ECOWAS HUMAN SECURITY ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK (HSAF)

2020

Table of Contents

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project
ARM	Actors, Resources, and Motivations
CRVA	Country Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
ECOWARN	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPF	ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework
EW	Early Warning
EWD	ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate
GIS	Geographic Information System
HSAF	Human Security Analysis Framework
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
NCCRMs	National Centers for the Coordination of Response Mechanisms
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
REWARD	Reacting to Early Warning and Response Data in West Africa
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
STEEP	Social, Technological, Environmental, Economic, Political
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Terminology and Conceptual Definitions

"Assumptions" are inferences about the current crisis that may not be empirically tested or able to be tested.

"Conflict" is defined as the natural condition in which individuals and groups seek to advance their interests. Conflict only becomes acute when it eclipses the ability of social, economic, and political institutions to manage divergent interests. Consistent with the ECPF, "conflict refers to the contradictions inherent in power relations and which manifest themselves in individual and group interactions with one another and with nature in the pursuit of limited resources or opportunities. Conflict is the motor of transformation and is either positive or negative. It can be creatively transformed to ensure equity, progress and harmony; or destructively transformed to engender acute insecurity" (Source: ECPF).

"Crisis" is defined as a series of events that eclipses the ability of social, economic, and political institutions to manage naturally occurring conflict and competition. These crises events can occur across the human security pillars and are prone to escalation and/or spreading if not addressed.

"Cultural Violence" refers to how symbols, and discourses shape prevailing attitudes held by key actors towards particular issues. These cultural sources of meaning can serve to legitimize direct and structural violence.

"Direct Violence" refers to physical threats and acts, from political to criminal violence, that threaten individuals and communities. A key assumption is that all direct violence rests on larger, indirect structural and cultural factors. These indirect structural and cultural factors often manifest across the human security pillars.

"Driving force" is defined as any external factor that is likely shaping the human security challenge in question. In standard scenario planning, analysts explore broad categories to identify potential driving forces: social, technological, environmental, economic, political (STEEP). Examples of driving forces include demographic factors like migration and youth bulges, changes in laws and regulation affecting land ownership and access to resources, market activity altering the price of important commodities and food security, new technologies that make it easier to mobilize supporters (i.e., cell phones, social media, etc.), new employment patterns that affect livelihoods and tax revenues, and resources constraints such as changes to fisheries or agriculture that affect basic needs. The combination of these driving forces produce trends (Source: OECD). As used in the HSAF, driving forces are the larger factors shaping your hypotheses about cause and effect relationships at play in the environment.

"Feedback loop" refers to a chain of causal connections in which the output of a series of interactions creates a new input. Positive feedback loops tend to result in significant

increases or decreases (i.e., success breeds success, failure perpetuates failure). Inversely, a negative (i.e., balancing) feedback loop describes a situation where the output of a chain of causal connection tends to reduce the original
output. Feedback loops are best thought of as accelerators. According to the ECPF, an accelerator is a feedback event that can worsen a structural factor such as collapsed education systems, repressive security apparatuses, and the curtailment of freedoms, corruption, religious/ethnic discrimination, and poverty (Source: ECPF).

"Gender lens" is a fundamental tool for implementing gender integration in early warning at all times and levels. It means thinking about how gender norms, roles, relations, structures, and other factors might impact or affect a particular issue, problem, or event. (Source: Gender Integration in Early Warning: ECOWAS Gender Manual for Practitioners).

"Human Security" refers to seeing human development and security as transcending narrow approaches that focus solely on physical violence. A human security approach moves beyond immediate threats to physical security to examine basic needs and livelihoods related to economic access, food, environmental considerations, and health. In the HSAF, there are five human security pillars: 1) governance; 2) security; 3) environment; 4) crime and criminality; and 5) health. A fundamental assumption is that human insecurity is driven by the negative transformation of structural factors through the exacerbation of conflict accelerators. The degeneration of conflict into open violence is often sparked by triggers (Sources: UNDP, ECPF).

"Human Security Issue" is defined as how key actors define events. The assumption is that no event is neutral. Each actor has a particular set of contextual factors and historical understanding that shape how they view events on the ground. Human Security Issues are closely related to attitudes, which describe an actor's preferred set of behaviors based on an issue as it pertains to governance, security, crime, health, and environment.

"Hypotheses" are proposed explanations of what causes observed patterns. Analysts can test hypotheses by collecting additional data about what supports or counters the assumed cause-effect relationship under consideration as part of their research.

"Levels of Analysis" are defined as the various political levels at which conflict actors operate. In the HSAF context, every conflict potentially has a local, sub-national, national, regional, and international context.

"Resources and Means" are defined as any material or non-material item key actors use to mobilize support for their position. These resources and means can be based on money, commodities, or other material resources or a function of enduring norms and ideas, political affiliation, military strength and ethno-linguistic ties. Given a particular issue, actors adopt a particular attitude and apply resources and means to influence events on the ground, often leading to an expanding conflict.

"Resilience" is defined as any social/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/individuals that play a stabilizing role in the short, medium, or long term (Source: USAID CRVA framework).

"Risk" is defined as any event-driven factor that has the potential to be a conflict trigger. Risk factors usually emanate from, or are exacerbated by, structural vulnerabilities and can include specific controversies, or events such as natural or manmade disasters, protests, or election violence, that may occur (Source: USAID REWARD CRVA framework).

"Scenario" is defined as a causal description of how past tendencies and current interaction between key actors based on issues, attitudes, and resources/means unfold in the short, medium, or long term. A scenario in effect postulates how a sequence of events creates the future. These descriptions of the future are used to plan possible responses and identify additional information requirements in support of policy (Source: OECD). Note that not every early warning product requires an explicit section with best-case, most likely, and worst-case scenario. However, each should consider implicitly or explicitly how the human security issue may unfold and what the future risk may be.

"Stakeholders" are defined individuals and/or groups able to positively or negatively shape events. These key actors, often identified through stakeholder analysis, see events through a particular issue lens, and as a result, maintain prevailing attitudes towards each other and possible actions by stakeholders. In a conflict situation, the attitudes of actors often lead to polarization and create in-group/out-group dynamics in which groups become more cohesive and recalcitrant in opposition to other parties. In conflict analysis, there are primary parties (those directly involved in the conflict), secondary parties (those supporting the primary parties, and third parties (actors who are outside the conflict and are helping the primary parties to resolve it).

"Structural Factors" According to the ECPF, "structural factors mask latent (indirect) violence, that is, harm perpetrated against the individual or group and which is embedded in the structure of our societies, such as the sources of illiteracy and innumeracy, unemployment and environmental degradation. Their possible degeneration into direct violence is a function of how, and in what direction, people interact with each other and with nature to transform them. For instance, a repressive regime may create a security racket to protect itself, crackdown on the labor movement, muzzle the press, imprison opposition figures, and fill a voters' register with double entries and ghost names, all in the attempts to cling on to power. All these practices accelerate the negative transformation of structural factors and nudge society towards direct violence (Source: ECPF)." These "structural factors refer to systemic variables conditioned by decades and centuries of interactions with regard to external, regional and internal power relations (global and local

governance); fault-lines in the architecture of the postcolonial African State; and the vulnerability of the continent to the vagaries of global processes and nature, such as the region's disadvantaged position in the world market and environmental degradation. The root causes of violent conflict, such as poverty, exclusion, gender and political/economic inequalities are traceable to these global and local fault lines. They have always constituted a time bomb under governance processes in West Africa, being the primary source of latent, indirect violence" (Source: ECPF). The key is to identify not just structures, but how they shape the behavior of key actors, as agents, whose actions shape tendency and potential in the conflict system.

"Trends" are defined as larger patterns of events produced by the interaction of driving forces. In a conflict situation, a trend may exacerbate tensions or create opportunities to reduce tensions. Trend analysis implies examining how a potential driver of change develops over time and shapes potential futures (Source: OECD). As used in the HSAF, analysts combine driving forces to visualize and describe larger trends. These trends help the analyst develop scenarios about alternative futures.

"Trigger" is defined as sudden events with catalytic effects on existing structural factors and feedback loops (i.e. accelerators). Triggers are intervening variables that spark an emerging conflict just as a match can cause wood to start burning. By setting in motion events that undermine human security triggers can lead to violent conflict, and left unchecked, culminate in larger political violence and break downs in institutions and order (Source: ECPF).

"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. (Source: ECOWAS CRVA framework).

Introduction

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Human Security Analysis Framework (HSAF) bridges diagnostic early-warning reporting with prognostic analysis of emerging challenges to human security throughout the region. The framework helps analysts speak to planners and decision-makers, translating their initial estimates of unfolding events into scenarios that outline a range of opportunities and risks inherent in these events. The HSAF process, detailed in this document, is visualized below, progressing from data collection and assessment to analysis and then to effectively communicating findings and scenarios to inform early response.
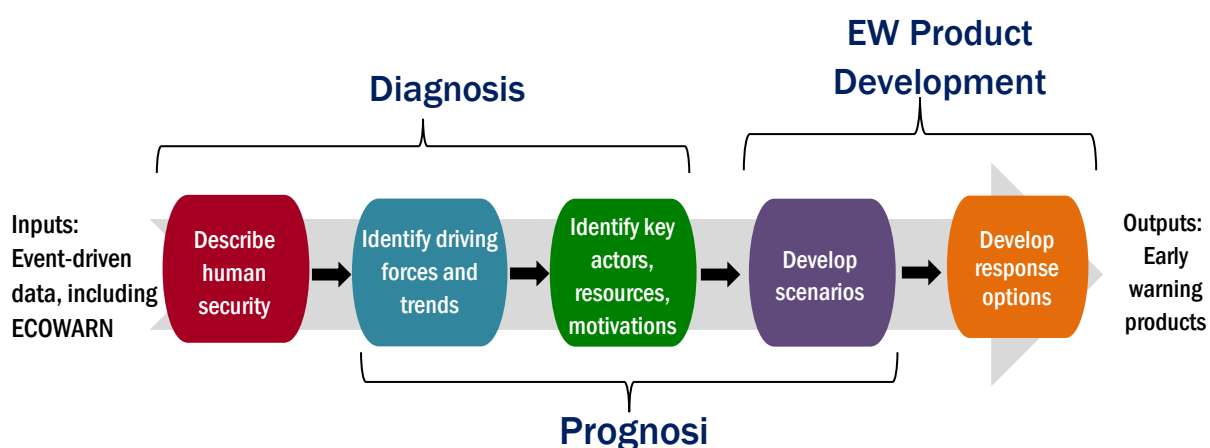

Figure 1. HSAF

At the core of the HSAF is an analytical methodology designed to help analysts identify structural factors producing human security challenges across ECOWAS Member States. These factors mold the attitudes key actors adopt and, as a result, influence their behavior as they mobilize resources and adopt incompatible positions in relation to other stakeholders. This combination of structure and agency defines conflict in a human security system, mapping the range of possible ways underlying human security issues might evolve into an acute crisis. If an analyst can describe this context, they can infer the driving forces and trends likely to influence the strategies key actors adopt. The HSAF supports analysts to frame emerging issues in this manner, helping them produce the type of prognostic reports leaders need to assess human security challenges and develop intervention strategies.

Acknowledging the dynamic nature of human security, the HSAF is designed to be flexible and scalable. It can be used in analytical efforts ranging from regular conflict monitoring, to unfolding crises, to special studies that lead to early warning outputs such as policy briefs and monthly reports supporting policy decisions, response planning and implementation. As such, the HSAF complements existing data collection and reporting programs in the ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate (EWD). The framework uses existing early warning data as well as desk studies, stakeholder analysis, and other conflict analysis best practices to give analysts flexibility in visualizing and describing human security challenges across the region. The HSAF methodology also supports the application of a

gender lens consistent with best practices as set forth in ECOWAS' Gender Integration Manual in Early Warning: A Manual for Practitioners (February 2018). A checklist for integrating gender into early warning excerpted from the Manual is included in the Appendix of this document. Analysts are encouraged to refer to both the checklist and the full manual for further guidance on integrating gender into their analyses.

The ECOWAS regional peace and security Observation and Monitoring Centre, known as the 'Early Warning System' derives its mandate from Article 58f of the 1993 Revised Treaty which stipulates the establishment of the System. Chapter IV of the 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security gives expression to the provisions of the Treaty by defining a framework for the System and underscoring its conflict prevention purpose.
Specifically, Article 23 of the Protocol elucidates that 'the Observation and Monitoring Centre shall be responsible for data collection, analysis and preparation of reports for the use of the President of the Commission'.

The ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council at its 37th Ordinary session which held in Abuja on the 14th of December 2016, adopted the implementation of the National Early Warning and Response Mechanism in Member States and recommended the expansion of the scope of the Early Warning System to cover broad aspects of human security.

The vision of the Early Warning Directorate is to have in place, a fully integrated and functional early warning system, providing the ECOWAS Commission and Member States with timely reports and analysis to enable effective responses in preventing and mitigating human insecurity in the ECOWAS region. This is in furtherance of the ECOWAS Commission's strategic objective of enabling a peaceful and secure Region in order to attain the development and integration goals of the Community.

By facilitating analysts' assessments of emerging risks, issues and events through a human-security lens, the HSAF helps ensure that the insights developed by analysts through conflict monitoring are linked to response planning and implementation. Consistent with the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Regional Security (1999) (hereafter referred to as the Mechanism) and the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001) that facilitate early response, the HSAF contributes to a fully integrated and functional early warning system for ECOWAS and its Member States that promotes the early detection of human security challenges for the purpose of early response and conflict prevention; these response mechanisms include the full range of conflict prevention and human security interventions within ECOWAS such as the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF), as well as the various instruments guiding the operationalization of the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture including the National Centers for the Coordination of Response Mechanisms (NCCRMs). In this manner, the HSAF is a key component of the Joint Analysis and Response Planning (JARP) toolkit.

HSAF Logic: Human Security, Instability, and Conflict

The ECOWAS HSAF helps analytical teams describe challenges to human security in a manner that supports response planning. Human security issues can present challenges to local and regional communities' and institutions' capacity to
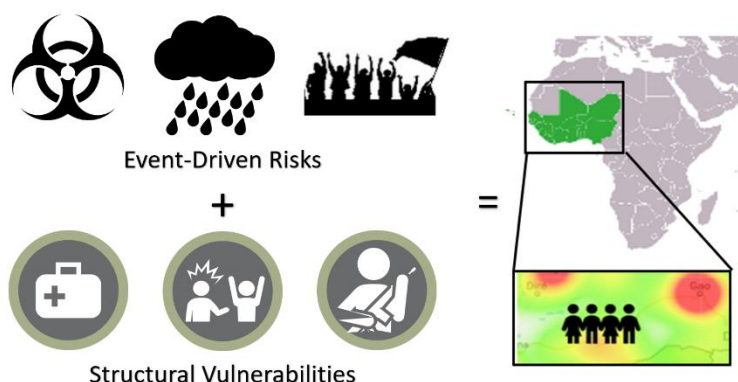
respond. At these critical moments, multiple challenges that include forms of direct, structural, and cultural violence can overwhelm the existing community and institutional capacity to respond in a timely way and effectively. For example, local political factions in ECOWAS Member States compete for political power peacefully through processes such as elections as well as formal and informal power-sharing accords. Yet, if that political competition sparks large protests or extrajudicial violence, a crisis emerges. Similarly, infectious disease outbreaks can highlight the unpreparedness of communities and eclipse the ability of public health institutions to respond, especially if they are underfunded as a result of an economic downturn. **A combination of near-term triggers and event-driven risks interact with deeper structural factors to produce human insecurity.** Left unchecked, the resulting situation risks degenerating into crises and violence as well as other destabilizing conditions.
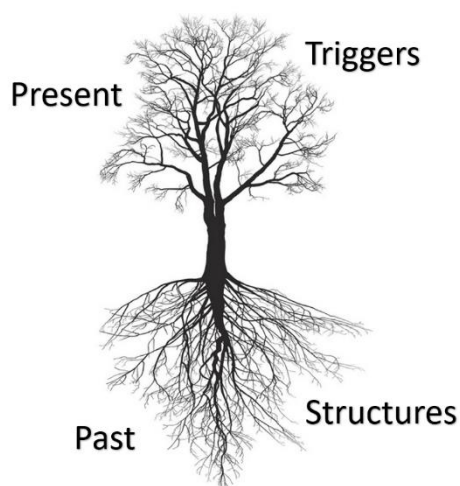
These examples illustrate that like a tree, any human security challenge in the present rests on deeper problems that take root over time. Maritime disruptions often link to market conditions and migration, just as climate stress can produce a cascading series of problems from human trafficking to land disputes. Food insecurity can cause protests based on deeper human security issues linked to political factions, ethno-linguistic identity, and even the legacy of colonialism. Triggering events exacerbate underlying structural vulnerabilities creating human security challenges that manifest as a system. This system expresses how interrelationships between groups, institutions, prevailing beliefs, and the environment can produce crisis patterns. Therefore, understanding instability is a function of describing how present triggers interact with deeper structures, producing human insecurity to create the context in which key actors mobilize resources and compete for power and influence.

Relationship to Reporting

The HSAF can be used to support the production of thematic reports and other products that help ECOWAS analysts visualize and describe factors affecting human security in the ECOWAS Region and how they might evolve into the future. This approach builds on EWD's existing data collection methods and report formats to support analysis at multiple levels:

> 1. First, the HSAF supports understanding of human security issues, helping analysts integrate the existing ECOWARN data (as well as complementary datasets) into analytical estimates;

> 2. Second, the process helps analysts conduct emerging conflict analysis and visualize events (as triggers) and changes observed in data analytics as a larger conflict system.

Driving forces, trends, patterns, and key feedback loops shape this system and produce identifiable tendencies and potential future states. By helping the analyst think about how triggers and trends interact, the HSAF provides a framework for analysts to generate scenarios specifying opportunities and risks on the horizon in a manner that supports the development of response options by either decision-makers or their designees, such as an inter-directorate multi-disciplinary working group.

Situating near-term events in relation to larger factors allows the analyst to develop scenarios that address both the proximate and structural causes of human insecurity across West Africa. This approach builds on EWD's established quantitative/qualitative Country Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) methodology to help analysts take that next step and

> **Situating Near-term Events in Relation to Larger Factors:**
>
> How do rising food prices (i.e., a trigger) interact with larger trends like changing migration patterns, climate change, and urbanization?

describe how conflicts evolve into acute human security crises. This analysis helps ensure early warning becomes more relevant, actionable, and targeted, whether the customer is ECOWAS decision makers, the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF), or National Centers on the front lines of response.

The HSAF is designed to produce scenario-driven recommendations. These scenarios help visualize the complex interactions in a conflict system, as tendencies, and how these larger tendencies produce alternative futures (i.e., the most likely, most dangerous, and best case). Describing these futures helps decision makers identify additional information requirements and shape larger intervention decisions at the local, state, national and regional levels of analyses. Once ECOWAS does intervene to prevent human security challenges from worsening, a conflict from escalating, and/or a crisis from spreading, the HSAF helps leaders monitor the efficacy of actions and how best to ensure a transition back to stability across the human security pillars. In this way, the HSAF supports analysis
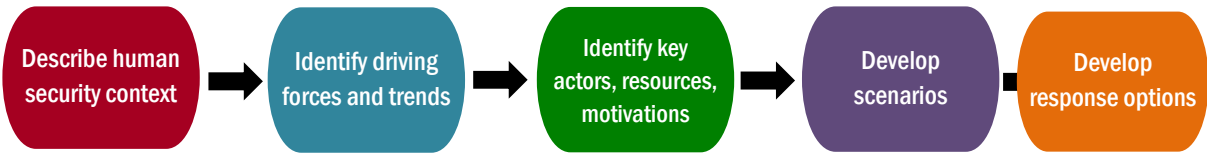
along the full project cycle, and targets EW product users at multiple levels, including ECOWAS management and relevant departments as well as national and regional responders.

> **Using the HSAF, therefore, analysts will:**
>
> 1) Help decision makers decide if an intervention is necessary;
>
> 2) Provide information to frame planning decisions, once an intervention has been approved;
>
> 3) Provide analytic support to operations once an intervention has been approved and deployed; and,
>
> 4) Monitor and assess the intervention to inform the development of strategies addressing obstacles to progress or emerging trends.

The HSAF Process and Analytical Tools

The HSAF uses five analytical steps to help analysts visualize and describe how larger structural and contextual vulnerabilities shape event-driven risk factors and the behavior of key actors. These steps are designed to be scalable based on available data, the analyst's toolkit and preferred techniques, and the time available. For example, if a decision maker requests a report on food insecurity in an ECOWAS Member State in the next four hours, analysts can still work through the five steps in a time constrained environment.

Describe human security context → **Identify driving forces and trends** → **Identify key actors, resources, motivations** → **Develop scenarios** - **Develop response options**

Step 1: Describe Human Security Context

The analyst should start with empirical observations. The analyst's first task is to describe the immediate problem based on data, as the analysis must be data driven. Working with all the divisions and units within the Early Warning Directorate, they pull data from the **ECOWARN reporter** and develop charts and graphs to identify patterns, trends, and hotspots using GIS and other analytical tools and platforms. Specifically, and significantly, the analyst starts with facts: what is the human security issue, how does it relate to recent
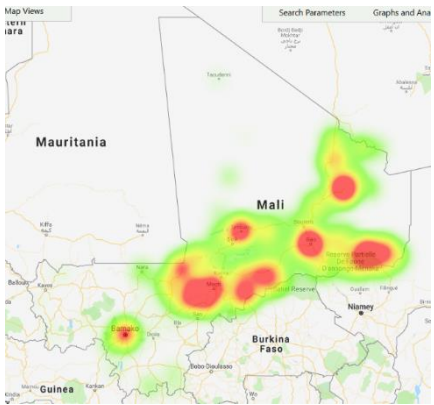
> **Example:** An analyst asked to write a quick report on an emerging food security crisis starts by identifying the areas facing acute shortages or challenges getting food. They work with existing data and map out affected areas with support from the Geographic Information System (GIS), taking care to disaggregate data by sex and other demographic characteristics. Next, through desk studies, they see if the food security crisis is related in time and space to any other events such as droughts, elections, changing migration patterns, economic downturns, or even outbreaks of political violence. They examine how different groups (ethnic, religious, etc.) are being impacted and whether men, women, girls and boys in these different groups are impacted differently by the situation. The purpose of the first step is to identify the human security issue at hand and start thinking through its deeper connection to key actors, resources, and structural vulnerabilities in steps 2 and 3.

events, etc. Based on this baseline data - essentially observable facts - the analyst will develop hypotheses about what might be causing the pattern, trend, or hotspot. These hypotheses can be specific to one thematic area or cut across the thematic areas. To make

these inferences, the analyst should review past reporting, including the CRVAs, and extrapolate from there. Applying a gender lens, the analyst includes how men, women, boys and girls are impacted differently by the problem.

As mentioned above, the analyst then draws inferences from the baseline data and clearly states a series of hypotheses about how these trigger events relate to larger structural vulnerabilities, using the human security framework. These hypotheses describe how human security issues are related to deeper forces that emerge from prevailing patterns of structural and social pressures that develop over time. The hypotheses are the starting point for developing the deeper analysis and drawing out scenarios in Step 4 that help decision makers determine how best to respond to the situation.

The analyst should ensure they have at least **two facts from the baseline data (e.g. hotspots and trends)**, with **associated hypotheses for each** before proceeding to the next step of the HSAF. The observed facts should consider how different groups - and the men, women, boys, and girls within those groups - are affected differently by the situation through, for example, providing disaggregated data whenever available. Further the analyst should also apply a gender and conflict-sensitive lens to the hypotheses.

A list of key questions to help the analyst discern key facts and a list of human security related structural vulnerabilities are listed on the following pages.

Baseline Data (Observed facts including patterns, trends and hotspots)	Hypotheses
	Governance:
	Security:
	Environment:
	Crime/Criminality:
	Health:
	Governance:
	Security:
	Environment:
	Crime/Criminality:
	Health:

A.   Baseline Data: Identifying Key Facts

A fact is a **statement of information known to be true.** For example, human security challenges usually occur in a specific place and at a specific time. Think of facts as symptoms. The analysis should diagnose natural patterns in the region to see where they might evolve into an acute crisis. The goal is to get from diagnosing that crisis to prognosis: helping decision makers figure out the best course of action to ensure regional stability.

Identifying Key Facts

A good technique is to ask, **"what is the issue?"** and describe it with data:

☐ Be specific: what is the effect at the national level? At the regional level?
☐ Who are the affected populations and identities?
☐ How are men, women, boys, and girls affected differently by the crisis?
☐ Which actors have an interest in the issue at the local, national, and regional levels? (Be careful not to overlook individuals and/or groups, such as women, minorities, youth and marginalized groups, even though they may not be in positions of power)
☐ Are there related events that occurred recently (i.e., event-driven risks)?
☐ Data analysis
   o Heat maps of incidents
   o Charts (per capita incidents at the local and national levels disaggregated by gender and other identity-based factors whenever possible; e.g., children vs. adults)
   o Descriptive statistics
   o Be specific: what does quantitative analysis and data visualization illustrate about larger patterns and trends?

B. *Identifying Hypotheses*

Hypotheses posit relationships between the observed facts and their causes. For example, the analyst might infer that human security challenges are related to larger governance issues. This type of hypothesis can then form the basis for further analysis by asking a key question: **How does the issue relate to larger structural vulnerabilities from a human security perspective?** In the HSAF, the hypothesis should align with the concept of human security and the thematic areas. By aligning them accordingly, the analyst can draw on the larger ECOWARN data stream as well as data from other sources to help the reader visualize patterns, trends, and hotspots in a manner that sets up a clear causal portrait of a potential human security challenges as well as opportunities and risks inherent in any response.

To begin, what variable factors from the human security thematic indicator list might be producing the observed pattern, trend, or hotspot? The analyst should identify both assumptions about what is escalating tensions as well as those factors that decrease tensions and/or stop a conflict from becoming a crisis. Hypotheses can be framed in an if … then formula (e.g., if community fragmentation increases, then crime will also increase). In so doing, the analysis will point to possible leverage points and recommendations.

The list on the next page, based on the ECOWARN data, is a starting point for the analyst to identify possible causes of observed patterns. The more the analyst follows this list, the easier it is to integrate their larger assessment and scenarios, as prognosis, into indicators and warnings.

Governance
[Political Legitimacy; Economic Management; Functioning of Gvt/Public Services; Judicial Independence/Rule of Law]

- Access – Infrastructure
- Child Protection
- Community Fragmentation
- Economic Pressures
- Electoral Vulnerabilities
- Intolerance and Marginalization
- Repression and Exclusion
- Unemployment and Stagnation
- Human Rights Abuses
- Corruption and Accountability

Security
[Capacity of Defense Institutions; Conflict/Terrorism; Displacement]

- Violence – State and Non-state as well as their intersection in proxy groups
- Violence – Child Soldiering
- Violence – Contagion
- Radical Propaganda
- Religious Fanaticism
- Radicalization
- Hate Speech
- Criminal Recruitment
- Maritime Disruptions
- Security Checkpoints
- Aggression
- Terror Financing
- Suspicious Movement
- Security Sector Governance

Health
[Services; Malnutrition; Maternal/Women's Health; Disease/Mortality]

- Health Maintenance
- Healthcare Access
- Disease – Human
- Disease – Plant and Animal
- Reproductive Health
- Sanitation, Water and Air Quality

Environment
[Air/Water; Population Pressures; Biodiversity and Environmental Protection]

- Climate Stress
- Deforestation/Desertification
- Ecosystem Modification
- Food Insecurity
- Farmer-Herder Conflict
- Land Control Disputes
- Pollution
- Urban Settlement
- Water Management

Crime
[Personal Safety; Gender-Based Violence]

- Trafficking – Natural Resources
- Trafficking – Smuggling
- Trafficking – Human
- Trafficking – Goods
- Trafficking – Arms
- Trafficking – Drugs
- Violence – Gangs
- Violence – Engendered
- Violence – Extrajudicial
- Money Laundering
- Cybercrime

Gender
(Cross-Cutting)

- Engendered Education
- Engendered Healthcare
- Women's Participation
- Gender-Based Violence
- Women's Rights

See Worksheet Template #1 to assist with recording Facts and Hypotheses.

Step 2: Identify Driving Forces and Trends

The next step of the process builds on the first. Analysts take the diagnosis – the assessment of assumed causes to observed patterns, trends, and hotspots – and develop a deeper sense of what might be producing the near-term cause. This framework implies that the hypotheses from step one are the immediate causes or near-term triggers. The driving forces are the **structural or root causes**. A driving force is a variable that produces a tendency towards the observed outcome. For example, labor market disruption,

In other words: *driving forces (as root causes) condition hypotheses (as proximate causes)*

corruption, a decaying public transportation infrastructure and inflation could be driving forces behind food insecurity.

Framed this way, the analyst differentiates whether assumed causes are root or proximate causes that perpetuate human security challenges. Remember, there are always multiple forces at play in a complex crisis, implying that the analyst should think about multiple hypotheses, as diagnoses, for each observed fact, as a symptom. For example, a deficit of political legitimacy and systemic discrimination are best thought of as root cases, and thus driving forces. They are underlying structural conditions. Election vulnerabilities or recent human rights abuses are more akin to proximate causes. They act as triggers and accelerate a crisis. The identification of driving forces helps the analyst to probe deeper and see the larger array of factors shaping human security challenges.

Social
Technological
Environmental
Economic
Political

STEEP is a technique for identifying driving forces. Given the human security issue and key actors, analysts identify potential driving forces considering **social, technological, environmental, economic and/or political factors (STEEP).**

After generating a list of potential driving forces, the analysts should narrow the list based on the driving forces that influence the most key actors and that relate to larger structural vulnerabilities producing human security challenges. For example, technological change – such as the introduction of cell phones – may be a constant in the region

and linked to many crises in both a positive and negative manner, but that doesn't mean it is always driving prevailing attitudes and behaviors or the ability of actors to mobilize resources. One technique is to limit the driving forces to two. The concept is to narrow the list to the two driving forces, using STEEP, that have the largest impact on the key actors and reflect the larger structural context manifest in human security challenges.

By narrowing the list of potential driving forces, the analyst creates a clearer, causal model that describes how given a prevailing context, actors mobilize resources, compete for power and influence, and perpetuate human insecurity.

> Example: Returning to the food insecurity example, after describing the crisis issue and identifying key actors and resources, the analyst uses STEEP to think about driving forces. In consultation with other local observers the analyst has worked with on past reports, they conclude that social and economic factors are likely playing a critical role. The food crisis is confined to urban areas where newly arriving migrants are taken advantage of by criminal groups. The migrants are isolated from other ethno-linguistic groups who historically control municipal governance and economic activity. This social distance creates an opportunity for criminal groups to prey on the vulnerable migrants. Boys are particularly at risk of forced recruitment into gangs, and women and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence. Second, a larger economic downturn the country is experiencing amplifies this effect, creating a feedback loop. Food from the countryside is available, it is just not getting to the people who need it most as criminal groups create illicit taxes and withhold aid for their own benefit and inflation undermines the purchasing power of the most vulnerable members of society. Combining these two driving forces creates a trend towards food insecurity in urban areas where newly arrived migrants, often from minority groups, fall victim to predatory criminals.

In this step, the analyst should list **at least two major driving forces** creating the conditions in which the assumed cause operates. Once they identify these driving forces, the next step is to infer what trends they produce. These trends become the foundation of the scenarios (step 4). When describing them, the analyst should be sure to draw out implications as they relate to the human security thematic framework, as these observations will help write the scenario in the next step.

Filling in the tables below will help the analyst organize their thoughts and set up the scenario. These tables are better kept in the running estimate, with the analyst describing the driving forces and resulting trends in at least a paragraph in the underlying report.

Hypothesis	Driving Force	Trend	Trend Human Security Implications:
			Governance:
			Security:
Hypothesis	Driving Force		Environment:
			Crime/Criminality:
			Health:
Feedback:			
Resiliencies:			

Step 3: Identify Key Actors, Resources, Motivations and Resiliencies

Given an assessment of the driving forces and trends shaping human security challenges at the local and regional level, the analyst's next job is to describe key actors and their resources. Actors respond to crises based on prevailing attitudes they have about in-groups and out-groups as well the larger structural context such as their role(s) in the society, gender, and other cultural norms, their interests, and their views about how to address human security challenges. These attitudes shape how they are likely to respond to human insecurity and whether they will mobilize through peaceful means, through violence / force, or not at all. The analyst must identity these actors, their relationship to one another, and the resources they can access. These resources can be material and monetary or cultural, military, political, diplomatic and ideological. Resources often determine the ability of an actor to expand a local conflict into a larger state or even regional challenge to human security. Resources can also be a source of resilience and determine the ability of an actor to mobilize for peace.
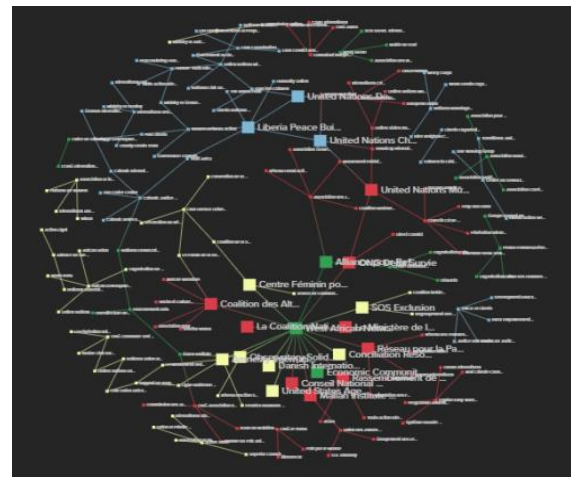
This step of the process is similar to traditional stakeholder analysis and issue mapping. The objective is to identify key actors, their underlying interests and motives and highlight any key alignments or points of opposition. The analyst should list **at least three major**

Example: Returning to the food insecurity example, after gathering data on the issue at hand in collaboration with the larger ECOWARN team, the analyst shifts to cataloguing any key actors, factions, and resources they can access to shape the crisis. For example, the analyst might notice that the food security crisis is predominantly in rapidly urbanizing cities where criminal groups linked to fringe political parties who control some poorer neighborhoods are taking advantage of the crisis. They also notice that there are a number of local charity groups and aid organizations who are trying to address the crisis using international support. The analyst therefore identifies these actors, their attitudes towards the issue, and the resources they can mobilize to influence the crisis. The purpose is to identify the actors that ECOWAS may want to influence in considering whether to intervene and the best approach to isolate malign influences and amplify parties who can enable positive, local solutions.

actors in terms of their available resources (including material and non-material resources such as cultural appeal, ideology, etc.) and their primary and secondary motivation in relation to the emerging human security challenges. When stating the actor, be sure to highlight which actors they are aligned with and which actors they are opposed to as well as the degree of alignment and opposition (low, medium, high). Be sure to consider third-party actors who are working to resolve the conflict on the ground.

| Actor (Name\\#)	Resources	Motive(s)	Alignments (High, Medium, Low)	Opposition (High, Medium, Low)
	Material:	Primary:		
	Non-Material:	Secondary:		
	Material:	Primary:		
	Non-Material:	Secondary:		
	Material:	Primary:		
	Non-Material:	Secondary:		

Helpful Hints

In monthly reporting, this analysis will usually be condensed to a paragraph. The analyst should maintain the full table and any additional issue maps as well as other visualization tools in their running estimate.

See Worksheet Template #3 to assist with recording actors, resources and motivations.

Step 4: Develop Scenarios

An analyst's job is not just to define how the past produced the present. Decision makers require accurate forecasting about the future. To this end, the HSAF combines an understanding of the issue at hand, key actors as well as their prevailing attitudes and resources, and driving forces and trends indicative of the larger structural context to develop scenarios. Scenario development represents a structured way for an analyst to describe **how prevailing tendencies produce potential futures**.
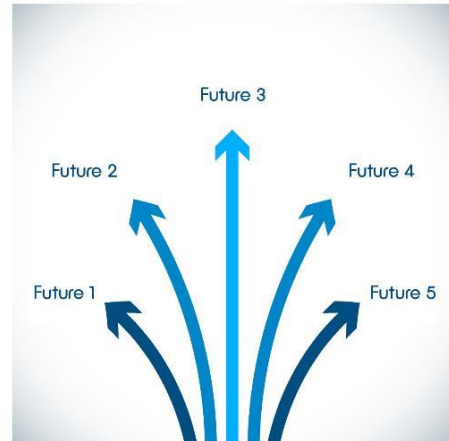
While there are multiple techniques for developing scenarios, at their core all scenarios share some common attributes. **First, they describe key actors in terms of their interests and resources and how they are likely to behave** relative to a particular human security issue, such as food insecurity in the future. That is, scenarios take the causal model the analyst identifies and project it into the future. In the HSAF, steps 1-3 provide the analyst the insights they need to describe how tendencies produce potential futures. These descriptions must be specific enough to facilitate policy discussions about possible intervention methods and risks.

Second, scenarios should be variable. That is, because the future is impossible to predict with 100% accuracy, the analyst should provide at least **two to three different scenarios**. One technique for producing these different scenarios is to differentiate them based on **opportunity, risk, and probability.** Although not all early warning products need to explicitly include the following three scenarios, they should always consider implicitly or explicitly different ways in which risks and vulnerabilities may unfold in the short, medium, and long term.

- ☐ First, state the **most likely future (Probable)** given an extrapolation of the underlying factors. Include an estimate of how likely the scenario is with a confidence estimate: Very Unlikely (1-20%); Unlikely (21-45%); Even Chance (46-55%); Likely (56-80%); Very Likely (81-99%). This scenario allows analysts to describe a middle ground that helps policy makers avoid the utopia of the opportunity scenario and the pessimism of the risk scenario.

- ☐ Second, describe the **worst-case future (Risk).** This scenario should build off the most likely scenario with the addition of plausible external or compounding factors that could exacerbate, expand, or worsen the human security situation or crisis. describe the worst-case scenario (i.e., worsening human security, crisis escalation, conflict spillover, etc.) as it relates not just to the underlying factors, but available policies and instruments. State the key differences between this scenario and the most likely (Probable). State the factors producing the increased risk.

☐ Third, state the **best-case future (Opportunity).** This scenario should describe the best-case scenario if all the necessary conditions were applied within the framework of existing policies and instruments. State the key differences between this scenario and the most likely (Probable) scenario. State the factors producing the opportunity. Both risks and opportunities should be related to factors ECOWAS could shape through local intermediaries or directly.

> <u>Example:</u> Returning to the food security crisis, the analyst translates the driving forces and trends into scenarios describing how key actors will behave in the future. First, the analyst looks at the most likely outcome. Absent an intervention, rural migrants to the rapidly urbanizing city will continue to face challenges purchasing enough food to meet their basic needs. Criminal groups will continue to prey on this vulnerable population and extort aid groups. Second, the analyst describes the most dangerous course of action considering how inflation, criminal groups, and corruption could cascade and produce protests. The analyst sees a feedback loop whereby the growing resources criminal groups gain from extorting rural migrants results in protests and a larger political crisis of confidence. Third, they describe the most pressing security issues to protect the population while addressing the medium to long-term solutions.

The table below provides a tool for scenario generation. The analyst will likely keep the table in their running estimate and report the scenario as a narrative in their report. When doing so, the analyst should be sure that at least one paragraph describes the scenario and the overall likelihood, and a second paragraph or table lays out the risks and opportunities. Remember, when the analytical team is reporting bimonthly (i.e., twice a month), you can "report by exception." In the scenario section that means keep the same scenario, if events have not drastically changed, and update the likelihood based on the indicators and any new risks and/or opportunities.

Issue	Actors	Trends
Most Likely Scenario		
Estimate:		
Indicators:		
Risks:		Opportunities:
Worst Case Scenario		
Estimate:		
Indicators:		
Risks:		Opportunities:
Differences from Probable:		

Best Case Scenario
Estimate:
Indicators:

Risks:	Opportunities:

Differences from Probable:

The analyst should be sure to <u>keep in mind the following</u> when using the tool:

Issue: ground the analysis in space and time (e.g., where, timeframe, specific issue, etc.).

Opportunities and Risks: spend as much time identifying opportunities as articulating the risks. Remember, in stating risks and opportunities the analyst must be objective. Avoid statements like "ECOWAS must."

Indicators: construct the indicators as close as possible to existing ECOWARN and other accessible data sources. Doing so helps the analyst track events and update their scenario as new factors emerge. Furthermore, it gives the analyst the ability to "report by exception" – update the indicators to make secondary reporting easier to generate but grounded in the running estimate.

Helpful Hints

Make sure to build off the first three steps of the HSAF process to describe the future scenario; the first three steps build the causal logic and theory of the case.

See Worksheet Template #4 to assist with developing scenarios.

Step 5: Develop Response Options

Given scenarios describing how human security challenges could evolve, the analyst's final step is to recommend initial response options. These options must emerge from the analysis as opposed to existing biases, past responses, or unvalidated guesses. Response options are based on opportunities and risks identified in the scenario analysis. In turn, the initial response options reflect the assessment of driving forces and trends as well as key hypotheses about the causes of human (in)security. In this way, the analyst does not just describe the symptoms, they diagnosis the disease and specify the larger array of structural vulnerabilities explaining why the human security challenges manifest in a particular way. These initial response options become the basis for further response planning using the ECOWAS Response Planning Framework (ERPF).

The response options should fit within ECOWAS' mandate and consider ECOWAS' past relationship with the Member State and any current political sensitivities regarding ECOWAS' engagement. They should also consider time and be coordinated with other directorates. With respect to time, often a fact-finding mission is an important precursor to validate hypotheses about driving forces and trends as well as the acute causes of human (in)security. In the case of an emerging human security challenge, or whenever appropriate recommended response options should be co-developed with the relevant response directorates who can bring to bear technical and relevant country experience. This integration ensures that the options under consideration are technically sound, feasible, and acceptable given ECOWAS's mandate, capacity, and existing action plans.

Scenario Risks	
Scenario Opportunities	
Concept (Two sentences – *how might ECOWAS address the drivers/trends and amplify resiliencies identified in the previous analysis within ECOWAS' mandate and capacity?*)	
Near-Term Response Options For each option note: ☐ which directorate(s) would be responsible; ☐ coordination opportunities with national and regional partners; ☐ required resources; ☐ risks associated with the option and plans for risk mitigation	**Mid-Term Response Options** For each option note: ☐ which directorate(s) would be responsible; ☐ coordination opportunities with national and regional partners; ☐ required resources; ☐ risks associated with the option and plans for risk mitigation;
1. Option	1. Option
2. Option	2. Option

Communicating Your Findings

After going through the HSAF Process (i.e., making diagnostic assessments and developing prognostic analysis) the analyst should reflect on the primary audience for their early warning product and consider key questions that facilitate the process. For example, at the most basic level, decision makers (i.e., ECOWAS leadership) need to determine the answer to the question, "is a course correction necessary and/or advisable?" Then, after the decision makers approve a course correction and task the planners and implementers with a specific mission, there is a new set of more detailed questions which analysts will need to answer through their early warning assessments. The analysts should, therefore,

go through the findings of the analysis from Steps 1-4, to answer the sub-questions below in a few words:

Primary Audience 1 - Decision Makers (e.g., ECOWAS leadership, Policy Makers, Donors, etc.)

Overarching question is one of **Prioritization and/or Triage**. Is a course correction necessary/advisable?

1. What is the current policy in place in relation to the issue and larger objective (e.g., in the case of farmer/herder conflict it could be related to the principle of free movement and peaceable livelihoods)?

2. What (if any) efforts are currently being undertaken to address the issue (local/national/regional)? Is the objective being achieved through current efforts or not? Are we succeeding or not? Why or why not? How salient is the issue and is there political will to address the problem?

3. Subsidiarity consideration: what is the lowest level at which the issue could be addressed?

4. How bad is the problem? How bad might it get? (including proportionality from a regional and historical perspective)

5. If the problem gets that bad, how might it affect the 5 Thematic Areas?

6. Other questions?

Primary Audience 2 – Planners/Implementers, (e.g., ECOWAS Directorates, National Centers, National Governments, Implementing Partners, Civil Society, etc.)

Overarching question is one of **Sequencing and Distribution of Resources**. What are key considerations that need to inform planning?

1. Larger regional and historical context of the problem (including the proportionality of the problem over space and time)

2. Geographic scope of the problem (including key locations such as specific border points, transhumance corridors, etc.)

3. Key stakeholders, relationships, and interests

4. Resource availability, points of leverage, and windows of opportunity

5. Cycles, patterns, and triggers

6. Other questions?

Worksheet Templates

Worksheet Template #1 – Step 1: Describe Human Security Context

Step 1: Describe Human Security Context	
Baseline Data (Facts including patterns, trends and hotspots)	Hypotheses
	Governance:
	Security:
	Environment:
	Crime/Criminality:
	Health:
	Governance:
	Security:
	Environment:
	Crime/Criminality:
	Health:

Worksheet Template #2 – Step 2: Identify Driving Forces and Trends

Step 2: Identify Driving Forces and Trends		
Hypotheses	Driving Force \ Trend	Trend Human Security Implications:
		Governance:
		Security:
Hypotheses	Driving Force \ Trend	Environment:
		Crime/Criminality:
		Health:
Feedback:		
Resiliencies:		

Worksheet Template #3 – Step 3: Identify Key Actors, Resources, and Motivations (ARM)

Step 3: Identify Key Actors, Resources, and Motivations (ARM)				
Actor (Name\#)	Resources	Motive(s)	Alignments (High, Medium, Low)	Opposition (High, Medium, Low)
	Material:	Primary:		
	Non-Material:	Secondary:		
	Material:	Primary:		
	Non-Material:	Secondary:		
	Material:	Primary:		
	Non-Material:	Secondary:		

Worksheet #4 – Step 4: Develop Scenarios

Step 4: Develop Scenarios		
Issue	**Actors**	**Trends**
Most Likely Scenario		
Estimate: *		
Indicators:		
Risks:		Opportunities:
Worst Case Scenario		
Estimate: *		
Indicators:		
Risks:		Opportunities:
Differences from Probable:		
Best Case Scenario		
Estimate: *		
Indicators:		
Risks:		Opportunities:
Differences from Probable:		

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* Likelihoods are based on the scale of: Very Unlikely (1-20%); Unlikely (21-45%); Even Chance (46-55%); Likely (56-80%); Very Likely (81-99%)

Worksheet #5 – Step 5: Develop Response Options

Step 5: Develop Response Options
Scenario Risks
Scenario Opportunities
Concept (Two sentences – *how might ECOWAS address the drivers/trends and amplify resiliencies identified in the previous analysis within ECOWAS' mandate and capacity?*)

Near-Term Response Options For each option note: ☐ which directorate(s) would be responsible? ☐ coordination opportunities with national and regional partners ☐ required resources ☐ risks associated with the option and plans for risk mitigation	Mid-Term Response Options For each option note: ☐ which directorate(s) would be responsible? ☐ coordination opportunities with national and regional partners ☐ required resources ☐ risks associated with the option and plans for risk mitigation
1. Option	1. Option
2. Option	2. Option
3. Option	3. Option

Appendices

# Appendix A – Checklist for Integrating a Gender Lens

The following checklist is an excerpt from "Gender Integration in Early Warning - ECOWAS Gender Manual for Practitioners". For additional guidance, please refer to this Manual. A gender lens is a fundamental tool for implementing gender integration in early warning at all times and levels. It means thinking about how gender norms, roles, relations, structures, and other factors might impact or affect a particular issue, problem, or event. Members of the ECOWAS Early Warning Directorate should incorporate this practice of applying a gender lens into every aspect of their work.

Risk/Vulnerability	Warning	Reporting
What is the risk, for whom?	Who is warning about what?	How is gender analysis reflected in incident and situation reports, and any other reports?
☐ How does the issue/event affect women and girls, men and boys differently? Why?	☐ Consult both women/girls and men/boys about the issue/event. They might have different information on the same issue.	☐ Document and report on gender-specific warnings.
☐ What are the specific risks based on other factors, such as disability, age, ethnicity, religion?	☐ Use gender indicators to identify specific warnings between males and females.	☐ Include sex-disaggregated data.
☐ What are the different roles, status and power of women/girls and men/boys in this context?	☐ Incorporate gender awareness and discussion into identification of warnings with women/girls and men/boys. They might have different perspectives.	☐ Report on gender-related indicators.
☐ What services have been disrupted for women/girls, men/boys? (E.g. for pregnant and/or breastfeeding mothers?)	☐ Gather sufficient data about how roles, social norms and relations affect how women/girls, men/boys experience the issue/event.	☐ Reports reflect the different needs, roles, perspective, experiences of women/girls men/boys and other factors such as age, ethnicity, and disability.
		☐ Write gender-specific recommendations for action.

Best Practices for Using a Gender Lens	Why it is Important for Early Warning
Consider the inequalities and different roles between and among women and men, the different experiences and perceptions of men and women, and how gender roles/norms/etc. might shape those different experiences and perceptions.	This is important because there is a wider tendency to equate gender with women. But gender does not just concern women; gender represents the social constructions of how men, women, boys, and girls should act. In order to understand the dynamics of gender, all of these perspectives and experiences must be taken into account. Note that warnings can focus on only women or only men, depending on risks.
Conduct your activities in a way that takes into account inequalities and differences between women and men. Avoid treating women and men the same.	It is important to acknowledge gender norms/roles/etc., the historical and systematic bias and discrimination of women and girls and how those factors may impact the experiences of women and men. For example, if looking into pastoralist/farmer tension or conflict, you cannot assume that men's and women's experiences and perceptions will be the same. They may have different information to offer on the same issue or event. Or, if an early warning response includes issuing written notices, this could affect men and women differently in places where women have much lower literacy rates than men.
Move beyond counting the number of participants and instead look at the quality of participation. Avoid undue emphasis on equal or 50/50 (men/women) participation.	Equal representation does not necessarily mean equal participation or equal impact. To achieve meaningful participation of women, you will need women with relevant expertise and the authority to be heard. Sometimes women may be present, but that does not always mean that their opinions and views will be equally valued. Based on what you know about gender norms/roles/etc., are men and women equally impacted? If women or men are more likely impacted, are their opinions given equitable weight? Note: women's representation is important and 'gender sensitive' men can support, but not replace women.
Understand the differences among different groups of women (and men) and do not assume that all women (or all men) have the same interests.	Every individual has multiple identities – gender, religion, nationality, ethnicity, etc. To assume that all women are the same neglects power/privilege disparities among women – e.g., women from minority groups, women with disabilities, poor women. Early warning issues/events will affect these different groups of women differently. So, it is important to take into account those differences and make sure that various experiences/perspectives are included.
Understand the specific situation and document actual conditions and priorities. Do not assume who does what work and who has which responsibilities.	Where possible, it is best practice to operate on actual knowledge and facts instead of assumptions. This is particularly important for gender norms/roles/etc. For example, if you assume young boys are primarily responsible for collecting water (when actually women and girls most often collect water) and there is a water shortage, you might be seeking information from the wrong cohort or trying to work with the wrong cohort for early response.

Appendix B – Additional Tools for Human Security Analysis

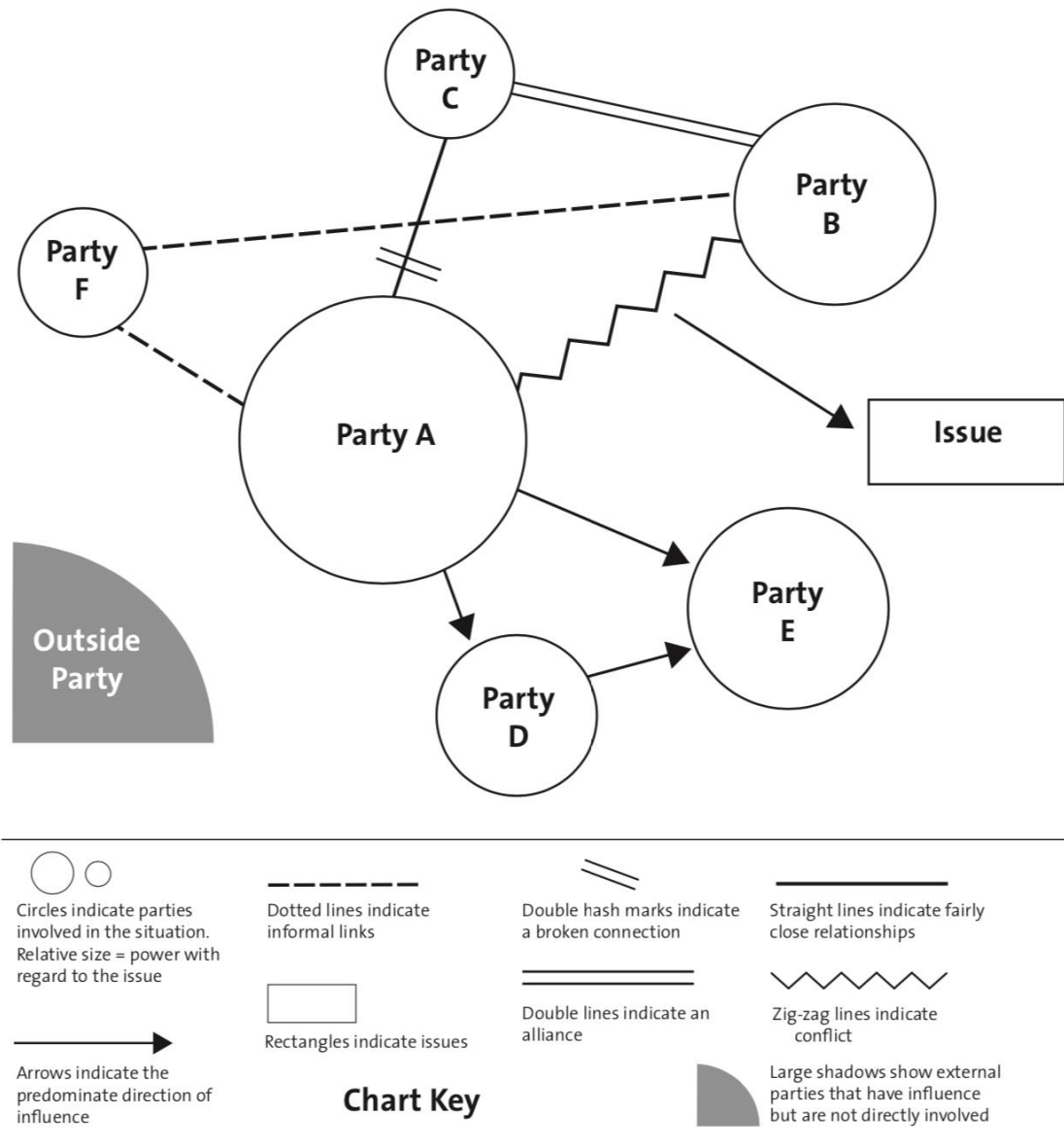*Tree Model: Roots and Impact of Conflict[2]*
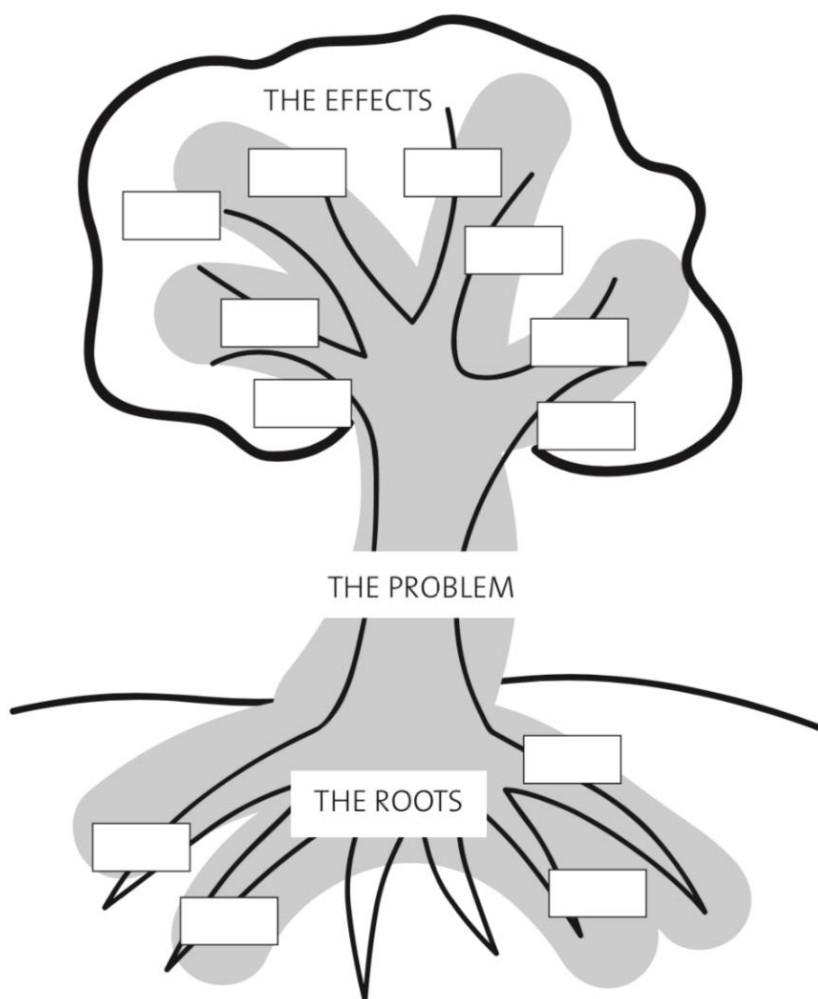
The Problem Tree helps the analyst enumerate the roots (causes) and corresponding effects (consequences) of a particular problem or conflict.

Method: First, identify the many roots of a particular problem or conflict. Some causes may be interconnected and can be depicted as smaller branches of a larger root. Then show all the effects that arise from these roots. Write the main effects on the branches; then draw in smaller twigs and leaves to show secondary and tertiary effects.

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[2] Adapted from: Fisher, S., et al. "Working with conflict: skills and strategies for action" (2000). New York, NY: Zed Books.

Conflict Mapping[3]

Circles indicate parties involved in the situation. Relative size = power with regard to the issue

Arrows indicate the predominate direction of influence

Dotted lines indicate informal links

Rectangles indicate issues

Chart Key

Double hash marks indicate a broken connection

Double lines indicate an alliance

Straight lines indicate fairly close relationships

Zig-zag lines indicate conflict

Large shadows show external parties that have influence but are not directly involved

Conflict Mapping helps the analyst illustrate graphically how the parties to a complex conflict relate to each other and to the central issue in the conflict. By indicating alliances of varying degrees of strength, conflictual relationships, the relative power of different groups, and who has influence over whom, the map can suggest strategic points of entry for influencing conflict dynamics.

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[3] Adapted from: Fisher, S., et al. "Working with conflict: skills and strategies for action" (2000). New York, NY: Zed Books.

Pillars Model: Factors that Sustain Conflict[4]
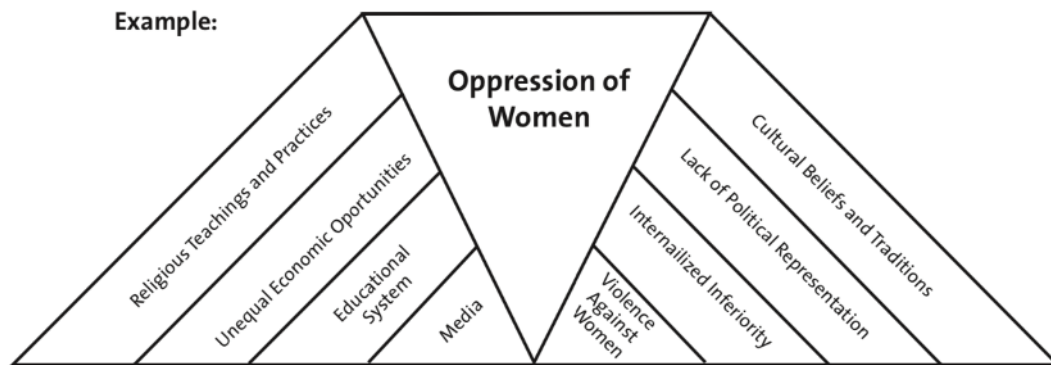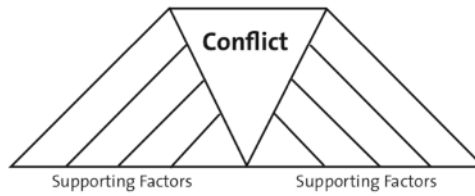
The Pillars Model can help the analyst examine factors that support the continuation of structural violence or the central problem in a conflict. A situation of injustice, represented as an inverted triangle, cannot stand by itself but requires pillars of systems, institutions, and habituated beliefs to prop it up. If enough of the pillars that prop up unjust structures are removed, the sources of violent conflict will give way, creating space for conflict transformation.

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[4] Adapted from: Goss-Mayr, H. and Goss-Mayr, J. "The gospel and the struggle for justice and peace" (1990). Alkmaar, Holland: The International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

The Onion Model: What Underlies Positions[5]
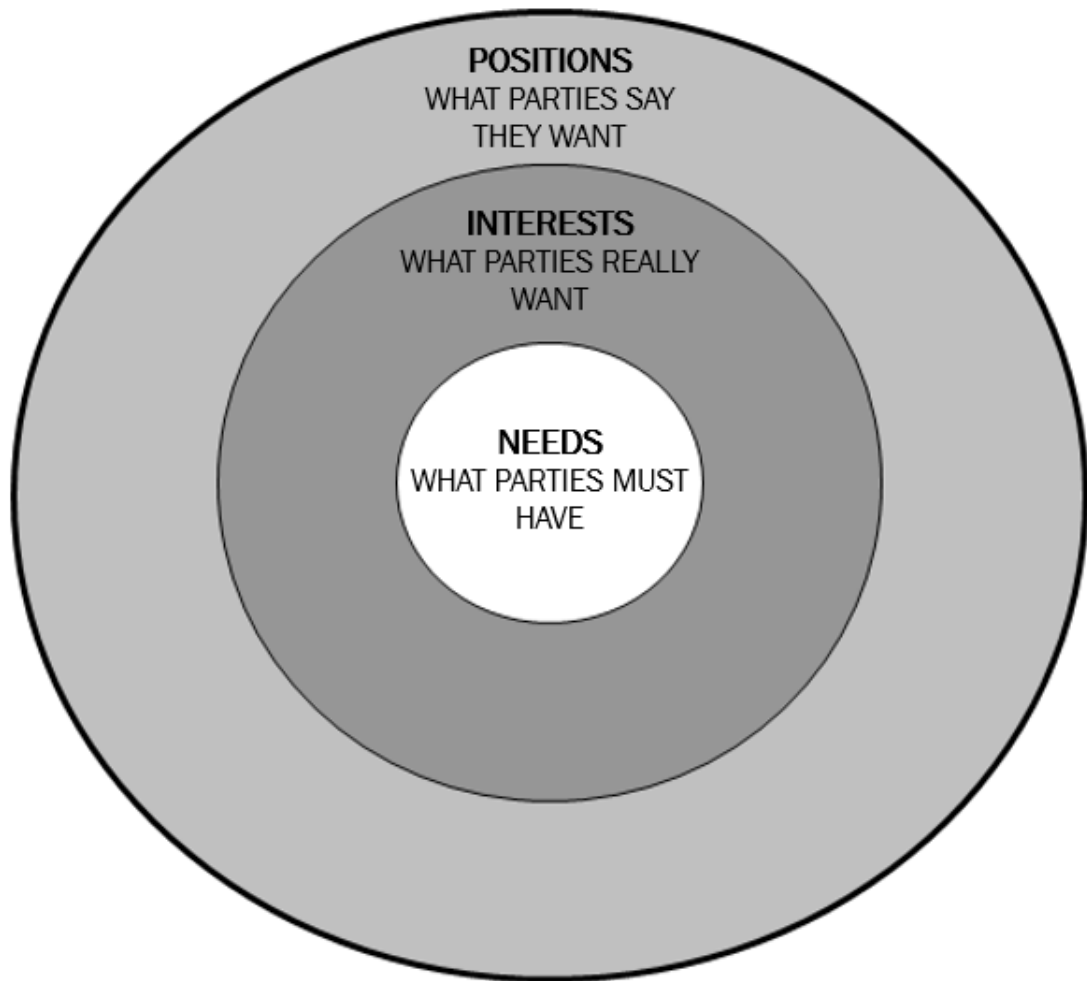
The Onion Model helps an analyst distinguish between various actors' positions, interests, and needs, which is often essential for planning successful interventions and/or negotiations.

Positions are often stated in mutually exclusive, zero-sum terms, and are therefore not a conducive platform for conflict resolution.

Interests usually are negotiable. It is important to understand the ways in which each party might be willing to compromise, so long as their core needs and *some* of their interests are met.

Needs are usually non-negotiable. It is therefore important for these to be fully understood.

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[5] Adapted from: Fisher, S., et al. "Working with conflict: skills and strategies for action" (2000). New York, NY: Zed Books.

Needs and Fears Mapping[6]

Name of Person/Group: Position: Needs: Fears:	Name of Person/Group: Position: Needs: Fears:
The Issue:	
Name of Person/Group: Position: Needs: Fears:	Name of Person/Group: Position: Needs: Fears:

Needs and Fears Mapping of individuals or groups in conflict allows the analyst to:
- ☐ Understand the various needs and fears driving a conflict or hardening positions
- ☐ Understand the causes of obstacles encountered in attempts to resolve conflicts
- ☐ Clarify the issues that will need to be addressed for a solution to be amenable to all key parties or groups
- ☐ Discover overlapping needs and fears that can inform creative approaches

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[6] Adapted from: Fisher, S., et al. "Working with conflict: skills and strategies for action" (2000). New York, NY: Zed Books.

Appendix C – Example HSAF Brief: Transhumance in Nigeria and the 2019 Elections

Introduction

Escalating violence related to transhumance in Nigeria is a pressing area of concern in the lead up to the 2019 presidential, legislative and gubernatorial elections. Climate change impacts are pushing herders further into farmland in the Middle Belt as they seek fertile grazing land for cattle. Trends show that intercommunal violence spikes in the dry season, which will coincide with hotly contested Presidential elections to be held in February 2019. With several Middle Belt states as potential battle ground states during the election period, intercommunal violence could become conflated with election-related clashes, exacerbating existing group-based cleavages. This has the potential to be compounded by criminality and banditry in the region, with opportunistic groups such as cattle rustlers, insurgents, ethnic-aligned militias and vigilante groups staging armed attacks on communities. This combination may result in significant collective lethal violence in 2019 in the Middle Belt of Nigeria, if unaddressed.

Risks	Opportunities
☐ Spikes in intercommunal violence in dry season ☐ Exacerbation of group-based tensions in the Middle Belt during election period ☐ Increased criminality/banditry feed into intercommunal and political violence	☐ Coordination and cooperation by ECOWAS with international organizations to monitor upcoming elections ☐ Engagement by ECOWAS with state and national governments after elections to pass structural reforms on herder-farmer issues ☐ Engagement with political parties and leaders on reducing potential for hate speech in the Middle Belt

Background

Conflict between farmers and herders is a multidimensional issue that is driven by ongoing, longer term issues such as environmental degradation, population growth, the expansion of commercial farmland in the Middle Belt and prevention of access to historical grazing routes. Violence associated with this conflict spiked in the first half of 2018 before falling later in the year. This follows the pattern of recent years in which communal
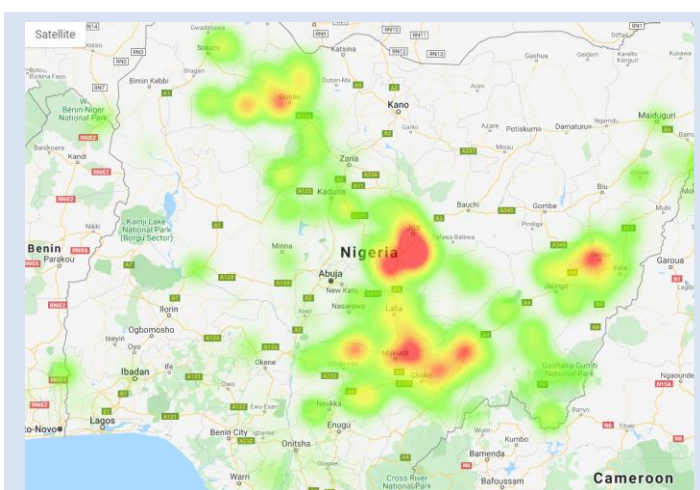
Heatmap of fatal violence between farmers and herders, 2014 – 2018
Source: ACLED/ECOWARN

violence between herders and farmers is higher in the early months of the year, which corresponds to the latter half of the dry season, before falling in the middle of the year when the wet season begins. This dynamic also played out the last time this conflict saw a major spike in violence in 2014.

Historically, farmers and herders in Nigeria have maintained a mutually beneficial relationship, with farmers granting herders grazing rights in return for the natural fertilization provided by the herders' cattle grazing on the farmer's land. Over the previous ten years, this historically harmonious relationship has been thrown out of balance by complex and interdependent factors such as environmental pressures, the growth of commercial agriculture, and the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, leading to rising rates of tension and violence in Nigeria's Middle Belt. Violence has become increasingly lethal as conflict between farmers and herders has spread. In 2012, the violence was concentrated in Plateau, but eventually spread to Benue, Taraba, Adamawa, Kaduna and Nasarawa states beginning in 2013. These conflicts are complex and are driven by an amalgamation of short, medium and long-term factors.

Agriculture employs about 70 percent of Nigeria's labor force and accounts for about 75 percent of non-oil exports.[7] Livestock makes up about 20 to 30 percent of total agricultural production and about 60 percent of the ruminant livestock population is found in the northern, semi-arid zone of the country and is managed by farmers, or pastoralists as they are often known.[8] Herders engage in random and planned transhumance movements, primarily to find areas with grass and water for livestock.

Furthermore, tensions have been exacerbated by the insecurity in the Northeast, increasing criminality in the region, growing religious tensions, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW). Militia groups, often formed along ethnic lines, have been created by farmers to defend their land from herders, have grown in the region and have become increasingly prone to violence. Furthermore, new anti-grazing laws in Benue and Taraba states are exacerbating

Key Actors and Motivations

Farmers
Aim to protect farmland from crop damage

Herders
Driven southward in search of grassland and water for herds

Ethnic militias and vigilante groups
Formed by farming communities to protect crops from grazing herds, some have become increasingly violent

Herder's associations/groups
Created to advocate on behalf of pastoralists for land use rights and improved conflict resolution

Cattle rustlers/bandits
Coordinated and organized criminal groups that steal livestock and property, growing number in the Middle Belt

Key Actors and Motivations

Politicians/Political Parties/Candidates
Can work to curb conflict, especially through legislation and by avoiding inflammatory language during election cycles

Community, traditional, and religious leaders
Serve as mediators using indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms

State governments
Control the crafting and implementation of grazing laws and anti-grazing legislation

National government
Oversees security responses to conflict and controls national-level legislation around farmer-herder issues

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[7] Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, The Green Alternative: The Agricultural Promotion Policy 2016-2020, 2016.
[8] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Nigeria at a glance, http://www.fao.org/nigeria/fao-in-nigeria/nigeria-at-a-glance/en/.

already strained tensions between farmers and herders. In Benue, the Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law, 2017 prohibits rearing and grazing of livestock and calls for the establishment of ranches and livestock regulation.[9] A similar law was passed in Taraba, though the state government has agreed to suspend the law to address the concerns of herders in the state. These factors, coupled with a broader societal breakdown of religious and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, have contributed to a shift from spontaneous conflict to deadlier, preplanned attacks.

Key Trends
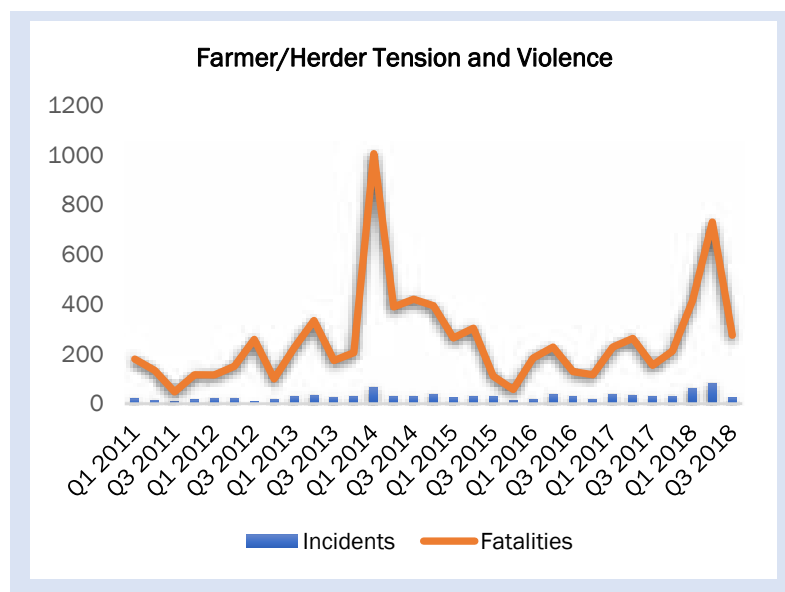
Violence between farmers and herders has been somewhat cyclical in the past few years, with elevated reports of violence during the first quarter of each year, which coincides with Nigeria's dry season. Fatalities spiked significantly in the first quarter of 2014, and again in the first quarter of 2018. These spikes in reported violence were largely due to either attacks on farming communities, reportedly perpetrated by herders, and farmer-herder clashes over grazing rights.
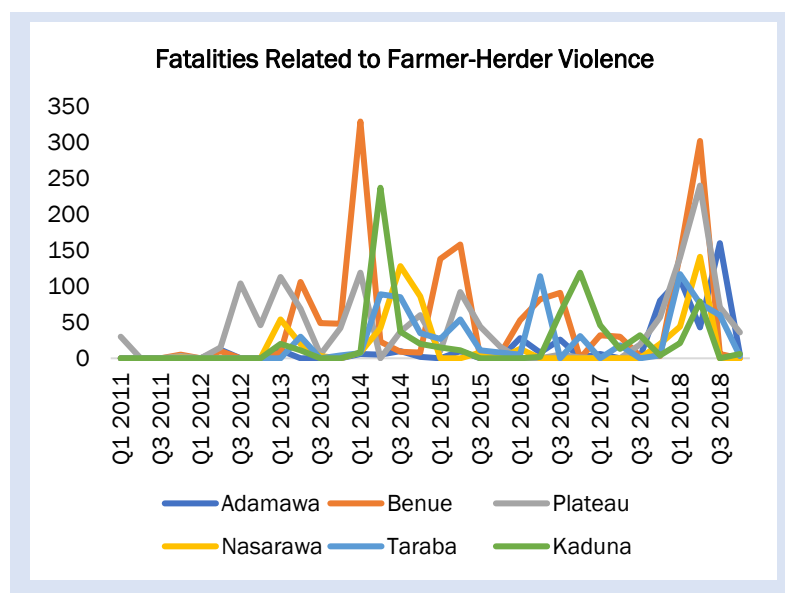
As tension and violence has escalated, the geographic scope of the issue has also broadened. In late-2012 and early-2013, farmer-herder violence was largely concentrated in Plateau until fatalities spiked significantly in Benue in the first quarter of 2014. Other states, including Kaduna, Nasarawa and Taraba, also experienced increased incidences of farmer-herder conflict in 2014. In 2018, violence spread to Adamawa state, which had historically seen relatively low reported incidents of farmer-herder violence.

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[9] Open Grazing Prohibition and Ranches Establishment Law, 2017, Benue State of Nigeria, https://thenigerialawyer.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/law-pr.pdf.

Conflict Drivers

Long-Term Drivers

☐ Environmental deterioration (desertification) and loss of grazing reserves pushing herders south
☐ High population growth and expansion of agriculture reducing scope for herding in Middle Belt
☐ Most Relevant Pillars: Environment, Governance

In recent decades, herders in Nigeria have been both extending their grazing areas further south and staying longer as environmental conditions in the north have increasingly deteriorated. Between 1978 and 2008 the average length of the annual rainy season decreased from 150 days to 120 while forest coverage in the country has decreased by almost 60 percent between 1990 and 2015. Combined with rapid population growth, these changes have contributed to desertification, with over 350,000 km^2 lost to desert or desert-like conditions in the already-arid far north. Desertification is continuing southward at the rate of 0.6 km annually, with between 50 and 75 percent of Nigeria's 11 northern states at severe risk, and between 10 and 15 percent at severe risk in most of the states of the Middle Belt.[10]

Additionally, most of the 415 grazing reserves established by the northern regional government in the 1960s have been lost to farmland, urban or other infrastructure, or private commercial interests. At the same time, farming in the Middle Belt has been expanding and changing. Development projects in the 1970s encouraged the use of water pumps and helped farmers exploit wetlands such as river valleys and flood plains, facilitating the expansion of farming into new areas. Furthermore, the shift to more modern methods of farming has likely upset the historic symbiotic relationship between farmers and herders, whereby the latter would fertilize the former's land in exchange for grazing rights.

Medium-Term Drivers

☐ Reduction in capacity of both security services and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms
☐ Increase in pressures due to rising insecurity, religious tension and proliferation of small arms
☐ Most Relevant Pillars: Security, Crime, Governance

Over the last decade, insecurity has increased in northern Nigeria due to the rise both of Boko Haram and of increasingly large and well-organized bandit groups. In 2013 alone, an estimated 64,750 cattle were stolen and nearly 3,000 herders killed in the north-central zone. This increase in insecurity has been facilitated by easy access to small arms from across West Africa and further afield, including Libya. Security forces have also been overstretched dealing with a multitude of threats across Nigeria, including Boko Haram in the northeast, militant and cult groups in the Niger Delta, and cattle rustling in the northwest. Additionally, while Boko Haram has killed both Christians and Muslims, it also worsened religious tensions, leading many Christian southerners to be suspicious or resentful of the predominately Muslim herders.

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[10] Federal Ministry of Environment, National Policy on Desertification and Drought, 2008

There has also been an erosion of the legitimacy and influence of traditional, community-level conflict resolution mechanisms that were formerly relied upon to resolve issues between herders and farmers. Filling this gap is the role of the police, courts, and local political leaders, but these new arbitrators are at times resented by herders for reported cases of corruption, protracted court processes immobilizing herds, and the perception of partisanship by local political leaders in an environment where farmers are more likely to be registered as voters in the Middle Belt states. Additionally, cattle herding has increasingly been undertaken by young men or boys, who may not have the ties to or trust in traditional authorities.

Short-Term Drivers

☐ Poor response to early warnings
☐ Rise of militias
☐ Passage of state-level grazing bans
☐ Most Relevant Pillars: Security, Governance

For some segments of the Nigerian population, there have been perceptions that the government response to herder-farmer violence has been limited. Herders allege that the government has made no arrests in the murder of about 1,000 Fulani herders and the slaughter or theft of two million cattle between June 2017 and January 2018. For example, Benue Governor Samuel Ortom alleged that he received no response to letters sent to President Buhari and federal security chiefs through 2017 alerting them to the danger of herder militia attacks on farmers in his state.[11] It is widely perceived by some farmer communities that there has been insufficient government response to and protections from attacks by armed groups. In response to this perceived lack of effective response, ethnic militias from both herder and farmer groups have become larger and better armed and changed the nature of their attacks, increasingly embarking on scorched-earth campaigns that raze villages and kill civilians and engaging both police and military forces sent to quell the violence. Exacerbating the conflict were state-level grazing bans passed in Benue and Taraba states. The former, signed in May 2017, took effect the following November and the latter officially took effect in January 2018, but enforcement was suspended in February. These laws, while not an originating cause of the violence, increased perceptions of marginalization on the part of herders and also likely contributed to the spread of the violence; the Benue law prompted an exodus of herders to Cross River, Taraba, and especially Nasarawa states at the end of November 2018.

Gender Considerations

Land-related and communal-based conflict between farmers and herders has fostered a general environment of insecurity that has direct, and distinct, impacts on men and boys, women and girls. Amidst this backdrop of insecurity, women and girls often become targets of the violence and unrest. Incidents such as forced marriages, sexual assault, displacement and destruction of livelihoods, have all had significant impacts on women

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[11] Baiyewu, Leke and John Charles. "Blame Buhari, Osinbajo, NSA, IG for Benue killings, Ortom tells Senate". *The Punch*. January 14, 2018.

and girls. Beyond being victims of direct physical attacks, the effects of displacement and increased economic and social vulnerability continue to impact the daily lives of women and girls long after conflict has ended. These vulnerabilities must be addressed by any program aimed at addressing the human cost of those impacted by such conflict. This can be done in coordination with local organizations working to provide social services and empower women.

Scenarios

The following are three potential scenarios around farmer-herder violence and the 2019 elections, written from the vantage point of mid-to-late 2019. The scenarios are informed by the background conditions, trends, and drivers outlined above and each considers possible ways that the near future may unfold, based on important events such as the 2019 elections and the actions of key actors. The first scenario is a *Most Likely* scenario, which represents the most plausible future barring any unexpected developments or actions. The second scenario is a *Worst Case* scenario, which represents a case where there are several factors which serve to further worsen the crisis. The third is a *Best Case* scenario, which represents a case in which strong action on the part of major actors contributes to an improvement in crisis dynamics.

➜ Most Likely Scenario

☐ Occasional use of hate speech and inflammatory rhetoric during election
☐ Little progress on grazing policy at national or state level
☐ Trends in farmer-herder conflict remain similar to 2018

Herder-farmer violence levels remain at a similar level to 2018, and no wider communal violence is sparked by elections. The elections in the Middle Belt are characterized by occasional use of hate speech spread by campaigners on social media, but this does not significantly worsen attempts to exploit similarly divisive issues in the Niger Delta or the Northeast. Some herder-farmer divisions manifest along political lines – most notably Kaduna, where long standing divisions from the violence during the 2011 election period remain. Overall, however, major parties in most states compete for similar groups of voters and therefore have little incentive to take up opposing sides on the issue. The election sees allegations of vote buying and voter suppression. However, given the relatively large margin of victory at the presidential level, these allegations involve too few votes to throw the entire process into doubt, and they are dismissed without too much protest. The coordination and communication between civil society groups and the security services helps to address incidents of violence that flares up in the immediate aftermath of the election.

Despite changes following the national and state level elections, there is little progress made on the design or implementation of policy that might address the underlying drivers of the herder-farmer conflict. The one exception is Taraba; the relative success of suspending the enforcement of its grazing ban encourages the new government to enter constructive dialogue with both farmers and herders. Signs suggest conflict is spreading into new states, notably Cross River and several southern states, who ramp up their anti-herder rhetoric and discussion of grazing bans.

➜ Worst Case Scenario

- ☐ Herder-farmer divisions manipulated by politicians/supporters during the election
- ☐ Inflammatory rhetoric by politicians and spread of misinformation
- ☐ Disputed elections led to protests, pulling away security forces from the Middle Belt
- ☐ Passage of grazing bans
- ☐ Farmer-herder violence spreads into neighboring states

Herder-farmer violence rises at in the beginning of 2019 and assumes increasingly partisan characteristics. Major political parties attempt to use the issue to motivate their supporters in the lead up to closely contested elections, leading to wide use of hate speech and polarizing rhetoric. With the Middle Belt states representing important battleground areas for the elections – four of the five states with the closest margin in the 2015 presidential election were in the region – campaigns are marred by violence. Accusations of atrocities – both real and fabricated – spread rapidly through WhatsApp and other social media, and few politicians make attempts to reduce the tensions.

The election results are disputed, with allegations of vote buying and voter suppression. This is compounded by some technical problems experienced by INEC, prompting court challenges and uncertainty about the final election results. Public security personnel are redeployed from the Middle Belt to respond to the large-scale protests and violence in the wake of the electoral uncertainty. Combined with the forces that had already rotated out of the area after the end of *Operation Whirl Stroke II* to counter a resurgent Boko Haram in the northeast, the military are forced to rely on the use of air campaigns as farmer-herder violence increases during and after the elections. Similar to reports from December 2017 in Adamawa, air strikes result in civilian collateral damage, further inflaming tensions and eroding trust in the military and federal government.

Despite the resolution of the elections and the arrival of the rainy season by June, communal violence levels continue. New administrations in some states decide to pass grazing bans - similar to laws passed in 2017 in Benue and Taraba - fulfilling partisan campaign promises. In other states, the farmer-aligned militias that have previously operated largely along ethnic lines, begin taking tentative steps towards coordinating their activities. Clashes between herders and farmers spread to neighboring states such as Bauchi, Cross River, and Kogi, and communal conflict risk remains high amidst projected lower levels of rainfall for the rainy season.

➜ Best Case Scenario

☐ Peace messaging by political parties and politicians
☐ Collaboration between security forces and local civil society groups
☐ Passage of grazing legislation
☐ Confidence-building dialogues and intercommunal forums
☐ Regional cooperation

Following the decrease in violence between farmers and herders at the end of 2018, the downward trend continues despite the closely contested election. Significantly fewer incidents of lethal violence is seen in the 2019 election than in previous cycles. The government plays an important role in deescalating tensions at the national level. Following the December 2018 signing of an election peace accord, political parties and candidates urge peaceful campaigning and denounce the use of inflammatory language and hate speech.

While states such as Plateau and Adamawa, which were expected to be flashpoints for violence, saw incidents of election-related violence, security forces largely maintained a peaceful electoral process. Collaboration between police and local civil society groups allowed for more effective election monitoring. Adamawa is a fierce battleground state during the presidential election. This, coupled with escalating farmer-herder conflict, leads to concerns that politicians will whip up ethno-religious hostility for political advancement. Steps in the lead-up to the election helps to alleviate this type of tension and violence. Confidence-building dialogues and intercommunal forums held at the state and local levels help rebuild trust in divided communities. Additionally, politicians largely maintain their commitment to avoiding language and campaign techniques that could trigger violence, especially in areas already divided along ethnic and religious lines.

Longer-term solutions also begin to mitigate farmer-herder violence, especially the passage of grazing legislation and the continuation of dialogues between communities post-election. The federal government's work with state governments to develop grazing reserves help alleviate some of the tensions between farmers and herding communities. Furthermore, efforts by the police and the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps to address attacks on farming communities by focusing on preventive measures, such as community engagement and improved early warning and response, begin to more effectively mitigate farmer-herder violence. Efforts at a regional level to manage herder movement across borders and to fight illicit arms trafficking also play an important role in addressing the farmer-herder issue. The continued efforts of ECOWAS to work with the governments of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger to reach an agreement on how to regulate transhumance pastoralism are an important piece of reaching a long-term solution.

Conclusion

Based on historical precedent and the three projected scenarios detailed above, the herder-farmer clashes that escalated in 2018 across much of Nigeria's Middle Belt have implications across the human security thematic areas. Some of these, such as the policy approaches by the national and state governments, can be addressed in a relatively short timeframe. Others, especially the desertification of the north, can only be addressed in the long-term, to the extent that they can be addressed at all. Over the past several years, the level of violence caused by these clashes has usually lessened in the rainy season and escalated in the dry season. However, the February 2019 elections are likely to have a major influence on the future direction of this issue. Even if the elections themselves are less violent than previous cycles, if the underlying drivers are not addressed, the conflict is unlikely to wane, and more likely to intensify, in coming years. This will put additional strain on the Nigerian security services, curbing their effectiveness against other national and regional threats and continue to undermine the legitimacy and perceived effectiveness of the government as a whole.