

Social Media and Civil Security in Counterterrorism

by

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Abstract

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In conflict areas, a connection between the people and their government is a key aspect of how greater information sharing through social networking programs can enhance civil security efforts during counterterrorism operations. This paper will assess the viability of using an interactive web based program such as CRIMEWATCH to link security services to the population in order to deter, disrupt and defeat extremists. The following analysis uses security efforts in Nigeria as a case study for analyzing the feasibility, suitability and acceptability of employing this approach across political, infrastructure, social and information sectors. At the local level, web based programs can share relevant information between authorities and the public to be value-added in disrupting extremists efforts, thereby providing the government a strategic advantage. This potentially low cost investment would provide a significant payout at the strategic level in countering violent extremists and provide a method which could be replicated in other affected countries or regions.

Social Media and Civil Security in Counterterrorism

Social media provides a voice to the voiceless our challenge is we have to listen to what they are saying.

—LTG Michael Flynn
Director Defense Intelligence Agency¹

The average American has embraced the Information Age to the point almost any piece of information a person needs is literally at their fingertips. Through a few clicks of a mouse or finger swipes on tablets and smartphones individuals can access an unimaginable amount of data as well as connect to other people around the world.

Americans are not alone in this need to be connected. Around the world people are embracing the ability to share incredible amounts of information with others through social media. While the need to connect to other people and share information has always been present, the proliferation of mobile technology has made this possible on a much grander scale with Facebook, tweeting, pinning, texting, emailing and up-loading. People also receive more information than ever before from government and civil authorities through these same social media platforms. Weather warnings, school updates and group mass notifications are key aspects of how civil services currently inform the public. Across a wide spectrum of the western world the population is willing and able to share and receive critical information through social networking, but as the rest of the world embraces these technologies the question becomes, *What else can be done in developing countries to tie the people to their government through social media?*

In conflict areas, a key aspect for governments involved in countering internal criminal and terrorist threats is how greater information sharing through social networking programs can enhance civil security efforts. This paper will assess the

viability of using an interactive web based program such as CRIMEWATCH to link security services to the population in order to deter, disrupt and defeat extremist violence. The following analysis uses security efforts in Nigeria as a case study for analyzing the feasibility, suitability and acceptability of employing this approach across political, infrastructural, social and information sectors. At the local level, web based programs can share relevant information between authorities and the public to be value-added in disrupting extremists efforts, thereby providing the government a marked strategic advantage. This potentially low-cost investment could provide a significant payout in countering violent extremist efforts and providing a method for security – public interaction which could be replicated in other affected countries or regions.

Background on Current Situation

Nigeria is the most populous country on the African continent with 177 million inhabitants whose diverse population includes over 250 ethnic groups speaking over 500 languages with English as their official language.² At the end of 2014 Nigeria's growing urban population exceeded 51 percent of the total population within an area roughly twice the size of California that is divided into 36 states and one territory.³ Nigeria's geography ranges from coastal lowlands in the south to rolling hills and plateaus in the central region flattening out to plains in the north.⁴

While not as diverse as its geography, Nigeria's economy was Africa's largest in 2014.⁵ As the country grows in multiple sectors to include technology, banking and services, Nigeria is still heavily reliant on oil and gas production from the southern Niger Delta region. Even as the number one economy in Africa, Nigeria struggles with extreme poverty ranking 153rd out of 187 countries in the UN's Human Development Index.⁶ The combination of extreme poverty and great wealth is one of the defining

grievances driving the actions of many violent groups in Nigeria. Billions of foreign investment dollars are also spurring significant infrastructure improvements in the data and cellular networks. These information infrastructures are making mobile technology and connectivity much more accessible across all of Nigeria.

Currently Nigeria is the largest mobile phone market in Africa and growing rapidly.⁷ According to the Nigerian Communications Commission, as of September 2014 there were over 135 million active mobile phones registered as compared to just over 120 million in September 2013.⁸ As expected, the best mobile broadband coverage and connectivity rates are centered on the major metropolitan areas and connecting highways. In 2012, 96.1 percent of the Nigerian population was covered by a mobile network.⁹ As such, linking Nigerians via the current mobile network could easily support a basic CRIMEWATCH-like capability through rapidly advancing network capabilities.

Nigeria is culturally diverse with the country evenly split along religious lines between Muslim and Christian groups while each compose roughly half the country's population along with a trace of indigenous religious groups. As noted by the American Foreign Policy Council, a predominantly Muslim population inhabits the North while Christians inhabit the South along a natural separation line based on the historical boundaries of prior British colonization:

Colonization brought with it British education, including Western schools and Christian missionaries. By the time of Nigerian independence in 1960, southern Nigeria, where British influence was strongest (especially in cities like Lagos and the oil hub Port Harcourt), was economically more powerful and more educated than northern Nigeria. Moreover, its population, which was almost completely animist before the arrival of the British, was by 1960 predominantly Christian. Northern Nigeria, on the other hand, was and remains predominantly Muslim.¹⁰

There are natural tensions between these predominantly Muslim and Christian areas. The Muslims rejection of western influence in the North has led to violence, and their strong Islamic culture has led to implementation of Sharia law in 12 of the Northern states. In contrast, the rest of the country follows English common and local traditional law.¹¹ In response to western Christian influences, the Muslim separatist movement Boko Haram was established in 1999 and maintains its core strength in the state of Borno and specifically in capital of Maidugun.



Figure 1: Nigerian State with Sharia Law¹²

Since independence, Nigeria has experienced numerous violent clashes through tribal feuds and religious conflicts across several regions. A number of violent groups emerged such as the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) and Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) to oppose national government efforts to govern effectively. However, this paper will look specifically at the Boko Haram threat because of its international recognition, recent affiliation with the Islamic State, previous Al Qaeda connections and commitment to establish a caliphate, and their recent, violent

attacks against civilian, all of which create a potential for social media exploitation. In anticipation of growing BH efforts, a CRIMEWATCH like capability could easily be used against violent groups in and around major metropolitan areas in order to mitigate or prevent the spread of radical extremism.

The Information Technology Landscape

Nigeria's landscape varies greatly from large sprawling urban areas with growing oil, gas and technology sectors in the South, to rural, remote villages with agricultural markets in the North. These economic differences and disparities affect every sector of Nigerian life to include the use of modern data networks. To assess the feasibility of using modern technology and internet based applications for civil security, one must understand the range of technologies already in use and the capabilities and limitations such technologies provide.

Mobile phone service providers offer a range of technologies and capabilities. Mobile phones are commonly referred to as 2G, 3G or 4G, with the "G" referring to the phone's generation of technology. Beyond first generation analog devices "bricks" or "bag phones", Second Generation (2G) phones included digital technology in the early 1990's making components much smaller and cheaper for "pocket" and "flip" phones with limited "on demand" data capabilities for texting and simple email.¹³ Third Generation (3G) technology emerged in the United States in 2003, enabling a significant jump in capability through "smartphones" powered by true broadband data of up to 2 megabits per second (Mbps) and "always on" data connections.¹⁴ Finally, recent 4G technologies are available across the United States and developed countries with data rates exceeding 100 Mbps.

“Smartphones” are cellular phones running a third party operating system (Android, iOS, Blackberry, Microsoft) and with the ability to run software applications, or “apps”.¹⁵ “Feature phones” are the middle ground between smart and basic mobile phones, with a limited proprietary operating system that may or may not run other applications; however, feature phones usually offer web browsing, texting, GPS, Facebook and Twitter capabilities.¹⁶ The appealing aspect of these earlier devices is their lower cost (as compared to smartphones) but this cost differential is rapidly dwindling with the introduction of more inexpensive devices.

The Growing Threat: Boko Haram

Nigeria has struggled with internal violence since its independence in 1960. The most recent violent organization to appear is “Boko Haram”, meaning “Western education is forbidden”.¹⁷ Boko Haram’s rejection of all Western influences made international headlines in 2014-2015 through multiple spectacular events to include the kidnapping of over 200 Christian school girls from Chibok, the bombing of Kano’s Grand Mosque, and the Baga massacre of civilians. According to the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center,

Boko Haram, which refers to itself as “Jama‘atu Ahl as-Sunnah li-Da‘awati wal-Jihad” (JASDJ; Group of the Sunni People for the Calling and Jihad) and “Nigerian Taliban”—other translations and variants are used—is a Nigeria-based group that seeks to overthrow the current Nigerian Government and replace it with a regime based on Islamic law.¹⁸

Both the Nigerian government and the United States have declared Boko Haram and its splinter faction *Ansaru* to be terrorist organizations.¹⁹ “This designation assists U.S. and other law enforcement partners in efforts to investigate and prosecute terrorist suspects associated with Boko Haram and Ansaru.”²⁰

Boko Haram (BH) began as a separatist movement led by a northern Muslim Imam Mohammed Yusuf in order to protest the Nigerian government misrule in the Borno state and city of Maiduguri. (Boko Haram's primary area of operations are shown by the dark shaded area below.)



Figure 2: Traditional Boko Haram Operations Area²¹

Originally known as the “Nigerian Taliban”, the group engaged local police until the death of Yusuf at the hands of Nigerian Security Forces in 2009.²² Afterward, BH emerged as an incredibly violent insurgency that advocates strict Islamic governance, a war on Christians, and the death of collaborationist Muslims which the group sees as traitors. Their current leader Abubakar Shekau has developed Boko Haram into a powerful organization capable of carrying out large scale operations that killed over 7,500 civilians in 2014 while expanding recruitment and attacks into Chad and Cameroon.²³ Boko Haram has recently extended its operations into central and south Nigeria as far the capital of Abuja and its surrounding urban areas.

Most importantly, Boko Haram's recruiting efforts through social media have been improving quickly in scope and approach. While not the most sophisticated terrorist organization in its use of social media, BH has a growing online presence. Traditionally the organization has released short videos to news outlets, but has recently progressed to posting grainy and poorly edited products online. Andrew Walker of USIP observes that:

Boko Haram, as a group, clearly does not utterly reject the modern world out of hand. The groups' use of mobile phones, video camera, DVD's, YouTube, chemical explosives, automatic weapons, and cars show it is more than prepared to use the fruits of Western education when it suits them.²⁴

Boko Haram's Facebook presence includes messages from Shekau, with most postings originating from BH's home territory within the Borno state.²⁵ They also maintain Twitter accounts that are rapidly developing a much more sophisticated presence. In January 2015 BH produced a media outlet, *The Indissoluble Link*, which experts view as "taking a page out of the Islamic State's social media playbook".²⁶ The *Link* also created a Twitter account to disseminate the group's messages and aid in recruitment, which was a first major step in professionalizing BH's online presence. A recent study by the Brookings Institute estimated that on the low end there are over 46,000 Twitter accounts in support of the Islamic State.²⁷ Boko Haram's adaptation of Islamic State's social media playbook is a significant development in their use of online efforts to increase their online visibility and influence.

While Boko Haram is quickly advancing its online presence and use of technology, there is a small window of opportunity to disrupt the organization in the virtual world and counter their extremist message. In several areas to include the Borno state, local communities are banding together to resist BH efforts through informant

networks as well as taking up arms against fighters.²⁸ The people's desire to defend themselves and take action against the brutality of Boko Haram is creating an opportunity for the United States to assist the Nigerian security forces and ultimately the Nigerian people through social media efforts to build sentiment against BH. There are already several social media outlets focused on engaging the people to provide information on BH efforts such as #BokoHaramWatch and #BringBackOurGirls to build upon such momentum. The introduction of an internet based program to share information between the population and local authorities could significantly assist security efforts in disrupting Boko Haram activity.

An information sharing and intelligence gathering platform for law enforcement such as CRIMEWATCH uses web, mobile and social network technology to increase police and public partnerships in identifying and countering criminality and violence on local, state and national levels.²⁹ This platform builds direct law enforcement and public linkages and enhances partnerships through the effective and efficient use of web technology. CRIMEWATCH is a user friendly and fairly intuitive application that enables the public to gain current information on criminal activity, the police "most wanted" list, arrests, issued warrants, and crime trend (through an embedded mapping capability), as well as the ability to provide tip information anonymously to law enforcement officials. This "push/pull" information flow breaks down normal barriers and boundaries between law enforcement organizations because any user can see information outside their local area. Each law enforcement agency connected to CRIMEWATCH builds a portion of the network from local up through county, state and eventually national levels. The more law enforcement agencies that are connected to the network, the better the coverage

and intelligence picture will be. In all, CRIMEWATCH is credited in the U.S. with numerous arrests based on tips received and the ability to see and assemble information that otherwise would not be linked across local community efforts. An example of such success is cited on the CRIMEWATCH technologies website:

On July 8th, 2013, Swatara Township Police Department (Dauphin County, PA) posted a case featuring a surveillance photo of a suspected Wal-Mart shoplifter. Although the actual crime occurred in June, police were unable to access the Wal-Mart surveillance photos until early July. Swatara Township Police Department posted the case on their portal shortly after 10:00am on July 8th. This immediately notified residents via the web, e-mail and Facebook. By noon, Swatara Township PD had already received a tip via the CRIMEWATCH 'tip submission' feature. At 1:42pm, a second tip arrived; this tip included a direct link to the suspect's personal Facebook page. By 3:30pm, Swatara Township Police Department had the suspect in custody.³⁰

CRIMEWATCH has several key capabilities valuable in civil security efforts that could have direct benefits in sharing information within partner nations to deter or disrupt extremists. Public users can visit the traditional website, use their mobile app to provide or receive information, sign up for notifications, and receive Facebook updates or follow on Twitter. On the law enforcement side, the program provides activity reporting that can then be shared through social media websites such as Facebook and Twitter, email, news outlets, and the CRIMEWATCH mobile application, or just be cataloged for future analysis and use by police. An example of these linked efforts is when a police officer makes an arrest and files a report on the CRIMEWATCH portal with key information, pictures, documents, video or other relevant items. The report is reviewed and shared through social media or other ways previously listed. The report is then cataloged and available for future use or review while at the same time building the criminal activity database and intelligence picture.

CRIMEWATCH allows government, business and private users to easily visualize criminal activity on an interactive map that includes arrest locations, open cases, incidents, issued warrants and links to local authorities. Such mapping also provides tip information through the CRIMEWATCH site to law enforcement agencies in a user-selected area. In the examples below, the circles represent the number of incidents within a given space, with green or light colored areas indicating 10 or less incidents, yellow or medium colored area 11 to 100 incidents, and orange or darker colored areas 101 or more incidents. (*Incidents* are defined as arrests, warrants issued, open cases or other matters where authorities made a report.) These views can be focused downwards from the state, to county and eventually city level. The program has



Figure 3: Sample of CRIMEWATCH Incident Mapping

the ability to zoom onto individual buildings as long as map data detail is available. Law enforcement officers can access CRIMEWATCH wherever they are located. The cloud based system eliminates the need for stand-alone or dedicated systems, thereby allowing portal access by users from any computer to utilize the full suite of tools.

Currently the mobile application is only available on Apple products but in the near future it will be available through all mobile platforms.³¹ The mobile app has the same features, look and feel as the computer accessible website that is easy to maneuver across information the user desires. Bandwidth requirements are not an issue on 3G or better networks. The largest data items are imbedded photos but these could easily be scaled to support lower bandwidth networks in future releases with the universal mobile application.

For the capabilities that CRIMEWATCH provides, access is relatively inexpensive and based on a “per citizen” fee. For discussion purposes, the cost would be \$.25 per citizen to start the program and for the first year coverage. The operational cost would then be \$.15 per citizen for each additional year.³² Using Nigeria’s capital city of Abuja with a population of 2.15 million as an example, the cost would be $$.25 \times 2.15 \text{ million} = \$537,500$ for the first year and $$.15 \times 2.15 \text{ million} = \$322,500$ for each additional year. Abuja offers an excellent location to test CRIMEWATCH since it is well controlled and has a robust cellular infrastructure to support the mobile application. In recent months BH has carried out attacks farther into the south and west as they expand their operational areas, and implementing a CRIMEWATCH capability in Abuja could significantly assist security forces in identifying and stemming the flow of Boko Haram activities into and around the capital city.

Feasibility Analysis for Proposed Program

With regards to social factors, Nigeria's demographics reflect a younger society with over 62 percent of the population under the age of 24 and another 31 percent between the ages of 25 to 54.³³ This younger population is rapidly embracing technology with 89 percent of the 25-34 age group owning personal mobile phones.³⁴ With over 12 million Facebook users, 1.8 million Twitter accounts and over a million LinkedIn accounts as of December 2012, Nigerians are increasingly embracing social media and social networking.³⁵ Other popular sharing applications are *2go*, *Eskimi*, *Blackberry Messenger*, *Instagram* and *YouTube* which are being used by younger population who increasingly seek the information and connectivity with others offered through social media. As IT News Africa noted, since its launch in 2009 "2go has [acquired] 50 million registered users, over 10 million of which are active on a monthly basis and sending 6 billion messages a month across Africa with the majority of users in Nigeria."³⁶ This free mobile messaging application works with Android, Blackberry and Java, and is just one example of a messaging application that works with older "feature" phones as well as new smartphones. Such programs also use a low bandwidth capability available across all mobile phone providers in Nigeria.

An excellent example of social media's impact is the domestic and international reaction to Boko Haram's kidnapping of 276 school girls from Chibok in May 2014. Social media outlets became a significant means of gaining the world stage, as immediately after the kidnapping a Facebook page "Bring Back Our Girls" went up along with a Twitter account #bringbackourgirls that gained a rapid, significant following. The worldwide attention that this incident received was due partially to the aggressive social media campaign immediately following the kidnapping. The campaign also maintains a

traditional webpage, with all three accounts updated almost daily. Activists effectively use the outlets to update followers and push information about rallies, similar attacks and ongoing political actions surrounding the incident. If there were a CRIMEWATCH like capability in Nigeria, such information could also be linked and shared through that venue. People with information about the girls could anonymously provide tips to the authorities and credible information could be provided aggregated, analyzed and provided to enable government and international efforts to locate and rescue at least some of the girls.

A major challenge for Nigeria is the legitimacy of its security forces who are greatly mistrusted by the people. Transparency International noted that “nine out of 10 people said the police were corrupt in 2013, and 45 percent said the military was corrupt.”³⁷ The Nigeria Survey and Corruption Survey Study, Final Report (June 2003) noted Nigerian corruption as recurring and institutional. While the information is dated, the study found the Nigerian Police to be the most corrupt Nigerian government agency. In response to such mistrust of the law enforcement and civil authorities the 2011 proposed Nigerian National Security Strategy addressed these challenges:

Another critical intelligence-related development is the need for the security forces to re-align its relationship with society. At present there is a lot of mistrust directed towards the Nigerian security forces. This is inimical to securing the critical human intelligence reporting required to detect and dismantle emerging and existing threats to the peace.³⁸

The Nigeria Police Force Facebook page also addresses such issues through significant coverage of initiatives to improve community interaction and confidence. YouTube videos are used to explain the police force code of conduct as well as new manuals including “The Nigeria Police Force Human Rights Practice Manual” and “The

Nigeria Police Force Standard Operational Guidelines/Rules for Police Officers on Electoral Duties” for the February 2015 Presidential election.³⁹

From the social aspect, the Nigerian government could readily use a CRIMEWATCH capability. Analysis of the potential for social media and networking use across a wide range of capabilities suggest the technology would be used by the public. Increased social media interaction is desired by the Nigerian public and used by the government across numerous agencies. The Nigerian federal government has already embraced and established a social media presence that is current and relevant. From the suitability standpoint, both the public and government can effectively use such technology to address public mistrust of security forces, and a program like CRIMEWATCH could provide quick success stories to further close this trust gap.

The rapidly expanding information infrastructure also makes the use of social media for security purposes more possible. Nigeria’s growing economy and outside investments are bringing higher demands for internet connectivity, as the country currently has a 38 percent internet user penetration⁴⁰. The majority of internet users are connecting at work but this is changing quickly with rapidly decreasing mobile broadband prices. Historically internet access has been very expensive so most people accessed the internet at work or in internet cafes. The emergence of smartphones and falling mobile broadband prices have significantly increased the number of Nigerians accessing the internet.⁴¹ Increased fiber optic cable connectivity in recent years has also contributed to the decrease in broadband prices by increasing market competition. Since late 2009 several new undersea fiber cable projects have been completed by

SAT-3, GLO, WASACE, MainOne, ACE, WACS and other small carriers, yielding an exponential increase in bandwidth for Nigeria now measured in terabytes.⁴²

There are currently nine mobile phone service providers in Nigeria (MTN Nigeria, Globacom, Airtel, Etisalat (EMTS), Starcomms, Mtel (NITEL), Multilinks, Visafone and ZoomMobile).⁴³ In 2014 MTN had the largest market share according to IT News Africa.⁴⁴ The Nigerian Communications Commission also recognizes MTN as the leading provider with over 58 million subscribers.⁴⁵ The image below shows extensive GSM mobile phone coverage for MTN across the country.



Figure 4: MTN Coverage Map⁴⁶

The majority of all mobile phone customers use prepaid plans, with the average customer paying \$3 per month for data services on the MTN network.⁴⁷ One industry estimate noted over 10 million smart phones were sold in Nigeria in 2013.⁴⁸ As the

fastest growing telecommunications market in the world, Nigeria was estimated to receive 24 million smart phones by the end of 2014, with the top 3 smart phones being the Nokia XL (Android OS), Blackberry Q10 and Nokia Lumina 360 (Windows OS).⁴⁹

In 2009 Nigerian leadership developed “Nigeria Vision 20: 2020”, a long term vision to propel Nigeria into the Top 20 global economies by the year 2020.⁵⁰ This comprehensive document examined all aspects of improving life in Nigeria, to include emphasis on expanding the information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure. This vision is being implemented through the Nigerian National Broadband Plan 2013-2018, which proposes that all mobile phone base stations be upgraded to a minimum of 3G capability by 2015.⁵¹ This plan is split into several phases, but Phase 1 calls for the spread of 3G services to at least 50 percent of the population by the end of 2015.⁵² The plan also calls for physical infrastructure improvements and just as important is the release of key ranges of spectrum to allow further expansion of 3G and 4G networks.⁵³ Improvements are well underway and on track to meet the mid-term goals set for 2015.

On October 9, 2014, Gareth Knight, creator of Tech4Africa, presented the top 10 benefits of the extremely sought after “\$50 (USD) Smartphone”. According to Knight, “When the \$50 smartphone hits there will be a massive boom in Africa.”⁵⁴ Knight believes that the \$50 smartphone is only 12 months away and set to revolutionize the continent. Additionally, Tecno Mobile announced it would release a \$30 smartphone in 2015.⁵⁵ Tecno Mobile is one of the fastest growing mobile phone producers in Africa and it is teamed with MTN, the cellular access market leader in Nigeria, as well as other service providers it is teamed with in Nigeria include Airtel, Etisalat and Mediatek.⁵⁶

In all, the current Nigerian cellular infrastructure could support a nation-wide CRIMEWATCH program through both wired and mobile broadband networks. In urban areas and along major roads, 3G infrastructure already exists and infrastructure already supports over 12 million Facebook users and 40 million smartphone users. This infrastructure can support the web based program, especially with the introduction of low cost smartphones and the improvements planned in support of the Vision 2020. A CRIMEWATCH program is possible through Nigeria's infrastructure that already provides internet to over 38 percent of the population or roughly 67 million users. This infrastructure will certainly improve over time as Nigeria implements its broadband upgrades to cover at least 50 percent of the population with 3G broadband services by the end of 2015.

With respect to national media presence, key Nigerian political figures maintain social media sites. The President Goodluck Johnathon has a Facebook page with almost two million "Likes" that is regularly updated with pictures of his engagements, new proposals and public announcements. This is a good example of how he is able to control public messaging and effectively utilize social media to forward his agenda and re-election campaign. Additionally, Nigerian security forces including the Nigeria Police Force, Security and Civil Defense Corps, and Army maintain a Facebook and Twitter presence to push information to the public. In most cases these agencies have traditional webpages with links to their social media sites, and Facebook pages are updated regularly with current events and issues of public concern.

The Nigerian population is an avid information and news consumer. A 2014 Gallup poll conducted throughout Nigeria noted that 67 percent of respondents said

they accessed some form of news at least once a day, with radio as their primary source of news and television close behind. Compared to the same poll conducted in 2012, radio and television saw small declines while internet usage saw a percent increase.⁵⁷ Of those using the internet 95.7 percent connected to the web via a mobile device.⁵⁸ Mobile phone ownership also surpassed radio and television ownership for the first time with over 87 percent of the population now owning mobile phones.⁵⁹

The analysis of the information environment show that implementing a CRIMEWATCH program in Nigeria is clearly feasible. The federal government is already a heavy user of social media, social networking and e-government to project its message and information to the public. Expanding internet usage makes online a more effective method for providing the public news and updates through social media and mobile devices. The existing capabilities of government agencies to maintain a social media presence demonstrates that the implementation of a CRIMEWATCH program is both suitable and feasible.

With respect to political considerations, Nigerian politics are as diverse as the country's demographics and economics. While the current president is elected there has been a historical trend for military coups instead of peaceful transitions of power. President Goodluck Ebele Johnathon is a Christian from the South while the previous president, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'adua, was a Muslim from the North.⁶⁰ The most recent rotation of national leadership from the North to the South demonstrates that democracy can work but the cultural divide creates a natural tension and a source for disputes between religious factions. Politically the Nigerian government has been criticized for its handling of terrorism, insurgencies and protests through heavy handed

tactics to crush the opposition. Such efforts have increased distrust of law enforcement and security officials.

In response to growing terrorist threats, the Nigerian government has taken several steps to limit violence through legislation such as the Terrorism Prevention Act (TPA).⁶¹ Additionally the Nigerian National Security Strategy emphasizes the use of modern technology for intelligence, surveillance, detection and information as the basis for its new counterterrorism strategy and critical infrastructure protection programs.⁶² In support of these efforts, the president has pushed information technology as a solution to emerging security problems. He created the Presidential Committee on Broadband to develop a five year plan to distribute broadband communications across the country, and Nigeria is actively implementing and enforcing its information technology governance and policy as part of Nigeria Vision 2020.⁶³ In 2013 the National Information and Communication Technology (ICT) policy was published.⁶⁴ This policy was approved as the governance document for information and communication technology management by the Federal Ministry of Communication Technology.⁶⁵ The Vision 2020 also calls for strong e-government presence to connect with the population and automated systems for more effective law enforcement.

Establishment of a national criminal database to be used by the Police Force, Nigerian Prisons, and the criminal justice administration to aid the criminal intelligence system in tracking and apprehending criminals in Nigeria. The primary stakeholders in the development of the database include the Police, the Courts, and the Prisons. The criminal records database could be linked to a Global Criminal Justice network.⁶⁶

CRIMEWATCH meets most of the parameters laid out in this short description as a searchable database that enables a networked law enforcement intelligence system.

Arrest records, warrants, public interaction and tipping information all feed the database to provide law enforcement an intelligence picture.

The United States is actively assisting Nigeria in improving its overall security efforts. In 2010 the United States and Nigeria entered into a Binational Commission (BNC) to strengthen and deepen cooperation and partnership between our two countries in security and governance areas. At the BNC signing ceremony, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton noted that “Part of that cooperation will be broader collaboration on security and counterterrorism.”⁶⁷ Additionally, USAID conducts efforts to counter radicalization as Department of State advisors assist anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing efforts. During testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs stated that “We are committed to assisting Nigeria in bolstering its law enforcement capabilities and ultimately shifting to an integrated civilian-security-focused strategy to counter Boko Haram and Ansaru in a manner that adheres to the rule of law and ensures accountability.”⁶⁸ Additionally, The Department of Defense supports Nigeria with intelligence in the search for the Chibok school girls, provides Counterterrorism Partnership Funds, and conducts military-to-military exercises and training through the California Army National Guard’s participation in the State Partnership Program.

With respect to political efforts, Nigeria could implement CRIMEWATCH as an extension of security efforts to reduce overall public violence. CRIMEWATCH appears to be an acceptable solution to improving linkages among political and security leaders, presents a great opportunity to build trust with the community, bridge relationships between the police and the public, and provides Nigerian leadership a large-volume

venue to get their message out while demonstrating resolve towards ending BH violence.

Conclusions

Nigeria faces many challenges across all aspects of life to include economic challenges, political disagreement, religious diversity, and violent extremism. There are viable and positive opportunities to use social networking and interactive web based programs such as CRIMEWATCH to link information between civil services and the public to deter, disrupt and defeat extremist efforts. While significant progress has been made in many areas, Nigeria still struggles with violence from political and terrorist groups, the most notable being Boko Haram. Nigerian security forces are actively fighting terrorist organizations but more public interaction and assistance could greatly increase their overall effectiveness. Building trust and confidence in the police and security forces is a major obstacle in this area, but a CRIMEWATCH capability in Nigeria could be a key tool to achieve true success. The positive impacts of private citizens having the ability to report anonymously and see positive actions taken against criminals, insurgents and terrorist cannot be underestimated. In all, establishing a CRIMEWATCH capability across Nigeria is feasible, acceptable and suitable for enhancing security and counterterrorism operations. In line with the Binational Committee for improved security and counterterrorism efforts, the use of a CRIMEWATCH capability would provide a much needed linkage between the people and the civil security services to improve protection of the people. Even more importantly, this system and methodology could be used across most of the civilized world possessing a basic to semi-modern internet infrastructure. With younger generations increasingly embracing social media and feeling the need to be connected,

the opportunity exists to make them part of the solution of ending violent extremism is achievable through fielding this type of program as part of international counterterrorism support efforts. The relative low cost of such a program and limited U.S. handprint creates a valuable “local” solution to an emerging security problem.

In all, there is significant potential for utilizing social networking and interactive web based programs for linking information between civil services and the public to deter, disrupt and defeat extremists. Further detailed assessments should be conducted on how to potentially implement a small pilot program in Abuja, Nigeria through the existing programs of the Department of State, USAID or Department of Defense. Within DoD, several potential funding sources are available to support foreign security forces such as 1206, 1207 or 1208 programs. Any of these could potentially enable a pilot program starting through the California Army National Guard efforts with Nigerian Forces as part of the State Partnership Program. Given the United States commitment to helping Nigeria improve security and fight terrorism, the program outlined here provides valuable options to link social media and civil security in future counterterrorism operations.

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