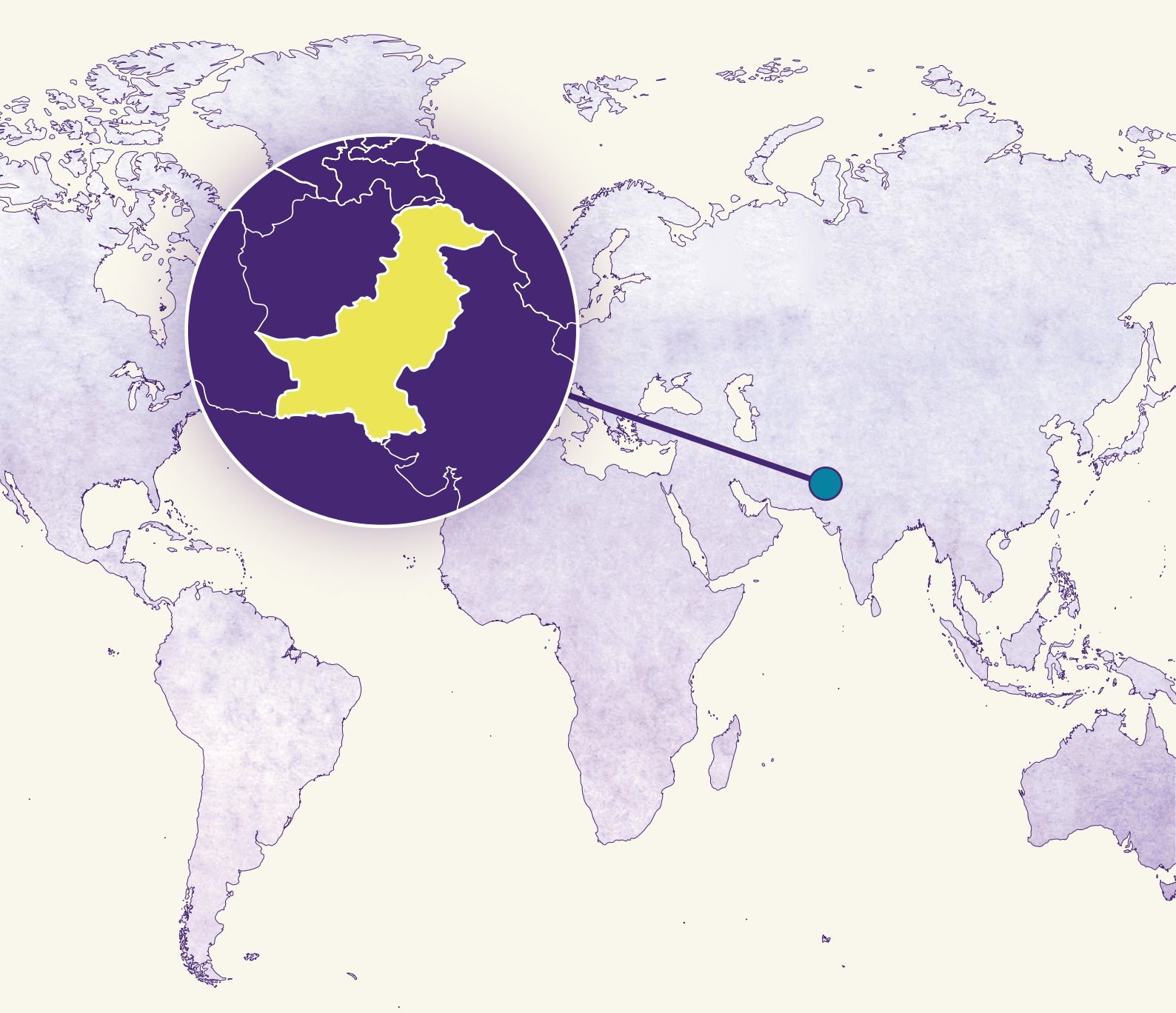
PAKISTAN

Violence Against Health Care in Conflict

2025



SAFEGUARDING HEALTH IN CONFLICT

Insecurity Insight
Data on People in Danger

Pakistan

REPORTED INCIDENTS AND MOST COMMONLY REPORTED CONCERNS				
REPORTED INCIDENTS	INCIDENTS AFFECTING VACCINATION CAMPAIGNS	INCIDENTS WHERE HEALTH FACILITIES WERE DAMAGED/ DESTROYED	HEALTH WORKERS KIDNAPPED	HEALTH WORKERS KILLED
2025				
32	10	7	12	6
2024				
40	25	1	8	15
2023				
12	8	1	3	3

Source: Insecurity Insight for the SHCC.

OVERVIEW

Using data collected by Insecurity Insight, the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC) identified 32 incidents of violence against or obstruction of health care in Pakistan in 2025, compared to 40 in 2024 and 12 in 2023.[1] Among incidents reported in 2025, polio vaccination campaigns came under attack ten times, while 12 health workers were kidnapped and six were killed. Health facilities were damaged on at least seven occasions.

Methodology and sources
Information on incidents of violence against health care in Pakistan are compiled from open sources and information projects. 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

A brief international armed conflict occurred between Pakistan and India on May 7, 2025, when India launched missile strikes in Punjab following the attack in Pahalgam in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir on April 22. Hostilities lasted four days before a ceasefire was announced on May 10. Pakistan

also continued to experience a protracted non-international armed conflict between security forces and organized armed groups, including al-Qaeda affiliates, the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP), and Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The violence was concentrated in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, and affected parts of Punjab and Sindh. Militant groups carried out suicide bombings and other attacks against security forces and civilians in these provinces. Targeted violence against religious minorities, including members of the Ahmadiyya community, was also reported, particularly in Punjab, which is home to a large proportion of the country's Ahmadi population.

The Pakistani authorities intensified restrictions on media, political opposition, and civil society during 2025, and NGOs reported tighter regulation and constraints affecting their registration and operations, including for international humanitarian actors. Limitations on access to information regarding counterterrorism operations and broader restrictions on civil society affected the environment in which violent incidents impacted health care.

Pakistan faced multiple humanitarian crises in 2025. From late June to mid-September, heavy monsoon rains caused landslides and flooding across Gilgit-Baltistan administrative territory, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Sindh provinces, affecting over 6.9 million people and displacing around three million. Flooding damaged at least 120 health facilities, including eight that were destroyed, and disrupted essential services, while disease outbreaks that included dengue, malaria, and acute watery diarrhea were reported in several provinces. Between November 2024 and July 2025, around 11 million people were assessed as highly food insecure, including approximately two million children experiencing acute malnutrition, while Pakistan continued to host about two million Afghan refugees, placing sustained pressure on public services, including health care.

VIOLENCE AGAINST OR OBSTRUCTION OF HEALTH CARE IN 2025

In 2025, the total number of incidents of violence against or obstruction of health care attributed to organized armed actors remained at broadly similar levels to 2024, but patterns of violence against health care shifted from predominantly attacks on polio vaccination campaigns and their security escorts to include damage to health facilities and violence against a broader range of health personnel.

As in previous years, in 2025 incidents were frequently recorded in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's southern districts of Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, and Malakand, which are known for security challenges and militant activity. Cases were also recorded in Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh provinces.

Most reported incidents were attributed to unidentified armed men, while TTP militants were named in nine cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.[2] Unlike in previous years, when incidents attributed to the group mainly targeted polio vaccination campaigns, 2025 saw an increase in TTP militants detonating improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that damaged health facilities. Baloch separatists abducted a health worker and hijacked a health care vehicle in Balochistan.[3] Two incidents were attributed to the Indian military in Punjab during the four-day Pakistani-Indian armed conflict in May.[4]

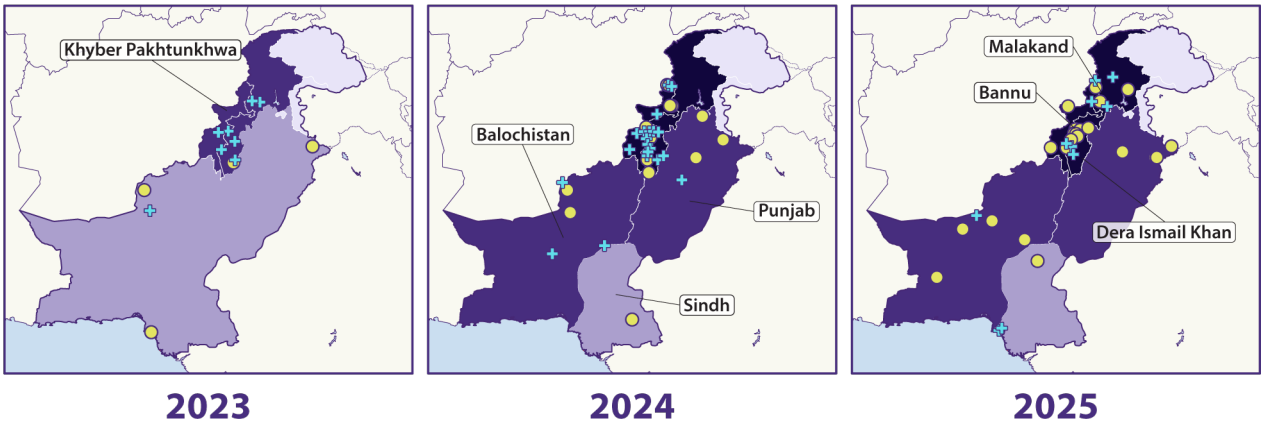
The majority of reported cases affected health care providers working for national health structures, with four incidents affecting an NGO, two affecting private health care organizations, and one each affecting Red Cross societies and a UN agency.[5]

Pakistan

In 2025, the pattern of violence against health care in Pakistan shifted: incidents damaging health care facilities increased sharply, while attacks on polio vaccination campaigns and their security escorts and health worker killings continued, but at lower levels than in previous years, representing a smaller proportion of overall incidents. The overall number of incidents in which health workers were kidnapped remained similar to that in 2024; however, their proportion of incidents and the number of victims increased.

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

Incidents continued to be recorded in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's southern districts of Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, and Malakand, which are known for security challenges and militant activity.



Source: Insecurity Insight for the SHCC.

Attacks on vaccination campaigns

Threats or violence against workers during polio vaccination drives were reported on ten occasions in 2024, compared to 25 in 2024 and ten in 2023. Most involved personnel being shot at or threatened by armed groups, with one case attributed to the TTP. Incidents were primarily reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where vaccine hesitancy and mistrust are high, but also occurred in Balochistan and Sindh. Similar to 2024, some kidnapped polio workers were released only after agreeing to abandon their work.

Reported vaccinator kidnappings became fewer in 2025, but involved more victims per incident. Seven vaccinators were kidnapped in three incidents in 2025, compared to six in five incidents in 2024. Vaccinator killings slightly decreased, from four killed in four incidents in 2024 to three in 2025.

For more information on attacks on vaccination campaigns in Pakistan, explore Insecurity Insight's global map by selecting "vaccination" and zooming in on Pakistan.

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.

Pakistan

Health facilities damaged/destroyed

Incidents where health facilities were reportedly damaged increased from two incidents in 2023-2024 to seven in 2025. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, four government-run basic health units and a private clinic were damaged in IED explosions set off by TTP militants. In Punjab, two health facilities, including a hospital located inside the Government Health and Educational Complex in Shakargarh city (which also housed two schools and a hostel) along with a pharmacy in Muridke city were damaged during Indian missile strikes on May 7.[6]

Health workers kidnapped

Twelve health workers were reported kidnapped in nine incidents in 2025, compared to eight in seven incidents in 2024 and six in three incidents in 2023. Reported health worker kidnappings doubled in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – in the context of persistent violence by armed groups –where 83% of reported cases occurred. In 2025 health workers delivering general health services accounted for a greater proportion of the total number of kidnapped health workers than vaccinators, marking a shift from 2024, when vaccinators represented the larger share. Along with the seven abducted vaccinators, four health workers were kidnapped from health facilities and the TTP abducted a doctor from his home in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.[7] Apart from five health workers who were released, the fates of most abducted staff members were not recorded.

Health workers killed

In 2025, six health workers were killed in six incidents, compared to 15 health workers in 12 incidents in 2024, and three in three incidents in 2023. Along with the three vaccinators who were killed, in Sindh a doctor's car was shot at by unidentified armed men, killing his assistant and injuring the doctor, allegedly over his refusal to pay extortion demands.[8] An Ahmadi doctor at a private hospital was fatally shot by armed men in Punjab, where persecution of the Ahmadiyya community is particularly high. The doctor had previously received threats from anti-Ahmadi groups.[9]

A driver delivering humanitarian medicine, food, and other essential supplies and a security guard were killed when armed militants attacked a two-truck convoy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At least 15 others were injured in the attack.[10]

> *High levels of food insecurity and acute malnutrition increased pressure on nutritional and community-based health services, particularly for children.*

THE IMPACT OF ATTACKS ON HEALTH CARE

Flood-related damage to health facilities and the disruption of services reduced physical access to health care in several provinces where insecurity was also reported, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. Displacement during the monsoon season and the large number of refugees that continued to be hosted in Pakistan increased reliance on mobile outreach, primary care, and vaccination services in affected districts. Outbreaks of communicable diseases following the floods increased demand for treatment and preventive services. High levels of food insecurity and acute malnutrition increased pressure on nutritional and community-based health services, particularly for children.

Pakistan

Together with the tighter regulation of NGOs, restrictions imposed on the media and civil society affected operational conditions for some health service providers and may have influenced the reporting environment for incidents impacting health care. Reductions in humanitarian funding in 2025 likely affected the scale and continuity of some health care and nutritional interventions.

Health workforce attrition, including the outward migration of doctors and low participation of women in the medical workforce, further constrained service availability in certain areas.

In this context of overlapping armed violence, climate-related shocks, displacement, funding pressures and workforce constraints, damage to facilities, kidnappings of health workers, and attacks on vaccination personnel adversely affected a health system operating under sustained strain in multiple provinces.

1 The SHCC's 2024 Annual Report cited 39 incidents of violence against or obstruction of health care in Pakistan in 2024 and 12 in 2023. Data is continuously updated and numbers can change if new information is made publicly available.

2 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 88728; 105044; 118836; 118838; 118840; 119935; 119936; 120877; 122699.

3 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 119450; 116899.

4 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 100252; 100253.

5 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 93345; 98701; 105784; 123019; 102001; 119935; 91178; 121601.

6 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident number 100252.

7 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident numbers 91178; 118837; 118838; 119450; 123019.

8 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident number 113420.

9 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident number 102001.

10 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2025 Report Dataset: 2023-2025 PAK SHCC Health Care Data. Incident number 93345.

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 Coalititon (SHCC) 2026. Care in the Crosshairs: Violence Against Health Care in Conflict, May 2026. https://shcc.pub/SHCCAnnualReport2025
https://safeguarding-health.com

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