

Analysis of Armed Conflicts in Africa



National Geospatial Technology
Center of Excellence

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Recommended Age(s)/Grade(s): High School Senior or College Freshman Course

Time Needed – Preparation: Half a Class Period

Time Needed – Execution: One Classroom Period

Standards (optional):

National Geography Standards

Standard 1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

Standard 13: How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface

Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- A) Understand different data types – spatial, temporal and descriptive
- B) Judging different data visualizations types
- C) Examine spatial patterns of conflict in African countries

Learning Framework Connections:

Youth use geographic tools to observe and analyze relationships between people, places, and Earth systems.

Youth develop explanations that are supported by multiple sources of evidence consistent with scientific ideas.

Vocabulary:

What new vocabulary will students need to learn to complete this lesson?

Disorder

Battles

Violence Against Civilians

Remote Violence

Riots / Protests

https://acleddata.com/acleddatanew/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/04/ACLED-Event-Definitions_Final.pdf

Exercise used in World Regional Geography course

This exercise is used when discussing Sub-Sahara Africa.

Materials and Preparation Needed:

What materials will need to be gathered or prepared for this lesson? Note what should be prepared in advance.

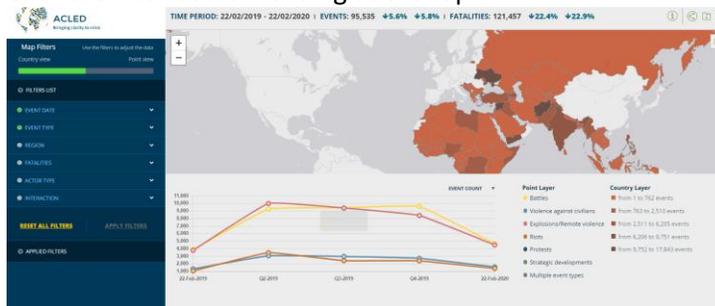
The teacher should make copies of the following table:

	Location - Clustered or Dispersed	Years with highest numbers
Battles		
Violence Against Civilians		
Remote Violence		
Riots		
Protests		

Directions:

How does the lesson work, step by step? Note actions taken by educators and learners.

- 1) Every student will be assigned an Sub Sahara African country – See Appendix 1.
- 2) Go to the following website: <https://acleddata.com/>
- 3) Click the Dashboard Heading at the top



- 4) Click Event Date and Select the Last Five Years (For example – 01/01/2015 – 31/12/2019.)

EVENT DATE

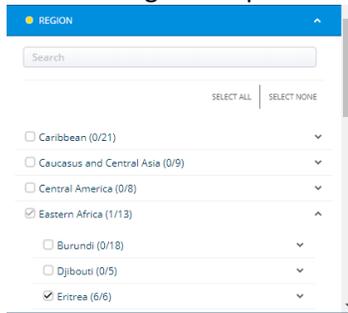
Start Date

01 / 01 / 2015

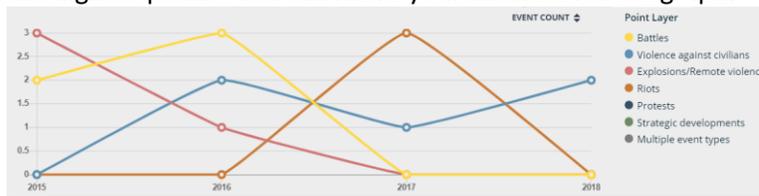
End Date

31 / 12 / 2019

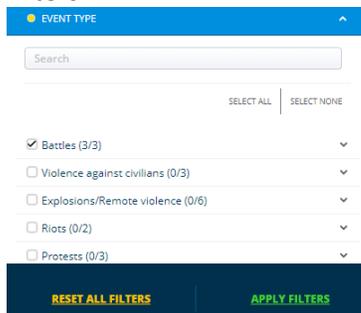
- 5) Click the Region Dropdown Menu – Click Eastern Africa Dropdown Menu – Put a Check in Eritrea



- 6) Click Apply Filters
 7) Zoom in and out of the map using the + or – symbol.
 8) On the Left Hand side of the page – Click Point View
 9) Where are the events located within the country (Northeast, Northwest, South, etc.)? What is the pattern of these battles? Close to the Capital? Clustered or Dispersed?
 10) Now move down the webpage and examine the Events Over Year Chart. What year(s) had the highest peaks? You can move your mouse over the graph.



- 11) Now Click Event Type and Select Battles Only (Uncheck all other boxes under Event Types) – Click Apply Filters



- 12) Examine the Map – What is the pattern of these battles? Close to the Capital? Clustered or Dispersed?
 13) Examine the Events Over Year – Which year had the highest peaks? You can move your mouse over the graph.
 14) Repeat Steps 11 - 13 for each of the following:
 A) Violence Against Civilians Only
 B) Remote Violence Only
 C) Riots Only
 D) Protests Only

15) Fill in the Following Table based on your results

	Location - Clustered or Dispersed	Years with highest numbers
Battles		
Violence Against Civilians		
Remote Violence		
Riots		
Protests		

16) Now complete some research on either Battles, Violence Against Civilians, Remote Violence, Riots or Protests in your assigned country. Be able to describe it in one or more of the following topics:

- A) Cultural
- B) Political
- C) Economic
- D) Historical
- E) Environmental

17) The students could use the National Geographic MapMaker site for assistance -

<https://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org/#/>

- A) Zoom into your region
- B) Click the Add Layer button – choose the different layers to examine the different themes.

18) The students could also use BBC News – Country Files:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm

19) The students could also complete a Google Search for the groups involved, etc.

20) Be prepared to present your findings in class.

Assessment:

How will students be assessed for this lesson?

Students will present their country's findings.

Presentation Rubric

	Not addressed	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Discussion of Battles	0	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion of Violence Against Civilians	0	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion of Remote Violence	0	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion of Riots	0	1	2	3	4	5
Discussion of Protests	0	1	2	3	4	5
Integration of Cultural, Political, Economic, Historical and / or Environmental Factors	0	2	4	6	8	10
Row totals						
Total						

During the presentation, the teacher should keep track of the regional impacts of each conflict. The teacher should put the following matrix on the screen for each region

	Cultural	Political	Economic	Historical	Environmental
Battles					
Violence Against Civilians					
Remote Violence					
Riots					
Protests					

Example for Southern Africa Countries – Ask the students with the Southern African countries – After completing your research were your country’s Battles about Cultural Issues, Political, etc. There can be multiple selections.

Opportunities for Modifications and Extensions:

Suggest ways in which the lesson might be modified or extended for specific student audiences, different abilities, deeper learning, etc.

- 1) Students could repeat this exercise using the United States and compare the results with their African country.
- 2) Students can be divided into groups. Each group can be assigned a few countries from the different areas – Africa, Middle East and South(east) Asia.
- 3) After students complete the above assignment, they should read Clionadh Raleigh’s *Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Does Physical Geography Affect a State’s Conflict Risk? International Interactions*. 2010. Pages 384-410 and integrate into their presentations.
- 4) The students should read about the Spatial Precision Codes in the data
 - A) “If the report notes a particular town, and coordinates are available for that town, the highest precision level (1) is recorded. If the source material notes that activity took place in a small part of a region, and notes a general area, a town with georeferenced coordinates to represent that area is chosen and the geo-precision code will note “2” for “ part of region”. If activity occurs in the direct outskirts of a town or city, this same precision code is employed. If a larger region is mentioned, a provincial capital is chosen to represent the region and noted with precision level “3”. With few exceptions, the provincial capital should be selected to represent the larger regions. No ACLED event should be associated with the “country” as the smallest location unit available.” - https://www.acleddata.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ACLED_Codebook_2017FINAL.pdf
 - B) Then ask the students to discuss locational accuracy.

Resources:

What outside materials did you use to support this lesson? Please include links.

- Armed Conflict Location Event Data website: <https://www.acleddata.com>
 National Geographic MapMaker: <https://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org/#/>
 BBC News Country Profiles: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm

Appendix – List of Possible Countries

Country	Region
Burundi	Eastern Africa
Djibouti	Eastern Africa
Eritrea	Eastern Africa
Ethiopia	Eastern Africa
Kenya	Eastern Africa
Madagascar	Eastern Africa
Malawi	Eastern Africa
Mozambique	Eastern Africa
Rwanda	Eastern Africa
Somalia	Eastern Africa
South Sudan	Eastern Africa
Tanzania	Eastern Africa
Uganda	Eastern Africa
Angola	Middle Africa
Cameroon	Middle Africa
Central African Republic	Middle Africa
Chad	Middle Africa
Democratic Republic of Congo	Middle Africa
Equatorial Guinea	Middle Africa
Gabon	Middle Africa
Republic of Congo	Middle Africa
Botswana	Southern Africa
eSwatini	Southern Africa
Lesotho	Southern Africa
Namibia	Southern Africa
South Africa	Southern Africa
Zambia	Southern Africa
Zimbabwe	Southern Africa
Benin	Western Africa
Burkina Faso	Western Africa
Gambia	Western Africa
Ghana	Western Africa
Guinea	Western Africa
Guinea-Bissau	Western Africa
Ivory Coast	Western Africa
Liberia	Western Africa
Mali	Western Africa
Mauritania	Western Africa
Niger	Western Africa

Nigeria	Western Africa
Senegal	Western Africa
Sierra Leone	Western Africa
Togo	Western Africa