

Niger Delta Weekly: Preventing Herder-Farmer Clashes in Ondo State

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Description

Perennial clashes between herders and farmers over access to land for farming and grazing is a prevailing security issue in Ondo State. Recent trends indicate an increase in frequency and intensity of clashes in agrarian communities, particularly in Akure North, Akure South, Odigbo, Akoko North-West and Ifedore LGAs. In January 2020, local hunters and farmers reportedly impounded over 140 cattle belonging to herders for grazing on farmlands and destroying crops in Ijare community, Ifedore LGA. Clashes between herders and farmers are reinforced by alleged involvement of herders in criminality including kidnapping and sexual violence. According to data (see map below), farmer-herder clashes resulted in over 20 fatalities in Ondo State between 2015 and 2019. Recently, communal tensions intensified after violent clashes between herders and farmers resulted in several fatalities and displacement of many residents. On March 31, 2020, for instance, three farmers including a man and his son were reportedly killed by herders in Arimogija community, Ose LGA. The incident reportedly sparked off a protest by residents.

Why it Matters

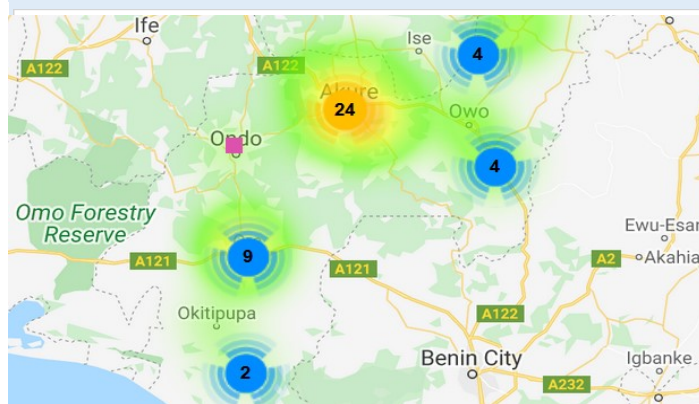
Recent trends indicate an upsurge in frequency and lethality of herder-farmer clashes in Ondo State, marked by loss of lives and destruction of livestock and farmlands. The situation threatens to become more prevalent and intense with far-reaching social, economic and political implications for the state.

Social: Repeated clashes between herders and farmers could intensify communal tensions and undermine social cohesion and peace in the state. Periodic destruction of farmlands and livestock can cause social disruptions including widespread occupational displacement and forced migration which can exacerbate insecurity in the state.

Economic: Disruptions caused by herder-farmer clashes could gravely impact the economy of the state. Violent clashes disrupt farming, thereby resulting in loss of livelihoods, undermine food security and exacerbate poverty. Killings during clashes diminish the agricultural labor force, threaten the sustainability of pastoral farming and crop production, and endanger agro-allied businesses. Recurrent clashes also create insecurity that makes the agricultural sector unattractive to investors and force existing businesses to relocate.

Political: The recurrence of violent herder-farmer clashes in the state could be seen by residents as indicative of the failure of the security agencies and the political authorities to manage the conflict. As a result communities could take the law into their hands. This can lead to social unrest, including mob violence, riots and protests, with the potential to heighten political tensions and insecurity in the state.

Incidents Heat Map of Herder-Farmer Clashes in Ondo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported incidents of herder-farmer conflict in Ondo State from January 2015 - December 2019. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org.

Prognosis

The herder-farmer conflict in Ondo state is likely to continue and become more intense unless constructive actions are taken by stakeholders. Peace and development actors should collaborate with the Ondo State government and the state chapters of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) and All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) to develop strategies to build trust and promote symbiotic relationships that can facilitate peaceful coexistence between herders and farmers in the state.

Contact Us

Inquiries: Afeno Super Odomovo, Research Coordinator

Telephone: 08172401595

Email: afeno@pindfoundation.org

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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