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Institute for Statistics

## **SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

### **METADATA**

#### **4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all**

##### **4.a.3 Number of attacks on students, personnel and institutions**

###### **Definition**

Number of violent attacks, threats or deliberate use of force in a given time period (e.g. the last 12 months, a school year or a calendar year) directed against students, teachers and other personnel or against education buildings, materials and facilities, including transport. The indicator focuses on attacks carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic or religious reasons by armed forces or nonstate armed groups.

*Attacks on education* include the following sub-categories:

- Attacks on schools: targeted violent attacks on preschool, kindergarten, primary, and secondary school buildings or infrastructure by state military forces or non-state armed groups in the form of arson; suicide, car, or other bombs aimed at a school; or artillery fire directed at a school. In addition, this category includes indiscriminate attacks that result in the damage or destruction of school infrastructure as well as explosions that occur in close proximity to a school.
- Attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel: killings, injuries, torture, abductions, forced disappearances, or threats of violence, including coercion or extortion involving violent threats directed towards students and education staff who work at the primary and secondary levels. Since it is sometimes difficult to identify why a teacher or school staff member is killed if the assassination occurs outside of school, this category also includes such attacks in cases where there is an established pattern of that kind of violence. The category of attacks on students, teachers, and other education personnel also includes cases where police or state security forces violently repress student protests that either occur at school, or, if they occur off-campus, focus on education-related policies and laws.

- Military use of schools and universities: cases in which armed forces or non-state armed groups take over schools or universities as bases, barracks and temporary shelters to house soldiers or fighters, fighting positions, weapons storage facilities, detention and interrogation centres, or for other military purposes.
- Recruitment of children at schools or along school routes: cases in which armed forces or nonstate armed groups use schools or school routes as locales for recruiting children under the age of 18 into their fighting forces in violation of international standards.
- Sexual violence by parties to the conflict: incidents of sexual abuse and harassment perpetrated at schools or universities or along school routes.
- Attacks on higher education: include targeted violent attacks on universities in the form of bombings, airstrikes, arson, or other means, as well as targeted killings, abductions, or threats directed at university students, faculty, or staff. The category includes cases of violent repression of student protests that either occur at institutions of higher education, or, if they occur off-campus, focus on education-related policies and laws.

### **Purpose**

The indicator is a broad measure of the safety of learning environments, particularly in relation to armed conflict and political violence.

Available data for global tracking are presently collected from reporting by a wide variety of stakeholders, including national and international NGOs working at the country-level and national and international media reports.

### **Calculation method**

The indicator is calculated based on the reported number of incidents in which students, education personnel or educational facilities are attacked, as defined above.

### **Interpretation**

A higher value indicates a large number of attacks on education are reported more frequently. In some cases, only multi-year information is available. In these cases, the total for the multi-year period is replicated across years, with a footnote indicating that it is not comparable to other annual totals.

### **Type of data source**

In-depth review and assessment of information on attacks on education from multiple sources.

### **Disaggregation**

Information is not currently disaggregated.

**Data required**

Information on the numbers and types of attacks on students, education personnel and educational infrastructure.

**Data sources**

The calculation of this indicator relies on three types of data sources: reports released by UN agencies, development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights organizations, government bodies, and think tanks; media reports; and information shared with GCPEA by staff members of international and national organizations working in the countries profiled in this study.

**Quality assurance**

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA), for its report *Education under Attack*, maintains the database used to produce this indicator. GCPEA defines the protocol for reporting and harmonising these data which are compiled from three main sources (see section above on Data sources).

**Limitations and comments**

This indicator compiles information from different sources that are subject to different levels of verification. Furthermore, the sources of data vary considerably from country to country, which are determined in part by whether a country has any established mechanisms for monitoring and reporting. See *Education under Attack 2020* (GCPEA 2020), pp. 88-96, for more details.

**References**

Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA). 2020. *Education under Attack 2020*. New York: GCPEA. [https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/eua\\_2020\\_full.pdf](https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/eua_2020_full.pdf).