

2.3.4 Katsina

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Katsina state is comprised of the following 34 LGAs: Bakori, Batagarawa, Batsari, Baure, Bindawa, Charanchi, Dan Musa, Dandume, Danja, Daura, Dutsi, Dutsin Ma, Faskari, Funtua, Ingawa, Jibia, Kafur, Kaita, Kankara, Kankia, Katsina, Kurfi, Kusada, Mai'Adua, Malumfashi, Mani, Mashi, Matazu, Musawa, Rimi, Sabuwa, Safana, Sandamu, Zango.1052 The capital city is Katsina.1053

The majority of the population in Katsina are Hausa and Fulani, and are mainly settled cultivators and traders, but there is also a significant number of nomadic Fulani cattle herders. 1054 There are also Maguwazawa, Yoruba and Igbo minorities in Katsina state. The majority of the population are Muslims, with a Christian minority.1055

UNFPA and the US Census Bureau projected the state's population at 10 368 483 in 2022, based on figures from the 2006 census.1056

a) Conflict dynamics and main actors

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

In May 2025, IOM reported a multi-dimensional crisis in Nigeria's North-West, with long-standing ethnic and religious tensions leading to attacks and banditry.1057 Katsina was one of the three states worst affected by rural banditry,1058 with bandits maintaining camps in the state's forests.1059 In early 2024, violent incidents related to banditry in Katsina state increased,1060 following a spike in attacks on civilians.1061 Between 2019 and October 2024, Katsina was among the five Nigerian states most severely impacted by inter-group clashes between bandit groups.1062 In July 2024, FEWS NET reported that households in Katsina state were also severely impacted by farmer-herder conflict and abductions.1063

During the reference period, attacks against civilians, leading to civilian deaths, abductions,1064 including mass abductions,1065 lootings, house burnings,1066 and cattle rustling were reported.1067 Between July 2023 and June 2024, Katsina state accounted for 119 of the country's 1 130 abduction incidents and 887 of the 7 568 victims, making it the second-most Nigerian state affected by abductions.1068 In 2024, Katsina was the state with the fourth-highest number of abduction victims (267)1069 and abductions reportedly increased by 97 % compared to the foregoing 4-year average.1070 According to Amnesty International, 306 individuals were abducted in Katsina between May 2023 and May 2025 by armed groups, who also pressured individuals into paying taxes by threatening to kill them.1071 According to the

February 2025 UN Security Council report, Boko Haram's Adamu Yunusa/Adamu Sadiqu faction was present in Katsina state.1072

Supported by vigilantes and the Community Watch Corps (created in late 20241073),1074 government forces carried out security operations against bandits,1075 including airstrikes.1076

SBM Intelligence reported IED explosions in Katsina state in February and June 2025.1077

b) Security incidents and impact on the population

For the period between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2025, ACLED recorded 746 security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) in Katsina state, which resulted in 2 145 fatalities. Of these incidents, 433 were coded as incidents of violence against civilians, 271 were coded as battles, 28 as explosions/remote violence, and 14 as riots.1078

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Figure 21: Evolution of security events coded as battles, explosions/remote violence, riots, and violence against civilians in Katsina state, 1 January 2024 – 31 August 2025, based on ACLED data.1079

Security incidents were recorded by ACLED in 28 LGAs of the state, with the highest number documented in Faskari (107 incidents), followed by Kankara (91 incidents), Dutsinma (72), Malumfasi (63), and Jibia (49 incidents). No incidents were recorded in 6 LGAs. According to ACLED, Katsina communal militia (coded as either 'Actor 1' or 'Actor 2') were involved in the majority of incidents coded as violence against civilians.1080

Katsina state was the fourth 'most dangerous' state in Nigeria in 2024, according to Nigeria Watch, with 11.39 violence-related fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, following Zamfara, Borno, and Niger states.1081 ACLED reports a similar trend, ranking Katsina as the third state with the highest number of security incidents (defined as battles, explosions/remote violence, violence against civilians, and riots) during the reference period.1082

According to Nigeria Watch, in 2024, Katsina saw the highest number of fatalities due to rural banditry, cattle rustling and government counter-operations, accounting for 577 of the about 1 452 deaths, including of civilians, recorded in nine states and the FCT.1083

In January 2024, over 60 army-style dressed bandits invaded Tashar Na-Gulle village in Batsari LGA, abducting some 30 persons.1084 In May 2025, armed bandits attacked Kuki in Dutsin-Ma LGA, affecting 2 155 individuals.1085 In mid-August 2025, armed men attacked a mosque in Unguwan Mantau village, killing a minimum of 17 persons in the mosque,1086 and killing and abducting more in nearby villages, where they also burned houses.1087 An airstrike in February 2025 in Safana area led to at least six civilian deaths.1088

Conflict-related infrastructure damage - An October 2024 Africa Center for Strategic Studies report highlights the ongoing attacks by criminal groups on medical facilities in north-western states, including Katsina. The attacks result in the looting of medical supplies and the

razing of facilities, with some shutting down due to insecurity.1089 In March 2024, terrorist attacks in Wurma village in Kurfi LGA resulted in the destruction of a primary healthcare centre and a police outpost.1090 A security analyst noted in June 2025 that the existence of terrorists often led to dilapidated schools, and health centres, with such infrastructure often destroyed or taken by armed groups in remote areas of Katsina state.1091

Road security - Criminal groups in Katsina state were reportedly engaging in grand larceny along major highways.1092 Reported incidents included an attempted attack on security forces on the Dutsinma-Kurfi highway,1093 an attack on a commercial vehicle on the Jibia-Katsina road,1094 and an abduction incident on the Kankara-Dutsinma road.1095 The roads leading from Jibia to Batsari, Batsari to Katsina, Jibia to Katsina, and Kankara to Sheme were reportedly among the most vulnerable to attacks.1096

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.1097 As of February 2025, IOM estimated the number of IDPs in Katsina state at 270 9681098 compared to 227 203 as of November 2024. IOM lists armed banditry/kidnapping (77 %), disasters (15 %), communal clashes (7 %), and armed insurgency (1 %) as the main reasons for displacement in the state.1099 The IMDC reported 295 000 cases of internal displacement due to conflict and violence in Nigeria in 2024, with 123 000 in three north-western states, including Katsina.1100 The abovementioned bandit attack in May 2025 on Kuki in Dutsin-Ma LGA displaced 604 individuals.1101 The Africa Center for Strategic Studies in October 2024 attributed 84 % of displacement in Katsina to criminal group activity.1102

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

c) State response in maintaining law and order

In late January 2024, around 30 people who had been abducted in the Batsari LGA earlier the same month, were reportedly rescued by the army.1103 In April 2025, a series of attacks in Katsina state reportedly led to residents' outrage, as they claimed government security forces had failed to protect them. Despite repeated calls for help from communities, who were under attack for two days, security forces were absent, resulting in the abduction of over 50 persons. 1104 Following the abovementioned attack on a mosque in Unguwan Mantau village by armed men in mid-August 2025, a police source reported that the security forces had stopped the attackers, preventing further attacks on two more villages.1105 Later that month, 76 abduction victims were reportedly rescued in a security operation involving an airstrike on a bandit stronghold in Pauwa Hill.1106

According to a security analyst, in Nigerian ‘territories overrun by terrorists’, including in remote areas in Katsina state, governance and secular leadership were scarcely present and state structures, including police posts and local government offices, were ‘destroyed or taken over’ by them.1107 According to sources, some communities in Katsina state have taken it upon themselves to negotiate with bandit groups.1108

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