In 2015, 287 aid workers were victims of major attacks.

2015 was the second consecutive year showing a lower global casualty toll for aid workers. There were 148 incidents recorded in 25 countries, affecting 287 aid workers, which represented 22% fewer attacks compared to the previous year, and 42 fewer victims.

Five conflict-affected countries represented the bulk of all major attacks on civilian aid operations: Afghanistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen. For the first time, South Sudan overtook Afghanistan for the country with the highest number of these attacks, reflecting the most brutal year of the conflict to date.

In terms of attacks per number of aid workers, however, South Central (SC) Somalia was the most violent operational setting in 2015, followed by Afghanistan.

There were 13 times as many national staff victims as international (expatriate) victims in these countries, and seven times as many globally. But international staff had higher rates of attack, due to their smaller number in the field. The exception to this is SC Somalia where there are extremely low numbers of international staff present, and hence no reported incidents affecting them in 2014 and 2015.

Kidnapping remained the most prevalent means of violence in Afghanistan in 2015. Shootings and assault, including rape, were the most significant type of violence in South Sudan, reflecting the proliferation of small arms in the ethnically-driven conflict. Incidents involving explosives and heavy weapons were down in 2015, apart from in Syria and Yemen, where major active conflict prevails.

*Of 79 kidnap victims, 68 survived. The 11 who died are counted within the “killed” number.