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Fieldwork Destination: Northern Nigeria

2025 Fieldwork Report for IRIS Graduate Student Summer Fieldwork Award and BLAC Foundation Award

I take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude for the support I received from IRIS Graduate Student Fieldwork Award and the BLAC Foundation supplementary award for summer research fieldwork trip to Northern Nigeria, as support to my PhD dissertation research. The awards enabled me to carry out three months' summer fieldwork research toward my dissertation from May to August 2025.

My research titled "Sociocultural manifestations of trauma among the victims of Boko Haram's insurgency, banditry, and kidnapping in northwest Nigeria," my dissertation research aims at examining forceful migration, people's memories of violence, trauma, PTSD and PTI, mental health and healing, victim's experiences as internally displaced within the northern region of Nigeria.

My research will significantly contribute to the study on trauma faced by victims of the ongoing insurgency, banditry, and kidnapping movement in northern Nigeria. The study will foster a deeper understanding of mental health issues and their societal impacts on the affected individual's experience. Also, the research will contribute to developing effective theories, interventions, and support systems for the affected individuals. And further, fill in a gap within trauma knowledge and skills necessary for addressing mental and health challenges that are

associated with violence. Engaging in this field encourages interdisciplinary collaboration and enriches the academic environment. Ultimately, my research will advance the understanding of trauma and will empower future professionals to create meaningful change in communities affected by violence.

In these past months while in Gusau, the state capital of Zamfara state in northwestern Nigeria. I conducted interviews with IDPs in host communities, thoroughly documented their memories and traumatic experiences during and after attacks in their various villages and communities, forced migration, and living conditions. I also visited local governments housing IDP camps in Kaura-Namoda and Bakura, where I conducted interviews with several affected persons both males and females, including few patient victims on transfer to federal medical center Gusau.

Furthermore, over the course of 12 weeks, I was committed and dedicated to visiting various hospitals within Gusau, having already sampled two hospitals in local government areas—General Hospital Kaura-Namoda and General Hospital Bakura—as well as two notable hospitals in Gusau metropolis: The Federal Medical Center and Ahmad Sani Yariman Bakura Specialist Hospital. During the hospital visits l gathered archival data at the Outpatient Department (OPD) and carry out interviews with patients and doctors to explore memory and trauma-related issues, examining how the focus has shifted from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to Post-Traumatic Illness (PTI). Following my interviews with consultants from the Outpatient Department (OPD), Neuro, and Psychiatric Department at the federal medical center Gusau, it was highlighted that individuals burdened by harrowing memories of bandit attacks are now seeking medical attention for illnesses caused by the trauma of losing everything they once had.

However, I used the remaining four weeks to focus deeply on understanding how victims recover from traumatic memories through cultural healing methods. Visiting Mosque, Churches, and other traditional healing shrines particularly in Kwatarkwashi town known for their Bori and Maguzanci practices.

In addition to visiting IDP camps, conducting interviews, and gathering archival materials, I also had the opportunity to engage and interact with a news reporter, who gave me more insight into the intensity of how traumatic such a type of violence movement had on the northern states of Nigeria on the sociocultural and economic developments of the Nigerian northern states.

Finally, I say a big thanks to IRIS and the BLAC foundation for making this trip a productive and significant towards my final dissertation.