

2.3.2. Kaduna

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Kaduna state is comprised of the following 23 LGAs: Birnin Gwari, Chikun, Giwa, Igabi, Ikara, Jaba, Jema'a, Kachia, Kaduna North, Kaduna South, Kagarko, Kajuru, Kaura, Kauru, Kubau, Kudan, Lere, Makarfi, Sabon Gari, Sanga, Soba, Zangon Kataf, Zaria.952 The Federal Government lists only 22 LGAs,953 excluding Kajuru LGA, which is included by the Kaduna State Government.954 The capital city is Kaduna.955

The main ethnic groups include Hausa, Gbagyi, Adara, Ham, Gong, Atyap, Bajjuu, Ninkyob, Kurama, Koro, Zango Kataf, Mada, Agworok, Ikulu, Moroa'a, Atuku,956 Gbari, Kamuku and Kadara. Kaduna state has a Muslim majority in the northern part and a Christian majority in the southern part, with a small group of indigenous followers.957

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the population at 9 032 181 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.958

a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

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

In June 2025, IOM reported a multi-dimensional crisis in the North-West, characterised by ethnic and religious tensions that had led to attacks and banditry.959 As of July 2024 households in Kaduna state were reported to be heavily impacted by farmer-herder conflict, kidnappings, and banditry.960 According to Nigeria Watch, Kaduna was the third Nigerian state worst affected by rural banditry in 2024,961 with the number of civilians targeted in bandit-related violence increasing significantly in early 2024.962 As of July 2024, there were several thousand armed bandits in Kaduna state. ACLED and GI-TOC reported a decrease in violence by bandit groups in Kaduna since 2023, but suggested they now generate revenue perpetrating less violence and often coercing local communities.963 These groups were said to be maintaining camps in the state's forests.964 According to a June 2025 HumAngle report, in southern Kaduna, ethnic violence was fused with terror raids, causing the destruction of villages like Jika da Kolo and Tudun Biri.965

During the reference period, armed groups continued to carry out attacks, including against smaller towns, schools and travellers,966 as well as abductions967 and looting of villages.968 Dozens of civilians were reportedly killed in an airstrike by security forces against armed groups in September 2024.969 A Vigilante Service force reportedly also existed in the state.970 According to UN Security Council reports, Boko Haram's Adamu Yunusa/Adamu Sadiqu faction

was present in Kaduna state.971

Abductions reported in Kaduna state during the reference period included mass abductions972 and led to civilian fatalities.973 Between July 2023 and June 2024, Kaduna state experienced 111 of the country's 1 130 abduction incidents and accounted for 1 113 of the 7 568 victims, making it the third-worst Nigerian state affected by abductions.974 In 2024, Kaduna was the state with the highest number of abduction victims (793), accounting for 32.3 % of all abduction victims recorded in Nigeria,975 as well as abduction-related deaths (86 fatalities).976 Also, abductions in Kaduna state reportedly increased by 37 % compared to the foregoing 4-year average.977 and In February 2025, a significant rise in abductions was reported across Kachia LGA, including neighbouring villages.978

Between 2019 and October 2024, Kaduna was among the five Nigerian states most impacted by inter-group clashes between bandit groups.979 Climate change-induced drought reportedly led to clashes between farmers and herders980 and clashes between bandit/criminal groups981 increased due to competition over limited resources.982

Sources reported demonstrations in Kaduna state during the reference period,983 including protests in August 2024. These August protests resulted in the arrest984 and killing of protesters during a crackdown by the authorities.985

b) Security incidents and impact on the population

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 475 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Kaduna state, which resulted in 951 fatalities. Of these incidents, 290 were coded as incidents of violence against civilians, 144 were coded as battles, 30 as riots, and 11 as explosions/remote violence.986

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Figure 8: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Kaduna state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.987

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 22 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Kachia (107), followed by Kajuru (60), Birnin Gwari (52), Kagarko (43) and Giwa (41). No incidents were recorded in Jaba LGA. According to ACLED, Kaduna communal militia (coded as either ‘Actor 1’ or ‘Actor 2’) were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.988

Nigeria Watch noted an increase in fatalities, resulting from rural banditry, cattle rustling and government counter-operations across the country in 2024, with Kaduna state accounting for 225 of the 1 452 deaths, including of civilians, recorded in nine states and the FCT. Attacks by Boko Haram, ISWAP and Ansaru and government counter-operations reportedly claimed 53 lives in Kaduna state in 2024.989

In early March 2024, around 280 children were abducted from a school in Kaduna. Local reports identified the Ansaru group as the perpetrators.990 In August 2024, a Fulani militia reportedly abducted 17 Adara community members and killed two more in the Kachia and Kajuru LGAs, destroying houses and looting properties.991 In September 2024, unidentified armed men abducted two nurses and an unknown number of patients from a primary healthcare centre in Birnin-Gwari LGA.992

Conflict-related infrastructure damage - Attacks by criminal groups have resulted in looting of medical supplies and the razing or occupying of medical facilities in some north-western states, including Kaduna. Some facilities shut down as a result of insecurity.993 Furthermore, mining activities in the state were disrupted due to attacks by armed groups, affecting mining as a source of income.994 In November 2024, bandits set fire to several farms in the Birnin Gwari LGA, destroying harvested maize in the process.995

Road security - Criminal groups reportedly have been stopping cars on major highways, including the Abuja-Kaduna highway, and abducting people.996 While media sources reported violent incidents, including abductions, on that highway during the reference period,997 according to police sources no abductions were recorded.998 In April 2024, an evangelical pastor was reportedly killed by bandits along the Birnin Gwari-Kaduna highway.999

Displacement, movement and return - According to IOM, the conflict in the north-western states of Nigeria has worsened, leading to widespread displacement throughout the region.1000 As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Kaduna state at 117 9891001 compared to 113 089 as of November 2024. IOM lists armed banditry/kidnapping (55 %), communal clashes (24 %), disasters (11 %), and farmer-herder clashes (8 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.1002 The Africa Center for Strategic Studies in October 2024 attributed 50 % of displacements in Kaduna to criminal group activity.1003

No information could be found on returns in Kaduna state during the reference period.

c) State response in maintaining law and order

Security forces conducted ground1004 and air operations against armed groups,1005 including counter-operations against Boko Haram, ISWAP and Ansaru in 2024.1006 Security operations resulted in the release of abduction victims during the reference period.1007 In late March 2024, around 130 children abducted from a school in early March 2024 were reportedly freed by security forces.1008

In early 2024, residents of Kaduna state reportedly called for the Federal Government to recruit, train, and empower local vigilante groups to combat banditry and abductions, highlighting the state's security breakdown.1009 Ansaru factions and bandit groups have reportedly displaced state institutions in Chikun, Giwa, and Birnin Gwari LGAs.1010 In June 2024, three new military bases were established in Kaduna state in order to tackle the insecurity.1011 In February 2025, Kachia LGA residents protested against a surge in attacks and abductions, highlighting the need for increased security measures.1012 The construction of new access roads between Fadama, Koroto, and Kutara in April 2025 has been reported to enhance security in the state by facilitating quicker access to bandit-infested areas.1013 Critics argued that despite government

efforts to address farmer-herder clashes in Kaduna State, the crisis was not receiving the necessary attention from authorities.1014

In May 2024, the Nigerian military announced that two officers would face a court-martial for a December 2023 military drone attack in Tundun Biri, Kaduna state, which killed 85 individuals when the military mistook them for 'terrorists'; the military authorities did not provide details on the investigation.1015 In September 2024, a military airstrike in Kaduna state that killed 24 people was supposedly carried out 'based on credible intelligence from multiple reliable sources'; the Air Force announced an investigation into the strike.1016

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