

Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating Criminal Violence and Targeted Killings in Bayelsa State

August 07-13, 2022

Description

This weekly update spotlights lethal violence in the Niger Delta with a focus on the resurgence of violent criminality and targeted killings in Bayelsa State. According to data (see map below), criminal violence and targeted killings including kidnapping for ransom, gun attacks, and clashes between rival cult gangs caused over 200 fatalities in Bayelsa State between January 2019 and June 2022. In June 2022, for example, gunmen reportedly abducted and killed the paramount ruler and the Community Development Committee (CDC) chairman of Kalaba community, Yenagoa LGA. In July, gunmen suspected to be assassins reportedly killed an official of an indigenous oil pipeline surveillance firm in a hotel in Okutukutu community, Yenagoa LGA. Separately, in July, gunmen dressed in military camouflage reportedly killed a community youth leader at a mechanic village along Edepie-Imiringi road in Yenagoa, the state capital. Recently, on July 30, 2022, gunmen reportedly ambushed and killed a police officer and injured another during a stop-and-search operation at a security checkpoint in Famgbe community, Yenagoa LGA.

Why it Matters

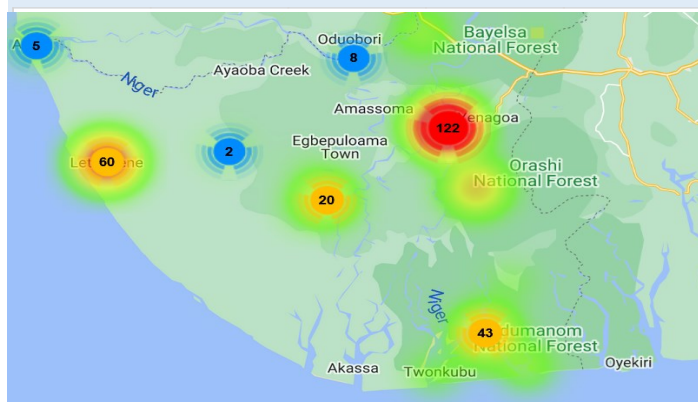
The recent wave of targeted killings has the potential to intensify communal tensions and worsen insecurity in the State. According to information from key informant interviews with selected residents, these targeted killings are largely driven by conflicts over access to oil pipeline surveillance contracts and illegal oil bunkering and artisanal oil refining opportunities. If not mitigated, the situation could degenerate into criminal victimization and reprisal killings which could bring about devastating socio-economic and political consequences.

Social: The prevalence of criminal violence and targeted killings could cause a general feeling of insecurity that could compel residents to adopt hostile self-help measures including vigilante and mob violence that could result in criminal victimization and arbitrary killings. This brings about serious psychosocial consequences that could undermine communal stability and the social wellbeing of residents.

Economic: Criminal violence and targeted killings could create an environment of heightened insecurity that could destabilize the local economy. Recurrent incidents of targeted violence and killings could escalate into social strife and reprisals that could disrupt economic activities and cause loss of livelihoods and business opportunities, and consequently undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

Political: The resurgence of criminal violence and targeted killings could force residents to adopt aggressive coping mechanisms and self-help measures that could cause lawlessness and civil disorder. This could cause serious political and security challenges for the State.

Fatalities Heat Map of Violent Criminality and Targeted Killings in Bayelsa State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of fatalities caused by criminal violence in Bayelsa State from January 2019 - June 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The recent resurgence of criminal violence and targeted killings has the potential to escalate and exacerbate insecurity in the State. Stakeholders should collaborate with the State government and the relevant security agencies to deploy appropriate developmental and security strategies to mitigate the situation. Law enforcement agencies and peace actors should also work with reputable community leaders to address the underlying triggers and drivers of the recent wave of criminal violence and targeted killings in the State.

Contact Us

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Incident Details: Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and brief incident description.



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