

Introduction & Methodology

Given the rapidly changing operational context, OCHA developed a Rapid Capacity Survey in August 2021 with the aim of quantifying the impact of the conflict on humanitarian reach and activities, the risks facing humanitarian personnel, and to collect information on enabling conditions for the resumption of activities. The survey asked organisations (UN and NGO; national and international) to report on the estimated percentage of programming that has been suspended/hibernated, where, and in which sector due to the conflict. The first three rounds of the survey are accessible here ([part I](#), [part II](#) and [part III](#)).

For this fourth round of the survey, partners submitted their inputs between 13 and 23 December 2021. Similar to previous rounds, the survey was completely anonymous and confidential and partners had the option to skip any questions that they did not want to respond to. To prevent duplicated submissions and ensure quality data collection, partners were asked to nominate one person per organisation to respond to the surveys. Considering the fluidity of the context on the political, financial and security fronts, this summary report may or may not reflect partners' current capacity.

Key Findings

Programme Locations

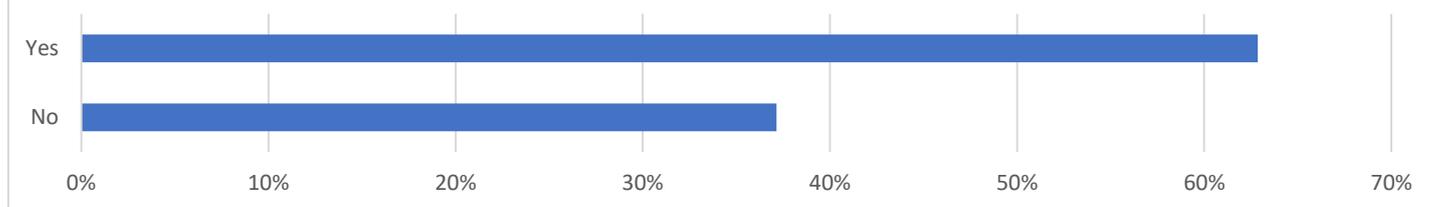
In total, 70 organizations (29 national and 41 international) working in all 34 provinces responded. As Figure 1 illustrates, the majority of the respondents' programming is being implemented in Nangarhar, Kabul, Hirat, Balkh, Kunar and Laghman provinces.



Overall Impact and Drivers

Close to two-thirds / 63 per cent of partners (44 organisations) have noted an impact on programme delivery since 12 August due to changes in the operating environment, whereas 37 per cent of respondents (26 organisations) report no witnessed any impact on programme delivery (see Figure 2). Of those partners who reported an impact on programme delivery, more than half (54 per cent) of their programmes were either suspended or hibernated. This is on par with the third iteration of the survey but constitutes a significant increase compared to the 36 per cent of partners who reported an impact on programme delivery, and the 35 per cent of programmes those partners reported as either being suspended or hibernated during the first iteration of the survey.

Figure 2: Has there been an impact on programme delivery since 12 August?



The main reasons cited for temporary suspension or hibernation of programmes include: cash and liquidity issues impeding local procurement (28 per cent), followed by funding running out (24 per cent), Self-initiated pause due to lack of clarity on allowing humanitarian response (13 per cent), self-initiated pause due to lack of clarity / mixed messages from authorities regarding the safe participation of female staff in the full spectrum of humanitarian response (12 per cent) and direct interference or bans on programmes (12 per cent). These reasons (though to varying degrees) have remained on the top of the list of reasons for suspension/hibernation of activities during all four iterations of the surveys.

Figure 3: What is the reason for the suspension/hibernation? (multiple-choice)

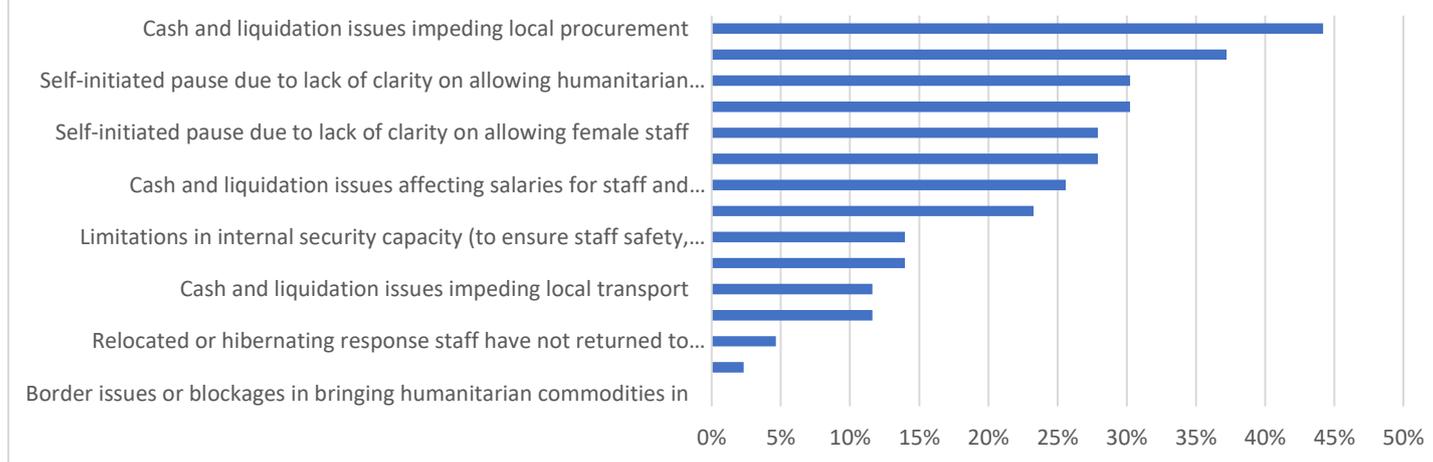
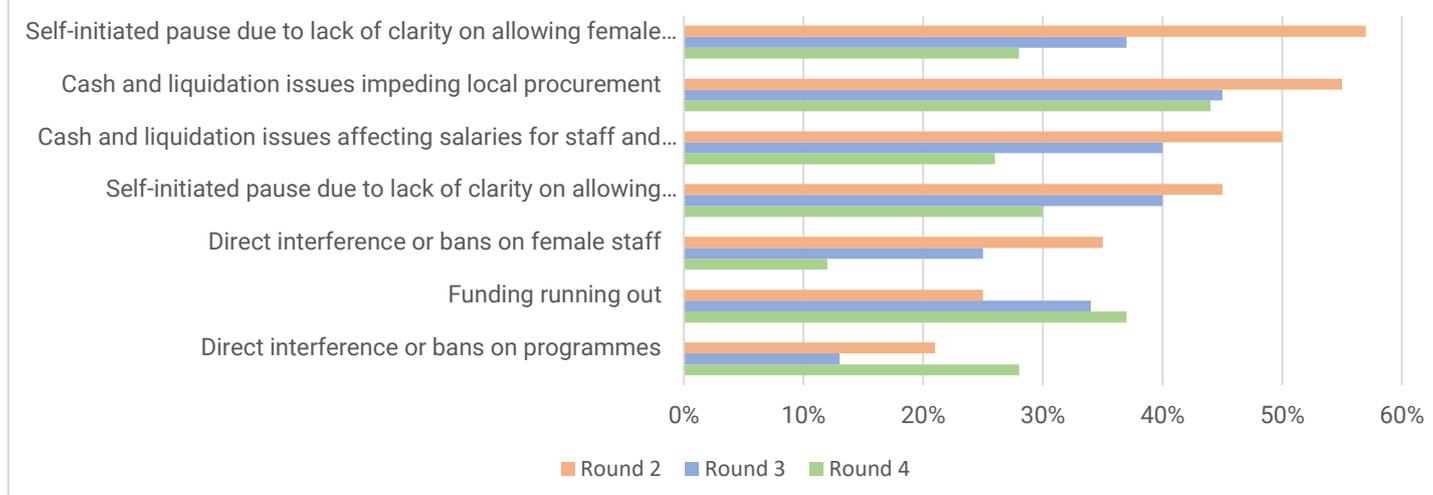


Figure 4: Comparison of the top seven reasons for suspension/hibernation of programmes across the last three surveys? (multiple-choice)



Similar to the last round of the survey, all 5 partners who reported direct bans on female humanitarian staff as a reason for suspension of activities, indicated that the Taliban had issued the bans. In the previous round, all 22 partners who had reported direct interference or bans on female humanitarian staff had indicated that the ban had been issued by the Taliban, compared to 97 per cent of respondents in September. Similarly, among the 12 partners who reported direct bans on

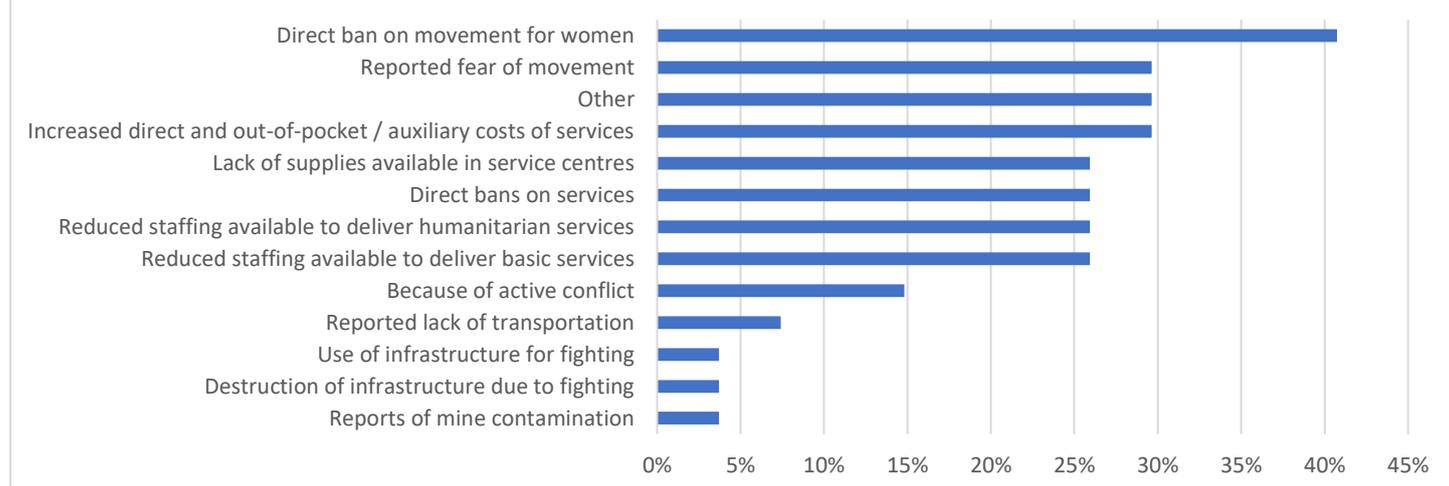
programmes as a reason for suspension of activities, 10 partners (83 per cent) indicated the bans were issued by the Taliban. This compares with 73 per cent of partners in the previous round who had attributed the direct bans to the Taliban.

Among the 10 partners reporting reduction in staff due to insecurity and other risks, the majority (60 per cent) said this was not a temporary measure taken in response to the heightened risks; signifying potentially reduced capacity among partners as experienced staff withdraw from their functions. This indicates a significant change from the last round when among 17 partners reporting a relocation/reduction of staff due to insecurity, the majority (71 per cent) had indicated it was only a temporary relocation/reduction.

The vast majority of the suspended/hibernating programmes were reported to be services (education, GBV case management, psycho-social support, health care, maternal care, and sexual and reproductive health). After that, partners cited both distributions (predominantly food, hygiene kits and cash) as well as assessments and monitoring activities to be affected.

Sixty per cent of the partners reported reduction in uptake of services by beneficiaries in the last three months. They noted direct bans on movement for women (41 per cent), reported fear of movement (30 per cent), increased direct and out-of-pocket / auxiliary costs (30 per cent) and lack of supplies available in service centres (26 per cent) as the main reasons for the reduction in uptake of services by beneficiaries. Notably, only 15 per cent of partners reported active conflict as a reason for the reduced uptake (compared to 34 per cent of partners in the last round).

Figure 5: Why has there been a reduction in people accessing your services in the last 3 months? (multiple-choice)



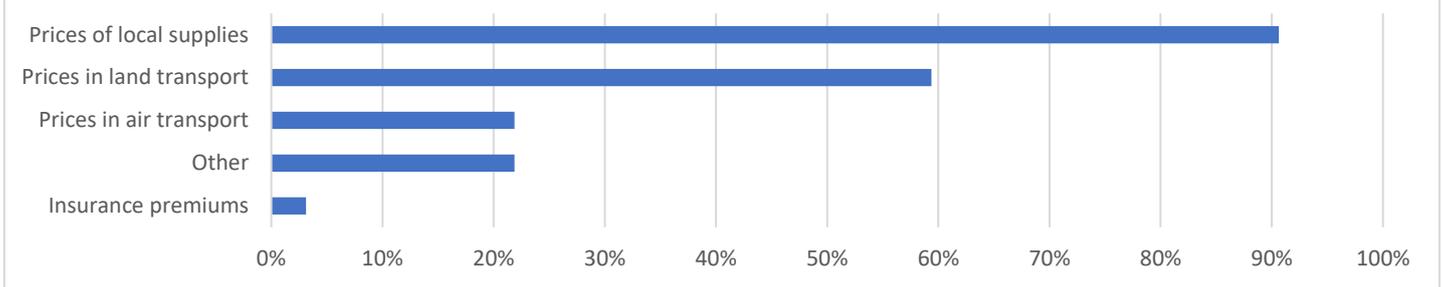
Cash and Liquidity

Among the 19 partners reporting that cash and liquidity issues are impeding local procurement, an average of 82 per cent of their commodities are locally procured. Among this group, more than half (58 per cent) indicated that they are liquidating reserves held by money service providers and/or sending international transfers through money service providers, while others (26 per cent) reported that they are yet to find a means to solve cash liquidity challenges related to local procurement (compared to 42 per cent in the previous round). However, 73 per cent of partners who are liquidating existing reserves as a mitigating measure noted this still does not cover the full amount of procurement.

Similarly, among the 11 partners citing cash and liquidation challenges affecting salaries for staff and contractors as the primary reason for hibernation or suspension, partners reported that close to 67 per cent of their staff and contractors are presently unpaid, with 4 partners (36 per cent) of these respondents reporting they are yet to find a solution to this issue. Also, 45 per cent of the partners citing cash and liquidation challenges affecting salaries for staff and contractors in December noted that they are liquidating existing reserves as a mitigating measure to pay staff and contractor salaries, with more than three-fourths (80 per cent) indicating that the liquidation of existing resources does not cover the full amount.

Nearly half of all partners (47 per cent) have also reported experiencing increased operational costs in the last three weeks. However, compared to the last survey findings, this signifies a 20 per cent decrease in partners experiencing increased operational costs. Nearly all respondents (91 per cent) reported prices of local supplies with highest price increase, followed by prices in land transport and air transport (see Figure 5).

Figure 6: If there is increased operational costs experienced in the last 3 weeks, in which area did you see increased costs? (multiple-choice)



Enabling Factors

On enabling factors for resumption of activities, the vast majority of all responding partners (84 per cent) cited the availability of liquid cash as a key factor. Survey respondents also suggested that additional funding (60 per cent), common, consistent and clear messaging by de facto authorities on operations (58 per cent) as other key enabling factors (see Figure 6). While most of these findings are comparable with the last survey, the percentage of partners citing the need for common, consistent and clear messaging by the de facto authorities has increased by 14 per cent compared to the October survey.

Figure 7: What would enable resumption of activities? (multiple-choice)

