

2.2.1. Adamawa

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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,625 Yola North and Yola South.626 The capital city is Yola. 627

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.628

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.629

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.630 A July 2024 report by the consulting firm Nextier identified five LGAs in Adamawa (Madagali, Michika, Mubi North, Mubi South and Maiha),631 all located in the state's north,632 as being part of what it called the 'Northeast Belt of Insurgency'.633 In 2025, heightened insurgent activity was seen in Hong LGA.634

As of July 2025, the situation in Adamawa state was described as being marked by insecurity.635 During the first half of 2025, insurgent activity focused on Hong LGA,636 where individual armed attacks in January637 and February 2025638 were followed by a wave of attacks between April and June 2025 that killed dozens of people,639 including at least 17 within the space of two weeks in April.640 A number of these attacks occurred in villages bordering the Sambisa forest,641 a Boko Haram stronghold.642 Boko Haram/ISWAP repeatedly attacked the villages of Banga643 (a Christian community)644 and Kopre (Kwapre).645 Attacks were carried out by gunmen on motorbikes646 and involved the use of explosives against vigilantes and police.647

Meanwhile, deadly communal clashes erupted between ethnic Setti of Numan LGA and Kpasham of Demsa LGA (March 2024)648 and between ethnic Bachama and Tsobo in Lamurde LGA (early July 2025).649 Moreover, armed robberies occurred in Yola city,650 in Girei LGA,651 and along

the Numan–Gombe road axis,652 including by youths affiliated with the ‘Shila Boys’ gang.653 The state also saw over a dozen kidnappings between mid-2023 and mid-2025,654 with villagers655 and Catholic clergymen among those targeted.656

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.657

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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.658

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.659

In Hong LGA, insurgent attacks resulted in dozens of fatalities among local residents, including in Banga and Larh villages (between six660 and seven deaths on 15 April 2025661 and at least six more on 11 June 2025662) and Kopre on 26 April 2025 (between 10663 and 12 deaths among hunters and CJTF members).664 Communal clashes caused at least five fatalities in Numan/Demsa LGA (March 2024)665 and – depending on sources – two,666 three,667 or 10 or more fatalities in Lamurde LGA (early July 2025).668 Kidnappers targeted dozens of people during the reference period.669

Conflict-related infrastructure damage - The destruction of multiple civilian structures during insurgent attacks in Hong LGA in February,670 mid-April671 and June 2025 was reported.672 In the context of communal tensions and violence, several houses were burnt in Guyuk LGA in March 2025673 and early July 2025, while more than 20 houses were burnt in Lamurde LGA in July 2025.674

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 200 211,675 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.676 Attacks on five communities in Hong in April 2025 prompted the displacement of most residents.677 As of August 2024, there were 882 021 returnees (IDP returnees and returnees from abroad) in Adamawa state.678

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.679

Counter-insurgency operations again intensified in early July 2025.680 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 presence681 and responsiveness of security forces.682 In the context of efforts to combat crime, coordinated security operations led to the rescue of a number of victims of kidnappings and child trafficking, 683 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.684

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