



# NEWS MONTHLY BULLETIN- (WANEP-GHANA)

## (JANUARY 2023)

### I- INTRODUCTION

Human security issues recorded in the WANEP's National Early Warning System (NEWS) amounted to 235 incidents<sup>1</sup>. This resulted in 51 fatalities (16 males, 6 females and 29 inconclusive) and 98 injuries (9 males, 3 females and 86 inconclusive).<sup>2</sup> Data collected on incidents that occurred in the country in January 2023 indicated that the Ashanti region had emerged the region with a significant frequency of 189 incidents reported, made up mostly of fire outbreak (178) incidents. The Central region followed with 15 incidents and the Western region with 9 incidents. All other regions recorded less than 9 incidents.<sup>3</sup>

Among the key incidents reported this month are fire outbreaks, accidents, homicides, armed robberies, demonstrations, and chieftaincy disputes.<sup>4</sup> The highest casualty rates were recorded from road accidents and were higher in the Central region among other regions. From table 1 below, combined totals of all incident casualties were highest in the Greater Accra, Central, Ashanti and Western regions, chronologically.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 1: Reported Casualties for the Period of January 2023**

Regions	Ahafo	Ashanti	Bono East	Bono	Central	Eastern	Greater Accra	North East	Northern	Oti	Savannah	Upper East	Upper West	Volta	Western	Western North	Totals
Fatalities	1	12	0	0	13	2	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	51
Injuries	5	5	0	0	25	8	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	1	98
Total Casualties	6	17	0	0	38	10	50	1	1	0	0	0	0	8	17	1	149

Source: WANEP NEWS

The *Monthly Bulletin* provides analysis of the incident data recorded in the reporting period based on the following four thematic areas: Organized Crime and Violent Extremism (OCVE); Democracy and Governance (DG); Gender, Peace and Security (GPS); and Environmental Security (ES). The details of these incidents and casualties have been detailed under the thematic areas identified.

<sup>1</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

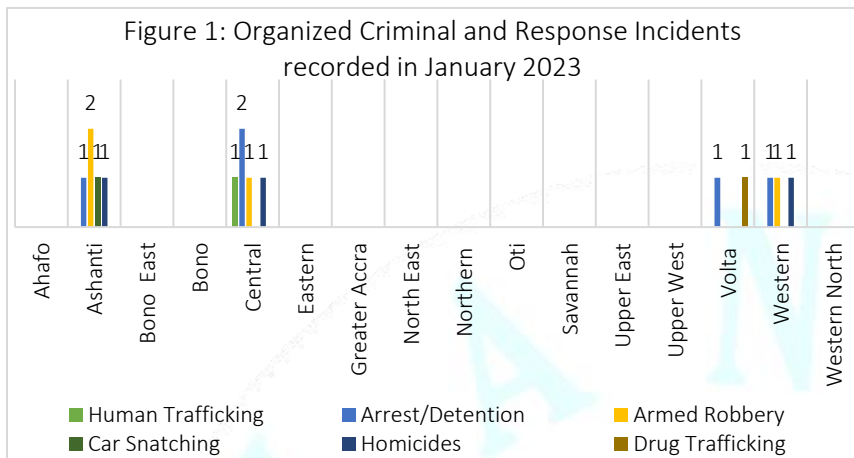
<sup>2</sup> WANEP National Early Warning System Data

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

## II- ORGANIZED CRIME AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM (OCVE)



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

Criminal incidents captured in various regions in Ghana include human trafficking, armed robbery, car snatching, and drug trafficking. Regions that recorded more incidents of crime than others were the Central and Ashanti regions, with 5 each as indicated in the figure 1 beside. Human trafficking, especially sex trafficking, was an incident recorded in the central region and

involved 8 female victims trafficked into the country to engage in commercial sex activities.<sup>6</sup> Although the problem is a gender issue, the trafficking of persons is also a criminal act that violates human rights and is illegal in many countries, including Ghana, under national and international laws. The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children (also known as the Palermo Protocol)<sup>7</sup> presents a framework that assists countries to address the matter. However, weaknesses in the implementation of the framework nationally, to protect women and girls against sexual exploitation is a major contributory factor to the thriving sex trafficking situation in Ghana and West Africa as a whole.

Two armed robbery cases were also recorded in the Ashanti region and one each in the Central and Western regions. The criminal act continues to be a major security concern that affects both individual and business communities. The motives for armed robbery in Ghana include rising poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities, proliferation of illegal arms, and weaknesses in law enforcement. The Government and security forces have taken measures to address the security threats. This includes increasing day and night patrols, intelligence gathering and implementing stricter gun control laws. Despite this, the threat remains recurrent. Within the period, reports have indicated the movement of Burkinabe from communities in Burkina Faso such as Bugri, Zouga and Asongo, into communities along the north-eastern side of the Upper East region in the Bawku West District. This as a result of the violent extremist attacks in Burkina Faso. Although the attacks are not on

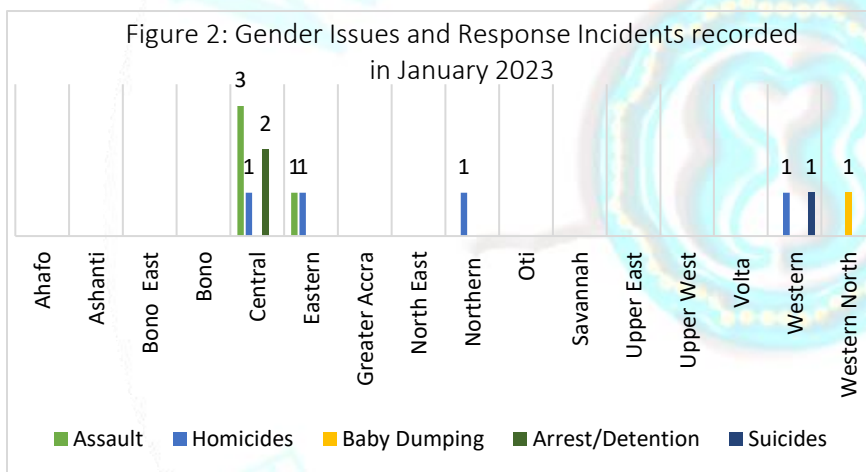
<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ghanaiantimes.com.gh/8-trafficked-sex-workers-rescued-7-repatriated-to-nigeria/>

<sup>7</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/protocol-prevent-suppress-and-punish-trafficking-persons>

Ghanaian soil, the influx of Burkinabe’s into border towns increases the risk of violent extremist and terrorist attacks in northern border communities, which could also serve as incubating grounds for further attacks.

The ongoing conflict between the Kusasis and Mamprusis, rooted in ethno-chieftaincy, is an issue that has the potential to cause a surge in dissidence, radicalization and the recruitment of radicalized young people into extremist groups. Additionally, the influx of migrants into border communities presents an opportunity for the illegal importation of small arms, light weapons, and other prohibited goods, which could further fuels violence in the affected regions. While the shared ethnic identity of those living along the Ghana-Burkina Faso border can provide shelter and support to fellow kinsmen, it can also serve as a means of mobilizing ethnic groups for conflicts in the northern parts of Ghana. Terrorists and extremist groups may also take advantage of this situation to launch attacks.

### III- GENDER, PEACE AND SECURITY (GPS):



Peace and security issues reported under this theme included assaults, homicides, baby dumping<sup>8</sup> and suicides.<sup>9</sup> From figure 2 beside, the Eastern region recorded an assault and homicide incident. In the western region, two incidents were recorded, a homicide incident at Ajoa in the Ahanta West Municipality<sup>10</sup> and a suicide at Bibiani.<sup>11</sup> The Northern Region recorded one homicide incident.<sup>12</sup>

The Central region recorded the highest number of incidents (6), especially physical assault cases and a homicide incident. At Gomoa-Nyamenadom in the Gomoa East District, a woman was murdered together with the son at their home.<sup>13</sup> Another incident also occurred at Assin Tomfokor in the Assin South District, where a resident

<sup>8</sup> A situation where young mothers or women, sometimes with very low financial status, abandon their newborn infants because they cannot take care of them or are unwilling to.

<sup>9</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/mother-and-son-found-hanging-dead-at-ajoa/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.myjoyonline.com/29-year-old-man-found-dead-in-his-room-at-sefwi/>

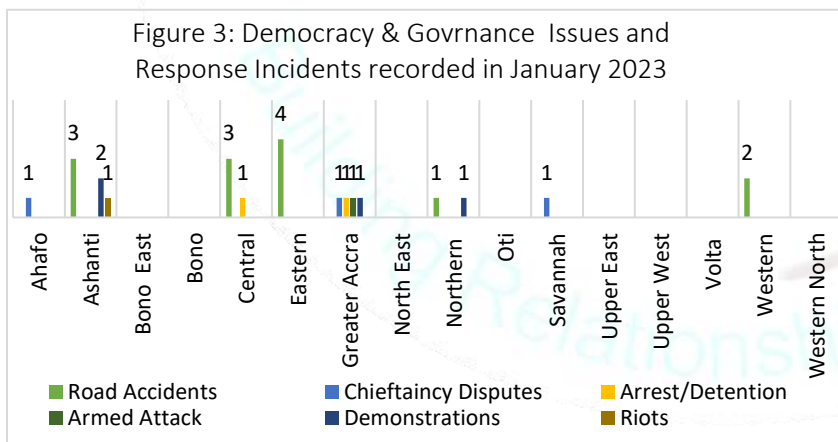
<sup>12</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/mother-and-son-murdered-at-gomoa/>

physically assaulted the parent with a cutlass, wounding him in the process.<sup>14</sup> A similar assault situation was also reported at the Awutu Breku District.

As indicated earlier, a human trafficking incident which was reported in the Central region involved eight girls who were trafficked into Ghana to engage in commercial sex. The intervention of the Ghana Police Service and the Cape Coast office of the Social Welfare Department was timely and made it possible for seven victims to be repatriated through the International Organization for Migration (IOM) after identifying the families of the victims in Nigeria. The government and various organizations are working towards combating this issue by increasing awareness, providing support to victims, and implementing stricter laws and enforcement measures. The Government’s digitization processes which includes the acquisition of the Ghana Card and its use as the base identification document and registration of mobile phone numbers, makes it easier for the authorities to clamp down on persons who are illegally resident in the country. These illegal residents include persons trafficked into the country. Other initiatives include the establishment of the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Ghana Police Service, which conducts investigations into allegations of human trafficking and pursues the prosecution offenders, as well as the establishment of the Anti- Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Unit (AHSTIP) of the Ghana Immigration Service; an operational unit set up to investigate and arrest human traffickers and smugglers, while also building the capacity of immigration officials to detect cases of trafficking and smuggling.<sup>15</sup>

#### IV- DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (DG):



Source: WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

From data gathered in the reporting period, 13 road accidents were recorded across the Ashanti, Central, Eastern, Northern and Western regions.<sup>16</sup> Three chieftaincy disputes were also recorded within the period, and these occurred in the Ahafo, Greater Accra and Savannah region.<sup>17</sup> In the Ahafo region, the dispute was triggered after the death of the Booma Chief, which sparked

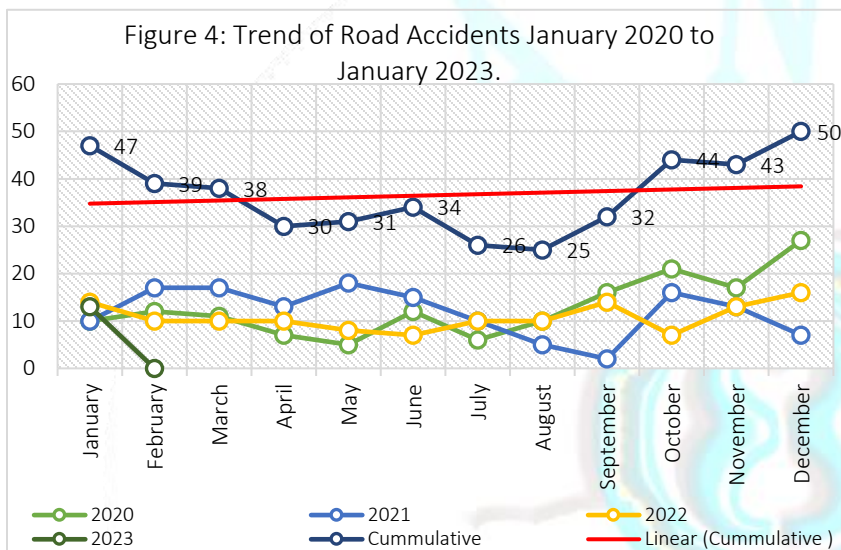
<sup>14</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/man-chops-off-fathers-hand-and-leg-at-assin-tomfokor/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/ghana/media/1851/file/National%20Plan%20of%20Action%20for%20the%20Elimination%20of%20Human%20Trafficking%20in%20Ghana.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>17</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

the feud between two families over who was next in line as chief.<sup>18</sup> One death was confirmed while an unconfirmed number of persons were injured. At Jamestown in the Greater Accra region, a similar succession dispute was triggered after the Jamestown palace was attacked by a claimant, leading the youth of the area to retaliate. No casualties were reported however properties were destroyed.<sup>19</sup> In the Savannah region, some youth in Buipe attacked a Fulbe who was enskinned as Mande chief. His residence and several other properties were burnt down. The violence was perpetrated based on the decision of the Buipewura Jinapor II to enskin a Fulbe as Mande chief.



Road accidents in Ghana have been a major issue, leading to numerous casualties and fatalities each year. In this month, 13 road accidents were recorded. These happened in the Eastern, Central, Ashanti and Western regions.<sup>20</sup> According to WANEP Ghana’s data captured since 2020, road accidents have been a on sturdy climb. The highest frequencies since 2020 occurs in the month of December (50) and continues in January (47) per the data captured. The government,

in partnership with various organizations, has

taken steps to promote the reduction road accidents, including improving road infrastructure, increasing police presence on roads, enforcing traffic laws, raising awareness about road safety and indulging the use of technologies like closed-circuit cameras at vantage locations like road intersections and box junctions. Nevertheless, road accident persistence continues to impact lives negatively. More efforts must be garnered to ensure a multi-level approach to dealing with the problem.

## V- ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY (ES)

Cases of fire outbreaks were recorded in the reporting period, especially in the Ashanti region. According to the Ashanti Regional Ghana National Fire Service, 178 fire outbreaks were recorded in the region. In the same period, six persons were confirmed dead because of these fires. Other regions that recorded fires included the Upper

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/bomaa-chieftaincy-dispute-one-dead-many-injured/>  
<sup>19</sup> <https://citinewsroom.com/2023/01/10-arrested-over-violent-chieftaincy-clashes-in-jamestown/>  
<sup>20</sup> Ibid

West region in Wa, where over 200 girls of the Wa Senior High Technical School were left stranded following a fire outbreak that razed portions of the main girls' dormitory block at the school.<sup>21</sup> In the Western region at Tanokrom, two firefighters were injured after a burning building fell on them.<sup>22</sup>

The arrival of the harmattan season comes with its attendant climatic hazards such as dry conditions that render materials very flammable, causing widespread damage to property and loss of lives. Among the issues that must be emphasized through sensitization of the public are proper electrical wiring, supervised cooking, proper fuel stations management, industrial fires, and extensive monitoring of infants at home and marketplaces.

Another issue of public health concern was reported in the Greater Accra region where five persons died, and 45 others were faced critical health conditions after consuming contaminated food from a local vendor at Oyibi.<sup>23</sup> The patronage of food from public spaces in Ghana, such as street food vendors and food courts in malls, is a common occurrence and an important part of the country's food culture. Patronage has shot up because of factors such as convenience, affordability, variety, socialization, and cultural significance. Despite its popularity, there are concerns about the hygiene and safety of food from such public spaces. The government implemented some measures to improve food safety, such as regular inspections, health certification and training for vendors, but enforcement of these requirements remains a challenge. This has accounted for issues like the food poisoning incident experienced recently in Oyibi and another that occurred at Mawarko Fast Foods at East Legon, in 2022.<sup>24</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Ghana Fire Service should intensify collaboration with various relevant agencies including the Police Service, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Authorities (MMDAs), and civil society organizations, to reduce the number of fire outbreaks and their impact through fire safety education and awareness campaigns on building codes and fire safety regulations, and also intensify investment in firefighting infrastructure.
- The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) must review and enforce already existing food safety regulations to ensure that street food vendors adhere to good hygiene practices and use safe food handling techniques. The FDA must also collaborate with the National Commission for Civic Education to provide food vendor training on food safety and hygiene, implement and enforce food safety regulations, regularly inspect

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/over-200-students-stranded-as-fire-destroys-wa-shts-dormitory/>

<sup>22</sup> WANEP Ghana NEWS Monitoring

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.adomonline.com/suspected-food-poisoning-waakye-kills-5-including-pregnant-woman/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/cause-of-food-contamination-at-marwako-restaurant-unknown-fda.html>

and monitor street food vendors, implement food labeling and packaging requirements, raise awareness and educate the public, encourage collaboration, invest in infrastructure improvements, and provide adequate sanitation facilities.

- The Government must intensify its financial investment in improved road infrastructure, support the Motor Traffic and Transport Department (MTTD) to enforce traffic laws, Support the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) as well as the National Road Safety Authority (NRSA) to provide driver education and training, implement vehicle standards, raise awareness about road safety, improve emergency response, and conduct road safety research.

## CONCLUSIONS

The report has highlighted the human security incidents recorded in Ghana in January 2023. These include fire outbreaks which had the highest frequency of occurrence and reported mostly in the Ashanti region. Road accidents, second highest in terms of frequency produced the highest casualty rates in the period especially in the Central region. Other incidents highlighted include homicides, armed robberies, demonstrations, chieftaincy disputes, car snatching, and drug trafficking etc. These and other human security challenges in Ghana require urgent attention and action of critical stakeholders to mitigate the threats and impact on human security in the country.

### CENSUS OF INCIDENTS FROM THE WANEP NEWS

THEMATIC AREA	NO OF INCIDENTS	CASUALTIES	
		DEATHS	INJURIES
<b>ORGANIZED CRIME &amp; VIOLENT EXTREMISM:</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
Human Trafficking	1	-	-
Arrest/Detention	5	-	-
Armed Robbery	4	3	8
Car Snatching	1	-	-
Homicides	3	1	0
Drug Trafficking	1	-	-
<b>WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
Assault	4	-	-
Homicides	4	6	0
Baby Dumping	1	0	1
Arrest/Detention	2	-	-

Suicides	1	1	0
<b>DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>39</b>
Road Accidents	13	20	33
Chieftaincy Disputes	3	1	5
Arrest/Detention	2	-	-
Armed Attack	1	0	1
Demonstrations	4	-	-
Riots	1	-	-
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>47</b>
Fire Outbreaks	180	6	2
Drowning	1	8	0
Flooding	1	-	-
Food Poisoning	1	5	45
Arrest/Detention	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>98</b>

Source: WANEP NEWS

*Through its National Early Warning System (NEWS), the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP- Ghana) develops and disseminates a monthly bulletin on Human Security at the end of each month to inform the different actors and /or partners and formulates recommendations to different decision-makers for targeted responses to the given alerts. This monthly monitoring is based on information gathered from the field by the WANEP-GHANA field monitors, and information also gathered from the various national and international media.*

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