

Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Threat of Kidnapping for Ransom in Akwa Ibom State

October 10-16, 2021

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights violent criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on the growing threat of kidnapping for ransom in Akwa Ibom State. According to data (see map below), more than 25 kidnapping incidents and over 20 fatalities were reported in Akwa Ibom State between January 2018 and June 2021. Recent data shows an increase in incidents of kidnapping for ransom, including the targeted abduction of politically exposed individuals and businesspersons in the State. In September 2021, for instance, a prominent politician who was a former Senator was reportedly kidnapped for ransom by gunmen at a hotel in Uyo, the state capital. Separately, in September, a male medical doctor was reportedly abducted by armed kidnapers at his residence in Ekparakwa town, Oruk Anam LGA. Also, in September, a local government councilor was reportedly abducted by gunmen at a petrol station in Eket town, Eket LGA. More recently, on October 01, 2021, four fishermen, including three expatriates were reportedly attacked and abducted by kidnapers along the waterways in Ibaka community, Mbo LGA.

Why it Matters

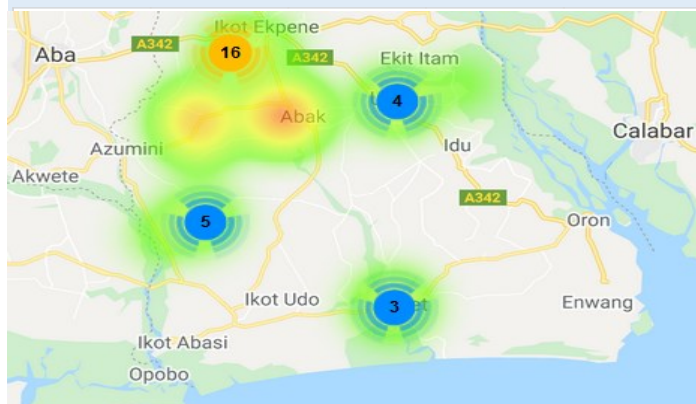
Kidnapping is increasingly becoming frequent and intense in Akwa Ibom State. The current trend and pattern of kidnapping is alarming, especially the targeted abduction of government officials and businesspersons for ransom. The current trend has the potential to intensify in ways that could significantly endanger human security and cause serious socio-economic disruptions and political instability.

Social: Recurrent incidents of kidnapping for ransom could be socially disrupting. The threat of kidnapping could cause a general feeling of insecurity that can cause anxiety and distrust among residents. This could force residents to adopt aggressive coping strategies and self-help measures including vigilantism and mob justice. This could intensify insecurity, social tensions and communal instability in ways that could negatively affect the health and wellbeing of residents.

Economic: The prevalence of kidnapping for ransom could impose huge financial burdens on individuals, families, businesses and the government, including the cost of ransom and additional security. This could disrupt the local economy by depleting households' savings, scaring away investors, and forcing businesses to relocate. This can also endanger the livelihoods of residents, reduce governments' revenue from taxation, and increase expenditure on public security.

Political: Targeted abduction of public officials could adversely affect governance in the State. It could cause a general feeling of insecurity among public officials and thus reduce their productivity. This could destabilize governance and weaken public service delivery.

Incidents Heat Map of Kidnapping for Ransom in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported incidents of kidnapping for ransom in Akwa Ibom State from January 2018 - June 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

Targeted kidnapping of public officials and businesspersons is a prevailing security threat in Akwa Ibom State. The situation could intensify except appropriate preventive actions are taken by stakeholders. Stakeholders should collaborate with the State government and relevant security agencies to strengthen ongoing efforts to mitigate the situation. Peace actors should also ensure that the proposed South-South regional security outfit is structured to effectively deal with the growing threat of kidnapping in the Niger Delta.

Contact Us

Inquiries: Afeno Super Odomovo, Research Coordinator

Telephone: 08172401595

Email: afeno@pindfoundation.org

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.



FOUNDATION FOR PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES IN THE NIGER DELTA



FOUNDATION FOR NIGER DELTA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE