

# Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Resurgence of Child Trafficking in the Niger Delta

July 17-23, 2022

## Description

This special edition of the weekly update spotlights human trafficking in the Niger Delta with a focus on illegal breeding, kidnapping and sale of children for illegal adoption and ritualistic purposes. According to data (see map below), over 60 human trafficking incidents were reported in the Niger Delta between January 2019 and March 2022. Recent data indicates a resurgence of illegal breeding, kidnapping, sale and trafficking of children in the region. In April 2022, for instance, the police reportedly arrested 10 child trafficking suspects and rescued five underage girls at a brothel in Otokutu community, Ughelli South LGA, Delta State. The girls were reportedly trafficked from Cross River State and kept in the brothel for sexual exploitation. In May 2022, a 5-year old girl was reportedly kidnapped by her 30-year old aunt and sold for six hundred thousand naira in Omagwa community in Ikwerre LGA, Rivers state. Recently, on July 10, 2022, the police reportedly arrested two child trafficking suspects and rescued three pregnant women at a 'Baby Factory' (illegal maternity home) in Okpanam town in Oshimili North LGA, Delta State.

## Why it Matters

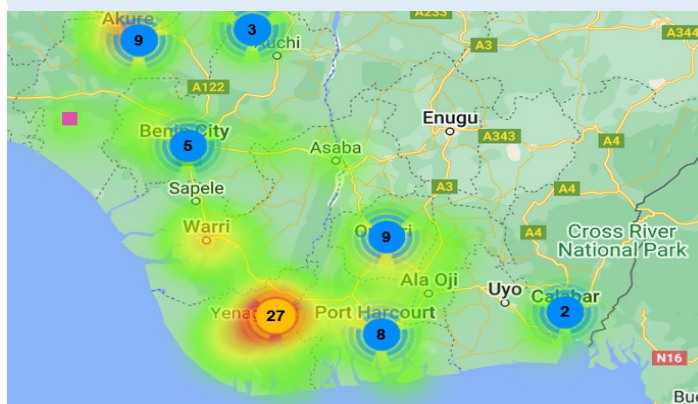
The prevailing trend of child trafficking in the Niger Delta is disturbing, especially the trafficking of underage girls for sexual exploitation and the proliferation of illegal maternity homes where young girls are made to get pregnant to produce babies for trafficking. The current trend has the potential to evolve into a thriving black market for human commodity that could further sustain human trafficking networks at the regional, national and international levels. This could have serious socio-economic and political repercussions in the region.

**Social:** Child trafficking could have serious psycho-social and health impacts on the victims and society, including identity disturbance and social alienation. It devalues human dignity and victims could feel exploited and debased, and they could end up as human traffickers in the future. The sale and trafficking of children can also cause paternity disputes that can lead to broken homes and communal instability.

**Economic:** The prevalence of child trafficking could fuel the growth of a thriving black market for human commodity. This could distort the local economy by diverting human and financial resources from legitimate businesses into criminal networks. Because of its hidden nature, child trafficking could also reduce government revenue from taxation and thus undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

**Political:** Child trafficking is a human rights violation with significant political implications. It violates several international conventions and national laws including the 'Convention on the Rights of the Child' and the national 'Child Rights Act'. The growing prevalence of child trafficking could cause civil unrest and violent protests in the region.

## Incidents Heat Map of Human Trafficking in the Niger Delta of Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of reported incidents of human trafficking in the Niger Delta from January 2019 - March 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

Child trafficking is a major threat to human security in the Niger Delta. The situation could worsen unless appropriate preventive measures are taken, especially within the context of the growing demand for babies for illegal adoption and trafficking of underage girls for sexual exploitation. Stakeholders should work with the Police and the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) to prosecute and convict traffickers. Stakeholders should also raise public awareness on human trafficking indicators.

## 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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