

# Niger Delta Weekly: **Spotlighting the Emerging Issue of Kidnapping in Ondo State**

May 31-June 06, 2020

## Description

This weekly update examines the issue of kidnapping for ransom in the Niger Delta with specific focus on Ondo State. Recent trends indicate an increase in reported incidents of kidnapping for ransom in the State. According to data (see map below), over 50 incidents of kidnapping were reported in Ondo State between January 2016 and April 2020. Since January 2020, there has been a rise in the frequency and intensity of incidents of kidnapping in the state, particularly in Akoko North-East and Akoko South-West LGAs. In January 2020, for instance, the chairman of a local chapter of a major political party was reportedly kidnapped by gunmen at his residence in Akungba-Akoko, Akoko South-West LGA. In May 2020, 4 persons including, an army officer, were reportedly abducted by gunmen along Kabba-Auga-Akoko highway in Akoko North-East LGA. More recently, on May 20, 2020, a naval officer was reportedly abducted by gunmen in Ago Ajayi village along Ose/Oba Akoko highway in Akoko North-East LGA. The kidnapers of the naval officer demanded a 50 million naira ransom. He was later rescued by security operatives.

## Why it Matters

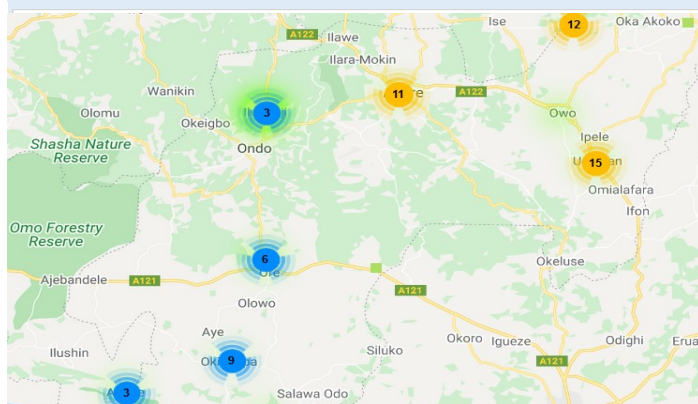
The emerging pattern of kidnapping for ransom in Ondo State is worrying, particularly the targeted abduction of military officers. The situation could lead to the mobilization of repressive responses and measures designed to crackdown on kidnapers. This could cause significant socio-economic and political consequences for the state.

**Social:** The impact of kidnapping for ransom could be socially disrupting. The fear of being kidnapped can cause apprehension and distrust among residents and create a common feeling of insecurity. Moreover, recurrent abduction of military officers could result in more repressive security policies and militarization of public security. This can cause rights abuses and collateral damage among residents.

**Economic:** Kidnapping for ransom imposes heavy economic costs on individuals and businesses, and creates an environment that is hostile to economic development. This could inflate the cost of doing business which could be the expenses on extra security or ransoms. Kidnapping for ransom could also scare away investors, cause businesses to relocate, and reduce government's revenue from taxation.

**Political:** Recurrent incidents of kidnapping could lead to public dissatisfaction with government efforts to provide security. This could make residents to seek alternative forms of protection such as vigilante groups which can result in mob violence and human rights violations. The situation could also degenerate into politically motivated kidnappings that could be used to intimidate political rivals, especially in the context of the upcoming gubernatorial elections in the state.

## Incidents Heat Map of Kidnapping for Ransom in Ondo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported incidents of kidnapping for ransom in Ondo state from January 2016 - April 2020. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org).

## Prognosis

Kidnapping for ransom in Ondo State remains sporadic and unpredictable. Stakeholders should continue to monitor the situation and respond appropriately. Targeted kidnapping of politically exposed persons, public officials and businesspersons could increase, especially in the context of the upcoming gubernatorial elections in the state, scheduled for October 2020. Peace actors should collaborate with security agencies and the state government to intensify ongoing efforts to curb the spread of kidnapping for ransom in the state.

## Contact Us

**Inquiries:** Afeno Super Odomovo, Research Coordinator

**Telephone:** 08172401595

**Email:** [afeno@pindfoundation.org](mailto: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.



FOUNDATION FOR PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES IN THE NIGER DELTA



NIGER DELTA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE