

Welcome to the August issue of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Dataset (ACLED) *Conflict Trends*. Each month, ACLED researchers gather, analyse and publish data on political violence in Africa in realtime. Realtime conflict event data is published through our research partners at [Climate Change and African Political Stability \(CCAPS\)](#) where it is updated monthly.

In addition, historical data from Volume III of the dataset, covering conflict in Africa from January 1997 to December 2012, is available online at [acleddata.com](#), along with previous *Conflict Trends* reports, country profiles for key conflict-affected states (including Somalia, Nigeria and DRC), thematic special features, and information on the data collection and publication process.

This issue includes data and analysis of the escalating crisis in **Egypt**, which witnessed an intensification of fighting and related fatalities in July; an overview of events surrounding the recent elections in **Mali** and **Zimbabwe**; details of **Morocco's** conflict profile in historical and regional perspective; and a look at simmering tensions in **Mozambique**. Elsewhere on the continent (see Conflict Trajectory map), conflict is ongoing in **Nigeria** and **Somalia**, and escalating in **Ethiopia**.



Conflict Trajectory, July 2013

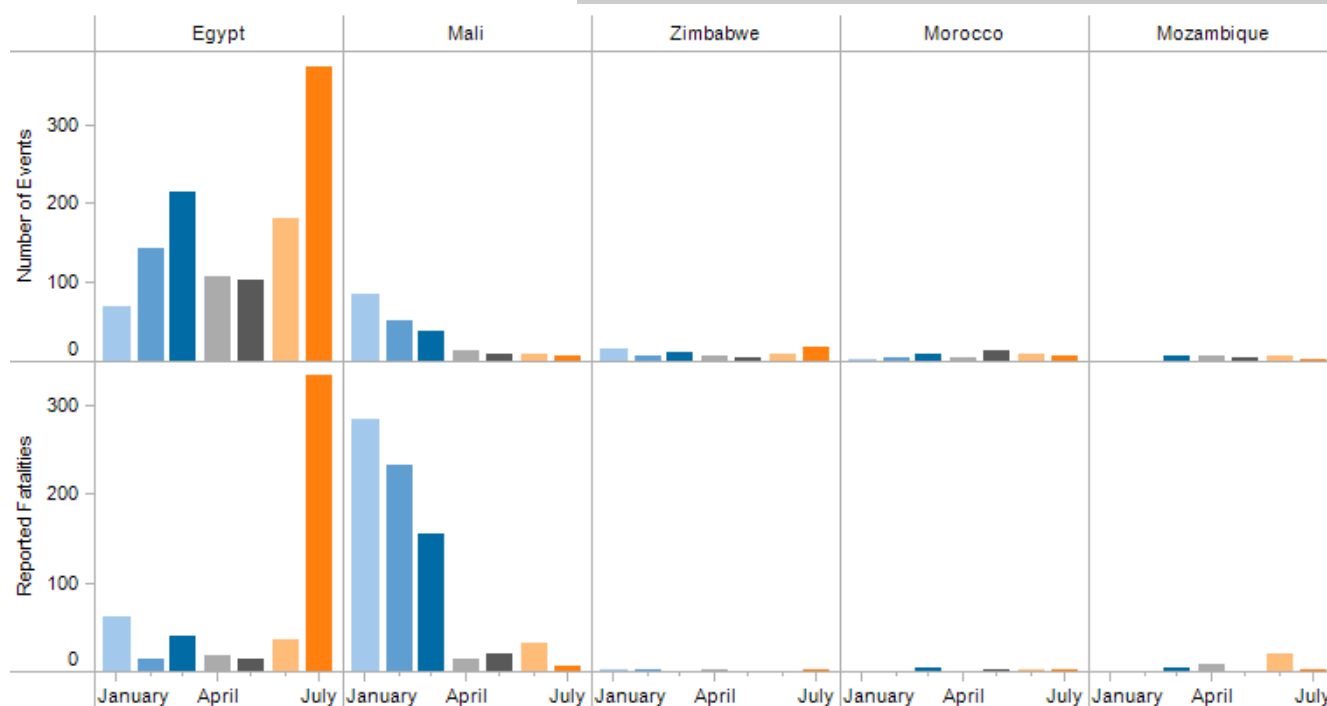


Figure 1: Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities, Select Countries, January - July 2013.

#### Egypt

Conflict escalated in Egypt once more this month, following the leadership crisis brought about by June's military ultimatum to beleaguered former President Mohamed Morsi. In last month's *Conflict Trends*, the ongoing demonstrations - being hailed in some media sources as Egypt's "second revolution" - were compared with the historical data for the period surrounding Hosni Mubarak's ousting. At the time of writing, while it was clear that the number of discrete protest and riot events was higher than in the 2010 - early 2011 period, the level of related fatalities had not yet risen.

In July, both conflict events and associated fatalities rose sharply, eclipsing the monthly figures for the 2010 - 2011 period (see Figure 2). An event type breakdown shows a sharp increase in riot and protest events, with battles also escalating steeply, indicating a greater level of militarization on both (all) sides of the divide, as opponents and supporters of the new military regime battle with one another (see Figure 3). In both absolute and proportional terms, violence against civilians has witnessed the smallest rate of increase. Civilian targeting has typically constituted around 10% of all political violence in Egypt in the last year, although spikes in October 2012, and February - March 2013, indicate that this is affected by sharp and sudden increases in non-combatant vulnerability.

Most recent violence against civilians in Egypt has been carried out by non-state actors - militias, unidentified armed groups, or spontaneous groups of rioters and violent demonstrators. State forces have primarily engaged other armed groups and rioters, with only 27.7% of civilian targeting involving state security forces since December 2010, compared to militia involvement in over 48.8% of similar events.

Analysis of armed actors in July reveals - unsurprisingly - a significant role for the military for the first time since January 2011 (see Figure 4). While the military has clearly retained influence, power and strength throughout the period of instability and transition in Egypt, its forces have not been directly engaged in much of the violence which involved demonstrators, militias and police forces across the country in the intervening period.

In recent weeks, there has been a clear and deliberate escalation in both the rhetoric and level of violence employed by the military. Supporters of the ousted president have established protest camps in Cairo, which security forces have repeatedly threatened to dismantle. In July, the military issued a statement in which it declared it would not 'turn its guns against its people,' but 'it will turn them against black violence and terrorism which has no religion or nation.' (*Reuters*, 26 July 2013). Having ousted

**Last month's *Conflict Trends* sought to compare levels of unrest from the 2010-2011 period with the present day, concluding that while protests were more numerous in June, reported fatalities remained low. July has seen a sharp and tragic increase in both.**

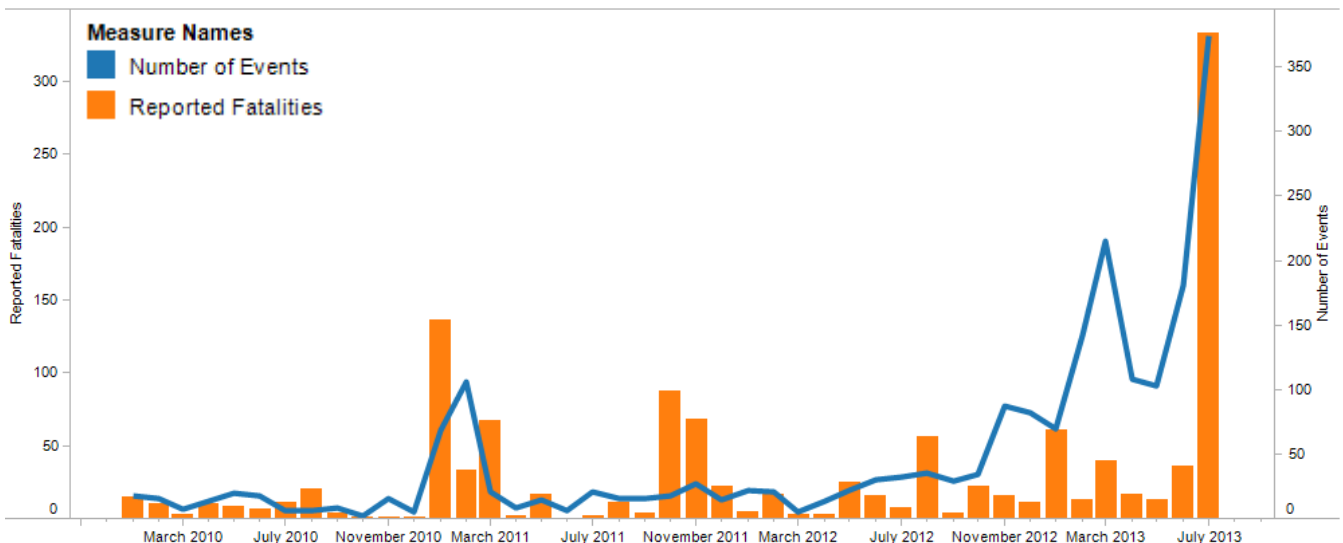
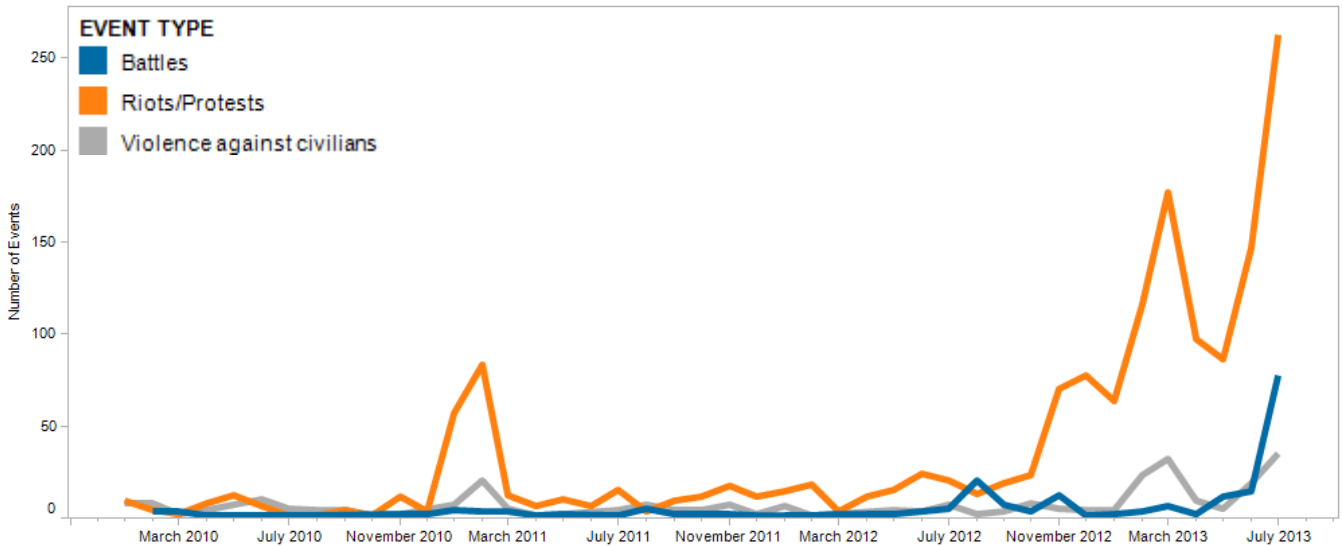


Figure 2: Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities, Egypt, January 2010 - July 2013.

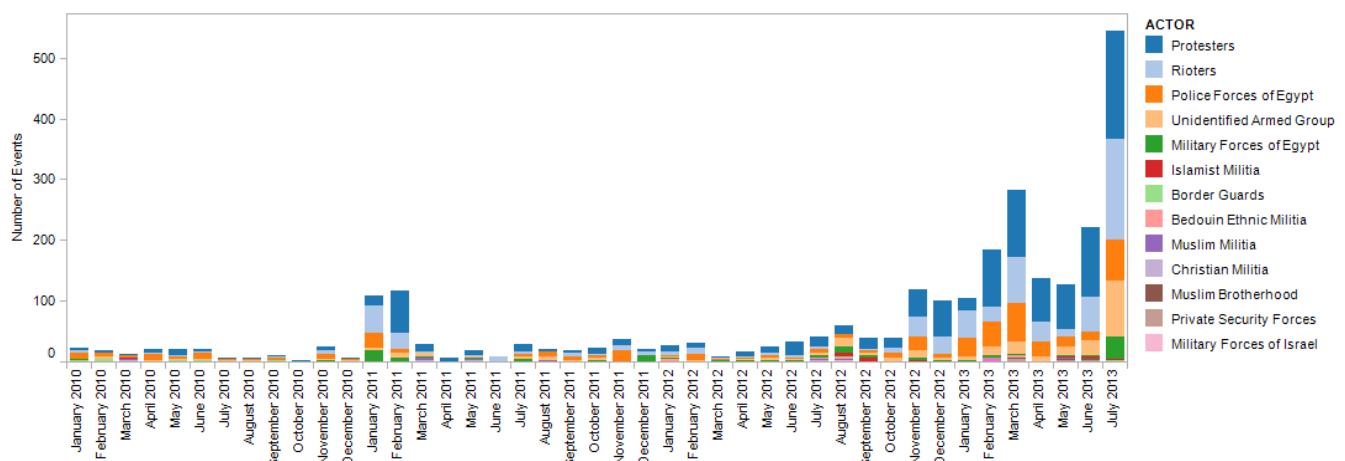
#### Egypt



**Figure 3: Conflict Events by Type, Egypt, January 2010 - July 2013.**

the country's first democratically elected president, thereby failing to secure a mandate in the conventional way, the army chief General Abdel Fattah then called on Egyptians to demonstrate in support of the military, so that it might have such a 'mandate' to take action against violent dissent. The rhetoric has not been hollow: July witnessed two separate mass killings of Islamist supporters of the ousted president involving the Republican Guard and the police, resulting in dozens of deaths which made headlines and alarmed observers internationally. Also worrying is the escalation in violent rhetoric among non-state militia groups, among which the main anti-Morsi youth group reported it was taking to the streets to 'cleanse Egypt.' (*Reuters*, 26 July 2013)

An increase in unidentified armed group activity in part captures the number of informal, nascent armed groups engaging one another in battles and attacks in Egypt, with no accountability. Finally, communal militias - those identified as primarily composed of communal, ethnic or religious members - are also emerging as a significant actor in the ongoing. Reports suggest that -tensions between segments of Egypt's Coptic Christian and Muslim communities have been stoked by the ousting of Morsi, holding Christian communities partly responsible (*BBC News*, 12 August 2013).



**Figure 4: Conflict Events by Actor, Egypt, January 2010 - July 2013.**

#### Mali

July saw Mali's first presidential election since the March 2012 coup which prevented the scheduled April 2012 elections from taking place. In the run-up to last month's polls, there was concern that prioritising the process of voting over the establishment of conditions for a real and lasting peace in the troubled West African country would further destabilise conditions there. In addition, concerns over literacy levels and its impact on participation, particularly in the marginalised, conflict-affected Northern region of the country, were frequently voiced.

In spite of these fears, and threats issued by the regional militant group, Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) to attack polling stations (*Magharebia*, 30 July 2013) the first round of voting was carried out in largely peaceful conditions. Overall, July witnessed a sustained decline in conflict event levels for the seventh month in a row (see Figure 5). This downward trend in conflict events was ushered in at the beginning of July by the declaration of the end of the state of emergency - in place since January of this year.

French officials were reported congratulating Mali on the successful coordination of the elections, and declaring 'For France, it is a great success. Our international partners have hailed our courage and coherence because France in no way wanted to do anything reflecting the militarism and paternalism of the past, but on the contrary to give Africa and in this case Mali every chance to become a democratic independent nation in charge of its own development.' (RFI, 30 July 2013)

**July witnessed a sustained decline in conflict event levels for the seventh month in a row. Reported fatalities have also continued to drop. Analysis of historical Mali data, however, reveals the relatively high rates of pre-crisis conflict fatalities in the country, reflecting deep-seated conflict dynamics.**

Reported fatalities have also continued to drop: although they saw a small increase last month, these remain well below crisis-level fatalities. One trend which is illuminated by fatalities data (see Figure 5), however, is the relatively high rate of pre-crisis conflict-related fatalities. A persistent but misleading narrative concerning post-conflict recovery and reconstruction in many African contexts, but particularly in the case of Mali's recent, multiple, overlapping crises, concerns the return to 'normal' after the period of intense fighting has apparently passed.

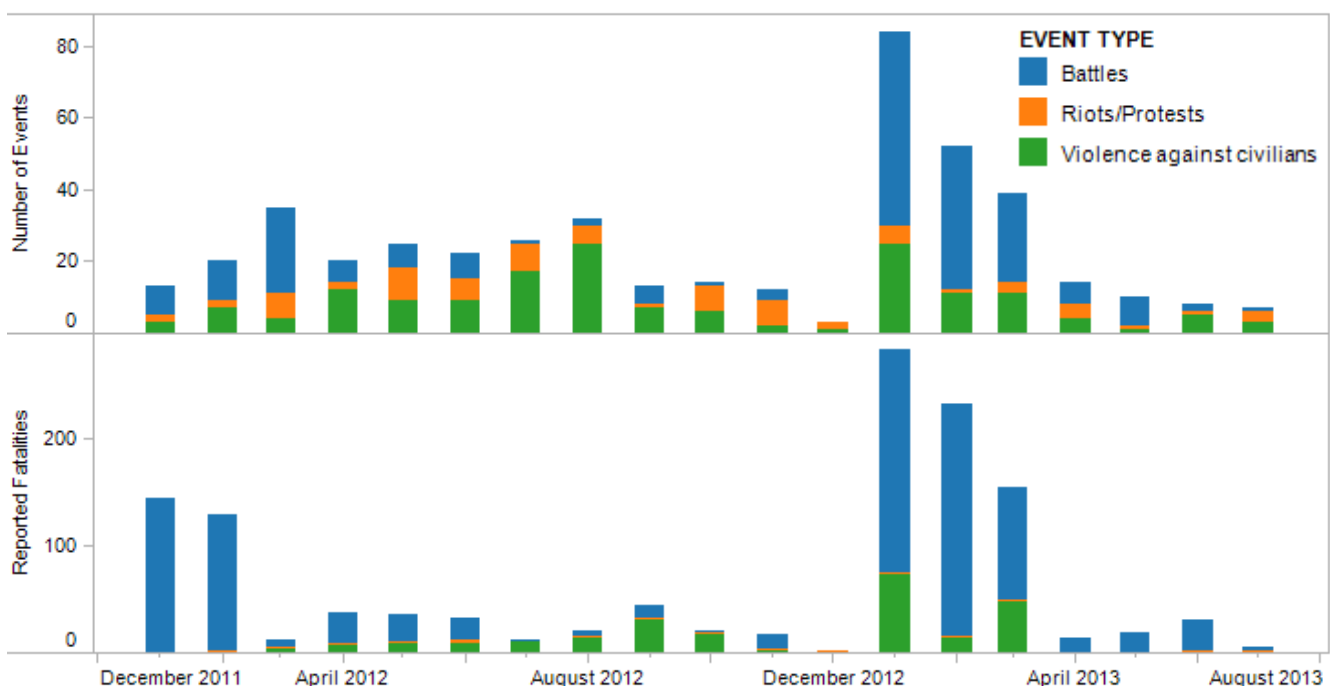
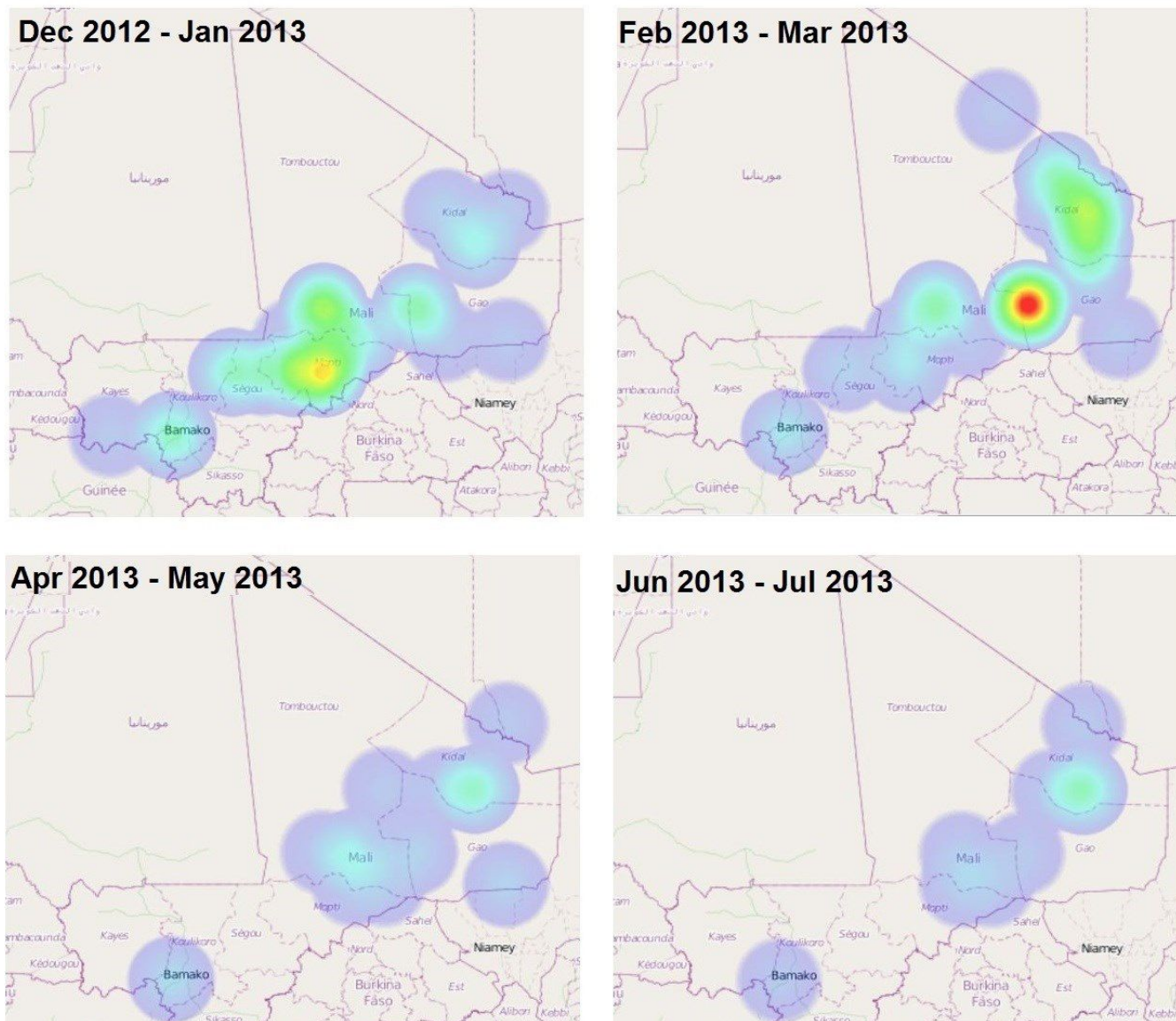


Figure 5: Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities, Mali, January 2012 - July 2013.



#### Mali



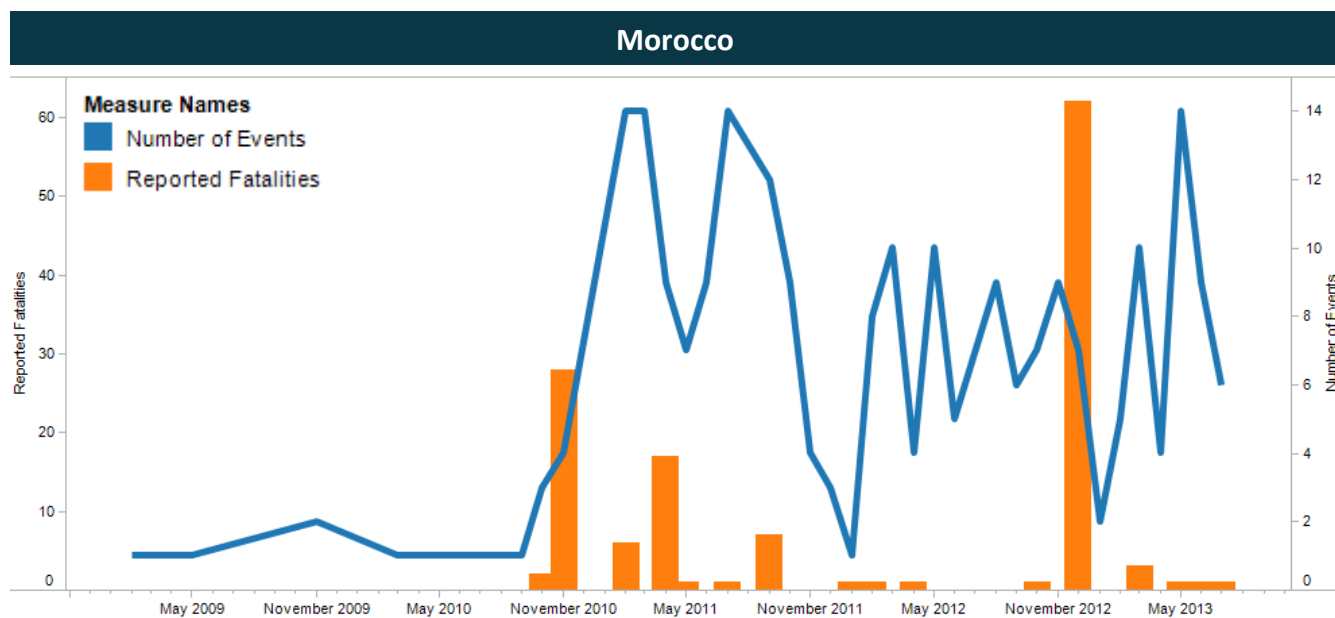
**Figure 6: Conflict Event Locations, Mali, December 2012 - July 2013 (Four Time Periods).**

What this terminology obscures, is that it was often these pre-crisis ‘normal’ conditions which sparked or drove conflict in the first place. A return to normal, and the re-establishment of stability in a country on the basis of earlier economic, political and social conditions, may pay short-term dividends but risks contributing to longer-term volatility.

In the case of Mali, the country has witnessed recurring, intermittent, violent uprisings from among the Tuareg and aligned ethnic communities of the Northern region, evident in longer-term analysis of conflict trends in the coun-

try (see Mali 1997 - 2012 data at [acleddata.com/data/africa/](http://acleddata.com/data/africa/)). Even in the present-day conditions of limited conflict, the Northern region continues to witness the highest levels of violence, with clashes between competing and rival militant groups concentrated in Kidal (see Figure 6).

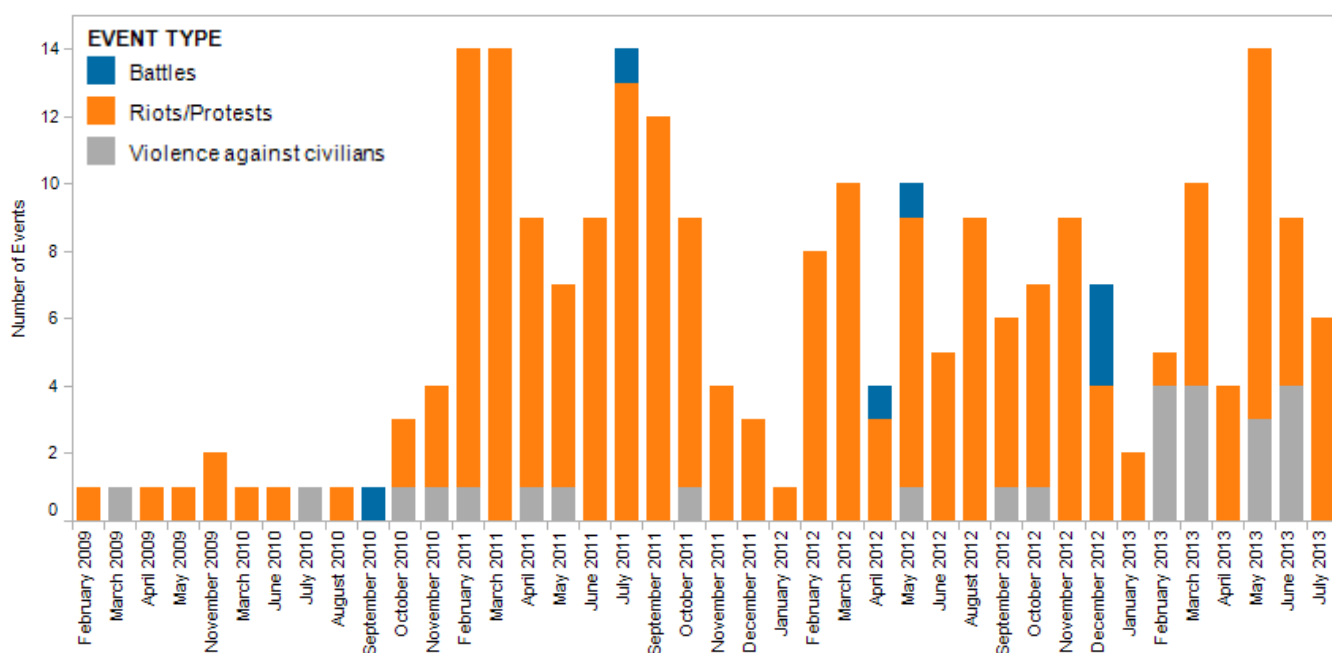
While the incidents reported in Kidal were primarily low-grade, and did not directly concern or affect the conduct of the elections, turnout in the region was reportedly as low as 12% (RFI, 30 July 2013), indicating that there is still some way to go before the drivers of conflict, including marginalisation and poverty, are meaningfully addressed.



**Figure 7: Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities, Morocco, January 2009 - July 2013.**

July witnessed an increase in conflict events in Morocco. Morocco's conflict landscape is typically dominated by riots and protests, with fluctuating prevalence of violence against civilians since January, 2013. This year's conflict profile is consistent with recent years, with the exception of an increase in levels of battles reported between 2010 and 2012, which were absent in 2013 (see Figure 7, 8).

All events in July were riots and protests, trending upwards from June (see Figure 8). An earlier spike in protests took place in May of this year, following April's extension of the mandate UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (see Figure 8). The Mission led by US Diplomat Christopher Ross was meant to renew negotiations between the disputed Western Sahara's Polisario Front and Moroccan state. Subsequent protests centred on the 22 year old dis-



**Figure 8: Conflict Events by Type, Morocco, January 2009 - July 2013.**

#### Morocco

pute over independence of Western Sahara territory (*African Arguments*, 18 December 2012), and also on the issue of the extension of the mission's work without a mandate to monitor human rights (*International News*, 27 April 2013).

This ongoing dispute is a source of conflict in Morocco that is geographically dispersed throughout the country. Demonstrations in support of the disputed territory are typically held in Laayoune, the capital of the area. Levels of protests and riots in Laayoune are met with relatively high levels of violence against civilians as the state responds to these demonstrations as seen between June 2012 and July 2013. By contrast, significantly higher volumes of riots and protests have been reported in Morocco's capital, Rabat, met with much lower volumes of violence against civilians. These demonstrations focus on a wider range of subjects such high unemployment rates i

(*Moroccan World News*, 2 May 2013), political prisoners held for the February 20th uprising, and independence protests in Laayoune (*Sahara Press Service*, 23 July 2013).

Morocco's conflict profile can also be compared with other North African states. The country experiences a comparable proportional breakdown of violence by type as that found in Tunisia and Egypt (see Figure 9). Algeria and Libya, by contrast, witness much higher rates of battles between armed groups. Similarly, an analysis of conflict events by actor type reveals strong similarities between Morocco and Tunisia: events in both countries are dominated by protesters, rioters and militias, and state security forces play a comparatively smaller role in political violence than in Libya and Algeria. Similarities with Tunisia and, to a lesser extent, Egypt, are interesting in light of the divergent paths of Morocco and its neighbours during the Arab Spring uprisings, and may speak to an underlying potential for volatility in the state.

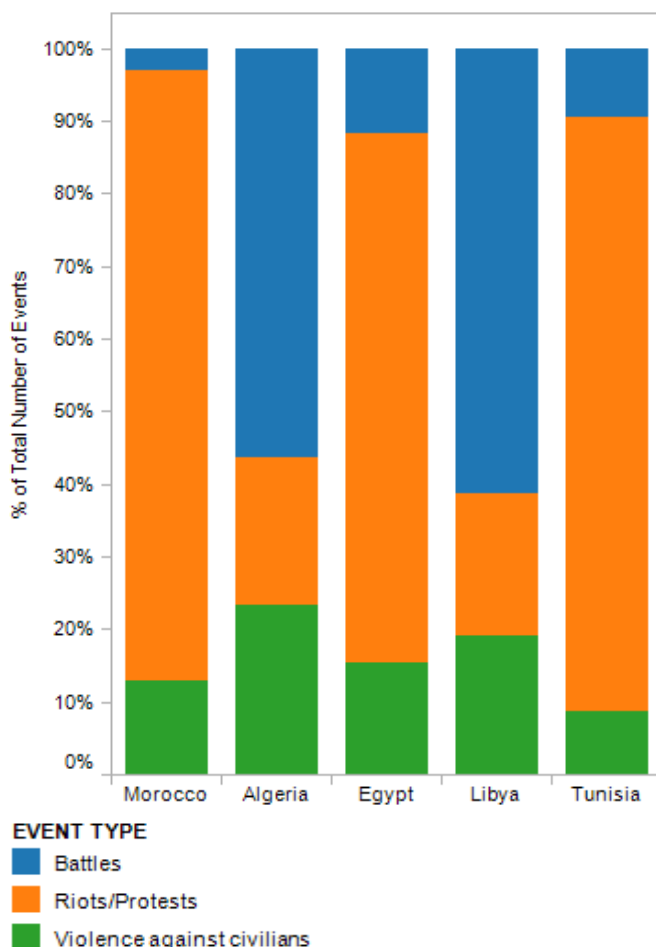


Figure 9: Conflict Events by Type, North Africa, all years.

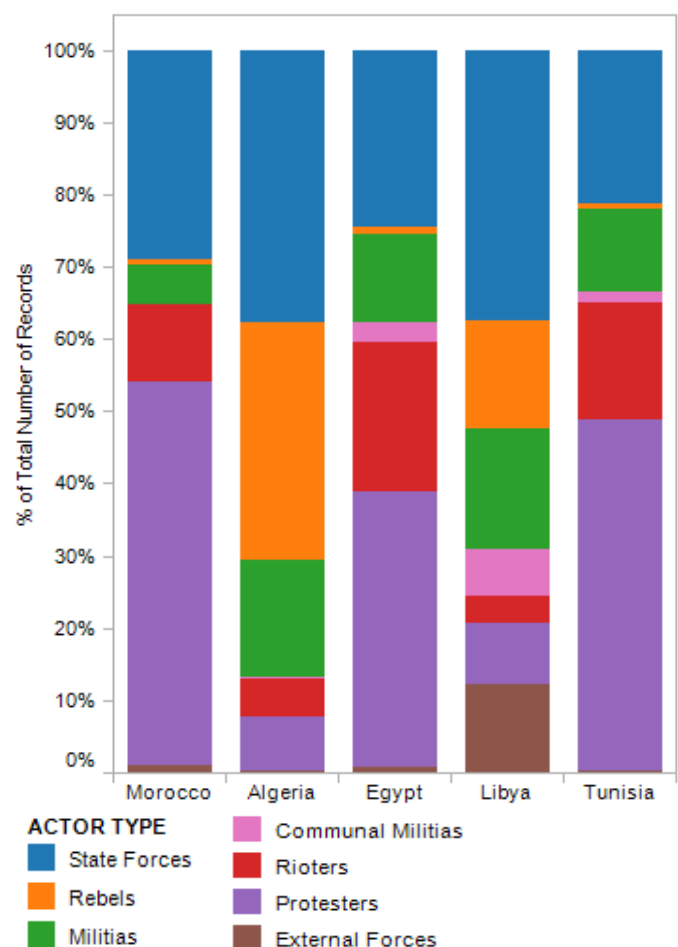
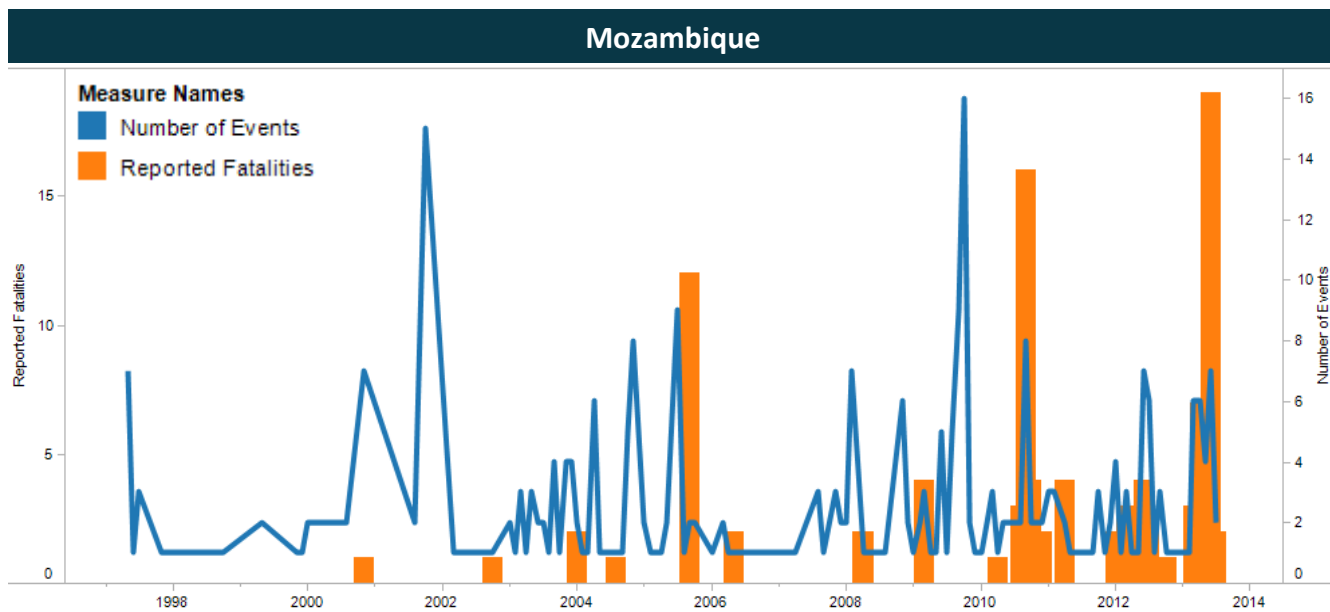


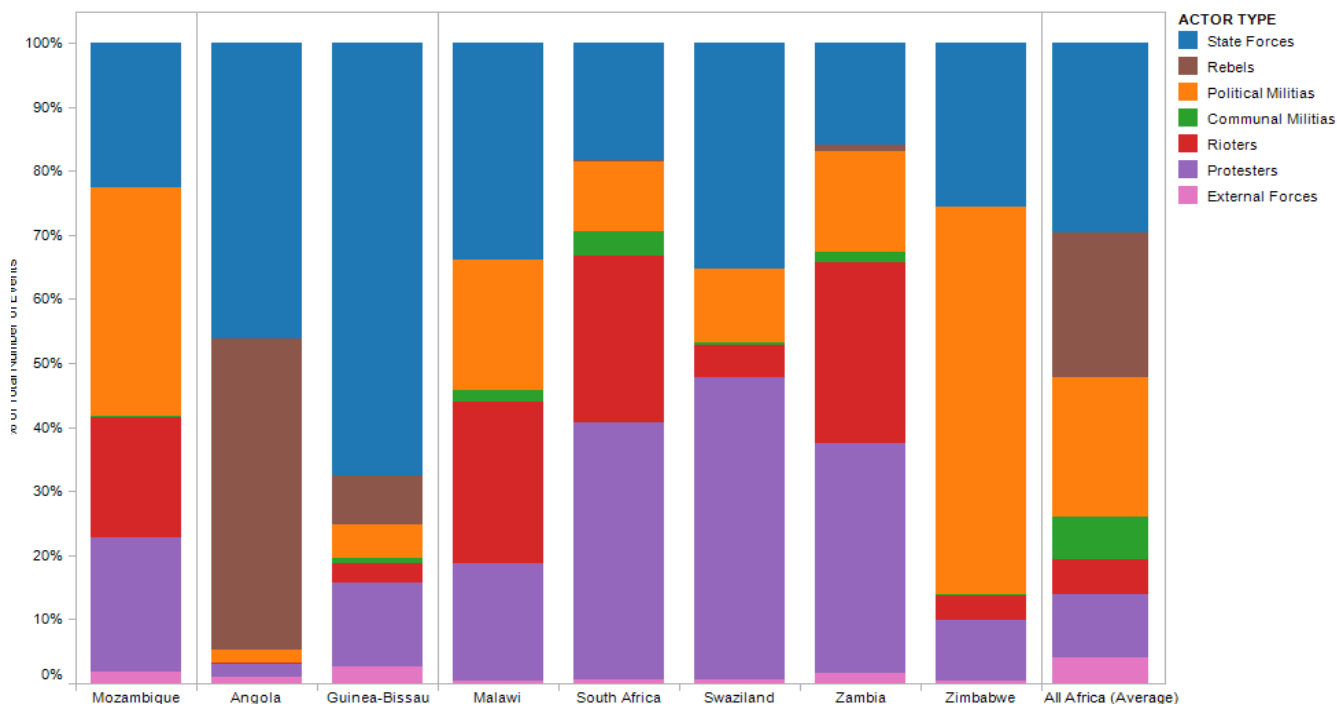
Figure 10: Conflict Events by Actor Type, North Africa.



**Figure 11: Conflict Events and Reported Fatalities, Mozambique, 1997 - July 2013.**

Simmering tensions in Mozambique between the government and former rebel group, RENAMO, now the country's main opposition, bring it to our attention this month. RENAMO militants have been involved in a series of road blockages and low-grade clashes with FRELIMO forces, while a move in October of last year back to their old military base in the bush was intended as a gesture of mili-

tant muscle-flexing (*Think Africa Press*, 30 October 2012). In reality, Mozambique's conflict profile is fairly peaceful, with typically very few fatalities (see Figure 11). Compared with other regional and Lusophone states, Mozambique sees a higher rate of militia violence than regional and continental averages, but also lower levels of state involvement in violence than is typical (see Figure 12).



**Figure 12: Conflict Events by Actor Type, Mozambique, Lusophone and Southern African Countries, all years.**



#### Zimbabwe

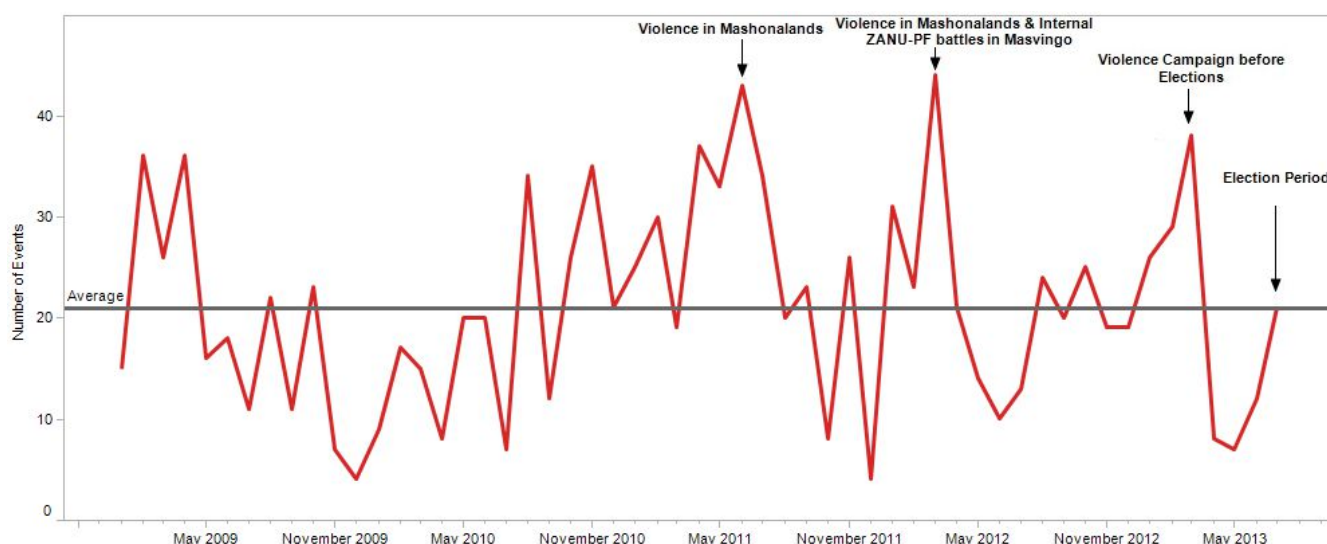
The not-so-surprising tale of Zimbabwe's election: pulling out all the stops.

Up until voting commenced (for the general population) on July 31<sup>st</sup>, polls suggested the Morgan Tshangari (MDC) had a fighting chance to win the election over Permanent President Robert Mugabe (ZANU-PF). Mugabe's henchman had made some ominous claims detailing the different ways that they would not accept defeat, and how they looked forward to the re-establishment of the one party state. ZANU-PF cheated 'better' in this election compared to 2008; various methods are well documented in several sources and include manipulating the voting rolls, presiding over election stations, and temporarily dismantling communication and social media systems.

Better cheating wasn't the only difference; there was no runoff this time, and hence no need to threaten and limit the opposition through violence. Violence rates remained stable and at the mean post 2008 rate for the election. The mean rate is set by ZANU-PF and allied operations to

threaten civilians and opponents throughout the state. Non-fatal violence against civilians is the typical mode of conflict in Zimbabwe (as detailed in last month's ACLED Trend Report), but geography and competing groups tend to vacillate with the immediate political environment. Looking at violence from 2009, a consistent volatility is evident. In particular, spikes are due to increased activity in Mashonaland and intermittent internal ZANU-PF battles (such as those in Masvingo in 2012).

The future political environment in Zimbabwe will be characterized by MDC soul searching and fervent ZANU-PF preparations. ZANU-PF demanded a constitutional provision stating that should the president retire or step down before the end of a term, the party will decide on a successor without new elections. ZANU-PF may have a succession crisis, if not in competition for Mugabe's nod, then in assuring that security forces and patronage networks keep in line post-Mugabe. Violence until the next election may conform to these intra-party instead of inter-party challenges.



**Figure 10: Conflict Events and Monthly Average, Zimbabwe, January 2009 - July 2013.**

#### Support

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#### Sources

*Conflict Trends* reports are compiled from ACLED data and draws on news sources, civil society reports, and political analysis from outlets including *African Arguments*, *Think Africa Press*, Reuters, *Jeune Afrique*, *Radio France Internationale* (RFI), *Magharebia* and others cited throughout. More information about sources, methodology and data is available online at [acleddata.com](http://acleddata.com).