



**Deutsche Welle**

[Nigeria: Vigilantes Rescue Kidnapped Children](#)

Staff Writer

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Vigilantes from a small village in northern Nigeria rescued scores of children who had been abducted while returning from a religious ceremony, police said on Sunday.

Armed bandits kidnapped 80 children on Saturday as they were heading home to the village of Mahuta in the state of Katsina, Gambo Isah, spokesman for state police said.

The children who were from local Islamic seminaries had been traveling with their teachers at the time of the abduction.

Locals said that they rescued 113 children including some who had been abducted earlier.

The vigilantes assembled after learning of the abduction of the children. Local leader Abdullah Sada said that the group then set off in pursuit of the kidnappers who had been identified as Fulani herdsmen.

The locals found the bandits' hideout and after a fierce firefight the group finally freed the children.

"We laid siege on the area [where] we knew they were holding the children and also took some Fulani settlements in the area hostage, warning that if anything happened to our children no Fulani would live in the area henceforth," Sada said.

"They released 60 children around 3:00 am and this morning they called and said they had released the remaining 53 who are now being ferried from the bush," he added.

Police were still looking for the perpetrators, who had managed to escape.

The northwestern region of Nigeria has seen a spate of violence from criminal gangs, including raiding villages, stealing cattle, kidnapping for ransom and burning homes after looting supplies.

Saturday's incident took place just days after the release of hundreds of school boys who were kidnapped from a boarding school in Katsina state — an act which Boko Haram claimed responsibility for.

In April, another vigilante group was formed after a motorcycle gang killed 47 villagers during raids in nearby villages. This led to a series of tit-for-tat killings from both sides.

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