

## Press Release

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Humanitarian  
Aid Relief Trust

# Central Nigeria: The mother who gave birth during a village massacre

*When hundreds of gunmen descended on her village in Central Nigeria, the shock of the gunfire sent Blessing into immediate, traumatic labour. This is how she survived.*



Blessing was heavily pregnant with her second child when an armed convoy of motorbikes arrived in her village in Plateau State, Central Nigeria. As the gunmen opened fire and homes began to burn, she felt her waters break.

"I begged my baby not to come," Blessing recalled.

She fled through the bush with her three-year-old son, with bullets flying past her head. The shock triggered trauma-induced labour — a

phenomenon where extreme physical or emotional stress forces the body into delivery.

### **‘My bones were breaking’**

Blessing eventually found shelter in a nearby church, where a lone Nigerian soldier held off the militia. She collapsed on the floor amid the sound of gunfire. With no medical help, her mother-in-law assisted with the delivery.

"It was far more painful than the birth of my first child. I felt like my bones were breaking," she said.

Against the odds, she gave birth to a healthy girl. She asked the soldier who protected them to name the child, who became the youngest survivor of a massacre that claimed 52 lives.

### **‘Total collapse of human security’**

Blessing’s story is a window into growing troubles in Central Nigeria. Years of violence between armed militia and local communities have resulted in “thousands of killings, countless injuries and displacement that is off the charts”, according to Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART).

Despite the scale and nature of the violence, there is no sign of international engagement to bring the attacks to an end.

### **Hassan John, Senior Programmes Manager for HART, says:**

“I have visited over 150 villages in Central Nigeria, during or after an attack, and witnessed the most unspeakable atrocities.

“I can say categorically that none of these villages have received adequate security or humanitarian assistance from the Nigerian Government or elsewhere. Survivors are forced to rely on aid from local churches, small NGOs like HART, or they receive almost no aid at all.”

### **Sam Mason, CEO of HART, says:**

“After 15 years of inter-communal violence, we’re now seeing a total collapse of human security in parts of Central Nigeria. Mothers like

Blessing suffer intense trauma, while displaced children face heightened risk of neglect and exploitation.

“The Nigerian Government owes these communities a clear plan to stop the killings – with no more dither or delay.”

### Notes to editors

- Insecurity in Nigeria hit the headlines in December 2025 when **Donald Trump** ordered U.S. airstrikes against “Terrorist Scum [...] who have been targeting and viciously killing, primarily, innocent Christians.”
- Claims of a “Christian genocide” were [investigated](#) by **Channel 4** last week in a documentary focusing on escalating violence in Central Nigeria.
- More than 700 villages in Central Nigeria have suffered attacks since 2009, resulting in an estimated 20,000 killings, according to a [report](#) by Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART).
- We use the name Blessing, a pseudonym, to protect her identity.

Media enquiries: [anais.arroyo@hart-uk.org](mailto:anais.arroyo@hart-uk.org)