

Nigeria

Country Overview

Politics

Nigeria is a federal presidential republic in West Africa that is currently experiencing its longest period of civilian rule since its independence in 1960. The national elections in 2015 that resulted in the election of President Muhammadu Buhari represented the country's first peaceful transfer of power from one party to its opposition. President Muhammadu Buhari was re-elected for a second term in 2019, and the CIA reported that the election was generally free and fair.¹ Nigeria's next general election occurs February 2023.²

The U.S. Department of State reports that terrorist activity conducted by the group Boko Haram continued in 2021.³ Since 2011, the group has killed thousands of civilians and government officials and has displaced more than two million Nigerian residents. The CIA notes that Boko Haram and a recent offshoot group known as Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiyyah (Islamic State West Africa Province or ISWAP) are most active in Nigeria's northeastern states (Borno State)⁴ with unrest also in the southeast from separatist agitations.⁵ Since the death of Boko Haram's leader in 2021, ISWAP has become the main terrorist group in Nigeria according to the U.S. Department of State.⁶

Economy

The World Bank classifies Nigeria as a lower-middle income economy.⁷ Despite this status, Nigeria has the largest economy in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁸ Nigeria's GDP is approximately USD 432 billion with an annual growth rate of -1.8 percent in 2020.⁹ There is a split between the labor force and the primary drivers of economic growth; 70 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture,¹⁰ while the oil and gas sector accounts for over 88 percent of export earnings.¹¹ Thus, Nigeria's economy is heavily sensitive to fluctuations in oil market prices. Consequently, President Buhari's administration has prioritized diversifying its economy beyond oil and gas, looking towards manufacturing, technology, and agriculture.¹²

According to the CIA, Nigeria's economy suffers from weak infrastructure, an inconsistent regulatory environment, violence and insecurity, widespread corruption, and a lack of available electric power.¹³ The World Bank ranked Nigeria 161 out of 190 countries for ease of obtaining electricity for businesses—a major obstacle to economic development.¹⁴ President Buhari's administration has addressed many of these issues; new policies seek to reduce barriers of



doing business, combat corruption, and improve infrastructure, particularly in the energy sector.¹⁵

Despite the administration's efforts of diversification and business reforms, the results have been slow. In 2020, Nigeria's economy experienced a recession due to the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with low global oil prices. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicts Nigeria's growth rate will return to low to moderate in 2021 to 2022.¹⁶

Social/Human Development

Nigeria's population exceeds 219 million people—the largest population of any country in Africa and the sixth largest in the world.¹⁷ Nigeria is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups, the most populous being the Hausa (30 percent), Yoruba (15.5 percent), Igbo (15.2 percent), and Fulani (6 percent). Over half of Nigerians are Muslim, followed by 35.3 percent Christian, and an additional 10.6 percent specifically Roman Catholic¹⁸ The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimated that there were approximately 2.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) within Nigeria as of 2021.¹⁹

The ongoing humanitarian crisis in the northeast regions of the country, driven by conflict with Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa, has caused widespread displacement, leaving large swaths of the population in that region vulnerable to violent attacks and inadequate access to food or medical care.²⁰

The UN reports that roughly 40 percent of the population were living below the national poverty line in 2019.²¹ Nigeria falls in the low human development category with an Human Development Index of 0.539, ranking the country 161 out of 189 countries in 2019. This ranking indicates a 15.9 percent increase in Nigeria's HDI since 2005.²²

U.S. Department of State TIP Report Summary

U.S. Department of State TIP Ranking: Tier 2

According to the *Trafficking in Persons Report*, trafficking risk may be found among Nigerian boys in export supply chains including mining, stone quarrying, textile manufacturing, and agriculture. Children migrating from neighboring West African countries are vulnerable to trafficking in the granite and gold mining sectors.

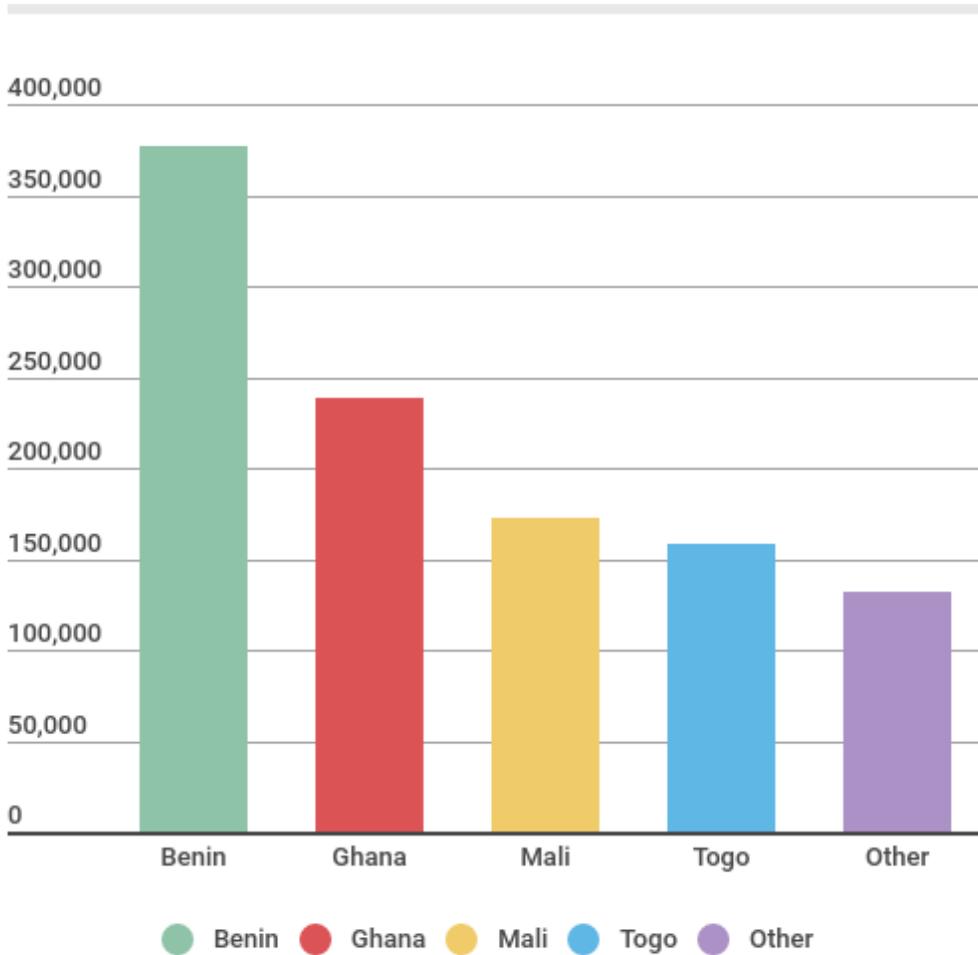
Read the full TIP Report at: <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/TIPR-GPA-upload-07222021.pdf>

Migrants and Other Vulnerable Populations



Nigeria has negative net migration. In 2020, Nigeria had an inward migration of approximately 1.3 million people and an outward migration of approximately 1.7 million.²³ Roughly 0.6 percent of the total population of Nigeria were immigrants in 2020.²⁴ According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are approximately 78,805 refugees and 2.2 million IDPs in Nigeria.²⁵ The largest source countries for migrants to Nigeria in 2020 were Benin, Ghana, Mali, Togo, and Other (“Other” indicates the origin data is unknown or incompatible with United Nations’ standardization).²⁶

Migrants to Nigeria

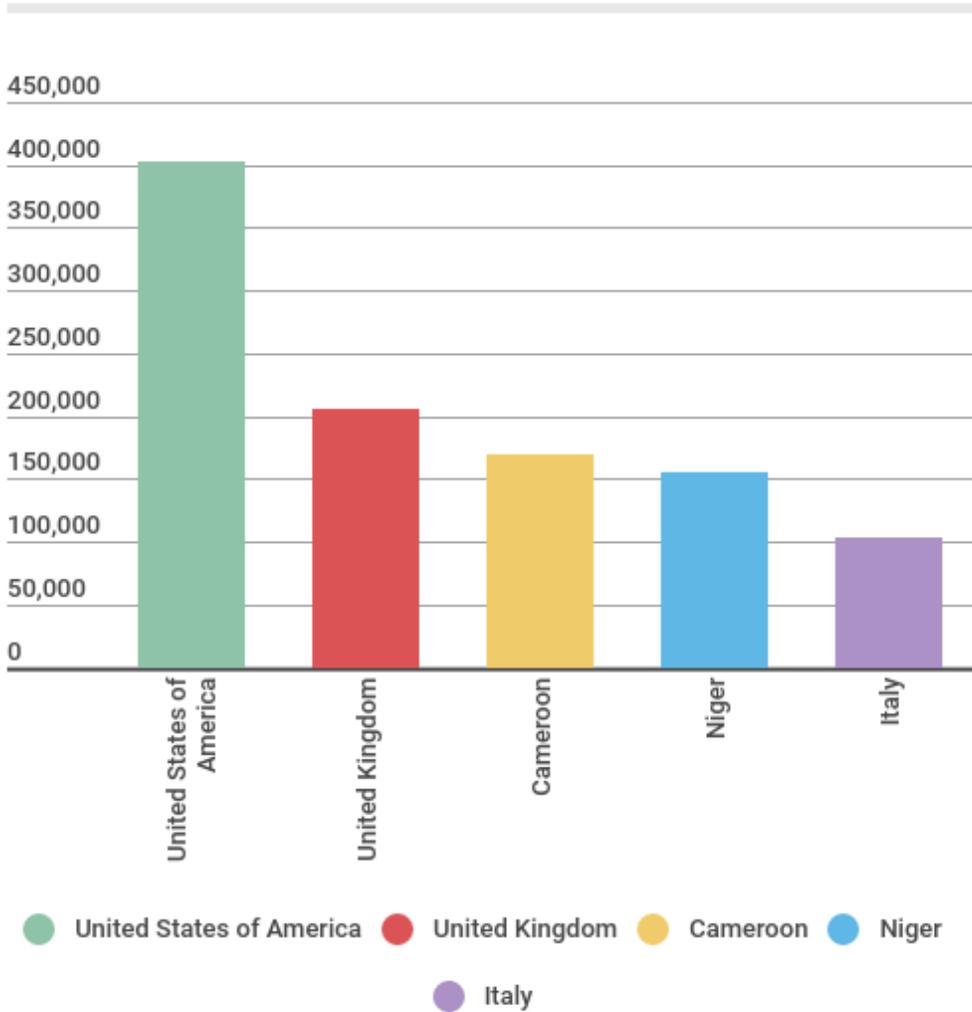


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The top destination countries for migrants from Nigeria in 2020 were the United States, the United Kingdom, Cameroon, Niger, and Italy.²⁸



Migrants from Nigeria



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Exports and Trade

In 2020, mineral fuels comprised over 88 percent of Nigeria’s export earnings. These exports were mainly comprised of crude petroleum oils, although the country also exported petroleum gas and non-crude petroleum oils. Other top exports for 2020 included ships, oil seeds and fruits, cocoa, and fertilizers.³⁰



Top Commodity Exports (USD/Thousands)

2020

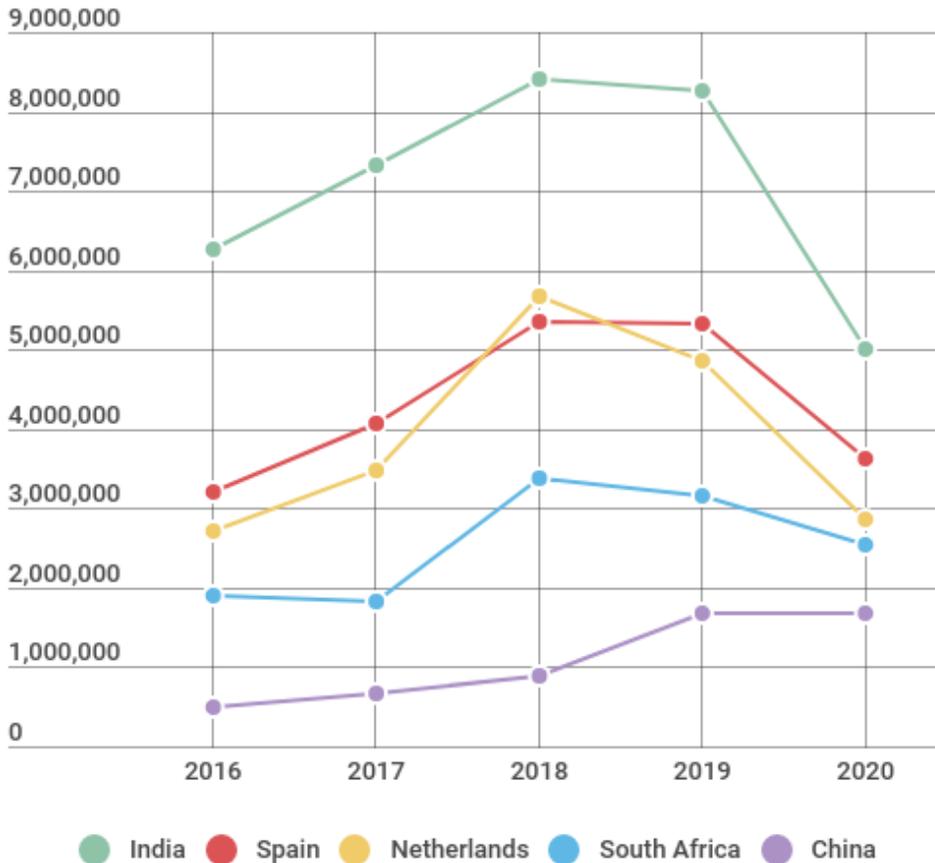


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The top importers of all goods from Nigeria in 2020 include India, Spain, the Netherlands, South Africa, and China.³²



Nigeria Export Partners (USD/Thousands)



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Trafficking in Persons Risk Factors Analysis

Legal/Policy Risk Factors

Level of Legal Protection for Civil Liberties and Workers' Rights

Freedom of Association

Collective bargaining occurs throughout most, but not all of the public and organized private sectors.³⁴ The U.S. Department of State reports that the law provides all workers except members of the armed forces and public employees in essential services the right to belong to



unions, though there are statutory limitations on these rights. The ILO notes that the government's application of "essential" is overly broad and encompasses banking, telecommunications, maintenance of ports, airports, and transportation of persons, goods, or livestock.³⁵ The law does not provide for a union's ability to conduct its activities without interference from the government. Additionally, the government limits the right to strike through legal restrictions, with strikes over national economic policy prohibited.

The Nigerian government has failed to enforce laws protecting workers' freedom of association more broadly. Some workers choose not to report violations of their rights for fear of retaliation from their employers since no laws prohibit retribution against strikers.³⁶

Working Conditions

The government increased the national monthly minimum wage in 2019 from NGN 18,000 (USD 49.54) to NGN 30,000 (USD 78), though employers with less than 50 employees are exempt from this minimum.³⁷ The law establishes a 40-hour workweek, two to four weeks of annual leave, overtime and holiday pay, except for agricultural and domestic workers. The labor law establishes general health and safety provisions, some of which are specific to young or female workers. According to the U.S. Department of State, Nigerian workers have the right to avoid situations that endanger their health or safety. However, the government does little to enforce this right.³⁸ The law specifically protects factory workers from hazardous working conditions, but not other non-factory employees in similar dangerous conditions. The U.S. Department of State reports that Nigeria's Ministry of Labor and Employment did not effectively enforce labor protections in 2020 and suffers from underfunding and insufficient resources.³⁹

Discrimination

According to the U.S. Department of State, "The law does not prohibit discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, sex, religion, political opinion, gender, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, HIV-positive status, or social status."⁴⁰ Employment discrimination against women and people living with HIV/AIDS is particularly rampant. The Nigerian government did not effectively address discrimination in employment and occupation; however, they did make progress in the area of discrimination against persons with disabilities by passing an act in 2019 that prohibits it. The Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act criminalizes participation in gay rights organizations, and the U.S. Department of State reports that this law has had, "a significant chilling effect on free association."⁴¹

Forced Labor

Nigerian law prohibits most forms of forced labor. The U.S. Department of State reports that the Nigerian government has taken significant steps to eliminate trafficking within the country. However, the government fails to meet the minimum standards needed for an effective anti-



trafficking response.⁴² See full Trafficking in Persons report: <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/TIPR-GPA-upload-07222021.pdf>.

Child Labor

The U.S. Department of State reports that the general minimum age for employment in Nigeria is 12 years, though children under the age of 14 may only work on a daily basis and must be paid at the end of each workday. These regulations do not apply to domestic service.⁴³ Additionally, the law considers light work in agriculture as an exception if the employer is a family member.

Children above age 12 are allowed to apprentice in skilled trades or as domestic servants. Those under 16 cannot work underground, and children must be at least 15 to work on vessels or in industrial work. The law protects persons under 18 from working in hazardous working conditions.

According to the U.S. Department of State, the government does not adequately enforce the law, and child labor remains highly prevalent, especially in the informal sector.⁴⁴ Although Nigeria has made some effort to meet international standards of prohibiting child trafficking by enacting the Child's Right Act, only 25 out of Nigeria's 36 states have adopted the measure leaving serious gaps in legal protections.⁴⁵

Nigeria's Labor Ministry reported nearly 3,000 children were rescued from child labor in 2020. UNICEF reports that roughly 10.5 million Nigerian children between the ages of five and 14 do not attend school.⁴⁶ According to a 2017 government survey reported by Human Rights Watch, one in two children in Nigeria are involved in child labor and 39 percent are working under dangerous conditions.⁴⁷

Civil Society Organizations

According to the U.S. Department of State, the government has responded harshly to journalists and NGOs that have spoken out against the government. In 2020, military personnel threatened a number of people who provided information on military misconduct to NGOs. The Department of State reports that "numerous journalists were killed, detained, abducted, or arrested during the year".⁴⁸ Public meetings by civil society organizations are permitted by security forces on a case-by-case basis.⁴⁹

Freedom House reports that military personnel shut down the Nigerian offices of two international NGOs in 2019, claiming that the organizations had ties to Boko Haram. The bans on these organizations were later lifted.⁵⁰ According to Freedom House, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), the splinter group of Boko Haram, announced it would target humanitarian workers, and in June 2020 the group killed five aid workers.⁵¹



Immigration Policies Limiting the Employment Options or Movement of Migrants

Refugees are able to move and work freely within the country, but they have few opportunities for employment, similar to regular citizens. However, the UNHCR raised concern of Nigeria’s ineffective registration and identification management systems in areas hosting IDPs and refugees which are necessary to access basic services .⁵²

Ratification of ILO Conventions Related to Human Trafficking or Rights of Workers and Migrants

Conventions	Status
ILO 29 Forced Labor	In force
ILO 87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize	In force
ILO 98 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining	In force
ILO 100 Equal Remuneration	In force
ILO 105 Abolition of Forced Labor	In force
ILO 111 Discrimination	In force
ILO 138 Minimum Age	In force
ILO 181 Private Employment Agencies	Not ratified
ILO 182 Worst Forms of Child Labor	In force
ILO 97 Migration for Employment	In force

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Use of Export Processing Zones (EPZs)

Nigeria has a number of export processing zones and an established government agency, the Nigerian Export Processing Zone Authority (NEPZA), is responsible for the facilitation of investment into these zones.⁵⁴ According to the U.S. Department of State, “workers and employers in EPZs are subject to the provisions of labor law, the 1992 Nigeria Export Processing Zones Decree, and other laws.” Workers in the EPZs have some public bargaining rights, but the law places restrictions on their right to strike.⁵⁵ The NEPZA allows duty-free import of equipment and raw materials, plus exempts investors operating in the zone from foreign exchange regulations and taxes.⁵⁶

Promotion of Emigration/Remittance Economy



The World Bank reported that that Nigeria received roughly USD 17.21 billion of remittances in 2020.⁵⁷ These remittances comprised approximately 3.98 percent of GDP for that year.⁵⁸

Political Risk Factors

Political Instability or Conflict

Nigeria scored 98 on the Fragile States Index in 2021 and was placed in the “Alert” category as the twelfth most fragile state out of 179 countries.⁵⁹ According to the U.S. Department of State, authorities do not always maintain control over the security forces. These personnel committed multiple acts of violence in 2020. The U.S. Department of State reports that the constitution and the law provide for freedom of speech and of the press, but the government often restricts these rights.⁶⁰ The U.S. Department of state does note that Nigeria’s past presidential elections in 2019 were relatively peaceful in comparison with previous years with only several instances of violent political rallies in some states.⁶¹

The Worldwide Governance Indicators, run by the World Bank, score Nigeria at a 4.72 percentile rank on the “Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism” indicator for 2020. The percentile rank indicates the percentage of countries that score below the county of attention (higher rank indicates greater stability of governance).⁶²

Level of Crime and Violence

According to the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), crime is a serious risk throughout the country, and criminals tend to use violence and deadly force when met with resistance.⁶³ OSAC warns of the risk of “widespread violent crime and/or organized crime present in the country, and/or that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes”.⁶⁴

Terrorism is a significant threat in Nigeria, particularly in the northeastern region, with three main active terrorist organizations: Boko Haram, the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) or (ISIS-WA), and Jama’atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru). These groups carry out frequent attacks, killings, bombings, kidnappings on military personnel as well as civilians resulting in tens of thousands of deaths.

The rate of pirate attacks and kidnappings in the Gulf of Guinea has reportedly increased in recent years. Armed gangs have been reported to board vessels to kidnap passengers and crew and steal boats to conduct piracy operations.⁶⁵

State Persecution



The U.S. Department of State has reported that while the law prohibits ethnic discrimination by the government, many ethnic group members claim to be marginalized in terms of government resource allocation, political representation, or both. Although all citizens have the right to live in any part of the country, state and local governments are reported to discriminate against members of ethnic groups that are not indigenous to their areas, sometimes compelling them to move by threats, discrimination in employment, or destruction of homes. Members of all ethnic groups are connected to reports of discrimination in hiring within the private sector.⁶⁶

Level of Corruption

Corruption is widespread and pervasive throughout Nigeria and hinders the nation's economic development.⁶⁷ The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index scores Nigeria as 24 out of 100, where 0 signals "Highly Corrupt" and 100 signals "Very Clean." Nigeria ranks 154 out of 180 countries on the index.⁶⁸ The World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators score Nigeria a 13.46 percentile rank on their "Control of Corruption" indicator. The percentile rank indicates the percentage of countries that score below the country of attention (a higher score indicates greater control of corruption).⁶⁹ Domestic and foreign observers site Nigeria's corruption and lack of transparency a serious barrier to investment, economic growth, and poverty reduction.

The U.S. Department of State has reported that the government does not effectively implement anti-corruption law, which provides criminal penalties for official corruption, and officials frequently engage in corrupt practices with impunity.⁷⁰ While president Buhari has promised to address corruption and has made some headway, some critics believe that his efforts are largely political, designed to target his opponents.⁷¹

Socio-Economic Risk Factors

Level of National Economic Development

The UN Human Development Index places Nigeria in the low human development category, ranking it 161 out of 189 countries with a score of 0.539 for 2019. Nigeria scored 0.484 on the index in 2010, and its score has slightly increased in each of the years since. While Nigeria scores higher than the average for its development category, it ranks slightly below average for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁷²

Level and Extent of Poverty

According to the UN, 40.1 percent of Nigerians live below the national poverty line as of 2019 data, while 46.4 are living in multidimensional poverty. Nigeria's inequality-adjusted Human Development Index value for 2019 was 0.348.⁷³



Degree of Gender Inequality

The Social Institutions and Gender Index reports that while Nigeria has a National Gender Policy that focuses on female empowerment and prioritizes the elimination of discriminatory practices against women, significant gender gaps in education, economic empowerment, and political participation remain present in Nigeria.⁷⁴ Patterns of inheritance have many variations, reflecting the plural legal system within the country that has developed because of varied forms of customary law practiced by numerous ethnic groups. In civil marriages when the husband leaves a will, widows are guaranteed the right to inherit at least one-third of the property.⁷⁵ However, customary law dictates inheritance rights in cases where the husband has no will. In northern Muslim communities, discriminatory practices concerning widows occur.⁷⁶

Although civil law entitles women to have access to land, certain customary laws stipulate that only men can inherit and own land. Under civil and Islamic law, married women have the right to non-land assets, but women have limited financial resources, and some institutions demand prior consent of the woman's husband before granting a loan.⁷⁷

The U.S. Department of State has noted that gender-based discrimination occurs in employment, reflecting gender inequities in traditional and religious practices.⁷⁸

Approximately 47.9 percent of the female population participates in the work force compared to 57.9 percent of the male population.⁷⁹

Landlessness and Dispossession

According to the U.S. Department of State, there were approximately 2.2 million IDPs living in Nigeria in 2021.⁸⁰ The main reasons for displacement included terrorism and communal clashes between ethnic groups.⁸¹

The U.S. Department of State reports that widespread sex trafficking occurs in many Nigerian IDP camps. Government officials are often directly involved with this trafficking, though none of these officials have been prosecuted.⁸²

The U.S. Department of State notes that clarity of land ownership has remained a significant challenge throughout rural Nigeria, where smallholder farmers may rely on customary or traditional use claims to their land.⁸³

Environmental Factors

Nigeria is currently experiencing severe deforestation and soil degradation. Additionally, rapid urbanization has led to a loss of arable land, and oil spills have caused serious water, air, and soil pollution.⁸⁴



Documented Trafficking Risk in Key Commodity Supply Chains

Cocoa

Cocoa Overview

Nigeria is the twenty-fifth largest exporter of cocoa and cocoa preparations in the world, and the crop is one of the country's largest agricultural export.⁸⁵ Nigerian cocoa exports have declined significantly in recent years; exports totaled roughly USD 1.999 billion in 2013 and USD 334 million in 2020.⁸⁶ Nigerian cocoa production more generally has also declined, largely due to outdated farming methods and aging cocoa trees.⁸⁷ According to the Nigerian Export Promotion Council, there are approximately 300,000 farmers growing cocoa in Nigeria, with the majority of cocoa production occurring on small-scale farms.⁸⁸

Documented TIP Risks in Cocoa

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*, there is evidence that cocoa is produced with child and forced labor in Nigeria.⁸⁹ There is little up-to-date information on the nature of child labor and trafficking risk in Nigerian cocoa production. A 2002 report suggested that some children are recruited by intermediaries for work on cocoa farms and are subject to non-payment of wages.⁹⁰ The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) are in coordination to eliminate child labor in cocoa production, as well as small-scale gold mining, effective from May 2019 to October 2022.⁹¹

Oil and Gas

Oil and Gas Overview

The southeastern region of Nigeria is home to sub-Saharan Africa's largest reserves of crude oil. These reserves are primarily located in and around the Niger Delta, a sprawling network of wetlands and low-lying agricultural areas home to millions of people who depend on the land for their livelihood. As of September, 2021, Nigeria produced approximately 1.559 million barrels of crude oil per day, down from an estimated 1.702 million barrels per day in September, 2020.⁹²

Documented TIP Risks in Oil and Gas



The oil and gas industry in Nigeria is a source of friction for many living in the Niger delta region of the country; especially relating to the prevalence of oil-related pollution in the region.⁹³ These tensions have fueled rural to urban migration, conflict, and illegal oil production.^{94, 95}

Gold

Gold Overview

According to the United States Geological Survey, Nigeria produced approximately 23 kilograms of gold in 2016.⁹⁶ The Minister of State of the Ministry of Mines and Steel Development, reported that Nigeria's most recent gold production in 2020 was 1,288 kilograms, according to one news source.⁹⁷ Most gold mining in the country is currently done by artisanal miners,⁹⁸ but a Canadian company recently began constructing Nigeria's first large-scale gold mine.⁹⁹ The Nigerian government is expanding its mining sector, and recently licensed two new gold refineries in 2020.¹⁰⁰ Gold deposits are found primarily in the northwest and southwest regions.¹⁰¹

Documented TIP Risks in Gold Mining

According to the U.S. Department of Labor's *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor*, gold mining is susceptible to child labor in Nigeria. The U.S. Department of State notes that some West African children are forced to work in Nigerian gold mines.¹⁰²

Lead has been found in gold deposits in some regions of Nigeria, leading to significant levels of lead poisoning among artisanal miners, child laborers, and the surrounding environment.¹⁰³ In 2010, Nigeria's gold mining sector was responsible for the largest incident of mass lead poisoning in history.¹⁰⁴ Illicit mining practices also cause environmental damage causing land and water shortages generating tension and conflict over these vital resources.¹⁰⁵

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