

# Alert

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## Afghanistan

# Ongoing Fighting in Kunduz Causing New Wave of Displacements

Geneva, October 2015

### 1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

Since 24 April 2015, the conflict between Afghanistan National Security Force (ANSF) and Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs) intensified in the North, Northeast and East, especially in Kunduz, Takhar, Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, and Sari-pul provinces. This caused the displacement of thousands of families in Kunduz, Takhar and Nangarhar provinces. On 28 September 2015, AOGs attacked Kunduz City and gained control of most of the area. The ANSF deployed a huge number of forces in the outskirts of Kunduz to control the situation. The Government deployed forces and after a few days of fighting and bombardment, it was able to take control of some parts of the city. On October 6, AOGs again attacked the city and again took back control of some of the areas from the government.

Fighting is still ongoing in the city. All shops, public transport, NGO and company offices in Kunduz City have been shut down. Previously, two hospitals were operational throughout the fighting but since the bombardment of a hospital being managed by MSF, services have now been suspended. The assault came a day before President Ashraf Ghani's unity government marks its first anniversary, and will further complicate efforts to resume stalled peace negotiations.

Kunduz Province currently remains one of the most fragile environments in Afghanistan. Based on recent reports from the Afghan Government, more than 12,000 families have since then reportedly been displaced from Kunduz. The inflow of IDPs to the outskirts of the Jalalabad city is likewise increasing following the heavy fights between AOGs and ANSF in Kot, Achin, Agam, Chaparhar and Khugyani districts. The previously host communities in Kunduz have now likewise been displaced and are fleeing along with the previous IDPs to safer ground. Conflict-induced displacement continues to be largely triggered by AOGs ground offensives and by the ANSF counteroffensives, often through large-scale military operations, including aerial bombardments. More recently, and on a more localized level in Eastern region, displacement has also been triggered by clashes between armed opposition groups. In several situations, no party in the conflict appears able to capitalize on and hold territorial gains made over time. As a result, the frontlines and control over areas rapidly shifts, causing swift population movements and rapid displacement cycles that are increasingly difficult to track.

The affected people are fleeing in emergency and had no much time to take any belongings with them as the top priority is to save their lives, hence wherever they will take refuge, will need emergency response assistance such as food, NFIs, health, shelter, cash grants and livelihood assistance. Additionally Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, and Nangarhar provinces have been affected by floods in 2015, which resulted in the loss of food, health, shelter and other livelihood assets.

## **2. Why is an ACT response needed**

It is still unclear whether an ACT response would be required, but if the conflict continues, it is expected that massive displacements will occur and those internally displaced will definitely require humanitarian assistance.

## **3. National and international response**

At the moment, most organizations have fled the area. MSF stayed behind and was providing emergency health services. Since its hospital was bombarded, no other organization is left providing services.

## **4. ACT members' response**

Community World Service Asia has recently been responding to the needs of IDPs in Kunduz Province providing food packages with the support of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), so is in direct contact with stakeholders in the area, including local government, partners and those assisted during the recent response. NCA has 2 national partners with offices in Kunduz, who have pulled out staff who are not from the province. Three assessment teams will be deployed to Kunduz, Takhar, Baghlan and Badakshan and a task force is established in Takhar. One of their partners is part of the Need Assessment. NCA is following the situation and waiting for the result of the needs assessment. Christian Aid has a partner working in and round Kunduz area. They also have office in Kunduz and Takhar. They are closely watching the developments and will respond accordingly.

## **5. Planned activities**

The situation at the moment is very fluid and can change drastically at any moment. Members are closely monitoring the situation and will plan a response based on the needs and gaps identified.

## **6. Constraints**

Due to the volatile situation in Kunduz City, it is very difficult to acquire detailed information at the moment.

*The members of ACT Afghanistan Forum include Christian Aid, Community World Service Asia, Hungarian Interchurch Aid and Norwegian Church Aid.*

**Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel ([Line.Hempel@actalliance.org](mailto:Line.Hempel@actalliance.org)).**

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