

Attacks on Health Care

Monthly News Brief

SHCC Attacks on Health Care

The section aligns with the definition of attacks on health care used by the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC).

August
2020

This monthly digest comprises threats and violence as well as protests and other events affecting the delivery of and access to health care.

It is prepared by Insecurity Insight from information available in open sources.

The incidents reported are not a complete nor a representative list of all events that affected the provision of health care and have not been independently verified

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HEALTH WORKERS AT RISK:
VIOLENCE AGAINST HEALTH CARE

GLOBAL REPORT BY THE
SAFEGUARDING HEALTH
IN CONFLICT COALITION
SHOWS AT LEAST 1,200
INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE
AND THREATS TO HEALTH
WORKERS, FACILITIES,
AND TRANSPORT
IN 2019

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Africa

Burkina Faso

21 August 2020: Near Mentao, Pobe-Mengao department, Soum province, Sahel region, presumed JNIM militants reportedly intercepted an INGO vehicle and seized a large amount of medicine. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Central African Republic

13 August 2020: Near Mboki, Obo, Haut-Mbomou prefecture, seven health workers, including a doctor, were detained by ex-Seleka UPC militiamen, as they were traveling to the town for a measles vaccination campaign. Militia leaders claimed that the group had been detained after attempting to enter the UPC-controlled area without a permit from the group. Two agents in charge of voting registration were also kidnapped. Unconfirmed reports that the militia fighters seized medical supplies, money, and personal items from the health workers. **Sources:** [Corbeau News](#) and [GardaWorld](#)

Madagascar

Around 12 August 2020: In Beteva, Miandrivazo district, Menabe region, a nurse was attacked and killed by an unidentified armed group. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Nigeria

11 August 2020: In Mahuta village, Danudume LGA, Katsina state, unidentified perpetrators abducted a health worker. **Source:** [Vanguard](#)

17 August 2020: In Magumeri LGA, Borno state, suspected Boko Haram insurgents set fire to a hospital during a wider assault on the area. **Sources:** [EONS Intelligence](#) and [Sahara Reporters](#)

28 August 2020: In Calabar city, Calabar-Municipal, Cross River state, a female paediatrician at the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital was kidnapped by unknown gunmen around the Marian Road. This incident on top of previous abductions of doctors led medics to protest. **Source:** [Daily Post Nigeria](#)

31 August 2020: In Idoani town, Ondo state, unidentified gunmen kidnapped the Chief Medical Director of General Hospital and two other health workers while they were on their way to Owo town for an official engagement. **Sources:** [Nigeria Security Tracker](#), [Punch](#) and [Sahara Reporters](#)

Somalia

15 August 2020: In Hodan district, Mogadishu, Banadir region, a young man was shot dead in his pharmacy by Al Shabaab militants. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

South Sudan

10 August 2020: Between Yei and Lasu, Central Equatoria state, a clearly-marked aid convoy of two vehicles was ambushed by an armed group while on its way to provide medical services at a refugee camp in Lasu. The convoy, a van and an ambulance, was carrying 15 passengers - 11 aid workers and four patients - at the time of the attack. The NGO van driver was shot and wounded but managed to keep driving and escape, while the ambulance was forced to stop and the passengers fled into a nearby bush. All the passengers of the convoy were later accounted for. The ambulance was looted of medical and nutritional supplies. **Sources:** [Eye Radio](#) and [Radio Tamazuji](#)

Sudan

04 August 2020: In Nyala city, South Darfur state, an ambulance was hijacked by gunmen. The perpetrators also abducted the driver but released him later that same day at Abu Shouk camp. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Asia

Afghanistan

05 August 2020: In Farah province, a doctor was attacked and killed by Taliban fighters. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

24 August 2020: In the Kora Dash-e-Moghul village, Aqcha district, Jowzjan province, two people were killed inside a clinic by unidentified gunmen. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

India

03 August 2020: In Barwada locality of Dhanbad city, Dhanbad district, Jharkhand health workers at a hospital were assaulted by six police officers who demanded to be tested for COVID-19 ahead of other people waiting. Three of the police officers were suspended as a result. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

21 August 2020: In Dimapur, Dimapur district, Nagaland state, a doctor was attacked and assaulted by a team of Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB) personnel while on duty at a COVID-19 Care Centre. **Source:** [Sentinel Assam](#)

The Philippines

01 August 2020: In Dumarán municipality, Palawan province, unidentified armed men attacked a moving ambulance of Rescue 165, killing a nurse and injuring a responder on board. **Source:** [GMA News Online](#)

Europe

Greece

20 August 2020: On Lesbos island, anti-migrant protestors attacked and set fire to an MSF-run pediatric and sexual reproductive health clinic run outside Moria refugee camp. During the incident, a small group of protestors gathered outside, shouting at and threatening staff while throwing stones into the clinic where approximately 50 staff were working to treat women and children from Moria camp. No staff were injured. The protestors had gathered in opposition to Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou's visit to inaugurate a new government COVID-19 facility, which was also attacked. This incident comes less than a month after MSF was [forced to close](#) its COVID-19 isolation center on the island in response to the local authorities' decision to impose fines with potential criminal charges related to urban planning regulations. MSF have called on the authorities to "take all necessary measures against the growing anti-migrant rhetoric, aggression, and violence circulating on Lesbos, and to take action against those who have harassed and attacked humanitarian actors". **Sources:** [MSF](#) and [The New Humanitarian](#)

Middle East and North Africa

Lebanon

04 August 2020: In Beirut, a massive explosion that rocked the entire city caused severe damage to several health facilities. As a result, at least four hospitals and more than 25 health centres and clinics were forced to shut down, whilst three hospitals remained functioning well below their normal capacity. **Sources:** [ABC](#), [AP](#), [BBC](#) and [Reuters](#)

Libya

06 August 2020: Near Azzawya town, an armed group intercepted a truck on its way to Benghazi and Tobruk to deliver WHO supplies, including insulin. The driver was detained overnight, and his phone was confiscated. The next day, the group directed the driver to deliver the supplies to a nearby health care facility. **Source:** [WHO](#)

Occupied Palestinian Territories

21 August 2020: In Al Quds, West Bank, Al Makased hospital was attacked by Israeli military forces who fired tear gas inside the hospital. A number of hospital visitors were injured from tear gas inhalation and an unspecified number of hospital employees were also injured during the attack. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

30 August 2020: In Hebron city, a Palestinian hospital was attacked by Israeli military forces who fired tear gas at the premises, injuring 25 Palestinian patients and health workers through tear gas inhalation. **Source:** [ACLED](#)¹

Syrian Arab Republic

18 August 2020: In Shiheil town, Deir-ez-Zor countryside, a hospital was raided by YPG Anti-Terrorism Forces who arrested two people, one of them a health worker. They also confiscated an unspecified number of staff motorbikes. **Source:** [SOHR](#)

18 August 2020: In Idlib city and governorate, a male pharmacist and director of a midwifery institute was arrested and detained by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham militants. A number of individuals have reported being tortured during detention by Hay'at Tahrir al Sham in Idlib. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

27 August 2020: In Jlein town, Dara'a governorate, a doctor and professor at Damascus University was shot dead by gunmen. **Source:** [SOHR](#)

Yemen

17 August 2020: In As Sawmaah district, Al Bayda province, a male dentist from Taiz province was shot dead and crucified by Al-Qaeda gunmen after having been accused of spying on them for the Houthi-led government. **Sources:** [Civilian Impact Monitoring Project \(CIMP\)](#) and [Middle East Monitor](#)

25 August: In As Sawmaah district, Al Bayda province, a medical centre was destroyed by explosives. It was the same location where a doctor was shot dead and crucified the week prior. **Source:** [Civilian Impact Monitoring Project \(CIMP\)](#)

The Americas

Colombia

21 August 2020: In Palmira city, Valle del Cauca department, a female nurse was killed when a group of police officers stopped one of the victim's brothers and shot at him but the bullet killed the sister. **Source:** [El Pais](#)

Haiti

05 August 2020: In Port-au-Prince, La Paix University Hospital was attacked by three armed men, including a police officer. They ransacked the building, smashed windows and windshields of cars and opened fire. Staff of the hospital fled the scene in panic. **Sources:** [ACLED](#)¹ and [Le Nouvelliste](#)

Mexico

19 August 2020: In Chilapa city, Guerrero state, an ambulance was fired at by armed men while carrying a police officer of Acatepec municipality who had been injured in a previous attack. The officer died. **Source:** [Pulso Informativo Guerrero](#)

Global Health Insecurity

These events go beyond the definition used by the SHCC to cover a wider range of events that affect the provision of health care including events perpetrated by patients or relatives of patients, private individuals and criminals as well as significant strike action or protests by health care personnel.

Africa

Nigeria

11 August 2020: In Ilorin city, Kwara state, the family of a patient assaulted and injured a doctor of the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital, prompting members of the Association of Residential Doctors to commence a three-day warning strike in the hope that necessary security measures are put in place by the responsible authority. **Source:** [EONS Intelligence](#)

Middle East and North Africa

Israel

11 August 2020: In Netanya city, Central district, a patient at the Lev HaSharon Medical Centre threw objects at a male nurse and physically assaulted him, leaving him with severe injuries. Hospital staff nearby intervened and were able to stop the patient. In response, psychiatric hospitals across Israel announced a three-hour strike for 12 August in protest. **Source:** [The Jerusalem Post](#)

The Americas

United States of America

09 August 2020: In Chicago city, Illinois state, unidentified perpetrators wielding hammers smashed the glass of the front door of the Ronald McDonald House Charity, near the Lurie Children's Hospital, causing minimal damage to the exterior entrance of the house, and scaring families currently staying there whilst their children undergo medical treatment. This incident occurred amid widespread looting across Chicago. **Source:** [USA Today](#)

10 August 2020: In Red Deer city, Alberta state, a patient attacked a male doctor with a hammer and a machete in an examination room at the Village Mall walk-in clinic. Police arrested the perpetrator on the scene, and the victim died after he was rushed to hospital. **Sources:** [CBC](#), [CTV News](#) and [The Star](#)

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The incidents reported are not a complete nor a representative list of all events that affected the provision of health care and have not been independently verified. All decisions made, on the basis of, or with consideration to, such information remains the responsibility of their respective organisations.

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WHO SSA reported incidents: August 2020

This table shows the number of incidents reported by the WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA) in countries monitored by the Safeguarding Health Care in Conflict Coalition (SHCC). Incidents are broken down by attack type.

	# of reported incidents	Abduction, arrest, detention of health personnel or patients	Armed or violent search of health care personnel, facility or transport	Assault (without weapon)	Chemical agent	Militarization of civilian health facility	Obstruction to health care delivery	Psychological violence/of violence/intimidation	Removal of health care assets	Setting fire	Sexual assault	Unknown	Violence with heavy weapons	Violence with individual weapons
Afghanistan	8	1				1	1	3	1				1	
Libya	1						1							
Nigeria	1													1
oPt	1						1							1
Syria	2						1		1					2
Yemen	3	1							1				2	1
Total	16	2				1	4	3	3				3	5

Date period: August 2020. **Data accessed:** 18 September 2020

See [SHCC Methodology](#) for information on how the SHCC uses this data. This information may change as the WHO SSA is updated.

¹ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) [database attribution policy](#). Accessed 14 September 2020.