

# Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing Cholera Outbreak in the Midst of Flooding in the Niger Delta

October 16-22, 2022a

## Description

This special edition of the weekly update highlights emerging threats to public health in the Niger Delta with a focus on the potential outbreak of cholera as a result of widespread flooding. The recent flooding has caused widespread contamination of water sources in the Niger Delta. Accordingly, this has increased the risk of outbreak of water-borne diseases in the region, especially cholera which usually spread through contaminated water. Cholera is a severe diarrheal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the *Vibrio cholerae* Bacterium. Symptoms include watery diarrhea, vomiting, muscle cramps, and dehydration. It is an epidemic-prone infectious disease with significant public health consequences. According to epidemiological data from the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), as at September 2022, a total of 5451 cholera cases including 149 deaths have been reported across 31 states in Nigeria including eight out of the nine states in the Niger Delta. According to NCDC's Cholera Situation Report, as of September 4, 2022, more than 22% of all suspected cases were reported in the Niger Delta.

## Why it Matters

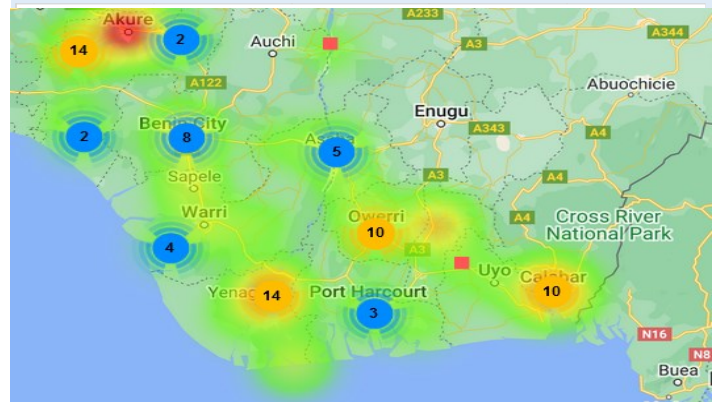
Epidemiological data shows that outbreak of cholera is increasingly becoming seasonal and prevalent in the Niger Delta. According to data from NCDC, as of September 4, 2022, a total of 1,212 cases and 20 fatalities have been reported in the region, with a Case Fatality Ratio (CFR) of 1.7%. The recent flooding has caused contamination of water sources and forced displaced residents into crowded shelters with poor hygiene and sanitation. This could increase the spread of the disease with significant public health consequences that could cause serious socio-economic and political disruptions in the region.

**Social:** The recent flood disaster has the potential to cause a cholera pandemic by intensifying both primary and secondary transmission of the disease through widespread contamination of water sources, disruption of water, sanitation and hygiene services, and displacement of public health infrastructure. Widespread outbreak of cholera could overwhelm health facilities and healthcare professionals. This could undermine public health and the social wellbeing of residents.

**Economic:** The economic repercussions of a cholera pandemic could be as disrupting as its epidemiological consequences. Increased infection rate could disrupt economic activities including travel restriction, labour shortages and loss of livelihoods. Fear and uncertainties about the transmission of the disease could also negatively affect consumer behavior and cause low productivity, inflation, and loss of income.

**Political:** Widespread outbreak of the disease could raise concerns about government's commitment to public health security. This could spark off unrest and violent protests that could disrupt governance.

## Heat Map of Infectious Disease Related Incidents in the Niger Delta of Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of infectious disease outbreak in Niger Delta from January 2018 - June 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

The seasonal outbreak of cholera is a serious public health concern in the Niger Delta. The infection rate of the disease could be intensified by the recent flooding. Stakeholders should monitor the situation and respond proactively. While the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) is making efforts to curtail the disease, development actors should work with other relevant government agencies and media outfits to sensitize the public about the disease and advise residents on appropriate preventive and remedial measures.

## 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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