

HIGHLIGHTS

- At least six Kabul Informal Settlements (KIS) have received verbal eviction notices
- Aid workers in Afghanistan prepare for World Humanitarian Summit
- Recent attacks against aid workers highlight need to rethink humanitarian access
- CARE assists vulnerable families in Khost with CHF support

The evictions could affect an estimated 221 families (1,430 individuals) requiring them to find alternative places to live.



WHH fuel distributions, Kabul informal settlements
Source: OCHA

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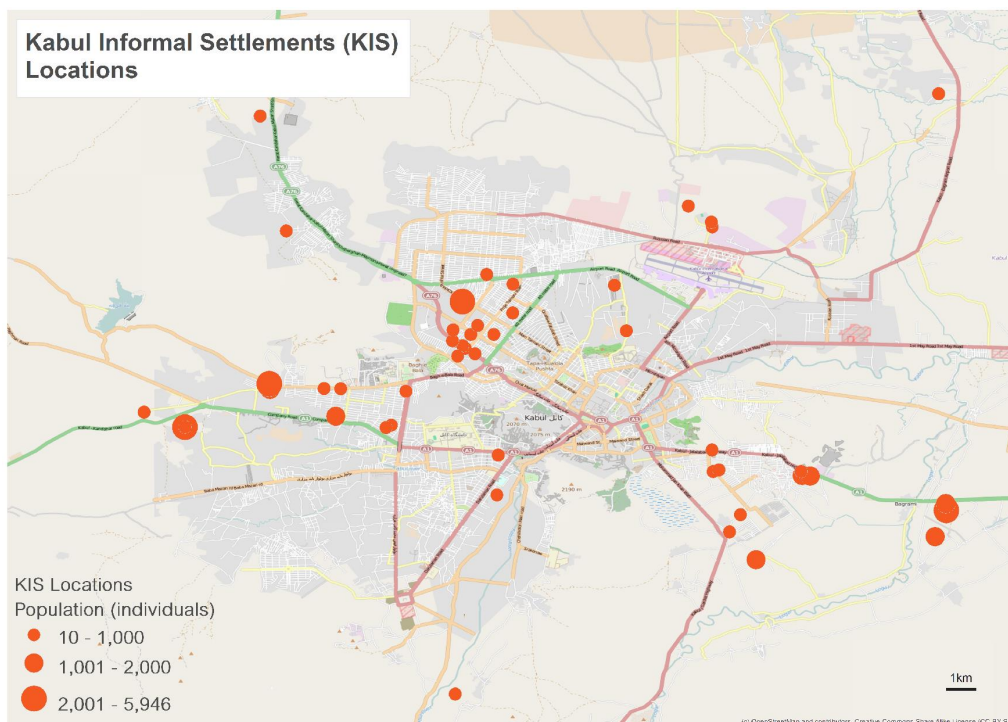
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Eviction notices raise protection concerns for KIS families

As of 31 May, according to information received from community leaders, UNHCR and the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations (MoRR), residents in at least six Kabul Informal Settlements (KIS) located on privately owned land have received verbal eviction notices. These include five settlements which have received notices in the month of May. At this time, residents in four sites face possible eviction late June and July 2015, requiring urgent intervention in order to avoid a forced or arbitrary eviction. The evictions could affect an estimated 221 families (1,430 individuals) requiring them to find alternative places to live. The recent increase in the number of eviction notices, as compared the first quarter of 2015, could be linked to plans by landowners to start construction in the summer and follows a moratorium on evictions declared for the winter period.



Source: OCHA

The KIS are located on privately- or government-owned land, with insecurity of tenure for the occupants and potential evictions being a major challenge. According to the KIS Task Force, Winter Assistance Post-Distribution Monitoring Survey Report 2014/2015, an

estimated 40,000 individuals live in approximately 50 Kabul Informal Settlements. There is great diversity among KIS families who include returnees from Pakistan and Iran, those displaced by conflict, and economic migrants. The oldest settlements date back to 2002 and the most recent ones to 2014 which shelter families displaced by conflict in Helmand.



Fuel distributions, Kabul Informal Settlements, November 2014
Source: OCHA

Insufficient shelter is a major concern, in particular to protect against Kabul's extreme climate

Protection concerns include the general vulnerability of KIS families due to a lack of tenure security and poor living conditions. Lack of access to adequate water, minimal access to basic services such as schools and hospitals, low income and unstable livelihoods opportunities, and tensions with host communities, contribute to vulnerabilities. Insufficient shelter is a major concern, in particular to protect against Kabul's extreme climate. In addition, the sites host persons with disabilities, female-headed households, and persons addicted to drugs, among other groups with specific needs.

Humanitarian actors are working with relevant government departments to find durable solutions for KIS families that are under imminent or potential threat of eviction, in accordance with the laws of Afghanistan, the directive of the National IDP Policy, International Humanitarian Law and in full consultation with KIS residents.

In the absence of a durable solution which gives KIS families security of tenure, alternative sites identified may not be sufficient. A general moratorium on evictions combined with enhanced efforts to identify durable solutions is required. These efforts should include an updated intentions survey to guide the process, along with the identification and allocation of suitable land that would provide security of tenure to KIS families.

Aid workers in Afghanistan prepare for World Humanitarian Summit

An initiative of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) will be held in Istanbul-Turkey on 26-27 May 2016. With support from UNOCHA, the Summit will bring together governments, humanitarian organisations, people affected by humanitarian crises and new partners including the private sector to propose solutions to keep humanitarian aid fit for purpose.

In the two years leading up to the Summit, eight regional consultations with a wide range of stakeholders (national governments, humanitarian organisations, community responders/affected populations, private sector and other partners) will be held. These will provide humanitarian actors with opportunities to highlight what they consider crucial

to better address the needs of affected populations. Afghanistan will be represented in the South and Central Asia Regional consultation in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, in July 2015.

In preparation for Dushanbe, two meetings were held in Afghanistan. On 21 May, Agency Coordinating Body of Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR) and Islamic Relief hosted the Afghanistan National Consultation. Representatives from the government, international and national NGOs, the donor community, and UN agencies discussed their perspectives and experiences in providing humanitarian assistance to millions of vulnerable Afghans. The meeting focused on humanitarian effectiveness, reducing vulnerability and managing risk, transformation through innovation, and serving the needs of people in conflict.

National consultations are a starting point to inform future debates on the views, visions, and innovative ideas of humanitarian actors working in Afghanistan



On 4 June, UNOCHA hosted a consultation for the Humanitarian Country Team, Inter-cluster Coordination Team and Humanitarian Donor Group. The meeting addressed regional priority themes of: giving affected people greater voice and choice, localising preparedness and response, International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian action in conflict, and new models for protracted crisis. Participants also discussed national issues of concern and possible recommendations.

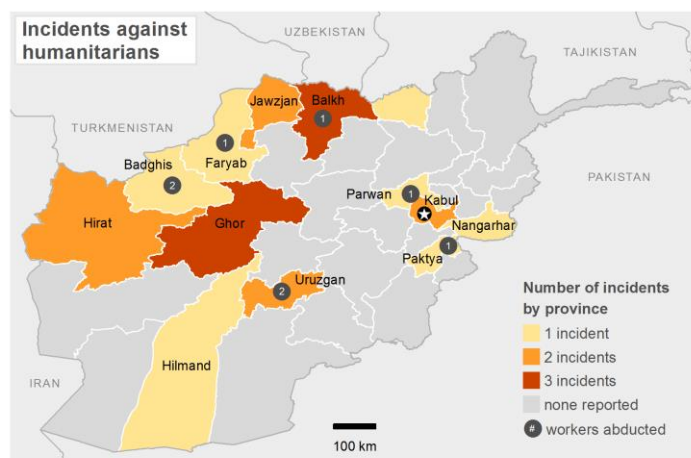
These national consultations are a starting point to inform future debates and will provide the views, visions, and innovative ideas of humanitarian actors working in Afghanistan to the WHS Central and South Asian Regional Consultation in July 2015, and ultimately the World Humanitarian Summit 2016.

More information on the WHS can be accessed [here](#).

Humanitarian access

Incidents affecting humanitarian action

There were 21 incidents reported involving national and international NGOs and international organisations across Afghanistan in May. These incidents resulted in violence against aid workers, assets or facilities. There were 11 reported deaths. This includes the killing of five national and two international NGO workers in the attack on the Park Palace guest house in Kabul. There were four reported incidents against health facilities and workers. Notably, one clinic was occupied during an armed-clash in Charsada district of Ghor, which resulted in damage to the building; and two health workers were abducted in Uruzgan province.



The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Incidents against Humanitarians in May 2015

Source: Various

21 incidents

11 aid workers killed

2 air worker wounded

8 aid workers abducted

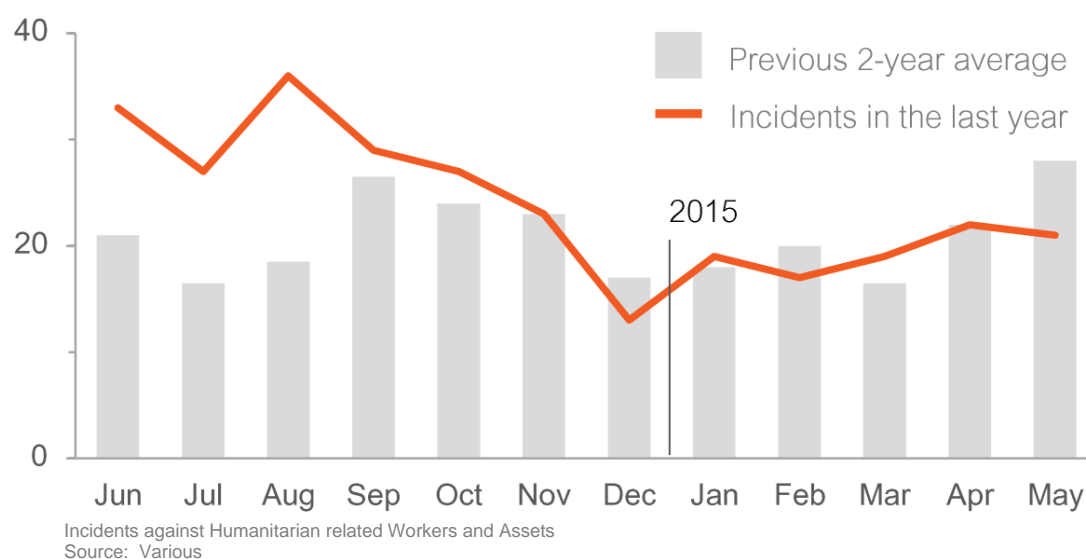
Humanitarian access in focus

Recent attacks against aid workers highlight need to rethink humanitarian access

Will Carter, Senior Researcher

Secure Access in Volatile Environments (SAVE), Humanitarian Outcomes

‘Nine NGO workers were murdered in southern Balkh Province this month; they were part of a humanitarian NGO who had worked with local communities there for over ten years. Our thoughts are with their families.’



The attack follows a series of recent multiple-fatality incidents affecting humanitarian agencies around the country, including five NGO abductees killed in Uruzgan in April, and five NGO workers killed in Kabul in November. While these incidents are seemingly unrelated, cumulatively they have left agencies and staff unsettled and uncertain. For the

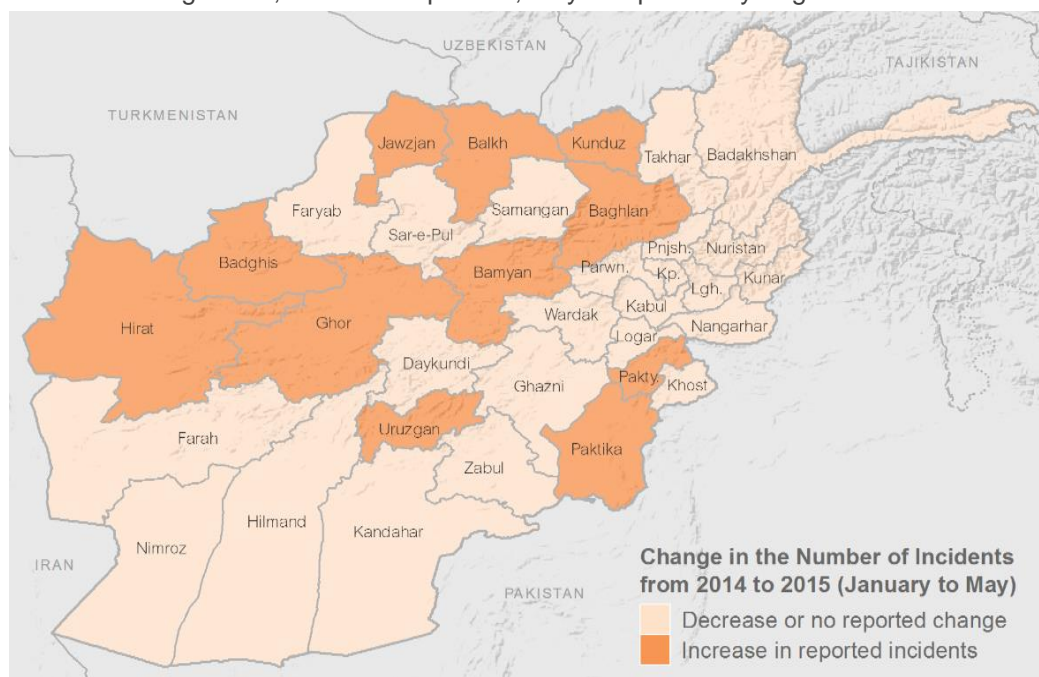
"I am deeply saddened by this shocking news. I share the grief of our colleagues at Save the Children International and the families of those killed."

[Read the Humanitarian Coordinator, Mark Bowden's full Statement here](#)

first few months of this new chapter in Afghan history, following the end of the 13-year military intervention in the country, these events augur poorly.

Whilst seasonal patterns of violence in Afghanistan have cycled through some of its worst offerings over the past five years, the last eight months have seen a notable uptick in premeditated violence against aid workers. Some commentators have assessed that as the conflict intensifies and the insurgency radicalises, aid workers may move from simply being 'benign infidels' to 'agents of Western imperialism', the implication being that armed non-state actors could become less tolerant towards aid organisations. This position would challenge assumptions of the nature of community acceptance in Afghanistan, and hence humanitarian access, in the new climate.

ⁱⁱOf course, there are many possible explanations about the recent string of incidents of targeted violence against aid workers, which arguably started in November 2014. Other analyses might downplay the idea that these—albeit serious—incidents could represent a seismic shift in the security situation, and that it is easy and counterproductive to be alarmist. Some of the perpetrators could be opposition commanders, whilst others could be a range of actors, for a number of reasons. Are these recent incidents different to the suicide attacks on an INGO compound in Jalalabad and a UN compound in Kabul, or grim execution of abducted aid workers in western Afghanistan, all in 2013? This remains unclear. Unfortunately, there is more speculation than actual investigative data on these incidents shared between and amongst the aid community; little is actually known about the precise motivations, even specific identities, of the perpetrators of incidents against aid workers. Although some of those details can be inferred, less can now be assumed about whether agencies, staff or compounds, may be specifically targeted.



Source: Various

These events have challenged security management assumptions for aid agencies. The organisations affected here have had very strong levels of community acceptance in their areas of operation. The incidents demonstrate that even if NGOs work within humanitarian principles, carefully and intimately manage community relations, and only work with community acceptance—even if we do 'everything right', we are still vulnerable to violence. Armed non-state actors can pose a fatal threat; violence is not simply opportunistic, and the behaviour of such groups is less and less predictable. Aid organisations will consequently need to re-examine the nature of their 'acceptance' and its adequacy for the situation, perhaps thinking firstly whether they have been passive (only gaining 'tolerance') or active in its management.

As a humanitarian security strategy, acceptance depends on influencing security threats at their source, persuading those who could do harm them not to, convincing those who

The bigger security challenge for humanitarian organisations has typically been to avoid being in the wrong place at the wrong time

could help protect them to do so. In Afghanistan, many aid organisations speak of their commitment to community acceptance as the most important pillar of their security approach. However, many organisations here talk specifically of *community* acceptance. Whilst important, communities may be limited in their ability to protect aid organisations from the actions of armed actors, particularly during the summer ‘fighting seasons’ when new opposition commanders are deployed forward. Very few organisations here speak specifically of engagement with the non-state armed actors who could be proponents of such incidents. This differs from other conflict contexts such as in the Middle East or Africa, where explicit humanitarian engagement of armed actors is more normal for aid organisations on the ground. Perhaps now is a moment for aid organisations in Afghanistan to reassess their policies concerning acceptance and move beyond community acceptance?

Acceptance aside, even with a history of targeted attacks against aid operations in Afghanistan, the bigger security challenge for humanitarian organisations has typically been to avoid being in the wrong place, wrong time, or being collaterally affected by the conflict. Now there is need to pause for reflection on why aid workers seem to be increasingly affected. Whatever answers aid organisations come up with, either individually or collectively, and their response, will shape humanitarian access around the country in this new chapter.

The last time security structurally deteriorated in Afghanistan and aid workers felt targeted (between 2006 and 2009, most especially in the south of the country), the aid community polarised in terms of how to respond and reconfigure, partly to maintain access to populations in need as best as the organisations saw fit: many desisted from armed security to improve acceptance; many adopted remote management approaches. Some were strongly opposed to remote management, largely due to suspected deficits in programme quality and financial control, and the idea of risk transfer to national colleagues and partners. Many aid organisations felt that their acceptance was compromised by other organisations, who were affiliated to the stabilisation campaign. Aid organisations subsequently became relatively individualistic in this regard, inhibiting collective mechanisms and strategies for greater operational access around the country.

As both the aid funding climate and security conditions currently change in Afghanistan, it is unclear how the aid community will respond -- either individually or collectively -- and how access will be reconfigured. However, what is plain from the history of aid work in Afghanistan is that access is interdependent, and—if properly understood and analysed—can be actively managed.

In brief

Warm clothes and blankets – CARE assists vulnerable families in Khost with CHF support

In December 2014, a Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) Reserve was activated to provide Pakistani refugees, undocumented Afghan returnees, and the families who host them in Afghanistan’s South Eastern region with life-saving services for the upcoming winter months. The CHF supported CARE International to supply 1,750 winterisation kits

Breakdown by Cluster

Cluster	CHF Funding (million US\$)	%	Number of projects	%
Health	6.9	32%	8	30%
Nutrition	5	23%	4	15%
Multi-Sector	5	23%	7	26%
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	4	21%	8	30%

CHF Funding Allocations by Cluster for 2015
Source: OCHA

with blankets, tarpaulin sheets, shoes and warm winter clothes to the most vulnerable, including 10 per cent of the host communities in Khost's Gurbuz and Matun districts."

In May 2015, a team from an OCHA's Humanitarian Financing Unit which manages the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) visited Anzarki village of Gurboz district in Khost province. During the post-distribution monitoring visit, the team was able to see first hand the impact of CHF funding in the lives of the vulnerable families in the village. According to UNCHR as of 31 May, 3,061 Pakistani refugee families had been assessed in the district. In Anzarki village, the OCHA team spent time with beneficiaries and listened to their stories.

Habibullah is a 62 years old Afghan who lives in Anzarki village with his wife and six children. Since military operations started in Pakistan's North Waziristan Agency (NWA) in June 2014, his community has been hosting several hundred Pakistani families who fled to Khost province. He told the team, "Life is difficult for us, because we face increasing hardship every day." This is his story.

We could not afford to buy firewood and my children complained about the cold, as they could not sleep because they did not have mattresses, blankets and pillows



Source: CARE

"I got married late – when I was 44 years old. My family was poor and I could not afford to get married when I was younger. I am the head of my family now and work as a daily wage worker. Sometimes I find work and sometimes I do not. Since I am an old man, people do not often pick me to work for them. My average daily earning is 50 Afs and I often have to rely on loans to make ends meet.

At the start of winter, we had no money to buy winter clothes for my children and carpets for the living room. We could not afford to buy firewood and my children complained about the cold, as they could not sleep because they did not have mattresses, blankets and pillows.

Out on the streets, other children laughed at my kids for their old and torn cloths. My children suffered this ridicule every time they went outside the house. They would ask me to buy them new cloths and sweaters. I was unable to send them to school because there was no money for pens and notebooks. They saw children of their age going to school, and they kept asking me when they would be able to go to school. I would sigh and tell them to wait, that in a few years they could go to school too.

Fortunately, about few months ago, CARE started a project to help refugees and their host families in Khost through the winter months. The joint team from CARE and Community Development Council (CDC) chose my family as eligible for winter assistance.

CARE changed things for my family. They gave us blankets, sweaters, socks, shoes, hats and warm clothes for the children, and a tarpaulin/plastic sheet. We are very thankful to CARE and the donor because the project helped us cope with the cold and harsh winter. Our children can sleep comfortably and they can also play in the streets with other children because they wear new jackets that keep them warm against the cold.”

With \$304,435 of support from the CHF, CARE Afghanistan supported the winter needs 12,800 individuals (Pakistani refugee and host families) in Matun and Gurbuz districts of Khost province. This included 3,215 women and 6,684 children.

ⁱ Notes: Politically or economically motivated violence as well as exposure to incidental violence directly affecting humanitarian personnel, equipment and facilities. Incidents relating to violence against humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities, which includes intimidation, abductions, arrests, injuries, deaths, damaged property, stolen assets.

ⁱⁱ Disclaimer: The designations employed and the presentation of material on all maps contained herein, do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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