

They used to go to the village to drink [alcohol] and carry women. They take them back to the school to sleep there. Those boys [Boko Haram] were watching them. This is what they [Boko Haram] don't like. I was not surprised when Boko Haram attacked the school.¹⁸⁸

Locals who had welcomed, and in one case invited, soldiers to lodge in their schools as a preventive measure against impending Boko Haram attacks, found the contrary to be the case—the schools were attacked specifically because of the presence of soldiers.

Witnesses said that Boko Haram attacked Comprehensive Primary School, Pulka, and Government Day School, Ngoshe, in Gwoza, to get at soldiers stationed who had been stationed there for about three months, and to steal their arms.¹⁸⁹

In Ngoshe, witnesses said the insurgents killed one soldier, and burned classrooms and hostels as the others fled to the nearby hills during an attack on April 24, 2014.¹⁹⁰

Human Rights Watch also documented the use of Best Center, a vocational school, and Government Secondary School by soldiers in Goniri, Yobe state from March 2015 until time of writing.¹⁹¹ The village and surrounding areas had been under Boko Haram control since late 2013.¹⁹² An April 2015 YouTube video showed Nigeria government forces operating out of a school in Konduga, Borno state. No students appear to be in the school. The footage shot while a Vice News journalist was embedded with the Nigerian army showed forces engaged in a firefight with Boko Haram combatants stationed in another school.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸ Human Rights Watch interview with witnesses [names withheld], Maiduguri, September 13, 2015.

¹⁸⁹ Human Rights Watch interview with witnesses [names withheld] Maiduguri, September 13, 2015.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Human Rights Watch interview with witnesses [names withheld], Damaturu, October 7, 2015.

¹⁹² Human Rights Watch interview with witnesses [names withheld], Damaturu, October 7, 2015.

¹⁹³ Kaj Larsen, "The War Against Boko Haram (Full Length)", Vice News, April 13, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kimbo5coAk>, (accessed November 1, 2015).