

Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting Emerging Trends in the Herder-Farmer Conflict in Ondo State

February 21-27, 2021

Description

This edition of the weekly update spotlights emerging trends in the herder-farmer conflict in the Niger Delta with a focus on the criminal aspect of the conflict in Ondo State. According to data (see map below), the herder-farmer conflict caused over 40 fatalities in Ondo State between 2015 and 2020. Recent incidents indicate important changes in the context and undercurrents of the conflict, including the alleged involvement of some herders in kidnapping and banditry, and the emergence of self-help vigilante groups. The conflict has intensified since January 2021 when the government issued a quit notice to herders to vacate all forest reserves in the State. In February, 2021, for instance, herders reportedly abducted a farmer and killed a vigilante in Iju town, Akure North LGA. Separately, a farmer was reportedly killed by herders in Ajowa town, Akoko North-West LGA. Also, two people were reportedly killed during a clash between herders and local vigilantes along Ute road in Owo LGA. Recently, on February 13, 2021, three residents were reportedly killed during a clash between herders and farmers at Ijugbere in Owo LGA.

Why it Matters

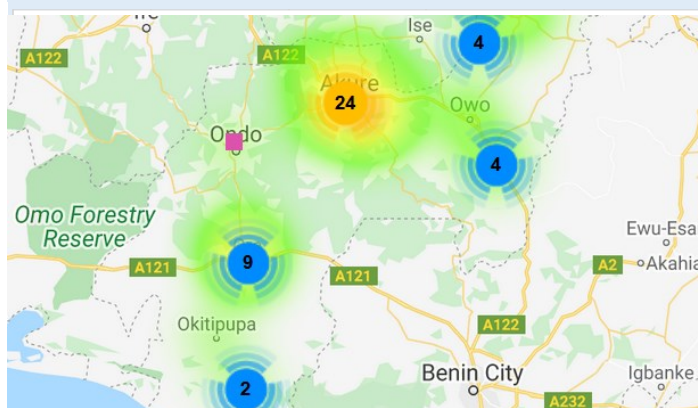
The recent changes in the context and dynamics of the herder-farmer conflict are both causal and symptomatic of growing grievances and tensions between herders and farming communities. The emerging situation has the potential to escalate in ways that could cause serious socio-economic disruptions and political instability in the State.

Social: The emerging trends in the herder-farmer conflict could intensify ethno-religious and communal hostilities and undermine social cohesion in the State. The criminal dimension of the conflict could trigger cyclical violence whereby any attack against herders or farmers would result in punitive reprisals. This could result in arms proliferation and the multiplication of local militias and vigilante groups which could intensify criminal and communal violence in the State.

Economic: The herder-farmer conflict could be economically devastating, especially as it is becoming more intense and lethal. The conflict could cause occupational displacement and loss of livelihood which could disrupt farming and livestock production. Recurrent clashes could also deplete the agricultural labor force, reduce agricultural output and household income, and jeopardize the agro-allied sector. This could cause food insecurity and rural poverty in the State.

Political: The criminal dimension of the conflict could intensify communal tensions and cause the proliferation of local militias and vigilante groups as self-help mechanisms. This could increase criminal violence and cause social unrest including mob violence, riots and protests. This could cause chaos and political instability in the State.

Fatalities Heat Map of the Herder-Farmer Conflict in Ondo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows concentration of reported fatalities caused by the herder-farmer conflict in Ondo State from January 2015 - December 2020. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org.

Prognosis

The herder-farmer conflict in Ondo State has the potential to intensify in ways that could adversely affect human security. Peace actors should work with the government to set up a farmer-Herder Conflict Early Warning System in the State. Stakeholders should also work with the state chapters of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) and the All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) to build symbiotic relationships to facilitate peaceful coexistence between herders and farmers in the State.

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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