

Rivers State Elections Scenarios and Recommendations

Draft Produced 17 December 2014

Disclaimer: The following analysis is based on discussions with State-level actors and so reflects their perceptions, not the view of the Peace and Security Working Group. These scenarios were produced prior to the 2014 primary elections and are thus subject to change. Where relevant, updates have been made to reflect evolving dynamics.

Rivers At-a-Glance

Current Governor	Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi
Current Ruling Party	All Progressives Congress (APC)
Key February 2015 Elections	Presidential, Gubernatorial, Senate and State House of Assembly
Prognosis	Abia State is identified as a medium level risk (amber category) in CLEEN's latest report

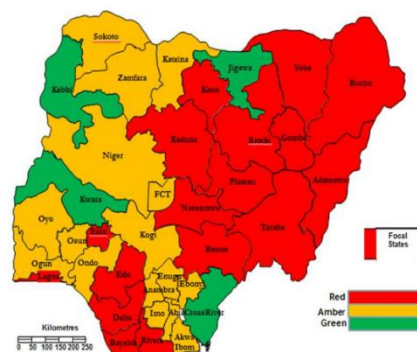


Figure 1: CLEEN Map of Hot Spots for Election Violence

Rivers Violence Data

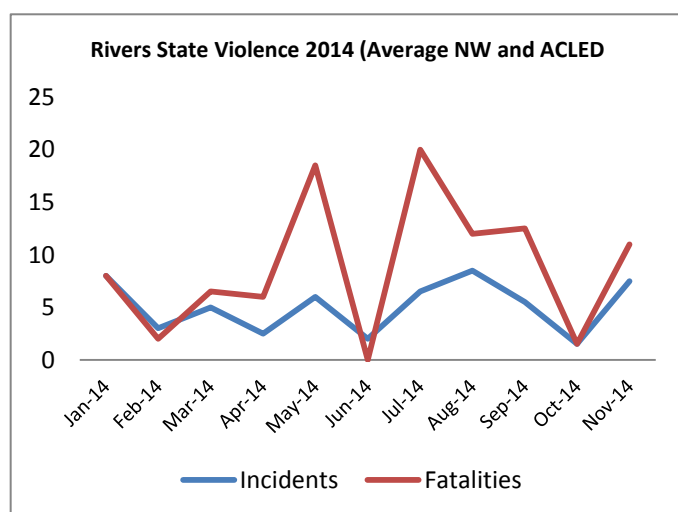


Figure 2: Peace Map (www.p4p-nigerdelta.org)

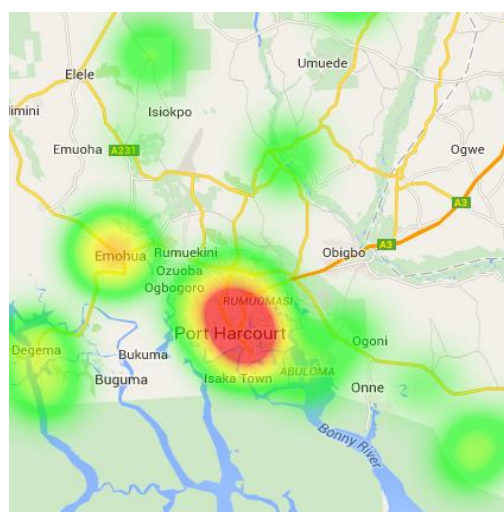


Figure 3: Violence Heat Map Jan 2009-Dec 2014



Elections in 2011

- In 2011, the state was predominantly a single-party state (PDP). At the gubernatorial level, PDP won 85.81% of the vote; APGA won 8.19%; ACN won 4.39%. The APGA gubernatorial candidate was Celestine Omeiha, who had a history of quarrels with Governor Amaechi; both are from Ikwerre, where the election was fiercely contested, though state-wide the results were decisive. Elections were not very violent, though there were a few incidents of thuggery, kidnapping, and clashes in Abua/Odual LGA. In Degema LGA, women were reportedly targeted for intimidation as voters and candidates. Voter intimidation was reported in Akuku-Toru. Clashes of political rallies and other incidents were reported in the Riverine areas of Asari-Toru, Okrika, Port Harcourt (Borokiri), Ogu/Bolo, and Obio-Akpor.
- **Ethnic Tension in 2011:** To the extent that there was some political polarization along ethnic lines, ACN had more support in the Riverine communities, while PDP had more support in the Upland communities. Governor Amaechi, who won on the PDP ticket with 85.81% of the vote, is from Ikwerre (upland).
- **Response:** NDI brought CSOs together, Situation Room, police
- **Gaps in Government Response:** No hotlines for victims; No tribunals to handle offenders; No instruments for sanctions (special courts).

Key Political Developments Since 2011

- Change in the ruling party leadership in the state (PDP to APC)
- Merger of opposition political parties to form APC
- Emergence of political pressure groups; GDI, Save Rivers Movement' Kengema Unity Forum, Ogoni 2015 Project
- Nyesom Wike, Former Ministry of State for Education, resigns to join gubernatorial race under PDP and emerged from the primaries as the PDP Candidate.
- Beks Dagogo Jack, Chairman of Presidential Task Force on Power resigns to join gubernatorial race under PDP
- Party defection and counter defection (e.g. former Khana LGA Chairman)
- More female aspirants have emerged
- Ex-militant leader – High Chief (Senior) Comrade Ateke Tom contested as gubernatorial aspirant under PDP
- Nollywood actor/comedian – Julius Agwu contests for gubernatorial position.



Major Political Players in Rivers State

Name	Position	Elected / Appointed	Party	Additional Information
Rotimi Amaechi	State Governor	2011	APC	-
Tele Ikuru	Deputy Governor	2011	APC	-
George Thompson Sekibo	Senator	2007	PDP	-
Magnus Ngei Abe	Senator	2011	APC	-
Wilson Asinobi Ake	Senator	2007	APC	-
Nyesom Wike	Former Minister		PDP	Running for Governor in 2015
Dakuku Peterside	Member of House		APC	Running for Governor in 2015

Elections in 2015

Conflict Drivers

- Political Polarization (PDP/APC)
- Perceived politicization of security services
- Monetary Inducements
- Politicization of Cults Groups (rumors that cult groups are being equipped with weapons and ammunition in the run-up to the election)

Areas at Risk of Possible Election Violence: Obio/Akpor (wards 9, 10, 11); Khana; Gokana; Degema (Bakana); Akuku-Toru (Abomena); Asari-Toru (Buguma – wards 3, 6, 7); Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni; Emohua; Port Harcourt (ward 20); Omuma; Ahoda East

Possible Types of Violence: Political Thuggery, Assassinations, Abductions/Kidnappings, Sexual Violence, Destruction of Property, Clashes during Rallies, Intra/Inter Party Violence (Power Tussle), Intimidation of Aspirants/Candidates, Upland/Riverine Division

Sources for Situational Awareness: Rhythm 93.7 (News media), Social media (Facebook, Twitter), Key points of contacts (friends); plugged into UNLock

Scenario of Possible Election Violence in Rivers State

Amaechi, from Rivers South Senatorial District, has been in power for eight years (formerly PDP, now APC). According to the zoning formula, the PDP ticket would normally go to a candidate from Rivers Southeast (Ogoni axis, Kalabari axis, or Okrika axis.) However, former minister Nyeson Wike, from Ikwerre (Rivers South) joins the gubernatorial race potentially upsetting the rotation. Going into the general, Amaechi will throw his support behind the APC candidate who has connections to Rivers Southeast. These dynamics could play into the ethnic sentiments of the region. A number of cult groups and ex-militants, for example, have aligned themselves with the “Ogoni 2015 Project.” Meanwhile at the Presidential level, PDP needs to win Rivers, despite APCs ascent in the state, raising the stakes and increasing incentives for possible irregularities and election violence, which could escalate significantly if the results of the Presidential election are disputed.



- ✓ Update: Former minister Nyeson Wike, from Ikwerre (Rivers South) has emerged as the candidate for PDP after the primaries, upsetting the zoning rotation.

Before Elections

- Women will be schemed out of the race
- Violence will be high before elections (abductions, arrests, violent protests)
- Emergence of new cult groups
 - ✓ Update: Currently 16 aspirants still reject the outcome of the primaries, they are threatening to throw their support behind another party.

During Elections

- Security deployment to potential flashpoints
- Security agents may be use to intimidate opposition parties
- Use of cult groups to intimidate electorates
- Vote buying and selling

After Elections

- Party defection
- Court cases
- Settlement of aggrieved candidates