

# Afghanistan: COI Repository



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## Purpose of this document

This document is a collection of Country of Origin Information (COI) jointly compiled by Asylos and Clifford Chance law firm, quality reviewed by ARC Foundation and Asylos. Its purpose is to pre-empt COI needs that will arise as Afghans who have fled the current situation will make claims for international protection.

This is a living document intended to collect a) information on sources that are (still) reporting on the situation in Afghanistan and b) to collect relevant source excerpts. As we compile this document, the situation in Afghanistan changes rapidly. We will publish an updated version of this document on a weekly basis from September 2021 onwards.

Research themes for this report are devised in consultation with UK asylum lawyers and with regards to relevant UK Home Office guidance on similar situations (notably Somalia and Al-Shabab).

## Disclaimer

The *COI Repository* is intended as background reference material for legal representatives and those assisting asylum seekers from Afghanistan, to assist in their preparation of the case. The *COI Repository* should be used as a tool to help identify relevant COI. The information cited in the repository can be considered by decision makers in assessing asylum applications and appeals. Legal representatives are welcome to submit relevant excerpts cited in this document for their specific case to decision makers (including judges) to assist in the determination of an asylum claim or appeal. **However, this document should not be submitted directly, in its entirety or in isolation as evidence to decision-makers in asylum applications or appeals.**

The information cited in this document is illustrative, but not exhaustive of the information available in the public domain, nor is it determinative of any individual human rights or asylum claim. Submissions should always be complemented by case-specific COI research.

While we strive to be as comprehensive as possible, no amount of research can ever provide an exhaustive picture of the situation. It is therefore important to note that the absence of information should not be taken as evidence that an issue, incident or violation does not exist.

We are COI research experts and adhere to strict research principles of providing relevant, objective, transparent, timely and reliable sources material. We therefore include all discoverable relevant information, whether or not supportive of any human rights or asylum claim. **It is therefore imperative that legal representatives and those assisting asylum seekers read the whole *COI Repository* and submit only relevant excerpts cited in this document for their specific case in addition to conducting their own case-specific COI research.**

Due to the rapid unfolding of events in Afghanistan and the increased media interest during August 2021, as well as internal organisational matters, it was agreed that research would only start on 1st September 2021. Therefore, sources published in August 2021 have not been included.

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## SECTION 1 - COI RESEARCH COLLECTION

*This section is a collection of relevant COI excerpts, organised by research topic.*

### Control of Territory

*What territory in Afghanistan do the Taliban control?*

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [ICC judges ask UN for help identifying who represents Afghanistan](#), 8 October 2021

“The International Criminal Court on Friday said it cannot rule on a prosecutor's request to resume a war crimes investigation of Afghanistan until it can decide who represents the country in international bodies. The judges asked U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the ICC's governing body for help identifying which group officially rules Afghanistan from an international law standpoint. It asked for a response by Nov. 8.”

RUSI, [Afghanistan: A Safe Haven for Global Jihadism Once More?](#), 20 September 2021

“The Taliban’s leadership still seems to want to proceed with its policy of confining foreign jihadists in ‘reserves’ where their movements can be controlled. Taliban sources in Badakhshan say that just days ago the Central Asian jihadists clustered near Jurm were told to get ready to be transferred to their assigned areas and registered. The possibility of taking away their weapons was also raised, to their dismay.

Still, the pro-jihadist lobby has fairly good hopes of prevailing in Kabul. The Haqqani network has a powerful presence in the cabinet, with four ministerial posts – including the minister of the interior – and has obvious influence on government activities due to its control over Kabul. In any case, Al-Qa’ida is not trusting its fate to the uncertain outcome of power struggles in Kabul and has been preparing back-up options in case its allies within the Taliban lose out. In recent months it has encouraged the TTP to move to the Loya Paktia region, under the protection of the Haqqani network. Now old members of Al-Qa’ida are moving from Waziristan to the Afghan province of Paktia, local sources say, a further sign that it might be seeking to turn the area into its new safe haven.”

TOLO News, [Taliban Says Panjshir is Captured, Resistance Claims War Not Over](#), 10 September 2021

“The Taliban said they are in control of Panjshir and the resistance forces are hiding in “valleys and caves.” Five days after all districts of Panjshir and the provincial center were captured by the Taliban, a commander of the Resistance Front on Friday in a recorded video message said the Taliban’s presence in Panjshir does not mean the end of the war.”

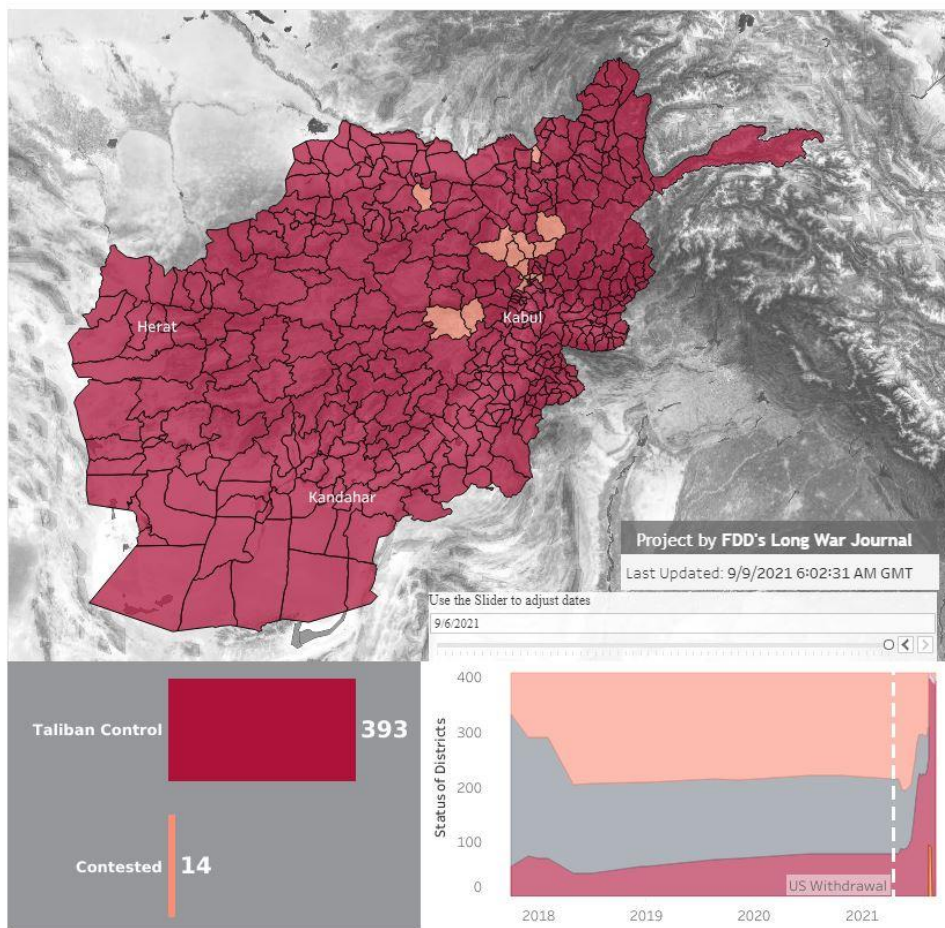
FDD’s Long War Journal, [Taliban completes conquest of Afghanistan after seizing Panjshir | FDD's Long War Journal](#), 6 September 2021

“The Taliban completed its military conquest of Afghanistan and took control of the mountainous province of Panjshir after seven days of heavy fighting. The fall of Panjshir puts the Taliban in full control of the country and eliminates the final vestige of organized resistance to its rule.”

FDD’s Long War Journal, [Mapping Taliban Control in Afghanistan | FDD's Long War Journal](#), 9 September 2021

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UNAMA, [Report of the Secretary-General: The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 8 September 2021

"The situation in Afghanistan remained highly fluid, after a Taliban military offensive took control of provincial capitals and Kabul. The departure of President Ghani and entry of Taliban forces into the capital on 15 August saw the de facto disintegration of the Government.

[...]

4. The Taliban extensively expanded its territorial control in a military campaign in which it seized 33 out of 34 of the provincial capitals within a 10-day period in August. Following the Taliban forces' entry into Kabul on 15 August, President Ghani left the country, stating via social media that his aim had been to prevent bloodshed. On 15 August, Taliban deputy leader and head of the Political Commission, Mullah Baradar, issued a video announcing the group's "unexpected" victory.

[...]

16. Insecurity in Afghanistan steadily increased during the reporting period as the Taliban initiated a large-scale offensive amid the withdrawal of the remaining international military forces. As at 18 August, they controlled all of Afghanistan, except Panjshir Province."

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FDD's Long War Journal, [National Resistance Front repels multi-day Taliban assault on Panjshir](#), 2 September 2021

"After weeks of fruitless negotiations between the Taliban's political leadership and senior leaders of the National Resistance Front in Panjshir, the Taliban launched a multi-pronged attack on the Panjshir Valley beginning on Aug. 31. The Taliban timed the assault on Panjshir for immediately after the U.S. military pulled out of Kabul airport and ended efforts to evacuate American citizens and Afghan allies.

To this point, the National Resistance Front has mostly successfully warded off the Taliban by virtue of easily defended positions in the mountainous region, inflicting heavy Taliban casualties along the way."

*Where do actors other than the Taliban exert influence?*

Al Jazeera (Afghanistan), [Afghanistan: Taliban leader warns of infiltrators](#), 4 November 2021

"The supreme leader of the Taliban, Haibatullah Akhunzada, has warned the group that there may be "unknown" entities among their ranks who are "working against the will of the government."

Lawfare, [The Taliban Haven't Changed, But U.S. Policy Must](#), 31 October 2021

"When it comes to IS-K, the notion that the Taliban will be able to provide anything more than short-term, tactical gains against the group is optimistic. Although the Taliban may succeed in rooting out some IS-K cells in the next few months, the history and current trajectory of the Islamic State-Taliban rivalry suggests that a much longer, protracted war between the two organizations is likely if the Taliban are left alone to manage IS-K. Civilians will bear the brunt of the costs. Boosted by thousands of jailbroke fighters, new leadership, and a revamped messaging campaign that paints the Taliban as illegitimate puppets of the United States and the international community, IS-K recently embarked on a lethal campaign of attacks in its former stronghold of Nangarhar province to challenge Taliban rule. With likely support from Salafist sympathizers, veteran jihadists, younger Afghans and others, IS-K has already begun to implement the same method of insurgency as its namesake in Iraq and Syria, including the assassination of prominent members of the "moderate middle" in IS-K's target recruiting pool in order to weaken its opponents."

EurAsia.net, [Event | Russia looks to Taliban to contain Islamic State in Afghanistan](#), 28 October 2021

"Moscow seems willing to tolerate Taliban rights abuses, if the movement can get the job done."

AVA Press, [ISIS unable to threaten region, Taliban are way stronger: Taliban's minister](#), 27 October 2021

"Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has assured the region not to be threatened by ISIS-K from their soil and said that their fighters are way stronger and serious when it comes to suppressing the group.

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_Afghanistan's acting minister of information and culture Khairullah said that they will eliminate not only -K but any group who wants to insecure the region.

On the other hand, US undersecretary of defense said that they suspect the ability of the Taliban in suppressing ISIS-K and .

Colin Kahl has said that the Taliban have relations with the Al Qaida terror group and that will make it difficult for the former to fight against the group.

Our intelligence assessment indicates that ISIS and Al Qaida are willing to conduct operations abroad including in the US. The assessments show that ISIS-K will be able to do so in six months while Al Qaida will gain the ability in upcoming 12 or 24 months." Said Kahl.

The concerns over the appearance of ISIS-K come after the group conducted bloody attacks in Kandahar and Kunduz province that inflicted casualties to Shite worshippers."

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Gandhara News, [Taliban Wages Deadly Crackdown On Afghan Salafists As War With IS-K Intensifies](#), 22 October 2021

"Since seizing power, the militant group has waged a deadly crackdown on Salafists, who accuse the Taliban of detaining and killing members of the community. They also allege that the Taliban has raided and closed down dozens of their mosques and madrasahs, or religious seminaries.

The Taliban's clampdown on Salafists has coincided with its escalating war with rival Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K) militants, many of whom are Salafists. There are believed to be several hundred thousand Salafists in Afghanistan, mainly concentrated in the eastern provinces of Fof Nangarhar, Kunar, and Nuristan.

Salafists like Hakimullah say civilian members of the community are caught in the middle of the intensifying conflict between the two groups in eastern Afghanistan, an IS-K stronghold."

The Khaama Press News Agency, [Taliban underrate Daesh, do not call it danger in Afghanistan](#), 17 October 2021

"Afghanistan's acting foreign minister Amir Khan Motaqi during his visit to Turkey said that ISIS-K (Daesh) is not a threat in Afghanistan and the group does not have training centers in the country."

Al Jazeera (Afghanistan), [Will Afghanistan's powerful neighbours engage the Taliban?](#), 16 October 2021

"The withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan is inevitably leaving a political vacuum in South and Central Asia. The question that many are asking is who will step in to fill it. Afghanistan's immediate neighbours – Pakistan, Iran and China – all have special interests in the country that they are likely to pursue with renewed vigour."

Afghan Voice Agency, [Blasts Hit Mosque in Kandahar, 32 Killed](#), 16 October 2021

"A bombing attack occurred at Imam Bargah Fatimeyah mosque in the southern province of Kandahar on Friday."

Al Jazeera (Afghanistan), [Deadly explosion hits Shia mosque in Afghanistan's Kandahar](#), 15 October 2021

"ISIS-K claims responsibility for attack that killed at least 47 people inside a mosque in southern city during Friday prayers."

[The Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD) published on 5th October 2021 a [Brief compilation on recent developments and key actors in Afghanistan](#), which you may wish to consult. The compilation covers: *Developments in 2021, The Taliban, Taliban-associated groups (Haqqani Network; Al Qaeda); Islamic State - Khorasan Province; National Resistance Front (NRF)*]

Ariana News, [IEA says Daesh is not a threat to Afghanistan's security](#), 3 October 2021

"MoI officials also said that Daesh claims responsibility for attacks in Afghanistan that are carried out by criminals.

"Daesh is not a serious threat to Afghanistan's security, and they (Daesh) are not able to threaten Afghanistan's security," said Saeed Khosti, spokesman for the MoI.

Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) officials say that Daesh has no active presence in the country and falsely claim responsibility for attacks.[...]

This comes after IEA forces raided a Daesh (ISIS-K) hideout north of Kabul on Friday, killing and arresting an unspecified number of militants, an IEA spokesman said.

IEA spokesman Bilal Karimi told The Associated Press that Friday's raid took place in the city of Charikar in Parwan province. He did not provide more details.

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The raid followed an arrest by the IEA of two Daesh members linked to a roadside bombing that targeted an IEA vehicle in the city on Friday, wounding four members. The two were questioned and the information they provided helped the IEA identify the hideout, Karimi said.”

The Guardian, [Civilians killed in deadliest Kabul attack since US withdrawal](#), 3 October 2021

“IS militants have stepped up attacks against the Taliban since their mid-August takeover, signalling a widening conflict between them. IS maintains a strong presence in the eastern province of Nangarhar, where it has claimed responsibility for several killings in the provincial capital of Jalalabad. [...]

Attacks in Kabul have so far been rare, but in recent weeks IS has shown signs it is expanding its footprint beyond the east and closer toward the capital. On Friday Taliban fighters raided an IS hideout just north of Kabul in Parwan province. The raid came after an IS roadside bomb wounded four Taliban fighters in the area.”

Long War Journal, [Testimony: The Biden’s Administration policy in Afghanistan](#), 30 September 2021

“Al-Qaeda retained a significant footprint in Afghanistan throughout the war. At FDD’s *Long War Journal*, my colleague Bill Roggio and I have documented this footprint for more than a dozen years. Other sources have recently recognized al-Qaeda’s current network inside the country. For example, a team of experts working for the UN Security Council reported earlier this year that al-Qaeda has an active presence in at least 15 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces.<sup>2</sup> This assessment is broadly consistent with al-Qaeda’s own reporting, via its Arabic newsletter *Thabat*, as well as with reporting by other sources.<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Treasury Department warned in January that al-Qaeda has been “gaining strength in Afghanistan while continuing to operate with the Taliban under the Taliban’s protection.” Al-Qaeda has a “network of mentors and advisers who are embedded with the Taliban, providing advice, guidance, and financial support.”<sup>4</sup> Much of al-Qaeda’s focus inside Afghanistan has been on winning the war. Now that the war has been won, al-Qaeda’s personnel in Afghanistan will have the resources to devote to other missions, both throughout the region and globally. [...]

ISKP continues to pose a threat throughout the region. ISKP’s network extends into Pakistan, where it has conducted a string of attacks. The group has also demonstrated some capability to strike in the Central Asian nations. In July 2018, a team of Islamic State terrorists ran over American and European cyclists in Tajikistan, killing four people.<sup>5</sup> ISKP has also recruited members from throughout Central Asia who could potentially return to their home countries to conduct attacks.

ISKP poses some degree of threat outside of Central and South Asia as well. In the summer of 2016, three men allegedly conspired to carry out terrorist attacks in New York City on behalf of the Islamic State.<sup>6</sup> American investigators discovered that the trio had at least some contact with ISKP’s jihadists. In April 2020, German authorities broke up a cell of four Tajik nationals who were allegedly preparing to attack U.S. and NATO military facilities.<sup>7</sup> Given ISKP’s open hostility to the United States, as demonstrated by the August 26 suicide bombing outside the airport in Kabul, military and intelligence officials will have to continue monitoring the group.

2 U.N. Security Council, “Twelfth report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2557 (2020) concerning the Taliban and other associated individuals and entities constituting a threat to the peace stability and security of Afghanistan,” April 28, 2021, page 12. (<https://www.undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/S/2021/486>)

3 Bill Roggio, “Analysis: Al Qaeda continues to operate throughout Afghanistan,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, April 8, 2021. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2021/04/analysis-al-qaeda-continues-to-operate-throughout-afghanistan.php>)

4 U.S. Department of the Treasury, Memorandum for Department of Defense Lead Inspector General, “Operation Inherent Resolve - Summary of Work Performed by the Department of the Treasury Related to Terrorist Financing, ISIS, and Anti-Money Laundering for First Quarter Fiscal Year 2021,” January 4, 2021. (<https://oig.treasury.gov/sites/oig/files/2021-01/OIG-CA-21-012.pdf>)

5 Thomas Joscelyn, “Assailants in Tajikistan swore allegiance to Baghdadi before attack,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, July 31, 2018. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2018/07/assailants-in-tajikistan-swore-allegiance-to-baghdadi-before-attack.php>)

6 U.S. Department of Justice, Press Release, “Charges Unsealed Against Three Men for Plotting to Carry out Terrorist Attacks in New York City for ISIS in the Summer of 2016,” October 6, 2017. (<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/charges-unsealed-against-three-men-plotting-carry-out-terrorist-attacks-new-york-city-isis>)

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7 Nodirbek Soliev, "The April 2020 Islamic State Terror Plot Against U.S. and NATO Military Bases in Germany: The Tajik Connection," *CTC Sentinel*, January 2021, Volume 14, Issue 1. (<https://ctc.usma.edu/the-april-2020-islamic-state-terror-plot-against-u-s-and-nato-military-bases-in-germany-the-tajik-connection>)"

Long War Journal, [Islamic State bombs Taliban convoys in eastern Afghanistan](#), 20 September 2021

"The Islamic State's Khorasan Province has claimed responsibility for a series of bombings that targeted Taliban convoys throughout the city of Jalalabad, the capital of Nangarhar province. The group claims that 35 Taliban members were killed or wounded in the attacks, though the casualty figures could not be independently verified. [...]

The so-called caliphate's men previously controlled a number of districts in Nangarhar. The Islamic State even seized ground in the Tora Bora Mountains, which were once home to Osama bin Laden.

As of early 2016, the Islamic State's men reportedly controlled 10 districts in Nangarhar. However, their safe haven shrunk in the months that followed. They lost their turf after battling the U.S. military, security forces for the now deposed Afghan government, as well as rival jihadists from the Taliban and al Qaeda.

Even after losing its turf, the Islamic State retained a terror network in Nangarhar. That network received a new influx of personnel in recent months, as thousands of jihadists were freed from Afghanistan's jails, including in Jalalabad."

Danish Immigration Service, [Afghanistan Recent developments in the security situation, impact on civilians and targeted individuals](#), 8 September 2021

[The Danish Immigration Service lists the National Resistance Front (NRF), Al-Qaeda, Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP), and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) as actors in Afghanistan besides the Taliban.]

"Although these rapid developments in the conflict have put the Taliban in control of all of Afghanistan but the Panjshir Valley and other small pockets of resistance, it should be noted that the Taliban does not constitute the only actor in the country."

#### *General security situation*

Tolo News, [US Worried by Increase of Daesh Attacks in Afghanistan](#), 9 November 2021

The United States is worried about an uptick in attacks by Islamic State's affiliate in Afghanistan and remains deeply concerned about al Qaeda's ongoing presence there, U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Tom West said on Monday.

World Politics Review, [Addressing Afghanistan's Crisis Will Require Dealing With the Taliban](#), 9 November 2021

As the Taliban government struggles to contain the crisis with minimal resources, it will likely fail to maintain control over all of its territory. The Islamic State's affiliate in Afghanistan, known as ISIS-Khorasan, is stepping up its attacks in the country and could establish a firm territorial base there.

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 8 November 2021

The Afghanistan security situation remains of high concern, with people describing parts of the country as being in "total chaos". Last week, the Deputy Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, Farhan Haq, reported ongoing violence resulting in casualties in Afghanistan: in Jalalabad, unverified pictures appeared online showing bodies swinging from a rope; residents also reported various targeted killings and video footage circulated of gunmen firing into a car, apparently killing its occupants, one of whom was identified by local journalists as a Taliban official. The Taliban have downplayed such incidents, saying that after decades of war, it will take time for the country to be completely pacified.

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BBC News, [More than 20 killed in attack on Kabul military hospital](#), 2 November 2021  
More than 20 people have been killed and at least 16 injured in a gun and bomb assault on a military hospital in the Afghan capital Kabul.

Attackers targeted the 400-bed Sardar Daud Khan hospital starting with two massive explosions outside the building, officials said.

Gunmen then broke into the hospital grounds, witnesses said.

An affiliate of the Islamic State group, IS-K, later said it had carried out the attack.

ACLED, [Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan](#), 27 October 2021  
“Last week in South Asia and Afghanistan, violence continued between the Taliban and the National Resistance Front (NRF) in Afghanistan, as the Islamic State (IS) sustained its attacks on Taliban forces. [...]

In **Afghanistan**, the number of armed clashes increased last week, amid ongoing clashes between the Taliban and the NRF. Clashes were reported in the Pul-e-Hisar, Andarab, and Deh Sala districts of Baghlan province. While the exact number of casualties remains unknown, several NRF and Taliban fighters were reportedly killed, including two NRF commanders.”

UN News, [Act swiftly and with determination on Afghanistan, UN chief urges](#), 27 October 2021  
““Afghanistan is confronting an epic humanitarian crisis and is on the verge of a development catastrophe”, the UN chief [Antonia Guterres] told the gathering. He urged countries to speak with one voice.

[...] Mr. Guterres said **he was deeply disturbed by violations of human rights**, including the rights of women, children and ethnic minorities, and recent deadly terrorist attacks on religious institutions. **He called for ongoing engagement “to help move things in the right direction.”**

For his final point, the UN chief stressed that Afghans, and the region, “also need a country that is secure – not one that is a haven for terrorism or a centre for drug trafficking.” This, he said, is vital to peace and stability, both in the region and around the world. “

TOLO News, [16 People Killed in Herat Clashes: Sources](#), 25 October 2021

“At least 16 people including seven children and three women were killed in clashes that erupted between the forces of the Islamic Emirate and a group of armed men in the western province of Herat, sources claimed on Monday.

The sources said that the house belonged to Daesh. Three members of the Islamic Emirate were also killed, the sources added.

However, Mawllavi Naeemulhaq Haqqani, provincial director of information and culture, said that a number of kidnappers were killed in the clashes. [...]

In the past two months, Herat has not seen a deadlier incident.”

Pajhwok Afghan News, [Last week, casualties in Afghanistan fall to record low](#), 23 October 2021  
“Casualty figure in Afghanistan fell to its lowest level or [sic] nine people in the past week, when some countries stressed aid to Afghanistan at a summit in Moscow and the Afghan government said it was ready for any civilized interaction with the world.

Attacks and civilian casualties

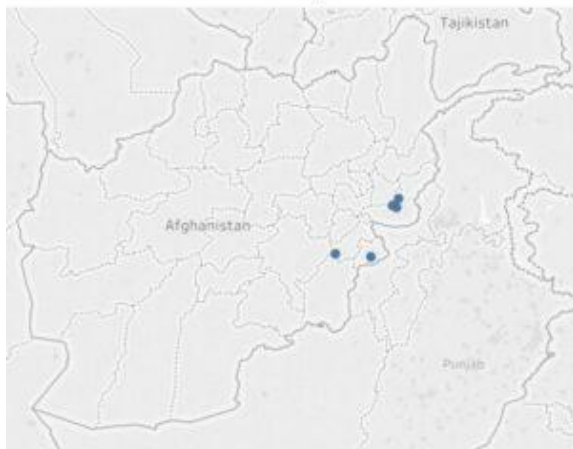
According to reports, six people were killed and three others wounded in different attacks last week.

Three children were killed and one was injured in a roadside bomb blast in Mata Khan district of Paktika province. A man was found stabbed to death and unidentified gunmen killed a former border policeman in Khost city, capital of Khost province. No one has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Casualties were also low six weeks ago when eight people were killed and one was wounded.

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9 Civilians were killed and injured in different incidents



Last week's death toll was 16 times lower than the previous one.

Previous week, 56 people were killed and 90 others injured in various incidents across the country. Forty-seven of them were killed and 90 others were injured in an attack on a Shia mosque in Kandahar province. ISIS claims responsibility for Kandahar attack."

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(11-17 October 2021\)](#), 21 October 2021

On 15 October, scores of civilians were killed and injured after a suicide bomb attack at a Shia mosque in Police District 1 of Kandahar City; 23 civilians including women and children were injured by abandoned IEDs in rural areas during the reporting period.

UNHCR, [UNHCR Iran: Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 18 October 2021

"The overall security situation in the country remains relatively calm, though isolated but violent incidents continue to take civilian lives. On 15 October, suicide bombers attacked a mosque in Kandahar in southern Afghanistan, killing dozens of people and wounding dozens more, the second such attack on a Shiite place of worship on successive Fridays in the country. The Islamic State Khorasan, also known as ISIS-K and ISKP, claimed responsibility. These attacks can be seen as a display of the organization's newly established reach, as it begins a reinvigorated campaign of violence against the people of Afghanistan and the new Taliban government."

Pajhwok Afghan News, [Efforts on to build strong, independent army: Mazloom](#), 16 October 2021

"The first deputy defense minister says they are trying to train an army that can defend Afghanistan's borders and people."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Gandhara, [Intensifying Violence Between Taliban, IS-K Heralds New War In Afghanistan](#), 13 October 2021

"But the Taliban's intensifying rivalry with the Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K), a rival militant group, has signaled the beginning of another phase of war in Afghanistan -- a development that many Afghans dread will provoke further bloodshed.

"Every day, two or three people are killed," Abdullah, a resident of the eastern province of Nangarhar, a stronghold of IS-K, told RFE/RL's Radio Azadi.

Abdullah said IS-K bomb attacks and assassinations have increased since the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan on August 15."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Last week was again deadliest for Afghans](#), 10 October 2021

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“Last week, 223 people suffered casualties in Afghanistan.

Attacks and civilian casualties:

According to reports last week 58 people were killed and 165 others injured in different incidents of violence in the country.

The deadliest incident last week happened in Kunduz province where 46 civilians were killed and 143 others injured in a suicide attack. Daesh or Islamic State (IS) claimed responsibility for the attack.

Elsewhere, three people including a were killed and three civilians injured in two incidents in Nangarhar province.

One person was found dead in Nangarhar. In province, a bride was killed and two people were injured after a person hurled a hand grenade to a wedding party. Two people were killed and three others injured in an explosion in a gathering of people attending the funeral of the mother of Zabihullah Mujahid, deputy information and culture minister.

In Laghman province, an Islamic scholar was shot dead while a person was killed and 14 others injured in an explosion in a seminary in Khost province. A robber was killed during a clash with Taliban in Kapisa province. A person was killed by unidentified armed men in Achin district of Nangarhar province. A former policeman was killed in an attack of armed robbers in province.

No groups have so far claimed responsibility for these attacks and explosions.

A week before 16 civilians were killed and nine others wounded in various incidents.”

The New York Times, [ISIS Bomber Kills Dozens at Shiite Mosque in Northern Afghanistan](#), 8 October 2021

“An Islamic State suicide bomber devastated a Shiite mosque in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz on Friday, killing dozens of worshipers in a deadly continuation of the terrorist group’s campaign against the Hazara minority. The massacre, while the mosque was crowded for Friday Prayer, was the group’s second attack against a mosque in just a few days. And it was the realization of Afghan Hazaras’ fears that the Islamic State’s predation would go unchecked under the rule of the Taliban, which itself preyed on the Hazara in the past.

Witness accounts described a powerful explosion with many casualties. Matullah Rohani, a Taliban official in Kunduz, told local media that at least 43 people were killed by the attack and more than 140 were injured.

A local Shiite community leader put the death toll much higher. Sayed Ahmad Shah Hashemi, who represents Kunduz Province’s Shiite population, told The New York Times that more than 70 people were killed in the attack.”

“Hours after the bombing, it was claimed by the [Islamic State Khorasan](#), also known as ISIS-K. It was the group’s deadliest strike since the suicide bombing at the international airport in Kabul on Aug. 26 that [killed about 170 civilians](#) and [13 U.S. troops](#).”

[The Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD) published on 5th October 2021 a [Brief compilation on recent developments and key actors in Afghanistan](#), which you may wish to consult. The compilation covers: *Developments in 2021, The Taliban, Taliban-associated groups (Haqqani Network; Al Qaeda); Islamic State - Khorasan Province; National Resistance Front (NRF)*]

Khaama Press, [ISIS-K claims responsibility for explosion on Eidgah mosque in Kabul](#), 5 October 2021

“The Khorasan branch of the Islamic State (ISIS-K) claimed responsibility for the deadly explosion on the Eidgah mosque on Sunday, October 3.

The explosion took the lives of at least eight and leftover 20 more wounded among them the Taliban fighters.

The Taliban did not disclose an exact number of their fighters killed and wounded though, a source told the Khaama Press that most of them were the Taliban fighters.

The explosion which is said to have been conducted by a suicide bomber targeted a big mosque close to the Presidential Palace where people and the Taliban officials had gathered for the mourning and prayer ceremony of the slain mother of Zabiullah Mujahid- spokesperson and deputy minister of information and culture.

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The Taliban fighters raided a house in the northern suburb of Kabul only hours after the incident and killed ISIS-K affiliates.

Zabiullah Mujahid had later said that they eliminated a cell of the ISIS-K fighters and killed all those existed in [who were part of it].”

The Guardian, [Civilians killed in deadliest Kabul attack since US withdrawal](#), 3 October 2021

“At least five civilians have been killed in a bomb blast at the entrance to a Kabul mosque on Sunday, a Taliban official said, the deadliest attack in the Afghan capital since US forces left at the end of August.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but suspicion fell on Islamic State extremists, who have stepped up attacks on the Taliban in recent weeks, particularly in the IS stronghold in eastern Afghanistan.

It is believed that a roadside bomb went off at the gate of the sprawling Eidgah mosque in Kabul when a memorial service was being held for the mother of the Taliban’s chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid. Five people were killed, said Qari Saeed Khosti, a spokesman for the interior ministry.”

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(13-19 September 2021\)](#), 23 September 2021

“In the reporting period, the security situation in the south remained calm but uncertain. The presence of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) is affecting access of people to areas in Uruzgan, Hilmand, and some parts of Kandahar provinces.”

“The security situation in the East remains volatile and unpredictable. On 18 September, five people were reportedly killed and 21 people were wounded by multiple IED detonations across the city of Jalalabad in Nangarhar Province”

“On 18 September, two civilians were reportedly injured by an IED attached to a private vehicle in Police District 13, Kabul. On 14 September, two civilians were reportedly killed and 12 others were wounded when an old mortar shell exploded in Ajristan district in Daykundi province.”

Long War Journal, [Islamic State bombs Taliban convoys in eastern Afghanistan](#), 20 September 2021

“The Islamic State’s Khorasan Province has claimed responsibility for a series of bombings that targeted Taliban convoys throughout the city of Jalalabad, the capital of Nangarhar province. The group claims that 35 Taliban members were killed or wounded in the attacks, though the casualty figures could not be independently verified.

Amaq News Agency, a media arm for the Islamic State, released a single-page statement on the attacks, as well as a short video showing an improvised explosive device being detonated underneath a Taliban vehicle. A screen shot from the video can be seen above.

Amaq claimed that seven bombings were carried out on Sept. 18 and 19, with the final explosion occurring outside of the Indian consulate in Jalalabad. Other jihadists have assaulted the Indian consulate inside the city in the past, but there is no indication in Amaq’s reporting that the diplomatic location was deliberately targeted on this occasion.”

Lawfare, [Thinking Long Term About the Future of Afghanistan](#), 19 September 2021

“With good relations between al-Qaeda and the Taliban, the latter may successfully convince the former to focus on local and regional issues, helping the Taliban to shore up and extend their influence throughout South Asia over time. That still leaves IS-K, a group previously linked to an international terrorist plot against U.S. and NATO bases in Germany, as a significant threat. There are serious doubts about whether the Taliban, overwhelmed and stretched thin by the challenge of attempting to govern a war-ravaged nation, will be able to prevent IS-K or other rogue groups from operating on Afghan soil.”

Reuters, [U.N. Afghanistan mission extended, Afghan envoy asks to keep seat](#), 17 September 2021

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“The United Nations Security Council extended a U.N. political mission in Afghanistan on Friday [17 September] for six months to allow for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to work out what changes might be needed after the Taliban seized control of the country.”

Afghanistan Analysts Network, [The Focus of the Taleban’s New Government: Internal cohesion, external dominance](#), 12 September 2021

“It has been very difficult to follow what is happening. There has been almost no independent reporting, since communications were and the road into the Panjshir closed. The information vacuum has been filled by pro-Taleban and pro-resistance social media accounts and media appearances, often making unverifiable and conflicting claims in an attempt to dominate the narrative. (See, for an example, this [Tolo News report](#) from 2 September in which the Taleban claimed to have captured Shutul district centre and 11 outposts, killing 34, while the National Resistant Front denied the loss of the district and claimed to have killed at least 350 Taleban fighters in the various clashes.)

It has been even more difficult to get a handle on reports of possible atrocities, in Panjshir and Andarab, or of the rounding up of young Panjshiri men in neighbourhoods like Khairkhana in Kabul. The online clamour by diaspora pro-resistance supporters that there is both an ongoing genocide and a Pakistani invasion going on in Panjshir – generally without much details or ‘supported’ by footage that is either old, from other places, and in one case even from a computer game – threatened to drown out the gathering of corroborated reporting.

On the other hand, the Taleban’s apparent determination to completely root out Panjshir’s armed resistance, coupled with an almost complete information black-out and emerging anecdotal detail, does suggest that the onslaught in Panjshir is likely to have been brutal. This impression is only strengthened by the fact that ‘news’ from Panjshir has so far been very carefully managed, with only friendly journalists or those with minders having been allowed in.

Ahmad Massud and other members of the National Resistant Front have reiterated that the struggle continues, whether armed or not, and have tried to link their stand in Panjshir to other recent expressions of dissent – with some success.”

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(30 August – 5 September 2021\)](#), 13 September 2021

“In the reporting period, the overall security situation in the south remained relatively calm. Civilians including women and children reportedly continued to be affected by roadside Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detonations and gunfire.”

ACLED, [Regional Overview: South Asia and Afghanistan, 31 July - 3 September 2021](#), 9 September 2021

“Meanwhile, an anti-Taliban resistance, known as National Resistance Front (NRF), began to form in the Panjshir valley in northeastern Afghanistan following the Kabul takeover. The valley had previously hosted Northern Alliance Forces, a military alliance against the Soviet and then Taliban invasion, in the 1980s and 1990s (BBC News, 3 September 2021). Led by the son of a late Northern Alliance leader, the group consists of local militia and former members of Afghan security forces. It is also supported by former Vice President Amrullah Saleh and former Acting Defense Minister Bismillah Mohammadi (Washington Post, 18 August 2021). From 18 August to 3 September, ACLED records over 20 clashes between the NRF and Taliban forces around Panjshir valley and in the neighboring Baghlan and Parwan provinces. Since then, the Taliban claim to have entered the Panjshir valley, although it remains uncertain whether they have taken complete control over all remaining NRF territory (CNBC, 7 September 2021).”

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## Coercion / Forced Recruitment to join Taliban

*What instances of forced recruitment and use of children/young men are there under the Taliban?*

Human Rights Watch, [‘This is our opportunity to end the Taliban’s use of child soldiers’](#), 20 September 2021

“For more than two decades, the Taliban have put children on the front lines of Afghanistan’s armed conflicts. They have used children [as fighters](#), to plant and detonate improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and as suicide bombers. Thousands of children may [remain in their ranks](#) today.”

“The Taliban have [denied](#) that they use children in “jihadic operations” and their [code of conduct](#) states that “boys without beards” are not allowed in military centers. Nevertheless, the U.N. has verified hundreds of individual cases in which the Taliban have recruited and used children in recent years, including a [sharp spike](#) in 2020, and warned that the true figures are likely much higher.”

## Leaving and ‘defecting’ from Taliban

*What may be reasons for leaving?*

*What legal prosecution is there for defectors?*

*How are defectors treated by the Taliban?*

*How are they treated by society?*

## Justice, Law and Order in Taliban-controlled Territory

*How is governance, law and order regulated under the Taliban?*

Reuters, [Taliban says failure to recognise their government could have global effects](#), 30 October 2021

“The Taliban called on the United States and other countries on Saturday to recognise their government in Afghanistan, saying that a failure to do so and the continued freezing of Afghan funds abroad would lead to problems not only for the country but for the world.

No country has formally recognised the Taliban government since the insurgents took over the country in August, while billions of dollars in Afghan assets and funds abroad have also been frozen, even as the country faces severe economic and humanitarian crises. “Our message to America is, if unrecognition continues, Afghan problems continue, it is the problem of the region and could turn into a problem for the world,” Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told journalists at a news conference on [30 October].”

Ariana News, [MoD to form a new, independent national army](#), 24 October 2021

“Afghan Ministry of Defense (MoD) officials said Saturday that they will establish a new army that is independent in order to defend Afghanistan’s territory and airspace.

Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob, acting minister of defense and son of Mullah Mohammad Omar, founder of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), said in a voice clip on Sunday that efforts are being made to safeguard Afghanistan’s territory and airspace.

[...]

The caretaker minister did not however provide further details about how the IEA will finance the army or whether it will include soldiers from the former government.”

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Jurist, [Afghanistan dispatches: 'maybe the international community's pressure on the Taliban concerning human rights and women rights is producing results'](#), 21 October 2021

"Law students and lawyers in Afghanistan are filing reports with JURIST on the situation there after the fall of Kabul to the Taliban. Here, a lawyer in Kabul offers his personal observations and perspective on an apparent Taliban reversal of their decision to suspend the Ministry of Women Affairs in Afghanistan.

[...]

In a press conference, one of the top leaders of the Taliban has announced that they did not actually remove the Ministry of Women Affairs and they are looking into options to resume its operations based on Islamic rules and under the supervision of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan."

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [Taliban pledge to step up security as Shi'ite victims buried in Afghanistan](#), 16 October 2021

"Taliban authorities pledged to step up security at Shi'ite mosques as hundreds of people gathered on Saturday to bury the victims of the second Islamic State suicide attack on worshippers in a week."

Al Jazeera, [UN to appoint special rapporteur to monitor rights in Afghanistan](#), 7 October 2021

"The UN has voted to create a new special rapporteur on Afghanistan to probe violations carried out by the Taliban and other parties to the conflict, amid growing concerns for the erosion of civil rights as the country transitions to an "Islamic emirate".

The UN Human Rights Council on Thursday passed a resolution brought by the European Union to have a special rapporteur working on the ground in March 2022, supported by UN experts in legal analysis, forensics and women's rights."

Al Jazeera, [Taliban: From Afghanistan's rugged mountains to policing streets](#), 5 October 2021

"One fighter after another, the Taliban is trading in their characteristic long flowing garb for stiff military uniforms. It is a symbol of the moment of transition its fighters find themselves in: Once warriors embedded in Afghanistan's rugged mountains, now they are an urban police force.

[...]

By winning the country – after two decades of war – with the August 15 seizure of Kabul, the Taliban also inherited a city marked by lawlessness. Immediately, it set to work, making its presence known in daily street patrols. Some fighters have done away with the typical AK-47 rifles replacing them with US-made M16s left behind by Afghan forces. They halt street fights, summon suspected criminals to police stations and chase those who do not heed their call." In Kabul's Police District 8, there is a long queue leading to two rooms. In one, there are criminal cases. In another, civilian disputes. Victims of stabbings, robbery and other misdeeds sit in the same room as alleged perpetrators, staring into the distance until it is their turn to plead their case. For lesser crimes, Taliban police offer the accused three days to show up at the station. After that, they go after them.

The court system is a work in progress, officials said. Meetings are still under way between Taliban officials – used to tribal justice prevalent in rural Afghanistan – to work out the process in a sprawling city with an active judiciary. Even those who fear them in the embattled city welcome the peace their arrival has brought. The Taliban has empowered local elders to pass judgement based on their interpretation of Islamic law for minor criminal cases.

In the Sheikh Zayed City residential area of Kabul, a committee of elders ordered the father of a man accused of stabbing a neighbour to pay 35,000 Afghanis, about \$400.

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The father counts the banknotes in a rapid shuffle and hands it to the imam, who offers it to the family of the victim. They embrace. Justice served.”

Long War Journal, [Testimony: The Biden Administration’s Policy on Afghanistan](#), 30 September 2021

“The Taliban’s new regime is, in many ways, just its old regime. Many of the Taliban’s cabinet ministers are veterans of the Taliban’s first Islamic Emirate from 1996 through 2001.<sup>8</sup> More than one dozen of them have already been sanctioned by the United Nations, including for their ties to terrorism. All five of the former Guantanamo detainees who were exchanged for Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl in 2014 now serve the Taliban in senior leadership roles. Four of the five are Taliban cabinet ministers, while the fifth is the governor of Khost province.”

Pajhwok Afghan News, [Taliban to temporarily adopt Zahir Shah era constitution](#), 28 September 2021

“KABUL (Pajhwok): The Ministry of Justice on Tuesday said the caretaker government would adopt the constitution of King Mohammad Zahir Shah era without the parts which are in conflict with Islamic Sharia.

The ministry in a statement said that justice minister Abdul Hakim Shar’ee during a meeting with Chinese ambassador, Wang Yu, said that Taliban would temporarily enforce the constitution of Zahir Shah era without the parts which are in violation to Islamic Sharia.

He said that any international documents which were not in conflict with Sharia and Emirate rules, the Taliban respected them.

The source said that the Taliban wanted good relations with all countries and assures the world that the soil of Afghanistan would not be used against them.”

United States Institute of Peace, [Taliban Seek Recognition, But Offer Few Concessions to International Concerns](#), 28 September 2021

“Much of the Taliban’s overtures to seek or establish international recognition seem to be driven by the group’s pressing economic needs, their desire to see funds unfrozen and various forms of assistance delivered.

As part of their announcement of senior figures to formal government posts, the Taliban nominated Suhail Shaheen, a longtime member of and former spokesperson for the group’s political office in Qatar, to serve as ambassador to the United Nations. In press statements, they have repeatedly encouraged foreign embassies to return to Kabul, including the United States and European states. And the group has maintained a steady tempo of high-level diplomacy with neighboring and regional states, including Russia, China and even India.

However, the Taliban have repeatedly revealed a clear prioritization of maintaining their own internal cohesion and demonstrating their authority domestically. The current caretaker government is made up entirely of their own leadership, excluding women and other political stakeholders while including a number of internationally sanctioned figures. The group has renamed the Afghan government the Islamic Emirate, in spite of a joint diplomatic statement by the United States, Russia, China and Pakistan lobbying against a revival of the title. The group’s rank and file have suppressed demonstrations across the country; protestors and journalists are being detained and beaten. Taliban leadership have effectively banned girls’ education, discouraged women from returning to work in a number of sectors and disbanded the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (replacing it with its historically notorious Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice). At least some elements of the group have begun enforcing brutal law enforcement policies, including public execution.”

AP News, [Taliban official: Strict punishment, executions will return](#), 23 September, 2021

“One of the founders of the Taliban and the chief enforcer of its harsh interpretation of Islamic law when they last ruled Afghanistan said the hard-line movement will once again carry out executions and amputations of hands, though perhaps not in public.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Mullah Nooruddin Turabi dismissed outrage over the Taliban’s executions in the past, which sometimes took place in front of crowds at a stadium, and he warned the world against interfering with Afghanistan’s new rulers.”

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“On at least two occasions in the last week, Kabul men have been packed into the back of a pickup truck, their hands tied, and were paraded around to humiliate them. In one case, their faces were painted to identify them as thieves. In the other, stale bread was hung from their necks or stuffed in their mouth. It wasn’t immediately clear what their crimes were.”

“He said now the Taliban would allow television, mobile phones, photos and video “because this is the necessity of the people, and we are serious about it.” He suggested that the Taliban saw the media as a way to spread their message. “Now we know instead of reaching just hundreds, we can reach millions,” he said. He added that if punishments are made public, then people may be allowed to video or take photos to spread the deterrent effect.”

AP News, [Taliban name deputy ministers, double down on all-male team](#), 21 September 2021

“The Taliban expanded their interim Cabinet by naming more ministers and deputies on Tuesday [21 September], but failed to appoint any women, doubling down on a hard-line course despite the international outcry that followed their initial presentation of an all-male government lineup earlier this month.”

Al Jazeera, [Rights groups accuse Taliban of rolling back civil liberties](#), 20 September 2021

“Rights groups have accused the Taliban of “steadily dismantling” human rights in Afghanistan since the group captured power last month. In a briefing released on Tuesday, Amnesty International, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) accused the Taliban of a number of rights violations including limits on the freedom of the press, restrictions on women and targeted killing of civilians and former government officials.”

Jurist.org [legal news commentary in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh], [Afghanistan dispatches: “Now there are no clients for lawyers...”](#) 20 September 2021

“Currently, there is no judicial and prosecution system active and running in the country. All criminal, civil, and commercial cases are stopped. With the limited capacity that the Taliban have, re-start of this system will take a long period of time.”

“Now there are no clients for lawyers – not even local clients – because all the matters they had before the courts are either closed and/or will take at least a year or two for them to be resumed. All law firms face the same situation in Afghanistan right now.”

Afghanistan Analysts Network, [The Focus of the Taleban’s New Government: Internal cohesion, external dominance](#), 12 September 2021

“As the twentieth anniversary of al-Qaeda’s 9/11 attacks that brought the US to Afghanistan to topple the Taleban’s emirate came round, it was the Taleban who were back in power. This week, they announced their new interim administration. It is all-male, almost all-Pashtun, almost all clerical and all-Taleban. Set alongside their sustained military campaign in the Panjshir, the only province that held out against the Taleban takeover, and their violent response to protests across the country, it seems the movement’s priorities have coalesced – internal cohesion, monopolisation of power, silencing of open dissent and dividing the ‘spoils of war’, in terms of government posts, between themselves. Also noticeable, reports AAN’s Martine van Bijlert (with input from Kate Clark and Thomas Ruttig), is the absence, still, of Taleban supreme leader, Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada.” [...]

The list of ministers and other senior officials is almost exclusively Pashtun, with just two Tajiks and one Uzbek, and no Hazaras, Shia Muslims or members of Afghanistan’s smaller minorities. The list is further all-male and made up mostly of clerics, either mullahs or mawlawis (who have a higher Islamic madrassa education). All are from within the Taleban’s own ranks and many are old-timers – familiar faces from the 1990s.

The one possible exception is the minister of public health. No new acting minister was announced for this post and the Republican-era incumbent, Dr Wahid Majruh, has been pictured in office since the Taleban took power on 15 August. [...]

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The most senior position announced, that of prime minister (*rais-e wuzera*), was given to Mullah Muhammad Hassan Akhundzada. [...]

Many of the Taleban government's newly appointed senior officials are on the United States and/or United Nations sanctions list and two of them have an FBI bounty on their heads. [4] Many have long held leadership positions and have been implicated in terror attacks or atrocities. [...] Having so many officially appointed leaders who are on international sanctions lists hugely complicates the new government's chances of receiving international aid and interacting with other governments."

TOLO News, [Uniformed Police to be Stationed in Kabul](#), 12 September 2021

"The current Taliban forces who are stationed in Kabul will soon be replaced with police forces of the former government and Taliban forces and all will have uniforms, the Taliban said on Sunday.

Anaamullah Samangani, a member of the Taliban's cultural commission, told TOLONews that the current Taliban forces, who do not have uniforms, will be transferred from Kabul to military posts in the provinces.

Samangani, however, did not say how many police and Taliban forces will be deployed in Kabul.

"Police and uniformed forces who have received training and gained skills in their specific fields should soon take charge of maintaining Kabul security and start their jobs. After that, the Mujahideen who are stationed in different police departments and who do not have uniforms will be stationed in police headquarters and army corps (in the provinces)," Samangani said.

A number of Kabul residents, meanwhile, said uniformed forces should be deployed to the city to maintain security and to prevent criminal activity by gunmen identifying as Taliban."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Afghan Women At Forefront Of Nonviolent Resistance To Taliban](#), 10 September 2021

"The Taliban formed a new, all-male government on September 7 that is made up exclusively of senior militants. It did not include any women, even in secondary roles. The Taliban said women were not suited to serve in the cabinet.

The militants also abolished the Women's Affairs Ministry and reestablished the feared Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice.

In the 1990s, that ministry was responsible for enforcing the Taliban's morality laws, including its strict dress code and gender segregation in society. The ministry's dreaded police were notorious for publicly beating offenders, including women.

United States Institute of Peace, [Five Questions on the Taliban's Caretaker Government](#), 9 September 2021

"As part of the Taliban's bid to re-establish the "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan," the militant group announced the line up for its caretaker government on Tuesday. Despite several leading Taliban figures saying the movement would govern in a more moderate and inclusive fashion, the acting appointments made this week were mostly old guard members who played similar roles when the group ruled Afghanistan in the 1990s. USIP's Andrew Watkins discusses who the key players are, what it signals about the Taliban's commitment to inclusivity, the key challenges the government will face and how the West and regional countries should engage."

International Crisis Group, [Who Will Run the Taliban Government?](#), 9 September 2021

"The Taliban announced an "interim" cabinet on 7 September, their first step since taking power on 15 August toward forming a government and signalling how they intend to rule. The cabinet is filled with long-time key Taliban figures from their days as a government and later an insurgency, and it bears a strong resemblance to their former regime of the 1990s. The appointments will reassure the Taliban's rank and file that their leadership remains unified and has not succumbed to pressure to show a more moderate face, but it will not be appreciated

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by many others. The roster does not reflect Afghan diversity, and it offers no olive branches to a wary international community.”

FDD’s Long War Journal, [Taliban’s government includes designated terrorists, ex-Guantanamo detainees](#), 8 September 2021

“The Taliban has announced the formation of an “interim government” to rule over Afghanistan. The Taliban’s regime will be known as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. This is entirely unsurprising. The first emirate was toppled during the U.S.-led invasion in late 2001. The jihadis, members of both the Taliban and al Qaeda, waged jihad for the next two decades in order to resurrect it. The Taliban was clear about its political goal all along. Many of the newly appointed leaders in the Islamic Emirate are actually old Taliban leaders. More than a dozen of them were first sanctioned by the U.N. Security Council in early 2001. Some new faces have joined them. Brief profiles for 22 of the Taliban men who will govern under the emirate are offered below. This list does not include all of the figures appointed to lead. FDD’s Long War Journal will likely add to this list in the future. Many of the Taliban leaders discussed below have either current or historical ties to al Qaeda. Indeed, some of them worked closely with al Qaeda throughout their careers. Some them are U.S.-designated terrorists.”

Five of the newly-appointed Taliban leaders were once held at the detention facility in Guantánamo, but exchanged for Bowe Bergdahl in 2014. They are discussed at the end of this analysis.”

The Guardian, [Taliban name all-male Afghan cabinet including minister wanted by FBI](#), 7 September 2021

“The **Taliban** have announced an all-male caretaker government including an interior minister wanted by the FBI, on a day when at least two people were killed by violent policing of street protests against the new authorities. The leadership unveiled on Tuesday is drawn entirely from Taliban ranks, despite promises of an inclusive cabinet, and many of its senior figures are on UN sanctions lists, which is likely to complicate the group’s search for international recognition.”

“Afghanistan will once more be officially known as an Islamic emirate, as it was under Taliban rule in the 1990s, and its chief, Hibatullah Akhundzada, will be supreme leader.”

“The prime minister will be Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, one of the founding members of the group who was close to its original leader, one-eyed **Mullah Mohammed Omar**.”

“Mullah Omar’s son Mullah Yaqoob will be defence minister, and the acting interior minister is Sirajuddin Haqqani, who is on the FBI wanted list with a \$5m (£3.6m) bounty on his head.”

“The new cabinet is also heavily dominated by the Pashtun ethnic group that formed the Taliban’s original power base but which makes up only about 40% of Afghanistan’s population. Just three appointees appeared to be from other ethnic groups.”

*How is the media regulated under the Taliban?*

Al Jazeera, [Afghan journalists lament ‘bleak’ future for media under Taliban](#), 22 October 2021

“Ahmadi, who was then deputy head of news at TOLO, met the network’s top management and immediately came to two decisions.

“The first thing we did was send all the female staff home,” Ahmadi told Al Jazeera over the phone from Europe. The other decision they made was controversial but necessary, he said. They immediately stopped broadcasting music and entertainment programmes. The Turkish serials, game shows, singing competitions, talk shows and sketch comedy shows that millions of people tuned into every evening came to a sudden end. Though the Taliban had made no official declarations on programming at the time, Ahmadi said the decision was a preemptive one.

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"If you understood the fear that night, you would see why we came to such a decision," he told Al Jazeera. Ahmadi said he now regrets that decision, but that at the time, it seemed like a necessary one. "We wanted to be the ones to cut them off, not the Taliban," he said. [...]

Other journalists Al Jazeera spoke to agreed with Khenjani's assessment, saying they have faced pushback while trying to report on several issues over the last two months.

Journalists who were beaten and tortured for reporting on protests in Kabul last month told Al Jazeera they have been warned by Taliban officials not to cover such events.

Likewise, journalists also recalled being stopped by the Taliban from reporting from the northern province of Panjshir where an armed resistance against the group started after it took over Kabul.

Abdul Farid Ahmad, the former deputy director for operations at TOLO News, references all of these events when speaking about his efforts to continue working in a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. "They have beaten journalists many times. They didn't let journalists cover the women's protests. They didn't let journalists go to Panjshir when it was not under their control. We have so many examples that the Taliban didn't and still don't want journalists to work freely," he told Al Jazeera."

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Taliban Severely Restrict Media](#), 1 October 2021

"Taliban authorities in Afghanistan have imposed wide-ranging restrictions on media and free speech that are already stifling criticism and dissent, Human Rights Watch said today.

During a late September meeting with journalists in Kabul, the Taliban Ministry of Information and Culture distributed media regulations whose provisions are so broad and vague as to prohibit virtually any critical reporting about the Taliban.

"Despite the Taliban's promises to allow media that 'respected Islamic values' to function, the new rules are suffocating media freedom in the country," said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director at Human Rights Watch.

"The Taliban regulations are so sweeping that journalists are self-censoring and fear ending up in prison."

A copy of the regulations seen by Human Rights Watch says that media are prohibited from printing or broadcasting reports that "are contrary to Islam," "insult national figures," or "distort news content." Journalists are required to "ensure that their reporting is balanced" and not report on "matters that have not been confirmed by officials" or issues that "could have a negative impact on the public's attitude." Media outlets are required to "prepare detailed reports" with the new governmental regulatory body before publication.

[...]

An editor of a media outlet led by women said that, after the Taliban takeover, they had continued to publish online but stopped after the new regulations were announced. "We have lost the space for free media with the Taliban taking over the country," she said. "We do not have free media in Afghanistan anymore."

A journalist in Kabul said that the regulations were "very worrying," as they would "restrict most of the media's activities. Those who are still operating no longer publish anything critical. They mostly interview Taliban officials. Previously, they were active in criticizing the government ... but with these regulations, censorship is the immediate result."

A Kabul-based editor said that the prohibition on "insulting national figures" could be interpreted very broadly and curtail any reporting on corruption or other abuses."

*How is Sharia law interpreted and applied?*

NPR via The Associated Press, [The Taliban Order Barbers Not To Shave Beards In Afghan Province Of Helmand](#), 27 September 2021

"The Taliban on Monday banned barbershops in a southern Afghanistan province from shaving or trimming beards, claiming their edict is in line with Shariah, or Islamic, [law](#)."

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The order in Helmand province was issued by the provincial Taliban government's vice and virtue department to barbers in Lashkar Gah, the provincial capital.[...]

During their previous rule of Afghanistan, the Taliban adhered to a harsh interpretation of Islam. Since overrunning Kabul on Aug. 15 and again taking control of the country, the world has been watching to see whether they will re-create their strict governance of the late 1990s.

Some indication came on Saturday, when Taliban fighters killed four alleged kidnappers and later hung their bodies in the public squares of the western city of Herat."

Financial Times, [Afghanistan's young Talibs: 'No compromise with the enemy of our martyrs'](#), 18 September 2021

"There is a generation "more radical than the mainstream Taliban", said Graeme Smith at the International Crisis Group. The new Taliban rulers are "going to have their hands full".

The Guardian, [Taliban ban girls from secondary education in Afghanistan](#), 17 September 2021

"In a further sign that the recently announced Taliban government is tightening restrictions on women, the former ministry of women's affairs building in Kabul has been handed over to the newly re-established ministry for the prevention of vice and promotion of virtue.

This was the group's feared enforcer in the 1990s, charged with beating women who violated bars on everything from going out in public without a male guardian to an obsessively prescriptive dress code that even forbade high heels."

TOLO News, [Afghan Education Ministry to Modify Curriculum](#), 13 September 2021

"The Ministry of Higher Education announced on Sunday that some subjects which contrast with Islam's Sharia will be dropped from the higher education curriculum.

It comes as private universities and other higher education institutions reopened about a week ago in which classes were divided by gender.

Acting Minister of Higher Education Shaikh Abdul Baqi Haqqani said on Sunday that mixed classes between girls and boys are not acceptable and some changes will be brought to the curriculum.

He said changes will be based on Islamic Sharia.

[...]

The ministry added that it will launch a program to send students abroad for higher education in the future."

TOLO News, [Private Universities Reopen, Students Separated by Gender](#), 7 September 2021

"The Ministry of Higher Education announced that private universities and higher education institutions that are following the new gender format have reopened.

The acting Minister Abdul Baqi Haqqani told TOLONews that the male and female university students will be taught in separate classrooms, emphasizing that only female lecturers will be allowed to teach girls' classes.

According to Haqqani, joint classes are not acceptable at universities. He said: "Some of the universities are able to use separate buildings for girls, to teach the girls separately. But a number of universities do not have buildings, they can change the time of classes."

Meanwhile, officials from the private universities and institutions said they were willing to implement the new format required by the ministry. The officials are worried about the girls' low attendance at the universities. [...]

The state universities are still closed in Afghanistan. Based on the ministry's announcements, government universities will open as soon as the separation of classes take place."

The Guardian, [Taliban name all-male Afghan cabinet including minister wanted by FBI](#), 7 September 2021

"The Taliban have also brought back the ministry for promotion of virtue and prevention of vice, a notorious

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enforcement body that was one of the most hated institutions when they last controlled Afghanistan. Its main function was to police the Taliban's **extreme interpretation** of Islamic law." "In his first statement since the Taliban seized power last month, [supreme leader] Akhundzada said Afghanistan's new rulers were committed to all international laws, treaties and commitments not in conflict with Islamic law. "In the future, all matters of governance and life in Afghanistan will be regulated by the laws of the holy Sharia," he said."

#### *What is the Taliban's justice and dispute resolution system?*

Al Jazeera, [Taliban: From Afghanistan's rugged mountains to policing streets](#), 5 October 2021

"In Kabul's Police District 8, there is a long queue leading to two rooms. In one, there are criminal cases. In another, civilian disputes.

Victims of stabbings, robbery and other misdeeds sit in the same room as alleged perpetrators, staring into the distance until it is their turn to plead their case.

For lesser crimes, Taliban police offer the accused three days to show up at the station. After that, they go after them.

The court system is a work in progress, officials said. Meetings are still under way between Taliban officials – used to tribal justice prevalent in rural Afghanistan – to work out the process in a sprawling city with an active judiciary. Even those who fear them in the embattled city welcome the peace their arrival has brought.

The Taliban has empowered local elders to pass judgement based on their interpretation of Islamic law for minor criminal cases.

In the Sheikh Zayed City residential area of Kabul, a committee of elders ordered the father of a man accused of stabbing a neighbour to pay 35,000 Afghanis, about \$400.

The father counts the banknotes in a rapid shuffle and hands it to the imam, who offers it to the family of the victim. They embrace. Justice served."

Afghan Analyst Network, [Creating a Hierarchy of Victims? ICC may drop investigations into US forces to focus on Taleban and ISKP - Afghanistan Analysts Network - English](#), 1 October 2021

"As to whether allegations of war crimes or crimes against humanity would be dealt with in domestic courts, the Prosecutor is correct to say that the Taleban are unlikely to prosecute their own. Taleban action against the ISKP and former government officials can be expected, but it is debateable whether that would be through their courts, which are even further from reaching international fair trial standards than the previous government's, or as summary executions or punishment beatings. Reprisal killings of members of the former Afghan security services have been alleged by UNAMA and of members of ISKP and other Salafists in media reporting, see for example, [here](#) and [here](#)."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Gandhara Briefing: Return Of The Taliban Emirate](#), 10 September 2021

"The Taliban, as Afghans remember all too well, has its own brand of justice. The militants' shadow courts are set to become Afghanistan's official judicial system based on their strict interpretation of Islamic law. "Soon we will see floggings for adultery and public intoxication, and we will see them executing people for murder," predicted Haroun Rahimi, an exiled Afghan legal scholar."

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## Livelihood

*Can cultural activities take place? What restrictions and guidelines does the Taliban place on them?*

BBC, [Afghanistan: Gunmen attack wedding to stop music being played](#), 31 October 2021  
“Gunmen who identified themselves as Taliban attacked a wedding in eastern Afghanistan to stop music being played, killing at least two people and injuring 10 others, officials say.  
A Taliban spokesman said two of the three gunmen had been arrested but denied they had acted on behalf of the Islamist movement.  
Music was banned when the Taliban ruled the country from 1996 to 2001.  
The new authorities have not yet issued such a decree.”

Al Jazeera, [Afghan National Music Institute strikes a chord in Qatar](#), 23 October 2021  
“About 96 members of the Afghanistan National Institute of Music, or ANIM, which includes faculty and musicians have fled their homes in Afghanistan. [...] The school’s doors have been closed since mid-August. The building is now under constant patrol by the Taliban.  
Situation on the ground  
Since the Taliban’s return to power in Afghanistan there has not been an outright ban on music, but rather restrictions, such as no loud music is to be played in public.  
Out of fear of potential consequences, several radio and TV stations in Kabul have ceased the broadcast of music or entertainment they believe might go against the Taliban’s practices and governance, which continue to be moulded and reshaped.”

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Gandhara, [‘I Feel Like A Dead Fish’: Silenced By The Taliban, Afghanistan's Musicians Despair](#), 13 October 2021  
“Ahmad Gholami, a 25-year-old Afghan musician, had dedicated his life to the art of playing a sitar-like lute called the tanbur.  
But after nearly a decade mastering the instrument well enough to earn his living as a professional musician, the Taliban has banned music under its tribal interpretation of Islamic law.  
Gholami and other musicians he knows have effectively been silenced by an order from the Taliban-installed police chief in the central province of Bamiyan who has declared that no singing or musical instruments are allowed in his jurisdiction. [...] the Taliban has beaten musicians in some areas, burned instruments, and banned music. That has led hundreds of musicians to flee the country in fear of their lives. [...] Now, the Taliban’s Information and Culture Ministry says music is “forbidden” under its strict Hanafi interpretation of Islamic law.  
One of the first things Taliban fighters did in August when they seized control of Jalalabad, the capital of Nangarhar Province, was to break into a music studio used by well-known Afghan musicians.  
The militants dragged their harmonium, lutes, drums, and other instruments out into the street -- dousing them with petrol and setting them ablaze.  
Noman Khan and other musicians who had used the studio promptly fled the country in fear of their lives. [...] Meanwhile, local Taliban authorities in Afghanistan continue to issue decrees outlawing music in the capital, Kabul, and in major cities like Kandahar, Herat, and Mazar-e Sharif.  
Siddiqullah, the Taliban-installed police chief in Bamiyan, justifies the bans and the destruction of instruments by arguing that nobody is allowed to play music.”

Jurist.org, [Afghanistan dispatches: ‘The Taliban have banned live music in hotels’](#), 9 October 2021

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“The Taliban have banned live music in hotels. Officials of Ministry of Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice – which was established by the Taliban after the took control of Afghanistan – met with most of hotel owners in Kabul Wednesday.

In this meeting, the Taliban instructed the hotel owners to avoid live music, and segregate places of men and women in the hotels. They already did this in some other provinces as well. In Takhar they even beat up a groom because he brought live music to his wedding ceremony.

In Afghanistan, hotels and restaurants are regulated by the specific laws and regulations under authority of the Ministry of Information and Culture. They obtain licenses from this Ministry and the Government uses this Ministry to communicate with them. The Ministry of Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice – as you understand from its name – will now establish policies for each and every government agency through which they will tell people what is right and what is wrong.

Previously, women and men were separated but only by a partition made of plastic or other stuff, but they have now made it clear that hotel owners have to separate them by walls. This indicates that they still hold the opinion of prohibiting music in the country. I actually think that this is a starting point for them to slowly ban music. In other statements, one of the Taliban’s top leaders has told the media that if singers stop singing he will give them an amount of 40K AFN on a monthly basis. These statements are clearly a sign that there will be no musicians in the country, and those who choose to stay will have to change their profession and seek another source of income.”

The Guardian, [‘A friend tells me he is burning his paintings’: Afghan artists in Australia speak on 20 years of war](#), 6 October 2021

“The Afghanistan-born visual artist and poet Elyas Alavi, who gained asylum in Australia as a Hazara refugee in 2007, staged an exhibition of his work in Kabul in 2014 and returned to his home country again in 2016.

He said he now feared he may never be able to return to Afghanistan.

“A friend tells me he is burning his paintings ... and I’ve heard of people burning their philosophy books and art books,” he said.

“Now he and some of his family, most of them are living in hiding because they just don’t know what’s going to happen. The Taliban are checking people’s mobiles ... looking for [content] that is against Sharia law, and they are [targeting] writers, artists, the LGBTQI community.”

Alavi said the Afghan-Australian community felt betrayed by the Australian government.

“The prime minister says Afghanistan is a tragic country with a tragic history and Australia cannot do anything, it is the fate of these people and it’s always going to be a tragedy,” the now Adelaide-based artist said.

“But the government can get more people at risk out, more than the 3,000 extra visas they’ve announced ... and there are no permanent visas for those who are already here.”

Ariana News, [Afghan Film emphasis on making serials based on Afghanistan realities](#), 4 October 2021

“Jawed Afghan, the new director of Afghan Films, was recently appointed by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), and says that he will develop the directorate of Afghan Film and, using its past capabilities, show the true story of Afghanistan to the world.

The director of Afghan Film emphasized the increase in the number of employees of this institution and the production of new films.

Afghan Film is Afghanistan’s main government cinema institution, which has been around for decades and has played an important role in supporting and strengthening Afghan cinema.

[...]

Although the director of Afghan Film does not say anything about the continued presence of female staff in the film industry, but he emphasized that the employees of this institution will continue their work as in the past and using the past capacities, the current narratives of the country will be shown to the world.

[...]

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Afghan Film is considered one of the most important directorates in the production of Afghan films; an office whose archive also narrates the history of Afghanistan. But it is not yet clear what type of films and series this directorate will make and whether it will be allowed to reopen cinemas in Afghanistan.”

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s Gandhara, [Fearing Taliban Crackdown, Afghan Musicians Are Already Falling Silent](#), 10 September 2021

“Habibullah Shabab found his calling as a singer -- but since the Taliban's return to power, he's given up performing and instead makes a living as a shopkeeper. The Taliban has not yet imposed a ban on music as it did in the 1990s, but Shabab and others fear such a policy is imminent, stripping many musicians of their livelihoods.”

*How are taxes collected?*

Gandhara, [Taliban Imposing ‘Charity’ Taxes on Farmers Who Need Aid](#), 29 October 2021

War, drought, and COVID have devastated farmers across Afghanistan.

Now, Afghan farmers who've lost money trying to grow crops over the past year say the Taliban is dealing them another crippling blow.

The cash-strapped regime is making them pay so-called charity taxes on their land and harvests, describing the payments as an obligation under Islamic law.

The charity taxes are being collected despite the fact that farmers themselves are among the 14 million Afghans that the World Food Program says are already facing acute hunger.

Jurist.org, [Afghanistan dispatches: 'The Taliban Ministry of Agriculture is setting new rules to collect Islamic taxes.'](#), 22 October 2021

“Law students and lawyers in Afghanistan are filing reports with JURIST on the situation there after the fall of Kabul to the Taliban. Here, a lawyer in Kabul offers his personal observations and perspective on new Islamic taxes being levied on farmers in Afghanistan. [...]

The Taliban Ministry of Agriculture is setting new rules to collect Islamic taxes. The Ministry of Agriculture have announced that farmers are required now to pay zakat and oshr to this Ministry.

In Islamic law zakat refers to a religious obligation which requires Muslims to pay 2.5% of their income to the poor. In the previous government, the Taliban used to force the public to pay this amount because it was one of their revenue generation mechanisms. The Taliban hold the position that the money will go to the poor families but they have never provided any evidence of doing so. However, it was previously used to fund their war against the government.

Oshr also refers to one-tenth of whatever is produced or harvested and made available to the market. This type of Islamic tax can be collected in kind or in cash.

Over the past two decades a wide variety of businesses in Afghanistan have confirmed that the Taliban asked for more than it is said and meant by the terms zakat and oshr. In the former government the application of such rules was voluntary/optional. However, in the areas where the Taliban had more influence than the government it was a must.

If the Ministry’s applies its decision to farmers in the country, it means that the farmers are required to add these two on top of other taxes that they are required to comply as per the taxation laws and regulations.”

*What is the state of the financial industry and civilians’ access to money?*

Ariana News, [Afghanistan central bank raises limit on bank withdrawals to \\$400 a week](#), 3 November 2021

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Afghanistan's central bank has eased restrictions on bank withdrawals, lifting the maximum to \$400 from dollar-denominated accounts or 30,000 Afghanis a week from the previous limit of \$200 or 20,000 Afghanis, the central bank said on Wednesday. The change, which sets a monthly limit on withdrawals of \$1,200 or 100,000 Afghani, came amid growing economic hardship that has left millions in Afghanistan without work and facing hunger. Even those with savings have struggled to pay for food and household necessities because of the strict limits on withdrawals that were brought in to prevent a run on banks. Afghanistan's foreign exchange reserves have been restricted following the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) take over in August, severely limiting the new administration's room for financial manoeuvre. Some \$9.5 billion in central bank reserves remain blocked outside the country and international support given to the previous government has dried up. This week, the IEA banned the use of foreign currencies for transactions like buying a car or a house, saying all contracts must be denominated in the Afghani currency.

Al Jazeera, [Taliban bans the use of foreign currency across Afghanistan](#), 2 November 2021

"The Taliban has announced a complete ban on the use of foreign currency in Afghanistan, a move certain to cause further disruption to an economy pushed to the brink of collapse by the abrupt withdrawal of international support in the wake of the group's takeover of the country. "The Islamic Emirate instructs all citizens, shopkeepers, traders, businessmen and the general public to ... conduct all transactions in Afghanis and strictly refrain from using foreign currency," the Taliban said in a statement posted online by spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid. "Anyone violating this order will face legal action," the statement said. The use of US dollars is widespread in Afghanistan's markets, while border areas use the currency of neighbouring countries such as Pakistan for trade."

Al Jazeera, [As US freezes funds, a harsh winter awaits cash-strapped Afghans](#), 29 October 2021

"In its latest report to the United States Congress, the Special Investigator General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) has detailed Washington's decision to cut off the Taliban government's access to billions in funds and assets that has led to devastation across the cash-strapped nation. [...] After the Taliban toppled the Western-led government in the middle of August, the US, along with international bodies including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), decided to cut off Afghanistan's access to more than \$9.5bn in assets and loans. The decision has had a devastating effect on Afghanistan's healthcare and other sectors, all of which are struggling to continue operations amid cutbacks to international aid. According to the World Bank, approximately 14 million people – one out of three Afghans – were on the brink of starvation due to the aid cuts until the end of the last month."

Reuters, ['Just give us our money': Taliban push to unlock Afghan billions abroad](#), 29 October 2021

"Afghanistan's Taliban government is pressing for the release of billions of dollars of central bank reserves as the drought-stricken nation faces a cash crunch, mass starvation and a new migration crisis. Afghanistan parked billions of dollars in assets overseas with the U.S. Federal Reserve and other central banks in Europe, but that money has been frozen since the Islamist Taliban ousted the Western-backed government in August."

Reuters, [U.N. urgently needs cash in Afghanistan](#), but struggles for solution, 28 October, 2021

"The United Nations cannot get enough cash into Afghanistan to deliver humanitarian aid to millions of people on the brink of starvation and is struggling to develop options to help stabilize the collapsing economy, U.N. officials said. [...] Ultimately political solutions are needed, a senior U.N. official told Reuters on condition of anonymity, an apparent reference to sanctions relief and for governments and institutions to free up billions of dollars of Afghan assets held overseas."

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IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation September - October 2021 and Projection for November 2021 - March 2022](#), 25 October 2021

“Remittance flows have been severely affected: The financial freeze in government assets is affecting international remittance flows, compounding reductions resulting from the lingering economic impact of COVID-19 across the world and greatly impacting those households relying on remittances. According to the World Bank, remittances account for 4% of Afghanistan’s GDP or \$800M a year. According to the 2021 SFSA, 7.4% of households receive remittances, and 2.5% are the primary income source. Remittances are a critical buffer during shocks; the suspension of such services has had a detrimental impact on households’ coping capacities. As a result, the proportion of urban dwellers in IPC Phase 3 or above increased from 36% last year to 43%. The number of people in high acute food insecurity is expected to increase in the projection period (November 2021 - March 2022) to 4.9 million people (52%) due to the expected increase in prices and the decrease in job opportunities particularly for government workers. Compared to last year's financial access, the overall situation has significantly deteriorated due to a slowdown of business and industry and food prices significantly increasing this year compared to the previous year's.”

Jurist.org, [Afghanistan dispatches: 'the central bank as well as commercial banks are running out of dollar banknotes'](#), 21 October 2021

“Law students and lawyers in Afghanistan are filing reports with JURIST on the situation there after the fall of Kabul to the Taliban. Here, a lawyer in Kabul offers his personal observations and perspective on recent banking and financial developments in Afghanistan. [...]

Today, I visited a local bank to receive my USD 200 which I can receive from my account on a weekly basis. I went to the nearest branch of this bank but I was told that they do not have USD dollars. I went to the main branch of the bank which is close to the central bank.

I received the above amount but the dollar I received today is from 2006 series.[...]

I also took some time and talked to the guy at the bank on how much they receive on a weekly basis from the central bank. He told me that this week they only received USD 20,000 from the central bank. This means that the central bank as well as commercial banks are running out of dollar banknotes and soon this will adversely affect the banking system.

My friend further added that the state-owned banks as well as the commercial banks are only open provide cash to the people and nothing more than that.”

Jurist.org, [Afghanistan dispatches: 'The commercial banks are unable to preserve their liquidity and that is leading them to failure.'](#), 27 October 2021

“The banking system had developed a lot during the last two decades in the country. Until 2001 only state-owned banks with limited banking system were active in Afghanistan. Upon the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 the government – with foreign help – developed a system that attracted many financial institutions as well as investors to invest in the banking system. The central bank licensed up to 10 private banks and some branches of foreign banks to operate in the country.

Currently, 12 banks are active, of which three are state-owned and others private banks. The latest reports from the central bank (July 2021) indicate that the total assets of the commercial banks are 311 billion AFN of which 276 billion AFN includes debts/loans and only 36 billion AFN covers these banks net assets or shareholder shares.

AIB, Azizi, Bank Millie, and Islamic Bank total assets and capital are more than 30 billion AFN. Investments in capital notes, long-term investment, and loans to businesses are the major areas in which commercial banks have invested mostly. The total amount of loans on different businesses is about 32 billion AFN and about 45 billion AFN is invested in capital notes of the central bank. The problem with loans on businesses is that many businesses has collapsed already and/or are collapsing due to the current economic situation. Businesses are unable to pay debts and any interest. Therefore, commercial banks are losing and/or have already lost a big amount of revenue.”

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AVA Press, [IEA won't be allowed access to Afghan central bank reserves: US](#), 21 October 2021

"Deputy U.S. Treasury Secretary Wally Adeyemo on Tuesday said he sees no situation where the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) who regained power in Afghanistan in August, would be allowed access to Afghan central bank reserves, which are largely held in the United States.

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_The IEA have called for the United States to lift a block on more than \$9 billion of Afghan reserves held outside the country as the government struggles to contain a deepening ."

United States Institute of Peace, [Afghanistan's Economic and Humanitarian Crises Turn Dire](#), 14 October 2021

"Two months after the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, the country is grappling with twin economic and humanitarian crises the response to which has been complicated by international aid cutoffs, the freezing of Afghanistan's foreign exchange reserves and sanctions on the militants. USIP's William Byrd discusses the implications of these crises and the challenges to alleviating them."

Landinfo, [Afghanistan: En humanitær krise](#), 13 October 2021

"Afghanistan is on the brink of economic collapse. Neither the Taliban, aid organizations nor most people have access to cash (Debre 2021; Bolle & Røst 2021). At the end of September 2021, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) announced that humanitarian efforts were hampered by a lack of cash; there is no money to pay wages or to buy goods (OCHA 2021b). NRC has no opportunity to transfer salaries to the organization's two thousand local employees (Matre 2021).

Long queues are reported outside the country's banks. Private banks do not have access to cash, which means that even Afghans with money in the bank do not have access to their own funds (UNAMA 2021). It is especially in the cities that Afghans have been dependent on foreign funding, either directly by receiving wages funded by the international community, or indirectly by offering goods and services (Duncan & Clark 2021)."

Original excerpt in Norwegian [translated using Google translate]

"Afghanistan er på randen av økonomisk sammenbrudd. Verken Taliban, bistandsorganisasjoner eller folk flest har tilgang til kontanter (Debre 2021; Bolle & Røst 2021). Ved utgangen av september 2021 meldte FNs kontor for koordinering av humanitær innsats (OCHA) at den humanitære innsatsen hindres av mangel på kontanter; det er ikke penger til å betale lønn eller å kjøpe varer (OCHA 2021b). Flyktninghjelpen har ingen mulighet til å overføre lønn til organisasjonens to tusen lokalt ansatte (Matre 2021).

Det meldes om lange køer utenfor landets banker. Private banker har ikke tilgang på kontanter, hvilket betyr at selv afghanere med penger i banken ikke får tilgang til egne midler (UNAMA 2021). Det er særlig i byene at afghanerne har vært avhengig av utenlandsk finansiering, enten direkte ved at de har mottatt lønn finansiert av det internasjonale samfunnet, eller indirekte ved at de har tilbudt varer og tjenester (Duncan & Clark 2021)."

BBC, [Afghanistan crisis: G20 leaders pledge to avert economic catastrophe](#), 13 October 2021

"The takeover of this country has caused a massive shock to an economy that was just about surviving.

Banks were closed for many days after the Taliban seized control, and while many have opened now, accessing cash is still difficult.

Many businesses shut down because their owners fled the country fearing for their lives. Many of those who had jobs haven't received salaries for months.

With no cash in the market, there has been a sharp rise in prices of day to day necessities including food. An already difficult situation created by war and drought has become much worse.

Women who had jobs and supported their families can no longer work and are now entirely dependent on handouts.

In Kabul, hundreds of people are still living in the open in tents with harsher winter months fast approaching.

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Development aid given by foreign countries and agencies to Afghanistan, which helped to put cash into the economy, is all but frozen. This, on the ground, means that people who worked on development projects are out of jobs. [...]

Afghans have been describing their difficulties to the BBC.

"Nothing can be found, and even if it is available, it's too expensive and not affordable," one retired man said. "I was paid last year and am still waiting on my salary, I have nothing to eat with my children."

Another, a government employee in the northern town of Takhar, complained that officials were lying about the payment of salaries.

"I've received nothing," he said. "What type government is this? If an employee doesn't go to work, there would be complaints and an investigation. But if he's not being paid, how can he survive?"

Reuters, [Afghanistan on verge of socio-economic collapse, EU's top diplomat says](#), 3 October 2021

"The Afghan banking system is largely paralysed, with people unable to withdraw money, while the country's health system - which was heavily dependent on foreign aid - is close to collapse, according to Borrell."

BBC News, [Taliban: Afghanistan bank boss warns sector near collapse](#), 28 September 2021

"Syed Moosa Kaleem Al-Falahi, the Chief Executive of the Islamic Bank of Afghanistan, said the country's financial industry is in the grip of an "existential crisis" as customers panic.

"There's huge withdrawals happening at the moment", he said, speaking from Dubai, where he is temporarily based because of the chaos in Kabul.

"Only withdrawals are happening, most of the banks are not functioning, and not providing full services," he added.

Afghanistan's economy was already on shaky ground even before the Taliban took control in August."

"Inflation is soaring, the Afghani, the country's currency, is plummeting and people are desperate as many have lost their jobs and are short of cash."

TOLO News, [UNDP Forecast: 97% of Afghans in Poverty by Mid-2022](#), 12 September 2021

"The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) warned that 97 percent of Afghans could fall below the poverty line by mid-2022 unless the country's political and economic challenges are addressed promptly.

Based on a report UNDP released on September 9th, the latest developments and uncertainties have severely affected the lives of Afghans and an economic crisis is emerging in the country."

Reuters, [EXCLUSIVE Taliban launch charm offensive with Afghan banks amid funding fears](#), 1 September 2021

"Banks have mainly re-opened this week, but are operating with limited services, including \$200 weekly limits on withdrawals and few wire transfers amid liquidity worries and correspondent banks cutting ties, say bankers."

#### *Availability of and access to food*

Al Jazeera, [UN food agency: 45 million people on the edge of famine](#), 8 November 2021

"The United Nations food agency has said that the number of people on the edge of famine across 43 countries had risen to 45 million, as acute hunger spikes around the world.

The jump from 42 million people earlier in the year was largely down to a food security assessment that found another three million people facing famine in Afghanistan, the World Food Programme (WFP) said on Monday.

WFP said the cost of averting famine globally now stands at \$7bn, up from \$6.6bn earlier in the year, but warned that traditional funding streams were overstretched.

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Families facing acute food insecurity are being “forced to make devastating choices”, marrying off children early, pulling them out of school or feeding them locusts, wild leaves, or cactus.

Multiple droughts in Afghanistan were combining with an economic meltdown to push families to the edge, while some 12.4 million people in Syria do not know where their next meal will come from – more than any time during the decade-long conflict, it said.”

BBC, [Afghans facing 'hell on earth' as winter looms](#), 8 November 2021

"Ninety-five percent of the people don't have enough food, and now we're looking at 23 million people marching towards starvation," he added. "The next six months are going to be catastrophic. It is going to be hell on Earth."

AVA Press, [Agricultural free fall in Afghanistan is part of U.S. war legacy](#), 27 October 2021

"Promises cannot feed people" were the words of the United Nations Food Program Executive Director David Beasley as he underlined the rapid, unfortunate and alarming decline of Afghanistan's agricultural sector after decades of war. While the byproducts of the 20-year U.S. war include massive poverty, malnutrition, widespread displacement, terrorism and unemployment, the backbone of the Afghan national economy which is the agricultural sector has also taken a massive blow.

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_With roughly 80 percent of Afghans relying on it for daily sustenance and livelihood, its rapid decline can be attributed to the prolongation of war in the country and sector's abandonment after the U.S. troops' withdrawal in August.

As per assessments from the United Nations World and the Food and Agricultural Organization, Afghanistan is facing a starvation crisis, with approximately 45 percent of its population or 19 million people being at risk of high levels of food insecurity.”

Ariana News, [Afghanistan on ‘countdown to catastrophe’ as winter looms](#), 26 October 2021

“This is the highest number of acutely food insecure people ever recorded by the UN, during 10 years of conducting IPC analyses in Afghanistan.

And globally, the country is home to one of the largest number of people facing acute hunger.

“Hunger is rising and children are dying”, said WFP Executive Director David Beasley.

“We can’t feed people on promises – funding commitments must turn into hard cash, and the international community must come together to address this crisis, which is fast spinning out of control”.

Among those at risk are 3.2 million children under five, who are expected to suffer from acute malnutrition by the end of the year.

Last month, WFP and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) warned that without immediate life-saving treatment, one million children risked dying from severe acute malnutrition.

And for the first time, urban residents are suffering from food insecurity at similar rates to rural communities.

“Afghanistan is now among the world’s worst humanitarian crises – if not the worst – and food security has all but collapsed”, said the WFP chief.”

TOLO News, [Afghans Struggle with High Prices of Essential Goods](#), 26 October 2021

“A number of residents speaking to TOLONews complained about the high price of primary items in the markets, saying they are concerned about providing food for their families.

According to the residents, the economic downturn and the high prices have worried them as winter approaches.

“Domestic production is not enough, the prices are high because the goods are imported,” said Abdul Maroof, a shopkeeper.

Meanwhile, a number of farmers said that the recent drought has caused a serious decrease in yield compared to past years. They say this year’s drought is more severe than previous years, and the wells which were used to irrigate the farmlands have dried up. [...]

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Droughts and political problems in the country are cited as the reason for an unprecedented rise in the price of primary goods, mainly food, in the country.”

TOLO News, [UN Urges World to Support Vulnerable Afghans](#), 26 October 2021

“[...] The World Food Program WFP said on Monday that more than half of Afghanistan’s population will face starvation this winter unless urgent action is taken.

“Afghanistan is fighting a humanitarian crisis, the humanitarian organizations should urgently take steps and deliver their assistance to Afghanistan. The latest reports indicate that more than 22 million people face food insecurity,” said Wahidullah Amani, spokesman of WFP in Kabul.

Save the Children said that an unprecedented food crisis has left at least 14 million Afghan children hungry.

The statistics show a 35% increase in the number of people facing a food crisis compared with the same time last year.”

WFP, [Afghanistan set to be world’s worst humanitarian crisis, report warns](#), 25 October 2021

“Afghanistan is becoming the world’s largest humanitarian crisis, with needs surpassing those in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, according to figures released today.

With a harsh winter on its way, the latest IPC assessment (the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification), a global standard for assessing food insecurity, found 22.8 million people could face acute risk, while 8.7 million face emergency levels of hunger – a record in the ten years the UN has been conducting IPC analyses in the country. [...] Since the withdrawal of international forces in August, the fall of the Afghan government and the Taliban takeover, the country has been in freefall. Job losses, lack of cash and soaring prices have pushed the humanitarian crisis to a new high, creating a new class of hungry, the report said.

For the first time, urban residents are suffering from food insecurity at similar rates to rural communities, which have been ravaged by drought twice in the past three years. Across cities, towns and villages, virtually no family can afford sufficient food, according to recent WFP surveys. [...]

A crippling drought poses a further challenge to a political transition that has been met with international sanctions, and a financial and banking collapse. With COP26 kicking off in Glasgow on Friday (31 Oct), Bauer highlights the effects of the “double-dip” of the La Niña climate phenomenon, which is causing the worst drought the country has seen in years. [...]

“People who used to be food-secure, people who live in urban areas, people who were part of the Afghan middle class are now facing food insecurity because they're not being paid anymore, and they don't have access to their savings anymore. If they don't have money, and they don't have food assistance, it's going to be a long, dark winter.”

Due to a cash liquidity crisis, people are currently restricted to withdrawing US\$200 a week. However, “in more remote locations the banks still don’t have cash, so they can’t even withdraw that,” said Hsiao-Wei Lee, WFP deputy country director in charge of operations for Afghanistan.”



WFP, [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification \(IPC\), IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS September 2021 - March 2022](#), 25 October 2021

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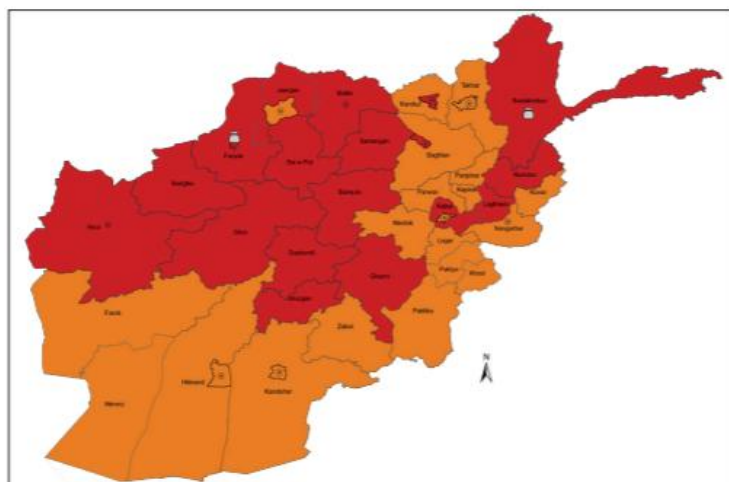
# AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan's food crisis reaches unprecedented levels as nearly 19 million people are highly food insecure due to prolonged drought, conflict and economic collapse

IPC ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY ANALYSIS  
September 2021 - March 2022  
Issued in October 2021

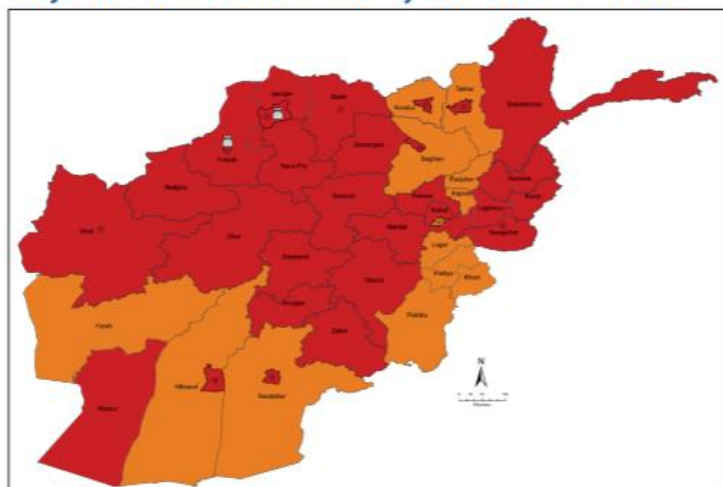
CURRENT SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2021			PROJECTED NOVEMBER 2021 – MARCH 2022		
 <b>18.8M</b> 47% of the population People facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION	Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe	 <b>22.8M</b> 55% of the population People facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION	Phase 5	0 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4	6,856,000 People in Emergency		Phase 4	8,740,000 People in Emergency
	Phase 3	11,988,000 People in Crisis		Phase 3	14,074,000 People in Crisis
	Phase 2	13,613,000 People in Stressed		Phase 2	12,473,000 People in Stressed
	Phase 1	7,954,000 People in food security		Phase 1	6,441,000 People in food security

## Current Acute Food Insecurity Sept - Oct 2021



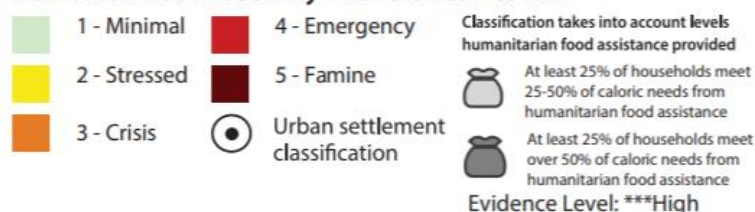
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## Projected Acute food Insecurity Nov 2021 - Mar 2022



### Key for the Map

#### IPC Acute Food Insecurity Phase Classification



WFP, [Half of Afghanistan's population face acute hunger as humanitarian needs grow to record levels](#), 25 October 2021

“More than half the population of Afghanistan – a record 22.8 million people - will face acute food insecurity from November, according to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report issued today by the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster of Afghanistan, co-led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN and the UN World Food Programme.

The combined impacts of drought, conflict, COVID-19 and the economic crisis, have severely affected lives, livelihoods, and people’s access to food. The report’s findings come as Afghanistan’s harsh winter looms, threatening to cut off areas of the country where families desperately depend on humanitarian assistance to survive the freezing winter months.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report has found that more than one in two Afghans will be facing crisis (IPC Phase 3) or emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of acute food insecurity through the November 2021 to March 2022 lean season, requiring urgent humanitarian interventions to meet basic food needs, protect livelihoods and prevent a humanitarian catastrophe.

The report also notes that this is the highest number of acutely food insecure people ever recorded in the ten years the UN has been conducting IPC analyses in Afghanistan. Globally, Afghanistan is home to one of the largest number of people in acute food insecurity in both absolute and relative terms. [...]

“Afghanistan is now among the world’s worst humanitarian crises - if not the worst - and food security has all but collapsed. This winter, millions of Afghans will be forced to choose between migration and starvation unless we can step up our life-saving assistance, and unless the economy can be resuscitated. We are on a countdown to

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catastrophe and if we don't act now, we will have a total disaster on our hands," said David Beasley, WFP Executive Director. [...]

#### Hunger spreads from rural to urban areas

The IPC report reflects a 37 percent increase in the number of Afghans facing acute hunger since the last assessment issued in April 2021. Among those at risk are 3.2 million children under-five who are expected to suffer from acute malnutrition by the end of the year. In October, WFP and UNICEF warned that one million children were at risk of dying from severe acute malnutrition without immediate life-saving treatment.

For the first time, urban residents are suffering from food insecurity at similar rates to rural communities, marking the shifting face of hunger in the country. Rampant unemployment and the liquidity crisis mean that all major urban centres are projected to face Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of food insecurity, including formerly middle-class populations.

In rural areas, the severe impact of the second drought in four years continues to impact the livelihoods of 7.3 million people who rely on agriculture and livestock to survive."

Reuters, ['Children are going to die', U.N. agency warns as Afghanistan verges on collapse](#), 25 October 2021

"Millions of Afghans, including children, could die of starvation unless urgent action is taken to pull Afghanistan back from the brink of collapse, a senior United Nations official warned, calling for frozen funds to be freed for humanitarian efforts.

World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director David Beasley told Reuters that 22.8 million people - more than half of Afghanistan's 39 million population - were facing acute food insecurity and "marching to starvation" compared to 14 million just two months ago. [...]

Afghanistan was plunged into crisis in August after Taliban fighters drove out a Western-backed government, prompting donors to hold back billions of dollars in assistance for the aid-dependent economy.

The food crisis, exacerbated by climate change, was dire in Afghanistan even before the takeover by the Taliban, whose new administration has been blocked from accessing assets held overseas as nations grapple with how to deal with the hardline Islamists. [...]

The U.N. food agency needs up to \$220 million a month to partially feed the nearly 23 million vulnerable people as winter nears.

Many Afghans are selling possessions to buy food with the Taliban unable to pay wages to civil servants, and urban communities are facing food insecurity on levels similar to rural areas for the first time."

The Guardian, ['Countdown to catastrophe': half of Afghans face hunger this winter – UN](#), 25 October 2021

"More than half of Afghanistan's population is facing acute hunger as the country has been thrown into one of the world's largest food crises.

Almost 23 million Afghans will be hungry due to conflict, drought and an economic downturn that is severely affecting livelihoods and people's access to food as a harsh winter looms, the UN has warned; an increase of nearly 35% compared with last year.

"Afghanistan is now among the world's worst humanitarian crises – if not the worst – and food security has all but collapsed. This winter, millions of Afghans will be forced to choose between migration and starvation," the World Food Programme's executive director David Beasley said, adding that "we are on a countdown to catastrophe".

The Taliban takeover in August has contributed to the economic upheaval as billions of dollars in foreign aid payments – 40% of the country's gross domestic product – have ceased and almost \$10bn (£7.3bn) of Afghan central bank assets have been frozen.

Half of all Afghans will be facing crisis or emergency levels of acute food insecurity between this November and March next year, the UN report said.

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As desperation grows, the number of beggars throughout Afghanistan's major cities – including children – has risen as urban residents, for the first time, suffer similar rates of food insecurity to rural communities; a shifting pattern of hunger in the country. [...]

Only 5% of households have enough to eat every day, the UN said. Many families who fled fighting before the Taliban takeover can't afford to go back home, instead remaining in makeshift camps with no source of income. About 3.5 million people remain displaced within the country. [...]

Cash is largely unavailable, and many government employees are waiting for unpaid salaries.

In Kabul, beggars are visible on almost every street corner. In the city centre, small children chase after shoppers, hoping for a piece of bread."

IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation September - October 2021 and Projection for November 2021 - March 2022](#), 25 October 2021

"In September and October 2021 (the post-harvest season), nearly 19 million people in Afghanistan experienced high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above), an almost 30% increase from the same season last year (14.5 million people). The main drivers of acute food insecurity include drought and its impacts on crops and livestock, the collapse of public services, a severe economic crisis and increasing food prices. An estimated 6.8 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 11.9 million people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) require urgent action to save their lives, reduce food gaps and protect their livelihoods. [...]

A profound economic crisis is severely restricting household access to food. [...]

Impact on Food Markets and Prices: The period between August to September corresponds to the post-harvest season when wheat and wheat flour prices usually decrease slightly following seasonal trends. However, in 2021, there has been a dramatic and sudden price increase for wheat flour (+28% from June to September) and other food commodities. In addition, cooking oil prices increased by 55% compared to the same period last year and more than 80% above the previous 5-year average, contributing to increasing food and non-food prices. Moreover, the political transition also led to a freeze of US\$ 9.5 billion in government assets, further deteriorating the economy and resulting in a 12.5% currency devaluation, which in turn contributed to increasing prices of food and non-food items, especially for imported ones. These higher food prices are negatively impacting the purchasing power of lower-income groups across the country, reducing their access to food. The impact of high prices is not only limited to poor households, with other household income groups unable to access cash due to banking restrictions on cash withdrawals (currently limited to USD200/household/week). [...]

Food insecurity is growing in urban areas. Eleven major towns of selected provinces were analysed to assess the specific vulnerabilities of urban households. Across the urban areas, around 3.98 million people (43% of the analysed population) were facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above), of which 1.2 million people (13%) were classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Five out of 11 urban areas were classified in Emergency, and another six urban areas were classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3). The urban area of Faryab (Maimana), with 65% of its total population classified in IPC Phase 3 or above, is the most vulnerable urban center, followed by Balkh (Mazar), Jawzjan, Helmand (Lashkergah), Hirat, Kunduz, Nangarhar, (e) Baghlan (Pul-e-Khumri), Kabul, and Kandahar, each having 40-55% of their respective populations classified in IPC Phase 3 or above. The impact of the transition of power on the functionality of key services (banks, markets, transports, communication) as well as on labour opportunities (e.g. civil servants and functionality of public and private economic comparts) coupled with unseasonable inflation spikes for food products, deeply affected the capacity of most urban households to produce an income and access food."

BBC News, [Afghanistan facing desperate food crisis, UN warns](#), 25 October 2021

"More than half the population - about 22.8 million people - face acute food insecurity, while 3.2 million children under five could suffer acute malnutrition, the WFP said. [...]

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Many Afghans are now selling their possessions to buy food. The new Taliban administration has been blocked from accessing overseas assets, as nations assess how to deal with the hardline group, meaning wages to civil servants and other workers have been withheld.

"It has been more than five months that I have received my wages," a teacher in Herat told the BBC. "Life is tough. I am selling whatever we have at home. We are selling our animals, cutting our trees to sell the wood."

"People are impoverished here," said a man in Kandahar. "Yesterday I saw a woman who was going through the rubbish bins at the local hotel, collecting the leftover food. I asked her why she was doing so and she said she didn't have any other solution, she was trying to find food for her children." [...]

The WFP warned that the looming winter threatened to further isolate Afghans dependent on humanitarian assistance to survive. And for the first time in Afghanistan, urban residents are suffering from food insecurity at similar rates to rural communities, the organisation said.

"It is urgent that we act efficiently and effectively to speed up and scale up our delivery in Afghanistan before winter cuts off a large part of the country, with millions of people - including farmers, women, young children and the elderly - going hungry in the freezing winter," said QU Dongyu, the director of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation."

CARE, [CARE warns of increased risks for women and girls as new report reveals almost half of Afghans now face acute hunger](#), 25 October 2021

"A new report reveals Afghanistan has descended deeper into an already alarming hunger crisis, exacerbated by drought, increasing displacement, rising food prices, the COVID-19 pandemic and economic decline, with 18.8 million people, close to half the population, now facing acute hunger - an almost 30% increase from the same time last year.

"People in many parts of Afghanistan are resorting to extreme measures just to put food on the table – they're selling the few assets they have, making tough choices about which family members miss out on meals and some are even marrying their daughters off at a young age just so there is one less mouth to feed. The dramatic rise in the price of wheat between June and September this year by 28% is hugely concerning and puts life-sustaining food out of reach for so many," said Victor Moses, CARE Afghanistan's Country Director."

Kabul Now, [Eight children of a family starve to death in west Kabul](#), 24 October 2021

"Eight children of a family starve to death in west Kabul

As many as eight children of a single family have starved to death in Etifaq Township, a neighborhood in west part of the capital Kabul, according to the local residents and a religious scholar. The children have died from lack of food after the death of their parents who had previously lost their lives to cancer and heart disease.

The incident took place three weeks ago in PD 13 of Kabul city, Mohammad Ali Rahimi Bamiani, the religious scholar who performed the mass funeral ceremony of the children told Kabul Now today, October 24, in Kabul.

He confirmed that all the children were members of a single family and died of starvation."

Al Jazeera, [Kabul orphanage struggles to feed its children as cash runs low](#), 19 October 2021

"Ahmad Khalil Mayan, programme director at a large Kabul orphanage, says he is cutting back on the amount of fruit and meat he gives the children each week because the home is running out of money.

For the last two months, since the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan and millions of dollars in aid suddenly dried up, he has been desperately calling and emailing donors, both foreign and local, who supported him before."

BBC, [Afghanistan crisis: G20 leaders pledge to avert economic catastrophe](#), 13 October 2021

"The takeover of this country has caused a massive shock to an economy that was just about surviving [...]"

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With no cash in the market, there has been a sharp rise in prices of day to day necessities including food. An already difficult situation created by war and drought has become much worse.”

Landinfo, [Afghanistan: En humanitær krise](#), 13 October 2021

“The prices of absolutely necessary foods such as flour and cooking oil have risen, for example a 50 kilo sack of flour has risen from 21 USD to 24 USD. Other indispensable products such as medicines and electricity have also become more expensive, while those who sell non-essential goods, such as clothing, have declined sales (Duncan & Clark 2021).

The country, which is highly dependent on imports, cannot finance the import of food, medicine, fuel and electricity (UNAMA 2021). The Taliban does not even have the means to pay the import duty to retrieve containers with food reserves from ports in Pakistan (Debre 2021). On the streets, cheap, low-quality fuel is sold, which has been smuggled into the country, probably from Iran (Jahanmal 2021).”

Original excerpt in Norwegian [translated using Google translate]

“Prisene på helt nødvendige matvarer som mel og matolje har steget, eksempelvis har en 50 kilos sekk med mel steget fra 21 USD til 24 USD. Også andre helt uunnværlige produkter som medisiner og elektrisitet har blitt dyrere, mens de som selger varer som ikke er livsnødvendige, som for eksempel klær, har nedgang i salget (Duncan & Clark 2021).

Landet, som er svært importavhengig, kan ikke finansiere import av mat, medisin, drivstoff og elektrisitet (UNAMA 2021). Taliban har ikke engang midler til å betale importavgiften for å hente ut containere med matreserver fra havner i Pakistan (Debre 2021). På gatene selges billig drivstoff av lav kvalitet, som har blitt smuglet inn i landet, antagelig fra Iran (Jahanmal 2021).”

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Gandhara, [Death Stalks 1 Million Afghan Children Facing Malnutrition](#), 7 October 2021

“Dozens of malnourished children are now receiving care in the central hospital of Afghanistan's Ghor Province. Malnutrition in Ghor is expected to increase rapidly as poverty in the country grows -- driven by drought and the collapse of the economy following the Taliban takeover in August.”

Ariana News, [Afghan air corridor for cargo to resume next week](#), 7 October 2021

“The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment (ACCI) deputy head said Thursday that Afghanistan’s international air corridor for cargo will resume next week. Mohammad Younis Mohmand told Ariana News the first flight will carry pine nuts. The ACCI however continues to criticize Pakistan over its treatment of Afghan businessmen and called for issues to be resolved at the Torkham and Spin Boldak land ports.”

The New Humanitarian, [From rural drought to urban shortages: Afghanistan’s new hungry](#), 6 October 2021

“Only five percent of Afghan households reported having enough food to eat, according to recent World Food Programme surveys. For the first time, there are similar levels of food insecurity among urban Afghans as drought-hit rural ones, the UN agency said: “Job losses, lack of cash, and soaring prices are creating a new class of hungry in Afghanistan.”

Food worries now stretch from the country’s remote rural corners – which often face the brunt of shortfalls caused by drought, conflict, or under-development – to its urban areas.”

Tolo News, [WFP: 14 Million Face Food Insecurity in Afghanistan](#), 6 October 2021

“The World Food Programme (WFP) warned of the dire state of food insecurity sweeping across Afghanistan as winter approaches fast.

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While visiting a food distribution center in Herat province in the west, WFP officials said that at least 14 million people in Afghanistan will face food insecurity and over 3 million children are suffering from acute malnutrition.

"We have huge concerns about the desperate choices families are being forced to take," said Mary-Ellen McGroarty, WFP Afghanistan's Representative and Country Director. "Unless we intervene now, malnutrition will only become more severe. The international community must release the funds they pledged weeks ago, or the impact could be irreversible."

It is reported that WFP and UNICEF are distributing food to poor Afghan families in several provinces.

A number of families who were benefited by lifesaving food packages talked about their poverty, saying they have not been able to pay for food."

UNICEF, [Half of Afghanistan's children under five expected to suffer from acute malnutrition as hunger takes root for millions](#), 5 October 2021

"KABUL, 5 October 2021 –Wrapping up a two-day visit to Herat, UNICEF Representative in Afghanistan, Hervé Ludovic De Lys, and WFP Afghanistan Representative and Country Director, Mary-Ellen McGroarty, sounded the alarm on the dire state of malnutrition and food insecurity sweeping across the country. Without reliable access to water, food and basic health and nutrition services, Afghan children and their families are bearing the brunt of years of conflict and the current economic crisis.

14 million people in Afghanistan are facing acute food insecurity, and an estimated 3.2 million children under the age of five expected to suffer from acute malnutrition by the end of the year. At least 1 million of these children are at risk of dying due to severe acute malnutrition without immediate treatment.

[...]

According to WFP surveys 95 per cent of households in Afghanistan are not consuming enough food, adults are eating less and skipping meals so their children can eat more."

Reuters, [Afghanistan on verge of socio-economic collapse, EU's top diplomat says](#), 3 October 2021

"Afghanistan is facing a breakdown of its economic and social systems that risks turning into a humanitarian catastrophe, the European Union's foreign policy chief said on Sunday.

Avoiding the worst-case scenario would require the Taliban to comply with conditions that would enable more international assistance, Josep Borrell wrote in a blog post.

"Afghanistan is experiencing a serious humanitarian crisis and a socio-economic collapse is looming, which would be dangerous for Afghans, the region and international security," Borrell wrote.

Food prices in the country have jumped more than 50% since the Taliban took power in August as the freezing of \$9 billion of Afghanistan's assets held in foreign central bank reserves and the withdrawal of foreign income stokes inflation.

The Afghan banking system is largely paralysed, with people unable to withdraw money, while the country's health system - which was heavily dependent on foreign aid - is close to collapse, according to Borrell.

"If the situation continues and with winter approaching, this risks turning into a humanitarian catastrophe," he wrote, adding that this could trigger mass migration into neighbouring states."

WFP, [WFP Afghanistan Situation Report](#), 30 September 2021

"SITUATION UPDATE

- Winter is fast-approaching and the race is on to get food prepositioned at strategic locations before it's too late.
- Food security is deteriorating sharply: Just 5 percent of households are consuming enough food according to WFP's latest surveys.
  - Urban residents are suffering from food insecurity at similar rates to rural communities, who were ravaged by drought twice in the past three years.

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- While families with lower education levels are hardest hit by food insecurity, more than 90 percent of households with high-school or university educations are unable to afford enough food to feed their families.
- Almost no one has enough money to buy food.
  - Three out of four households now limit portion sizes; adults are eating less so their children can eat more.
    - o Households headed by women are skipping meals, and reducing their portions far more than those headed by men.
  - Three out of four households are also borrowing food (76.7 percent up from 60 percent) or consuming cheaper food (74.5 percent up from 56 percent).
- Cash shortages are hampering commercial transporters, millers and cooperating partners as they face challenges in securing cash to pay staff/drivers and procure raw materials.”

ACTED, September, [DROUGHT EMERGENCY APPEAL Situation analysis and proposed response](#), September 2021 [exact date unknown]

“The 2021 harvest for a range of crops is expected to be below average due to the effects of drought. According to the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC), total wheat production in 2021 will be 25% less than in 2020 based on initial estimates, and overall the country is facing a national shortfall of 2.46m MT of wheat due to the poor harvests, and a 62% reduction in area under cultivation compared to 2020. Additionally, decreases in rice and vegetable production are also anticipated to be high, with rice production down 20%, vegetable production down 25-30%, and fruit production expected to be down a staggering 80% in some locations. In addition, livestock mortality will further erode food security and increase risks of malnutrition, with livestock production to be down 30% across the most affected provinces.[...]

The impact of the drought is, and will be, very severe for the poorest and most vulnerable small-holder farmers reliant on rain-fed wheat production, as the area of rain-fed wheat planted in 2021 has decreased by 62% from the 2020 level, with the resulting yield also down 47% against the prior year. In addition, the effects of the drought are depleting many already poor and vulnerable household’s financial and asset reserves as they struggle and resort to extremely negative coping strategies, with the poorest and most vulnerable households incurring catastrophic levels of debt.[...]

Unfortunately, long-term forecasts indicate that the drought will continue into 2022, and the next main lean season (late January to late April 2022) is expected to be more intense and arrive earlier, leading to a further deterioration in the food security situation across the country.”

BBC News, [Taliban: Afghanistan bank boss warns sector near collapse](#), 28 September 2021

“The United Nations World Food Programme has warned that only 5% of households in Afghanistan have enough to eat every day.

Half of those surveyed said they have run out of food altogether at least once in the last two weeks.”

NRC, [Afghanistan is on a countdown to economic collapse](#), 27 September 2021

“Statement by Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council, who is currently visiting Afghanistan.

“Afghanistan’s economy is spiralling out of control. The formal banking system could collapse any day now because of a lack of cash. I’ve spoken to families who tell me they are surviving on tea and small scraps of old bread.

“If the economy collapses, even the most basic services will no longer function, and humanitarian needs will soar even higher. Dealing with the liquidity crisis is critical as aid organisations seek to scale up to meet urgent humanitarian needs.”

WFP, [In the grip of hunger: only 5 percent of Afghan families have enough to eat](#), 23 September 2021

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“Due to the combined effects of unemployment, a drop in the value of the local currency and a rise in prices – cooking oil has almost doubled in price since 2020, and wheat is up by 28 percent – only 10 percent of families headed by someone with a secondary or university education can afford sufficient food.”

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(30 August – 5 September 2021\)](#), 13 September 2021  
“In the reporting period [...] The prices of food, medicine and other essential supplies in markets across the region reportedly increased by about 30 per cent.”

#### *Availability of and access to water*

ACTED, September, [DROUGHT EMERGENCY APPEAL Situation analysis and proposed response](#), September 2021 [exact date unknown]

“While Afghanistan has sufficient water for its population and production in aggregate terms, access, storage and efficiency of water use are extremely low due to mismanagement, destruction of systems, and lack of infrastructures and investment, with 88% of irrigation done through informal systems. Overall, it is estimated that 90% of Afghanistan’s water consumption is for agricultural purposes, of which over 50% is lost due to inefficient systems and management. When faced with drought conditions, these issues result in severe WASH needs and water scarcity, especially in rural areas, leading to a lack of access and availability of water.”

#### *Availability of and access to shelter*

BBC, [Afghanistan crisis: G20 leaders pledge to avert economic catastrophe](#), 13 October 2021  
“The takeover of this country has caused a massive shock to an economy that was just about surviving. [...] In Kabul, hundreds of people are still living in the open in tents with harsher winter months fast approaching.”

#### *Availability of and access to employment*

IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation September - October 2021 and Projection for November 2021 - March 2022](#), 25 October 2021

“Impacts on Employment: The political transition in August 2021 resulted in significant disruptions to public finances, services and international assistance and had enormous impacts on employment, particularly for women. The political transition also led to over 500,000 Afghan security force members losing their jobs while civil servants, who comprise a significant proportion of the urban population, have been unpaid for over three months. Overall, the economic crisis that followed the political transition has negatively impacted the labour market in both urban and rural areas. The World Food Programme’s (WFP) market and price monitoring showed a drastic decline in the number of days work available for casual labour in urban areas: these were two days per week in July, dropping to 1.8 days in August and to only one day of work in September, a level which is 50% lower compared to both July 2021 and September 2020. According to the 2021 SFSA, 95% of the population reported reduced incomes, out of which 76% reported a significant decrease (83% for urban and 72% for rural households) compared to the previous year. The main reasons for decreased income were reduced employment (42%) and conflict (41%).”

BBC, [Afghanistan crisis: G20 leaders pledge to avert economic catastrophe](#), 13 October 2021  
“The takeover of this country has caused a massive shock to an economy that was just about surviving. [...]

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Many businesses shut down because their owners fled the country fearing for their lives. Many of those who had jobs haven't received salaries for months.

With no cash in the market, there has been a sharp rise in prices of day to day necessities including food. An already difficult situation created by war and drought has become much worse.

Women who had jobs and supported their families can no longer work and are now entirely dependent on handouts. [...]

Development aid given by foreign countries and agencies to Afghanistan, which helped to put cash into the economy, is all but frozen. This, on the ground, means that people who worked on development projects are out of jobs."

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA), [Crippling economy closing Afghan media outlets](#), 12 October 2021

"This comes after reports emerged that at least half of all Afghan [sic] have shut down, mainly due to financial problems.

In addition, a large percentage of journalists and media workers have not been paid for at least two months.

Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan said the lack of financial resources has affected hundreds of journalists.

"Following the IEA takeover in Afghanistan, some media closed down while others have complained about (restrictions on) access to information," said Nasir Noori, a member of [sic].

"When we try to continue our journalistic affairs, we have few information sources. We call on the IEA to provide sources for the media," he said.

Some media outlets have continued to operate despite facing serious financial constraints.

"All journalists in Faryab province are jobless. ' activities are being restricted," said Nabil Niyaish, a journalist.

"The media has financial problems in [sic]. Some media organizations have remained open but might close down because there are no advertisements," said another journalist.

Media and freedom of speech has been a major achievement in Afghanistan in the past 20 years, but the future for this sector is uncertain.

IEA officials meanwhile said they will help resolve problems regarding the financial situation in the long term.

"We will try our best to create a market for the media. It will be beneficial for the media," said , a member of the IEA's cultural committee.

Recently, Afghanistan's journalist union said that 70% of media outlets have closed down in Afghanistan in recent weeks and more face closure unless the [international community](#) provide help"

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Gandhara, [As Afghan Media Struggles Under Taliban, Jobless Journalists Grow Desperate](#), 11 October 2021

"Many media outlets across Afghanistan have shut down in the wake of the Taliban takeover, with some journalists leaving the profession or the country out of fear of reprisals. Gul Ahmad Almas is one former freelance journalist whose life has been upended by the new regime. With no income from reporting, he is dependent on hand-to-mouth work collecting brush to sell as fuel"

Khaama Press, [School graduates of 2000-2020, of no use: Taliban's higher education minister](#), 4 October 2021

"The acting minister of the higher education of the Taliban Abdul Baqi Haqqani said that those who have graduated from high schools during the past twenty years are of no use.

The acting minister is meant by the graduates who have studied during the non-Taliban era when they were fighting the US-backed governments of Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani.

[...]

Earlier, the acting minister of higher education had said that the Master's and Ph.D. holders of modern studies are less valuable than those who have studied in madrasas and have religious studies in Afghanistan.

The statement of Haqqani comes as the period-2000-2020- is said to be one of the most important and rich eras when it comes to the level of education in Afghanistan."

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BBC News, [Afghanistan, There's security but no money': Afghans settle into life under Taliban rule](#), 17 September 2021

"One teacher has already sold everything she can. "I became a shopkeeper in my own house and sold all my belongings..whatever I earned I am using to buy food now. Whenever I come here and see the condition of the people I go home and cry". Nonetheless, she says she's still turning up to work every day [...] Across the road is Mazar -i-Sharif's main hospital. It's now run by a Taliban official, but his deputy is continuing in the same position he held under the previous government. Staff haven't been paid since the Taliban takeover, with uncertainty over how the ministry of health will be funded, while the current reserve stock of medicine will only last for another month"

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(30 August – 5 September 2021\)](#), 13 September 2021  
"In the reporting period [...] A rise in unemployment has been observed along with increasing criminality."

## Medical Care

*Are there any challenges to accessing medical services?*

MSF, [Malnutrition soars in Herat as healthcare reaches breaking point](#), 10 November 2021

"The Afghan healthcare system has been fragile and plagued by major gaps for years now. The suspension of international aid as a result of the recent political developments has further deteriorated the situation. In Herat, in southwestern Afghanistan, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is witnessing a worrying increase in malnutrition, says Mamman Mustapha, former project coordinator in the province.

The healthcare system is at risk of collapse in the whole country, while the needs are huge. This is also reflected in what we observe in Herat. Access to care was a major issue in Afghanistan well before the Taliban takeover, but today the situation has further degraded, as most of the international aid has been suspended. This includes the World Bank funding of the World Health Organization's (WHO) basic and essential care programmes covering Herat province.

Health facilities in the area are either closing or have reduced to providing minimum services with whatever residual resources are available. We have no visibility on what is going to happen to these facilities. People are jobless and are poor; they cannot afford private care, while some of the humanitarian organisations previously working in the area are yet to resume their activities in full.

There are probably several reasons for the increase of malnutrition in the area, most likely indicative of the broader situation in Afghanistan: a lack of functioning health facilities in the area; the economic downturn (with up to 30 per cent inflation rate for food items); the lack of liquidity and closing of banks; and a drought that is expected to persist throughout 2021."

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 8 November 2021

"Health facilities in parts of Afghanistan have shut down and, in the capital, hospitals are functioning without electricity or water supply. More than 2,000 health facilities have been forced to close since the Taliban takeover, according to the Red Cross, and in those hospitals that are still accepting patients, most staff have not been paid their salaries for months and patients are forced to buy their own medication, a difficult prospect during an economic crisis. That said, according to the Taliban's Acting Public Health Minister, Dr Qalandar Ebad, the new government has agreed to launch a four-day polio vaccination programme. Vaccination teams have been unable to work in parts of the country for much of the past three years, meaning that since 2018, an estimated 3.3 million

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children have missed out on a polio vaccination. It is estimated that 10 million Afghan children aged under five will be targeted by this programme, which appears to be aimed at showing the de facto authorities can cooperate with international agencies."

Reuters, [Dozens killed and wounded as blasts and gunfire hit Kabul hospital](#), 3 November 2021

At least 25 people were killed and more than 50 wounded when gunmen attacked Afghanistan's biggest military hospital after two heavy explosions at the site in central Kabul, officials said. [...]

The United Nations' mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), along with countries including Pakistan, condemned the attack.

"Attacks targeting medical personnel and civilians seeking treatment are violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Those responsible need to be held to account," UNAMA said in a tweet.

Gandhara, [Afghanistan's Health-Care System In 'Free Fall' As Punishing Winter Looms](#), 3 November 2021

The main problem affecting Afghanistan's health-care sector is the loss of financial aid, according to Patricia Gossman, associate director for Human Rights Watch's Asia Division. "There is no money to pay health-care workers. There is no money to buy medicines," said Gossman, who added that the system was "already weak" under the previous government. "With former donors blocking aid -- not humanitarian aid, but actual cash to pay salaries -- the health-care situation is in a free fall like the rest of the economy."

Hundreds of health facilities have been shuttered in Afghanistan since the Taliban toppled the internationally recognized government in Kabul. Abdul Bari Omari, the Taliban's caretaker deputy director of public health, told RFE/RL in October that nearly 90 percent of the sector was dependent on foreign aid, which led to the closure of 2,300 health centers when that aid was cut off.

Urgent appeals for more funds by NGOs and the United Nations have resulted in pledges of more than \$1 billion, and outside states and aid groups have delivered much-needed medical supplies. But there is no clear path for the distribution of the funds and supplies, and billions of dollars held by Afghanistan's previous government remain frozen in the United States.

Reuters, [In Kabul children's hospital, medics struggle with staff shortages](#), 26 October 2021

"In Kabul's main children's hospital, the crumbling of Afghanistan's health system is reflected in the eyes of exhausted staff as they eke out fast-diminishing stocks of medicines.

As crowds of mothers and sick children fill waiting rooms in the Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital, medical staff are squeezing three babies into a single incubator and doubling them up in cot-like infant warmer beds.

Nurses who once took care of three or four babies each are now having to look after 20 or more to make up for the absence of staff who fled the country when the Taliban seized power in August. [...]

Although the number of blast victims and war wounded have fallen since the fighting ended, Afghanistan's hospitals are grappling with the fallout of a rapidly spreading economic crisis that has threatened millions with hunger.

U.N. agencies say as much as 95% of the population does not regularly have enough to eat and last month, the head of the World Health Organisation warned the health system was on the brink of collapse as international aid has dried up.

Lack of support for the \$600 million Sehatmandi health service project administered by World Bank, has left thousands of facilities unable to buy supplies and pay salaries, threatening health services at all levels from village clinics to hospitals offering caesarian sections.

STAFF NOT PAID IN MONTHS

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For the medical team, it is the acute staff shortage that is causing the heaviest strain. They have not been paid in months and often struggle even to pay their car fare to work.”

Al Jazeera, [Afghanistan: Taliban agrees to door-to-door polio vaccine drive](#), 19 October 2021

“Health workers in Afghanistan will begin a house-to-house polio vaccination drive next month after the new Taliban government agreed to support the campaign, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund said.”

“The campaign, due to start on November 8, will be the first in more than three years aimed at all children in Afghanistan, including more than 3 million in remote and previously inaccessible areas.”

The Guardian, [Critically ill Afghans suffer as Taliban tighten Pakistan border](#), 13 October 2021

“Shortage of specialised doctors in Afghanistan means patients seek lifesaving care in Pakistan, but conventions have changed [...]

Doctors and family members of patients say conventions at the border have changed since the Taliban takeover, which has made it more difficult for Afghan patients to seek lifesaving care in [Pakistan](#). [...]

Afghanistan’s healthcare system, which already suffered from a shortage of specialised doctors and well-equipped facilities, has been critically wounded. Funding cuts from international donors have led to a dearth of medical supplies and equipment. Some doctors left during the early days of the [Taliban](#) rule, and others lost jobs at hospitals that could no longer afford to pay them. The head of the World Health Organization said late last month that Afghanistan’s health system was on the brink of collapse.”

Landinfo, [Afghanistan: En humanitær krise](#), 13 October 2021

“The Afghan health service is close to collapse. Hospitals and clinics have no money for food, medicine, oxygen or diesel for power supplies. The crisis in the health care system affects treatment capacity, but also preventive work and vaccination programs. Health workers who still go to work cannot expect to be paid - they have not been paid for several months (Bolle & Røst 2021; Mandavilli 2021).”

Original excerpt in Norwegian [translated using Google translate]

”Den afghanske helsevesenet er nær kollaps. Sykehus og klinikker har verken penger til mat, medisiner, oksygen eller diesel til strømaggregater. Krisen i helsevesenet rammer behandlingskapasitet, men også forebyggende arbeid og vaksineringsprogrammer. Helsearbeidere som fortsatt går på jobb, kan ikke forvente å få lønn – de har ikke fått lønn på flere måneder (Bolle & Røst 2021; Mandavilli 2021).”

Ariana News, [UN agency to pay salaries of Afghan health care workers](#), 7 October 2021

“The World Bank previously gave hundreds of millions of dollars to Afghanistan to cover workers and other health care needs but cut off its support after the government in Kabul was no longer officially recognized by most countries.

The U.N. agency will be taking over the program from the World Bank this week in order to provide money to health care workers and the health care system in order to avoid a looming humanitarian crisis in the country, The Washington Post reported.

Global Fund, a global health organization, donated \$15 million to the program at the beginning of October.”

TOLO News, [Provincial Health Centres Closed, Kabul Hospitals Crowded](#), 04 October 2021

“Officials at the state-owned hospitals said the citizens’ access to health care has significantly declined across the country, so people mostly travel to the capital for medical treatment.

According to officials, the number of patients coming to Kabul’s hospitals has increased after healthcare centers faced challenges in some provinces.

The shortage of medicine and professional staff are major challenges in Kabul city as well.

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"As the healthcare centers were closed in the provinces, the number of patients increased in the capital's hospitals. There will not be sufficient capacity if the situation continues," said Parwiz Noori, head of the Wazir Mohammad Akbar Khan Hospital.

"Kabul's hospitals are affected as well. We face a lack of medicine and doctors," said Dr. Mohammad Ishaq Shirani. [...] Provincial healthcare centers recently closed due to lack of medicine, medical equipment and doctors. [...] Beds are full [...] and there is no medicine or doctors."

At the same time, the World Health Organization (WHO) released an assessment and warned that Afghanistan's healthcare system is facing a crisis.

The assessment says: "Only 17% of health facilities supported by Sehatmandi remain fully functional. Two thirds are experiencing stock-out of essential medicines. Without urgent action, they are at risk of closure."

International organizations have repeatedly announced that Afghanistan's healthcare system is at risk of collapse."

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, [SCA the only health service provider in Maidan Wardak](#), 4 October 2021

"Currently the health service in the provincial hospital is limited; there is no medicine or food for the patients. This is a problem that our poor people cannot bear," he said. "Despite all these problems, we thank SCA for providing health services to the people of Afghanistan, as we are aware that health services in other provinces have declined. We call on SCA and other international bodies to help us. If they don't help, a humanitarian catastrophe could happen in Afghanistan due to the lack of public health services."

About 650 patients daily receive health services in Maidan Shahr Provincial Hospital, including around 300 children and more than 150 female patients. This hospital with a capacity of 110 beds admits 85 to 90 patients every day, including patients who need maternal and surgical care.

Maidan Shahr Provincial Hospital previously provided wider services under Sehatmandi Health Project. Sehatmandi project supported 77 health centers in Wardak under a health contract funded by the World Bank. The contract was for 30 months beginning from January 2019 to June 2021. However, after the political transition in the country, the project ended up vague without signs of extension. This has affected the supply of health services in the province.

"It would be difficult to run such a big hospital and other clinics without having a project, but we are still providing patients with only essential life-saving services using SCA's funds only. If these insufficient services are stopped, we are afraid of a deadly catastrophe for mothers, children and needy people in the country," explained Dr. Mohammad Nader Rahmani, director of the Maidan Wardak Provincial Hospital.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned in a new report that halting the budget for health projects in Afghanistan will close down more than 2,000 health centers in the country. This is while the Red Cross has also warned that more than seven million people in Afghanistan do not have access to basic health care."

WHO, [Dr Maragaret Harris - Emergencies in Lebanon and Afghanistan - Virtual Press conference](#), 23 September 2021

"WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus [...]

"Those gains are now at severe risk with the country's health system on the brink of collapse. There has been a surge in cases of measles and diarrhoea. Almost 50% of children are at risk of malnutrition. The resurgence of polio is a major risk and 2.1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine remain unused."

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(13-19 September 2021\)](#), 23 September 2021

"Most public health facilities and hospitals are reportedly running low on medicines and other basic supplies due to a shortage of funding [...]

Health services remain limited in hospitals due to funding shortage. A number of medical units in the Nangarhar Regional Hospital and districts' hospitals are reportedly closed."

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The Guardian, [UN frees funds to prevent Afghan health system collapse](#), 22 September 2021  
“The UN released emergency funds on Wednesday to help prevent Afghanistan’s battered healthcare system from collapsing, with the WHO chief warning of an imminent catastrophe.”

WHO, [Statement by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, and Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean on their visit to Kabul](#), 22 September 2021

“Only 17% of all Sehatmandi health facilities are now fully functional. This breakdown in health services is having a rippling effect on the availability of basic and essential health care, as well as on emergency response, polio eradication, and COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

Nine of 37 COVID-19 hospitals have already closed, and all aspects of the COVID-19 response have dropped, including surveillance, testing, and vaccination. Prior to August this year, 2.2 million people had been vaccinated against COVID-19. In recent weeks, vaccination rates have decreased rapidly while 1.8 million COVID-19 vaccine doses in country remain unused. Swift action is needed to use these doses in the coming weeks and work towards reaching the goal of vaccinating at least 20% of the population by the end of the year based on national targets.

Afghanistan is one of two countries in the world where polio remains endemic. With only one case of wild poliovirus reported so far this year, compared to 56 in 2020, there has never been a better time to eradicate polio. However, the polio programme will struggle to respond if the basic immunization infrastructure begins to collapse around it. Measles outbreaks are also spreading. With access to all communities no longer impeded, WHO and partners are ready to begin a country-wide house-to-house polio vaccination campaign and include measles and COVID vaccination in an integrated campaign”

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(30 August – 5 September 2021\)](#), 13 September 2021

“South: Limited health services in Uruzgan province

Most public health facilities and hospitals are reportedly running short of medication and other basic supplies. The situation in Uruzgan province is reportedly particularly dire with medical staff including doctors who have not been paid for months quitting. Currently, other health facilities supported by NGOs such as the Mirwais hospital in Kandahar province and Bost hospital in Lashkargah city in Hilmand province continue to function but are overstretched and facing an increasing number of patients from rural areas.”

The New Humanitarian, [Healthcare, aid, and the Taliban: A Q&A with Afghanistan’s health minister](#), 8 September 2021

“International aid donors must find a way to fund Afghanistan’s crumbling health system, or risk an even greater humanitarian catastrophe.

This is the warning from the country’s acting health minister, Dr. Wahid Majrooh, who now oversees a sector he says is on the verge of collapse due to donor funding freezes.”

The New Humanitarian, [Afghan healthcare under threat from international aid freeze](#), 6 September 2021

“International aid suspensions could shutter most of Afghanistan’s public health facilities, essentially leaving the country without a working healthcare system, officials and aid groups say.

Some 2,000 donor-funded clinics and other health facilities could shut their doors within days, stripping access to primary or secondary healthcare from millions of people. The closures, amounting to 90 percent of clinics funded by a World Bank-administered donor pot, would also leave only a fraction of Afghanistan’s COVID-19 isolation beds still operating, the World Health Organization said.”

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*What effect does COVID-19 have on the health care system?*

UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCO), [Foreign Travel Advice: Afghanistan - Coronavirus](#), Last updated: 5 November 2021

There is no guarantee that any local health care will be available in the current security situation.

Healthcare in Afghanistan is very limited. Medical facilities, including those in Kabul, do not have the capacity or capability to effectively deal with the COVID-19 outbreak. The supply of ICU beds and ventilators remains low. There are areas which have no medical facilities with ICU beds and ventilators.

COVID-19 treatment centres in Afghanistan are experiencing severe shortages of commodities and drugs. The vaccination programme only recently resumed and is operating at a very low level.

AVA Press, [Officials warn of possible 4th wave of COVID-19 in Afghanistan](#), 27 October 2021

"Afghanistan's health officials on Tuesday warned of a possible 4th wave of COVID-19 in the country, adding that treatment possibilities have been minimized recently. [...]"

"There is no medical equipment such as drugs and other (necessities) to fight the 4th wave of COVID-19 in Afghanistan," said Qayamuddin, a doctor at the hospital.

This comes after the WHO said that 1.6 million doses of the in Afghanistan will expire if it is not used."

Landinfo, [Afghanistan: En humanitær krise](#), 13 October 2021

"Like the rest of the world, Afghanistan is also affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. To what extent we do not know. There is great underreporting and unreliable data on the number of infected and dead as a result of the pandemic. Neither before nor after the Taliban took power has the health service had the capacity to test on a large scale. There are no records of deaths (Essar et al. 2021, p. 1).

At the end of September 2021, Covid-19 was registered as the cause of death in approximately 7,200 cases, while about 155,000 people had been diagnosed with the infection. On nationwide, only 750,000 of a population of about 33 million are tested. About 4 percent of the population is vaccinated. The vaccination rate is particularly low in rural areas (OCHA 2021, p. 5; Reuters 2021).

Afghanistan has had three waves of infection, the third with a peak in June / July 2021. The infectious delta variant dominated the country. The hospitals were full, there was a lack of oxygen and many died (Sarwar 2021; Essar et al. 2021)."

Original excerpt in Norwegian [translated using Google translate]

"I likhet med resten av verden, er også Afghanistan rammet av Covid-19- pandemien. I hvor stor grad vet vi ikke. Det er stor underrapportering og upålitelige data om antallet smittede og døde som følge av pandemien. Verken før eller etter Talibans maktovertakelse har helsevesenet hatt kapasitet til å teste i stor skala. Det finnes ikke registre over dødsfall (Essar et al. 2021, s. 1).

Ved utgangen av september 2021 er Covid-19 registrert som dødsårsak i cirka 7200 tilfeller, mens om lag 155 000 personer hadde fått påvist smitte. På landsbasis er kun 750 000 av en befolkning på om lag 33 millioner testet. Rundt 4 prosent av befolkningen er vaksinert. Vaksinasjonsgraden er særlig lav på landsbygda (OCHA 2021, s. 5; Reuters 2021).

Afghanistan har hatt tre smittebølger, den tredje med topp i juni/juli 2021. Den smittsomme deltavarianten dominerte i landet. Sykehusene var fulle, det var mangel på oksygen og mange døde (Sarwar 2021; Essar et al. 2021)."

*What treatment for mental health conditions is available?*

AVA Press, [Mental illness a silent threat to Afghanistan](#), 30 September 2021

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"A mental health expert, concerned about the increase in psychological problems among people, warns the number of such patients will double if factors behind it are not prevented.

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_ involves a wide range of disorders that affect the ability to think, feel and behave properly. The affected individuals cannot handle their daily affairs well.

Misbehavior, aggression, lack of concentration, depression, lack of interest and enjoyment, bullying, irritability, rapid weight change, fear, anxiety, changes in eating habits, extreme exhaustion, inability to cope with daily problems, excessive anger, violence and suicidal tendencies are some the symptoms of mental problems.

In line with the data from the Ministry of Public Health, 46 percent of the country's population, or 35 million people, do not have mental health.

In an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, Dr. Azizuddin Himmat, a mental health specialist and head of the Afghan psychologists' union, said: "We have to say that the number of people with mental illness is higher than what was provided by the MoPH because there is conflict, insecurity and economic problems in the past 40 years."

Referring to the change of government and problems arising in various areas, he said: "Since the day the country's political system changed, insecurity had decreased.

"Unfortunately, people are not mental calm. There are factors have cause people psychological pain and a surge in their problems." [...]

"You know, the most affected people in this situation are women and girls. After the change in the political system two months ago, they remain at home. [...]

"If such factors are not prevented, believe me, the number of people with mental illness will increase significantly. I can say, mental illness is a catastrophe that threatens Afghanistan silently," said Dr. Himmat. [...]

Stressed the need for the opening of girls' schools and higher education centers as soon as possible and women should be employed, he added: "I believe if the Islamic Emirate do so, not only they will gain popularity, but also national and international community's support." "

*How are people with mental health conditions treated by the Taliban?*

Al Jazeera, [Now in power, Taliban sets sights on Afghan drug underworld](#), 11 October 2021

"Now the uncontested rulers of Afghanistan, the Taliban has set its sights on stamping out the scourge of narcotics addiction, even if by force.

At nightfall, the battle-hardened fighters-turned-policemen scour the capital's drug-ravaged underworld. Below Kabul's bustling city bridges, amid piles of garbage and streams of filthy water, hundreds of homeless men addicted to heroin and methamphetamines are rounded up, beaten and forcibly taken to treatment centres.

The Associated Press gained rare access to one such raid last week.

The scene provided a window into the new order under Taliban governance: The men – many with mental illness, according to doctors – sat against stone walls with their hands tied. They were told to sober up or face beatings.

*How are people with mental health conditions treated by society?*

*What are the challenges for persons with disabilities to access health services?*

*What treatment is available for people with drug-addiction issues?*

Al Jazeera, [Now in power, Taliban sets sights on Afghan drug underworld](#), 11 October 2021

"Now the uncontested rulers of Afghanistan, the Taliban has set its sights on stamping out the scourge of narcotics addiction, even if by force.

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The heavy-handed methods are welcomed by some health workers, who have had no choice but to adapt to Taliban rule. "We are not in a democracy anymore, this is a dictatorship. And the use of force is the only way to treat these people," said Dr Fazalrabi Mayar, working in a treatment facility. He was referring specifically to Afghans addicted to heroin and meth."

## Women

For more information about women in governance positions, please refer to the section [Justice, Law and Order in Taliban-controlled Territory](#) in this report. For more information on women and Sharia law please refer to the section [How is Sharia law interpreted and applied?](#)

[List of Taliban Policies Violating Women's Rights in Afghanistan by Heather Barr dated 29 September 2021](#) [Note that these are presented in Tweets]

*What is the Taliban's position regarding women in the labour force?*

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Taliban blocking female aid workers](#), 4 November 2021

Taliban rules prohibiting most women from operating as aid workers are worsening the humanitarian crisis in [Afghanistan](#). Countrywide restrictions mean that aid will reach fewer families in need, particularly women-headed households.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has mapped the agreements between aid agencies and the Taliban in each of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, showing where female staff members will be permitted to function. The document, reviewed by Human Rights Watch, indicates that, as of October 28, 2021, Taliban officials in only three provinces had provided a written agreement unconditionally permitting women aid workers to do their jobs. In over half the country, women aid workers face severe restrictions, such as requirements for a male family member to escort them while they do their jobs, making it difficult or impossible for them to do their job effectively.

In Badghis province, the Taliban are not allowing women aid workers to work at all. In two other provinces – Bamiyan and Daikundi – the Taliban have said women aid workers are only permitted to work during assessments – gathering information about people's needs – but not in other stages, such as delivering aid.

In 16 more provinces, the Taliban have said that women aid workers must be accompanied by a mahram (a male family member chaperone) when they are outside the office. The most crucial work women aid workers do is often outside the office, meeting with people in need including women and girls, assessing their needs, determining risk factors they face, and ensuring that assistance reaches those who need it most. Requiring women aid workers in these roles to be escorted, forces a male family member to essentially become a second unpaid worker or – very often – will prove to be an impossible requirement that forces the woman to leave her job.

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The Taliban have also restricted the types of work female aid workers can do. In 11 provinces, women aid workers are permitted to work only in health and education programs, blocking them from other areas of humanitarian assistance, such as distributing food and other necessities, water and sanitation, and livelihoods assistance, in which women's participation is also essential. Another key aspect of aid programming is protecting and assisting people, predominantly women and girls, who may face gender-based violence. Without women workers this task is virtually impossible. The Taliban, since taking over Afghanistan on August 15, have systematically [dismantled](#) systems established in the country to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. [...]

Many women aid workers have been afraid to go to work since the return of the Taliban, fearing harassment on the street and at their workplace and retaliation by Taliban members and sympathizers who oppose women working. Without a written agreement, women workers will feel less secure and able to continue their work.

Aid agencies told Human Rights Watch that the Taliban are increasingly imposing requirements for offices, strictly segregating employees by gender, with no contact between female and male employees. Such restrictions harm both those in need of assistance and women employees, and reduce the effectiveness of agencies women aid workers kept from the room where decisions are being made, won't be able to provide their expertise, with expected harm to potential female recipients. And women workers who are cut out of key discussions and decision-making in their agencies will find that their careers, job retention, and morale suffer.

Human Rights Watch, [From Taliban to Taliban: Cycle of Hope, Despair on Women's Rights](#), 1 November 2021

"Secondary schools have reopened for boys but remain closed to the vast majority of girls. Women are banned from most employment; the Taliban government added insult to injury by saying women in their employ could keep their jobs only if they were in a role a man cannot fill—such as being an attendant in a women's toilet. Women are mostly out of university, and due to new restrictions it is unclear when and how they can return. Many female teachers have been dismissed.

The policy of requiring a mahram, a male family member as chaperone, to accompany any woman leaving her home, is not in place according to a Kabul official but Taliban members on the street are still sometimes enforcing it, as well as harassing women about their clothing. The Taliban have systematically closed down shelters for women and girls fleeing domestic violence. Women's sports have been banned.

The Taliban have appointed an all-male cabinet. They abolished the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and handed over the women's ministry building to the reinstated Ministry of Vice and Virtue, which was responsible for some of the worst abuses against women during the Taliban's previous period in power from 1996 to 2001."

Gandhara News, [Afghan women protest in Kabul demanding right to work, education](#) 26 October 2021

"Female activists held a protest in the Afghan capital, Kabul, demanding the right to work and education. During their October 26 march, they called on the international community do more to pressure Taliban leaders to respect their rights. Since taking power in August, the Taliban has prevented older girls from attending school and most women from working."

BBC News, [Fleeing Afghanistan: 'Women are imprisoned, while the criminals are free'](#), 26 October 2021

"Asked whether women would hold prominent roles, such as judge or minister, in the future, Mr Karimi [secretary to the Taliban spokesman Bilal Karimi] told the BBC he could not comment, because "the working conditions and opportunities for women" were "still being discussed".

Al Jazeera, [Anxious wait for Afghan girls as opening of high schools stalled](#), 5 October 2021

"Women employment

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Though Hossaini is no longer in the country, the women Al Jazeera spoke to said there are tens of thousands of Afghan women who have had their lives put on hold by the stalling of fully reopening all schools across the country.

Masuda Sultan, an Afghan-American entrepreneur and activist who has also joined in the efforts to restart employment and education for women, said it is not just the girls who are heavily affected by the continued shutdown of secondary education for female students.

"More women are employed in education than any other sector in Afghanistan," said Sultan.

UNICEF estimated that roughly one-third of Afghan teachers were women, and Momand and Afghani said a further 150,000 are employed in other facets of the education sector.

"For a lot of families, teaching is the only job they'll let their women have," said Sultan referring to the decades-long practice of gender-segregating primary and secondary education in the country.

Because of this, Sultan said it is imperative to reopen all schools across the country as quickly as possible, "If you don't employ these teachers, then we are failing women in Afghanistan." "

Reuters, [Protests get harder for Afghan women amid risks and red tape](#), 4 October 2021

"Women in Afghanistan who object to what the Taliban have said and done since returning to power are finding it harder to protest, now that impromptu demonstrations have been banned and previous rallies were broken up by gunfire and beatings.

Resistance within families and concerns over sharing information over social media that could identify people involved are also acting as deterrents, according to six female protesters Reuters spoke to across the country.

Sporadic demonstrations by women demanding that the Taliban respect their civil freedoms have been captured on social media, as have the sometimes violent responses, drawing the world's attention to issues of equality and human rights.

The last time the Taliban ruled in the 1990s, they banned women from work and girls from school, allowed women to leave their homes only when accompanied by a male relative and insisted that women wore all-enveloping burqas.

Those who broke the rules were sometimes whipped in public by the Islamist militants' "moral police".

This time the Taliban are promising greater freedom for women, including in education and employment, in accordance with their interpretation of Islamic law.

Yet older girls are still not back at school, there are no women in senior positions in the new government, the Women's Ministry in Kabul has been shut and the Taliban have said women will only be allowed to work in a small number of jobs."

The Guardian, [‘I don’t know where to go’: uncertain fate of the women in Kabul’s shelters](#), 1 October 2021

"When a Kabul-based shelter that once housed 80 women closed during the Taliban takeover, its cook lost her income as well as a way to provide for her extended family. "My mother and I were the breadwinners but now we both sit at home, not knowing how we will survive," says the 30-year-old, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Since last year she cooked, twice a day, receiving £190 a month and independence from her abusive husband, who was a crystal meth addict. Her mother, who was the cook at another shelter funded by the same western NGO, also lost her job.

"Now that I am locked up in my house, I suffer a lot, mentally and financially," the daughter says. She fears for her own two daughters, who were meant to enter secondary school next year. "As an illiterate Afghan woman, I was working to help my two daughters go to school but now they can't even get an education."

NY Times, [At Afghan Universities, Increasing Fear that Women will never be allowed back](#), 29 September [updated 5 October]

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"The new government has also prohibited most women from returning to the workplace, citing security concerns, though officials have described that as temporary. (The original Taliban movement did that as well in its early days in 1990s, but never followed up.)"

UNHCR, [Afghanistan situation: Emergency preparedness and response in Iran](#), 27 September 2021

"There have been reports that women-owned businesses, especially restaurants and cafes, have remained closed by the Taliban in Kabul. "Women have been progressively excluded from the public sphere, prohibited from appearing without a male guardian and face increasing restrictions on their right to work," the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet said at the UN General Assembly on 21 September."

TOLO News, [Kabul restaurants owned, staffed by women now closed](#), 22 September 2021

"In order to feed their families, women are seeking ways to work and earn money, Tabasom said.

"Women are the breadwinners for some families, so these families are facing economic and financial problems," she added. The café's employees said that each of them is leading a family. Opportunities for work must be found for women. Qadira said: "They should consider our demands. When they don't pay attention, how will the Taliban start governance?" Sabrina Sultani said: "I was earning my livelihood by working at the café for two years. I helped my family." Afghan businesswomen lost millions of Afs as the Taliban took Afghanistan in mid-August. Noor-ul-Haq Omari, head of the Union of Kabul Workers, said: "Investments led by women have unfortunately stopped. They lost their jobs and funds. In some cases, the women have sold their company's expensive things at a very low price." Dozens of Afghan businesswomen had begun to invest in various fields across the country over the past few years, and now this has stopped."

Reuters, [Taliban replaces women's ministry with ministry of virtue and vice](#), 17 September 2021

"Female employees said they had been trying to come to work for several weeks only to be told to return to their homes, according to videos filmed outside the building seen by Reuters."

"A senior Taliban leader said earlier this week that women would not be allowed to work in government ministries with men."

BBC news, [Afghanistan: Life under Taliban rule one month on](#), 16 September 2021

"She's concerned that the Taliban may not let women work - something the group has denied. For the moment, though, women in Afghanistan are being told to stay at home for their own safety, unless they are teachers or medics."

TOLO News, [Kabul Airport Employees, Including Women, Return to Work](#), 13 September 2021

"Lida, one of the 100 female security employees at the airport, said she is happy to return to her job after more than two weeks of staying at home.

"We were about to get a salary but then the Taliban came and we did not receive our salaries. Now we are working for free," she said.

"We are happy that they asked us to resume our work. We want the government to pay us a salary from now on," said Zahra Amiri, an employee at the airport."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Not Keeping Its Word: Afghan Woman Quits Job After Pressure From Taliban](#), 11 September 2021

"A young Afghan woman has quit her job at a private foreign-language center in Kabul after what she described as intimidation and harassment by Taliban fighters stationed outside her workplace. [...]

"I put on Islamic clothing and went to work, but the moment I arrived there I faced insults and shouting from Taliban fighters standing at the entrance."

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The teacher said armed Taliban militants were guarding the commercial building that houses several companies and offices in a crowded neighborhood in downtown Kabul.

"When I tried to enter my office, one of them asked me, 'Where are you going?' I told them that I work here. He said: 'Who told you to come? Go back home, fast,'" the woman told RFE/RL on September 10.

The language instructor said she was particularly concerned when the fighters called her an "infidel." [...]

The teacher said three other women in her circle experienced similar assaults by Taliban fighters when they tried to go to work. They all quit their jobs rather than face the harassment, she said."

TOLO News, [Afghan Women Seek Right to Return to Govt Jobs](#), 10 September 2021

"Despite their willingness to work, women in government jobs say they have been prevented by the Taliban from returning to work.

Speaking to TOLOnews, they urged the Taliban to pave the way for women employees to return to work.

Shugufa Najibi, who has her master's degree in law from India, worked in Afghanistan's parliament for around ten years and said: "When I went to the office, they stopped me. I asked 'Why? Your officials say women can work?' When I left, they told me through my colleagues to not come anymore."

Based on the numbers of the Special Inspector for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), more than 5,000 women were working in the military sector in Afghanistan. [...]

The Taliban have only allowed women in the health and education sectors to restart work. "

UNHCR REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ASIA AND PACIFIC (RBAP), [FLASH EXTERNAL UPDATE: AFGHANISTAN SITUATION #5 As of 08 September 2021](#)

"Female humanitarian colleagues, however, have only been permitted to work in specific sectors in some provinces, largely in the areas of health and education. Female humanitarians are reportedly not currently permitted to work in several of Afghanistan's provinces."

Human Rights Watch, [How the International Community Can Protect Afghan Women and Girls](#), 2 September 2021

"Access to Employment

"They are going to be working with us, shoulder to shoulder with us," Zabihullah Mujahid said of women on August 17. But on August 24, he urged women to stay home from work, citing security concerns related to misconduct by the Taliban's own forces. This followed incidents of the Taliban forcing women out of work in banks and the media."

*What is the Taliban's position regarding women studying?*

For more information about girls in primary and secondary education, please refer to the section [Access to Education](#) in this report. For more information about the interpretation of Sharia law in educational institutions, please refer to the chapter [How is Sharia law interpreted and applied?](#)

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 8 November 2021

"On 2 November, Waheedullah Hashimi, the Director of External Programmes and Aid at the Taliban's Ministry of Education, announced that the de facto Afghan government will "soon" begin allowing older girls back into schools, while also urging the international community to help fund this. He added that "no women teachers had been laid off", and that this was "a positive message to the world that we are working on a mechanism. We are not working on deleting them from our schools and universities". On 5 November, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, announced that 10 out of the 14 girls-only schools run by the Maarif Foundation – a

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Turkish state-funded organisation which runs 80 schools overall in the country – have been reopened. According to Cavusoglu, he had held talks with the Taliban Interim Minister of Foreign Affairs, Amir Khan Muttaqi”

Human Rights Watch, [Afghan Girls’ Education: ‘I Don’t Think I Have a Future’](#), 31 October 2021

The Taliban have effectively banned girls from education past primary school by ordering secondary schools, which include grades seven and up, to reopen only for boys. Although Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid claimed on September 21 that the Ministry of Education was preparing for “the education of high school girls as soon as possible,” only a few secondary schools have reopened in some provinces. The ban in most of the country and an unclear Taliban policy makes millions of girls understandably fearful for their education. Even if girls’ schools reopened immediately, their studies, including preparation for exams, plans to graduate, and university applications, have already suffered a severe setback. And the harm increases every day.

Women across Afghanistan continue to protest, asking for schools to reopen and for women’s right to work. “If the Taliban have really changed, they should prove it by letting our daughters go to school and us to go work,” said Zainab, a friend in Kabul who participated in one of these protests.

TIME, [Afghanistan's Female Students Were Banned from Studying. Now Some Are Finding New Ways to Learn](#), 27 October 2021

“Remote Opportunities

[...] Banned from in-person classes in Kabul, hundreds of female students have rushed in recent weeks to register for a remote learning program launched by a California-based nonprofit online university, entering a new program that begins November 1, which is geared specifically at women banished from their education by the Taliban.

[...] But University of the People appears to be the sole organization offering large numbers of full scholarships for Afghan women to earn degrees online, without leaving their homes. Although the students can take the courses for free, they are required to pay fees in order to sit exams and formally graduate. The fees are minuscule compared to average tuition at a U.S. university—about \$4,800 for a four-year B.A. degree, and \$3,000 for an MBA. Nonetheless, it is out of reach for the great majority of Afghan women.”

Reuters, [Afghan minister wants good relations, need more time on girls’ education](#), 12 October 2021

“Afghanistan's [acting] foreign minister acting Foreign Minister [Amir Khan Muttaqi] appealed to the world for good relations on Monday but avoided making firm commitments on girls' education despite international demands to allow all Afghan children to go back to school.” [...]

But the Taliban have so far refused to give ground on allowing girls to return to high school, one of the key demands of the international community after a decision last month that schools above the sixth grade would only reopen for boys.

“Muttaqi said the Taliban's Islamic Emirate government was moving carefully but had only been in power for a few weeks and could not be expected to complete reforms the international community had not been able to implement in 20 years.”

NY Times, [At Afghan Universities, Increasing Fear that Women will never be allowed back](#), 29 September 2021 [updated 5 October 2021]

“While some women have returned to class at private universities, the country’s public universities, which had been scheduled to start their academic year this week, remain closed to everyone, not just women. Even if they reopen, it appears that women will be required to attend segregated classes, with only women as instructors. But with so few female teachers available — and many of them still publicly restricted from working — many women will almost certainly have no classes to attend.”

BBC News, [Afghanistan life under Taliban rule one month on](#), 16 September 2021

“Private universities like hers are open, but those run by the government remain shut for now. Under the new Taliban rule, male and female students who are studying in the same classroom must be separated by a curtain.”

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Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Taliban Sets Out Restrictions For Women To Study At Universities In Afghanistan](#), 12 September 2021

"Women in Afghanistan will only be allowed to study in universities in gender-segregated classrooms and Islamic dress will be compulsory, a member of the new Taliban government has said.

Abdul Baqi Haqqani laid out the new policies at a news conference in Kabul on September 12, several days after Afghanistan's new rulers formed an all-male government.

The world has been watching closely to see to what extent the Taliban might act differently from its first time in power, in the late 1990s. During that era, girls and women were denied an education, and were excluded from public life.

The Taliban insurgents have suggested they have changed, including in their attitudes toward women. Haqqani, in charge of education, said the Taliban did not want to turn the clock back 20 years. "We will start building on what exists today," he said.

However, female university students will face restrictions under the Taliban, including a compulsory dress code. Haqqani said hijabs will be mandatory but did not specify if this meant compulsory head scarves or also compulsory face coverings.

Gender segregation will also be enforced, Haqqani said. "We will not allow boys and girls to study together," he said.

Haqqani said that where no women teachers were available, special measures would be adopted to ensure separation.

"When there is really a need, men can also teach [women] but in accordance with Shari'a, they should observe the veil," he said. Classrooms will be curtained off to divide male and female students where necessary, and teaching could also be done through streaming or closed-circuit TV.

Classrooms divided by curtains have already been seen in many places since the Western-backed government collapsed and the Taliban seized Kabul last month. Haqqani told reporters that subjects being taught in universities would also be reviewed but did not elaborate. The Taliban, who subscribe to a harsh interpretation of Islam, have banned music and art during their previous time in power.

Women in Kabul and elsewhere in Afghanistan have protested in large and small groups against Taliban rule and efforts to curtail their rights. In some cases, the Taliban has responded with force, wielding whips, beating women with batons, pointing guns and firing weapons into the air."

BBC News, [Afghanistan: Taliban accused of killing pregnant police officer](#), 5 September 2021

"The Taliban on Sunday gave more details of how segregation of the sexes will be enacted in universities.

In an extensive document, the new authorities said men and women must be separated, if necessary by a curtain.

Ideally, women will be taught by women but if none are available then "old men" of good character can step in, AFP reports. Female students must wear an abaya, or robe, and niqab, or face veil."

*What is the Taliban's position regarding women in public?*

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 8 November 2021

"The situation for women in Afghanistan remains worrying. On 6 November, the bodies of four women, including one of a women's rights activist, were discovered in Balkh province in northern Afghanistan; the three other bodies have not yet been identified, the Balkh Information Department Director, Mawlawi Zabihullah Noorani, stated. Since mid-August, women have held regular, nationwide protests against the Taliban, demanding that their rights be restored and protected, and since September, several female activists have been reportedly detained and

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tortured by Taliban members. On 4 November, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said Taliban rules were prohibiting most women from operating as aid workers in the country."

Kabul Now, [Female civil activists murdered in Balkh; Taliban arrest two suspects](#), 6 November 2021

"The Taliban security forces have arrested two suspects in Mazar-e-Sharif, capital city of the northern Balkh province, in connection to the murder of four women whose dead bodies were found last Thursday, November 04, inside a residence."

Thomson Reuters Foundation news, [IN PICTURES: Four Afghan women tell of lives upturned by Taliban](#), 13 October 2021

"When the Taliban seized Afghanistan on Aug 15, we asked women from various professions to take a photo marking what could be their last day of work, and to share their thoughts.

As the Taliban mark two months in power, we contacted the women to ask how their lives are now. Whether they have fled Afghanistan or stayed, all have seen dramatic changes. [...]

Shabnam Popalzi, former journalist and presenter at Parliament TV

I am at home in Kabul. All my friends are in the United States or Europe these days so I stay up until the early hours so that I can talk to them and try to find a way out of the country.

I have not left my home for weeks because I'm too scared to go out on the streets. The Taliban have taken everything from me, including the job I love.

I don't think there is any future for women like me in Afghanistan. But western countries won't help me leave because I worked for local media rather than the international media.

I've always promoted women's rights and freedom of speech. How can the international community say that they can't help me? Is this how they pay back 20 years of our efforts to build a modern Afghanistan?

It isn't fair to abandon us without a future, or to be killed by the Taliban.

Kabul has drastically changed. The coffee shops and restaurants, which used to be full of young women, are empty - or just have male customers. There are few women on the streets and women's faces have disappeared from advertising hoardings.

Most women wear black hijabs in the street now. It's very sad.

It's a basic right to choose what you wear. I don't feel comfortable in long dresses. I prefer jeans and shirts. The way we dress as Afghan women is part of our fight for our rights."

United Nations, [Afghanistan: 'Palpable' fear of 'brutal and systemic repression' of women grows](#), 21 September 2021

"Michelle Bachelet informed a high-level event on safeguarding 20 years of international engagement in Afghanistan, that women have been "progressively excluded from the public sphere", prohibited from appearing without a male guardian and face increasing restrictions on their right to work."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Not Keeping Its Word: Afghan Woman Quits Job After Pressure From Taliban](#), 11 September 2021

"In some provinces, the Taliban has reportedly banned women from leaving home unless accompanied by a male relative.

No such demand was made publicly yet for women in Kabul. But the English teacher [whose name is being withheld for protection] said Taliban fighters shouted at her, "What the hell are you doing walking alone outside your home?" "

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Afghan Women At Forefront Of Nonviolent Resistance To Taliban](#), 10 September 2021

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“The Taliban has advised women to largely remain indoors for their own safety. The militants have also ordered tens of thousands of former female government workers not to return to work even as their male colleagues went back.”

UNAMA, [Report of the Secretary-General: The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 8 September 2021

“5. In a press conference on 17 August in Kabul, the Taliban, inter alia, emphasized that it had entered Kabul to prevent a security vacuum and “to ensure security of lives and property of the people”. [...] It assured women of their rights “within the framework of Sharia law”, adding that “no discrimination and violence will be committed against women”;

[...]

6. On 17 August, women marching through Kabul called upon the Taliban to respect their rights to education, work and political participation.

[...]

41. The Taliban taking control of districts had been followed by allegations of regression in the enjoyment by Afghan women and girls of their fundamental rights and freedoms, specifically access to education, access to health clinics, the right to work and freedom of movement, owing to the directive that women were to be accompanied by a male family chaperone when leaving the home and the reinstitution of strict dress code. In several locations, the Taliban had reportedly threatened that violation of those rules would result in harsh punishments. There were reports of women having been flogged and beaten in public because they had breached the prescribed rules. In one case in Balkh Province, on 3 August, a women’s rights activist was shot and killed for breaching the rules.”

Human Rights Watch, [Afghan Women Protest Against Taliban Restrictions](#), 7 September 2021

“ “We decided to protest to demand our basic rights: the right to education, to work, and political participation. We want the Taliban to know that they cannot eliminate us from society.”

Those were the words of Arezo, a young woman from Kabul who took to the streets after the Taliban’s announcement that women would not be allowed to hold senior positions in Afghanistan’s new government.

“The Taliban have told women that they have no place in the new order,” another protester said. “We told them that we want to continue working, but they say only female nurses and teachers are allowed to work. We are engineers and lawyers and we want to work in our professions, but they say we cannot and should stay at home instead.”

Protests by Afghan women against Taliban restrictions that began in Herat on September 2 have spread to Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif. On September 4, around 100 women gathered in front of the presidential palace – now the Taliban’s command center in Kabul – carrying banners and chanting slogans for an equal society.

Taliban security forces reacted violently to these protests. In Kabul they stopped the women and beat at least 10 of them. Nargis was among those beaten. She told me: “When I saw that they are badly beating one of the participants, I went to help but the Taliban soldier hit me with a metal object, and I fainted. All I remember is that there were two other women on the ground, and they were still being beaten.” Taliban officials said they detained four of their men who beat the protesters.”

BBC News, [Afghanistan: Taliban accused of killing pregnant police officer](#), 5 September 2021

“Taliban militants in Afghanistan have shot dead a policewoman in a provincial city, witnesses have told the BBC.

The woman, named in local media as Banu Negar, was killed at the family home in front of relatives in Firozkoh, the capital of central Ghor province.

The killing comes amid increasing reports of escalating repression of women in Afghanistan.

The Taliban told the BBC they had no involvement in Negar’s death and are investigating the incident”

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BBC News, [Life in Kabul under Taliban: Where is your male escort?](#), 4 September 2021

““Why are you travelling without a mahram?” the Taliban guard asks a young Afghan woman about her missing male escort.

She sits on her own in the back of a beat-up Kabul yellow taxi as it pulls up to the checkpoint marked, like all the others, by the white Taliban flag with black script.

What is allowed now in Kabul, and what is not?

The turbaned Talib, rifle slung over shoulder, tells her to call her husband. When she explains she doesn't have a phone, he instructs another taxi driver to take her home to get her husband and bring them back. Once completed, all is resolved.”

*What is the Taliban's position regarding women participating in sports?*

BBC, [UK to resettle teenage Afghan women footballers and families](#), 10 October 2021

“Dozens of Afghan girls with promising football careers, who fled the Taliban, have been told they can come to the UK to be resettled, along with their families.

The 35-member squad - aged 13-19 - fled Kabul last month and have been staying for the past few weeks in a hotel in Pakistan, where their temporary visas were due to expire on Monday.” [...]

“Most of them are from Herat in western Afghanistan and had made their way to Kabul when the Western airlift started, staying in safe houses.

“Seventy percent of them had received death threats,” said Ms Gill. “They were terrified.””

Deutsche Welle, [Fleeing Afghan women footballers seek new home from Pakistan](#), 1 October 2021

“A group of 32 Afghan women football players and their families are seeking safe haven from the Taliban in third countries after fleeing to Pakistan, the former Afghanistan women's team captain said on Friday.

Women's team captain Khalida Popal told DW that some of the players “had their houses burned down and some family members were taken by [the Taliban](#).”

Some 135 people — 32 players and coaches as well as their families — “were displaced from their provinces” because of their involvement in women's football, Popal added.”

Financial Times, [The Afghan cricketers living in fear of the Taliban](#), 28 September 2021

“Here, women can never go into sports. No and never,” said a cricketer on the women's team, who is still in the country but hopes to leave. “The men's cricket team makes a lot of money, so [the Taliban] will promote it.” “If they want us to wear long clothes and play, we will accept all that,” she added. “It hurts a lot when your dream crashes. I don't want my dream to remain unfulfilled. Not just mine. It's . . . my entire team's dream to play again.”

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: The fate of thousands hanging in the balance](#), 21 September 2021

“In this report, Amnesty International, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) have documented incidents of human rights violations that have taken place in Afghanistan since the takeover by the Taliban on 15 August”. The report references a number of sources, Including: [...]

· The Guardian, Afghan women to be banned from playing sport, Taliban say, 8 September 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/sep/08/afghan-women-to-be-banned-from-playing-sport-taliban-say>

The Guardian, [Dozens more female footballers and family members escape Afghanistan](#), 15 September 2021

“Last week, the Taliban announced that women would be banned from participating in all sports. In an interview with the Australian broadcaster SBS the deputy head of the Taliban's cultural commission, Ahmadullah Wasiq, said

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it was “not necessary” for women to be involved in sport and that “Islam and the Islamic Emirate [Afghanistan] do not allow women to play cricket or play cricket or play the kind of sports where they get exposed.”

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s Gandhara, [Afghan Cricket Board Says Women's Team Could Still Play](#), 11 September 2021

“The head of the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) has told an Australian broadcaster that the Afghan national women's team could still be allowed to play cricket. ACB Chairman Azizullah Fazli told SBS Radio Pashto late on September 10 that the governing body would outline “very soon” how women would be allowed to play -- a development that, if true, would mark a reversal of the Taliban's hard-line stance on the issue.”

BBC News, [Afghanistan women’s cricket team: Players hiding in Kabul fear Taliban rule](#), 1 September 2021

“Asel and many of her international team-mates are in hiding. Asel isn't her real name. In Kabul members of the Taliban have already come looking for Afghanistan's women's cricket team.

“Every woman playing cricket or other sports is not safe right now,” she says. “The situation is very bad in Kabul.

“We have a group on WhatsApp and every night we are talking about our problems and sharing plans about what we should do. We are all hopeless.”

Asel has barely stepped outside her home since the Taliban entered Kabul in mid-August and has locked her cricket kit away. She explains how one of her team-mates was targeted in the city.

“The village where they play cricket, some people who knew them are working with the Taliban. When the Taliban came here and took Kabul they threatened them, saying, ‘We may come and kill you if you try to play cricket again,’” Asel says.

Taqwa, who is also using a pseudonym, was involved in Afghan women's cricket for many years. She managed to flee the country after Kabul fell. In the week before she got out, she moved from house to house to avoid being detected. The Taliban called her father, but he said he had not been in contact with her.”

*What is the position for lone women (i.e. widows, divorcee) without a male support network?*

*What is the position for unmarried/single women without a male support network?*

*What is the position for single mothers without a male support network?*

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Taliban abuses cause widespread fear](#), 23 September 2021

“Women leaders were eventually able to have some discussions with two Taliban officials, but without significant concessions or assurances on the issues the women were concerned about: their freedom of movement, especially whether they would need to have a mahram with them at all times; whether they would be able to work, in what occupations, and how soon; and whether girls and women would be able to continue their education, at all levels and in all disciplines.

The response from the officials was to lecture them that they should leave their homes only when absolutely necessary and with a male family member. For unmarried women who did not have a male family member, they suggested the solution was to marry. Employment for women, the women were told, would be permitted only in areas in which the Taliban felt it was necessary for women to do jobs, presumably some education and healthcare roles working with girls and women. The officials emphasized that the Taliban had made a concession by allowing girls even primary education and said girls could have basic education by learning to read and write, and that would suffice. They urged the women to support the Taliban and warned of harsh action if they opposed the Taliban or protested.”

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The Guardian, [‘They came for my daughter’: Afghan single mothers face losing children under Taliban](#), 8 September 2021

“The day after Mazar-i-Sharif, the provincial capital of Balkh province, fell to the Taliban on 14 August, gunmen came for Raihana’s\* six-year-old daughter.

Widowed when her husband was murdered by Taliban forces in 2020, Raihana had been raising her child as a single mother. After her husband’s death she had fought her in-laws for custody of her daughter and won, thanks to the rights she had under Afghan civil law – which state that single women can keep their children if they can provide for them financially.

Now, with her city in Taliban hands, Raihana was alone.

“The day after the fall of Mazar-i-Sharif, my brother in-law showed up at my father’s house, where I lived, with Taliban fighters demanding to give them my daughter,” Raihana told the Guardian.

Raihana was lucky. She and her daughter were not at home when the armed men arrived. As soon as she heard, she took her child and fled Mazar-i-Sharif for Kabul.”

*What is the situation of women in women’s shelters?*

The Guardian, [‘I don’t know where to go’: uncertain fate of the women in Kabul’s shelters](#), 1 October 2021

“Women in refuges have been sent home to their abusers or to prison since the Taliban takeover. Those in the few shelters still open fear what lies ahead [...]

The shelter is one of nearly 30 such facilities in Afghanistan. Built up over the past 20 years, they operated as a discreet and often hidden part of the international community’s commitment to advancing the rights of Afghan women. Most of the women’s cases were resolved within months, but some spent years at the shelter, learning new skills so they could reintegrate into society.

Over the past six weeks, this crucial lifeline has all but disappeared. Most of the shelters have closed their doors at the request of the **Taliban**, meaning women have either been sent home, often back to their abusers, or moved to secret locations. [...]

Of the three shelter directors who spoke to the Guardian, none are taking in new women. [...]

**Mahbooba Seraj**, a veteran women’s rights activist and manager of a shelter for 30 women in Kabul, says the Taliban are still figuring out what to do about women’s refuges. “They’re afraid that women in the shelters will leave, and end up on the streets and enter prostitution, which is very possible,” she says by phone from Kabul. “And they do not want that.”

Two weeks ago, 15 Taliban police officers, including secret police, visited Seraj’s shelter over several days, noting residents’ names and snooping around. The women wore veils so they could not be identified, Seraj said.

Seraj told the Taliban that their visit was exceptional – a man had never crossed her shelter’s threshold before. “They looked at me as if they didn’t believe me. And one policeman asked, ‘Even the Americans?’ I laughed and said, ‘Neither American nor Afghan. Period.’ Why they thought Americans visited is beyond me.”

## Children

### *Access to Education*

For more information about the interpretation of Sharia law in educational institutions, please refer to the chapter [How is Sharia law interpreted and applied?](#)

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TOLO News, [Girls' Schools for Grades 7-12 Reopen in Herat](#), 8 November 2021

"Teachers said they have not received their salaries for over four months and face economic problems.

After nearly three months, girls' schools have reopened for all female students in the western province of Herat, according to an elected council of Herat teachers.

For the past several months only girls up to grade 6 were allowed; now girls and young women in grades 7-12 are allowed to attend school in Herat.

According to the council, the decision was made after a month of discussions between the council and officials of girls' schools with the local officials of the Islamic Emirate in Herat.

The council said this decision allows over 300,000 more girls to continue with their education."

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [UNICEF to directly fund Afghan teachers, bypassing Taliban authorities](#), 3 November 2021

"The United Nations children's agency said it was planning to set up a system to directly fund Afghan teachers, after the international community placed a freeze on funding to the Taliban-led administration. "UNICEF is setting up a system that will allow direct payments to teachers without the funds being channelled through the de facto authorities," Jeannette Vogelaar, UNICEF Afghanistan's Chief of Education, told Reuters in an email.

In preparation, she said, UNICEF would begin registering all public school teachers. "The best way to support the education of girls in Afghanistan is to continue supporting their schools and teachers. UNICEF is calling upon donors not to let Afghanistan's children down," Vogelaar added. Afghanistan's public services, in particular health and education, have been plunged into crisis since the Islamist Taliban movement took over the country on Aug. 15. Many foreign governments have placed a ban on funding outside of humanitarian aid that is channelled through multilateral agencies.

That has generally been limited to urgent supplies such as wheat and blankets, leaving public service workers including teachers without pay for months. Billions of dollars in Afghan central bank funds held overseas have also been frozen.

The international community has raised alarm that the Taliban might restrict female education, and high schools for girls in many parts of the country have remained closed even while those for boys have been allowed to open. A Taliban official told Reuters this week there would be "good news" soon on older girls being allowed to go back to school, and that they were working with UNICEF and other international organisations on the issue.

"We are working especially with UNICEF and some other international organisations ... to come up with a good solution ... we have meetings on a daily basis," said Waheedullah Hashimi, Director of External Programmes and Aid at Afghanistan's Ministry of Education.

"We have a problem that economically we are not good ... that is why we are requesting the international community, international organisations, especially those who have funds for emergency situations, to help us in this regard," he added."

Tolo News, [Afghan Girls Call for Reopening of Schools](#), 29 October 2021

"In the last two months, school-age girls and young women from grades 7 to 12 are still deprived of education in many of the provinces.

These students called on the Islamic Emirate to reopen girls' schools across the country.

[...] According to the United Nations Educational Organization, over 4 million students have been deprived of education in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, a number of Kandahar residents urged the Islamic Emirate to rebuild all those schools that have been destroyed in fighting between the former government and the Islamic military forces in the provinces.

Kandahar residents said that dozens of schools have been destroyed in the city and in other districts and thousands of students have been deprived of learning. The Ghazi Mohammad Akbar Khan school in Arghandab district of Kandahar province is an example of the war's

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devastation in Kandahar. The school has been destroyed in recent battles between the former government military forces and the Islamic Emirate. "Anyone who sees this school says 'we ask our leaders to let the children go back to school,' but they said that a large part of the school has been destroyed," said Barialai, the principal of the school. Officials at the Kandahar education department said that plans are underway for the reconstruction of schools in Kandahar."

KHAAMA PRESS, [Women protest over closed schools for girls in Afghanistan](#), 26 October 2021  
"A number of women took to the streets of Kabul on Tuesday, October 26 to protest against the closed school for girls and accused the international community of being silent about what is going on in Afghanistan. The women who had gathered at the gates of UNAMA in Kabul said that the international community, human rights group, and the United Nations are completely indifferent to the restrictions imposed by the Taliban in particular on the Afghan women. The protestors said that the silence of the UN against the ongoing situation in Afghanistan is "shameful". The women chanted "rights to education, rights to work, are the fundamental rights of women" and "history will be ashamed of the silence of the UN".

Deutsche Welle, [Afghan girls set up 'secret school' amid Taliban restrictions](#), 22 October 2021  
"After coming to power, the Islamist group imposed a ban on girls' education, prompting some Afghans to set up an "underground school." DW spoke to some of the girls who are determined to continue their studies. [...] After the Taliban overthrew Ashraf Ghani's government and captured the capital, Kabul, in late August, they reimposed restrictions on girls' education. In some cities, girls are not allowed to attend schools after sixth grade, and in some areas, older girls are not allowed to sit with male students. The measures are arbitrary but in stark contrast to the Islamists' initial statements that they would respect fundamental human rights. [...] Running the "secret school" under these circumstances is not an easy task, but many parents are determined to educate their daughters and are ready to take risks. The students of this school take different routes to join their classes at different times during the day so that they are not noticed by the authorities. There are no desks and chairs in the classroom; girls sit in a circle on the floor. DW spoke to some of these girls, but for security reasons, their identities have been concealed."

Thomson Reuters Foundation news, [In northern Afghanistan, girls' schools working despite ban elsewhere](#), 12 October 2021  
"While girls across most of Afghanistan remain at home while brothers go to high school, classes in some northern areas have been open for all students, highlighting regional differences starting to emerge two months after the Taliban seized power. Secondary schools remain closed for girls in much of the country, but in Mazar-i-Sharif, close to the border with Uzbekistan, local authorities have taken a different approach. Zabihullah Noorani, head of the culture and information directorate in the northern province of Balkh, said lessons in many schools were continuing for both boys and girls."

Reuters, [Afghan minister wants good relations, need more time on girls' education](#), 12 October 2021  
"Afghanistan's [acting] foreign minister acting Foreign Minister [Amir Khan Muttaqi] appealed to the world for good relations on Monday but avoided making firm commitments on girls' education despite international demands to allow all Afghan children to go back to school." [...]

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“Muttaqi said the Taliban's Islamic Emirate government was moving carefully but had only been in power for a few weeks and could not be expected to complete reforms the international community had not been able to implement in 20 years.”

Thomson Reuters Foundation news, [Despite promises by the militants to let girls go to school, many Afghans fear girls' opportunities will be severely limited](#), 11 October 2021

“Secondary school girls in Afghanistan have had to remain at home since the Taliban took control of the country on Aug. 15, even though their brothers have returned to class.

The Islamist movement, which barred girls from education when last in power 20 years ago, has promised it will allow girls to go to school as it seeks to show the world it has changed.

But when it announced older boys [could resume school](#) in September, along with primary-age children, it gave no indication of when adolescent girls could return to class.

Some secondary schools for girls have recently reopened in the northern province of Kunduz, but there has been no statement by the Taliban.

Head teachers, who are in talks with officials over the conditions for resuming girls' education elsewhere, expect an announcement shortly.

But even if the Taliban keep their word, many people fear girls' education and future opportunities will be restricted under the militant group's rule.”

Al Jazeera, [Anxious wait for Afghan girls as opening of high schools stalled](#), 5 October 2021

“Millions of teenage girls across Afghanistan are anxiously waiting to return to the classroom, as high schools continue to remain closed, raising fears about the future of female education under Taliban rule.

The country's new rulers allowed boys in the same age group – seven to 12 – to attend classes last month, but said that “a safe learning environment” was needed before older girls could return to school. At that time, the Taliban's Deputy Minister of Information and Culture Zabihullah Mujahid said the group was working on a “procedure” to allow teenage girls back into the classroom.”

Khaama Press, [School graduates of 2000-2020, of no use: Taliban's higher education minister](#), 4 October 2021

“The acting minister of the higher education of the Taliban Abdul Baqi Haqqani said that those who have graduated from high schools during the past twenty years are of no use.

The acting minister is meant by the graduates who have studied during the non-Taliban era when they were fighting the US-backed governments of Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani.

Abdul Baqi Haqqani made the statements in a meeting with the university lecturers in Kabul.

Haqqani said that they must hire teachers who instill the students and incoming generations the values that are of use in the country and Afghanistan can utilize their talents in the future.

Earlier, the acting minister of higher education had said that the Master's and Ph.D. holders of modern studies are less valuable than those who have studied in madrasas and have religious studies in Afghanistan.

The statement of Haqqani comes as the period-2000-2020- is said to be one of the most important and rich eras when it comes to the level of education in Afghanistan.

The writer of this report is one of those who first went to school in 2000, graduated, got his BA degree in journalism, and is now working as a professional Afghan journalist in Kabul.”

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, [SCA brings hope to children of war survivors](#), 4 October 2021

“The construction of a school by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) in a war frontline has built hopes and brought smile to the face of children and residents of Olkhel village in Wardak Province.

The children of Olkhil village, who have long been deprived of their right to education and have always lived in turmoil in search of shelter against the bullets and flames of war, are now happy and excited about the

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construction of a school in their village. The village that has witnessed years of fighting between the former government's security forces and its armed opposition groups, its residents has bitter memories about their village being used as a war frontline before the recent political transition in the country. [...]

Hazrat Omar Farooq School is an elementary school whose building is designed with six classrooms, four administrative rooms, a computer lab, a laboratory, ten separate toilets for girls and boys, and a 300-meter surrounding wall. The school will going to be equipped with a solar power system. A drinking water well has also been dug in the school and is to be connected to a solar power system. This school is built for both boys and girls students and has 13 teachers. The school is located 7 km from the capital city of Maidan Shahr and about 35 km from the capital province Kabul."

ABC News, [Taliban official's comments on education, jobs fuel more fears for Afghan women's rights](#), 29 September 2021

"When the Taliban controlled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, they largely barred women and girls from public life without a male relative and excluded them from schools and universities entirely. Kabul University chancellor Mohammad Ashraf Ghairat suggested a return to that policy Tuesday, tweeting, " As long as a real Islamic environment is not provided for all, women will not be allowed to come to universities or work. Islam first." After media outlets reported on his comments, he issued a second tweet, criticizing the New York Times in particular for what he called a "bad misunderstanding" of his comments."

Al Jazeera, [Girls to return to secondary schools 'soon as possible': Taliban](#), 21 September 2021

"Girls will have to wait longer to return to secondary school in Afghanistan, according to Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, as concerns grow over the fate of women's education under the new government. Speaking at a press conference in the capital Kabul on Tuesday, Mujahid said the group was "finalising things" and that secondary school girls will return to the classroom "as soon as possible."

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: The fate of thousands hanging in the balance](#), 21 September 2021

"In this report, Amnesty International, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) have documented incidents of human rights violations that have taken place in Afghanistan since the takeover by the Taliban on 15 August". The report references a number of sources, Including: [...]

- Gandhara/RFEL, Taliban Imposes New Dress Code, Segregation of Women at Afghan Universities, 6 September 2021, <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/taliban-dress-code-segregation-women/31446726.htm>
- The Times of India. 18 September 2021. "Taliban resume boys-only schools, makes no mention of girls". <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/taliban-resume-boys-only-schools-makes-no-mention-of-girls/articleshow/86311733.cms>.
- Al Jazeera. 17 September 2021. "Taliban says classes resume for Afghan boys, no mention of girls". <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/17/taliban-saysclasses-resume-afghan-boys-no-mention-girls>. [...]
- France 24. 11 September 2021. "Sports ban, segregated education: Afghanistan women worried by first Taliban measures". <https://www.france24.com/en/asia-pacific/20210911-sports-ban-segregated-education-afghanistan-women-worried-by-first-taliban-measures>.

Reuters, [Some Afghan girls return to school, others face anxious wait](#), 18 September 2021

"Some Afghan girls returned to primary schools with gender-segregated classes on Saturday, but older girls faced an anxious wait with no clarity over if and when they would be able to resume their studies at the secondary school level."

"Taliban officials say they will not return to the fundamentalist policies - including a ban on girls receiving an education - when they last ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001."

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The Guardian, [Taliban ban girls from secondary education in Afghanistan](#), 17 September 2021

"The Taliban have effectively banned girls from secondary education in Afghanistan, by ordering high schools to reopen only for boys.

Girls were not mentioned in Friday's announcement, which means boys will be back at their desks next week after a one-month hiatus, while their sisters will still be stuck at home. The Taliban education ministry said secondary school classes for boys in grades seven to 12 would resume on Saturday, the start of the Afghan week. "All male teachers and students should attend their educational institutions," the statement said. The future of girls and female teachers, stuck at home since the Taliban took control, was not addressed. The edict makes Afghanistan the only country on earth to bar half its population from getting a secondary education.

[...] The Taliban appeared somewhat more open to women's education when they ordered all primary school students back to class, and said women could study for degrees, albeit in a strictly gender-segregated system that will dramatically lower the range and quality of women's options. But if the high schools do not reopen for girls, the commitments to allow university education would become meaningless once the current cohort of students graduated."

Human Rights Watch, [How the International Community Can Protect Afghan Women and Girls](#), 2 September 2021

"Access to Education

In recent years, in areas under their control, Taliban policies varied but often included permitting girls to attend school only up to the sixth grade. Even when local Taliban policy permitted at least some girls to study, there have sometimes been efforts to discourage girls and women from attending.

Since gaining control of the country, the Taliban have said they support education for girls and women. At the initial news conference, Mujahid said, "They can have activities in different sectors and different areas on the basis of our rules and regulations: educational, health and other areas." Another spokesperson, Suhail Shaheen, on August 23 tweeted a clip of girls entering a school, writing, "Back to School in a New Afghanistan."

The status of girls' access to secondary education, which the Taliban have typically not permitted in recent years in areas under their control, is unclear. On August 29, the acting minister of higher education announced that girls and women may participate in higher education but may not study with boys and men. The Taliban previously issued a similar order to universities in the western city of Herat, adding that female students could only receive instruction from female or "virtuous" elderly male professors.

A lack of female teachers, especially in higher education, is likely to mean that such rules amount to a de facto denial of access to education for many girls and women. Afghan government statistics from 2019 indicate that across the country's 166 universities, 27 percent of students were female, but only 14 percent of professors. Even in government teacher training institutions, only about 13 percent of the teachers were women that year although 57 percent of the students were women."

### *Violence and Abuse*

CNN, [She was sold to a stranger so her family could eat as Afghanistan crumbles](#), 1 November 2021

Parwana is one of many young Afghan girls sold into marriage as the country's [humanitarian crisis deepens](#). Hunger has pushed some families to make heartbreaking decisions, especially as the brutal winter approaches.

The parents gave CNN full access and permission to speak to the children and show their faces, because they say they cannot change the practice themselves.

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"Day by day, the numbers are increasing of families selling their children," said Mohammad Naiem Nazem, a human rights activist in Badghis. "Lack of food, lack of work, the families feel they have to do this." [...]

Though marrying off children under 15 is illegal nationwide, it has been commonly practiced for years, especially in more rural parts of Afghanistan. And it has only spread since August, driven by widespread hunger and desperation.

UNAMA, [Report of the Secretary-General: The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 8 September 2021

"37. During the second quarter of 2021, the country task force on monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children in armed conflict verified 1,179 grave violations against 1,112 children (673 boys, 420 girls, 19 sex unknown) during the reporting period, including 1,085 children killed or maimed (309 killed and 776 maimed) (647 boys, 419 girls, 19 sex unknown). [...]

38. The country task force verified the recruitment and use of 26 children (all boys) aged between 12 and 17 years by the Taliban (16), Afghan National Police (6) and pro-government militias (4)."

### *Children separated from their families*

UNICEF, [Statement by UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore on unaccompanied and separated children evacuated from Afghanistan](#), 7 September 2021

"“Since 14 August, hundreds of children have been separated from their families amidst chaotic conditions, including large-scale evacuations, in and around the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul. [...]

In Afghanistan, more than 550,000 people have been displaced by conflict, the majority in recent weeks, and 10 million children are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. We are very worried about the safety and wellbeing of unaccompanied and separated children inside the country.”

### **Persons with disabilities (stigma, discrimination, harassment, violence)**

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Taliban blocking female aid workers](#), 4 November 2021

[...] women with disabilities, whether married or single, are often seen as a burden on their families and are at increased risk of violence both inside and outside the home. [...]

The lack of women aid workers also means that women with disabilities have less access to rehabilitative services.

International Disability Alliance (IDA), [IDA Statement on the Situation in Afghanistan](#), September 2021 [exact date unknown]

“Due to communication barriers and security concerns, adequate information on the situation of Afghans with disabilities during the current crisis is not available. It is evident however that due to the unsafe situation, many Afghans have been forced to leave their homes in search of safety and dignity. Persons with disabilities face additional risks during the displacement journey including being left behind in the first place or being forced to withdraw from the journey due to a lack of assistive devices or disruption of support networks. When reaching displacement or refugee camps, or other temporary residence, persons with disabilities face additional barriers accessing the very basic rights such as water, sanitation, hygiene, food or shelter.

Those left behind are at risk of violence and abuse, disruption of support services and isolation. In case the situation turns to internal armed conflict, persons with disabilities are more likely to lose their lives than others, and face risk of being abused as human shields, sexual slaves or trafficking.”

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Business Insider, [An advocate for disabled Afghans on her harrowing escape and her concern for disabled Afghans under Taliban rule](#), 6 September 2021

[...] Benasfha Yaqubi, a blind commissioner with the Afghanistan Human Rights Commission (AHRC) [...]

Afghanistan has one of the highest rates of disability in the world, according to [Human Rights Watch](#)—including more than a million people with physical injuries from decades of conflict, including the two-decade-long U.S. war. Countless others have mental health conditions, like post-traumatic stress, [depression](#), and anxiety. [...]

The proportion of Afghans with severe disabilities increased from 2.7% in 2005 to 13.9% in 2019, the [European Parliament reported](#) last year. [...]

Vulnerable adults and children are often deeply reliant on the assistance of family members, and she worries that desperate families might leave behind more vulnerable, and less able, family members. [...]

Another group she is thinking about is disabled widows as well as widows who do not live with an adult male and therefore, under Taliban rules where women are expected to move around with a male escort, might become "functionally disabled" and unable to earn money.

"The women don't have husbands. They have small children. They don't have a man. They don't have anyone to follow them outside. So what can they do? They are functionally disabled. They can't go to work. They'll miss their income," said Yaqubi.

The Guardian, [Disabled Afghans in special jeopardy, warns exiled campaigner](#), 6 September 2021

"Benafsha Yaqoobi, a commissioner at the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), said she fears the Taliban will neglect and discriminate against people with disabilities due to the belief, held by many in the country, that disability is a punishment from God for the sins of parents."

The Nation, [The Taliban Is Targeting Disability Rights Activists](#), 2 September 2021

"With the fall of the Ashraf Ghani–led government, the provision of these services is almost certain to become more difficult. According to the Asia Foundation, Afghanistan has one of the highest rates of disability per capita in the world, with nearly 80 percent of Afghan adults disabled, mostly because of more than 40 years of war. Despite this staggering number, that disabled Afghans are largely left behind is the result of a lack of accessible infrastructure and systemic ableism. This problem especially impacts women and girls; according to a 2020 report by Human Rights Watch, 80 percent of Afghan girls with disabilities aren't enrolled in school. [...]

She and M are also concerned that disabled victims of war will lose their monthly stipend provided by the administration under former President Ghani, which helps them pay for food and other necessities, and that rehabilitation centers will shut down, withdrawing critical medical support for Afghans with disabilities. Small businesses owned by people with disabilities are also shutting down, making them extra vulnerable in an economy already in free fall."

## Freedom of Movement

*What is the Taliban's position regarding citizens leaving the country?*

Pajhwok Afghan News, [Opportunists fleecing Afghans trying to leave country](#), 25 October 2021

"Pajhwok Afghan News findings show some people have demanded tens of thousands of dollars from people wishing to leave the country against a promise of individual and family visas.

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However, government officials say those behind of such cases have been identified and will be brought to justice. Following the fall of Afghanistan's previous regime on August 15 this year, a number of countries, including the United States, Britain, Germany, Canada, France, Ireland, Italy, and Australia, announced that Afghans who worked with them in Afghanistan, would be evacuated to the countries.

According to reports, more than 120,000 Afghans have been evacuated so far, including journalists, civil society activists, translators, former government security personnel and others.

At the same time, many Afghans are trying to take advantage of this opportunity to move to the United States or Europe with their families.

Some people are trying to involve in trafficking persons using the opportunity and take illegal money from people who plan to leave the country.

A Facebook page named, (Tourist Company providing European countries visas and free consultation for asylum) in a post said, "US individual visa, there are limited chances, anyone who are matching the conditions should hurry up".

The post says that the US immigrant visa processes for a person is charged \$28,000 and it could be provided in 20 days. Two visas of Canada for a family of two is for \$50,000 and for a three member family it is for \$60,000.

A number of Facebook users who commented to the post said that officials of the company have deceived people; some others said that the company lied while others required more details.

The post has given a telephone number, which a Pajhwok reporter dialed and sought details from the recipient, who identified himself as "Umrah." He said "Right now we have Canadian visas, we have individual visas for the United States, we have many individual visas."

He said a Canadian visa would cost 27000 dollars. He said they had American visas as well and each visa would cost between 29,000 and 27000 and 26000 dollars. The visa process time is 25 to 30 days. "You will be included in this program. Family visas will be announced next week. Our work is 100 percent sure."

The person said they took no money in advance. The money should be kept with a money changer and they would receive the money once the visa was confirmed.

A Facebook page "Afghan Bazaar" also wrote that a Canadian visa was being made available in 45 days.

A phone number on the page was contacted by this scribe. The call recipient refused to give his name. He said a Canadian visa would be provided in 45 days against 22,000 dollars. He also said they do not demand money in advance.

Similarly, Pajhwok has obtained an audio clip in which a person says "There are Afghans who can receive visas from embassies against 10000 dollars. Why don't we do this, we have Wakil Sahib in the embassy, if we introduce five people and each gives 50000 dollars, it is enough money."

In a second audio clip the same person says: "there are Afghans who want to go abroad to the US, Europe and other countries. I am in the embassy and I will introduce someone in the embassy who can obtain visas. You can ask people to give up to 25000 dollars which we will distribute among ourselves."

Similarly, a resident of Kabul, Melad Sahibzada, said he had talked with a human smuggler who lived in Mazar-i-Sharif. The smuggler told him he could evacuate people in flights to foreign countries from Mazar and Kabul.

"A single person is charged 10000 USD and a family is charged 20000 dollars. The flight is confirmed in a week. One should provide ID card, passport, telephone number and email address."

The Human First Coalition, which facilitates the evacuation of American citizens and their Afghan allies from Afghanistan, also says it has received information that someone is trying to deceive Afghans who want to leave Afghanistan safely. [...]

The group insists that these people are deceiving Afghan families and people should know that those who call these numbers are not providing real service because the Human First Coalition never asks for money in return for services and cooperation in evacuating people from Afghanistan.

Zabihullah Mujahid, Deputy Minister of Information and Culture, told Pajhwok Afghan News that they were investigating the claims and in case of any violation, they would act according to the law."

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Pajhwok Afghan News, [Hundreds of nomads, passengers denied entry into Pakistan](#), 13 October 2021 [subscription only]

"Hundreds of nomads and passengers are stranded in Agnur Ada area of Barmal district in southeastern Paktika province after being denied entry into . . . [Pakistan]"

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Gandhara, [Taliban Uses Force And Fear To Push Hundreds Of Afghans From Tajik Border](#), 8 October 2021

"Thousands of Afghans camped out in Afghanistan's Badakhshan Province on the border with Tajikistan hope to leave their country and Taliban rule. Many had been at the border for weeks but now the Taliban has forced hundreds to flee the area amid reports of death threats from the militants"

Reuters, [Plane carrying Afghans, U.S. and European citizens from Kabul arrives in Doha](#), 17 September 2021

"The third chartered flight bringing civilians from Afghanistan to Qatar since U.S. forces withdrew last month landed on Friday with around 170 passengers on board, including U.S. and European citizens as well as Afghans, a Qatari official said."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Pakistan's PIA To Restart Islamabad-Kabul Commercial Flights](#), 11 September 2021

"A spokesman for Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) says the airline plans to resume special charter flights to and from Kabul next week in order to help evacuate people who want to leave Afghanistan.

PIA spokesman Abdullah Hafeez Khan told the AFP news agency on September 11 that the airline had received "all technical clearances for flight operations" to resume."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Gandhara Briefing: Return Of The Taliban Emirate](#), 10 September 2021

"On September 9, the first civilian flight since the Taliban took over Kabul airport, mainly evacuating people with foreign passports to Qatar, raised hopes that the Taliban would allow the evacuation of foreigners and vulnerable Afghans to proceed. Western governments have been pushing for such flights since the Taliban refused to let chartered planes take hundreds stranded in Mazar-e Sharif."

Human Rights Watch, [What's Next for Afghans Fleeing the Taliban?](#), 9 September 2021

"2. Are Afghans entitled to leave the country?

[...]

Taliban authorities have been quoted saying they do not want Afghans to leave the country. They have provided assurances that Afghan citizens with foreign travel authorization will be allowed to depart, however setting this requirement violates the right to freedom of movement.

On August 30 the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution that expressed the expectation that "the Taliban will adhere to their commitments," and referenced Taliban promises that:

Afghans will be able to travel abroad, may leave Afghanistan anytime they want to, and may exit Afghanistan via any border crossing, both air and ground, including at the reopened and secured Kabul airport, with no one preventing them from traveling, including regarding the safe, secure, and orderly departure from Afghanistan of Afghans and all foreign nationals.

It remains to be seen if the Taliban will adhere to these commitments."

TOLO News, [Taliban Preventing Planes From Leaving: US Rep. McCaul](#), 6 September 2021

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“Michael McCaul, a US representative for Texas and the top Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the Taliban was preventing six airplanes from taking off from Mazar-e-Sharif airport in the northern province of Balkh.

McCaul says there are six airplanes at the Mazar-e-Sharif airport with American citizens on board, along with their Afghan interpreters, and the Taliban are “holding them hostage,” AP reported.

The Taliban, however, rejected the claim, saying anyone holding travel documents is allowed to travel out of the country.”

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(30 August – 5 September 2021\)](#), 13 September 2021

“On 5 September, Kandahar airfield resumed daily flights from Kabul and Hirat provinces. The Spin Boldak border crossing remained open to Pakistani identification card holders, Afghans with Pakistani visas and commercial truck movements.”

*What is the Taliban’s position regarding unsuccessful asylum applicants returning to Afghanistan? What happens to individuals who have left Afghanistan and return?*

*What are the challenges to moving freely within the country?*

*How do Taliban checkpoints affect free movement?*

## **Situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)**

*How many IDPs are there in Afghanistan?*

TOLO News, [Displaced Families Transferred From Kabul](#), 28 October 2021

“Thousands of people were displaced as fighting between the forces of the Islamic Emirate and the former government escalated.

More than 2,500 displaced families were transferred from Kabul back to their home-provinces, the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation said on Thursday.

The head of the Kabul refugee department, Abdul Matin Rahimzai, said that the evacuation process would continue.

“We have evacuated 2,500 displaced families from Kabul. Today we are evacuating 450 families from Kunduz and some of the other provinces,” he added.

The UN said earlier that many of these families were incapable of going back to their home areas due to financial problems.

“We and around 75 families were displaced from Ghor to Shahar-e-Naw camp. We haven’t received any aid from any organization,” said Ghulam Jailani, a displaced person.

Thousands of displaced families are struggling with severe challenges in the capital city of Kabul.

“We haven’t seen anything good but cold weather, exhaustion and poverty,” said Abdul Samad, a displaced person.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), nearly 700,000 people were displaced between January and September 2021.”

UNHCR, [UNHCR Iran: Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 26 October 2021

“677,832 people have been internally displaced in Afghanistan”

IPC, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation September - October 2021 and Projection for November 2021 - March 2022](#), 25 October 2021

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“Displacement continues to drive food insecurity. From January to September 2021, around 664,200 people were displaced due to intensified conflict and livelihood-related factors. Most of the people were displaced to provincial urban centres, regional capitals and Kabul, which has exacerbated the already oversaturated labour market and placed further pressure on limited facilities in those areas. Due to prolonged conflict and droughts, the country already had 3.5 million prolonged IDPs in December 2020. The 2021 SFSA found that 9% of randomly selected respondents were IDPs. This indicates that the actual number of displaced people could be higher than estimated.”

OCHA, [Afghanistan: Snapshot of Population Movements, January - September 2021](#), 22 October 2021

“In 2021, displacement due to ongoing conflict and natural disasters is continuing to drive humanitarian needs in Afghanistan. Almost 677,000 people have left their homes this year due to fighting. Many of these people remain displaced across the country, as conflict and poverty prevent them from returning to their areas of origin [...]

Same period previous years

2020: 308,000 new IDPs

2019: 392,000 new IDPs

[...]

20% adult male 21% adult female 59% children under 18”

OCHA, Afghanistan, [ICCT Real-Time Response Overview Situation Report \(21 October 2021\) - Afghanistan](#), 21 October 2021

“KEY	FIGURES	IDPs	IN	2021	(AS	OF	17	OCTOBER)
677,832	People		displaced		by	conflict		(verified)
312,182 Received assistance”								

UNHCR, [UNHCR Iran: Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 18 October 2021

“677,832 people have been internally displaced in Afghanistan in 2021.”

AVA Press, [IDPs appeal for urgent help ahead of winter](#), 30 September 2021

“Meanwhile, Amnesty International stated that over 5 million internally are in dire need of support amidst the escalating crisis in Afghanistan.

“The international community must ensure continues unabated to Afghanistan, the organization tweeted.

The Ministry of ‘Refugees, however, stated that the number of IDPs is lower than what Amnesty International has reported.

The Ministry said around one million Afghans have been displaced, adding that aid would be provided to all displaced people.

, the acting deputy minister of refugees stated: “Consultations have been made with as many as 30 organizations, issues of transportation have been considered for them (IDPs), for where they must go [to live], food and cash and we have also discussed the issue of those who don’t have shelter and whose houses have been destroyed.” “

[IOM DMT Emergency Event Tracking Report - covering 1-27 September 2021](#), 29 September 2021

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## ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE FIGURES\*

	TOTAL	RURAL	PERI-URBAN	URBAN
# CFPs	6,660	5,3086	986	588
% CFPs who reported an increase in IDP arrivals	53%	49%	65%	72%
# of reported individual IDP arrivals	986,618	584,701	183,377	218,540
# of reported family IDP arrivals	140,378	81,650	27,777	30,951
% CFPs who reported an increase in departures	69%	67%	78%	73%
# of reported individual departures	1,328,179	901,120	275,829	151,200
# of reported family departures	177,226	121,544	36,427	19,255

[CFPs = Community Focal Points]

UNHCR, [Afghanistan situation: Emergency preparedness and response in Iran](#), 27 September 2021

“663,969 people have been internally displaced in Afghanistan since the start of 2021, of which 80% are women and children”

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [No Afghan refugee exodus yet but 'massive displacement' possible -U.N. refugee agency](#), 10 September 2021

“Half a million people had been displaced within Afghanistan in recent months, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said, a number which would grow if health services, schools and the economy break down. “In reality we have not seen at this point large movements of Afghan people towards the borders of the country,” Grandi told Reuters. “What we continue to see is a very dramatic phenomenon of internal displacement.” “

International Organisation for Migration, [Displacement Tracking Matrix Afghanistan — Emergency Event Tracking \(1 - 7 September 2021\)](#), 10 September 2021

“Key Informants in Helmand, Baghlan and Kabul most frequently reported an increase of IDP arrivals in their communities. Communities in Baghlan and Kabul, in addition to Kapisa, also reportedly experienced an increase in departures more frequently than communities assessed in other provinces.”

ACAPS, [Afghanistan - Conflict-Driven Displacement](#), 3 September 2021

“Since 16 August, fighting between the Taliban and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in villages of Khanabad district along the Kunduz-Khanabad highway, Imam Sahib district, and Kunduz city, all in Kunduz province (OCHA 27/08/2020), displaced approximately 64,000 people within these areas; approximately 28,000 were identified in assessments as requiring immediate lifesaving assistance. [...] Assessments from mid-August indicated that a high proportion of IDPs did not want to return to their areas of origin, fearing continued fighting (OCHA 25/08/2020). However close to 13,000 of the IDPs have returned to their homes in Khanabad district, where their needs will be assessed. Returnees are exposed to violence, IEDs, and mines on their return journeys”

International Crisis Group, [Afghanistan's Growing Humanitarian Crisis](#), 2 September 2021

“Violence, Displacement, Food Insecurity and Deteriorating Essential Services

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Unprecedented numbers of civilians were killed and injured in the early months of 2021 and at least 560,000 people were displaced, including nearly 120,000 fleeing to Kabul as they sought refuge from Taliban advances. Those numbers represent the worst-ever period in what for some years has been the world's deadliest conflict. The count of displaced people in Afghanistan over the last seven months was twice the monthly average in the last five years, and the figures are expected to grow as aid agencies' accounting catches up with the scale of the crisis. Some 80 per cent of those fleeing violence since the end of May have been women and children. Thousands of displaced people in Kabul have been sleeping in the open air, and only a minuscule portion of them escaped during the international airlift that ended on 30 August."

#### *What is the housing situation for IDPs?*

AVA Press, [IDPs appeal for urgent help ahead of winter](#), 30 September 2021

"Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_Thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) are living in very poor conditions in Kabul camps, where they have no access to medical services nor regular food supplies.

Sahar Arsalan, an IDP stated: "Refugees from all provinces are living inside tents in hardship; so far, they have not received any assistance from the or any organizations."

The IDPs have also called on aid agencies to provide them with shelter in Kabul or help them to return home.

Another IDP said: "Many have no home in their provinces and they need aid and help to get back to their province to help them pay rent for houses."

ACAPS, [Afghanistan - Conflict-Driven Displacement](#), 3 September 2021  
 "Sectoral Shelter and NFI  
 IDPs in Kunduz are residing with relatives or friends, sheltering in schools, or have put up makeshift shelters, all of which are inadequate (OCHA 25/08/2020). NGO assessments have identified that IDPs need shelter aid, though warned against establishing camps-style settlements that may encourage the spread of COVID-19 (OCHA 27/08/2020)."

#### *What is the food situation for IDPs?*

IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation September - October 2021 and Projection for November 2021 - March 2022](#), 25 October 2021

"Food security situation for displaced populations: Various assessments conducted on IDPs by Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) partners show worse food security scores on indicators than any other population category in Afghanistan. In 2021, REACH conducted an assessment with different vulnerable groups on the move that included new and prolonged IDPs, returnees and refugees; these people on the move are mostly concentrated in 11 urban areas (Nangarhar, Hirat, Kabul, Faryab, Takhar, Kunduz, Kandahar, Hilmand, Balkh, Baghlan and Jawzjan) on which the urban IPC analysis focused. According to the findings of this assessment, 42% of the IDPs have a poor and 36% have a borderline food consumption score; they have a very low level of income, far below the cost of a basic food basket, and 75% of the IDP's reported a high level of debt. With the recent severe economic crisis, the FSAC of Afghanistan aims to target 90% of the newly displaced IDPs with a multisector response, aligning the response with these numbers."

ACAPS, [Afghanistan - Conflict-Driven Displacement](#), 3 September 2021  
 "Food  
 IDPs need food aid (OCHA 27/08/2020). People in Kunduz province face Stressed (IPC-2) food security conditions

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as of August-September, and 14.2% of children under five face some form of malnutrition in the province (Nutrition Cluster 2019). People are projected to face these levels into next year, which will likely make recovery difficult (FEWS Net 08/2020)."

*Do IDPs have access to livelihood opportunities?*

IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation September - October 2021 and Projection for November 2021 - March 2022](#), 25 October 2021

"Usually, because of the severity of the conflict and its sudden nature, most of the livelihood assets of IDPs are either looted, sold at very meagre prices and/or killed in the case of livestock or lost. IDPs often migrate without the necessary legal documents of identity and school certificates of their children, which hinders their access to support services. They also pay very high prices for transportation to move their families to a safer location. Therefore, in the absence of agriculture and livestock-based livelihoods and with no urban labour skills, they are left with almost zero livelihood options. Most of the IDPs bring agriculture-based livelihood skills to these urban areas where there is no market for their skills. Their arrival increases the pressure on the local job market, reducing wages and adding strain on infrastructure, ultimately fuelling tensions and conflict with the local population."

Thomson Reuters Foundation news, [Agencies distribute food, blankets, cash as hunger and cold threaten Afghanistan](#), 13 October 2021

"Aid agencies delivered food, blankets and cash to hundreds of displaced families in Kabul on Wednesday as humanitarian assistance begins to trickle into Afghanistan following warnings the country faces potentially catastrophic famine this winter.

The distribution of aid to 324 families represents a tiny fraction of the needs in Afghanistan, which faces a severe drought as well as a near collapse of its economy following the withdrawal of Western support. [...]

But the challenge of providing the aid is massive. As well as farmers and rural people displaced by drought, poverty has extended into the cities where widespread unemployment has forced many to try to sell their household goods to raise money. "Around 50,000 Afghan people from different provinces of the country have been displaced because of recent conflicts and are in Kabul. Our assistance continues to needy people every week," said UNHCR spokesperson Babar Baloch."

AVA Press, [Taliban begins relocating thousands of IDPs from Kabul](#), 3 October 2021

"Officials of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan say that they have begun the relocation process of thousands of Internally Displaced People from Kabul to their respective provinces on Saturday, October 2.

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_Over two thousand families were displaced mainly from the Northern provinces of Afghanistan after conflicts intensified between the Taliban and the security forces of the previous Afghan government.

They were settled in the parks of Kabul along with their children for more than two months.

Head of refugees and returnees of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Abdul Matin said that 1,005 displaced families from -e-Naw Park in Kabul have been relocated in collaboration with different aid agencies.

Previously, the UNHCR had warned humanitarian crisis if not addressed the problems of IDPs as winter is approaching.

On the other hand, the also distributed humanitarian aid to the people in Kabul.

According to the statistics of UNHCR, around 300,000 people have been forced to displace due to heavy conflicts in 2020."

CARE, [CARE Restarts Afghanistan Humanitarian Response - Provides Seeds, Tools, Fertilizer Ahead of Lean Growing Season and Ongoing Food Crisis](#), 30 September 2021

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"In the last week, CARE has restarted its emergency humanitarian response, providing a small number of vulnerable displaced families with financial assistance to spend on key needs. Similarly, CARE resumed some of its crucial food security and livelihoods support to small-scale farmers in several provinces - including, fertilizer, tools, seeds and trainings as part of a programme to encourage women to develop home gardens and household level livelihoods options."

OCHA, Afghanistan, [Weekly Humanitarian Update \(30 August – 5 September 2021\)](#), 13 September 2021

"KEY FIGURES

IDPs IN 2021 (AS OF 5 SEPTEMBER)

592,531 People displaced by conflict (verified)

280,244 Received assistance"

## Documentation

*How do people obtain ID, birth registrations and/or passports under the Taliban?*

TOLO News, [Passport Services to Begin in Provinces: Officials](#), 25 October 2021

"A number of passport applicants in Kabul complained about irregularities in the Kabul passport department and demanded the officials to end the problems. The passport issuance process is scheduled to begin in the next two weeks in a number of major provinces, officials from the passport department said.

Alam Gul Haqqani, head of passport department, said that the process in the provinces was stopped due to technical problems and once the problems are resolved, the distribution process will begin again. [...]

The passport distribution process is going well in Kabul and over 50,000 passports have been distributed so far, he said.

On the other hand, a number of passport applicants in Kabul complained about irregularities in the Kabul passport department and demanded the officials to end the problems. [...]

It has been a month that the passport distribution process has been operating in Kabul, but still this process has not started in other provinces.

Statistics of the passport department show that over 5,000 passports are being issued every day in Kabul and since the beginning of this process more than 50,000 passports have been distributed."

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: Few routes to safety for Afghans at risk of Taliban reprisals](#), 20 October 2021

"“Trying to get out of Afghanistan right now is like an obstacle course. Since the Taliban takeover it has been near-impossible to obtain travel documents, forcing many Afghans to make irregular journeys which result in punitive treatment by other governments. Instead of finding safety and protection, Afghans who fled the Taliban end up trapped in makeshift camps at border zones, or detained while they await deportation to an uncertain fate,” said Francesca Pizzutelli, Head of Amnesty International’s Refugees and Migrants’ Rights Team.”

TOLO News, [30,000 Passports Issued Since Office Reopened](#), 13 October 2021

"The passport department has distributed 30,000 passports since the office reopened ten days ago in Kabul, officials said on Wednesday.

According to officials, the department is able to issue 4,000 passports per day and efforts are underway to increase capacity to 6,000 per day.

Officials further added the department has been paid 110 million Afghanis since the office started its services.

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"First, we start the process of issuing passports for those who pay the fees to the banks, and then we work on the issuing of passports for those who filed documents online," said Alim Gul Haqani, head of the passport department.

Reportedly thousands of Afghans flocked to the passport department to receive travel documents.

Many reasons caused them to come together and file documents for passport.

Some of the applicants said they are fleeing the country to seek work opportunities, while others said they were traveling for school or medical treatment."

TOLO News, [Officials: Identity Card Centers to Resume Operations Soon](#), 11 October 2021

"Following a recent announcement by the Islamic Emirate over the distribution of national identity cards, the National Statistics and Information Authority said on Monday that electronic National Identity Card (eNIC) centers are going to reopen on Wednesday across Afghanistan.

Officials further said that around 30,000 identity cards that are already printed will be distributed in the first step.

"30,000 identity cards have been printed and are ready to be distributed. The process will begin on Wednesday," said Yousuf Ahadi, who is in charge of information technology at the NSIA.

Meanwhile, several residents told TOLONews that people require ID cards for various purposes. A resident in Kabul, Shabir Ahmad, said he intends to travel abroad to get medical treatment for his family member.

Shabir Ahmad said: "We seriously need ID cards. Everyone needs to take their patients abroad. Having ID cards is necessary for getting a passport."

"Before the reopening of the passport department, it was necessary that ID centers be opened. People have many problems that are related to the opening of the ID card center," said Husamudin, a resident.

Officials at the NSIA added that so far about 6 million Afghan citizens have received their eNIC cards and there are 104 centers in total for the distribution of ID cards in the country, 25 of which are based in Kabul."

AVA Press, [Taliban to continue issuance previous government's e-NIDs](#), 10 October 2021

"Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_The cabinet has directed the National Statistics and Information Administration of the country to resume issuing -NIDs under the name of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, BNA reported.

The process has been stalled for the past nearly two months since the Taliban took over on August, 15.

Earlier, the Taliban had directed to resume issuance of the same passports of the previous government that started on Wednesday.

Taliban officially started the issuance of passports last week and pledged to be issuing up to six thousand each day. E-NID is a must require card to apply for passports in Afghanistan."

Al Jazeera, [Hundreds throng passport office in Afghanistan capital Kabul](#), 6 October 2021

"Hundreds of Afghans have flocked to the passport office in Kabul a day after it was announced it would reopen to issue travel documents.

Taliban soldiers beat back some in the crowd in efforts to maintain order on Wednesday.

Taliban officials said the service will resume on Saturday after being suspended since the armed group's takeover and the fall of Ashraf Ghani's government in August, which stranded many of those desperate to flee the country."

Khaama Press, [We will issue 6,000 passports daily: Taliban officials](#), 5 October 2021

"Officials of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan resumed the issuance of passports on Tuesday, October 5, and promised that the previous government was issuing three thousand passports but they intend to issue six thousand passports per day.

The department of passport opens nearly two months after the Taliban took over the country.

Head of the department Alamgul Haqqani said that they currently have one million notebooks of passport-on which they print passports- and added that there are 25 thousand passports ready to be issued.

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Unlike other government bodies-except for education and health sectors- the Taliban asked the female employees of the department to come to their jobs and promised to pay the salaries for the past three months.

The Taliban does not intend to print their own passport having their logo and said that they will continue with the passports and NIDs of the previous government, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan had promised to resume the issuance of NIDs as well but they did not comment on the issue in Tuesday's press conference.

As per the policy of the previous government, those who apply for passports should have electronic NID thus, there is desperate need for the issuance of NIDs first so that the applicants get eligible to apply for passports."

TOLo News, [Afghan People Call for Govt Offices to Open](#), 12 September 2021

"Even though the Taliban announced a 33-member caretaker cabinet last week, most government offices have not resumed services, residents complained on Sunday.

Speaking to TOLoNews, the residents called on the Taliban to immediately provide services so citizens' problems can be addressed.

Noor Agha, who is from Herat province, along with several others is waiting for the passport office to be opened.

He intends to leave for Pakistan to receive medical treatment.

Noor Agha told TOLoNews: "The department is closed. They do not distribute passports. I am sick, I want to go Pakistan." [...]

Officials from the passport department said they are waiting to receive directions from the Ministry of Interior.

The problem not only applies to the capital city of Kabul. Kunduz residents are encountering the same challenges.

The residents are waiting for the reopening of the banks in the province."

### **Taliban's ability to track individuals of interest**

*What are the Taliban's capabilities to track individuals?*

Reuters, [The Taliban vowed no revent. One Afghan family tells a different story](#), 28 September 2021

"When the Taliban won back control of the [eastern Afghan province of Nangarhar](#) last month, they set out to settle a score with an old foe.

As they searched for prominent local politician Ajmal Omar - who had helped drive the militants out of a Nangarhar district a year earlier and tried to dissuade young Afghans from joining them - Taliban members detonated explosives at his ancestral home."

UNAMA, [Report of the Secretary-General: The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 8 September 2021

"20. After seizing Kabul, Taliban fighters erected checkpoints throughout the capital and increased patrols, without uniforms. Reports also suggested that some people had been shot after having crossed checkpoints without approval. While statements by the Taliban included instructions not to enter anyone's house without permission and that "life, property and honour" would be protected, numerous reports emerged of the Taliban conducting house-to-house searches for government personnel, weapons and property, and in some cases confiscation of the latter. Some reports indicated that the Taliban were allegedly searching for people who had "worked with foreigners" and at times, beating them."

Danish Immigration Service, [Afghanistan Recent developments in the security situation, impact on civilians and targeted individuals](#), 8 September 2021

"During the course of the Taliban offensive, as well as after the conquest of Kabul, there have been reports of the Taliban targeting members of the civilian population and the Afghan military as well their families. According to

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SER [Sune Engel Rasmussen, Danish journalist] members of Taliban have been going door to door and arresting or threatening family members of targeted individuals. He explained how members of the Taliban came to the house in Kabul of a colleague of his knocking on the door. Being a journalist, he was hiding inside his house with his family and the Taliban left. He had been warned over the telephone by his neighbour and he immediately thereafter moved to a hotel, knowing that the Taliban knew his address.”

The Guardian, [The Taliban are showing us the dangers of personal data falling into the wrong hands](#), 7 September 2021

“The [Taliban](#) have openly talked about using US-made digital identity technology to hunt down Afghans who have worked with the international coalition – posing a huge threat to everyone recorded in the system. In addition, the extremists now also have access to – and control over – the digital identification systems and technologies built through international aid support.

These include the e-Tazkira, a biometric identity card used by Afghanistan’s National Statistics and Information Authority, which includes fingerprints, iris scans and a photograph, as well as voter registration databases. It also includes the Afghan personnel and pay system, used by the interior and defence ministries to pay the army and police.

For Afghans, and for the wider community working on digital identification for development, this means that the Taliban have sensitive personal information that they have said will be used to target those they consider enemies or threats. While some Afghans are frantically trying to erase any trace of digital activity, on official databases, user deletion is not an option.”

The New Humanitarian, [Biometric data and the Taliban: What are the risks?](#), 2 September 2021

“Data protection experts warn that aid groups must quickly review and safeguard sensitive information on Afghans who have received emergency relief and other services. Humanitarian agencies are among those that have tracked, stored, and shared data linked to millions of Afghans – including precise biometric data like fingerprints or iris scans. Crucially, some of this data has been collected by the now-deposed Afghan government – raising concern that the Taliban have inherited databases and technology that could be used to identify people linked to previous regimes or international forces, or members of persecuted groups who have received aid.”

## Targeted Groups

*Individuals who are critical or in opposition of the Taliban (e.g. peaceful protesters)*

The Guardian, [They stayed to fight the Taliban. Now the protesters are being hunted down](#), 4 November 2021

“Women’s rights activists fear for their lives as Afghanistan’s new rulers infiltrate, detain, beat and torture groups of protesters”

Khaama Press, [Taliban creates commission to expel unfavorable members](#), 13 October 2021

“Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has created a special commission to expel those who misuse the name of the Taliban, do not treat people well, and have nasty backgrounds.

The commission which has been named “filtration commission of forces” is composed of representatives from the defense ministry, interior affairs ministry, and high directorate of intelligence and was officially announced on Wednesday, October 13.

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Spokesperson on the ministry of interior affairs Saeed Khostai said that the commission will get functional in all provinces of the country and heads of the intelligence of the provinces will be leading the provincial offices of the commission.

Saeed Khostai though did not disclose details of the unfavorable people, said that these are some people who stand against the government and Islamic system.

The IEA created the commission after gunmen started entering the houses of people pretending to be the Taliban fighters.

Earlier, it was said the IEA will also send back to provinces the Taliban fighters who are not trained enough to deal with people of Kabul especially the women."

BBC News, [Afghanistan: social media users delete profiles over fear of attack](#), 28 September 2021

"Since 15 August, Afghans have been deleting photos and tweets from their past - and many have turned away from social media altogether for fear of being targeted by Taliban forces."

Wall Street Journal, [Killings of Islamic State Militants Highlight Power Struggle With Afghanistan's Taliban](#), 26 September 2021

"While offering an amnesty to security officers of the former Afghan republic, the Taliban have shown no mercy to Islamic State, killing one of the group's main leaders in a Kabul prison hours after seizing the Afghan capital."

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: The fate of thousands hanging in the balance](#), 21 September 2021

"In this report, Amnesty International, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) have documented incidents of human rights violations that have taken place in Afghanistan since the takeover by the Taliban on 15 August". The report references a number of sources, including: [...]

- 5 September 2021. 7:04 PM. <https://twitter.com/adityarajkaul/status/1434510349609299971?lang=en>. 22 Alex Horton and Ezzatullah Mehrdad. The Washington Post. 28 July 2021. "After 'comedian' is killed by Taliban, videos of his treatment spark outrage across Afghanistan". <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/07/28/nazar-khasha-afghanistan-comedian/>. ANI. "Popular Afghan comedian killed by gunmen, family blames Taliban". <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/popular-afghan-comedian-killed-by-gunmen-family-blame-taliban20210723165601/>.
- Yogita Limaye. BBC. 1 September 2021. "Amid violent reprisals, Afghans fear the Taliban's 'amnesty' was empty". <https://www.bbc.com/news/worldasia-58395954>
- Zarifa Ghafari. Al Jazeera. 16 September 2021. "The world should not yet engage with the new Taliban government". <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/9/16/the-world-should-not-yet-engage-with-the-new-taliban-government> [...]
- France 24. 5 September 2021. "Taliban fire into air, use tear gas to break up Afghan women's protest in Kabul". <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBep8nD7NCQ>. Tweet. Farhan Amiri Official @خبرهای تازه
- FarhanAmiree. 4 September 2021. 6:06 PM. <https://twitter.com/FarhanAmiree/status/1434133338122596357> [...]
- Reuters. 10 September 2021. 9 September 2021. "Afghanistan commercial flights resume as U.N. accuses Taliban of harassment". <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/taliban-interim-government-agrees-let-foreigners-leave-afghanistan-2021-09-09/>. New York Times. "A Qatari jet carries more than 100 foreigners from Kabul". <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/world/asia/taliban-americans-afghanistan.html>. [...]
- Foreign Policy. 9 September 2021. "In Afghanistan, It's Back to the Future—of Taliban Tyranny". <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/09/09/talibanafghanistan-government-future-tyranny/> [...]

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- UN. 10 September 2021. "Taliban response to protests increasingly violent, warns OHCHR". <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1099552> [...]

OHCHR, [Press briefing notes on Afghanistan](#), 10 September 2021

"Peaceful protesters across various provinces in Afghanistan over the past four weeks have faced an increasingly violent response by the Taliban, including the use of live ammunition, batons and whips. On Wednesday, 8 September, the Taliban issued an instruction prohibiting unauthorized assemblies. Yesterday, Thursday, they ordered telecommunications companies to switch off internet on mobile phones in specific areas of Kabul.

[...] From 15 to 19 August, people gathered in Nangarhar and Kunar provinces to mark national flag-raising ceremonies. According to credible reports, during these three days when protests took place, the Taliban reportedly killed a man and a boy, and injured eight others, when firing in an apparent attempt to disperse the crowds. On Tuesday this week (7 September), during a protest in Herat, the Taliban reportedly shot and killed two men and wounded seven more. That same day in Kabul, credible reports indicate that the Taliban beat and detained protesters, including several women and up to 15 journalists. On Wednesday, 8 September, reports emerged that as a largely female group of demonstrators gathered in the Dashti-Barchi area of Kabul, at least five journalists were arrested and two severely beaten for several hours. There were also reports that during a demonstration in Faizabad city in Badakhshan province held by several women, including activists and human rights defenders, the Taliban fired in the air and allegedly beat several of the protesters. A small group of women who had gathered to protest elsewhere in Kabul were violently dispersed, as the Taliban fired shots into the air over their heads. That same day, women were violently dispersed during protests in Kapisa and Takhar provinces, and several women's rights activists in Kapisa were detained."

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: Suppression of protests at odds with Taliban's claims on human rights](#), 8 September 2021

"Responding to widespread reports that the Taliban are using unlawful force against peaceful protesters and journalists at gatherings across Afghanistan, including using gunfire to disperse crowds and cables to lash protesters, Samira Hamidi, Amnesty International's South Asia Campaigner said [...]

According to media reports, peaceful protests in Kabul, Badakhshan and Herat over the past two days have been dispersed by Taliban fighters firing rifles into the air, while some female protesters have reportedly been lashed with cables. Amnesty International has independently verified videos of Taliban fighters firing guns into the air to disperse protests in Kabul, and also verified videos of violence against women protesters between 4 and 7 September in Kabul committed by the Taliban.

Journalists and cameramen from Afghan media outlets Ariana, Tolo and Etilaat-e- Roz have said that they were beaten up and detained by Taliban fighters while trying to cover protests, before having their equipment confiscated or their footage destroyed."

*Individuals (formerly) affiliated with the Afghan government or international governments*

AVA Press, [Islamic Emirate Welcomes Possible EU Office Reopening](#), 26 October 2021

"The Islamic Emirate on Monday welcomed the reopening of the European Union's office in Kabul, saying that the step could be the beginning of engagement with European countries.

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_"The decision of the [sic] to reopen its office in the near future is a good step and it is in the interest of the people of Afghanistan," said Ahmadullah Wasiq, deputy spokesman for the . "They will evaluate their work from the vicinity."

According to a report in the Financial Times, the European Union is considering restarting its political activities in a limited way in Kabul.

The report said that the move is not intended to recognize the current government in Afghanistan. [...]

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Abdul Qahar Balkhi, the foreign ministry's spokesman, said in a tweet on Monday that the Islamic Emirate would guarantee the security of the European Countries' embassies and personnel."

Jurist.org, [Afghanistan dispatches: 'Anyone on the Taliban's blacklist is in great danger'](#), 26 October 2021

"Law students and lawyers in Afghanistan are filing reports with JURIST on the situation there after the Taliban takeover. Here, a Staff Correspondent for JURIST in Kabul offers observations on the Taliban's targeting of perceived or potential opponents in Afghanistan who publicly object to their policies, who were associated with the previous government, or who worked with foreign forces prior to the Taliban takeover. [...] It's mostly social activists, former military and government officials, CSOs, and traders who have been targeted, warned, and even affected by the Taliban. In particular, former government officials in Panjshir, Mazar, and Samangan provinces have been targeted, leading to the death of one in Samangan province. A few weeks ago the Taliban even went farther and stated some specific individuals – especially those who worked with the foreign forces – should give themselves up to be prosecuted or they will prosecute their family members if they find them. Anyone on the Taliban's blacklist is in great danger.

The Taliban are using different techniques in targeting people. They have issued warning letters to some former government officials stating that if they do not give themselves to them then their families would be arrested. Several officials of the the central bank received warning letters in the last three weeks. They all received written warning letters signed and stamped by the Taliban. One of the warning letters shared with me said "You should have stopped working with a slave government under control of Americans; we shall punish you so others take a lesson." Fortunately, the target of this letter is already out of the country. In another incident from the central bank, the Taliban went to check the former Chief of Staff of the central bank who was said to have worked with the ex-governor of the bank too closely. However, they could not find him.

The Taliban appear to have monitored government officials closely before they seized power in August. Most of the people who got killed by them were government officials. I myself lost three friends in a car bombing several months ago."

Ariana News, [IEA pledges to safeguard all UN operations and staff](#), 24 October 2021

"Deputy Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), Abdul Salaam Hanafi met with the UN Secretary-General's special representative to Afghanistan Deborah Lyons on Saturday at ARG (Presidential Palace) to discuss various issues including that of the protection of UN operations and staff.

Hanafi asked for the UN's cooperation in different sectors and assured Lyons the Islamic Emirate (IE) would ensure the safety of all UN organizations in Afghanistan, said a spokesperson of the IEA Zabiullah Mujahid in a statement."

Ariana News, [MoD to form a new, independent national army](#), 24 October 2021

Some IEA officials meanwhile said that former government soldiers will be brought back into the army.

"We have left the way open for those people who were in security institutions in the former government. Some of them have returned already," said Qari Saeed Khosti, spokesman for the Ministry of Interior Affairs."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, [Afghan Pilots Who Fled To Tajikistan Say Taliban Is Threatening Relatives Back Home](#), 23 October 2021

"Afghan military pilots who fled to Tajikistan when the Taliban seized power in Kabul say the militant group is pressuring them to return to Afghanistan by threatening to kill their relatives.

Trained by the United States, the Afghan pilots say their documents have been completed for traveling and they hope they will soon be able to go to the United States.

But two Afghan pilots who are sheltering at sanatoriums on the outskirts of Dushanbe [told RFE/RL's Tajik Service](#) on October 23 that the Taliban is now trying to force them to return to Afghanistan.

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One Afghan pilot, speaking on condition of anonymity, told RFE/RL that his son back in Afghanistan was beaten by the Taliban and that the militants threatened to kill the boy if the pilot did not return.

Another pilot told RFE/RL that Taliban militants have gone to the homes of several of his family members to demand that the pilot return to Afghanistan.

He told RFE/RL that the Taliban has a list of the names of all 143 Afghan pilots now in Tajikistan. He said Taliban authorities are increasing pressure on all of the pilots by threatening their relatives in Afghanistan.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid denied that the Taliban is threatening the relatives of the pilots.”

Pajhwok Afghan News, [Govt sets body to remove undesirable figures from military](#), 13 October 2021

“The government has created a commission to identify and remove unwanted people from military ranks, an official said Wednesday”

Financial Times, [Afghanistan’s hunters become hunted as Taliban conquer old order](#), 13 October 2021

“Khalid, the former Afghan intelligence service interrogator, said it was impossible for those in his situation to adjust to the new Afghanistan. He is trying to find a way to get his family out of the country and is getting desperate. “There is no place for us here now. We have not even been able to go back to our house since the Taliban came,” he said. “Either we escape or we will run out of money and die here.””

The Guardian, [Afghans seeking Australian humanitarian visas say Taliban are ‘hunting us like animals’](#), 10 October 2021

“Afghans who have applied for Australian humanitarian visas say they are living in fear as the [Taliban](#) are “hunting us down like animals”.

Accounts of their “painful” experiences under the Taliban regime – including testimonies of beatings, interrogations and threats to family members – are set to be provided to a Senate inquiry into Australia’s engagement in [Afghanistan](#), which begins public hearings on Monday.

A Hazara man described being interrogated by the Taliban as they demanded to know whether he was a civil activist and had any links to foreigners. The man, whose name cannot be published for safety reasons, said he was taken into a cell where he was blindfolded and gagged.

“I received 26 lashes. I felt the first five lashes and after that I couldn’t feel anything anymore, my back became numb.”

He recounted later being threatened with execution. “I believed my life would soon be over. I was so frightened,” he wrote. He was eventually released from custody and is now in hiding, sleeping in a different place every night.

“The Taliban have been calling me every night,” he wrote. “They tell me not to try to run away, that wherever I am, even outside of Afghanistan, they will find me.”

It is one of several testimonies compiled by an Australian citizen who has been helping Afghan nationals apply for Australian humanitarian visas, with the support of Rural Australians for [Refugees](#).

In another account provided to Guardian Australia, a former Afghan national army soldier said he had come out of hiding briefly to “send the papers and identity documents to friends who are helping me apply for a humanitarian visa to Australia”.

“They [the Taliban] say they forgive everyone who has worked with foreigners, or who worked in government or in the army,” he wrote. “But in reality, they are hunting us down like animals. I fear we will all be killed in the end.”

A worker for a non-government organisation noted the Taliban were going door-to-door, purportedly to assess humanitarian needs.

“They are using this as a way to spot people, in the guise of a humanitarian assessment, which is disgusting basically. They are doing evil things behind ‘good deeds’.”

This person said he was hoping to leave Afghanistan legally and had received an acknowledgement letter from the Australian government for his family’s humanitarian visa application in mid-September.

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Meanwhile, a Hazara hospitality worker described the past few weeks as “the darkest of my whole life”. He said many young people were “willing to gamble with their lives to illegally cross the borders into neighbouring countries”.

“Living here is much more suffocating and more painful. It’s a slow, gradual death,” this person wrote.

“I just hope that at least we can get out of here and be somewhere where we will be treated as human.””

The Guardian, [Former British embassy driver badly beaten in Kabul](#), 5 October 2021

“A former employee of the British embassy in Kabul has been badly beaten at his home by five armed men, in an attack linked to his 11 years working with UK diplomats in Afghanistan.

The British embassy driver, one of about 150 employees who applied to be evacuated in May, was at home with his family in a village on the outskirts of Kabul last Thursday when five masked men came to his house and attacked him, hitting him with their Kalashnikovs.

The attackers told him they had information he was still working for an international organisation. [...]

The driver, 44, who has asked for his name not to be printed, said his children, wife and neighbours saw the attack, and are now too afraid to leave their houses.

X-rays showed his hand had been broken in two places and his skull fractured in three places. [...] He did not report the attack to the police, believing that the Taliban-run police would not have helped him.

While he did not know the attackers, he suspected they were affiliated to the Taliban. Five years ago he had been targeted by Taliban militants because of his work with the British embassy, and was told he should leave his job. His son was hit in the head when a gun was fired during that attack, suffering brain damage.

Last month a pregnant Afghan policewoman was reported to have been killed by the Taliban, and there have been many other reports of attacks on people who worked for international organisations and the previous regime. Taliban officials have denied responsibility, citing the amnesty they announced for employees of the previous administration. It is not clear whether these attacks are officially organised and state sanctioned, or the work of fractured groups that know they can act with impunity.

The driver worked for the embassy for 10 years under a contract with G4S and then for 18 months in the same role employed by the Canadian security firm GardaWorld, which took over the embassy contract last year. He and about 150 colleagues applied to be evacuated in May under the UK Ministry of Defence’s Afghan relocations and assistance policy, but his application was refused on the grounds that British embassy employees hired through subcontracted organisations were not eligible for help.”

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: 13 Hazara killed by Taliban fighters in Daykundi province – new investigation](#), 5 October 2021

“Taliban forces unlawfully killed 13 ethnic Hazaras, including a 17-year-old girl, in Afghanistan’s Daykundi province after members of the security forces of the former government surrendered, a new investigation by Amnesty International has revealed.

The killings happened in Kahor village of Khidir district on 30 August. Eleven of the victims were former members of the Afghan National Defence Security Forces (ANDSF), and two were civilians.

According to eyewitness testimony gathered by Amnesty International, the Taliban extrajudicially executed nine of the ANDSF members after they had surrendered, killings that appear to be war crimes. Two civilians were killed as they attempted to flee, including a 17-year-old girl shot when the Taliban opened fire on a crowd of people.”

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: The fate of thousands hanging in the balance](#), 21 September 2021

“In this report, Amnesty International, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) have documented incidents of human rights violations that have taken place in Afghanistan since the takeover by the Taliban on 15 August”. The report references a number of sources, including:

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· BBC. 5 September 2021. "Afghanistan: Taliban accused of killing pregnant police officer". <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-58455826>. Relatives have confirmed she was killed by the Taliban. Tweet. Aditya Raj Kaul @AdityaRajKaul. [...]

Crisis Group, Afghanistan's Taliban expand their interim government, 28 September 2021

"Similarly, the Taliban have resisted calls from regional and Western governments to include figures from the previous Western-backed political establishment. Taliban interlocutors claim to Crisis Group that despite an internal push by some members to include figures associated with the former system in the new government, most of the top Taliban leadership has so far opposed such a move due to the perception that former politicians were corrupt and discredited. Perhaps more importantly, there were also concerns among the Taliban that if they moved to bring in either women or former politicians, they could risk backlash from the rank and file, who might view the leadership as betraying their ideals. The resurgence of the Islamic State Khorasan Province, which has sought to portray the Taliban as compromising their Islamist credentials, is likely to further diminish prospects for inclusion."

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [Afghan pilots start leaving Uzbekistan for UAE, despite Taliban pressure-source](#), 12 September 2021

"Afghanistan's new rulers have said they will invite former military personnel to join the country's revamped security forces and that they will come to no harm.

That offer rings hollow to Afghan pilots who spoke with Reuters. Even before the Taliban takeover, the U.S.-trained, English-speaking pilots had become their prime targets. Taliban fighters tracked them down and assassinated some pilots."

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [Brother of Afghan opposition figure executed by Taliban, family says](#), 10 September 2021

"The Taliban have executed the brother of Amrullah Saleh, the former Afghan vice president who became one of the leaders of anti-Taliban opposition forces in the Panjshir valley, his nephew said on Friday."

TOLO News, [Taliban Closes Bank Accounts of Officials From Former Govt](#), 10 September 2021

"Bank accounts of some former government officials who fled the country have been closed by the Taliban.

Anaamullah Samangani, a member of the Taliban Cultural Commission, said on Thursday that the Taliban has closed some bank accounts of officials who worked in the previous government, but he did not mention names. [...]

At the same time, a letter posted on social media by the Afghanistan Central Bank (Da Afghanistan Bank ) said that accounts of some ministers, deputy ministers, governors, deputy governors, members of parliament, members of provincial councils, mayors and other VIPs should be closed in other internal banks, and be reported to Central Bank.

Officials from Afghanistan Central Bank have not commented to the media over the issue."

UNOCHA, [Afghanistan: Humanitarian Access Snapshot \(August 2021\)](#), 9 September 2021  
Violence/ Threat Against Humanitarian Personnel/ Assets/ Facilities

In August, the HAG logged 124 incidents of violence/threats against humanitarians and their assets and facilities - the highest number of such incidents on HAG record. The majority of incidents related to intimidations, thefts, occupation of facilities or assets, and hijacking of vehicles and were authored by individuals identifying as Taliban. Most incidents were recorded in Kabul, Herat, Bamyán, Balkh and Nangarhar and had a very chilling effect on humanitarian operations. The notable increase in violent incidents can be attributed to the Taliban's rapid advancement into Kabul and other major cities, where Taliban fighters occupied many humanitarian buildings, in

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addition to government installations. In the early stages, humanitarian buildings were used as hideouts and as fighting positions against ANDSF. On 4 August 2021, Lashkar Gha City, Taliban members occupied an NGO compound and took position on the rooftop from where they started firing towards the Governor's compound. Once the cities came under full Taliban control, Taliban members, often identifying as members of the intelligence unit, conducted searches of humanitarian offices, seized humanitarian vehicles and asked NGO staff about project details as well as staff and asset lists. In some cases, provincial Taliban NGO Commissioners were successful in getting previously seized vehicles back and in convincing the occupiers to vacate the humanitarian facilities. However, in many cases, seized items remain missing and facilities remain occupied. In at least 18 incidents, ACG members falsely identified as Taliban to get access to humanitarian compounds and looted assets and vehicles from NGOs' offices and private residences. In at least 35 instances Taliban members threatened and intimidated UN and NGO staff through phone calls, letters as well as during house searches and accused them of spying for foreign intelligence entities. The current environment creates a lot of insecurity and concerns among the humanitarian community and highlights the need to have a functioning problem-solving mechanism with Taliban interlocutors at provincial and national level to quickly resolve issues of occupation and seized assets.

UNAMA, [Report of the Secretary-General: The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 8 September 2021

"20. [...] While statements by the Taliban included instructions not to enter anyone's house without permission and that "life, property and honour" would be protected, numerous reports emerged of the Taliban conducting house-to-house searches for government personnel, weapons and property, and in some cases confiscation of the latter. Some reports indicated that the Taliban were allegedly searching for people who had "worked with foreigners" and at times, beating them.

23. High-profile attacks by anti-Government elements occurred countrywide prior to the Taliban takeover of major cities. Between 16 May and 31 July, 18 suicide attacks were documented, compared with 11 in the prior period, including 16 suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices primarily targeting Afghan National Defence and Security Forces positions. In addition, there were 68 attacks using magnetic improvised explosive devices, including 14 in Kabul. Targeted and usually unclaimed assassinations occurred countrywide, with victims including, among others, the Policy and Planning Director of the Ministry of Urban Development and Land, killed in Kabul on 30 May; the deputy of the Ulema Shura, killed in Herat on 3 June; an appeals court provincial prosecutor and a pro-government religious scholar, killed in Logar on 7 and 12 June, respectively; and the Head of the Government Media and Information Centre, killed on 6 August. On 4 August, the Taliban claimed responsibility for an attack in Kabul on the residence of the acting Minister of Defence."

BBC, [Life in Kabul under Taliban: Where is your male escort?](#), 4 September 2021

"In some neighbourhoods, Taliban fighters go house-to-house. There's a knock on the door, a demand to hand over government phones and cars, anything of value from their old job. Sometimes even private cars are seized by Taliban who doubt it could have been afforded without some kind of corruption"

*"Westernised" young men*

*(Former) prosecutors, judges and lawyers*

Al Jazeera, [Trapped: Afghan women judges fear for their lives](#), 25 October 2021 [podcast]

"After trying to save Afghan women from violence and abuse, Afghan women judges are trying to escape Afghanistan and save themselves. Many Afghans are still trying to escape their country after the Taliban took over in August but few are as threatened as women judges. In 2009, the Elimination of Violence Against women was signed by then-President

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Hamid Karzai and in the years that followed, courts led by female judges opened in provinces around the country, enforcing laws protecting women from violence and abuse. Since the Taliban opened the prisons, many of those jailed are now free and threatening the lives of the women who locked them up. Now, the chaos that followed the Western exit from Afghanistan has made it that much more difficult for the women to escape. Today on The Take, we hear their stories and the plight of the international legal community trying to get them out.”

BBC News, [Fleeing Afghanistan: 'Women are imprisoned, while the criminals are free'](#), 26 October 2021

“When Afghanistan fell to the Taliban, hundreds of female judges went into hiding. The Taliban had opened prisons across the country, freeing the very men the judges once incarcerated. [...] For the past three months, Sana said, she has been hunted by the very men she sent to prison for violent crimes against women. The Taliban opened prisons as they advanced across the country, freeing thousands of criminals to take revenge on those who incarcerated them.

“I worked in a court that dealt with lots of different crimes, including murder, suicide, rape, and other complex crimes. The punishments I delivered were long and serious,” Sana said.

“But after they were all released, every one of them told us: ‘We will kill you if we find you.’” A recent BBC investigation found that more than 220 female judges were living in hiding because they feared retribution under Taliban rule. Speaking from secret locations inside Afghanistan, many of those women said they were receiving death threats on a daily basis.

In response to the accusations, secretary to the Taliban spokesman Bilal Karimi told the BBC: “Female judges should live like any other family without fear. No-one should threaten them. Our special military units are obliged to investigate such complaints and act if there is a violation.”

Karimi also repeated the Taliban's promise of a “general amnesty” for all former government workers across Afghanistan.

But Sana described the past few months as a “living nightmare”.

“We were changing locations every two to three days, moving from the street to safehouses and hotels,” she said.

“We couldn't go back. Our own house had already been raided.” [...] After their evacuation, the house was commandeered by a high-ranking member of the Taliban, she said. He lives in her home, drives her car, possesses all of her belongings.

For the judges now living as a part of the diaspora, news from back home is rarely positive. In one of their many Whatsapp groups, a montage of 28 profile pictures is being shared. Every face, one judge said, was a former male prosecutor allegedly assassinated in the past 48 hours by criminals released from prison.”

Al Jazeera, [Trapped: Afghan women judges fear for their lives](#), 25 October 2021

“Many Afghans are still trying to escape their country after the Taliban took over in August but few are as threatened as women judges. In 2009, the Elimination of Violence Against women was signed by then-President Hamid Karzai and in the years that followed, courts led by female judges opened in provinces around the country, enforcing laws protecting women from violence and abuse.

Since the Taliban opened the prisons, many of those jailed are now free and threatening the lives of the women who locked them up. Now, the chaos that followed the Western exit from Afghanistan has made it that much more difficult for the women to escape. Today on The Take, we hear their stories and the plight of the international legal community trying to get them out.”

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Gandhara, [Women Judges In Afghanistan Face Threats And 'Uncertain Future' According To Exiled Female Jurist](#), 13 October 2021

“Marzia Babakarkhil, an Afghan judge, spoke to RFE/RL's Radio Azadi from London about the dangers women judges face in Afghanistan. In a radio program on October 10, she talked about how the Taliban do not acknowledge women in the role of a judge and that her colleagues have faced threats and intimidation. Many have

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left the country or gone into hiding. Call-in programs focusing on women's rights, produced by Radio Azadi, are continuing to reach listeners in Afghanistan, despite the Taliban takeover of the country”

BBC News, [Female Afghan judges hunted by the murderers they convicted](#), 28 September 2021

Names have been changed for this article:

“For more than three decades, Judge Sanaa investigated cases of violence against women and children.

She says the majority of her cases involved convicting members of the Taliban as well as militant group Isis.

"I have received more than 20 threatening phone calls from former inmates who have now been released."

She is currently in hiding with more than a dozen family members.

Only once has one of her male relatives returned to their former family home. But as he was packing some clothes, the Taliban arrived at the house in several cars full of armed men, led by a commander.

"I opened the door. They asked me whether this was the judge's house," he says. "When I said I didn't know where she was, they threw me on the stairs. One of them hit me with the butt of his gun and started beating me. My nose and mouth were covered in blood."

After the armed men left, Sanaa's relative took himself to hospital.

"I told another relative we must keep changing the house where my sister is staying. There is no other way out now. We can't escape to any other country, even Pakistan."

The Times of India, [Afghanistan: Former female prosecutors in hiding to escape retaliation](#), 22 September 2021

Afghanistan's former female prosecutors are in hiding, fearing retaliation from those who were once jailed after their judgments and have now been released.

Many prisoners in Afghanistan have been freed by the Taliban after they took over the country last month.

The female prosecutors claim that ex-prisoners are searching for them to take revenge. One female judge said that she has been repeatedly called by unknown numbers after the Taliban took over the country, The Khaama Press News Agency reported.

Many female judges who could manage to flee from Afghanistan are now abroad, but hundreds of female judges are still hiding in the country.

The female prosecutors usually handled the cases of women's rights violation, women's torture, rapes, murder, and family harassment.

Along with other female employees in Afghanistan, female prosecutors have also been at their homes and have been told not to go to their jobs, The Khaama Press News Agency reported.

*(Former) Journalists*

AVA Press, [12 Journalists killed last year in Afghanistan](#), 3 November 2021

“Afghanistan’s Journalists Safety Committee in its latest report indicated that 12 journalists have been killed and 230 more have been conducted violence against during the past year in Afghanistan.” [...]

“As per the report, one journalist has been killed and 67 more have been committed violence against only after the Taliban takeover on August 15.”

Committee to Protect Journalists, [Journalists shot, beaten and detained in Afghanistan](#), 2 November 2021

“Washington, D.C., November 2, 2021 - The Taliban must thoroughly and swiftly investigate the attacks on Afghan journalists Abdul Khaliq Hussaini and Alireza Sharifi and the beating and detention of Zahidullah Husainkhil, and do everything in its power to ensure the safety of members of the press, the Committee to Protect Journalists said today.

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On October 28 and 29, unidentified gunmen injured Hussaini and Sharifi in separate attacks in Kabul, according to news reports, a statement by the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee, a local press freedom group, and Sharifi, who spoke to CPJ via messaging app.

Also on October 29, Taliban members beat and detained Husainkhil, according to a statement by the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee and a person familiar with the incident, who spoke to CPJ on the condition of anonymity due to fear of reprisal by the Taliban.

[...] At about 10:30am on October 28, two unidentified gunmen attacked Hussaini, a reporter for the privately owned online news service Khaama Press, while he was driving to the office of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, in Kabul, according to a report by his employer and a statement by the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee.

The attackers opened Hussaini's car, and one punched him in the head and face, while the other hit his head and back with the butt of a rifle, Ahmadi told his employer, saying that the attackers tried to take his car, but he threw the keys away from the vehicle and fled the scene.

Hussaini sustained injuries to his head and shoulder due to a gunshot wound, according to his employer, which did not specify the nature of that wound. He spent one night in a local hospital and then was released, according to that report, which said that the Taliban had detained two suspects in the attack. [...]

Separately, at about 8 p.m. on October 29, two unidentified men riding a motorcycle fired several gunshots at Sharifi, a camera operator and editor for the IRIB, the Iranian state-owned news agency, while he was driving home in Kabul with his wife and son, according to that statement by the safety committee, a report by his employer, and Sharifi.

Sharifi was treated at a local hospital after shards of window glass injured his left eye and a bullet grazed his lip, he said, adding that his wife and son were not injured. Bilal Karimi, deputy spokesperson of the Taliban in Afghanistan, told The Associated Press that the Taliban was investigating that attack. That report said no one has claimed responsibility for the shooting.

Also on October 28, at about 4:30 p.m., Taliban members pulled Husainkhil, director of the privately owned station Radio Mahaal, out of his car when he arrived at his home in Logar, according to the safety committee's statement and the person who spoke to CPJ.

The Taliban members beat Husainkhil with assault rifles on his face and back, and continued beating him while they brought him to a local police station, where they held him for about three hours, according to those sources.

[...] Previously, on October 25, a Taliban fighter beat freelance journalist Sadaqat Ghorzang while he was reporting at an Afghanistan-Pakistan border crossing, and on October 21 Taliban members beat at least three journalists covering a women's protest, as CPJ documented at the time"

Al Jazeera, [Watchdog: 30 recent cases of violence against Afghan journalists](#), 28 October 2021

More than 30 instances of violence and threats of violence against Afghan journalists were recorded in the last two months, with nearly 90 percent committed by the Taliban, says a media watchdog. More than 40 percent of the cases recorded by the Afghanistan National Journalists Union (ANJU) were physical beatings and another 40 percent were verbal threats of violence, Masorro Lutfi, the group's head, said on Wednesday. The remainder involved cases in which journalists were imprisoned for a day. One journalist was killed.

TOLO News, [30 Cases of Violence Against Afghan Reporters Cited: ANJU](#), 27 October 2021, 27 October 2021

"More than 30 cases of violence against journalists were recorded since the Islamic Emirate swept into power, the Afghanistan National Journalists Union said on Wednesday.

Speaking at a news conference in Kabul, the head of the union, Masroor Lufti, said that 90 percent of the violence was committed by forces related to the Islamic Emirate. The rest of the cases were committed by unidentified individuals. "The Afghanistan's National Journalists' Union conducted a general assessment over the journalists' status for Afghanistan across the country and it shows that over 30 cases of violence against journalists happened," he added. "Nearly 90 percent of these cases belong to the Taliban."

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The journalists expressed their deepest concern over the ongoing situation of the media in Afghanistan and called on the Islamic Emirate officials to form a way for journalists to deal with the safety issues as well as to provide access to information.

“One of the main problems that we have is that we don’t have proper access to information. When we go to cover a news event, we face problems,” said Mohammad Sahibzada.

“My wish is that if we (women) are capable of working, why are women not allowed to work in the government media? They should be allowed,” said Farahnaz, a journalist.

The spokesman for the Ministry of Interior, Sayed Khosti, said that efforts were underway to provide security for the journalists.

“The Islamic Emirate in some cases arrested the perpetrators,” he said. “Those who humiliated the journalists have been advised.”

The union earlier said that based on findings, over 70 percent of media organizations in the country have halted their activities after the collapse of the former government due to restrictions to access to information and economic challenges.”

TOLO News, [Reporter Beaten by Soldiers in Torkham](#), 24 October 2021

“A TOLONews freelance reporter for the eastern region, Sadaqat Ghorzang, was beaten by border forces near Torkham gate on Sunday while making a report about the situation at the crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Ghorzang said although he had coordinated with Torkham crossing officials, the border forces beat him up and threw his camera and other equipment into the river and also broke his mobile phone.

“After having a talk with the Torkham crossing commissioner, I along with a bodyguard of the commissioner went to near the Torkham gate to make a report. There we were warned and beaten up by the border forces without any reason. They threw my camera and other equipment into the river. They kept me for a few minutes at the commissariat and broke my mobile. So far, I do not know what has happened to my camera,” Ghorzang said. [...]

Meanwhile, reporters in the eastern region of Afghanistan in reaction to the incident said the future situation will be difficult if this continues. [...]

So far, no government department has reacted to this incident.

This follows several similar incidents that have been recorded in Kabul and in a number of provinces.”

Al Jazeera, [Afghan journalists lament ‘bleak’ future for media under Taliban](#), 22 October 2021

“In a recent report, the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) described the killing of a journalist by unknown gunmen and seizures of two media outlets in the east and the north as examples of the Islamic Emirate failing to ensure safety of the media. Like CPJ, the AJSC also says the Taliban has failed to provide details of promised investigations into abuses against journalists.

“I don’t know any journalist who is willing to work with the Taliban, but I do know a lot of journalists who left the country and many others who want to leave the country. Journalists don’t feel safe in Afghanistan,” said Ahmad.”

Committee to Protect Journalists, [Taliban fighters assault at least 3 journalists covering women’s protest in Afghanistan](#), 21 October 2021

Today, Taliban fighters assaulted at least three journalists covering a women’s protest opposing the group and demanding “work, bread, and education” in Kabul, the capital, according to multiple news reports and Bülent Kılıç, a photographer with the French news agency Agence France-Presse, who was among those attacked and spoke to CPJ in a phone interview.

Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, [Briefing Notes Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration](#), 4 October 2021

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“On 02.10.21 it was reported that two civilians (including a well-known journalist) and two Taliban had been killed in an attack by unknown armed assailants in Jalalabad/Nangarhar. On 01.10.21 it was reported that the Taliban were forcing interpreters who had worked for the Netherlands to appear in court by threatening their relatives.”

AVA Press, [Former Afghan journalist, journalism lecturer killed in eastern Nangarhar province](#), 3 October 2021

“Unknown gunmen killed four people in Police District three of Jalalabad City of eastern Nangarhar province among them a well-known journalist and journalism lecturer, Sayed Maroof Sadat.

Afghan Voice Agency (AVA)\_The incident happened on Saturday, October 2 and local residents say that the two others killed were the Taliban fighters. [...]

Sayed Maroof Sadat was a journalism graduate from and was working as a journalist in radio “Sub Bakhair and Sham”.

He was recently assigned as media in charge of the directorate of urban development in province and was also working for a number of foreign media in the province.”

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Taliban Severely Restrict Media](#), 1 October 2021

“Taliban security forces have also arbitrarily detained journalists and beaten several. The head of a journalists’ advocacy group told Human Rights Watch that the Taliban have taken at least 32 journalists into custody since they took power in Kabul on August 15. Most were released after warnings about their reporting, but some were beaten. One who was badly beaten was released with the warning not to tell anyone what happened to him. As of October 1, at least one remained in custody without access to his family.

In the city of Herat on September 6, the Taliban detained Murtaza Samadi, 21, a freelance photojournalist, while he was covering a protest. Family members said that after hearing of his arrest, they asked officials at the governor’s office and police station where he had been taken. They were told that the case had been referred to the intelligence department and that Samadi was accused of organizing the protest and having “connections with foreigners.” He remained in custody without access to his family until he was released on September 30.

Beyond the arrests, the Taliban’s intelligence office has summoned journalists and warned them that their reporting constituted “propaganda” and needed to stop. [...]

Many Afghan journalists have fled the country or have gone into hiding, and scores of media outlets, especially outside major cities, have closed altogether. Taliban commanders and fighters have long engaged in a pattern of threats, intimidation, and violence against members of the media, and have been responsible for targeted killings of journalists.”

AVA Press, [Herat Family Asks Emirate to Release Photojournalist](#), 30 September 2021

“The family of Murteza Samadi, a photojournalist who was detained in Herat province, called on the Taliban to release him from detention.

Afghan Voice Agency(AVA)\_Freelance photojournalist Murteza Samadi was detained by the Taliban about three weeks ago in western Herat province while covering a women’s protest held in front of the governor’s office.

[...]

At the same time, officials of the Islamic Emirate in province said that he will be released in the coming days.

“Murtaza is an ordinary person who was taking photos with his private camera. His documents were sent to the directorate of security, and he will be released after some days,” said Deputy Governor of Herat Shir Ahmad Amar.”

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: The fate of thousands hanging in the balance](#), 21 September 2021

“In this report, Amnesty International, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) have documented incidents of human rights violations that have taken place

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in Afghanistan since the takeover by the Taliban on 15 August". The report references a number of sources, including: [...]

BBC. 9 September 2021. "Afghanistan: Journalists tell of beatings by Taliban".  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-58500579> [...]

TOLO News, [153 Afghan Media Outlets Cease Operating in Less Than 1 Month](#), 13 September 2021

"Organizations supporting free media in Afghanistan said on Monday that since the fall of the former government in mid-August, 153 media outlets have stopped activity in 20 provinces.

According to officials at the organizations, these outlets include radio, print and TV channels, and both economic problems and restrictions are reportedly the main reasons.

The officials said that if the media's financial crisis is not solved and restrictions against them are not addressed, more outlets are likely to cease operating in the country."

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [Taliban response to Afghan protests increasingly violent, UN says](#), 10 September 2021

"The U.N. rights office on Friday said that the Taliban response to peaceful marches in Afghanistan has been increasingly violent, with authorities using live ammunition, batons and whips and causing the deaths of at least four protesters. [...]

She added that the United Nations had also received reports of house-to-house searches for those who participated in the protests. Journalists covering the protests have also been intimidated.

"In one case, one journalist was reported to have been told, as he was being kicked in the head, 'You are lucky you haven't been beheaded'," Shamdasani said. "Really there has been lots of intimidation of journalists simply trying to do their job." "

BBC News, [Afghanistan: Journalists tell of beatings by Taliban](#), 10 September 2021

"Journalists in Afghanistan say that they have been beaten, detained and flogged by the Taliban when attempting to cover protests.

Photos circulating online show two journalists from Etilaatroz newspaper with welts and bruises after their arrest in the capital Kabul.

One of them, Taqi Daryabi, told the BBC he had been taken to a district police station where he was kicked and beaten." [...]

"Afghanistan's Tolo news agency reported that its cameraman had been arrested and held by the Taliban for nearly three hours.

The CPJ, an international non-governmental organisation, said at least 14 journalists had been detained and then released over the past two days."

UNOCHA, [Afghanistan: Humanitarian Access Snapshot \(August 2021\)](#), 9 September 2021

"Interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities

In August, the HAG recorded 32 interferences compared to 11 in July. Taliban members initiated 31 interferences, while ANSF members authored one incident. In at least 19 instances, armed Taliban members visited NGO offices with the aim to search and investigate about the NGO's activities, asking for staff and assets lists. In some instances, NGOs were asked to register their programs, or to stop female staff from attending offices and field work. On 31 August 2021, in Farah, the Provincial NGO Commissioner asked all humanitarian partners to submit their project proposals along with all related documents; further emphasizing that women were not allowed to resume their work until further notice. In five incidents, Taliban members attempted to interfere in health programs by demanding additional services and supplies, suspending health services and trying to replace some of their key staff. The absence of a clear Taliban policy on humanitarian activities, makes it challenging for provincial

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NGO Commissioners to make decisions which creates a certain limbo with lots of confusion among humanitarian partners which results insignificant delays in resuming humanitarian programs.”

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty’s Gandhara, [Live Rounds, Batons, Whips: Taliban Violence Against Protesters, Journalists Rising](#), 9 September 2021

“Since the Taliban issued an order banning protests "under any circumstances" earlier this week, protesters have also been beaten and detained, according to the UN's human rights spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani, while Reporters Without Borders (RSF) said “incidents involving media personnel have been on the rise in both Kabul and provincial cities,” with Afghan journalists being “harassed by the Taliban, arrested, and beaten with cables.” “

Danish Immigration Service, [Afghanistan Recent developments in the security situation, impact on civilians and targeted individuals](#), 8 September 2021

“There have also been reports of Taliban fighters going house-to-house searching for journalists. [...]

The private news outlet Tolo News, have been allowed to continue their reporting with female anchors, while the Taliban has barred female anchors at Radio Television Afghanistan from returning to work. [...]

SER advised that Taliban perceive human rights defenders as an extension of the American presence in the country because they find that the idea of human rights undermine the principles of Islam.”

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Taliban Severely Beat Journalists](#), 8 September 2021

“Taliban authorities in Afghanistan have been detaining and assaulting journalists and imposing new restrictions on media work, Human Rights Watch said today. [...]

On September 7, 2021, Taliban security forces detained Taqi Daryabi and Nemat Naqdi, journalists from the Kabul-based media outlet Etilaat-e Roz. The reporters had been covering protests by women in Kabul demanding an end to Taliban violations of the rights of women and girls. Etilaat-e Roz reported that Taliban authorities took the two men to a police station in Kabul, placed them in separate cells, and severely beat them with cables. Both men were released on September 8 and received medical care at a hospital for injuries to their backs and faces. [...]

The Taliban authorities also detained a Tolonews photojournalist, Wahid Ahmadi, on September 7, and released him the same day. They confiscated his camera and prevented other journalists from filming the protest. [...]

Taliban commanders and fighters have long engaged in a pattern of threats, intimidation, and violence against members of the media, and have been responsible for targeted killings of journalists”

TOLO News, [Well-Known Journalist Fahim Dashti Killed in Panjshir](#), 6 September 2021

“Fahim Dashti, a well-known journalist and spokesperson for the Resistance Front, was killed during a clash in Panjshir province on Monday night.

The National Resistance Front officials said that he was targeted by Pakistan Air Force drones in Anaba district of the province.

This claim was denied by the Taliban.

Fahim Dashti held various jobs over his career including media adviser, a member of the Afghanistan Journalist Federation, managing director of Subh-e-Kabul weekly magazine, and as head of the Afghanistan National Journalists Union.

He was currently working as spokesperson for the resistance front in Panjshir province.”

OCHCHR, [Afghanistan: Journalists at risk of persecution need urgent protection – UN experts](#), 3 September 2021

“A group of UN human rights experts\* today called on all States to provide urgent protection to Afghan journalists and media workers who fear for their lives and are seeking safety abroad.

“Journalists and media workers, in particular women, are facing heightened risks since the Taliban’s political takeover of Afghanistan,” the experts said. [...]

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Recalling the various resolutions on the safety of journalists adopted by the Human Rights Council in recent years, the UN experts called on the Council to uphold its own commitment and do more to address the growing threat to the safety of journalists in the country.

“Reports of targeted killings of journalists and their family members, home raids, threats and intimidation in areas controlled by the Taliban have sharply increased in recent months. This is taking place in a context where Afghanistan is already considered one of the most dangerous countries for journalists,” the experts said. [...]

“We are deeply worried about the threats and systematic human rights violations faced by female journalists, as they may be targeted for working in the media or simply being a woman in public life,” the UN experts added. [...]

The experts: Ms. Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression; Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism; Clément Voule, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; and the Working Group on discrimination against women: Ms. Melissa Upreti (Chair), Ms. Dorothy Estrada-Tanck (Vice Chair), Ms. Elizabeth Broderick, Ms. Ivana Radačić, and Ms. Meskerem Geset Techane.

*Human rights defenders, NGO representatives*

UNHCR, [Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 8 November 2021

“The situation for women in Afghanistan remains worrying. On 6 November, the bodies of four women, including one of a women’s rights activist, were discovered in Balkh province in northern Afghanistan; the three other bodies have not yet been identified, the Balkh Information Department Director, Mawlawi Zabihullah Noorani, stated. Since mid-August, women have held regular, nationwide protests against the Taliban, demanding that their rights be restored and protected, and since September, several female activists have been reportedly detained and tortured by Taliban members. On 4 November, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said Taliban rules were prohibiting most women from operating as aid workers in the country.”

Kabul Now, [Female civil activists murdered in Balkh; Taliban arrest two suspects](#), 6 November 2021

"The Taliban security forces have arrested two suspects in Mazar-e-Sharif, capital city of the northern Balkh province, in connection to the murder of four women whose dead bodies were found last Thursday, November 04, inside a residence."

UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCO), [Foreign Travel Advice: Afghanistan - Coronavirus](#), Last updated: 5 November 2021

There have been a number of serious attacks on both western and Afghan NGOs and vehicles belonging to them, in which people have been killed or injured. NGO workers have been kidnapped near their places of work. Most attacks continue to occur in the east and south of Afghanistan with a recent increase in activity in the central areas. The [International NGO Safety Organisation \(INSO\)](#) issues regular security updates for NGOs.

UNHCR, [Afghanistan: Human rights defenders living under “climate of fear”](#) – UN expert, 3 November 2021

“Human rights defenders in Afghanistan describe living under a climate of fear, threats, intense insecurity and growing desperation, a UN expert said today, calling for an urgent coordinated response from the international community.

“Among those most at risk are defenders documenting alleged war crimes, women defenders, in particular criminal lawyers, cultural rights defenders, especially those working in banned sectors such as music, and

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defenders from minority groups. Defenders tell me that some have erased their online data history to evade identification, and that the Taliban are resorting to other ways of finding them - for example that one HRD was identified by an injury to his leg.”

“Many defenders are well known in their local communities, in particular in rural areas, and have left for the anonymity of the cities, but even there they are forced to constantly change locations,” the UN expert said. “Most have also lost their source of income, further limiting their options to find safety.””

TOLO News, [Woman Activist in Kandahar Says Family Members Beaten](#), 12 September 2021

“Fahima Rahmati, a civil society activist and the head of a charity in southern Kandahar province, claimed on Sunday that an “armed group related to the Taliban,” had entered her house and beat some of her family members last night.

Miss Rahmati, who leads a charity naming Heela, (wish) said she has received death threats and her family has also been threatened.

She added that she has never worked with the government before. “Is this their general amnesty--that the Taliban are coming to my house, and beating my family members? Is governance like this?”

A man also claimed that his wife was recently killed in a Taliban shooting in Kabul. Her husband, Abdul Khaleq said: “Is this in Islam? Can someone, in Islam, kill a woman who is outside her house?””

UNAMA, [Report of the Secretary-General: The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security](#), 8 September 2021

42. Human rights defenders and media workers continued to be targeted. UNAMA recorded the killing of a civil society activist and his wife by the Taliban in Helmand Province; the killing of a civil society activist in Kabul Province; the killing of an international photojournalist in Kandahar Province; and the killing of a female journalist, claimed by ISIL-K, in Kabul Province. In addition, a private radio worker was injured in an armed attack by unknown perpetrators in Ghazni Province; a journalist, a female non-governmental organization employee and a female civil society activist were threatened by unknown perpetrators in Daikundi and Herat Provinces; and a female journalist reportedly escaped an attack by ISIL-K in Nangarhar Province. In Parwan Province, Radio Bareen stopped broadcasting after one of its female staff was assaulted by unknown perpetrators.

43. Reports emerged during the reporting period of media entities temporarily ceasing their activities in districts in Baghlan, Zabul, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Nuristan and Paktia Provinces after they had been overtaken by the Taliban. On 26 July, in Kandahar, the National Directorate of Security arrested four journalists after their return from a reporting trip in Spin Boldak.

### *Hazara Shi’a*

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, [Factsheet Afghanistan](#), 28 October 2021

“Hazara Shi’a Persecution  
[...] The Hazara Shi’a have faced *attacks* by both the Taliban and the ISIS-K over the last 30 years and now face the prospect of more violence with the Taliban back in power. There has been a recent resurgence of attacks targeting the Hazara community. In the first half of 2021, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) *documented* 20 attacks targeting Hazaras, which left a total of 143 dead and 357 injured. In early July, after the Taliban took control of Ghazni province in their advance toward Kabul, villagers from Mundarakht left for shelter in the mountains during fighting between the Taliban and government forces. As some of the villagers returned to gather food and supplies, Taliban forces *massacred* nine Hazara Shi’a men over the course of three days; six were shot and three were tortured to death. In September 2021, Hazara activists claimed that at least 1,200 Hazara Shi’a were evicted from their homes in Daykundi province

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as the Taliban fighters seized their properties. Shortly after, in *October 2021*, there were confirmed reports that the Taliban killed 13 Hazaras in Daykundi province. On October 8, 2021, ISIS-K *attacked* a Shi'a mosque in Kunduz province that killed at least 46 worshipers and wounded dozens more. In August 2021, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum issued a *press release* stating its grave concern about the Shi'a minority, warning that Hazaras face "a risk of crimes against humanity or even genocide." For more information on the threat to the Hazara community, please refer to USCIRF's Spotlight September 2021 episode "*Hazara Community Threatened in Afghanistan.*"

Al Jazeera, [Why the Hazara people fear genocide in Afghanistan](#), 27 October 2021

"In the aftermath of the withdrawal of international troops from Afghanistan, violence against the Hazara population has escalated. With a long history of persecution, including by the Taliban, the Hazaras are right to fear a genocide.

While the Taliban and other armed groups are targeting and committing human rights violations against the people of Afghanistan, the Hazara ethnic and religious population is especially at high risk. The international community must pressure the Taliban to guarantee the protection of the rights of the Hazara people, to ensure a genocide against them does not take place. [...]

The return of the Taliban to power in Kabul has meant not only a rollback of the limited social gains the Hazaras had achieved, but also new atrocities against the community.

In August, Amnesty International reported that at least nine Hazara men were massacred by the Taliban when its fighters took over Ghazni province in July. Then earlier this month, the organisation released evidence of another massacre in which 13 Hazaras, including a 17-year-old girl, were killed in late August in Daykundi province.

In late September and early October, reports in Western media emerged of mass "evictions" of Hazara people from their ancestral homes and lands in Daykundi province. Taliban fighters forced over 4,000 Hazaras from their homes, claiming they had no ownership over their land, leaving them stranded without food or shelter as harsh winter approaches. In Mazar-e-Sharif, a local Taliban court decided to expel some 2,000 families, again based on false claims that they do not own their homes.

By now there is a clear pattern of Taliban atrocities being committed across Afghanistan, which could mean that the Hazaras may be facing imminent ethnic cleansing.

The Taliban leadership may have moderated its rhetoric to please the international community, claiming that it will protect all ethnic groups, but it has done nothing to stem the growing number of crimes being committed by its fighters. What is more, the group has also clearly declared that it will only accept Hanafi jurisprudence, which would effectively preclude any accommodation of the Shia Islamic law and values followed by Hazaras. Expectedly, no Hazara representative was included in the Taliban government announced in September.

It is also not surprising that, despite the insistence by the Taliban that it can provide security and peace in Afghanistan, ISKP has continued its deadly attacks against the Hazaras. In October, the bombing of a Hazara mosque in Kunduz resulted in the death of more than 100 people. Another bombing of a Hazara mosque in Kandahar killed at least 47 people and wounded scores of others."

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Surge in Islamic State Attacks on Shia](#), 25 October 2021

"The Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP), an armed group affiliated with the Islamic State (ISIS), is carrying out bombings and other targeted attacks against Afghanistan's Shia religious minority that amount to crimes against humanity, Human Rights Watch said today. The group has also carried out other mass casualty attacks, including the August 29, 2021 suicide bombing at Kabul's airport that killed 170 Afghans, mostly civilians.

The ISKP has claimed responsibility for many recent unlawful attacks on the Hazara Shia community, including suicide bombings that killed at least 72 people at the Sayed Abad mosque in Kunduz on October 8, and a bombing that killed at least 63 people at the Bibi Fatima mosque in Kandahar on October 15. After the Kandahar attack, ISIS issued a statement saying it would target Shia in their homes and centers "in every way, from slaughtering their

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necks to scattering their limbs... and the news of [ISIS's] attacks...in the temples of the [Shia] and their gatherings is not hidden from anyone, from Baghdad to Khorasan.

The ISKP armed group has repeatedly carried out devastating attacks that appear designed to spread terror and inflict maximum suffering particularly on Afghanistan's Hazara community," said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "The numerous attacks targeting Hazaras amount to crimes against humanity, and those responsible should be brought to justice.

The ISKP has posed a serious threat to Hazaras and other Afghan civilians since at least 2015, when the Islamist armed group began attacks on mosques, hospitals, schools, and other civilian facilities, especially in predominantly Shia neighborhoods. These attacks have killed at least 1,500 civilians and injured thousands more, mostly religious minorities.

[...]

Taliban authorities, who took over Kabul and most of the country in August, have said they would [provide more protection](#) for Shia mosques and other facilities. However, the Taliban also have a history of committing serious abuses against Hazaras, including large-scale killings during fighting in Mazar-e Sharif and Bamiyan in 1998-99. Recently, Taliban officials have singled out Hazara journalists for arbitrary [detention and beatings](#), and Hazara communities for [forced evictions](#).

[...]

The ISKP attacks are widespread. The group has killed more than 1,500 civilians and wounded over 3,500, primarily by bombing civilian facilities such as Shia mosques and Shia educational institutions, as well as hospitals, sports centers, and other gathering places in Shia neighborhoods and at Shia or Hazara events in Kabul, Jalalabad, Herat, and other cities. The consistent nature of the attacks over a six-year-period indicates a pattern, if not a methodical plan, and supports the conclusion that these attacks are systematic.

Statements from ISKP leaders since 2015 and as recently as October 2021 indicate that the deadly targeting of Shia civilians has been deliberate. In July 2016, for instance, following an attack on Hazara protesters in Kabul, the ISKP stated that Shias "were undisputed infidels and... whoever doubts this or the right to kill them are, in turn, apostates." "

The Guardian, [Taliban 'forcibly evicting' Hazaras and opponents in Afghanistan](#), 23 October 2021

"Thousands of people have been forced from their homes and land by Taliban officials in the north and south of Afghanistan, in what amounted to collective punishment, illegal under international law, Human Rights Watch has warned.

Many of the evictions targeted members of the Shia Hazara community, while others were of people connected to the former Afghan government. Land and homes seized this way have often been redistributed to Taliban supporters, HRW said.

Forced evictions logged by Human Rights Watch took place across five provinces, including Kandahar, Helmand and Uruzgan in the south, Daikundi in the centre, and the northern province of Balkh.

Many of the people were ordered to leave homes and farms with just a few days' notice, and without any opportunity to prove their legal ownership. Some were reportedly told that if they did not comply with orders to leave, they "had no right to complain about the consequences", the report said.

"The Taliban are forcibly evicting Hazaras and others on the basis of ethnicity or political opinion to reward Taliban supporters," said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "These evictions, carried out with threats of force and without any legal process, are serious abuses that amount to collective punishment."

The Taliban promised an inclusive government, but chose an all-male cabinet dominated largely by Sunni clerics from the Pashtun ethnic group, from which the group has historically drawn its core support."

Human Rights Watch, [Afghanistan: Taliban Forcibly Evict Minority Shia](#), 22 October 2021

"Taliban officials in several provinces across Afghanistan have forcibly displaced residents partly to distribute land to their own supporters, Human Rights Watch said today. Many of these evictions have targeted Hazara Shia communities, as well as people associated with the former government, as a form of collective punishment.

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In early October 2021, the Taliban and associated militias forcibly evicted hundreds of Hazara families from the southern Helmand province and the northern Balkh province. These followed earlier evictions from Daikundi, Uruzgan, and Kandahar provinces. Since the Taliban came to power in August, the Taliban have told many Hazaras and other residents in these five provinces to leave their homes and farms, in many cases with only a few days' notice and without any opportunity to present their legal claims to the land. A former United Nations political analyst said that he saw eviction notices telling residents that if they did not comply, they "had no right to complain about the consequences."

"The Taliban are forcibly evicting Hazaras and others on the basis of ethnicity or political opinion to reward Taliban supporters," said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "These evictions, carried out with threats of force and without any legal process, are serious abuses that amount to collective punishment."

Reuters, [For Afghan Hazaras, where to pray can be life and death choice](#), 21 October 2021

"The last two Fridays have seen suicide bombings, both attacks claimed by Islamic State (ISIS) and both targeting the minority Shi'ite sect. More than 100 people were killed in total.

In the wake of the violence, some Hazaras are not going to the mosque at all.

Hazaras have long been discriminated against in Afghanistan from a mix of factors, of which religion is just one.

But while thousands died under the last Taliban government from 1996-2001, it was the appearance of Islamic State in Afghanistan from around the start of 2015 that made them and the wider Shi'ite community a systematic target.

Many hundreds were killed in suicide attacks on mosques and community centres by hardline Sunni militants who do not see them as true Muslims, bringing a form of the sectarian violence that devastated countries like Iraq to Afghanistan.

No up-to-date census data exists, but estimates put the size of the overall Shi'ite community at between 10-20 percent of the population, including Persian-speaking Tajiks and Pashtuns as well as Hazaras.

In addition, Hazaras have often also been victim of the ethnic and economic rivalries endemic to Afghan politics. [...] Although the Taliban have promised that all of Afghanistan's ethnic groups will be protected, the killing has gone on since they seized power in August."

UNHCR, [UNHCR Iran: Afghanistan Situation Update](#), 18 October 2021

"For the Shiite minority and many of the Hazaras in Afghanistan, ISKP's regained strength has ushered in yet another era of uncertainty. Earlier this month, Amnesty International said that the Taliban unlawfully killed 13 Hazaras, including a 17-year-old girl, amplifying fears for ethnic and religious minorities. On 16 October, it was reported that large populations of the Hazara ethnic group have been ordered to evict their homes by the Taliban. Most evictions are taking place in remote and rural areas of the country. It is estimated that between 400 to 2,000 families have been displaced from 15 villages in Daikundi province in central Afghanistan. Among the new arrivals in Iran, 40% are Hazaras; UNHCR suspects the number of Hazaras crossing to Iran will likely increase, in light of these recent attacks."

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), [Suicide attack on Shia mosque in Kandahar after Friday prayers](#), 18 October 2021

"A suicide bombing at a Shia Mosque in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar killed over 50 people and injured more than 80 on 15 October. A series of three explosions took place at the mosque, with one bomb detonated at the door of the mosque, and two more inside the building.

The attack took place during Friday prayers, which is the busiest congregation of the week, and the building was full of worshippers at the time.

Kandahar is the Taliban's heartland, and while this is the first time in recent years that its minority Shia residents have been directly targeted in a terror attack, the incident marks the second attack on Shia worshippers in

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Afghanistan in a week. On 8 October a suicide attack on a Shia Mosque in the northern city of Kunduz killed at least 50 people and injured over 100, again during Friday prayers.

According to CSW sources, Islamic State – Khorasan Province (IS-K), a local branch of the Islamic State group who claimed responsibility for the attack on 8 October, is also expected to claim responsibility for this attack.”

The Khaama Press News Agency, [Shi’ite Muslims to be targeted everywhere: warns ISIS](#), 17 October 2021

“Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) or Daesh in a statement said that Shi’ite Muslims are perilous and they will be targeted by them everywhere.”

The Guardian, [Shia mosque bombing in Afghanistan that killed at least 47 claimed by ISKP](#), 15 October 2021

“A suicide bombing at a mosque in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar has killed at least 47 people and injured more than 80, in the second major attack on Shia worshippers in Afghanistan in a week.

The Imam Bargah mosque was particularly crowded when the attackers struck, because the community had been holding memorial prayers for the victims of the previous bombing, in northern Kunduz province.

Friday’s attack, like the previous bombing, was claimed by the Islamic State’s local affiliate, **Islamic State** Khorasan Province (ISKP), which has a long history of attacking Afghanistan’s Shia minority.

Four men arrived around 1.00pm local time (0930 BST) detonating at least one bomb at the mosque gate and two more among two more among worshippers inside, witnesses said.”

Al Jazeera, [Taliban says ‘ready for inclusivity, but not selectivity’](#), 9 October 2021

“The Taliban’s “Islamic emirate” is “ready for inclusivity but not selectivity”, the group’s senior leader has told Al Jazeera, in response to the Western pressure for an inclusive Afghan government. The Taliban says members of ethnic minorities have been represented in its Cabinet announced last month and that women would be added later. The Taliban has been cold to US suggestion to include “old guard” in the “inclusive” government, sources told Al Jazeera.

“The international community must respect the wishes of the Afghan people,” Suhail Shaheen, ambassador-designate to the UN, told Al Jazeera in an exclusive interview.”

The New York Times, [ISIS Bomber Kills Dozens at Shiite Mosque in Northern Afghanistan](#), 8 October 2021

“An Islamic State suicide bomber devastated a Shiite mosque in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz on Friday, killing dozens of worshipers in a deadly continuation of the terrorist group’s campaign against the Hazara minority. The massacre, while the mosque was crowded for Friday Prayer, was the group’s second attack against a mosque in just a few days. And it was the realization of Afghan Hazaras’ fears that the Islamic State’s predation would go unchecked under the rule of the Taliban, which itself preyed on the Hazara in the past.

Witness accounts described a powerful explosion with many casualties. Matullah Rohani, a Taliban official in Kunduz, told local media that at least 43 people were killed by the attack and more than 140 were injured.

A local Shiite community leader put the death toll much higher. Sayed Ahmad Shah Hashemi, who represents Kunduz Province’s Shiite population, told The New York Times that more than 70 people were killed in the attack.”

“Hours after the bombing, it was claimed by the [Islamic State Khorasan](#), also known as ISIS-K. It was the group’s deadliest strike since the suicide bombing at the international airport in Kabul on Aug. 26 that [killed about 170 civilians](#) and [13 U.S. troops](#).”

“The Taliban’s chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, condemned the attack on Friday, and vowed retribution.”

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: 13 Hazara killed by Taliban fighters in Daykundi province – new investigation](#), 5 October 2021

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"Taliban forces unlawfully killed 13 ethnic Hazaras, including a 17-year-old girl, in Afghanistan's Daykundi province after members of the security forces of the former government surrendered, a new investigation by Amnesty International has revealed.

The killings happened in Kahor village of Khidir district on 30 August. Eleven of the victims were former members of the Afghan National Defence Security Forces (ANDSF), and two were civilians.

According to eyewitness testimony gathered by Amnesty International, the Taliban extrajudicially executed nine of the ANDSF members after they had surrendered, killings that appear to be war crimes. Two civilians were killed as they attempted to flee, including a 17-year-old girl shot when the Taliban opened fire on a crowd of people."

Itv News, [Brits in Afghanistan fear for families' lives as Taliban threaten to 'cut off children's heads'](#), 5 October 2021

"One British national told ITV News he is still stuck in **Kabul**.

The man, who grew up in the UK, is at risk, not just as a former British interpreter but also as a Panjshiri, a minority targeted by **Taliban**.

Trapped in a small space with his wife and seven small children, they live in constant fear having been threatened by Taliban. Three of his relatives, including his 23-year-old cousin who was studying economics at Kabul University, have been killed since the extremists took power. He thinks he will be next.

"Being a British national has its down sides right now in Afghanistan, but being a British national with a Panjshiri heritage and family background has an even better appeal for the Taliban to either kill or kidnap me," he says.

He continues: "As the situation worsens with the failure of the western world to keep a grip on Afghanistan, more and more every day the Taliban are coming and sniffing out whatever they feel is rightfully theirs, or reprisals from their previous encounter twenty years ago."

Shortly before ITV News spoke to him, his brother-in-law had been taken away by Taliban in front of his kids and wife.

The extremists threatened his wife as they left. "They said, 'if you say anything to anybody, make sure that your family knows that we've taken your brother. If you speak about this, we will come back, cut off your kids' heads and then your head off'."

Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, [Briefing Notes Group 62 – Information Centre for Asylum and Migration](#), 4 October 2021

"On 24.09.21 Hazara politician Mohammad Mohaqeq reported on his Facebook page that the Taliban were forcibly evacuating Hazaras from their homes in Daikundi province and handing over these homes to Pashtuns. He said some 800 families were affected in Zayn, Kandir, Naleh, Tagabdar and Shaguljeh within Kato District, Suf, Kariz, Lakhtoghi and Sulaimanabad Kajran District and Ghamqul in Khadir District."

Danish Immigration Service, [Afghanistan Recent developments in the security situation, impact on civilians and targeted individuals](#), 8 September 2021, p 18

"There have also been [reports](#) of Taliban targeting ethnic and religious minorities during their conquest of Afghanistan, notably Afghanistan's Hazara population. SER [Sune Engel Rasmussen, Danish journalist] assessed that Hazaras in country would face discrimination going forward as the Taliban views them as infidels."

Qantara.de, [Shia minority in a Sunni state: Afghanistan's repressed Hazaras face a hostile Taliban](#), 7 September 2021

"To assuage fears of a return to their brutal rule, the Taliban have put on a show of moderation. Spokesmen have repeatedly vowed to refrain from retributions and to respect the rights of women and minorities.

They even made a point of sending representatives across the country to secure Afghanistan's Ashura processions last month. The annual mourning ritual is undertaken by Shias every year to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. Hard-line Sunni groups view the practice as heresy.

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Many Hazaras believe the group's self-professed inclusiveness is little more than propaganda aimed at the international community, whose development aid is a lifeline to prop up an economy teetering on the edge of collapse.

None of the Hazara men and women still in Afghanistan that we spoke to believed the assurances. Mahdi Raskih, a Hazara parliamentarian until the Taliban captured the capital, said that Hazaras face "ethnic and religious persecution" by the militant group. They were, he added, "in mortal danger." Massacres and a harrowing message

Amnesty International's latest findings seem to prove their worst fears. On-the-ground researchers documented brutal killings of nine Hazara men in Ghazni province in central Afghanistan, which took place in early July. Six of the men, according to the report, were shot; three were tortured to death by Taliban fighters.

[...]

Habiba Sarabi, a Hazara political leader, admitted she had proof of more atrocities, but could not share the details, as it might endanger surviving eyewitnesses. Sarabi was the first female governor of Afghanistan and one of four women representing Afghanistan in the negotiations with the Taliban in Doha. When we spoke to her, she was still reeling from the Taliban's takeover. She was, she said, "in shock."

Soon after the interview, Sarabi sent a link to a short, grainy video, which showed two Taliban fighters. Speaking into the camera, one of them says they are waiting for permission from their leaders to "eliminate" all Hazaras living in Afghanistan. While we were unable to verify the video, it has nevertheless been shared widely among Hazaras to whom it sends a chilling message.

"I'm numb," said one Hazara after watching it. It had taken her breath away, she said.

The looming resurgence of Islamic State-Khorasan (ISI-K) following the withdrawal of U.S. forces and de facto collapse of the Afghan army represents yet another threat. Many fear that once the attention of the international community and media has shifted elsewhere, the Taliban will start a campaign against those who might lead a Hazara resistance.

[...]

Many Hazaras are fleeing, among them most of the well-educated, and that exodus would, Ibrahimi said, result in the Hazaras losing their voice in Afghanistan."

BBC News, [Life in Kabul under Taliban: Where is your male escort?](#), 4 September 2021

"In western Kabul, in neighbourhoods like Dasht-e-Barchi, populated largely by members of the minority Hazara community, residents whisper of house searches, of men being taken away."

### *Other ethnic minorities*

### *Other religious minorities (e.g. Sikhs, Hindus, Christians, Jews)*

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, [Factsheet Afghanistan](#), 28 October 2021

"Religious Minorities in Afghanistan  
[...] Despite initial statements from the Taliban that it had reformed some elements of its ideology, Afghans who do not adhere to the Taliban's harsh and strict interpretation of Sunni Islam and adherents of other faiths or beliefs are at grave threat. [...] The Taliban consider conversion from Islam to another religion apostasy, which could be punishable by death according to their interpretation of *Shari'a* or Islamic law. [...] Religious freedom conditions in Afghanistan have deteriorated since the Taliban *seized* control of the country on August 15, 2021. [...] USCIRF has received credible reports that the Taliban regime and rival militant group Islamic State-Khorasan (ISIS-K) also present in Afghanistan have intimidated, threatened, and targeted members of religious minority communities and carried out *violent attacks*. Even before the Taliban took control of the country, in June 2021, *Mawlawi Ayaz Niazi*—a respected Sunni religious leader of the Wazir Mohammed Akbar Khan Mosque who

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espoused pro-government, anti-Taliban sentiments—was assassinated. Conclusion  
 [...] Afghanistan’s religious minorities and others who do not share the same religious beliefs as the Taliban are in danger of falling afoul of the Taliban’s hardline Islamist beliefs. While religious freedom conditions in the country were poor under the previous government, these conditions have already worsened and have become dire under the Taliban and are likely to continue to deteriorate.”

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, [Factsheet Afghanistan](#), 28 October 2021  
 “The Targeting and Exodus of Hindus, Sikhs, and Jews  
 [...] As the Taliban advanced toward Kabul in August, some Hindus and Sikhs took *refuge* in a Sikh temple in the capital while others tried to flee. As of October 2021, a little under 250 Hindus and Sikhs remain in the country following an evacuation effort by India. Nearly 140 Hindus and Sikhs who attempted to leave were not able to access the airport after the August 26 suicide bomb attack near the front gates. USCIRF received reports that just days after the takeover, armed Taliban representatives went to the Sikh Gurdwara in Karte Parwan in Kabul to urge Sikh and Hindu community members not to leave Afghanistan. Also in October 2021, the Sikh community shared videos of their *Gurdwara in Karte Parwan* being vandalized and ransacked by alleged members of the Taliban. Additionally, the last reported Jewish person in Afghanistan, *Zeblon Simantov*, finally *left* the country in September out of fear of persecution by the Taliban, leaving behind what had been the last operating synagogue in Kabul.”

United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, [Factsheet Afghanistan](#), 28 October 2021  
 “Practicing Faith in Fear: Christians, Ahmadi Muslims, Baha’is, and Nonbelievers  
 [...] According to reports received by USCIRF, the Taliban have reportedly gone door-to-door looking for U.S. allies, former government workers, rights activists, and Christian converts. Christians have received threatening *phone calls*, while one leader of a house church network received a *letter* on August 12 from Taliban militants threatening him and his family. Some Christians have turned their *phones off* and moved to undisclosed locations. In Afghanistan, followers of the Baha’i faith have faced persecution both before and after the Taliban were in power. In 2007, the General Directorate of Fatwas and Accounts of the Supreme Court *declared* the Baha’i faith to be blasphemous and their followers to be *infidels*. The Baha’i community has lived in secret since this ruling. Nonbelievers—who *lived* in fear even under the Western- backed government—are worried that their neighbors may turn them in to the Taliban. Atheism and agnosticism are *considered* apostasy and is punishable by death, according to the Taliban’s interpretation of Islam. Afghanistan’s small Uyghur Muslim community—thought to number around 2,000 to 3,000 and many are second- and third-generation Afghan citizens—has *expressed* fear that the Taliban could deport them to China where they face egregious persecution, which the U.S. government has *designated* as genocide and crimes against humanity. There are concerns that the Chinese government could use its economic and geopolitical leverage to *pressure* the Taliban to deport these Uyghurs. Just prior to the Taliban’s military takeover of Afghanistan, a top Taliban delegation traveled to China to meet with Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi in July 2021. The Taliban previously deported Uyghurs at the request of the Chinese government in 2000. ”

GANDHARA NEWS, [Taliban Wages Deadly Crackdown On Afghan Salafists As War With IS-K Intensifies](#), 22 October 2021

“Hakimullah, a resident of Afghanistan’s eastern province of Nangarhar, says he is routinely subjected to violence and discrimination because of his faith.

As a member of Afghanistan’s small Salafist community, an ultraradical sect under Sunni Islam, he says he is frequently targeted by the Taliban, the militant Islamist group that seized control of the war-torn country in August.

Many Taliban fighters are followers of the Hanafi school of Islam, a rival Sunni denomination. The Salafists, also known as Wahhabis, see many other branches of the faith as heretical.

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Since seizing power, the militant group has waged a deadly crackdown on Salafists, who accuse the Taliban of detaining and killing members of the community. They also allege that the Taliban has raided and closed down dozens of their mosques and madrasahs, or religious seminaries. [...]

"Since the Taliban seized power and hastened war with Daesh, they have forced people who wear knitted caps and long beards out of their cars and abused them for being Salafists," Hakimullah told RFE/RL's Radio Azadi, using the Arabic acronym for IS-K.

Many Salafists wear kufis -- white, knitted skull caps -- and sport long beards.

Hakimullah says that many of his friends who are Salafists have been detained or killed by the Taliban in Nangarhar, the epicenter of clashes between the Taliban and IS-K militants. [...]

In September, a senior Salafist cleric in Afghanistan, Sheikh Abu Obaidullah Mutawakil, was abducted and then found dead days later. The Taliban, which many Salafists blamed for the killing, denied it was responsible. [...]

The Taliban declared a general amnesty when it seized control of the capital, Kabul, on August 15. But human rights group accuse the Taliban of executing, torturing, and detaining its rivals, including members of Afghanistan's former armed forces."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Kabul Sikhs Fear For Safety After Armed Men Attack Temple](#), 6 October 2021

"Sikhs in Kabul say more than a dozen armed men attacked and briefly occupied a Sikh temple in the Kart-e Parwan district of the Afghan capital on October 5, tying up the guards and destroying security cameras.

There were no major injuries reported.

The leader of the temple, Gurnam, told RFE/RL that it was unclear who the perpetrators were, but the incident has heightened concerns about the minority Sikh community's safety.

"At around 3:30 p.m. on [October 5], 15 to 20 militants entered the shrine and tied up the guards. They also broke security cameras," Gurnam said. "They were in the gurdwara (temple) for about half an hour. Security officials did not tell us if they were thieves or the Taliban."

Video that appeared on social media showed armed men inside the Sikh temple, with some commentators claiming that "Taliban" attacked the shrine and beat some worshipers.

But that accusation could not be confirmed.

Many religious minorities have suffered discrimination at the hands of Sunni Taliban militants, including during their reign in Kabul and other wide swaths of Afghanistan from 1996-2001.

The community of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs was once estimated to be more than 80,000 strong, but many left after the collapse of the communist regime in 1992.

Many have lost their businesses and properties during the various cycles of war during the past three decades."

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara, [Last Afghan Jew Leaves Amid Minority Exodus In Fear Of Taliban](#), 10 September 2021

"Zablon Simintov, Afghanistan's last Jew, has left the country after the Taliban takeover. [...]

Simintov is not the only one leaving his homeland, which in the mid-1900s boasted a 40,000-strong Jewish community.

Afghanistan's Hindu and Sikh minorities have also shrunk from more than 200,000 in the 1980s to just a few hundred families today.

Most members of those communities in Afghanistan have already left while others plan to join exiled members of their community in India. Militant attacks have targeted their temples and leaders, killing scores, while criminals kidnap community members for ransom.

There is a risk that some of Afghanistan's non-Muslim minorities, many of whose members fled during the tumultuous decades following the 1978 communist coup, could vanish completely now that the Taliban has returned to power.

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For its part, the Taliban has attempted to assuage the fears of non-Muslim Afghans. The militants have visited Sikh temples to try and assure the remaining members of the community of their commitment to their safety and well-being.

“The Islamic Emirate will take serious and effective steps to grant human rights, rights of the minorities and the marginalized communities within the framework of the holy religion of Islam,” a September 7 statement by the Taliban government said.

But members of minority communities find it difficult to trust such statements.”

*LGBTQI+ people, including hijras*

France24, [The Taliban has a hit list for the Afghan LGBT community, NGO says](#), 2 November 2021

Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan at the end of August, the persecution of the country’s LGBT+ community has ramped up - forcing many to live in hiding, fearing for their lives. “We have received reports of names of suspected LGBTQI people circulating,” said the head of the Rainbow Railroad, a Canadian NGO helping under-threat Afghans to flee into exile. The situation for the LGBT+ community in Afghanistan has never been easy. Same-sex relations have always been taboo in the Muslim-majority country, where – even under the former Western-backed government – non-heterosexual relations were illegal and could lead to up to two years in prison.

But since the [Taliban](#) came to power after the US [military withdrawal on August 30](#), the situation has deteriorated rapidly. Although the militant group has not yet officially said how it plans to deal with acts of homosexuality, reports are increasingly suggesting that the Taliban is applying a strict interpretation of [Sharia law](#), under which same-sex relations [may be punishable by death](#). [...]

“We have received reports of names of suspected LGBTQI people circulating,” he said. In some cases, landing on one of these ad hoc lists could even prove fatal.

“We now know for sure the Taliban has ‘kill lists’ circulating, identifying LGBTQI+ persons.” [...]

Powell also said the Taliban seem to have complemented these lists through active persecution, by means of “entrapment” and data leaks.

“[Some] individuals who have reached out to us have told us about how they’ve received a mystery email from someone claiming to be connected with Rainbow Railroad asking for their information and passport. That’s how we know the information has been leaked.” [...]

Powell described the current climate in Afghanistan as “lawless”, saying the general uncertainty and unpredictability of what Taliban rule entails for the population as a whole has even led to some people turning in family members for suspected LGBT+ activity.

BBC, [‘I feel free’ - LGBT Afghan refugees arrive in UK](#), 31 October 2021

“The Taliban return sparked a mass exodus of people who believed they would be in danger if they stayed, including people who worked closely with the US and its allies, and a number of high-profile women.

Members of the LGBT community are also trying to leave, unsure of their future under the Taliban. The last time the group were in power - between 1996 and 2001 - gay men were reportedly stoned to death.

The community has not lived openly in the 20 years since - like many, the man the BBC interviewed has a wife and child.

“The LGBTI [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex] community was a secret underground community, but we knew each other and our network, and if one of us got arrested, they could have found the rest of us,” he told the BBC.

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"Kabul is not a big city, and with the way the Taliban are ruling the country, it was not that difficult to find high profile LGBTI people. We also heard a couple of people were arrested."

The man's escape was only possible with the help of international LGBT organisations. An initial attempt to leave on evacuation flights out of Kabul airport - past the "terrifying" Taliban guards - failed.

But almost two months on, having made it to a third country to wait for a visa, the man arrived in the UK.

Officials explained that the UK foreign secretary and UK and Canadian organisations Stonewall and Rainbow Railroad intervened to help the first 29 people.

More members of Afghanistan's LGBT community are expected to leave in the coming months.

Their arrival comes as a spokesman for the Afghan finance minister said human rights would be respected within the framework of Islamic law, but not gay rights. "LGBT... That's against our Sharia law," Ahmad Wali Haqmal said."

Deutsche Welle, [Trans in Afghanistan: A mortal danger under the Taliban](#), 2 October 2021  
"Attacked in the street

Khalid [a gay Afghan man] has taken precautions. [As the Taliban advanced on Kabul](#), he swapped his jeans and a hooded jacket for traditional Afghan clothing. He even grew a beard — so as not to attract attention.

But he's really a feminine guy, he says. And he knows that this alone can be dangerous for him.

On August 15, the day the Islamists took Kabul, he left his room to run errands. He thought he was well prepared. But his precautionary measures were not enough.

In the middle of the street, he felt a sudden pain in his right shoulder. "Then there was this Talib. I did not see him. He had a plastic pipe which is used for water. It was really thick and heavy. He hit me on my right shoulder. It hurt a lot, my eyes were full of tears. Then he used some curse words in Pashto, basically, he said: 'Why are you walking so feminine, don't you know how to walk [properly]?'"

Khalid has stayed at home since then.

Brutal punishment under the Taliban

[Under the Taliban](#), LGBTQ people like Khalid and Danish fear for their lives. For a man who has sex with another man there are only two possible punishments — and both are lethal, according to [a Taliban judge who spoke with German tabloid newspaper Bild in an exclusive interview](#) a few weeks before the takeover: "Either stoning or he has to be behind a wall that falls on him. The wall must be 2 1/2 to 3 meters [ca. 8 to 9 feet — Editor's note] high." At the end of September, Mullah Nooruddin Turabi, a senior founding member of the Taliban, [told The Associated Press news agency](#) that the government would reintroduce executions and hand amputations, just like they did in the 1990s.

Back then, Turabi was the justice minister in the Taliban government. According to an [Australian government report](#), homosexuals in Afghanistan were executed regularly between 1996 and the fall of the Taliban in autumn 2001."

Amnesty International, [Afghanistan: The fate of thousands hanging in the balance](#), 21 September 2021

"In this report, Amnesty International, International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) have documented incidents of human rights violations that have taken place in Afghanistan since the takeover by the Taliban on 15 August". The report references a number of sources, including: [...]

Tracey Shelton. ABC. 2 September 2021. "LGBT Afghans are on the run, afraid they could be stoned to death under Taliban law". <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-09-02/afghans-lgbt-community-face-stoning-under-taliban-law/100412330>. [...]

India Today, [We'll be killed: Afghanistan's LGBTQ+ community forced to live in hiding under Taliban regime](#) 18 September 2021

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“After the return of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, members of the LGBTQ+ community are forced to live in hiding in fear of their lives. They urged human rights advocates outside the country to help them escape the Taliban regime.”

### *Disability rights activists*

The Nation, [The Taliban Is Targeting Disability Rights Activists](#), 2 September 2021

“The day the Taliban seized control of Kabul, they lobbed a grenade into A’s yard, and he promptly left home to seek refuge. A lower-limb amputee and prominent disability rights activist, he’s at risk because of his disability rights organization’s association with the United States. [...]

As of Monday, the Taliban has shown up at A’s house three times. They also visited the office of the organization, where they asked security guards for A’s whereabouts. A is moving from house to house to evade capture. At least 50 disability rights activists like A and their families are imperiled, says Isabel Hodge, the executive director of the United States International Council on Disabilities (USICD).”

### *Treatment of family members of those sought by the Taliban*

Jurist.org, [Afghanistan dispatches: 'Anyone on the Taliban’s blacklist is in great danger.'](#), 26 October 2021

“JURIST EXCLUSIVE – Law students and lawyers in Afghanistan are filing reports with JURIST on the situation there after the Taliban takeover. Here, a Staff Correspondent for JURIST in Kabul offers observations on the Taliban’s targeting of perceived or potential opponents in Afghanistan who publicly object to their policies, who were associated with the previous government, or who worked with foreign forces prior to the Taliban takeover. [...]

It’s mostly social activists, former military and government officials, CSOs, and traders who have been targeted, warned, and even affected by the Taliban. In particular, former government officials in Panjshir, Mazar, and Samangan provinces have been targeted, leading to the death of one in Samangan province. A few weeks ago the Taliban even went farther and stated some specific individuals – especially those who worked with the foreign forces – should give themselves up to be prosecuted or they will prosecute their family members if they find them. Anyone on the Taliban’s blacklist is in great danger.

The Taliban are using different techniques in targeting people. They have issued warning letters to some former government officials stating that if they do not give themselves to them then their families would be arrested. Several officials of the the central bank received warning letters in the last three weeks. They all received written warning letters signed and stamped by the Taliban. One of the warning letters shared with me said “You should have stopped working with a slave government under control of Americans; we shall punish you so others take a lesson.” Fortunately, the target of this letter is already out of the country. In another incident from the central bank, the Taliban went to check the former Chief of Staff of the central bank who was said to have worked with the ex-governor of the bank too closely. However, they could not find him.

The Taliban appear to have monitored government officials closely before they seized power in August. Most of the people who got killed by them were government officials. I myself lost three friends in a car bombing several months ago.”

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, [Afghan Pilots Who Fled To Tajikistan Say Taliban Is Threatening Relatives Back Home](#), 23 October 2021

“Afghan military pilots who fled to Tajikistan when the Taliban seized power in Kabul say the militant group is pressuring them to return to Afghanistan by threatening to kill their relatives.

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Trained by the United States, the Afghan pilots say their documents have been completed for traveling and they hope they will soon be able to go to the United States.

But two Afghan pilots who are sheltering at sanatoriums on the outskirts of Dushanbe [told RFE/RL's Tajik Service](#) on October 23 that the Taliban is now trying to force them to return to Afghanistan.

One Afghan pilot, speaking on condition of anonymity, told RFE/RL that his son back in Afghanistan was beaten by the Taliban and that the militants threatened to kill the boy if the pilot did not return.

Another pilot told RFE/RL that Taliban militants have gone to the homes of several of his family members to demand that the pilot return to Afghanistan.

He told RFE/RL that the Taliban has a list of the names of all 143 Afghan pilots now in Tajikistan. He said Taliban authorities are increasing pressure on all of the pilots by threatening their relatives in Afghanistan.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid denied that the Taliban is threatening the relatives of the pilots."

The Guardian, [Afghans seeking Australian humanitarian visas say Taliban are 'hunting us like animals'](#), 10 October 2021

"Afghans who have applied for Australian humanitarian visas say they are living in fear as the [Taliban](#) are "hunting us down like animals".

Accounts of their "painful" experiences under the Taliban regime – including testimonies of beatings, interrogations and threats to family members – are set to be provided to a Senate inquiry into Australia's engagement in [Afghanistan](#), which begins public hearings on Monday.

A Hazara man described being interrogated by the Taliban as they demanded to know whether he was a civil activist and had any links to foreigners. The man, whose name cannot be published for safety reasons, said he was taken into a cell where he was blindfolded and gagged.

"I received 26 lashes. I felt the first five lashes and after that I couldn't feel anything anymore, my back became numb."

He recounted later being threatened with execution. "I believed my life would soon be over. I was so frightened," he wrote. He was eventually released from custody and is now in hiding, sleeping in a different place every night.

"The Taliban have been calling me every night," he wrote. "They tell me not to try to run away, that wherever I am, even outside of Afghanistan, they will find me."

It is one of several testimonies compiled by an Australian citizen who has been helping Afghan nationals apply for Australian humanitarian visas, with the support of Rural Australians for [Refugees](#).

In another account provided to Guardian Australia, a former Afghan national army soldier said he had come out of hiding briefly to "send the papers and identity documents to friends who are helping me apply for a humanitarian visa to Australia".

"They [the Taliban] say they forgive everyone who has worked with foreigners, or who worked in government or in the army," he wrote. "But in reality, they are hunting us down like animals. I fear we will all be killed in the end."

A worker for a non-government organisation noted the Taliban were going door-to-door, purportedly to assess humanitarian needs.

"They are using this as a way to spot people, in the guise of a humanitarian assessment, which is disgusting basically. They are doing evil things behind 'good deeds'."

This person said he was hoping to leave Afghanistan legally and had received an acknowledgement letter from the Australian government for his family's humanitarian visa application in mid-September.

Meanwhile, a Hazara hospitality worker described the past few weeks as "the darkest of my whole life". He said many young people were "willing to gamble with their lives to illegally cross the borders into neighbouring countries".

"Living here is much more suffocating and more painful. It's a slow, gradual death," this person wrote.

"I just hope that at least we can get out of here and be somewhere where we will be treated as human.""

Deutsche Welle, [Fleeing Afghan women footballers seek new home from Pakistan](#), 1 October 2021

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"A group of 32 Afghan women football players and their families are seeking safe haven from the Taliban in third countries after fleeing to Pakistan, the former Afghanistan women's team captain said on Friday. Women's team captain Khalida Popal told DW that some of the players "had their houses burned down and some family members were taken by [the Taliban](#)."

Some 135 people — 32 players and coaches as well as their families — "were displaced from their provinces" because of their involvement in women's football, Popal added."

BBC News, [Female Afghan judges hunted by the murderers they convicted](#), 28 September 2021

Names have been changed for this article:

"For more than three decades, Judge Sanaa investigated cases of violence against women and children.

She says the majority of her cases involved convicting members of the Taliban as well as militant group Isis.

"I have received more than 20 threatening phone calls from former inmates who have now been released."

She is currently in hiding with more than a dozen family members.

Only once has one of her male relatives returned to their former family home. But as he was packing some clothes, the Taliban arrived at the house in several cars full of armed men, led by a commander.

"I opened the door. They asked me whether this was the judge's house," he says. "When I said I didn't know where she was, they threw me on the stairs. One of them hit me with the butt of his gun and started beating me. My nose and mouth were covered in blood."

After the armed men left, Sanaa's relative took himself to hospital.

"I told another relative we must keep changing the house where my sister is staying. There is no other way out now. We can't escape to any other country, even Pakistan."

TOLO News, [Woman Activist in Kandahar Says Family Members Beaten](#), 12 September 2021

"Fahima Rahmati, a civil society activist and the head of a charity in southern Kandahar province, claimed on Sunday that an "armed group related to the Taliban," had entered her house and beat some of her family members last night.

Miss Rahmati, who leads a charity naming Heela, (wish) said she has received death threats and her family has also been threatened.

She added that she has never worked with the government before. "Is this their general amnesty--that the Taliban are coming to my house, and beating my family members? Is governance like this?"

A man also claimed that his wife was recently killed in a Taliban shooting in Kabul. Her husband, Abdul Khaleq said: "Is this in Islam? Can someone, in Islam, kill a woman who is outside her house?"

Thomson Reuters Foundation News, [Brother of Afghan opposition figure executed by Taliban, family says](#), 10 September 2021

"The Taliban have executed the brother of Amrullah Saleh, the former Afghan vice president who became one of the leaders of anti-Taliban opposition forces in the Panjshir valley, his nephew said on Friday."

Danish Immigration Service, [Afghanistan Recent developments in the security situation, impact on civilians and targeted individuals](#), 8 September 2021

"During the course of the Taliban offensive, as well as after the conquest of Kabul, there have been reports of the Taliban targeting members of the civilian population and the Afghan military as well their families. According to SER [Sune Engel Rasmussen, Danish journalist] members of Taliban have been going door to door and arresting or threatening family members of targeted individuals. He explained how members of the Taliban came to the house in Kabul of a colleague of his knocking on the door. Being a journalist, he was hiding inside his house with his family and the Taliban left. He had been warned over the telephone by his neighbour and he immediately thereafter moved to a hotel, knowing that the Taliban knew his address."

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OCHCHR, [Afghanistan: Journalists at risk of persecution need urgent protection – UN experts](#), 3 September 2021

“A group of UN human rights experts\* today called on all States to provide urgent protection to Afghan journalists and media workers who fear for their lives and are seeking safety abroad.

“Journalists and media workers, in particular women, are facing heightened risks since the Taliban’s political takeover of Afghanistan,” the experts said. [...]

Recalling the various resolutions on the safety of journalists adopted by the Human Rights Council in recent years, the UN experts called on the Council to uphold its own commitment and do more to address the growing threat to the safety of journalists in the country.

“Reports of targeted killings of journalists and their family members, home raids, threats and intimidation in areas controlled by the Taliban have sharply increased in recent months. This is taking place in a context where Afghanistan is already considered one of the most dangerous countries for journalists,” the experts said. [...]

“We are deeply worried about the threats and systematic human rights violations faced by female journalists, as they may be targeted for working in the media or simply being a woman in public life,” the UN experts added. [...]

The experts: Ms. Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression; Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism; Clément Voule, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; and the Working Group on discrimination against women : Ms. Melissa Upreti (Chair), Ms. Dorothy Estrada-Tanck (Vice Chair), Ms. Elizabeth Broderick, Ms. Ivana Radačić, and Ms. Meskerem Geset Techane.

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## SECTION 2 - COI SOURCES

*This section is a list of potentially relevant COI sources that we scanned systematically for this report. The list is non-exhaustive and will be regularly reviewed and updated. The date in brackets shows the last time a researcher consulted this source.*

### International Organisations

- [International Organization for Migration \(IOM \(Afghanistan\)\)](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan \(UNAMA\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\)](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [The State of the World's Children 2021, latest report -](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner \(UNOHCHR\) \(Afghanistan news\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs \(UNOCHA\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [Humanitarian Response \(Afghanistan\)](#)[10.11.2021]
- United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) (Afghanistan)
  - [Afghanistan Situation Page](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [Operational Data Portal](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations Secretary-General reports](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations World Food Programme \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations World Health Organisation \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]

### Intergovernmental Sources

- [European Asylum Support Office \(EASO\) COI Portal](#) [10.11.2021]

### Government sources

- [Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#)
  - [Country Information reports](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Danish Immigration Service](#)
  - [Country Reports](#) [[10.11.2021]
- [Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)
  - [ambtsbericht](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation Service](#)
  - [landenrapporten](#), specifically on the [situation in Afghanistan](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada](#)
  - [Responses to Information Requests](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [National Documentation Packages](#) [10.11.2021]
- The [Norwegian Country of Origin Information Centre Landinfo](#)
  - [Afghan publications page](#)[10.11.2021]
- [French Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)
  - [dossiers pays](#) [10.11.2021]

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- [United States Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) [10.11.2021]

## NGOS and think tanks

[Note: This list focuses on local and national organisations as well as those international organisations with a local presence]

- [Assessment Capacities Project \(ACAPS\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Afghanistan Analysts Network \(AAN\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission \(AIHRC\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit \(AREU\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Amnesty International \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project \(ACLED\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Brookings \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [Lawfare \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Care International \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Chatham House \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Center for Strategic & International Studies \(CSIS\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Committee to Protect Journalists](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Congressional Research Service](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Council on Foreign Relations \(CFR\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [Global Conflict Tracker \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Danish Refugee Council \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Global Shelter Cluster \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Heinrich Boll Stiftung \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Human Rights Watch \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [International Crisis Group \(ICG\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [CrisisWatch Database](#) [10.11.2021]
- [International Committee of the Red Cross \(ICRC\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [International Disability Alliance](#) [10.11.2021]
- [International Federation for Human Rights \(FIDH\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [International Institute for Strategic Studies \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [International NGO Safety Organisation \(INSO\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [International Rescue Committee \(IRC\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Jamestown Foundation \(Central Asia\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Long War Journal](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Medecin Sans Frontieres \(MSF\) \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Norwegian Refugee Council \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Refugees International \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Royal United Services Institute \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Samuel Hall \(South and Central Asia\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Save the Children \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
  - [Blog \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction \(SIGAR\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Swedish Committee for Afghanistan](#) [10.11.2021]

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- [United States Institute of Peace \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]

## Media

[Additional media sources may be included in this report but have not been systematically checked on a weekly basis]

- [Afghan Islamic Press](#) [[10.11.2021]
- [Afghan Voice Agency \(AVA\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Al Jazeera \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Ariana News](#) [10.11.2021]
- [BBC News](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Deutsche Welle \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [EurAsia.net](#)[10.11.2021]
- [Inter Press Service News Agency](#)[10.11.2021]
- [Jurist.org](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Kabul Now](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Khaama Press \(Afghan News Agency\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Pajhwok Afghan News \(Afghan News Agency\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Qantara.de](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Gandhara](#) [10.11.2021]
- [The Guardian](#) (Afghanistan) [10.11.2021]
- [The New Humanitarian](#) (Afghanistan) [10.11.2021]
- [Thomson Reuters Foundation News](#) (Afghanistan)[10.11.2021]
- [ToloNews](#) [10.11.2021]
- [UN News](#) [10.11.2021]

## Contacts on the ground

[Listed here are sources that may not report regularly on Afghanistan, but who might be willing to be contacted as they have a presence in Afghanistan]

- [ACTED \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Afghan Aid](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Afghan Women's Education Centre](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society \(AICS\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Agha Khan Foundation \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Aschiana Foundation](#) [10.11.2021]
- [CARE](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres \(MSF\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [The Liaison Office](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Mercy Corps \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]
- [Oxfam \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]

## Databases

- [Ecoi.net \(Afghanistan\)](#) [10.11.2021]

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### Additional useful COI databases for case-specific country research (non-exhaustive)

- [Asylos's research notes](#) [Subscription only]
- [COI Forum](#) [Subscription only]
- [EASO COI Portal](#) [European Asylum Support Office's portal]
- [Electronic Immigration Network](#) [Subscription only]
- [ECOI.net](#) [European Country of Origin Information Network]
- International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP): [Visa and Refugee Information Reports](#) ["provide information on the refugee protection program, if any, in the countries of flight; the ability of refugees in those countries to work, pursue an education, and live freely; and the penalties, if any, imposed upon individuals living in the countries of flight without lawful immigration status"]
- [Refworld](#) [UNHCR's portal]
- [ReliefWeb](#)

For useful sources arranged by theme consult ARC Foundation's free [Thematic COI Sources toolkit](#).

For any case-specific research requests please get in touch with [Asylos](#).

### Additional useful databases and sources to find expert witnesses

*Please note that these experts have not been vetted by us and each database/source will have its own vetting process.*

- [EIN Experts Directory](#) – The Electronic Immigration Network Directory of Experts gives access to detailed information from a wide variety of experts in a fully searchable database.
- Rights in Exile Programme's "[Country of Origin Information Experts database](#)".
- The Centre for Gender and Refugee Studies' [Expert Witness database](#) [requires registration]
- Country experts cited in relevant [UK country guidance determinations](#)
- Interlocutors cited in [EASO COI products](#)
- Interlocutors cited in fact-finding mission (FFM) reports. These are published by a range of country of asylum/receiving country's governments. You can find them through a Google search or on [ecoi.net](#).
- Academics and/or (I)NGOs who are cited in this COI Repository
- Ask an expert who you have worked with in the past to suggest other relevant individuals who may be in a position to comment.
- [Global Experts](#) – Global Experts is a UN database of academics, analysts, former officials, faith leaders, civil society activists, private sector/business and media experts around the world. You can search for experts by area of expertise as well as by geographical area.
- [Expertise Finder](#) – Expertise Finder is a directory of experts in a variety of subjects. Search by keywords, for instance country, to find experts and their contact details.
- [SheSource](#) – Same concept as the two sources above, except that this website only lists female experts.

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- [CGRS](#) – The Center for Gender and Refugee Studies – California features a webpage with a list of experts providing practice advisories and declarations for US Courts hearings regarding vulnerable groups (LGBTI, Women, Children etc.).
- [Google Scholar](#) / [Microsoft Academic](#) – Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic are search engines for academic publications, although you will find media articles on there as well. On Google Scholar, clicking on an author’s name will typically take you to his / her profile page. Contact details are not provided, but affiliation is; you can then search on his / her institution’s website.

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