



Home Office

# Country Background Note Nigeria

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# Preface

## Purpose

This note provides a summary of and links to country of origin information (COI) for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims. It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into two main sections: (1) general background to the country concerned, including demography and geography; and (2) issues which may be relevant to protection claims. Unlike country policy and information notes, it does **not** contain an assessment of risk, availability of protection or reasonableness of internal relocation.

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

## Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013](#). Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the 'cut-off' date in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after this date is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available, and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion.

Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information, and
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

## Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email [the Country Policy and Information Team](#).

## Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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# Country information

Section 3 updated: 5 December 2019

## 1. Geography and demography

### 1.1 Key geographic and demographic facts

- 1.1.1 The official name of the country is the Republic of Nigeria<sup>1</sup>. See the link for images of and information about the [Nigeria flag](#).
- 1.1.2 The total area of the country is 923,768 sq km, with a land mass of 910,768 sq km and water mass of 13,000 sq km<sup>2</sup>. Nigeria is approximately 4 times the size of the United Kingdom.<sup>3</sup>
- 1.1.3 A July 2018 estimate of the population was 203,452,505 with Nigeria having the seventh highest population in the world<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.1.4 The capital city is Abuja<sup>5</sup>.
- 1.1.5 Nigeria 'is bordered to the east by Cameroon and Chad while the west is bound by Benin. Niger is to the north of Nigeria while the northeast of Nigeria is bordered by Lake Chad. The coast of the nation in the south lies along the Gulf of Guinea.'<sup>6</sup>
- 1.1.6 Nigeria is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups, including Hausa 30%, Yoruba 15.5%, Igbo (Ibo) 15.2%, Fulani 6%, Tiv 2.4%, Kanuri/Berberi 2.4%, Ibibio 1.8%, Ijaw/Izon 1.8%, other 24.7% (2018 est.)<sup>7</sup>.
- 1.1.7 A 2018 estimate of distribution of religions in the country indicated Muslim 53.5%, 45.9% Christian (Roman Catholic 10.6%, other Christian 35.3%), other 0.6%<sup>8</sup>.
- 1.1.8 See the CPIN on [Nigeria: Internal relocation](#) for more information on geography and demography.

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### 1.2 Administrative divisions

- 1.2.1 Nigeria is divided into 36 states and one territory:

'Abia, Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Federal Capital Territory [Abuja], Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Lagos, Nasarawa, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe, Zamfara.'<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perm Cmttee for Geographic Names/FCO, 'Country Names', last updated 25 May 2018, [url](#)

<sup>2</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Nigeria' (Geography), updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>3</sup> My Life Elsewhere, 'Country Size Comparison', undated, [url](#)

<sup>4</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Nigeria', updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>5</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Nigeria', updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>6</sup> World Atlas, 'Which Countries Border Nigeria?', undated, [url](#)

<sup>7</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Nigeria', updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>8</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Nigeria', updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>9</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Nigeria', updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

### 1.3 Maps

- 1.3.1 A [map of the country](#) is available on the UN's Geospatial Information Section.
- 1.3.2 See the Perry Castaneda Library Map Collection for thematic maps of Nigeria [Thematic Maps of Nigeria](#).
- 1.3.3 The OnTheWorldMap website provides [administrative](#) and [political](#) maps of Nigeria.
- 1.3.4 For maps on the [humanitarian situation](#) in Nigeria see the 'Maps and Infographics' section of Reliefweb

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### 1.4 Physical geography

- 1.4.1 The climate of the country varies, it is equatorial in south, tropical in the centre and arid in north<sup>10</sup>. Southern lowlands merge into central hills and plateaus with mountains in southeast and plains in north<sup>11</sup>.

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### 1.5 Population density and distribution

- 1.5.1 The population density according to World Population Review is 212.04 per sq. km<sup>12</sup>. The country has the highest population of any African nation, and much of the population resides in the south and south west areas<sup>13</sup>.
- 1.5.2 The Nigerian cities with a population of over a million were Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, Kaduna, Port Harcourt, Benin city and Maiduguri<sup>14</sup>. The same source noted that 'the Lagos State Government estimates the population of Lagos at 17.5 million, although this number has been disputed by the Nigerian government and found to be unreliable by the National Population Commission of Nigeria, which put the population at over 21 million in 2016.'<sup>15</sup>

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Section 2 updated: 5 December 2019

## 2. Economy

### 2.1 Key economic points

- 2.1.1 The currency in Nigeria is the Naira<sup>16</sup>. 1 GBP = 466 Naira (at 27 November 2019)<sup>17</sup>.
- 2.1.2 The Trading Economics website noted that 'The GDP [Gross domestic product] per Capita in Nigeria is equivalent to 19 percent of the world's average.

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<sup>10</sup> CIA Factbook, 'Nigeria', updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>11</sup> CIA Factbook, 'Nigeria', updated 5 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>12</sup> World Population Review, 'Nigeria 2018', [url](#)

<sup>13</sup> World Population Review, 'Nigeria 2018', [url](#)

<sup>14</sup> World Population Review, 'Nigeria 2018', [url](#)

<sup>15</sup> World Population Review, 'Lagos Population 2019', 30 March 2019, [url](#)

<sup>16</sup> XE Currency Converter, [url](#)

<sup>17</sup> XE Currency Converter, [url](#)

GDP per capita in Nigeria averaged 1736.15 USD from 1960 until 2018, reaching an all time high of 2563.90 USD in 2014 and a record low of 1145.80 USD in 1968.’<sup>18</sup>

- 2.1.3 The CIA World Factbook noted in its overview of the county’s economy:  
‘Nigeria is Sub Saharan Africa’s largest economy and relies heavily on oil as its main source of foreign exchange earnings and government revenues...oil-rich Nigeria has been hobbled by inadequate power supply, lack of infrastructure, delays in the passage of legislative reforms, an inefficient property registration system, restrictive trade policies, an inconsistent regulatory environment, a slow and ineffective judicial system, unreliable dispute resolution mechanisms, insecurity, and pervasive corruption. Regulatory constraints and security risks have limited new investment in oil and natural gas...’<sup>19</sup>
- 2.1.4 A Voice of America (VoA) article from December 2018 (quoting National Bureau of Statistics and Brookings Institute) noted that ‘Nigeria’s unemployment numbers jumped by nearly 30 percent this year to 16 million... less than forty percent of Nigeria’s nearly 200 million people are fully employed... Nigeria overtook India this year as having the largest number of people living in extreme poverty — 87 million.’<sup>20</sup>
- 2.1.5 According to an article by Wee Tracker, published in December 2019, ‘The Nigerian government has come under fire for not releasing the quarterly reports on job creation collated by the National Bureau of Statistics. Because the withholding is contrary to what is usual, it has been assumed that the administration is keeping the data inaccessible to prevent an outpouring of criticisms from Nigerians. According to experts, the reports have not seen the light of day because the rate of joblessness has risen above 40 percent. As Africa’s most impressive economy gradually recovers from the 2016 economic recession, unemployment in Nigeria continues to remain a challenge. According to a new report released by the World Bank last week, only 450,000 of the 5 million Nigerians that joined the labor force in 2018 are currently employed. In agreement, the Nigeria Economic Update (NEU) report released last Monday revealed that per capita incomes are falling. The report released in the third quarter of 2018 shows that Nigeria’s unemployment figure rose to about 23.1 percent, trailed by critiques from stakeholders’.<sup>21</sup>
- 2.1.6 According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Nigeria has approximately 71.2 million hectares of available agricultural land, about half of which was currently being utilised, and is heavily dependent on imports for food<sup>22</sup>.
- 2.1.7 See the CPIN on [Nigeria: Internal relocation](#) for more information on the economy.

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<sup>18</sup> Trading Economics, ‘Nigeria GDP per capita’, [url](#)

<sup>19</sup> CIA Factbook, ‘Nigeria’ (Economy), updated 7 November 2019, [url](#)

<sup>20</sup> Voice of America News, ‘Nigeria Struggles Against Unemployment, ...’, 3 Dec 2018, [url](#)

<sup>21</sup> Wee Tracker, Nigeria Withholding Unemployment Data...’, 9 December 2019, [url](#)

<sup>22</sup> Food and Agriculture Org. of the UN, ‘Country Pasture/Forage Resource Profiles’, 2009, [url](#)



### 3. History

3.1.1 The [Encyclopaedia Britannica](#) provide a short history of the country.

3.1.2 The BBC Nigeria Country Profile Timeline noted some key dates in the country's history:

'16-18<sup>th</sup> centuries – Slave trade sees Nigerians forcibly sent to the Americas to work on plantations.

'1850s – Britain establishes presence, which it consolidates over the next 70 years as the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. In 1922, part of former German colony Kamerun is added under a League of Nations mandate.

'1960 – Independence, with Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa leading a coalition government. He is killed in a coup in 1966.

'1967 – Three eastern states secede as the Republic of Biafra, sparking a bloody three-year civil war.

'1983 – Major-General Muhammadu Buhari seizes power in a bloodless coup, ushering in a period of political instability capped by the 1999 presidential and parliamentary elections.

'2000 – Adoption of Islamic law by several northern states in the face of opposition from Christians.

'2009 – Boko Haram jihadists launch a campaign of violence that spreads to neighbouring countries. One high-profile incident involves the kidnapping of 200 school girls in 2014.

'2015 March - Muhammadu Buhari wins the presidential election, becoming the first opposition candidate to do so in Nigeria's history.

'2016 June - Naira currency floated in attempt to stave off financial crisis caused by low oil prices.

'2016 November - Niger Delta Avengers rebels bomb three oil pipelines in attempt to renew southern insurgency.

'2017 December - Clashes between herders in Benue and Taraba states prompt thousands to flee.

'2018 - Escalating attacks by Boko Haram from August onwards, targeting army bases.

'2019 February - Presidential elections held after last-minute delay of a week.'<sup>23</sup>

3.1.3 The Guardian reported on 27 February 2019 that: 'Nigeria's president Muhammadu Buhari has been declared the winner of the country's election after results showed that he claimed 56% of the vote.'<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> BBC, 'Nigeria Country Profile', 18 February 2019, [url](#)

<sup>24</sup> The Guardian, 'Muhammadu Buhari wins Nigerian election...', 27 February 2019, [url](#)

## 4. Media and telecommunications

### 4.1 Key media and telecommunications points

4.1.1 The country calling code is +234<sup>25</sup>

4.1.2 The time in the country can be seen in the [World Clock](#).

4.1.3 The internet domain is .ng<sup>26</sup>.

4.1.4 The BBC Nigeria Media Profile noted:

‘Nigeria's media scene is one of the liveliest in Africa. State radio and TV operate at federal and regional levels. All 36 states run at least one radio network and a TV station.

‘There are hundreds of radio stations and terrestrial TV networks, as well as cable and direct-to-home satellite offerings.

‘Radio is a key source of information. International broadcasters, including the BBC, are popular. However, rebroadcasts of foreign radios are banned.

‘State TV says it reaches tens of millions of viewers, while the main privately-owned networks are market leaders in some cities.

‘There are more than 100 national and local press titles, some of them state-owned. They include well-respected dailies, tabloids and publications which champion ethnic interests.’<sup>27</sup>

4.1.5 The Freedom in the World report covering 2018 noted that ‘The vibrant media landscape is impeded by criminal defamation laws, as well as the frequent harassment and arrests of journalists who cover politically sensitive topics... Freedoms of speech, expression, and the press are constitutionally guaranteed. However, these rights are limited by laws on sedition, criminal defamation, and publication of false news. Sharia (Islamic law) statutes in 12 northern states impose severe penalties for alleged press offenses. Government officials also restrict press freedom by publicly criticizing, harassing, and arresting journalists, especially when they cover corruption scandals, human rights violations, separatist and communal violence, or other politically sensitive topics... Internet service providers sometimes block websites, particularly those that advocate for Biafran independence, at the request of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC)’.<sup>28</sup>

4.1.6 The US State Department 2018 Human Rights Practices Report (USSD Human Rights report 2018) noted that ‘a large and vibrant private domestic press frequently criticized the government, but critics reported being subjected to threats, intimidation, and sometimes violence. Security services increasingly detained and harassed journalists, sometimes for reporting on sensitive problems such as political corruption and security. Security services including the SSS and police occasionally arrested and detained journalists who criticized the government. Moreover, army personnel in some

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<sup>25</sup> Countrycode.org, undated, [url](#)

<sup>26</sup> Worldstandards.eu, undated, [url](#)

<sup>27</sup> BBC, ‘Nigeria Media Profile’, 30 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>28</sup> Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2019: Nigeria, 4 February 2019, [url](#)

cases threatened civilians who provided, or were perceived to have provided, information to journalists or NGOs on misconduct by the military...The government controlled much of the electronic media through the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), which is responsible for monitoring and regulating broadcast media. The law prohibits local television stations from transmitting programming from other countries except for special religious programs, sports programs, or events of national interest. Cable and satellite transmission was less restricted.

‘Civil society organizations expressed concern regarding the broad powers provided by the Cybercrimes Act of 2015. The act has been used by some local and state governments to arrest opponents and critics for alleged hate speech. Those arrested were typically detained only briefly because the Cybercrimes Act had yet to be fully tested in the courts. There was increasing legislative interest and calls for regulating social media due to concerns it plays a role in accelerating rural and electoral violence.’<sup>29</sup>

4.1.7 The Freedom House 2018 Freedom on the Net report covering events between June 2017 and May 2018 noted:

4.1.8 ‘Internet freedom in Nigeria declined in the past year due to unprecedented blocks on 21 websites, including an independent online news outlet, as well as growing intimidation and violence against journalists and activists for their online activities. The continual arrests of journalists and bloggers also remained a concern.

‘Nigeria has one of the largest populations of internet users in sub-Saharan Africa, with over 89 million citizens online. According to the latest data from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Nigeria’s internet penetration rate was 26 percent in 2016. Most of the growth in internet use can be attributed to the proliferation of mobile phone services. As of December 2017, the sector regulator reported a mobile phone teledensity of 103 percent and nearly 145 million active mobile internet subscriptions on GSM networks.

‘...Power cuts frequently disrupt service and access, despite Nigeria’s status as an oil-rich country. Nigerian households reported slight improvements in electricity access in recent years, receiving an average of ten hours of power supply per day in February 2017, up from less than six hours the previous year. Those with the financial wherewithal are able to rely on private generators and standby battery-powered inverter systems to stay online during outages

‘...YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and other communications platforms are freely available and widely used. The complex nature of Nigeria’s internet infrastructure makes it difficult to carry out systematic filtering or censorship.

‘Numerous bloggers, online journalists, and private citizens were arrested for their online activities in the past year, most of whom were charged for “cyberstalking” under section 24 of the cybercrime law, though no cases have led to convictions.

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<sup>29</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 2a), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

‘Thus far, there has been no evidence that authorities proactively monitor internet and mobile phone communications, but many online journalists have long suspected that they are being monitored by the state.

‘Online journalists and activists have been subject to increasing extralegal harassment and intimidation for their activities in recent years, particularly by local officials or powerful businesspeople who have taken issue with critical commentary posted about them on social media. Along with the threat of arrest as an intimidation tactic, police often raided the homes of targeted bloggers, seizing equipment.’<sup>30</sup>

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Section 5 updated: 5 December 2019

## 5. Citizenship and nationality

5.1.1 The 1999 [Constitution](#) (Chapter 3, paragraphs 25 to 32) sets out the rules of citizenship in the country.

5.1.2 According to the Constitution, Chapter III, citizenship can be acquired in different ways, namely by birth, registration and naturalisation:

‘By birth: one person born in Nigeria is granted citizenship of Nigeria provided that either parents or any of whose grandparents belonged to an indigenous community in Nigeria before the date of independence; or provided that either of whose parents or any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria after the date of independence.

‘By registration: any woman who is or has been married to a citizen of Nigeria or any person of full age and capacity born outside Nigeria any of whose grandparents is a citizen of Nigeria may be registered as a citizen of Nigeria if the President is satisfied with his good character, if he/she has shown a clear intention of his desire to be domiciled in Nigeria, if he has taken the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution.

‘By naturalization: a person shall be qualified to apply for the grant of naturalization provided that he satisfies the President with a number of specified requirements.’<sup>31</sup>

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Section 6 updated: 5 December 2019

## 6. Official documents

### 6.1 Birth certificates

6.1.1 The US State Department Reciprocity Schedule noted:

‘The birth of every child born in Nigeria shall be registered by the Registrar of the National Population Commission or any person working under his authority... Issuance of birth certificates is free for infants under 2 years of age. Fees may be required for children more than 2 years old... They are

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<sup>30</sup> Freedom House, ‘Freedom on the Net 2019: Nigeria’, November 2018, [url](#)

<sup>31</sup> Federal Republic of Nigeria, ‘Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria’, 1999, [url](#)

typically printed on white paper with green background lettering. Seals are inked, most often in blue, black or purple. Bio-data may be typed or handwritten.’<sup>32</sup>

6.1.2 A Vanguard article from August 2018 noted that ‘for every 10 Nigerian children that are at least five years old, there are no records about the birth of seven. Even though these children have names, their births are not registered by the relevant authorities and their identity is therefore questionable...such children’s access to basic services was under threat and...their official “invisibility” increases their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation.’<sup>33</sup>

6.1.3 A Premium Times article from September 2018 noted:

‘The National Population Commission (NPopC) has restated that the registration for birth and death certificates in Nigeria are offered free by the commission.

‘The chairman of NPopC, Eze Duruiheoma, made this known in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Wednesday in Abuja.

‘Mr Duruiheoma was reacting to allegations by some Nigerians that they were being charged various sums from N2,000 upwards at the different registration points established by the commission across the country.

“The Commission does not charge for issuance of birth or death certificates, but rather the private organisations engaged for the job,” he explained.

‘According to him, the certificate is free for children from 0-days to 17 years of birth, after which a N2,000 penalty is imposed on defaulters who must also produce an affidavit from a law court.’<sup>34</sup>

6.1.4 The USSD Human Rights report 2018 stated: ‘Children derive their citizenship from their parents. The government does not require birth registration, and the majority of births were unregistered. The 2013 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, the most recent data available, found that only 30 percent of births of children younger than age five were registered. Lack of documents did not result in denial of education, health care, or other public services.’<sup>35</sup>

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## 6.2 National identity cards

6.2.1 The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia [DFAT] 2018 Country Information report noted:

‘In September 2014, Nigeria launched the National Electronic Identification Card (known as eID card). The eID card is intended to eventually act as a travel document between ECOWAS [Economic Community of West African States] countries. The card is intended to harmonise all national identity databases including drivers’ licences, voter registration, health, tax, and National Pension Commission, into a single ‘shared’ services platform.

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<sup>32</sup> US State Department, Travel, ‘Nigeria Reciprocity Schedule’, undated, [url](#)

<sup>33</sup> Vanguard, ‘Most African children without birth certificates are Nigerians’, 21 August 2018, [url](#)

<sup>34</sup> Premium Times, ‘Nigeria birth, death certificates are free — Popn Commission’, 19 Sept 2018, [url](#)

<sup>35</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

Individuals will receive a Unique national Identification Number with their eID card. Nigerians who do not have an eID card by 2019 will be unable to vote or use other government services. To obtain a card, a citizen must attend an NIS Enrolment Centre in their state to record their photographs, fingerprints, iris scan and signatures. The card is currently undergoing a trial and is several years from full implementation. Previous attempts to introduce a national identity card in Nigeria have failed.

‘The National ID Card Management Commission (NIMC) manages administration of the card and the National Identity Database. The government has been criticised for developing the card in partnership with MasterCard, ensuring it also provides access to financial services for millions of Nigerians.’<sup>36</sup>

- 6.2.2 The US State Department Reciprocity Schedule noted that such were ‘available, but not widely used. All Nigerians should have a national identification number; however, registration for this number is rarely completed.’<sup>37</sup>

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### 6.3 Passports

- 6.3.1 The Australia DFAT 2018 Country Information report noted:

‘Passports are the most commonly used travel document in Nigeria. The NIS [Nigerian immigration Service] issues and manages passports. Nigeria rolled out ePassports in 2011 to reduce passport fraud. The ePassport has an embedded microchip that stores the personal information of the holder. An ePassport costs 8,750 Nigerian Naira [c.£18.60].

‘Applicants may apply for a passport online or in person. All applicants are required to attend an interview at a local NIS office in their state. Current requirements for adult passport applicants include a valid National Identity Card or driver’s license, marriage certificate (where relevant), father’s letter of consent for minors under 16 years signed by both parents, birth certificate or age declaration, letter of identification from an individual’s local government and a guarantor’s form witnessed by a commissioner of oaths.’<sup>38</sup>

- 6.3.2 The US State Department Reciprocity Schedule noted ‘Diplomatic and Official Passports are Free. Regular Passports when paying in Nigeria cost N8,750 [£18.60] (\$65 when paying from abroad) for applicants aged 0-17 years, N15,000 [c.£32] (\$94 when paying from abroad) for applicants aged from 18-59 years and N8,750 [£18.60]...for applicants aged 60 years and above. These are for the 32 paged passports. For the 64-paged Passports, the fee is N20,000 [c.£42] (\$125 when paying from abroad) across the board.’<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> DFAT, ‘Nigeria Country Information Report’ (p33), 9 March 2018, [url](#)

<sup>37</sup> US State Department, Travel, ‘Nigeria Reciprocity Schedule’, undated, [url](#)

<sup>38</sup> DFAT, ‘Nigeria Country Information Report’ (p33), 9 March 2018, [url](#)

<sup>39</sup> US State Department, Travel, ‘Nigeria Reciprocity Schedule’, undated, [url](#)



## 6.4 Fraudulent documents and corruption

6.4.1 The information found among the sources consulted indicate that corruption and access to fraudulent documents is endemic in Nigeria.

6.4.2 John Campbell, a former US ambassador to Nigeria, wrote in a book in 2011 that 'Benin City [South of Nigeria] is a center of the engraving industry, and practically any falsified document can be procured there, from birth certificates to diplomas.'<sup>40</sup>

6.4.3 The Australia DFAT 2018 Country Information report noted:

'Nigeria experiences high rates of document fraud. Most documents, from birth certificates to diplomas, can be falsified and procured. The Nigeria Police Force has established a Special Fraud Unit and the Penal Code and the Criminal Code address fraud and the falsification of documents. [It is understood that] the Special Fraud Unit actively investigates and prosecutes suspects but very few cases have thus far resulted in convictions. The NIS [Nigerian Immigration Service] has a forensic laboratory for the examination of travel documents and monetary instruments.

'Many businesses provide false documents in Nigeria. [It is understood that] it is neither difficult nor expensive to obtain a fraudulent driver's licence or other documents that can be used to obtain a genuine passport (marriage certificate, birth certificate or age declaration, letter of identification from an individual's local government etc.). Corruption at local NIS offices also enables the fraudulent production of genuine passports.'<sup>41</sup>

6.4.4 An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC) response of August 2018, based on a range of sources, stated with regards to the prevalence of fraudulent identity documents:

'According to sources, corruption is a serious issue in Nigeria (Canada 14 Feb. 2018a; Quartz Africa 21 Aug. 2017) and is "prevalent across most government agencies and departments" (Quartz Africa 21 Aug. 2017). According to Transparency International, Nigeria is ranked 148 out of 180 countries on the Corruption Perceptions Index 2017, with 180 having the highest level of corruption (Transparency International n.d.).

'In correspondence with the Research Directorate, an associate fellow in the Africa Programme at Chatham House [1] whose research focuses on Nigeria and on corruption, among other topics, speaking on his own behalf, stated that

'Nigeria is a highly bureaucratic society where citizens are required to obtain and routinely produce a variety of official documents. These are often in the form of paper originals that are signed/stamped by local government and other officials. Because these documents typically lack basic security features (e.g. watermarking), they are easily forged. Because of the high prevalence of official corruption, however, it is also possible to fraudulently obtain genuine documents in exchange for a bribe. This makes it difficult to

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<sup>40</sup> John Campbell, 'Dancing on the Brink' (p122), published 2011, [url](#)

<sup>41</sup> DFAT, 'Nigeria Country Information Report' (p34), 9 March 2018, [url](#)

determine the authenticity of a specific document. (Associate Fellow 20 Aug. 2018)

'According to sources, documentation fraud is highly prevalent in Nigeria (Researcher 17 Aug. 2018; Canada 14 Feb. 2018a; Vanguard 19 Nov. 2017). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a visiting lecturer and academic researcher at the Green Economics Institute in the UK, who has written and published on corruption in Nigeria, stated that document fraud can occur through the falsification of an entire document; the partial falsification of a document; the use of false information to obtain genuine documents; impersonation, where one person assumes the identity of another (deceased or alive; with or without the person's consent); and renting out documents to someone else (Researcher 17 Aug. 2018).

'In an interview with the Research Directorate, a Lagos-based representative of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) at the High Commission of Canada to Nigeria stated that, in Nigeria, there is "an absence of [document] verification options" (Canada 14 Feb. 2018a). In the same interview with the Research Directorate, a Lagos-based Migration Program Manager of IRCC indicated that High Commission staff in Nigeria are "not able to physically travel to a registry office to verify a document" (Canada 14 Feb. 2018b). The same source stated that, when assessing Canadian Temporary Resident Visas (TRVs), their office conducts interviews and does not generally "look at documents" (Canada 14 Feb. 2018b).

'According to the Reciprocity Schedule published by the US Department of State for Nigeria, "fraudulent documents can be easily obtained in Nigeria" (US n.d). The researcher stated that the following documents are subject to "high incidences of fraud": driver's licences, passports, secondary school certificates, birth certificates and marriage certificates (Researcher 17 Aug. 2018). According to the IRCC representative, there are "fraudulent letters of acceptance in education and fraudulent bank documents" (Canada 14 Feb. 2018a). According to the Associate Fellow, in Nigeria, all forms of genuine documents can be obtained using false information. However, the cost (in bribes) of obtaining some documents (e.g. a Permanent Voter Card or a passport) would be significant, whereas the cost of obtaining an educational certificate or driver's license would be much less so. (Associate Fellow 20 Aug. 2018)

'In an article in the Lagos-based daily newspaper PM News that describes the use of fake documents to obtain Italian visas, the spokesperson of the Lagos-based Police Special Fraud Unit (PSFU) states that, on a monthly basis, his unit receives about 50 passports from the Italian embassy related to "complaints of forged documents" (PM News 19 June 2017). According to the same source, "[d]ocuments the applicants always forged include bank statements, health insurance certificates, invitation letters from Italy, letters of introduction and letter[s] of employment from multinational companies" (PM News 19 June 2017).

'According to the researcher, fewer incidences of document fraud are found with [regard to] tertiary education qualifications and National Youth Service Certificates (a requirement for tertiary educated graduates to work in the civil service) ... because they have been historically easy to detect and have led



to convictions. No one goes to jail for falsifying birth certificates, driver's licences, marriage certificates, passports or voter cards. (Researcher 17 Aug. 2018)

'Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.'<sup>42</sup>

6.4.5 For further information on fraudulent documents and corruption in Nigeria see:

- [EASO, Nigeria: Actors of protection](#)
- [IRBC, Nigeria: Prevalence of fraudulent documents](#)
- [Quartz Africa, Nigeria's First Ever Corruption Survey is as Bad as Most People Imagined](#)
- [Transparency International's Nigeria webpage](#)
- [UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on Nigeria in the absence of its second periodic report, 29 August 2019, para. 12](#)
- [United Nations Office on drugs and crime \(UNODC\) -Corruption in Nigeria Bribery: public experience and response](#)

6.4.6 See the CPIN on [Nigeria: Actors of protection](#) for more information on government corruption.

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<sup>42</sup> IRBC, 'Nigeria: Prevalence of fraudulent documents...', 28 August 2018, [url](#)

# Key issues relevant to protection claims

The issues below are not meant to be exhaustive; rather the key topics which may be relevant to protection claims. They are listed in alphabetical order.

Section 7 updated: 6 January 2020

## 7. Children

### 7.1 Infant mortality

7.1.1 UNICEF country profile statistics noted that the under-five mortality rates were 100 per 1,000 births. Further details can be found in the [UNICEF: Nigeria Country Profile](#)

7.1.2 A Premium Times article from 2017 noted:

‘The Nigerian Minister of Health, Isaac Adewole, had earlier this year described the high mortality rate of under-five[s] in the country as unacceptable.

‘He said the government has however made significant progress in reducing the rate of new-born deaths in the country as it has declined from 201/1000 live births to 128/1000 live births in 2013.

‘Every single day, Nigeria loses about 2,300 under-five year olds and 145 women of child bearing age, making the country the second largest contributor to under-five and maternal mortality rate in the world.’<sup>43</sup>

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### 7.2 Education and child labour

7.2.1 The US State Department of Labour (USDOL) noted in its 2017 report that 31.1% of 5 to 14 year olds were working; 76.2% of 5 to 14 year olds attended school; 26.8% of 7 to 14 year olds combined work and school; and primary school completion rate was 73.8%<sup>44</sup>. For more information see [2017 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor](#).

7.2.2 The same USDOL report noted:

‘In 2017, Nigeria made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor...However, despite these efforts, children continue to be engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in quarrying granite and gravel, commercial sexual exploitation, and armed conflict. The legal framework has inconsistencies regarding child labor, and the minimum age for work is below international standards. There are not enough labor inspectors to provide sufficient coverage of the workforce. In addition, social programs are not sufficient to address the scope of the problem.

‘...Although free and compulsory education is federally mandated by the Education Act, little enforcement of compulsory education laws occurs at state level. School fees are often charged, and the cost of materials can be prohibitive for families. Access to education is further hindered by a lack of teachers and inadequate sanitation facilities, particularly for girls. Many

<sup>43</sup> Premium Times, ‘Nigeria has third highest infant mortality rate in the world’, 20 Oct 2017, [url](#)

<sup>44</sup> USDOL, ‘2017 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor’, 2018, [url](#).

families favored the enrollment of boys over girls in elementary and secondary school.. Furthermore, government armed forces have previously occupied schools in their campaign against Boko Haram and the Islamic State-West Africa.’<sup>45</sup>

- 7.2.3 The Daily Sabah reported in May 2019 that ‘t least 43% of Nigerian children are trapped in various forced labor despite international conventions banning it, the International Labor Organization ... Dennis Zulu, country head of the global body, said the children as young as 5-10 years are being used as labor mostly in private establishments and homes’.<sup>46</sup>

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### 7.3 Child marriage

- 7.3.1 The Girls Not Brides organisation noted:

‘44% of girls in Nigeria are married before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and 18% are married before the age of 15.

‘Child marriage is most common in the North West and North East of Nigeria, where 68% and 57% of women aged 20-49 were married before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Child marriage is particularly common among Nigeria’s poorest, rural households and the Hausa ethnic group.

‘...Nigeria ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991, which sets a minimum age of marriage of 18, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1985, which obligates states to ensure free and full consent to marriage.

‘In 2016, Nigeria launched the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa.

‘In 2001 Nigeria ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, including Article 21 regarding the prohibition of child marriage.

‘In 2004 Nigeria ratified the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, including Article 6 which sets the minimum age of marriage as 18.

‘As a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Nigeria has adopted the Strategic Framework for Strengthening National Child protection Systems under which protecting children from marriage is a priority.

‘...There are several different laws related to the minimum legal age of marriage in Nigeria.

‘Under the Marriage Act 1990 the minimum legal age of marriage 21 years for boys and girls, although they are able to marry before this with written consent from a parent or guardian.

‘Under the Child Rights Act 2003, the minimum legal age of marriage is 18 years. However as of May 2017 there were still 12 Nigerian States (11 of which are located in the north of the country) that did not include the Child’s Rights Act 2003 in their internal legislation. It follows that in those States

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<sup>45</sup> US State Department of Labor, ‘2017 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor’, 2018, [url](#)

<sup>46</sup> Daily Sabah, ‘Almost half of Nigerian children trapped in forced labor...’, 3 May 2019, [url](#)

local laws are applied, most of which are Islamic Law provisions, and the minimum age of marriage in some of those States is as low as 12 years. In 2013, the government stated that efforts have been made to sensitise states about the Child Rights Act in order to improve enforcement.

‘There is also a lack of harmonisation between the Child Rights Act 2003 which sets 18 years as the minimum age of marriage and the Sexual Offences Bill 2015 which sets the minimum age of sexual consent at 11 years.’<sup>47</sup>

- 7.3.2 The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in their concluding observations on the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Nigeria in July 2017 observed that:

‘Although the Child Rights Act of 2003 sets the legal age of marriage at 18 years for both women and men, it is applicable only in a limited number of federal states and that, in some states, especially in the northern region, child marriage is prevalent;

‘While sections 218 and 357 of the Criminal Code protect girls under 13 years of age from forced sexual intercourse, section 6 excludes its applicability to girls of the same age in customary law marriages;’<sup>48</sup>

- 7.3.3 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that:

‘Early and Forced Marriage: The law sets a minimum age of 18 for marriage for both boys and girls. The prevalence of child marriage varied widely among regions, with figures ranging from 76 percent in the Northwest to 10 percent in the Southeast. Only 25 state assemblies adopted the Child Rights Act of 2003, which sets the minimum marriage age, and most states, especially northern states, did not uphold the federal official minimum age for marriage. The government engaged religious leaders, emirs, and sultans on the problem, emphasizing the health hazards of early marriage. Certain states worked with NGO programs to establish school subsidies or fee waivers for children to help protect against early marriage. The government did not take legal steps to end sales of young girls into marriage.

‘According to an NGO, education was a key indicator of whether a girl would marry as a child—82 percent of women with no education were married before 18, as opposed to 13 percent of women who had at least finished secondary school. In the North parents complained the quality of education was so poor that schooling could not be considered a viable alternative to marriage for their daughters. Families sometimes forced young girls into marriage as early as puberty, regardless of age, to prevent “indecent” associated with premarital sex or for other cultural and religious reasons. Boko Haram subjected abducted girls to forced marriage.’<sup>49</sup>

- 7.3.4 For further information see:

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<sup>47</sup> Girls Not Brides, ‘Nigeria’, undated, [url](#)

<sup>48</sup> CEDAW, ‘Concluding observations on the combined seventh...Nigeria’, 24 July 2017, [url](#)

<sup>49</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

- [IRBC, Nigeria: Forced marriage, including child marriage; prevalence, related legislation, state protection, support services and the ability to refuse a forced marriage \(2016-November 2019\)](#)
- [Refugee Documentation Centre, Legal Aid Board: Information on arranged/forced marriages of young girls including: rates nationwide; rates for Kaduna; available state protection for those who report on forced marriages; related honour killings nationwide/in Kaduna; treatment of families who refuse to allow their daughter undergo a forced marriage; Hausa/Fulani traditions of child marriages; & state protection for Hausa/Fulani who report child marriages, 26 April 2019](#)

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## 7.4 Violence against children

### 7.4.1 UNICEF information on child protection in Nigeria noted:

‘Abuse in all its forms are a daily reality for many Nigerian children and only a fraction ever receive help. Six out of every 10 children experience some form of violence – one in four girls and 10 per cent of boys have been victims of sexual violence. Of the children who reported violence, fewer than five out of a 100 received any form of support. The drivers of violence against children (VAC) are rooted in social norms, including around the use of violent discipline, violence against women and community beliefs about witchcraft, all of which increase children’s vulnerability.’<sup>50</sup>

### 7.4.2 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that:

‘Child abuse remained common throughout the country, but the government took no significant measures to combat it. Findings from the Nigeria Violence Against Children Survey released in 2015 revealed approximately six of every 10 children younger than age 18 experienced some form of physical, emotional, or sexual violence during childhood. One in two children experienced physical violence, one in four girls and one in 10 boys experienced sexual violence, and one in six girls and one in five boys experienced emotional violence.’<sup>51</sup>

### 7.4.3 For further information see:

- Hadithi. Africa, The Accusation & Persecution of [‘Witch children’ in Nigeria](#), undated.
- [IRBC, Nigeria: Forced marriage, including child marriage; prevalence, related legislation, state protection, support services and the ability to refuse a forced marriage \(2016-November 2019\)](#)
- [UN Human Rights Council, Summary of Stakeholders’ submissions on Nigeria, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 24 August 2018](#), para. 84-89
- [UNICEF-Violence against Children in Nigeria: Findings of a National Survey 2014](#)

<sup>50</sup> UNICEF, ‘Child Protection’, 2017, [url](#)

<sup>51</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

7.4.4 See also CPIN on [Nigeria: Female Genital Mutilation](#).

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Section 8 updated: 6 January 2020

## 8. Child custody

8.1.1 According to the Matrimonial Causes Act section 71 the courts award custody of a child as follows:

‘71. Powers of court in custody, etc., proceedings

‘1) In proceedings with respect to the custody, guardianship, welfare, advancement or education of children of marriage, the court shall regard the interests of those children as the paramount consideration; and subject thereto, the court may make such order in respect of those matters as it thinks proper.’<sup>52</sup>

8.1.2 For more information on child custody see

- [Dissolution of Marriage and Custody of Children Under Customary Law in Nigeria \(II\) – Bright E. Oniha, 21 September 2017](#)
- [RDC – Refugee Documentation Centre, Legal Aid Board: Country Marriage Pack; Nigeria, October 2016](#)

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Section 9 updated: 6 January 2020

## 9. Criminal gangs / cults

9.1.1 A European Asylum Support Office report, citing a range of sources including French reports in particular, noted:

‘The term ‘cult’ in Nigeria is colloquially used for different types of groups, whose motivations or modes operandi are kept secret: traditional secret societies, vigilante groups, ethnic militias, and student confraternities or university cults.

‘...The student or university cults (also called confraternities) originate from the Pyrates confraternity, founded in the 1950s by, amongst others writer Woyle Soyinka, to organise alumni students and to improve university excellence. In the 1980s other cults followed, such as Buccaneers, Black Axe, Red Berets and Black Berets. Female student cults or confraternities also emerged in the 1990s. As of 1994-95 the situation started to change, from recruiting students from the ruling classes and demanding change of admission policies, to violent threats to professors and other students.

‘...A [French] report lists the most well-known confraternities or student cults: Pyrates, Buccaneers, Supreme Vikings, Black Axe, Klansmen Konfraternity, (Supreme) Eiye or Air Lords. Female cults are: Black-bra, Black Berets, Woman Brassier, Daughters of Jezebel, Pink Lady, Amazons, White Angels, Lady of Rose, Sisterhood of Darkness, Golden Daughters, The Ten wonderful Girls, White Ladies, The Royal Queens, Daughters of the Knight, The Knights of the Aristos.

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<sup>52</sup> Laws of the Federation of Nigeria: Nigeria law, ‘Matrimonial Causes Act’ (section 71), undated, [url](#).

'...Student cults engage, according to OFPRA sources, in several criminal activities such as killings, human trafficking, drugs trafficking, smuggling, extortions, and prostitution networks. Their violence extends to the university campuses and actions such as armed robbery, murder, kidnapping, gangsterism, frequently committed by cults, pose security and social problems to the entire nation.'<sup>53</sup>

9.1.2 The Nigeria Watch 2018 Report on Violence in Nigeria noted:

'Cultism is another major form of violence that caused the death of 446 people in 153 lethal events in 2018. Among the affected 24 states and the FCT [Federal Capital Territory], Rivers and Lagos recorded the highest number of fatalities with, respectively, 70 and 49 people killed during the period under study. Yet the relative number of deaths from cultism per 100,000 populations placed Bayelsa state above others, followed by Rivers, Edo and Delta. Such a pattern confirms that people in the Niger Delta are more exposed to being killed in cult attacks than in other regions in Nigeria.'<sup>54</sup>

9.1.3 See also [Nigeria: Trafficking of women](#).

9.1.4 For more information on criminal gangs / cults see

- [DFAT 2018 report \(section 3.7 – 3.74\)](#)
- [Nigeria Watch, '2018 Report on Violence in Nigeria' \(section 2.1\), 2019](#)

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Section 10 updated: 6 January 2020

## 10. Political system/situation

### 10.1 Political system

10.1.1 The Nigeria Embassy in Berlin website noted:

'Nigeria is a federal republic with a presidential system. The constitution provides for separation of powers among the three branches of government. General elections held in February 1999 marked the end of 15 years of military rule and the beginning of civilian rule based on a multiparty democracy.

'...Executive power is vested in the president, who is simultaneously chief of state and head of government. The president is eligible for two four-year terms. The president's Federal Executive Council, or cabinet, includes representatives from all 36 states. The National Assembly, consisting of a 109-member Senate and a 360-member House of Representatives, constitutes the country's legislative branch. Three senators represent each of Nigeria's 36 states, and one additional senator represents the capital city of Abuja. Seats in the House of Representatives are allocated according to population. Therefore, the number of House members from each state differs. Members of the National Assembly are elected to a maximum of two four-year terms.

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<sup>53</sup> EASO, 'Nigeria: Targeting of Individuals' (pages 43, 44 and 45), November 2018 [url](#)

<sup>54</sup> Nigeria Watch, '2018 Report on Violence in Nigeria' (page 11), 2019 [url](#)



‘...Each of Nigeria’s 36 states has an elected governor and a House of Assembly. The governor is elected to a maximum of two four-year terms. The number of delegates to the House of Assembly is based on population (three to four times the number of delegates each state sends to the Federal House of Representatives) and therefore varies from state to state within the range of 24 to 40. Nigeria’s states are subdivided into 774 local government areas, each of which is governed by a council that is responsible for supplying basic needs. The local government councils, which are regarded as the third tier of government below the federal and state levels, receive monthly subsidies from a national “federation account.”’<sup>55</sup>

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## 10.2 Recent elections

10.2.1 The Guardian provided a summary of the outcome of the presidential election in February 2019 Buhari wins Nigerian election.

10.2.2 The BBC provided information on the Nigerian election in 2019:

Muhammadu Buhari ‘from the All Progressives Congress (APC) has been re-elected Nigeria’s president [in February 2019], defeating Atiku Abukabar of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) after winning in 19 of the 36 states’.<sup>56</sup> In September 2019 ‘A Nigerian election tribunal has dismissed a case filed by opposition candidate Atiku Abubakar, who was challenging President Muhammadu Buhari’s victory ... The judges said that Mr Abubakar, a former vice-president, and his People’s Democratic Party (PDP) had failed to prove their allegation that the election had been rigged in favour of Mr Buhari. They also said there was no proof that the president had lied about his academic qualification. The opposition had alleged the president did not have a secondary-school leaving certificate, which is a basic requirement for presidential candidates’.<sup>57</sup>

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## 10.3 Biafra

10.3.1 The Australian Governments 2018 DFAT country information report Nigeria stated: ‘In 1967, three south-eastern states seceded as the Republic of Biafra, sparking civil war. The conflict and subsequent famine killed an estimated one to three million people, making it one of the deadliest conflicts in Africa. The Biafran cause remains current in southeast Nigeria, propagated by the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and more recently the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB).’<sup>58</sup>

10.3.2 The same report stated: ‘DFAT assesses that individuals associated with IPOB do not face official violence on a day-to-day basis; however, individuals participating in Biafran protests, particularly on Biafran

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<sup>55</sup> Nigeria Embassy, Berlin, ‘Political Structure’, undated, [url](#)

<sup>56</sup> BBC, ‘Nigeria Presidential Elections Results, Last updated 26 February 2019, [url](#)

<sup>57</sup> BBC, ‘Nigeria court upholds Buhari’s poll victory, 12 September 2019, [url](#)

<sup>58</sup> DFAT, ‘Country information report: Nigeria’, 9 March 2018, [url](#).



Remembrance Day, face a high risk of violence by security forces during protest activity.’<sup>59</sup>

10.3.3 DFAT also reported that: ‘On 9 February 2016, police and military personnel reportedly used live ammunition to disperse protesting members and supporters of the IPOB movement at a school in Aba, Abia State.’<sup>60</sup>

10.3.4 EASO in their 2019 Country Guidance report stated:

‘In March 2016, MASSOB and IPOB issued a joint statement that all Fulani herdsmen should retreat to northern Nigeria, as ‘their safety [could] no longer be guaranteed’. MASSOB was banned by the Nigerian authorities in 2001 and its members were accused of being ‘armed criminals and robbers’. In 2017, the Nigerian authorities declared IPOB a terrorist organisation. However, there are no confirmed reports of violence by the two organisations.’<sup>61</sup>

10.3.5 The International Centre for not-for-profit law stated:

‘While Nigerian law does not prohibit the formation or operation of unregistered groups, the President may issue an order to make unlawful a CSO [civil society organisation] that is “dangerous to the good government of Nigeria or of any part thereof.” Although there are few examples of organizations that have been refused registration because of such an order, this power has been used against unregistered organizations. For example, the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) was proscribed by the Obasanjo [Olusegun] administration [Military ruler and President of Nigeria 1976 – 1979 and 1999 – 2007 respectively]; the group is non-violent but seeks secession or the break-up of Nigeria.’<sup>62</sup>

10.3.6 For background information see [Background on Biafra](#); and the International Crisis Group’s December 2015 commentary [Nigeria's Biafran Separatist Upsurge](#).

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Section 11 updated: 5 December 2019

## 11. Prison conditions

11.1.1 For information on prison conditions in Nigeria see:

- [ARC Foundation: Prison conditions in Nigeria, November 2019](#)
- [EASO, ‘Nigeria: Actors of Protection’, November 2018](#)
- [UNHRC, Concluding observations on Nigeria in the absence of its second periodic report, August 2019 \(p7\)](#)
- [USSD, 2018 Country report on human rights practices: Nigeria \(p7-11\)](#)
- [World Prison Brief Data for Nigeria](#).

<sup>59</sup> DFAT, ‘Country information report: Nigeria’ (section 3.20), 9 March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>60</sup> DFAT, ‘Country information report: Nigeria’ (section 5.7), 9 March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>61</sup> EASO, ‘Country Guidance: Nigeria’ (page 49), February 2019, [url](#).

<sup>62</sup> ICNL, ‘Civic Freedom Monitor: NGA’ (section: Legal analysis: Barriers to entry), 5 October 2019, [url](#).

## 12. Security situation

- 12.1.1 See the CPIN on [Nigeria: Boko Haram](#).

## 13. Ethnic groups and Farmer / herder violence

- 13.1.1 The USSD's 2018 International Religious Freedom Report noted:

'There were incidents of violence reflecting tension between different ethnic groups involving predominantly Muslim Fulani herders and predominantly Christian farmers. Scholars and other experts assessed that ethnicity, politics, and increasing competition over dwindling land resources were among the drivers of the violence, but religious identity and affiliation were also factors. In January and May Fulani herdsmen attacked several villages in northern Benue State, resulting in the deaths of more than 200, mostly Christian, Tiv farmers. During the year [2018], clashes between farmers and herders in Adamawa and Taraba States resulted in more than 250 deaths. In June [2018] Fulani herdsmen attacked several villages in Barkin Ladi Local Government Area (LGA) of Plateau State, killing approximately 200 ethnic Berom farmers. The following day, Berom youth set up roadblocks and killed dozens of Muslim passersby. In March [2018] the Nigerian Interreligious Council (NIREC), which includes the nation's most influential religious leaders and addresses interfaith collaboration, met for the first time in five years. In September [2018] religious leaders throughout the country met in Abuja to sign a peace pact and pledged to combat ethnoreligious divisions.'<sup>63</sup>

- 13.1.2 The same report continued:

'Both Muslim and Christian groups again said there was a lack of just handling of their mutual disputes and inadequate protection by federal, state, and local authorities, especially in central regions, where there were longstanding, often violent, disputes among ethnic groups. In disputes between primarily Christian farmers and Muslim herders, herders stated they did not receive justice when their members were killed or their cattle stolen by farming communities, which they said caused them to carry out retaliatory attacks. Farmers stated security forces did not intervene when herdsmen attacked their villages.'<sup>64</sup>

- 13.1.3 For further information on inter-ethnic and farmer / herder violence see

- [UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on Nigeria in the absence of its second periodic report, 29 August 2019, para. 28](#)

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<sup>63</sup> USSD, '2018 International Religious Freedom Report' (executive summary), 21 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>64</sup> USSD, '2018 International Religious Freedom Report' (executive summary), 21 June 2019, [url](#)

- [UN Human Rights Council, Summary of Stakeholders' submissions on Nigeria, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 24 August 2018, para.92-95](#)
- [International Crisis Group, Stopping Nigeria's Spiralling Farmer-Herder Violence, 26 July 2018](#)
- [International Crisis Group, Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict, 19 September 2017](#)
- [Asylum Research Centre, Nigeria: Query Response, The situation of Indigenes and Settlers, 19 January 2018](#)
- [DFAT 2018 report \(section 2.46 – section 2.49\)](#)

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Section 14 updated: 5 December 2019

## 14. Religious conversion

14.1.1 The USSD's 2018 International Religious Freedom Report noted:

'The constitution stipulates neither the federal nor the state governments shall establish a state religion and prohibits discrimination on religious grounds. It provides for freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, including the freedom to change one's religion and to manifest and propagate religion "in worship, teaching, practice, and observance," provided these rights are consistent with the interests of defense, public safety, order, morality, or health, and protecting the rights of others. The constitution also states it shall be the duty of the state to encourage interfaith marriages and to promote the formation of associations that cut across religious lines and promote "national integration." It prohibits political parties that limit membership on the basis of religion or with names that have a religious connotation.'

<sup>65</sup>

14.1.2 The US Commission on International Religious Freedom annual report noted that 'The group [Boko Haram] has killed and harmed people for being "nonbelievers," including prominent religious leaders. Civilians have been abducted and subjected to forced marriage, forced conversion, sexual abuse, and torture.'

<sup>66</sup>

14.1.3 A World Watch Monitor article from January 2018 noted that 'A Nigerian university student who converted from Islam to Christianity has been arrested by state security forces, as has the man who introduced her to Christianity.'

<sup>67</sup>

14.1.4 Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) stated in a June 2019 report that:

'In most Shari'a states, and particularly in rural areas, the education of Christian female minors is frequently curtailed by abduction, forcible conversion and marriage without parental consent. Parents seeking the release of their daughters are generally informed they have converted and

<sup>65</sup> USSD, '2018 International Religious Freedom Report', 21 June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>66</sup> US Commission on International Religious Freedom, 'Annual Report', 2019, [url](#)

<sup>67</sup> World Watch Monitor, 16 January 2018, [url](#)

married willingly, or are in the custody of Muslim traditional rulers or Shari'a Commissions and have no desire to return. Appeals to law enforcement agencies for assistance generally prove fruitless.<sup>68</sup>

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Section 15 updated: 5 December 2019

## 15. Sexual orientation and/or gender identity

15.1.1 See the CPIN on [Nigeria: Sexual orientation and gender identity](#).

15.1.2 For more recent information see:

- [UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on Nigeria in the absence of its second periodic report, 29 August 2019, para. 18](#)

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Section 16 updated: 6 January 2020

## 16. Women - sexual and gender based harm or violence

### 16.1 Legal, social and economic rights

16.1.1 OECDs Social Institutions and Gender Index report for 2019 (OECD SIGI), based on a range of sources published up to the end of 2018, noted that:

'To date, there is no specific law addressing violence against women, however there is existing legislation that provides general protections against violence for all citizens...

'Alongside these laws, the government has also made other efforts to protect victims. In particular, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social has established safe houses and temporary shelters for women victims of violence to support the rehabilitation and re-integration of victims as well as allocated funding towards projects and programmes that aim at reducing violence against women from the yearly budgetary allocation. It is unclear on the amount and regularity that the budget is provided on a year to year basis.

'Despite these national efforts, violence against women is endemic in Nigeria (Centre for Reproductive Rights, 2016). The discriminatory attitudes against women and girls in Nigerian society contribute to the increase in violence against women as well as harmful practices such as child marriages, FGM, widowhood rites.'<sup>69</sup>

16.1.2 The Australia DFAT Country information report 2018 stated:

'The Violence against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act addresses sexual violence, physical violence, psychological violence, harmful traditional practices, and socioeconomic violence. However, unless individual states adopt the VAPP, the provisions only apply in the Federal Capital Territory.

'Women and girls frequently experience gender-based discrimination and violence in Nigeria. Nigeria remains a highly patriarchal society and cultural traditions including forced child marriage, female genital mutilation and so-

<sup>68</sup> CSW, 'Human Rights Situation in the Federal Republic of Nigeria...', June 2019, [url](#)

<sup>69</sup> OECD, 'Social Institutions and Gender Index – Nigeria Profile, 2019, [url](#)

called ‘widowhood practices’, which include hair-shaving and confining a woman to the marital home, continue to occur particularly in rural areas. While there are no laws preventing women from participating in public life, Nigeria continues to perform poorly on gender inclusiveness indices. Nigeria ranked 152 out of 187 countries on the 2016 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index (1 being the most equal, 187 being the least). Since the early 2000s, women have held approximately seven per cent of seats in the National Assembly (the House of Representatives and the Senate combined). Female participation in education, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, is extremely low (see Education). This is particularly the case in the northern states where over 80 per cent of women are unable to read (compared with 54 per cent of men).<sup>70</sup>

#### 16.1.3 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that:

‘... The VAPP cites spousal battery, forceful ejection from the home, forced financial dependence or economic abuse, harmful widowhood practices, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), other harmful traditional practices, substance attacks (such as acid attacks), political violence, and violence by state actors (especially government security forces) as offenses. Victims and survivors of violence are entitled to comprehensive medical, psychological, social, and legal assistance by accredited service providers and government agencies, with their identities protected during court cases. As of March only Anambra, Ebonyi, and Oyo states, in addition to the FCT, had domesticated the VAPP.

‘Although the constitution provides the same legal status and rights for women as for men, women experienced considerable economic discrimination. The law does not mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value, nor does it mandate nondiscrimination based on gender in hiring.

‘Women generally remained marginalized. No laws prohibit women from owning land, but customary land tenure systems allowed only men to own land, with women gaining access to land only via marriage or family. Many customary practices also did not recognize a woman’s right to inherit her husband’s property, and many widows became destitute when their in-laws took virtually all the deceased husband’s property.

‘In the 12 northern states that adopted sharia law, sharia and social norms affected women to varying degrees. For example, in Zamfara State local governments enforced laws requiring the separation of Muslim men and women in transportation and health care. In 2013 the Kano State government issued a statement declaring men and women must remain separate while using public transportation.

‘The testimony of women carried less weight than that of men in many criminal courts. Women could arrange but not post bail at most police detention facilities.’<sup>71</sup>

#### 16.1.4 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 continued: ‘There is no comprehensive law for combatting violence against women that applies

<sup>70</sup> DFAT, ‘Nigeria Country Information Report’ (p21), 9 March 2018, [url](#)

<sup>71</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

across the country. Victims and survivors had little or no recourse to justice. While some, mostly southern, states enacted laws prohibiting some forms of gender violence or sought to safeguard certain rights, a majority of states did not have such legislation.

- 16.1.5 See also [IRBC, 'Nigeria: Domestic violence, including legislation; protection and support services offered to victims \(2016-November 2019\)'](#)
- 16.1.1 The full text of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act 2015 is available on the UNHCR's Refworld at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/556d5eb14.html> <sup>72</sup>
- 16.1.2 For more information see:
- [UN Human Rights Committee, Concluding observations on Nigeria in the absence of its second periodic report, 29 August 2019, para. 16](#)
  - [UN Human Rights Council, Summary of Stakeholders' submissions on Nigeria, Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 24 August 2018, para. 76-83](#)

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## 16.2 Domestic violence

- 16.2.1 CEDAW in their concluding observations of July 2017 stated:

'Gender-based violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, remains prevalent;

'To date, the "enforcement procedure" framework for the implementation of the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Act has not been prepared;

'Shelters are inadequate and there is no information on their accessibility for women and girls, especially in remote areas.'<sup>73</sup>

- 16.2.2 The Australian DFAT report stated that:

'It is difficult to determine rates of domestic violence in Nigeria due to a lack of reliable data and under-reporting. Local and international sources estimate that 30-50 per cent of women have experienced domestic violence.

'In 2013, Nigeria passed the Violence against Persons Act that criminalises sexual violence and provides support for domestic violence victims and protection through restraining orders. Rape, including marital rape, is an offence under Nigerian law and Nigerian courts have delivered some convictions for spousal rape. A number of NGOs provide support to women in violent relationships, including through the provision of shelters. Shelters are predominantly located in southern Nigeria. The government provides a small number of state-run shelters across Nigeria; however, DFAT understands the government shelters are poorly equipped and do not provide adequate protection.'<sup>74</sup>

- 16.2.3 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that

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<sup>72</sup> Nigeria: Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015 (VAPP) [Nigeria], 25 May 2015, [url](#)

<sup>73</sup> CEDAW, 'Concluding observations on the combined seventh...Nigeria', 24 July 2017, [url](#)

<sup>74</sup> DFAT, 'Nigeria Country Information Report' (p22), 9 March 2018, [url](#)



'The VAPP provides for up to three years' imprisonment, a maximum fine of 200,000 naira ([US]\$635), or both for conviction of spousal battery. It also authorizes courts to issue protection orders upon application by a victim and directs the appointment of a coordinator for the prevention of domestic violence to submit an annual report to the federal government. Notwithstanding these federal provisions, only the states of Cross River, Ebonyi, Jigawa, and Lagos had enacted domestic violence laws.'<sup>75</sup>

'Domestic violence remained widespread, and many considered it socially acceptable. The National Crime Victimization and Safety Survey for 2013 of the CLEEN Foundation—formerly known as Center for Law Enforcement Education—reported 30 percent of male and female respondents countrywide claimed to have been victims of domestic violence.'<sup>76</sup>

16.2.4 United Nations Human Rights in their summary for 2019 state: 'Domestic violence is very high with 23% of women reporting being victims of physical or sexual violence.'<sup>77</sup>

- See [UN OCHA](#) report for specific information on gender based violence (GBV) in Yobe State (Protection section).
- See also [IRBC, 'Nigeria: Domestic violence, including legislation; protection and support services offered to victims \(2016-November 2019\)'](#)

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## 16.3 Rape

16.3.1 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that:

'The law criminalizes rape, but it remained widespread. In 2013 Positive Action for Treatment Access, an NGO focused on HIV treatment, released a countrywide survey of 1,000 preadolescents and adolescents (ages 10 to 19), which noted three in 10 girls reported their first sexual encounter was rape. For example, in October, 13-year-old Ochanya Ogbanje died from a traumatic fistula caused by multiple rapes allegedly committed over a period of years by her guardian, 51-year-old Andrew Ogbuja, and his son, Victor Ogbuja.

'Sentences for persons convicted of rape and sexual assault were inconsistent and often minor. The VAPP provides penalties for conviction ranging from 12 years to life imprisonment for offenders older than 14 and a maximum of 14 years' imprisonment for all others. It also provides for a public register of convicted sexual offenders and appointment of protection officers at the local government level to coordinate with courts and provide for victims to receive various forms of assistance (e.g., medical, psychosocial, legal, rehabilitative, and for reintegration) provided by the VAPP. The act also includes provisions to protect the identity of rape victims and a provision empowering courts to award appropriate compensation to

<sup>75</sup> USSD, '2018 Human Rights Practices Report' (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

<sup>76</sup> USSD, '2018 Human Rights Practices Report' (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

<sup>77</sup> OHCHR, 'OHCHR in Nigeria (2019) – Human rights context', 2019, [url](#)

victims of rape. Because the VAPP has only been domesticated in a handful of states, state criminal codes continued to govern most rape and sexual assault cases, and typically allowed for lesser sentences.’<sup>78</sup>

- 16.3.2 The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in their concluding observations on the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Nigeria in July 2017 observed that:

‘A significant number of girls who were abducted by Boko Haram from Chibok and Damasak in Borno State in April and November 2014, respectively, have not been rescued and continue to be subjected to rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage and impregnation by insurgents;

‘Sexual exploitation, including so-called “transactional sex”, is reportedly taking place in camps for internally displaced persons, especially in Maiduguri, and girls and children born as a result of rape and sexual slavery committed by Boko Haram insurgents are subject to stigma and social isolation.’<sup>79</sup>

- 16.3.3 See also the CPIN on [Nigeria: Boko Haram](#) and [Nigeria: Trafficking of women](#).

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## 16.4 Sexual harassment

- 16.4.1 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that

‘Sexual harassment remained a common problem. No statutes prohibit sexual harassment, but assault statutes provide for prosecution of violent harassment. The VAPP criminalizes stalking, but it does not explicitly criminalize sexual harassment. The act criminalizes emotional, verbal, and psychological abuse and acts of intimidation.

‘The practice of demanding sexual favors in exchange for employment or university grades remained common. For example, in June, Obafemi Awolowo University, in Osun State, fired management and accounting professor Richard Akindele after a student recorded him soliciting sex in return for a better grade. Women suffered harassment for social and religious reasons in some regions.’<sup>80</sup>

- 16.4.2 The BBC reported on 10 October 2019 in that:

‘The Nigerian senate has introduced a bill that aims to prevent the sexual harassment of university students.

‘The proposed legislation follows a BBC investigation that uncovered alleged sexual misconduct by lecturers in Nigeria and Ghana...

‘If the bill were to become law it would be illegal for lecturers to make any sexual advances towards students.

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<sup>78</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

<sup>79</sup> CEDAW, ‘Concluding observations on the combined seventh...Nigeria’, 24 July 2017, [url](#)

<sup>80</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)



'And under the proposed law, which was read in the senate on Wednesday, teaching staff could face up to 14 years in jail for having sexual relationships with their students.'<sup>81</sup>

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## 16.5 Single women

16.5.1 A report by Damilola Oyedele, Senior Correspondent, Foreign Affairs/Gender, Thisday Newspaper published on 4 July 2014 by D+C Development and Cooperation (Germany), stated:

'In Nigeria...many women choose to stay in abusive marriages because of the stigmatisation which accompanies single or divorced women. The police do not help... They have been reported to advise victims to go home and settle the issues, saying that women have to accept to be disciplined by their husbands when they 'misbehave'.

'...A rising number of families now take cases of assault against their married daughters more seriously. The country, in recent times, has witnessed a higher number of cases of DV (domestic violence) against women being reported to the police.

'Religious organisations, which hitherto had attributed such issues to spiritual or demonic attacks on marriages, are now changing their positions. Due to cultural and spiritual sensibilities, most of them would not outright recommend divorce, but would advocate "temporary" separation. Up to now, faith-based organisations had shunned divorced women, allowing them no leadership roles, but recent events have changed the perception towards this group. Churches as well as mosques now offer counselling and even economic support to women who have had to leave their spouses.'<sup>82</sup>

16.5.2 For more information on the treatment of single/divorced women see:

- [IRBC, Nigeria: Whether women who head their own household, without male or family support, can obtain housing and employment in Abuja, Lagos, Ibadan, and Port Harcourt; government support services available to female-headed households \(2017-November 2019\)](#)
- [IRBC, Nigeria: Situation of single women living alone in Abuja, including ability to access employment and housing; threat of violence; support services available to them \(2015 - June 2016\)](#)

16.5.3 For more information on the treatment of female returnees / single women formerly affiliated with the Boko Haram see

- [ICG – International Crisis Group: Returning from the Land of Jihad: The Fate of Women Associated with Boko Haram \(section IV\) 21 May 2019](#)

16.5.4 See also CPIN [Nigeria: Trafficking of women](#) and Internal relocation

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<sup>81</sup> BBC, 'Nigeria seeks anti-sexual harassment law...', 10 October 2019, [url](#)

<sup>82</sup> D+C Development and Cooperation (Germany), Miles apart, sisters in pain, 4 July 2014 [url](#)

## 16.6 Sexual violence and abuse by Nigerian military

16.6.1 Amnesty International reported that ‘In the North East, Amnesty International has documented cases of rape and sexual exploitation by soldiers and members of the Civilian Joint Task Force. Some soldiers and members of the Civilian Joint Task Force often take advantage of the faminelike conditions and hunger in satellite camps to perpetrate sexual violence against women, in exchange for food and basic necessities that these women need for survival.’<sup>83</sup>

16.6.2 See also the CPIN on [Nigeria: Boko Haram](#) and [Nigeria: Internal relocation](#)

16.6.3 For more information see

- [Amnesty international - Nigeria: ‘They took our husbands and forced us to be their girlfriends’ - Women in north-east Nigeria starved and raped by those claiming to rescue them](#)
- [International Crisis Group, Returning from the Land of Jihad: The Fate of Women Associated with Boko Haram, 21 May 2019](#)

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## 16.7 Harmful traditional practice

16.7.1 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that

‘According to the VAPP, any person convicted of subjecting another person to harmful traditional practices may be punished with up to four years’ imprisonment, a fine not exceeding 500,000 naira (\$1,590), or both. Anyone convicted of subjecting a widow to harmful traditional practices is subject to two years’ imprisonment, a fine not exceeding 500,000 naira (\$1,590), or both. For purposes of the VAPP, a harmful traditional practice means all traditional behavior, attitudes, or practices that negatively affect the fundamental rights of women or girls, to include denial of inheritance or succession rights, FGM/C or circumcision, forced marriage, and forced isolation from family and friends.’<sup>84</sup>

16.7.2 See also CPINs on; [Nigeria: Female Genital Mutilation](#); [Nigeria: Trafficking of women](#), [Actors of Protection](#) and [Internal relocation](#).

16.7.3 Also see section on [Child marriage](#).

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## 16.8 State assistance

16.8.1 The Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board, using a range of sources, produced a detailed response to information request on 14 November 2019: [IRBC, ‘Nigeria: Domestic violence, including legislation; protection and support services offered to victims \(2016-November 2019\)’](#), which noted with regards to enforcement of legislation in relation to domestic violence.

16.8.2 DFAT in their March 2018 report stated that ‘Police often turn away domestic violence victims if they report the offence, continuing to view the issue as a

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<sup>83</sup> AI, Nigeria: Human rights agenda (p9), May 2019, [url](#)

<sup>84</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

private matter that should remain within the boundaries of the marital home.’<sup>85</sup>

16.8.3 The same report stated: ‘Women are sometimes held in the same sections as male prisoners and face a high risk of sexual assault. In March 2013, four male inmates raped a woman in police custody in Delta State . The police officers in question were charged with neglecting to provide her with adequate protection. Authorities often hold juveniles with adult prisoners, despite requirements to hold them in specific juvenile detention facilities.’<sup>86</sup>

16.8.4 The USSD Human Rights Report 2018 stated that, ‘Police often refused to intervene in domestic disputes or blamed the victim for provoking the abuse. In rural areas, courts and police were reluctant to intervene to protect women who formally accused their husbands of abuse if the level of alleged abuse did not exceed local customary norms.’<sup>87</sup>

16.8.5 The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stated in August 2019 that:

‘While generally welcoming the adoption of the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Act of 2015, dealing among other things with gender-based violence, the Committee is concerned that the act applies only in the Federal Capital Territory and in those few states that have adopted the law, and that several states do not have specific laws prohibiting sexual and gender-based violence. The Committee is concerned about reports of widespread gender-based violence, including rape, and the prevalence of harmful traditional practices against girls and women, including female genital mutilation, especially its medicalization. It is further concerned by the low level of reporting of gender-based violence, partly due to a culture of silence perpetuated by persistent societal stereotypes; the lack of prompt and effective investigations of such cases; the low level of prosecution and conviction of perpetrators; and the insufficient level of assistance for victims.

‘The State party should strengthen its efforts to curb gender-based violence, in particular by: (a) ensuring the Violence against Persons (Prohibition) Act applies in all federal states; (b) taking measures to ensure that cases of violence against women are reported and thoroughly investigated, perpetrators are prosecuted, and if convicted, sentenced with appropriate penalties, and victims provided with full reparation and granted adequate assistance, including shelters; and (c) raising awareness among religious and traditional leaders, police, medical staff and legal professionals, and society at large, about the negative effects of violence against women and harmful traditional practices.’<sup>88</sup>

16.8.6 OECDs Social Institutions and Gender Index report for 2019 (OECD SIGI), based on a range of sources published up to the end of 2018, noted that:

‘... there has been efforts by the government to improve women’s access to legal services. This includes a Legal Aid Council that was established to provide free legal counsel to women victims/survivors of violence; a Citizens

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<sup>85</sup> DFAT, ‘Nigeria Country Information Report’ (p22), 9 March 2018, [url](#)

<sup>86</sup> DFAT, ‘Nigeria Country Information Report’ (p31), 9 March 2018, [url](#)

<sup>87</sup> USSD, ‘2018 Human Rights Practices Report’ (section 6), 13 March 2019, [url](#)

<sup>88</sup> OHCHR – ‘Concluding observations on Nigeria...’ (p4-5), 29 August 2019, [url](#)

Rights Department that was established in 2005 within the Federal Ministry of Justice to offer free legal counselling to indigent women. A National Gender Data Bank was created to pool and harmonize existing data sources into a one-stop referral point; and a Multi-Technical Team (MTT) composed of relevant Ministries, Agencies and Civil Societies that was constituted in 2006 to coordinate on cases of reported cases of domestic violence, sexual assault and rape, sexual harassment as well as protective measures that are intended to assist abused women (legal aid, financial assistance, housing assistance, shelters, police action, NGO efforts).<sup>89</sup>

16.8.7 See also CPIN on [Actors of Protection](#).

16.8.8 For more information on SGBV see:

- [Amnesty International – Human Rights Agenda – May 2019 \(section 3.1\)](#)
- [Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies: Northeast Nigeria Road Map 2018-2019](#)
- [Demographic and Health Survey: Nigeria 2018](#)
- [DFAT 2018 report \(section 3.45 – section 3.50\)](#)
- [EASO, Country guidance Nigeria \(p61-62\), February 2019](#)
- [EASO, Nigeria: Actors of protection, November 2018](#)
- [Freedom house – Freedom in the World 2019 - Nigeria](#)
- [HRW – Violence against women pervasive in Nigeria, 14 March 2019](#)
- [IRCB, National documentation packages: Nigeria](#)
- [IRBC, 'Nigeria: Domestic violence, including legislation; protection and support services offered to victims \(2016-November 2019\)'](#)
- [IRBC, Nigeria: Forced marriage, including child marriage; prevalence, related legislation, state protection, support services and the ability to refuse a forced marriage \(2016-November 2019\)](#)
- [OECD, 'Social Institutions and Gender Index – Nigeria Profile, 2019](#)
- [OHCHR – 'Compilation on NGA – Report of OHCHR' \(p8\)](#)
- [OHCHR – 'Concluding observations on Nigeria...' \(p4-5\)](#)
- [UN Global database on Violence against women - Nigeria](#)
- [USSD 2018 Human Rights Report \(section 6\)](#)

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<sup>89</sup> OECD, 'Social Institutions and Gender Index – Nigeria Profile, 2019, [url](#)

# Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Geography and demography
  - Key geographic and demographic facts
  - Administrative divisions
  - Maps
  - Physical geography
  - Population density and distribution
- Economy
  - Key economic points
- History
- Media and telecommunications
- Key media and telecommunications points
- Citizenship and nationality
- Official documents
  - Birth certificates
  - National identity cards
  - Passports
  - Fraudulent documents
- Key issues relevant to protection claims
  - Children
    - Infant mortality
    - Education and child labour
    - Child marriage
    - Violence against children
    - Custody
  - Political situation
    - Recent elections
    - Biafra
  - Prison conditions

- Religious conversion
- Security situation
- Ethnic groups
- Farmer / herders
- Sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- Women / gender based harm or violence

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# Version control

## Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **2.0**
- valid from **7 January 2020**

## Changes from last version of this note

Updated country information

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