

Niger Delta Weekly: De-escalating Rising Criminal Violence and Targeted Killings in Delta State

October 15-21, 2023

Description

This weekly update spotlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on rising criminal violence and targeted killings in Delta State. According to data (see map below), criminal violence and targeted killing caused over 250 fatalities in Delta State between January 2021 and August 2023. In August 2023, for instance, gunmen reportedly attacked a divisional police station, killed an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) and injured another in Isiokolo community, Ethiope East LGA. In October, gunmen suspected to be herdsmen allegedly killed three residents including a local vigilante in Ubulu-Uku community, Aniocha South LGA. Separately, suspected kidnappers reportedly killed a man and abducted the wife of a community leader in Owevwe community, Ughelli North LGA. Also, in October, armed kidnappers allegedly abducted a cleric, his wife and children along the East-West Road in Ewreni community, Ughelli North LGA. More recently, on October 15, 2023, a 45-year-old police inspector was allegedly attacked and killed by a group of commercial motorcyclists in Ogwashi-Uku community, Aniocha South LGA.

Why it Matters

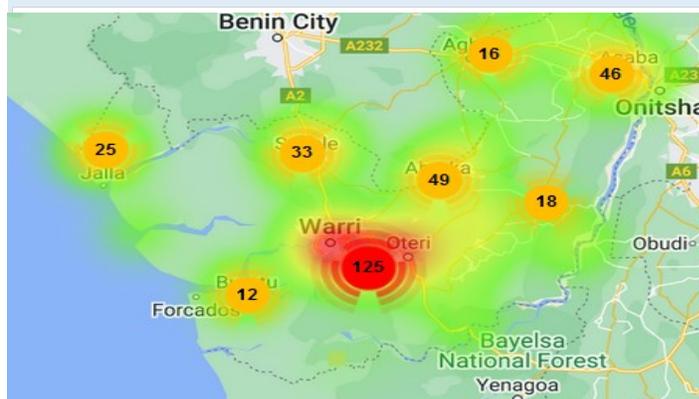
The growing prevalence of organized criminal violence and targeted killings could increase conflict risk and insecurity in the State. If not appropriately de-escalated, the situation could intensify in ways that could negatively affect the dynamics of conflict and insecurity including lawlessness, hooliganism, mob lynching and the deployment of repressive strategies by government security forces. This could cause devastating social, economic, political and security consequences.

Social: Organized criminal violence and targeted killing could bring about devastating psychosocial impact on residents. It could create wider feelings of uncertainty that could embolden residents to adopt aggressive coping mechanisms and self-help measures including the proliferation of local vigilante groups which could bring about human rights violations including extrajudicial killings. This could undermine communal stability and the health and social wellbeing of residents.

Economic: The prevalence of organized criminal violence including kidnap for ransom and targeted killing of government security personnel could create an atmosphere of heightened insecurity that could destabilize the local economy. The situation could create a general feeling of insecurity that could disrupt economic activities and cause loss of livelihoods and business opportunities in the State. This could seriously undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

Political: If not de-escalated, the current wave of criminal violence and killings could cause serious challenges for law enforcement and governance. It could force residents to adopt violent coping strategies and self-help tactics that could cause lawlessness and disorder.

Fatalities Heat Map of Criminal Violence and Targeted Killings in Delta State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of fatalities caused by criminal violence and targeted killings in Delta State from January 2021 - August 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The current wave of criminal violence has the potential to intensify in ways that could adversely impact the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the State. Stakeholders should work with the security agencies to devise strategies to de-escalate the situation. Peace actors should also work with other relevant governments' agencies to develop lasting developmental and institutional strategies to address the underlying causes. Interestingly, several organizations are working to address the various forms of insecurity in the State.

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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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