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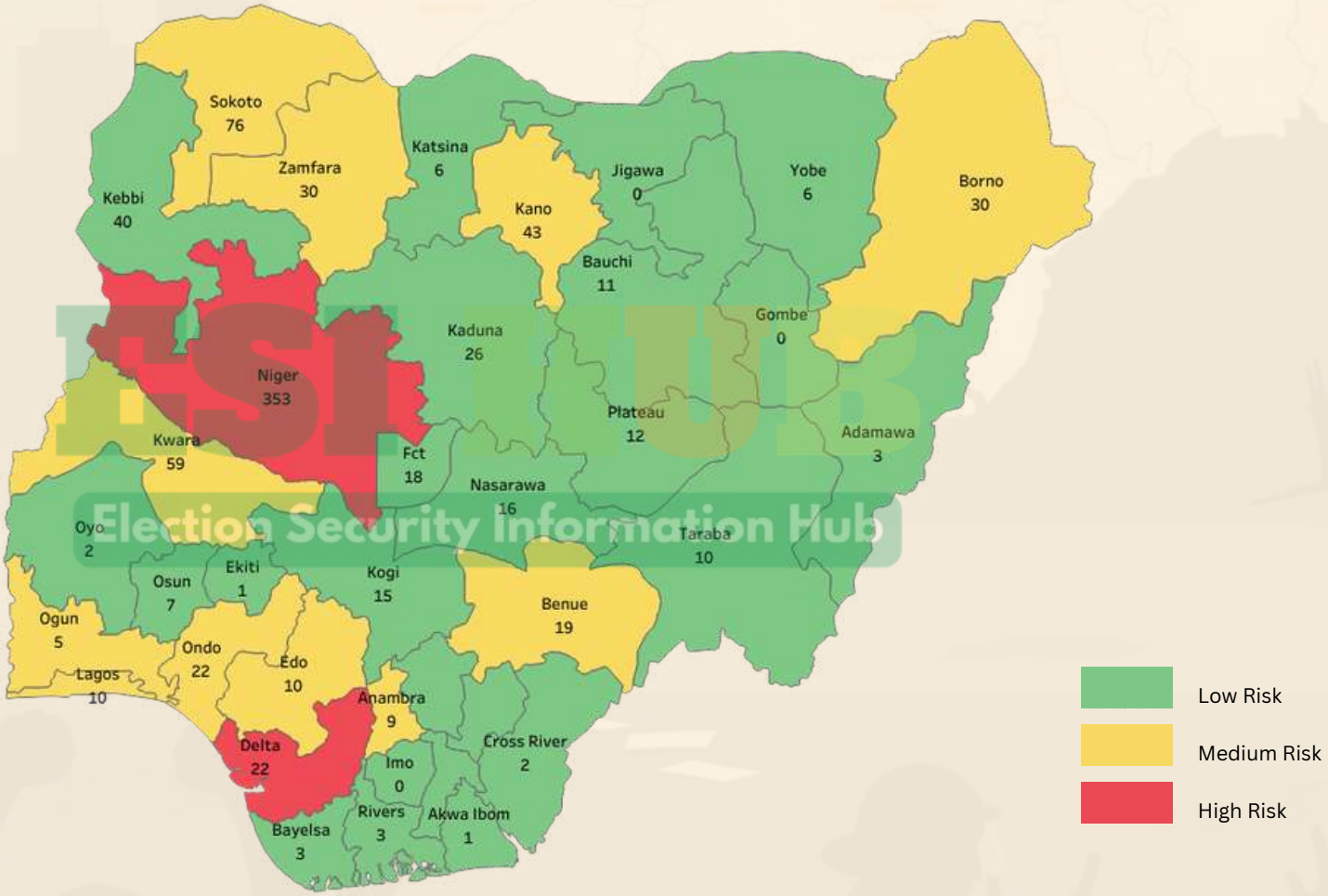
MONTHLY THREAT ANALYSIS REPORT – NOVEMBER 2025

NATIONAL RISK MAP - NOVEMBER 2025



TKC/ESI/MTA/V.03/2025

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ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

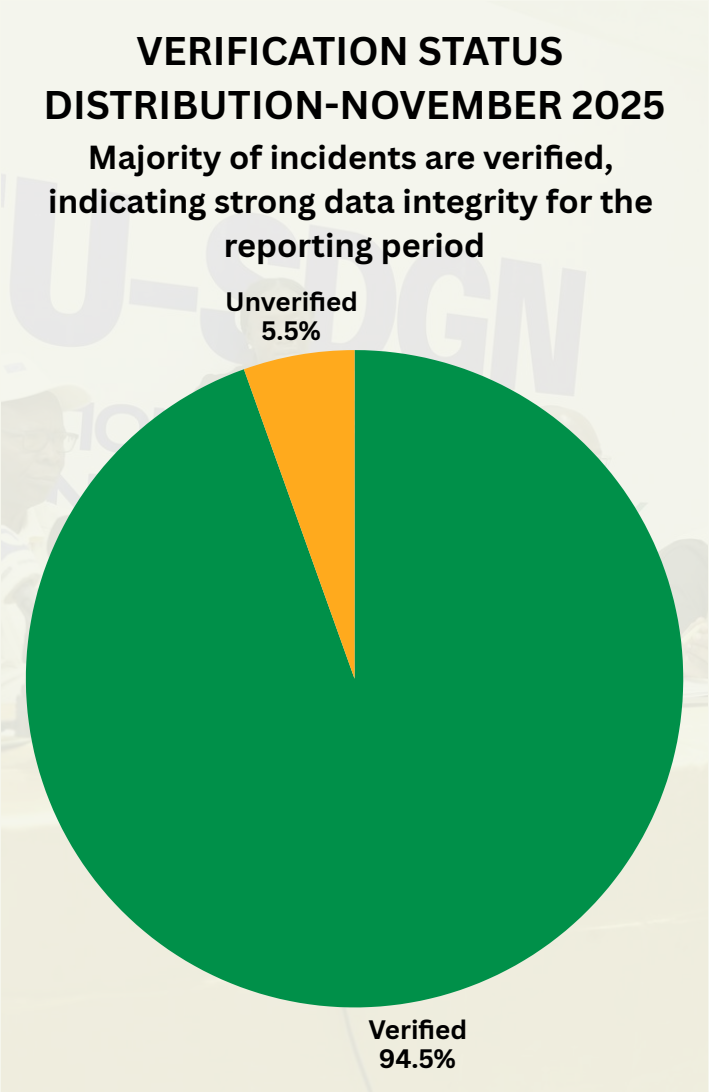
The Kukah Centre (TKC), founded by Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah, is a non-profit policy and research institution dedicated to promoting democracy, good governance, and national cohesion in Nigeria. Through evidence-based research, data-driven analysis, and inclusive dialogue, the Centre works to strengthen human-rights protection, accountability, and sustainable peace. Its interventions are designed to generate actionable insights that inform governance reforms, deepen civic participation, and reinforce institutional resilience.

As the Secretariat of the National Peace Committee (NPC), The Kukah Centre provides administrative support to the NPC — a non-governmental, non-partisan body of eminent Nigerians that has been central to Nigeria's democratic stability since its establishment in 2015. The Committee is widely recognized for facilitating the National Peace Accords, through which political parties and candidates commit to issue-based campaigns and respect for electoral outcomes. Beyond the accords, the NPC engages in preventive diplomacy, mediation, and dialogue, consistently helping to de-escalate political tensions and safeguard democratic transitions across electoral cycles.

In alignment with this peacebuilding mandate, The Kukah Centre accepted to host the Election Security Information (ESI) Hub under the European Union Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN II) programme. The ESI Hub functions as a central coordination and data-intelligence platform that tracks electoral offences, identifies insecurity flashpoints, and generates verified, real-time analysis to inform decision-making. By integrating systematic data collection, geospatial analysis, and strategic communication tools, the Hub provides actionable insights to key stakeholders, including INEC, security agencies, civil-society organizations, media, and development partners. Thereby enhancing early warning, countering disinformation, and advancing the shared goal of peaceful, credible, and inclusive elections in Nigeria.

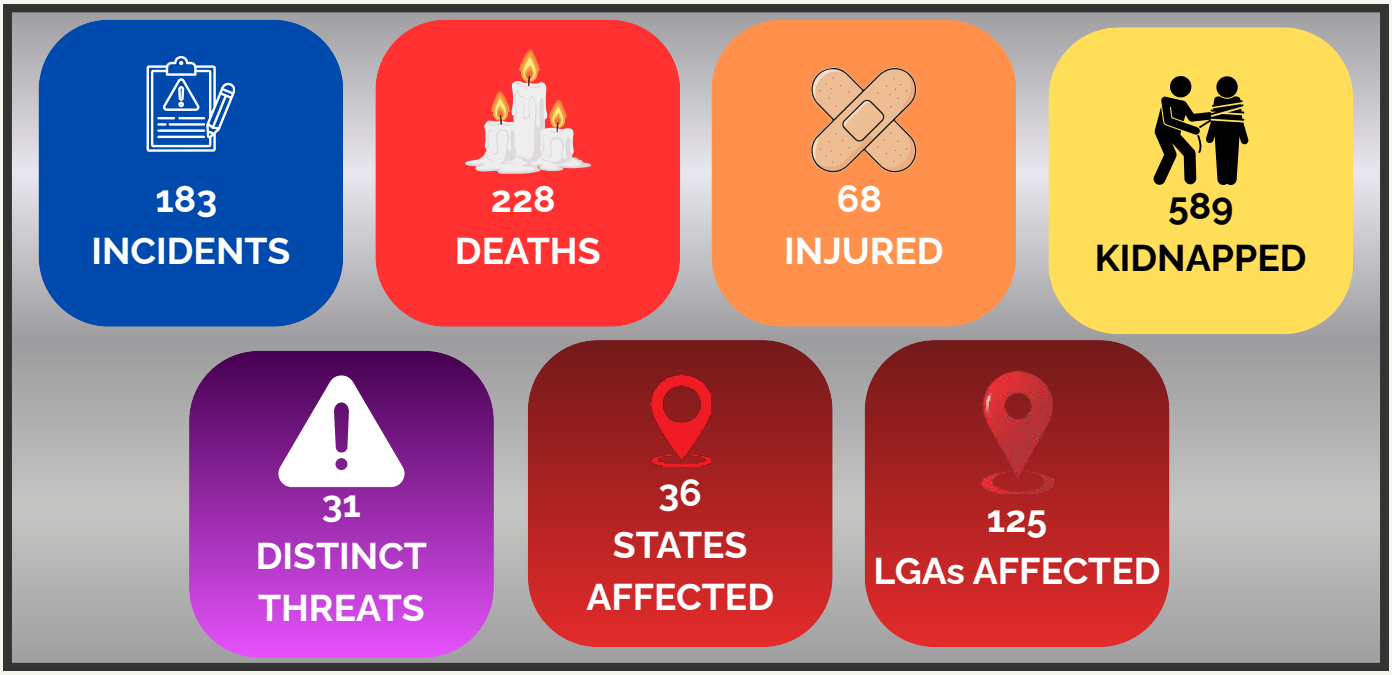
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the Election Security Information Hub's monthly security assessment for November 2025, based on incident reports recorded across Nigeria between the 1st and 30th of November. A total of 191 verified incidents, 11 unverified incidents, and 8 incidents with incomplete information were documented. These incidents occurred across 36 states and the FCT, resulting in 228 reported fatalities, 68 recorded injuries, and 589 recorded kidnappings. No internally displaced persons were recorded within the dataset for the period under review.



Across all incidents, 31 distinct threat categories were identified. The most frequently occurring categories included banditry (37 incidents), kidnapping (27 incidents), sexual assault (15 incidents), armed robbery (14 incidents), gunmen attacks (12 incidents), and cult-related violence (11 incidents). Several cases involved attacks on homes, places of worship, farms, schools, commuters, traditional actors, and security personnel, as documented in publicly available reports such as Daily Post (2025), Punch Newspaper (2025), The Guardian (2025), and others.

Geographically, incidents were distributed across all six regions. The North Central recorded 42 incidents, with 67 fatalities, 22 injuries, and 403 kidnappings, largely associated with reported mass abductions in Niger, Nasarawa, and Kwara States. North West recorded 36 incidents, 66 fatalities, 18 injuries, and 137 kidnappings, including multiple cases in Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi, and Katsina. North East recorded 22 incidents, 36 fatalities, 9 injuries, and 15 kidnappings, with several incidents reportedly involving Boko Haram and ISWAP fighters as reported by Zagazola (2025) and Grassroot Reporters (2025). The southern regions (South West, South East, and South South) accounted for a combined 83 incidents, shaped by armed robbery, cult violence, sexual assaults, targeted killings, and localised clashes.



Kidnapping dominates the human impact profile, far exceeding deaths and injuries.

The Flashpoint Severity Index (FSI) placed Niger State at the highest severity level (FSI score: 0.82), driven by incident frequency and cumulative casualties, including large-scale abductions reportedly affecting several communities. Delta, Edo, Lagos, Borno, Benue, and Kano also recorded elevated incident and casualty counts. Cluster analysis categorised most southern and several northern states as low to moderate risk, with only Niger classified as high risk for November based on the available data.

The incident narratives collected during the period consistently show that women, children, farmers, commuters, and security personnel formed a significant proportion of victims. Several reports documented sexual offences against minors (e.g., cases in Cross River, Yobe, FCT, Delta, and Anambra), attacks on religious facilities (e.g., Kwara church incident), abductions in residential estates (e.g., FCT-Lugbe incident), and attacks on schools (e.g., Kebbi girls' secondary school).

These incidents were recorded as reported by media and community sources, and where cited, appear in the dataset with appropriate references (e.g., Daily Trust, 2025; Vanguard, 2025; TVC News, 2025).

Overall, the November dataset reflects a wide geographical spread of security incidents, a high volume of abductions, and continued targeting of civilians and security personnel. The findings underline the need for strengthened subnational early-warning systems, improved community reporting structures, timely verification processes, and coordinated responses across state and non-state actors. As Nigeria approaches critical democratic milestones, the consistent documentation of incidents remains central to supporting preventive action by the National Peace Committee, security agencies, INEC, civil society, the media, and international development partners.

METHODOLOGY

The Election Security Information (ESI) Hub is an initiative of The Kukah Centre (TKC), which serves as the secretariat of the National Peace Committee (NPC). The Hub is supported by the European Union through its flagship programme, Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN). The Hub contributes to the broader objective of strengthening democratic governance, peacebuilding, and credible elections in Nigeria.

Conceived as a central coordination, research, and data-intelligence platform, the ESI Hub monitors, analyses, and communicates patterns of election-related insecurity while also tracking broader governance risks that may indirectly influence electoral processes. Its mandate is to bridge the evidence gap between field-level security incidents and strategic decision-making, providing actionable insights that inform policy, coordination, and preventive response.
Through its core components the Election Security Trends Reports, Electoral Offences Tracking System (EOTS), and ESI Studio the Hub generates verified data and analysis to support early warning and early response (EWER), strengthen institutional accountability, and promote collaborative peacebuilding. It works closely with security agencies, INEC, civil-society organisations, media partners, and development actors, ensuring that national peace and security efforts are grounded in credible, real-time evidence.

This Monthly Security Assessment, the inaugural edition under the ESI Hub framework, focuses on both election-related incidents of insecurity and broader trends of insecurity trends with potential electoral implications. It situates these within Nigeria's wider governance and democratic landscape, showing how armed violence, disinformation, and institutional weaknesses intersect to threaten peace and political stability.

The assessment aims to:

01

Strengthen understanding of security dynamics influencing democratic and electoral integrity across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones.

02

Support early-warning, coordinated response, and accountability mechanisms among security, governance, and peace institutions.

03

Provide a verified, gender-responsive data foundation for continuous monitoring, comparative analysis, and strategic planning across electoral cycles.

By combining quantitative incident tracking with qualitative field insights from the NPC's Independent State Peace Architectures (ISPAs), civil-society partners, and media observers, the report contributes to a unified national framework for election security analysis. It complements the NPC's preventive diplomacy, work peace accords, mediation, and dialogue facilitation while aligning with international best practices in data validation, transparency, and conflict prevention.

This security assessment applies a six-step hybrid methodology adapted from the Operational Framework of the Election Security Information (ESI) Hub and refined in alignment with international standards such as the UNOCHA Verification Scale, ACLED data validation protocols, and EU-SDGN II early-warning benchmarks. The approach integrates both quantitative and qualitative analysis to ensure data reliability, accuracy, and contextual depth.

In practice, this alignment is reflected in the data-collection and verification process:

Step 1

Multi-source ingestion: Incidents were collated from 42 open-source and institutional feeds (media, CSOs, and security bulletins).

Step 2

Triangulation: Each report was cross-checked against at least two independent sources before classification as verified.

Step 3

UNOCHA Verification Scale mapping: Every entry was rated from Level 0 (Unverified) to Level 5 (Verified with Field Confirmation).

Step 4

ACLED-style coding: Incidents were tagged by actor, event type, and geographic precision, ensuring international comparability.

Step 5

Quantitative weighting: Severity scores were computed using the Flashpoint Severity Index (FSI) to standardize impact across states.

Step 6

Qualitative context review: Analysts conducted narrative vetting and correlation with socio-political dynamics (e.g., election phases, displacement data).

This methodology not only ensures consistency with global verification norms but also allows the ESI Hub dataset to serve as a traceable, evidence-based reference for policy, humanitarian coordination, and electoral risk mapping.

Data Sources

Data for this report were obtained from multi-source inputs combining primary and secondary channels to check accuracy, verify and confirm data in order that findings are mutually corroborated and authentic.

The assessment applies a six-step hybrid methodology adapted from the ESI Hub Operational Framework and aligned with international standards (UNOCHA Verification Scale, ACLED protocols, EU-SDGN II early-warning benchmarks).

1

Institutional Sources:

Situation reports and advisories from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Department of State Services (DSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Situation Room.

2

Civil Society and Research Partners:

Field data and updates from the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), YIAGA Africa, CLEEN Foundation, Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI), ELECTHER, and SB Morgen Intelligence under the EU-SDGN II Consortium.

3

Media Monitoring:

Verified reports from major Nigerian outlets including Daily Trust, Premium Times, The Cable, Channels TV, Vanguard, HumAngle, and Arise News, complemented by international media when relevant.

4

Digital & social media:

Geotagged content and verified posts from platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and Telegram monitored through ESI Hub's Social Media Intelligence Tracker, which filters and cross-references content against verified field data.

5

Field Observations:

Local incident logs and eyewitness reports submitted by community monitors, observer networks, and EWER focal points within the National Peace Committee's (NPC) state peace architectures.

Data Verification and Validation

To ensure reliability, all data underwent a three-stage validation protocol consistent with the ESI Hub's verification framework:

1

Triangulation: Each incident was cross-referenced with at least two independent sources — institutional, media, or field-based — before confirmation.

2

Geospatial Verification: Incidents were geocoded and verified using open-source tools (Google Earth, ACLED mapping) to ensure spatial accuracy.

3

Confidence Scoring: Incidents were classified as Verified, Probable, or Unverified based on corroboration strength, credibility of the source, and consistency with field observations.

The validated dataset was then subjected to peer review within the ESI analytical team and internal/external review with partners.

Data Processing and Analysis

Following verification, data were cleaned, standardized, and consolidated using the ESI Hub's database schema. Duplicate entries and unverifiable reports were excluded.

Analysis combined:

1

Quantitative Techniques:

Statistical frequency counts, time-series analysis, and geospatial clustering.

2

Qualitative Techniques:

Contextual interpretation, thematic coding, and scenario mapping.

Findings were visualized through charts, infographics, and heatmaps for trend interpretation.

Time Frame and Scope

This assessment covers 1–30 November 2025, capturing all incidents of insecurity recorded within that period across 36 Nigerian states. However, incidents of insecurity were recorded within that period only in 27 states. Only incidents falling within the reporting window were analyzed.

Limitations

While every effort was made to ensure accuracy, constraints such as underreporting in rural or conflict-prone areas, information blackouts, and delayed verification may limit data completeness. These limitations are transparently acknowledged to preserve analytical integrity.

Alignment with International Best Practices

The methodology aligns with:

1. UNOCHA's Verification and Reliability Scale (Levels 1–3) for incident confidence grading.
2. ACLED's Incident Coding Standards, emphasizing temporal and geospatial consistency.
3. EU-SDGN II Early Warning/Early Response Framework, ensuring comparability with regional security analyses.
4. OECD-DAC Principles on Data Transparency, mandating multi-source corroboration and open validation.

Purpose

Beyond serving as an analytical tool, this methodology underpins accountability, transparency, and preventive action. It enables security agencies, INEC, civil society, and development partners to translate verified data into evidence-based interventions that strengthen Nigeria's democratic resilience.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Communal Clash refers to violent confrontations between ethnic, religious, or geographically defined groups, often fueled or exacerbated by electoral competition. These clashes can be triggered by political mobilization along ethnic lines, disputes over polling unit locations, or manipulation of existing grievances by political actors to intimidate voters, indigene-settler dichotomy, voter suppression in rival areas, overvoting, the deployment of partisan security personnel to support electoral malpractice. The violence often results in displacement, preventing legitimate voters from participating and can undermine the credibility of election results in affected areas.

Terrorism primarily refers to acts of violence perpetrated by non-state extremist groups (such as Boko Haram or ISWAP) aimed at disrupting electoral processes, intimidating voters and election officials, or undermining the legitimacy of the state and its democratic institutions. Terrorist attacks can involve bombings, abductions, or direct assaults on polling centers, effectively disenfranchising populations in affected regions, creating a climate of fear, and challenging the state's capacity to conduct credible elections.

Banditry refers to the organized criminal activities of armed groups (e.g., kidnapping for ransom, cattle rustling, village raids) that directly impact electoral processes by creating pervasive insecurity, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. These bandit groups can disrupt voter registration, prevent the deployment of electoral materials and personnel, force the relocation or closure of polling units, and intimidate or abduct voters, candidates, or election observers, thereby suppressing turnout and compromising the fairness of elections in affected regions for purely financial or opportunistic gains.

Extra Judicial Killings refer to unlawful killings carried out by state security forces (police, military) or state-backed non-state actors, often under the guise of maintaining order during election periods. These killings can be used to suppress opposition, intimidate voters or protesters, eliminate political rivals, or enforce curfews and restrictions in ways that disproportionately affect specific populations. Their occurrence erodes public trust in security agencies and the electoral process, and can incite further violence or lead to widespread apathy.

Farmer Herder Conflict refers to violent confrontations between sedentary farming communities and nomadic or semi-nomadic herders primarily over access to land, water, and grazing routes. These disputes often escalate when armed community militias, vigilante groups, political actors or criminal opportunists intervene, amplifying the cycle of retaliation. Electoral competition can heighten existing tensions by politicizing resource disputes, leading to targeted attacks or displacement that disenfranchise communities, alter voter demographics, or create no-go areas for electoral officials and voters. The insecurity arising from these conflicts directly undermines the ability to conduct free, fair, and inclusive elections in affected rural areas.

Gunmen Attacks is a descriptive term for violent incidents perpetrated by unidentified or unaligned armed individuals or groups, which directly threaten the integrity and safety of the electoral process. These attacks often target electoral infrastructure (e.g., INEC offices, polling units), electoral personnel, security forces, voters, or even politicians, leading to casualties, destruction of materials, and widespread fear. Such attacks are frequently opportunistic or politically motivated, designed to disrupt elections, suppress turnout, or facilitate other forms of malpractice, often without a clear ideological backing like terrorism.

Kidnapping refers to the abduction of individuals, often for ransom, which becomes a significant threat during electoral periods. This can involve the targeting of election officials, security personnel, candidates, their families, or even ordinary voters to disrupt election logistics, extort funds for political campaigns, or intimidate political opponents and communities. The pervasive fear of abduction can suppress voter turnout, hinder the deployment of election materials, and create a climate of fear that undermines the freeness and fairness of the electoral process

Thuggery refers to the organized use of intimidation, coercion, and physical violence by politically sponsored groups or individuals ("thugs" or "political touts") to manipulate electoral outcomes. These groups are often employed by politicians or parties to disrupt opponents' rallies, snatch ballot boxes, intimidate voters at polling units, perpetrate voter suppression, or facilitate ballot stuffing. Thuggery is a pervasive feature of Nigerian elections, directly undermining their credibility and contributing significantly to electoral violence and distrust.

Armed Robbery though a general crime, can become particularly prevalent and impactful during election periods. Criminal gangs may target electoral officials, security convoys, or even ordinary citizens during transportation of electoral materials or sensitive financial assets (e.g., cash for ad-hoc staff payments). Such incidents not only result in loss of life and property but also disrupt the logistics of elections, create widespread fear, and can lead to the loss of sensitive election materials.

Cultism refers to the activities of secret confraternities or fraternities, often operating in tertiary institutions and urban areas, which are frequently co-opted or sponsored by political actors during elections. Members of these cult groups (also known as "campus cults" or "street cults") are used as political thugs to intimidate voters, snatch ballot boxes, instigate violence at rallies or polling units, and assassinate rivals.

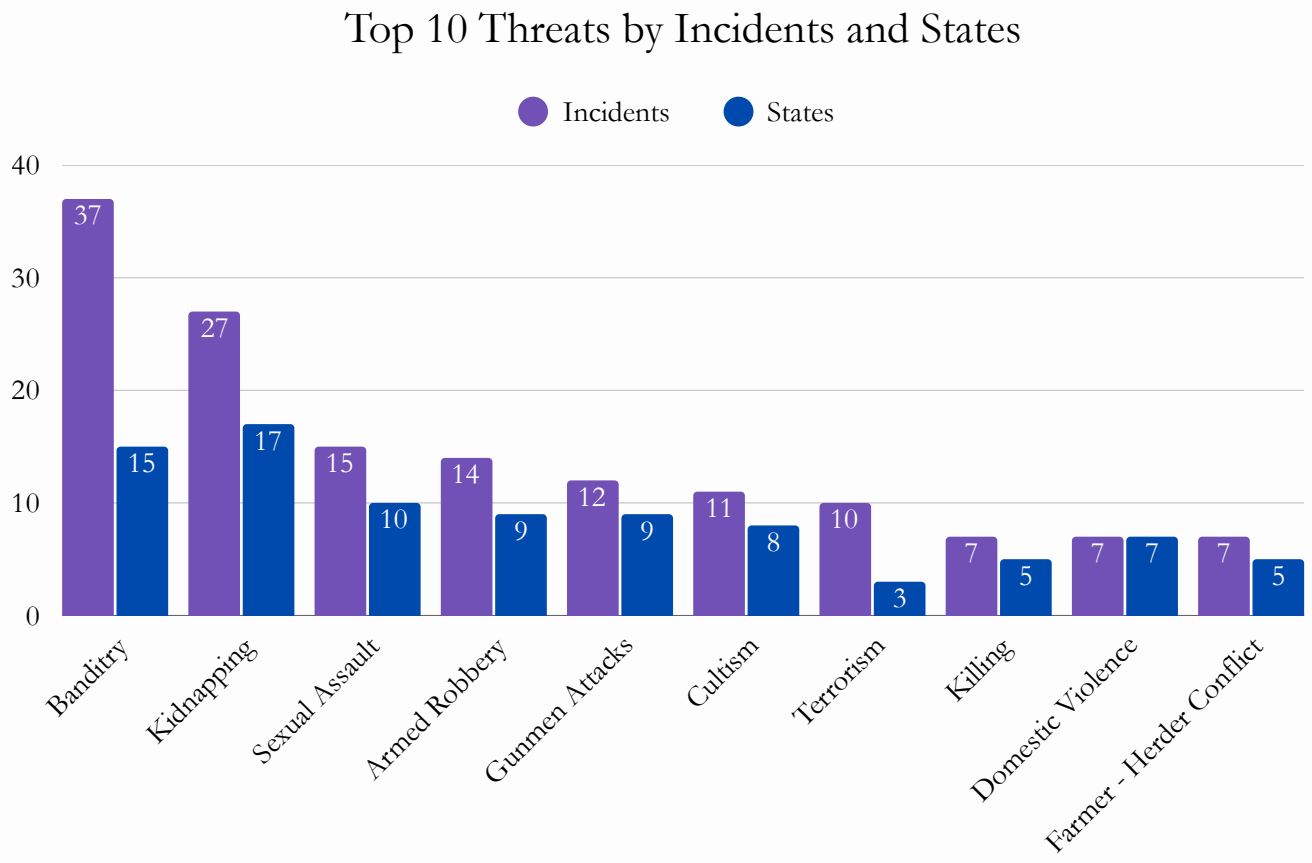
Security Threats and Trends

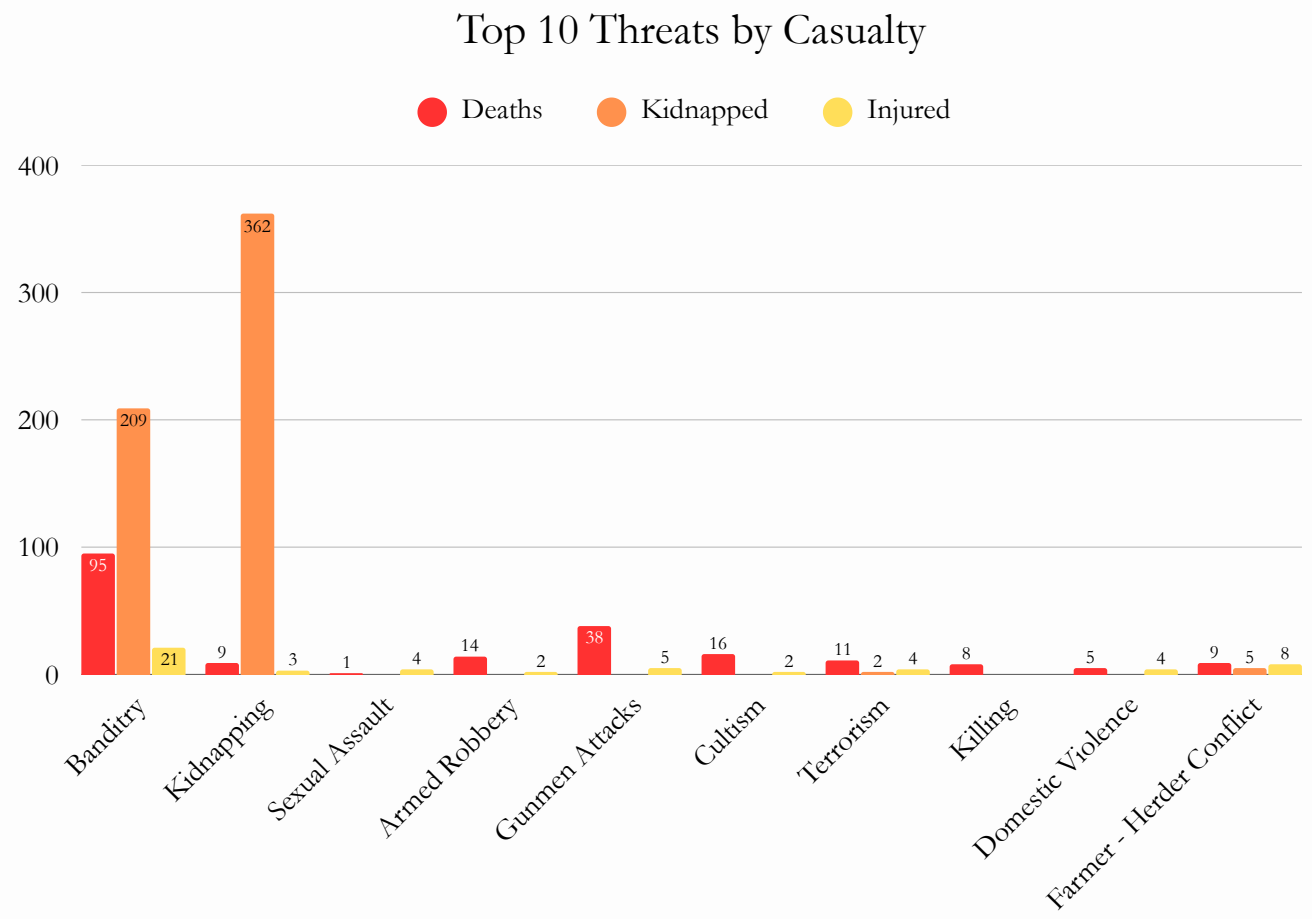
National overview

Between 1 and 30 November 2025, the Election Security Information Hub (ESI Hub) recorded 191 incidents of insecurity across 35 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Of these, 172 incidents were verified, while 19 remained under verification or had incomplete information at the time of reporting. The incidents resulted in at least 228 people killed, 68 injured, and 589 persons kidnapped.

Most incidents were concentrated in the North Central and North West zones, which together accounted for about 4 in 10 recorded incidents and many mass abductions. The South South and South West zones also recorded significant levels of urban and peri-urban violence, including cultism, mob attacks, sexual violence and armed robbery. The North East continued to experience terrorism and insurgent-linked attacks, including targeted killings and school-related abductions.

Delta, Edo, Lagos, Benue, Borno, Kano, Niger, Sokoto, Nasarawa and Kwara featured most frequently in the dataset, either by incident count or casualty burden. Niger State recorded the highest number of kidnapping victims, largely due to mass abductions linked to bandit and insurgent actors, while Kano and Borno registered some of the deadliest single incidents in terms of fatalities


Top 10 Threats by Incidents and States
Incidents
States
40
30
20
10
0
37
15
27
17
15
10
14
9
12
9
11
8
10
3
7
5
7
7
7
5
Banditry
Kidnapping
Sexual Assault
Armed Robbery
Gunmen Attacks
Cultism
Terrorism
Killing
Domestic Violence
Farmer - Herder Conflict


Top 10 Threats by Casualty
Deaths
Kidnapped
Injured
400
300
200
100
0
95
209
21
9
362
3
1
4
14
2
38
5
16
2
11
2
4
8
5
4
9
5
8
Banditry
Kidnapping
Sexual Assault
Armed Robbery
Gunmen Attacks
Cultism
Terrorism
Killing
Domestic Violence
Farmer - Herder Conflict

These November patterns unfolded within a wider environment of economic stress, high inflation and fragile livelihoods. Nigeria has recorded sustained double-digit inflation above 20 per cent in 2023 and 2024, including food price increases that continue to erode household purchasing power and deepen vulnerability to predatory armed groups[1]. At the same time, Nigeria remains one of the African countries with a large internally displaced population, with more than 1 million people displaced by conflict and violence as of 2024, most of them in the northern zones. These structural pressures help to explain why many of the November incidents involved rural communities, traders, transport workers, and school children who already live with heightened exposure to insecurity.

From an election-security perspective, the November incidents show that threats to democratic processes are not limited to campaign periods. Insecurity affected key logistics corridors, communities that host polling units, and constituencies that are likely to play a role in forthcoming off-cycle and general elections. The patterns also have direct implications for human rights, particularly for women, children, and other vulnerable groups, which aligns with European Union and broader international concerns about protection of civilians and safeguarding electoral integrity in fragile contexts[2].

Threat categories and human impact

The November dataset captures a wide spectrum of threats, ranging from banditry and terrorism to sexual and gender-based violence, mob attacks, communal clashes and domestic violence. Banditry, kidnapping, sexual violence, terrorism and armed robbery together accounted for most deaths and almost all kidnappings recorded in the month.

Banditry accounted for 37 incidents across at least 10 states, resulting in 95 deaths, 21 injuries and 209 kidnappings. Many of these incidents occurred in rural or semi-rural communities in Niger, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, Kaduna and Niger-adjacent corridors, where armed groups allegedly attacked villages, churches, farms and markets, often at night. In several cases, bandits reportedly combined killings with abductions and destruction of property, which suggests a mix of economic and coercive motives.

Kidnapping featured as both an independent threat category and as a tactic associated with banditry and terrorism. There were 19 incidents primarily coded as kidnapping, resulting in at least 1 death, 1 injury and 342 kidnapping victims. The single largest event occurred in Niger State, where armed actors allegedly abducted around 265 school children at Papiri village in Rafi LGA, drawing national attention to the vulnerability of rural schools and echoing earlier patterns of school-related abductions in northern Nigeria. Other notable kidnapping incidents included the abduction of a couple in Keana LGA, Nasarawa and the kidnapping of a Catholic priest and local political actor in Kwara. These events highlight how abductions target both symbolic figures and ordinary citizens, with potential consequences for voter confidence, participation in civic activities and trust in state protection.

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a prominent feature of the November dataset. Sexual assault, domestic violence and human trafficking together accounted for 24 incidents, resulting in at least 6 deaths, 8 injuries and 15 kidnappings. Many of these incidents involved alleged rape or defilement of minors by neighbours, guardians, religious figures or family members.

[1] Wikipedia contributors. (n.d.). Jollof Index. In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jollof_index

[2] Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project. (2024, December 6). Nigeria: 2024 Conflict Index infographic. Wikipedia contributors. (n.d.). Jollof Index. In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jollof_index

These cases underscore the intersection between household insecurity, child protection failures and wider patterns of impunity. They also align with broader research showing that women and girls in conflict-affected and fragile settings face elevated risks of violence, exploitation and abuse[3].

Terrorism incidents, largely associated with Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), accounted for 10 incidents, 10 deaths, 7 injuries and 2 kidnappings. Most of these incidents occurred in Borno, Yobe, Taraba and Kaduna, and often targeted security personnel, farmers or local leaders. In Chibok LGA, Borno[4], insurgents allegedly attacked Bamzir community, killing two brothers and burning a church. In Askira/Uba LGA[5], reports indicated that militants killed four farmers, razed a church and abducted women and children. In Damboa LGA, insurgents ambushed military convoys, resulting in the deaths of security personnel[6] and, in one case, the execution of a senior army officer who had previously been reported missing[7]. These incidents confirm that insurgent groups maintain operational capacity in key parts of the North East and some adjoining areas, with direct implications for humanitarian access, the protection of civilians and the feasibility of secure election logistics.

Armed robbery and gunmen attacks contributed to a further layer of insecurity in both urban and rural areas. Armed robbery accounted for 12 incidents, with 3 deaths and no recorded injuries, while 4 incidents were categorised as gunmen attacks, leading to 5 deaths. Many of these incidents involved targeted attacks on motorists, business owners, clergy or political figures. In Lagos, a popular hairstylist[8] and a site engineer[9] were allegedly shot dead in separate armed attacks. In Ebonyi, the brother of a state commissioner was killed in a suspected robbery[10]. These events indicate that economic-driven violence interacts with political and social tensions, particularly in urban corridors that are central to campaign activity and media coverage.

Communal and farmer–herder violence formed a smaller but significant portion of the dataset. Farmer–herder conflict accounted for 3 recorded incidents, with 4 injuries, while one incident was explicitly categorised as communal. In Nasarawa[11], suspected herders allegedly severed a woman's wrist and injured her husband in Keana LGA, prompting public calls for stronger state intervention.

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[3] Wikipedia contributors. (2025, November 29). End Bad Governance protests. In Wikipedia. Wikipedia contributors. (n.d.). Jollof Index. In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jollof_index

[4] Grassroot Reporters. (2025, November 11). Boko Haram gunmen raid Chibok village, kill two brothers and burn church in Borno. https://grassrootreporters.ng/2025/11/11/boko-haram-gunmen-raid-chibok-village-kill-two-brothers-and-burn-church/

[5] Linda Ikeja Blog. (2025, November 14). Senator Ndume fumes as Boko Haram kills 4 farmers, raze church, abduct women, children and pastor's daughters in Borno communities. https://www.lindaikejisblog.com/2025/11/senator-ndume-fumes-as-boko-haram-klls-4-farmers-raze-church-abduct-women-children-and-pastors-daughters-in-borno-communities.html

[6] Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 15). Army confirms two soldiers, two security operatives killed in Borno ambush. https://punchng.com/army-confirms-two-soldiers-two-security-operatives-killed-in-borno-ambush/?amp

[7] The Cable. (2025, November 18). ISWAP claims Borno ambush, says it killed brigadier general despite army denial. https://www.thecable.ng/iswap-claims-borno-ambush-says-it-killed-brigadier-general-despite-army-denial/

[8] Daily Post. (2025, November 13). Popular Lagos hairstylist shot dead by suspected cultists. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/13/popular-lagos-hairstylist-shot-dead-by-suspected-cultists/

[9] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 14). Two security guards arrested in Lagos for beating site engineer to death after labelling him a thief. https://punchng.com/two-security-guards-arrested-for-beating-lagos-engineer-to-death/

[10] Premium Times. (2025, November 18). Commissioner's brother shot dead in Ebonyi.https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-east/836470-commissioners-brother-shot-dead-in-ebonyi.html

[11] The Guardian. (2025, November 17). Suspected herders sever woman's wrist, injure husband in Nasarawa. https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/suspected-herders-sever-womans-wrist-injure-husband-in-nasarawa

In Taraba[12], six displaced residents were allegedly killed in a renewed attack that also triggered protests. These incidents show how unresolved land and resource disputes, combined with displacement and weak mediation mechanisms, continue to drive localised violence that can easily intersect with political and electoral grievances.

Cultism and gang violence were captured under 6 incidents, with 7 deaths and 1 injury. These cases largely involved clashes between rival groups or cult-related killings, especially in urban or peri-urban areas of Delta, Osun, Edo and Cross River. For instance, the killing of a Students' Union Government president during his father's burial rites in Cross River[13] illustrates how cult-linked violence can affect young leaders and community spaces that are central to civic life.

Civil unrest, mob attacks and stampedes also featured in the November data. There were 6 incidents categorised as mob attacks, 3 as violent protest or violent protest-type events, and 1 stampede, together leading to several deaths and injuries. In Zamfara[14] a stampede at the residence of the Defence Minister reportedly left one person dead and six injured. In Lagos, a mob allegedly burnt an immigration checkpoint after a stray bullet hit a woman[15], and street urchins allegedly stabbed an Air Force officer[16]. These incidents show how crowd control, the use of force and public mistrust can quickly escalate into fatal outcomes.

Evolving drivers and emerging dynamics

In November the incident pattern reflected how wider economic, social and governance pressures are shaping everyday insecurity rather than isolated events. Recorded incidents cut across banditry, terrorism, kidnapping, mob violence, sexual and domestic abuse, cultism, and targeted attacks on political, religious and community figures. Together they illustrate a security environment influenced by economic strain, youth precarity, local justice gaps and changing criminal organisation, with direct implications for human security and for the conduct of elections.

Economic pressure and livelihood stress

High inflation, especially for food, continues to reduce household purchasing power and deepen rural and urban vulnerability. Nigeria's headline inflation stayed above 27 per cent in late 2024, with food inflation exceeding 31 per cent, following earlier peaks above 40 per cent in 2023[17],[18]. In this context, banditry, kidnapping and attacks on farms, churches and markets recorded in states such as Niger, Kebbi, Kwara, Taraba and Borno in November function as both criminal enterprise and survival strategy. Rural communities facing repeated raids, abductions and forced levies experience cumulative livelihood loss, which can in turn incentivise further out-migration, recruitment into armed groups or participation in informal security structures.

[12] Eve Afrique Business and News. (2025, November 18). Six displaced residents killed in suspected Fulani attack, sparking protests in Taraba. https://saharareporters.com/2025/11/18/breaking-terrorists-kill-six-displaced-residents-taraba-community-christian-leader

[13] Leadership Newspaper. (2025, November 16). Cult violence: How SUG president was gunned down during his father's burial rites. https://leadership.ng/cult-violence-how-sug-president-was-gunned-down-during-his-fathers-burial-rites/

[14] Daily Post. (2025, November 14). One dead, six injured in stampede at Defence Minister's home.https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/14/one-dead-six-injured-in-stampede-at-defence-ministers-home/

[15] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 11). Mob burns Lagos immigration checkpoint after stray bullet hits woman. https://punchng.com/mob-burns-lagos-immigration-checkpoint-after-stray-bullet-hit-woman/?amp

[16] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 18). Tension as Lagos street urchins stab Air Force officer. https://punchng.com/tension-as-lagos-street-urchins-stab-air-force-officer/

[17] Telegraph Nigeria. (2024, November 15). Nigeria's inflation soars to 33.88% in October 2024 – NBS. https://telegraph.ng/news/2024/11/15/nigerias-inflation-soars-to-33-88-in-october-2024-nbs/

[18] Guardian Nigeria. (2024, December 16). Inflation hits 34.8% in December. Telegraph Nigeria. (2024, November 15). Nigeria's inflation soars to 33.88% in October 2024 – NBS. https://telegraph.ng/news/2024/11/15/nigerias-inflation-soars-to-33-88-in-october-2024-nbs/

Youth marginalisation, urban insecurity and cult networks

Incidents in Lagos, Osun, Edo, Cross River and Ebonyi involving cult clashes, mob attacks and urban armed robbery point to the role of youth gangs and informal networks in the current security landscape. High youth underemployment, concentration in informal urban economies and weak social protection increase the appeal of cult groups and street gangs as sources of income, identity and informal protection. November cases where cult-linked violence intersected with student spaces, nightlife corridors and community events show how these groups operate in both social and political spheres, including as potential enforcers during periods of heightened political competition.

Gendered and child-focused violence

Multiple November incidents involved sexual assault of girls and young women, domestic abuse by guardians, and exploitation framed as religious or parental authority, across states such as Cross River, Yobe, FCT, Delta, Anambra and Ondo. These incidents align with wider evidence that women and children face elevated risks of conflict-related and intimate violence in Nigeria's current security context. They also expose gaps in child protection systems, gender desks, case management and survivor-centred justice, particularly where cases are reported first on social media or through local advocacy before formal institutional response. For election security this has implications for the safe participation of women and girls in political meetings, religious gatherings and campaign events.

Fragmented authority, vigilante responses and justice gaps

November reports frequently noted either no recorded security response at the time of reporting or reliance on local vigilantes, community guards and informal actors. While some incidents documented effective police or military intervention, others highlighted delayed response, limited investigations or lack of public information on case outcomes. This mix of formal and informal security provision contributes to uneven protection across local government areas. It also increases the risk of extra-legal practices, including mob justice, retaliatory attacks, and abuse by non-state or quasi-state actors, which can undermine trust in institutions that are central to credible elections.

Education spaces, religious sites and political figures as targets

Several November incidents involved schools, churches, clerics, student leaders and political actors. The school raid in Kebbi, attacks on churches in Kwara, killings of local party officials and abductions of clergy in Kaduna and Kwara show that education and religious facilities, as well as symbolic figures, are part of the current threat map. These are institutions that also play important roles in voter education, peace messaging and community mobilisation. Insecurity around them therefore carries both immediate protection risks and longer-term implications for public confidence in democratic processes.

Information ecosystems and incident reporting

Several incidents were first documented through online platforms, including Instagram, Facebook and X, before being amplified by mainstream media. This pattern reflects both the value of digital platforms for rapid incident reporting and the challenges they pose for verification and responsible communication. It underscores the need for careful triangulation between social media, local field sources and official statements when classifying incidents as verified or unverified.

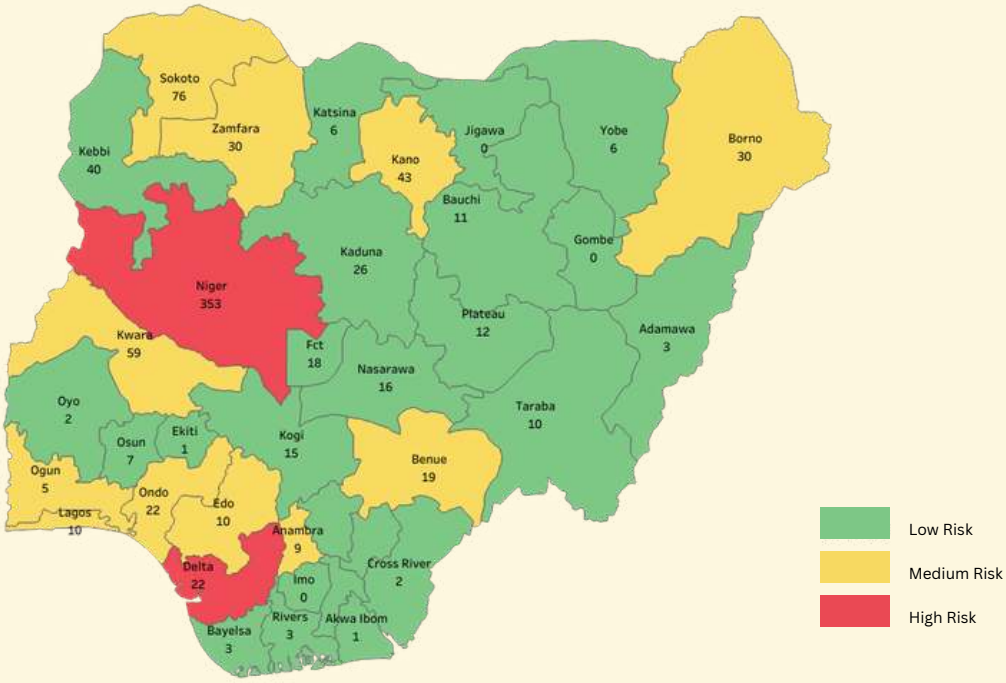
At the same time, online discourse around incidents can influence community perceptions, fears and expectations, which can either support de-escalation or contribute to polarisation depending on how information is framed and shared.

Overall, the November data suggest that insecurity is driven by a combination of structural economic and social pressures and more immediate opportunity-based criminal and political calculations. These dynamics cut across humanitarian, human rights and electoral concerns. Any response that focuses only on tactical security deployment without addressing underlying drivers, institutional trust and communication will have limited impact on the patterns observed in this reporting period.

Geographic patterns and implications for election security

INCIDENTS ACROSS NIGERIA - NOVEMBER 2025

NATIONAL RISK MAP - NOVEMBER 2025



Geographic patterns and implications for election security

The geographic spread of November incidents reinforces the picture of a multi-layered and interconnected security landscape. The North Central zone recorded the highest number of incidents in the dataset, followed closely by the North West, with both zones also contributing the majority of kidnapping victims and many of the deadliest rural attacks. The North East recorded fewer incidents than some other zones, but terrorism-related events tended to be high impact, targeting security personnel, farmers, churches and schools.

In the South, the South South and South West zones were more affected by cultism, armed robbery, sexual violence, mob attacks and isolated political killings. Delta, Rivers, Lagos and Edo showed recurrent patterns of urban and peri-urban insecurity that directly affect transport routes, markets and public events. The South East recorded fewer incidents overall, but the profile of incidents included sexual violence, armed robbery and police operations, which still contribute to a climate of fear and mistrust in law enforcement.

These spatial patterns intersect with structural vulnerabilities that are already documented in wider research, including the concentration of internally displaced persons in the North East and North West, rising cost of living across the country, and high levels of youth unemployment and underemployment[19]. In such contexts, violence can disrupt livelihoods, encourage risky survival strategies, and provide incentives for recruitment into armed or criminal groups.

For election security, three implications are notable. First, mass kidnappings and repeated rural attacks in states such as Niger, Borno, Sokoto and Zamfara can undermine voter registration, polling-unit access and observer deployment, particularly in LGAs that already host displaced populations or insurgent activity. Second, urban violence in Lagos, Kano, Benin City, Port Harcourt and other commercial hubs threatens campaign activities, party meetings and election-day movement, especially when cult groups, youth gangs or politically exposed persons are involved. Third, persistent sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, including minors, has a chilling effect on women's participation in public life, whether as voters, candidates, party agents or observers, and directly engages EU and wider international commitments on gender equality, child protection and human rights[20].

Overall, the November 2025 data depict a security environment in which violent actors exploit economic distress, weak deterrence and social fragmentation. Although the incidents in this period were not predominantly coded as election-related, their cumulative effect is to lower public confidence, narrow civic space and expose key electoral processes to disruption. Subsequent sections of the report build on this analysis to examine specific offender profiles, electoral offence patterns and early-warning implications, and to outline practical options for coordinated response by the National Peace Committee, election management bodies, security agencies, civil society, media and international partners.

[19] International Organization for Migration. (n.d.). DTM Nigeria. IOM. https://dtm.iom.int/nigeria

[20] Wikipedia contributors. (2025, November 27). End Bad Governance protests. In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/End_Bad_Governance_protests?

Analytical Cluster (8)	Threat Categories Assigned (31 Total)
1. Organised Armed Violence	Banditry; Gunmen Attacks; Terrorism; Killing; Political Killing; Militancy; Arson*; Violence; Violent Clash; Assassination
2. Targeted Abductions & Forced Detention	Kidnapping; Human Trafficking; Voter Intimidation; Stampede*
3. Political and Electoral-Linked Disorder	Thuggery; Group Conflict* (political); Violent Protest; Political Killing*
4. Urban Criminality & Social Disorder	Armed Robbery; Illegal Possession of Firearms; Cultism; Inter-Gang-Violence; Mob Attack* (non-political/vigilante not included here); Drug Trafficking
5. Communal and Resource-Based Violence	Communal Clash; Farmer–Herder Conflict; Group Conflict* (non-political); Violent Clash* (contextual when rooted in community rivalry)
6. Gender-Based and Household-Level Violence	Sexual Assault; Domestic Violence; Ritual Killing
7. State and Non-State Enforcement Excesses	Extra-Judicial Killings; Police Brutality; Mob Attack* (vigilante justice cases)
8. Undefined / Outlier Category	NAN (excluded from analysis; placeholder for missing/uncoded incidents)

Organised Armed Violence

ANALYTICAL CLUSTER - ORGANIZED CRIME

Threat Category	Incidents	Deaths	Injured	Kidnapped	States
Banditry	37	95	21	209	15
Gunmen Attacks	12	38	5	0	9
Terrorism	10	11	4	2	3
Killing	7	8	0	0	5
Political Killing	1	1	0	0	1
Militancy	1	4	0	0	1
Arson	1	2	0	0	1
Violence	3	2	1	1	3
Violent Clash	1	0	0	0	1
Assasination	2	2	0	0	2

Organised armed violence in November cut across banditry, terrorism, armed robbery, inter-gang clashes and politically linked killings. These incidents were concentrated in the North West, North Central and North East, with significant spill-over into the South South and South West. Bandit attacks in Nasarawa, Kaduna, Niger, Zamfara and Kebbi illustrated the persistence of armed groups with the capacity to strike communities, schools and places of worship. For example, separate incidents in Doma LGA[21], Nasarawa[22], involved the killing of a prince and other residents, while in Kaduna armed men killed four people and abducted an ECWA pastor and 11 others in Lere LGA[23]. In Kebbi, bandits raided a girls' secondary school, killed a vice principal and abducted several students[24].

Insurgent violence in the North East continued to shape this cluster. Boko Haram and ISWAP-linked attacks in Chibok[25] and Askira/Uba LGAs in Borno[26], including the killing of brothers and the burning of churches, sit within longer patterns of insurgency and adaptive terror tactics documented by previous research.

[21] The Guardian. (2025, November 11). Gunmen kill Nasarawa prince, two others, cart away motorcycle.https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/gunmen-kill-nasarawa-prince-two-others-cart-away-motorcycle/

[22] Daily Post. (2025, November 11). Three killed in fresh bandit attack in Nasarawa. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/11/three-killed-in-fresh-bandit-attack-in-nasarawa/#:~:text=Three%20people%20have%20been%20killed,in%20Doma%2C%20on%20Monday%20morning

[23] Daily Post. (2025, November 12). Bandits kill four, abduct ECWA pastor, 11 others in Kaduna. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/12/bandits-kill-four-abduct-ecwa-pastor-11-others-in-kaduna/

[24] Vanguard. (2025, November 17). Bandits raid girls secondary school in Kebbi, kill vice principal, kidnap several students. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/17/bandits-raid-girls-secondary-school-in-kebbi-kill-vice-principal-kidnap-several-students/

[25] Grassroot Reporters. (2025, November 11). Boko Haram gunmen raid Chibok village, kill two brothers and burn church in Borno. Vanguard. (2025, November 17). Bandits raid girls secondary school in Kebbi, kill vice principal, kidnap several students. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/17/bandits-raid-girls-secondary-school-in-kebbi-kill-vice-principal-kidnap-several-students/

[26] Linda Ikeja Blog. (2025, November 14). Senator Ndume fumes as Boko Haram kills 4 farmers, raze church, abduct women, children and pastor's daughters in Borno communities. Grassroot Reporters. (2025, November 11). Boko Haram gunmen raid Chibok village, kill two brothers and burn church in Borno. Vanguard. (2025, November 17). Bandits raid girls secondary school in Kebbi, kill vice principal, kidnap several students. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/17/bandits-raid-girls-secondary-school-in-kebbi-kill-vice-principal-kidnap-several-students/

These studies highlight how militant groups combine targeted killings, abductions and attacks on education and religious infrastructure to sustain control and extract resources[27],[28]. Armed robbery and inter-gang clashes in Lagos, Ebonyi[29] and Edo, including forest rivalry between bandit factions in Katsina[30], and the killing of an engineer in Lagos[31], further show that organised armed violence now spans both rural corridors and dense urban spaces.

For elections, this pattern presents several layered risks. First, repeated attacks on rural communities, highways and churches in Nasarawa, Niger[32],[33], Kwara[34], Kaduna[35] and Kebbi[36] can depress voter registration and turnout in affected LGAs and may lead to de-facto disenfranchisement where communities are displaced or routes are considered unsafe. Second, attacks on schools and religious spaces undermine trusted community institutions that often serve as polling centres or voter education hubs. Third, the overlap between insurgent tactics and criminal banditry, as discussed in existing work on the political economy of violence in the North West, suggests that election materials, polling officials and observers moving along these same routes may become opportunistic targets. The overall risk is a patchwork of insecurity where election operations are technically possible in some LGAs but are perceived as unsafe by citizens and political actors.

Targeted Abductions and Forced Detention

Threat Category	Incidents	Deaths	Injured	Kidnapped	States
Kidnapping	27	9	3	362	17
Human Trafficking	2	0	0	15	2
Voter Intimidation	1	1	0	0	1
Stampede	1	1	6	0	1

[27] Mercy Corps. (2017). Farmer–herder violence in Nigeria: Patterns and drivers (Research report). Mercy Corps.

[28] Amnesty International. (2018). "They betrayed us": Women who survived Boko Haram raped, starved and detained in Nigeria. Amnesty International.

[29] Premium Times. (2025, November 18). Commissioner's brother shot dead in Ebonyi. https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-east/836470-commissioners-brother-shot-dead-in-ebonyi.html

[30] Zagazola. (2025, November 12). Two bandits killed in deadly forest rivalry clash in Katsina.Premium Times. (2025, November 18). Commissioner's brother shot dead in Ebonyi. https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-east/836470-commissioners-brother-shot-dead-in-ebonyi.html

[31] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 14). Two security guards arrested for beating Lagos engineer to death. https://punchng.com/two-security-guards-arrested-for-beating-lagos-engineer-to-death/

[32] Daily Post. (2025, November 15). Bandits abduct 22 people in Niger community. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/15/bandits-kill-16-vigilante-members-abduct-42-residents-in-niger/

[33] Daily Post. (2025, November 15). Bandits abduct 20, ambush vigilantes in Mashegu LGA in Niger, kill 13. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/15/bandits-kill-16-vigilante-members-abduct-42-residents-in-niger/

[34] Linda Ikeja Blog. (2025, November 18). Police confirm two killed, one injured in Kwara church attack. https://www.punchng.com/police-confirm-two-killed-one-injured-in-kwara-church-attack/

[35] Daily Post. (2025, November 12). Bandits kill four, abduct ECWA pastor, 11 others in Kaduna. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/12/bandits-kill-four-abduct-ecwa-pastor-11-others-in-kaduna/

[36] Vanguard. (2025, November 17). Bandits raid girls secondary school in Kebbi, kill vice principal, kidnap several students. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/17/bandits-raid-girls-secondary-school-in-kebbi-kill-vice-principal-kidnap-several-students/

Kidnapping and human trafficking incidents in November displayed a clear pattern of targeted abductions against families, commuters, clergy and local officials. Cases in Ekiti, Kwara, Nasarawa and the FCT show how abductions can occur both along rural roads and within residential estates. Examples include the abduction of brothers in Akoko-Edo, Edo State, who later escaped after kidnappers allegedly fell asleep[37], the abduction of a young man inside a housing estate in Abuja Municipal Area Council with his fiancée injured during the attack[38] and the kidnapping of a farm manager in Ikole LGA, Ekiti, even after ransom payment[39]. In Kwara, a former local party chair and a Catholic priest were kidnapped in a rural community[40] while in Nasarawa a couple was abducted in Keana LGA[41].

Human trafficking cases, including the arraignment of a self-acclaimed missionary for serial rape, fraud and sexual exploitation in Ondo State[42], reveal that abductions are not only for ransom but may be linked to long-term exploitation, including sexual abuse and forced labour. Research on kidnap-for-ransom economies in Nigeria has shown how armed groups and criminal networks use abductions to fund operations, test state capacity and negotiate informal authority with communities[43]. The November data are consistent with this logic, showing a mix of high-profile and low-visibility cases that create chronic fear, particularly among women, children and professionals who rely on inter-state travel.

Electoral implications arise at three levels. First, targeted abductions of community leaders, clergy and local party figures can silence voices that would otherwise mobilise voters or facilitate dialogue, as seen in the kidnapping of religious leaders in Kwara[44] and Kaduna[45]. Second, repeated kidnappings along corridors such as Ekiti–Ondo and Abuja–Nasarawa may deter campaign travel, party primaries and civic education activities, thereby skewing political competition in favour of actors who can afford private security. Third, where kidnapping networks overlap with former political thugs or cult groups, there is a risk that their coercive capacity will be repurposed for voter intimidation or post-election bargaining, a pattern noted in past election security assessments[46],[47].

[37] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 10). Abducted brothers escape as kidnappers sleep off in Edo. https://punchng.com/abducted-brothers-escape-as-kidnappers-sleep-off-in-edo/

[38] Zagazola. (2025, November 11). Kidnappers abduct young man in Abuja estate, shoot fiancée.https://zagazola.org/index.php/breaking-news/kidnappers-abduct-young-man-in-abuja-estate-shoot-fiancee

[39] Ekiti News. (2025, November 12). Kidnappers hold Ekiti farm manager despite collecting 15 million ransom, issue death threat as family begs for government's intervention. https://ekitinews247.com.ng/2025/11/12/kidnappers-hold-ekiti-farm-manager-despite-collecting-n15million-ransom-issue-death-threat-as-family-begs-for-governments-intervention/

[40] Daily Post. (2025, November 15). Gunmen kidnap PDP ex-chairman, Catholic priest in Kwara. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/15/gunmen-kidnap-pdp-ex-chairman-catholic-priest-in-kwara/

[41] Linda Ikeja Blog. (2025, November 16). Gunmen abduct couple in Nasarawa. https://www.lindaikejisblog.com/2025/11/gunmen-abduct-couple-in-nasarawa.ht

[42] Tori Newspaper. (2025, November 18). Police arraign self-acclaimed missionary for alleged serial rape, fraud and sexual exploitation in Ondo. https://www.tori.ng/amp/315804/police-arraign-selfacclaimed-missionary-for-allege.html

[43] Amnesty International. (2018). "They betrayed us": Women who survived Boko Haram raped, starved and detained in Nigeria. Amnesty International.

[44] Daily Post. (2025, November 15). Gunmen kidnap PDP ex-Chairman, Catholic priest in Kwara. Daily Post. (2025, November 15). Bandits abduct 20, ambush vigilantes in Mashegu LGA in Niger, kill 13. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/15/bandits-kill-16-vigilante-members-abduct-42-residents-in-niger/

[45] TVC News. (2025, November 18). Kaduna Catholic priest abducted, one killed in terrorist attack. https://www.tvcnews.tv/kaduna-catholic-priest-abducted-one-killed-in-terrorist-attack/

[46] Okoro, J., & Nwankwo, C. (2015). Cultism and youth violence in Nigerian tertiary institutions: Implications for national security. Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning, 15(2), 45–58

[47] European Union Election Observation Mission. (2019). Nigeria: General elections 2019, final report. European Union.

Political and Electoral-Linked Disorder

Threat Category	Incidents	Deaths	Injured	Kidnapped	States
THUGGERY	2	0	2	0	2
Group Conflict (Political)	1	0	0	0	1
Violent Protest	1	0	0	0	1
Political Killing					

Although November was not an election month, several incidents reflected the continued use of violence within political and quasi-political spaces. The killing of the acting APC chairman in Delta State in a targeted shooting in Ethiope East LGA[48] illustrates the vulnerability of party officials in contexts where intra-party rivalry, local power struggles and broader insecurity intersect. Likewise, cult-linked killings and clashes in Cross River, Edo and Osun (for example the killing of a Students' Union Government president during burial rites in Yakurr LGA, Cross River[49] and cult clashes in Osun[50] and Edo[51], show how youth gangs and confraternities can become de facto political actors, controlling territory and enforcing informal rules around events and local leadership.
Existing studies on cultism and youth gangs in Nigeria's urban centres highlight the overlap between campus-origin groups, street gangs and political mobilisation, with some groups contracted for election-period enforcement or intimidation[52]. The November incidents are consistent with this wider pattern, as cult violence and political killings occurred in areas that are also notable for active party competition and resource struggles. Even where no direct electoral event is ongoing, such killings broadcast a message of vulnerability to party insiders and community leaders.

From an election perspective, political killings and cult-linked violence raise the risk of candidate withdrawal, self-censorship and negotiated candidacies that are shaped more by fear than by voter choice. In addition, communities that witness such incidents may experience lower trust in the neutrality of security agencies, especially if investigations are slow or inconclusive. The use of cult networks around party structures can also complicate the enforcement of electoral rules on campaign conduct, as documented in previous EU and civil society observation missions[53]. Over time, this dynamic can normalise the expectation that politics is inherently violent, which may discourage women, youth and persons with disabilities from seeking office or openly supporting candidates.

[48] Daily Post. (2025, November 16). Delta APC acting chairman Felix Idisi shot dead. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/16/delta-apc-acting-chairman-felix-idisi-shot-dead/
[49] The Leadership Newspaper. (2025, November 16). How SUG president was gunned down during his father's burial rites. Daily Post. (2025, November 16). Delta APC acting chairman Felix Idisi shot dead. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/16/delta-apc-acting-chairman-felix-idisi-shot-dead/
[50] The Point Newspaper. (2025, November 17). Suspected cultists' clash claims four lives as police recover two corpses. https://www.thepointng.com/suspected-cultists-clash-claims-four-lives-as-police-recover-two-corpses/
[51] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 18). Edo cult clash leaves one injured, 31 arrested. The Point Newspaper. (2025, November 17). Suspected cultists' clash claims four lives as police recover two corpses. https://www.thepointng.com/suspected-cultists-clash-claims-four-lives-as-police-recover-two-corpses/
[52] Ameh, E. U., & Aliyu, T. (2023). Political economy of banditry in Nigeria: A threat to national security. Aquino Journal of Philosophy, 3(1). https://doi.org/[if available]
[53] European Union Election Observation Mission. (2019). Nigeria: General elections 2019, final report. European Union.

Urban Criminality and Social Disorder

Threat Category	Incidents	Deaths	Injured	Kidnapped	States
Armed Robbery	14	14	2	0	9
Illegal Possesion of Firearms	2	0	0	0	2
Cultism	11	16	2	0	8
Inter Gang Violence	1	2	0	0	1
Mob Attack (non-political/vigilante not included here)	6	2	5	0	5
Drug Trafficking	3	0	0	0	1

Urban criminality and social disorder in November included mob attacks, arson, stampede-related deaths and violent confrontations in public spaces. In Lagos, a mob set an immigration checkpoint on fire in Badagry after a stray bullet injured a woman, with at least one person injured and no immediate recorded security response at the time of reporting[54]. In Kano, the killing of two women during an incident categorised as arson in Gwale LGA[55], and the stabbing of an Air Force officer by street urchins in Lagos [56], illustrate how quickly routine security operations or local disputes can escalate into fatal confrontations.

The stampede at the Defence Minister's residence in Maradun, Zamfara, which left one dead and six injured[57], reflects the risks associated with crowd management at political or elite-linked events.

These patterns align with broader research on urban insecurity in Nigeria, which notes that weak regulation of firearms, high youth unemployment and limited police presence in informal settlements contribute to cycles of street-level violence and mob justice. In several November incidents, formal law enforcement arrived after property had been destroyed or casualties recorded, and some reports note that there was no response at the time the story was filed. Such delays reinforce community preferences for self-help, including vigilantism and spontaneous mob action.

In an electoral context, uncontrolled crowds, mob reactions to perceived injustice and attacks on checkpoints or security posts pose direct operational risks. Campaign rallies, voter registration centres and polling units often rely on the same security formations that are involved in these everyday interactions. Where there is existing tension between communities and security personnel, as seen in Lagos and Kano, voters may be reluctant to gather at crowded venues or may interpret routine crowd control as partisan behaviour. Moreover, if street gangs and informal "area boys" are already active in controlling traffic, markets and checkpoints, they may be recruited or tolerated by local political actors during campaign periods, blurring the line between criminal and electoral activity.

[54] Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 11). Mob burns Lagos immigration checkpoint after stray bullet hit woman. European Union Election Observation Mission. (2019). Nigeria: General elections 2019, final report. European Union.

[55] Daily Post. (2025, November 16). Police begin investigation into killing of two women in Kano. Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 11). Mob burns Lagos immigration checkpoint after stray bullet hit woman. European Union Election Observation Mission. (2019). Nigeria: General elections 2019, final report. European Union.

[56] Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 18). Tension as Lagos street urchins stab Air Force officer. https://punchng.com/tension-as-lagos-street-urchins-stab-air-force-officer/

[57] The Eagle Online. (2025, November 14). One dead, six injured in stampede at Minister's residence. https://theeagleonline.com.ng/one-dead-six-injured-in-stampede-at-ministers-residence/

Communal and Resource-Based Violence

Threat Category	Incidents	Deaths	Injured	Kidnapped	States
Communal Clash	2	1	0	0	2
Farmer Herder Conflict	7	9	8	0	5
Group Conflict	1	0	0	0	1
Violent Clash (contextual when					

Communal and resource-based violence was less frequent in the November subset than banditry or kidnapping, but incidents that did occur illustrate persistent tensions around land, livelihood and identity. In Nasarawa, a suspected farmer–herder conflict in Lafia LGA involved the severe injury of a woman whose wrist was reportedly severed and the injury of her husband[58]. The incident was linked to ongoing insecurity and grazing disputes and took place in a context where state authorities later promised new security measures but also acknowledged reporting gaps.

Research on farmer–herder conflict in Nigeria identifies climate stress, demographic pressure, weak land governance and the presence of arms as key drivers of these incidents[59]. Even where casualty numbers per event are relatively low, the cumulative effect includes displacement, mistrust between communities and the erosion of local dispute resolution mechanisms. In several Middle Belt and North Central states, farmer–herder disputes frequently overlap with wider banditry and gunmen activity, making it harder to distinguish communal reprisal from opportunistic attacks by external armed groups. The November Nasarawa incident fits within this broader pattern of blurred boundaries between local disputes and broader insecurity.

For elections, communal and resource-based violence can shape both the geography and psychology of participation. Displacement from rural communities complicates the location of polling units, the integrity of the voter registers and the fairness of constituency boundaries. Tensions between farming and herding communities may also heighten the risk of election-period clashes if candidates are perceived to be aligned with one side. Where state responses are seen as partial or slow, communities may interpret security deployment around elections as favouring one group, which can inflame grievances and undermine acceptance of results.

[58] The Guardian. (2025, November 17). Suspected herders sever woman's wrist, injure husband in Nasarawa. The Guardian. https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/suspected-herders-sever-womans-wrist-injure-husband-in-nasarawa/

[59] Mercy Corps. (2017). Farmer–herder violence in Nigeria: Patterns and drivers (Research report). Mercy Corps.

Gender-Based and Household-Level Violence

Threat Category	Incidents	Deaths	Injured	Kidnapped	States
Sexual Assault	15	1	4	0	10
Domestic Violence	7	5	4	0	7
Ritual Killing	2	3	0	0	2

Gender-based violence (GBV) and household-level abuse are prominent features of the November data. The dataset records repeated cases of sexual assault against girls and young women in Cross River, Yobe, the FCT, Yobe again, Yobe's Bade LGA and Delta, among others. Examples include the alleged rape of a six-year-old girl by a man who falsely presented as blind in Cross River[60], the defilement of a nine-year-old girl in Damaturu, Yobe[61] the assault of a nine-year-old in Gwagwalada[62], FCT, the alleged rape of a four-year-old by a 22-year-old in Jakusko, Yobe[63] and the rape and killing of a 16-year-old girl in Bade LGA, Yobe[64]. Domestic violence cases also appear, such as the rescue of a teenage girl from an abusive guardian in Rivers State[65].

These incidents echo broader findings on GBV in Nigeria, which show that women and girls often face layered risks in conflict-affected and economically stressed contexts, including intimate partner violence, child sexual abuse and exploitation by authority figures. In several November cases, police statements indicate that suspects have been arrested and investigations handed to specialised gender units or SCID, but survivors still bear the burden of trauma, social stigma and disrupted education.

The case of a father in Delta who confessed to abusing his three daughters over years[66] underscores how long-term abuse can remain hidden until outreach or school-based reporting mechanisms intervene.

While these incidents are not directly election-related, they have clear implications for democratic participation and human rights commitments, including those under EU and AU frameworks. High levels of GBV within communities can limit the ability of women and girls to attend civic meetings, register to vote or stand as candidates. Fear of harassment or abuse in crowded spaces, including queues and polling units, may also reduce turnout among women, particularly adolescents and young adults. In addition, where survivors view state institutions as slow or ineffective in addressing GBV, trust in these same institutions during elections may be weakened. Addressing GBV therefore supports both human security and credible elections.

[60] Instagram. (November 10). An elderly man who pretended to be a blind man rape six years old girl. https://www.instagram.com/p/DQp6V4xjMzg/?igsh=MTlmNXFsdjRsY3I5eA%3D%3D

[61] The Guardian. (2025, November 11). Nayi Nawa Man arrested for defiling nine-year-old girl in Yobe. https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/man-arrested-for-defiling-nine-year-old-girl-in-yobe/

[62] Daily Trust. (2025, November 14) 9-year-old girl defiled in Abuja community. https://dailytrust.com/9-year-old-girl-defiled-in-abuja-community/

[63] [1] Linda Ikeji Blog. (2025, November 14). 4-year-old girl allegedly r@ped by a 22-year-old man in Jakusko Local Government Area of the State. https://www.instagram.com/p/DRAai3VDNnR/?igsh=MXY0OXp1Z3ZsYm00Mw%3D%3D

[64] Linda Ikeji Blog. (2025, November 16). "16-year-old girl brutally raped and murdered in. https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/police-rescue-teenage-girl-from-abusive-guardian-in-rivers/

[65] The Guardian. (2025, November 14). Police rescue teenage girl from abusive guardian in River. https://www.lindaikejisblog.com/2025/11/16-year-old-girl-brutally-r-at-ped-and-m8rdered-in-yobe.html

[66] Daily Post. (2025, November 11). It's devil's work, I have been defiling my three daughters – 54-year-old man confesses in Delta. Daily Post. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/16/its-devils-work-i-have-been-defiling-my-three-daughters-54-year-old-man-confesses-in-delta/

State and Non-State Enforcement Excesses

Threat Category	Incidents	Deaths	Injured	Kidnapped	States
Extra-Judicial Killings	1	1	0	0	1
Police Brutality	1	0	1	0	1
Mob Attack (vigilante justice	6	2	5	0	5

The November incidents also point to tensions around the use of force by both state and non-state actors. While explicit extra-judicial killing or police brutality categories are limited in the subset presented, several incidents involve contested or absent security responses that shape perceptions of legitimacy. In Lagos, for example, the burning of an immigration checkpoint after a stray bullet injured a woman[67] suggests a breakdown of trust between security agencies and residents. Cases where there was "no response at the time of filing this report", such as in some bandit attacks in Nasarawa[68] and Kaduna[69] reinforce narratives that state protection is uneven or delayed.

Research by human rights bodies and Nigerian civil society has documented how both over-use and under-use of force can undermine confidence in law enforcement, encourage vigilantism and complicate election security[70]. Incidents of mob justice, like the attack on street urchins who stabbed an Air Force officer in Lagos[71], or communities taking independent action against suspected criminals, sit alongside episodes where security responses are viewed as inadequate. Together, these patterns indicate a fragile security contract between state and citizens.

For elections, perceptions of security force behaviour are as important as actual deployment. If communities associate the police or military with delayed responses to banditry or kidnapping, they may mistrust election-day deployments, assuming they serve partisan or non-protective purposes. Conversely, where past operations have involved excessive force, citizens may fear that election operations could trigger heavy-handed crackdowns. Strengthening accountability and communication around security responses in ordinary times is therefore central to building confidence for electoral periods.

Civic Safety Incidents and Outliers

Finally, a small set of incidents fall outside conventional security threat categories but still affect civic safety and public confidence. The stampede at the Defence Minister's residence in Zamfara[72] is an example where crowd management and event design failures led to deaths and injuries even though no armed group was directly involved. Such incidents remind stakeholders that election-period risks include not only organised violence but also logistical and crowd-related hazards at rallies, voter registration centres and polling units.

[67] Prompt News Online. (2025, November 11). Mob burns Lagos immigration checkpoint after stray bullet injures woman. Prompt News Online. Daily Post. (2025, November 11). It's devil's work, I have been defiling my three daughters – 54-year-old man confesses in Delta. Daily Post. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/16/its-devils-work-i-have-been-defiling-my-three-daughters-54-year-old-man-confesses-in-delta/

[68] Daily Post. (2025, November 11). Three killed in fresh bandit attack in Nasarawa. Daily Post. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/11/three-killed-in-fresh-bandit-attack-in-nasarawa/#:~:text=Three%20people%20have%20been%20killed,in%20Doma%2C%20on%20Monday%20morning

[69] Daily Post. (2025, November 12). Bandits kill four, abduct ECWA pastor, 11 others in Kaduna. Daily Post. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/12/bandits-kill-four-abduct-ecwa-pastor-11-others-in-kaduna/

[70] CLEEN Foundation. (2010). Policing elections in Nigeria: Assessment of the role of the Nigeria Police Force in elections (2nd ed.). CLEEN Foundation

[71] The Cable. (2025, November 18). Newspaper headlines: Tension as Lagos Street urchins stab Air Force officer. The Cable. https://www.thecable.ng/newspaper-headlines-tension-as-lagos-street-urchins-stab-air-force-officer/

[72] The Eagle Online. (2025, November 14). One dead, six injured in stampede at minister's residence. The Eagle Online. Daily Trust. (2025, November 14) 9-year-old girl defiled in Abuja community. https://dailytrust.com/9-year-old-girl-defiled-in-abuja-community/

International observation and domestic monitoring reports on past Nigerian elections have already highlighted how poor crowd control, unclear queuing arrangements and limited accessibility can increase frustration and trigger minor clashes[73]. As turnout and competition intensify ahead of off-cycle and general elections, attention to crowd management, emergency medical support and safe venue design becomes an essential component of election security planning, alongside the more visible work on armed threats and political violence.

Comparative Analysis Across Nigeria's Six Geopolitical Zones

November presented a differentiated security landscape across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones, reflecting how distinct forms of violence continue to evolve and interact with governance, mobility and civic confidence. Although insecurity was widespread, its scale, expression and electoral significance varied by region. The month recorded 173 verified incidents and 11 unverified incidents across 36 states, with 228 deaths, 68 injuries and 589 documented kidnappings, indicating a complex environment that influences national stability and preparations for future elections.

Across the zones, violence manifested through organised armed activity, targeted abductions, cult-related clashes, gender-based violence and a small number of communal and urban disorder events. The implications for election logistics, voter confidence and political engagement differ by zone but converge around a shared concern: the persistence of insecurity outside electoral cycles suggests a structural challenge that could shape voter turnout, staff deployment and the safety of civic actors.

North Central: High-incidence corridor of banditry, abductions and communal tension

The North Central zone recorded the highest number of incidents (42) and the highest kidnapping burden (403 victims) in November. States such as Niger, Nasarawa, Benue and the FCT experienced recurrent armed attacks and abductions. Incidents in Doma[74] and Keana[75] LGAs in Nasarawa underline the exposure of rural and peri-urban communities to armed groups with the capacity to strike repeatedly. In Niger State, mass abductions of travellers and residents contributed substantially to the national kidnapping total.

The zone's position as a transit corridor linking the North West to the South makes it strategically sensitive. For election-related activities, persistent insecurity along routes such as Abuja–Keffi, Minna–Kontagora and Makurdi–Gboko raises concerns regarding staff deployment, movement of materials and the safety of campaign teams. Communities experiencing repeated attacks may also exhibit lower trust in state protection, which could shape turnout patterns.

[73] European Union Election Observation Mission. (2019). Nigeria: General elections 2019, final report. European Union.

[74] The Guardian. (2025, November 11). Gunmen kill Nasarawa prince, two others, cart away motorcycle.CLEEN Foundation. (2010). Policing elections in Nigeria: Assessment of the role of the Nigeria Police Force in elections (2nd ed.). CLEEN Foundation

[75] Daily Report. (2025, November 16). Couple abducted as gunmen, herders renew violence in Nasarawa.https://dailyreport.ng/couple-abducted-as-gunmen-herders-renew-violence-in-nasarawa/

North West: Concentrated organised armed violence and rural insecurity

The North West recorded 36 incidents, 66 deaths, 18 injuries and 137 kidnappings, making it one of the most violent zones in absolute terms. Bandit attacks in Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Zamfara and Sokoto were recurrent. Examples include the killing of residents and the abduction of a pastor and worshippers in Lere LGA, Kaduna[76], and the killing of a school official and the abduction of students in Kebbi[77].

These events align with long-standing patterns of rural predation and parallel armed governance structures documented in previous studies.

The pressure on communities, schools and religious centres affects social cohesion and mobility, which are essential for inclusive democratic processes.

Ahead of future elections, the zone's security dynamics pose direct logistical risks. Large areas may require reinforced security presence, which increases operational costs and may influence perceptions of neutrality. Repeated displacement from attacks can also weaken voter registration continuity and representation.

North East: Lower frequency but high-impact attacks linked to insurgent operations

The North East recorded 22 incidents, 36 deaths, 9 injuries and 15 kidnappings. Although incident frequency was lower than the North Central and North West, the nature of violence was severe. Attacks in Chibok[78] and Askira Uba[79] in Borno killings and the destruction of property, including churches, consistent with the operational methods of Boko Haram and ISWAP.

These incidents contribute to ongoing displacement, limited access to services and heightened fear among residents. Even outside peak insurgency levels, the continued presence of armed groups affects humanitarian reach and civic participation. For future elections, displaced communities in Borno and Yobe may face structural barriers in voter registration and polling access. The zone therefore presents a significant inclusion challenge, requiring coordination between INEC, NEMA and peacebuilding actors to sustain electoral credibility.

South East: Mixed insecurity driven by abductions, cult violence and isolated gunmen attacks

The South East recorded 19 incidents, 11 deaths, 6 injuries and 7 kidnappings. The zone experienced diverse threats, including gunmen attacks in Plateau-bordering settlements and repeated cult-related clashes. In Anambra, for example, the abduction of a medical doctor in Nnewi North[80] and a violent incident in Orumba South contribute to a pattern of targeted community-level insecurity.

[76] Daily Post. (2025, November 12). Bandits kill four, abduct ECWA pastor, 11 others in Kaduna. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/12/bandits-kill-four-abduct-ecwa-pastor-11-others-in-kaduna/

[77] Daily Post. (2025, November 17). Bandits raid girls secondary school in Kebbi, kill vice principal, kidnap several students. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/17/bandits-raid-girls-secondary-school-in-kebbi-kill-vice-principal-kidnap-several-students/

[78] Grassroot Reporters. (2025, November 11). Boko Haram gunmen raid Chibok village, kill two brothers and burn church in Borno. Daily Post. (2025, November 17). Bandits raid girls secondary school in Kebbi, kill vice principal, kidnap several students. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/17/bandits-raid-girls-secondary-school-in-kebbi-kill-vice-principal-kidnap-several-students/

[79] Mataza Rising. (2025, November 14). Senator Ndume fumes as Boko Haram kills 4 farmers, raze church, abduct women, children and pastor's daughters in Borno communities. https://matazarising.com/2025/11/14/senator-ndume-fumes-as-boko-haram-klls-4-farmers-raze-church-abduct-women-children-and-pastors-daughters-in-borno/

[80] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 1). Kidnappers abduct medical doctor in Anambra. The Guardian. (2025, November 11). Gunmen kill Nasarawa prince, two others, cart away motorcycle.CLEEN Foundation. (2010). Policing elections in Nigeria: Assessment of the role of the Nigeria Police Force in elections (2nd ed.). CLEEN Foundation

While the scale of violence was lower compared to the North, the region's incidents have significant psychological effect due to their unpredictability and visibility. Abductions and cult clashes can reduce public confidence in safety during mobility, rallies or community meetings. In a pre-election context, these dynamics can heighten fear, suppress turnout and intensify elite mistrust, especially in states preparing for off-cycle contests.

South South: Politically sensitive environment with cult activity and targeted attacks

The South South recorded 33 incidents, 25 deaths, 7 injuries and 9 kidnappings, making it one of the most volatile southern regions. States such as Edo, Delta and Cross River experienced cult-related killings, assassinations and targeted shootings. For example, the murder of a Students Union Government president during burial rites in Yakurr LGA, Cross River[81] (ESI-202511-086), and the targeted killing of a local party official in Delta[82] signal the presence of entrenched armed youth groups and politically linked networks.

These incidents can affect the safety of political actors, particularly at ward and LGA levels, and may influence internal party processes. The zone's history of factional rivalry suggests that future electoral cycles could experience heightened tension if early mediation and preventive diplomacy mechanisms are not activated.

South West: Urban disorder, abductions and cult-related violence in a high-density zone

The South West recorded 31 incidents, 23 deaths, 6 injuries and 18 kidnappings. Violence in the zone was largely urban, involving cult clashes, armed robbery, mob reactions and isolated political or communal attacks. The burning of an immigration checkpoint in Lagos after a stray bullet injured a woman[83] and the stabbing of an Air Force officer by street urchins[84] highlight the tension between residents and security actors in crowded urban areas.

While overall casualties were lower compared to northern zones, the concentration of incidents in Lagos, Ogun and Ondo suggests that urban governance and crowd management remain central concerns. In electoral periods, dense populations, high youth unemployment and active cult groups can complicate crowd control and influence the safety of rallies and polling centres.

[80] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 1). Kidnappers abduct medical doctor in Anambra. The Guardian. (2025, November 11). Gunmen kill Nasarawa prince, two others, cart away motorcycle.CLEEN Foundation. (2010). Policing elections in Nigeria: Assessment of the role of the Nigeria Police Force in elections (2nd ed.). CLEEN Foundation

[81] The Leadership Newspaper. (2025, November 16). How SUG President was gunned down during his father's burial rites. https://leadership.ng/cult-violence-how-sug-president-was-gunned-down-during-his-fathers-burial-rites/

[82] Daily Post. (2025, November 16). Delta APC acting chairman Felix Idisi shot dead. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/16/delta-apc-acting-chairman-felix-idisi-shot-dead/

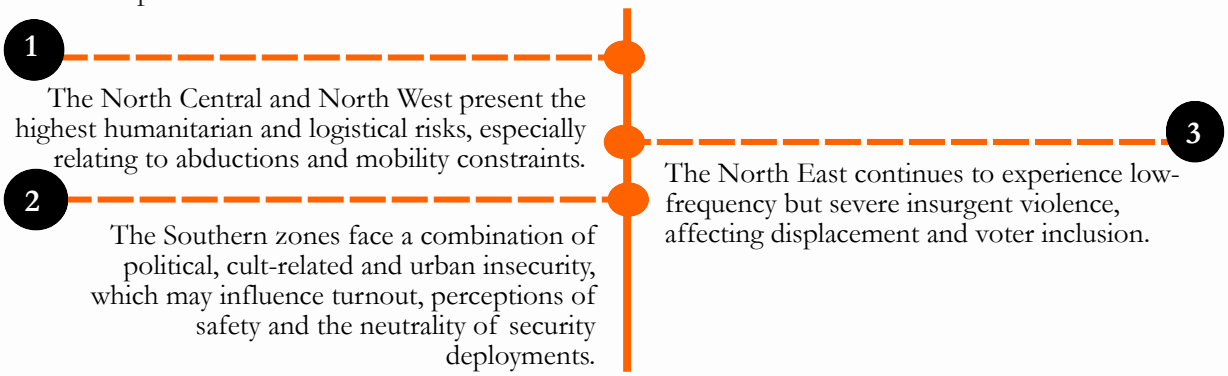
[83] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 11). Mob burns Lagos immigration checkpoint after stray bullet hits woman. https://punchng.com/mob-burns-lagos-immigration-checkpoint-after-stray-bullet-hit-woman/?amp

[84] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 18). Tension as Lagos street urchins stab Air Force officer.https://punchng.com/tension-as-lagos-street-urchins-stab-air-force-officer/

Cross-Zonal Insight

The November landscape demonstrates that insecurity is neither uniform nor isolated.

Three broad patterns stand out:



Collectively, these dynamics show that effective electoral security planning requires a differentiated regional approach, combining early-warning systems in the North with political mediation and civic resilience efforts in the South. The November data reinforce the importance of continued collaboration among the NPC, INEC, security agencies, civil society, media and international partners in strengthening public trust and safeguarding Nigeria's democratic processes.

Risk and Implications

The November incident patterns reveal a security landscape that, while varied across regions, collectively shapes the environment in which Nigeria's elections will unfold. In the North Central, persistent attacks on communities, worship centres and transport corridors such as the abductions in Niger[85] and killings in Nasarawa[86] have contributed to a climate of fear that affects travel, routine governance and citizen engagement. These disruptions have immediate electoral consequences: unsafe roads slow deployment, communities avoid public gatherings, and the uncertainty around safety undermines confidence in pre-election activities.

The North West recorded the most concentrated forms of organised armed activity, including killings, raids and church burnings in Kaduna[87], Kebbi[88] and Zamfara[89]. Such incidents reflect the operational space available to armed groups and the limited reach of state authority in several rural LGAs. For elections, this reality shapes turnout, affects the neutrality required for safe political competition and raises concerns about the ability of election personnel to access communities reliably. In areas where non-state actors exert influence, electoral choices may be constrained by coercion or fear of reprisals.

[85] Daily Trust. (2025, November 15). Bandits kill 16 vigilantes, kidnap 42 in Niger. https://dailytrust.com/bandits-kill-16-vigilantes-kidnap-42-in-niger/

[86] The Guardian. (2025, November 11). Gunmen kill Nasarawa prince, two others, cart away motorcycle.https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/gunmen-kill-nasarawa-prince-two-others-cart-away-motorcycle/

[87] Daily Post. (2025, November 12). Bandits kill four, abduct ECWA Pastor, 11 others in Kaduna.https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/12/bandits-kill-four-abduct-ecwa-pastor-11-others-in-kaduna/

[88] Daily Post. (2025, November 17). Bandits raid girls secondary school in Kebbi, kill vice principal, kidnap several students. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/17/bandits-raid-girls-secondary-school-in-kebbi-kill-vice-principal-kidnap-several-students/

[89] Daily Post. (2025, November 15). Suspected gunmen kill prominent Zamfara politician. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/15/suspected-gunmen-kill-prominent-zamfara-politician/

In the North East, although incident counts were lower, the severity of attacks such as village raids and destruction of property in Borno[90] continues to drive displacement and heighten anxiety. These conditions produce structural barriers to voter inclusion. Voters who are displaced or traumatised may not be reached through conventional civic and electoral processes, and humanitarian corridors often double as the only feasible entry points for election logistics.

The South East reflected a pattern of scattered insecurity with cumulative psychological weight. Isolated incidents, such as the abduction of a medical professional in Nnewi North[91] and other targeted attacks, contribute to an atmosphere that discourages campaign events and limits political outreach. This environment can narrow the field of political participation, particularly for independent candidates, women and youth, who often rely on open mobilisation and public gatherings.

In the South South, violence frequently intersected with local political dynamics and youth armed networks. The killing of a political figure in Delta[92] and violent confrontations linked to youth groups in Cross River[93] reveal how political contestation, community authority disputes and cult activity create unpredictable security environments. Such patterns can distort electoral competition by deterring candidates from campaigning freely or discouraging supporters from attending rallies or voting.

In the South West, the mix of urban disorder, mob incidents and confrontations with security agencies such as the Badagry checkpoint burning[94] and the stabbing of an Air Force officer in Lagos[95] signals a form of volatility that, while less fatal, is highly disruptive in densely populated zones. Urban insecurity can interrupt material distribution, affect queue management on election day and heighten mistrust between citizens and security personnel.

Taken together, the November trends show that Nigeria's electoral landscape is shaped by region-specific patterns of insecurity that influence access, participation and public trust. The North Central and North West pose direct risks to the safe movement of election personnel and materials. The North East raises challenges of inclusion due to displacement and the psychological impact of insurgent threats. The Southern regions, each in distinct ways, present risks tied to political intimidation, urban disorder and the volatility of youth-driven armed networks.

Across all zones, the implications for elections are consistent: voter turnout may be suppressed where fear dominates daily life; political actors may face uneven access to communities; security agencies may be stretched between protection and deterrence roles; and election management bodies may struggle to ensure that polling units operate without obstruction. In environments where violence shapes civic participation, elections risk being perceived not only as insecure but as unequal in opportunity and access. The November patterns therefore underscore the need for targeted preventive measures, bespoke security planning, and coordinated engagement among INEC, the NPC, security institutions, civil society and development partners to reduce risk, protect voters and maintain the credibility of the democratic process.

[90] Daily Trust. (2025, November 15). Bandits kill 16 vigilantes, kidnap 42 in Niger. https://dailytrust.com/bandits-kill-16-vigilantes-kidnap-42-in-niger/

[91] The Guardian. (2025, November 11). Gunmen kill Nasarawa prince, two others, cart away motorcycle.https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria/metro/gunmen-kill-nasarawa-prince-two-others-cart-away-motorcycle/

[92] Daily Post. (2025, November 16). Delta APC acting chairman Felix Idisi shot dead. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/16/delta-apc-acting-chairman-felix-idisi-shot-dead/

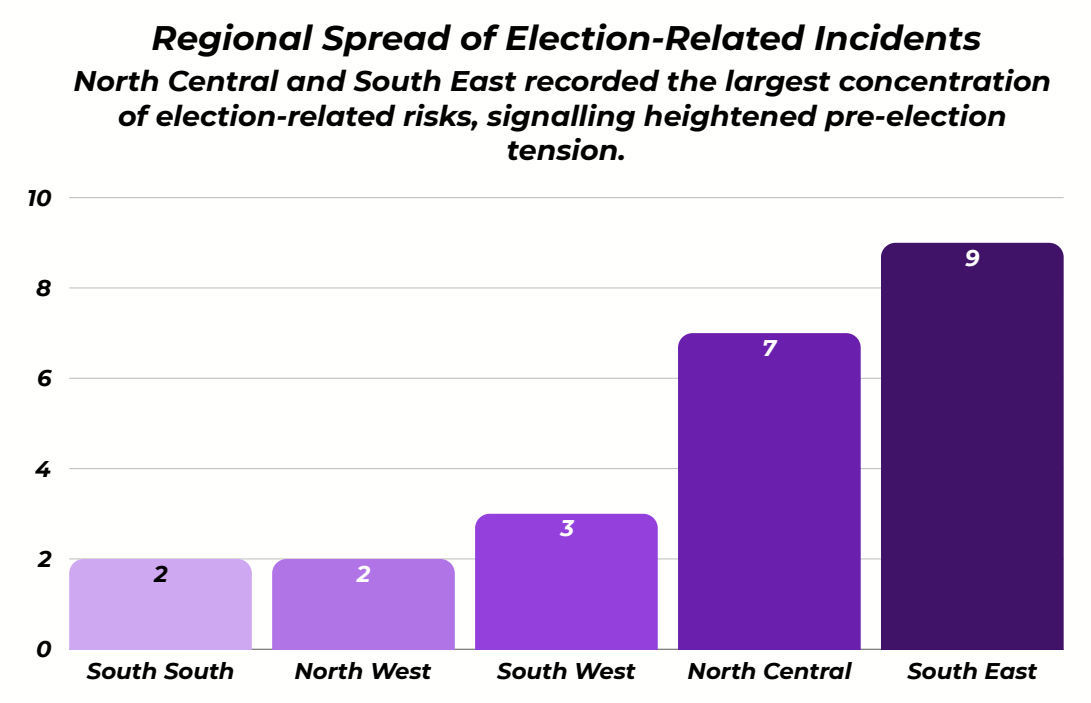
[93] The Leadership Newspaper. (2025, November 16). How SUG president was gunned down during his father's burial rites. https://leadership.ng/cult-violence-how-sug-president-was-gunned-down-during-his-fathers-burial-rites/

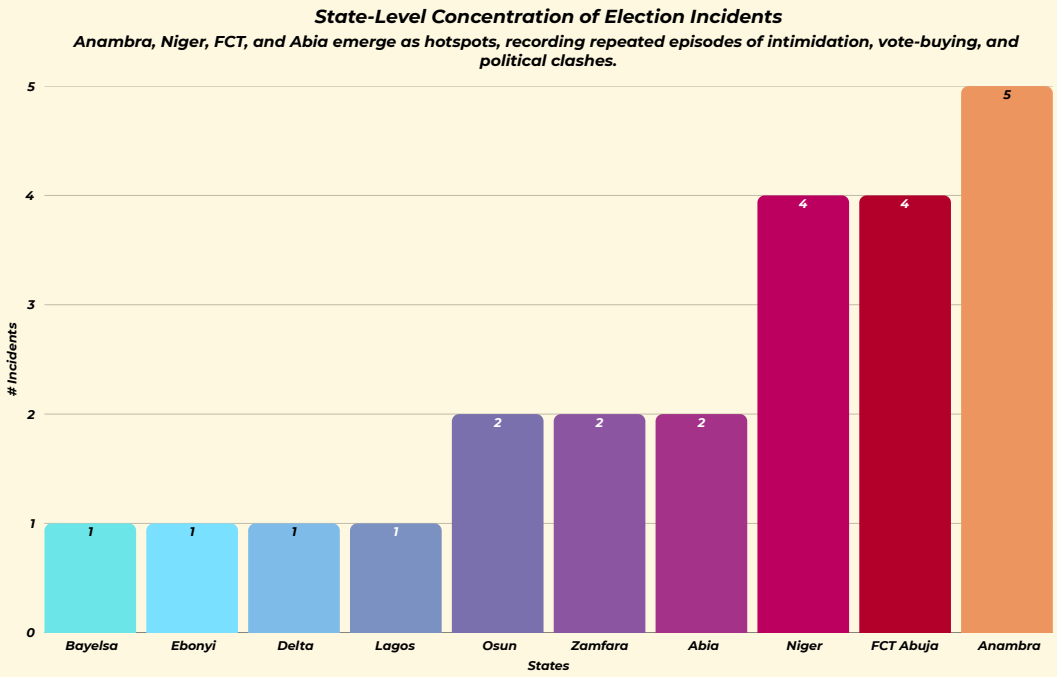
[94] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 11). Mob burns Lagos immigration checkpoint after stray bullet hits woman. https://punchng.com/mob-burns-lagos-immigration-checkpoint-after-stray-bullet-hit-woman/

[95] The Cable. (2025, November 18). Tension as Lagos street urchins stab Air Force officer. https://www.thecable.ng/newspaper-headlines-tension-as-lagos-street-urchins-stab-air-force-officer/

ELECTORAL OFFENCES TRACKING SYSTEM (EOTS) – NOVEMBER 2025

The Electoral Offences Tracking System (EOTS), managed by the Elections Security Information (ESI) Hub, documents behaviours that undermine Nigeria's electoral framework under the 1999 Constitution (as amended), the Electoral Act 2022 and the commitments of the National Peace Accord. Together, these instruments criminalise practices such as vote buying, voter intimidation, violent disruption of political activity, disinformation and hate speech, and they place a duty of restraint on state and non-state actors during political competition.





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In November 2025, EOTS recorded 25 incidents across at least 5 of the 6 geopolitical zones, with cases documented in the North Central, North West, South East, South South and South West. The incidents were concentrated around subnational elections in Niger and Anambra States, continuing intra-party crises in Abuja, and ongoing partisan mobilisation in Bayelsa, Delta, Osun and Lagos. The majority occurred in the pre-election phase, often outside formal campaign windows, and involved political parties, candidates, youth supporters, security actors and influential religious or media figures. Across the 25 incidents, 2 people were killed in politically linked assassinations in Zamfara[96] and in Delta[97], at least 2 people were injured in violent confrontations around local polls[98] and convoy movements, and public or party property was damaged in several events, including the burning of an INEC office in Magama, Niger State, vandalism of billboards after local government elections in Bida[99] and the confiscation of a truck and sound system used for peaceful civic engagement in Lagos[100]. Although casualty figures are modest compared with wider national insecurity, the pattern of behaviour points to a gradual normalisation of coercion, monetisation and propaganda in electoral competition, consistent with broader research on Nigerian elections.

A first group of incidents relates to direct political violence, thuggery and physical disruption of electoral processes. In Niger State, youths allegedly attacked Governor Bago's convoy in Bida over a failed cash handout linked to local politics, injuring an aide and damaging vehicles[101]. During the same local government poll cycle, an INEC office in Magama was set on fire following disputes over missing result sheets[102], and youths destroyed billboards after the election[103]. In Abuja, police presence and thugs featured in the contested takeover of the PDP secretariat[104] and violent clashes[105] between factions loyal to the FCT Minister and sitting governors at Wadata Plaza.

[96] Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 15). APC chieftain killed in suspected Zamfara bandit attack. https://punchng.com/apc-chieftain-killed-in-suspected-zamfara-bandit-attack/

[97] Daily Post. (2025, November 16). Delta APC acting chairman Felix Idisi shot dead. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/16/delta-apc-acting-chairman-felix-idisi-shot-dead/

[98] Daily Report. (2025, November 2). Youths attack Niger Governor Bago's convoy over failed cash handout, injure aide.https://dailyreport.ng/youths-attack-niger-governor-bagos-convoy-over-failed-cash-handout-injure-aide/

[99] Northern Nigeria Fact Zone. (2025, November 3). Youths destroy billboards in Bida after election [Tweet]. X. https://x.com/ArewaFactsZone/status/1985241561953677628

[100] X Post. (2025, November 14). Video shows a truck and sound system used for peaceful civic engagement still being held by the police [Video]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/reel/1062879379195881

[101] Daily Report. (2025, November 2). Youths attack Niger Governor Bago's convoy over failed cash handout, injure aide. X Post. (2025, November 14). Video shows a truck and sound system used for peaceful civic engagement still being held by the police [Video]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/reel/1062879379195881

[102] Nigerian Tribune. (2025, November 2). Niger LG poll: INEC office set ablaze over missing result sheets. https://tribuneonlineng.com/niger-lg-poll-inec-office-set-ablaze-over-missing-result-sheets/

[103] Northern Nigeria Fact Zone. (2025, November 3). Youths destroy billboards in Bida after election [Tweet]. X. https://x.com/ArewaFactsZone/status/1985241561953677628

[104] This Day. (2025, November 4). Police, thugs take over PDP secretariat, as Mohammed resumes as acting chairman. https://www.thisdaylive.com/2025/11/04/police-thugs-take-over-pdp-secretariat-as-mohammed-resumes-as-acting-chairman/

[105] PMNews. (2025, November 18). Breaking: Trouble erupts at PDP headquarters. https://pmnewsnigeria.com/2025/11/18/breaking-trouble-erupts-at-pdp-headquarters/

ADC youths disrupted a party meeting in Abia State[106], [107]while allegations surfaced in Anambra that thugs and individuals posing as security agents were being prepared to infiltrate and disrupt off-cycle elections[108]. These events fall within recognised forms of electoral violence that compromise level playing fields, discourage participation and increase the cost of campaigning, particularly for smaller parties and women candidates.

A second group of incidents concerns vote buying, improper inducement and perceived manipulation by election management bodies. In Anambra, reports circulated about vote buying by candidates of both the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) during the off-cycle poll[109], while another incident alleged that INEC went ahead to declare a winner despite extensive accounts of vote trading[110]. In Niger, the protest the governor's convoy was tied directly to expectations of cash distribution. These behaviours align with a wider body of evidence that links vote trading, gift-based mobilisation and patronage to long-term erosion of voter autonomy and accountability. Such practices risk depressing trust in results, incentivising turnout primarily for financial gain rather than policy preference and reinforcing the perception that institutions respond mainly to monetary pressure.

A third cluster involves targeted political killings and intimidation. The suspected killing of an APC chieftain following a rally in Tsafe LGA, Zamfara State, and the shooting of the Acting APC Chairman in Ethiope East, Delta State, illustrate the continued use of violence to resolve intra- or inter-party disputes. In Ebonyi, a young man, Chisom Achor, was allegedly abducted during a live stream in which he criticised the actions of a federal legislator[111]. In Abia, the sealing of a "Renewed Hope" political office associated with the President's party by the state government led to accusations of partisan intimidation[112]. Comparative research on Nigeria and other African countries suggests that such targeted violence and harassment can create a chilling effect on opposition activity, deter credible candidates from contesting and weaken local mediation structures that are often essential for de-escalation. The electoral risk is cumulative: political assassinations generate fear among party organisers and volunteers, while visible state action against rival symbols, such as office closures, deepens perceptions of institutional bias.

A fourth area relates to disinformation, fake news and information disorder. In Anambra, rumours spread that BVAS malfunction had disrupted voting in Onitsha, although subsequent fact-checking indicated that the claim was inaccurate and that voting continued[113]. In Osun, police publicly debunked a viral video alleging a bandit attack in Ilesa[114].

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[106] Daily Post. (2025, November 18). Wike, Makinde, Bala Mohammed clash at PDP secretariat. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/18/wike-govs-makinde-bala-mohammed-clash-at-pdp-secretariat/

[107] Vanguard. (2025, November 10). ADC youths disrupt party meeting in Abia. https://www.vanguardngr.com/2025/11/adc-youths-disrupt-party-meeting-in-abia/

[108] Anambra News via Facebook. (2025, November 6). Unverified report says Ukachukwu planned to infiltrate and disrupt Saturday's election using fake police and thugs. https://www.facebook.com/share/p/16LDHcR5rz/

[109] X Space. (2025, November 7). Reports flying around of vote buying by APGA and APC candidates [Audio]. Secondary, Unverified. EOTS Audio 0106. https://x.com/

[110] The Punch. (2025, November 11). Soludo's Anambra win sparks political storm. Secondary, Verified. https://punchng.com/soludos-anambra-win-sparks-political-storm/

[111] X (UchePOkoye). (2025, November 6). Video circulating says that a young man, named Chisom Achor was whisked away from his house while he was on a live stream exposing the atrocities of one Honourable Chinedu Ogah in Ikwo local government of Ebonyi state [Video]. X. https://x.com/UchePOkoye/status/1986531433687421301/video/1

[112] Facebook. (2025, November 25). Tension in Abia as Abia state Government under the leadership of Otti shuts down Tinubu Renewed Hope Office in Umuahia [Video]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/reel/24967510602869934

[113] CDD Factcheck. (2025, November 8). Fact check: Did BVAS glitch disrupt the voting exercise in Onitsha? CDD Factcheck. https://cddfactcheck.org/fact-check-did-bvas-glitch-disrupt-the-voting-exercise-in-onitsha/

[114] Daily Post. (2025, November 28). Osun: Police debunk viral video on alleged bandit attack in Ilesa. Daily Post. https://dailypost.ng/2025/11/28/osun-police-debunk-viral-video-on-alleged-bandit-attack-in-ilesa/

In the South East, a Facebook post claiming that 5,000 Muslims had converted to Christianity because of the detained separatist leader Nnamdi Kanu circulated widely despite lacking evidence[115]. These episodes show how false or exaggerated claims travel quickly across social media and can influence perceptions of security, religious balance or the credibility of electoral technology. Studies of the 2019 and 2023 general elections highlight the way online disinformation and hate narratives shaped attitudes towards institutions and sometimes preceded local tension or violence. In electoral terms, such narratives can distort citizens' understanding of procedures, reduce confidence in INEC, provoke spontaneous protests or boycotts and complicate logistics when security agencies respond to false alerts.

A fifth set of incidents concerns hate speech, inflammatory statements and identity-based rhetoric. In Osun, an APC figure reportedly declared at a partisan meeting that she had a gun and could shoot anyone, framing political contest in openly violent language[116]. A widely circulated video showed a religious leader asserting that "Igbos are the problem of Nigeria"[117], while separate controversy followed comments by a federal spokesperson accusing a Christian Association of Nigeria leader in Niger State of "playing games" over a school abduction. The Department of State Services' invitation to Datti Baba-Ahmed over alleged inciting remarks during a national television appearance[118] further illustrates how high-profile figures influence public tone. Comparative work on hate speech and elections in Nigeria finds that identity-based incitement can heighten communal anxiety, discourage minority participation and, in some contexts, precede targeted violence. In the run-up to elections, such rhetoric therefore poses a direct risk to inclusive turnout and to acceptance of results in diverse constituencies.

Finally, several incidents point to perceived institutional fragility and enforcement gaps. The use of police and private thugs[119] in the struggle over PDP headquarters control in Abuja, the continued holding of a truck and sound system used for peaceful civic engagement in Lagos[120], and allegations of INEC insensitivity to reports of vote buying in Anambra[121] all contribute to public narratives that institutions may be selective in their response to offences. When communities or party supporters perceive security agencies or election managers as partisan, they are less likely to report incidents or comply fully with instructions. Research on electoral governance shows that weak or uneven enforcement of offences encourages repeat violations and can reduce voter confidence in the neutrality of the process.

Taken together, the November 2025 EOTS data suggest that Nigeria's electoral environment is being shaped as much by low-level, recurring violations as by high-impact crises. The incidents span violence, inducement, disinformation, hate speech and institutional contestation, and they occur largely in the pre-election space rather than on polling day.

[115] Nnanna, B. [Beady Nnanna]. (2025, November 26). Woman claims 5,000 Muslims embraced Christianity because of Nnamdi Kanu [Facebook post]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/beady.nnanna/posts/pfbid0Ja4KNspVG6QVmonVXyrJwM4XNvXkx9VxhM7ecnT3Ymzp8qVzDrPL8PEB8HgyeVHMl

[116] Osun Defender. (2025). Ero Arike [Webpage]. https://osundefender.com/tag/ero-arike/

[117] Sahara Reporters. (2025, November 16). Enough hate against Igbo, stop using God to fan your tribalism, Labour Party chief condemns. https://saharareporters.com/2025/11/16/enough-hate-against-igbo-stop-using-god-fan-your-tribalism-labour-party-chief-condemns

[118] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, December 28). DSS invites Datti Baba-Ahmed over inciting comments.https://punchng.com/dss-invites-datti-baba-ahmed-over-inciting-comments/

[119] This Day. (2025, November 4). Police, thugs take over PDP secretariat, as Mohammed resumes as acting chairman. https://www.thisdaylive.com/2025/11/04/police-thugs-take-over-pdp-secretariat-as-mohammed-resumes-as-acting-chairman/

[120] X. (2025, November 14). Video shows a truck and sound system used for peaceful civic engagement still being held by the police [Video]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/reel/1062879379195881

[121] The Punch Newspaper. (2025, November 11). Soludo's Anambra win sparks political storm. https://punchng.com/soludos-anambra-win-sparks-political-storm/

Their combined effect is to increase the perceived risk and financial cost of political participation, to weaken trust in INEC and security agencies, and to narrow civic space for opposition parties, women and youth. If left unaddressed, these patterns can depress turnout in competitive states, encourage parallel mobilisation and widen the gap between the legal framework of the Electoral Act 2022 and the realities of political practice. For the National Peace Committee, INEC, security institutions, civil society and development partners, the November findings underline the need for early mediation, consistent sanctions and coordinated fact-checking, so that electoral offences do not harden into an accepted feature of Nigeria's democratic life.

Policy Recommendations

The recommendations below are designed for practical application by Nigerian institutions within existing political, financial, and operational constraints. They address the dual challenge of national insecurity and electoral offences, recognising that both phenomena reinforce one another and can undermine democratic stability if left unmanaged.

National Peace Committee (NPC)

NPC's influence lies in convening power, moral authority, and high-level diplomacy rather than enforcement. Recommendations therefore focus on feasible, soft mechanisms that can stabilise the civic and electoral environment.

- Facilitate structured dialogue platforms in high-risk states, bringing together political actors, security leadership, traditional authorities, and religious bodies to negotiate practical commitments on campaign conduct, rally coordination, and early de-escalation mechanisms.

- Issue a supplementary Peace Accord addendum focusing on disinformation, hate speech, identity-based mobilisation, and threats directed at candidates and party offices.

- Develop a quiet-engagement protocol that enables NPC members to intervene early when intra-party or inter-party tensions escalate.

- Promote local peace committees at the LGA level, especially in areas affected by farmer–herder conflict, banditry, political intimidation, or communal violence, to improve community-level early warning.

- Use media engagements to highlight positive compliance by political actors, reinforcing a culture of non-violence without naming or shaming.

Security Agencies (Nigeria Police Force, DSS, Civil Defence, and Supporting Military Units)

Recommendations aim to strengthen consistency, impartiality, and communication using already available structures.

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- Adopt a three-step operational protocol for political and security flashpoints: early warning, preventive visibility, and immediate factual public communication after incidents.
- Integrate electoral facility protection into the routine duties of existing joint task forces in conflict-prone corridors, rather than creating new election-specific units.
- Standardise rapid response frameworks for threats involving banditry, gunmen attacks, political thuggery, or intimidation around party meetings.
- Improve community-police liaison structures, enabling DPOs, traditional leaders, market unions, and youth associations to feed real-time local intelligence into security planning.
- Ensure neutral policing at rallies, protests, and party headquarters, supported by body-worn cameras where available, to reduce accusations of selective enforcement,
- Provide transparent follow-up updates on investigations involving political violence or destruction of public infrastructure, reducing speculation and mistrust.

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)

Given recurring insecurity pressures, INEC's preparedness and neutrality require proactive reinforcement.

- Strengthen contingency planning for high-risk LGAs, including alternative voting locations, secure movement protocols, and pre-positioning of materials.
- Expand digital and community-based information campaigns to counter false narratives about election procedures, technology malfunction, or collusion.
- Improve liaison with security agencies at state and LGA levels to ensure aligned risk assessments and coordinated deployment.
- Build capacity for rapid communication, issuing clarifications within hours when misinformation targets the Commission, its officials, or its technology.
- Establish psychosocial and safety support for election workers, particularly those deployed in areas experiencing armed attacks or high levels of intimidation.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

CSOs play a bridging role between institutions and communities. Recommendations focus on strengthening monitoring, mediation, civic education, and accountability.

- Expand community-based early warning systems that document emerging threats related to banditry, communal tension, political intimidation, and hate speech.
- Provide mediation and dialogue support in local communities affected by farmer–herder clashes, urban gang rivalry, or political mobilisation of youths.
- Strengthen legal follow-up support for victims of political violence or intimidation, ensuring cases do not disappear due to institutional inertia.
- Embed civic safety education into existing community meetings, school programmes, religious spaces, and youth networks.
- Partner with traditional institutions, women's groups, and professional associations to promote non-violent political participation across gender, class, and ethnic lines.
- Use simple, accessible scorecards to track government and security agency follow-through on emblematic cases, increasing accountability.

Media and Fact-Checking Organisations

The information environment is central to Nigeria's risk landscape. Practical measures can be implemented without new regulation.

- Adopt editorial red-lines requiring disclaimers, balanced perspectives, or expert interpretation when airing inflammatory political claims.
- Maintain rapid verification desks during election periods, ensuring that misinformation or rumours are verified within 24 hours.
- Strengthen collaboration between mainstream media and fact-checking platforms, including offline dissemination in markets and rural communities.
- Develop internal registers of repeat disseminators of hate speech or unverifiable claims to guide editorial decision-making.
- Promote public awareness campaigns on recognising false information, targeting women, youths, and rural voters through radio, town criers, and community media.

Political Parties and Candidates

Party behaviour is a critical determinant of political stability.

- Institutionalise internal dispute resolution mechanisms to prevent factional rivalry from escalating into violence or property destruction.
- Train campaign teams on non-violent conduct, crowd management, and safety protocols for rallies in volatile communities.
- Ensure consistent party-level messaging discouraging the use of thugs, cult groups, or coercive youth mobilisation.
- Develop internal guidelines for ethical digital communication, discouraging disinformation, identity-based propaganda, and inciting speech.

Traditional and Religious Institutions

These institutions retain significant influence over community behaviour and conflict dynamics.

- Support community-level dialogue aimed at de-escalating tensions linked to communal disputes, identity rhetoric, or political rivalry.
- Issue consistent public guidance discouraging ethnic or religious incitement, reinforcing social cohesion.
- Engage youth and women's associations through faith-based peace education, reducing vulnerability to recruitment for violence.

Cross-Cutting Measures on Insecurity and Electoral Offences

These interventions cut across all sectors and address both structural insecurity and election-related risks.

- Strengthen early warning and early response coordination across security agencies, INEC, CSOs, and local peace actors.
- Promote conflict-sensitive policing that does not escalate existing tensions in fragile communities.
- Integrate human rights and election-security training for frontline officers.
- Encourage community-centred prevention, including neighbourhood patrol partnerships and grievance-reporting channels.
- Improve data sharing and incident mapping, including real-time dashboards accessible to regulators, observers, and peace structures.
- Promote fact-based political communication, with rapid correction of unverified claims that could trigger violence or voter suppression.

Conclusion

The November security and electoral offences analysis presents a picture of a political environment shaped by overlapping risks: widespread organised armed violence, expanding criminal networks, politically motivated intimidation, institutional fragility, and an increasingly influential information disorder. These patterns demonstrate that insecurity and electoral misconduct are no longer parallel issues; they now operate as a single ecosystem that shapes public trust, civic participation, and the credibility of Nigeria's democratic processes.

Across all geopolitical zones, the data show that communities continue to experience violence that disrupts daily life, weakens local governance, and restricts the safe functioning of political activities. While the intensity varies from one region to another, the implications are similar: voters are discouraged from participating, candidates operate under threat, institutions face scrutiny, and civic space becomes more constrained. For many Nigerians, security concerns remain a central factor in decisions about political participation and public engagement.

The Electoral Offences Tracking System further highlights the growing normalisation of political misconduct; thuggery, vote-trading, disinformation, hate speech, intimidation, and institutional overreach. These offences distort political competition and amplify tensions at moments when communities require stability and reassurance. As Nigeria approaches future electoral cycles, unchecked political misconduct risks hardening into accepted practice, deepening mistrust in state institutions and eroding democratic resilience.

At the same time, the persistence of insecurity across northern and southern corridors continues to place pressure on electoral logistics, community mobilisation, and peacebuilding structures. The proximity between security threats and political competition means that responses cannot be isolated or reactive. The actors responsible for stabilising the political environment, security agencies, INEC, political parties, the media, civil society, traditional authorities, and the NPC must therefore adopt coordinated, preventive, and evidence-led approaches grounded in local realities.

The findings indicate that credible elections and national security are mutually reinforcing. Where security is weak, political manipulation thrives; where institutions are inconsistent, misinformation spreads; where communities are fearful, civic participation declines. Breaking this cycle requires practical cooperation, strengthened enforcement, transparent communication, and renewed commitment to the values outlined in the National Peace Accord and Electoral Act.

Ultimately, the November data reinforce a central conclusion: safeguarding Nigeria's democratic trajectory demands that insecurity and electoral offences be addressed not as isolated events but as interconnected challenges that shape governance outcomes. Sustained political will, institutional impartiality, and community engagement will be essential to prevent escalation, protect civic space, and uphold public trust as the country moves closer to future elections.