Plateau State
Elections Scenarios and Recommendations

Draft Produced 17 December 2014

Disclaimer: The following analysis is based on discussions with State-level actors and so reflects their perceptions, not the view of the Peace and Security Working Group. These scenarios were produced prior to the 2014 primary elections and are thus subject to change. Where relevant, updates have been made to reflect evolving dynamics.

Plateau At-a-Glance

Current Governor	Jonah David Jang
Current Ruling Party	Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)
Key February 2015 Elections	Presidential, Gubernatorial, National Assembly elections, State House of Assembly.
Prognosis	Plateau state has been considered one of the most volatile states, placed in the highest threat level (red category) of CLEEN's latest report.

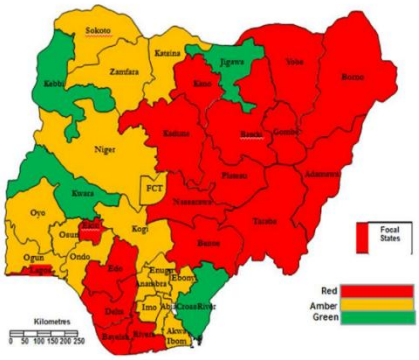

Figure 1: CLEEN Map of Hot Spots for Election Violence

Plateau Violence Data

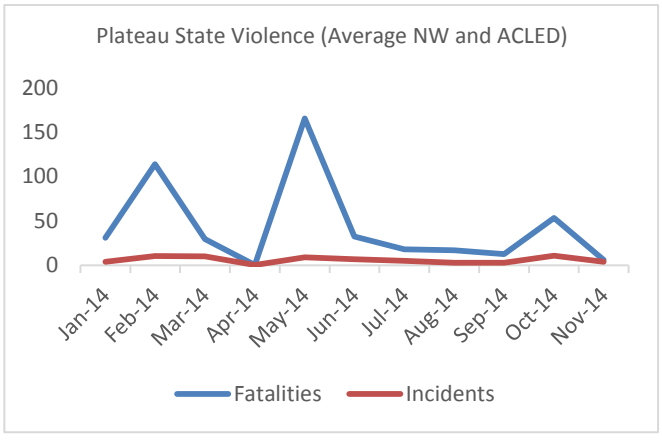

Figure 2: Peace Map (www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

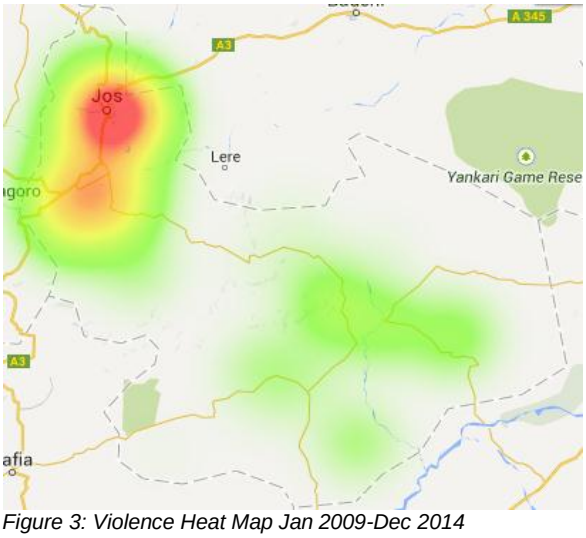

Figure 3: Violence Heat Map Jan 2009-Dec 2014

Political Developments:

- Plateau is a multi-ethnic state with over 60 ethnic groups present in every part of the state
- Important mining and commercial centre 10-20 years ago but decline of mining industry and commercial activity now one of the main drivers of political unrest especially the illegal mining activities of both locals and internationals, particularly in the Southern zone
- Since 1994, Plateau has experienced recurrent violence, generally along religious and ethnic lines and between pastoralists and farmers: extensive violence in 2001, 2004, 2008, 2010 and 2011
- Ethnic and religious lines tend to determine voting behaviour
- Question of 'indigeneity' where some groups have access to political power, resources, employment and education in the state or LGAs while migrants from other areas are relatively excluded
- Sectarian violence in Plateau and the Middle Belt heightens religious tension across Nigeria
- Civil-military relations characterised by misunderstanding and mistrust, often reinforcing ethno-regional and religious fault-lines. There have been allegations by some communities that the military have been reluctant to defend or protect them, and have themselves committed atrocities with impunity. Communities have reported military indiscipline and unprofessionalism, including harassment at checkpoints and the violated of their rights as citizens.
- Operation Rainbow established in June 2010 bringing together personnel from the Special Task Force (STF), Mobile Police (MOPOL), Nigeria Police, Department of State Services (DSS) and Nigerian Security and Civil Defence (NSCD). It has set up an early warning and early response infrastructure with a situation room – however level to which it has achieved its main objectives is unclear given ongoing conflict between pastoralists and farmers
- Plateau has a long history of people, groups and organisations working on peacebuilding, who have had success in ensuring violence is contained
- The government sees peacebuilding and NGOs as important and has appointed Special Advisors to the Governor on Peacebuilding and on NGOs. Although their offices are not well funded, this is not seen in other states and is a positive sign. They have held regular meetings and dialogue sessions, joint Sallah and Christmas celebrations and discussions with border communities.
- 3 Senatorial zones and 17 LGAs.
  - Northern: Senator Gyang-Pwajok (former DG of Government House, PDP) – mix of Muslims and Christians
  - Central: Senator Dariye (former Governor, Labour Party) – many Christian with large Muslim population in Mangu (Gindri) and a large Fulani Muslim community in Bokkos
  - Southern: Senator Lar (in national House of Representatives as APP, PDP) – strong Muslim presence in Wase and Kanam and mix of Muslims and Christians in the rest of the LGAs
- Plateau is seen as a safe PDP state
- Governor Jang is PDP (Northern zone), has been in office for 8 years and is serving his last term
- Previous Governor Dariye is from Central zone and served two terms as PDP i.e. 8 years. He is currently an APC Senator for Central Zone but has returned to the PDP
- PDP has system of rotation so assumed new Governor will be from the Southern zone – but this may not happen

Elections in 2011

- Results in 2008 elections were disputed and there was violence especially in Jos North, due to the contest for LGA chair elections, and reprisals in other LGAs as a result of Jos North violence. Justice Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry, 2009 looked into crisis of Nov 2008 as a result of Jos North LGA elections - boycotted by the Hausa/ Fulani communities due to perceptions of bias.
- Based on this experience, government and civil society took proactive steps in 2011 and were prepared; as a result violence in Plateau was contained in comparison to other states:
    - There were no elections held in Jos North in 2011 because of 2008 violence
    - NGO work around peacebuilding and violence free elections
    - CSOs doing monitoring and election observation
    - Federal government set up Lemu panel to investigate causes of violence, ascertain damage and make recommendations for prevention
- Governor Jang won a second term as Governor
- Between 2008 and 2011, violence that had been politically motivated took on a religious dimension
- Increase in tension between farmers and pastoralists from 2011 onwards.
    - In 2011, while elections related violence took place in towns, it was violence over land and water in rural areas

Key Political Developments Since 2011

- Senior Special Assistants on Community Relations representing Hausa, Fulani, Tiv, Igbo and Yoruba communities appointed in October 2012 to improve relations.
- Increased number of attacks on farming and pastoralist communities, increasing tension and violence over land and water from 2011 onwards. This is especially so in Riyom, Barkin Ladi, Jos North, Wase, Langtang North, Bokkos and Jos South LGAs.
- Sporadic attacks in one part leading to reprisal attacks in other areas of the state
    - Three bombs detonated in Terminus Market in Jos in May 2014. There were fears this would spark inter-communal violence. However, this was contained due to peacebuilding work and security sector response – and as there was a sense of solidarity against a perceived external aggressor. Communities and civil society mobilised across religious lines to stop violence e.g. by going out in potential hotspots such as on Bauchi Road and discouraging those about to commit violence from doing so

Major Political Players in Plateau State

Name	Position	Elected / Appointed	Party	Additional Information
Jonah Jang	State Governor	2011	PDP	Running for Abia Central senatorial seat in 2015, not running for governor in 2015
Ignatius Longjan	Deputy Governor	2011	PDP	Longjan is running in the 2015 gubernatorial election for Plateau state.
Victor Rampyal Lar	Senator	2011	APC	-
Joshua Chibi Dariye	Senator	2011	PDP	-
Pwajok	Senator	2012	Labour Party	-

Elections in 2015

- Group of politicians (including former Governor) who defected previously have returned to the PDP at the national level – initial refusal by Governor of acceptance and access to the party at the state level. There were media announcements to this effect. They wished to return before the party primaries and this was seen as a delaying tactic to ensure they don't contest in the party primaries. However, they have now been allowed back and have picked up their elections forms.
- Around 8 candidates have already shown their intention to run for the Governorship
- Political ambitions and conflict around zoning. It is seen as the turn of the Southern Senatorial zone to produce the next Governor and if this is not the case, this will cause tension and may cause violence. It will be seen as the Berom holding onto power and fissures will develop within the PDP.
- Many communities feel highly marginalised and may gang up against a Berom candidate. However, Berom youth are heavily armed and are hugely economically and educationally disadvantaged, as well as being largely unrepresented in Civil Society. Due to the ongoing attacks and huge loss of lives in the Berom community, if they lose political representation and are manipulated by parties with certain interests, the youth may perceive themselves as having nothing to lose. This will be highly likely to lead to violence in the countryside which could spill into the city and play into any Christian/Muslim divide - needs to be boosted as an election scenario in planning.

- Governor Jang is seen as wanting a successor from his (Northern) zone; wants Senator Gyang-Pwajok of the Northern zone to contest. Some say this is as he wants his Senatorial seat but it is not clear who the Governor's candidate is and this is creating tension within the PDP in the state.
- Under the present administration, the Governor has control of delegates the PDP machinery (as reflected in the sacking of the PDP Chairman Haruna Dabin when he announced attention to run for Governor – unlikely for the PDP to support any candidate against the wishes of the Governor.
- Deputy Governor is from the Southern Zone and wishes to contest – tension between him and Jang

- Another southerner is a popular and credible candidate from the Goemai community in Qua'anpan. He would get the vote of the largely Goemai community in Shendam and split the vote in Qua'anpan. This will likely divide the Southern vote for the Deputy Governor and affects the viability of a Southern zone candidate unless the Deputy Governor gets the approval of the current Governor as the PDP candidate.
- Within the Southern Zone, communities from Shendam, Qua'anpan. Mikang and Wase are opposed to a Tarok candidate emerging as Governor in 2015 - may produce violence in the Southern zone
- There is no strong opposition party in the state and whatever happens in the PDP primaries will have impact on elections but if the PDP candidate is from the northern zone, this will strengthen the opposition in terms of defections, mobilisation and voting patterns
- There is concern that issues within the party primaries will be transferred to the election.
- A lot of attention has been paid to peace and security issues in the Northern zone, with Operation Rainbow and JTF focusing their presence and patrolling here, with conflict deepening in the Southern zone not adequately addressed
- No elections held in Jos North and Wase in 2011 (under control of state electoral commission, under Governor) to suppress violence but INEC not the state will be in charge of the 2015 elections and they are likely to be conducted there. This may take a religious or ethnic dimension.
- Conflict between pastoralists and farmers persist e.g. attack of 7th September in Bokkos
- Recent tension between Anaguta and Berom communities in Tudun Wada on land and leadership related issues and on boundaries and water issues in Rikkos. Incidents of attacks and armed robbery continue in Bokkos in villages and on the road.
- Fear of recurrence of bombs and explosions of Plateau state government has banned operation of viewing centres after May 2014 bomb blasts
- Factors: widespread availability and possession of small arms, unemployment
- Change of leadership at the STF, police and SSS in Plateau

Key issues:

- Where should Governor come from?
- Unaddressed needs of survivors of previous violence
- History of inter-communal (religious, ethnic, farming/ pastoralist) tension and violence

Potential drivers

- Desperation to win at all cost so actions to rig elections in area where cannot win
- Religious, ethnic and geographical (zones) identities; political contentions combined with identity based historical grievances

Potential Types of violence

Jos North likely to be major flashpoint

Dimensions of violence: inter-party, intra-party, religious, ethnic – and combination

Need to pay attention to pre-election time i.e. primaries and politicking

- If zoning is not addressed and the PDP candidate is not from the south, another party may develop, there may be defections and opposition may become stronger. This may cause tension and violence will move from being intra PDP to between parties. Voting patterns may change.
- If Berom feel they are not represented in government, they may take up arms as they see themselves as victims given the villages burnt during farmer/ pastoralist violence and may perceive themselves as having nothing to lose.

Pre-election

- Controversy over zoning i.e. where candidates come from & intra-party contestation
- Politically motivated, intra-party conflict within PDP may lead to violence
- Depending on who Governor supports on candidate and the resulting emergence of opposition may lead to clashes between parties
- Hijacking of materials possible
- Disruption/ clashes at campaign rallies and political thuggery if there are two parties
- Bombs may be detonated in this period by JAS
- Sectarian violence
- Intimidation

During election:

- Ballot box snatching and voter intimidation
- Police used in intimidating opposition
- Bombs may be detonated in this period by JAS
- Sexual violence

Post-election:

- Declaration of results may lead to prolonged legal battles
- Political violence degenerating to sectarian violence is of a high probability if it happens.
- Bombs may be detonated in this period by JAS

To consider:

- JAS attack – bombs including suicide bombings of women in Kano and Lagos
- Possible impact of vigilante groups established due to conflict over land and water
- Impact of violence in neighbouring states on Plateau – including movement of displaced people, reprisal attacks
- Roles played by young people: migration of young people from states outside Plateau in search of employment; large population of unemployed youth in the state but also mobilisation by youth after recent bombs to keep the peace
- Proliferation of arms
- Reactions to Presidential and Governorship elections do not necessarily depend on each other – outcomes may produce widely different scenarios and need to be planned for separately.

Scenario 1

***Before Elections*:**

- Southern Plateau feels it's their turn to have a candidate but PDP candidate chosen is from Northern zone and Berom
- Hotly contested primaries leads to intra (PDP) party violence in Jos city and southern Plateau
- Opposition gain strength from defections and mobilisation in southern Plateau
- Increasing contestation, campaigning materials damaged and badly managed political rallies – violence between parties
- Parties agree to concede and abide by results, due to pressure from civil society

During Elections:

- Presidential election is held but outcome is contested – causes tension
- Heavy security presence – not always welcome by communities
- (Perceptions of) ballot stuffing/ stealing and polls crowded means not all able to vote
- Inflammatory statements by parties
- Small incidents spark riots/ clashes in Jos and southern cities
- Unpredictable violence in other LGAs due to unlikely alliances forming across religious and ethnic groups
- JAS attack in Terminus causes many to be killed and injured; fighting stops movement on Bauchi Road (Jos) – people unable to get to polling stations
- Civil society including women's groups, youth groups, media, religious leaders call for peace and mobilise to stop groups taking part in violence
- Tense Nassarawa & Kaduna elections lead to border violence

After Elections:

- PDP wins Governorship by a close margin, APC contests – in contravention of earlier agreement
- Violence in Jos mostly contained due to cooperation and mobilisation by civil society and security forces
- Violence persists in the south and border with Nassarawa
- Influential leaders publicly call for peace
- GEJ declared winner of presidential election after court battle; accusations and recriminations continue (riots in Kaduna and Kano, JAS attacks in Abuja and PH, continuing insecurity in the Northeast)

<u>Scenario 2</u>

Before Elections:

- Keen contestation between those from Langtang axis and Shendam/ Quaanpan axis over who will be the PDP flagbearer for the Governorship elections from the Southern Zone i.e. between Lar, the Southern Zone Senator, Jimmy Cheto, former Director in FCT Works Department, contested Governorship elections in 2011 (Langtang) and Longjang, the current Deputy Governor (Quaanpan)
- Governor decides to support Victor Lar (from Southern Zone) and PDP nomination goes to him; whoever has PDP ticket seen as highly likely to win the Governorship
- Outcome of PDP primaries not contested by any other candidate
- Internal discussion within the Berom and attempts by parties with interests to mobilise youth, including by playing into the Christian/ Muslim divide – leads to instances of violence in the countryside - but voices for peace are stronger and this does not spill into the city and is contained in the countryside

- Security agencies increase presence – leads to tension with communities
- Civil society work with communities around voter education and the need for issue based and violent free elections and continue strengthening the existing early warning system
- Increasing contestation and tension in Jos North over House of Representatives elections

During Elections:

- Heavy security presence – not always welcome by communities
- Buhari wins presidential election but outcome contested by PDP – no protests or violence in Plateau
- Rigging in Jos North over House of Representatives seat
- Delay in supply of voting materials puts pressure on INEC
- People worried about bombing; leads to people feeling afraid to come out and vote
- JAS attack in Terminus causes many to be killed and injured; fighting stops movement on Bauchi Road (Jos) – people unable to get to polling stations
- Civil society including women's groups, youth groups, media, religious leaders call for peace and mobilise to stop groups taking part in violence
- People stop going out to vote in city centre in Jos because they are worried of another bomb

After Elections:

- Lar declared winner of Governorship election; challenged by opposition in court
- Court cases for House of Representatives seat in Jos North and other LGAs
- Clashes in Jos North between supporters of opposing candidates
- Buhari declared winner of presidential election after court battle; accusations and recriminations continue (riots in the Delta sparks widespread insecurity across the region, JAS attacks in Abuja and PH, continuing insecurity in the Northeast)