

My abduction led to my father's death, now I can't continue education –Konduga student, who escaped from B'Haram captivity



JULIANA CHRISTOPHER was kidnapped by the Boko Haram insurgents in 2014, but escaped three weeks later. In this interview with **DOGARA BITRUS**, Julianah explains her ordeal while in captivity

WHAT was your experience in the Boko Haram camp?

My name is Juliana Christopher; I am 24 years old from Chibok. I was a student of the College of Business and

Management Studies in Konduga when Boko Haram stormed the school and kidnapped us on a Tuesday evening in 2014. Before the insurgents came, soldiers came to us and told us that the town was not safe and that whenever we heard gunshots, we should all lie down. They passed this instruction and left, but immediately the insurgents drove in and started shooting indiscriminately; we became afraid and ran into our hostels and lay down.

The insurgents, who were dressed in full military uniform, came to our hostels; at first, we thought they were real soldiers until they started shooting at our male students, who were running to safety. They locked us all in a hostel and went about burning classes and buildings in the school. We were with them till around 10 the following morning. They conveyed us to the

forest in their vehicles. On reaching the camp, we met many young girls there and the whole place was in disarray. Fortunately for me and some other girls, we escaped from the forest and found our way back to Chibok.

On getting to Chibok, I found the whole community in a state of confusion; so, I asked after my parents and was told that my father took ill when he heard about my abduction and my mother took him to the hospital in Maiduguri. I set out to go and look for them in Maiduguri, but I could not go far because the road was blocked and no movement was allowed, except for military vehicles; in that process, my father died.

How did you find yourself in the IDP camp?

When I heard about my father's condition, I became worried and tried to locate my parents in the hospital, not knowing that he was

already dead. When I eventually got to the hospital in Maiduguri, my mother had conveyed my father's corpse to Chibok for burial, so my mother said I should stay back to avoid another kidnap. That was how I got to this camp.

Which year did all these happen?

It was in 2014 and I was in the Boko Haram camp for three weeks. We met Chibok girls in the camp. While in the camp, I saw so many small girls, who were kidnapped. Some were being molested in a rude manner. Some were carrying children, while others were pregnant for the Boko Haram insurgents. It was a disgusting thing.

When I came out, my father was already critically sick and he died of the complications of my abduction; so, I couldn't continue with my education, because my mother alone could not take care of my schooling and that of my other siblings.

How I was kidnapped, my experience in the camp and my escape