Annex of Statistical Information

Country Reports on Terrorism 2018

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Prepared by
Development Services Group, Inc.
Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center
7315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 800 East
Bethesda, MD 20814
www.dsgonline.com

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Annex of Statistical Information 2018

Introduction

Title 22, Section 2656f, of the United States Code requires the Department of State to present in its annual report on terrorism, "to the extent practicable, complete statistical information on the number of individuals, including United States citizens and dual nationals, killed, injured, or kidnapped by each terrorist group during the preceding calendar year." Title 22 of the U.S. Code defines terrorism as "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents." From 2004 to 2011, the data for the Annex of Statistical Information were collected by the National Counterterrorism Center, part of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, through the Worldwide Incidents Tracking System.

In June 2012, the Department of State contracted with the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) to collect an Annex of Statistical Information dataset and provide a report to supplement the Department of State's annual *Country Reports on Terrorism*. Using its Global Terrorism Database, START produced the Annex of Statistical Information from 2012 through 2017.

In August 2018, the Department of State awarded the Annex of Statistical Information contract to Development Services Group, Inc. (DSG), a national research firm with headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland. DSG and its subcontractor, the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center operated by the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University (GMU), are responsible for collecting and analyzing data, creating a global database of terrorist incidents, producing the Annex, and editing the *Country Reports on Terrorism.* DSG established the Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center (GTTAC) in 2018 and designed a new database as part of the center to house terrorist incident data. The data in the 2018 Annex of Statistical Information, compiled from open-source unclassified reporting, describe patterns of worldwide terrorist activity, including the frequency of terrorist incidents, fatalities as a result of terrorist incidents, hostages/kidnappings, and where and by whom these incidents were committed. The report also interprets data trends regarding incident locations, perpetrators, tactics, weapons used, victims, and facilities targeted by terrorists.

The next section discusses the methodology for preparing the new 2018 Annex.

Owing to the evolution in data collection methodology with respect to both the Worldwide Incidents Tracking System and the Global Terrorism Database, as well as the Global Terrorism Trends and Analysis Center, we have restricted the analysis of global terrorism to 2018. This is consistent with the transition of 2012. In general, comparisons of aggregate statistics over time should be interpreted with caution because of considerable variation in the availability of source materials and differing methodologies for data collection and analysis. Any assessments and descriptions, including those regarding the nature of the incidents or the factual circumstances thereof, are offered only as part of GTTAC's analytic work product and may not reflect the views of the United States government.

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Methodology

About the 2018 Annex of Statistical Information
The Annex of Statistical Information (henceforth referred to as the Annex) is a summary of worldwide terrorist activity that occurred during the 2018 calendar year, as reported by unclassified sources. The data for the Annex are processed by a combination of electronic data acquisition and filtering and of human processing and validation of terrorism incidents. All the data come from open-source material and are used to strengthen ongoing efforts to analyze and understand the threat landscape and risk of global terrorism.

Defining Terrorism
For the purposes of this Annex, an incident is deemed "terrorist" if it conforms to Title 22, Section 2656f, of the U.S. Code. It is therefore defined as a violent act carried out by non-state actors that meets the following inclusion criteria:

1. The violent act aims to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal.
2. The violent act includes evidence of an intention to coerce, intimidate, or convey some other message to an audience (or audiences) larger than the immediate victims.
3. The violent act occurred outside the precepts of International Humanitarian Law insofar as it targeted non-combatants.

GTTAC includes only those incidents for which all three criteria were met. In exceptional cases, such as in conflict zones, incidents could be included that target military forces rather than non-combatants — when known terrorist groups commit the violent acts. An example is U.S. forces in Afghanistan coming under attack by the Taliban. Additionally, all identified terrorist incidents must be reported by at least one independent and reliable source. For example, GTTAC does not use any reports from terrorist media sources, and it excludes any incidents for which there was considerable uncertainty or conflicting reporting.

About GTTAC
DSG created the GTTAC database that the Annex uses to summarize global terrorism incidents. GTTAC accesses five of the most comprehensive, open-source, multimedia data aggregators to identify reports of potential terrorist incidents. Data acquisition begins with using open-source technology tools developed in Python atop a Linux platform for text analysis, predictive modeling, and feature extraction. GTTAC applies ontologies for terrorist incidents, perpetrators, tactics for attack, weapon use, and the targeting of victims and facilities. Once the automated processes have established a body of data for human review and validation, the global terrorism incidents database begins to take form within regional and other geographic locales.

To the extent practicable, the following data elements are extracted for each incident:

- The number of individuals killed

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- The number of individuals injured
- The number of individuals kidnapped
- The location* (country and state/province) of the incident
- The perpetrator responsible for the incident
- The attack type (e.g., armed assault, bombing/explosion, hijacking)
- The type of target (e.g., business, government, police, military)

Limitations

This rigorous approach has its challenges. First, because GTTAC uses open-source data to identify reports of terrorist incidents, the initial data collection process is burdened by biased and unreliable media coverage, especially in conflict zones.

GTTAC has worked around this by employing a well-trained multilingual and multicultural team of subject-matter experts, technologists, and researchers to continually monitor and enhance the methodology and thereby maintain a comprehensive, accurate, and systematic data collection process. This is important, as GTTAC's source material has been extracted from more than 90 languages worldwide.

To support this report, GTTAC created a Global Terrorism Experts Group, an international advisory board that reviews content and ensures objectivity by capturing local context and nuance.

Quantifying harm to victims of terrorist incidents is challenging when open-source information is imprecise (persons killed or injured).

COMPLEXITIES OF OPEN-SOURCE DATA

Capturing the extent of terrorist activities in conflict and high-risk areas is difficult. For an incident to be included in the Annex of Statistical Information, there must be verifiable sources. However, in these conflict areas, information typically is scarce and tends to be reported in vague terms. For instance, during the battle for Hajin in Syria (September to December 2018) against ISIS, human rights groups counted nearly 1,500 deaths, including 900 ISIS and 600 Syrian Defense Forces. However, fewer than 50 of these casualties were reported as specific incidents that could be recorded in the GTTAC database. Similarly, it is often difficult to distinguish between intentional counterterrorism operations and random encounters. There is also a tendency in open media sources to quantify casualties with imprecise language ("a few," "many," "tens"), which requires additional investigation. To work through these issues, GTTAC created a scale to quantify the lethality of an incident.

*GTTAC uses the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Geopolitical Entities, Names, and Codes for the encoding country and state/province information. For geographic region designations, GTTAC uses the United Nations Country Grouping as an initial set of regions. These designations can be found online: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/.

To address this issue, GTTAC created the following scale to aid in the recording of casualties:

Table 1.1. Quantifying Vague Amounts

When Media Articulate	GTTAC Records
A couple	2
A number of, a few, several, or some	3
Many	5
Tens	11
A dozen	12
More than a dozen, dozens	13

This method of quantifying harm when open-source reports are imprecise means the 2018 Annex may show a higher number of casualties than previous reports.

It is GTTAC's understanding that previous Annexes omitted data on deaths and injuries when open-source reports did not cite numbers; casualties described in terms such as "a few," "huge losses," or "scores" were classified as "missing data" and were not counted.

Finally, as noted in the introduction, the process for collecting and analyzing data used to create the Annex has changed over time. From 2004 to 2011, the data were collected by the National Counterterrorism Center. From 2012 to 2017, they were collected by START. In 2018, DSG and its subcontractor GMU began producing the Annex. GTTAC has made use of technological advancements in data collection that employed different processes for identifying, coding, and counting terrorism incidents. Additionally, the 2018 Annex employed a new set of variables to record victims of terrorist incidents that did not exist in previous Annexes. Given the differences in methodology from the initiation of the Statistical Annex in 2004, caution should be used when comparing statistics over time.

Disclaimers

Nothing in this report should be construed as a determination that individuals associated with particular incidents are guilty of terrorism or any other criminal offense.

The data on terrorist incidents collected and stored in GTTAC are not static. Rather, the database is dynamic and will evolve over time as new incidents are identified and new details about existing incidents become available. For this reason, the data provided in this report may not exactly match data provided in subsequent reports.

1. Significant Trends

In 2018, terrorist incidents occurred in 84 countries and territories. About 85 percent of all incidents were concentrated in three geographic regions: the Middle East, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. In order, Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, India, Nigeria, Somalia, Philippines, Pakistan, Yemen, and Cameroon experienced the greatest number of terrorist incidents in 2018. Incidents in these 10 countries accounted for 71 percent of the overall total number of incidents and 81 percent of all fatalities from terrorist incidents (see Table 10.1).

In 2018, there were 8,093 terrorist incidents resulting in 32,836 fatalities. The number of fatalities per incident was 4.58 per incident in 2018. In 2018 there were 901 terrorist incidents with more than 10 fatalities.

Afghanistan had the largest number of fatalities attributable to terrorism in 2018, and the Taliban was responsible for 83 percent of them. For the purposes of this report, attacks attributed to the Taliban are also inclusive of attacks committed by the Haqqani Network. Among other global perpetrators, the Taliban was responsible for the largest number of incidents and casualties (persons killed or injured), followed by ISIS and al-Shabaab. The Taliban was responsible for 8,509 deaths and 4,943 injuries, about 25 percent of the total casualties attributed to terrorism globally in 2018. With 647 terrorist attacks, ISIS was the next-most-active terrorist organization, responsible for 3,585 fatalities and 1,761 injuries. Having conducted 535 attacks, al-Shabaab was responsible for 2,062 deaths and 1,278 injuries. Boko Haram was among the top-five terrorist perpetrators, with 220 incidents, 1,311 deaths, and 927 injuries. It should be noted that local sources do not always differentiate between Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa.

In 2018, ISIS lost most of the remaining territory of its so-called caliphate in Iraq and Syria; however, the group and its affiliates remained active in 26 countries. The most active ISIS affiliates were

- The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria-ISIS (647 incidents, 3,585 deaths) in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen
- ISIS-Khorasan (110 incidents, 1,324 deaths) in Afghanistan and Pakistan
- ISIS-West Africa (22 incidents, 160 deaths) in Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and the Lake Chad Basin
- ISIS-Sinai province (56 incidents, 485 deaths) in Egypt
- ISIS-Philippines (52 incidents, 150 deaths) and Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (62 incidents, 121 deaths) in the Philippines
- ISIS-Greater Sahara (18 incidents, 79 deaths) in Mali and Burkina Faso
- Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (16 incidents, 41 deaths) in Indonesia

AFFILIATES

GTTAC defines an affiliated group as "pledging allegiance, declaring loyalty, breaking away from the group but still linked, by finance, communications, technical, HR, or being a splinter/offshoot organization."

Al-Qa'ida networks continue to operate in 15 countries concentrated in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. Some of the major al-Qa'ida affiliate groups are

- Al-Shabaab (534 incidents, 2,098 deaths) in Somalia and Kenya
- Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (117 incidents, 177 deaths) in Syria
- Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (57 incidents, 129 deaths) in India and Pakistan
- Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (30 incidents, 131 deaths) in Yemen
- Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (26 incidents, 121 deaths) in Mali and Burkina Faso

2. Incidents of Terrorism Worldwide

In 2018 there were 8,093 terrorist incidents worldwide, which resulted in 32,836 fatalities. Additionally, 22,651 persons were injured. These incidents involved 3,534 hostages or kidnap victims.

Figure 2.1 shows hotspots of global terrorist incidents in 2018. The expansion of terrorism in West Africa made a dramatic impact on the numbers of incidents and casualties there. This was due to the increased activity of terrorist groups largely associated with ISIS-West Africa, Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam Wal-Muslimin (an al-Qa'ida affiliate), and Boko Haram.

Figure 2.1 Global Terrorist Incidents and Deaths, 2018

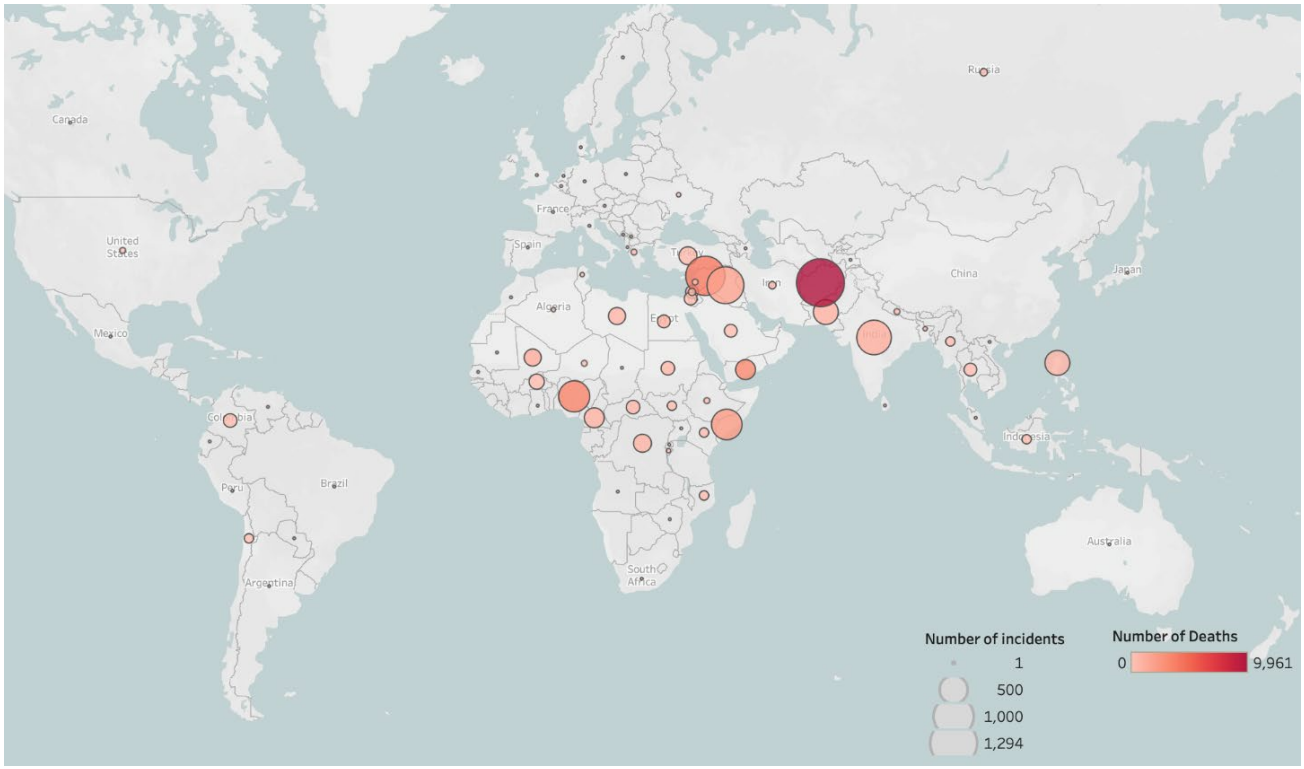

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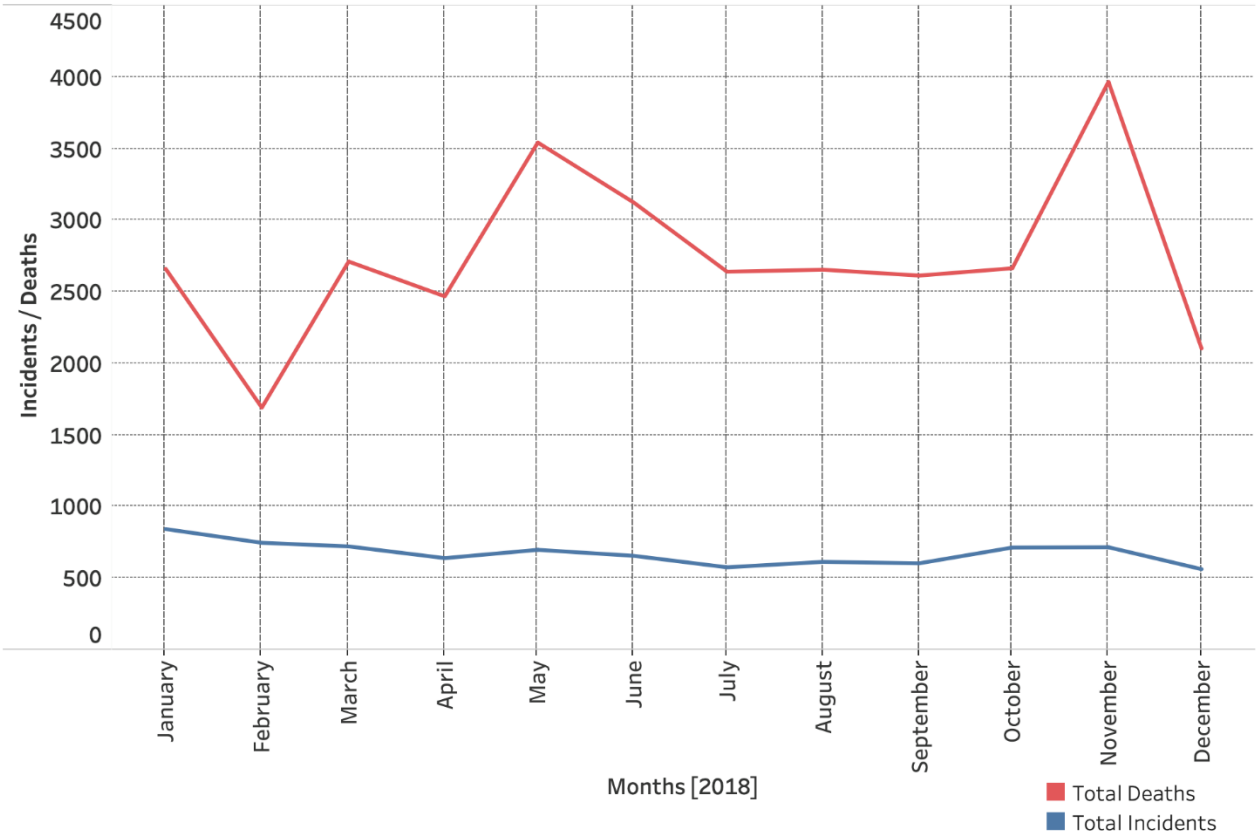
Table 2.1 shows the distribution of terrorism casualties across months at the global level. January 2018 had the highest number of incidents with 843 and more than 4,986 casualties. November 2018 had the highest number of fatalities with 3,966 killed.

Table 2.1. Global Terrorist Incidents and Deaths, 2018

Months	Total Incidents 2018	Total Deaths 2018	Total Injured 2018	Kidnapped/Hostages 2018
January	843	2,660	2,326	212
February	747	1,691	1,716	241
March	722	2,711	1,902	204
April	640	2,468	1,719	178
May	698	3,542	2,194	243
June	656	3,122	1,987	214
July	576	2,640	2,017	161
August	614	2,654	1,692	503
September	604	2,613	1,790	259
October	714	2,664	1,917	505
November	716	3,966	2,156	546
December	563	2,105	1,235	268
Year-end Total	8,093	32,836	22,651	3,534
Monthly Avg	674	2,736	1,888	295

*As noted in the methodology section on page 4 above, GTTAC quantifies open-source reporting statements such as "many," "tens," "several" and the like into numeric quantities for those killed or wounded in a terrorist incident. This quantification scale is unique to GTTAC and this report.

Figure 2.2. Terrorist Incidents and Total Deaths Worldwide by Month, 2018



In 2018, there were 8,093 terrorist incidents worldwide, which resulted in 32,836 fatalities.

Incidents with the highest fatality rates in 2018 include the following:

- On January 27, in Afghanistan, a Taliban suicide bomber detonated an ambulance bomb, killing 95 persons and wounding 158 others in a government-controlled zone of the city.
- On May 15, in Farah City, Afghanistan, a Taliban raid killed 330 people.
- On May 16, in Afghanistan, a complex Taliban operation killed more than 180 people.
- On July 13, in Mastung, Pakistan, an ISIS-K suicide bomber killed 128 persons and injured 150 during an election rally.
- On July 25, ISIS militants carried out a complex coordinated attack in Syria that killed 290 people.
- On August 2, in al-Hudaydah, Yemen, militants killed 55 civilians.
- On August 10, in Ghazni, Afghanistan, the Taliban killed 190 people during an operation.
- On November 18, in Borno state, Nigeria, ISIS-WA attacked a military base in the town of Metele, killing at least 118 soldiers, while at least 153 others were missing after the attack. The militants also seized tanks, armored vehicles, artillery, weapons, and ammunition.

3. Perpetrators

As in previous years, a significant percentage of terrorism incidents were either not claimed or not credibly attributable to one group or another. In 2018 for 2,427 incidents (30 percent of the global total of incidents) the perpetrators were either unclaimed or unknown. Some groups, like al-Shabaab, have a known policy of not claiming responsibility for incidents outside Somalia even though they are active in neighboring countries. The geographic clustering of terrorism incidents (see **Figure 2.1,** page 6) suggests that effective counterterrorism activities are displacing traditional terror groups, including ISIS and al-Qa'ida. These groups, to devastating effect, have found refuge across a huge swath of Africa: from Somalia, through the Lake Chad region, Nigeria, and the tri-border area of the Sahel.

Table 3.1 shows that in 2018 the Taliban, ISIS, and al-Shabaab are the groups with the highest number of terrorist incidents. These three groups (as seen later in this report) are the most prolific in their use of IEDs and other deadly tactics.

Table 3.1. Top-10 Known Perpetrator Groups With the Most Incidents, 2018

Perpetrators	Total Incidents	Total Deaths	Fatality Rate	Total Injured	Injury Rate	Kidnapped/ Hostages	Kidnapped/ Hostage Rate
	2018	2018		2018		2018	
Taliban	1,079	8,509	7.89	4,943	4.58	1,082	1.00
ISIS	647	3,585	5.54	1,761	2.72	325	0.50
al-Shabaab	535	2,062	3.85	1,278	2.39	107	0.20
Boko Haram	220	1,311	5.96	927	4.21	267	1.21
Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA)	194	170	0.88	233	1.20	28	0.14
Communist Party of India - Maoist (CPI-Maoist)	177	311	1.76	136	0.77	63	0.36
Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK, aka Kongra-Gel)	164	276	1.68	266	1.62	3	0.02
Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham	119	210	1.76	174	1.46	17	0.14
INDIVIDUAL	104	87	0.84	160	1.54	2	0.02
ISIS-Khorasan (ISIS-K)	101	1,278	12.65	1,695	16.78	1	0.01
Total	**3,340**	**17,799**	**5.33**	**11,573**	**3.46**	**1,895**	**0.57**

*Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) formed in January 2017 as a merger involving Jabhat Fateh al-Sham (formerly al-Nusra Front), the Ansar al-Din Front, Jaysh al-Sunna, Liwa al-Haqq, and the Nour al-Din al-Zenki Movement. In 2017, al-Nusra Front had 104 incidents, Liwa al-Haqq had 3 incidents, and HTS had 21 incidents directly attributed to them. This table represents the merged incidents and casualties of HTS and its member groups.

4. Casualties

Table 4.1 shows that in 2018 the average number of fatalities per incident was 4.58. Yemen, Afghanistan, and Nigeria were the countries with the highest fatality rates per terrorist incident.

The average injury rate per incident in 2018 was 2.81.

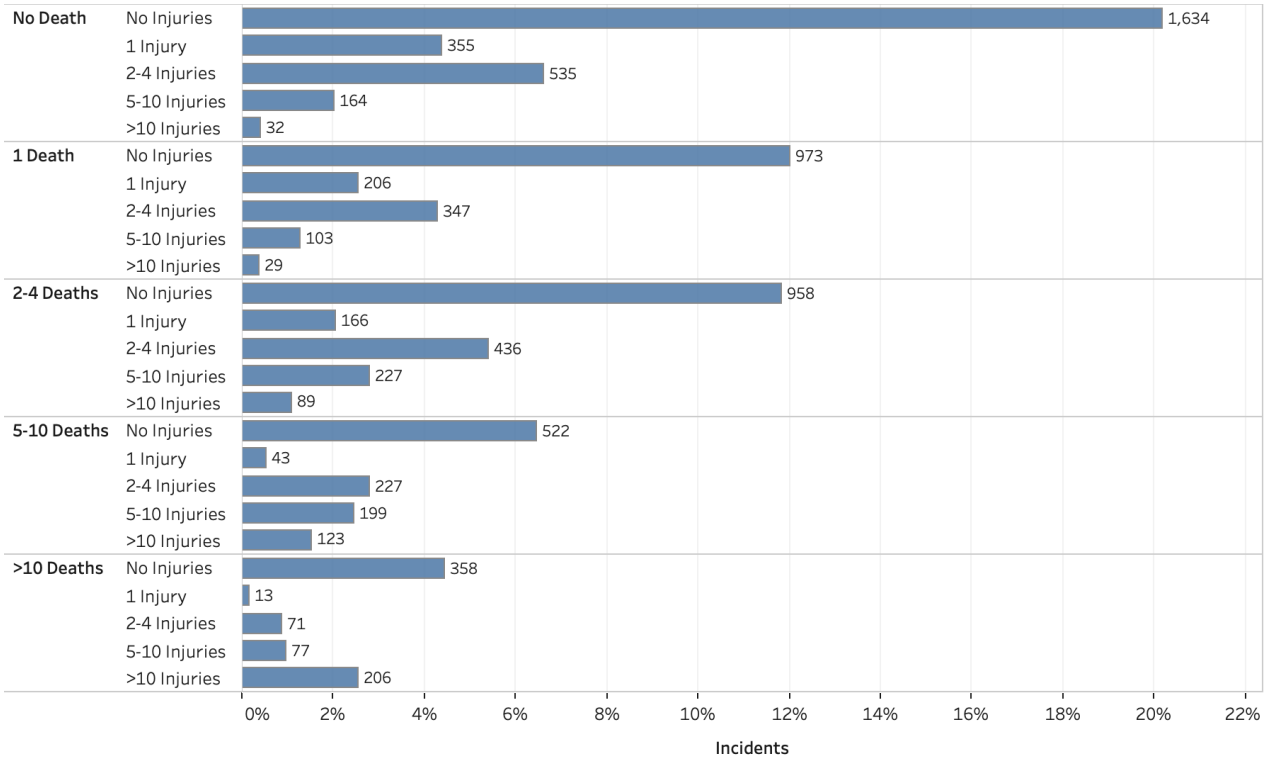
Table 4.1. Average Number of Fatalities and Injuries per Incident in 10 Countries With the Most Terrorist Incidents, 2018

Country	Fatality Rate 2018	Injury Rate 2018
Afghanistan	7.70	5.44
Syria	4.45	3.02
Iraq	1.99	2.39
India	1.37	1.17
Nigeria	6.10	2.18
Somalia	3.92	2.50
Philippines	1.38	1.81
Pakistan	2.33	3.43
Yemen	13.56	4.89
Cameroon	2.97	1.23
Average Rate	**4.58**	**2.81**

As indicated in **Figure 4.1,** not all terrorism incidents ended up with (reported) casualties. Casualties are defined in the Annex as fatalities and physical injuries. The number of fatalities in terrorist incidents varied by location, target, weapon used, and tactic. Attacks with armed assaults and vehicles were deadlier than incidents with other weapons, including bombings and explosives.

Twenty percent of the incidents in 2018 resulted in neither fatalities nor injuries. Examples of this are a mortar attack that missed its intended target, incendiary weapons that caused only property damage, and a kidnapping in which the victim was unharmed physically. Nine percent of the incidents in 2018, however, resulted in more than 10 fatalities.

Figure 4.1. Casualties Attributable to Terrorist Incidents Worldwide, 2018



*As noted in the methodology section on page 4 above, GTTAC quantifies open-source reporting statements such as "many," "tens," "several" and the like into numeric quantities for those killed or wounded in a terrorist incident. This quantification scale is unique to GTTAC and this report.

5. Hostage-Taking and Kidnapping

There were 3,534 people kidnapped or taken hostage by terrorist groups in 2018. The Taliban was the perpetrator with the highest number of hostages and kidnappings — with 1,082 in 2018, almost 34 percent of the worldwide total. ISIS, with the second highest, kidnapped or took hostage 325 individuals in 2018.

GTTAC could report only those incidents that had reliable corroborating information and for which specific numbers were available. Thus, the GTTAC database likely will show only a handful of kidnappings, despite evidence that the problem is much more pervasive.

6. Attack Types

A wide range of tactics and weapons were used to commit acts of terrorism in 2018. Any single recorded incident may have involved multiple tactics and weapons.

The clear majority of incidents (68 percent) were armed assaults. Only 19 percent of incidents were carried out with bombs and explosives. GTTAC found that the percentage of bombings and explosives was higher for ISIS and the Taliban (about 25 percent), compared with the other most-active terrorist groups.

There were 305 suicide attacks in 2018, which killed 3,315 persons. ISIS committed the highest number of suicide attacks in 2018, with 49 incidents, killing 714 people. ISIS is followed closely by ISIS-Khorasan, Boko Haram, the Taliban, and al-Shabaab (43, 42, 39, and 33 attacks, respectively). These five groups were responsible for 206 suicide attacks, which comprise more than 80 percent of all suicide attacks from the known terrorist groups.

Suicide attacks took place in 22 countries. Afghanistan had the largest number, with 97 suicide attacks, killing 1,409 persons in 2018. Seventy-five percent of all suicide attacks occurred in five countries — Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Somali, and Pakistan. Suicide attacks in 2018 were highly lethal, with a fatality rate of 11.05 deaths per incident.

In 2018, 306 assassinations took place in 40 countries. Somalia alone experienced 60 assassinations, 51 of which were attributed to al-Shabaab.

Figure 6.1. Primary Attack Types of Top-Five Perpetrators, 2018

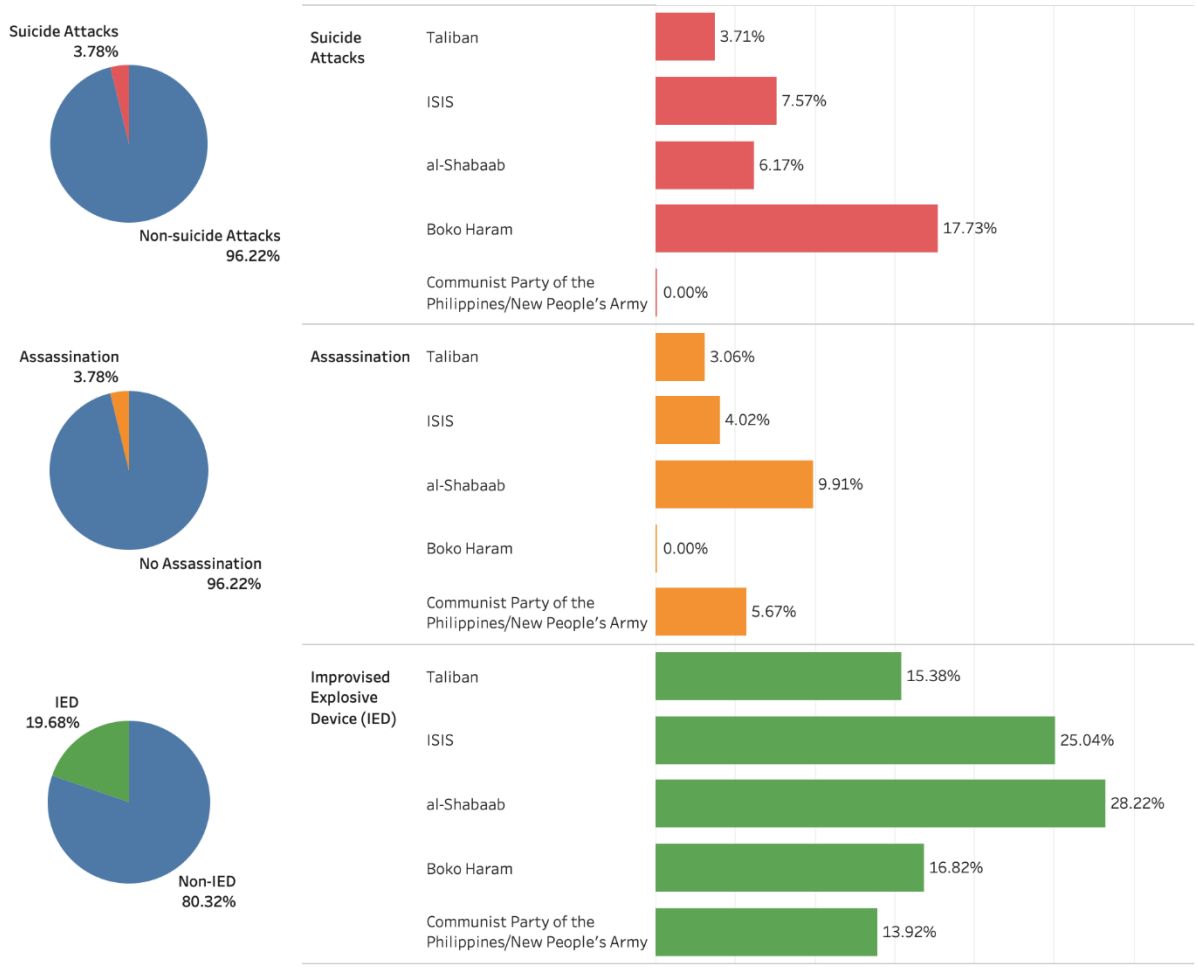


Figure 6.1 shows the frequency with which the three primary attack types (suicides, assassinations, and IEDs) were used by the top-five terrorist groups — with IEDs being the type the terrorists chose most often (19.7 percent). Suicide attacks and assassinations accounted for 3.8 percent of primary attack types of the top-five perpetrators.

Of the top-five terrorist groups in 2018, al-Shabaab had the highest percentage use of IEDs per incident (28.2 percent), followed by ISIS (25.0 percent), while the Taliban and Boko Haram shared similar patterns of usage (15.4 percent and 16.8 percent, respectively). Among suicide attacks, Boko Haram conducted more suicide attacks (17.7 percent) than ISIS-WA (7.6 percent), while al-Shabaab used suicide attacks less frequently (6.1 percent). Of the top-five terrorist groups in 2018, al-Shabaab had the highest usage of assassinations (9.9 percent) — more than the Taliban and Boko Haram combined.

7. Weapons and Technology

As seen in **Figure 7.1,** firearms and bombs/explosives were the most commonly used weapons in 2018, accounting for 88 percent of weapons used in all incidents: 53 percent of terrorist incidents involved firearms, while bombs and explosives were used in 34 percent of all incidents. Widely available explosives such as dynamite, grenades, mortars, and IEDs were the weapons of choice in the majority of terrorist incidents. IEDs were used in 1,594 incidents, 19.7 percent of all terrorist incidents. Al-Shabaab, ISIS, and the Taliban used IEDs more frequently than other terrorist groups. These three groups were responsible for more than half of the IED-related incidents from the known terrorist groups. In the Middle East, bombs and explosives were used in 53 percent of incidents. Some incidents involved more than one weapon. For example, firearms and explosives were used together in 6 percent of terrorist incidents. Eight incidents were carried out by unmanned aerial vehicles (drones). In 19 incidents, perpetrators used vehicles as weapons. Ten of these vehicle-ramming incidents took place in the West Bank against Israeli soldiers.

Figure 7.1. Weapon Types by Terrorist Incidents Worldwide, 2018

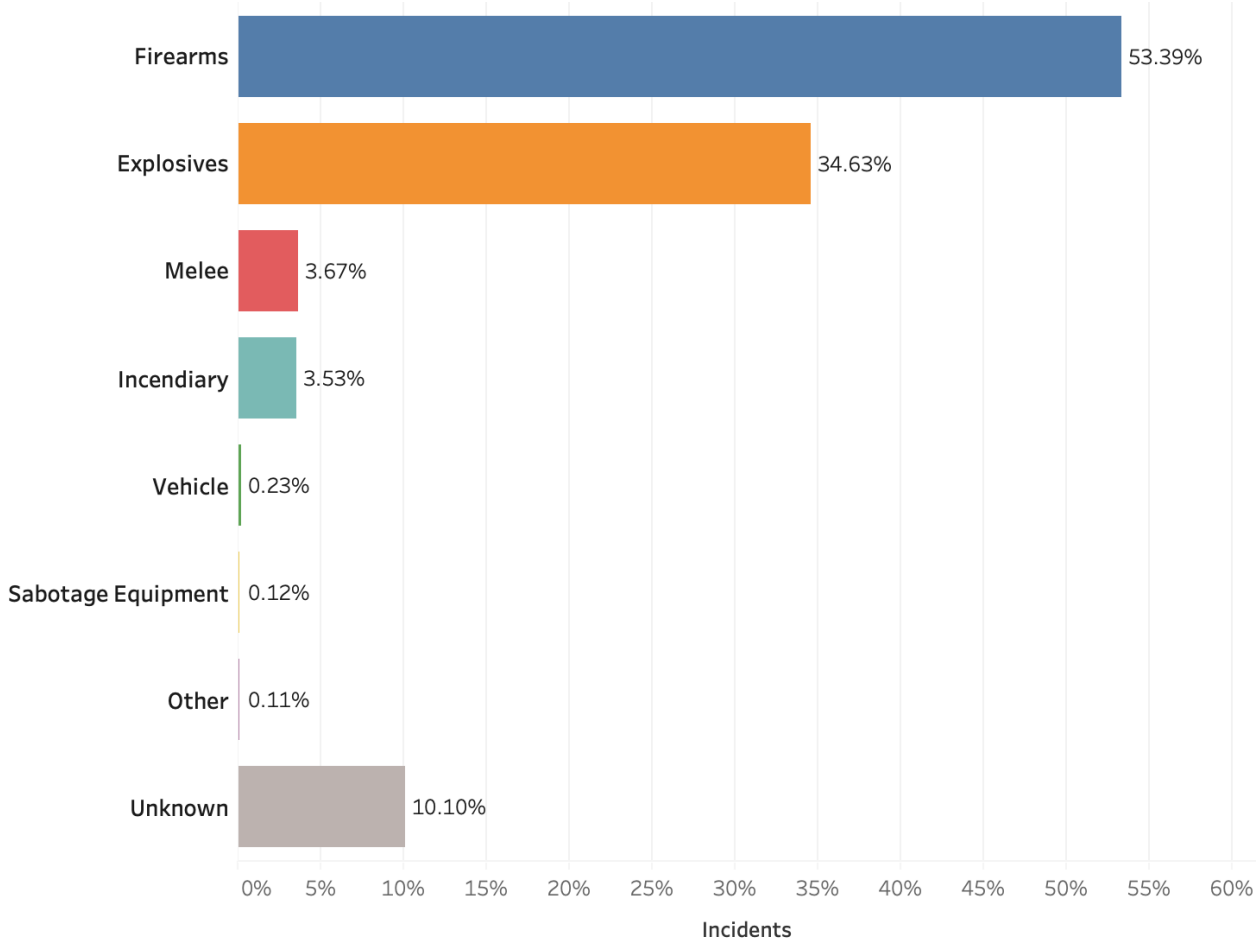


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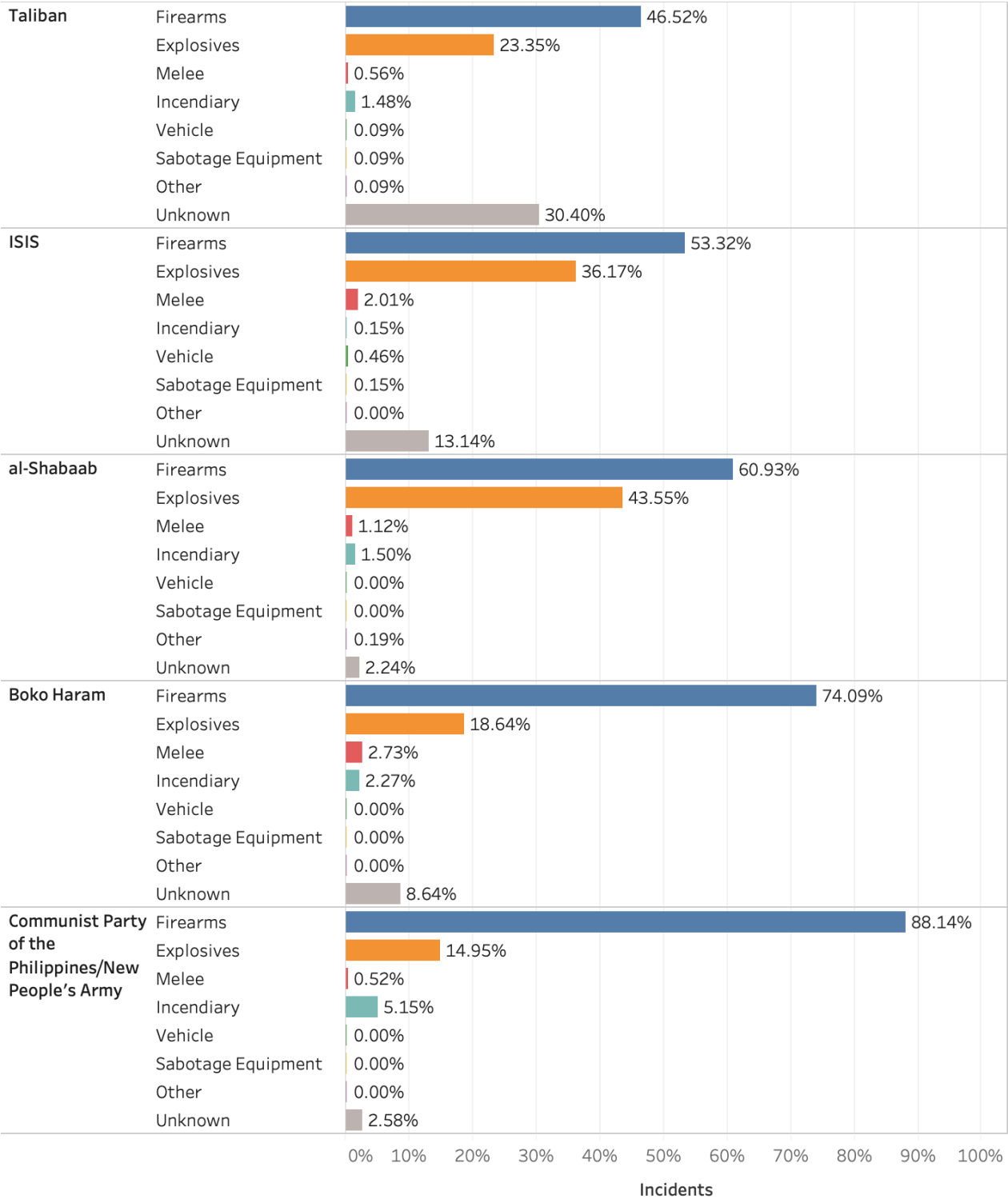
Figure 7.2. Weapon Types by Top-Five Perpetrators, 2018



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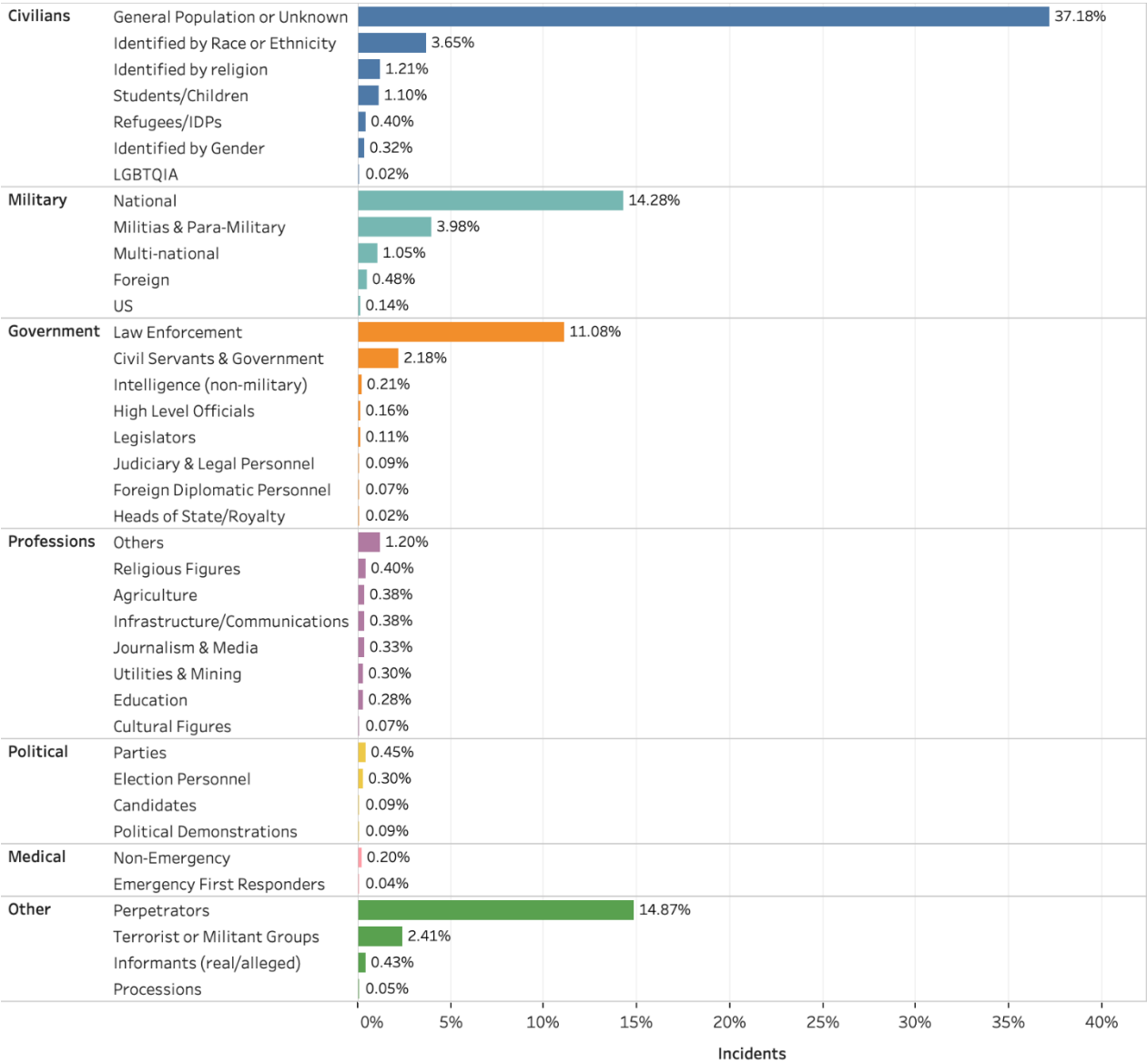
As seen in **Figure 7.2,** most active terrorist groups relied on firearms more than any other type of weapon. Explosives are the second-most-frequently used weapon of choice for the Taliban, ISIS, al-Shabaab, and Boko Haram.

8. Victims

Figure 8.1. Victims of Terrorist Incidents Worldwide, 2018



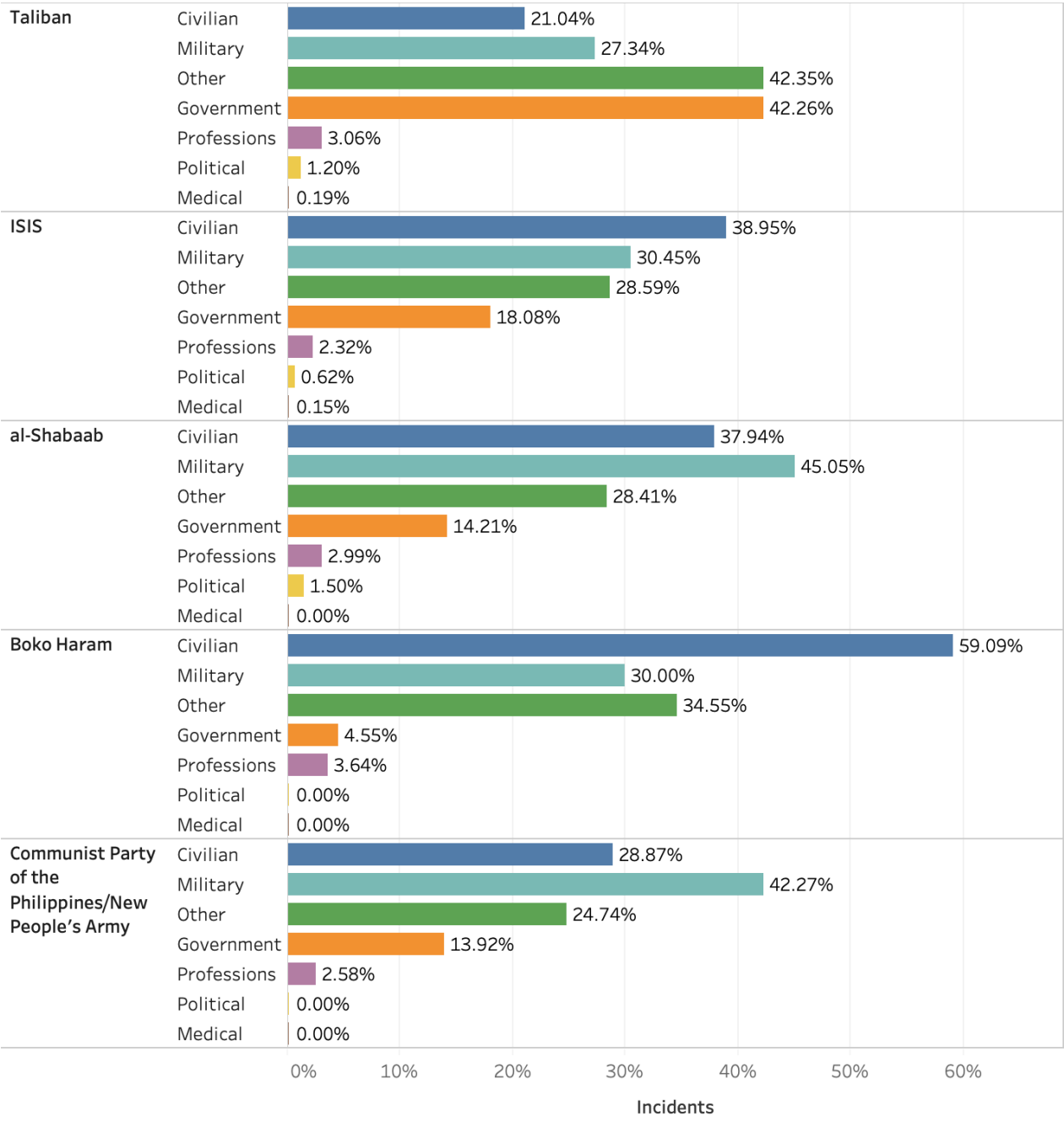
This section contains a new set of variables for 2018 that did not exist in previous Annexes. Information about victims is being collected at two different levels. As seen in **Figure 8.1,** the first level consists of more general attributes, such as "Civilians" and "Military," while the second level includes more detailed characteristics, such as "Students/Children."

Many incidents are complex, and a single incident may affect different types of victims. As also shown in **Figure 8.1,** civilians were the single largest category of victims, accounting for 44 percent of victims in all terrorist incidents. Civilians were not always the primary target; they often were collateral damage. One of the deadliest attacks against civilians took place on July 13, in Mastung, Pakistan, where a suicide bomber affiliated with ISIS-Khorasan killed 128 civilians and injured another 150 people during an election rally.

Military and government victims comprise 20 percent and 14 percent, respectively, of all terrorist incidents. Among government targets, law enforcement was the most frequently targeted subgroup, with 890 incidents comprising 11 percent of all terrorist attacks. A large number of these attacks against law enforcement (354 incidents) took place in Afghanistan, with 334 of them carried out by the Taliban.

Terrorists targeted diplomats in eight incidents. Three of these attacks took place in South Sudan, two in Afghanistan, and one each in Libya, Mali, and Somalia. Terrorists targeted journalists in 28 incidents, in which 52 people died.

Figure 8.2. Victims of Top-Five Known Perpetrator Groups With the Most Incidents, 2018



Among the five perpetrator groups with the greatest number of terrorist attacks, Boko Haram carried out most of its attacks against civilians, nearly twice as high as any of the other groups. About 59 percent of Boko Haram attacks were aimed at civilians (see **Figure 8.2**). The Taliban attacked the government more than any other category. Forty-two percent of Taliban attacks were aimed at government targets, and civilians were about 21 percent of the Taliban's primary victims. Al-Shabaab conducted 45 percent of its incidents against the military.

9. Facilities

Targeted facilities were characterized using two levels of attributes (see **Figure 9.1**). The first level describes general attributes about where the incident took place, such as "Infrastructure." The second level includes more specific characteristics, such as "Utilities and Mining."

The largest portion of incidents (other than unattributed incidents), 11 percent (903 attacks), took place on private property and residences; an additional 11.6 percent (937 attacks), took place on national military facilities; 7.2 percent of incidents (583 attacks) targeted land transportation, such as passenger terminals or transportation vehicles; and 6.7 percent of incidents (548 attacks) took place in public places, where civilians were the most affected. For example, ISIS-Khorasan conducted 15 attacks in public places and killed 393 people in these attacks. On the anniversary of September 11, in Nangarhar, Afghanistan, ISIS-Khorasan bombed a large public demonstration, killing 68 persons and wounding 165. Overall, about 38 percent of all incidents reported in 2018 were not attributed to any type of facility by the open sources.

Figure 9.1. Facilities Targeted in Terrorist Incidents Worldwide, 2018

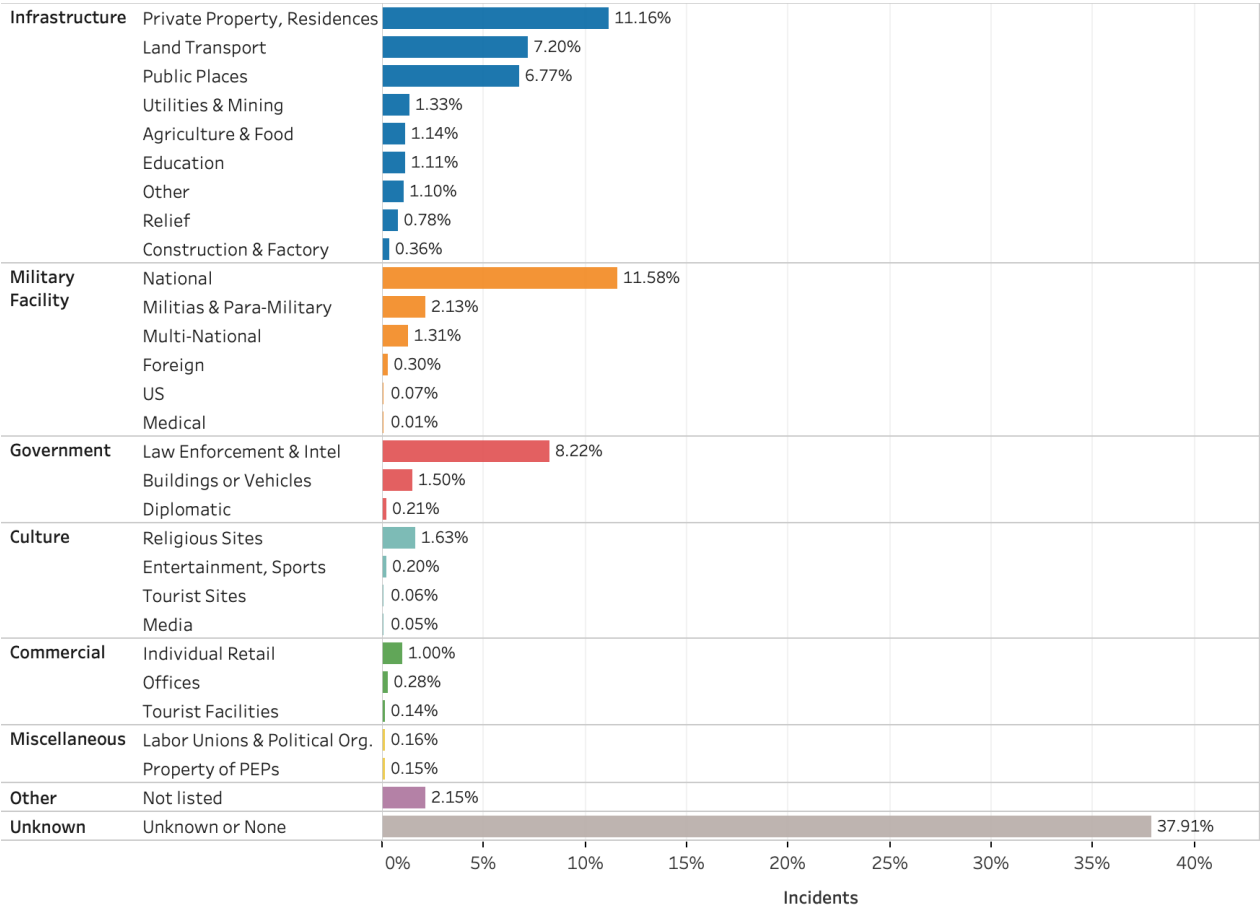


Figure 9.2. Facilities Targeted by the Top-Five Known Perpetrator Groups With the Most Incidents, 2018

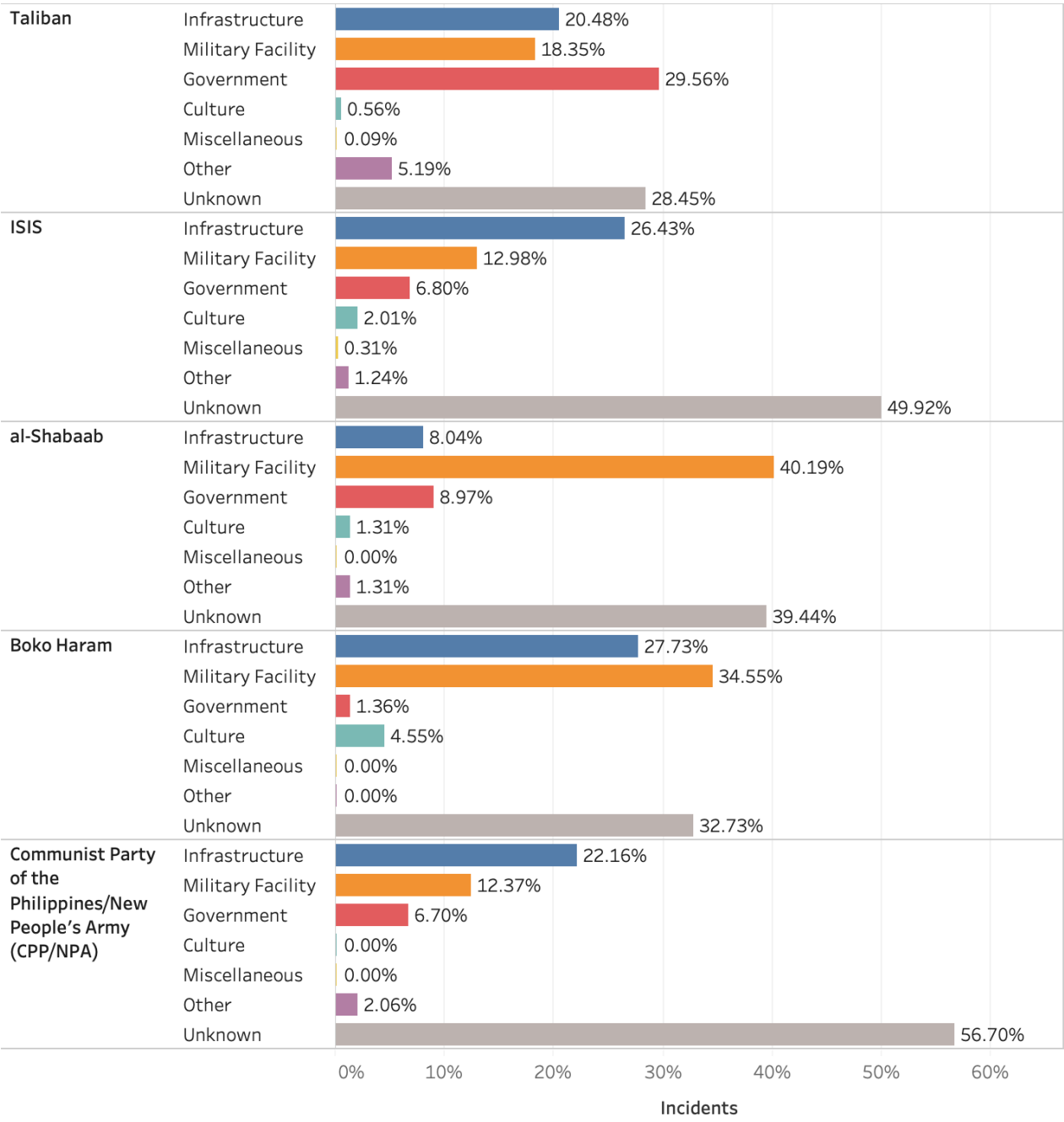


Figure 9.2 shows that among the five perpetrator groups with the greatest number of terrorist attacks in 2018, most of the identified targeted facilities were infrastructure, military facilities, and government facilities. Twenty-six percent of ISIS attacks were against identified infrastructure facilities. Additionally, 40 percent of al-Shabaab attacks and 34 percent of Boko Haram attacks were against identified military facilities, whereas 29 percent of Taliban attacks were against identified government facilities.

10. Locations

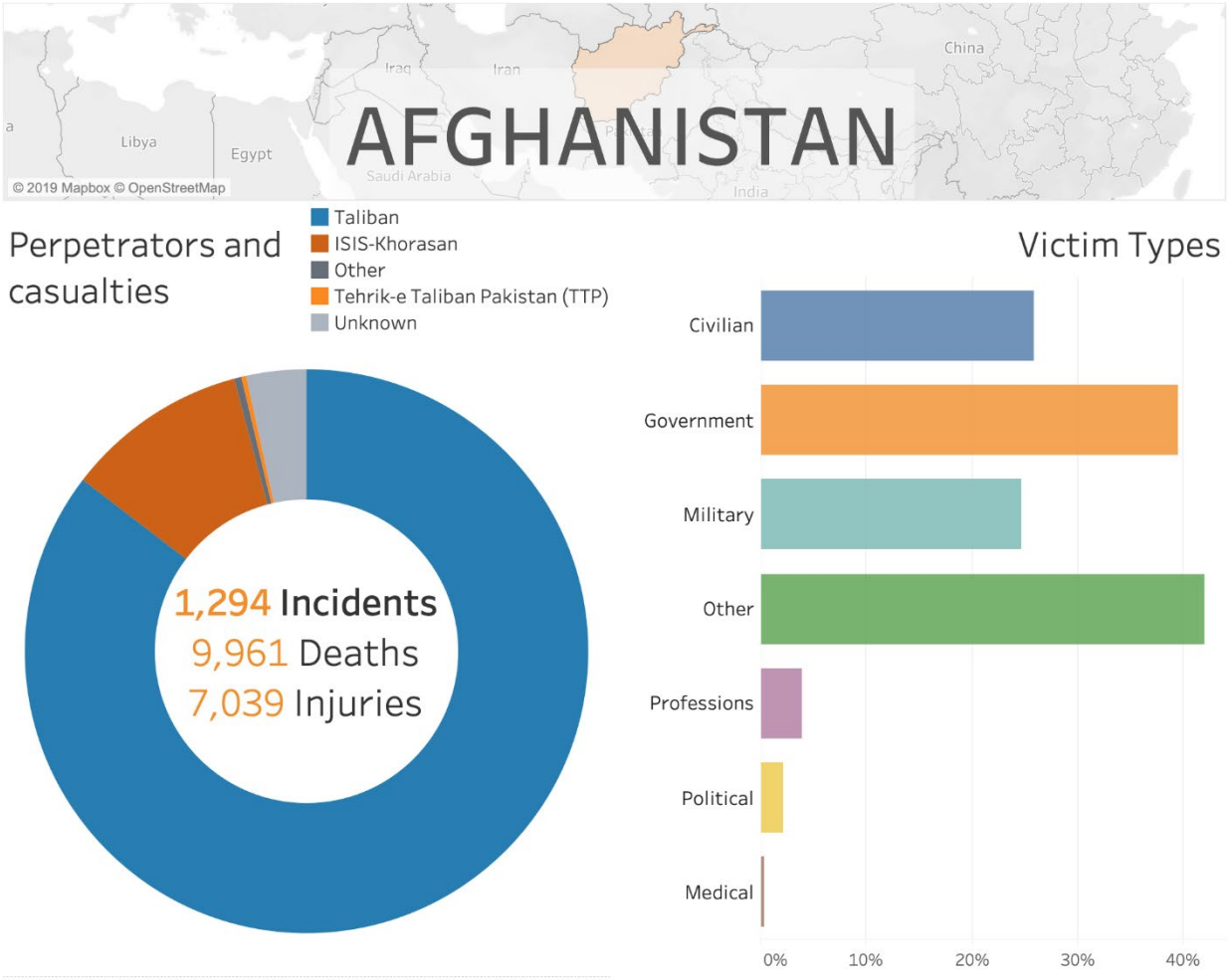
The majority of terrorist incidents were concentrated in the Middle East, West and East Africa, and South Asia. As **Table 10.1** shows, the top 10 countries with the most incidents (in order of number of incidents) are Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, India, Nigeria, Somalia, the Philippines, Pakistan, Yemen, and Cameroon. These 10 countries accounted for 71 percent of all incidents and 81 percent of all deaths from terrorism.

Conflict areas, however, clearly have a higher number of terrorist incidents and a greater number of casualties.

Table 10.1. Ten Countries With the Most Terrorist Incidents, 2018

	Total Incidents	Total Deaths	Total Injured	Kidnapped/Hostages
Country	**2018**	**2018**	**2018**	**2018**
Afghanistan	1,294	9,961	7,039	1,111
Syria	871	3,875	2,631	240
Iraq	765	1,520	1,829	140
India	671	917	784	107
Nigeria	546	3,331	1,190	375
Somalia	526	2,063	1,317	109
Philippines	350	483	635	45
Pakistan	329	766	1,130	7
Yemen	224	3,038	1,095	45
Cameroon	207	615	254	328
Total	**5,783**	**26,569**	**17,904**	**2,507**

11. Profiles of Top 10 Countries With the Highest Number of Terrorist Incidents



In 2018 there were 1,294 incidents in Afghanistan, and there were 9,961 fatalities (30 percent of the yearly total), 7,039 injuries (31 percent of the yearly total), and 1,111 kidnappings (31 percent of the yearly total). This constituted 16 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents for the year.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Afghanistan were

- On January 27, in Kabul, a suicide bomber detonated an ambulance bomb at a police checkpoint, killing 95 people and wounding 158 others in a secured zone of the city. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the incident.
- On October 20, Election Day, the Taliban conducted 193 attacks over the span of 12 hours at polling places around the country.

The Taliban were the main perpetrators of incidents in Afghanistan in 2018, responsible for 1,078 incidents (83 percent). ISIS-Khorasan was responsible for 95 (7 percent of all) incidents. Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan was responsible for 4 (less than 1 percent of all) incidents. Other groups, such as al-Qa'ida and ISIS, were also active in Afghanistan. Nine percent of incidents in Afghanistan were not attributed to a specific perpetrator group.

IMPACT OF AFGHANISTAN

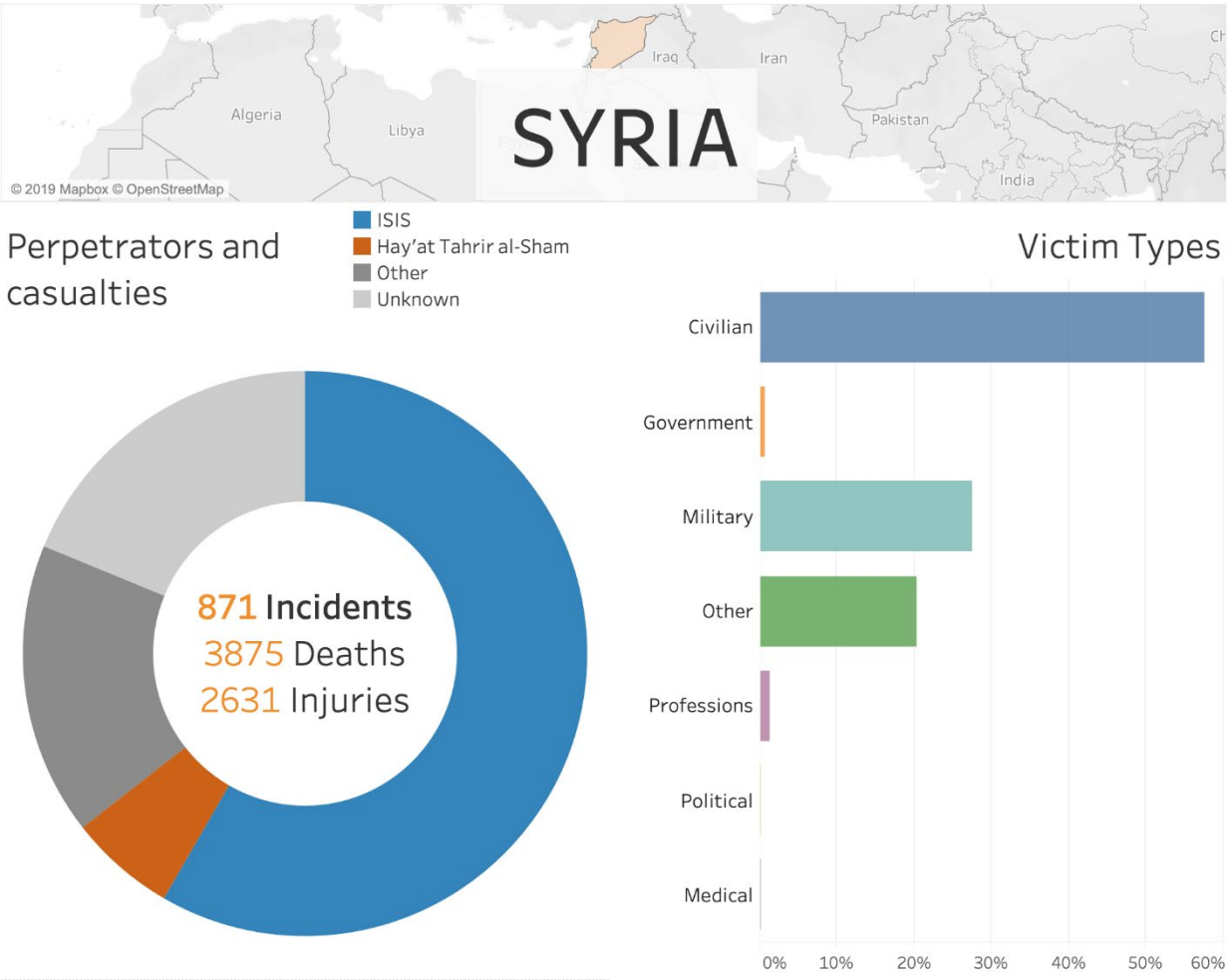
In Afghanistan, two major phenomena heavily affected the global terrorist incident and death count in 2018: 1) fighting season, which is an offensive that the Taliban announces in late April that continues through October, and 2) the Afghan elections.

On Election Day, October 20, nearly 200 terrorist incidents occurred.

Common attack types in Afghanistan included Armed Assaults (74 percent), Bombings/Explosions (19 percent), and Kidnappings (3 percent).

Twenty-eight percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted government law enforcement in Afghanistan in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Other Perpetrators (23 percent), Civilians-General Population or Unknown (14 percent), and Military-National (14 percent).

In Afghanistan, 33 of 34 provinces were affected by terrorist incidents; only Panjshir had none. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were Nangarhar with 110 incidents (9 percent), Ghazni with 103 incidents (8 percent), and Faryab with 100 incidents (8 percent).



During 2018 in Syria, there were 871 incidents, 3,875 fatalities (12 percent of the global total), 2,631 injuries (12 percent of the global total), and 240 kidnappings (7 percent of the global total). This constituted 11 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents for the year.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Syria are described below:

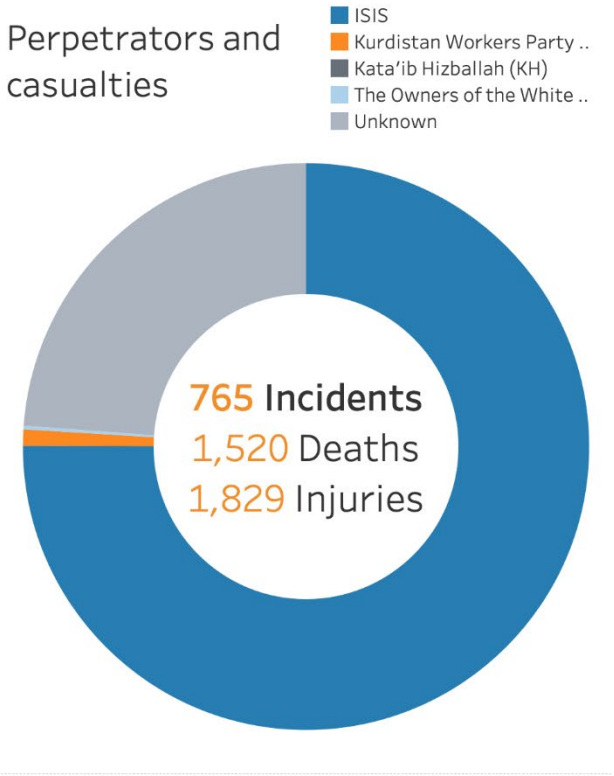
- On November 23, in Qamishli, Al Hasakah, members of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (formerly al-Qa'ida in Iraq) mounted a major assault on the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) that lasted until November 25, 2018, and resulted in the deaths of 92 SDF members and 51 civilians. Sixty-one ISIS fighters were also killed in the attack. The group did not publicly claim responsibility for the incident.
- On July 25, in As Suwayda province, ISIS militants carried out a coordinated attack in multiple locations throughout the province. Four suicide bombings and shootings resulted in 290 people killed (including 75 ISIS fighters), 180 injured, and 36 civilians abducted during the attack. ISIS issued a statement claiming responsibility for the incident.

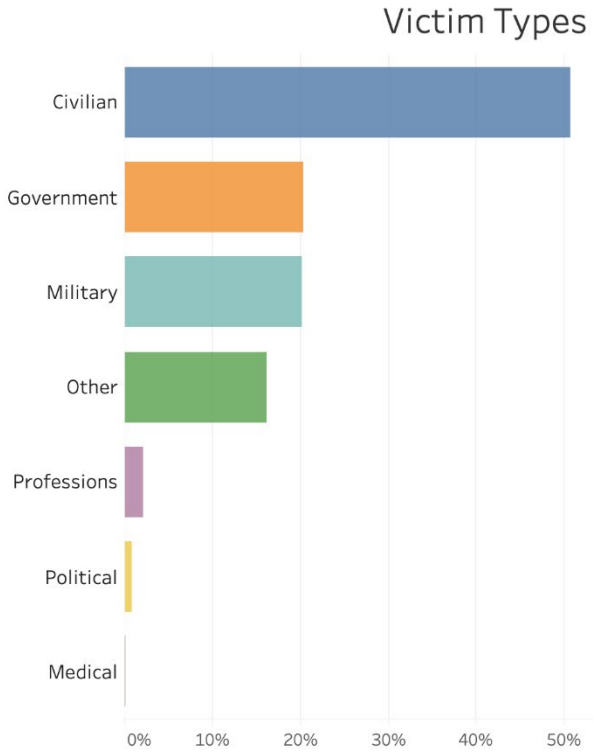
ISIS was the main perpetrator of incidents in Syria in 2018, responsible for 185 incidents (21 percent).

Common attack types in Syria included Armed Assaults (75 percent), Bombings/Explosions (16 percent), and Kidnappings (2 percent).

Thirty-five percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted Civilians-General Population or Unknown in Syria in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Military-National (13 percent) and Other Terrorist or Militant Groups (10 percent).

In Syria, 26 of the 65 districts were affected by terrorist incidents. Districts that experienced the most incidents were Dimashq with 185 incidents (21 percent) and Dayr az Zawar with 108 incidents (12 percent).





In 2018 there were 765 incidents in Iraq with 1,520 fatalities (5 percent of the global total), 1,829 injuries (8 percent of the global total), and 140 kidnappings (4 percent of the global total). Iraq suffered 9 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Iraq are detailed below:

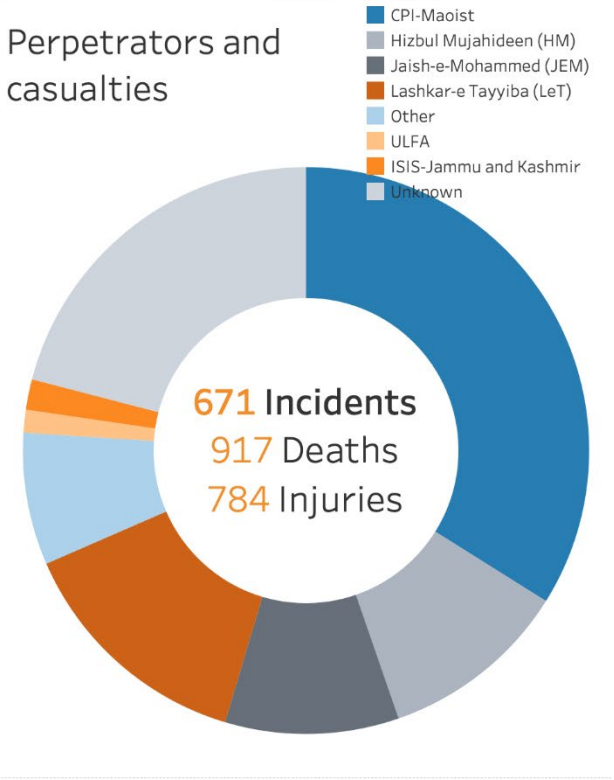
- On January 15, in Baghdad, 38 civilians were killed and 105 were wounded in twin suicide attacks that targeted Al-Tayaran Square.
- On June 6, in Sadr City, Baghdad, ISIS attacked with two VBIEDs and killed 18 civilians and injured 90 others near a mosque.

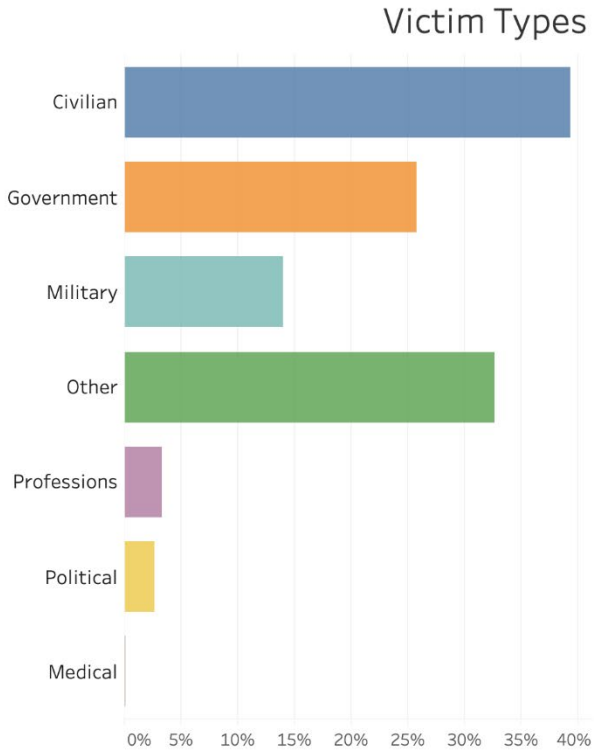
ISIS was the main perpetrator of incidents in Iraq in 2018, responsible for 407 incidents (53 percent). The PKK was responsible for eight (less than 1 percent of all) incidents. Other groups, such as Kata'ib Hizballah and the Owners of the White Flags, were also active in Iraq. Forty-six percent of incidents in Iraq were not attributed to a particular perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Iraq included Bombings/Explosions (50 percent), Armed Assault (43 percent), and Kidnappings (3 percent).

Thirty-eight percent of terrorist incidents in Iraq in 2018 primarily targeted Civilians General Population or Unknown. Other prominent targeted groups included Government-Law Enforcement (17 percent), Other Perpetrators (13 percent), and Military Militias and Paramilitary (9 percent).

In Iraq, 13 of 19 provinces were affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were Baghdad with 168 incidents (22 percent), Kirkuk with 158 incidents (21 percent), and Diyala with 123 incidents (16 percent).





In 2018 there were 671 incidents in India, with 917 fatalities (3 percent of the global total), 784 injuries (3 percent of the global total), and 107 kidnappings (3 percent of the global total). The incidents in India constituted 9 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents.

Two major incidents of 2018 in India are described below:

- On March 2, 2018, in Bijapur district, Chhattisgarh, the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) members opened fire on law enforcement officials who were conducting a joint operation in a forest area. The encounter ended up killing 12 Maoist militants and 1 police officer and wounding 3 others. No group claimed responsibility.
- On November 18, in Amritsar, Punjab, 3 persons were killed and 20 were injured when two Sikh extremists threw grenades into a building where Sikhs belonging to the "Nirankari" sect had gathered.

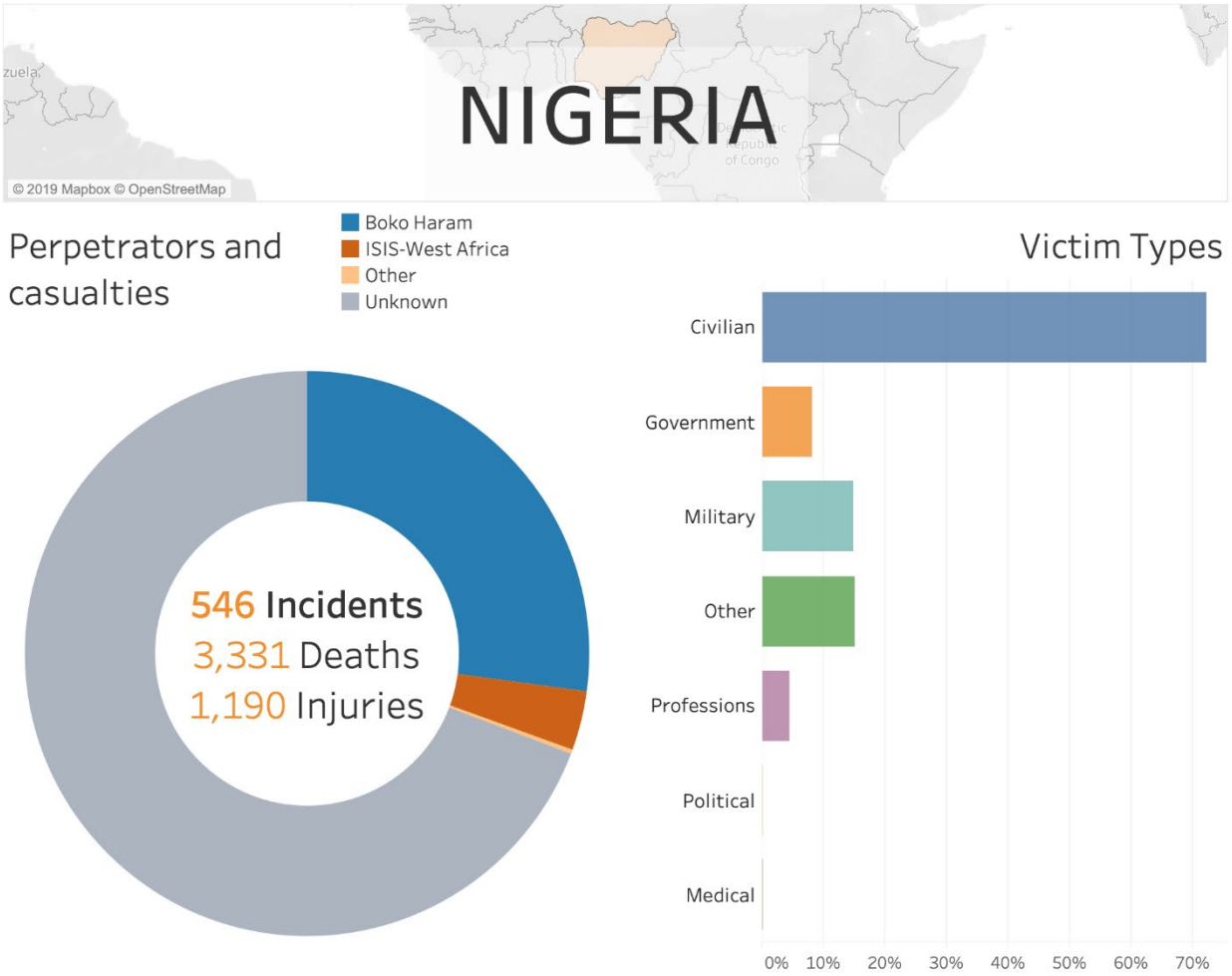
CPI-Maoist was the main perpetrator of incidents in India in 2018, responsible for 176 (26 percent of all) incidents. Jaish-e-Mohammed was responsible for 60 (9 percent of all) incidents. Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) was responsible for 59 (9 percent of all) incidents. Lashkar-e Tayyiba (LeT) was responsible for 55 (8 percent of all) incidents. Other groups, such as the United Liberation Front of Assam, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muivah, and ISIS-

Jammu and Kashmir were also active in India. Thirty-seven percent of incidents in India were not attributed to a specific perpetrator group.

Common attack types in India included Armed Assaults (76 percent), Bombings/Explosions (12 percent), and Kidnappings (5 percent).

Twenty-three percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted Government-Law Enforcement (20 percent) in India in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Civilians-General Population or Unknown (15 percent) and Military-National (8 percent).

All 29 Indian states were affected by terrorist incidents. States that experienced the most incidents were Jammu and Kashmir with 386 incidents (57 percent), Chattisgarh with 111 incidents (16 percent), and Manipur with 22 incidents (3 percent).



In 2018 there were 546 incidents in Nigeria, with 3,331 fatalities (10 percent of the global total), 1,190 injuries (5 percent of the global total), and 375 kidnappings (11 percent of the global total). The incidents in Nigeria constituted 7 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents for the year.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Nigeria are highlighted below:

- On February 19, suspected ISIS-WA militants conducted a night raid on the Government Girls Science Technical College in Dapchi, a town in Yobe state. The insurgents kidnapped around 110 students. Reports suggest at least five students were killed during the attack.
- On November 18, 2018, in Metele, Borno state, Boko Haram attacked a military base, killing 118 military officers. Boko Haram claimed responsibility for the attack.

Boko Haram was the main perpetrator of incidents in Nigeria in 2018, responsible for 159 (33 percent of all) incidents. ISIS-West Africa was responsible for 18 (3 percent of all) incidents. As noted earlier, local sources do not always differentiate between Boko Haram and ISIS-West Africa. Other groups such as the Niger Delta Avengers, Bachama extremists, and Kareowi were

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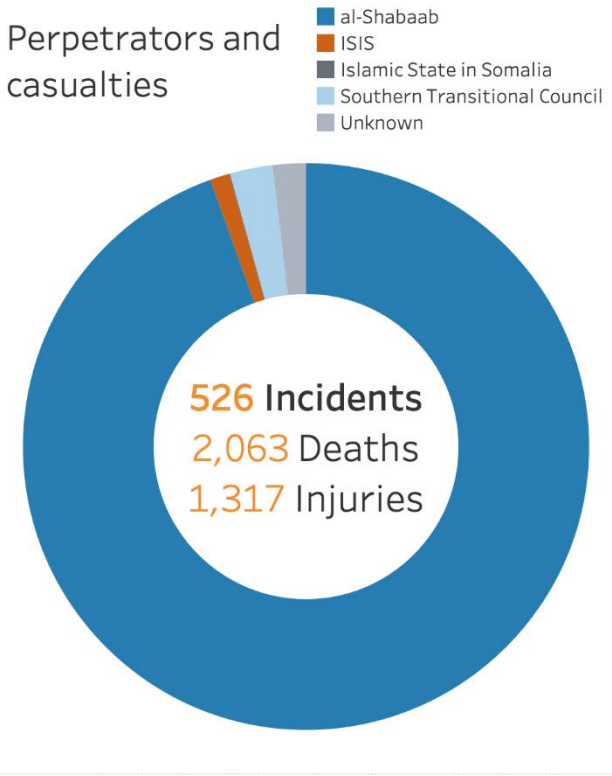
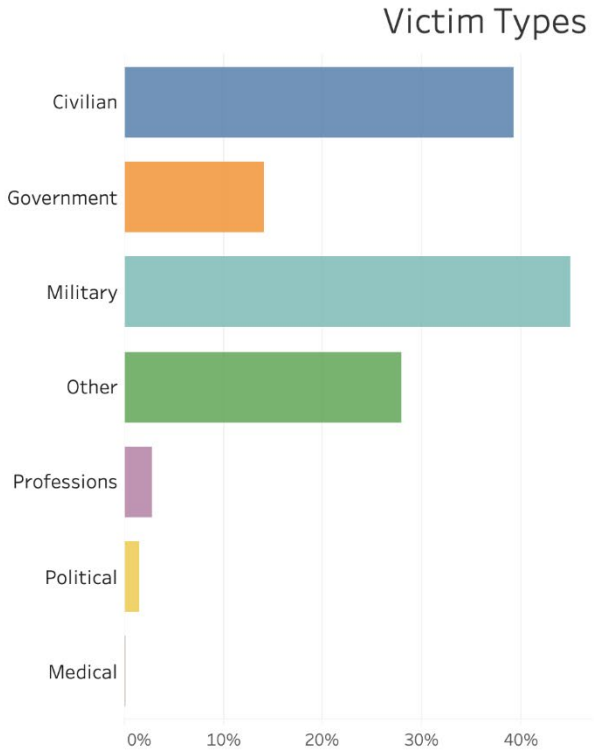
also active in Nigeria. Twelve percent of incidents in Nigeria were not attributed to a particular perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Nigeria included Armed Assaults (94 percent), Bombings/Explosions (3 percent), and Kidnappings (2 percent).

Forty-five percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted Civilians Identified by Race or Ethnicity in Nigeria in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Civilians-General Population or Unknown (19 percent) and Military-National (13 percent).

Twenty of Nigeria's 37 provinces were affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were Borno with 148 incidents (27 percent), Benue with 87 incidents (16 percent), and Taraba with 57 incidents (9 percent).





In 2018 there were 526 incidents in Somalia with 2,063 fatalities (6 percent of the global total), 1,317 injuries (6 percent of the global total), and 109 kidnappings (3 percent of the global total). The incidents in Somalia constituted 6 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Somalia are described below:

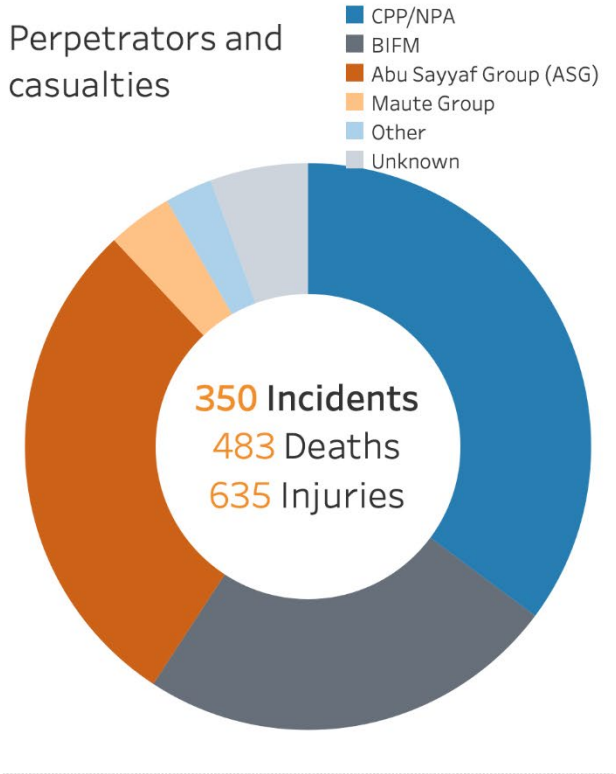
- On June 1, in Moqokori, there was an armed assault, with firearms/weapons, committed by al-Shabaab. The organization ambushed a town after the government had recently left the area. Seventy persons were killed, and 47 persons were taken hostage. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for this attack.
- On November 9, in Banaadir, al-Shabaab conducted a complex attack involving three VBIEDs and five shooters at a hotel in Mogadishu, killing 52, with another 106 injured.

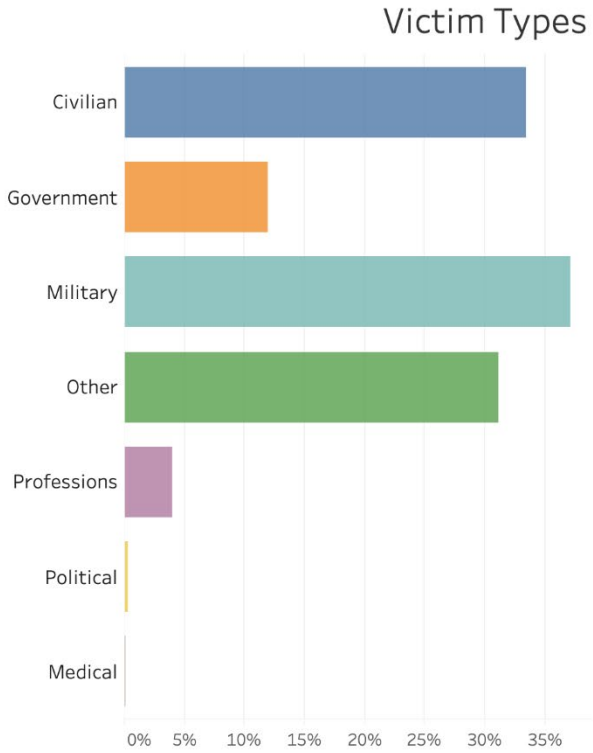
Al-Shabaab was the main perpetrator of incidents in Somalia in 2018, responsible for 480 incidents (91 percent). ISIS was responsible for 17 incidents (3 percent). The Southern Transitional Council was responsible for one incident (less than 1 percent). Five percent of incidents in Somalia were not attributed to a particular perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Somalia included Armed Assaults (63 percent), Bombings/Explosions (26 percent), and Assassinations (8 percent).

Twenty-nine percent of terrorist incidents in Somalia in 2018 primarily targeted Military-National. Other prominent targeted groups included Civilians-General Population or Unknown (23 percent) and Military-Multinationals (7 percent).

Fourteen of Somalia's 18 regions were affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were Banaadir with 169 incidents (32 percent), Shabeellaha Hoose with 101 incidents (19 percent), and Shabeellaha Dhexe with 43 incidents (9 percent).





In 2018 there were 350 incidents in the Philippines, with 483 fatalities (1 percent of the global total), 635 injuries (3 percent of the global total), and 45 kidnappings (1 percent of the global total). The incidents in the Philippines constituted 4 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents for the year.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Philippines are detailed below:

- On July 31, in Lamitan, Basilan, ISIS-Philippines targeted the military using a suicide-VBIED, killing 1 perpetrator, 1 soldier, 4 militiamen, and 4 civilians (10 total killed) and wounding another 9.
- On March 8, in Ampatuan, Maguindanao, there was an armed assault, using firearms, committed by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM). Twelve militants were killed. One national military soldier was wounded. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.

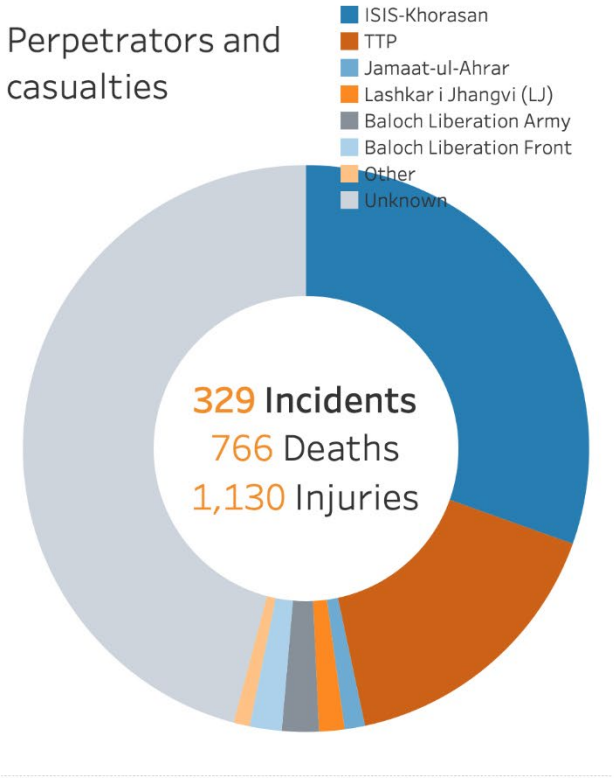
The Communist Party of the Philippines/News People's Army was the main perpetrator of incidents in the Philippines in 2018, responsible for 194 (55 percent of all) incidents. BIFM was responsible for 61 incidents (20 percent). ISIS-Philippines was responsible for 58 incidents (17 percent). Other groups — such as the Maute Group, Ansar Al-Khilafa, and the Moro Islamic

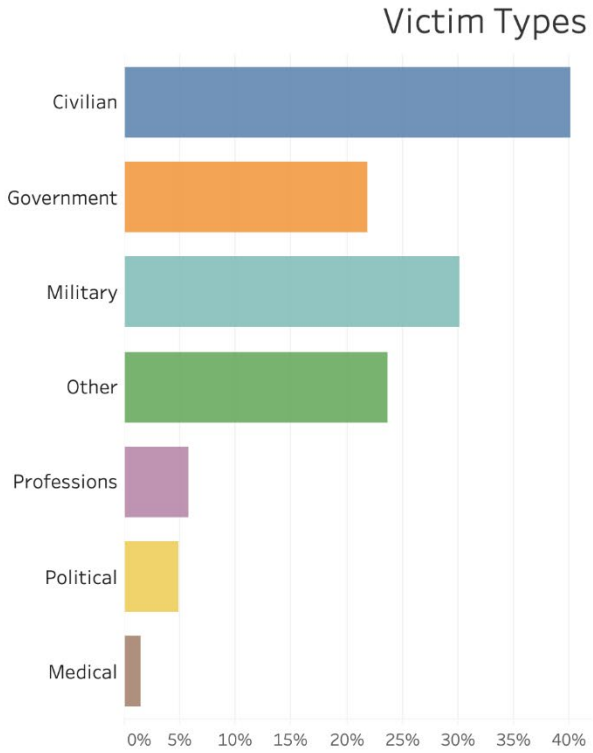
Liberation Front — were also active in the Philippines. Seven percent of incidents in the Philippines were not attributed to a specific perpetrator group.

Common attack types in the Philippines included Armed Assaults (76 percent), Bombings/Explosions (15 percent), and Kidnappings (4 percent).

Thirty percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted Military Nationals in the Philippines in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Civilians-General Population or Unknown (16 percent), and Government-Law Enforcement (6 percent).

In the Philippines in 2018, 61 of 81 provinces were affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were those facing Sunni terrorist threats: Sulu with 42 incidents (12 percent), Maguindanao with 42 incidents (12 percent), and Cotabato with 36 incidents (10 percent).





In 2018 there were 329 incidents in Pakistan, with 766 fatalities (2 percent of the global total), 1,130 injuries (5 percent of the global total), and 7 kidnappings (less than 1 percent of the global total). The incidents in Pakistan constituted 4 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents for the year.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Pakistan are described below:

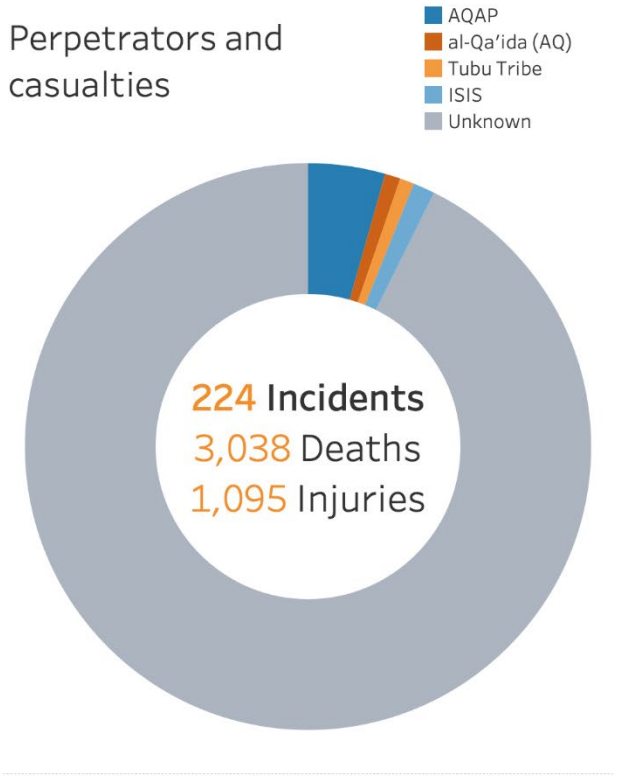
- On July 13, a suicide bomber killed at least 149 people and injured at least 186 others at a pre-election campaign event in Mastung, Balochistan province. ISIS-Khorasan (ISIS-K) claimed responsibility for the attack.
- On November 23, a suicide bomber killed at least 33 people and injured at least 56 others in Hangu, Orakzai district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. ISIS-K claimed responsibility for the attack.

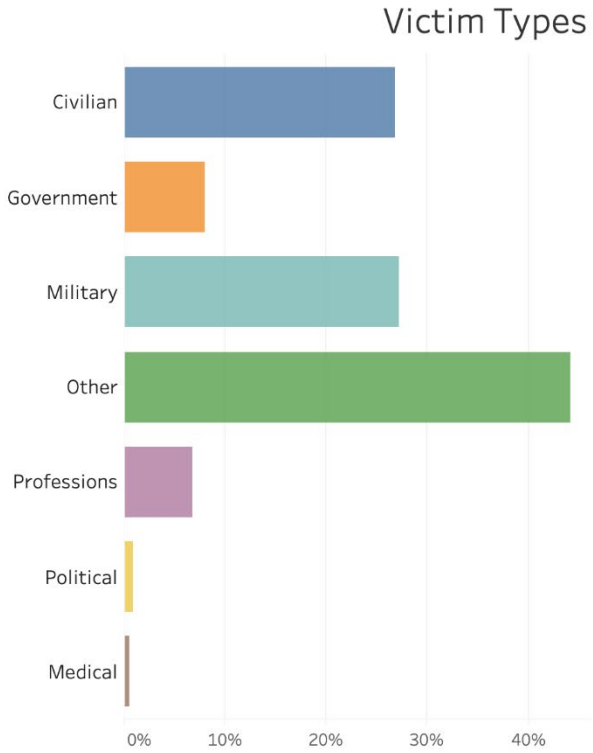
Tehrik-e-Taliban was the main perpetrator of incidents in Pakistan in 2018, responsible for 39 incidents (13 percent). ISIS-K was responsible for 13 incidents (4 percent). Other groups — such as Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, Lashkar i Jhangvi, and the Baloch Liberation Army — were also active in Pakistan. Seventy-six percent of incidents in Pakistan could not be attributed to a particular perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Pakistan included Armed Assault (60 percent), Bombings/Explosions (34 percent), and Assassinations (3 percent).

Sixteen percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted Civilians-General Population or Unknown in Pakistan in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Military Militias and Paramilitary groups (15 percent), and Government-Law Enforcement (15 percent).

All four of Pakistan's provinces were affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 127 incidents (39 percent), Balochistan with 118 incidents (36 percent), and Sindh with 32 incidents (10 percent).





In 2018 there were 224 incidents in Yemen with 3,038 fatalities (9 percent of the global total), 1,095 injuries (5 percent of the global total), and 45 kidnappings (1 percent of the global total). The incidents in Yemen constituted 3 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents for the year.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Yemen are highlighted below:

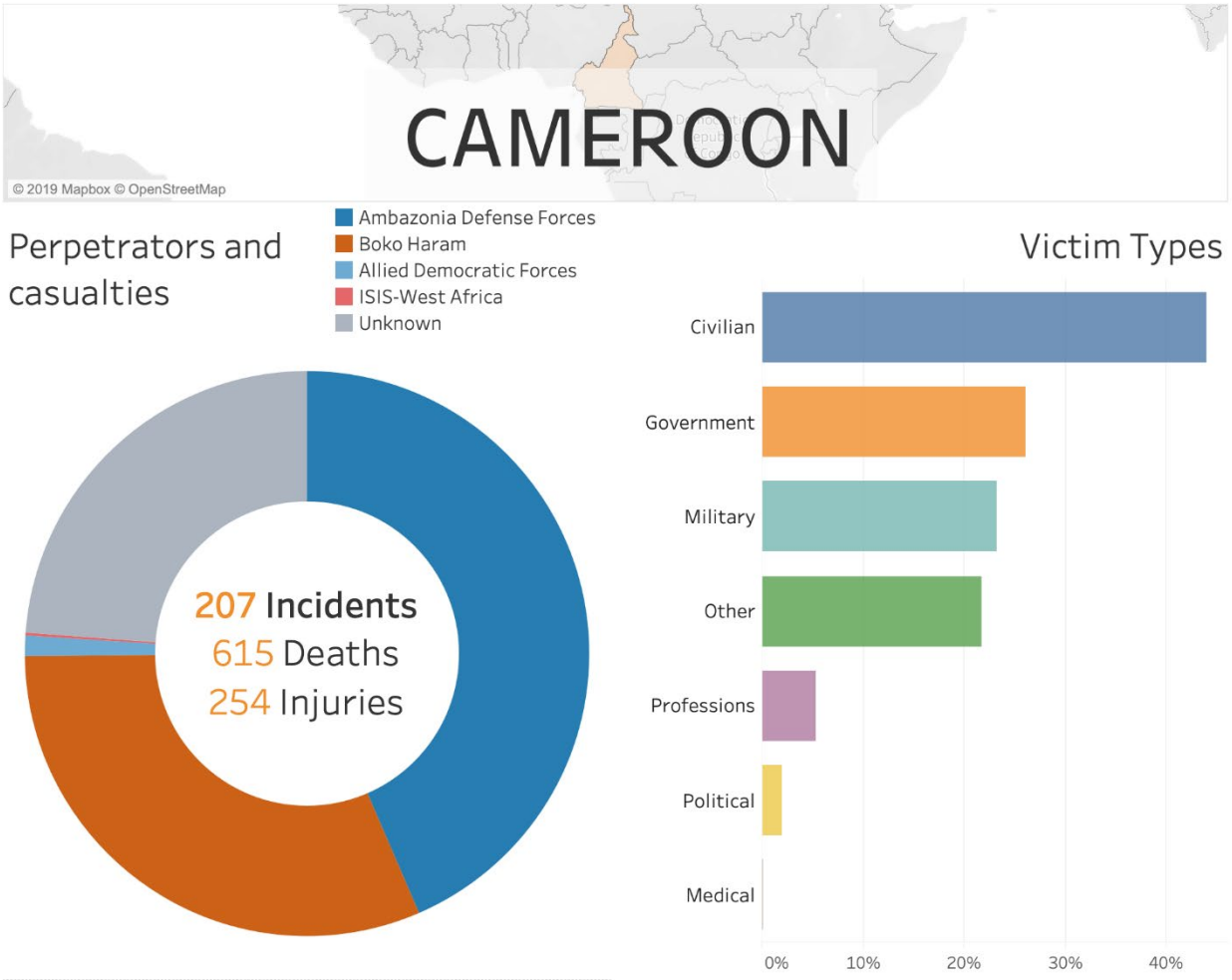
- On January 12, in Shabwah, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) used a parked car bomb in an attack that targeted the UAE-backed Elite Shabwa Force, killing 20 individuals.
- On August 2, in Al Hudaydah, unknown militants used explosives to kill 55 civilians and injure 24 others. There has been no official claim of responsibility.

AQAP was the main perpetrator of incidents in Yemen in 2018, responsible for 29 incidents (14 percent). ISIS was responsible for nine incidents (4 percent). Eighty percent of incidents in Yemen could not be attributed to a specific perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Yemen included Armed Assaults (62 percent), Bombings/Explosions (23 percent), and Assassinations (8 percent).

Fourteen percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted Civilians-General Population or Unknown in Yemen in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Military-National (13 percent) and Government-Law Enforcement (6 percent).

In Yemen, 16 of the 20 provinces were affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were al Hudaydah with 52 incidents (23 percent), Aden with 25 incidents (11 percent), and al Bayda with 24 incidents (12 percent).



In 2018 there were 207 incidents in Cameroon with 615 fatalities (2 percent of the global total), 254 injuries (1 percent of the global total), and 328 kidnappings (9 percent of the global total). The incidents in Cameroon constituted 3 percent of the total number of global terrorism incidents for the year.

Two major incidents of 2018 in Cameroon are described below:

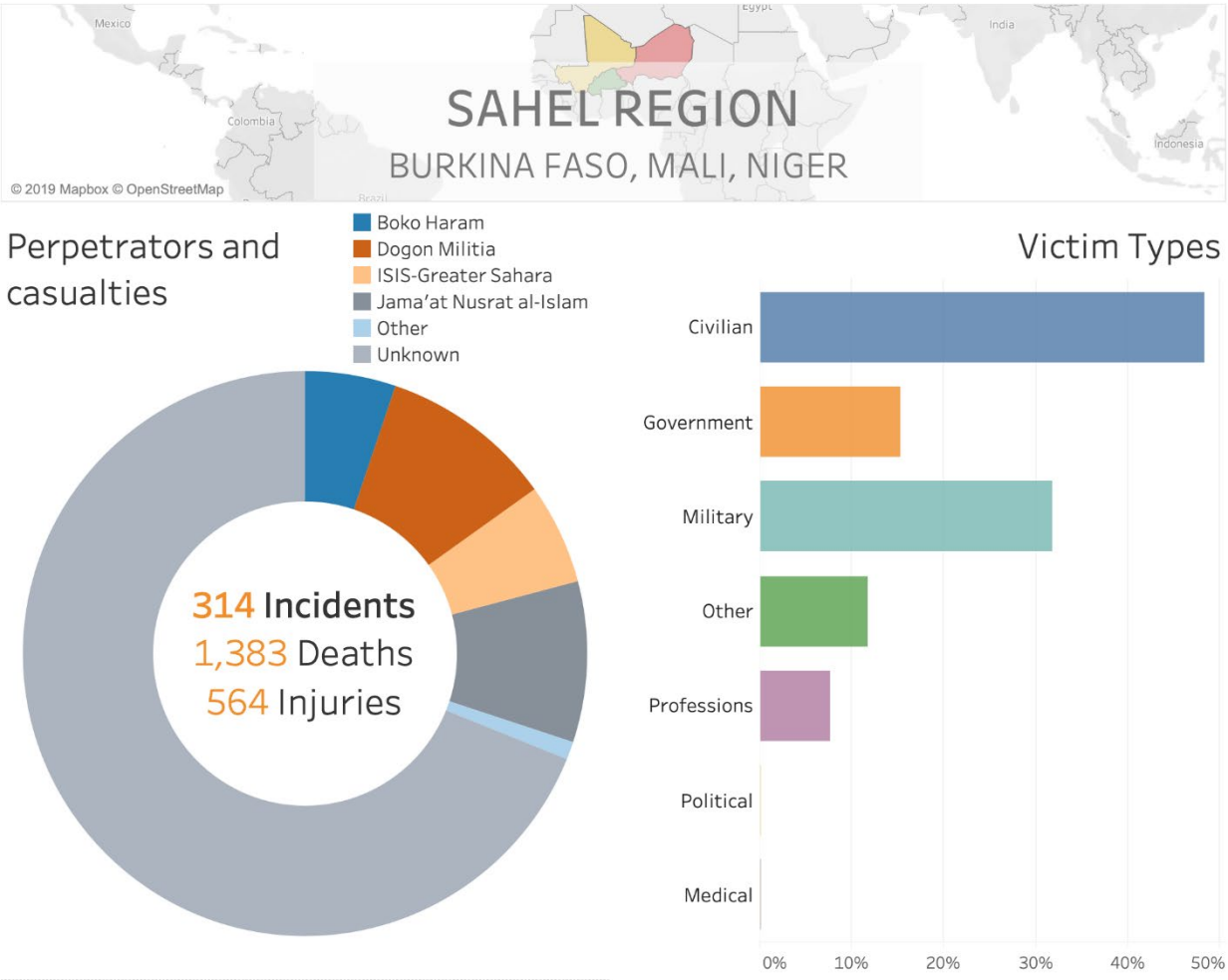
- On March 18, in Lebialem, South West, Ambazonian Defense Forces (ADF) fighters kidnapped 37 government officials traveling to attend a political rally.
- On November 5, in Bamenda, North-West, Ambazonia separatists abducted 79 students and 3 staff members of the school. On November 7, the separatists released 79 students and a driver. However, the principal and a teacher were not released.

ADF were the main perpetrators of incidents in Cameroon in 2018, responsible for 100 (50 percent of all) incidents. Boko Haram was responsible for 42 (20 percent of all) incidents. Other groups such as the Allied Democratic Forces and ISIS-West Africa were also active in Cameroon. Twenty-nine percent of incidents in Cameroon were not attributed to a specific perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Cameroon included Armed Assaults (69 percent), Kidnappings (20 percent), and Assassinations (3 percent).

Twenty-nine percent of terrorist incidents primarily targeted the general civilian population or unknown parties in 2018. Other targeted groups included Military Nationals (17 percent), Government-Law Enforcement (14 percent), and Government-Civil Servants and Local Government (9 percent).

In Cameroon, all 10 regions were affected by terrorist incidents. Regions that experienced the most incidents were the North-West region with 84 incidents (41 percent), the South-West region with 57 incidents (32 percent), and the Extreme Nord with 31 incidents (15 percent).



In the Sahel, terrorist groups — including affiliates and adherents of al-Qa'ida and ISIS and non-aligned groups — have expanded their operations in north and central Mali and the tri-border region of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. The number of incidents nearly doubled in 2018, and an upward trend is expected to continue.

Burkina Faso

In 2018 there were 130 incidents in Burkina Faso with 173 fatalities, 185 injuries, and 40 kidnappings.

Two major incidents of 2018 are described below:

- On December 27, 2018, in Toeni, Sourou province, Burkina Faso, armed individuals attacked a convoy of security forces in an ambush, killing 10 and wounding 8 others. The Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) claimed the attack.
- On March 2, 2018, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, unknown Islamic militants attacked Burkina Faso army headquarters, killing 16 (8 soldiers and 8 perpetrators) and injuring 50. JNIM claimed responsibility.

Ansar al-Islam was the main perpetrator of incidents in Burkina Faso in 2018, responsible for 14 incidents (11 percent). ISIS-Greater Sahara was responsible for six incidents (5 percent). Other groups, such as JNIM and ISIS-West Africa, were also active in Burkina Faso. Eighty-one percent of incidents in Burkina Faso could not be attributed to a particular perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Burkina Faso included Armed Assaults (59 percent), Kidnappings (13 percent), and Bombings/Explosions (12 percent).

Twenty-two percent of terrorist incidents in Burkina Faso in 2018 primarily targeted Military-National. Other prominent targeted groups included Government-Civil Servants and Local Government (12 percent) and Government Law Enforcement (10 percent).

In Burkina Faso, 23 of 45 provinces were affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were Soum (31 percent), Gourma (13 percent), and Oudalan (9 percent).

Mali
In 2018, there were 164 incidents in Mali with 1,093 fatalities, 297 injuries, and 81 kidnappings.

Two major incidents of 2018 in (country) are detailed below:

- On April 26, 2018, suspected jihadist militants killed at least 40 people in two villages in the Menaka region in Northern Mali. No individual or group has officially claimed responsibility.
- On January 1, 2018, in Koulogon, Mopti, Mali, an armed assault was committed by Dogon hunters against ethnic Fulanis. Thirty-seven were killed. Sources believe that ethnic Fulanis were targeted. There has been no official claim of responsibility.

Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin was the main perpetrator of incidents in Mali in 2018, responsible for 23 incidents (14 percent). The Dogon Militia was responsible for 16 incidents (10 percent). ISIS-Greater Sahara was responsible for 12 incidents (7 percent). Sixty-eight percent of incidents in Mali were not attributed to a specific perpetrator group.

Common attack types in Mali included Armed Assaults (63 percent), Bombings/Explosions (20 percent), and Kidnappings (10 percent).

Twenty-seven percent of terrorist incidents in Mali primarily targeted Civilians-General Population or Unknown in 2018. Other prominent targeted groups included Civilians Identified by Race or Ethnicity (18 percent) and Military-Nationals (18 percent).

In Mali, each of the state's 11 provinces was affected by terrorist incidents. Provinces that experienced the most incidents were Mopti (32 percent), Gao (13 percent), and Menaka (6 percent).

Niger
In 2018 there were 20 incidents in Niger, with 117 fatalities, 82 injuries, and 19 kidnappings.

Unclassified UNCLASSIFIED

Two major incidents of 2018 are described below:

- On December 12, 2018, in Maradi Region, Niger, unknown assailants targeted Niger-Nigeria joint forces, killing 5 Nigerien troops, 5 Nigerian troops, and wounding 3 others; 11 terrorists were also killed during this operation. No individual or group has claimed responsibility.
- On May 19, 2018, in Aghay village, Niger, unknown armed assailants targeted civilians and killed 17 of them. There has been no claim of responsibility.

Boko Haram was the main perpetrator of incidents in Niger in 2018, responsible for 12 incidents (60 percent). Forty percent of incidents in Niger could not be attributed to a specific perpetrator.

Common attack types in Niger included Armed Assaults (85 percent) and Kidnappings (15 percent).

Thirty percent of terrorist incidents in Niger primarily targeted Military National. Other prominent targeted groups included Civilians-General Population or Unknown (20 percent) and Government-Law Enforcement (10 percent).

Five of Niger's eight provinces were affected by terrorist incidents. The province that experienced the most terrorism was Diffa, which suffered 50 percent of all incidents in Niger.