Sustainable peace and security remains a key challenge in the Niger Delta region. Recent trends in violence have shown significant rise in conflict incidents and violent fatalities since February 2015. According to data formatted from the Peace Map, in April-June 2016 (Q2), the number of fatalities is at the highest point since the end of the 2009 militancy.

The conflict landscape in the Niger Delta is layered and complex, involving communal tensions, political competition, organized criminality, and resource-based conflicts; exemplified by militancy, piracy, cultism, election violence, armed robbery, kidnapping, and land disputes varying at state and Local Government Area (LGA) levels. Data sources include ACLED (www.acleddata.com), Nigeria Watch (www.nigeriawatch.org), NSRP Sources (focused on violence against women and girls), as well as the IPDU SMS early warning system, and others.

To ensure that these trackers are comprehensive, please contribute your knowledge by reporting any verified incident of conflict to the IPDU Early Warning System by texting a message to 080 9936 2222. Kindly include the relevant state, LGA, town, date, and brief description of the incident. To read the latest monthly tracker, please visit: www.p4p-nigerdelta.org

Context and Risk Profile

This quarterly tracker looks at the trends and patterns of conflict risk factors and incidents of violence, and their pressures on peace and stability in the Niger Delta. It is not designed as a conflict analysis, but rather, it is intended to update stakeholders on patterns and trends in conflict risk and violence. Understanding the deeper conflict drivers, implications, and mitigating options requires a robust participatory, qualitative analysis of these trends by local stakeholders in affected communities, including women, traditional authorities, political leaders, youths, private sector actors, and others. We hope that these trackers provide such stakeholders with information to inform that process of analysis and joint planning to promote sustainable peace in the Niger Delta.

The Niger Delta comprises 185 out of the 774 local government areas, and covers 9 out of the 36 states of Nigeria namely; Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers. With over 30 million people (according to a 2006 population census) and an estimated population density of 265 people per square kilometer, the region accounts for more than 23 percent of Nigeria’s population. The region is highly heterogeneous with over 40 ethnic groups who speak more than 100 languages and dialects (Source: www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/ARR_110929_Niger%20Delta_0113.pdf).

Fishing and farming are historically the main occupations in the region. The region contains vast reserves of oil and gas, which play an important role in the Nigerian economy and global energy security. In spite of these abundant natural resources, the Niger Delta is marked by poverty, economic underdevelopment, inequality, and environmental degradation. Historical grievances and a proliferation of armed groups (militant, criminal, and ethno-sectarian) contribute to many of the conflict dynamics described in the following pages.
Conflict risk and violence in the Niger Delta reached its highest level in 2016 Q2 since late 2009. During this quarter, the security situation in the region deteriorated considerably with increasing incidents of conflict fatalities, including political violence, protests, land disputes and communal conflict, criminality, and gang violence. There was rise in attacks on oil and gas infrastructure by new militant groups such as the Niger Delta Avengers, particularly in Bayelsa and Delta states. There was also a significant rise in cult-related violence and criminality across the nine states, partly due to ongoing clashes between the Icelanders and Greenlanders which caused dozens of deaths in Q2. Overall, the state has seen progressively worsening in both reported violent incidents and subsequent fatalities, despite mixed progress by the state. Abia, Akwa Ibom, Ondo, and Rivers all had declining levels of violence this quarter, while the rest of the states experienced increased levels of violence. Imo had the largest increase in conflict incidents, and Cross River had the biggest jump in fatalities, the highest for the state since 2012.

Rivers was the most violent state in the region this quarter with a significant rise in cult and political violence and criminality. The second most violent was Delta, with fatalities associated with militancy and communal violence. In Bayelsa, there was a rise in criminal violence, as well as incidents and fatalities related to militancy and piracy.

The most violent LGAs per capita were Emuoha and Ogbia/Egbema/Ndoni (Rivers) followed by Yakurr (Cross River), and Nembe (Bayelsa). In Warri South, there were numerous fatalities by mobs and five separate attacks on oil pipelines and energy infrastructure. In Yenagoa, violent incidents related to militant attacks on pipelines, violent crime, and cult-related and communal violence.

Other regional trends in conflict across states in Q2 include the pro-Biafran cause with protests reported in several states to mark the movement’s 49th Anniversary; as well as ongoing inter-communal land disputes between pastoralists and farmers.
The second quarter of 2016 saw a drop in violence in Abia state, following the spike of conflict incidents and fatalities in January and February 2016. On a per capita basis, conflict risk and violence were most prevalent in Aba South LGA. Incidents reported in 2016 Q2 included ethno-sectarian tensions, violent criminality and reported fatalities involving publics security forces and protesters.

Communal Tension and Violence

In April 2016, five Hausa-Fulani commercial motorcyclists were reportedly kidnapped and murdered by alleged members of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Isuikwato. In May, an inter-communal clash between Hausa and Igbo traders left at least three dead. There is increasing tension within the Ohafia, Akanu, and Okun communities.

In May, two Igbo butchers in Aba were killed in a clash with soldiers over a dispute with a trader. This event triggered a mass protest in June, with protesters marching towards a Mosque and Hausa settlement area in Aba South before being dispersed.

Violent Criminality

In April, soldiers reportedly killed two kidnappers and rescued two victims in Osisioma Ngwa, while in Bende police killed one armed robber and captured another during a shoot out. In June, a kidnap kingpin was shot dead during a robbery by a police ambush.

Political Protests

In May, over 5,000 members IPOB reportedly took to the streets in Aba South to advocate for recognition of a Biafran state. In the same month, Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) staged a protest in Umuahia North, which resulted in one man being shot by police and 19 arrests.

In June, protesters staged a demonstration in Umuahia North following the June 28th Federal High Court decision to annul the 2015 election of Governor Okezie Ikpeazu, based on tax evasion charges.
Regional Patterns and Trends in Conflict Risk — Akwa Ibom State

Akwa Ibom was the least violent state in the Niger Delta during Q2 2016, based on reported incidents of conflict risk. Reported conflict-related fatalities within the state decreased significantly in Q2 compared to the previous quarter, though the number of reported incidents remained at a similar level. Uyo LGA had the highest levels of violence in the state during the period. Reported incidents included inter-communal conflict, cult violence, criminality, and protests.

### Violent Criminality

In April, it was reported that a 14-year old boy was killed in a cult-related incident in Uyo. The female head of the Pathology Department at a hospital was killed by a gang at her home in Uyo in April. A truck driver was reportedly shot dead by a member of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) in Abak, when he failed to stop the vehicle.

In Ibiono Ibom, a woman accused her father of witchcraft and killed him. A man in Essien Udim killed his aunt with a machete because he believed she wanted to use him for a ritual.

### Protests

In April, ex-militants reportedly barricaded the entrance to the state governor’s office over issues related to the Presidential Amnesty Program. In May, youth from the Ibeno community reportedly protested at the office of an oil company in Uyo over an alleged spill.

### Communal Violence

Another incident during the quarter included a land dispute that left four people dead, property destroyed and 16 other people displaced in Oron.
This quarter, Bayelsa saw the highest number of violent fatalities since 2014 in the state. Rising levels of violence began during the build-up to the inconclusive December 2015 gubernatorial elections which were characterized by tensions and violent clashes. Election-related violence continued through to the January 2016 supplementary elections, with hijacking of voting materials and clashes between supporters of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive Congress (APC). Political violence has continued this quarter, along with militancy and piracy, crime and kidnapping, and gang violence. Most of the reported incidents in Q2 were concentrated in Yenagoa and Ekeremor LGAs.

Militancy and Vandalism

Militancy was a key issue during the quarter, especially in Nembe, Brass, and Southern Ijaw. In April, militants reportedly abducted two expatriates and killed two soldiers in Nembe. In May a group of militants and pirates attacked and killed three soldiers from the Joint Task Force (JTF), Operation Pulo Shield in Southern Ijaw. In the deadliest incident, about ten suspected militants were reportedly killed in a clash with the Army after they attempted to vandalize an oil pipeline. In June, the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) reportedly blew up a crude oil pipeline in Brass. Also in June, members of the NDA were reported to have blown up two oil pipelines in Yenagoa.

Protests

In Yenagoa, there were a number of protests, including one by the National Youth Service Corps over unpaid allowances. Igbo traders also protested at police headquarters about lack of safety, and community workers went on strike because of underpaid wages.

Other Incidents

There were a range of other violent incidents in Bayelsa this quarter. A 9-year-old girl was sexually assaulted in Yenagoa in April, two incidents of rape including of a 16-year-old girl were reported in Ekeremor. Additionally, two people were killed in a clash between PDP and APC supporters in Nembe. Three Igbo businessmen were killed by gunmen over several days. There was also a leadership clash between members of the Ijaw Youth Council, with attackers attempting to interrupt a broadcast at a local radio station, and reportedly assaulting employees and looting.
Regional Patterns and Trends in Conflict Risk — Cross River State

This quarter saw Cross River experience the highest number of reported fatalities since mid-2012, which was prior to the full transition of the Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon which concluded a year later. The Q2 2016 upward conflict trends have been largely driven by communal violence over land and boundary disputes, as well as incidents of violent crime. The vast majority of fatalities this quarter are the result of communal clashes in April and June 2016.

Communal Violence

In April during a major land dispute, at least 10 people, mainly children, women and the elderly were reported to have been killed. The multiple day clash occurred between Inyima and Onyadama communities in Yakurr, and flowed over into other communities in Obubra, with properties and farmland destroyed during the violence. Later that month, two fatalities were reported in a clash between Mkpani and Nko communities in Yakurr. Clashes between the Nko and Mkpani continued throughout the quarter, with P4P data reporting an estimated 20 dead as well as houses and cars burnt. In incident between the Mkpani and Nko militias, soldiers attempted to intervene by opening a road block, resulting in three deaths. In June, five people were killed in the community of Adadama in a retaliatory attack by members of the Ochienyim community.

Cult-related violence also spiked in June 2016, with reports of multiple gangs involved including the Vikings and Maphite confraternities over the control of bike operators. At least eight fatalities were reported as a result of the violence.

Protests

Coinciding with other Niger Delta states, MASSOB staged peaceful protested in Ikom and Calabar Municipal to mark the 49th Anniversary of Biafra on May 30. The Ikom protest was interrupted by a counter protest of youth groups.

Violent Criminality and Armed Clashes

Violence was reported in May following the assassination of a businessman who was a former LGA Councilor in Ugep, Yakurr. Youth reacted to the assassination by looting shops belonging to other business owners in the area. A clash between policemen and the Nigeria Security and Civil and Defense Corps (NSCDC) left one dead in Calabar Municipal, and a police sergeant was killed was during a shootout between policemen and a gang of armed robbers. A baker was abducted and released but later died of his injuries.

Data for map and bar charts from ACLED and Nigeria Watch formatted and integrated on P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org
Delta has remained one of the most violent states in the Niger Delta since 2009. Compared with last quarter, there has been a significant rise in conflict-related fatalities in Delta state in Q2 2016. This has been driven largely by militancy, criminal and mob violence, and inter-communal clashes.

**Militancy**

In Q2, several oil facilities were destroyed in a series of coordinated attacks by militant groups in the state. In May and June, the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) reportedly blew up pipelines and oil facilities in Warri North, Warri South, and Warri South West. Following these attacks, soldiers reportedly raided the affected areas and arrested some of the suspected militants. The NDA also reportedly attacked a houseboat in Warri South and killed three soldiers and four civilians. In the deadliest incident this quarter, 50 soldiers drowned while pursuing the NDA militants in May.

**Communal Violence**

Over a dozen fatalities were reported from communal conflict in the state during Q2. In the central part of the state (Udu and Warri South West) communal tensions between Ijaw and Urhobo youths led to violent clashes. Several land disputes were also reported including three disputes between Aladja and Ogbe-Ijaw communities in Udu, and a lethal clash between youths from Umuezegoli and Akoko communities in Ukwuani. In Isoko South, up to five people were reported killed in clashes between Okpolo-Enwhe and Igbide youths. In Uvwie, a leadership dispute resulted in riots and a shooting by youth from the community.

There were also multiple incidents of violence involving pastoralists, including in Ukwuani where eight people were kidnapped and tortured for hours while they were held hostage. In one report from April in Aniocha North, a 38-year-old pregnant woman was killed. Other reports have suggested that the inter-communal violence has involved attacks on communities including sexual violence and destruction of farm crops.

**Other Incidents**

Other reported incidents of violence in Q2 have included protests, kidnapping, and mob violence.

In Uvwie, the people of Effurun community protested the military’s treatment of residents. Erratic electricity also led to protests in Warri South throughout the month of April. In Oshimili South, three protests took place in April relating to grievances with governance and public services. Police clashed in May with MASSOB protesters in Oshimili South, resulting in seven fatalities.

In April in Warri South, mobs attacked suspected robbers and set them on fire in two separate incidents, leaving five dead. Similar incidents also occurred in Warri North. In Ughelli North, a man was kidnapped and killed after ransom was paid, while several abductions were reported in Udu.
Overall, violence in Edo has been decreasing over the past year. Issues mainly related to crime, communal conflict, and political tensions. In the context of the upcoming gubernatorial elections in September 2016, there has been a rise in tension between political groups. By LGA, Oredo had the highest levels of violence in the state this quarter.

Political Tensions

The upcoming gubernatorial elections have created an atmosphere of increasing political tension in Edo state. Two youth APC leaders were killed in Edo, one in Oredo and one in Ikpoba-Okha. In April, four people were reportedly injured by attackers during a political rally in Etsako West. Political thugs reportedly stopped an LGA chairman from entering his offices in Oredo, after the decision to sack him was overturned by the High Court. In May, there were several reported cases of political tensions in Benin, the state capital, following the impeachment and suspension of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the state House of Assembly. Supporters of the impeached politicians took over the House Chamber, resulting in police intervention with tear gas and several injuries. In Owan West, an APC local government hopeful was attacked by a gunman, though there were no casualties.

Cult Violence

Cult violence remained prevalent in Q2, causing up to 10 fatalities. In April, a young man was reportedly shot dead by suspected cultists in Egor. In May, four people were reportedly killed in clashes and reprisal attacks between Black Axe and Eiye cult groups in Oredo. In Ikpoba-Okha, a clash between the Maphats and Eyeh gangs left one dead.

Communal Violence

Several people were killed in communal conflicts this quarter. In April, four people were reportedly killed due to inter-communal conflict involving Fulani herdsmen and farmers in Ovia North East and Owan West.

Protests

Edo was besieged by protests this quarter regarding fuel prices and pensions. In Oredo, protests against fuel prices persisted through the month of May. Hundreds of disabled orphans and children took to the streets in protests of unpaid pensions, as did 500 retired government workers the week after. In Esan West, a student died in a protest at Auchi Polytechnic.

Other Incidents

Most of the other reported cases related to violent criminality.
Regional Patterns and Trends in Conflict Risk — Imo State

There has been a decrease in fatalities since December 2015, when 10 people were killed in an intra-communal clash over a traditional kingship in Oguta. Key drivers of conflict risk in Q2 2016 for Imo include violent criminality, cult violence, and protests.

Cult violence

Rival cult groups clashed and left two dead in May. Separately, a 26-year-old man was reportedly killed in a clash between the Debam and Deywell confraternities in Ohaji/Egbema, who went on to have several violent altercations throughout the quarter. Also in Ohaji/Egbema, the Awarra Town Hall was burnt down by the Bimmup/Dewell Boys.

Criminality

In April, robbers reportedly killed two policemen and stole their guns in Ohaji/Egbema. The chairman of the state chapter of the National Association of Traders (NATS) was also reportedly killed in Owerri West. In June, three members of a gang of kidnappers were killed by a team of policemen during an armed clash in Ohaji/Egbema. In June, a student in Owerri West was reportedly kidnapped and killed by his friends. While in Abob Mbaise, youths burned a man to death in an act of vigilante/mob justice, accusing him of ritual killings.

Protests

In April, women protested over the persistent incidents of rape and killing of women in Ehime-Mbano. Separately, youths reportedly protested in the state capital over the selection of the director of the state oil community development commission. In May, members of the PDP took over the state secretariat in an attempt to cancel the planned state congress. There were also reported protests by government workers in Ezinihitte and Owerri during the quarter over unpaid pensions and entitlements. In May, 17 members of MASSOB, the separatist movement for the region of Biafra, were arrested during a protest.

Other Incidents

There were a number of incidents of domestic violence and communal conflict in Imo in Q2. In Owerri North, a man beat his wife to death. In Obowo, an 11-year-old boy was killed by his cousin.

There were rising inter-communal tensions about over land reported in Ideato South, Isiala Mbano, Ohaji/Egbema and Oguta. Intra-communal tensions were also high in May in Isiala Mbano, where members of the Ihim Autonomous Community were disputing over the traditional leadership.

An incident of alleged abuse by public security personnel was reported in June in Ohaji/Egbema. A man was handed to soldiers by his employer over a missing sum of money, where he was then reportedly tortured and killed.

Data for map and bar charts from MCLED and Nigeria Watch formatted and integrated on P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org
Violence in Ondo has been relatively steady over the last year. Issues reported in Q2 included communal conflict, cult violence, criminality, and protests.

**Communal Violence**

Land conflict between pastoralists and farmers remained a driver of tensions and violence this quarter. In April, two members of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) were reported to have been killed by suspected Fulani herdsmen in two separate incidents, in Akure North. A Fulani herdsman was also reportedly killed after his cattle had allegedly destroyed farmland in Ifedore. There were also reported attacks later in April over farmland, also in Ifedore.

**Cult Violence**

Several incidents of cult violence were reported in Q2. In May, a young man, who was alleged to be a member of Eiye Confraternity, was shot dead by members of a rival cult group in Ondo town. Separately, a leader of a cult group was reportedly killed during a clash with a rival cult group in Akoko South. The victim was reportedly killed in retaliation for the killing of a rival cult member.

**Protests**

Protests were prevalent throughout the state during Q2. In April, there was a protest by university students over the death of their colleague who was killed in an automobile accident in Akoko South West. In June, one person was reported to have been killed and several others injured during a clash between students of the Rufus Giwa Polytechnic and police in Owo. The students were protesting against the police on behalf of two of their peers who had been hit by a police car. There were also reported protests by workers in Akure and in Ondo West over unpaid salaries.

**Other Incidents**

The other incidents in Ondo include cases of violent criminality. A traditional ruler in Akure South was strangled to death by three robbers and his personal belongings were stolen. A man also stole a goat and was subsequently lynched by a mob in Akure South. In May, two men got into a fight in Ese-Odo where one died during the altercation, and the other was subsequently killed by the victim’s relatives. Also that month a school Vice-Principal in Okitipupa was reportedly killed by two men for unknown reasons.
Regional Patterns and Trends in Conflict Risk — Rivers State

Rivers was one of the most violent states in the Niger Delta this quarter, despite its decrease in violent incidents and fatalities in Q2 2016. During Q2, fatalities and conflict incidents both dropped slightly, after Q1 2016 saw the highest number of fatalities in the state since 2009. Port Harcourt was the LGA with the highest number of violent incidents. Conflict risk reported in Q2 related to cult-related and political violence, as well as criminality, and some incidents of communal violence in Tai and Gokana. In Q2, Rivers showed high numbers of incidents of gender based violence and sexual abuse in Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor LGAs.

Cult Violence

Throughout Q2, dozens were reported killed in rival cult attacks in Ahoada, Emohua, Ikwerre, Khana, Obio/Akpor, Oyigbo, and Port Harcourt. There were also multiple counts of civilians killed by unidentified gunmen or pirates. In Khana, three people were killed by gunmen for no apparent reason.

Gender-based Violence

NSRP reported over two dozen cases of child abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence, mostly concentrated in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt LGAs. Several incidents related to the sexual assault of young girls by male relatives, teachers and acquaintances. In one incident reported in April, a young girl was repeatedly raped by her guardian. Another incident in Obio/Akpor reported that a pregnant woman had been brutally raped, causing her to lose her baby.

Protests

Port Harcourt experienced a number of protests in Q2. A two-day protest by students from the University of Port Harcourt turned violent in April, resulting in clashes with police and two fatalities. The protest related to a University policy about exams, with the unrest causing a month-long cancellation of classes. There were also two student protests in Obio/Akpor, including one that turned violent and left three dead. Like many other Niger Delta States, pro-Biafran protests were staged to mark the anniversary of the movement in May. MASSOB held a protest in Port Harcourt which resulted in 13 arrests. Employees from a telecommunications committee protested job cuts in April in Port Harcourt.

Political Violence

Political tensions between party supporters continued this quarter. In Gokana, an APC chieftain was shot dead while returning home for his job as a university lecturer. In June in Abua/Odual, another chieftain of the APC was killed by unidentified gunmen. In Eleme, a PDP chieftain was shot dead by unidentified gunmen, and similar events occurred in Gokana, and Oyigbo/Egbema/Ndoni, all in April.

Incidents and Fatalities, Rivers State

Quarterly Trends

LGA Level Fatalities, Rivers State

Per Capita, 2016 (Apr-June)

Data for map and bar charts from ACLED and Nigeria Watch formatted and integrated on P4P Peace Map www.p4p-nigerdelta.org
About Us

PIND

The Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) is a not-for-profit organization that develops innovative partnerships for peacebuilding and sustainable livelihoods in the Niger Delta. PIND has developed a Peace Map to bring together data on peace and conflict for validation, triangulation and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

The Fund For Peace

The Fund for Peace (FFP) is an independent, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) non-profit research and educational organization founded over five decades ago, headquartered in Washington D.C. FFP works to prevent conflict and promote sustainable security by building relationships and trust across diverse sectors and by developing innovative technologies and tools.

The Projects

IPDU: The Integrated Peace and Development Unit (IPDU) of PIND responds to emerging threats and mobilizes appropriate actors and resources for preventive interventions.

P4P: Partners for Peace (P4P) is a network of peace actors whose mission is to build social capital around peacebuilding by amplifying the voices of positive actors, and collaborating on activities for conflict early warning, management, and prevention.

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Please report any verified incident of conflict to the IPDU SMS early warning system:

Text: 080 9936 2222

Kindly include the State, LGA, Town, Date, and brief incident description