

Aid in Danger

Monthly News Brief

May
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.

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

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Africa

Burkina Faso

30 May 2020: Near Barsalogo commune, Sanmatenga province, unidentified gunmen ambushed a government aid convoy after delivering food to IDPs in the area, killing at least 10 people, including an ambulance driver and a nurse, and injuring about 20 more. **Sources:** [Al Jazeera](#), [Sahel Security Alerts](#) and [TRT World Now](#)

Central African Republic

01 - 09 May 2020: In N'Dele town, Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture, unidentified perpetrators attacked unspecified humanitarian organisations on 10 separate occasions. **Source:** [OCHA](#)

14 May 2020: Along the road in Yagarandji Forest, near Kaga-Bandoro town, Nana-Gribizi prefecture, a male national NGO driver was shot by an unidentified armed group in an ambush. He was transferred to hospital where he later died. Three other passengers were unharmed. **Source:** [AWSD](#)¹

19 May 2020: In N'Dele town, Bamingui-Bangoran prefecture, attacks on aid workers and theft of INGO office material and three INGO vehicles by unidentified perpetrators forced the NRC, Premiere Urgence Internationale, Search for Common Ground, and War Child to suspend their activities in the area. **Sources:** [NRC](#) and [Twitter](#)

20 May 2020: In an unnamed village in Nana-Mambéré prefecture, an NGO driver was ambushed, beaten and robbed by seven armed Fulani tribesmen. Cash, documents and personal valuables were stolen. The driver received medical care at the Bouar hospital. **Source:** [AWSD](#)¹

25 May 2020: In Bokita village, near Batangafo town, Ouham prefecture, three male and three female aid workers from the Danish Refugee Council returning from a cash work activity in Kabo were kidnapped by suspected armed Fulani tribesmen. One female aid worker was released following MINUSCA negotiations with the tribesmen leader. The remaining five staff were transferred to MPB/FPRC base in Batafango. The perpetrators demanded the release of three Fulani children who were held hostage the week before by anti-Balaka armed men. Negotiations for their release are ongoing. All humanitarian activities in the area were suspended. **Source:** [AWSD](#)¹ and [Radio Ndeke Luka](#)

Aid Workers Arrested in 2019

In 2019, 70 aid workers were reportedly arrested in 49 incidents across 24 countries. A high number were reportedly arrested in Yemen (23), followed by the CAR (8), South Sudan (7) and Syria (6).

Read the full report [here](#)

Democratic Republic of the Congo

21 May 2020: In Kyondo village, Beni territory, North Kivu province, a vehicle belonging to Mercy Corps was set on fire by locals after it crashed into a crowd, injuring several people, one of whom later died from her injuries. The driver managed to flee. **Source:** [Radio Moto](#)

30 May 2020: Update: A Congolese militia leader accused of involvement in the murder of an American citizen and a Swedish national working with the UN has been arrested more than three years after the killings. **Source:** [AP](#)

Mali

10 May 2020: In Aguelhok commune, Tessalit cercle, Kidal region, a MINUSMA convoy hit a roadside IED whilst on a routine patrol, killing three Chadian peacekeepers and injuring four more. **Source:** [France 24](#)

Mozambique

30 April 2020: In Matola suburb, Maputo city and province, the founder of NGO Rizwan Adatia Foundation was kidnapped in an ambush by four unidentified perpetrators. He was rescued 20 days later. **Sources:** [Club of Mozambique I](#), [Club of Mozambique II](#) and [Club of Mozambique III](#)

26 May 2020: In Koko village, Macomia district, Cabo Delgado province, food donated by unspecified humanitarian agencies was looted, properties destroyed, and huts burned down during a terrorist attack on the village. **Source:** [Club of Mozambique](#)

Somalia

04 May 2020: In El Bardale town, Gabiley district, Woqooyi Galbeed region, unidentified perpetrators shot down a privately owned Kenyan aircraft carrying aid and medical supplies to aid Somalia's fight against the spread of COVID-19. The plane crashed, killing all six people on board. **Sources:** [Al Jazeera](#), [AS](#), [AWSD](#)¹, [BBC](#) and [The New York Times](#)

08 May 2020: Between Hoosingow and Dhobley town, Kismayo city, Lower Juba region, three NGO staff members on their way to Hoosingow town were kidnapped and their rented vehicle hijacked by Al Shabaab militants. **Source:** [ACLED](#)²

09 May 2020: Update: Outside Mogadishu, an Italian aid worker from the Italian NGO Africa Milele Onlus who was abducted in Kenya in November 2018 was released by her captors, a group affiliated to al Shabaab. See *Italy* section for further details. **Sources:** [ABC](#) and [BBC](#)

25 May 2020: In Qansahdhere town and district, Bay region, a WFP aircraft was hit with surface-to-air fire. No casualties were reported, and the aircraft managed to land safely. The crew were reportedly arrested and had their mobiles confiscated by Somalia's National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA). Local media sources claim Ethiopian troops misidentified the aircraft and opened fire. **Sources:** [Aviation 24](#), [Aeroinside](#) and [Garda](#)

27 May 2020: In Gololey village, Balcad city and district, Middle Shabelle region, unidentified masked perpetrators kidnapped seven Somali aid workers and a civilian from a health facility run by the local NGO Zamzam Foundation, before executing them. The bodies of the victims were found the next day. Some reports suggest the Somali Armed Forces may have been responsible for the killings as part of a retaliatory attack following the deaths of their soldiers, while other reports blame al-Shabaab. **Sources:** [ABC](#), [ACLED](#)² and [AWSD](#)¹

South Sudan

07 May 2020: In Bentiu city, Unity state, a male UN aid worker was assaulted with a spear by an unidentified perpetrator who broke into his home in the Bentiu PoC. The aid worker was injured and treated at the UNMISS clinic. The perpetrator stole two mobile phones and a radio that were later recovered. **Source:** [AWSD](#)¹

09 May 2020: In Juba, Central Equatoria state, an INGO security guard was held at gunpoint, dragged, and beaten by a group of unidentified perpetrators who broke into the INGO compound and demanded the compounds gate keys. The perpetrators cut the fence and cables to the air conditioning units before

fleeing when another on-duty guard alerted the rapid response team. The security guard was transferred to the local hospital. **Source:** [AWS¹](#)

16 or 17 May 2020: In Pieri town, Uror country, Jonglei state, two INGO aid workers and a volunteer were killed during intercommunal clashes and cattle raids in the village. Two staff members and 3 volunteers were also wounded. The INGO temporarily suspended operations in the area as a result. **Sources:** [AWS¹](#) and [Garda](#)

31 May 2020: At Cuiecok village, Awerial county, Lakes state, an NGO vehicle was ambushed by unknown gunmen while travelling from Terekeka county to Awerial town. The gunmen demanded money but as the staff refused to give it to them, the attackers shot the driver in the hand. **Source:** [AWS¹](#)

Sudan

09 May 2020: In Kadguli city, South Kordofan province, a male Sudanese UN staff member was shot as he tried to intervene in a robbery near his home. He suffered wounds on his shoulder, hand and stomach and was transferred to hospital. **Source:** [AWS¹](#)

Asia

Afghanistan

09 May 2020: In Firozkoh city and district, Ghor province, violent clashes took place during a public food donation event outside the governor's office that had been organised by a Qatari aid organisation. Security forces reportedly fired on demonstrators who were demanding more equitable food aid distribution. At least six people were killed and 19 wounded. Two of the dead are believed to be police officers. **Source:** [Garda World](#) and [The New Arab](#)

Myanmar

29 April 2020: Between Samee and Paletwa towns, Chin state, unidentified perpetrators ambushed between three and five trucks contracted by the WFP. Three trucks were hit by gunfire, injuring one driver. **Source:** [OCHA](#)

02 May 2020: In Chin and Rakhine states, continued armed conflict has disrupted supply routes and fueled food shortages. **Source:** [TNH](#)

Europe

Italy

10 May 2020: As soon as she landed in Rome after being freed from 18 months of captivity in Somalia, an Italian aid worker became the target of hate speech and threats on social media for having converted to Islam voluntarily mid-way through her time in detention. **Sources:** [Al Jazeera](#), [Global Village Space](#), [The New Arab I](#), [The New Arab II](#) and [The New York Times](#)

Turkey

14 May 2020: In Ozalp district, Van province, two aid workers were shot and killed when the vehicle they were travelling in was shot at by suspected PKK militants. **Sources:** [Garda](#)

Middle East and North Africa

Libya

09 May 2020: In Tripoli, heavy shelling of unidentified origin hit the Mitiga International Airport, the only functioning airport in Libya, and a key route for bringing aid into the country. **Source:** [IRC](#)

Syrian Arab Republic

21 May 2020: In the Tell Abiad area, Raqqa governorate, suspected Jamaah Ansharusy Syariah (JAS) members shot live rounds at crowds gathered during a relief distribution by an unspecified humanitarian organisation. One woman was wounded. **Source:** [ACLED²](#)

Yemen

09 May 2020: In unspecified Houthi rebel-held areas, the WHO ordered its staff to withdraw until further notice, citing credible threats and perceived risks related to COVID-19 which could impact on staff security. **Sources:** [Al Jazeera I](#), [Al Jazeera II](#) and [UN Humanitarian Air Service](#)

KKA Data May 2020

Aid workers reportedly killed, kidnapped and arrested.

| | Killed | Kidnapped | Arrested | Total affected | Total KKA incidents |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|---------------------|
| Afghanistan | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| CAR | 3 | 6 | | 9 | 4 |
| DRC | 1 | 12 | | 13 | 6 |
| Iraq | | 4 | | 4 | 1 |
| Mali | | 5 | | 5 | 2 |
| Nigeria | | | | | |
| Somalia | | 15 | | 15 | 4 |
| South Sudan | 10 | | | 10 | 8 |
| Syria | 10 | | 1 | 11 | 9 |
| Yemen | | 2 | | 2 | 1 |
| Other countries | 8 | 1 | 15 | 24 | 7 |
| Total affected | 32 | 45 | 17 | 94 | 43 |

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](#).

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 05 June 2020.

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

