

## FACT SHEET NIGERIA

This Fact Sheet is based on the executive summary of the [ORFA report](https://orfa.africa/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/26082024-ORFA-4-YEARS-REPORT.pdf) 'Countering the myth of religious indifference in Nigerian terror (10/2019 - 9/2023)'.<sup>1</sup> (source: <https://orfa.africa/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/26082024-ORFA-4-YEARS-REPORT.pdf> )

Nigeria is grappling with a complex security crisis characterized by widespread violence, especially targeting religious groups. From 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2023, research shows that the Muslim Fulani Ethnic Militia have been carrying out mass killings, abductions, and torture of Christians with little resistance. Government forces largely fail to intervene, focusing their efforts elsewhere while these attacks continue unopposed.

### Nigeria: Key Violence Statistics (Oct 2019–Sept 2023)

- Total people killed: 55,910 (civilians: 30,880; Security Forces or Terror Groups: 25,030)
- Total people abducted: 21,621 (civilians: 21,532; Security Forces or Terror Groups: 89)
- Attacks with killings and/or abductions (distinct): 11,610
  - Attacks with killings only: 8,905
  - Attacks with both killings and abductions: 1,065
  - Attacks with abductions only: 1,640
- Average: 8 attacks per day involving killings and/or abductions

### Religious Group Impact

- More Nigerian Christians were killed than Nigerians holding to other religious affiliations. Amongst the 30,880 civilians killed:
  - Number of Christians killed: 16,769
  - Number of Muslims killed was 6,235
  - Number of African Traditional Religionists killed: 154
  - Religious identity of 7,722 civilians killed remained unknown.
- More Nigerian Christians were abducted than Nigerians holding to other religious affiliations. Amongst the 21,532 civilians abducted:
  - Number of Christians abducted: 11,185
  - Number of Muslims abducted: 7,899
  - Number of African Traditional Religionists abducted: 184
  - Religious identity of 2,264 civilians abducted remained unknown.
- Ratio Christians to Muslims killed: 2.71
- Ratio Christians to Muslims abducted: 1.41
- Ratio (adjusted for population in the different states): Christians/Muslims killed: 6.5
- Ratio (adjusted for population in the different states): Christians/Muslims abducted: 5.1

### Attack Patterns

- Most civilians were killed during attacks on their communities: 25,312.
- Most civilians were abducted during attacks on their communities: 16,761 abducted.
- Attacks with killings were widespread: 65 LGAs in the top 25 for killings, spanning 15 states and 4 geopolitical zones.
- Attacks with abductions were widespread: 60 LGAs in the top 25 for abductions, across 14 states and 6 zones.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://orfa.africa/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/26082024-ORFA-4-YEARS-REPORT.pdf>

## Trends Over Time

- Attacks with civilians killed, especially Christian farmers in the North Central, peaked between April and May, which is the heart of the farming season.
- During this peak there was considerably less engagement by Security Forces.
- Security Forces concentrated operations in North West and North East, leaving North Central more vulnerable.

## Responsible Groups

- Most civilian killings: Other Terrorist Groups (12,039) and Armed Fulani Herdsmen (11,948). Boko Haram and ISWAP combined are responsible for 3,079 civilian deaths.
- Largest abductions: Other Terrorist Groups (13,728), Armed Fulani Herdsmen (6,380), Boko Haram and ISWAP combined (1,023).
- Christian victims (killings): 55% (9,153) killed by Armed Fulani Herdsmen, 29% (4,895) by Other Terrorist Groups, 8% (1,268) by Boko Haram and ISWAP combined.
- Muslim victims (killings): 24% (1,473) killed by Armed Fulani Herdsmen, 53% (3,334) by Other Terrorist Groups, 12% (770) by Boko Haram and ISWAP combined.
- Christian victims (abductions): 35% (3,914) abducted by Armed Fulani Herdsmen, 60% (6,657) by Other Terrorist Groups, 4% (422) by Boko Haram and ISWAP combined.
- Muslim victims (abductions): 24% (1,903) abducted by Armed Fulani Herdsmen, 71% (5,635) by Other Terrorist Groups, 4% (300) by Boko Haram and ISWAP combined.

## Additional findings

- ORFA's research showed that the Muslim Armed Fulani Herdsmen are affiliated to FEM (Fulani Ethnic Militia). FEM is an ethno-religious terrorist group.
- Additional research showed that a significant part of the Other Terrorist Groups consists of so-called bandit groups. Many of them have a Fulani background and can be considered as affiliated to FEM.<sup>2</sup>
- It follows that the affiliates of FEM are a much larger factor in violence than Boko Haram and ISWAP combined.

## Final notes

- Community attacks not only caused death and kidnapping but also led to severe trauma and economic devastation through destruction and loss of land, incurring ransom debts and forced displacement.
- Reports since 2015 note differences in captivity experiences of Christian and Muslim victims, including forced labor, sexual violence, amount of ransom, and religious tests.

---

<sup>2</sup> Research results will be published in the ORFA 6-years report (Oct 2019 – Sept 2025). (Planned for January/February 2026.)