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Nigeria Conflict Bulletin: Bayelsa State

Patterns and Trends, January 2012 - June 2015

Although on a per capita basis, violence is relatively high in Bayelsa, the number of fatalities and incidents have dropped since 2010. In February 2012, Henry Seriake Dickson (PDP) was elected as governor after a period of uncertainty in the wake of Governor Timipre Sylva's termination in January 2012. Over the last four years, incidents of insecurity in Bayelsa have included cult violence, piracy, abductions, and attacks on energy infrastructure. Conflict factors were mainly reported around the capital of Yenagoa, but also in Nembe and Southern Ijaw.

This Conflict Bulletin provides a brief

snapshot of the trends and patterns of conflict risk factors at the State and Local Government Area (LGA) levels, drawing on the data available on the P4P Digital Platform for Multi-Stakeholder Engagement (www.p4p-nigerdelta.org). It represents a compilation of the data from the sources listed below, not necessarily the opinions of FFP or any other organization that collaborated on the production of this bulletin.

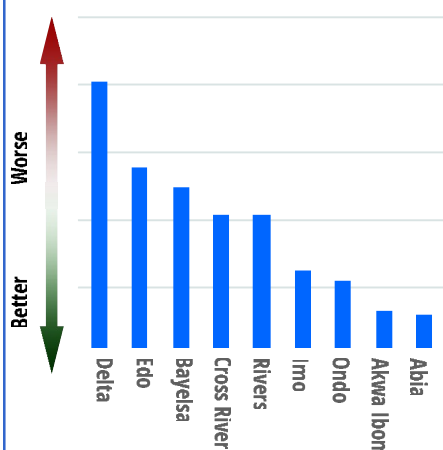
The screenshot of the heat map on this page shows the relative distribution of incidents from one LGA to the next from 2012-2014. The trend-line on the next page

shows the number of incidents and fatalities over time. The bar chart shows the trend of incidents of insecurity by LGA per capita.

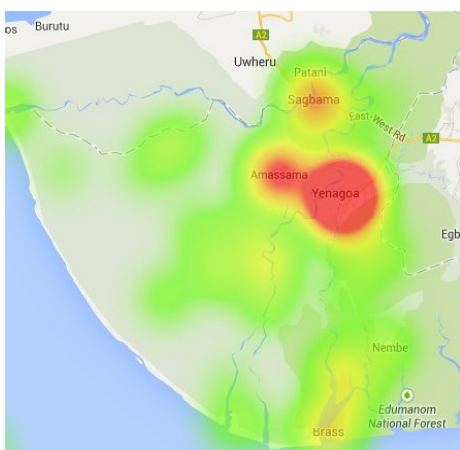
The summaries draw on data collected by FFP's UNLOCK, the Council on Foreign Relations' NST, WANEP Nigeria, CSS/ETH Zurich, Nigeria Watch, NEEWS2015, and ACLED integrated on the P4P platform. They also draw on data and information from "Violence in Nigeria: Patterns and Trends," by Patricia Taft and Nate Haken (Springer Press, April 2015). While this bulletin is not exhaustive of all violence in Bayelsa, it gives an overview of the types and trajectory of violence trends in key LGAs.

Reported Violence*

Fatalities per Capita (Jan 2012-June 2015)



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



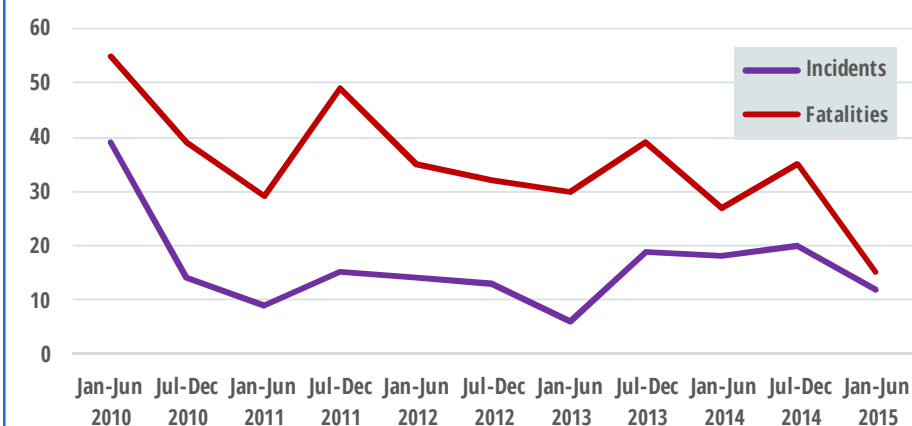
The graphic above is a Heat Map (screenshot) of Conflict Risk in Bayelsa State 2012-2015 — www.p4p-nigerdelta.org.

Overview of Bayelsa State



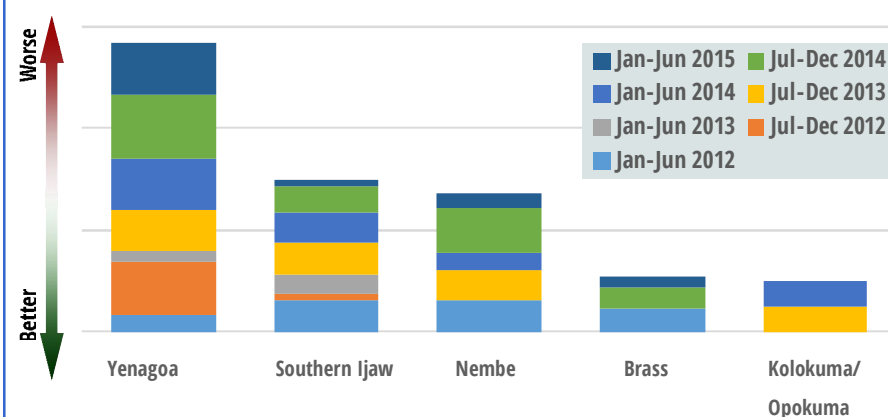
With 2 million people, Bayelsa is one of the smallest states in the country, by population. Most are of Ijaw descent. Bayelsa produces between 30-40% of Nigeria's oil and gas. In addition to the petroleum sector, the state has an extensive commercial fishing industry and produces oil palm, raffia palm, rubber, and coconut.

Conflict Risk Factors in Bayelsa State*



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

Reported Insecurity Per Capita in Bayelsa State (by LGA)*



Brass

(Bayelsa East Senatorial District)

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Attacks on Energy Infrastructure
- > Kidnapping
- > Piracy
- > Political violence
- > Inter-communal/Land Conflict

With its extensive shoreline, Brass is an LGA that sometimes experiences attacks on nearby vessels, many of which are associated with the oil industry. Data from CSS/ETH Zurich points to over a dozen such incidents occurring during 2012-2013, some of which resulted in kidnappings as well as the loss of property and lives.

In 2014 and early 2015, abductions and killings by pirates continued. In March, gunmen reportedly abducted a husband and wife. Later, in August, a passenger boat driver was shot dead by pirates. In two separate incidents in October, sea pirates allegedly killed four policemen and abducted six civilians while gunmen attacked a tugboat and abducted the captain. Between January and June 2015 there were four reports of pirate attacks.

There was a rise in election tensions and violence in 2015 as the elections drew nearer, including reports of political thugs destroying campaign materials, youths threatening INEC over the distribution of PVCs, the destruction of campaign materials by youths, inter-party threats, and a woman beaten in a political attack over money.

In late January and early February 2015, there were also a few incidents of inter-communal land clashes and cult violence.

In June 2012, a JTF/Navy patrol reportedly killed six pirates on a vessel transporting stolen crude. Three naval officers were also killed in the fight which later became a source of tension in the community as the Independent newspaper reported that the suspected pirates were actually indigenes.



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



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).



The data used in this analysis was pulled from the integrated digital platform for multistakeholder engagement developed by P4P, an initiative supported by Partnership Initiatives for the Niger Delta (PIND). For a deeper understanding of the conflict risk factors, visit www.p4p-nigerdelta.org.

Disclaimer The content of this report represents a summary of the incidents reported in the data, not the opinions of the organizations that collaborated on the compilation of this information.

Ekeremor

(Bayelsa West Senatorial District)

returning from a funeral. A community petition was then reported to have been circulated and sent to the Chief Army Staff protesting the killing and requesting an inquiry into such violence undertaken by patrols.

In November of 2013, it was reported that a group of seven gunmen kidnapped the father of Bayelsa State Commissioner for Tourism. Other reported issues during this time period included the October 2012 removal of five LGA chairmen for financial recklessness shortly after the election of Governor Dickson. They denied the charges of impropriety and accused Dickson of targeting certain individuals in order to marginalize them from politics. These accusations, and other related claims, continued throughout 2012-2013 although overall, political tensions seemed to decrease by the end of 2013, before rising again in 2015.

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Protests
- > Piracy
- > Political Violence
- > Intra-Communal Violence
(Youth vs. Elders)
- > Inter-communal violence

In early 2015, there were multiple cases of inter and intra-communal tensions. The intra-communal violence related to youths disagreeing with community elders over pipeline surveillance jobs. In January, inter-communal tensions rose when a youth was killed in a clash with a rival community. Like other states in early 2015, Ekeremor witnessed a rise in political violence. There were reports of threats against the LG Chairman. There were also reports of clashes between supporters of two candidates as well as grievances with the PVC distribution process. In February, a local monarch led protests against the alleged abandonment of a shore protection project; the community is reportedly threatened by sea erosion. In early 2014, boat drivers under the Maritime Workers Union protested against pirate activity in the region.

Kolokuma/Opokuma

(Bayelsa Central Senatorial District)

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Attacks on energy infrastructure
- > Protests
- > Domestic violence
- > Political Tension
- > Kidnapping

In early 2015, there were many reports of violence and protests related to the oil industry. In January and February, there were protests reported, including one in January where youths barricaded an oil facility construction site. Tension was reported regarding the distribution of funds to the Amnesty program and regarding pipeline surveillance contracts. Tension related to the election was also elevated during this period. There were general intra-party tensions regarding the selection of a party candidate, frustrations over alleged uneven PVC distribution, destruction of campaign materials, and tension over the distribution of compensation for those involved in campaigns.

Incidents reported in Kolokuma/Opokuma in 2012 mainly related to the devastation caused by flooding. In March 2012, it was reported that a "general" from a local militia had attacked an oil flow station in protest of the lack of development in the Niger Delta. In mid- to late-2013, violence related to domestic disputes were the main reported incidents of insecurity although early in the year problems associated with the flooding still lingered. In October of 2014, unidentified gunmen kidnapped the brother of the monarch of the of Kolokuma Kingdom. Their demands were not known.

Nembe

(Bayelsa East Senatorial District)

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Attacks on energy infrastructure
- > Piracy
- > Political violence

In the lead-up to the 2015 elections, there was an increase in politically-motivated violence reported. In January and February 2015, there were multiple reports of rising inter-party tensions, the use of political thugs during campaign rallies, destruction of campaign materials, and complaints by voters that politicians took their PVCs.

In February, there was also a shoot-out between police and militants which left five dead and a conflict between Christians and Traditionalists.

Sporadic pirate attacks continued throughout 2014. In several cases, multiple policemen and soldiers were killed. In two instances of reported piracy, it was noted that the attackers also attempted to abduct the victims. In December, sea pirates attacked and allegedly murdered three soldiers attached to the Joint Military Task Force in the Niger Delta.

Data from CSS/ETH Zurich and the Council on Foreign relations reported an April 2013 attack by MEND on an oil well which was said to have caused a spill and created an environmental emergency. In the later half of 2013, there was an escalation in reported attacks by pirates on passenger boats as well as military police and Navy formations. It was reported that as of late 2013, up to twenty civilians had been killed by pirate activity or from being caught in the crossfire between police and suspected pirates. This number could not be independently verified although multiple news sources did corroborate the rise in violent deaths and general insecurity surrounding suspected pirate activity and police counter-actions. Incidents reported in Nembe included an alleged attack by MEND on marine policemen in 2012.

Ogbia

(Bayelsa East Senatorial District)

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Kidnapping
- > Protests

Unidentified gunmen in April 2015 abducted the Chairman of Ogbia LGA, and other gunmen in June abducted two Lebanese and killed policemen in the process. In July, youths protested to demand the appointment of indigenes into management positions in the Federal University.

In early 2014, gunmen invaded the hometown of President Jonathan and abducted the 70-year-old foster father of the President. It was not clear whether the kidnapping was politically motivated. Gunmen later kidnapped four civilians on a passenger boat as well as three expatriates in two separate incidents in October and November. In December, members of an oil union protested in several locations, preventing all workers from entering oil installations.

In January 2013, gunmen reportedly invaded the country home of the Local Council Chairman and abducted his parents for ransom. It was reported that they were released a week later.

As in many other LGAs across the region, flooding in October 2012 reportedly submerged communities and led to displacement and some food scarcity issues.

Sagbama

(Bayelsa West Senatorial District)

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Intra-Communal Violence (Leadership Tussle)
- > Piracy
- > Inter-Communal Conflict
- > Protests
- > Political violence

January and February 2015 saw an increase in political violence. There were clashes between different party supporters, complaints about the process of PVC distribution, non-indigenes complaints of disenfranchisement in the election process, and violent disruptions in political rallies. There were also complaints of a lack of power supply and protests planned over problems with electricity supply.

In December 2014, members of an oil union protested in all eight LGAs of Bayelsa, preventing all workers from entering oil installations.

In February 2013, an incident of piracy was reported in which gunmen allegedly killed several soldiers who were escorting an oil vessel in the creeks. In December, there was a report of possible inter-communal tension when two men were killed after a feud with herdsmen over cattle blocking a main roadway although it appeared to be an isolated incident. Tension within the Ijaw Youth Council was also reported at intermittent times throughout the year.

In October 2012, massive flooding hit Sagbama causing food scarcity and epidemics, as Nigeria experienced the most severe rainy season in decades. That same month, the LGA council chairman was removed for alleged impropriety. In November 2012, there was a reported incident of intra-communal conflict which resulted in the death of about a dozen people after a traditional ruler was removed by the Sylva administration.

Southern Ijaw

(Bayelsa Central Senatorial District)

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Political violence
- > Cult Clashes
- > Attacks on energy infrastructure
- > Piracy/Militancy
- > Kidnapping

In early 2015, reported incidents of conflict risk factors included political violence, disease outbreaks, and cult violence. There was one report of a sea pirate attack in January. At the end of January and early February, there were reports of political hate speech, youths attacking political candidates and clashing amongst themselves over leadership, and clashes between different political party supporters. There were a few reports relating to cholera outbreak in the state in February. There were also many incidents of cult clashes and cult recruitments reported. In June, a young man was killed by gunmen when he attempted to stop an operation planned by kidnappers.

In early 2014, a clash between cult groups at the Niger Delta University resulted in several fatalities. Also, in the first half of the year, unidentified gunmen ambushed a group of twenty police escorting an ex-MEND leader along the creeks of the Niger Delta. No casualties were reported in the incident. In August, gunmen abducted the younger brother to the Speaker of Bayelsa House of Assembly. The abduction came at a time when the House Speaker was enduring possible impeachment proceedings. In July, a team of policemen repelled an attack on an oil installation and reportedly killed five pirates in the process. The pirates were said to have attacked an oil rig belonging to an foreign drilling company when they opened fire on the policemen on duty. Boat drivers under the Maritime Workers Union later protested against perceived increased pirate activity in the region. In October, two murders reported included that of a businessman and the other of a woman who was killed for having

an abortion. During the same month, two officers of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) were arrested over their involvement in the killing of a boat owner.

In 2013, there were reported clashes between members of the Joint Task Force (JTF) and militants in the Azuzuama area, killing several and displacing local residents. The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) also claimed to have killed 15 officers in a boat attack. In early May 2013, a shooting by suspected renegade militants left five ex-militants dead. In the second half of 2013, reports of police action leading to the deaths of suspected pirates, as well as police deaths, were reported in May, July and October, although the estimated numbers of individuals killed varied. Other incidents reported in 2013 included deaths related to oil bunkering as well as a few instances of attacks on local oil dredgers.

Reported incidents of insecurity in Southern Ijaw in 2012 included attacks on energy infrastructure, politically motivated violence, and cultist attacks on university students. In January 2012, unidentified gunmen reportedly attacked the home of an ex-militant leader and killed a policeman and young ex-militant. A fight broke out at a political rally in February 2012, resulting in at least one death. In March and April 2012, there were reported attacks on oil pipelines, the first such reports in over a year. In July, gunmen reportedly attacked a boat belonging to an oil company, killing at least three and injuring others. Throughout 2012 cultists reportedly killed Niger Delta University students in several incidents. Flooding was a problem in October 2012.

Yenagoa

(Bayelsa Central Senatorial District)

Key LGA Risk Factors

- > Political violence
- > Cult violence
- > Protests
- > Inter-Communal/Land Conflict
- > Kidnapping

In the first half of 2015 there were reports of protests, cult violence, domestic violence, and attacks on ex-militants. In January, health workers at the Federal Medical Centre staged a peaceful protest over the alleged refusal of the federal government to discuss the demands of their union. In March, drivers in the Government security outfit protested the non-payment of their salaries, and workers shut down a gas gathering facility in protest of the company's alleged violation of local content law and poor employment policies. In May, women protested an expired memorandum of understanding with an oil company. In the first half of 2015, cultists reportedly attacked and raped an 18 year old girl and murdered three men. An ex-militant found dynamite planted outside of his home, and another ex-militant was killed in a clash with police during a protest. There were also two reported domestic violence fatalities in February and May.

In 2014 there were incidents of suspected political violence, protests, cultism, vigilantism, piracy, and general criminality. Political violence included incidents late in the year when unidentified gunmen shot and killed the Secretary of Bayelsa State Independent Electoral Commission (BYSIEC), and one in which suspected PDP political thugs raided the Bayelsa State Secretariat of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) to hijack election materials for the Federal House of Representatives primaries in the state. Protests included one in August, when youths shut down five oil wells. The protesting youths demanded that the company provide them with a generator. A second protest of a similar nature took place just days later after other

expectations were not met by the company.

Finally, in December, members of an oil union protested in several locations, preventing all workers from entering oil installations. Other incidents during the year included a clash between two cult groups in which several people were killed. In September, police allegedly killed two vigilantes as they were attempting to lynch a group of suspected armed robbers. In November, pirates carried out several attacks on passenger boats. Separately, that same month, gunmen reportedly killed two policemen and a civilian.

In February, 2013 it was reported that up to 200 former militants rioted and destroyed property when they learned that they would not be included in the third phase of the amnesty program. In August, Vanguard news reported that 12 suspected pirates killed by the Nigerian Navy were actually members of a defunct militant group refusing to turn over arms or join the amnesty program. November of 2013 was characterized by violence reportedly stemming from continued political tensions surrounding the Ijaw National Congress Elections in October. Incidents included the reported targeting and kidnapping of youth group members and political allies supportive of each candidate. Later in November, up to five people were reportedly killed in clashes between two communities over farmland.

In early 2014, unidentified gunmen killed the former Chairman of Peremabiri Community Development Committee (CDC) in his residence in Akenpai. His attackers reportedly took nothing from the victim's home, suggesting motives other than robbery.

In 2012, there were two bombings suspected to be linked to political tensions around the gubernatorial elections. Multiple incidents of cultist violence were

reported, some targeting politicians or candidates. Ex-militants reportedly attacked cluster oil wells several times throughout the year, claiming that their actions were in protest against their exclusion from the federal amnesty program. In June, women reportedly barricaded an oil facility, protesting that the company had failed to meet community obligations while causing environmental and social degradation. In November 2012, hundreds reportedly protested over the non-payment of expected allowances from the amnesty program over a six-month period. Also in November, hundreds of flood victims reportedly protested against government action to remove them from relief camps. There were multiple reports of police clashes with suspected armed robbers and kidnappers.