2.1.7. Plateau

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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. 560

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.561

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 4 717 305 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.562

a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section 1.1 Main Actors.

Plateau state was affected by farmer-herder violence in the reference period.563 This violence was mainly driven by competition over resources and was 'complicated by religious undertones as many herders are Muslim and farmers Christian.'564

Attacks by gunmen were reported for example in January,565 May566 and September 2024567 and in April,568 May,569 June570 and July 2025.571 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.572

Kidnappings were reported, for example, in April,573 May,574 and July 2025,575 including the rescue of kidnapping victims by security forces.576

Clashes between bandits and vigilantes were reported in April577 and November 2024578 and in June579 and July 2025.580 In some cases, clashes involved joint operations between security forces and vigilantes.581

Clashes between military forces and armed men were reported for example in November 2024, 582 and in February,583 March,584and May 2025.585

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 coded as battles, 1 as explosion/remote violence, 18 as riots and 170 as incidents of violence against civilians.586

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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.587

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.588

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.589

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 2025.590

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.591 In July 2025, gunmen reportedly killed at least 27 farmers, including men and women, in an attack on Tahoss village in Riyom LGA.592 In July 2025, armed men abducted two children in an attack on a herder settlement in Tarangol district,593 and in August 2025 gunmen killed two herders in Butura district,594 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 2024.595 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.596 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.597 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.598 In May 2025, over 20 houses were burnt and food looted in attacks by gunmen on Wereng camp in Riyom LGA599 and around 300 hectares of farmland were destroyed in Kpachudu village in Bassa LGA.600 In July 2025, the burning of houses in attacks by bandits was reported in Kanam,601 Wase,602 and Riyom603 LGAs.

Road security - Media reported kidnappings along various roads, for example along Jos-Mangu,604 Jos-Makurdi,605 and Jos-Ganawuri606 roads. In June 2025, a bus carrying passengers to a

wedding in Qua'an Pan LGA[607] was reportedly attacked by a mob in Mangu LGA, leaving at least a dozen people dead.[608]

Displacement, movement and return - As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Plateau state at 55 053[609] compared to 56 690 as of November 2024.[610] IOM lists communal clashes (45 %) and farmer-herder-clashes (40 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.[611]

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.[612]

According to IOM, 1 203 people were displaced between 3 and 4 June 2025 following attacks in Bassa and Riyom LGAs.[613]

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[614] and Operation Safe Haven (OPSH)[615] 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.'[616] In January 2024, Operation Rainbow had been accused by residents of Mangu LGA of carrying out extrajudicial killings and arson.[617]

Following attacks in Bassa LGA in April 2025, Amnesty International described the killings as an 'inexcusable security failure'.[618] The Plateau state governor banned night grazing and the movement of vehicles and cattle in the night following the attacks.[619] In June 2025, the Nigerian military announced the deployment of over 800 special forces in 'troubled states', including Plateau, to combat security challenges,[620] and in July 2025, the governor announced the recruitment of 150 new Agro-Rangers to provide security for farmers.[621]

In July 2025, the state governor claimed that 'proactive security measures have ensured that no LGA remains under bandit control'.[622] 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.[623]

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