ELECTION SECURITY THREAT ASSESSMENT OF NIGERIA

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2018
Background
BACKGROUND

- Elections are at the core of the democratic process, affording citizens the opportunity of voting for the candidate of their choice to represent them.

- Failed and fraudulent elections have plunged nations into spiralling violence and conflicts.

- Therefore, preserving the credibility and integrity of elections have become key considerations in national and international efforts at deepening democracy.

- This commitment is all the more imperative in Nigeria where every election in its modern history has experienced violence.

- Nigeria’s keenly anticipated national elections are scheduled to take place in February and March 2019.
BACKGROUND

- These elections will mark the sixth vote since the return to democracy in 1999
- Will follow the country’s first peaceful transition of power to an opposition party
- Will feature huge number of political parties \{91 registered parties\}
- The security environment is tense ahead of the election
This prompted the CLEEN Foundation to embark on an assessment of electoral risk factors in the thirty-six states and the FCT ahead of the forthcoming general elections in 2019, with a view to identifying early warning signals that could assist relevant stakeholders, especially the INEC, security agencies and civil society organisations (CSOs) to deploy appropriate responses. The specific objectives of the assessment are to:

- Examine real and potential election security threats in the states
- Identify actors and actions that could constitute threats to peaceful election in the states
- Proffer recommendations to mitigate identified threats or potential risk factors
CONDUCT OF THE STUDY

- This ESTA explores the security environment in the run-up to the 2019 general election in Nigeria.
- The survey for the study was conducted in 36 states and the FCT in October 2018, by a team of enumerators.
- It had a sample size of 11,209 respondents, selected through clustered, stratified multi stage area probability sampling technique; purposive sampling of special public.
- In addition to the survey, the consultants made use of desk review of secondary sources to ground the analysis.
- The report is organised under 8 parts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>States</th>
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<th>Special Public (Experts)</th>
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Number of Respondents in the states

Kano: 751
Lagos: 728
Kaduna: 488
Katsina: 465
Oyo: 446
Rivers: 372
Bauchi: 348
Jigawa: 340
Benue: 334
Anambra: 333
Borno: 329
Delta: 316
Niger: 314
Imo: 312
Akwa Ibom: 300
Ogun: 296
Sokoto: 276
Ondo: 273
Osun: 265
Kogi: 262
Enugu: 261
Kebbi: 258
Edo: 256
Plateau: 254
Adamawa: 231
Cross River: 227
Abia: 192
Ekiti: 189
Kwara: 189
Gombe: 185
Yobe: 183
Taraba: 174
Ebonyi: 149
Nasarawa: 136
Bayelsa: 112

States
Uncertainty over peaceful elections

The findings suggest that the forthcoming elections will be peaceful in 11 states: Cross River, Ebonyi, Edo, Enugu, FCT, Jigawa, Katsina, Kebbi, Nasarawa, Niger, and Oyo states respectively.

There are various degrees of concern in 25 states with 13 states on Amber: Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Delta, Ekiti, Gombe, Imo, Kwara, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Sokoto, Yobe

While 12 states are on Red: Abia, Adamawa, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Kaduna, Kano, Kogi, Plateau, Rivers, Taraba, Zamfara

based on the findings of this report using triangulation.
Nigeria Election Security Hotspots

High Risk of Violence

Justice Sector Reform
Expectation of peaceful elections

However, most Nigerians expect peaceful elections based on the survey result below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>NIGERIA</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Geo-Political Zone</th>
<th>Age-group</th>
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<tr>
<td>General Public</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experts</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Score</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Justice Sector Reform*
Survey Results of Expectation of Peaceful Elections in the states
Vote buying tops electoral risk factors ahead of 2019 elections

The survey reveals that vote buying is the foremost of the fourteen risk factors that could generate tension or electoral violence.

The level of tension the risk factors can generate was rated on a scale of:

- 0.1 - 1.0 as Low
- 1.1 to 2.0 as Medium
- 2.1 to 3.0 as High

The national average score for the risk factors emerged in this order: vote buying (1.16):
Vote buying tops electoral risk factors ahead of 2019 elections
Disaffection with government can lead to electoral violence

Overwhelming majority of the respondents believe that citizens’ disaffection with government either on policy grounds or economic considerations could cause electoral violence in this order:
Prominent Actors that are likely to cause electoral violence

The survey result shows that the top five actors with the most likelihood of causing electoral violence are party thugs (4.06), political parties (3.99), INEC (3.79), religious extremists, cultists, and other armed groups (3.79), and security agents (3.78) in a list that contain twelve actors.

**Political thugs** constitute the most prominent actor that could cause electoral violence in Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Enugu, FCT, Gombe, Imo, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Rivers and Taraba states

**Political parties** (intra and inter party) are the most prominent actor that could cause electoral violence in Ekiti, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo Sokoto and Zamfara states

**INEC** was seen as the most prominent actor that could cause electoral violence in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states
Use of hate speech can cause electoral violence

Overwhelming majority of the respondents affirmed that hate speech is a potential trigger of electoral violence. The respondents who think that hate speech could trigger electoral violence are as follows:
Percentage perception of whether hate speech can cause electoral violence

- Osun: 94%
- Gombe: 94%
- Benue: 94%
- Ondo: 93%
- Ekiti: 92%
- Sokoto: 92%
- Adamawa: 88%
- Zamfara: 87%
- Plateau: 87%
- Ogun: 87%
- Nasarawa: 86%
- Kano: 85%
- Katsina: 85%
- Rivers: 84%
- Yobe: 84%
- Imo: 82%
- Enugu: 81%
- Kogi: 81%
- Kebbi: 81%
- Niger: 79%
- Jigawa: 79%
- Taraba: 79%
- Akwa Ibom: 79%
- Ebonyi: 78%
- Oyo: 74%
- Bayelsa: 74%
- Borno: 73%
- Edo: 71%
- Bauchi: 70%
- Abia: 70%
- FCT: 67%
- Cross River: 67%
- Kaduna: 65%
- Kwara: 63%
- Lagos: 62%
- Delta: 57%
- Anambra: 52%
Acrimonious party politics could exacerbate electoral violence

The survey shows that lack of internal party democracy evidence in rancorous party primaries pose significant threat to the 2019 general elections. Factors behind this situation included

- Contentious party conventions
- Lack of respect for party rules
- Influence of money and godfathers
- Disorderly party rallies

There is slight variation in the dynamics of these factors in relation to the states, but they all point to the dangers the nature of party politicking poses to elections.
Widespread availability of hard drug can contribute to electoral violence
Widespread availability of hard drug can contribute to electoral violence

Majority of the survey respondents held the view that widespread availability and use of hard drugs can precipitate electoral violence in the states: Gombe state had the highest percentage (98%) of those who believe that widespread availability and use of hard drugs could lead to electoral violence.
Ineffective and partisan security agents likely to cause electoral violence

- The survey indicates that low sense of safety among members of the public due partly to the inability of the security agents to tackle banditry, kidnapping, and assassination (4.12) tops the list of factors that could lead to electoral violence, followed by partiality of security agents (4.07), aggressive and excessive use of force (4.05), and poor training and low professionalism of security agents (4.05).

- Other relevant actions or inactions of security personnel that could lead to electoral violence include lack of synergy between INEC and security agencies (4.04), inadequate or excessive presence of security agents (4.03), and lack of synergy among security agents (3.97).
Media partisanship can heighten electoral violence

In relation to the media, the survey reveals that factors that are more like to precipitate electoral violence include when the media is involved in *partisanship, favouritism and partiality* (4.04), failure of regulatory bodies to ensure adherence to established rules by the media (3.99), and broadcasting and publishing of hate speeches (3.95).

Other actions of the media that could cause electoral violence include sensationalism and provocation by the media (3.76), unequal access to media (3.63), abuse of social media (3.60), and misinformation of the public by the media (3.39).
Electoral management body and electoral violence

- Going by the national average score, the survey indicates that ‘problems associated with the distribution, location and adequacy of polling units and voting points’ (4.02) is the principal factor most likely to cause electoral violence.

- Other relevant actions or inactions of INEC that could lead to electoral violence are partiality of INEC officials (4.00), movement and distribution of election materials (3.88), overall disenchantment with the electoral process can lead to electoral violence (3.87), substitution of trained electoral officials (3.86), problems associated with the distribution of PVCs (3.84), problems associated with the continuous voter registration exercise (3.84), problems of underage registration (3.80)
Political exclusion of some groups could trigger electoral violence

- Based on the national average, the survey indicates that youths (4.15), ethnic minority (3.83) and women (3.70) were the three most prominent groups that their exclusion could cause electoral violence in the states.

- It equally revealed that exclusion of groups such as the elderly, people living with disability, and religious groups also has the potential to contribute to electoral violence. Notwithstanding, there are variations on the dynamics of exclusion that are specific to these states or the geopolitical zones that they are located.
Recommendations
Strategic Force Deployment

• Implement robust and 'right-sized' deployment of security, intelligence and law enforcement operatives across the 36 states to ensure efficient security provisioning before, during and after the election.

• Leverage the findings of this study and others that have provided evidence-based insights on potential security flashpoints to evolve or fine-tune security incident response plan for the elections.
Formulation of Elections Security Protocol

➢ To ensure a more effective use of the military and security forces in election management and administration in Nigeria, there is the need for the INEC in partnership with the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA) to collaborate with other relevant stakeholders to develop a standard Protocol on Engagement of Security Agencies in Elections Duties in Nigeria.

➢ Such protocol will, among others, clearly delineate the duties of all security agencies involved in election duties, define the nature and perimeter of their deployment, and provide a framework of modalities of paying for their allowances or entitlement.
Preventing and Countering Hate Speech

- The ONSA should collaborate with relevant agencies such as the Nigerian Communication Commission and the National Broadcasting Commission in establishing framework for effective monitoring and response to the use of the media – print, broadcast and social media platforms – to proactively prevent and counter the use of hate speech before, during and after the elections.

- Particular attention should be paid to ensuring impartial regulation of social media to tackle inflammatory rhetoric, hate speech, disinformation and misinformation that could instigate electoral violence before, during and after elections.
Scaling up Interdiction Operations against Hard Drug and Banned Substances

- Widespread use of hard drug has been identified as posing serious risk of electoral violence. There is the need for security agencies to scale up operations against hard drugs and banned substances, through a multi-agency exercise to identify the hotspot of drug use as well as interdict the networks, routes and actors that sustain drug and substance abuse in each state.

- Such intelligence-led mapping exercise would inform proactive and effective interdiction operations to dismantle the networks and markets that sustain drug trafficking and abuse. While the NAFDAC intensifies efforts at tracking proliferation of illicit drugs and banned substances, other security agencies like the police and NDLEA, among others, would concentrate on seizure and arrest operations.
Capacitating critical stakeholders to ensure peaceful elections

**INEC staff** - should be exposed to adequate training on vital aspects of logistics, electronic devices handling skills, information management, incident reporting and safety precautions.

**Media practitioners** - capacity building should focus on conflict sensitive reporting and balanced coverage of electoral news.

**Security agents** - specialised training and refresher courses should be delivered in the area of intelligence gathering, escort duty, VIP protection, and effective crowd control.

**Civil society** - train and empower them with the tools for identifying and proactively acting on early warning signs at local communities to mitigate violence.
Promoting Internal Party Democracy

Political parties should be encouraged to promote internal democracy in the area of election of party officials and candidates. In this regard, the INEC needs to be more involved in monitoring internal party processes and primaries with enhanced capacity to impose appropriate sanctions on erring parties.

This will ensure that those who eventually emerge are acceptable to all concerned, thereby minimising the potential disruptive effects that acrimonious party primaries could have on peaceful conduct of elections.

There is equally the need to deepen efforts at political inclusivity in terms of fair representation of women, youth and ethnic minority groups.
Initiating Aggressive Public Sensitisation Campaign

The need to escalate public enlightenment and sensitisation programmes, leveraging platforms like town hall meetings, radio, television and social media, among others.

Civil society activists and government agencies should initiate and sustain widespread voter sensitization campaign to discourage vote buying.

The Ministry of Information and the National Orientation Agency should play a lead role in terms of government’s effort at voter education and sensitisation. Such enlightenment and awareness campaigns should be adapted to local peculiarities, while leveraging local languages to achieve extensive reach and enhance better appreciation of the message by targeted audience.
Promoting Responsible Media Coverage of Elections

The media should be continuously trained on conflict sensitive reportage to prevent the threats to peace associated with media sensationalism and misinformation. Credible sources of information should be assessable to the media to curtail misinformation given that there is a tension between accuracy and time in the bid for reporters to broadcast an event quickly while the news is current. Responsible media reporting can also assist in dousing flare-ups of violence by offering accurate information to counter rumours and hate speech. In addition, enhanced monitoring of the media by regulatory agencies will help to reduce misinformation and sensationalism that could trigger or escalate electoral violence.
Activating an Early Warning and Response Mechanism

- Key elections stakeholders should partner with donor and development agencies to establish an Elections Security Threat Early Warning and Response Mechanisms (ESTEWARM) across the states for identifying proximate factors and potential flashpoints for electoral violence. The ESTEWARM would operate a toll-free (call or SMS-based) service for timely reporting and response to incidents that could undermine peace and security before, during and shortly after elections.

- In addition to the early warning system, troubleshooting mechanisms can be organized by civil society groups at the state levels to proactively address incipient electoral risks.
Conclusion
The findings of this study suggest that activities of politicians such as hate speech, vote buying, party thuggery, money politics and godfatherism, use of hard drugs, exclusion of youth and women, corruption, and partisanship of security agents, among others, could cause electoral violence if measures are not taken to prevent or manage such risk factors. The modest recommendations proffered in this study would contribute to national efforts at preventing and mitigating possible outbreak of electoral violence
Thank You