



Horizon West Africa – Mali 150 Metres Route de Koulikoro Sotuba ACI Route 3EME Pont, Bamako
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DATE: 30 November 2020
MONTHLY SITUATION REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS

22

**Boko
Haram
Activity**

○ **Highlight of week 1 & 2**

- The number of incidents recorded during the first two weeks was 110 and the most recorded incident was criminal activity.
- The reporting weeks were riddled with crime, post-civil unrest majorly in the southern part of the country as there was an absence of police officers in the cities.
- COVID-19 numbers started increasing in the reporting week with 1.8 percent fatality rate in the week.
- A major decline in protests in the weeks after the civil unrest which occurred in October.
- Kidnappings were recorded in some states in the South South region while there was military presence in another state in the region resulting in human rights abuses and unrest.
- Two military operations conducted against insurgents in the North East region.
- An IED incident recorded in the North East region.
- The NAF conducted airstrikes against Bandit hideouts in the North West region.

56

**Banditry
Activity**

15

**Civil
Unrest**

○ **Highlight of the week 3 & 4**

- The number of incidents in the last weeks of the month reduced to 92 despite a surge in kidnappings and insurgent activities.
- Bandit activities increased in the North West region towards the end of the month resulting in several fatalities and kidnappings.
- Country plunges into recession, the second in less than four years.
- Boko Haram insurgents increased attacks along highways bordering Maiduguri, Borno State.
- Another round of military operations recorded against insurgents in the North East.
- An IED incident recorded in the South South region.
- An upsurge in robberies in the Northeast and Northwest regions.

122

**Kidnapping
Activity**

292

Killings

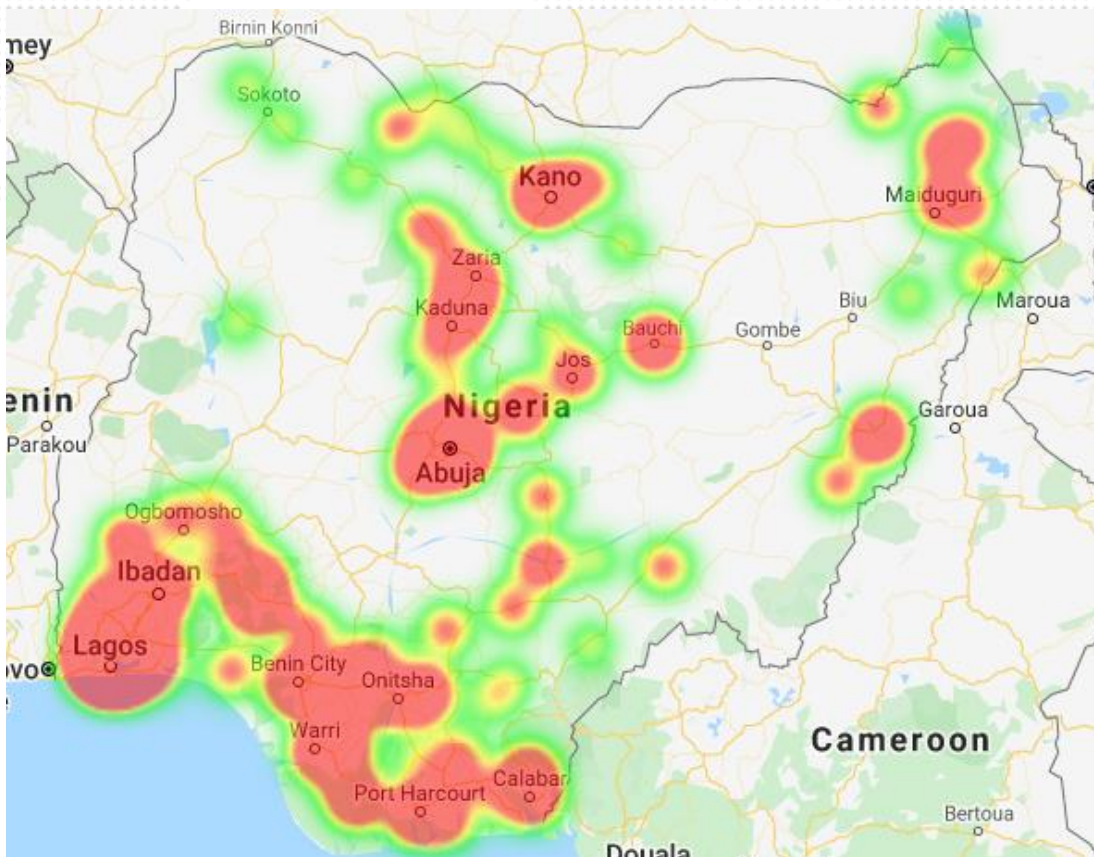
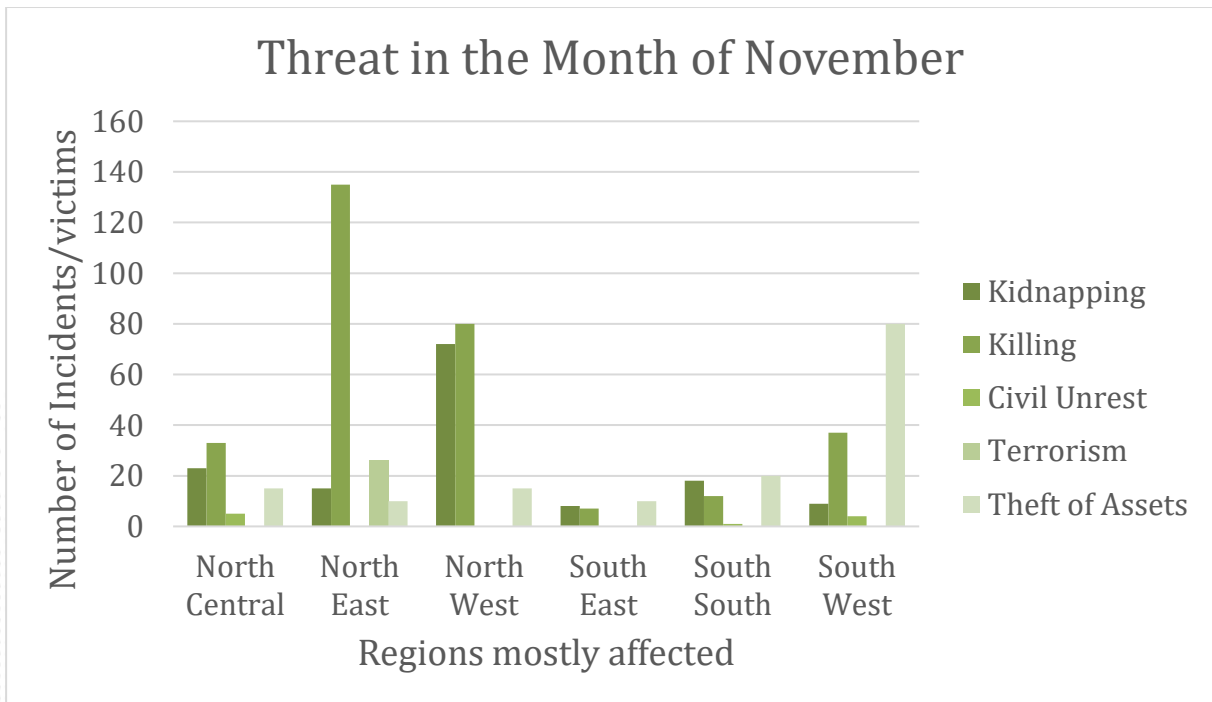
07

**Military
Operation**

56

**Theft
of Asset**

MAPS AND CHARTS



Heat Map showing incidents for November 2020

Analysis



The month in review recorded an upsurge in crime and terrorist activities compared to the last reporting month. The month commenced with an upsurge in crime following the absence of police officers off major highways and city centres. The situation soon escalated as armed individuals started orchestrating robberies in some populated parts of Lagos State and in extension other states especially in the South West, South South and South East regions. The month recorded an upsurge in armed robberies specifically in Lagos and Edo states both in the early hours of the morning and late at night. Clashes occurred almost on a daily basis making several routes inaccessible to residents and visitors. There was however a decline towards the end of the month as security forces gradually returned to the streets. Another major crime that was recorded on the aforementioned regions was kidnapping. States like Cross River recorded an upsurge in the kidnappings of high-profile individuals and medical doctors. This led the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) in the state to threaten an indefinite strike action till all medical personnel were released and a lasting solution is found for these incidents. Most of the kidnappings occurred at all hours of the day and it remains unclear why doctors remain the major targets for armed groups (possibly pirates troubling the Gulf of Guinea) operating in the area. Edo State also recorded a surge in kidnappings but most of the targets were high profile personalities mostly related to government officials. This trend spread through Bayelsa and Delta states in the reporting month with all assailants escaping via the waterways in proximity to the scene of the crime.

The North West region recorded an upsurge in kidnappings and killings orchestrated by armed groups called bandits. An estimated 72 individuals were kidnapped and 80 others killed and this figure does not fully represent the gravity of the insecurity currently plaguing the region. The attacks have been frequent in states like Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kaduna, Sokoto and Zamfara. High profile individuals are the targets and it is mostly for ransom except in unfortunate situations where the asset is killed possibly in error by the assailants. An incident that raised concern was the kidnapping of eight Assistant Superintendent of Police whilst travelling between Katsina and Zamfara State close to bandits' hideout which is Rugu Forest. Although they were eventually released after ransom was paid as reports emerged that frantic calls were made by the officers to their families to raise money, the idea that high ranked police officers could be victims of banditry without a rescue operation for their release shows the ineffectiveness of the government's fight against these armed groups. Furthermore, taxes were imposed on farmers by bandits who demanded a payment to allow them plant and harvest crops in their communities. These difficulties faced by farmers could likely result into food shortages if allowed to continue. Major parts of these states have become red zones and it is highly advised that all travel to the area should be suspended till further notice.

The activities of these bandits seem to spill to the North Central which has also been recording kidnapping incidents especially in the country's capital Abuja FCT. Generally, crime is expected to increase nationwide as the country prepares for end of the year festivities, the

increase in kidnappings of individuals is a cause of concern. Thus far an estimated 15 individuals have been kidnapped from the capital. An unfortunate incident also occurred in Lafia, Nasarawa State where the All Progressive Congress (APC) state chapter chairman was killed during a kidnap gone wrong in the latter part of the month in review. Additionally, the Kaduna-Abuja Highway recorded an upsurge in kidnappings after a seeming lull in the last reporting period. Notably, underreporting remains an issue as the number of those who are currently held hostage cannot be ascertained.

The North East specifically Borno State recorded over 26 incidents of Boko Haram activities as insurgents attacked not only military positions but set up illegal checkpoints on routes outside Maiduguri to extort motorists. Although the mainstream media did report on these incidents, there has been an upsurge in robberies by insurgents who mostly target motorists travelling into Maiduguri, carting away food items and valuables. These incidents have become so common it is now a normal occurrence along Maiduguri-Monguno road, Maiduguri-Dikwa road etc.

Kidnappings specifically for ransom or for execution has become common along highways leading inward and outward Maiduguri making the capital the only green zone in the state while other parts of the state have become insurgent territory. Additionally, reports emerged that farmers have been majorly targeted by insurgents. Such was the case on 28 November when 110 individuals were killed in Zambarmari. It is unclear why farmers are a major target also in Borno but this can be linked to the modus operandi of bandits in the Northwest region who also demand taxes before any farming can be done. This brings to question, if these bandits are affiliates of the Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP) fighters. In these regions plagued by banditry and insurgency, vigilante groups have been created to help in the fight against these armed groups. This has in turn resulted in these elements targeting not only members of the vigilante groups but also members of their families as recorded in Kano, Kaduna and Katsina states.

Road traffic accidents occurring in the North Central, South East and South West regions continue to decline in the reporting month with an estimated 22 casualties. Reasons behind the recent decline in RTAs remains unclear.

Fire outbreaks are also a common occurrence in the country with most incidents recorded in the south west region. Fourteen fire incidents were recorded in the month which is a decline compared to previous month. Most of the incidents were caused by tanker explosions from RTA and vandalism.

There were pockets of extra-judicial killings while another was averted in Abuja FCT. Three reports of shooting in which a man was killed by the security detail of the House Speaker in Abuja FCT, another was killed in Ketu, Lagos State while three women were injured by gunshots fired by police officers to disperse a crowd in Bayelsa State. These types of incidents are expected to continue till there is willingness by the Police to give adequate training to officers.

In other news, the country plunged into another recession which was announced during the month in review. This will be the second time the country will be facing not only economic crises recording a devaluation of the naira against the dollar but also looming food shortages as insecurity is majorly deterring farmers from planting and harvesting crops.

Threat Chart for November

| Threats for the Month | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|---------|
| Region | Kidnapping | Terrorism | Theft of Assets | Civil Unrest | Killing |
| North Central | High | Low | High | Medium | Medium |
| North East | High | High | High | Low | High |
| North West | High | Medium | High | Medium | High |
| South East | Medium | Low | Medium | Low | Medium |
| South West | Medium | Low | High | Medium | High |
| South South | High | Low | High | Low | Medium |

- ◆ **Low (1)** - Incident did not occur in the reporting period. Nevertheless, will to conduct attacks and opportunity to target project assets and/or personnel remains a threat.
- ◆ **Medium (2)** – Incident occurred but minimal. Nevertheless, will to conduct attacks and opportunity to target project assets and/or personnel remains a threat.
- ◆ **High (3)** – Incident occurred at increased proportion and active with demonstrated will to conduct attacks that would target project assets and/or personnel.



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