

Christians on hitlist in Burkina Faso as jihad spreads

Please pray for Christians in Burkina Faso who are believed to be on the hitlist of jihadists after a recent deadly attack in the north of the country in which at least 100 people were killed.

Our partners say the extremists are targeting places of worship and religious leaders.

The government of Burkina Faso said gunmen killed at least 100 people in their deadliest attack on the country earlier this month. The BBC put the death toll in Solhan even higher at 160. It followed an attack on a nearby village in which 14 were killed.

Jihadist violence is on the increase in the Sahel and groups affiliated with Al Qaeda and Islamic State have been gaining ground in the region. In parts of the north, Christians are the primary targets.

Our partners say the jihadists have been targeting pastors and priests, forcing churches to close their doors and meet in secret.

While most of Burkina Faso's Christians live in the south, the minority in the north are being targeted by the jihadists from Mali.

'Susanna', our partner at Voice of the Martyrs Poland, said: 'They want to kick out the Christians. Christians are on the blacklist. The jihadists come looking for Christians to kidnap or kill them.' As a result, many have fled, swelling the numbers of refugees.

The militants have also attacked schools to try to purge the western influence from their culture. They have burned schools down and forced 2,000 to close, denying 300,000 pupils an education.

Thank God that our partners have been able to provide food for some victims of the violence as well as food and hygiene supplies for more than 8,000 displaced Christians. They have also been drilling wells for drinking water.

But the children still need to be educated, which the militants are determined to stop. Some of these children have been driven out of their schools by Covid and conflict for up to three years.

As a result our partners have paid for school fees and school kits for more than 400 children of Christians displaced by conflict.

- Pray for all those affected by the increasing jihadist violence in Burkina Faso.
- Pray especially for church leaders who are being targeted by the militants.
- Thank God that Release partners have been able to provide food and supplies for displaced Christians as well as education kits for children.

Listen to our recent podcast interview with Susanna [here](#).

(Sources: BBC, VOM Poland) – Release International

