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**SAFEGUARDING
HEALTH
IN CONFLICT**



**Insecurity
Insight**
Data on People in Danger

2020

No respite: Violence against Health Care in Conflict



Physicians for
Human Rights



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On Christmas Eve 2020, Boko Haram militants killed several people in Borno state in north-eastern Nigeria. During raids on mostly Christian villages, the militants stole medical supplies from a hospital in Pemi before setting it on fire. They also burned down a church and abducted a priest.¹³⁷

REPORTED INCIDENTS AND MOST COMMONLY REPORTED CONCERNS



↓ Source: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data

OVERVIEW

The Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC) identified 43 incidents of violence against or obstruction of health care in Nigeria in 2020, compared to 19 such incidents in 2019. Health workers were kidnapped and health supplies looted.

Some doctors and nurses have reportedly left their clinical positions and others have gone on strike in response to the targeted kidnapping of physicians. The loss of these health workers has had a profound effect on the country's health services.

This factsheet is based on the dataset 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data, which is available on the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX).

THE CONTEXT

The presence of Boko Haram in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states continued to affect health workers and health centers in 2020. Boko Haram uses an Islamist ideology to oppose the Nigerian and other states. Violent tactics, including looting and kidnapping for ransom, sustain the group's operations. Boko Haram also operates in Cameroon, Chad, and Niger.

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The growing presence of armed groups – locally referred to as “bandits” – in Katsina, Kaduna, and Zamfara states increasingly affected health care and health workers. These “bandits” are believed to have set up camps in Rugu forest in Zamfara state, which they use as a springboard for attacks on rural communities to steal cattle and food supplies or to carry out ambushes on roads; they often kill those who resist kidnapping. There are some concerns that these groups, who operate mainly for financial profit, may have been infiltrated by extremists.

Communal conflicts between herder and farmer communities, as well as ethno-religious conflicts, also affected health workers.

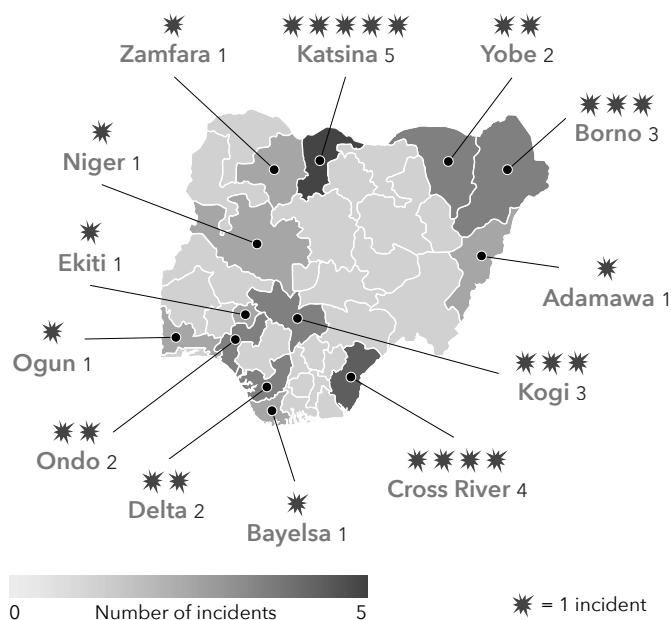
Health workers were kidnapped in southern Nigeria, where kidnappings for profit are common.

Nigerian Armed Forces personnel also injured a health worker.

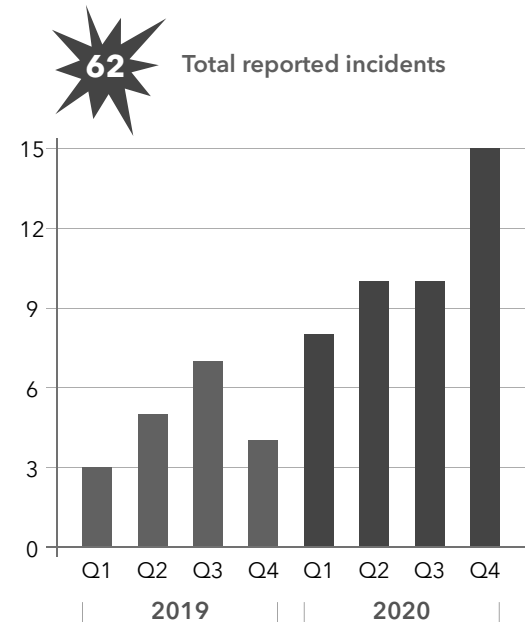
VIOLENCE AGAINST OR OBSTRUCTION OF HEALTH CARE IN 2020

Incidents were documented in 13 of Nigeria’s 36 states.

Known locations of reported incidents affecting health care in Nigeria in 2020, by state¹³⁸



Reported incidents affecting health care in Nigeria in 2019 and 2020, by quarter



↓ Source: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data

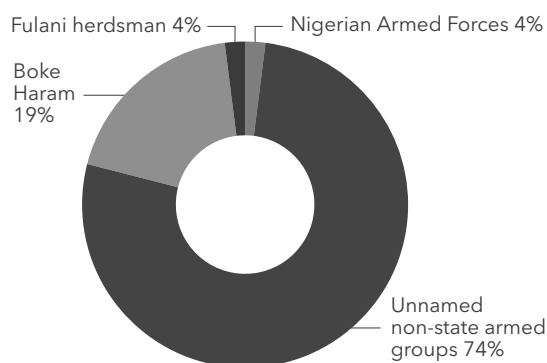
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Boko Haram looted medicine before burning down health centers in Borno and Yobe states in north-eastern Nigeria at least five times in 2020. These incidents were mostly suspected targeted attacks intended to obtain treatment for sick fighters and their families.

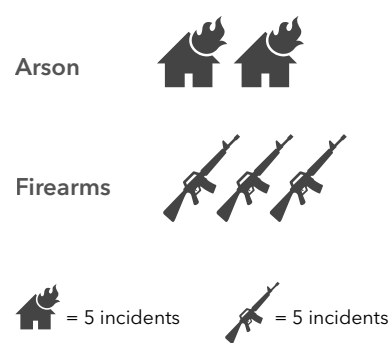
Local armed groups, often with firearms, killed at least one health worker and kidnapped at least five during raids on local communities. Two health workers were killed in a health center by unidentified armed men in Zamfara state.¹³⁹

Kidnappings of health workers were reported in eight states. Beside Katsina (where four kidnappings were attributed to “bandits”), three were reported from Cross River and Kogi states.^{140,141} Kidnappings were also reported from Adamawa, Ekiti, Delta, Niger, and Ondo states.^{142,143,144,145} Perpetrators usually made ransom demands following the kidnappings.^{146,147}

Reported perpetrators¹⁴⁸



Reported weapons use¹⁴⁹



Source: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data

Fulani herdsman armed with guns also attempted to abduct a doctor outside his home as he returned home from work in the early evening in Cross River state. He escaped, but was shot and injured.¹⁵⁰

A British missionary medical worker was killed by unidentified men in the Niger Delta.¹⁵¹

Nigerian Armed Forces personnel injured a nurse at a coronavirus checkpoint in Ondo state.¹⁵²

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- 137 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 1363.
- 138 This chart only shows the locations mentioned in the original source. Information on the location of 16 incidents is not available and therefore not included in the chart.
- 139 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 35.
- 140 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 813.
- 141 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 1063.
- 142 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 10.
- 143 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 1147.
- 144 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 575.
- 145 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 815.
- 146 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 1119.
- 147 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 10.
- 148 This chart only shows the perpetrators who are named in the original source. Information on the perpetrators in 16 incidents is not available and therefore not included in the chart.
- 149 This chart only shows the weapons mentioned in the original source. Information on the weapons used in 13 incidents is not available and therefore not included in the chart.
- 150 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 1358.
- 151 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 398.
- 152 Insecurity Insight. Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition 2021 Report Dataset: 2020 SHCC Health Care Nigeria Data. Incident number 383.