

# Niger Delta Weekly: Spotighting the Resurgence of Gun Violence in Rivers State

August 27 - September 02, 2023

## Description

This weekly update spotlights lethal violence in the Niger Delta with a focus on the resurgence of gun violence in Rivers State. According to data (see map below), gun violence caused over 240 fatalities in Rivers State between January 2021 and June 2023. Recent incidents indicate a rise in gun violence in the state, particularly targeted killing of residents and government security operatives by gunmen. In August 2023, for example, gunmen allegedly killed two soldiers and abducted six persons including an expatriate at a road construction site in Ogboloma community, Abua/Odual LGA. Separately, gunmen reportedly killed a police inspector and made away with his rifle in front of a popular hotel at Olu Obasanjo Road in Port Harcourt, the state capital. In another incident, gunmen suspected to be pirates reportedly hijacked a passenger boat along the Soku-Abonema waterways in Akuku-Toru LGA. More recently, on August 26, 2023, gunmen reportedly killed two youths and injured five other residents assigned to provide security and surveillance of oil pipelines at the site of a recent oil spill in Bodo community, Gokana LGA.

## Why it Matters

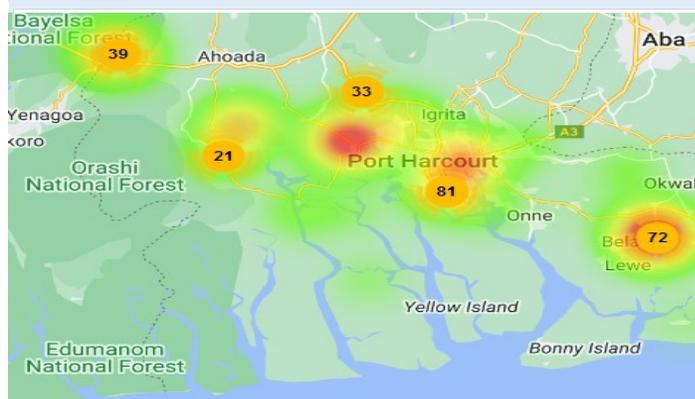
Rising incidents of gun violence could adversely impact the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the State. The prevalence of gun violence could intensify arms proliferation, organized criminal violence, and communal tensions. This could cause a breakdown of law and order which could result in unrest, arbitrary killings, and the deployment of repressive measures by government security forces. This could bring about serious socio-economic, political and security consequences.

**Social:** The growing prevalence of gun violence and targeted killings could have a devastating impact on the security and social wellbeing of residents. It could cause a general feeling of uncertainty and 'siege mentality' among residents. This could bring about serious physical, psychosocial and health consequences including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It could also force law enforcement agencies to deploy security measures that could cause human rights violations.

**Economic:** A resurgence of gun violence could create an environment of insecurity that is detrimental to economic development. Recurrent incidents of gun violence could disrupt economic activities and consequently cause loss of livelihoods and business opportunities. The damaging impact of gun violence could reduce government's revenue from taxation and undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

**Political:** The prevalence of gun violence could cause serious challenges for law enforcement and governance in the state. It could weaken citizen's confidence in the capacity of the government to ensure the security of lives and properties. This could trigger civil unrest and violent protests which could cause political instability.

## Fatalities Heat Map of Gun Related Violence and Targeted Killings in Rivers State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of fatalities caused by gun violence in Rivers State from January 2021 - June 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

Gun violence is becoming increasingly prevalent in Rivers State, driven generally by organized criminality and arms proliferation. Stakeholders should work with the State government, community leaders and the relevant security agencies to identify and address the underlying causes and enablers of gun violence. Peace and security stakeholders should also collaborate with law enforcement agencies to devise strategies to mitigate gun violence and targeted killings including measures to curtail the proliferation of arms.

## Contact Us

Inquiries: [PINDfoundation.org](http://PINDfoundation.org)

Contacts: [info@PINDfoundation.org](mailto:info@PINDfoundation.org) +234 (0) 9 291 0454

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## Report Incidents: IPDU Early Warning System

Please report any verified incident of conflict to the IPDU SMS early warning system: Text report to **080 9936 2222**

**Incident Details:** Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and brief incident description.



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