



2.2.3. Borno

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Borno state is comprised of the following 27 LGAs: Maiduguri, Askira/Uba, Abadam, Ngala, Bayo, Gubio, Kala/Balge, Biu, Guzamala, Mafa, Chibok, Kaga, Konduga, Damboa, Kukawa, Bama, Gwoza, Magumeri, Jere, Hawul, Marte, Dikwa, Kwaya Kusar, Mobbar, Shani, Monguno, and Nganzai. The capital city is Maiduguri. [710](#)

The Kanuri are the dominant ethnic group in the state, accounting for about three quarters of its population. Other ethnic groups include the Fulani, Hausa, Chibok, Babur, Bura, Shuwa, Marghi, Gamergu, Kanakuru, Ngoshe, Guduf, Mandara and Tera. The Chibok minority group inhabits the newly created Chibok LGA. The Hausa reside mainly in Askira and Maiduguri. [711](#)

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population of Borno in 2022 at 6 111 462, based on figures from the 2006 census figures. [712](#)

a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

For a general overview on actors in Nigeria, please see section [1.1 Main Actors](#).

Borno state has been at the centre of the 15-year-long insurgency by Boko Haram. [713](#) ISWAP has assigned parts of the state to its three main *wilaya* (provinces) Buhaira (encompassing the fringes of Lake Chad), Faruq (comprising southern Borno, alongside areas in Yobe and Adamawa states), and Krenowa (covering territories in central and northern Borno). [714](#) A July 2024 report by the consulting firm Nextier identified ten LGAs across Borno (Bama, Baga, Biu, Chibok, Gwoza, Kukawa, Kaga, Marte, Mongonu and Ngala) as being part of what it called the 'Northeast Belt of Insurgency'. [715](#) In ISWAP-controlled villages in the state's north, the group extorted levies from farmers and fishermen. At the same time, insurgent activities were largely limited to rural zones. [716](#)

While the NAF were able to push back against Boko Haram in recent years [717](#) and continued to report gains in security operations in 2024, insurgent attacks against security forces and civilians persisted. [718](#) Deadly militant assaults in 2024 and early 2025 targeted the police in Nganzai LGA and the military forces in Marte, Mobbar, Gwoza and Damboa LGAs, as well as killing dozens of civilians in Chibok and Nganzai (January 2024), [719](#) Gwoza (including in January, February [720](#) and September 2024) and Kukawa (May 2024 [721](#) and January 2025 [722](#)).

During the first half of 2025, ISWAP made some territorial gains in the state as it carried out several complex attacks against security installations and civilians. [723](#) ISWAP attacks intensified

in March⁷²⁴/April 2025⁷²⁵ in what was seen as a ‘resurgence’ of militancy,⁷²⁶ with Borno’s state governor declaring that the authorities were ‘losing ground’ to the insurgents.⁷²⁷ Between late April and mid-May 2025, ISWAP and Boko Haram conducted at least 12 attacks of various types.⁷²⁸ In a series of coordinated attacks in May that involved highly mobile tactics and drones, ISWAP overran Marte town⁷²⁹ (the site of Borno’s largest military base),⁷³⁰ Dikwa town and Kala-Balge LGA’s Rann town,⁷³¹ killing a number of soldiers stationed at military bases.⁷³² As of late May 2025, all but one of the over 300 towns and villages of Marte LGA were outside government control.⁷³³ Militants also killed dozens of local residents as they assaulted communities in Gwoza,⁷³⁴ Kukawa,⁷³⁵ Chibok⁷³⁶ and Mobbar in April and May,⁷³⁷ in Abadam in July 2025,⁷³⁸ and in Bama in September 2025.⁷³⁹ As of mid-2025, Borno continued to ‘bear the brunt’ of armed activities in Nigeria, which also included IED attacks and mass kidnappings.⁷⁴⁰

Between early 2024 and mid-2025, SBM Intelligence recorded eight bombings in the state, including three in the single month of January 2025 and four more between March and June 2025. The source attributed all but one of the attacks to either ISWAP or Boko Haram.⁷⁴¹

Deadly IED attacks struck travellers in Kukawa and Gamboru (Ngala) (both April 2024), forest workers in Konduga (November 2024), and individuals travelling along the Maiduguri-Damboa highway⁷⁴² and between Rann to Gamboru (both April 2025).⁷⁴³ Four coordinated suicide attacks occurred in Gwoza,⁷⁴⁴ targeting a wedding on 29 June 2024,⁷⁴⁵ followed by a bombing of a teashop in Konduga (31 July 2024).⁷⁴⁶ Another unclaimed deadly suicide attack occurred in Konduga in June 2025.⁷⁴⁷ These attacks left dozens of people dead.⁷⁴⁸ Boko Haram/ISWAP also conducted multiple abductions targeting IDPs in Ngala (February 2024),⁷⁴⁹ villagers in Gwoza (September/October 2024⁷⁵⁰ and July 2025),⁷⁵¹ Chibok (April 2025)⁷⁵² and Kukawa (May 2025),⁷⁵³ and travellers (e.g., June 2024⁷⁵⁴ and July 2025⁷⁵⁵).

b) Security incidents and impact on the population

In the period from 1 January 2024 to 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 813 security incidents in Borno state that resulted in a total of 3 995 fatalities. Of these incidents, 416 were coded as battles, 178 as explosion/remote violence, 10 as riots, and 209 as violence against civilians.⁷⁵⁶

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Figure 5: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Borno state, 1 January 2024 - 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.⁷⁵⁷

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 26 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Gwoza LGA (141 incidents), followed by Bama (109), Damboa (77), Konduga (60) and Kukawa (49) LGAs. There was only one LGA where no incidents were recorded. According to ACLED, ISWAP and Boko Haram (coded as either ‘Actor1’ or ‘Actor2’) were involved in the vast majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.⁷⁵⁸

According to Nigeria Watch, in 2024, Borno recorded the highest number of fatalities from violent incidents in absolute terms (1 263), followed by Zamfara, Niger, Katsina and Benue. With 16 57 violence-related fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, Borno, after Zamfara, ranked second

among the country's 'most dangerous' states, with Niger, Katsina and Benue following Borno in third, fourth and fifth place, respectively.[759](#)

Amongst others, suspected insurgents killed at least 63 farmers and fishermen in Kukawa in January and May 2025,[760](#) at least 54 civilians between late April and mid-May 2025 in Ngala, Chibok, Mobbar and Kukawa,[761](#) and over 50 further civilians in Bama in early September 2025.[762](#) Coordinated suicide attacks in Gwoza[763](#) (29 June 2024) and a further bombing in Konduga (31 July 2024) resulted in a total of 48 deaths.[764](#) Civilians kidnapped by insurgents included more than 600 IDPs in Ngala (February[765](#) and March 2024[766](#)) as well as dozens of villagers across the state.[767](#)

Conflict-related infrastructure damage - ISWAP attacks also continued to target critical infrastructure.[768](#) The destruction of infrastructure (roads, bridges, and lines of communication) in insurgent attacks across Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states in 2025,[769](#) including in Borno's Bayo LGA in April 2025,[770](#) led to disruptions in troop movements and obstruction of humanitarian aid.[771](#) In an attack on Wulgo town in May 2025, the insurgents burnt down public structures such as hospitals and schools, as well as several military vehicles,[772](#) while in early September 2025, Boko Haram attack on Darul Jamal village in Bama LGA resulted in the destruction of over 20 houses and 10 buses.[773](#)

Road security - IED attacks killed at least 35 travellers along the Maiduguri-Damboia highway and between Rann to Gamboru (April 2025) and multiple travellers along the Maiduguri-Damaturu highway (June 2024)[774](#) and the Maiduguri-Mafa road (July 2025).[775](#) Similarly, the Maiduguri-Monguno road was affected by recurrent kidnappings and continued to see illegal checkpoints set up by suspected non-state armed groups.[776](#)

Displacement, movement and return - As of November 2024, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Borno state at 1 704 175,[777](#) compared to 1 722 263 as of September 2024. IOM lists insurgency as the exclusive reason for displacement in the state.[778](#) As of August 2024, there were 890 960 returnees in the state, including IDP returnees and returnees from abroad.[779](#) The IDMC reported that violence and conflict across several states, including Borno, Yobe and Katsina, had prompted the displacement of 57 000 people in 2024.[780](#) ISWAP's attacks on multiple military bases in Borno in May 2025 resulted in numerous civilians in nearby communities being displaced internally and across the border into Cameroon.[781](#) More than 100 people were newly displaced in the deadly early September 2025 Boko Haram attack on Darul Jamal village (Bama LGA)[782](#) which had only recently seen residents returning from years of displacement.[783](#)

c) State response in maintaining law and order

Hundreds of Boko Haram/ISWAP fighters were killed in battles following insurgent attacks on military sites[784](#) or during security operations,[785](#) with military gains against insurgents reported during most months of 2024.[786](#) Meanwhile, in 2025, soldiers saw themselves overpowered as dozens of well-armed ISWAP fighters attacked their base in Marte[787](#) and by Boko Haram militants who stormed Darul Jamal village in September 2025.[788](#)

As of mid-April 2025, it was noted that the NAF had intensified its efforts to contain ISWAP and Boko Haram.[789](#) Amongst others, the NAF killed at least 60 insurgents after repelling an assault

on a military camp in Bita (Gwoza LGA).[790](#) A targeted intelligence-based operation in Kukawa involving the NAF, MNJTF and CJTF led to the killing of Boko Haram (JAS) commander Amir Abu Fatima and his key deputies in May 2025.[791](#) As of July 2025, the state remained one of the country's main operational theatres areas for counter-insurgency campaigns.[792](#)

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