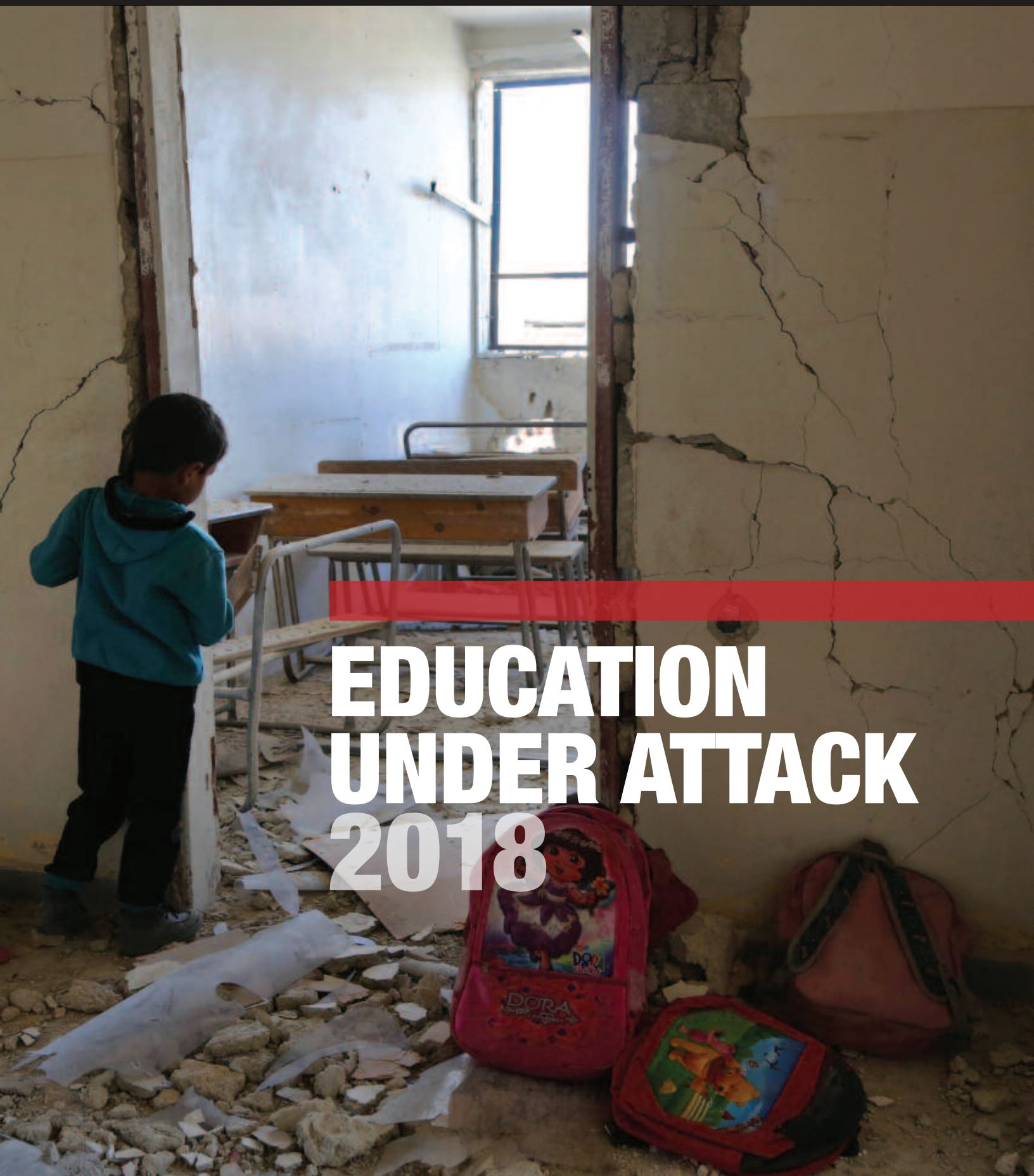
Global Coalition to
Protect Education from Attack

GCPEA



EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK 2018

Global Coalition to **Protect Education from Attack**

This study is published by the **Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)**, which was formed in 2010 by organizations working in the fields of education in emergencies and conflict-affected contexts, higher education, protection, and international human rights and humanitarian law that were concerned about ongoing attacks on educational institutions, their students, and staff in countries affected by conflict and insecurity.

GCPEA is a coalition of organizations that includes: co-chairs Human Rights Watch and Save the Children, the Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara), the Education Above All Foundation (EAA), the Institute of International Education (IIE), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). GCPEA is a project of the Tides Center, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

This study is the result of independent research conducted by GCPEA. It is independent of the individual member organizations of the Steering Committee of GCPEA and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Steering Committee member organizations.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABVP	All India Student Council (Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad)
ACU	Assistance Coordination Unit (Syria)
ADF	Allied Democratic Forces (Forces démocratiques alliées) (DRC)
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AFTE	Association of Freedom of Thought and Expression (Egypt)
AGC	Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia
AL	Awami League (Bagladesh)
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APCLS	People's Alliance for a Free and Sovereign Congo (Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain) (DRC)
AQIM	Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (Mali)
ASAK	A'chik Songna An'pachakgipa Kotok (India)
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group (Philippines)
ASOINCA	Asociacion de Institutores y Trabajadores de la Educacion del Cauca (Association of Education Institutions and Workers of Cauca) (Colombia)
ASWJ	Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a (Somalia)
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BHU	Banaras Hindu University (India)
BIFF	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (Philippines)
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party (India)
BLF	Baloch Liberation Front (Pakistan)
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BRN	Barisan Revolusi Nasional Melayu Patani (National Revolutionary Front) (Thailand)
CAFGU	Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (Philippines)
CAR	Central African Republic
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CESCR	United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CMA	Haut Conseil pour l'unité de l'Azawad (Mali)
COALICO	Coalition Against Involvement of Children and Youth in Armed Conflict in Colombia
CPI-M	Communist Party of India-Maoist
CRC	Children's Rehabilitation Center
CRC	United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force (India)
CTFMR	Country Taskforce for Monitoring and Reporting
DPKO	Department of Peace Keeping Operations (Myanmar)
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration
DKBA	Democratic Karen Buddhist Army
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAAF	Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense) (Mexico)
ECW	Education Cannot Wait
ELN	National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional) (Colombia)
EPL	Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army) (Colombia)
FARC-EP	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia— Ejército del Pueblo) (Colombia)
FARDC	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo)
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Pakistan)
FDLR	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda) (DRC)
FDPC	Democratic Front of the Central African People (CAR)
FETÖ	Fethullahist Terrorist Organization
FFP	Fund for Peace
FIDH	International Federation for Human Rights
FORSC	Forum for Strengthening Civil Society (Forum pour le renforcement de la société civile) (Burundi)
FPA	United Nations Population Fund
FPRC	Popular Front for the Renaissance in the Central African Republic (Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain)
FRPI	Force de Résistance Patriotique d'Ituri (The Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri) (DRC)
FSA	Free Syrian Army
GCA	Government-Controlled Areas (Ukraine)
GCPEA	Global Coalition to Protect Education under Attack
GIEI	Group of International Experts
GNC	General National Congress (Libya)
GNS	Government of National Salvation (Libya)
GTD	Global Terrorism Database
HCUA	High Council for the Unity of Azawad (l'Haut Conseil pour l'unité de l'Azawad) (Mali)
HRC	Human Rights Council
HRCO	Human Rights Council (Ethiopia)
HRCP	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
IACHR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IBA	Institute of Business Administration
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IS	'Islamic State'
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISF	Israeli security forces
JNU	Jawaharlal Nehru University
KCP	Kangleipak Communist Party (India)
KDP	Kurdistan Democratic Party
KIA	Kachin Independence Army (Myanmar)
LNA	Libyan National Army
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M23	March 23 Movement (DRC)
MAA	Arab Movement of Azawad (Mouvement Arabe de l'Azawad) (Mali)
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Philippines)
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en Centrafrique)
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation au Mali)
MISCA	African Union International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (Mission internationale de soutien à la Centrafrique sous conduite africaine)
MISFI	Mindanao Interfaith Services Foundation Academy (Philippines)
MLC	Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (Mouvement de Libération du Congo) (CAR)
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad) (Mali)
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front (Philippines)
MoECHE	Ministry of Education, Culture, and Higher Education
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Mission de l'Organisation des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo)
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCPO	National Council for Peace and Order (Thailand)
NDC	Nduma Defence of Congo (DRC)
NDTV	New Delhi Television Limited
NGCA	Non-Government-Controlled Areas (Ukraine)
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
NISS	National Intelligence Security Service (Sudan)
NPA	New People's Army (Philippines)
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PKK	Kurdistan Worker's Party
PRIO	Peace Research Institute Oslo
PSC	Peace and Security Council of the African Union
PSUV	United Socialist Party of Venezuela (Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela)
RFI	Radio France Internationale
RSF	Rapid Support Forces (Sudan)
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SAIH	Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHRC	Syrian Human Rights Committee
SIMAD	Somali Institute of Management and Administration Development
SLA-MM	Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi
SNAF	Somali National Armed Forces
SNHR	Syrian Network for Human Rights
SOS	Save Our Schools Network
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLA-IO	Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition
SPLM-N	Sudan People's Liberation Movement North
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSDM	South Sudan Democratic Movement
START	National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism
STTICLC	Salungpungan Ta' Tanu Igkanugon Community Learning Center (Philippines)
SZOP	Schools as Zones of Peace
TNLA	Ta'ang National Liberation Army
TTP	Tehreeki-Taliban Pakistan
TÜMÖD	Association of Academic Staff (Turkey)
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam (India)
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq
UNAMID	African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIAN	Ukrainian Independent Information Agency of News
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UPC	Union for Peace in the Central African Republic (l'Union pour la Paix en Centrafrique)
UPF	United Popular Front
WOLA	Washington Office on Latin America
YPG	People's Protection Unit (Syria)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 14, 2014, a group of fighters from Boko Haram came to my hometown in Chibok at night while people were asleep. They shot guns as they entered the town, but I was sleeping at the school where I study, and I didn't hear it.

My friend woke me up. She said to me, "Joy, can't you hear what is going on outside the gate?" ...That was the first time I heard the voices of the Boko Haram fighters. They were shouting and shooting their guns.

We were all scared. We prayed for our families at home, and we asked God to protect them wherever they were.

As we were deciding what we should do, a man came in. We tried to escape, but he told us he was a policeman and we could trust him—that he was there to protect us from what was going on outside. He asked us to come, and we did.

But he lied! He wasn't a policeman. He was one of the Boko Haram people.

Afterwards, many of the people from Boko Haram began coming in from different directions. They told us that we had to cooperate with them because they are people who kill without mercy. They told us to follow them, and they loaded us into three big trucks to take us away from our school.

I prayed and asked God to save me. He answered my prayer. I jumped out of the truck and ran for hours and hours to get away. On my way, I met two of my classmates who also jumped out. We continued running together.

As we were running, a man passed us on a motorcycle. We stopped him and asked for help. He took us back to Chibok.

Whenever I think of that horrible night, I pray for the safety of every student at school everywhere. I know what it feels like—it doesn't feel good at all—when all you ever wanted was to study and achieve your dream, and then all of a sudden, in just a few minutes, your hopes and dreams fall like a leaf from a tree.

—JOY BISHARA, SPEAKING BEFORE THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL,
OCTOBER 13, 2017

This photo taken from a video by Boko Haram allegedly shows girls four weeks after they were abducted by the group from their school in the northeastern town of Chibok, Nigeria in April 2014.

© 2014 AP Photo/File

On the night of April 14, 2014, Joy Bishara and more than 270 of her classmates were kidnapped by members of the armed extremist group Boko Haram from a government-run secondary school for girls in Chibok, Nigeria. The men who attacked the school, some wearing police uniforms, claimed they had received information that the school was going to be attacked and that they were there to take the girls to a safe location. Instead they abducted them and destroyed the school.[1]

Fifty-seven of the girls—including Joy—were able to escape soon after being kidnapped, but more than two hundred remained captive for years.[2] In the months and years that followed, the kidnapping gained international attention and sparked the campaign, 'Bring Back Our Girls.' Negotiations led to approximately one hundred girls being released in 2016 and 2017, but more than one hundred were still missing as of the time of writing. [3]

The girls at the secondary school in Chibok were not alone in risking their lives in order to study and learn. **Attacks on students, teachers, professors, schools, and universities, as well as the use of schools and universities for military purposes, are commonplace in many countries. In some, the situation is getting worse**.

The fourth in a series, this current edition of *Education under Attack* examines the threatened or actual use of force against students, teachers, education personnel, or educational facilities and materials. The report, which tracks attacks on education and the military use of schools and universities across the globe, shows that, between 2013 and 2017, attacks on education and military use of schools and universities killed or injured thousands of students and educators and damaged or destroyed hundreds of schools and higher education facilities.

At a school located on the frontline of conflict in Marjinka, Ukraine, sandbags are stacked in front of classroom windows and armed police officers patrol the school grounds and entrance for protection.

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Each of the 28 countries profiled in this report experienced at least 20 attacks on education between 2013 and 2017, the period covered by the current study: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Yemen.

Including the 28 countries profiled in the report, **GCPEA found attacks on education in 74 countries**. At least 5 but fewer than 20 incidents of attacks on education, in which at least one incident was a direct attack or killed at least one person, were reported in 13 countries. Isolated incidents of attack on education were documented in 33 other countries.

Attacks on education may be committed for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, or religious reasons. As Joy's story shows, students and education staff have been killed, injured, and traumatized, and school and university buildings damaged and destroyed. The use of schools and universities for military purposes can make the buildings targets of attack by opposing forces, putting the lives of students and teachers in danger. In addition to the risk of death and injury, military use of educational facilities often prevents students from accessing education. Beyond these immediate impacts, attacks on education and military use of schools and universities limit access to educational opportunities, diminish the quality of education, and obstruct social progress and development.

This fourth edition of *Education under Attack* builds on two studies published by UNESCO in 2007 and 2010, and a third study published by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) in 2014. In the last decade since this series was begun, reporting on attacks has improved significantly in many places. Accordingly, analyzing trends in attacks over the time period was challenging because apparent trends may reflect changes in access to information rather than actual increases or decreases in the number of attacks. Nevertheless, this study compares global patterns of attacks on education during the 2013-2017 period to those reported in the previous study, to the greatest extent possible. It does so by employing a methodology similar to that used for the 2014 edition, which relies on three methods of research: a search of reports by UN agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and human rights and monitoring organizations; a search of media reports; and interviews with groups collecting data in the countries profiled and with country experts.

The overall number of attacks on education documented in *Education under Attack 2018* suggests **that violence directed at students, educators, and their institutions increased worldwide between January 2013 and December 2017 from the 2009 to mid-2013** period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.

This study found that there were **reports of more than 1,000 individual attacks on education or cases of military use of schools or universities, *or* of 1,000 or more students, teachers, or other education personnel being harmed, in 9 countries: DRC, Egypt, Israel/Palestine, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Sudan, Syria, Turkey,** and **Yemen**.

Each country profile includes information on six categories of attacks on education, as relevant:

- Physical attacks or threats of attacks on schools
- Physical attacks or threats directed at students, teachers, and other education personnel
- Military use of schools and universities
- Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school or university
- Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university
- Attacks on higher education

Attacks on schools were most commonly reported in **DRC, Israel/Palestine, Nigeria,** and **Yemen.** For example, OCHA reported in December 2017 that 256 schools had been fully destroyed and another 1,413 schools partially damaged in Yemen.[4]

"The whole school shook."

Muhammad al-Anadani, a teacher at the Center for Children's Training and Rehabilitation in Aleppo, Syria, described to journalists what happened on May 3, 2015, when his school was struck by a barrel bomb: "It was recess time and I was at the administration office. I heard people in the street screaming 'Be careful! They are dropping!' We didn't realize that they would target us. We were sort of calm, but the sound of the barrel bomb was getting closer, and then we heard a terrifying explosion. The whole school shook, and I flew to the other side of the room. I heard the kids screaming. I rushed out of the office and what I saw was horrifying. For a moment, I thought that everyone was killed. Then I rushed to help paramedics and get the survivors out of school. As I learned later, nine kids and two teachers were killed."[5]

Reports suggested that **students and educators** were individually targeted most frequently in **Afghanistan, Israel/Palestine, Nigeria,** and **the Philippines**. In Afghanistan and Nigeria, these attacks included targeted killings, abductions, and threats. In Israel/Palestine, students, teachers, and education staff were most commonly injured or arrested when they protested military and settler presence in and nearby schools. In the Philippines, indigenous students faced intimidation and harassment by armed forces and paramilitary groups. The indigenous advocacy network Save Our Schools documented an intensification of threats and harassment by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and associated paramilitary groups, which targeted students and teachers in indigenous communities.

"We will chop you up and kill you."

At the Mindanao Interfaith School Foundation Academy's Talaingod campus in the Philippines, Human Rights Watch reported in 2015 that soldiers had been intimidating and harassing students and teachers since 2012. One teacher told Human Rights Watch that a group of soldiers and members of the Alamara paramilitary stopped him while he was on his way to school on January 5, 2015. He reported that they told him, "If you go through, we will chop you up and kill you."[6]

Seleka MPC (Central African Patriotic Movement) fighters use a desk they removed from the local school in Mbrès, Nana-Grébizi province, Central African Republic, in March 2017. All three schools in the town had been closed since 2013 because of the presence of fighters, a lack of teachers, and tensions between armed groups.

© 2017 Edouard Dropsy for Human Rights Watch

Military use of schools or universities was reported at least once in 29 countries, including 24 of those profiled in this report: Afghanistan, Burundi, CAR, Cameroon, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe. These included cases in which armed forces or non-state armed groups used schools as bases, barracks, temporary shelters, fighting positions, weapons storage facilities, detention and interrogation centers, or military training facilities.

"They used our school grounds as their toilet."

In 2016 and 2017, Human Rights Watch documented the occupation of schools in CAR by Seleka fighters, anti-balaka fighters, and UN forces. One school official described to Human Rights Watch the lasting effects anti-balaka fighters had on his school when they occupied it from late 2014 to October 2016: "They destroyed desks and chairs. We were able to get them to vacate one of the buildings so we could restart the school, but they still occupied half of the school and ruined the building. They would smoke marijuana all day and they said they were waiting for DDR [Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration]. They would go out on the main road and put up roadblocks on the street, stop vehicles and take money from them at gunpoint. They used our school grounds as their toilet. They used the desks for firewood and destroyed at least 75 of them. When the building is repaired we will use it again."[7]

Limitations in the information reported made it difficult to assess the extent to which schools served as locales for child recruitment or sexual violence. Nevertheless, GCPEA found reports of **child recruitment in 16 of the countries profiled in this report**: Afghanistan, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and Yemen.

Both male and female children and adults were victims of sexual violence perpetrated by armed parties in school or university settings. GCPEA found reports that parties to conflicts were responsible for **sexual violence occurring at, or en route to or from, school or university in 17 countries** profiled in the report: Afghanistan, Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, Colombia, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Sudan, Venezuela, and Yemen. In DRC, for example, the Education Cluster reported that militiamen abducted 17 girls from primary schools in 2017 and raped them over the course of several months.[8]

Girls and women were uniquely targeted because of their gender, not only as victims of sexual violence but also where armed groups opposed female education. **Girls and women were targets of attacks on education because of their gender in at least 18 of the 28 countries** profiled in this report: Afghanistan, Cameroon, CAR, Colombia, DRC, Egypt, India, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Sudan, Syria, Venezuela, and Yemen. These attacks included sexual violence and other forms of attacks on education. For instance, in July 2016, an unidentified attacker on a motorcycle threw acid into the eyes of three female high school students in Herat province in Afghanistan.[9]

At their graduation ceremony on October 24, 2016, students from the chemical engineering department of Benghazi University, Libya, pose next to defused ammunitions and explosive devices outside a university building that was destroyed during fighting.

© 2016 Abdullah Doma/AFP/Getty Images

Attacks on higher education staff and infrastructure were widely reported in every country profiled, including **attacks on higher education buildings in 20 countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, Syria, Thailand, Ukraine, Venezuela,** and **Yemen**. In Bangladesh, for example, approximately 28 explosive attacks were reported at the University of Dhaka during the first three months of 2015 alone.[10] **Higher education personnel were attacked in every country profiled** in this report, which included violent repression of education-related protests that harmed students or education staff.

University students shot in their rooms

On the morning of December 1, 2017, Taliban gunmen attacked the Agricultural Training Institute in Peshawar, Pakistan.[11] One student told the *Dawn* newspaper, "I was asleep. When we heard the gunshots, we quickly shut our room's door and made phone calls to find out what was happening. We were told that the people outside are terrorists and that we should keep our room's door shut ... The terrorists shot at everyone who was roaming around and they were breaking doors down to attack students. Thankfully security personnel reached the hostel before those men came to our room—that is why we are alive."[12] Although many students had gone home for a holiday when the attack occurred, 9 people were killed, including at least 6 students, and at least 35 injured.[13]

As reporting on attacks on education and their devastating effects has become more common, so have efforts to prevent such attacks and address their impact. This attention was perhaps most evident in specific commitments that more than one-third of the UN member states (so far) have made to protect students, teachers, schools, and universities from attack. As of April 2018, 74 states had endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, an intergovernmental political commitment to protect education during armed conflict.. Widespread endorsement has been accompanied by an increasing number of states implementing the promises made in the declaration by changing laws or changing military or education policies.

The UN Security Council, UN General Assembly, UN treaty bodies, international courts, and aid and humanitarian organizations in turn gave considerable attention to attacks on education and military use of schools and universities.

These gains are laudable, yet there is still significant work to be done to protect students, educators, and educational institutions from attacks on education and military use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To protect education more effectively, GCPEA urges states, international agencies, and civil society organizations to:

- Endorse, implement, and support the Safe Schools Declaration to ensure that all students and educators, male and female, can learn and teach in safety.
- Avoid using schools and universities for military purposes, including by implementing the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*.
- Strengthen monitoring and reporting of attacks on education, including disaggregating data by type of attack on education, sex, age, and type of schooling, in order to improve efforts to prevent and respond to attacks on education.
- Systematically investigate attacks on education and prosecute perpetrators.
- Provide nondiscriminatory assistance for all victims of attacks on education, taking into account the different needs and experiences of males and females.
- Ensure that education promotes peace instead of triggering conflict, and that it provides physical and psychosocial protection for students, including by addressing gender-based stereotypes and barriers that can trigger, exacerbate, and follow attacks on education.
- Where feasible, maintain safe access to education during armed conflict, including by engaging with school and university communities and all other relevant stakeholders in developing risk-reduction strategies and comprehensive safety and security plans for attacks on education.

WHEN SPEAKING TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 13, 2017, JOY BISHARA CALLED FOR THE PROTECTION OF EDUCATION

Schools need to be protected. Students need to feel safe. They need to study and work towards their dreams without fear. This is the only way they will be able to go out and make a change in the world. I hope and pray that no more students will go through what I went through.

METHODOLOGY

This report is the fourth edition of *Education under Attack*. It builds on the 2014 study published by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack and the 2007 and 2010 publications by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The present edition covers the five-year period from January 2013 to December 2017. The previous edition included profiles of 30 countries that had experienced at least five incidents of attacks on education in which students or education personnel were harmed, including at least one direct attack or one person killed, between 2009 and mid-2013. The current study includes profiles of 28 countries that experienced at least 20 attacks on education during the 2013-2017 reporting period, regardless of the severity of the incidents. Although significant data gaps remain and data quality varies, reporting of attacks on education has become more comprehensive and systematic over the last five years.

Definition of attacks on education

This study examines violent attacks on education, defined as any threatened or actual use of force against students, teachers, academics, education support and transport staff (e.g., janitors, bus drivers), or education officials, as well as attacks on education buildings, resources, materials, or facilities (including school buses). These actions may occur for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, or religious reasons. Attacks on education not only kill, maim, and traumatize students and personnel but also disrupt students' right to education. They impede the ability of instructors and educational institutions to offer inclusive, quality education, and they restrict students' access to schools and universities.

The study focuses on attacks against education that were intentionally directed at schools or universities, or at students, teachers, academics, or other education personnel. It also examines attacks that did not necessarily target education but in which armed actors did not take precautions to protect educational institutions, students, or education staff. Perpetrators of these attacks included national and international armed forces, police forces, intelligence services, regional and UN peacekeeping forces, paramilitaries and militias affiliated with a state, and rebel forces or any other non-state armed group. This report uses some of these terms interchangeably. For example, "armed forces," "military," and "security forces" are all used to refer to any national armed force, paramilitary group, paramilitary police, police, intelligence or security services, multinational forces, or peacekeeping forces. The terms "non-state armed group" and "armed group" are also used interchangeably to refer to organized groups that sought various goals, often related to political or social control. The term "armed opposition group" applies only to non-state armed groups that were fighting against the government in power. The term "armed separatist group" is only used to refer to non-state armed groups that sought to establish autonomous territory.

Importantly, this report does not look systematically at gang or criminal violence, both of which may affect the safety of school for students and staff. These groups sometimes employ violent tactics or use military-grade weapons to gain control over territory, and this violence can appear similar to the types of attacks on education included in this report. For example, criminal groups may target students and teachers for extortion, or use educational institutions for the purposes of criminal activity or to gain territorial control. Recognizing this impact on education, this report includes a text box in which criminal violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras is examined.

Despite this distinction, there is frequently a nexus between non-state armed groups and criminal activity—conflict and fragility often provide opportunities for crime—and the perpetrators of attacks are not always specified. Therefore, although studying criminal violence systematically was beyond the scope of this research, it is possible that criminal groups were responsible for some of the attacks that took place in conflict-affected settings and that are described in this report.

This report also does not include one-time incidents perpetrated by a single gunman, such as the shootings that occur all too commonly at schools and universities in the United States. While devastating, these events do not meet the criteria for inclusion in this report in that they typically lack a connection to an organized group and they are not carried out in a systematic manner.

Attacks on education occur for diverse reasons, such as to secure a military advantage or objective (including child recruitment or rape), to target or persecute an influential member of an opposing group, or to repress a specific form or mode of education. This report focuses on attacks that had a clear nexus with education. However, motivations for individual incidents are often difficult to identify without a public announcement or specific threat. Therefore, the report also includes incidents that followed a pattern of attack that was established in a specific context, even if the reason for the specific attack was not clear. The researchers have tried to avoid incidents that occur for reasons unrelated to education, but it is possible that some are included in the report.

In some cases, attacks on education violate international human rights law, international humanitarian law (also known as the laws of war), or international criminal law, depending on which legal frameworks are contextually applicable. International human rights law guarantees the right to education in both conflict and nonconflict states that have ratified the relevant treaties.[14] International humanitarian law prohibits the targeting of civilians, including civilian students and education staff, and civilian institutions, including schools that are not being used for military purposes.[15] International criminal law prohibits acts such as the willful killing of civilians, torture, and attacks on civilian objects. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court specifically prohibits attacks on educational institutions that are not military targets.[16] While this report recognizes that these legal frameworks may apply to the contexts described, it is beyond its scope to assess whether the incidents described constitute violations of human rights law, war crimes, or criminal acts under international criminal law.

This report instead classifies attacks on education into the following six categories: attacks on schools; attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel; military use of schools and universities; sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university; child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school; and attacks on higher education. These categories are defined as follows:

Attacks on schools include targeted violent attacks on schools or other education infrastructure (e.g., school playgrounds or libraries, storage facilities, examination halls) by state security forces or non-state armed groups. These may take the form of arson; suicide, car, or other bombs aimed at a school; or artillery fire directed at a school. In addition, with the rising use of aerial bombardment in some conflict-affected countries, this edition of *Education under Attack* also includes indiscriminate attacks that result in the damage or destruction of education infrastructure, the death or injury of students and educators who are present, and explosions that occur in close proximity to a school or other education facility that may affect the students, education personnel, or infrastructure. The attacks on schools category applies to all types of primary and secondary institutions, as well as to kindergartens, preschools, and nonformal education sites.

Although students, teachers, and other education personnel may be harmed in attacks on schools, these attacks are distinct in that they involve an intent to damage infrastructure or a failure to take precautions to protect it. Therefore, cases in which a child was killed or injured by an explosive planted or left on school grounds are considered attacks on schools, since we presume that the explosive was intended to affect the school more generally, rather than the specific child. Furthermore, while the report sometimes discusses school closures due to the dynamics of a general conflict, when describing the contexts of the countries it profiles it does not consider each closed school as one that has been attacked, unless the closure resulted from a specific threat or incident.

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel consist of killings, injuries, torture, abductions, forced disappearances, or threats of violence, including coercion or extortion that involve violent threats directed toward students and education staff. These attacks do not include sexual violence, which is included in a different category. Education personnel include teaching staff, administrators, and school support staff, such as janitors, school bus drivers, or security guards; they also include education officials at both a national and local level.

These attacks are distinct from attacks on schools in that their aim is to harm people related to education, with little to no effect on infrastructure. Included in this category are incidents in which these individuals were injured or killed while on their way to or from school, even if the attack did not directly target them; for example, if gunfire hit a student en route to class. These incidents are included because they represent the danger of attending school in conflict-affected areas. This category also includes attacks on school buses that were on the way to or from school, and attacks on vehicles carrying ministry of education officials. Also included are attacks in which a member of an armed group entered a school and opened fire on students and teachers. Conversely, more complex attacks in which multiple fighters entered a school and used gunfire and explosives or committed arson, thereby damaging the school in addition to killing or injuring students, teacher, or education staff, are included in the attacks on schools category.

Since it is sometimes difficult to determine why a teacher or school staff member was killed if the assassination occurred outside school, this study includes such attacks in cases where there was an established pattern of similar violence. For example, in some situations teachers remain a specifically targeted casualty of conflict, therefore we include any killing of a teacher, regardless of whether a motivation is identified. The category of attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel also includes cases in which police or other state security forces violently repressed student protests, killing or injuring students or school staff, when these protests either (a) occurred on school grounds, regardless of their aim, or (b) related to education, even if they occurred off school grounds. Accordingly, this category does not include students or staff who were injured during their participation in protests that occurred off campus and were unrelated to education, even if the leaders of the protest were students. Also excluded from this category are students or school staff who were killed when an air strike or bomb hit a school, since these attacks are already included as attacks on schools.

Military use of schools and universities includes cases in which armed forces or non-state armed groups occupy schools and use them for purposes that support a military effort, such as bases, barracks, and temporary shelters for those associated with fighting forces; for fighting positions, weapons storage facilities, and detention and interrogation centers; and for military training or drilling soldiers.[17] Armed forces may include national armed forces, paramilitary groups, paramilitary police, police acting as combatants in an armed conflict, intelligence or security services, multinational forces, or peacekeeping forces. Armed groups may include rebel, opposition, or separatist groups, or other types of non-state armed groups.

These uses negatively affect the learning environment and prevent students from continuing their studies. Use of an entire school or university may leave students without a place to study, but even the partial use of an institution endangers learners. If the students continue to attend classes at an institution being used by an armed group, they may be subject to harassment or sexual violence. The quality of education may also be affected through the degradation of infrastructure or destruction of educational materials, or because the presence of fighters distracts the children. Parents may be less willing to send their children to school, particularly their daughters, for fear of sexual violence. Moreover, military use of a school or university may trigger an attack by opposing forces, which puts the lives of students and instructors at risk if they continue to attend, or it may destroy the school and prevent it from being used for educational purposes in the future.

The military use category includes cases in which an armed force or group took over only part of an educational facility—for example, by occupying a school's or university's grounds or by establishing a firing position on the roof—or the entire institution. Armed forces or groups may use schools or universities for varying lengths of time, in some cases for just one night, in other cases for several years. This report includes all lengths of such military use. In multiple cases included in this report, armed forces and other groups that were fighting each other alternated control of schools as they gained and lost control of territory.

Military use often coincides with other abuses, including attacks on schools, child recruitment, or sexual violence. When an attack occurs on a school in military use, the incident is not counted as an attack on the school because it is likely that the occupation triggered the attack. It is also important to note that military use may convert schools and universities into legitimate targets of war, which means that an attack may be legal under international law. When members of armed forces or armed groups use a school only to recruit students, the violation is reported as child recruitment rather than military use. If, however, the armed forces or armed groups use a school for child recruitment in addition to another use, this is counted as two separate violations. Likewise, if armed forces occupying a school commit sexual violence against students or education staff, this is counted as two separate violations.

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school occurs when armed forces or armed groups use schools or school routes as locales for recruiting girls and boys under the age of 18 to act as fighters, spies, or intelligence sources; for domestic work; to transport weapons or other materials; or for any other purposes associated with the armed group. Cases of recruitment for sexual purposes, such as rape or forced marriage, are included in the sexual violence category.

Although child recruitment happens in many locations, schools are places with a concentration of children, and this report includes several instances of armed actors recruiting or abducting students from a school. In addition, in contexts where there are examples of mass or individual recruitment, this category also describes reports of armed groups conducting combat trainings with children, or indoctrinating children while at school and encouraging them to join their group. As in the case of sexual violence below, reports of child recruitment at school or along school routes are likely underrepresented in this study. Except in cases of mass recruitment, it is often difficult to discern the exact location in which the recruitment of one child or several children has taken place.

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university occurs when state security forces or non-state armed groups rape, sexually harass, or abuse students or educators; abduct students or educators for sexual purposes; recruit students or educators to serve a sexual function in an armed force or armed group; or threaten to engage in such conduct. This category includes such violations only if they occur while students or educators are traveling to and from, or are in, places of learning, or if they occur at another time but explicitly target individuals because of their status as students or educators. This category also includes sexual violence that takes place in an educational institution, even if those abused are not students or educators. Certain acts that do not occur en route to or from school are also included if there is a clear nexus with education. For example, forced marriage may be counted as an attack on education if it occurs after an abduction from or along the route to school or university. Sexual violence perpetrated by educators and students is not included as an attack on education, unless the perpetrators belong to an armed force or armed group.

Sexual violence as an attack on education may affect girls, boys, women, and men. These sexual acts are committed by force or coercion, or by the threat of force, or by otherwise taking advantage of a person's inability to consent. Sexual violence includes rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, forced abortion, forced circumcision, castration, genital harm, and any other non-consensual sexual act, as well as acts that may not require physical violence or contact but include humiliation or shaming, such as forced nudity.[18]

Conflict-related sexual violence tends to be underreported in general, and while the UN and other groups do report on this violation, their reporting often does not indicate the location of the incident or the individual's status as a learner or educator. Consequently, this study likely underrepresents attacks on education of this nature.

Attacks on higher education include attacks on universities, technical and vocational education training institutes, and other higher education facilities, as well as attacks that target students, professors, and other higher education staff. Many of the violations included in this category are similar to those described at the pre-primary, primary, and secondary school levels, including bombings, air strikes, or other methods of targeting university campuses, as well as killings, abductions, or threats directed at university students, faculty, or staff. Sexual violence committed against university students in an educational setting is categorized as sexual violence by armed parties. GCPEA did not identify any cases of children below the age of 18 who were conscripted in a higher education setting, but such violations would be categorized as child recruitment.

This category includes violent repression of demonstrations related to education matters such as policies and laws, or of on-campus protests, during which state security forces kill, seriously injure, or otherwise use excessive force against university students or staff. As in the case of primary and secondary education, these violations are only included when they (a) occur on campus, regardless of their aim, or (b) relate to education, even if they occur off campus. Such cases are much more common at the higher education level than at other levels of the education system.

Attacks on higher education also include deliberate acts of coercion, intimidation, or threats of physical force that create a climate of fear and repression that undermines academic freedom and educational functions. This report excludes violations such as infringement on academic freedom that does not consist of either physical violence or the threat of physical violence. While the detention of academics is included when imprisonment occurs in relation to their scholarship because this is a physical punishment, the report does not track violations such as the suspension of academics, censorship of research, travel bans, or revocation of citizenship.

Country profile criteria

This report includes profiles of 28 countries where attacks on education have occurred. The countries were selected based on two criteria. First, they either were affected by conflict or experiencing a significant level of political violence during the reporting period. For example, the Fund for Peace's 2016 "Fragile States Index" classified all countries included in this report as being at elevated risk of state collapse or above.[19] Second, they all experienced a pattern of attacks on education, defined as at least 20 attacks on education from the beginning of 2013 until the first quarter of 2017. This approach excluded countries that experienced only a few attacks on education, even if those attacks harmed a significant number of people. It also excluded several countries that may have experienced rising levels of violence affecting education during the reporting period but for which insufficient information was available by the first quarter of 2017.

Data sources

The research team collected data using three approaches, each focused on different data sources. Because the data-collection process began at the beginning of 2016, the middle of the reporting period, the research team cycled through each phase of data collection repeatedly throughout the process.

The first approach consisted of a desk study of reports released by UN agencies, development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights organizations, government bodies, and think tanks. For this phase, the research team compiled a list of sources and searched each of them for every country profiled. These searches were conducted in English; Arabic, French, or Spanish searches also were conducted for the relevant countries. Main sources included the UN Secretary-General's annual and country-specific reports on children and armed conflict, although these sources focus only on country situations where there is an established UN-supported Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM);[20] reports from other UN agencies and bodies, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC); reports by human rights organizations and NGOs, including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, and Save the Children; reports from scholar rescue organizations, such as the Scholars at Risk Network's Academic Freedom Monitor; and Education Cluster reports, meeting minutes, and other documents. In addition to the sources relevant to many of the countries profiled in the study, the research team also identified country-specific sources, including the UN or UN missions, such as the UN Assistance Missions in Afghanistan (UNAMA), UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), UN Assistance Missions in Iraq (UNAMI), and UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). Other country-specific resources included the monthly *Humanitarian Monitor* in Israel/Palestine published by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and reports from the organization Airwars, which tracks and verifies air strikes on civilians and civilian institutions in Iraq, Libya, and Syria.

The second approach consisted of media searches conducted in English, as well as in Arabic, French, or Spanish where relevant. For each country studied, the research team used 12 combinations of different keywords to conduct a series of searches in Google News, then scanned the results to identify relevant articles. The research team used the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) at the University of Maryland's National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) as a complementary source for news articles to identify attacks on education that could be further investigated. The GTD is an open-source database that draws on media reports of attacks or threats perpetrated by non-state armed actors who use fear, coercion, or intimidation to achieve political, economic, religious, or social objectives.[21]

The third approach included outreach to staff members of international and national organizations working in the countries profiled in this study. This outreach was conducted through requests for general information, and by soliciting feedback on drafts of the country profiles. The goal of this approach to collecting data was twofold: first, to verify and gather additional information on attacks GCPEA already had identified from media sources, and second, to identify additional data sources and attacks. Through this outreach the research team was able to access several databases of information collected by local NGOs and international agencies working in the countries profiled.

Each approach yielded three types of data on attacks on education: individual incidents, summary statistics, and qualitative information. This information was entered into a country-specific Microsoft Excel database, which included one tab for each type of data. Information on individual incidents was categorized into one of the six types of attacks described above. The team then recorded the date and location of the attack, as well as details on the individuals and institutions harmed, disaggregated by gender if possible. The research team carefully reviewed records of individual incidents to prevent duplication and double-counting.

Summary statistics included information reported by UN agencies or NGOs on the total number of attacks occurring in a particular location during a particular period of time. The statistics were treated as independent data points. Comparisons between these data points were limited by the fact that, even within a single country, summary statistics often were produced by different mechanisms with diverse procedures for collecting information on attacks on education, covered different periods of time, and did not necessarily follow the same definition for an attack on education. Some external summary statistics may have included incidents that did not meet GCPEA's definition of an attack on education or a subcategory. Furthermore, some data-collection mechanisms had different subcategories of attacks on education, did not disaggregate by the different types of attacks, or called all types of attacks on pre-tertiary education "attacks on schools," making it difficult to know how many attacks were on infrastructure rather than on people. This ambiguity made it challenging to categorize summary statistics into the subcategories used in this report. Accordingly, where this report presents summary statistics from UN, NGO, or other sources, the language of the category and time period covered are clearly specified. It also was not possible to aggregate summary statistics from different sources covering the same period, as the research team could not determine how much overlap there might be between the incidents identified.

Finally, the research team collected qualitative information on attacks on education from all data sources. This information was not used to quantify attacks on education, but it helped to contextualize the individual incidents and summary statistics presented in the report, and to indicate the severity of the problem.

Data reliability

This report draws on information that was reported but not necessarily verified, therefore the reliability of the data included varies. The research team sought to corroborate the information reported as much as possible, particularly that from media sources, but was not always able to do so. Therefore, this study clearly indicates the sources for all attacks documented and whether those sources indicated that the information was verified.

Moreover, the reliability of the information included in this report varies by country. The profiles rely on different information sources, which are determined in part by whether a country has any established mechanisms for monitoring and reporting. For example, profiles of countries in which there is no formal UN monitoring mechanism or Education Cluster, or where the Education Cluster does not systematically report attacks on education, depend more heavily on media reporting.

Several sources have their own requirements for verifying information. For example, data included in the UN Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict typically adhere to the standards of verification used by the UN's MRM on Grave Violations against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict, which are based on the source of the information, triangulation or cross-checking, and analysis by contextual specialists. The UN Secretary-General's minimum standards of verification are that testimony has been obtained from a primary source, that the information has been designated credible by a trained monitor, and that a designated member of the Country Taskforce on Monitoring and Reporting has verified the information.[22] The report indicates where the UN was unable to verify information. The GTD draws solely from media sources and rates each source from "one" (poor validity or biased) to "three" (substantively independent), based on its reliability. Only incidents based on at least one source that had a rating of three are included in their online database, which was where GCPEA gathered data.[23]

Data analysis

This report seeks to identify global trends in attacks on education and military use of educational institutions to the greatest extent possible. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the conclusions drawn are based on the information available. This study analyzes trends in *reports* of attacks on education, which may not always precisely reflect the reality of such attacks.

Although monitoring of attacks on education and of military use of educational institutions has improved in recent years, there is still no comprehensive and systematic mechanism for reporting these violations. Furthermore, insecurity in the places where attacks on education take place often makes it challenging to collect information. As a result, data collection varied significantly from country to country, and even within a single country, over the reporting period. Importantly, while this report's monitoring of attacks on education was more systematic and comprehensive than for previous editions of *Education under Attack,* the extent of reporting still differed drastically between countries, and thus this study likely underreports violations. Nevertheless, using these different incident counts enabled GCPEA to present an overall picture of attacks on education in the countries profiled in this report.

The report analyzes global trends in reports of attacks on education and in each subcategory of attack; this analysis is presented in the Global Overview section. GCPEA sometimes chose to present summary statistics based on information on individual incidents collected, on an external summary statistic reported by another entity, or on a combination of the two, meanwhile taking precautions to prevent double-counting. Each decision was made based on which statistic or combination of statistics was most comprehensive and most reliable for a particular country.

The research team categorized country situations according to three levels of severity, which accounted for either the number of discrete incidents of attacks on education *or* the number of students and education personnel harmed by such attacks. These combined criteria allowed the team to account for contexts in which many attacks on education were reported but little information was provided to indicate whether people were harmed in these attacks, and for contexts in which fewer incidents were reported but the incidents that did occur harmed many people. This twofold method of accounting for severity also addressed some of the limitations posed by gaps in information. For example, in some cases, significant information was available on the number of schools attacked but little information on whether these attacks harmed students and education personnel and, if so, how many.

The three levels of severity were:

- *Very heavily affected:* 1,000 or more incidents of attacks on education or military use, OR 1,000 or more students and education personnel harmed by attacks on education or military use
- *Heavily affected:* 500 to 999 incidents of attacks on education or military use, OR 500 to 999 students and education personnel harmed by attacks on education or military use
- *Affected:* 499 or fewer incidents of attacks on education or military use, OR 499 or fewer students and education personnel harmed by attacks on education or military use

Where the research team used information on individual incidents in its analysis of severity, incidents and people harmed were defined and counted as follows:

- **Incidents**: the number of discrete incidents reported. Incidents of military use were accounted for in this total, but these were likely slightly biased because these facilities were often used for varying periods of time. The total number of institutions in military use are typically reported at a particular point in time, and even when a single source provides repeated counts of military use, it is difficult to determine how much overlap there is between reports. All data sources tend to report either summary statistics of military use or anecdotal examples, making it difficult to extract individual incidents and avoid duplication. The number of cases of military use included in the total incident count was based on the highest total reported by a single source for a single period of time. This approach likely underrepresents the extent of military use. Furthermore, it is important to note that these numbers may be biased, depending on the length of time under consideration. In some cases, for example, the research team was able to identify reports that tracked military use over just a couple of months, while in other cases it identified reports that tracked military use over a year or more. Reports focused on a shorter time period almost always documented fewer incidents than sources focused on a longer period. Nevertheless, because military use is underreported, this bias likely does not significantly change how this report classifies countries in terms of how severely they experience attacks on education.
- **Students and education personnel affected**: the total number of students and education personnel killed, injured, or threatened in any form of attack, whether it targeted the people or an institution. Where reports mentioned that a certain number of people were killed or injured, among them students or education personnel, but no information was available on how many of those killed or injured were students or education personnel, the numbers were not included. Individual students or education staff members targeted by specific threats were included in the count. However, if no information was available on the number of individuals affected by such a threat, the threat was included as an incident of attack on education, but the number of people affected was not counted. This information was disaggregated by gender where possible, and individuals associated with female education were included in the count of female students and educators affected. For example, if the headmaster of a girls' school was killed, that individual was included in the count of affected personnel affiliated with female education, even if the person killed was male. Reports often did not disaggregate by gender, so this category likely undercounted the number of females affected.

On September 13, 2014, prior to the start of the new school year, Palestinian women assess the extent of damage at a school in Shujayah district, Gaza City, caused by fighting during Israeli Operation "Protective Edge."

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GLOBAL OVERVIEW

This study is the fourth in a series of publications examining attacks on education, including the threat of or actual use of force against students, teachers, professors, and other education personnel, or educational facilities and materials. The previous editions of *Education under Attack* were published in 2007, 2010, and 2014, the first two by UNESCO and the third by GCPEA. The research carried out for this report suggests that violence against students, educators, and their institutions has spread geographically and appears to have increased in some countries since the period from 2009 to mid-2013 covered in the last edition of *Education under Attack*. From January 2013 to December 2017, the period covered in this report, 41 countries experienced more than 5 attacks on education in which at least one incident was a direct attack or killed at least one person. This represents 11 more countries than in the previous report.

Main Trends 2013-2017

This report describes violence and threats of violence committed against students, teachers, professors, education personnel, schools, and universities in the 28 countries where GCPEA documented more than 20 attacks on education between January 1, 2013, and December 31, 2017. These countries are:

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Burundi
Cameroon
Central African Republic
Colombia
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Egypt
Ethiopia
India
Iraq
Israel/Palestine
Kenya
Libya
Mali
Myanmar
Nigeria
Pakistan
The Philippines
Somalia
South Sudan
Sudan
Syria
Thailand
Turkey
Ukraine
Venezuela
Yemen

The spread of violence targeting education occurred within a global context that was significantly less stable than during the previous reporting period, one that saw a greater number of armed conflicts that were more protracted and harmed more people than those in the past.[24] According to the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), the number of armed conflicts increased markedly between 2013 and 2016, from 34 in 2013 to 41 in 2014 and to 52 in 2015, before declining slightly to 49 in 2016.[25] The years from 2014 to 2016 were three of the five most violent and deadly since 1989.[26]

PRIO data showed that the proliferation of groups affiliated with the 'Islamic State' ('IS'), was the main reason the number of conflicts rose after 2014.[27] 'IS' or 'IS' affiliates contributed widely to attacks on education over the course of the reporting period, reportedly conducting at least 1 attack on education in 12 out of the 28 countries profiled in this report: **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Syria**, **Turkey,** and **Yemen**. Syria, where 'IS' controlled significant territory for much of the reporting period, was one of the countries most heavily affected by attacks on education and also the site of the deadliest conflict since the end of the Cold War.[28] 'IS' and 'IS' affiliates were also responsible for a large number of gender-based attacks against girls and women.

Several countries experienced new outbreaks of violence that were unrelated to 'IS.' For example, attacks on education occurred in the context of a new political crisis in **Burundi**, fighting between newly-formed armed groups and government forces in **Ukraine**, escalating repression in **Venezuela**, and renewed violence in the eastern **DRC,** as well as a new conflict in DRC's Kasai region.[29]

At the same time, the world saw a marked improvement in the awareness of attacks on education and their devastating impacts, as well as a growing global consensus around the imperative of preventing and mitigating such attacks. At the time of writing, 74 states had endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, an intergovernmental political commitment that enables states to express support for protecting students, teachers, schools, and universities from attack during times of armed conflict; for continuing education during armed conflict; and for implementing concrete measures to deter military use of schools. The endorsing states included 11 of the 28 countries profiled in this report: **Afghanistan, CAR, DRC, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan,** and **Yemen.**

Schoolgirls walk past a damaged mini-bus after it was hit by a bomb blast in the Bagrami district of Kabul, Afghanistan.

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Motivations for attacks

The reasons students, educators, and educational facilities are targeted vary from country to country, and there may be multiple reasons for attacks on education within a single country, or even for a single attack. Because schools are one of the most visible symbols of state authority, non-state armed groups may target educational institutions to delegitimize the government. This is particularly likely if the school curriculum includes subjects, languages, values, or cultures that the armed group rejects—such as educating women and girls—or if the school is being used for political purposes, such as polling during national or subnational elections. Non-state armed groups may also target schools being used as military or police bases. Alternatively, non-state armed groups may themselves seek to turn schools and universities into military bases in order to control territory or to prevent government forces from using them, in turn making them military targets. Armed forces and armed groups may further view educational institutions as convenient places to recruit children as combatants. State military and non-state armed groups may perpetrate sexual violence in, and along the route to and from, schools or universities as part of broader patterns of conflict-related sexual violence. In higher education, students, academic staff, or universities may come under attack because their research is seen as being in opposition to government control or extremist dogmas.

Impact of attacks on education

Attacks on education harm students, educators, and education systems. While it is challenging to quantify the impact of attacks on education—for instance, it is difficult to determine how many children are out of school because of attacks on education specifically, as opposed to conflict-related violence in general—it is clear that attacks on learners, educators, and educational institutions have significant short- and long-term consequences.

Attacks on education have the potential to increase student dropout and teacher attrition; lead to extended school and university closures; diminish the quality of education; and cause physical and psychological harm to those affected.[30] Attacks also compromise schools' capacity to protect students from social risks, which leaves learners more vulnerable to sexual and other forms of exploitation, recruitment as child laborers or child soldiers, or early marriage and pregnancy.[31] Attacks on higher education undermine research and teaching, and often result in self-censorship and "brain drain." More broadly, attacks on higher education may affect access to and the quality of education at all levels, as a trained teaching force and high-quality teaching materials are dependent on higher education.[32]

All forms of attack on education can result in significant financial costs for governments, contribute to state fragility, and impede social development.[33] For example, in an analysis quantifying the financial cost of attacks on education, the Education Development Trust (formerly CfBT Education Trust) and Protect Education in Insecurity and Conflict estimated that attacks targeting education cost the governments of DRC, Nigeria, and Pakistan a combined total of $133 million between 2009 and 2012.[34] A global financing gap in education means that making up these losses may be a significant challenge.[35]

Conflict and crisis, including attacks on education, often exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and social exclusion and reinforce discriminatory norms and social practices. Although there is limited evidence showing the precise impact attacks on education and military use of schools have on disadvantaged groups, it is likely that minority groups, learners with disabilities, and girls and women are disproportionately affected. Some information shows that, when insecurity increases or a school is occupied by armed forces or armed groups, families typically are more reluctant to continue to send girls to school than boys, for reasons including fear of sexual harassment and violence. For instance, one teacher in Mali reported that parents kept their daughters home from school to prevent them from being assaulted.[36] This occurs particularly in conflict-affected contexts. Save the Children found Syrian refugee families took their daughters out of school early to have them marry, with the hope that doing so would protect them from sexual violence.[37]

Attacks on education have devastating immediate and lifelong physical and psychosocial consequences for both male and female survivors, including ones that are distinct to each gender.[38] There is evidence that girls who leave school early are less likely than boys to return to learning and may instead be forced to marry.[39] In some contexts, particularly where there are financial constraints, families prioritize the education of boys over that of girls.[40] This suggests that when keeping children safe increases the cost of education for families—for example, when parents have to pay for transportation to a more distant school if the local school is destroyed—those with limited finances may prioritize educating boys. Girls who become pregnant from rape in war often face discrimination, sometimes leaving school, especially if they do not have access to sexual and reproductive health services.[41] Conversely, boys may be more likely to be targeted to prevent them from fighting or being recruited by opposing forces. For example, in several cases in Iraq and Syria, 'IS' visited schools, separated the boys from girls, and abducted or killed the boys.[42]

Education is critical for gender equality, and for social and economic recovery from conflict and crisis. Therefore, reduced access to education has significant social consequences for all children, damaging their future outcomes as well as those of society as a whole. Education is widely recognized as being key to a range of other social, economic, and political rights, which attacks on education can take away from girls, boys, women, and men. These include health outcomes, as well as livelihood opportunities or participation in political processes. Lower levels of female education in particular are linked to higher rates of maternal and infant mortality.[43] Women also may not be able to participate meaningfully to influence politics, police, or peace and transitional justice processes if they drop out of school at a young age.[44] Conversely, there is some evidence that having a higher level of education increases women's power in household decision-making.[45]

A global overview of attacks on education

Each of the 28 countries profiled in this report saw **at least 20 attacks against students, teachers, professors, other education personnel, or educational institutions over the course of the reporting period**.

In addition to the 28 countries profiled, GCPEA found reports of isolated or occasional attacks on education in 46 other countries.[46] These attacks were most commonly bombings or arson targeting primary or secondary schools, and violent repression of education-related protests, the latter often at the higher education level.

The 46 countries where GCPEA identified isolated attacks on education included the following:

Algeria	**Ecuador**	**Malawi**	**Spain**
Angola	**France**	**Malaysia**	**Sri Lanka**
Armenia	**Georgia**	**Mexico**	**Swaziland**
Azerbaijan	**Greece**	**Mozambique**	**Sweden**
Bahrain	**Haiti**	**Nepal**	**Tanzania**
Belarus	**Indonesia**	**Niger**	**Togo**
Brazil	**Iran**	**Papua New Guinea**	**Uganda**
Burkina Faso	**Ireland**	**Russia**	**United Arab Emirates**
Chad	**Jordan**	**Saudi Arabia**	**United Kingdom**
Chile	**Kosovo**	**Senegal**	**Zimbabwe**
China	**Lebanon**	**Sierra Leone**	
Côte d'Ivoire	**Liberia**	**South Africa**	

This study seeks to analyze **global trends** in attacks on education to the greatest extent possible, and to make comparisons with the previous editions of *Education under Attack*. To that end, it uses similar definitions for what constitutes an attack on education and its subcategories and follows a methodology similar to that used in the 2014 edition to identify incidents and statistics.

However, there are several limits on analyzing trends between the two reports:

- This study covers a five-year period, 2013 to 2017, whereas the 2014 study categorized countries according to severity of attacks on education experienced during a four year period from 2009 to 2012.[47] Accordingly, while it is possible to note general trends—such as which countries were most heavily affected by attacks on education during each time period—and to compare annual rates of reported attacks, it is not possible to make direct comparisons between the number of attacks the two reports found in individual countries.
- This study examines countries with 20 or more reported incidents, whereas the 2014 study profiled countries with 5 or more attacks, in which at least one incident was a direct attack or killed at least one person.[48] Had the 2014 criteria been applied to this report, at least 13 additional countries would have been profiled, based on the reported number of attacks on education from 2013 to 2016, representing the same number of years as the previous report: **Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Chad, Indonesia, Iran, Lebanon, Nepal, Niger, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom,** and **Zimbabwe**.
- Access to data changes over time, even within a single country. For example, changing security conditions may make it more or less difficult to monitor attacks on education. As a result, data may show an increase in attacks even as security improved. Similarly, rising awareness of the problem of attacks on education has resulted in some cases in stronger monitoring systems, which means that apparent increases in attacks may be the result of improved monitoring rather than an escalation of violence. Accordingly, some findings in this report could reflect changes in the availability of information rather than actual fluctuations in the number of attacks.

Regardless of these limitations, the overall number of incidents collected in this study is higher than in the 2014 study, and attacks on education occurred in more locations. Even recognizing changes in data availability, **there is evidence that attacks on education became more common during the period covered by this report.** From 2013 to 2017, 41 countries experienced more than 5 attacks on education in which at least one incident was a direct attack or killed at least one person, compared with the 30 countries profiled in the previous report.

Countries with more than five attacks on education between 2013 and 2017, including one that was either a direct attack or killed at least one person

Afghanistan	**Iraq**	**Somalia**
Bahrain	**Iran**	**South Africa**
Bangladesh	**Israel/Palestine**	**South Sudan**
Burundi	**Kenya**	**Sudan**
Burkina Faso	**Lebanon**	**Sweden**
Cameroon	**Libya**	**Syria**
CAR	**Mali**	**Thailand**
Chad	**Myanmar**	**Turkey**
Colombia	**Nepal**	**United Kingdom**
DRC	**Niger**	**Ukraine**
Egypt	**Nigeria**	**Venezuela**
Ethiopia	**Pakistan**	**Yemen**
India	**The Philippines**	**Zimbabwe**
Indonesia	**Russia**	

Five countries are covered in this study that were not featured in the 2014 report: **Bangladesh**, which experienced a rise in political violence, particularly during national elections in January 2014; **Burundi**, which faced an escalating political crisis beginning in 2015; **Cameroon**, which saw increasing violence perpetrated by the Nigeria-based violent extremist group, Boko Haram as well as escalating tensions between the country's French-speaking majority and its English-speaking minority; **Ukraine**, where armed groups took control of areas in the country's east after former president Viktor Yanukovytch was ousted from power; and **Venezuela**, where increasing student protests were met with violent repression.

Although there was a global spread of violence, the places most affected by attacks on education shifted. The most affected countries—where reports indicated that 1,000 or more incidents of attacks on education occurred or 1,000 or more students, teachers, or other education personnel were harmed—were **DRC, Egypt, Israel/Palestine, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Sudan, Syria, Turkey,** and **Yemen**. Only one of these countries—**Syria**—was on the list of most affected countries in the 2014 report.

- In **DRC,** education was heavily affected by renewed conflict in the country's east and the outbreak of a new conflict in the Greater Kasai region. This uptick in violence resulted in more than 1,000 incidents in which schools were attacked or used for military purposes.[49] In 2016 and 2017 there were at least 639 reported attacks on schools in the Greater Kasai region alone, of which more than 400 were verified.[50] In addition, several hundred attacks on schools were reported in the Tanganyika region and close to 100 attacks on schools were reported in North and South Kivu during those same years.[51]
- In **Egypt**, a large number of students were reported harmed in a small number of incidents. NGO and media sources reported that, as university students expressed dissent against President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Egyptian security forces allegedly used force against large groups of protesters on university campuses, killing and injuring dozens of students and arresting more than 1,000.[52] This violence peaked during the 2013-2014 academic year, before dying down later in the reporting period.
- Large numbers of educational facilities, students, and personnel were harmed in the context of the conflict between **Israel and Palestine**, reportedly through attacks on education. According to information compiled by GCPEA, more than 1,000 educational facilities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were documented as being attacked or used for military purposes. Attacks included damage or destruction by air strikes, arson, or vandalism, and demolitions on the grounds of not having a building permit, which is nearly impossible for Palestinians to obtain in Area C of the West Bank, which is administered by Israel.[53] Additionally, more than 2,000 Palestinian primary, secondary, and tertiary students were reportedly injured, killed, detained, arrested, or otherwise harmed in attacks on education.[54] Much of this violence occurred during Israel's Operation Protective Edge in the Gaza Strip in June and July 2014, and Operation Brother's Keeper in the West Bank in June 2014.[55] In Israel there were approximately 12 attacks on education; most were attacks on schools.[56]
- In **Nigeria** more than 1,500 schools and universities were reportedly attacked, most by Boko Haram, or used for military purposes by Nigerian security forces.[57] Information compiled by GCPEA indicated that attacks on education, most perpetrated by Boko Haram, led to the abduction, killing, or injury of more than 1,000 students and educators at all levels of the education system.[58]
- According to media reports and local advocacy groups, more than 1,000 indigenous students and teachers in **the Philippines** experienced targeted threats, harassment, and intimidation by members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and paramilitary groups. These groups also intimidated other students and teachers working and learning in the dozens of schools the groups used as bases and camps.[59]
- In **South Sudan**, government forces and armed groups occupied 161 educational institutions.[60] In addition, approximately 800 educational institutions were targeted in attacks, and more than 900 students and education personnel were harmed in attacks on education, including several hundred students who were abducted into armed groups from their schools.[61]

Attacks on education and military use of schools and universities in profiled countries, 2013-2017

Very heavily affected

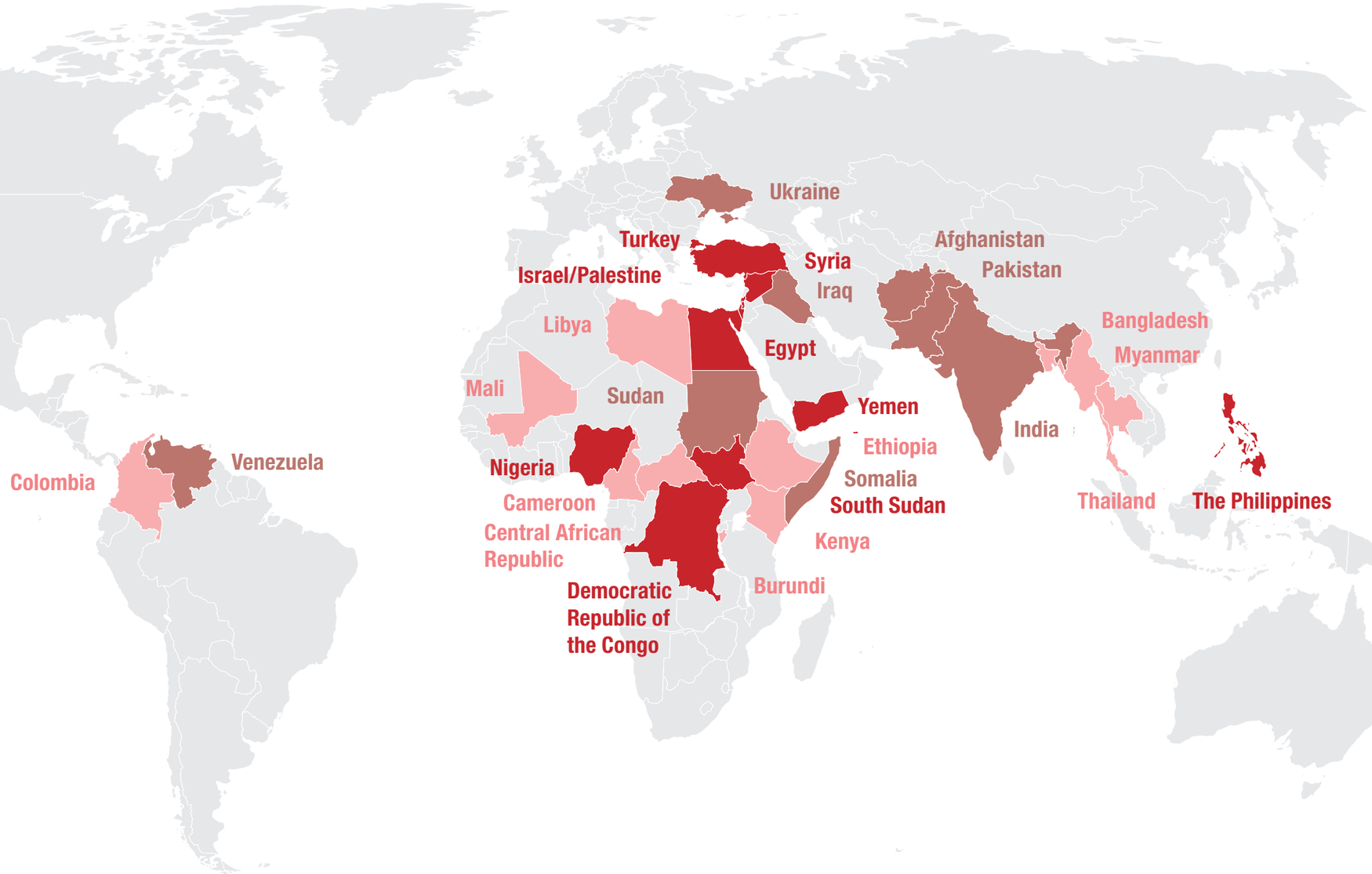
Countries where reports documented 1000 or more incidents of attacks on education or military use of educational facilities or 1000 or more students and education personnel harmed by attacks on education

Heavily affected

Countries where reports documented between 500 and 999 incidents of attacks on education or military use of educational facilities or between 500 and 999 students and education personnel harmed by attacks on education

Affected

Countries where reports documented fewer than 500 incidents of attacks on education or military use of educational facilities or under 500 students and education personnel harmed by attacks



- In **Syria**, UN, NGO, and media sources reported the damage or destruction of more than 650 educational facilities, most from air strikes by the Syrian and Russian forces or the international campaign against 'IS'. More than 1,000 students and education personnel were harmed in these attacks or in other violence that targeted them as students and educators.[62]
- Beginning in 2016, university students, scholars, and higher education personnel were arrested and detained in large numbers in **Turkey.** Most arrested were accused of having connections to the US-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gülen, whose movement was designated a terrorist organization called FETÖ (Fethullahist Terrorist Organization).[63] Gülen and his followers had been accused of having responsibility for an attempted coup on July 15, 2016.[64]
- The largest number of educational institutions damaged, destroyed, or used for military purposes was documented in **Yemen**, where more than 1,500 schools and universities were affected by attacks on education or military use, according to UN and media sources.[65] Many of these attacks were the result of air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition or bombings by non-state Houthi armed groups.[66]

Many of the countries listed among the most heavily affected in the 2014 report were no longer on that list for the 2013-2017 time period, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Pakistan, Somalia, and Sudan. Yet, attacks in most of these countries remained at worryingly high levels. In Afghanistan, there were more than 900 incidents of attacks on education or military use of schools, and in Pakistan, Somalia, and Sudan, more than 500 students or education personnel were harmed in attacks on education. The most marked decline in reported incidents of attacks occurred in Colombia, where different data collection methods uncovered fewer than 500 instances of attacks and fewer than 500 students or education personnel harmed in attacks on education—down from more than 1,000 between 2009 and 2012. However, it is unclear if violence targeting education really declined so significantly, or if the apparent reduction in attacks reflected challenges to monitoring and reporting, such as security conditions.

Attacks on schools

More than 1,000 incidents of direct and collateral attacks on schools were reported in four of the nine countries most heavily affected by attacks on education: **DRC, Israel/Palestine, Nigeria,** and **Yemen.** Israel/Palestine, Nigeria, and Yemen were also among the countries reported as being most affected by attacks on schools in *Education under Attack 2014*. Between 500 and 999 attacks on schools were documented in 4 other countries: **Afghanistan, South Sudan, Syria,** and **Ukraine.** Examples of attacks on schools included the following:

- In **Nigeria**, Boko Haram used arson, explosives, and gunfire to attack schools and began carrying out most attacks on institutions during daytime hours. The group previously had carried out most attacks by night and thus had avoided harming people. Attacks on schools therefore resulted in more significant harm to students and education personnel than during the previous reporting period.[67] These attacks were frequent during the first half of the reporting period and then slowed, possibly because the majority of schools in northeastern Nigeria were already destroyed or closed.[68]
- One of the most dramatic increases in incidents of attacks on schools occurred in **South Sudan**, likely due to the outbreak of civil war at the end of 2013. Between 2009 and mid-2013, fewer than 100 attacks on schools occurred, in contrast to more than 800 reported between late 2013 and January 2016.[69] Most of these schools were damaged by shelling, gunfire, arson, and looting during fighting between state forces and paramilitaries and anti-government armed groups, primarily in the Greater Upper Nile region.
- At least 740 schools were damaged or destroyed in **Ukraine** during fighting between Ukrainian forces and armed groups between April 2014 and March 2017, according to UNICEF.[70]

The 2013-2017 reporting period saw a decline in reported incidents in Libya, where there previously had been more than 1,000 attacks on schools, and in Pakistan, where 838 attacks on schools had previously been documented.[71] The number of reported attacks on schools in Libya declined from close to 2,000 to fewer than 100, and in Pakistan from 838 to 260.

A Pakistani soldier stands in the Army Public School on December 17, 2014, following an attack by Pakistani Taliban gunmen. The armed extremists took hundreds of students and teachers hostage in the school in the northwestern city of Peshawar, killing 132 schoolchildren and several teachers and staff.

© 2014 Zohra Bensemra/REUTERS

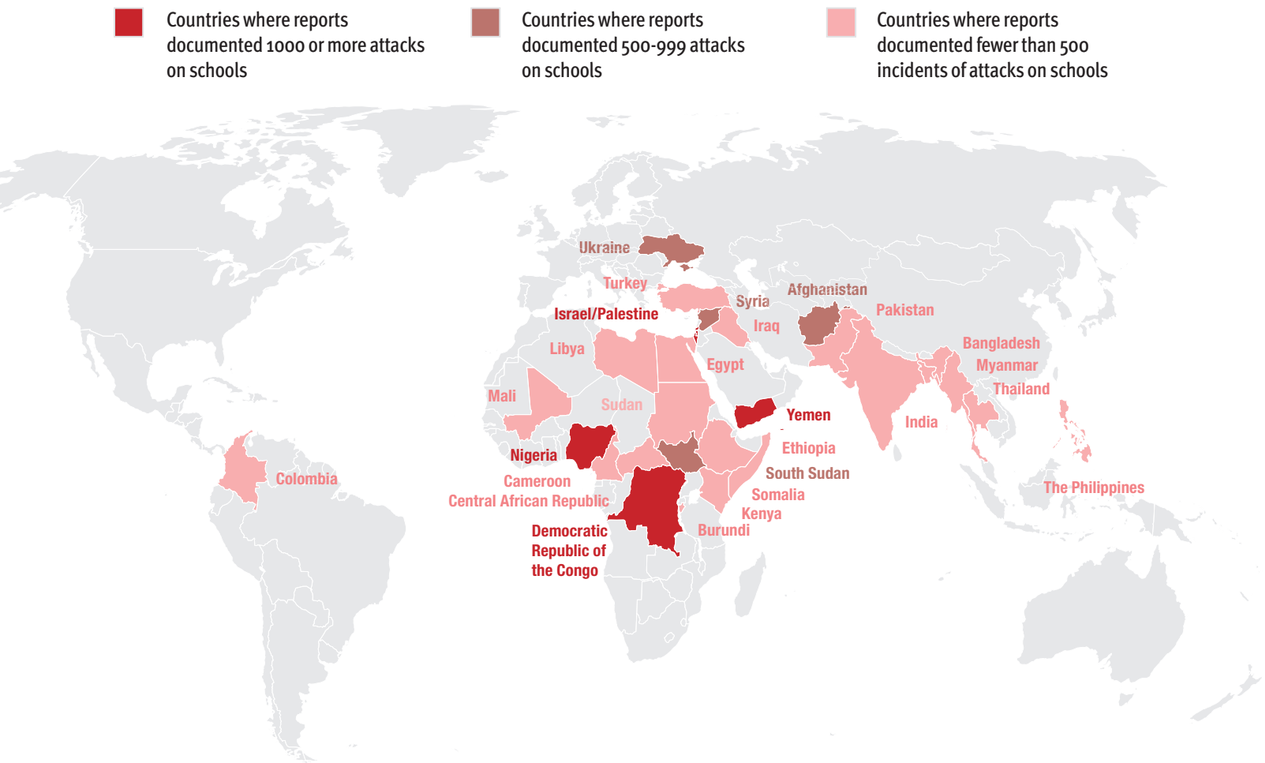
The overall level of attacks in these countries—and the concomitant harm— was still high. Indeed, one of the deadliest attacks occurred in Pakistan on December 16, 2014, when gunmen from Tehreeki-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) stormed the Army Public School in Peshawar, firing on students and education personnel and setting off hand grenades and other explosives. The attack killed 132 children, as well as teachers and other education personnel, and injured 133 people, most of them children.[72] Furthermore, weaknesses in monitoring and reporting may account for some of the reduction in recorded attacks. Information from Libya was particularly sparse, possibly because of significant weakness in the collection and verification of data due to rival and parallel governments and

insecurity.[73] Nevertheless, the decline in the number of reports in these countries was all the more notable because the current study covered a longer reporting period than the previous one.

Notably, among the countries profiled, there were reports that **schools were targeted in relation to their use as polling stations in 10 countries**: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iraq, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. Among these, more than a dozen schools were systematically targeted during elections in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iraq, and the Philippines. For example:

- The HRC reported that at least 79 attacks directly targeted schools used as polling centers during the 2014 presidential elections in **Afghanistan**.[74]
- According to the *Guardian* around 60 schools were targeted for their use as polling stations during general elections in **Bangladesh** in 2014.[75]
- There were 23 attacks on schools used as polling stations in **Iraq** during the April 2014 parliamentary elections, according to the UN.[76]

Profiled countries with reports of attacks on schools, 2013-2017



Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

In addition to being injured and killed in attacks on school buildings, students, teachers, and other education personnel were directly targeted through killings, abductions, threats, or violent responses to their participation in education-related protests in each country profiled in this report. It was not always clear why individuals were targeted, but in several cases, assailants targeted education personnel because they disagreed with the content of their teaching.

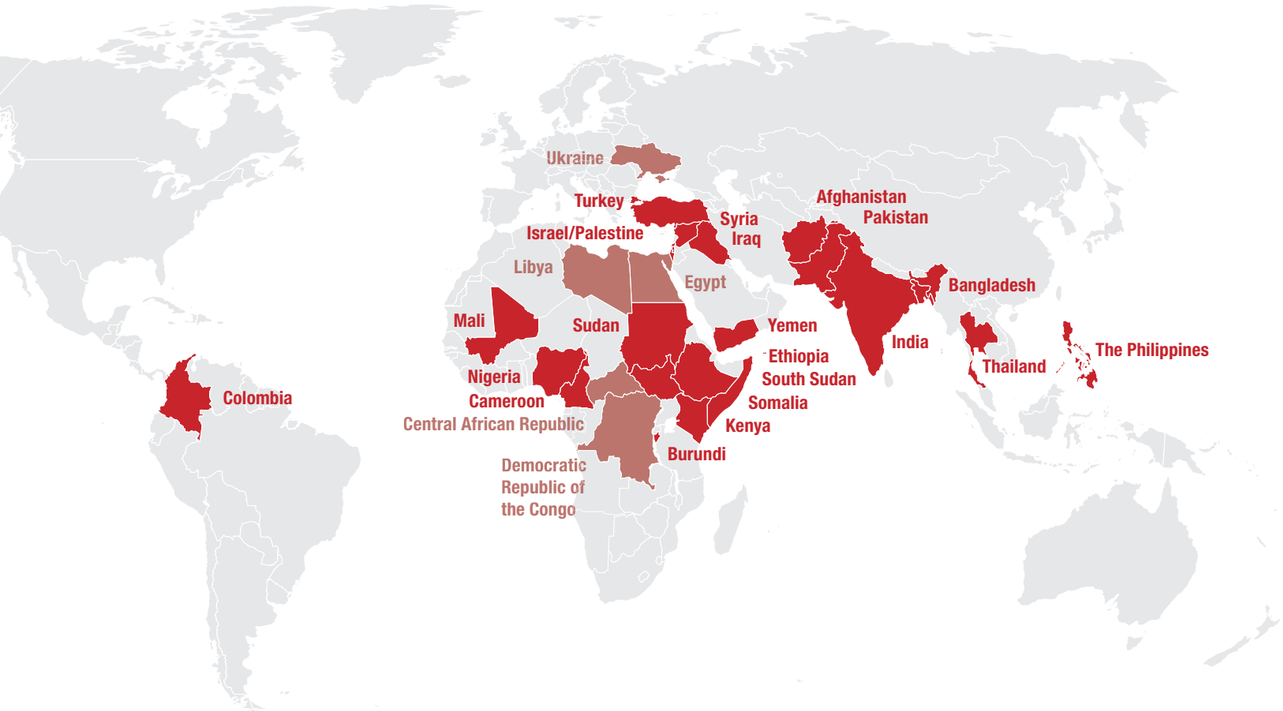
Learners and educators were most frequently affected by direct and targeted attacks in **Afghanistan, Israel/Palestine, the Philippines,** and **Nigeria:**

- In **Nigeria**, the targeting of students, teachers, and education personnel was much more prevalent in the current report than in *Education under Attack 2014*. The 2014 report noted that Boko Haram began targeting students and teachers in 2013—a trend that intensified over the course of the present reporting period. This report found that at least 750 individuals were harmed, largely as a result of two mass kidnappings in 2014. The first occurred on April 14, 2014, in Chibok, Borno state, when Boko Haram kidnapped 276 female students from a government-run girls' secondary school. Members of the group raped and forced marriage upon many of those kidnapped and used some as suicide bombers.[77] A similar mass abduction took place on November 24, 2014, when Boko Haram kidnapped more than 300 boys and girls from Zana Mobarti Primary School in Damasak, Borno state.[78]
- Attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel were also more prevalent than previously reported in the context of the **Israeli and Palestinian** conflict, primarily affecting Palestinian students. The violence largely resulted from a more regular presence of Israeli forces outside of and nearby schools and was most common at schools located near Israeli settlements. The military presence sparked clashes between Palestinian students and Israeli forces, which were sometimes instigated by Palestinian students throwing stones and which resulted in the arrests, detentions, or injuries of more than 2,000 Palestinian students, teachers, and other education personnel. In some cases, Israeli security forces used live fire to respond to students who had thrown stones at them.[79] In 2016 the Palestinian Ministry of Education reported that 26 students and 1 teacher had been killed, 1,810 students and 101 teachers injured, and 198 students and education personnel arrested.[80]
- In **the Philippines**, media and NGO sources, including Save Our Schools (SOS), a local network of child rights advocates and organizations, reported that government security forces and paramilitary groups directly harassed and threatened approximately 860 students and 140 teachers during the reporting period.[81] These numbers appeared to represent an intensification of patterns described in *Education under Attack 2014,* which recorded that approximately 50 students and education personnel were harmed over the four-year period. The recent numbers may have reflected the increasing targeting of indigenous populations and their school communities by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and associated paramilitaries that occurred during the reporting period.[82] However, increased reporting or differing definitions of attacks on education could also have accounted for some of the increase.
- In **Afghanistan,** documented threats and intimidation of teachers increased dramatically during the reporting period, at least from 2013 to 2016, even as targeted killings reportedly declined.[83] The majority of verbal or written threats were directed toward girls' education and, during the later years of the reporting period, in areas of the country where 'IS' had a presence. For example, UNAMA and UNICEF documented 14 cases of intimidation in 2015, including 9 cases leading to the partial or full closure of 213 schools, primarily in Nangarhar and Herat provinces. Ninety-four of the schools were coeducational, but they were closed to girls after the incidents while remaining open for boys.[84]

Profiled countries with reports of attacks individually targeting school students, teachers, or other education personnel, 2013-2017

Countries where reports documented more than 20 students, teachers, or other education personnel harmed by individually targeted attacks

Countries where reports documented fewer than 20 students, teachers, or other education personnel harmed by individually targeted attacks



Military use of schools or universities

At least one case of military use of schools or universities was reported in 29 countries between 2013 and 2017, including in 24 countries profiled in this report: **Afghanistan, Burundi, CAR, Cameroon, Colombia, DRC, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine,** and **Yemen.** Of the countries not profiled in this report, at least one incident of military use of schools, but not universities, was reported in **Côte d'Ivoire, Lebanon**, **Niger, Saudi Arabia,** and **Zimbabwe**.[85]

Members of an armed group stand in a school that was converted into a base in Luhansk oblast, Ukraine, on August 18, 2014.

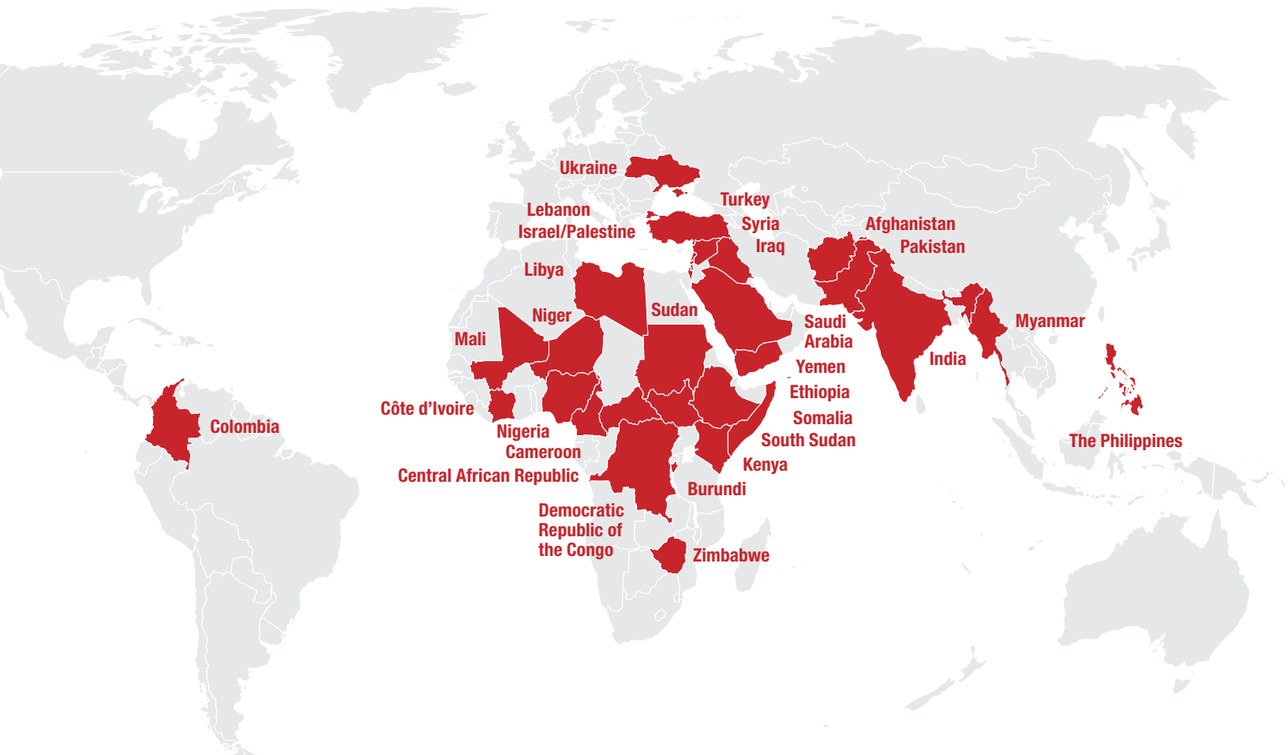
© 2014 Anatolii Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images

The total number of countries with at least one documented instance of military use was higher than the 24 identified in the 2014 report. Among the countries listed above, eight had no documented cases of military use in the previous reporting period: **Burundi, Cameroon, Lebanon, Niger, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Turkey,** and **Ukraine.** In most of these countries, military use of schools and universities appeared to be associated with the onset or intensification of conflict or political violence within the country or along its borders.

Conversely, three countries where military use of schools and universities was identified in the 2014 report had no reported cases between 2013 and 2017: Indonesia, Kenya, and Thailand. It was not clear whether this was because the information was unavailable or because there were no such cases.

Between 2013 and 2017, military use of schools and universities was most prominently reported in **Afghanistan, CAR, the Philippines, South Sudan, Syria,** and **Yemen**. Each had more than 40 educational institutions simultaneously in military use at some point during the reporting period.

Countries with at least one report of military use of schools or universities, 2013-2017



These cases involved a variety of forces, including state police and military forces, non-state armed groups, paramilitary groups, and international peacekeeping forces. Examples of military use included the following:

- In **South Sudan**, the Education Cluster found that, from the start of the conflict in December 2013 through 2016, armed forces and non-state armed groups used at least 161 schools for military purposes, including 92 schools in Greater Upper Nile region, 46 schools in Greater Equatoria region, and 23 schools in Greater Bahr el Ghazal region.[86]
- In **CAR**, armed groups, MINUSCA, French Opération Sangaris, and the African Union (AU) International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA) were each responsible for using schools. The Education Cluster reported that armed forces and armed groups used at least 46 schools for military purposes in 2014. Many of these schools were also looted, hit by bullets, or set on fire.[87] At the end of 2015, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Central African Republic, also the Head of MINUSCA, released a directive based on the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*, which prohibited its troops from using schools and universities.[88]
- In **the Philippines**, paramilitary groups sometimes used schools jointly with the AFP. The UN Secretary-General reported the use of 31 schools between the end of 2012 and the end of 2016. The AFP was involved in a majority of the reported cases, including three schools allegedly used alongside pro-government armed groups.[89]

Recognizing the difficulty of comparing figures on military use of schools and universities, the biggest declines in reported cases appeared to occur in **India, Libya,** and **Thailand**, all of which were among the 14 countries with the highest incidence of military use between 2009 and mid-2013:

- In **India**, fewer than 50 cases were reported between 2013 and 2017, whereas *Education under Attack 2014* reported more than 129 schools used as barracks or bases.[90]
- No cases of military use of schools were documented in **Thailand** between 2013 and 2017. *Education under Attack 2014* had reported 79 cases of military use of schools in the country.[91]
- In **Libya**, GCPEA found only sporadic reports of military use of schools between 2013 and 2017. In comparison, a UN respondent reported that armed groups in Libya used more than 200 schools during the 2011 uprising.[92]

In the 24 profiled countries where military use of educational institutions was documented, armed forces and non-state armed groups used schools and universities for a variety of purposes, including as barracks; firing positions; detention and interrogation centers, where torture and sexual violence occurred; or weapons factories. For example:

- In **Iraq,** media reports indicated that 'IS' used Mosul University as a fighting base and weapons factory from June 2014 until the Iraqi Security Forces took the campus in January 2017.[93] A mapping conducted by the UN HumanSettlements Program (UN-Habitat) showed that multiple university buildings were severely damaged as a result.[94]
- In the West Bank, Israeli security forces temporarily used Palestinian schools to protect Israeli settlers as they visited religious sites, and as interrogation and detention centers.[95]

At a minimum, military use of schools made it difficult for students to learn, while, in more injurious cases, schools and universities were turned into targets for attacks by opposing forces. For instance:

- In **South Sudan,** children from two primary schools in Pibor town in Jonglei state that were occupied by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) told Human Rights Watch they were afraid because the soldiers were regularly intoxicated.[96]
- The UN reported that two schools occupied by armed forces or armed groups in **Syria** were subsequently attacked by opposing forces in 2016.[97]

A former child combatant, age 14, who used to be a member of the anti-balaka sits outside her school building in Bambari, Central African Republic. UNICEF helped the girl leave the armed group to pursue her education.

© 2015 Tom Esslemont/REUTERS/ Thomson Reuters Foundation

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

While information was limited, at least one case of child recruitment was documented during the reporting period at, or en route to or from, school in 16 of the countries profiled in this report: **Afghanistan, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine,** and **Yemen.**

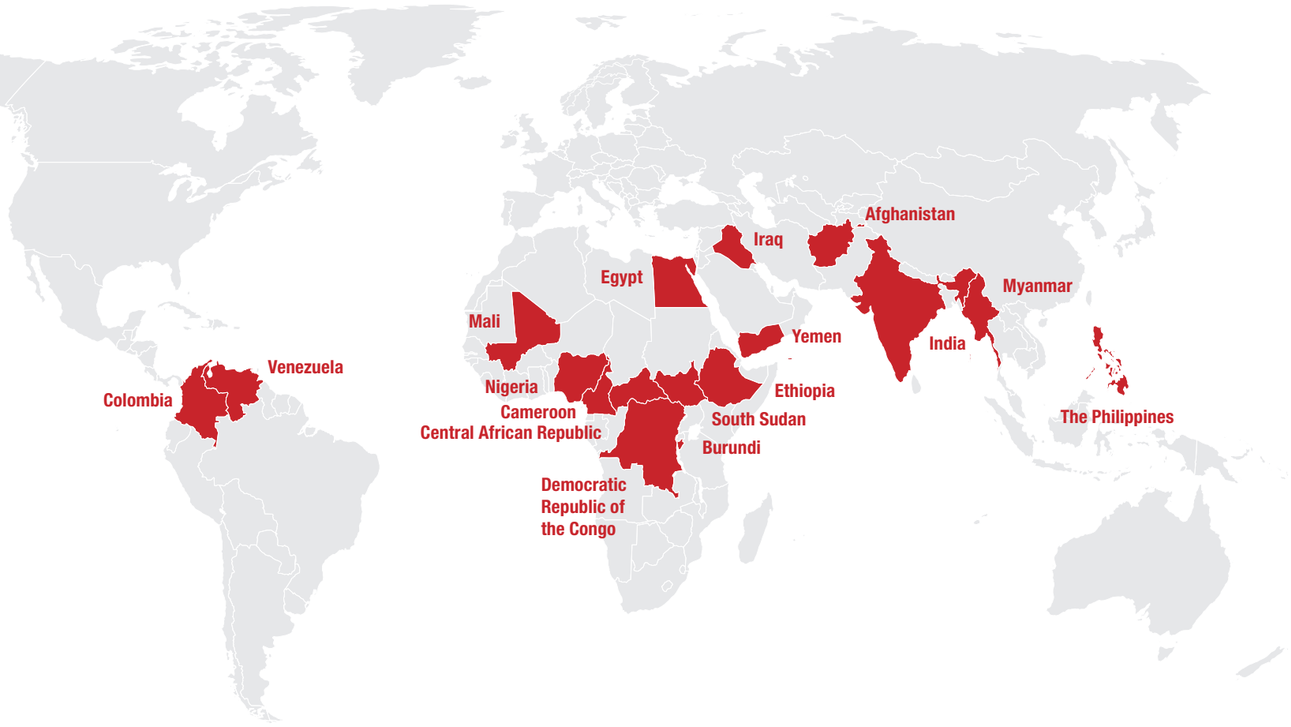
The list of 16 represented an increase over the 6 countries listed in *Education under Attack 2014* where child recruitment at schools or along school routes was reported to have taken place: Colombia, DRC, Pakistan, Somalia, Thailand, and Yemen; all 6 were also listed among the current 16. This rise may reflect more comprehensive reporting rather than an increase in recruitment at schools, but it nevertheless indicated that this was a matter of grave concern. For example:

- In **South Sudan**, UN and media sources indicated that anti-government groups forcibly recruited more than 500 children from schools between December 2014 and May 2015.[98]
- In **DRC**, non-state armed groups abducted students at school or en route to or from school.[99]

Profiled countries with reports of child recruitment occurring at, or en route to or from, school, 2013-2017

- In **Mali,** the UN reported that witnesses stated that armed groups had paid parents in Gao city to send their children to religious schools, where they received weapons training.[100]
- In **Somalia,** al-Shabaab reportedly used education as a tool for recruitment, threatened and arrested teachers who refused to encourage their students to join the group, and abducted children from schools. For example, Human Rights Watch reported that the group forcibly abducted at least 50 boys and girls from two schools in Burhakaba, Bay region, in September 2017, possibly for recruitment purposes.[101]

Profiled countries with reports of sexual violence occurring at, or en route to or from, school or university, 2013-2017



Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

Conflict-related sexual violence is a common feature in modern warfare, and in some profiled countries it was used as a weapon against both female and male students and teachers.[102]

Social stigma and a lack of social services in conflict areas limit reporting of sexual violence in general and, as with child recruitment, there was limited information available on armed forces or armed groups perpetrating sexual violence against students and teachers specifically in the context of education.[103] Where data were available, they did not often include specific information on the context in which an incident occurred.

Nevertheless, parties to conflict were reportedly responsible for sexual violence occurring at, or en route to or from, schools or universities in 17 countries: **Afghanistan, Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, Colombia, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Sudan**, **Venezuela,** and **Yemen**. Similar forms of sexual violence were documented in only seven countries in *Education under Attack 2014*—Bahrain, CAR, Colombia, DRC, India, Libya, and Somalia—but this increase may reflect more comprehensive reporting on conflict-related sexual violence in general rather than an increase in the number of incidents related to education.

Examples of sexual violence included the following:

- In **Sudan**, NGO and media sources reported one incident in which several girl students were raped and abducted as they walked to school. Responsibility was attributed to either government forces or an associated paramilitary group.[104]
- In **Burundi**, students in the *Imbonerakure,* a government-affiliated youth militia, reportedly abducted a male classmate for refusing to join them and took him to a house where three men raped him.[105]

Reported cases of sexual violence around schools and universities often occurred in the context of other forms of attack on education, such as military use or attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel. For example:

- In **Iraq,** 'IS' used schools systematically to detain, rape, and sell women and girls. For example, UNAMI and OHCHR reported that from September through December 2014, 'IS' held a group of women and girls at an abandoned school in Tal Afar. Some were reportedly raped.[106]
- In January 2015, soldiers in **Myanmar** stationed next to a school allegedly assaulted, raped, and killed two female school teachers in their dormitory in Kuang Kha in Kachin state.[107]
- In **Afghanistan,** UNAMA reported that, on October 17, 2016, Afghan National Army (ANA) Special Forces forcibly stripped and photographed a 16-year-old boy in front of his teacher and other students at school. The forces then opened fire inside the school when other students and the teacher protested. Five ANA members were arrested and three were released; two were convicted—one for unlawful use of force and another for beating. None was charged with sexual abuse or exploitation.[108]

Attacks on higher education

Overall, reported attacks on higher education appeared to be more widespread from 2013 to 2017 than previously documented. GCPEA found reports of attacks on higher education facilities and other property in 28 countries, including 20 of the 28 countries profiled in the report. Of the profiled countries, higher education facilities were attacked in **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, Syria, Thailand, Ukraine, Venezuela,** and **Yemen.**

Attacks on higher education personnel, including targeted killings, abductions, threats, harassment, or violent repression of education-related protests that injured or killed a student or university staff member, were found in 52 countries, including **every country profiled** in this report**.**

The countries with the highest number of reported attacks on higher education facilities were **Bangladesh, Iraq, Syria,** and **Yemen**. This included attacks with explosives and gunmen targeting university campuses. There were also widely-reported deadly attacks on universities in several other countries, including **Pakistan** and **Kenya**. For example:

- Explosives were set at Dhaka University in **Bangladesh** at least 35 times between 2013 and 2015. Some incidents involved multiple bombs. The attackers often were not identified.[109]
- In **Kenya,** gunmen from the Somalia-based armed group al-Shabaab killed at least 142 students and injured another 79 on April 2, 2015, when they entered Garissa University College, shooting students while they slept and taking others hostage before killing them.[110]

Profiled countries with reports of attacks on higher education facilities, 2013-2017

- In **Pakistan** on June 15, 2013, members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi placed a bomb on a bus carrying university students, which exploded on the campus of Sardar Bahaddur Khan Women's University in Quetta, Balochistan, killing 14 people and wounding at least 19 others.[111]

Egypt, India, Sudan, Venezuela, and **Turkey** were the countries in which the highest number of students or education personnel were harmed by attacks on higher education. In each of these countries, the most common forms of attack were arrests and detentions related to academic work, and the excessive use of force during education-related protests. For example:

- Increasing insecurity and authoritarian actions by the government led to widespread protests across **Venezuela**.[112] University students were actively engaged in these protests, many of which either took place or began on university campuses. More than 600 university students were injured when government forces responded with force, or were arrested or detained.[113] Some of those detained faced abuse in detention. For example, Scholars at Risk reported that up to 331 students were abused in police custody in February 2014 alone.[114]
- In **Egypt,** dozens of students, professors, and university staff were killed or injured and more than 1,000 were detained or arrested between 2013 and 2017.[115] Amnesty International reported that, according to the Marsad Tolab Horreya (Student Freedom Observatory), at least 200 students were arrested during protests in September and October 2014.[116]

Kenyan riot police clash with students protesting a fee increase inside a classroom at Nairobi University on May 20, 2014.

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Attack on Higher Education in Ayotzinapa, Mexico

Although Mexico did not meet the criteria for inclusion in this report, the country did experience one attack on higher education during the reporting period. It is described here because it affected a large number of students.On the night of September 26, 2014, police and unidentified armed individuals opened fire on three buses filled with students from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Teachers' School as they were traveling from the city of Iguala back to Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, where the school was located. More than 15 people were injured and 6 were killed. After throwing teargas into one of the buses, police ordered the students out of the vehicle. They beat an unknown number of students from this bus and took them away in police cars.[117] At the time of writing, the location of 42 students remained unknown. The DNA of one student was later identified among remains that the Mexican government said were those of the students.[118] The Mexican authorities arrested approximately 100 people, including police officers, for alleged involvement in the case, but no convictions were obtained.[119] Widespread outcry against the government's response and international attention to the case led the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to set up an Inter-disciplinary Group of International Experts (GIEI) to investigate, with the involvement of the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF).[120] GIEI reported in September 2015 that state investigators had committed serious errors in the investigation and that, contrary to a report by Mexico's attorney general's office, there was no evidence to indicate that the students' bodies were taken to a local dump and burned; this finding was corroborated by a later EAAF report.[121] The expert group also found that the municipal police and unidentified armed collaborators acted in coordinated fashion, and that the reasons for this level of coordination and violence were unknown.[122]

Students hold portraits of some of the 43 missing students from the Ayotzinapa Rural Teacher's College during a march in Mexico City to mark 37 months since their disappearance in the state of Guerrero.

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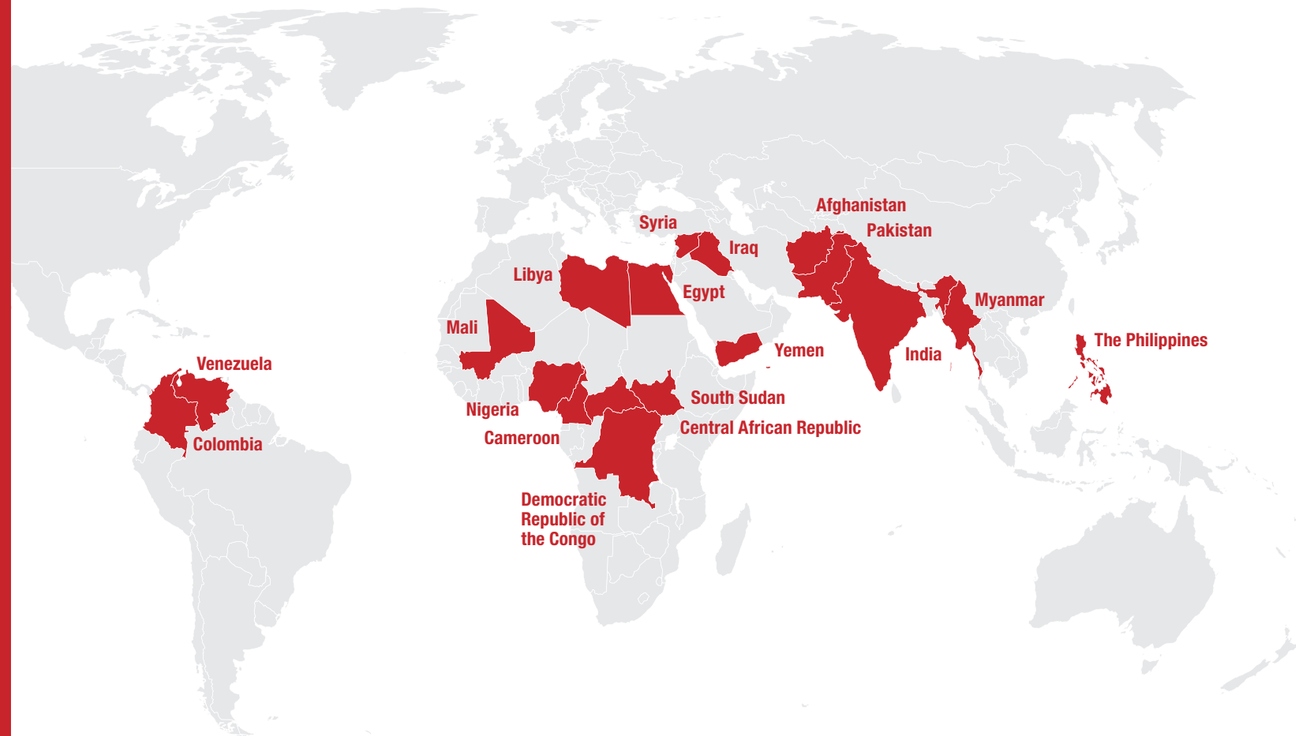
Education-related attacks on girls and women

Information collected for this report showed that girls and women were targeted because of their gender in at least 18 of the 28 countries profiled in this report: **Afghanistan, Cameroon, CAR, Colombia, DRC, Egypt, India, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Sudan, Syria, Venezuela,** and **Yemen.**

Attacks targeting girls and women because of their gender took two forms: sexual violence, as discussed above, and attacks aimed at repressing or stopping the learning or teaching of girls and women. Examples of the second form of attack included the following:

- Targeted attacks on girls' schools comprised approximately one-quarter of reported attacks on schools in **Afghanistan** and one-third of reported attacks on schools in **Pakistan** between 2013 and 2017.[123]
- According to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in areas of **Libya** controlled by the non-state armed group Ansar al-Sharia, parents reported that they were afraid to send their daughters to school for fear they would be abducted.[124]

Profiled countries with reports of attacks on education that uniquely targeted girls or women



CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE NORTHERN TRIANGLE

Rising rates of violence associated with criminal organizations in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras took a toll on the education systems of these countries during the reporting period. Extortion, child recruitment, use of schools by non-state armed groups, and other threats, as well as the risk of violence in schools and en route to and from school, resulted in high dropout rates. These groups also threatened and physically targeted teachers.

After the early 2000s, rates of violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—together known as the Northern Triangle of Central America—increased. Homicides occurred at some of the highest rates in the world, and there was widespread sexual violence and pervasive extortion and threats. At the time of writing, the region was recognized as one of the most violent outside a warzone.[125] Those responsible were criminal organizations commonly known as gangs, or maras. These groups vied for control over neighborhoods, towns, and even entire cities, battling both each other and the state, often engaging in open gunfire battles. The two most active maras were Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13, and Mara 18, or 18th Street, both of which had tens of thousands of members across the three countries.[126] Efforts to maintain territorial control frequently involved broad recruitment campaigns and efforts to ensure that mara members were present in all facets of daily life.

Violence associated with the maras' activity caused mass displacement of the communities where they operated and profoundly damaged the social fabric of the Northern Triangle countries between 2013 and 2017. Children were disproportionately affected by the violence, which permeated their daily lives. Schools in the Northern Triangle countries were centers of child recruitment, bases for sexual exploitation, sources of extortion revenue, and other hives of mara activity.[127] In Guatemala, UNICEF and World Vision reported in 2015 that 60 percent of students feared attending school, and that 23 percent of students and 30 percent of teachers had been victims or knew a victim of mara violence.[128] Amnesty International reported that in 2015, 39,000 students in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras dropped out of school because of threats or harassment by gangs.[129]

The violence led to forced migration. In the first six months of 2016, almost 26,000 unaccompanied children from the Northern Triangle were apprehended at the US border, and an additional 16,000 were found in Mexico. Poverty and violence were cited as the most common reasons for their leaving their countries of ori-

A student walks past the graffiti of a street gang painted on the wall of a school in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in April 2016. The school was under military protection after a series of threats by gangs trying to control territory and drug sale points.

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gin.[130] In testimony recorded by UNICEF, a child reported dropping out of school in February 2015 because mara members threatened him there.[131] In February 2016, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported the testimony of a woman from El Salvador whose family, including her daughter, had been continuously harassed by mara members. When the mara members eventually appeared at the daughter's school and threatened her, the family decided that the only way to escape the organization's reach was to leave the country, as the threat to their daily life had become too great.[132]

Students recruited at school

Criminal groups recruited children as young as eight years old, according to a media article about mara violence in Guatemala City.[133] Students sometimes joined the maras because they were offered money. In other cases they were forced to join, risking violence and even death if they did not. Some girls were reportedly taken from schools and "given" to mara members, who would rape them and then let them go.[134]

Many children continued to attend school after being recruited so their mara could be better represented in the school and could increase its reach and presence in the neighborhood.[135] An *Associated Press* article published in December 2014 highlighted the maras' control over the majority of the 130 public schools in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The groups painted graffiti on the schools' walls, passed out pamphlets in the hallways, and conscripted both students and their parents as mara members. There were also reports that student mara members intentionally repeated grades so that they could continue the maras' operations in the schools. [136]

In some schools in Tegucigalpa the groups did not have to recruit children because more students wanted to join than the maras could absorb.[137] In other schools mara members' presence attracted police attention. In one incident in El Salvador, a school in San Jacinto, Santa Ana, reported to the police that security officers had entered the campus and hit a student; it was then clarified that the officers had entered the school to find a student mara member who was otherwise unreachable. The student had been arrested and released in previous weeks, but the police had not taken his photo or registered other personal information. They went to the school to collect this data from him.[138] The UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and UNHCR both reported in 2017 that parents in El Salvador kept children, especially girls, home from school to avoid their being recruited or otherwise threatened by mara members.[139]

Students caught in the dynamics of territorial disputes

Threats related to territorial disputes between maras affected children's ability to attend school during the 2013-2017 reporting period. Threats of recruitment or physical harm resulted in significant dropout levels. *IRIN News* reported that children going to school in their own neighborhoods were commonly recruited by the mara controlling the neighborhood. Children who were enrolled in schools in neighborhoods other than where they lived often faced the additional risk of crossing invisible borders between mara territories while en route to or from school.[140] Children attending school in a neighborhood other than their own that was controlled by a rival mara were often subjected to death threats at school, as they were perceived to be associated with the mara that controlled their home neighborhood.[141] For example:

- A Guatemalan media source reported that a motorcyclist shot and killed a high school student in Guatemala City on April 6, 2016, as he walked home from school. The source suspected that the killing was linked to a territorial dispute between the group that controlled the student's school zone and the group that controlled his home neighborhood.[142]
- In Honduras in May 2016, local media reported that Mara 18 sent messages to the Instituto Central Vicente Cáceres in Comayagüela, in which they "ordered" approximately 500 students to stop attending classes because they were from neighborhoods controlled by MS-13.[143] Another local media article reported several similar cases in Tegucigalpa in February 2017.[144]

- In San Salvador on May 18, 2017, a school bus was reportedly attacked by two members of MS-13 on a motorbike, who shot at the bus. The driver was killed and two students were wounded. Media sources reported that the police suspected that the driver, who had been driving through an area controlled by MS-13 to collect students at the time of the attack, was associated with Mara 18.[145]

Extortion, threats, and targeted killings affecting schools, teachers, students, and parents

Extortion, or demands for what the maras called war taxes or rent, also affected schools throughout the region during the reporting period, including a reported 60 percent of schools in El Salvador alone in 2016.[146] For example, a school in Ilopango, El Salvador, had to change its location in June 2015 because it could no longer afford the extortion payments demanded by local maras.[147] The director of the Private Schools Association in Honduras reported that extortion and threats had affected schools in that country for 10 years as of February 2017. Some of the schools eventually had to close due to the increased risk of violence presented by the maras' threats.[148] Honduran media reported that, in February 2017, hundreds of children in Tegucigalpa were unable to attend classes after their schools closed due to extortion demands and threats from mara members.[149]

Threats targeting students, teachers, and parents often came from student recruits themselves. In other cases teachers were targeted for killing by more senior group members. For example:

- An *Associated Press* article reported in December 2014 that teachers in Honduras were often forced to pay up to 10 percent of their salaries, frequently to child recruits in the schools where they taught.[150] In August 2014, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras reported that one teacher was killed every month in Honduras.[151]
- On March 15, 2016, gunmen entered a classroom in Chiquimulilla, Guatemala, and shot the teacher dead in front of his students. The motive for the attack was unknown, although local media speculated that the teacher had refused to hand over school funds to the armed group, as he was in charge of the treasury.[152]
- On June 2, 2017, mara members in El Salvador abducted two female schoolgirls in Cusamaluco de Nahuizalco, Sonsonate, as they walked home from school. They took the two students to a field and attacked them with a machete before one could escape and call for help. Police suspected that one of the girls had been romantically involved with a mara member, but neither would speak about the identity of their attackers, possibly due to the threat of retaliation.[153]

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN PROTECTING EDUCATION FROM ATTACK

Despite the increase in the number of recorded attacks on education between 2013 and 2017, increased awareness of the problem and the growing global consensus around the need to protect education resulted in a wide range of efforts to ensure that learning spaces remained safe. While many policies and programs were implemented at the national and local level, this section focuses on international responses and national efforts to implement global initiatives, with a particular focus on legal responses. Additional information on national and local efforts to prevent, mitigate, and respond to attacks on education is available on GCPEA's website.[154]

Safe Schools Declaration

The launch of the Safe Schools Declaration and the rising number of states endorsing it was perhaps the most visible representation of a global consensus that education should be protected from attacks and military use, as highlighted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Children and Armed conflict in her 2017 report to the UN General Assembly.[155] The SRSG noted that the growing number of endorsements of the Declaration signaled "a growing international consensus that preventing the military use of schools is essential to avoid disruption to education" and echoed a call by the Secretary-General "for more Member States to formally endorse the Declaration and its guidelines and encourage signatories to include those commitments in their national policies."[156] At the end of 2017, the High Commissioner for Human Rights also encouraged states to endorse the Declaration.[157]

Norway and Argentina led a process of state consultations to develop the Safe Schools Declaration, which was opened for endorsement at the First International Safe Schools Conference, hosted in Oslo in May 2015. Thirty-seven states endorsed the Declaration in Oslo, and by the time of the Second International Safe Schools Conference, hosted by Argentina in Buenos Aires in March 2017, the number of endorsing states had grown to 63. At the time of writing, 74 states had endorsed the Declaration, including 20 members of the African Union, 32 Council of Europe members, 22 European Union members, 20 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members, 13 members of the Organization of American States, and 18 members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Iraqi children in a classroom in a village south of Mosul, which was retaken from 'IS' fighters by Iraqi forces on February 15, 2017. Many children had been kept out of school for more than two years.

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States endorsing the Safe Schools Declaration (as of April 19, 2018)*

1. Afghanistan
2. Albania (Sept. 9, 2016)
3. Angola (June 1, 2016)
4. Andorra (March 30, 2017)
5. Argentina
6. Armenia (March 21, 2017)
7. Austria
8. Belgium (March 28, 2017)
9. Botswana (June 16, 2017)
10. Brazil
11. Bulgaria
12. Burkina Faso (Sept. 12, 2017)
13. Canada (Feb. 21, 2017)
14. Central African Republic (June 23, 2015)
15. Chad (July 30, 2015)
16. Chile
17. Costa Rica (June 2, 2015)
18. Côte d'Ivoire
19. Czech Republic
20. Cyprus (July 26, 2017)
21. Denmark (May 2, 2017)
22. Dominican Republic (Dec. 26, 2017)
23. Democratic Republic of the Congo (July 28, 2016)
24. Ecuador
25. El Salvador (Nov. 13, 2017)
26. Finland
27. France (Feb. 21, 2017)
28. Georgia
29. Greece
30. Honduras
31. Iceland
32. Ireland
33. Italy
34. Jamaica
35. Jordan
36. Kazakhstan (July 24, 2015)
37. Kenya (June 23, 2015)
38. Lebanon (June 24, 2015)
39. Liberia
40. Liechtenstein
41. Luxembourg
42. Madagascar
43. Malaysia (June 17, 2015)
44. Mali (Feb. 1, 2018)
45. Malta (March 24, 2017)
46. Montenegro
47. Mozambique
48. New Zealand
49. The Netherlands
50. Niger (June 23, 2015)
51. Nigeria
52. Norway
53. Palestine
54. Panama (June 17, 2015)
55. Paraguay (March 11, 2016)
56. Poland
57. Portugal
58. Qatar
59. Romania (May 24, 2017)
60. Serbia (July 10, 2017)
61. Sierra Leone (June 12, 2015)
62. Slovakia (Dec. 29, 2016)
63. Slovenia (April 12, 2016)
64. Somalia (Oct. 27, 2015)
65. South Africa
66. South Sudan (June 23, 2015)
67. Spain
68. Sudan (Oct. 27, 2015)
69. Sweden (June 25, 2015)
70. Switzerland
71. United Kingdom (April 19, 2018)
72. Uruguay
73. Yemen (Oct. 20, 2017)
74. Zambia

* The date when a country endorsed is noted unless the country endorsed in May 2015, when the Declaration was first opened for endorsement.

The first of the Declaration's seven commitments is the pledge to use the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* and bring them into endorsing nations' domestic policies and operational frameworks as far as possible. Drafted through a consultative process hosted by GCPEA, the *Guidelines* were finalized in December 2014 through a process led by the governments of Norway, Argentina, and a core group of states. The *Guidelines* suggest a series of actions states can take to ensure that schools and universities remain safe spaces for learning. These include refraining from military use of schools and universities, regardless of whether they are functioning; refraining from destroying schools and universities as part of battlefield tactics; avoiding engaging security forces in protecting schools and universities unless no alternative means of providing security are available; incorporating the *Guidelines* into legislation, military doctrine, training manuals, rules of engagement, and operational orders, and disseminating them by other means; and encouraging protective practices in relation to schools and universities.

By endorsing the Declaration, states also commit to:

- Make every effort at a national level to collect relevant data on attacks on educational facilities, the victims of attacks, and military use of schools and universities during armed conflict, including through existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms;
- Provide assistance to victims in a nondiscriminatory manner;
- Investigate allegations of violations of applicable national and international law and, where appropriate, duly prosecute perpetrators;
- Develop, adopt, and promote conflict-sensitive approaches to education in international humanitarian and development programs, and at the national level, where relevant;
- Seek to ensure the continuation of education during armed conflict, support the reestablishment of educational facilities, and, where in a position to do so, provide and facilitate international cooperation and assistance to programs working to prevent or respond to attacks on education;
- Support efforts of the UN Security Council on children and armed conflict, the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict, and other relevant UN organs, entities, and agencies; and
- Meet on a regular basis to review implementation of the Declaration and use of the *Guidelines,* and invite relevant international organizations and civil society to participate.

Global funding and frameworks for education in emergencies

The period between 2013 and 2017 saw increased attention given to education for crisis-affected populations. Several global frameworks and funds acknowledged the need for renewed attention to education in emergency situations, including attacks on education, and aimed to commit member states to ensuring access to quality education in the midst of conflict and crisis, including attacks on education. These included:

- **Education Cannot Wait** (ECW), established in 2016, was the first global fund dedicated to education in emergencies, with the goal of making education a greater priority on the humanitarian agenda. ECW explicitly linked the education and protection agendas in an effort to ensure that schools and other learning centers remain safe, protective, and healing spaces.[158]
- The **Incheon Declaration and** the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs)**,** both adopted in 2015, together affirmed global leaders' commitment to Education 2030, a new vision for education for the next 15 years. The Incheon Delcaration notes that 36 percent of the world's out-of-school children lived in areas affected by conflict, and expressly recognizes the need to maintain education during and after crises.[159] SDG Goal Four aims to "ensure inclusive and quality education and promote lifelong learning for all" and included among its targets ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for those in vulnerable situations, as well as providing safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments.[160] The **Education 2030 Framework for Action,** published in October 2015, provides an outline for turning the commitments of the SDG4-Education 2030 agenda into reality through funding, implementation, coordination, and monitoring. The framework recognizes the significant funding gaps for education in situations of conflict and the need to develop resilient and responsive education systems, with 'addressing education in emergency situations' identified among a set of strategic approaches requisite for achieving SDG4. It specifically emphasizes that every effort should be made to 'ensure that education institutions are protected as zones of peace'; that special measures are put in place to protect women and girls in conflict zones; that schools and educational institutions – and the routes to and from them – are free from attack, forced recruitment, kidnapping and sexual violence; and that actions are taken to end impunity for persons and armed groups that attack education institutions. Among the proposed indicators for monitoring the SDG4 targets more comprehensively across countries is the 'number of attacks on students, personnel and institutions'.[161]
- The **International Committee of the Red Cross** (ICRC), whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to work in areas of armed conflict and other situations of violence, consolidated its approach in responding to humanitarian needs resulting from disruption to education in such situations. In 2017, the ICRC developed a Framework on Access to Education to guide its operational and policy responses. Also in 2017, the Council of Delegates of the Red Cross and Red Crescent passed a resolution encouraging a strengthened response to education-related humanitarian needs and supporting efforts to strengthen preparedness, response, and recovery measures in the education sector.[162]

Protecting schools and universities from military use

Between 2013 and 2017, several states took tangible steps to reduce military use of schools and universities. For example:

- Several states worked to implement the *Guidelines* as part of Save the Children's **Schools as Zones of Peace** (SZOP) project.[163] The SZOP project was explicitly and conceptually related to the Safe Schools Declaration, linking the global work on protecting education from attack to what happens at the school level in affected countries. At the time of writing, Save the Children was supporting SZOP projects in **DRC, Israel/Palestine, Niger, South Sudan, Syria,** and **Ukraine.**[164] Save the Children developed internal guidance that details suggested activities at the community and national levels to help secure children's protection at school and avoid the disruption of education due to armed conflict. These included risk-mapping, risk-reduction plans, the formation and training of children's clubs, community outreach, training of armed groups, and legal reviews. For example, in DRC, more than 100 national-level stakeholders committed to disseminating and implementing the *Guidelines*. An internal evaluation of SZOP projects in DRC and Palestine showed that fewer school days were lost and reporting mechanisms were strengthened by the projects.[165]
- **Denmark**'s *Military Manual on the Law of Danish Armed Forces*, published in 2016, included added protections for children, such as prohibiting the use of educational institutions: "[R]estraint should be exercised with respect to use of schools and other education institutions in support of Danish military operations. This particular focus on schools is due to the grave consequences of military use, not only in terms of immediate risk to the lives of children and young people, who may be in or near such schools, but also more long-term consequences for school-aged children."[166]
- A June 2016 **United Kingdom** army doctrine note, entitled "Human Security: The Military Contribution," noted that the UN Security Council had declared schools off limits for armed groups and military activities.[167] The doctrine note states that, in certain circumstances, an occupying power might be within its rights to temporarily close a school, but only when there are very strong reasons for doing so, these reasons are made public, and there is a serious possibility that the closure will achieve important and worthwhile results.[168] It also states that attacks on schools are prohibited unless the school is being used for military purposes, but even then, considerable care must be taken.[169]
- **New Zealand**'s updated Law of Armed Conflict Manual on armed force law includes explicit protections for educational institutions: "[New Zealand Defence Forces are only to use the buildings of educational institutions for military purposes if it is absolutely necessary to do so. In such cases all feasible steps are to be taken to ensure that:] (a) Civilians and, in particular, children are protected from the effects of attack upon the institutions by opposing forces—including where necessary the removal of such persons from the vicinity; (b) Such use is for the minimum time possible; (c) The adverse effects upon children, in particular in respect to their right to education, are minimized to the maximum extent possible."[170]
- **Switzerland**'s draft manual on the law of armed conflict also included protections for educational institutions: "Educational institutions are to be treated with particular caution. Their destruction may amount to particularly grave disadvantages for a people and the future of a country. Moreover, children, who require extra protection due to their vulnerability, are present in schools. In addition, universities as well as other institutions of higher education often constitute or host significant cultural objects. Therefore, in applying the principles of precautions and proportionality, particular importance has to be attached to educational institutions. Their military use should be avoided."[171]
- **Afghanistan**'s Ministry of Education issued two directives to all security-related ministries in 2016, highlighting the fact that Afghanistan had endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration and requesting that armed forces stop using schools for military purposes.[172] In an April 2016 letter, the minister of education sought support from the Ministry of Interior Affairs to clear schools of military checkpoints and bases.[173]
- The ceasefire agreement signed in 2015 between **Myanmar**'s government and armed groups included a stipulation to avoid using schools and other civilian and culturally important places as military outposts.[174]
- In South Sudan, the chief of staff of the **Sudan People's Liberation Army** issued a military order in September 2014 that reaffirmed a demand that all SPLA members refrain from occupying or using schools in any manner.[175] The order stated that any SPLA member who violated the order would be subject to the full range of disciplinary and administrative measures available under South Sudanese and international law.[176]

Several non-state armed groups also took steps to reduce military use of educational institutions:

- Following days of fighting between rival Palestinian factions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Lebanon reportedly obtained written assurances from **Palestinian armed groups** in the Ein Al Hilweh refugee camp on March 6, 2017, that the groups would no longer violate the neutrality of UNRWA's facilities in the camps, including schools.[177]
- The **Free Syrian Army** (FSA) called for immediate demilitarization of schools in a declaration issued on April 30, 2014.[178]
- In a declaration on March 19, 2014, the **National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces** affirmed its responsibility to respect International Humanitarian Law (IHL), including respecting and protecting schools and refraining from using them in support of military efforts.[179] The coalition also agreed to take all necessary measures to ensure that all groups acting under its instructions, direction, or control would abide by IHL, and to investigate and prosecute all reports of violations.[180]

Finally, several multilateral bodies worked to prevent military use of schools and universities. For example:

- During 2017, NATO worked to develop its concept on protection of civilians and consulted with agencies working in child protection, such as Save the Children. Save the Children recommended that the policy include specific protections for children in conflict, and emphasized the Safe Schools Declaration and *Guidelines* on military use. The policy was scheduled to be finalized in 2018.[181]
- In July 2017, after its troops had occupied Somali National University for nearly a decade, the **African Union Mission in Somalia** (AMISOM) handed control of the institution to the Federal Government of Somalia.[182]
- The **UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations** (DPKO) released a new child-protection policy in June 2017, including extensive guidance on the military use of schools and referencing the Safe Schools Declaration and *Guidelines* on military use.[183] The policy urges UN peacekeeping missions to develop, adopt, disseminate, raise awareness of, and conduct trainings on directives and operating procedures that protect schools. It also encourages UN peacekeeping forces to refrain from using or establishing a presence close to schools and to demilitarize schools already in use as quickly as possible.[184] DPKO's "Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection for Peacekeepers," published in 2015, also includes scenarios intended to discourage the use of educational institutions by peacekeepers, and its *Infantry Battalion Manual,* published in 2012, includes a prohibition against the use of schools.[185]
- The **UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic** issued a directive on protecting schools and universities against military use in December 2015.[186] The directive instructed MINUSCA military and police to vacate schools without delay, remove all signs of militarization, including ammunition and ordnance, and repair all damage done to the institutions.[187] The directive also instructed military and police personnel tasked to secure schools to avoid entering school premises wherever possible so as not to compromise the schools' civilian status.[188]

Geneva Call Deeds of Commitment

The NGO Geneva Call incorporated the protection of education into its work with non-state armed groups. Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict allows non-state groups to pledge their respect for international humanitarian norms and to be held publicly accountable. The Deed includes a commitment to "avoid using for military purposes schools or premises primarily used by children."[189] One armed group which had signed the Deed, after it was introduced to the *Guidelines* on military use, moved its trainings on international humanitarian law out of a school.[190] As of March 2018, 26 groups had signed the Deed of Commitment to protect children.[191]

Legal developments

As the global extent of attacks on education gained international attention, UN bodies, international courts, treaty bodies, regional bodies, and independent investigative mechanisms considered the violence committed against students, educators, and educational institutions in their decisions, recommendations, and reporting.

United Nations

During the reporting period, the UN Secretary-General urged all member states to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration, and the Security Council and General Assembly each passed a resolution to strengthen the protection of education, in particular to discourage military use of schools. For example:

- The **Secretary-General**'s 2017 report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict expressed concern about the destruction of schools, as well as their use for military purposes.[192] The Secretary-General urged member states to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration and called upon parties to conflict to stop military use of schools.[193]
- At its 35th session in June 2017, the **HRC** issued two statements, one on child, early, and forced marriage, the other on the right to education, both of which strongly condemned attacks on education.[194]
- **UN General Assembly Resolution 70/137,** adopted on December 17, 2015, expressed concern about military use of schools and the growing number of attacks on schools and related personnel.[195] The General Assembly encouraged all states to strengthen efforts to prevent military use of schools and to take measures to prevent attacks on schools and related personnel.[196]
- **UN Security Council Resolution 2225,** adopted on June 18, 2015, encouraged states to take concrete measures to prevent armed forces and armed groups from using schools.[197]
- **UN Security Council Resolution 2143,** adopted on March 7, 2014, expressed concern about military use of schools, recognizing that such use might make schools legitimate targets of attack.[198] The Council urged all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian character of schools, encouraged member states to consider concrete measures to deter military use of schools, and called upon UN country-level task forces to enhance monitoring of and reporting on military use.[199]

International Courts

During the reporting period, the **International Criminal Court** (ICC) considered violations against education in its investigations, in issuing arrest warrants, and in making trial judgments. Of the situations under investigation at the ICC, all but those in **Libya** included reference to an attack on education. For example:

- In November 2017, the ICC prosecutor's request to investigate the situation in Afghanistan noted attacks on schools, students, teachers, and school administrators by the Taliban. The prosecutor also noted that girls' education, in particular, had come under sustained attack.[200]
- The ICC's investigation of allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity in **DRC,** which opened in June 2004, included cases of child recruitment and sexual violence, some of which occurred at schools.

UN peacekeepers are seen using a school building in Central African Republic as their base. The forces vacated the school in January 2017 after Human Rights Watch informed UN authorities of their presence.

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For example, in March 2012, the ICC convicted Thomas Lubanga, the founder and president of the Union des Patriotes Congolais, of enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15, some from schools.[201]

- The ICC charges against Dominic Ongwen, an ex-brigade commander of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in **Uganda,** whose trial opened in December 2016, included conscription and use of children under the age of 15 for combat-related purposes. At the time of writing, the briefs provided by the prosecution included accounts of attacks on schools, as well as of the LRA abducting children from schools to become "LRA wives."[202]
- On March 4, 2009, the ICC applied for an arrest warrant for President Omar al-Bashir of **Sudan,** who remained at large. The application cited an ethnically motivated school bombing, as well as rapes perpetrated at a girls' boarding school, as evidence of genocide. Another school bombing was cited as evidence of a crime against humanity.[203]
- In March 2016, the ICC's conviction of Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo, former military commander of the Mouvement de Libération du Congo (MLC) troops in **CAR,** for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed under command or superior responsibility considered evidence of attacks on education.[204] In its trial judgment, the ICC stated that the MLC had established a base in a school and stored looted items in classrooms.[205]

- The ICC's confirmation of charges against former **Côte d'Ivoire** president Laurent Gbagbo and his close political ally Charles Blé Goudé in 2014 noted that one of Gbagbo's defense militias used university residence halls to train a group of students in firearm use in order to operate as a militia.[206]
- The ICC's investigation of war crimes in **Mali,** opened in January 2013, included an inquiry into attacks on schools, including their use for training child recruits.[207]
- In her request to authorize an investigation in **Georgia,** the ICC prosecutor noted that several indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks had allegedly damaged schools, and that Human Rights Watch had reported one direct attack on a school that was being occupied by Georgian armed forces in August 2008. In January 2016, the ICC granted the prosecutor's request to investigate.[208]

The **European Court of Human Rights** also considered attacks on education in at least one case during the reporting period. On April 13, 2017, the court decided unanimously that Russia had violated Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights by failing to take measures to prevent the September 2004 attack on a school in Beslan by members of Chechen armed groups, and by conducting an insufficient investigation to determine whether force used by Russian state agents had been justified.[209] The attack by the Chechen gunmen and the Russian government's response, which took place at Beslan School No. 1 during its Day of Knowledge ceremony, lasted more than 50 hours and killed 330 people, including 180 children.[210] The court held that Russia's use of explosives and indiscriminate weapons could not be regarded as absolutely necessary and thus violated the right to life, protected by Article 2 of the Convention.[211] The court ordered Russia to pay the applicants a total of nearly €3 million and recommended that states take measures to deter similar violations of the European Convention on Human Rights in the future.[212]

Treaty Bodies

Several treaty bodies expressed concern about attacks on education and made recommendations regarding attacks on education during the reporting period. For example:

- In its concluding observations on **Thailand** (2015) and **Pakistan** (2017), the **UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights** (CESCR) expressed concern about attacks on teachers and schools and the military use of schools.[213] CESCR recommended that Pakistan take all measures necessary to enhance security at schools, provide an alternate space for education in case of attack, and immediately and completely ban the use of schools by military forces. It also invited Pakistan to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration and commit to using the *Guidelines* on military use.[214]
- **CEDAW** expressed concern over the sexual harassment and forced recruitment of girls by armed forces and armed groups in schools in **India** (2014), **El Salvador** (2017), and **Nigeria** (2017).[215] Its concluding observations on India noted that sexual harassment by security forces occupying schools in India caused girls to drop out. CEDAW called on India to address the issue, to escort girls to school in unsafe areas, and to prohibit the security forces from using schools for their own purposes.[216]
- The **UN Committee on the Rights of the Child** (CRC) addressed attacks on education in its concluding observations on **Yemen** (2014), **Zimbabwe** (2016), **Kenya** (2016), **DRC** (2017), **CAR** (2017), **Bhutan** (2017), and **Cyprus** (2017).[217] The committee's concluding observations on DRC included a statement of concern over attacks on schools, students, and teachers by armed groups, as well as those groups' use of schools for military purposes. The CRC recommended that DRC implement existing laws and regulations that prohibit attacks on and occupation of schools by the military and take measures to prosecute those responsible for incidents that do occur.[218]

Regional Bodies

Throughout the reporting period, the African Union made strong statements about attacks on education and adopted measures to protect education from attack. In January 2016, the AU heads of state adopted the **Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025,** which included an objective to promote peace education and conflict prevention and resolution in educational settings. Additionally, the AU **Peace and Security Council** (PSC) repeatedly encouraged the protection of education and signing of the Safe Schools Declaration. For example:

- After an open session titled "Child Soldiers/Out of School Children in Armed Conflict in Africa" held in July 2017, the PSC welcomed the Safe Schools Declaration as an initiative that could curb the number of children who were out of school and being used as soldiers.[219]
- Following its open session on ending child marriages held in June 2017, the PSC stated that "keeping girls in schools is one of the most effective instruments to end child marriages. In this regard, the council urged Member States to endorse and implement the Safe Schools Declaration and to develop refugee education action plans, with a view to providing inclusive and quality education in refugee situations in Africa."[220]
- In its 597th meeting on May 10, 2016, the PSC expressed concern over attacks against schools and the destruction of educational infrastructure.[221] The council underscored the need for AU members to mainstream the protection of schools and personnel into their public administration and management systems and urged AU members that had not yet done so to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration.[222]

Independent Investigative Mechanisms

Two independent investigative mechanisms specifically addressed attacks on education and the military use of educational institutions.

- The **Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic** reported numerous instances of attacks on schools and related personnel and the military use of schools, noting that some acts constituted war crimes.[223] The Commission also reported that schools were being used as military bases and training camps and recommended that all parties respect and protect schools and maintain their civilian character.[224]
- The **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights** published its fourth report on Colombia in December 2013, noting that the factors undermining children's right to an education included the destruction, occupation, and forced closure of schools; a scarcity of teachers because of threats and attacks against them; mines and ordnance in and around schools; abusive use of school areas for military propaganda and recruitment; and forced displacement.[225]

Monitoring and reporting attacks on education

Efforts to strengthen the monitoring and reporting of attacks on education included the following:

- Steps were taken to strengthen the **UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict**, which was established in 2005 through UN Security Council Resolution 1612 to end the six grave violations against children, including attacks on schools and hospitals. Each year the Secretary-General releases a report on children and armed conflict, which in an annex to the report names the parties to conflict that have committed a "trigger" violation. In July 2011, UN Security Council Resolution 1998 made attacks on schools and hospitals a trigger violation.[226] In 2014, the Office of the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, which has a mandate to support monitoring and reporting on the six grave violations, released a **guidance note on Security Council Resolution 1998.** The practical guide seeks to improve the systems for reporting on attacks on schools and hospitals in order to support more comprehensive and accurate monitoring of these violations. The guidance note refers to the *Guidelines* on military use and encourages member states, "both in times of conflict and peace, to support and adhere to this set of principles, and to integrate them in a practical way into their national policies and legislation, as well as their military doctrine, manuals and training."[227]
- The **Education 2030 Framework for Action** includes a set of 11 global and 43 thematic indicators proposed to measure and monitor progress in achieving SDG4, including indicator 34: "Number of attacks on students, personnel, and institutions."[228]

RECOMMENDATIONS

The gains made in protecting education from attack since 2013 are laudable, yet there is still significant work to be done to protect learners, educators, and educational institutions from attacks on education and military use. To better protect education, GCPEA makes the following recommendations to be followed by states, non-state armed groups, UN and international agencies, and civil society actors:

Overarching recommendations

- **Endorse, implement, and support the Safe Schools Declaration to ensure that all students and educators, male and female, can learn and teach in safety.**
- **Avoid using schools and universities for military purposes, including by implementing the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*.**
- **Strengthen monitoring and reporting of attacks on education, including disaggregating data by type of attack on education, sex, age, and type of schooling, in order to improve efforts to prevent and respond to attacks on education.**
- **Systematically investigate attacks on education and prosecute perpetrators.**
- **Provide nondiscriminatory assistance for all victims of attacks on education, taking into account the different needs and experiences of males and females.**
- **Ensure that education promotes peace instead of triggering conflict and provides physical and psychosocial protection for students, including by addressing gender-based stereotypes and barriers that can trigger, exacerbate, and follow attacks on education.**
- **Where feasible, maintain safe access to education during armed conflict, including by engaging with school and university communities and all other relevant stakeholders in developing risk-reduction strategies and comprehensive safety and security plans for attacks on education.**

National governments, including ministries of education, higher education, and defense, as well as national security forces, should take the following steps, considering the gender-specific needs and experiences of affected populations:

International Commitments

1. Endorse the Safe Schools Declaration.
2. Implement the Safe Schools Declaration at all levels of education.
3. Support GCPEA's Principles of State Responsibility to Protect Higher Education from Attack.

Military Operations

4. Refrain from using schools and universities for military purposes, including by integrating the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* into domestic policy, operational frameworks, and training manuals, as far as is possible and appropriate.
5. Abide by the laws of war and never target students or teachers who are not taking direct part in hostilities. Never attack buildings dedicated to education – such as schools and universities – that do not constitute military objectives.
6. Engage gender specialists to review military policies and doctrines and hold regular trainings on implementing protections for education that account for the specific needs of males and females.
7. Strengthen efforts to recruit women officers, both in the military and in law enforcement, and if officers are stationed near or at schools, ensure gender parity among them.

Monitoring and Reporting

8. Work with the UN, international agencies, and civil society to strengthen and support existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms, and report attacks on education and military use of schools and universities to the UN-led MRM, Education Cluster, or other monitoring partners, as relevant.
9. Ensure that monitoring systems collect and report data that is disaggregated by type of attack on education, sex, age, and type of schooling.
10. Ensure that reports of child recruitment and conflict-related sexual violence specify where it takes place, including at schools and universities and along school or university routes, so they can be tracked as attacks on education.
11. Work with legal, medical, and psychosocial service providers to establish referral mechanisms that allow victims of attacks on education to consent to sharing anonymized information with monitoring systems.
12. Support the creation of a mechanism for reporting attacks on higher education. In the absence of a specialized mechanism, strengthen and systematize procedures for reporting attacks on higher education; for example, reporting to the relevant UN or regional rapporteurs or human rights bodies.

Assistance for Victims

13. Provide nondiscriminatory, contextually appropriate legal, medical, and psychosocial assistance to male and female victims of attacks on education, including sexual and reproductive health services, and engage in outreach to ensure that victims have access to such services.
14. Establish, or contribute to the establishment of, child-friendly and gender-specific safe spaces, such as formal or informal community centers or women's centers, for victims of attacks on education where they can receive legal, medical, and psychosocial information and services; learn how to continue their education during conflict; and participate in developing and contributing to response and protection measures.

Legal Mechanisms and Accountability

15. Reform or promulgate domestic laws and policies in accordance with international law to enable the effective, systematic, and transparent investigation and prosecution of allegations of attacks on educational facilities, students, and teachers, including gender-based attacks.
16. Effectively and transparently investigate alleged violations of applicable national and international law, prosecute perpetrators where appropriate, and ensure that cases of attacks on educational facilities, students, and teachers are brought to existing national courts or establish ad hoc mechanisms to address such cases.
17. Support and cooperate with criminal accountability mechanisms through international channels, such as the ICC, and support the establishment of internationalized or hybrid courts.
18. Pursue broad accountability by mandating that transitional justice mechanisms, such as domestic special courts or truth commissions, explicitly recognize attacks on education and redress victims of such attacks, including through dedicated reparations efforts and programs for these victims.
19. Support national consultations to assess the needs and desires of affected communities and individuals, particularly with respect to justice and reparations for attacks on education and consequent gender-based harms.

Planning for and Mitigating the Impact of Attacks on Education

20. Ensure that education continues during armed conflict by collaborating with local civil society and community members to develop early warning systems, contingency plans, comprehensive safety and security plans, and other initiatives to prevent and mitigate the impact of attacks on education at the school and university levels that respond to the specific needs and experiences of males and females and vulnerable groups.
21. Develop educational policies and practices in accordance with the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, among other international standards on education in emergencies and gender-based violence in emergencies.
22. Consult affected and at-risk populations, including women and girls, about their needs, risks, and envisioned protections, particularly with respect to their education, and incorporate their input into service provision and protection plans.
23. Engage and educate communities on the importance of educating women and girls, keeping them in school or university, and not stigmatizing victims of rape and sexual violence or child recruitment.
24. Contribute to deradicalization efforts by raising awareness of the societal and developmental benefits of protecting education in order to deter ideologically targeted attacks on education, particularly on women and girls.
25. Ensure that schools remain politically neutral spaces. In contexts where there is a pattern of attacking schools used as polling centers, refrain from using them as such.

Non-state armed groups should take the following steps, considering the gender-specific needs and experiences of affected populations:

International Commitments

1. Sign and implement Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict, including as it relates to educational spaces.
2. Sign and implement the Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment to prohibit sexual violence and gender discrimination, including in relation to attacks on education and those targeting women and girls.

Military Operations

3. Refrain from using schools and universities for military purposes, including by integrating the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* into domestic policy, operational frameworks, and training manuals, as far as is possible and appropriate.
4. Abide by the laws of war and never target students or teachers who are not taking direct part in hostilities. Never attack buildings dedicated to education – such as schools and universities – that do not constitute military objectives.
5. Engage gender specialists to review military policies and doctrines and hold regular trainings on implementing protections for education.

UN and international agencies should take the following steps, considering the gender-specific needs and experiences of affected populations:

International Commitments

1. Advocate for states that have not endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration to do so.
2. Support states in implementing the Safe Schools Declaration at all levels of education.

Operations by International Peacekeeping Forces

3. Abide by the laws of war and never target students or teachers who are not taking direct part in hostilities. Never attack buildings dedicated to education – such as schools and universities – that do not constitute military objectives.
4. Refrain from using schools and universities for military purposes, in keeping with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations' 2017 child protection policy and the UN *Infantry Battalion Manual*, and integrate the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* into operations, as far as is possible and appropriate.
5. Engage gender specialists to review state security force policies and doctrines and hold regular trainings on good practices to protect against attacks on education that account for specific experiences, such as conflict-related sexual violence that appears to disproportionately affect women and girls.
6. Strengthen efforts to recruit women officers into peacekeeping missions and, if officers are stationed near or at schools, ensure gender parity among them.

Monitoring and Reporting

7. Establish, strengthen, and systematize monitoring and reporting partnerships between the UN-led MRM, Education Cluster, ministries of education, and civil society.
8. Ensure that monitoring systems collect and report data that is disaggregated by type of attack on education, sex, age, and type of schooling.
9. Ensure that reporting on child recruitment and conflict-related sexual violence specifies where it takes place, including at schools and universities and along school or university routes, so they can be tracked as attacks on education.
10. Support the creation of a mechanism for reporting attacks on higher education. In the absence of a specialized mechanism, strengthen and systematize procedures for reporting attacks on higher education, such as reporting to the relevant UN or regional rapporteurs or human rights bodies.
11. Work with legal, medical, and psychosocial service providers to establish referral mechanisms that allow victims of attacks on education to consent to sharing anonymized information with monitoring systems.

Assistance for Victims

12. Provide nondiscriminatory, contextually appropriate legal, medical, and psychosocial assistance to male and female victims of attacks on education, including sexual and reproductive health services, and engage in outreach to ensure that victims have access to such services.
13. Establish, or contribute to the establishment of, child-friendly and gender-specific safe spaces, such as formal or informal community centers or women's centers, for victims of attacks on education where they can receive legal, medical, and psychosocial information and services; learn how to continue their education during conflict; and participate in developing and contributing to response and protection measures.

Legal Mechanisms and Accountability

14. Provide financial or expert support for investigations of alleged violations of applicable national and international law.
15. Support criminal accountability measures through international channels such as the ICC and the establishment of internationalized or hybrid courts.
16. Request that existing and future mechanisms of the HRC, such as commissions, fact-finding missions, and investigations, identify attacks on education and the perpetrators with a view toward holding them accountable in transitional justice processes, including criminal trials.
17. Highlight attacks on education through UN human rights treaty bodies (including the CRC, the CESCR, and CEDAW; UN country and thematic special procedures of the HRC, such as the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education and the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women; and relevant special representatives, such as for children and armed conflict and on sexual violence in conflict), identify such violations as attacks on education, and recommend that UN member states investigate, prosecute, and otherwise hold accountable the perpetrators of attacks on education, relative to their mandate.
18. Support broad accountability through transitional justice mechanisms, such as domestic special courts or truth commissions, that explicitly recognize attacks on education and redress victims of such attacks, including through dedicated reparations efforts and programs for these victims.
19. Support national consultations to assess the needs and desires of affected communities and individuals, particularly with respect to justice and reparations for attacks on education and consequent gender-based harms.

Planning for and Mitigating the Impact of Attacks on Education

20. Support ministries of education and higher education in preventing, mitigating, and responding to attacks on education by collaborating with local civil society and community members to develop early warning systems, contingency plans, comprehensive safety and security plans, and other initiatives to prevent and mitigate the impact of attacks on education at the school and university levels, which will respond to the specific needs and experiences of males and females and vulnerable groups.

21. Support educational policies and practices in accordance with the INEE Minimum Standards for Education, IASC's Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, and UNFPA's Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, among other international standards on education in emergencies and gender-based violence in emergencies.
22. Consult affected and at-risk populations, including women and girls, about their needs, risks, and envisioned protections, particularly with respect to their education, and incorporate their inputs into service provision and protection plans.
23. Engage and educate communities on the importance of educating women and girls, keeping them in school or university, and not stigmatizing victims of rape and sexual violence or child recruitment.
24. Contribute to deradicalization efforts by raising awareness of the societal and developmental benefits of protecting education in order to deter ideologically targeted attacks on education, particularly on women and girls.

Civil society, as well as school and university communities, should take the following steps, considering the gender-specific needs and experiences of affected populations:

International Commitments

1. Advocate for states that have not yet endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration to do so.
2. Support states in implementing the Safe Schools Declaration at all levels of education.
3. Advocate for state authorities to demonstrate a commitment to GCPEA's Principles of State Responsibility to Protect Higher Education from Attack, including by advocating for and assisting in the review of relevant national policies and laws.

Monitoring and Reporting

4. Work with national governments, the UN, and international agencies to strengthen and systematize monitoring and reporting partnerships, and report attacks on education and military use of schools and universities to the UN-led MRM, Education Cluster, or other monitoring partners, as relevant.
5. Ensure that monitoring systems collect and report data that is disaggregated by type of attack on education, sex, age, and type of schooling.
6. Ensure that reporting on child recruitment and conflict-related sexual violence specifies where it takes place, including at schools and universities and along school or university routes, so they can be tracked as attacks on education.
7. In the absence of a specialized mechanism, strengthen and systematize procedures for reporting attacks on higher education, such as reporting to the relevant UN or regional rapporteurs or human rights bodies.
8. Work with legal, medical, and psychosocial service providers to establish referral mechanisms that allow victims of attacks on education to consent to sharing anonymized information with monitoring systems.

Assistance for Victims

9. Provide nondiscriminatory, contextually appropriate legal, medical, and psychosocial assistance to victims of attacks on education, including sexual and reproductive health services, and engage in outreach to ensure that victims have access to such services.
10. Establish, or contribute to the establishment of, child-friendly and gender-specific safe spaces, such as formal or informal community centers or women's centers, for victims of attacks on education where they can receive legal, medical, and psychosocial information and services; learn how to continue their education during conflict; and participate in developing and contributing to response and protection measures.

Legal Mechanisms and Accountability

11. Support criminal accountability by providing documentation on attacks on education to criminal investigators and prosecutors.
12. Hold national consultations to assess the needs and desires of affected communities and individuals, particularly with respect to justice and reparations for attacks on education and consequent gender-based harms.
13. Support broad accountability through transitional justice mechanisms, such as domestic special courts or truth commissions, that explicitly recognize attacks on education and redress victims of such attacks, including through dedicated reparations efforts and programs for these victims.
14. Highlight attacks on education through UN human rights treaty bodies (including the CRC, CESCR, and CEDAW; UN country and thematic special procedures of the HRC, such as the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education and the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women; and relevant special representatives, such as for children and armed conflict and on sexual violence in conflict), identify such violations as attacks on education, and recommend that UN member states investigate, prosecute, and otherwise hold accountable the perpetrators of attacks on education, relative to their mandate.

Planning for and Mitigating the Impact of Attacks on Education

15. Support the continuation of education during armed conflict and the development of risk-reduction strategies, comprehensive safety and security plans, and other initiatives to prevent and mitigate the impact of attacks on education at the school and university levels that respond to the specific needs and experiences of males and females and vulnerable groups.
16. Support educational policies and practices in accordance with the INEE Minimum Standards for Education, IASC's Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, and UNFPA's Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, among other international standards on education in emergencies and gender-based violence in emergencies.

17. Consult affected and at-risk populations, including women and girls, about their needs, risks, and envisioned protections, particularly with respect to their education, and incorporate their input into service provision and protection plans.
18. Engage and educate communities on the importance of educating women and girls, keeping them in school or university, and not stigmatizing victims of rape and sexual violence or child recruitment.
19. Contribute to deradicalization efforts by raising awareness of the societal and developmental benefits of protecting education in order to deter ideologically targeted attacks on education, particularly on women and girls.

Donors should take the following steps, considering the gender-specific needs and experiences of affected populations:

International Commitments

1. Support the implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration at all levels of education.
2. Support GCPEA's Principles of State Responsibility to Protect Higher Education from Attack.

Monitoring and Reporting

3. Support efforts to establish, strengthen, and systematize monitoring and reporting partnerships between the UN-led MRM, Education Cluster, ministries of education, and civil society.
4. Support the creation of a mechanism for reporting attacks on higher education. In the absence of a specialized mechanism, strengthen and systematize procedures for reporting attacks on higher education, such as reporting to the relevant UN or regional rapporteurs or human rights bodies.

Assistance for Victims

5. Provide financial support to ensure that victims of attacks on education can access legal, medical, and psychosocial assistance, as well as child-friendly and gender-specific safe spaces.
6. Provide financial assistance for the establishment of child-friendly and gender-specific safe spaces, such as formal or informal community centers or women's centers, where victims of attacks on education can receive legal, medical, and psychosocial information and services; learn how to continue their education during conflict; and participate in developing and contributing to response and protection measures.

Legal Mechanisms and Accountability

7. Provide financial or expert support for investigations of alleged violations of applicable national and international law.

Planning for and Mitigating the Impact of Attacks on Education

8. Provide financial support for the continuation of education during armed conflict and the development of risk-reduction strategies, comprehensive safety and security plans, and other initiatives to prevent and mitigate the impact of attacks on education at the school and university levels that will respond to the specific needs and experiences of males and females and vulnerable groups.
9. Support educational policies and practices in accordance with the INEE Minimum Standards for Education, IASC's Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action, and UNFPA's Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, among other international standards on education in emergencies and gender-based violence in emergencies.
10. Consult affected and at-risk populations, including women and girls, about their needs, risks, and envisioned protections, particularly with respect to their education, and incorporate their input into service provision and protection plans.

Students play together on the playground of a damaged school in eastern Aleppo's countryside, Syria, in September 2017.

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COUNTRY PROFILES

This section of the report profiles the 28 countries where there were at least 20 incidents of attacks on education during the five years from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2017.

Desks are seen through a broken window at Garissa University College in northeast Kenya following a 2015 attack on the university by the Somalia-based armed group al-Shabaab.

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AFGHANISTAN

Although reports of physical attacks on educational institutions, students, and educators in Afghanistan appeared to slow, the number of reported threats targeting education, particularly girls' education, rose dramatically. Additionally, state military forces and non-state armed groups used schools and universities as barracks, as sites to recruit and train children, and for other military purposes.

Context

After 13 years of engagement in Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), led by NATO, began to withdraw most troops from the country in 2014. The following years saw an upsurge in violence across the country, with the UN calling nearly half of Afghanistan's provinces areas of high or extreme risk.[229] The Taliban and other non-state armed groups, including 'IS,' expanded their geographical presence and carried out numerous attacks on the civilian population, particularly in provincial areas and in and around the capital city, Kabul.[230] Key parties to the conflict included the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), pro-government militias, the Taliban, other non-state armed groups, including 'IS', and NATO forces.[231] Contested elections in 2014 led to further political tensions that contributed to instability throughout the reporting period.[232] In 2017, NATO said it would increase its "training mission" in Afghanistan by 3,000 troops.[233]

The escalating conflict resulted in sustained high levels of displacement, with at least 360,000 people displaced in 2017.[234] The UN Secretary-General noted in September 2017 that civilians continued be the people most affected by the ongoing conflict.[235] The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan verified more than 40,000 civilian casualties between the beginning of 2013 and the third quarter of 2017.[236] Conflict also challenged the advances made in educational enrollments since 2001, with increasing reports of chronic teacher shortages and "ghost" schools.[237] According to Afghanistan's Ministry of Education, an estimated 3.5 million children were out of school in 2016, 75 percent of them girls.[238]

Direct targeting of the education of girls and women by non-state armed groups, particularly the Taliban and 'IS', contributed to educational and gender inequalities, including high rates of gender-based violence, women's and girls' restricted ability to work and study outside the home, and limited access to justice.[239] According to a survey conducted by REACH in 2017, security concerns and violence were the most commonly cited obstacles to girls' education.[240] Data collected by GCPEA indicated that a growing proportion of attacks in Afghanistan over the course of the reporting period targeted girls' schools, as well as female students and educators. There were reports that armed groups, including 'IS' and the Taliban, forced schools to close.[241] At the same time, provincial education authorities in provinces including Herat and Nangarhar reportedly expressed satisfaction with cooperation received from the Taliban in overseeing and supporting schools.[242]

From 2013 to 2017, reports of incidents that negatively affected education increased, although they did not reach the level reported in *Education under Attack 2014*. In December 2017, OCHA reported that more than 1,000 schools had been destroyed, damaged, or occupied in incidents related to conflict and insecurity over an unspecified period of time.[243]

Afghanistan was among the first group of 37 countries that endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration on May 29, 2015.

Attacks on schools

GCPEA documented approximately 500 attacks on schools across Afghanistan between 2013 and 2017. The rate of attacks on schools peaked in 2014 around the time of the presidential election, but in general fewer attacks were documented than during the 2009 to 2013 period tracked in *Education under Attack 2014*. It was not clear whether this trend was due to fewer monitoring resources or to insecurity, both of which made it more difficult to track and investigate incidents, or to a real decline in physical attacks on schools.

There was some evidence that community-based schools—those in local communities supported by either the government or an NGO—were less susceptible to attacks. One study found that the Taliban widely accepted community-based education and argued that this explained the lower number of attacks on community-based classes.[244]

Direct attacks on schools included arson, suicide bombings, and use of other explosives.[245] Armed opposition groups were often suspected to be behind these attacks, even if they did not claim responsibility. Schools were also caught in fighting between militia forces that competed to gain control of them as a source of funds.[246] Most commonly, schools were damaged in explosions occurring nearby, or struck by rockets aimed at other targets. Of the reported attacks compiled by GCPEA, just over one-quarter that occurred between 2013 and 2017 targeted girls' schools and female education.

The UN reported that at least 73 attacks on schools occurred in Afghanistan in 2013, including suicide bombings and explosive devices planted on school grounds by armed opposition groups, along with one drone strike. These attacks resulted in the death of at least 11 children and injury to 46 others.[247] Data collected by GCPEA showed that girls' schools comprised approximately one-quarter of those targeted in 2013. Examples of attacks on both boys' and girls' schools included the following:

- International media and UNAMA reported that, on June 3, 2013, a motorcyclist with no clear affiliation detonated a bomb outside a boys' high school in Chamkani district, Paktya province. The explosion, which targeted a passing ISAF convoy, killed 10 students and injured 15 other people, including school children.[248]
- Media sources reported that unidentified assailants set a girls' school on fire in Kunduz city, Kunduz province, on July 19, 2013, damaging the building.[249]
- Media sources also recorded a rocket attack that hit a girls' school in Asmar district, Kunar province, on November 25, 2013, injuring four teachers. Authorities claimed that the Taliban was responsible.[250]
- The UN found that, on November 27, 2013, a drone struck Shahid Ghulam Sakhi High School in Logar province, killing one 10-year-old boy.[251]

Attacks on schools peaked during 2014 and were largely related to the presidential election, when non-state armed groups targeted schools used as polling stations. The UN verified 163 attacks against schools and education personnel.[252] The HRC found similarly that, of 155 incidents of attacks on schools and on students and education personnel, and of military occupation, 79 directly targeted schools used as polling centers.[253] Indeed, on June 14 alone, the second day of run-off elections, UNICEF documented 22 attacks on schools, most of them in the central, eastern, and northeastern regions of the country.[254]

Apart from election-related violence, patterns of attacks in 2014 were similar to those of the previous year, including both targeted and indiscriminate incidents. The Taliban and other armed opposition groups were responsible for the majority of the attacks (94 out of 163 documented by the UN).[255] Of the 163 incidents reported by the UN, 28 involved IEDs being placed on school premises.[256] At least one suicide attack targeted a school in 2014. Data collected by GCPEA indicated again that one-quarter of the attacks on education in 2014 affected girls' schools. These incidents included the following:

- International news sources reported that, on December 11, 2014, a suicide bomber detonated his device inside the auditorium of a French-run high school in Kabul that was full of people. At least 7 were killed and 15 injured, according to *Al Jazeera*.[257]
- According to media sources, unidentified assailants burned down one girls' school in Farah province on November 19, 2014, another in Jawzjan province on November 29, 2014, and a third in Herat province on December 10, 2014.[258] During the attack in Jawzjan province, the assailants beat and injured a school guard. According to sources cited by the media, the aim of the attack was to disrupt exams.[259]

The number of UN-reported attacks on schools dropped slightly in 2015, with 132 verified attacks on schools and education personnel. As in previous years, the UN reported that the Taliban was responsible for the majority (82) of these incidents. Afghan government forces and affiliated groups were responsible for 23 cases, and 'IS' was responsible for at least 13 attacks, a higher number than what was reported in previous years.[260] Citing the UN, Human Rights Watch reported a spike in attacks on schools between April and June 2015, which it attributed mainly to Taliban activity in Kunduz, Ghor, and Nuristan provinces. However, the organization noted that threats by pro-government groups also resulted in school closures.[261]

Forms of attack in 2015 remained similar to those seen in previous years, including indirect attacks involving gunfire or rockets, and direct attacks employing IEDs and arson. Examples of attacks on schools included the following:

- UNAMA found that, in August 2015, 'IS'-affiliated fighters forced 25 schools in Deh Bala district, Nangarhar province, to close, which affected 14,102 students. As of December 31st of that year, 10 of the institutions remained closed, leaving 7,087 children still out of school.[262]
- Local media reported that, on May 31, 2015, a rocket struck a school in Logar province, resulting in the death of a teacher and two students.[263]
- According to a joint UNICEF and UNAMA report, on January 29, 2015, an anti-government group detonated an IED in a girls' high school in Nangarhar province, destroying three classrooms. The group also left a written warning calling girls' schools "brothels" and warning the community to stop educating females. The note referenced an attack on a school in Peshawar, Pakistan, and stated that a failure to cease girls' education would result in a similar attack.[264]

Rates of reported attacks on schools declined further in 2016, with 77 incidents affecting schools and personnel verified by the UN, compared to 132 in 2015. The Taliban was responsible for 51 incidents, the majority of verified attacks. A further seven were attributed to 'IS', twelve to undetermined armed groups, four to Afghan national forces, and one incident was jointly attributed to the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Taliban.[265] UNAMA reported a total of 94 conflict-related incidents affecting education, including 17 cases in which IEDs, looting, and other forms of intentional damage affected educational facilities.[266] Girls' schools appeared to be targeted in a slightly higher proportion of incidents in 2016 than in 2015, with 23 incidents directly targeting girls' education, according to the UN.[267] Additionally, UNAMA reported 16 incidents of intimidation and threats directed at girls' schools.[268] Reported incidents included the following:

- UNAMA and media reports both indicated that, on January 10, 2016, anti-government groups fired rockets in Bak district, Khost province. The rockets landed at a primary school where children were playing, killing at least three students and injuring several other children.[269] UNAMA reported that a 9-year-old was killed in the attack, while the Ministry of Education released a statement saying that at least two female students died.[270]
- Human Rights Watch reported that fighting in April between the Taliban and government forces in Baghlan province caught one school in the crossfire, destroying all five tents that comprised the school.[271]
- On May 18, 2016, suspected anti-government groups carried out three similar attacks in the Dara-e-Pech area of Kunar province, according to media reports that GCPEA was able to verify. The assailants set fire to two boys' schools and one girls' school and assaulted and temporarily abducted the guard at each school.[272]
- On October 28, 2016, armed men broke into a girls' school in Jawzjan province. They set fire to the school and beat the security guards. According to local sources, the incident appeared to be connected to a local commander who was opposed to girls' education.[273]

In 2017, the UN verified 31 attacks on education facilities.[274] Likewise, attacks on schools were reported less frequently. GCPEA identified 39 incidents, according to the media and local sources. It was not clear whether these lists overlapped or drew on the same definitions of attacks on schools. Approximately one-quarter of the incidents identified by GCPEA affected girls' education.[275] UNAMA documented 51 attacks on educational facilities and education-related personnel during the first three-quarters of 2017 but did not disaggregate how many of these incidents affected schools.[276] According to the UN-verified information, the Taliban was responsible for the majority of education-related attacks, followed by 'IS' and undetermined armed groups.[277] For example:

- On February 25, 2017, two students were killed when a mortar struck a classroom at Shaheed Mawlawi Habib Rahman High School, a government school in Laghman province. At least five other students suffered injuries in the attack. Afghan security forces may have fired the mortar and missed their target, but this information was unconfirmed in media reports.[278]
- According to UNAMA and OHCHR, the Taliban fired mortar rounds that landed close to a high school in Kunduz city on May 25, 2017. The group was reportedly targeting international forces located near the school. One 9-year-old male student was killed in the attack.[279]
- *Voice of America* reported that 'IS' members destroyed a high school for girls in Darzab district, Jawzjan province, in late June 2017. The acting governor of the province told the reporters that the group had burned and looted other schools in the area. 'IS' had reportedly warned the schools to teach a curriculum the group considered acceptable.[280]
- In an attack reported by the media, which GCPEA was able to confirm with local sources, a school was destroyed during a US air strike on Kunduz province on July 15, 2017.[281]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Abductions, targeted killings, and intimidation were the most common forms of direct attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel between 2013 and 2017, as they were between 2009 and 2012. The Taliban and, increasingly, 'IS' were responsible for the majority of attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel.[282] Male and female students faced threats for distinct reasons, males because of their political affiliations and females because of their status as learners. Overall, the annual number of attacks on students and education personnel appeared to rise over the course of the reporting period. However, according to the data compiled by GCPEA, cases of abduction and intimidation drove these increases, while killings of education personnel declined between 2013 and 2017 from the number killed between 2009 and 2013. [283] According to UNAMA and UNICEF, threats and intimidation targeting education-related personnel rose 376 percent between 2013 and 2015.[284]

Female students and teachers were the targets of approximately one-quarter of all attacks on students and education personnel, according to the information GCPEA collected. Intimidation and threats forced the closure of some girls' schools, sometimes affecting tens of thousands of students.[285] In addition, media sources reported approximately 20 cases in which hundreds of school children became ill in alleged poisonings by unidentified attackers. The vast majority of these cases took place at girls' schools. World Health Organization and other investigators reported to international media that the illness was most likely linked to fear and stress and that it was unlikely poison had been used, but the incidents illustrated the climate of fear surrounding education, particularly for girls.[286]

During 2013, UNAMA and UNICEF reported that 46 teachers were killed or injured and 12 were abducted.[287] The number of teachers killed or abducted that was verified for the UN's annual report on children and armed conflict was much lower (13 cases).[288] Ministry of Education numbers, reported in a media source, were considerably higher, citing approximately 100 education personnel killed between January 1 and August 10 of 2013.[289]

Attacks recorded in 2013 included the following:

- Media sources reported an incident on March 27, 2013, in which unknown assailants shot and killed three teachers who were on their way to school in Balkh province.[290]

- UNAMA reported that on May 31 the Taliban abducted and killed a 7th-grade student in Khost province, reportedly for writing anti-Taliban poetry.[291]
- According to the UN, in May 2013 the Taliban issued a letter in Nangarhar province warning that students, teachers, and other personnel associated with girls' schools would face attacks, including with acid, if they continued to attend school.[292]

According to UNAMA and UNICEF, the number of incidents of threats and intimidation against education personnel increased to 26 in 2014.[293] In contrast, the agencies reported that killings and injuries of teachers and other education personnel declined slightly, to 37.[294] Additionally, 14 teachers were reported abducted in 2014, as compared to 12 in 2013.[295] Examples of attacks included the following:

- The US Department of State reported that in May 2014 the head of the security detail for the minister of education was kidnapped and killed.[296]
- The UN reported that in August 2014 the Taliban abducted a teacher from his school in Zabul province, later killing him, because he had ignored warnings to stop teaching.[297]
- According to media sources, unknown assailants shot and killed a teacher in Logar province on December 13 and one in Uruzgan province on December 24.[298]

UNICEF and UNAMA reported 26 teachers and other education personnel killed and injured in 2015, fewer than documented during the previous year. In addition, of the 75 incidents directly affecting education personnel through abduction or homicide, anti-government groups such as the Taliban were responsible for 74 attacks, and one was attributed to pro-government forces.[299] For example:

- UNAMA reported that, on April 14, 2015, members of a pro-government group shot and killed a teacher in front of his students at a school in Kunduz province for allegedly not following the group commander's instructions.[300]
- The UN documented an incident on April 30, 2015, in which two teachers were kidnapped from a boys' school in Kunar province and killed soon after.[301]

Reported abductions and cases involving threats and intimidation against students and education personnel rose dramatically in 2015. There were 49 cases of kidnapping and 74 of threats reported.[302] UNAMA's annual report on the protection of civilians cited a similar number of cases of intimidation (68).[303]

'IS' activity in the eastern region, particularly in Nangarhar, contributed to a significant proportion of this increase. Sixteen incidents occurred in the east, including twelve in Nangarhar, up from four cases reported in that province in both 2013 and 2014. Eight of the twelve incidents in Nangarhar were attributed to an 'IS' affiliate.[304] Furthermore, 9 out of 14 cases of intimidation reported by UNAMA and UNICEF led to the partial or full closure of 213 schools, primarily in Nangarhar and Herat provinces, areas with high levels of Taliban and 'IS' activity. These threats severely affected girls' education. Ninety-four of these schools had served both genders but were then closed to girls while remaining open for boys. The two agencies reported five other instances in which girls' education was banned or restricted by anti-government actors.[305]

Throughout 2016, threats and intimidation, including attacks affecting girls and women, continued to be the most common forms of attack directed at students, teachers, and other education personnel, although the total number of incidents appeared to decline from the number in 2015. UNAMA reported 44 cases of threats and intimidation directed at education personnel and facilities in 2016.[306] Several of these cases were directed at girls' education or at the content of education. For example:

- On January 7, 2016, approximately 15 armed, masked, and unidentified men entered Khoja Dokoh Female High School in Jawzjan province with guns and issued a warning that the girls should wear burqas. The school director made the requirement a school policy following the threat.[307]
- UNAMA also reported that, on September 4, anti-government groups ordered girls' high schools in three districts of Laghman province to close and asked that community leaders bar girls from attending higher levels of education.[308]
- UNAMA reported two cases in which anti-government groups made threats aimed at having subjects such as science removed from the curriculum, to be replaced with Islamic studies.[309]

Targeted killings and abductions also continued to affect students and education personnel in 2016. UNAMA reported 13 attempted or actual targeted killings of education personnel, which killed 11 and injured 10, and 12 incidents of abduction, which targeted 55 students and education personnel.[310] GCPEA collected information on the following incidents, for example:

- UNAMA reported that on April 11, 2016, an IED struck a shuttle bus carrying Ministry of Education officials in Kabul province, killing the driver and his assistant. Five ministry employees were injured in the attack.[311]
- Nine days later, a stray bullet struck a school headmaster while he was teaching, killing him in front of the class.[312]
- UNAMA also reported that, on September 7, 2016, an anti-government group singled out 13 students on a public bus they had stopped in Farah province. They held the students for three days, releasing them following negotiations with community leaders.[313]
- The UN reported that in September 2016 Afghan forces took seven boys from a school, reportedly with the goal of pressuring the Taliban to release a soldier; it was unclear how the boys' abduction would create such pressure.[314]

The UN verified 16 attacks on education personnel and 22 threats of attack against education personnel and facilities in 2017.[315] The latter category was not disaggregated. Separately, GCPEA identified reports of 32 incidents of targeted assassinations, abductions, or threats of students and education personnel in 2017, collected from UN, media, and local sources, close to half of which affected girls' education.[316] For example:

- Media sources reported that, on January 15, 2017, assailants stating allegiance to 'IS' abducted twelve teachers and two administrative personnel from a government-run madrassa, or religious school, in Nangarhar province. Almost two months later, on March 4, all 14 individuals were freed unharmed.[317]
- The UN reported that threats by anti-government groups closed six girls' schools in Farah district, Farah province, between February 10 and February 20, 2017. According to the UN report, only 10 percent of students returned to the schools when they reopened on February 20.[318]
- In September 2017, 'IS' sent hundreds of families in Darzab district, Jawzjan province, letters urging them not to send their children to school, according to *Gandhara,* a local media agency.[319]
- *Pajhwok Afghan News Agency* reported that an IED targeted and killed the deputy of the Parwan province education department on November 14, 2017. The explosion also injured the head of the Parwan education department. The two were traveling home at the time of the attack.[320]

Military use of schools

Armed forces and non-state armed groups continued to use schools; the number of cases reported in 2013 and 2014 was similar to the number in 2012. Documented instances of military use of schools rose in 2015. Government forces and pro-government groups used the majority of these schools, but non-state armed groups occupied educational institutions as well.[321]

According to UNAMA and UNICEF, 10 schools were used for military purposes in 2013 and 12 in 2014.[322] For example:

- The UN reported that the ANFS took over three schools in Badakhshan province in October 2013 and continued to use them into 2014.[323]

- In June 2014, the ANA took over a girls' school in Kunduz province for more than three weeks, also according to the UN.[324] Advocacy from the country taskforce on monitoring and reporting (CTFMR) succeeded in getting one school vacated in June 2014.[325]
- Media sources reported an incident on September 16, 2013, in which gunmen, whom the local authorities said were Taliban, used a school to shield themselves while they attacked a nearby Afghan border police checkpoint in Nangarhar province.[326]

In 2015, the UN verified 51 cases of military use of schools. Armed opposition groups used 26 schools, the ANA used 9, Afghan National Police used 7, pro-government groups used 6, and international military forces used 3.[327] According to a separate report by UNAMA and UNICEF, pro-government groups used 15 schools in Kunduz province alone for military purposes during 2015.[328] UNAMA and UNICEF also reported that international forces used schools in 2015. Examples included the following:

- According to UNAMA and UNICEF, Afghan local police used a school in Baghlan province as a base from April 28 to September 16, 2015. The police broke down chairs and desks to be burned as firewood. Approximately 700 students and 20 teachers were prevented from entering the school during that time.[329]
- According to the same sources, US Special Forces took over a school in Uruzgan. They left the school when the local community asked them to go, but by May 2015, the school was largely destroyed due to fighting that occurred while the Special Forces were present.[330]

According to the UN, there were 42 verified cases of military use of schools in 2016.[331] These included 34 by government forces, 7 by armed groups, and 1 by a pro-government armed group.[332] Among the documented cases were the following:

- The *Guardian* reported that two schools in Helmand province were used as Afghan military bases in 2016. Soldiers built a watchtower on the roof of one and frequently walked around the schoolyards while heavily armed. A teacher at one school reported that gunfire sent students running for cover on multiple occasions.[333]
- The Institute for War and Peace Reporting noted in December 2016 that the ANA had been using a girls' school in Pasaband district, Ghor province, and that the Taliban had been using a school in Charsada district, also in Ghor province, for two years.[334]
- Human Rights Watch reported on 12 schools in Baghlan province that were or had been used by either Afghan forces or anti-government groups. Multiple schools were used several times by each of these groups and had sustained damage in armed combat.[335] For example, Khial Jan Shahid Primary School, which opened in 2014 after being constructed with funding from the Swedish government and UNICEF, was occupied by the Taliban for approximately five months from late 2015 into early 2016, and again in April 2016. After the Taliban left, government forces occupied the school. The school was largely destroyed in fighting between the two groups.[336]

In 2017, the UN verified 14 incidents in which schools were used for military purposes.[337] Separately, OCHA reported in December 2017 that 41 schools were being used for military purposes.[338] It was not clear how many of these cases overlapped with those reported by the UN during the previous year. Reported cases of schools used for military purposes included the following:

- Afghan soldiers were reportedly stationed at a high school and a middle school in central Baghlan province as of January 2017. Both schools had been closed for several months at that time.[339]
- The Afghanistan Protection Cluster reported that two schools, Peerakhil and Kamboare, both in Kogyani district, Nangarhar province, were being used by non-state armed groups in November 2017.[340]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

There was limited and anecdotal information available on child recruitment that occurred at schools during the reporting period. In 2016, Human Rights Watch reported that the Taliban was increasingly using madrassas in northeastern Afghanistan to train boys between ages 13 and 17 for action in their military operations.[341] According to Human Rights Watch, many of the children recruited from madrassas were deployed in combat.[342] Other reports stated similarly that the group recruited boys from madrassas where poor parents sent their children for free education and lodging despite, or because they were unaware of, the possible risk of recruitment.[343]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school

Two cases of sexual violence affecting male students were reported, both documented by UNAMA. UNAMA reported that sexual abuse of boys by Afghan police was allegedly common, but that cases of such violence were difficult to verify. It was also not clear how often these practices occurred in relation to education.[344] Reported cases included the following:

- On February 2, 2013, Afghan police forces arrested three male students from a religious school in Kandahar. One of the boys, who was 16 years old, reported that all three were tortured, raped, and beaten.[345]
- On October 17, 2016, the Afghan National Army Special Forces forcibly stripped and photographed a 16-year-old boy at his school in front of teachers and other students. When the students and teachers protested, they opened fire inside the school, injuring a second student. They also beat another student until he was unconscious. Five ANA members were arrested for the incident. Three soldiers were released and two were convicted in Special Corps Court: one for unlawful use of force and another for the beating. No one was charged with sexual abuse or exploitation.[346]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks targeting institutions of higher education or their personnel were reported with increasing intensity throughout most of the reporting period, beginning with two incidents reported in 2013 and rising to ten in 2016, before falling to six in 2017. These mostly took the form of explosives or gunfire on university campuses. However, targeted killings and abductions of university personnel also occurred. Both types of attacks occurred during each year of the reporting period.

Attacks on higher education included at least two reported incidents in 2013, both carried out by unidentified assailants. One targeted a university, and the other was directed at personnel:

- A motorcycle laden with bombs exploded in the courtyard of Jalalabad University's education faculty building in Nangarhar province on February 2, 2013. The explosion injured at least seven students, according to media sources.[347]
- The head of Mawlana Jalaludin Muhammad Balkhi Institute of Higher Education, located in Balkh province, was reportedly abducted and killed in mid-April 2013, according to media sources. The reasons for the abduction were unclear.[348]

In 2014, the number of reported attacks on higher education rose, as did the number of people affected. There were at least seven reported incidents affecting approximately forty students and education personnel, according to data collected by GCPEA.[349] Thirty-eight of the forty people were affected in the two incidents described below:

- On June 10, 2014, gunmen stopped a bus carrying approximately 35 university professors and students from Kandahar University to Kabul. They forced the passengers at gunpoint to disembark and board other vehicles, and then used the vehicles to take the victims to an unknown location.[350] The Taliban admitted responsibility for the abduction and released the professors and students two weeks later.[351]
- An IED exploded near a university in Kabul on November 10, 2014, wounding three individuals.[352] It was not clear if the three people who were injured were professors or students at the university.

Reported attacks on higher education again rose slightly in 2015. At least nine attacks occurred, including explosions that targeted universities and abductions of students and personnel.[353] Abductions were reported much more frequently than in previous years, when reported incidents affecting education personnel more often took the form of gun attacks and other physical violence. The incidents reported in 2015 included the following:

- On January 28, 2015, attackers attempted to kidnap 15 university students on a highway in Faryab province. Security forces intervened, and the attack was unsuccessful. Media sources alleged that the Taliban was responsible for the attack, but no group claimed responsibility.[354]
- According to media sources, explosions occurred at Kandahar University on March 31, injuring one person;[355] at Kabul University on May 16, injuring two lecturers;[356] at the Teacher Training Center in Kandahar city on May 26, killing at least one person and wounding two others;[357] and at Kabul Education University on November 24, killing three civilians.[358] The perpetrators of these incidents were unknown.
- The principal of a technical and vocational institute in Wardak province was abducted by unidentified assailants on May 20, 2015. His fate remains unknown, according to media sources.[359]

Ten attacks on higher education were reported in 2016, including several high-profile attacks.[360] These attacks were of a wider variety than in previous years, including explosions, kidnappings, a beheading, and more complex methods that involved organized armed raids. For example:

- Six people were injured in an explosion that occurred at a teacher training center in Maqmud Raqi district of Kapisa province on May 25, 2016, according to media sources.[361] The perpetrators were unknown.
- International media reported that, on August 7, 2016, two foreign professors—an American and an Australian—who taught in the English language center were kidnapped while on a road close to their university.[362] The Taliban was still holding the professors hostage at the time of writing.[363]
- On August 22, 2016, a university student was reportedly abducted from a vehicle and beheaded by suspected anti-government groups. The student was found with explosives planted in his body. According to a

Afghan men peer through the former window of a destroyed school in Afghanistan, on March 19, 2013. The photographer was killed in Afghanistan on April 4, 2014.

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media report, the provincial governor's spokesperson suggested that the attack was aimed at discouraging higher education.[364]

- A complex attack involving suicide bombers and gunmen took place at the American University of Afghanistan on August 24, 2016, when armed assailants stormed the campus, trapping students in classrooms for almost 10 hours. Local and international media reported that seven students, one lecturer, and two campus guards were killed in the attack. No group claimed responsibility.[365]

There were at least six reported attacks on higher education in 2017, including one targeted killing of a scholar.[366] For example:

- According to *Pajhwok Afghan News,* on May 12, 2017, Saifur Rahman Stanikzai, the deputy head of Islamic science at the Afghanistan Academy of Academic Sciences, who was also completing his doctorate at Nangarhar University, was shot and killed on his way from home to a mosque.[367]
- On October 17, 2017, an explosion shattered the windows of a building at Paktia University, slightly injuring a student, according to the *Guardian*. The blast had targeted a military training center located just over one mile away.[368]
- Local media sources reported that members of the Taliban kidnapped a lecturer and a student at an agricultural institute in Nangarhar province on December 27, 2017, and executed them both two days later.[369]
- International media sources reported that, on December 28, 2017, 'IS' attacked a Shia cultural center where dozens of students were attending an event.[370] According to the *Los Angeles Times,* the 'IS' news agency, *Amaq,* stated that the center was targeted because "it sends students to Iran to learn from the ayatollahs."[371] More than 40 people were killed and 80 injured in the attack. It was not clear how many of those harmed were students.[372]

BANGLADESH

Explosive devices were used to target schools in Bangladesh during the elections in January 2014, when many educational institutions were used as polling stations. Attacks on higher education, often involving improvised explosive devices detonated by unknown assailants, occurred on dozens of university campuses and were the most frequent type of attack on education.

Context

Bangladesh has a history of political violence, mainly involving two political parties. The ruling Awami League (AL) was the predominant political presence from the country's independence through the reporting period. The AL won the national elections in 2014 amid violent protests in which hundreds were killed and injured. The opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) boycotted the elections. Both political parties had an active student wing (Bangladesh Chhatra League for the AL and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal for the BNP). [373]

In their reporting, Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International highlighted the Bangladeshi authorities' crackdown on the opposition, including the illegal detention and possible killing of activists and bloggers, and the failure to provide protection for activists who received threats and in some cases had to leave the country for their safety.[374] Some analysts noted that the AL afforded impunity to government security forces.[375] Meanwhile the BNP and its allied Jamaat-e-Islami organization worked to disrupt state operations, elections, and other political activity, especially around the January 2014 elections.[376] Numerous violent extremist groups were also active.[377]

Political and extremist violence affected education in Bangladesh, resulting in attacks on schools, universities, teachers, and students, especially during the 2014 elections, when schools were frequently used as polling centers. While reports of attacks at the primary and secondary school level peaked in 2014, reports of attacks on higher education peaked in 2015. In addition, although there was gender parity in education, sexual harassment and other factors like child marriage, pregnancy, and poverty continued to affect girls' enrollment in secondary school.[378]

Bangladesh did not meet the criteria for inclusion in the 2014 issue of *Education under Attack,* so no comparisons or identification of trends was possible.

Attacks on schools

IEDs were the most commonly used method of attacking schools during the reporting period. Dozens were attacked, particularly during the January 2014 elections, when many schools were used as polling stations. Reports gathered by GCPEA indicated that election-related violence damaged dozens or possibly hundreds of educational institutions throughout the country. Attacks occurred sporadically for the remainder of the reporting period, the majority of them carried out by unknown assailants.

In 2013, GCPEA collected reports of two IED attacks by unidentified perpetrators:

- Local media reported that on April 15, 2013, unknown perpetrators torched a madrassa in Laxmipur, Chittagong area, causing damage to two rooms.[379]
- According to media sources, on October 7, 2013, a device planted by an unknown assailant exploded near a madrassa in the Lalkhan Bazaar area of Chittagong, killing three people. It is unclear whether the school was the intended target of the attack.[380]

Media sources compiled by GCPEA suggested that, in 2014, assailants bombed or set fire to at least 46 schools being used as polling centers for the general elections that took place on January 5. No injuries were reported for most of these attacks.[381] Local media sources reported 15 such attacks on January 3, 30 on January 4, and 2 on January 5, 2014.[382] The *Guardian* reported that at least 60 schools planned to be used as polling stations were set on fire between January 2 and January 4; it was unclear how many of these incidents were the same as those in the local media reports that GCPEA collected.[383] According to Human Rights Watch, government officials claimed that a total of 553 educational institutions throughout the country were damaged by election-related violence in January 2014.[384] Examples of these attacks included the following:

- Media sources reported that on January 3, 2014, unidentified assailants threw petrol bombs at a polling center at the Gazaria Ideal Kindergarten in Feni, Chittagong.[385]
- In an incident documented by Human Rights Watch, between 100 and 150 BNP-Jamaat supporters attacked Molani Cheprikura Government Primary School on January 4, 2014, the night before it was to be used as a polling station. They killed the "assistant presiding officer" and injured three others.[386]

Sporadic attacks on schools were documented beginning in January 2015. News sources recorded 12 attacks or threats of attacks in 2015, all of which involved explosive devices detonated in or near schools.[387] The motivation for these attacks was unclear. Ten incidents occurred in Dhaka city and two happened elsewhere. For example:

- On January 12, 2015, unidentified assailants attacked two schools in Dhaka city: Suritola school in the Suritola neighborhood and Viqarunnia Noon school in the Azimpur area.[388]
- On March 1, 2015, police reportedly found approximately 10 explosive devices at Monipur High School and College and Mirpur Bangla High School and College in the Mirpur area of Dhaka city.[389]
- On March 8, 2015, government security forces safely removed four explosive devices planted by unknown perpetrators at a kindergarten in Gaibandha, near Rangpur city in northern Bangladesh.[390]
- Unidentified perpetrators detonated multiple devices on March 11, 2015, at a school in the Azimpur area of Dhaka city, wounding two police officers.[391]
- On December 26, 2015, two IEDs exploded outside the Charnoabad Government Primary School in Bhola district, Barisal province, as a mayoral candidate's procession passed by the school.[392]

Attacks on schools appeared to decrease in 2016, with only sporadic cases reported. According to local media, there were two attacks on schools that year, both carried out by unspecified assailants:

- In the first, on March 31, 2016, unidentified perpetrators threw IEDs at a school that was being used as a polling station in Jessore district in southwestern Bangladesh, killing one person.[393]
- On May 5, 2016, unknown assailants set fire to Boikanthapur Baldia Primary School in Thakurgaon district, Rangpur province, causing no casualties.[394]

GCPEA did not identify any reports of attacks on schools in 2017.

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

While attacks targeting students and educators took place, they were infrequent, occurring at a rate of one or two attacks per year throughout the 2013-2017 period. Approximately half of the attacks were carried out by unidentified perpetrators, while two appeared to be politically motivated and one appeared to be related to religious and ethnic violence. Additionally, the CRC reported that harassment and violence on the way to and from school contributed to dropout rates during the reporting period;[395] the US State Department found that these violations disproportionately affected girls and prevented them from attending school.[396] It was not clear who was responsible for this harassment or what their motivations were.

During 2013, unknown perpetrators used explosives against students and teachers in two incidents, and Human Rights Watch documented several cases in which police used force against student activists or those accused of being affiliated with Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing.[397] For example:

- Media sources reported an incident on June 1, 2013, in which unidentified assailants threw an explosive device at a teacher and an army corporal as they walked home together from prayers in Khulna. The intended target of the attack was unclear, but both individuals were injured in the blast.[398]
- In September 2013, police allegedly entered a private student dorm, according to Human Rights Watch. They questioned the one student there about activists affiliated with Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, accusing them of living in the dorm. When the student said that he had no information, they searched his room, confiscating his books and papers, and then shot the student in his right leg. The student was taken to a government hospital and then transferred to a jail after 10 days. He was jailed for eight months, while the condition of his leg worsened. This was one of several cases in which police allegedly shot student activists in leg during 2013.[399]
- A witness reported to Human Rights Watch that, in December 2013, someone on a rickshaw threw a bag in front of her son as he was walking home from school in Dhaka. The bag exploded and severely injured him.[400]

Violence against students continued in 2015, with two reported incidents targeting secondary school students. Both attacks were likely politically motivated, as they were carried out by identified opposition and government supporters:

- Media sources documented an incident on January 22, 2015, in which suspected opposition supporters threw an explosive device at a secondary school truck that was being escorted by police vehicles in Srimangal city, Sylhet province. The blast injured one of the truck personnel.[401]
- The US Department of State reported that on an unspecified day in August 2015 in Chandpur district, government supporters attacked secondary school students who were protesting the assault of their teacher by government security forces, resulting in the hospitalization of at least 20 students.[402]

No attacks on students or education personnel were identified in 2016 or 2017.

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on higher education targeted both individuals and institutions throughout the reporting period. IED attacks on university infrastructure were particularly common, with more than 45 occurring during the reporting period. These incidents most frequently affected Dhaka University, which suffered 27 IED attacks in 2015 alone. Attacks on university infrastructure peaked in 2015 with 33 incidents, and were at their lowest rates in 2014, 2016, and 2017, with only one or two incidents in each of those years. GCPEA collected data on 10 incidents in which university personnel and students were the victims of homicide and the targets of other physical violence and threats, mostly by unidentified assailants and for unknown reasons. Attacks on students and personnel were most common in 2014 and 2015, with three attacks each year, and least common in 2013, when just one such incident occurred.

Anti-government protesters, including the BNP and unknown perpetrators, used explosive devices to target universities in at least 10 attacks throughout 2013, according to local media reports. For example:

- Seven incidents involving the detonation of IEDs occurred on the Dhaka University campus between January 5 and January 6, 2013.[403]
- Unknown perpetrators detonated at least 9 IEDs around Dhaka University throughout the morning of January 28, 2013.[404]
- On January 29, 2013, assailants on motorcycles, reportedly affiliated with the BNP, set off explosive devices at various points around the Dhaka University campus.[405]
- Less than one month later, on February 25, 2013, unknown perpetrators detonated an explosive device at the Women's College in Brahmanbaria district, Chittagong province.[406]

One attack on university students was also reported in 2013. On July 7, 2013, unidentified attackers beat two student activists while they were driving a motorbike on the campus of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Kumargaon city, Sylhet province.[407]

Media sources and Scholars at Risk together reported at least five IED attacks on universities, infrastructure, and personnel by unidentified assailants in 2014, a decrease from the 11 attacks reported in 2013:

- The first attack was outside the main gates of Rajshahi University, Rajshahi district, on January 23, 2014, where assailants detonated explosive devices.[408]
- Attackers threw bricks and IEDs at a teachers' bus on its way to Chittagong University, Chittagong district, on September 13, 2014, injuring 10 teachers.[409]
- On September 27, 2014, unidentified aggressors threw two IEDs at the car of the director of a medical university in Dhaka. He was not injured, but his car was damaged in the attack.[410]
- Two violent extremist groups, Ansar al-Islam Bangladesh-2 and al Qaeda, both claimed responsibility for the killing of a professor of sociology at Rajshahi University, who was hacked to death by assailants wielding blunt objects while walking home from the campus on November 15, 2014.[411]
- Violence returned to Dhaka University on December 28, 2014, according to media sources, when unknown assailants threw Molotov cocktails at three different buildings across campus, injuring three civilians.[412]

During 2015, unknown perpetrators continued to bomb higher education institutions and violent extremists threatened university teachers. At the beginning of the year, bombings continued to impact Dhaka University at significantly increased rates from January to March, during which time local media reported at least 27 incidents of IEDs exploding on campus, some involving multiple detonations at once.[413] For example, on January 13, 2015, six devices placed by unknown perpetrators exploded at various points around the Dhaka University campus.[414] According to news sources, IEDs were used in at least six other anonymous attacks on universities throughout the year, including three IED attacks at Rajshahi University, one each on February 11, October 29, and December

5, 2015.[415] Violence that targeted university professors and students in 2015 continued to include homicide, but also reportedly involved death threats sent to dozens of professors throughout the year:

- Media reports indicated that dozens of teachers at Rajshahi University received death threats in 2015 and 2016.[416]
- Such messages were also reportedly sent to at least one professor at Dhaka University, who received an anonymous threat by text message on November 10, according to Scholars at Risk.[417]
- According to Human Rights Watch, a 22-year-old university student was reportedly found dead after being arrested by the police. The government claimed that the student was killed in the crossfire between government security forces and Jamaat-e-Islami, which the student supported.[418]

In 2016, attacks against higher education were reported less frequently, but there were at least five cases in which university personnel and infrastructure were targeted:

- Local media recorded an incident on February 18, 2016, in which unknown assailants threw an IED at a university bus in Chittagong city. There were no casualties in the attack.[419]
- Scholars at Risk and local media reported that, on April 23, 2016, two assailants on a motorbike drove up to an English professor who worked at Rajshahi University and hacked him to death while he was on his way to the university. 'IS' claimed responsibility for this incident.[420]
- Media sources reported that on June 15, 2016, three armed men arrived at the Madaripur home of a Hindu lecturer and attacked him with a machete when he opened the front door. No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but authorities considered it to be part of a recent spate of similar attacks against ethnic minorities by violent extremist groups.[421]
- According to local news sources, on October 28, 2016, members of Islami Chhatra Shibir, part of Jamaat-e-Islami, detonated IEDs at Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur.[422]
- On November 27, 2016, local media reported that students and teachers at the Phulbaria Degree College in Mymensingh city were protesting to demand the nationalization of the institution when police tried to disperse them using batons and possibly guns. The police killed two people in the ensuing clash, including one college teacher, and injured at least 20 more.[423]

GCPEA identified one report of an attack on higher education in 2017. On November 7, Mubashar Hasan, an assistant professor of political science at North South University in Dhaka, reportedly disappeared shortly after leaving campus. The professor was known for his research on violent extremism in Bangladesh. His disappearance took place in a context in which a growing number of public figures had gone missing. The professor had previously reported that unidentified men had come looking for him at his home.[424] Hasan was released in late December, but the perpetrators and the reason for the abduction remained unknown.[425]

BURUNDI

Government security forces in Burundi reportedly arrested more than 70 primary and secondary students and used more than a dozen primary and secondary schools in the capital as bases. Grenade attacks by unknown assailants impacted several schools.

Context

Burundi faced an escalating political crisis starting in April 2015, when President Pierre Nkurunziza ran for a third term in office, despite the two-term limit on the presidency.[426] Government intelligence services, police, *Imbonerakure* (the youth militia of the ruling party) and the military repressed protests and cracked down on the opposition, particularly activists and journalists.[427] The UN and human rights groups documented patterns of torture, ill treatment, and sexual violence, including the rape and forced impregnation of government opponents, which often appeared to target Tutsi women or women associated with the opposition, at the hands of the police, military, and *Imbonerakure*.[428]

During just the first few months of the crisis, thousands fled their homes to neighboring countries.[429] As of February 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported that nearly 150,000 were internally displaced, and as of March 2017, UNHCR reported that more than 400,000 Burundians were refugees, over half of whom fled to Tanzania.[430]

After April 2015, NGO and UN sources reported that the crisis, economic hardship, and food insecurity contributed to rising school dropout rates and increased insecurity inside and near schools.[431] According to a report by the Forum pour le Renforcement de la Société Civile (Forum for the Strengthening of Civil Society), dropout rates in Bujumbura rose more acutely among boys than girls. Education officials contended that the political crisis had led to "criminal repression" of boys.[432]

Armed actors affiliated with the government were responsible for the majority of attacks on education in Burundi. These attacks typically affected student protesters, whose activities ranged from doodling on pictures of the president in textbooks to holding demonstrations. Burundi did not meet the threshold for inclusion in the 2014 edition of *Education under Attack,* so GCPEA was unable to make comparisons with the previous reporting period.

Attacks on schools

GCPEA found information indicating that there were sporadic grenade attacks that affected schools in 2015 and 2016. The UN and other sources noted a pattern of grenade blasts affecting schools between April and November 2015, although these reports did not indicate the frequency of these incidents.

Incidents identified by GCPEA included the following:

- The UN reported that on June 16, 2015, a grenade allegedly hit a school in Bujumbura, wounding a 15-year-old boy.[433] A police officer attributed the attack to demonstrators opposed to the president's bid for a third term.[434]
- On June 29, 2015, a grenade attack hit a school in Bururi province. Elections were scheduled in the province for later that day. According to the UN, the attack prompted children to flee the school, but no one was injured. Upon the children's return, they reportedly found the military in their school. It was not clear whether the military was using the school or responding to the grenade attack.[435]
- On April 27, 2016, a local radio station alleged that a grenade exploded in a schoolyard in Gihanga, Bubanza province, killing one student. The perpetrator and motivation of the attack were unclear.[436]
- According to another local radio station, on June 14, 2016, a grenade exploded next to a primary school in Ngozi province, killing two people and injuring five more. Two of those injured were school children. The grenade exploded in an army corporal's pocket, and it was not clear whether the attack was intentional.[437]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

The US Department of State indicated that the government detained, arrested, and imprisoned at least 70 students and teachers during the reporting period.[438] The majority of these individuals were students who were arrested in 2016 for doodling on pictures of the president in textbooks. However, there were also occasional reports in 2015 of armed groups targeting students and teachers inside schools, and of violence affecting students along school routes.

Intimidation and insecurity characterized attacks on students and educators in 2015. In the lead-up to the presidential election, from April to July 21, 2015, dozens of individuals reported that the *Imbonerakure* entered schools and houses to threaten individuals who did not support President Nkurunziza, according to the Fédération In-

ternational des ligues des droits de l'Homme (International Federation for Human Rights) (FIDH).[439] Education International reported that the government had continued to harass teachers since the outbreak of unrest in April 2015, and that as of October 2015, 253 teachers had fled the capital in search of safer locations.[440] Reports also indicated that violent outbreaks during protests affected students and teachers on their way to and from school. For example, according to *Info Afrique,* in May 2015 students' access to testing centers was constrained by clashes between police and protesters.[441]

Attacks on individuals took a different form in 2016, and students bore the brunt of government repression. According to the US Department of State, more than 70 students were arrested in 2016 for protesting President Nkurunziza by doodling on his image in textbooks while in class.[442] At least 38 students were arrested in Cankuzo, Muramvya, and Rumonge provinces in June alone.[443] The US State Department reported that, from May to July 2016, 440 students were suspended and 73 were detained for defacing pictures of the president in school textbooks.[444] These arrests included the following incidents:

- According to FIDH and *Al Jazeera,* on June 3, 2016, the police arrested five girls and six boys in Muramvya, charging them with "contempt of the Head of State."[445] Reporting on the same incident, Human Rights Watch documented eight arrests.[446]
- NGOs and news sources reported that, later that same day, June 3, 2016, police used live bullets to disperse students who were peacefully protesting the arrest of those 11 students. Two students were injured. The police released 6 of the 11 arrested students on June 7, 2016, and later released 3 more. Two students, Alexis Mugerowimana and Perfect Iradukunda, remained in police detention, and as of October 2017 there was no information on their release.[447]
- FIDH reported that the police arrested 11 students in Bweru Commune, Cankuzo province, on June 17, 2016, also for doodling on pictures of the president. A week later police arrested 16 secondary students from the Lycée Communal, Rumonge province, for allegedly committing the same offense. All students were eventually released during the following weeks.[448]

On May 12, 2016, the police arrested a history teacher for unclear reasons after allegedly beating him in front of his secondary students in the Lycée Communal Mugamba in Bururi province. More than 1,400 students protested his arrest by refusing to return to class, according to a local news source.[449]

Military use of schools

UN and NGO reports indicated that government security forces used at least 16 schools in Bujumbura during the reporting period. The majority of these cases were reported during 2016.

Reports of school occupation by police or military included the following:

- In December 2015, government security forces allegedly used one school as a police post in Bujumbura's Musaga neighborhood, according to Amnesty International.[450]
- In March 2016, FIDH reported the use of four schools in Bujumbura. Police allegedly used the Municipal Lycée in the Musaga neighborhood and the Municipal Lycée in Cibitoke neighborhood, while the military allegedly used the basic school of the Ngagara 3 neighborhood and the primary school of the Ngagara 5 neighborhood.[451]
- In May 2016, the UN independent investigation of Burundi documented police use of 16 schools in Bujumbura. The investigation reported that the police had occupied 10 of these schools for an extended period of unspecified length.[452] It is possible that some of these 16 schools overlapped with the four schools that FIDH documented as being used by the police or military in March 2016.

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

Based on available information, GCPEA identified one case of sexual violence against a male student en route to school. The UN independent investigation reported that, in May 2015, students active in the *Imbonerakure* abducted a male classmate and took him to a house, where he was handcuffed and raped by three men because he had refused to join the *Imbonerakure*.[453] Such cases of sexual violence may have been underreported, given allegations that government security forces systematically used sexual violence to persecute perceived opponents, particularly women and girls. [454]

Attacks on higher education

The crisis had a general effect on higher education, with some universities, particularly in the capital, closed for varying periods of time.[455] For example, the Burundi branch of the Akilah Institute for Women closed in April 2015, due to increasing violence and insecurity for students en route to the campus.[456]

Attacks directly targeting higher education were more sporadic, according to information collected by GCPEA. Arrests and the threat of violence affected university students in at least two incidents that occurred after the start of the crisis:

- The *New York Times* reported that, in late April 2016, students fled the University of Burundi in Bujumbura after the government closed it down.[457] More than 500 of these students set up a protest camp next to the US embassy, seeking its protection. The students remained there for several weeks. Police broke up their camp on June 22, 2016, after which some students crawled under the gate or threw themselves over the walls of the embassy. The students stayed in the parking lot of the embassy for the rest of the day, expressing fear for their lives if they left.[458]
- *Radio France Internationale Afrique* reported that two students of the University of Burundi were arrested on April 1, 2017, while demonstrating against a government decree that would transform their tuition grants into loans.[459]

CAMEROON

Violence perpetrated by the Nigeria-based extremist group Boko Haram spilled over into the Far North region of Cameroon, resulting in several attacks on schools, students, and teachers, as well as military use of schools. Hundreds of schools closed due to a lack of security. During protests in Cameroon's Anglophone regions, government security forces reportedly detained or injured several teachers and students.

Context

Two factors caused the violence that affected education in Cameroon. First, the armed group Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad, commonly known as Boko Haram, whose moniker translates to "Western education is forbidden" in the Hausa language, accelerated attacks in the country in 2014. The group, which was founded in neighboring northeastern Nigeria, established a presence in Cameroon's Far North region in 2009.[460]

Between March 2014 and March 2016, Boko Haram carried out more than 400 attacks on civilian infrastructure in the Far North region of Cameroon, including 50 suicide bombings by both adults and children.[461] Notably, Boko Haram suicide bombers in Cameroon were girls who had been recruited and forced to carry out the attacks.[462] The group also raided villages where it engaged in child recruitment, abductions, beheadings, arson attacks, and raids that affected people and property, including students, teachers, and schools.[463] The violence exacerbated ethnic tensions in the Far North, where the Kanuri ethnic group was stigmatized and associated with Boko Haram, even though no linkages between them were found.[464] The fear and insecurity caused by Boko Haram's activity in the region forced more than 240,000 people from their homes between 2014 and 2017.[465]

The second cause of the violence that affected education in Cameroon stemmed from internal tensions between Cameroon's French-speaking majority and its English-speaking minority. In October 2016, lawyers from the English-speaking northwest and southwest regions went on strike in response to the perceived marginalization of the Anglophone minority, including the lack of English-language legal resources.[466] Journalists, students, teachers, and others in the Anglophone areas expanded the scope of the protests to include the imposition of French-language education. National security forces responded violently, killing at least four people during a crackdown in December 2016.[467] This violence led to more than a year of general strikes and school closures by Anglophone school authorities, as well as boycotts of schools still operating in other regions.[468]

The violence escalated on October 1, 2017—a date usually marked by celebration of the reunification of Cameroon. Instead of celebrating, tens of thousands of people protested government repression in the Anglophone region, and secessionist groups declared the symbolic independence of "Ambazonia." Security forces responded with excessive force, including live ammunition and teargas. This resulted in at least 40 deaths and more than 100 injured protesters, and more than 500 protesters were detained.[469]

Cameroon did not meet the criteria necessary for inclusion in *Education under Attack 2014*. Therefore, no comparisons with the previous reporting period can be made. During the current reporting period, attacks on education became more frequent after Boko Haram expanded its operations in the Far North in 2014. Attacks in the Anglophone areas of the country started after anti-government protests there began in October 2016, increasing in frequency through the end of 2017.

Attacks on schools

Arson attacks, bombings, and raids reportedly damaged schools, especially after Boko Haram increased its activity in the Far North region in 2014. The US Department of State reported that the group had damaged or destroyed hundreds of classrooms in 2016.[470] In addition, there were several dozen arson attacks on schools in Anglophone areas in 2017, after the outbreak of protest-related violence.

According to UNICEF, 120 schools in the Far North were forced to close as a result of attacks on infrastructure and personnel throughout the 2014-2015 academic year.[471] By December 2014, 69 schools remained affected by closure, damage, or intermittent operations, according to *IRIN*.[472] UNICEF stated that 33,163 children were out of school or had to seek education outside their own communities as a result of school closures between 2014 and 2015.[473] In this context, attacks on schools included the following:

Students sit in the courtyard of a high school in Fotokol, northern Cameroon, where the students and teachers are fearful of attacks by the extremist armed group Boko Haram.

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- Amnesty International attributed an arson attack to Boko Haram, which reportedly burned down a primary school in Greya, Far North region, on August 18, 2014.[474]
- According to witness testimony reported to Amnesty International, Boko Haram destroyed a school in Amchide, Far North region, on October 15, 2014.[475]
- Boko Haram set fire to a school in Tourou, Far North region on an unknown day in 2014, killing or wounding several children and causing the school to close for approximately two years, according to international media.[476]

Attacks on schools by Boko Haram continued into 2016 and may have accelerated. The US Department of State reported that the group damaged and destroyed hundreds of classrooms and that the government shut down hundreds of schools due to security concerns in the Far North region.[477] Other agencies and media sources also reported attacks on schools, including the following:

- The UN reported that members of Boko Haram detonated explosive devices at Bodo primary school on January 25, 2016. Ten children were killed and 20 others were injured in this attack and a simultaneous explosion in a market.[478]
- On January 28, 2016, two suicide bombers entered a school in Kerawa village in the Far North region and detonated their devices, killing four people. According to media reports, the school was hosting Nigerian refugees at the time of the incident.[479]
- Media sources indicated that on February 19, 2016, two suicide bombers detonated their devices near a school in Tokombre town, Far North region. The sources attributed the attack to Boko Haram.[480]

In September 2017, the government delegate in charge of elementary education in the Far North region reported to *Voice of America* that dozens of schools in the area remained closed due to a lack of security.[481] Media sources reported that Boko Haram was responsible for two attacks on schools in 2017:

- Boko Haram detonated suicide bombs behind a high school full of students on April 3, 2017, in Mora, Far North region, according to international media. There were no reported casualties in the blast.[482]
- Boko Haram set fire to a school in Vouzi town, Far North province, on November 13, 2017.[483]

In addition, 2017 saw arson and IED attacks on schools linked to the protests and boycotts spreading through the Anglophone areas in reaction to the government's perceived discrimination against the English-speaking population. The International Crisis Group (ICG) reported in December 2017 that armed "self-defense" groups had begun carrying out arson attacks on schools, as well as shops and markets.[484] Amnesty International reported that at least 30 schools in the region were severely damaged through arson between January and September 2017.[485] These attacks reportedly contributed to school closures. For example, schools in Buea, the capital of the Anglophone southwest, remained closed at the beginning of the September 2017 academic year, after having been shuttered the entire previous year due to protest-related violence and boycotts.[486]

Attacks on schools in the Anglophone region, some of which were likely included in the totals above, include the following:

- An arson attack targeted the Baptist Comprehensive High School in Bamenda, the capital of the Anglophone northwest, on August 13, 2017. Following the attack, parents reported to *Voice of America* that educating their children was no longer safe.[487]
- According to news sources, after security forces shot and killed a 17-year-old boy in Kifem, northwest Cameroon, in early September 2017, protesters burned a school and government building.[488]
- The *BBC* reported that an IED was found outside a secondary school in Bamenda on October 20, 2017, and was safely detonated by security forces.[489]
- According to news sources, unknown perpetrators burned down four schools in Jakiri in the northwest. These included Jakiri Bilingual High School in Jakiri town, which armed men set on fire after threatening two guards at the school on November 4, 2017.[490] These attacks occurred amid calls for the schools to remain closed until the situation in the Anglophone region was resolved.[491]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Teachers reportedly fled their communities to escape raids and targeted attacks by Boko Haram, and students were killed in at least one attack by the same group between 2013 and 2017.[492] Child Soldiers International reported that national security forces detained children, especially those studying in Quranic schools, supposedly to prevent them from becoming involved in or being recruited by Boko Haram, despite a lack of evidence suggesting that they were at increased risk of recruitment.[493] In addition, government forces repressed protests against the imposition of French-language classes and curriculum in Anglophone areas from October 2016 onward. This included violence against student and teacher protesters.[494] GCPEA collected information on one or two attacks on students and personnel per year, beginning when the confrontation between Boko Haram and government forces intensified in 2014 and continuing when protests broke out in the Anglophone region in 2016.

In 2014, there were at least two incidents of national security forces detaining students for supposed involvement with Boko Haram:

- According to Amnesty International and international media, three students were arrested for sharing via text message a joke about how Boko Haram would not recruit students with low exam results. The security forces reportedly transferred the students to prison on January 14, 2015, and held them in ankle chains for four months. They were charged under the Cameroonian Penal Code and Cameroonian Military Code on March 3, 2015, and found guilty of "non-denunciation of terrorism related information" on November 2, 2016. They were sentenced to 10 years in prison, according to the same sources.[495]
- Amnesty International reported that security forces raided Quranic schools in Guirvidig, Far North region, and arrested 84 children on December 20, 2014. The government claimed that the schools were being used as Boko Haram training camps and reportedly held the children for more than six months without allowing them access to their families. The children were released in June 2015.[496]

Attacks by Boko Haram affected students in at least one case in 2015. According to a Christian news source and local media, nine students were burned to death in an attack on the village of Kamouna, Far North region, by 80 members of Boko Haram on July 19, 2015.[497]

Teachers reportedly fled or decided that the schools were too dangerous for them to work in as the violence progressed. According to *Voice of America*, the Cameroonian government stated that at least 500 teachers in the Far North did not report for duty at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year.[498]

Meanwhile, in the Anglophone southwest and northwest, negotiations between the government and the teachers' union progressed in 2017.[499] Nevertheless, there were two attacks on students or teachers:

- Unidentified assailants reportedly attacked one student in Limbe in the southwest in January 2017, allegedly because he was French speaking and did not want to participate in the boycott of French-language education in English schools.[500]
- An IED exploded on the grounds of a teachers' training school in Limbe, southwest region, on September 22, 2017. The school's security guard was injured in the blast, according to news sources.[501]

Military use of schools

Armed groups reportedly used more than a dozen schools in the Far North region as bases and torture centers from the beginning of the increased violence between Boko Haram and government forces in 2014, continuing through the end of the reporting period in 2017.

UNICEF stated that eight percent of 110 schools surveyed during a needs assessment in the Far North in 2015 reported being occupied by armed groups since the onset of the confrontation between national security forces

and Boko Haram in 2014.[502] The UN also reported in May 2017 that national armed forces used 15 schools in the Far North for an unknown period of time. In April 2017, seven of these schools had been vacated and the other eight were still in use. The occupation of the schools denied approximately 8,000 children access to education.[503]

For example, according to information provided to Amnesty International, which included a video that Amnesty authenticated, Public School Number 2 in Fotokol, Far North region, was used by Cameroonian national forces from May 2014 until at least June 2017. The information indicated that the school was used as a site to detain and torture suspected members of Boko Haram between May 2014 and October 2016. The school reopened in November 2016, but information obtained by Amnesty International showed that national security forces still used the school in June 2017 and that soldiers shared the space with school children. Local sources informed Amnesty International that nine detainees were still held at the school as of June 1, 2017.[504]

Police officers also were present around schools in the Anglophone region in September 2017, although it was unclear whether the officers were stationed on the school grounds. *African News* reported that, when some schools in the Anglophone regions opened at the beginning of the 2017-2018 academic year in September 2017, there was a heavy police presence around the schools, supposedly to prevent protests from interrupting classes.[505] It was unclear whether the police were on school grounds.

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

In Cameroon, the ICG found that Boko Haram recruited young men with promises of money and marriage, and that abducted girls became the wives of Boko Haram fighters, similar to the group's practices in Nigeria.[506] GCPEA did not find reports of sexual violence by Boko Haram in the context of education, but this could be the result of underreporting of such violations.

There was at least one report of sexual violence in the context of the protests in Anglophone areas. Local media indicated that security forces raped and detained students at the University of Buea and the University of Bamenda in conjunction with their supposed involvement with the protests in December 2016, as discussed below.[507]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on higher education occurred in the context of the anti-government protests in Anglophone regions that started in October 2016. Government efforts to repress this opposition resulted in at least three reported incidents of violence committed against university students in late 2016, and one arrest of a university professor in early 2017. These incidents included the following:

- Scholars at Risk and international media indicated in late November 2016 that state security forces reportedly attacked students participating in a peaceful protest at the University of Buea in Southwest region. An unknown number of students were detained.[508]
- Local media reported that students at the University of Buea and the University of Bamenda were raped, tortured, and pulled from their dormitories before being arraigned in court for supposedly protesting on an unspecified date in December 2016.[509]
- On January 17, 2017, security forces arrested Dr. Fontem A. Neba, a professor at the University of Buea, in connection with a strike that began the day before. Dr. Neba was placed in a detention cell and was reportedly subject to inhumane treatment while in detention, which lasted until at least February 2017.[510]
- In the early morning of October 1, 2017, government security forces raided the hostels at the University of Bamenda in Northwest region, reportedly harming students, lecturers, and their families, according to *University World News*.[511]

GCPEA did not find reports of Boko Haram attacks on universities and their students and personnel in the Far North during the reporting period.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Attacks and military use affected hundreds of schools and tens of thousands of children in the Central African Republic. Teachers and students also faced the threat of physical harm from the crossfire of battles, and dozens were reportedly killed, assaulted, and abducted.

Context

Conflict in CAR began in late 2012, with the emergence of the Séléka, a largely Muslim coalition of former rebels that launched an assault to overthrow the government. Beginning in 2013, there were intercommunal clashes between the Séléka and anti-balaka militia, the other main combat group in the country.[512] In 2015 the Séléka fractured into multiple groups that continued to participate in hostilities (sometimes called "ex- Séléka).[513] Smaller armed groups were also active in CAR throughout the reporting period.[514]

Eruptions of unrest continued, despite international peacekeeping efforts by the African Union, UN, EU, and France, and the peaceful election of a new government in March 2016.[515] As of November 2016, 2.3 million people in CAR needed humanitarian aid and 380,000 were internally displaced.[516] By November 2017, an additional 200,000 people needed humanitarian aid and more than 600,000 were internally displaced.[517]

Furthermore, the conflict placed women and girls at a high risk of rape by government security forces, non-state armed groups, UN peacekeepers, and foreign troops.[518] Parties to the conflict sometimes used sexual violence to humiliate and punish opponents.[519]

By December 2017, the government and all 14 armed groups had signed a peace agreement, but clashes continued in the east.[520] The fighting between the Séléka and anti-balaka also escalated in the northwest in 2017.[521]

OCHA and UNICEF reported that the violence kept children from going to school.[522] According to the Ministry of Education, the destruction and military use of schools were major challenges to education.[523] Media reports noted that, although most schools opened in the fall of 2016, more than 400 remained closed, leaving 10,000 children without access to an education.[524] CEDAW expressed concern in 2014 that the lack of security prevented female students in particular from returning to school.[525] The escalation of conflict in CAR in 2013 likely contributed to the uptick in attacks on education described in this report, relative to the numbers reported in *Education under Attack 2014*.

CAR endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in June 2015.

Attacks on schools

There were reports of more than 100 incidents of non-state armed groups and unidentified assailants targeting schools in the current reporting period, an increase in the rate of reported attacks on schools from the 2009-2013 period covered by *Education under Attack 2014*. Schools were continually attacked throughout the current reporting period. A series of Education Cluster assessments found that 17.5 percent of purposefully sampled schools were attacked as of August 2013, 33 percent as of February 2014, and 38 percent as of April 2015, yet it was not clear that the rate of attacks on schools accelerated during this period.[526] The increased percentages of school attacks may instead have been cumulative. Attacks on schools included threats against educational personnel and military occupation of schools, and the Education Cluster noted that threats and military use often occurred in conjunction with attacks on schools.[527]

The UN verified 36 attacks on schools during 2013, including looting, ransacking, and arson, which led to the closure of many schools.[528] In one of these cases, the Séléka burned down a school in Nana-Grébizi prefecture after school personnel refused to give their archives to the group.[529] The CAR Education Cluster assessment conducted in August 2013 found that 108 out of 176 assessed schools were looted, including by breaking windows and doors and stealing desks, blackboards, school cabinets, textbooks, official school documents, canteen equipment, and food.[530] Bullets or shells hit 16 of the assessed schools, and Séléka soldiers set three of the 176

assessed schools on fire.[531] During the second half of 2013, the Education Cluster also reported eight schools damaged by gunfire or explosives and three cases of arson.[532]

As in 2013, looting continued to be the most common form of attack on schools in 2014. A second survey conducted by the Education Cluster in February 2014 found that 111 out of 384 randomly sampled schools had experienced an attack, 70 percent by looting.[533] These attacks also included military occupation. It was not clear whether any of these schools overlapped with those sampled by the Education Cluster during the previous year. Bangui, Ouham, and Ouaka were the hardest hit regions.[534] An Education Cluster database included 50 incidents of attacks on schools that occurred in 2014, with 30 cases of looting, 13 cases of schools hit by bullets or set on fire, and 7 cases in which the two forms of attack occurred in the same incident.[535]

The rate of attacks on schools may have declined in 2015, despite the Education Cluster's finding that the cumulative number of schools attacked was higher in 2015 than in previous years.[536] The UN verified 19 attacks on schools in 2015, about half as many as in 2013.[537]

Information from a random survey of 335 schools conducted by the Education Cluster in April 2015 found that some forms of attack were more common in some prefectures than in others. For example, schools were most commonly burned in Ouham and Ouham- Pendé prefectures, looted in Ombella-Mpoko prefecture, and damaged by gunfire in Bangui.[538] The perpetrators were often unknown.

Overall, however, looting continued to be a significant problem. An Education Cluster database included 43 cases of looting or vandalism, 22 instances in which schools were hit by bullets or set on fire, and 18 others in which the two types of attacks occurred.[539] Furthermore, almost every school with a food program visited by Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict between April and May 2015 had food supplies stolen, which led to decreased school attendance. Although Watchlist noted that armed groups specifically targeted school food programs, it was unclear who stole the food supplies.[540] A local NGO described one case of looting. On October 1, 2015, unknown vandals broke the gates and stole material from Mixed Schools 1 and 2 in Bozoum, Ouham-Pendé prefecture. According to a local NGO, this was the third recorded act of vandalism in three months at the school, and the lack of material prevented parents from registering their children for the new school year.[541]

Attacks on schools were reported far less frequently in 2016 and 2017, although it was not clear whether this indicated a decline in the number of incidents or was due to the availability of information. From June 2015 through March 2016, the Human Rights Division of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic found that armed groups perpetrated at least 23 attacks on schools.[542] MINUSCA also found 15 incidents of attacks on schools between April 2016 and March 2017.[543] The UN verified eight attacks on schools and education personnel in 2016, although it was not clear how many of these attacks fell into each category.[544] Anecdotal examples of attacks on schools in 2016 and 2017 included the following:

- Human Rights Watch and UNICEF reported that, in October 2016, armed men attacked a secondary school in Kaga-Bandoro during a teacher training course, killing three teachers in training, the director of the Regional Pedagogical Centre, and the vice president of the Association of Parents. According to Human Rights Watch, the Séléka was responsible.[545]
- According to reports to the Education Cluster, another theft occurred at night around November 2016, when the Séléka stole school kits from the Base Intersos School in Kaga-Bandoro town.[546]
- Fighting between the Popular Front for the Renaissance in the Central African Republic (FPRC) and the Union for Peace in the Central African Republic (UPC) (l'Union pour la paix en Centrafrique) between December 2016 and at least April 2017 in Mourouba, Ouaka prefecture, damaged at least one school. Residents who spoke with Human Rights Watch researchers stated that the UPC gained control of the town in December, when they ransacked the town school and burned school documents. Residents fled the area. When they returned, the school was reportedly occupied by MINUSCA.[547]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Séléka and anti-balaka fighters, as well as unidentified assailants, reportedly threatened, assaulted, and killed dozens of students and teachers in both targeted attacks and from crossfire between opposing groups, including MINUSCA forces. Watchlist reported that armed groups intimidated teachers and students who were suspected of having links to opposing armed groups.[548]

Anecdotal examples in 2013 and 2014 indicated that armed groups and unidentified perpetrators attacked education actors in Bangui, Nana-Grébizi, Ombella-M'Poko, and Ouham prefectures. For example:

- According to OHCHR, on April 25, 2013, Séléka fighters killed a teacher.[549]
- OHCHR reported that Séléka fighters tortured and killed a school guard in Yindjiama on January 5, 2014. The Séléka had attacked the school where the guard worked earlier.[550]
- According to the Education Cluster, students and education personnel were intimidated on several occasions in the same area of Bangui in September 2014. Anti-balaka fighters reportedly intimidated school personnel using grenades and assault rifles in the presence of school children and intimidated the school director at school and at home. All were public school students and personnel, but it was not clear whether all were associated with the same school.[551]
- The Education Cluster reported that, on October 1, 2014, anti-balaka members beat the director of the Gbawélé School for authorizing the opening of the school.[552]
- The Education Cluster also documented that, on October 24, 2014, the deputy mayor of Bambari threatened personnel from the local school with grenades and arson, alleging that his children did not receive school supplies distributed by members of French military's Operation Sangaris.[553]

NGO reports indicated that attacks on students and educators continued with some regularity during 2015, with dozens of school children and teachers threatened, injured, or killed by both non-state armed groups and international forces. An Education Cluster assessment published in April 2015 found that education personnel in nearly one-third of the attacked schools (approximately 40 schools) reported having been assaulted or threatened as part of the attack on their school.[554] An Education Cluster database included 10 instances of students and teachers being threatened or attacked by armed groups.[555] Examples of attacks on students and educators included the following:

- Watchlist reported that, in February 2015, armed groups killed three secondary students between the ages of 16 and 20 who were on their way home from school. The location and exact date of this incident were not specified.[556]
- The Education Cluster reported that around March 20, 2015, in Bossangoa, Ouham prefecture, passing Séléka fighters threatened a school director, set the school on fire, and burned everything, including all school documents.[557]
- On June 3, 2015, in the Boy Rabe neighborhood of Bangui, during a MINUSCA operation to recover a stolen vehicle near a high school, anti-balaka fighters reportedly used students as human shields and fired shots at the MINUSCA peacekeepers. According to *RFI Afrique,* students were shot or injured while trying to flee. MINUSCA documented that at least 80 students were taken to medical facilities for treatment.[558]

While the situation in CAR appeared to improve in 2016, occasional attacks continued, often in the context of military use of schools, as described in the relevant section below. Anecdotal information indicated that there were at least sporadic attacks on teachers. For example:

- Human Rights Watch learned of an incident in July 2016, in Sekia-Dalliet, Lobaye prefecture, in which an anti-balaka fighter hit a teacher with a knife after the teacher tried to stop him from burning a school desk.[559]

- According to the UN, the FPRC/Central African Patriotic Movement coalition invaded a school and killed three teachers in Kaga-Bandoro in October 2016.[560]
- The UN also reported that, in October 2016, former Séléka members stabbed a teacher in Bamou.[561]

GCPEA did not identify reports of any instances of attack on students or education personnel in 2017.

Military use of schools and universities

Reports indicated that foreign peacekeeping forces and non-state armed groups occupied dozens of schools annually in CAR, often staying for several years, which forced out students and teachers. According to Human Rights Watch, the armed groups occupying schools destroyed desks and books.[562] The current reporting period saw a rise in reports of military use of schools and universities over the 2009-2013 reporting period, likely due to the escalation of armed conflict since 2013.

The UN received reports of 36 cases of military use of schools between December 2012 and December 2015, all by Séléka factions.[563] The Education Cluster reported 11 incidents of military use by the AU's mission known as MISCA (Mission Internationale de Soutien`a la Centrafrique sous Conduite Africaine), MINUSCA, and French Operation Sangaris forces, which occurred between the start of the crisis in late 2012 and January 2015. The occupations ranged from weeks to months.[564]

In 2013, the Education Cluster reported that armed forces and armed groups used 22 schools for between a few hours and several years. Four of these schools were also attacked and five were looted.[565] GCPEA found incidents of military use in Bangui, Bamingui-Bangoran, Haute-Kotto, Kémo, Nana-Grébizi, Ouham, Ombella-M'Poko, and Sangha-Mbaéré prefectures. Examples of military use included the following:

- The UN collected information that, between December 2012 and January 2013, as the Séléka took control of major cities and advanced toward Bangui, it regularly occupied schools, including the primary school in Kaga-Bandoro and an unknown number of primary schools in Sibut.[566]
- According to Human Rights Watch, none of the three schools in Mbrès, Nana-Grébizi prefecture, operated from 2013 to at least January 2017, even though the MPC and FPRC vacated at least two of them, because the armed groups remained near the grounds.[567]
- Human Rights Watch reported that Séléka fighters occupied the primary school in Mbali, Ouham prefecture, from August 2013 to July 2016. During that period, teachers asked the group to leave, and the fighters responded angrily by burning all the desks and books, which resulted in a lack of educational materials as of January 2017.[568]

The Education Cluster recorded 46 cases of schools used by armed forces and armed groups in 2014. Of these, 15 schools were hit by bullets or set on fire and 20 were looted.[569] According to the UN, MISCA and Operation Sangaris forces used five schools temporarily in 2014.[570] GCPEA found incidents of military use in 11 of CAR's 14 prefectures: Bangui, Haut-Mbomou, Kémo, Mambéré-Kadeï, Mbomou, Nana-Grébizi, Nana-Mambéré, Ombella-M'Poko, Ouaka, Ouham, and Ouham-Pendé. There was also one case of military use of a university. Examples of reported military use by non-state armed groups included the following:

- Starting in March 2014, the Séléka reportedly occupied a department in the University of Bangui for six months. According to Watchlist, the group then settled near the campus after government efforts forced them to leave. This forced the university administration to declare the department unsafe and relocate education personnel and students to an alternate campus.[571]
- A substitute teacher told Watchlist that, in May 2014, the Séléka established a base near a private school in an unknown location, where they used one of the classrooms, stored materials in the school building, and washed vehicles on school grounds.[572]
- Anti-balaka fighters reportedly occupied a primary school in Sekia-Dalliet from late 2014 through October 2016. Human Rights Watch learned that the fighters apparently destroyed chairs and at least 75 desks and damaged the building.[573]
- Human Rights Watch reported that the UPC intermittently used a primary school in Ngadja, Ouaka prefecture, including as a detention center, between October 2014 and January 2017. The UPC occupied this school more frequently after 2015.[574]
- The UN documented the use of a primary school in Boto, Nana-Grébizi prefecture, by FPRC elements as a base from which to launch attacks against the anti-balaka in December 2014 and January 2015.[575]

Military use of schools appeared to become less common in 2015. The UN verified the military use of 16 schools and the Education Cluster documented the military use of 25 schools that year.[576] Séléka factions were responsible for 14 of the 16 cases verified by the UN.[577] Of the cases documented by the Education Cluster, nine occupied schools appeared to experience attacks from gunfire or fighting within the building, students and teachers were threatened in four schools, and eleven schools were looted.[578] Examples included the following:

- Séléka occupied a preschool from 2015 to at least January 2017, according to the Education Cluster.[579]
- The UN and the Education Cluster documented the occupation on January 20, 2015, of three primary schools in Bangui by anti-balaka groups that used them as bases. Violence prevented both teachers and students from returning to all three of these schools.[580]

Although educational institutions continued to be used for military purposes, advocacy contributed to some groups vacating some schools in 2016.[581] The Education Cluster reported the occupation of 16 schools throughout the country, mostly by Séléka groups.[582] The UN verified 22 cases of military use and noted that, following condemnation by the UN, the MPC and the Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain (Democratic Front of the Central African People) (FDPC) vacated six schools. The UPC and FRPC vacated three schools but later reoccupied them. MINUSCA troops occupied two schools in late 2016 and early 2017 but vacated them under orders once MINUSCA learned of the situation.[583] Furthermore, the UN verified the occupation of 10 schools from September 2016 to February 2017 in conjunction with increased fighting in the Bambari area and the towns of Kaga-Bandoro and Bria.[584]

Other examples of military use in 2016 included the following:

- According to Human Rights Watch, the FDPC occupied a school in Zoukombo, Nana-Mambére prefecture, from May 20, 2016, until October 2016, when it vacated the premises. The group justified the occupation by claiming that they were waiting to participate in DDR programs.[585]
- According to the Education Cluster, Séléka occupied the school in Kouki, Ouham prefecture, from at least November 2016 until at least March 2017, and established a base near sub-prefectural schools A and B in Bantangafo commune, Bantangafo sub-prefecture, Ouham prefecture.[586] They also reportedly established a base near Saragba school in the same town.[587]
- According to Human Rights Watch, on December 12, 2016, UPC fighters took control of Bakala, Ouaka prefecture, and used a classroom of the École Sous-Préfectorale to hold a small group of men captive. The next day the fighters gathered the townspeople for a meeting at the school and seized at least 24 men and a boy, killing most of them on the school grounds.[588]

Military use of schools remained an ongoing problem in 2017, although advocacy continued to contribute to the vacating of some school buildings. MINUSCA reported that armed groups were occupying 11 schools as of March 31, 2017.[589] The UN also reported that four schools were occupied and looted between February 2017 and June 2017.[590] Anecdotal information indicated that a range of actors used schools that year:

- Human Rights Watch reported that that MINUSCA peacekeepers occupied a school in Mourouba, Ouaka prefecture, on January 22, 2017, despite a MINUSCA directive not to use schools. As occurred in 2016, the MINUSCA troops vacated the premises after Human Rights Watch informed MINUSCA authorities.[591]
- On February 21, 2017, UPC fighters reportedly occupied a school in Liwa, near Bambari. According to Education Cluster documentation, the UPC vacated the school in mid-March 2017 after an intervention by MINUSCA.[592]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

Anecdotal information indicated that some armed groups raped and threatened to rape girls at, or en route to or from, school. For example, Human Rights Watch reported in October 2017 that Séléka and anti-balaka fighters committed sexual violence against women and girls who were conducting their daily tasks, such as going to market, farming, or going to school or work.[593]

Specific reports of this type of attack were infrequent, as they were during the previous reporting period. This may be due to underreporting, as human rights organizations and news sources documented widespread sexual violence by various parties to the conflict.[594]

The Education Cluster documented three instances of sexual violence between December 2012 and August 2014:

- On unspecified dates between December 2012 and August 2013, unknown perpetrators reportedly threatened female students with sexual violence in Kémo prefecture.[595]
- Also on unspecified dates between December 2012 and August 2013, unknown perpetrators allegedly raped girls in schools in Haute-Kotto prefecture.[596]
- In June 2014, anti-balaka militants in Kaga-Bandoro, Nana-Grébizi prefecture, reportedly lynched and raped the wife of a school director, whose husband was threatened by Séléka.[597]

Attacks on higher education

There was one reported attack on higher education during the reporting period, which occurred in 2016. No attacks on higher education were documented during the previous reporting period of 2009 to 2013.

On March 14, 2016, the Human Rights Division of MINUSCA spoke with a male student who said he was shot by members of the armed forces during a student demonstration at the University of Bangui.[598]

COLOMBIA

Schools and students in Colombia were directly targeted by non-state armed groups using land mines and bombs, as well as harmed in fighting between government security forces and non-state armed groups. Teachers and other education personnel were reportedly threatened, injured, and killed, and dozens of higher education students and faculty were threatened with violence.

Context

Violence continued in Colombia fifty years after the beginning of the country's internal armed conflict. Conflict dynamics shifted over this time, with fighting driven first by guerrilla groups seeking to install a communist regime that would ensure social justice for the poor, and in subsequent decades by complex dynamics involving multiple armed groups and government security forces aiming to achieve both political and, later, financial gain through the drug trade and other illegal economies. The Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia—Ejército del Pueblo (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army) (FARC-EP) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) were the largest guerrilla groups to initiate armed activity in the 1960s. They later began fighting directly against state armed forces. Paramilitary groups emerged in the 1980s as a reaction to perceived state weakness in responding to the guerrilla threat; these groups demobilized between 2003 and 2006.[599]

Peace talks between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP began in 2012 and resulted in several partial agreements, including progressive promises by the FARC-EP to first end the recruitment of children under 17 years and then of those under 18.[600] A final peace agreement was signed on November 24, 2016.[601] The Colombian government began informal secret peace talks with the ELN in June 2015, followed by formal talks on February 2017. A bilateral ceasefire was declared on September 5, 2017, and talks remained ongoing at the time of writing.[602]

The Ejército Popular de Liberación (Popular Liberation Army) (EPL), founded in the 1960s and considered a criminal group by the Colombian government, and postdemobilization groups, including los Rastrojos, las Águilas Negras, and los Urabeños, also known as los Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia) (AGC), were also involved in political and conflict-related violence, as well as illegal economies, since 2006.[603] These groups, along with FARC-EP dissident groups who refused to demobilize or to sign on to the final peace agreement, continued to vie for territorial control throughout the 2013-2017 reporting period.[604]

After the peace agreement with the FARC-EP was signed in 2016, reports of some types of attacks, including those on schools, appeared to decline in number. However, it was not clear whether this was due to a reduction in attacks or changes in reporting. Other types of attacks, such as those affecting higher education, continued at rates similar to those reported in *Education under Attack 2014*. Postdemobilization groups increasingly affected education, with reports indicating that they recruited more children, threatened and killed more teachers, and carried out more attacks at the higher education level than they had in previous years.

Attacks on schools

Information GCPEA collected from media and NGO reports indicated that explosives damaged or destroyed at least 31 schools, as did explosive remnants of war and land mines, resulting in one reported death of a child, multiple injuries, and the cancellation or indefinite suspension of classes over the course of the reporting period. Some of these explosives were planted by the FARC-EP, while others were planted by unidentified assailants. GCPEA identified fewer attacks on schools beginning in 2016, but this finding may indicate that available information was more limited rather than an actual decline in attacks.

In 2013, the UN reported 26 education-related incidents in the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict. These included attacks on schools, attacks on teachers, military use of schools, and unspecified others that resulted in damage to schools or suspension of classes.[605] In addition, the Coalition Against Involvement of Children and Youth in Armed Conflict in Colombia (COALICO), a local NGO, reported that armed groups attacked four schools, affecting more than 60 students.[606] These cases may have overlapped with those reported by the UN. In one incident in February 2013, explosives were detonated at a boarding school in Balsillas, Caquetá, destroying classrooms and dormitories. The attack was attributed to the FARC-EP.[607]

UN and local media reports suggested that explosives continued to hit schools during 2014. The UN received reports of 12 cases in which schools were damaged by crossfire, mines, and other explosive devices, half as many as in the previous year.[608] Local media reports suggested that the FARC-EP intentionally targeted schools in a few cases. For example:

- Two June 2014 news reports by *Semana* and *El Tiempo* reported that land mines were found and deactivated before they could explode on the school playground of San Andrés de Pisimbalá, Cauca. The perpetrator was unknown, although the news articles reported that the Colombian Ministry of Education suspected that the FARC-EP was involved.[609]
- In mid-2014, Human Rights Watch reported that the FARC-EP placed explosives near the entrance to a village school in Tumaco, Nariño, while the military was in the area, resulting in the cancellation of classes for one day while the explosives were deactivated.[610]

- In October 2014, according to numerous media reports, a land mine placed by the FARC-EP on the only path leading to a school in the village of La Palma, Cauca, was discovered and safely detonated by government security forces.[611]

The UN reported that 11 schools were damaged in crossfire and by explosive devices in 2015, numbers similar to the previous year.[612] GCPEA identified four individually reported instances in which non-state armed groups attacked schools:

- In March 2015, the Colombian Armed Forces deactivated explosives in the backyard of a school located in an indigenous reservation in Putumayo. The explosives were attributed to the FARC-EP, 32nd Front.[613]
- Local media registered one incident on May 6, 2015, when a bomb placed at a school playground in Convención, Norte de Santander, exploded after a soldier stepped on it. Local news sources attributed the attack to the ELN.[614]
- Media sources reported that a land mine was placed in a schoolyard in Cauca, killing a young student and injuring three others on May 20, 2015. School was suspended after the attack. Local media attributed this attack to the FARC-EP.[615]
- Local sources reported that the FARC-EP set off a bomb outside a school in Tumaco, Nariño, on June 3, 2015, injuring a young child.[616]

The UN reported fewer incidents again in 2016, verifying six attacks on schools that year. Schools were affected by crossfire between the armed forces and the ELN, and by explosions of land mines planted by unknown assailants.[617] In addition, land mines were reportedly planted near many schools and along school routes in Nariño department, a violation of children's right to education. In one case, when the village of Samaniego was surrounded by mines, no one could enter or leave the community and children were unable to attend school for three months.[618]

GCPEA collected information on five individually reported incidents in 2016, including two involving security forces and non-state armed groups, one by security forces, one by postdemobilization groups, and one by unknown assailants. These attacks may have overlapped with the six incidents reported by the UN. They included the following:

- In February 2016, a school in Antioquia was caught in the middle of a battle between the ELN and the Colombian Armed Forces. Children were forced to find cover under the tables and desks.[619]
- On March 3, 2016, the AGC and los Rastrojos reportedly exchanged fire in Guaramito, Norte de Santander. During the fighting, one school was used as a shield while children were inside.[620]
- Newspapers reported that, in July 2016, the army detonated two cylinder-bombs containing 100 kilograms of explosives that had been planted in a ditch outside a school in Morales, Cauca. The bombs had been there for six months, endangering the lives of students as they entered the school. The 150 students at the school were evacuated during the controlled explosion, which shattered some classroom windows. The group responsible for planting the bombs remained unclear.[621]
- On an unknown date in either August or September 2016, a school in Sardinata, Norte de Santander, was reportedly damaged in crossfire between security forces and an unknown non-state armed group. An explosive device entered the rector's office through the roof and exploded. No one was injured in the incident.[622]
- On September 4, 2016, there were reports that Colombian Armed forces indiscriminately bombed the Sibariza indigenous community in Arauca department. At least one of the five explosives landed near the local school, causing some damage.[623] The Colombian Armed Forces reported that the actions were taken to reduce ELN activities in the area.[624]

At least 4 attacks on schools were reported in 2017.[625] These included the following:

- Local residents of Carrá, Chocó, told Human Rights Watch that, on February 19, 2017 the Colombian navy and the AGC engaged in a 45-minute gun battle behind the local school.[626]
- Land mines were placed near a school located in an indigenous community in Chocó in March 2017.[627]
- Colombian Armed Forces and the EPL carried out military operations on March 27 and 28, 2017, near a school in Sardinata, Norte de Santander.[628]
- Armed confrontations between postdemobilization groups and the Ejército Revolucionario Popular (ERP) took place near a school in Tumaco and Barbacoas on August 29, 2017. These activities impeded access to the school for several weeks.[629]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Between 2013 and 2017, non-state armed groups killed teachers in at least 16 reported cases. However, many more teachers were reportedly threatened with violence, and some left their jobs and communities as a result. Hundreds of students missed school or dropped out due to armed conflict in the areas surrounding their schools. In addition to being planted at schools, land mines, unexploded ordnances, and IEDs were planted along school routes, affecting children's access to education. For instance, COALICO reported that education authorities documented 10 incidents involving land mines that directly and indirectly affected 127 students in Valle del Guamuez, Putumayo department, between January 2014 and December 2016. Some of the students were gravely injured in these attacks.[630]

Compared to the previous reporting period, the perpetrators during this period were more often found to be postdemobilization groups or unidentified armed groups than the FARC-EP and ELN, both of which implemented a series of ceasefires between 2014 and 2017. GCPEA was unable to include Ministry of Education and teachers' union information on threats to teachers during the current reporting period, so comparisons with similar information from the 2009-2013 period were not possible.

Killings of teachers and mass threats by postdemobilization groups, other non-state armed groups, and unidentified parties placed pressure on Colombia's education system in 2013. According to the UN, unidentified non-state armed groups reportedly killed five teachers during that year. Other teachers were subject to threats by armed groups in six of Colombia's 32 departments.[631] For example:

- In Medellin, Antioquia, in February 2013, an anonymous pamphlet was reportedly distributed in the neighborhoods of Bello Horizonte and Villa Flora warning parents against taking children to four specific schools, due to an upcoming war between various postdemobilization groups battling for territorial control. As a result, 4,000 students missed school for a day.[632]
- Local media source *El Tiempo* reported that, in July 2013, death threats spread through Sucre department, and that Los Rastrojos, a postdemobilization group, sent four teachers threatening text messages.[633]

Killings and threats targeting teachers and educational institutions continued to be reported during 2014. The UN reported that unidentified armed groups killed three teachers that year and stated that the FARC-EP, ELN, AGC, and Los Rastrojos had threatened teachers.[634] Meanwhile, the Medellin prosecutor's office found that 82 teachers in 63 institutions were threatened in the Medellin metropolitan area during 2014.[635] The prosecutor's office did not identify the perpetrators, and it was not clear how many of these threats were directly linked to the armed conflict.

In 2015, the UN reported that unidentified armed groups killed teachers in two cases, and noted that it had received reports of an unknown number of threats by FARC-EP, ELN, ACG, and Los Rastrojos directed against teachers throughout the year.[636] In addition, an article in *El Colombiano* reported that 24 teachers in Ituango, Antioquia, left their posts between June and August 2015 due to death threats in the form of pamphlets or phone calls. Six teachers in the village were also sent a threat in the form of a video phone message telling them to leave Ituango. The news article attributed the threats to the FARC-EP, who had a presence in the area, but it was not confirmed

that they were involved. After their teachers left the area, 614 children were unable to attend school. According to government authorities, many of the threats targeted teachers who came to Ituango from other regions, some through a government program that placed highly qualified teachers in poor rural areas.[637]

The UN continued to receive reports of armed groups, including the ELN and the AGC, threatening teachers in 2016.[638] GCPEA found infrequent reports of physically violent attacks on education personnel in 2016. For example, a teacher and vice president of a local teachers' union was found shot dead on the banks of a river in Cucuta, Norte de Santander, in early November 2016, according to local news outlets. The teachers' union, Asociación Sindical de Institutores Nortesantandereanos, expressed concern over this representation of the widespread violence that affected their community and demanded that the authorities ensure their safety.[639]

There were at least four threats or killings of teachers in 2017; the perpetrators and motives were unknown for three of these attacks. Unrelated to the armed conflict, there was also one incident in which police used force to suppress a teacher protest:

- Local media reported that on March 31, 2017, a teacher and member of the teachers' union Asociación de Institutores y Trabajadores de la Educación del Cauca was found shot dead in Sucre, Cauca. The motives and perpetrators of the attack remained unknown.[640]
- News sources reported that on August 24, 2017, an unidentified assailant entered the office of the director of Javier Londoño School in Medellin, Antioquia, and threatened him with death if he did not leave his position. The motivation for the threat was unknown. This was the third threat made to a teacher in Medellin reported that month.[641]
- On September 10, 2017, members of a FARC-EP dissident group allegedly kidnapped and killed Ivan Torres Acosta, a physical education teacher and vocational school student, in Miraflores, Guaviare. Media reported that Torres Acosta had recently received threats from the group, which accused him of being an informer for the national armed forces in the area. The same news article said that local residents reported that the FARC-EP dissident group had sent out a message via unknown means saying that anyone who attempted to prevent child and adult recruitment in the area would be killed.[642]
- On October 19, 2017, indigenous teacher Liliana Astrid Ramirez Martinez was attacked and killed when exiting a taxi on her way to work in Coyaima, Tolima. Several of the teachers from her school had received threats from unknown armed actors in the months prior to the incident.[643]
- Media sources reported that police used force against teachers who were protesting at the Ministry of Education in Bogota on November 18, 2017.[644] Teachers had gone on strike earlier in the year to demand reforms, including salary increases, lower student-teacher ratios, and more funding for school maintenance and supplies.[645]

Military use of schools

The FARC-EP used at least 18 schools for weapons storage, and the ELN and other non-state armed groups used schools as bases. The ELN also stationed troops in front of or near schools, placing students at risk. Compared to trends reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* reports of military use of schools seemed to decrease gradually after a brief peak in 2014. The reasons for this decline were unclear.

The UN reported at least two cases of military use of schools during 2013:

- In one instance in February 2013, Colombian Armed Forces used a school while fighting against the FARC-EP in Putumayo, placing children at risk and leading to the suspension of classes. [646]
- In another case, in April 2013, the FARC-EP used a school in Arauca as a shelter and the school was damaged during clashes with armed forces.[647]

According to the UN, there were 11 reported cases of military use of schools in 2014. In some cases, armed forces were stationed near or in front of schools during class hours, placing schools and children at risk.[648] In May 2014, the military found 76 empty gas cylinders in a school in Cauca that the FARC-EP had been storing, to have ready for use in combat.[649]

During 2015, the UN reported five cases of military use of schools, including one by the FARC-EP and four by Colombian Armed Forces, the latter in violation of the Colombian Ministry of National Defense's orders against military use of schools.[650] The five UN-reported cases may have included the following, which were reported by local authorities and media sources:

- The People's Ombudsman's Office reported the possible use of a school by the armed forces in Caloto, Cauca, in February 2015. According to community members, the military used the school as a defense base during combat with the FARC-EP.[651]
- Local media released two videos that showed members of the FARC-EP making a list of explosives they were storing in a primary school classroom in Putumayo in July 2014 and June 2015.[652]
- In June 2015, residents in Guapi, Cauca, told local newspaper *El Espectador* that members of the military were often present in the local high school and spent the night there.[653]

The UN verified three cases of military use of schools in 2016, all by unspecified groups.[654] Human Rights Watch reported credible allegations that both the ELN and the AGC used schools as military bases in Chocó department in August and September 2016.[655] Reported cases of military use of schools in 2016 included the following:

- Members of the Armed Forces were reported to be stationed 200 meters from a school in Llana Baja, Norte de Santander department, in January 2016. They then occupied the school's canteen in July 2016, until regional authorities intervened and requested that they vacate the premises, which they did. However, they remained in close proximity to the school until at least October 2016.[656]
- A local NGO reported to Human Rights Watch that, in August 2016, members of the ELN temporarily occupied a school in a Wounaan village in Chocó, and threatened the teacher there, forcing him to flee the village.[657]
- A teacher in an unidentified Afro-Colombian community in Chocó told Human Rights Watch that in September 2016, while they were fighting with the armed forces, the AGC took shelter in a school while classes were in session. A justice official told Human Rights Watch that this postdemobilization group often used that particular school for military purposes.[658]
- A UN staff member reported that 100 members of the Colombian Armed Forces occupied a school in Arenas Altas, Antioquia department, on October 18, 2016. They left behind a military vest, a cell phone, and long-range ammunition. After the community gave these materials to the authorities, some army troops allegedly threatened the community.[659]

There were several reported cases in which armed actors used schools in 2017. COALICO reported the use of two schools by unknown armed actors between January and June 2017.[660] GCPEA separately gathered three reported cases of military use. It was not clear whether these three overlapped with those reported by COALICO. They included the following:

- During the first two weeks of January, an unidentified non-state armed group occupied a school in San Miguel, Putumayo, and asked for money, according to a UN staff member.[661]
- In Cucuta, Norte de Santander, the ELN occupied a school on March 22, 2017.[662]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

There were anecdotal cases of child recruitment reported at school or along school routes during the reporting period. The FARC-EP pledged to abandon child recruitment in early 2016. However, other groups, including the

ELN and dissident fronts of the FARC-EP, continued to recruit children, with an unspecified number of cases reported in late 2016.[663] The number of cases was limited to those formally reported in the media, and thus probably understated the real extent of this phenomenon.

There were two reported cases of child recruitment from schools during the 2013-2017 reporting period, compared with at least 12 incidents in the 2009-2013 reporting period.

- Local newspaper *Semana* reported that the FARC-EP recruited from schools in Cali in June 2013.[664]
- On May 24, 2015, the FARC-EP kidnapped two students from their school in the indigenous village of Jambaló, Cauca, seemingly to recruit them. One of the students escaped and reported what happened to the local media.[665]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school

CEDAW stated that all armed actors committed rape and other forms of sexual violence against women, girls, and boys.[666] According to national data obtained by UNICEF, 180 children—the majority of whom were girls—were victims of sexual violence by parties to the conflict between 2013 and March 2016.[667]

The extent to which any of this violence constituted attacks on education was unclear. However, in 2016 the UN documented a pattern of sexual violence against school girls by postdemobilization groups in Santander department. The nature and exact dates of the violence were not specified, but a former principal and a former police inspector faced trial for facilitating sexual slavery and forced recruitment in relation to the case.[668] In addition, teachers and other school personnel reported that armed groups perpetrated sexual violence against approximately 50 school girls in Cali in 2016.[669]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on higher education included threats to students and professors, IEDs used on campuses, and excessive use of force against students by government security forces. At least five attacks targeted higher education institutions, and at least eight were directed at students or university personnel. Reports of these violations occurred at rates similar to those reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* fewer than five attacks per year. However, while the FARC-EP perpetrated fewer attacks each year, postdemobilization groups were responsible for an increasing number of attacks at the higher education level.

At least one attack on higher education occurred in 2013, according to local media. On June 14, 2013, the teaching staff of the University of Antioquia went on strike in protest after 15 masked men broke into lecturers' offices, stole equipment, and raised a FARC-EP flag, before addressing approximately 200 students about the peace process taking place at the time.[670]

There were at least three attacks on higher education in 2014, including two by postdemobilization groups and one by the FARC-EP and ELN. Again, Colombian news sources reported these attacks:

- In March 2014, local media reported that Los Rastrojos distributed a pamphlet that contained death threats against students in Valle University's Francisco Isaias Cifuentes Human Rights Network and accused the students of bringing guerrilla members to campus.[671]
- In September 2014, also at Valle University, Los Rastrojos sent death threats to university workers' union members, accusing them of being guerrilla members.[672]
- Local newspaper *El Colombiano* reported that on December 12, 2014, a group of approximately 10 masked individuals entered the University of Antioquia and hung FARC-EP and ELN flags in visible points around campus. They told students they had brought explosives into the university. Part of the campus was temporarily evacuated.[673]

After a decline in reported attacks on higher education in 2015, news sources reported slightly more incidents in 2016, although such incidents appeared to remain infrequent. Postdemobilization groups or unknown assailants were responsible for these incidents:

- In February 2016, a group of unknown hooded perpetrators detonated IEDs known as "pamphlet bombs" (*papas explosivas*) at the entrance to the Industrial University of Santander, destroying the turnstiles at the gates.[674] The group also distributed pamphlets speaking out against the recent naming of a university building after Camilo Torres, a Catholic priest who contributed to the founding of the ELN.[675]
- In April 2016, Las Águilas Negras reportedly threatened at least five students of the University of Atlántico through phone calls and letters to their homes, declaring them targets because of their involvement with a communist youth group on campus. The group said that they would be killed if they did not leave the university within one week.[676]
- Unidentified assailants detonated pamphlet bombs at the Industrial University of Santander in two separate incidents in June 2016.[677] It was not clear whether this incident was related to armed conflict.

At the time of writing, GCPEA had not identified attacks on higher education in 2017.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Hundreds of schools were looted, damaged, and destroyed or used for military purposes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Armed parties also reportedly threatened, abducted, injured, and killed students and education personnel. Both boys and girls were recruited from schools or along school routes, and reports indicated that girls were taken specifically for sexual purposes.

Context

Already ongoing for more than two decades, conflict continued in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.[678] A new conflict began in the Greater Kasai region in April 2016, when tensions between the government and traditional chiefs led to the emergence of the Kamuina Nsapu militia.[679] This violence surged in 2017, with conflict also escalating in North and South Kivu and Tanganyika provinces.[680] The armed parties included the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) (FARDC) and more than 120 non-state armed groups.[681] Most armed groups were small. One of the largest remaining groups was the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) (FDLR), which was estimated to have between 500 and 1,000 fighters in 2017.[682] The UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), which began its peacekeeping mission in 1999, also continued to operate in the country.[683]

As of August 2017, 3.8 million people were internally displaced throughout DRC.[684] State and non-state parties reportedly raped, sexually enslaved, and forcibly impregnated women and girls because of their ethnicity.[685] Non-state armed groups perpetrated the majority of reported sexual violence, although MONUSCO and foreign forces were also accused of sexual exploitation from 2015 through 2017.[686]

Conflict impeded access to education across DRC, and an estimated 2.9 million children were in urgent need of education at the end of 2016.[687] In the Tanganyika region, a resurgence of intercommunal tensions and military operations resulted in the destruction of more than 300 schools as of July 2017.[688] Also as of July 2017, UNICEF reported that damage to schools had forced 150,000 children out of school in the Kasai region.[689] The Education Cluster also reported that military use of educational institutions and other factors, including teachers forcibly recruited by militia, disrupted schooling, impeded girls' access to education and led to early marriages and pregnancies.[690]

According to a 2017 report by Child Soldiers International, child recruitment and a lack of access to education were mutually reinforcing. Forced conscription limited girls' access to education, while the inability to afford ed-

ucation led some girls to join armed groups instead.[691] Information collected by GCPEA indicated that girls who were abducted or recruited and raped, sometimes for months, often dropped out of school afterward.[692]

Reports of attacks on education, except child recruitment, were higher during the 2013-2017 reporting period than in the 2009-2013 period. This was possibly due to the resurgence of conflict in North and South Kivu and Tanganyika and the emergence of conflict in the Greater Kasai region, as well as strengthened monitoring and reporting of attacks on education. Attacks on education appeared to decline from 2013 to 2015, before rising significantly in 2016 and 2017.[693]

DRC endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in July 2016.

Attacks on schools

Non-state armed groups reportedly shelled, burned, and looted hundreds of schools during the reporting period, many in the Kasai and Kasai-Central provinces, and in the Tanganyika region. Reports indicated that 2017 saw the highest number of attacks on schools of the reporting period. Attacks on schools occurred at similar rates in 2013, 2014, and 2015, with dozens of attacks each year, but 2016 saw a sharp spike. There were at least 639 verified and unverified attacks on schools reported in the Greater Kasai region in 2016 and 2017.[694] Of these, the UN verified 51 in 2016 and 396 in 2017.[695]

Non-state armed groups perpetrated most of the attacks on schools, and they used different methods, depending on their location. While perpetrators in the east used heavy weapons such as mines and rockets, perpetrators in the Greater Kasai region mainly used light weapons.[696]

During 2013, various non-state armed actors in the east, including the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain (People's Alliance for a Free and Sovereign Congo) (APCLS), Force de résistance patriotique d'Ituri (Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri) (FRPI), March 23 Movement (M23), and Nduma Defence of Congo (NDC), reportedly looted, shelled, and burned schools. The UN verified 95 attacks on schools, including the looting of 21 by the ADF in Beni, North Kivu, and the looting and damage of 10 by the FRPI in Irumu, Ituri.[697] Examples included the following:

- A report published by Save the Children included an incident on February 27, 2013, in which bombs hit a school during clashes between the FARDC and the APCLS because the IDPs inside the building were mistaken for enemy soldiers. Twelve people were killed and four students were injured. It was unclear if the school was hit, but it was reportedly later looted.[698]
- According to information gathered and verified by the UN, M23 shelled a school in Goma during an attack in August 2013.[699]
- Human Rights Watch reported that, in August 2013, NDC fighters raided a school in Pinga, destroying equipment and an office. Reports indicated that they also forced people to flee, although it was not clear if these people were school children or teachers.[700]

Attacks on schools in the east appeared to decline from 2014 to 2015. Reported totals of attacks on schools included the following:

- In 2014, according to UN-verified information, the FARDC, ADF, FDLR, the Union des Patriotes Congolais pour la Paix (Union of Congolese Patriots), Raia Mutomboki, and other armed groups attacked 22 schools, including 10 that were looted after being used for military purposes.[701]
- The UN also verified 22 attacks on schools in the east during 2015. This included 10 schools destroyed by the Twa self-defense group during clashes with members of the Luba ethnic group in Tanganyika. The Nyatura, an umbrella term for Congolese Hutu armed groups, destroyed four schools, and other armed groups destroyed eight. The locations of these attacks were not indicated.[702]

An empty classroom in a school in Kananga, Kasai-Central Province, Democratic Republic of Congo. Militias targeted schools in the southern Kasai region in 2016 and 2017, preventing students from studying and forcing teachers to leave their schools.

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Attacks on schools rose again in 2016, when the UN verified 51 incidents targeting primary and secondary educational institutions. Identified perpetrators included Twa militia (13), ADF (8), Mai-Mai Simba (4), Mai-Mai Raia Mutomboki (4), and the FRPI (3).[703] Conflict broke out in the Greater Kasai region in August 2016, and violence surged in the Tanganyika region in September of that year. Violence also continued in the Kivus. For example, local civil society and UN agencies reported that on October 15, 2016, two teachers and two students were killed by a rocket strike that hit a school in Beni, North Kivu, during fighting between the FARDC and Corps du Christ, an armed religious sect.[704]

Different agencies reported the following totals of attacks on schools across the different DRC regions in 2016:

- According to information provided by an international humanitarian organization, approximately 87 schools were attacked, set on fire, or looted in Kasai-Central by either the FARDC or militias between August and December 2016.[705]

- According to Amnesty International, civil society organizations and local leaders reported that more than 150 schools were destroyed by fires during clashes between the Batwa and Luba communities in the Tanganyika region.[706]
- In North Kivu, one international humanitarian agency found that, of 30 schools included in an intervention, nonstate armed groups attacked approximately 10 of them more than four times between 2015 and 2017. Another 10 were attacked at least three times.[707]

Attacks on schools continued to escalate in 2017, both in eastern DRC and the Greater Kasai region. Non-state armed groups were responsible for most of these attacks.[708] An international humanitarian organization reported that there were nearly 100 attacks on schools in the east as of October 2017. This included one school in North Kivu, 68 schools in South Kivu, and 29 schools in Tanganyika.[709] In the Kasai region, 396 attacks on schools were verified in 2017.[710] Examples of attacks in both the east and the Kasai region included the following:

- According to *Reuters*, during heavy fighting between the military and militia members on June 22, 2017, a mortar attack on a school injured at least three students who were sitting for their exams in Beni, North Kivu.[711]
- In October 2017, the UN verified that a FARDC rocket hit a school in Butembo, North Kivu, killing two girls and two teachers and injuring four children.[712]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

The FARDC and various non-state armed groups reportedly beat, abducted, and killed several dozen students and teachers during the period from 2013 to 2017. For example, an international humanitarian agency found that 4 percent of students and 8 percent of teachers who were beneficiaries of a program implemented in Masisi territory, North Kivu, were attacked between 2015 and 2017.[713] Teachers and students were also killed in crossfire. The number of students and educators harmed was higher than the number reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* which reported only two incidents of attacks on students or education personnel.

Most of these attacks occurred at the end of the reporting period. Indeed, only one case of an attack on a teacher was reported during the first three years. On October 26, 2013, a Hutu primary school director was killed near the village of Kavere during attacks by Raia Mutomboki in three villages in Masisi territory, North Kivu.[714]

Beginning in 2016, attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel were reported in both eastern DRC and the Greater Kasai region, including the following:

- Between August 2016 and May 2017, five education inspectors were killed in Kasai-Central.[715]
- As of June 8, 2017, an unknown number of teachers were attacked while transporting test sheets for students.[716]
- Militia members slapped a school inspector who was on his way to deliver school exams on or before May 2, 2017, reportedly in response to the fact that he was providing education in the areas under their control.[717]
- Men armed with machetes reportedly stopped a team from delivering exams to the village of Tshisuku and used their weapons to strike the head of the team on or before May 2, 2017.[718]
- Suspected militiamen temporarily abducted a team of education personnel that was traveling to Luiza on or before April 30, 2017. The team paid the militiamen to release them.[719]
- According to the UN and the Education Cluster, the Kamuina Nsapu militia attacked a truck delivering exam materials in Kazumba territory, Kasai-Central province, on April 30, 2017. The assailants killed three school inspectors, two of whom were women.[720]

Military use of schools

Government soldiers and armed groups reportedly used schools for military positions and lodging, and looted them for resources such as firewood. The length of military occupation documented by Human Rights Watch ranged from days to months.[721] Military use was also reported at schools in the Greater Kasai region toward the end of the reporting period. Reports of military use were more common than in the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014,* but it was not clear whether this finding was due to an actual rise in instances of military use or to better monitoring and reporting.

The UN verified 25 incidents of military use of schools in 2013, including 13 cases by the FARDC.[722] A variety of parties other parties, including M23, FDLR, Nyatura groups, and Raia Mutomboki, were also responsible, according to Human Rights Watch.[723] Military use included the occupation of schools as strategic points and training grounds for varying lengths of time. For example:

- Human Rights Watch documented the occupation of a primary school in Kashenda village by government armed forces for 10 months starting in November 2012, although soldiers said they were positioned there to "secure the school."[724]
- In March 2013, Nyatura combatants spent two nights in one school and looted it before leaving, according to Human Rights Watch.[725]
- In June 2013, the M23 used both a primary school and a former kindergarten in Chengerero, North Kivu, to train combatants, according to Human Rights Watch.[726]
- Human Rights Watch reported that, between November 2012 and at least July 2013, the FARDC used school grounds at the Institut Bweremana in Minova, conducting military parades and training exercises.[727]

Military use was less commonly reported in 2014, with the UN verifying about half as many cases (12) as it had previous year. The UN also reported that in Shabunda territory, South Kivu, the FARDC and Raia Mutomboki used four and six schools respectively, which were later destroyed, looted, or had their materials burned during fighting in April 2014.[728]

Military use continued in 2015, but successful advocacy led to armed groups vacating some schools. The UN verified information indicating that armed groups used 10 schools in 2015.[729] The FARDC reportedly used another 20 schools but vacated 13 following UN advocacy. [730]

Military use continued to be reported in eastern DRC throughout 2016. The UN verified the military use of 19 schools, more than half of which were occupied by the FARDC.[731] In a study conducted in 2016 by an international humanitarian agency, the presence of an armed group at a school was the most common abuse: 29 percent of the 30 schools surveyed reported that armed actors entered classrooms during school hours.[732] An international humanitarian agency reported several examples of military use, including the following:

- Throughout the year, government security forces and armed groups reportedly occupied and partially damaged schools in North Kivu. These incidents occurred in at least four villages in Masisi territory, three villages in Nyiragongo territory, and two other villages.[733]
- In August 2016, the Mai Nyatura reportedly occupied Kishisha Primary School in Rutshuru territory.[734]
- An armed group attempted to occupy Mwandja Primary School in October 2016. The exact location of the school was unreported.[735]

In 2016 and 2017, there were also reports that military use was occurring in the Greater Kasai region:

- According to the UN, the FARDC used four schools in the Kasai provinces at some point between September 2016 and June 2017, but left the schools following advocacy by the UN.[736]
- As of May 11, 2017, the Education Cluster reported that the military had occupied three to eight schools in Kananga, Kasai-Central province, for an unknown duration since the start of the conflict in the Greater Kasai region in August 2016.[737]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

Anecdotal reports indicated that non-state armed groups in the eastern part of the country targeted students for recruitment. They reportedly abducted students at school or along school routes, including for sexual purposes, as described in the following section. GCPEA found a similar number of reports of child recruitment from schools or along school routes in the 2013-2017 and 2009-2013 periods. Some parents reportedly stopped sending their children to school for fear that armed groups would recruit them, according to the US State Department.[738]

Incidents of child recruitment included the following:

- According to MONUSCO, between January 2012 and August 2013, Nyatura groups recruited 185 boys and 5 girls, 34 of whom were under 15 years of age. A Nyatura recruiter told MONUSCO that they were commanded to recruit "older boys" from schools. It was not clear what "older" meant.[739]
- On September 27, 2013, according to Human Rights Watch, NDC fighters abducted approximately 20 students from a primary school in Butemure, Walikale territory, North Kivu. They beat those trying to flee with sticks and bayonets, seriously injuring six students.[740]
- MONUSCO reported that the FDLR was responsible for the abduction of five children while on their way to school between January 1, 2012, and August 31, 2013.[741]
- Human Rights Watch reported a pattern of recruitment in February 2013, during which the FDLR recruited teachers and students from schools in Mpati territory.[742]
- On an unknown day in July 2013, the FDLR kidnapped 10 boys and three girls from the Bumbasha Institute, a secondary school in Rutshuru. All abducted children were reportedly forced to join the FDLR as combatants or forced laborers.[743]
- According to an international humanitarian organization, in 2014 and 2015, 51 school children were recruited from 12 schools the organization supported in unidentified provinces throughout the country. Thirteen of these children were later returned.[744]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school

Sexual violence by armed parties affected girls and women in DRC, including at school. An international humanitarian organization found that several out of 30 schools surveyed reported that students were subjected to sexual violence, including abduction and forced marriage, by armed actors along school routes.[745] GCPEA identified more incidents of sexual violence in the context of education in 2013-2017 than in 2009-2013. It was unclear whether this increase was due to stronger monitoring and reporting or to an intensification of conflict.

Both military personnel and members of non-state armed groups reportedly targeted girls at schools for rape, forcing them to leave their classrooms or abducting them on the route to or from school. For example:

- Human Rights Watch reported in 2015 that M23 forced male students to bring female classmates to them.[746]
- Human Rights Watch reported that, on an unspecified date before June 2013, government soldiers caught a 16-year-old girl student and her female classmate while they were fleeing, but still on school grounds, and raped both girls.[747]
- In July 2013, a female teacher in Rutshuru territory told Human Rights Watch that M23 fighters came to her school three to four times per month and took girls away to rape them.[748]
- The Education Cluster reported on July 31, 2017, that Twa militia men reportedly abducted and raped three girls from a primary school in the Kabalo area.[749]
- The Education Cluster reported that on an unspecified date before July 31, 2017, Bantu militiamen abducted and raped eight girls from a primary school on the Nyunzu-Manono axis over the course of three months.[750]
- According to the Education Cluster, on an unspecified date before July 31, 2017, in the process of robbing a primary school in Manono town, an unidentified militia abducted and raped six school girls for over two months.[751]

Attacks on higher education

Police and other government security forces reportedly killed and injured nearly 100 student protesters from 2013-2017. Protest-related violence, which was the only reported type of attack on higher education students and institutions, took place primarily in Kinshasa. There were more attacks on higher education in the current reporting period than in the 2009-2013 period, when only two such incidents were reported. However, the increase may have been due to improved monitoring and reporting of attacks on higher education.[752]

GCPEA identified reports of six incidents in which police used excessive violence against student protestors, which included the following:

- According to *University World News,* witnesses reported that in February 2013, after student protests at the Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural in Lubao turned violent and students threw stones, police opened fired on the crowd, killing two students and injuring seven others.[753]
- *Reuters* reported that in January 2015, during several days of demonstrations near the University of Kinshasa, police fired shots into the air amid thousands of students protesting President Kabila.[754] In the midst of these protests, on January 21, 2015, police also shot teargas into students' dormitory rooms at the University of Kinshasa, according to Human Rights Watch.[755] According FIDH, the violence killed at least 42 people. The authorities, on the other hand, claimed the death toll was five.[756] Human Rights Watch reported that at least 6 of those killed were students.[757]
- In November 2016, regional news sources stated that approximately 20 students at the Higher Institute of Applied Technology in Kinshasa were injured during protests against higher university fees. The same sources reported that the police shot students and fired teargas into classrooms during the protests. The police denied using lethal weapons.[758]
- According to Human Rights Watch, military intelligence officers arrested Ben Tshimanga, a student at Kinshasa's Institut Supérieur des Techniques Médicales, on July 20, 2017, likely for his affiliation with an opposition political party. Students protested his arrest that evening, but they were reportedly dispersed by government security forces, who shot live bullets into the air.[759]
- The next day, July 21, 2017, an even larger group of students demonstrated outside the university's administrative building. Some of these students turned violent, throwing rocks and burning nearby vehicles. Human Rights Watch indicated that the police responded with teargas and live bullets, which hit several students. The same source reported that police beat and arrested many more students.[760]

EGYPT

University student protests turned violent, with Egyptian security forces killing and injuring dozens of students and arresting more than 1,000. Additionally, unknown individuals and armed groups, including some affiliated with 'IS', increasingly attacked civilians and civilian institutions, including students, educators, and education buildings, in the country's north.

Context

Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohammad Morsi was ousted from Egypt's presidency in July 2013, and General Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, former head of the Egyptian armed forces, became president.[761] Egyptian security forces responded to the protests that followed, allegedly using violent means such as arbitrary arrests, disappearances, and torture of detainees and killing at least 1,150 demonstrators against Morsi's ouster in July and August 2013.[762] According to Amnesty International, sexual harassment, primarily of girls and women, was a common characteristic of these protests, and mob sexual assaults became common in demonstrations near Tahrir Square in Cairo after November 2012.[763] Pressure continued to mount from 2013 to 2014, before subsiding slightly in 2015.

Under El-Sisi, the Egyptian government focused on restablishing political stability and maintaining security, sometimes using repressive measures.[764] Egyptian security forces sought to limit the activity of 'IS,' which established a stronger presence in the Sinai and targeted Egyptian security and government officials.[765] The reporting period saw some increase in interreligious and sectarian tensions in Egypt, including anti-Christian violence.[766]

These trends impacted education during the reporting period. From 2013 through 2017 there were sporadic cases of sectarian fighters and other unknown individuals targeting schools, universities, students, and teachers with explosives and gunfire. Police and government security forces reportedly used violent means to respond to protests on campuses, and university students and faculty came under scrutiny for the content of their academic work. Related to this violence were allegations that Egyptian security forces sexually abused male and female students who were detained or arrested on campus.[767]

GCPEA identified more systematic patterns of violence against education in the current reporting period than the occasional incidents reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* particularly in higher education. These patterns were largely related to violence that occurred in response to student protests.

Attacks on schools

Media sources indicated that explosives, gunfire, and clashes between protesters and Egyptian security forces damaged close to 20 schools in sporadic incidents throughout the current reporting period. These findings represented an increase in comparison to *Education under Attack 2014,* which found only a few attacks on schools in 2013. These reports were largely unverified.

In 2013, arson in the context of protests damaged or destroyed at least five schools, all located in Cairo:

- According to media sources, al-Howeiyaty Secondary School for Girls and the Lycée al-Horreya were set on fire during fighting between demonstrators and security forces in central Cairo in 2013. Al-Howeiyaty school burned to the ground.[768]
- On August 14, 2013, following a deadly raid by Egyptian security forces on two camps of protesters in Cairo, violence surged throughout the country, including against Christian targets, according to Human Rights Watch.[769] The Coptic boys' school complex and Saint Joseph's girls' school in Minya City were set on fire amidst this violence. The same day, a mob looted and set fire to a Franciscan girls' school in Bani Suef.[770]

Violence affecting schools shifted to the Northern Sinai in 2014, as media reports indicated that unidentified attackers deployed explosives at at least four schools in northern Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula. For example:

- A vehicle loaded with explosives was reportedly discovered and the devices deactivated near the Ibrahimiya private school in Kafr al-Sheikh city, located north of Cairo, on January 2, 2014.[771]
- *Seif News* reported that on April 15, 2014, unidentified individuals threw a flash grenade into a Mansheyat al-Salam girls' secondary school in Dakahlia governorate, injuring 25 people.[772]
- On December 7, 2014, a bomb planted by an unknown assailant reportedly exploded at Salman al-Farsi Elementary School in al-Salam, Cairo, resulting in minor property damage, according to *Akhbar Al-Alam*.[773]
- A similar event was reported on December 10, 2014, but it did not cause any damage. According to media sources, security forces found and defused an explosive device planted near a school in Al-Arish town in North Sinai governorate.[774]

Also in Egypt's north, Human Rights Watch reported that, between July 2013 and August 2015, Egyptian military forces demolished six schools during an operation to clear land for a buffer zone along Egypt's border with the Gaza Strip. These actions reportedly left some children without access to education in the town of Rafah on the Sinai Peninsula.[775]

Reports of explosive attacks on schools increased in 2015. Media sources reported at least seven cases in which unidentified perpetrators targeted schools, most taking place north of Cairo and in the Sinai Peninsula. These reports coincided with an escalation of violence carried out by non-state armed groups, including 'IS', and Egypt's counterterrorism response.[776] For example:

- On January 19, 2015, a projectile reportedly struck a high school in Sheikh Zuweid city, North Sinai governorate. No casualties were reported.[777]
- On February 8, 2015, unknown attackers allegedly planted explosive devices at three schools in the Qantara Gharb area in Ismailia governorate. All three explosives were discovered and defused before going off.[778]
- A similar incident was reported one month later when, on March 9, 2015, an explosive device was found and safely defused at a school in Alexandria city.[779]
- Also on March 9, 2015, unidentified individuals reportedly detonated a bomb and opened fire on a Coptic Catholic school in the Kafr al-Dawar town of the Beheira governorate. The incident injured two police guards.[780]
- Two weeks later, on March 23, 2015, a rocket reportedly exploded near a school outside al-Muqataah village in the North Sinai.[781]
- On March 25, 2015, media sources reported that another explosive detonated in the hands of a 10-year-old girl who was playing outside an elementary school in Faiyum city, southwest of Cairo. The girl later died.[782]
- On April 4, 2015, two bombs reportedly exploded outside Ahmed Oraby School in Imbabah neighborhood, Giza city.[783]

Rates of reported attacks on schools slowed again in 2016 and 2017, with sporadic cases occurring in the North Sinai governorate. The media reported at least three attacks on schools during the two years, including the following:

- On October 30, 2016, *Masr al-Arabiya* reported that a suicide bomber exploded a car at al-Yaser School in al-Arish, Northern Sinai governorate. The attack significantly damaged the school building and property.[784]
- Nine days later, on November 9, 2016, security forces reportedly defused an explosive device planted by unknown attackers near Abu-Bakr al-Siddiq Preparatory School, also in al-Arish.[785]
- On February 3, 2017, fighters reported by local media to be associated with an 'IS' affiliate remotely detonated explosives planted at a state-run school in Rafah in the northern Sinai. The school had previously

been caught in artillery fire between security forces and 'IS'. No students were attending school at the time. The media stated that the attack had been conducted to prevent Egyptian security forces from using the roof of the school to monitor the armed group.[786]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

As during the 2009-2013 period documented in *Education under Attack 2014,* arrests and targeted killings sporadically affected primary and secondary school students and teachers between 2013 and 2017.

In 2013, local media reported the arrests of one teacher and seven high school students:

- In May, Egyptian officials arrested a Christian school teacher after her students accused her of expressing disdain for Islam. She was ordered to pay more than 25 years of her salary as punishment.[787]
- In September 2013, seven high school students were arrested during a student-led protest in Faiyum.[788]

Between 2014 and 2017, local media reported at least three targeted attacks on teachers carried out by fighters suspected of being affiliated with 'IS', along with one allegedly carried out by Egyptian security forces:

- On January 13, 2015, assailants suspected to be with 'IS' in the Sinai Province reportedly shot and killed a female teacher in Sheikh Zuweid town.[789]
- Two years later, on January 17, 2017, anonymous gunmen on a motorbike opened fire on a teacher in the center of al-Arish city, killing him.[790]
- On February 16, 2017, Coptic Christian teacher Gamal Tawfiq died in a similar incident in the same city. He was shot by two men on a motorbike as he walked to al-Samran School. According to media sources, security officials suspected that 'IS' in the Sinai Province was responsible for the killing.[791]
- In the one case implicating Egyptian security forces, Amnesty International alleged that teacher Mohamed Abdelsatar was disappeared on April 9, 2017, and later extrajudicially executed. Abdelsatar was reportedly taken from Abdel Samie Saloma School, the Al-Azhar University affiliate where he worked, by plainclothes officers on the morning of April 9. Egyptian police denied the claim, stating that Abdelsatar had belonged to an armed group and was killed in an exchange of fire with police.[792]

In addition to these individual attacks, a local media source reported that Sinai Province fighters repeatedly stopped school buses taking teachers from al-Arish to Rafah in March 2017. They threatened to kill or mutilate with acid women teachers who were not accompanied by male relatives and did not abide by "dress codes."[793]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

At least two cases of sexual violence against students were reported between 2013 and 2017, one affecting a female student and one affecting a male student. Both cases occurred in the context of protests in Cairo in 2013 and 2014, during which rights groups documented patterns of sexual harassment and abuse:[794]

- Amnesty International reported testimony from a female Al-Azhar University student, who accused Egyptian Central Security Forces of detaining her on campus on December 30, 2013. The security forces allegedly dragged her across the pavement, beat her with batons, and kicked her, before taking her into a police van and threatening to rape her. She told Amnesty International that the police officers continued to beat her with batons after she was transferred to the police station.[795]
- According to the *Guardian,* plainclothes police officers arrested a 19-year-old male student leader on March 24, 2014, after a student protest. The student alleged that the police officers beat him, gave him electric shocks on his genitals, armpits, fingers, and stomach, and sexually assaulted him.[796]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on education occurred more frequently in Egypt's higher education sector than at the primary or secondary levels, with dozens of students, professors, and university personnel killed or injured and more than 1,000 detained or arrested.[797] The most frequent forms of attack included the arrest of Egyptian and foreign national university students and academics in relation to anti-government protests that took place on campus. This violence peaked in 2013 and 2014. In addition, unidentified attackers and non-state armed groups used explosives to target university campuses. Both forms of attack were similar to those reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* but they were documented more frequently over the 2013-2017 period.

In 2013, there were several cases of Egyptian security forces arresting students and professors or injuring or killing students while responding to student protests on campus.[798] One incident occurred during the first half of 2013, but the majority took place during the second half of the year, after General El-Sisi became president. Media sources reported that Egyptian security personnel used force to break up protests and arrested students at Cairo University, Zagazig University in Sharqia governorate, and Al-Azhar University in al-Arish city, Northern Sinai governorate. Examples included the following:

- According to the Scholars at Risk Network, on April 16, 2013, Suez Canal University professor Dr. Mona Price began receiving death threats after delivering a lecture in which she referred to a poster hung on campus by Salafist students as an example of sectarianism. The university responded to these attacks by informally suspending Dr. Price without pay, after first advising her to stay at home because they could not guarantee her safety. She was also subject to a disciplinary investigation.[799]
- Scholars at Risk also reported that five days later, on November 21, 2013, Egyptian police shot sixth-year medical student Abdel Ghany Hamouda in the head as they broke up a protest at Al-Azhar University. Protesters were demonstrating against the military coup and the new government's crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood supporters.[800]
- On November 28, 2013, police reportedly used live bullets and teargas to disperse a protest on the Cairo University campus, shooting and killing a 19-year-old engineering student named Mohamed Reda, according to Scholars at Risk. Protesters were objecting to the 11-year prison sentences imposed on 14 adult female students, and the unspecified juvenile detention time given to 7 minor female students for their involvement in pro-Morsi protests. Egypt's Ministry of Interior denied using lethal force.[801]
- Egyptian police allegedly used teargas and live ammunition to disperse crowds of protesting students at Al-Azhar University on December 28, 2013, during clashes between student supporters of former president Morsi and other students. One student was killed in the incident, another was left in critical condition, and three others were less seriously injured. Two university buildings were reportedly damaged.[802]

According to media sources, there were also two explosive attacks by unknown perpetrators in 2013, both of which affected Al-Azhar University in Cairo:

- On December 26, 2013, a bomb reportedly exploded on a bus in the road near student dormitories, injuring four to five people on the bus. It did not appear that students were among those injured. [803]
- A second explosive device was discovered and defused outside the Al-Azhar University faculty of medicine on December 29, 2013.[804]

Similar patterns of violence occurring during student protests continued in 2014, with allegations that security forces responded to both peaceful and violent student protests with disproportionate force.[805] SAIH and AFTE reported that, between September 2013 and July 2014, Egyptian security forces killed 18 university students and detained close to 1,000.[806] Violence reportedly affected Cairo University, Ain Shams University, Al-Azhar University, and Alexandria University. After only a handful of incidents in early 2014, violence surged after the summer break. For example:

- On January 23, 2014, Egyptian security forces used teargas and live ammunition against protesting Alexandria University students who were throwing stones at them. One student was shot and killed, several others were injured.[807]
- On May 20, 2014, pro-Muslim Brotherhood students protesting at Cairo University to gain the release of several of their colleagues threw lit firecrackers at security officers. The officers responded by firing live bullets, killing an engineering student and injuring at least one other.[808]
- Amnesty International reported that from October 11 to October 17, 2014, at least 200 students had been arrested and 90 injured during protests, according to information from the Marsad Tolab Horreya (Student Freedom Observatory).[809] By the end of the year, 15 Zagazig University students and 8 Al-Azhar University students were facing prosecution in military court for their participation in on-campus protests.[810]
- Scholars at Risk also reported that several students from Al-Azhar University and Zagazig University were arrested during protests in December 2014. Five of the students from Al-Azhar were accused of setting fire to a university office.[811]

In addition to the protest-related violence, explosives, often set by unidentified attackers, targeted Egyptian universities in at least six cases reported by local media sources in 2014.[812] In some cases, the bombs appeared to target security personnel located just outside the universities. Examples included:

- A group calling itself the Soldiers of Egypt reportedly claimed responsibility for three bombs that affected Cairo University on April 2, 2014. The bombs may have been directed at police stationed just outside the university. The first two devices exploded near the faculty of engineering, and the third explosion occurred near the main university gate approximately two hours later. A fourth bomb was found in a car parked near the university but was safely defused. The explosions killed a senior police official and wounded between five and nine other individuals. The Soldiers of Egypt stated that the attack was retribution for the Egyptian government's detention of girls and women.[813]
- Six days later, on April 8, 2014, Egyptian security forces reportedly found 12 explosive devices planted by unknown individuals at Ain Shams University in Cairo. The devices were safely defused.[814]
- On May 19, 2014, a bomb planted by unknown attackers reportedly detonated at Ain Shams University during a protest, wounding at least one person.[815]
- On October 22, 2014, media sources reported that nine people, including five police officers, were wounded when a bomb exploded outside the gates of Cairo University.[816]

The rate of reported violence affecting higher education appeared to decline after the start of the 2014-2015 school year. SAIH and AFTE reported that, between September 2014 and July 2015, Egyptian security forces killed 3 students and arrested 162 during protests, a marked reduction from the previous year.[817] In addition, there were at least four reported explosive attacks affecting universities. The majority of these explosions affected Zagazig University, whose president was also reportedly attacked by unidentified individuals:

- According to international and local news sources, on March 28, 2015, a bomb exploded near a subway entrance next to the Cairo University campus, injuring eight people, including police officers stationed at the university entrance. The Soldiers of Egypt claimed responsibility.[818]
- On May 1, 2015, a bomb reportedly detonated at the Zagazig University stadium, damaging the building.[819]
- A media source reported that another bomb detonated at the Zagazig University pharmacy faculty building approximately six months later, on October 10, 2015. A second explosive went off in front of the University's College of Engineering that same day. No one was killed or injured in either blast, and no group claimed responsibility for either incident.[820]
- On December 17, 2015, three unidentified attackers reportedly injured the Zagazig University president as he was leaving his home.[821]

Protest-related violence continued to slow during the 2015-2016 school year. SAIH and AFTE documented 21 arrests of university students.[822] There were also two attacks on doctoral candidates at the beginning of 2016, both of which appeared to be connected to their scholarly research:

- On January 25, 2016, Giulio Regeni, an Italian doctoral student, disappeared. He was later found dead. Regeni had been researching an emerging street vendors' union. Investigative media sources suspected that Egyptian authorities were responsible for Regeni's death because of the government's concern that the street vendors were becoming increasingly difficult to control as a group.[823]
- In February 2016, Medhat Maher, another doctoral candidate at Cairo University, was arrested and accused of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. Maher had reportedly been researching Islamic movements and owned books related to the topic. The evidence against him included books related to his research.[824]

By 2017 there were no more reports of protest-related violence affecting university students or personnel. However, there were reports of at least one explosive attack targeting a university and one case of university students being detained and deported:

- *Daily News Egypt* reported that on February 4, 2017, unknown attackers suspected to be members of the Sinai Province blew up an institute affiliated with Al-Azhar University.[825]
- According to Human Rights Watch and media reports, beginning on July 2, 2017, Egyptian police began targeting shops, restaurants, and student dormitories where university students from the Chinese Uighur ethnic group were known to congregate and detaining them. Chinese authorities sought the return of Uighur students studying abroad throughout 2017, according to Human Rights Watch.[826]

ETHIOPIA

Dozens of primary, secondary, and university students were killed or injured, along with hundreds arrested, during the government's response to student protests in Ethiopia. Many of these students were members of the Oromo ethnic group. Government personnel also intimidated and arrested university professors and primary and secondary school teachers in connection with the government's counterprotest efforts.

Context

In 2014, due to their fear of displacement, members of the Oromo ethnic group began protesting the Ethiopian government's announced "Master Plan" to expand Addis Ababa into surrounding towns in the Oromia region.[827] Protests decreased in early 2015 before surging in November of that year and continuing into late 2016, with a broad geographic scope both within and outside Oromia.[828]

Government security forces responded to peaceful protesters, many of whom were students, with live ammunition and other violent means, killing dozens and arresting thousands.[829] Government-affiliated personnel reportedly threatened and harassed human rights activists, journalists, teachers, and others whose publications and teaching activities were perceived to align with the Oromo protests.[830] The government cancelled the Master Plan in January 2016, but the protests continued.[831]

In October 2016, Ethiopia's government declared a state of emergency, due to instability caused by the protests. The measure, initially planned to last six months but extended by another four, restricted freedom of expression, association, and assembly and gave the police significant authority in responding to protests.[832] The state of emergency officially ended on August 4, 2017.[833] Protests began again soon after the state of emergency was lifted and continued through 2017, with clashes between security forces and local community members leaving at least 18 people dead on September 12, 2017, alone.[834]

Arrests made as part of government efforts to prevent further protests affected students and teachers, along with opposition politicians, health workers, and others who assisted fleeing protesters.[835] According to the govern-

ment's own figures, at least 21,000 people, the majority of them students, were arrested during the 10 months of the state of emergency as part of the government's crackdown on opposition.[836] The government temporarily closed schools throughout the Oromia region between 2015 and 2016, for weeks in some locations, in order to dissuade protests, because parents did not allow their children to go to class for fear of arrest, and because, in some locations, teachers had been arrested.[837] Some schools and universities remained closed throughout the Oromia region until at least February 2016.[838]

Due to the scale and violence of the response to protests in Oromia, the number of students at all levels who were arrested or otherwise targeted between 2013 and 2017 increased significantly over the 2009-2013 reporting period. Reports of attacks on education decreased from late 2016 through the end of 2017, but this may have resulted from limitations on reporting and journalism during the state of emergency.[839]

Attacks on schools

GCPEA found one report of an attack on a school in Ethiopia during the reporting period. On September 6, 2017, a grenade was thrown into a school in Meiso, Harar, in eastern Ethiopia, injuring four students. News sources reported that local residents believed the Somali region's Liya police were responsible and that the grenade was retaliation for the killing of members of the police force by members of the Oromo community the week before.[840]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Throughout the reporting period, government security forces arrested, killed, and injured hundreds of students and teachers in the context of protests. These incidents occurred at schools, in classrooms, and at home. Attacks on students and teachers were more frequently reported than they had been from 2009 to 2013, mainly due to the heightened instability caused by the protests and the state's response. Attacks on students and teachers began during the protests in 2014 and decreased slightly at the beginning of 2015. They peaked later in the year when the government response to opposition intensified, lasting from November 2015 to February 2016 and beyond. When the state of emergency was in effect, from October 2016 to August 2017, reports of protests decreased.

On April 25, 2014, students began demonstrating throughout Oromia in response to the announcement of the Master Plan.[841] In responding to these protests throughout that year, government security forces killed dozens of primary and secondary school student protesters and injured many more by using live ammunition, teargas, and other means.[842] For example, on May 2, 2014, international media reported that government security forces killed between 9 and 11 students of unknown ages during protests in Ambo, Alem Maya, and Bidire.[843]

Amnesty International reported that, in the aftermath of the protests in October 2014, large numbers of suspected dissenters were arrested, including several hundred students, farmers, and other residents of the Hurumu and Yayu districts.[844] Amnesty International also received reports that students who asked about the fate of their arrested classmates, demanding their release and justice for those killed, were also arrested.[845] Human Rights Watch found that an unknown number of Oromo students involved in the 2014 protests remained in detention in 2015, many without being charged.[846] Among the approximately 30 former detainees interviewed by Human Rights Watch, most alleged that they were tortured or ill-treated while in detention.[847]

From 2014 to 2015, attacks on and detention of students and teachers in Oromia often followed a similar pattern. According to Human Rights Watch, during the evenings after protests, government security forces arrested students while raiding their homes and interrogated them about who was organizing students.[848] Most students arrested were boys, but Human Rights Watch found that the youngest student detained was a 6-year-old girl.[849] Many of the students arrested were released from detention after several weeks, although some were detained for several months and many remained in detention throughout the 2013-2017 reporting period.[850] The arrested students reported to Human Rights Watch that they had been tortured and beaten while in detention. Four students interviewed said they received electric shocks, and two stated that they had weights tied to their testicles, which was also an act of sexual violence, as noted below.[851]

Protest-related violence decreased in early 2015 and then peaked again late in the year. According to a local NGO called the Human Rights Council (HRCO), between November 2015 and February 20, 2016, government security forces killed at least 16 children between the ages of 12 and 18 while responding to protests.[852] On November 12, 2015, after a lull in the violence, authorities began clearing a forest and a football field for an investment project in Ginchi, which reignited protests by primary and secondary school students against the Master Plan and against the government's response to the protests.[853] Dozens of students and at least one teacher were reportedly harmed in the following incidents in late 2015:

- On December 6, 2015, government security forces shot and killed a 19-year-old 9th-grade student in Haromaya Town, Oromia region, according to HRCO.[854] The motivation for the shooting was unclear.
- Government security forces shot and injured a 19-year-old woman in the 8th grade in Babich Town on December 10, 2015, also as reported by HRCO.[855] The reasons for the attack were unknown.
- In mid-December 2015, according to Human Rights Watch, Oromia local police entered a school near Shashemene and arrested four students. When other students protested, the police left. They returned with federal police and then shot and killed three students. The following morning, 20 students from the same school were arrested.[856]
- On late December 2015, 50 students from one school joined other students in a peaceful protest, which was met with teargas. Soldiers and police reportedly beat some students and threw some in the back of trucks, according to students who recounted the incident to Human Rights Watch.[857]
- A teacher in Arsi was detained in December 2015 and threatened with death if his students continued to protest, according to his account to Human Rights Watch.[858]
- Student witnesses reported to Human Rights Watch that government security forces had hung detained student protesters upside down and beaten them in at least two incidents in December 2015.[859]

These protest trends continued at a similar rate into early 2016, before decreasing in the second half of the year and into 2017, although arrests continued to be widespread. The state of emergency was imposed from October 2016 to August 2017, which likely prevented some protests from occurring.[860] Human Rights Watch reported that there were dozens of further incidents in the first half of 2016 in which government security forces entered schools in Oromia and Amhara and injured, harassed, or killed students and teachers.[861] For example:

- Human Rights Watch found that, in January 2016, government security forces shot at least six students in Bedeno in the East Hararghe zone, Oromia.[862]
- The same source found that, in February 2016, government security forces shot three students who were protesting in East Hararghe, Oromia. Two of them died from their wounds.[863]

Military use of schools and universities

Military use of schools and universities by national armed forces that was reported in 2015 and 2016 took place in the context of the government response to protests. Human Rights Watch found that, during the 2015 protests, government security forces occupied at least four school and university campuses, including classrooms, to prevent students from organizing and protesting. In some cases this prevented classes from taking place.[864] The same source reported that classes took place with plainclothes security officers present in at least three cases.[865] Several students claimed that government security forces used their classrooms as makeshift detention centers, but Human Rights Watch was unable to verify these allegations.[866] In December 2015, according to Human Rights Watch, students at Ambo University protested the occupation of their campus by government security forces.[867]

Reports of military use of schools and universities continued but were less frequent in 2016 and 2017. For example:

- Human Rights Watch reported an incident on an unknown date in June 2016, when the Liyu police used a local school as a detention center during an operation to disarm the local population.[868]
- *Borkena Ethiopian News* reported in November 2017 that security forces had been deployed at Alamaya University in southeastern Ethiopia following ethnic tensions on campus. Students were demanding the withdrawal of security forces.[869]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

GCPEA found one report of sexual violence against students or in schools and universities during the reporting period. The above-mentioned incident reported to Human Rights Watch of two students having weights tied to their testicles constituted sexual violence, as well as torture.[870]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

According to Human Rights Watch, several students were forcibly recruited into the Liyu police in the Somali region in 2013 and 2014. In two other separate incidents, Liyu police went to local schools and pressured students to join, asserting that if they didn't they would be seen as opposing the government.[871]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on higher education appeared to increase in the 2013-2017 reporting period over the 2009-2013 period. Throughout the current reporting period, government security forces killed, injured, and arrested university students in response to protests. There was a peak in 2015 and early 2016 in conjunction with the rising level of protests across the country and the violent government response. GCPEA found reports of two cases of attacks on higher education in both 2013 and 2014. The number rose to 15 in 2015, including at least 13 in December, and in January 2016 alone there were three attacks on higher education. Dozens of students were injured, arrested, and detained in these attacks, with the violence primarily targeting Oromo students.

At least two incidents of arrests of multiple university students occurred in 2013, which included one at Addis Ababa University and the other at Arba Minch University in the south of Ethiopia:[872]

- Scholars at Risk found that an Addis Ababa University student was arrested on campus on March 28, 2013, after expressing concern via Facebook about alleged corruption among Arba Minch University officials and city administrators. The student was subsequently charged with criminal defamation.[873]
- Local news reported in May 2013 that police surrounded the campus of Arba Minch University and detained at least 100 students for allegedly organizing a protest about education-related grievances.[874]

As in the case of primary and secondary education, violent responses to protests at the university level continued in Oromia into 2014, after the announcement of the Master Plan. GCPEA collected information on two such incidents:

- Scholars at Risk found that on April 30, 2014, police fired live ammunition at a group of student protesters at Ambo University in Ambo, Oromia, killing at least nine people.[875]
- According to Amnesty International, 27 students were reportedly arrested in late November 2014 at Wollega University in Nekemte, Western Oromia, after asking about classmates arrested during the 2014 protests.[876]

During the 2015 protests, when violence against students and other protesters increased over previous years, soldiers and police arrested, injured, and killed dozens of students from university campuses and other locations, mainly in the Oromia region. Human Rights Watch reported such violence in the cities of Ambo, Adama, Jimma, and Haramaya in the Oromia region, and in other locations throughout the country.[877] The US State Department found similarly that the Ethiopian government surveilled and detained students at Oromia University throughout the year.[878] Detentions, beatings, and killings that targeted university students in 2015 included the following:

- Government security forces detained 20 university students after a peaceful protest in Addis Ababa on March 8, 2015. According to Human Rights Watch, they were charged with "inciting the public through false rumors" under both the Criminal Code and the Peaceful Demonstration and Public Political Meeting Procedure Proclamation, including for their protest of military use of schools.[879] It was unclear whether they were sentenced.
- Government forces killed three student protesters in Addis Ababa in December 2015, as reported by Scholars at Risk and *Al Jazeera*. Local activists told the latter source that there were seven casualties across the Oromia region.[880]
- On an unknown day in December 2015, government security forces entered a Jimma University dormitory and asked students to identify their Oromo companions. Those identified were beaten and some were arrested, according to Human Rights Watch.[881]
- Government security forces entered classrooms at Rift Valley University in Waliso, Oromia region, on approximately 10 different occasions in December 2015, shooting and killing at least one student and arresting several others, as documented by Human Rights Watch.[882]
- HRCO reported that government security forces shot and killed a 25-year-old student at Ambo College in the Oromia region during a demonstration in Muger Town on December 17, 2015.[883]
- Unidentified assailants threw a hand grenade at students at Dilla University in Oromia, killing two students and injuring six others, according to media reports.[884]

This crackdown on protesters continued into January 2016 before the violence subsided later in the year. For example:

- As students continued to protest in the early days of January 2016, local media reported that government security forces shot and killed a student at Adama University, Oromia region.[885]
- Human Rights Watch reported that on January 10, 2016, government security forces threw a grenade at students at Jimma University in the Oromia region, injuring dozens. [886]
- On January 10 and 11, 2016, government security forces stormed the Jimma University dormitories, where they arrested and beat Oromo students.[887]

At the time of writing, reports of students being targeted during protests had not been found since the beginning of the state of emergency, and no further attacks on higher education were reported. This could have been due to restrictions on access, media, and other independent reporting, and it was possible that more incidents occurred but were not reported for these reasons.

INDIA

Explosives, arson, and use by the military damaged or destroyed more than 100 schools in India. The highest rates of attacks occurred in 2013 during elections in the country's northeast, and in 2016 in connection with violent protests in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, where approximately 500 secondary school and university students were reportedly injured.

Context

Ongoing political and separatist conflicts triggered unrest in several regions of the country, each resulting in attacks on education.[888] In 2014, CEDAW noted its concern for the level of violence affecting women in the conflict-affected areas of the country, including rape and other forms of sexual assault.[889]

Separatist movements and communal conflicts reportedly contributed to violence in the country's northeast.[890] Abuses affecting education were concentrated in Assam, Manipur, and Meghalaya states. Also in the east of the

country but farther south, Naxalite or communist groups continued to fight the government, affecting education.[891]

Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir state in northern India, which began when the Indian sub-continent was partitioned into India and Pakistan in 1947, continued throughout the reporting period. Tensions heightened after a Hizb-ul-Mujahedeen leader and two other militants were killed during a clash with government forces in July 2016. Conflict closed the state's schools for eight months that school year.[892] Violence flared again in Jammu and Kashmir in April and May 2017, with student demonstrations against Indian police closing schools and universities in the state.[893]

In the higher education sector, rising tensions between student political groups led to increased violence directed at academics and students, including those associated with minority groups and those viewed as political opponents.[894]

The frequency of attacks on schools remained similar to the 2009 to 2013 reporting period covered by *Education under Attack 2014,* as did attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel. The attacks also occurred in the same regions. Reported instances of military use of schools appeared to decline, while attacks at the higher education level appeared to occur slightly more frequently.

Attacks on schools

Attacks on schools occurred across all conflict-affected regions of India during the current reporting period, but the majority took place between 2013 and 2015 in the northeastern and eastern states. According to media reports compiled by GCPEA, approximately 100 attacks on schools took place, a rate similar to that documented in *Education under Attack 2014*. In July 2014, the CRC expressed concern over continued attacks on schools by non-state armed groups.[895] In 2016, the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir also saw a marked increase of attacks on schools linked to violent protests. The majority of attacks on schools occurred at night and did not cause casualties.

In 2013 there were media reports of at least 26 attacks on school infrastructure in India, taking a range of forms from explosives to arson. The majority of these attacks (21) occurred in India's northeastern states of Manipur and Assam, including 11 attacks during elections. There were also five attacks on schools in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh, according to the media sources. Maoist groups claimed responsibility for or were suspected of being behind the attacks in Bihar and Jharkhand. The perpetrators of the attacks in Odisha and Uttar Pradesh were unidentified.[896] Examples of reported attacks on schools in 2013 included the following:

- Between January 25 and 27, 2013, three explosive devices targeted Raja Dumbra Singh High School and Khonghampat High School, both in Manipur state, and Jaleshwar High School in Assam state. The Coordination Committee, an umbrella organization comprised of several non-state groups fighting against the state, claimed responsibility for the first attack, while officials suspected that the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) was responsible for the second attack. No group claimed responsibility for the third attack. All three explosions were thought to have been intended to disrupt Republic Day celebrations.[897]
- The next month, on February 10, 2013, at least 11 schools were partially or fully burned down in Assam state, due to polling violence, according to media reports.[898]
- On June 15, 2013, suspected Naxalites blew up a middle school in Bhulsumia village in Jamui district, Bihar state.[899]
- An explosive device went off at Ayatpur High School in Ayatpur city, Odisha state, on July 1, 2013, reportedly injuring at least 19 students.[900]
- Authorities disabled another explosive device at the government middle school for boys in Katlang village, also in Odisha state, on September 11, 2013.[901]

Indian government forces patrol outside a college in the midst of a series of student protests in April and May 2017, in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir State.

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- On December 3, 2013, the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-M) claimed responsibility for blowing up a school that was under construction in Kurumgarh village, Jharkhand state, reportedly to prevent police from using the building. They left behind a note that stated, "Destroy police camp."[902]
- In Uttar Pradesh, unidentified assailants threw an explosive device at an educational institution serving a minority group on December 5, 2013.[903]

Attacks on schools appeared to decline across conflict-affected areas in India in 2014, with the media reporting at least three incidents, including the following:

- The United Revolutionary Front reportedly claimed one school bombing that occurred in the insurgency-affected area of Manipur state in northeast India, when an explosive device detonated at a primary school located near the home of the Minister of Health and Family Welfare on April 12, 2014.[904]
- Maoist groups blew up two schools in Jharkhand state: one in Bokaro district on April 17, 2014, and one in Latehar district on August 16, 2014. The latter school had reportedly been demolished previously and then reconstructed before being blown up a second time.[905]

At least 12 attacks on schools took place during 2015, according to media reports. Four incidents occurred in connection with the insurgency in India's northeast (three in Manipur and one in Meghalaya states), four schools in the Maoist-affected areas of Bihar and Jharkhand states experienced explosive attacks, and four incidents affected schools in West Bengal state.[906] For example:

- MM Higher Secondary School in Imphal city, the capital of Manipur state, was reportedly targeted twice, once on March 8, 2015, when a grenade exploded outside the school, and once on June 26, 2015, when a bomb was safely defused.[907]
- On March 9, 2015, six gunmen suspected to be part of the Garo National Army opened fire on a school in Rabhagre village in West Garo Hills district, Meghalaya.[908]
- An attack at God Church School in Dum Dum Cantonment of Calcutta, West Bengal, injured one student on June 15, 2015.[909]
- On August 15, 2015, two explosives thrown at a school in Nawada town in Bihar state reportedly injured two female students.[910]
- In Jharkhand state, the CPI-M left a pamphlet at a school in Serendag village, Latehar district, after detonating explosives there on November 10, 2015. The pamphlet warned against allowing security forces to use school facilities and demanded that security forces vacate any schools in the district that they were currently using.[911]

The rate of attacks on schools in India rose sharply in 2016. GCPEA identified media reports of 58 attacks on schools that year. The majority of these incidents took place in Jammu and Kashmir state, but schools were also attacked in at least 9 other Indian states.[912] In Jammu and Kashmir state, unidentified assailants burned scores of schools. These attacks occurred against a backdrop of violent protests. According to Human Rights Watch, at least 32 schools were set on fire between August and the end of the year.[913] In response, the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir directed government officials to take the necessary measures to protect them.[914] Schools across the state were closed from July 2016, to March 2017.[915] Examples of attacks on schools elsewhere in the country included the following:

- On March 29, 2016, a bomb exploded at Kaliahudi Primary School in Dhurudiamba, Keonjhar district, in Odisha state, injuring one child. There was no claim of responsibility for the attack.[916]
- On May 4, 2016, several explosive devices were found at Shankarpur Primary School in Ramnagar, West Bengal state, which was being used as a polling station. The devices were defused, and no group claimed responsibility for planting them.[917]
- Two more explosive devices were reportedly discovered and defused near a school in Bijapur district, Chhattisgarh state, on May 9, 2016. It was suspected that the attackers were Maoists targeting government soldiers, but it was not clear whether the soldiers were based in or near the school.[918]
- A gun battle between the Indian army and other armed groups reportedly destroyed the Education Development Institute in Pampore, Jammu and Kashmir, on October 13, 2016.[919]
- On August 15, 2016, an improvised explosive device reportedly exploded near Indira Gandhi School in Tinsukia district, Assam state.[920] The United Liberation Front of Assam claimed responsibility for the attack.[921]

Attacks on schools appeared to slow in 2017, but at least two schools in Jammu and Kashmir state were targeted, and several other attacks by unknown assailants occurred in other areas of the country. For example:

- On January 28, 2017, *Times Now* reported that unidentified assailants set a school in Kupwara district, Jammu and Kashmir state, on fire, destroying two buildings.[922]
- According to local media, on March 10, 2017, an unidentified individual threw a bomb into the Sardar Patel Inter College in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh state, injuring two female students.[923]
- *First Post* reported that a government school was set on fire in Budgam district, Jammu and Kashmir state, on April 7, 2017. The school was to be used as a polling station.[924]
- In Jharkhand state, suspected Maoists attacked one school in Khunti district on the night of April 28, 2017, partially destroying it, according to the *Indian Express*.[925]
- On April 29, 2017, according to the *Hindustan Times,* a bomb exploded at a government-run middle school in Patna City, Bihar state, injuring seven students.[926]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

According to media reports compiled by GCPEA, there were more than 30 cases of abductions, explosive attacks, targeted killings, and violent repression of student protests between 2013 and 2017, which harmed approximately 150 students and education personnel.[927] Most individual attacks occurred in connection with the insurgency in the northeast and the Maoist conflict in the east. However, the majority of individuals harmed were injured during student protests in Jammu and Kashmir in April and May 2017. Although the protest-related violence meant that more students and educators were reportedly harmed by attacks on education between 2013 and 2017, the documented rates of abduction and targeted killings were slightly lower than those reported in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Four incidents affected students, teachers, and education personnel during 2013, according to media reports. These included two cases of abduction in Assam state, an attack on a teacher's residence in Manipur state, and an attack on a school leader in Uttar Pradesh state:

- In Assam state, unknown assailants reportedly kidnapped the headmaster of Nambor Middle English School in Golaghat district on March 13, 2013.[928]
- Later in the year, on December 4, 2013, two armed men attempted to hijack a school van in Sivsagar district of Assam state. When the bus driver fought back, they kidnapped one girl out of the 11 children aboard, reportedly taking her in the direction of Nagaland state.[929]
- In Manipur state, unidentified attackers threw a grenade at the home of a government school teacher in Imphal East district on September 3, 2013. The explosive failed to detonate.[930]
- Further south, in Uttar Pradesh state, armed men broke into a school run by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Heera Singh in late December. They burned the school guard to death and kidnapped Singh's daughter.[931]

There were slightly more attacks on teachers and other education personnel reported during 2014, with media sources documenting nine incidents. Five of these attacks took place in the northeastern states of Manipur and Meghalaya, and four took place in Odisha and Chhattisgarh states, affected by conflict with Naxalite groups. A series of abductions and killings also appeared to target teachers in Meghalaya state during the second half of 2014.[932] Examples included the following:

- A school supervisor and a librarian were reportedly abducted in Odisha state on January 24, 2014. The police rescued both on January 30, 2014.[933]

- Another teacher, Moirangthem Jayenta, was attacked in an incident claimed by a splinter faction of the Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) (military council) in the northeastern state of Manipur on June 4, 2014. The attackers threw a grenade into the teacher's home. The explosive failed to detonate.[934]
- On June 30, 2014, assailants suspected to be members of the A'chik Songna An'pachakgipa Kotok (ASAK), a Meghalaya-based armed group, abducted a teacher at the Dalu Higher Secondary School. Police rescued the teacher the following day.[935]
- Gunmen abducted another teacher from West Garo Hills district on July 26, 2014, after firing on the teacher and a police officer. The kidnappers released the teacher the next day.[936]

During 2015, media reports indicated that students, teachers, and other school employees continued to be targeted at similar rates as the previous year, primarily through abduction, in India's northeastern states of Assam and Meghalaya. That year saw at least eight attacks on education personnel, according to media reports, including the following:[937]

- In Assam state, unidentified assailants abducted two teachers: Iqbal Rafique, a teacher at the Tura Christian Girls' School on February 1, 2015, and Basu Upadhyai, a school employee, on March 12, 2015.[938]
- A third teacher, Prabin Patgiri, was reported injured in Assam state on May 3, 2015, when gunmen opened fire on him.[939]
- In Meghalaya state, the ASAK claimed responsibility for abducting a retired teacher, Gaganendra Sanyal, on May 9, 2015, and holding him hostage until May 23.[940]
- Unknown assailants abducted three other teachers in Meghalaya state, including two on June 12, 2015, and a third on September 15.[941]
- In Bihar state, two suspected Maoist assailants abducted Kamlesh Kumar, a student at the Simultala Residential School, releasing him, with injuries, after four hours. The attackers reportedly demanded that the school be closed.[942]

News sources reported that education personnel in Meghalaya and Jammu and Kashmir states experienced beatings, threats, and abductions in at least nine incidents in 2016.[943] These included the following:

- Sengsram Marak, a teacher, was reportedly abducted in Dobakdrop village, Meghalaya state, on February 9, 2016. He was rescued one day later, on February 10. It was not clear who was responsible for the abduction.[944]
- During the first week of August, unidentified attackers beat Abdul Rashid, the principal of a higher secondary school in Jammu and Kashmir state, critically injuring him.[945]
- On August 16, 2016, Madison Ch Marak, a teacher in Jinamgre, was reportedly attacked and killed. The Garo National Liberation Army claimed credit for the attack, stating that Marak had been working with government authorities.[946]
- Also during the first week of August, a petrol bomb was thrown at the home of Naeem Akthar, the Minister of Education for Jammu and Kashmir state.[947] The minister was again threatened on September 27, 2016, when the Pakistan-based group Lashkar-e-Taiba warned him not to re-open educational institutions in the Kashmir Valley.[948]
- Sudhir Kumar, a teacher, was wounded when police allegedly used violence during a teacher protest in Punjab state on December 11, 2016. The teachers were demonstrating for more regularized jobs and permanent recruitment.[949]

On December 8, 2017, unidentified perpetrators killed a pregnant female teacher in Bihar state for unknown reasons, according to a local media source.[950] However, the majority of attacks on students and education personnel that occurred in 2017 took place in the context of student protests in Jammu and Kashmir state, according to information collected by GCPEA. More than 100 secondary school students were reportedly injured in clashes with the police in April and May 2017, as described in more detail in the higher education section below.[951] On May 27, 2017, Sameer Ahmad, a 19-year-old class 12 student, was critically injured by a bullet that hit him in the head when police entered the Government Higher Secondary School in Mattan, Anantnag district, and fired bullets into the air.[952]

Military use of schools

Several human rights bodies, along with the US Department of State, expressed concern over the continued military use of educational institutions and the presence of security forces near schools during the 2013-2017 reporting period, although rates of military use appeared to be lower than in the 2009-2013 period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.[953] The majority of military use occurred in regions of India affected by conflict with Naxalite groups, including Jharkhand, Bihar, and West Bengal states. However, military use of schools was also reported in Jammu and Kashmir state. In several cases, schools that were in use or had recently been used by armed forces were attacked with explosives.[954] In 2014, CEDAW pointed to reports that military use also contributed to higher dropout rates among girl students.[955]

Media sources reported that at least one case of military use occurred during 2013. A group of paramilitary soldiers was allegedly inside a school attended by the children of police officers in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir state, when armed men attacked them on March 13, 2013. No children or teachers were inside the school at the time of the attack.[956]

In 2014, media sources indicated that Indian police used at least four schools in Jharkhand and Bihar states, which provoked attacks by confirmed or suspected Maoist groups around the time of Lok Sabha, or parliamentary, elections:

- On March 21, 2014, the CPI-M claimed responsibility for blowing up the Giridih School in Naukania district of Jharkhand state, which was being used by the Central Reserve Police Force. The group left pamphlets urging people to boycott the elections.[957]
- On April 10, 20, and 28, 2014, suspected Maoists reportedly detonated explosive devices in three schools in the Lakhisarai and Jamui districts of Bihar state. Indian police had been based in the first two schools to guard polling during the Lok Sabha elections, and in the third school to carry out military operations.[958]

In 2015, at least one school was blown up while being used as a police camp in West Bengal state, according to a media report. On January 10, 2015, unidentified attackers threw explosive devices into a school in Palsa village, injuring one police officer.[959]

Several media outlets published reports of military use of schools in Jammu and Kashmir state during protests that occurred in response to the killing of the Hizb-ul-Mujahedin leader on July 8, 2016. In September, *Quartz India* reported use of schools by at least 20 paramilitary groups in the state, including Sri Pratap Higher Secondary School.[960] *NDTV* reported in October that security forces were occupying dozens of schools, and the *Kashmir Monitor* stated around the same time that the Indian police were using seven schools in Srinagar.[961]

In 2017, several schools in Imphal West district of Manipur state were re-opened after having been closed since December 2016. The Manipur Commission for Protection of Child Rights found that security forces used at least two schools—Lilasing Khongnangkhong High School and N Tomchou Singh Higher Secondary School—during that time and asked the troops to leave the schools.[962]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

Between 2013 and 2017, at least two reported cases of sexual violence was committed against female students. A Christian media source reported that on July 14, 2013, in the state of Jharkhand, masked men abducted four girls from their Christian school's dormitory and raped them before releasing them.[963] The motive for the attack was unclear. In addition, Amnesty International reported that police allegedly assaulted female university stu-

dents who were protesting a lack of investigation into the suicide of Dalit PhD Student Rohith Vemula, as described in more detail in the section on attacks on higher education.[964]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on higher education from 2013 to 2017 included explosives targeting university campuses and personnel, as well as abductions of professors. Beginning in 2016, attacks on higher education were increasingly common, as communal tensions fueled by different political parties appeared to contribute to several incidents of violent attacks, protests, or repression that took place during university lectures or elsewhere on campus. Violence also escalated in Jammu and Kashmir state. More than 100 students and 100 education personnel were harmed, the majority during protests in Jasmmu and Kashmir state in April 2017. Attacks on higher education appeared to occur with slightly greater frequency than during the 2009-2013 period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.

There were at least two attacks on higher education in 2013, according to media reports:

- On July 16, 2013, unidentified attackers set off an explosive device at the home of the director of the Regional Institute of Medical Science and Hospital in the Imphal West district of Manipur state.[965]
- On December 6, 2016, a bomb exploded at Annie Besant Intercollege in Uttar Pradesh state, injuring a 5-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl.[966]

According to media sources, at least four attacks targeted higher education in 2014, three in the northeastern states of Manipur and Assam, and one in the Maoist-affected state of Jharkhand:

- On April 7, 2014, unidentified assailants threw a hand grenade at the home of the director of the National Institute of Technology in Bishnupur district, Manipur state.[967]
- A second attack in Manipur state targeted Manipur University. On July 12, 2014, an explosive device detonated near the university, wounding seven people.[968]
- On July 29, 2014, a college principal was abducted, reportedly by the Rabha National Security Force, an armed group affiliated with the Rabha tribal community. He was freed in a police force operation two days later.[969]
- In Jharkhand state, gunmen abducted the chairman of Nilai Institute of Technology on August 4, 2014.[970]

During 2015, there were media reports of at least five attacks on universities and academics in the northeastern states of Manipur and Nagaland. One additional attack, in Karnataka state, appeared to be linked to religious intolerance. For example:

- One bomb exploded near Manipur University on April 22, 2015, injuring at least three people, including university lecturers.[971]
- A second explosive device was found and defused in Imphal district on May 21, 2015, at the National Institute of Technology.[972]
- On August 7, 2015, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang claimed responsibility for an assault on the principal of the Kheloshe Polytechnic Atoizu, an engineering school. The group attacked and extorted the principal.[973]
- On August 15, 2015, unidentified attackers shot and killed Madivalappa Kalburgi, a literary scholar at Kannada University. The professor had been critical of particular religious groups and had publicly criticized "idol worship" and superstition.[974]

Media reports indicated that attacks on higher education became slightly more common in 2016 than in 2015. Incidents included at least four explosive attacks at universities, and the arrest or attack of professors or students in at least nine incidents for reasons related to their academic work or their alleged use of antinationalist rhetoric.[975] For example:

- On January 27, 2016, news sources reported that police detained approximately 100 students from universities across Delhi who were marching in protest after Rohith Vemula, 26-year-old Dalit doctoral student at the University of Hyderabad, committed suicide. The ABVP had accused Vemula of violence against other students in 2016.[976] On March 22, 2016, police allegedly used force on University of Hyderabad students and faculty who were protesting the lack of investigation into Vemula's death. Amnesty International reported that the police assaulted the protesting students, including by using sexual violence against female students.[977]
- Media sources reported that Professor Vivek Kumar from Jawaharlal Nehru University was attacked during clashes that broke out between Akhil Bharatiya Janta Yuva Morcha, the youth wing of the BJP party, and Ambedkar Vichar Manch, a Dalit network, at a symposium on Indian society that the professor held on February 21, 2016.[978]
- According to the Scholars at Risk Network, Kanhaiya Kumar, head of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student union, was arrested on February 12, 2016, in New Delhi for allegedly using anti-Indian slogans during protests, after the university had withdrawn permission for a student event marking the government execution of a Kashmiri activist in 2013.[979] Two other students, Umar Khalid and Anirban Bhattacharya, were later arrested and charged with sedition on February 23, 2016, for the same reason as Kumar.[980] Kumar and Khalid were released on bail in March 2016. The two remained under threat, however, and on April 17, police found a note elaborating a plan to kill them. The note and a gun were found in a bag on a bus that was headed to the JNU campus.[981] A group of approximately 100 people reportedly affiliated with right-wing groups later assaulted Kumar during a rally organized by two left-wing student organizations in August 2017.[982]
- In Mysore, a University of Mysore communications and journalism professor was arrested on June 16, 2016, after giving a speech on campus that allegedly insulted the Hindu community, according to Scholars at Risk.[983]
- According to local media, a bomb exploded at the gate of Manipur University on August 10, 2016. This was the third such incident within three years at the same university.[984]
- On November 3, 2016, unknown attackers threw a petrol bomb at Sri Pratap College in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir state, according to news reports.[985]

During 2017, there were 10 incidents of violence and arrests affecting higher education that related to Hindu nationalism or occurred in connection with student protests of university or state policies.[986] In general, these incidents caused more harm than those in previous years, and were largely related to student protests in Jammu and Kashmir state. Incidents related to Hindu nationalism or to protests over policy included the following:

- The Hinduistan Times reported that police arrested several students demonstrating on the first anniversary of Rohith Vemula's death on January 17, 2017, along with Vemula's mother, Radhika Vemula.[987]
- On February 21, 2017, the Hindu nationalist student organization Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) (All India Student Council), affiliated with the Hindu nationalist organization Rashtirya Sevak Sangh, protested a talk given at Ramjas College in Delhi by Umar Khalid, who had been arrested the year before, and Shehla Rashid, another student who had been arrested at JNU in 2016. The protest turned violent, with ABVP students reportedly breaking the windows of the conference room where the event was to be held and throwing rocks at other students. The college cancelled the talk, and a march protesting the cancellation led to violent clashes between student groups. Police allegedly used excessive force in responding to the violence, injuring at least 20 students.[988]
- Scholars at Risk reported that on April 11, 2017, 52 students from Panjab University were arrested and charged with sedition after a clash with police officers that occurred while they were protesting an increase in tuition fees. Police allegedly used water cannons, teargas, and batons to prevent the students from

reaching the vice chancellor's office. Students reportedly responded by throwing stones. The clashes injured students, journalists, and police officers.[989]

- Eight Lucknow University students were reportedly arrested on June 7, 2017, after they participated in a peaceful demonstration against the allocation of university funds. After students surrounded the motorcade of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, a state official who was visiting the university, police allegedly responded with force. The charges against the students included unlawful assembly, rioting, assault or criminal force against a public servant, and criminal intimidation. They were denied bail on June 10 and kept in judicial custody until June 24.[990]
- A female student, B. Valarmathi, was also reportedly arrested at Periyar University in Salem, Tamil Nadu state, on July 12, 2017, after she distributed pamphlets encouraging student opposition to government energy projects. Valarmathi was detained for six days before being charged with instigating others to disturb the public order, according to Scholars at Risk.[991]
- On September 23, 2017, police allegedly wounded several students, mostly female, at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) as they tried to enter the residence of the university's vice chancellor during a protest of the alleged sexual harassment of one of their classmates. According to the students, police used lathis (a kind of marital arts stick) against the protesters, pulled their hair, and dragged them away.[992] Varanasi police reportedly charged some 1,200 BHU students, mostly female, with arson and other crimes.[993] The vice chancellor was accused of mishandling the event and placed on indefinite leave, the head of campus security resigned, seven women were appointed as security guards, and the National Commission for Women initiated an investigation.[994]

Tensions in Jammu and Kashmir state also affected higher education during 2017, with clashes occurring between both university and secondary school students and police, as mentioned above. *University World News* reported that some sources estimated that a total of 500 students were injured.[995] Many schools and colleges were reportedly closed for up to one month.[996] Incidents included the following:

- Violence began in mid-April, after two Indian security force vehicles entered the campus of Pulwama Government Degree College. Students threw rocks, and security forces responded with pellets and teargas, reportedly wounding at least 54 students.[997]
- Two days later, violence spread to Baramulla and Sopore towns in north Jammu and Kashmir state, Anantnag and Tral in south Jammu and Kashmir, and Srinagar in central Jammu and Kashmir, with at least 70 more secondary school and university students injured on April 17, 2017.[998] Local media reported that government forces responded to student protestors at the SP Higher Secondary School in Srinagar with teargas and water cannons in an effort to prevent them from marching in the streets. At least two students sustained brain injuries.[999]
- Colleges across the region were closed for five days, but when they re-opened on April 24, 2017, students marched in protest once more, clashing with police who again used water cannons, teargas, and pellets. At least 14 college and secondary school students in Pulwama and Shopian were injured.[1000]
- Protests continued through May 18, 2017, when pellets and teargas shells were fired at protesters during clashes between students from the Government Degree College in Kulgam district and police, reportedly injuring 14 people, mostly students. The students were protesting the detention of their colleagues.[1001]

IRAQ

According to information shared by the UN at least 350 schools were damaged or destroyed in Iraq, and at least 100 teachers and 60 students were killed, injured, threatened, or abducted. Dozens of schools and universities were used for military purposes by parties to the conflict. Armed groups recruited children and youth from schools. There were also at least 70 reported attacks on higher education facilities, students, and personnel.

Context

Insecurity increased across Iraq during the 2013-2017 reporting period, with sectarian violence between Shias and Sunnis escalating in 2013, the rise of 'IS' in 2014, and violence surrounding parliamentary elections, also in 2014. These trends, in combination with weak governance and widespread corruption, significantly challenged the country's stability.[1002]

The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), government-allied militias, and 'IS' vied for territorial control throughout the reporting period.[1003] Beginning in mid-2014, 'IS' gained control over predominantly Sunni areas north and east of the capital, Baghdad.[1004] Backed by the United States, the ISF began operations to retake Ramadi in February 2016, Fallujah in May 2016, and Mosul in October 2016.[1005] The operation in Mosul lasted through first half of 2017, which had a devastating impact on the civilian population.

Conflict throughout Iraq took a toll on education. UNICEF reported in June 2017 that in the areas of Iraq most affected by conflict, more than 90 percent of children were out of school.[1006] In areas under its control, 'IS' reportedly banned subjects such as history, literature, art, music, and evolution, and replaced the curriculum with one focused on religious teaching.[1007] Human Rights Watch reported that families had stopped sending their children to school in areas controlled by 'IS' because of changes the group made to the curriculum, fears about indoctrination, concern that schools would be struck in air strikes targeting fighters, and a lack of qualified teachers.[1008] Although 'IS' permitted girls under the age of 15 to attend school, the group segregated the classrooms and its curriculum promoted gender stereotypes.[1009] In public life, including on the route to school, girls faced the threat of rape and harassment, including for failure to comply with dress codes.[1010] Furthermore, parents reported marrying their girls early to protect them from being forced to marry 'IS' fighters, despite the fact that early marriage resulted in the girls dropping out of school.[1011] A UN commission of inquiry determined that sexual violence committed against Yezidi women and girls by 'IS', such as using schools as sites to sell women and girls into sexual slavery, were acts of genocide.[1012]

In the context of increased violence and instability, attacks on education in the current period were reported at higher rates than during the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Attacks on schools

The 2013-2017 reporting period saw more than 100 targeted and indiscriminate attacks on schools, which harmed more than 300 students and education personnel. UNICEF reported in June 2017 that there had been 138 attacks on schools between January 2014 and May 2017, and that half of all schools in Iraq were in need of urgent repairs, although it was unclear whether this need stemmed solely from the conflict.[1013]

Attacks on schools typically took the form of explosives, mortar shells, and air strikes. These reported numbers represented a doubling of those described in *Education under Attack 2014,* despite constraints on monitoring and reporting during the current reporting period. The UN Security Council noted that limited access to areas of Iraq affected by conflict throughout 2014 and during the first half of 2015 prevented comprehensive monitoring of attacks on education during that time.[1014]

GCPEA found a total of 19 attacks on schools that were reported by the UN and media sources in 2013.[1015] In most cases, unidentified attackers planted explosives inside or near schools, or exploded vehicles near schools. The

UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) documented the same number of attacks, although it was not clear whether the two sets of attacks included identical incidents.[1016] For example:

- According to UN sources, on March 11, 2013, an IED targeting a police station in the town of Dibis, north of Baghdad, damaged an adjacent secondary school. One hundred and six students between the ages of 13 and 17 were wounded, as were four teachers.[1017]
- UN and media sources documented an attack in October 2013 in Qabak Turkman village, in the northern Nineveh governorate. A suicide bomber reportedly drove a truck full of explosives into a primary school playground and detonated them, killing at least eight primary school children, their head teacher, and an unknown number of other teachers, and injuring at least 112 children and teachers.[1018]
- On November 28, 2013, a bomb on the road outside a girls' school was discovered and safely defused.[1019]

The number of reported attacks in 2014 tripled over the previous year. GCPEA found reports of approximately 60 incidents of violence targeting schools, based on information compiled from UN and media sources.[1020] The UN Secretary-General's *Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict* similarly reported 67 attacks on schools and education personnel, including military use of schools, throughout the country during the year.[1021] This increase in attacks that affected schools was partially attributable to violence leading up to the Iraqi elections in April of that year. The majority of attacks on schools took forms similar to those seen in 2013, including the use of IEDs and other explosives. There were also cases of gunmen opening fire on schools guarded by the ISF, which damaged the buildings.[1022] For example:

- According to the UN, 23 attacks targeted schools used as polling stations in northern and western regions of Iraq, including in Baghdad, Kirkuk, Salah al-Din, Anbar, and Nineveh, around the time of the April 2014 parliamentary elections. The perpetrators of the attacks were not identified.[1023]
- One of the deadlier attacks on schools occurred on June 9, 2014, when two vehicle-borne IEDs detonated in the mixed Kurdish, Turkmen, Sunni area of Tuz Khormatu, one near the office of the political party Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, and the other near the office of the Iraqi Communist Party, both located near schools. No damage to the schools was reported. According to UNAMI, these explosions killed 26 people, including one child under the age of 15, and injured 150 others, including 12 students under the age of 15. The perpetrator of the attack was not reported.[1024]

Attacks on schools continued to be reported at even higher rates during 2015. The UN documented 90 attacks on schools and education personnel and verified 68. Most (62) took place during fighting in Anbar, near Baghdad, that continued throughout the year. It was not clear how many of these attacks were directed at educational facilities rather than at education personnel.[1025] For example:

- A UN report documented five attacks on schools during the first half of 2015, all of which occurred during clashes between the ISF and 'IS' in Anbar, killing an unknown number of IDPs who were sheltering in the schools.[1026]
- According to media reports, on June 16, 2015, an explosion near a girls' school in Diyala killed at least four students and a teacher and injured another four students.[1027] Reports conflicted about whether the explosion was the result of a roadside bomb or a car bomb.
- On November 29, 2015, a mortar shell from an unidentified source struck a school in Anbar, reportedly injuring three students, according to the GTD.[1028]

Reports of attacks on schools appeared to decline in 2016, but it was not clear whether this pattern was the result of challenges in monitoring or changes in the environment. The UN documented at least 11 attacks on schools during 2016 but verified just 5.[1029] Among the attacks verified were air strikes that damaged two schools in Mosul, one that was being used by 'IS', and three others that were damaged by fighting in Kirkuk and Nineveh.[1030] The UN also documented attacks on schools in Diyala, Baghdad, and Anbar provinces.[1031] The majority of these attacks took the form of mortars and explosives directed at schools, and were reportedly perpetrated by 'IS'. Examples included the following:

- 'IS' struck a school in eastern Ramadi on May 16, 2016, according to local media sources.[1032]
- The MRM country taskforce reported at least one case of a vehicle-born IED attack on a school in Karkh district, which occurred on an unknown date in October of that year.[1033]

In 2017, Mosul was the area most heavily affected by attacks on schools. Information collected by GCPEA from media reports, Airwars, and the UN indicated that there were at least 20 attacks on schools between January and April 2017, including 18 in Mosul, one in Diyala governorate, and one in Salah al-Din governorate.[1034] In April 2017, UN Habitat released an analysis of satellite imagery assessing damage to schools in Mosul. The analysis indicated that 31 schools had been destroyed across different areas of the city as of that month.[1035] According to the Education Cluster, by the end of July 2017, after Iraqi forces had retaken the city, a total of 69 schools had been damaged, the majority in West Mosul.[1036] In Salah al-Din governorate, the Education Cluster reported in June 2017 that 19 schools were destroyed, 13 in Yathrib district, 4 in Baiji district, and 2 in Shirqat district.[1037]

The UN verified 151 attacks on schools in 2017.[1038] GCPEA separately compiled information on 21 attacks on schools in 2017 from UN, NGO, and media sources.[1039] It was not clear whether any of these incidents overlapped with those verified by the MRM. For example:

- Airwars reported that Coalition forces took responsibility for bombing a school housing IDPs in Mosul on January 13, 2017.[1040]
- 'IS' was allegedly responsible for one of the deadlier attacks during the first quarter of 2017, according to local media. On February 11, 2017, the group reportedly fired missiles at a school in eastern Mosul, killing two female students and wounding others, including teachers.[1041]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

From 2013 to 2017, targeted killings, bomb blasts, abductions, and threats harmed at least 100 education personnel and 60 students. Rates of reported attacks remained relatively consistent throughout the reporting period and were slightly less frequent than documented in *Education under Attack 2014,* although this may have been the result of challenges in monitoring.

The majority of violence against students, teachers, and education personnel occurred in areas of the country under 'IS' control, such as Mosul. Reports about life under 'IS' described teachers being threatened with death if they did not continue to teach the 'IS' curriculum. 'IS' was said to patrol the schools to ensure compliance.[1042] Many parents reportedly took their children out of school so that they would not be indoctrinated.[1043]

Targeted killings of teachers and principals were the most commonly reported form of attacks on students and education personnel in 2013. In most cases, the perpetrators and motives were unknown. The UN reported 13 incidents of killing or injury of education personnel and expressed concern about threats to teachers, particularly in Diyala governorate, where flyers distributed throughout the community threatened English-language teachers.[1044] GCPEA identified media reports of 11 attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel in 2013.[1045] It was not clear how many of these overlapped with those reported by the UN. Some attacks targeted female educators and girls' education. For instance:

- On January 7, 2013, a female Christian teacher was found dead, with her throat cut, in Mosul, according to UNAMI.[1046]

- According to media sources, unidentified perpetrators shot and killed the principal of Nablus School for Girls in Mosul on September 26, 2013. The principal's gender was not reported.[1047]

Targeted killings of teachers and other education personnel continued at similar rates in 2014, and targeted attacks on and abductions of students were also reported. The UN documented 10 attacks or threats of attack against teachers by 'IS' during 2014, as 'IS' began to target teachers as part of its widely implemented strategy to control the Iraqi education system and use schools as sites for indoctrination.[1048] UNAMI and OHCHR reported that in Kirkuk, after 'IS' required females above the age of 13 to wear the face-covering *niqab,* parents stopped sending their girls to school in order to avoid harassment by 'IS' patrols that were enforcing the rules.[1049] The attacks on students and education personnel recorded in 2014 included the following:

- According to media sources, a roadside bomb planted by unidentified perpetrators struck a bus carrying school teachers in Baquba, Diyala province, in February 2014. At least 10 teachers were reported wounded.[1050]
- Education International reported that 'IS' targeted teachers' union leaders and their families, including the assassination of a union leader in June 2014 for his involvement in efforts to build a more democratic education system.[1051]
- On June 22, 2014, attackers kidnapped 20 Kurdish school children, according to the GTD. Sources believed that 'IS' was responsible for that attack, but no one claimed responsibility.[1052]
- On August 15, 2014, as reported by UNAMI and OHCHR, 'IS' went to a local school in Tal Afar, rounded up all males older than 10, took them away, and shot them.[1053]

The UN and Human Rights Watch reported dozens of targeted killings and abductions of students and teachers during 2015, and one case of torture.[1054] Following the same trends identified in 2014, 'IS' continued to target individuals who openly opposed the group and was responsible for many of the attacks on students and teachers. The UN verified a total of 24 violations against teachers and students.[1055] Examples of attacks included the following:

- According to a report by UNAMI, 'IS' abducted four teachers from a high school in Mosul due to their opposition to the group.[1056]
- In March 2015, 'IS' executed a primary school teacher who criticized the group in Tal Afar, according to Quilliam and the Romeo Dallaire Foundation.[1057]
- On June 16, 2015, in Abu-Saida subdistrict, Diyala, an IED planted by unidentified perpetrators detonated in a minibus carrying female middle school students, killing the driver and four students, and wounding six students.[1058]
- On December 9, 2015, 'IS' tortured and killed a female secondary school teacher in Mosul city for purportedly refusing to teach the group's curriculum.[1059] The curriculum banned the teaching of national history, literature, art, music, and evolution, and implemented gender-segregated teaching and learning.[1060]

Attacks on students and educators appeared to slow in 2016. The UN verified far fewer attacks on education personnel than during the previous year, just five total. 'IS' was responsible for all of these attacks, including incidents in which four teachers were abducted, killed, or injured, and one teacher was threatened by the group.[1061] GCPEA collated information on 14 incidents of actual and attempted targeted killings by 'IS' or unidentified attackers in 2016, as well as abductions.[1062] For example:

- Local media stated that, in January 2016, 'IS' executed several teachers and civil servants in Mosul because they refused to implement the group's curriculum, which they perceived to be ideologically extremist and to encourage violence.[1063]
- On January 15, 2016, also according to UNAMI and OHCHR, 'IS' burned three female teachers to death in northern Mosul after accusing them of providing information to the ISF.[1064]
- UNAMI and OHCHR reported that 'IS' abducted five male teachers in Mosul during the first week of January 2016 and killed another teacher at Palestine School in Mosul because he or she refused to teach the 'IS' curriculum.[1065]
- In at least seven cases, unidentified attackers targeted education personnel across Iraq through killings and abductions, according to the CTFMR.[1066]

There were at least five reported attacks against teachers and other education personnel in 2017:

- On January 16, 2017, the assistant director of a high school in Basra province was found dead after having been kidnapped from an unidentified location on January 14, according to media sources. The teachers' union that reported the attack accused the "enemies of humanity and education" of being responsible but did not name a specific group.[1067]
- The Ministry of Education reported that, in January 2017, a group of soldiers in the Iraqi army had attacked teachers and other education personnel at a girls' school in Anbar province.[1068]
- The UN received information that a teacher was killed in Baghdad city on April 9, 2017, by an explosive attached to his vehicle.[1069]
- Human Rights Watch reported that six men who were masked and wearing military clothes broke into the home of a high school principal on October 30, 2017, in Daquq city, Kirkuk governorate, and killed him. The principal was an active member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party and a part-time cameraman for a party news outlet.[1070]
- On November 4, 2017, unidentified attackers kidnapped a school guard and his son in Diyala governorate, according to media sources. The outcome of the kidnapping was unknown.[1071]

Military use of schools and universities

Iraqi forces, 'IS', Peshmerga forces (Kurdish military forces), and other armed groups used dozens of educational institutions. It was not always clear how these institutions were used, but in some cases they served as bases, detention centers, and shields from attack, among other military purposes.[1072]

Perhaps most notably, 'IS' used Mosul University as a base throughout much of the reporting period, from June 2014 until January 2017, when the ISF regained control of the area. 'IS' used university buildings as weapons workshops, barracks, and execution sites; damaged and destroyed university facilities; and attempted to change the university syllabus.[1073] According to UN Habitat, which mapped damage in the area, multiple university buildings were severely damaged as a result of 'IS' use.[1074] Military use of schools and universities appeared to increase throughout the reporting period, in contrast to the 2009-2013 period covered by *Education under Attack 2014,* during which no military use of schools or universities was documented.

While no cases of military use were documented in 2013, multiple parties to the conflict used schools for military purposes in 2014, resulting in at least one school being demolished by opposing forces.[1075] According to the UN, 'IS' used three schools in the Anbar and Diyala governorates, ISF used two in the Salah al-Din governorate, and Peshmerga forces used one in Mosul.[1076] In several cases reported by human rights groups and the UN, 'IS' used schools as detention, torture, and killing centers in their persecution of members of the Yezidi minority group. The reported cases in which 'IS' used educational institutions included the following:

- At least one university was used temporarily during 2014. According to a news report, in June 2014, members of 'IS' stormed Anbar University and detained dozens of students inside a dormitory before the gunmen left the university a few hours later.[1077]
- On August 15, 2014, 'IS' fighters assembled Yezidi residents of a village in Kocho in a secondary school, separating men and boys from women and girls.[1078] All males older than 10 years old were driven away and shot. As many as 400 men and boys were killed.[1079]

- According to the UN, on August 2014, 'IS' took children between the ages of 8 and 15 to different locations in Iraq and beyond, including a school in Tal Afar and a school on the outskirts of Raqqa, Syria. Trainings typically lasted from 13 days to three weeks. The children learned to shoot live ammunition and were forced to watch videos of beheadings. Some who refused to watch were severely beaten.[1080]
- On November 11, 2014, the vacated Industrial High School in Baiji was destroyed by IEDs allegedly placed there by 'IS', as the ISF had previously used it as a military base.[1081]

According to the UN, between January and June 2015, 'IS', ISF, and the Peshmerga used seven schools for military purposes and as screening sites in cities throughout Iraq (four by 'IS', two by the ISF, and one by the Peshmerga).[1082] Several of the educational institutions being used by armed forces or groups were either targeted by opposing forces or damaged in fighting. For example:

- In Mosul, on July 9, 2015, air strikes from an unknown source that UNAMI stated were intended to strike al-Ameen Secondary School, which was occupied by 'IS' fighters at the time, hit a marketplace, killing 11 civilians and wounding 12.[1083]
- According to information reported by *Al Fanar Media,* after Iraqi forces took back control of Tikrit University from 'IS', the military used the campus as a base for five months. The university had been heavily damaged in fighting between 'IS' and Iraqi forces while it was occupied.[1084]

Reports of military use of schools rose significantly in 2016, with the UN documenting 38 cases, most involving 'IS'. According to the UN, 'IS' reportedly used 34 schools as combat positions, weapons depots, or training facilities in Anbar, Kirkuk, and Nineveh, while ISF used three schools in Nineveh as screening centers, and the Popular Mobilization Forces used one school in Nineveh.[1085] Separately, the UN, human rights groups, and media sources reported at least eight cases of armed groups using schools to detain civilians and as bases and strategic positions.[1086] For example:

- On June 5, 2016, during clashes between two clans, armed men reportedly broke into five schools in Basra and used them as firing positions. Several of the schools were damaged in the fighting, according to UNAMI and OHCHR.[1087]
- The UN reported that, in November 2016, 'IS' allegedly used a school in Tal Afar to sell an unknown number of Yezidi women to the group's fighters.[1088] The UN report did not specifically indicate for what purpose the Yezidi women were sold, but during the reporting period rights organizations and media sources documented a pattern of 'IS' fighters forcibly marrying Yezidi women and using them as sex slaves.[1089]
- In December 2016, Human Rights Watch reported that a Yezidi militia was using a boys' secondary school in Khanasoor as barracks.[1090]
- *Al Fanar Media* reported that Iraqi forces used Anbar University in Ramadi as a military base from 2015, when they retook the campus from 'IS', until September 2016. 'IS' had previously looted the university's labs, and fighting between ISF and 'IS' had caused extensive damage to many of the buildings, according to a professor interviewed by the news source.[1091]

The UN verified 22 cases of military use in 2017.[1092] GCPEA separately identified reports of five cases in which armed groups used schools as detainment centers, training centers, or headquarters. It was not clear whether any of these cases overlapped with those verified by the MRM. They included the following:

- According to the UN, a primary school in eastern Mosul was used as the headquarters of an unidentified armed group from the beginning of January 2017 through at least February 2017.[1093]
- Human Rights Watch reported that, in late April 2017, the Popular Mobilization Forces detained at least 100 men in a school building and a home near Mosul, interrogating them about their connections to 'IS' and torturing them.[1094]
- According to Human Rights Watch, Peshmerga soldiers used a school in the village of Saleh al-Malih near Tal Afar in Nineveh governorate as a detainment center in late August 2017. Women interviewed by Human Rights Watch described how Peshmerga forces beat the boys and men after separating them from the girls and women. On August 28, 2017, a foreign woman detonated a bomb at the school as she was being checked by female Peshmerga soldiers, killing and wounding solders and displaced people, including one child and two women.[1095]
- On September 17, 2017, a bomb exploded at a school near Tal Afar, Nineveh governorate, according to media sources. The school was being used for training by the Tribal Mobilization, a pro-government paramilitary force.[1096]
- Human Rights Watch interviewed women who reported that Iraqi forces detained them in a school in Hawija, Kirkuk governorate, on September 22, 2017. The detainment occurred during Iraqi forces' operation to retake Haqija from 'IS', and the women told Human Rights Watch that the soldiers questioned them about the identity of villagers affiliated with 'IS'.[1097]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

There were widespread reports by UN, NGO, and media sources that armed groups, particularly 'IS', mandated that school children participate in their trainings or join their groups, and required teachers to encourage students to join. Additionally, a media report indicated that 'IS' kidnapped more than 100 children from their places of study to give them military training and use them in combat.[1098] Child recruitment from schools was not included in the Iraq profile of *Education under Attack 2014,* thus it constituted a new finding during the 2013-2017 reporting period.

Reports of child recruitment from schools included the following:

- On March 10, 2014, unidentified armed men kidnapped an 8-year-old girl outside her school in Utafiyya, Baghdad. She was later found wearing a fake explosive belt. The girl's father had been a candidate in parliamentary elections that took place in 2010.[1099]
- In 2014 there were reports that 'IS' mandated that students participate in combat training and join the group after completing school.[1100]
- On May 23, 2014, 'IS' announced at schools and universities in Nineveh governorate that all male students must join the group after completing their exams.[1101]
- In April 2015, the *International Business Times* reported that 'IS' had kidnapped 120 school children from their classrooms at a school in Mosul. Local media reported that the group loaded the children onto military vehicles and took them away. It was predicted that most of the children would be trained as 'IS' fighters, while those belonging to wealthy families would be released upon payment of a ransom.[1102]
- According to the UN, on June 5, 2015, the influential Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah al-Sistani called upon all students to use their summer break for military training in the fight against 'IS', which resulted in several schools being converted to religious and military training camps for children in Baghdad, Diyala, Basra, and other southern governorates.[1103]
- In 2016, Human Rights Watch reported patterns of child recruitment in areas of Iraq under the control of Kurdish forces at the time, including Sinjar province. In the cases in Sinjar, according to the rights group, teachers encouraged students to join groups affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party.[1104]

Quilliam and the Romeo Dallaire Foundation reported that, in addition to incidents of forced recruitment, 'IS' sought to recruit children through indoctrination in areas under their control. The group used schools as sites for indoctrination and "schooling in the 'caliphate,'" with rules set out by the *Diwan al-Ta'aleem,* the 'IS' equivalent of a Ministry of Education. Classrooms were mixed for the first year of school, and then segregated by gender from the ages of 6 to 15. Clothing had to comply with 'IS' laws, including head coverings for girls from first grade

onward. The curriculum banned drawing, music, nationalism, history, philosophy, and social studies courses while including intensive Quranic studies, and it limited topics such as geography, using textbooks that named only continents, not countries. Physical education in particular reflected the use of education to recruit children, as it was renamed "jihadi training" and included the assembly and firing of weapons.[1105]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school

Individual instances of sexual violence in the education context were not widely reported in the 2013-2017 period. However, a respondent interviewed during an Oxfam gender and conflict analysis reported that, in areas controlled by 'IS', adolescent girls were commonly harassed.[1106] Additionally, there were several reported instances of schools used as sites for detaining, raping, and selling women and girls in what Human Rights Watch called cases of "systematic rape." For example:[1107]

- Amnesty International reported that on August 15, 2014, 'IS' assembled Yezidi residents of a village in Kocho in a secondary school, separating out women and children. There were reports that 'IS' also detained Yezidi women and children at schools in Tal Afar, Mosul, and Ba'aj cities around August 2014. Many of them were subjected to rape, sexual abuse, forced marriage to fighters, or slavery.[1108]
- According to UNAMI and OHCHR, 'IS' held a group of women and girls at an abandoned school in Tal Afar between September 11 and December 10, 2014, and raped them.[1109]
- In April 2016, Human Rights Watch reported that 'IS' was still detaining many women and girls in schools, moving them between Iraq and Syria, keeping them in sexual slavery, raping them, and buying and selling them in slave markets.[1110]

Attacks on higher education

Explosives, air strikes, and arson affected university campuses, and 'IS' and unidentified gunmen killed and injured university students, personnel, and scholars in at least 70 incidents. According to *Al Fanar Media,* many of the buildings on 10 Iraqi university campuses were destroyed by bombs and mortar shells between 2014 and 2017, including Anbar, Fallujah, and Ma'arif universities in Anbar governorate; Tikrit and Samarra universities in Tikrit governorate; and Nineveh, Mosul, Hamdaniyah, Tal Afar, and Northern Technical universities in Nineveh governorate.[1111] In most cases, the perpetrator of the attack was either unknown or identified as 'IS'. The 2013-2017 reporting period also saw an increase in reports of attacks on higher education over the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.

In 2013, GCPEA identified 11 instances of attacks on higher education in media reports.[1112] These included bombings, shootings, and abductions of university students and personnel. For example:

- In March 2013, unidentified assailants reportedly killed four university personnel members in a bomb attack north of Tikrit.[1113]
- In June 2013, it was reported that a suicide bomber attacked the campus of Tikrit University, killing a police officer.[1114]
- On November 21, 2013, two Turkmen students were abducted as they returned from college, following anonymous threats against Turkmen students due to their ethnicity.[1115]
- Unidentified gunmen reportedly fired on a bus carrying Turkmen Shia students from Tikrit University on December 17, 2013, injuring one student seriously.[1116]

Media reports of attacks on higher education doubled in 2014 from the previous year, with 26 attacks on universities, students, or university personnel. Of these, six involved explosive devices planted in the vehicles of targeted professors and personnel, and five involved professors being shot and killed. The perpetrators of these 11 attacks remained unknown. The other incidents involved the detonation of explosives in institutions and other types of attacks.[1117] The president of Mosul University stated that 'IS' was responsible for killing at least 56 lecturers between 2014 and late 2016, when ISF began operations to retake the city.[1118] It was not clear whether any of these lecturers were those identified in individual incidents collated by GCPEA. Examples of attacks on students and professors included the following:

- In July 2014, 'IS' militants killed a professor from the University of Mosul after he spoke out against violence targeting Christians in that city.[1119]
- Also in Mosul, on November 21-22, 2014, 'IS' killed 12 university students, according to the UN.[1120]

In 2015 there were at least 10 media reports of attacks on higher education, of which six involved explosive devices planted in the vehicles of university administrators and professors in Baghdad; the others involved attacks on higher education institutions.[1121] In several cases, 'IS' continued to target university students and professors and to destroy university property. For example:

- In January 2015, 'IS' burned hundreds of books from Mosul University's central library.[1122]
- On March 15, 2015, 'IS' blew up two of Mosul University's laboratories.[1123]

In 2016 there were at least five media reports of attacks on higher education.[1124] In four instances, higher education personnel were reportedly targeted by explosive devices planted on their vehicles. No group claimed responsibility for any of these attacks. In the fifth case, an air strike hit a university. Examples included the following:

- Four professors were killed, one on each of the following dates in the indicated locations: in Baladiat, Baghdad governorate, on March 2, 2016;[1125] in Amiriyah, Baghdad governorate, on June 20, 2016;[1126] in Fallujah, Anbar governorate, on August 17, 2016;[1127] and in Waziriya, Baghdad governorate, on November 3, 2016.[1128]
- According to information received by the UN, air strikes hit the residential complex of a university sometime during 2016, killing the dean of one of the university colleges and his wife.[1129]

In 2017 there was at least one reported attack on higher education, which occurred on August 19, when a bomb planted under a university professor's car exploded in western Baghdad. The professor was killed in the blast.[1130]

ISRAEL/PALESTINE

In the West Bank, military operations by Israeli security forces and attacks by Israeli settlers harmed Palestinian students, education personnel, schools, and universities. In Gaza, air strikes and mortar shells damaged or destroyed hundreds of Palestinian schools and universities, most of them in 2014. Several Israeli schools and buses transporting Israeli students were also damaged. Multiple parties used dozens of schools and universities as bases, for weapons storage, or for military training in the West Bank and Gaza.

Context

Conflict in Israel/Palestine varied by region from 2013 to 2017. Tension in the West Bank was largely related to Israeli settlements and administrative policies. Israeli authorities exercised exclusive jurisdiction over civil and security issues in Area C, which encompassed approximately 60 percent of the West Bank, and full jurisdiction over East Jerusalem. Israeli authorities rarely issued building permits for Palestinians in Area C and frequently demolished Palestinian property there, including schools.[1131] Furthermore, according to the human rights group Yesh Din, there was limited accountability for ideologically motivated crimes against Palestinians, such as physical violence, damage to property, or takeover of land. In 2016, Yesh Din found that 85 percent of the investigations into this type of crime were closed because of failed police investigations.[1132] Violence and tensions also arose in areas close to Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and to checkpoints established and run by Israeli security forces (ISF).[1133]

Violence intensified in the West Bank in June 2014, after two Israeli children and one Israeli youth were abducted and killed.[1134] In response, Israeli extremists abducted and burned a Palestinian child to death.[1135] ISF initiated Operation Brother's Keeper during the search for the three abducted Israelis, conducting searches across the West Bank, including at schools and universities. At least four Palestinians were killed and more than 470 arrested between June 12 and June 24, 2014.[1136] Israel convicted a Palestinian man with ties to Hamas for the three deaths, but there was no evidence that Hamas leadership was involved. Tensions continued to spike in the West Bank and East Jerusalem throughout the remainder of the reporting period.[1137]

Israel's closure of Gaza's border crossings and limits on sea and air access, which was supported by Egypt, restricted the movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza and shaped conflict in the Gaza Strip, which was de facto controlled by Hamas.[1138] During the reporting period, there were periods of intense fighting between ISF and Palestinian armed groups, including rockets launched by Palestinian groups into Israel and Israeli air strikes and ground incursions into Gaza.[1139] The most intense damage to schools in Gaza occurred during fighting between ISF and de facto Hamas authorities in July and August 2014, during an Israeli military operation called "Operation Protective Edge" that damaged many schools and destroyed others.[1140] Intensification of fighting on the Israel-Gaza border also affected education in southern Israel, with children staying home from school during periods of increased rocket attacks.[1141]

The UN reported that tactics of the occupation in the West Bank, including checkpoints, road closures, raids, and the blockade in Gaza, hindered girls' and women's access to education.[1142]

Attacks on education reflected this overall intensification of violence, all forms of which occurred more frequently in the current reporting period than in the period documented in *Education under Attack 2014*. There were at least 1,147 incidents related to pre-tertiary education in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Israel between 2013 and 2017, which affected tens of thousands of students.[1143]

Palestine endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in May 2015.

Palestinian girls attend class at a school in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip on September 5, 2015. The school was damaged during Israeli Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014.

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Attacks on schools

Attacks on schools took several forms in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza, and southern Israel. In all areas, safe access to education was restricted. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, there were reports of Israeli settlers attacking schools. In Gaza, Israeli air strikes and ground force operations destroyed or damaged hundreds of Palestinian schools; Palestinian armed groups launched rockets and fired mortar shells that damaged schools in Israel but also in Gaza. The more frequent presence of Israeli forces near schools also affected educational opportunities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, where Israeli forces entered and searched and fired teargas canisters into Palestinian schools and schoolyards. Finally, demolitions and stop-work orders at schools lacking building permits contributed to a lack of adequate educational facilities and a severe shortage of schools. According to Save the Children, at the end of 2017, there were pending demolition orders on 46 schools in the West Bank, affecting children's access to education.[1144]

The overall level of reported attacks was higher than in the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014,* largely due a sustained Israeli military operation, called "Protective Edge," in Gaza during July and August 2014, and generally heightened tensions between the Israeli and Palestinian populations throughout the reporting period.

In the West Bank during 2013, attacks by Israeli settlers inhibited safe access to schools for Palestinian children in the West Bank, as did the presence of Israeli forces in school areas. Israeli settlers vandalized schools, and Israeli forces fired on or near schools using teargas and sound bombs, which explode with a bright flash and loud noise intended to disorient the people targeted. In 2013, according to the UN, there were 41 cases of ISF conducting operations inside or near schools, forcing entry into schools, firing teargas and sound bombs into schools, or causing structural damage to schools on the West Bank.[1145] In 15 cases, teargas and sound bombs affected UNRWA schools, sometimes during class.[1146] Cases of vandalism or abuse by armed forces at schools included:

- UNICEF reported that Israeli settlers attacked schools in the West Bank in five instances during 2013.[1147] Israeli settlers from Yitzhar settlement near 'Urif village in Nablus and settlers living near Jalud village, also in Nablus, were responsible for surrounding and breaking into or hurling stones at schools in at least three cases during the first half of the year, as documented by the UN sources.[1148]
- On September 24, 2013, Israeli forces fired teargas canisters into a group of Palestinian protesters who were allegedly throwing stones near the Zeita Secondary School in Tulkarem. The school evacuated its 350 students.[1149]

Two schools were affected in an attack in Gaza in 2013. On December 25, 2013, rockets fired by Israeli forces into the Gaza Strip damaged the windows of Deir Al Balah Vocational School and Abdallah Ben Rawaha Mixed School.[1150]

There was at least one attack that damaged a school in Israel reported in 2013. On January 26, 2013, unknown assailants reportedly targeted a kindergarten in Tuba-Zangariya, a Bedouin village in northern Israel, with an explosive device. The attack did not cause any casualties or damage, according to media sources.[1151]

The number of attacks on both Palestinian and Israeli schools peaked in 2014, rising significantly over the previous year. In the West Bank, an Israeli military operation, called "Brother's Keeper," contributed to an increased presence of armed forces around schools. ISF were responsible for 117 attacks on West Bank schools in 2014, including responding to clashes with Palestinians by entering schools or firing teargas and sound bombs into schools and schoolyards, according to UNICEF. These attacks injured students and teachers.[1152] UNICEF also reported that Israeli settlers and extremists attacked West Bank schools in 12 cases during 2014.[1153] Cases of attacks on schools by Israeli settlers or of military presence affecting schools included:

- In early March 2014, ISF fired teargas and sound bombs into and near Ya'bad Secondary School in Jenin and al-Sawiya Secondary School in Nablus, after students allegedly threw stones or Molotov cocktails at the soldiers. At the latter school, Israeli forces assaulted teachers and arrested one student.[1154]
- According to the UN, Israeli settlers allegedly living in the Yizhar settlement in the West Bank attacked 'Urif Secondary School for Boys near Nablus four times in 2014.[1155] In one of these cases, on April 18, 2014, ISF shielded the settlers as they attacked the school with stones, bullets, and a gas canister, injuring 12 students.[1156]
- On September 24, 2014, ISF fired rubber bullets toward Dar al-Aytam School in Jerusalem's Old City, allegedly after Palestinian students had thrown stones. The rubber bullets injured three children.[1157]

One Israeli school in East Jerusalem was also attacked in 2014. Members of the right-wing group Lahava, whose main goal was to prevent interfaith marriages, vandalized the integrated Arab-Israeli school in Jerusalem in November, writing hate slogans such as "Death to Arabs" on the walls and burning books. The incident prompted Israel's President Rivlin to hold a solidarity meeting with children from the school a few days later.[1158]

Attacks on schools peaked in Gaza in 2014 during Israeli Operation Protective Edge. According to the UN, at least 262 schools and 274 kindergartens in Gaza were damaged or destroyed during the operation between July 8 and August 26, 2014.[1159] The UN reported that, during the operation, Israeli artillery, mortar shells, and missiles damaged seven UN-run schools, six of which were being used by the UNRWA as temporary shelters. These attacks killed or injured hundreds of civilians, including children.[1160] Israeli forces reportedly carried out these strikes despite repeated notifications of the schools' locations and use as shelters by the UN.[1161] Human Rights Watch determined that the attacks in Beit Hanoun and Jabalya did not appear to target military objectives "or were otherwise unlawfully indiscriminate." Human Rights Watch considered the third attack in Rafah to be unlawfully disproportionate if not indiscriminate.[1162]

As Operation Protective Edge continued, rockets launched from inside Gaza struck two Israeli schools and two Israeli kindergartens, injuring one civilian in one of the kindergartens.[1163] According to UNICEF and local media sources, the affected schools included the following:

- A special education school in Rishon LeZion in southern Israel on July 15, 2014.[1164]
- A kindergarten in Sha'ar Hanegev Regional Council, Sderot city, on July 21, 2014.[1165]
- A school in Ashdod in southern Israel on July 21, 2014.[1166]
- A kindergarten in Eshkol region on August 21, 2014, where one adult was injured.[1167]

Attacks on schools declined for much of 2015, before becoming more common again toward the end of the year.[1168] Military operations around schools in the West Bank were responsible for the majority of attacks on schools in 2015. The UN reported 96 incidents in which schools came under fire during military-led operations.[1169] At least 4,752 students were harmed by attacks on schools and military activity around schools, primarily due to teargas inhalation.[1170] In addition, Israeli settlers were also responsible for attacks on four schools, all during the first quarter of 2015, according to UNICEF—two in Hebron, one in Nablus, and one in Bethlehem.[1171] There was one demolition order issued against a school in the West Bank in 2015.[1172] Examples of attacks related to military operations, settler violence, or demolitions included:

- During the first quarter of 2015, settlers threw rocks at students at the al-Ibrahimyye School in Hebron's Old City and later vandalized the school gate. [1173]
- Also during the first quarter of 2015, another group of Israeli settlers vandalized 'Urif Secondary Boys School, writing "Death to Arabs" on its walls.[1174]
- During search operations, Israeli force munitions broke the windows of the UNRWA Jalazone Camp Basic Girls' School during the first quarter of 2015.[1175]
- The Shab Albotom School in Massafer Yatta received a demolition order during the third quarter of 2015.[1176]

In 2015, armed clashes also affected two schools in Gaza, which had to be evacuated on October 18, 2015, according to OCHA.[1177]

In 2016, attacks on schools continued to occur in the West Bank but were reported slightly less frequently. The UN documented 74 attacks on schools or protected education personnel in the West Bank in 2016 but did not disaggregate these numbers.[1178] Information from UNICEF indicated that there were approximately 83 incidents in 2016.[1179] As during previous years, most attacks occurred in the context of Israeli military operations near Palestinian schools, resulting in the firing of teargas or sound bombs and ISF searches on school premises. However, there was also at least one case in which Israeli settlers attacked a school and nine cases of either demolition orders issued against schools or actual demolitions of school structures.[1180] According to the Palestinian Ministry of Education, there were 162 attacks on schools in the West Bank in 2016, including searches by ISF in which they used live fire and rubber bullets, as well as gas and sound bombs.[1181] It was not clear whether these different tallies overlapped or whether the different sources used the same criteria to define attacks on schools. Examples of attacks on schools, including military presence, vandalism, and demolitions, included:

- In March 2016, ISF demolished an elementary school in the Khirbet Tana herding community. The school had been constructed in 2011 after the original school was demolished by ISF. The second demolition affected nine children, according to OCHA.[1182]
- On June 5, 2016, Israeli forces demolished a donor-funded kindergarten in the Sateh al-Bahar Bedouin community in the West Bank. The kindergarten had been constructed in early May, according to OCHA.[1183]
- On August 31, 2016, UNICEF reported that a group of Israeli settlers damaged a school in Nablus at night, when they attacked it by throwing stones, mud, and glass bottles.[1184]
- In October 2016, ISF entered Dar al-Aytam School, where they arrested 14 students and the school director, according to OCHA.[1185]

In one case, a rocket fired from Gaza damaged an educational institution in Israel. On July 1, 2016, a rocket fired from Gaza landed on a preschool in Sderot, Southern district. No one was injured in the blast.[1186]

During 2017, there were 95 reported cases of attacks on schools in the West Bank, which affected 12,380 children.[1187] These incidents included cases of military activity inside and around schools, including 66 cases in which the Israeli military fired tear gas canisters, sound grenades and live ammunition at or nearby schools, or at students commuting to or from school, as well as 24 cases in which the Israeli military entered and searched schools.[1188] In addition, there were several demolitions and demolition orders issued against schools.[1189] Examples of these different types of attacks included:

- OCHA reported that nine school-related structures in three Area C communities were confiscated by Israeli forces at the start of the school year in August 2017.[1190]
- According to Save the Children, tear gas fired by Israeli forces at the Al-Sharika School in Qalqilya city resulted in multiple students and staff suffering from suffocation.[1191]
- OCHA reported that on November 9, 2017, Israeli forces fired teargas canisters into a school yard in Hebron city, injuring five children. According to Israeli sources, this incident took place after unidentified individuals threw stones at Israeli settler vehicles from the school compound.[1192]

In addition, at least four schools in Gaza and one kindergarten in Israel were damaged in fighting between Israeli armed forces and Palestinian fighters in 2017. For example:

- An air strike by Israeli forces on August 9, 2017, damaged two schools located northwest of Gaza City, according to OCHA.[1193]
- OCHA reported that, during fighting in early December 2017, Israeli air strikes hit two schools, causing minor damage, and a Palestinian projectile damaged Ghazi al-Shawa public school in Beit Hanoun, Gaza, when it fell short of Israel.[1194]
- OCHA also reported that a rocket launched from Gaza into Israel damaged a kindergarten in Sderot, Israel, on December 10, 2017.[1195]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

There were more than 100 reported attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel in the West Bank during the reporting period. Reports indicated that ISF detained and harassed students and teachers on their way to school, at checkpoints, and on school premises, and that Israeli settlers threatened and harassed students and teachers. Clashes that injured students were concentrated in areas of Jerusalem, Nablus, Jenin, and Hebron, and cases of settler intimidation were particularly common in areas of Hebron, such as al-Tuwani. There were also two attacks on Israeli school buses.

In 2013, the UN reported 32 attacks on students and teachers, most of whom were detained, arrested, or harmed in clashes with Israeli forces on their way to or from school. The UN also reported 15 cases of settler violence that targeted school children and teachers with physical assaults and other means.[1196] For example:

- On April 25, 2013, 8 students between the ages of 6 and 16 were injured when they inhaled teargas as they left school in the midst of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli forces during a search-and-arrest operation in Abu Dis, Jerusalem, according to OCHA.[1197]
- UNICEF reported that Israeli settlers were responsible for injuring 30 students and 6 teachers on April 30, 2013, when they attacked a Palestinian school bus near Nablus city.[1198]
- On December 9, 2013, 15-year-old Palestinian Wajih al-Ramahi was shot and killed by Israeli forces as he left the UNRWA school in Jalazone refugee camp. Human Rights Watch reported that a group of boys and men had gathered, and some were throwing stones at the soldiers. It was not clear whether al-Ramahi threw stones and, according to Human Rights Watch, there was no clear justification for the soldiers' use of live ammunition.[1199]

According to media sources, in 2013, unknown individuals were responsible for two attacks on Israeli school children riding or waiting for school buses, including one in the West Bank and one near the Gaza border:

- Unknown individuals reportedly threw a Molotov cocktail at a bus full of Israeli students on November 19, 2013, in the West Bank.[1200]
- A rocket fired by unknown attackers landed near a school bus stop near Ashkelon city in the Southern district of Israel on December 23, 2013. No one was harmed.[1201]

A similar number of attacks on students and educators occurred in 2014, despite the escalation of violence. As in previous years, these attacks were concentrated in the West Bank. UNICEF reported 36 attacks on Palestinian students and teachers by Israeli forces and 10 attacks by Israeli settlers in 2014.[1202] The majority of these incidents included the arrest and detention of individuals on their way to or from school. These types of attacks described by the UN or media sources included the following:

- On January 4, 2014, an Israeli settler physically attacked and injured a 12-year-old Palestinian girl on her back and stomach while she was on her way to school in Silwan, Jerusalem, according to OCHA.[1203]
- A similar attack occurred on April 12, 2014, when settlers assaulted and injured two girls, one age 12 and one 13, while they were on their way to school in al-Tuwani village, Hebron.[1204]
- Israeli police detained an 11-year-old boy outside his school on November 24, 2014, a second 11-year-old boy as he was leaving school on December 21, 2014, and a 12-year-old boy as he waited for the bus to go home from school on December 8, 2014. In each case the police alleged that the students had thrown stones at them. They detained, interrogated, and mistreated the boys, denying them access to family members, humiliating them, shouting abusive language, and denying them food, before finally releasing them.[1205]

According to the UN, violence by Israeli settlers and Israeli forces that targeted Palestinian students and school staff was slightly more common in 2015 and continued in forms similar to previous years. The UN documented 46 attacks and threats of violence against students and teachers, which included the following:[1206]

- OCHA reported that in mid-April 2015, during clashes with Palestinians, Israeli forces shot and injured a 13-year-old girl with rubber bullets as she was on her way home from school in East Jerusalem.[1207]
- UNICEF reported that, during the second quarter of 2015, a 10-year-old boy from al-Razi School in Shu'fat in East Jerusalem was on his way home from school when Israeli forces shot him with a rubber bullet, causing him to lose his left eye.[1208]
- Israeli forces chased school boys from Taqu Secondary School in Bethlehem and fired teargas canisters at them, according to UNICEF.[1209]
- UNICEF reported that on at least three occasions, on September 7, 9, and 17, 2015, Israeli forces threatened school personnel and students in Nablus in order to elicit information from them on stone throwers.[1210]
- In October 2015, Israeli settlers reportedly harassed and intimidated protective-presence volunteers who were stationed in locations around Hebron, including near schools, to monitor violations against the civilian population. On October 22, 2015, in Hebron's Old City, an unidentified person hung posters with photos of the education volunteers, which requested that settlers and Israeli forces act against them and stated that "the persons in these photos are here to harm Israelis for anti-Semitic reasons. DEAL WITH THEM."[1211]

Attacks on students and education personnel followed similar patterns in 2016. UNICEF reported 118 incidents in 2016 that met GCPEA's definition of attacks on students and education personnel.[1212] The Palestinian Ministry of Education reported that Israeli forces killed 26 students and one teacher, injured 1,810 students and 101 teachers, and arrested 198 students and education personnel.[1213] Examples included the following:

- According to OCHA, clashes between Palestinians and ISF injured 10 Palestinian students in Hebron in late January 2016; 19 female Palestinian students in Hebron and Jaba' village in Jenin in mid-April 2016; and 40 Palestinian students at al-Khalil School in Hebron, all due to teargas inhalation.[1214]

A worker stands near a kindergarten located just outside the Gaza Strip, in Israel, in September 2014. The kindergarten was surrounded by concrete blast walls, erected to protect against Palestinian rocket and mortar fire.

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- On March 16, 2016, a group of settlers assaulted six students who were returning from school in Yatta, West Bank, according to UNICEF.[1215]
- UNICEF reported that on August 29, 2016, Israeli forces assaulted and temporarily detained four students from 'Urif Secondary School for Boys as they were on their way home from school.[1216]
- In late October, Israeli settlers injured a boy who was on his way to school in the occupied area of Hebron city.[1217]

Also in the West Bank, media reports indicated that unidentified individuals attacked two school buses carrying Israeli school children in 2016:

- On May 21, 2016, an unidentified person fired shots at a school bus full of Israeli teenagers near Gush Etzion, a settlement south of Jerusalem. [1218]
- On June 5, 2016, an unidentified assailant threw iron projectiles at a bus full of Israeli school children near the Palestinian town of Huwara.[1219]

In 2017, Save the Children reported eight attacks on Palestinian students and education personnel, 39 incidents in which Israeli forces arrested or detained students or education personnel at school, and 114 cases in which students or teachers were delayed at checkpoints on the way to schools or because of military presence in or around schools.[1220] Examples of the different types of violations included the following:

- In one incident on an unknown date in 2017, Israeli soldiers reportedly assaulted and detained a student for an hour at Abu Al-Reesh checkpoint in Hebron.[1221]
- In mid-February 2017, two clashes near schools in Qalqiliya city and Bizzariya village in Nablus injured five students, according to OCHA.[1222]
- OCHA also reported that Israeli settlers assaulted and injured a 14-year-old Palestinian girl on her way to school in Hebron in mid-April 2017, and the headmaster of Qurtuba School in Hebron in mid-May 2017.[1223]

Military use of schools and universities

Israeli forces and unidentified armed groups used dozens of schools as bases, to store weaponry, and for a variety of other purposes, including in several cases as strategic points from which to protect Israeli settlers.[1224] This represented a higher number of incidents than were reported between 2009 and mid-2013, when six cases of military use were documented. Most cases of military use of schools were reported in the West Bank during 2014.

During 2013, UNICEF reported 12 cases of military use. Among these, Israeli security personnel forcibly entered the Haj Ma'zoz Al Masri School in Nablus, in the northern West Bank, six times, reportedly to protect Israeli settlers as they visited a nearby religious site. They damaged the building each time, breaking the locks and doors.[1225]

According to the UN and a report by Scholars at Risk, there were 22 cases of military use of schools and universities in the West Bank during 2014, and Israeli forces entered five UNRWA schools without permission.[1226] UNICEF reported that, in the West Bank, Israeli forces declared schools to be closed military zones and used them as detention and interrogation centers, and in 15 cases as locations from which to protect Israeli settlers as they visited religious sites.[1227] In three cases, Palestinian groups used UNRWA schools in Gaza to store rockets, and Israeli forces used one government school in Gaza for military purposes, according to UNICEF.[1228] Cases of military use included the following:

- During the first quarter of the year, Israeli forces used al-Tabaqa Basic Mixed School in Hebron as an overnight detention center.[1229]
- Human Rights Watch found that military forces had used three schools for military operations in mid-June 2014, after a Palestinian kidnapped and killed three Israeli teenagers. The soldiers slept in the schools and left behind live bullets and unsanitary facilities.[1230]
- According to Scholars at Risk, Israeli troops converted academic buildings on the campus of Birzeit University in Ramallah into barracks on June 19-22, 2014, as they searched the university and confiscated student property.[1231]
- The UN Security Council reported that in Gaza during July 2014, unspecified parties used three UNRWA schools to store weaponry: Gaza Beach Elementary Co-educational "B" School, Jabalya Elementary "C" and Ayyobiya Boys School (considered one school), and Nuseirat Preparatory Coeducational "B" School.[1232] The UN found weaponry at all three schools, as well as military plans written on chalkboards and boards used as beds at the Nuseirat Preparatory Coeducational "B" School.[1233]

Reported military use of schools declined after 2014. UNICEF documented three cases of military use of schools in the West Bank during 2015 and 2016—one by armed Palestinians and two by Israeli forces—and media reported Israeli military use of one university. These incidents included the following:

- On March 11, 2015, armed Palestinians forcibly entered Balata Boys School in the West Bank, took over, and demanded that students evacuate.[1234]
- In Jenin, Israeli security forces entered Zebdeh Secondary School for Boys and used its rooftop to monitor the Israeli checkpoint near the school during the first quarter of the year.[1235]
- According to OCHA, Israeli forces used the roof of the 'Awarta Village Secondary School for several hours to protect settlers while they visited a religious site in late January 2016. This use damaged the school's doors.[1236]

Attacks on higher education

Israeli forces, unidentified assailants, and Palestinian Authority security forces entered and searched universities, injured and killed university students during clashes, and threatened, harassed, and detained Palestinian students in dozens of incidents that affected hundreds of students. The number of such attacks, which were concentrated in Gaza and the West Bank, increased in 2014, after which several dozen incidents reportedly affected higher education each year. The attacks occurred at higher rates than those reported in *Education under Attack 2014*.

In 2013 there was at least one attack on higher education, which occurred during clashes between Palestinian students and Israeli forces. OCHA reported that on November 17, 2013, a group of Palestinians, including students from al-Quds University in Jerusalem, threw stones at Israeli soldiers who were guarding Israeli workers conducting maintenance on the separation barrier next to the university. During the clashes that followed, Israeli forces fired teargas and sound bombs toward the university, injuring 32 people and damaging university property.[1237]

The number of attacks on higher education rose significantly in 2014 from previous years. The UN, NGOs, and media reported four instances in which Israeli forces entered West Bank universities during 2014, and the damage or destruction of 14 universities in Gaza during Operation Protective Edge.[1238] GCPEA also identified one report of an attack on a professor of higher education, who was shot at by unidentified assailants. For example:

- In June 2014, according to Scholars at Risk, Israeli forces entered four Palestinian universities in their search for three missing Israeli teenagers, damaging buildings and property, destroying education materials, and confiscating personal student data.[1239] The universities included the following:
  - Birzeit University in Ramallah on June 19-22, 2014, also mentioned above in the section on military use
  - The Arab American University in Jenin on June 20, 2014
  - Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron on June 22, 2014
  - al-Quds University in Jerusalem, also on June 22, 2014

- According to local news sources, unidentified assailants shot at Abd al-Sattar Qasim, a professor at al-Najah National University in the northern West Bank, in August 2014, as he left his home. He was reportedly unharmed in the incident.[1240]
- Among the universities damaged or destroyed during Operation Protective Edge, Scholars at Risk reported that the Islamic University suffered considerable damage on August 2, 2014, when Israeli forces fired a missile at the campus. The Israelis contended that Hamas was using the institution for military purposes, although the university denied allegations of military use. The attack significantly damaged the facilities.[1241]

In 2015, both Palestinian security forces and ISF entered Palestinian universities in the West Bank in several dozen instances, where they threatened, harassed, or detained several hundred Palestinian university students, according to the UN, Human Rights Watch, and media reports.[1242] These threats and instances of harassment represented an increase in the reported number of students and professors affected by attacks on higher education, which had previously affected mainly infrastructure. Arrests by Palestinian security forces came in response to participation in student political parties and elections.[1243] In addition, the US State Department and other sources reported several instances of Israeli forces targeting students with live fire, rubber bullets, teargas, and other means. Examples included the following:

- Palestinian security forces arrested 25 students from several universities, including Birzeit University in Ramallah, after student council elections on April 22, 2015.[1244] Among those arrested was Jihad Salim, a student representative of a Hamas-affiliated group at Birzeit University, who reported that Palestinian security forces arrested, beat, interrogated, and denied him access to basic necessities for 24 hours on April 25, 2015.[1245]
- Israeli forces reportedly entered and searched Palestine Technical University-Kadoorie in Tulkarim multiple times in October, November, and December 2015, in addition to occupying the university.[1246] For example, Israeli forces reportedly injured 87 students when they attempted to dispel protests at the university using live fire, rubber bullets, and teargas between December 16 and 20, 2015.[1247]
- Israeli forces also injured dozens of students using teargas, rubber bullets, and sound bombs at al-Quds University in Jerusalem on October 28 and November 2, 2015.[1248]

Incursions by Israeli forces on Palestinian universities occurred with similar frequency during 2016, with more than a dozen reported instances that harmed approximately 100 people. Throughout the year, OCHA and media reports documented incidents of Israeli forces entering and searching Birzeit University in Ramallah, the Arab American University of Jenin, Palestine Technical University-Kadoorie in Tulkarim, and al-Quds University, which was searched at least four times.[1249] Palestinian security forces were responsible for arresting a Palestinian professor in one incident. For example:

- On November 17, 2016, Israeli forces entered and searched Palestine Technical University-Kadoorie, breaking the doors of a computer lab, damaging several computers, and stealing recordings from university security cameras.[1250]
- On November 19, 2016, Israeli forces spent three hours on the campus of al-Quds University. During the operation, they damaged or stole all the books, magazines, and stationery being sold at a book fair to benefit low-income students.[1251] OCHA reported that there was at least one additional incident at al-Quds University in November 2016.[1252]
- Palestinian security forces arrested at least one professor, political science scholar Abdul Sattar Qassem, in response to remarks he made in a television interview about limits on presidential terms in February 2016.[1253]

Similar patterns of violence continued in 2017, including searches by Israeli forces on Palestinian university campuses and the arrest of at least one Palestinian professor. These incidents included the following:

- *Ma'an News Agency* reported that on April 13, 2017, ISF searched the town of Abu Dis in Jerusalem, clashing with Palestinian students at al-Quds University. Rubber-coated steel bullets fired by Israeli forces injured six students, and 18 other Palestinians inhaled teargas.[1254]
- On May 14, 2017, according to Amnesty International, Israeli forces arrested Ahmad Qatamesh, a professor of political science, at his home in Ramallah. He was detained without charges for three months until his release on August 13.[1255]
- *Ma'an News Agency* reported that Israeli forces detained Tareq Rabie, a former member of the Hamas-affiliated Islamic bloc student group. The search and Rabie's detention led to clashes outside of Birzeit University, and Israeli forces opened fire, injuring 11 Palestinian youths.[1256]
- On December 14, 2017, Israeli forces entered and searched Birzeit University in Ramallah. They detained the university's security personnel, smashed the door to the student council building, and confiscated computers, flags, banners, microphones, speakers, leaflets, and brochures, according to media sources.[1257] *Ma'an News Agency* reported that Israeli forces had previously searched the campus on January 11, 2016.[1258]

KENYA

Attacks on education by al-Shabaab killed more than 150 people in Kenya. Most of the victims were students at Garissa University, where the armed group perpetrated one of the most globally high-profile attacks on higher education during the 2013-2017 reporting period. Police and private security guards reportedly used excessive force against school and university student protesters, killing several students and injuring many more.

Context

Kenya experienced growing insecurity after 2011, when the country sent troops to fight the Harakat Shabaab al-Mujahidin, commonly known as al-Shabaab, a Somali armed group that became affiliated with al Qaeda in 2012, in Somalia. In Kenya, al-Shabaab sought to pressure the government to withdraw its armed forces from Somalia.[1259]

The Kenyan government responded by increasing the powers of police and security, passing legislation that curtailed civil rights, and targeting human rights organizations, the media, and Somali refugee communities.[1260] Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International both noted that Kenyan government representatives harassed civil society activists and journalists.[1261] Human Rights Watch also obtained reports that the police perpetrated sexual violence against women and girls after President Uhuru Kenyatta's re-election in August 2017. However, such acts had also occurred after the 2007-2008 election, and impunity continued one decade later.[1262]

Kenya's security challenges negatively affected education. According to international media, almost 700 teachers in the county of Mandera in the northeast, near the highly insecure Kenya-Somalia border, did not report for duty at the start of 2015 due to attacks by al-Shabaab that killed many, including teachers.[1263] Instead, they went on strike, demanding that the government transfer them to safer posts.[1264] As part of a security crackdown on perceived extremism and opposition, security forces entered homes, mosques, and Islamic schools, among other civilian properties, and questioned teachers, among others.[1265]

Attacks on education were reported between 2013 and 2017 with similar frequency to what was reported from 2009 to mid-2013, with a slight uptick in attacks on schools in 2017, due to al-Shabaab's increased activity that year. In many cases, the perpetrators were unknown, and it is possible that some incidents included in this profile were not linked to armed groups. However, al-Shabaab was increasingly active in Kenya during the reporting period.

Kenya endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in June 2015.

Attacks on schools

Almost a dozen attacks on schools occurred in Kenya between 2013 and 2017, including IED detonations and arson. Unknown assailants reportedly carried out the majority of the attacks before 2016, while al-Shabaab became more active in the education context from that year into 2017, when reports of attacks on schools increased.

According to local media sources, there were explosive or arson attacks on at least five schools in 2013 and 2014. For example:

- On February 16, 2013, an explosion occurred at a primary school in Garissa city while the unidentified attacker was planting the device. Authorities suspected that the explosive had been intended to target a presidential election rally to be held at the school the next day.[1266]
- A device exploded near a primary school being used as a polling station in Mandera town on March 4, 2013.[1267]
- Unidentified perpetrators threw an explosive device at a school in Mombasa county on February 5, 2014, damaging the building.[1268]
- According to media sources, on February 10, 2014, assailants attacked the Saint Charles Mutego School in the Dagoreti area of Nairobi county and held students hostage. The attackers killed one student, wounded at least 40 others, and kidnapped an unknown number.[1269]
- Another explosive device was found on the playground of a primary school in Garissa county on May 5, 2014.[1270]

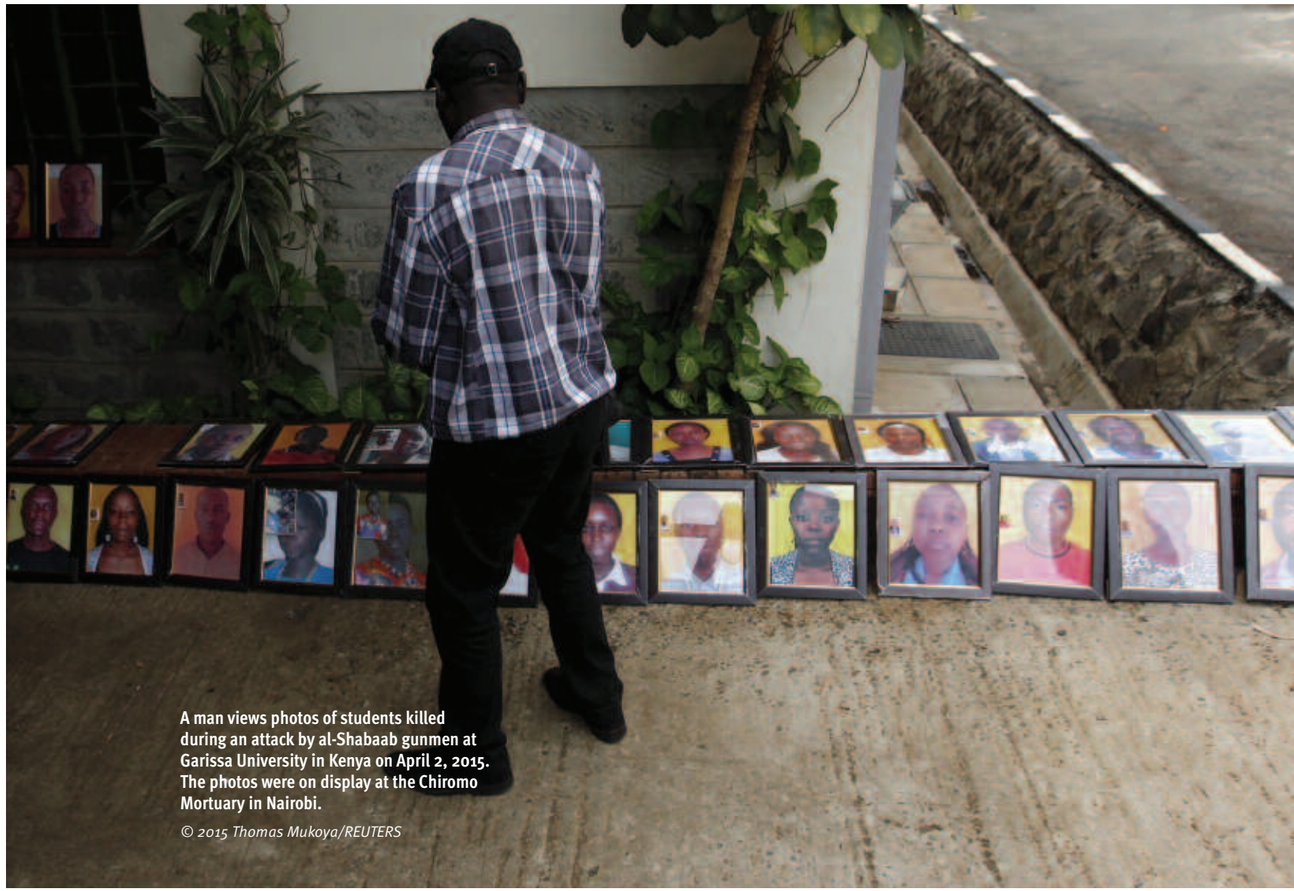
No other attacks on schools were recorded until November 22, 2016, when media sources reported that unknown gunmen opened fire on Abaqkorey High School in Wajir county.[1271] Responsibility for the attack was unconfirmed, but media sources speculated that al-Shabaab may have been the perpetrator, given Wajir's location bordering Somalia and the recent occurrence of cross-border raids by the group.[1272]

Such cases continued and increased into 2017. Several attacks on schools occurred that year, the majority perpetrated by al-Shabaab, and one tribal dispute led to a school being caught in the crossfire. For example:

- Local media reported that on February 15, 2017, gunmen opened fire on Kapindasum Primary School in Arabal location, Baringo county. The attack happened as teachers and students were leaving the school. One teacher was killed and another injured. Police believed the incident was part of territorial disputes between the Pokot and Tugen ethnic groups.[1273]
- Local and international media sources reported that on June 1, 2017, members of al-Shabaab attacked a school in Fafi, Garissa county, setting the building on fire, killing one teacher, and kidnapping another. The attack prompted an unspecified number of teachers who were working in the area but were from other parts of Kenya to migrate back to their hometowns, as they feared for their safety.[1274]
- According to local media, on July 5, 2017, members of al-Shabaab attacked Pandanguo village in Lamu county, causing damage to a school and other civilian infrastructure.[1275]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Throughout the 2013 to 2017 reporting period, government forces, unidentified assailants, and al-Shabaab targeted students and teachers in at least nine killings and kidnappings. In a few cases, police used excessive force against student and teacher protesters who were demonstrating to call attention to bad school conditions and to protest other education-related policies. These attacks occurred at a rate of between two and four per year between 2013 and 2017, most in the form of abductions and other physical violence by al-Shabaab and unknown armed assailants. Attacks affected more than 100 students, teachers, and other personnel between 2013 and 2017, compared to just over a dozen between 2009 and mid-2013.



A man views photos of students killed during an attack by al-Shabaab gunmen at Garissa University in Kenya on April 2, 2015. The photos were on display at the Chiromo Mortuary in Nairobi.

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Non-state armed groups and unknown perpetrators were responsible for violent attacks on and kidnappings of school-related personnel in 2013. Teachers were particularly affected. Media reports showed that, in early 2013, there was a series of attacks by al-Shabaab along the Kenya-Somalia border in Garissa county, which included the killing of at least one teacher.[1276] Because of the widespread targeting of teachers, the Kenya National Union of Teachers asked teachers in approximately 20 schools to leave the area until the government guaranteed their safety.[1277]

Police and al-Shabaab were each responsible for one incident that affected students and teachers in 2014:

- On June 17, 2014, police shot and killed a secondary school student in Maili Tisa town, Kajiado county. According to the US Department of State and media sources, the students were protesting bad school conditions, including the lack of teachers, textbooks, and a school bus.[1278]
- On November 22, 2014, local and international media sources documented an incident in which al-Shabaab gunmen shot 28 passengers on a bus traveling from the Kenya-Somalia border region to Nairobi. Seventeen of those killed were teachers who were travelling home for the holidays. They were among a

group of people who were singled out because of their non-Muslim identities. Most of those killed were shot multiple times in the back.[1279]

In 2015, there was one incident in which state forces responded violently to students who were protesting and three cases of teacher abductions, although it was not always clear whether these individuals were kidnapped because they were education personnel. Al-Shabaab and state security forces were each responsible for at least one abduction, which included the following:

- The UN and international media reported that on January 19, 2015, approximately 40 police officers used batons, teargas, and dogs against a group of approximately 100 people, including school children as young as seven years old, as well as parents, teachers, and activists, all of whom were protesting the government's appropriation of school playground land at Langata Road Primary School in Nairobi. At least 10 students were hospitalized for injuries, including teargas exposure.[1280]
- According to local media, on April 24, 2015, suspected members of al-Shabaab kidnapped two teachers in Mandera county and took them to Somalia.[1281]
- Human Rights Watch found that government security forces arrested a Quranic teacher at his school on July 8, 2015, and his body was later found buried in a shallow grave in Omar Jillow Location, Mandera county.[1282]
- Local and international media reported that, approximately six months later, on October 12, 2015, assailants from al-Shabaab kidnapped a Kenyan female teacher from Hagadera refugee camp in Dadaab, Garissa county. Kenya Defence Forces, backed by their counterparts from the Somali National Army, successfully rescued the teacher in Somalia four days later.[1283]

There were no reported cases of attacks on students or education personnel in 2016. In 2017, there were three reports of attacks on students or education personnel, including one abduction, one killing of students on their way to school, and one raid on a madrassa:

- Local and international media reported that on March 2, 2017, three gunmen entered the Udha Academy in Hagadera refugee camp, Dadaab, and shot twice into the air before kidnapping three teachers.[1284]
- On June 27, 2017, police offered to transport 14 students from Mararani to Kiunga, Lamu county, as they made their way back to school after Eid celebrations. The police truck hit a land mine and was then shot at by suspected members of al-Shabaab. Four students were killed and five injured in the incident.[1285]
- On December 19, 2017, Kenyan police arrested 95 students and two teachers from a madrassa in Likoni, Mombasa county, accusing the school of indoctrinating children and youth with extremist ideology.[1286] *Reuters* reported that police stated that the students would be released one at a time after they were interrogated.[1287]

Military use of schools

According to Human Rights Watch, in July 2014, government security forces were using Pandanguo Primary School in Lamu county, as a base.[1288] Around that same time, there were media reports that gunmen burned down the office, library, and the house of a teacher at the school.[1289] The school was later closed in 2017 and the students and teachers transferred to other schools because of increased insecurity in the area.[1290] A similar case of military use was documented in one school in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

Throughout the reporting period, violent extremist groups and individuals associated with them were accused of recruiting students from schools, although there was little direct evidence to substantiate these reports. During 2013, for example, international and local media reported that al-Shabaab was using secondary schools and Islamic schools in Nairobi and Mombasa to radicalize and recruit students, but they did not provide specifics.[1291]

Similarly, in October 2015, the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea noted that it had received general reports of al-Shabaab recruiting children from madrassas in Kenya and using them for both support functions and in direct combat.[1292]

In *Education under Attack 2014*, child recruitment in Kenya was documented only in 2013, and the same information is included in this report. Therefore, the additional incidents of child recruitment reported after 2013 may represent increased reporting, more activity by al-Shabaab, or a combination of the two.

In several cases between 2013 and 2017, teachers were accused, convicted, and sentenced for indoctrinating and recruiting their students. For example:

- A news source reported in November 2014 that a student in Nairobi told his mother that his science teacher had taught his class how to dismantle and reassemble a gun and shoot at targets.[1293]
- Local media reported that on June 19, 2015, a teacher at Gandini Primary School in Kaloleini, Kilifi county, was accused of recruiting seven students between the ages of 4 and 16, after allegedly urging them to fight non-Muslims.[1294]
- Six months later, international media sources documented an incident in which the same teacher at Gandini Primary School was arrested and charged with radicalizing children and being affiliated with al-Shabaab. On January 7, 2016, the teacher was acquitted of being affiliated with al-Shabaab but found guilty of attempting to radicalize children. He received a 20-year prison sentence.[1295]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on higher education occurred at a rate of between one and three per year during the current reporting period. This was more frequent than during the period covered by *Education under Attack 2014*, when only one attack on higher education was reported. These incidents affected university students most heavily and primarily took the form of excessive use of police force against student demonstrations. There were anecdotal reports that cases in which police killed university students took place throughout the second half of the reporting period, but these cases were not commonly reported, and it was unclear how often they occurred.[1296]

However, the most high-profile attack on higher education was an al-Shabaab attack on Garissa University College. On April 2, 2015, five gunmen from al-Shabaab forcibly entered the university campus, shot students in their dormitories, and took other students hostage. The assailants targeted non-Muslim students, killing 147 people and injuring more than 79, the majority of whom were students.[1297]

Over the course of the reporting period, police killed, injured, and arrested university student demonstrators on six different dates, according to local and international media reports.[1298] For example:

- On November 3, 2013, police shot and killed a university student during protests near Laikipia University in the town of Nyahururu. He and other students were protesting the killing of another student by a speeding police car near the university. The group of students stopped traffic, set the implicated police car on fire, and threw stones at police. In response, police launched teargas canisters at the students and reportedly fired live ammunition, killing one student who was enrolled in Chuka University in Meru.[1299]
- Scholars at Risk and the media also reported that on December 14, 2013, police shot and killed another university student during violent protests at the University of Nairobi. The students threw stones at cars and damaged property as they protested the custodial death of a fellow student who had been arrested on suspicion of committing arson on university property. The police intervened by firing teargas canisters and live ammunition, killing one of the protesters and injuring another.[1300]
- According to local media, police shot and killed a Mount Kenya University student in Thika on March 6, 2015, while he was taking part in a demonstration against the killing of another student by common criminals.[1301]

- According to local media, on January 21, 2016, police arrested 15 Laikipia University students following a violent strike on the streets of Nyahururu town. The students were protesting a recommendation by the Commission of University Education to close the town campus. Police said that the protest was illegal and used teargas to disperse the students, leaving scores injured. However, the students said they had notified the police of the plans for a peaceful demonstration. The majority of those arrested were female.[1302]

There was one attack on university personnel in 2017. On October 10, 2017, gunmen killed two university staff members, when they fired on vehicles carrying them and students to campus. The identify of the gunmen was not clear.[1303]

LIBYA

Aerial bombings, car bombs, grenades, and other explosives damaged and destroyed hundreds of schools and universities in Libya. Armed groups used kidnapping to generate income, their victims including teachers, professors, and students at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.

Context

The General National Congress (GNC), established with a temporary mandate in August 2012 after the ouster of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, refused to step down when the mandate expired in February 2014. After a conflict erupted in eastern Libya in 2014, two rival governments emerged, one in Tripoli and one in the eastern cities of al-Bayda and Tobruk. Thus, by 2017 three different governments competed for legitimacy and control. The UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) headed by the Presidential Council, created after the signing of the UN-brokered Libyan Political Agreement in 2015, and the Government of National Salvation (GNS), which drew authority from the GNC, were both based in Tripoli until clashes resulted in the GNS being exiled to operate mostly out of Turkey. The other rival interim government operated from Tobruk and al-Bayda, supported by the Libyan National Army (LNA) under the command of Khalifa Hiftar. The House of Representatives, Libya's Tobruk-based parliament, also supported the LNA and the interim government.[1304]

Forces aligned with the different governments and armed militias fought for control over various parts of the country.[1305] Between 2015 and 2017, the UN spearheaded multiple attempts to reach a political agreement between the major factions to end hostilities, including most recently an attempt by France's President Emmanuel Macron to get Hiftar and GNA Prime Minster Serraj to

A kindergarten that was damaged during clashes between Libyan forces and 'Islamic State' fighters in Sirte, Libya, in November 2017. The mural reads "my way to my kindergarten."

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agree to a deal that would end the hostilities on July 25, 2017.[1306] However, the situation in Libya remained volatile at the time of writing.[1307]

'IS' gained a foothold in Sirte in 2014, but its remnants retreated to areas south of Sirte after a joint Libyan militia alliance, backed by US air strikes, retook the city in February 2017.[1308] Before January 2017, when 'IS' lost control over territory it had held in the eastern cities of Derna and Benghazi and Sirte, the group instituted gender-segregated classes in some areas, closed educational facilities that they alleged contradicted Islam, enforced dress codes, and restricted the movement of women and girls.[1309]

The conflict displaced hundreds of thousands of people, as the parties to the conflict indiscriminately shelled civilian areas and destroyed civilian property. According to the Ministry of Education in Tripoli and Benghazi, 558 schools had been affected by the crisis as of November 2016, impeding education for 279,000 students.[1310] Access to education was severely interrupted in 2014 and 2015, and the 2016-2017 school year started one month late, due to teachers protesting their low salaries.[1311] Abduction of civilians was a prominent feature of the conflicts in Libya, which reportedly negatively affected school attendance.[1312]

Collection and verification of data on education was a significant problem in Libya throughout the reporting period, due to the rival governments, including rival education ministries, and insecurity.[1313] These challenges resulted in very limited documentation of attacks on education. The following profile therefore has significant information gaps, which made it difficult to compare trends either between the current reporting period and that covered in *Education under Attack 2014,* or over the course of the 2013-2017 reporting period.

Attacks on schools

Targeted and indiscriminate attacks reportedly damaged and destroyed several hundred schools across Libya during the current reporting period. According to OHCHR, conflict-related violence damaged more than 40 percent of Libya's schools between 2011 and 2015.[1314] Reported rates of attacks on schools were lower during the current reporting period than in the previous one. Nearly 2,000 schools were reported destroyed or damaged between 2011 and mid-2013, while the Ministries of Education in Tripoli and Benghazi reported in November 2016 that 30 schools were destroyed and 477 damaged.[1315] It was not clear when these schools were attacked.

In 2013, the US Department of State reported that many schools across Libya remained abandoned, due to a lack of materials, damage to buildings, or security concerns.[1316] There also were anecdotal reports of individual attacks on schools.[1317] These included the following:

- The UN reported two attacks on schools in 2013, both involving the detonation of explosives inside schools in Benghazi by unknown perpetrators.[1318]
- Local media reported that on May 10, 2013, a bomb exploded in front of a police station in Benghazi, shattering the windows of the school opposite. There were no injuries in the blast.[1319]
- Later that year, media sources reported an attack on a girls' school in Derna, eastern Libya, where unidentified assailants detonated an explosive device on November 22, 2013.[1320]

The UN documented the closure of many schools across the country in 2014, particularly in eastern Libya, because of insecurity.[1321] There were sporadic examples of unidentified attackers perpetrating several targeted attacks, including the following:

- The *BBC* reported that on February 5, 2014, unknown perpetrators threw a grenade over a wall into the playground of a private school in Benghazi, injuring 12 children.[1322]
- According to news reports, on April 7, 2014, an explosive device hidden in a bag detonated near a girls' school in Benghazi.[1323]
- In a similar attack on May 31, 2014, a car bomb exploded near a school in Benghazi, also according to media sources.[1324]
- News reports noted that on October 26, 2014, a rocket struck a school in Benghazi.[1325]

Information from the UN and Save the Children indicated that Benghazi was significantly affected by attacks on schools in 2015. According to the UN, 40 schools in Benghazi were damaged or destroyed, including by indiscriminate shelling, along with an unknown number of other schools across the country.[1326] Save the Children reported in June 2015 that 75 percent of school-age children in Benghazi had no access to education, and that 440 schools there could not operate because they were damaged or destroyed by shelling.[1327] Human Rights Watch reported one air strike that destroyed a school in Ganfouda, a district of Benghazi, at the beginning of 2015. Classes were moved to a nearby mosque, until it too was destroyed.[1328]

Media reports also documented occasional attacks on schools inside and outside of Benghazi in 2015. These included the following:

- On January 28, 2015, unknown perpetrators allegedly threw a grenade, which did not explode, at a school in Tripoli.[1329]
- On August 5, 2015, an 'IS' member detonated a suicide bomb next to a school in Derna's Bab Tobruq area, killing himself but not harming others.[1330]
- An explosive planted at a school detonated in Baninah in Benghazi on September 9, 2015, reportedly killing four children and injuring two more.[1331] It was not clear whether this incident was included in the total reported by the UN.

In 2016, UNICEF reported that 64 schools in the cities of Sirte, Bani Walid, and Tarhuna were partially damaged or transformed into IDP shelters, according to education authorities. This represented 17 percent of all schools in the three cities.[1332] There were also media reports of at least three incidents affecting schools in 2016, which included the following:

- On January 7, 2016, an explosion at a school in Derna city, Derna district, damaged the school.[1333]
- The Barqa Province of 'IS' claimed responsibility for firing rockets at al-Nahda School in Derna city on January 23, 2016.[1334]
- On November 21, 2016, a car bomb exploded outside a hospital in Benghazi, reportedly harming children who were leaving a nearby primary school. The number of casualties and injuries reported varied. According to some reports, three children were killed. Others reported that eight children were injured, along with 22 other civilians.[1335]

In 2017, local media sources reported one attack on a school. On July 10, 2017, a suicide bomb exploded at the Sulaimani Martyrs elementary and middle school in the al-Sabri area of Bengazi. Security forces had pursued the attacker, who was killed, from another area.[1336]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

There were sporadic cases of students and educators being individually targeted for attacks throughout the reporting period. These types of incidents, which included shootings, harassment, and abduction, were not reported in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Kidnapping increasingly affected the landscape in Libya during the second half of the reporting period, when armed groups engaged in kidnapping for the purpose of extortion.[1337] These abductions harmed civilians, including students and educators, and parents' fears that their children could be abducted reportedly led them to keep them home from school. For example, OHCHR reported that parents in areas of Derna and Benghazi—then controlled by the later dissolved Ansar al-Sharia militant groups—stated in 2015 that they were afraid of sending their daughters to school because of the chance they would be abducted. OHCHR received reports that girls had been attacked and harassed on their way to school in Tripoli but did not indicate the frequency or precise nature of those threats.[1338]

Attacks that individually targeted students and educators included the following:

- On February 20, 2014, gunmen allegedly shot and killed the caretaker of a school in Derna that was to be used as a polling station during the election of a panel to draft a new constitution, according to news sources.[1339]
- OHCHR found that, in April 2014, gunmen in a car shot and killed a school headmaster while he was driving in central Benghazi. The headmaster was a well-known advocate for the non-politicization of education and for the need to keep schools operating under all circumstances.[1340]
- International news media reported that on May 19, 2014, the armed group Jaish al-Islam abducted and held hostage the principal of an international school in Benghazi, releasing him almost five months later.[1341]
- On December 3, 2015, armed men reportedly kidnapped a girl and her two brothers while they were on their way to school with their mother, according to a media report. The article attributed the attack to an armed militia.[1342]
- OHCHR reported that at the end of 2015 an 11-year-old boy was abducted while on his way to school. His kidnappers demanded a ransom, and the boy was found dead on February 24, 2016, after 68 days, bearing marks of torture.[1343]
- Armed men reportedly kidnapped another boy from a bus in front of his school in Zliten, Murqub district, at the end of January 2017, according to a media sources.[1344] It was not clear why the boy was kidnapped.
- Gunmen allegedly opened fire on Othman Abdeljalil, the education minister of the Libyan GNA, on July 3, 2017. The minister, who was monitoring final exams being given in Sabha city, was unharmed in the attack.[1345]
- The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) reported that a 7-year-old boy was killed and an 11-year-old girl injured on November 10, 2017, when they were caught in crossfire as they were leaving school in Salmani, Benghazi.[1346]

Military use of schools and universities

Government armed forces and non-state armed groups reportedly used schools and at least one university as bases; as centers for detention, interrogation, and torture; and for other purposes between 2014 and 2016. However, there was limited information on the extent of these practices, and it was not clear whether military use occurred more or less frequently than during the 2009-2013 reporting period, during which GCPEA found more than 200 cases of military use.

Sporadic cases of military use of educational institutions were documented throughout the reporting period, including the following:

- OHCHR reported that the 21st Unit of the Army Special Forces (al-Sae'qa) of the LNA detained a man at an unknown location in October 2014 for suspicion of being part of Ansar al-Sharia. They took him to a school and tortured him for a day. The man told OHCHR that he was beaten and tortured for nine hours at the school.[1347]
- In another incident reported by OHCHR, also during October 2014, four men surrendered themselves to Operation Dignity forces, a coalition of armed groups that mounted an offensive against the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council and 'IS' in a military operation known as Operation Dignity. Two of the men were temporarily detained at a school that was being used as a military base.[1348]
- OHCHR reported that the Army Special Forces (al-Sai'qa) used Hassan Ben Haitham School in Benghazi as a detention and torture center at least once between 2013 and 2015 for an unknown period of time.[1349]
- Separate UN documents showed that armed groups were using schools to launch attacks in the Warshafana area and the Nafusa Mountains between March 2014 and January 2015.[1350]
- In 2015, the UN documented one case of military use of a school as a detention facility by the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council, an armed group controlling Derna.[1351] The report did not specify the time or duration of this use.
- During February 2015, international media reported that members of 'IS' took over Sirte University, leading the university to suspend classes and postpone exams.[1352] Human Rights Watch documented information showing that 'IS' restrictions on education had also contributed to the suspension of classes at the university. These restrictions included segregating the 16,000 students by gender, as well as closing the law, language, literature, and art faculties, all of which the group claimed contradicted Islamic teachings.[1353] Another media report indicated that the group used a female dormitory at Sabha University to store artillery and mortars.[1354]
- OHCHR reported that it was investigating an unidentified armed group's use of a primary school in Benghazi as a base and detention facility. Satellite imagery from August 2015 showed several cargo vehicles of the type used for military purposes on the school grounds.[1355]
- A local news source reported that on June 7, 2016, a large bomb exploded at the entrance to the Al Nahda School in the Bab Tobruq area of Derna, which had been taken over for use as a military base by the Derna Mujahideen Shura Council. The explosion did not result in any casualties.[1356]
- On September 8, 2016, local media reported that, according to a military source in Sirte, 'IS' forces had transferred prisoners from a social security building to the 17 February High School for Engineering Science in the Aljezza Albahria area of Giza.[1357]
- On July 9, 2017, Libyan armed forces found 10 unidentified decomposed bodies in the National School in the Sabri area of Benghazi and 15 unidentified bodies in the Fatima al-Zahra engineering science school for girls, after having retaken the area from armed groups that reportedly used the schools to bury opposing fighters.[1358] A local news source later reported that the Libyan Red Crescent was able to take DNA samples from seven of the bodies taken from the National School. With the cooperation of local municipal authorities and the prosecutor's office, they were able to bury the bodies on August 22, 2017.[1359]

Attacks on higher education

Abductions, explosions, and indiscriminate air strikes reportedly affected higher education. Such cases were documented more commonly in the current reporting period than in *Education under Attack 2014,* but limitations on information gathering inhibited the identification of patterns. Many attacks on higher education involved the targeting of individual academics, possibly representing a general crackdown on opposition and freedom of expression. However, university facilities also were damaged in conflict-related violence.

Media sources reported one attack on higher education in 2013. Khalaf Hassan Al-Sa'idi, an Iraqi professor working at the University of Derna Higher Institute of Work Studies, was abducted on November 23, 2013. The professor was later killed on an unknown date.[1360]

There were at least six attacks on higher education in 2014, according to OCHA and media reports. These included one air strike that hit a university and five individually targeted attacks on university students and personnel:

- OCHA reported that in June 2014, a Libyan warplane targeted a base belonging to an unidentified extremist militia group in Benghazi but instead fired three rockets that hit the engineering faculty of a university, causing significant damage.[1361]
- On March 18, 2014, unidentified gunmen shot Christian Iraqi Professor Adison Karkha on his way to work at the University of Sirte, according to Scholars at Risk and international media.[1362]

- On April 27, 2014, unidentified assailants attempted to kidnap a university student in Benghazi city, according to media sources.[1363]
- According to media reports, an explosive device was detonated in an auditorium at Omar Mukhtar University in Derna on May 8, 2014. It was not clear who was responsible for the attack. There were no casualties in the blast.[1364]
- Media sources also reported two attacks on University of Tripoli professors in November 2014.[1365] In the first, attackers who were suspected to be members of the Libya Dawn militia stormed the house of Professor Fadil Ahmed Azzabi, injuring him, reportedly for refusing to condemn Operation Dignity on television.[1366] In the second, another group of unidentified attackers abducted the dean of the economics department at Tripoli University, whose whereabouts remained unknown as of May 2017.[1367]

According to media sources, there were at least five attacks on higher education in 2015, including the following:

- On January 4, 2015, unknown assailants reportedly abducted an Iraqi professor and his three sons in Sirte. There was no report of them being released.[1368]
- On March 29, 2015, an unknown group allegedly detonated an explosive device near the Higher Careers Institute in Derna, injuring two education personnel and one student.[1369]
- On April 16, 2015, government security forces reportedly discovered and safely defused an explosive device that unidentified attackers had planted at the gate of the High Institute of Economic Science in Sirte.[1370]
- On July 29, 2015, media sources reported that the Tripoli Province of 'IS' abducted four Indian nationals working for Sirte University at a checkpoint in Sirte. Two of the hostages were released two days later, while the other two were held until September 2016.[1371]
- Unidentified assailants reportedly opened fire on Salem Rahil, a local imam and a staff member of the Islamic Studies Department at the University of Benghazi, as he was leaving his home in his car on November 2, 2015. He was not injured.[1372]

Media sources documented two reported attacks on universities in 2016:

- On January 9, 2016, a vehicle filled with explosives was reportedly discovered outside Al-Marqab University in Al-Khums, Murqub district. The explosives were defused. It was not clear who was responsible for the foiled attack.[1373]
- The Barqa Province of 'IS' claimed responsibility for firing rockets at the Medical Technical School in Derna city, Derna district, on January 23, 2016. The group fired rockets at another school that day.[1374]

In 2017, there were at least three reported attacks on higher education:

- Amnesty International reported that Dr. Salem Mohamed Beitelmal, engineering professor at the Department of Maritime Engineering at the University of Tripoli, was abducted by local militias on the outskirts of Tripoli on April 20, 2017. He was released on June 6, 2017.[1375]
- On December 10, 2017, a student at the Faculty of Petroleum Engineering at al-Zawiya University in Zawiya city was injured when he was shot in the leg while on the university campus. UNSMIL reported that the alleged perpetrator was a relative of the commander of an armed group based in al-Zawiya.[1376]
- Four armed men wearing military uniforms raided al-Arab Medical University in Benghazi on December 23, 2017 and fired shots into the air.[1377]

MALI

Hundreds of schools in the central and northern parts of Mali were closed, many because school personnel had fled out of fear because of attacks. Other schools were directly attacked or collaterally damaged during fighting between armed groups. Armed groups—including those linked to extremist groups—national forces, and peacekeeping forces reportedly used schools for military purposes, and non-state armed groups indoctrinated and recruited children at schools.

Context

Mali's most recent armed conflict began in early 2012, when Tuareg separatists from the Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) and extremist groups occupied Mali's northern regions.[1378] Later in the year, a military junta ousted the democratically elected president, accusing him of not doing enough to quell the armed rebellion, leading to lawlessness and insecurity throughout much of the country.[1379]

A French-led military intervention in early 2013 largely cleared the non-state armed groups, many of which were allied with al Qaeda, that had gained control over the northern regions of Timbuktu, Gao, and Kidal in 2012.[1380] However, the MNLA continued to control much of the Kidal region.[1381] In addition, the presence of armed groups affiliated with al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), such as Ansar Dine, continued and, beginning in 2015, spread into the Mopti and Ségou regions of central Mali.[1382]

Despite a peace agreement signed in June 2015 that was designed to reestablish state control over the north, general lawlessness and attacks by state-affiliated and non-state armed groups undermined stability and the restoration of state authority in the north. After 2015 violence spread into the central regions, where security has worsened, including the assassination of officials, intercommunal conflicts, and attacks against the security forces.[1383]

In total, 657 schools were closed as of December 31, 2017, which represented 14 percent of all schools in Mali.[1384] According to OCHA, central Mali was particularly affected. In December 2017, 277 schools were closed in the Mopti region.[1385] Threats against teachers and students and a lack of security were reported to be two of the primary reasons for school closures. According to UNICEF, around the end of 2015 nearly 600 teachers had fled the conflict areas or stopped working because of general insecurity.[1386] OCHA reported in December 2017 that 2,700 teachers were not in their posts because of a lack of security and threats from extremist groups who opposed education.[1387] A Sahel-focused news site reported in June 2017 that insecurity had closed many schools for three or four years.[1388]

According to CEDAW, the conflict disproportionately harmed girls' access to education and helped worsen the overall situation of women and girls.[1389] UN agencies reported that, during the conflict in the north, armed groups perpetrated gender-based violence ranging from enforced dress codes to rape, and the perceived threat of this violence led some parents to keep their daughters home from school.[1390]

Attacks on education were most common in Mali in 2012, before the start of the current reporting period, and in early 2013. They intensified again beginning in 2015, with increased insecurity in the central regions.

Mali endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in February 2018.

Attacks on schools

Schools in northern and central Mali suffered damage from looting and fighting throughout the current reporting period. During their occupation of the north, armed groups damaged and destroyed more than 100 schools, according to reports by UN agencies, NGOs, and the media. The conflict caused school closures in Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu regions, according to the US State Department.[1391] Additionally, fighting during the 2013 French-led intervention in Mali caused collateral damage to several schools. Armed groups continued to attack schools

throughout the reporting period, although documented rates of attack were generally lower than in *Education under Attack 2014*.

The Education Cluster reported in March 2013 that armed forces and armed groups had occupied, looted, or destroyed 130 schools since the conflict began in 2012, and that many schools in the north had closed as a result of the fighting and the flight of school personnel due to insecurity.[1392] During the second half of 2013, explosives, including those left in schools, injured at least 77 children in the towns of Tessalit, Kidal, Timbuktu, and Gao, according to UNICEF.[1393]

Explosives also caused collateral damage to schools in 2013. For example, according to information collected by the UN independent expert on human rights in Mali, on December 14, 2013, an unknown perpetrator used a vehicle loaded with explosives to launch an attack on a UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) vehicle parked in front of a bank in Kidal. The bank and a school across from it sustained heavy damage.[1394]

Insecurity in the north continued to damage schools sporadically in 2014, even after the security situation improved. The UN verified one attack on a school in Gao region in 2014.[1395] However, the violence appeared to be most acute in Kidal region, where Tuareg groups continued to occupy Kidal town. After a brief outbreak of violence in Kidal, seven schools closed, preventing 772 children from completing the 2013-2014 academic year.[1396] Examples of attacks on schools in Kidal region included the following:

- According to local media, on April 7, 2014, unidentified assailants fired rockets at a school in Kidal town, Kidal region.[1397]
- UNICEF reported that on June 30, 2014, unknown assailants used a car bomb to target the same bank in Kidal that was attacked in December 2013 and once again damaged the school next to it. The explosion seriously damaged the school fence, but no students or teachers were killed or injured.[1398]

During the second half of the reporting period, violence affecting education spread to central Mali, causing several hundred schools to close in the north and center of the country.[1399] In 2015 and 2016, reported attacks included the following:

- The UN verified four attacks on schools and protected persons in 2015, including two by non-state armed groups.[1400]
- The UN verified six attacks or threats against schools and protected persons in Ménaka, Mopti, and Timbuktu in the center and north of the country in 2016.[1401]

In 2017, attacks against schools appeared to intensify. The UN verified 41 attacks against schools and protected personnel in Gao, Mopti, Timbuktu, and Kidal regions, but did not share disaggregated information. According to the UN, the alleged perpetrators of these attacks were armed men identified as members of extremist groups.[1402] Examples of attacks on schools identified by GCPEA included two in Ndodjiga commune, Mopti region:

- A Sahel-focused news site alleged that on May 24, 2017, in Sah village, Ndodjiga commune, young armed men attacked two schools with heavy fire and ransacked them.[1403]
- Around the same time, local officials alleged that armed extremists who opposed Western schools attacked, burned, and sacked a French-language school in an unspecified location. The identities of the perpetrators were unverified.[1404]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Armed groups occasionally targeted school directors, teachers, and students. These types of attacks were not documented in *Education under Attack 2014*. According to the UN, attacks and threats against students, parents, and education personnel were common in 2016, especially in the Mopti region, although precise statistics were unspecified.[1405]

Among the anecdotal examples that GCPEA was able to identify were two attacks on teachers:

- At an unspecified time in 2015, le Front de libération du Macina, an affiliate of Ansar Dine, demanded that the village leader in Dogo village, Mopti region, close secular schools. When the village leader sought authorities' support, the group killed him. The group then threatened teachers in six local communes, which led to the closure of 93 schools.[1406]
- On July 11, 2016, armed actors who were reportedly opposed to Western education and the government of Mali killed a school director.[1407]

Military use of schools

Military use of schools continued throughout the reporting period. From 2014 to 2015, the UN reported the military use of schools by the MNLA, l'Haut Conseil pour l'unité de l'Azawad (HCUA), le Mouvement arabe de l'Azawad (MAA), la Coalition du people de l'Azawad, le Mouvement pour l'unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest, Ansar Dine, and MINUSMA peacekeepers.[1408] Armed parties reportedly continued to occupy schools even after signing the 2015 peace agreement.[1409] According to an international agency working in Mali, the presence of armed actors near schools was common but poorly documented.[1410]

During 2013, there were anecdotal reports that armed forces, non-state armed groups, and peacekeepers occupied schools, sometimes resulting in attacks on educational institutions. For example:

- During the first half of 2013, according to various sources, several schools that were allegedly being used by armed groups were damaged by French aerial bombardments, one in Bourem, one in Douentza, one in Timbuktu, and at least one other in Diabaly.[1411]
- According to the UN, most schools were vacated after the French-led military intervention, but as of November 2013, 30 members of the MNLA had established a military post inside the Lycée Attaher Af Ily high school in Kidal and were using two buildings and the hangar of the school.[1412]
- According to the UN, MINUSMA occupied a vocational training center from 2013 until December 2014.[1413]

The UN verified 20 instances of military use of schools in 2014, mainly attributed to the MNLA, HCUA, MAA, and la Coalition du People de l'Azawad. Nearly 60 percent of the schools used were in Gao region; the others were in Kidal, Timbuktu, and Mopti regions.[1414] Also according to the UN, MINUSMA peacekeepers used three schools during 2014: in Gao city. Ansongo Cercle, a subdivision of Gao region, and Tabankort, Kidal region.[1415]

Between 15 and 16 schools were reportedly used for military purposes in 2015, with responsibility attributed to the non-state armed groups, the national army, and MINUSMA. For example:

- According to the Education Cluster, armed actors, including the Malian army and MINUSMA, occupied at least 16 school buildings in 2015.[1416]
- The UN also verified that armed groups used nine schools between March 27 and June 11, 2015, and it noted that it had received unverified reports of military use in six other schools.[1417]
- In December 2015, the UN noted that armed groups that had signed the peace agreement were occupying seven schools in Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu regions.[1418]

Armed groups used at least 14 schools in Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu regions in 2016, according to the UN. The UN noted that the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA) and CMA/Haut Conseil pour l'unité de l'Azawad vacated two of these schools that year.[1419] According to the UN, seven schools in these regions were occupied by armed groups that were signatories to the June 2015 peace agreement.[1420]

The UN documented the use of 12 schools by armed groups as of December 31, 2017. These included four schools used by the CMA and two by Platform, a pro-government militia. Schools occupied by armed groups were located in Gao, Timbuktu, and Kidal regions.[1421] At least one school formerly used by Mali's armed forces was vacated in 2017. Information from the Education Cluster indicated that, in January 2017, the military was occupying one func-

tional school in Ménaka, Gao region, at night when school was not in session.[1422] The UN verified that the military vacated this school in early 2017.[1423]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

As recorded in *Education under Attack 2014,* the UN verified that armed groups used an unspecified number of schools as locations in which to indoctrinate and train children in 2012 and 2013.[1424] According to the UN, armed groups continued to recruit school children frequently in Islamic schools in 2013. Families requested that their children be recruited so they would receive a religious education and be protected from other armed groups.[1425] From January 2012 to December 2013, witnesses told the UN about instances in which parents in Gao city were paid to send their children to religious schools, where they received weapons training and extremist instruction.[1426] By the end of 2013, following the French-led intervention which drove the armed groups out of most major towns and cities in the north, the UN reported that it was believed that most children had decided to return to their families.[1427]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school

At least one case of sexual violence was perpetrated by armed parties in the education context.

In 2013, a female teacher in northern Mali told UNESCO that her 16-year-old female student was gang-raped by three members of an extremist group on her way to school on an unspecified date.[1428] Although sexual violence was not documented in Mali in *Education under Attack 2014* and only one report was found during the 2013-2017 period, it may have been underreported in both periods, given the context in which armed groups engaged in sexual and gender-based violence in the north, according to Human Rights Watch and the UN.[1429]

Attacks on higher education

At least one attack on higher education occurred in Mali during the 2013-2017 reporting period, whereas no such attacks were reported from 2009 through the first half of 2013.

Scholars at Risk and the US Department of State reported that police forces used teargas against a peaceful student sit-in at the University of Bamako on July 9, 2013. According to these reports, the police and effects of the teargas forced students away from the campus. Police also reportedly beat several students. Scholars at Risk documented injuries to at least 37 students. The protest took place against the backdrop of a teachers' union announcement to go on an indefinite strike after university officials failed to honor an agreement to raise salaries. The strike led to the suspension of classes, and the students began their protest to prompt negotiations between university authorities and the teachers' union.[1430]

MYANMAR

More than a dozen schools in Myanmar were damaged, and classes were disrupted by arson attacks, aerial bombings, and shelling. Communal, religious, and ethnic conflicts killed dozens of students and teachers. In Rakhine state, military-led operations in Rohingya communities burned hundreds of villages to the ground and killed an unknown number of students and teachers.

Context

Ethnic armed groups continued their decades-long insurgency, particularly in different parts of northern Myanmar. The Myanmar military (the Tatmadaw Kyi or Tatmadaw) targeted ethnic minorities such as the Ta'ang, Kachin, and Shan, who they believed to have ties to armed opposition groups seeking to gain increased autonomy and independence for their communities.[1431] In addition, communal violence between Buddhists and Muslims erupted in central and western Myanmar beginning in 2012, killing and injuring hundreds.[1432]

Internal displacement and insecurity caused by the ongoing violence disrupted education for thousands of children, For example, authorities closed approximately 30 schools during fighting between the government and Karen armed groups in southeastern Mon state in September 2014.[1433] In a 2016 analysis of nationwide data, the Asian Development Bank and UN agencies found that security concerns combined with the long distances required to travel to school may have discouraged all children, especially girls above the age of puberty, from attending school.[1434]

In 2016 and 2017, during two military-led operations in Rohingya Muslim minority communities in northern Rakhine state, at least 400 schools in Rakhine state were closed due to fighting.[1435] These operations intensified after August 25, 2017 when a nascent militant group reportedly carried out attacks against approximately 30 security forces outposts.[1436] These operations displaced hundreds of thousands of people, destroyed an unknown number of schools in hundreds of devastated villages, and killed untold numbers of students and teachers.[1437] A series of surveys conducted by Médecins Sans Frontières in November 2017 with Rohingya Muslim refugees in Bangladesh estimated that the violence had killed 8,170 people, including 1,247 children under the age of five.[1438] According to the Human Rights Watch, the campaign had partially or fully destroyed 354 villages by December 2017.[1439] The UN High Commissioner for Refugees stated in February 2018 that more than 688,000 Rohingya people had fled to refugee camps in Bangladesh in the previous months.[1440] According to government sources, 27,000 members of Rakhine minority groups were displaced after August 25, 2017, but by November of that year more than 24,000 had returned home.[1441]

According to OHCHR, the military-led operation in Rakhine state at the end of 2016 included actions that very likely amounted to crimes against humanity.[1442] In March 2017, the UN mandated a fact-finding mission to investigate human rights violations perpetrated by the Myanmar security forces, in particular those in Rakhine state, including arbitrary detention, torture and inhumane treatment, extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary killing, rape, and other sexual violence, and the destruction of property.[1443] However, the Myanmar government stated in June 2017 that it would not issue visas to the UN investigators, a situation that continued at the time of writing.[1444]

The number of attacks on schools and universities fluctuated throughout the reporting period, in conjunction with the intensifications of military activity and new laws that caused protests that were sometimes repressed with violence at Myanmar's universities. Reports of military use of schools appeared to remain steady until late 2016, and there was limited data on the extent of military use during military operations in Rakhine state.

Attacks on schools

Mortar fire, shelling, arson, and gunfire by various sides of multiple conflicts were reported to have damaged or destroyed schools in multiple states, particularly in the context of the government's military-led operations in Rakhine state. Throughout the reporting period there was only limited information available on exactly how widespread attacks on schools were. However, anecdotal reports indicated that fighting regularly impacted schools.

After a brief peak in 2013, when Buddhist nationalist armed groups increased attacks in Muslim communities, attacks on schools remained at levels similar to those reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* which lasted through 2015.[1445] Attacks increased again in 2016 and 2017 in the context of military-led operations in Rakhine state. Further attacks may be reported for 2017 when more detailed information becomes available.

Communal and religious tensions intensified into conflict in 2012, and media outlets reported a rise in targeted attacks by Buddhist nationalists in 2013. There were anecdotal reports of Buddhist nationalist violence targeting schools in two different areas of Myanmar:

- Media sources reported that on February 17, 2013, approximately 300 Buddhists attacked an Islamic religious school in Thaketa township in the central city of Rangoon (Yangon).[1446]
- According to media sources, in March, more than 200 Buddhist community members set fire to an Islamic school in Meiktila in the Mandalay region of central Myanmar, allegedly while government security forces watched. The mob, armed with machetes and pipes, killed 32 students and four teachers, clubbing some

to death and burning others alive. The media reported that seven people were later imprisoned in connection with the attacks.[1447]

UN sources reported that fighting between the government security forces and ethnic armed opposition groups in Kachin state also damaged schools during 2013. According to the UN, fighting between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and the military during October and November 2013 damaged an unknown number of schools in northern Kachin state.[1448] For example, the UN reported that, in November 2013, the national army surrounded a boys' boarding school in Mansi Township in Kachin state, forcing 300 students to flee the school. Their stated reason for doing so was to minimize civilian casualties during the fighting by ensuring that students were not present and therefore could not be caught in the crossfire.[1449] It was unclear what happened to those who fled or whether the school was damaged.

In Shan state, unidentified attackers damaged two schools in 2013, according to NGO and media sources:

- According to a local human rights NGO, mortar shells damaged a school in Tangyan, Shan state, in April 2013.[1450]
- In northern Shan state there was one attack on a school in 2013. In Lashio, unknown attackers burned down an Islamic school in late May 2013.[1451]

In 2014, reports of attacks on schools became more sporadic. Fighting between the national army and ethnic armed opposition groups damaged at least two schools in Shan state, according to a local human rights organization. For example:

- Shelling damaged a government school in the northern village of Wan Na Hee, Shan state in March 2014.[1452]
- A high school in Mong Nawng town, Shan state was damaged during a three-day military campaign by the national army during November 2014.[1453]

Reports of attacks on schools increased slightly in 2015, to approximately seven, according to information collected from rights groups and media sources. Fighting between the national army and the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA) damaged or closed schools in five villages during communal violence in the Kawkareik township, southeastern Karen state, in July 2015.[1454] There were also media reports of damage to two schools caught in the crossfire of fighting in 2015. For example, police and the national army destroyed at least one school in Karen state, on the border with Thailand, in June 2015.[1455]

There was one report of an attack on a school in Kachin state in 2015. In June of that year, media and NGO reports stated that a military mortar shell landed 200 meters from the dormitory and headmaster's house at the Alen Bum Internally Displaced Persons Boarding School in Laiza.[1456]

Attacks against schools appeared to intensify in 2016, with the most significant violence moving to Rakhine state. The UN found that government security forces burned schools and madrassas in Rakhine as part of its military-led operations in the area beginning in October 2016. The extent of this damage was not clear.[1457]

The UN also received reports of six attacks on schools in 2016, two of which were verified. It was not clear where in the country these attacks occurred.[1458] GCPEA also collected information on two cases of unidentified attackers and collateral damage from fighting that affected access to education in 2016. It was not clear whether these cases overlapped with those reported by the UN. For example:

- According to media sources, on June 23, 2016, unidentified assailants attacked a village in Bago division, causing damage to a local school.[1459]
- Local media reported that, in August 2016, stray shells from a battle between the national army and the KIA landed in the compound of Namya Basic Education Middle School in Hpakant, Kachin state. The extent of the damage to the school caused by the explosion was unclear, but at least one student and one teacher were injured.[1460]

Damage to schools continued in 2017, according to information collected from news reports. Although there was limited information available on the number of schools affected in Rakhine state, GCPEA was able to identify anecdotal reports of such attacks, including the following:

- In September 2017, at least one school was destroyed in an arson attack, reportedly by non-Rohingya villagers or security forces, according to international media.[1461]
- News sources reported that on September 22, 2017, a school in Mee Chaung, a village in Rakhine that had remained mostly peaceful during the violence against the Rohingya in other parts of that state, was reportedly damaged and possibly destroyed by a bomb blast carried out by unknown perpetrators.[1462]

In other states, media sources reported sporadic cases of schools caught in the crossfire between government forces and non-state armed groups in 2017. For example:

- On January 11, 2017, fighting between the Ta'ang National Liberation Army and government security forces caused schools and other civilian infrastructure to be closed in Namhsan, Shan state. Unknown perpetrators caused unspecified damage to one local high school.[1463]
- On March 11, 2017, shelling damaged Hongyan School in Kokang region, Shan state. No students were injured in the blast, as it occurred on a weekend. However, a volunteer teacher who was in residence at the time was killed.[1464]
- In August 2017, teachers and students were injured during fighting near Nam Ya Middle School in Moe Nyin District, Kachin state, which also disrupted school services.[1465]

Military use of schools

Local NGOs, the UN, and media sources reported intermittent incidents of the national army and armed groups using schools as training facilities and for protection during fighting, among other purposes. Military use of schools was documented at rates similar to those reported in *Education under Attack 2014* for most of the 2013-2017 period, but it was more commonly reported during the second half.

The UN reported two cases of military use of schools in 2013, one by government forces and the other by a non-state armed group:

- According to the UN, the national army used a vacated boys' school in Bhamo, Kachin state, during a school vacation in 2013.
- The UN reported that a KIA-affiliated militia used a boys' dormitory at a boarding school as a training facility in Kachin state, also during the school vacation. Responding to UN pressure, the KIA instructed the militia to leave the premises.[1466] It was unknown whether students were present in either school at the time.

These incidents continued into 2014, with one incident attributed to government forces and one to a non-state armed group:

- According to a local NGO report, in September 2014 the DKBA used a middle school for cover during conflict with the national army. The DKBA allegedly fired on the military from the school.[1467]
- A local NGO reported that, between June and July 2014, the national army set up a base in a village school in Kehsi Township, northern Shan state, and prevented students from attending school.[1468]

Military use was reported more commonly in 2015 and 2016. The UN verified six cases of military use of schools by the national army throughout 2015 and documented two cases in 2016, including one in Rakhine state and one in Kachin state.[1469] In addition, a report by OHCHR indicated that government security forces commonly used schools and mosques as outposts or temporary detention centers in the context of the government crackdown in Rakhine state in the last three months of 2016. For example:

- On an unknown date between October 9 and December 31, 2016, government security forces rounded up 12 elderly people in Rakhine state and beat them, before taking them to a school, where they were confined and beaten repeatedly for an unknown period of time.[1470]
- OHCHR also reported that, during the same period, women from the region had been detained in schools, where they were raped and otherwise abused.[1471]

As of December 2017, there was only one documented case of military use for the year, which occurred in the context of the government's military-led operations in Rakhine state. According to Amnesty International, military forces slept in one school in August 2017 as they moved through villages.[1472] The full scope of the use of schools by the military was unknown at the time of writing.

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

There were at least two reported cases in which sexual violence affected education between 2013 and 2017, one in the context of communal conflict in Kachin state, and one in the context of violence in Rakhine state. This type of violence was not documented in *Education under Attack 2014*. For example:

- Human Rights Watch reported that, in January 2015, soldiers stationed near a school physically assaulted, raped, and killed two female school teachers in their dormitory in Kuang Kha in Shan state.[1473] According to Human Rights Watch, the military denied all involvement and threatened to take legal action against anyone alleging their involvement.[1474]
- OHCHR reported that, in the last three months of 2016, women in Rakhine state were detained, raped, and otherwise abused by armed groups in schools.[1475] In one such case, a Rohingya woman in a Bangladesh refugee camp reported to Human Rights Watch that before she left her village of Kyein Chaung, in Maungdaw township, a soldier dragged her to a school toilet and raped her there.[1476]

Attacks on higher education

There were more reports of attacks on higher education during the 2013-2017 reporting period than in the previous period, possibly due to tensions related to the new National Education Law passed in 2014. The law restricted university student unions and teachers' unions and prohibited minority ethnic language education at universities. Its passage sparked a widespread outcry and protests calling for increased academic freedom, which were met with violence by police and other government security forces.[1477] The majority of the attacks on higher education for which reports were collected by GCPEA occurred in the following year, 2015.

No attacks on higher education were documented until 2015. Rights groups including Human Rights Watch, Scholars at Risk, and Amnesty International reported that, beginning in March of that year, police responded to student protests over the new National Education Law with excessive use of force and violence, harassment, and detention of some of the students involved. For example:

- In Letpadan, Pegu region, central Myanmar, at least 80 students and their supporters, mostly monks, were reportedly arrested following clashes with police in March. The students were protesting the new education law.[1478] Local and international media reported that police beat protesters and the medical responders who were called to assist them.[1479] Amnesty International stated that in the following month the police harassed and threatened student leaders and their supporters for their suspected involvement in the protest.[1480] According to *Reuters,* the government released at least 14 of the arrested students two days after the protest. As of March 2016, the government reportedly had plans to release the other students, but whether or not this had happened by September 2017 was unclear.[1481]
- Two leaders of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions, who had been in hiding since the March protests, were detained from late October through early November 2015, according to Scholars at Risk.[1482]

2016 saw the release of many arrested students and no reported attacks. Amnesty International and international media reported that, beginning in April 2016, the government released 69 students from prison following promises of reform from State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi, although three of those released continued to face charges.[1483]

There was one reported attack on higher education in 2017. Local media reported that on May 8, four student union members were arrested for their participation in a protest against a set of laws that banned mobile phones and required strict timetables on university campuses. The students also were calling on the government to respect students' rights and democracy in general. They were sentenced to four months in jail.[1484]

NIGERIA

Dozens of schools and universities in Nigeria were bombed or set on fire by violent extremists, killing hundreds of students, teachers, and other education personnel. The University of Maiduguri was targeted repeatedly. Schools were used as barracks, for weapons caches, and detention and killing centers. Hundreds of students were abducted from classrooms, particularly girls, many of whom were then forced into marriage.

Context

The armed group Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad, commonly known as Boko Haram, whose moniker in the Hausa language is commonly translated into English as "Western education is forbidden," carried out brutal attacks from 2009 through the 2013-2017 reporting period in an effort to establish extremist Islamic rule.[1485] In March 2015, Boko Haram declared its allegiance to 'IS' and renamed itself the "Islamic State West Africa."[1486]

New military leadership and efforts by troops from neighboring countries to quell Boko Haram's operations in 2015 and 2016 forced the group out of most of the territory it had controlled in northeastern Nigeria. However, abductions, forced recruitment, and other crimes committed by Boko Haram continued.[1487]

Violence against civilians, including targeted attacks on education, was part of Boko Haram's strategy.[1488] Human Rights Watch reported that approximately 10,000 civilians died in Nigeria between 2009 and early 2016 as a result of Boko Haram's activities.[1489] In May 2013, the Nigerian Senate declared a state of emergency in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states, leading to increased military activity and an escalation of violence.[1490] In August 2017, the IOM reported that 1,757,288 people were displaced in Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe states—a slight decrease from previous assessments.[1491] The majority of the IDP population (80 percent) was located in Borno state, and the primary cause of displacement was insurgency.[1492]

Boko Haram prevented thousands of children in Borno and Yobe states from continuing their education, including by destroying schools, driving community members away, and targeting girl students in large-scale abductions and other attacks.[1493] OCHA reported in 2017 that approximately three million children in northeastern Nigeria were in urgent need of education.[1494] In March 2014, Borno state shut around 85 high schools in response to attacks by Boko Haram. Some schools in Yobe and Adamawa states were also closed.[1495] According to the UN, 57 percent of all schools in Borno state remained closed in late September 2017.[1496]

Reports of attacks on education increased throughout the 2009-2013 period covered by *Education under Attack 2014,* becoming particularly frequent in 2013 as Boko Haram extended its operations in the northeast. The attacks continued to be frequent and widespread between 2013 and 2015, then decreased from late 2015 until 2017, possibly because by that time there were fewer people and institutions in the northeast left to attack.

Nigeria endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in May 2015.

Attacks on schools

During the reporting period, Boko Haram used arson and other means to destroy schools. In 2017, the UN estimated that the conflict between Boko Haram and security forces had destroyed 1,500 schools from January 2014 to December 2016, with at least 1,280 teacher and student casualties.[1497] These numbers represented more widespread and systematic occurrences of attacks on schools from 2013 to 2015 than during the 2009-2013 period

covered in *Education under Attack 2014,* which coincided with increased activity by Boko Haram. Attacks on schools decreased after 2015, possibly due to the closure or destruction of schools in northeastern Nigeria, which left Boko Haram fewer institutions to attack.[1498]

An Amnesty International report stated that up to 50 schools were attacked, burned, or destroyed in Borno state alone in 2013, resulting in the deaths of 70 teachers and dozens of students.[1499] Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict noted that until mid-2013 Boko Haram carried out most attacks at night, when schools were empty.[1500] After mid-2013, attacks began happening more frequently during school hours, according to Amnesty International.[1501] The information gathered by GCPEA also seemed to indicate that attacks occurring in the second half of the year were deadlier. For example:

- On March 11, 2013, unidentified attackers set fire to Gwange I Primary School in Maiduguri city, Borno state, burning it down. Unidentified attackers reportedly set fire to Gwange III Primary School in the same city two days later.[1502]
- A local media source reported that on March 23, 2013, persons believed to be members of Boko Haram burned down three private schools in Biu town, Borno state, at night.[1503]
- The UN, international media sources, and the US Department of State reported that on July 6, 2013, members of Boko Haram attacked and burned down a secondary school in Mamudo, Yobe state, during the day, killing at least 29 male students and one teacher.[1504] Human Rights Watch reported that Boko Haram had previously threatened to kill students found at the school.[1505]
- Human Rights Watch reported that on September 6, 2013, Boko Haram bombed the science laboratory at the Government Secondary School Gajerai and the principal's house, before abducting the principal and capturing six students. Boko Haram members forced students to point out the homes of teachers and local education administrators in the village, then killed the teachers they found and destroyed their teaching certificates. They then abducted one of the students and killed the other five.[1506]

During 2014, Boko Haram and unidentified armed assailants continued to target schools in Nigeria's northeast, often using arson, suicide attacks, and other methods that caused dozens of deaths and injuries. Attacks that year occurred both during the day and at night. For example:

- According to media sources, unidentified assailants set fire to a residential building for education personnel at a girls' secondary school in Yana, Bauchi state, on the night of April 20, 2014.[1507]
- News outlets reported that unidentified assailants razed two primary schools in Shedarki and Yelwan Darazo villages, Bauchi state, on the night of May 14, 2014.[1508]
- News sources reported that on September 7, 2014, Boko Haram members destroyed a school when they attacked Buratai town, Borno state.[1509]
- In November 2014, Boko Haram fighters stormed a school in Chikide, Borno state, and set classrooms on fire, burning eleven children and three teachers to death. They also abducted several women and children in the same attack.[1510]
- On November 10, 2014, a suicide bomber dressed as a student detonated a bomb during a school assembly at the Government Science and Technical College in Potiskum, Yobe state.[1511] According to Human Rights Watch, the explosion killed 26 students and inflicted minor to grave injuries on an additional 81 students.[1512]

Non-state armed groups continued to target schools in 2015, especially in the country's northeastern region. However, there was some indication that these attacks occurred at lower rates because, by the middle of the year, most of the schools in the area were already either destroyed or closed and the surrounding areas deserted.[1513] The attacks included the following:

Nigerian troops near the site of a bomb explosion in Nigeria's northeastern University of Maiduguri on January 16, 2016. Two bombs exploded at the university at dawn that day.

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- Local media reported that on January 12, 2015, Boko Haram members stormed Askira town, Borno state, using explosive and incendiary devices to damage several buildings, including a school.[1514]
- On March 28, 2015, at least three schools being used as polling stations in Enugu, Anambra, and Bauchi states were the targets of explosive devices and arson. Boko Haram committed the attack in Bauchi, but the perpetrators of the other two remained unidentified, according to local news sources.[1515]

Neither the UN nor other sources reported attacks on schools in 2016 or 2017.[1516] One reason for this decline in attacks on schools may have been that most of the schools in the northeast were already destroyed or closed: in August 2016, UN data showed that an estimated 1,697 schools were closed in northeastern Nigeria, of which 524 were in Adamawa state, 110 were in Yobe, and 1,063 were in Borno.[1517]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Between 2013 and 2017, armed assailants claiming or believed to be part of Boko Haram regularly targeted individual students, teachers, and other education personnel in isolated or coordinated incidents, which often took place at schools. They shot, killed, abducted, and threatened teachers and students.[1518] Attacks on students and teachers occurred with greater frequency from 2013 to 2017 than from 2009 to 2013. The later attacks also affected

more students and teachers than the previous ones, as Boko Haram carried out multiple mass abductions of hundreds of students at a time, as well as large-scale bombings that killed and injured dozens of students and education personnel.

Boko Haram targeted hundreds of students and teachers during the early years of the current reporting period. Education authorities in the northeast of the country recorded the killing of 314 school children between January 2012 and December 2014.[1519] According to the Nigerian Union of Teachers, as of October 2015, Boko Haram had killed more than 600 teachers since 2009.[1520] Throughout the period, Boko Haram justified their violent acts as retaliation for government harassment and detention of teachers and students at Quranic schools and mosques, which the government believed to be where young people were incited to violence.[1521]

Government security forces also perpetrated abuses against civilians, albeit at a significantly lower rate than Boko Haram, including against school teachers and alleged and actual Boko Haram members.[1522] For example, from 2012 to 2015, Human Rights Watch documented the extrajudicial killing by government forces of three teachers and two non-teaching staff suspected to be Boko Haram members or informants.[1523]

As attacks on students became more frequent than previously documented, the UN reported that Boko Haram killed 126 school children and 70 teachers in Borno and Yobe states in 2013 alone.[1524] Amnesty International reported that attackers, often unknown, shot 30 teachers, some of them during class, between January and November 2013.[1525] Watchlist found that in 2013 and 2014, Boko Haram sent letters to students and teachers stating that they would be attacked if they continued to attend and work in school.[1526]

Much of the violence was concentrated in Borno and Yobe states, where GCPEA collected reports of at least 14 incidents of killings, injury, or abduction of approximately 79 students and education personnel in 2013.[1527] Boko Haram or unknown assailants were responsible for each of these attacks. GCPEA also identified one report of government forces harassing a teacher. Examples included the following:

- On March 18, 2013, unknown gunmen reportedly shot and killed at least three teachers and seriously injured three students in simultaneous attacks in four government-run schools in Maiduguri, Borno state, according to Amnesty International and media sources.[1528]
- Media sources reported that on June 17, 2013, unidentified gunmen reportedly killed nine students who were taking exams in a school in Maiduguri, Borno state.[1529]
- Also on June 17, 2013, according to local news sources, Boko Haram captured and lynched a National Examination Council education official in Maiduguri, Borno state.[1530]
- The director of a Quranic school in Damaturu, Yobe state reported to Human Rights Watch that government security forces continually harassed him during the year, possibly because they suspected him of being linked to Boko Haram.[1531]

Early 2014 was a deadly period for teachers and students, particularly due to Boko Haram's targeting of students in larger scale incidents than they had perpetrated previously, with several hundred students and teachers harmed. For example:

- The UN and Human Rights Watch reported that two weeks later, on February 25, Boko Haram killed at least 29 school boys at night in Federal Government College in Buni Yadi village, Yobe state.[1533]
- One of the most highly publicized attacks on education occurred on April 14, 2014, when Boko Haram stormed a government-run secondary school for girls in the Chibok local government area in Borno state. They burned down the school and kidnapped 276 female students.[1534] Boko Haram boasted of the kidnapping as a warning against girls participating in Western education. Fifty-seven of the girls escaped from the group soon after the kidnapping, and one was found in May 2016.[1535] Another 21 were released after negotiations with Boko Haram in October 2016.[1536] One more schoolgirl was found in January 2017 with a six-month-old baby, to whom she had given birth while in captivity.[1537] Another 82 were released in exchange for Boko Haram prisoners in May 2017.[1538]
- On November 24, 2014, Boko Haram kidnapped at least 300 students from Zanna Mobarti Primary School in Damasak, Borno state, in the group's largest documented school abduction, according to Human Rights Watch.[1539] Between March 13 and March 15, 2015, Boko Haram reportedly fled with the 300 children. Two years later, in March 2017, the children still had not been found.[1540]

Similar attacks continued at a lower rate into 2015, with just one reported incident. According to international media, on May 8, 2015, a gunman suspected by police to have ties to Boko Haram who was wearing a suicide vest opened fire on students as they underwent security checks outside a school in Potiskum, Yobe state. The gunman then fired sporadically around the campus.[1541] Human Rights Watch reported that one student was killed and five were injured.[1542]

The next attack on students and education personnel was recorded two years later. On December 1, 2017, an unidentified assailant killed two boy students and injured two others, along with one female teacher, at a school in Kwaya Kusar. *Reuters* reported that, according to UNICEF, the man entered the schoolyard with a machete and tried to talk to some of the children. The female teacher confronted him, and he attacked her. Two local youths intervened before more people were harmed. It was unconfirmed whether the attacker was affiliated with Boko Haram.[1543]

Military use of schools and universities

Nigerian government security forces used at least a dozen schools for military purposes between January 2013 and December 2016, according to the UN. These included 10 in Borno state and two in Yobe state.[1544] Boko Haram was also found to have used several schools.[1545] This type of violation occurred more frequently during the 2013-2017 reporting period than during the 2009-2013 period of *Education under Attack 2014,* possibly due to national armed forces' increased efforts to drive out Boko Haram. Use of schools by government forces sometimes made the buildings targets for Boko Haram, with the group bombing and burning down several schools in Borno state between 2013 and 2015 because of the military's presence, according to Human Rights Watch.[1546] The UN reported that, between January 2013 and December 2016, Boko Haram burned and destroyed four schools in Gwoza after the national armed forces vacated the premises.[1547]

In 2013, Boko Haram reportedly used an unknown number of schools in Borno and Yobe states as detention or killing centers. Human Rights Watch reported this type of use of schools in Goniri and Gujba, both in Yobe state, in 2013.[1548] Government forces were also reported to have occupied schools in 2013. In one such incident, a witness in Gwoza, Borno state, told Human Rights Watch that soldiers had occupied a primary school for six months beginning in November 2013, sleeping there and bringing women from the village to stay there with them. Boko Haram then attacked the school in May 2014.[1549]

Boko Haram and government forces used schools and universities as detention centers and military bases in 2014, with six such cases reportedly attributed to Boko Haram and two to the armed forces, as described in the following:

- A witness in Gwoza told Human Rights Watch that her children stopped going to school in May 2014 after members of Boko Haram occupied and transformed the school into a base, before burning it down three weeks later.[1550]
- Human Rights Watch documented two cases of military use of schools by Boko Haram in Bama, Borno state, in 2014. In one case, members of the group used schoolbooks to make fires; in the other, they shot kidnapping victims in the dormitories.[1551]

- A witness reported to Human Rights Watch that government security forces had taken over another school in Bama, Borno state in February 2014.[1552]
- The UN documented an incident of national security forces using the Government Day Secondary School in Ngoshe, Borno state, as a barracks and detention center for two months between April and June 2014.[1553]
- In the above-mentioned incident on November 24, 2014, when Boko Haram kidnapped at least 300 students from Zanna Mobarti Primary School in Damasak, Human Rights Watch reported that Boko Haram locked the students inside the school grounds for several months while using the school as a military base. Many other women and children they abducted from across town were brought there as captives, the women and girls separated from the boys.[1554]
- According to media reports, in December 2014 Boko Haram kidnapped at least 50 elderly people in Gowza, Borno state and brought them to two secondary schools to be killed.[1555]

Both Boko Haram and the Nigerian armed forces continued to use schools during 2015. According to the UN, Boko Haram used five schools for military purposes in Bauchi state that year.[1556] Human Rights Watch reported that Boko Haram used at least two schools and attacked three schools where government security forces were stationed in 2015.[1557] It was not clear whether these incidents overlapped. The following are two examples of military use of schools in 2015:

- Boko Haram attacked Euga Primary School in Bauchi state and then used it for military purposes, which affected the education of 800 school children in February 2015, according to the UN.[1558]
- Security forces used the Government Day Secondary School in Ngoshe, Borno state, as a military barracks and detention facility from April to June 2014, also according to the UN.[1559]

In 2016, both the Nigerian military and Boko Haram used at least six schools as bases:

- In February 2016, Human Rights Watch documented the presence of government security forces and military hardware in at least two schools in Goniri, Yobe state. The soldiers had reportedly been in the schools in March 2015.[1560]
- As of April 2016, government security forces had used three schools since April 2014 in Maiduguri and Chibok, Borno state.[1561]
- In July 2016, local media reported that a school in Adamawa state had previously been used as a Boko Haram base.[1562]

More than a dozen schools were used for military purposes in 2017 alone. In January 2017, the UN reported seven schools being used by national security forces.[1563] In May 2017, UNICEF reported that 17 schools were being used by government forces at the time, 10 in Borno state and 7 in Yobe state.[1564] It was not clear how much overlap there was between these two lists of schools.

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

At least four instances of child recruitment from schools were reported, which fit into a context in which child recruitment was common. The UN received reports of the recruitment and use of children by Boko Haram from 2013 through 2016, as well as by a pro-government local group in 2015 and 2016.[1565] The number of UN-verified cases of recruitment jumped from 278 in 2015 to 2,122 in 2016, with Boko Haram the main perpetrator of this violation, the group having recruited 1,947 of the 2,122 verified cases in 2016 alone.[1566] UNICEF reported an uptick in use of children, particularly girls, by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region in early 2017, with 27 children used to carry out bomb attacks in the first three months of the year—almost the number used in such incidents in all of 2016.[1567]

The four cases in which schools served as recruitment sites included the following:

- Human Rights Watch reported that Boko Haram recruited approximately 13 students from Army Children's School Monguno, northern Borno state, when they looted the premises on March 22, 2013.[1568]
- The UN reported that two religious schools in Maiduguri were used as sites for recruitment through 2014.[1569]
- A girl found carrying explosives in Cameroon in March 2016 claimed to be one of the 276 girls kidnapped from the school in Chibok, according to international media sources.[1570]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

According to information documented by the UN, women and girls reported experiences of sexual slavery, forced marriage, and forced pregnancy.[1571] Human Rights Watch and the UN indicated that government officials and army officers had also raped and sexually exploited women and girls displaced by the conflict.[1572]

In the context of education between 2013 and 2016, armed assailants claiming or believed to be part of Boko Haram abducted female students and teachers, sometimes raping and forcibly marrying them.[1573] For example, in the globally publicized incident on April 14, 2014, in which members of Boko Haram stormed a government-run secondary school for girls in the Chibok area of Borno state and kidnapped 276 female students, fighters forced many of the missing girls to convert to Islam, marry their captors, and become pregnant.[1574]

Attacks on higher education

Armed assailants, unidentified suicide bombers, Boko Haram, and government security forces killed, injured, and detained dozens of university personnel and students during the reporting period. The motivation for the attacks perpetrated by unidentified individuals was unknown, but these incidents were included because they fit into an established pattern of armed groups targeting education personnel. Attacks on higher education personnel, such as professors, occurred at similar rates as during the 2009-2013 reporting period, between five and six attacks per year, except in 2015, when GCPEA identified one incident. In addition, higher education facilities were bombed and set on fire in multiple incidents, including six that took place at the University of Maiduguri in 2017 alone.

In 2013, Boko Haram abducted and killed dozens of students and personnel in at least one attack at the tertiary level in the northeast, and unknown assailants perpetrated two attacks. For example:

- Media documented that unknown assailants abducted the education director of degree programs in Rivers state on January 22, 2013. It was unclear whether the director was targeted because of his profession or for another reason.[1575]
- News sources reported that on February 23, 2013, unknown perpetrators kidnapped a senior lecturer from a federal low-cost estate in Maiduguri, Borno state, shortly after a battle in the area. The outcome of the kidnapping was unknown.[1576]
- In a mass casualty attack on September 29, 2013, armed assailants believed to be members of Boko Haram stormed the College of Agriculture in Gujba, Yobe state, killing 65 students and wounding 18 more, according to the UN and other sources.[1577] According to the state police commissioner, the gunmen shot students as they slept.[1578] A military spokesman in Yobe state reported that they also set fire to several classrooms.[1579]

Also in 2013, police were responsible for at least three attacks on higher education students and teachers, all in the context of protests. These included:

- Scholars at Risk reported that on February 13, 2013, police interrupted an Academic Staff Union of Universities meeting and detained between 10 and 12 lecturers, whom they later released.[1580]
- Scholars at Risk found that on June 12, 2013, at the University of Uyo, a student protest against university transport prices turned violent after police used teargas and live bullets against the students, killing one. Police denied this and stated that protesters brought the student's body from off campus.[1581]

- Scholars at Risk and local media reported that police tear-gassed student protesters in Abuja in October 2013.[1582]

GCPEA identified reports of six attacks in 2014, most of which involved suicide bombers or the threat of such violence that targeted higher education institutions across northern Nigeria.[1583] For example:

- Scholars at Risk and international media reported that on February 28, 2014, the College of Education in Hong, Adamawa state, closed down after Boko Haram sent a series of threats to students.[1584]
- Human Rights Watch, Scholars at Risk and media sources reported that on June 23, 2014, a suicide bombing occurred on the campus of the Kano State School of Hygiene, killing at least seven prospective students and wounding at least twenty more.[1585] The unknown perpetrator concealed the bomb in a bag and detonated it near the university's main gate, an area that students frequented between classes.[1586]
- Human Rights Watch and Scholars at Risk reported that on July 30, 2014, on the campus of Kano State Polytechnic, a female suicide bomber dressed as a student detonated a bomb in a crowd of students gathered around a notice board.[1587] Approximately six students were killed and seven injured. Authorities suspected that the bomber was affiliated with Boko Haram.[1588] A female suicide bomber associated with Boko Haram reportedly carried out at least one other attack on higher education in 2014. [1589]
- Scholars at Risk, Human Rights Watch, and other sources documented an attack on September 17, 2014, in which suspected Boko Haram suicide bombers detonated their devices in a full lecture hall in a government-run teacher training college while other assailants threw explosives and shot at those who attempted to escape.[1590] According to Human Rights Watch, 27 students and 2 teachers were killed during this attack.[1591] This was the second attack on a teacher training college reported in 2014.[1592]

There was one reported attack on higher education in 2015. In October 2015, Scholars at Risk and local media reported that a professor of agricultural economics at Ambrose Alli University was kidnapped from his home near Benin City, Edo state in June 2015, and killed. The motive of the attack remained unclear, but the anonymous assailants continued to demand money from the professor's family after his death.[1593]

Similar types of violence by unknown assailants targeting higher education personnel and students, as well as their institutions, continued into 2016. Only one of these attacks, at Port Harcourt in Rivers state, was perpetrated by security forces; the other four were carried out by unknown assailants in Rivers and Cross River states. In contrast with the previous year, there were no reports of mass casualty attacks, as each incident affected between one and three people. For example:

- Scholars at Risk reported that on January 19, 2016, unidentified perpetrators kidnapped the director of the Centre for Continuing Education at Rivers State University of Science and Technology in Port Harcourt. His whereabouts remained unknown at the time of writing.[1594]
- On April 10, 2016, local media reported that police shot and killed a student who was part of a group of students protesting a "no fee, no examination" policy introduced by the University of Port Harcourt.[1595]
- Local media reported that on April 21, 2016, unknown gunmen killed the principal lecturer of the Ken Saro Wiwa Polytechnic in Rivers State.[1596]
- On May 3, 2016, seven gunmen reportedly entered the campus of the University of Calabar, Cross River state, at night, firing shots to disperse security guards and bystanders. They kidnapped a lecturer and two students from their residential quarters, according to local news sources.[1597]
- Local media reported on August 8, 2016, that unidentified perpetrators kidnapped a professor at the University of Port Harcourt on his way home from the university.[1598]

In 2017 there was a series of six incidents in which attackers, either associated with Boko Haram or unidentified, targeted the University of Maiduguri. Each of these attacks harmed between zero and four people, as described in the following:

- International and local media reported that on January 16, 2017, two Boko Haram child suicide attackers detonated their devices at the University of Maiduguri, killing at least four people, including one professor, and injuring 15 more.[1599]
- Local media and Scholars at Risk reported that on May 13, 2017, three suicide bombers attempted to enter the University of Maiduguri but were stopped by two security guards. The assailants detonated their devices, killing one security guard and injuring the other.[1600]
- Scholars at Risk documented another incident at the University of Maiduguri on May 18, 2017, when three suicide bombers tried to detonate their devices outside the female dormitory. One was able to do so, while the other two reportedly ran to another place on campus, where they also detonated their explosives, injuring three security guards.[1601]
- Local and international media and Scholars at Risk reported another attempted attack on May 20, 2017, when a suicide bomber detonated his vest just outside the University of Maiduguri. There were no casualties in the incident.[1602]
- Attacks on the University of Maiduguri continued. *BBC News* and Scholars at Risk reported that on June 25, 2017, a suicide attacker detonated his device on campus, killing a female security guard. The university was digging trenches around its facilities at the time in an effort to prevent these attacks from occurring.[1603]
- Despite efforts to prevent attackers from entering campus, Scholars at Risk found that on July 6, unidentified individuals entered the University of Maiduguri and set off explosive devices. There were no reported casualties in the attack.[1604]

On November 13, 2017, a female student and a female education staff member were injured when students clashed with police outside of the Federal College of Agriculture in Ibadan, Oyo state, according to local media. The students were protesting the management of the college. Police reportedly used teargas, stones, and live bullets to disperse the students. Several teachers' vehicles and police vans were also reported to be damaged, and five students were arrested.[1605]

PAKISTAN

Unknown attackers and non-state armed groups used explosives, gunfire, and other tactics to damage and destroy hundreds of schools and universities in Pakistan. They also killed, injured, threatened, and abducted close to 100 students and educators, with approximately one-quarter of documented cases of all forms of attack affecting the education of females.

Context

Pakistan confronted a variety of security challenges during the 2013-2017 reporting period. The Tehreeki-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other non-state armed groups carried out violent attacks against government officials and civilians.[1606] Responding to the Taliban presence, the United States conducted preemptive attacks and drone strikes in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and elsewhere. The Pakistani military also conducted military operations against the TTP.[1607] The TTP meanwhile carried out violent attacks in Punjab province, which was home to two other non-state armed groups, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.[1608]

Sindh province saw escalating violence throughout the reporting period, particularly in Karachi city, stoked by a mix of ethnic, sectarian, political, and criminal tensions, as well as alleged human rights abuses by the paramilitary Rangers, who were increasingly deployed to maintain order.[1609] The TTP also established a foothold in Karachi city.

Meanwhile, Balochistan province was the site of several distinct conflicts, including a nationalist and separatist movement led by the Baloch Liberation Army and the Baloch Liberation United Front, which targeted ethnic Pun-

jabis and other minority groups; a sectarian conflict led by Sunni groups, who attacked Shia communities, especially the Hazara; and violent extremist attacks on individuals and institutions that behaved in a way the extremists viewed as contrary to Islam.[1610]

Education was a casualty of each of these conflicts throughout Pakistan. Notably, in both Khyber Paktunkhwa province, where the TTP controlled Swat Valley, and in FATA, non-state actors targeted the state, women's rights, and girls' education, often violently.[1611] *Voice of America reported* in September 2017 that more than 1,100 girls' schools had been destroyed in FATA over the previous decade, according to government estimates.[1612] Furthermore, child marriage and pregnancy, prioritization of boys' education, a deficit of qualified female teachers, and having to travel long distances to school affected girls' access to education, according to the CEDAW committee.[1613]

In general, reports of attacks on education declined from the period covered by *Education under Attack 2014,* when Pakistan was one of the most heavily affected countries. Attacks on education also declined in Pakistan over the course of the current reporting period.

Attacks on schools

Between 2013 and 2017, armed non-state groups and unknown parties reportedly attacked hundreds of schools in Pakistan, typically using explosive devices. According to data from UN, NGO, and media sources compiled by GCPEA, approximately one-third of these attacks were reported to have affected girls' schools.[1614] It should be noted, however, that not all reports indicated whether the institutions attacked were boys' or girls' schools.

In many cases, these attacks damaged or destroyed infrastructure and killed several hundred students and teachers. Human Rights Watch reported that, according to the Pakistan Minister for States and Frontier Regions, 360 schools were destroyed in North Waziristan Agency, Khyber Agency, and South Waziristan as of 2015. However, it was not clear how much of this damage was due to attacks that had occurred in the previous two years, rather than in earlier years.[1615] According to the UN and the Education Cluster, the annual rate of attacks on schools was lower during the 2013-2017 reporting period than in the period documented in *Education under Attack 2014*.

In 2013, media, NGO, and UN sources combined reported more than 100 attacks on schools, including bombings, grenade attacks, and shootings.[1616] According to information reported to the UN, the TTP and allied groups carried out at least 78 targeted attacks on schools, teachers, and school children, including 26 attacks that targeted female educational institutions.[1617] GCPEA's information indicated that approximately half of the attacks on schools in 2013 occurred in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Attacks on schools also occurred with regularity in FATA, Balochistan, and Karachi city. Examples of attacks on schools in 2013 included the following:

A guard with a gun and a metal detector stands outside a school in Peshawar, Pakistan, on January 12, 2015. Most schools across the country closed for an extended winter break after Pakistani Taliban gunmen attacked the Army Public School on December 16, 2014.

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- According to Human Rights Watch, there were at least nine attacks on schools in the District West area of Karachi between March and August 2013. In most of these cases, unidentified gunmen fired on the schools.[1618]
- According to media reports, at least six attacks on schools occurred between May 2, 2013, and May 11, 2013, in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces and were carried out in connection with the schools' use as polling centers.[1619]
- In November 2013, according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, a US drone hit a religious school in Hangu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, killing three teachers and five students.[1620]

Just under one-third of the attacks on schools in 2013 were reported to target girls' schools or those serving boys and girls together, according to data collected by GCPEA. For example:

- On March 30, 2013, gunmen entered the Nation Secondary School in Ittehad Town, Karachi, hurling grenades and firing on students and teachers. One girl student and the school principal were killed, six other girl students and two visitors were injured. One of the injured visitors was also an educator, the principal of a nearby school who was visiting when the attack occurred. Information collected by Human Rights Watch indicated that the attackers may have been targeting female students.[1621]
- In one of the deadlier attacks on schools in 2013, local Taliban allegedly carried out an explosive attack outside a government girls' primary school in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on September 5, 2013. The attack injured 13 female students under the age of 10.[1622]

Violence targeting schools appeared to decline slightly in 2014, according to information GCPEA collected from UN and media reports.[1623] According to the UN, at least 40 secular schools were attacked during 2014 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, FATA, and Balochistan province.[1624] Again, unknown attackers were responsible for the majority of violations, but in some cases the attackers were known to include non-state armed groups such as the Taliban and other violent extremist groups, which targeted secular and English-language schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces and FATA.

More than a third of attacks on schools were reported to affect girls' education during 2014, according to information collected by GCPEA. The proportion of girls' institutions attacked may have varied across the country. For example, the HRCP reported that more than half of the schools destroyed in 2014 by the Taliban in Swat Valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, were girls' institutions.[1625]

Attacks on schools in 2014 included the following:

- Media sources reported that on September 1, 2014, members of a group called Al-Jihad carried out an arson attack at Gorbam Private School in Kech district of Balochistan province because of its curriculum. Their statement claiming responsibility for the attack explained that the school had been targeted for providing Western education.[1626]
- Al-Jihad reportedly set another private school on fire in Turbat district of Balochistan on September 3, 2014, destroying 150 textbooks and leaving behind pamphlets warning the school not to teach Western education in English, according to Human Rights Watch and several media sources.[1627]
- The HRCP reported that unidentified assailants killed a school teacher and two children in a grenade attack at Askari Public School in Peshawar in October 2014. The incident followed the school's receipt of letters that threatened attacks if students wore Western attire rather than the traditional *shalwar kameez*.[1628]
- One of the most globally publicized attacks on educational institutions occurred on December 16, 2014. That day TTP gunmen stormed the Army Public School in Peshawar, firing on pupils and education personnel and setting off hand grenades and other explosive devices. At least 141 people were reportedly killed, including at least 132 children, as well as several teachers and other education personnel. At least another 133 were reportedly injured, the vast majority of them children.[1629] The TTP claimed that the attack was an act of revenge for the Pakistani military's ongoing offensive in North Waziristan.[1630] As a result of the attack, the government closed all educational institutions across Pakistan for three to four weeks, according to the UN.[1631]

The UN recorded a 65 percent decline in attacks between 2014 and 2015, reporting 14 attacks on educational institutions in 2015, including eight in FATA, four in Sindh, and two in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.[1632] Information compiled from media sources indicated that there were 33 attacks on schools reported in 2015, of which 12, or just over a third, targeted girls' education.[1633] The extent of overlap between the UN and the media information was not clear.

In addition to physical attacks on schools, several schools in Punjab and Balochistan provinces received threats demanding that they stop teaching Western education, or that girls stop attending school or wear headscarves, according to Human Rights Watch and media reports.[1634] For example, in August 2015, an official from the Panjgur district education department in Balochistan province told Human Rights Watch that a group called Tanzeemul Islam al Furqan had sent threats demanding that more than 25 English and coeducational schools close.[1635]

The reported rate of attacks on schools in Pakistan continued to decline into 2016. According to both the UN and Pakistan's Education Cluster, there were six attacks on educational institutions that year.[1636] This included at least two in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the rest in FATA.[1637] GCPEA identified 22 incidents in media and NGO reports, including six targeting girls' schools. These attacks were distributed across the country, with eight reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, five in FATA, four in Sindh, three in Punjab, and one each in Balochistan and Azad Kashmir territory.[1638] It was not clear how many of these attacks were the same as those documented by the Education Cluster. Examples of attacks on schools in 2016 included the following:

- According to media sources, 10 students were injured in a stampede that occurred when gunmen fired on a government girls' secondary school in Tandlianwala, Punjab province, on January 23, 2016.[1639]
- The UN, Human Rights Watch, and media sources reported that on February 19, 2016, the Taliban detonated bombs and exploded the girls' wing of a newly built government school in Peshawar. When claiming responsibility for the attack, the Taliban stated that they had targeted the school because it was a government facility and would be part of a series of attacks on such institutions.[1640]
- In another case, reported by *Dawn* newspaper on September 6, 2016, a secondary school student was injured in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when he tried to stop an attacker with a rifle from climbing the school's boundary wall.[1641]
- Multiple media sources reported that one girl died, and three others injured, when a bomb exploded while they were playing outside their school in North Waziristan on December 13, 2016.[1642]

At least eight attacks on schools were reported in 2017, according to information compiled from media sources. Half of these attacks reportedly targeted girls' education.[1643] For example:

- On January 10, 2017, two female students were reportedly injured when unknown attackers threw fireworks into the Hashmat Memorial Private School in Gujranwala, Punjab.[1644]
- On March 10, 2017, unidentified individuals vandalized the Oxford Public School, located in Ghizer Valley, Gilgit Baltistan. They left behind a note warning that the school would be bombed if the female teachers did not cover themselves.[1645]
- *Dawn* newspaper also reported an incident in Balochistan province on March 23, 2017, when a government girls' school located in Qila Abdulla was damaged in an IED attack.[1646]
- On May 8, 2017, a bomb reportedly exploded outside a girls' school in an area near Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, damaging the school gate and some of the school walls. A second bomb was defused nearby.[1647]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

In addition to the attacks on schools that killed many learners and educators, students, teachers, and education personnel were also killed in violence that targeted them individually. According to media, NGO, and international agency sources, there were more than 65 attacks against approximately 98 students, teachers, and other education personnel between 2013 and 2017. These numbers represented a decrease from the period reported in *Education under Attack 2014*. Unknown attackers were responsible for the majority of these incidents, which included targeted killings and abductions. Female students and teachers were targeted in a minority of cases.

Data GCPEA collected from media sources and NGO reports indicated that there were at least 20 cases of attacks on teachers and students, affecting approximately 28 individuals, during 2013.[1648] These included kidnappings and targeted killings. Students also faced threats to their safety during 2013. For example:

- On March 26, 2013, unidentified armed assailants reportedly executed a female teacher in front of her 13-year-old son in a drive-by shooting while she was on her way to the school where she taught in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.[1649]
- On April 15, 2013, a Taliban faction threatened to harm students if they violated a ban on children attending five schools in North Waziristan.[1650]
- Unknown assailants reportedly kidnapped three school teachers who taught at the Government Workers' Welfare School in Khuzdar town, Balochistan, on February 5, 2013.[1651]
- On May 14, 2013, unknown attackers killed Abdul Waheed, who ran the Naunehal Public School in Orangi Town, Karachi, possibly because he refused to pay extortion money. The school shut down, and after it reopened in August 2013, other unknown attackers targeted it with a grenade.[1652]

The number of incidents targeting students, teachers, and other education personnel was similar in 2014, with media sources reporting approximately 23 incidents across Khyber Pakhtukwa, FATA, Balochistan, and Sindh.[1653] However, many of these incidents harmed about twice as many individuals. For example:

- On February 10, 2014, unidentified motorcyclists reportedly shot dead three school teachers in Hangu district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, when they were on their way home from school.[1654]
- On May 21, 2014, gunmen from the Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) opened fire on the home of Abdul Hameed, a teacher in Turbat district, Balochistan province, killing him and five of his family members. The BLF stated that they believed Hameed was an agent of the government, according to media sources.[1655]
- In Karachi, unknown attackers reportedly opened fire and killed Malik Ishaq, a secondary school principal in Baldia Town, Karachi city, on August 4, 2014.[1656]
- The UN received reports that on November 21, 2014, 11 teachers and local volunteers were abducted from a private school in Khyber Agency.[1657]

Attacks on teachers and education personnel appeared to decline in 2015. Human Rights Watch and media sources documented a total of eight incidents that harmed seven people.[1658] Examples included the following:

- Media reports indicated that on January 14, 2015, unknown gunmen opened fire on and killed a teacher in Kech district, Balochistan.[1659]
- On March 4, 2015, a teacher was shot and killed by unidentified perpetrators in Punjab, also according to media sources.[1660]
- According to testimony collected by Human Rights Watch, a government school teacher was killed on May 8, 2015, by unknown militants in Charbagh Bazaar, Swat. The individual interviewed noted that the Pakistani Taliban considered all teachers to be heretics.[1661]

There were reports of at least 12 targeted attacks on education personnel in 2016, which harmed approximately 18 students and education personnel.[1662] The majority of attacks were actual and attempted killings and abductions, but students and teachers were also threatened. News reports included the following:

- Three teachers were injured when unknown gunmen opened fire on them in Prang, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on January 1, 2016.[1663]
- On August 18, 2016, unidentified assailants shot and killed the watchman of a school as he slept at the school in Punjab province.[1664]
- Another security guard was injured on November 1, 2016, when four unknown armed gunmen entered his school, also in Punjab province, and opened fire.[1665]
- In September 2017, teachers at two government primary schools in Rawalpindi, Punjab province received threats warning that students would be abducted. The threats caused a number of students to leave the schools.[1666]

GCPEA identified four incidents of armed actors targeting students and education personnel during 2017. Seven students and education personnel were harmed in these attacks.[1667] The media also reported two cases in which protesting teachers were violently dispersed or arrested, which included the following:

- Local media reported the abduction of FATA Education Deputy Director Mohib Rehman Dawar and his son on February 11, 2017.[1668]
- Local media also indicated that unknown attackers kidnapped three government school teachers in Awaran district, Balochistan, as the teachers returned from a training session for national census workers.[1669] It is possible that they were abducted because of their affiliation with the census rather than their positions as school teachers.
- On May 24, 2017, two Chinese language teachers were kidnapped by armed men disguised as policemen in Quetta, Balochistan.[1670] 'IS' claimed responsibility for the attack and killed the teachers two weeks later.[1671]
- On November 21, 2017, police used batons to disperse teachers protesting in Gothki district, Sindh province, because they had not received their salaries.[1672]
- Police used water cannons to disperse teachers demonstrating for permanent positions in Karachi city, Sindh province, on December 25, 2017. More than two dozen teachers were arrested and held for several days.[1673]

Military use of schools and universities

Information about military use of schools and universities was scarce during the current reporting period, as it was during the 2009-2013 period. However, Kamran Michael, Pakistan's minister for human rights, noted in his response to the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights on June 15, 2017, that the Pakistani army used schools as barracks. The minister stated that the army only used schools during summer or winter holidays, or at other times when the schools were closed, and then only for a few days at a time.[1674] Reports from the UN and Human Rights Watch indicated that both armed groups and Pakistani security forces used educational institutions as bases of operation, disrupting access to education.[1675]

Human Rights Watch wrote that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Elementary and Secondary Education Department's Independent Monitoring Unit reported the partial occupation of 222 schools and full occupation of 63 schools by either displaced families or Pakistani security forces in December 2014. The source did not distinguish between the two uses, and it was not clear how many of these schools were functioning as bases for security operations.[1676] Human Rights Watch also reported the following:

- A member of a teachers' association reported that Pakistani security forces were launching operations against the Taliban from approximately 20 schools in Swat in 2016.[1677]
- The same source reported that both the military and the paramilitary Frontier Corps were partially occupying five schools, including the Government High School Sherpalam, Government Middle School Marghazar, Government Primary School Bar Sher Palam No. 1, and Government Primary School Kandaw Kass.[1678]
- The Swat education department reported that the army was fully occupying at least two schools in September 2016: the Government Primary School Achar No. 2 for boys, which they had been using since May 2014, and the Government Primary School Ozbaka for boys.[1679]

Human Rights Watch also documented reports that the Pakistani army and paramilitary Rangers used university and college dormitories. For example:

- According to a teacher interviewed by Human Rights Watch, as of 2016 the army had been using an undergraduate college for women in Khwazakhela, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as offices for senior military officials for seven years, since 2009. Although another space was given to the college to continue classes, many women dropped out.[1680]
- In 2016 the Rangers were reported to be using at least three higher education facilities in Sindh province. These included the Mitha Ram Hostel, a dormitory for students of the DJ Science College, which the Rangers had been using since 1992 and had converted into a small jail in 2015; the Jinnah Courts, a residential dormitory that the Rangers had used as their headquarters since 1999; and a hostel at the Government College of Technology.[1681]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

There was little information on child recruitment from schools during the reporting period. According to the UN, there were allegations in 2014, 2015, and 2016 that the TTP used religious schools in Pakistan to recruit and train children.[1682] However, there were no specific details on this activity.

Attacks on higher education

Unknown attackers and armed non-state groups reportedly killed, injured, and abducted university scholars and education personnel between 2013 and 2017 at rates similar to those documented in *Education under Attack 2014*. GCPEA documented approximately 37 attacks on higher education using media, NGO, and UN sources. Two of these attacks affected females' education. Most attacks on higher education took place in Balochistan and Sindh provinces.

According to information compiled by GCPEA, at least 12 attacks on higher education occurred during 2013, harming 38 university students and education personnel in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan, and Punjab provinces.[1683] For example:

- On February 1, 2013, an explosive planted at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Peshawar by unknown attackers injured two people and damaged the building, according to media sources.[1684]
- News reports indicated that unknown attackers shot and killed professor Syed Sibte Jafar Zaidi on March 18, 2013. The attack occurred outside the Government Degree Science College in Karachi, Sindh, and observers believed that Zaidi was killed for his scholarship on "sectarian harmony."[1685]
- The deadliest attack of the year on higher education occurred on June 15, 2013, when members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi placed a bomb on a bus carrying university students, which exploded on the campus of Sardar Bahaddur Khan Women's University in Quetta, Balochistan, killing 25 people and wounding at least another 19. Several girls suffered severe burn injuries when the bus caught fire after the blast. Ninety minutes later, two suicide attackers and gunmen of unknown affiliation attacked the Bolan Medical Clinic, where those injured during the first attack were receiving treatment, killing 11 more people and wounding 17.[1686] The HRCP viewed the attack as a warning to women seeking higher education, as the university was the sole all-women university in Balochistan.[1687]
- On July 11, 2013, one college professor was killed and another wounded in Balochistan province. The professor who was killed was known for promoting girls' education, according to a news report.[1688]
- According to a media report, unknown assailants reportedly kidnapped four employees of the Institute of Business Administration Community College in Shikarpur city, Sindh province, on December 21, 2013, releasing them a few days later.[1689]

In 2014 there were at least 16 attacks on universities and higher education students and personnel, which harmed 21 people, as reported by media sources. These attacks in 2014, which were similar to those that occurred the previous year, included 12 attacks on higher education personnel and 4 on higher education infrastructure.[1690] For example:

- On February 8, 2014, an explosive set by unknown attackers detonated at the Technical Training Center in Sohbatpur town, Balochistan province.[1691]
- On February 17, 2014, unknown attackers killed Dr. Javed Iqbal Qazi, dean of the pathology department of Karachi Medical and Dental College, in an attack that also wounded his driver.[1692]
- On March 10, 2014, unknown attackers killed student organization leader Raja Qadoos in Rawalpindi city, Punjab province.[1693]
- Another explosive device was found on the roof of a bus at Shah Abdul Latif University in Khairpur city, Sindh province, on March 25, 2014. It was safely defused.[1694]
- A grenade exploded on May 12, 2014, near the Gomal Medical College in Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, killing a security guard.[1695]
- On September 18, 2014, unidentified attackers killed Dr. Muhammad Shakil Auj, a liberal religious scholar and dean of Islamic Studies at Karachi University, who had received death threats for months. The threats had come from rival religious scholars charging blasphemy.[1696]

Attacks against higher education appeared to decline in 2015, with media sources reporting six incidents, of which three targeted students or education personnel and three targeted institutions.[1697] For example:

- On February 5, unidentified perpetrators detonated an explosive device outside the Institute of Computer and Management Sciences College in Peshawar city, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. There were no casualties in the blast, but university infrastructure was damaged.[1698]
- Unknown assailants shot and killed a student organization activist, Sajjad Hussain of the People's Students Federation, on March 9, 2015, in Karachi city, Sindh province.[1699]
- In April 2015, four gunmen shot and killed Dr. Waheedur Rehman, a former student of Dr. Muhammad Shakeel Auj, who was killed the previous year. Dr. Rehman was also working as a professor at Karachi University.[1700]

In 2016, media reports again indicated that there were at least five attacks on higher education, including the following:[1701]

- On January 20, 2016, armed assailants associated with the Pakistani Taliban attacked Bacha Khan University, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, shooting and killing at least 20 people and wounding dozens more.[1702] Following this attack, the national government issued a "red alert" to education institutions nationwide, causing them to close for a week, or more in some cases.[1703] Counterterrorism drills and other security exercises were also practiced in schools and universities across the country in the wake of the attack.[1704]

- Later in the year, in June 2016, unknown assailants fatally shot Amanullah Khan Achakzai, principal of University Law College Quetta, while he was en route to work.[1705]

Media sources reported four targeted attacks on higher education personnel or facilities during 2017:

- On March 15, 2017, local media reported that the Balochistan secretary of higher education was abducted on his way to work. The outcome of the abduction was unclear.[1706]
- On April 7, 2017, Ashfaq Ahmed, a retired professor from Lahore University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, was killed in Lahore by unknown attackers. Police believed that the attack was related to Ahmed's Ahmadi faith.[1707]
- Local media reported that police defused five bombs planted by unidentified attackers outside of Mehran University of Engineering and Technology in Jamshoro, Sindh province, on November 8, 2017.[1708]
- The Pakistani Taliban claimed responsibility for an attack on the Agricultural Training Institute on December 1, 2017, which killed at least 9 people and injured 37, the majority of them students, according to international media.[1709]

THE PHILIPPINES

More than 1,000 students and educators in the southern Philippines, particularly those working in indigenous community schools, reportedly experienced threats, harassment, and intimidation. There were also reports that government forces and paramilitary groups used more than 30 schools as bases and camps, and that non-state armed groups recruited children from schools. In approximately one dozen cases, universities were reportedly bombed and university personnel killed, often for unknown reasons.

Context

After several decades of violence, the Philippines continued to be affected by two increasingly fragmented conflicts: a Moro insurgency focused in the southern Philippines, primarily in the Mindanao region, and a communist insurgency that particularly affected indigenous Lumad communities.

The Moro insurgency involved the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and several non-state armed groups: the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the 'IS'-affiliated Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF).[1710] Despite a peace agreement signed in 2012 by the government and the MILF, the conflict continued throughout the reporting period, with increasing involvement from groups claiming affiliation with 'IS.'[1711]

In addition, the communist New People's Army (NPA) fought the AFP and paramilitary groups, such as the Alamara and the Magahat-Bahani, which allegedly had ties to the Philippine military. This conflict displaced thousands from Lumad communities, whom the government accused of supporting communist groups.[1712] In early 2017, the NPA announced the end to a ceasefire with the government, citing the expansion of a state military presence in villages across the country, and the Philippine government later put peace talks on hold.[1713]

A new president, Rodrigo Duterte, took office in June 2016 pledging a hard line against criminals and the drug trade. Human rights groups subsequently reported a rise in the excessive use of force by government security forces.[1714]

In 2016, CEDAW expressed concern about increased gender-based violence in conflict-affected areas by members of the AFP and others. This included both killings and sexual abuse.[1715]

The Moro and communist insurgencies created significant impediments to education. Hundreds of thousands of people were displaced in areas affected by separatist violence, and clashes between armed groups led to the suspension of classes for thousands of students.[1716] In Lumad communities, government forces closed schools, which they accused of being run by the NPA, and harassed and intimidated teachers and students.[1717] In the 2013-2017 reporting period, GCPEA found an increase in all forms of attacks on education reported in the Philippines over the 2009-2013 timeframe covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Attacks on schools

The reported level of attacks on schools was higher from 2013 to 2017 than in the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*. This violence took the form of explosives planted at schools, arson, gun and grenade attacks, and bomb threats. During 2013 and 2016, schools were targeted for their use as polling stations. The UN noted with concern the high number of attacks on indigenous schools throughout the reporting period and observed that these attacks intensified after 2015. The UN verified 24 attacks on schools between December 1, 2012, and December 31, 2016.[1718] In 2017 alone, more than a dozen schools were reportedly damaged in the southern Philippines during fighting between the AFP and two IS-affiliated groups in Marawi city. [1719]

In 2013, the Children's Rehabilitation Center (CRC), a nonprofit NGO in the Philippines, reported 23 attacks on schools, while GCPEA found seven attacks reported by the UN and media sources.[1720] Some incidents found by GCPEA may have been the same as those documented by the CRC. These attacks occurred in the southern region of the country, particularly in the provinces of North Cotabato, Zamboanga del Norte, and Maguindanao. For example:

- BIFF fighters allegedly opened fire on a public school in North Cotabato province on April 5, 2013, according to media reports. The group stated that the attack was a response to the arrest and killing of one of its members.[1721]
- Media sources also reported that on May 17, 2013, an IED planted by unknown assailants at the Salung National High School in Zamboanga del Norte province damaged a classroom.[1722]
- Three attacks verified by the UN occurred in September 2013. They involved schools being burned and being destroyed by crossfire between the MNLF and the AFP in Zamboanga city.[1723]
- An arson attack destroyed a daycare facility in Montawal town, Maguindanao province, in November 2013. Local media reported that the followers of a defeated candidate for chairman of the *barangay* (village) set the fire and that authorities attributed the attack to the MILF.[1724]

In addition to the seven incidents described above, GCPEA identified eight media reports of attacks targeting schools because of their use as voting stations:

- Three attacks by unknown assailants reportedly targeted schools being used as polling stations for national government mid-term elections on May 13, 2013. Two involved grenades thrown at schools. In the third, unidentified perpetrators opened fire on a school, killing an election poll security guard.[1725]
- Five further incidents, which involved arson, explosive devices, and gunfire, targeted schools serving as polling centers for *barangay* official elections in October. For example, in two separate incidents on October 26, 2013, in Digos city, Davao del Sur province, unidentified assailants on motorcycles threw Molotov cocktails at schools. Both of the schools were reportedly damaged in the ensuing fires.[1726]

The CRC documented 64 attacks on schools in 2014.[1727] The UN verified five incidents of fighting between the armed forces and the BIFF and between the Philippines national police and the NPA that damaged schools over the course of the year.[1728] GCPEA found five reports of specific attacks that year reported by media and NGO sources, all occurring in the south of the country.[1729] It is unclear whether there was overlap among these different incident counts. Examples included:

- On March 18, 2014, a school run by the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines-Northern Mindanao was hit by gunfire during a rehearsal for the upcoming graduation ceremony, according to the Save Our Schools Network.[1730]

Philippine Army Scout Rangers crouch in a classroom during a mission to find members of armed extremist groups affiliated with 'IS' in Marawi city, Mindanao, on June 6, 2017. Civilians had mostly abandoned the city at the time.

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- SOS recorded three attacks in October 2014 in Surigao del Sur province, including an arson attack on a school in Kabulohan *barangay* on October 27, 2014, allegedly by the AFP.[1731]

SOS reported 84 attacks on 57 schools between January 2014 and September 2015. The group alleged that paramilitary and military forces were responsible for most of these incidents, which displaced more than 3,000 Lumad children.[1732] The UN verified 12 attacks during 2015. The military and paramilitary groups were responsible for 10 attacks (the Magahat 5, the Alamara 2, and the AFP 3), while the NPA and the BIFF were responsible for the other two.[1733] Media and NGO reports documented seven attacks on schools in 2015.[1734] It is possible that there was some overlap of incidents across the SOS, UN, and media totals, and it should be noted that SOS likely used a different definition of attacks on schools than the UN, and thus included more incidents of threats and harassment. Attacks on schools in 2015 included the following:

- Media sources reported two arson attacks on schools in 2015. The first took place in May in Parang town, Maguindanao province.[1735] The second took place in November in Sibagat municipality, Agusan del Sur province, and in Parang town, Maguindanao province.[1736]
- According to SOS, government forces fired indiscriminately at a Salungpungan Ta' Tanu Igkanugon Community Learning Center (STTICLC) on July 26, 2015, and at Tibucag Elementary School on July 26 and August 3, 2015, both in Talaingod, Davao del Norte province.[1737]
- Government soldiers reportedly destroyed school property and forced the closure of a Lumad school on October 23, 2015, also according to SOS. [1738]

In 2016 there were again reports of attacks on schools that were used as polling stations. Media reports collated by GCPEA indicated that 15 schools were attacked because of their use as polling stations between April 27 and May 11, 2016. Methods of attack included explosives, firearms, and arson.[1739] The UN verified ten attacks affecting twelve schools in 2016, of which two were attributed to the armed forces, one to the Bangsamoro Freedom Fighters, and seven were unknown.[1740] Attacks on schools in 2016 included the following:

- On April 27, 2016, grenades and antitank rockets were reportedly fired into six school buildings that were to be used as polling stations, according to news sources. No one was reported injured, and no group claimed responsibility for the attacks.[1741]
- On May 9, 2016, unidentified attackers set fire to polling centers at Dilausan Primary School in Tamparan town and Ragayan Elementary School in Poona Bayabao town, both in Lanao del Sur province. There were no injuries in the attacks.[1742]
- On May 11, 2016, unidentified attackers threw a grenade at a primary school in Mohammad Ajul in Basilan province, where votes were being counted. No one was reported injured in the attack.[1743]

Media reports indicated that schools in Marawi city were highly affected by armed conflict in 2017, after two groups affiliated with 'IS'—the Maute group and ASG—attempted to take control of the city and the AFP responded. Between May 23, 2017, and August 8, 2017, fighting between anti-government groups and government forces damaged at least 14 schools, according to the Philippines Department of Education.[1744] The UN was able to verify six of the cases as of September 2017.[1745]

The Philippine government and armed forces singled out indigenous community schools. In July 2017, President Duterte issued a public statement in which he threatened to bomb indigenous Lumad schools in Mindanao for allegedly teaching communism and encouraging rebellion. In the statement, the president also ended peace negotiations with the NPA. President Duterte later said that he was not encouraging harm to Lumad children, only to the school buildings.[1746] According to SOS, the AFP, the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU), an auxiliary force, and paramilitary forces were also responsible for physical damage to several indigenous schools that year. For example:

- SOS alleged that members of the 84th Infantry Battalion of the AFP and suspected paramilitary groups damaged one Lumad school each in Compostela Valley province between December 8, 2016, and January 3, 2017.[1747]
- Also according to SOS, a member of the CAFGU fired his gun three times at an STTICLC building in Talaingod, Davao Del Norte province, on June 20, 2017.[1748]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Teachers and other education personnel experienced a high number of individually targeted attacks related to education, including threats, kidnappings, and killings. These threats closed some schools and particularly affected Lumad communities. As with attacks on schools, reports of individually targeted attacks on students and educators appeared to increase from the period reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* when approximately 20 attacks of this type were found. Individually targeted attacks on students and educators also appeared to increase over the course of the current reporting period.

The UN verified 41 cases of teachers being threatened with violence and 12 school personnel being killed, injured, or abducted between December 1, 2012, and December 31, 2016.[1749] SOS, which had a broader definition of at-

tacks on students and educators, including threats, harassment, and intimidation, documented 71 incidents of attacks directly targeting learners and educators that affected 859 students and 142 education personnel. Most of these attacks were in the form of threats, harassment, and intimidation.[1750]

At least 13 cases of harassment, attempted and actual killing, and abduction targeted 18 students and 57 teachers and other education personnel in 2013, according to media and NGO reports compiled by GCPEA.[1751] Unidentified gunmen were responsible for the majority of these incidents. For example:

- On January 22, 2013, gunmen shot and kidnapped the principal of a madrassa, who was also a Muslim scholar, in Labuan, Zamboanga city, Zamboanga del Sur. He remained missing as of the end of August 2013. Human rights groups suspected that state security forces were responsible for the abduction.[1752]
- At least two killings occurred before the May 13 elections in Maguindanao, resulting in the deaths of a head teacher in Sultan Mastura town and the district education supervisor of General S. K. Pendatun town.[1753]
- Later in the year, unidentified gunmen ambushed, shot, and killed a school district deputy education supervisor in Talayan municipality on June 17, 2013.[1754]
- In Basilan, on August 26, 2013, unidentified gunmen shot at three teachers who were on their way home from school in Lamitan city. The attack killed two of the teachers and injured the third.[1755]

Information from NGO and media sources indicated that there were at least 15 incidents of attacks affecting approximately 14 students and 22 educators in 2014.[1756] This included actual and attempted killings and abductions, along with threats, harassment, and intimidation. Unidentified gunmen were responsible for most of the killings and abductions, while government forces or paramilitary groups were allegedly responsible for the threats, harassment, and intimidation. For example:

- On August 31, 2014, unidentified attackers shot and killed a district education supervisor and her husband while they were riding on their motorbike in Pikit town, North Cotabato province.[1757]
- According to local media sources, unknown gunmen were responsible for the attempted abduction of four teachers in Tagbak village, Sulu province, on March 10, 2014.[1758]
- The ASG was suspected of being responsible for the abduction of two married school administrators in Zamboanga del Sur province on January 27, 2018, and the group claimed responsibility for the abduction of a school principal in Libug village, Basilan province on March 31, 2014. All of those abducted were later released.[1759]
- SOS documented threats, harassment, and intimidation of students and teachers at indigenous community schools on March 19 and April 3 in Talaingod, Davao del Norte; on August 4 in Davao city; on October 16 in Tagum city, Davao del Norte; and on October 20, 2014, in Compostela, Compostela Valley province. Government forces were allegedly responsible for these violations, sometimes in coordination with paramilitary group members.[1760]

In 2015, sporadic killings and abductions of educators continued, and threats against educators appeared to escalate. The UN verified the killing of one school director, the maiming of one teacher, and threats against 40 teachers in 2015.[1761] According to SOS, paramilitary groups harassed groups of students and teachers in Lumad areas in Mindanao with increasing frequency.[1762] Media sources and SOS reported at least 31 incidents of intimidation, harassment, and threat directed at 289 students and 104 education personnel in 2015.[1763] The extent to which SOS reports overlapped with the UN-verified incidents was unclear. The targeted killings and abductions, and the incidents of threats, harassment, or intimidation, included the following:

- Human Rights Watch reported that on January 5, 2015, soldiers and members of the Alamara paramilitary group stopped a teacher in Talaingod on his way to school and told him they would kill him and "chop him up" if he continued on to school.[1764]
- A student at a Mindanao Interfaith Services Foundation (MISFI) Academy in Kapalong town, Davao del Norte province, reported to Human Rights Watch that soldiers and the Alamara harassed her and her classmates, accusing them of working with the NPA. She noted one incident in February 2015 when the Alamara fired guns in the air as she passed them.[1765]
- The UN reported that the Alamara group also threatened four teachers on their way to school in Davao del Norte province in February 2015. In March 2015, the group again threatened the teachers, this time in coordination with the AFP, and interrogated them about their alleged links to the NPA.[1766]
- In early March 2015, suspected ASG members kidnapped two teachers from Moalboal village in Zamboanga Sibugay province, holding one hostage until May 14, 2015, and the other until July 12, 2015, according to local media.[1767]
- A widely reported targeted assassination, which was documented by human rights groups and the UN, occurred on September 1, 2015, when the Magahat paramilitary group allegedly tortured and killed educator Emerito "Tatay Emok" Samarca, the executive director of the Alternative Learning Center for Agriculture and Development and a convener of the SOS Network in Surigao del Sur province.[1768] According to media reports, the Magahat stated that they killed Samarca because they did not approve of his ideology in educating students.[1769] The violent attack caused several thousand community members to flee to an evacuation camp in Tandag city.[1770]
- Some teachers reportedly experienced repeated harassment. For example, members of the Alamara allegedly threatened, harassed, and intimidated two STTICLC teachers on November 23, 2015. One of the two teachers was reportedly harassed a second time on December 19, 2015, along with a third teacher.[1771]

Similar trends continued in 2016, with sporadic cases of killing and abduction. Teachers and students from indigenous communities in the Mindanao area also reportedly faced a high level of harassment and intimidation from the military and paramilitary groups. SOS and media sources documented 31 incidents of threats, harassment, and intimidation affecting 243 students and 36 teachers in 2016.[1772] Unknown assailants were responsible for most cases of killing and abduction, and government and paramilitary forces were allegedly responsible for most cases of threats and harassment. Individually targeted attacks in 2016 included the following:

- Media sources documented an incident in which unidentified assailants opened fire on a daycare teacher at his home in Palma Gil, Davao del Norte province, on January 26, 2016. The teacher was unharmed in the attack. Sources attributed the incident to the NPA.[1773]
- According to SOS, a high school student at a MISFI Academy was harassed on February 14, 2016, and again on June 15, 2016, allegedly by members of the AFP's 68th battalion.[1774]
- According to media sources, on June 30, 2016, attackers suspected to be ASG members abducted a child in front of a school in Patikul district, Sulu province. The outcome of the kidnapping was unknown.[1775]
- Local civil society groups reported that, in October and November 2016, government officials harassed students and teachers at the Lumad School Diya Menuwa, run by the Center for Lumad Advocacy and Services in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat province, and distributed flyers that threatened to arrest educators.[1776]

These patterns of violence and harassment continued in 2017. From January through July 2017, SOS and media sources documented 22 cases of threats and harassment affecting 37 educators and 304 students in indigenous communities.[1777] There also was one instance of a teacher abduction, allegedly by members of the ASG. For example:

- A member of the Alamara paramilitary group harassed and intimidated three MISFI teachers in Davao city, Davao del Norte, during the first week of January 2017, according to SOS.[1778]

- SOS reported that the Bagani paramilitary group threatened, harassed, and intimidated 168 students and 9 teachers and education personnel at the Father Fausto Tentorio Memorial School in Magpet, North Cotabato province, on February 18, 2017.[1779]
- A female indigenous school teacher was threatened and harassed on eight occasions in Talaingod, Davao del Norte province, between August 17, 2015, and March 3, 2017. Her family was also harassed on April 22, 2016, according to SOS. According to the NGO, those responsible were unidentified but were suspected to be members of the state intelligence services.[1780]
- Local media reported an incident on March 11, 2017, in which gunmen suspected to be part of ASG abducted a public school teacher in Patikul town, Sulu, while he was on his way home.[1781]
- Media sources reported that an STTICLC teacher was shot three times, but not killed, in Talaingod, Davao del Norte, on June 20, 2017. The CAFGU was allegedly responsible for the attack. The teacher had reportedly been threatened previously by the CAFGU and was said to have sought but not received support from the Department of Education.[1782]

Military use of schools

Dozens of schools reportedly continued to be used for military purposes between 2013 and 2017, as they were in the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*. In the majority of cases, government armed forces allegedly used schools as bases or interrogation centers, or for lodging. Paramilitary groups were sometimes reported to use schools jointly with the AFP. In a few cases, non-state armed groups also reportedly used schools as fighting positions.

The UN reported that 31 schools were used for military purposes, the majority by Philippine security forces, between December 1, 2012, and December 31, 2016.[1783] Similar information provided to SOS indicated that schools were used for military purposes in 37 cases between 2013 and 2017.[1784] It is not clear how many of these cases overlapped with those verified by the UN. SOS alleged that members of the armed forces and armed groups threatened, harassed, and intimidated the teachers and students at the schools they were occupying, affecting a reported total of approximately 3,194 students and 103 teachers.[1785] Military use of schools appeared to become more common over the course of the reporting period.

In 2013 there were at least two cases of schools used by the AFP and one case of schools use by the BIFF:

- In July 2013, the UN verified an incident in which three boys from Maguindanao province were detained, interrogated, and abused by members of the AFP in a school. The army accused the boys, who were ages 16 and 17, of being members of the BIFF.[1786]
- In another case, international media reported that the AFP used a school as a base during a battle with armed separatist groups that took place in September 2013 in Zamboanga province. It was unclear how long the school served as an army base.[1787]
- The BIFF also used a school in North Cotabato province as a defensive position on September 23, 2013. According to local media and information verified by the UN, during their occupation the BIFF held approximately adults and children hostage and abducted nine teachers who tried to vacate the school.[1788]

There were again reports that AFP, along with paramilitary groups, used schools in 2014. Information from SOS indicated that there were 10 cases of military use between January and December 2014.[1789] The UN verified the use of six schools, which may have overlapped with those reported by SOS. [1790] Of the UN-verified cases, the AFP was responsible for five incidents that occurred during operations against the BIFF, and the BIFF was responsible for one incident. [1791] For example:

- On January 2, 2014, the BIFF used a school during fighting with the Philippine army and set fire to the school as members retreated, according to the UN.[1792]
- SOS reported that an STTICLC elementary school-kindergarten was used by 37 members of the 25th Infantry Battalion of the AFP in Magayan, Compostela Valley province, from October 3, 2013, through January 24, 2014. The military personnel based there allegedly threatened, harassed, and intimidated 130 students at the school.[1793]
- According to SOS, the 60th Infantry Division of the AFP used a school and the teachers' staff house in Sitio Km. 30 in Tailaingod, Davao del Norte province, as barracks from March 26 to March 30, 2014.
- In another incident reported by SOS, the army used the Salugpungan community school in Sitio Nasilaban in Tailaingod, Davao del Norte province, from April 1 to April 12, 2014.[1794]
- SOS also reported that in October 2014, the 68th Infantry Division of the army and the Alamara paramilitary group slept in a school in Sitio Laslasakan in Palma Gil village, Davao del Norte province. The group also looted the building and tampered with the teachers' materials.[1795]

The UN verified 10 cases of military use of schools in 2015. The AFP was responsible for more than half. In six cases they used the schools alone, and in three cases they used them jointly with paramilitary groups. The UN verified one case of a school used by the BIFF.[1796] SOS reported 11 incidents of military use of schools by the AFP and paramilitary groups that same year.[1797] The SOS-reported cases may have overlapped with those verified by the UN. The incidents reported included the following:

- According to SOS, more than 100 members of the Alamara, CAFGU, and 60th Infantry Battalion of the AFP used a MISFI Academy in Kapalong, Davao del Norte, as a base from February 6 to February 12, 2016, reportedly harassing and intimidating 144 students and 4 teachers.[1798]
- Human Rights Watch reported that the AFP and paramilitaries used schools in 2015, such as a Salugpungan school in Talaingod. Soldiers slept in the classrooms and teachers' quarters and harassed students, asking them about the NPA.[1799]
- The 67th Infantry Battalion of the AFP reportedly camped in Paglusnagan Primary School and the Yapasay Elementary School Annex, both in Cateel municipality, Davao Oriental province, from May to September 2015, which affected 23 students and 2 teachers, according to SOS.[1800]

Military use of schools decreased slightly in 2016, to eight cases verified by the UN. Of these, six were attributed to national security forces and two to the Maute group. Four of these schools were attacked while they were occupied.[1801] Local and international media and civil society groups reported 14 cases of school occupation in 2016.[1802] At least four cases involved encampment by AFP soldiers, according to SOS.[1803] Some cases of military use reported by the media and NGOs may have overlapped with those verified by the UN. Examples included the following:

- The *Philippine Daily Inquirer* reported that on June 1, 2016, evacuees from Barangay Palma Gil in Talaingod, Davao del Norte province, returned home but were unable to return to class because soldiers were still using the school.[1804]
- SOS reported that the 46th Infantry Battalion used a school in Compostela, Compostela Valley, on June 23, 2014, allegedly threatening and harassing a 12-year-old female student while encamped there.[1805]
- According to SOS, on November 10, 2016, eight soldiers used the grounds of a Salugpongan community school in Compostela Valley. The soldiers allegedly told the teachers they would remain in the school until the new year in order to observe the community.[1806]
- Members of an 'IS'-affiliated group allegedly used a high school in Butig municipality, Lanao del Sur province, in late November 2016, according to media reports, which stated that the school was used during a battle with Philippine troops.[1807]
- On December 13, 2016, the *Northern Dispatch Weekly* wrote that the 50th Infantry Battalion of the AFP was staying in Western Uma Elementary School in Kalinga province in the northern part of the country.[1808]

GCPEA compiled information on 11 cases of military use of schools and universities during 2017 from SOS reports and media sources.[1809] As during the previous years, the majority of these cases took place in indigenous communities in the southern Philippines, with responsibility most commonly attributed to the AFP and paramilitary groups. For example:

- SOS documented seven cases in Talaingod, Davao del Norte province, between February and June 2017.[1810]
- Local media reported in January 2017 that authorities discovered two bombs in a house on Mindanao State University grounds in Marawi city, Lanao del Sur province. Security forces believed that the house was being used by the Maute group.[1811]
- On June 21, 2017, armed fighters alleged to be affiliated with the BIFF attacked Pigcawayan town in North Cotabato province, seizing the Malagakit Elementary School and holding several students hostage for approximately 12 hours. None of the students was reported harmed in the incident.[1812]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

UN and media sources indicated that armed groups may have used educational institutions to indoctrinate and recruit children during the reporting period.[1813] In September 2017, *Reuters* reported that foreign fighters, including some affiliated with 'IS', were allegedly recruiting students from schools, madrassas, and daycare centers.[1814] The UN verified two such cases of child recruitment:

- The ASG recruited a 14-year-old boy from a school in 2013. No additional details about this incident were reported.[1815]
- The ASG also recruited three boys ages 14 and 15 from the same school in 2014, and threatened the school director after he encouraged his students not to join the group. The locations of these incidents were not reported.[1816]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school

There was one documented attack on education in the form of sexual violence during the reporting period. Local media reported that on June 20, 2016, gunmen suspected to be ASG members abducted a female teacher at Kanlagay Elementary School in Kalingalan Caluang, Sulu province, later forcing her to marry one of her abductors.[1817]

Attacks on higher education

Research for the current reporting period identified sporadic attacks on higher education. In 2013 and 2014, these attacks were slightly more common than was documented for the years covered in *Education under Attack 2014,* with between seven and ten incidents per year. Rates of reported attacks on higher education appeared to drop in 2015 and later years to two or three per year.

These incidents included bombs and bomb threats directed at universities, arson attacks on university campuses, and abductions and targeted killings of university personnel. As with other violations against education in the Philippines, the majority of the attacks occurred in Mindanao. However, several occurred in other areas, including Metro Manila, and Sorsogon and Pampanga provinces.

In 2013, media sources documented seven attacks on higher education, including three on universities and four on personnel associated with higher education.[1818] This represented a significant increase from the previous year, when only one attack was reported. For example:

- An education staff member in Western Mindanao State University's Islamic Studies department in Sulu province was reportedly abducted by unidentified assailants on June 22, 2013, and held until July 31, 2013. Although no group claimed responsibility for the attack, media sources suspected that the ASG was responsible.[1819]
- Mortar shells reportedly struck the gymnasium of Zamboanga University on September 23, 2013, damaging the building but not harming anyone. Media sources suspected that non-state armed actors fired the rounds.[1820]

During 2014, media sources reported ten attacks on higher education, including six attacks on institutions and four on personnel.[1821] These attacks were similar to those that occurred during the previous year. For example:

- On February 26, 2014, unknown actors allegedly set fire to the University of Southern Mindanao administration building in Kabacan town, North Cotabato province, burning parts of it down. A grenade had exploded on the campus previously. The reasons for the attacks were unknown.[1822]
- On August 20, 2014, an explosive device detonated inside the car of a Mindanao State University professor in Cotabato city, Maguindanao province. The professor was unharmed. Although no group took credit for the blast, media sources suspected that the ASG was involved.[1823]
- Local media reported that Rendell Ryan Edpan Cagula, a student activist at the University of the Philippines-Mindanao, was found shot dead on November 4, 2014. The AFP allegedly mistook him for a member of the NPA.[1824]

In 2015, GCPEA identified two reports of attacks on higher education, down from ten the previous year. Media sources documented one explosion affecting an institution of higher education in the north, and one attack on higher education personnel in the south, possibly indicating a decrease in violence affecting higher education in the region:

- On February 24, 2017, there was an explosion in the parking lot of the AMA Computer Learning Center campus in Angeles city, Pampanga province.[1825]
- On November 21, 2015, unidentified gunmen shot and injured a college official in North Cotabato province.[1826]

In 2016 the level of attacks on higher education stayed constant, as bomb threats targeted three universities, including one actual explosion, according to local media sources:

- On March 28, 2016, students and personnel at the Ateneo de Manila University in Metro Manila were evacuated due to a bomb threat.[1827]
- On September 6, 2016, the University of Southeastern Philippines campuses in Obrero in Metro Manila and Mintal in Davao city, Davao del Sur province, both received bomb threats. The next day, September 7, St. John Paul II College was also threatened.[1828]
- Media sources reported that on April 4, 2016, an explosive device detonated at Cotabato City State Polytechnic College in Maguindanao, injuring three students. It was not clear who was responsible for the attack.[1829]

There were at least two reported attacks that affected higher education in 2017, including one on education personnel in the north and one in which a college's infrastructure was caught in the crossfire of fighting in the south:

- On January 7, 2017, unknown assailants on a motorcycle allegedly shot and killed an instructor from the University of Northern Philippines in Vigan city while he was driving his motorcycle along the national highway of San Ramon village.[1830]
- On May 23, 2017, Dansalan College was reportedly set on fire during government clashes with the Maute group as they fought over Marawi city, Lanao del Sur province.[1831]

SOMALIA

Combined, actions by non-state armed groups and local clan conflicts led to more than 600 attacks on education, mostly in central and southern Somalia. This included attacks on schools, targeted killings, abductions, and abuse of students and educators, and military use of schools. At least 15 incidents affected higher education, mostly targeted killings of students and professors, and bombing of universities.

Context

By 2017, civil conflict had wracked Somalia for more than two decades. In 2012, Somali government troops, an allied non-state armed group, Ethiopian forces, and African Union forces regained control over parts of the country, including the capital city of Mogadishu, having taken it back from the Islamic Courts Union, a coalition of Sharia courts that assumed authority in 2006.[1832]

However, Somalia faced continued insecurity and conflict between government forces and an al Qaeda-affiliated extremist group, the Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahedeen, known as al-Shabaab, which splintered off from the former Shariah coalition. Al-Shabaab aimed to build an Islamic state by using violence against the Somali government, its institutions, and other groups of people perceived to be affiliated with the government, including schools, foreigners, members of the Somali diaspora, and Western countries and organizations.[1833] In 2017, a newly elected government intensified military operations against al-Shabaab.[1834]

Insecurity due to armed conflict negatively affected education across the country. Somalia's enrollment rates were some of the lowest in the world and were even lower in the most insecure areas. Across southern and central Somalia, only an estimated 30 percent of school-aged children had access to learning opportunities, and this number was only 17 percent in the areas most affected by conflict, including IDP settlements and rural areas.[1835] Moreover, armed conflict, along with drought and famine, continued to displace families across Somalia. According to OCHA, 1,029,000 people were displaced as of October 2017.[1836]

Boys and girls were reportedly subject to different risks. The education of boys was reportedly prioritized over that of girls, which created significant gender disparities in education.[1837] As of September 2016, only 43 percent of Somali children enrolled in school were girls, due to factors including early marriage, a limited number of female teachers (only 12 percent at the primary level), and a lack of separate toilet facilities for girls in the schools.[1838] Most girls reportedly left school before grade five.[1839] Boys were more at risk of forced recruitment.[1840] During the first half of 2016, armed forces and groups reportedly forcefully recruited 962 boys and 410 girls.[1841]

The majority of attacks on education occurred in central and southern Somalia, but sporadic incidents were also reported in Puntland and Somaliland. A rapid assessment conducted in 2016 by the Somalia Education Cluster and funded by UNICEF in central and southern Somalia found that there were 682 attacks and threats against education. Many of the threats related to the presence of al-Shabaab, as well as to clan and community conflicts.[1842] The same assessment noted that that Quranic school students, personnel, and institutions were most frequently attacked (369 incidents), followed by primary schools (169 incidents). The study noted that Quranic institutions may have been attacked most frequently because of their greater numbers.[1843] According to the study, 30 percent of attacks against education occurred in South West state, 27 percent in Hirshabelle state, 26 percent in Jubaland state, and 17 percent in Galmudug state.[1844] It should be noted that these numbers may include some incidents that were not attacks on education as defined by GCPEA, such as community grievances with school management, since the data were not disaggregated.

Somalia endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in November 2015.

Attacks on schools

Between 2013 and 2017, al-Shabaab, the Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF), and other armed groups attacked more than 100 schools. While the SNAF was responsible for the majority of attacks on schools during 2013, al-Shabaab was responsible for most attacks in subsequent years. A UN report that began prior to the current reporting period verified 195 attacks on schools between 2012 and mid-2016. Of these, al-Shabaab was responsible for more than half (112) and the SNAF was responsible for approximately 30 percent (60). Unknown armed elements, the African Union Mission in Somalia, Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a (ASWJ), Galmudug Interim Administration forces, and the Kenyan Defense Forces were also responsible for a smaller number of attacks on schools.[1845] Rates of documented attacks on schools declined during the 2009-2013 reporting period for *Education under Attack 2014* and through 2014, before rising again during 2015 and 2016.[1846]

Civilians look through the window of a classroom damaged by mortar fire in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, on April 18, 2017.

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The UN verified 54 attacks on schools in Somalia in 2013.[1847] According to the UN, the SNAF was responsible for the majority of attacks on both schools and hospitals that year.[1848] It was not clear where the majority of these attacks took place, but media sources reported two examples of attacks on schools, both in central and southern Somalia:

- In January 2013, AMISOM troops were reported to have mistakenly fired on a religious school in a village near Mogadishu, killing five children and two adults.[1849]

- Local media reported that in March 2013, two children died and three more were injured when a student accidentally triggered an IED that had been planted at a Quranic school in the Galgadud region, Galmudug state.[1850]

The UN verified 17 attacks on schools in 2014. In contrast to the previous year, al-Shabaab was responsible for the majority of these incidents (eight), the Somali National Army and allied non-state armed groups perpetrated six, and unidentified assailants were responsible for three.[1851] Attacks on schools included collateral damage caused by shelling, as well as intentional damage caused by vandalism. Again, the reports did not make clear where most of the attacks occurred, but there were sporadic reports of attacks on schools in central and southern Somalia. For example:

- Media sources reported that on May 1, 2014, shells fired by unknown assailants into Mogadishu city hit a Quranic school, as well as civilian homes. At least two people were killed and twelve wounded, although it was not clear whether any of them were teachers or students at the school.[1852]
- AMISOM forces destroyed a madrassa in Ceel Garas town, Galmudug state, on October 2, 2014, while targeting al-Shabaab, according to information verified by the UN.[1853]
- AMISOM and the UN reported that al-Shabaab was responsible for vandalizing and raiding schools in at least two cases: on March 24, 2014, in Hudur town, Western Bakool region, and on October 27, 2014, in Aadan Yabaal district, Middle Shabelle region, Hirshabelle state.[1854]

In 2015, the UN documented at least 24 attacks on schools. Al-Shabaab was responsible for 15 of these attacks, the SNAF and allies were responsible for four, clan armed groups and unidentified non-state armed groups were each responsible for two, and unidentified air forces were responsible for one.[1855] Individual attacks continued to be concentrated in central and southern Somalia. For example:

- At the beginning of 2015, unidentified armed men allegedly threw grenades into one primary and one secondary school in Galkayo, Mudug region, Galmudug state, killing at least four teachers and injuring dozens, according to a media report.[1856]
- The UN Secretary-General reported that Kenyan forces hit a Quranic school during air strikes against Jungal village in Baardheere district, Gedo region, Jubaland state, on July 21, 2015. The attack killed six boys and injured twelve others.[1857]

During the first half of 2016, the UN signaled a dramatic increase over the previous year in the number of reported attacks on schools (33).[1858] The UN verified 46 attacks on schools in over the full course of the year. As in previous years, al-Shabaab was the primary actor responsible for these attacks (31), followed by the Somalia National Army (9), ASWJ (2), clan militias (2), and AMISOM (1).[1859]

The Somalia Education Cluster's rapid assessment conducted in 2016 found that most attacks and threats against primary schools in central and southern Somalia occurred in Jubaland state (eight), with incidents also documented in Hirshabelle state (five) and South West state (one). Non-state actors were responsible for most of these attacks.[1860] There also were four attacks on schools in South West state (two Quranic, one secondary, and one technical).[1861] Media sources and the Somalia Education Cluster also described several attacks in these areas, and in Banadir region where Mogadishu is located, which is also in central and southern Somalia. It was not clear whether there was any overlap between the incidents included in the rapid assessment and those described by other sources. Reports of incidents included the following:

- The UN reported that al-Shabaab mortar shells destroyed a madrassa in Caga Dhiig village, Banadir state, on February 25, 2016, killing three boys and injuring two other boys and a girl.[1862]
- Media sources recorded an incident on July 21, 2016, claiming that unidentified assailants set fire to multiple schools near Cadale, Middle Shabelle region, Hirshabelle state.[1863]
- According to media sources, on August 28, 2016, a vehicle filled with explosives was reportedly discovered in front of Zaawo Taako Primary School in the Xamar Weyne neighborhood of Mogadishu. Security forces defused the explosives.[1864]
- According to the Somalia Education Cluster, at least four schools were damaged in Gaalkayo town, Mudug region, Galmudug state, at the end of 2016 during a period of intensified violence between non-state armed groups.[1865]

An unknown number of educational institutions were damaged or destroyed by security forces or armed groups in 2017. These included:

- On April 18, 2017, unidentified opposition forces fired mortar shells that landed on a primary school in Mogadishu, Banadir region. Reports indicated that between one and four students were killed, and that seven or eight other civilians were injured.[1866]
- According to a report by the Norwegian Refugee Council in support of the Housing, Land, and Property Sub Cluster and the Protection Cluster in Somalia, in December 2017, 25 learning facilities, 10 mainstream school, and 15 Quranic learning centers were demolished in the context of mass evictions in Mogadishu. In some cases, armed individuals wearing Somali security agency uniforms were responsible for the demolitions.[1867]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Members of non-state armed groups and unknown assailants threatened, kidnapped, detained, and killed teachers, and shot, abducted, and abused students in more than 100 cases during the 2013-2017 reporting period. Security forces were responsible for a smaller number of violations. The majority of such cases occurred in the southern and central states of Somalia, but sporadic cases were also reported in Puntland. The reporting period did not include any incidents on the large scale of those documented in *Education under Attack 2014,* such as one in October 2011 at the Ministry of Education that killed more than 100 people, many of them students and their parents.[1868]

In 2013, AMISOM's daily media monitoring report identified several cases of al-Shabaab abducting more than 100 Quranic school teachers in central and southern Somalia, in most cases for refusing to comply with the group's demands:[1869]

- At the beginning of January 2013, the group reportedly abducted more than 100 Quranic teachers in Eldheer town, Galgadud region, Galmudug state, for rejecting their demand to recruit fighters. It was not clear whether al-Shabaab demanded that the recruitment occur at schools.[1870]
- In February 2013, al-Shabaab reportedly detained Quranic teachers from Halgan town, Hiran region, Hirshabelle state, after they refused to participate in a seminar the group had ordered them to attend.[1871] The group also kidnapped another Quranic teacher on January 17, 2013, in Lower Juba region.[1872]

In 2014, media reports, including those collated by AMISOM, indicated that unknown attackers and non-state armed groups shot and killed, detained and abducted approximately 10 teachers and students. The majority of these attacks occurred in southern and central Somalia, but one teacher was also attacked in Puntland state.[1873] Reported incidents included the following:

- Unidentified assailants allegedly shot and killed two students in Kismayo, Lower Juba region, Jubaland state, on April 14, 2014.[1874]
- On October 26, 2014, assailants shot and killed two teachers in Mogadishu. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack.[1875]
- Two female teachers who worked in a kindergarten were shot and killed on their way to work on November 2, 2014, in Dharkenley district, Mogadishu, also by unknown attackers.[1876]

- Al-Shabaab beheaded a Quranic teacher in Qardho, Bari region, Puntland state, on December 12, 2014, leaving his body near his hometown.[1877]
- The UN documented an incident in which al-Shabaab detained two teachers for refusing to instruct their students to participate in religious classes. The date of the incident was unspecified.[1878]

In 2015, media sources documented sporadic reports of attacks targeting education personnel. Unknown attackers, members of al-Shabaab, state police, and international forces were all implicated in the attacks, most of which occurred in southern and central Somalia. One attack also took place in Puntland.[1879] For example:

- On January 2, 2015, a bomb reportedly targeted a bus in Mudug region, Galmudug state, killing a security guard and wounding 10 other people, including at least 6 Kenyan teachers.[1880]
- On April 14, 2015, members of al-Shabaab allegedly detonated two bombs outside the Somali Ministry of Education, and gunmen then stormed the building.[1881] At least 12 people reportedly were killed, including 7 attackers, and at least 15 people were injured as a result of the attack. It was not clear how many of those killed were education personnel.[1882]
- On July 12, 2015, Kenyan air strikes allegedly killed five children while they were on their way to study at a religious school.[1883]
- On October 14, 2015, police entered a school in Bossaso Port, Puntland, to arrest the headmaster and an unknown number of students. When students protested, the police allegedly fired live bullets.[1884]
- In December 2015, two gunmen went to the house of the headmaster of Al Cayn Primary School, where they shot and killed him. The reasons for the shooting were unclear, but he reportedly had argued with local authorities over school management and had received threats from a non-state armed group warning him to stop working, which he did not.[1885]

According to the Education Cluster's rapid assessment in 2016, in central and southern Somalia, there were 14 attacks on education personnel, including twelve threats and two unspecified attacks, as well as 12 attacks targeting school children, including seven threats, two abductions, and three cases of unspecified abuse targeting school children in central and southern Somalia. The majority of these cases took place in Jubaland and South West states.[1886] In addition to these violations, there were media reports of one attack on teachers that occurred in Mogadishu. On March 30, 2016, at least two foreign teachers at a Somali primary school, their driver, a translator, and a security guard were reportedly killed in a drive-by shooting of their school bus by unknown gunmen in Mogadishu. Five students were injured in the attack.[1887]

In 2017, al-Shabaab posted an online video in which the group's spokesperson threatened to harm teachers and parents who continued to send their children to Western-style schools.[1888] There also were also two attacks, including one targeting a Ministry of Education official and including one attack affecting school children.

- On April 10, 2017, a Ministry of Education officer reportedly died after a bomb planted in his car exploded in Hamarweyne district, Mogadishu.[1889]
- On October 14, 2017 a large truck bomb detonated in Mogadishu, killing more than 300 people and injured hundreds, according to the *Guardian*.[1890] Among those killed were 15 primary school children who were on a school bus at the time of the blast.[1891]

Military use of schools and universities

The Somalia Education Cluster reported in 2016 that it was working with the SNAF to address military occupation of schools.[1892] Although the Education Cluster noted that military use of schools was not a significant problem, the SNAF, al-Shabaab, and AMISOM were all reported to have used schools and universities for military purposes during the reporting period. Rates of military use were approximately the same as those reported in 2011 and 2012 by *Education under Attack 2014,* with between two and five institutions used each year.

Somali government forces and African Union troops were reported as having used two universities as military bases throughout the reporting period. For example:

- Media sources reported that Somali government forces and AMISOM established a military base at Kismayo University in September 2012. Several attacks reportedly targeted the university during the military troops' presence there, including the following:
  - On May 2, 2013, a woman carrying explosives attempted to attack the university, but she was arrested before succeeding.[1893]
  - On May 9, 2013, unknown attackers hit the university with artillery fire. At least three people were killed.[1894]
  - On August 22, 2015, assailants believed to be part of al-Shabaab exploded a vehicle at the military base on the campus of Kismayo University. The explosion killed at least 12 people and wounded more than 20.[1895]
  - In February 2016, unknown perpetrators launched mortar shells that hit the university.[1896]
- AMISOM forces used the Somali National University as a base throughout the reporting period, officially handing it back to the government in July 2017, after 10 years.[1897] al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for detonating two grenades near the university campus on August 4, 2013, while the African Union forces were still occupying it.[1898]

There were also sporadic cases of schools used for military purposes throughout the reporting period. No instances were documented in 2013, but there were at least four verified and one unverified cases of schools used for military purposes in 2014, three by the SNAF, one by al-Shabaab, and one by AMISOM troops (unverified).[1899] At least three schools were reportedly used in 2015.[1900] Cases reported by the UN or media sources included the following:

- State security forces reportedly used a secondary school to interrogate more than 45 people who were arrested in Afgoye district, Lower Shabelle region, South West state, in September 2014.[1901]
- The army used one school in the Lower Shabelle region, South West state, during 2015. The army vacated the school in response to UN advocacy.[1902]
- UN personnel verified that Somali forces also used two schools in in Diinsoor town, Bay region, South West state, in November 2015. The army was still using one of the schools at the end of 2016.[1903]

In 2016, the SNAF and AMISOM reportedly continued to use schools. This occurred most prominently in South West state but was also reported to occur in other areas in central and southern Somalia. Somalia's 2012-2016 Education Sector Analysis reported that a rapid baseline survey conducted in 2016 found that the military was occupying seven primary schools and one secondary school, including three primary schools and one secondary school in South West state, two primary schools in Jubaland state, one primary school in Hirshabelle state, and one primary school in Galmudug state.[1904] Other sources also reported military use of schools that year, but it was not clear whether these reports overlapped with those documented in the Education Sector Analysis. For example:

- After al-Shabaab attacked their base, AMISOM forces reportedly occupied a secondary school in Gedo region, Jubaland state, for six days in January 2016.[1905]
- In May 2016, a media report collected by AMISOM indicated that the Somali Ministry of Defense had ordered the SNAF to vacate one school in Afgoye district, Lower Shabelle region, South West state, after the troops had occupied the school for four years.[1906] It was not clear whether this was the same school where the army interrogated people in September 2014.

At the time of writing, the only information available on military use of schools and universities was the handing over of Somali National Univeristy from AMISOM to the Somali government.[1907]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

Throughout the 2013-2017 reporting period, AMISOM, the UN, and other observers repeatedly reported that al-Shabaab recruited children from schools and madrassas, although the exact number of children recruited continued to be difficult to determine, as was the case from 2009 to 2013. There were reports that al-Shabaab used education as a tool for recruitment, establishing schools and madrassas to recruit child fighters. Al-Shabaab allegedly gave lectures and distributed booklets supporting its ideology, and the group forced children to attend madrassas they operated in order to train them as soldiers. It was also noted that the group detained and abducted teachers, elders, and imams who did not comply with turning children over to the group. In 2017, al-Shabaab reportedly introduced a new primary and secondary school curriculum, which excluded such elements as English-language education and replaced it with Arabic, and was seeking to institute the new curriculum widely, according to a media source. [1908]

Education was also reportedly promised in return for participation in fighting. A March 2016 report by AMISOM stated that al-Shabaab members frequently recruited or forcibly abducted children as young as 10 years old from madrassas, promising them a better education and access to a more prosperous life in return for their participation in fighting. The report noted that the group used some children as suicide bombers.[1909]

While *Education under Attack 2014* indicated that girls were recruited as soldiers' wives between 2009 and 2012, there were no such cases documented during the period covered in the current report.

Incidents in which children were abducted and forcibly recruited included the following:

- The UN documented al-Shabaab's recruitment of six boys, some as young as twelve years old, from a Quranic school in the city of Baidoa, Bay region, South West state, on January 24, 2013.[1910]
- The same report documented the recruitment of 34 boys during four of the attacks on schools that al-Shabaab and other groups carried out in 2013.[1911]
- A media report alleged that al-Shabaab abducted hundreds of children in El Bur town, Galgadud region, Galmudug state, in June 2013, including from Quranic schools.[1912] It was not clear how many of these children were boys or girls.
- On February 16, 2014, al-Shabaab recruited four boys from a school in Waajid district, Bakool region, after threatening to kill the teachers if they did not join the group.[1913]
- The UN documented the abduction of approximately 150 children from madrassas in the Bay region, South West state, by al-Shabaab for recruitment purposes in December 2015. Of the twenty-six of cases that were verified, all were boys.[1914]
- On April 19, 2016, al-Shabaab reportedly abducted at least 10 students from their school in Harardheere district, Mudug region, Galmudug state, according to a media report.[1915]
- Human Rights Watch documented an intensified child recruitment campaign by al-Shabaab beginning in mid-2017. For example, the group forcibly abducted at least 50 boys and girls from two schools in Burhakaba, Bay region, in September 2017. Witnesses who spoke to Human Rights Watch reported that the children were taken to Bulo Fulay, a village with several religious schools and a training facility. Al-Shabaab fighters reportedly returned to another school in Burhakaba two weeks later, where they threatened and beat a teacher and demanded that more children be handed over. Human Rights Watch pointed out interviewees' concerns and al-Shabaab's history with child combatants, but noted that there was no clear evidence that the children were abducted for fighting purposes.[1916]

Children who were recruited by armed groups sometimes were later arrested or fled. For example:

- During a battle in Puntland in April 2016, Somali security officials reported that they arrested around 100 boys as young as 14 years old, dozens of whom al-Shabaab had abducted from their schools.[1917] Of those children, 28 were sentenced in military court to between 10 and 20 years in prison; 26 were being held in prison at the beginning of 2017, after having been to a rehabilitation center in Mogadishu; and 9 were initially sentenced to death before having their sentences commuted to 20 years.[1918]
- In August 2017, *Voice of America* reported that children fleeing areas of central Somalia controlled by al-Shabaab were escaping recruitment. According to the district commissioner of Adale town, Middle Shabelle region, al-Shabaab had been abducting children from local schools to reinforce their numbers.[1919]

Attacks on higher education

Higher education institutions and personnel continued to be targeted sporadically in the current reporting period, as was reported in *Education under Attack 2014*. GCPEA found media reports of 16 incidents that affected approximately 32 people. These attacks were concentrated in Mogadishu, with 12 taking place in the capital city. There were also reports of attacks against higher education in other areas of southern and central Somalia, including Galmudug state and South West state, as well as one incident in Somaliland. The attacks that occurred in the south and center of the country included gunmen attacking university personnel and explosions on university campuses, while the attack in Somaliland occurred in the context of a student protest.

There were three reported attacks on higher education in 2013, according to local media sources:

- On August 17, 2013, unknown attackers reportedly kidnapped five students who were on their way to study at Mogadishu University.[1920]
- On November 7, 2013, two unidentified assailants shot and killed Mahmud Kolow, a university professor in the Lower Shebelle region, South West state.[1921]
- On December 6, 2013, a female lecturer from Uganda who was working at the University of Somalia was reportedly shot and killed by unknown perpetrators on her way home from the campus in Mogadishu.[1922]

Higher education personnel and infrastructure were reportedly targeted in six cases throughout 2014, according to media sources. These included five by unidentified attackers and one by Somali police:

- On January 11, 2014, gunmen shot and killed a female university employee in Mogadishu.[1923]
- On April 14, 2014, Somali police arrested dozens of students who were peacefully protesting against a tuition fee increase at Hargeisa University, Somaliland. Police also fired live bullets into the air to disperse the crowd, injuring one student.[1924]
- A blast struck the campus of the National University of Somalia in Mogadishu on April 21, 2014, leading three students to jump from the walls and injure themselves.[1925]
- In May 2014, unknown gunmen shot and killed a Kenyan teacher working at a college in Galkayo town, Mudug region, Galmudug state.[1926]
- Also in May, a university lecturer working at Horseed International University, Mogadishu, was targeted by a bomb planted in his car. The attack injured one university student.[1927]
- On December 10, 2014, assailants opened fire on the vehicle of the acting chancellor of Mogadishu's Somali Institute of Management and Administration Development (SIMAD), who was killed in the attack.[1928]

In 2015 there were at least four reported attacks targeting higher education, including a deadly attack on the Ministry of Higher Education, according to media sources. For example:

- On January 7, 2015, a car bomb exploded in Mogadishu, critically injuring a lecturer at SIMAD. The assailants were not identified.[1929]

- On April 14, 2015, al-Shabaab targeted Somalia's Ministry of Higher Education, blasting the entrance and then storming the building. They killed at least 15 and wounded at least 20, including civilians and the attackers.[1930]
- Three months later, on August 11, 2015, an explosive device planted by al-Shabaab at the gate to Samad University in Mogadishu injured two people.[1931]
- On August 12, 2015, leaflets bearing al-Shabaab's logo were reportedly distributed in Mogadishu, warning residents to stay away from Samad University, located in the city.[1932]

In 2016 at least two incidents of attacks on higher education were reported by media sources:

- Professor Abdiweli Badi Mohamed was injured by an explosive device attached to his vehicle in Mogadishu. Sources interviewed by the media believed that al-Shabaab was responsible, but it was not clear why the attack was carried out.[1933]
- Samad University in Mogadishu was reportedly affected by violence for a second time on November 29, 2016, this time by Somali forces. AMISOM's *Daily Monitoring Report* indicated that security forces had entered the university during evening classes, fired bullets into the air, and confiscated several students' cell phones.[1934]

At the time of writing, there had been no reported attacks on higher education in 2017.

SOUTH SUDAN

Attacks on education occurred in South Sudan throughout the reporting period, damaging schools and killing and injuring students and teachers. More than 150 schools were used for military purposes and hundreds of children were abducted from their classrooms. Conflict-related violence destroyed at least 800 schools.

Context

Following a protracted civil war, South Sudan declared independence from Sudan in July 2011.[1935] At the end of 2013, a new civil war erupted in South Sudan over a power struggle between President Salva Kiir, a member of the majority Dinka ethnic group, and his former vice president, Riek Machar, a member of the Nuer ethnic group, who was dismissed by Kiir.[1936]

Warring parties included the national armed forces, known as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA); the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO), which fought against the SPLA; Sudanese rebels who fought at various times alongside the SPLA; and various opposition groups that formed since the war started.[1937] A peace agreement, signed in August 2015, did not prevent renewed conflict, and a follow-up ceasefire in December 2017 did not stop fighting or abuses.[1938]

Violence intensified during the second half of 2016, with the UN warning that the conflict risked becoming a genocide.[1939] In its first three years, the armed conflict was most intensely concentrated in the northeastern states of Upper Nile, Jonglei, and Unity—three of the ten states that form the Greater Upper Nile region.[1940] However, in late 2015 the violence spread to the Greater Equatoria region in the south of the country and to Bahr el Ghazal region, in the west.[1941]

At the time of writing, tens of thousands of people were killed in the fighting and millions fled their homes between the beginning of the conflict in late 2013 and May 2016.[1942] The violence had a particularly damaging impact on children. UNICEF reported that 2.4 million South Sudanese children had been forced to flee their homes as of December 2017.[1943] Over 2,300 children had been killed or maimed, and approximately 19,000 had been recruited into armed groups.[1944] Sexual and gender-based violence also occurred, and government forces and militias used rape as a weapon of war and ethnic cleansing, primarily against women and girls.[1945] Between December 2013 and October 2017, UNICEF reported that more than 1,200 children experienced sexual violence. Ninety-nine percent of those affected were girls.[1946]

In December 2017, UNICEF reported that around 2 million children in South Sudan were out of school, representing 72 percent of the country's school-age population.[1947] This was the largest percentage of any nation's children out of school at the time.[1948] Schools across the country were frequently closed due to fighting and the threat of violence, and hundreds of schools and other civilian assets were looted and destroyed.[1949] Between the beginning of the conflict in December 2013 and October 2017, 293 incidents of attacks on schools or protected persons or of military use of schools were reported to the South Sudan CTFMR. These incidents cumulatively affected more than 90,000 children.[1950] Plan International reported that parents kept their girls home from school to do housework, with conflict and famine adding fuel to their decisions.[1951] GCPEA found instances of rape occurring in the educational context, as described in the section on sexual violence below.

South Sudan endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in June 2015.

Attacks on schools

According to UNICEF, between the beginning of the conflict in late 2013 and January 2016, violence destroyed more than 800 schools.[1952] In 2017, the Education Cluster reported that 31 percent of all schools in South Sudan had suffered some form of attack by armed forces or non-state armed groups between December 2013 and the end of 2016, including military use and threats targeting students and teachers. The Greater Upper Nile region, where 63 percent of schools experienced attacks during that period, was most heavily affected.[1953]

These reported numbers represented a dramatic increase over the 100 attacks on schools found during the 2009-2013 reporting period. This increase could be due to more systematic data collection after 2013, the intensification of the conflict in late 2013, or some combination of the two.

Despite the large cumulative number of attacks on schools, annual reports remained anecdotal for much of the reporting period. In 2013, there were reports that at least six schools were looted or destroyed. In some cases, classes were suspended as a result. The six cases were:

- Witnesses reported to Human Rights Watch that soldiers and unknown assailants looted three schools in Pibor town between April and May 2013, destroying books and cupboards and stealing tables and chairs.[1954]
- UNICEF reported that land mines found behind Darussalam school in Maban refugee camp in Upper Nile state forced the suspension of alternative learning activities in its Child Friendly Spaces program in March 2013.[1955]
- According to Human Rights Watch, soldiers destroyed a school near Labrab village in April 2013.[1956]
- Human Rights Watch also reported that, during the capture of Boma town by the SSDM in May 2013, unknown assailants looted and destroyed a school and part of a teacher-training center, both supported by a local NGO.[1957]

In 2014, during the first full year of the conflict, the UN reported but was unable to verify seven attacks on schools.[1958] Amnesty International reported that witnesses described an incident in March 2014 in which the White Army, a Nuer non-state armed group, looted school materials during an attack in Duk county. [1959]

In 2015, attacks on education appeared to particularly affect Unity state because of fighting between the SPLA and allied forces and the SPLA-IO in April and May. A UN report documented nine attacks on schools, including looting, in May 2015 in Unity state alone.[1960] According to Human Rights Watch, two containers of school textbooks were opened, and their contents ruined during the fighting in Unity state.[1961] There were also sporadic reports of attacks on schools elsewhere in South Sudan. For example:

- Local media reported that on April 8, 2015, warplanes coming from the direction of Sudan dropped bombs in Northern Bahr el Ghazal state, some of which landed on one school.[1962]
- The Education Cluster documented the looting and damage of at least two primary schools in two areas of Western Equatoria state, causing them to be abandoned in May 2015.[1963]
- OHCHR reported that witnesses in Mondikolo village described the looting of a primary school in September 2015 by unidentified assailants and said the same school was vandalized the following November.[1964]
- According to local media, the SPLA looted a school in Juba in June 2015.[1965]

Reports of attacks on schools became more common in 2016 as the conflict intensified. The South Sudan Education Cluster found that 72 schools had been damaged or burned by parties to the conflict, although it was not clear whether all of these attacks happened in 2016. Of those 72 schools, 30 were in Jonglei state, 17 were in Unity state, 15 were in Upper Nile state, 7 were in Central Equatoria state, 1 was in North Bahr el Ghazal state, 1 was in Lakes state, and 1 was in Warrap state.[1966] Attacks reported by the Education Cluster and other sources included the following:

- The Education Cluster found that a primary school in Rubkona county, Unity state, was damaged by bullets on January 6, 2016.[1967]
- The UN reported the destruction of three schools on February 18, 2016, when armed fighters, allegedly wearing the uniforms of the SPLA, attacked Shilluk and Nuer IDPs in the Greater Upper Nile region.[1968]
- The Education Cluster found that a primary school in Pajok, Eastern Equatoria, was looted by armed actors on April 7, 2016.[1969]
- Human Rights Watch reported that in the days after an attack in Kansuk, Central Equatoria, on June 15, 2016, government forces looted the boarding house of Kabi Senior Secondary School, stealing mattresses, books, and other items.[1970]
- According to information collected by the Education Cluster, as well as *Radio Tamazuj*, a school in Juba was looted on July 15, 2016. SPLA soldiers later prevented the school from being repaired, for unknown reasons.[1971]
- Government bombs struck another school in Yei River state on December 6, 2016, according to *Radio Tamazuj*.[1972]

Attacks on schools continued in 2017, as the UN recorded 23 incidents of attacks on and military use of schools between March 2 and June 1 alone. Most of these were in Eastern Equatoria.[1973] Attacks on schools across the country, reported by the Education Cluster, included the following:

- On March 1, 2017, fighting at night destroyed a school in Mayendit county, Unity state.[1974]
- Nine schools in Pajok, Eastern Equatoria state, were looted on April 4, 2017.[1975]
- A school in Tonga, Upper Nile state, was looted on April 15, 2017. [1976]
- Two schools in Pajok, Eastern Equatoria state, were looted on April 16 and April 17, respectively.[1977]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Attacks directly targeted students and teachers in isolated instances between 2013 and 2017, although they were reported more frequently in 2016, after the conflict spread to the south of the country. These attacks occurred more commonly than was reported in *Education under Attack 2014*, when fewer than 10 students and teachers were reported to have been targeted over the course of the reporting period. The Education Cluster reported in early 2017 that there had been 35 attacks and threats targeting students, teachers, and other education personnel in the Greater Equatoria (15), Greater Upper Nile (13), and Greater Bahr el Ghazal (7) regions since the beginning of the conflict.[1978]

There were few reports of individual attacks on students and educators between 2013 and 2015. However, one reported attack occurred on June 8, 2015, when witnesses reported to the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) that ethnic Dinka pastoralists, including students armed with guns and machetes, killed classmates, the headmaster of a local school, and other civilians in the town of Maridi, in Maridi state.[1979]

In 2016, the Education Cluster reported 30 attacks on students, teachers, and education personnel: thirteen in Central Equatoria state, six in Warrap state, four in Unity state, three in Eastern Equatoria state, one in Upper Nile state, one in Lakes state, one in Jonglei state, and one in an unknown location.[1980] It was not clear whether all of these attacks occurred in 2016. The UN, the Education Cluster, and media sources reported the following attacks on students and educators:

- On March 15, 2016, gunmen kidnapped five high school students, according to a media report. Two of the students remained missing at the end of April, more than one month later.[1981]
- An unidentified person or persons killed a teacher at a primary school in Eastern Equatoria state on August 15, 2016.[1982]
- On an unknown date shortly before November 17, 2016, SPLA soldiers killed the head teacher of Nyei Primary School in Yei River state. There were other attacks targeting civilians.[1983]
- In a large abduction of students in 2016, assailants attacked two schools in Amadi, Western Equatoria state, and kidnapped 30 students, according to news sources. The attacks were attributed to the SPLA.[1984]
- The UN reported that witnesses had stated that the head teacher of a primary school in Siliri village, Yei River state, was killed by government forces as he walked home on November 9, 2016.[1985]
- In late November, media sources reported that government security forces arrested more than 30 teachers from Bor town, Jonglei state, who were striking to protest the lack of salary payments and job promotions.[1986]
- Media reports also indicated that five schools in Amadi state had reportedly closed as of November 2016, due to attacks on students and teachers.[1987]

Information on attacks on students and school personnel was more sparsely reported in 2017. The Education Cluster reported three attacks on teachers between April and May 2017, all in Unity state:

- In the first incident, a community teacher in Rubkona county was shot and killed in his house. The assailants were unidentified. [1988]
- In the other two incidents, armed actors recruited five teachers in Guit county and detained them for an unknown period of time.[1989]

Military use of schools and universities

Armed forces and non-state armed groups occupied more than 100 schools and universities during the reporting period, forcing closures and creating extended gaps in schooling for thousands of children. The number of schools being used for military purposes fluctuated from 2013 to 2017, as security forces and non-state armed groups moved in and out of different schools. However, OCHA reported that, between December 2013 and the end of November 2015, armed forces and non-state armed groups occupied a total of 113 schools for varying periods of time.[1990] An Education Cluster survey conducted at the end of 2016 found that 161 schools had been used for military purposes during an unspecified time period, including 92 schools in Greater Upper Nile region, 46 schools in Greater Equatoria region, and 23 schools in Greater Bahr el Ghazal region.[1991]

Military use of education facilities was reported more frequently at the beginning of 2013, even before the outbreak of conflict in South Sudan, than during the period from 2009 to 2012. The UN documented the use of 26 schools by government security forces and non-state armed groups during 2013, resulting in the loss of access to schooling for approximately 13,000 children. The groups responsible included the SPLA (19 schools), South

Sudan national police services (6 schools), and non-state armed groups (1 school).[1992] During the first quarter of the year alone, the Education Cluster reported that 21 schools were used for military purposes in Jonglei, Western Bahr el Ghazal, and Lakes states, with the SPLA occupying the vast majority.[1993] The US State Department noted that UNMISS had found SPLA forces occupying a university and a primary school in Unity state in 2013 and multiple schools in Western Bahr el Ghazal state in July of that year.[1994]

Military use of schools and universities was recorded at higher rates in 2014. The UN reported 60 incidents of military use of schools by numerous armed actors throughout the year.[1995] The US Department of State reported that in May of that year the SPLA occupied a growing number of schools.[1996] As of December 2014, the UN found that various armed actors continued to use 33 schools, which affected access to schooling for approximately 11,000 children.[1997] For example:

- UNMISS observed the occupation of at least one university and one primary school in Unity state during December 2014, according to the US Department of State.[1998]
- According to Human Rights Watch, SPLA soldiers continued living in two primary schools in Pibor town, Jonglei state, even after the May 2014 peace agreement to end the conflict. Their presence prevented children from studying at the schools. The soldiers later vacated the schools but retained barracks adjacent to them, frequently walking through school property and sleeping in classrooms when it rained. Students from the schools reported that they were fearful of the soldiers, who were regularly inebriated.[1999]

Schools continued to be used for military purposes in 2015. The Education Cluster collected information on approximately 24 cases of military use of schools that year. Of these, 15 were in Unity state (at least five by the SPLA), four were in Warrap state (at least three by the SPLA), three were in Central Equatoria (at least two by the SPLA), one was in Eastern Equatoria, and one was in Western Equatoria.[2000] UNMISS reported that 29 schools were being used by armed forces and non-state armed groups as of early December 2015.[2001] At the same time, advocacy resulted in some schools being vacated. The UN reported that 36 schools being used for military purposes were vacated in 2015, mainly due to UN advocacy and agreements with the SPLA.[2002] It was not clear whether the schools the UN reported as vacated overlapped with any of those identified by Human Rights Watch, UNMISS, or the Education Cluster as being used by armed forces and non-state armed groups.

Reported military use of schools showed a slight uptick in 2016 as the conflict intensified. The Education Cluster collected information on approximately 50 schools by armed actors across the country that year.[2003] At the end of the year, the UN verified military use of 55 schools across the country.[2004] This total included 21 new cases of military use of schools, of which 10 were attributed to the SPLA and 7 to the SPLA-IO.[2005] There may have been overlap between the Education Cluster and UN totals. The individual incidents of military use that were reported by a variety of sources included the following:

- Human Rights Watch reported that in the city of Yambio, Western Equatoria state, the SPLA temporarily occupied at least four schools during the first four months of the year, displacing students.[2006]
- SPLA forces occupied Pajok Primary School in Pajok Payam, Eastern Equatoria state, as of September 2016, according to the UN.[2007]
- In November 2016, the Education Cluster collected verified information indicating that armed actors used a primary school in Yambio, Western Equatoria state.[2008]
- At least one case of military use during 2016 also targeted students. Human Rights Watch indicated that SPLA-IO fighters held more than 300 students hostage at their school in Yei River state from late September until at least the end of November.[2009]

Military use of schools was also documented at varying levels in 2017. Between March 2 and June 1, 2017, the UN continued to verify reports of ongoing military use of 55 schools across the country.[2010] However, these numbers appeared to have dropped by the end of the year. The UN reported that, between September 2 and November 14, 2017, 16 schools remained occupied by armed forces or armed groups.[2011] It was not clear exactly how many previously occupied schools were vacated or how many schools were newly occupied at the end of the year, but the Education Cluster found seven new incidents of military use of schools between March 2 and June 1, 2017. Of these, two were in Jonglei state (one by the SPLA, the other seemingly by multiple parties at various times), two were in Unity state (both by the SPLA), and three in Greater Equatoria (all by the SPLA).[2012]

Reports in 2017 indicated that this use negatively impacted the learning environment. For example:

- Of the 12 looted schools that the Education Cluster found in Pajok and Tonga, Upper Nile state, in April 2017 (mentioned in the section on attacks on schools), eight were being used for military purposes.[2013]
- In April 2017, media sources described an internal UN report indicating that UN officials had visited a school in Jonglei state that was being used by a local militia. Children were still attending classes at the school in classrooms where rifles and grenade launchers were propped against the walls.[2014]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

Several hundred children were reportedly recruited from schools in South Sudan during the reporting period. The Education Cluster found at least six cases of child recruitment that occurred in schools between December 2013 and the end of 2016, including five cases in Greater Upper Nile and one in Greater Equatoria.[2015] Child recruitment was not reported at schools during the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Incidents of child recruitment reported to have occurred at schools included the following:

- According to NGO and UN sources, in December 2013, just three days after the war broke out in Juba, non-state armed groups began forcibly recruiting students from schools in the Unity state towns of Bentiu and Rubkona.[2016] In Rubkona, the SPLA-IO forcibly recruited 413 school children from their schools. The children were later used in combat in Bentiu during April and May 2014.[2017]
- In May 2014, the *BBC* reported that non-state armed groups recruited more than 100 students from a primary school in Bentiu town, Unity state.[2018]
- UNMISS found that the following year, on February 16, 2015, members of a Shilluk militia commanded by General Olony reportedly forcibly recruited at least 36 students from secondary school classrooms in the village of Wau Shilluk, Upper Nile state. Most of the students were under the age of 18. The militia released the children following an intervention by child protection actors.[2019]
- The Education Cluster collected information in November 2016 indicating that an unknown group recruited children from a school in Juba. This occurred at an unknown time after the beginning of the conflict in December 2013.[2020]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

Sexual violence by parties to the conflict affected education in anecdotal incidents reported between 2013 and 2017. Sexual violence affecting education was not reported between 2009 and mid-2013. Incidents of sexual violence may have occurred in the education context during that time but would not have been carried out by parties to the conflict, which started in December 2013.

There were at least four incidents of sexual violence in the education context during the 2013-2017 reporting period:

- The UN reported that in May 2014, approximately 30 SPLA soldiers captured three women scavenging for food and cooking supplies in abandoned homes and gang raped them in a primary school.[2021]
- The US Department of State found that on October 29, 2014, the SPLA-IO abducted and raped women in Bentiu, including from Lich University.[2022] It was unclear whether the women abducted from the university were professors or students.

- In September 2015, the UN Secretary-General reported that SPLA soldiers raped several girls who were going home from school in Central Equatoria state.[2023]
- Witnesses reported to Human Rights Watch that on an unspecified date between June 2016 and May 2017, three suspected members of a non-state armed group raped three school girls on their way home from boarding school in Kajo Keji county, Central Equatoria state.[2024]

Attacks on higher education

Attacks on higher education included sporadic instances of assault, abductions, arrests, and threats targeting students and professors. Three attacks were reported between 2013 and 2017, as compared to one from 2009 to 2013.

There was one reported attack on higher education in 2013. After 2013, no further incidents of attacks on higher education were reported until the end of 2015, which included the following:

- On February 1, 2013, two Nuer students at the University of Juba disappeared in a suspected kidnapping by unknown assailants, according to the US State Department.[2025]
- On December 7, 2015, the National Security Service arrested a professor while he was driving home from Juba University. It was not clear why he was arrested; however, he remained in detention as of the end of March 2016.[2026]
- On December 28, 2015, five armed men attacked and threatened nuns who worked at the college at the Solidarity Teacher Training College in Yambio, Western Equatoria state. The men, who attempted to rob the women, were believed to belong to the SPLA-IO.[2027]

SUDAN

Bombing, shelling, arson, and looting damaged and destroyed hundreds of schools and killed and injured students and school personnel in Darfur and in Southern Kordofan, Abyei, and Blue Nile. School and university students, as well as school teachers, were also reportedly targeted for their perceived opposition, and were attacked with live and rubber bullets, teargas, batons, and other means.

Context

Conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan began in 2003 and continued through the period covered by this report. In 2014, violence and battles between government and rebel forces, in addition to intertribal conflict, reached a level of intensity that had not been seen since 2004, displacing nearly half a million people in Darfur in that year alone.[2028] Attacks by government forces in Jebel Marra, the rebel stronghold in Central Darfur, intensified in the first half of 2016, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. The Sudanese government also blocked access to Jebel Marra by the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).[2029]

Government security forces and their supporters in Darfur included the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, and the police, as well as armed community groups. Anti-government non-state armed groups in Darfur included the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army, both of which claimed to be fighting against social injustice.[2030] The government declared a unilateral ceasefire in Darfur in June 2016, but skirmishes continued.[2031] In June 2017, the UN Security Council approved the reduction of UNAMID's peacekeeping forces by approximately one-third, despite ongoing violence in the region.[2032]

In addition to the conflict in Darfur, after the 2011 secession of South Sudan, territorial conflicts broke out in Southern Kordofan, Abyei, and Blue Nile states, all of which bordered the new nation to the south. In 2011, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N), an armed opposition group, began fighting government forces in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.[2033] Infighting continued from 2012 through 2014, and in 2015, the SPLM-N launched increasingly powerful attacks in these two states, including shelling.[2034] In December 2016, the parties to the conflict declared a ceasefire.[2035] Aerial bombardment reportedly decreased in Darfur and in Southern Kordofan, Blue Bile, and Abyei states in the first half of 2017, possibly as a result of the ceasefires which were widely seen to be linked to a decision by the United States to lift economic sanctions on Sudan.[2036]

Sudan's conflicts severely impacted children's access to education in all affected areas. Indiscriminate bombing by the government and opposition groups killed and maimed children, and damaged and destroyed schools.[2037] In Darfur, OCHA reported that 680,000 children were out of school in 2013 alone. In addition, enrollment rates were lower than 75 percent in Blue Nile, Southern Kordofan, and Abyei states.[2038] In 2014 the Minister of Education reported to local media that conflict-related insecurity led many students and teachers to leave school.[2039]

From 2013 to 2016, the number of attacks on education remained comparable to levels reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* and they continued to take similar forms. Reports of all types of attacks began to decrease in 2017, possibly due in part to the ceasefires declared in Sudan's conflict zones. Information on attacks on education came from UN, NGO, and media sources. Restricted access to conflict-affected regions of Sudan made it challenging to verify data.

Sudan endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in October 2015.

Attacks on schools

Aerial bombings by government forces damaged and destroyed dozens of schools during the reporting period. The Darfur region and Southern Kordofan state were most heavily affected by these attacks. Attacks in Darfur were reported at similar rates to those found in *Education under Attack 2014,* and those in Southern Kordofan were reported at rates similar to the years 2011 and 2012. GCPEA found no reports of attacks on schools in 2017, possibly due in part to the government's 2016 ceasefire in Darfur and the ceasefire between the government and the SPLM-N, which was active in Southern Kordofan, Abyei, and Blue Nile states.

In 2013 the UN reported three government air strikes on schools, which took place in Dursa village, Central Darfur state; Um Dadeti town, South Darfur state; and Tabit village, North Darfur state. Each air strike damaged schools and injured a combined total of six school children. The UN also reported that unknown armed attackers looted schools in Labado, East Darfur in April 2013.[2040]

Meanwhile, during the first half of 2013, reports collated from UN, NGO, and media sources in Southern Kordofan state indicated that government forces damaged three schools and an SPLM-N mortar damaged one:

- The UN reported that an SPLM-N mortar shell hit the yard of El Manar Primary School for Boys in Kadugli, injuring a 10-year-old boy.[2041]
- An NGO report stated that in February and March 2013, government aircraft bombarded villages in Delami and Al Buram counties, Southern Kordofan state, damaging several buildings, including two schools.[2042]
- On May 16, 2013, four SAF bombs hit the Father Cliff Primary School for Orphans while the students were eating lunch, according to *Nuba Reports*. A 9-year-old boy was reportedly injured in the attack, when shrapnel struck his leg.[2043]

Similar attacks continued to affect education in 2014. The UN documented 10 cases of schools being damaged or destroyed in Darfur.[2044] Among these, the UN reported that two schools were looted and burned following fighting between government security forces and the Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi (SLA-MM) in Umgonia village, South Darfur state, in February 2014.[2045]

Also in 2014, government bombs reportedly damaged or destroyed schools in Southern Kordofan state. Human Rights Watch reported that government armed forces bombed five school areas at least three times between 2014 and 2015.[2046] *Nuba Reports* separately reported three attacks on schools:

- A school in Kauda in the Nuba Mountains was hit by rockets dropped by SAF jets on January 1, 2014.[2047]

- *Nuba Reports* documented an attack in which the SAF reportedly dropped bombs on the Tabanya Primary School.[2048]
- On December 20, 2014, bombs reportedly hit a school in Katcha during fighting between the SAF and SPLM-N.[2049]

Attacks on schools continued in 2015, with the UN reporting 13 incidents throughout the year in Darfur.[2050] For example, the UN documented the looting of six schools by government security officers in villages around eastern Jebel Marra in January 2015, and the destruction of one school in East Dafur state during fighting between the Rizeigat and Habania tribes on an unknown date.[2051]

Schools in Southern Kordofan state were also reportedly damaged by aerial bombing and looting in 2015. For example:

- Amnesty International confirmed the indiscriminate aerial bombing of four schools in Southern Kordofan state in 2015, resulting in deaths, injuries, extensive property damage, and displacement.[2052]
- On March 28, 2015, a school was burned down and looted during clashes between the SPLM-N and government security forces in Habila, Southern Kordofan state, according to the UN.[2053]

The UN documented 20 attacks on schools in Darfur in 2016, an increase from the 13 incidents reported by the UN in 2015.[2054] It was unclear when in 2016 the attacks occurred and whether they took place after the government's ceasefire in June.

Also in 2016, the UN received but could not verify reports of attacks on three schools in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile, and Abyei states.[2055] Media sources reported separately on three attacks on schools in the Nuba Mountains, Southern Kordofan state:

- Several media sources reported that on May 25, 2016, government forces dropped two parachute bombs into the compound of St. Vincent Primary School in the Nuba Mountains, damaging its classrooms and library and wounding a Kenyan teacher.[2056]
- *Radio Dabanga* reported that, in April 2016, a government plane bombed a school in Dalami, Southern Kordofan state, destroying classrooms, killing the headmaster, and injuring two boy students who were 8 and 11 years old. The article stated that this was the fifth school in the area to be damaged by aerial bombardment in March and April.[2057]
- According to *Nuba Reports,* another school was destroyed in the Nuba Mountains on May 28, 2016, during fighting between the SAF and SPLM-N.[2058]

At the time of writing, GCPEA had not identified reports of attacks on schools in 2017.

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Throughout the reporting period, students, teachers, and other education personnel were caught in the crossfire during fighting, as they had been during the 2009-2013 period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*. As also reported in *Education under Attack 2014,* the government used force in responding to student protests and perceived political opposition, mostly in the Darfur region. Sporadic incidents were reported in the Darfur region, and in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.

Students and teachers in Darfur were harmed in attacks on education in 2013 and 2014. During that period, *Radio Dabanga* reported in September 2014 that basic school teachers in North Darfur were protesting the killing of seven colleagues in the past year. They accused a pro-government milita group of being responsible for the latest attack.[2059] In addition, government security forces reportedly fired live ammunition at groups of students during two incidents in the Darfur region in 2013, and unidentified attackers targeted students in at least one incident in 2014. Examples of attacks included:

- Local media reported that on July 7, 2013, a soldier fired live bullets at students who became impatient over delays and perceived corruption while waiting to obtain a seal required for university applications in Nyala, South Darfur. One student was killed and four were wounded.[2060]
- According to Sudanese news sources, on September 29, 2013, police shot teargas and live ammunition at secondary students protesting the increased cost of national exams in North Darfur, killing at least one student and injuring at least ten.[2061]
- Media sources found that on July 16, 2014, a teacher in Darfur was abducted, with *Radio Dabanga* attributing the event to pro-government militia members. The outcome of the abduction was unknown.[2062]
- *Radio Dabanga* reported that a secondary school teacher was beheaded in September 2014, attributing responsibility to pro-government militia members.[2063]
- According to the *Sudan Tribune,* government security forces arrested nine teachers in Darfur in September 2014 for participating in a strike to protest unpaid salaries.[2064]
- *Radio Dabanga* reported that on an unknown day during the week of November 23-30, 2014, men in military uniforms abducted a female secondary school student on her way home from school in North Darfur. It was not clear why she was kidnapped or where she was taken.[2065]

Violence affected teachers in West Kordofan beginning in 2015, which coincided with the SPLM-N's broader operations in the area and the government's increased response. For example, the UN reported an unspecified incident in April 2015 in which the SPLM-N killed an unknown number of education personnel in West Kordofan state.[2066]

Also in 2015, the Asylum Research Consultancy (ARC) reported that government security forces used teargas and live ammunition to disperse primary school students protesting for unknown reasons in Blue Nile state in October 2015.[2067]

Incidents impacting teachers and students occurred in both the Darfur region and Southern Kordofan state in 2016, with just one reported incident in each area:

- In the first quarter of 2016, the ARC reported that one student was killed during clashes between the SPLM-N and government forces in a village in Southern Kordofan state during primary school exams.[2068]
- The *Sudan Tribune* reported that on September 15, 2016, unidentified gunmen shot and killed three students and injured two others in Kass, South Darfur. Local leaders alleged that non-state armed groups operating in the area were responsible for the attack.[2069]

Violence in Darfur continued to affect students occasionally in 2017, with at least two incidents that year, according to media sources:

- Chadian forces reportedly kidnapped a student from a Quran school in Sirba locality, West Darfur, on October 29, 2017, taking him in the direction of the Chadian border. A witness told the media that the motivation for the attack was unclear.[2070]
- On November 10, 2017, unidentified gunmen stormed a teacher dormitory at a school in Muglad town, Central Darfur, killing two teachers. The motive for the attack was unknown.[2071]

Military use of schools

Government security forces and non-state armed groups used schools as barracks or bases of operation in both Darfur and Southern Kordofan during the reporting period, with at least eight such cases between 2013 and 2017. GCPEA found more reports on this activity from 2013 to 2017 than from 2009 to 2013, when the UN reported the use of three schools in Southern Kordofan state and none in Darfur. This difference could be due to stronger monitoring and reporting in the more recent period.

The UN reported the military use of five schools in Darfur between 2013 and 2016.[2072] This may have included the following four incidents reported separately by the UN:

- The UN received credible information regarding military use of one school in South Darfur in 2014. [2073]
- The UN reported the use of three schools in Darfur by national security forces in 2016.[2074]

The UN also reported military use of schools by government forces in Southern Kordofan:

- A UN report documented the use of two schools as military camps in September of 2014: the Gadid Basic School in Abu Jibeha locality, and the Suq al-Jabal Basic School in Abbasiyya locality.[2075]
- The UN documented the use of a school in Kadugli, Southern Kordofan state, by the National Intelligence Security Service in March 2016.[2076] The school was reportedly closed for vacation at the time, and it was quickly vacated because of advocacy by the UN and Ministry of Education.[2077]

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

According to information received by the UN, children in Darfur were raped in various settings, including en route to and from school.[2078] The UN also reported that government and affiliated forces allegedly perpetrated individual and mass rapes against women and girls in Darfur.[2079] At least two cases of sexual violence, or threats of sexual violence, by government forces against students were reported, including the following:

- On October 5 and 6, 2014, government security forces violently and forcibly evicted approximately 70 female Darfuri students from the Zahra dormitory complex at the University of Khartoum, beating numerous students and arresting 18 who refused to leave. The students told Human Rights Watch that they were hit and interrogated at the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) offices before being taken to Omdurman prison for women.[2080] The US Department of State received reports that the government security forces accused the students of supporting rebel groups in Darfur and subjected them to sexual and other physical violence.[2081] Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International reported that government security forces raped one student during this incident.[2082]
- Both the Sudan Social Development Organization (SUDO), a UK-based NGO, and *Radio Dabanga* reported that in March 2015, ten girls and seven boys were attacked as they walked along a road to take their final exams in Central Darfur. Between two and five girls were raped and eight girls abducted. SUDO attributed the attack to the Rapid Support Forces, while *Radio Dabanga* attributed it to government troops.[2083]

Attacks on higher education

Violence occurred at university protests, with government security forces allegedly using excessive force against protesters.[2084] Protests were sometimes peaceful, but at other times student protesters reportedly wielded weapons, including metal bars, stones, and chains.[2085]

According to Human Rights Watch, police reportedly stood in front of dormitories and harassed female students as they entered and exited.[2086] Amnesty International also highlighted a government crackdown on university students who spoke out against the humanitarian situation in Darfur, which was usually carried out by the NISS and with students affiliated with the ruling National Congress Party.[2087] Other violence in the context of higher education included outbreaks of fighting between supporters of different political parties on campuses, and attacks with unknown motivations.

There were at least 30 reported attacks on higher education during the reporting period. These reports peaked in 2015, when several hundred were reportedly arrested and approximately one dozen killed.[2088] Overall, however, the level of violence was lower than in the 2009-2013 reporting period, when hundreds of students were injured and more than a thousand arrested across the country.

Various sources documented the following six incidents affecting university students in 2013, the majority perpetrated by security forces and related to government suppression of protests about the situation in Darfur. More than 100 students were reportedly arrested in these attacks and at least 15 were injured:

- Human Rights Watch and other sources reported that in May 2013, nine students sustained injuries at El Fasher University in North Darfur. Students were attending a meeting when 70 student members of a pro-government armed group entered the campus. Clashes broke out and militia members fired into the air, wounding one student. As students attempted to flee, police and NISS members at the campus gate fired into the crowd, wounding eight more.[2089]
- Human Rights Watch found that on June 16, 2013, intelligence officers arrested five Darfuri student activists in three separate locations in Khartoum and Omdurman. The students were held in detention for at least one month. [2090]
- Also on June 16, 2013, a violent outbreak allegedly occurred at Omdurman's Ahlia University between student supporters of the ruling National Congress Party and student members of the United Popular Front, a group linked to the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army faction.[2091]
- Local media reported that in September 2013, 22 Darfuri students were arrested and several were injured during a sit-in at the University of Peace in West Kordofan. This was part of ongoing nationwide protests against a university policy requiring Darfuri students to pay tuition, despite a political agreement that Darfuri students were exempt from such payments. Police used live ammunition, batons, air rifles, and teargas against the student protesters.[2092]
- Scholars at Risk reported that on October 29, 2013, government security forces raided a meeting held at the Ahfad University in Khartoum to establish a unified position against the government crackdown on protests related to the situation in Darfur. Nine professors were arrested and detained until the next day.[2093]

The government was responsible for further violence against university student protesters, particularly students from Darfur or those protesting the violence in Darfur throughout 2014. As in 2013, more than 100 students were arrested by security forces and at least a dozen were injured. In addition, at least one student was reportedly killed by government forces in 2014. These violent attacks included the following:

- Scholars at Risk and Amnesty International reported that on March 11, 2014, government security forces reportedly fired live ammunition and teargas at students engaged in a demonstration at the University of Khartoum, killing one student and injuring seven. They also arrested more than 100 student protesters. The students were protesting the escalating violence in Darfur.[2094] *Radio Dabanga* reported that government security forces also reacted violently at a memorial service held for the dead student a few days later.[2095]
- Scholars at Risk reported two additional incidents in 2014 in which multiple university students were wounded when government security forces dispersed student protests.[2096]
- Scholars at Risk also reported that on May 21, 2014, university lecturer and activist Sidig Noreen Ali Abdalla had been detained incommunicado and without charges at El Obeid prison for more than four months.[2097] He was thought to have been detained due to his advocacy around the situation in Darfur.[2098]
- A university student activist told Amnesty International that NISS officers arrested him five times, once each in 2003, 2007, 2008, and in March and September 2014. In the last incident, the NISS severely beat him and kept him in solitary confinement for 10 days. The NISS also forced him to provide a blood sample, and he suspected that NISS agents purposefully infected him with Hepatitis B while he was detained, as a doctor found that he was newly infected with the virus a week after he was released. After his release, NISS agents continued to monitor his movements and sent him threatening messages, so he fled to Egypt in February 2015.[2099]

In 2015, Amnesty International reported that government security forces arbitrarily arrested and detained 200 students from Darfur and killed at least 13 at universities across the country that year.[2100] The US Department of State also reported detentions and the possible torture of Darfuri students by government forces in September 2015.[2101] Attacks on higher education included the following:

- Scholars at Risk and other international sources reported that on April 14, 2015, riot police used teargas to disperse student protesters at El Fasher University who were calling for a boycott of the general elections for president and national assembly. At least 18 students were detained and charged with criminal offenses. Many of them reportedly appeared in court in the following days with blood on their clothes and other signs that they had been beaten.[2102]
- Amnesty International stated that in October 2015, the Holy Quran University imposed retroactive tuition fees on Darfuri students. In response, approximately 500 Darfuri students organized a public seminar on campus on October 13, 2015, which was attacked by 70 to 100 ruling party-affiliated students, police, and NISS agents wielding explosive devices and iron bars. The attack injured six students.[2103] On October 25, 2015, Darfuri students at the Holy Quran University reportedly organized another protest, but government security forces and ruling party-affiliated students attacked them again, injuring 15 students, according to Amnesty International. The next day police arrested twelve students, releasing three the same day and detaining the other nine until an unknown day in November 2015.[2104]

In 2016, rights groups, the UN, and other sources documented continued violence by government forces against university students across the country, including the use of teargas, rubber bullets, batons, and live ammunition to break up protests.[2105] Much of this violence occurred in April 2016.[2106] Two students were killed and dozens arrested, which was a frequency similar to that in 2013 and 2014. For example:

- Amnesty International reported that in January 2016, government security forces and students affiliated with the ruling party attacked a peaceful assembly of Darfuri students at the University of El Geneina. They beat multiple students with metal bars and other instruments, killing one. Government security forces also arrested 27 students from the Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa ethnic groups.[2107]
- According to the UN, on March 24, 2016, a female university student was assaulted by NISS officers while she was on her way to the University of El Geneina in West Darfur.[2108]
- *Al Jazeera* reported that in April 2016, government security forces opened fire on around 200 students protesting the sale of a University of Khartoum building for use as a tourist attraction, killing one student.[2109]
- According to Scholars at Risk and media sources, on April 19, 2016, NISS personnel attacked students participating in elections at the University of Kordofan, killing one student and injuring 27 more.[2110]
- The UN reported that on April 26, 2016, seven students from Nyala University, South Darfur state, were arrested for demonstrating against increased public transport fees. They were reportedly beaten while in detention for an unknown period of time.[2111]
- Media sources indicated that pro-government armed groups shot and killed one student and wounded three at Omdurman Ahlia University in Omdurman, Khartoum state on April 27, 2016.[2112]
- Scholars at Risk reported that on May 5, 2016, NISS officers raided a meeting at the University of Khartoum where students were discussing how to appeal the university's decision to dismiss them for their involvement in student-led demonstrations. The officers beat and detained nine students.[2113]

The number of reported attacks on higher education decreased in 2017. Examples included the following:

- On May 9, 2017, armed police entered the dormitories of Bakht El Rida University in White Nile state and ordered all students to leave, after a student group held a protest over the possibly fraudulent process surrounding the election of a student union committee. Three students were allegedly shot in the incident, and 19 were arrested and detained for an unknown period of time.[2114]
- On May 15, 2017, the Darfur Student Association at El Zaeem El Azhari University in Khartoum North met to discuss the right to a free education. NISS agents stormed the campus and arrested 15 Darfuri students, including two females, and injured two others. It was not clear how long the arrested students were kept in detention.[2115]
- Amnesty International reported that NISS agents arrested Naser Aldeen Mukhtar Mohamed, the former chairperson of the Darfur Students' Association at the Holy Quran University, at the campus gates on August 22, 2017.[2116] He was released without charge on January 28, 2018.[2117]

SYRIA

Schools and universities were attacked by multiple parties to the conflict in Syria. Several hundred educational institutions were damaged or destroyed during air strikes that killed more than 1,000 students and education personnel. The use of schools by state and non-state armed groups as detention centers, military bases, and sniper posts also impeded education. In areas controlled by armed groups, boys faced the threat of being recruited at or along the route to or from school, and some armed groups altered the curriculum to fit their ideology.

Context

Armed hostilities broke out in Syria between forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad and those who opposed his rule, following the government's repressive response to anti-government protests in the southern city of Dara'a in early 2011. After government security forces arrested and tortured thousands of people, including children, protests rapidly expanded to other parts of the country.[2118]

By 2017, the internal crisis had evolved into multisided hostilities involving the Syrian military and intelligence branches; allied domestic and foreign militias and states, including Russia and Iran; a range of moderate and extremist armed opposition groups, some of which were supported by foreign powers, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, and the United States;[2119] allied opposition forces, including Kurdish, Arab, Turkmen, and Christian units (collectively known as the Syrian Democratic Forces); and an international coalition of states fighting 'IS'.[2120] The conflict had also become marked by aerial operations by Syrian government forces, Russian forces supporting the Syrian government, members of the international counter-'IS' coalition, Turkey, and Israel.[2121]

The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR) reported that as of March 2017, the six-year anniversary of the Syrian crisis, 207,000 civilians had been killed, including 24,000 children and 23,000 women. According to the rights group, more than 90 percent of them had allegedly been killed by government military action.[2122] According to UNHCR, by November 2017, more than 5.3 million people were registered as refugees in countries neighboring Syria, approximately 48 percent of them under the age of 18.[2123] Inside Syria, 6.5 million people were displaced as of November 2017, including 2.8 million children.[2124] There also were 4.5 million people living in besieged and hard-to-reach areas of Syria.[2125]

The armed hostilities largely destroyed Syria's previously strong education system.[2126] In February 2015, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic reported that more than three million children had stopped attending school on a regular basis.[2127] The Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU), a Syrian relief organization, found in November 2016 that 1,378 out of 3,373 public schools surveyed were not functioning. The majority of these schools were located in 'IS'-controlled Raqqa district (40 percent), where the extremist group had closed many educational institutions, and in Kurdish areas (31 percent), where some Arab parents reportedly had stopped sending their children to school after the schools had begun teaching in the Kurdish language.[2128] The UN noted that 'IS' shut schools to alter the curriculum and indoctrinate children. For example, in

Students play in the courtyard of their school located in the south of Idlib province, Syria. The school was previously used as a military camp.

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late 2014 'IS' closed all schools in Aleppo, Deir al-Zour, and Raqqa, pending implementation of a "modified" curriculum.[2129]

Early marriage further limited female access to education. Some families forced their daughters to marry with the intention of "protecting" them, or to reduce the family's financial burden.[2130] The UN reported that women and girls in 'IS'-controlled areas were forcibly married to fighters, and 'IS' trafficked Yezidi women and girls they had abducted in Iraq as sex slaves into Syria.[2131]

The multi-sided, shifting, and complex nature of the conflict in Syria made it difficult to verify with certainty when damage to schools and universities from ordnances was the result of targeted attacks, rather than incidental damage resulting from the conduct of hostilities. Nevertheless, all forms of reported attacks on education were significantly more widespread during the current reporting period than in the period covered by *Education under Attack 2014*, which likely coincided with the escalation of the armed hostilities in 2014.

Attacks on schools

Attacks on schools, whether targeted or incidental, in Syria were frequent. The UN and human rights monitoring groups documented attacks on schools by Syrian government forces, pro-government militias, armed opposition groups, and violent extremist groups.[2132] The international coalition against 'IS' and Russia began carrying out aerial bombardments in September 2014 and September 2015, respectively.[2133] These assaults were particularly destructive of civilian life and infrastructure, including damage or destruction of schools. Reports of attacks on schools did not often state whether there were military targets nearby.

Save the Children reported that between 2011 and 2015 more than half of all attacks on schools worldwide occurred in Syria.[2134] A World Bank report published in July 2017 found that 53 percent of education facilities were partially damaged and 10 percent were wholly destroyed.[2135] The education facilities most commonly damaged or destroyed were vocational institutes, secondary schools, and education offices. The highest num-

ber of education facilities affected was in Aleppo, where 73 percent had suffered some damage.[2136] Throughout the country, the many individual attacks on schools had dozens of victims.[2137]

Syrian government forces, pro-government militias, armed opposition groups, and violent extremist groups attacked dozens of schools during 2013, in both indiscriminate and targeted attacks.[2138] For example:

- The UN stated that there were reports that mortar rounds launched by armed opposition groups hit schools in the al-Dweila, Bab Sharqi, and al-Qassa areas of Damascus on November 3 and November 11, 2013, killing children and school personnel and causing the government to suspend classes in those areas for three days.[2139]
- Human Rights Watch reported that armed opposition groups were responsible for at least four attacks in Homs (March 19, May 27 or 28, July 8, and October 17), six in Jaramana, Rif Dimashq governorate (October 22, October 31, and four other unspecified days), one in Eastern Ghouta (November 4), and one in Damascus (November 11) during 2013.[2140] According to information collected by Human Rights Watch, the six attacks in Jaramana killed and injured dozens, and the attack in Homs on March 19 killed four boys between the ages of 10 and 16 and severely injured a fifth boy.[2141]

Multiple attacks that affected schools in 2013 used weapons that caused significant damage and bodily harm. The deadliest attacks included the following:

- On February 21, 2013, the *Telegraph* reported that a car bomb exploded near Ibn Al-Atheer School in Damascus, which was close to the Russian embassy, while students were leaving school, killing 50 people, including children.[2142]
- On August 21, 2013, government rockets struck a school in Eastern Ghouta. According to Human Rights Watch, the effects were consistent with a chemical attack, and only the government—not armed opposition groups—was known to possess the type of weaponry used in the attack.[2143] The UN later confirmed the use of chemical weapons in the attack.[2144]
- Just a few days later, on August 26, 2013, international media reported that victims had burns and were covered in a "napalm-like" coating after an aerial bomb struck a schoolyard in opposition-held Aleppo. Human Rights Watch reported that the attack killed 37 people, most of them students, and injured 44 civilians.[2145]
- On September 29, 2013, a government air strike on a school in Raqqa killed 15 civilians, including 14 students and a school janitor.[2146] Human Rights Watch reported that the attack used a fuel-air bomb, a weapon designed to cause extensive harm.[2147]
- According to media reports, in December 2013 a suicide bomber exploded a device near a primary school in the government-held town of Umm al-'Amed, Homs governorate, killing at least twelve people, including at least six students.[2148]
- The Syrian Human Rights Committee (SHRC) reported that an air strike on a school in Mare', Aleppo, injured at least 40 students on December 22, 2013.[2149]

In 2014, the UN verified 60 attacks on educational facilities by government forces and armed groups and noted that the Ministry of Education had reported 889 schools partially or fully damaged by year's end.[2150] Information GCPEA compiled from media and NGO sources indicated that there were at least 86 attacks on schools.[2151] Media sources reported that, according to UNICEF, attacks on schools killed at least 160 children and wounded 343 across Syria in 2014.[2152] Of the attacks it verified in 2014, the UN reported that government forces perpetrated 39, 'IS' perpetrated 9, the Free Syrian Army perpetrated 1, and unidentified fighters perpetrated 11.[2153]

Air strikes and mortar rounds appeared to be used in the majority of attacks in 2014, according to information compiled by GCPEA, but vehicle and suicide attacks also directly targeted schools in government-held areas of Homs in 2014. Reported attacks included the following:

- According to SHRC, a barrel bomb dropped near Tar'aan school in al-Mizerib, Dara'a, injured approximately 40 students on February 9, 2014.[2154]
- Human Rights Watch reported that on April 29, 2014, two mortar shells hit the Badr el-Din Hussaini educational complex in government-held Damascus. The attack killed 17 children and at least 2 parents, and injured approximately 50 people. According to Human Rights Watch, the mortar rounds came from the direction of Yarmouk camp, an opposition-held area.[2155]
- Media sources reported that government aircraft bombarded Ein Jalout Primary School on April 30, 2014, as members of the school community were preparing for the opening of an art exhibit. The attack reportedly killed at least 20 people, including between 17 and 33 students and 2 teachers, and wounded many more, including the school's principal.[2156] The UN verified that the attack occurred and stated that it killed 33 children and injured 40.[2157]
- On June 19, 2014, a vehicle exploded near Maysaloun School in Homs, according to the UN.[2158]
- In Homs, a suicide attacker carried out a double bombing at al-Makhzomi elementary school on October 1, 2014.[2159] The attack killed more than 50 people, including at least 29 children, according to reports received by the UN.[2160]
- In Homs, another vehicle-borne IED detonated near several schools on October 29, 2014.[2161]
- The UN also reported that on November 13, 2014, the government dropped barrel bombs on Tal Laylan Primary School in al-Hasakah, killing more than 7 children and injuring 13 more.[2162]

During 2015, the UN again verified 60 attacks on education facilities, as well as 9 attacks on education personnel. GCPEA compiled verified and unverified reports from both media and NGO sources of at least 168 attacks on schools, reportedly harming more than 300 students and education personnel.[2163] The 69 attacks verified by the UN killed or injured a total of 174 children. They were attributed to government forces and pro-government groups (48); 'IS' (11); other armed groups (10); and unknown parties (1).[2164]

Attacks on schools in 2015 were similar to those that occurred during the previous year, including mortar rounds and air strikes. According to information from the monitoring group Airwars, of 19 air strikes documented, the international coalition against 'IS' was likely responsible for 1 and the Syrian-Russian joint air campaign was likely responsible for 18.[2165] Approximately 30 percent of the attacks identified by GCPEA occurred in Idlib governorate, but Aleppo and Rif Dimashq governorates were also heavily affected.

Based on the data collected by GCPEA, the attacks that caused the most harm included the following:

- Two missiles struck a primary school in Northern Syria during the exam period in March 2015. One missile fell outside the gate of the school, while the other struck the teachers' room. Five children and three teachers were killed, and fifty children and six teachers were injured, according to a Save the Children report.[2166]
- Media reports indicated that just a few days later, on May 3, 2015, a government barrel bomb hit the Center for Children's Training and Rehabilitation in the Seif al-Dawla neighborhood of Aleppo and killed at least seven people, including four children and a school teacher.[2167] The attack prompted school closures and the cancellation of exams by local opposition authorities in order to protect teachers and students.[2168]
- Mortar shells killed one female teacher and injured twenty students when they hit the al-Thaqafi Primary School in Damascus' al-Maleki neighborhood on May 19, 2015, according to reports shared with the UN.[2169]
- The UN also received information that, in early December, 3 students and 4 education personnel were killed and 17 students injured when air strikes hit the Sabie al-Jamia Primary School in Deir al-Zour.[2170]
- On December 22, 2015, 'IS' fired mortars, striking a school in the Hrabish area of Deir al-Zour city, according to information received by the UN. The attack reportedly killed nine students and injured twenty others.[2171]

In some instances in 2015, aerial bombardments affected multiple schools in nearby locations on the same or consecutive days. For example:

- Between May 31 and June 7, 2015, eight Syrian government air strikes struck in Idlib city and the surrounding countryside, according to SHRC.[2172] In the strike on May 31, a barrel bomb damaged a school in Kafr Aweed village. The attack took place in the evening during summer vacation, so no one was harmed.[2173]
- SHRC reported that on November 24, 2015, there were air strikes on three schools in Deir al-Asafir town, in the outskirts of Damascus: a primary school, a secondary school for girls, and a mixed-gender high school. SHRC attributed the strikes to Syrian government forces.[2174]
- The Independent International Commission of Inquiry and the UN found that on December 13, 2015, air strikes hit up to four schools in Douma. One girls' school in Douma was hit twice in succession, with the second attack occurring while students and teachers were evacuating and those wounded in the first strike were being treated. The Commission of Inquiry reported that the school director and 15 students were among those killed at the girls' school.[2175]

The UN verified 76 attacks on schools in Syria in 2016, which caused 255 child casualties. Government and pro-government forces were reportedly responsible for the majority of these attacks, particularly through air strikes. 'IS,' People's Protection Units, and unidentified armed groups were all responsible for some attacks on schools as well.[2176] Information GCPEA compiled from media and NGO sources indicated that there were at least 205 attacks on schools, but this information was not verified. As previously, more than half of these attacks occurred in Aleppo and Idlib governorates.[2177]

This increased number of attacks on schools at least partially reflected the increased international involvement in the conflict in 2016. Notably, Russia had deployed military forces on September 30, 2015, further complicating the political landscape by lending its air power to the Syrian government.[2178] Periods of intense fighting, often in urban settings, also badly affected schools, with both pro- and anti-government forces responsible.

According to the information compiled by GCPEA, air strikes at or near schools comprised a significant majority of the reported attacks on schools in 2016. Indeed, there were several periods of intense aerial bombardment during 2016 that reportedly damaged dozens of schools and harmed many students and education personnel. For example:

- Between July 31 and August 15, 2016, UNICEF and OCHA each reported that the fighting damaged 12 schools in Aleppo and Idlib governorates.[2179]
- Save the Children reported on August 11, 2016, that six schools run by their local NGO partners in Aleppo were affected by numerous air strikes during a one-week period in August. The bombings damaged four school buildings and killed children and education personnel in three of the incidents in different parts of Aleppo that were unidentified in the report.[2180]
- According to OCHA, by September 2016, 7 out of the 15 schools in Ariha town, Idlib governorate, had been destroyed during the previous year.[2181]

Data collected by GCPEA also indicated that there were almost daily air strikes from late October through December 2016, and that shelling affected more than 60 schools.[2182] Many of these air strikes were deadly. For example:

- On October 26, 2016, Syrian-Russian coalition military planes reportedly struck the Kamal Qal'aji school complex in Hass village, Idlib governorate, between seven and nine times. The complex included a kindergarten, an elementary school, two middle schools, and a secondary school, according to information collected by Human Rights Watch.[2183] According to information verified by the UN, the attack killed twenty children and three female teachers. Five female teachers and many other children were also injured.[2184]
- The following day, on October 27, 2016, shelling by armed opposition groups reportedly struck the National School, a private school in a government-controlled area of western Aleppo, killing between 3 and 6 school children, and injuring between 14 and 23 others.[2185]
- On November 6, 2016, an air strike hit the Rawdat Ajyal al-Mustaqbal Nursery School in Harasta, Rif Dimashq.[2186] According to information verified by the UN, the strike killed eight children and injured twenty more.[2187]
- According to information collected by *Syria Direct,* there were four other aerial attacks on schools on November 20, 2016, alone, again in Hass, Idlib, and the Eastern Ghouta suburb of Damascus.[2188] Several media sources reported, for example, that anti-government groups struck a school in western government-held Aleppo, killing eight children.[2189]

Information GCPEA compiled from media and NGO sources showed that attacks on schools continued to be an almost daily occurrence in 2017, with at least 150 incidents that year.[2190] Raqqa governorate, where the Syrian Democratic Forces and Free Syrian Army militias, backed by the US, sought to retake Raqqa from 'IS,' was most affected by these attacks.[2191] However, Idlib and Aleppo governorates continued to be heavily affected as well. As in 2016, the majority of these attacks were believed to be air strikes, although there were also some ground-based strikes. For example:

- On March 9, 2017, an air strike reportedly hit the Abu Bakr Seddeeq School in Darat Izza, Aleppo governorate, killing seven children and injuring ten others on the school playground, according to credible information received by the UN.[2192] SNHR suspected that Russian warplanes were responsible for the attack.[2193]
- On March 20, an air strike by international coalition forces almost completely destroyed the three-story Badia Boarding School in Mansoura, Raqqa, killing at least 40 displaced civilians who were sheltering there, including 16 children and probably more, according to research by Human Rights Watch. Local residents reported that 'IS' maintained a presence at the school but also said that the school hosted a large number of displaced civilians.[2194]
- On May 18, 2017, a ground-based strike hit a school in Dara'a city, Dara'a governorate, according to information received by the UN. The strike allegedly killed seven children, including four girls, and injured twenty-five other civilians, including five children.[2195]
- On June 14, 2017, an air strike hit the courtyard of Martyr Kiwan Middle School in the opposition-controlled town of Tafas, Dara'a governorate, killing eight people, including a child, Human Rights Watch reported. Most of the casualties were members of a family who were taking shelter at the school after they had been displaced from another town. Artillery attacks near the school roughly an hour earlier killed two other civilians, including one child, and injured five.[2196]
- The UN received information that a vehicle-borne explosive device killed three male teachers and four boys on July 4, 2017, when it exploded next to a secondary school in Quneitra, Idlib governorate.[2197]
- According to Human Rights Watch, at least six Syrian children died on October 31, 2017, when shells fired by government forces landed at the gate of their school in Jisreen town in Eastern Ghouta, Damascus.[2198] NGOs reported that the shelling also damaged the school building and furniture.[2199] Half an hour later, two mortar rounds fell just outside another school in Mesraba, Eastern Ghouta, killing two children, according to Human Rights Watch.[2200]
- SNHR alleged that barrel bombs dropped by Syrian regime helicopters struck a school complex near Babolin village, Idlib governorate, on December 28, 2017. The complex included a high school and a secondary school, and the bombs partially destroyed the school buildings and damaged furniture.[2201]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel reflected levels similar to those reported in *Education under Attack 2014*. The majority of individuals who were killed or injured in reported attacks on education between 2013 and 2017 were harmed in attacks on schools, like those described above. These attacks affected hundreds of students and teachers. However, students and educators were also killed on their way to or from school, as well as in other forms of attack that targeted them more directly.

According to Save the Children, one in five teachers had been displaced or killed by 2015.[2202] UNICEF reported that more than 52,000 teachers and 523 school counselors, nearly a quarter of Syria's teaching personnel, had left their posts by 2015, due to the conflict. Some fled and became refugees in other countries.[2203] GCPEA identified anecdotal cases of students and educators who were individually targeted. Attacks on education personnel appeared to become more common toward the end of the reporting period, in 2016.

In 2013 and 2014, shelling killed or injured students in at least four reported incidents. The later three incidents were all reported by SHRC:

- Human Rights Watch reported that on May 19, 2013, a 6th-grade student died after shelling by armed opposition groups hit him while he was going home from school in Homs.[2204]
- On April 10, 2014, shelling killed four children as they were leaving school in al-Rastan town, Homs.[2205]
- On September 24, 2014, barrel bombs injured several children, again in al-Rastan, Homs as the children were leaving school.[2206]
- On December 22, 2014, a rocket struck a school bus carrying students from Hafsa Primary School in Saraqib, Idlib. The attack killed four children and injured nine other people.[2207]

Teachers and education personnel also were killed, arrested, detained, or abducted in at least five incidents in 2013 and 2014. For example:

- Lebanon's *Daily Star* reported that in June 2013, a missile hit a government helicopter carrying seven Ministry of Education employees who were transporting exam papers to secondary school students in northern Aleppo. All seven employees and the plane's crew died. The Syrian government accused opposition groups of targeting the plane.[2208]
- Between January 1, 2013, and March 31, 2014, the UN reported three cases of teachers being arrested and detained. The report attributed responsibility for two of these cases to the government and for one to 'IS'.[2209]
- The UN also noted that it had received reports that on October 5, 2014, 'IS' detained a married couple for allegedly teaching mixed-gender classes.[2210]

During 2014 and 2015, exam periods exposed students to particular risks, as thousands of students from besieged areas had to make dangerous journeys across checkpoints to take exams in government schools to ensure that their scores would be recognized by the Syrian government, according to UNICEF and Save the Children.[2211] UNICEF verified that more than 150 of the 400 children killed in 2015 were at school or on their way to or from school when the deadly incident occurred.[2212] Attacks included the following:

- Local sources reported to Human Rights Watch, the UN, and the media that on May 29, 2014, 'IS' abducted 153 Kurdish students who were returning from their end-of-year exams in Aleppo.[2213] The group separated male from female students and kidnapped only the boys.[2214] Four boys escaped after a few days, slipping out a door while their classmates distracted their captors.[2215] 'IS' released many of the remaining boys over the course of the next five months.[2216] According to Human Rights Watch interviews with some of the released children, 'IS' beat the boys and forced them to attend religious lessons and watch videos of 'IS' beheadings and attacks.[2217]
- In December 2015, according to Save the Children, students were stopped at checkpoints while on their way to take exams at government schools in some besieged areas of Damascus. Individuals interviewed by Save the Children reported that the people manning the checkpoints confiscated students' food and medicine. Save the Children did not report why the children were stopped or who controlled the checkpoints.[2218]

Reported attacks on educators appeared to escalate in 2016, when the UN verified 11 incidents of attacks on education personnel, which harmed 28 educators. The UN noted that these numbers represented a 40 percent increase over 2015.[2219] Government forces and other groups continued to intimidate and abduct students and teachers at school and at home in 2016. OCHA reported allegations in January 2016 that 1,500 school students and 400 university students were unable to take their exams or look for jobs because of a siege by opposition groups in the villages of al-Fu'ah and Kafriya in Idlib governorate.[2220] Other incidents included the following:

- The UN received reports that a Kurdish school teacher was abducted from his home in Qamishli city, al-Hasakah governorate, which is on the border with Turkey, on January 9, 2016, and taken to an unknown location. The Kurdish National Council accused the Democratic Union Party/People's Protection Unit (YPG) of kidnapping him.[2221]
- UNICEF noted in February 2016 that girls attending the UNICEF-supported 1070 School in western Aleppo had reported that a sniper repeatedly threatened them by aiming his gun in their direction.[2222]
- OHCHR received reports that a 15-year-old schoolboy died in detention on May 7, 2016, after approximately two years in prison. He had been arrested for unclear or unknown reasons at a government checkpoint in Deir al-Zour city while on his way to take his exams.[2223]

At the time of writing there were no reports of targeted attacks on students or education personnel in 2017.

Military use of schools and universities

In *Education under Attack 2014,* Syria had the highest rate of reported military use of education facilities of any profiled country. As of the beginning of 2013, as many as 1,000 schools were reported to have been used as barracks, firing positions, or detention and torture centers by different parties to the conflict.[2224] It was not clear when this use occurred. Reports of military use of schools and universities did not reach these levels between 2013 and 2017, but military use did occur consistently throughout the reporting period.

According to Human Rights Watch, armed opposition groups continued to use schools as barracks, detention centers, military bases, and sniper posts in 2013 and 2014.[2225] Between January 1, 2013, and March 31, 2014, the UN documented 16 instances of schools being used as military bases, barracks, or weapons depositories by government forces (4), by the Free Syrian Army (7), by Jabhat al-Nusra (2), and by the YPG (3).[2226]

The UN verified fewer cases of military use of schools in 2014, including nine by 'IS' and other non-state armed groups.[2227] SHRC recorded 37 schools used as military bases across Syria in 2014. This included 27 cases of use by government forces, 8 by 'IS,' and 2 by armed opposition groups, some of which apparently led to attacks on schools.[2228] For example, SHRC reported that on September 8, 2014, Syrian government forces shelled an agricultural high school that 'IS' was using as a military base in Hjen town, Deir al-Zour. The attack seriously damaged the school.[2229]

Information GCPEA collated from UN, NGO, and media sources indicated that, in addition to being used as bases, schools were also reportedly used as prisons in 2014. Examples included the following:

- An August 2014 report by the UN noted that OHCHR had received reports of prisoners being transferred out of a prison in Al-Andalus School in the Old City of Homs.[2230]
- Two UN reports documented additional information indicating that prisoners were transferred to Al-Wahda School in Aleppo in May and July 2014.[2231]

Military use of schools continued in 2015, with at least nine cases reported, at least eight of which were verified by the UN.[2232] These included the following:

- The UN verified that government forces were using eight schools in Idlib for military purposes in March 2015. Reportedly, armed opposition groups subsequently attacked four of the schools using unreported means.[2233]
- According to information verified by UNICEF, government troops used six schools for military purposes in the Ariha subdistrict of Idlib governorate in April 2015. It was not clear whether any or all of these cases overlapped with those documented the previous month.[2234]
- Education Cluster partners reported that on June 25, 2015, 'IS' used a school in Kobane, Aleppo governorate, as a firing location for attacking civilians.[2235]

The UN reported approximately the same number of cases of military use in 2016 as it had verified the previous year: nine instances of military use, including five by the Free Syrian Army, three by 'IS,' and one by government forces. The UN noted that opposing forces reportedly subsequently attacked two of the schools, a trend that was reported by other agencies as well.[2236] For example:

- According to the UN, in June 2016, 'IS' allegedly used two schools in Raqqa city for military purposes, evicting IDPs who had been living there.[2237]
- According to information that Airwars assessed as "fair," 'IS' used two schools in or near Manbij, Aleppo governorate, in June and July 2016. Reported coalition air strikes hit the first, an agricultural secondary school that 'IS' was reportedly using as a detention center, on June 13, 2016, and the second, a primary school that 'IS' was reportedly occupying for unknown purposes, on July 28, 2016.[2238]
- In late September 2016, the UN reported that 'IS' had forcibly taken over UNRWA's Al Jarmaq School in the Yarmouk refugee camp near Damascus. The group was reportedly using the school to deliver educational services.[2239]
- Information provided to OHCHR by the Syrian government indicated that Muhaddathah School in the Sukkari area of Aleppo had been used for military purposes. Fourteen bodies found in the school on December 23, 2016, were members of the Syrian armed forces and six were members of government-allied forces.[2240]

Al Ameen for Humanitarian support, a Syrian nonprofit, reported in October 2017 that 'IS' had used 54 schools in Deir al-Zour governorate as headquarters for the General Islamic Services Authority and the Islamic police.[2241] It was not clear when this use occurred. GCPEA separately identified reports that at least three schools and one university were used for military purposes during 2017, including the following:

- OCHA reported allegations that snipers took up positions on the roof of the education faculty of al-Furat University in Deir al-Zour governorate during fighting between 'IS' and the government in the beginning of January 2017. Their presence exposed students to shelling and gunfire as they took their exams.[2242]
- Airwars reported that on April 18, 2017, Mohammed Al-Faris School in al-Tabaqa, Raqqa governorate, was targeted by warplanes. The basement of the school was reportedly being used to hold prisoners.[2243]
- The UN also received reports that 'IS' fighters used Aqarib Primary School northeast of Salamiyah city, Hama governorate, on May 18, 2017, during a battle with government forces.[2244]
- According to the UN, 'IS' was reported to have used a school in Albu Kamal city, Deir al-Zour governorate. The school was subsequently targeted by rockets on June 15, 2017.[2245]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

From 2013 to 2017 there was little documentation of how many children had been recruited from schools specifically to fight for government, pro-government, or anti-government forces in Syria. Nevertheless, some anecdotal information indicated that schools might have been used for recruitment purposes, unlike the period covered by *Education under Attack 2014*, during which no cases were reported. For example:

- On June 8, 2016, government security forces and pro-government armed groups arrested 150 students who were taking exams at Thib Antar School in the Jurah neighborhood of Deir al-Zour, according to reports received by the UN. The UN noted that it was believed the students had been detained in order to recruit them into armed groups.[2246]
- Also in 2016, the ACU found that there were twice as many girl students as boy students enrolled in school. Key informants interviewed by the ACU in Raqqa reported that parents were keeping their boys home from school for fear they would be recruited and that children did often disappear, presumably taken to provide services to fighters.[2247]

There was also some indication that education-related activities played a role in child recruitment. Based on interviews conducted with children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups, Human Rights Watch reported that armed opposition groups encouraged boys as young as 15 years old to fight, and that groups including Jabhat al-Nusra and 'IS' at times recruiting them by offering free lectures and schooling.[2248]

Attacks on higher education

While the majority of reported attacks on educational institutions affected primary or secondary schools, attacks by 'IS' and unidentified parties also affected higher education institutions, as mortars, rockets, IEDs, and air strikes struck university buildings. There were also reports that different parties sporadically targeted higher education students and personnel. The number of such attacks was similar to that reported during the 2009-2013 period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Media reports indicated that multiple explosions hit two of the country's most prestigious universities in 2013:

- Two explosions at Aleppo University killed at least 80 people and wounded 150 on the first day of midterm examinations in January 2013.[2249] Many students and university personnel were believed to be among those killed.[2250] The government and opposition groups blamed one another for the attack.[2251]
- Two months later, in March 2013, a mortar fired by armed opposition groups hit a cafe on the Damascus University campus, killing at least 10 students and wounding approximately 29.[2252]

In 2014, mortars and rockets reportedly hit at least three university and college campuses multiple times. For example:

- The UN received information that on March 24, 2014, a mortar shell damaged the faculty of mechanical engineering in Ladhiqiyah.[2253]
- The UN also noted reports that two days later, on March 26, 2014, there was an explosion at Damascus University's Faculty of Medicine in Damascus.[2254] A suicide bomber detonated explosives at the same college on November 2, 2014, killing two students and injuring five, according to information provided to the UN by the Syrian government.[2255]
- On May 3, 2014, three mortars shells reportedly landed on the Faculty of Economy and Trading at the University of Aleppo, killing 12 students and injuring 16, according to reports received by the UN.[2256]

Also in 2014, Syrian government forces killed at least one professor and 'IS' prevented female university students from studying. For example:

- According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, government security forces tortured and killed a professor at al-Furat University in Deir al-Zour in 2014 for his alleged involvement in Jabhat al-Nusra.[2257]

- The US Department of State cited reports that armed groups such as 'IS' prevented female students in Raqqa from traveling to complete their university exams, also during 2014.[2258]

Rockets and mortars struck universities at least six times in 2015. For example:

- On June 4, 2015, rockets hit Baath University in Homs, according to reports received by the UN.[2259]
- Based on interviews, the Commission of Inquiry documented the killing of one student on November 10, 2015, when rockets fired by unidentified fighters struck Tishreen University in government-controlled Latakia city.[2260]
- According to SHRC, a missile that landed on Damascus University's School of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering on September 2, 2015, reportedly killed 1 student and injured 15 others.[2261]
- On November 19, 2015, media sources reported that the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering building at Damascus University was hit by mortar rounds, killing at least two students and injuring three. No group claimed responsibility for the attack.[2262]
- According to reports received by the UN, on December 2, 2015, mortar rounds impacted the al-Sham Higher Institute in Damascus' Rukn al-Deen neighborhood, injuring 14 students and others.[2263]
- Also on December 2, 2015, a mortar shell struck the Civil Engineering College, injuring two students and a professor.[2264]

In 2016 there were at least 11 incidents in which air strikes, rockets, or mortar rounds hit university buildings, campuses, or buses, according to information compiled by GCPEA.[2265] All attacks were reported to have taken place during the second half of the year. For example:

- Based on information shared with Human Rights Watch, during an incendiary bomb attack on August 7, 2016, Syrian or Russian forces hit near the Faculty of Humanities of the university in al-Dabbit, Idlib.[2266]
- On August 10, 2016, projectiles launched by an unidentified armed group hit a bus of students on their way to Aleppo University, killing 13 of the 24 passengers and wounding 35 others, including civilians on the street, according to reports provided to the Commission of Inquiry.[2267]
- Sources in Aleppo reported to OCHA that a rocket launched by armed opposition groups hit the University of Aleppo in al-Furqan neighborhood on October 4, 2016, killing at least two students and several other people.[2268]
- OCHA noted that, according to media sources, mortars struck an agricultural and medical institute in the same neighborhood, also on October 4, 2016, wounding a teacher and three students.[2269]
- Unidentified armed groups hit Aleppo University a second time on November 2, 2016, killing at least two female students at its Faculty of Humanities, according to reports provided to the Commission of Inquiry.[2270]
- OCHA reported a fourth alleged attack on Aleppo University on November 9, 2016, when shelling killed six people and injured twenty. It was not clear how many of them were students, faculty, or other personnel.[2271]

GCPEA identified reports that air strikes or ground strikes struck university campuses six times from January 1 through November 30, 2017:

- The UN received reports that a veterinary school in Idlib city, Idlib governorate, was struck during air strikes on January 30, 2017.[2272]
- According to SNHR, a missile damaged an industrial school near Kafr Nabl city, Idlib governorate, on March 22, 2017, damaging it and making it unusable. SNHR believed that Russian planes were responsible for the strike.[2273]
- The UN identified reports that air strikes on the Faculty of Education at Idlib University injured a female student on March 25, 2017.[2274] SNHR suspected that Russian planes were responsible for the strike.[2275]
- OCHA reported that the faculty of science and an industrial school in Raqqa city, Raqqa governorate, were both severely damaged during air strikes on May 29, 2017.[2276]
- According to SNHR, shells partially damaged Aleppo University's Faculty of Law building, located in the al-Jame'a neighborhood, on August 16, 2017.[2277]

THAILAND

Dozens of explosive devices targeted government security forces who had been tasked with protecting teachers and schools, putting educators and students at risk and, in some cases, killing or injuring them. Dozens of schools in Thailand were deliberately damaged or destroyed, or unintentionally caught in crossfire. University students and academics were arrested and detained in the context of expanded restrictions on freedom of expression and political opposition.

Context

From early 2004 through the current reporting period, separatists launched an armed insurgency to seek autonomy for Songkhla, Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat provinces.[2278] In February 2013, negotiations facilitated by the Malaysian government began between the Thai government and representatives of Barisan Revolusi Nasional Melayu Patani (BRN) (Patani-Malay National Revolutionary Front), the principal non-state armed group in the country, and other separatist groups in the loose network of Majlis Syura Patani (Mara Patani). At the time of writing, these talks were ongoing but unfruitful.[2279]

After staging a coup that overthrew the elected Thai government on May 22, 2014, the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) junta intensified its counterinsurgency measures in the deep south, which created a major obstacle for efforts to seek a political solution to the conflict.[2280] Government security sweeps pushed back the separatists, but they were able to maintain a presence in hundreds of ethnic Malay Muslim villages.[2281]

In addition to intensifying operations in the deep south, the junta imposed restrictions on freedom of expression across the country, enforcing a ban on public discussions about decentralization and self-governance.[2282] In June 2017, the UN expressed concern about the number of prosecutions under the *lèse-majesté* laws, which outlawed insulting the monarchy but did not define what constituted such an insult.[2283]

The insurgency in the deep south and nationwide restrictions on freedom of expression negatively affected education. In the deep south, Malay Muslim insurgents directly targeted government-funded education, as they viewed government teachers as representatives of the Thai government and government schools as vehicles for assimilating the Malay Muslim community.[2284] Conversely, security forces raided madrassas while searching for insurgents, and insurgents targeted madrassas and Islamic teachers who cooperated with the Thai government.[2285] In 2017, CEDAW noted that the ongoing conflict impeded the rights of ethnic Malay Muslim women in the deep south, including their right to education, and that there were gender bias and stereotypes in the curriculum.[2286] Meanwhile, nationwide enforcement of the *lèse-majesté* laws primarily affected higher education by limiting student protests and activism.[2287]

The different types of attacks on education demonstrated diverse trends during the 2013-2017 reporting period. Reports of attacks on higher education increased, reports of attacks on primary and secondary schools began to decrease after 2015, and attacks on primary and secondary school students and teachers fluctuated throughout the reporting period.

Attacks on schools

Non-state armed groups and unidentified perpetrators were suspected of having bombed or set on fire dozens of schools, along with other government offices and state-related bodies, all of which were perceived by some ethnic Malay Muslims as instruments of Thai domination and assimilation policies.[2288] Many of these attacks targeted government security forces who were protecting schools or teachers, but the violence damaged schools and harmed students and teachers in the process. These attacks on schools continued to be reported throughout 2014 at rates similar to those recorded in the 2009-2013 reporting period, with a decrease in reported attacks starting in 2015.

GCPEA collected information on eight attacks on schools in 2013, a level similar to reports found for the previous year.[2289] The UN reported that, in 2013, armed groups used IEDs to attack state armed forces who were stationed to protect schools in several cases, thereby putting school children and teachers at risk.[2290] More than half of the reported incidents identified by GCPEA directly targeted security forces. Media and UN sources reported six incidents that harmed security forces or volunteers as they were protecting schools. There were also at least two reported incidents of arson that affected schools. For example:

- Unknown perpetrators carried out an attack on an army ranger who was protecting a school in Cho Ai Rong district on January 30, 2013, in Narathiwat province. The attack injured the ranger.[2291]
- Local media also reported two arson attacks on schools in February 2013, both carried out by unidentified assailants. One occurred in Narathiwat province on February 13, 2013, and a second took place in Pattani province on February 23, 2013.[2292]
- On July 31, 2013, an armed separatist group detonated an IED at a school in Yala province, injuring a security volunteer.[2293]
- A bomb planted behind the guard booth at a school in Yala province killed two soldiers and injured a 12-year-old school boy on September 10, 2013. Government authorities believed that a BRN splinter group was responsible for the attack.[2294]

Attacks affecting schools appeared to accelerate in 2014, with at least 14 attacks reported. In several cases, the attacks targeted security forces providing protection for schools, students, and teachers on or near school grounds.[2295] For example:

- Media sources recorded one IED attack in Narathiwat province on March 10, 2014, when unidentified assailants threw a grenade at a school.[2296]
- Two arson attacks occurred in Narathiwat province on May 11, 2014, when unknown perpetrators reportedly set fire to two schools in one night. Local sources attributed the attacks to armed separatists.[2297]
- The UN reported that, in October 2014, nighttime arson attacks targeted eight schools in Pattani and Narathiwat provinces. According to the UN, these attacks may have been retaliation by an armed group for attacks by the Thai army. While no group claimed responsibility for the attacks, the UN stated that some reports indicated that the incidents constituted retaliation by a BRN-led armed group for attacks by government security forces. [2298] Media sources reported six arson attacks in Pattani province on October 12, 2014.[2299] It was not clear how much overlap there was between the two lists of attacks.
- Local media also reported that an armed separatist group detonated an IED near an Islamic school in Pattani province on December 5, 2014, possibly targeting a group of soldiers nearby, which damaged the school.[2300]

Reports of attacks on schools appeared to decrease in 2015, with only two incidents documented that year, both perpetrated by unidentified assailants:

A school bag lies on a street in Narathiwat province, Thailand after a motorcycle bomb exploded outside of an elementary school on September 6, 2016. The attack occurred as parents were dropping off their children, killing a father and daughter.

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- On September 11, 2015, a bomb planted by unknown assailants exploded at the entrance of a community school in Pattani province, according to the UN. The attack injured five students between the ages of 3 and 15.[2301]
- Local media reported that two months later, on November 19, 2015, unidentified assailants opened fire on a school in Yala province, injuring the security guard.[2302]

In 2016, reports of attacks on schools again occurred sporadically. Unknown attackers and alleged non-state armed groups were responsible for the attacks, with five such incidents found by GCPEA:

- On February 12, 2016, unidentified assailants set fire to Ban Khai School in Pulo Puyo, Nong Chik district, Pattani province, causing no casualties, according to local media.[2303]
- In an attack on August 6, 2016, an IED planted by unknown perpetrators exploded at Bannangsetar Intharachat School in Bannang Sata district, Yala province. There were no injuries in the blast, and it was not clear if the school was damaged, according to local media.[2304]

- Local media also reported that on August 7, 2016, an IED exploded at the entrance to a school, targeting a convoy carrying referendum ballots in Pattani province. A school official, who sources reported was serving as director of the local voting station, was killed in the blast.[2305]
- The UN, Human Rights Watch, Save the Children, and other sources reported that on September 6, 2016, alleged members of a non-state armed group detonated a bomb in front of a school in Tak Bai district, Narathiwat province, as parents were dropping their children off in the morning. A father and his daughter were killed in the blast and at least 10 people were injured, including teachers.[2306]
- On August 2, 2016, an explosive device planted near Solihiyah School in Khok Pho district, Pattani province, detonated, slightly wounding two security volunteers. The school was closed for the day as a result.[2307]

At the time of writing, GCPEA had not identified any attacks on schools in 2017.

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Most of the attacks that affected teachers targeted government security forces responsible for forming teacher-protection units that escorted teachers to school, putting the teachers at risk and in some cases resulting in their deaths. Notably, however, casualties among civilian government employees—such as civil servants and teachers—outnumbered casualties among government security forces.[2308]

Reports of attacks on teachers and other education personnel remained at the same level in 2013 as in previous years, then peaked in both 2014 and 2016, with apparent lulls in 2015 and 2017. Reported incidents affecting students remained at levels similar to the 2009-2013 reporting period, between one and three per year, through 2015, with no reports of attacks on students identified in 2016 and one in 2017.

Attacks on teachers and education personnel were more frequent than those on students, and the UN reported that, according to the Ministry of Education, at least seven teachers and three education-related personnel were killed in 2013.[2309] Media soures reported that at least 12 attacks affecting teachers and education personnel involved assailants targeting government security forces who were escorting teachers to school as part of a broad teacher-protection program.[2310] In nine additional incidents recorded by media sources throughout the year—five in Pattani province, two in Narathiwat, one in Yala province, and one in an unknown location—unidentified assailants opened fire on teachers or education personnel.[2311] It was unclear whether government security forces were escorting these teachers at the time the attacks occurred, nor was it clear how many of these 21 media-reported attacks overlapped with the 10 incidents documented by the UN. In contrast to reported attacks on teachers, GCPEA identified only one attack on students.

Attacks on students and teachers in 2013 included the following:

- Two unidentified motorcyclists opened fire on a bus that was transporting seven kindergarten students to school in Rueso district, Narathiwat province, on January 23, 2013, according to local media. None of the passengers was injured in the attack.[2312]
- The UN and local media found that on January 23, 2013, four unidentified gunmen entered a school cafeteria in Narathiwat province and shot a teacher in front of dozens of children, including his 7-year-old daughter.[2313] Most of these attacks occurred in Pattani and Narathiwat provinces.
- News sources reported that on June 20, 2013, a roadside IED detonated as a teacher security patrol was passing by, injuring five soldiers. No teachers were reported injured.[2314]
- On August 21, 2013, gunmen shot and killed a teacher from the Islam Community Foundation School in Moo 5, Pattani province. Authorities reportedly attributed the attack to separatists.[2315]
- On December 12, 2013, a bomb placed in front of a school targeted a military convoy providing protection for teachers, reportedly injuring two workers and six members of the government security forces. Local news media attributed this attack to a separatist group.[2316]

Attacks on personnel appeared to be more frequent in 2014, mainly due to an increase in attacks on teacher-protection units, while reports of attacks on students remained consistent at one per year. In more than 30 incidents reported by local media, explosives and gunfire targeted teacher-protection units as they accompanied teachers to school.[2317] For example, local media reported that on August 28, 2014, a gas cylinder bomb was used to attack a motorcycle convoy of teachers and their soldier escorts in Pattani province. The explosion on the side of the road reportedly killed one female teacher and injured another.[2318] In addition to being affected by incidents directed at their protection units, teachers were also directly targeted and received threats, and students were attacked. For example:

- Human Rights Watch reported that on January 14, 2014, unknown assailants shot a teacher in Yala province while he rode home from his school on a motorcycle.[2319]
- The UN and international media reported that on March 14, 2014, assailants shot dead a female teacher riding a motorcycle to school, then poured gasoline on her body and set it on fire. A pamphlet with the words, "This attack is in revenge for the killing of innocent people," was found near her body.[2320]
- Less than one week later, unidentified perpetrators reportedly shot and killed a teacher in Narathiwat province, according to Human Rights Watch.[2321]
- The UN reported that banners threatening teachers were hung in parts of Yala province in November.[2322]
- Local media sources recorded two incidents, one each on November 12 and 15, 2014, when unknown gunmen opened fire on two teachers, one in Yala province and one in Pattani province.[2323]
- News sources also reported an incident on November 27, 2014, in which assailants opened fire on high school students in Tanyong Talo area, Pattani province, killing one and injuring another.[2324]

Reports of attacks on teachers decreased in frequency in 2015, while attacks on students remained at a level similar to previous years. According to the UN, the Ministry of Education reported that two teachers and one student were killed in attacks, and one teacher and two students were injured.[2325] Meanwhile, local media documented five explosions targeting teacher-protection units, three in Pattani province and two in Narathiwat province.[2326] Gun attacks on teachers reported by local news sources in 2015 included the following:

- On May 9, 2015, unknown assailants shot and killed two teachers in the street in Narathiwat province.[2327]
- On May 26, 2015, assailants started shooting at a car carrying a teacher and a community leader in Pattani province, killing them both.[2328]
- On July 13, 2015, a physical education teacher was shot and killed by unknown perpetrators in Pattani province.[2329]

Reported attacks targeting teacher-protection units increased again in 2016, when local media sources documented 22 such incidents: 12 in Narathiwat province, 8 in Pattani province, and 2 in Yala province. Of these attacks, 19 involved IEDs planted by the side of the road or elsewhere near the patrols, and three used gunfire to target teachers and their protection units.[2330] The teachers were largely uninjured in these attacks. In addition, local and international media reported that on October 28, 2016, two unidentified assailants on motorbikes shot and killed a teacher in Pattani province as she parked her car outside the school where she worked.[2331] GCPEA did not identify reports of attacks on students in 2016.

GCPEA identified one recorded incident of an attack on students in 2017. *Reuters* reported that on March 2, 2017, assailants opened fire on a village deputy leader's car as he was transporting several children to a village school in Rue Soh district, Narathiwat province. An 8-year-old boy was killed instantly and two other children were

wounded.[2332] There were no reported attacks targeting teachers. It was not clear whether this reduction was related to a change in the security environment or to a lack of information at the time of writing.

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

Information on child recruitment from schools in Thailand was sparse, but anecdotal information indicated that it did occur. Three former child recruits reported to Child Soldiers International in 2014 that armed groups had used private Islamic schools to indoctrinate and recruit them and other students.[2333]

Attacks on higher education

During the reporting period, government security forces reportedly arrested university students and professors for their perceived opposition to the government. Many of these arrests took place under the *lèse-majesté* laws, which criminalized insulting the monarchy and were more actively and more broadly enforced after the May 2014 coup.[2334] Reports of this form of attack were more frequent than in *Education under Attack 2014*.

The separatist conflict in the deep south affected higher education sporadically during the reporting period. There were reports of isolated incidents of IED explosions and gunfire affecting universities, students, and education personnel in the southern provinces.

Media sources and NGOs documented two incidents of government forces arresting higher education students and personnel on political grounds in 2014:

- Scholars at Risk reported an incident on September 18, 2014, in which government forces interrupted a forum on democracy at Thammasat University in Bangkok, titled "The Fall of Dictatorships." They detained a group of four academics and three students, who were held at a local police station for a few hours and questioned before being released.[2335]
- Scholars at Risk also reported that on October 27, 2014, a student and a professor at Thammasat University in Bangkok were charged and jailed for insulting the monarchy when they staged a play called "The Wolf Bride," which parodied the Thai political conflict of 2013.[2336]

There was one incident in Thailand's deep south in 2014, in which suspected separatists shot and killed a university student. Local media reported that on November 2, 2014, unidentified assailants shot and killed a university student in Muang district, Narathiwat province. Local sources alleged that the perpetrators were members of an armed separatist group.[2337]

In 2015, the government's crackdown on perceived student opposition continued with the reported arrest of at least 14 students in a single incident, representing a slight increase in the number of people affected during 2014. Scholars at Risk and Human Rights Watch found that on June 26, 2015, state police arrested 14 students from the New Democracy Movement for sedition and violating the junta government's ban on public assembly. The students had led a nonviolent protest against the government the day before at Thammasat University in Bangkok. They were detained until July 8, 2015. The charges against them remained pending for an unknown period of time.[2338]

NGO reports indicated that student activists continued to be affected by restrictions on freedom of expression in 2016. GCPEA collected information on two incidents in which students were detained, arrested, or beaten:

- Human Rights Watch reported that on January 20, 2016, government security forces abducted a well-known student activist as he walked with friends outside Thammasat University's Rangsit campus. The abductors grabbed him and pushed him into a truck with no license plates. Soldiers then handed him over to the police in the early morning of the next day. He later reported that he had been blindfolded, beaten, interrogated about his political affiliations, and accused of violating the ban on public assembly and political activity.[2339]
- According Scholars at Risk, on June 24, 2016, police arrested a group of student activists who were returning to the campus of Phranakhon Rajbhat University in Bangkok after marching to Bangkok's Laksi Monument, where they had distributed copies of *Kao Kham,* the New Democracy Movement's newspaper. Police officers had asked the students to stop distributing the newspapers but the students refused. They were then arrested under a law banning political gatherings of five or more people. The students were released later in the day and were not formally charged with anything.[2340]

Rights groups reported two incidents in which academics were detained or arrested in 2017:

- On August 14, 2017, five academics were required to report to the police after they participated in the 13th International Conference at Chiang Mai University between July 15 and 18. At the conference, a group of Thai and foreign academics issued a statement that called on the government to restore freedom of expression in Thailand. Four of the academics were photographed holding a sign stating, "AN ACADEMIC FORUM IS NOT A MILITARY BARRACK." The four academics and the conference organizer were accused of violating NCPO Order No. 3/2558, which banned political gatherings of five or more people. They faced up to six months in prison and up to a $300 fine if convicted.[2341]
- Thai authorities charged Sulak Sivaraksa, a Thai academic and activist on October 9, 2017, with lèse majesté after he made comments questioning a historical narrative about the 16th century royal elephant battle during an academic conference at Thammasat University. Sivaraksa.[2342] The prosectutor later dropped the charges on January 17, 2018.[2343]

TURKEY

According to Turkey's Ministry of National Education, approximately 100 schools were partially or fully damaged in the southeastern part of the country and some teachers were reportedly abducted. More than 300 higher education personnel were detained, and several dozen protesting students and educators were arrested or injured. Several schools in the southeast of the country were reportedly used for weapons storage.

Context

Violence intensified in the southeast of Turkey after peace negotiations between the Turkish government and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which sought greater autonomy in Turkey, broke down in 2015.[2344] The Turkish government also detained or arrested journalists and academics for alleged affiliations to the PKK and other terrorist organizations.[2345] Most of those arrested were accused of being supporters of US-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gülen, whose movement was termed a terrorist organization referred to as the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization, or FETÖ.[2346] The government and the courts accused Gülen and his followers of being responsible for an attempted coup on July 15, 2016.[2347]

Media and NGO reports indicated that around 5,300 academics were suspended, another 2,300 were fired, and 15 private universities affiliated with the Gülen movement were closed as of September 2016. Many academics reportedly fled from Turkey due to a lack of employment or the perceived risks in staying.[2348] Among the academics affected were hundreds dismissed by universities after they signed a January 2016 declaration condemning the government's security operations in cities of the southeast.[2349] At the trials of those detained, which began in December 2017, more than 100 were charged with spreading terrorist propaganda.[2350] OHCHR found that more than 40,000 education personnel from the Ministry of National Education, most of them teachers, were dismissed or suspended, including 9,000 teachers working in Kurdish-speaking parts of the southeast, who were reportedly suspended due to their suspected ties to the PKK. [2351] The majority of the latter were later reinstated in their jobs.[2352]

Attacks on education were more common and were increasingly reported throughout the current reporting period than in the period covered by *Education under Attack 2014*.

Attacks on schools

According to Turkey's minister of education, the PKK bombed or set fire to more than 100 schools.[2353] These numbers indicated an uptick in reported attacks on schools over the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*. GCPEA identified between 5 and 15 reports of attacks on schools annually from 2014 through 2016, and one in 2017.

Media sources reported at least 10 attacks on schools in 2014, including a series of coordinated arson attacks reportedly perpetrated by the PKK on primary and secondary schools in September. During these attacks, assailants reportedly threw incendiary devices into seven schools in Cizre district, Şırnak province, and three schools in Yüksekova district, Hakkâri province, on September 16 and 17, 2014. These attacks damaged school infrastructure but did not cause any injuries.[2354]

There were at least 13 attacks on schools in 2015, as documented in media reports collated by GCPEA.[2355] For example:

- On September 26, 2015, assailants believed to be members of the PKK fired rockets and firearms at a gendarmerie station in Güce district, Giresun province. They reportedly struck a nearby school in the attack, killing four civilians.[2356]
- Media sources reported that on September 30, 2015, the PKK damaged the windows and gates of seven primary and middle schools in the Bulanık district, Mus province. The damage was reported to be retaliation for the educational institutions' refusal to comply with the PKK's demand that schools refrain from opening at the beginning of the academic year. There were no reported casualties in these incidents.[2357]
- An IED reportedly exploded outside a school in Silvan district, Diyarbakır province, on October 8, 2015, killing one child and injuring three.[2358]

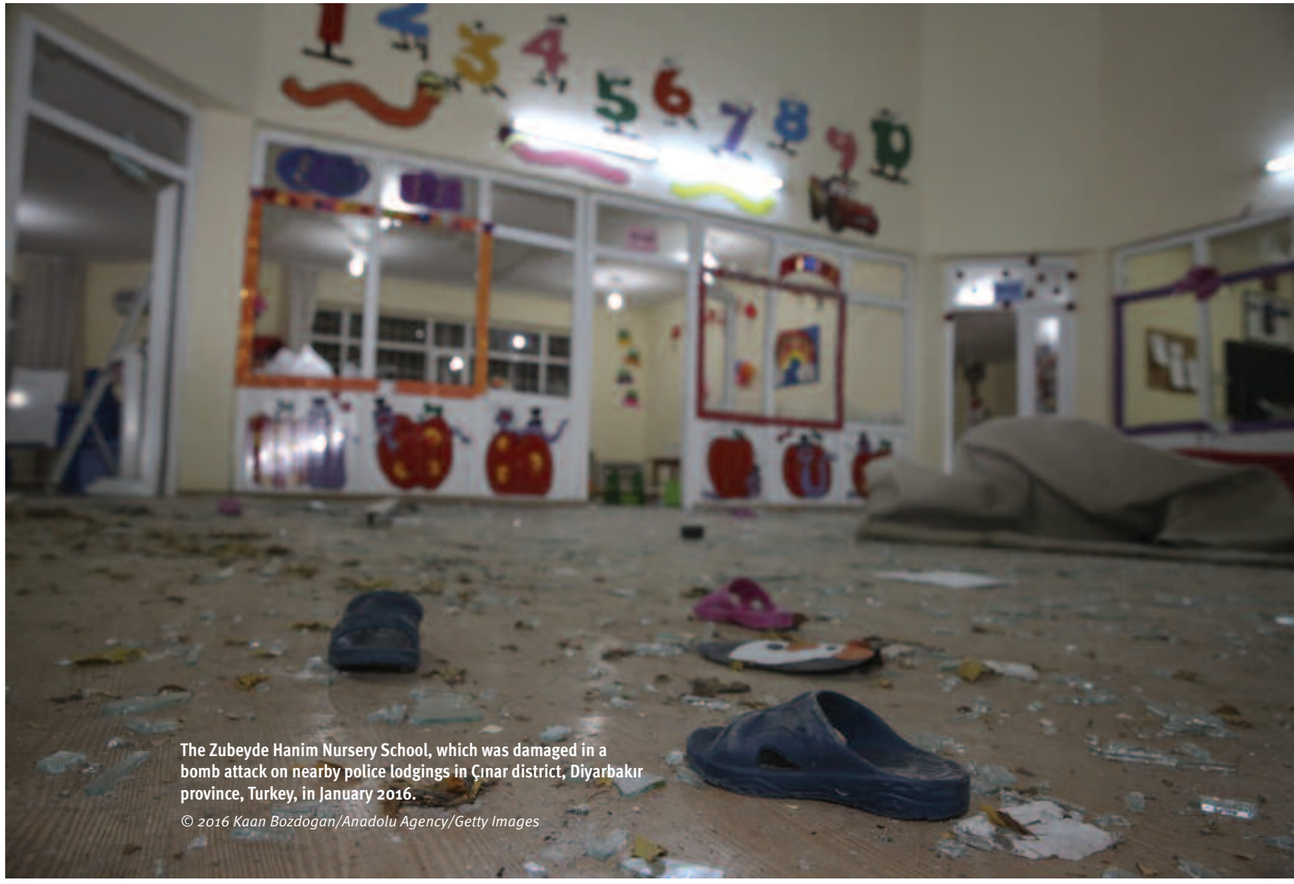
GCPEA identified 12 attacks on schools in 2016, including incidents in which the PKK planted bombs in schoolyards and set schools on fire, as well as one rocket launched from Syria that struck a school in Turkey. These included:

- The PKK reportedly set fire to eight schools and a dormitory in İdil district, Şırnak province, on January 14, 2016.[2359]
- On January 18, 2016, a rocket from an unknown source in Syria struck a school in Turkey's southern Kilis province, killing a female janitor and injuring a female student.[2360]
- Also on January 18, 2016, five children were reportedly wounded in a bomb attack that took place near an elementary school in Diyarbakır province, as they were playing in the schoolyard.[2361]
- On January 19, 2016, the PKK reportedly launched Molotov cocktails at two secondary schools in Van province.[2362]
- On June 19, 2016, the PKK reportedly detonated an IED at a nursery school in Van province, destroying most of it.[2363]

At least one school was reported to be targeted in 2017. On October 3, 2017, Turkish security forces defused an IED at Şair Cahin Sıtkı Tarancı Elementary School in Yenişehir district, Diyarbakır province. *Anadolu Agency* attributed the attack to the PKK.[2364]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Beginning in 2015, police detained, arrested, or harmed more than 50 secondary school students and teachers in the context of protests at schools, including against the government's education policies, such as those on compulsory religion classes and the transformation of some secondary schools into religious vocational imam hatip schools.[2365] Both secondary students and university students participated in protests, but reports on the events did not always distinguish between the two groups, making it difficult to determine how many affected



The Zubeyde Hanim Nursery School, which was damaged in a bomb attack on nearby police lodgings in Çınar district, Diyarbakır province, Turkey, in January 2016.

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students were at the secondary or the university level. In multiple cases, teachers were arrested for alleged affiliation with the PKK, FETÖ, or groups designated as terrorist organzations by the Turkish government.[2366] There also were reports that a subgroup of the PKK was responsible for kidnapping almost two dozen teachers in 2015 and for killing one.[2367]

The arrest of students and teachers was reported more commonly than in the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014*. Reports of abductions occurred at rates similar to those documented in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Attacks on students and educators were sporadic in 2015, and included the following:

- In February 2015, police allegedly fired water cannons to disperse teachers, students, parents, and others who were demonstrating against government education policies.[2368]
- The Public Affairs Section of the US Consulate in Adana, Turkey, reported that a subgroup of the PKK abducted 23 teachers on October 7, 2015. These abductions occurred during attacks on four schools in the Silopi district, Şırnak province. The teachers were released after several hours.[2369]

During the last two years of the reporting period there were numerous reports of teachers arrested, and often dismissed from their jobs, for reasons related to their activism and alleged links with the FETÖ.[2370] For example:

- Human Rights Watch received reports that a 40-year-old male school teacher was detained by police in August 2016 and held in prison for at least a year, where he was reportedly threatened and beaten.[2371]
- According to the US State Department, on September 23, 2016, police broke up a teacher protest and detained 17 suspended teachers who were demonstrating in front of the Ministry of National Education provincial office in Diyarbakır city. The teachers had been protesting the mass suspension and dismissal of teachers after the coup attempt.[2372]
- A Turkish teacher and a Turkish academic were reportedly renditioned from Malaysia to Turkey in 2017, and upon their arrival in Turkey they were detained on charges of being FETÖ members, according to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.[2373]
- Human Rights Watch reported that, in April 2017, unidentified perpetrators likely to have been state agents abducted a former teacher who had been dismissed from his job under an emergency decree in Ankara, forcing him into a van. As of May 17, 2017, he was in detention pending trial on charges of being a member of FETÖ.[2374]
- On May 22, 2017, Semih Özakça, a primary school teacher, and Nuriye Gülmen, a professor of literature, were arrested for their alleged membership in a terrorist group.[2375] Özakça had joined Gülmen in a long-term hunger strike and sit-in in central Ankara, protesting their dismissal from their jobs. Their trial began in September 2017.[2376] Özakça was released in October, and Gülmen was released in December. They ended their hunger strike in January 2018, but had not been reinstated to their jobs.[2377]
- The PKK confirmed media reports that in June 2017 it had abducted and killed a 23-year-old teacher, Necmettin Yılmaz, in Zaxge village, Tunceli province.[2378] The full circumstances of his death remained unexplained.

Military use of schools

There was some evidence of the Turkish army's presence inside schools in 2015 and 2016, as the government conducted security operations in the southeast of the country. These reports were new, as GCPEA did not identify any military use of educational institutions in *Education under Attack 2014*.

According to reports received by OHCHR, the government deployed heavy armored vehicles in and around schools, such as Suleyman Nazif School in Diyarbakır province, between July 2015 and December 2016.[2379] *Al Jazeera* reported that a school used by Turkish security forces in Cizre town, Şırnak province, was destroyed in March 2016.[2380]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

There were anecdotal reports that the PKK was responsible for recruiting children during the current reporting period. GCPEA did not find reports of child recruitment from schools or along school routes during the previous reporting period, from 2009 through mid-2013.

In May 2015, the human rights group Mazlum Der reported cases of recruitment of children from southeastern Turkey into the PKK.[2381] According to the Turkish Ministry of Interior, the PKK reportedly recruited a 15-year-old girl while she was on her way to school in Van. The girl said that when she saw a PKK member creating propaganda for the organization, he threatened to harm her family unless she joined the group. She joined the PKK that evening.[2382]

Attacks on higher education

Student and academic protests were common throughout the reporting period, and rights groups and media sources reported that police used excessive force to disperse demonstrations against national higher education policies and minority student rights. 'IS' was responsible for a particularly deadly attack on higher education that occurred in 2015. Largely because of the arrests that occurred in 2016 and 2017, incidents related to higher education occurred with significantly higher frequency than was reported in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Between 2013 and 2015, there were reports that police sporadically used force against university student protesters and injured them. Reported incidents included the following:

- Scholars at Risk reported that on three occasions—October 18, 21, and 26, 2013—riot police used teargas, stun grenades, and water cannons to disperse student protests at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, injuring several students.[2383]
- Scholars at Risk reported a series of incidents affecting minority university students that began on January 16, 2014, when an ultra-nationalist group physically assaulted a group of seven mainly leftist and Kurdish students on the Marmara University campus in Göztepe, Istanbul. Following the attack, students held a peaceful protest demanding stronger security on campus. According to Scholars at Risk, police fired water cannons, teargas, and plastic bullets at the protesters.[2384]
- According to Scholars at Risk, a lecturer at Gazi University and the general secretary of the Association of Academic Staff (TÜMÖD) was arrested for insulting President Erdoğan during a TÜMÖD-organized panel discussion on May 23, 2015, in İzmir. He was sentenced on February 3, 2017, to serve nearly one year in prison.[2385]

The deadliest attack against university students occurred on July 20, 2015, when a suspected 'IS' suicide bomber killed at least 30 people, according to Human Rights Watch and media sources. The attack occurred while student activists were gathered in Suruç city to make a press statement about a development assistance project.[2386]

Arrests of academics became more common in 2016. In January, more than 1,100 scholars signed an Academics for Peace petition denouncing military operations in the southeast of Turkey.[2387] Several academic signatories reported receiving threats via social media, telephone, or at their universities, according to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.[2388] Scholars at Risk and media sources stated that dozens of other academics who signed the petition were arrested, charged with terrorism-related crimes, and required to resign from their positions. Government security forces also raided their homes.[2389]

In mid-2016, the Turkish government began detaining and arresting academics, many of whom were accused of having connections to the Gülen movement.[2390] As of December 2016, the government had arrested 37,000 individuals, including soldiers, police officers, judges, prosecutors, academics, teachers, and other civil servants, for their suspected ties.[2391] Many of the government's actions did not constitute attacks on higher education as defined by GCPEA, but they did create an environment of fear. Scholars at Risk reported that throughout the rest of the year the government detained, arrested, dismissed, or banned from travel hundreds of higher education personnel.[2392] For instance, on July 19, 2016, government officials reportedly demanded the resignation of 1,577 deans from all universities in Turkey. Additionally, 19,828 academics were dismissed, suspended from their teaching positions, or forced into unemployment because their universities closed in the wake of the coup attempt, according to media reports.[2393]

Actions that met GCPEA's definition of attacks on higher education were in the form of arrests and detentions. For example:

- On September 2, 2016, security forces arrested 15 academics and university personnel from Mustafa Kemal University on suspicion of connections to terrorist organizations, such as FETÖ, according to *University World News*.[2394]

- Scholars at Risk reported that, in late December 2016, 17 higher education personnel from Gediz University and Uşak University were arrested and detained alleged involvement in the coup attempt. At least one professor's notes and scholarly writing were used as evidence against her.[2395]

Arrests and detention of academics became even more common in 2017, according to information collected by GCPEA. In September 2017, *University World News* reported that Scholars at Risk had documented 49 incidents of detention, arrest, warrants issued, or wrongful prosecution of scholars, university personnel, or students. These incidents reportedly affected 1,308 people.[2396] Most were arrested in connection with on-campus activism or for alleged connections to terrorist groups or the Gülen movement during 2017. Incidents documented by Scholars at Risk or media sources included the following:

- According to Scholars at Risk, on January 4, 2017, private security forces beat seven students from Dokuz Eylül University after they publicly read a statement in response to the New Year's Eve attack on an Istanbul nightclub, for which 'IS' claimed responsibility. Afterward, police reportedly arrested and detained the seven students for one day.[2397]
- On March 30, 2017, police detained 37 students from İstanbul University who had participated in a peaceful demonstration commemorating the 45th anniversary of the 1972 Kızıldere Massacre, according to Scholars at Risk. They had gathered to remember the student leaders who were killed by the military on that day in 1972. The memorialized students were killed after they had taken foreigners hostage in an alleged attempt to pressure the government to halt the executions of some imprisoned student leaders.[2398]
- On May 1, 2017, the government reportedly detained and raided the homes and offices of 16 academic personnel from Dicle University, Diyarbakır, all of whom had signed the 2016 Academics for Peace petition.[2399]
- In July 2017, the government reportedly detained 20 academic and administrative personnel from Selçuk University and Necmettin Erbakan University, as well as 42 personnel from Boğaziçi University and İstanbul Medeniyet University, for their alleged affiliation with the Gülen movement.[2400] Similar arrests took place throughout the year.
- On November 17, 2017, Turkish authorities issued warrants for the detention of 42 current and former academics and administrative personnel of Marmara University because of alleged connections to the Gülen movement. Twenty-two of them were detained that day.[2401]
- On November 27, 2017, Turkish police briefly detained Fikret Baskaya, a professor of economic development and international relations and raided his home because of allegations that he provided support to the PKK. Scholars at Risk reported that, according to Baskaya's lawyer, the reason for Baskaya's arrest was an article he wrote in November 2016 entitled, "The Real Terror Is State Terrorism." Baskaya had previously written several controversial books on socialism, politics, and corruption in Turkey.[2402]

Hurriyet Daily News reported that one attack by the PKK affected higher education in 2017. On January 16, 2017, the PKK reportedly targeted an armored police vehicle in Sur district, Diyarbakır province, which was near an excavation site on the Dicle University campus. The explosion killed four police officers and injured two more, but it was not reported to have harmed any students or education personnel.[2403]

UKRAINE

Indiscriminate shelling and targeted artillery attacks damaged or destroyed more than 740 schools in Ukraine, and both sides of the conflict used schools and universities as bases and barracks. Artillery fire, other explosions, and—early in the reporting period— air strikes occurred near schools, killing and injuring students and other civilians. Fear of such attacks caused many parents to keep their children out of school. Similar attacks also sporadically targeted higher education infrastructure and personnel.

Context

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovytch's ouster from power in February 2014 prompted violent clashes between pro- and anti-government protestors in southeastern Ukraine. When Russia took control over Crimea in March 2014, armed groups took control of many towns and cities in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of eastern Ukraine, and an armed conflict began between these groups and Ukrainian forces.[2404] In May of the same year, armed groups proclaimed self-rule in a referendum on the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.[2405]

In the Minsk agreements of February 2015, the two sides agreed to a ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the "contact line" separating the Government-Controlled Areas (GCA) and the Non-Government-Controlled Areas (NGCA), and access for monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Nevertheless, fighting and shelling continued to flare up.[2406]

Between April 2014 and May 2017, the conflict killed at least 2,505 civilians and injured between 7,000 and 9,000.[2407] Ceasefire violations by all parties to the conflict and almost daily shelling, localized clashes, and unexploded ordnances caused damage and insecurity in civilian areas.[2408]

The conflict led to a splintered education system, and fighting disrupted children's access to education near the contact line.[2409] An assessment published by UNICEF in June 2017 showed that more than 12,000 of the approximately 19,000 children living in GCAs within three miles of the contact line lived in areas that were hit by shelling in the last three months of 2016.[2410] The same UNICEF report found that large numbers of kindergarten-age children living along the contact line were out of school because their parents saw the shelling as too risky and kept them at home.[2411] In addition, five respondents interviewed by UNICEF mentioned gender-based violence and specifically noted that older school girls faced abuse by soldiers, with the proximity and size of military installations being possible risk factors contributing to this violence.[2412] Between 2013 and March 2017, 16 universities and 10 other higher education institutions were forced to relocate to Kyiv, Kryvyi Rih, Kramatorsk, Severodonetsk, Kharkiv, and other cities, due to the violence.[2413]

Ukraine was not included in the 2014 issue of *Education under Attack,* as the conflict had not yet broken out and the country did not meet the reporting criteria.

Attacks on schools

Rockets, heavy artillery, and mortars launched by all parties to the conflict damaged or destroyed hundreds of schools on both sides of the contact line.[2414] In March 2017, the Education Cluster reported that at least 740 schools had been damaged or destroyed since the conflict began in April 2014.[2415] Information collected by GCPEA indicated that attacks on schools were particularly intense in 2014 and 2015, with between 117 and 290 schools damaged or destroyed in 2014 and approximately 200 similarly affected the following year.[2416] As the sustained intensity of the conflict diminished, these numbers decreased slightly, with reported attacks on 26 schools in 2016 and 42 in 2017.[2417]

In 2014, when the armed conflict began, schools in the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces were damaged and destroyed, mainly by indiscriminate shelling but also by direct attacks. In late August 2014, humanitarian organizations and the media estimated that the fighting in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts partially or completely

destroyed between 117 and at least 290 schools.[2418] Schools damaged or destroyed in the violence included the following:

- Media sources reported that in September 2014, unknown assailants attacked a school being used as a shelter in Spartak village, Donetsk oblast (NGCA).[2419]
- According to international media, between August 2014 and February 2015, shelling destroyed a school in Nikishine village, Donetsk oblast, and damaged the kindergarten.[2420]
- OCHA reported that on October 1, 2014, shells hit a school playground and a minibus in Donetsk city (NGCA), killing 10 adults.[2421] According to media reports, a teacher and a student's father were among the casualties, and at least 50 school children were inside the school during the attack.[2422] International media reported that shrapnel shattered windows on the first and second floors of the school.[2423]
- According to the UN, in late October 2014, shelling damaged at least five kindergartens and seven schools in Makiivka town, Donetsk oblast (NGCA). Thirty other educational institutions also suffered damage that month from shelling in Horlivka town, Donetsk oblast (NGCA).[2424]

During 2015, schools in eastern Ukraine continued to sustain damage as they were caught in the crossfire of fighting. According to OCHA, as of October 2015, nearly 200 schools, or one in every five, was damaged or destroyed in NGCA eastern Ukraine.[2425] Examples of artillery or missiles landing on schools included the following:

- Media sources documented an incident in January 2015 in which projectiles landed in Artema town, Luhansk oblast (GCA), hitting and detonating in one school building. The school was abandoned at the time.[2426]
- In February 2015, according to the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group, a missile hit school No. 6 in Debaltsevo town, Donetsk oblast, during fighting for of the city. The missile damaged part of the school's floor structure.[2427]
- Later in 2015, OCHA reported that on November 5, 2014, mortar and artillery shells struck a school sports field in Donetsk city. The strike killed at least two children and injured four more.[2428]

A child plays with his cousin in his former school in Nikishino village, Donetsk oblast, Ukraine. The school was destroyed by fighting on September 27, 2015.

© 2015 Lynsey Addario/Getty Images Reportage

Fighting continued to affect schools in eastern Ukraine during 2016. Shelling and explosions damaged or destroyed at least 26 schools, as reported by the Education Cluster.[2429] For example:

- OHCHR documented damage to three schools during shelling that took place on the night of July 9 through the morning of July 10 in Horlivka town and Sakhanka village, Donetsk oblast (NGCA).[2430]
- The *Interpreter* reported that on October 5, 2016, a vehicle explosion shattered the windows of six local schools and three kindergartens in Makiivka town, Donetsk oblast (NGCA).[2431]

Attacks on schools appeared to escalate in 2017 over the previous year, according to information reported by the Education Cluster. The Education Cluster documented damage or destruction to 42 schools in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts during 2017, including 28 schools in NGCA and 14 schools in GCA.[2432] At least one school was damaged every month throughout 2017.[2433] These incidents reflected continuing violence throughout the year. For example:

- On April 10, 2017, a bullet hit the window of a kindergarten facility in NGCA Donetsk oblast. At the time, 157 children were in the school, 30 of them in the playroom where the bullet hit the window.[2434]
- The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) visited several villages between April and July 2017 and found evidence of shelling having damaged six schools. Two of these were in Luhansk oblast: one in NGCA Kadiivka city, visited on April 30, and the other in Zolote city (GCA), visited on July 15.[2435] Four of the damaged schools found by the SMM were in Donetsk, where monitoring took place between May 28 and June 18, 2017: two of the schools were in Krasnohorivka (GCA), one was in Pavlopil village (GCA), and one was in Yasynuvata village (NGCA).[2436]
- The OSCE SMM found damage to three schools in Donetsk in October and November. One of the schools was damaged on October 29, 2017, in Oleksandrivka, and two were damaged on November 5, 2017, in Donetsk city. All of these incidents damaged school and dormitory walls and broke windows with gunfire or shelling.[2437]
- The Education Cluster reported that seven kindergartens or schools were damaged in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts between December 13 and December 21, 2017. This included three in NGCA Donetsk, two in GCA Donetsk, and two in NGCA Luhansk.[2438] The windows of most of the schools were broken, and one kindergarten in Novoluhanske, Donetsk oblast (GCA), had been directly hit twice on December 18, substantially damaging its roof.[2439]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

Attacks on students and teachers were infrequent. GCPEA found reports of only two targeted attacks on education personnel, both by unknown perpetrators, and no targeted attacks on students during the 2013-2017 period:

- According to OHCHR, on May 14, 2014, four armed men in camouflage abducted the principal of a school in Luhansk from the school premises because she opposed holding a referendum at the school. The men released the principal several hours later. The exact location of the incident was not reported.[2440]
- Local media reported that on February 15, 2016, unidentified assailants threw three grenades at the home of a school director in Stanytsya-Luhanska district, Luhansk oblast (GCA). There were no casualties in the incident.[2441]

Military use of schools and universities

There were reports that parties to the conflict used schools and universities for military purposes, deploying fighters in or near educational facilities, and storing weapons in or near school buildings. In several cases all students were forced to evacuate. Parties to the conflict also reportedly used several state orphanages and boarding schools as bases of operation due to their strategic locations on the outskirts of towns.[2442] There was also anecdotal information that de facto authorities encouraged the use of schools. For example, according to OHCHR, de facto authorities in NGCA Donetsk allegedly pressured school personnel to establish "hideouts" in schools.[2443]

More information was available on the use of schools by Ukrainian armed forces, although it was not clear that these forces used schools more frequently than armed groups. Additionally, most information on military use was reported in 2017. This increase may have been a consequence of strengthened monitoring systems rather than an actual increase in instances of military use.

Parties to the conflict used schools and universities throughout 2014, reportedly establishing bases and other strategic positions in education facilities in at least five cases:

- OHCHR reported that in July 2014, in the village of Golmovsky, Donetsk oblast, an armed group used a school as a base until Ukrainian forces destroyed it.[2444]
- There were multiple media reports that armed fighters used Donetsk National University. On July 7, 2014, armed fighters allegedly entered the dormitories of Donetsk National University in Donetsk city and drove students from their rooms at gunpoint. Media sources reported that the group captured the entire university nine days later and converted dormitories into living quarters for fighters.[2445] Two months later, on September 10, 2014, armed assailants led by a former professor at the university reportedly seized buildings at the institution. The purpose or duration of the seizure was unclear.[2446]
- In August 2014 in Novosvitlivka town, Luhansk oblast (formerly NGCA), Human Rights Watch reported that armed forces used a school as a base during fighting with armed groups. During this fight, most of the school was destroyed by indiscriminately fired Grad rockets, and it remained devastated one year later. The fighting reduced school enrollment by nearly half, as many students attended an overcrowded school nearby.[2447] As of May 2016, local reconstruction efforts had restored much of the Novosvitlivka school, but furniture and school supplies were lacking.[2448]
- In August 2014, also according to Human Rights Watch, staff evacuated all students from an orphanage-school for children with vision impairments in Yenakiieve city, Donetsk oblast (NGCA), when armed forces were deployed there. The forces remained in the building for six months, and fighting in February 2015 severely damaged the school. It was not yet repaired as of September 2015.[2449]
- Armed groups also reportedly used a school as a base in the city of Pervomaisk, Luhansk oblast, during 2014, according to Human Rights Watch.[2450] During the last week of November 2014, Human Rights Watch researchers observed signs on trees next to the school that read, "Entry prohibited. Shoot to kill" and "Mines."[2451]

In 2015 there were two reported cases of military use of schools by Ukrainian forces:

- According to Human Rights Watch, in Vuhlehirsk town, Donetsk oblast (NGCA), a principal reported that different armed forces and armed groups occupied school No. 42 at different times during 2015 and used it for weapons storage.[2452] NGO and media sources reported that artillery hit the school six times in January and February 2015, which damaged parts of its infrastructure.[2453] For example, fighting between January and February 2015 reportedly destroyed part of a third-floor wall when an armed group fired a tank at the school, targeting a Ukrainian sniper positioned near the window.[2454]
- In Marinka city, Donetsk oblast (GCA), Ukrainian forces reportedly used an orphanage-school as a base in November 2015 and the children were evacuated, according to Human Rights Watch.[2455] As of May 2016, Ukrainian forces were still stationed at the orphanage and reportedly had no plans to relocate.[2456]

Throughout 2016 there was evidence that parties to the conflict used schools for military purposes. At least four cases were reported. For example:

- In July 2016, the UN reported that Ukrainian forces were positioned at a school in Pavlopil village, Donetsk oblast (GCA).[2457]

- In August 2016 the OSCE SMM observed a military compound located 120 meters from a school in Komyshuvakha settlement, Zaporizhia oblast.[2458]
- According to OHCHR, in Zaitseve settlement of Horlivka town, Donetsk oblast (GCA), an armed group affiliated with the de facto NGCA authorities was stationed at a local school as of July 2016.[2459]
- In September 2016, according to the OSCE SMM, Ukrainian forces used the roof of a school in Krasnohorivka town, Donetsk oblast (GCA), as an observation post and the school grounds as a shooting range, which damaged the building and school equipment.[2460]

According to the Education Cluster, there were at least seven reports of military use of schools in 2017.[2461] The cases reported by the Education Cluster, OSCE, or UN sources included the following:[2462]

- On April 2, 2017, the OSCE SMM in Ukraine observed at least five soldiers from the Ukrainian armed forces and two vehicles parked inside a former kindergarten in a GCA Zolote city, Luhansk. The commander of the Ukrainian armed forces told the SMM that an agreement had been made with local authorities that allowed the armed forces to use the school buildings.[2463]
- On April 11, OHCHR observed that a former boarding school close to a functioning kindergarten in Novotroiske, Donetsk oblast, was being occupied by Ukrainian armed forces. It was unclear how long they had been using the school.[2464]
- On August 4, 2017, the OSCE SMM in Ukraine found that a school in Popasna city, Luhansk oblast (GCA), was being occupied by Ukrainian armed forces. There were trucks parked on the school grounds and 30 to 35 soldiers in the school, some of whom were armed, and a military crane was being used for construction work in the schoolyard. A sign saying, "NO ENTRANCE - ACCESS FORBIDDEN" had been placed outside the school.[2465]
- The OSCE SMM reported information indicating that on September 9, 2017, the SMM in Teple, Luhansk oblast (GCA), had found that Ukrainian armed forces were using part of a building that housed a canteen for the school next door. Students from the school used one door to the building and soldiers used another.[2466]
- On September 13, 2017, the OSCE SMM in Ukraine saw a compound housing Ukrainian armed forces located 30 meters from a school in Muratove, Luhansk oblast (GCA), according to the Education Cluster.[2467]
- The OSCE SMM reported information about another military compound opposite a school in Poltavka, Donetsk oblast (GCA), on September 18, 2017. There were military personnel and vehicles in the compound at the time.[2468]
- The OSCE SMM reported the presence of armed forces at the entrance of a kindergarten in Olkhovatka, Donetsk oblast (NGCA), on November 10, 2017. Local residents reported to the SMM at the time that students from the school had been attending another institution for approximately one year.[2469]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

Several media reports suggested that armed groups and school personnel in areas controlled by armed groups trained or recruited students at school for military purposes. For example, in November 2014, a *BBC Russia* article reported that armed groups visited several schools in NGCA in order to recruit 14-year-old students to spy on Ukrainian forces.[2470]

Attacks on higher education

In addition to the case of military use of a university documented above, assailants, who were often unidentified, carried out at least three attacks on higher education during the reporting period. Reported incidents included the following:

- Local media reported that assailants allegedly associated with de facto NGCA authorities kidnapped nine Nigerian students on July 21, 2014, in Luhansk city. The outcome of the incident was not clear as of August 2017.[2473]
- Media sources reported that in Kharkiv city on July 1, 2015, an explosive detonated near the dormitories of Kharkiv Polytechnic University, damaging windows. No one claimed responsibility for the incident.[2474]
- Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and local media reported an incident on January 27, 2016, when de facto NGCA authorities detained professor Igor Kozlovsky for supposedly possessing illegal weapons and supporting Ukraine.[2475] He was detained until May 3, 2017, when the unofficial military court convicted him of weapons possession and sentenced him to two years, eight months in prison, according to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.[2476]

VENEZUELA

Attacks on education in Venezuela took the form of violent repression of university student protests, as government forces accompanied by armed civilian groups used teargas, rubber bullets, and live bullets against demonstrators. Security forces also reportedly arrested and detained hundreds of students and higher education personnel.

Context

Venezuela's political and social context was increasingly unstable after the death of President Hugo Chavez in March 2013 and the ascent of Vice President Nicolas Maduro to the presidential office. Chavez had made efforts to accumulate power in the executive branch and used it to repress dissent. During Maduro's rule, reforms to consolidate the concentration of power in the executive branch were progressively implemented, until the government-controlled Supreme Court stripped the legislature of its authority and formed a Constituent Assembly that took over the opposition-led parliament's functions in August 2017.[2477]

Widespread anti-government protests, triggered by food shortages, restrictions on democracy, and insecurity, peaked from February to July 2014 and again from April to August 2017. Security forces violently quelled protests, often accompanied by armed civilian groups known as *colectivos,* which also used excessive force against unarmed protesters, including university students and other civilians.[2478]

The UN Committee against Torture found that 3,306 protesters, including 400 adolescents, were detained between February and June 2014. The committee expressed concern over reports that detained protesters were tortured, and that the perpetrators went unpunished.[2479] OHCHR found similarly that more than 5,000 people were detained between April 1 and July 31, 2017, during which time violence progressively escalated and security forces moved from using teargas to guns against protesters, according to medical personnel.[2480] Security forces were also reported to be responsible for the arbitrary detention of students, and in some cases, of presenting them before military courts even though they were civilians.[2481] Once in detention, men and women protesters, as well as their relatives, were threatened with rape and other sexual and physical violence.[2482] The worsening humanitarian situation caused the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans to other Latin American countries and the United States.[2483]

The *Associated Press* reported that children lost an average of 40 percent of their class time during 2016.[2484] In 2017, loss of teaching personnel due to the economic and humanitarian crisis was reported in 90 percent of the

nation's schools, and Miranda state reported 20 percent absenteeism at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year.[2485] In November 2015, there was a proposal that teachers and other education personnel form "combatant corps" to provide "assistance" to security forces during emergencies, including armed conflict.[2486] Reports indicated that the government used higher education as a political instrument by applying political pressure at universities and by vote-mongering on campuses in October 2015. For example, the director of the National Experimental Polytechnic University told professors that each of them was in charge of guaranteeing 10 votes for the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela (*Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela*) and ensuring that five students also guaranteed 10 votes, thereby making each professor responsible for 60 votes.[2487]

Venezuela did not meet the criteria for inclusion in *Education under Attack 2014,* so no comparison with the previous reporting period can be made.

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school or university

Police forces were reportedly responsible for perpetrating sexual violence on at least one female student detained on a university campus. On July 2, 2017, Human Rights Watch reported that Venezuelan police detained students at the Universidad Pedagógica Experimental Libertador in Aragua state. The students' lawyer told Human Rights Watch that a police agent touched the female student's breasts, put her head close to his genitals, and told her, "This is what you like."[2488]

Attacks on higher education

According to UN, NGO, and media reports, state security forces used widespread violence against university students who were protesting against the government. This violence occurred from February to July 2014 and from April to August 2017.[2489] It included physical attacks using teargas, rubber and live bullets, and other means, as well as arbitrary detention and imprisonment. [2490]

State security forces, sometimes supported by *colectivos,* used teargas, rubber bullets, live ammunition, and explosive devices to crack down on student anti-government protests in 2014. In addition, hundreds of students were detained in connection with student and civilian anti-government protests, and as many as 331 students were reportedly abused while in police custody in February 2014 alone, according to Scholars at Risk.[2491] One year later, in 2015, Attorney General Luisa Ortega Diaz admitted that 27 people, including two students, were still in detention, according to Human Rights Watch.[2492] Violent attacks on university campuses or at student protests in 2014 included the following incidents, in which at least 38 students were injured and one killed:

- Security forces accompanied by *colectivos* used rubber bullets and teargas against students demonstrating at the Lisandro Alvarado Centro Occidental University in Barquisimeto, Lara state, on March 11, 2014, according to testimony collected by Human Rights Watch.[2493]
- Human Rights Watch also documented an attack by a *colectivo* member on March 19, 2014, when approximately 150 students were holding a student meeting in the lobby of the School of Architecture of the Central University of Venezuela in Caracas. The students saw that eight men were replacing a nonpartisan banner they had hung from the building with a pro-government sign. As students started leaving the lobby, a man with a firearm entered, identified himself as part of a *colectivo,* and threw two teargas canisters into the remaining group of 50 students. More intruders arrived and beat the students with their fists, tubes, and sticks, as well as kicking them and forcing several of them to undress. At least 30 students were injured in the attack.[2494]
- Scholars at Risk and international media reported that on April 3, 2014, during a protest at the Central University of Venezuela in Caracas, state security forces used grenades and teargas to prevent students from leaving the campus to march through the city. Vigilantes also entered the campus and attacked students with metal pipes and other makeshift weapons, leaving at least three students severely injured.[2495]

A student carries a gas mask at the entrance of the University of the Andes, San Cristobal, in March 2015. The wall was covered with messages in support of the student occupation of the university in protest of the killing of a 14-year old student by Venezuelan police.
© 2015 Eliezer Mantilla/AP Photo

- According to Scholars at Risk, on May 29, 2014, a student was shot and killed when police allegedly used live ammunition in a crackdown on a student protest near the campus of Rafael Belloso Chacín University in Maracaibo city, Zulia state.[2496]
- The campus of Fermin Toro University in Barquismeto, Lara state, experienced a series of three attacks in May and June 2014, according to Scholars at Risk. Pro-government assailants launched an arson attack on university buildings in mid-May. One month later, on June 10, 2014, security footage reportedly showed the same attackers launching teargas cans onto the campus, which caused respiratory problems for several students.[2497] Two days later unidentified assailants threw teargas canisters onto the campus, injuring 14 people.[2498]

- Scholars at Risk reported that on June 4, 2014, police tried to stop students outside the Metropolitan University in Caracas from protesting the use of police force and detention of fellow students. Students threw stones and firecrackers at the police, who reportedly responded with teargas and rubber bullets, injuring five students.[2499]

GCPEA collected information on five incidents of security forces and *colectivos* using disproportionate violence against student protesters in 2015, a decrease from the previous year. In these five examples, at least 37 students were injured in attacks that used buckshot, teargas, and other means:

- According to Scholars at Risk, on January 15, 2015, security forces accompanied by *colectivos* raided the campus of Los Andes University, Tachira, firing steel shells, buckshot, teargas, pepper spray, and marbles at students. Twenty-two students were reportedly injured in the incident.[2500]
- Scholars at Risk and media sources reported that on February 25, 2015, students gathered on the Merida campus of Los Andes University to protest the death of a 14-year-old boy killed a day before in a confrontation between police and protesters in San Cristobal. Security forces reportedly fired buckshot into the crowd of students, injuring five.[2501]
- On October 25, 2015, education personnel and students from the Central University in Caracas attempted to march to protest unfair wages and demand quality education. Scholars at Risk and local media reported that the police prevented the march from proceeding by firing teargas into the crowd and pushing and kicking participants.[2502]
- According to local media and Scholars at Risk, on November 2, 2015, students from various universities gathered outside the vice president's office in Caracas to protest delays in the start of the semester, as classes were supposed to begin 63 days earlier but were postponed due to strikes over higher education budget cuts. The protest was dispersed by the police, who allegedly beat and injured 10 students.[2503]
- Scholars at Risk reported that two days later, as a group of university officials and students convened at the Central University in Caracas, unidentified hooded assailants used trash to barricade the doors of the building, preventing approximately 60 people from leaving. The assailants also vandalized university buildings.[2504]

According to Scholars at Risk and the US Department of State, 2016 saw continued violence in four incidents involving looting and robbing of the Institute of Tropical Medicine at the Central University in Caracas, and three attacks on university student protesters by national security forces using teargas, buckshot, and other means, as in previous years. GCPEA also gathered information relating to at least one incident in which a professor was detained and threatened by police and armed assailants. For example:

- There were four attacks on the Institute of Tropical Medicine at the Central University in Caracas during 2016. On February 29 and March 1, unidentified assailants raided the laboratories, stealing a total of 25 computers in addition to microwaves, printers, and other equipment. The intruders also destroyed microscopes and a camera. University personnel alleged that *colectivos* were responsible for the robberies.[2505] On July 4, 2016, unidentified individuals reportedly entered the institute and stole computers, equipment, drinking water, clothes, and approximately 20 years of research and patient data. One week later, on July 11, unknown assailants reportedly entered the university again and stole medical supplies and equipment.[2506]
- On March 31, 2016, police officers temporarily detained Professor Benjamin Scharifker, rector of the Metropolitan University in Caracas, while he was out jogging in the morning. Professor Scharifker was taken to his home in a police car and questioned about his identity and profession, while unknown armed individuals reportedly stood watch. The police then left his home.[2507]
- On May 18, 2016, students and education personnel of Los Andes University, Merida campus, reportedly gathered to protest working conditions and demand higher wages. Police tried to break up the protest using teargas, buckshot, and stones. Meanwhile, unidentified armed civilians on motorbikes allegedly broke into the university's Faculty of Medicine, where they shot and injured several students, set fire to two vehicles, looted offices, and stole computers. The police did nothing to stop this raid.[2508]
- On October 24, 2016, four days after the Venezuelan government suspended a recall referendum against President Maduro, students from the Central University in Caracas and other universities nationwide marched to protest the government's actions. The march reportedly left the Central University campus and was met by police who used teargas, pepper spray, and buckshot to force the students to disperse. At least 27 students were allegedly injured.[2509]
- On November 3, 2016, a Los Andes University student was detained in connection with the burning of a police vehicle during a demonstration. The student was reportedly arriving on campus for another protest when unidentified individuals forced him into an unmarked van and drove away. A fellow student who was also detained reported that, while detained, the assailants covered his face, threatened him with a gun, and interrogated him, before releasing him in the outskirts of Caracas 10 hours later.[2510]

Government repression of dissent, including student protests worsened in 2017, peaking between April and July. Crackdowns, often violent, affected more students and personnel than in any previous year, and Human Rights Watch documented a pattern of abuse.[2511] An OHCHR report on the generalized violence in Venezuela between April 1 and July 31, 2017, found that the attorney general's office registered 124 deaths in connection with protests during that period. The majority of the 124 victims were students or people who had recently finished their education.[2512] The document also stated that medical personnel reported treating more injuries from teargas used by security forces against protesters at the beginning of this period, and more gunshot wounds inflicted by security forces in June and July.[2513]

GCPEA collected information on at least 22 attacks in 2017. Over 200 people were reportedly injured or detained in this violence, although it was not clear that all of them were students. In one case, a student was killed.[2514] These attacks were reported by Scholars at Risk, Human Rights Watch, OHCHR, the media, and other sources, and included the following:

- On February 14, 2017, security forces opened fire and launched teargas into a group of student protesters at Los Andes University in Tachira. In addition, unidentified individuals threw explosive devices onto the campus and burned down a gate. Parts of the campus were damaged in the incident and 40 students were injured.[2515]
- On March 22, 2017, security forces and *colectivos* used teargas, bottles, and stones to disperse a Caracas march by the National Inter-Federal Command of the University Sector, a union of education professionals that was protesting the governments' failure to include them in education policy discussions. At least 16 participants were reportedly injured in the incident.[2516]
- According to OHCHR, security forces shot teargas onto the campuses of the Metropolitan University of Caracas and the Catholic University of Táchira between April 1 and July 31, 2017, for unspecified reasons.[2517]
- Police used teargas and shotgun pellets in response to a student anti-government protest at the Experimental University in Tachira on April 5, 2017. Twenty-one students were injured.[2518] A similar incident occurred one day later on the campus of the University of Carabobo in Valencia, where 27 students were reportedly injured.[2519]
- On May 4, 2017, a gunman entered a student assembly at the Territorial Polytechnic University in El Tigre and fired several shots into the group of students, reportedly killing one, leaving one in critical condition, and injuring two others.[2520]
- On May 24, 2017, security forces arrested and detained 18 students from Oriente University in Ciudad Bolivar. The students were protesting the armed forces' infringement on the university's autonomy. The eight

female protesters were released on the same day they were detained, and the 10 male protesters were held for an unknown period of time.[2521]

- According to Human Rights Watch, on June 22, 2017, security forces and *colectivos* entered the Sucre campus of Oriente University. The *colectivos* destroyed several classrooms before detaining seven students and handing them over to security forces, who charged them with the intention to commit a crime and released them on the condition that they not participate in further protests.[2522]
- On the morning of July 2, 2017, security forces entered the Libertador Experimental Pedagogical University in Ciudad Bolivar, according to information obtained by Human Rights Watch. The national forces beat multiple students and university security personnel and detained at least 27 students, who were sent to military court. The court held the students there until 7 AM on July 4 for an all-night hearing, during which they were charged with instigating rebellion. The 22 male detainees were reportedly sent to prison and the 5 women were put under house arrest. News sources reported that family members were unable to visit the detainees.[2523]

YEMEN

Air strikes and bombings affected as many as 1,500 schools and 100 universities in Yemen. Individually targeted attacks by non-state armed groups killed or injured almost 100 university students and personnel. Armed forces and non-state armed groups used dozens of schools and universities for military purposes, particularly in the contested city of Taizz, and there was at least one case in which two children were recruited at a school.

Context

Fighting in Yemen began in 2011, as protest movements called attention to the need for stronger human rights protections in the country and made other demands inspired by the Arab Spring movement across the Middle East and North Africa region.[2524] Following months of protests against his rule, President Ali Abdullah Saleh agreed to step down under the terms of a deal with the Gulf Cooperation Council.[2525] He stepped down in 2012, but the transitional process was aborted when fighting broke out in 2014. In September 2014, the Zaidi Shiite Houthi armed group (also known as Ansar Allah), who were allied with Saleh, took over the capital, Sana'a, and much of the country's north.[2526]

This violence escalated in March 2015 after a Saudi-led coalition, at the request of the internationally recognized government of President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, launched a military operation against the Houthis and the Saleh loyalists who were allied with them.[2527] Violent extremist groups like al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the local 'IS' affiliate also carried out numerous attacks against Houthi forces and the Hadi government in various cities.[2528] In late 2017 the Houthis killed their former ally, ex-president Saleh, after he and his forces withdrew from their nearly three-year alliance.[2529] The conflict continued between the coalition, Yemeni government, and the Houthis.

The violence gravely affected Yemen's children. Between March 2015 and September 2017, at least 5,006 children were reported to have been killed or injured, and more than 400,000 school-age children were among the millions displaced.[2530] According to OCHA, as of December 2017, 1.9 million out of 7.5 million school-age children in Yemen were out of school.[2531] By August 2017, the largest number of schools that were inoperable due to destruction, damage, or use by IDPs or armed forces was concentrated in Taizz (325), Aden (260), Saada (239), and Amanat al-Asimah (227) governorates.[2532]

The 2013-2017 reporting period saw a marked increase in attacks on education compared to the period covered in *Education under Attack 2014,* particularly in the form of attacks on schools, which was largely due to Saudi-led coalition air strikes.

Yemen endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration in October 2017.

Attacks on schools

Reports of attacks on schools began to rise dramatically in 2015, seemingly as a consequence of air strikes on areas controlled by Houthi-Saleh forces. Prior to 2015, attacks on schools usually took the form of mortars fired and explosives placed by unknown attackers and non-state armed groups. By December 2017, OCHA reported that air strikes and shelling had fully destroyed 256 schools and that another 1,413 schools were partially damaged.[2533] The UN was able to verify 144 attacks on schools during the same period.[2534] According to the Education Cluster, the damage was most significant in the Houthi-controlled areas of Saada governorate.[2535]

UN and government reports stated that dozens of schools were damaged or destroyed in 2013. The UN documented but was unable to verify a total of 35 attacks on schools or education personnel, including mortar attacks and timed explosives.[2536] Attacks on schools in 2013 included the following:

- The US Department of State reported that on May 25, 2013, in al-Jawf governorate, an unidentified bomber drove a car full of explosives into a school during Friday prayers, killing at least 12 people. The number of students and teachers harmed was not reported.[2537]
- Unknown assailants targeted a girls' school in Saada city on December 31, 2013, detonating a device outside the school buildings. It was not clear whether the school was targeted because it was a girls' school or for other reasons.[2538]

Reported rates of attacks on schools remained similar throughout 2014. That year the UN verified 35 attacks on schools by various parties to the conflict. Among these, fighting between Houthi-Saleh forces, the Yemeni Air Force, and pro-government tribal militias destroyed 10 schools in Amanah al-Asimah governorate. Many of the schools attacked that year closed as a result.[2539]

Reports of attacks on schools increased in 2015, corresponding with the start of Saudi-led air strikes and intensifying conflict. The UN verified 92 attacks on schools in 2015, including 62 in Taizz, 20 in Saada, 19 in Lahj, 14 in Amanat al-Asimah, and 10 in Aden.[2540] Of the 42 attacks on schools described in the UN Secretary-General's "Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict," 57 percent were attributed to the Saudi-led coalition, 16 percent to Houthi-Saleh forces, and 21 percent to unknown perpetrators. The most heavily affected governorates were Saada (10 attacks), Taizz (10), and Amanat al-Asimah (12).[2541]

Using information shared by the Education Cluster and the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, GCPEA found that there were at least 200 attacks on schools in 2015.[2542] According to Human Rights Watch researchers, indiscriminate Saudi-led air strikes in 2015 and 2016 caused 90 percent of the damage to or destruction of schools in Sana'a, the capital.[2543] Examples of reported incidents included the following:

- The UN verified that air strikes between March and May 2015 damaged at least 38 schools.[2544]
- Human Rights Watch reported that one air strike on al-Rasheedi School in Ibb on April 7, 2015, killed two children and wounded two others.[2545] This incident was not included in the UN-verified list.
- Local media reported that on November 14, 2015, unidentified attackers threw explosive devices at the Martyr Zubairi School in Hudaydah city, al-Hudaydah governorate. It is unknown if there were casualties from the blast.[2546]

Reported attacks on schools were slightly fewer in 2016 than in 2015. The UN verified one-third of the attacks, as it had the previous year, including 33 incidents affecting 30 schools in 2016. Air strikes carried out by the Saudi-led coalition damaged the majority (28) of these schools, while the Houthis were reportedly responsible for four and the Yemeni Armed Forces for one.[2547]According to information shared by local sources and media reports, there were at least 70 reported but unverified attacks on schools that year.[2548] One school in Taizz was repeatedly bombed on approximately a dozen different days between January and December 2016.[2549] Although data on casualties resulting from attacks on schools were scarce, at least several attacks were deadly. For example:

- Mortars fired by suspected Houthi-Saleh forces struck a school in Taizz governorate on June 8, 2016, according to media sources. Five people were killed in the attack, but it was not clear whether they were students or education personnel.[2550]
- On August 13, 2016, according to information verified by the UN, at least 7 children were killed and approximately 21 injured in a Saudi-led coalition air strike on a school in Haydan, Saada governorate, where Houthi-Saleh forces were active.[2551]

The UN verified at least nine attacks on schools in 2017.[2552] According to information from Human Rights Watch and media reports, both the Saudi-led coalition and Houthi-Saleh forces were responsible for attacks throughout the year. For example:

- On January 10, 2017, an air strike on an informal gas station near al-Faleh School killed two students and a school administrator and wounded three other children. The attack also damaged the school's windows, electrical wires, and speakers.[2553]
- According to the *Independent,* an opposition news agency reported that a second school was struck by a Saudi-led coalition air strike outside Sana'a on January 22, 2017.[2554]
- A local activist told Human Rights Watch that there was one attack near a school on May 21, 2017, when Houthi-Saleh forces were shelling the area.[2555]
- According to information shared by an international humanitarian organization, armed men attacked schools in eight instances in October 2017, in an attempt to force their education personnel to engage in a strike demanding higher teacher salaries.[2556]
- An international humanitarian organization also reported to GCPEA that around November 2017, principals and several district heads of education reported increased threats against schools on social media. For example, several schools had received WhatsApp messages threating that they would be bombed if girls continued to attend school.[2557]

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

From 2013 to 2017, attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel in Yemen included killings, torture, assaults, illegal detention, and threats of violence in forms similar to those highlighted in the 2014 issue of *Education under Attack.* The total number—approximately 100 students and education personnel harmed by targeted attacks—were also consistent with the levels reported in *Education under Attack 2014*.

Gunfire and other types of violent attacks killed and injured students and teachers in sporadically reported incidents in 2013. For example:

- According to the UN, on February 23, 2013, Houthi-Saleh fighters allegedly entered Al-Emam Al-Hady School in Saada governorate and demanded to use the school to temporarily detain a prisoner. When school administrators refused to allow the prisoner to enter, the group opened fire, injuring one teacher.[2558]
- Media sources reported that on April 4, 2013, armed assailants beat the principal of Al-Fatah School in Al-Hashwah district with the butts of their rifles. Local sources claimed that Houthi forces were responsible for the attack, which was carried out in retaliation for the principal prohibiting students from chanting a Houthist slogan.[2559]

Sporadic reports of targeted killings and abductions continued into 2014. For example:

- According to media reports, on February 23, 2014, armed assailants allegedly from Ansar al-Sharia, a subgroup of al Qaeda, opened fire on a group of Houthi-affiliated teachers in Al Bayda governorate, killing two. The teachers did not appear to be at school when the attack occurred.[2560]
- The same media source reported that Houthi forces abducted two teachers on July 13, 2014, in Saada city, and unknown assailants exploded a device under a school vehicle in Amran, just north of Sana'a, killing six people and wounding four others on September 11, 2014.[2561] It was unclear how many of those killed or injured in the second attack were students or education personnel.
- The UN verified that on December 16, 2014, a suicide bomber detonated a car bomb near a primary school bus close to a Houthi checkpoint in Radaa city, Al Bayda governorate, killing at least 9 children and injuring 24.[2562]

Reported violence individually targeting students and education personnel escalated in 2015, harming close to 50 individuals in documented attacks. For example:

- Media sources reported that on April 9, 2015, suspected assailants affiliated with Houthi forces entered a religious school in Yarim, Ibb governorate, and abducted the director and 15 students. Their whereabouts were still unknown as of May 2017.[2563]
- The Human Rights Council, UNICEF, and Save the Children each reported that on August 18, 2015, unidentified jets struck a teachers' office in Amran in an air strike, killing 13 Ministry of Education personnel and four of the teachers' children. Twenty people were killed and seventeen injured, including five children.[2564] According to Education International, the teachers had gathered after school to prepare exams for thousands of children who had missed the end of the school year, due to continued fighting.[2565]
- The Education Cluster provided information that on November 4, 2015, a stray bullet injured a primary school girl in her shoulder while she played during recess at Dar Sa'ad School in Aden.[2566]

According to the Taizz-based Research and Education Resources Information Centre, there were 16 incidents of children killed on their way to or from school in 2016.[2567] Students and teachers also were reported abducted in at least two incidents:

- According to media sources, fourteen civilians, including five teachers and two students, were allegedly abducted by suspected Houthis on April 27, 2016, in al-Taizziyah district, Taizz governorate. The outcome of the kidnapping was unknown at the time of writing.[2568]
- On September 20, 2016, armed assailants thought to be Houthi-Saleh fighters entered the classroom of an English-language school in Sana'a and kidnapped an American teacher. The outcome of the kidnapping was unknown at the time of writing.[2569]

In 2017 there were three reported attacks on students or education personnel:

- On January 5, 2017, the *Gulf News* wrote that a shell fired by Houthi forces killed one primary school student and injured another as they were walking home from school.[2570] This incident was not documented or verified by the UN.
- An international humanitarian organization reported that on September 13, 2017, an army commander attacked an education office in Al-Dali governorate after threatening the director of education.[2571]
- The international humanitarian organization also reported that armed men forced the Tawahi district education office in Aden to close for reasons related to salary demands.[2572]

Military use of schools and universities

Armed forces and various non-state armed groups used dozens of schools as detention centers and barracks, resulting in damage and destruction. According to UN reports, military use of schools was documented more often in 2014 than in previous years. It is unclear whether this trend was related to actual changes in military use or to changing access to information.

Several different groups reportedly used schools in 2013. For example:

- The US Department of State, citing international NGOs, reported that Houthi groups used an unreported number of schools as detention centers in 2013.[2573]

- The UN documented but did not verify the use of a school in Amran as barracks for Yemeni armed forces from January 19 to March 1, 2013. The same report stated that militias associated with the Al-Osimat and Qaflat Uthar tribes used and destroyed four schools in Amran in 2013. [2574]
- The UN also reported but did not verify that Houthi forces and the Salafists used four schools as barracks and firing positions during clashes, leading to the schools' subsequent closure in October 2013.[2575] The report did not indicate which Salafist groups used the schools.

The UN verified that armed forces and groups used 92 schools during 2014. Houthi fighters were responsible for the majority of this use.[2576] The US Department of State reported that in May, June, and July 2014, Houthi forces seized several schools in Amran, using them as barracks and detention centers.[2577] The group vacated 25 schools by the year's end in response to government and UN interventions.[2578]

Non-state armed groups also allegedly used universities during 2014. For example:

- Scholars at Risk reported that on September 20, 2014, Houthi fighters took control of Sana'a's Al-Imam University, seizing it from government security forces who had closed and occupied the university since earlier in the week.[2579]
- One month later, on October 29, 2014, Houthis occupied Dhamar University campus, also in Sana'a. Also according to Scholars at Risk, the Houthis claimed that their intention was to stop corruption at the university.[2580]

The UN verified 84 cases of military use of educational facilities in 2015.[2581] Of the 51 cases reported in the UN Secretary-General's annual report, 44 cases took place in Taizz city, where Houthi-Saleh forces were responsible for the greatest number of cases of military use (20). Popular committees such as tribal groups, some of which supported the Yemeni army while others supported the Houthi forces, were responsible for eight cases, and unknown armed groups were responsible for 16 cases. Houthi-Saleh forces also used schools in the cities of Aden, Dali, and Lahj.[2582] For example, according to Human Rights Watch, Houthis were using a girls' secondary school in Sana'a as a food distribution center at the beginning of the year. The school had been damaged in air strikes, which local residents believed had targeted the school because of the Houthi presence.[2583]

Armed groups also occupied at least two universities in 2015, according to information reported to OHCHR but not verified:

- On May 6, 2015, a Houthi-affiliated sniper used the roof of the Education College building in Al-Humaira village, Al-Dhali, as a firing position.[2584]
- On September 2, 2015, Houthi-affiliated fighters and forces loyal to the former president of Yemen took up fighting positions on the campus of Taizz University, according to the same source.[2585]

There were significantly fewer reports of military use in 2016, when the UN verified that 12 schools were occupied by armed forces and armed groups. Houthis-Saleh forces reportedly were responsible for six cases of occupation, the Popular Resistance was responsible for four cases, and the Yemeni Armed Forces and Ansar al-Sharia were each responsible for one.[2586] According to a report by *Al Jazeera,* military use appeared particularly prominent in Taizz city, where the Houthi-affiliated Popular Resistance armed group was allegedly using approximately 30 schools as of November 2016.[2587]

Human Rights Watch reported that the al-Noor Center for the Care and Rehabilitation of the Blind, a boarding school for blind students in Sana'a and Yemen's only educational center for students with visual impairments, was damaged because of military use. On January 5, 2016, a bomb dropped by the Saudi-led coalition reportedly hit the school compound. At the time of the strike, Houthi-Saleh forces were based near the school, housed fighters in the school, and had established an office in its kindergarten. Two school staff members, an 18-year-old student, and a local resident were wounded. Although the bomb did not detonate, its impact broke windows and blew out doors in the school.[2588]

In February 2017, Save the Children reported that 24 schools were being used for military purposes. The vast majority of these schools (21) were located in Taizz governorate. Save the Children did not report who was responsible for using the schools.[2589] In December 2017, OCHA reported that 23 out of the 24 schools were still occupied by armed groups.[2590] As of September 2017, the UN had verified one case of school occupation so far that year.[2591] An international humanitarian organization reported that an armed gang was using part of a secondary school yard in Tawahi district, Aden, in June 2017, and that the army was using Omar bin Abdul Aziz School in Karesh, Lahj, in August 2017.[2592]

Child recruitment at, or en route to or from, school

Child recruitment was reported between 2013 and 2017, as it was between 2009 and mid-2013, especially by the Houthi forces. Most available information did not indicate the extent to which such recruitment took place in schools, making it difficult to compare reporting periods.[2593] However, at least one case of child recruitment at school was documented in Sana'a. In January 2017, Amnesty International documented eyewitness reports that two boys had been recruited by a Houthi member at a Quranic school. They were later returned to their families.[2594] This incident was not documented or verified by the UN.

Sexual violence by armed parties at, or en route to or from, school

At least two incidents of sexual violence reportedly affected female students between 2013 and 2017:

- One unverified media report alleged that Houthi fighters threatened to strip a female university student naked in December 2014 if she did not comply with their orders to wear a cloak that fully covered her body.[2595]
- A women's journalist group alleged that Houthi gunmen were responsible for sexual assaulting students and teachers at a girls' school in Sana'a on April 17, 2017, after the students and teachers refused to chant the group's slogan.[2596]

Attacks on higher education

Throughout the reporting period there were over 100 reported attacks on institutions, scholars, and students of higher education in Yemen, based on information compiled by GCPEA. These attacks included explosives and air strikes, as well as violent repression of protests.[2597] Reports of attacks on university infrastructure were significantly more common during the 2013-2017 reporting period than in 2009-2013, while reports of targeted attacks on personnel and students remained constant between the two periods.

In 2013 there were two media reports of attacks on higher education personnel, according to media sources:

- On May 24, 2013, unidentified gunmen reportedly opened fire on the car of the vice president of Hajjah University in Abs district, Hajjah governorate. It is unknown whether he was injured in the attack.[2598]
- On June 11, 2013, suspected al Qaeda members allegedly kidnapped a Dutch couple who worked at the Lebanese International University in Sana'a. The group let the couple go for unknown reasons six months later, on December 11, 2013.[2599]

There were at least four reported attacks on higher education institutions in 2014 and at least six reported attacks on university students and personnel, affecting at least more than 40 individuals.[2600] For example, according to news sources, on September 20, 2014, unidentified perpetrators detonated a device near Iman University in Sana'a city, Amanat al-Asimah governorate, killing at least three people.[2601]

Among the reported attacks on university students and personnel in 2014 were several cases of hostage-taking and abductions of university students and personnel, according to media reports. For example:

- On October 1, 2014, unidentified assailants reportedly stormed a university dormitory in Sana'a city and held an unreported number of students hostage for 10 days. Students attributed the attack to Houthi forces.[2602]
- On June 10, 2014 al Qaeda members allegedly abducted three al-Bayda University professors in Dhamar governorate and took them to Qayfah district. The group released two of the professors on July 31. The fate of the other was unknown.[2603]
- On December 20, 2014, suspected Houthi fighters allegedly kidnapped 30 students from Al-Qalam University in Ibb city, releasing them two days later.[2604]

As with other forms of attacks on education, reported attacks on higher education intensified in 2015, coinciding with the onset of Saudi-led coalition air strikes. There were more than 100 attacks on higher education that year, including at least 87 air strikes affecting university buildings, according to information compiled from Watchlist and the Education Cluster. University buildings, infrastructure, students, and personnel were targeted in 2015, and they also suffered collateral damage.[2605] Reports of attacks on university facilities included the following:

- Media sources recorded that on October 26, 2015, armed 'IS' members distributed leaflets at the University of Aden, demanding gender segregation, a ban on music, and collective prayer sessions.[2606]
- On December 29, 2015, suspected Ayman Askar loyalists attacked the University of Aden because the university was coeducational. The assailants dragged students out of the buildings and detained two students for filming the incident.[2607]

Media sources also reported several killings and kidnappings of professors and academics throughout 2015. For example:

- On January 18, 2015, assailants, reported to be Houthi fighters, attacked and killed a university professor in Al-Dali City.[2608]
- The same source reported the abduction of five students from Dhamar University, Dhamar governorate, by unidentified assailants in August 2015.[2609]
- Also in August 2015, al Qaeda detained university students in al-Mukalla city, Hadramawt governorate, because their university was coeducational, but released them several hours later.[2610]

Both government security forces and non-state armed groups targeted university students during protests in 2015. For example:

- Human Rights Watch reported that on January 25, 2015, at least 15 members of the police and Special Security Forces stormed Sana'a University and shot in the direction of 15 to 20 students who were petitioning to have an exam postponed because of increasing conflict in Sana'a city. The next day, Houthi supporters blocked the gates to Sana'a University, preventing students from going to class.[2611]
- Scholars at Risk alleged that Houthi fighters repeatedly attacked protesters in and around the University of Sana'a in late January 2015.[2612] In one instance the group detained around 12 students, protesters, and activists, in addition to two reporters.[2613]

The number of documented attacks targeting higher education appeared to decline in 2016 and 2017. GCPEA found reports of 11 incidents during the two years, which included air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition on seven universities, colleges, and vocational schools in Sana'a, Saada, Hudaydeh, and Amran.[2614] In addition, non-state armed groups were reportedly responsible for two attacks on university students and personnel in 2016 and 2017:

- In November 2016, Houthis attacked peaceful protesters at Sana'a University, where academics were protesting a three-month delay of salary payments.[2615]

Girls attend school in the Red Sea port city of Hudaydah, Yemen, on October 24, 2017. The school had recently been damaged by an air strike.

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- In 2017, according to *Reuters,* a gunman shot Amgad Abdulrahman, a law student, in an Internet café in Aden city on June 26, 2017. Abdulrahman was a member of a secular student and intellectual cultural club that had come under pressure from members of extremist groups. *Reuters* reported that his involvement in these clubs was the suspected reason for his killing, and that Abdulrahman had moderated a debate on women's conditions in Aden a few weeks before being killed.[2616]

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(Cover) A Syrian child looks into a school classroom damaged during a reported air strike on March 7, 2017, in the opposition-held town of Utaya, near the city of Damascus.

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