

# Niger Delta Weekly: De-escalating Rising Tensions over Communal Conflict in Delta State

October 02-08, 2022

## Description

This weekly update spotlights communal conflict in the Niger Delta with a focus on rising tensions over land disputes and leadership tussles in Delta State. Clashes over land disputes and leadership tussles have been major causes of lethal violence and communal instability in Delta State. According to data (see map below), communal conflict caused over 200 fatalities in Delta State between January 2019 and June 2022. Recent incidents indicate rising communal tensions over escalation of land disputes and leadership tussles in the State. In August 2022, for instance, a youth leader was reportedly killed and three others wounded during a clash over a leadership tussle in Ufuoma town, Ughelli North LGA. In September, a passenger was reportedly shot dead and a community leader seriously injured during a clash between two rival factions over a leadership tussle in Igvide community, Isoko South LGA. Recently, on September 16, 2022, a middle-aged man was reportedly killed during renewed clashes over a boundary dispute between Aladja and Ogbe-Ijoh communities in Udu and Warri South-West LGAs respectively.

## Why it Matters

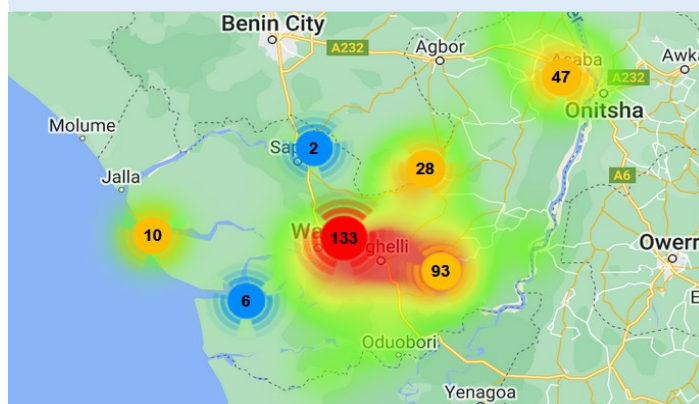
The resurgence of clashes over leadership tussles, land and boundary disputes could intensify communal tensions and hostilities in ways that could trigger a cycle of reprisal violence in the State. Communal hostilities could negatively affect the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the State. This could bring about far-reaching social, political and economic consequences at the local, state and regional levels.

**Social:** Recurrent clashes over land disputes and leadership tussles could have devastating impact on social relations and communal stability in the State. It could intensify ethno-communal hostilities which could result in killings, plundering and internal displacement. Prolonged land disputes and leadership tussles could encourage the creation of communal militias and proliferation of arms, which could make the drivers of the conflict more complicated and intractable.

**Economic:** Prolonged communal conflicts over land disputes could have devastating impact on the economy, especially considering that land is the mainstay of the local agro-based economy. Disputes over land ownership could discourage farming by limiting access to land. This could cause food insecurity by disrupting agricultural livelihoods and agro-allied businesses. This could also deepen rural poverty by reducing agricultural productivity and household income in the State.

**Political:** Communal conflict over land disputes and leadership tussles could destabilize local politics and governance in the State, especially considering that land is not only an economic asset, but also the basis of communal identity, social legitimacy and political representation.

## Fatalities Heat Map of Communal Conflicts in Delta State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported fatalities caused by communal conflicts in Delta State from January 2019 - June 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

Conflict over land disputes and leadership tussles in Delta State remains recurrent with periodic incidents of violence. Stakeholders should work with the State government to develop appropriate policies to holistically address the underlying conflict drivers. Stakeholders should also work with relevant government agencies and community leaders to set up conflict resolution committees and establish community-based early warning systems to proactively identify and respond to potential triggers of communal conflicts.

## 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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