Niger Delta Weekly: Reducing the Risk of Kidnapping for Ransom in Cross River State

June 11-17, 2023

Description

This weekly update spotlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on kidnapping for ransom in Cross River State. According to data (see map below), more than 60 kidnapping incidents and over 25 related fatalities were reported in Cross River State between January 2020 and April 2023. Recent incidents show that kidnapping for ransom is increasingly becoming prevalent and intense in the State. In January 2023, for example, two persons including an aide to a federal lawmaker were reportedly abducted by gunmen along the Calabar-Ikom Highway in Betem community, Biase LGA. In February, gunmen reportedly kidnapped two women including a Commissioner for Women Affairs at Mayne Avenue, Calabar South LGA. In March, four persons including an Assistant Superintendent of Immigration and the deputy governorship candidate of a political party were reportedly abducted by gunmen along the Calabar-Ogoja Highway in Biase LGA. Recently, on June 09, 2023, two residents including a staff of the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH) were reportedly kidnapped in Calabar, the state capital.

Why it Matters

Kidnapping for ransom is increasingly becoming a serious conflict risk and threat to peace and security in Cross River State. The prevailing trend and pattern of kidnapping is alarming, especially the targeted abduction of travellers and government officials. If not mitigated, the situation could intensify in ways that could worsen human insecurity and cause major socio-economic and political disruptions in the State.

Social: The growing prevalence and intensity of kidnapping could be socially disrupting especially in terms of the distress it causes families, the threat to the lives of victims, and the feelings of uncertainty it creates among residents. The prevalence of kidnapping for ransom could force residents to adopt violent coping strategies and self-help measures including vigilantism, mob violence and extrajudicial killings. This could increase insecurity and social tensions in ways that could adversely impact the health and social wellbeing of residents.

Economic: The prevalence of kidnapping for ransom could create a climate of uncertainty that could disrupt the local economy. Ransoms could impose huge financial burdens on families, businesses and the government. This could distort the local economy by destabilizing legitimate business and reducing government revenue from taxation. Payment of ransom could also reduce household savings, cause hardship for families, and undermine the economic wellbeing of residents.

Political: Rising cases of targeted abduction of public officials could adversely affect politics and governance in the State. It could cause fear and uncertainty among public officials and reduce their productivity. This could disrupt governance and public service delivery.

Incidents Heat Map of Kidnapping for Ransom in Cross River State, Nigeria

Heat Map shows geographical concentration of reported incidents of kidnap for ransom in Cross River State from January 2020 - April 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

Kidnapping is increasingly becoming prevalent and very intense in Cross River State. The prevailing situation has the potential to intensify conflict risks and insecurity in the State. Stakeholders should work with the State government and the relevant security agencies to strengthen ongoing efforts to mitigate the situation. Peace and development actors should also team up with relevant government agencies and community leaders to address the underlying socio-economic drivers of the current wave of kidnapping in the State.
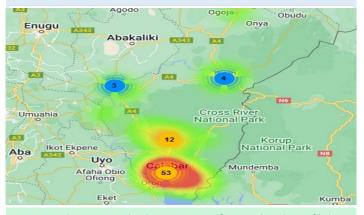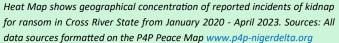
Contact Us

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What do you think about the report? - We value your feedback

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.