Please cite as: EASO, '6.2.1.Crimes committed by state forces and state-affiliated forces' in *Country Guidance Nigeria*, Oktober 2021.

6.2.1.Crimes committed by state forces and state-affiliated forces

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: February 2019
*Minor updates added October 2021

Serious breaches of international humanitarian law and international human rights law are reported in relation to the armed conflict involving the NAF, MNJTF, CJTF, and Boko Haram and aligned factions in the North-East. Reported violations include unlawful killings, sexual violence and abuse, recruitment and use of child soldiers, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and other forms of ill treatment of civilians [Targeting, 2.1.3, 2.5.1; Security situation 2021, 1.6.1, 1.3.1.7]

More specifically, NAF has been accused of extrajudicial executions, mass deaths in custody, torture, forced displacement of entire villages, sexual abuse and violence against IDP women, fumigation, unlawful detention and arrest, and starvation of over 8 000 people caused by the closure of roads [Targeting, 2.5.1; Security situation 2021, 1.7.2]. Additionally, several sources indicate that the CJTF has also committed crimes, such as extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, acts of torture, and severe abuses of IDP women, including physical and sexual violence, and recruitment of children [Targeting, 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.5, 3.13.4].

The personnel of some Nigerian authorities may also be found responsible for crimes outside the context of armed conflict. NPF, generally considered the most violent State institution, has been reportedly involved in acts of extortion, beatings, illegal detention, sexual harassment and abuses committed against LGBTIQ persons. SARS, in particular, had been accused of widespread torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of detainees in their custody. The largely peaceful country-wide #EndSARS protests were met with violent response by the Nigerian security forces [Security situation 2021, 1.3.1.1, 1.3.1.2]. The hisbah, operating in the Sharia-implementing states, was also reported to arrest and torture LGBTIQ persons, and to sporadically target women accused of immorality [Targeting, 2.5.2.1, 2.5.3.1, 2.5.3.2].

Crimes by the Nigerian security forces against IMN, including reports of mass killings and burials, have also been reported [Targeting, 2.5.1]. Acts of the Nigerian security forces against pro-Biafra protesters, IPOB members and/or ESN members have also been reported to exceed their legitimate response and could be relevant for exclusion [Targeting, 3.3.4; Security situation, 1.4.1.1.]

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu