

Introduction & Methodology

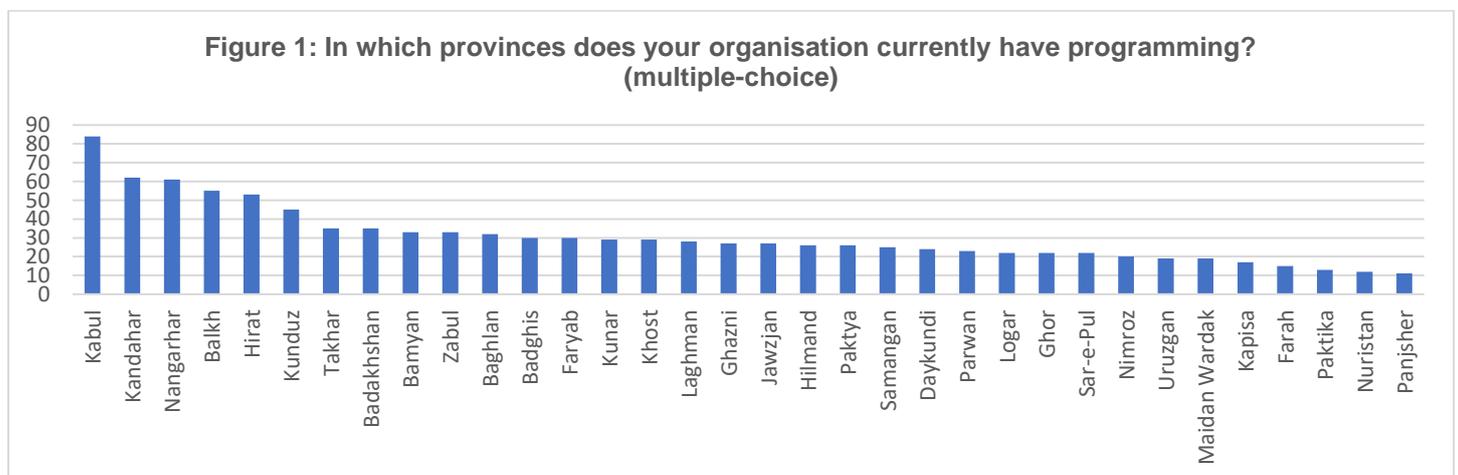
Given the rapidly changing operational context, OCHA developed a Rapid Capacity Survey in August 2021 with the aim of quantifying the impact of the conflict on humanitarian reach and activities, the risks facing humanitarian personnel, and to collect information on enabling conditions for the resumption 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 round of the survey is accessible [here](#). While the majority of the survey questions remain the same, for the second iteration of the survey partners were also asked to respond to questions on issues related to female staff policies, procurement, salary payments, operational costs, banking, and other operational constraints. Partners submitted their inputs to the survey between **9 and 16 September 2021**. Considering the fluidity of the context on the political, financial and security fronts, this summary report may or may not reflect partners' current capacity.

The survey was available in English, Dari and Pashto. The survey was completely anonymous and confidential and partners had the option to skip any questions that they did not want to respond to. The survey also consisted of multi-choice options where partners were given the opportunity to submit several answers. To prevent duplicated submissions and ensure quality data collection, partners were asked to nominate one person per organisation to respond to the survey.

Key Findings

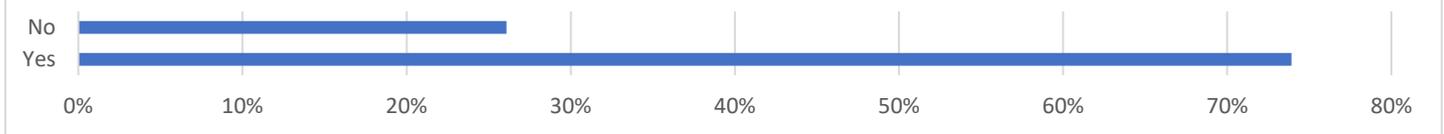
Programme Locations

In total, 147 organisations (85 international and 62 national) in all 34 provinces responded. As Figure 1 illustrates, the majority of the respondents' programming is being implemented in Kabul, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Balkh and Hirat provinces.



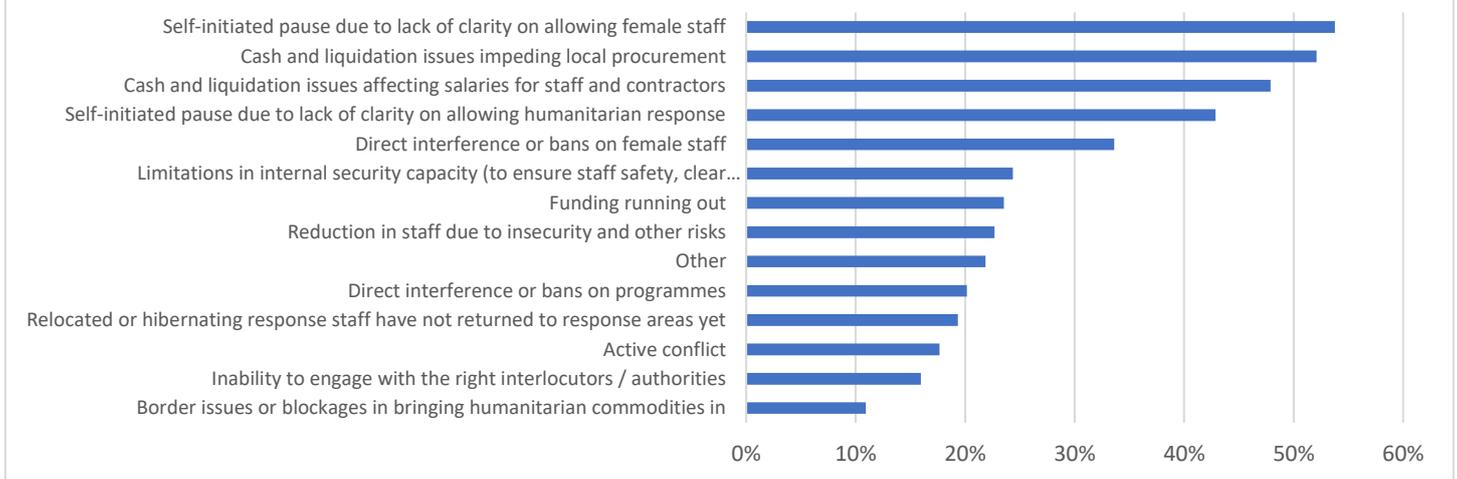
Overall Impact and Drivers

Almost three-fourths / 74 per cent of partners (119 organisations) have noted an impact on programme delivery since 12 August due to changes in the operating environment, whereas 26 per cent of respondents (42 organisations) have not witnessed any impact on programme delivery (see figure 2). Of those partners who reported an impact on programme delivery, close to two-thirds (62 per cent) of their programmes were either suspended or hibernated. This 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: 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 (54 per cent), followed by cash and liquidity issues impeding local procurement (52 per cent), cash and liquidity issues affecting salaries for staff and contractors (48 per cent), self-initiated pause due to lack of clarity / mixed messages from authorities regarding safety of staff to conduct the full spectrum of humanitarian response (43 per cent) and direct interference or bans on female humanitarian staff (34 per cent), among other reasons (see Figure 3). Only 18 per cent of respondents cited active conflict as the main reasons for temporary suspension or hibernation of programmes, compared to 87 per cent of respondents in the first iteration. This suggests a significant, yet no less restrictive, change in the operating environment for partners compared to last month when large parts of the country were actively experiencing heightened conflict.

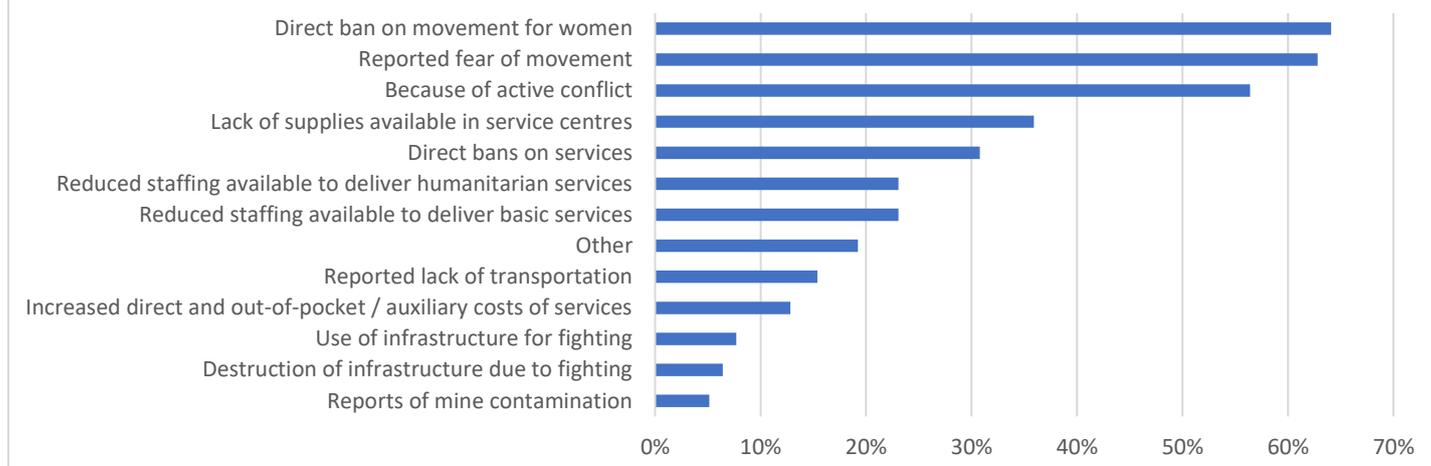
Of the 39 partners who report direct interference or bans on female humanitarian staff, the vast majority (97 per cent) indicated that the ban was issued by the Taliban. Similarly, among the 24 partners citing direct bans on programme as the primary cause for the suspension or hibernation, the majority of the respondents (88 per cent) attributed the direct bans to the Taliban. Among the 26 partners reporting a relocation/reduction of staff due to insecurity, the majority (88 per cent) indicated it was only a temporary relocation/reduction, with 74 per cent of the responding partners suggesting there are plans for staff to return within the next two weeks.

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

The majority of the suspended / hibernating programmes were reported to be services (education, health care, GBV case management, psycho-social support, maternal care, malnutrition treatment and sexual and reproductive health). After that, partners cited distributions to be affected (predominantly cash assistance), followed lastly by assessments and monitoring activities.

Two-thirds (66 per cent) of the partners who reported reduction in programmes noted that fewer people were accessing their services in the last three months, with direct bans on movement for women, reported fear of movement and active conflict cited as the main reasons (see Figure 4). Compared to the first round of the Rapid Capacity Survey, the number of partners reporting a reduction in people accessing their services in the last 3 months has increased by 9 per cent.

Figure 4: Why has there been a reduction in people accessing your services in the last 3 months? (multiple-choice)



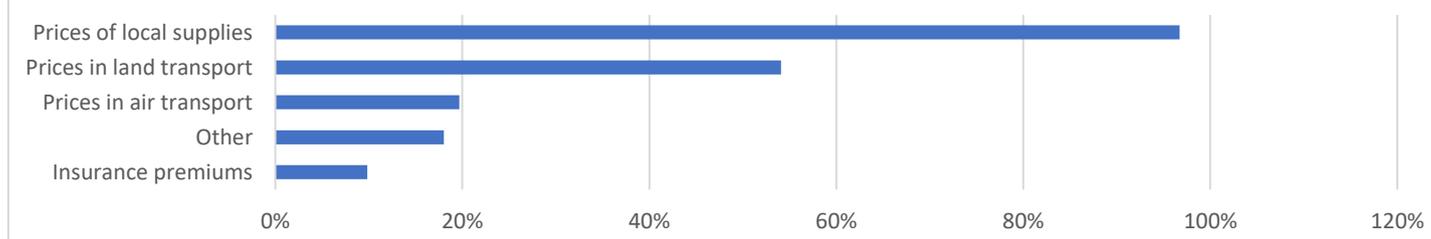
Cash and Liquidity

Among the 62 partners reporting that cash and liquidity issues are impeding local procurement, an average of 71 per cent of their commodities are locally procured. Among this group, more than half (51 per cent) indicated that they are yet to find a means to solve cash liquidity challenges related to local procurement, while others (39 per cent) reported that they are liquidating reserves held by money service providers and/or sending international transfers through money services providers, or making special arrangements with local banks (25 per cent). However, 78 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 57 partners citing cash and liquidation challenges affecting salaries for staff and contractors as the primary reason for hibernation or suspension, partners reported that more than 66 per cent of their staff and contractors are presently unpaid, with close to half (45 per cent) of these respondents yet to find a solution to this issue. Also, 43 per cent of the partners citing cash and liquidation challenges affecting salaries for staff and contractors noted that they are liquidating existing reserves as a mitigating measure to pay staff and contractor salaries, with less than two-thirds (62 per cent) indicating that the liquidation of existing resources covers the full amount.

At the same time as partners note liquidity challenges, more than half of all partners (52 per cent) have also reported experiencing increased operational costs in the last three weeks. Nearly all respondents (97 per cent) reported prices of local supplies as the area with highest price increase, followed by prices in land transport and air transport (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: 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 (79 per cent) cited the availability of liquid cash as a key factor. Survey respondents also suggested that greater commitments of non-interference by parties to the conflict / local leadership (60 per cent), common, consistent and clear messaging by de facto authorities on operations (58 per cent) as well as additional funding (48 per cent) will be needed to resume activities (see Figure 6). This is a significant change compared to last month where nearly all partners (97 per cent) cited improved physical security and/or reduction in fighting as the main enabler for resuming activities.

**Figure 6: What would enable resumption of activities?
(multiple-choice)**

