

Niger Delta Weekly: Responding to Evolving Trends of kidnap for Ransom in the Niger Delta

December 17-23, 2023

Description

This weekly update spotlights emerging trends of kidnap for ransom in the Niger Delta. Recent incidents indicate major changes in the trends and patterns of kidnap for ransom in the region. There has been a rise in cases of kidnapping with lengthy detention period and demand for huge ransoms, along with targeted kidnapping with relatively shorter detention period and lesser ransoms. In November 2023, for instance, kidnapers allegedly abducted a professor and demanded a ransom of 50 million naira in Calabar, the Cross River state capital. He was released 26 days later. Also, in November, a Catholic priest and his driver were reportedly abducted by kidnapers in Osu-Owerre community, in Isiala Mbano LGA, Imo State. He was released few days later, after a five hundred-thousand-naira ransom was paid. The kidnapper initially demanded a 50-million-naira ransom which was later reduced to 10 million naira, and eventually five hundred thousand naira. In a recent incident, on December 12, 2023, gunmen allegedly abducted a traditional ruler from his residence and killed his aide in Akpabuyo LGA, Cross River State.

Why it Matters

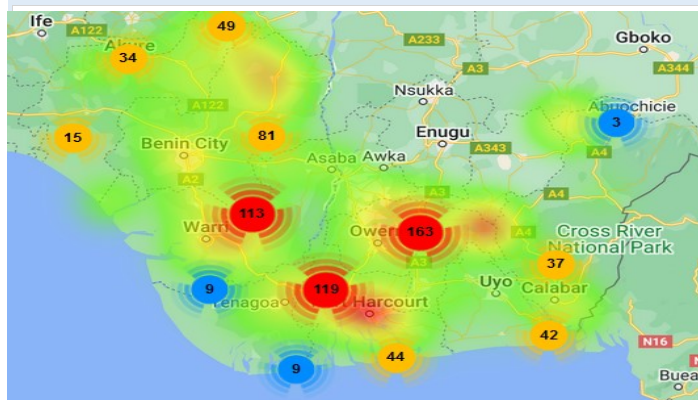
The current trends of kidnap for ransom in the Niger Delta is alarming, especially given the [high percentage of Nigerians that are multi-dimensionally poor](#), the widening socio-economic disparities between the rich and the poor, and coupled with the current economic hardship caused by rising inflation in the country. If not mitigated, the situation could intensify in ways that could cause unrest, disrupt public service delivery and undermine human security in the region. This could bring about serious socio-economic and political consequences.

Social: The emerging trends of kidnapping could have a devastating psychosocial impact on residents. Demand for large ransoms and prolong detention of victims could be extremely traumatic for victims and their families, especially given the negative publicity and long-term reputational damage to individuals, families and organizations. The situation could force residents to adopt violent coping mechanisms including vigilante and mob justice. This could cause communal tensions and undermine the health and social wellbeing of residents.

Economic: The current trends of kidnapping could create a climate of insecurity that could disrupt the economy. Ransoms could impose financial burdens on families and businesses. This could distort the economy by draining household savings and destabilizing legitimate businesses. This could undercut the economic wellbeing of residents.

Political: The current wave of kidnapping and hostage-taking could disrupt governance and public service delivery. It could trigger violent protests and unrest which could cause political instability, and thus present additional security challenges for government in the region.

Incidents Heat Map of Kidnap for Ransom in the Niger Delta of Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of reported incidents of kidnap for ransom in the Niger Delta from January 2022 - October 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The emerging trends and patterns of kidnap of ransom is a major threat to human security and the local economy in the Niger Delta. This could intensify conflict risks and insecurity in ways that could negatively impact the overall security situation in the region. Peace and development actors should work with the relevant government agencies and community leaders to develop appropriate developmental strategies to mitigate the underlying social and economic drivers of the current trends of kidnap for ransom 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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