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# NEIGHBORS IN ARMS: INTERCOMMUNAL VIOLENCE AND TARGETING OF CIVILIANS IN MALI IN 2018

ACLED Research Analyst Hilary Matfess traces the rise of intercommunal violence ahead of Mali's 2018 election in this infographic.

**Analysis by Country**

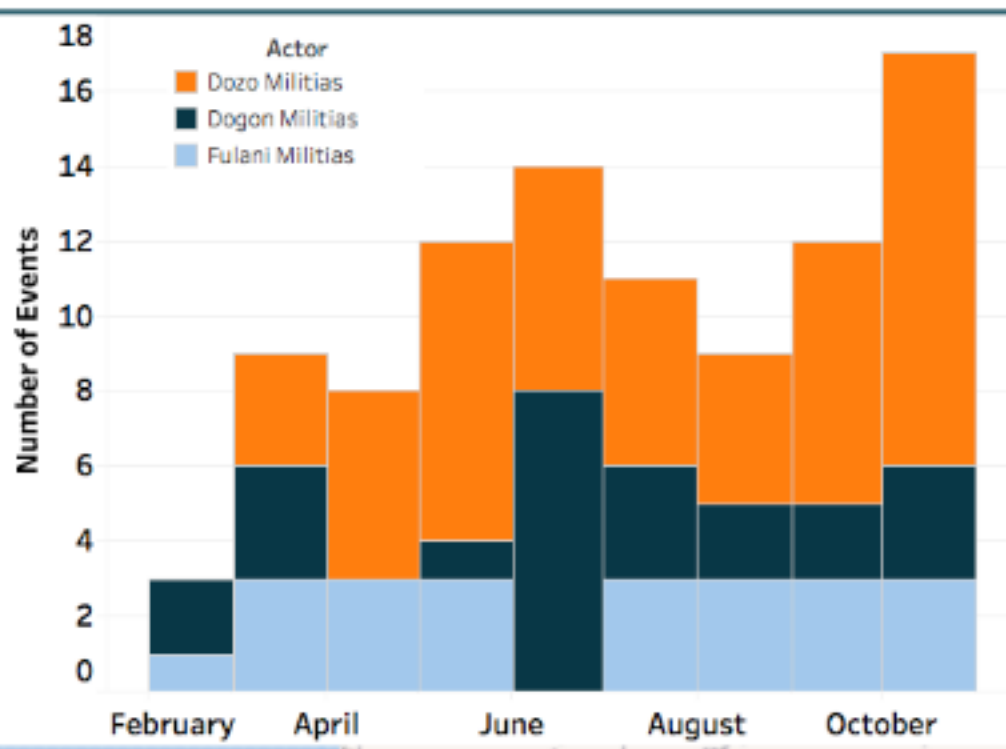
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**Topics**

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## Neighbors in Arms: Intercommunal Violence and Targeting of Civilians in Mali in 2018

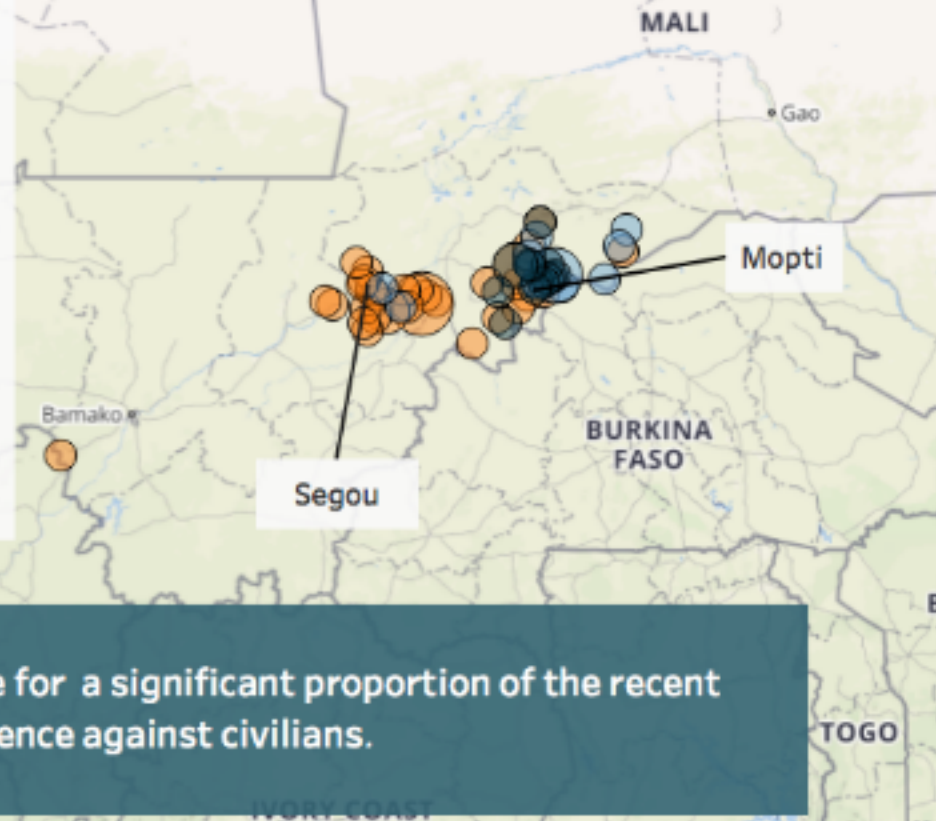
In the run up to Mali's 2018 elections, communal violence - a longstanding feature of the political violence landscape - increased dramatically, reaching a new peak in October 2018.



There was an uptick in fighting between communal militias in the run up to the July 2018 elections in Mali. Since the elections, violence against civilians by communal militias has been on the rise and is largely attributable to the activities of Dozo militias. Though Dozo militias are often locally organized and purport to represent and defend their ethnic community, some reports suggest these militias could be tied to the state (Human Rights Watch, 5 April 2017). The areas in which the Dozo operate were closely contested in the presidential elections. The Malian government's relationship to Dozo militias suggests these groups are being used to fortify the incumbent's position in these areas.



Mopti is a hotspot for communal violence, as highlighted in the map to the right. Dozo militias are more active in Segou than Dogon and Fulani militias. Both Mopti and Segou were areas in which violence prevented a number of polling places from operating in the July 2018 elections and contributed to high levels of abstentions (Sciences Po, 2018). The surge in Dozo-linked violence against civilians in the aftermath of the elections suggests that the state could be punishing areas linked to opposition support.

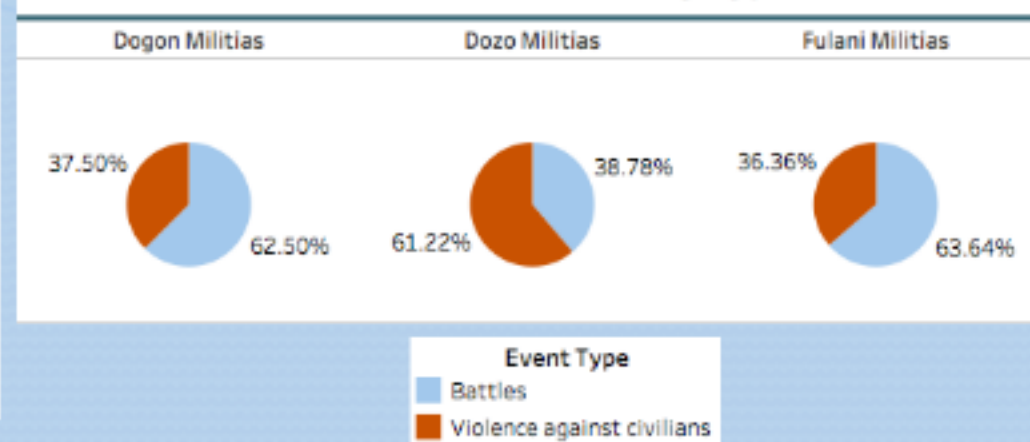


Dozo militias have been responsible for a significant proportion of the recent increase in violence against civilians.

The bulk of the recent violence linked to communal militias has been attributed to Dogon, Fulani, and Dozo militias. Dozo militias have been more active in 2018 than Fulani or Dogon militias. Dozo militias also engage in a higher rate of civilian targeting than other ethnic militias as a proportion of their violent activities.

The recent surge in civilian targeting by Dozo militias has contributed to the overall increase in civilian targeting by communal militias. More than 80% of the violence against civilians in October was attributed to Dozo militias.

### Proportion of Violent Events Involving Dogon, Dozo, and Fulani Militias in 2018 by Type



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## Hilary Matfess



### Research Analyst

Hilary Matfess is a Research Analyst with ACLED and a PhD student at Yale University. She received a BA in International Studies from Johns Hopkins University and an MA in African Studies from Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. She is the author of *Women and the War on Boko Haram: Wives, Weapons, Witnesses*.

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