

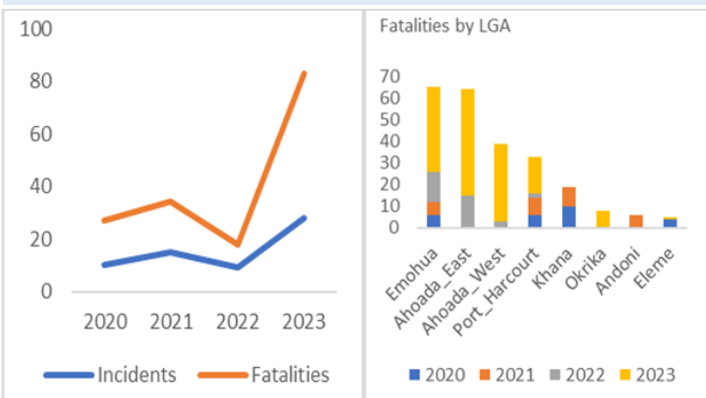
# Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing a Resurgence of Cult and Gang Violence in Rivers State

April 07-13, 2024

## Background

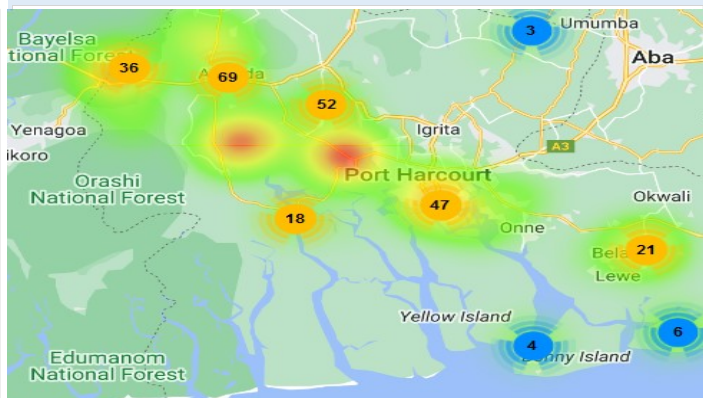
This weekly update spotlights gang violence in the Niger Delta with a focus on cult and gang related killings in Rivers State. According to data (see map below), gang violence caused over 250 fatalities in Rivers State between January 2020 and December 2023. Recent data shows a rise in cult and gang related killings in the State. In January 2024, for instance, members of a cult gang reportedly killed two residents and injured six others in Ikem community, Etche LGA. Between March 14 and 17, 2024, two residents including a businessman were reportedly killed in a series of clashes between rival cult gangs at different locations in Diobu community, Port Harcourt LGA. The clashes were allegedly triggered by internal wranglings between factions of a cult gang over the control of illegal trading spots in the area. In April, a local vigilante was allegedly killed during a clash with a cult gang at Obidanso Waterfront in Diobu community, Port Harcourt LGA. More recently, on April 07, 2024, two persons were reportedly killed during a clash between the police and members of a cult gang in Ogbologbo community, Ahoada West LGA.

## Key Facts and Figures: Trends and Dynamics of Gang Violence in Rivers State



Data shows that Emohua and Ahoada East LGAs had the highest number of cult and gang related fatalities during the period. Sources: ACLED and Nigeria Watch data formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Fatalities Heat Map of Cult and Gang Related Violence in Rivers State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows the geographical concentration of fatalities caused by gang violence in Rivers State from January 2020 - December 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Why it Matters

The current spate of targeted killing by cult gangs has the potential to escalate and intensify lethal violence and insecurity in the State. It could bring about a cycle of reprisal violence and killings by rival cult gangs. If not deescalated, the situation could degenerate into an extended battle for supremacy and territorial control among the various cult gangs. The current wave of violence could also intersect with criminality, political and communal tensions in a way that could negatively affect the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the State.

## Anticipated Trends and Dynamics

Based on recent trends and historical data, the current wave of violence by cult gangs could escalate and intersect with criminality as well as political and communal tensions. Stakeholders including civil society organizations (CSOs) should work with government security agencies and local vigilantes to intensify ongoing anti-cultism efforts. CSOs should collaborate with the State government and community leaders to set up peace clubs in schools to help foster peace education and discourage membership of cult groups.

## 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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