

April 24-30, 2022

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights communal conflicts in the Niger Delta with a focus on the herder-farmer conflict in Ondo State. According to data (see map below), clashes between herders and farmers caused over 50 fatalities in Ondo State between February 2018 and February 2022. The nature of the conflict has changed significantly over the years. Recent data shows that the conflict is becoming increasingly linked with criminality including robbery and kidnapping. In January 2022, for instance, armed herders reportedly attacked Molege, Arimogija and Okeluse communities in Ose LGA and killed 11 residents. In February, herders reportedly attacked a farm and killed three farmers in Ijugebere Village, Owo LGA. In March, herders reportedly attacked a farmer and cut off one of his hands in Ikakumo village, Akoko North-East LGA. The farmer was reportedly attacked for challenging the herders who were allegedly picking fruits from his farm. More recently, on April 15, 2022, suspected herdsmen reportedly attacked a 77 year-old farmer and demanded money from him in Ikakumo village, Akoko North-East LGA.

Why it Matters

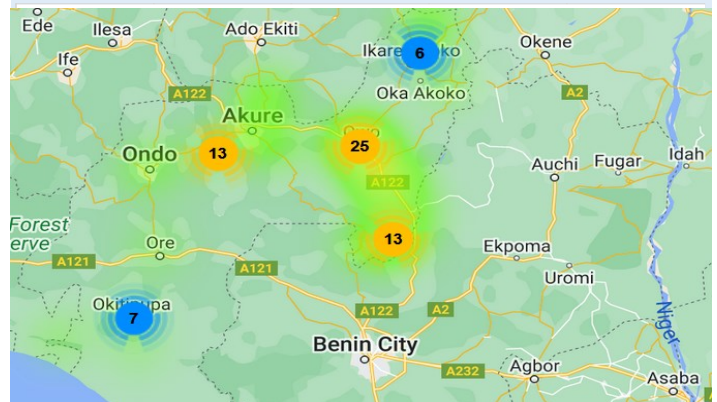
The recent escalation of communal tensions over the herder-farmer conflict is driven by changes in the context and dynamics of the lingering conflict. These changes including the criminal manifestation of the conflict are warning signs of growing grievances and hostilities between herders and farmers in the State. The prevailing situation could increase the frequency, intensity and geographical scope of the conflict with far-reaching socio-economic and political consequences.

Social: The escalating herder-farmer conflict could intensify ethnic, religious and communal hostilities and consequently undermine social cohesion in the State. The criminal aspects of the conflict could trigger a cycle of violence and killings whereby any attack against farmers or herders would result in punitive reprisals. This could also cause the proliferation of arms and local militias and vigilante groups which could intensify communal and criminal violence in the State.

Economic: The lingering conflict is inimical to economic development, especially as it is becoming increasingly linked with criminality and vandalism. Recurrent clashes could cause internal displacement, deplete agricultural labor force, and disrupt farming and livestock production. This could reduce agricultural output and undermine the agro-allied sector. This could cause food insecurity and rural poverty.

Political: The conflict could result in the multiplication of local vigilante groups and militias as self-help mechanisms. This could present additional security challenges for the State as it could cause arms proliferation and thus intensify criminal violence and social unrest.

Fatalities Heat Map of Herder-Farmer Clashes in Ondo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported fatalities caused by the farmer-herder clashes in Ondo State from February 2018 - February 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The farmer-herder conflict is increasingly assuming various criminal dimensions and intensifying communal tensions in the State. Stakeholders should work with the state chapters of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) and the All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) to de-escalate the situation and set up a Farmer-Herder Conflict Early Warning System. Stakeholders should also work with the State government and the relevant security agencies to mitigate the criminal aspects of the 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**

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