

**SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS, CRIMINAL INTELLIGENCE, AND THE COST OF  
MISCOMMUNICATION:  
DECISION-MAKING, SURVEILLANCE, DISINFORMATION, AND REFORM OF NIGERIA'S  
SECURITY ARCHITECTURE**

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**Abstract**

Nigeria's security crisis is increasingly defined by the interplay between kinetic violence and information disorder. Weaknesses in security investigations, gaps in criminal intelligence fusion, failures in decision-making, and the absence of integrated surveillance systems have created an environment where miscommunication and disinformation thrive. Using the Ogun State Anti-Kidnapping operations and the allegations surrounding the Seriki Fulani as a contemporary case, this paper analyzes how breakdowns in intelligence-led policing amplify insecurity, erode public trust, and distort operational outcomes. The paper examines the roles of formal state security agencies, regional security outfits, informal militia groups, village informants, traditional rulers, and community awareness programmes in intelligence collection, prevention, and response. Drawing on *Intelligence System: Principles and Practice* (2015) and *Security and Criminal Intelligence For Law Enforcement* (2021), it concludes with a reform framework focused on integrated criminal intelligence fusion centres, standardized investigation protocols, real-time surveillance architecture, counter-disinformation mechanisms, and structured engagement with non-state actors under legal oversight.

**Keywords:** Security Investigation, Criminal Intelligence, Intelligence Fusion, Surveillance, Disinformation, Community Policing, Regional Security, Traditional Rulers, Nigeria

## **1. Introduction**

Effective counter-kidnapping, counter-banditry, and community safety depend on three interlocking functions: security investigations, criminal intelligence, and decision-making systems. When these functions are fragmented, delayed, or compromised by miscommunication and disinformation, security agencies lose the initiative.

The Ogun State Police Command's Anti-Kidnapping Unit has demonstrated operational capability in the Ijebu axis. Yet, allegations that a participant in security coordination meetings is linked to kidnapping have exposed weaknesses in vetting, information sharing, and public communication. More broadly, Nigeria's security architecture relies not only on the Nigeria Police Force and Department of State Services, but also on regional security agencies such as Amotekun, Ebube Agu, and local vigilantes, as well as informal militia groups, village informants, and traditional institutions.

This paper uses the Ogun case to examine the broader architecture of investigation and intelligence in Nigeria, and to propose reforms that integrate technology, process, governance, and community participation.

## **2. Conceptual Framework**

### **2.1 Security Investigations**

Security and Criminal Intelligence For Law Enforcement (2021) defines investigation as the lawful, systematic process of identifying, collecting, analyzing, and presenting evidence to support prosecution and prevention. A sound investigation rests on chain-of-custody, timely forensic processing, witness management, and case management systems.

### **2.2 Criminal Intelligence**

Intelligence System: Principles and Practice (2015) frames intelligence as information evaluated for source reliability, content validity, and relevance to a specific decision. Intelligence becomes actionable when it answers the commander's critical information requirements: who, what, where, when, why, and how.

### **2.3 Decision-Making and Surveillance Architecture**

Modern policing requires integrated surveillance ecosystems: human intelligence networks, open-source monitoring, CCTV, drone-based aerial surveillance, signals intelligence, and data analytics platforms. These systems must feed a central fusion centre that produces a common operational picture for commanders.

### **2.4 Miscommunication and Disinformation**

Miscommunication refers to the failure of accurate, timely information flow within and between agencies. Disinformation refers to the deliberate creation and dissemination of false information to mislead, distract, or delegitimize state action. Both exploit gaps in intelligence fusion and public communication, enabling criminals to operate with reduced friction.

## **2.5 The Role of Non-State and Community Actors**

Regional security agencies, informal militia groups, village informants, and traditional rulers form a decentralized layer of security governance. When regulated and coordinated, they extend the state's reach into rural and forested areas where formal presence is limited. When unregulated, they risk human rights violations, duplication of effort, and conflict with state agencies.

## **3. Current Situation: Diagnosis of Systemic Weaknesses**

### **3.1 Fragmentation of Investigation and Intelligence Functions**

Investigation, intelligence, and operations function in silos across state commands. Case files are not routinely fed into intelligence databases, and intelligence products do not consistently inform operational planning. Patterns of kidnapping along corridors such as Ijebu are not translated into preventive deployments.

### **3.2 Weak Vetting and Conflict of Interest**

The Seriki Fulani case illustrates the absence of a mandatory vetting protocol for participants in security coordination forums. Individuals under suspicion gain insight into police tactics, compromise sources, and undermine operational security.

### **3.3 Inadequate Surveillance and Data Integration**

Drone deployment shows progress, but surveillance remains ad hoc. There is no state-wide integrated platform that combines drone feeds, CCTV, ANPR, mobile call data, and social media monitoring into a single dashboard for commanders.

### **3.4 Unregulated Role of Regional and Informal Security Actors**

Regional agencies such as Amotekun and local vigilantes operate with varying mandates, training levels, and accountability mechanisms. Informal militia groups often act without legal oversight, creating risks of extra-judicial action and inter-group conflict.

### **3.5 Miscommunication and Disinformation**

Inter-agency communication is often informal and undocumented. Critical information on suspect movements and safe houses is lost or delayed. In the absence of timely police updates, false narratives spread on social media, reducing willingness to provide information.

## **4. Impacts and Effects on Security Outcomes**

### **Dimension      Impact Operational Consequence**

Investigation Quality      Poor evidence handling and delayed forensics      Low conviction rate, case attrition

Intelligence Fusion across jurisdictions	Siloed databases, no common operational picture	Inability to link crimes
Decision-Making operations	Decisions based on incomplete or outdated data	Reactive rather than preventive
Surveillance Coverage	Gaps in rural and forest corridors	Safe havens for kidnappers and bandits
Community Trust communities	Perception of selective justice and impunity	Reduced intelligence flow from communities
Operational Security personnel	Leaks from compromised meetings	Compromised operations, endangered personnel

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities of Key Actors**

### **5.1 Formal State Security Agencies**

Nigeria Police Force: Lead in investigation, arrest, and prosecution. Maintain criminal intelligence units and case management systems.

Department of State Services: Provide domestic intelligence, counter-intelligence, and vetting support.

Civil Defence and Immigration: Secure critical infrastructure and borders, provide secondary intelligence.

### **5.2 Regional Security Agencies**

Amotekun, Ebube Agu, Hisbah, etc.: Operate under state law to support community safety, intelligence gathering, and rapid response in rural areas. Their role should be limited to intelligence collection, community liaison, and first response, with arrests handed over to the Police.

### **5.3 Informal Militia Groups and Vigilantes**

These groups possess local terrain knowledge and rapid mobilization capacity. Their role should be confined to early warning, escort duties, and community patrols under the supervision of a Divisional Police Officer. They must not conduct arrests or interrogations.

### **5.4 Village Informants and Community Networks**

Informants provide human intelligence on movements, safe houses, and ransom negotiations. Their protection and anonymity are critical. Information should be channeled through designated community liaison officers to the Fusion Centre.

### **5.5 Traditional Rulers and Community Leaders**

Traditional rulers influence public opinion, mediate disputes, and mobilize communities. Their role should be to legitimize state security initiatives, disseminate security awareness messages, and facilitate community meetings with security agencies. They must not interfere in investigations or shield suspects.

### **5.6 Community Awareness Programmes**

Structured programmes educate communities on reporting channels, identifying suspicious activity, and countering disinformation. Programmes should use local languages, radio, town halls, and religious platforms to maximize reach.

## **6. Recommendations for Improvement, Innovation, and Reformation**

### **6.1 Establish State Criminal Intelligence Fusion Centres**

Each state should operate a 24/7 Criminal Intelligence Fusion Centre co-located with the Police Command. The centre integrates human intelligence from community policing units, signals and cyber intelligence, open-source intelligence, geospatial data, and case management data. It produces daily intelligence summaries, threat bulletins, and operational recommendations.

### **6.2 Standardize Security Investigation Protocols**

Adopt a national Standard Operating Procedure for kidnapping and violent crime investigations covering crime scene preservation, forensic processing, witness management, chain-of-custody, and case review boards. Mandate linkage of case files to the intelligence database.

### **6.3 Deploy Integrated Surveillance and Decision-Support Systems**

Implement a statewide integrated surveillance platform combining drone and aerial surveillance, ANPR and CCTV, call data and mobile geolocation analysis, and social media monitoring. Feed this platform into a Decision Support System providing real-time dashboards, risk heat maps, and recommended courses of action.

### **6.4 Institutionalize Mandatory Vetting and Access Control**

All individuals participating in security coordination forums must undergo vetting by the DSS and the Police Intelligence Unit. A “no-investigation, no-access” rule should apply. Maintain a centralized register of cleared participants at the Fusion Centre.

### **6.5 Formalize Engagement with Regional and Informal Security Actors**

Develop a legal framework and Standard Operating Procedure for the engagement of regional security agencies and vigilantes. Key elements:

- Clear mandate limited to intelligence collection, early warning, and first response.
- Mandatory training on human rights, evidence handling, and rules of engagement.
- Supervision by Divisional Police Officers.
- Reporting line to the Fusion Centre for all intelligence collected.
- Disciplinary mechanism for violations.

### **6.6 Integrate Village Informants and Community Networks**

Create a Community Intelligence Network under each Divisional Police Command. Recruit vetted informants, provide secure communication channels, and offer protection measures. Incentivize reporting through witness protection and confidentiality guarantees.

### **6.7 Mobilize Traditional Rulers and Community Leaders**

Formalize the role of traditional rulers in the security architecture through a Community Security Council at the Local Government level. The Council, chaired by the Local Government Chairman with the DPO as

secretary, includes traditional rulers, religious leaders, youth leaders, and security agency representatives. Its functions:

- Coordinate community awareness programmes.
- Validate community intelligence before escalation.
- Mediate minor disputes to prevent escalation into violence.
- Monitor the conduct of regional and informal security actors.

### **6.8 Counter-Disinformation Unit and Public Communication Strategy**

Create a dedicated Counter-Disinformation Unit within the Police Public Relations Department. Its mandate: monitor social media for false security alerts, produce rapid debunk statements with evidence, coordinate with NCC and NITDA for lawful takedown, and publish weekly transparency reports on investigation progress.

### **6.9 Protect Witnesses and Whistleblowers**

Establish a Witness Protection Programme with secure housing, identity management, and legal support. Protecting sources is essential for sustaining human intelligence in kidnapping cases.

### **6.10 Performance Measurement and Accountability**

Link investigation and intelligence outcomes to command performance metrics: case resolution rate within 90 days, time from intelligence receipt to operational action, rate of intelligence-driven arrests, and public trust index. Publish anonymized performance data to create accountability.

### **6.11 Legal and Policy Reform**

- Amend state laws to create aggravated offenses for kidnapping by persons in positions of authority.
- Strengthen the legal framework for lawful interception and data sharing between agencies while safeguarding privacy.
- Codify the mandate and powers of State Criminal Intelligence Fusion Centres.

## **7. Innovations for the Next Phase**

### **7.1 AI-Assisted Pattern Recognition**

Deploy machine learning tools to analyze historical kidnapping data for patterns in timing, location, method, and suspect networks. This reduces analyst workload and improves predictive capacity.

### **7.2 Blockchain for Evidence Chain-of-Custody**

Use blockchain-based logging to ensure tamper-evident recording of evidence handling, increasing prosecutorial success and public confidence.

### **7.3 Community Intelligence Mobile Platform**

Develop a secure mobile app for vetted community informants to submit tips directly to the Fusion Centre, with end-to-end encryption and anonymity features.

## 7.4 Joint Operations Centre

For high-risk kidnapping cases, establish a Joint Operations Centre that co-locates Police, DSS, and Military liaison officers to coordinate rapid response while maintaining clear command and control.

## 8. Implementation Roadmap

Phase	Timeline	Key Actions	Responsible Entity
Phase 1: Foundation	0-6 months	Set up Fusion Centre, adopt SOPs, begin vetting protocol	Police Command, Ministry of Police Affairs
Phase 2: Integration	6-12 months	Deploy integrated surveillance platform, launch counter-disinformation unit	Police ICT Unit, NITDA, NCC
Phase 3: Scaling	12-24 months	Roll out AI tools, witness protection programme, performance dashboard	Police, Ministry of Justice, CSOs
Phase 4: Institutionalization	24+ months	Legislative backing, inter-state data sharing, national fusion network	National Assembly, NPF HQ

## 9. Conclusion

Nigeria cannot outgun kidnapping and banditry without out-thinking it. Out-thinking requires professional security investigations, fused criminal intelligence, integrated surveillance, and decision-making systems that are resistant to miscommunication and disinformation.

The Ogun State case shows that operational success is possible, but it is fragile without institutional reforms that protect intelligence integrity, enforce vetting, and maintain public trust through transparent communication. Equally important is the structured integration of regional security agencies, informal militia groups, village informants, traditional rulers, and community awareness programmes into a legally governed security network.

The proposed framework—fusion centres, standardized investigations, integrated surveillance, counter-disinformation capacity, regulated community participation, and performance accountability—provides a practical pathway to reform the security architecture. Implementation will require political will, budgetary commitment, and sustained oversight, but the cost of inaction is higher: continued loss of lives, economic disruption, and erosion of the social contract.

Security is not only about presence on the ground. It is about having the right information, at the right time, in the hands of the right people, to make the right decision.

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## Appendix A: Community Security Council Structure at LGA Level

Chair: Local Government Chairman

Secretary: Divisional Police Officer

Members: Traditional Ruler, Religious Leader, Youth Leader, Women Leader, Amotekun/Vigilante Commander, Civil Society Representative

Functions: Coordinate awareness programmes, validate community intelligence, mediate disputes, monitor conduct of non-state actors.

## Appendix B: Vetting Checklist for Security Forum Participants

1. Criminal record check with Nigeria Police Force Database
2. Open-source intelligence screening for adverse media
3. Consultation with Department of State Services and National Intelligence Agency
4. Declaration of conflict of interest
5. Approval by State Director of Security

## Appendix C: Public Communication Template for High-Profile Investigations

Subject: Update on Ongoing Investigation

Date: [Insert Date]

Statement: The Ogun State Police Command acknowledges public interest in the ongoing investigation related to [Case Reference]. The investigation is being conducted by an independent team in accordance with the Police Act 2020 and the Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015. The Command is committed

to ensuring that the investigation is thorough, impartial, and based on evidence. Further updates will be provided at appropriate intervals without compromising operational security or the integrity of the judicial process.

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