

2.4.3. Violence against children

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Conflict in North-East Nigeria has had a severe impact on children. The UN Security Council has documented six grave violations: recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, sexual violence including rape, attacks on schools and hospitals, abductions, and the denial of humanitarian access. It further notes an increase in the number of verified violations during the current reporting period compared to the previous one.465 After escaping Boko Haram, many children in Nigeria have been unlawfully detained by the military for months or years without charge, legal counsel, or contact with their families.466 For more information see 2.13. Perceived Boko Haram members or supporters.

In February 2024, over 200 IDPs, mostly children, were reportedly abducted by armed groups in Borno State's Ngala Local Government Area.467 In the North-West states of Zamfara, Sokoto, and Katsina, ongoing bandit attacks, school kidnappings, and widespread community violence have led to the closure of numerous schools, interrupted education, and displaced large numbers of children and educators.468 For more information see 2.10. Individuals targeted by Boko Haram.

Local sources reported an increase in the recruitment of children by cult groups.469 See 2.14. Individuals targeted by student cults.

In Southern states, such as Akwa Ibom State, hundreds of children are being accused of witchcraft, especially in the Oron LGA, where such beliefs are said to be still common.470 For instance, in March 2024, in Alkaleri LGA in Bauchi State, a young boy was reportedly left blind following an attack that some members of the community linked to beliefs in witchcraft. 471 See 2.17. Individuals accused of witchcraft.

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