



FATALITY TRENDS *Bulletin*

First Edition – January 2014

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In this issue

ABOUT US

- About Nigeria Watch
- Nigeria Watch Team
- Trainings: Staff Orientation/Geographic Information Systems

FATALITY BRIEFINGS

- Is Abuja (FCT) Prone to Road Accidents?
- Governors' Convoys as Metaphors of Executive Highway Killers
- Violence in Borno

SPECIAL FEATURES – Visits

- NSRP Team
- DFID Conflict Advisor

NEWS ITEMS

- PSWG Meeting
- End of the Year Party
- Send-Off Party for Outgoing Director of IFRA
- Official Launching of Nigeria Watch

ABOUT NIGERIA WATCH

Nigeria Watch (NW) was established in 2006 by French researcher Prof. Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, of the University of Paris 8. Since mid-2013, the project has been implemented under the supervision of IFRA-Nigeria at the University of Ibadan, with funding from the DFID and as part of the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme. NW is a database that monitors and compiles violent deaths, including accidents, crimes, natural disasters, fire outbreaks, and oil-related violence, occurring in Nigeria since 1 June 2006. It relies principally on ten Nigerian daily newspapers, which are analysed by information retrieval specialists on a daily basis. Other sources of information, such as human rights organisations and Federal security agencies, are used to cross-check data and mitigate methodological biases. NW provides the research community, policy makers, security experts and the general public with concrete data on violence in Nigeria. It thereby helps decision makers and other stakeholders to monitor violence by providing an original set of data. In a country where there are few statistics on crime, the database helps to cross-check various sources of information to give trends of violence. The primary objective is to measure the physical risk to people in the hazardous environment of Nigeria.

As part of its strategic initiatives, NW provides training on how to use its database. Furthermore, it generates discussions, workshops, seminars and conferences framed around national security issues, based on information regularly extracted from the database. This helps to strengthen and redirect policy options, with the overall aim of reducing the frequency of violent deaths in Nigeria. NW database is updated daily by its team of researchers, and it is frequently used by scholars and other interested parties.

MEET THE NIGERIA WATCH TEAM



Adeola Adams is the Project Coordinator of Nigeria Watch. He obtained a PhD in the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, University of Ibadan.



Afeno Super Odomovo is the Assistant Coordinator of Nigeria Watch. He has a Master's Degree in Political Science, University of Ibadan.



Vitus Ukoji is a Researcher and Archival Retrieval Specialist with Nigeria Watch. He has a Master's Degree in the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, University of Ibadan.



Victoria Ayodokun is a Researcher and Archival Retrieval Specialist with Nigeria Watch. She has a Master's Degree in the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, University of Ibadan.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS:




Manuel Reinert
IFRA-Nigeria
Research
Associate &
Deputy Scientific
Supervisor



Gérard Chouin
IFRA-Nigeria
Director &
Scientific
Supervisor



Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos
Professor at the
University of Paris 8 &
Scientific Director

Staff Orientation: A 2-week orientation training was organized for the recruited staff of Nigeria Watch from 24 June to 5 July 2013. The training took place at the Parry Road Office of Nigeria Watch in the University of Ibadan from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The training focused on the processes of updating and extracting data from the Nigeria Watch database. The programme included a series of brainstorming sessions on the adaptability of the project and the modalities for its launching in Nigeria. Marc-Antoine, Gérard, Manuel, and Ghislain Benrais (IT engineer) were on hand to introduce the trainees to the various aspects of the project.

GIS Training: On 7 November 2013, the Nigeria Watch Project played host to Mrs Reinert, a cartography expert from Montpellier, France. She led the Nigeria Watch team in an intensive 2-day training on Geographic Information Systems (GIS), with modules on how to generate graphs using the database. Mrs Reinert was assisted by Manuel and Gérard, particularly in the aspect of interpretation.



Marc-Antoine and Staff Trainees



Mrs Reinert and the Nigeria Watch Team

SPECIAL FEATURES – Visits



NRSP TEAM: On 2–3 July 2013, a team from the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP), which comprised Dr Ukoha (Deputy Programme Manager of NSRP) and his assistant Habiba Makanjuola, paid a 2-day working visit to the Nigeria Watch office at Parry Road. Nigeria Watch is currently on a 2-year funding from the DFID/British Council through the NSRP. The team was in Ibadan to assess the facilities and the mode of operation of the Nigeria Watch Project. The photo shows Dr Ukoha and Habiba (seventh and fifth from left) with the Nigeria Watch team.



DFID CONFLICT ADVISOR: On 13 September 2013, the then Conflict Advisor of the Department For International Development (DFID) Mr Marcus Lenzen paid a short courtesy visit to the Nigeria Watch office at Parry Road in the University of Ibadan. While on the visit, Mr Lenzen held talks with the Nigeria Watch Coordinator Dr Adeola Adams and IFRA-Nigeria Secretary-General Mr Mbela Martins on some crucial issues of concern to the Nigeria Watch Project. The photo shows Mr Lenzen (third from left) with his hosts.

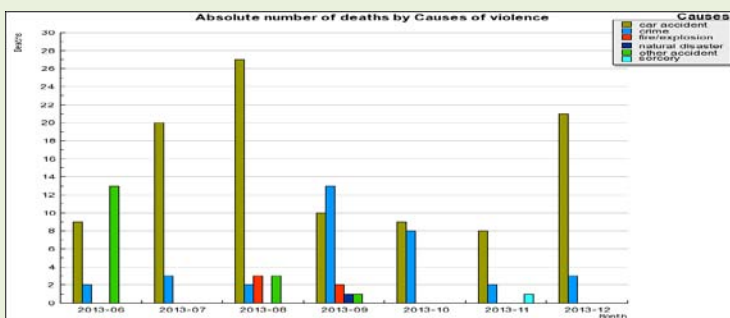
SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS:



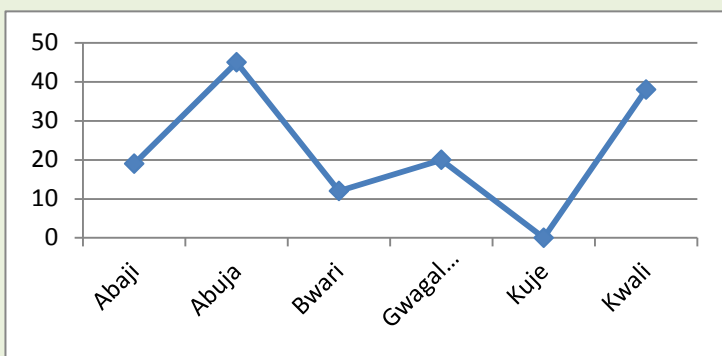
FATALITY BRIEFINGS

Is Abuja (FCT) Prone to Road Accidents?

Even the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja), Nigeria's political and administrative seat of power, has not sufficiently demonstrated that it is free of the incessant road accidents that characterize most highways across the country. Despite its first-class road networks and the heavy presence of state security agents like the Nigerian Police Force, the Road Safety Corps and the Vehicle Inspector officers, the capital city continues to experience numerous fatalities on its highways. In fact, road accidents are one of the major causes of violent deaths in the metropolis. Other prevailing causes of violent deaths in the capital city include crime, fire/explosion, natural disaster, other accidents, and sorcery, as documented in the Nigeria Watch database. The following figures exhibit a noticeable trend in the causes of civil violence between the months of June and December 2013.



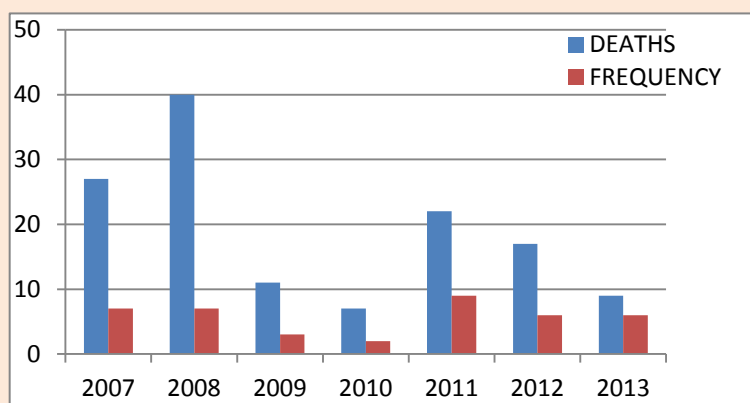
The above trend indicates that road accident was the main cause of civil violence for the months of July, August, October, November and December. Road accident also ranks second for the month of June (after Other Accidents) and September (after Crime). A pattern of fatalities in the period under consideration can further be identified across the six municipalities that make up the FCT.



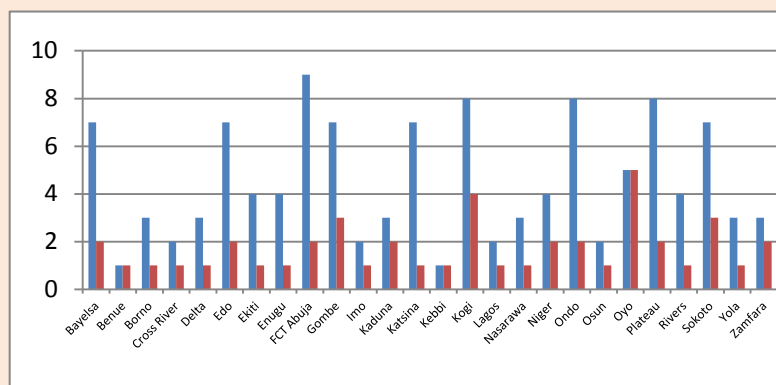
Abuja and Kwali Area Councils, the main routes through which heavy traffic flows into the capital territory, account for the highest death figures. This unfortunate development could be linked to over-speeding commuters and the very poor state of the roads along those particular axes. Ironically, the construction of the Lokoja–Abuja expressway has been on-going for more than 10 years without any serious improvement. The rising death tolls on this road may not abate in the near future if the construction overseers fail to expedite completion of the expressway. Government and other stakeholders should, therefore, take appropriate action to increase safety for road users.

Governors' Convoys as Metaphors of Executive Highway Killers

The cases of over-speeding governors' convoys on our pothole-ridden roads continue to be a source of concern. Despite their constitutional role as the Chief Security Officers of their respective states, our governors and other VIPs blatantly disregard traffic rules, violating other road users' rights and endangering lives. Since 2007, there have been many cases of irresponsible and deadly lawlessness perpetrated by convoys of state executives. The annual deaths due to governors' convoys and the frequency of these accidents since 2007 are summarized below:



The blue columns represent the number of deaths, while the red indicate their frequency for each year. This analysis shows clearly that the cases of fatalities involving governors' convoys are not recent happenings. The public were incensed only with the recent killing of Prof Festus Iyayi, when the convoy of Kogi State Governor Mr Idris Wada rammed into the professor's vehicle. Past trends ought to have provoked an outcry long before this. Convoys of at least 26 governors, including those of Plateau, Ekiti, Edo, Ogun, Katsina, Ondo, Delta, Imo, Nasarawa and Gombe, have been involved in fatal accidents since 2006. The following chart shows the trend by location, deaths and frequency since that year.



States, Deaths & Frequency of Governors' Convoys (2006–2013)

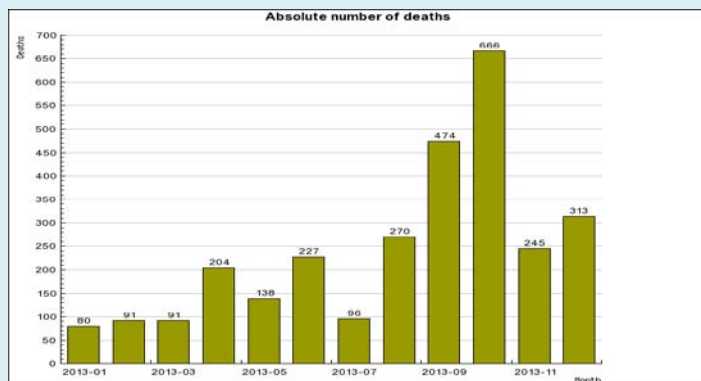
The emerging trend is that well over 75% of the states of the federation have had their share of the highway carnage characterizing the movement of state executives. It may therefore be argued and asserted that the so-called Chief Security Officers of states constitute a greater threat than others to the security of the lives of the citizens they were elected to protect.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS:



Violence in Borno

Towards the tail-end of last year, the governments of the United States and Canada at different fora labelled the Boko Haram rebels an *international terrorist group*. By the same token, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) found it expedient to lengthen its declaration of emergency rule in the troubled Borno region by an additional six months. This is a clear indication that the first phase of emergency rule, which began on 14 May 2013, has not achieved much result. The deadly operations being orchestrated by both the Boko Haram insurgents and the FGN-led Joint Military Forces (JTF) continue unabated. The situation has become more complex with the emergence of a ‘third force’, popularly known as the ‘Civilian JTF’, in the military campaigns against the dreaded insurgents. Between June and December, the fatality figures are indeed frightening, especially for the months of September and October.



Every indication is that there are no serious efforts in place to reduce the loss of life in Borno State. In fact, the first phase of the emergency rule (May – November) recorded more casualties (2,126) than the 6-month period before it (987). In any case, the anti-terrorist approach of the JTF seems to have compromised the tactical engagements of the insurgents. To every deadly attack carried out by the insurgents, the JTF responded with a more devastating and indiscriminate onslaught, often leaving women, children and other defenceless civilians as victims. Meanwhile, the Civilian JTF, whose initial task was to help the JTF with information that could lead to the arrest of the insurgents, suddenly took on a more ferocious role, apprehending fleeing insurgents and burning them to death. As expected, the rebel group shifted its attention to the Civilian JTF as key targets. By September 2013, a newspaper reported that no fewer than 100 Civilian JTF members had been killed by the sect, leaving no one in doubt that the country may be losing the war against the Islamic terrorists. From the statistics presented above, it is clear that the country has continued to suffer substantial human losses in the north-eastern region, especially in Borno State. The sense of insecurity pervading the region is in itself anathema to national peace and development. All efforts should, therefore, be directed to stemming the tide of wanton killings and striving to restore a lasting peace to the north-eastern part of the country.

NEWS ITEMS

NSRP/PSWG Quarterly Meeting: The Peace and Security Working Group (PSWG), an initiative of the Nigerian Stability and Reconciliation Programme (NSRP), met on 29 October 2013. The PSWG seeks to bring peace experts and practitioners together to share information and evolve a platform for developing local capacities for dealing with violent conflicts in Nigeria. A 5-member delegation of the Nigeria Watch team participated in the event. The gathering afforded Nigeria Watch an opportunity to present (for the first time) its products to members of the PSWG. The presentation was well received by the participants. Participants raised questions on various aspects of the work and offered suggestions on how to improve our services.

End of the Year Party: IFRA-Nigeria’s end of the year Get-Together took place at Cocoa Dome, Dugbe (Central Business Area of Ibadan) on 4 December 2013. The Nigeria Watch team also joined in the fun-filled event. The outgoing director of IFRA Dr Gérard Chouin took the opportunity to formally announce the completion of his tenure and his intention to relocate to the United States to pursue his academic career. Taking stock of his 4-year stewardship as the director of IFRA, he encouraged staff to work as a team and cooperate with the in-coming director to consolidate on the successes of his tenure. He noted that the incoming director, Xavier Moyet, is not a complete stranger to IFRA-Nigeria and the university community. He is optimistic that Dr Moyet will consolidate on his existing networks within the University of Ibadan to begin well as the new IFRA helmsman.

Send-Off Party: A send-off party was organized in honour of the out-going director of IFRA Dr Chouin on the 4 December, 2013. A group of IFRA Research Fellows gathered at his Crowder-Lane residence to bid him farewell. During the event, there were outpourings of encomiums for Dr Chouin as a distinguished administrator, a fine humanist and a scholar of a unique genre. Representatives of IFRA Research Fellowship, the Nigeria Watch team and the Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP) presented gifts as tokens of appreciation to the out-going director.

Official Launching of Nigeria Watch: Arrangements are in top gear to formally launch Nigeria Watch in the First Quarter of 2014. Researchers, policy makers, members of the media, and security personnel are expected as guests to grace the occasion.

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Fatality Trends is published tri-annually (3 issues per year)

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