

Aid in Danger

Monthly News Brief

March
2020

Safety, Security and Access Incidents

Insecurity affecting aid workers and aid delivery

This monthly digest comprises threats and incidents of violence affecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

It is prepared by Insecurity Insight from information available in open sources.

Join our [mailing list](#) to receive monthly reports on insecurity affecting the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

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Data on aid workers reportedly [killed, kidnapped or arrested \(KKA\)](#) is available to download on HDX Insecurity Insight.

Visit our website to download previous [Aid in Danger](#) Monthly News Briefs.

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Africa

Burkina Faso

14 March 2020: Update: An Italian man and a Canadian woman - kidnapped by unidentified perpetrators on 15 December 2018 whilst on their way to Togo for a humanitarian mission - managed to escape captivity and reach safety in Mali, where they were picked up by UN forces. **Source:** [BBC](#)

Sahel Monitoring

A new series exploring violent and threatening incidents affecting aid operations, health care, education, civilians, refugees and IDPs in the Sahel region to ensure staff safety and better response outcomes. [Burkina Faso](#) and [Niger](#) available now.

Coming soon! Cameroon and Mali

Join our [Sahel Monitoring](#) mailing list to get them straight to your inbox.

Central African Republic

Misinformation targeting international organisations translates into hostility. Social media monitoring in the CAR shows misinformation deliberately targets the reputation of UN and INGOs: threats, accusations, and statements have increased by 22.6% in the last 7 days alone. [Read more](#)

Democratic Republic of Congo

07 March 2020: Near Sebele village, Fizi territory, South Kivu province, a male national LINGO driver was kidnapped by unidentified perpetrators while travelling from Kazimia to Baraka. The NGO vehicle was not taken. **Source:** [AWS¹](#)

Social media monitoring in the DRC has ended. For past documents, please see [Bulletin 1](#) and [Bulletin 2](#).

South Sudan

02 March 2020: Between Yuai and Pieri villages, Uror county, Jonglei state, unidentified perpetrators - thought to be youths conducting cattle raids - fired their weapons towards a vehicle belonging to the INGO Tearfund, killing a female local contractor and a bystander, and injuring the driver. Three other passengers escaped unharmed. In response, Tearfund suspended travel in the area. **Sources:** [Radio Tamazuj](#) and [VOA](#)

29 March 2020: In Rumbek town, Lakes state, a national administrator of an UN-supported hospital was reportedly killed in his home by an unidentified gunman. **Source:** [AWS¹](#)

31 March 2020: On the Pajut-Poktap road, Duk county, Jonglei state, an UN-contracted truck was ambushed by suspected Murle Tribesman while travelling from Pajut to Bor. The driver's assistant was shot and injured. **Source:** [AWS¹](#)

Coming soon! Trends and insight from social media monitoring in South Sudan. Join our [Security Media Trends](#) mailing list to get your copy when it's out.

Sudan

29 February 2020: The Sudanese Transitional Government lifted laws, rules and procedures that, during the rule of the now-ousted Omar al-Bashir, hampered the ability of aid organisations to operate in Sudan. Humanitarian agencies that were expelled at the time, including the WFP, have now been encouraged to return. **Source:** [VOA](#)

Asia

India

31 March 2020: Near Gondal Chowkadi, Rajkot city, Gujarat state, police officers beat up the president of the Gondal-based LINGO Manav Seva Trust while he was transporting the body of an old man - who had died from natural causes - to Gondal in an ambulance during the COVID-19 lockdown. The police sub-inspector was suspended. **Source:** [Times of India](#)

Want more information on COVID-19 developments impacting the security of aid work and operations? Join our [Aid Agency and COVID-19](#) mailing list now! Read the latest bulletin [here](#).

Europe

Kosovo

13 March 2020: The US Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation announced in a press release that it would pause implementation of its development programmes in Kosovo until the Kosovan government resolves tariff issues with Serbia. **Source:** [RFE RL](#)

Middle East and North Africa

Iraq

27 March 2020: Update: Three French aid workers from the NGO SOS Chrétiens d'Orient and their Iraqi colleague - kidnapped by unidentified perpetrators on 20 January 2020 - have been freed by their abductors. **Sources:** [BBC](#), [Catholic News Agency](#) and [RFE RL](#)

Occupied Palestinian Territories

25 March 2020: The Palestinian Authority imposed strict measures aimed at halting the spread of COVID-19, leaving aid organisations unable to reach people in need. **Source:** [The New York Times](#)

Syrian Arab Republic

02 March 2020: Near Binnesh city, Idlib governorate, warplanes believed to be Russian fired missiles near a Syrian Civil Defense (SCD) ambulance, severely damaging it. The ambulance was heading to the site of a previous bombing by the pro-Syrian government alliance. The Syrian regime and Russia have been found to repeatedly target healthcare facilities, workers and vehicles. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

14 March 2020: In al Atareb city, Aleppo governorate, Hay'at Tahrir al Sham militia shot a male ambulance driver working for Qatar Red Crescent during a raid in his brother's house. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

14 March 2020: In Ariha town and district, Idlib governorate, unidentified armed men broke into the sub-branch of the SARC, during which staff and volunteers were detained, property was damaged, and aid was stolen. **Source:** [ICRC](#)

19 March 2020: In the western suburb of Jilin, Daraa governorate, a male UN national staff member was killed during an outbreak of violence. **Source:** [AWS¹](#)

Around 19 March 2020: Eight local activists working mainly in humanitarian organisations and charities in Idlib governorate have been detained since the beginning of 2020. The al-Qaeda affiliated group Hurras al Din has reportedly detained six of them. **Source:** [SNHR](#)

25 March 2020: Syrian authorities imposed strict measures aimed at halting the spread of COVID-19, leaving aid organisations unable to reach people in need. **Source:** [The New York Times](#)

25 March 2020: In rebel-held northwest Syria, testing for COVID-19 started after weeks of unspecified obstacles. **Source:** [The New York Times](#)

Yemen

02 March 2020: On the Durayhimi road, Al Hudayah city and governorate, a suspected UN-agency truck transporting relief supplies struck an IED allegedly planted by pro-Houthi forces and exploded, injuring the driver. **Source:** [AWSD](#)¹

14 March 2020: The Yemeni Government and Houthi authorities imposed a ban on all inbound and outbound flights to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As a result, UNHAS operated its last flight from Sana'a on 16 March, and from Aden on 17 March, INGOs have been forced to scale back to essential staff only, WHO-run medical evacuations have been halted and an anti-aid fraud scheme using fingerprint technology was also put on hold. **Source:** [TNH](#)

20 March 2019: In Aden city and governorate, two Emirates Red Crescent aid workers were kidnapped by unidentified armed perpetrators and later found dead. **Source:** [Al Jazeera](#)

25 March 2020: In government-held areas, the Yemeni Government imposed strict measures aimed at halting the spread of COVID-19, leaving aid organisations unable to reach people in need. **Source:** [The New York Times](#)

26 March 2020: In rebel-held areas, Houthi authorities imposed strict restrictions aimed at halting the spread of COVID-19, forcing USAID to partially suspend humanitarian assistance to 70 percent of the Yemeni population. This suspension is believed to leave Yemen vulnerable to contagion. **Source:** [The Washington Times](#)

The Americas

Colombia

03 March 2020: In Narino department, renewed violence between armed groups and fear of reprisals by the same perpetrators have been preventing aid organisations, including MSF, from reaching 14,000 people in need of assistance. **Source:** [Doctors Without Borders](#)

16 March 2020: In Cucuata city, Norte de Santander department, the Colombian Government has instructed NGOs operating near the Colombia-Venezuela border to scale down their activities by half, as a preventive measure against the spread of COVID-19. **Source:** [Devex](#)

Notes

This document is part of the Aid in Danger project. It is published by Insecurity Insight and funded and supported by the Department for International Development (DFID) of the UK government through the RIAH project at the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute at Manchester University, UK. The incidents reported are not a complete nor a representative list of all events that affected the provision of aid delivery and have not been independently verified. All decisions made, on the basis of, or with consideration to, such information remains the responsibility of their respective organisations.

¹ The AWSD database does not include the names of individual victims or the agencies affected by an incident. This is done in consideration of the victims and their families who may not wish to have the names publicised in this format and to afford equal respect to the many victims for whom this information is not available. Accessed 23 April 2020.

² Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) database attribution policy. Accessed 05 March 2020



KKA Data March 2020

Aid workers reportedly killed, kidnapped and arrested.

	Killed	Kidnapped	Arrested	Total affected	Total KKA incidents
Afghanistan			1	1	1
CAR					
DRC	1	1		2	2
Iraq		4		4	1
Mali		1		1	1
Nigeria				0	
Somalia		3		3	1
South Sudan	3			3	3
Syria	10		1	11	9
Yemen				0	
Other countries	1		10	11	2
Total affected	15	9	12	36	20

Key Definitions

Aid worker: An individual employed by or attached to a humanitarian, UN, international, national, or government aid agency.

Killed: Refers to a staff member being killed. Aid worker(s) killed while in captivity are coded as 'kidnapped'.

Kidnapped: Refers to a staff member being kidnapped, missing or taken hostage.

Arrested: Refers to a staff member being arrested, charged, detained, fined or imprisoned. The classification is based on reported but not independently verified information. The Aid in Danger project makes no independent judgement about the legality of any reported arrest or detention.

KKA Data

We monitor local, national and international news outlets and online databases for threats facing people living and working in dangerous environments. Each month we release the latest available data on aid workers killed, kidnapped and arrested. The data is continually updated and includes new and historic reports identified in open-sources and verified security incidents submitted by Aid in Danger partner agencies. The dataset and quick charts can be accessed via [HDX Insecurity Insight](#). Data collection is ongoing, and data may change as more information is made available. Where the number of aid workers affected is unspecified, one is counted. The countries above have been selected by [Reliefweb](#).