



***“Some will die, but we will not all die. Those that can carry on must keep hope alive.”***



Humanitarian  
Aid Relief Trust

## **North Nigeria**

### **VISIT REPORT**

*30<sup>th</sup> November – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015*

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

<b>Boko Haram</b>	Translates as ‘Western Education is a Sin’. The group are also known as Wilāyat Gharb Ifrīqīyyah (Islamic State’s) West Africa Province, <i>ISWAP</i> ), and Jamā’at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da’wah wa’l-Jihād (Group of the People of Sunnah for Preaching and Jihad).
<b>CJTF</b>	Civilian Joint Task Force
<b>DTM</b>	Displacement Tracking Matrix
<b>HART</b>	Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IHL</b>	International Humanitarian Law
<b>IPC</b>	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>IS</b>	The self-styled ‘Islamic State’ – also known as Isis, Isil and Daesh
<b>Izala</b>	Jama’at Izalat al-Bid’a wa-Iqamat al-Sunna (Arabic for ‘The Society for the Removal of Innovation and the Establishment of the Sunna’, officially abbreviated at JIBWIS but commonly known as Izala)
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Area
<b>NEMA</b>	National Emergency Management Agency
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HART wishes to express our warmest appreciation to our partner the Diocese of Jos for making arrangements for this visit and for their wonderful work which brings hope to so many. We are grateful to our other partners in Northern Nigeria, the Bishop of Bauchi and the Bishop of Bari, for making the journey to Jos to meet and update us as for the first time security risks were too high for us to visit these areas in person.

We also wish to thank the Stefanos Foundation<sup>1</sup> for sharing their records of events and assistance in visiting Sho district, and Adam Higazi (Research Scholar Cambridge University and Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola) for his time and extensive research across Northern Nigeria.

*Cover Photo:* Christian and Muslim women are working and learning together at the Mai Adiko Peace Project in Rayfield, Jos (Case Study on page 12-13).

*Quoted:* The Most Reverend Doctor Benjamin Kwashi, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Jos and Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Jos in the Church of Nigeria.

<sup>1</sup> [www.stefanosfoundation.org](http://www.stefanosfoundation.org)

For six years, Boko Haram, an extremist jihadist insurgency group which opposes traditionally Western systems of governance and education, has inflicted its reign of terror on the people of Northern Nigeria. The magnitude of the devastation in north-eastern states has not been fully reported due to a lack of access. Recently, the military and civilian vigilantes have regained much territory that was previously held by Boko Haram. This is triggering the return of displaced communities to situations of insecurity and shortage. Deep divisions exist between religious communities due to the climate of fear and mistrust fostered by constant insecurity.

#### *The Boko Haram Insurgency*

- This year, Boko Haram was named as the deadliest terrorist group in the world by the Global Terrorism Index, calculated on the total number of deaths caused by terrorist activity<sup>2</sup>.
- In recent months, the Nigerian Security Forces and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) have had some success in forcing Boko Haram out of occupied areas. This is revealing the sheer scale of the devastation left behind. As of early December 2015, the most accurate data available, a conservative estimate based on press coverage, assesses that there have been 43,101 deaths as a result of the insurgency<sup>3</sup>.
- In 2015, Boko Haram has increasingly used suicide bombers – particularly young women and girls – to attack crowds of people. There are fears that these girls may be those abducted and forcibly converted.
- Amnesty International reported that between November 2014 and February 2015, more than 500 women and 1,000 children were abducted from Gwoza Local Government Area (LGA) alone<sup>4</sup>. We were told, “*Chibok is just the tip of the iceberg. Wherever Boko Haram is present there are abductions*”. On 28<sup>th</sup> November, four women were abducted in Bauchi State. Abducted women are likely married off to Boko Haram members, entrapped in domestic slavery or used as fighters. Women who escape or are released may face stigma from their communities; there is a need for trauma healing and rehabilitative care for these women.
- Overall, due to the population demographics in the northern states, more Muslims have now been killed by Boko Haram than Christians. 13 of 64 District Heads in the Borno Emirate have been killed by Boko Haram<sup>5</sup>.
- A combination of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy may contribute to making young men vulnerable to radicalisation<sup>6</sup>. The insurgent group are able to offer significance in the way of money, loot, power and women to encourage membership. Alternatively, they also forcibly recruit with the threat of death.

#### *Persecution and Inter-faith Relations*

- The threat to freedom of religion and belief is a serious concern in Northern Nigeria. In addition to the direct targeting of Christian populations by Boko Haram, Christians are under-represented in politics in many northern states and have unequal access to services, including education. We also heard of multiple instances where Christians were coerced into having criminal trials heard in sharia courts instead of courts of common law. This is against the Constitution of Nigeria. However, Christians in the North often do not have access to a lawyer who would be willing to fight against the hegemony of the sharia legal system.
- In rural communities surrounding Jos, further tensions exist between predominantly Christian farming communities and the Muslim Fulani herdsmen. Increased cultivation, combined with growing herd sizes, has put added pressure on grazing land available, resulting in the closing of many legal cattle herding routes and reserves available to the Fulani. 2015 has seen a sharp increase in violence. We visited Sho District in Barkin Ladi LGA, a village that is completely isolated at the end of a road that is impassable without military escort as there have been such frequent violent attacks by Fulani. These villagers are unable to farm the land surrounding their village and their church and school have been destroyed. On 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015, 14 civilians were killed whilst travelling in military escort but not a single perpetrator was arrested (the Sho Development Association report of this attack is available upon request).

#### *Humanitarian Situation*

It is estimated that there are 2,233,506 displaced people within Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno (Borno has the highest displacement), Gombe, Taraba, Yobe, Nasarawa, Plateau and Kaduna States - 8.6% of whom have been displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, more than 177,000 Nigerians have escaped the conflict to neighbouring countries<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace (2015). ‘*The Global Terrorism Index*’: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Nigeria Security Tracker (2015) ‘Graph 1: Deaths over Time’: <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/nigeria-security-tracker/p29483> [Accessed: 15/10/2015]

<sup>4</sup> Amnesty International (2015), “*OUR JOB IS TO SHOOT, SLAUGHTER AND KILL*” BOKO HARAM’S REIGN OF TERROR IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA’: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/1360/2015/en/>

<sup>5</sup> Information supplied by researcher, Adam Higazi, who showed us an annotated poster of the Shehu of Borno that illustrated the current status of the leaders.

<sup>6</sup> Onuoha, F. (2014). ‘Why do Youth Join Boko Haram?’ United States Institute for Peace: <https://www.ciaonet.org/attachments/25304/uploads>.

- 875,000 people in Yobe and Borno states are facing emergency levels of food insecurity or worse. Stunting levels stand at 40 percent in North-Eastern Nigeria.<sup>9</sup>
- This month and next, the Nigerian Government has said that they will begin closing camps in Adamawa and Borno States. This, combined with the information that Boko Haram has retreated from many areas it previously held, is promoting the return of many IDPs. Those returning will require urgent support as shelter, food stocks, schools and places of worship have been destroyed in many north-eastern areas. Food security is certain to be a significant problem in 2016 as the planting season this year was largely missed.

#### *Priorities for Future Peace*

- **Education:** Boko Haram has systematically attacked education provision in North-East Nigeria. The country has exceedingly low enrolment levels in primary, secondary and further education, particularly for girls. In 2015, UNESCO reported that only 56.6 percent of adults in Nigeria are literate.<sup>10</sup> Many schools in the north-east have been closed for two to three years.
- **Inter-faith Reconciliation:** Small, community-led inter-faith reconciliation projects require urgent support in order to continue their excellent work in repairing the deep divisions and mistrust that exist between religious communities. One such project is the Mai Adiko Peace Project where Christian and Muslim women are empowered with practical skills. The project promotes cross-communal dialogue and learning and has significantly improved relations between these communities in Rayfield, Jos.
- **Political Representation:** Across all political levels, it is important that issues of representation are addressed to prevent the disenfranchisement of minority groups within the Nigerian political system.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Carefully directed support to returning IDPs is urgently required as they begin to rebuild their lives. Most urgently they will require shelter, food, support in restoring water sources and mine clearance. However, ongoing support will be necessary to kick-start local economy and bring quality education to children who have been out of school for prolonged periods. This support should be provided direct to the people via local organisations and established NGOs in order to bypass governments who have been accused of corruption. The Diocese of Jos plans to begin offering relief and reconstruction support to displaced communities returning to Michika and surrounding areas. The Diocese is experienced in reaching such Christian communities and has an established understanding of how to efficiently and effectively deliver appropriate assistance. HART strongly recommends support of such initiatives.
- There will be a need for external support in high-level reconciliation initiatives. Considerable restructuring of state-level government is necessary to ensure fair representation of the people within each state. Representation is key to promoting future peace. It would be helpful for community representatives to have the space to act as mediators, in order to address disputes through dialogue as opposed to violence.
- Financial support is required for grass-roots projects that seek to rebuild trust and dialogue between divided faith communities. One such project is the Mai Adiko Peace Project in Rayfield, Jos where Christian and Muslim women come together to learn skills that they can use to help lift themselves out of poverty. The project has seen significant improvements in inter-faith relations and is an excellent example of how dialogue and cross-communal learning can promote peaceful coexistence.
- The Nigerian Government and external influencers should prioritise education provision in the northern states. Increased resources are required in order to ensure that teachers are better trained and are also fairly and reliably paid; that schools are reopened when safe and made to be secure learning environments; and that enrolment rates at both primary and secondary level, particularly for girls, are improved. Government schools should be available equally to Christian and Muslim pupils and religious education should be taught in a way that is inclusive.
- At present, those who have been raped or abducted by Boko Haram may face stigma from within their own communities upon reintegration. There is a pressing need for improved trauma healing and rehabilitation work and outreach to promote these services.
- As Amnesty International has found evidence that the conflict in Northern Nigeria constitutes non-international armed conflict, Boko Haram should be investigated for war crimes and brought to justice in accordance with international law. In any conflict, justice forms an essential part of reconciliation and this is no exception.
- Tensions in rural farming communities are building due to increased cultivation of land which has led to decreased space available for growing cattle herds. It would be helpful if the routes and reserves designated by Nigerian law were reopened to settle land-use disputes.

<sup>7</sup> IOM (2015) 'Displacement Tracking Matrix, Round VI Report – October 2015':

[http://nigeria.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/01\\_IOM%20DTM%20Nigeria\\_Round%20VI%20Report\\_20151031.pdf](http://nigeria.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/01_IOM%20DTM%20Nigeria_Round%20VI%20Report_20151031.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> UN OCHA (2015), 'NIGERIA: Displacement - Humanitarian Snapshot': [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ocha\\_nigeria-displacement\\_snapshot\\_20151116\\_portrait.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ocha_nigeria-displacement_snapshot_20151116_portrait.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> World Food Programme (20.11.2015), 'Insecurity in northern Nigeria – Regional Impact':

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP%20Insecurity%20in%20Northern%20Nigeria%20Situation%20Report%20%202310%2020%20November%202015.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> UNESCO (2015) 'Education: Full Dataset': [http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EDULIT\\_DS&popupcustomise=true&lang=en#](http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EDULIT_DS&popupcustomise=true&lang=en#)

## INTRODUCTION

Boko Haram continue to perpetuate a climate of fear amongst Christian and Muslim communities across North-Eastern Nigeria. The sheer scale of the terror has meant that exact death and displacement figures are unattainable. In early 2015, Boko Haram held around 20,000 square miles of territory (an area the size of Belgium)<sup>11</sup>, an area that the Government, NGOs and other actors were unable to access. Internally Displaced People (IDPs), both Christian and Muslim, brought with them as they fled stories of unimaginable brutality and destruction – beheadings, abductions and forced conversion to Boko Haram’s extremist jihad. More recently this year, the military and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF – civilian vigilante group) have managed to take back much of this territory. Newly gained access to some regions in the north has revealed villages, towns and cities in which every shred of previous community and livelihood has been destroyed. Later this month and early next year, the Nigerian Government will be closing camps for displaced people in Borno and Adamawa. This is part of their overly-ambitious narrative that the war against Boko Haram is won. The closing of camps, combined with news that Boko Haram has retreated from some areas, is resulting in mass returns. However, many returning will face landmines, no shelter and no food, plus the ongoing threat of Boko Haram terror. It is imperative that support in attaining the most basic human necessities reaches these northern communities. Whether or not Boko Haram has been significantly weakened, with planting season missed, 2016 is certain to be a year of shortage and struggle in Northern Nigeria.

While HART remains deeply disturbed and concerned about the present situation in Northern Nigeria in which daily life is rife with fear and insecurity, we found a bright glimmer of hope in the inspirational work of our partners. Their commitment, courage and determination to see that education, faith, inter-communal reconciliation and practical support with healthcare and reconstruction remain under these deeply challenging circumstances. This ensures that there is a future for the people of this troubled region.

## OBJECTIVES

### Aid

- a) To discuss with HART’s partners their priorities for aid, as a basis for fundraising and ensuring the most appropriate use of funds.
- b) To obtain evidence of the use of funds previously provided by HART, supplementing monitoring reports and accounts provided by partners, and to enhance accountability to donors.
- c) To ascertain the availability and adequacy of aid for the populations in the areas visited, and to identify priorities for future aid.

### Advocacy

- a) To obtain up-to-date information and first-hand accounts of the situation in Northern Nigeria and Plateau State, with a particular focus on continued violence caused by Boko Haram and inter-religious tensions between the Christian and Fulani communities.
- b) To discuss with IDPs and community representatives their concerns and priorities for support, and to record their messages for members of the international community.
- c) To be with and encourage the people of Northern Nigeria at this difficult time.

## QUOTATIONS

All quotations in this report have been placed in *italics*. Where necessary, quotations have been anonymised to protect identity.

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<sup>11</sup> Blair, D. (2015) ‘Boko Haram is now a mini-Islamic State, with its own territory’. The Telegraph: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/nigeria/11337722/Boko-Haram-is-now-a-mini-Islamic-State-with-its-own-territory.html>

## METHODOLOGY

HART works with local partners in every aspect of our work. Therefore, it is important to note that the research for this report was conducted primarily with these partners (who all identify as Christian in faith) and we were not able to interview a truly representative cross-section of the population of Northern Nigeria in the time available. This is a report of our visit in late November 2015 and is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of this complex conflict.

### *Introduction to HART's Partners in Nigeria*

The Mai Adiko Peace Project, run by the Anglican Diocese of Jos	Founded to address the divisions between Christian and Muslim populations in Rayfield Jos, the Mai Adiko Peace project is bring women from different communities together to empower them with practical skills that can be used to generate an income. The women learn tailoring, knitting, literacy, business skills and computer skills. They are also able to apply for loans to kick-start their own small business initiatives.
The Christian Institute, Jos	The Christian Institute seeks to train pastors and health workers in such a way that they will be equipped to be young leaders who will stand for truth, justice and righteousness in their families, churches and communities. Despite their tight budget, the Christian Institute has awarded additional free places to students from crisis areas. One such student told us, <i>“I want to become a nurse. When these people [Boko Haram] come to our place and they have pursued people into the bush, people have died because there have been no doctors, no nurses and no drugs. This is why I want to be a nurse.”</i>
The Anglican Diocese of Bari	The Diocese established the Ceto group of schools (nursery to junior-secondary) to provide quality education to Christian pupils (although Muslim pupils can and do attend) who were being denied admission to Government schools. They seek funding to complete two new blocks which will provide further classrooms and boarding accommodation. The Diocese also runs the B.B. Ayam Clinic, which treats approximately 1000 patients a year. 95 percent of the patients of this clinic are Muslim.
The Bishop of Bauchi	In Bauchi, HART is supporting St Paul's Academy in Tafawa Balewa and Ningi Academy in Ningi LGA. The priority for the Bishop of Bauchi is education to ensure that this generation of young people is not neglected so that they grow up to promote a peaceful future.

## ASPECTS OF THE CRISIS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

### BOKO HARAM

From the emergence of Boko Haram as an organised movement in 2009, arising from previous violent Islamist groups including the 'Nigerian Taliban', the scale and brutality of their violent insurgency in Northern Nigeria has grown beyond imagination. For the first time since HART began working in Northern Nigeria, we were unable to visit partners in Bauchi and Kano States due to the escalating security risk and fears of reprisal attacks on our partners. Instead these partners discreetly came to Jos, bringing with them accounts of the devastation in their home-states. This year, Boko Haram was named as the deadliest terrorist group in the world by the Global Terrorism Index, calculated on the total number of deaths caused by terrorist activity. In 2014, the country witnessed the largest increase in terrorist deaths ever recorded by any country, increasing by over 300 percent to 7,512 fatalities<sup>12</sup>. As of early December, the most accurate data available, a conservative estimate based on press coverage, assesses that there have been 43,101 total deaths as a result of the insurgency.<sup>13</sup> There have been vastly more unreported deaths as no accurate reporting figures are available due to the lack of access for media, Government and NGO actors. Researcher, Adam Higazi, told us; *“The scale of devastation following Boko Haram in the North-East is worse than people realise, especially in Borno state. In areas of Boko Haram control, there is no Government presence and no one is able to visit. Accurate figures are not coming out.”* Canon Hassan John highlighted that, *“Boko Haram have managed to generate fear and myth that they are everywhere. Reporters are too afraid to report stories of attacks, giving Boko Haram a coat of silence.”* In recent months, the Nigerian Security Forces and Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) have had some success in forcing Boko Haram out of occupied areas. This is revealing the sheer scale of the devastation left behind.

<sup>12</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace (2015). *'The Global Terrorism Index'*: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> Nigeria Security Tracker (2015) *'Graph 1: Deaths over Time'*: <http://www.cfr.org/nigeria/nigeria-security-tracker/p29483> [Accessed: 15/10/2015]

The tactics that Boko Haram employ have changed over time as communities have adapted and the group have grown in strength and sophistication: *“Now they can use anything to cause an explosion. They can use a phone, they can use a bottle, you may think that they are supplying water while it is another chemical. In Maiduguri they have been polluting the water sources with poison. We don’t know how they manufacture it. Fortunately, nobody has taken the water yet.”*<sup>14</sup> 2015 has seen an increase in their use of suicide bombers – particularly young women and girls. Suicide bombers are able to pass easily through the concrete barricades constructed around churches and mosques to prevent car bombs and reach the heart of a market without detection. There are widespread fears that abducted women and girls, including those abducted from the town of Chibok in April 2014, are being used as suicide bombers: *“These girls are indoctrinated into the Boko Haram ideology, being told that they will go straight to paradise and be blessed for doing this deed for their God. Some suspect that their parents may receive payment and so this may be an incentive in this situation of deep poverty. Others say that these girls have been so deeply abused that their lives are no longer worth living and so they are willing to commit suicide.”*<sup>15</sup> It has not been possible to verify this claim as the identity of the perpetrator is rarely recorded.

Numbers of abductions are far higher than has been reported in the international media, which has predominantly focused on the Chibok abductions: *“Chibok is just the tip of the iceberg. Wherever Boko Haram is present there are abductions”*<sup>16</sup>. Amnesty International reported that between November 2014 and February 2015, more than 500 women and 1,000 children were abducted from Gwoza Local Government Area (LGA) alone<sup>17</sup>. Abducted girls are known to be subjected to physical and psychological abuse, forced labour, forced participation in military operations (including carrying ammunition or luring men into ambush), forced marriage to the captors, forced religious conversion and sexual abuse (including rape)<sup>18</sup>. Women who manage to escape or have been liberated then often face stigmatisation from their own community who react with mistrust or regard them as ‘damaged goods’. There is an urgent need for trauma healing and rehabilitation for these women to support their reintegration into normal life. The Bishop of Bari told us, *“Culturally it is difficult for a woman who is raped to come out and say that she has been raped. Most of them suffer silently until health implications show. It is very difficult to get the real information on what has happened unless someone else saw.”*

Abducted women who have been forced to convert to Islam are also being used as part of the incentivisation of young men into Boko Haram. We were told of instances where the woman’s husband was murdered in front of her and then she was immediately forced to marry a Boko Haram member<sup>19</sup>. A combination of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy may contribute to making young men vulnerable to radicalisation<sup>20</sup>. The insurgent group are able to offer significance in the way of money, loot, power and women to those who join. Alternatively, they forcibly recruit with the threat of death.

Boko Haram continue to perpetuate their reign of terror through brutal tactics. A 13 year old boy named Isa told us, *“My whole family left Gwoza because of the increasing fighting and attacks. We heard that the militants were moving around the town; that Boko Haram was said to be gone but it was a trick. Any people who returned to their villages...Boko Haram cut their throats. I am not sure how many people were killed and how many dead bodies. There was one man who was told to lie on the ground, and then they pushed and held him down while they cut through his neck from the back to cut his head off. My whole family saw it.”* Another female interviewee recounted, *“In a village near my hometown Boko Haram gathered the youths together and started slaughtering them all...They were killed with guns or knives, sometimes they take away their heads.”* We were repeatedly told that Boko Haram came wearing Nigerian Military uniforms, except they did not have boots and their heads and faces would be covered.

At present, Boko Haram is a regional problem affecting Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger. However, in March 2015, Boko Haram released a statement pledging allegiance to the Islamic state group (IS). In the audio message, a male voice believed to be Boko Haram leader, Abubakar Shekau, announced, *“We announce our allegiance to the caliph... and will hear and obey in times of difficulty and prosperity.”*<sup>21</sup> IS responded with a tape in which a man - who describes himself as IS spokesman Mohammed al-Adnani - says: *“We announce to you to the good news of the expansion of the caliphate to West Africa because the caliph... has*

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with the Bishop of Bari.

<sup>15</sup> Pre-visit interview with Canon Hassan John and the Venerable Justice Onyeaka Okoronkwo

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Adam Higazi

<sup>17</sup> Amnesty International (2015), *“OUR JOB IS TO SHOOT, SLAUGHTER AND KILL” BOKO HARAM’S REIGN OF TERROR IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA*: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/1360/2015/en/>

<sup>18</sup> Human Rights Watch (2014), *‘Those Terrible Weeks in Their Camp’*: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/10/27/those-terrible-weeks-their-camp/boko-haram-violence-against-women-and-girls>

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Adam Higazi.

<sup>20</sup> Onuoha, F. (2014). *‘Why do Youth Join Boko Haram?’* United States Institute for Peace: <https://www.ciaonet.org/attachments/25304/uploads>.

<sup>21</sup> BBC (2015), *‘Nigeria’s Boko Haram pledges allegiance to Islamic State’*: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-31784538>.

accepted the allegiance of our brothers of the Sunni group for preaching and the jihad.”<sup>22</sup> Some of our respondents hypothesised that Boko Haram has international connections and support from outside, as well as from within Nigeria. However, researcher Adam Higazi, highlighted that the wealth and resources of Boko Haram can be explained without international support. Their looting of markets and homes, robbing of banks, stealing weapons from the Nigerian Military and funds generated through ransom payments can explain this growth. Indeed, it is likely that most Boko Haram weaponry has been stolen from within the country or purchased on the black market.

In most areas, Boko Haram do not have the support of the wider Muslim population, particularly following a change in their tactics in 2013 when they moved towards the indiscriminate killing of both Christians and Muslims. HART’s partner, the Bishop of Bari told us, “There is an awareness that has been created between the Muslims and the Christians because we are both from the same place and the mosque is now in as much danger as the church. They are in the same danger as us and they have the same fear as us. This has helped with cohesion. In the beginning it was just the churches that were in danger - now they [Boko Haram] are killing everyone. They are like wild dogs.” Overall, due to the population demographics in the northern states, more Muslims have now been killed by Boko Haram than Christians. In fact, 13 of 64 District Heads in the Borno Emirate have been killed by Boko Haram<sup>23</sup>. Just one example of a recent attack on the Muslim population is the killing of at least 32 people by a Boko Haram in a market bombing in Yola on 17<sup>th</sup> November, only three weeks after twin suicide bombings took place in a new mosque in Yola and Maiduguri<sup>24</sup>.

Many Islamic sects have publically condemned Boko Haram. Likewise, Boko Haram considers any Muslim who does not join them to be a non-Muslim and therefore a legitimate target in their jihad. On this visit we heard of the strange practices of Boko Haram members that do not align with Islam. For example, we were told that they routinely pray with their shoes on and wash with sand instead of water, despite the ready availability of water in their camps. An IDP boy who fled Boko Haram told us, “They don’t really bath. They say that bathing is an abomination...it’s haram [forbidden] to their own religion”.<sup>25</sup> Boko Haram’s founder, Mohammed Yusuf, was not widely respected by Islamic scholars in his interpretation of the Qur’an and founding principles of Boko Haram<sup>26</sup>.

In a report earlier this year, Amnesty International found that: “Since at least May 2013, the situation in North-East Nigeria has constituted a non-international armed conflict. In this context, Boko Haram is bound by international humanitarian law (IHL). Amnesty International has concluded that Boko Haram has committed serious violations of IHL amounting to war crimes. These include murder, attacks on civilians and civilian objects, and indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks. Members of Boko Haram should also be investigated for the war crimes of torture, rape, sexual violence, sexual slavery, forced marriages and the recruitment of child soldiers.”<sup>27</sup>

## THE NIGERIAN SECURITY FORCES AND THE CIVILIAN JOINT TASK FORCE (CJTF)

We received varying reports of the success in which the Nigerian Security Forces have weakened Boko Haram. However, it does appear that many areas that were previously under Boko Haram control have been recaptured in recent months. Prior to this, the Security Forces had come under intense criticism for their incompetence in the fight against Boko Haram, for allowing the group to seize their weapons and they have even been accused of possible collusion with the insurgent group. Since President Goodluck Jonathan declared a State of Emergency in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2013, the military have been able to operate with impunity<sup>28</sup>. This year, Amnesty International released a report which accuses the military of war crimes and possible crimes against humanity, such as the arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial executions, deaths in custody, unlawful detention, enforced disappearances and use of torture<sup>29</sup>. Furthermore, the Government has been accused of corruption in its military

<sup>22</sup> BBC (2015) ‘Islamic State ‘accepts’ Boko Haram’s allegiance pledge’: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-31862992>.

<sup>23</sup> Information supplied by Adam Higazi, who showed us an annotated poster of the Shehu of Borno that illustrated the current status of the leaders.

<sup>24</sup> Al Jazeera (2015) ‘Dozens killed in Nigeria market bombing’: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/11/nigeria-market-bombing-151117213718605.html>

<sup>25</sup> Interview with Ishaya, 15 year old boy from Shaffa in Borno State.

<sup>26</sup> Higazi, A. ‘Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria’ (published in: M. Cahen, M.E. Pommerolle, K. Tall (eds.) (2015), *Collective Mobilisations in Africa: Contestation, Resistance, Revolt*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.)

<sup>27</sup> Amnesty International (2015) ‘“OUR JOB IS TO SHOOT, SLAUGHTER AND KILL” BOKO HARAM’S REIGN OF TERROR IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA’: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/1360/2015/en/>.

<sup>28</sup> Higazi, A. ‘Mobilisation into and against Boko Haram in North-East Nigeria’ (published in: M. Cahen, M.E. Pommerolle, K. Tall (eds.) (2015), *Collective Mobilisations in Africa: Contestation, Resistance, Revolt*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.)

<sup>29</sup> Amnesty International (2015). ‘Stars on their shoulders. Blood on their hands. War crimes committed by the Nigerian military’: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/.../AFR4416572015ENGLISH.PDF>



spending. In November, President Buhari ordered the arrest of former National Security Adviser, Sambo Dasuki, and other unidentified officials for allegedly misappropriating as much as \$5.5 billion intended for the purchase of defence equipment<sup>30</sup>.

Public opinion is significantly more positive towards the CJTF, the civilian vigilante groups who have armed themselves and have actively fought back against Boko Haram. In an interview with a girl forced to flee Borno State, we were told, *"My junior sister went with the vigilantes. They supervised the place - the vigilantes protect the people. Boko Haram are running away. There are now more vigilantes which has made it safer."* The Bishop of Bauchi told us, *"Vigilantes move in sets, some will go for 12 hours and then change - they are normally in a group of about 20...The boys train themselves because they pass through a lot of attacks - they develop a kind of discipline within themselves. A boy of 7 years will know how to handle any weapon. These are people that farm the land; they have not been violent military persons. A typical African community has their own security and administrative strategy."* Often Christians and Muslims work together in the vigilante groups, working together for the common cause of defeating Boko Haram.

As with the Security Forces, concerns remain as to the accountability of CJTF operations, particularly with regards to their involvement in arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings<sup>31</sup>.

## FULANI

The semi-nomadic Fulani people spread over West and Northern Central Africa and into some parts of Sudan. In Nigeria, they are a minority group that mostly dwell in the northern areas and Middle Belt, although recently have been moving further southwards due to the aridity of northern land and Boko Haram violence. The rural Fulani are traditionally cattle herders. However, the Fulani community cannot be viewed as homogeneous and a divide exists between rural and urban Fulani. Indeed, President Buhari is a Fulani, but we were told that it cannot be said that he politically represents the rural Fulani community who remain significantly under-represented in state-level politics.

Grazing routes and reserves in Nigeria have been formally marked and supposedly protected. However, many have been blocked due to increased cultivation of land. In 2009, a director in Nigeria's agriculture ministry, Mr. Jinaidu Maina, stated that; *"Nigeria officially has 415 grazing reserves but only one-third is in use; the remaining 270 have been built on or farmed."*<sup>32</sup> This has caused increased tensions between communities as movement of Fulani herders is increasingly restricted and there is increased likelihood of cultivated land becoming damaged by roaming cattle.

Some members of the Fulani people have taken up arms to further their localised goals, which mostly relate to securing greater grazing land for their cattle<sup>33</sup>. The 2015 Global Terrorism Index report states that *"Fulani militants killed 1,229 people in 2014 [992 of which were private citizens], up from 63 in 2013"* and that the majority of these deaths occurred in the Middle Belt of Nigeria, particularly in the five states of Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Plateau and Taraba<sup>34</sup>. There have been significant deaths on the Fulani side; however these have been less widely reported as nomadic Fulani tend to have little or no media access. Despite no evidence of collusion and the different objectives of the two distinct groups, we were told, *"The average Hausa or nominal Christian on the street would generalise and match together Boko Haram and the Fulani because they are both Muslim."*

### *Fulani on the Plateau*

Approximately 90 percent of Fulani in the Barkin Ladi, Riyom and Bokokos LGAs on the Plateau are members of Izala<sup>35</sup>, a fundamentalist Sunni Islamic movement. Izala is a Salafi-inspired reformist group that is heavily influenced by the Wahhabi doctrines from Saudi Arabia. The Fulani on the Plateau were some of the first to join the association, because Shaykh Isma'ila Idris (the leader until 2000) preached to them in their native language Fulfulde and increased their empowerment in religious matters<sup>36</sup>. It can be argued that this led to the deterioration in relations with neighbouring Christian and other Muslim sects, as

<sup>30</sup> Ibukun, Y. and McGregor, S. (2015). *'Nigeria Looks for Missing \$5.5 Billion in Defense Spending'*, Bloomberg: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-11-17/nigeria-orders-criminal-probe-of-suspicious-defense-spending>.

<sup>31</sup> Amnesty International (2015). *'Stars on their shoulders. Blood on their hands. War crimes committed by the Nigerian military'*: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/.../AFR4416572015ENGLISH.PDF>

<sup>32</sup> Odemwingie, E. (2014), *'Nigeria: The Grazing Routes To Ethnic Bloodshed'*: <http://leadership.ng/features/392080/nigeria-grazing-routes-ethnic-bloodshed>.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Institute for Economics and Peace (2015), *'Global Terrorism Index'*: <http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Adam Higazi.

<sup>36</sup> Higazi, A., (2015), *'Rural Insecurity in the Jos Plateau, central Nigeria: livelihoods, land, and cattle amid religious reform and violent conflict'*. (Forthcoming in: A.R. Mustapha and D. Ehrhardt (eds), *'Creed and Grievance: Muslims, Christians, & Society in northern Nigeria*. Oxford: James Curry).

the Fulani community became increasingly influenced by some preachers who provoked hostility and put an end to inter-communal trade relationships<sup>37</sup>. Boko Haram have openly dismissed Izala as ‘infidels’<sup>38</sup> because of their willingness to cooperate with the Government, have attacked Izala mosques and attempted to kill their Sheiks.

Disputes between Christians and Muslims came to a head in the 2001 riots in Jos that killed 1,000 people in six days<sup>39</sup>, and again in the 2010 riots. There has been long standing rivalry and division for political power between those categorised as “indigenous” to Jos, with Christianity forming the dominant religion, and those labelled as “non-indigenous” or “settlers”, including the predominantly Muslim Fulani the majority of whom have been permanently settled on the Plateau for 80-100 years<sup>40</sup>). Overlapping categorisation of “indigenous”/Christian and “settler”/Muslim, exacerbated by the arrival of displaced Christians from the northern states who brought with them stories of Muslim violence, caused fear and mistrust between religious communities which became violent<sup>41</sup>. Tensions flared in September 2001 after the appointment of Mukhtar Muhammad, a Fulani-Hausa, as Poverty Eradication Coordinator in Jos North in August, a few weeks before the crisis.

In response to rioting in Jos, particularly in September 2001 and January 2010, attacks on Muslims spread into the surrounding rural areas<sup>42</sup>. This in turn led to widespread reprisal attacks on the Christian Berom community. Since, there has been a high concentration of violence in the Berom areas of Riyom, Barkin Ladi and Jos South that has escalated and is on-going. Researcher, Adam Higazi, found that, *“There is now a cycle of violence fuelled by cattle rustling, the destruction of farms, competition for land, and revenge attacks by both sides.”*<sup>43</sup> This has resulted in the current trend of Fulani groups driving Berom communities off their agricultural land in order to create grazing land for themselves and their growing cattle herds.

*CASE STUDY: Sho village, Barkin Ladi Local Government Area*<sup>44</sup>

*“This place is under siege and this is our home father land. We have never rested, we have been attacked day and night. We cannot move from this village to Barkin Ladi without security escort. In fact, we cannot farm. Our major economic activity is to farm. Those that were able to farm, they came and attacked. Nobody can go for any of any economic activities. Therefore we are hopeless.”* - Acting President of Sho Development Association

On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2015, the HART delegation visited the people of Sho under military escort. Military escort is the only way which the people of Sho are able to leave the village due to severe insecurity along the Sho-Barkin Ladi road. 69 members of the Sho community have been killed since the start of the troubles here in 2013. These people have been killed by the Fulani on this road, in their farms and within their homes. Their church and school have been burned and can no longer be accessed. Villagers showed us the scars from where they had been shot and experienced knife attacks. The village now survives in complete isolation, surrounded by those Fulani who perpetrated these crimes with impunity. The community are unable to farm and are consequently suffering food shortages; they said, *“We do not know what we will eat this year.”*

The community highlighted to us an attack that occurred on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2015, in which 14 were killed<sup>45</sup>. A group from the Sho community gathered for a journey to Barkin Ladi in a convoy of six cars and several motorcycles, guarded by the Nigeria Police Force security stationed in Sho Village Headquarters. Their documentation of



*Burial at Sho following the attack on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2015.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Ogunlesi, T. (2015), ‘Nigeria’s Internal Struggles’, New York Times: [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/24/opinion/nigerias-internal-struggles.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/24/opinion/nigerias-internal-struggles.html?_r=1).

<sup>39</sup> Human Rights Watch, (2001), ‘Jos: A City Torn Apart’ : [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/nigeria1201\\_1.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/nigeria1201_1.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Adam Higazi.

<sup>41</sup> Human Rights Watch, (2001), ‘Jos: A City Torn Apart’ : [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/nigeria1201\\_1.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/nigeria1201_1.pdf).

<sup>42</sup> Higazi, A., (2015), ‘Rural Insecurity in the Jos Plateau, central Nigeria: livelihoods, land, and cattle amid religious reform and violent conflict’. (Forthcoming in: A.R. Mustapha and D. Ehrhardt (eds), ‘Creed and Grievance: Muslims, Christians, & Society in northern Nigeria. Oxford: James Curry).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Please note that this case study is not representative of the whole inter-ethnic conflict between the Fulani pastoralists and Berom farming communities, but is an individual example cited because HART was able to visit and meet community representatives here.

<sup>45</sup> A report of this attack by the Sho Development Association is available upon request.

events states: *“They were going for a bank verification exercise (BVN) at First Bank Nigeria PLC Barkin Ladi branch... When the police escort van passed, they then opened fire on the next cars following the police pick up van from both sides of the road on the helpless convoy killing 13 of them on the spot while one later died in the hospital making 14. The police escort ahead could not offer any effective defence, nor apprehend, kill or arrest any of the terrorists and the killers made their way fleeing into the rocks and forest a distance ahead.”*

The Sho community request emergency relief from NEMA and other NGOs in order to support them through the severe food shortage that they currently face. They also request investigation into why the police security forces had been unable to protect the civilians and why no arrests were made.

## PERSECUTION AND INTER-FAITH RELATIONS

Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion<sup>46</sup>. Boko Haram has repeatedly violated this human right in their efforts to establish sharia across the northern states. The Bishop of Bauchi told us, *“Their main strategy is to weaken Christianity in areas where it is strong. They aim to weaken our religion, our community strength and our economy. They bomb churches and kill Christians – that strategy has two faces, to weaken us and to provoke us to retaliate. They want to start civil war.”*

In the northern states, we were told that religious persecution extends beyond the current violence into politics. Christians are poorly represented at the state-level of governance, resulting in unequal opportunities and services. Canon Hassan John told us, *“I have a Muslim name because there are no opportunities for people with Christian names where I come from.”* Within the education system in the north, Christians are unable to access religious education of Christianity in the free Government schools and instead are taught Islam, despite it being set out in the constitution that schools should teach both religions. This may be because Christian teachers are not employed. Christians therefore have to send their children to private or church schools, which can be expensive and therefore impossible in such conditions of poverty.

We also heard of instances where Christians have been coerced into having their trials heard in a sharia court instead of common courts. This is against the Nigerian constitution which bars the federal government or state governments from establishing a state religion<sup>47</sup>. Muslims and non-Muslims should have the right to have their case heard in a common court of law rather than a sharia court if they wish. In relation to this matter, we were told, *“Nigerian laws are beautiful laws but enforcing them is the challenge.”*<sup>48</sup> Because Christians are disempowered in the northern states, they are unable to claim their legal rights and lawyers often shy away from challenging the sharia legal system.

In Jos, which is viewed as *“the bastion of Christianity”*,<sup>49</sup> the perceived threat of Islam is acute. Jos is suspected to be a key target because it is a barrier to the geographical spread of Islam into the South. Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi told us, *“They have not succeeded in weakening the faith of Christians in Jos.”*

Attacks by Boko Haram and inter-ethnic conflicts in rural areas surrounding Jos have had a further damaging impact upon inter-faith relations, particularly between the two largest religious groups in Nigeria, Christians and Muslims. We repeatedly heard of the mistrust of other faiths as a whole: *“I am doing this work and I will come to their aid, but I am still yet to be able to love a Muslim.”*<sup>50</sup>

### CASE STUDY- Mistrust kills in Michika<sup>51</sup>

Boko Haram entered Madagali and committed a massacre of Muslims. In the mosque, Boko Haram said that anyone who was willing to join their jihad should stand on one side and anyone who was unsure should stand on the other. They then proceeded to execute every person who was unsure. Their bodies were buried in a mass grave – they put one layer of bodies down, drove over them with their trucks and then covered with another layer of bodies.

<sup>46</sup> The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

<sup>47</sup> US Department of State (2014) ‘International Religious Freedom Report for 2014’: <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?year=2014&dliid=238248#wrapper>

<sup>48</sup> Interview with the CEO of Stefanos Foundation, Mark Lipdo

<sup>49</sup> Higazi, A., (2015), *‘Rural Insecurity in the Jos Plateau, central Nigeria: livelihoods, land, and cattle amid religious reform and violent conflict’*. (Forthcoming in: A.R. Mustapha and D. Ehrhardt (eds), *‘Creed and Grievance: Muslims, Christians, & Society in northern Nigeria*. Oxford: James Curry).

<sup>50</sup> Anonymous interview

<sup>51</sup> Adam Higazi shared with us this story from his research

Some Muslims escaped to Zah in Michika. Here the local people, who believed that all Muslims were Boko Haram members, killed most of those fleeing.

## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

### INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLES (IDPs)

The International Organisation for Migration's (IOM's) Displacement Tracking Index (DTI) indicates that there are 2,233,506 displaced people within Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno (Borno has the highest displacement), Gombe, Taraba, Yobe, Nasarawa, Plateau and Kaduna states<sup>52</sup>. 88.6 percent of these have been displaced by the Boko Haram insurgency. 92 percent of IDPs live in host families, the other eight percent live in camps<sup>53</sup>. Furthermore, more than 177,000 Nigerians have escaped the conflict to neighbouring countries<sup>54</sup>. This data may not be fully comprehensive due to access restrictions in some areas.

The retreat of Boko Haram, combined with the proposed Government closing of IDP camps in Adamawa and Borno<sup>55</sup> has led to the return of some IDPs. Boko Haram is known to have indiscriminately planted mines around some villages to create fear of return. Furthermore, many people are returning to find that they have nothing left. For example, in some villages of Michika LGA, most buildings have been destroyed by Boko Haram. Anyone who returns will be returning to no shelter and no food as the planting season was missed. 875,000 people in Yobe and Borno states are facing emergency levels of food insecurity (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC] Phase 4) or worse. Stunting levels stand at 40 percent in North-Eastern Nigeria<sup>56</sup>.

Those returning require urgent support to rebuild their lives and to have enough food to survive until the next harvest. Support should be provided direct to the people via local organisations and established NGOs in order to bypass governments who have been accused of corruption. The Diocese of Jos plans to begin offering relief and reconstruction support to displaced communities returning to Michika and surrounding areas. The Diocese is experienced in reaching such Christian communities and has an established understanding of how to efficiently and effectively deliver appropriate assistance.

In addition to emergency aid for shelter and food, it will be necessary to assist the rebuilding of schools and provision of education in repopulated villages in the northern states. In IDP camps we visited in Jos, most want desperately to return to the land and the life they knew previously but some have found better education for their children in Jos and are therefore reluctant to leave behind these prospects for their children.

## PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

### INTER-FAITH RECONCILIATION

The damage to inter-faith relations caused by Boko Haram and tensions between rural farming communities has had a far-reaching impact. There exists a deep suspicion and divide between communities of different faiths in Northern Nigeria. For the sake of future peace, it is of paramount importance that careful reconciliation projects ensue to repair trust and civility, and to enable the diverse north of the country to return to a state of harmony once the immediate violence has been controlled. One such project is described below and is strongly recommended for funding to enable the project to grow.

*CASE STUDY: The Mai Adiko Peace Project in Rayfield, Jos*

HART supports a reconciliation project run by the Diocese of Jos that was established to address the deep suspicion between Christian and Muslim communities in Rayfield, Jos. The project brings together women and young people from different faith traditions. The project is centred on increasing dialogue between communities and promoting inter-communal learning.

<sup>52</sup> IOM (2015) 'Displacement Tracking Matrix, Round VI Report – October 2015':

[http://nigeria.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/01\\_IOM%20DTM%20Nigeria\\_Round%20VI%20Report\\_20151031.pdf](http://nigeria.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/01_IOM%20DTM%20Nigeria_Round%20VI%20Report_20151031.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> UN OCHA (2015), 'NIGERIA: Displacement - Humanitarian Snapshot':

[http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ocha\\_nigeria-displacement\\_snapshot\\_20151116\\_portrait.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ocha_nigeria-displacement_snapshot_20151116_portrait.pdf)

<sup>55</sup> IRIN (2015), 'Nigeria says 'go home', but is it safe from Boko Haram?' : <http://www.irinnews.org/report/102221/nigeria-says-go-home-but-is-it-safe-from-boko-haram>

<sup>56</sup> World Food Programme (20.11.2015), 'Insecurity in northern Nigeria – Regional Impact':

<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP%20Insecurity%20in%20Northern%20Nigeria%20Situation%20Report%20%2310%2C%2020%20November%202015.pdf>

As well as bringing women from different faith traditions together, the project empowers women with practical skills that they can use to lift themselves out of poverty.

The project seeks permission from the parents of a child or husband of a wife in the Muslim community in order to avoid further tensions. We were told, *“Husbands are happy to give their consent. The Chief is happy too – he says that he has never seen this done in the recent day and he thanks his God that peace will come.”*<sup>57</sup>

Each Saturday morning at 7am, the entire group meets to assess the week and overcome mutual challenges. The group will pray together, sometimes led by a Christian and other times lead by a Muslim.

Course	Teachers	Number of women	Notes
Tailoring	2 – 1 Muslim and 1 Christian	35	Meet Monday – Wednesday (2-4pm)
Knitting	1 Muslim Teacher	5	Meet Thursday – Saturday
Computer Class	1 Muslim Teacher	12	
Literacy	2 Male Teachers, including Canon Alabi	30	Split into two classes according to ability
Bead Making	1 Christian Teacher (Canon Alabi’s Wife)	25	Recently only theory has been taught as the project has not had the funds to purchase materials.
Business and Trading (loans)		15+ have been given loans, 12+ still require loans.	Women have been given loans to establish small businesses such as selling pap, doughnuts, vegetables, cookies, rice, charcoal, eggs and boiled groundnuts.



*Left: Christian and Muslim tailoring teachers. Right: Students show the clothing items that they have made. The Anglican Diocese of Jos has just begun paying for the Muslim twins on the left in this photo to go to school as their family cannot afford to pay.*

## EDUCATION

The Boko Haram insurgency has severely impacted education provision in North-Eastern Nigeria. Schools across the north have been specifically targeted and many have been forced to close. The 2015 Education for All Report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) revealed that Nigeria has not met any of the internationally agreed education goals set out to be achieved by 2015<sup>58</sup>. The country has exceedingly low enrolment levels in primary, secondary and further education, particularly for girls. In 2015, UNESCO reported that only 56.6 percent of adults in Nigeria are literate<sup>59</sup>.

In 2004, the Government’s Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act was passed into law, making free primary education compulsory. However, in northern states the quality of the free education that is available only in some areas is significantly lacking and many schools have been either unable or unwilling to teach Christian religious education to Christian pupils despite the

<sup>57</sup> Canon Alabi, who now manages the Reconciliation Project

<sup>58</sup> UNESCO (2015) ‘Education for All 2000-2015 – Regional Summary: Sub-Saharan Africa’: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002325/232577E.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> UNESCO (2015) ‘Education: Full Dataset’: [http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EDULIT\\_DS&popupcustomise=true&lang=en#](http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=EDULIT_DS&popupcustomise=true&lang=en#)

constitutional requirement. Especially in light of the crisis, many Christian parents do not want their children to receive Islamic religious education. Furthermore, many Government schools have been unable to pay teachers' wages in the northern states, resulting in teachers being present in schools for full schooling hours if at all. Therefore, where free government education does exist in the north, church or private education is often significantly preferable. However, these options can be expensive and unattainable for most.

The Bishop of Bauchi told us, *"The priority will be education. The education you cannot leave. HART's support will go towards teachers in St Pauls Academy in Tafawa Balewa. That is where you have most of the children. Their parents' houses were destroyed and their source of living is destroyed. Almost 100 children do not have any support. We cannot drive them away because they are our future. We want them to pay 7000 naira per term but none of these children can pay. We can't close the school and so we are forced to continue. Education is where the challenge is.*

*Money will also go to Ningi academy in Ningi LGA, Bauchi. When I went there I cried, because the number of students that are Muslims is more than 200, but I don't have the money to pay the teachers and so they are leaving. If the Muslim parents are agreeing to send their teachers to the mission school the future is brighter. They are having the western education. I am crying because I want them to keep coming here and they will not if the teachers leave."* HART is privileged to support such inspirational partners who are striving to create a better future for the youth of Nigeria.

Some of the children interviewed at the House of Recab IDP camp for children had been entirely out of education for two years before coming to Jos. Access to education is a serious concern for those who now have to consider returning to the north. HART recommends that increased governmental and NGO funding is directed towards teachers' wages, teacher training, school buildings and the education system in the north as a whole. Particular focus should be given to ensuring that girls have equal access to education and that they are empowered to attend school.

#### CASE STUDY: *Zambiri School*

*"Education will help them to be free."* – Gloria Kwashi

Zambiri (meaning 'life is not an accident') School is run by Gloria Kwashi, wife of Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi. It provides the opportunity for education and safety to 470 children aged between six and 17 years. Most of the children who attend the school are HIV orphans, but many have been displaced by the conflict or rejected by their communities. Some children have HIV themselves – the school helps to ensure that they receive ARV medication and promotes an inclusive environment in which the children experience no stigma.

The school has been forced to seek Government support for the protection of some children whose communities are actively seeking to kill them. Just one example is a boy whose community believe is demonic. He was brought to the school by his grandmother and the very next day members of his village arrived at the school and attempted to raid the classes to find and kill him. Gloria told us, *"I sought Government help so that no child will be molested here. They have come here for safety."*

Many of these children are deeply traumatised: *"They will laugh but you know that the trauma runs very deep."* At Zambiri School they find unconditional love and hope for the future.

The school is slowly growing and now has a library that they pray to one day to be able to fill with books: *"My vision is that all the children will share the books and here they will learn to love to read."*<sup>60</sup>



Above Right: a pupil at Zambiri school enjoys a nutritious lunch. For half of the children at the school this will be their only meal of the day. Gloria Kwashi wakes up at 2.30am to prepare this meal, doing what she can to ensure that it is nutritious with only very limited resources; she says, *"gradually we will be having enough but for now we are happy"*. The school has begun encouraging Sunday worship in order to enable children that would not otherwise eat at all over the week-end to receive an additional meal.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Gloria Kwashi

## CONCLUSION

As the scale of the violence and destruction is far beyond what has been reported by the international media, we urgently call for increased attention and support for the people of Northern Nigeria. While much territory has been regained from Boko Haram control in recent months, they have left behind a legacy of fear and devastation. As IDPs return, they will require support in rebuilding their lives, from the immediate essential needs of food, shelter and water to the long-term reconstruction of livelihoods, education and community structures. There is much that the international community can do to support these people via locally-managed projects.

Projects such as the inter-faith reconciliation programme run by the Diocese of Jos, the Christian Institute, Zambiri school and the health and education projects managed by HART's partners in Bari and Bauchi provide hope and practical support to populations in desperate need. These programmes are achieving outstanding results by bringing together communities and harnessing the power and resilience of those they assist. They operate on highly limited resources but are instrumental to the future peace and prosperity of Northern Nigeria.

Please be in touch if you are able to offer financial or other means of support to any of these projects.

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