

Niger Delta Weekly: Raising Awareness of New Trends of Violence Against Women and Girls

November 21-27, 2021

Description

This special edition of the weekly update highlights emerging trends and drivers of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the Niger Delta. According to data (see map below), more than 600 incidents of violence affecting women and girls were reported in the Niger Delta between January 2020 and September 2021. Recent incidents indicate new trends of VAWG including sexual violation of children, illegal breeding and selling of babies, and targeted killing of women and girls to harvest their vital organs and other body parts for trafficking and ritual purposes. In July 2020, for instance, a 3-year old girl was reportedly raped by a 23-year old man in Akpata community, Ondo State. Separately, in July 2020, the police reportedly arrested three pregnant teenagers, three babies and their mothers, and a couple who bought two babies from an illegal maternity home in Rumuolumeni community, Rivers State. In March 2021, a 39-year old woman was reportedly abducted from her farm and killed by suspected human body parts dealers in Obiaruku town, Delta State. Her vital organs and other body parts were allegedly harvested.

Why it Matters

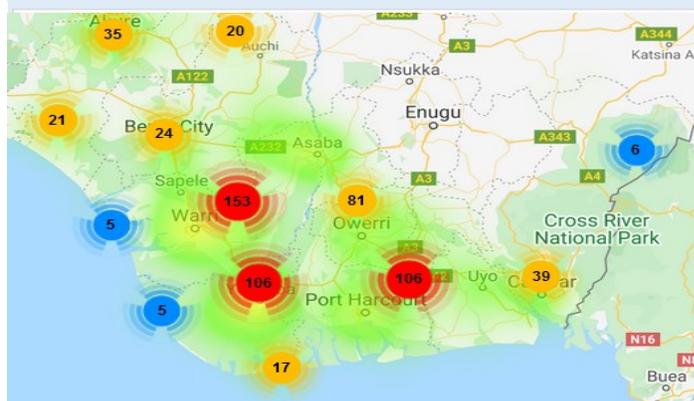
The prevalence of VAWG in the Niger Delta is alarming, especially the emerging trends of killing women and girls for rituals, sexual violation of children, and the proliferation of 'Baby Factories' - homes where young women are kept and made to produce babies for sale. In spite of the prevalence of these new forms of VAWG, the level of public awareness remains low. Raising awareness of the situation is crucial for prevention at the individual, institutional and societal levels.

Emerging Trends and Drivers: The prevalence of new forms of VAWG is seemingly driven by increasing demand for babies for illegal adoption and ritual purposes, and the emergence of a new generation of cyber criminals (Yahoo-Boys) who use sexual violation and human body parts for occult rituals to achieve success in their cyber scams. Despite its pervasiveness, VAWG is largely underreported.

Impediments to Reporting: VAWG is widely underreported mainly because of the inability or reluctance of victims to report. Reluctance to report could be engendered by shame, stigma, cultural taboos, or aversion to the potential publicity of public disclosure. Underreporting could make it difficult for policy makers to get the true picture of the situation, and as well provide impunity for perpetrators.

Implications for Society: VAWG could have serious physiological, psychosocial and health impacts on victims and families, as well as negative intergenerational effects on youth and children who are exposed to these forms of violence. It degrades womankind, diminishes respect for human life, and weakens moral standards in society.

Incidents Heat Map of Violence Affecting Women and Girls (VAWG) in the Niger Delta of Nigeria.



Heat Map shows the geographical concentration of reported incidents of VAWG in the Niger Delta from January 2020 - September 2021. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

The Way Forward

Violence against woman and girls remains prevalent and largely underreported in the region. Stakeholders should collaborate with the relevant government agencies to address the main drivers and develop appropriate preventive and punitive measures, including programs to raise public awareness of the nature, new dimensions and prevalence of VAWG. Greater awareness and multi-stakeholder engagement with traditional institutions and policy makers can strengthen preventive efforts and tackle the underlying drivers.

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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