

Niger Delta Weekly: De-escalating Violent Protests and Vandalism in the Niger Delta

February 12-18, 2023

Description

This special edition of the weekly update spotlights rising protests over cash shortages and fuel scarcity in Nigeria, with a focus on violent protests and vandalism of public and private properties in the Niger Delta. Since January 2023, irate youths, traders, students and commuters have taken to the streets to protest the social and economic hardships caused by the lingering shortages of fuel and naira notes across the country. Several incidents of vandalism and clashes between protesters and government security operatives have been reported in the Niger Delta. In early February, for instance, protesters reportedly caused gridlock on major roads and disrupted economic activities in several communities including Asaba and Warri in Delta State. Separately, an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) was reportedly vandalized by a mob at a bank in Orhuwhorun community in Udu LGA, Delta State. Recently, on February 15, 2023, three residents were allegedly killed during a clash between protesters and government security operatives at different locations including the office of the Central Bank of Nigeria in Benin City, Edo State.

Why it Matters

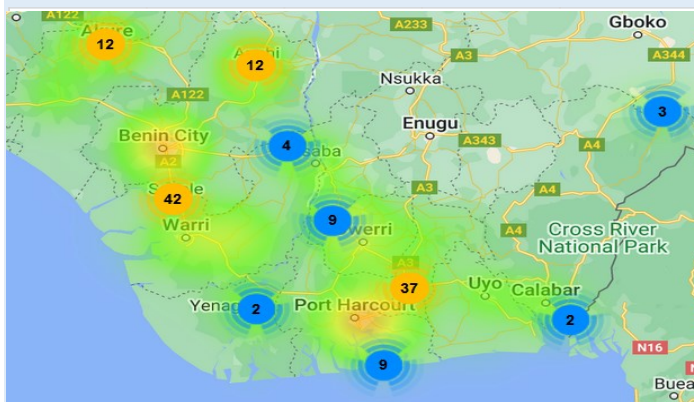
The spiralling protests are worrying especially against the backdrop of rising political tensions in the lead-up to the 2023 general elections in the Niger Delta. The current wave of protests could escalate in ways that could negatively affect the dynamics of peace and conflict in the region. The protests could be hijacked by political thugs and hoodlums, and result in the deployment of security measures that could be seen by residents as human rights violations. This could cause social and economic disruptions and political instability in the region.

Social: If not de-escalated, the ongoing wave of violent protests and targeted vandalism could evolve into widespread and indiscriminate destruction of properties, looting, criminal violence and arbitrary killings. This could cause public unrest and a breakdown of law and order with devastating security and health consequences for residents. The situation could also be exploited by separatist groups and criminal gangs to intensify communal tensions and criminal violence.

Economic: Violent protests and vandalism could have devastating impact on the local economy. The destruction of public infrastructure and private properties, as well as the disruption of business activities and restriction of human and vehicular movement, have caused huge economic losses in the region. The local economy could be further destabilized if the current wave of protests and vandalism continues.

Political: The ongoing wave of violent protests is a threat to law and order and public safety. It could evolve into mass demonstrations and backlash movements against the government. This could destabilize the 2023 general elections and cause political instability in the region.

Fatalities Heat Map of Violent Protests and Clampdowns in the Niger Delta of Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of fatalities caused by protests and clampdowns in the Niger Delta from January 2020 - December 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The ongoing protests are not only a reaction to the negative effects of the recent monetary policy, but also a rallying point for the citizenry to voice their displeasure over harsh economic conditions. As cash and petrol shortages persist, any use of force by security operatives could be counterproductive. Stakeholders should work with law enforcement agencies to create safe spaces for protesters, and enlighten protesters to be peaceful. The police should also use non-violent means including negotiation to de-escalate violent protests.

Contact Us

Inquiries: PINDfoundation.org

Contacts: info@PINDfoundation.org +234 (0) 9 291 0454

What do you think about the report? - [We value your feedback](#)

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.



FOUNDATION FOR PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES IN THE NIGER DELTA



FOUNDATION FOR NIGER DELTA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE