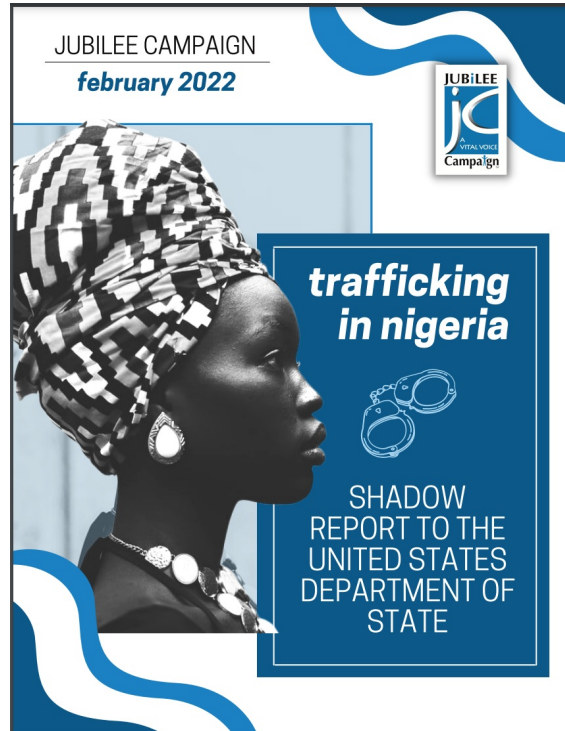


Jubilee Campaign Submits Shadow Report to the State Department: Trafficking in Persons in Nigeria

One of Jubilee Campaign's first advocacy initiatives in 2022 was to submit information to the United States Department of State regarding Nigeria's failure to meet the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, with regards specifically to the areas of prevention and prosecution. Regrettably, the past year not a single month went by without an incident of kidnapping by Islamist jihadist groups such as Boko Haram, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), and Fulani militants. Though in many of these cases the majority of victims were eventually released and returned safely to their families with the exception of minor injuries and general hunger, we are concerned that tens to hundreds of Nigerian civilians - many of whom are children - remain in captivity and are exploited for the purposes of domestic servitude, sexual slavery, forced marriage, and child soldiering.

Our submission can be viewed and downloading by clicking on the graphic below:



Circumstances of Trafficking in Nigeria

Following the 2014 kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls from Government Secondary School for Girls in Chibok by Boko Haram, scores of freed girls have provided testimony that they had been subjected to domestic and sexual servitude during their captivity by the militant group. In 2018 in a similar incident, Boko Haram faction group ISWAP abducted 110

students from Yobe State's Government Girls Science and Technology College. In the years since these two incidents, most of the kidnapped girls have been released due to negotiation; however, they have revealed that the students that remain in captivity are subjected to all kinds of forms of trafficking. Their testimonies are a sobering reminder that we cannot be satisfied with the release of some victims, but we must fight for the secure release of all of them; for each survivor, there is another victim.

Girls and women in militant captivity - commonly students and teachers from girls' schools - are subjected to forced marriage with militant fighters; in these 'marriages', these women and girls are locked in sexual servitude, being forced to bear children that will be raised either as female servants themselves or as male child soldiers. Some of the survivors that have escaped Boko Haram captivity have explained that women and girls are so used to the sexual abuse that they begin to use sex as a form of currency, one of the only means to obtain food, water, and daily necessities. And many survivors who are released or escaped have at some point during their imprisonment gone through unwanted pregnancies, forced marriages, rape, and have developed sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis.

Boys that are kidnapped and remain in Boko Haram/ISWAP captivity face a different yet equally tragic fate; on the first days of their captivity in the camps, they are outfitted in uniforms, handed guns and weapons as large as them, and are taught how to engage in violence against innocent civilians.



Above images from [Photo RNW.org](https://www.flickr.com/photos/rnw/) on Flickr ([CC BY-ND 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/))

Prevention

Nigeria falls extremely short in developing preventive measures against human trafficking. Security forces such as military and police have a notorious record of ignoring early warnings of incidents such as mass kidnappings on educational institutions; for example, the 2014 Chibok and 2018 Dapchi school abductions were preceded with numerous phone calls by community residents to security officials warning them that militants were encroaching upon the towns. While one of Jubilee Campaign's recommendations to the Nigerian government is to improve early warning mechanisms, such initiatives will be futile should the nation's security forces remain "reluctan[t] to meaningfully engage armed threats".

Nigeria's Safe School Initiative (SSI), established in 2014 following the Chibok kidnapping, has failed its objectives to improve the safety of schools by erecting perimeter walls, developing rapid responses, and dispatching security guards to schools. Not only have most schools in Nigeria not benefitted from SSI, but many have had to take matters into their own hands, using guard dogs and building sand bag boundary walls around the schools. It is also important to note that the SSI originally raised the equivalent of \$30 million dollars, yet such money is untraceable and is believed to have made its way to the pockets of corrupt government officials.

On the bright side, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons

(NAPTIP), currently under the leadership of Ms. Fatima Waziri-Ari, has been successful in rescuing some kidnapped children and returning them to their families. However, these children were abducted by ordinary citizens, and NAPTIP has yet to engage with rescuing women and children abducted by terrorist and militant groups.

Response & Prosecution

Regrettably, with the exception of two individuals associated with the 2014 Chibok kidnapping, the Nigerian government has not prosecuted a single militant group member for their involvement in mass abductions and subsequent enslavement of girls, women, and boys. On the contrary, the Nigerian government is currently implementing Operation Safe Corridor, by which Boko Haram militants are permitted to defect from the group, take de-radicalization classes, and re-integrate into civilian society. The lack of punishment for their activities, however, has left Nigerians feeling that the government is being too lenient on criminal actors. Meanwhile, Nigerian security forces have actually been detaining individuals - including children - they believe are associated with Boko Haram, but have not been arresting and prosecuting the militants themselves.

In a positive turn of events, in May 2021, the Deputy Director of the Federal Ministry of Justice announced that 800 Boko Haram fighters were being "prepared for prosecution" that would take place following the end of a judiciary strike that was happening at the time. However, the strike has since ended and there have been no updates on the case.

Recommendations

Jubilee Campaign made the following selected recommendations to the Nigerian government to improve its efforts and progress in combatting human trafficking:

- National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) collaborate with Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and other civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to finalize the new National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons.
 - Locate and safely rescue victims of human trafficking, including women and children who are exploited as servants and soldiers by militant groups.
 - Make concrete efforts to identify, locate, and prosecute individuals directly or indirectly involved in trafficking in persons.
 - Expand the capacity of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and Nigerian military forces to respond promptly and effectively to early warnings of incidents (i.e., community attacks, mass abductions) that facilitate human trafficking.
 - Recognize peoples, communities, societies, and institutions that are vulnerable to instances of human trafficking or related terrorist activity, and bolster their security.
-



Jubilee Campaign USA | 9689-C Main Street, Fairfax, VA 22030

[Unsubscribe jubilee@jubileecampaign.org](mailto:Unsubscribe_jubilee@jubileecampaign.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [About Constant Contact](#)

Sent by jubilee@jubileecampaign.org in collaboration
with



Try email marketing for free today!