

Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing Electoral Violence through Early Warning and Response

March 12-18, 2023

Description

This special edition of the weekly update spotlights election violence in the Niger Delta with a focus on the application of Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) systems to prevent and mitigate electoral violence in the region. Historically, elections in the Niger Delta are high stake affairs, highly competitive, and often characterized by violence. According to data (see map below), over 180 incidents of election violence and more than 100 related fatalities were reported in the region between January 2019 and December 2022. Many of the prevalent and recurrent incidents including election irregularities and clashes between supporters of political parties could be prevented or mitigated through the deployment of community-based, multistakeholder EWER systems. PIND's integrated, multistakeholder, and data-driven [SMS EWER platform](#), for instance, has proven to be useful in collecting data on potential incidents and indicators of election violence from people on the ground which are then analyzed and transmitted to specialized response actors for targeted interventions to prevent and mitigate violence in the Niger Delta.

Why it Matters

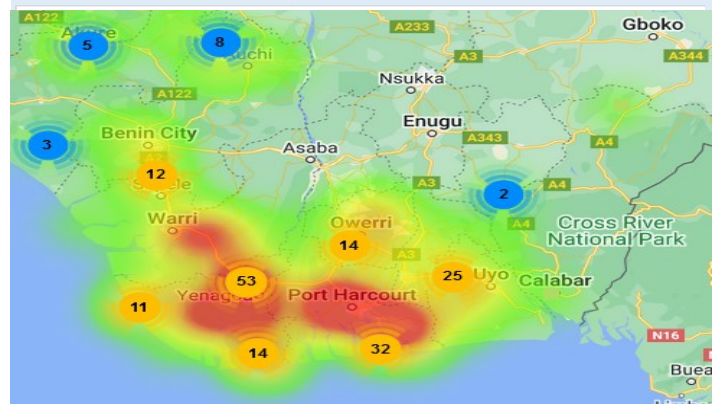
The political situation in the Niger Delta is highly charged. Several incidents of protest, violence, threat of violence, and inciting statements have been reported in the aftermath of the February 25, 2023 presidential and National Assembly elections, and in the lead-up to the March 18, 2023 governorship and State Assembly elections. The deployment of multistakeholder EWER systems to track, identify and proactively respond to potential incidents and indicators of election violence could help defuse tensions by channeling grievances to the appropriate conflict resolution agencies before they trigger violence.

Social: Electoral violence could cause social tensions that could negatively impact the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the region. It could cause social polarization and a breakdown of law and order which could intensify criminality and communal instability. A multistakeholder, community-based EWER system can help promote social stability by channeling grievances to specialized agencies, civil society organizations, and local response actors for a peaceful resolution.

Economic: Electoral violence could cause violent protests and mass demonstrations that could disrupt the economy. A data-driven EWER system can provide individuals, businesses, and the government with data and information to map the hotspots and forecast the potential for violence, and respond proactively to prevent or minimize losses.

Political: Election irregularities and violence could undermine the electoral process and cause political instability. EWER systems could be used to monitor the electoral process, identify possible trends of violence and catalyze proactive responses by the relevant agencies.

Incidents Heat Map of Election-related Violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria



Heat Map shows the concentration of reported incidents of election-related violence in the Niger Delta from January 2019 - December 2022. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

Electoral violence is a major driver of insecurity in the Niger Delta. Peace actors should reinforce the existing EWER infrastructure to effectively respond to the changing dynamics of election violence in the region. This should include measures to address fake news and misinformation. Civil society organizations (CSOs) should work with relevant government agencies to create regional multistakeholder platforms including community stakeholder networks and situation rooms to improve early response to potential incidents of violence.

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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



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