

# Nigeria: Security Situation



**Nigeria:**

**Security Situation**

**2025**



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- The Netherlands, Immigration and Naturalisation Service, Ministry of Asylum and Migration

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## Disclaimer

This report was written according to the [EUAA COI Report Methodology \(2023\)](#). The report is based on carefully selected sources of information. All sources used are referenced.

The information contained in this report has been researched, evaluated and analysed with utmost care within a limited timeframe. However, this document does not claim to be exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned in the report, this does not mean that the event has not taken place or that the person or organisation does not exist.

Furthermore, this report is not conclusive as to the determination or merit of any particular application for international protection. Terminology used should not be regarded as indicative of a particular legal position.

'Refugee', 'risk' and similar terminology are used as generic terminology and not in the legal sense as applied in the EU Asylum Acquis, the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

Neither EUAA nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained in this report.

On 19 January 2022, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) became the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA). All references to EASO, EASO products and bodies should be understood as references to the EUAA.

The drafting of this report was finalised on 5 September 2025. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this report. More information on the reference period for this report can be found in the methodology section of the Introduction.





## Glossary and abbreviations

Term	Definition
<b>APC</b>	All Progressives Congress
<b>BLA</b>	Biafran Liberation Army
<b>BoSHA</b>	Borno State Hunters Association
<b>BRGIE</b>	Biafran Republic Government In Exile
<b>CDS</b>	Chief of Defence Staff
<b>CJTF</b>	Civilian Joint Task Force
<b>DPO</b>	Division Police Officer
<b>DSS</b>	Department of State Services
<b>ESAM</b>	Ekiti State Agro Marshalls
<b>ESSN</b>	Edo State Security Network
<b>ESN</b>	Eastern Security Network
<b>FCT</b>	Federal Capital Territory
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally displaced persons
<b>IEDs</b>	Improvised explosive devices
<b>IPOB</b>	Indigenous People of Biafra
<b>ISSP</b>	Islamic State Sahel Province





<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>ISWAP</b>	Islamic State West Africa Province
<b>JAS</b>	Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad
<b>KKK</b>	Ku Klux Klan
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Area
<b>MACBAN</b>	Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria
<b>MNJTF</b>	Multinational Joint Task Force
<b>NAF</b>	Nigerian Armed Forces
<b>NBM</b>	Neo-Black Movement of Africa
<b>NDLEA</b>	National Drug Law Enforcement Agency
<b>NEF</b>	Northern Elders Forum
<b>NPF</b>	Nigerian Police Force
<b>NSCDC</b>	Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps
<b>NSEMA</b>	Nigeria State Emergency Management Agency
<b>OPSH</b>	Operation Save Haven
<b>PDP</b>	People's Democratic Party
<b>RPG</b>	Rocket-propelled grenade
<b>SIS</b>	Special Intervention Squad
<b>VGN</b>	Vigilante Group of Nigeria





Term	Definition
<b>VIPs</b>	Very important persons
<b>YPP</b>	Young Progressive Party





# Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide relevant information for the assessment of applications for international protection, including refugee status and subsidiary protection. This report is to be read in conjunction with the [EUAA COI Report – Nigeria Country Focus, November 2025](#). Both COI reports are for use in updating of EUAA’s Country Guidance on Nigeria (2026).

The report provides an update on and mapping of the security situation at both country and state level, namely for the 36 states plus for Abuja Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The report builds upon preceding EUAA COI reports, notably [Nigeria - Country Focus July 2024](#), and [Nigeria - Security Situation June 2021](#).

## Methodology

This COI report was written in line with the [EUAA COI Report Methodology \(2023\)](#)<sup>1</sup> and [the EUAA COI Writing and Referencing Style Guide \(2023\)](#).<sup>2</sup>

### Defining the terms of reference

The terms of reference for this COI report draw on previous EUAA COI reports on Nigeria and internal consultations. They were developed with careful consideration of country of origin information deemed most relevant to the intended users of the report. In addition, as part of the country guidance development process, national asylum authorities from EU+ countries within the Country Guidance Network on Nigeria were surveyed to assess their needs in relation to their respective national caseloads. Their input was incorporated into the design of these terms of reference, with the consolidated feedback and suggestions reflected in the final version presented in [Annex 2: Terms of Reference](#).

The reference period for this report covers from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025 and also includes general background information to contextualise the current situation. Drafting was completed on 5 September 2025, followed by peer review (8–19 September 2025) and a quality review process, during which additional information was incorporated until 15 October 2025. The report then underwent internal final review and proofreading by EUAA prior to publication.

### Collecting information

This report is based on publicly available information from both electronic and print sources gathered through desk-based research, complemented by interviews with oral sources. All sources used are referenced. To address information gaps identified during the research, the EUAA conducted interviews with experts on selected topics. All interviewed and written

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<sup>1</sup> EUAA COI Report Methodology, February 2023, [url](#)

<sup>2</sup> EUAA COI Writing and Referencing Guide, February 2023, [url](#)





sources are referenced in Annex 1: Bibliography. Where information could not be obtained within the drafting timeframe, this is noted in the relevant sections of the report.

## Quality control

In line with the EUAA COI Report Methodology (2023) and the EUAA COI Writing and Referencing Style Guide (2023), the report underwent peer review by COI experts from national authorities from EU+ countries (as noted in the [Acknowledgments](#)) as well as internal peer review by the EUAA COI Sector. All comments provided by the reviewers were duly considered, and most were incorporated into the final draft, which was completed on 15 October 2025.

## Sources

As per EUAA COI research principles,<sup>3</sup> a range of different published documentary sources have been consulted. The information results mainly from desk research of public specialised paper-based, and electronic sources. These include:

- reports produced by various United Nations (UN) bodies;
- reports produced by other international and non-governmental organisations active in the field of human rights, conflict and security situation;
- reports produced by EU and governmental organisations;
- reports produced by foundations, and advocacy organisations;
- academic publications, investigative articles and think tank reports;
- reports from international, regional and local media sources in English;
- reports and datasets by organisations specialised in specific topics or profiles, such as security and conflict monitoring;
- reports produced by local and grassroot organisations.

In addition, oral sources were interviewed, including scholars, international experts, government officials, and NGO representatives working on the ground in Nigeria. Some interviewees requested anonymity for security and operational reasons. All sources were assessed for their background, publication history, reputability, and current ground-level expertise. The interviews were conducted between July and September 2025, and all oral sources are described in [Annex 1: Bibliography](#).

## Sources on security incidents and fatalities

Data of the [Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project \(ACLED\)](#)<sup>4</sup> have been used for information on security events and fatalities.

ACLED is a project that collects, analyses and maps information on 'dates, actors, locations, fatalities, and types of all reported political violence and protest events around the world'.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> EUAA COI Report Methodology, 2023, [url](#)

<sup>4</sup> ACLED, Data & Tools, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>5</sup> ACLED, About ACLED, n.d., [url](#)





The ACLED curated data files on Nigeria used in this report were downloaded by the EUAA on 10 September 2025.

ACLED explains the methodology applied for coding and monitoring the data in a codebook<sup>6</sup> where it states that ‘The fundamental unit of observation in ACLED is the event’.<sup>7</sup> ACLED records six event types: battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, protests, riots and strategic developments.<sup>8</sup> For the analysis of the security situation in Nigeria in this report, battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians and riots were included as incidents.

ACLED uses the following definitions of these event types:

- **battle:** ‘a violent interaction between two organized armed groups at a particular time and location. ‘Battles’ can occur between armed and organized state, non-state, and external groups, and in any combination therein. There is no fatality minimum necessary for inclusion. Civilians can be harmed in the course of larger ‘Battles’ events if they are caught in the crossfire(...);’
- **explosions/remote violence:** ‘events as incidents in which one side uses weapon types that, by their nature, are at range and widely destructive. The weapons used in ‘Explosions/Remote violence’ events are explosive devices, including but not limited to: bombs, grenades, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), artillery fire or shelling, missile attacks, air or drone strikes, and other widely destructive heavy weapons or chemical weapons. Suicide attacks using explosives also fall under this category’;
- **violence against civilians:** ‘events where an organized armed group inflicts violence upon unarmed non-combatants. By definition, civilians are unarmed and cannot engage in political violence. (...) The perpetrators of such acts include state forces and their affiliates, rebels, militias, and external/other forces.’;
- **riots:** ‘violent events where demonstrators or mobs of three or more engage in violent or destructive acts, including but not limited to physical fights, rock throwing, property destruction, etc. They may engage individuals, property, businesses, other rioting groups, or armed actors.’<sup>9</sup>

Regarding **fatalities**, ACLED stated on 7 May 2024:

- ‘ACLED does not have a fatality threshold for an event’s inclusion in the dataset. This means that political violence and demonstration events in ACLED do not need to produce any fatalities in order to be included as valid events. No arbitrary number of deaths is used to define a conflict.’;
- ‘ACLED codes fatalities from the most reliable possible sources and/or partners in a given conflict environment. Further, researchers seek out information to triangulate – where and when possible – the fatality numbers from reports.’;
- ‘If source reports differ or a vague estimate is provided, ACLED uses the most conservative estimate available and seeks to note in the ‘Notes’ column when there

<sup>6</sup> ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project Codebook, updated 9 November 2023, [url](#)

<sup>7</sup> ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project Codebook, updated 9 November 2023, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>8</sup> ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project Codebook, updated 9 November 2023, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>9</sup> ACLED, Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project Codebook, updated 9 November 2023, [url](#), pp. 11-18



has been a dispute. When better information becomes available, these totals will be revised and corrected – upward or downward. When sources report estimates such as “tens” or “dozens” or “hundreds,” ACLED codes 10 for “tens,” 12 for “dozens,” 100 for “hundreds,” and so on’;

- ‘When a report does not indicate whether or not any fatalities occurred or notes that it is unknown whether fatalities occurred at all, ACLED defaults to coding 0 as the fatality estimate. ACLED distinguishes between ‘fatalities’ and ‘casualties.’ Fatalities are deaths, whereas casualties are assumed to be injuries *or* fatalities. As such, if a report only indicates “casualties” (or similar ambiguous wording in other languages), the conservative approach that ACLED takes is to assume all casualties are injuries and hence code 0 fatalities.’
- ‘When a report indicates that an event did indeed lead to fatalities, yet there is no additional information on how many fatalities may have occurred, ACLED codes this unspecified number of fatalities as either 3 or 10 fatalities depending on the circumstances of the event. If the information in the event and the general understanding of the conflict context indicates the event has a high death toll (likely over 10), then 10 fatalities are coded.’
- ‘ACLED does not code reported fatalities according to which group suffered fatalities, nor according to the number of people killed by a specific group. For this reason, the data cannot generally be used to estimate the number of deaths caused or suffered by one actor or another in a conflict, as a single event may contain information on fatalities caused or suffered by both parties in a battle. The exception to this is events targeting civilians and protesters, who are by definition not engaging in violence themselves.’
- ‘Fatality numbers are not consistently reliable from any source. All reported fatalities, from all forms of media and partners, are estimates.’<sup>10</sup>

Qualitative information and data on security incidents and fatalities from the research project [Nigeria Watch](#)<sup>11</sup> have also been used in the report, alongside ACLED data. The project began in July 2006 and is hosted by the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA-Nigeria) on the campus of the University of Ibadan since July 2013.<sup>12</sup>

Qualitative information and data on security incidents and fatalities reported by the [Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta \(PIND\)](#) have also been used, when available, for the states comprising the Niger Delta region (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, Rivers).<sup>13</sup>

It must be noted that ACLED, Nigeria Watch and PIND follow different methodologies and, as such, their data are not directly comparable.

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<sup>10</sup> ACLED, Fatalities, last update 7 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>11</sup> Nigeria Watch, Nigeria Watch, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>12</sup> Nigeria Watch, About us, Who we are?, n.d., [url](#); IFRA-Nigeria, Nigeria Watch Presentation, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>13</sup> PIND is an Abuja-based non-profit organisation working on economic and conflict-related issues in the Niger Delta. For more information on the conflict tracker project by PIND see Partners for Peace, n.d., [url](#); PIND, Weekly Conflict Reports, n.d., [url](#)



## Structure and use of the report

The report is divided into two parts. The first part provides an analytical overview on long-standing security challenges and major conflicts, including information on the state armed actors and non-state armed actors involved. The second part of the report provides a breakdown of the security situation by geopolitical zone and state, covering security trends in the period 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025. This part includes information on major security issues and main actors, main types of violence, recent security trends and state response in maintaining law and order.

### Terminology and classification of actors

In examining matters concerning Boko Haram, it is important to note that the term serves as an umbrella definition for an armed group comprising internal factions. Some sources do not explicitly differentiate between the two main factions: Jamaatu Ahlis-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wal-Jihad (JAS) and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), which may affect the specificity of information related to their activities, structures, and areas of control. In this report, the terms JAS and Boko Haram are used interchangeably, in contrast to ISWAP and other Boko Haram factions.

When reporting on issues involving especially cult groups, herder-farmer conflicts, banditry (and in some instances, vigilante groups, separatist armed groups, Islamist groups), sources often use broad labels such as 'criminals', 'gunmen', 'bandits', 'terrorists' to describe perpetrators. Such terminology, at times, creates challenges in distinguishing between different groups and incidents, particularly as some actors overlap. Given the complex nature of these phenomena in Nigeria, it is not always possible to provide precise or clear-cut information about the actors involved.

Further, some sources use the terms 'hunters' and 'vigilantes' interchangeably to describe community-based security groups in Nigeria. However, the term 'vigilante' is more commonly used as the broader label for these non-state security actors.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> UNUCPR, MEAC Findings Report 5, Volunteer Security Outfits in North East Nigeria, April 2021, [url](#), p. 5





# Map



## NIGERIA Reference Map

As of 29 Oct. 2020



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.  
Update date: 29 Oct. 2020 Sources: UNCS, NGA, DCW, Natural Earth, Gov, ESRI, WFP, OCHA. Feedback: ocharowca@un.org www.unocha.org www.reliefweb.int

Map 1. Nigeria UNOCHA<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> UNOCHA, Nigeria: Reference Map, 29 October 2020, [url](https://www.unocha.org/nigeria/reference-map)





# 1. General description of the security situation

Nigeria continues to face a variety of concurrent security challenges,<sup>16</sup> each of them multifaceted and posing a serious threat to the country's stability. These challenges have kept the country in a state of security crisis for the past two decades.<sup>17</sup>

Northern Nigeria has remained affected by the decade-and-a-half-long Islamist insurgency.<sup>18</sup> While such insurgency, led by Boko Haram and related al-Qaeda and Islamic State affiliates, had long been seen as the most significant threat to the country's stability, by early 2024 violence arising from banditry has become both more lethal and widespread. Perpetrated by groups described as 'highly fragmented' and diverse in terms of their capabilities and degree of organisation,<sup>19</sup> banditry was reported in the country's North-West<sup>20</sup> and North-Central zones,<sup>21</sup> as well as in Lagos and other areas of the South-West.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile, tensions between herders and farmers over livelihoods<sup>23</sup> remained an issue across the North-Central zone<sup>24</sup> (also known as the Middle Belt)<sup>25</sup> and other parts of the country.<sup>26</sup> Some sources attributed these security challenges to ethno-religious tensions<sup>27</sup> and, at times, also to criminal activity.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the reference period witnessed a continuation of Biafran secessionist activities in the South-East, criminality in the Niger Delta,<sup>29</sup> activities of violent gangs centred around the South-South and the South-West,<sup>30</sup> and pre-election-related

<sup>16</sup> International Crisis Group, Restoring Nigeria's Leadership for Regional Peace and Security, 11 December 2024, [url](#), p. 8; Jones, M., & Kotarska, G., Crime, Terror and Insecurity in Nigeria. (RUSI Whitehall Report). Royal United Services Institute, 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>17</sup> Aboh, A., Nigeria's security problems deepen as Anglophone insurgency in Cameroon spills across border, The Conversation, 28 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>18</sup> International Crisis Group, Restoring Nigeria's Leadership for Regional Peace and Security, 11 December 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>19</sup> Wiehler, C. and Malefakis, M., Time to Make 'Peace' with the Bandits, CSS, April 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>20</sup> International Crisis Group, Restoring Nigeria's Leadership for Regional Peace and Security, 11 December 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>21</sup> HumAngle, What Is The Real Cause Of Attacks In Nigeria's Middle Belt?, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>22</sup> Conversation (The), Nigeria's growing security crisis: 6 essential reads, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>23</sup> HRW, Nigeria: Prioritize Security Amid Rising Violence in Benue State, 18 June 2025, [url](#); Wiehler, C. and Malefakis, M., Time to Make 'Peace' with the Bandits, CSS, April 2024, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>24</sup> International Crisis Group, Restoring Nigeria's Leadership for Regional Peace and Security, 11 December 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>25</sup> Ojewale, O., Violence is endemic in north central Nigeria: what communities are doing to cope, The Conversation, 23 June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>26</sup> Wiehler, C. and Malefakis, M., Time to Make 'Peace' with the Bandits, CSS, April 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>27</sup> Conversation (The), Nigeria's growing security crisis: 6 essential reads, 22 April 2025, [url](#); HumAngle, What Is The Real Cause Of Attacks In Nigeria's Middle Belt?, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>28</sup> Conversation (The), Nigeria's growing security crisis: 6 essential reads, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>29</sup> International Crisis Group, Restoring Nigeria's Leadership for Regional Peace and Security, 11 December 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>30</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster's Paradise: Nigeria's Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 4





violence in Edo state.<sup>31</sup> These manifold security issues have left the country's military and police forces overstretched.<sup>32</sup>

The UN noted a rise in insecurity during the first half 2024.<sup>33</sup> Several sources highlighted the volatility of the security situation in Nigeria's North-Eastern zone,<sup>34</sup> the border zones between Nigeria, Niger and Benin,<sup>35</sup> and across the Sahel region at large.<sup>36</sup> The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) covering events of the year 2024 ranked Nigeria in sixth place among countries most impacted by terrorism (a deterioration by two places from 2023),<sup>37</sup> based on a weighted analysis of terrorism incidents, fatalities, injuries and hostages taken.<sup>38</sup> According to the Global Peace Index 2025, Nigeria ranked 148<sup>th</sup> out of 163 independent countries and territories surveyed (a deterioration by three places from the previous year).<sup>39</sup> The Fragile States Index covering the year 2024 ranked Nigeria as the 15<sup>th</sup> most fragile country out of 179 countries assessed.<sup>40</sup>

Nigeria has been marked by high levels of corruption, poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment.<sup>41</sup> The government of Bola Tinubu, elected president in February 2023,<sup>42</sup> has attempted to diminish corruption both in public and private institutions, but the issue remained pervasive, especially in the oil and security sector.<sup>43</sup> Economic policies introduced by the government since 2023, including the removal of a petrol subsidy, cuts to subsidies on electricity prices, and currency devaluations, have resulted in high inflation rates.<sup>44</sup> The country's political opposition has been weakened by defections to the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC).<sup>45</sup> However, in July 2025, the leaders of the two main opposition parties joined forces to challenge Tinubu and the APC in the next election.<sup>46</sup> For more general information on the country, including on latest political developments and human rights situation see [EUAA COI Country Focus Report Nigeria, November 2025](#).

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<sup>31</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 41

<sup>32</sup> International Crisis Group, Restoring Nigeria's Leadership for Regional Peace and Security, 11 December 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>33</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/521, 1 July 2024, [url](#), para. 17

<sup>34</sup> GPC, Protection Sector North-East Nigeria (PSNE), Annual Report 2024, 13 March 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>35</sup> ACLED, New frontlines: Jihadist expansion is reshaping the Benin, Niger, and Nigeria borderlands, 27 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>36</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2025/187, 26 March 2025, [url](#), para. 18

<sup>37</sup> IEP, Global Terrorism Index 2025, 5 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 20

<sup>38</sup> IEP, Global Terrorism Index 2025, 5 March 2025, [url](#), p. 20

<sup>39</sup> IEP, Global Peace Index 2025, 17 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>40</sup> FFP, Fragile States Index – Annual Report 2024, 18 February 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>41</sup> Edigheji, O., Rescuing Nigeria: how to break the cycle of decline and bring progress, The Conversation, 17 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>42</sup> Lubin, D., Nigeria's economy needs the naira to stay competitive, Chatham House, 4 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>43</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2025, 2025, [url](#)

<sup>44</sup> Reuters, Nigeria's Tinubu touts economic gains at mid-term but inflation and insecurity persist, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>45</sup> DW, Can Nigeria's new opposition coalition defeat Tinubu?, 3 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>46</sup> BBC News, Big shake-up in Nigerian politics as heavyweights join forces, 7 July 2025, [url](#)





## 1.1. Main Actors

This section focuses on developments relevant to actors involved in the different conflicts within the reference period. Detailed information, including historical background, on state and non-state actors is provided in section 1.3. Armed Actors of the [EUAA COI Report – Nigeria: Security Situation, June 2021](#).

### 1.1.1. State armed actors

#### Nigerian Police Force (NPF)

The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) acts under the jurisdiction of both federal and state institutions<sup>47</sup> and is commanded by an Inspector-General of Police. Reflecting other existing administrative structures in the country, the police force consists of the following entities: the force headquarters, zonal headquarters, headquarters of the state command, divisional police headquarters, police stations, police posts, and village police posts.<sup>48</sup> Both recent sources and sources dating back as far as 2007 claimed that the NPF had an estimated strength of 371 800,<sup>49</sup> serving a total population estimated in 2024 at 236 747 130.<sup>50</sup> The resulting shortage in police personnel was compounded by the fact that more than 100 000 police officers were assigned to the protection of politicians and VIPs,<sup>51</sup> rather than to tasks serving the general population.<sup>52</sup> This shortage in manpower, as well as corruption and insufficient resources have resulted in delayed responses to crimes and numerous communities being left without protection.<sup>53</sup> With reliable accountability mechanisms lacking, there were reports of police officers engaging in misconduct, including arbitrary arrests, extortion of money<sup>54</sup> and excessive use of violence.<sup>55</sup>

#### Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF)

The Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) are comprised of three branches: the army, the air force, and the navy.<sup>56</sup> Information on numbers of personnel numbers varied among sources. While Global Firepower estimated the total strength of the armed forces at 280 000 (including 230 000 active personnel),<sup>57</sup> another recent estimate put the number of active service

<sup>47</sup> THISDAY, The Police and Human Resource Reform, 28 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>48</sup> Nigeria, Nigeria Police Force, Force Structure, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>49</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Nigeria police, 'friend' of the people, 10 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Challenges of policing Nigeria, 19 July 2018, [url](#); Canada, IRB, Nigeria: Structure and size of the police force; availability of complaint mechanisms; whether there is communication between the divisions and commands across the country; whether authorities in Sharia states can execute their warrants, make arrests and lay charges in non-Sharia states, NGA102889.E, 31 July 2008, [url](#)

<sup>50</sup> US, CIA, The World Factbook – Nigeria, last updated 2 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>51</sup> Agora Police, Despite Tinubu's Frequent Pledges, Insecurity Still a Critical Challenge, 27 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>52</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Nigeria police, 'friend' of the people, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>53</sup> Lekwa, H., State police: A necessary response to Nigeria's growing security crisis, The Cable, 28 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>54</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Nigeria police, 'friend' of the people, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>55</sup> THISDAY, The Police and Human Resource Reform, 28 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>56</sup> Legit, Nigerian Army ranks, symbols, and salaries: Top facts and details, 12 May 2025, [url](#); Africa Report (The), Nigeria: Meet General Oluyede, Tinubu's new chief of army staff, 11 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>57</sup> Global Firepower, 2025 Nigeria Military Strength, last updated 9 January 2025, [url](#)





personnel at 140 000.<sup>58</sup> The army, estimated to be 65 000 strong,<sup>59</sup> was deployed in all 36 states. It was engaged in counterinsurgency operations in the North-East and combating criminal gangs/banditry in the North-West, farmer–herder violence, military and criminal activity targeting the oil industry in the Niger Delta, and separatist agitation in Biafra state.<sup>60</sup>

The armed forces are equipped with a variety of weapons systems of Chinese, Russian, Middle Eastern, European and US origin and have been undergoing modernisation.<sup>61</sup> In mid-2024, NAF launched its new aviation wing to provide aerial support for its ground operations.<sup>62</sup> However, while the military budget has been consistently increased over the past years, criticism had been voiced over the volume and quality of the weaponry available.<sup>63</sup> Multiple security breaches allowed large-scale kidnappings to unfold and military aircraft to be shot down by militants using anti-aircraft weaponry.<sup>64</sup> A government airstrike targeting a site of the insurgent group Lakurawa in Sokoto State mistakenly killed 10 civilians in late 2024.<sup>65</sup>

### **Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC)**

State actors also comprise the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), a paramilitary organisation under the federal government tasked with combating threats to the country and its citizens<sup>66</sup> and protecting ‘critical national assets and infrastructure’,<sup>67</sup> including oil pipelines. The reference period witnessed disputes between the NSCDC and the police over their respective roles,<sup>68</sup> and at least one instance of violent altercation between members of the two institutions.<sup>69</sup>

### **1.1.2. Vigilante groups and other communal defence forces**

Hundreds of vigilante groups have been set up by local communities to combat crime across the country.<sup>70</sup> They notably operate in remote under-policed areas,<sup>71</sup> protecting farms and conducting patrols.<sup>72</sup>

Some groups, especially those sponsored by state administrations, have clear-cut structures at state, zone, LGA and community levels, as well as well-defined operational procedures. However, many other vigilante groups, particularly smaller ones, operated under no specific guidelines,<sup>73</sup> and were loosely organised.<sup>74</sup> Most groups indeed acted with little external

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<sup>58</sup> US, CIA, The World Factbook – Nigeria, last updated 2 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>59</sup> Global Firepower, 2025 Nigeria Military Strength, last updated 9 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>60</sup> US, CIA, The World Factbook – Nigeria, last updated 2 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>61</sup> US, CIA, The World Factbook – Nigeria, last updated 2 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>62</sup> Reuters, Nigerian army bolsters air capacity with two new helicopters, 21 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>63</sup> Punch, Rising insecurity: NASS, ex-generals demand urgent military re-armament, 7 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>64</sup> Nwanze, C., Centralisation versus community: The path to resolving Nigeria’s security failures, Business Day, 3 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>65</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>66</sup> NSCDC, History of Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>67</sup> NSCDC, The Commandant General, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>68</sup> Daily Post, Clash of interest: Police, NSCDC have clear roles under the constitution – Tunji-Ojo, 1 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>69</sup> Punch, Police, NSCDC officers fighting on duty must face the law, 5 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>70</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, How vigilante groups constitute danger to life despite role in security, 24 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>71</sup> DW, Are Nigeria’s vigilantes as bad as bandits they’re chasing?, 22 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>72</sup> HumAngle, Disappearing Migration Routes Fueling Farmer-Herder Violence in Northern Nigeria, 2 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>73</sup> International Crisis Group, Managing Vigilantism in Nigeria: A Near-term Necessity, 21 April 2022, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>74</sup> HumAngle, Disappearing Migration Routes Fueling Farmer-Herder Violence in Northern Nigeria, 2 July 2025, [url](#)



oversight, with the nature of relations between vigilantes and state entities like the NPF, the NAF and the NSCDC described as ranging from cordiality and collaboration to suspiciousness and outright hostility.<sup>75</sup> The quality of recruitment practices also differed widely among groups<sup>76</sup> and many vigilantes were poorly trained.<sup>77</sup>

As of 2025, the highly structured Vigilante Group of Nigeria (VGN), originally from Benue, was described by Nigeria's Guardian newspaper as the country's most powerful vigilante group.<sup>78</sup> As of December 2023, the group was estimated to have around 13 000 members, including at least 4 000 equipped with firearms (e.g., Dane guns, rifles, and shotguns). Other major groups include the Borno State Hunters Association (BoSHA), the Kesh Kesh vigilante group, and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTf), operating primarily in the North-East.<sup>79</sup> While there has been some evidence of success in fulfilling their tasks, including in eliminating bandits<sup>80</sup> and rescuing victims of kidnapping,<sup>81</sup> vigilantes also suffered heavy losses in bandit attacks.<sup>82</sup> As the majority of groups operated with limited internal accountability,<sup>83</sup> members of vigilante groups have also been accused of excesses<sup>84</sup> such as torture and killing of innocent individuals they suspected of banditry.<sup>85</sup> Some residents in states where vigilante groups are present were quoted as saying that actions by these groups were getting out of control.<sup>86</sup> In a notable incident, armed vigilantes in Edo State killed a group of 16 hunters in May 2025, allegedly mistaking them for kidnappers.<sup>87</sup>

In the South-West, the Western Security Network, codenamed 'Amotekun'<sup>88</sup> (Yoruba for 'Leopard'),<sup>89</sup> created in 2019 by the region's six state governors,<sup>90</sup> has been engaged in efforts to tackle banditry and herder-farmer conflicts,<sup>91</sup> conducting dozens of arrests of suspected criminals.<sup>92</sup> At the same time, Amotekun commanders in various southwestern states pointed to a number of obstacles facing their forces, such as lack of funding, personnel, advanced

<sup>75</sup> International Crisis Group, Managing Vigilantism in Nigeria: A Near-term Necessity, 21 April 2022, [url](#), pp. 10-11

<sup>76</sup> International Crisis Group, Managing Vigilantism in Nigeria: A Near-term Necessity, 21 April 2022, [url](#), pp. 9-10

<sup>77</sup> HumAngle, Disappearing Migration Routes Fueling Farmer-Herder Violence in Northern Nigeria, 2 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>78</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, How vigilante groups constitute danger to life despite role in security, 24 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>79</sup> Premium Times, Civilian volunteers helping Nigerian forces fight insurgents. But how do they operate?, 23 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>80</sup> Business Day, Vigilante groups kill 30 bandits in Zamfara ambush, 6 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, Channels TV, Police, Army, Fulani Vigilantes Rescue Three Kidnap Victims In Kogi Forest Raid, 19 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Vigilantes rescue kidnap victims in Taraba, 18 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Police, vigilante rescue 20 abducted victims in Kwara, 17 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, Punch, After 70 killed, Plateau vigilante vows to fight bandits, 9 July 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, 60 bandits, 21 residents, 13 vigilantes killed in Bauchi attack – Gov Mohammed confirms, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>83</sup> International Crisis Group, Managing Vigilantism in Nigeria: A Near-term Necessity, 21 April 2022, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>84</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, How vigilante groups constitute danger to life despite role in security, 24 May 2025, [url](#); DW, Are Nigeria's vigilantes as bad as bandits they're chasing?, 22 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>85</sup> DW, Are Nigeria's vigilantes as bad as bandits they're chasing?, 22 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>86</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, How vigilante groups constitute danger to life despite role in security, 24 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>87</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, How vigilante groups constitute danger to life despite role in security, 24 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>88</sup> Odeyinka, O., Insecurity: How Amotekun Is Faring In Southwest Nigeria 20 Months After Inauguration, Hum Angle, 2 September 2021, [url](#)

<sup>89</sup> Business Day, Five things you need to know about Operation Amotekun, 4 March 2020, [url](#)

<sup>90</sup> Odeyinka, O., Insecurity: How Amotekun Is Faring In Southwest Nigeria 20 Months After Inauguration, Hum Angle, 2 September 2021, [url](#)

<sup>91</sup> Punch, Upgrade Amotekun, save South-West again, 14 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>92</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Ondo Amotekun arraigns 175 suspects in Q1 2025, 30 April 2025, [url](#); Punch, Amotekun arrests nine suspected criminals in Ondo, 21 August 2024, [url](#)



weaponry and operational vehicles.<sup>93</sup> Regional security networks in the South-East<sup>94</sup> included the Eastern Security Network (ESN), created in 2020 by Nnamdi Kanu, the leader of the pro-Biafran separatist movement Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), as IPOB's paramilitary wing,<sup>95</sup> (see section on Pro-Biafran separatist groups in [1.1.3. Non-state armed actors](#)) and Ebube Agu, established in 2021 by state governors.<sup>96</sup>

### 1.1.3. Non-state armed actors

#### Boko Haram

Since 2016, there have been two main distinct factions of Boko Haram – the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) and Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad (JAS) – with considerable differences in their *modi operandi*.<sup>97</sup>

Fighting between these two factions has continued during the reporting period.<sup>98</sup> Both groups have strengthened their hold over their respective territories, and the frontline between them appears to have largely stabilised.<sup>99</sup>

For information on developments pertaining to these factions prior to mid-2024, including territorial control, see section 1.3.2 Non-state armed actors of the [EUAA COI Report – Nigeria: Security Situation, June 2021](#) and section 2.4.2 Non-state armed groups of the [EUAA COI Report – Nigeria: Country Focus, July 2024](#).

**ISWAP** - Sources variously estimated that ISWAP had between 4 000 and 7 000<sup>100</sup> or even 8 000 to 12 000 fighters within its ranks.<sup>101</sup> As of late 2024, the group's operations were limited to Borno and Yobe states.<sup>102</sup> Its leadership structure involves a *shura* (advisory council). *Shura* consists of a number of senior commanders and clerics who must be consulted in key decision-making matters,<sup>103</sup> overseeing the group's strategy, approving appointments to positions of command, and ensuring ideological conformity.<sup>104</sup> The group has split its territories of operation in northeastern Nigeria into *wilaya* (provinces), which are further

<sup>93</sup> Vanguard, Killings: Northern govts rattled as Amotekun, other states' security outfits struggle without guns, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>94</sup> Iwuamadi, C.K. et al., Regional Security Outfits and the Challenges of Insecurity in Nigeria, 2021, [url](#), p. 480

<sup>95</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>96</sup> Amnesty International, A decade of impunity – Attacks and unlawful killings in South-East Nigeria, August 2025, [url](#), p. 69

<sup>97</sup> Foucher, V., Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation, UNIDIR (MEAC), September 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>98</sup> International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>99</sup> Foucher, V., Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation, UNIDIR (MEAC), September 2024, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>100</sup> US, ODNI, ISIS–West Africa (ISIS-WA), last updated April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>101</sup> UNSG, Twenty-first report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat, 1 August 2025, [url](#), para. 10

<sup>102</sup> UN Security Council, Letter dated 6 February 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fifth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2025/71/Rev.1, 6 February 2025, [url](#), para. 23

<sup>103</sup> Foucher, V., Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation, UNIDIR (MEAC), September 2024, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>104</sup> TNH, When rebels rule: ISWAP's formula for winning support in Nigeria's northeast, 24 July 2025, [url](#)





subdivided into several *mantiqa* (districts). A *mantiqa* is commanded by an *amir-ul mantiqa* (district head) who reports to the ISWAP's leadership.<sup>105</sup>

As of mid-2025, there were said to be three *wilaya*: Buhaira (on the fringes of Lake Chad), Faruq (covering southern Borno, southern Yobe and northern Adamawa), and Krenowa (comprising areas of northern and central Borno).<sup>106</sup> Vincent Foucher, a political scientist specialised in security issues in West Africa,<sup>107</sup> pointed to sources indicating that ISWAP had strengthened its presence outside of the North-East since the 2021 death of Abubakar Shekau<sup>108</sup> who led the rival faction JAS (often referred to as Boko Haram).<sup>109</sup>

ISWAP's attacks mainly targeted the military forces.<sup>110</sup> While the group also considered Christian communities as legitimate targets for its attacks, it sought to regulate its relations with Muslim communities on whom it imposed levies to maintain its standing armed fighting force. ISWAP has set up standardised military units, strengthened internal surveillance, and intensified its use of information technology.<sup>111</sup> Thus, the group has made effective use of technology to increase its appeal among young people and drive its recruitment efforts, spreading jihadist propaganda and justifying killings in TikTok videos.<sup>112</sup>

During its operations against positions of government forces in the first half of 2025, ISWAP gave evidence of using new military tactics<sup>113</sup> as it adapted to the government's 'super camp'<sup>114</sup> strategy,<sup>115</sup> including through the deployment of motorcycle-mounted combat units,<sup>116</sup> rapid assaults using light weaponry, nighttime raids,<sup>117</sup> near-simultaneous attacks at different places,<sup>118</sup> attacks on strategic roads and bridges, and diversionary attacks to prevent the arrival of government reinforcements.<sup>119</sup> Moreover, since December 2024, the group has used

<sup>105</sup> Foucher, V., Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation, UNIDIR (MEAC), September 2024, [url](#), pp. 14-15

<sup>106</sup> Samuel, M. and Stoddard, E., Resurgent jihadist violence in northeast Nigeria part of a worrying regional trend, TNH, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>107</sup> LAM, Vincent FOUCHER, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>108</sup> Foucher, V., Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation, UNIDIR (MEAC), September 2024, [url](#), p. 14

<sup>109</sup> International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>110</sup> Samuel, M. and Stoddard, E., Resurgent jihadist violence in northeast Nigeria part of a worrying regional trend, TNH, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>111</sup> Foucher, V., Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation, UNIDIR (MEAC), September 2024, [url](#), pp. 16-17

<sup>112</sup> Aina, F., Why Islamic State is expanding its operations in north-eastern Nigeria, The Conversation, 28 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>113</sup> AP, Boko Haram's resurgence: Why Nigeria's military is struggling to hold the line, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>114</sup> Beginning in 2019, Nigeria's army concentrated its forces in heavily fortified 'super camps' based in key towns to enhance its responsiveness to insurgent activity. However, as a result, large rural territories were ceded to insurgents. ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkinabe Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré; IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad; IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria; Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>115</sup> ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkinabe Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré; IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad; IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria; Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>116</sup> Jamestown Foundation (The), Brief: ISWAP Raids in Northeastern Nigeria Upset Regional Status Quo, 25 June 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Militants attack Nigerian army base, troops missing, sources say, 12 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>117</sup> AP, Boko Haram's resurgence: Why Nigeria's military is struggling to hold the line, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>118</sup> Samuel, M. and Stoddard, E., Resurgent jihadist violence in northeast Nigeria part of a worrying regional trend, TNH, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>119</sup> Aina, F., Why Islamic State is expanding its operations in north-eastern Nigeria, The Conversation, 28 May 2025, [url](#)





drones to conduct attacks,<sup>120</sup> rather than merely employing them for surveillance/ intelligence gathering<sup>121</sup> and propaganda purposes.<sup>122</sup> Following its successful overrunning of multiple military bases in Borno, researchers Malik Samuel and Ed Stoddard held that ISWAP had expanded its geographical scope and acquired the capability to attack ‘any location’ in the state, including garrison towns.<sup>123</sup>

**JAS (Boko Haram)** - JAS also remained active.<sup>124</sup> As of mid-2024, the group controlled several separate enclaves in Nigeria, including its main territory on the Lake Chad islands and Gwoza Hills near the Nigeria-Cameroon border. JAS also maintains at least one enclave outside the North-East, located in the hills near the Shiroro Reservoir in Kaduna State (North-West). The current top leader (*imam*) of JAS is Ibrahim Bakura Doro, also known as Bakura Buduma. Estimates on the number of JAS troops are particularly difficult to determine, as the organisation of its forces is much less structured compared to ISWAP, lacking standardised unit sizes. To gather resources, the group continued to resort to plunder and kidnap residents for ransom in the areas under its control, including Muslims. However, it has also started to tax residents in its Lake Chad enclave.<sup>125</sup> Although JAS primarily targeted civilians, it has continued to pose a threat to the military. Attacking military posts remained one of the group’s main methods of replenishing its arsenal.<sup>126</sup>

### Other Islamist armed groups

**Lakurawa** - Insurgents with suspected<sup>127</sup> links to Islamic State Sahel Province (ISSP), locally known as Lakurawa, have been operating in northwestern Nigeria’s Kebbi,<sup>128</sup> Sokoto<sup>129</sup> and Zamfara states. Described as a violent jihadist group, Lakurawa became a high security concern in northern Nigeria in 2024. Its fighters are believed to have crossed into Sokoto State from the Niger Republic in 2018.<sup>130</sup> Its members have assaulted villages in both Nigeria and Niger and were believed to hold territory in several villages, where they levied taxes.<sup>131</sup> After the Lakurawa killed 15 people in an attack on Mera village in Kebbi State in November

<sup>120</sup> Adebayo, T., Lake Chad Basin insurgents raise the stakes with weaponised drones, ISS, 17 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>121</sup> Aina, F., Why Islamic State is expanding its operations in north-eastern Nigeria, The Conversation, 28 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>122</sup> Jamiu, A., Nigeria: ISWAP extremists launching attack drones, DW, 16 April 2025, [url](#); Adebayo, T., Lake Chad Basin insurgents raise the stakes with weaponised drones, ISS, 17 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>123</sup> Samuel, M. and Stoddard, E., Resurgent jihadist violence in northeast Nigeria part of a worrying regional trend, TNH, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>124</sup> UN Security Council, Letter dated 6 February 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da’esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fifth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da’esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2025/71/Rev.1, 6 February 2025, [url](#), para. 26; International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>125</sup> Foucher, V., Boko Haram: Mapping an Evolving Armed Constellation, UNIDIR (MEAC), September 2024, [url](#), pp. 18-19

<sup>126</sup> International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>127</sup> Igwe, U., Is Lakurawa the emerging face of terror in the Sahel? [Blog], LSE, 27 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>128</sup> ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkina Faso Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré; IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad; IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria; Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>129</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>130</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>131</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)





2024,<sup>132</sup> authorities began a counterterrorism campaign in December 2024<sup>133</sup> and designated the group as a terrorist organisation.<sup>134</sup> The military campaign against Lakurawa continued in 2025, albeit at a less intensive pace.<sup>135</sup>

**Ansaru and Mahmuda** – Other Islamist insurgent groups in Nigeria include Ansaru - an al-Qaeda-affiliated network primarily based around the Kainji National Park between Niger and Kwara states<sup>136</sup> - and Mahmuda (also referred to as the Mallam Group after its leader), a newly emerged group that also operates in the same area<sup>137</sup> and is believed to be a Boko Haram splinter faction.<sup>138</sup> For more information on Mahmuda, please see section [2.1.4 Kwara](#).

### Pro-Biafran separatist groups

**Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB)** - IPOB is a secessionist group striving for the restoration of the now-defunct Republic of Biafra.<sup>139</sup> It was designated by the Nigerian government as a terrorist organisation and banned in 2017. The group's supreme leader Nnamdi Kanu was arrested and detained in 2021.<sup>140</sup> Since then, IPOB has been implementing a sit-at-home order across the South-East initially designed as a weekly protest calling for the release of its detained leader Nnamdi Kanu. Compliance with the weekly shutdowns have been enforced by armed men<sup>141</sup> known for resorting to coercive tactics such as looting, arson and targeted assassinations.<sup>142</sup> Meanwhile, there has been a recent shift away from armed violence in IPOB's messaging, assessed to be a 'more tactical than an ideological shift'.<sup>143</sup>

**Eastern Security Network (ESN)** - ESN is IPOB's paramilitary wing,<sup>144</sup> and it was created in December 2020 to protect Igbos from attacks by armed men (including Fulani herders).<sup>145</sup> ESN launched a campaign targeting Fulanis in the forests of the South-East. Over 2024, the campaign reportedly dislodged more than 70 Fulani herders and criminal settlements in these areas.<sup>146</sup> It also engaged in clashes with security forces, often conducting guerrilla-style

<sup>132</sup> Ojo, J.S. and Olumba, E.E., Nigeria's terror group Lakurawa is nothing new – it exists because of government's failure: analysts, *The Conversation*, 17 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>133</sup> ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkina Faso Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré; IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad; IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria; Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>134</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2025/187, 26 March 2025, [url](#), para. 22

<sup>135</sup> ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkina Faso Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré; IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad; IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria; Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>136</sup> Nigeria, NCTC, Counter-Terrorism: Nigeria captures top leaders of Ansaru terrorist group, 18 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>137</sup> Sahara Reporters, EXCLUSIVE: New Terrorist Group, Mahmuda Plotting To Establish Independent Government In Kwara, Collect Zakat, Allocate Lands — Emir, 30 June 2025, [url](#); TNV, New Terror Group Unleashes Fresh Attack On Kwara Community, 20 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>138</sup> ADF, Terror Group Mahmuda Emerges in North-Central Nigeria, Wreaks Havoc, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>139</sup> SBM Intelligence, Four Years of Disruption: Unmasking the Impact of IPOB's Sit-at-Home Order in Southeast Nigeria, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>140</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>141</sup> SBM Intelligence, Four Years of Disruption: Unmasking the Impact of IPOB's Sit-at-Home Order in Southeast Nigeria, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>142</sup> DW, Nigeria: The true cost of separatist sit-at-home protests, 4 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>143</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>144</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>145</sup> SBM Intelligence, Four Years of Disruption: Unmasking the Impact of IPOB's Sit-at-Home Order in Southeast Nigeria, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>146</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025





attacks against police and military installations.<sup>147</sup> As of mid-2025, ESN's strength was unknown. A Nigerian senior security advisor told EUAA in July 2025 that the security forces had killed many ESN commanders and members since 2023 and that attacks on security personnel had declined in frequency and fatalities since late 2024.<sup>148</sup>

**Biafran Republic Government In Exile (BRGIE) and the Biafran Liberation Army (BLA) -** Meanwhile, a rise in violent activities in the South-East since 2023 has been attributed to fighters linked to Simon Ekpa, a Finland-based agitator and self-acclaimed disciple of Kanu who that year announced the creation of the so-called Biafran Republic Government In Exile (BRGIE) and the Biafran Liberation Army (BLA).<sup>149</sup>

For more information see also 2.9.1. Treatment by authorities of pro-Biafran separatists and perceived pro-Biafran supporters and 2.9.2. Treatment by pro-Biafran armed groups of Igbos perceived as non-supporting the cause in [EUAA COI Report – Nigeria Country Focus, November 2025](#).

### Farmers and herders

While the conflict between farmers and herders was resurging over the first half of 2025, there was disagreement over the nature and categorisation<sup>150</sup> of this complex and under-researched phenomenon.<sup>151</sup> Some observers linked the clashes to pressures on herders induced by climate change<sup>152</sup> and competition over ever-dwindling resources,<sup>153</sup> while others labelled the violence as manifestations of organised criminality led by armed groups<sup>154</sup> or terrorism. Yet others have traced the violence to religious differences between the mostly Muslim herders and largely Christian farming communities, or to disputes between herders and farmers over land use.<sup>155</sup> For more information see [1.2.2 Intercommunal conflicts, including between farmers and herders](#).

### Bandits/criminal groups

Bandits are characterised by fragmentation and diversity in their capabilities and levels of organisation.<sup>156</sup> Some observers noted that the labelling of banditry as 'organised criminals', 'unknown gunmen', or 'terrorists' has created challenges in understanding the complex nature of this phenomenon. Bandit groups are described as diverse, mobile, and economically motivated. Their violence disproportionately affects men through killings and women through sexual assault, while the frequency and intensity of attacks continue to rise. Despite receiving limited attention compared to the insurgency in the North-East, in recent years banditry

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<sup>147</sup> SBM Intelligence, Four Years of Disruption: Unmasking the Impact of IPOB's Sit-at-Home Order in Southeast Nigeria, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>148</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>149</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>150</sup> DW, Nigeria's farmer-herder conflicts: Where is the end? [Video], 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>151</sup> Nana, S.S., How to stop Nigeria's worsening farmer-pastoralist violence, TNH, 5 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>152</sup> DW, Nigeria's farmer-herder conflicts: Where is the end? [Video], 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>153</sup> FT, Nigeria's spiralling rural violence heaps pressure on president, 27 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>154</sup> DW, Nigeria's farmer-herder conflicts: Where is the end? [Video], 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>155</sup> Ojewale, O. and Onuoha, F., Nigeria's North Central violence reveals systemic state failure, ISS, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>156</sup> Wiehler, C. and Malefakis, M., Time to Make 'Peace' with the Bandits, CSS, April 2024, [url](#), p. 1





violence has surpassed that perpetrated by groups like Boko Haram.<sup>157</sup> For more information see [1.2.3. Banditry and kidnappings](#).

### Cult groups/armed gangs

Numerous violent armed gangs originated as university confraternities (or cult groups) in southern Nigeria between the 1960s and the 2000s. These include Black Axe<sup>158</sup> (also known as Aiye), the Supreme Eiye Confraternity, the Supreme Vikings Confraternity, the Buccaneers<sup>159</sup> (Alora Sea Lords),<sup>160</sup> the Maphite, Deygbam and Deywell,<sup>161</sup> and ‘waterfront gangs’ of the Icelanders and Greenlanders<sup>162</sup> primarily operating in Rivers, Edo, Delta and Bayelsa states.<sup>163</sup> Few of these groups, with the exception of Black Axe, have sought to recruit new members outside their established homebases in the south.<sup>164</sup> While these groups are well-known, the most recorded incidents of lethal violence were linked to unidentified gangs.<sup>165</sup>

Black Axe is an organised criminal group running cells in numerous countries. In Nigeria, where it is often perceived as synonymous with its legal parent group, the Neo-Black Movement of Africa (NBM), Black Axe is notorious for its violence and brutality. Its members, active in cities like Lagos, Port Harcourt and Benin City, regularly engage in kidnapping, extortion, smuggling and drug dealing while competing with rival gangs (e.g., the Maphites, the Eiye and the Vikings) over territory. Like other gangs, Black Axe recruits new adherents from secondary schools and universities<sup>166</sup> and enforces permanent membership.<sup>167</sup>

The Maphite gang was dominant in Edo State, while Deygbam, Deywell and Icelanders were the dominant groups in Rivers. The Vikings were strongly established in Edo and Delta states. As of mid-2025, SBM Intelligence has identified three main gang rivalries: a fierce battle between Black Axe and Eiye’s over control of the Lagos underworld; the Vikings’ active resistance to Black Axe’s attempts to expand in the South-East and the South-South; and a deadly rivalry between local Icelanders and Greenlanders in Rivers State.<sup>168</sup> For more information see [1.2.4. Violence linked to criminality, gangs/cults and separatism in the Niger Delta](#).

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<sup>157</sup> Kleffmann, J. et al., Banditry Violence in Nigeria’s North West: Insights from Affected Communities, Findings Report 36, UNIDIR, July 2024, [url](#), pp. 3, 5

<sup>158</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Black Axe—Nigeria’s Most Notorious Transnational Criminal Organization, 29 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>159</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>160</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Eight Ekiti varsity students arrested for cultism, 8 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>161</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>162</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 21

<sup>163</sup> Punch, Rise of child cultists turning schools into battlefields (1), 9 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>164</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>165</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 21

<sup>166</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Black Axe—Nigeria’s Most Notorious Transnational Criminal Organization, 29 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>167</sup> Africa Report (The), Nigerian cult mafia groups and how they wreak havoc on society, 28 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>168</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 21



## 1.2. Conflict drivers and security trends

### 1.2.1. Attacks by Islamist groups and counter-insurgency operations

Northern Nigeria was described as a one of the main hotbeds of violence as it continued to be affected by armed attacks, abductions and banditry.<sup>169</sup> During the first half of 2024, the UN observed a deterioration of security conditions across the Lake Chad basin as operations of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)<sup>170</sup> faced disruptions after the military coup in Niger<sup>171</sup> in July 2023,<sup>172</sup> prompting a rise in militant and extremist activity in the North-East.<sup>173</sup>

Following a period of relative lull in insurgent activity,<sup>174</sup> ISWAP, a splinter faction of Boko Haram,<sup>175</sup> attacked Nigerian troops in Borno state in January 2025<sup>176</sup> and then launched a large-scale offensive across its zone of operation in the North-East, overrunning positions of government forces at multiple instances.<sup>177</sup> Amongst others, the group attacked army positions in Yamtaje town<sup>178</sup> and carried out coordinated attacks on Marte, Dikwa and Rann towns<sup>179</sup> (all located in Borno state).<sup>180</sup> It also extended its attacks into Yobe and Adamawa states.<sup>181</sup> Between February and late June 2025, ISWAP conducted 22 attacks on heavily fortified 'super camps' of the Nigerian armed forces, as recorded by the Jamestown Foundation.<sup>182</sup> Dozens of soldiers were killed in these attacks.<sup>183</sup> Some of the attacks were repelled by the army<sup>184</sup> or followed by counter-offensives that retook at least one base seized by the militants.<sup>185</sup>

Besides conducting attacks on military forces, ISWAP perpetrated deadly assaults against communities of Shiites (August 2024)<sup>186</sup> and Christians (April<sup>187</sup> and May 2025<sup>188</sup>). The Boko

<sup>169</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>170</sup> For more information on the MNJTF, see 1.3.1.6 Special forces / counter-terrorism in EUAA, COI Report Nigeria - Security Situation, June 2021, [url](#)

<sup>171</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/521, 1 July 2024, [url](#), para. 25

<sup>172</sup> SWP, Came to Stay: Niger's Military Junta Consolidates its Power, 5 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>173</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/521, 1 July 2024, [url](#), para. 25

<sup>174</sup> BBC News, Nigerian governor warns of Boko Haram comeback, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>175</sup> AP, Boko Haram's resurgence: Why Nigeria's military is struggling to hold the line, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>176</sup> BBC News, Nigerian governor warns of Boko Haram comeback, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>177</sup> ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkina Faso Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré; IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad; IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria; Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>178</sup> Reuters, ISWAP claims responsibility for deadly attacks in Nigeria, 21 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>179</sup> HumAngle, ISWAP Overruns Key Borno Sites in Coordinated Assault, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>180</sup> Reuters, ISWAP claims responsibility for deadly attacks in Nigeria, 21 April 2025, [url](#); HumAngle, ISWAP Overruns Key Borno Sites in Coordinated Assault, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>181</sup> ICIR, Back to the trenches: Ex-Boko Haram commanders, others reveal terrorists brutal comeback in North-East, 3 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>182</sup> Jamestown Foundation (The), Brief: ISWAP Raids in Northeastern Nigeria Upset Regional Status Quo, 25 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>183</sup> ICIR, Back to the trenches: Ex-Boko Haram commanders, others reveal terrorists brutal comeback in North-East, 3 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>184</sup> AA, Nigerian army kills 60 Boko Haram terrorists after repelling attack on military base, 30 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>185</sup> Reuters, Militants attack Nigerian army base, troops missing, sources say, 12 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>186</sup> Jamestown Foundation (The), Brief: Security Services and ISWAP May Be Pushing Nigeria's Shia Minority Toward Iran, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>187</sup> Reuters, ISWAP claims responsibility for deadly attacks in Nigeria, 21 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>188</sup> ICC, ISWAP Kills 23 Christian Farmers, Abducts 18 in Borno, 22 May 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Militants kill at least 23 in Nigeria attack, security sources say, 17 May 2025, [url](#)



Haram faction, JAS, likewise intensified its attacks on civilians and perceived government collaborators.<sup>189</sup> The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) identified 214 attacks on civilians by armed groups over the year 2024, resulting in more than 300 deaths.<sup>190</sup> Dozens of civilians were killed in attacks by Boko Haram factions in the region in September 2024<sup>191</sup> and January<sup>192</sup> and April 2025.<sup>193</sup> A key Boko Haram (JAS) commander and two of his deputies were killed in a targeted security operation in May 2025.<sup>194</sup>

In remote areas of the North-West, Lakurawa - a militant group with suspected<sup>195</sup> links to ISSP<sup>196</sup> and whose existence was only first acknowledged by the Nigerian government in November 2024 - launched attacks on local villages in late 2024/early 2025, killing dozens of residents. In response, armed forces launched air and ground operations against Lakurawa in late 2024<sup>197</sup> and arrested 174 suspected members of the group at the Nigeria-Niger border in January 2025.<sup>198</sup> According to Nigeria Watch, Lakurawa's raids on local communities and government operations against the group in 2024 resulted in 48 fatalities in Zamfara, Kebbi and Sokoto states.<sup>199</sup>

Military and security campaigns against insurgents further intensified in mid-2025, involving clearance operations, airstrikes and ambushes mainly in Borno, Adamawa, Kebbi and Zamfara states, resulting in the killing of dozens of armed militants.<sup>200</sup>

### 1.2.2. Intercommunal conflicts, including between farmers and herders

The country witnessed continued violence between herders and farmers<sup>201</sup> as well as deadly attacks on local communities by unidentified perpetrators.<sup>202</sup> In late May 2025, Amnesty International reported that at least 10 217 people had been killed in armed attacks in the states of Benue, Plateau (North-Central), Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara (North-West) and Edo (South-South) since the end of May 2023, with Benue accounting for most deaths (6 896), followed by Plateau (2 630).<sup>203</sup>

<sup>189</sup> AP, Boko Haram's resurgence: Why Nigeria's military is struggling to hold the line, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>190</sup> GPC, Protection Sector North-East Nigeria (PSNE), Annual Report 2024, 13 March 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>191</sup> SBM Intelligence, Chart of the week: Boko Haram and civilians, 26 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>192</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Boko Haram must end vicious killing spree, 15 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>193</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Terrorists kill 10 hunters, 30 others in Adamawa, Borno, 30 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>194</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Troops kill Boko Haram top commander Abu Fatima in Borno, 31 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>195</sup> Igwe, U., Is Lakurawa the emerging face of terror in the Sahel? [Blog], LSE, 27 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>196</sup> ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkinabe Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré; IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad; IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria; Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>197</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>198</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2025/187, 26 March 2025, [url](#), para. 24

<sup>199</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>200</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>201</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>202</sup> Conversation (The), Nigeria's growing security crisis: 6 essential reads, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>203</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis, 29 May 2025, [url](#)



After high levels of lethal violence in 2023,<sup>204</sup> the year 2024 saw a drop in fatalities from herder-farmer violence as Nigeria Watch recorded 567 such fatalities over the year (compared to 860 in 2023), with the largest numbers recorded in Kaduna state, the FCT and Delta state.<sup>205</sup> However, in the second quarter of 2025, Benue and Plateau states witnessed another ‘resurgence’ of the conflict,<sup>206</sup> involving a series of mass-casualty attacks by assailants linked to herders across Benue resulting in over 150 deaths<sup>207</sup> and several mass-casualty<sup>208</sup>/coordinated attacks in Plateau.<sup>209</sup> Government efforts to enhance security were hindered by a lack of police and military personnel and shortages in equipment, as Nnamdi Obasi, International Crisis Group’s senior adviser for Nigeria, told the Financial Times.<sup>210</sup>

### 1.2.3. Banditry and kidnappings

Banditry is described as a multifaceted crime encompassing acts such as armed robbery, murder, rape, kidnapping,<sup>211</sup> cattle rustling, armed attacks, and raids targeting local communities.<sup>212</sup> Perpetrated by groups defined as ‘highly fragmented’ and diverse in terms of their capabilities and degree of organisation, violence arising from banditry has increasingly become both more widespread and lethal,<sup>213</sup> spreading from the North-West to other regions and affecting remote villages, towns, and cities.<sup>214</sup>

During the reference period, banditry-related violence was reported in the country’s North-West<sup>215</sup> and North-Central zones,<sup>216</sup> as well as in Lagos and other areas of the South-West.<sup>217</sup> Riding on motorbikes (*okadas*), the mobility, weaponry, and unpredictable nature of these groups have reportedly created widespread fear across communities, with anecdotal accounts from residents suggesting that the gunmen ‘can reach anywhere ... whenever they want’ and ‘kidnap at their own discretion.’<sup>218</sup>

During 2024, Nigeria Watch reported an increase in fatalities arising from rural banditry, cattle rustling and related government operations (1 452 deaths, compared to 892 in 2023), with

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<sup>204</sup> FT, Nigeria’s spiralling rural violence heaps pressure on president, 27 April 2025, [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>205</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>206</sup> FT, Nigeria’s spiralling rural violence heaps pressure on president, 27 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>207</sup> HRW, Nigeria: Prioritize Security Amid Rising Violence in Benue State, 18 June 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The), Forty-two people killed in central Nigeria in attacks blamed on herders, 27 May 2025, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Herder-farmer clashes in Nigeria kill at least 56, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>208</sup> Conversation (The), Nigeria’s growing security crisis: 6 essential reads, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>209</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>210</sup> FT, Nigeria’s spiralling rural violence heaps pressure on president, 27 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>211</sup> Ojewale, O., ‘Northwest Nigeria Has a Banditry Problem. What’s Driving It?’, IPI Global Observatory, 22 May 2024, [url](#); Badiora, A.I., Terror attacks and kidnappings spread in Nigeria: why Lagos could be a target, The Conversation, 25 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>212</sup> Conversation (The), Nigeria’s growing security crisis: 6 essential reads, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>213</sup> Wiehler, C. and Malefakis, M., Time to Make ‘Peace’ with the Bandits, CSS, April 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>214</sup> Jones, M., & Kotarska, G., Crime, Terror and Insecurity in Nigeria. (RUSI Whitehall Report). Royal United Services Institute, 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>215</sup> International Crisis Group, Restoring Nigeria’s Leadership for Regional Peace and Security, 11 December 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>216</sup> HumAngle, What Is The Real Cause Of Attacks In Nigeria’s Middle Belt?, 4 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>217</sup> Conversation (The), Nigeria’s growing security crisis: 6 essential reads, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>218</sup> Jones, M., & Kotarska, G., Crime, Terror and Insecurity in Nigeria. (RUSI Whitehall Report). Royal United Services Institute, 2025, [url](#), p. 20

most fatalities recorded in Katsina, Zamfara and Kaduna.<sup>219</sup> In mid-2025, a further ‘significant surge’ in violence linked to banditry was reported, particularly across Niger, Katsina and Zamfara.<sup>220</sup>

Early 2024 saw a rise in kidnappings for ransom across the country,<sup>221</sup> including hundreds abductions in various parts of northern Nigeria in February and March 2024.<sup>222</sup> According to a February 2024 study by the Nigeria-based polling agency NOI Polls, the prevalence of kidnapping was highest in the North-Central zone, followed by the South-West, North-West, and South-East.<sup>223</sup> According to the consulting firm Nextier, 2 452 individuals were kidnapped during the year 2024, a 31 % rise over the 1 878 victims of kidnapping recorded in 2023.<sup>224</sup> At the same time, abduction-related fatalities dropped in 2024, according to Nigeria Watch (425 deaths, compared to 536 recorded in 2023).<sup>225</sup> 2025 saw continued large-scale kidnappings<sup>226</sup> and killings of abductees,<sup>227</sup> with kidnappings remaining a ‘pervasive threat’ across multiple states as of mid-2025.<sup>228</sup> Urban and rural areas, along with national highways, have emerged as vulnerable locations where kidnappings occur.<sup>229</sup> Victims of kidnappings included villagers,<sup>230</sup> travellers, political figures,<sup>231</sup> large numbers of schoolchildren and IDPs,<sup>232</sup> businesspeople, priests, and individuals perceived as being well-off.<sup>233</sup> Several military operations were launched in April 2025 against hideouts of bandits in northwestern Nigeria.<sup>234</sup>

#### 1.2.4. Violence linked to criminality, gangs/cults and separatism in the Niger Delta

The main drivers of insecurity and lethal violence in the Niger Delta region included criminality, violence linked to gangs/cults, mob violence, separatist agitation, communal

<sup>219</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>220</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>221</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/521, 1 July 2024, [url](#), para. 17, 25; Badiora, A.I., Terror attacks and kidnappings spread in Nigeria: why Lagos could be a target, The Conversation, 25 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>222</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/521, 1 July 2024, [url](#), para. 25; HRW, Armed Groups Kidnap Hundreds Across Northern Nigeria, 18 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>223</sup> Channels TV, NOI Poll On Kidnapping: N/Central, N/West, S/West Record Highest Rate Of Kidnapping [Online video], 9 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>224</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>225</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>226</sup> AFP, 'Bandits' kidnap more than 50 people in Nigeria, 3 August 2025; BBC News, Nigeria kidnappers kill 35 hostages even after ransom paid, 29 July 2025, [url](#); BBC News, Nigerian bandit kingpin and 100 followers killed, 12 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>227</sup> BBC News, Nigeria kidnappers kill 35 hostages even after ransom paid, 29 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>228</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>229</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>230</sup> BBC News, Nigerian bandit kingpin and 100 followers killed, 12 April 2025, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Dozens kidnapped by rifle-wielding men in northwest Nigeria village, 10 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>231</sup> Badiora, A.I., Terror attacks and kidnappings spread in Nigeria: why Lagos could be a target, The Conversation, 25 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>232</sup> HRW, Armed Groups Kidnap Hundreds Across Northern Nigeria, 18 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>233</sup> Al Jazeera, Why mass kidnappings still plague Nigeria a decade after Chibok abductions, 3 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>234</sup> BBC News, Nigerian bandit kingpin and 100 followers killed, 12 April 2025, [url](#)

violence,<sup>235</sup> disputes over land and resources,<sup>236</sup> armed clashes between criminals and security forces.<sup>237</sup> According to the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND), an Abuja-based non-profit organisation working on economic and conflict-related issues in the Niger Delta, in 2024, the region saw a 30 % decline in fatalities linked to violent incidents compared to 2023 (from 1 019 to 713 fatalities), with decreases recorded for fatalities linked to criminal violence (from 647 deaths to 475), communal violence (from 74 to 68) and cult/gang-related clashes (from 177 to 143). However, insecurity still persisted across the Niger Delta, as PIND recorded an 11 % rise in incidents of criminal violence (from 401 to 445 incidents).<sup>238</sup> For the first quarter of 2025, the same source reported a marginal 8.3 % decline in violent incidents compared to the last quarter of 2024, alongside a 27.7 % increase in overall conflict-related fatalities that was attributed to a rise in deaths from communal violence (from eight to 85), criminal violence (from 94 to 104) and mob violence (from 23 to 30).<sup>239</sup> The second quarter of 2025 saw a 24 % decline in overall conflict-related fatalities from the first quarter of 2025, attributed to a decrease in deaths from mob violence (30 to six), criminal violence (126 to 110) and communal conflicts (from 85 to 39).<sup>240</sup>

Nigeria Watch reported 328 fatalities arising from violence related to gangs/cults, with most fatalities recorded in Anambra, Lagos and Rivers states.<sup>241</sup> SBM Intelligence, a consultancy specialising in market and security research in West Africa,<sup>242</sup> stated that between January 2020 and March 2025, 1 686 individuals had been killed in at least 909 violent incidents linked to gangs/cults in Nigeria. Among these years under review, 2024 recorded by far the highest number of incidents (273), and the third-highest number of fatalities (333) (following 377 in 2021 and 350 in 2020).<sup>243</sup> The 'epicentres' of gang/cult-related violence were the South-South (accounting for more than 750 gang-related fatalities between January 2020 and March 2025) and the South-West (more than 491 fatalities). The South-East ranked third in terms of fatalities (more than 215 fatalities). By contrast, the North-East and the North-West together saw less than 30 fatalities linked to these traditional gangs,<sup>244</sup> which can all trace their origins to the south.<sup>245</sup> Meanwhile, the South-East also saw 379 deaths arising from violence related to pro-Biafran agitation in 2024.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 1; PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>236</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>237</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>238</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>239</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), pp. 1-2

<sup>240</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>241</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>242</sup> SBM Intelligence, Homepage, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>243</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster's Paradise: Nigeria's Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025 [Graph], 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>244</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster's Paradise: Nigeria's Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>245</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster's Paradise: Nigeria's Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>246</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 13



### 1.2.5. Electoral violence

There were instances of violence ahead of the Edo state gubernatorial elections in September 2024, including assaults and shootings.<sup>247</sup> For more information see [2.5.5. Edo](#).

### 1.2.6. Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and airstrikes

Sources reported widely different numbers of fatalities caused by IED attacks, with Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) recording 200 such civilian deaths<sup>248</sup> and SBM Intelligence documenting 42 related deaths in 2024.<sup>249</sup> After years of low incidence of suicide attacks,<sup>250</sup> a notable upsurge in bombings by ISWAP was observed in the North-East,<sup>251</sup> with unclaimed suicide attacks killing dozens in mid-2024 in Borno's Gwoza and Konduga LGAs.<sup>252</sup> At least one large-scale suicide attack was reported in 2025.<sup>253</sup> Meanwhile, airstrikes by the Nigerian armed forces killed dozens of civilians in Kaduna,<sup>254</sup> Sokoto<sup>255</sup> and Zamfara states.<sup>256</sup> Amongst others, an airstrike targeting a site of the insurgent group Lakurawa in Sokoto State mistakenly killed 10 civilians in late 2024.<sup>257</sup>

### 1.2.7. Main security trends and impact on the civilian population

#### Security Incidents

According to ACLED data, 7 127 security incidents (coded as 'battles', 'explosions/remote violence', 'riots', and 'violence against civilians'<sup>258</sup>) occurred across the country during the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025. Of these incidents, 2 627 were coded by ACLED as battles, 348 as explosions/remote violence, 566 as riots, and 3 586 as violence against civilians.<sup>259</sup>

<sup>247</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 41

<sup>248</sup> AOAV, Explosive Violence Monitor 2024, 20 May 2025, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>249</sup> SBM Intelligence, Nigeria's growing IED menace, 19 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>250</sup> HRW, Resurgence of Suicide Bombings in Nigeria's Boko Haram Conflict, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>251</sup> UN Security Council, Letter dated 19 July 2024 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fourth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2024/556, 22 July 2024, [url](#), para. 27

<sup>252</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/871, 2 December 2024, [url](#), para. 26

<sup>253</sup> HRW, Resurgence of Suicide Bombings in Nigeria's Boko Haram Conflict, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>254</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#); HRW, Nigerian Military Accused of Another Deadly Airstrike, 9 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>255</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#);

Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

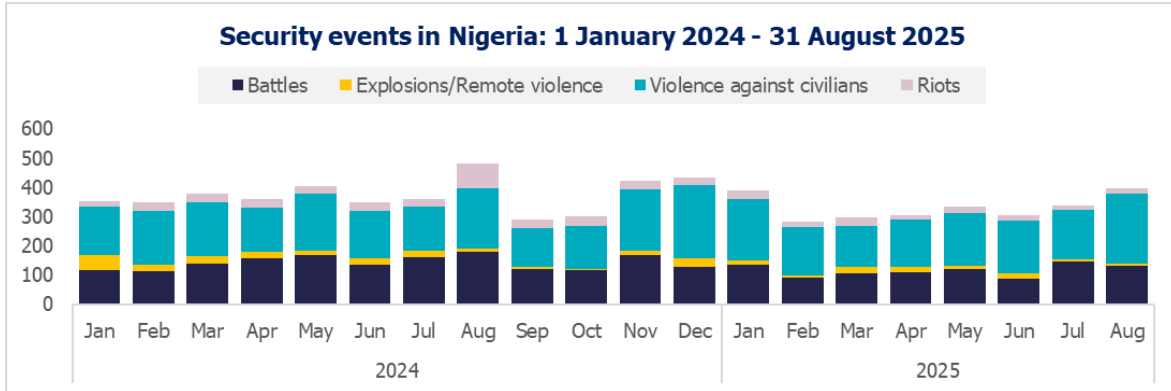
<sup>256</sup> HRW, Another Erroneous Airstrike Claims Lives in Nigeria, 13 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>257</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>258</sup> Kidnappings are categorized by ACLED as 'violence against civilians'.

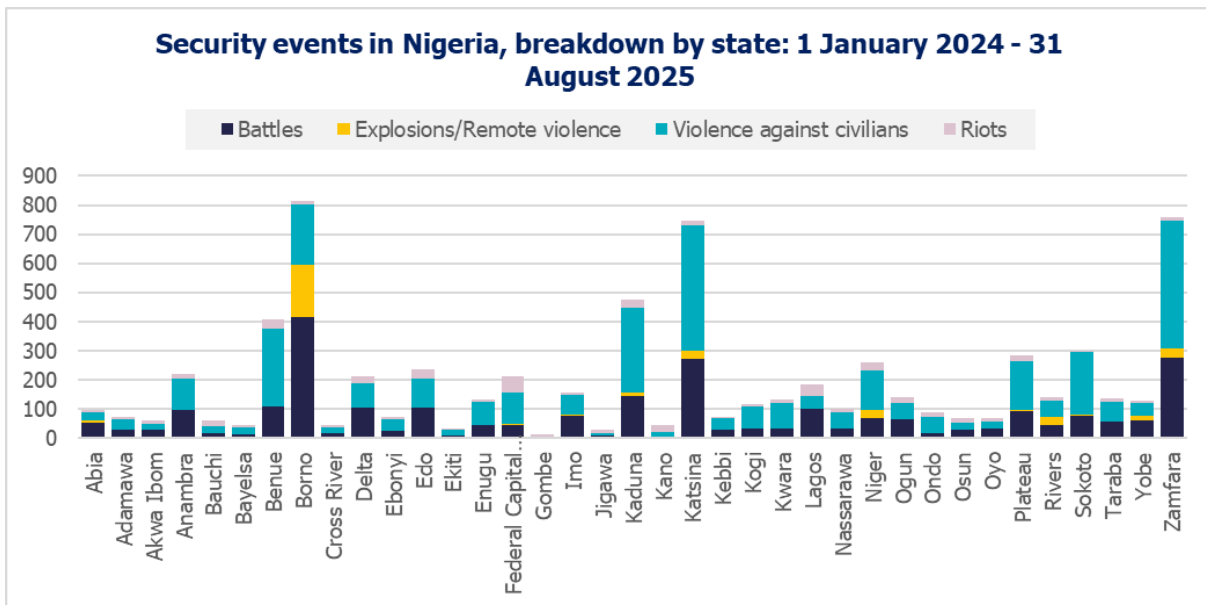
<sup>259</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 1: Evolution of countrywide security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots and violence against civilians in Nigeria, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>260</sup>**

The highest numbers of security incidents were recorded by ACLED in Borno (813 incidents), Zamfara (760), and Katsina states (746). By contrast, the fewest incidents were recorded in Gombe (12), Jigawa (26) and Ekiti states (30).<sup>261</sup>



**Figure 2: Breakdown of countrywide security events in Nigeria by states, in alphabetical order, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, monthly breakdown, based on ACLED data.<sup>262</sup>**

Some illustrative incidents include:

- On 7 March 2024, bandits abducted 287 schoolchildren, including numerous girls, in the town of Kuriga, Kaduna State.<sup>263</sup>

<sup>260</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>261</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>262</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>263</sup> HRW, Armed Groups Kidnap Hundreds Across Northern Nigeria, 18 March 2024, [url](#)



- On 12 January 2025, suspected Boko Haram/ISWAP militants killed at least 40 civilians as they attacked the Dumba community of Borno State.<sup>264</sup>
- On 13 April 2025, unidentified gunmen attacked two villages in the Bassa LGA of Plateau State, killing 52 people.<sup>265</sup>
- On 14 June 2025, unidentified gunmen suspected to be linked to herder communities launched an attack on Yelewata community (Benue State). The state governor stated that 59 residents had been killed in the attack, although media citing victims lists put the death toll at more than 100.<sup>266</sup>
- On 21 June 2025, a suicide bombing by a woman at a market in Konduga town (Borno State) reportedly left at least 12 people dead. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.<sup>267</sup>
- In July 2025, at least 70 vigilantes were killed as they were ambushed by bandits in Kanam LGA of Plateau state.<sup>268</sup>
- On 5 September 2025, Boko Haram carried out a nighttime assault on a community in Borno state’s Bama LGA, killing over 60 people, including seven soldiers.<sup>269</sup>

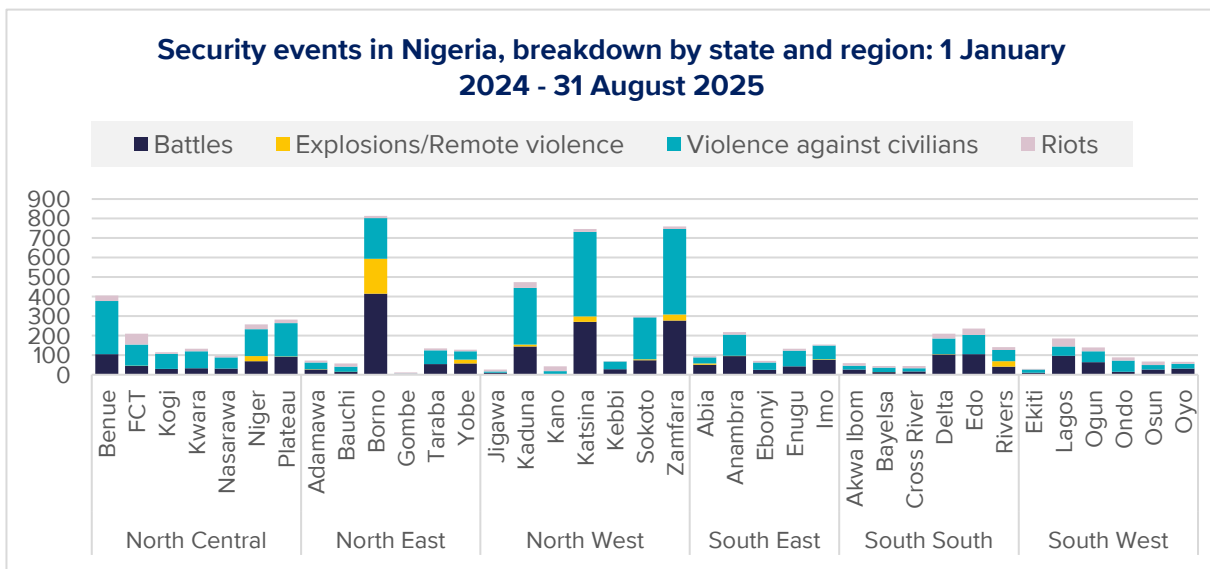


Figure 3: Breakdown of countrywide security events in Nigeria by states, grouped per geopolitical region, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, monthly breakdown, based on ACLED data.<sup>270</sup>

<sup>264</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Boko Haram must end vicious killing spree, 15 January 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Militants kill at least 40 farmers in Nigeria’s Borno state, 13 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>265</sup> Le Monde, Dozens killed in Nigeria attack as President Tinubu vows crackdown, 15 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>266</sup> HRW, Nigeria: Prioritize Security Amid Rising Violence in Benue State, 18 June 2025, [url](#)

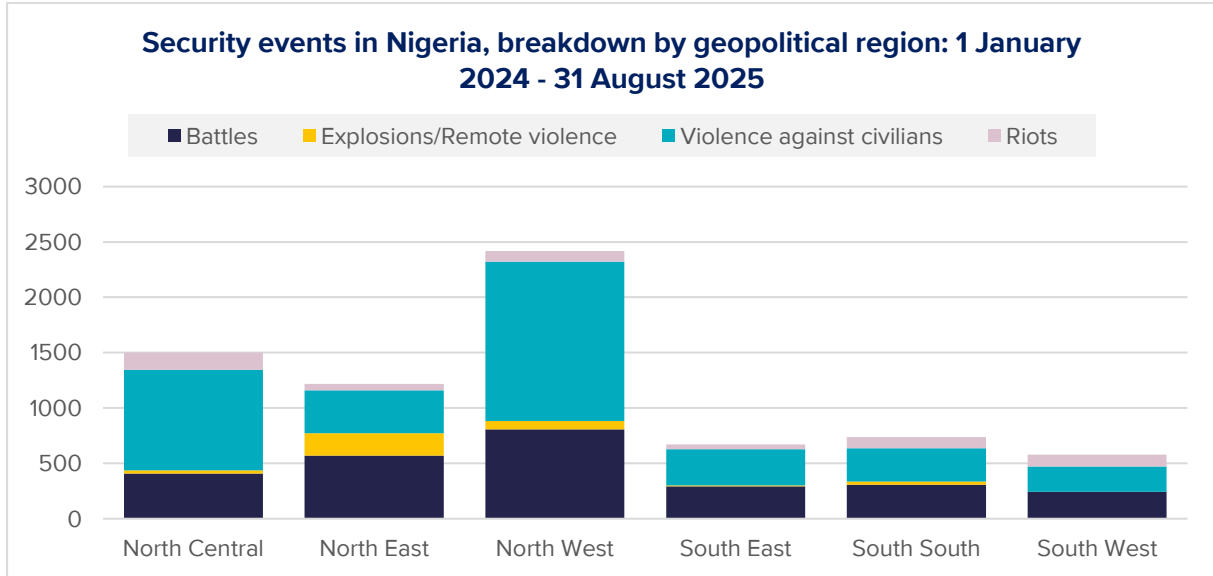
<sup>267</sup> HRW, Resurgence of Suicide Bombings in Nigeria’s Boko Haram Conflict, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>268</sup> Daily Post, Bandits ambush, kill over 70 vigilante members in Plateau, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>269</sup> Reuters, Boko Haram kills dozens in 'house to house' attack in Nigeria's northeast, residents say, 6 September 2025, [url](#);

<sup>270</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 4: Breakdown of countrywide security events in Nigeria by geopolitical region, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>271</sup>**

### Fatalities

ACLED recorded a total of 17 109 fatalities as having been caused by security incidents across the country, recorded during the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, including 5 840 that resulted from incidents coded as ‘violence against civilians’.<sup>272</sup>

### Internal Displacement

According to UNHCR, as of August 2025, 3 575 114 IDPs and 23 732 refugee returnees were living in Nigeria. The highest number of people were displaced in the North-East (2 252 348), mainly due to insurgency (92 %) and communal violence (6 %), followed by the North-West (718 126) and North-Central (604 640), driven by a variety of conflict-related dynamics. At state level, most IDPs were recorded in Borno (1 704 175), Benue (457 666), Katsina (270 968), Zamfara (216 968) and Adamawa states (200 211).<sup>273</sup> According to the IDMC, 295 000 people were newly displaced across the country as a result of conflict and violence, including nearly 123 000 due to criminal violence in the North-West (Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara), 57 000 due to conflict in states such as Borno and Yobe, and 43 000 as a result of communal violence in Benue.<sup>274</sup>

<sup>271</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

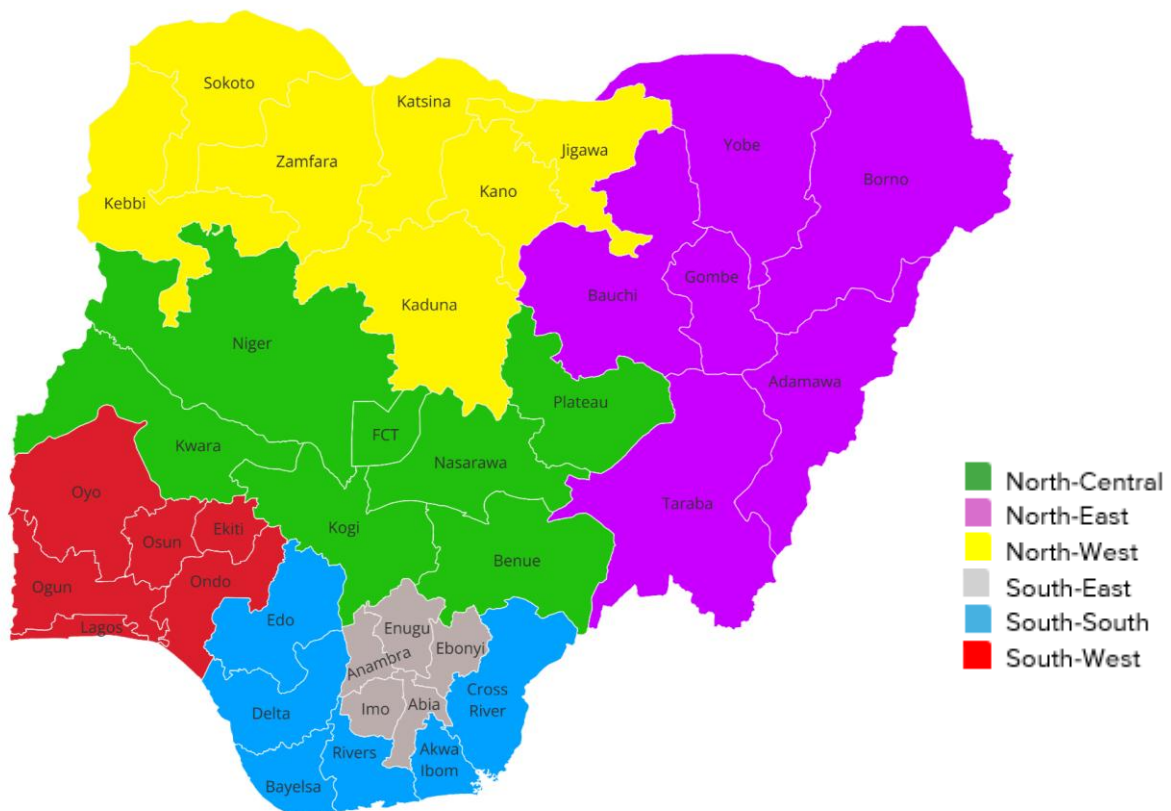
<sup>272</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>273</sup> UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>274</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 32

## 2. Security situation per state and Federal Capital Territory

Nigeria is a federal republic with three levels of government: federal, state, and local.<sup>275</sup> It is divided into 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The 36 states and the FCT are grouped into six geopolitical regions.<sup>276</sup>



**Map 2. EUAA visualisation based on publicly available information by Federal Government of Nigeria<sup>277</sup> and publicly available data on administrative boundaries sourced from the Office for the Surveyor General of the Federation of Nigeria (OSGOF), Ehealth, United Nations Cartographic Section (UNCS) on UN OCHA, The Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX).<sup>278</sup> The visualisation has been generated using QGIS 3.44<sup>279</sup>**

<sup>275</sup> Ata-Agboni, J. U. et al., Federalism and Local Government System in Nigeria: A Critical Assessment, January 2023, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>276</sup> Nigeria, Nigeria Embassy Berlin, Government, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>277</sup> Nigeria, About Nigeria, States, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>278</sup> OSGOF, UNCS, UN OCHA, HDX, n.d., latest modified 4 April 2023, [url](#)

<sup>279</sup> QGIS 3.44, n.d., [url](#)



For general information on the country, including historical background, state structure, key political developments, human rights and socio-economic situation, see [EUAA COI Report – Nigeria Country Focus, November 2025](#).

More detailed information on geography and economy for each state and FCT is provided in [EUAA COI Report Nigeria - Security Situation June 2021](#).

## 2.1. North-Central

North-Central consists of the following six states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT): Benue, FCT Abuja, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau.<sup>280</sup>

For an overview of the main conflict drivers at the country and regional levels, see [1. General description of the security situation](#).

### 2.1.1. Benue

Benue state is comprised of the following 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs): Ado, Agatu, Apa, Buruku, Gboko, Guma, Gwer East, Gwer West, Katsina-Ala, Konshisha, Kwande, Logo, Makurdi, Obi, Ogbadibo, Ohimini, Oju, Okpokwu, Otukpo, Tarka, Ukum, Ushongo and Vandeikya. The state's capital is Makurdi.<sup>281</sup>

The main ethnic groups are Tiv, Idoma, Igede, Etulo, Abakpa, Jukun, Hausa, Akweya and Nyifon.<sup>282</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 6 141 284 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>283</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Benue was frequently affected by intercommunal clashes, primarily fuelled by disputes between nomadic herders and predominantly settled farming communities regarding access to and control of natural resources, including land and water.<sup>284</sup> Attacks primarily affected farmers.<sup>285</sup> In a May 2025 report, Amnesty International mentioned that all 23 LGAs of Benue state had experienced attacks by gunmen and bandits, with Ukum, Logo, Katsina-Ala, Gwer West, Gwer East, Apa and Agatu LGAs facing attacks more frequently.<sup>286</sup> In March 2025, SBM Intelligence mentioned protests against attacks by alleged Fulani herdsmen. Benue state

<sup>280</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, North Central, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>281</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Benue, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>282</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Benue, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>283</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>284</sup> HRW, Nigeria: Prioritize Security Amid Rising Violence in Benue State, 18 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>285</sup> GCR2P, Atrocity Alert No. 444: Nigeria, Haiti and South Sudan, 18 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>286</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)





remained the ‘epicentre’ of protests. According to SBM ‘reports suggest some peaceful Fulani communities face increasing hostility, regardless of their involvement in violence.’<sup>287</sup>

Regular killings by (alleged) herders were reported over the reference period in 2024 (for example in March,<sup>288</sup> July,<sup>289</sup> October,<sup>290</sup> and December<sup>291</sup>) and 2025 (for example in February,<sup>292</sup> April,<sup>293</sup> May,<sup>294</sup> June<sup>295</sup> and July<sup>296</sup>). Besides attacks by Fulani militias<sup>297</sup> and unspecified armed men,<sup>298</sup> other types of violence included clashes between rival militias<sup>299</sup> and abductions.<sup>300</sup> According to a report by Nextier, 97 kidnap victims were recorded in 2024.<sup>301</sup>

Clashes between cult groups were also reported.<sup>302</sup> According to a July 2025 SBM Intelligence report, Benue state recorded 81 gang-related deaths, with gang activities ‘often intersecting with farmer-herder clashes.’<sup>303</sup> The gang environment of the state was marked by longstanding rivalries among groups like the Eiye, Vikings, and Buccaneers, as well as the presence of localised factions such as the Red Axe and Chain. The Red Axe, an offshoot of the Supreme Eiye confraternity, operated exclusively within Benue.<sup>304</sup>

## b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 406 security incidents in Benue state, which resulted in 1 338 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 106 were coded as battles, 29 as riots and 271 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>305</sup>

<sup>287</sup> SBM Intelligence, A threat to national stability, 27 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 18-19

<sup>288</sup> Vanguard, Over 15 killed, residents flee as herders attack Benue communities, 22 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>289</sup> Daily Post, Herdsmen invade Benue community, kill 13, 10 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>290</sup> Blueprint, Gunmen kill over 15 in Benue community, 31 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>291</sup> Punch, Suspected herders kill 11 in Benue on Christmas Day, 27 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>292</sup> Punch, Suspected herders kill 19 in fresh Benue attack, 18 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>293</sup> Business Day, Benue killings death toll hits 70, 23 April 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Death toll in Nigeria attacks by herders rises to 56, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>294</sup> Guardian (The), Forty-two people killed in central Nigeria in attacks blamed on herders, 27 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>295</sup> Blueprint, Senate declares Yelewata, Mangu massacre, act of terrorism, tables demand, 26 June 2025, [url](#);

Reuters, Charred bodies, shattered lives after gunmen kill 100 in Nigeria, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Yelewata: List of 127 persons killed in Benue community, 16 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>296</sup> Punch, Armed herders kill four security men on patrol in Benue, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>297</sup> Truth Nigeria, Benue Officials Charge Ethnic Militias With Returning to Threaten Farmers, 31 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>298</sup> Daily Trust, 7 killed in fresh Benue attacks, 7 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, 7 killed, 3 abducted in fresh Benue

attack, 25 April 2025, [url](#); France 24, Gunmen kill at least 56 people in central Nigeria, 20 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>299</sup> Vanguard, 9 killed in Benue rival militia gang war, 19 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>300</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen abduct 10 passengers in Benue, 2 June 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Catholic Priest Shot, Others Abducted by Suspected Herdsmen in Benue, 26 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, 7 killed, 3 abducted in fresh Benue

attack, 25 April 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Again, armed herders kidnap 19 commuters in Benue, 24 April 2025, [url](#);

Vanguard, Anxiety in Benue as criminal gang of late militia kingpin, Gana embark on killings, kidnapping, 7 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>301</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p. 31

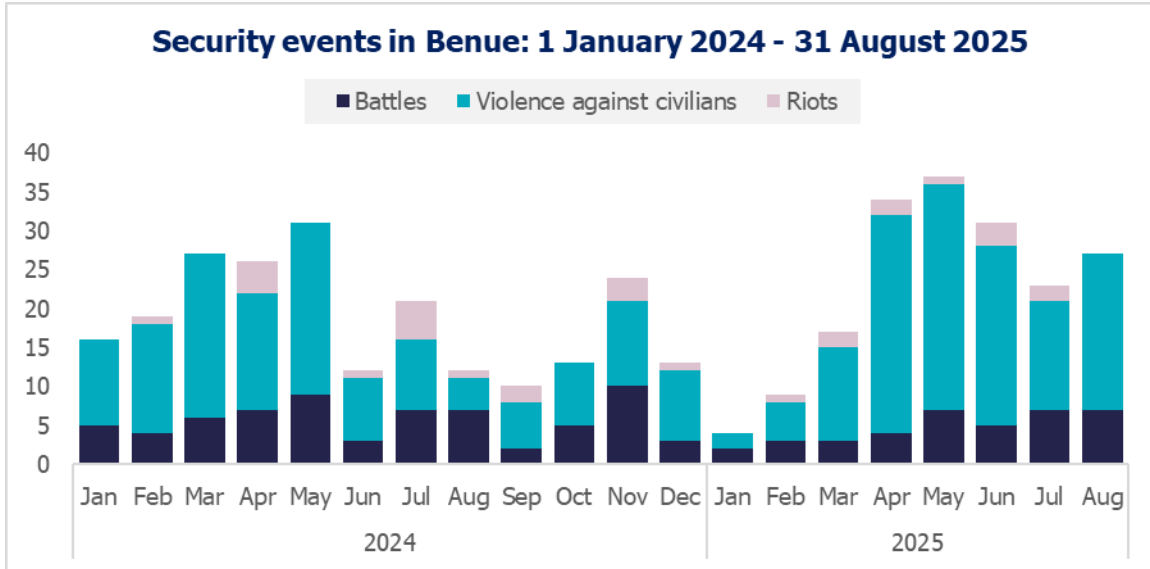
<sup>302</sup> Vanguard, 10 killed in Makurdi rival cult clash 28 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, 8 dead as rival cults clashed in Benue, 9 February 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Police quell cult clash in Benue, 19 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>303</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>304</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>305</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 5: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Benue state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>306</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 22 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Makurdi (62 incidents), Agatu (48 incidents), Otukpo (41 incidents), Ukum (39 incidents) and Qwer West LGAs (37). No incidents were recorded in one LGA (Obi). According to ACLED, Fulani ethnic militia and unidentified armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>307</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch’s annual report covering 2024, the highest number of deaths from violence involving farmers and herders countrywide was recorded in Benue State (376), with Agatu (99), Kwande (76), Logo (60), Gwer West (46) and Apa (32) LGAs being the most affected.<sup>308</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, regarding fatalities, Benue was the second most affected state by ethno-communal violence in 2024,<sup>309</sup> with deadly incidents reported in Ado LGA in December 2024<sup>310</sup> and April 2025.<sup>311</sup>

In February 2025, eight people were killed in alleged clashes between the Black Axe and Vikings cult groups in Benue’s capital Makurdi.<sup>312</sup> In April 2025, an attack by alleged members of the Effium community against members of the Ezza community resulted in the killing of two persons and the disappearance of several others.<sup>313</sup> In April 2025, suspected herders killed 11 persons in Afia community in Ukum LGA,<sup>314</sup> and in May 2025 suspected herders killed 42

<sup>306</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>307</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>308</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>309</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth Report on Violence (2024), n.d., [url](#), p. 15

<sup>310</sup> Vanguard, Sen Moro condemns Ezza/Effium crisis spillover to Benue, 19 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>311</sup> Daily Post, Ezza indigenes killed, others missing in fresh attack on Benue community, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>312</sup> Daily Post, 8 dead as rival cults clashed in Benue, 9 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>313</sup> Daily Post, Ezza indigenes killed, others missing in fresh attack on Benue community, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>314</sup> Daily Post, Again, suspected herdsmen kill 11 in Benue community, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

people in four communities in Gwer West LGA.<sup>315</sup> In June 2025, up to over 200 people were killed in attacks by gunmen in Yelewata, in Guma LGA.<sup>316</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - In May 2025, Amnesty International reported that gunmen not only killed individuals but also destroyed boreholes, clinics, and schools following attacks. Amnesty International documented that, during attacks on communities in Ukum and Logo LGAs, grain reserves and religious sites were destroyed.<sup>317</sup> Reportedly armed groups occupied farmland and obstructed agricultural activities.<sup>318</sup>

**Road security** - Kidnappings were reported along various roads in the reference period.<sup>319</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Benue state at 457 666<sup>320</sup> compared to 401 403 as of November 2024.<sup>321</sup> IOM lists communal clashes (45 %), farmer-herder clash (36 %) and insurgency (18 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>322</sup> IDMC recorded 43 000 displacements triggered by communal conflicts in Benue in 2024.<sup>323</sup> According to a July 2025 article by Amnesty International, attacks by gunmen had displaced at least 500 000 people.<sup>324</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Benue state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Media reported on Operation Whirl Stroke (OPWS), launched in May 2018,<sup>325</sup> with activities in Benue state, including the rescue of kidnapped victims,<sup>326</sup> operations against bandit hideouts<sup>327</sup> and the arrest of suspects.<sup>328</sup> In June 2025, new combat and mobility equipment was deployed to troops of OPWS<sup>329</sup> following the killing of civilians in Yelewata on 14 June 2025 (see above), with sources alleging state failure regarding the protection of citizens.<sup>330</sup>

<sup>315</sup> Guardian (The), Forty-two people killed in central Nigeria in attacks blamed on herders, 27 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>316</sup> Blueprint, Senate declares Yelewata, Mangu massacre, act of terrorism, tables demand, 26 June 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Charred bodies, shattered lives after gunmen kill 100 in Nigeria, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Yelewata: List of 127 persons killed in Benue community, 16 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>317</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>318</sup> GCR2P, Atrocity Alert No. 444: Nigeria, Haiti and South Sudan, 18 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>319</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen abduct 12 Benue Links passengers, 24 June 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, 12 travellers abducted by gunmen in Benue, one rescued as search intensifies, 23 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Gunmen abduct 10 passengers in Benue, 2 June 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Again, armed herders kidnap 19 commuters in Benue, 24 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>320</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 1 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>321</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>322</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>323</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025; Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 32

<sup>324</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Violence and widespread displacement leave Benue facing a humanitarian disaster, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>325</sup> Channels TV, Military Launches Operation 'Whirl Stroke' In Benue, 18 May 2028, [url](#)

<sup>326</sup> Punch, Two police officers, nine others rescued from Benue kidnappers, 5 August 2025, [url](#); Punch, Troops rescue 12 kidnapped victims, 23 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>327</sup> Daily Post, Army storms bandits' hideouts in Benue, destroys Konyo Mbise's camp, 19 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>328</sup> Daily Post, Troops of Operation Whirl Stroke arrest two armed men in Benue, 4 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>329</sup> Daily Post, Military reinforces troops in North Central with new combat vehicles, motorcycles, 20 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>330</sup> HRW, Nigeria: Prioritize Security Amid Rising Violence in Benue State, 18 June 2025, [url](#); Ojewale, O. and Onuoha, F., Nigeria's North Central violence reveals systemic state failure, ISS, 26 June 2025, [url](#); Cleen

Also, the Nigeria Police Force, military, and intelligence services were criticised for their continued inability ‘to safeguard vulnerable communities and deter armed non-state actors’ following the attacks.<sup>331</sup> An April 2025 article by France 24 on killings in Benue state noted that critics alleged ‘a failure by authorities and police to govern the countryside.’<sup>332</sup> Reportedly, despite various efforts, state-level initiatives such as the anti-open grazing law, community dialogues and compensation programmes had not proven effective, while military operations often triggered reprisals by bandits and armed groups.<sup>333</sup>

## 2.1.2. FCT Abuja

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja is comprised of the following six LGAs: Abaji, Abuja Municipal, Gwagwalada, Kuje, Bwari and Kwali.<sup>334</sup>

The main ethnic group in Abuja is Gbagyi (Gwari).<sup>335</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 3 067 457 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>336</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

The FCT was frequently affected by kidnappings,<sup>337</sup> often occurring in the suburbs of the FCT.<sup>338</sup> According to a report by Nextier, 116 kidnap victims were recorded in 2024.<sup>339</sup> Incidents, for example, were reported in November 2024,<sup>340</sup> and January,<sup>341</sup> February,<sup>342</sup> March,<sup>343</sup> and May<sup>344</sup> 2025. In some cases, arrests of alleged kidnappers<sup>345</sup> and clashes

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Foundation, Condemning the Renewed Killings in Benue State and Calling for Immediate Government Action, 18 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>331</sup> Rule of Law and Empowerment Initiative, Escalating Insecurity In Benue State: A National Call To Action, 17 June 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>332</sup> France 24, Gunmen kill at least 56 people in central Nigeria, 20 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>333</sup> OWP, Benue State’s Farmer-Herder Conflict, A Major Threat To Stability, 30 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>334</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Federal Capital Territory, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>335</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Federal Capital Territory, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>336</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>337</sup> Punch, Many feared abducted as kidnappers storm Abuja estate, 26 May 2025, [url](#); FIJ, Daily Abductions Fuel Fear Among Abuja Residents, 1 November 2024, [url](#); SBM Intelligence, Inside Nigeria’s Hostage Capital: Unraveling the economic impact of Abuja’s kidnap epidemic, 1 February 2024, [url](#); Africanews, Nigeria: mass kidnappings returns to Abuja, 17 January 2024, [url](#); Leadership, Escalation Of Kidnapping In Abuja, A Cause For Concern, 23 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>338</sup> DW, Nigeria: Kidnappings in Abuja spark new fears, 19 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>339</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>340</sup> FIJ, Daily Abductions Fuel Fear Among Abuja Residents, 1 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>341</sup> Premium Times, How APC leader Rauf Adeniji died in kidnappers’ den, 11 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>342</sup> Vanguard, Kidnappers kill 2 FCT residents over delay in ransom payment, 20 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>343</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Gunmen kidnap Defence HQ official, two others in Abuja 22 March 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Kidnappers abduct village head, grandchildren, 5 others in Abuja, 12 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>344</sup> Punch, Many feared abducted as kidnappers storm Abuja estate, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>345</sup> Global Upfront, Police Arrest Another Notorious Kidnapping Kingpin In FCT Abuja, Recover Weapon, 18 June 2025, [url](#); Leadership, Police Uncover Kidnappers’ Hideout In Abuja, Arrest 4, 3 October 2024, [url](#)

between them and police<sup>346</sup> were reported. Bwari LGA was affected by kidnappings for ransom,<sup>347</sup> with at least 49 kidnapping victims reported over the year 2024.<sup>348</sup> In June 2024, a media article mentions 'cases of deadly cult clashes and attacks' in Bwari Area Council.<sup>349</sup>

Other types of violence resulting in fatalities included attacks by gunmen,<sup>350</sup> including attacks against herders<sup>351</sup> and by herders.<sup>352</sup> Deadly clashes between members of the proscribed Islamic Movement in Nigeria<sup>353</sup> and security forces were reported in March 2025<sup>354</sup> and August 2024.<sup>355</sup> Further protests were reported in early August 2024, when police used tear gas to disperse protesters demonstrating against economic reforms by the government,<sup>356</sup> and in March 2024, riots were reported at Abuja's Wuse market.<sup>357</sup> An IED explosion was reported at a school in the outskirts of Abuja in January 2025, killing two people and injuring two others.<sup>358</sup> Another explosion occurred outside an army barracks in the centre of the capital Abuja in May 2025, injuring one person.<sup>359</sup>

## b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 210 security incidents in FCT Abuja, which resulted in 170 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 45 were coded as battles, 2 as explosions/remote violence, 55 as riots and 108 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>360</sup>

<sup>346</sup> Vanguard, Police foil plans to kidnap residents of El-Rufai Estate in Abuja, 18 July 2024, [url](#); Daily Trust, Policeman killed as officers foil kidnap of FCT council chair's family, 10 April 2024, [url](#); Daily Trust, 'Wanted' suspected bandit killed in gun duel with police in FCT, 13 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>347</sup> Daily Trust, After killing Abuja village head, kidnappers reduce ransom on grandchildren, 19 March 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Abductors of APC nat'l director demand N350m ransom, 12 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>348</sup> Premium Times, Armed men disguised as vigilantes kidnap family of three in Abuja, 27 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>349</sup> Daily Trust, Mpape: Inside Abuja community under siege by cult, criminal gangs, 29 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>350</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen kill 2 vigilantes in reprisal attack near FCT, 11 July 2025, [url](#); Tribune Online, Gunmen invade Abuja communities, kill one, abduct four, 30 June 2024, [url](#); Cable (The), Gunmen 'kill three more residents' kidnapped from Abuja community, 15 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>351</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen kill 2 vigilantes in FCT, 14 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>352</sup> Daily Trust, 1 killed as herders, villagers fight over water pond in Abuja community, 6 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>353</sup> The Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) is a Shia minority movement with close links to Iran, active primarily in northern Nigeria. It emerged in the 1980s under the leadership of Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, who was influenced by Iran's revolutionary ideology. The government formally announced the banning of the group in July 2019. HRW, Nigeria: Court Bans Shia Group, 30 July 2019, [url](#)

<sup>354</sup> AP, Clash between Nigerian security forces and members of pro-Palestinian group kill 6, 29 March 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Shi'ite protesters clash with Nigerian military, police in Abuja, 29 March 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police confirm officer killed in IMN attack, 29 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>355</sup> Vanguard, 2 officers, IMN members killed as Police, Shi'ite clash in Abuja, 26 August 2024, [url](#)

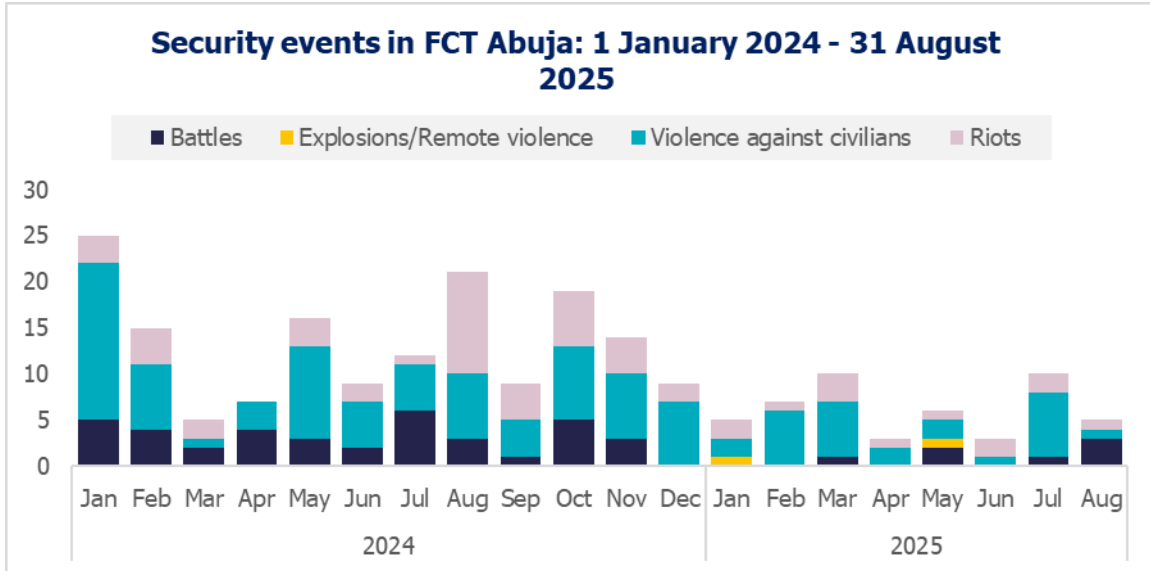
<sup>356</sup> Reuters, At least 3 killed in Nigeria at protests over high cost of living, 1 August 2024, [url](#); Channels TV, Security Operatives Clash With Protesters In Gwagwalada, Abuja, 2 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>357</sup> Channels TV, Uproar As Wuse Market Shut Down After Fire Outbreak, 13 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>358</sup> AP, Explosive device kills 2 at a school near Nigeria's capital, police say, 7 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>359</sup> Reuters, Nigeria police investigate blast outside army barracks in Abuja, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>360</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



**Figure 6: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in FCT Abuja, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>361</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in all 6 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Abuja Municipal (111 incidents), Bwari (34 incidents), Gwagwalada (22 incidents), Kuje (21 incidents), Abaji LGAs (12 incidents). According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and Fulani ethnic militias (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>362</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, 43 fatalities related to abductions were recorded in the FCT in 2024.<sup>363</sup>

In March 2025, suspected bandits killed two vigilante members while attempting to invade a Fulani settlement at Dogon Ruwa village in Abaji Area Council.<sup>364</sup> Also in March 2025, six people, including one member of the security forces, were killed in clashes between security forces and members of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria in Abuja.<sup>365</sup> In January 2025, armed men kidnapped a family of three in Chikakore area of Kubwa in Bwari LGA.<sup>366</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - In March 2024, youths reportedly set fire to a part of Wuse market<sup>367</sup> and in August 2024, protesters reportedly damaged cars.<sup>368</sup>

**Road security** - A May 2025 article by The Abuja Inquirer reported that the Abuja-Lokoja Highway was ‘long plagued by violent crime, kidnappings, and fear’. The Abaji/Kwali section of the road was a preferred location for ambushes. The article however noted that ‘recent

<sup>361</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>362</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>363</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>364</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen kill 2 vigilantes in FCT, 14 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>365</sup> AP, Clash between Nigerian security forces and members of pro-Palestinian group kill 6, 29 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>366</sup> Premium Times, Armed men disguised as vigilantes kidnap family of three in Abuja, 27 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>367</sup> Channels TV, Uproar As Wuse Market Shut Down After Fire Outbreak, 13 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>368</sup> Channels TV, Security Operatives Clash With Protesters In Gwagwalada, Abuja, 2 August 2024, [url](#)



reports indicate a significant reduction in criminal activities' along the route, credited 'to increased patrols led by the Nigerian army and other security agencies.' However, certain sections of the road continued to suffer from potholes, poor lighting, and deserted checkpoints, which were frequently used as ambush spots.<sup>369</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found on conflict-induced displacement or returns in FCT Abuja during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In July 2025, the FCT Police Command initiated a joint security patrol and deployment in collaboration with the military and paramilitary agencies, 'following recent security incidents within the Federal Capital Territory, particularly kidnapping, one chance robbery attacks and vandalism of public property'.<sup>370</sup> Already in January 2024, the Inspector-General of Police (IGP) had launched the Special Intervention Squad (SIS) in the FTC to combat insecurity and kidnapping.<sup>371</sup> According to the IGP, the SIS consisted of 'trained, well-equipped and highly mobile police officers'.<sup>372</sup> At the end of February 2024, the SIS had reportedly carried out operations in 'Kawu, Kuchikau, Bwari, Nigerian Law School, Verias University, Claritian Missionary Seminary, Zuma I, Zuma II, Iguh areas of the FCT which are known areas for terrorist and bandit activities'.<sup>373</sup> In March 2025, for example, police killed a 'notorious kidnapper', and in June 2025 arrested a 'suspected kidnap kingpin' during operations.<sup>374</sup>

### 2.1.3. Kogi

Kogi state is comprised of the following 21 LGAs: Adavi, Ajaokuta, Ankpa, Bassa, Dekina, Ibaji, Idah, Igalamela-Odolu, Ijumu, Kabba/Bunu, Kogi, Lokoja, Mopa-Muro, Ofu, Ogori/Magongo, Okehi, Okene, Olamaboro, Omala, Yagba East, Yagba West.<sup>375</sup> The capital city is Lokoja.<sup>376</sup>

The main ethnic groups are Igala (including the Ogugu subgroup), Ebira, and Okun. Other minorities include Bassa, Nupe (mainly in Lokoja), Gwari, Kakanda, Oworo, Ogori Magongo and the Eggan community.<sup>377</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 4 466 801 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>378</sup>

<sup>369</sup> Abuja Inquirer (The), Abuja-Lokoja Highway: A renewed success story of security, community initiatives, 25 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>370</sup> Vanguard, FCT police, military activate joint patrols to curb kidnapping, one chance, vandalism, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>371</sup> Vanguard, FCT insecurity: IGP launches special intervention squad to combat kidnapping, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>372</sup> Premium Times, Insecurity: IGP inaugurates Special Intervention Squad in FCT, 17 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>373</sup> Nation (The), National Security: Special Intervention Squad (SIS), its impact, prospects, 25 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>374</sup> PR Nigeria, Police Arrest Kidnap Kingpin in FCT as Bandits Attack Niger Community, 15 June 2025, [url](#); Cable (The), Police kill 'notorious kidnapper' in Abuja, recover weapons, 12 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>375</sup> Nigeria, Kogi State Government, Structure, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>376</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kogi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>377</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kogi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>378</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)



## a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

According to a report by Nextier, 68 kidnap victims were recorded in Kogi in 2024,<sup>379</sup> while according to SBM Intelligence, 80 people were kidnapped in 2024.<sup>380</sup> Kidnappers often demanded ransom.<sup>381</sup> Data from the Nigeria Risk Index, cited by a June 2025 article by The Journal Nigeria ranked Kogi state ‘among the top five states affected by kidnapping nationwide.’<sup>382</sup> Cases of kidnapping were for example reported in February,<sup>383</sup> August,<sup>384</sup> November,<sup>385</sup> and December 2024,<sup>386</sup> and in February,<sup>387</sup> March,<sup>388</sup> April,<sup>389</sup> and May 2025.<sup>390</sup> In May 2025, the Punch Newspaper reported that Kogi was affected by a ‘spate of kidnappings’ in the previous weeks.<sup>391</sup>

According to an April 2025 article by Nigerian newspaper The Sun, 57 people were killed by bandits, herders or criminal groups between November 2024 and April 2025.<sup>392</sup> Deadly attacks by bandits were for example reported in January and April 2024,<sup>393</sup> and in January 2025.<sup>394</sup> Violence linked to conflicts between herders and farmers included incidents in April 2024 in Omala LGA<sup>395</sup> and in November 2024 in Ijumu LGA.<sup>396</sup>

SBM Intelligence noted in July 2025 that Kogi was affected by gang activity, describing the state as ‘notable hotspot’ within the North-Central zone.<sup>397</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>380</sup> SBM Intelligence, Kogi’s logistical nightmares, 29 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>381</sup> SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria’s Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, August 2024, [url](#), p. 4; Journal Nigeria (The), Kogi’s Rising Kidnap Crisis: After ₦10m Ransom, Retired Army Major Found Dead in Forest, 9 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>382</sup> Journal Nigeria (The), Kogi’s Rising Kidnap Crisis: After ₦10m Ransom, Retired Army Major Found Dead in Forest, 9 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>383</sup> Punch, Police comb Kogi forest as gunmen abduct 14 Abuja-bound travellers, 6 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>384</sup> Daily Post, Yuletide: Nigerians jittery over incessant kidnappings on highways, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>385</sup> Daily Post, Deputy Superintendent of Corrections, 15 others kidnapped, 25 November 2024, [url](#); Daily Post, Yuletide: Nigerians jittery over incessant kidnappings on highways, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>386</sup> Vanguard, Gunmen kidnap councillor, eight others in Kogi, 4 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>387</sup> Daily Post, Yuletide: Nigerians jittery over incessant kidnappings on highways, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>388</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen invade Kogi community, abduct timber contractor, 5 others, 29 March 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Bandits kill two vigilantes, kidnap woman in Kogi, 24 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>389</sup> Daily Trust, Kidnappers on the prowl in Kogi, amputate victims’ limbs, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>390</sup> Channels TV, Gunmen Abduct 76-Year-Old Retired Major In Kogi, 22 May 2025, [url](#); Channels TV, Gunmen Attack Kogi Community Again, Abduct Four Persons, 21 May 2025, [url](#); Punch, Kogi community thrown into confusion as gunmen storm palace, abduct monarch, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>391</sup> Punch, Kogi: Experts blame open borders for rising insecurity in N’Central state, 12 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>392</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, Banditry: 578 massacred in North Central states in 6 months, 26 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>393</sup> Vanguard, Kogi attack: Community leader calls for military base, as death toll rises to 25, 6 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>394</sup> Kogi Reports, Bandits Attack Ambulance, Kill Undertaker in Kogi, 28 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>395</sup> TRT Global, Nigeria herder-farmer clashes leave 21 dead, 5 April 2024, [url](#)

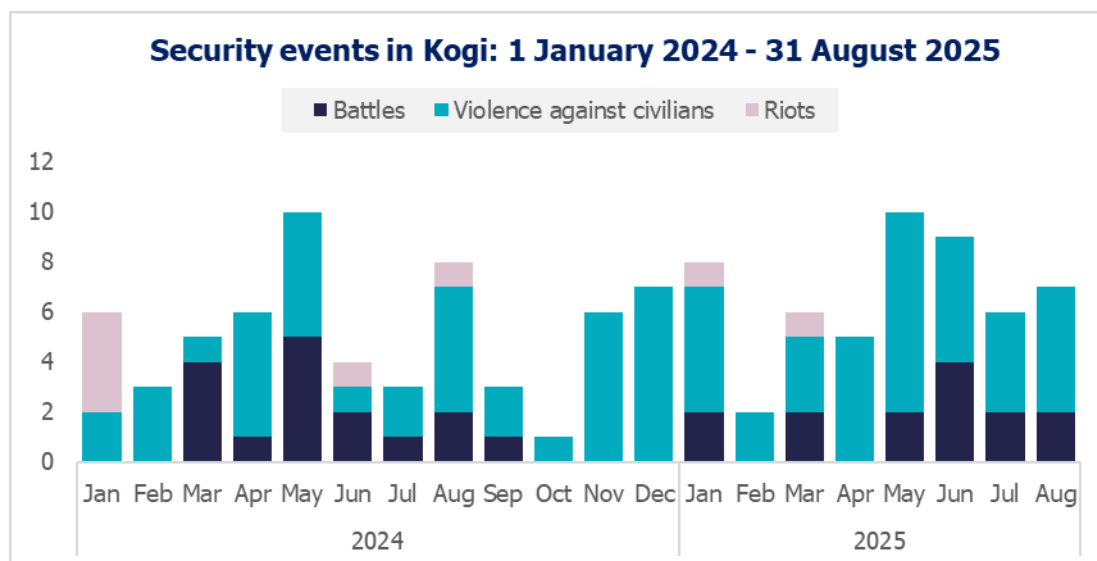
<sup>396</sup> Daily Trust, Herder cuts farmer’s hand in Kogi community, 7 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>397</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 16

In October 2024, a lawmaker pointed to an inter-tribal crisis that had broken out in 2016 in Bassa LGA, mentioning that several persons were killed by unknown gunmen, including in October 2024.<sup>398</sup>

### b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 115 security incidents in Kogi state, which resulted in 98 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 30 were coded as battles, 8 as riots and 77 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>399</sup>



**Figure 7: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Kogi state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>400</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 20 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Lokoja (25 incidents), Yagba West (15 incidents), Kabba (14 incidents), Ofu (9 incidents), Adavi, Dekina and Omala LGAs (6 incidents each). No incidents were recorded in one LGA (Ogori). According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and Kogi communal militias (coded as either 'Actor1' or 'Actor2') were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>401</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Farm produce was destroyed in attacks by bandits in April 2024<sup>402</sup> and in November 2024 armed men damaged a power transformer in Obajana.<sup>403</sup>

<sup>398</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Kogi Assembly laments insecurity in Bassa LG, 30 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>399</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>400</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>401</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>402</sup> Vanguard, Kogi attack: Community leader calls for military base, as death toll rises to 25, 6 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>403</sup> Punch, Armed men damage power transformer in Kogi, 13 November 2024, [url](#)

A February 2025 article by the Daily Post mentions the destruction of property in the conflict between communities in Bassa LGA.<sup>404</sup>

**Road security** - As noted in section [2.1.2 FCT Abuja](#), the Abuja-Lokoja Highway was ‘long plagued by violent crime, kidnappings, and fear’. The most affected areas in Kogi state ‘included the Kwaita-Chikara-Omoko-Idu-Gegu-Orehi-Ochonyi-Akpogu and Koton Karfe communities’ and ‘Chikara-Sharp Bend, Aseni, Ahoko-Adabo, and the Orehi/Achabo axis.’ The article however noted that ‘recent reports indicate a significant reduction in criminal activities’ along the route, credited ‘to increased patrols led by the Nigerian army and other security agencies.’ However, certain sections of the road continued to suffer from potholes, poor lighting, and deserted checkpoints, which were frequently used as ambush spots.<sup>405</sup> In July 2025, for example, kidnappings were reported along Egume-Ankpa expressway.<sup>406</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Kogi state at 20 793<sup>407</sup> compared to 24 576 as of November 2024.<sup>408</sup> IOM lists disaster (90 %) and farmer-herder clashes (9 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>409</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Kogi state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In December 2024, the Kogi State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps concluded the training of 262 of its personnel, ‘in response to escalating security challenges and the need to safeguard critical infrastructure.’<sup>410</sup> In June 2024, the state government planned the recruitment of 50 hunters in each of the state’s 21 LGAs and cited ‘a shortage of security personnel’ and the necessity ‘to curb crime and criminality in the state’ as reasons for the proposed recruitment.<sup>411</sup> In December 2024, the state government reported that in 2024, it had deployed 3 000 security personnel throughout the 21 LGAs to combat banditry and other forms of crime.<sup>412</sup> In October 2024, a forward operational base of the Nigerian Army in Egbe began operations as part of efforts ‘to stem kidnapping, banditry and other criminal activities in the border community.’<sup>413</sup> According to a June 2025 media article, the base, strategically located ‘at the crossroads of Kogi, Kwara, Ekiti, Osun, and Niger states’ provided ‘rapid-response capability and a permanent military presence to deter criminal elements exploiting the remote forested terrains of the region.’<sup>414</sup>

<sup>404</sup> Daily Post, Kogi Assembly committee brokers peace to end Bassa Kwomu-Egbira Mozum crisis, 21 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>405</sup> Abuja Inquirer (The), Abuja-Lokoja Highway: A renewed success story of security, community initiatives, 25 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>406</sup> Zagazola, Nine kidnapped passengers rescued in Kogi, 13 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>407</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 1 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>408</sup> IOM, Nigeria — North-Central and North-West — Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>409</sup> IOM, Nigeria — North-Central and North-West — Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>410</sup> Punch, Training imperative due to security threats, says Kogi NSCDC commandant, 17 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>411</sup> Daily Trust, Insecurity: Kogi Gov’t to recruit over 1000 hunters, 19 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>412</sup> Punch, Kogi engages 3,000 security guards to tackle banditry, 24 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>413</sup> Daily Trust, Army Takes Control of Operational Base in Kogi Community, 12 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>414</sup> Vanguard, Senator Sunday Karimi builds military operating base in Kogi, 14 June 2025, [url](#)

Media reported the rescue of kidnapped victims<sup>415</sup> and the foiling of kidnappings.<sup>416</sup> In June 2025, the Kogi Government launched a crackdown on kidnappers, arresting 26 suspects.<sup>417</sup>

## 2.1.4. Kwara

Kwara state is comprised of the following 16 LGAs: Asa, Baruten, Edu, Ekiti, Ifelodun, Ilorin East, Ilorin West, Ilorin South, Irepodun, Kaiama, Moro, Offa, Oyun, Isin, Oke-Ero and Patigi. The capital city is Ilorin.<sup>418</sup>

The main ethnic groups residing in Kwara State are the Yoruba, Nupe, Bariba and Fulani.<sup>419</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 3 551 023 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>420</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In June 2025, Premium Times mentioned that across seven LGAs in the southern part of Kwara state, individuals described as ‘foreign elements’ were reportedly ambushing road users and carrying out kidnappings for ransom, while armed herders were allegedly driving cattle onto farmland and attacking farmers who try to resist.<sup>421</sup> A March 2024 study noted that ‘poor communication, crop destruction, and cattle theft are the primary causes of conflict between the crop farmers and cattle herders in Kwara State.’<sup>422</sup> A December 2024 article mentioned ‘incessant conflicts between herders and farmers’ in Kaiama LGA.<sup>423</sup>

In April 2025, the emergence of a new ‘terrorist group’ named Mahmuda was reported.<sup>424</sup> The group is believed to be a breakaway faction of Boko Haram and is also referred to as the Mallam Group after its leader.<sup>425</sup> It was mostly active in Kainji Lake National Park.<sup>426</sup> The group financed its operations through a combination of kidnapping for ransom, forced labour, and

<sup>415</sup> Channels TV, Police Rescue 28 Kidnap Victims, Arrest 10, 20 May 2025, [url](#); Channels TV, Police, Army, Fulani Vigilantes Rescue Three Kidnap Victims In Kogi Forest Raid, 19 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, 31 rescued, 7 still missing after night kidnap on Kogi highway, 9 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Hunters rescue 5 kidnap victims, gun down bandit in Kogi, 16 March 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Police neutralise eight bandits, arrest rescue 207 abducted children, 20 January 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Remaining abducted Kogi varsity students freed, 2 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>416</sup> Vanguard, Kogi Police foil kidnap of passengers along Obajana-Oshokoshoko road, arrest 2, 25 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>417</sup> Kogi State Government, Insecurity: Kogi Government Launches Major Crackdown on Kidnappers, Arrests 26 Suspects, 17 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>418</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kwara, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>419</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kwara, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>420</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>421</sup> Premium Times, SPECIAL REPORT: Farmers feeling the brunt as kidnappers lay siege to Kwara communities, 29 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>422</sup> Azeez, B.S. et al., Empirical Evaluation of Farmer-Herders’ Conflict in Asa Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria, March 2024, [url](#), p 1

<sup>423</sup> Vanguard, Kwara Govt earmarks 1,000 hectares for pastoral devt, to halt incessant farmers/herders clash, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>424</sup> TNV, New Terror Group Unleashes Fresh Attack On Kwara Community, 20 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>425</sup> ADF, Terror Group Mahmuda Emerges in North-Central Nigeria, Wreaks Havoc, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>426</sup> Sahara Reporters, EXCLUSIVE: New Terrorist Group, Mahmuda Plotting To Establish Independent Government In Kwara, Collect Zakat, Allocate Lands — Emir, 30 June 2025, [url](#)

illegal taxation of herders and farmers.<sup>427</sup> According to Sahara Reporters, the group was ‘collecting Zakat (Islamic tax), allocating lands, and enforcing their laws on communities’.<sup>428</sup> Mahmuda carried out several attacks, including in April and June 2025.<sup>429</sup> In August 2025, the group’s leader, Mallam Mamuda, who was also the deputy commander of Ansaru, was reportedly arrested.<sup>430</sup>

Kwara state was affected by kidnappings, for example in August,<sup>431</sup> September 2024,<sup>432</sup> April,<sup>433</sup> May,<sup>434</sup> June,<sup>435</sup> and July 2025.<sup>436</sup> In response to ‘unabated kidnappings’ in Edu LGA, angry youths attacked and set fire to the palace of the local Emir and the local office of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) in June 2025.<sup>437</sup>

Killings by gunmen were reported for example in October 2024,<sup>438</sup> and in March,<sup>439</sup> April,<sup>440</sup> and June 2025.<sup>441</sup>

Deadly violence targeted members of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN),<sup>442</sup> an organisation supporting Fulani issues.<sup>443</sup>

According to a July 2025 report by SBM Intelligence, Kwara recorded 58 youth gang-related deaths between January 2020 and March 2025.<sup>444</sup> The report described the state as ‘notable hotspot’ within the North-Central zone, with violence involving the Black Axe (Aiye) group.<sup>445</sup> In June 2024, Daily Trust newspaper reported ‘rising cases of cult wars and clashes between rival cult groups in Kwara State’.<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>427</sup> ADF, Terror Group Mahmuda Emerges in North-Central Nigeria, Wreaks Havoc, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>428</sup> Sahara Reporters, EXCLUSIVE: New Terrorist Group, Mahmuda Plotting To Establish Independent Government In Kwara, Collect Zakat, Allocate Lands — Emir, 30 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>429</sup> Punch, Mahmuda terror group kills three Kwara villagers in renewed attacks, 4 June 2025, [url](#); TNV, New Terror Group Unleashes Fresh Attack On Kwara Community, 20 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>430</sup> NCTC, National Counter Terrorism Centre, Nigeria captures top leaders of Ansaru terrorist group – NCTC, 18 August 2025, [url](#); Zagazola, Nigeria dismantles terror groups, Ansaru and Mahmuda, with the capture of their leaders, 16 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>431</sup> Vanguard, Police, vigilante rescue 20 kidnap victims in Kwara, 17 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>432</sup> Channels TV, Kwara Vigilante Commander Killed During Rescue Of Kidnapped Victims, 2 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>433</sup> Punch, Gunmen abduct two LG workers, three others in Kwara, 27 April 2025, [url](#); Punch, Gunmen kidnap seven passengers in Kwara, 20 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>434</sup> Punch, Abductors demand N200m ransom for Kwara petrol dealer, manager’s release, 12 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>435</sup> Punch, Kidnappers kill two policemen, abduct Chinese, Nigerian in Kwara, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>436</sup> Daily Post, Bandits strike in Kwara community, three kidnapped, 8 July 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Residents flee as kidnappers lay siege on Kwara communities, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>437</sup> Vanguard, Kidnapping: Angry youths set ablaze Emir’s palace, NDLEA office in Kwara, 30 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>438</sup> Punch, One killed, another injured in Kwara community invasion, 14 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>439</sup> Punch, Police begin probe as gunmen kill another Miyetti Allah leader, 10 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>440</sup> Daily Post, Gunmen kill 4, injure 2 at Kwara motor park, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>441</sup> Punch, Kwara PDP ward chair, two others killed in gunmen attack, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>442</sup> Daily Post, Four Fulani leaders killed so far in Kwara – MACBAN laments, 12 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>443</sup> Courtright, J., Fulani Responses to Pastoralist Crisis and Mass Violence, SWP, February 2025, [url](#), p. 6

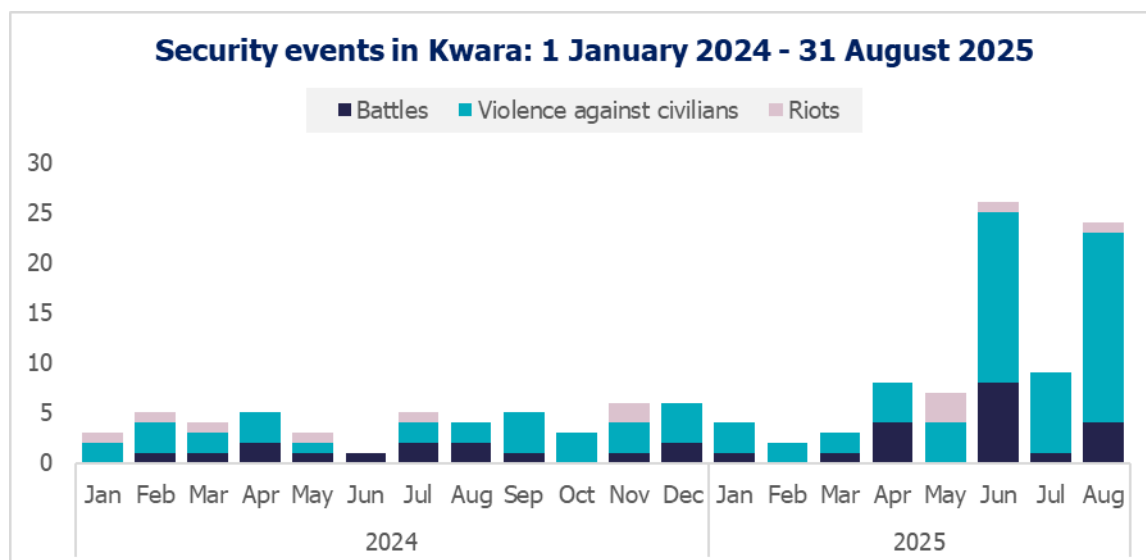
<sup>444</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>445</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 16

<sup>446</sup> Daily Trust, Cultists having a field day in Kwara, 22 June 2024, [url](#)

## b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 133 security incidents in Kwara state, which resulted in 144 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 33 were coded as battles, 12 as riots and 88 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>447</sup>



**Figure 8: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Kwara state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>448</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 14 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Ifelodun (28 incidents), Ilorin West (20 incidents), Edu (17 incidents), Pategi (17 incidents) and Baruten LGAs (9 incidents). No incidents were recorded in two LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and Kwara communal militias (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>449</sup>

In June 2025, Mahmuda members reportedly killed three persons in an attack on Duruma village in Baruten LGA.<sup>450</sup> In April 2025, youths set fire to huts in a village in Kaiama LGA, accusing ‘the inhabitants of the Fulani settlement of colluding with bandits in the kidnapping and killing of locals.’<sup>451</sup> Also in April 2025, gunmen killed seven persons in Baruten and Kaiama LGAs.<sup>452</sup> In August 2024, 20 travellers were kidnapped in Ekiti LGA and later rescued by police and local vigilante.<sup>453</sup>

<sup>447</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>448</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>449</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>450</sup> Daily Post, Mahmuda terrorists resume attack, kill three in Kwara community, 3 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>451</sup> Daily Post, Youths attack Fulani settlement in Kwara, accuse residents of aiding kidnappers, 18 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>452</sup> Punch, Gunmen kill seven in Kwara attacks, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>453</sup> Vanguard, Police, vigilante rescue 20 kidnap victims in Kwara, 17 August 2024, [url](#)

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Two schools in Ilorin West LGA were temporarily shut in May 2025 due to student clashes, which had also resulted in property damage.<sup>454</sup> In July 2025, a media article mentioned that Kwara and the FCT had ‘recorded the highest number of attacks on telecom infrastructure’ in an ‘increasing wave of vandalism and theft of telecommunications infrastructure across the country.’<sup>455</sup>

**Road security** - Kidnappings were reported along various roads in Kwara state in the reference period.<sup>456</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found on conflict-induced displacement or returns in Kwara state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In July 2025, the Kwara State Government announced a new military campaign ‘to address growing security concerns in isolated settlements, particularly in Ifelodun, Edu, and Patigi Local Government Areas.’ The campaign would be supported by ‘newly trained forest guards.’<sup>457</sup> However, in June 2025, members of the armed group Mahmuda had allegedly taken advantage of security gaps caused by the temporary absence of local hunters, who were ‘undergoing training for the newly approved National Forests Guard’. The attack happened ‘despite the presence of soldiers deployed in flashpoint areas in recent months’.<sup>458</sup> Already in May 2025, the Nigerian army had launched ‘Operation Park Strike Four’ to fight ‘bandits and other criminal elements hiding within the Kainji Lake National Park and surrounding border areas between Kwara and Niger States’<sup>459</sup> and arrested 12 ‘suspected terrorists’.<sup>460</sup> In December 2024, the state government earmarked 1 000 hectares of land in Kaiama LGA for pastoral development, to ‘reduce the conflict between herders and farmers’.<sup>461</sup> In November 2024, the Kwara State Command of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) said that its Agro Rangers had resolved 196 farmer-herder conflicts in the past year and its personnel were trained in Alternative Dispute Resolution to mediate disputes across all 16 LGAs.<sup>462</sup>

## 2.1.5. Nasarawa

Nasarawa state is comprised of the following 13 LGAs: Akwanga, Awe, Doma, Karu, Keana, Keffi, Kokona, Lafia, Nasarawa, Nasarawa Egon, Obi, Toto, Wamba. The capital city is Lafia.<sup>463</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> Vanguard, Kwara reopens schools amid unrest resolution, 17 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>455</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Telcos alert FG to possible collapse of sector due to rise in vandalism, 17 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>456</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as kidnappers lay siege on Kwara communities, 8 July 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Aftermath of banditry, kidnappings in Kwara: Government moves to confront growing threat, 16 May 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Police, vigilante rescue 20 kidnap victims in Kwara, 17 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>457</sup> Punch, Kwara strengthens security with new military campaign, forest guards, 6 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>458</sup> Punch, Mahmuda terror group kills three Kwara villagers in renewed attacks, 4 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>459</sup> PR Nigeria, Army Launches Operation to Flush Out Bandits from Kwara-Niger Axis, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>460</sup> Daily Post, Nigerian Army arrests 12 suspected terrorists in Kwara, 12 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>461</sup> Vanguard, Kwara Govt earmarks 1,000 hectares for pastoral devt, to halt incessant farmers/herders clash, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>462</sup> Punch, Kwara NSCDC restates commitment to protecting farmers, 8 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>463</sup> Nigeria, Government of Nasarawa State, About Nasarawa State, n.d., [url](#)

The main ethnic groups include Gwandara, Alago, Eggon, Gbagi, Egbira, Migili, Kantana, Fulani, Hausa, Kanuri, Tiv, Afo, Gade, Nyankpa, Koro, Jukun, Mada, Ninzam, Buh, Basa, Agatu, Arum, Kulere, Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa.<sup>464</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 2 886 022 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>465</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Nasarawa state was affected by farmer-herder violence in the reference period.<sup>466</sup> Violence between suspected armed herders and farmers was reported, for example, in January,<sup>467</sup> March,<sup>468</sup> April<sup>469</sup> and June 2025,<sup>470</sup> and killings by bandits were reported in February,<sup>471</sup> and March 2025.<sup>472</sup> Communal clashes were reported in July 2024 in Keana LGA<sup>473</sup> and in January 2025 in Nasarawa LGA.<sup>474</sup>

Kidnappings were reported in August 2024<sup>475</sup> and in February,<sup>476</sup> March,<sup>477</sup> April,<sup>478</sup> May<sup>479</sup> and July 2025.<sup>480</sup> In some cases ransom money was demanded.<sup>481</sup>

The killing of a student by a 'yet-to-be identified gang' was reported in July 2024.<sup>482</sup> In September 2024, soldiers were accused of killing a student 'over allegations of cultism'.<sup>483</sup>

<sup>464</sup> Nigeria, Government of Nasarawa State, About Nasarawa State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>465</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>466</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>467</sup> Daily Trust, 9 dead, many injured in Nasarawa attack, 13 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>468</sup> Daily Trust, Farmers-pastoralists' clashes leave pregnant woman, 10 others dead in Nasarawa, 13 March 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Pregnant woman, 5 others dead, many wounded as farmer/herder clash in Nasarawa, 11 March 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Nasarawa communal clash: Police arrest two suspects in Farin Dutse, restore normalcy, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>469</sup> Nigeria World, Herder allegedly kills two in Nasarawa over grazing dispute, 30 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>470</sup> Punch, Four killed, 3,000 displaced in renewed Nasarawa herder attacks, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>471</sup> Daily Trust, Kidnappers kill pastor's son, abduct wife near Abuja, 18 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>472</sup> Daily Trust, Bandits attack church camp in Nasarawa, kill 3 worshippers, 17 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>473</sup> Punch, Two Tiv farmers die in Nasarawa community land dispute, 25 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>474</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Communal clash claims seven lives, properties destroyed in Nasarawa, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>475</sup> Daily Trust, Abductors of 9 Nasarawa villagers demand N50m, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>476</sup> Daily Trust, Kidnappers kill pastor's son, abduct wife near Abuja, 18 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>477</sup> Daily Post, Police rescue two kidnapped university students in Nasarawa, 2 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>478</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen kill husband, abduct wife days after wedding, 25 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>479</sup> Vanguard, Just in: Bandits invade palace, abduct traditional ruler in night attack in Nasarawa, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>480</sup> Punch, Gunmen abduct Nasarawa Permanent Secretary at residence, 15 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>481</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen kill 19-year-old after collecting N17m ransom in Nasarawa, 3 September 2024, [url](#); Daily Trust, Abductors of 9 Nasarawa villagers demand N50m, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

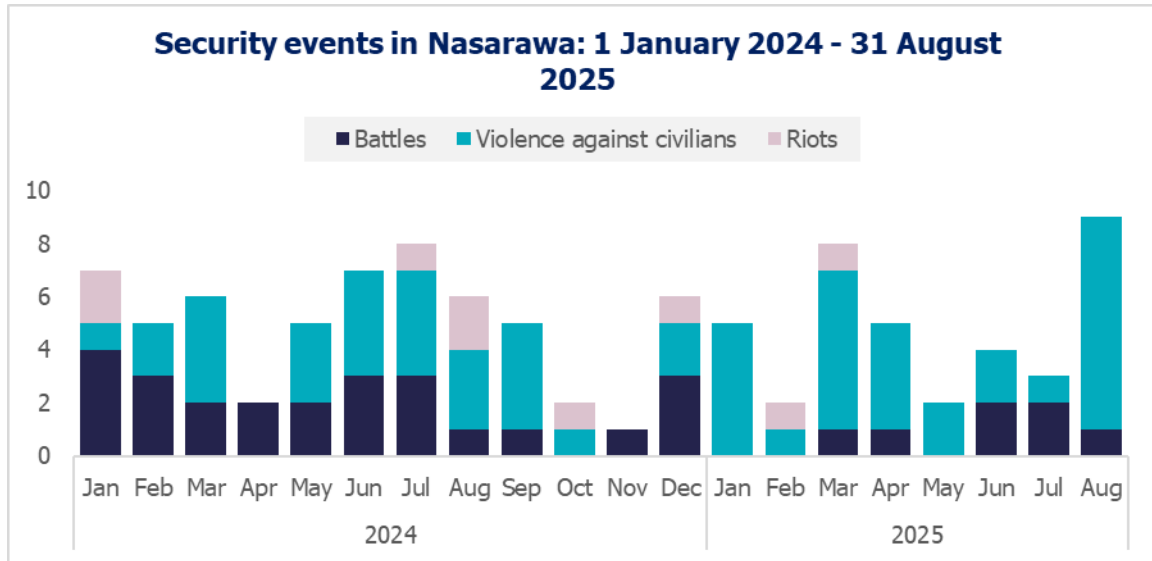
<sup>482</sup> Daily Trust, Gang kills final year Nasarawa Varsity law student, 27 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>483</sup> Daily Post, Soldiers reportedly beat Nasarawa Polytechnic student to death over alleged cultism, 14 September 2024, [url](#)

In January 2024, ISWAP reportedly claimed an attack on a shop in Karu LGA, killing four Christians.<sup>484</sup> Other media reports also mentioned the attack, but not that ISWAP claimed responsibility.<sup>485</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 98 security incidents in Nasarawa state, which resulted in 165 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 32 were coded as battles, 9 as riots and 57 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>486</sup>



**Figure 9: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Nasarawa state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>487</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 12 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Toto (18 incidents), Karu and Lafia LGAs (16 incidents each), LGAs, Nasarawa (12 incidents) and Keana LGAs (10 incidents). No incidents were recorded in one LGA (Doma). According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and Fulani ethnic militias (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>488</sup>

<sup>484</sup> SpecialEurasia, ISWAP Media Campaign in January 2024: A Chronological Overview, 5 February 2024, [url](#); ISW and CTP, Salafi-Jihadi Movement Weekly Update, Jan. 10: New IS Campaign Presents Pro-Palestine Propaganda Opportunities for Sub-Saharan Affiliates, 11 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>485</sup> TVN, Nasarawa CP orders probe into four people murdered in supermarket attack, 4 January 2024, [url](#); Channels TV, Gunmen Attack Nasarawa Supermarket, Kill Four, 3 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>486</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>487</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>488</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



According to an April 2025 article by Nigerian newspaper The Sun, out of 578 people killed by bandits, herders and criminal groups across the North-Central states, 104 were killed in Nasarawa between November 2024 and April 2025.<sup>489</sup>

In July 2024, two Tiv farmers were killed in attacks over a land dispute between Tiv and Alago farming communities in Keana LGA.<sup>490</sup> In January 2025, seven people were killed in a communal clash between two Afo tribes in Udege, Nasarawa LGA.<sup>491</sup> In February 2025, bandits killed the son of a pastor and abducted his wife in Nasarawa LGA.<sup>492</sup> In March 2025, six people, including a pregnant women, were killed and many others wounded in clashes between farmers and herders in Nasarawa LGA.<sup>493</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Destruction of property was reported in Nasarawa LGA in December 2024.<sup>494</sup> In January 2025, further properties and farm produce were reportedly damaged in communal clashes in Nasarawa LGA.<sup>495</sup> In March 2025, houses, shops, and vehicles were damaged during an attack in Nasarawa LGA,<sup>496</sup> while farms and farm produce and motorcycles were damaged in attacks in June 2025.<sup>497</sup>

**Road security** - An attack by armed men on commuters along the Nasarawa-Keffi Road,<sup>498</sup> and the abduction of students on Abuja-Nasarawa highway<sup>499</sup> were reported during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Nasarawa state at 23 913,<sup>500</sup> compared to 27 150 as of November 2024.<sup>501</sup> IOM lists communal clashes (53 %) and insurgency (33 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>502</sup>

<sup>489</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, Banditry: 578 massacred in North Central states in 6 months, 26 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>490</sup> Punch, Two Tiv farmers die in Nasarawa community land dispute, 25 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>491</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Communal clash claims seven lives, properties destroyed in Nasarawa, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>492</sup> Daily Trust, Kidnappers kill pastor's son, abduct wife near Abuja, 18 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>493</sup> Vanguard, Pregnant woman, 5 others dead, many wounded as farmer/herder clash in Nasarawa, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>494</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Lawmakers seek Police, military deployment in Nasarawa over killings, 24 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>495</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Communal clash claims seven lives, properties destroyed in Nasarawa, 10 January 2025, [url](#); Sun (The), Seven dead, properties destroyed in Nasarawa communal clash, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>496</sup> Vanguard, Pregnant woman, 5 others dead, many wounded as farmer/herder clash in Nasarawa, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>497</sup> Vanguard, Four farmers killed, farms destroyed, scores displaced as herdsmen attack Nasarawa communities, 23 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>498</sup> Zagazola, Gunmen attack travellers on Nasarawa-Keffi Road, CCB staff missing, 23 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>499</sup> Punch, Poly students, 25 others abducted on Abuja-Nasarawa highway, 10 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>500</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 1 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>501</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>502</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10



In April 2025, Mdzou U Tiv, an association of the Tiv people, claimed that people were displaced after attacks by suspected herders in April<sup>503</sup> and June<sup>504</sup> 2025. An official of the State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA) stated in June 2025 that the IDP camp at the Kadarko school in Keana LGA was ‘already overwhelmed’ by an influx of displaced victims from the June 2025 attack in Yelewata in Benue state.<sup>505</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Nasarawa state during the reference period.

### **c) State response in maintaining law and order**

In April 2024, the state government reportedly banned all ethnic-based vigilante groups within the state's 13 LGAs and ordered them to hand over uniforms and weapons to the police.<sup>506</sup> The Fulani association Miyetti Allah Kautal Hore Fulani had previously launched a vigilante group<sup>507</sup> to fight banditry, kidnapping and cattle rustling.<sup>508</sup> In December 2024, local lawmakers called on security agencies to deploy staff to Mararaba Udege in Nasarawa LGA to address violence.<sup>509</sup> In May 2025, the state government deployed security forces to border communities in response to attacks in Benue State,<sup>510</sup> and in June 2025, the state government reportedly planned to establish security surveillance bases in cooperation with security forces.<sup>511</sup> Media reported the rescue of victims of kidnapping,<sup>512</sup> the arrest of suspected kidnappers,<sup>513</sup> and the foiling of kidnappings by security forces,<sup>514</sup> and in July 2025, the arrest of a suspected cultist by police.<sup>515</sup>

## **2.1.6. Niger**

Niger state is comprised of the following 25 LGAs: Agaie, Agwara, Bida, Borgu, Bosso, Chanchaga, Edati, Gbako, Gurara, Katcha, Kontagora, Lapai, Lavun, Magama, Mariga, Mashegu, Mokwa, Munya, Paikoro, Rafi, Rijau, Shiroro, Suleja, Tafa, Wushishi. The capital city is Minna.<sup>516</sup>

<sup>503</sup> PM News, Herder-Farmer crises: Tiv group says 10,000 people displaced in 4 days in Nasarawa, 30 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>504</sup> Vanguard, Four farmers killed, farms destroyed, scores displaced as herdsmen attack Nasarawa communities, 23 June 2025, [url](#); Punch, Four killed, 3,000 displaced in renewed Nasarawa herder attacks, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>505</sup> Leadership, Insecurity: Nasarawa Moves To Establish Surveillance Bases At Flashpoints, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>506</sup> Daily Trust, Banditry: Nasarawa bans ethnic vigilante groups, 16 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>507</sup> Punch, 20 Nasarawa ethnic groups reject Miyetti Allah's security outfit, 8 February 2024, [url](#); Punch, Miyetti Allah unveils 1,144-man outfit to tackle Nasarawa bandits, 18 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>508</sup> Daily Trust, Banditry: Nasarawa bans ethnic vigilante groups, 16 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>509</sup> Daily Post, Lawmakers demand security beef-up in Nasarawa over escalating killings, 24 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>510</sup> Radio Nigeria: Nasarawa deploys security to border communities, 2 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>511</sup> Daily Post, Insecurity: Nasarawa Govt moves to establish surveillance bases, 18 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>512</sup> Daily Post, Police rescue two kidnapped university students in Nasarawa, 2 April 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The)

Nigeria, Police bust kidnapping gang, rescue victim in Nasarawa, 21 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>513</sup> PR Nigeria, Six Suspects Arrested for Kidnapping, Rape, Robbery in Nasarawa, 25 July 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police bust kidnapping gang, rescue victim in Nasarawa, 21 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Fake EFCC operatives arrested for robbery, kidnapping in Nasarawa, 2 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>514</sup> Daily Trust, Security agents foil kidnap attempt in Abuja border town, 22 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>515</sup> Nation (The), Nasarawa police arrest suspected cultist, recover firearm, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>516</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Niger, n.d., [url](#)



The main ethnic groups are Nupe, Gbagyi and Hausa. Other groups include Kadara, Koro, Barab, Kakanda, GanaGana, Dibo, Kambari, Kamuku, Pangu, Dukawa, Gwada and Ingwai, Igbo, Yoruba.<sup>517</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 6 783 325 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>518</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

According to a June 2025 article, the Mahmuda group had ‘seized control’ of communities in in Borgu LGA.<sup>519</sup> Clashes between troops and Mahmuda were reported in March<sup>520</sup> and May<sup>521</sup> 2025. For general information on Mahmuda, please see section [2.1.4 Kwara](#).

A July 2025 report published by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) mentions a Boko Haram cell in Shiroro LGA that launched attacks on security forces and civilians in Shiroro, Munya and Rafi LGAs from camps in Kugu and Dogon Fili<sup>522</sup> in the Alawa forest reserve.<sup>523</sup> Attacks by suspected Boko Haram members were reported in June,<sup>524</sup> September,<sup>525</sup> and December 2024<sup>526</sup> in Shiroro LGA. In February 2024, women were abducted by Boko Haram in Rafi and Shiroro LGAs. In July 2025, some of the women were rescued by police.<sup>527</sup>

During the reference period, airstrikes by the Nigerian Air Force against ‘terrorists’ or bandits under Operation Fansan Yamma<sup>528</sup> were reported.<sup>529</sup> Clashes between the military and bandits/ armed groups were also reported.<sup>530</sup>

<sup>517</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Niger, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>518</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>519</sup> Sahara Reporters, BREAKING: New Terrorist Group Mahmuda Resumes Attacks In Kwara Community, Kills Three Villagers, 3 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>520</sup> Daily Post, Troops dislodge Mamuda-led bandits in Niger’s Dekara forest, 12 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>521</sup> Leadership, DSS, Troops Repel Terrorists’ Attack, Neutralise Scores In Niger, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>522</sup> Adebayo, T., How a Boko Haram faction entrenched itself near Nigeria’s capital, ISS, 29 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>523</sup> Premium Times, Forced Labour, Child Marriage: Inside Boko Haram camps in Niger State, 1 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>524</sup> Vanguard, Boko Haram kill 3, raze houses, foodstuffs bank as residents flee in fresh attack on Niger communities, 12 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>525</sup> Business Day, Suspected Boko Haram attack Bassa town, Niger State, 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>526</sup> Premium Times, Boko Haram strengthens presence in Niger State, as explosives kill three, injure four locals, 20 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>527</sup> Daily Trust, Abducted Niger women return with pregnancies, babies, 17 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>528</sup> AA, Nigeria kills scores of terrorists in anti-terror operation in north-central Niger state, 27 June 2025, [url](#);

Vanguard, NAF airstrikes destroy bandit kingpin Mallam Saleh’s residence, arms depot in Shiroro, Niger State, 18 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>529</sup> Daily Post, NAF airstrikes destroys bandit camps in Niger, many neutralized, 12 March 2025, [url](#); Arise News, Military Airstrikes Kill Over 28 Terrorists in Niger State, 12 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>530</sup> Daily Trust, Security operatives have killed scores of terrorists in Rijau Local Government Area of Niger State., 24 July 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, DSS, military ‘gun down 45 bandits’ in Niger, 4 June 2025, [url](#)

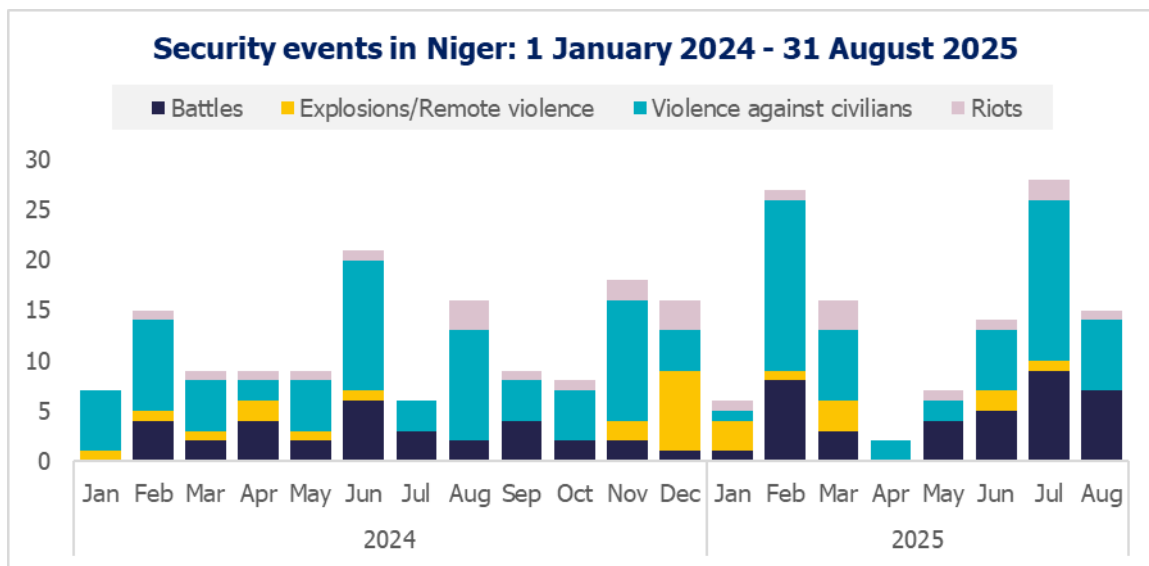


Attacks by bandits were reported for example in March<sup>531</sup> and May 2024<sup>532</sup> and January 2025.<sup>533</sup> Abductions of inhabitants by bandits were also reported.<sup>534</sup>

Persons were killed by bomb explosions for example in December 2024<sup>535</sup> and March 2025.<sup>536</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 258 security incidents in Niger state, which resulted in 859 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 69 were coded as battles, 27 as explosions/remote violence, 25 as riots and 137 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>537</sup>



**Figure 10: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Niger state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>538</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 22 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Shiroro (67 incidents), Mariga and Rafi (30 incidents each) LGAs. No incidents were recorded in three LGAs. According to ACLED, Niger communal militias and unidentified

<sup>531</sup> TVC News, Niger Govt reinforces security in Madaka to prevent further attacks - Trending News, 4 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>532</sup> Daily Trust, Bandits still in our community 4 days after attack, Niger farmers cry out, 28 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>533</sup> Daily Trust, Bandits kill herder, abduct 2 others near Bwari, 30 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>534</sup> Daily Trust, 148 Niger farmers still in captivity 53 days after abduction, 16 July 2024, [url](#); Daily Trust, Bandits still in our community 4 days after attack, Niger farmers cry out, 28 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>535</sup> Daily Trust, One killed, siblings injured as explosions rock Niger community, 19 December 2024, [url](#); Daily Trust, Explosion Kills Farmer in Niger, 7 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>536</sup> Daily Post, Man killed in Niger as bandits' explosive device detonates, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>537</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>538</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>539</sup>

In November 2024, bandits reportedly killed at least 10 people in two communities in Rafi LGA. Six of the victims were beheaded.<sup>540</sup> In June 2025, more than 20<sup>541</sup> soldiers were killed by armed groups, as troops ‘successfully thwarted an attempted incursion by terrorists into Bangi Community, in Mariga Local Council of Niger’.<sup>542</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Bandits reportedly burnt houses and shops in March 2024<sup>543</sup> and houses and farms in November 2024<sup>544</sup> in Rafi LGA. In October 2024, attacks by bandits on the Shiroro-Kaduna power lines were reported.<sup>545</sup>

**Road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Niger state at 47 215<sup>546</sup> compared to 42 486 as of November 2024.<sup>547</sup> IOM lists armed banditry/kidnapping (61 %) and insurgency (38 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state,<sup>548</sup> while the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in October 2024 attributed 100 % of displacements in Niger state to criminal group activity.<sup>549</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Niger state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In April 2024, the state government said security in Madaka in Rafi LGA had been reinforced ‘to prevent further attacks on the community.’<sup>550</sup> Also in April 2024, the Nigerian military withdrew troops from areas affected by bandit attacks ‘for tactical reasons’, as the forces ‘suffered human and equipment casualties’.<sup>551</sup> In October 2024, bandits reportedly took over a military training camp. The military camp covered a vast area between Kontagora and Mariga LGAs.<sup>552</sup> In November 2024, the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) ordered the reorganisation of

<sup>539</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>540</sup> AA, Armed bandits decapitate 6 out of 10 killed, abduct 13 more in Nigeria, 6 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>541</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Northern elders decry massacre of soldiers in Niger, 28 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>542</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, 17 soldiers killed in Niger as troops foil attack, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>543</sup> TVC News, Niger Govt reinforces security in Madaka to prevent further attacks - Trending News, 4 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>544</sup> Premium Times, Niger lawmakers fret over influx of bandits in Rafi Local Government Area, 13 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>545</sup> Premium Times, Nigerian Air Force bombs terrorists frustrating repairs of Shiroro-Kaduna transmission line, 5 November 2024, [url](#); Daily Trust, Power outage: Bandits targeting Shiroro’s 330kV lines for long — Locals, 30 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>546</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 1 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>547</sup> IOM, Nigeria — North-Central and North-West — Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>548</sup> IOM, Nigeria — North-Central and North-West — Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>549</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024 [url](#), p. 6

<sup>550</sup> TVC News, Niger Govt reinforces security in Madaka to prevent further attacks - Trending News, 4 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>551</sup> Punch, Military explains troops withdrawal from Niger communities, 28 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>552</sup> Ripples Nigeria, Bandits take over military training camp in Niger, 30 October 2024, [url](#)



two former operations encompassing several states, one of which covered Niger, into a Joint Task Force for the Northwest, named Operation Fansan Yamma.<sup>553</sup>

In May 2025, the Emir of Kagara commended security agencies for the ‘improved security situation’ in Kagara in Rafi LGA and their prompt response that curtailed bandit activities,<sup>554</sup> while in June 2025, members of the Northern Elders Forum (NEF), an organisation advocating for the well-being of northern Nigeria,<sup>555</sup> described the killing of more than 20 soldiers in a June 2025 attack in Mariga LGA ‘as further evidence of a total collapse of security in Northern Nigeria’.<sup>556</sup> Between 24 and 26 June 2025, the Nigerian Air Force launched airstrikes ‘targeting terrorist elements behind recent attacks and cattle rustling’.<sup>557</sup>

In April 2025, HumAngle noted that ‘a significant portion of the Lapkma axis in Shiroro is ungoverned’ and Allawa and Bassa communities in Shiroro LGA were ‘characterised by a lack of effective governance control and security architectures’.<sup>558</sup> In June 2025, HumAngle reported that Shiroro, Mashegu, and Borgu LGAs were ‘steadily slipping from state and federal control’.<sup>559</sup>

### 2.1.7. Plateau

Plateau state is comprised of the following 17 LGAs: Barkin Ladi, Bassa, Bokkos, Jos East, Jos North, Jos South, Kanam, Kanke, Langtang North, Langtang South, Mangu, Mikang, Pankshin, Qua’an Pan, Riyom, Shendam, Wase. The capital city is Jos.<sup>560</sup>

There are more than forty ethno-linguistic groups in the state. The main groups include Berom, Afizere, Amo, Anaguta, Aten, Bogghom, Buji, Challa, Chip, Fier, Gashish, Goemai, Irigwe, Jarawa, Jukun, Kofyar (comprising Doemak, Kwalla, and Mernyang), Montol, Mushere, Mupun, Mwaghavul, Ngas, Piapung, Pyem, Ron-Kulere, Bache, Talet, Tarok, Youm and Fulani/Kanuri in Wase. Other small communities include Igbo, Yoruba, Ibibio, Annang, Efik, Ijaw, and Bini. Besides English, Hausa is also a medium of communication and commerce, similarly to most parts of the North and Middle Belt of Nigeria.<sup>561</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 4 717 305 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>562</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

<sup>553</sup> Blueprint, CDS Musa renames Northwest taskforce to Operation Fansan Yamma, 20 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>554</sup> NAN, Emir praises security agencies for restoring peace in Niger, 5 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>555</sup> NEF, About US, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>556</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Northern elders decry massacre of soldiers in Niger, 28 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>557</sup> Arise News, NAF Pounds Terrorist Hideouts in Niger State with Three-Day Airstrikes, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>558</sup> HumAngle, Shiroro: Once a Safe Town, Now a Haven for Boko Haram’s Violent Campaigns (1), 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>559</sup> HumAngle, Nigeria’s Governance Gap Widens as Ungoverned Areas Multiply, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>560</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Plateau, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>561</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Plateau, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>562</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)



Plateau state was affected by farmer-herder violence in the reference period.<sup>563</sup> This violence was mainly driven by competition over resources and was ‘complicated by religious undertones as many herders are Muslim and farmers Christian.’<sup>564</sup>

Attacks by gunmen were reported for example in January,<sup>565</sup> May<sup>566</sup> and September 2024<sup>567</sup> and in April,<sup>568</sup> May,<sup>569</sup> June<sup>570</sup> and July 2025.<sup>571</sup> Attacks were reportedly carried out both by members of farmer and herder communities. Ten people were killed in the Fulani attacks, while the farmer attacks resulted in the killing of cows.<sup>572</sup>

Kidnappings were reported, for example, in April,<sup>573</sup> May,<sup>574</sup> and July 2025,<sup>575</sup> including the rescue of kidnapping victims by security forces.<sup>576</sup>

Clashes between bandits and vigilantes were reported in April<sup>577</sup> and November 2024<sup>578</sup> and in June<sup>579</sup> and July 2025.<sup>580</sup> In some cases, clashes involved joint operations between security forces and vigilantes.<sup>581</sup>

Clashes between military forces and armed men were reported for example in November 2024,<sup>582</sup> and in February,<sup>583</sup> March,<sup>584</sup> and May 2025.<sup>585</sup>

## **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 282 security incidents in Plateau state, which resulted in 737 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 93 were

<sup>563</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>564</sup> FT, Nigeria’s spiralling rural violence heaps pressure on president, 27 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>565</sup> Reuters, Attacks in Nigeria’s Plateau state leave at least 30 dead, 25 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>566</sup> Reuters, Gunmen kill 40 in north-central Nigeria attack, 21 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>567</sup> Channels TV, Five Youths Killed In Fresh Plateau Attack, 17 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>568</sup> Amnesty International, Plateau: Killing of 51 People Is an Inexcusable Security Failure, 14 April 2025, [url](#); Reuters, At least 51 killed in another attack in Nigeria’s Plateau state, 14 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>569</sup> Daily Trust, 8 killed, houses burnt in fresh Plateau attack, 16 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Plateau: Gunmen attack Barkin Ladi, kill six, 6 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>570</sup> Punch, Three killed, two injured in renewed Plateau violence, 24 June 2025, [url](#); Punch, Gunmen kill 19 in fresh Plateau attacks, 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>571</sup> DW, Nigeria: Gunmen kill 14 returning from weekly market, 26 July 2025, [url](#); Nation (The), Gunmen kill 27 farmers, burn houses in fresh Plateau attack, 16 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>572</sup> Channels TV, 10 Killed In Fresh Plateau Attack Linked To Cattle Rustling, Farm Destruction, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>573</sup> Punch, Soldiers rescue 16 kidnapped passengers in Plateau, 14 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>574</sup> Punch, Female FRSC official kidnapped in Plateau, 28 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>575</sup> Punch, Bandits abduct palace officials in Plateau, burn houses, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>576</sup> Punch, Soldiers rescue 16 kidnapped passengers in Plateau, 14 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>577</sup> Punch, Bandits feared killed as operatives raid Plateau hideouts, 2 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>578</sup> Eons Intelligence, Three Bandits, One Vigilante Killed in Violent Clash in Plateau State Community, 1 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>579</sup> Daily Trust, INSECURITY: Many bandits killed in clash with vigilantes in Plateau, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>580</sup> Daily Post, Bandits ambush vigilante team, kill four, cart away weapons, uniforms in Plateau, 30 July 2025, [url](#); AA, 70 killed in attack by bandits in north-central Nigeria, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>581</sup> Daily Trust, INSECURITY: Many bandits killed in clash with vigilantes in Plateau, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>582</sup> Punch, Troops kill bandits’ kingpin, four others in Plateau, 6 November 2024, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Military kills five bandits in Plateau council, 7 November 2024, [url](#)

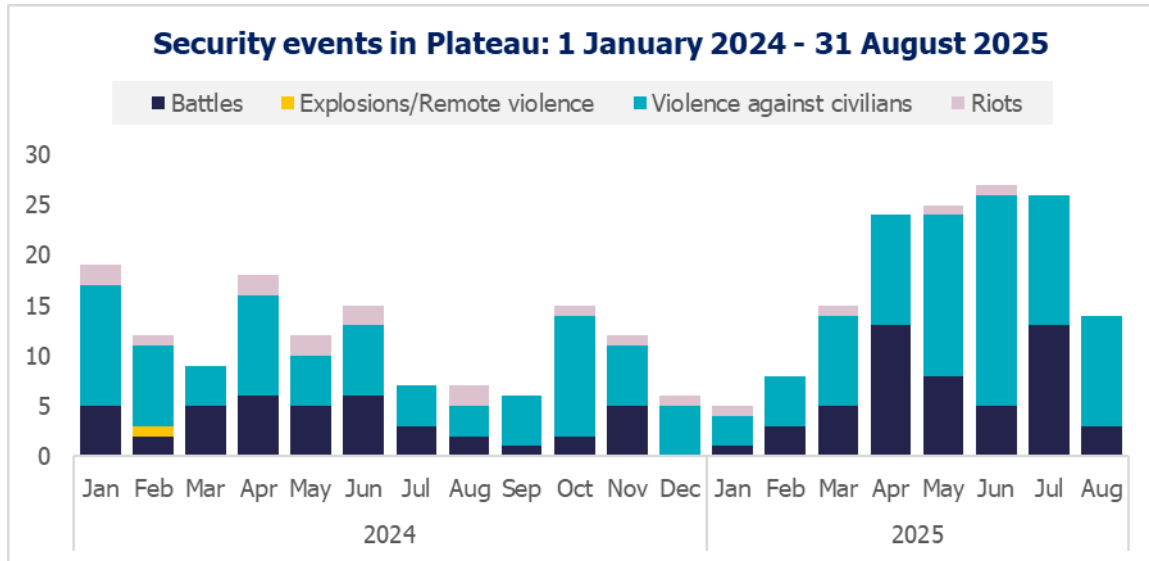
<sup>583</sup> Daily Post, Troops eliminate kidnappers, rescue abducted mother, daughter in Plateau, 26 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>584</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Troops neutralise suspected bandit, armed robber in Plateau, 15 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>585</sup> TVC News, Troops Kill Two Bandits, Recover Weapons In Plateau Operation, 13 May 2025, [url](#)



coded as battles, 1 as explosion/remote violence, 18 as riots and 170 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>586</sup>



**Figure 11: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Plateau state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>587</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 13 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Bokkos (74 incidents), Wase (33 incidents), and Jos North (32 incidents) LGAs. No incidents were recorded in four LGAs. According to ACLED, Plateau communal militias and Fulani ethnic militias (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>588</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch’s annual report covering 2024, the second-highest number of deaths from violence involving farmers and herders countrywide was recorded in Plateau State, with Bokkos (40) and Riyom (14) LGAs being the most affected.<sup>589</sup>

According to an April 2025 article by Nigerian newspaper The Sun, out of 578 people killed by bandits, herders and criminal groups across the North-Central states, 137 were killed in Plateau between November 2024 and April 2025.<sup>590</sup>

In April 2025, gunmen attacked the communities of Zike and Kimakpa in Bassa LGA, reportedly killing 51 people. Less than two weeks earlier, armed men had killed 52 people in attacks in Bokkos LGA.<sup>591</sup> In July 2025, gunmen reportedly killed at least 27 farmers, including men and women, in an attack on Tahoss village in Riyom LGA.<sup>592</sup> In July 2025, armed men

<sup>586</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>587</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>588</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>589</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>590</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, Banditry: 578 massacred in North Central states in 6 months, 26 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>591</sup> Punch, Plateau killings: How militants attacked villages near major army formation – Victims, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>592</sup> Nation (The), Gunmen kill 27 farmers, burn houses in fresh Plateau attack, 16 July 2025, [url](#)



abducted two children in an attack on a herder settlement in Tarangol district,<sup>593</sup> and in August 2025 gunmen killed two herders in Butura district,<sup>594</sup> both in Bokkos LGA.

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Burning of houses, vehicles and property, and the killing of cattle was reported in Barkin Ladi LGA in March 2024.<sup>595</sup> Media reported the destruction of more than 50 farms between January and March 2025 in Bassa and/or Jos LGAs belonging to the Irigwe people.<sup>596</sup> Media also reported the rustling or killing of cattle and sheep between March and April 2025, and herders claimed incidents of cattle poisoning in Bassa and Mangu LGAs.<sup>597</sup> According to Open Doors, between the end of March and mid-April 2025, over 300 homes were destroyed in attacks in Bokkos and Bassa LGAs.<sup>598</sup> In May 2025, over 20 houses were burnt and food looted in attacks by gunmen on Wereng camp in Riyom LGA<sup>599</sup> and around 300 hectares of farmland were destroyed in Kpachudu village in Bassa LGA.<sup>600</sup> In July 2025, the burning of houses in attacks by bandits was reported in Kanam,<sup>601</sup> Wase,<sup>602</sup> and Riyom<sup>603</sup> LGAs.

**Road security** - Media reported kidnappings along various roads, for example along Jos-Mangu,<sup>604</sup> Jos-Makurdi,<sup>605</sup> and Jos-Ganawuri<sup>606</sup> roads. In June 2025, a bus carrying passengers to a wedding in Qua'an Pan LGA<sup>607</sup> was reportedly attacked by a mob in Mangu LGA, leaving at least a dozen people dead.<sup>608</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Plateau state at 55 053<sup>609</sup> compared to 56 690 as of November 2024.<sup>610</sup> IOM lists communal clashes (45 %) and farmer-herder-clashes (40 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>611</sup>

According to Open Doors, more than 3 000 people were displaced in attacks in Bokkos and Bassa LGAs between the end of March and mid-April 2025.<sup>612</sup>

<sup>593</sup> Daily Post, Suspected gunmen kill cows, abduct children from Plateau herders' settlement, 7 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>594</sup> Daily Trust, Gunmen kill 2 persons, cattle in Plateau, 14 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>595</sup> Daily Trust, Fulani community accuses army of burning houses, killing cattle in Plateau, 30 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>596</sup> Business Day, 1,107 killed, 27,330 farms destroyed as Irigwe tribe in Plateau faces extinction, 7 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>597</sup> Daily Trust, How Plateau conflict cost herders over N300m in 2 months, 3 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>598</sup> Open Doors, Christians among 113 killed in latest spate of attacks in Nigeria, 14 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>599</sup> Daily Trust, 8 killed, houses burnt in fresh Plateau attack, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>600</sup> Persecution.org, 8 Christians Killed, Farms Destroyed in Nigeria's Middle Belt, 21 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>601</sup> AA, 70 killed in attack by bandits in north-central Nigeria, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>602</sup> Punch, Bandits abduct palace officials in Plateau, burn houses, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>603</sup> Nation (The), Gunmen kill 27 farmers, burn houses in fresh Plateau attack, 16 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>604</sup> Punch, Soldiers rescue 16 kidnapped passengers in Plateau, 14 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>605</sup> Daily Post, Troops rescue abducted soldier, 7 others along Jos-Makurdi highway, 5 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>606</sup> Punch, Troops raid Plateau kidnappers' den, rescue seven, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>607</sup> HumAngle, Plateau Mob Action: When Identity Becomes a Death Sentence in Nigeria, 25 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>608</sup> AP, Nigerian police arrest 22 suspects after deadly bus attack, 22 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>609</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 1 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>610</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>611</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>612</sup> Open Doors, Christians among 113 killed in latest spate of attacks in Nigeria, 14 April 2025, [url](#)



According to IOM, 1 203 people were displaced between 3 and 4 June 2025 following attacks in Bassa and Riyom LGAs.<sup>613</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Plateau state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Media reported on activities of the Plateau State security outfit Operation Rainbow<sup>614</sup> and Operation Safe Haven (OPSH)<sup>615</sup> during the reference period. In November 2024, the state government planned to recruit 2 000 youths for Operation Rainbow, ‘as part of efforts to tackle insecurity in rural communities.’<sup>616</sup> In January 2024, Operation Rainbow had been accused by residents of Mangu LGA of carrying out extrajudicial killings and arson.<sup>617</sup>

Following attacks in Bassa LGA in April 2025, Amnesty International described the killings as an ‘inexcusable security failure’.<sup>618</sup> The Plateau state governor banned night grazing and the movement of vehicles and cattle in the night following the attacks.<sup>619</sup> In June 2025, the Nigerian military announced the deployment of over 800 special forces in ‘troubled states’, including Plateau, to combat security challenges,<sup>620</sup> and in July 2025, the governor announced the recruitment of 150 new Agro-Rangers to provide security for farmers.<sup>621</sup>

In July 2025, the state governor claimed that ‘proactive security measures have ensured that no LGA remains under bandit control’.<sup>622</sup> However, according to a July 2025 article by Global Upfront, the presence of the Nigerian military under Operation Safe Haven had ‘yielded diminishing returns.’ The state government now wanted to deploy Mobile Police units instead, as the ‘the military’s conventional warfare tactics are ill-suited to addressing communal clashes and guerrilla-style attacks’. Plateau state also advocated for federal support for Operation Rainbow.<sup>623</sup>

## 2.2. North-East

The North-East consists of the following six states: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe.<sup>624</sup>

<sup>613</sup> IOM, DTM Nigeria — North-central — Plateau State Flash Report (03 - 04 June 2024), 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>614</sup> Punch, Plateau unveils 600-man security outfit, 30 November 2023, [url](#)

<sup>615</sup> Punch, Eight vigilantes killed in Plateau ambush, says military, 9 July 2025, [url](#); Business Day, Troops rescue 16 kidnapped passengers along Jos–Mangu Road in a night operation, 15 April 2025, [url](#); Punch, Army rescues 18 kidnapped victims, captures 10 bandits in Plateau, Taraba, 16 January 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Fulani community accuses army of burning houses, killing cattle in Plateau, 30 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>616</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Plateau to recruit 2,000 youths into security outfit, 27 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>617</sup> Daily Trust, Plateau crisis: Residents accuse Security Operatives of extrajudicial killings, 24 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>618</sup> Amnesty International, Plateau: Killing of 51 People Is an Inexcusable Security Failure, 14 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>619</sup> Ripples Nigeria, Insecurity: Mutfwang bans night grazing in Plateau, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>620</sup> Nation (The), DHQ to deploy 800 special operatives in troubled states, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>621</sup> Punch, Plateau gov recruits 150 new agro rangers to secure farmers, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>622</sup> Nigerian Eye, No Plateau Local Government Under Bandits, Gov Mutfwang Declares, 30 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>623</sup> Global Upfront, Genocide: Plateau Governor’s Call For Soldiers’ Withdrawal From Flashpoints, 31 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>624</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, Region, North East, n.d., [url](#)



For an overview of the main conflict drivers at the country and regional levels, see [1. General description of the security situation](#).

## 2.2.1. Adamawa

Adamawa state is comprised of the following 21 LGAs: Demsa, Fufore, Ganye, Girei, Gombi, Guyuk, Hong, Jada, Lamurde, Madagali, Maiha, Mayo-Belwa, Michika, Mubi North, Mubi South, Numan, Song, Shelleng, Toungo,<sup>625</sup> Yola North and Yola South.<sup>626</sup> The capital city is Yola.<sup>627</sup>

The main ethnic groups include Fulani, Verre, Chamba, Mumuye, Dabanci, Dangsa, Higgi, Nyandang, Sukur, Margi, Gudu, Hona, Mboi, Ga'anda, Yungur, Bwatiye, Mbula, Bala, Bille, Sate, Koma, Bura, Lala, Gwaba, Njanyi, Fali, Gude, Holma, Lunguda, Kanakuru, Jen, Matakam, Laka, Wula, Lilba, Kwah, Waja, Tambo, LiboMwama, Kilba, Viengo and others.<sup>628</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Adamawa in 2022 at 4 902 055, based on figures from the 2006 census figures.<sup>629</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Alongside Borno and Yobe states, Adamawa is one of the main bases of Boko Haram and ISWAP in Nigeria. ISWAP has assigned the state's north to its Faruq *wilaya* (province) and has expanded its operations there.<sup>630</sup> A July 2024 report by the consulting firm Nextier identified five LGAs in Adamawa (Madagali, Michika, Mubi North, Mubi South and Maiha),<sup>631</sup> all located in the state's north,<sup>632</sup> as being part of what it called the 'Northeast Belt of Insurgency'.<sup>633</sup> In 2025, heightened insurgent activity was seen in Hong LGA.<sup>634</sup>

As of July 2025, the situation in Adamawa state was described as being marked by insecurity.<sup>635</sup> During the first half of 2025, insurgent activity focused on Hong LGA,<sup>636</sup> where individual armed attacks in January<sup>637</sup> and February 2025<sup>638</sup> were followed by a wave of

<sup>625</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Adamawa, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>626</sup> ALGON, Local Government Areas, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>627</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Adamawa, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>628</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Adamawa, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>629</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>630</sup> Samuel, M. and Stoddard, E., Resurgent jihadist violence in northeast Nigeria part of a worrying regional trend, TNH, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>631</sup> Nextier, Nigeria's Northeast Belt of Insurgency and the Challenge of Refugees, 17 July 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>632</sup> UNOCHA, Nigeria: Reference map of Adamawa state, 24 December 2018, [url](#)

<sup>633</sup> Nextier, Nigeria's Northeast Belt of Insurgency and the Challenge of Refugees, 17 July 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>634</sup> See, for example, Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>635</sup> Daily Post, Insecurity: Adamawa Gov, Fintiri imposes 24-hour curfew on LG, 12 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>636</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>637</sup> Daily Post, 2 residents hit by stray bullets in attack on Adamawa community, 24 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>638</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)



attacks between April and June 2025 that killed dozens of people,<sup>639</sup> including at least 17 within the space of two weeks in April.<sup>640</sup> A number of these attacks occurred in villages bordering the Sambisa forest,<sup>641</sup> a Boko Haram stronghold.<sup>642</sup> Boko Haram/ISWAP repeatedly attacked the villages of Banga<sup>643</sup> (a Christian community)<sup>644</sup> and Kopre (Kwapre).<sup>645</sup> Attacks were carried out by gunmen on motorbikes<sup>646</sup> and involved the use of explosives against vigilantes and police.<sup>647</sup>

Meanwhile, deadly communal clashes erupted between ethnic Setti of Numan LGA and Kpasham of Demsa LGA (March 2024)<sup>648</sup> and between ethnic Bachama and Tsobo in Lamurde LGA (early July 2025).<sup>649</sup> Moreover, armed robberies occurred in Yola city,<sup>650</sup> in Girei LGA,<sup>651</sup> and along the Numan–Gombe road axis,<sup>652</sup> including by youths affiliated with the ‘Shila Boys’ gang.<sup>653</sup> The state also saw over a dozen kidnappings between mid-2023 and mid-2025,<sup>654</sup> with villagers<sup>655</sup> and Catholic clergymen among those targeted.<sup>656</sup>

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<sup>639</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Adamawa villagers bury their dead in silence after Boko Haram attack, 21 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#);

<sup>640</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#);

International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>641</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>642</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Boko Haram kills 10, displaces farmers in Adamawa village, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>643</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#); Reuters, ISWAP claims responsibility for deadly attacks in Nigeria, 21 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>644</sup> Reuters, ISWAP claims responsibility for deadly attacks in Nigeria, 21 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>645</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Suspected Boko Haram terrorists attack Adamawa community, raze buildings, 26 February 2025, [url](#); IOM, Flash Report Population Displacement: Adamawa and Borno States – Nigeria 01 - 07 January 2024, 12 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>646</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Adamawa villagers bury their dead in silence after Boko Haram attack, 21 May 2025, [url](#);

Guardian (The) Nigeria, Boko Haram kills 10, displaces farmers in Adamawa village, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>647</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>648</sup> Vanguard, 5 killed in Adamawa communal clash, 14 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>649</sup> Premium Times, Adamawa government imposes curfew after 10 die in communal clash over farmland, 14 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>650</sup> Peoples Gazette, Adamawa police nab three suspected armed robbers, recover weapons, 29 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>651</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Adamawa police arrest seven ‘Shilla gangsters’ for armed robbery, 10 June 2025, [url](#);

Nigerian Tribune, Police arrest four suspected robbers in Adamawa, 13 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>652</sup> Punch, Police nab wanted armed robber terrorising Adamawa – Gombe road, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>653</sup> Punch, Adamawa police nab seven for alleged robbery, 11 June 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Adamawa police arrest seven ‘Shilla gangsters’ for armed robbery, 10 June 2025, [url](#); Peoples Gazette, Adamawa police nab three suspected armed robbers, recover weapons, 29 December 2024, [url](#)

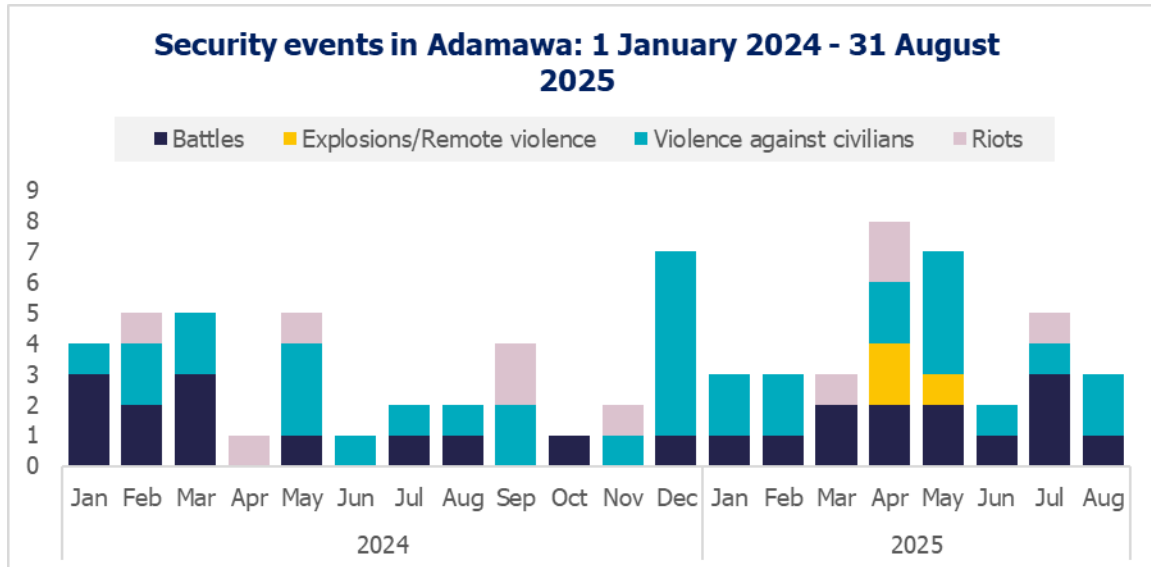
<sup>654</sup> Punch, Police rescue four kidnap victims, 13 trafficked children in Adamawa, 21 July 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Reverend Fathers kidnapped in Adamawa, 22 February 2025, [url](#); SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria’s Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>655</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>656</sup> THISDAY, Police Rescue Two Priests, Other Kidnap Victims in Adamawa, Bayelsa, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

## b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 15 August 2025, ACLED recorded 73 security incidents in Adamawa state that resulted in a total of 123 fatalities. Of these incidents, 26 were coded as battles, 3 as explosion/remote violence, 10 as riots, and 34 as violence against civilians.<sup>657</sup>



**Figure 3: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Adamawa state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>658</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 18 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Hong LGA (16 incidents), followed by Madagali (13) and Fufore and Yola-North LGAs (6 incidents each). No incidents were recorded in three LGAs. According to ACLED, Boko Haram and unidentified armed groups (coded as either 'Actor1' or 'Actor2') were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>659</sup>

In Hong LGA, insurgent attacks resulted in dozens of fatalities among local residents, including in Banga and Larh villages (between six<sup>660</sup> and seven deaths on 15 April 2025<sup>661</sup> and at least six more on 11 June 2025<sup>662</sup>) and Kopre on 26 April 2025 (between 10<sup>663</sup> and 12 deaths among hunters and CJTF members).<sup>664</sup> Communal clashes caused at least five fatalities in Numan/Demsa LGA (March 2024)<sup>665</sup> and – depending on sources – two,<sup>666</sup> three,<sup>667</sup> or 10 or

<sup>657</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>658</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>659</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September, [url](#)

<sup>660</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>661</sup> Daily Post, Adamawa: Boko Haram hit Hong again, destroy facilities, hoist flags, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>662</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>663</sup> Reuters, At least 22 killed in weekend attacks in Nigeria's northeast, 28 April 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Boko Haram kills 10, displaces farmers in Adamawa village, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>664</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>665</sup> Vanguard, 5 killed in Adamawa communal clash, 14 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>666</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>667</sup> Daily Post, Communal Clash: Adamawa Assembly seeks security task forces in Lamurde, Numan LGAs, 22 July 2025, [url](#)



more fatalities in Lamurde LGA (early July 2025).<sup>668</sup> Kidnappers targeted dozens of people during the reference period.<sup>669</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - The destruction of multiple civilian structures during insurgent attacks in Hong LGA in February,<sup>670</sup> mid-April<sup>671</sup> and June 2025 was reported.<sup>672</sup> In the context of communal tensions and violence, several houses were burnt in Guyuk LGA in March 2025<sup>673</sup> and early July 2025, while more than 20 houses were burnt in Lamurde LGA in July 2025.<sup>674</sup>

**Road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of November 2024, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Adamawa state at 200 211,<sup>675</sup> compared to 196 189 as of September 2024. IOM lists insurgency (72 %) and communal clashes (27 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>676</sup> Attacks on five communities in Hong in April 2025 prompted the displacement of most residents.<sup>677</sup> As of August 2024, there were 882 021 returnees (IDP returnees and returnees from abroad) in Adamawa state.<sup>678</sup>

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

The NAF reported some gains during counter-insurgency operations in Adamawa in October 2024, although militant attacks on security forces and civilians continued in the region.<sup>679</sup> Counter-insurgency operations again intensified in early July 2025.<sup>680</sup> Meanwhile, according to local sources in Hong LGA interviewed by media during the second quarter of 2025, the situation in villages bordering the Sambisa forest was marked by a lack of adequate security presence<sup>681</sup> and responsiveness of security forces.<sup>682</sup> In the context of efforts to combat crime, coordinated security operations led to the rescue of a number of victims of kidnappings and

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<sup>668</sup> Premium Times, Adamawa government imposes curfew after 10 die in communal clash over farmland, 14 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>669</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Police Rescue Two Priests, Other Kidnap Victims in Adamawa, Bayelsa, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>670</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>671</sup> Reuters, ISWAP claims responsibility for deadly attacks in Nigeria, 21 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Adamawa: Boko Haram hit Hong again, destroy facilities, hoist flags, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>672</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>673</sup> Daily Post, Houses destroyed as Adamawa villages clash over boundary, 15 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>674</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>675</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6; As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>676</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 9

<sup>677</sup> Daily Trust, Residents flee as Boko Haram intensifies attacks on Adamawa villages, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>678</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 20

<sup>679</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>680</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>681</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#);

Guardian (The) Nigeria, Boko Haram kills 10, displaces farmers in Adamawa village, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>682</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Boko Haram kills 10, displaces farmers in Adamawa village, 28 April 2025, [url](#)





child trafficking,<sup>683</sup> as well as to the arrest of hundreds of individuals suspected of kidnapping, armed robbery, involvement in the Shila Boys gang, and other criminal acts.<sup>684</sup>

## 2.2.2. Bauchi

Bauchi state is comprised of the following 20 LGAs: Alkaleri, Bauchi, Bogoro, Dambam, Darazo, Dass, Gamawa, Ganjuwa, Giade, Itas/Gadau, Jama'are, Katagum, Krifi, Misau, Ningi, Shira, Tafawa Balewa, Toro, Warji and Zaki. The capital city is Bauchi.<sup>685</sup>

According to the Nigerian government, there are 55 ethnic groups in Bauchi state, including the Hausa, Fulani, Sayawa, Bulewa, Karekare, Kanuri, Warjawa, Zulawa and Badawa.<sup>686</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Bauchi in 2022 at 8 308 783, based on figures from the 2006 census figures.<sup>687</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

During the reference period, Bauchi's governor declared that the state was one of the country's most secure.<sup>688</sup> Security incidents included an assassination of a former local politician (May 2025)<sup>689</sup> and a deadly ambush by suspected bandits on a security patrol<sup>690</sup> of vigilantes and hunters who were faced with 'superior firepower' from the attackers<sup>691</sup> (Gwana district, Alkaleri LGA, May 2025).<sup>692</sup> Moreover, a group of around 30 gunmen carried out a deadly attack on Dogon Ruwa village in the same LGA in July 2025,<sup>693</sup> while clashes were reported between herders and farmers in Darazo LGA.<sup>694</sup> The state also saw between 10 and 15 kidnappings in 2024, according to Nigeria Watch.<sup>695</sup>

<sup>683</sup> Punch, Police rescue four kidnap victims, 13 trafficked children in Adamawa, 21 July 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Police

Rescue Two Priests, Other Kidnap Victims in Adamawa, Bayelsa, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>684</sup> Punch, Police rescue four kidnap victims, 13 trafficked children in Adamawa, 21 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>685</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Bauchi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>686</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Bauchi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>687</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>688</sup> Business Day, Bauchi woos investors with security, guarantees, business-friendly reforms, 1 July 2025, [url](#); NAN, Why Bauchi is one of Nigeria's safest states – Gov. Mohammed, 8 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>689</sup> Punch, Ex-Bauchi LG chair stabbed to death in son's home, 2 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>690</sup> Reuters, Armed bandits kill 19, rustle livestock in northeast Nigeria, 5 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>691</sup> Punch, Bauchi approves N100m for families of vigilantes killed by bandits, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>692</sup> THISDAY, Bauchi Gov Pays Condolence Visit To Victims of Bandits' Attack, Donates N100m, 17 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>693</sup> Daily Post, Over 30 gunmen attack Bauchi community, abduct residents, injure others, 7 July 2025, [url](#)

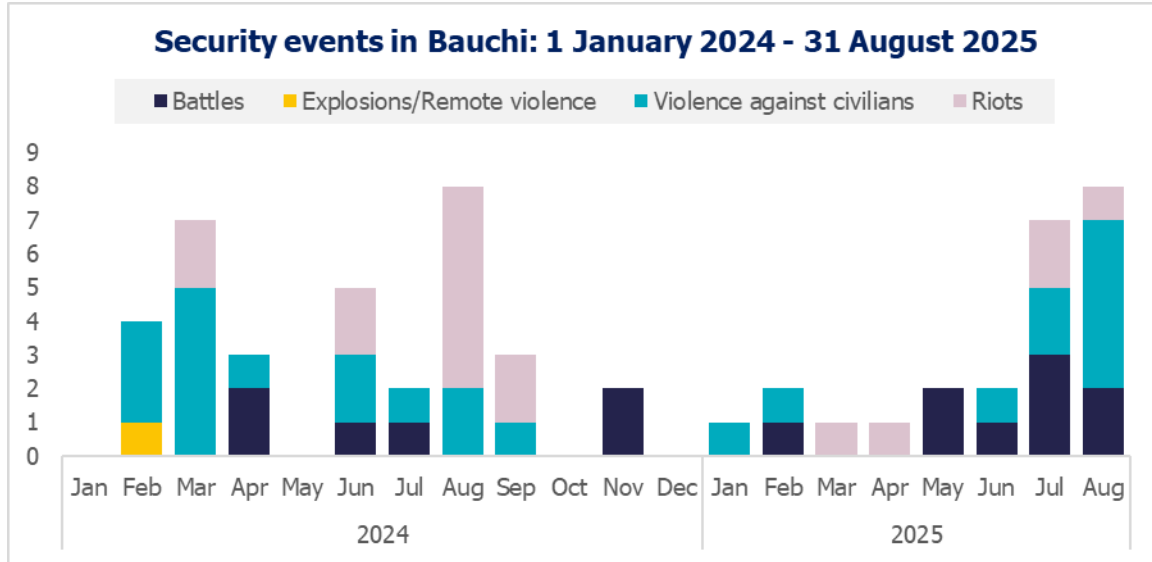
<sup>694</sup> Punch, Bauchi gov vows to restore peace amid farmer-herder conflict, 27 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>695</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 10



**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 58 security incidents in Bauchi state that resulted in a total of 159 fatalities. Of these incidents, 15 were coded as battles, 1 as explosion/remote violence, 17 as riots, and 25 as violence against civilians.<sup>696</sup>



**Figure 4: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Bauchi state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>697</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 11 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Alkaleri LGA (16 incidents), followed by Bauchi (15) and Toro (10) LGAs. No incidents were recorded in nine LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>698</sup>

The May 2025 suspected bandit attack on a local security team in Gwana district of Alkaleri LGA resulted in a gun battle<sup>699</sup> that killed 10 civilians (reportedly all Fulani herders) and 13 hunters/vigilantes, alongside more than 60 attackers.<sup>700</sup> This incident was preceded by the bandits kidnapping 16 villagers and rustling some 500 cattle.<sup>701</sup> The July 2025 assault on Dogon Ruwa left one person dead, another injured, and ten more abducted.<sup>702</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage and road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

<sup>696</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>697</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>698</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>699</sup> Reuters, Armed bandits kill 19, rustle livestock in northeast Nigeria, 5 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>700</sup> THISDAY, Bauchi Gov Pays Condolence Visit To Victims of Bandits’ Attack, Donates N100m, 17 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>701</sup> Daily Trust, 25 killed as bandits, vigilantes clash in Bauchi, 6 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>702</sup> Daily Post, Over 30 gunmen attack Bauchi community, abduct residents, injure others, 7 July 2025, [url](#)



**Displacement, movement and return** - As of November 2024, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Bauchi state at 65 876,<sup>703</sup> compared to 65 358 as of September 2024. IOM lists insurgency (83 %) and communal clashes (17 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>704</sup> No information could be found on returns in the state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

According to a February 2024 statement by the Bauchi state governor, the state had rivers, mountains and forests that could serve bandits as hideouts.<sup>705</sup> In April 2025, the NAF reportedly thwarted plans by ISWAP to set up bases in the state.<sup>706</sup> After the May 2025 attack in Alkaleri LGA, the state governor announced a new joint security force to tackle insecurity in Gwana district.<sup>707</sup> The July 2025 attack on Dogon Ruwa village further prompted the deployment of security forces (troops, police, vigilantes and hunters) to the affected area to track down assailants and search for victims.<sup>708</sup> Community-based hunters and vigilantes were patrolling areas of the state.<sup>709</sup>

## 2.2.3. Borno

Borno state is comprised of the following 27 LGAs: Maiduguri, Askira/Uba, Abadam, Ngala, Bayo, Gubio, Kala/Balge, Biu, Guzamala, Mafa, Chibok, Kaga, Konduga, Damboa, Kukawa, Bama, Gwoza, Magumeri, Jere, Hawul, Marte, Dikwa, Kwaya Kusar, Mobbar, Shani, Monguno, and Nganzai. The capital city is Maiduguri.<sup>710</sup>

The Kanuri are the dominant ethnic group in the state, accounting for about three quarters of its population. Other ethnic groups include the Fulani, Hausa, Chibok, Babur, Bura, Shuwa, Marghi, Gamergu, Kanakuru, Ngoshe, Guduf, Mandara and Tera. The Chibok minority group inhabits the newly created Chibok LGA. The Hausa reside mainly in Askira and Maiduguri.<sup>711</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Borno in 2022 at 6 111 462, based on figures from the 2006 census figures.<sup>712</sup>

### (a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

<sup>703</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6; As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>704</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 9

<sup>705</sup> NAN, Why Bauchi is one of Nigeria's safest states – Gov. Mohammed, 8 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>706</sup> Jamiu, A., Nigeria: ISWAP extremists launching attack drones, DW, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>707</sup> Punch, Bauchi deploys fresh strategies to bolster security, 20 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>708</sup> Daily Post, Over 30 gunmen attack Bauchi community, abduct residents, injure others, 7 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>709</sup> Punch, Bauchi approves N100m for families of vigilantes killed by bandits, 16 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, 25 killed as bandits, vigilantes clash in Bauchi, 6 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>710</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Borno, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>711</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Borno, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>712</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)





Borno state has been at the centre of the 15-year-long insurgency by Boko Haram.<sup>713</sup> ISWAP has assigned parts of the state to its three main *wilaya* (provinces) Buhaira (encompassing the fringes of Lake Chad), Faruq (comprising southern Borno, alongside areas in Yobe and Adamawa states), and Krenowa (covering territories in central and northern Borno).<sup>714</sup> A July 2024 report by the consulting firm Nextier identified ten LGAs across Borno (Bama, Baga, Biu, Chibok, Gwoza, Kukawa, Kaga, Marte, Mongonu and Ngala) as being part of what it called the ‘Northeast Belt of Insurgency’.<sup>715</sup> In ISWAP-controlled villages in the state’s north, the group extorted levies from farmers and fishermen. At the same time, insurgent activities were largely limited to rural zones.<sup>716</sup>

While the NAF were able to push back against Boko Haram in recent years<sup>717</sup> and continued to report gains in security operations in 2024, insurgent attacks against security forces and civilians persisted.<sup>718</sup> Deadly militant assaults in 2024 and early 2025 targeted the police in Nganzai LGA and the military forces in Marte, Mobbar, Gwoza and Damboa LGAs, as well as killing dozens of civilians in Chibok and Nganzai (January 2024),<sup>719</sup> Gwoza (including in January, February<sup>720</sup> and September 2024) and Kukawa (May 2024<sup>721</sup> and January 2025<sup>722</sup>).

During the first half of 2025, ISWAP made some territorial gains in the state as it carried out several complex attacks against security installations and civilians.<sup>723</sup> ISWAP attacks intensified in March<sup>724</sup>/April 2025<sup>725</sup> in what was seen as a ‘resurgence’ of militancy,<sup>726</sup> with Borno’s state governor declaring that the authorities were ‘losing ground’ to the insurgents.<sup>727</sup> Between late April and mid-May 2025, ISWAP and Boko Haram conducted at least 12 attacks of various types.<sup>728</sup> In a series of coordinated attacks in May that involved highly mobile tactics and drones, ISWAP overran Marte town<sup>729</sup> (the site of Borno’s largest military base),<sup>730</sup> Dikwa town and Kala-Balge LGA’s Rann town,<sup>731</sup> killing a number of soldiers stationed at military bases.<sup>732</sup>

<sup>713</sup> BBC, Nigerian governor warns of Boko Haram comeback, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>714</sup> Samuel, M. and Stoddard, E., Resurgent jihadist violence in northeast Nigeria part of a worrying regional trend, TNH, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>715</sup> Nextier, Nigeria’s Northeast Belt of Insurgency and the Challenge of Refugees, 17 July 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>716</sup> HumAngle, ISWAP’s ‘Tax’ System is Bleeding Farmers Dry in Northeastern Nigeria, 30 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>717</sup> Reuters, Nigeria’s Boko Haram making gains again in Borno state, governor says, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>718</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>719</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>720</sup> GPC, Killing and Abduction of Civilians In Borno State, Nigeria, 26 March 2024, [url](#), pp. 1-2

<sup>721</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>722</sup> UNOCHA, Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states – Situation Report (As of 20 February 2025), 20 February 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>723</sup> UNSG, Twenty-first report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da’esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat, 1 August 2025, [url](#), para. 10

<sup>724</sup> Aina, F., Why Islamic State is expanding its operations in north-eastern Nigeria, The Conversation, 28 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>725</sup> HumAngle, ISWAP Overruns Key Borno Sites in Coordinated Assault, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>726</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>727</sup> Guardian (The), Fears of Boko Haram comeback stir in Nigerian birthplace of Maiduguri, 28 April 2025, [url](#);

Reuters, Nigeria’s Boko Haram making gains again in Borno state, governor says, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>728</sup> Premium Times, Insurgents launch 12 attacks in Borno in three weeks, 18 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>729</sup> HumAngle, ISWAP Overruns Key Borno Sites in Coordinated Assault, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>730</sup> ACLED, Africa Overview: June 2025, 6 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>731</sup> HumAngle, ISWAP Overruns Key Borno Sites in Coordinated Assault, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>732</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)





As of late May 2025, all but one of the over 300 towns and villages of Marte LGA were outside government control.<sup>733</sup> Militants also killed dozens of local residents as they assaulted communities in Gwoza,<sup>734</sup> Kukawa,<sup>735</sup> Chibok<sup>736</sup> and Mobbar in April and May,<sup>737</sup> in Abadam in July 2025,<sup>738</sup> and in Bama in September 2025.<sup>739</sup> As of mid-2025, Borno continued to 'bear the brunt' of armed activities in Nigeria, which also included IED attacks and mass kidnappings.<sup>740</sup>

Between early 2024 and mid-2025, SBM Intelligence recorded eight bombings in the state, including three in the single month of January 2025 and four more between March and June 2025. The source attributed all but one of the attacks to either ISWAP or Boko Haram.<sup>741</sup> Deadly IED attacks struck travellers in Kukawa and Gamboru (Ngala) (both April 2024), forest workers in Konduga (November 2024), and individuals travelling along the Maiduguri–Damboa highway<sup>742</sup> and between Rann to Gamboru (both April 2025).<sup>743</sup> Four coordinated suicide attacks occurred in Gwoza,<sup>744</sup> targeting a wedding on 29 June 2024,<sup>745</sup> followed by a bombing of a teashop in Konduga (31 July 2024).<sup>746</sup> Another unclaimed deadly suicide attack occurred in Konduga in June 2025.<sup>747</sup> These attacks left dozens of people dead.<sup>748</sup> Boko Haram/ISWAP also conducted multiple abductions targeting IDPs in Ngala (February 2024),<sup>749</sup> villagers in Gwoza (September/October 2024<sup>750</sup> and July 2025),<sup>751</sup> Chibok (April 2025)<sup>752</sup> and Kukawa (May 2025),<sup>753</sup> and travellers (e.g., June 2024<sup>754</sup> and July 2025<sup>755</sup>).

<sup>733</sup> Peoples Dispatch, Nigerian government losing ground to a resurgent Boko Haram and its IS-affiliated splinter, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>734</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Punch, Boko Haram kills two soldiers, civilians in Borno attack, 18 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>735</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Reuters, Militants kill at least 23 in Nigeria attack, security sources say, 17 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>736</sup> Premium Times, Insurgents launch 12 attacks in Borno in three weeks, 18 May 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Terrorists kill 10 hunters, 30 others in Adamawa, Borno, 30 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>737</sup> Premium Times, Insurgents launch 12 attacks in Borno in three weeks, 18 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>738</sup> Cable (The), 'Nine killed' as Boko Haram attacks Borno community, 6 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>739</sup> Reuters, Boko Haram kills dozens in 'house to house' attack in Nigeria's northeast, residents say, 6 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>740</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>741</sup> SBM Intelligence, Bombings in Nigeria: A shifting threat, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>742</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>743</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Punch, B'Haram bombs Borno travellers, kills 17 in Adamawa, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>744</sup> Okoli, A.C., Suicide bombings in Nigeria: tactic is back after a four-year break – security researcher offers 3 possible reasons, The Conversation, 16 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>745</sup> BBC News, Suspected female suicide bombers death toll rises to 32 in Nigeria, 1 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>746</sup> France 24, Bombing in Nigeria's Borno state kills more than 15 people, say police, 2 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>747</sup> HRW, Resurgence of Suicide Bombings in Nigeria's Boko Haram Conflict, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>748</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/871, 2 December 2024, [url](#), para. 26; HRW, Resurgence of Suicide Bombings in Nigeria's Boko Haram Conflict, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>749</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); HRW, Armed Groups Kidnap Hundreds Across Northern Nigeria, 18 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>750</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>751</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>752</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>753</sup> Reuters, Militants kill at least 23 in Nigeria attack, security sources say, 17 May 2025, [url](#); Channels TV, ISWAP Kills 23 Farmers, Abducts 18 Others In Borno, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

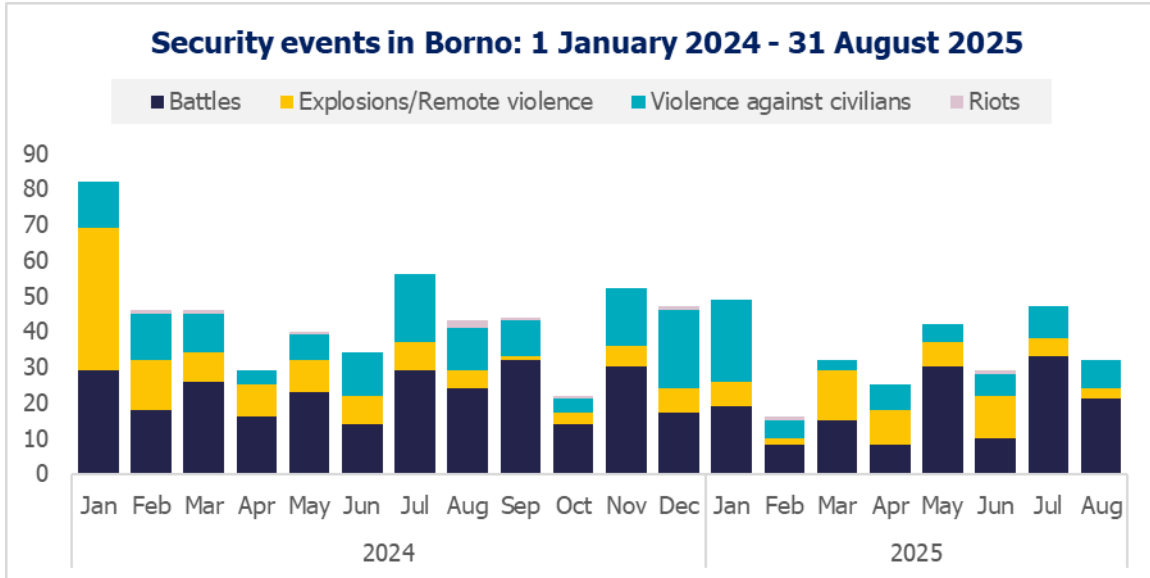
<sup>754</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>755</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 5



**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 813 security incidents in Borno state that resulted in a total of 3 995 fatalities. Of these incidents, 416 were coded as battles, 178 as explosion/remote violence, 10 as riots, and 209 as violence against civilians.<sup>756</sup>



**Figure 5: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Borno state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>757</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 26 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Gwoza LGA (141 incidents), followed by Bama (109), Damboa (77), Konduga (60) and Kukawa (49) LGAs. There was only one LGA where no incidents were recorded. According to ACLED, ISWAP and Boko Haram (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the vast majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>758</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, in 2024, Borno recorded the highest number of fatalities from violent incidents in absolute terms (1 263), followed by Zamfara, Niger, Katsina and Benue. With 16 57 violence-related fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, Borno, after Zamfara, ranked second among the country’s ‘most dangerous’ states, with Niger, Katsina and Benue following Borno in third, fourth and fifth place, respectively.<sup>759</sup>

Amongst others, suspected insurgents killed at least 63 farmers and fishermen in Kukawa in January and May 2025,<sup>760</sup> at least 54 civilians between late April and mid-May 2025 in Ngala,

<sup>756</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>757</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>758</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>759</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 12, 16

<sup>760</sup> UNOCHA, Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states – Situation Report (As of 20 February 2025), 20 February 2025, [url](#), p. 3; Amnesty International, Nigeria: Boko Haram must end vicious killing spree, 15 January 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Militants kill at least 23 in Nigeria attack, security sources say, 17 May 2025, [url](#)



Chibok, Mobbar and Kukawa,<sup>761</sup> and over 50 further civilians in Bama in early September 2025.<sup>762</sup> Coordinated suicide attacks in Gwoza<sup>763</sup> (29 June 2024) and a further bombing in Konduga (31 July 2024) resulted in a total of 48 deaths.<sup>764</sup> Civilians kidnapped by insurgents included more than 600 IDPs in Ngala (February<sup>765</sup> and March 2024<sup>766</sup>) as well as dozens of villagers across the state.<sup>767</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - ISWAP attacks also continued to target critical infrastructure.<sup>768</sup> The destruction of infrastructure (roads, bridges, and lines of communication) in insurgent attacks across Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states in 2025,<sup>769</sup> including in Borno's Bayo LGA in April 2025,<sup>770</sup> led to disruptions in troop movements and obstruction of humanitarian aid.<sup>771</sup> In an attack on Wulgo town in May 2025, the insurgents burnt down public structures such as hospitals and schools, as well as several military vehicles,<sup>772</sup> while in early September 2025, Boko Haram attack on Darul Jamal village in Bama LGA resulted in the destruction of over 20 houses and 10 buses.<sup>773</sup>

**Road security** - IED attacks killed at least 35 travellers along the Maiduguri–Damboa highway and between Rann to Gamboru (April 2025) and multiple travellers along the Maiduguri–Damaturu highway (June 2024)<sup>774</sup> and the Maiduguri–Mafa road (July 2025).<sup>775</sup> Similarly, the Maiduguri–Monguno road was affected by recurrent kidnappings and continued to see illegal checkpoints set up by suspected non-state armed groups.<sup>776</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of November 2024, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Borno state at 1 704 175,<sup>777</sup> compared to 1 722 263 as of September 2024. IOM lists insurgency as the exclusive reason for displacement in the state.<sup>778</sup> As of August 2024, there

<sup>761</sup> Premium Times, Insurgents launch 12 attacks in Borno in three weeks, 18 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>762</sup> Reuters, Boko Haram kills dozens in 'house to house' attack in Nigeria's northeast, residents say, 6 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>763</sup> Okoli, A.C., Suicide bombings in Nigeria: tactic is back after a four-year break – security researcher offers 3 possible reasons, The Conversation, 16 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>764</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/871, 2 December 2024, [url](#), para. 26

<sup>765</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); HRW, Armed Groups Kidnap Hundreds Across Northern Nigeria, 18 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>766</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Fresh abduction is a sign that impunity reigns, 13 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>767</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Channels TV, ISWAP Kills 23 Farmers, Abducts 18 Others In Borno, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>768</sup> Vanguard, Confusion, tears, anger as insurgents attack many Adamawa communities, 13 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>769</sup> Vanguard, End amnesty, empower the military to crush Boko Haram now!, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>770</sup> Usman, A.Z., Boko Haram Resurgence Threatens Resettled Communities in Nigeria's Borno State, HumAngle, 18 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>771</sup> Vanguard, End amnesty, empower the military to crush Boko Haram now!, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>772</sup> Premium Times, Insurgents launch 12 attacks in Borno in three weeks, 18 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>773</sup> Reuters, Boko Haram kills dozens in 'house to house' attack in Nigeria's northeast, residents say, 6 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>774</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>775</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>776</sup> IOM, Nigeria: Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe (BAY) states – Situation Report (As of 24 April 2025), 24 April 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>777</sup> IOM, Nigeria – Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria – March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6; As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>778</sup> IOM, Nigeria – Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria – March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 9



were 890 960 returnees in the state, including IDP returnees and returnees from abroad.<sup>779</sup> The IDMC reported that violence and conflict across several states, including Borno, Yobe and Katsina, had prompted the displacement of 57 000 people in 2024.<sup>780</sup> ISWAP's attacks on multiple military bases in Borno in May 2025 resulted in numerous civilians in nearby communities being displaced internally and across the border into Cameroon.<sup>781</sup> More than 100 people were newly displaced in the deadly early September 2025 Boko Haram attack on Darul Jamal village (Bama LGA)<sup>782</sup> which had only recently seen residents returning from years of displacement.<sup>783</sup>

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Hundreds of Boko Haram/ISWAP fighters were killed in battles following insurgent attacks on military sites<sup>784</sup> or during security operations,<sup>785</sup> with military gains against insurgents reported during most months of 2024.<sup>786</sup> Meanwhile, in 2025, soldiers saw themselves overpowered as dozens of well-armed ISWAP fighters attacked their base in Marte<sup>787</sup> and by Boko Haram militants who stormed Darul Jamal village in September 2025.<sup>788</sup>

As of mid-April 2025, it was noted that the NAF had intensified its efforts to contain ISWAP and Boko Haram.<sup>789</sup> Amongst others, the NAF killed at least 60 insurgents after repelling an assault on a military camp in Bita (Gwoza LGA).<sup>790</sup> A targeted intelligence-based operation in Kukawa involving the NAF, MNJTF and CJTF led to the killing of Boko Haram (JAS) commander Amir Abu Fatima and his key deputies in May 2025.<sup>791</sup> As of July 2025, the state remained one of the country's main operational theatres areas for counter-insurgency campaigns.<sup>792</sup>

## 2.2.4. Gombe

Gombe state is comprised of the following 11 LGAs: Akko, Balanga, Billiri, Dukku, Funakaye, Gombe, Kaltungo, Kwami, Nafada, Shongom, and Yamaltu Deba. The capital city is Gombe.<sup>793</sup>

<sup>779</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 20

<sup>780</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 32

<sup>781</sup> ACLED, Africa Overview: June 2025, 6 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>782</sup> AP, Boko Haram militants kill 60 in an attack in Nigeria's northeast, 7 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>783</sup> BBC News, Boko Haram kills at least 60 in overnight attack on Nigerian village, 6 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>784</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch — Nigeria: January 2024 — August 2025, n.d., [url](#); AA, Nigerian army kills 60 Boko Haram terrorists after repelling attack on military base, 30 May 2025, [url](#); AA, Nigerian military says it killed 16 Boko Haram terrorists in northeastern Borno state, 24 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>785</sup> Al Jazeera, Nigeria says troops kill dozens of gunmen in northwest and northeast, 10 July 2025, [url](#); SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>786</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch — Nigeria: January 2024 — August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>787</sup> ICIR, Back to the trenches: Ex-Boko Haram commanders, others reveal terrorists brutal comeback in North-East, 3 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>788</sup> Reuters, Boko Haram kills dozens in 'house to house' attack in Nigeria's northeast, residents say, 6 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>789</sup> Jamiu, A., Nigeria: ISWAP extremists launching attack drones, DW, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>790</sup> AA, Nigerian army kills 60 Boko Haram terrorists after repelling attack on military base, 30 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>791</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Troops kill Boko Haram top commander Abu Fatima in Borno, 31 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>792</sup> SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>793</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Gombe, n.d., [url](#)



The main ethnic groups include Tangale, Terawa, Waja, Kumo, Fulani, Kanuri, Bolewa, Jukun, Pero/Shonge, Tula, Cham, Lunguda, Dadiya, Banbuka, Hausa and Kamo/Awak.<sup>794</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Gombe in 2022 at 3 960 122, based on figures from the 2006 census figures.<sup>795</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Gombe state authorities described the state as relatively secure in comparison to other states while pointing to several security issues.<sup>796</sup>

In Gombe LGA, there were reports of criminals clashing with police (April 2025)<sup>797</sup> and a deadly attack by Kalare boys (June 2025).<sup>798</sup> Elsewhere, there was a deliberate truck attack on Christians (Billiri LGA, April 2025),<sup>799</sup> violent herder–farmer conflicts (Kwami, Yamaltu Deba<sup>800</sup> and Billiri LGAs<sup>801</sup> in December 2024<sup>802</sup>), and kidnappings linked to cattle rustling. Security was reported to have been negatively affected by an influx of criminal elements from adjacent states.<sup>803</sup>

### b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 12 security incidents in Gombe state that resulted in a total of 10 fatalities. Of these incidents, two were coded as battles, six as riots and four as violence against civilians.<sup>804</sup>

<sup>794</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Gombe, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>795</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>796</sup> Punch, Gombe takes steps to address insecurity, 9 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>797</sup> Daily Post, One dead, policeman injured as hoodlums clash with police in Gombe, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>798</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Gombe community mourns as suspected thugs kill 45-year-old man, 9 June 2025, [url](#);

Guardian (The) Nigeria, Thugs kill industrialist in Gombe rampage, 9 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>799</sup> Daily Post, Gombe Easter truck accident was deliberate attack – Panel, 30 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>800</sup> Punch, Gombe villagers lament herders-farmers' killings, demand intervention, 10 December 2024, [url](#)

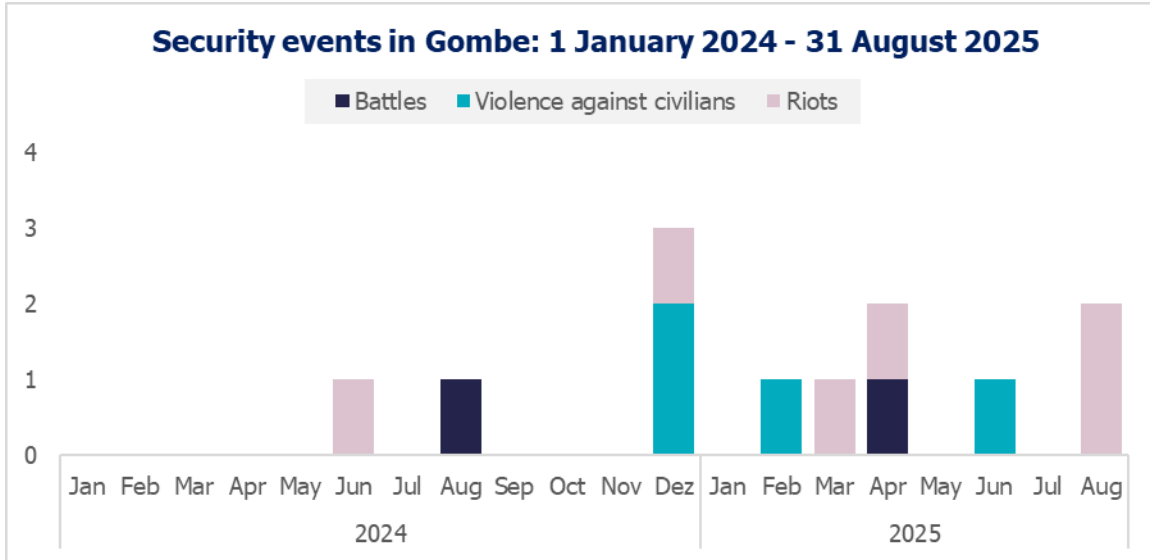
<sup>801</sup> Daily Trust, Village head killed in Gombe attack, 13 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>802</sup> Daily Trust, Village head killed in Gombe attack, 13 December 2024, [url](#); Punch, Gombe villagers lament herders-farmers' killings, demand intervention, 10 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>803</sup> Punch, Gombe takes steps to address insecurity, 9 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>804</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 15: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Gombe state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>805</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in six LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Billiri and Akko LGAs (3 incidents each), followed by Dukku and Gombe LGAs (2 each). No incidents were recorded in five LGAs. According to ACLED, Fulani ethnic militia, the Kalare Boys gang, and an unidentified armed group (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>806</sup>

Nigeria Watch ranked Gombe as Nigeria’s most peaceful state in 2024.<sup>807</sup> ACLED reported a similar trend, with Gombe ranking as the state with the lowest number of security incidents overall (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots), during the reference period.<sup>808</sup>

Civilian casualties from reported security incidents, including events not recorded by ACLED, arose from clashes between herders and farmers in Yamaltu Deba LGA (December 2024, one fatality)<sup>809</sup> and Billiri LGA (December 2024, two fatalities),<sup>810</sup> a truck driver ramming participants of a Christian procession in Billiri LGA in April 2025 (six fatalities and dozens of injuries),<sup>811</sup> and an assault by suspected Kalare boys in Gombe city (June 2025, one fatality).<sup>812</sup>

<sup>805</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>806</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>807</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 16

<sup>808</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>809</sup> Nigerian Tribune, One dead, others injured as herders, youths clash in Gombe village, 8 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>810</sup> Premium Times, Herders kill farmers, burn crop harvests in Gombe communities, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>811</sup> Daily Post, Gombe Easter truck accident was deliberate attack – Panel, 30 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>812</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Thugs kill industrialist in Gombe rampage, 9 June 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Gombe community mourns as suspected thugs kill 45-year-old man, 9 June 2025, [url](#)



**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - The December 2024 herder-farmer clashes in Billiri LGA led to the destruction of farm produce,<sup>813</sup> burning of houses, and livestock rustling.<sup>814</sup>

**Road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of November 2024, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Gombe state at 52 202,<sup>815</sup> compared to 51 028 as of September 2024. IOM lists insurgency (68 %) and communal clashes (32 %) as the reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>816</sup> No information could be found on returns in Gombe state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In the aftermath of the herder–farmer clashes in Billiri LGA, local residents complained about what they saw as ‘ineffectiveness of security operatives’, with one source stating that security forces were slow to respond and failed to take decisive action upon their arrival.<sup>817</sup> According to the police, a combined team of police and 301 Artillery Regiment personnel were deployed to the scene, but the assailants had fled prior to its arrival.<sup>818</sup>

## 2.2.5. Taraba

Taraba state is comprised of the following 16 LGAs: Ardo Kola, Bali, Donga, Gashaka, Gassol, Ibi, Jalingo, Karim Lamido, Kurmi, Lau, Sardauna, Takum, Ussa, Wukari, Yorro, and Zing. The capital city is Jalingo.<sup>819</sup>

The main ethnic groups include Fulani, Mumuye, Jukun, Jenjo, Kuteb, Chamba and Mambilla.<sup>820</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Taraba in 2022 at 3 609 843, based on figures from the 2006 census figures.<sup>821</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

A July 2024 report by the consulting firm Nextier did not identify any LGAs in Taraba as being part of what it refers to as the ‘Northeast Belt of Insurgency’,<sup>822</sup> although there was some

<sup>813</sup> Premium Times, Herders kill farmers, burn crop harvests in Gombe communities, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>814</sup> Daily Post, Gunmen attack Gombe village, kill one, burn several houses, 13 December 2024, [url](#); Daily Trust, Village head killed in Gombe attack, 13 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>815</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6; As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>816</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 9

<sup>817</sup> Premium Times, Herders kill farmers, burn crop harvests in Gombe communities, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>818</sup> Daily Trust, Village head killed in Gombe attack, 13 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>819</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Taraba, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>820</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Taraba, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>821</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>822</sup> Nextier, Nigeria’s Northeast Belt of Insurgency and the Challenge of Refugees, 17 July 2024, [url](#), p. 1



reported activity of criminals deployed by Boko Haram and ISWAP.<sup>823</sup> The state has witnessed conflicts between farmers and herders,<sup>824</sup> kidnappings<sup>825</sup> and banditry,<sup>826</sup> including armed robberies.<sup>827</sup> Southern Taraba, including Wukari LGA, faced long-standing land disputes between ethnic Tiv and Jukun communities,<sup>828</sup> with suspected militia attacks on farmers resulting in casualties in April 2025<sup>829</sup> and May 2025.<sup>830</sup>

Parts of Karim Lamido LGA saw recurrent communal clashes between herders and farmers, including in Bandawa, Munga, and Fulani communities, resulting in multiple deaths.<sup>831</sup> An intensification of attacks was observed in May 2025 as eight youths were killed in Munga Dosso.<sup>832</sup> Violence further escalated on 23 May 2025 when gunmen on motorcycles assaulted Munga Lelau and other nearby villages,<sup>833</sup> killing dozens of people.<sup>834</sup> The attack on Munga Lelau, reportedly involving over 50 assailants,<sup>835</sup> was attributed to Fulani herders.<sup>836</sup> Attacks on farming communities also occurred in Bali LGA,<sup>837</sup> including in the context of tensions between Tiv residents and Fulani herders.<sup>838</sup>

## **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 135 security incidents in Taraba state that resulted in a total of 219 fatalities. Of these incidents, 54 were coded as battles, 10 as riots, and 71 as violence against civilians.<sup>839</sup>

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<sup>823</sup> Vanguard, Army apprehends Boko Haram suspect in Taraba, 28 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>824</sup> Dabo, N.M. et al., Effect of farmer-herder conflicts on food security in Taraba state, Nigeria, June 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>825</sup> Daily Post, Gunmen kidnap varsity lecturer, attack businessman in Taraba, 1 August 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Insecurity: Nigerian Army assures Taraba residents of adequate security, 11 January 2024, [url](#); IFRC, NGA: Other - 03-2024 - Arm Gangs Attacks, 8 March 2024, [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>826</sup> Vanguard, Insecurity: Nigerian Army assures Taraba residents of adequate security, 11 January 2024, [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>827</sup> Daily Post, Gunmen kidnap varsity lecturer, attack businessman in Taraba, 1 August 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Residents panic as armed robbers invade Taraba community, 21 July 2025, [url](#); Punch, Police confirm Taraba attack, mum on gov's family involvement, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>828</sup> PM News, Gunmen raze 15 huts, shoot one in fresh Taraba clash, 8 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>829</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Shock as farm attack claims two brothers in Taraba community, 6 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>830</sup> PM News, Gunmen raze 15 huts, shoot one in fresh Taraba clash, 8 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>831</sup> Daily Trust, 30 killed in Taraba communal clash, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>832</sup> Premium Times, Taraba community cries out over bandits' activities, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>833</sup> Daily Trust, 30 killed in Taraba communal clash, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>834</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

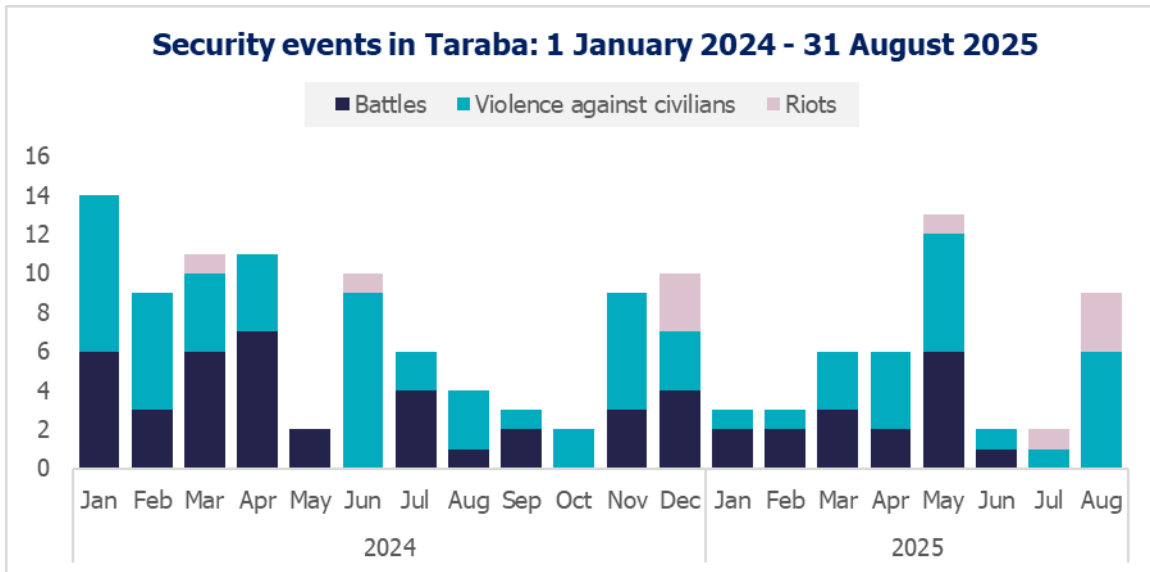
<sup>835</sup> Punch, Mass burial in Taraba as herders slaughter scores, 25 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>836</sup> Daily Trust, 30 killed in Taraba communal clash, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>837</sup> Naija Times, TARABA: One injured, 62 houses set ablaze as suspected herders attack Bali, 21 June 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Troops Nab Mastermind of Terrorist Attack on Villages in Taraba, 21 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>838</sup> Naija Times, TARABA: One injured, 62 houses set ablaze as suspected herders attack Bali, 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>839</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



**Figure 16: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Taraba state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>840</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 15 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Karim Lamidu LGA (26 incidents), followed by Wukari (24) and Takum (23) LGAs. There was only one LGA where no incidents were recorded. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups, Taraba communal militia and Fulani ethnic militia (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>841</sup>

Nigeria Watch recorded that in 2024, six deaths resulted from incidents related to rural banditry (which represents the country’s lowest number of fatalities linked to rural banditry in 2024) and 33 from kidnappings.<sup>842</sup> Gunmen suspected to be herders killed at least 40 people as they launched attacks in Karim Lamido LGA on 23 May 2025.<sup>843</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Multiple houses were set on fire in herder attacks in Munga Lelau, Magami<sup>844</sup> and Bandawa villages (Karim Lamido LGA)<sup>845</sup> and in communal clashes in Wukari<sup>846</sup> and Bali LGAs.<sup>847</sup>

**Road security** - A deadly attack on commuters occurred along the Takum-Wukari highway (August 2024),<sup>848</sup> while several travellers were kidnapped on the Chinkai-Kente-Wukari road

<sup>840</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>841</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>842</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 9-10

<sup>843</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>844</sup> Vanguard, Many displaced as armed herders renew attacks in Taraba communities, 24 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>845</sup> Vanguard, Fresh attack hits Taraba village as suspected herders raze houses, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>846</sup> PM News, Gunmen raze 15 huts, shoot one in fresh Taraba clash, 8 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>847</sup> Naija Times, TARABA: One injured, 62 houses set ablaze as suspected herders attack Bali, 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>848</sup> Punch, Gunmen kill six in Taraba highway attack, 12 August 2024, [url](#)





(August 2025).<sup>849</sup> The road through Chonku to Gor (Wukari LGA) was described as a ‘high tension route’ in terms of bandit activity.<sup>850</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of November 2024, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Taraba state at 62 564,<sup>851</sup> compared to 65 589 as of September 2024. IOM lists communal clashes (82 %) and insurgency (18 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>852</sup> The 23 May 2025 attack on the Munga Lelau community in Karim Lamido LGA resulted in the displacement of hundreds of residents.<sup>853</sup> No information could be found on returns in Taraba state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

The NAF’s 6 Brigade and Sector 3 of OPWS dismantled a number of bandit hideouts during clearance operations in Takum, Donga,<sup>854</sup> Karim Lamido<sup>855</sup> and Wukari LGAs,<sup>856</sup> arrested dozens of bandits<sup>857</sup> and a suspected criminal working for Boko Haram,<sup>858</sup> and foiled a planned bandit attack on villages in southern Taraba.<sup>859</sup> Meanwhile, at the time when the deadly May 2025 attack on Munga Lelau was launched, security forces were stationed in Bandawa and arrived at the scene only after the killings,<sup>860</sup> while residents in Ardo Kola LGA pointed to a lack of adequate security presence in their area, particularly during nighttime.<sup>861</sup>

## 2.2.6. Yobe

Yobe state is comprised of the following 17 LGAs: Bursari, Damaturu, Geidam, Bade, Gujba, Gulani, Fika, Fune, Jakusko, Karasuwa, Machina, Nangere, Nguru, Potiskum, Tarmuwa, Yunusari and Yusufari. The capital city is Damaturu.<sup>862</sup>

The main ethnic groups include Kanuri, Fulani, Hausa, Kare-Kare, Bolewa, Ngizim, Bade, Ngamo and Shuwa.<sup>863</sup>

<sup>849</sup> Daily Post, Kidnappers attack vehicle, abduct passengers in Taraba, 5 August 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Gunmen kidnap varsity lecturer, attack businessman in Taraba, 1 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>850</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, Troops conduct clearance operations in parts of Taraba, 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>851</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6; As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>852</sup> IOM, Nigeria — Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria — March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 9

<sup>853</sup> Daily Trust, 30 killed in Taraba communal clash, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>854</sup> Daily Trust, Troops storm Taraba forest, sack bandits’ camp, 2 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>855</sup> Channels TV, 23 Bandits Surrender, One Killed As Troops Recover Arms In Taraba, 3 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>856</sup> TVC News, Troops Of 6 Brigade Disrupt Bandit Meeting, Destroy Camps In Taraba, 7 July 2025, [url](#); Sun (The) Nigeria, Troops conduct clearance operations in parts of Taraba, 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>857</sup> Channels TV, 23 Bandits Surrender, One Killed As Troops Recover Arms In Taraba, 3 February 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Army repels bandits’ retaliatory attack on Taraba community, 14 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>858</sup> Vanguard, Army apprehends Boko Haram suspect in Taraba, 28 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>859</sup> Channels TV, Troops Foil Bandit Attack, Arrest Two Suspects In Taraba, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>860</sup> Daily Trust, 30 killed in Taraba communal clash, 26 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>861</sup> Daily Post, Residents panic as armed robbers invade Taraba community, 21 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>862</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Yobe, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>863</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Yobe, n.d., [url](#)



UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Yobe in 2022 at 3 649 607, based on figures from the 2006 census figures.<sup>864</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Alongside Borno and Adamawa, Yobe is one of the main bases of Boko Haram and ISWAP in Nigeria. The state's south has been integrated into ISWAP's Faruq *wilaya* ('province').<sup>865</sup> A July 2024 report by the consulting firm Nextier identified three LGAs in Yobe (Damaturu, Gujba and Geidam) as being part of what it called the 'Northeast Belt of Insurgency'.<sup>866</sup>

Deadly attacks by suspected armed groups/insurgents targeted communities in Fika and Potiskum (January 2024),<sup>867</sup> Geidam (January and August 2024),<sup>868</sup> Damaturu (February 2024),<sup>869</sup> Gujba (May 2024),<sup>870</sup> Yunusari (May 2025),<sup>871</sup> and notably in Tarmuwa LGA<sup>872</sup> where insurgents conducted a large-scale attack on Mafa village in September 2024.<sup>873</sup> The latter attack involved around 150 assailants armed with rifles and RPGs and riding motorcycles, with sources variously attributing the incident to either Boko Haram<sup>874</sup> or ISWAP.<sup>875</sup> Apart from communities, insurgents targeted NAF troops in at least two deadly assaults on military sites in the same LGA in April and May 2025<sup>876</sup> and in a suicide car attack in January 2025<sup>877</sup> in Gujba LGA.<sup>878</sup> SBM Intelligence recorded two more bombings in May 2024 and April 2025, attributing both to ISWAP.<sup>879</sup> Yobe also saw several attempted and actual kidnappings.<sup>880</sup>

<sup>864</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>865</sup> Samuel, M. and Stoddard, E., Resurgent jihadist violence in northeast Nigeria part of a worrying regional trend, TNH, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>866</sup> Nextier, Nigeria's Northeast Belt of Insurgency and the Challenge of Refugees, 17 July 2024, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>867</sup> IOM, Flash Report: Rapid Assessment of Fika and Postiskum LGA Attacks, Yobe State North-east Nigeria, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>868</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>869</sup> Premium Times, Boko Haram insurgents kill two civilians, abduct three others in Yobe, 5 February 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Boko Haram: We only closed 3 markets, not 8 – Yobe Govt clarifies, 4 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>870</sup> IOM, Flash Report Population Displacement: North-east Nigeria: Yobe State – Nigeria, 31 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>871</sup> IOM, Flash Report 159 Population Displacement: North-east Nigeria: Yobe State, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>872</sup> Punch, Many feared killed, houses razed in Yobe terror attack, 3 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>873</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>874</sup> Al Jazeera, Dozens killed in Boko Haram attack on village in northeastern Nigeria, 4 September 2024, [url](#); AFP, At least 81 killed in Nigeria in suspected Boko Haram attack: officials, 3 September 2024

<sup>875</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); HumAngle, ISWAP Attack Devastates Mafa In Northeast Nigeria, Leaving A Grim Toll of Death, 4 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>876</sup> Daily Trust, Four soldiers gunned down as Boko Haram invades military base in Yobe, 3 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>877</sup> AFP, 27 Nigerian soldiers killed in jihadist suicide attack: army, 26 January 2025

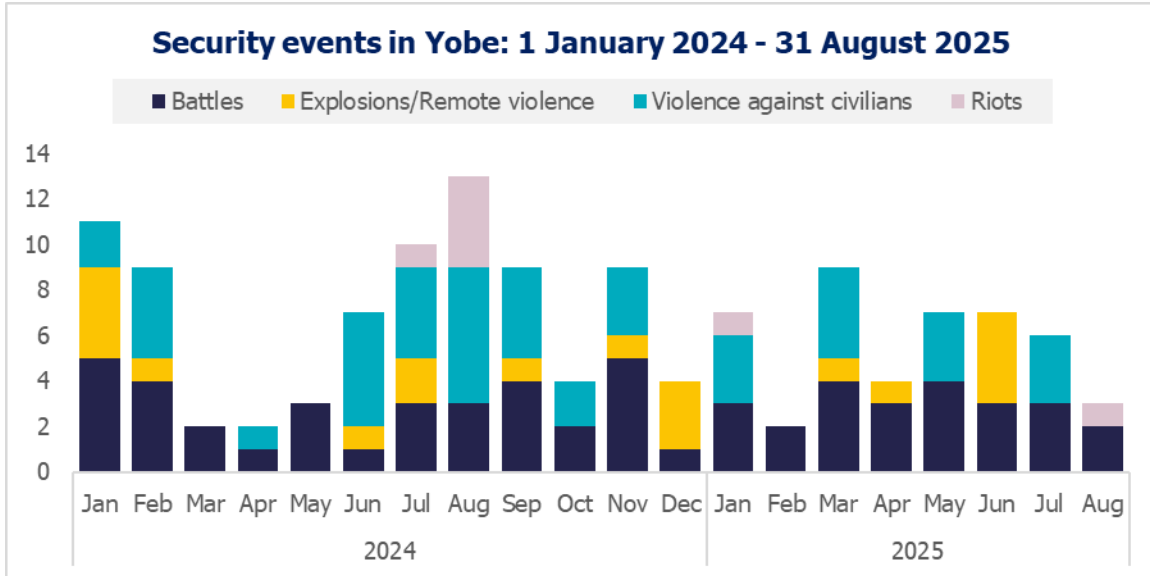
<sup>878</sup> Daily Trust, How B/Haram IED explosions killed 121 civilians, soldiers in 16 months, 9 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>879</sup> SBM Intelligence, Bombings in Nigeria: A shifting threat, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>880</sup> Daily Trust, Police rescue abducted 22-year-old in Yobe, 23 May 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Police arrest two suspected kidnappers in Yobe, 10 April 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Boko Haram insurgents kill two civilians, abduct three others in Yobe, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 128 security incidents in Yobe state that resulted in a total of 225 fatalities. Of these incidents, 58 were coded as battles, 19 as explosion/remote violence, 7 as riots, and 44 as violence against civilians.<sup>881</sup>



**Figure 6: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Yobe state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>882</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 12 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Gujba LGA (75 incidents), followed by Damaturu (11) and Tarmua LGAs (10). No incidents were recorded in five LGAs. According to ACLED, ISWAP, Boko Haram and unidentified armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>883</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, in 2024 Yobe state recorded the country’s second-highest number of fatalities (123) related to attacks by insurgent groups and government counter-operations.<sup>884</sup>

While the UN Secretary-General stated that the September 2024 insurgent attack on Mafa caused on unknown number of casualties,<sup>885</sup> other sources gave various estimates of the death toll, including at least 81 people (AFP quoting local officials),<sup>886</sup> over 100 people (AI

<sup>881</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>882</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>883</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>884</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>885</sup> UNSG, Activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel, S/2024/871, 2 December 2024, [url](#), para. 26

<sup>886</sup> AFP, At least 81 killed in Nigeria in suspected Boko Haram attack: officials, 3 September 2024



Jazeera quoting a resident),<sup>887</sup> at least 128 people (the UN Resident Coordinator)<sup>888</sup> or even 170 or more villagers, mostly men and boys (the New York Times quoting local sources).<sup>889</sup> Moreover, at least 17 fatalities resulted from attacks by suspected armed groups/insurgents on communities in Fika and Potiskum,<sup>890</sup> Geidam,<sup>891</sup> Damaturu,<sup>892</sup> Gujba<sup>893</sup> and Yunusari.<sup>894</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - The attack on Mafa also resulted in infrastructure damage, with assailants burnt down businesses, shelters, and other property and planted IEDs along roads leading towards the community.<sup>895</sup>

**Road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of November 2024, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Yobe state at 167 320,<sup>896</sup> compared to 155 168 as of September 2024. IOM lists insurgency (94 %) as the main reason for displacement in the state.<sup>897</sup> As of August 2024, there were 356 344 returnees in the state, including IDP returnees and returnees from abroad.<sup>898</sup> The IDMC reported that over the year 2024, violence and conflict across several states, including Borno, Yobe and Katsina, had prompted the displacement of 57 000 people.<sup>899</sup> The September 2024 attack on Mafa displaced thousands of individuals to Babban Gida town (Tarmuwa LGA's headquarters) and other nearby communities, as well as into Borno state.<sup>900</sup> Instances of attack or threat of attack by armed groups in Fika and Potiskum in January 2024,<sup>901</sup> Gujba in May 2024<sup>902</sup> and Yunusari in January 2025<sup>903</sup> each resulted in the displacement of thousands of people.

<sup>887</sup> Al Jazeera, Dozens killed in Boko Haram attack on village in northeastern Nigeria, 4 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>888</sup> UNOCHA, Statement by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mohamed Malick Fall, on the killing of scores of men and boys in Mafa, Yobe State, 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>889</sup> New York Times (The), They Thought It Was Safe to Go Home. Then They Were Slaughtered., 6 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>890</sup> IOM, Flash Report: Rapid Assessment of Fika and Postiskum LGA Attacks, Yobe State North-east Nigeria, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>891</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>892</sup> Premium Times, Boko Haram insurgents kill two civilians, abduct three others in Yobe, 5 February 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Boko Haram: We only closed 3 markets, not 8 – Yobe Govt clarifies, 4 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>893</sup> IOM, Flash Report Population Displacement: North-east Nigeria: Yobe State – Nigeria, 31 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>894</sup> IOM, Flash Report 159 Population Displacement: North-east Nigeria: Yobe State, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>895</sup> UNOCHA, Statement by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mohamed Malick Fall, on the killing of scores of men and boys in Mafa, Yobe State, 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>896</sup> IOM, Nigeria – Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria – March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6; As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers and 108 returnees. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>897</sup> IOM, Nigeria – Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria – March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 9

<sup>898</sup> IOM, Nigeria – Displacement Report Round 49: Needs Monitoring in North-East Nigeria – March 2025, 7 March 2025, [url](#), p. 20

<sup>899</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 32

<sup>900</sup> UNOCHA, Statement by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Mohamed Malick Fall, on the killing of scores of men and boys in Mafa, Yobe State, 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>901</sup> IOM, Flash Report: Rapid Assessment of Fika and Postiskum LGA Attacks, Yobe State North-east Nigeria, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>902</sup> IOM, Flash Report Population Displacement: North-east Nigeria: Yobe State – Nigeria, 31 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>903</sup> UNOCHA, Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (BAY) states – Situation Report (As of 20 February 2025), 20 February 2025, [url](#), p. 4



### c) State response in maintaining law and order

While several security breaches led to insurgent attacks (e.g., in Mafa and Geidam in 2024),<sup>904</sup> security operations resulted in the killing or arrest of dozens of insurgents<sup>905</sup> (e.g., in Donga, Takum and Tarmuwa LGAs),<sup>906</sup> the arrest of suspected members of a gang specialised in kidnapping for ransom,<sup>907</sup> and the rescue of kidnapping victims.<sup>908</sup>

## 2.3. North-West

The North-West consists of the following seven states: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara.<sup>909</sup>

For an overview of the main conflict drivers at the country and regional levels, see [1. General description of the security situation.](#)

### 2.3.1. Jigawa

Jigawa state is comprised of the following 27 LGAs: Auyo, Babura, Biriniwa, Birnin Kudu, Buji, Dutse, Gagarawa, Garki, Gumel, Guri, Gwaram, Gwiwa, Hadejia, Jahun, Kafin Hausa, Kaugama, Kazaure, Kiri Kasama, Kiyawa, Maigatari, Malam Madori (or: Mallam Madori), Miga, Ringim, Roni, Sule Tankarkar, Taura and Yankwashi.<sup>910</sup> The capital city is Dutse.<sup>911</sup>

The main ethnic groups, according to the Jigawa state government website, are the Hausa, the Fulani and the Mangawa, Ngizimawa and Badawa.<sup>912</sup> The NGO Zaccheus Onumba Dibiaezue Memorial Libraries (ZODML) states that Jigawa state's inhabitants are mainly of Hausa or Fulani origin.<sup>913</sup> While Islam is the predominant religion in the state,<sup>914</sup> there are also Christians.<sup>915</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 7 499 059 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>916</sup>

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<sup>904</sup> Blueprint, Insecurity: Buni meets heads of security agencies in Yobe, adopt new measures, 12 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>905</sup> Punch, Soldiers nab suspected Nigerian terrorist in Yobe, kill scores across theatres, 29 July 2025, [url](#); Cable (The), Troops arrest eight suspects for 'supplying arms to terrorists' in Taraba, Yobe, 2 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>906</sup> Cable (The), Troops arrest eight suspects for 'supplying arms to terrorists' in Taraba, Yobe, 2 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>907</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police arrest two suspected kidnapppers in Yobe, 10 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>908</sup> Punch, Soldiers nab suspected Nigerian terrorist in Yobe, kill scores across theatres, 29 July 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Police rescue abducted 22-year-old in Yobe, 23 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>909</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, Region, North West, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>910</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Jigawa, n.d., [url](#); Nigeria, Jigawa state government, 27 Local Government Area's, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>911</sup> Nigeria, Jigawa state government, Background History, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>912</sup> Nigeria, Jigawa state government, Background History, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>913</sup> ZODML, Jigawa, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>914</sup> ZODML, Jigawa, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>915</sup> Nigeria, Jigawa state government, Topography & Religious, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>916</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria - Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)



### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In June 2025, IOM reported a multi-dimensional crisis in Nigeria's North-West, characterised by ethnic and religious tensions leading to attacks and banditry,<sup>917</sup> with low levels of violent conflict in Jigawa state.<sup>918</sup>

Clashes between herders and farmers and communal clashes occurred in Jigawa state in the reference period, for example in May,<sup>919</sup> June<sup>920</sup> and July 2024<sup>921</sup> as well as in January<sup>922</sup> and February 2025,<sup>923</sup> in Miga,<sup>924</sup> Jahun,<sup>925</sup> Dutse, Kiyaw,<sup>926</sup> and Birnin Kudu LGAs.<sup>927</sup> According to a state representative, Guri LGA, 'a fertile region with thriving farming and herding activities, often experienced clashes between the two groups over land and resource use'.<sup>928</sup> Some clashes resulted in civilian fatalities<sup>929</sup> and injuries<sup>930</sup> as well as property loss,<sup>931</sup> and the burning of houses.<sup>932</sup> In February 2025, tensions between farmers and herders in the state increased,<sup>933</sup> with clashes described as 'persistent' in May 2025.<sup>934</sup>

Protests in Jigawa state, sparked by economic hardship<sup>935</sup> and political demands,<sup>936</sup> were reported in February<sup>937</sup> and in August 2024 in the state capital Dutse.<sup>938</sup> Protests in early

<sup>917</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>918</sup> Punch, DSS, Police pledge collaboration to rid Jigawa of security threats, 19 March 2025, [url](#); Conciliation Resources and Institute of Development Studies, Peace and security for pastoralist communities in African borderlands, Accord Insight 5, May 2024, [url](#), p. 51

<sup>919</sup> Punch, Five injured in Jigawa farmers, herders' clash, 27 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>920</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Eight injured as herders attack four Jigawa communities — Police, 29 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>921</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Jigawa: Police confirm killings, arson in herders-farmers conflict, 3 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>922</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police confirm nine dead, four injured in Jigawa communal clash, 4 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>923</sup> Punch, Four injured in Jigawa herders, farmers clash, 19 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>924</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police confirm nine dead, four injured in Jigawa communal clash, 4 January 2025, [url](#); Punch, Four injured in Jigawa herders, farmers clash, 19 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>925</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police confirm nine dead, four injured in Jigawa communal clash, 4 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>926</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Eight injured as herders attack four Jigawa communities — Police, 29 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>927</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Jigawa: Police confirm killings, arson in herders-farmers conflict, 3 July 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Eight injured as herders attack four Jigawa communities — Police, 29 June 2024, [url](#); Punch, Five injured in Jigawa farmers, herders' clash, 27 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>928</sup> Punch, Jigawa residents seek anti-riot police unit over farmer-herder conflict, 7 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>929</sup> Daily Trust, 11 Killed, 31 Houses Burnt as ethnic crisis breaks out in Jigawa, 8 January 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Jigawa: Police confirm killings, arson in herders-farmers conflict, 3 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>930</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police confirm nine dead, four injured in Jigawa communal clash, 4 January 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Eight injured as herders attack four Jigawa communities — Police, 29 June 2024, [url](#); Punch, Five injured in Jigawa farmers, herders' clash, 27 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>931</sup> Punch, Four injured in Jigawa herders, farmers clash, 19 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>932</sup> Daily Trust, 11 Killed, 31 Houses Burnt as ethnic crisis breaks out in Jigawa, 8 January 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Jigawa: Police confirm killings, arson in herders-farmers conflict, 3 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>933</sup> Punch, Four injured in Jigawa herders, farmers clash, 19 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>934</sup> Punch, Jigawa residents seek anti-riot police unit over farmer-herder conflict, 7 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>935</sup> BBC News, Nigerian president demands end to deadly protests, 4 August 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Hardship protests: Chaos in Kano, Niger, Kaduna, Abuja, Borno, Yobe, Jigawa, 2 August 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Police halt anti-hunger protest in Jigawa, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>936</sup> Daily Trust, Residents protest in Jigawa, demand commissioner's removal, 23 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>937</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police halt anti-hunger protest in Jigawa, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

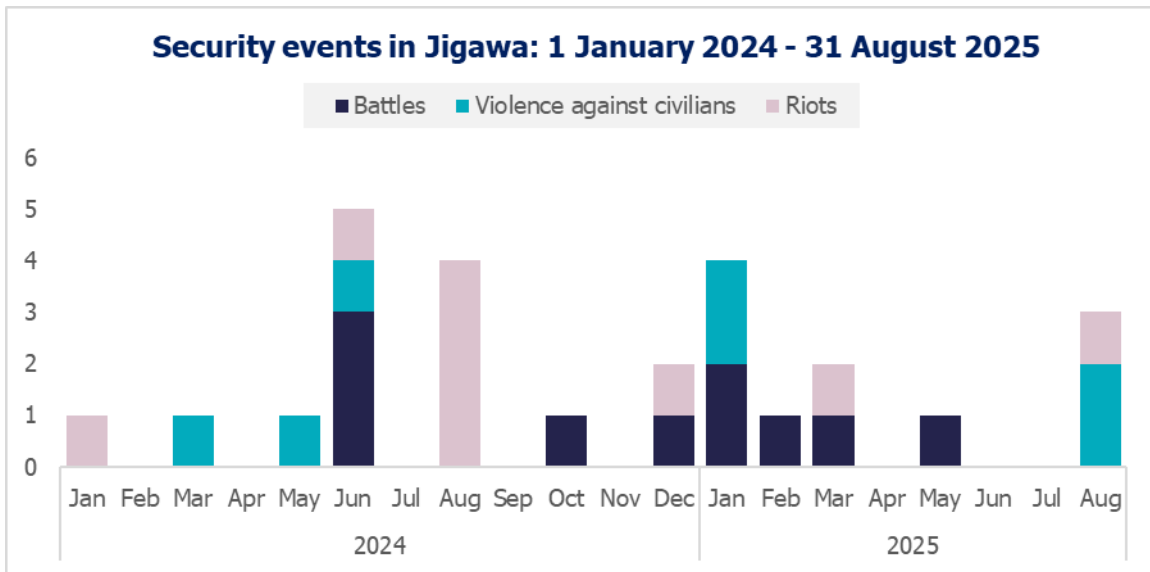
<sup>938</sup> Daily Trust, Residents protest in Jigawa, demand commissioner's removal, 23 August 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Hardship protests: Chaos in Kano, Niger, Kaduna, Abuja, Borno, Yobe, Jigawa, 2 August 2024, [url](#)



August 2024 turned violent.<sup>939</sup> Violent crackdowns by the authorities led to protesters being killed among others in Jigawa state,<sup>940</sup> where a 24-hour-curfew was imposed.<sup>941</sup> In December 2024, herders protested in the Kaugama LGA after land was allegedly seized from them by a rice-farming company supported by the state authorities.<sup>942</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

For the period 1 January 2024 - 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 26 security incidents (defined as battles, violence against civilians, and riots) in Jigawa state, which resulted in 45 fatalities. Of these incidents, 10 were coded as battles, 9 as riots, and 7 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>943</sup>



**Figure 7: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Jigawa state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>944</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 13 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Dutse (5), followed by Birnin Kudu and Jahun (4 incidents each) LGAs. No incidents were recorded in 14 LGAs. According to ACLED, Fulani ethnic militia and unidentified armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>945</sup>

<sup>939</sup> BBC News, Nigerian president demands end to deadly protests, 4 August 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Hardship protests: Chaos in Kano, Niger, Kaduna, Abuja, Borno, Yobe, Jigawa, 2 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>940</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>941</sup> BBC News, Nigerian president demands end to deadly protests, 4 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>942</sup> Premium Times, Tension as herders protest alleged land grabbing in Jigawa community, 24 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>943</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>944</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>945</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



In June 2024, herders attacked four localities in Birnin Kudu, Dutse, and Kiwaya LGAs, including Baranda village, reportedly using machetes, bows, arrows, and sticks. The residents' attempt to defend themselves reportedly led to eight of them getting injured.<sup>946</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage and road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found on conflict-induced displacement or returns in Jigawa state during the reference period. A May 2024 report by the Conciliation Resources and Institute of Development Studies highlights the displacement and impoverishment caused by the seizing of farmland and pastoral land from communities and families by politicians in Jigawa, as well as in corporate deals, causing some pastoralists to migrate to other states or even out of the country.<sup>947</sup>

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In late June 2024, a restoration of peace between farmers and herders in Jigawa state was reportedly initiated by the state's governor.<sup>948</sup> As clashes resumed in Birnin Kudu, Dutse and Kiyawa LGAs by the end of the same month, police forces were deployed to the areas to prevent further escalation.<sup>949</sup> In the context of a worsening of the herder-farmer conflict in early July 2024 in Birnin Kudu LGA, the Nigerian Tribune reported that security personnel and vigilante forces were deployed to the area, citing a police report, which noted that 'farmers were also mobilised in large numbers to defend their farmlands' before security personnel arrived to the areas.<sup>950</sup> In May 2025, authorities announced plans to establish an anti-riot police unit in Jigawa state, a move reportedly aimed at addressing Jigawa residents' yearnings over the area's frequent violent conflicts.<sup>951</sup>

## 2.3.2. Kaduna

Kaduna state is comprised of the following 23 LGAs: Birnin Gwari, Chikun, Giwa, Igabi, Ikara, Jaba, Jema'a, Kachia, Kaduna North, Kaduna South, Kagarko, Kajuru, Kaura, Kauru, Kubau, Kudan, Lere, Makarfi, Sabon Gari, Sanga, Soba, Zangon Kataf, Zaria.<sup>952</sup> The Federal Government lists only 22 LGAs,<sup>953</sup> excluding Kajuru LGA, which is included by the Kaduna State Government.<sup>954</sup> The capital city is Kaduna.<sup>955</sup>

The main ethnic groups include Hausa, Gbagyi, Adara, Ham, Gong, Atyap, Bajjuu, Ninkyob, Kurama, Koro, Zango Kataf, Mada, Agworok, Ikulu, Moroa'a, Atuku,<sup>956</sup> Gbari, Kamuku and

<sup>946</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Eight injured as herders attack four Jigawa communities — Police, 29 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>947</sup> Conciliation Resources and Institute of Development Studies, Peace and security for pastoralist communities in African borderlands, Accord Insight 5, May 2024, [url](#), p. 51

<sup>948</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Gov Namadi commended as Jigawa farmers, herders resolve conflict, 24 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>949</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Eight injured as herders attack four Jigawa communities — Police, 29 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>950</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Jigawa: Police confirm killings, arson in herders-farmers conflict, 3 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>951</sup> Punch, Jigawa residents seek anti-riot police unit over farmer-herder conflict, 7 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>952</sup> Nigeria, Kaduna State Government, Welcome to Kaduna State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>953</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kaduna, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>954</sup> Nigeria, Kaduna State Government, Welcome to Kaduna State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>955</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kaduna, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>956</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kaduna, n.d., [url](#)



Kadara. Kaduna state has a Muslim majority in the northern part and a Christian majority in the southern part, with a small group of indigenous followers.<sup>957</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 9 032 181 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>958</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In June 2025, IOM reported a multi-dimensional crisis in the North-West, characterised by ethnic and religious tensions that had led to attacks and banditry.<sup>959</sup> As of July 2024 households in Kaduna state were reported to be heavily impacted by farmer-herder conflict, kidnappings, and banditry.<sup>960</sup> According to Nigeria Watch, Kaduna was the third Nigerian state worst affected by rural banditry in 2024,<sup>961</sup> with the number of civilians targeted in bandit-related violence increasing significantly in early 2024.<sup>962</sup> As of July 2024, there were several thousand armed bandits in Kaduna state. ACLED and GI-TOC reported a decrease in violence by bandit groups in Kaduna since 2023, but suggested they now generate revenue perpetrating less violence and often coercing local communities.<sup>963</sup> These groups were said to be maintaining camps in the state's forests.<sup>964</sup> According to a June 2025 HumAngle report, in southern Kaduna, ethnic violence was fused with terror raids, causing the destruction of villages like Jika da Kolo and Tudun Biri.<sup>965</sup>

During the reference period, armed groups continued to carry out attacks, including against smaller towns, schools and travellers,<sup>966</sup> as well as abductions<sup>967</sup> and looting of villages.<sup>968</sup> Dozens of civilians were reportedly killed in an airstrike by security forces against armed groups in September 2024.<sup>969</sup> A Vigilante Service force reportedly also existed in the state.<sup>970</sup> According to UN Security Council reports, Boko Haram's Adamu Yunusa/Adamu Sadiqu faction was present in Kaduna state.<sup>971</sup>

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<sup>957</sup> ZODML, Kaduna, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>958</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria - Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>959</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>960</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>961</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>962</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>963</sup> ACLED and GI-TOC, Non-State Armed Groups and Illicit Economies in West Africa: Armed Bandits in Nigeria, July 2024, [url](#), pp. 16, 18

<sup>964</sup> AFP, Nigerian state turns to vigilantes in fight against bandits, 1 February 2024

<sup>965</sup> HumAngle, Nigeria's Governance Gap Widens as Ungoverned Areas Multiply, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>966</sup> Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes (KW12/2025), 17 March 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>967</sup> Daily Post, Community in Kaduna decries incessant attacks, kidnappings by bandits, 1 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>968</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>969</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#); HRW, World Report 2025 - Nigeria, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>970</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>971</sup> UN Security Council, Letter dated 6 February 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253



Abductions reported in Kaduna state during the reference period included mass abductions<sup>972</sup> and led to civilian fatalities.<sup>973</sup> Between July 2023 and June 2024, Kaduna state experienced 111 of the country's 1 130 abduction incidents and accounted for 1 113 of the 7 568 victims, making it the third-worst Nigerian state affected by abductions.<sup>974</sup> In 2024, Kaduna was the state with the highest number of abduction victims (793), accounting for 32.3 % of all abduction victims recorded in Nigeria,<sup>975</sup> as well as abduction-related deaths (86 fatalities).<sup>976</sup> Also, abductions in Kaduna state reportedly increased by 37 % compared to the foregoing 4-year average.<sup>977</sup> and In February 2025, a significant rise in abductions was reported across Kachia LGA, including neighbouring villages.<sup>978</sup>

Between 2019 and October 2024, Kaduna was among the five Nigerian states most impacted by inter-group clashes between bandit groups.<sup>979</sup> Climate change-induced drought reportedly led to clashes between farmers and herders<sup>980</sup> and clashes between bandit/criminal groups<sup>981</sup> increased due to competition over limited resources.<sup>982</sup>

Sources reported demonstrations in Kaduna state during the reference period,<sup>983</sup> including protests in August 2024. These August protests resulted in the arrest<sup>984</sup> and killing of protesters during a crackdown by the authorities.<sup>985</sup>

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(2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fifth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2025/71/Rev.1, 6 February 2025, [url](#), para. 27; UN Security Council, Letter dated 19 July 2024 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fourth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2024/556, 22 July 2024, [url](#), para. 28

<sup>972</sup> GI-TOC, What does the recent escalation of mass abductions in Nigeria tell us?, 15 March 2024, [url](#); UN OHCHR, Nigeria: UN Human Rights Chief appalled by recent mass abductions, 15 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>973</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Daily Post, Gunmen abduct 60-year-old farmer, kill son in Kaduna village, 3 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>974</sup> SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria's Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>975</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>976</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>977</sup> ORFA, The Illusion of Progress: Mapping Nigeria's Deteriorating Security Landscape, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>978</sup> Daily Post, Kaduna community protest incessant terrorist attacks, 13 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>979</sup> SBM Intelligence, Chart of the week: Bandit rivalry in Northern Nigeria, 3 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>980</sup> IPS, Climate Change, Ethnicity and Neglect Fuel Violence in Nigeria's Kaduna State, 19 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>981</sup> Daily Post, Kaduna: 10 bandits killed in violent clash between rival factions, 10 April 2025, [url](#); SBM Intelligence, Chart of the week: Bandit rivalry in Northern Nigeria, 3 October 2024, [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>982</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>983</sup> SBM Intelligence, Escalating protests against militant Fulani pastoralists, 2 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Kaduna community protest incessant terrorist attacks, 13 February 2025, [url](#)

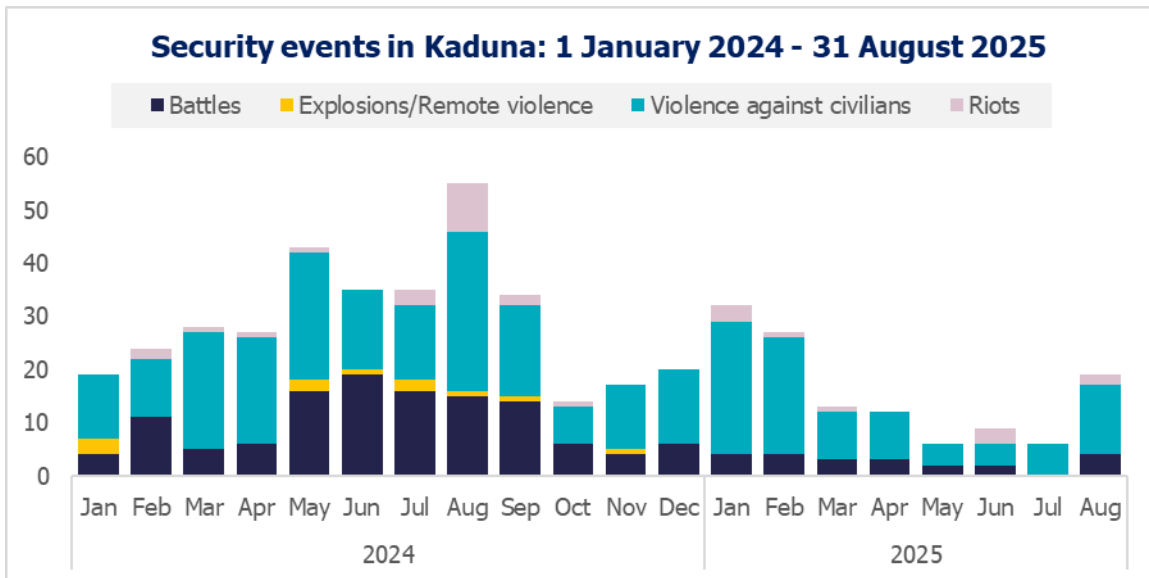
<sup>984</sup> BBC News: Nigeria protests: About 40 arrested for waving Russian flags, 6 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>985</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights; Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#); Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes Summary, 31 December 2024, [url](#), p. 4



### b) Security incidents and impact on the population

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 475 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Kaduna state, which resulted in 951 fatalities. Of these incidents, 290 were coded as incidents of violence against civilians, 144 were coded as battles, 30 as riots, and 11 as explosions/remote violence.<sup>986</sup>



**Figure 8: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Kaduna state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>987</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 22 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Kachia (107), followed by Kajuru (60), Birnin Gwari (52), Kagarko (43) and Giwa (41). No incidents were recorded in Jaba LGA. According to ACLED, Kaduna communal militia (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>988</sup>

Nigeria Watch noted an increase in fatalities, resulting from rural banditry, cattle rustling and government counter-operations across the country in 2024, with Kaduna state accounting for 225 of the 1 452 deaths, including of civilians, recorded in nine states and the FCT. Attacks by Boko Haram, ISWAP and Ansaru and government counter-operations reportedly claimed 53 lives in Kaduna state in 2024.<sup>989</sup>

In early March 2024, around 280 children were abducted from a school in Kaduna. Local reports identified the Ansaru group as the perpetrators.<sup>990</sup> In August 2024, a Fulani militia

<sup>986</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>987</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>988</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>989</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 9, 12

<sup>990</sup> BBC News, Nigeria's mass abductions: What lies behind the resurgence?, 9 March 2024, [url](#)



reportedly abducted 17 Adara community members and killed two more in the Kachia and Kajuru LGAs, destroying houses and looting properties.<sup>991</sup> In September 2024, unidentified armed men abducted two nurses and an unknown number of patients from a primary healthcare centre in Birnin-Gwari LGA.<sup>992</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Attacks by criminal groups have resulted in looting of medical supplies and the razing or occupying of medical facilities in some north-western states, including Kaduna. Some facilities shut down as a result of insecurity.<sup>993</sup> Furthermore, mining activities in the state were disrupted due to attacks by armed groups, affecting mining as a source of income.<sup>994</sup> In November 2024, bandits set fire to several farms in the Birnin Gwari LGA, destroying harvested maize in the process.<sup>995</sup>

**Road security** - Criminal groups reportedly have been stopping cars on major highways, including the Abuja-Kaduna highway, and abducting people.<sup>996</sup> While media sources reported violent incidents, including abductions, on that highway during the reference period,<sup>997</sup> according to police sources no abductions were recorded.<sup>998</sup> In April 2024, an evangelical pastor was reportedly killed by bandits along the Birnin Gwari-Kaduna highway.<sup>999</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - According to IOM, the conflict in the north-western states of Nigeria has worsened, leading to widespread displacement throughout the region.<sup>1000</sup> As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Kaduna state at 117 989<sup>1001</sup> compared to 113 089 as of November 2024. IOM lists armed banditry/kidnapping (55 %), communal clashes (24 %), disasters (11 %), and farmer-herder clashes (8 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>1002</sup> The Africa Center for Strategic Studies in October 2024 attributed 50 % of displacements in Kaduna to criminal group activity.<sup>1003</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Kaduna state during the reference period.

<sup>991</sup> Daily Post, Kaduna: Adara community cries out as militia kill two, abduct 17 others, 10 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>992</sup> Daily Post, Panic as bandits abduct nurses, patients in Kaduna hospital, 9 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>993</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), pp. 5-6

<sup>994</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>995</sup> Daily Post, Bandits set farms on fire, destroy harvested maize in Kaduna, 12 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>996</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); UK, FCDO, Foreign travel advice – Nigeria, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>997</sup> Obodo, N. and Onoto, E., The Abuja-Kaduna Expressway, a Transportation Corridor Under Insecurity, 4 July 2025 [url](#), pp. 10-11

<sup>998</sup> Daily Post, Police deny abduction of 200 persons on Abuja-Kaduna road, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>999</sup> USCIRF, Country Update Nigeria, August 2024, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1000</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1001</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1002</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 10

<sup>1003</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6



### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Security forces conducted ground<sup>1004</sup> and air operations against armed groups,<sup>1005</sup> including counter-operations against Boko Haram, ISWAP and Ansaru in 2024.<sup>1006</sup> Security operations resulted in the release of abduction victims during the reference period.<sup>1007</sup> In late March 2024, around 130 children abducted from a school in early March 2024 were reportedly freed by security forces.<sup>1008</sup>

In early 2024, residents of Kaduna state reportedly called for the Federal Government to recruit, train, and empower local vigilante groups to combat banditry and abductions, highlighting the state's security breakdown.<sup>1009</sup> Ansaru factions and bandit groups have reportedly displaced state institutions in Chikun, Giwa, and Birnin Gwari LGAs.<sup>1010</sup> In June 2024, three new military bases were established in Kaduna state in order to tackle the insecurity.<sup>1011</sup> In February 2025, Kachia LGA residents protested against a surge in attacks and abductions, highlighting the need for increased security measures.<sup>1012</sup> The construction of new access roads between Fadama, Koroto, and Kutara in April 2025 has been reported to enhance security in the state by facilitating quicker access to bandit-infested areas.<sup>1013</sup> Critics argued that despite government efforts to address farmer-herder clashes in Kaduna State, the crisis was not receiving the necessary attention from authorities.<sup>1014</sup>

In May 2024, the Nigerian military announced that two officers would face a court-martial for a December 2023 military drone attack in Tundun Biri, Kaduna state, which killed 85 individuals when the military mistook them for 'terrorists'; the military authorities did not provide details on the investigation.<sup>1015</sup> In September 2024, a military airstrike in Kaduna state that killed 24 people was supposedly carried out 'based on credible intelligence from multiple reliable sources'; the Air Force announced an investigation into the strike.<sup>1016</sup>

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<sup>1004</sup> Punch, Kaduna security operatives nab 398 suspects in nine days, 21 June 2025, [url](#); USCIRF, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2025 Annual Report, USCIRF–Recommended for Countries of particular Concern (CPC): Nigeria, March 2025, [url](#), p. 29; Daily Post, Kaduna security forces rescue 23 kidnapped victims in Kajuru LGA, 3 February 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Three gunned down as Nigerian soldiers, bandits clash in Kaduna, 4 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1005</sup> Daily Post, Many killed as soldiers, bandits exchange gunfire in Kaduna, Niger, 25 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1006</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 9, 12

<sup>1007</sup> Punch, Kaduna dismisses kidnap ranking report as false, mischievous, 29 August 2025, [url](#); Reuters, Nigerian troops rescue 13 kidnap victims in northwest Kaduna, 14 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1008</sup> BBC News, Kuriga kidnap: Nigerian pupils taken in mass abduction freed, 24 March 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, More than 130 kidnapped Nigerian students released: Government spokesman, 24 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1009</sup> Channels TV, Kaduna Residents Demand State Police To Curb Banditry, Kidnapping, 27 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1010</sup> HumAngle, Nigeria's Governance Gap Widens as Ungoverned Areas Multiply, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1011</sup> Daily Trust, Insecurity: Military establishes new commands in Kaduna, 27 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1012</sup> Daily Post, Kaduna community protest incessant terrorist attacks, 13 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1013</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Community excited over access roads in Southern Kaduna, 25 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1014</sup> IPS, Climate Change, Ethnicity and Neglect Fuel Violence in Nigeria's Kaduna State, 19 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1015</sup> HRW, World Report 2025 (Events of 2024), Nigeria, 16 January 2025, [url](#); AP, 2 Nigerian military personnel will face court martial over a drone attack that killed 85 villagers, 3 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1016</sup> HRW, Nigerian Military Accused of Another Deadly Airstrike, 9 October 2024, [url](#); Reuters, Nigerian airstrike kills 24 in Kaduna state village, residents say, 30 September 2024, [url](#)



### 2.3.3. Kano

Kano state is comprised of the following 44 LGAs: Ajingi, Albasu, Bagwai, Bebeji, Bichi, Bunkure, Dala, Dambatta, Dawakin Kudu, Dawakin Tofa, Doguwa, Gabasawa, Garko, Garun Malam, Gaya, Gezawa, Gwale, Gwarzo, Kabo, Karaye, Kibiya, Kiru, Kumbotso, Kura, Madobi, Makoda, Minjibir, Kano Municipal, Nassarawa, Rimini Gado, Rogo, Shanono, Sumaila, Takai, Tarauni, Tsanyawa, Tudun Wada, Tofa, Warawa, Wudil,<sup>1017</sup> Rano, Fagge, Ungoggo,<sup>1018</sup> and Ghari (formerly Kunchi).<sup>1019</sup> The capital city is Kano.<sup>1020</sup>

The majority of the population in Kano are Sunni Muslims, with a minority of Shia Muslims. Smaller communities of the population include Christians and other religious groups.<sup>1021</sup> The main ethnic groups are the Hausa and the Fulani people.<sup>1022</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the state's population at 15 462 177 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1023</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

JAS-Boko Haram faction<sup>1024</sup> has a long-standing presence in Kano state, employing tactics similar to those of bandits, including coercion.<sup>1025</sup> The UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) noted that attacks likely associated with 'terrorist groups' such as Boko Haram had occurred in several Nigerian states since 2021, including Kano.<sup>1026</sup>

In May 2025, a violent demonstration in Kano state resulted in the death of a Division Police Officer,<sup>1027</sup> highlighting the ongoing issue of mob violence.<sup>1028</sup>

<sup>1017</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kano, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1018</sup> Nigeria, Kano State – The Center of Commerce, Facts and figures about Kano State Local Governments, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1019</sup> Daily Trust, Kano: Kunchi residents welcome renaming of LGA, 6 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1020</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kano, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1021</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kano, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1022</sup> ZODML, Kano, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1023</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria - Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1024</sup> JAS is commonly called Boko Haram; EUAA, Nigeria Security Situation, June 2021, [url](#), p. 30

<sup>1025</sup> ACLED and GI-TOC, Non-State Armed Groups and Illicit Economies in West Africa: Armed Bandits in Nigeria, July 2024, [url](#), p. 24

<sup>1026</sup> UK, FCDO, Foreign travel advice – Nigeria, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1027</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, Protest: Mob kills DPO, sets station ablaze in Kano, 27 May 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Kano mob attacks police station, kills DPO, raze vehicles, 27 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1028</sup> Daily Post, Mob justice: Kano community kills 'yan 6' gang member after robbery spree, 3 February 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Mob burns tricycle of alleged phone thieves in Kano, 19 January 2025, [url](#)





Protests in Kano state in August<sup>1029</sup> and in October 2024<sup>1030</sup> were reportedly suppressed by authorities, leading to the arrests<sup>1031</sup> and killing of protesters,<sup>1032</sup> as well as the vandalism of properties, arson and looting.<sup>1033</sup>

During the reference period, there were reports of abductions in Kano state.<sup>1034</sup>

In June 2025, two explosions in Kano state resulted in civilian injuries and fatalities,<sup>1035</sup> raising concerns about the circulation of unexploded ordnances in scrap markets.<sup>1036</sup>

In December 2024, Kano residents expressed concern over a resurgence of violent clashes between bandit groups following clashes after a football match, killing at least two people.<sup>1037</sup> An April 2025 Nigerian Tribune article reported a recent rise of ‘innocent’ killings by rival gang groups in Kano.<sup>1038</sup>

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 43 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Kano state, which resulted in 32 fatalities. Of these incidents, 24 were coded as incidents of riots, 16 were coded as violence against civilians, and 3 as battles.<sup>1039</sup>

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<sup>1029</sup> HRW, World Report 2025 - Nigeria, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1030</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Repression of peaceful protest must end, 2 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1031</sup> BBC News: Nigeria protests: About 40 arrested for waving Russian flags, 6 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1032</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#); Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes Summary, 31 December 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1033</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Hardship protests: Chaos in Kano, Niger, Kaduna, Abuja, Borno, Yobe, Jigawa, 2 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1034</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Jigawa: Police bust kidnapping syndicate, rescue 80-year-old victim, 21 May 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Police rescue 75-year-old kidnapped victim in Kano, 12 May 2025, [url](#); Punch, One kidnapped as gunmen attack Kano community, 18 April 2025, [url](#); Punch, Three nabbed for four-year-old Kano boy abduction, 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1035</sup> Nigerian Tribune, One dead, several injured as another grenade explodes In Kano, 2 July 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Five dead, 15 injured as bomb explodes in Kano, 21 June 2025, [url](#)

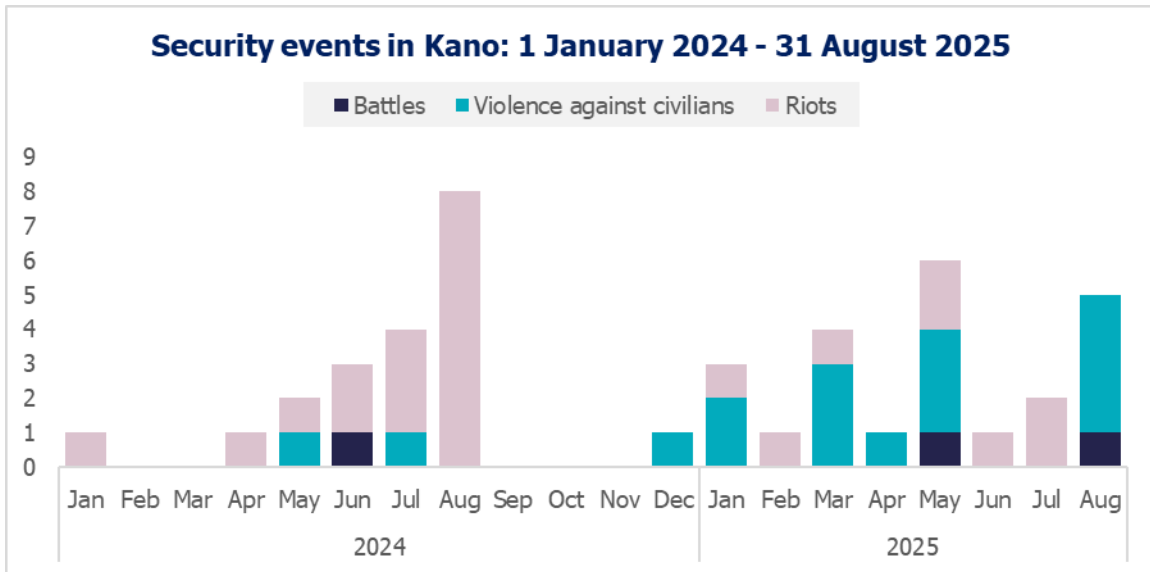
<sup>1036</sup> Nigerian Tribune, One dead, several injured as another grenade explodes In Kano, 2 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1037</sup> Daily Trust, Concerns over resurgence of thug clashes in Kano, 11 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1038</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Security: Kano CP calls for establishment of special courts, 13 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1039</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 20: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Kano state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1040</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 17 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Kano Municipal (11), followed by Gwale and Ungogo (4 incidents each), as well as Rano and Kumbotso (3 incidents each) LGAs, and Ungogo (3 incidents). No incidents were recorded in 27 LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1041</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, Kano state was the fourth most peaceful in 2024,<sup>1042</sup> with 1.37 fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants. Regarding deaths resulting from farmer-herder clashes in 2024, Kano was among the three least-affected states.<sup>1043</sup> ACLED reported a similar trend, with Kano State ranking fourth from last overall among the states with the lowest number of security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) during the reference period.<sup>1044</sup>

In February 2025, residents of Sheka in Kumbotso LGA reportedly captured a gang member and beat him to death, which sparked further clashes in Sheka.<sup>1045</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - No information could be found during the reference period.

<sup>1040</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1041</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1042</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 16

<sup>1043</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 16

<sup>1044</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1045</sup> Daily Post, Mob justice: Kano community kills ‘yan 6’ gang member after robbery spree, 3 February 2025, [url](#)



**Road security** - Nine Unexploded Ordnance (UXOs) were recovered in June 2025 from the scene of an explosion that occurred at a steel company located in the Mariri area.<sup>1046</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Kano state at 12 555<sup>1047</sup> as opposed to 12 532 as of November 2024. IOM lists insurgency (77 %), disasters (12 %), communal clashes (8 %), and armed banditry/kidnapping (3 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>1048</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Kano state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

During the reference period, state police conducted security operations and raids in Kano state, tackling armed robbery, thuggery,<sup>1049</sup> abductions,<sup>1050</sup> and criminal activities.<sup>1051</sup>

## 2.3.4. Katsina

Katsina state is comprised of the following 34 LGAs: Bakori, Batagarawa, Batsari, Baure, Bindawa, Charanchi, Dan Musa, Dandume, Danja, Daura, Dutsi, Dutsin Ma, Faskari, Funtua, Ingawa, Jibia, Kafur, Kaita, Kankara, Kankia, Katsina, Kurfi, Kusada, Mai'Adua, Malumfashi, Mani, Mashi, Matazu, Musawa, Rimi, Sabuwa, Safana, Sandamu, Zango.<sup>1052</sup> The capital city is Katsina.<sup>1053</sup>

The majority of the population in Katsina are Hausa and Fulani, and are mainly settled cultivators and traders, but there is also a significant number of nomadic Fulani cattle herders.<sup>1054</sup> There are also Maguwazawa, Yoruba and Igbo minorities in Katsina state. The majority of the population are Muslims, with a Christian minority.<sup>1055</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the state's population at 10 368 483 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1056</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

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<sup>1046</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Kano explosion: Police recover nine unexploded devices, urge calm, 23 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1047</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1048</sup> IOM, Nigeria — North-Central and North-West — Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 10

<sup>1049</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police arrest 157 suspected armed robbers, thugs in Kano, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1050</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Jigawa: Police bust kidnapping syndicate, rescue 80-year-old victim, 21 May 2025, [url](#);

Nigerian Tribune, Police rescue 75-year-old kidnapped victim in Kano, 12 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1051</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Kano: Police nab 93 suspects over armed robbery, kidnapping, others, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1052</sup> ALGON, Local Government Areas, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1053</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Katsina, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1054</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Katsina, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1055</sup> ZODML, Katsina, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1056</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria - Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)



In May 2025, IOM reported a multi-dimensional crisis in Nigeria's North-West, with long-standing ethnic and religious tensions leading to attacks and banditry.<sup>1057</sup> Katsina was one of the three states worst affected by rural banditry,<sup>1058</sup> with bandits maintaining camps in the state's forests.<sup>1059</sup> In early 2024, violent incidents related to banditry in Katsina state increased,<sup>1060</sup> following a spike in attacks on civilians.<sup>1061</sup> Between 2019 and October 2024, Katsina was among the five Nigerian states most severely impacted by inter-group clashes between bandit groups.<sup>1062</sup> In July 2024, FEWS NET reported that households in Katsina state were also severely impacted by farmer-herder conflict and abductions.<sup>1063</sup>

During the reference period, attacks against civilians, leading to civilian deaths, abductions,<sup>1064</sup> including mass abductions,<sup>1065</sup> lootings, house burnings,<sup>1066</sup> and cattle rustling were reported.<sup>1067</sup> Between July 2023 and June 2024, Katsina state accounted for 119 of the country's 1 130 abduction incidents and 887 of the 7 568 victims, making it the second-most Nigerian state affected by abductions.<sup>1068</sup> In 2024, Katsina was the state with the fourth-highest number of abduction victims (267)<sup>1069</sup> and abductions reportedly increased by 97 % compared to the foregoing 4-year average.<sup>1070</sup> According to Amnesty International, 306 individuals were abducted in Katsina between May 2023 and May 2025 by armed groups, who also pressured individuals into paying taxes by threatening to kill them.<sup>1071</sup> According to the February 2025 UN Security Council report, Boko Haram's Adamu Yunusa/Adamu Sadiqu faction was present in Katsina state.<sup>1072</sup>

<sup>1057</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Katsina state, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1058</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 16

<sup>1059</sup> Al Jazeera, Nigeria says troops kill dozens of gunmen in northwest and northeast, 10 July 2025, [url](#); AFP, Nigerian state turns to vigilantes in fight against bandits, 1 February 2024

<sup>1060</sup> Nextier, Nigeria Violent Conflict, January 2024 – February 2024, 25 March 2024, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1061</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1062</sup> SBM Intelligence, Chart of the week: Bandit rivalry in Northern Nigeria, 3 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1063</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>1064</sup> GCR2P, R2P Monitor, Issue 71, 1 December 2024, [url](#), p. 20

<sup>1065</sup> BBC News, Nigerian bandit kingpin and 100 followers killed, 12 April 2025, [url](#); BBC News, Nigeria gunmen kill at least 25 in village raid, officials say, 11 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1066</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Daily Trust, Terrorists abduct over 80 in Katsina, 15 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1067</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>1068</sup> SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria's Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1069</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>1070</sup> ORFA, The Illusion of Progress: Mapping Nigeria's Deteriorating Security Landscape, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1071</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1072</sup> UN Security Council, Letter dated 6 February 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fifth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2025/71/Rev.1, 6 February 2025, [url](#), para. 27

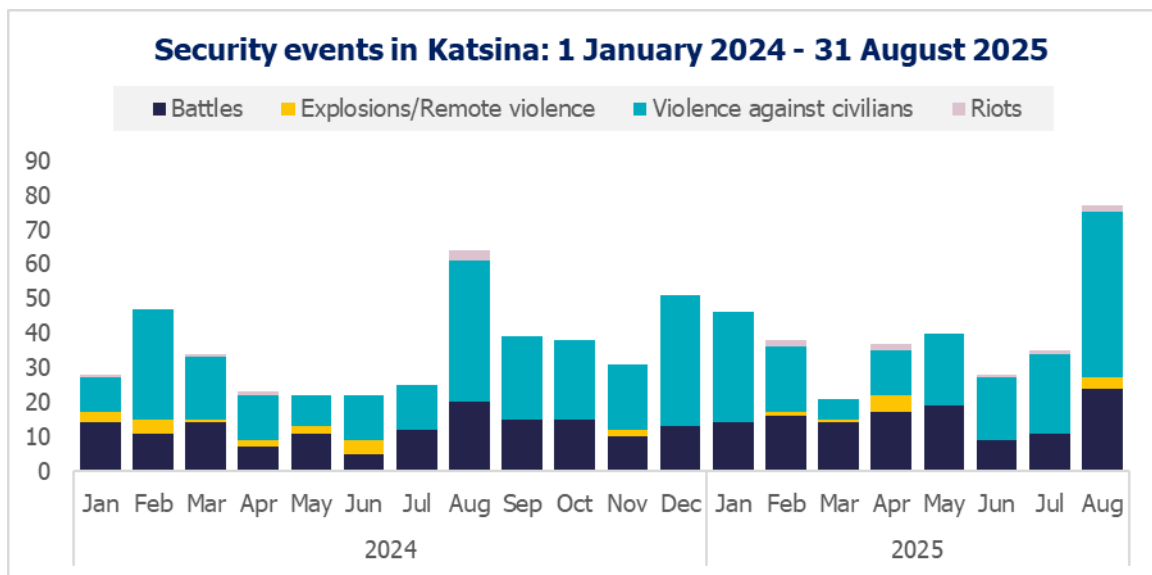


Supported by vigilantes and the Community Watch Corps (created in late 2024<sup>1073</sup>),<sup>1074</sup> government forces carried out security operations against bandits,<sup>1075</sup> including airstrikes.<sup>1076</sup>

SBM Intelligence reported IED explosions in Katsina state in February and June 2025.<sup>1077</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 746 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Katsina state, which resulted in 2 145 fatalities. Of these incidents, 433 were coded as incidents of violence against civilians, 271 were coded as battles, 28 as explosions/remote violence, and 14 as riots.<sup>1078</sup>



**Figure 21: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Katsina state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.**<sup>1079</sup>

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 28 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Faskari (107 incidents), followed by Kankara (91 incidents), Dutsinma (72), Malumfasi (63), and Jibia (49 incidents). No incidents were recorded in 6 LGAs. According to

<sup>1073</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1074</sup> Channels TV, Security Operatives Kill 12 Bandits, Recover Weapons In Katsina, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1075</sup> Al Jazeera, Nigeria says troops kill dozens of gunmen in northwest and northeast, 10 July 2025, [url](#);

International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1076</sup> Punch, Military airstrike kills top ISWAP commander, 100 others in Katsina, 11 April 2025, [url](#); Channels TV, NAF Air Strike Destroys Terrorists’ Camp In Kaduna, Katsina States, 4 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1077</sup> SBM Intelligence, Bombings in Nigeria: A shifting threat, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1078</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1079</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



ACLED, Katsina communal militia (coded as either 'Actor 1' or 'Actor 2') were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1080</sup>

Katsina state was the fourth 'most dangerous' state in Nigeria in 2024, according to Nigeria Watch, with 11.39 violence-related fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, following Zamfara, Borno, and Niger states.<sup>1081</sup> ACLED reports a similar trend, ranking Katsina as the third state with the highest number of security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) during the reference period.<sup>1082</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, in 2024, Katsina saw the highest number of fatalities due to rural banditry, cattle rustling and government counter-operations, accounting for 577 of the about 1 452 deaths, including of civilians, recorded in nine states and the FCT.<sup>1083</sup>

In January 2024, over 60 army-style dressed bandits invaded Tashar Na-Gulle village in Batsari LGA, abducting some 30 persons.<sup>1084</sup> In May 2025, armed bandits attacked Kuki in Dutsin-Ma LGA, affecting 2 155 individuals.<sup>1085</sup> In mid-August 2025, armed men attacked a mosque in Unguwan Mantau village, killing a minimum of 17 persons in the mosque,<sup>1086</sup> and killing and abducting more in nearby villages, where they also burned houses.<sup>1087</sup> An airstrike in February 2025 in Safana area led to at least six civilian deaths.<sup>1088</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - An October 2024 Africa Center for Strategic Studies report highlights the ongoing attacks by criminal groups on medical facilities in north-western states, including Katsina. The attacks result in the looting of medical supplies and the razing of facilities, with some shutting down due to insecurity.<sup>1089</sup> In March 2024, terrorist attacks in Wurma village in Kurfi LGA resulted in the destruction of a primary healthcare centre and a police outpost.<sup>1090</sup> A security analyst noted in June 2025 that the existence of terrorists often led to dilapidated schools, and health centres, with such infrastructure often destroyed or taken by armed groups in remote areas of Katsina state.<sup>1091</sup>

**Road security** - Criminal groups in Katsina state were reportedly engaging in grand larceny along major highways.<sup>1092</sup> Reported incidents included an attempted attack on security forces on the Dutsinma-Kurfi highway,<sup>1093</sup> an attack on a commercial vehicle on the Jibia-Katsina

<sup>1080</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1081</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 16

<sup>1082</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1083</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1084</sup> Channels TV, 29 Persons Abducted As Bandits In Military Camouflage Attack Katsina Community, 22 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1085</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Katsina state, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1086</sup> HumAngle, After Katsina Mosque Attack, Familiar Question Returns: Do Peace Deals Work?, 23 August 2025, [url](#); BBC News, Gunmen in Nigeria kill Muslim worshippers in 'reprisal attack', 20 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1087</sup> DW, Nigeria: 'Bandits' go on killing spree in Katsina state, 20 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1088</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1089</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>1090</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Banditry: Katsina communities protest incessant bandits attacks, 2 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1091</sup> HumAngle, Nigeria's Governance Gap Widens as Ungoverned Areas Multiply, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1092</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Katsina state, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1093</sup> Daily Post, Katsina police foil bandit attack on Dutsinma-Kurfi highway, 24 February 2025, [url](#)





road,<sup>1094</sup> and an abduction incident on the Kankara-Dutsinma road.<sup>1095</sup> The roads leading from Jibia to Batsari, Batsari to Katsina, Jibia to Katsina, and Kankara to Sheme were reportedly among the most vulnerable to attacks.<sup>1096</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - According to IOM, the conflict in the north-western states of Nigeria has worsened, leading to widespread displacement throughout the region.<sup>1097</sup> As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Katsina state at 270 968<sup>1098</sup> compared to 227 203 as of November 2024. IOM lists armed banditry/kidnapping (77 %), disasters (15 %), communal clashes (7 %), and armed insurgency (1 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>1099</sup> The IMDC reported 295 000 cases of internal displacement due to conflict and violence in Nigeria in 2024, with 123 000 in three north-western states, including Katsina.<sup>1100</sup> The abovementioned bandit attack in May 2025 on Kuki in Dutsin-Ma LGA displaced 604 individuals.<sup>1101</sup> The Africa Center for Strategic Studies in October 2024 attributed 84 % of displacement in Katsina to criminal group activity.<sup>1102</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Katsina state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In late January 2024, around 30 people who had been abducted in the Batsari LGA earlier the same month, were reportedly rescued by the army.<sup>1103</sup> In April 2025, a series of attacks in Katsina state reportedly led to residents' outrage, as they claimed government security forces had failed to protect them. Despite repeated calls for help from communities, who were under attack for two days, security forces were absent, resulting in the abduction of over 50 persons.<sup>1104</sup> Following the abovementioned attack on a mosque in Unguwan Mantau village by armed men in mid-August 2025, a police source reported that the security forces had stopped the attackers, preventing further attacks on two more villages.<sup>1105</sup> Later that month, 76 abduction victims were reportedly rescued in a security operation involving an airstrike on a bandit stronghold in Pauwa Hill.<sup>1106</sup>

According to a security analyst, in Nigerian 'territories overrun by terrorists', including in remote areas in Katsina state, governance and secular leadership were scarcely present and state structures, including police posts and local government offices, were 'destroyed or taken

<sup>1094</sup> Punch, Bandits kill one, injure four in Katsina highway attack, 24 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1095</sup> Daily Post, Katsina: Bandits block Kankara–Dutsin-Ma road, kidnap entire vehicle, 29 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1096</sup> Premium Times, Terrorists kill nine traders in Katsina highway attack, 12 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1097</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1098</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1099</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 10

<sup>1100</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>1101</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Katsina state, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1102</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1103</sup> THISDAY, Army Hands Over 35 Rescued Kidnap Victims to Katsina Gov, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1104</sup> HumAngle, 'We Are Ignored': Katsina Villagers Mourn Abduction of 50, Decry Gov't Inaction, 8 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1105</sup> DW, Nigeria: 'Bandits' go on killing spree in Katsina state, 20 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1106</sup> Africanews, Nigeria Air Force rescues 76 kidnap victims in Katsina raid, 25 August 2025, [url](#)



over' by them.<sup>1107</sup> According to sources, some communities in Katsina state have taken it upon themselves to negotiate with bandit groups.<sup>1108</sup>

### 2.3.5. Kebbi

Kebbi state is comprised of the following 21 LGAs: Aleiro, Arewa Dandi, Argungu, Augie, Bagudu, Birnin Kebbi, Bunza, Dandi, Fakai, Gwandu, Jega, Kalgo, Koko/Besse, Maiyama, Ngaski, Sakaba, Shanga, Suru, Wasagu/Danko, Yauri, Zuru.<sup>1109</sup> The capital city is Birnin Kebbi.<sup>1110</sup>

The major ethnic groups in the state include Hausa,<sup>1111</sup> Fulani, Dakarki (or Dakarawa).<sup>1112</sup> There are also some members of the ethnic groups known as the Bussawa, Dukawa, Kambari, and Kamuku in the state.<sup>1113</sup> Kebbi state has a Muslim majority and minorities of Christians and followers of indigenous religions in the south.<sup>1114</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the state's population at 5 563 907 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1115</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

During the reference period, attacks and abductions by armed men and bandit groups, including Lakurawa,<sup>1116</sup> were reported. These led to civilian killings,<sup>1117</sup> as well as cattle rustling<sup>1118</sup> and arson.<sup>1119</sup> Lakurawa reportedly emerged in northern Kebbi in September 2024,<sup>1120</sup> and the authorities acknowledged their existence for the first time in November of

<sup>1107</sup> HumAngle, Nigeria's Governance Gap Widens as Ungoverned Areas Multiply, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1108</sup> Punch, Katsina community negotiating with bandits – Commissioner, 15 July 2025, [url](#); FIJ, Through Katsina's Kidnapping Routes: How Terrorists Strike and Escape, 5 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1109</sup> Nigeria, Kebbi State, About Kebbi State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1110</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kebbi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1111</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kebbi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1112</sup> ZODML, Kebbi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1113</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Kebbi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1114</sup> ZODML, Kebbi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1115</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria - Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1116</sup> Insurgents with suspected links to ISSP locally known as 'Lakurawa'; Igwe, U., Is Lakurawa the emerging face of terror in the Sahel? [Blog], LSE, 27 January 2025, [url](#); ISW and CTP, JNIM Seizes Burkinabe Provincial Capital in Latest Blow to Traoré, IS West Africa Regains the Advantage in Lake Chad, IS Sahel Operationalizes Support Networks in Nigeria, Tripoli Clashes, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1117</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Channels TV, Bandits Kill One, Kidnap District Head, Others In Kebbi, 6 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1118</sup> Daily Post, Bandits kill scores, kidnap others, rustle cows in Kebbi State, 17 June 2025, [url](#); SBM Intelligence, Lakurawa, the not-so-new sheriffs in town, 14 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1119</sup> Daily Trust, Kebbi: Lakurawa kills 13 in revenge mission, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1120</sup> UN Security Council, Letter dated 6 February 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fifth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2025/71/Rev.1, 6 February 2025, [url](#), para. 21

that year, noting that the group has a headquarters in Kebbi state.<sup>1121</sup> FEWS NET reported a significant increase in the number of civilians targeted in bandit-related violence in early 2024.<sup>1122</sup> Between May 2023 and May 2025, Amnesty International reported that the emergence of Lakurawa had ‘opened a new frontier of bloodshed in Kebbi state where at least 70 people were killed in 22 attacks’.<sup>1123</sup> In May 2025, the chairman of the Danko-Wasugu LGA reportedly stated that there was a ‘a growing trend’ of bandits using Kebbi as a ‘soft target for attacks and abductions’.<sup>1124</sup>

Government raids and operations against armed groups,<sup>1125</sup> including airstrikes, were reported in Kebbi state during the reference period,<sup>1126</sup> including operations targeting Lakurawa.<sup>1127</sup>

Vigilante forces reportedly also existed in Kebbi state in the reference period.<sup>1128</sup>

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 70 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Kebbi state, which resulted in 156 fatalities. Of these incidents, 40 were coded as incidents of violence against civilians, 28 were coded as battles, and 2 as riots.<sup>1129</sup>

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<sup>1121</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1122</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 – January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1123</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1124</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Bandits invade church, abduct eight female worshippers in Kebbi, 20 May 2025, [url](#)

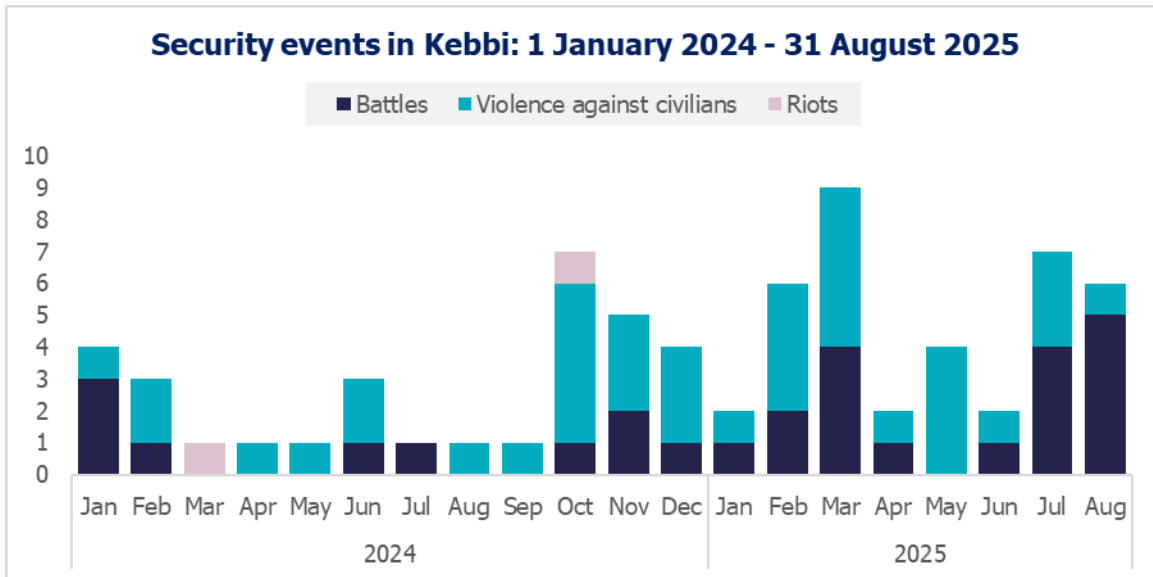
<sup>1125</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); USCIRF, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2025 Annual Report, USCIRF–Recommended for Countries of particular Concern (CPC): Nigeria, March 2025, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>1126</sup> Daily Post, NAF, Army raid bandits’ camp in Kebbi, kill dozens, rescue kidnap victims, 18 July 2025, [url](#); SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 1; Nigerian Tribune, Troops eliminate bandits in Kebbi, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1127</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>1128</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Premium Times, Lakurawa kingpin, Maigemu, killed in Kebbi – Official, 7 March 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Police rescue 36 kidnapped victims in Kebbi, 9 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1129</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



**Figure 9: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Kebbi state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1130</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 18 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Danko (19), followed by Arewa (12), Shanga (9), as well as Suru and Augie (5 incidents each) LGAs. No incidents were recorded in 3 LGAs. According to ACLED, Kebbi communal militia, unidentified armed groups, and ISSP (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1131</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, regarding deaths resulting from farmer-herder clashes in 2024, Kebbi was among the three least-affected states, recording no fatalities.<sup>1132</sup>

In mid-June 2025, bandits stormed the village of Tadurga in the Zuru LGA, killing and abducting several people and looting and stealing cattle.<sup>1133</sup>

On 8 November 2024, clashes broke out between residents of Mera village in Augie LGA and the Lakurawa, resulting in 15 casualties.<sup>1134</sup> In response to the killing of a Lakurawa leader by security forces, Lakurawa attacked eight villages in the Arewa area in early March 2025, killing 13 people<sup>1135</sup> and setting the villages on fire.<sup>1136</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Road security** - On 8 December 2024, armed bandits barricaded the road between Mairairai and Bena, abducting at least 30 people. Following clashes with state forces and vigilantes in

<sup>1130</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1131</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1132</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 11

<sup>1133</sup> Daily Post, Bandits kill scores, kidnap others, rustle cows in Kebbi State, 17 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1134</sup> Daily Post, 15 dead as Mera community, terrorist group clash in Kebbi, 9 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1135</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1136</sup> Daily Trust, Kebbi: Lakurawa kills 13 in revenge mission, 11 March 2025, [url](#)



the Danko/Wasagu LGA, the abduction victims were reportedly freed.<sup>1137</sup> In a separate incident in early April 2025, armed bandits ambushed a commercial vehicle on the Kebbi/Sokoto highway, killing one person.<sup>1138</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of August 2025, no figures could be found on conflict-related IDPs in Kebbi state. In early March 2025, the Lakurawa group reportedly attacked the villages of Birnin Debe, Dan Marke, and Tambo, resulting in residents being displaced to IDP camps in the Kangiwa village of the Arewa Dandi LGA.<sup>1139</sup> Attacks in mid-June 2025 on residents of Tadurga and Kyabu/Kandu in the Zuru and Danko/Wasagu LGAs of the state, reportedly displaced hundreds of people.<sup>1140</sup>

No information could be found on conflict-induced returns in Kebbi state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Following attacks on residents of Tadurga and Kyabu/Kandu in the Zuru and Danko/Wasagu LGAs of the state in mid-June 2025, a survivor of the attacks reportedly stated that government security forces only arrived the next day, long after the attackers had left.<sup>1141</sup> In May 2025, the chairman of Danko-Wasagu LGA reportedly noted that villages previously under siege by bandits, such as Dan Kade and Yar Tasha had been freed due to the increased military presence in the area. He added that arrangements were being made to secure the Kebbi state border by deploying large numbers of military personnel there.<sup>1142</sup>

## 2.3.6. Sokoto

Sokoto state is comprised of the following 23 LGAs: Binji, Bodinga, Dange Shuni, Gada, Goronyo, Gudu, Gwadabawa, Illela, Isa, Kebbe, Kware, Rabah, Sabon Birni, Shagari, Silame, Sokoto North, Sokoto South, Tambuwal, Tangaza, Tureta, Wamako, Wurno, Yabo. The capital city is Sokoto.<sup>1143</sup>

The majority of the population are Hausa people,<sup>1144</sup> followed by Fulanis. There are also Zabarmawa, Tuareg and Dakarki minorities in Sokoto state.<sup>1145</sup> Most of the residents are Sunni Muslims, with a Shia minority.<sup>1146</sup>

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<sup>1137</sup> Vanguard, Police rescue 36 kidnapped victims in Kebbi, 9 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1138</sup> Daily Post, Bandits ambush commercial vehicle on Kebbi-Sokoto road, kill passenger, 4 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1139</sup> Punch, Kebbi gov pledges swift resettlement for Lakurawa attack victims, 13 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1140</sup> News Express, 'We slept in a cemetery to survive': Fear, death and despair as bandits sack Kebbi villages, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1141</sup> News Express, 'We slept in a cemetery to survive': Fear, death and despair as bandits sack Kebbi villages, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1142</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Bandits invade church, abduct eight female worshippers in Kebbi, 20 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1143</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Sokoto, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1144</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Sokoto, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1145</sup> ZODML, Sokoto, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1146</sup> Nigeria, Sokoto, n.d., [url](#); ZODML, Sokoto, n.d., [url](#)



UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the state's population at 6 391 047 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1147</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

As of July 2024, households in Sokoto state had been severely affected by farmer-herder conflict, abductions, and banditry.<sup>1148</sup> Sokoto was considered to be one of the three states in the North-West most affected by banditry,<sup>1149</sup> with bandit groups having established bases in remote areas.<sup>1150</sup>

During the reference period, attacks<sup>1151</sup> and abductions, including mass abductions,<sup>1152</sup> as well as arson and cattle rustling<sup>1153</sup> by armed men and bandit groups<sup>1154</sup> such as Lakurawa were reported in Sokoto state. Some of these attacks led to civilian deaths.<sup>1155</sup> In 2024, abductions in Sokoto state reportedly increased by 108 % compared to the foregoing 4-year average.<sup>1156</sup> Between July 2023 and June 2024, Sokoto state experienced 67 of the country's 1 130 abduction incidents and accounted for 487 of the 7 568 victims.<sup>1157</sup> Armed groups reportedly also pressured individuals into paying taxes by threatening to kill them.<sup>1158</sup> Lakurawa emerged in north-western Sokoto state in September 2024,<sup>1159</sup> with authorities acknowledging their existence in Nigeria for the first time in November 2024, noting that it has a headquarters in Sokoto state.<sup>1160</sup> However, displaced residents of northern Sokoto state had reported Lakurawa activity there since 2018.<sup>1161</sup> Furthermore, the UK FCDO stated that attacks likely

<sup>1147</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria - Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1148</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>1149</sup> Kleffmann, J. et al., Banditry Violence in Nigeria's North West: Insights from Affected Communities, Findings Report 36, UNIDIR, July 2024, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1150</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1151</sup> Amnesty International: Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1152</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); HumAngle, Terrorists Abduct 70 Farmers In Nigeria's Sokoto Amid Rising Food Insecurity, 15 June 2024, [url](#); GI-TOC, What does the recent escalation of mass abductions in Nigeria tell us?, 15 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1153</sup> HumAngle, No Simple Way Home: Displaced Sokoto Residents Driven To Despair And Frustration, 4 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1154</sup> Nation (The), 2025 Outlook – National Security: Prospects, challenges, emerging threats, 5 January 2025, [url](#); FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1155</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1156</sup> ORFA, The Illusion of Progress: Mapping Nigeria's Deteriorating Security Landscape, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1157</sup> SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria's Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1158</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1159</sup> UN Security Council, Letter dated 6 February 2025 from the President of the Security Council acting in the absence of a Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council [containing thirty-fifth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2734 (2024) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities], S/2025/71/Rev.1, 6 February 2025, [url](#), para. 21

<sup>1160</sup> Al Jazeera, Lakurawa, the new armed group wreaking havoc on the Nigeria-Niger border, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1161</sup> SBM Intelligence, Lakurawa, the not-so-new sheriffs in town, 14 November 2024, [url](#)



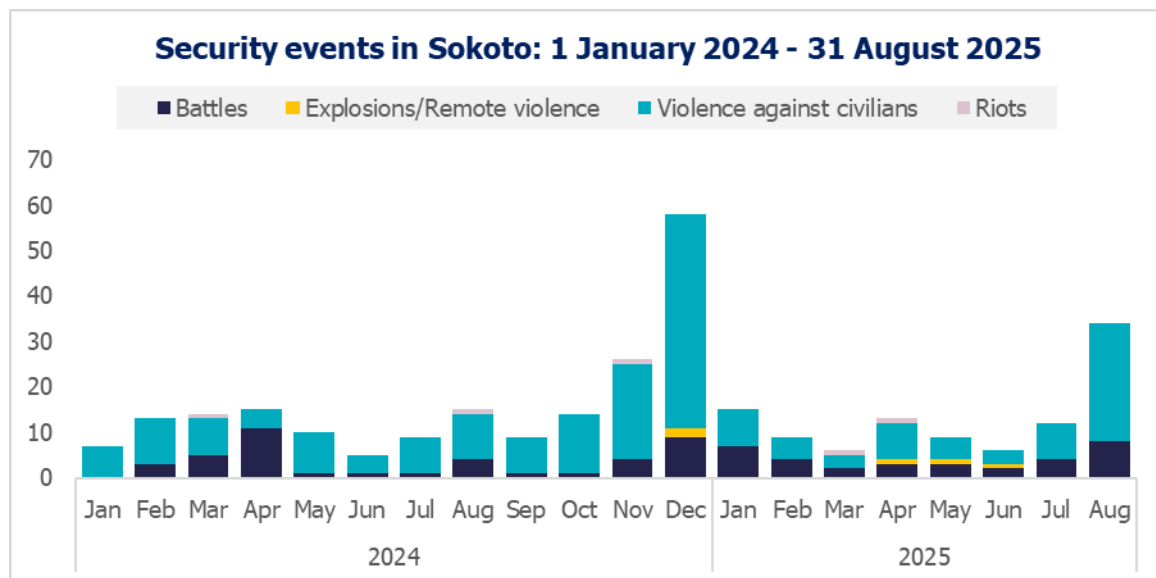
associated with ‘terrorist groups’, such as Boko Haram, had occurred in several Nigerian states, including Sokoto, since 2021.<sup>1162</sup>

A government airstrike in December 2024 in Silame LGA targeting armed groups reportedly killed ten villagers.<sup>1163</sup>

Vigilante forces reportedly also existed in Sokoto state during the reference period.<sup>1164</sup>

### b) Security incidents and impact on the population

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 299 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Sokoto state, which resulted in 550 fatalities. Of these incidents, 215 were coded as incidents of violence against civilians, 74 were coded as battles, 5 as explosions/remote violence, and 5 as riots.<sup>1165</sup>



**Figure 10: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Sokoto state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1166</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 21 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Sabon Birni (102), followed by Isa (39), Tangaza (23), Goronyo (20 incidents), and Rabah (19). No incidents were recorded in two LGAs. According to ACLED, Sokoto

<sup>1162</sup> UK, FCDO, Foreign travel advice – Nigeria, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1163</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Airstrike kills 10 Sokoto villagers, 26 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1164</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1165</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1166</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



communal militia (coded as either 'Actor 1' or 'Actor 2') were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1167</sup>

On 2 July 2025, an incident of armed banditry and abduction in Tangaza LGA affected over 500 persons and led to 50 casualties.<sup>1168</sup> Between 2 and 3 June 2025, several bandit attacks involving abductions occurred in a number of locations in Isa LGA affecting around 18 500 persons.<sup>1169</sup> In March 2024, at least 15 pupils were abducted by bandits from a boarding school in Gidan Bakuso hamlet while they were asleep.<sup>1170</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Reports indicated that schools in Sokoto state had been closed or temporarily closed due to banditry.<sup>1171</sup>

**Road security** - Criminal groups in Sokoto state were reportedly engaging in grand larceny along major highways.<sup>1172</sup> FEWS NET reported in July 2024 that bandits had intensified attacks along the Sokoto-Gusau road by mounting illegal checkpoints and abducting travellers.<sup>1173</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - IOM noted that the crisis in north-western Nigeria has accelerated in recent years, resulting in widespread displacement across the region.<sup>1174</sup> As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Sokoto state at 99 729<sup>1175</sup> compared to 96 232 as of November 2024. IOM lists armed banditry/kidnapping (81 %), insurgency (10 %), disaster (8 %), and communal clashes (1 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>1176</sup> The IDMC reported 295 000 cases of internal displacements resulting from conflict and violence in Nigeria in 2024, of which almost 123 000 occurred in three north-western states, including Sokoto.<sup>1177</sup> The Africa Center for Strategic Studies in October 2024 attributed 87 % of displacements in Sokoto state to criminal group activity.<sup>1178</sup> Mass displacement in

<sup>1167</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1168</sup> IOM, Flash Report 233 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Sokoto State - Conflict/Violence, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1169</sup> IOM, Flash report – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Sokoto state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1170</sup> HRW, World Report 2025 - Nigeria, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1171</sup> Kleffmann, J. et al., Banditry Violence in Nigeria's North West: Insights from Affected Communities, Findings Report 36, UNIDIR, July 2024, [url](#), p. 30

<sup>1172</sup> IOM, Flash report – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Sokoto state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1173</sup> FEWS NET, Nigeria Food Security Outlook, June 2024 - January 2025, 9 July 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1174</sup> IOM, Flash report – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Sokoto state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1175</sup> As of 1 August 2025, UNHCR mentions the same IDP numbers. UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1176</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 10

<sup>1177</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>1178</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6



Sokoto state as a result of bandit attacks was reported for example in several locations of Isa LGA,<sup>1179</sup> as well as in Shagari,<sup>1180</sup> Rabah,<sup>1181</sup> and Tangaza LGAs.<sup>1182</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Sokoto state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Government operations against armed groups, such as operations targeting Lakurawa,<sup>1183</sup> including an airstrike in December 2024 in Silame LGA,<sup>1184</sup> were reported in Sokoto state during the reference period.<sup>1185</sup> In early September 2025, security forces reportedly rescued nine abduction victims in an operation in Sokoto state.<sup>1186</sup>

In October 2024, it was reported that some villages in Sokoto had lost confidence in the government's ability to protect them and were paying criminal groups for protection, otherwise facing attacks<sup>1187</sup> and abductions.<sup>1188</sup> In July 2024, residents of the Lambar-Tureta area protested against the withdrawal of army officers protecting the area, fearing that the withdrawal at a time of intensified terrorist attacks would make them a lot more vulnerable.<sup>1189</sup>

## 2.3.7. Zamfara

Zamfara state is comprised of the following 14 LGAs: Anka, Bakura, Birin Magaji (or Birnin Magaji/Kiyaw), Bukkuyum, Bungudu, Chafe, Gummi, Gusau, Kaura Namoda, Maradun, Maru, Shinkafi, Talata Mafara, Zurmi. The capital city is Gusau.<sup>1190</sup>

The two main ethnic groups are the Hausa and the Fulani. Other ethnic groups in Zamfara State include the Gwari, Kamuku, Kambari, Dukawa, Bussawa, Zabarma, Igbo, Yoruba, Kanuri, Nupe, and the Tiv. While Islam is the predominant religion in the state, there are also Christians and followers of indigenous religions.<sup>1191</sup>

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<sup>1179</sup> IOM, Flash report – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Sokoto state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1180</sup> Punch, Sokoto residents seek help after bandits sack eight communities, 31 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1181</sup> Daily Post, Over 150 residents displaced as bandits hit communities in Sokoto, 27 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1182</sup> IOM, Flash Report 233 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Sokoto State - Conflict/Violence, 9 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1183</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Sokoto: Police arrest notorious bandit, recover ammunition, 17 July 2025, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 12

<sup>1184</sup> Amnesty International, The State of the World's Human Rights, Nigeria 2024, 29 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, Airstrike kills 10 Sokoto villagers, 26 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1185</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Nation (The), 2025 Outlook – National Security: Prospects, challenges, emerging threats, 5 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1186</sup> Punch, Troops rescue nine kidnap victims, kill terrorists in Sokoto, 1 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1187</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1188</sup> HumAngle, Terrorists Abduct 70 Farmers In Nigeria's Sokoto Amid Rising Food Insecurity, 15 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1189</sup> HumAngle, Stray Bullets Hit Villagers Protesting Over Withdrawal Of Soldiers From Sokoto Community, 31 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1190</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Zamfara, n.d., [url](#); Nigeria, NIPC, Nigerian States – Zamfara State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1191</sup> Nigeria, Zamfara State Government, Brief history of the state, n.d., [url](#)

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 5 833 500 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1192</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In June 2025, IOM reported a multi-dimensional crisis in Nigeria's North-West, with long-standing tensions between ethnic and religious groups leading to attacks and banditry.<sup>1193</sup> As of July 2024, one third of the North-West's 20 000 to 30 000 armed bandits were reported to be in Zamfara state.<sup>1194</sup> Between 2019 and October 2024, Zamfara was among the five states most affected by inter-group clashes between bandit groups.<sup>1195</sup> Amnesty International reported that between May 2023 and May 2025, over 273 people were killed by bandits in the state. 725 villages across 13 LGAs were controlled by bandit/criminal groups,<sup>1196</sup> who have reportedly established bases in remote parts of various north-western states, including Zamfara.<sup>1197</sup> Armed groups reportedly pressured individuals into paying taxes by threatening to kill,<sup>1198</sup> abduct, forcibly evict or hurt them,<sup>1199</sup> with some civilians killed for refusing to pay.<sup>1200</sup>

During the reference period, abductions of civilians,<sup>1201</sup> including mass abductions<sup>1202</sup> and abductions leading to civilian deaths were reported in Zamfara state.<sup>1203</sup>

In early 2024, the vigilante force Zamfara state community protection guards,<sup>1204</sup> also known as Askarawa, was formed.<sup>1205</sup> Previously banned due to violence concerns, the new vigilante force has undergone training to prevent such issues.<sup>1206</sup> Some government airstrikes against

<sup>1192</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September, [url](#)

<sup>1193</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1194</sup> ACLED and GI-TOC, Non-State Armed Groups and Illicit Economies in West Africa: Armed Bandits in Nigeria, July 2024, [url](#), pp. 16, 18

<sup>1195</sup> SBM Intelligence, Chart of the week: Bandit rivalry in Northern Nigeria, 3 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1196</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1197</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1198</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1199</sup> Daily Trust, Zamfara residents pay millions for safety, 22 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1200</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1201</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1202</sup> SBM Intelligence defines mass abductions as abductions, where a minimum of five people is abducted per incident. SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria's Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1203</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes (KW51/2024), 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 6; SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria's Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1204</sup> Punch, Zamfara gov unveils 2,645-member protection guard to tackle insecurity, 31 January 2024, [url](#); AFP, Nigerian state turns to vigilantes in fight against bandits, 1 February 2024

<sup>1205</sup> Channels Television, Bandits Kill Eight Zamfara Community Guards, 8 October 2024, [url](#); Punch, Zamfara gov unveils 2,645-member protection guard to tackle insecurity, 31 January 2024, [url](#);

<sup>1206</sup> AFP, Nigerian state turns to vigilantes in fight against bandits, 1 February 2024



bandits resulted in civilian deaths.<sup>1207</sup> Revenge attacks by bandits and armed groups were also reported.<sup>1208</sup>

The jihadist group Lakurawa was active<sup>1209</sup> and present in Zamfara state,<sup>1210</sup> specifically in Gummi-Gusau.<sup>1211</sup>

Sources also reported IED explosions in Zamfara state during the reference period.<sup>1212</sup>

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 760 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Zamfara state, which resulted in 2 806 fatalities. Of these incidents, 439 were coded as incidents of violence against civilians, 277 were coded as battles, 31 as explosions/remote violence, and 13 as riots.<sup>1213</sup>

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<sup>1207</sup> Al Jazeera, Military air strike kills at least 20 people in northwest Nigeria, 2 June 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Group slams NAF over alleged killing of civilians in Zamfara, 12 January 2025, [url](#); HRW, Nigerian Military Accused of Another Deadly Airstrike, 9 October 2024, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1208</sup> Nation (The), Bandits kill 10 security guards, three missing in Zamfara, 24 March 2025, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1209</sup> Dayton C., Islamic State, Not “Lakurawa” [Map], Modern Diplomacy, 28 June 2025, [url](#)

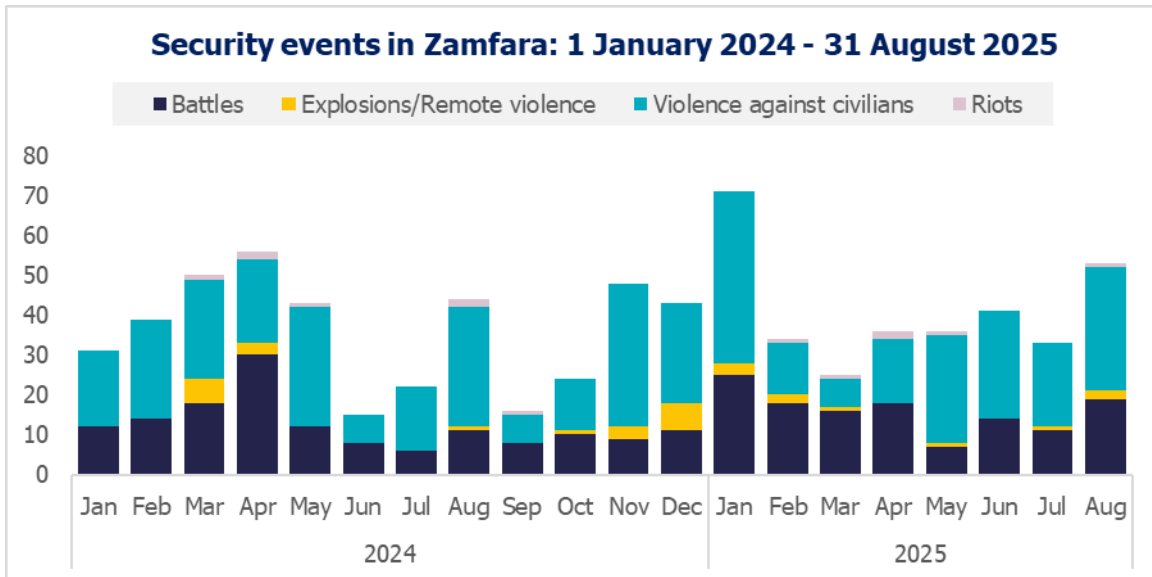
<sup>1210</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1211</sup> SBM Intelligence, Lakurawa, the not-so-new sheriffs in town, 14 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1212</sup> SBM Intelligence, Bombings in Nigeria: A shifting threat, 26 June 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Again, explosion rocks Zamfara community, 7 December 2024, [url](#); BBC News, Military react to bandits new strategy of planting landmines for road for Zamfara, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1213</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 11: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Zamfara state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1214</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in all 14 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Tsafe (145), followed by Gusau (91), Maru (82), Zurmi (68) and Kaura Namoda (66). According to ACLED, Zamfara communal militia (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1215</sup>

Zamfara state was the most dangerous state in Nigeria in 2024, according to Nigeria Watch, with 19.52 fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, primarily due to banditry.<sup>1216</sup> Nigeria Watch also noted an increase in fatalities resulting from rural banditry, cattle rustling and government counter-operations across the country in 2024, with Zamfara state accounting for 394 of the about 1 452 deaths, including of civilians, recorded in nine states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).<sup>1217</sup> ACLED ranked Zamfara as the second state with the highest number of security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) during the reference period, after Borno state ranking first.<sup>1218</sup>

Between July 2023 and June 2024, the state experienced 132 of the country's 1 130 abduction incidents and accounted for 1 639 of the 7 568 victims, including 146 civilian fatalities, making it the Nigerian state most affected by abductions in that period.<sup>1219</sup> In 2024, Zamfara was the state with the second-highest number of abduction victims (421)<sup>1220</sup> and abductions in the state reportedly increased by 156 % compared to the foregoing 4-year average.<sup>1221</sup> Amnesty

<sup>1214</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1215</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1216</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 16

<sup>1217</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1218</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1219</sup> SBM Intelligence, Grim Reaping: Economics of Nigeria’s Kidnap Industry—A 2024 Update, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1220</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p.

31

<sup>1221</sup> ORFA, The Illusion of Progress: Mapping Nigeria’s Deteriorating Security Landscape, 29 May 2025, [url](#)





International reported that over 467 individuals were abducted in Zamfara between May 2023 and May 2025.<sup>1222</sup>

In May 2024, armed men attacked Bilbis in Tsafe LGA and three villages in Birin Magaji LGA, resulting in 20 deaths and seven injuries. Over 100 people were abducted for ransom.<sup>1223</sup> In December 2024, unidentified men raided Kakin Dawa village in the Maradun LGA, abducting over 50 women and children.<sup>1224</sup> In May 2025, an armed group killed four women and abducted 20 residents in the Kaura Namoda LGA.<sup>1225</sup> In April 2024,<sup>1226</sup> as well as in January<sup>1227</sup> and June 2025, government attacks from the air targeting bandits were reported to have accidentally killed civilians.<sup>1228</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - An October 2024 Africa Center for Strategic Studies report noted that attacks by criminal groups have resulted in looting of medical supplies and the razing or occupying of medical facilities in some north-western states, including Zamfara. Some facilities reportedly shut down as a result of insecurity. The source noted that healthcare access in Zurmi, Maru, Bungudu, Tsafe, Birnin Magaji, Gusau East, and Shinkafi LGAs had disappeared for almost two years as a result, forcing people to receive healthcare in other places inside or outside the country. Activities of bandits and a related worsening of the security situation also forced the mentioned LGAs to shut schools for over two years, with 168 schools remaining shut in Zamfara state as of October 2024. Also, large areas of 'farmlands have become inaccessible or deserted due to displacements, producing very little output. Where people can farm, a substantial portion of their harvests go to the criminal groups'.<sup>1229</sup>

**Road security** - Criminal groups in Zamfara state were reportedly engaging in grand larceny along major highways,<sup>1230</sup> with bandits planting landmines on roads to block government forces' accessing during attacks.<sup>1231</sup> In May 2025, Amnesty International reported that bandit groups were preventing farmers in the Dangulbi district of the Maru LGA from accessing the nearest markets to sell their harvest.<sup>1232</sup> Blocked by bandits, residents in Anka LGA's Bagega and Kawaye districts were cut off from the outside world for weeks in late April and early May 2025.<sup>1233</sup>

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<sup>1222</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1223</sup> Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes (KW20/2024), 13 May 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1224</sup> Germany, BAMF, Briefing Notes (KW51/2024), 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1225</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1226</sup> HRW, Nigerian Military Accused of Another Deadly Airstrike, 9 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1227</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Group slams NAF over alleged killing of civilians in Zamfara, 12 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1228</sup> Impact International, Zamfara Airstrike Tragedy: Understanding Civilian Casualties and Security Challenges in Nigeria, 3 June 2025, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Military air strike kills at least 20 people in northwest Nigeria, 2 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1229</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), pp. 5-6

<sup>1230</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1231</sup> BBC News, Military react to bandits new strategy of planting landmines for road for Zamfara, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1232</sup> Amnesty International, Nigeria: Mounting death toll and looming humanitarian crisis amid unchecked attacks by armed groups, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1233</sup> GGA, Zamfara's fragile peace: Communities negotiate with bandits amid government inaction, 15 May 2025, [url](#)





**Displacement, movement and return** - According to IOM, the conflict in the north-western states of Nigeria has worsened, leading to widespread displacement throughout the region.<sup>1234</sup> According to the October 2024 Africa Center for Strategic Studies report, criminal groups' establishment of bases in remote parts of Zamfara and other north-western states has led to civilian displacement.<sup>1235</sup> As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Zamfara state at 216 885 compared to 191 055 as of November 2024.<sup>1236</sup> UNHCR, as of August 2025, estimated the number of IDPs in Zamfara state at 216 968.<sup>1237</sup> IOM lists armed banditry/kidnapping (79 %), insurgency (12 %) and communal clashes (9 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.<sup>1238</sup> The IMDC reported 295 000 cases of internal displacements resulting from conflict and violence in Nigeria in 2024, of which almost 123 000 occurred in three north-western states, including Zamfara.<sup>1239</sup> The Africa Center for Strategic Studies in October 2024 attributed 100 % of displacements in Zamfara state to criminal group activity.<sup>1240</sup> In an attack by armed bandits on 24 June 2025 on six locations in Bukkuyum and Gummi LGAs in Zamfara state, 6 245 individuals, including a high number of children, were displaced.<sup>1241</sup> According to a May 2025 Nigerian Tribune article, there were no camps for the IDPs in Zamfara state.<sup>1242</sup>

No information could be found on returns in Zamfara state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Offensives against bandits were carried out by vigilantes<sup>1243</sup> and the government during the reference period,<sup>1244</sup> including government airstrikes.<sup>1245</sup> Regarding Lakurawa activity, the government also reportedly carried out raids on communities and counter-operations in 2024.<sup>1246</sup> Sources also reported security operation during the reference period, which resulted

<sup>1234</sup> IOM, Flash report 220 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara state - Conflict/Violence, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1235</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1236</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1237</sup> UNHCR, Nigeria – Forcibly Displaced Populations, 13 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1238</sup> IOM, Nigeria – North-Central and North-West – Round 16 IDP Atlas (February 2025), 18 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1239</sup> IDMC, GRID 2025, Global Report on Internal Displacement, 2025, [url](#), p. 31

<sup>1240</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1241</sup> IOM, Flash report 231 – Population displacement: North-west Nigeria – Zamfara State - Conflict/Violence, 30 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1242</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Insecurity: Zamfara parallel Assembly urges Gov Lawal to establish IDP camps, 13 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1243</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Jubilation as Shinkafi Volunteer Forces kill bandit commander, Danbokolo in Zamfara, 30 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1244</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Zamfara: Troops kill two bandits, recover weapons, 12 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1245</sup> BBC News, Scores of bandits killed in air and ground raids, Nigerian military says, 12 August 2025, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#); SARI Global, Weekly Update: Nigeria (July 4 - 10, 2025), 11 July 2025, [url](#), p. 1; USCIRF, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2025 Annual Report; USCIRF–Recommended for Countries of particular Concern (CPC): Nigeria, March 2025, [url](#), p. 29

<sup>1246</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 12



in abduction victims being released.<sup>1247</sup> Non-military government efforts in late August 2025 reportedly led to the release of over 142 abduction victims.<sup>1248</sup>

The Zamfara State parallel House of Assembly criticised state's governor Dauda Lawal in May 2025 for failing to fulfil electoral campaign promises to end armed banditry and allow insecurity to grow and leaving IDPs with nowhere to go.<sup>1249</sup> The same month, communities in Bagega and Kawaye districts of Anka LGA, expressing desperation due to ineffective government intervention, initiated direct negotiations with bandits.<sup>1250</sup> On a similar note, the Africa Center for Strategic Studie reported in October 2024 that some villages in Zamfara 'having lost confidence in the government's ability to come to their aid', were paying criminal groups protection money, noting that those who cannot pay are subjected to attacks.<sup>1251</sup> In contrast to this, some sources cited Zamfara state governor Dauda Lawal as saying security has improved.<sup>1252</sup> In early September 2025, he reportedly stated that his main problem in tackling banditry in Zamfara state was that he did not have direct control over the security agencies, which received their orders from the federal government. A Daily Trust article cited unspecified sources as saying that poor road conditions were helping the bandits and seriously hindering the security forces' ability to access affected areas promptly.<sup>1253</sup>

In January 2025, at least 16 civilians were killed in Zamfara state in a military air strike, apparently after being mistaken for criminal gangs; the Nigerian Air Force indicated that it "views with grave concern reports of the loss of civilian lives in the course of the operation" and that a "comprehensive investigation" would be carried out and it would be "communicated to inform and reassure the public".<sup>1254</sup> Human Rights Watch indicated that investigations into airstrikes by the Nigerian military have yet to produce results and that the military continue facing accusations of further erroneous strikes.<sup>1255</sup>

## 2.4. South-East

The South-East consists of the following five states: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo.<sup>1256</sup>

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<sup>1247</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, The National Counter Terrorism Centre, NSA presents 128 rescued kidnap victims to Zamfara govt, 28 August 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Troops free kidnaped victims in Zamfara, 2 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1248</sup> Daily Post, Bandits leader releases 142 victims to govt in Zamfara amid peace talk, 28 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1249</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Insecurity: Zamfara parallel Assembly urges Gov Lawal to establish IDP camps, 13 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1250</sup> GGA, Zamfara's fragile peace: Communities negotiate with bandits amid government inaction, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1251</sup> Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Violent Criminal Gangs Displace and Disrupt North West Nigeria, 21 October 2024, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1252</sup> Channels TV, Why Security Has Improved In Zamfara – Gov Lawal, 14 May 2025, [url](#); Nigeria, Zamfara State Government, Zamfara security has improved, says Gov. Lawal during historic peace walk, 30 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1253</sup> Daily Trust, I can end banditry in 2 months – Zamfara gov, 4 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1254</sup> BBC, Nigeria military kills 16 civilians in air strike 'mistake', 13 January 2025, [url](#); HRW, Another Erroneous Airstrike Claims Lives in Nigeria, 13 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1255</sup> HRW, Nigerian Military Accused of Another Deadly Airstrike, 9 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1256</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, Region, South East, n.d., [url](#)



For an overview of the main conflict drivers at the country and regional levels, see [1. General description of the security situation](#).

## 2.4.1. Abia

Abia state is comprised of the following 17 LGAs: Aba North, Aba South, Arochukwu, Bende, Ikwuano, Isiala Ngwa North, Isiala Ngwa South, Isuikwuato, Obi Ngwa, Ohafia, Osisioma Ngwa, Ugwunagbo, Ukwu East, Ukwu West, Umuahia North, Umuahia South and Umunneochi. The capital city is Umuahia.<sup>1257</sup>

Igbos comprise 95 % of the population.<sup>1258</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Abia in 2022 at 4 143 093, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1259</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Sources ranked Abia state among the country's five safest states during the period from 2011 to 2024 (KDI)<sup>1260</sup> and among the least violent within the Niger Delta in terms of conflict-related fatalities,<sup>1261</sup> which decreased from 26 in the fourth quarter of 2024 to 11 in the first quarter of 2025<sup>1262</sup> before marginally rising to 13 in the following quarter (PIND).<sup>1263</sup> Drivers of insecurity were incidents linked to separatist militias,<sup>1264</sup> criminality (including kidnappings), communal violence<sup>1265</sup> and cult/gang-related clashes.<sup>1266</sup>

In 2024, Abia was reportedly one of the Niger Delta states most affected by violence linked to separatist militias,<sup>1267</sup> which included incidents that the authorities attributed to the banned IPOB movement<sup>1268</sup> and its armed wing, the ESN.<sup>1269</sup>

Referring to the South-East in general, a Nigerian senior security advisor interviewed by EUAA in July 2025 stated that IPOB was now generally viewed as 'less combative' than in the past and appeared not to have been implicated in most of the recent attacks against federal

<sup>1257</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Abia, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1258</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Abia, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1259</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1260</sup> KDI, Protecting the civic space. Trends, challenges, and future outlook in Nigeria, 28 February 2025, [url](#), p. 28

<sup>1261</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 3; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1262</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1263</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1264</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 4, 8

<sup>1265</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 3; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1266</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1267</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1268</sup> Reuters, Gunmen kill 11 in attack in Nigeria's southeast, army says, 31 May 2024, [url](#); Punch, Gunmen attack army checkpoint in Abia, kill two soldiers, 13 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1269</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 3; Punch, Gunmen attack army checkpoint in Abia, kill two soldiers, 13 November 2024, [url](#)



security personnel. According to this source, these attacks seemed to have been carried out either by criminal organisations ‘masquerading’ as Biafran agitators (using Biafran symbols and flags) or by elements linked to the so-called Biafran Republic Government In Exile (BRGIE) of the Finland-based Biafran agitator Simon Ekpa.<sup>1270</sup> For more information on BRGIE, see section [1.1.3 Non-state armed actors](#).

In May 2024, deadly disputes over land and boundaries erupted as communities in Arochukwu LGA clashed with communities in Odukpani LGA (Cross River state)<sup>1271</sup>/Eket LGA (Akwa Ibom state).<sup>1272</sup> Further deadly clashes over land-related issues were reported during the first quarter of 2025 in what PIND described as a ‘resurgence of communal violence’, involving communities in Ikwuano, Isuikwuato and Obi Ngwa LGAs.<sup>1273</sup>

Civil society organisations reported of ‘escalating attacks’ by suspected Fulani armed bandits and herdsmen on local communities, including in Isuikwuato, Umunneochi, and Obi Ngwa LGAs, also noting the occurrence of kidnappings and farm destruction.<sup>1274</sup> March 2025 witnessed the kidnapping of four individuals by gunmen in Obi Ngwa LGA.<sup>1275</sup>

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 96 security incidents in Abia state that resulted in a total of 118 fatalities. Of these incidents, 51 were coded as battles, 7 as explosion/remote violence, 7 as riots, and 31 as violence against civilians.<sup>1276</sup>

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<sup>1270</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1271</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

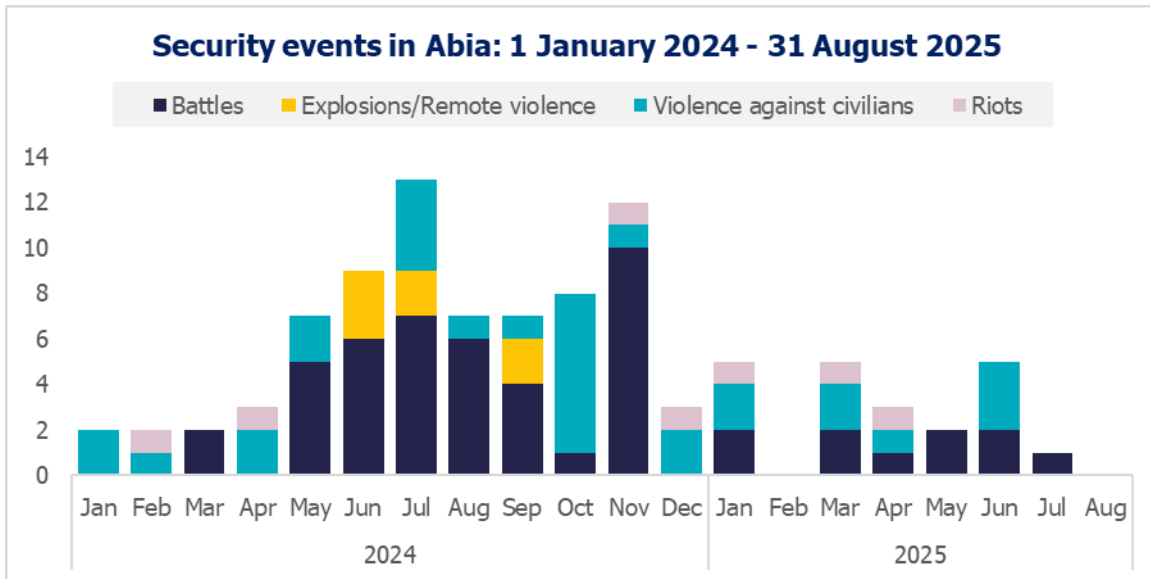
<sup>1272</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1273</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1274</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1275</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1276</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



**Figure 12: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Abia state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1277</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in all 17 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Aba South LGA (22 incidents), followed by Umuahia North (12) and Umunneochi (also spelled Nneochi) LGAs (8 incidents). According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups, IPOB, unidentified cult militias, and military and police forces (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the vast majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1278</sup>

Over the year 2024, PIND recorded 13 incidents attributed to separatist militants that resulted in more than 40 fatalities,<sup>1279</sup> while Nigeria Watch recorded 34 such deaths, the fourth-highest figure among all states.<sup>1280</sup> These incidents included deadly clashes during (suspected) separatist militant attacks targeting the security forces,<sup>1281</sup> some of which also resulted in civilian casualties.<sup>1282</sup>

Several fatalities resulted from ‘security breaches’ in Umunneochi LGA in June 2025<sup>1283</sup> and a July 2025 attack on a Chinese-operated construction site in Isuikwuato LGA by suspected kidnappers wearing military camouflage and armed with assault rifles.<sup>1284</sup> Moreover, several

<sup>1277</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1278</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1279</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1280</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>1281</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8; THISDAY, Two Soldiers Killed as Gunmen Attack Troops in Abia, 14 November 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Gunmen kill Police inspector, three others in Abia, 21 July 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Separatists kill at least 11 people in southeast Nigeria, army says, 31 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1282</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1283</sup> Daily Champion, Many reported dead as herdsmen attack Enugu, Abia communities, 18 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1284</sup> Punch, Many feared killed in Abia gunmen attack, 14 July 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Gunmen in Army uniform kill soldier, driver in Abia construction site attack, 13 July 2025, [url](#)





fatalities arose from violence linked to rivalries between cults/gangs in various locations across Aba North LGA.<sup>1285</sup>

In May 2024, six civilians were among those killed in a surprise attack by alleged IPOB members targeting a security checkpoint<sup>1286</sup> in Aba North LGA,<sup>1287</sup> while attacks by unidentified gunmen targeting a police patrol in Aba South LGA killed four civilians in July 2024<sup>1288</sup> and June 2025.<sup>1289</sup> Suspected kidnappers killed a driver working for a Chinese company in Ikuikwuato LGA in July 2025.<sup>1290</sup> At least seven people died in communal clashes in May 2024<sup>1291</sup> and February, March 2025<sup>1292</sup> and June 2025.<sup>1293</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Civil society organisations reported of farm destruction by suspected armed herdsmen.<sup>1294</sup>

**Road security** -The reference period saw activities of criminal elements on the Abia stretches of the Ikigew (Imo state)–Umunneochi axis<sup>1295</sup> and the Enugu-Aba-Port Harcourt Expressway.<sup>1296</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found on numbers of individuals affected by conflict-induced displacement in Abia state during the reference period. Following a deadly November 2024 attack by gunmen on an army checkpoint in Umuhia South LGA, youths of the Ekenobizi community deserted the area due to fears of a retaliatory military attack on the community.<sup>1297</sup> No information could be found on returns in Abia state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Civil society organisations highlighted that the security forces demonstrated ‘alarming inertia’ in responding to attacks by herdsmen on communities across the South-East.<sup>1298</sup> While the state government officially denied having engaged the ESN to fight insecurity,<sup>1299</sup> ESN launched a campaign against the Fulanis in the forests of the South-East, reportedly dislodging over 70 Fulani herder and criminal settlements in forests across the South-East zone in 2024.<sup>1300</sup> Meanwhile, sources noted that security forces launched at least two raids on

<sup>1285</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1286</sup> Al Jazeera, Separatists kill at least 11 people in southeast Nigeria, army says, 31 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1287</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1288</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8; Nigerian Tribune, Gunmen kill Police inspector, three others in Abia, 21 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1289</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1290</sup> Daily Post, Gunmen in Army uniform kill soldier, driver in Abia construction site attack, 13 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1291</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1292</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1293</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1294</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1295</sup> Vanguard, Oti threatens crackdown over rising insecurity in Abia North, 20 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1296</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Abia govt confirms gunmen attack in Aba, 31 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1297</sup> Daily Post, Abia community deserted after unknown gunmen attack on military checkpoint, 18 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1298</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1299</sup> Vanguard, Abia Govt denies engaging ESN to combat herdsmen, 6 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1300</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025





IPOB/ESN camps<sup>1301</sup> and reportedly killed an IPOB leader,<sup>1302</sup> while the reference period also saw several suspected criminals being arrested during raids on their hideouts in Ugwuagbo<sup>1303</sup> and Umuahia North LGAs.<sup>1304</sup>

## 2.4.2. Anambra

Anambra state is comprised of the following 21 LGAs: Aguata, Awka North, Awka South, Anambra East, Anambra West, Anaocha, Ayamelum, Dunukofia, Ekwusigo, Idemili North, Idemili South, Ihiala, Njikoka, Nnewi North, Nnewi South, Ogbaru, Onitsha North, Onitsha South, Orumba North, Orumba South and Oyi. The capital city is Awka.<sup>1305</sup>

The main ethnic group are the Igbos (98 %) and a small population of Igala (2 %) who live in the Northwestern part of the state.<sup>1306</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Anambra in 2022 at 5 953 517, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1307</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Anambra state was described as being marked by ‘insecurity’<sup>1308</sup> as it faced a number of security issues, including cultism, armed robbery,<sup>1309</sup> killings<sup>1310</sup> and kidnapping.<sup>1311</sup> Gunmen carried out multiple deadly attacks across Anambra targeting security forces<sup>1312</sup> and vigilantes,<sup>1313</sup> with some of these attacks suspected to have been carried out by separatist elements.<sup>1314</sup> Referring to the South-East in general, a Nigerian senior security advisor interviewed by EUAA in July 2025 stated that IPOB was now generally viewed as ‘less combative’ than in previous years and appeared not to have been implicated in the majority of

<sup>1301</sup> THISDAY, Police Officer, Two Gunmen, Three Civilians Killed in Aba Attack, 22 July 2024, [url](#); Channels TV, Soldiers Killing: Army Raids IPOB Camp In Abia, Neutralises Six, 9 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1302</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1303</sup> Vanguard, Otti threatens crackdown over rising insecurity in Abia North, 20 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1304</sup> Daily Post, Gunmen in Army uniform kill soldier, driver in Abia construction site attack, 13 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1305</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Anambra, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1306</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Anambra, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1307</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1308</sup> Daily Post, Group stages protest over insecurity, activities of vigilante in Anambra, 22 August 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Tension heightens as new wave of insecurity sweeps Anambra, 16 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1309</sup> Punch, Insecurity: Anambra assembly passes homeland security bill, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1310</sup> Premium Times, Vigilante group arrest gunmen terrorising Anambra residents – Official, 17 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1311</sup> Punch, Gunmen shoot, abduct Anambra bizman, 29 July 2025, [url](#); Punch, Insecurity: Anambra assembly passes homeland security bill, 16 January 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Vigilante group arrest gunmen terrorising Anambra residents – Official, 17 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1312</sup> Punch, Panic as four killed, vehicles burnt in Anambra gunmen attack, 10 July 2025, [url](#); Punch, Five feared killed as gunmen attack two Anambra communities, 18 November 2024, [url](#); THISDAY, Gunmen Attack Police Station in Anambra, Kill Two Officers, 16 September 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Gunmen attack another police station in Anambra, kill corporal, 3 September 2024, [url](#); Punch, Gunmen kill policeman in Anambra checkpoint attack, 18 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1313</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen kill four vigilante operatives in South-east Nigeria, 18 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1314</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen kill four vigilante operatives in South-east Nigeria, 18 November 2024, [url](#); THISDAY, Gunmen Attack Police Station in Anambra, Kill Two Officers, 16 September 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Gunmen attack another police station in Anambra, kill corporal, 3 September 2024, [url](#)





recent attacks against federal security personnel. According to this source, these attacks seemed to have been carried out by criminal groups ‘masquerading’ as Biafra agitators or by elements linked to Simon Ekpa’s BRGIE.<sup>1315</sup> For more information on BRGIE, see section on Pro-Biafran separatist groups in [1.1.3 Non-state armed actors](#).

According to Nigeria Watch, in 2024, Anambra recorded one of the lowest numbers of deaths linked to ethnic and communal violence,<sup>1316</sup> although civil society organisations in May 2025 reported of ‘escalating attacks’ by suspected armed bandits and herdsmen on local communities, with Ayamelum and Orumba North LGAs witnessing continued violence.<sup>1317</sup>

Lethal attacks by unidentified gunmen targeted local communities in Aguata and Orumba North (July 2025),<sup>1318</sup> Njikoka (October 2024)<sup>1319</sup> and Orumba South LGAs (June 2025).<sup>1320</sup> The reference period also saw gunmen shooting and injuring Jude Ezenwafor, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP)’s candidate for the Anambra state election due to be held in November 2025,<sup>1321</sup> and assaulting a female member of the National Youth Service Corps.<sup>1322</sup>

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 218 security incidents in Anambra state that resulted in a total of 305 fatalities. Of these incidents, 96 were coded as battles, 1 as explosion/remote violence, 13 as riots, and 108 as violence against civilians.<sup>1323</sup>

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<sup>1315</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1316</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1317</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1318</sup> Daily Post, Three killed as gunmen attack two towns in Anambra, repelled from burning police station, 9 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1319</sup> Punch, Gunmen kill five in Anambra, 8 October 2024, [url](#)

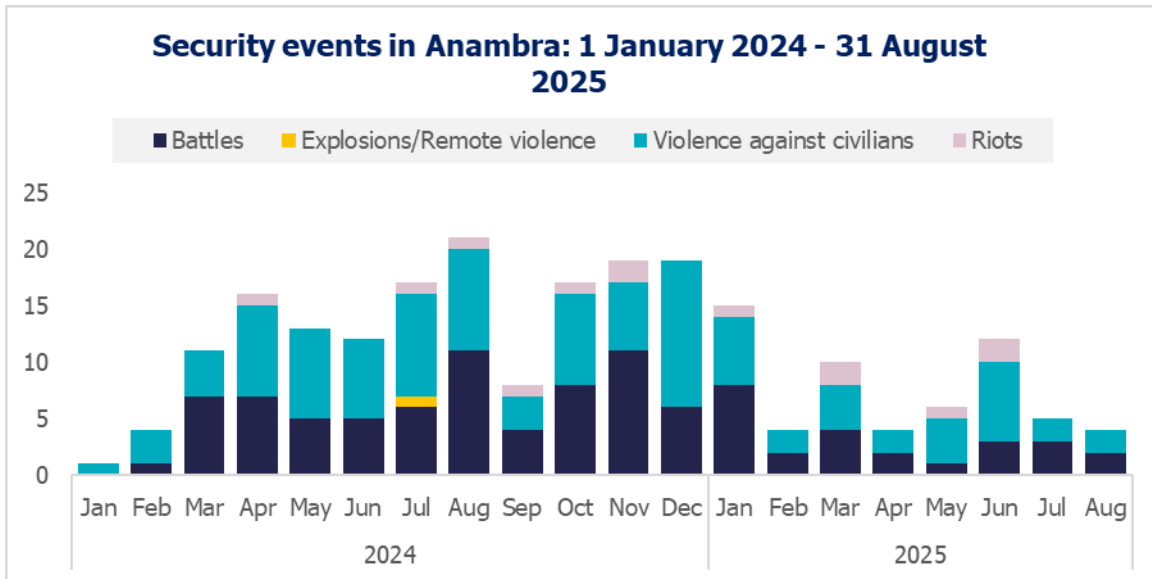
<sup>1320</sup> Punch, Police hunt killers of 13 in Anambra community, 2 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1321</sup> Vanguard, Anambra PDP governorship candidate Jude Ezenwafor shot in Abuja, 19 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1322</sup> Punch, Operatives behind assault on corps member arrested – Anambra, 19 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1323</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 13: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Anambra state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1324</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 20 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Akwa South LGA (46 incidents), followed by Ihiala (30), Aguata (21), and Idemili South LGAs (20). There was only one LGA where no incidents were recorded. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and unidentified cult militias (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1325</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, Anambra witnessed 88 fatalities arising from cult-related violence (more than any other state), with the state capital of Awka described as a stronghold of cult activities. Deadly incidents attributed to cults occurred recurrently in Awka city (in March,<sup>1326</sup> October<sup>1327</sup> and November 2024<sup>1328</sup>), as well as in Awka South LGA (October 2024),<sup>1329</sup> Oyi (April 2025)<sup>1330</sup> and Orumba North LGA (June 2025),<sup>1331</sup> often near premises of institutions of higher education.<sup>1332</sup> The clashes in Oyi LGA involved the Black Axe Confraternity and the Eiyi Confraternity.<sup>1333</sup> Amongst others, suspected cult clashes killed 13 people in Awka city in March 2024, between 13<sup>1334</sup> and 16 people in Awka South Local Government Area (LGA) in October 2024,<sup>1335</sup> and at least 13 people in attacks on near higher education facilities in Awka

<sup>1324</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1325</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1326</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1327</sup> Punch, Gunmen kill six near UNIZIK school gate, 24 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1328</sup> Channels TV, Suspected Cultists Kill Three Brothers In Anambra, 2 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1329</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, The reprehensible killings in Anambra, 27 October 2024, [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1330</sup> Vanguard, 2 dead, 1 arrested as rival cult groups clash in Anambra, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1331</sup> Punch, Four killed, seven injured as gunmen kidnap two others in Anambra, 20 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1332</sup> Punch, Four killed, seven injured as gunmen kidnap two others in Anambra, 20 June 2025, [url](#); Channels TV, Suspected Cultists Kill Three Brothers In Anambra, 2 November 2024, [url](#); Punch, Gunmen kill six near UNIZIK school gate, 24 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1333</sup> Vanguard, 2 dead, 1 arrested as rival cult groups clash in Anambra, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1334</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1335</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, The reprehensible killings in Anambra, 27 October 2024, [url](#)



city in October<sup>1336</sup> and November 2024<sup>1337</sup> and in Orumba North LGA in June 2025.<sup>1338</sup> Attacks by unknown gunmen resulted in five deaths in Njikoka LGA (October 2024),<sup>1339</sup> between 10 and 13 deaths in Orumba South LGA (June 2025),<sup>1340</sup> and at least three deaths in Aguata and Orumba North LGAs (July 2025).<sup>1341</sup>

Nigeria Watch recorded 114 fatalities related to pro-Biafran agitation in 2024, the second-highest figure among the five states of the South-East zone, with Aguata and Ihiala among the most severely affected LGAs across the zone.<sup>1342</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Road security** -It was noted that despite dozens of police checkpoints along roads such as the Enugu-Awka-Onitsha Road, the Onitsha-Owerri Road, the Awka Old Road, the Nkpor Old Road and the Umuchu Road, the state witnessed a high incidence of kidnappings.<sup>1343</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found on numbers of individuals affected by conflict-induced displacement in Anambra state during the reference period. Continued communal violence in Ayamelum and Orumba North LGAs prompted farmers to abandon their lands.<sup>1344</sup> No information could be found on returns in Anambra state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Amnesty International noted that activities of gunmen had turned some communities in the South-East, including parts of Ihiala LGA, into ‘ungoverned spaces’,<sup>1345</sup> while cult groups operated ‘unchecked’ in several towns, including Awka, Obosi, Ogidi, Onitsha and Umuoji.<sup>1346</sup> Civil society organisations observed that the security forces demonstrated ‘alarming inertia’ in responding to attacks by herdsmen on communities across the region.<sup>1347</sup>

In Nnewi South LGA, IPOB exercised ‘fragmented shadow governance’ with the ESN operating checkpoints and enforcing lockdowns, while police were near-absent and courts were closed.<sup>1348</sup> ESN launched a campaign against the Fulanis in the forests of the South-East,

<sup>1336</sup> Punch, Gunmen kill six near UNIZIK school gate, 24 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1337</sup> Channels TV, Suspected Cultists Kill Three Brothers In Anambra, 2 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1338</sup> Punch, Four killed, seven injured as gunmen kidnap two others in Anambra, 20 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1339</sup> Punch, Gunmen kill five in Anambra, 8 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1340</sup> Punch, Police hunt killers of 13 in Anambra community, 2 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1341</sup> Daily Post, Three killed as gunmen attack two towns in Anambra, repelled from burning police station, 9 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1342</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>1343</sup> Punch, Rising kidnapping: Anambra stakeholders express worries despite scores of checkpoints, 11 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1344</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1345</sup> Amnesty International, A decade of impunity – Attacks and unlawful killings in South-East Nigeria, August 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1346</sup> Amnesty International, A decade of impunity – Attacks and unlawful killings in South-East Nigeria, August 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1347</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1348</sup> HumAngle, Nigeria’s Governance Gap Widens as Ungoverned Areas Multiply, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

reportedly dislodging over 70 Fulani herder and criminal settlements in forests across the South-East zone in 2024.<sup>1349</sup>

In January 2025, Anambra State House of Assembly adopted a law to strengthen security and order in the state, establishing a new security outfit called the ‘Anambra State Agunchemba’ to address key security challenges.<sup>1350</sup> Moreover, the state governor launched a new security system named Operation Udo ga Achi (‘Operation Peace Shall Reign’) comprised of military, police and intelligence, NSCDC and Agunchemba personnel.<sup>1351</sup> However, in June 2025, the opposition Young Progressive Party (YPP)’s governorship candidate Paul Chukwuma accused the ruling party of ‘poor handling’ of security measures, pointing to continued killings, kidnappings and other crimes and alleging that the new Agunchemba security outfit was a ‘scam’.<sup>1352</sup> Security operations during the reference period led to the arrest or killing of several gunmen,<sup>1353</sup> ESN members<sup>1354</sup> and cultists.<sup>1355</sup>

### 2.4.3. Ebonyi

Ebonyi state is comprised of the following 13 LGAs: Abakaliki, Afikpo North, Afikpo South, Ebonyi, Ezza North, Ezza South, Ikwo, Ishielu, Ivo, Izzi, Ohaozara, Ohaukwu and Onicha. The capital city is Abakaliki.<sup>1356</sup>

The majority of the population is Igbo.<sup>1357</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Ebonyi in 2022 at 3 242 518, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1358</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

The situation in Ebonyi state has been described as being marked by insecurity.<sup>1359</sup> Conflicts between farmers and herders have led to fatalities, property destruction, and displacement.<sup>1360</sup> According to a Nigerian senior security adviser interviewed by EUAA in July 2025, the ESN has reduced, if not dislodged, the Fulani presence in the forests of the South-East with considerable success, apparently contributing to a reduction in incidents of kidnappings by

<sup>1349</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1350</sup> Punch, Insecurity: Anambra assembly passes homeland security bill, 16 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1351</sup> Vanguard, Soludo launches Anambra security system Operation Udo ga-Achi, 20 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1352</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, 2025: Anambra YPP blames APGA govt over killings, kidnappings, 24 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1353</sup> Premium Times, Vigilante group arrest gunmen terrorising Anambra residents – Official, 17 July 2024, [url](#);

Premium Times, Police kill two gunmen, arrest three others – Official, 15 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1354</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1355</sup> Punch, Police arrest cultist for murder, abduction in Anambra community, 8 July 2025, [url](#); Punch, Six suspected cultists arrested after initiation ceremony in Anambra, 18 June 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, 2 dead, 1 arrested as rival cult groups clash in Anambra, 16 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1356</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Ebonyi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1357</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Ebonyi, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1358</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1359</sup> Daily Post, Insecurity: Ebonyi Govt asks security agencies to set up joint task force, 11 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1360</sup> Punch, Ebonyi residents reject open grazing, 25 June 2025, [url](#)

Fulani elements across the South-East. However, parts of Ebonyi state still experienced incidents involving forest-based criminal groups.<sup>1361</sup> Civil society organisations cited by the Punch newspaper in May 2025 pointed to ‘escalating attacks’ by suspected armed bandits and herdsmen on local communities.<sup>1362</sup>

The reference period also witnessed a number of deadly clashes linked to long-standing land disputes, including between two communities in Ohaukwu LGA (Ebonyi) and in Ado LGA (Benue) (December 2024)<sup>1363</sup> and two further communities<sup>1364</sup> in Afikpo North and Afikpo South LGAs.<sup>1365</sup> In Ivo LGA, a decades-long land dispute between two communities in Ogor and Omobor (Umuobor) villages repeatedly erupted into deadly clashes in late 2024 and early 2025.<sup>1366</sup> As of March 2025, it was noted that a more than century-old land dispute between the Abaomege and Ishinkwo communities of Onicha LGA had caused over 100 deaths over the past five years.<sup>1367</sup> Moreover, a number of abductions of rural residents were reported.<sup>1368</sup> Deadly cult clashes occurred in Ezza North LGA in January 2024.<sup>1369</sup>

## **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 71 security incidents in Ebonyi state that resulted in a total of 135 fatalities. Of these incidents, 25 were coded as battles, 9 as riots, and 37 as violence against civilians, while no incidents were coded as explosions/remote violence.<sup>1370</sup>

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<sup>1361</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1362</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1363</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1364</sup> Vanguard, Ebonyi Land Dispute: Six killed, including pregnant woman, as renewed attack destroys homes, 9 April 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Four killed in renewed land dispute in Ebonyi communities, 8 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1365</sup> Vanguard, Land dispute: One killed, four kidnapped in Ebonyi communal clashes, 9 February 2023, [url](#)

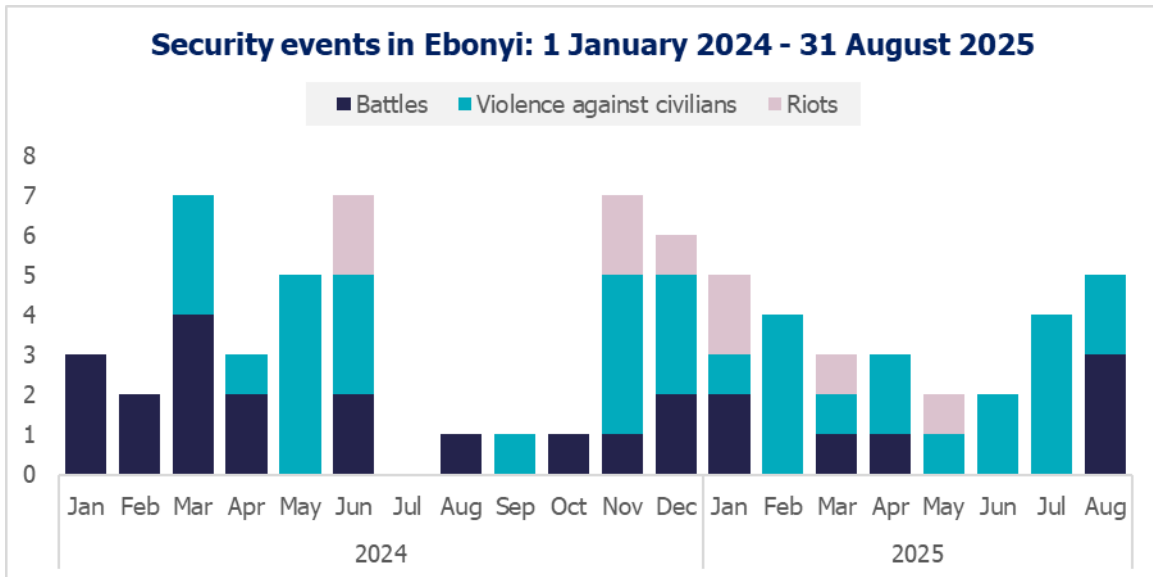
<sup>1366</sup> Vanguard, Two killed in renewed attack over land dispute in Ebonyi, 18 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Four killed in fresh Ebonyi communal land dispute, 20 February 2025, [url](#); Punch, Two killed, three missing in Ebonyi land dispute, 11 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1367</sup> Vanguard, Ebonyi land dispute: We lost over 100 people in five years —LG Chairman, 24 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1368</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen kill four, raze houses in fresh attack in Ebonyi, 14 August 2025, [url](#); Punch, Police begin search for four abducted Ebonyi farmers, 1 August 2025, [url](#); Channels TV, Another Two Beheaded In Ebonyi Community Attack, 20 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1369</sup> Daily Post, Police confirm killing of 3 persons as rival cult groups clash in Ebonyi community, 31 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1370</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



**Figure 14: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Ebonyi state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1371</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 12 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Ivo LGA (14 incidents), followed by Ohaukwu (12), and Afikpo South LGA (8). There was only one LGA where no incidents were recorded. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups (16), communal militias and police forces (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1372</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, in 2024, Ebonyi recorded nearly 30 deaths linked to ethnic and communal violence, more than any other state.<sup>1373</sup> Amongst others, civilian fatalities resulted from clashes linked to land disputes in Ohaukwu LGA of Ebonyi and Ado LGA of Benue (four deaths),<sup>1374</sup> Afikpo North and Afikpo South LGAs (between four<sup>1375</sup> and six deaths),<sup>1376</sup> and Ivo LGA (at least 13 deaths).<sup>1377</sup> Dozens of fatalities resulted from attacks on communities some of which attributed to armed herdsmen, including in Ivo LGA (November 2024)<sup>1378</sup> and Ishielu LGA (February 2025),<sup>1379</sup> and from attacks by unknown gunmen on communities in Ohaukwu

<sup>1371</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1372</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1373</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1374</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1375</sup> Premium Times, Four killed in renewed land dispute in Ebonyi communities, 8 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1376</sup> Vanguard, Ebonyi Land Dispute: Six killed, including pregnant woman, as renewed attack destroys homes, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1377</sup> Vanguard, Two killed in renewed attack over land dispute in Ebonyi, 18 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Four killed in fresh Ebonyi communal land dispute, 20 February 2025, [url](#); Punch, Seven farmers killed in Ebonyi community attack, 12 December 2024, [url](#); Punch, Two killed, three missing in Ebonyi land dispute, 11 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1378</sup> Vanguard, Farmer, two sons killed by suspected herdsmen in Ebonyi, 3 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1379</sup> THISDAY, The Massacre of Villagers in Ebonyi, 9 February 2025, [url](#); Punch, Death toll rises to 15 in Ebonyi community herdsmen’s killings, 5 February 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Updated: 10 killed, others injured as gunmen attack Ebonyi community, 2 February 2025, [url](#)



(May 2025),<sup>1380</sup> Ishielu (July 2025)<sup>1381</sup> and Ivo LGAs (August 2025).<sup>1382</sup> Attacks on three villages in Ishielu LGA in February 2025 left 15 people dead,<sup>1383</sup> while around 14 deaths resulted from attacks on communities in Ohaukwu LGA in May<sup>1384</sup> and Ivo LGA in August 2025.<sup>1385</sup> Three people died in cult clashes in Ezza North LGA in January 2024.<sup>1386</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, the state recorded seven fatalities linked to pro-Biafran agitation in 2024, the lowest figure among the five states of the South-East zone.<sup>1387</sup> Several deaths resulted from attacks on police forces by suspected IPOB/ESN operatives in the Abakaliki outskirts (March 2024)<sup>1388</sup> and by unidentified gunmen along the Abakaliki–Enugu road (April 2024).<sup>1389</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Conflicts between farmers and herders resulted in property destruction.<sup>1390</sup> Clashes and armed attacks resulted in damage to buildings and property in Afikpo North/Afikpo South,<sup>1391</sup> Ohaukwu,<sup>1392</sup> and Ivo LGAs.<sup>1393</sup>

**Road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found on numbers of individuals affected by conflict-induced displacement in Ebonyi state during the reference period. An intra-communal conflict in Ohaukwu LGA was reported to have displaced thousands of residents during the past four years,<sup>1394</sup> while many other were displaced as gunmen attacked a community in Ishielu LGA.<sup>1395</sup> No information could be found on returns in Ebonyi state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Civil society organisations observed that the security forces demonstrated ‘alarming inertia’ in responding to attacks by herdsmen on communities across the South-East.<sup>1396</sup> Despite a campaign launched by the ESN against Fulani criminal elements in the forests of the South-East, parts of Ebonyi state still experience incidents linked to forest-based criminal groups, a

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<sup>1380</sup> THISDAY, 10 Persons Killed, Houses Burnt in Ebonyi Communal Clash, 3 May 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Two killed in Ebonyi communal clashes, 20 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1381</sup> Punch, Two killed as gunmen raid Ebonyi village, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1382</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen kill four, raze houses in fresh attack in Ebonyi, 14 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1383</sup> Punch, Death toll rises to 15 in Ebonyi community herdsmen’s killings, 5 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1384</sup> THISDAY, 10 Persons Killed, Houses Burnt in Ebonyi Communal Clash, 3 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, 10 killed, houses destroyed in attack on community, 2 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1385</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen kill four, raze houses in fresh attack in Ebonyi, 14 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1386</sup> Daily Post, Police confirm killing of 3 persons as rival cult groups clash in Ebonyi community, 31 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1387</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>1388</sup> Daily Post, Police confirm killing of four cops, two civilians in Ebonyi, 8 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1389</sup> Punch, Cop killed as gunmen attack Ebonyi police checkpoint, 12 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1390</sup> Punch, Ebonyi residents reject open grazing, 25 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1391</sup> Vanguard, Ebonyi Land Dispute: Six killed, including pregnant woman, as renewed attack destroys homes, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1392</sup> THISDAY, 10 Persons Killed, Houses Burnt in Ebonyi Communal Clash, 3 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1393</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen kill four, raze houses in fresh attack in Ebonyi, 14 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1394</sup> THISDAY, 10 Persons Killed, Houses Burnt in Ebonyi Communal Clash, 3 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1395</sup> AA, Gunmen kill 10, displace many in southeastern Nigeria, 3 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1396</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)



Nigerian senior security advisor told EUAA in July 2025.<sup>1397</sup> Meanwhile, security forces raided a camp run by IPOB and ESN in Izzi LGA in March 2024.<sup>1398</sup> In July 2025, the Ebonyi State Police Command announced that security operations conducted across all of the state's 13 LGAs during the first half of 2025 had led to the arrest of 939 individuals suspected of various crimes such as murder, robbery, child abduction and cultism.<sup>1399</sup>

#### 2.4.4. Enugu

Enugu state is comprised of the following 17 LGAs: Aninri, Awgu, Enugu East, Enugu North, Enugu South, Ezeagu, Igbo Etiti, Igboeze North, Igboeze South, Isiuzo, Nkanu East, Nkanu West, Nsukka, Oji River, Udeno, Udi and Uzo Uwani. The capital city is Enugu.<sup>1400</sup>

The majority of the population is Igbo.<sup>1401</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Enugu in 2022 at 4 690 053, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1402</sup>

##### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

While Enugu state's governor maintained that Enugu continued to be one of the country's safest states,<sup>1403</sup> the situation in some parts of Enugu was described as marked by growing 'insecurity'.<sup>1404</sup> According to a Nigerian senior security adviser interviewed by EUAA in July 2025, the ESN has reduced, if not dislodged, the Fulani presence in the forests of the South-East with considerable success, apparently contributing to a reduction in incidents of kidnappings by Fulani elements across the South-East. However, parts of Enugu state still experienced incidents involving forest-based criminal groups.<sup>1405</sup>

Referring to the South-East in general, the Nigerian senior security advisor stated that IPOB was now generally viewed as 'less combative' than in previous years and appeared not to have been implicated in the majority of recent attacks against federal security personnel. According to this source, these attacks seemed to have been carried out either by criminal groups 'masquerading' as Biafran agitators or by elements linked to Simon Ekpa's BRGIE.<sup>1406</sup> For more information on the BRGIE, see section [1.1.3 Non-state armed actors](#).

<sup>1397</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1398</sup> PM News, Troops raid IPOB/ESN camp in Ebonyi, recover arms, 22 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1399</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, 887 men, 52 women arrested for crimes in Ebonyi — Police, 15 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1400</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Enugu, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1401</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Enugu, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1402</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1403</sup> Punch, Enugu confirms herdsmen attacks, arrests suspected informants, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1404</sup> Vanguard, Insecurity: Our homes have become theatres of horror – Group tells Enugu Govt, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1405</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

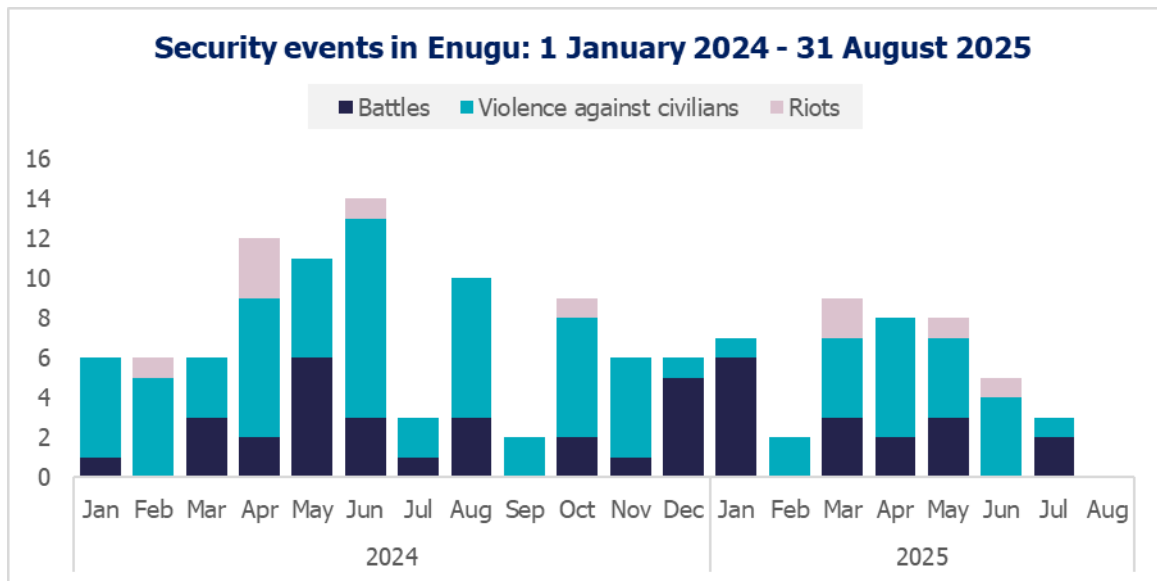
<sup>1406</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025



During the reference period, unidentified gunmen carried out multiple deadly attacks targeting police forces<sup>1407</sup> and vigilantes<sup>1408</sup> and assassinated the chairperson of the traders’ association of Enugu’s largest market.<sup>1409</sup> Meanwhile, clashes erupting from a long-standing land dispute between two communities in Udi and Enugu South LGAs in July 2025 left one person dead.<sup>1410</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 133 security incidents in Enugu state that resulted in a total of 135 fatalities. Of these incidents, 43 were coded as battles, 10 as riots, and 80 as violence against civilians.<sup>1411</sup>



**Figure 15: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Enugu state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1412</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in all 17 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Isi Uzo LGA (24 incidents), followed by Enugu North (18), Nsukka (14), Uzo Uwani (13) and Udi (12) LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups, Fulani ethnic militias and police forces (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1413</sup>

<sup>1407</sup> Punch, Two killed as gunmen attack Enugu police checkpoint, 3 May 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Gunmen kill four policemen in Enugu, set patrol vehicle ablaze, 15 April 2025, [url](#); Punch, Policeman killed in gunmen attack on Enugu station, 25 March 2025, [url](#); Channels TV, Gunmen Kill Three Police Officers, One FRSC Official In Fresh Enugu Attack, 13 May 2024, [url](#); Daily Post, Gunmen kill 2 policemen, four others in Enugu community, 6 May 2024, [url](#)  
<sup>1408</sup> Daily Post, Gunmen kill 2 policemen, four others in Enugu community, 6 May 2024, [url](#)  
<sup>1409</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen kill popular market leader in South-east, 14 September 2024, [url](#)  
<sup>1410</sup> Vanguard, One killed as Enugu community land dispute escalates, 16 July 2025, [url](#)  
<sup>1411</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)  
<sup>1412</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)  
<sup>1413</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



In 2024, according to Nigeria Watch, Enugu recorded close to 25 fatalities arising from ethnic and communal violence, the third-highest figure across all states.<sup>1414</sup> While the same source listed Enugu as one of the states experiencing the fewest fatalities specifically related to herder–farmer clashes in 2024,<sup>1415</sup> suspected armed herdsmen carried out a deadly attack on a community in Uzo Uwani LGA in April 2024.<sup>1416</sup> In June 2025, Eha-Amufu (Isiuzo LGA)<sup>1417</sup> saw at least two deadly attacks by suspected armed herdsmen.<sup>1418</sup> Nsukka LGA reportedly saw a ‘spate of killings, kidnappings, and other violent crimes’.<sup>1419</sup> Amongst others, an attack by suspected armed herdsmen resulted in four deaths in Uzo-Uwani in April 2024,<sup>1420</sup> while the June 2025 attacks in Eha-Amufu (Isiuzo LGA) claimed between 11<sup>1421</sup> and more than 14 lives.<sup>1422</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, the state recorded 50 fatalities related to pro-Biafran agitation in 2024, the third-highest figure among the five states of the South-East zone.<sup>1423</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - A renewed land dispute in Enugu South LGA in May 2025 resulted in the destruction of property in the Etiti-Ngwo community.<sup>1424</sup>

**Road security** - The reference period saw gunmen abducting 11 bus passengers on the Amechi-Idodo axis of the Enugu–Abakaliki expressway, an area that has become notorious for kidnappings.<sup>1425</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of 31 August 2025, no information could be found on numbers of individuals affected by conflict-induced displacement in Enugu state during the reference period. Attacks on communities in Uzo Uwani LGA and Eha-Amufu have prompted displacements.<sup>1426</sup> The April 2024 attack in Uzo Uwani left the stricken community deserted as villagers abandoned their houses for fear of further attacks.<sup>1427</sup> No information could be found on returns in Enugu state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Civil society organisations observed that the security forces demonstrated ‘alarming inertia’ in responding to attacks by herdsmen on communities across the South-East.<sup>1428</sup> Despite a campaign launched by the ESN against Fulani criminal elements in the forests of the South-

<sup>1414</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1415</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1416</sup> Vanguard, 4 killed, many injured as herdsmen attack Nimbo community, 29 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1417</sup> THISDAY, Eha-Amufu Indigenes Debunk Alleged Mass Killings in Enugu, 19 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1418</sup> Punch, Seven killed, two missing in fresh herdsmen attack in Enugu, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Again, suspected Fulani herdsmen kill over 10 in Eha-Amufu, Enugu, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Herdsmen murder four persons in Enugu community, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1419</sup> Vanguard, Insecurity: Our homes have become theatres of horror – Group tells Enugu Govt, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1420</sup> Vanguard, 4 killed, many injured as herdsmen attack Nimbo community, 29 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1421</sup> Punch, Seven killed, two missing in fresh herdsmen attack in Enugu, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Herdsmen murder four persons in Enugu community, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1422</sup> Vanguard, Again, suspected Fulani herdsmen kill over 10 in Eha-Amufu, Enugu, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Herdsmen murder four persons in Enugu community, 10 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1423</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>1424</sup> Vanguard, Over N20m property destroyed in Enugu land dispute, 23 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1425</sup> Punch, 11 travellers kidnapped on Enugu-Abakaliki expressway, 19 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1426</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1427</sup> Vanguard, 4 killed, many injured as herdsmen attack Nimbo community, 29 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1428</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)



East, parts of Enugu state still experienced incidents linked to forest-based criminal groups, a Nigerian senior security advisor told EUAA in July 2025.<sup>1429</sup> Meanwhile, security forces arrested dozens of suspected IPOB/ESN members<sup>1430</sup> and killed members of the pro-Biafra separatist faction led by Simon Ekpa.<sup>1431</sup>

The security forces killed and arrested suspected kidnappers,<sup>1432</sup> dismantled a criminal hideout operating under the guise of a place of worship,<sup>1433</sup> arrested suspected informants of militant herders who had attacked communities in June 2025,<sup>1434</sup> and foiled at least one armed robbery.<sup>1435</sup> Moreover, the The Enugu State Boundary Committee resolved a long-running land dispute between two communities in Nkanu East and Nkanu West LGAs.<sup>1436</sup>

## 2.4.5. Imo

Imo state is comprised of the following 27 LGAs: Ahiazu Mbaise,<sup>1437</sup> Aboh Mbaise, Ehime Mbano, Ezinihitte, Ideato North, Ideato South, Ihitte/Uboma, Ikeduru, Isiala Mbano, Isu, Mbaitoli, Ngor Okpala, Njaba, Nkwerre, Nwangele, Obowo, Oguta, Ohaji/Egbema, Okigwe, Onuimo, Orlu, Orsu, Oru East, Oru West, Owerri Municipal, Owerri North and Owerri West. The capital city is Owerri.<sup>1438</sup>

Igbo people constitute 98 % of the population.<sup>1439</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Imo in 2022 at 5 459 337, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1440</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

The situation in Imo has been marked by rising insecurity, which also affected the city of Owerri.<sup>1441</sup> According to PIND, Imo ranked among the three Niger Delta states witnessing the highest numbers of conflict-related deaths in 2024, with Ohaji/Egbema being one of the three most affected LGAs in the region.<sup>1442</sup> Conflict-related fatalities in the state dropped from 22 in the fourth quarter of 2024 to 13 in the first quarter of 2025 (PIND)<sup>1443</sup> but then saw a marked

<sup>1429</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1430</sup> PR Nigeria, Enugu Police Raid IPOB/ESN Hideout, Nab 25 Militants, Recover Firearms, 26 July 2025, [url](#); Cable (The), Police arrest 'six ESN members' in Enugu, 14 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1431</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1432</sup> Vanguard, Police kill suspected kidnapper, arrest 5, rescue victim in Enugu, 18 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1433</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, South-East: More laws, less security in the interior, 24 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1434</sup> Punch, Enugu confirms herdsman attacks, arrests suspected informants, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1435</sup> Daily Champion, Enugu police foil armed robbery attack, neutralise suspect, recover firearms, 9 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1436</sup> Punch, Enugu resolves boundary dispute between Nkanu East, West communities, 13 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1437</sup> ALGON, Local Government Areas, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1438</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Imo, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1439</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Imo, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1440</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1441</sup> OMN, News Update, 11 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1442</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1443</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9



increase to 41 in the following quarter.<sup>1444</sup> Main sources of insecurity were criminal activities (including targeted killings and kidnappings for ransom), violence linked to separatist militias,<sup>1445</sup> and communal clashes.<sup>1446</sup>

In 2024, Imo was reportedly one of the Niger Delta states experiencing the highest numbers of fatalities attributed to separatist militias,<sup>1447</sup> including IPOB/ESN.<sup>1448</sup> Meanwhile, referring to the South-East in general, a Nigerian senior security advisor interviewed by EUAA in July 2025 stated that IPOB was now generally viewed as ‘less combative’ than in previous years and appeared not to have been implicated in the majority of recent attacks against federal security personnel. According to this source, these attacks seemed to have been carried out either by criminal groups ‘masquerading’ as Biafran agitators or by elements linked to Simon Ekpa’s BRGIE.<sup>1449</sup> For more information on the BRGIE, see section [1.1.3 Non-state armed actors](#).

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 154 security incidents in Imo state that resulted in a total of 275 fatalities. Of these incidents, 76 were coded as battles, 3 as explosion/remote violence, 5 as riots, and 70 as violence against civilians.<sup>1450</sup>

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<sup>1444</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1445</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 9; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1446</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 9

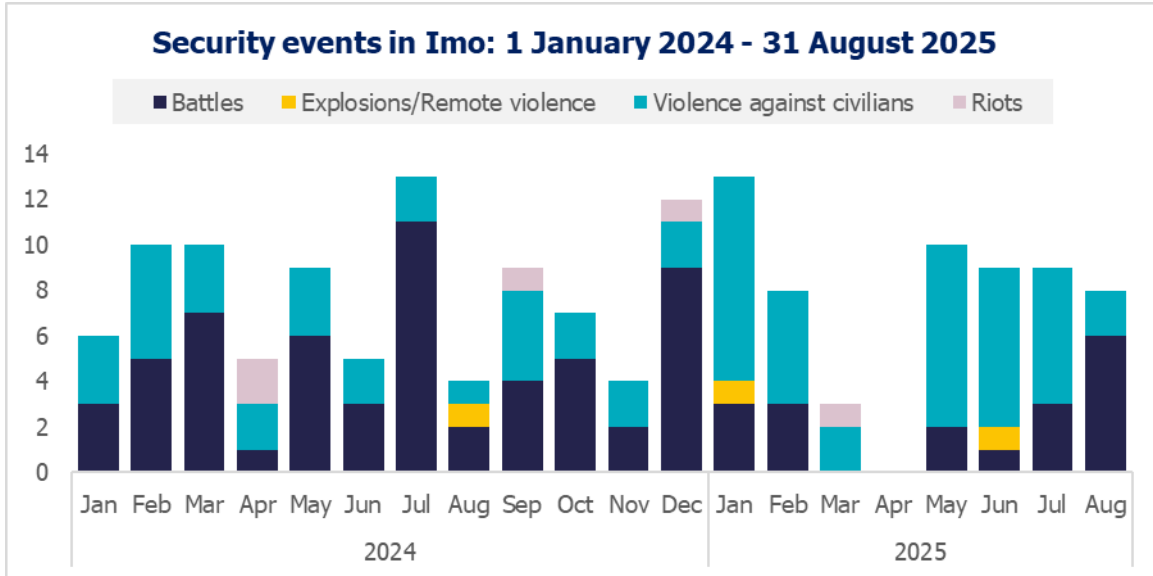
<sup>1447</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1448</sup> Cable (The), Six persons killed as ‘IPOB members’ attack Imo community, 27 June 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Police finger IPOB in death of two officers, one other in Imo, 11 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1449</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1450</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 16: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Imo state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1451</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 20 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Okigwe LGA (27 incidents), followed by Owerri West (23), Orsu (15), Mbaitoli (14) and Owerri Municipal (13) LGAs. No incidents were recorded in seven LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups, IPOB, and Fulani ethnic militias (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1452</sup>

Over the year 2024, PIND attributed more than 100 deaths in Imo to violence linked to separatist militias,<sup>1453</sup> while Nigeria Watch recorded 174 such deaths, the highest figure among all states, with Orsu and Ehime Mbano Oyo among the LGAs most severely affected in the zone. Many of those killed were members of IPOB and ESN who died in special operations led by security forces.<sup>1454</sup> Incidents attributed to separatist militias included multiple deadly clashes with security forces<sup>1455</sup> and alleged lethal attacks on civilians in Okigwe (June 2024),<sup>1456</sup> Owerri North (July 2024)<sup>1457</sup> and Onuimo LGAs (August 2024).<sup>1458</sup> Amongst others, gunmen suspected to be IPOB members killed six people in Okigwe LGA (June 2024)<sup>1459</sup> and eight community leaders in Onuimo LGA (August 2024).<sup>1460</sup> Meanwhile, unidentified gunmen killed more than 18 local residents in a string of attacks across multiple communities in Orsu

<sup>1451</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1452</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1453</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1454</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 13

<sup>1455</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8; Premium Times, Many feared killed as gunmen attack soldiers in Imo, 9 October 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Police finger IPOB in death of two officers, one other in Imo, 11 June 2024, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1456</sup> Cable (The), Six persons killed as ‘IPOB members’ attack Imo community, 27 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1457</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1458</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Gunmen kill eight people in Imo, 4 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1459</sup> Cable (The), Six persons killed as ‘IPOB members’ attack Imo community, 27 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1460</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Gunmen kill eight people in Imo, 4 August 2024, [url](#)



LGA in January 2025.<sup>1461</sup> At least 18 more local residents were killed in attacks attributed to armed herders in Okpala, Owerri West, Mbaitoli, Oguta (between April and June 2025)<sup>1462</sup> and Ideato North LGAs (July 2025).<sup>1463</sup>

Imo was one of the Niger Delta states witnessing the highest numbers of fatalities (more than 50) linked to criminal violence in 2024, mainly as a result of gun attacks and clashes between militia groups, vigilantes and security forces.<sup>1464</sup> Unidentified gunmen were involved in deadly clashes with security forces,<sup>1465</sup> freed inmates in an attack on a correctional facility,<sup>1466</sup> and killed dozens of civilians in Ohaji/Egbema (March 2024),<sup>1467</sup> Mbaitoli (April 2024),<sup>1468</sup> Onuimo (August 2024),<sup>1469</sup> Ideato North (December 2024<sup>1470</sup> and July 2025<sup>1471</sup>), Orsu LGAs (January 2025)<sup>1472</sup> and on the Okigwe-Owerri road (May 2025).<sup>1473</sup> Unknown gunmen also carried out kidnappings in Owerri West (September 2024),<sup>1474</sup> Isiala Mbanu (November 2024)<sup>1475</sup> and Okigwe LGAs (January 2025)<sup>1476</sup> and Owerri city (December 2024<sup>1477</sup> and February 2025<sup>1478</sup>).

Imo was also one of the Niger Delta states most affected by vigilante and mob violence in 2024, resulting in killings of civilians in Owerri North (April 2024) and Owerri West LGAs (September 2024).<sup>1479</sup> Deadly inter-cult fighting was reported in Owerri city (March 2024)<sup>1480</sup> and Ohaji/Egbema LGA (September 2024).<sup>1481</sup> Moreover, civil society organisations reported of ‘escalating attacks’ by suspected armed bandits and herdsmen on local communities.<sup>1482</sup> Attacks by armed herdsmen resulted in several deaths.<sup>1483</sup> At least five residents of Oguta LGA were killed by suspected armed herdsmen June 2025,<sup>1484</sup> while at

<sup>1461</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9; Punch, 18 killed in machete attacks in Imo communities, 8 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1462</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1463</sup> Punch, Gunmen attack three Imo communities, kill seven, 25 July 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Gunmen invade Imo communities, kill 7, 25 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1464</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>1465</sup> THISDAY, Four Policemen Shot Dead in Imo, 31 July 2024, [url](#); Channels TV, Gunmen free seven inmates in Imo prison, 12 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1466</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1467</sup> Punch, Imo CP meets stakeholders over killings of five youths, 11 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1468</sup> Nation (The), Gunmen kill another lawyer in Imo, 9 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1469</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1470</sup> Cable (The), Gunmen ‘kill five’ in attack on Imo community, 28 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1471</sup> Punch, Gunmen attack three Imo communities, kill seven, 25 July 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Gunmen invade Imo communities, kill 7, 25 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1472</sup> Punch, 18 killed in machete attacks in Imo communities, 8 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1473</sup> Amnesty International Nigeria, [X], posted on: 9 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1474</sup> Cable (The), Gunmen ‘abduct four residents’ in Imo, 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1475</sup> Punch, JUST IN: Gunmen kidnap Imo Catholic priest, 6 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1476</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1477</sup> NAN, NAN editor kidnapped in Imo, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1478</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1479</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January – December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1480</sup> Daily Post, Student killed, others injured as rival cults clash in FUTO, 1 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1481</sup> Punch, Eight killed in Imo inter-cult clash, 27 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1482</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1483</sup> Vanguard, Suspected armed herders invade Imo village, kill vigilante leader, others missing, 22 August 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Herdsmen launch 3rd attack in 2 weeks, kill 5, kidnap 3, injure many in Imo community, 5 June 2025, [url](#); PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1484</sup> Vanguard, Herdsmen launch 3rd attack in 2 weeks, kill 5, kidnap 3, injure many in Imo community, 5 June 2025, [url](#)



least eight people died in an inter-cult clash involving two communities in Ohaji/Egbema in September 2024.<sup>1485</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - An armed attack on travellers along the Okigwe-Owerri Road on 8 May 2025, resulted in the killing of at least 30 people<sup>1486</sup> and the burning of more than 20 commuter vehicles and lorries,<sup>1487</sup> while the Okigwe area was also affected by farmland destruction.<sup>1488</sup>

**Road security** - Besides the aforementioned attack on travellers along the Okigwe-Owerri Road on 8 May 2025,<sup>1489</sup> two further ambushes the same month reportedly led to the killing of at least two drivers and the kidnapping of multiple travellers/bus passengers. The following month, separatist militias reportedly killed two lorry drivers at Ogi Junction in Okigwe LGA.<sup>1490</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found on conflict-induced displacement or returns in Imo state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Amnesty International noted that activities of gunmen had turned some communities in the South-East, including parts of Oguta LGA, into ‘ungoverned spaces’.<sup>1491</sup> Civil society organisations observed that the security forces demonstrated ‘alarming inertia’ in responding to attacks by herdsmen on communities across the region. Amongst others, the Okigwe area saw no evidence of significant arrests or prosecutions in response to attacks and destructions.<sup>1492</sup>

In Oguta and Orsu LGAs, IPOB exercised ‘fragmented shadow governance’ with the ESN operating checkpoints and enforcing lockdowns, while police were near-absent and courts remained closed.<sup>1493</sup> On 30 May 2025, Owerri’s residents remained indoors in compliance with a sit-at-home directive issued by IPOB for that day, despite the police calling on residents to ignore the directive.<sup>1494</sup> ESN launched a campaign against the Fulanis in the forests of the South-East, reportedly dislodging over 70 Fulani herders and criminal settlements in forests across the South-East zone in 2024. Meanwhile, security agencies sustained operations to destroy IPOB/ESN,<sup>1495</sup> killing and arresting multiple commanders and members across Imo.<sup>1496</sup>

In July 2025, the Imo State Police Command announced that over the previous six months, it had arrested 2 785 individuals suspected of crimes such as murder, terrorism, armed robbery,

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<sup>1485</sup> Punch, Eight killed in Imo inter-cult clash, 27 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1486</sup> Amnesty International Nigeria, [X], posted on: 9 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1487</sup> Amnesty International Nigeria, [X], posted on: 9 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1488</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1489</sup> Amnesty International Nigeria, [X], posted on: 9 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1490</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1491</sup> Amnesty International, A decade of impunity – Attacks and unlawful killings in South-East Nigeria, August 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1492</sup> Vanguard, CSOs decry herdsmen attacks in Southeast, demand justice, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1493</sup> HumAngle, Nigeria’s Governance Gap Widens as Ungoverned Areas Multiply, 27 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1494</sup> Punch, PICTORIAL: Imo shut down as residents comply with sit-at-home order, 30 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1495</sup> Nigerian senior security advisor, online interview with EUAA, 30 July 2025

<sup>1496</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)



kidnapping, cultism and trafficking in children and claimed having rescued 100 victims of kidnapping and child trafficking.<sup>1497</sup>

## 2.5. South-South

The South-South consists of the following six states: Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers.<sup>1498</sup>

For an overview of the main conflict drivers at the country and regional levels, see [1. General description of the security situation](#).

### 2.5.1. Akwa Ibom

Akwa Ibom state is comprised of the following 31 LGAs: Abak, Eastern Obolo, Eket, Esit Eket, Essien Udim, Etim Ekpo, Etinan, Ibeno, Ibesikpo Asutan, Ibiono Ibom, Ika, Ikono, Ikot Abasi, Ikot Ekpene, Ini, Itu, Mbo, Mkpato Enin, Nsit Atai, Nsit Ibom, Nsit Ubium, Obot Akara, Okobo, Onna, Oron, Oruk Anam, Udung Uko, Ukanafun, Uruan, Urue Offong Oruko, Uyo. The capital city is Uyo.<sup>1499</sup>

The main ethnic groups are Ibibio, Anang, and Eket.<sup>1500</sup> Other groups include the Oron (also Oro), Ibeno, Itu Mbonuso and Andonis.<sup>1501</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 4 979 418 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1502</sup> The population is predominantly of Christian faith.<sup>1503</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

According to PIND, during the reporting period, the main sources of insecurity in Akwa Ibom state were clashes between rival cult gangs and kidnappings for ransom.<sup>1504</sup> In 2024, Akwa Ibom was among the Niger Delta states most affected by kidnappings for ransom, with more than 18 such incidents documented by PIND, resulting in more than 16 fatalities.<sup>1505</sup> Kidnappings reportedly also occurred for the purpose of child trafficking.<sup>1506</sup>

In May 2024, the PIND noted that abductions for ransom had become ‘increasingly prevalent and intense’ in Akwa Ibom state and that the ‘trends and patterns of kidnapping’ could

<sup>1497</sup> Punch, Police burst IPOB/ESN syndicates in Imo, rescue over 100 victims, 19 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1498</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, Region, South South, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1499</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Akwa-Ibom, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1500</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Akwa-Ibom, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1501</sup> Pulse, Meet 3 major tribes in Akwa-Ibom state, 19 April 2023, [url](#)

<sup>1502</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1503</sup> Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group, Overview of Akwa Ibom State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1504</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1505</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1506</sup> THISDAY, Police to Prosecute 17 Persons in Akwa Ibom over Crime, 22 January 2025, [url](#)





potentially intensify and negatively influence the state's political, socio-economic and security situation.<sup>1507</sup> A few months later, the organisation described the ongoing abductions as 'a prevailing security threat' in the state and particularly mentioned the targeted abduction of travellers.<sup>1508</sup> Victims of abductions included for example 18 passengers and the driver of a bus travelling from Uyo to Port Harcourt in Rivers state in July 2024,<sup>1509</sup> and a lawyer and his niece travelling along the Abak-Ikot Abasi road in December 2024. Both were rescued the following day.<sup>1510</sup> In April 2025, in the context of the kidnapping of passengers from a ship travelling from Akwa Ibom to Cross River state (please see section [2.5.3 Cross River](#)), the Nigerian news site noted that the so-called 'Oron axis' including Oron, Mbo, Okobo, Udung Uko and Urue Offong/Uruko LGAs in Akwa Ibom state had become a 'hotbed for kidnappers in the recent past'.<sup>1511</sup> In its report on conflict trends in the Niger Delta region covering the period April to June 2025, PIND pointed out that conflict risks and lethal violence had declined compared to the first quarter of 2025. However, kidnapping for ransom and sea robbery remained major drivers of insecurity.<sup>1512</sup>

Sources reported of clashes over supremacy between rival cult groups, including between Vikings/Bagger<sup>1513</sup> and Red Skin in Mbo LGA in March 2024,<sup>1514</sup> and between Black Axe (also Aye<sup>1515</sup>) and Vikings/Bagger in Oron LGA in October 2024.<sup>1516</sup> Sources also reported of activities of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) confraternity in Uyo LGA in June 2025,<sup>1517</sup> and along the Calabar-Itu Road, where suspected members were involved in robbery, abductions and other criminal activities.<sup>1518</sup> PIND described cult-related violence as 'a major source of insecurity and fatalities' in the second quarter of 2025.<sup>1519</sup>

Communal violence was another source of insecurity and occurred mostly in the context of disputes between herders and farmers, or over land, involving communities in the Eket, Esit Eket and Ibeno LGAs.<sup>1520</sup> While intra-communal land disputes were 'prevalent' in Akwa Ibom

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<sup>1507</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Deescalating Rising Wave of Kidnap for Ransom in Akwa Ibom State, May 19-25, 2024, 25 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1508</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Responding to the Rising Threat of Kidnapping in Akwa Ibom State, August 25-31, 2024, 31 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1509</sup> Vanguard, Driver, 18 passengers kidnapped in Akwa Ibom, 15 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1510</sup> Ibom Standard, Akwa Ibom Police Kill Three Kidnappers, Rescue Prominent Lawyer and Niece, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1511</sup> Premium Times, Gunmen abduct 20 passengers travelling on Nigerian waterways, 25 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1512</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1513</sup> The Bagger, also Baggar, Aro Bagger/Aro Baggar, are also known as the Supreme Vikings Confraternity. Pointer (The), Renewed Cult Clash Claims Two, 17 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1514</sup> Pulse, Navy arrests 2 suspected cultists in Akwa Ibom, hands them over to DSS, 20 March 2024, [url](#); Leadership, Navy Arrests 2 As Rival Cult Groups Clash In Akwa Ibom, 21 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1515</sup> Africa Report (The), Nigerian cult mafia groups and how they wreak havoc on society, 28 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1516</sup> THISDAY, Monarchs Threaten Traditional Sanctions against Cult-related Killings in Akwa Ibom, 27 October 2024, [url](#); Punch, Cult clashes worry A'Ibom traditional rulers, 26 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1517</sup> News Express, Tension in Akwa Ibom community as suspected cultists threaten attack, 7 June 2025, [url](#); Punch, Akwa Ibom village cries out to govt over cultist threats, 7 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1518</sup> Vanguard, Police raid criminal hideout, arrest suspected robbers and cultists in Akwa Ibom, 4 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1519</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 4

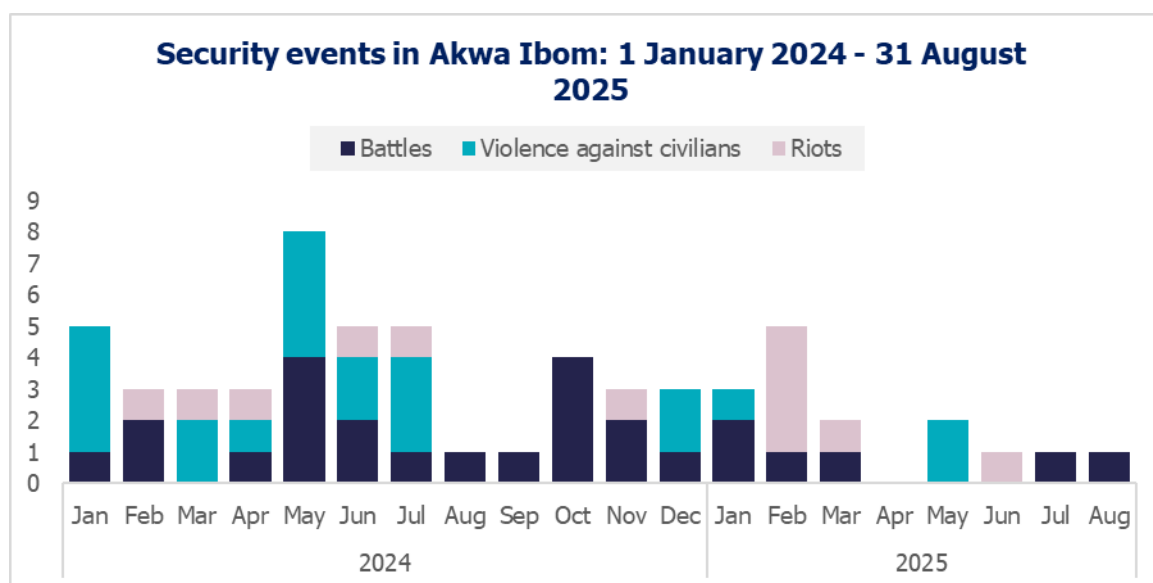
<sup>1520</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10



state in 2024,<sup>1521</sup> PIND and Nigeria Watch also recorded lethal inter-communal violence over inter-state boundaries between communities in Akwa Ibom and Abia states.<sup>1522</sup>

### b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 59 security incidents in Akwa Ibom state, which resulted in 65 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 26 were coded as battles, 12 as riots and 21 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>1523</sup>



**Figure 30: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Akwa Ibom state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.**<sup>1524</sup>

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 18 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Uyo (12), Abak and Itu (6 incidents each), Oron (5 incidents). No incidents were recorded in 13 LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and unidentified cult militia (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1525</sup>

In a report covering the period from January to March 2025, PIND described Akwa Ibom state as ‘one of the least violent’ in the Niger Delta region in terms of reported fatalities.<sup>1526</sup> Similarly, in 2024, Akwa Ibom was among the five most peaceful states, according to Nigeria Watch.<sup>1527</sup>

<sup>1521</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1522</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 3; Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1523</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1524</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1525</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1526</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1527</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2024, [url](#), p. 16



Cult-related violence, resulting in casualties, including among civilians and others, was reported during the reference period, for example in Eket LGA in April 2024,<sup>1528</sup> in Uyo LGA in July 2024,<sup>1529</sup> in Oron LGA in October 2024,<sup>1530</sup> in Ikot Ekpene LGA in January 2025,<sup>1531</sup> and in Etim Ekpo LGA in May 2025.<sup>1532</sup> Several people were killed in an escalation of violence between Vikings and Black Axe cults in October 2024. A school principal was beheaded by members of the Viking confraternity,<sup>1533</sup> while two other suspected members of the Black Axe and Viking cults had been beheaded earlier in Mbo LGA.<sup>1534</sup>

Sources reported of incidents of mob violence during the reference period, targeting for example suspected cult members,<sup>1535</sup> suspected thieves,<sup>1536</sup> members of the security forces,<sup>1537</sup> and others.<sup>1538</sup>

Two people were reportedly killed, several injured in an attack on Iwuochang community in Ibeno LGA in the context of a long-standing land dispute between Ibeno, Eket and Esit Eket LGAs over the oil-rich Stubbs Creek in February 2024.<sup>1539</sup> Tensions reportedly flared up again in early 2025.<sup>1540</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - More than 20 houses, including a church, were destroyed in the aforementioned attack on Iwuochang community in Ibeno LGA in February 2024.<sup>1541</sup> In the same context, houses, schools and medical facilities were damaged in an attack on Inua Eyet Ikot community in November 2024.<sup>1542</sup>

**Road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - As of 1 June 2025, UNHCR estimated the numbers of refugees from abroad living in Akwa Ibom state at 1 762, and noted that it had areas with 'high

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<sup>1528</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, 1 killed, 2 arrested in Akwa Ibom cult clash, 10 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1529</sup> Daily Trust, 9 killed as cultists clash on 7/7 day, 9 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1530</sup> Trumpet (The), Chaos in Akwa Ibom: 5 dead as rival cults clash, as residents flee Oron community, 23 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1531</sup> Cable (The), Akwa Ibom polytechnic student shot dead in cult attack, 15 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1532</sup> Punch, Cultists hack farmer to death in Akwa Ibom, 6 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1533</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Principal beheaded as cult war rages in Akwa Ibom, 23 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1534</sup> THISDAY, Monarchs Threaten Traditional Sanctions against Cult-related Killings in Akwa Ibom, 27 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1535</sup> Vanguard, Mob sets suspected cultist on fire over murder of final year UNIUYO student, 14 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1536</sup> Pulse Wire, Mob Burns Phone Thief in Akwa Ibom, Police Rescue Another, 11 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1537</sup> Premium Times, Angry mob attack police constable in Akwa Ibom, 13 March 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Tension in Akwa Ibom as army officer shoots villager during clash with diesel thieves, 26 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1538</sup> Leadership, Woman Escapes Mob Attack By Ibom Air Passengers After Causing Flight Cancellation, 8 January 2025, [url](#); Sun (The) Nigeria, Akwa Ibom: Angry mob intercepts father with child's corpse in carton to dispose at waste bin, 13 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1539</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Defusing Tensions over Natural Resource Conflicts in Akwa Ibom State, March 03-09, 2024, 9 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1540</sup> Punch, A'Ibom communities urge Eno to resolve land dispute, 29 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Akwa Ibom: Ibeno communities protest over incessant attacks, 14 February 2025, [url](#); Leadership, Tension In Akwa Ibom As 3 LGs Lay Claims To Piece Of Land, 19 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1541</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Defusing Tensions over Natural Resource Conflicts in Akwa Ibom State, March 03-09, 2024, 9 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1542</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Midnight attack devastates Akwa Ibom community, 17 November 2024, [url](#)





concentrations of refugees'.<sup>1543</sup> No information could be found on conflict-induced displacement or returns in Akwa Ibom state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In June 2025, the Nigerian Centre for Human Rights and Accountability Network (CHRAN) mentioned that the Department of State Services (DSS) prevented the allegedly planned abduction of politicians expected to attend a political ceremony on an upcoming holiday. In a security operation in Oron LGA, the DSS detained four suspected members of a group of sea pirates reportedly known for kidnappings across the South-South geopolitical zone targeting high-profile victims.<sup>1544</sup> In December 2024, two kidnap victims, a lawyer and his niece, were freed in a police operation that resulted in the killing of three suspected kidnappers.<sup>1545</sup> Punch reported in January 2025 of the state government's announcement – in view of increase in acts of vandalism of public facilities – to have at least one member of the state-funded Ibom Community Watch agency in every village of the state who should 'act as an eye' for the police.<sup>1546</sup> Meanwhile, in May 2025, the state's parliament demanded the recruitment of more than 1 000 youths for the Ibom Community Watch to ensure that not only Uyo but all senatorial districts of the state were covered.<sup>1547</sup>

## 2.5.2. Bayelsa

Bayelsa state is comprised of the following 8 LGAs: Brass, Ekeremor, Kolokuma/Opokuma, Nembe, Ogbia, Sagbama, Southern Ijaw, Yenagoa. The capital city is Yenagoa.<sup>1548</sup>

The state's main ethnic group are the Ijaw; other groups include the Urhobo<sup>1549</sup> and Isoko.<sup>1550</sup>

Bayelsa's population was 'exceeding 2.5 million', according to the website of the Bayelsa state government, noting that it was the country's least populous state.<sup>1551</sup> Similarly, UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 2 537 375 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1552</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In early 2025, PIND described cult violence and organised crime as the main drivers of insecurity and violence, including lethal violence, in Bayelsa state. Clashes between rivaling

<sup>1543</sup> UNHCR, Nigeria Forcibly Displaced Populations Dashboard – 1 June 2025, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1544</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, CHRAN lauds DSS for foiling kidnapping plot against Akwa Ibom politicians, 9 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1545</sup> Ibom Standard, Akwa Ibom Police Kill Three Kidnappers, Rescue Prominent Lawyer and Niece, 6 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1546</sup> Punch, A'Ibom deploys village security operatives to tackle vandalism, 7 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1547</sup> Business Day, Assembly wants community watch in all senatorial districts of Akwa Ibom, 25 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1548</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Bayelsa, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1549</sup> Nigeria, Bayelsa State Government, The State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1550</sup> Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group, Overview of Bayelsa State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1551</sup> Nigeria, Bayelsa State Government, The State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1552</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)



cults occurred particularly in Yenagoa between the Greenlanders and Bobos cult gangs who were fighting for control over a carpark in Igbogene.<sup>1553</sup> Other cult gangs reportedly involved in the conflict were the Icelanders, Vikings and Deebams.<sup>1554</sup> Cult-related violence targeted not only rival cult members; civilians were also killed or injured by suspected cultists.<sup>1555</sup> Sources reported of cult-related killings using firearms,<sup>1556</sup> machetes<sup>1557</sup> or of stoning people.<sup>1558</sup> Cult-related crimes also included robbery and theft.<sup>1559</sup> Insecurity and lethal violence increased in the second quarter of 2025, mainly driven by clashes between rival cult gangs – particularly in Yenagoa and Southern Ijaw LGA – and criminal activities. Nevertheless, based on the recorded fatalities, Bayelsa remained one of the least violent states in the Niger Delta region, according to PIND.<sup>1560</sup>

Suspected sea pirates were involved in the abduction of four women travelling by boat and robbing the other passengers,<sup>1561</sup> as well as in ambushes on private pipeline surveillance workers<sup>1562</sup> and federal security forces.<sup>1563</sup>

Lethal clashes between Opolo and Okutukutu communities in Yenagoa LGA over land ownership and the boundaries of their communal land were reported in February 2024.<sup>1564</sup>

## **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 44 security incidents in Bayelsa state, resulting in 44 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 13 were coded as battles, 1 as explosion/remote violence, 7 as riots, and 23 as incidents of violence against civilians.<sup>1565</sup>

<sup>1553</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>1554</sup> Radio Nigeria, Bayelsa Police engage cult groups to negotiate ceasefire, 12 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1555</sup> Punch, Cult killings spark panic in Bayelsa, 22 May 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Cult war claims six lives in Bayelsa, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1556</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Cult war claims six lives in Bayelsa, 11 May 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Cult War Intensifies in Bayelsa as Gunmen Assassinate Suspected Rival Leader, 26 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Notorious cult group invades Bayelsa community, kills three, 9 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1557</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, Cult war escalates in Bayelsa, heavy shooting in Yenagoa, 4 killed, 12 May 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, How suspected cultists killed 15 in 4 months in Bayelsa, 23 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1558</sup> THISDAY, Cult War Intensifies in Bayelsa as Gunmen Assassinate Suspected Rival Leader, 26 April 2025, [url](#); Daily Trust, How suspected cultists killed 15 in 4 months in Bayelsa, 23 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1559</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Diri suspends traditional ruler as cult war, robbery escalate in Bayelsa, 23 May 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Cult War Intensifies in Bayelsa as Gunmen Assassinate Suspected Rival Leader, 26 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1560</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 5

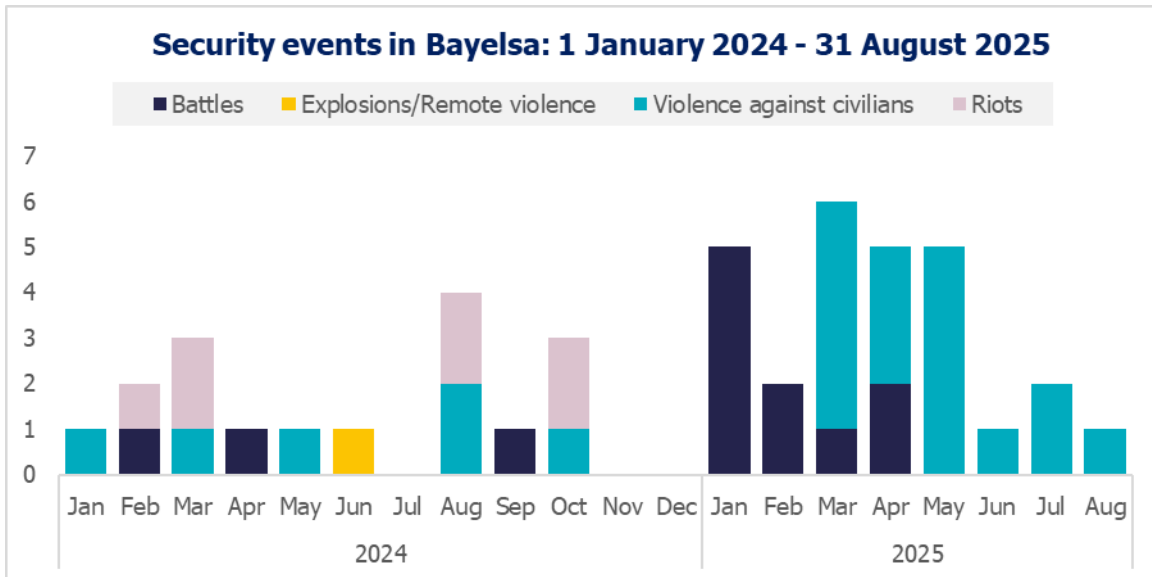
<sup>1561</sup> Vanguard, Lawmaker condemns Bayelsa sea pirates attacks, abduction of 4 market women, 2 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1562</sup> Daily Champion, Gunmen ambush pipeline surveillance workers in Bayelsa, kill One, injure others, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1563</sup> Daily Trust, Bayelsa: How pirates killed 2, abducted 4, injured many in 4 months, 13 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1564</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Two dead in Bayelsa communities over land dispute, 19 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1565</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



**Figure 31: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Bayelsa state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1566</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 6 LGAs of the state. The by far highest number of incidents was recorded in Yenagoa LGA (29), followed by Southern Ijaw (8), Ogbia (3) and Ekeremor (2). No incidents were recorded in 2 LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified cult militia, unidentified armed groups and pirates (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1567</sup>

In early 2025, cult-related violence was a ‘major driver’ of insecurity in the state.<sup>1568</sup> In comparison, in 2024, Bayelsa was among the country’s five states with the lowest number of deaths (91), according to Nigeria Watch.<sup>1569</sup> Daily Trust noted that the violence was believed to have increased after the government’s decision at the end of 2024 to move all inter-state carparks to Igbogene, Yenagoa LGA, as the gangs were fighting over revenues generated from the new transport terminal. The source estimated that 15 people were killed in seven cult-related incidents in Yenagoa in the period from January to April 2025.<sup>1570</sup> The Guardian Nigeria reported in May 2025 of the killing of six people within a week, among them two graduates from Niger Delta University (NDU) who were attacked while heading out for shopping.<sup>1571</sup> In some areas of the state, social activities were reportedly ‘paralyzed’, with people avoiding the streets and shop owners closing early for fear of being attacked.<sup>1572</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage and road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

<sup>1566</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1567</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1568</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>1569</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1570</sup> Daily Trust, How suspected cultists killed 15 in 4 months in Bayelsa, 23 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1571</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Cult war claims six lives in Bayelsa, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1572</sup> Punch, Cult killings spark panic in Bayelsa, 22 May 2025, [url](#)





**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

The Guardian Nigeria noted in May 2025 that in some parts of the capital Yenagoa, the violent conflict between rivaling cult groups continued ‘unabated’ and that after the killing of 15 people within a month, the police authorities ‘appeared helpless’ in the ongoing ‘cult war’. Residents in Swali community (Yenagoa LGA) reportedly blamed the authorities for failing to take ‘proactive actions’ against the attackers, and the community’s leader claimed that many of those detained by the police would return only a few days later and harass the residents.<sup>1573</sup>

Similarly, a rights activist stated that police efforts were made difficult by ‘all sorts of calls from different angles’ that the police would receive when they arrested cultists, ‘pleading for their release’. He alleged links between the political class and cultists, noting that the cultists were sometimes ‘the same boys’ whom politicians would ‘use during elections’.<sup>1574</sup>

In May 2025, the paramount ruler of Swali community was reportedly suspended by the Bayelsa state governor due to the escalation of cult-related killings and crime and over ‘credible intelligence’ that two of the traditional leader’s sons were involved in cult activities.<sup>1575</sup>

## 2.5.3. Cross River

Cross River state is comprised of the following 18 LGAs: Abi, Akamkpa, Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Bekwarra, Biase, Boki, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South, Etung, Ikom, Obanliku, Obubra, Obudu, Odukpani, Ogoja, Yakurr, and Yala.<sup>1576</sup> The capital city is Calabar.<sup>1577</sup>

The main ethnic groups include the Efik, Ejagham and Bekwarra.<sup>1578</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 4 406 204 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1579</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Communal conflicts over land were ‘prevalent’ in Cross River state in 2024,<sup>1580</sup> and a major driver of violence and insecurity during the reference period.<sup>1581</sup> Another source of insecurity

<sup>1573</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Cult war claims six lives in Bayelsa, 11 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1574</sup> Daily Trust, How suspected cultists killed 15 in 4 months in Bayelsa, 23 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1575</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Diri suspends traditional ruler as cult war, robbery escalate in Bayelsa, 23 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1576</sup> Nigeria, Cross River State Government, Local Government, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1577</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Cross River, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1578</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Cross River, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1579</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1580</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1581</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 6

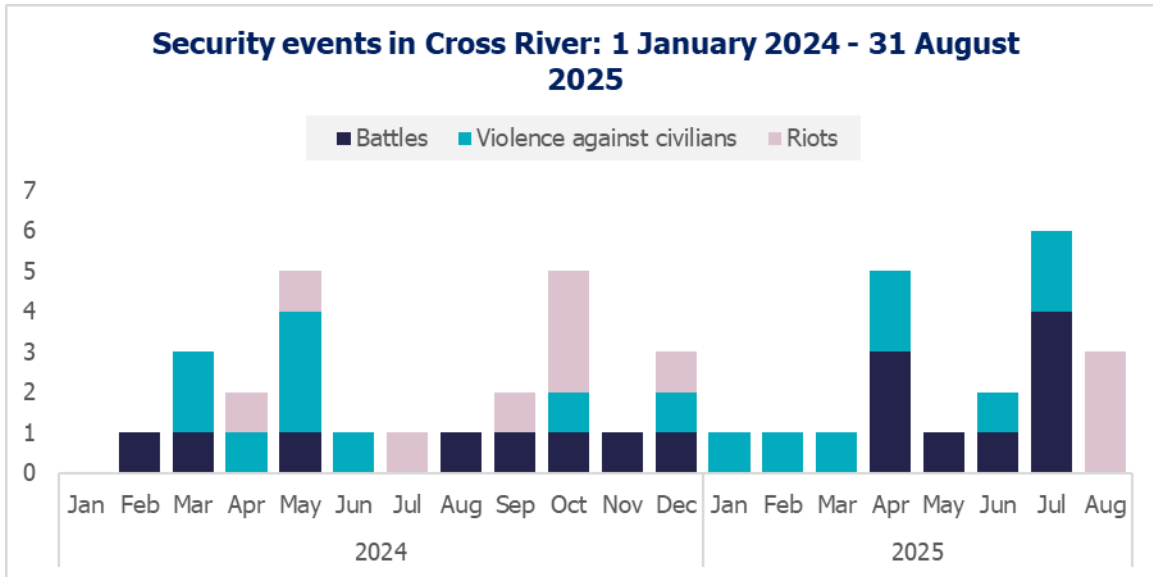




was cult/gang-related violence,<sup>1582</sup> involving abductions,<sup>1583</sup> and killings.<sup>1584</sup> Sea pirates were also involved in abductions for ransom, targeting passengers travelling by boat between Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.<sup>1585</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 45 security incidents in Cross River state, resulting in 56 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 17 were coded as battles, 11 as riots, and 17 as violence against civilians.<sup>1586</sup>



**Figure 17: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Cross River state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1587</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 10 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Calabar Municipality LGA (13), followed by Biase (7), and Akamkpa and Odukpani (6 each) LGAs. No security incidents were recorded in 8 LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups, communal militias and pirates (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1588</sup>

<sup>1582</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 6; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1583</sup> CrossRiverWatch, Pregnant Woman Abducted By Suspected Kidnappers In Cross River, 5 October 2024, [url](#); Premium Times, Police confirm abduction of 3 UNICAL students, 31 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1584</sup> Daily Post, Rivalry cult clash leaves 5 dead in Cross River farming community, 29 April 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Kidnap lord who abducted Akwa Ibom Judge, others killed in Cross River, 29 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1585</sup> FIJ, More Sea Pirate Attacks Shape Deadly Trend in the Niger Delta, 7 May 2025, [url](#); Sun (The) Nigeria, Cross River: Police confirm abduction of twelve passengers by sea pirates, 25 April 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Gunmen abduct 20 passengers travelling on Nigerian waterways, 25 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1586</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1587</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1588</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





In the period from January to March 2025, the number of reported conflict incidents reportedly halved compared to 2024. However, the number of fatalities remained unchanged, according to PIND. These fatalities resulted mainly from inter- and intracommunal violence, particularly in Akamkpa and Odukpani LGAs, as well as from cult/gang-related violence.<sup>1589</sup> In October 2024, Ambazonia Freedom Fighters from Cameroon reportedly attacked communities in Akamkpa LGA,<sup>1590</sup> six fighters were later detained by the Cross River police command.<sup>1591</sup>

Lethal clashes were recorded between communities in Obubra and Ikom LGAs in 2024,<sup>1592</sup> as well as within or between communities in Akamkpa,<sup>1593</sup> Odukpani<sup>1594</sup> and Biase<sup>1595</sup> LGAs in the first half of 2025. Moreover, inter-communal violence in the context of a land and boundary dispute between the Ukwa community (Odukpani LGA, Cross River) and the Isu community (Arochuckwu LGA, Abia) resulted in fatalities in May 2024,<sup>1596</sup> and January 2025.<sup>1597</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Road/waterway security** - Punch noted in May 2025 that due to 'rampant' sea piracy and insecurity, travelling along the Oron-Calabar waterway between Akwa Ibom and Cross River states had become increasingly dangerous.<sup>1598</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - According to UNHCR, there were 45 978 refugees from abroad residing in Cross River state as of 1 June 2025.<sup>1599</sup> As of the end of June 2025, Cross River state hosted more than 50 000 refugees, particularly from Cameroon, according to the State Governor quoted by Cross River State News.<sup>1600</sup> No information could be found on conflict-induced displacement or returns in Cross River state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Punch noted in May 2025 that pirates seemed to have taken full control of the Calabar-Oron waterway. Boat drivers reportedly complained about ongoing attacks and kidnappings despite

<sup>1589</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1590</sup> CrossRiverWatch, Cross River Assembly Fears As Gunmen Invaded Akamkpa, Kill 4, 25 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1591</sup> Peoples Gazette, Police nab six suspected Ambazonian separatists in Cross River, 19 October 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1592</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1593</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly Update, Preventing a Resurgence of Communal Violence in Cross River State June 08-14, 2025, 14 June 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Akamkpa communal crisis deepens as aide, council chairman trade accusations, 3 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1594</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly Update, Preventing a Resurgence of Communal Violence in Cross River State June 08-14, 2025, 14 June 2025, [url](#); Sun (The) Nigeria, Communal clash claims two lives in Cross River, 13 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1595</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly Update, Preventing a Resurgence of Communal Violence in Cross River State June 08-14, 2025, 14 June 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Police threatens disarmament operation in Cross River's warring communities, 23 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1596</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10; Daily Post, Abia, Cross River communal clashes: Youths ask for military barrack in disputed area, 14 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1597</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1598</sup> Punch, Cross River communities demand action as Oron-Calabar waterway turns deadly, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1599</sup> UNHCR, Nigeria: Forcibly Displaced Populations Dashboard – 1 June 2025, 19 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1600</sup> Cross River State News, Gov. Otu Decries Refugee Burden on Cross River, Seeks Stronger Int'l Support, 24 June 2025, [url](#)





paying for security agencies.<sup>1601</sup> In the context of deadly clashes between Biakpan and Etono communities in Biase LGA, the state's police command announced a major disarmament operation in both communities as earlier interventions by security agencies had been ignored and local leaders refused to cooperate in restoring peace.<sup>1602</sup>

## 2.5.4. Delta

Delta state is comprised of the following 25 LGAs: Aniocha North, Aniocha South, Bomadi, Burutu, Ethiope East, Ethiope West, Ika North-East, Ika South, Isoko North, Isoko South, Ndokwa East, Ndokwa West, Okpe, Oshimili North, Oshimili South, Patani, Sapele, Udu, Ugheli North, Ugheli South, Ukwuani, Uvwie, Warri North, Warri South, and Warri South-West. The capital city is Asaba.<sup>1603</sup>

The main ethnic groups are Urhobos, Ishekiri, Ijaw, Delta-Igbos.<sup>1604</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 5 636 145 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1605</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Communal tensions,<sup>1606</sup> criminal violence,<sup>1607</sup> and gang/cult-related violence were the main drivers of insecurity in Delta state during the reference period.<sup>1608</sup> Criminal activities included kidnapping,<sup>1609</sup> homicide,<sup>1610</sup> robbery and clashes between security forces and 'bandits'.<sup>1611</sup>

<sup>1601</sup> Punch, Cross River communities demand action as Oron-Calabar waterway turns deadly, 16 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1602</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police to begin disarmament in Cross Rivers communities over killings, 23 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1603</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Delta, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1604</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Delta, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1605</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1606</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10; Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1607</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>1608</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 7; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1609</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1610</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1611</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 5





Cult/gang-related violence involved groups such as the Eiyee,<sup>1612</sup> the Black Axe/Aye,<sup>1613</sup> the Vikings<sup>1614</sup>/Bagger,<sup>1615</sup> and the Maphite.<sup>1616</sup>

Sources reported of communal violence over land between communities in Ughelli South and Bomadi LGAs,<sup>1617</sup> in Ughelli North and Ughelli South LGAs,<sup>1618</sup> as well as between herders and farmers in Ika South LGA,<sup>1619</sup> Ika North-East and Ughelli North LGAs,<sup>1620</sup> and – specifically involving Fulani herders – in Ethiope East<sup>1621</sup> and Ethiope West<sup>1622</sup> LGAs.

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 211 security incidents in Delta state, resulting in 217 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 103 were coded as battles, 2 as explosion/remote violence, 25 as riots, and 81 as violence against civilians.<sup>1623</sup>

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<sup>1612</sup> Punch, Police arrest suspected cultists with gun, stolen vehicle in Delta, 3 July 2025, [url](#); New Telegraph, Ritualists, Cultists, Kidnappers Arrested In Delta, 13 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1613</sup> Daily Post, One dead, others injured as rival cult groups clash in Delta community, 17 February 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Four Killed in Cult Groups Clash in Delta, 6 August 2024, [url](#); Peoples Gazette, Suspected Black Axe members nabbed with gun, live cartridges in Delta, 19 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1614</sup> The Vikings are particularly strong in Delta and Edo states. SBM Intelligence, Gangster's Paradise: Nigeria's Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 21

<sup>1615</sup> Daily Post, One dead, others injured as rival cult groups clash in Delta community, 17 February 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Four Killed in Cult Groups Clash in Delta, 6 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1616</sup> Pointer (The), Tension As Two Cult Groups Set For Showdown In Ughelli, 20 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1617</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1618</sup> Vanguard, 3 dead, many injured as Delta communities clash over land ownership, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1619</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10

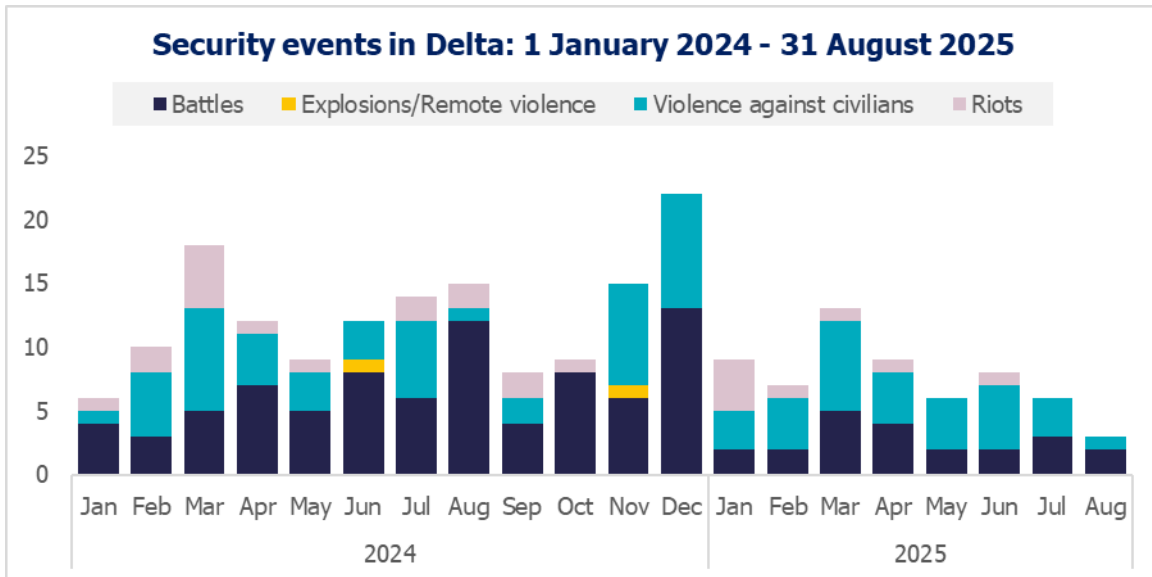
<sup>1620</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1621</sup> Vanguard, Abraka residents celebrate neutralization of suspected Fulani herdsmen-turned kidnappers, 5 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1622</sup> Vanguard, Delta monarch demands govt's intervention over herdsmen killings, 29 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1623</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 18: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Delta state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1624</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 24 LGAs of the state, with the highest number of security incidents documented in Ughelli North LGA (48), followed by Aniocha South (34), Oshimili North (13), Ndokwa West and Oshimili South (12 incidents each). No incidents were recorded in one LGA (Warri South-West). According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and Fulani ethnic militia (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1625</sup>

Delta State was among the states in the Niger Delta region with the highest rates of conflict-related fatalities in 2024,<sup>1626</sup> as well as in the first quarter of 2025, according to PIND.<sup>1627</sup> At local government level, the highest number of conflict-related fatalities was recorded in Ughelli North LGA in both 2024 and early 2025.<sup>1628</sup> In the second quarter of 2025, PIND recorded the highest number of fatalities in Ethiope East LGA.<sup>1629</sup>

Security incidents during the reference period were, for example communal clashes over land in Bomadi LGA in March 2024. 16 soldiers on a peace mission were killed in the context of these clashes.<sup>1630</sup> The Okuama community was subsequently surrounded by soldiers who were said to have set some buildings on fire in response to the killings.<sup>1631</sup> In August 2024, four persons were killed in separate incidents in Ughelli North LGA in clashes between Black

<sup>1624</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1625</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1626</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 3

<sup>1627</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 2

<sup>1628</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 3; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1629</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 7

<sup>1630</sup> International Crisis Group, Crisis Watch – Nigeria: January 2024 – August 2025, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1631</sup> Punch, Deadly peace mission: Delta community deserted, DHQ orders probe as 15 soldiers’ bodies recovered, 17 March 2024, [url](#)



Axe/Aye and Viking confraternities, reportedly over unpaid debts related to a drug deal.<sup>1632</sup> Sources reported of kidnappings along the Ughelli-Patani road,<sup>1633</sup> and the Eku-Abraka road.<sup>1634</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage and road security** – No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Punch stated in June 2025 that over the previous three months there had been a ‘surge in violent crimes, including kidnappings and killings’ across the state, which continued ‘unabated’. In reaction to communities’ protests, a joint security operation was set up, including ‘police officers, local hunters, vigilantes, and anti-cult volunteers’. In the course of the operation, the security forces engaged in a gunfight with suspected kidnappers along the Abraka Railway, reportedly killing four suspects. In another community, women reportedly protested over the disappearance of at least 26 children in the area, claiming that these disappearances continued ‘without any clear leads or arrests’.<sup>1635</sup>

## 2.5.5. Edo

Edo state is comprised of the following 18 LGAs: Akoko-Edo, Egor, Esan Central, Esan North-East, Esan South-East, Esan West, Etsako Central, Etsako East, Etsako West, Igueben, Ikpoba-Okha, Oredo, Orhionmwon, Ovia North-East, Ovia South-West, Owan East, Owan West and Uhumwonde.<sup>1636</sup> The state’s capital is Benin city.<sup>1637</sup>

The main ethnic groups include Binis, Okpe, Esan, Afemai, Ora, Akoko-Edo, Igbanke, Emai and Ijaw.<sup>1638</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 4 777 042 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1639</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

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<sup>1632</sup> THISDAY, Four Killed in Cult Groups Clash in Delta, 6 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1633</sup> Nation (The), Troops foil kidnap attempt in Delta, rescue passengers, 11 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1634</sup> Pointer (The), Security Operatives In Search Of Kidnapped Mother, Three-Month-Old Baby In Delta, 19 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1635</sup> Punch, Grief, anger and calls for action as kidnappings surge in Delta, 13 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1636</sup> City Population, Nigeria: Administrative Division, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1637</sup> Nigeria, NIPC, Nigerian States, Edo State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1638</sup> Nigeria, NIPC, Nigerian States, Edo State, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1639</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)



In July 2025, the Nigerian Observer pointed to ‘rampant cultism and targeted kidnappings’ as major security challenges, particularly in Benin city, Ekpoma, Auchu and their surrounding areas.<sup>1640</sup> PIND mentioned criminal activities, including homicide, kidnapping for ransom, and communal violence as the main sources of insecurity in early 2025.<sup>1641</sup> In the second quarter of 2025, PIND pointed to a decline in the number of reported fatalities, despite an increase in the number of security incidents. Criminal activities, cult-related clashes and communal conflict remained the main security challenges.<sup>1642</sup> Criminal violence was also a ‘significant’ driver of insecurity in 2024, alongside cult/gang-related violence,<sup>1643</sup> while in terms of communal conflict, Edo was one of three states recording the lowest number of fatalities in 2024, according to Nigeria Watch.<sup>1644</sup>

During the reference period, media sources reported on cult gang clashes involving the Black Axe,<sup>1645</sup> Eiye, Vikings,<sup>1646</sup> and Maphite<sup>1647</sup>. Edo state, and particularly Benin city, was reportedly ‘notorious’ for lethal clashes between Black Axe and Viking confraternities.<sup>1648</sup> Another group operating in Edo state was the Buccaneer Confraternity.<sup>1649</sup> Clashes between rival cult groups were mostly driven by fights for supremacy in terms of territorial control.<sup>1650</sup>

Communal violence included killings<sup>1651</sup> and abductions by suspected herders,<sup>1652</sup> mob violence,<sup>1653</sup> an attack by suspected Ijaw militias,<sup>1654</sup> and attacks by unidentified armed men.<sup>1655</sup>

The Nigerian non-profit Policy and Advocacy Centre (PLAC) reported on pre-election violence ahead of the governorship elections in Edo state in September 2024, including shootings and

<sup>1640</sup> Nigerian Observer (The), Insecurity: Gov Okpobholo sets up special anti-kidnapping, anti-cultism squad, 13 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1641</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1642</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1643</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 5-6

<sup>1644</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 15

<sup>1645</sup> Nigerian Observer (The), 7 killed in renewed cult war in Edo 2 months after ceasefire, 9 July 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Over 15 people feared dead as secret cult killings resume in Edo, 28 April 2025, [url](#); Radio Nigeria, Cultists to get 21-year jail term in Edo, 30 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1646</sup> Radio Nigeria, Cultists to get 21-year jail term in Edo, 30 January 2025, [url](#); Punch, Edo gripped by renewed cult violence, 3 November 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Edo: Eight feared killed in renewed cult clashes, 29 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1647</sup> Nigerian Observer (The), 7 killed in renewed cult war in Edo 2 months after ceasefire, 9 July 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Over 15 people feared dead as secret cult killings resume in Edo, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1648</sup> SBM, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Crisis 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1649</sup> Daily Post, Police parade 23 suspected cultists, child abductors in Edo, 15 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1650</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating the Resurgence of Cult-related Gang Violence in Edo State, November 17-23, 2024, 23 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1651</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10; Vanguard, One dead, others injured as suspected herders attack Edo community, 23 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Suspected herders kill two farmers in Edo, 25 February 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Gunmen kill 3 farmers in Edo, 6 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1652</sup> Vanguard, One dead, others injured as suspected herders attack Edo community, 23 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Suspected herders kidnap Edo Catholic priest, four arrested, 5 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1653</sup> HumAngle, Mob Violence Soars in Nigeria as Northern Travellers are Killed in South-South, 29 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1654</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, 22 feared dead in gunmen attack on Edo farming communities, 23 February 2025, [url](#)

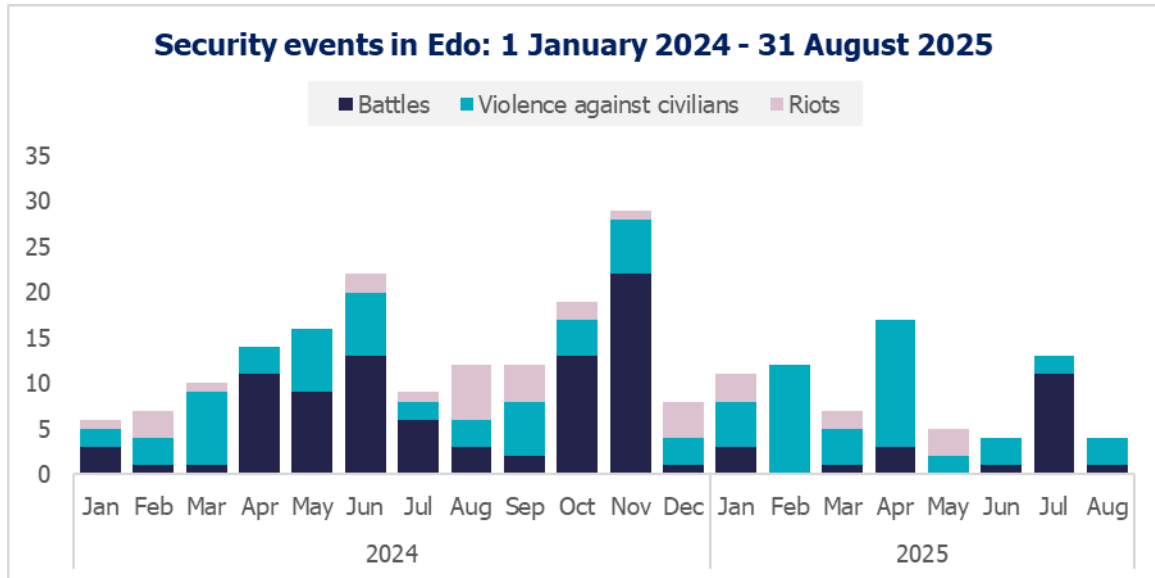
<sup>1655</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 28



assaults.<sup>1656</sup> In the same context, PIND mentioned the targeted abduction of political figures.<sup>1657</sup> Election Day, however, was ‘largely peaceful’.<sup>1658</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 237 security incidents in Edo state, resulting in 212 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 105 were coded as battles, 33 as riots and 99 as violence against civilians.<sup>1659</sup>



**Figure 19: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Edo state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1660</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in all 18 LGAs of Edo state, with the highest number documented in Oredo LGA (71), followed by Etsako West (25), Ikpoba Okha (19), Ovia North-East (18), and Ovia South-West (15). According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups, cult militia and Fulani ethnic militia (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1661</sup>

PIND recorded the highest number of conflict-related deaths in Oredo LGA in 2024,<sup>1662</sup> and in the second quarter of 2025.<sup>1663</sup> In the first quarter of 2025, the highest number of conflict-related fatalities was recorded in Esan North-East LGA.<sup>1664</sup>

<sup>1656</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 41  
<sup>1657</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Resurgence of Kidnap for Ransom in Edo State, March 24-30, 2024, 29 March 2024, [url](#)  
<sup>1658</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 41  
<sup>1659</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)  
<sup>1660</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)  
<sup>1661</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)  
<sup>1662</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 3  
<sup>1663</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trend: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 8  
<sup>1664</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 8



Media reported of waves of cult-related violence and crime during the reference period.<sup>1665</sup> For example, 150 fatalities were recorded in the period January - May 2024, according to the governor of Edo state,<sup>1666</sup> 20 suspected members of rival cults were reportedly killed within a month in the period October-November 2024,<sup>1667</sup> and in the period March - April 2025, the Nigerian consulting company Nextier recorded 13 incidents of gunmen attacks,<sup>1668</sup> while the Nigerian Tribune reported of at least 15 people killed within four days during the same period in Benin city in fights for supremacy between Black Axe and Maphite cults.<sup>1669</sup>

Attacks on farmers by unknown gunmen or suspected herders included, for example, the killing of a man on his farm in Ubune-Ivbiaro community/Owan East LGA in March 2024,<sup>1670</sup> and the killing of two men on their farms in Okpekpe community/Etsako East LGA in February 2025.<sup>1671</sup> At least 22 people were reportedly killed in an attack by suspected Ijaw militias on seven farming communities in February 2025, while the state police confirmed seven killed and six injured. The attack reportedly occurred in retaliation for the previous killing of a suspected cocoa thief by vigilantes hired by the farmers.<sup>1672</sup> In March 2025, seven travellers on their way from Rivers to Kano state for Islamic religious festivities were killed in a mob attack in Uromi.<sup>1673</sup> The travellers, Hausa hunters, had been stopped by local vigilantes who found several arms when searching their car and subsequently suspected them of being kidnappers and herders, triggering the attack.<sup>1674</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - Media sources reported on conflict-related infrastructure damage in the context of communal violence such as the burning of houses, destruction of property, and crops.<sup>1675</sup> In March 2025 and based on a previously adopted law, authorities began with the demolition of houses presumably linked to kidnapping activities.<sup>1676</sup>

**Road security** - The Nigerian Observer reported on several attacks on travellers along the Ivbiaro-Auchi route in Owan East LGA in May 2025, and quoted a village chief as saying that

<sup>1665</sup> Nigerian Observer, 7 killed in renewed cult war in Edo 2 months after ceasefire, 9 July 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Edo assembly raises alarm over resurgence of cult killings, 30 April 2025, [url](#); PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Mitigating the Resurgence of Cult-related Gang Violence in Edo State, November 17-23, 2024, 23 November 2024, [url](#); PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Deescalating Rising Wave of Cult Gang Related Killings in Edo State, January 07-13, 2024, 13 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1666</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Obaseki declares war on cultists as 150 persons feared dead in Edo, 4 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1667</sup> New Telegraph, How Cultists Killed 20 Rivals In Clashes Within A Month In Edo, 8 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1668</sup> Nextier, Nigeria Violent Conflict. Bi-monthly Report, Volume 1, Issue 14, March 2025-April 2025, 26 May 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>1669</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Over 15 people feared dead as secret cult killings resume in Edo, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1670</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 10; PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 28

<sup>1671</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 8; Punch, Suspected herders kill two farmers in Edo, 25 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1672</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, 22 feared dead in gunmen attack on Edo farming communities, 23 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1673</sup> HumAngle, Mob Violence Soars in Nigeria as Northern Travellers are Killed in South-South, 29 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1674</sup> Reuters, Mob kills seven suspected kidnappers in Nigeria's Edo state, 28 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1675</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, 22 feared dead in gunmen attack on Edo farming communities, 23 February 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Suspected ethnic militias invade Edo community, 13 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1676</sup> Pulse, Edo task force demolishes property belonging to kidnap informant, 8 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Edo begins demolition of kidnappers' houses, 6 March 2025, [url](#)



given the insecurity many locals were afraid to go to their farms.<sup>1677</sup> PIND mentioned targeted abductions of travellers ahead of the elections for state governor in September 2024.<sup>1678</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - Residents were reportedly fleeing ‘en masse’ following violent clashes with suspected Ijaw militias that affected seven farming communities in Ovia South-West LGA in February 2025.<sup>1679</sup> No further information on conflict-induced displacement and no information on returns in Edo state during the reference period could be found.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Security experts and opposition members reportedly criticised the state government for its ‘lack of coordination’ in the context of a resurgence of cult-related violence and criminal activity, following contradicting information on the status of the Edo State Security Network (ESSN).<sup>1680</sup> The ESSN and other state-owned or private security networks had been suspended from participating in securing voters and election materials by the Inspector General of Police (IGP) ahead of the September 2024 gubernatorial elections.<sup>1681</sup> The suspension was lifted by October/November 2024.<sup>1682</sup> Two civil society organisations reportedly attributed the rise in crime to the ban of the ESSN,<sup>1683</sup> with a member of one organisation noting that there was an ‘insufficient’ number of police officers in relation to the state’s population.<sup>1684</sup>

In January 2025, the Secret Cult and Similar Activities (Prohibition) Law was signed into law by the state governor. The new law foresees a 21-year prison term for ‘financial and material sponsors of secret cults’ and states that ‘[a]ny person found to be a cultist under Section 4, who assaults, injures, maims, or kills any person(s) or destroys any property in furtherance of the activities of any secret cult, is guilty of an offence and is liable to 21 years of imprisonment without an option of fine’. In case of a fatality, the law provided for the death penalty for the perpetrator(s) and the confiscation and demolition of their properties and place of residence by the state. Persons harbouring cult members face a 10-year prison term and the confiscation and demolition of their properties.<sup>1685</sup>

PLAC pointed to an ‘alarming rise’ in attacks targeting police officers and military forces in the South-South zone in 2024,<sup>1686</sup> such as the killing of two police officers in Edo state in March 2024.<sup>1687</sup> A police station was set on fire in Etsako East LGA in October 2024 by youths who

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<sup>1677</sup> Nigerian Observer (The), Gunmen kill woman, abduct husband in Ivbiaro community, 20 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1678</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Weekly: Spotlighting the Resurgence of Kidnap for Ransom in Edo State, March 24-30, 2024, 29 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1679</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, 22 feared dead in gunmen attack on Edo farming communities, 23 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1680</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Edo State Security Network stirs confusion amid insecurity concerns, 29 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1681</sup> Daily Trust, IGP bans Edo Security Network from gov’ship poll, 12 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1682</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Edo State Security Network stirs confusion amid insecurity concerns, 29 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1683</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Edo: Eight feared killed in renewed cult clashes, 29 October 2024, [url](#); PM News, Edo under siege: The untold stories behind the rise in kidnappings, robberies, 24 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1684</sup> PM News, Edo under siege: The untold stories behind the rise in kidnappings, robberies, 24 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1685</sup> Punch, Edo gov approves 21-year jail term for cultists, sponsors, 28 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1686</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 42

<sup>1687</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), pp. 43-44



accused police of collaborating with suspected criminals.<sup>1688</sup> Similarly, communities in Etsako West LGA alleged in a protest letter to the IGP in April 2025, in the context of ongoing killings, kidnappings and rape, that police officers collaborated with suspected herders whom they accused of being responsible for the attacks.<sup>1689</sup> Punch described the mob killing of suspected herders in Uromi in March 2025 (see above) as ‘the symptom of a broken security and justice system’ in Nigeria.<sup>1690</sup> Following a second attack on a Catholic seminary in Etsako East LGA in July 2025, where a police officer was killed and three seminarians kidnapped, the Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) pointed to the state’s security forces’ ‘lack of capacity to protect the lives and property of the citizens’.<sup>1691</sup>

### 2.5.6. Rivers

Rivers state is comprised of the following 23 LGAs: Port Harcourt, Obio-Akpor, Okrika, Ogu–Bolo, Eleme, Tai, Gokana, Khana, Oyigbo, Opobo–Nkoro, Andoni, Bonny, Degema, Asari-Toru, Akuku-Toru, Abua–Oduval, Ahoada West, Ahoada East, Ogba–Egbema–Ndoni, Emohua, Ikwerre, Etche, Omuma. The capital city is Port Harcourt.<sup>1692</sup>

The main ethnic groups include Ikwerre, Ibani, Opobo, Eleme, Okrika, and Kalabari, Etche, Ogba, Ogoni, Engenni and others.<sup>1693</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 7 476 805 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1694</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In the first six months of 2025, PIND identified criminal activities and clashes between rival cult gangs as major security challenges in Rivers state, with the highest number of conflict-related fatalities being recorded in Emohua LGA in the period from January to March 2025,<sup>1695</sup> and in Port Harcourt LGA in the period from April to June 2025.<sup>1696</sup> Similarly, in 2024, clashes between rival cult gangs, security forces and local vigilantes, kidnapping for ransom – especially in Port Harcourt, Ikwerre, Degema, Ogba-Egbema-Ndoni, and Ahoada West LGAs –, as well as vigilante and mob violence triggered by criminal activity and clashes between local vigilantes, cult gangs and ‘hoodlums’ constituted primary drivers of insecurity.<sup>1697</sup> Cult-related violence was predominantly caused by fights for supremacy over territory, levies collection

<sup>1688</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Alleged kidnapping, organ harvesting: Many killed, police station set ablaze by protesting youths in Edo, 14 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1689</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police deny aiding herdsmen as Edo community protests rising violence, 24 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1690</sup> Punch, Uromi killings: Symptoms of a broken system, 6 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1691</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, HURIWA condemns second deadly attack on Catholic seminary in Edo, 14 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1692</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Rivers, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1693</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Rivers, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1694</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1695</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1696</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1697</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), pp. 6, 7, 11



and other criminal activities.<sup>1698</sup> In its report analysing the main drivers of crime and violence in the Niger Delta and covering the period from 2019 to 2024, the Nigerian Stakeholder Democracy Network (SDN) rated ‘cultism’ as overall ‘very high’ in Rivers state.<sup>1699</sup> Cult groups operating in Rivers state reportedly included the Deebam<sup>1700</sup> (also spelled Deygbam<sup>1701</sup>), Icelanders,<sup>1702</sup> Vikings,<sup>1703</sup> the Klu-Klux-Klan,<sup>1704</sup> the Black Axe confraternity,<sup>1705</sup> and the Greenlanders,<sup>1706</sup> who predominantly operated around Owube Kingdom in Ahoada West LGA.<sup>1707</sup> Clashes between these groups were reported during the reference period, including between Deebam and Icelanders,<sup>1708</sup> Vikings and Icelanders,<sup>1709</sup> the Klu-Klux-Klan and Vikings,<sup>1710</sup> and between Vikings and the Black Axe confraternity.<sup>1711</sup>

Sources also reported of pirate attacks on boats travelling along sea routes and the abduction of passengers;<sup>1712</sup> pipeline vandalism,<sup>1713</sup> and oil theft,<sup>1714</sup> also involving children.<sup>1715</sup>

Following an outbreak of violence and attacks on oil infrastructure, the Nigerian president declared a state of emergency in Rivers state in March 2025, and suspended the state’s leadership and parliament for six months.<sup>1716</sup> The move, which was criticised as ‘unconstitutional’,<sup>1717</sup> constituted the culmination of an ongoing political crisis between state governor Fubara and his predecessor,<sup>1718</sup> and according to one source, triggered ‘ethnic

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<sup>1698</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 6

<sup>1699</sup> SDN, Devil’s Workshop – Participatory analysis of crime and violence in the Niger Delta, Nigeria 2025, 7 April 2025, [url](#), p. 18

<sup>1700</sup> Punch, Rivers community deserted as cultists kill 19 residents, 10 February 2025, [url](#); PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1701</sup> Madueke, K. et al., ‘Do not come out to vote’. Gangs, elections, political violence and criminality in Kano and Rivers, Nigeria, October 2023, [url](#), p. 40, footnote 17

<sup>1702</sup> Punch, Rivers community deserted as cultists kill 19 residents, 10 February 2025, [url](#); PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1703</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, One feared dead, many injured in Rivers varsity cult clash, 13 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1704</sup> Punch, Police probe killing of 300-level Rivers varsity student, 21 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1705</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, One arrested as cults clash in Rivers university, 10 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1706</sup> PM News, Cult gang kills 3 alleged police informants in Rivers, 22 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1707</sup> Premium Times, Police kill notorious cult leader in Rivers, 26 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1708</sup> Punch, Rivers community deserted as cultists kill 19 residents, 10 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1709</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, One feared dead, many injured in Rivers varsity cult clash, 13 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1710</sup> Punch, Police probe killing of 300-level Rivers varsity student, 21 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1711</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, One arrested as cults clash in Rivers university, 10 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1712</sup> Vanguard, Pirates kidnap 19 passengers in Rivers boat hijacking, 7 May 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Five passengers abducted by pirates on Rivers waterways, 7 April 2025, [url](#); Punch, How pirates murdered Rivers fashion designer after N2m ransom — Police, 22 April 2025, [url](#); Punch, Rivers workers lament as pirates abduct 13 boat passengers, 8 February 2025, [url](#); Punch, Pirates strike in Rivers, abduct 10 passengers, 2 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1713</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 11; Business Day, Another explosion hits gas facility in Rivers amid ongoing crisis, 23 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1714</sup> PM News, Army uncovers over 40 illegal oil wells in Rivers, 29 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1715</sup> Angalapu, D. and Ojewale, O., Mining and extractives / Poverty fuels child labour at Nigeria’s illegal oil refineries, ENACT, 24 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1716</sup> Nextier, Nigeria Violent Conflict. Bi-monthly Report, Volume 1, Issue 14, March 2025-April 2025, 26 May 2025, [url](#), p. 5

<sup>1717</sup> Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room, Nigeria Civil Society Situation Room Condemns President Tinubu’s Unconstitutional Removal of Elected Governor and Legislators in Rivers State, 19 March 2025, [url](#)

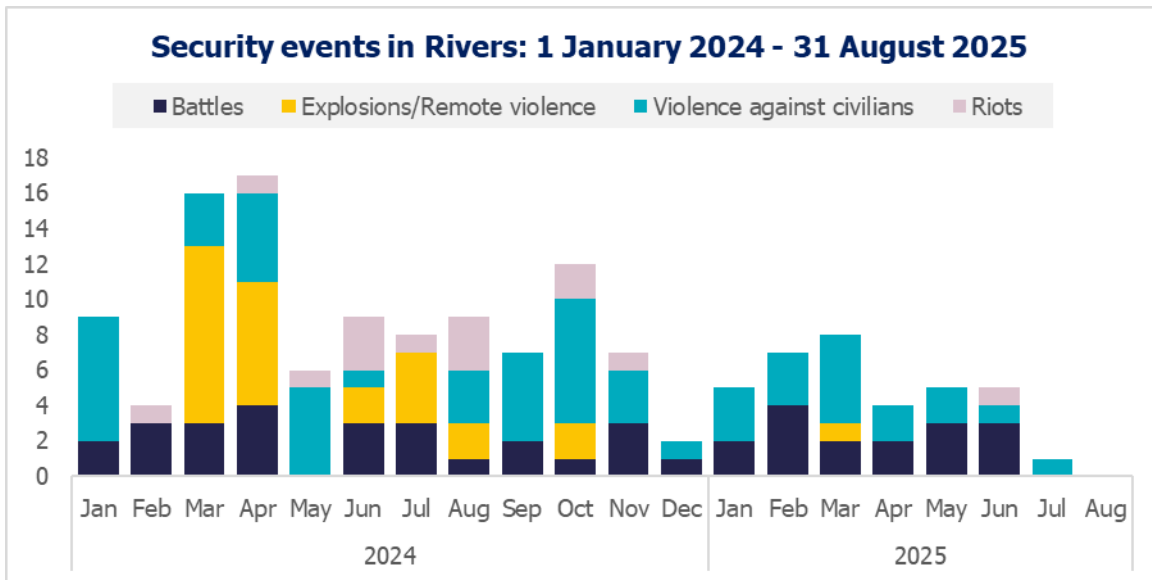
<sup>1718</sup> Bloomsbury Intelligence & Security Institute, Crude Awakening: Nigeria’s Trans-Niger Pipeline Explosion Triggers State of Emergency in Rivers State, 12 April 2025, [url](#)



sentiments’ among the Ijaw, who perceive attempts to unseat the governor as directed against the political representation of their ethnic group.<sup>1719</sup>

**b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the Period 1 January 2024 - 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 141 security incidents in Rivers state, resulting in 111 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 42 were coded as battles, 28 as explosion/remote violence, 14 as riots, and 57 as violence against civilians.<sup>1720</sup>



**Figure 20: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Rivers state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1721</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 19 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in the capital Port Harcourt (36 incidents), followed by Degema LGA (25), Obio (12), Emohua and Ikwerre LGAs (11 incidents each). No incidents were recorded in 4 LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and cult militias, the Icelander cult group, and pirates (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1722</sup>

PIND noted that, overall, Rivers was one of three states in the Niger Delta region with the highest level of lethal violence in 2024.<sup>1723</sup> It recorded the fourth highest level within the region in the first quarter of 2025, with a slight increase compared to the last quarter of 2024,<sup>1724</sup> and the third highest level in the second quarter of 2025.<sup>1725</sup> According to Nigeria

<sup>1719</sup> Weldone, D.O., Why A State of Emergency in Rivers State is a Bad Idea, CDD [Blog], 19 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1720</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1721</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1722</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1723</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Annual Conflict Report, January to December 2024, 25 March 2025, [url](#), p. 1

<sup>1724</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), pp. 2, 11

<sup>1725</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), pp. 2, 11



Watch, Rivers was among the three most affected states in terms of cult-related fatalities and the fifth most affected state in terms of fatalities related to kidnappings in 2024.<sup>1726</sup>

For example, at least 19 people were feared to have been killed in a battle for supremacy between Deebam and Icelanders cult groups in Obelle community in Emohua LGA in February 2025. According to the police quoted by Punch, 10 fatalities were confirmed, and the fight was over control of levies from an oil company in the region.<sup>1727</sup> Moreover, since the beginning of 2025, the Nigerian Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ) reported of three incidents of sea pirates abducting at least 28 passengers from boats travelling on waterways in Rivers state.<sup>1728</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage and road security** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In the context of attacks by sea pirates on passenger boats, the FIJ reported that several abducted passengers could be rescued by security forces. Nevertheless, the ‘maritime police lacked funding and equipment’ to secure the state’s waterways, according to the chairman of the Maritime Workers Union quoted by the FIJ.<sup>1729</sup>

In January 2024, the Nigerian navy reportedly launched Operation Delta Sanity to fight oil theft in the Niger Delta Region and extended it in April and July 2024.<sup>1730</sup> A second phase of the operation was launched on 30 December 2024.<sup>1731</sup> In December 2024, the state government declared that it had donated six gunboats to the Nigerian navy to improve waterway patrols and response times.<sup>1732</sup> Operations against oil theft,<sup>1733</sup> vandalism,<sup>1734</sup> and illegal refineries continued to be reported in 2025.<sup>1735</sup>

Vanguard reported on a case of oil theft executed with the complicity of two officers of the NSCDC.<sup>1736</sup> Four soldiers and an NSCDC member were arrested in May 2024 on suspected involvement in armed robbery, the hijacking of food trucks and diversion of these goods.<sup>1737</sup>

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<sup>1726</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), pp. 8, 10

<sup>1727</sup> Punch, Rivers community deserted as cultists kill 19 residents, 10 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1728</sup> FIJ, More Sea Pirate Attacks Shape Deadly Trend in the Niger Delta, 7 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1729</sup> FIJ, More Sea Pirate Attacks Shape Deadly Trend in the Niger Delta, 7 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1730</sup> Arise News, Nigerian Navy Intensifies Fight against Oil Theft, Destroys Illegal Bunkering Hideout, 24 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1731</sup> Majorwaves Energy Report, Nigerian Navy Launches Operation Delta Sanity II, 30 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1732</sup> Reuters, Nigeria's Rivers state pledges gunboats to navy in fight against oil theft, 11 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1733</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, NSCDC impounds truckload of stolen crude in Rivers, 1 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1734</sup> Premium Times, Police foil attack on pipeline in Rivers, arrest suspects with bombs – Official, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1735</sup> Punch, Navy destroys five illegal refineries in Rivers, recovers stolen oil, 16 June 2025, [url](#); Punch, Navy destroys nine illegal refining sites in Rivers, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1736</sup> Vanguard, Logistics company used as front for oil theft uncovered in Rivers State, 13 October 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1737</sup> Daily Trust, Police arrest soldiers, others over robbery, 28 May 2024, [url](#)



On the other hand, sources reported of lethal attacks on security personnel<sup>1738</sup> and suspected police informants.<sup>1739</sup> One official stated that the police was ‘doing their best’, but that it was ‘not enough’. Cult members had sophisticated arms, while a local security outfit had only hunting guns.<sup>1740</sup>

## 2.6. South-West

The South-West consists of the following six states: Ekiti, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, and Lagos.<sup>1741</sup>

For an overview of the main conflict drivers at the country and regional levels, see [1. General description of the security situation.](#)

### 2.6.1. Ekiti

Ekiti state is comprised of the following 15 LGAs: Ado, Efon, Ekiti East, Ekiti South-West, Ekiti West, Emure, Gbonyin (also Ayekire), Ido Osi, Ijero, Ikere, Ikole, Ilejemeje, Irepodun/Ifelodun, Ise/Orun, Moba and Oye.<sup>1742</sup> The capital city is Ado-Ekiti.<sup>1743</sup>

The main ethnic group in Ekiti state are the Ekiti, a Yoruba subgroup. Other groups include minorities of the Akoko Yoruba subgroup.<sup>1744</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 3 592 163 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1745</sup>

#### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors.](#)

The Kimpact Development Initiative (KDI), a Nigerian NGO with a focus on good governance and democratic development, noted in a report of February 2025 that in the period from 2011 to 2024, Ekiti ranked among the country’s five safest states and that the South-West remained ‘relatively stable’ despite ‘pockets of violence’.<sup>1746</sup>

In September 2024, the state government reportedly condemned a ‘wave of kidnappings’ that had resurfaced, although the state had enjoyed ‘relative peace’ until then, according to a state

<sup>1738</sup> Vanguard, Rivers Police confirm murder of cop, vigilante member, vow to arrest killers, 24 June 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Gunmen kill police inspector in Rivers, 25 April 2024, [url](#); Premium Times, Gunmen kill police officer in Rivers, 23 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1739</sup> PM News, Cult gang kills 3 alleged police informants in Rivers, 22 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1740</sup> Vanguard, Cultists kill 30 in 3 months, vow to unleash mayhem on Rivers communities, 11 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1741</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, Region, South West, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1742</sup> ALGON, Local Government Areas, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1743</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Ekiti, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1744</sup> Nigeria, Ekiti State Bureau of Tourism Development, About Ekiti State, 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1745</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1746</sup> KDI, Protecting the civic space. Trends, challenges, and future outlook in Nigeria, 28 February 2025, [url](#), p. 28





official.<sup>1747</sup> Incidents of kidnappings were reported in January 2024,<sup>1748</sup> September 2024,<sup>1749</sup> November 2024,<sup>1750</sup> December 2024,<sup>1751</sup> and April 2025.<sup>1752</sup> Sources also reported of incidents of killings by unidentified armed men during the reference period.<sup>1753</sup> Sometimes, killings occurred in the context of (attempted) abductions.<sup>1754</sup>

In terms of cult activities, media sources described incidents involving the following cult groups: the Supreme Eiyé Confraternity, the Black Axe,<sup>1755</sup> and the Buccaneer Confraternity.<sup>1756</sup>

## **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period 1 January 2024 - 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 30 security incidents in Ekiti state, resulting in 16 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 10 were coded as battles, 3 as riots, and 17 incidents were coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1757</sup>

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<sup>1747</sup> Punch, Ekiti condemns wave of kidnappings, beefs up security, 25 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1748</sup> ICIR, Ekiti government confirms abduction of 6 school pupils, 3 teachers, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1749</sup> Punch, Gunmen kidnap three, kill husband in Ekiti, 2 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1750</sup> Hope Newspaper (The), Kidnapping: Amotekun rescues 60-year-old Ekiti farmer, arrests suspect, 24 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1751</sup> Vanguard, Bandits abduct Ekiti-bound travellers, demand N30m ransom each, 24 December 2024, [url](#); Nation (The), JUST IN: Gunmen attack 18-passenger bus, kidnap travellers in Ekiti, 23 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1752</sup> Punch, Two kidnapped victims regain freedom in Ekiti, 28 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1753</sup> Premium Times, Security agencies on red alert as unknown gunmen kill two in Ekiti, 20 June 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Tension as gunmen kill another man, hours after killing POS agent in Ekiti, 20 June 2024, [url](#); Premium Times, Insecurity: Ekiti to spend N61 million to provide jackets for motorcycle, tricycle operators, 13 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1754</sup> Daily Post, Kidnap, killing of teenager in Ekiti community painful – Oyebanji mourns, 12 February 2025, [url](#);

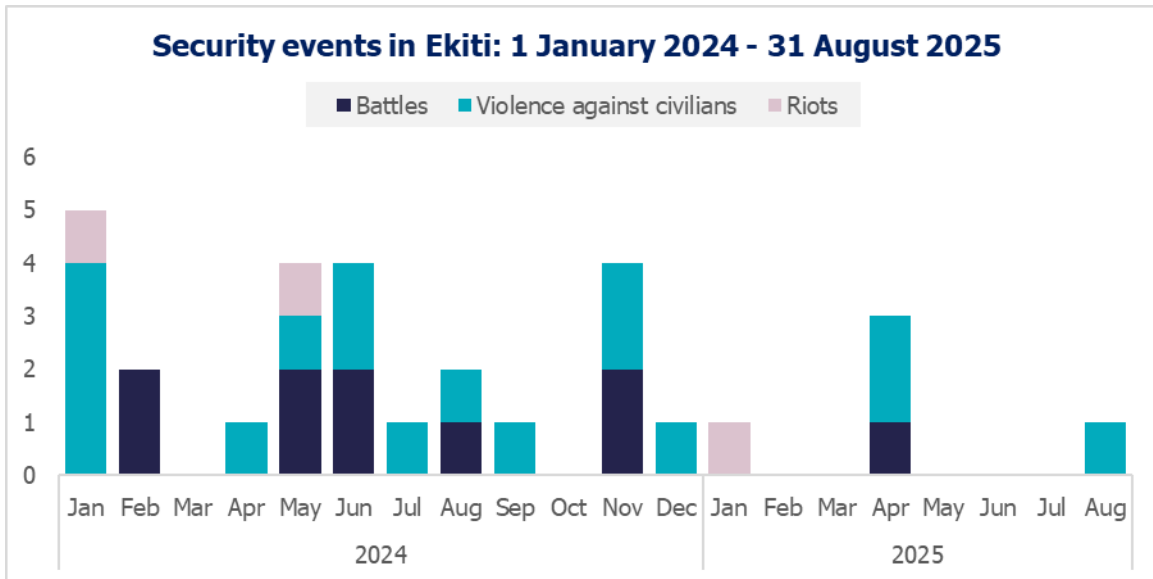
Punch, Gunmen kidnap three, kill husband in Ekiti, 2 September 2024, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Kidnappers kill two traditional rulers, one escapes in Ekiti, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1755</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, 17 suspected kidnappers, robbers arrested in Ekiti, 26 July 2024, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Cultism: Police arrest suspected killers of PoS agent, others in Ekiti, 26 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1756</sup> Punch, Police arrest eight Ekiti varsity students for cultism, 8 May 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1757</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 21: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Ekiti state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1758</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 10 LGAs of the state, with the highest number recorded in the capital city Ado Ekiti (12 incidents), followed by Ikere (5 incidents), Emure (4 incidents), and Ilejemeje LGAs (3). No security incidents were recorded in five LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in 14 of the 17 security incidents coded as violence against civilians, the majority of them abductions and killings.<sup>1759</sup>

For example, in January 2024, unknown gunmen abducted six pupils, three teachers and the driver of a school bus travelling in Emure LGA.<sup>1760</sup> On the same day in a separate incident, two traditional rulers were killed by unknown attackers while they were travelling along the Oke-Ako-Ipao Ekiti-Aiyedun road in Ikole LGA.<sup>1761</sup> The abducted children and teachers were released a few days later; the driver, however, was killed by the kidnappers.<sup>1762</sup> The gang had reportedly established a hideout in the forest between Ise and Emure LGAs.<sup>1763</sup> Other sources also reported about suspected criminals hiding in forests in<sup>1764</sup> and across border regions,<sup>1765</sup> including along major roads.<sup>1766</sup>

<sup>1758</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1759</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1760</sup> Vanguard, Driver killed as abducted Ekiti pupils, teachers regain freedom, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1761</sup> ICIR, Ekiti government confirms abduction of 6 school pupils, 3 teachers, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1762</sup> Vanguard, Driver killed as abducted Ekiti pupils, teachers regain freedom, 5 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1763</sup> Premium Times, Police arrest suspected kidnappers of school pupils in Ekiti, 16 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1764</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Insecurity: Police launch joint task force for bush combing in Ekiti, 25 April 2025, [url](#);

Nigerian Tribune, Oyebanji inaugurates Ekiti forest guards to protect reserves, 21 March 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1765</sup> Whistler (The), Bandits Have Taken Over Forests In Ekiti North — Monarch Who Escaped Assassination Says, 29 February 2024, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, FG deploys troops to tackle bandits, others in Ekiti, 9 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1766</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Ekiti communities raise the alarm over insecurity, 22 February 2024, [url](#)





**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Road security** - No additional information on road security other than the aforementioned incidents could be found during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In mid-February 2024, the police arrested several members of a kidnapping gang, including vigilante members, involved in the abduction of a school bus in Emure LGA.<sup>1767</sup> In September 2024, Punch reported of a meeting between special advisors on security from Ekiti and neighbouring states to tackle an increase in ‘cross-border insecurity’ and ‘inter-border crimes’ where suspected perpetrators moved to neighbouring states to evade prosecution.<sup>1768</sup> In January 2025, the police commissioner of Ekiti state noted that border security was strengthened to curb the ‘influx of bandits’.<sup>1769</sup> ‘Bush combing operations’ in coordination with neighbouring states targeting suspected criminals hiding in the state’s forests were also reported in April 2025.<sup>1770</sup> A special security agency tasked with securing farmland and forests, the so-called the Agro Marshalls (ESAM), had already been established by the Ekiti state government in April 2024.<sup>1771</sup> As of May 2025, crime rates had decreased across the state, according to the state’s governor, although there still was insufficient security coverage in the rural areas.<sup>1772</sup> To ensure security especially at grassroot level, more than 400 additional members were recruited into the state’s security network of Amotekun,<sup>1773</sup> Agro-Marshall and Grazing Marshall Corps in July 2025.<sup>1774</sup>

## 2.6.2. Ogun

Ogun state is comprised of the following 21 LGAs: Abeokuta North, Abeokuta South, Ado-Odo/Ota, Ewekoro, Ifo, Ijebu East, Ijebu North, Ijebu North-East, Ijebu Igbo, Ijebu Ode, Ikenne, Imeko Afon, Ipokia, Obafemi Owode, Odogbolu, Odeda, Ogun Waterside, Remo North, Sagamu, Yewa North and Yewa South. The capital city is Abeokuta.<sup>1775</sup>

The main ethnic groups are the Egba, the Ijebu, the Remo, the Egbado, the Awori and the Egun.<sup>1776</sup>

<sup>1767</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 48

<sup>1768</sup> Punch, Ekiti, neighbouring states to strengthen security, 5 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1769</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police strengthen border security to check influx of bandits in Ekiti, 15 January 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Police increase security at Ekiti borders to prevent bandits’ influx, 14 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1770</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Insecurity: Police launch joint task force for bush combing in Ekiti, 25 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1771</sup> PM News, PHOTOS: Gov. Oyebanji launches Agro Marshalls to protect Ekiti farmlands, forests, 24 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1772</sup> Punch, Insecurity: Oyebanji demands more police personnel in Ekiti, 15 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1773</sup> Amotekun (Yoruba: Leopard) is a joint security agency established by the six South-West states in 2020.

Business Day, Five things you need to know about Operation Amotekun, 4 March 2020, [url](#)

<sup>1774</sup> Premium Times, Ekiti recruits 400 new Amotekun, agro-marshall corps to strengthen security, 25 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1775</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Ogun, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1776</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Ogun, n.d., [url](#)



UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 6 379 532 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1777</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In mid-January 2024, the Guardian Nigeria mentioned cult violence, kidnapping, armed robbery and ritual killings as sources of insecurity in Ogun state. Cult-related attacks appeared to occur predominantly in Abeokuta North, Abeokuta South, Sagamu, Ikenne and Odogbolu.<sup>1778</sup> Punch described Ogun state as being ‘under a security siege’, with kidnappings, ritual killings, armed robbery, violent Fulani herdsman, criminal activities, and cultism as the main challenges.<sup>1779</sup> PLAC described several incidents of abductions and killings by unknown gunmen during 2024.<sup>1780</sup> Vanguard pointed to at least 47 kidnappings in the period from January to August 2024,<sup>1781</sup> and to killings by unknown gunmen in early 2025.<sup>1782</sup>

Cult-related violence was recorded during the reference period, involving rival cult groups such as the Black Axe (Aye), the Supreme Eiyé Confraternity,<sup>1783</sup> and the Buccaneer Confraternity.<sup>1784</sup> In a report of July 2025, the research consultancy SBM Intelligence listed Ogun as a ‘high density state’ in terms of cult/gang-related violence, with 78 incidents recorded in the period from January 2020 to March 2025.<sup>1785</sup>

As of November 2024, ritual killings in Ogun state occurred at ‘alarming rates’, mainly targeting women and girls, according to the Nigerian news site THISDAY. The source further explained that ritual killings were often based on the belief that the perpetrators would get rich quickly through rituals involving human sacrifices.<sup>1786</sup>

### b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period 1 January 2024 - 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 140 security incidents in Ogun state, resulting in 110 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 64 were coded as battles, 20 as riots, and 56 incidents were coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1787</sup>

<sup>1777</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1778</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Ogun in the throes of insecurity as kidnapping, cultism, farmer-herder clash threaten economic stability, 14 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1779</sup> Punch, Abiodun, tackle insecurity, reclaim peace, 10 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1780</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), pp. 14, 29-30, 32

<sup>1781</sup> Vanguard, Beware: Roads, waterways in 17 states where kidnappers reign, 29 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1782</sup> Vanguard, Killing Fields: Nigeria loses 805 lives to insecurity, violence in six weeks, 15 February 2025, [url](#)

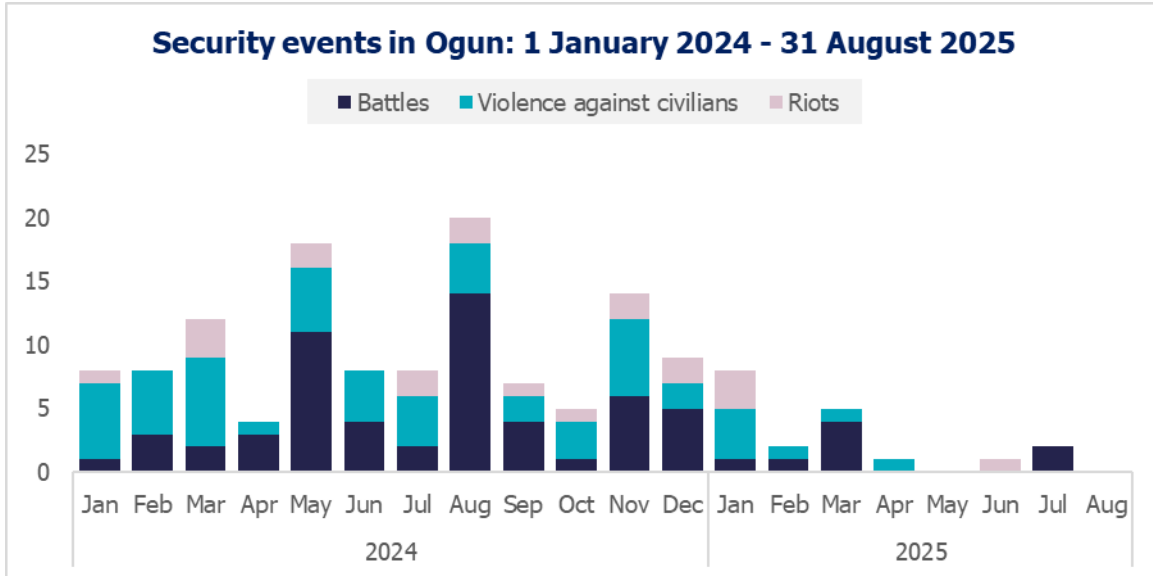
<sup>1783</sup> Punch, Four feared killed in Ogun cult clashes, 18 March 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Deadly Cult Clash Erupts in Ibaragun, Ogun State, 3 December 2024, [url](#); Punch, Three killed in Ogun renewed cult clash, 26 May 2024, [url](#); Sun (The) Nigeria, Cult clash: 4 killed, 11 suspects arrested in Ogun, 6 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1784</sup> New Telegraph, Recurrent Ogun Cult War: Killing Continues Unabated, 26 April 2024, [url](#); Sun (The) Nigeria, Cult clash: 4 killed, 11 suspects arrested in Ogun, 6 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1785</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Crisis 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 33

<sup>1786</sup> THISDAY, Taming the Prevalence of Ritual Killing among Nigerian Youths, 18 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1787</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)



**Figure 22: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Ogun state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1788</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 18 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Abeokuta South LGA (27), followed by Ado-Odo LGA (19), Obafemi (15) and Odeda (10), Abeokuta North and Sagamu LGAs (9 incidents each). No incidents were recorded in three LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and unidentified cult militias (coded either as ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of security incidents coded as violence against civilians, mainly in the context of abductions and killings.<sup>1789</sup>

For example, in April 2024, a lecturer at Babcock University Ilishan, was killed by eight gunmen in an event centre in Ipero Remo (Ilkenne LGA), reportedly for refusing to go with them, while two other persons were abducted by the gunmen.<sup>1790</sup> A security guard at the centre suspected of being involved in the incident was later arrested.<sup>1791</sup> In another example, in August 2024, a Point of Sale (POS) operator, and son of the Baale (a traditional ruler) of Kuto, was reportedly killed by suspected cultists in Kuto, Abeokuta LGA.<sup>1792</sup> In the period from January to June 2024, at least 24 people were killed in clashes between rival cult groups in Ogun state, according to Punch. Most of the clashes occurred between the Aiye and Black Axe (Eye) confraternities. In some clashes, members of the Buccaneer cult group were involved.<sup>1793</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** – No information could be found during the reference period.

<sup>1788</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1789</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1790</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 14; Daily Trust, Nigerian Law Professor shot dead, 22 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1791</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police nab suspect over abduction of two, killing of Babcock lecturer, 23 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1792</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 38; Punch, Cultists kill son of Ogun community leader, one other, 10 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1793</sup> Nigerian NewsDirect, Cult clash persists in Ogun, as 24 killed in six months, 16 September 2024, [url](#)



**Road security** - Sources pointed to kidnappings in certain areas across the state such as the Wasinmi road, the Lafenwa-Ayetoro-Imeko road, and the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway,<sup>1794</sup> and armed robberies on the ‘Long Bridge’, the Sagamu-Benin Expressway and the Papalanto highway.<sup>1795</sup> Three persons were kidnapped (and later rescued) on the Sagamu-Ijebu Ode Expressway, where the attackers reportedly blocked the road with a truck.<sup>1796</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Measures taken by the police to address security challenges reportedly included additional patrols along ‘identified hotspots’ of kidnappings, the use of surveillance drones,<sup>1797</sup> joint patrols of Ogun and Lagos state police along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway,<sup>1798</sup> intelligence sharing with Oyo state on the activities of suspected criminals (‘bandits’) along the border area,<sup>1799</sup> and the recruitment of additional personnel for the Amotekun state security network.<sup>1800</sup> Several media sources reported of successful police operations targeting suspected kidnapers and criminals,<sup>1801</sup> also in collaboration with community vigilantes.<sup>1802</sup>

PLAC reported on several incidents of police misconduct, including gender-based violence, in 2024. In July, the operator of a betting shop was reportedly shot dead by a police officer who, according to an eye witness, was drunk.<sup>1803</sup> The media company Nigerian NewsDirect pointed to allegations of police involvement in cult groups in Ibaragun following fights between the Eiye Confraternity and the Black Axe cult groups over control of recruitment in the community.<sup>1804</sup> Following a series of armed robbery attacks, students of the Abeokuta Federal University announced in July 2025 that they would set up night patrols, noting that the police in the area was understaffed.<sup>1805</sup>

## 2.6.3. Ondo

Ondo state is comprised of the following 18 LGAs: Akoko North-East, Akoko North-West, Akoko South-East, Akoko South-West, Akure North, Akure South, Ese Odo, Idanre, Ifedore,

<sup>1794</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Ogun in the throes of insecurity as kidnapping, cultism, farmer-herder clash threaten economic stability, 14 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1795</sup> Punch, Abiodun, tackle insecurity, reclaim peace, 10 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1796</sup> Punch, Police rescue three kidnap victims, kill five suspects in Ogun, 29 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1797</sup> Vanguard, Beware: Roads, waterways in 17 states where kidnapers reign, 29 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1798</sup> Punch, Lagos, Ogun police begin joint Lagos-Ibadan Expressway patrol, 23 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1799</sup> Daily Post, Alleged Invasion of bandits: Ogun beefs up security to fight banditry, 10 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1800</sup> THISDAY, To Improve Security in Ogun, Abiodun Approves Recruitment of 1,000 Amotekun Personnel, Warns Criminals, 19 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1801</sup> Nation (The), Police arrest suspected kidnapers, others ‘terrorising’ Ogun communities, 26 May 2025, [url](#);

Nigerian Tribune, Police kill four kidnapers in Ogun, 22 February 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Five

kidnapers killed in gun duel with police along Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, 30 January 2025, [url](#); Punch, Ogun

police nab kidnap gang terrorising Sagamu-Ijebu-Ode Expressway, 2 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1802</sup> Vanguard, Police foil kidnap attempt, arrest suspect, recover weapons, 17 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1803</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), pp. 10, 11, 52, 54

<sup>1804</sup> Nigerian NewsDirect, Ogun State: cult clash leaves 10 dead, police allegedly involved, 3 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1805</sup> Punch, Ogun varsity students resort to self-help over robbery attacks, 15 July 2025, [url](#)





Ilaje, Ile Oluji/Okeigbo, Irele, Odigbo, Okitipupa, Ondo East, Ondo West, Ose, and Owo.<sup>1806</sup> The capital city is Akure.<sup>1807</sup>

The main ethnic groups include the Akoko, Akure, Ikalẹ, Ilaje, Ondo, and Owo – all sub-ethnic groups of the Yoruba - and minorities such as Ijaw and Apoi.<sup>1808</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Ondo state at 5 316 603 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1809</sup> Ondo state is part of the Niger Delta region.<sup>1810</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Main security issues reported during the reference include communal conflict and criminal activities,<sup>1811</sup> especially kidnapping for ransom.<sup>1812</sup>

The Nigerian civil society organisation Yiaga Africa recorded communal clashes in several LGAs ahead of the November 2024 gubernatorial elections, including clashes over a boundary between Ode-Irele (Irele LGA) and Igbobini (Ese-Ode LGA) communities, as well as between communities in Akoko South-West, Ifedore, Ondo East and Ose LGAs.<sup>1813</sup> During the reference period, a surge in kidnappings was reported by the media,<sup>1814</sup> with such incidents reportedly occurring regularly.<sup>1815</sup> The Daily Trust similarly pointed to ‘frequent’ incidents of kidnapping by armed criminals (‘bandits’) and noted that there had been numerous incidents of kidnappings and killings since November 2024, including the killing of victims who were unable to secure the requested ransom.<sup>1816</sup> In November 2024, Yiaga Africa observed that kidnapping for ransom had become ‘a trend’ in Ose LGA.<sup>1817</sup> Nextier recorded 29 kidnapping victims in Ondo state in 2024. In contrast to other parts of Nigeria, in the South-West kidnapping mainly took the form of kidnapping for ransom and rituals.<sup>1818</sup>

<sup>1806</sup> ALGON, Local Government Area, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1807</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Ondo, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1808</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Ondo, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1809</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1810</sup> PIND, Where we work, n.d., [url](#); NDDC, Discover our projects, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1811</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 10; PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1812</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Amotekun reassures residents on security situation in Ondo, 25 March 2025, [url](#);

Premium Times, Security agencies begin search for three Christians kidnapped in Ondo, 27 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1813</sup> Yiaga Africa, Ondo 2024 Political Dynamics and Emerging Security Concerns. Pre-Election Observation for the Ondo 2024 Governorship Election, 16 September 2024 – 18 October 2024, November 2024, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1814</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Amotekun reassures residents on security situation in Ondo, 25 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1815</sup> Premium Times, Security agencies begin search for three Christians kidnapped in Ondo, 27 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1816</sup> Daily Trust, Surge in abductions sparks fear among Ondo residents, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1817</sup> Yiaga Africa, Ondo 2024 Political Dynamics and Emerging Security Concerns. Pre-Election Observation for the Ondo 2024 Governorship Election, 16 September 2024 – 18 October 2024, November 2024, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1818</sup> Nextier, Mutations of Terror and Conflicts. 2025 Security and Conflict Outlook in Nigeria, February 2025, [url](#), p.





Several sources reported about lethal attacks on farmers by suspected (Fulani) herders in the reference period,<sup>1819</sup> and about an increase in violent farmer-herder conflicts as of early 2025.<sup>1820</sup> Attacks occurred in the context of conflicts over land and resources between local farmers and herders migrating from the north in search of grazing land and water for their cattle.<sup>1821</sup>

Some sources reported on incidents of cult-related violence in Ondo state.<sup>1822</sup> Cult groups explicitly mentioned were the Eiye,<sup>1823</sup> Black Axe and Ku Klux Klan confraternities.<sup>1824</sup>

In terms of election-related violence, the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) and Yiaga Africa pointed to some violent incidents in the context of the November 2024 Ondo state gubernatorial elections,<sup>1825</sup> including the killing of a campaign manager of state governor Aiyedatiwa in April 2024.<sup>1826</sup> However, the CDD noted that only 'a little' of the projected disruption eventually materialised and that the electoral process in general was peaceful.<sup>1827</sup>

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period 1 January 2024 - 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 89 security incidents in Ondo state, resulting in 72 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 15 were coded as battles, 16 as riots, and 58 incidents were coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1828</sup>

<sup>1819</sup> Punch, Again, protest erupts in Ondo as herders kill three farmers, 9 April 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Ondo residents protest killing of five farmers, blame herders, 20 March 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Community cries out as herders allegedly kill five farmers in Ondo, 31 January 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Ondo community mourns as suspected herders kill farmer, 12 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1820</sup> Castor Vali, Nigeria Quarterly Report: 1 January – 31 March 2025, 24 April 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Protest rocks Ondo over fresh killing of farmers by herders, 9 April 2025, [url](#); SBM Intelligence, A Threat to National Stability, 27 March 2025, [url](#), p. 3; Nextier, Ondo State: Land, Cattle and Chaos, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1821</sup> Nextier, Ondo State: Land, Cattle and Chaos, 18 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1822</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 11; Nation (The), Police arrest suspected cultist for shooting football fans in Ondo, 22 July 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Police prosecute nine for alleged murder, cultism, other crimes in Ondo, 12 June 2025, [url](#); Daily Post, Ondo: Cultist on police's wanted list killed in cult clash, 19 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1823</sup> Premium Times, Four dead, five injured as rival cult groups engage in gun battle in Ondo, 28 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1824</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: July - September 2024, 26 November 2024, [url](#), p. 10

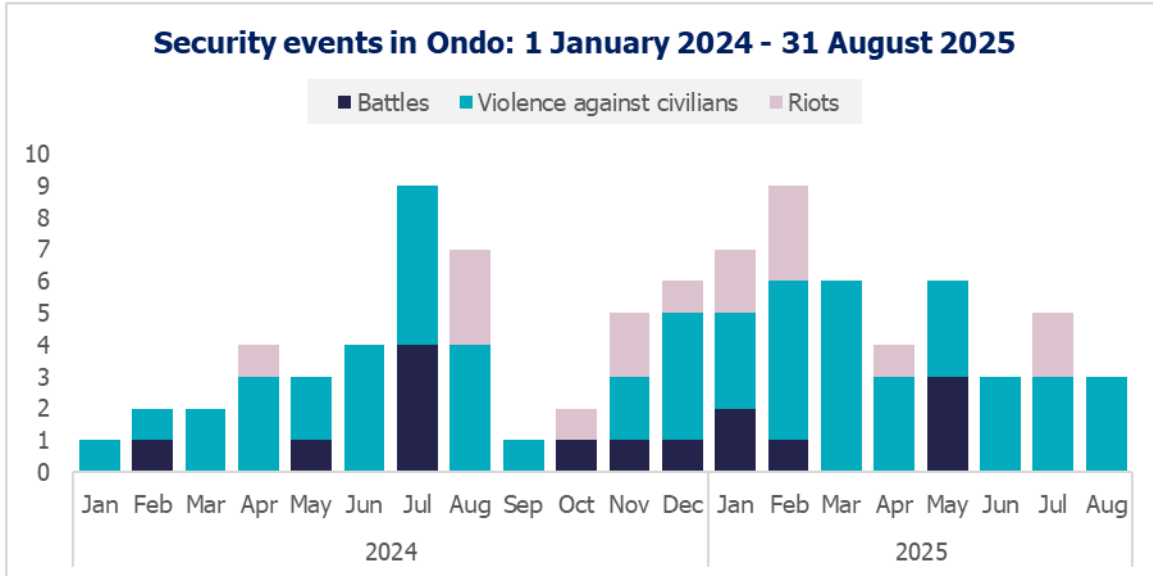
<sup>1825</sup> CDD, CDD Election Analysis Centre (CDD's EAC) Post-Election Press Statement on the Conduct of the 2024 Ondo State Governorship Election, 18 November 2024, [url](#); Yiaga Africa, Ondo 2024 Political Dynamics and Emerging Security Concerns. Pre-Election Observation for the Ondo 2024 Governorship Election, 16 September 2024 – 18 October 2024, November 2024, [url](#), p. 11

<sup>1826</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 31; Yiaga Africa, Edo & Ondo Political and Security Trends. Pre-Election Assessment of the Edo and Ondo 2024 Governorship Election, May-June 2024, August 2024, [url](#), p. 22

<sup>1827</sup> CDD, CDD Election Analysis Centre (CDD's EAC) Post-Election Press Statement on the Conduct of the 2024 Ondo State Governorship Election, 18 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1828</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 23: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Ondo state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1829</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 15 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers recorded in Akure North LGA (18), followed by Akoko South-West (14), Akure South (12), Owo (11), and Akoko North-East LGAs (7 Incidents). No incidents were recorded in three LGAs. According to ACLED, unidentified armed groups and Fulani ethnic militia (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of security incidents coded as violence against civilians, mainly in the context of abductions for ransom and killings.<sup>1830</sup>

PIND observed a sharp increase in lethal violence in early 2025 compared to the preceding quarter, mainly due to communal conflict and criminal activities, in particular abductions for ransom. In the period from January to March 2025, Akure North LGA recorded the highest number of conflict-related deaths.<sup>1831</sup> Lethal violence declined ‘significantly’ in the second quarter of 2025, according to PIND, with the highest number of fatalities recorded in Ondo West LGA during that period.<sup>1832</sup> In May 2025, the local chairman of the All Progressive Congress (APC) in Ifon, Ose LGA, was reportedly kidnapped at his residence and later killed by the kidnappers despite receiving part of the demanded ransom.<sup>1833</sup> In March 2025, nine surveyors were abducted by armed gunmen while working on site in Akure North LGA. The kidnappers reportedly demanded a ransom of 100 million Naira [EUR 56 553<sup>1834</sup>] and later reduced it to 50 million Naira [EUR 28 277].<sup>1835</sup> The victims were released a week later after the payment of 20 million Naira [EUR 11 311].<sup>1836</sup>

<sup>1829</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1830</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1831</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: January – March 2025, 5 June 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1832</sup> PIND, Niger Delta Quarterly Conflict Trends: April – June 2025, 11 September 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1833</sup> Punch, Abducted Ondo APC chairman killed in kidnappers’ den, 18 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1834</sup> European Commission, Exchange rate (InforEuro), n.d., [url](#), accessed on 20 August 2025

<sup>1835</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Gunmen abduct nine surveyors in Ondo, demand N100m ransom, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1836</sup> Vanguard, Breaking: Nine abducted Ondo surveyors released after payment of N20m ransom, 12 March 2025, [url](#)



On 8 March 2025, at least 14 people were killed in a nightly attack by suspected herders on four communities in Akure North LGA, reportedly in retaliation for the killing of more than 100 cows, which the attackers apparently attributed to the local communities.<sup>1837</sup> Attacks by suspected herders reportedly also included arson attacks,<sup>1838</sup> and the destruction of crops.<sup>1839</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - No further information, other than the aforementioned incidents, could be found during the reference period.

**Road security** - Daily Trust noted in May 2025 that the security situation was deteriorating particularly along highways and in rural communities. One resident particularly warned against using the Owo-Akoko road at night.<sup>1840</sup> Castor Vali mentioned several ‘hotspots’, including the ‘Lokoja–Makurdi–Lafia route, the Warri–Sagamu road, the Ondo–Benin City road, and the corridor between Ibadan and Oyo’, as several incidents had been recorded along all of these routes in the first quarter of 2025.<sup>1841</sup> THISDAY noted that kidnappers were operating in the area near Akure Airport.<sup>1842</sup> Vanguard pointed to the Owo-Ose highway, a ‘notorious’ kidnapping route.<sup>1843</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - Many farmers were reportedly abandoning their farms due to ongoing kidnappings,<sup>1844</sup> and attacks by suspected herdsmen.<sup>1845</sup> As of August 2025, no further information could be found on conflict-induced displacement and no information could be found on returns in Ondo state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

SBM Intelligence pointed to rising social unrest across the country with affected communities protesting against violent attacks by suspected Fulani herders, including in Ondo state,<sup>1846</sup> where at least three protests with street blockades took place in early 2025.<sup>1847</sup>

National media noted in March 2025 that kidnapping cases were ‘spiraling out of control’,<sup>1848</sup> and that Ondo state, a former ‘haven of peace’, had turned into a ‘hotbed of fear’ with perpetrators often acting ‘with impunity’, despite police efforts.<sup>1849</sup> In response to the rising crime rates, the government reportedly created a security joint task force in March 2025 that

<sup>1837</sup> Punch, Herders’ attacks: Tension in Ondo communities as Amotekun plans counter-operations, 16 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1838</sup> Vanguard, Reps condemn massacre, kidnapping by armed herdsmen in Ondo, 18 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Herders’ attacks: Tension in Ondo communities as Amotekun plans counter-operations, 16 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1839</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Community cries out as herders allegedly kill five farmers in Ondo, 31 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1840</sup> Daily Trust, Surge in abductions sparks fear among Ondo residents, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1841</sup> Castor Vali, Nigeria Quarterly Report: 1 January – 31 March 2025, 24 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1842</sup> THISDAY, Fear Grips Ondo Elites with Kidnapping Cases on the Rise, 16 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1843</sup> Vanguard, Amotekun rescues four victims, arrests notorious kidnap kingpins in Ondo, 26 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1844</sup> Daily Trust, Surge in abductions sparks fear among Ondo residents, 14 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1845</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Sorrow, anguish over killing of farmers in Ondo communities, 12 March 2025, [url](#); PIND, Mitigating the Impact of Communal Conflicts on Agricultural Investments in the Niger Delta. Conflict Briefing: October 2024, 11 November 2024, [url](#), p. 2; Punch, Villagers flee as bandits overwhelm Amotekun in parts of Ondo, 6 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1846</sup> SBM Intelligence, A Threat to National Stability, 27 March 2025, [url](#), p. 18

<sup>1847</sup> SBM Intelligence, A Threat to National Stability, 27 March 2025, [url](#), p. 39; Guardian (The) Nigeria, Protest rocks Ondo over fresh killing of farmers by herders, 9 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1848</sup> THISDAY, Fear Grips Ondo Elites with Kidnapping Cases on the Rise, 16 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1849</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Killings, kidnappings: Ondo residents desperate for respite, 21 March 2025, [url](#)





included army, police, Nigeria Security & Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and Amotekun forces.<sup>1850</sup> Previously, a specialised Amotekun unit was reportedly created and deployed to newly established control points along the border,<sup>1851</sup> following appeals by border communities to the authorities and security forces to increase surveillance especially in the border regions with Edo, Ekiti, and Kogi states.<sup>1852</sup> Ondo state's Amotekun commander noted that other measures taken to tackle the farmer-herder conflict included talks to herders and farmers to inform about each group's limitations, as well as the implementation of the anti-open-grazing law.<sup>1853</sup> The Amotekun commander and police officials pointed to uncontrolled immigration and the forces' insufficient equipment as major security challenges.<sup>1854</sup>

#### 2.6.4. Osun

Osun state is comprised of the following 30 LGAs: Ayedaade, Ayedire, Atakunmosa East, Atakunmosa West, Boluwaduro, Boripe, Ede North, Ede South, Egbedore, Ejigbo, Ife Central, Ife East, Ife North, Ife South, Ifedayo, Ifelodun, Ila, Ilesa East, Ilesa West, Irepodun, Irewole, Isokan, Iwo, Obokun, Odo Otin, Ola Oluwa, Olorunda, Oriade, Orolu and Osogbo. The capital city is Osogbo.<sup>1855</sup>

Most people are Yoruba; composed of Osun, Ifes, Ijesas and Igbominas.<sup>1856</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Osun state at 4 435 803 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1857</sup>

##### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

A surge in gang-related criminality was reported among the main security issues in Osun state during the reference period.<sup>1858</sup>

In March 2025, the Daily Post reported on growing insecurity and a rise in criminal activities in communities along the border with neighbouring Ondo. The source noted that kidnappings and violent attacks in Ondo state had triggered fears that criminals would use the cross-

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<sup>1850</sup> Vanguard, Insecurity: Ondo Govt sets up joint security task force, 23 March 2025, [url](#); Punch, Ondo sets up joint task force as Amotekun nabs 32 suspected kidnappers, 23 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1851</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Ondo govt establishes forest rangers to checkmate farmers/herders clashes, 20 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1852</sup> Punch, We endured four hellish days in Ondo kidnappers' den – NYSC members, 3 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1853</sup> Daily Trust, Ondo Killings: When the 'leopard' fails to growl, 7 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1854</sup> Daily Trust, Ondo Killings: When the 'leopard' fails to growl, 7 June 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Killings, kidnappings: Ondo residents desperate for respite, 21 March 2025, [url](#); THISDAY, Fear Grips Ondo Elites with Kidnapping Cases on the Rise, 16 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1855</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Osun, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1856</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Osun, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1857</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1858</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster's Paradise: Nigeria's Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 10; Daily Post, Rising Insecurity: Osun govt to engage monarchs, 17 March 2025, [url](#)





border forests to expand their activities into Osun state,<sup>1859</sup> a state with the reputation of one of the ‘most peaceful states’, according to a state official.<sup>1860</sup>

Several media sources mentioned incidents of lethal clashes between cult groups operating in Osun state, including the Eiye,<sup>1861</sup> Buccaneers,<sup>1862</sup> and Black Axe (Aye)<sup>1863</sup> confraternities.

Reports on communal violence during the reference period included land disputes between Ifon and Ilobu communities,<sup>1864</sup> and Ede and Egbedi communities,<sup>1865</sup> a land and chieftaincy dispute between Esa-Oke and Ido-Aiyegunle communities,<sup>1866</sup> and a state border dispute between communities in Lagelu (Oyo state) and Iwo (Osun state) LGAs.<sup>1867</sup>

A political dispute over control of the state’s 30 LGAs escalated in February 2025, when at least six people were killed in clashes between supporters of the APC and the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) (see below).<sup>1868</sup>

### **b) Security incidents and impact on the population**

In the period 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 68 security incidents in Osun state, resulting in 44 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 26 were coded as battles, 18 as riots, and 24 incidents were coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1869</sup>

<sup>1859</sup> Daily Post, Rising Insecurity: Osun govt to engage monarchs, 17 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1860</sup> Punch, Osun engages border communities to prevent bandits invasion, 21 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1861</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 21; Guardian (The) Nigeria, One killed as rival cult groups clash in Osun, 2 June 2025, [url](#); Punch, One feared killed, four injured in Osun poly cult clash, 9 April 2025, [url](#); Adaba 88.9 FM, Fear grip Osun communities over clash between two rival cult groups, 9 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1862</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 21; Punch, One killed in Osun cult clash, 18 June 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1863</sup> Punch, One feared killed, four injured in Osun poly cult clash, 9 April 2025, [url](#); Adaba 88.9 FM, Fear grip Osun communities over clash between two rival cult groups, 9 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1864</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Two killed, dozens injured, houses burnt in renewed Ifon/Ilobu communal clash, 21 March 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Two injured as crisis breaks out in Osun communities over land dispute, 14 January 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Renewed Ifon, Ilobu hostilities: Again, Adeleke declares curfew, 30 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1865</sup> Punch, Shooting: Osun community, Adeleke’s aide disagree over 10 suspects’ release, 17 March 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Fresh communal clash breaks out in Osun over land control, 28 February 2025, [url](#)

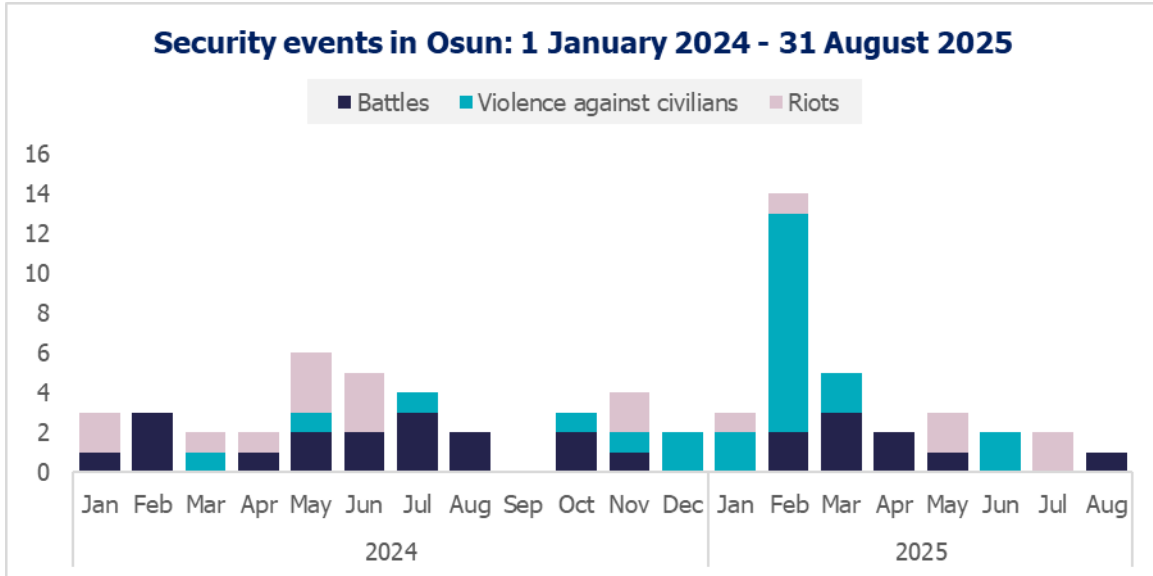
<sup>1866</sup> Nation (The), Tension rises in Osun community as many killed over land dispute, 7 July 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Four killed as Osun communities renew hostility over boundary dispute, 20 June 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Chieftaincy dispute: Adeleke visits troubled Esa-Oke, to probe crisis, 5 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1867</sup> Daily Post, Osun govt urges dialogue, patience in Oyo boundary dispute resolution, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Boundary dispute ignites killing, violence among Osun, Oyo communities, 26 April 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Communal crisis brewing between Osun, Oyo communities, Oluwo warns, 14 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1868</sup> Nation (The), Osun police confirm six dead in APC-PDP clash over LGA control, 18 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1869</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 24: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Osun state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1870</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 23 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Osogbo LGA (10 incidents), Boripe LGA (7) and Egbedore, Ife Central, Ilesa East, Obokun and Orolu LGAs, each of which recorded 4 security incidents in the reference period. No incidents were recorded in seven LGAs. The All Progressive Congress (APC), unidentified armed groups and communal militias (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of security incidents coded as violence against civilians. Incidents recorded as violence against civilians peaked in February 2025, with 11 such incidents recorded across the state, most of them in the context of clashes between APC and PDP supporters on 17 February.<sup>1871</sup>

These clashes were reportedly triggered by attempts of previously dismissed APC chairpersons and councillors to retake their positions based on a disputed Court of Appeal ruling.<sup>1872</sup> According to Punch, the APC officials had been elected in the 2022 LGA elections, which were challenged in court by some opposition parties, among them the PDP.<sup>1873</sup> Following the court’s nullification of the elections,<sup>1874</sup> the elected APC officials were dismissed and replaced with ‘caretaker committees’ by the state governor, a PDP candidate. New LGA elections were scheduled for 22 February 2025.<sup>1875</sup>

SBM noted that two states, including Osun and Kwara (North-Central region), had ‘unexpected spikes in gang fatalities’, with 55 deaths in the period from 2020 to the first quarter of 2025,

<sup>1870</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1871</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1872</sup> ICIR, Seven killed in Osun as PDP, APC supporters clashed over planned reinstatement of sacked LG chairpersons, 18 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1873</sup> Punch, Bloodbath in Osun and the Lagos political tremor, 19 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1874</sup> Daily Trust, Osun LG control: Tension as PDP, APC poised for fresh showdown, 16 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1875</sup> Punch, Bloodbath in Osun and the Lagos political tremor, 19 February 2025, [url](#)

possibly because of gang members from neighbouring states expanding their operations into Osun.<sup>1876</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - The FIJ pointed to the destruction of power infrastructure in the context of violent communal clashes between Ifon, Ilobu and Erin-Osu communities. Weeks later, parts of the affected communities reportedly still remained without electricity due to the damage.<sup>1877</sup> Other infrastructure destroyed in communal clashes included a primary health care centre,<sup>1878</sup> houses and other property.<sup>1879</sup>

**Road security** - In November 2024, the police reportedly arrested a gang of suspected armed robbers who operated along the Ilesa-Osu Expressway.<sup>1880</sup> In one such incident in September 2024, a bus driver was shot and a female passenger raped.<sup>1881</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - In March 2025, Punch reported on the displacement of residents affected by the violent clashes between Ilobu and Ifon communities. According to the head of the Ilobu-Asake Development Union quoted by Punch, more than 100 000 persons had been displaced due to the communal violence.<sup>1882</sup> No further information could be found on conflict-induced displacement and no information could be found on returns in Osun state during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Local media sources reported on several arrests made by the police during the reference period, including of a gang of armed robbers,<sup>1883</sup> and suspects involved in kidnapping,<sup>1884</sup> cult-related murder, vandalism, illegal arm possession,<sup>1885</sup> cultism and car theft.<sup>1886</sup> Vanguard mentioned a joint operation of police and local hunters in the capital Osogobo.<sup>1887</sup> Ten suspected Boko Haram/ISWAP members were arrested in Ilesa-East LGA in December 2024.<sup>1888</sup>

The Nigerian media outlet the Nation pointed in July 2024 to successes by Amotekun forces (please see section [1.1.2](#)) but also quoted the group's commander saying that the forces were 'overstretched' and lacked personnel.<sup>1889</sup> As of January 2025, 320 men were operating across the state,<sup>1890</sup> an additional 1 150 personnel was recruited as of March 2025. The Sun quoted

<sup>1876</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster's Paradise: Nigeria's Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, 1 July 2025, [url](#), p. 10

<sup>1877</sup> FIJ, Communal Conflict Leaves Businesses, Families Without Power Supply in Osun LGA, 13 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1878</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Two killed, dozens injured, houses burnt in renewed Ifon/Ilobu communal clash, 21 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1879</sup> Sun (The) Nigeria, Four dead as Osun communities renew hostilities over boundary dispute, 21 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1880</sup> Punch, Police parade 20 suspected armed robbers, others in Osun, 15 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1881</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 40; Punch, Police parade 20 suspected armed robbers, others in Osun, 15 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1882</sup> Punch, Many displaced as Osun communal clash escalates, 23 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1883</sup> Punch, Police parade 20 suspected armed robbers, others in Osun, 15 November 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1884</sup> Nation (The), Court remands three over alleged abduction of surveyor, land grabbing, 5 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1885</sup> Daily Post, Osun: Police arrest suspected cultists, armed robbers, vandals, 26 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1886</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police arrest five for armed robbery, kidnappings, others in Osun, 17 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1887</sup> Vanguard, Police, local hunters kill five armed robbers after shoot out in Osun, 16 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1888</sup> Punch, Osun: How DSS busted ISWAP terrorists who posed as watch repairers, 18 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1889</sup> Nation (The), Amotekun: success, challenges and prospects, 11 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1890</sup> Punch, Bandits influx: Amotekun mobilises 2,000 men to comb S'West forests, 22 January 2025, [url](#)

the state governor stressing the need for close cooperation between Amotekun forces, police, Department of State Services (DSS) and all other security agencies.<sup>1891</sup>

## 2.6.5. Oyo

Oyo state is comprised of the following 33 LGAs: Afijio, Akinyele, Atiba, Atisbo, Egbeda, Ibadan North, Ibadan North-East, Ibadan North-West, Ibadan South-East, Ibadan South-West, Ibarapa Central, Ibarapa East, Ibarapa North, Ido, Irepo, Iseyin, Itesiwaju, Iwajowa, Kajola, Lagelu, Ogbomoso North, Ogbomoso South, Ogo Oluwa, Olorunsogo, Oluyole, Ona Ara, Orelope, Oriire, Oyo East, Oyo West, Saki East, Saki West and Surulere.<sup>1892</sup> The capital city is Ibadan.<sup>1893</sup>

The population is predominantly Yoruba, and may be divided into five large sub-ethnic groups with distinct dialects: Ibadans, Ibarapas, Oyos, Oke-Oguns and Ogbomosos.<sup>1894</sup>

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Oyo state at 7 976 081 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1895</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In July 2025, Vanguard quoted an official saying that although there was ‘relative peace’ in Oyo state in comparison with other states, banditry and kidnapping were still prevalent in some parts of the state. Security threats were particularly prominent in the state’s ‘vast hinterlands’, mainly due to the ‘influx of bandits’.<sup>1896</sup> THISDAY quoted another official speaking in February 2025 about a ‘tide of banditry and criminality’ in some parts of the state, including parts of Oyo Township, Ogbomoso, Oke-Ogun, Ibarapa, and Ibadan.<sup>1897</sup>

National media reported on incidents involving unidentified armed men during the reference period, mostly in cases of kidnapping,<sup>1898</sup> often from the victims’ homes.<sup>1899</sup>

In December 2024, the Oyo Police Commissioner pointed to an increase in cultism and related criminal activities, motivated by fights for supremacy, particularly in the Ibadan areas of Apete, Abayomi (the Iwo Road axis), Ijokodo, Moniya, Monatan, Ojoo, Samonda, and Sango.<sup>1900</sup>

<sup>1891</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Suspected hoodlums attack three Amotekun operatives in Osun, 12 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1892</sup> Nigeria, Oyo State Government, Local Government Areas, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1893</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Oyo, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1894</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Oyo, n.d., [url](#)

<sup>1895</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1896</sup> Vanguard, Security: Makinde tackles banditry with aircraft, 10 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1897</sup> THISDAY, Oyo Talks Tough on Crimes, Assures Residents on Security, Safety, 20 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1898</sup> Punch, Police rescue two kidnapped salesgirls in Oyo, 25 June 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Gunmen kidnap RCCG pastor, other bus passengers in Oyo, 21 April 2024, [url](#); ICIR, Lagos PDP chairman regains freedom after 4 days with kidnapers, 29 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1899</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Oyo: Police arrest five, recover N4.6m ransom in kidnap case, 5 July 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Oyo Amotekun rescues victim 12 hours after abduction, 20 May 2025, [url](#); Nigerian Tribune, Again, Amotekun rescues victim 15 hours after abduction in Oyo, 2 March 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, Kidnapped PDP politician regains freedom in Ibadan, 12 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1900</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police parade 15 suspected cultists, armed robbers in Oyo, 16 December 2024, [url](#)



Nigerian Tribune reported in June 2025 that the Black Axe (Aye) ‘frequently unleashed terror’ on residents in Saki town and other Oke Ogun areas.<sup>1901</sup> FIJ wrote about a cult-related attack inside university premises in Ogbomoso town (Ogbomoso North LGA).<sup>1902</sup> The main cult groups mentioned as operating in Oyo state were the Black Axe and the Eiye cult groups.<sup>1903</sup>

National media also reported on incidents of killings in the context of so-called money rituals.<sup>1904</sup> These are rituals where people are killed, or body parts used in the belief that such rituals will bring wealth to the perpetrators.<sup>1905</sup>

A secessionist group active in Oyo state reportedly was the Yoruba Nation.<sup>1906</sup> Some sources mentioned an attempted takeover of government buildings in Ibadan by Yoruba Nation agitators in April 2024.<sup>1907</sup>

## b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 66 security incidents in Oyo state, resulting in 54 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 31 were coded as battles (most of them between Black Axe and Eiye cult groups), 10 as riots, and 25 incidents were coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1908</sup>

<sup>1901</sup> Nigerian Tribune, As fourth-in-command, I was aide-de-camp to our leader—Suspected Aye Confraternity member arrested with pistol, 1 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1902</sup> FIJ, LAUTECH Tells Students to ‘Prepare for Tomorrow’s Papers’ After Cult Attack on Campus, 6 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1903</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Oyo: Police alert public to Black Axe’s July 7 celebration, 6 July 2025, [url](#)

Nigerian Tribune, Cultists shoot one suspected rival dead, injure another in Ibadan, 8 December 2024, [url](#); Punch, One killed in Oyo cult-day celebration fracas, 10 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1904</sup> Punch, Oyo man kills blind grandfather, uncle for alleged money ritual, 10 September 2024, [url](#); Daily Post, Police nab 8 over alleged ritual killing in Oyo, 16 August 2024, [url](#); Vanguard, Police investigate killing of 14-year-old boy for ritual in Ibadan, 12 August 2024, [url](#)

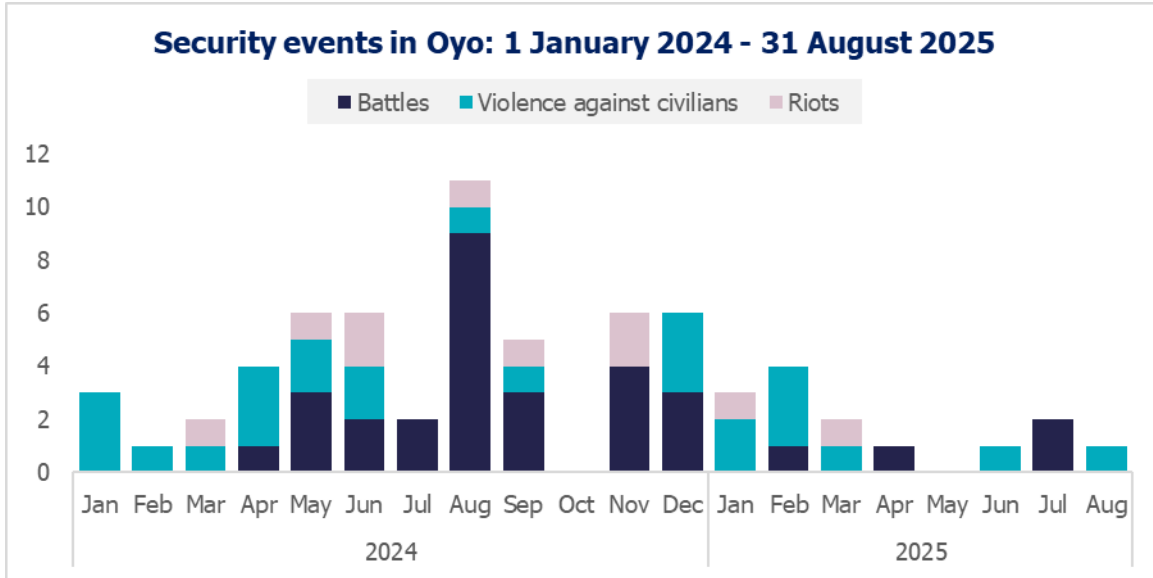
<sup>1905</sup> Nigerian Observer (The), When wealth demands blood: The horror of ritual killings in Nigeria, 13 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1906</sup> Punch, We are not guilty, ‘Yoruba Nation’ agitators tell court, 7 November 2024, [url](#); HumAngle, Heightened Security, Panic In Southwestern Nigeria Following Yoruba Nation Coup Attempt, 17 April 2024, [url](#); Sun (The), Insurrection: 3 feared dead as Yoruba nation agitators invade Oyo Govt secretariat, 14 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1907</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 30; HumAngle, Heightened Security, Panic In Southwestern Nigeria Following Yoruba Nation Coup Attempt, 17 April 2024, [url](#); Sun (The), Insurrection: 3 feared dead as Yoruba nation agitators invade Oyo Govt secretariat, 14 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1908</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)





**Figure 40: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Oyo state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.<sup>1909</sup>**

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 23 LGAs of the state, with the highest numbers documented in Akinyele LGA (11 incidents), followed by Ibadan North-West LGA (8 incidents), Ibadan North and Egbeda LGAs (6 incidents each), and Lagelu and Ogbomosho North LGAs (4 incidents each). No incidents were recorded in ten LGAs. Unidentified armed groups (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of cases coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1910</sup>

For example, Benedikt Akika, a chieftain of the PDP in Oyo state was abducted by unknown gunmen who forcefully entered his residence in Lagelu LGA in September 2024.<sup>1911</sup> He was reportedly freed some days later following a large-scale police search that also included cross-border forests with neighbouring Ogun, Ondo and Edo states.<sup>1912</sup> A suspected member of the Eiye confraternity was reportedly killed by the rival Black Axe cult group on 7 July 2025, allegedly in the context of the latter group’s so-called 7 7 Day celebrations,<sup>1913</sup> which marked the foundation date of the cult group.<sup>1914</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - The Guardian Nigeria explained that violent conflicts with herders and bandits negatively affected the South-West zone’s food production, including in the agrarian suburbs of Oyo state, as farmers were increasingly abandoning their

<sup>1909</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1910</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1911</sup> PLAC, Nigeria Annual Human Rights Report 2024, 16 December 2024, [url](#), p. 40; Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police confirm abduction of Oyo PDP chieftain Benedict Akika, 6 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1912</sup> Punch, Kidnapped Oyo PDP chieftain, Akika, regains freedom, 12 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1913</sup> Punch, One killed in Oyo cult-day celebration fracas, 10 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1914</sup> Nation (The), Police alert Oyo residents over July 7 ‘Black Axe’ cult Founders Day, 6 July 2025, [url](#)



farms due to the rising insecurity.<sup>1915</sup> No further information could be found on infrastructure damages during the reference period.

**Road security** - Kidnapping ‘black spots’ included the Ijebu-Ibadan Road, the Igbeti, Igboho and Oke-Ogun axis, as well as the Igbeti-Igboho Road and Ijebu-Ibadan Road. Within the Ibadan area, incidents reportedly occurred near the Obafemi Awolowo Stadium and the Felele area.<sup>1916</sup> Kidnappings were also reported along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway,<sup>1917</sup> and the Lanlate-Eruwa Road.<sup>1918</sup>

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

Government forces conducted rescue operations for kidnapping victims, together with local hunters, as well as vigilantes,<sup>1919</sup> and/or Amotekun forces.<sup>1920</sup> Amotekun forces were also involved in the surveillance of roads known for kidnapping attacks,<sup>1921</sup> and of border areas and ‘vulnerable points’ together with police and military forces and local vigilante groups.<sup>1922</sup>

Measures taken by the police forces to fight cult-related crime included intelligence gathering, advocacy campaigns, stakeholder meetings, and intelligence-led raids, according to the state’s police commander.<sup>1923</sup>

## 2.6.6. Lagos

Lagos state is comprised of the following 20 LGAs: Agege, Alimosho, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Kosofe, Mushin, Oshodi-Isolo, Ojo, Ikorodu, Surulere, Agege Ifako-Ijaye, Shomolu, Amuwo-Odofin, Lagos Mainland, Ikeja, Eti-Osa, Badagry, Apapa, Lagos Island, Epe, and Ibeju-Lekki.<sup>1924</sup> The capital city is Ikeja.<sup>1925</sup>

The State is predominantly Yoruba-speaking. Lagos is a heterogeneous state, with indigenous inhabitants including the Aworis and Eguns, among other groups.<sup>1926</sup>

<sup>1915</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, South-West: Bandits, herders’ invasion puts 40% of region’s food production at risk, 20 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1916</sup> Vanguard, Beware: Roads, waterways in 17 states where kidnappers reign, 29 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1917</sup> ICIR, Lagos PDP chairman regains freedom after 4 days with kidnappers, 29 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1918</sup> Vanguard, Gunmen kidnap RCCG pastor, other bus passengers in Oyo, 21 April 2024, [url](#); Nation (The), Kidnappers abduct four returning from party in Oyo, demand N200m, 20 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1919</sup> Punch, Police rescue two kidnapped salesgirls in Oyo, 25 June 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1920</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Oyo: Police arrest five, recover N4.6m ransom in kidnap case, 5 July 2025, [url](#); Vanguard, Hunter dies as Amotekun, police rescue kidnapped victims in Oyo, 25 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1921</sup> Vanguard, Beware: Roads, waterways in 17 states where kidnappers reign, 29 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1922</sup> Vanguard, Influx of bandits’ll be checkmated — Police, Amotekun commanders, OPC, 9 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1923</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Police parade 15 suspected cultists, armed robbers in Oyo, 16 December 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1924</sup> ALGON, Local Government Areas, 12 July 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1925</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Lagos, n.d [url](#)

<sup>1926</sup> Nigeria, Federal Government of Nigeria, States, Lagos, n.d [url](#)





UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Lagos state at 13 491 804 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.<sup>1927</sup>

### a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

In May 2025, Punch described Lagos state as ‘a hotspot’ for cultism and crime, including armed robbery, drug-related crime, carjacking and abductions.<sup>1928</sup> According to government data, Ikeja, Lagos Island, and Lekki were the ‘top three crime locations’ of the state in the period January 2024 - May 2025.<sup>1929</sup> Similarly, already in the beginning of the reference period, Vanguard quoted the state commissioner of police describing cultism, traffic robbery and abductions as the ‘prominent crime’ in Lagos state.<sup>1930</sup> The Nation pointed to a rise in criminal activities such as kidnappings, robberies, violent clashes and killings, especially in Lagos Island, Lekki and Okota areas.<sup>1931</sup> In comparison, of those LGAs mentioned above, ACLED lists only Ikeja as one of the LGAs with the highest number of recorded security incidents (see below).<sup>1932</sup>

In terms of cult-related violence, a report of July 2025 by SBM described Lagos as an ‘epicentre of gang warfare’,<sup>1933</sup> and a ‘hotspot’<sup>1934</sup> for the Black Axe and Eiye cult groups fighting for supremacy and control over crime in the state.<sup>1935</sup> Other cult groups operating in Lagos state included the Buccaneers,<sup>1936</sup> and ‘street-based gangs’,<sup>1937</sup> such as the Kesari and Idi-Araba Boys,<sup>1938</sup> and the Awawa Boys. Several sources reported on children and minors being recruited into cult gangs,<sup>1939</sup> and being involved in cult-related violence.<sup>1940</sup>

FIJ reported on an incident of neglect,<sup>1941</sup> and various national sources reported on incidents of maltreatment by officers of state security agencies.<sup>1942</sup>

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<sup>1927</sup> UNFPA and US Census Bureau, Nigeria – Subnational Population Statistics, 2022, modified 11 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1928</sup> Punch, Sanwo-Olu, crush the cultism menace, 5 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1929</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, LASG says Ikeja, Lagos Island, Lekki top state’s crime locations, 22 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1930</sup> Vanguard, Three cult leaders, four others nabbed in Lagos, 13 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1931</sup> Nation (The), Securing Lagos State, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1932</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1933</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 19

<sup>1934</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 4

<sup>1935</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 21

<sup>1936</sup> Punch, One killed in Lagos cult attack, 2 May 2025, [url](#); Guardian (The) Nigeria, Anxiety over death of three in Lagos estate cult war, 9 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1937</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 8

<sup>1938</sup> SBM Intelligence, Gangster’s Paradise: Nigeria’s Restive Youth Gang Crisis, 2020-2025, July 2025, [url](#), p. 8;

Punch, Fear grips Lagos community as three killed in cult clashes, 6 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1939</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Taming menace of cultism in primary, secondary schools, 22 July 2025, [url](#); Nation (The), Teen killers on the prowl: Tragic rise of Nigeria’s child cultists, 8 September 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1940</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Lagos Assembly summons CP, others over renewed cult violence in Mushin, 17 June 2025, [url](#); Nation (The), Teen killers on the prowl: Tragic rise of Nigeria’s child cultists, 8 September 2024, [url](#)

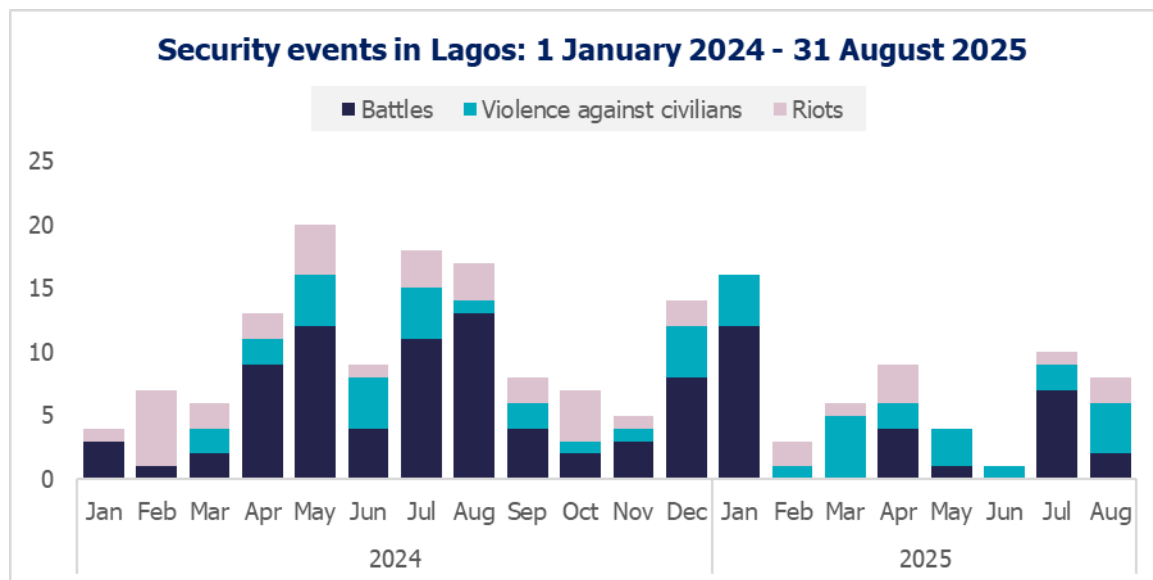
<sup>1941</sup> FIJ, ‘Your Mother Is an Unfortunate Being’ — How Hoodlums Attacked Lagos Protesters While Soldiers, Police Watched On, 5 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1942</sup> Punch, Newlywed allegedly tortured to death in Lagos police custody, 18 February 2025, [url](#); Premium Times, EFCC chairman orders arrest of officers for assaulting woman during hotel raid, 27 June 2024, [url](#); Channels TV, Lawyers Protest Against Police Brutality In Lagos, 11 January 2024, [url](#)



## b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period 1 January 2024 - 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 185 security incidents in Lagos state, resulting in 150 fatalities. Of these security incidents, 98 security incidents were coded as battles (the majority of them involving cult groups), 40 as riots, and 47 incidents were coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1943</sup>



**Figure 41: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Lagos state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.**<sup>1944</sup>

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in all 20 LGAs of the state. The highest numbers were documented in Alimosho LGA (33 incidents), followed by Ojo (29), Ikorodu (18) and Ikeja and Eti-Osa LGAs (10 incidents each). Unidentified armed groups and cult militias, police and military forces (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of cases coded as violence against civilians.<sup>1945</sup>

According to Nigeria Watch, Lagos state scored second in terms of deadly cult-related violence in 2024, predominantly due to the Black Axe (Aye) and Eiye confraternities.<sup>1946</sup> Cult-related violence was reported during the entire reference period and occurred in various LGAs, for example in Ojo LGA in January 2024,<sup>1947</sup> Ajegunle/Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA in April 2024,<sup>1948</sup> Mushin LGA in August 2024,<sup>1949</sup> Amuwo-Odofin LGA in January 2025,<sup>1950</sup> Ebute-

<sup>1943</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1944</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1945</sup> EUAA analysis based on publicly available ACLED data. ACLED, Curated Data Files, Africa, data covering 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, as of 10 September 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1946</sup> Nigeria Watch, Fourteenth report on violence in Nigeria 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 9

<sup>1947</sup> Daily Trust, 3 Lagos cultists arrested in military uniforms, 22 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1948</sup> Premium Times, Suspected cultist dies in aftermath of cult clash in Lagos, 13 April 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1949</sup> Punch, Three suspected cultists arraigned for causing panic in Lagos, 13 August 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1950</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Anxiety over death of three in Lagos estate cult war, 9 January 2025, [url](#)



Metta area/Lagos Mainland LGA in April 2025,<sup>1951</sup> Ikorodu LGA in May 2025,<sup>1952</sup> and Meiran area/Alimosho LGA in July 2025.<sup>1953</sup> A 12-year-old boy was reportedly killed by a stray bullet during a clash between rival cult groups in Mushin LGA in July 2025.<sup>1954</sup> A vigilante was killed, and his colleague were abducted in an attack by unknown gunmen on Igbe community in Ikorodu LGA in January 2025.<sup>1955</sup> In the period December 2024 - April 2025, the community reportedly recorded more than seven kidnapping attacks, and many residents were leaving the community as a result.<sup>1956</sup> In June 2024, a 17-year old girl was reportedly raped by a police officer at the police station where she had gone to get help tracking her phone that had been stolen earlier. In February 2025, following claims by the victim's family that they were pressured by the alleged suspect's family, the officer was taken into prison custody.<sup>1957</sup>

**Conflict-related infrastructure damage** - No information could be found during the reference period.

**Road security** - Incidents of kidnapping or attempted kidnapping were reported along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway,<sup>1958</sup> and the Lekki-Epe Expressway.<sup>1959</sup> As of August 2025, no further information could be found on road security in Lagos state during the reference period.

**Displacement, movement and return** - No information could be found during the reference period.

### c) State response in maintaining law and order

In February 2024, following incidents of kidnapping and other crimes, Lagos and Ogun state police initiated joint patrols along the Lagos-Ibadan motorway.<sup>1960</sup> In March 2025, the police reportedly arrested a robbery syndicate operating 'along Mile 2 to Alakija and Badagry Expressway',<sup>1961</sup> and in August 2025, 68 suspected criminals were arrested, including seven persons suspected of committing armed robberies by posing as security personnel.<sup>1962</sup> Several specialised police units reportedly conducted a large-scale security operation ahead of the cultist 7/7 Day celebrations in July 2025, and arrested an unspecified number of suspects.<sup>1963</sup> One official reportedly noted that 'lawmakers often face pressure to bail out arrested

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<sup>1951</sup> Daily Post, Lagos cult clash turns deadly as stray bullet kills 16-year-old boy, 24 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1952</sup> Punch, Suspected Lagos cultists kill shawarma vendor, 19 May 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1953</sup> Punch, Panic as cult clash claims life in Lagos, 25 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1954</sup> Daily Post, Stray bullet kills 12-year-old boy during cult clash in Lagos, 4 July 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1955</sup> Punch, Suspected kidnapers kill vigilante, abduct colleague in Lagos community, 14 January 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1956</sup> Punch, Lagos residents protest over recurring killings, kidnappings, 10 April 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1957</sup> Daily Trust, Policeman who raped teenager in Lagos sent to prison, 12 February 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1958</sup> Daily Post, Police foil kidnapping attempt, neutralise four suspects on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway road, 22 February 2025, [url](#); Punch, UPDATED: Gunmen abduct Lagos PDP chairman, others on Lagos-Ibadan expressway, 26 January 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1959</sup> Guardian (The) Nigeria, Police rescue three kidnap victims in Lagos, 9 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1960</sup> Nigerian Tribune, Lagos, Ogun Police form joint patrol to curb insecurity on Lagos-Ibadan expressway, 22 February 2024, [url](#)

<sup>1961</sup> THISDAY, Lagos State Police Command Intensifies Crime-fighting Efforts with Multiple Arrests, Rescues, 11 March 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1962</sup> Punch, Police arrest 68 suspected criminals in Lagos, 12 August 2025, [url](#)

<sup>1963</sup> Punch, Police arrest suspects across Lagos on 7/7 Cultism Day, 10 July 2025, [url](#)





cultists',<sup>1964</sup> and one source reported on investigations on the alleged role of a specialised police unit in the release of six suspected cult members in Ojo LGA.<sup>1965</sup>

A study by the African Cities Research Consortium (ACRC) quoted by Premium Times, identified state and non-state agencies as among the 'key players' in terms of insecurity in Lagos (alongside with cult groups, land grabbers, and street gangs) due to incidents of abuse of power, human rights violations or the 'aiding and abating of criminal conducts'. The same source noted the security agencies were 'overstretched' with the rapidly growing population and related security issues.<sup>1966</sup>

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## Annex 2: Terms of Reference

### Security situation

#### General description of the security situation in Nigeria

- **Recent security overview:** brief analytical overview of relevant political developments; long-standing security challenges and major conflicts (Boko Haram conflict; criminal violence and banditry; intercommunal/ethnic clashes; farmers and herders; criminal gang and oil-related violence; unrest in the former Biafra state, violent protests; cult-related violence; election-related violence); impact of economic situation on security; main security trends, including data.
- **Main actors:**
  - **State armed actors:** main actors (including state forces and self-defence/vigilante groups); current capacity and structure; modus operandi; their ability to secure law and order against the various security issues taking place in the country; reported cases of violations committed by them.
  - **Non-state armed actors:** (Boko Haram - ISWAP, JAS - IPOB, Lakurawa, farmers-herders, cults/confraternities, bandits/criminal gangs). Current capacity and structure; modus operandi; areas of operation and reach, control territory; goals and strategies; reported cases of violations committed by them.

#### Description of security situation per state and FCT

Each 36 state plus the FCT will include information on population number and ethnic composition; information on major security events and main actors (with cross-link to above section), type of violence (such as IED and airstrikes, targeted attacks by armed groups, intercommunal violence, organised crime/banditry, kidnappings, electoral violence); impact on the population (including data of security incidents and major illustrative examples, fatalities, road security and infrastructure damage; displacement, movement and return); state ability to secure law and order. The report will provide individual state chapters, and organise the state-level information by geo-political region:

- **North-Central**
  - Benue
  - Federal Capital Territory
  - Kogi
  - Kwara
  - Nasarawa
  - Niger
  - and Plateau



- **North-East**
  - Adamawa
  - Bauchi
  - Borno
  - Gombe
  - Taraba
  - Yobe
  
- **North-West**
  - Jigawa
  - Kaduna
  - Kano
  - Katsina
  - Kebbi
  - Sokoto
  - Zamfara
  
- **South-East**
  - Abia
  - Anambra
  - Ebonyi
  - Enugu
  - Imo
  
- **South-South**
  - Akwa Ibom
  - Bayelsa
  - Cross River
  - Delta
  - Edo
  - Rivers
  
- **South-West**
  - Ekiti
  - Ogun
  - Ondo
  - Osun
  - Oyo
  - Lagos





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