



CENTRE FOR  
STRATEGIC AND  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDIES

**Policy Brief**

# **INDONESIA'S COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE TRENDS IN 2022: LESS COMMON, MORE LETHAL**

---

*February 2023*

**Dr. Lina Alexandra and Alif Satria**



## INDONESIA'S COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE TRENDS IN 2022: LESS COMMON, MORE LETHAL



CENTRE FOR  
STRATEGIC AND  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDIES

A Policy Brief by CSIS Indonesia

Lina Alexandra\* and Alif Satria'

The CSIS Policy Brief is a means by which members of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) research community can quickly disseminate their research findings and encourage exchanges of ideas.

The author(s) welcome comments on the present form of this Policy Brief. The views expressed here are those of the author(s) and are not intended to be attributed to CSIS Indonesia.

\*Head of the Department of International Relations, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Jakarta

'Researcher in the Department of Politics and Social Change, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Jakarta

© 2023 CSIS Indonesia  
All rights reserved

## Introduction

In the past two decades, conflict in Indonesia has transformed from large-scale episodes of communal and separatist conflicts to more mundane, small-scale acts of violence.<sup>3</sup> Albeit far less lethal, this small-scale violence, if unaddressed, could compound on themselves and other local grievances to escalate into larger, more lethal mass atrocity crimes.<sup>4</sup> In 2021, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Jakarta developed the Collective Violence Early Warning (CVEW) Dataset to monitor and understand these risks. The dataset found three worrying trends: that the frequency of collective violence has increased throughout the year, that the number of interventions aiming to de-escalate violence is far lower today than a decade ago, and that collective violence is most intense in regions where socio-economic and political cohesion is most fragile like Papua.<sup>5</sup>

This policy brief updates the dataset's previous findings and provide a snapshot of Indonesia's collective violence trends throughout 2022. After a short description of the dataset, the brief look into the general trends of collective violence by analyzing its frequency, lethality, geographic concentration, and common underlying causes. Afterward, it provides a thematic analysis of three key subjects relating to collective violence in Indonesia: the frequency and success of third-party interventions, the trends and lethality of law enforcement violence, and the patterns of separatist violence in Papua and West Papua. The policy brief will then provide key policy recommendations to relevant stakeholders.

---

<sup>3</sup> Patrick Barron, Sana Jaffrey, and Ashutosh Varshney, "How Large Conflicts Subside: Evidence from Indonesia," *Indonesian Development Paper*, No. 18 (2014), 1.

<sup>4</sup> Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2007), 31; Nancy Lee Peluso, "Violence, Decentralization, and Resource Access in Indonesia," *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, No. 19 (2007), 24-25; Patrick Barron, Sana Jaffrey, and Ashutosh Varshney, "When Large Conflicts Subside: The Ebbs and Flows of Violence in Post-Suharto Indonesia," *Journal of East Asian Studies*, No. 16 (2016), 191-192; Yuhki Tajima, *The Institutional Origins of Communal Violence: Indonesia's Transition from Authoritarian Rule*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 8-10; United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, *Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes: A Tool for Prevention*, (New York: United Nations, 2014), 18

<sup>5</sup> Lina Alexandra, Fitriani, Alif Satria, "The Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset: A Snapshot of Violence and Intervention in Indonesia in 2021," *CSIS Policy Brief*, (2022), 9-10.

## The Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset

The Collective Violence Early Warning (CVEW) Dataset is a database that records all instances of collective violence in Indonesia.<sup>6</sup> CSIS Jakarta developed the database to provide stakeholders early warning notice of possible escalation and inform them of potential risk mitigation avenues to prevent atrocities.<sup>7</sup> Such a monitoring tool is particularly essential today as a comprehensive, public violence monitoring tool is unavailable since the National Violence Monitoring System (NVMS), which recorded all instances of violence in Indonesia, stopped operating in 2015. While international databases like the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED) exist, their reliance on national-level news sources often means they fail to properly record the majority of violent incidents which often occur locally.

To monitor the trends of collective violence in Indonesia, the CVEW Dataset collects data from 93 provincial-level and national-level online newspapers.<sup>8</sup> It records 57 variables ranging from the date and location of the incident, the identity of actors involved, the forms and causes of violence, and the success rates of third-party interventions.<sup>9</sup> The database also records important risk factor variables outlined in the United Nations Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes, such as whether an act of violence targeted vulnerable minorities or whether they are connected to a previous incident. Between 2021 and 2022, the CVEW Dataset recorded 2,335 collective violence incidents which resulted in over 662 deaths, 2,918 injured, and 724 damaged and destroyed infrastructures.

---

<sup>6</sup> The Dataset defines collective violence as “the intentional use of physical force or threat of physical force perpetrated either by or against a group of people.” These include, as noted by Varshney, Tadjoeeddin, and Panggabean’s definition, group-on-group violence such as ethnic conflicts, group-on-individual violence such as vigilantism, individual-on-group violence such as terrorism, group-on-state violence such as separatism, and state-on-group violence such as law enforcement violence. In cases where instances of crimes turn violent and involves a group of perpetrators, the incident is also recorded. See more in, Ashutosh Varshney, Mohammad Zulfan Tadjoeeddin, and Rizal Panggabean, “Creating Datasets in Information-Poor Environments: Patterns of Collective Violence in Indonesia, 1990–2003,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 8, No. 8 (2004), 363.

<sup>7</sup> CSIS Indonesia, “Towards a National Network for the Prevention of Social Conflict and Atrocity Crimes in Indonesia”, *Spotlight on R2P*, APR2P, University of Queensland (2021).

<sup>8</sup> News sources were selected based on their online archive availability, geographic reach at the city/district level, publication frequency, coverage focus, and news quality. See more in Lina Alexandra, Fitriani, dan Alif Satria, “Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset Codebook,” *CSIS Indonesia*, (2021), 2.

<sup>9</sup> Each incident is coded into the dataset by a coder and verified by two researchers. See more in Alexandra, Fitriani, dan Satria, “Collective Violence,” 2-3.

## General Findings: Patterns of Collective Violence in 2022

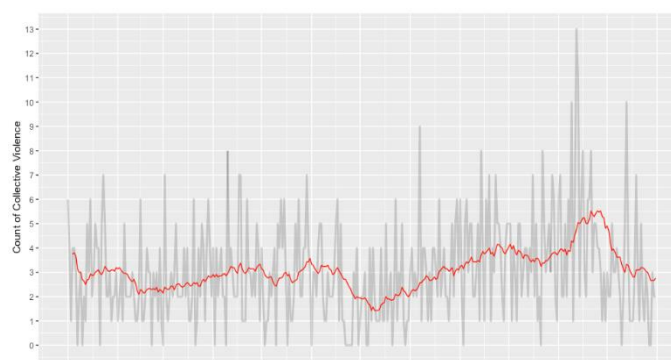
### *The Frequency of Collective Violence*

The frequency of collective violence in Indonesia throughout 2022 has decreased compared to 2021. Between January and December 2022, Indonesia experienced 1,114 incidents of collective violence -- an average of 92 incidents per month and three incidents a day. This total number of incidents marks an 8.7% decrease from 2021, which saw 1,221 incidents of collective violence. Like 2021, however, the frequency of collective violence incidents in 2022 consistently increased throughout the year and spiked significantly in the last quarter. Whereas Indonesia experienced 243 collective violence incidents in Q1 of 2022, in Q4, this number increased by 40.7% to 342 incidents.

The most significant spike of collective violence in 2022 occurred in November, which experienced a total of collective violence incidents 1.6 times higher than the year's monthly average. The significant rise of collective violence in two provinces caused this spike. The first province is South Sulawesi. In November, South Sulawesi experienced a 155% increase in violence compared to its monthly average.

This increase was caused mainly by the rise of student-on-student violence and vigilante violence in Makassar.<sup>10</sup> Notably, both these types of violence encompass 54.1% of all incidents and caused 47.3% of all collective violence casualties in South Sulawesi that month.

Graph 1. Frequency of Collective Violence Incidents in Indonesia per Day (2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

The second province that contributed to the November spike is Papua, which experienced a 151% increase in violence in November compared to its monthly average. Two collective violence episodes largely cause this spike. The first episode is the youth-on-youth violence in Sinakma, Wamena.<sup>11</sup> This incident was sparked by the murder of a young man in Sinakma village. Due to police's inadequate provision of justice, this incident escalated into inter-communal violence between the victim's and the accused's group over the

<sup>10</sup> Muslimin Emba, "Beredar Video Seorang Pria Diamuk Warga di Depan Toko Agung, Ngakunya Orang Dikejar," *Tribun Makassar*, November 11, 2022, <https://makassar.tribunnews.com/2022/11/11/beredar-video-diamuk-warga-depan-toko-agung-makassar-dituduh-mencuri-ngakunya-orang-dikejar>; Ronal YW, "Ancam Ojek Online Pakai Busur, Pengamen Diamankan," *Berita Kota*, December 1, 2022,

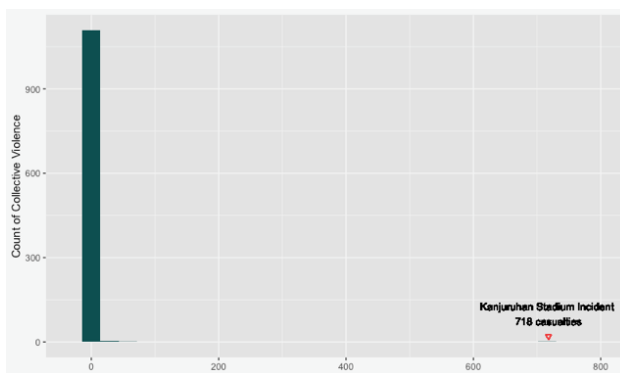
<https://beritakotamakassar.com/berita/2022/12/01/ancam-ojek-online-pakai-busur-pengamen-diamankan/>.

<sup>11</sup> Fajar Papua, "Yunus Tewas Dianiaya, Massa Serang Jalan Trans, Tiga Polisi dan Dua Orang Terkena Panah, Sejumlah Rumah Dibakar," *Fajar Papua*, November 13, 2022, <https://fajarpapua.com/2022/11/13/yunus-tewas-dianiaya-massa-serang-jalan-trans-tiga-polisi-dan-dua-orang-terkena-panah-sejumlah-rumah-dibakar/>.

following two days.<sup>12</sup> The second episode is the Dogiyai incident. This episode began when a company truck accidentally hit and killed a five year old child in Kamu sub-district.<sup>13</sup> Outraged by the incident, local communities attacked workers of CV Mandiri Papua and Fajar Mustika and burned down houses in the Dogiyai district for four days straight.<sup>14</sup>

### The Lethality of Collective Violence

Graph 2. Histogram of Collective Violence Incidents in Indonesia by Casualty (2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

It is essential to note that while Indonesia's number of collective violence incidents has decreased, the number of casualties it caused

has increased. Throughout 2022, collective violence incidents in Indonesia has resulted in over 368 death and 1,806 injured -- a significant increase of 25.1% and 62.6% compared to 2021, respectively. It is important to note, however, that a large portion of this increase is caused by the significantly higher lethality of outlier events.

In 2021, the highest casualty rate of a single incident was 47 -- which was caused by a clash between the Kimyal and Yali Tribe in Yahukimo, Papua.<sup>15</sup> In 2022, the highest casualty rate of a single incident was 718. Such high casualty rate was caused by the infamous Kanjuruhan Disaster, where police's faulty use of tear gas to disperse football crowds resulted in a deadly human stampede that killed 135 and injured 583 people.<sup>16</sup>

When the analysis removes the Kanjuruhan Disaster outlier, the lethality patterns of collective violence in 2022 become relatively similar to 2021. Identical to the previous year, most collective violence incidents in 2022 are non-lethal and small-scale. Notably, only one in six collective violence incidents in 2022 resulted in death, and over 98% of all incidents resulted in less than five casualties.

<sup>12</sup> Fani, "Pertikaian Masih Berlanjut, Pelaku Penganiayaan Berhasil Diamankan Polisi Kepolisian," *Pasific Pos*, November 14, 2022, <https://www.pasificpos.com/pertikaian-masih-berlanjut-pelaku-penganiayaan-berhasil-diamankan-polisi-kepolisian/>.

<sup>13</sup> Fajar Papua, "Ratusan Warga Mengungsi ke Ibukota Papua Tengah, Kapolda: Tangkap Dalang Rusuh Dogiyai!!" *Fajar Papua*, November 15, 2022, <https://fajarpapua.com/2022/11/15/ratusan-warga-mengungsi-ke-ibukota-papua-tengah-kapolda-tangkap-dalang-rusuh-dogiyai/>.

<sup>14</sup> Fajar Papua, "Ikbal, Seorang Penjaga Kios Dilaporkan Hilang, Dua SST Polri Tumpangi Truk Menuju Kabupaten Dogiyai," *Fajar Papua*, November 13, 2022, <https://fajarpapua.com/2022/11/13/ikbal-seorang-penjaga-kios-dilaporkan-hilang-dua-sst-polri-tumpangi-truk-menuju-kabupaten-dogiyai/>;

Fajar Papua, "Jasad Ikbal Ditemukan Terkubur di Kebun, Enam Korban Kerusuhan Dogiyai Sembunyi di Gereja," *Fajar Papua*, November 14, 2022, <https://fajarpapua.com/2022/11/14/jasad-ikbal-ditemukan-terkubur-di-kebun-enam-korban-kerusuhan-dogiyai-semunyi-di-gereja/>.

<sup>15</sup> DMI and AYP, "Yahukimo Ricuh Akibat Penyerangan Suku, 1 Orang Tewas," *CNN Indonesia*, October 3, 2021, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20211003214550-12-702817/yahukimo-ricuh-akibat-penyerangan-suku-1-orang-tewas>.

<sup>16</sup> John Duerden, "Stadium tragedy exposes Indonesia's troubled soccer history," *Associate Press*, October 3, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/soccer-sports-indonesia-international-joko-widodo-b269c6e67570803410bc31ba062e2429>.

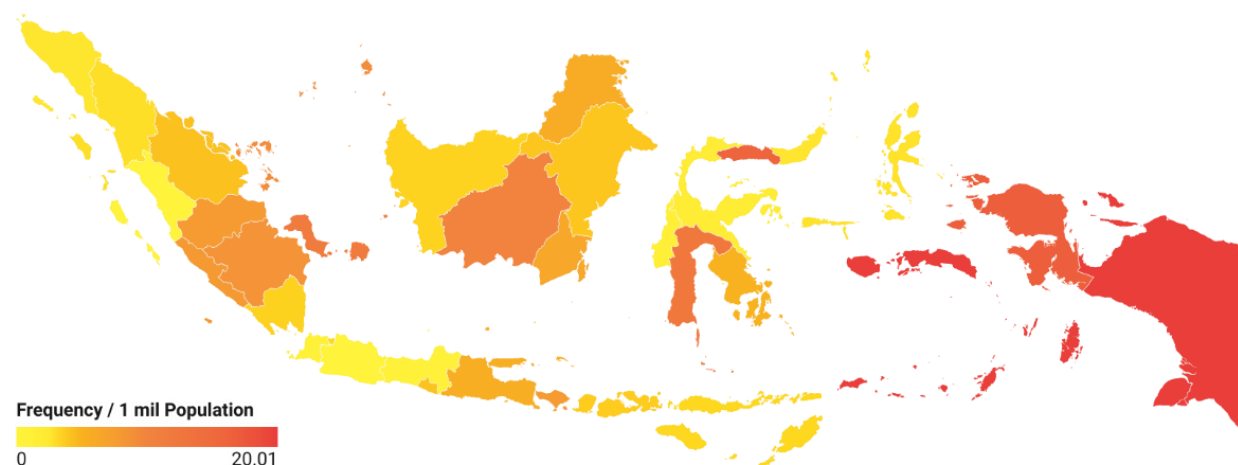


That said, it is worth noting that even with outliers removed, the lethality rate of collective violence in 2022 is still higher than in 2021 -- albeit by a smaller margin. In 2021, collective violence incidents resulted in 1,405

casualties and a lethality rate of 1.1 casualties per incident. Ignoring outliers, collective violence in 2022 resulted in 1,456 casualties (a 7.2% increase) and a lethality rate of 1.3 casualties per incident (an 18.1% increase)

### *The Geographic Concentrations of Collective Violence*

Figure 1. Intensity of Collective Violence Incidents in Indonesia by Province (2022)



Map: Alif Satria, Researcher CSIS Jakarta • Source: Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Indonesia • Created with Datawrapper

*Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)*

Similar to 2021, the province with the highest number of collective violence incidents is East Java, which experienced 221 incidents throughout 2022. However, when controlled for their populations, the top three provinces with the most intense collective violence are all post-conflict provinces in Eastern Indonesia. In 2022, collective violence was most intense in Maluku, which experienced 20 incidents of collective violence per million population -- an intensity rate five times higher than the national average. Maluku is closely followed by Papua, which experienced 19.9 incidents per million population, and West Papua, which experienced 16.7 incidents per million population. These rankings echoes Barron, Jaffrey, and Varshney's findings in 2014 that violence is more frequent in post-conflict areas.<sup>17</sup>

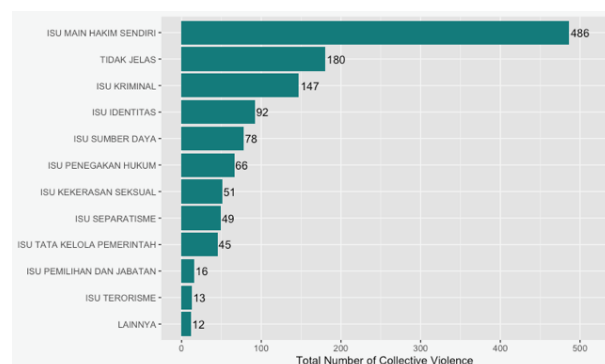
However, it is important to note that collective violence incidents within these three provinces are highly concentrated in only a few cities/districts. Notably, most collective violence incidents in these provinces occur in only 20% of each province's cities and districts. For example, 91.8% of incidents in Maluku occurred in three city/districts: Ambon City, Southeast Maluku, and Central Maluku. West Papua and Papua have experienced similar concentration patterns. West Papua, for example, experienced 78.9% of all of their collective violence incidents in only Sorong City,

<sup>17</sup> Barron, Jaffrey, and Varshney, "How Large Conflicts Subside," 21.

Manokwari, and Maybrat. On the other hand, Papua experienced 53.4% of all their collective violence incidents in only five districts: Puncak, Mimika, Dogiyai, Intan Jaya, and Pegunungan Bintang.

### The Underlying Causes of Collective Violence

Graph 3. Number of Collective Violence Incidents in Indonesia by Issue (2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

Two underlying causes of collective violence are particularly important to monitor moving forward. The first cause is vigilante violence. Similar to 2021, vigilantism issues is the most common cause of collective violence incidents in 2022.<sup>18</sup> In 2022, over 43.5% of all collective violence incidents were motivated wholly or in part by vigilantism issues. Concerningly, compared to 2021, the lethality of vigilante violence in 2022 has increased. Whereas vigilante violence in 2021 has a lethality rate of 1.05 casualties per incident (totaling to 636 casualties), vigilante violence in 2022 resulted in a lethality rate of 1.32 casualties per incident (totaling to 644 casualties). One vigilante violence involving village youths in Mappi Districts even resulted in 48 injured -- showcasing that

despite being mundane, vigilante violence can and do result in high casualties.<sup>19</sup>

The second cause of collective violence that requires monitoring is identity-based violence. Concerningly, compared to 2021, the casualty rate of identity-based violence in 2022 has increased by an astounding 247% to 139 casualties. However, it is important to note that most identity-based violence is not caused by inter-religious or sectarian disputes. Instead, most identity-based violence occurred between students (26.8%), village youths (24.7%), and members of rival martial art schools (19.3%).

That said, while violence mobilized by ethnic identities is not the most common, they are the most lethal. The highest casualty caused by identity-based violence (18 injured), for example, was, in fact, violence between ethnic youths from the Kei and Pelau tribe in Sorong, West Papua, over the burning of the Kei tribe's secretariat building.

<sup>18</sup> Vigilantism issues refers to the desire of a conflict party to use force or the threat of force to another party for the purpose of revenge. This encompasses revenge for insults, theft, adultery, and destruction of property. See more in Alexandra, Fitriani, dan Satria, "Collective Violence," 14.

<sup>19</sup> MPI, "Dua Kelompok Warga Terlibat Bentrok, Mobil Polisi Diserang, Penjabat Bupati Mappi Kumpulkan Tokoh Masyarakat," *Fajar Papua*, December 16, 2022, <https://fajarpapua.com/2022/12/16/dua-kelompok-warga-terlibat-bentrok-mobil-polisi-diserang-penjabat-bupati-mappi-kumpulkan-tokoh-masyarakat/>.



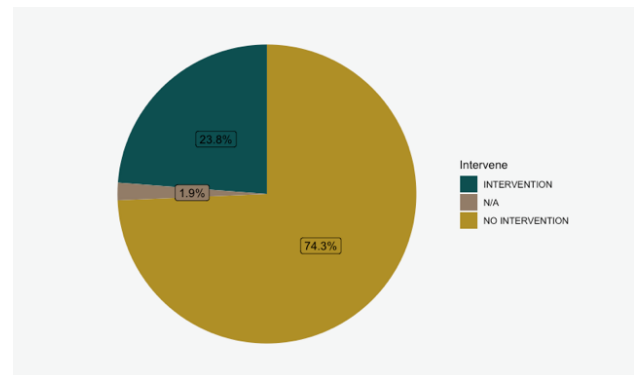
## Specific Findings: On Interventions, Law Enforcement Violence, and Separatism

### *Trends of Third-Party Interventions in 2022*

The CVEW Dataset defines interventions as attempts by third parties to de-escalate an ongoing collective violence incident. Various studies have shown that such interventions are crucial in ensuring small-scale incidents do not escalate to large-scale atrocities.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, the percentage of collective violence incidents that are intervened in Indonesia today is far lower than the percentage of collective violence incidents that were intervened a decade ago.

As the NVMS Dataset found, between 2006 and 2015, third-party actors intervened over 50% of all collective violence incidents. In 2022, the CVEW Dataset found that third-party actors intervened only 23.8% of all collective violence incidents. While this is a slight improvement from 2021, which only had an intervention rate of 23.5%, it is notably still far from ideal.

Figure 2. Percentage of Collective Violence Incidents in Indonesia Intervened (2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

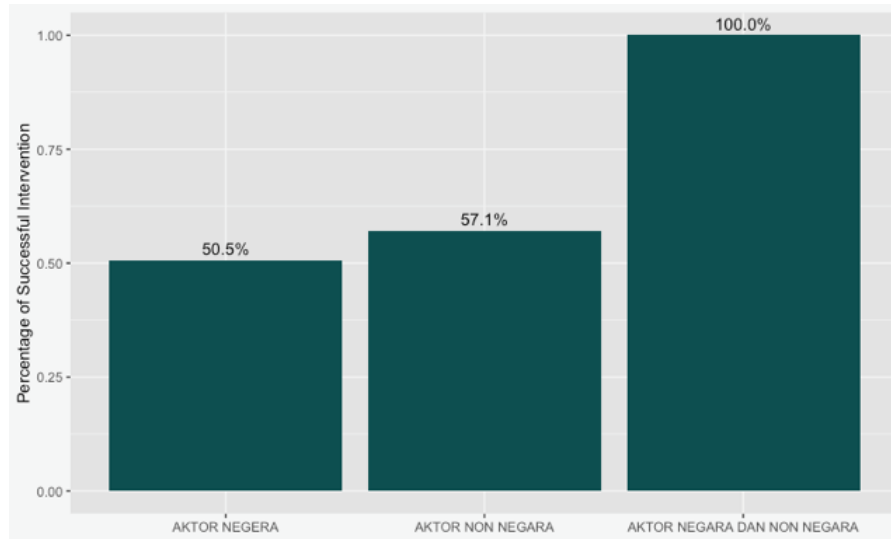
However, while the frequency of interventions has increased slightly, their success rate in de-escalating conflict has significantly decreased. Whereas over 74.4% of interventions in 2021 were successful in stopping violence or saving potential victims, in 2022, only 56.1% were successful. Interestingly, if analyzed by their actors, the CVEW dataset finds that interventions done by non-state actors were, in fact, more effective than interventions done by state actors.

Whereas 57.1% of all interventions by non-state actors are successful, only 50.5% of all interventions by state actors are successful. Importantly, the CVEW Dataset also finds that interventions involving both state and non-state actors always successfully de-escalate violence. Unfortunately, this occurred only six times in 2022.

<sup>20</sup> Yuhki Tajima, *The Institutional Origins of Communal Violence: Indonesia's Transition from Authoritarian Rule*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 8-

10; Barron, Jaffrey and Varshney, "When Large Conflicts Subside," 209.

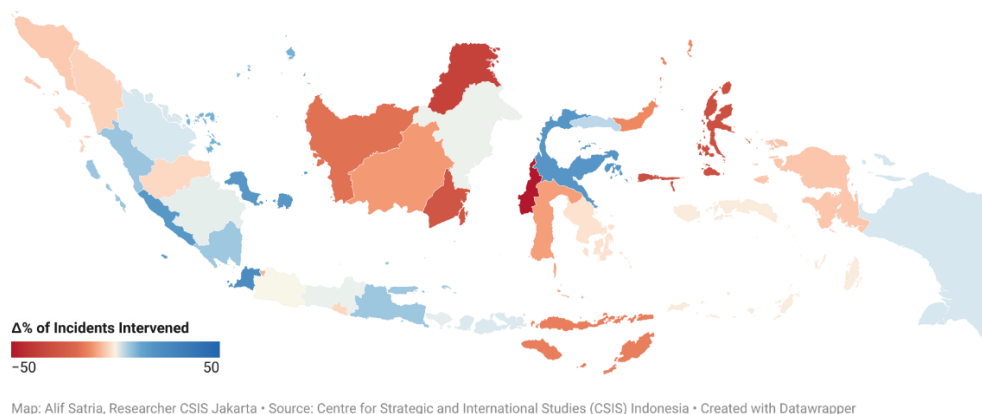
Graph 4. Success Rate of Interventions in Indonesia by Actor Type (2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

Similar to 2021, the province with the highest intervention rate is Maluku. In 2022, third-party actors in Maluku intervened over 56.8% of collective violence incidents.<sup>21</sup> It would seem, however, that outside of Maluku, provinces' intervention rates fluctuate significantly between the years. Between 2021 and 2022, some provinces experienced a significant drop in their intervention rate. For example, West Sulawesi and South Kalimantan, who had the second and third highest intervention rates in 2021, respectively ranked 34<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> in 2022. Some other provinces, however, experienced the complete opposite. For example, the intervention rate in Banten province increased fourfold from only 7.7% in 2021 to 31.3% in 2022.

Figure 3. Difference in Intervention Rate Between by Province (2021-2022)



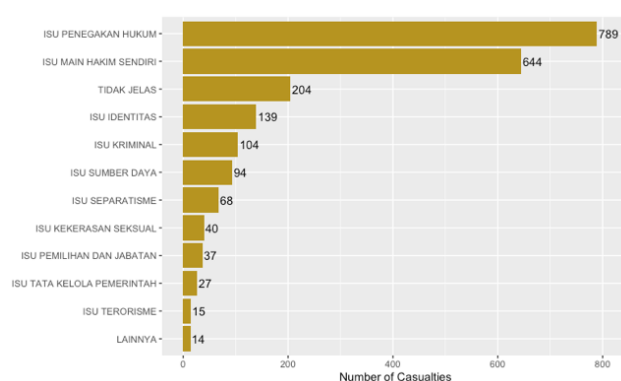
Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

<sup>21</sup> Following Maluku, the province with the highest intervention rate are East Java (35.3% of incidents intervened), West Nusa Tenggara (35% of incidents intervened), and North Sumatra (34% of incidents intervened).

In 2022, the most common factor to have intervened in collective violence incidents was state actors. Notably, over 73.7% of all collective violence interventions done in 2022 were done exclusively by state actors. These range from police officers to military personnel and village heads, but the most common are interventions by the police officers from the sub-district office (*Kepolisian Sektor*, Polsek). Notably, Polsek officials conducts 47.9% of all state-led interventions. However, despite non-state actors' low intervention rate, the dataset also finds that it has been increasing. In 2021, non-state actors only intervened in 16.7% of all incidents. In 2022, non-state actors intervened in 23.6% of all incidents.

### Trends of Law Enforcement Violence in 2022

Graph 5. Number of Casualties from Collective Violence by Issue (2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

Acts of violence conducted by security apparatuses during law enforcement procedures have been a longstanding problem in Indonesia. The human rights NGO Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence (*Komisi Untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan*, KontraS), for example, has reported since 2010 on how the “absence of effective remedies, corrective mechanisms, and accountability in providing

justice” have contributed to the increasing amount of police’s excessive use of force.<sup>22</sup> Even today, reports from various human rights NGOs still note that police officers often use excessive force which includes unlawful beatings of demonstrators, improper use of water cannons, and detaining suspects without giving them access to families and lawyers.<sup>23</sup>

In practice, law enforcement violence takes varying forms -- ranging from more explicit cases of police torture and killing of suspects to more implicit cases of arbitrary detention and denial of civil liberty. Depending on what forms of law enforcement violence are measured, reports vary widely in depicting how much incidents occurs. Between July 2019 and June 2020, for example, KontraS recorded a total of 921 incidents of police brutality which resulted in 1,931 casualties. In the same timeframe, the Foundation of the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute (*Yayasan Legal Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*, YLBHI) only recorded 56 instances of police violence, resulting in over 600 casualties.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Papang Hidayat, “Problems Rife in Indonesia’s Police,” *KontraS*, March 2, 2010, <https://kontras.org/2010/03/02/problems-rife-in-indonesias-police/>.

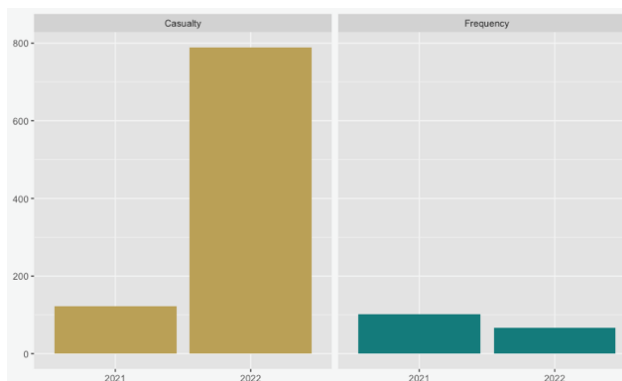
<sup>23</sup> Amnesty International, Indonesia: Investigate verified evidence of police violence during Omnibus Law protests,” *Amnesty International*, December 2, 2020, <https://www.amnesty.id/indonesia-investigate-verified-evidence-of-police-violence-during-omnibus-law-protests/>.

[verified-evidence-of-police-violence-during-omnibus-law-protests/](https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/07/01/rights-groups-highlight-cases-of-police-brutality-on-national-polices-74th-anniversary.html).

<sup>24</sup> Alya Nurbaiti and Tri Indah Oktaviani, “Rights groups highlight cases of police brutality on National Police’s 74th anniversary,” *The Jakarta Post*, July 1, 2020, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/07/01/rights-groups-highlight-cases-of-police-brutality-on-national-polices-74th-anniversary.html>.

The CVEW Dataset only records explicit incidents of law enforcement violence -- instances when police officers were reported to have overtly used force against a group of people to conduct law enforcement operations successfully.<sup>25</sup> Based on this definition, the dataset found that violence by law enforcement in Indonesia actually experienced a decrease between 2021 and 2022. In 2021, the dataset recorded over 118 acts of collective violence by security apparatuses during law enforcement procedures. In 2022, the dataset only recorded 66 such incidents -- a significant 44% decrease.

Graph 6. Total Frequency and Casualties from Law Enforcement Violence by Year (2021-2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

However, while the number of law enforcement violence in Indonesia between 2021 and 2022 has decreased, the number of casualties it resulted in has significantly increased. Compared to 2021, the number of casualties from law enforcement violence in 2022 increased 6.8 times to 789 casualties.

<sup>25</sup> This definition omits instances of torture allegations and arbitrary detentions. See more in Alexandra, Fitriani, dan Satria, "Collective Violence," 16.

<sup>26</sup> Vidhyandika D. Perkasa and Alif Satria, "Conflict Resolution in Papua and the Label of Terrorism," *The*

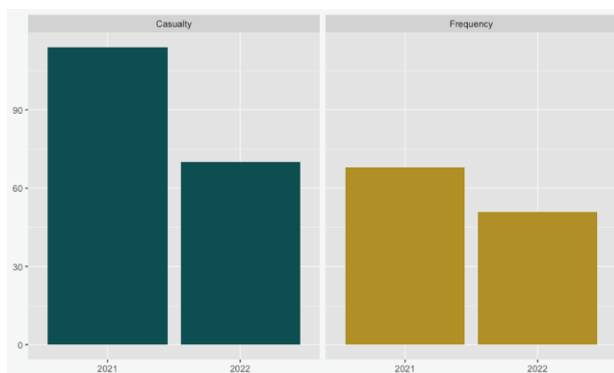
Indeed, this high number is caused mainly by the high death and injury toll in one incident of law enforcement violence: The Kanjuruhan Stadium tragedy. However, even ignoring casualties from the Kanjuruhan, the lethality rate of law enforcement violence in 2022 is still higher than in 2021. In 2021, law enforcement violence resulted in an average of 0.97 casualties per incident. In 2022, this number increased by 40.2% to 1.36 casualties per incident.

### *Trends of Separatist Violence in 2022*

The separatist conflict in Papua between the Indonesian government and the West Papua National Army-Free Papua Organization (*Tentara Nasional Papua Barat - Organisasi Papua Merdeka*, TNPB-OPM) is currently Indonesia's most protracted conflict. Due to TNPB-OPM's lack of central leadership and internal rivalries, separatist violence by their units has primarily comprised of low-intensity, uncoordinated skirmishes targeting the military and police.<sup>26</sup> Ever since 2018, however, TNPB-OPM violence has increased noticeably. Data from ACLED found that between 2015 and 2020, the number separatist violence increased sevenfold, from 11 incidents in 2015 to 73 incidents in 2020. This was also followed by the increase of casualties, which rose from 16 in 2015 to 59 in 2020.

Graph 7. Total Frequency and Casualties from Separatist Violence by Year (2021-2022)

*Diplomat*, May 7, 2021, <https://thediplomat.com/2021/05/conflict-resolution-in-papua-and-the-label-of-terrorism/>.

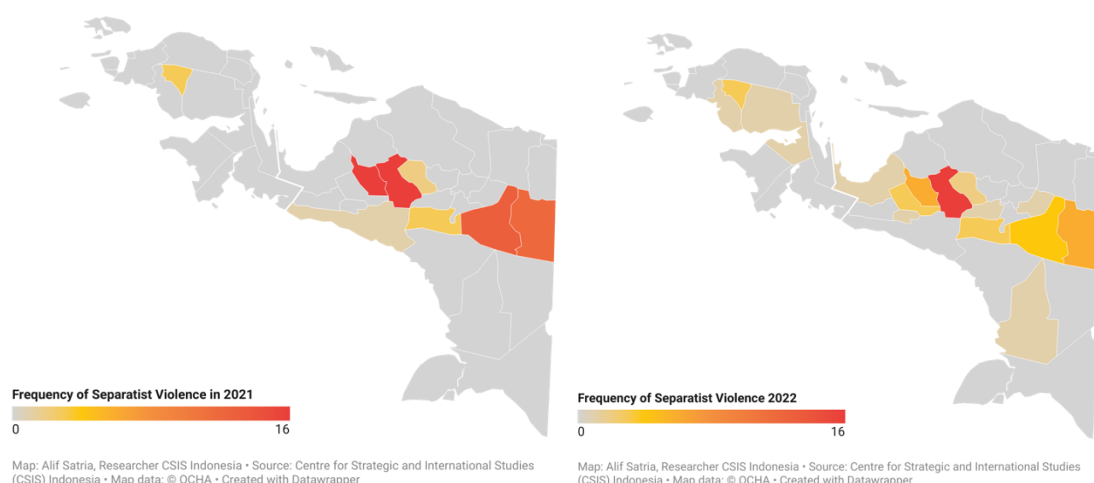


Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

Papua and West Papua has experienced a decrease in frequency. In 2021, Papua and West Papua saw 68 incidents of separatist violence by the TPNB-OPM. In 2022, the two provinces only saw 51 incidents -- a 25% decrease in frequency. Additionally, throughout 2022, the lethality of separatist violence has also relatively decreased. Whereas separatist violence in 2021 killed and injured over 114 people (a lethality rate of 1.83 casualties per incident), in 2022, separatist violence killed and injured only 70 people (a lethality rate of around 1.37 casualties per incident).

More recently, however, Data from CVEW Dataset have found that separatist violence in

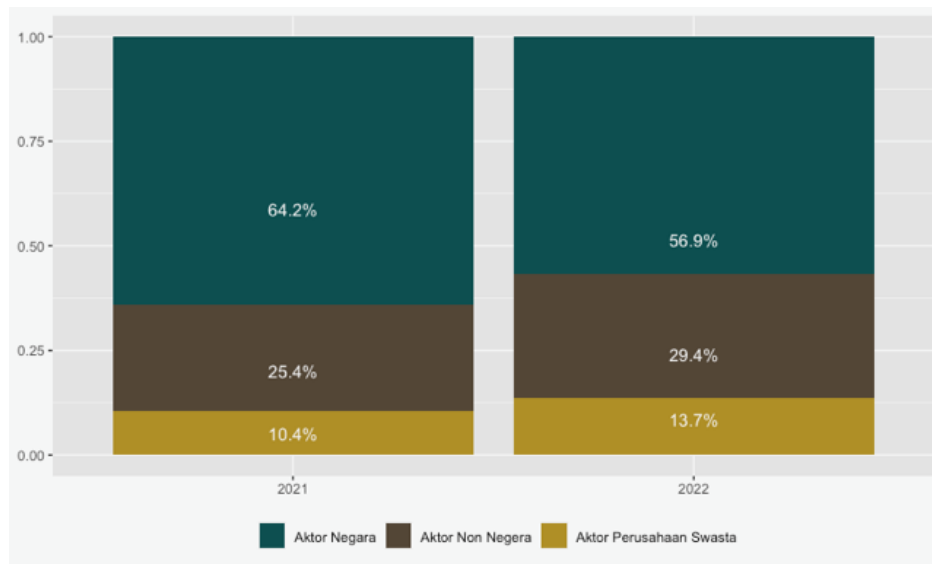
Figure 4. Spread of Separatist Violence in Papua and West Papua by City/District (2021-2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

However, while separatist violence's frequency and lethality decreased in 2022, they have increasingly targeted non-state actors. In 2021, only 22.8% of separatist violence involving OPM targeted non-state actors (i.e., civilians and schools). In 2022, this number increased to 27.4%. (i.e., civilians, illegal gold miners, schools). Additionally, the location of separatist violence in Papua has also spread. In 2021, separatist violence only occurred in 8 districts and cities. In 2022, the dataset recorded separatist violence occurring in over 16 districts and cities. That said, while the number of the location where separatist violence increased, they are still largely centralized in the four districts and cities. Indeed, 62.8% of all separatist violence in 2022 also occurred in Intan Jaya, Puncak, Yahukimo, and Pegunungan Bintang.

Graph 8. Target of Separatist Violence in Papua and West Papua (2021-2022)



Source: Collective Violence Early Warning Dataset (2022)

However, it is important to note that separatist violence has never, and still does not, account for the majority of collective violence in Papua and West Papua. In fact, throughout 2022, 51.5% of collective violence incidents in the two provinces are not separatist. From these non-separatist collective violence incidents, the most common cause underlying them are vigilantism issues (41.7%), followed by “unclear” causes (15%), and law enforcement violence (10%). Based on their casualty rate, the highest-ranking type of violence is vigilantism (56.7%), then followed by electoral violence (12.8%), then identity-based violence (11.8%), then violence caused by governance issues (7.9%).



## Policy Recommendations

Based on these findings, this policy brief posits the following policy recommendations:

1. ***More efforts to be done to craft policies in order to anticipate and prevent outlier incidents with high-casualty based on better understanding on the main causes and triggering circumstances to such incidences.***

Notably, the casualty rate of collective violence incidents in Indonesia has significantly increased between 2021 and 2022. As noted above, this increase is largely caused by the sharp rise in outlier events' lethality -- be it the Yahukimo clash in 2022 or the Kanjuruhan incident in 2022. While the dataset is able to spot these outliers, it alone is not able to analyze why they occur. To do so, more mixed-methods research on the subject needs to be done.

2. ***Stakeholders need to further develop and empower existing city/district-level violence restraining mechanisms in post-conflict areas, particularly in Eastern Indonesia.***

While collective violence incident is most frequent in East Java, they are most intense and severe in Eastern Indonesia provinces -- namely Maluku, Papua, and West Papua. In all three provinces, the intensity of collective violence incidents in 2022 are four to five times higher than the national average. While certain mechanisms to restrain the use of violence do exist under the national and local governments, more needs to be done to ensure they operate effectively at the district level where a majority of collective violence incidents occur.

3. ***Local governments and police precincts should do more in implementing effective law enforcement to specifically monitor and deter vigilante violence and identity-based violence.***

Data from 2022 finds that both vigilante violence and identity-based violence are all important types of violence to monitor. Not only has vigilante violence remained the most common form of collective violence to occur for the past two years, the lethality rate of vigilante violence has actually increased. A similar case can be made for identity-based violence which saw a 247% increase in lethality between 2022 and 2021.

4. ***More research needs to be done to understand which types of intervention are more effective than the others and what can they do to maintain it.***

Interventions to collective violence are crucial to ensure that small-scale incidents do not escalate into large-scale atrocities. Unfortunately, the efficacy of interventions across Indonesia have decreased. This trend is most visible at the provincial level where intervention rates between provinces and between years highly fluctuate. To develop more

sustainable and generalizable intervention practices, more needs to be done to first understand why certain type of intervention conducted by particular provinces are able to conduct relatively frequent and effective interventions, and why other intervention type could not.

**5. *More needs to be done to make police and military officials accountable for their use of force during law enforcement procedures.***

Law enforcement violence has been a longstanding problem in Indonesia. This is particularly true in 2022. Notably, the dataset found that while the number of law enforcement violence in 2022 has decreased, its lethality compared to 2021 has increased 6.8 times. Indeed, most of the casualties were caused by a single outlier event (i.e., the Kanjuruhan Disaster). However, even when such outlier is ignored, the dataset found that the average casualties per incident of law enforcement violence still experienced a 40.2% increase between 2022 and 2021.

**6. *More focus should be placed in developing and effectively implementing civilian protection mechanisms in Papua and West Papua.***

Separatist violence by the TPNB-OPM in Papua and West Papua has actually decreased in 2022 if compared to 2021. Concerningly, however, there is a larger portion of separatist violence in 2022 that deliberately targets non-state actors. These non-state actors include company vehicles, migrant workers, and, most commonly, ordinary civilians. To ensure that civilian casualties are kept to a minimum, government and non-government stakeholders need to further develop and empower civilian protection mechanisms in the region.

**7. *More data sharing and early warning collaboration needs to be made between government institutions, think tanks, and civil society***

While the CVEW dataset can provide important insights to existing collective violence trends, it means little to nothing if these insights are not followed by actionable policies. In order to effectively respond to collective violence trends, it is important to promote collaboration among the government institutions, both national and local ones, with think-tanks and civil society to raise awareness on these subjects. This collaboration should particularly take the form of data sharing efforts and discussions on how to improve the prevention and interventions to collective violence incidents.



 [csis.or.id](https://csis.or.id)

 [csis@csis.or.id](mailto:csis@csis.or.id)

  [@csisindonesia](https://www.instagram.com/csisindonesia)

  CSIS Indonesia

**Centre for Strategic and  
International Studies  
(CSIS Indonesia)**

Jl Tanah Abang III No 23-27  
Gambir, Jakarta Pusat 10160  
Indonesia