STUDENT HANDOUT

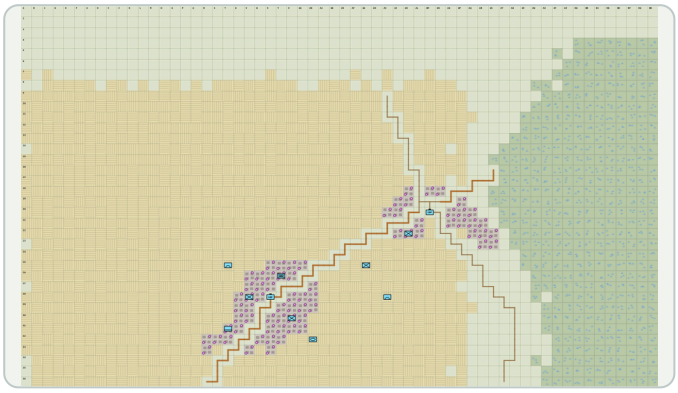
The Baga bases assault

Baga and Doron Baga, Kukawa Local Government Area, Borno State, Nigeria · 26 to 27 December 2018

Information as of 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 the loss of both bases and assess the assumed task of preserving limited military functions through withdrawal.
- Distinguish documented drone operations from local simulation assumptions.
- Assess the relationship between observation, military decisions and civilian risk.

Run time and a good result

Default run clock: 4 minutes 0 seconds at 1×, excluding pauses, briefing and discussion. Time controls change elapsed play time.

Objective: Preserve at least one of two portable military coordination or supply functions through withdrawal. Both bases were overrun historically. A surviving function here does not mean an intact base or retained base control.

The Baga bases assault: Preserve at least one of two portable military coordination or supply functions through withdrawal. Both bases were overrun historically. A surviving function here does not mean an intact base or retained base control. Preserve at least 1 represented site functions until the attack ends. The authored limit is 240 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

Amnesty International's 2015 report documented Boko Haram's killings, abductions and abuse of civilians in northeast Nigeria. This is earlier conflict context, not a report about the December 2018 Baga base assault. The modeled militant force remains computer controlled.

These reports describe the wider conflict. They do not establish that every crime occurred in this modeled battle.

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

- 2015-04-14 · Amnesty International: Boko Haram's reign of terror

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

Both bases were overrun. Preserving a portable coordination or supply function through withdrawal is a narrower task than retaining a base. This assumed task does not establish how many staff or stores survived historically.

Period drone evidence must be kept separate from local sortie evidence. The aircraft explicitly reported over Baga included crewed platforms, and the 2018 ISWAP drones were for reconnaissance.

Civilian harm

Reuters reported residents fleeing the fighting and conflicting death accounts. This bounded assault has no independently verified civilian death total; the 2015 massacre toll is not used.

Evidence for learning objectives

AFP reported both bases overrun; preserving one portable function is a separate model task.

Local CH-4 and quadcopter allocations are assumptions, not documented Baga sorties.

Reuters interviewed fleeing residents and recorded conflicting death accounts.

Timings

For 60 minutes, brief, complete one run and review the historical outcome. For 90 minutes, add a second run and compare decisions. For 180 minutes, pause at each dated phase and examine the source record and assumptions.

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 the limited preservation task, review losses at each dated phase and keep the historical loss of both bases clear.

intelligence
Separate confirmed reports from estimates and mark civilian locations.

fires
Assess military targets and withhold fire when civilian presence is uncertain.

droneOps
Record observations, launches and losses, including the limits of assumed availability.

Decision points

- 26 December: can observation distinguish attacking vehicles from fleeing civilians?
- 27 December: which portable coordination or supply function can be preserved through withdrawal as the naval base falls?
- After the run: which parts of the result reflect decisions and which reflect assumed allocations?

Before and after questions

1. **What does preserving one site function establish in the Baga model?**
   A. Control of one intact military base
   B. Survival of all the garrison staff
   C. Recovery of all captured equipment
   D. Meeting a limited preservation goal

2. **How should the December 2018 Reuters death reports from Baga be interpreted?**

   A. Reuters attributes differing death accounts to residents and the army spokesman without settling the total
   B. They verify ten civilian deaths locally
   C. They count all deaths as naval losses
   D. They establish the final garrison toll

3. **What is the evidence status of the Baga model's CH-4 cards?**

   A. Verified CH-4 model identification at Baga
   B. Role proxies with assumed local availability
   C. Verified local availability in both phases
   D. Exact historical launch totals for each phase

4. **How should the 240-second Baga run be read against its dated episode?**

   A. It times the complete campaign as four minutes
   B. It reconstructs actual sortie times for both days
   C. It compresses the dated 26–27 December episode
   D. It extends the episode through January recapture

5. **Which use of the Reuters Baga account preserves the civilian-harm scope?**

   A. Add the 2015 massacre toll to the 2018 episode
   B. Treat the insurgency toll as local civilian deaths
   C. Treat December reports as a final civilian toll
   D. Keep earlier massacre deaths outside this episode

Discussion

- How does preserving a portable military function differ from keeping a base intact or retaining control of it?
- What evidence would be needed to replace each estimated formation and drone allocation?
- How does civilian displacement change what a commander can reliably observe?
- What evidence would be needed to establish surviving staff or stores totals, rather than an assumed preservation task?

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. Robert Postings, The Defense Post, Systemic issues hamper the fight, 25 January 2019
2. Reuters via Business Recorder, Militants kill at least 10, 28 December 2018
3. Punch, NAF deploys six jets, 30 December 2018

Complete source list

Wikipedia, Chad Basin campaign, accessed 6 October 2026
Robert Postings, The Defense Post, Systemic issues hamper the fight, 25 January 2019
Reuters via Business Recorder, Militants kill at least 10, 28 December 2018
Punch, NAF deploys six jets, 30 December 2018
Thomas Joscelyn, Long War Journal, Islamic State arm reportedly seizes Nigerian town, 29 December 2018
AFP via VOA, Boko Haram envahit deux bases militaires, 27 December 2018
Channels Television, Air Force Seeks Cordial Civil Military Relations, 12 February 2016