

Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating Rising Criminal and Gang Violence in Edo State

September 10-16, 2023

Description

This weekly update spotlights organized criminality in the Niger Delta with a focus on criminal violence and clashes between cult gangs in Edo State. According to data (see map below), organized criminal violence caused over 200 fatalities in Edo State between January 2021 and June 2023. Recent data shows a rise in organized criminal violence in the State. In July 2023, for instance, gunmen reportedly ambushed a private vehicle, killed the male driver and abducted two of his siblings along Igarra-Ebilo Road in Akoko-Edo LGA. In August, gunmen reportedly attacked a church, shot the pastor and killed his wife in Benin City, Oredo LGA. Separately, in August, gunmen suspected to be robbers allegedly attacked a military patrol van, killed a soldier and made away with a bag containing money in Benin City, the state capital. Recently, on August 30, 2023, about 10 persons were reportedly killed in a series of clashes between rival cult gangs at different locations in Benin City, Oredo LGA. Same day, a female student and a revenue collector were reportedly killed during a clash between cult gangs in Auchi town, Etsako West LGA.

Why it Matters

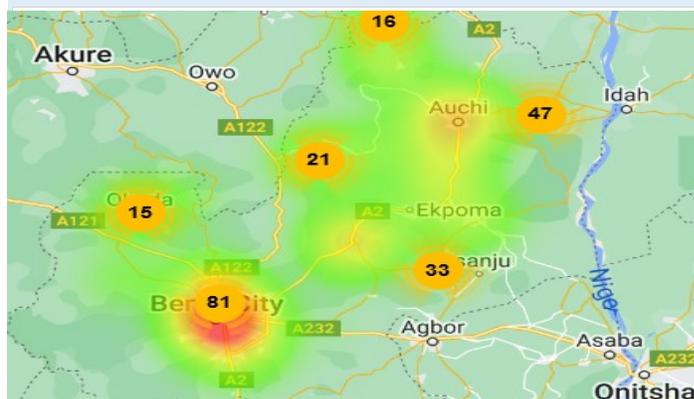
The recent escalation of organized criminal violence has the potential to escalate in ways that could adversely impact the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the State. The current spate of criminal violence and clashes between cult gangs could trigger a sequence of reprisal violence and targeted killings. It could also cause widespread hooliganism and a breakdown of law and order. This could cause social tensions, economic disruptions and political instability in the State.

Social: Rising wave of organized criminality and gang violence could have devastating impact on the wellbeing of residents. It could create general feelings of distrust and insecurity that could undermine social cohesion and communal stability. This could also embolden residents to adopt hostile coping strategies and self-help measures including the formation of local militias and vigilantes which could bring about social strife and human rights violations including extrajudicial killing.

Economic: The prevalence of organized criminal violence could destabilize the local economy. Kidnapping, robbery and clashes between rival cult gangs could cause serious economic disruptions that could destabilize businesses and undercut household income. Robbery, kidnap for ransom and violence by cult gangs could also impose huge financial burdens on individuals, families and businesses in the State.

Political: The spate of organized criminal violence could cause serious challenges for law enforcement and governance in the State. It could weaken citizens' trust in the capacity of the government to protect lives and property. This could compel residents to adopt aggressive self-help strategies that could result in lawlessness and civil disorder.

Fatalities Heat Map of Organized Criminality in Edo State, Nigeria



Heat Map shows geographical concentration of fatalities caused by organized criminal violence in Edo State from January 2021 - June 2023. Sources: All data sources formatted on the P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Prognosis

The current wave of organized criminality and gang violence could dangerously alter the dynamics of conflict in ways that could negatively impact the social, economic, political and security situations in the State. Stakeholders should collaborate with the relevant security agencies to deploy appropriate strategies to mitigate the situation. Peace and security stakeholders should work with the State government and community leaders to identify and address the underlying drivers and triggers of the current wave of violence.

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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