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## NIGERIA Women and children targeted in Plateau State village attack

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An attack yesterday by armed Fulani and Hausi men on Bere Village, located 68 kilometers from Jos in Nigeria's Plateau State, left two men and 16 women and children dead, including a mother and her three children.

Although one house was set on fire, the village was not torched as in previous attacks. Instead, the attackers went from house to house, shooting their victims and hacking them to death with machetes.

Sarah Isuwa was killed together with three of her children. Her eldest daughter Salomi was heavily pregnant. One-year-old Hope Pam was killed with her mother as they tried to flee. Their bodies were found a few meters from their home, with her mother bent over and cuddling Hope in an attempt to shield her from the bullets and machetes.

Local Government Chairman Dr Pam Dakwak said, "We are concerned that from where I am talking to you now it is less than a kilometer to where there is a military check point, and there were about 12 soldiers there as of 1 am this morning, but they could not come to assist these helpless villagers, and we are reading a lot of meaning into that. They are sent and paid with public funds to defend this country. I have sent word to the Sector Commander of Sector 7 to talk to his colleague. As far I am concerned, this is a dereliction of duty."

The Community Youth leader said that as soon as the village came under attack, a few of the men, who had formed a small vigilante group, had fought back and were able to shoot three of the Fulani attackers. They killed one of them, but the gang carried away the other two who were injured.

Da Isuwa, Sarah's husband, told CSW, "We had patrolled the village as usual and I had just come in to lay down. I had just laid down when I heard the first gunshot. I quickly grabbed my little hunting gun and dashed out, then I heard the barrage of gunshots. I quickly informed my family and told them we were under attack. I quickly tried to call my pastor but realized that the battery on the cell phone was dead. I called out to my family and told them to find a way of running out. I dashed to the bushes beside my house and saw some people shooting from this other direction. I dashed behind the building and shot in his direction. Then another man from behind me fired at me, I ducked and ran and felt the heat on my foot as a bullet grazed my foot. I ran off into the bush and I heard as they went from room to room shooting and hacking people. They entered my house and killed my wife Sarah and my three children. Doris, Salomi and Ishaku were all killed."

CSW's Advocacy Director Andrew Johnston said, "We offer our deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones in this appalling attack. The continued targeting of women and children is deeply reprehensible and seems to suggest a sinister agenda may be at work. Moreover, the fact that eighteen people were brutally murdered less than a kilometer from a military check point begs urgent questions. We once again call on the Nigerian authorities to take effective measures to bring a definitive end to this violence. The authorities must initiate an immediate, thorough and swift investigation into this incident, and take robust action against any soldiers found to be complicit in what amounts to a gross dereliction of duty."