

Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing a Resurgence of Communal Conflicts in Delta State

January 16-22, 2022

Description

This edition of the weekly update highlights communal conflicts in the Niger Delta with a focus on rising communal tensions over land disputes in Delta State. According to data (see map below), communal conflicts caused more than 350 fatalities in Delta State between January 2018 and November 2021. Recent incidents indicate a resurgence of communal violence over land and boundary disputes, and collection of levies in the State. In January 2022, for instance, two persons were reportedly killed and several others wounded during renewed clashes over a lingering land dispute between Igbide and Okpolo-Enwhe communities in Isoko South LGA. Separately, in January, several properties were reportedly destroyed during a clash between Itsekiri youths and Hausa traders over the collection of levies at a market in Ugbuwangu community, Warri South LGA. More recently, on January 11, 2022, four persons were reportedly injured, several properties destroyed and many residents displaced during a clash over a land dispute between Otonyasere and Abigborodo communities in Sapele and Warri North LGAs respectively.

Why it Matters

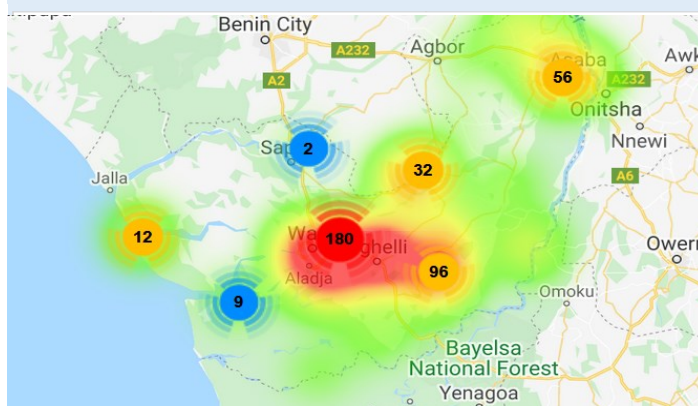
A resurgence of conflict over land disputes could intensify communal tensions and hostilities which could spark off a sequence of violence and reprisal killings in the State. Escalation of communal tensions and hostilities could adversely impact conflict dynamics at the local and state levels in ways that could have disruptive and wide-ranging socio-economic, humanitarian and political consequences for the State.

Social: Recurrent conflict over land and boundary disputes could cause far-reaching social disruptions including internal displacement of residents. Prolonged disputes could intensify ethnic and communal hostilities and impede inter-group relations. This could adversely impact the local conflict dynamics by encouraging the creation of militias and the proliferation of arms which could deepen insecurity and make the underlying drivers of the conflict more complicated.

Economic: Land conflicts could be economically disruptive, as land is the mainstay of the local economy. It could hinder investment and economic development, as it can create uncertainty about who has the right to lease or sell property. It could also cause the disruption of livelihoods, trading and agricultural activities, which could reduce household income, cause food insecurity, and deepen rural poverty.

Political: A resurgence of communal land conflicts could destabilize local politics and governance, as land is not only an economic asset, but also the basis of communal identity, social legitimacy and political representation. It could create animosities that could be exploited by desperate politicians to cause ethno-political conflict in the State.

Fatalities Heat Map of Resource Related Communal Conflict in Delta State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported fatalities caused by communal conflict in Delta State from January 2018 - November 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

Rising tensions over land disputes and other resource related conflicts could escalate in ways that could negatively affect conflict dynamics at the local and State levels. Stakeholders should collaborate with the State government to address the underlying drivers of land conflicts in the State. Peace actors should work with the State government to establish community-based peacebuilding platforms including a conflict early warning system to proactively identify and respond to potential triggers of communal conflicts in the State.

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.



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