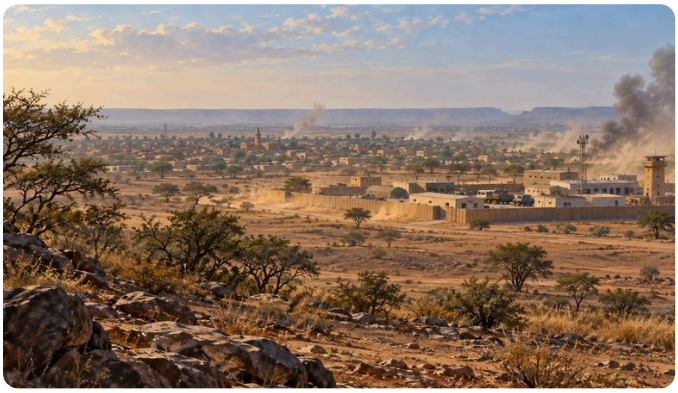
STUDENT HANDOUT

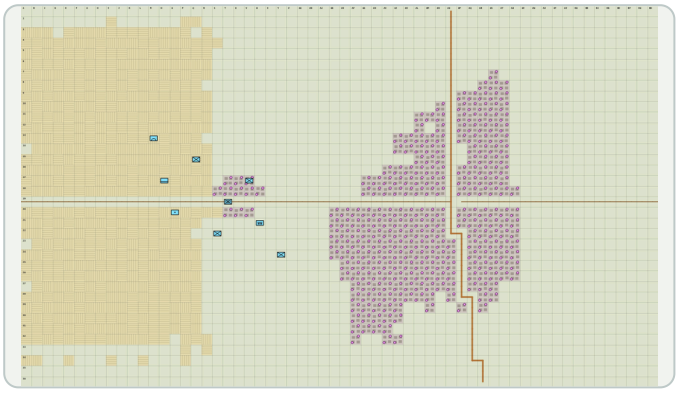
Djibo military base assault

Djibo, Soum Province, Burkina Faso · 26 November 2023

Information as of 6 October 2026



Scenario illustration · AI generated



Student map · own side only · Simulation situation map · reconstructed terrain and estimated deployments; not verified historical positions.

Learning objectives

- Explain how a base could be breached before an air response inflicted losses.
- Distinguish confirmed drone use from conflicting military loss claims.
- Keep civilian protection evidence separate from military scoring.

Run time and a good result

Default run clock: 3 minutes 20 seconds at 1×, excluding pauses, briefing and discussion. Time controls change elapsed play time.

Objective: Put five JNIM military assault groups out of action during the base attack and air response. This is a limited damage objective: it does not mean the base was never breached or that the civilian population was protected.

Djibo military base assault: Put five JNIM military assault groups out of action during the base attack and air response. This is a limited damage objective: it does not mean the base was never breached or that the civilian population was protected. Put at least 5 represented opposing units out of action; decoys do not count. The authored limit is 200 simulation seconds across 2 stages. Compare objective progress, time, losses, drone expenditure and recorded civilian harm with a second run. A strong classroom result also explains the source evidence and reconstruction estimates; it does not verify a historical casualty count.

Atrocity notice

Human Rights Watch's April 2026 report documents atrocities by Burkina Faso's military, allied VDP militias and JNIM. Its Djibo section distinguishes the November 2023 base attack from subsequent December reprisals against civilians. Those civilian killings are historical context, never playable operations.

Studying or commanding a side does not endorse its conduct. Drone Front never lets players target civilians, hospitals, schools or places of worship. Civilian harm from simulated strikes is counted and shown in the debrief, including nonzero harm. Civilian massacres are never playable operations. Designated terrorist forces and Wagner remain computer controlled; Gaza war events remain excluded from play.

▼ Dated reports and findings

- 2026-04-02 · Human Rights Watch: None Can Run Away, war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burkina Faso by all sides

Learn more: the laws of war

- ICRC: Geneva Conventions and commentaries
- ICRC: Customary IHL database
- UN: Genocide Convention (9 December 1948)
- UN: Rome Statute (17 July 1998), articles 6–8

Historical source notes

A breached base and a costly withdrawal can both be true. A military damage objective must not be mistaken for proof of a decisive victory.

ACLED records drone strikes, but casualty claims differ sharply. Separate a recorded platform and mission from an unverified claim of hundreds killed.

Human Rights Watch cites UN findings of civilian killing in Djibo. Civilian deaths and damage remain separate from the military success score.

Civilian harm

Human Rights Watch cites the UN finding that JNIM killed at least 40 civilians in Djibo on 26 November 2023. This is a minimum reported civilian death count, not a military loss total.

Le Monde reported residents alleging civilian deaths from army airstrikes. These allegations are attributed and no verified separate toll is assigned.

Evidence for learning objectives

The authored attrition objective counts five military groups; it cannot establish historical victory or civilian protection.

ACLED records military drone strikes but attributes divergent casualty claims; the exact military toll remains uncertain.

Le Monde reports local allegations of civilian deaths from army airstrikes; attribution does not verify a separate toll.

Timings

For 60 minutes brief for 10 minutes, run once and discuss the result. For 90 minutes compare a second run with different priorities. For 180 minutes pause at the decision points, compare source accounts and discuss the civilian harm record.

Session	Plan
45 minutes	Brief: 10 min; Run: 15 min; Collect: 5 min; Review: 15 min
60 minutes	Before questions: 5 min; Brief: 10 min; Run: 20 min; Collect: 5 min; Debrief and after questions: 15 min; Discussion: 5 min
90 minutes	Before questions: 5 min; Brief: 10 min; Run 1: with drones: 20 min; Run 2: without drones: 15 min; Collect: 5 min; Compare and discuss: 25 min; After questions: 10 min
180 minutes	Before questions: 10 min; Brief and staff roles: 15 min; Run 1: with drones: 25 min; Run 2: without drones: 20 min; Break: 10 min; Run 3: syndicates: 30 min; Collect: 10 min; Seminar replay and debrief: 40 min; After questions: 10 min; Close: 10 min

Staff roles

commander
Set a limited military damage goal and review its meaning.

intelligence
Separate observed military groups from contested reports.

fires
Identify military threats and flag proximity to homes.

droneOps
Record the model's assumed TB2 response, sorties and losses; separate this proxy from verified drone-use evidence.

Decision points

- Opening assault: which military approach most threatens the garrison?
- Air response: which assault groups can be identified away from civilian neighbourhoods?
- After withdrawal: what evidence would justify the damage assessment?

Before and after questions

1. **What does ACLED's Djibo account establish about the drone response?**

   A. It confirms hundreds killed, with drone use less certain.
   B. It confirms the force size, with military losses unresolved.
   C. It confirms no base breach, with deaths still disputed.
   D. ACLED records drone strikes and divergent casualty claims, leaving the military death count disputed

2. **A Djibo run reaches five military groups lost. What follows?**

   A. The authored damage threshold has been reached.
   B. The historical defending strength is established.
   C. The documented civilian protection is confirmed.
   D. The historical base breach has been disproved.

3. **How should the Djibo run's 200 seconds be interpreted?**

   A. A measured duration of the historical fighting.
   B. An authored duration of the compressed episode.
   C. A verified duration of each historical sortie.
   D. A reported duration of the civilian evacuation.

4. **How should Le Monde's Djibo airstrike allegations enter a debrief?**

   A. As a verified total replacing all civilian reports.
   B. As an equipment loss included in the cost exchange.
   C. As attributed claims without a verified separate toll.
   D. As a military total confirming the drone death claims.

5. **What can Djibo's fourteen red counters tell a reader?**

   A. They represent fourteen verified historical battalions.
   B. They record fourteen independently observed field groups.
   C. They record fourteen military groups lost in the assault.
   D. They represent groups rather than a published troop count.

Discussion

- How can both sides claim success after a raid and withdrawal?
- Why is a claimed death tally a poor substitute for a defending strength?
- What does the OHCHR account add to the military narrative?

Debrief rubric

Strong
Meets the objective or explains why it was not met; uses the published sources and run evidence, separates known facts from assumptions, compares both sides' losses and cost exchange, and evaluates precautions against civilian harm.

Adequate
Describes the objective and main decisions, identifies at least one source and model limitation, reports losses and harm, and gives a reasoned change for a second run.

Weak
Reports only victory or points, treats teaching settings as real performance, gives unsupported historical claims, or omits uncertainty and civilian harm.

Published readings

1. ACLED: Regional Overview, Africa, November 2023
2. Le Monde: Propaganda after Djibo (1 December 2023)
3. Human Rights Watch: Army massacres 223 villagers, Djibo context only (25 April 2024)

Complete source list

Wikipedia: Siege of Djibo, November 2023 assault
Wikipedia: Attaque de Djibo (2023)
ACLED: Regional Overview, Africa, November 2023
Le Monde: Propaganda after Djibo (1 December 2023)
Human Rights Watch: Army massacres 223 villagers, Djibo context only (25 April 2024)
OHCHR: Comment by spokesperson Seif Magango (28 November 2023)
Human Rights Watch: « Personne ne pourra s'échapper », 2 avril 2026, section « Attaque de Djibo »