

# Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing Escalation of Organized Criminal Violence in Delta State

February 05-11, 2023

## Description

This weekly update highlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on criminal violence in Delta State. Organized criminal violence including kidnapping for ransom, clashes between cult gangs, and targeted killing is a major cause of insecurity in the State. According to data (see map below), criminal violence caused over 150 fatalities in Delta State between January 2021 and December 2022. Recent data shows a rise in criminal violence in the State. In January 2023, for example, armed kidnappers reportedly killed a man and abducted another in Mosogar community, Ethiope West LGA. Separately, gunmen reportedly killed four residents including a politician, two businessmen and a sales girl in Sapele Town, Sapele LGA. Also, in January, gunmen allegedly killed two members of a local vigilante in Amukpe community, Sapele LGA. Separately, in January, cultists reportedly killed two young men in Egbokodo-Itsekiri and Ubeji communities, in Warri South LGA. Recently, on February 09, 2023, gunmen allegedly attacked troops of the Nigerian Army and killed four soldiers in Kwale community, Ndokwa West LGA.

## Why it Matters

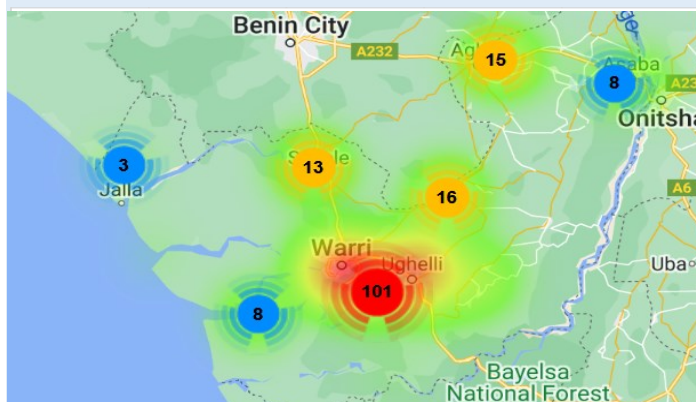
The recent escalation of organized criminal violence has the potential to intensify in ways that could adversely impact the peace and security dynamics in the State. If not deescalated, the situation could degenerate into lawlessness and widespread hooliganism. This could result in the deployment of security countermeasures that could be viewed by residents as human rights violation. This could also cause socio-political and economic disruptions, especially in the context of rising political tensions in the lead-up to the 2023 general elections.

**Social:** An escalation of criminal violence could have a devastating psychosocial impact on residents. It could create wider feelings of uncertainty that could embolden residents to adopt aggressive coping mechanisms and self-help measures including the formation of local militias and vigilantes which could bring about social strife and human rights violations. This could create communal tensions that could adversely impact the health and social wellbeing of residents.

**Economic:** The prevalence of criminal violence could destabilize the local economy. Kidnapping, cult violence, and armed clashes between hoodlums and public security forces could cause serious economic disruptions that could destabilize businesses and undercut household income. Robbery and kidnaping for ransom could also impose huge financial burdens on individuals, families and businesses in the State.

**Political:** The current wave of criminal violence is a threat to law and order, and public safety. It could weaken citizens' trust in the capacity of the government to protect lives and property. The situation could cause unrest which could disrupt politics and governance in the State.

## Fatalities Heat Map of Criminal Violence in Delta State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of fatalities caused by criminal violence in Delta State from January 2021 - December 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

## Prognosis

The current wave of criminal violence has the potential to intensify in ways that could adversely impact the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the State. Stakeholders should work with the security agencies to devise strategies to mitigate the situation. Stakeholders should also collaborate with other relevant governments' agencies to develop lasting developmental and institutional strategies to address the underlying causes. Interestingly, several organizations are collaborating to mitigate the drivers of violence in the region.

## 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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