

Cameroon

Reports of attacks on schools and on students, teachers, and other education personnel increased significantly in the current reporting period, and reports of sexual violence at, or on the way to or from school, also increased. Cases of reported military use decreased, in line with the implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration.

Context

Cameroon continued to face overlapping security crises which continued to heavily affect civilians in 2024-2025, marked by persistent violence in the Far North region and protracted armed conflict in the North-West and South-West regions.¹ Conflict-related violence increased in 2025.² There was a rise in both armed clashes and abductions across the North-West, South-West, and Far North regions.³

In the context of the Lake Chad Basin crisis, the UN reported that, between January and August 2025, around 377 people were abducted in Far North region, including 73 children.⁴ In North-West and South-West regions, lockdowns enforced by non-state armed groups continued to be reported on Mondays, and often targeted school resumption, and in 2025 the lockdowns intensified, marked by a sharp rise in violence, fear, and intimidation.⁵ Non-state armed groups imposed a three-week lockdown to delay the school start in 2024, and again in 2025 from September 8 to October 13, covering the period of school resumption as well as the weeks preceding the October 12 presidential elections.⁶ During the first week of the 2025 lockdown, there were reports of 22 kidnappings, six killings, as well as improvised explosive device (IED) attacks.⁷ On September 10, an IED exploded in Batibo, North-West region, killing three people, including civilians, and injuring four others.⁸

During protests following disputed elections in October 2025, Human Rights Watch reported that police used excessive force, using live ammunition and tear gas, and arrested protesters.⁹ At least 48 people died during the protests and hundreds were reportedly arrested. Incumbent President Biya was sworn in for an eighth term in November 2025.¹⁰

Conflict, floods, and food insecurity converged across multiple regions, and 3.3 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in 2025,¹¹ including at least 865,000 children in North-West and South-West regions.¹² The UN reported in June 2025 that 2.1 million Cameroonians were forcibly displaced, including at least 1.6 million internally displaced people.¹³

Education was severely affected by the ongoing conflicts. Lockdowns enforced by non-state armed groups caused hundreds of days of school to be lost, and although school operations continued during the reporting period, resources were stretched and con-

ditions were challenging. According to the UN, approximately 41 percent of schools in North-West and South-West regions were non-functional in 2024, although 75 percent of school-aged children were in school, albeit lacking furniture, learning materials, and full access to clean water.¹⁴ The UN also reported that over half of children surveyed in 2024 in North-West and South-West regions were afraid when travelling to or from school.¹⁵

Attacks on schools

GCPEA identified at least 67 attacks on schools in 2024 and 2025. This is an increase in reported attacks as compared to the previous reporting period, when GCPEA identified 40 attacks in 2023 and 14 in 2022.¹⁶ At least one attack involved the use of an explosive weapon.

The UN reported 62 attacks on schools in 2024.¹⁷ Separately, GCPEA identified approximately 30 attacks on schools, although since it is possible that some of these overlapped with the UN count, these were not added, to avoid double counting.¹⁸ While most attacks were in the North-West and South-West regions, at least two attacks were identified in the Far North region. Examples of attacks on schools included:

- On February 14, 2024, in Babungo village, Ngo-Ketunjia division, North-West region, members of one or more non-state armed groups allegedly attacked and vandalized a community school which served around 2,000 children, from nursery to high school, as reported by the UN.¹⁹ Students and teachers were also attacked, as detailed in the section below.
- Around February 15, 2024, in Konye town in Meme division, South-West region, classes were reportedly suspended for a day following an armed clash at a school, as reported by the UN.²⁰
- On March 20, 2024, in Weh and Esu villages, Menchum division, North-West region, members of a non-state armed group allegedly entered two government schools, fired live ammunition, and set fire to examination papers, disrupting examinations, as reported by the UN.²¹ Education personnel were also attacked, as detailed in the section below.
- On April 28, 2024, in Bamenda, North-West region, armed actors allegedly attacked Saint Frederick Comprehensive College with live ammunition while written examinations were taking place, injuring a student and a police officer who was providing security outside the school, as reported by local media.²²

In 2025, GCPEA identified at least 50 attacks on schools and school students, teachers, and education personnel, concentrated mainly in the South-West and North-West regions, although GCPEA was unable to establish how many were attacks on schools or on students, teachers, and education personnel.²³ Separately, GCPEA identified five attacks on schools.²⁴ Examples of attacks on schools include:

- On August 20, 2025, in Muyuka, Fako division, South-West region, St. Peter Clavers Catholic School was allegedly set on fire, as reported by the UN.²⁵
- In October 2025, in Buea, Fako division, South-West region, one school was allegedly attacked by unknown perpetrators as reported by the UN.²⁶
- In November 2025, the UN reported two attacks on schools were reported in Fako and Ndian divisions, South-West Region.²⁷
- Also in November 2025, the UN reported one other attack on a school by unknown perpetrators allegedly took place in Ngo-Ketenjia division, North-West region.²⁸

Attacks on school students, teachers, and other education personnel

GCPEA identified at least 85 attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel in 2024 and 2025. This is an increase in reported attacks as compared to the previous reporting period, when GCPEA identified nine attacks in 2023 and 35 in 2022.²⁹

GCPEA identified at least 60 attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel in 2024, during which at least 65 students or staff were harmed, including at least four who were killed.³⁰ Many attacks involved abduction, with at least 50 students or staff being abducted. Most attacks were in North-West and South-West regions. Some students and staff were targeted for organizing or participating in National Youth Day or May 20 celebrations, during which non-state armed groups imposed lockdowns. One person was killed, and around 120 more were injured when an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded during activities organized in celebration of National Youth Day on February 11, 2024, in Nkambe, North-West region, although it was not possible to establish how many were students or teachers.³¹ Examples of attacks included:

- On February 14, 2024, in Babungo village, Ngo-Ketunjia division, North-West region, members of one or more non-state armed groups allegedly assaulted students and school staff, as well as allegedly kidnapping 17 teachers, and seriously injuring the school security guard, during an attack on a community school, as reported by the UN.³²
- In February 2024, in Benakuma town, Menchum division, North-West region, two teachers were allegedly abducted, as reported by the UN. The teachers were subsequently released.³³

- On March 20, 2024, in Weh and Esu villages, Menchum division, North-West region, members of a non-state armed group allegedly abducted the vice principal and two teachers in Weh, and three teachers in Esu, as reported by the UN.³⁴

In 2025, as detailed in the previous section, GCPEA identified at least 50 attacks on schools and school students, teachers, and education personnel, concentrated mainly in the South-West and North-West regions, although GCPEA was unable to establish how many were attacks on schools or on students, teachers, and education personnel.³⁵ GCPEA separately identified 26 attacks on students, teachers, and education personnel.³⁶ During the reported attacks, at least 52 students or staff were victims of attacks, including at least 28 who were injured and one education personnel who was killed.³⁷ Reports included the abduction of at least 13 students or staff in March and April of 2025.³⁸ Examples of attacks on students, teachers, and educational personnel include:

- During the month of March 2025, two students, including one girl, were allegedly abducted by unknown perpetrators in Mamfe, Manyu division, South-West region, as reported by the UN.³⁹
- On June 1, 2025, in Afungom, Menchum division, South-West region, nine students were allegedly attacked as they traveled to their exams, according to ACLED and local media sources.⁴⁰
- Similarly, on June 3, 2025, in Esu village, Menchum division, South-West region, 52 students were allegedly attacked en route to exams, as reported by local media. Students' education materials were destroyed and an unknown number of students were allegedly physically assaulted.⁴¹
- During the month of October 2025, the UN reported two abductions in the South-West region, one in Fako and one in Meme divisions.⁴²
- Also in October 2025, the UN reported three abductions in the North-West region in Boyo, Donga Mantung, and Ngo-Kentunja divisions.⁴³

Military use of schools and universities

Reports of military use declined during the current reporting period, with a total of 11 reports. GCPEA identified at least 17 cases of military use in the previous reporting period.⁴⁴

The UN reported that, in line with Cameroon's adoption of the road map for the implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration, ten schools that were occupied by Cameroon Armed Forces were vacated in 2024.⁴⁵

In 2025, GCPEA identified one case of military use of schools. The UN reported that unknown perpetrators used a school in Njikwa, Momo division, North-West region, for military purposes, starting on April 22, 2025.⁴⁶

Sexual violence at, or on the way to or from, school and university

During the current reporting period, GCPEA identified four attacks. This is a slight increase in reported attacks as compared to the previous reporting period, when one incident was reported in 2022.⁴⁷

The Education Cluster reported three cases of sexual violence against students or staff between January and August 2024.⁴⁸ Further details on the number of victims were not available.

GCPEA identified one case of sexual violence in 2025. On June 1, 2025, during an assault of nine students traveling to Wum for examinations (see above), armed actors also molested members of the group. It is unclear how many students were victims of this act.

Attacks on higher education

GCPEA identified one attack on higher education people during the 2024-2025 reporting period, in 2025. On May 15, 2025, police allegedly arrested 70 students from the University of Bamenda in the North-West region prior to the 53rd National Unity Day, as reported by Scholars at Risk. The arrests were allegedly conducted forcibly.⁴⁹