

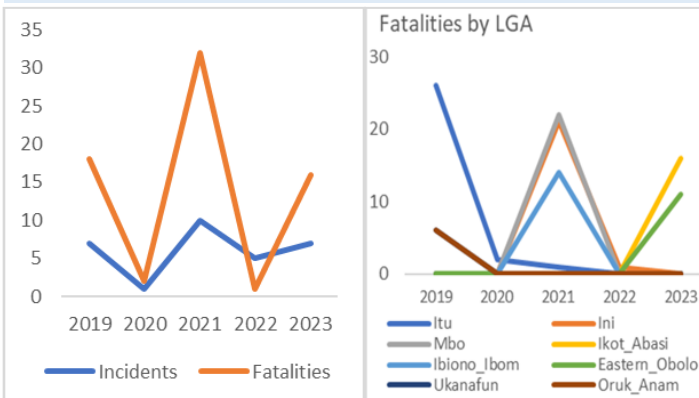
Niger Delta Weekly: Defusing Tensions over Natural Resource Conflicts in Akwa Ibom State

March 03-09, 2024

Background

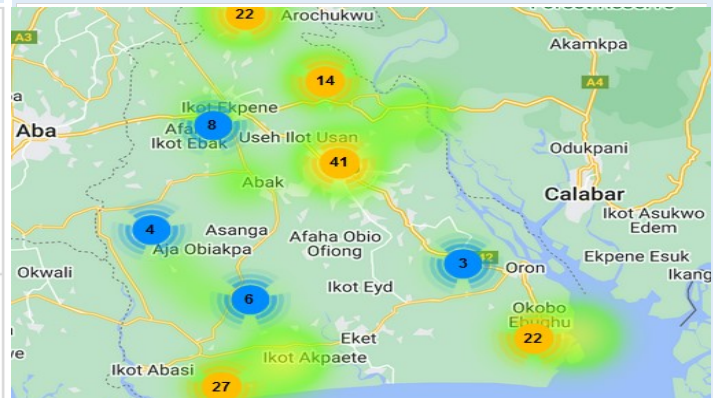
This weekly update spotlights communal conflict in the Niger Delta with a focus on communal tensions over natural resource conflict in Akwa Ibom State. Communal conflict over land and other natural resources is a major cause of lethal violence and instability in Akwa Ibom State. According to data (see map below), land and natural resource related conflicts caused over 140 fatalities in Akwa Ibom between January 2019 and December 2023. Recent data shows the escalation of communal tensions over lingering natural resource conflicts in the State. In August 2023, for instance, 22 residents were reportedly abducted by local militias during clashes between some communities in Eket, Esit Eket and Ibeno LGAs over the ownership of an oil-rich creek. Recently, on February 27, 2024, two residents were reportedly killed, several others injured and over 20 houses including a church destroyed in Iwuochang community in Ibeno LGA, during renewed clashes over the disputed oil-rich Stubbs Creek. The recent incidents have reportedly increased tensions in communities affected by the conflict in Eket, Esit Eket and Ibeno LGA.

Key Facts and Figures: Trends of Natural Resource Related Communal Violence in Akwa Ibom State



Data shows that Itu LGA had the highest number of reported fatalities caused by natural resource communal conflict during the period. Sources: ACLED and Nigeria Watch data on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Fatalities Heat Map of Natural Resource Related Communal Conflict in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported fatalities caused by land and resource conflict in Akwa Ibom from January 2019 -December 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Why it Matters

The recent escalation of violence over the disputed ownership of the oil-rich Stubbs Creek has the potential to intensify communal and ethnic hostilities in the State. Heightened communal tensions and hostilities could negatively impact the dynamics of conflict risks and insecurity in the State. It could trigger a cycle of reprisal violence and killings and the proliferation of arms and local militias. This could bring about far-reaching socio-economic, humanitarian, political, and security consequences that could make the conflict intractable.

Anticipated Trends and Dynamics

Conflict over land and other natural resources remains recurrent in Akwa Ibom State with periodic outbreak of violence. Stakeholders should work with the State government to holistically address the underlying drivers, including efforts to redress long-standing communal grievances and animosities. Peace actors should work with the relevant government agencies to set up community-based early warning systems and conflict resolution committees to proactively identify and respond to potential triggers of communal conflict.

Contact Us

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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 2222/0912 233 4455**

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



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