Cameroon

Thirteen events have been reported from Cameroon between January and July, compared to eight recorded by the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC) for all of 2019.

- Boko Haram set two health facilities on fire in February and March in Mayo-Sava, and another in April in Mayo-Tsanaga, Far North region. The attacks on health care are largely part of small-scale attacks on civilians, mostly using machetes and fire. Civilians are killed, women mutilated, children kidnapped, a school burnt down, and houses set ablaze in these attacks. Health facilities may have been targeted to obtain treatment for sick fighters and families. On 9 September, Boko Haram looted medical and food supplies from a private Catholic health centre in Mayo-Sava that had already been targeted in March. Security analysts have reported chaos in the Boko Haram camp following the deaths of over 200 fighters and their families from cholera.

- Suspected Ambazonian separatists burnt supplies intended to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on 14 May in the Northwest region departments of Mezam and Momo for unclear reasons. In the Southwest region, Ambazonian separatists kidnapped and killed a Cameroonian INGO volunteer community health worker on 7 July.

- Police officers arrested nine Cameroonian volunteers from Survie-Cameroon-Survival Initiative while they were handing out masks and sanitizing gel on 11 May in Yaounde and on 23 May in the Southern region of Sangmelima in what appears to be a politically-motivated move to crackdown on the opposition. The Survie-Cameroon-Survival Initiative was launched in April by opposition leader Maurice Kamto.

- Military officers stormed the Shisong Hospital in the Northwest city of Kumbo in early July and threatened to remove patients they suspected to be Ambazonian separatists. A nurse was almost beaten for defending the medical treatment of people without discrimination.

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Insecurity Insight’s social media monitoring suggests that local health providers and international humanitarian organisations operating in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon are increasingly affected by the ongoing conflict between Ambazonian separatists and the Cameroonian military.

The kidnapping and killing of the health worker on 7 July is particularly concerning as it was justified based on the conclusion that the health worker was spying on behalf of the government. Social media can influence to what extent aid providers and health workers are perceived as impartial, neutral and independent.

Interested in regular snapshots of social media posts relevant for community acceptance to understand disinformation that can put health and aid workers at risk in Sub Saharan Africa? Sign up here.