

A photograph of an armed soldier in a blue uniform and helmet, viewed from behind, sitting in a blue boat on a body of water. The soldier is holding a rifle. In the background, there is a shoreline with some buildings and trees under a cloudy sky.

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# **PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY DYNAMICS AND STABILISATION INTERVENTIONS IN THE NIGER DELTA**

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# Summary

This report presents the results of a public perceptions survey, carried out by Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN) in Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers states. It focuses on citizens' perceptions of the current security situation in the Niger Delta, and views on the actors and interventions aiming to address the problem of instability and insecurity in the region. The survey was conducted throughout September and October 2017. A questionnaire was completed by 293 respondents, and a focus group discussion was held in each state.

## Key findings:

- The perception is that the security situation in the Niger Delta has remained the same, or slightly worsened over the past 12 months.
- The biggest security concerns included cultism, the activities of politicians - in particular use of violent groups in and around elections - militancy, and a fear of military reprisals in association to this.
- Citizens have varied opinions about who is responsible for ensuring their security and ensuring stability in the region. They often rely more on informal security actors, such as traditional rulers and vigilante groups. Security services are often seen to be undermining security, rather than improving it.
- The Niger Delta New Vision initiative has some level of recognition – a number of people were aware of the Vice President's visits and felt these had been effective. However, a far greater number cited the effectiveness of the Amnesty Programme.
- There are concerns about the transparency and representativeness of the Pan-Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF), although there is a feeling that having a group representing the interests of the region, and engaging the Federal Government to demand a greater prioritisation of the needs of those living in the Niger Delta, is essential.
- There's a strong desire among the public for the government (and other actors such as PANDEF) to consult and engage them in decision making, and for better communication about their activities.

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# Glossary

**Cultism** - Whilst the history of cultism is complex, broadly, the term refers to groups which have evolved out of university fraternities to become criminal gangs. They are commonly involved in activities such as inter-gang violence, armed robbery, kidnapping and illicit business activities.

**Niger Delta New Vision initiative** - The current initiative, led by the Vice President's office, which includes dialogue between the Federal Government and groups representing the Niger Delta region (including those representing agitator groups), and the establishment of a consolidated development plan for the region (the Strategic Implementation Work Plan).

**Pan-Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF)** - The main group engaged by the Federal Government to participate in dialogue as part of the Niger Delta New Vision initiative. The group's ability to represent the region as a whole is contested.

# 1. Introduction

## Content of the report

This report presents the results of a public perceptions survey, carried out by Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN) in Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers states. It focuses on perceptions of the current security situation in the Niger Delta, and views on the actors and interventions aiming to address the problem of instability and insecurity in the region.

The survey was conducted throughout September and October 2017. A questionnaire was completed by 293 respondents, and a focus group discussion (FGD) was held in each state.

This is the first in a series of planned twice yearly public perceptions surveys, which SDN will use to inform its own programming and share with key stakeholders to raise awareness of the concerns and priorities of those living in the Niger Delta. This first survey has been an opportunity for us to pilot and learn from conducting a public perceptions survey in the Niger Delta. The data gathered is valuable, and we believe has revealed a number of valid findings. However, we intend to continue to improve the survey, its content, and the rigour of the survey methodology. Where there is significant variance in response between female and male participants, this is detailed.

As our first report of this type, it is prefaced with some general contextual information. Future reports will focus only on the latest developments, public perceptions, and identifiable trends.

## Limitations

The sample of respondents is not representative across the selected states or at the state-level. The challenges of travel within the Niger Delta, coupled with available resources, means certain trade-offs have been made to practically implement the survey and ensure it can take place on a regular basis. However, FGDs and a validation workshop with key experts have been used to provide an additional level of confidence in the validity of the findings.

Note that this report does not present an empirical analysis, for example, of the instance of violent threats (such as cult-related violence) – it presents the views of participants, with some analysis of this. This is important and valuable, because it provides an indication of how citizens in the Niger Delta feel about the current situation in their states, which is useful to guide interventions and programmes. However, this should not be conflated, for example, with an objective analysis of the instance and impact of the threats discussed.

## Context

The history of conflict and insecurity in the Niger Delta is long and complex and it is not the intention of this report to provide a comprehensive account of this. However, it is worth outlining some of the overarching and immediate issues in order to provide context for the results of this initial public perceptions survey.

Several decades of natural resource exploitation (namely oil and gas) have seen few benefits accrue to the general population of the Niger Delta. In fact, they have often undermined development and contributed to rights violations in the region – from oil spills that have polluted land and water resources, on which many are dependent for their livelihoods, through to the competition for control of natural resources that has often resulted in criminal activity, violent conflict and inter-communal disputes over land and borders.

The existence of oil and gas resources in the Niger Delta has contributed to the establishment of a rentier-type state – petroleum exports are relied upon for the vast majority of export revenue. This represents a major challenge to establishing a democratic, social contract between citizens and the state, which promotes development and ensures the protection and promotion of the rights of the people living there.

Violent resource conflicts in the 1990s ignited agitations and insecurity across the oil-rich Niger Delta region, which has often pitted the state against militant groups, civil society groups, and members of oil-producing communities. By the early-mid 2000's, militant activities, including oil pipeline attacks, kidnapping, piracy, and artisanal oil refining became common features of the conflict in the region.



The state's response to militant and other illicit activities is highly militarised, which undermines the security of the population, and is itself a source of rights violations. Furthermore, members of security agencies, charged with ending this activity, are believed to be complicit in its proliferation. The civilian police force is weak, and is unable to respond effectively to wider sources of conflict which are also significant in the region, such as cultism and organised criminal activity, and communal clashes over land use between different ethnic groups.

In 2009, the Presidential Amnesty Programme was instigated, and has played some role in producing a relative peace, at least in terms of state-militant conflict. However, the underlying causes of conflict, such as lack of economic opportunity, are yet to be addressed.

## Latest developments

2016 saw a resumption in militant activities, justified by perpetrators as a vote of no confidence in the current administration to address their developmental needs. The following year saw a lull in militant activities aimed at the state and oil and gas industry. This followed efforts by the Vice President and other parts of the State to enter dialogue with key groups, including the Pan Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF), to deliver a plan for peace and development in the region (the Niger Delta New Vision initiative).

Whilst headline-grabbing pipeline sabotage and similar incidents have been avoided, other forms of violence have remained common - for example, the past two decades have seen cultism - a movement mutated from university fraternities - become increasingly involved in armed criminal activities and militancy, including artisanal oil refining and political violence. The militarised policing of communities, and the military's response to recent low-level militant activity, has conversely become a significant source of violence and intimidation. Lastly, communal conflicts over land, high levels of crime and gender-based violence are an everyday occurrence.



## 2. Methodology

This research encompasses the three states of the Niger Delta region – Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta states. A survey was administered by the SDN research team in various locations selected to provide a balanced view, split evenly between rural and urban areas. A stratified sampling method was employed to ensure a representative group of the general public was captured, including gender balance. A total of 300 respondents were targeted and 293 completed the survey (50% female) across 13 communities in two senatorial districts per state. The number of respondents per state and age was as follows:

State	Number of Respondents
Bayelsa	98
Delta	101
Rivers	94
Age	
18 - 24	47
25 - 34	103
35 - 49	107
50 and over	36

*Table 1: Number of respondents per state and age*

To explore the issues in more detail, a FGD was held in each state after completion of the survey. An average of twelve participants were involved in each FGD, chosen for representation of a range of gender and age, with participants from different levels of government, civil society organisations, private sector, community leadership, ex-agitators and members of the general public.

The results were next analysed by SDN to highlight differences between states and to situate the findings in the contextual dynamics over the period under review. A validation workshop was held with a range of stakeholders, different from those captured in the survey and FGDs, including representatives from media, civil society, communities and academia. This created the space to present the aggregated findings and explore reasons for variation between locations.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1 Perceptions of the current security situation

#### The biggest threats to security

What do you believe is the biggest threat to security in the Niger Delta at the moment?

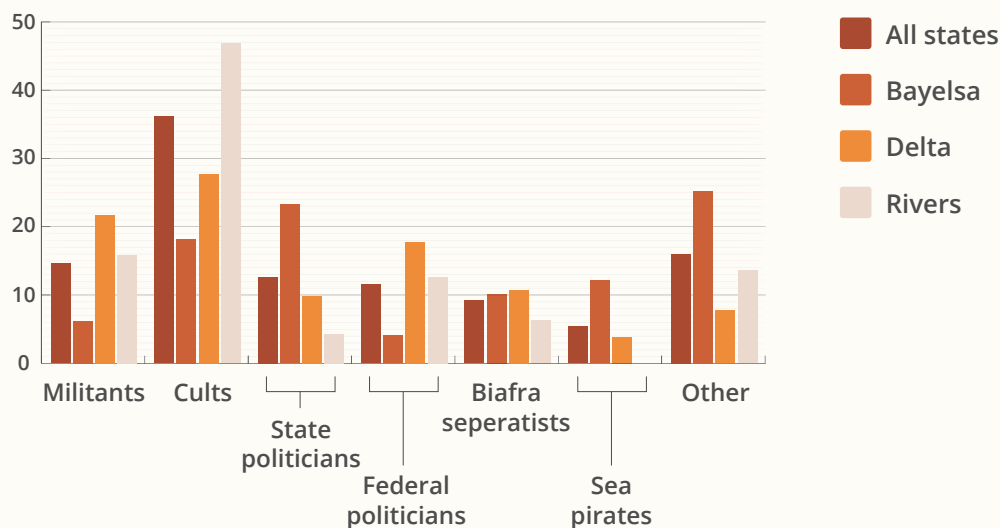


Figure 1: % of survey participants identifying given survey responses as the biggest threat to security in the Niger Delta.

Cultism was the single biggest threat to security identified by survey respondents, and FGDs reinforced this view. Participants noted concerns about what they felt is the rapid decline in values and related this to the rise of cultism. They were particularly concerned that young children are often recruited in to cult gangs, and felt cults were a major cause of killings in the region – both of cult and non-cult members. Participants felt that security services are often overwhelmed by the problem, and that although mass arrests are made, little has been done to ensure cult members are prosecuted. Police numbers are relatively low in Nigeria, with 370,000 police officers for a population of over 170 million<sup>1</sup>.

FGDs highlighted kidnapping and armed robbery as major concerns – this, in part, relates to cult activities, but also to other groups, such as militants. Participants were concerned that the poor economic situation has exacerbated insecurity, with kidnapping becoming commonplace and increasingly brazen, for example, with daylight kidnappings and hijackings of buses to kidnap all passengers.

Whilst pipeline attacks abated somewhat during 2017, militancy remains a concern, particularly in Delta and Rivers. However, FGDs revealed that whilst militancy is seen as a threat, this is often because of the fear that communities will be the victims of reprisals by the military, who have shown scarce regard for human rights.

In Bayelsa, state politicians were perceived as a major risk to security. This is possibly due to the lack of private sector economic activity, which means that state government budgets are a particularly substantial source of economic and political power. Across all three states, there is a common perception that state budgets are used to fund violent groups to protect political mandates. However, it may be that the problem in Bayelsa is particularly acute.

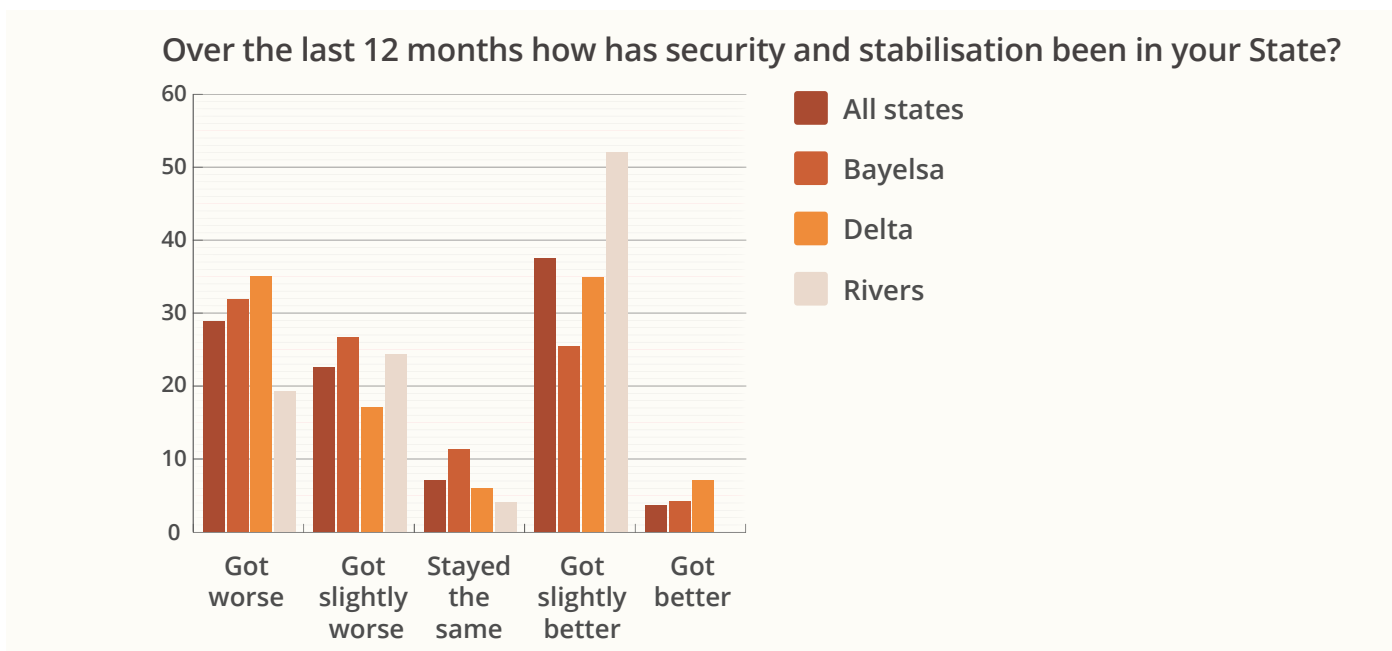
*"When it is time for them (Politicians) to be elected, they will go back to these youths, encourage them with [a] little money to go and fight and die."*

Tensions between herders and farmers were not a specific option provided in the survey, but were highlighted as a significant problem by some FGD participants. A number of women noted that their farms had been occupied by herders and community members killed – and some participants in Delta state suspected that herder attacks are responsible for more deaths than other criminal activities. Participants said that many fear going to their farms and felt the issue is being down-played by Government forces for political reasons and to avoid escalation of ethnic/religious conflicts.

In Bayelsa, the survey option "other" was most commonly selected, attributed in part to improvements needed in administering the survey. Many of these respondents also cited cultism, combined with other threats.

Across the survey, the perception of the biggest threats to security in the region were very similar between women and men.

## Change to the security situation at state-level over the last 12 months



*Figure 2: Percentage of survey participants selecting given options on perception of security trend in the past 12 months in the Niger Delta.*

A small majority of survey respondents felt that the security situation in their state has become worse in the past 12 months (52%). The slightly more positive outlook in Rivers state compared to Bayelsa and Delta is perhaps due to state-level infrastructure and employment initiatives, which is a theme that emerged in other sections of the survey and FGDs. FGDs highlighted that whilst there is relative peace at present – notably from militant-state conflict – citizens feel their communities are constantly under close watch by security agencies and there is a sense of fear that something could easily trigger increased conflict. This may explain the cautious perceptions recorded in the survey.

FGDs suggested that reasons for perceptions of reduced security included criminal gang activity and kidnapping. However, the fear of the potential for increased confrontation between militants and the military was also significant. Citizens are worried that military and rival militant attacks will affect communities in the creeks perceived to be hosts to militants. The recent military operations, such as Crocodile Smile II and Python Dance, are perceived by most citizens as another military invasion of the Niger Delta states. Whilst militant activity has abated in the past 12 months, FGDs suggested that where there have been militant attacks on security agents (or attacks by other groups, such as pirates, but treated as militant attacks), these have been followed by reprisals, often indiscriminately targeting community members.

Participants felt that a major underlying cause of involvement in cults, militancy and other criminal activities, was rapidly growing unemployment and the poor state of the economy. In particular, the situation of youth and their disaffection from the political process and economic benefits were noted. A respondent in Delta stated that:

*"The policies of the government are not even known by the youths, and as a result they feel left out and they try to solve the problem the best way they can, either they result to violence or they protest, because they have come to realize that the government rewards those who fight violently non intellectually"*

The high-level of youth underemployment and unemployment (estimated at 53% nationwide for 15-34 year olds<sup>2</sup>) was a serious concern for participants, who felt it portends danger in the coming years if not adequately addressed now. Participants also noted concerns that the security situation is likely to deteriorate in the approach to Christmas, as it is common for criminal activities to increase. This is likely to be because those involved in criminal activities are seeking money for the festive season, and because of the increased opportunities to make money, for example, because people carry more cash and travel more during this time.

### Change to the security situation at national-level over the last 12 months

Over the last 12 months how has security and stabilisation been in Nigeria?

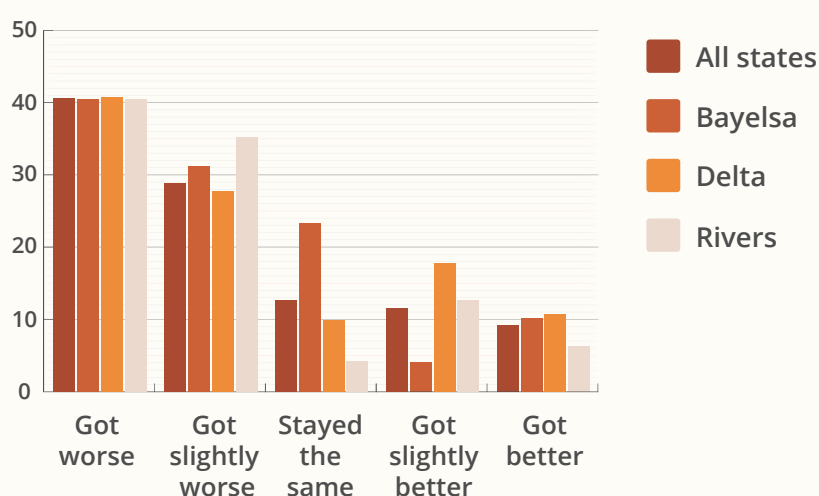


Figure 3: Percentage of survey participants selecting given options on perception of security trend in the past 12 months in Nigeria.

Survey respondents were also asked how they felt the security situation across Nigeria had changed in the past 12 months. Responses were consistently more negative than those for state-level security, with 69% of respondents feeling the situation had deteriorated. Women felt marginally more positive about state-level security and marginally more negative about national-level security, however, in all cases, a minority of women and men felt that the security situation had improved.

### Impact of current Government approach on security over next 12 months

With the current approaches taken by government, do you think that over the next year security will?

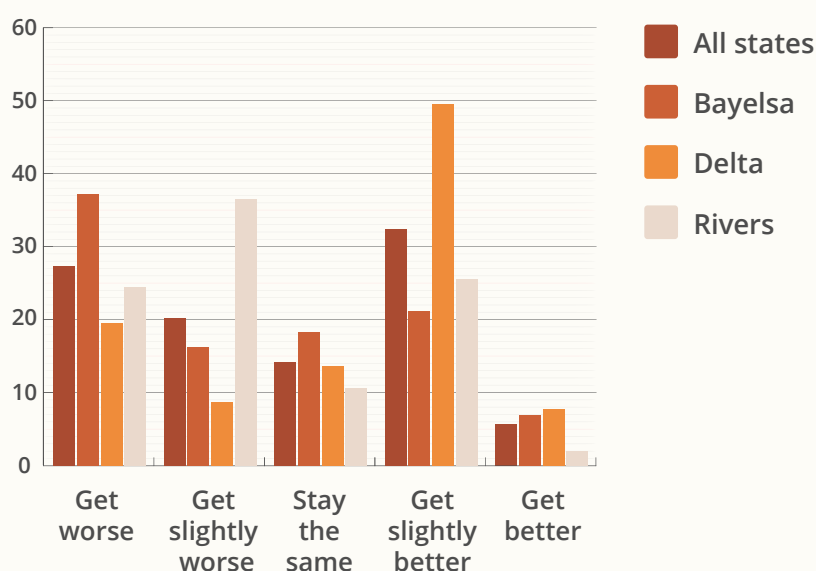


Figure 4: Percentage of survey participants selecting given options on perception of security trend in the next 12 months.

Survey respondents were also asked how they felt the security situation would change in the next 12 months. Across the three states, the assessment was similar to responses to the question of how the security situation in the Niger Delta has changed over the past 12 months, suggesting that respondents feel the current trend will continue. However, respondents in Delta were more likely to have a more positive outlook on the next twelve months compared to the past twelve months, whilst those in Rivers state had a more negative outlook (see figure 4). The positive shift in opinion amongst those living in Delta state is possibly because of a perception that recent collaboration among security agencies and vigilante groups has been effective, and because of PANDEF's (perceived to have a heavy representation among individuals in Delta state) engagement with the Federal government and possible progress on key initiatives in Delta state, such as the Maritime University.

## 3.2 Perceptions of actors and interventions relating to security and stabilization

Actors perceived to be responsible for security and stabilization in the region

Who do you believe is the main actor responsible for improving the stabilisation and development in the Niger Delta?

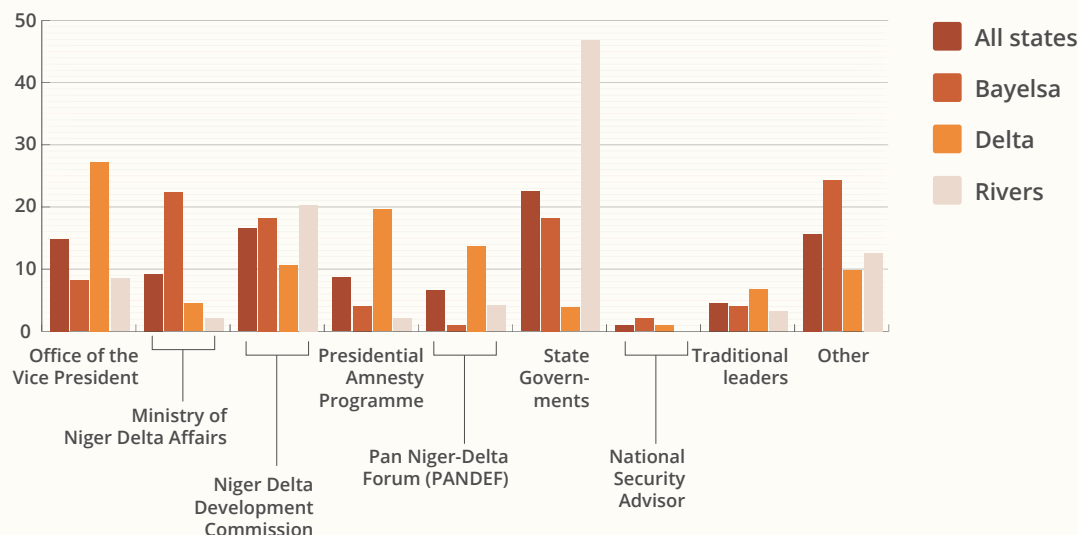


Figure 5: Percentage of survey participants selecting given options on main actor responsible for improving stabilisation and development in the Niger Delta.

Overall, survey participants identified a multiplicity of actors as being responsible for promoting security and stabilization in the region. Whilst state governments (22%), the Niger Delta Development Commission (17%) and the Office of the Vice President (15%) were those identified most frequently, there were significant differences between states, and there is no clear consensus among participants' perceptions on the actors that should be responsible.

Delta State also had higher levels of responses indicating the responsibility of the Presidential Amnesty Programme and the PANDEF in the role of security and stabilisation, perhaps suggesting a higher-level of engagement in, and awareness of, Federal-level initiatives than in Bayelsa and Rivers.

The varied survey responses and FGDs indicate that while there are official agencies formally mandated to provide security, their limited ability to deliver, coupled with a lack of trust, drives citizens to seek support from informal security actors. These actors include traditional rulers and vigilante groups, who, as the research reveals, are identified as significant providers of security (see below). This has implications for stabilisation efforts in the Niger Delta. Whether



the recent focus of the Federal Government on dialogue is altruistic or not, many view past efforts of the state as often being cosmetic, limited, stop-gap measures, aimed at ensuring increased production of oil rather than any real intention to address the root causes of insecurity in the region.

## Actors perceived to be most effective in promoting security and stabilization

Which actor do you believe has been the most effective at addressing stabilisation and development in the Niger Delta over the past year?

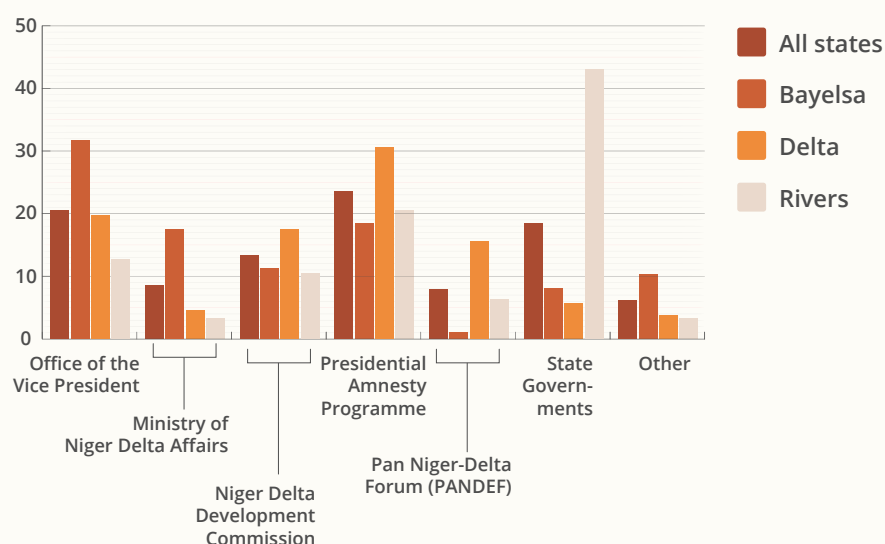


Figure 6: Percentage of survey participants selecting given options on who they feel has been the most effective actor in promoting stabilisation and development in the Niger Delta.

When asked about the most effective actor in promoting security and stabilization, participant responses were similarly mixed. However, there was greater consensus on the effectiveness of the Presidential Amnesty Programme and Office of the Vice President (24% and 22% of all survey respondents respectively). These two were the most commonly identified in Bayelsa and Delta, whilst respondents in Rivers again highlighted State Government as the most effective security actor.

FGDs reinforced the views represented in the survey, whilst also highlighting that CSOs, which had not been included as a response option in the survey, were playing an important role. FGDs further highlighted that participants felt that Federal security agencies were worsening the security situation, or at best were ineffective. Participants felt this led to the increased role and relevance to security of non-state and non-security actors including CSOs, PANDEF, and the

Office of the Vice President, as well as the Presidential Amnesty programme. Participants felt the involvement of security agents in exacerbating conflict and criminal activities for personal gain has led to citizens holding back information on security threats and resorting, for example, to vigilante groups to tackle issues such as piracy.

In Delta State, the role of PANDEF was seen more positively than in Bayelsa and Rivers, perhaps due the perception that its leadership is predominantly from Delta, as well as current efforts to establish the maritime university in the state, and rumoured approval of a Petroleum Training Institute in Delta State.

In Bayelsa, a state government-funded vigilante group (Bayelsa Volunteer) and increasing community policing efforts were also highlighted as effective interventions. Additionally, the state government-funded Operation Doo-Akpor security initiative was also highlighted as a critical factor in the security architecture in the state. However, overall, participants felt there was a failure by security actors in the state, which had resulted in the emergence of local and community vigilante groups. As shared by a participant:

*"If the government is responsible, individuals would not be doing this... If you look at Bayelsa as a whole, the government has not created the enabling environment for security agencies to operate"*

In Rivers, the State Government was highlighted, reinforcing the findings of the survey. Participants felt that the efforts of the Rivers State Government to increase construction work and employing young people as labourers, has helped to improve security, and that the provision of a source of income – no matter how small – has been incentive to keep the peace. Participants also noted that CSOs had played an important role in stability, for example:

*"The people trust the CSOs to amplify their voices... Look at the Ogoni clean up and the roles played by stakeholders"*

The lack of trust in Federal security services, and perceptions of the use of the security apparatus to further the interests of political elites, are part of a longer trend in perception. Whilst the Presidential Amnesty Programme and efforts of the Vice President's Office are seen relatively positively, citizens increasingly rely not on the federal government, but on affinity and allegiance to their local, regional and ethnic arrangements, which potentially has serious implications for national integration and development.

Notably, in the survey and FGDs, the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA) and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), tended to be perceived poorly. In particular, there is a lack of trust in the NDDC, which is perceived to be highly unaccountable and to lack transparency. In both cases, the agencies are seen to be weak in delivering and monitoring projects, and plagued by a lack a transparency and fraud in awarding contracts. The idea that both the MNDA and the NDDC are agencies with a mandate to develop the region creates anger among the citizens when the reports of billions wasted are published. A respondent noted that:

*"The projects they (NDDC) executed are not people oriented project, imagine going to a village with the population of just hundred people and build an ultra-modern market there, what will they use it for?"*

Whilst there were some minor differences between women and men's responses, overall the relative effectiveness of each of the actors identified were similar.

### Perceptions of PANDEF's role in security and stabilisation

Do you believe PANDEF is the right body to represent your interest and needs in dicussions with the Federal Government?

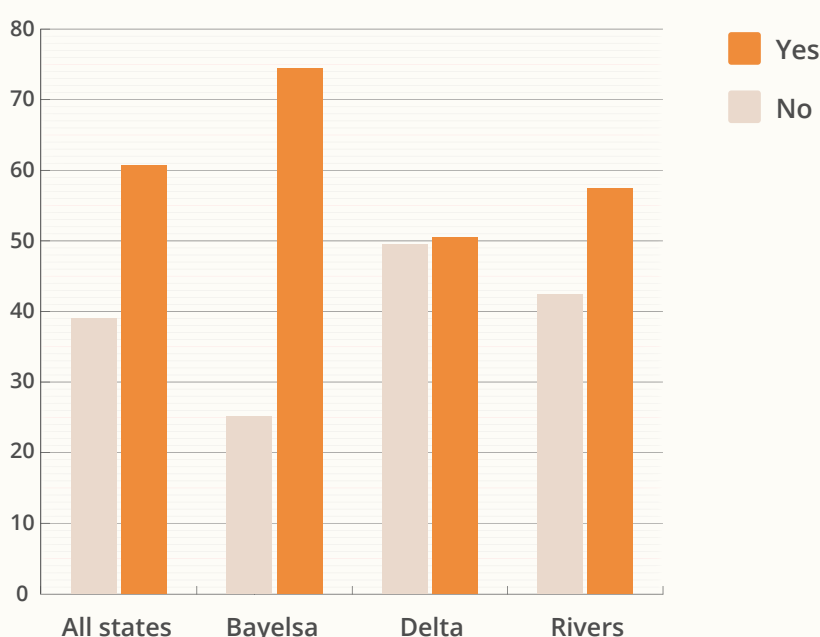


Figure 7: Percentage of survey participants by perception on whether PANDEF should represent their interests to the Federal Government

In the survey, 63% of respondents said they were aware of PANDEF, with awareness greatest in Delta (75%) and lowest in Bayelsa (54%), and of those, most were aware that PANDEF is playing a role in dialogue and negotiations with the Federal Government. Male respondents were more likely to be aware of PANDEF (70%) than female respondents (56%). Participants in Delta state were more likely to say that PANDEF has contributed to security and stability in the region than in Rivers and Bayelsa – with the latter being predominantly negative about PANDEF's role. Despite the skew in awareness, female participants were only slightly less likely to say that PANDEF represented their interests than male participants.

FGDs reinforced findings from the survey that indicated PANDEF has some level of legitimacy and has played a role in contributing to stability. This was particularly attributed to the willingness of the Federal Government to negotiate with it and its ability to mediate with ex/militants, who ceased attacks on oil infrastructure following the commencement of discussions. FGDs emphasised that PANDEF was a necessary outcome of the poor state of the Niger Delta and the 'cosmetic' approaches of the Federal Government, and the need to present a united front. As a participant from Delta state noted:

*"The Pan Niger Delta Forum in a sense we can say it is a political NGO, and it arose in 2016 in response to a voluntary effort to help Nigeria economy to stabilize.... the armed militants agreed to the proposal from PANDEF that they will stop any vandalization action, and they had a lot of expectation that the government would negotiate"*

FGDs in Delta tended to be positive about PANDEF's role and its contribution to security and stabilisation. Some felt that without PANDEF, the Niger Delta would have faced an increased wave of critical oil infrastructure bombing and destruction by the Niger Delta Avengers and other groups, and they felt that key commitments from government on projects such as modular refineries and the Maritime University were directly a result of PANDEF demands. As captured by a participant from Rivers State:

*"...they [PANDEF] have at least made the government to be responsive to the demands of the region and if they are able to pull this through within the next two years that will be a success story that will give them the legitimacy that they require to represent the region."*

As for Bayelsa, participants were more sceptical, and expressed concerns about over-representation of groups from other states, and the perceived self-interest (and suggested

corruption) of the PANDEF leadership – pursuing their own personal objectives, rather than peace and stability of the region. This perception of PANDEF being “transactional” was raised on a number of occasions by focus group participants across the states.

Although Delta state tends to be more positive, across the states survey respondents noted their two biggest concerns about PANDEF as self-interest and the unbalanced mix of representation of ethnic groups. Similarly, there was relative consensus in survey responses and FGDs on the areas that PANDEF needs to improve upon. These were: widening representation of ethnic groups in its membership and representation; inclusion of women; policy consistency; and greater communication and engagement with the general public to improve transparency and engagement in decision making.

### 3.3 Priorities for security and stabilization in the next 12 months

#### Priority interventions and perspectives on the presidential amnesty programme

What is the priority to improve security and stabilisation in the region?

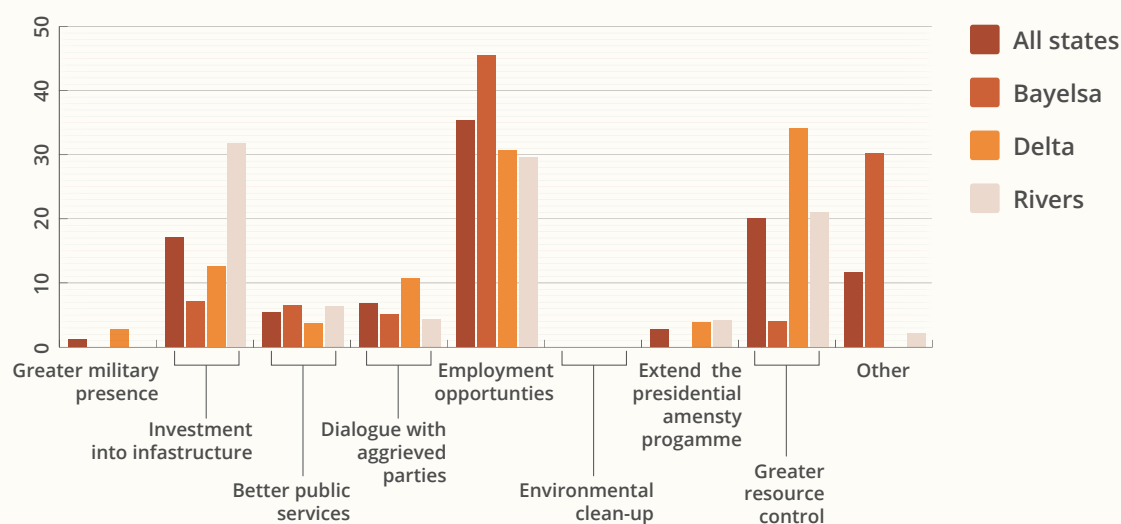


Figure 8: Percentage of survey participants by main priority for improving security and stabilisation in the next 12 months.

The survey provided several options for priority security and stabilisation interventions and asked participants to select one option. From these options, participants identified three clear priorities: employment opportunities, greater resource control, and investment in infrastructure.

Notably, no respondent selected the option of environmental clean-up by itself (although this did appear within “other” responses). Whilst some sampled communities were in regions known to be heavily polluted (e.g. in Ogoniland), we believe this result is likely to be due to the specific sampled communities being less heavily (or directly) affected by oil pollution than other areas, rather than this result being a representative view across the region. Additionally, although a low number of respondents selected the extension of the Presidential Amnesty Programme, 85% expressed support for the continuation of the programme when asked directly.

Findings from the FGDs suggested that the Amnesty Programme remains popular because young people previously involved in militancy and criminality have been reintegrated into the communities and ceased these activities to receive skills acquisition trainings and monthly stipends. Participants also felt that the relative peace experienced as a result of reduced militancy has created a more enabling economic environment.

There were, however, concerns raised about the amnesty programme, including lack of a clear exit strategy. There were also mentions of vested interests in contracts related to the amnesty programme. Some participants highlighted the large amount of expenditure being used to ‘buy peace’ at the expense of those not involved in agitations and wider development in the region; and the sense that the amnesty programme shows that violence pays. As one participant stated:

*“As we speak, all our intellectually endowed youths do not have a place within the government program, it is only those who understand the language of violence that have a place in the heart of the federal government.”*

In Bayelsa, the survey option “other” was commonly selected, however, this is in part due to improvements needed in administering the survey. Many of these respondents also cited a combination of infrastructure investment and employment opportunities.

## Citizen engagement

In addition to questions about security and stabilisation, respondents were asked whether they should have a say in government projects in their state, and what their main source of information is on security and development in their region. 86% felt that citizens should have a say in projects, and radio (39%), TV (22%) and internet (19%) were cited as the top three ways of accessing information. These responses were similar across states and by sex.

## 4. Recommendations

The purpose of this report is to present the views of respondents to the perceptions survey and participants of FGDs. However, through discussions in FGDs and the validation workshop some key recommendations have emerged. These are as follows:

### Federal Government:

- Protection and promotion of human rights, access to basic services, and increased investment in the region must be pursued in a way which benefits all citizens. In the short-term, a focus on high-impact development initiatives has the potential to both provide opportunities for citizens and address grievances (particularly among elite groups). These initiatives could, therefore, increase stability in the region and provide a more enabling context for those on all sides of the conflict in the Niger Delta to work together to this end.
- Reduce dependence on military options to address conflict. Instead, increase spaces for dialogue and empower the police and other civil agencies, which have a responsibility to protect citizens and ensure their security. Above all, ensure that in any government intervention, respect for human rights is paramount, and appropriate checks and balances should be placed on military interventions to ensure citizens' rights are protected.
- Make the Niger Delta New Vision initiative more inclusive, by improving communication and engagement with the public.

### For State Governments:

- State governments can play a key role in promoting or reducing the security of their citizens. A particular focus should be tackling cultism, including providing economic opportunities and social programmes to address some of the factors which push people in to cultism, and a new security approach to demobilise, rehabilitate, and provide economic opportunities to those willing to leave cultism.
- Ensure democratic elections take place, without the interference of violent groups, to protect the mandates of political candidates.



#### For PANDEF:

- Increase representation and diversity among its membership, including women and a wider selection of ethnic groups.
- Reach out to citizens across the Niger Delta to consult on, and represent, the priorities of a wide range of groups and individuals when engaging with the Federal Government.
- Establish a comprehensive set of communications activities to make the public aware of PANDEF's activities and status of their engagements with the Federal Government.
- Ensure high levels of transparency and accountability in its engagement with the Federal Government (particularly through increased engagement and communications with citizens in the Niger Delta as mentioned above).

- 1 Nigeria Police Force, 10th November, 2017 ([http://www.npf.gov.ng/more\\_news.php?id=280](http://www.npf.gov.ng/more_news.php?id=280))
- 2 Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, Q3, 2017.