

# A study of the nigerian extremist group boko haram

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Seemingly every year, an Islamic extremist group emerges from the ashes with hopes of expunging any trace of “ Western Influence” from their own culture, and replace it with a more rash Islamic regime. With the objective of establishing an Islamic State in Nigeria, the once peaceful Islamic extremists, Boko Haram, have evolved into a militant group.

The terrorists commenced their insurgency in July of 2009 with the “ Boko Haram uprising,” resulting in 1, 000 deaths shared between the extremists and the Nigerian military. The military managed to subdue the immediate threat through killing Mohammed Yusuf, spiritual leader of Boko Haram. Yet, the extremist summoned Abubakar Shekau as their new leader.

Shekau managed to cause a myriad of havoc whilst leading Boko Haram; ranging from the 2010 Bauchi prison break to the 2011 Abuja police headquarters bombing. Each incident seems to become more heinous than the last, all resulting in loss of life.

Being a religious extremist organization, Boko Haram clearly does not exclusively target government officials. The group is notorious for their church bombings and shootings between 2011 and 2012. Some notable incidences were the 2011 Nigeria church bombings and the 2012 Deeper Life Church shooting.

The extremists even target other Muslims, who they call “ infidels” and see them as a threat merely because they uphold moderate religious views that are not in concordance with their own, or they may compromise their schemes through releasing information to security agents.

Boko Haram attracted global attention with the 2014 Chibok schoolgirls kidnapping; an incident almost inevitably foreshadowed from the English translation of the Hausa phrase “ Boko Haram”, meaning “ western education is a sin.” The group has targeted a copious amount of schools claiming western education diverts civilians from following Islamic teachings. In the aforementioned kidnappings, the terrorists kidnapped over 219 schoolgirls; justifying their actions with a rather misogynist ideology that girls should be exempted from being educated. The group, however, used the kidnapped girls as cooks or sex slaves – positions they feel are better suited for a woman.

The events that transpired were covered in a previous article.

Recently, the extremists managed to resurface on the global scale when Abubakar Shekau, leader of Boko Haram, announced his allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State, on March 7th.

The two already closely parallel each other — from brutal executions to unconventionally recruiting members via social media. Although the exact specifications of the agreement are unclear, this coalition may prove to be disastrous.

The up-and-coming Boko Haram has started to extensively emulate ISIS’s modus operandi. Boko Haram has demonstrated a desire to establish an Islamist Caliphate; a desire not previously professed by the group.

As of late, Boko Haram's newfound quest for expansion and influential control has yet to prevail. African governments are uniting and reclaiming territory once seized by Boko Haram. On March 9th Chadian and Nigerian forces teamed up to liberate Malam Fatori and Damask in Nigeria. Within the same month, the Nigerian military manages to subdue Boko Haram's influence in Bama and Gwoza, successfully liberating both cities.

We have yet to know what Boko Haram's alliance with ISIS will entail, but Boko Haram's gradual loss of influence glimmers hope for Nigeria's imminent victory in the war against terrorism.

—-abraham dada