

2.1.2. FCT Abuja

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

The main ethnic group in Abuja is Gbagyi (Gwari).335

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

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,337 often occurring in the suburbs of the FCT. 338 According to a report by Nextier, 116 kidnap victims were recorded in 2024.339 Incidents, for example, were reported in November 2024,340 and January,341 February,342 March,343 and May344 2025. In some cases, arrests of alleged kidnappers345 and clashes between them and police346 were reported. Bwari LGA was affected by kidnappings for ransom,347 with at least 49 kidnapping victims reported over the year 2024.348 In June 2024, a media article mentions ‘cases of deadly cult clashes and attacks’ in Bwari Area Council.349

Other types of violence resulting in fatalities included attacks by gunmen,350 including attacks against herders351 and by herders.352 Deadly clashes between members of the proscribed Islamic Movement in Nigeria353 and security forces were reported in March 2025354 and August 2024.355 Further protests were reported in early August 2024, when police used tear gas to disperse protesters demonstrating against economic reforms by the government,356 and in March 2024, riots were reported at Abuja’s Wuse market.357 An IED explosion was reported at a school in the outskirts of Abuja in January 2025, killing two people and injuring two others. 358 Another explosion occurred outside an army barracks in the centre of the capital Abuja in May 2025, injuring one person.359

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.360

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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. [361]

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.[362]

According to Nigeria Watch, 43 fatalities related to abductions were recorded in the FCT in 2024. [363]

In March 2025, suspected bandits killed two vigilante members while attempting to invade a Fulani settlement at Dogon Ruwa village in Abaji Area Council.[364] 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.[365] In January 2025, armed men kidnapped a family of three in Chikakore area of Kubwa in Bwari LGA.[366]

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

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 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.[369]

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'.[370] 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.[371] According to the IGP, the SIS consisted of 'trained, well-equipped and highly mobile police officers'.[372] 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.'[373] In March 2025, for example, police killed a 'notorious kidnapper', and in June 2025 arrested a 'suspected kidnap kingpin' during operations.[374]

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