

On August 19, World Humanitarian Day, we commemorate humanitarian workers killed and injured in the course of their work. We also honor all aid and health workers who continue, despite the odds, to provide life-saving support and protection to those in most need.

Saving lives should never cost lives

Humanitarian day 2021

The UN recently predicted that 235 million people worldwide will need humanitarian assistance and protection in 2021; an increase of 40% in one year. This means that 1 in 33 people worldwide needs help, a significant increase from 1 in 45 people a year ago, which was already the highest figure in decades. ¹



Overcoming poverty is not a task of charity, it is an act of justice. Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. YOU can be that great generation.

- Nelson Mandela (1918- 2013)

To reach 235 million people in need is a massive task. To supply medical care, shelter, security, food, and clean water to those who have none. We now more than ever need dedicated and skilled personnel who are willing to go the extra mile.

Challenge

Evani Debone is part of the Humanitarian Advocacy Working Group in Yemen. ‘ADRA is one of the biggest NGOs in Yemen. Right now, access is a huge challenge. In a humanitarian operation, the main objective is coordination. That’s why we are working with the government’s principal here in the south. We serve over 1 million people a year so we are careful not to risk our operation at any level.’

Resolution

In 2016, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution aiming to condemn attacks against medical facilities, staff, and patients in conflict situations. And yet, the number of violent incidents keeps rising. Reaching its peak in 2019, with 481 aid workers either killed, kidnapped, or wounded.

The AWSD is a global compilation of reports on major security incidents involving deliberate acts of violence affecting aid workers.²

Data verified up to December 31, 2020. Last updated: July 6, 2021

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Killed	108	125	131	139	109	111
Kidnapped*	125	122	131	72	87	69
Wounded	242	234	147	102	99	109
Total	475	481	409	313	295	289

*Live release or escape (kidnappings, where victims were killed, are counted in the 'killed' totals).

#NotATarget

In response to the violence, followers of the campaign [#NotATarget](#) stand up for the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure, patients, medical staff, and hospitals in conflicts. Even though the hashtag started years ago, it’s still active on social media. This emphasizes the risk humanitarian workers are still facing in 2021.

¹ [Global Humanitarian overview 2021](#)
² <https://aidworkersecurity.org/incidents/report/victims>

Just recently, in June, three employees of Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) were killed in Ethiopia. UN Secretary-General António Guterres described these murders as an appalling violation of International Humanitarian Law. 'I stand in solidarity with our humanitarian partners who are risking their lives to provide protection and relief to people in Tigray', Guterres added.³

ADRA Yemen

ADRA has been active in Yemen since 1995, basing its programs on the needs of the local people. Focusing on primary health care, economic development, education and food security, ADRA Yemen's main target groups are women, children, and the poor, as well as people with special needs and refugees.

For the last six years, a devastating war has raged through Yemen. It seems the end is nowhere in sight.



Evani: 'Due to this war 80% of the population need humanitarian assistance. There are 12 million people who hardly have access to clean water. Half of them are children. Millions in Yemen don't know where their next meal is coming from. If we don't act now, we will soon have an immense famine on our hands.'

'One of our nutrition programs targets children between zero to five years old. The results are amazing. You see the children coming back to life. It warms my heart because when children are malnourished, it is as if the country is barren and childless. We run hospitals and reactivate the local market with our cash-transfer-work project. Participants earn money to support their families and use their talents and skills for the good of the community. So ADRA is creating a lasting impact in Yemen.'

If you think that you are too little to make a difference.

Remember:

- It only takes one to change the world
- By sharing this post you stand up against the violence against aid workers
- If you can't feed a hundred people then begin with feeding one
- In the end, all that gets left behind is our acts of kindness
- Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. **YOU can be that great generation.**
- Start today!



Security

Josep Borrell, Vice-President of the European Commission and High Representative of the EU, and Janez Lenarčič, Commissioner for Crisis Management issued the following [statement on Humanitarian day 2020](#). 'While we salute their courage and passion, regrettably in 2019, 125 humanitarian workers were killed, with 122 kidnapped. **Saving lives should never cost lives.** This is why International Humanitarian Law must be respected to protect humanitarian aid workers and civilians.'

Evani: 'We have team members whose main task is our safety. We try to minimize the risks as much as possible. That's why we coordinate our plans and actions with other NGOs and of course the UN. We make sure local authorities and communities know where we are. We share what we do, why we are there, and what is on our agenda. Once we have this situation

³ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/06/1094892>

circled, we implement the security protocols all NGOs follow; leave and come back early, never go anywhere without a backup car, don't drive in armoured cars.

But the attack on the three MSF workers in Ethiopia is, at the moment, the head topic in our monitoring comity meetings. International communities and governments need to get involved in the safety of humanitarian workers. I think Europe is the right place to advocate for those who are willing to risk their lives every single day, just to bring the bare essentials to people in need.'