that security forces are ineffective in responding to these security concerns due to inadequate staffing, training and resources. One participant mentioned that, while the Inspector General of Police and the Chief of Army Staff recently intervened to address the poor conduct of the police in the region, many security forces do not properly carry out investigations and are not professional. Some participants also expressed the perception that the current government and security forces are sympathetic to the herdsman due to corruption or ethnic ties, since President Muhammadu Buhari belongs to the Fulani ethnic group. As a result, communities frequently rely on vigilante groups to patrol neighborhoods and ensure security. These groups are often unarmed and coordinate with local police to arrest suspects.

“It’s the police that do the most damage. They are partial in justice and do not carry out proper investigations when crisis occurs.”

- Religious Leader, Kaduna

Despite the prevalence of herder-farmer conflicts and other sources of insecurity, fieldwork participants highlighted several local-level initiatives that aim to mitigate these conflicts. Participants in the Women’s FGD cited a series of meetings between farmers and herders in Jema’a LGA that resulted in the signing of a peace agreement and the creation of an arrangement in which farmers would allow livestock to graze on their fields after the harvest is complete. The

²⁰³ “Impacts of Violence on Women and Girls in Kaduna”, Taft, P., Blyth, H. and Murphy, C., The Fund for Peace

Kafanchan Peace Declaration, signed in March 2016 and mediated by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, also established agreements between herders and farmers in five LGAs in Southern Kaduna.²⁰⁴ Civil society organizations are also reportedly involved in peacebuilding in the region.

Population and Demographics

As noted above, the population of Kaduna State is ethnically diverse, with more than a dozen ethnic groups. In the north of the state, the majority-Muslim Hausa-Fulani are the largest ethnic group, while the south is home to a number of smaller and predominantly Christian ethnic groups. In Southern Kaduna, this demographic makeup has contributed to perceptions of marginalization along ethnic and religious lines. As noted above, conflicts between herders and farmers have also taken on ethnic and religious tones, as herders are largely from the Muslim Fulani ethnic group.

Key concerns identified by fieldwork participants include high rates of youth unemployment, the closure of schools due to insecurity, and an inadequate healthcare system. The region has seen a rise in the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) due to insecurity, and some of these IDPs are reportedly taking refuge in closed public schools. Participants also noted that the closure of schools contributes to high rates of illiteracy and unemployment and leads to increased crime and substance abuse. The region’s health system was also a concern, and interviewees reported that a lack of adequate facilities and staff has increased infant and maternal mortality. Several participants reported that health workers require payment from patients for drugs and services that are supposed to be free.

²⁰⁴ “The Kafanchan Peace Declaration”, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2016.

Politics and Governance

Fieldwork participants reported that elections in Kaduna State are often polarized along religious lines, and therefore along ethnic and regional lines, as religion roughly aligns with ethnic and geographic identities in the state. Interviewees from Southern Kaduna (who are predominantly Christian) expressed the sentiment that they are politically marginalized, since the state government is dominated by the majority-Muslim groups from the north. Participants particularly felt that the regional government has been ineffective at developing infrastructure and providing social services in Southern Kaduna, citing a lack of water, electricity, roads, schools and healthcare.

Many interviewees also discussed the lack of local elections, saying that the state government ended the village district system and fired many local employees. The governor has since appointed civil servants from other parts of the region to administer at the local level, which has reportedly contributed to discontent among local populations and undermined the legitimacy of these appointees.

“We have not had any local government council elections since the current government came to power. The Governor appoints civil servants to local government positions without consulting the people or the traditional heads of communities. And even these local government heads are not indigenes of where they are posted to, and they have little or no power to do anything.”

- Religious Leader, Kaduna

²⁰⁵ “Political and Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Mapping, Evolution and Patterns (June 2006 – May 2014)”, Nigeria Watch

²⁰⁶ “Presidential and Gubernatorial Elections Marred by Serious Irregularities and Fraud in Many States”, European Union, April 2003.

As noted above, Kaduna State also has a history of political violence. According to one study, Kaduna State recorded more than 650 political- and election-related fatalities between 2006 and 2014, the second-highest number in the country.²⁰⁵ The bulk of these fatalities occurred in the course of ethnic and religious riots following the 2011 presidential elections. Elections that have taken place in Kaduna have also had issues with irregularities, including ballot stuffing.²⁰⁶

Finally, women remain underrepresented in political decision-making in Kaduna State. While women are reportedly involved in civil society work and awareness-raising on issues such as healthcare, and a few women serve as councilors at the local level, higher level political posts are dominated by men.

Economics and Resources

The economy of Kaduna State is largely reliant on agricultural production, as well as livestock herding. In fact, 80 percent of the population practices farming, producing groundnuts, cotton, tobacco, guinea corn, cassava and more.²⁰⁷ Kaduna is the number one producer of cotton in Nigeria.²⁰⁸ Animals that are reared include cattle, sheep, goats and pigs.²⁰⁹ The city of Kaduna is also a key regional manufacturing and industrial center.

Participants in the fieldwork particularly highlighted the negative economic impacts of herder/farmer conflicts in the region. The livelihoods of both farmers and herders have diminished due to these conflicts, with herder participants reporting that farmers are killing their cattle and other respondents reporting that land they have purposefully left fallow has been overtaken by herders. Insecurity has also made it difficult for

²⁰⁷ “The state of governance in Nigeria: A situational analysis of Abia, Ebonyi, Imo and Kaduna States”, Christian Aid, February 2017.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

farmers, many of whom are women, to access their fields and maintain a stable source of income. This has in turn negatively impacted the food security of local populations, and interviewees reported a spike in food prices. The closures of schools and businesses due to insecurity has also reportedly worsened youth unemployment and led to a rise in crime.

Several interviewees also reported a need for increased support for farmers from the state and federal government, including the provision of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and machinery to improve agricultural outputs.

Rule of Law

Fieldwork participants in the southern Kaduna region expressed a general lack of confidence in the judicial system. One participant felt that the Kaduna State justice system was fair, but noted that “there is no follow up process on the court’s final verdicts.” As noted above, interviewees also expressed the sentiment that the security forces and courts are sympathetic to Fulani herders, which undermines trust in these institutions.

As a result of this lack of confidence, local populations often rely on local leaders or elders to settle disputes. Many people also utilize Islamic Sharia or customary court systems. Sharia law was introduced in the state in 2000, and the decision of the government to do so led to significant

tensions and violence.²¹⁰ The Kaduna State government has also created customary courts for non-Muslims.²¹¹

“The traditional justice system is the most efficient, where there is compensation or other forms of punishment for offenders within the community.”

- Youth focus group discussion, Kaduna

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

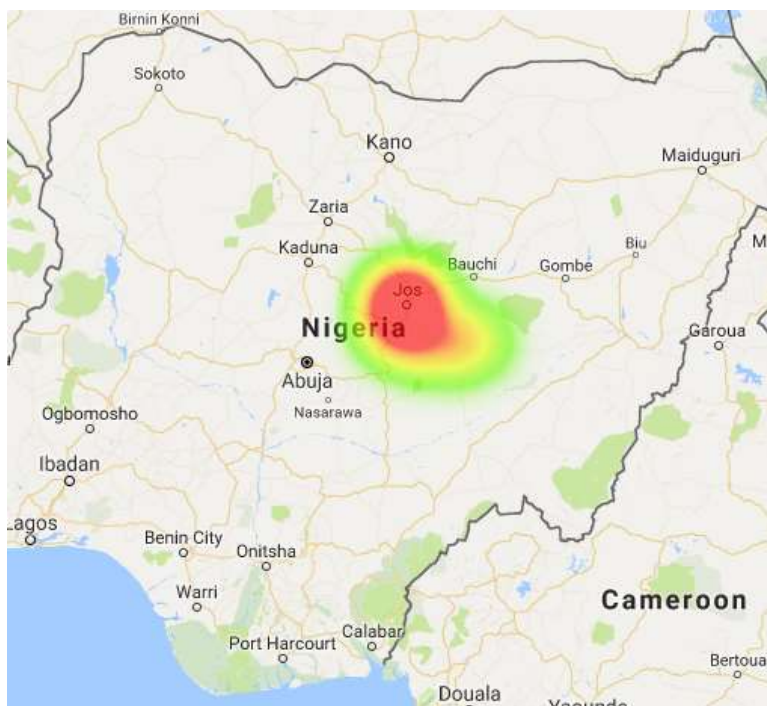
Key Informant Interview (KII) and FGD participants in the Kaduna region mentioned several resilience factors that mitigate conflict. The most commonly discussed resilience factor in southern Kaduna State was the faith-based community. This area is largely Christian, and most participants mentioned that their faith in God has been important in providing them with hope. Vigilante groups were also mentioned by participants as a source of protection for local communities. Local leaders and community elders are involved in dispute resolution. Finally, peacebuilding and dialogue initiatives led by civil society organizations and local communities are an important source of resilience and have proven effective at a small-scale in mitigating conflicts between herders and farmers.

²¹⁰ “Sharia compromise for Kaduna”, BBC, October 2000.

²¹¹ “Sharia Implementation in Northern Nigeria Over 15 Years: The Sharia Courts”, NSRP, 2016.

Plateau State

Plateau State is located in central Nigeria, known as the “Middle Belt,” and shares borders with the states of Bauchi, Taraba, Nasarawa and Kaduna. The state had a projected population of 3.7 million in 2012.²¹² The population of Plateau State is multiethnic, with more than forty native ethno-linguistic groups and a sizable number of groups from other regions of the country.²¹³ Plateau State is an important mining region, with tin and columbite extraction operations, among others. A majority of the population is engaged in agriculture or livestock herding.²¹⁴



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Cattle rustling and tensions between farmers and herders
- Illegal mining of zinc and other minerals²¹⁵
- Gender-based violence
- Lack of infrastructure, especially roads
- High unemployment, especially for youth
- Large youth population
- Poverty
- Lack of agriculture resources, such as seeds and fertilizer
- Perceptions of corruption and bias in the judicial system

Event-Driven Risks

- Violent farmer/herder conflicts
- Inter-communal conflicts
- Seasonal flooding
- Upcoming local government elections

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

- Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN)
- CSOs
- Government peacebuilding initiatives
- Sensitization campaigns
- Radio campaigns

²¹² “Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012”, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

²¹³ “Plateau State: People (Social) Profile”, Plateau State Government

²¹⁴ “Plateau”, Encyclopedia Britannica

²¹⁵ “Assessing the Ecological Effects of Mining in West Africa: The Case of Nigeria”, Merem, E.C., et al., International Journal of Mining Engineering and Mineral Processing, 2017.

Security

During the fieldwork, participants cited cattle rustling and farmer/herder conflicts as key security vulnerabilities in Plateau State. During one Key Informant Interview (KII), a civil society leader stated that young herders allow their cows to stray into farmlands, leading farmers to steal cows in retaliation. Interviewees emphasized that Fulani herders have destroyed farmland, and that incidents sometimes result in fatal violence. In addition to this, land conflicts can economically impact women and vulnerable populations, because the destruction of land jeopardizes their livelihoods and financial security.²¹⁶ If a husband dies due to violence from land conflict, the widow may lose access to the land due to customary law or tradition.²¹⁷

Communal conflict was also cited as a security vulnerability. According to fieldwork participants, the major drivers of communal conflict are land disputes and chieftaincy selection. For example, during the youth Focus Group Discussion (FGD), one participant described a recent clash between the Jarawa and Berom tribes over the selection of a traditional ruler.

Interviewees also stated that illicit economic activity, especially drug trafficking and arms proliferation, has undermined security in the state. Several fieldwork participants stated that drug abuse by youth is prevalent. The prevalence of drug abuse has led to the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to become involved to stop the illegal sale of drugs, with the goal of disrupting trade and preventing youth from becoming involved in drugs.²¹⁸ While the previous administration attempted to solve the problem through arrests and door to door rallies, drug abuse is still common. According to one interviewee, the approach is incomplete, as it does not provide

rehabilitation for drug users. Additionally, the proliferation of light arms in the state has reportedly become common, especially among youth groups. The prevalence of illegal mining was also noted as a security vulnerability in the state by a fieldwork participant. Illegal mining of precious stones in Wase LGA has previously triggered conflict between groups of miners over issues of ownership.

Fieldwork participants also highlighted criminality, homicide, and rape as key concerns in Plateau. Armed robbery is widespread, especially along roads. Interviewees noted that violence against women and girls is a prevalent issue in the state, citing high levels of rape and domestic abuse. Perpetrators often include family members, trusted community figures and members of the security forces.²¹⁹ Incidents of gender-based violence often go unreported due to the culture of silence around these issues,²²⁰ and during one KII, a participant stated that the police are allegedly complicit.

The Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN) has been successful at reducing cattle theft and criminality. The group has effectively collaborated with the State Police Command, arresting suspects and handing them over to the police for prosecution. Additionally, monthly meetings are held between the VGN and community representatives to discuss threats and develop strategies. According to interviewees, vigilante groups were formed because police forces were not responsive during or after conflict situations.

Population and Demographics

Plateau has more than 40 ethno-linguistic groups, and while there is linguistic diversity, English is the official language of Plateau State.²²¹ In 2013, the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) found that women in Plateau gave birth to 5.4

²¹⁶ "Impacts of Violence on Women and Girls in Kaduna", Taft, P., Blyth, H. and Murphy, C., The Fund for Peace

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ "NDLEA decries alarming rate of drug abuse in Plateau", Vanguard, July 2017.

²¹⁹ "Impacts of Violence on Women and Girls in Kaduna", Taft, P., Blyth, H. and Murphy, C., The Fund for Peace

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ "Elections and Governance in Nigeria's Fourth Republic", Agbu, O., African Books Collective, 2016.

children, which is slightly below the national average.²²² In addition to this, 15 percent of married women practice family planning.²²³ Plateau is largely comprised of Christians and Muslims, and there are religious tensions that lead to outbreaks in violence and arson.²²⁴

Fieldwork participants highlighted the state's youth bulge and high rate of youth unemployment as key demographic vulnerabilities in Plateau State. Interviewees reported that youth are not educated on their rights and are not involved in politics. During one KII, a participant stated that traditional leaders have reportedly exacerbated the situation by using police to silence youth during protests. Additionally, high youth unemployment is an ongoing concern in the region. This, in addition to other factors, has led to high levels of drug use among the youth population. According to fieldwork participants, women and girls are another vulnerable population in Plateau. Across the state, women and girls are subject to high rates of teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, and rape.

Interviewees in Plateau also expressed concern over the rise in disease outbreak across the state. Participants attribute the rise in public health issues to infrastructure problems. Poor sewage management and drainage in some areas has reportedly contributed to cases of cholera and typhoid. While there are healthcare facilities and hospitals in the state, fieldwork participants stated that they are often understaffed and experience frequent medication shortages.

Politics and Governance

Fieldwork participants stated that transparency and accountability has improved with the current state government administration, leading to increased confidence in government. During a KII, a youth leader stated that the new administration in Plateau State is widely viewed as credible across religious and ethnic groups. For example, the

current government has promoted social cohesion, particularly focusing on the Hausa ethnic group, which had felt isolated in the past. Currently, there are four commissioners who are Hausa.

However, interviewees emphasized that there is a lack of political opportunity for women in the state. During a KII, one participant stated that politicians manipulate women during elections to obtain more votes, but do little to promote the role of women and elevate their voices. The percentage of women in leadership groups is low compared to men. Only two women serve as Local Government Chairpersons out of 17 local government areas (LGAs) in the state.

Fieldwork participants also discussed lack of educational facilities as a key vulnerability in Plateau State. During a KII, one participant stated that classrooms lacked seating, textbooks, and supplies. Additionally, interviewees reported that electricity and water bills are too high for citizens.

Economics and Resources

Agriculture is the primary economic activity of Plateau State. Fieldwork participants cited high cost of living, poverty, and poor infrastructure as key economic vulnerabilities in Plateau State. Agriculture in Plateau is disadvantaged by poor policy and lacks resources such as, fertilizer, pesticides, and seeds. Several interviewees stated that when the government does provide fertilizer, local politicians allegedly hoard it and distribute it to their friends, families and those loyal to them first. The remainder is then sold at a high price.

Participants also highlighted poor infrastructure, natural disasters, and climate change as key concerns in Plateau. Roads and sewage management were viewed as specific vulnerabilities affecting the state, contributing to the rise in public health issues. According to a fieldwork participant in Mangu LGA, floods recently

²²² "Nigeria: Demographic and Health Survey", USAID, 2013.

²²³ "Nigeria: Demographic and Health Survey", USAID, 2013.

²²⁴ "Nigeria's elections in Plateau State", Winter, J., BBC, April 2003.

caused the partial and total collapse of several buildings. Interviewees also cited growing desertification, perennial floods, and insect damage as the most common environmental issues causing the destruction of farmland and decreased agricultural output.

While Plateau has a colonial history in mining tin and columbite, the mining sector has been reduced to artisanal mining. Since artisanal mining typically occurs in historical mines, these areas have radiation that leaves artisanal miners at risk of radiation and lead poisoning.²²⁵ While artisanal miners benefit from subsistence wages, the long-term risks of mining can lead to expensive healthcare costs and death. Columbite extracted from these mines have been found in Bassa, Bukur, Jos, Riyom and Barkin-Ladi.²²⁶ Artisanal mining could have implications for agriculture, since it is known to pollute ground water and affect plant growth.²²⁷

The Plateau has lost potential revenue because of land conflicts in the state. In 2012, Mercy Corps estimated that this loss amounted to 75 percent of potential state revenue due to farmer-herder conflict.²²⁸ The economic consequences of land conflict include loss of profit due to damaged lands or loss of cattle.²²⁹ Additionally, land conflict deters investors from opening businesses due to security concerns.

Rule of Law

Fieldwork participants cited perceptions of corruption and bias, lack of access to the justice system, and a lack of resources as key vulnerabilities in Plateau. Interviewees stated that courts lack an adequate number of judges to service the caseloads, leading to delays in the

justice process and long prison detentions. Bribery of judges is allegedly common. During one KII, a participant stated that due to high legal fees, people resort to “jungle justice.” Fieldwork participants also stated that tribalism holds sway in the courts and affects judges’ decisions. Women are underrepresented in the judicial system due to cultural practices. One interviewee stated that in some areas, women can only seek justice through her father, husband, or a male representative.

According to fieldwork participants, at the

“If cases are sent to the police, the richer person will always win somehow”

- Interviewee, Wase LGA, Plateau State

community level, local populations rely on village heads to mediate communal disputes rather than the court system. If both parties are not satisfied with the decision, only then will it be escalated to the formal court system. Additionally, local populations often rely on civil defense and vigilante groups for justice.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Despite the vulnerabilities and risks detailed above, participants in the KIIs and FGDs identified a number of resilience factors. CSOs have engaged in awareness-raising initiatives designed to educate women on their rights. Interviewees also cited strategic efforts by the government and NGOs to reduce drug use through awareness programming as a resilience factor. Government peacebuilding initiatives were also discussed during the fieldwork, including peace clubs in secondary schools, inclusivity of key community

²²⁵ “Assessing the Ecological Effects of Mining in West Africa: The Case of Nigeria”, Merem, E.C., et al., International Journal of Mining Engineering and Mineral Processing, 2017.

²²⁶ “The Nigerian Mining Industry – An Underdeveloped Industry”, Mining Africa

²²⁷ “Impacts of Derived Tin Mining Activities on Landuse/Landcover in Bukuru, Plateau State, Nigeria”,

Ndace, J. S. and Danladi, M. H., Journal of Sustainable Development, May 2012.

²²⁸ “The Economic Costs of Conflict and the Benefits of Peace: Effects of Farmer-Pastoralist Conflict in Nigeria’s Middle Belt on State, Sector, and National Economies”, Mercy Corps

²²⁹ Ibid.

stakeholders in decision making, and peacebuilding and promotion of tolerance in local communities. Organizations, such as the Christian Women for Excellence and Empowerment in Nigerian Society (CWEENS) have launched programs to sensitize women about their rights and provide them with lawyers. Radio programming, specifically programs focused on youth development, was also reported as a resilience factor in Plateau. Finally, interviewees reported that vigilante groups, such as the VGN, have played a key role in maintaining security in Plateau.

Recommendations for the Middle Belt

Security

The Nigerian government should work with regional and international partners, as well as local vigilante groups to address larger regional trends of insecurity in the region. CSOs can work with local communities and security forces to promote trust and encourage relationship-building. The Nigerian government, regional and international partners and CSOs should work with security forces and vigilante groups to train these actors on operational best practices and human rights standards. The Nigerian government, with support from regional international partners, should enhance the institutional and operational capacity of the police and military forces, including improved training and provision of material resources. Given the reported local-level success of mediation initiatives and peace agreements between herder and farmer communities, local leaders, local and state governments, and security forces should support similar initiatives with the aim of reducing herder-farmer conflicts in the region. The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and civil society organizations should work with regional and international partners to promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence, particularly in schools.

Population and Demographics

Civil society, the private sector, and donor organizations should support vocational training and job creation initiatives to engage the region's large youth population. CSOs and government agencies should support substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation programs for affected individuals. Traditional leaders, local government and civil society organizations should facilitate sustained dialogue and interactions across political, ethnic, and religious divides. Local and state governments, international donors and civil society organizations should expand access to

education, affordable healthcare and other social services, particularly for women, vulnerable youth and IDPs. Civil society organizations, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and other relevant government agencies should work with regional and international partners to promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence, early and forced marriage and family planning.

Politics and Governance

Regional organizations, CSOs and the Nigerian government should support both internal and external initiatives for good governance and transparency at the local and national levels. The Nigerian government and political parties should work with local civil society organizations to promote youth and women's involvement in politics. Local and regional governments, as well as CSOs, should carry out awareness raising campaigns with emphasis on civic education for youth and women. The local, regional, and national governments should work to improve relationships with local communities through greater visibility and improving social service provision, particularly in the areas of healthcare and education. CSOs should support inter-group dialogue across ethnic, religious, and regional lines, with a focus on reducing political and social tensions.

Economics and Resources

CSOs, international financial institutions (IFIs), and the Nigerian government should support and expand micro-financing and vocational training programs, particularly in support of women and youth-led initiatives. IFIs should offer greater support to small- and medium-sized enterprises, such as those aimed at sustainable agricultural production. Programming and initiatives aimed at increasing agricultural resilience to climate change and increasing food security should be of particular importance. The government should work with partners to create awareness campaigns about the lasting impacts of illegal mining on communities

and their land. It should provide accessible paths to formal small-scale mine licensing – which includes training on health, safety and environmental practices, and couple this with stronger oversight and policing of the small-scale sector. Investment in other vocational programs for unemployed youth will also reduce the incentive for them to take up illegal practices.

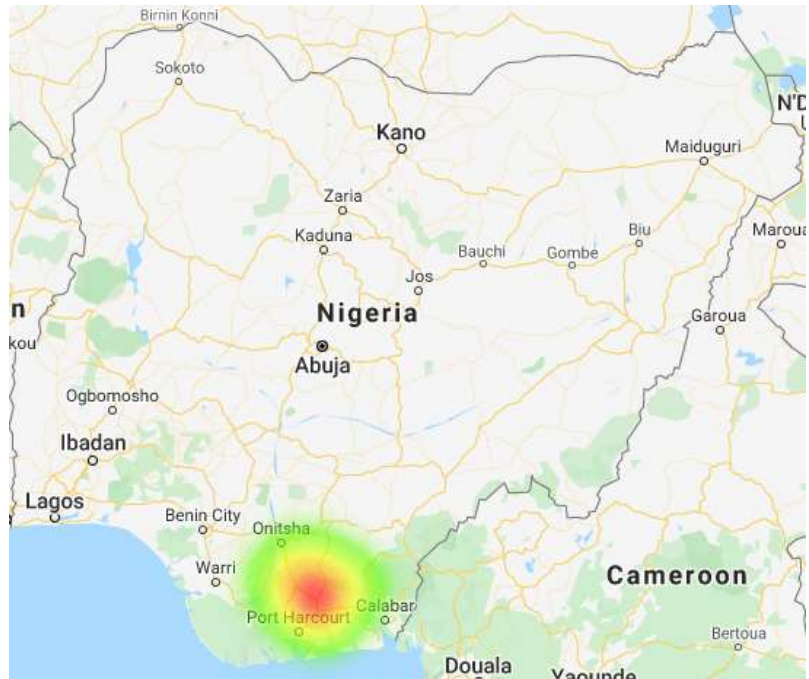
Rule of Law

CSOs and the Nigerian government should promote efficiency, independence, and transparency within the formal justice system. Local and international NGOs and civil society organizations should support programs that provide oversight, provide legal assistance to vulnerable populations and protect women in both traditional justice mechanisms and in the courts, particularly in gender-based violence cases.

Niger Delta Region

Abia and Imo States

Abia and Imo States are located in southeastern Nigeria, in the Niger Delta region. These two states share borders with Enugu, Ebonyi, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, and Anambra States. As of 2012, the projected populations of Abia and Imo States were 3.3 million and 4.6 million, respectively.²³⁰ The population is largely Igbo and Christian. Much of the population is engaged in agriculture, and the production of oil and gas also plays a primary role in the regional economy.²³¹



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Violent crime
- Abuses by security forces, including extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detentions, harassment, and extortion
- Poverty
- Youth Unemployment
- Land conflicts with government
- Perception of widespread corruption
- Perception that the South is economically/politically cheated by the North
- Lack of infrastructure and industrial development
- Ethnic tensions between Muslim Hausa and Christian Igbo
- Continued practice of FGM, early marriage, and widowhood practices
- Lack of funding for teachers and education
- Environmental degradation
- Lack of trust in police and judiciary

²³⁰ "Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012", National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

²³¹ "Imo", Encyclopedia Britannica

Event-Driven Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts between Nigerian military and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) movement • Pro-Biafra protests and demonstrations • Arrests or trials of IPOB leaders • Chieftaincy disputes/ government interference with selection of Eze leaders
Social and Institutional Resilience Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women organizing to promote peace • Youth programs • Civil society organizations

Security

Participants cited criminal activity, abuses by security forces and the potential for intra-communal violence as key security vulnerabilities. Interviewees described a situation of “no security” where the populace is living in perpetual fear and described incidents of intimidation and extortion allegedly perpetrated by the military.

The Nigerian military operation in Abia State nicknamed “Operation Python Dance” was specifically cited throughout the fieldwork as an ongoing driver of insecurity. Participants highlighted perceptions that the military has carried out extrajudicial killings and arbitrary detentions of members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) group and that it has targeted unarmed citizens who were unaffiliated with separatist groups. Participants stated that citizens, especially men, feel unable to walk outside at night due to fears of being arrested or killed by security forces. Interviewees expressed frustration that the IPOB has been labeled as a terrorist group, stating that their members practice non-violent protest. High levels of harassment of citizens were also noted during the fieldwork, especially in cities, including Aba and Umuahia in Abia. Motorists and tradespeople are allegedly forced to pay bribes and those who cannot may be killed or detained. Additionally, interviewees expressed concern about ethnic motivations for abuses by security forces and selective enforcement, citing discrimination against Igbo people and favor toward Muslim Hausa people. Concern that Boko

Haram may have infiltrated the security forces was also noted during the fieldwork.

Violent crime, including kidnapping and armed robbery, was also a major concern highlighted by fieldwork participants. High youth unemployment, poverty and a lack of economic opportunities after completion of education were cited as the main drivers of criminality, cultism and gang membership among youth. Participants mentioned that many criminal activities, such as oil bunkering, can only occur with the collusion of politicians, police, and security forces.

During a Key Informant Interview (KII) in Imo State, a participant discussed incidents of intra-communal violence over land tenure and government seizure. Youth, in particular, were angry about government seizure of land without proper compensation of the community. Interviewees also highlighted concerns in Abia and

“Around two weeks ago there was shooting everywhere in Aba; we don’t know why. There was a [Biafra] movement/demonstration, wearing regalia [points to arms], peaceful marches – we were fighting for our rights.... Suddenly the Nigerian Army put tanks at the junctions. Normally an army is for external issues, but we are seeing the contrary; we see the army in our streets.”

- Female interviewee, Abia State

Imo States about government interference in the selection of the Eze and other local chieftains, stating that this has the potential to spur conflict and violence within communities.

Population and Demographics

Participants highlighted tensions between religious/ethnic communities, problems with the education system, youth unemployment and continuing health-related issues with female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and early marriage as key demographic vulnerabilities.

Participants noted that there is a separation of the Muslim Hausa population from the Christian Igbo population, with the Muslim population having their own markets and separate gathering places. Additionally, interviewees discussed feelings of suspicion of northern Nigeria, expressing worries that people from southern Nigeria who go to work in the north have significant risk of being killed, stolen from, or passed over for jobs because they are not Muslim. Participants mentioned that the National Youth Service program has failed to enhance national unity.

KII and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants also noted problems with the education system, including the lack of pay for teachers and a lack of Biafra history in the curriculum. They stated that the government was unable to provide good education through public schools, which has led to the proliferation of private schools for wealthy students. Others said that teachers' salaries were too low to live on and that some teachers were owed up to eight months of pay by the government. One participant noted that Nigerian school curriculum does not include Biafran history or accounts of the Biafran war.

Many participants were concerned about the influx of youth in their communities and the lack of education and employment opportunities for youth. These factors, according to participants, lead to an increase in youth's participation in criminal

activities such as gangs, drugs, kidnapping and other illegal businesses.

Finally, respondents highlighted female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), early marriage and harmful widowhood practices as continuing issues in their communities. During the women's FGD, one participant stated "FGM is everywhere, and cutting. We've been fighting that. It's come down drastically." However, similar alternative practices have continued and need to be addressed according to the FGD.

Politics and Governance

During the fieldwork, ethnic tensions, perceptions of corruption, and perceptions of rigged elections were cited as key political vulnerabilities. Fieldwork participants stated that the Igbo people feel marginalized and "cheated" by the government and do not feel a sense of belonging in Nigeria. Interviewees discussed the anti-corruption campaign of the Buhari administration, expressing concerns that the campaign only targeted political opponents, or focused on Christians and not Muslims.

Interviewees also expressed low confidence in the electoral system, highlighting perceptions that votes do not matter and that a small group of people decide the results of elections. Politicians were perceived to be unresponsive to the people and concerned with their own interests, such as money made through corruption. During the fieldwork, participants also expressed concerns about violence during the next elections in 2019, stating that it may not be safe for people to vote.

Youth political participation has been low due to a lack of confidence in the system. Several participants said that many youths do not plan to vote in the 2019 elections due to perceptions that their votes do not matter in the results and that politicians are not sensitive to their concerns. Additionally, according to participants, youth political demonstrations have been suppressed.

Other participants cited youth violence and cultism around elections as salient concerns.

While interviewees stated that women have little political representation on the local or state level, they were reported to play a role in political organizing, and were cited as a voice for restraint and peaceful behavior around elections. However, other participants said that women's knowledge about the electoral system was low and that their support could be bought by small material items, such as tomatoes and salt.

“Women have played some good roles in the electoral system. They sometimes sensitize the general populace to be peaceful, avoid violence and be of good behavior.”

- Men's focus group discussion, Abia State

Economics and Resources

Fieldwork participants stated that poor infrastructure, lack of development and support for industries, high poverty and unemployment rates, illicit trade, and environmental degradation are key economic vulnerabilities. In general, many participants expressed the idea that the South has been cheated and neglected economically by the North.

Infrastructure issues, including poor roads, lacking waste management, and government failure to provide electricity for communities and industry, were also cited as vulnerabilities. The poor state of the roads in Abia and Imo have had negative effects on commerce and caused a lack of development and income for the states' residents. Government support for development and industry was also an issue, according to participants. They mentioned programs that were supposed to support small and medium enterprises, but said that funds had reportedly been lost due to corruption by officials. Multiple forms of taxation

and extortion by security services, even for petty traders, also hinder income generation and business growth.

“The neglect and interference from the federal government in the provision of infrastructure in the south eastern region constitute about 70 percent of the reason/causes of economic difficulties in the region and thus the discontent in the Southeast ”

- Male interviewee, Abia State

Participants stated that poverty and unemployment rates are high, and drive criminality and conflict. Youth are especially vulnerable and have few means to support themselves, in some cases turning to scavenging or driving commercial tricycles for a living. Many participants also noted that youth unemployment was driving a rise in “yahoo businesses” that perpetrated internet fraud. Others discussed a rise in other illicit businesses including the drug trade, oil bunkering, kidnapping rings, and “baby factories.” Unemployed youth have also been susceptible to recruitment for political violence. Participants also mentioned that unemployment was also driving migration out of the region.

Lastly, interviewees stated that environmental degradation, climate change, and poor land use were leading to diminishing crop yields in Abia and Imo States. “The soil is less fertile, there is flooding. It is impacting the quality and quantity of food. It is resulting in food insecurity,” said a KII participant in Imo state. Oil spillages and other environmental degradation from industrial activities were also concerns for agricultural production.

Rule of Law

Fieldwork participants had little confidence in the court system, citing a lack of transparency and little to no judicial independence. During an FGD in Abia

State, participants stated that, “the judiciary is weak, lacks integrity, and is incapable of salvaging the state of the nation right now.” Interviewees also highlighted perceptions that connections were key to getting results in the justice system, and that the rich and powerful were often able to circumvent the law, while the poor had to face long delays before their cases are heard. Fieldwork participants highlighted perceptions that the judicial system is not independent from the executive and legislative branches. During one FGD, participants stated that judicial officers themselves are now politicians. Additionally, the police were perceived to be corrupt and even in some cases complicit in crimes such as arms smuggling.

"Justice is for the rich. It is too expensive for the poor to fight for justice. The institutions will demand money before addressing your situation."

- Female interviewee, Abia State

Some participants stated that the judiciary and the police, rather than being impartial, are tools used by the government to suppress political opponents and certain areas of the country. Many cited arbitrary detentions by the security services and the police and that many waited years in jail before standing trial. Others noted perceptions that justice is served differently for Muslims and Christians. At the time fieldwork was conducted, IPOB leader Nnamdi Kanu was scheduled to stand trial on October 17, 2017. He was absent at the resumption of his trial. According to his lawyer, Kanu has been missing since September 14, 2017. Participants mentioned strong opposition in Abia State to Kanu being tried under Sharia law. Additionally, interviewees discussed perceptions that the judicial system was incapable of protecting human rights or curbing the abuses of the security services, such as extortion and rape. Grievance reporting mechanisms for abuses by the security

services were ineffective and not widely used for fear of reprisals.

Due to the lack of confidence in the police and the judicial system, fieldwork participants said that mob justice or “jungle justice” was often practiced. Several participants also cited traditional dispute settlement mechanisms, including Eze and traditional religious leaders, and said that people still rely on these instead of the official justice system. People will often go first to the traditional dispute mechanisms and to the formal justice system only for more serious issues. However, several participants complained that these systems were being politicized by government interference. This interference, including during chieftaincy disputes, was perceived to be eroding the independence of the traditional rulers, who were said to be “bought off” by the government.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Women were a social resilience factor promoting peace during elections and organizing community discussions and town hall meetings about contentious issues such as land tenure. Participants said that the role of women in politics had been improving slightly and that during elections women can “sensitize the general populace to be peaceful, avoid violence and be of good behavior.” They also are a key factor in the economic growth of Nigeria. One focus groups mentioned that women were starting co-ops to save money to start their own businesses. In the words of one FGD: “Women, we are suffering and smiling.”

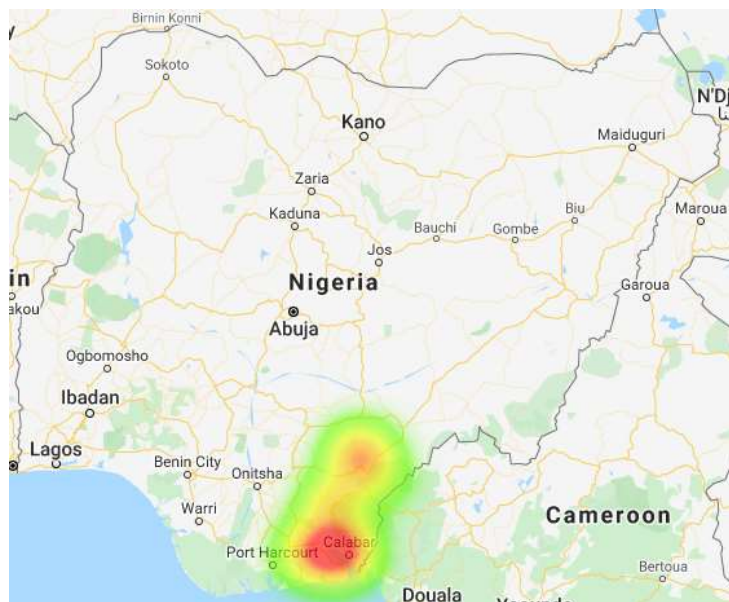
Although youth were a concern for many participants, others also identified them as a potential resilience factor. Some had positive experiences with the national service program and pointed to the potential for youth to participate positively in the political system. Others mentioned some programs in schools to group youth together and encourage them to stay away from cultism and criminality.

Civil society groups were seen as another potential resilience factor in pushing for transparency, accountability and inclusivity in governance. However, more resources were needed for such groups to be effective. One participant also

identified primary health centers as a resilience factor. She said that they are accessible but that many people do not use them regularly and cited the need for more awareness of the resources available.

Akwa Ibom and Cross River States

Akwa Ibom and Cross River States are located in the far southeastern corner of the Niger Delta, along the border with Cameroon. Internally, the two states share borders with Rivers, Abia, Ebonyi, and Benue States, and to the south both states have coastlines on the Bight of Biafra. As of 2012, the projected population of Akwa Ibom was 4.6 million, while that of Cross River was 3.3 million.²³² Major ethnic groups in Akwa Ibom include the Ibibio, Annang, and Oron, and in Cross River the largest ethnic groups are the Efik and Ekoi.²³³ Agriculture and fishing play an important role in the regional economy, and Akwa Ibom is also one of the largest oil producing states in Nigeria.²³⁴



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Perceptions of corruption among security forces
- Lack of staff and resources for security forces
- Cult violence
- Land-based conflicts due to unclear border demarcation
- Gender-based violence (GBV)
- Perceptions of corruption among politicians and lack of transparency in government
- Underrepresentation of women and youth in political decision-making
- Manipulation of women and youth by politicians
- Tensions between ethnic groups and “indigene vs. non-indigene” rhetoric
- Poor access to healthcare and education
- Low rate of family planning
- Poverty and economic inequality
- Food insecurity
- High rate of youth unemployment
- Oil bunkering
- Flooding, soil erosion and environmental degradation
- Perceptions of corruption, bias and impunity in the judicial system

²³² “Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012”, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

²³³ “Cross River”, Encyclopedia Britannica

²³⁴ “Achieving Together: Supporting the socio-economic development of Akwa Ibom state”, Seven Energy

Event-Driven Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land- and resource-based conflicts • Chieftaincy disputes • Elections • Economic recession and fluctuations in commodity prices
Social and Institutional Resilience Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community policing and vigilante groups • Religious and traditional leaders • Peaceful coexistence between religious groups • Civil society organizations and NGOs

Security

Primary security concerns identified by fieldwork participants in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States include incidents of criminality, communal violence, cult violence, and gender-based violence (GBV). Interviewees reported that security forces in the region are generally seen as being unreliable or ineffective due to a lack of staff or resources. One interviewee noted that security forces in the region (such as police, military, navy and air force) are outnumbered by the population and that when police are called, oftentimes they state their cars do not have gas. As a result, communities often rely on community watch groups, equipped with “a torch, raincoat, local weapons...a vehicle,” to deter criminals. Participants reported that these groups often collaborate with the police, and emphasized the importance of effective and timely communication to ensure successful community policing. The low level of trust in formal security forces has also contributed to a trend of mob justice in the region.

“The other month, two boys stole a bike in Abia state. And they were burned alive [by a mob]. Jungle justice. I have the video on my phone right now, I can show you.”

- Civil Society Leader, Cross River

Fieldwork participants also reported incidents of communal violence between ethnic groups over land in the region, often due to unclear border demarcation or boundary disputes, or other issues such as revenue-sharing or chieftaincy disputes. One interviewee cited the example of an ongoing boundary conflict between the Ikot Offiong and Oku-Iboku communities.²³⁵ Another respondent noted that communities will often collaborate with the Ministry of Land to demarcate property lines. Herder-farmer conflicts are also reportedly a growing concern.

Interviewees noted the prevalence of cult violence in the region, with one respondent stating that the violence “has been ongoing for over 17 years...it’s been escalating and no one is addressing it.” Cult groups in the region identified by the fieldwork participants include the Vikings, Klansmen, Black-Axe, Seadogs, Daybam and Daywear. Some of the violence by cult groups has taken place in universities and secondary schools, and cults reportedly begin recruiting members as early as the primary school level. Cult members are also reportedly mobilized by politicians during election cycles to foster a culture of fear or intimidation. Some interviewees tied the formation of cult groups to politicians, while others attributed their formation to negative interactions between students and security forces.

Finally, gender-based violence (GBV) was identified as a key security concern for women and girls in the region. Rape, particularly rape of underage girls,

²³⁵ “Ikot Offiong vs Oku-Iboku: FG Sues for Peace, To Begin Boundary Demarcation”, Ewa, U., Cross River Watch, July 2017.

and other forms of GBV are widespread, and participants in the Women’s Focus Group Discussion (FGD) reported that the prevalence of GBV had led to the implementation of a 6 pm curfew. These women also highlighted the vulnerability of street children to sexual abuse and early pregnancy. Many interviewees noted that, despite the pervasive nature of GBV in the region, survivors often face social stigma and family pressure to marry the perpetrator or settle cases out of court. One participant reported that police often question the victim’s credibility or fail to effectively follow up on reported cases of GBV. These factors have contributed to an environment in which GBV is routinely underreported.

Population and Demographics

Like much of the Niger Delta, Akwa Ibom and Cross River States are home to multiple ethnic groups. Ethnic groups in Akwa Ibom include the Ibibio, Annang, Oron, Eket and Obolo and the largest ethnic groups include Ibibio, Annang and Oron.²³⁶ The ethnic groups of Cross River include the Efik, Ejagham and the Bekwarra.²³⁷ Tensions between ethnic groups in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States do exist, particularly between those considered to be “indigene” or “non-indigene.” These labels are used to designate groups considered “indigenous” or “native” to the land, versus those groups that have settled later or are ethnically considered “outsiders.” One civil society leader stated, “I have lived in Cross River for 30 years. But I am still a ‘non-indigene’... This polarizes society, and stigmatization gives room to violence.” Tensions between “indigene” and “non-indigene” groups often stem from economic pressures and the perception that “non-indigenes” (including groups such as the Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa) hold greater economic power in the region. Several respondents particularly identified tensions between local communities and Hausa groups who are involved in scrap metal collection, linking their presence to

a rise in crime and evoking the perception that the Hausa are “colonizing” the region.

Although Christianity is the most prevalent religion in the region, fieldwork participants reported positive interfaith relationships between Muslims and Christians. Several interviewees noted that religious leaders will invite leaders of other religions to participate in important holidays, and that NGOs support interfaith programs.

A key concern identified by fieldwork participants was poor infrastructure in the region, particularly in the areas of education and healthcare. Participants in the Women’s FGD reported that, although education and healthcare are supposed to be subsidized or free, local populations often continue to pay for services, whether due to a lack of knowledge or poor implementation of laws. In addition, family planning is reportedly not extensively practiced in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, although the practice is more popular among youth and urban populations. Social stigma, as well as religious and cultural beliefs that “it’s God that gives children,” reportedly discourage the use of family planning in the region. However, one interviewee highlighted the role of civil society groups (particularly a program implemented by FHI 360) in raising awareness around family planning and destigmatizing the practice.

“In some places the cultural perception is that women do not negotiate sex, hence cannot discuss with their husbands about the number of children to bear.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Akwa Ibom and Cross River

²³⁶ “Overview of Akwa Ibom State”, NDEBUMOG Regional Accountability Centre

²³⁷ “Overview of Cross River State”, NDEBUMOG Regional Accountability Centre

Politics and Governance

Fieldwork participants reported widespread perceptions of corruption and a lack of budget transparency within the government. Interviewees expressed that resources are allocated to members of whichever party is currently in power, leading to greater competition during election periods and growing apathy toward the political process among local communities. Several participants felt that individual politicians use state resources to enrich themselves, with little concern for the needs of vulnerable citizens in the region.

“The state funds the lifestyle and activities of the political class, whereas the common citizens suffer.”

- Community Member, Akwa Ibom

Women also reportedly have limited roles in political decision-making, both at the local and national level. Several participants noted that women are often mobilized by politicians during election periods, but rarely hold formal political positions. Women who do participate in politics face social stigma or are “seen as loose and promiscuous.” However, there are several female politicians who were identified by fieldwork participants, including the Head of Service and the deputy speaker of the state assembly in Akwa Ibom.

Similarly, youth are reportedly manipulated by politicians during election periods but ultimately underutilized in political decision-making. As participants in the Men’s FGD in Akwa Ibom stated, “Youth and women have been shortchanged and excluded in the governance system. They are only used during elections and dumped afterwards.”

Economics and Resources

Primary economic activities in the states of Akwa Ibom and Cross River include agriculture and fishing, forestry, and oil production. Despite the fact that Akwa Ibom State is one of the leading producers of oil in Nigeria, fieldwork participants highlighted high levels of poverty, economic inequality, and unemployment (particularly among youth) in the region. The recent economic recession and rising food prices have reportedly exacerbated poverty in the region, causing a greater reliance on subsistence farming and produce imported from other states. Participants in the Men’s FGD also noted that the rise in poverty has resulted in an increase in school dropouts, as families can no longer afford to send their children to school.

“We do not feel the impact of the government in our economy, and crime is the result. But bunkering created jobs for our youths and made them live life. This drastically reduced crime in Akwa Ibom. When oil bunkers were arrested, crime and violence escalated in the state.”

- Youth focus group discussion, Akwa Ibom and Cross River

Fieldwork participants connected the region’s widespread poverty and youth unemployment to the prevalence of oil bunkering (the illegal collection of oil from a pipeline). Several interviewees noted that oil bunkering has created jobs for youth, and allows individuals to better support themselves. Participants in the Youth FGD also attributed the engagement of youth in oil bunkering with a decrease in violence and other forms of criminality. However, interviewees noted that oil bunkering also involves negative health risks and has contributed to environmental degradation. Despite the illegality of oil bunkering, fieldwork participants acknowledged that

politicians and security forces are frequently complicit and profit from the practice, whether directly or indirectly through the acceptance of bribes.

Finally, interviewees identified flooding and soil erosion as environmental vulnerabilities in Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers States. Participants in the Men's FGD reported that houses and farmland are regularly flooded, affecting agricultural outputs. This trend, combined with rising food prices driven by the economic recession, have contributed to growing food insecurity in the states.

Rule of Law

Mistrust of the formal justice system was prevalent in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, due to perceptions of corruption, impunity and bias toward the wealthy. Several fieldwork participants also expressed that the judiciary is not independent of the executive branch. Youth cited the Nigerian government's labeling of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as a terrorist group as an example, stating that the courts went along with the government's stance despite having a different definition of terrorism.

"Judges are friends and closer to rich people, and most often dispense judgements in their favor against the poor."

- Men's focus group discussion, Akwa Ibom and Cross River

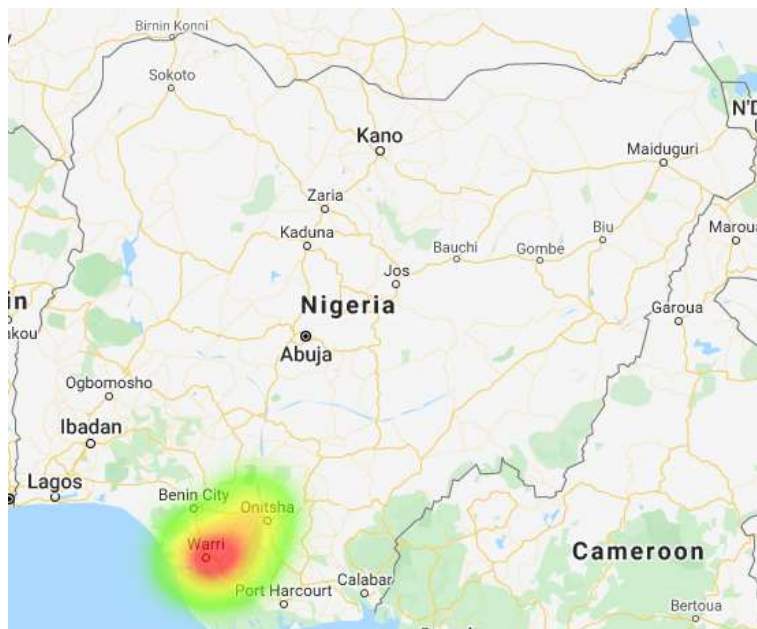
Due to this mistrust, fieldwork respondents reported that religious or traditional leaders are often involved in dispute resolution for non-criminal cases. As one Muslim civil society leader explained, "If it is a Muslim rule breaker, we will deal with them in our enclave. If it is an indigene, we will hand them over to the other side. If a Muslim boy rapes an indigene girl, then we bring the two systems [Christian and Muslim communities] together." However, several interviewees noted that traditional leaders may be viewed as corrupt or co-opted by the interests of the state, which undermines their effectiveness in resolving conflicts.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Despite the risks and vulnerabilities listed above, Key Informant Interview (KII) and FGD participants identified several key resilience factors in Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers States. Several interviewees cited the role of community policing and vigilante groups in local security provision. Religious and traditional leaders are also involved in dispute resolution, and religious leaders play an important role in promoting peaceful interfaith relationships. Civil society groups and NGOs are involved in awareness-raising around a number of social issues, including family planning. Finally, despite the illicit nature of oil bunkering, oil bunkering was perceived by some as a source of economic resilience for youth by providing employment and income.

Delta State

Delta State is located in the western part of the Niger Delta region in southern Nigeria. The state shares borders with the states of Ondo, Endo, Anambra, Rivers and Bayelsa and has a coastline of approximately 160 km along the Bight of Benin. As of 2012, the state had a projected population of 4.8 million.²³⁸ The population of Delta State is multiethnic and largely Christian, with significant populations of the Igbo, Edo, Itsekiri, Urhobo, Isoko and Ijaw groups.²³⁹ Delta State is a key producer and exporter of petroleum, rubber, timber, and palm oil.²⁴⁰



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Perceptions of corruption and bias in the judicial system
- Perceptions of clientelism, nepotism, corruption and bias among political and governmental officials.
- Perceived lack of transparency in the oil sector, inequitable distribution of resources
- Unemployment
- Under-staffed and under-resourced security personnel
- Poor provision of public services
- Climate pressures, including flooding
- Price volatility
- Under-representation of women and youth in politics
- Porous borders
- Gender-based violence including rape and domestic violence
- Under-representation of women and youth in leadership positions

Event-Driven Risks

- Land disputes
- Farmer-herder clashes
- Oil bunkering
- Election-related violence
- Cult violence

²³⁸ “Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012”, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

²³⁹ “Delta”, Encyclopedia Britannica

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

- Traditional leaders
- Civil society organizations
- Anti-cult groups and initiatives to prevent cult group recruitment

Security

Feelings of mistrust toward security forces were prevalent during interviews with participants in Delta State, primarily stemming from the perceived complicity of security forces in criminal acts, pervasive corruption, and an inability to effectively respond to violence due to a lack of resources. Fieldwork respondents cited examples of indiscriminate arrests, demand for bribes, slow response times and unequal access to security forces in rural areas. The lack of trust in the security sector has contributed to a greater reliance on non-state security services such as vigilante groups. Although interviewees reported that vigilante groups often collaborate with police forces, they have also been known to harass local populations.

“People buy cars, television sets, and other property for senior police officers so that whenever the police are called to carry out activities in favor of their benefactors, they would respond quickly.”

- Men’s focus group discussion, Warri, Delta State

Key security threats identified by participants in Delta State included land disputes stemming from poorly-defined boundaries. These include pastoralist conflicts, fostered by porous borders, communal clashes, and election-related violence. In addition, a rise in criminality, attributed to the proliferation of arms and a lack of employment opportunities for youth, was identified as a major concern for the local population. Interviewees noted instances of kidnappings for ransom,

killings, rape, and internet fraud. Finally, cult violence, which has historically been a source of insecurity in the state, was identified as a primary security concern.²⁴¹ One interviewee in Kwala noted that anti-cult groups have begun to work with the police to prevent cult violence, while civil society organizations carry out education activities to deter recruitment, and some local churches preach against joining cults.

Population and Demographics

Fieldwork participants reported that Delta State’s large and growing youth population could be viewed as a vulnerability, particularly given the high rate of unemployment. In addition, fieldwork participants reported that the empowerment and security of women in Delta State is marginal. The common occurrence of rape, which one participant claimed was, in part, perpetuated by members of the security forces, and the enduring socio-cultural perceptions of women, have contributed to the under-representation of women in leadership positions. These factors were noted as undermining female empowerment in the state.

Finally, although some participants reported that Delta State has some access to social services and resources like immunizations and family planning, others expressed concerns about the quality of these services, especially education and healthcare. Overcrowding in public schools and the use of local languages as the medium of instruction in primary schools were identified as barriers to quality education. Moreover, economic pressures and teenage pregnancy contribute to a high rate of school dropouts. Participants also noted that healthcare providers sometimes erroneously charge patients for medications and services. One participant in the Women’s Focus

²⁴¹ “Conflict Bulletin: Delta State – Patterns and Trends, 2012-2015”, Taft, P. and Haken, N., The Fund for Peace, August 2015.

Group Discussion (FGD) stated, “I tried get malaria drugs for my son. The doctor prescribed them... they were supposed to be free from the government. But at the pharmacy they will not give them to you for free, they will say they don’t have any in stock.”

Politics and Governance

Addressing the upcoming 2018 local government elections in Delta State, interviewees highlighted several vulnerabilities in the electoral process. In particular, participants noted instances of voter fraud, intimidation of opponents, and the mobilization of youth and cult members to carry out violence. Many respondents expressed a sense of disempowerment in the political process, stating that political candidates are selected by powerful party “godfathers” or by other influential actors such as militant leaders, rather than by the population. Several interviewees also reported that voting tends to occur along ethnic lines, rather than based on merit.

“Godfathers in Delta politics have already started mobilizing and arming youths and cultists in preparation for the election. One of the godfathers we found out has placed some youths on N5000 stipends in readiness for mobilization. Politicians are responsible for rise and escalation of cultism in Delta state and the rest of South-South.”

- Youth focus group discussion, Delta State

Generally, some respondents reported that the presence of local government in the state is marginal. In particular, the lack of public services such as water and electricity as well as governmental inaction on security issues were cited. Participants described a climate of nepotism and corruption, in which political elites pursue their own self-interest to the detriment of local populations. Also, the notion that the region had

not experienced infrastructural development due to the national government’s inequitable distribution of oil rents was held by some participants. One fieldwork participant maintained that although the region is a major contributor to the country’s oil sector, allocation of developmental resources was always centered in the north and Abuja.

The participation of women and youth in the political sphere remains limited in Delta State, due to their lack of resources and the enduring socio-cultural norms that deter political participation. For those few youth and female representatives in politics, fieldwork participants attributed their presence in the political space to nepotism. Moreover, their ability to effectively engender change through the political process was reportedly limited.

Finally, non-state actors, including civil society organizations, were identified as playing an important role in promoting civic education initiatives and as being involved in dispute resolution. Some interviewees, however, reported that a lack of cooperation between civil society organizations and the government as well as their limited resources - which impacts the long-term potential of their projects - have undermined their effectiveness.

Economics and Resources

Price volatility, a high cost of living, uneven allocation of resources, inflation and youth unemployment were highlighted by fieldwork participants as key economic concerns in Delta State. Fieldwork respondents also reported that the insecurity in the state has been damaging to the economy, leading to early business closures and the flight of multinational companies.

Another primary issue of concern that was identified during the fieldwork revolved around one of the key economic resources of Delta State: oil. Oil bunkering, or the illegal tapping of oil pipelines, by and large, was viewed as a source of insecurity.

Both legal and illegal oil production operations were also seen as being detrimental to agriculture and the environment. Participants in the Women's FGD reported that oil spills by multinational oil companies had negatively impacted the environment, polluted water, and killed fish. One participant said, "We see black rain (oil in the rain droplets), and we can't drink the water." However, some participants noted that oil bunkering had been beneficial to the local economy. One participant in the Male FGD noted that those engaged in oil bunkering were pivotal in providing for the infrastructural needs of the region. Participants also reported that political and military officials have ties to oil bunkering operations, with one youth leader saying "Oil theft is being perpetrated by past leaders of the country. This is why it will not stop. What the boys are doing is very minute compared to what those in government and the military steal."

"People who are involved in oil bunkering are more sensible and doing the right thing than the government. They provide power generating sets for communities that lack electricity, buy buses and boats to assist people, and give scholarships to indigent students. How can you stop such people?"

- Men's focus group discussion, Warri, Delta State

Furthermore, interviewees expressed concerns about the lack of transparency in the oil industry. On this topic, some respondents expressed that several multinational oil companies had damaged company-community relations by failing to hire locals and only engaging with chiefs. Although interviewees acknowledged the existence of company-led grievance mechanisms, many dismissed these as ineffective in resolving disputes.

Finally, Delta State is also susceptible to climate pressures. Respondents in particular identified

increased rainfall, which has impacted agriculture production patterns, and natural disasters like flooding as issues of concern. For fieldwork participants, the government's efforts to address such issues, especially flooding, have largely been inadequate and ineffective.

"Delta State, like the rest of coastal South-South, has had its fair share of natural disasters, especially flooding. Indiscriminate dumping of refuse and absence of good drainage, coupled with the erection of structures on channels, has compounded flooding in the state. Governments are complicit in this as they fail to do the needful, and at same time give approval for construction on drainage lines when cronies are involved."

- Youth focus group discussion, Delta State

Rule of Law

Fieldwork participants described a general lack of confidence and mistrust in the judicial system, primarily stemming from the perceived lack of judicial independence, political corruption and bias toward the wealthy. Respondents also highlighted a climate of impunity and a lack of respect for human rights among security forces. This lack of confidence in the judicial system has contributed to the use of mob justice and the reliance on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as mediation by traditional leaders. However, some respondents noted that these traditional institutions have been coopted by elite interests, undermining their effectiveness.

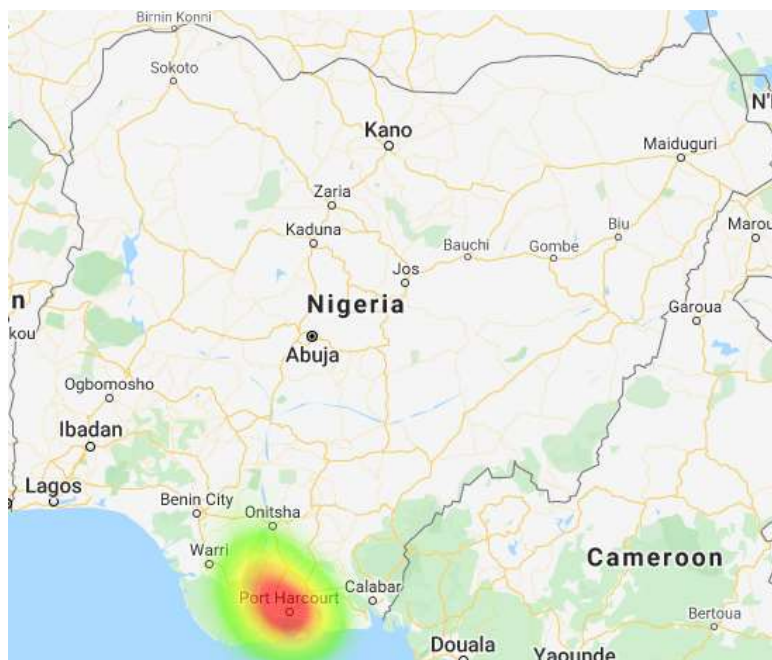
Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Despite the vulnerabilities and risks listed above, Delta State has a number of social and institutional resilience factors that help mitigate these risks. Fieldwork participants particularly identified the

important role of traditional institutions and civil society organizations in dispute resolution. Furthermore, the education initiatives of civil society organizations and anti-cult groups, who work in concert with police forces, were viewed as resilience factors in preventing youth recruitment into cults.

Rivers State

Rivers State, located in the southeastern Niger Delta region, is bordered by Bayelsa, Delta, Anambra, Imo, Abia and Akwa Ibom states. Rivers State also has a coastline along the Atlantic Ocean, with extensive networks of creeks and mangrove swamps in the south of the state. As of 2012, Rivers State had a projected population of 6.2 million, making it the sixth-most populous state in Nigeria.²⁴² The largest ethnic groups in the state are the Ikwerre, Ogoni, and Ijaw. While much of the population is engaged in agriculture and fishing, the state is also a major crude oil and natural gas production center in Nigeria.²⁴³



Structural Vulnerabilities

- Perceptions of corruption and bias in the judicial system
- Limited infrastructure
- Access to healthcare
- Lack of service delivery
- Gender-based violence
- High rates of youth unemployment and limited employment opportunities
- Environmental degradation
- Cult groups
- Perceptions of bias, corruption, and lack of transparency in politics
- Oil bunkering
- Soil erosion
- Security force violence
- Lack of local police forces in rural communities

Event-Driven Risks

- Land- and resource-disputes
- Violence associated with the upcoming 2019 elections
- Oil price fluctuations

²⁴² “Annual Abstract of Statistics, 2012”, National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria

²⁴³ “Rivers”, Encyclopedia Britannica

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

- P4P Network developing and supporting peace initiatives
- Civil society organizations
- Youth resource centers
- Youth festivals
- Maternal clubs
- Strength of women
- Traditional conflict resolution system

Security

Fieldwork participants highlighted cult violence as the main vulnerability undermining security in Rivers State. Interviewees also identified criminality, police violence, oil bunkering, political violence, and communal conflict as ongoing security concerns. One field participant underscored the severity of the problem, stating that “there is no effective security policy in Nigeria that guarantees the right and safety of all.”

During the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIs), participants emphasized the persistence of cult violence in Rivers State. Several interviewees connected cult violence to political violence, stating that politicians have allegedly hired rival cult groups to intimidate voters. Additionally, participants reported perceptions that cult groups can act with impunity because of their connections to chiefs and

“The state has been bedeviled with militancy, insurgency, political hooliganism, kidnapping and escalating cult related violence. Cultism is taking a frightening dimension in Rivers state. People now live in fear. Movements are now restricted as some areas are no longer safe for habitation or business... The failure of the Amnesty Programme also added to the rise of cult groups as the militants only surrendered the expended arms while keeping the useful ones. Elections have been highly and dangerously militarized that people are now afraid to come out to vote.”

- Former LGA Councilor, Rivers State

politicians. Some localities of Rivers State lack a viable police presence due to the intimidation and activities of cult groups. In 2016, an amnesty program was established to demobilize cult groups, but participants reported that this has been viewed as largely ineffective.

Fieldwork participants also discussed the impacts of cult violence on women, citing high levels of violence against women and girls and economic repercussions. During one KI, a participant stated that women have traditionally been fishers and farmers in Rivers State, but high levels of violence has prevented women from carrying out these activities. Additionally, participants reported that incidents of kidnapping and robbery have been on the rise in the state, noting that women are especially vulnerable. Interviewees also reported that girls have begun to join cult groups as a form of security and protection.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) was cited as an increasing security concern in Rivers State. During the men’s FGD, participants stated that politicians have allegedly begun to import arms into the state and distribute them to their “thugs” and cult groups during elections. Interviewees also highlighted reports of abuse by security forces, stating that security personnel allegedly play an active role in election rigging.

Interviewees also reported that cultism has fed into increased criminality in the region. During a KI, one civil society leader stated because cult groups now have weapons, there has been an increase in kidnappings, assassinations, and theft. Fieldwork participants also reported that oil bunkering has been an issue in the state. According to

participants in the men's FGD, traditional rulers have been involved in oil bunkering out of fear of reprisal attacks by militants if they do not participate. Sometimes, oil is exchanged for weapons, which has provided arms for youths in the state. Communal conflict was briefly discussed by fieldwork participants. Land disputes have been the primary trigger of conflict; one participant stated that "The government hasn't clearly demarcated the land."

Overall, fieldwork participants noted that security forces in the state have not successfully brought security. During the youth FGD, participants lamented the Joint Task Force (JTF), saying that they believe that the JTF, "sometimes instigates crisis to perpetuate their stay in the Niger Delta." Fieldwork participants expressed perceptions that the military is overwhelmed, fails to understand the nuance of security issues in the state, and has no strategy to combat cult violence. Furthermore, there are widespread perceptions of corruption within security forces. Where police forces do exist, they too have numerous problems according to participants. Participants stated that the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) is prone to abuse, stating that SARS has committed several extrajudicial killings, charged exorbitant bail amounts, and committed kidnappings and rape.

Population and Demographics

Fieldwork participants in Rivers state highlighted youth unemployment, lack of infrastructure, low access to healthcare, and high rural-to-urban migration rates as key demographic vulnerabilities. Participants repeatedly cited unsafe living conditions and a lack of economic opportunity as drivers of the significant flow of rural citizens to urban areas. Rural participants were specifically concerned about the low security presence in the rural areas and felt compelled to move to more urban areas to be closer to protection.

Fieldwork participants discussed youth in the region, stating that they are particularly vulnerable.

During the men's FGD, participants stated that there is a high population of youth and that they have begun to play negative roles in the social and political environment of the state. Interviewees reported that youth play a significant role in election rigging, illegal oil bunkering, and cultism. Youth unemployment continues to be a major obstacle to the improvement of living conditions.

Participants also highlighted the vulnerability of women in Rivers. Women are often pushed out of inheritances and forced to give up their children to their husband's families if their husband dies. The increasing number of widows due to cult violence is making this a growing problem. The declining economic opportunities for women due to cult violence has also further marginalized their role in society.

Politics and Governance

Fieldwork participants noted that the political environment in Rivers State has been increasingly contentious since the 2003 Gubernatorial election. The state is deeply divided, with one respondent noting that, in the 2015 elections, "Political parties contested for every blade of grass at the state level." A KII participant noted that the 2015 elections were the "first time there was an opposition party with equal strength, which encouraged polarization of the polity along party lines." Interviewees noted that elections are often polarized along ethnic and religious lines.

Interviewees reported a lack of faith in the state government, stemming from perceptions of corruption. Fieldwork participants also cited tribalism, religious differences, a lost focus on the economic development of the state, electoral irregularities, and low voter turnout as key issues plaguing the government in Rivers State. Participants stated that there has been too much political jockeying and that economic development beyond the oil sector was not a major priority of the state government.

The widespread use of cult violence and voter intimidation in the political and electoral processes was cited as the most rampant problem affecting politics and governance in Rivers state. One participant articulated the problem saying that “politicians are not given the mandate freely by the people, but are forced on the populace through intimidation.” Politicians fund cult groups to intimidate voters and opponents, often leading to violence. One participant stated, “Nobody gets into an elective position on popular votes. Rather, on the basis of how much violence you can unleash. So, this deadens the conscience of the people in power so much so that they do not care about the feelings and needs of the masses.” The cycle of election violence is instigated by politicians in Rivers State seeking to embolden their patronage networks through the mobilization of cult groups for easy reelection. Cult groups reportedly intimidate voters in their locale and suppress voter turnout in areas supported by the opposition. Cult groups are effective because of their grass roots background, local emphasis and understanding, and unique ability to mobilize. During a youth FGD, participants noted: “The lack of internal democracy is killing the quality of leadership we have. There were several qualified persons but because they will not bend to the demands of the Godfathers, they were not allowed to run for the election.”

Fieldwork participants stated that there is low involvement of women in politics in Rivers. During one KII, an interviewee stated that politicians bribe women during elections with rice, peanuts, and money to gain votes and political support. In between election cycles, participants reported that women do not feel the impact of the state government. A lack of economic resources hinders women from running for office. Some participants did state that there has been progress in the region, citing the government’s 35 percent affirmative action rate and the election of the first female Deputy Governor, Dr. Ipalibo Banigo, as positive signs that women have progressed in political and social circles.

“The bedrock of this crime and criminalities in Rivers is youth unemployment. But I tell you, it has gone beyond unemployment, because the huge and quick flow of money in cultism has contaminated the psyche of our youths. They now find cultism more lucrative than legitimate employment. However, if governments and other relevant institutions can be sincere in advocacy and capacity building for the youths, positive results can be achieved. A repentant cultist or militant needs available alternatives to cope.”

- Former LGA Councilor, Rivers State

Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Rivers State are filling important gaps, but participants felt they needed further support and institutional resiliency to be more successful. Partners for Peace in the Niger Delta (P4P), supported by the Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND), were widely seen as being the most active and successful CSO in the state. Participants said these groups were supporting mediation and conflict training with youth groups in the Ogoni LGAs as well as holding summits between formal and informal security forces in the region to improve security in the lead-up to the upcoming 2019 elections to stem the onset of violence. Participants also cited numerous court challenges by CSOs as crucial to upholding their rights.

Economics and Resources

The economy of Rivers State has continued to decline due to increasing environmental degradation and the decline of oil prices. In the past, farming and fishing were the primary economic drivers of the state, but oil has increasingly displaced these industries. Fieldwork participants reported that the oil industry has polluted the water, land, and air for over three decades, resulting in increased degradation. The loss of economic opportunities, the inability of the government to create new jobs, the perceived

cronyism in job hiring, and the loss of existing companies due to insecurity were all cited as common frustrations by fieldwork participants.

Interviewees emphasized high youth unemployment as a key vulnerability in Rivers, stating that it has been a driver of the cultist movement. Cult groups have provided more lucrative economic opportunities than legitimate jobs, providing the upward mobility that youth seek. Cult groups are also effective empowerment tools for youth that feel particularly marginalized along party or ethnic lines. One fieldwork participant noted that when they worked as a youth coordinator, they would often hire as many people as possible so that youth would be able to return home with some money. Cult groups have been particularly effective at finding employment through politicians, oil bunkering, and kidnapping.

During a youth FGD, many participants lamented the restrictive government policy on small and medium business loans, stating that many of them would like to start their own businesses. Participants noted that the government's programs that attempt to employ youth are ill conceived and ineffective, leading to low participation rates.

Fieldwork participants emphasized the economic vulnerabilities caused by the oil industry in Rivers State, highlighting how the discovery of oil has crowded out other industries. Oil has destroyed traditional industries like fishing and farming due to land degradation. The lack of environmental controls on oil exploration and illegal oil bunkering have made large swathes of land untenable for farming and fishing, two industries that have traditionally employed mostly women. Fieldwork participants stated that youth have begun illegal oil bunkering because the oil industry does not hire enough locals and other industries are no longer viable. Fieldwork participants expressed perceptions that oil companies are receiving the benefits of the natural resource without sharing any of the profit with local communities and stated that oil companies should be hiring local staff.

Long-term negative health effects of oil production, such as skin pigmentation caused by the pollution of the oil industry were also noted by participants.

Rule of Law

Fieldwork participants cited a lack of judicial independence and perceptions of corruption as a key vulnerability undermining rule of law in Rivers. Interviewees stated that political meddling has been a primary driver of corruption in the judicial system. One participant cited the recent example of the court system being locked down for a year due to the Governor's interference of the appointment of the Chief Justice. Access to justice and the lack of swift justice were also cited as common problems in the judicial process, which accounts for the rise in traditional chieftaincy arbitration to seek swift and independent justice in Rivers state.

Social and Institutional Resilience Factors

Participants in the KIs and FGDs identified a number of sources of resilience in Rivers State. Women have been particularly active as peacebuilders in Rivers state. Participants stated that the passage of the 2015 Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP) in the Rivers state legislature would improve the status and treatment of women by providing more support for women that have been the victims of violence. The reliance on traditional chieftaincy arbitration systems to receive just and independent legal decisions was cited as another resilience factor for the state. Citizens are finding justice that fits their needs, circumventing the political and judicial system failures in Rivers state.

CSOs in Rivers state that are holding the political and judicial systems accountable are another source of resiliency. CSOs are organizing and educating citizens on their rights and conducting mediation training to prevent conflict from breaking out ahead of the 2019 elections.

Recommendations for the Niger Delta Region

Security

The Nigerian government should work with regional and international partners, as well as local vigilante groups, to address larger regional trends of militancy and insecurity in the region. CSOs should work with local communities and security forces to promote trust and encourage relationship-building. The Nigerian government, regional and international partners and CSOs should work with security forces and vigilante groups to train these actors on operational best practices and human rights standards, particularly around elections. The Nigerian government, with support from regional international partners, should enhance the institutional and operational capacity of the police and military forces, including improved training and provision of material resources. Traditional leaders, local government and civil society organizations should facilitate sustained dialogue and interactions between communities with the goal of mitigating inter-communal violence and resolving local-level disputes prior to escalation. The Nigerian government, traditional and religious leaders, educational institutions and CSOs should support programs and initiatives to deter cult group recruitment. CSOs, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and other relevant government ministries should work with regional and international partners to promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence.

Population and Demographics

Civil society, the private sector, and donor organizations should support vocational training and job creation initiatives to engage the region's large youth population. Traditional leaders, local government and civil society organizations should facilitate sustained dialogue and interactions across political, ethnic, and religious divides. Local and state governments, international donors and

civil society organizations should expand access to education, affordable healthcare and other social services, particularly for women and vulnerable youth. Civil society organizations, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and other relevant government agencies should work with regional and international partners to promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence, early and forced marriage, FGM/C and family planning.

Politics and Governance

Regional organizations, CSOs and the Nigerian government should support both internal and external initiatives for good governance and transparency at the local and national levels. The Nigerian government and political parties should work with local civil society organizations to promote youth and women's involvement in politics. Local and regional governments, INEC, and CSOs should carry out awareness raising campaigns with emphasis on civic education for youth and women. The local, regional and national governments should work to improve relationships with local communities through greater visibility and improving social service provision, particularly in the areas of healthcare and education. CSOs should support inter-group dialogue across ethnic, religious and regional lines, with a focus on reducing political and social tensions.

Economics and Resources

CSOs, financial institutions and the Nigerian government should support and expand micro-financing and vocational training programs, particularly in support of women and youth-led initiatives. International financial institutions (IFIs) can lend greater support to small and medium enterprises. CSOs, international donors, and the Nigerian government should support sustainable agricultural initiatives and environmental

rehabilitation projects, particularly in areas affected by oil spills and pollution. The success of existing private-public partnerships and community-based economic development programs in the Niger Delta that focus on the linkages between sustainable security and economic development through direct community engagement (e.g. Foundation for Partnerships in the Niger Delta – PIND) should serve as a model. Particularly through engaging vulnerable youth and women for economic and community development, as well as conflict early warning and mediation, these sorts of programs should be replicated and contextualized in other parts of the region as well as other parts of the country. Additionally, local

governments, donors and the private sector should collaborate to mitigate the impacts of flooding in the region.

Rule of Law

CSOs and the Nigerian government should promote efficiency, independence and transparency within the formal justice system. Local and international NGOs and civil society organizations should support programs that provide oversight, provide legal assistance to vulnerable populations and protect women in both traditional justice mechanisms and in the courts, particularly in gender-based violence cases.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, Nigeria is the most vulnerable in the area of security, with research findings suggesting that the major drivers of conflict in the country are the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, militancy and cult violence in the Niger Delta, and intercommunal conflicts in the Middle Belt region. While the multi-nation military campaign in 2015 made significant strides in diminishing Boko Haram's capacity, there continue to be attacks against Nigerian security forces and civilians. Furthermore, the insurgency has contributed to a large IDP population, which has become a growing security concern. In the Middle Belt, intercommunal tensions and land competition have led to fatal violence in the region. The Niger Delta has continued to be an extremely complex conflict environment, as issues of militancy, cult violence, political violence, and increasing criminality are deeply intertwined and continue to plague the region, often getting much worse during election seasons.

It is important to note that security in Nigeria has been inextricably linked to demographic and economic pressures. Nigeria has one of the largest youth populations in the world and youth unemployment has been an ongoing vulnerability. A lack of economic and vocational opportunities has driven criminality, extremism, youth involvement in cult groups, and increased illicit economic activity, such as oil bunkering. Though Nigeria has one of the largest economies in Africa, a large section of the population lives in poverty. Decades of reliance on the oil sector to the exclusion of more fully developing other sectors, particularly outside the oil-rich Niger Delta, has made Nigeria extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in global markets and commodity prices. Environmental degradation due to oil extraction has had significant negative impacts on the fishing and farming industries in the Niger Delta, while climate change and land-based conflict in the

Middle Belt has decreased agricultural outputs. Overall, the Nigerian economy has been in a recession for years and food prices have risen, which has had negative impacts throughout the country, especially on rural communities.

Nevertheless, Nigeria has significant resiliencies and has an involved and highly entrepreneurial population. Women have formed one of the single most effective resiliencies in the country when effectively mobilized, whether at the national level to advocate for critical legislation or at the local level, coming together to form lending and micro-credit schemes that help other women. Nigeria also has a lively and engaged civil society, and this too forms one of the country's most important resiliencies. The continued engagement of local and national NGOs and CSOs in peacebuilding and awareness raising campaigns have played a significant role in the Northeast, Middle Belt and Niger Delta and will continue to be essential in establishing greater security and economic growth in the country. Additionally, financing and credit programs will continue to play an important role in empowering women, youth, and rural communities.

Throughout the country, successful models of national-international partnerships, both public and private sector, have also proven highly effective in addressing some of Nigeria's greatest vulnerabilities. From working together to counter narratives of violent extremism in the areas affected by the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast to designing programs linking economic development and early warning for conflict mitigation in the Niger Delta, there exists multiple models worth examining and replicating. Event-driven risk factors, such as elections and seasonal pastoral conflicts, can still lead to widespread violence and fatalities and need to be understood not so much as "one-off" events, but intricately linked to other, underlying vulnerabilities in order

to be properly understood, and addressed. However, Nigeria has incredible human and societal resources that, in many cases, need to be more readily engaged and supported in order to address some of the most critical threats to human security in the country, and, by extension, the wider regional neighborhood.

Security

- Enhance collaboration among local, regional and international partners to address larger regional trends of insecurity and extremism
- Partner with CSOs, security forces and local communities to build trust and encourage relationship-building
- Equip and train security forces and vigilante groups on operational best practices and human rights standards, particularly around elections
- Enhance the operational and institutional capacity of the police and military forces, including improved training
- Facilitate sustained dialogue and interactions between communities
- Promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence

Population and Demographics

- Support vocational trainings and job creation initiatives to engage the youth population
- Build infrastructure and promote enabling environments for business development and growth
- Facilitate sustained dialogue and interactions to bridge political, ethnic and religious divides
- Expand access to education, affordable healthcare and other social services, particularly for women and youth
- Promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence,

forced marriage, FGM/C and family planning

Politics and Governance

- Support initiatives for good governance and transparency at the local and national levels
- Promote youth and women's involvement in political decision-making
- Carry out awareness-raising campaigns with an emphasis on civic education for youth and women
- Expand government visibility and social service provision, particularly healthcare and education
- Support inter-group dialogue across ethnic, religious and regional lines

Economics and Resources

- Support and expand microfinancing and training programs, particularly in support of women- and youth-led initiatives
- Support small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
- Support sustainable agriculture initiatives and environmental rehabilitation projects, particularly around increasing resilience to climate change and enhancing food security

Rule of Law

- Promote efficiency, independence and transparency within the formal justice system
- Support programs that provide oversight, provide legal assistance to vulnerable populations, and protect women in both traditional justice mechanisms and in the courts

Appendix A: Data Sample

Phase	Dimension	Source	Metric	Sample
Phase 1: Desktop	Resilience	SNA	Survey	268 Peace/Security Actors
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	ECOWARN	SitReps	903 reports
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Global Integrity	In practice, the agency/agencies mandated to organize and monitor national elections is/are protected from political interference	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Global Integrity	In practice, the agency/agencies mandated to organize and monitor national elections make/s timely, publicly available reports before and after a national election.	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	EIU Democracy Index	Electoral process and pluralism	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	EIU Democracy Index	Political Participation	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	EIU Democracy Index	Functioning of Government	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	IDEA	Average Voter Turnout Parliamentary	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Transparency International	Corruption Perception	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	BTI	Political and Social Integration	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Freedom House	Political Rights	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Mo Ibrahim Index	Personal Safety	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UN, ECOWAS, AU	Peace Operations	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	ACLED	Conflict Fatalities per capita	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)

Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UPPSALA	Presence/Conflict with Non-State Armed Groups	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	PTS	Political Terror Scale – Amnesty	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	PTS	Political Terror Scale – State	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	PTS	Political Terror Scale – HRW	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UNHCR	Refugees by country of origin per capita	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UNHCR	Refugees by country of origin (difference 2015-2014) per capita	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UNHCR	IDPs by Country of Asylum per capita	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UNHCR	IDPs by country of asylum (difference 2015-2014) per capita	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Global Integrity	In practice, the independence of the judiciary is guaranteed.	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Global Integrity	In practice, national-level judges give reasons for their decisions/judgments.	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Global Integrity	In practice, allegations of corruption against senior level politicians and/or civil servants of any level are investigated by an independent body.	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Global Integrity	In practice, the body/bodies that investigate/s allegations of public sector corruption is/are effective.	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	Global Integrity	In practice, the mechanism for citizens to report police misconduct or abuse of force is effective.	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	WB Human Rights and Law Report	% of Women on Constitutional Court	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)

Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	WB – Women, Business, and Law	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	WB – Women, Business, and Law	Does the law mandate nondiscrimination based on gender in hiring?	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	WB – Women, Business, and Law	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Gini coefficient	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Gini WYD	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Income Share Held by Highest 10%	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Population with Improved Sanitation (Urban-Rural Difference)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Population with Improved Water Source (Urban-Rural Difference)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UN Stats	Children under 5 moderately or severely underweight, percentage	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Depth of the food deficit (kilocalories per person per day)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Prevalence of Underweight, weight for age (% of children under 5)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UN Stats	Literacy, 15-24, Women	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	School enrollment, primary and secondary (gross), gender parity index (GPI)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Employment to population ratio, ages 15-24, female (%) (modeled ILO estimate)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)

Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UN Stats	Median Age	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Population Growth	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	UN Stats	Prevalence of underweight, weight for age, female (% of children under 5)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate, per 100,000 live births)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Contraceptive prevalence, any methods (% of women ages 15-49)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	World Bank Data	Life expectancy at birth, female (years)	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Vulnerability	WB – Women, Business, and Law	Percentage of women aged 20-24 years old who were married or in a union before age 18	15 (all ECOWAS member states normalized and scaled)
Phase 1: Desktop	Risk	ECOWARN	IncReps	98 (after reducing for duplicates and relevance)
Phase 1: Desktop	Risk	ACLED	Incidents	8,034
Phase 1: Desktop	Risk	Nigeria Watch	Incidents	10,945
Phase 1: Desktop	Risk	P4P	Incidents	834
Phase 1: Desktop	Risk	NSRP Sources	Incidents	1733
Phase 1: Desktop	Risk	CIEPD	Incidents	371
Phase 2: Field Research	Risk and Vulnerability	Focus Group Discussions	Broken out by Men, Women, and Youth	34
Phase 2: Field Research	Risk and Vulnerability	Key Informant Interviews	Prominent individuals and local experts, including gvt officials	44

Appendix B: Vulnerability Index

Index Data Sources

Based on the five human security pillars, a series of indicators were identified based on relevance and measurability. Data sources were then identified from recognized institutions such as the World Bank, United Nations, as well as universities, research institutions, and think tanks. A full list of data sources is attached in **Appendix A**. During selection and testing of the index, the availability of data was assessed to ensure an even distribution of scores.

Process: Calculating the Scores

The index is scored on a scale of 1-10, with 1 representing the highest level of vulnerability, and 10 the lowest level of vulnerability. Each raw data set is normalized and scaled, before being integrated into the indicator and pillar scores.

1. Normalization

An index, by definition, integrates and compares data sets with very different curves and distribution. As a first step, therefore, it is necessary to normalize the data so that it can be properly compared. Without framing the data within the context of the wider group of numbers, its meaning can become skewed. Therefore, the process of finding the mean and calculating the Standard Deviation (SD) of the data set, then using those elements to approximate a normal distribution, can be used to provide this meaning. The Gaussian normalization formula is outlined below.

Where μ is the mean

σ^2 is the variance

$$f(x, \mu, \sigma) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi} \sigma} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}}$$

SD is the quantity calculated to indicate the extent of deviation for a group of numbers as a whole. Normal distribution is then used to find how the variables are approximately normally distributed. In the context of this tool, it will help to understand where countries sit in relation to each other within the group distribution of a particular data set.

For raw data sets that have gaps (e.g. data is unavailable for some countries but not others), country data points are left blank. This ensures countries are not provided with an artificial score, where data does not exist.

2. Scaling

To create an index where countries are scored within a defined range, the data sets must be scaled so the scores can be integrated. This process of scaling transforms the normalized data into a number between 1 and 10, with 10 representing the lowest level of vulnerability. The below formula was applied to standardize the distribution values from [min, max] to [MIN, MAX], matching the new scale of values both for the highest and lowest edges of the distribution.

$$X = MIN + \frac{(MAX - MIN)}{(max - min)} \times (x - min)$$

3. Aggregation

Each indicator may be made up of either one or multiple data sources. In cases where multiple data sets were used to make up the one indicator, the data sets were each scaled to preliminary index scores (1-10), as outlined in the above steps. The average was then taken of these scores to reach a final index score for that indicator. This process was repeated at the pillar level, first averaging, then scaling the indicator scores.

Appendix C: Additional References

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Appendix D: Glossary

All Progressives Congress (APC)	A Center-left but socially conservative Nigerian political party formed in 2013. The APC is the party of current president Muhammadu Buhari.
Amnesty Programme	A program initiated in 2009 to tackle violence in the oil-rich Niger Delta region. Under the program, former militants are entitled to ₦65,000 a month and job training. The program was suspended in 2016 but restarted in January 2017.
Bakassi Boys	A group of youth known for anti-crime vigilantism in the Igbo areas of Nigeria. Also known as "Anambra State Vigilante Service."
Black Axe	A confraternity or cult group, also known as the Neo-Black Movement of Africa (NBM).
Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF)	A vigilante group organized in northeastern Nigeria in response to the Boko Haram insurgency.
Cult Groups	Also known as confraternities, these groups were originally established at universities, but now encompass a wide range of groups both on and off campus. Cult groups are often involved in inter-group violence, sexual assault, ritual killings and criminal activities.
Daybam	Daybam (also spelled Deebam/Deegbam) is a wing of the campus-based Klansmen Konfraternity (KK) cult group. The group operates in Rivers State and surrounding states and is a rival to the Daywear cult group.
Daywear	Daywear (also spelled Deewell) was formed as a wing of the campus-based Supreme Vikings Confraternity cult group. They are active in Rivers, Delta and Bayelsa states. Many members previously fought with Ateke Tom's Icelanders group.
Fadama	A Hausa term for irrigable land. Typically refers to low-lying plains underlaid by shallow aquifers found by major river systems. ²⁴⁴
Indigenous People of Biafra	A separatist organization led by Nnamdi Kanu based in southeast Nigeria. Its aim is to create a separate Igbo state known as Biafra. The group has been labeled as a terrorist organization by the Nigerian government and proscribed by a federal court, though the group claims it is non-violent.
Joint Task Force (JTF)	A military group created by the government to promote security, mainly in the Middle Belt and Niger Delta

²⁴⁴ World Bank <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2010/07/28/fadama-iii-rural-agriculture-project-fast-becoming-a-household-name-in-nigeria>

Kalari Boys	A gang/cult group in Gombe State.
Klan Konfraternity	A cult group that originated at the University of Calabar in Cross River State as the Eternal Fraternal Order of Legion Consortium. Eventually the Klansmen went off campus, forming "street and creek" wing Daybam, who resorted to violence and crime to control territory.
Land Act	Also known as the Land Use Act, it governs land use in Nigeria. It vests all land in the territory of each state - with the exception of land vested in the federal government or its agencies - in the governor of the state, who holds the land in trust of the people. The governor of the state allocates all land in urban areas to individual residents in the state and to organizations for agricultural, commercial and residential purposes. Such powers, with respect to non-urban areas, are reserved for Local Governments.
Local Government Areas (LGAs)	Nigerian states are divided into these smaller administrative areas, of which there are 775.
Marshall Youth	A vigilante group composed of former members of the Kalari Boys in Gombe State.
The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND)	MEND is an organization in the Niger Delta that emerged in 2006. MEND is a decentralized organization that is composed primarily of young Ijaw men and engages in a multitude of actions, ranging from taking hostages to oil bunkering in the Niger Delta. The group also calls for the profits from the oil revenue to be shared with the Niger Delta region.
Northern People's Congress (NPC)	The NPC was a political party established in 1949. The party wielded significant influence in the politics of the Northern region until a military coup in 1966.
Oil bunkering	Oil bunkering is a term which encompasses all actions involving oil theft. Oil is stolen directly from oil pipelines to be refined or exported abroad.
Operation Python Dance	Operation Python Dance is a Nigerian military operation intended to address the security challenges and secessionist movements in the southeastern portion of Nigeria.
People's Democratic Party (PDP)	A center-right political party that currently controls 12 out of 36 states in Nigeria.
Sara-Suka	A criminal youth gang operating in Bauchi State and other parts of the Middle Belt region.
Seadogs	Also known as the Pyrate Confraternity, the movement was established in 1952 at University College, Ibadan. The National Association of Seadogs carries out humanitarian and social advocacy projects across Nigeria.

Vigilante groups	Community watch groups that patrol communities and monitor entry points and borders.
Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN)	An organization of vigilante groups throughout all 36 states of Nigeria. This group collaborates with law enforcement and is involved in community policing.
Vikings	The Supreme Viking Confraternity was formed in 1982 at the University of Port Harcourt. While the organization claims to fight for the oppressed and the weak and against social injustice, many accuse the organization of being involved in the insurgency in the Niger Delta.
Yan-Shilla	A criminal gang operating in the northeast, specifically Adamawa State.

Appendix E: Matrix of Vulnerabilities, Risks, Resilience Factors, and Recommendations by Human Security Pillar

	Vulnerabilities	Risks	Resilience Factors	Recommendations
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political violence - Cultism - Criminality - Sexual abuse and exploitation - Insurgency - Porosity of borders - Proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boko Haram insurgency activities - Herder-farmer conflicts - Criminality - Vigilantes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vigilantes, community-based groups and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) - Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) in the Lake Chad Basin - NGOs and civil society organizations activities - Local, traditional and religious leaders - Anti-cult initiatives - Peacebuilding and dialogue programs - Youth-focused training and empowerment programs - Finance and credit programs targeting women and youth - Media sensitization - Deployment of Nigerian security forces into volatile areas - Government initiatives to address Farmers-Herdsman conflicts - Implementation of national CVE action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance collaboration among local, regional and international partners, to address larger regional trends of insecurity and extremism - Partner with CSOs, security forces and local communities to build trust and encourage relationship-building - Equipping of and training to security forces and vigilante groups on operational best practices and human rights standards, particularly around elections - Enhance the operational and institutional capacity of the police and military forces, including improved training - Facilitate sustained dialogue and

			- Existence of herders and farmers associations for the promotion of dialogue	interactions between communities - Promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence
Population & Demographics	- Tensions between ethnic and religious groups - Population growth; low rate of family planning; forced marriage - Food insecurity - Climate change and environmental degradation	- Displacement due to conflicts - Ethno-religious conflicts - Land- and resource-based conflicts	- Existence of legal texts and normative frameworks on gender, equity and women's rights - Government initiatives to curtail desertification through afforestation programs - Actions of local, regional and International actors to address food insecurity	- Support vocational trainings and job creation initiatives to engage the youth population - Build infrastructure and promote enabling environments for business development and growth - Facilitate sustained dialogue and interactions to bridge political, ethnic and religious divides - Expand access to education, affordable healthcare and other social services, particularly for women and youth - Promote awareness-raising activities around domestic and sexual violence, forced

				marriage, FGM/C and family planning
Politics & Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of inclusivity in political processes - Underrepresentation of women and youth in political decision-making - Corruption, abuse of Public office, and nepotism among political actors - Systemic ethnic and religious polarization - Governance deficit and lack of transparency - Weak Institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elections and political violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy initiatives such as the Federal Character Commission to enhance inclusion in governance and political processes - Existence of legal frameworks, policies and Institutions to tackle corruption - Existence of community-based traditional and religious institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support initiatives for good governance and transparency at the local and national levels - Promote youth and women's involvement in political decision-making - Carry out awareness-raising campaigns with an emphasis on civic education for youth and women - Expand government visibility and social service provision, particularly healthcare and education - Support inter-group dialogue across ethnic, religious and regional lines
Economics & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High rate of youth unemployment - Poor infrastructure and inadequate access to social services, including education and healthcare - Poverty - Lack of economic diversification - Impacts of economic recession - Barriers to financing and credit facilities for women - Illicit economic activities, including 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic recession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of a vibrant informal economic sectors - Existence of social safety nets initiatives i.e. The National Cash Transfers, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support and expand microfinancing and training programs, particularly in support of women- and youth-led initiatives - Support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) - Support sustainable agriculture

	drug trafficking and oil bunkering, and cyber-criminality			initiatives and environmental rehabilitation projects, particularly around increasing resilience to climate change and enhancing food security
Rule of Law				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote efficiency, independence and transparency within the formal justice system - Support programs that provide oversight, provide legal assistance to vulnerable populations, and protect women in both traditional justice mechanisms and in the courts