EXPLOITABLE CONDITIONS

Demographic Pressures

Divided Societies

Economic Inequality

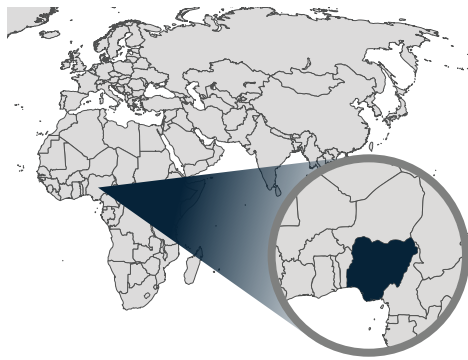Environmental Threats

Ineffective Government

Infrastructure Deficits

Multiple Sovereignties

Resource Scarcity

Nigeria
FAULT LINES

Fault Lines

FL1: Unbridled Territoriality

Nigeria is challenged by the intensification of territorial consciousness among ethnicities, which **has ossified ethno-territorial identity that is spurring the localization of sovereignty beyond the state** and creating unyielding challenges for security and stability.

FL2: Absence of National Identity and Integration

Nigeria's failure to integrate sub-national identities into the national identity **has steeped constituent groups in intense factionalization that undermines national unity and development and engenders pathologies of governance,** including nepotism and corruption.

FL3: Unrestrained, Unchanneled Population Growth

Nigeria's inability to channel its rapidly growing population into productive resources **has weaponized demography as a source of disorder and destabilization,** steadily elevating national security and stability risks with the potential to unravel regional stability.

The inability of Nigerians to identify at the national level rather than the local level is the intransigent obstacle to their country's stability. Identity plays a central destabilizing role because it is both socially constructed and contestable. It can deepen national divisions and empower malign domestic and foreign actors (e.g., China) to exploit disunity and further their parochial agendas.

Implications

1 **Reduced U.S. and Western Influence**

Moderate Risk
Probability: Likely
Consequence: Moderate

2 **Further Elite Factionalism**

High Risk
Probability: Likely
Consequence: Moderate

3 **Youth Restiveness and State Fracture**

High Risk
Probability: Occasional
Consequence: Catastrophic

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Elites & Belligerents

E1 Factionalized Local Elites

Local elites exploit ethno-territorial consciousness to localize discontent, which they use to gain national political access and the economic opportunities it bequeaths. Elite feuding can become very intense and produce destabilizing local conflicts, including manipulatively inserting hapless youths into elite-level disagreements.

Non-State Armed Groups

Armed, non-state actors—for example, Boko Haram & ISIS-WA, communal militias, secessionists, and fortune hunters—exploit population growth, youth unemployment, elite fracture, and economic decline to recruit youths who may soon roam free of their restraints to worsen insecurity and instability.

E2

Global Powers
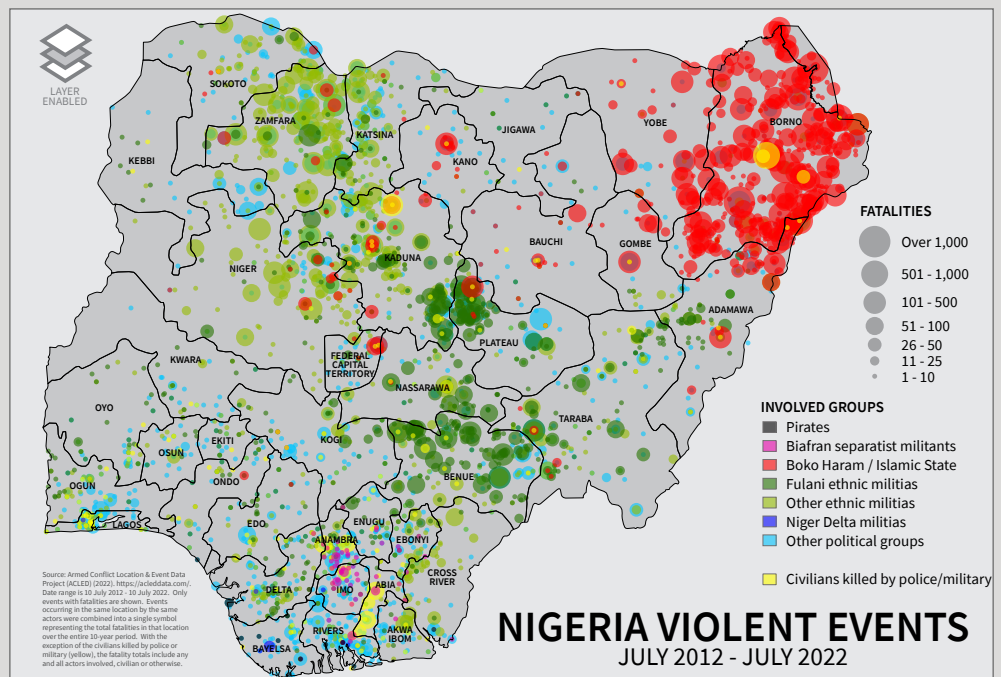
E3 Foreign Actors

China, Saudi Arabia, and Iran are secondary exploiters of Nigeria's sociocultural fault lines. While Saudi Arabia and Iran exploit the identarian divide to inject ideological frames (which have polarized northern Muslims), China exploits the fault lines to promote the illusionary belief among Nigerians that it is the only country that cares enough about Nigeria's national seams to offer solutions without preconditions. China's linking of constant conjunction events (e.g., Nigera's insecurity and frustration with U.S. preconditions associated with military sales) create distance between the U.S. and Nigeria.

ETHNO-TERRITORIALISM & CONFLICT

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa (211 million). Ethnicity is an important element in elite formation in Nigeria and is linked to group conflict. Nigeria has **446 ethnic groups**, which form two clusters: **"majorities"** and **"minorities."** The majorities, known as *wazobia*, a neologism for "come," are the **politically dominant Hausa-Fulani (north)**, **Yoruba (south-west)**, and **Igbo (south-east)** that **make up 56% of the Nigerian population**. The largest group of **minorities—Ijaw, Ibibio,** and **Edo (south-south), Kanuri (north-east),** and **Nupe and Tiv (north-central)**—constitute about **25%**

of the population. When broken down **by region**, the **north has more ethnic groups than the south (382 vs 64)**. Due to their diversity, the **NE, NC, and SS regions** are more prone to **identity-based conflicts**, including Boko Haram, herder/farmer, indigene/settler, and militant violence. The **SW and SE are prone to separatist agitation and violence due to their ethnic homogeneity**. Nigeria's diversity has worked to its advantage by preventing any one group from dominating, **although diversity is also a factor in the ossification of ethno-territorialism and disunity.**

FATALITIES
- Over 1,000
- 501 - 1,000
- 101 - 500
- 51 - 100
- 26 - 50
- 11 - 25
- 1 - 10

INVOLVED GROUPS
- Pirates
- Biafran separatist militants
- Boko Haram / Islamic State
- Fulani ethnic militias
- Other ethnic militias
- Niger Delta militias
- Other political groups
- Civilians killed by police/military

NIGERIA VIOLENT EVENTS
JULY 2012 - JULY 2022

Source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) (2022), https://acleddata.com/. Date range is 10 July 2012 - 10 July 2022. Only events with fatalities are shown. Events occurring in the same location by the same actors were combined into a single symbol representing the total fatalities in that location over the entire 10-year period. With the exception of the civilians killed by police or military (yellow), the fatality totals include any and all actors involved, civilian or otherwise.

Keith French, *Nigeria Violent Events (2012 JUL - 2022 JUL)*, 2022, map, GCKN, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.