

*i. Sea piracy*

Sea piracy is the most prevalent insecurity issue in Brass Local Government Area. Sea pirate attacks are more frequent in the Brass – Nembe creeks and the Brass -Yenagoa routes in the LGA. Livelihoods are affected gravely as travels to and from Brass LGA have become dangerously precarious. Respondents revealed that economic activities; fishing, trade, and ferrying of goods through outboard speed boats and local boats have often come under attacks and robbed. For example, they revealed that suspected pirates attacked a passenger boat along the Nembe-Brass waterway in Bayelsa State on Thursday, September 31, 2017, making it the second sea robbery incident on the waterway that week. Witnesses saw gunmen trailing a passenger boat and began firing their weapons sporadically before hijacking the boat. The boat driver and his crewmen were later dropped off in the creeks as the pirates took the boat to an unknown destination (Sahara Reporters, 2017). On Saturday, March 9, 2019, armed pirates reportedly attacked an offshore supply vessel (OSV) roughly 55km (34 mi) off Brass (Bayelsa state), killing one Nigerian Navy guard tasked with escorting the vessel. The pirates reportedly approached the OSV in speed boats armed with machine guns and kidnapped five crewmembers. The navy guard was reportedly killed in an exchange of gunfire during the attack (GardaWorld, 2019).

A respondent stated that security forces are trying their best to curtail sea robbery attacks but the issue is yet to abate. The local boats navigating to Twon Brass, Okpoama, and other communities are usually attacked, with some people kidnapped and on rare occasions, women are raped. People are now trading with fear. It was not until surveillance contracts were given to certain contractors who started engaging the boys to police the oil facilities that the level of piracy reduced. A key informant recounted the brutality of the sea robbers thus:

...I remember, there was a time when these boys caught a fisherman and his wife, demanded fish from them. They told them they had no fish and they pointed a gun at them, asked them to throw their baby into the river. They complied and when the baby got drowned, they told them, “You have fish now, take it home”. Even 9.9 horsepower engines, engines that have no value, they steal it. It was that bad until they started getting these surveillance contracts. There is considerable peace in the area now. But these activities had severe effects on