



Nigeria – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 26 April 2019

Information on Hausa/Fulani including: nationwide presence; population in Kaduna; population in Maiduguri; & attacks on homes/incidences in Kaduna

A PBS NewsHour report, in a section headed “Hausa-Fulani”, states:

“Muslim Hausa and Fulani are the predominant ethnic groups in Nigeria’s northern region. Though the groups originated in different parts of West Africa, religion, intermarriage and adoption of the Hausa language by the Fulani have unified the groups over time. In contemporary Nigerian society, they are often referred to collectively as Hausa-Fulani.

The largest of the major ethnic groups, Hausa and Fulani have been politically dominant since Nigeria’s independence from Britain in 1960.

Islam is a key component of their ethnic identity and continues to inform their role in modern Nigerian society and politics. Their culture is deeply patriarchal and patrilineal.

In recent years, Hausa and Fulani were instrumental in adopting and upholding Sharia, a system of Islamic law, in 11 of the country’s northern states.” (PBS NewsHour (5 April 2007) *Ethnicity in Nigeria*)

A document published on the evangelical Christian website The Joshua Project, in a paragraph headed “Introduction / History”, refers to the Hausa ethnic group as follows:

“The Hausa are the largest ethnic group in all of West Africa. Thirty percent of all Hausa can be found in the north and northwest regions of Nigeria, an area known as ‘Hausaland.’ (The Joshua Project (undated) *Hausa in Nigeria*)

In a paragraph headed “What Are Their Lives Like?” this document states:

“In comparison to some other African tribes, the Hausa have reasonable standards of health care, diet, shelter, electricity, and education. However, life for the Hausa is still very difficult. For example, nearly one-third of the people are unemployed, and only about half of the population can read and write. The average life expectancy of a Nigerian is only 53 years.

In marriage relationships, close relatives, preferably cousins, are chosen as partners. Marriages are arranged, and ceremonies last for weeks. Everyone is to appear happy except the bride. In the village compounds, each wife has her own hut where she and her young children sleep. Often the husband has his own hut where the wives take turns spending the night. In Nigerian terms, a woman is almost always defined as someone's daughter, wife,

mother, or widow and is given less educational opportunities than men. In fact, women are often confined to the home, except for visits to relatives and attending ceremonies. For the most part, women do not work in the fields, but are responsible for preparing all the daily meals. There is a large population of single women, especially in the cities, due to the high divorce rate.” (ibid)

A page on the tourism website Come to Nigeria, in a paragraph headed “Major towns and cities”, states:

“Many of the towns and cities in northern Nigeria had been predominantly occupied by the Hausa-Fulani people dated back to the stone age. Amongst these main cities are: Kano City – known as the groundnuts pyramids and indigo city. Others are Biram, Katsina, Abuja, Bauchi, Birnin Kebbi, Damaturu, Dutse, Gombe, Gusau, Jalingo, Jebba, Jos, Kaduna, Katsina, Lafia, Maiduguri, Makurdi, Sokoto, Suleja, Yola, Zaria.” (Come to Nigeria (undated) *Hausa And Fulani People*)

A report published by the UK-registered charity 28 Too Many, in a section titled “Hausa”, states:

"The Hausa are one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa, primarily living in northern Nigeria and south-eastern Niger. They make up around 21% of the population of Nigeria. The Hausa were historically recognised as successful traders. Islam has had a strong influence on their culture, including their language and marriage rites. There is also a significant number of Christians among the Hausa in Nigeria. Descent is patrilineal and, traditionally, early and polygynous marriage was not uncommon, often between close kin. In present-day Nigeria, the Hausa's frequent interaction and inter-marriage with the Fulani has resulted in both groups being increasingly referred to as the 'Hausa-Fulani'. FGM prevalence is 19.4%. The Hausa often practise Type III or, like the Fulani, they may practise Yankan Gishiri (salt cut), which is classified as Type IV.” (28 Too Many (October 2016) *Country Profile: FGM In Nigeria*, p.19)

A BBC News report, in a section titled “Who are the Fulanis?”, states:

“They are believed to be the largest semi-nomadic group in the world and are found across West and Central Africa - from Senegal to the Central African Republic

In Nigeria, some continue to live as semi-nomadic herders, while others have moved to cities

Unlike the more integrated city dwellers, the nomadic groups spend most of their lives in the bush and are the ones largely involved in these clashes

They herd their animals across vast areas, frequently clashing with farming communities

They are often linked with another group, the Hausas, having lived together for a very long time. Some refer to the Hausa-Fulanis but they are different groups

The Fulanis played a key role in 19th Century revival of Islam in Nigeria”
(BBC News (5 May 2016) *Making sense of Nigeria's Fulani-farmer conflict*)

A report from the London-based NGO Chatham House states:

“Over the past two decades, Nigeria’s Kaduna State has experienced a sharp segregation along religious and ethnic lines precipitated by about a dozen outbreaks of violence. Kaduna’s Hausa-Fulani residents, who are mostly Muslim, are the majority in the northern half of the state, while the people of southern Kaduna are predominantly Christian, although tribally and linguistically diverse. The river that runs through the city of Kaduna, the state capital, highlights the starkness of the divide: the northern half is unofficially called Mecca; the south, Jerusalem.

Between 10,000 and 20,000 people are estimated to have died in incidents across Kaduna State since 1980, a pattern of violence that peaked in 1992 and again from 2000 to 2002. In 2011, when tensions boiled over across 10 northern states triggered by protests against the presidential election results, more than 500 people were killed in southern Kaduna alone.

Outbreaks of violence in this area have now reached an unprecedented scale and frequency over the past five years. Nigeria’s National Emergency Management Agency reports that 204 people were killed in southern Kaduna between October and December 2016 – the bloodiest period since 2011– though these figures are hotly disputed by various local and religious groups.”
(Chatham House (15 February 2017) *Violence in Southern Kaduna Threatens to Undermine Nigeria’s Democratic Stability*)

In an article published on The Conversation website the author Damilola Agbalajobi states:

“In Kaduna State the Hausa-Fulani majority occupies the north, often referred to as ‘mecca’. The minority Christian population resides in the south, or ‘Jerusalem’. Since 1980, violence fuelled by these divisions has claimed about 20,000 lives.

The Hausa-Fulani have historically wielded governmental power and control over the states political and economic structures. This has damaged relations with the non-Muslim minority. The non-Muslims are often referred to as pagans and they have been ruled by the dominant Muslim population for years.

These ethno-religious differences have been entrenched by the dominant Hausa-Fulani group who make up 60% of the population. The group has marginalised the 30 minority non-Muslim tribes who make up the remaining 40%. These tribes are now predominantly Christian.” (The Conversation (12 February 2019) *Explainer: factors that foster conflict in Nigeria’s Kaduna state*)

In a section titled “Factors in the current crisis” this article states:

“In 2000 the then Governor Mohammed A. Makarfi introduced sharia law in the Kaduna State. This dramatically intensified religious tensions as the

introduction of sharia law further polarised people and made the Christian minority even more fearful of their Muslim neighbours.

The change was contrary to Nigeria's 1999 constitution which states that Nigeria is a secular state.

Ultimately, the introduction of sharia law led to even more violence. Attacks and counter attacks claimed the lives of 1,295 people and an unstated number of bodies were buried without identification.

Violence in the region is also undoubtedly fuelled by the fact that both sides have unfettered access to weapons. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is due to the fact that the borders between Nigeria and neighbouring states such as Niger, Chad, and Cameroon are porous, allowing illegal entry of arms smugglers.

There is also an occupational dimension to the violence. The Hausa-Fulani are predominantly cattle herders while the people of southern Kaduna are mostly farmers who cultivate food crops for a living. Violence periodically flares up between the herdsmen and the farmers when the herdsmen migrate to the south in search of pasture,

The migration triggers conflict over land use, land ownership, and encroachment of farmland. Reprisal attacks from the farmers are common. This dimension of the conflict has been made worse by the religious differences of the actors and the perceived bias of successive Kaduna State governments against the Christian minority." (ibid)

An article from the American business magazine Forbes states:

"The Fulani herdsmen, also known as the Fulani militia, are a semi-nomadic, pastoralist ethnic group living in the central regions of Nigeria, predominately in the Middle Belt. The majority of the Fulani herdsmen are Muslim. They have clashed with indigenous tribes and local, mainly Christian, farmers over grazing land over the centuries. However, as Open Doors explains, the clashes intensified around the time of the 2011 and 2015 elections, and again earlier this year. The regions most affected by the violence include the areas of Jama'a, Kachia, Kagarko, Kaura and Sanga in southern Kaduna.

The atrocities perpetrated by the Fulani herdsmen include the destruction of houses and churches, as well as the seizure of land and properties belonging to Christian owners. Reports have also emerged of the Fulani herdsmen 'kidnapping Christian schoolgirls to marry them to Muslim men.' In its 2015 report, Open Doors lists detailed examples of such targeted attacks. The report rebuts the argument that the clashes were caused by environmental degradation and resulting migration. The report presents a more comprehensive picture incorporating some elements of religious persecution. Indeed, the conflict is extremely complex." (Forbes (4 May 2018) *Trump May Not Be Wrong On the Fulani Herdsmen Crisis In Nigeria*)

A report from Christian Solidarity Worldwide refers to recent violence in Kaduna State as follows:

“At least 120 people have died since 9 February in a series of attacks by Fulani militia on communities in the Adara chiefdom of southern Kaduna. The violence comes in the wake of a statement by the Kaduna state governor on the eve of Nigeria’s presidential elections in February regarding an alleged massacre of Fulani villagers in the area.

On 11 March, 52 people were killed and around 100 homes were destroyed in attacks on Inkirimi and Dogonnoma villages in Maro, Kajuru Local Government Area (LGA). The victims included women and children. According to survivors, their assailants divided into three groups; one group was shooting, another set fire to homes as people ran away, and the third waited in the bush to intercept fleeing villagers. Later that evening, dozens of people were injured and 43 houses were burnt in an attack on Ungwan Gora village.

Pictures have emerged of hospitalised survivors of the Dogonnoma attack, showing men women and young children with deep machete wounds to different parts of their bodies. CSW was informed that one traumatised female survivor who suffered a deep cut to the hand had delivered a stillborn baby soon after the attack.

The day before, on 10 March, Ungwan Barde village in Kajuru suffered an attack in which 17 people died and dozens of homes were burnt. On 26 February, 38 people were killed and around 40 homes were destroyed in attacks on the Karamai community in Maro, Kajuru. Ten people were killed in an earlier attack on Ungwan Barde on 10 February, including a pregnant woman. Prior to this, on 9 February, six people were killed in isolated attacks in the area.

The violence is reported to have displaced thousands of households as people have deserted their villages in search of safety.” (Christian Solidarity Worldwide (14 March 2019) *Militia attacks claim 120 lives since Feb*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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