



AID WORKER SECURITY DATABASE

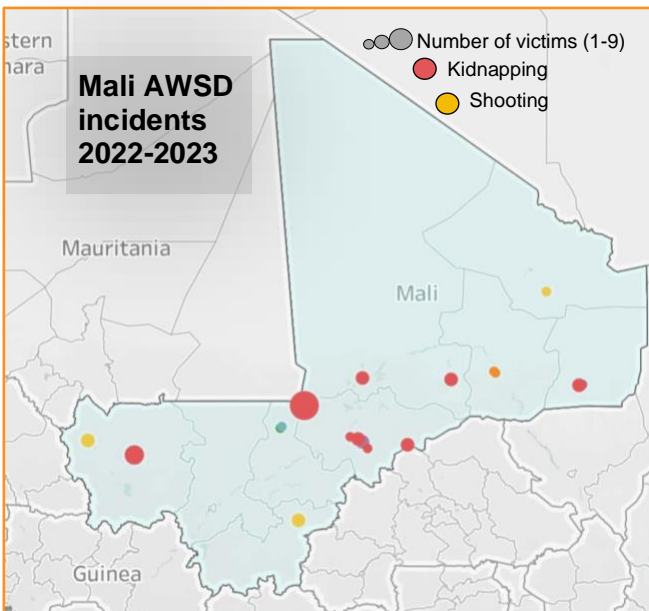
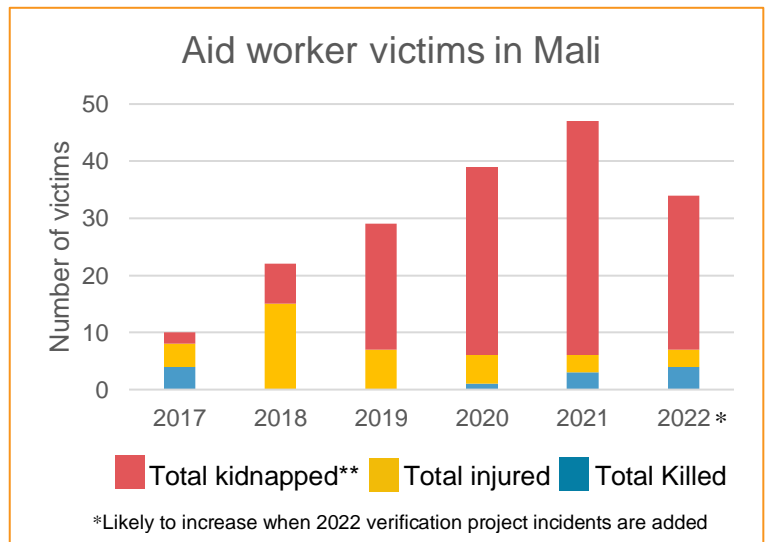
MARCH 2 2023

SIGNAL ALERT

Rise in humanitarian needs and aid worker abductions in Mali

Abductions of aid workers in Mali has increased significantly over the last 6 years. Abduction incidents have been reported in 6 out of 10 regions in Mali during the period, with 57% of incidents occurring in the region of Mopti, an epicenter of civil violence.

One of the world's "[neglected emergencies](#)", Mali has endured years of increasingly fragmented armed conflict, compounded by two military coups since 2020, and involving multiple militias and organised crime groups. An estimated [8.8 million people](#)—over a third of the population—are in now in need of humanitarian assistance due to displacement and disruption of basic services.



** The AWSD category of 'kidnapping' includes all abductions or forced detentions lasting over 24 hours, whether or not a ransom demand is made

Humanitarian workers in Mali note that kidnappings for ransom are rare, and usually target large organisations with international staff. Much more common are abductions (lasting on average between 1-30 days) by non-state armed groups displeased by an organisation's programming or simply exerting control. Humanitarian action is extremely constrained, as access to most communities must be negotiated with armed groups through community members acting as intermediaries.

A renewed military offensive in 2022 by Malian forces with the help of Russian financing and mercenaries has eroded relationships with communities that have suffered collateral violence, complicating the efforts of access negotiations. Aid groups predict a further deterioration of the humanitarian situation in 2023, and it is likely that operational security will follow suit, underscoring the need for localised approaches with an emphasis on negotiated access.

[ACAPS](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

[OCHA](#)

[TNH](#)

Signal Alert is an occasional publication of the Aid Worker Security Database to inform the humanitarian sector of a statistically significant trend, change, or outlier detected in the security environment for aid operations.

www.aidworkersecurity.org

www.humanitarianoutcomes.org