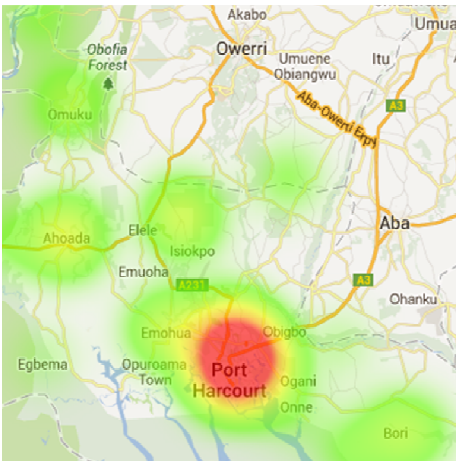


# Conflict Bulletin:

## Rivers State

August 2013



Since its independence from the British in 1960, Nigeria has experienced pressures on peace and stability. Faced with insurgencies, communal, ethnic and religious tensions, human rights abuses, and corruption, the country continues to be challenged by a variety of threats to human security. Africa's most populous country, Nigeria is roughly divided between a concentration of Christians in the South and a predominantly Muslim population in the North. The three largest ethnic groups are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Prior to an Amnesty Program that was implemented in 2009, a rebellion in the Niger Delta disrupted the economy and claimed many lives. Since then, a separate insurgency has broken out in the Northeast, killing thousands.

Rivers, among the largest of the oil-producing Nigerian states, had been at the heart of the Niger Delta militancy until 2009. Now it beset with a different array of issues as former combatants have turned to

criminality, and uneven economic development continues to pose a challenge to sustainable peace and human security. Following is a closer look at the patterns of conflict risk at the local level.

Since the end of 2010, the number of incidences of conflict risk factors has decreased to some extent, with the notable exception of May 2012 when criminal violence was particularly high. However, the number of fatalities associated with these conflict risk factors continues to fluctuate from month to month. Of the 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Rivers State, those with the highest number of reported incidents per capita resulting in fatalities were Ahoada East, Khana, Obio/Akpor, Port Harcourt, Ikwerre, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni, and Emuoha. Since May 2013, political tensions have been elevated in Rivers State after the disputed Nigerian Governor's Forum election, in which Governor Amaechi was the incumbent. On July 9, a fight broke out in the Rivers State House of Assembly following a move to impeach the Speaker of the House, who is considered to be a supporter of Governor Amaechi. In mid-July, when the governors from four northern states came to Rivers to visit Amaechi to show "solidarity," some protestors demonstrated at the airport. Concerned about the polarization and political maneuvering in the run-up to the 2015 elections, the Niger Delta Civil Society Coalition organized a rally on July 30 to promote freedom of assembly and democracy.

This Conflict Bulletin provides a brief

snapshot of the trends and patterns of conflict risk factors at the State and LGA levels, drawing on the data available on the P4P Digital Platform for Multi-Stakeholder Engagement ([www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)). The screenshot of the heat map above shows the relative distribution of incidents from one LGA to the next from 2012-2013. The trend-line below shows the number of incidents and fatalities by month. The bar chart shows the trend of incidents of insecurity by LGA per capita. The summaries draw on data collected by UNLock, the Council on Foreign Relations, WANEP Nigeria, CSS/ETH Zurich, and Nigeria Watch integrated on the P4P platform.

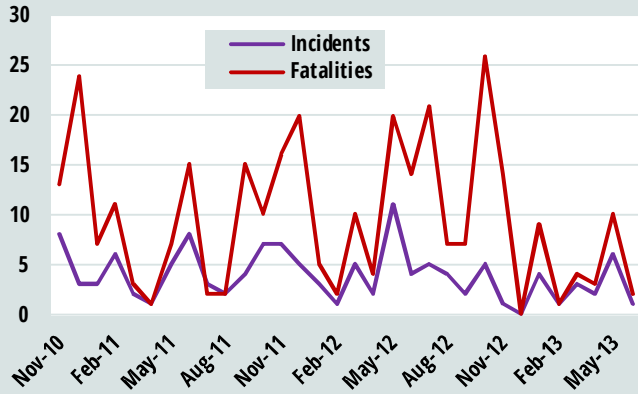
## LGA Level Summary

### Ahoada East

In Ahoada East, the main pressures on human security stemmed from corruption, criminality, and cult violence. During the first half of 2012, there was an attempted jailbreak that reportedly led to multiple casualties. Other clashes between police and criminals occurred in both 2012 and 2013 and led to several deaths. Additionally, as Nigeria experienced the most damaging rainy season in decades, flooding in the second half of 2012 exacerbated pressure on the state's resources. At least 12 people were reported to have lost their lives, and property and crops were destroyed. According to media reports, incidents of water-borne diseases and food scarcity also increased during this time.

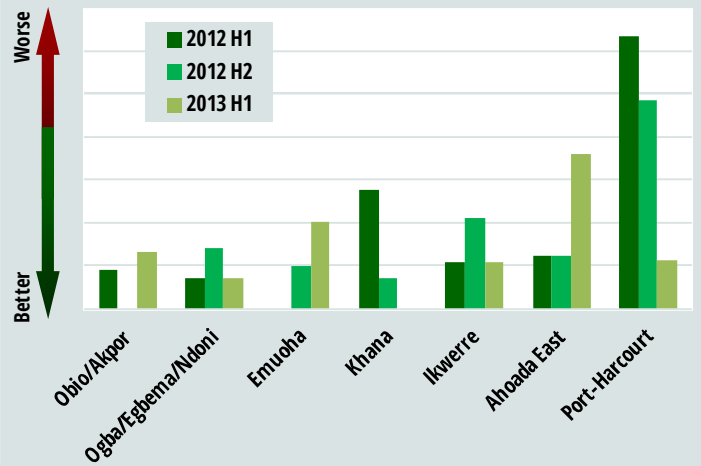
The graphic above is a Heat Map (screenshot) of Conflict Risk in Rivers State 2012-2013 — [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org).

### Conflict Risk Factors in Rivers State\*



\* Using Nigeria Watch data (www.nigeriawatch.org) formatted to the P4P Web Map platform (www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

### Reported Insecurity Per Capita in Rivers State (by LGA)



#### Khana

In Khana LGA, there continued to be communal tensions, particularly around the issue of land. There were also cult clashes and criminality including robbery and kidnapping. Land competition reportedly turned violent in 2012 when two communities in Ogoniland disagreed over whether and how a parcel of land should be developed by the state government as a banana plantation. These and related issues reportedly continued into 2013.

#### Obio/Akpor

In Obio/Akpor, reports included criminality, cult violence, domestic violence and child abuse. Additionally, a political protest occurred when the local government chairman, who is considered to be an opponent of Governor Amaechi, was suspended by the Rivers State House of Assembly for mismanagement of public funds. In response to ensuing violence from protestors demanding his reinstatement, police occupied the Obio/Akpor secretariat.

Four students from UNIPORT University were lynched by a mob on October 5, 2012. The reasons for the lynching are still unclear, but the victims were accused of having stolen electronics. After a YouTube video of the lynching was released, violent

protests broke out. Thirteen people were arrested over the killings.

#### Port Harcourt

Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State, has the highest population of all the state's LGAs. Given the high density of the urban population, conflict risk issues include robberies, kidnappings, and gang/cult-related violence. As the political capital of the state, protests and demonstrations are common. In the first half of 2012, large protests broke out over the government's removal of a fuel subsidy program. Later in the year, there were smaller protests reported over poor delivery of public services. In 2013, there was increased political tension between those who support Governor Amaechi and those who do not.

#### Ikwerre

As in many other LGAs, the predominant issues included gang violence, criminality, police corruption, and land competition. There were a few reports of tension between pastoralists and farmers and at least one clash between two cult gangs (Dewell and Degbam).

#### Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni

In Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni the primary issues

reported during this period include flooding, criminality, kidnappings, and gang violence. In October 2012, severe floods caused the displacement of entire communities leading to inflation, starvation and serious difficulties with resettlement. In May 2013, unknown gunman reportedly tortured and killed an aid to the former PDP chairman Chief Godspower Ake.

#### Emuoha

In Emuoha, there were numerous cases of abductions and gang violence. A local monarch was reportedly kidnapped for ransom. The clash between Dewell and Degbam cult groups, which was reported in bordering Ikwerre also reportedly impacted Emuoha.

**FFP** FFP is committed to promoting sustainable human security around the world, and is the International Coordinating Partner on P4P, an initiative supported by PIND. FFP has been working with local civil society in Nigeria to develop the UNLock network since 2010.

**IHRHL** One of the data sources utilized in the summary was derived from the UNLock network in Nigeria, a partnership between The Fund for Peace and the Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (IHRHL).

**Peace. Yes!** The data used in this analysis was pulled from the integrated digital platform for multistakeholder engagement developed by Partners for Peace (P4P), an initiative supported by PIND. For a deeper understanding of the conflict risk factors, visit [www.p4p-nigerdelta.org](http://www.p4p-nigerdelta.org).