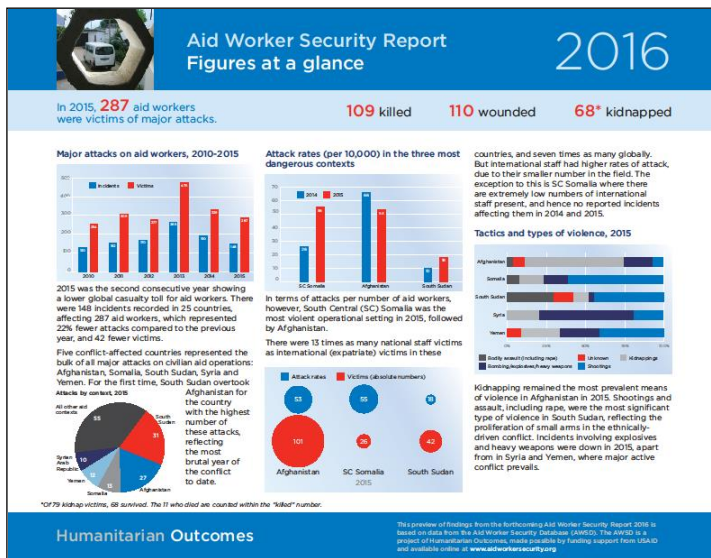# SAFETY AND SECURITY UPDATE

With support from USAID/OFDA, Humanitarian Outcomes provides data on security incidents targeting aid workers around the world. *Photo courtesy of Humanitarian Outcomes*

Improving Access to Aid Through Data and Analysis

The Aid Worker Security Database (AWSD) collects and analyzes data on violent incidents targeting aid workers worldwide. Freely available to the public, the AWSD—which works with public sources, aid organizations, and security entities to obtain and verify data—allows the humanitarian community to assess changing security environments. USAID/OFDA's support for the AWSD began with funding for the database's creation in 2005. With multi-year funding, USAID/OFDA continued supporting partner Humanitarian Outcomes, which manages the AWSD, to strengthen data collection and analysis in FY 2016. The AWSD is available at: https://aidworkersecurity.org/.

Improving Safety and Security Within the Humanitarian Community

Humanitarian organizations in the field, particularly those with limited resources, face many security challenges and risks. In FY 2016, USAID/OFDA continued to partner with InterAction—the largest alliance of U.S.-based international non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—to improve the safety and security of member agencies' staff and their ability to reach disaster-affected populations in high-risk environments. InterAction provides technical and strategic assistance to NGOs developing their own security frameworks and engages the private sector in providing security services to NGOs to ensure services are afforded in accordance with NGO principles and sensitivities. USAID/OFDA provided $250,000 in FY 2016 to facilitate InterAction's continued global leadership in safety and security coordination, outreach, and policy, including liaising with UN agencies, NGOs, and the U.S. Government and other donor agencies. USAID/OFDA has supported safety and security initiatives through InterAction for the past 10 years.

Sector Overview

USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) staff and relief agency partners frequently operate in countries with security challenges. To mitigate risk, USAID/OFDA enhances the safety and security of the humanitarian community through outreach and dialogue with implementing partners and the donor community. USAID/OFDA supports established networks of humanitarian security personnel, improves security mechanisms and capacity at the global and country levels, and strengthens policies that promote safety and security.

USAID/OFDA's Safety and Security Unit directly supports USAID/OFDA staff in the field by providing real-time analysis and guidance on security issues from Washington, D.C., and by deploying safety and security officers to the field. USAID/OFDA aims to enable humanitarian activities in volatile situations by increasing access while minimizing risk to staff and operations.

USAID/OFDA provided approximately $4 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 for activities that improved operational security, facilitated security-related coordination and information management, promoted best practices, provided innovative security training to humanitarian actors, and built a better understanding of the international humanitarian security landscape.

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Providing security training to humanitarian personnel results in safer operations on the ground by increasing staff capacity to assess threats, mitigate risk, and prepare contingency plans. With $150,000 in FY 2016, USAID/OFDA continued its multi-year support to the Mission Ready program through partner RedR. Mission Ready, an innovative online training program, allows participants to simulate security scenarios and receive real-time feedback. Launched in October 2015, Mission Ready is available in Arabic, English, and French and provides video content, documents, and interactive simulations for participants. More information regarding Mission Ready is available at: http://www.redr.org.uk/en/Training-and-more/mission-ready.cfm.

In addition to supporting training for staff across the international humanitarian community, USAID/OFDA designed a Security in Humanitarian Operations (SHOP) course designed to increase security awareness and emergency readiness among USAID/OFDA staff. USAID/OFDA piloted the course in July 2015 and in FY 2016 continued to support the development of the SHOP course as a key component of core staff training.

Participants learn to address critical safety and security issues during USAID/OFDA's SHOP course.
Photo by USAID/OFDA

Enhancing Humanitarian Response in Insecure Locations

In FY 2016, insecurity continued to impede humanitarian aid in multiple countries. In response, USAID/OFDA provided nearly $3.3 million to the UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) to support operations in countries such as Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Sudan. USAID/OFDA assistance reduced the vulnerability of humanitarian staff and informed the delivery of assistance, allowing aid to reach populations in need—often in hostile areas. For example, USAID/OFDA funding facilitates security training for UN and NGO partners operating in insecure environments and enables UNDSS to conduct risk mitigation and critical incident response activities.

Supporting the European Interagency Security Forum

Since 2010, USAID/OFDA has supported the European Interagency Security Forum (EISF), a group of security managers from more than 50 humanitarian organizations, to enhance the safety and security of aid workers providing humanitarian assistance in complex and increasingly volatile environments. Through coordination with fellow agencies on security issues and strengthening of integrated security risk management approaches, EISF facilitates increased and sustainable access to populations in need. EISF activities also include capacity-building workshops, biannual forums, and knowledge-sharing events. In FY 2016, USAID/OFDA provided approximately $110,000 to EISF through partner Christian Aid.