



COI QUERY

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COI QUERY RESPONSE – Nigeria

Security situation in Borno state

1. Background

In 2009, the jihadist insurgent group Boko Haram launched a rebellion against Nigeria¹ calling for the establishment of a caliphate.² Boko Haram reassembled under the name Jama’tu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’awati wal-Jihad (JAS)³ in 2010.⁴ Later, it changed to Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) when it pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS)⁵ in 2015.⁶ In 2016, ISWAP splintered into ISWAP, which continued to have the recognition of ISIS, and JAS, which is also referred to as Boko Haram.⁷ According to International Crisis Group, the conflict between these splinters, which still possess ‘thousands’ of fighters and pose a significant threat, ‘stems from differences in governance and treatment of civilians’.⁸

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the North-East, where Borno state is located, was the most affected zone by the conflict.⁹ Throughout 2023, human rights abuses continued to be perpetrated by Boko Haram and ISWAP in the North-East.¹⁰ In 2023 a ‘resurgence’ of ISWAP attacks in the North-East was reported.¹¹ Nigeria Watch, a database that monitors lethal violence in the country, reported that Borno state recorded the highest number of total fatalities in Nigeria (2 123), and was described as ‘the most dangerous state’ in 2023 with 29.03 fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, mainly due to the Boko Haram attacks.¹² The same source indicated that, in 2023, actions attributed to Boko Haram, ISWAP, Ansaru,¹³ and state forces resulted in 1 932 fatalities.¹⁴ Furthermore, during 2023, violent incidents, such as

¹ International Crisis Group, Fighting among Boko Haram Splinters Rages On, 30 May 2023, [url](#); CCCPA, Factional split inside Boko Haram: Evolving dynamics and future implications, n.d., [url](#), p. 3

² CCCPA, Factional split inside Boko Haram: Evolving dynamics and future implications, n.d., [url](#), p. 3

³ International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#); CCCPA, Factional split inside Boko Haram: Evolving dynamics and future implications, n.d., [url](#), p. 3

⁴ CCCPA, Factional split inside Boko Haram: Evolving dynamics and future implications, n.d., [url](#), p. 3

⁵ International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#); CCCPA, Factional split inside Boko Haram: Evolving dynamics and future implications, n.d., [url](#), p. 3

⁶ CCCPA, Factional split inside Boko Haram: Evolving dynamics and future implications, n.d., [url](#), p. 3

⁷ International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

⁸ International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

⁹ IOM, Nigeria — North-east — Mobility Tracking Round 46 IDP and Returnee Atlas (December 2023), 14 February 2024, [url](#), p. 3

¹⁰ AI, Amnesty International Report 2023/2024 - Nigeria, 24 April 2024, [url](#), p. 285; USDOS, 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Nigeria, 22 April 2024, [url](#)

¹¹ HRW, World Report 2024 - Nigeria, 11 January 2024, [url](#)

¹² Nigeria Watch, Annual Report 2023, n.d., [url](#), pp. 6, 13

¹³ Ansaru is a jihadist group based in Nigeria and is associated with al-Qaeda. Perspectives on Terrorism, Ansaru Resurgent: The Rebirth of Al-Qaeda’s Nigerian Franchise, October 2021, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁴ Nigeria Watch, Annual Report 2023, n.d., [url](#), p. 13



attacks, abductions and extortion in the North-East were perpetrated by non-state armed groups (NSAGs), including Boko Haram and ISWAP.¹⁵

Sources reported that military operations by government forces against Boko Haram and ISWAP resulted in the death of civilians.¹⁶ According to International Crisis Group, ‘[i]nformation from Borno is harder to get, but a security analyst and a journalist confirmed to Crisis Group two incidences of civilian injuries in airstrikes, one near Pulka in November 2023 and another near Kukawa on 9 January 2024.’¹⁷ TheCable reported that an air strike carried out by the military on ISWAP camps at Bukar Mairam, Borno state, killed 40 insurgents, and that ‘heavy’ gun battle lasted about two days.¹⁸ According to International Crisis Group, ‘[g]overnment offensives meet with only limited success. The fighters simply withdraw, hiding out and harassing the army with occasional raids, while they wait for the offensive to end.’¹⁹

2. Security developments, including security incidents

International Crisis Group reported that the commitment of Nigeria’s neighbours to the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), which is composed of military forces from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon, is weakening, among others, due to worsening relations between Nigeria and Niger, which led to the closure of the Nigerien border to Nigerian troops that cannot longer resupply in Niger to pursue jihadists.²⁰ Additional information could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

The Guardian reported that troops of the 21st armoured brigade and the 199 Special Forces Battalion, in cooperation with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), were involved in counter-insurgency operations against Boko Haram in Sambisa forest in Borno state in April 2023.²¹ The jihadist insurrection is described as ‘very violent’ in states around the Chad Basin, including Borno.²² Sources reported on mass abductions of people in March 2024 by Boko Haram in Borno state,²³ most of them children.²⁴

¹⁵ ACAPS, Nigeria. Conflict in northeastern and northwestern Nigeria, 3 January 2024, [url](#), p. 1

¹⁶ USDOS, 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Nigeria, 22 April 2024, [url](#); Nigeria Watch, Annual Report 2023, n.d., [url](#), p. 13

¹⁷ International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

¹⁸ TheCable, Air strike ‘kills scores of ISWAP fighters’ in Borno, 19 December 2023, [url](#)

¹⁹ International Crisis Group, Fighting among Boko Haram Splinters Rages On, 30 May 2023, [url](#)

²⁰ International Crisis Group, JAS vs. ISWAP: The War of the Boko Haram Splinters, 28 March 2024, [url](#)

²¹ Guardian (The) Nigeria, Troops kill 35 terrorists, destroy camps in Sambisa forest, 24 April 2023, [url](#)

²² IISS, Armed Conflict Survey 2023, From Global Jihad to Local Insurgencies: the Changing Nature of Sub-Saharan Jihadism, 6 December 2023, [url](#); The IISS survey covers the period 1 May 2022–30 June 2023. Source: IISS, Armed Conflict Survey 2023, Editor’s Introduction, 6 December 2023, [url](#)

²³ Global Initiative against transnational organized crime and ACLED, What does the recent escalation of mass abductions in Nigeria tell us?, 15 March 2024, [url](#); OHCHR, Nigeria: UN Human Rights Chief appalled by recent mass abductions, 15 March 2024, [url](#)

²⁴ AI, Nigeria: Authorities must ensure safe release and return of over 680 people abducted this week, 8 March 2024, [url](#)



Foreign workers and NGO workers have been reportedly kidnapped in Borno state.²⁵ The US Department of State (USDOS) report on Nigeria for 2023 indicated that '[t]hreats of attacks by ISIS-WA on humanitarian assistance convoys and aid workers constrained the provision of assistance to internally displaced persons (IDP) and local communities in the North East region.²⁶ UNHCR reported that, between January and February 2024, SGBV (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence) was the most reported protection incident in Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe States, including increasing incidents of violence perpetrated by NSAGs.²⁷ The same source reported that 'women and girls made up 100% of SGBV survivors, with 21% of incidents involving children'.²⁸

Security incidents in Borno state, as reported by sources, included:

- On 14 March 2024, NSAG members attacked two households in Soye community Bama LGA [Local Government Area], and took away about 20 livestock, consisting of goats and sheep.²⁹
- On 6 March 2024, NSAGs killed three individuals (two men and one woman) between the ages of 25-59 and injured four men between the ages of 18 – 59 at Mairamri; and seized property, animals, and other necessities.³⁰
- On 7 February 2024, two male IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) returnees, living in the Hausari host community were killed by alleged NSAGS at Lakwadisa, Hambagda/Limankara/Jaje Ward, while they were searching for fruits.³¹
- On 4 February 2024, 26 girls and boys aged 12 to 17 years old living in GSS Camp and Gwoza wakane camp, were abducted by alleged NSAGs at Kuseraha Duma, when they were searching for fruits and firewood.³²
- In February 2024, NSAGs kidnapped over 200 people living in the Ngala refugee camp, mostly women and children who were in the forest collecting firewood.³³

²⁵ Punch, ISWAP abducts three aid workers, security guards in Borno, 27 April 2023, [url](#)

²⁶ USDOS, 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Nigeria, 22 April 2024, [url](#);

²⁷ UNHCR, Protection Monitoring Report, UNHCR Maiduguri Sub-Office, January-February 2024, 18 March 2024, [url](#), p. 4

²⁸ UNHCR, Protection Monitoring Report, UNHCR Maiduguri Sub-Office, January-February 2024, 18 March 2024, [url](#), p. 6

²⁹ UNHCR, Protection Sector North East Nigeria, Killing and Abduction of Civilians in Borno State, Nigeria, 26 March 2024, [url](#), p. 3

³⁰ UNHCR, Protection Sector North East Nigeria, Killing and Abduction of Civilians in Borno State, Nigeria, 26 March 2024, [url](#), p. 3

³¹ UNHCR, Protection Sector North East Nigeria, Killing and Abduction of Civilians in Borno State, Nigeria, 26 March 2024, [url](#), p. 1

³² UNHCR, Protection Sector North East Nigeria, Killing and Abduction of Civilians in Borno State, Nigeria, 26 March 2024, [url](#), p. 1

³³ VOA, UN Condemns Mass Abduction of Displaced Persons in Nigeria, 7 March 2024, [url](#); TheCable, UN: Over 200 IDPs were abducted from Borno camp, 7 March 2024, [url](#)



- On 1 January 2024, seven men were killed by NSAG members at Amdaga, Mbomba Kache and Gada Tashan Damboa, Wala Warabe ward. The attack occurred when the returnees went to fetch firewood.³⁴
- On 5 November 2023, NSAGs killed 11 farmers in Monguno; the farmers were on their way to Kaluwa to buy charcoal. NSAGs also killed 10 farmers Mafa.³⁵
- In April 2023, three NGO workers and two security guards with FHI 360, a US-based non-for-profit development organisation, were kidnapped by ISWAP in Ngala.³⁶ Two of the kidnapped were reportedly ‘recovered’ by authorities in May 2023.³⁷

3. Humanitarian situation, including humanitarian access

Between October–December 2023, an estimated 2.8 million people faced acute food insecurity in the North-East states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe.³⁸ UNOCHA estimates the number at 3.3 million.³⁹ UNOCHA reported that, according to Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), ‘1,250 severely malnourished children with complications were admitted to its inpatient therapeutic feeding centres across the BAY [Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe] states in April 2024,’ doubling the number admitted in April 2023.⁴⁰ MSF also reported that ‘BAY states reported a 63 per cent increase in admissions of children with complicated severe acute malnutrition (SAM) between January and April 2024 compared to the same period in 2023,’ and that the prevalence of SAM and Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) among children ages 6 to 59 months is 18 %.⁴¹ UNOCHA indicated that in Borno state, around 172 570 households need shelter and 194 480 non-food items (NFI)⁴² and that ‘[m]ost of the emergency shelters in Borno state are fully or partially damaged and require replacement or maintenance.’⁴³

On 13 July 2023, President Bola Tinubu declared a state of emergency due to food insecurity and address increasing food prices and food shortages.⁴⁴ Additional information could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

³⁴ UNHCR, Protection Sector North East Nigeria, Killing and Abduction of Civilians in Borno State, Nigeria, 26 March 2024, [url](#), p. 1

³⁵ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 20 November 2023, [url](#), p. 2

³⁶ AFP, Two Grabbed Nigerian Aid Workers Released, 4 May 2023, [url](#); Punch, ISWAP abducts three aid workers, security guards in Borno, 27 April 2023, [url](#)

³⁷ AFP, Two Grabbed Nigerian Aid Workers Released, 4 May 2023, [url](#)

³⁸ ACAPS, Nigeria. Conflict in northeastern and northwestern Nigeria, 3 January 2024, [url](#), p. 2

³⁹ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 20 November 2023, [url](#), p. 4

⁴⁰ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 18 June 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁴¹ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 18 June 2024, [url](#), p. 2

⁴² UNHCR defined NFI as ‘any items other than food that are distributed to people affected by natural hazard-induced or conflict-induced displacement or other situations of crisis. NFIs are individual and household items that enable forcibly displaced and stateless persons to conduct their daily lives (eat, drink, sleep, cook, wash and store belongings) and maintain a minimum standard of living’. UNHCR, In-Kind Non-Food Item Distribution, 30 August 2023, [url](#)

⁴³ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 18 June 2024, [url](#), p. 15

⁴⁴ Punch, Food shortage: Tinubu declares state of emergency, plans 500,000 hectares farmland, 14 July 2023, [url](#); BBC News, Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu declares state of emergency over food, 14 July 2023, [url](#)



4. Internal displacement

According to IOM, insurgency, involving attacks by NSAG was the main reason of displacement reported (in 92 % of the locations), followed by communal clashes (6%), farmers-herders' conflicts, armed banditry/kidnapping and natural disasters.⁴⁵ As of December 2023, there were 2 305 335 IDPs in North-East Nigeria, with Borno hosting 74 % of IDPs, corresponding to 1 711 481 people.⁴⁶

UNOCHA reported that since January 2021, the Borno State Government has closed all official IDP camps in Maiduguri, and in November 2023, it announced plans to close the Government Senior Science Secondary School IDP camp in Monguno, resettling its over 16 000 camp residents to Kekeno, Mile 90 and Yoyo and others.⁴⁷ Furthermore, in November 2023, the Borno State Government announced the closure of the Kamcheji, Motor Park, Mohammed Kyari, Kanumburi, and Modu Kasa IDP camps in Dikwa, resettling its 17 000 residents to Gajibo and Logomane.⁴⁸ UNOCHA indicated that the '[h]igh congestion across the five IDP camps in Dikwa has degraded the quality of humanitarian services provided in the camps.'⁴⁹ The same source also indicated, however, that IDPs are being relocated to 'fringe areas dominated by non-state armed groups' and that most of these areas lack health care, education, and other basic services, as well as land and livelihood opportunities.⁵⁰ As of December 2023, Borno state hosted 871 017 returnees.⁵¹

⁴⁵ IOM, Nigeria — North-east — Mobility Tracking Round 46 IDP and Returnee Atlas (December 2023), 14 February 2024, [url](#), p. 10

⁴⁶ IOM, Nigeria — North-east — Mobility Tracking Round 46 IDP and Returnee Atlas (December 2023), 14 February 2024, [url](#), p. 7

⁴⁷ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 20 November 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁴⁸ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 20 November 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁴⁹ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 20 November 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁵⁰ UNOCHA, Nigeria- Situation report, 20 November 2023, [url](#), p. 2

⁵¹ IOM, Nigeria — North-east — Mobility Tracking Round 46 IDP and Returnee Atlas (December 2023), 14 February 2024, [url](#), p. 14



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