

HUMANITARIAN AID RELIEF TRUST (HART)
NIGERIA BRIEFING
OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 2014
Prepared by Edwin O'Connell for HART



As the year draws to a close, there is no foreseeable end to the unrest in northern Nigeria. **2014** has been the **bloodiest year** since Boko Haram's insurgency began in 2009. In terms of victims, it has been almost as deadly as the previous five years of the group's violent insurgency together. The past few months have highlighted the group's brutality, particularly in its **indiscriminate targeting of civilians**, as well as the **government's inability** to deal with the situation. This has left civilians across the north of the country vulnerable not only to Boko Haram's incursions, but to police and army abuse as the government's forces struggle to identify militants.

This briefing will highlight the situation in the three states that were declared to be in a 'state of emergency' by President Jonathan in May 2013: Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. [According](#) to the Deputy Governor of Borno State, Zanna Mustapha, **Boko Haram controls 13 local governments** in his state, **3 in Adamawa**, and **a few in Yobe**. He also [highlighted](#) that "if the Federal Government does not add extra effort, in the **next two to three months**, the **three north-eastern states will no longer be** in existence." Statistics in such circumstances are very hard to retrieve, however only verifiable sources will be used in this briefing to show the gravity of the situation. It should be also highlighted that not all suspected or confirmed Boko Haram nor attacks by security forces are included in this briefing.

Overall situation

- The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [most recent bulletin](#) (dated September 2014) estimates that **1.5 million people** have been **displaced** in six north-eastern states affected by the conflict.
- A [recent press release](#) by the UN's High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) reports that more than **150,000 Nigerians have fled to neighbouring countries** (more than 100,000 to Niger, more than 50,000 to Cameroon, over 2,000 to Chad).
- According to [John Hopkins University's Connect SAIS Africa Programme](#), Boko Haram has killed **5,156 people** in the **first nine months of 2014** alone - almost half of the total 11,121 murders since 2009. 2014 has been the **bloodiest year of Boko Haram's insurgency** so far.

Important developments

- On October 17th 2014, the [government announces](#) it has reached a **ceasefire deal** with Boko Haram that includes the release of some militants and of the Chibok girls.
- On October 31st 2014, [Agence France-Presse receives](#) a [video](#) from Boko Haram in which the group's leader, Abubakar Shekau, **denies** that there have been **any ceasefire talks**. Shekau denies the release of the Chibok girls and says that they had "married them off."

Timeline of attacks in the three 'state of emergency' states

Adamawa State:

- October 17th: On the same day the federal government announces a ceasefire, [attacks](#) on **Waga Mangoro** and **Gwarta towns** lead to the **abductions of 40 and 20 women** in each town.
- October 29th: **Boko Haram** militants [seize](#) the town of **Mubi**, the State's second largest city. After capturing Mubi, Boko Haram [implements](#) a **strict interpretation of Sharia law** and renames the town 'Madinatul Islam' (i.e. The City of Islam). Reports suggest militants have [tortured](#) university **students**, [killed](#) a **university lecturer** and his family, and [stoned](#) some **residents to death** for having allegedly committed capital offences. Thousands [flee](#).

- November 6th: Four Boko Haram militants [enter](#) **Gashala village** in Hong Local Government Area. They ask residents the whereabouts of three retired army generals and, upon having no reply, **burn the residence of a local church pastor and shoot dead a retired engineer**. Residents flee after militants tell them that anyone who would ‘not accept Islam’ should leave the town.
- November 10th: Boko Haram militants [overrun](#) **Maiha Town**. They do not encounter any resistance, as soldiers reportedly fled the town before the attack. A **dozen of soldiers and two civilians** were reported **dead**. On November 12th, however, a group of local hunters, vigilantes and **armed civilians** [recapture](#) their town **killing at least 80 members** of the militant group.

Borno:

- October 19th: Doubts increase on the ceasefire between Boko Haram and the Federal Government, as there have been reports of **attacks by militants on three different villages**: [Shaffa](#), [Abadam](#) and [Damboa](#) in Borno State. More than **40 people are killed**.
- October 26th: The **Chief of Mafa village** [tells reporters](#) that suspected Boko Haram militants have **abducted around 30 adolescents** in his village over the weekend. He also tells reporters that his own and surrounding villages are targeted on a quasi-daily basis.
- October 27th: Villagers in **Kukawa town** [report](#) that Boko Haram has attacked their village, **killing three people and burning some government buildings**.
- October 29th: Suspected Boko Haram militants [successfully seize](#) the town of **Uba**. **Several people are killed and thousands flee**.
- November 5th: Boko Haram militants [attack](#) **Malam Fatori**, a city in the remote northeast. Although they initially face resistance by the Multi-National Joint Task Force, the militants overrun the town and **shoot civilians indiscriminately. 21 residents lose their lives**.
- November 5th: 18 buses of militants [invade](#) **Whitambaya village** of Hawul Local Government Area **destroying two churches and raising houses belonging to Christians**. Two are killed.
- November 8th: Boko Haram attacks **Malam Fatori again**. This time, reports suggest that the militants [successfully](#) take the town, forcing **300 Nigerian soldiers to flee. Dozens are killed and 30 are wounded**.

Yobe:

- November 10th: A **suicide bomber** [kills 47 people](#) and injures 97 in the **Government Technical School in Potiskum**. No one claimed the attack, but Boko Haram is believed to be behind it.

Faith-based attacks:

Attacks on both Christians and Muslims have become the norm in most north-eastern states affected by Boko Haram’s insurgency. Anyone who is considered an ‘infidel’ or who refuses to accept Boko Haram’s distorted interpretation of Islam is a potential target. An example of these attacks is reported for each ‘emergency’ state.

- Attacks on Muslims:

- October 6th: Boko Haram [raids the town of Ngamdu](#), Borno State, and **decapitates seven Muslims** on the day that Muslims worldwide celebrate **Eid al-Adha** (a feast commemorating Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail, upon God’s orders).
- October 29th: When Boko Haram captured **Mubi town**, Adamawa State, militants [beheaded two local imams](#) who were preaching against the group.
- November 3rd: A **suicide bomber** [targets](#) a procession of **Shia Muslims in Potiskum**, Yobe, who are marking the **ceremony of Ashura** (a day of mourning for the martyrdom of Hussain, Prophet Mohammed’s grandson). The attack leaves **29 dead and 80 injured**.

- Targeting of Christians:

- [According](#) to the **Rev. Gideon Obasogie**, in the **Maiduguri diocese** (Borno State) alone, **185 churches have been destroyed** and more than **190,000 people have been displaced**, as of October 6th. **Bishop Oliver Dashe** of the Maiduguri Diocese also [declared](#) that his diocese is working with **26 of its 46 priests**, as the others have been displaced or murdered by Boko Haram militants. Bishop Dashe also stated that militants have **occupied three of the existing six deaneries** as well.

Security forces:

Security forces have also reportedly committed widespread human rights abuses. These are carried out by armed forces as well as by members of the Civilian Joint-Task Force (CJTF). An example of these violations is reported for each ‘emergency’ state.

- October 13th: According to a resident of **Michika**, Adamawa State, he and other **internally displaced peoples** were [tortured](#) on suspicions that they were Boko Haram members.
- October 31st: Following a failed attack by Boko Haram on **Sabon Gari**, in Damboa town of Borno State, members of the **CJTF** [chased the insurgents](#), **beheaded them** and displayed their heads to the local residents “in order to encourage them to stand against the Boko Haram fighters, who are now destroying our villages”.
- November 6th: **Soldiers** [arrest and then kill 18 men in Potiskum](#), Yobe State, following the suicide attack on a Shiite procession earlier in the week. All of the men had **no links with Boko Haram** and were said to be “law-abiding” people according to residents’ reports.