

Safeguarding Healthcare Monthly News Brief

Attacks on healthcare

December
2018

Threats and violence affecting emergency care

Africa

Somalia

22 December 2018: In Mogadishu, al Shabaab militants detonated a VBIED near the presidential palace while police and medics were responding to an earlier, politically-motivated suicide blast. No further details specified. **Source:** [IOL](#)

Middle-East and North Africa

Occupied Palestinian Territories

10 December 2018: In Beit Lahia city, Gaza strip, a Palestinian paramedic and at least thirty-two others were injured after demonstrators, who assembled for the 19th maritime march of the Great Return Marches, were shot at with live gunfire by Israeli soldiers. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

14 December 2018: Along the border of the Gaza strip, seven paramedics were injured after being shot with live gunfire by Israeli soldiers during the 38th week of a demonstration against the Israeli blockade. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

Syrian Arab Republic

04 December 2018: In Jendeires city, Afrin district, Aleppo governorate, a member of the Jandarisi Syrian Civil Defence (SCD) died from injuries he received two days earlier when an IED attached to a motorbike exploded. The perpetrator was not identified, and no further details are available. **Source:** [AWSD²](#) and [SNHR](#)

Yemen

21 December 2018: In Sadah city, an ambulance traveling through the al Zahra area was struck by a Saudi-led coalition airstrike, killing both the driver and an on-board doctor. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

Threats and violence affecting general healthcare

Africa

Central African Republic

03 December 2018: Update: Two aid workers kidnapped while collecting data for a vaccination drive in late November were

This monthly digest comprises threats and violence as well as protests and other events affecting the delivery of and access to healthcare.

It is prepared by Insecurity Insight from information available in open sources.

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Editorial team:

Christina Wille, Laurence Gerhardt and Helen Buck
Insecurity Insight

Research team:

James Naudi
Insecurity Insight

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released after the intervention of UN peacekeepers. The kidnappers claimed the aid workers were spying on them but agreed to let them go. **Source:** [UN-OCHA](#)

Democratic Republic of Congo

04 December 2018: In Beni city, North Kivu province, unidentified individuals burned down two Ebola screening sites and a community relay centre, contributing to the mass displacement of people towards neighbouring Ituri province and thereby further spreading the risk of Ebola across the country. **Source:** [UN-OCHA](#)

10 December 2018: In Kazaro village, Ituri province, a group of young people attacked an Ebola vaccination team, resulting in no injuries. The motivation for the attack is unspecified but likely due to general suspicion of vaccination programs. **Source:** [UN-OCHA](#)

20 - 29 December 2018: In Beni and Butembo cities, North Kivu province, the IRC suspended all of its activities, including its Ebola response program, due to a surge in violence towards aid workers (amongst other groups) following the 20 December delay of the general election in DRC. The election had been due to take place in December 2016 but was met with repeated delays year-by-year, resulting in an outbreak of riots on the 20 December which left multiple IRC facilities damaged, destroyed, looted and burned. In Beni, the burning down of one Ebola triage centre resulted in at least twenty-one patients being declared missing (accounts vary). **Sources:** [IRC](#), [Reuters](#), [Media Congo](#) and [NY Times](#)

28 December 2018: In Mulekera commune, Beni city, North Kivu province, in the midst of protests over the electoral commission, protesters looted mattresses and medical equipment from three Ebola assessment centres and set two facilities on fire. **Source:** [Media Congo](#)

28 December 2018: In Beni and Butembo cities, North Kivu province, protests over the electoral commission forced Oxfam to suspend its Ebola response activities in the region. **Sources:** [Media Congo](#) and [Oxfam](#)

Nigeria

06 December 2018: In Rann town, Borno state, a clash between armed assailants and soldiers led to the deaths of an unknown number of IDPs and the destruction of a medical centre. The violence subsequently forced an unspecified number of aid workers to relocate to Maiduguri city, the state capital. **Source:** [UN-OCHA](#)

08 December 2018: In Rann town, Borno state, Boko Haram militants torched a malnourishment treatment centre operated by an unspecified NGO. The attack was one component of a wider insurgent attack in the area. **Source:** [The Street Journal](#)

Sudan

30 December 2018: In Khartoum city, protesters demanding that President Bashir step down were targeted by Sudanese security forces, leading to a doctor receiving a bullet wound in his thigh and two other demonstrators being killed. The protests have been led, in part, by doctors and medics. **Sources:** [Channel 4](#) and [The National](#)

Asia

India

27 December 2018: In Barh city, Patna region, Bihar state, a mob believed to be comprised of family

and friends of a recently deceased hospital employee vandalized a private hospital and abducted a nurse. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

30 December 2018: In Amritsar city, Punjab state, an emergency room doctor was assaulted by the family of a patient, leading to strikes and protests the next day. The doctor's colleagues allege that private security agents on site did not assist the doctor during the assault. No further details specified. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

Pakistan

13 December 2018: In Shahbaz Town, Quetta city and district, Balochistan province, unidentified perpetrators abducted a neurosurgeon, sparking widespread concern over the safety of medical workers in the region. On 17 December 2018, doctors associated with the Pakistan Medical Association and other similar organisations announced a token one-day strike to protest his abduction from 18 – 19 December 2018 in outpatient departments of government-run hospitals across the region. **Source:** [Dawn](#)

26 December 2018: In Quetta city, Balochistan region, a female employee of a local NGO working on a polio program was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen. The motivation for the attack is unknown. **Sources:** [AWSD²](#) and [The Express Tribune](#)

Middle-East and North Africa

Iraq

14 December 2018: In Jubaila area, Basra city and governorate, the head of the national Health Committee was shot and hospitalised during a demonstration in front of the Basra Provincial Council building. **Source:** [National Iraqi News Agency](#)

Libya

05 December 2018 (DOA): In Sabha town and district, Fezzan region, gunfire of unspecified origin hit and injured a doctor from the Al Majd Hospital under unspecified circumstances. **Source:** [Sabha Journalist](#)

06 December 2018: In Sirte town and district, Tripolitania region, municipal authorities ordered the closure of the Ibn Sina Hospital for its alleged lack of appropriate permit, as well as two unnamed clinics for their poor hygiene conditions. **Source:** [Alwasat](#)

11 December 2018: In Bani Walid town and district, Tripolitania region, unidentified perpetrators stole the main power cable of the Khoramani Health Centre, cutting it off from electricity and affecting refrigerators where vaccines are stored. **Source:** [Alwasat](#)

25 December 2018: In Benghazi city and district, Cyrenaica region, unidentified perpetrators attacked the intensive care unit of the Al-Jala's Hospital after some of them were prevented from entering the facility, causing panic and fear among patients and health workers, and leaving some equipment with damage from stray bullets. **Sources:** [Libya Alahrar](#) and [Middle East Monitor](#)

29 December 2018: In Derna city and district, Cyrenaica region, Rijal al-Karama militiamen closed the Omar Mukhtar Health Centre and moved its equipment elsewhere in nearby Martuba town for unspecified reasons. **Source:** [Alnabaa](#)

Syrian Arab Republic

01 December 2018 (DOA): In Daraa district and governorate, fighting between unspecified parties gradually destroyed all but one of the food distribution centres of the UNRWA at the Daraa Palestinian

Refugee Camp, as well as leaving damaged six other installations, including three schools and a clinic. **Source:** [UNRWA](#)

01 December 2018 (DOA): In Damascus, fighting between unspecified warring parties gradually destroyed all three clinics of the UNRWA at the Yarmouk Palestinian Refugee Camp, and damaged to varying levels almost all of its 23 facilities, including 16 schools. **Source:** [UNRWA](#)

06 December 2018: In al Dana city, Idlib governorate, a VBIED exploded inside the compound of the al Quds Hospital, leaving an ambulance with minor damage but no other damages or casualties reported. The perpetrator was not identified. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

10 December 2018: In Kafr Nabl town, Maarrat al-Nu'man district, Idlib governorate, Sham Liberation Army rebels stormed the building of the Directorate of Health and arrested the director and two doctors after seizing their mobile phones and cars. The victims were released the next day under unspecified circumstances. **Sources:** [Enab Baladi](#) and [Smart News Agency](#)

12 December 2018: In Izaz city, Aleppo governorate, a VBIED exploded next to al Ahli Hospital, resulting in an unspecified number of casualties, moderate damage to the facade of the hospital building and moderate damage to an ambulance. The attack left the hospital building temporarily out of service, and also caused severe damage to a medical dispensary linked to the hospital. The perpetrators were not identified, but the region was under Syrian opposition forces control at the time. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

19 December 2018: In al Latamena town, Hama governorate, a SCD centre was struck by two artillery shells, severely damaging an ambulance, a rescue vehicle and a truck. No injuries were recorded. The attack was allegedly perpetrated by Syrian regime forces stationed in nearby Helfaya town. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

24 December 2018: In Morek town, Hama governorate, a series of artillery shells reportedly fired by Syrian regime forces struck the local SCD centre, moderately damaging the building and severely damaging an ambulance and a rescue vehicle. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

The Americas

Mexico

08 December 2018: In Colonia Narvarte area, Benito Juárez borough, Mexico City, unidentified perpetrators entered an unnamed hospital to rescue a soon to be charged criminal patient who had been detained and hospitalised since his involvement in a robbery on 06 December 2018. **Source:** [Milenio](#)

Peru

13 December 2018: In Cercado de Lima neighbourhood, Lima district, province and region, three masked gunmen attempted to rob the Sandoval Pharmacy, before the police shot and killed one of them, and detained the other two. An accomplice driver, who was half a block away, managed to escape. **Source:** [El Comercio](#)

Medical education

Africa

Mali

18 December 2018: In Bamako, employees of the Gabriel Touré University Hospital Center began an indefinite sit-in of two hours per day to protest poor working conditions. **Source:** [aBamako](#)

Europe

Turkey

11 December 2018: In Istanbul, the 37th Heavy Penal Court sentenced a retired physician and academic of the Medical School of Istanbul University to two years and three months in prison for having signed a petition organised by ‘Academics for Peace’, an organisation opposed to the Turkish military offensive against its Kurdish minority. The sentencing is one example of a wave of detentions and imprisonments for academics speaking out against the leadership in Turkey. **Source:** [bianet](#)

19 December 2018: The Turkish Heavy Penal Court sentenced an additional academic charged with “propagandizing for a terrorist organisation” to two years and six months imprisonment for signing the ‘Academics for Peace’ petition. **Sources:** [Ahval](#) and [Hurriyet](#)

Strikes and supply concerns

Africa

Sudan

10 December 2018: In Khartoum north, hospital workers went on strike over the shortages of essential equipment and the price of medicine. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

19 December 2018: In Ad-Damazin city, Blue Nile state, National Intelligence and Security Service agents arrested three doctors of the Damazin Hospital for striking. The medical workers had been on strike over a delay in receiving their salaries. **Source:** [Dabanga Sudan](#)

24 December 2018: Across Sudan, doctors, pharmacists and journalists went on strike. At least 38 hospitals were affected across the country, and all pharmacies in Khartoum temporarily closed. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

Asia

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

12 December 2018 (DOA): The United States Government, as part of its efforts to compel the North Korean Government to dismantle its nuclear programme, continued to delay the export of anti-tuberculosis and anti-malaria surgical equipment and supplies, and prevented the delivery of 300 stainless steel soy-milk cans for day-care centres and orphanages from Canada. **Source:** [Foreign Policy](#)

27 December 2018 (DOA): Global sanctions on North Korea continued to delay the importation of medication needed by vulnerable populations in the country. **Source:** [Korea Herald](#)

India

24 December 2018: In Sopore town, Jammu and Kashmir state, locals held a demonstration at the Mother and Child Care Hospital over the severe shortage of doctors. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

Pakistan

10 December 2018: In Gilgit-Baltistan territory, nearly 1,600 health workers went on strike at the onset of a four-day countrywide anti-polio campaign aimed at vaccinating more than 38 million children. The health workers – 99% of whom were female – were protesting over an unresolved pension dispute. **Source:** [Dawn](#)

11 December 2018: In Larkana city, Sindh province, female doctors and paramedics of the Shaikh Zayed Hospital for Women held a protest in response to the manhandling and assaults they had received from the family of a patient who died giving birth. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

11 December 2018: In Naushero Feroze city, Sindh province, local political activists held a protest over the shortage of medicine and doctors in the area. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

The Philippines

14 December 2018 (DOA): In Mindanao island, military officials at a checkpoint stopped two vehicles loaded with food and medical relief supplies en route to Sitio Dulyan village, telling the teacher, doctors and volunteers on board that they would have to turn back, thereby depriving 120 indigenous families from much-needed aid. **Source:** [Al Jazeera](#)

Middle-East and North Africa

Algeria

09 December 2018: In Sour El-Ghozlane town and commune, local residents protested in front of a medical facility to demand its reopening and for new additional doctors in the area. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

Morocco

04 December 2018: In Merzouga village, Errachidia province, residents of the remote desert village held a protest in response to poor health services and the lack of a doctor in the area since May. **Source:** [ACLED¹](#)

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Selective datasets and quick charts are available on HDX Insecurity Insight.



¹ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) [database attribution policy](#)

² The AWSD database does not include the names of individual victims or the agencies affected by an incident. This is done in consideration of the victims and their families who may not wish to have the names publicised in this format and to afford equal respect to the many victims for whom this information is not available.