

KEY ISSUES

During the reporting period covering January 2021, the HAG recorded 155 access impediments, the highest monthly number on records. Compared to the 100 incidents recorded during December, January illustrated a 50 per cent increase in the number of incidents. Figures recorded in January 2021 are three times higher than the 58 incidents logged in January 2020, which included 15 incidents linked to heavy snow, with only one such incident recorded in 2021.

Interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities

During January, the HAG recorded at least 47 incidents involving interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities, which is two times higher than the 24 interferences recorded in December 2020. NSAG-TB continued to author most incidents (35), followed by GOA (6), with ANSF and community members authoring three incidents respectively. In January, the NSAG-TB Commissioner for NGOs and Companies issue two letters to all provincial focal-points, in which he banned Community Development Councils (CDCs) and the government-led Dastarkhuan-e-Milli program throughout the country. The two letters were widely circulated among the humanitarian community, raising concerns about the impact of these letters on programming. The HAG recorded the suspension of the Dastarkhuan-e-Milli program in Ghor, Herat and Badghis provinces, while it continues unimpeded in other provinces. Similarly, demands to register with NSAG-TB continued to be an issue. In January, NSAG-TB approached multiple NGOs in Takhar, Nimroz and Laghman provinces and asked them to register their projects, warning them that otherwise they will not be allowed to operate in NSAG-TB controlled areas. Moreover, the NSAG-TB Education Commission approached partners in the north, requesting them to suspend all education programs unless they receive permission from the Doha level to resume their education activities. NSAG-TB also warned of staff detention if the education program is continued. After the issuance of criteria by the NSAG-TB Commissioner for NGOs and Companies in December 2020, in which he spoke against women empowerment and education programs, NGOs in Ghazni and Maidan Wardak provinces were approached by NSAG-TB with a request to avoid female staff recruitment, with provincial level NSAG-TB referring to the recent letter. After face to face engagement with the NSAG-TB focal point, one NGO was allowed to continue their operations, including deployment of female staff.

Military operations and Kinetic Activity

At least 20 incidents affecting humanitarian access in January resulted from military operations and kinetic activity. Kunduz, Kandahar, Faryab and Hirat remained the main hotspot for active clashes and IED incidents. 18 of these incidents were authored by NSAG-TB while two others by ANSF. 12 incidents resulted in temporarily suspension of health, education, WASH programs and delivery of food items while in one instance a protection program was relocated due to active clashes, IEDs and increasing insecurity in the areas of operation. On 31 January 2021, in Hilmand Province, an NGO suspended their operations in all districts of Hilmand, due to a deteriorated security situation resulting from confrontations between ANSF and NSAG-TB.

Movement restrictions

In January, the HAG logged 44 movement restrictions. 36 incidents related to NSAG-TB checkpoints to search ANSF and GOA staff and to collect tax from commercial trucks along the main highways in the northern, northeastern and western regions. These checkpoints did not directly target humanitarian programs but likely indirectly discouraged humanitarian staff movement and delivery of aid items. Moreover, as a result of three demonstrations in Ghor and Balkh, a humanitarian flight could not deliver project documents on time, while an NGO had to keep its office closed for one specific day. In the third instance, a demonstration approached an IO office with a demand to file a protection case of a kidnapped child.

Violence/Threats Against Humanitarian Personnel/Assets/Facilities

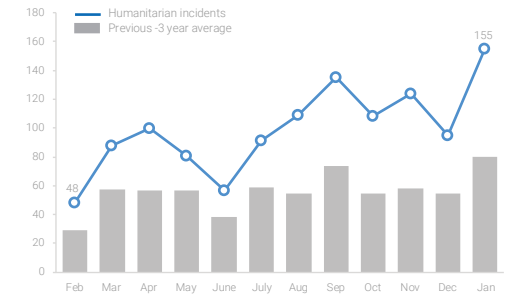
In January, the HAG recorded at least 31 incidents involve threats and violence against members of the humanitarian community, an increase compared to the 24 in December 2020. NSAG-TB continued to accuse humanitarian partners of not coordinating their activities, which resulted in the detention of two humanitarians in Kunduz. In Paktya Province, NSAG-TB detained three NGO staff members while travelling to meet NSAG-TB health officials on charges of not coordinating for health activities. All detained staff were released after community engagement. ANSF in the southern region raided a health clinic and arrested ten NGO staff, including female doctors, accusing them of supporting NSAG-TB.

KEY FIGURES

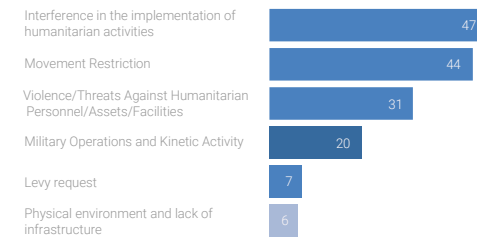
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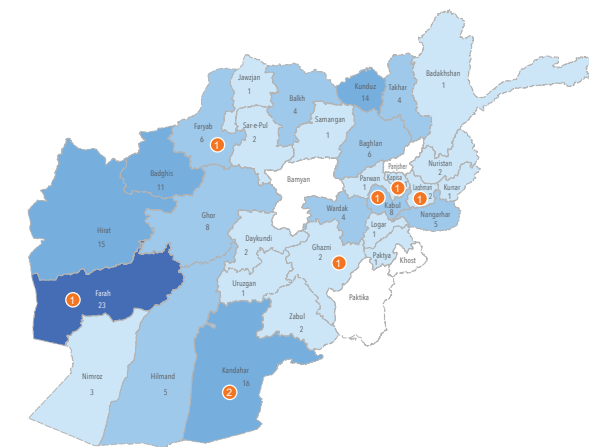
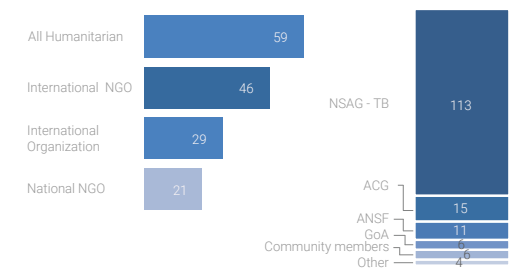
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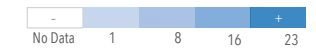
ACCESS CONSTRAINTS



IMPACTED GROUP/AUTHORED BY



Number of incidents by province



Incidents related to health workers and facilities
 Total incidents