

Attacks on Vaccination Campaigns

New blog series by Insecurity Insight



New blog series

Several years ago, polio vaccinators in Quetta, Pakistan were shook by the murder of two colleagues. Armed men on a motorcycle shot a mother and daughter in a 'drive-by' style shooting as they were administering polio drops to children. Both women died on their way to hospital.

This attack is not an isolated incident. Vaccinators working on polio, cholera, measles and Ebola vaccination campaigns have often been the target of threats and violence in Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia, and South Sudan. Since 2020, misinformation, fear and polarisation surrounding COVID-19 vaccinations has resulted in vaccination centres around the world being vandalised or set on fire. COVID-19 vaccination workers have been threatened and assaulted, including in countries not at war such as India, Malta, and New Zealand. These attacks have devastating effects on public health measures, forcing the closure of vaccination centres or the suspension of vaccination campaigns and leaving communities vulnerable to serious disease.

Since 2008, our monitoring identified over 100 incidents of violence against vaccination workers and campaigns in 17 countries. At least 66 vaccination workers have been kidnapped and 33 killed. Vaccination campaigns were frequently suspended as a result.

This new Attacks on Vaccination Campaigns blog series analyses Insecurity Insight's data on attacks to health care to explore where they took place, who was affected, who was responsible, how these attacks may have changed in recent years, and how they relate to public health and politics.

The analysis will bring together data from public sources and verified incidents shared by Aid in Danger partner agencies to provide a unique perspective on who is at risk and how vaccination campaigns could be made safer.

This series brings together data from public sources and verified incidents shared by Aid in Danger partner agencies for the first time to understand who is at risk and how vaccination campaigns could be made safer.

Whether you are a health worker, an academic or interested in public policy on vaccines, [subscribe to our new series](#).

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Interactive global map

You can explore some of these incidents on our '[Attacked and Threatened](#)' interactive global map. How to use the map:

1. Go to map.insecurityinsight.org/health.
2. Select 'vaccination' on the left side of the dashboard to show incidents on the map.
3. Countries are shaded by the number of reported incidents, with darker shadings representing more incidents.
4. Click on a country for an incident summary.
5. Zoom in to see the location of a specific incident.
6. Click on a square for a brief description.

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