

KEY ISSUES

In March 2020, the HAG recorded 79 incidents impacting access for humanitarian, compared to 47 incidents in February. The increase is mainly due to the outbreak of C-19 and the subsequent government response, with 28 incidents out of the 79 related to C-19.

Access Impediments Related to C-19 outbreak and its response

By 31 March, at least 16 provinces had announced some kind of lockdown to slow down the spread of C-19, with measures slightly varying across provinces. Despite the Ministry of Economy (MoE) publishing two letters specifying that organizations working in the health sector could continue to move freely in order to avoid gaps in providing health services and the Herat Governor issuing IDs to humanitarian organizations to facilitate movement, humanitarian actors continued to face severe movement restrictions. On 27 March, the Government announced that while the MoFA visa department will continue to extend expired visas of international NGO staff members, no new entry visas will be processed during the lockdown period. This poses a significant problem for humanitarian organizations wanting to urgently bring in surge staff and experts to ramp up their C-19 responses, with the MoE agreeing to facilitate the process.

Ahead of international air companies cancelling their flights, with Air India being the first on 19 March, many organizations relocated non-essential staff due to fear of being grounded in Afghanistan without international medevac options.

More information on the C-19 related access impediments can be found in the C-19 Access Impediment Report.

Military Operations and Kinetic Activity

While the outbreak of C-19 created new access impediments for humanitarian actors, access challenges stemming from ongoing conflict remained, with seven incidents resulting from military operations and kinetic activity. In Nuristan Province, a health NGO temporarily closed their facilities due to ongoing fighting, while another three incidents stemmed from crossfire. In Nusai District, Badakhshan Province, two stray SAF bullets impacted on an NGO building, during an armed clash between ANSF and NSAG-TB members, while in Kunduz one stray bullet impacted the roof of an NGO compound. In both incidents, no casualties were reported.

Interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities

The 11 incidents of interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities recorded in March 2020, are on par with the 12 logged in February. Six incidents were authored by NSAG-TB, with Government and community authoring three and two respectively. In Zabul, Uruzgan and Hilmand provinces, a multi-agency assessment as well as project implementations remained pending, with NSAG-TB opposing the activities. Also in the southern region, a health NGO closed their office and reduced performances in their health facilities, following a threat from provincial NSAG-TB representatives, claiming the NGO had failed to fulfil previously agreed demands. In Zabul Province, an NGO had to suspend a cash distribution after community members reached out to NSAG-TB representatives, claiming that the distribution was limited in scope and lacking their support. This incident reiterates the importance of gaining broad community acceptance before implementing a project.

Levy Requests

In March 2020, another three levy requests were recorded, bringing the total number of levy requests recorded since the beginning of the year to eight, although the real number is likely much higher. This month recorded the first two levy requests authored by Government and ANSF members this year.

In the southern region, an NGO planning to conduct a NFI distribution was pressured by district officials to pay them a significant amount of cash. When the NGO refused and wanted to withdraw from the location, the district officials threatened that they would get robbed on their way back if they left without starting the distribution. Only after the NGO brought up the issue with the Provincial Governor, they were able to start the distribution without further interference.

In the western region, an NGO was informed by beneficiaries that following an NFI distribution, ALP members had seized the distributed items from at least 10 beneficiaries after they had refused to pay a levy on the relief items. The beneficiaries had reportedly raised the issue with the district governor but to no avail. While discussions on levies have become more open and many organizations have adopted a strict stance against levy requests, actors increasingly move towards post-distribution levies, in the hope that these requests pass unnoticed.

The third incident occurred in the western region, where a NSAG-TB representative jointly with a community elder reached out to an NGO, raising dissatisfaction with their operations. While the community elder requested assistance for all inhabitants of the village or none at all, the NSAG-TB representative requested a levy on provided services. The NGO temporarily suspended operations while trying to renegotiate access.

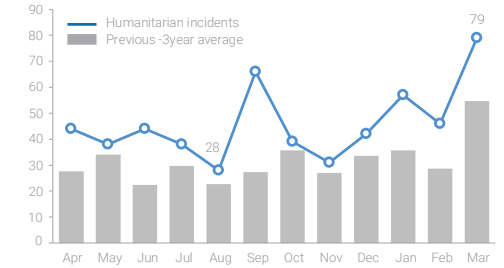
Violence/Threats Against Humanitarian Personnel/Assets/Facilities

In March 2020, 22 incidents resulted from violence or threats against humanitarian personnel, assets or facilities, with the de-mining sector logging six of these incidents. In the southern region, NSAG-TB members beat up two NGO staff members, accusing them of entering their territory without prior communication. Another two incidents occurred when ANP members opened fire at a de-mining organization, despite the NGO previously informing all checkpoints of their deployment and presence.

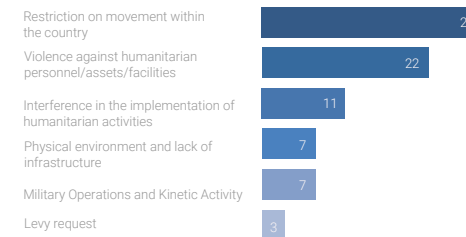
KEY FIGURES

	IN MARCH	IN 2020	
	79	180	access related total incidents reported (all constraints)
	4	17	total incidents related to health workers or facilities
	3	8	aid workers killed
	4	11	aid workers injured
	7	19	aid workers abducted

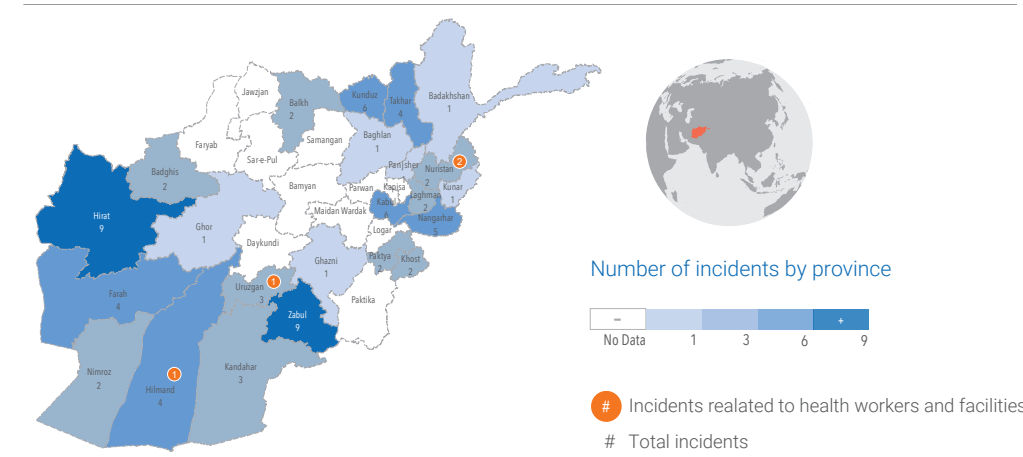
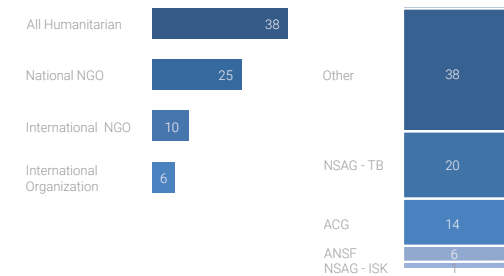
MONTHLY TREND



ACCESS CONSTRAINTS



IMPACTED GROUP/ATTRIBUTE TO



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Creation date: 13 April 2020 **Data sources:** Conflict/Access Constrains/Humanitarian Incidents (Various, as of 6 April 2020). These numbers are expected to change as new information becomes available.

Feedback: ocha-afghanistan@un.org **Website:** <http://www.unocha.org/afghanistan> <http://afg.humanitarianresponse.info>