

June 13-19, 2021

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights the herder-farmer conflict in the Niger Delta with a focus on the criminal dimensions of the conflict in Edo State. According to data (see map below), the farmer-herder conflict caused over 60 fatalities in Edo State between 2018 and 2020. Recently, communal tensions escalated following a resurgence of violent clashes between herders and farmers and the alleged involvement of some armed herders in banditry and kidnapping in the State. In February, 2021, for instance, seven residents including three farmers were reportedly killed during clashes between herders and farmers in Ugboke, Oshodi, Okokodo and Ariyan communities in Ovia North East LGA. In April, armed herdsmen reportedly attacked travelers and abducted three women and a man in Utesi community, Ovia North East LGA. More recently, on June 14, 2021, herdsmen reportedly attacked a commercial bus, killed two passengers and abducted others in Ehor community, Uhumwonde LGA. Killings and criminal violence associated with the herder-farmer conflict recently triggered a series of protests in the State.

Why it Matters

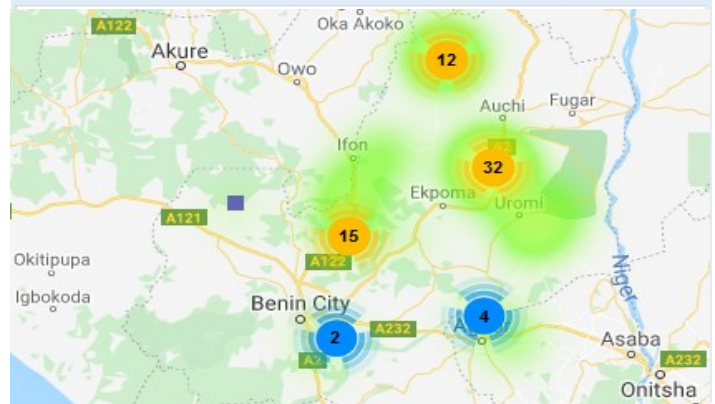
The recent escalation of communal tensions over the herder-farmer conflict indicate important changes in the context and undercurrents of the conflict. These changes including the criminal dimensions of the conflict are early warning signs of growing grievances and hostilities between herders and farming communities. The emerging situation could trigger a cycle of violence and reprisal killings which could cause sociopolitical instability and economic disruptions in the State.

Social: The emerging trends in the farmer-herder conflict could intensify ethno-religious and communal hostilities and undermine social cohesion in the State. The criminal aspects of the conflict could trigger a cycle of violence whereby any attack against farmers or herders would result in punitive reprisals. It could also result in arms proliferation and the multiplication of local militias and vigilante groups which could intensify communal and criminal violence in the State.

Economic: The impact of the conflict could be economically devastating, especially as it is becoming increasingly intertwined with criminality. It could cause loss of livelihoods and occupational displacement which can disrupt farming. Recurrent clashes could reduce agricultural output and household income, and jeopardize the agro-allied sector. This could cause food insecurity and rural poverty in the State.

Political: The conflict could present additional security challenges for the State. It could result in the proliferation of local vigilante groups as self-help mechanisms. This could intensify criminal violence and cause social unrest including mob violence, riots and protests.

Fatalities Heat Map of Communal and Criminal Violence Involving Herders and Farmers in Edo State



Heat Map shows cluster of fatalities caused by violence involving herders and farmers in Edo State from January 2018 - December 2020. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The herder-farmer conflict is escalating and increasingly taking various communal and criminal dimensions in Edo 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 communal tensions and set up a Farmer-Herder Conflict Early Warning System. Stakeholders should also work with the State government and relevant security agencies to counteract 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.

