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** All reports are based on anonymous NSRP sources.
Executive Summary
Jamaatu Ahlis-Sunna Liddaawati Wal Jihad (JAS) continues to be a major security challenge in Borno State as well as Bauchi and Kano States.

There were reported fissures within JAS and between JAS and Islamic State with leadership contest between Abubakar Shekau and Abu Busab Al-Barnawi newly appointed the head of Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA). However, the Nigerian government considered the reported fissures and appointment of Al-Barnawi as diversionary propaganda.

Humanitarian challenges in the North East remain, though newly accessible locations are being reached with life-saving items for those in need.

Political and social conflicts were reported across the four geopolitical zones under review, particularly in Yobe, Kano, Plateau, Kaduna and Bayelsa states.

Although the major militant groups in the Niger Delta declared ceasefire in the mobilizations against the Federal Government, the face-off between government and the aggrieved groups continue to affect the operations of oil companies, oil production and public revenues. It is feared that the push of the military against the militants will undermine the fragile cease fire.

National Context
John Kerry, US Secretary of State visited Nigeria in order to boost US-Nigeria relations and discuss greater support for counter-insurgency initiatives in the North East. Kerry also used the opportunity of the visit to express US support for the Buhari government's fight against corruption and advocate for the consideration of non-military approaches to addressing the Niger Delta Insurgency.

Criticism of President Buhari's administration on poor economic performance grew with increasing hardship with some speculating about government's plans to adopt emergency powers to control the economy.

The conflict over the position of Chairman of the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP) between Ali Modu Sheriff and Senator Ahmed Makarfi has continued to challenge the party's planned convention. Police obeyed a court order secured by the Sheriff faction and sealed off the party convention venue in Port Harcourt Rivers State. Although the convention was deferred in deference to court orders, the PDP still extended the tenure of the caretaker leadership of Markarfi.

After the launch of the clean-up exercise, the president inaugurated the governing board and the board of trustees for the exercise in the Niger Delta. The inauguration is intended to improve the perception of the government in the region by the people, and by extension, foster goodwill towards the government as it seeks to contain militant activities which are disrupting crude oil mining in the region.

Geopolitical zonal analysis (North East, North West, Middle Belt and Niger Delta)
Political

JAS continues to pose threat in North East
JAS has continued to be the major security challenge in Borno State in spite of successes in the war against terror especially in Adamawa and Yobe states. JAS continues to operate in Borno near the border forest locations like Alagarno, Gujba, as well as in the Northern fringes around Geidam. There were indications that JAS still moves fighters and equipment to other states in the North East, especially Bauchi.

Operational challenges continue to impede the fight against JAS. For instance, official and unofficial fighter groups supporting the military combat against JAS in Borno State are reportedly threatening to stop operations unless they are given special identification. This follows the reported arrest and detention of the leader of the Borno State local hunters/vigilante group (Sarkin Baka) while his group was pursuing JAS fighters to Ngamdu, a border town between Borno and Yobe states.
There were indications of fissures in JAS. The Islamic State, (IS) reportedly announced the appointment of Abu Musab al-Barnawi, the biological son of the late JAS leader, Mohammed Yusuf, as the new leader of JAS, replacing Abubakar Shekau.

However, the Nigerian government considers the reported appointment of Al-Barnawi as propaganda intended to divert attention from the severe losses JAS has suffered. Sources claim JAS have been weakened by cut-off of it supplies and may have been advised to surrender rather than insist on prisoner exchange. However, JAS still poses a steady threat to communities in the North East of Nigeria and has also launched offensives in neighbouring Chad, Niger and Cameroon.

Political struggles in Yobe and Kano state remain
The reappointment of members of the of the caretaker committees of all the 17 local government areas in Yobe State shortly after the dissolution of the councils have generated misgivings by the political class and members of the public. This stems from concerns that the continuous re-appointment of the same political office holders is inimical to political recruitment and political participation. There are fears of increased inter-party and intra-party conflicts especially since the state governor announced dates for new LG elections to douse tensions.

The on-going crisis between the erstwhile governor, Senator Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso and the incumbent, Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, worsened when Ganduje sacked the state Accountant General Dr Danjuma Adamu and replaced him with his commissioner for budget and planning, Hajia A’isha Bello Mahmud. The move is considered as a means to reduce the influence Kwankwaso in the state governor.

Elections drive conflict in Kaduna, Plateau, Rivers, and Bayelsa
Mobilizations over elections are generating tensions in Kaduna, Plateau, Rivers and Bayelsa states. There were concerns in Plateau that the state government was not keen to conduct local council elections as no directive had been given to the electoral commission and government did not make budgetary allocation for elections.

A major source of tension in Kaduna State remained the non-conduct of local council elections. Aggrieved residents and opposition party groups said the non-conduct of elections is linked to reported fears of the State Government and the ruling APC of a possible electoral defeat given the state of the economy.

INEC announced the postponement of the rerun elections for a seat in the Rivers state house of assembly due to arson of INEC office in Bori LGA. This elicited angry reactions from state PDP supporters who accused electoral officers of supporting the APC.

The fall out of the December 2015 and January 2016 Governorship elections in Bayelsa state have continued to create tension and instability in communities such as Peremabiri (in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area), Nembe, Basambiri and Oluasiri (in Nembe Local Government Area). Before the elections, these communities had factions that were engaged in tussles over control of community leadership structures – Council of Chiefs, Community Development Committee and the Youth Body. But during the electioneering period, the All Progressives Congress (APC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) solicited and won the support of opposing factions; thus deepening the intra-community divisions and the palpable hatred they exhibit towards each other. Because the PDP won the elections, its members are using the paraphernalia of office to entrench control of their communities.

Ethnic and Religious minorities remain in conflict in Plateau and Kaduna states
The Governor has received the reports of the two committees set up last December 2015 with the promise to study and implement their recommendations. The two committees are the Committee on the creation of Chiefdoms/ Districts and Village Areas and that on review of traditional ruler's welfare. The creation of chiefdom committee attracted attention from communities seeking the creation of chiefdoms or districts for their communities.
The chairman of the committee reported that over 4900 requests were received from different groups for the creation of chiefdoms, districts and village areas as indication of popularity of the government decision to respond to people’s desires. However, the request for the creation of a district for Hausa Muslim community in Jos was contested by some native ethnic groups in the state. It is premature to predict what the reaction of the people will be when Government announces its decision on the request for the creation of a district in Jos Municipal.

The advocacy campaign of Professor Sonni Tyoden, Plateau state Deputy Governor on the need for grazing reserve/ranching in the state was resisted at the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) headquarters in Jos. Reports in the media indicate that the Deputy Governor was booed during an awareness campaign organised by the Strategic Committee of the COCIN headquarters as he articulates the relevance of the provision of the grazing ranches to sustaining peace in the state. People allege that the awareness campaign was organised at the instance of the state government as a way of forcing the people to accept the policy on grazing ranches in the State.

Similarly, tensions are mounting across Kaduna State as the State Government commences the demolition of illegal structures and buildings with emphasis placed on those structures that were constructed under high voltage power cables and those constructed illegally on government lands. About 32 houses are already marked for demolition. Many communities are vehemently opposed to the move and the 21 days ultimatum served them which lapses in the third week of the month. The move and opposition have solicited attention of the international community such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, who have lent their opposing voice in the matter. The State Government have indicated that they would not compensate owners of unauthorised houses built on land belonging to government schools and hospital. The demolition commenced in Zaria, to be followed by Kaduna, and Igabi local government area. The state government also revealed that most of the illegal structures and buildings contravened section 29 of the Kaduna State Urban Development Agency (KASUPDA) Law No. 12 of 2015.

Social

**Humanitarian emergency continues in Borno state**
Born Government and key stakeholders and figures in the state continue to seek support from donor agencies, humanitarian organisations and the international community for help to avert food crisis in the state due to devastation caused by the insurgency. The state government says it is dedicating a good percentage of its resources to solving the living challenges in IDP camps in the state. It was responding to a report by, Medecin San Frontieres (MSF) on a looming food crisis in the North-East. Additional information has been discovered abut informal IDP camps that were not accessible. The deployment of humanitarian planes and helicopters flying aid workers to deliver assistance and provide updates that are shared at the coordination meetings with the Nigerian government has helped to begin addressing the lack of support to these previously unknown/inaccessible locations.

**Illicit activities perceived on the rise in Kano and Kaduna States**
The activities of notorious gangs are becoming increasingly prevalent and worrisome despite efforts by the various security agencies and community leaders to curtail the problem. Kano state experienced the resurgence of the ‘Yandaba’ gangs in the month of August. Many residents of Kano metropolis lived in constant fear following the audacious return of the deadly ‘Yandaba’ gangs who raid communities and attack innocent residents at will. The gangs use small and light arms to terrorize residents of various communities especially those living within the ancient city of Kano.

The kidnapping of the family members of some influential people and the activities of secret cults/ritualists also upset security dynamics in the state. Kidnapping has become an issue of great concern in two local government areas – Doguwa and Tudun Wada in Kano State. Perpetrators are believed to be former cattle rustlers who were early this year, granted pardon by the state governor. They are believed to be hiding in the very large Falgore forest in Doguwa local government area increasingly kidnapping nomads and families of the wealthy individuals, politicians and other influential people in the area and demanding ransom before they are released.
In August, sources say the kidnappers have changed their modus operandi by sending letters to the families of their proposed victims informing them of their planned action and demand for ransom.

Parents in the state are crying out over too many cases of missing children; a situation suspected to be perpetrated by ritualists. Children of five years or less are whisked away by suspected kidnappers. In just a month, over 10 children were reported missing in Hotoro community of Nassarawa LGA in Kano State. It was observed that the cases of missing children are more prevalent in areas like Wuro-Bagga, Walalanbe, Haye, Tinshama, Hotoron-Arewa, Sauna, Na’ibawa, Ladanai and Gunduwawa communities. A resident of one of the mentioned communities said in July alone over 30 children went missing from five communities, adding that the perpetrators are too many.

Crime rates appear to be on the rise as criminals are reported to have intensified their nefarious activities such as armed robbery, murder, kidnapping, cattle theft and car theft in and around the state. There were reports of highway robbery especially along the Birnin Gwari to Kaduna axis, Kaduna to Kano sector, Kaduna to Jos and Kaduna to Abuja axis as well. The forest bordering Kaduna, Katsina, Zamfara and Niger State is portending a new form of threat and danger apart from cattle rustling.

Across the State, the recorded practice of kidnapping for ransom has attained an alarming proportion and continues to pose serious security challenges for the authorities. Most of the incidents have led to arrest after huge ransom fees have been paid in exchange for the victims. For instance, earlier in the month police confirmed the kidnapping of Hon. Sani Bello Mashi, a House of Representatives Member, representing Mashi/Dutse constituency of Katsina State, by gunmen at Goburawa village along Birnin Gwari area of Kaduna State. He was later released after the payment of a ransom of N10 million Naira while some members of the gang have been arrested in Katsina state and some part of the ransom recovered. Similarly, Dr. Abdulmalik Mohammed Duruguwa, a former campaign coordinator of Kaduna State Governor, Mr Nasir El Rufai was kidnapped on a Friday at his GRA Malali residence at gun point. The Kidnappers demanded a ransom fee of N20 million Naira. He was released after four days. He observed that most of his abductors were unemployed graduates. This has intensified fears of free movement by the upper class.

**Inter-communal clashes continue in Kaduna State**

The month of August witnessed the resurgence and persistence of inter-communal conflict between herdsmen allegedly to be on a vengeance mission and indigenous settlers, notably in the southern part of the state. The communal conflicts have led to a situation of destructions of lives and properties, as well as displacements of communities as the populations have fled to safety. For instance early in the month, armed gunmen allegedly believed to be herdsmen simultaneously attacked communities in southern Kaduna State where they killed eleven (11) people, maimed several individuals and razed down several villages.

The gunmen unleashed mayhem on Ankpon village in Nandu and Kabamu village in Godogodo kingdom of Fadan Karshi in Sanga Local Government Area and Gida Biyu, Akwa’a and Angwan Anjo communities that are parts of the Jema’a Local Government Areas. These local governments are bordering Plateau and Nasarawa states from Abuja the Federal Capital Territory. The villagers attacked have become homeless and refugees in Godogodo, Gidan Waya, Kafanchan and neighbouring towns.

**Kaduna State Government Committee Report on December 2015 Incident Released**

The Kaduna State Government has officially released on its web site the committee report on the Army-Shi’ite Confrontation. It is generating wide spread discussions about the degree of culpability and statistics of death amongst the elites and across the various sectors of the State. The outcome of the report is most likely to have wider repercussions even towards other States bordering Kaduna State and beyond in the northern part of the country.

**Inter-Faith Peace and Harmony Centre Opened in Kaduna to mitigate tensions**

An international Centre for Inter-Faith Peace and Harmony has opened in Kaduna. The centre is an initiative of Jama’atul Nasril Islam (JNI), the umbrella Muslim organisation in Nigeria, and the Christian Council of Nigeria.
The centre is located in Kaduna as observed by the Governor in his opening addressed due largely because in the last three decades Kaduna has witnessed 12 rounds of bloody violence that has claimed more than 20,000 lives and destroyed properties worth tens of millions of Naira. Kaduna city is now balkanised along religious lines, with Muslims living on the northern part of Kaduna River and Christians living in the Southern part.

Sea Piracy continues to negatively affect those in Bayelsa state
Sea-piracy, armed robbery, murder and kidnapping have become very frequent in the state. The Nembe, Twon and Akassa axis of the state are now notorious for sea piracy, attacks and killing of security personnel. Sea piracy takes place nearly every week, resulting in deaths, injuries, rape and stealing. Sea piracy also takes place in the Southern Ijaw local government axis, but it is not as severe as the Nembe, Twon and Akassa areas. In the Nembe and Ogbolomabiri, three soldiers of Operation Delta Safe (ODS) were attacked and killed by persons suspected to be sea pirates or militants. Before this incidence, three personnel of the Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC) were also killed in the same area. An officer of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) was killed by oil pipeline vandals in the Southern Ijaw area, just as a staff of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was kidnapped.

Ethnic group dissention over foreign company operations in Niger Delta region
The Tein and Egbebiri communities in the Biseni Clan of Yenagoa Local Government Area were engaged in conflict arising from dispute over the use of each other's territory to protest against Nigerian Agip Oil Company (NAOC) operations in both communities. There was a stand-off for two days as the Tein community prevented Egbebiri indigenes from using the only access road which runs through the Tein community. The matter was resolved through the intervention of the Chairman of the Yenagoa Local Government Council and the member representing the area in the Bayelsa State House of Assembly. The actors were mainly youths of both communities.

Incidents of violence recorded in August, including the shutting-down of the Chevron facility; the NPDC, Ughelli Pumping Station; the bombing of the delivery line to Eriemu Manifold and the NDA's threats of independence, are related to social conflict drivers. These conflicts have negative social implications as many youths organizations appeared emboldened to damn the consequences of their adventure in seeking self-recognition. The Benikruku Community in Gbaramatu Kingdom in Warri South West Local Government gave Chevron a seven day ultimatum to negotiate with the community or have its facility shut down over lack of employment of the youths in the host community, marginalization in terms of infrastructural development, not being alive to its corporate social responsibility and violation of local content requirement.

The Niger Delta Avengers denied agreeing to a cease fire in the region. The group also denied giving Mr. Ballantyne Agiri the mandate to negotiate with the Government on their behalf. The group threatened to declare the Niger Delta region as an independent nation by October 1st, if the Federal Government fails to restructure the country.

In the month of August, a new militant group that calls itself Niger Delta Greenland Justice Mandate (NDGJM) bombed a major crude oil delivery line that runs from Iyede in Isoko North Local Government Area to the Eriemu Manifold in Urhobo land. The facility belongs to the NPDC/Shoreline Resources. Prior to this, the group had warned earlier that the Federal Government's recognition and negotiations with Ijaw Militants was one sided as other ethnic groups that produce oil and gas were not being carried along. In a newspaper report, the group was quoted as saying: "This line of action has been made inevitable by an unjust system which only responds to the violent, to the detriment of the peaceful and law abiding".

The shutdown of commercial operations at the Ughelli Pumping Station (UPS) of the NPDC by the staff of the UPS, the bombing of the Eriemu Manifold major delivery line, the shutdown of Chevrons facilities both in Escravos and Benikruku have impacted negatively on the economic balance of the people and the nation in general.
Economic

Failure to pay salaries to civil servants continues
Borno State Government has joined other states such as Plateau, Kaduna and Rivers, by failing to pay its workers salary as at when due. The state government is yet to pay workers on its payroll for the month of July, three weeks into the month of August. During the month of August, over 3,000 newly employed state government workers have not been paid their salaries from February to October 2015 in Kano State. In Plateau State, primary school teachers were paid outstanding salaries two months delayed. This signals difficult time as the state economy is hugely dependent on spending from the salary, to keep it going. Trading and commercial activities have been adversely affected by the insurgency, with no meaningful business going on.

Market reopening in Yobe state signals progress
Markets closed in some parts of Yobe State in order to sustain the economic blockade of JAS have been re-opened. A cross section of traders expressed delight over the re-opening of the markets. However, they recount their losses. In spite of the re-opening of the markets, the prices of goods and essential commodities kept going up. Traders lament that their savings have been depleted as a result of the weak purchasing power of their potential customers. However, in Gujba and Gulani LGAs food insecurity poverty are likely to threaten peace and security. For instance, some members of the communities resorted to washing treated seeds given to them by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) with detergents, cooking and eating them instead of planting them. Members of the communities who were made to comment on the situation linked this to poverty and economic incapacity

Youth job creation plans underway in Kano state
In a related development, the Federal government in collaboration with the Kano state government has perfected a plan to create over one million jobs for youth in the state. This is being planned to be achieved through the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). According to the Director General of the agency, Mr. Dikko, who was in Kano in August, the federal government through the agency has set aside a total of N10 billion for the programme which will help in reducing poverty and youth unemployment in the state.

A youth corps member, Mr. Duduyemi Oladayi has trained 50 men and women on various skills acquisition trades in Nassarawa LGA of Kano state. The beneficiaries received training on tailoring, welding, knitting and saloon. The corps member, a graduate of economics from Osun State University said they were advised to always behave well during the service and ensure that they contribute positively to the development of the communities of their places of primary assignment.

Increasing cost of food raising concerns
The cost of food stuffs have continued to increase despite the decline in economic activities in the state. The cost of rice has increased to between N550 to N600 while local rice sell for N450 to N500; a bag of rice that was sold for N16, 000 now sells for N18, 000. Other food stuffs equally recorded hike in price while the income of civil servants remained static. Artisans have fared no better, as they complain of lack of jobs.
Implications and Recommendations for Programmes in the North East

For programmes operating in Borno State, it is important to consider the fluidity of the security environment when designing and implementing programming in all sectors. The new security challenges confirmed regarding the shift of JAS from Sambisa Forest to Burra Forest in Bauchi State suggests that the corridor for this insurgency may be widening in a way that will continue to present challenges for staff that are implementing programming across all six NE states. Also, the attempt by Al-Barnawi to connect the support from humanitarian agencies to IDPs, as an attempt to “Christianise” IDPs suggests that humanitarian organisations providing support in the North East may be targets of insurgent attacks. Therefore, it is recommended that programmes working on humanitarian support outside of major capital cities in the North East consider adapting flexible planning to assure that its staff and the local beneficiaries do not become victims of violent attacks – both from JAS and radicalised elements in IDP camps - in the process of providing aid.

The killing of three people by suspected members of JAS calls for concerted efforts from security sector programming in Yobe State to work with state officials to assure that international and national human rights are upheld in current military actions against JAS. It is also recommended to donors such as DFID and the French government to encourage effective communication between Borno State government and Yobe State government to assure that intelligence is shared between the two states regarding military operations. For programmes considering expanding to Gulani or Gujba LGAs, it is important to consider security and risks assessment updating due to the withdrawal of the voluntary police in those areas.

This is especially important given the on-going food insecurity in Gujba and Gulani LGAs. This month's indication of this food scarcity was the report that individuals have been cooking treated seeds donated by INGOs instead of planting them to address their malnourishment. For programmes working on humanitarian support such as Catholic Relief Services in Yobe State, greater collaboration with the Nigerian government agencies such as National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Yobe State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) to see that adequate relief items are given to the people who have relocated to their liberated communities. Also, the State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) programme may also wish to encourage the Yobe State House of Assembly to legislate on adequate provision of relief materials and empowerment strategies for the affected people.

The pronouncement by the Executive Governor of Yobe State that local government elections will be held in February has stir underground politicking at the grassroots level in the state. This is capable of prompting inter-party and intra-party rivalry. The major concern is hitch-free pre-election and post-election period. Programmes working with legislators such as SPARC may wish to encourage the Yobe legislature to enact local government election regulations that would engender internal democracy and political participation as well as financial appropriation in respect of the election. There is the need for sustained advocacy in respect of the prevalence of political recruitment among the political actors. It is envisaged that this will minimize intrigues and skirmishes during campaigns and after the elections in a security vulnerable state like Yobe.

Implications and Recommendations for Programmes in North West (Kano)

The lingering crisis between the former governor and the incumbent is affecting the smooth and effective running of the state and local government administrative affairs. Efforts by some private agencies as well as NGOs are being affected. For instance, the efforts of many NGOs and development partners working on enhancing good governance in the state may be suffering from set-backs as the state government tries to protect and defend itself from the attacks coming from the camp of former governor and other political opponents coupled with the economic recession facing the country at large. Therefore, it is recommended that programmes working on governance, accountability, transparency and inclusivity to consider diversified entry points such as traditional and religious leaders in addition to state government in Kano to work on these issues while the state and local government administrations work on resolving their conflict.
Implications and Recommendations for Programmes in the Middle Belt (Plateau and Kaduna)

The increased rate of armed robbery, cult related killings and assassinations without any arrest or traces of perpetrators are indicators of insecurity and gaps in the security architecture in the state. The heightening inflation rate and the level of poverty in the society as a result of unemployment/underemployment is fuelling grievances that can easily trigger violent conflict at the slightest provocation. It is therefore recommended that programmes in the area of governance such as SAVI or SPARC or J4A and peace-building such as NSRP to look into the possibilities of supporting activities towards improving community policing and coordination between the various security agencies and the citizens’ initiated neighbourhood watch.

The wider threats of perennial inter-communal conflicts between herdsmen and indigenes continue to pose serious challenge to governance and security in the state. The renewed clashes and destructions poses a grave threat to peace and security, as that axis is the connecting point between Abuja, Nasarawa, Plateau, Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa and Taraba States and back to Abuja. If not properly addressed, it may escalate as the circle of violence and deaths continue to widen and deepen. Programmes focused at peace building and reconciliation may consider addressing conflict dynamics in southern Kaduna through multi-stakeholder platforms for conflict resolution. The deluge of youth unemployment and criminality is a major source of concern as evident in the spate of criminal kidnapping and brazen armed robbery attacks. DFID programmes working on governance and security sector such as DDIN, J4A, and SAVI may consider additional programming focused on youth and gang related issues that seeks to take the youth away from criminality but unleash the strength on more vocational and technological issues.

Implications and Recommendations for Programmes in the Niger Delta (Rivers, Bayelsa, and Delta)

Political tension arising from unpopular government policies tends to unsettle the stability of the polity which was returning to normalcy after the instability that followed the Governorship elections. The proliferation of arms, cults and gangs in the state makes this a threat to peaceful governance. Beyond this is the implication for efficient service delivery. The violence and instability which are likely outcomes of the economic hardship associated with the non-payment of salaries are a huge threat to intervention programmes such as MADE; which seeks to reduce poverty in the Niger Delta, including Bayelsa State. Programmes should consider these in their security mapping and planning. The state government should consider negotiating with its workers and agree on an acceptable template for the payment of salary during the period of recession.

The ultimatum given to Chevron by the Benikruku Community in Gbaramatu and the continued shut down of Chevron facilities in Ugborode, Escravos may present challenges to peace and security in Delta state in the coming months. For programmes such as FOSTER working on oil sector transparency and accountability, this tension may be mitigated by support to local organizations and local leaders working on maintaining the peace at the community level in the short-term. For other programmes, such as those working on natural resources management and peace building should consider advocacy with Chevron, State and Federal governments and the communities involved to mitigate the tension and stem conflict escalation where such programmes are not already in place.

The month of August witnessed the growth of political tensions and polarization of communities and residents. This suggests that programming working on social cohesion and citizen-state relationships such as the Nigeria Stability and Reconciliation Programme may wish to consider how to open more multi-stakeholder dialogue around the grievances underlying the uptick of tensions in the state. Programmes working with security agencies should consider focussing on community policing, while dedicating specific initiatives towards addressing cult related violence in the state.