

BURKINA FASO

Violence Against Health Care in Conflict 2025



**SAFEGUARDING
HEALTH
IN CONFLICT**



**Insecurity
Insight**
Data on People in Danger



REPORTED INCIDENTS AND MOST COMMONLY REPORTED CONCERNS

 REPORTED INCIDENTS	 INCIDENTS WHERE HEALTH FACILITIES WERE ATTACKED	 HEALTH WORKERS KILLED
2025		
13	7	6
2024		
22	16	5
2023		
49	30	8

Source: Insecurity Insight for the SHCC.

OVERVIEW

Using data collected by Insecurity Insight, the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC) identified 13 incidents of violence against or obstruction of health care in Burkina Faso in 2025, compared to 22 in 2024 and 49 in 2023. Among incidents reported in 2025, health facilities were attacked seven times, while six health workers were killed.

The actual number of incidents and the severity of the problem are likely greater, because attacks on health care may not have been reported in some locations. In addition, the decrease in reported attacks on health facilities may reflect the pre-emptive closure of facilities rather than improved security. Restrictions on independent reporting following the country's 2022 military coup may also be responsible for the decline in reported incidents.

Methodology and sources

Information on incidents of violence against health care in Burkina Faso is compiled from aid agency data-sharing mechanisms, information projects and open sources. Data is continuously updated and numbers may change if new information is made publicly available. For the latest available figures, see Insecurity Insight's [global map](#) on attacks on health care. See [Methodology](#) for further information.



THE CONTEXT

Burkina Faso remained affected by a protracted non-international armed conflict in 2025 between state forces and organized non-state armed groups, including Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM), the Maçina Liberation Front, Ansaroul Islam, and Katiba Hanifa, with reported violence continuing at high levels in the Boucle du Mouhoun, Centre-Nord, Centre-Est, Est, and Nord regions. State forces, including the armed forces and allied auxiliaries such as the Volontaires pour la Défense de la Patrie (VDP), continued counter-insurgency operations across these regions, while non-state armed groups carried out coordinated attacks against military positions, convoys, and population centers in Di, Diapaga, Djibo, Foutouri, Lanfiera Sollé, Solenzo, Thiou, and Yamba.

Political uncertainty persisted in 2025, and the political environment remained dominated by the military rule imposed following the September 2022 coup. The authorities intensified restrictions affecting media, civil society and humanitarian organizations, while arrests of humanitarian personnel continued. In January, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger formally withdrew from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), reflecting a shift in regional political alignment. Domestic security operations were increasingly supported by military backing from Russia and China.

Humanitarian needs remained at high levels: over two million people were officially recorded as internally displaced and more than one in four people required humanitarian assistance in 2025. Humanitarian actors estimated that 5.9 million people required humanitarian assistance in 2025, a slight decrease compared to 2024, amid continued armed violence and climate-related shocks, including drought, flooding, and violent winds. Insecurity and blockades continued to restrict movement in hard-to-reach areas, where an estimated 1.1 million people relied on irregular and costly resupply convoys and air operations, in some cases for prolonged periods.

VIOLENCE AGAINST OR OBSTRUCTION OF HEALTH CARE IN 2025

In 2025, all but one incident of reported violence against or obstruction of health care in Burkina Faso were attributed to JNIM fighters armed with guns.¹ Members of the group looted and deliberately set ablaze health centers; killed, abducted, and threatened health workers; and on one occasion planted an improvised explosive device (IED) that exploded and killed a health worker riding a motorcycle in Est region's Gnagna province.² Burkinabé security forces reportedly arrested an INGO health worker in May in Ouagadougou city, Centre region, for unclear reasons.³

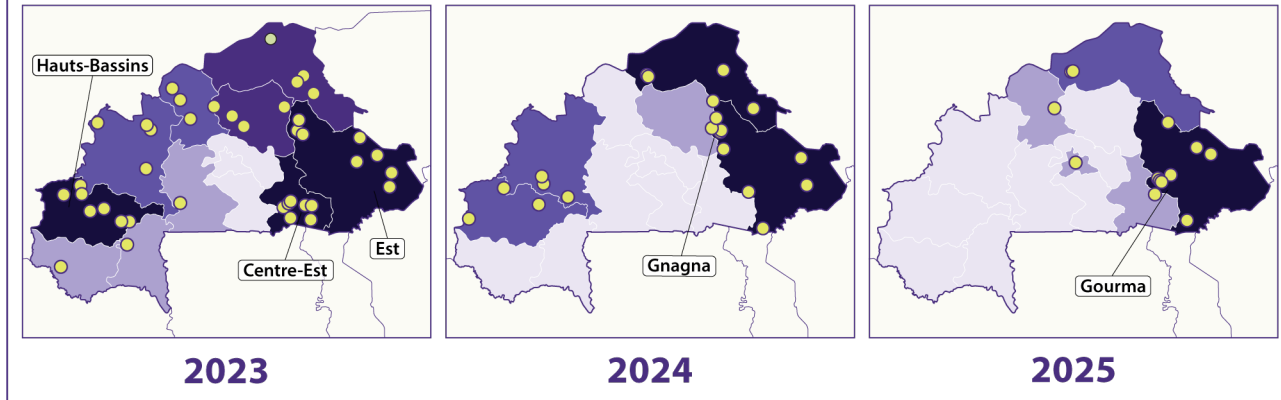
Reported health worker killings in 2025 were similar to the number reported in 2024, while attacks on health facilities declined. Most incidents affected local health care providers operating in national health structures, with two affecting NGOs.⁴

As in previous years, incidents in 2025 were concentrated in Est region, but shifted within the region from Gnagna in 2024 to Gourma in 2025. Reported incidents decreased in Sahel region in 2025, with cases reported in Centre, Centre-Est and Nord, where armed conflict remained at high levels. All but one incident occurred in the first six months of 2025.



Known locations of reported incidents affecting health care in Burkina Faso, 2023-2025

As in previous years, incidents in 2025 were concentrated in Est region, but shifted within the region from mainly Gnagna in 2024 to Gourma in 2025.



Source: Insecurity Insight for the SHCC.

Health facilities attacked

Health centers, hospitals, and pharmacies in Burkina Faso were reported attacked and looted on multiple occasions by JNIM fighters, who were usually armed with machine guns, AK-47s, and other firearms. Incidents involved pharmacies and health centers being looted or deliberately set on fire, and were often part of broader assaults that included civilian casualties and the destruction of property. JNIM fighters often fired indiscriminately at groups of people, creating stampedes that injured civilians, and threatened or displaced health workers, forcing them to flee to other facilities. Looted items included medicines and other vital medical supplies taken from health centers and pharmaceutical depots.

Two health centers in Est and Sahel regions were reportedly deliberately set on fire after nearby pharmaceutical depots or pharmacies were looted.⁵

Health workers killed

Six health workers were reportedly killed in six incidents in 2025, compared to three in three incidents in 2024 and 2023 combined. Most health worker killings were recorded in Est region, with a nurse killed and another abducted in an attack on a VDP position in Centre-Nord by JNIM fighters armed with rifles.⁶ Three of the health workers were killed as part of broader assaults involving civilian casualties and the destruction of property. In other health worker killings, along with the health worker killed in an IED explosion, an NGO health worker was kidnapped from a health facility and later killed, and another was stabbed to death in their home.⁷



This chapter is based on 2023-2025 BFA SHCC Health Care Data. Download this data on the [Humanitarian Data Exchange](https://data.humdata.org/) (HDX).

Insecurity Insight updates data continuously and numbers may change if new information is made publicly available. For the latest available figures, see Insecurity Insight's [global map on attacks on health care](#).



THE IMPACT OF ATTACKS ON HEALTH CARE

It can be generally stated that Burkina Faso's health care system operates with limited capacity following years of insecurity, displacement and the progressive contraction of services in conflict-affected regions. By 2025, insecurity had resulted in the closure of around 20% of health facilities across Boucle du Mouhoun, Centre-Nord, Centre-Est, Est and Nord regions, with hundreds of additional facilities operating at minimal capacity, limiting the availability of health services in areas where violence was most frequently reported. Health districts reported persistent disruptions to referral systems, medicine supply chains and cold-chain infrastructure, particularly in regions affected by movement restrictions, blockades, or damage to civilian infrastructure.

People living in hard-to-reach areas remained cut off from routine health services, including immunization, maternal and neonatal care, and treatment for common childhood illnesses, constraining both service delivery and the ability to document incidents affecting health care. Multiple concurrent public health outbreaks were reported in 2025, including hepatitis E, malaria, measles, meningitis, polio, Zika virus and yellow fever. In total, 2,168 measles cases were documented nationwide during the first five months of 2025, which was similar to case levels recorded during previous full-year outbreaks.

Immunization activities were uneven in 2025 due to insecurity, access constraints, and disruptions to supply and cold-chain systems. Insecurity coincided with service suspensions in some districts, while in others, care remained unavailable because of supply gaps or lack of safe access. Reduced service availability, including the closure of health facilities and disruptions to health care systems, further limited access to essential care for people in conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas.

Humanitarian access constraints in 2025, including insecurity, suspended humanitarian flights, administrative restrictions, arrests of humanitarian staff, and reduced operational presence following donor funding cuts and systemic gaps in funding, shaped both the delivery of health services and the reporting of incidents affecting health care.

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- 1 Note that restrictions on media might bias the identification of perpetrators.
- 2 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 BFA SHCC Health Care Data. Incident number 120804.
- 3 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 BFA SHCC Health Care Data. Incident number 99594.
- 4 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 BFA SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 99594; 118467.
- 5 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 BFA SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 118777; 118778; 122250.
- 6 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 BFA SHCC Health Care Data. Incident number 122253.
- 7 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 BFA SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 118467; 122256.

SAFEGUARDING HEALTH IN CONFLICT

The Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition is a group of more than 40 organizations working to protect health workers and services threatened by war or civil unrest. We have raised awareness of global attacks on health and pressed United Nations agencies for greater global action to protect the security of health care. We monitor attacks, strengthen universal norms of respect for the right to health, and demand accountability for perpetrators. Suggested citation: Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC) 2026. Care in the Crosshairs: Violence Against Health Care in Conflict, May 2026. <https://shcc.pub/SHCCAnnualReport2025>
<https://safeguarding-health.com>

Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition
615 N. Wolfe Street, E7143, Baltimore, MD 21205
SHCC administrator, safeguardinghcc@gmail.com