

# Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Resurgence of Kidnapping for Ransom in Edo State

July 10-16, 2022

## Description

This weekly update spotlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on the resurgence of kidnapping for ransom in Edo State. According to data (see map below), more than 85 incidents and over 50 fatalities related to kidnapping for ransom were reported in Edo State between January 2019 and April 2022. Recent data shows a resurgence of kidnapping for ransom, especially the targeted abduction of clergymen in the State. In June 2022, for instance, 13 mourners who were returning from a funeral were reportedly abducted by kidnappers along the Auchi-Benin Expressway in Etsako West LGA. The kidnappers later demanded a 60 million naira ransom. Separately, in June, a 41-year old Catholic priest was reportedly abducted and killed by kidnappers in Ikabigbo community, Etsako West LGA. In July, two Catholic priests were reportedly abducted by gunmen along the Benin-Ekpoma Expressway in Irukepken community, Esan West LGA. More recently, on July 03, 2022, a 64-year old Italian Catholic priest was reportedly abducted by kidnappers at Ogunwenyi village in Usen community, Ovia South West LGA.

## Why it Matters

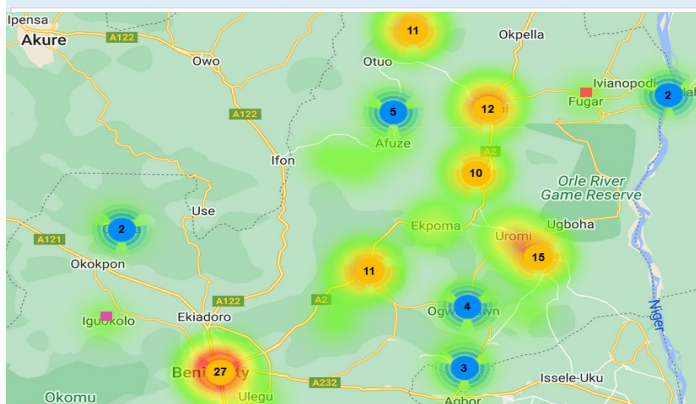
Kidnapping for ransom is increasingly becoming a serious threat to peace and security in Edo State. The current trend and pattern of kidnapping is worrying, especially the targeted abduction of clergymen, businesspersons and travellers. The situation has the potential to intensify in ways that could endanger human security and cause significant socio-economic and political disruptions in the State.

**Social:** The resurgence of kidnapping for ransom could be socially disrupting especially in terms of the threat it poses to the lives of victims, the anguish it causes families, and the feelings of uncertainty and insecurity it generates in society. The growing intensity of kidnapping could force residents to adopt hostile countermeasures and self-help strategies including criminal victimization, mob justice and vigilante violence. This could intensify social tensions and insecurity in ways that could undermine the health and wellbeing of residents

**Economic:** kidnapping for ransom could impose huge financial burdens on individuals, families, businesses and the government, including the cost of ransom and additional security. The growing prevalence of kidnapping could create a climate of fear and insecurity that could scare away investors and force businesses to relocate. Payment of ransom could also deplete household savings and cause significant economic distortions that could destabilize the local economy.

**Political:** Rising cases of kidnapping for ransom could cause public dissatisfaction with the efforts of government security forces to protect lives and properties. This could cause protests and civil unrest which could present additional security challenges for the State.

## Incidents Heat Map of Kidnapping for Ransom in Edo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of reported incidents of kidnapping for ransom in Edo State from January 2019 - April 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

Kidnapping for ransom is a prevailing security threat in Edo State. The situation could intensify except appropriate remedial and preventive actions are taken by stakeholders. Stakeholders should collaborate with the State government and relevant security agencies to reinforce ongoing efforts to mitigate the situation. Peace and development actors should also collaborate with the relevant government agencies and community leaders to address the underlying drivers of the current trend of kidnapping 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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