



CONCILIUM

AFGHANISTAN IMPACT REPORT

*A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF CONCILIUM, INC. FUNDS AND
AFFILIATED OPERATIONS DURING THE AFGHANISTAN CRISIS OF
2021*

CONTENTS

Who Is Concilium?.....	2
Mission	2
Vision.....	2
Values	2
Situation In Afghanistan	2
Concilium Response.....	2
Situation Impact.....	3
Strategic Analysis.....	3
Crisis Management Support.....	4
Member Care Resources	4
Staff Impact.....	4
Lessons Learned	5
Organizational Impact.....	5
Donor Impact	5
Moving Forward	6
Appendix I. Partner Testimonials	7
Appendix II. Timeline Of Events.....	7

WHO IS CONCILIUM?

Concilium, Inc. is a religious, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, wholly committed to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

We are dedicated to helping Christian missionaries, humanitarians, and other Gospel workers build stewardship and resilience into Great Commission obedience. Every year, Concilium equips, trains, and empowers Christian workers from around the world, empowering both the voice and presence of the Gospel to enter and remain in hard-to-reach places.

Concilium supports Christian workers serving in a multitude of locations using multiple ministry paradigms. This requires Concilium to remain both adaptive and cutting edge as we meet the needs of our global partners through security best practices, crisis prevention and management services, global risk analysis, and member care resources.

Concilium is connected to over 100 mission sending organizations for whom we constantly provide subject matter expertise in personal and organizational security as well as crisis management through training, consulting and written products.

MISSION

To build capacity and resilience into Gospel advance so others may hear and live.

VISION

To see Christians of all ages engaged in serving the Lord with boldness, legitimacy, and competence.

VALUES

We hold the Gospel as our highest value.

SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan came with dangerous implications for Western Christian expatriates (WCE's), Afghan believers, and others affiliated with Western governments, evangelical organizations, and civil society groups. The transition period for the Taliban's takeover resulted in intense scrutiny of personal property, such as homes, persons, and phones. In many cases, Afghans with perceived or assumed affiliation with these groups frequently faced stolen property, verbal and physical harassment, brutal beatings, and even death. *See Appendix I for a timeline of events.*

Now, those who have left Afghanistan face new dangers and uncertainties as they navigate land routes into neighboring countries, refugee camps, and host countries.

CONCILIAM RESPONSE

Prior to August 15th, Concilium's team of analysts began closely monitoring the situation on the ground and quickly understood the severity of the situation. After receiving a flood

of urgent phone calls for crisis management assistance, Concilium Founder & President, Scott Brawner, retasked all Concilium staff towards applying our foundational mission, resources, and services to supporting the evacuation efforts of our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan.

While many organizations raised money for seats on evacuation flights, the Concilium team understood that many Afghans struggled to make their way safely to the airport to fill those seats, identifying the need for accurate and actionable information that would help them travel safely.

On August 19th, we set up a 24/7 watch center to monitor the situation on the ground.

Within 48 hours of an all-staff meeting, **Concilium's 24/7 Watch Center** was up and running with a dedicated task force monitoring incoming requests, our team of analysts monitoring, researching, and forecasting the situation, and Stateside operators collaborating with individuals and contacts on the ground to ensure accurate and actionable information and communication.

Concilium staff leveraged organizational and personal contacts in government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other groups in order to serve those in need in Afghanistan.

Due to our rapid response to Afghanistan and prior reputation for acute analytical products for Western Christian expatriates, Concilium quickly became a leading figure in issuing guidance and considerations for several members of the [Overseas Security Advisory Council \(OSAC\)](#) Faith-based Sector Committee, as well as evangelical ministry representatives from the [Risk Management Network \(RMN\)](#). We hosted daily and weekly briefings on the situation on the ground where we issued general guidance and answered specific questions for individuals facilitating evacuations out of Afghanistan.

After the first week of September, Concilium staff understood that the environment had shifted, and so too must the dynamic of our Watch Center in order to effectively steward our newfound knowledge, networks, and resources.

We dedicated a team of 3 staff members to identify the new dynamic on the ground, as well as the pre-existing and new needs of Afghans and our organizational partners. Once we understood this new dynamic, we rooted our Afghanistan efforts going forward within the confines of our pre-existing programming, and most importantly, our mission and vision.

SITUATION IMPACT

Concilium leadership ensured that our operations stayed true to the mission and vision of the organization. As such, our Afghanistan efforts fall within the following categories: strategic analysis, member care resources, and crisis management support.

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

- Pushed real-time threat information through secure internet portals to over **100+ organizational partners**.

- Published **31 written products** involving strategic forecasts, crisis response guidance, and attack warnings to the **30+ organizations** Concilium actively supports, as well as **20 new organizational/individual contacts**.
- Held **regular briefings via secure digital platforms** to relay current information and answer questions from facilitators with their own contacts in need.
- Routinely **conducted due diligence** on potential misinformation and false claims.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

- Received **116 direct assistance requests involving 2,430 individuals**. Each request received a direct response from Concilium and was either assisted directly by Concilium, given the most recent situation update and available resources, or put in contact with a through vetted and trusted partner.
- Answered over **500 inquiries** via email.
- Confirmed **at least 200 individuals** (Western expatriates and Afghans) under our care safely fled Afghanistan.
- Provided general guidance for over **100+ organization** representatives.

MEMBER CARE RESOURCES

- Hosted a joint event with a partner organization (The Resilience Resource) to equip those working in resettlement agencies, supporting churches, and as host families with strategies to serve, work, and live with newly resettled Afghans in crisis.
 - Received over **100 participant registrations**.
- Partnered with regional international development experts to curate **mother-tongue video content for newly resettled Afghans** on topics such as host culture/family dynamics, cultural norms, and crisis and trauma response.

STAFF IMPACT

This abrupt shift in daily operations had a profound impact on our staff. Our staff was reoriented away from their daily routines and towards 12-hour+ shifts, fielding multiple meetings, phone calls, emails, and messages at once. While our diverse staff consists of seasoned missions and security professionals, this was indeed an intense time for our small but impactful team.

Staying true to our commitment to the Great Commission and discipleship, we called our Afghanistan support staff and their spouses for an in-person Critical Incident Debrief where they were guided by our Member Care team to reflect on the previous two weeks in a healthy way. More importantly, our Member Care team contextualized this debrief with the Lord our God as our Refuge and Strong Tower and encouraged our staff to lay their burdens before the Lord, so that we could continue to operate for the glory of God, confident in his sovereignty over all.

LESSONS LEARNED

Towards the end of the Debrief, Concilium's Executive Leadership came to the following conclusions:

- Non-governmental organizations supporting Afghanistan have a great need for a due diligence and information corroboration.
- Nefarious actors and criminal intent were and are rampant throughout this chaos and confusion.
- Many Christian organizations struggled to operate in a Christ-like manner during this tumultuous time.
- Individuals and groups working with Afghan refugees are typically ill-equipped to care for those in crisis and who express trauma response symptoms.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

EXTERNAL

Within a few days, Concilium earned the reputation as a “trusted agent” among evangelical ministries, faith-based organizations, government agencies, and other entities. We take this position very seriously. Along with our routine briefings for our partners, we began to expand our circle to include new ministry, non-governmental organizations, and even government affiliated partners. We understood the value of collaboration and engaged in thorough vetting of each new partner prior to initiating collaboration.

INTERNAL

Concilium understood that you don't rise to the occasion, you fall to the level of your training. Understanding that our staff came from various parts of the organization, we were amazed by our staff's own capacity for crisis management and rapid response. To maximize the efficiency of Concilium's future large-scale crisis management operations and further equip our staff, we have begun to develop mandatory training for all staff in the areas of field security, crisis management, first response, strategic analysis and more. Beginning with our own courses in these areas and developing new organization-specific curriculum as needed, we are staying true to our vision of equipping our own staff to share the Gospel with boldness, legitimacy, and competence.

DONOR IMPACT

Concilium was blessed by several individuals who trusted us to steward their funds to support our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. During our Afghanistan fundraising campaign, our **\$210,000** was applied to the following:

- Strategic Analysis
 - Satellite imagery in Afghanistan for informed assessments and information/source vetting
 - Geo-mapping and tracking software
- Crisis Management Support
 - Legal fees for Afghan humanitarian parole processing
 - Airfare for Afghans to flee the country
 - Land route transportation for Afghans
- Member Care
 - Mother-tongue video production resources for resettled Afghans
 - Spanish interpreter for our Latin American partners so they could equip their teams to receive and care for Afghans in crisis
 - Concilium Watch Center Debrief session
- Administration
 - Pay to two Concilium Watch Center staff members (1 full time, 1 part time) under 90-day contract following August 31st

MOVING FORWARD

We praise the Lord for his mercy and grace that allowed us to aid in these efforts. However, we know that our call to serve has just begun.

While the Watch Center's Afghanistan-centric operations are winding down, we intend to apply our lessons learned to the Watch Center going forward.

Concilium leadership foresees using the Watch Center as a functional mechanism to assist those in crisis all around the world. Using the infrastructure that we set up in the context of Afghanistan, we intend to develop, train, and enhance our resources and staff capacity to be readily available in case of a crisis anywhere around the globe.

Moreover, this experience has pushed us to expand and strengthen our networks in other countries so that Gospel workers operating overseas can have the physical presence of Concilium affiliates and staff.

Additionally, Concilium recognizes that the Great Commission requires full participation from brothers and sisters around the world. We are looking forward to solidifying and expanding our partnerships with Gospel workers from Latin America, Africa, Asia, and more.

At the suggestion of Concilium President, Scott Brawner, we are looking to establish a Scholarship Fund in 2022 to benefit the following:

- Registration fees for support-raising, North American Gospel workers who require financial assistance to participate in Concilium Secure training courses.
- Subscriptions to Concilium Insight for small-scale sending organizations and churches that wish equip their Gospel workers with strategic analysis and considerations for Western Christian Expatriates but cannot afford to do so out of their operational budget.
- Risk assessment and crisis management training and support services for sending organizations and churches not based in North America (i.e. Nigeria, Ethiopia, Brazil, Haiti, etc.)

APPENDIX I. PARTNER TESTIMONIALS

“Concilium does civil-military affairs right.” – High ranking military official

“This briefing was very insightful for me. What a great group!” – United Nations Representative, Faith-based organization

“You are truly a blessing. Thank you for these briefings, I am grateful for the dialogue and exchange of information.” – Global Safety & Security Director, Faith-based Organization

APPENDIX II. TIMELINE OF EVENTS

AUGUST 15TH: The Taliban seeks to establish itself as a legitimate government and announces that foreign civilians who stay in Kabul will be allowed to register with the new government. The US maintains control of the Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) and parts of Kabul during the evacuation.

AUGUST 16TH: The US Department of State repeats shelter-in-place guidance for US citizens and Afghans as they fill out Repatriation Assistance Requests. Some non-U.S. Christian expatriates have reportedly passed through a Taliban checkpoint without incident. Taliban fighters in some areas of Kabul are going door-to-door looking for people who worked for NGOs, foreign governments, and the Afghan government, former Afghan police and soldiers, and women in government and media.

AUGUST 17TH: The Taliban and the US government conclude negotiations for the safe passage of civilians to the airport through August 31st. The Taliban set up multiple checkpoints around the airport and prevent the passage of Afghan nationals while allowing the passage of foreigners. Taliban forces allude to no violence against women, while emphasizing that Sharia Law will be the basis of governance. Islamic State jihadists (ISK) are determined to pose a threat in the Kabul area and may attempt attacks

against the airport. Taliban capture multiple US military biometrics devices that contain the biometric data of Afghans who supported American and coalition forces, known as HIIDE (Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment).

AUGUST 18TH: Passengers with valid travel documents for entry into the United States will be prioritized over those who do not have valid documents. The situation at the airport continues to be reported as chaotic and dangerous by both media and field sources. Afghan nationals continue to experience difficulties passing through the several Taliban checkpoints. Both Taliban forces and US troops have fired shots into the air at different times to control crowds. Reported evidence indicates inconsistent implementation of supposed Taliban policies. Multiple sources have told us that the Taliban's possession of HIIDE's biometric identification data poses a low threat to foreigners and a moderate threat to Afghan nationals.

AUGUST 19TH: The Taliban blocks the gates to HKIA and assaults those seeking to evacuate. There are also first-hand reports of Taliban going door to door identifying individuals and detaining them or murdering them outright.

AUGUST 20TH: More than 1,000 Taliban fighters from Helmand and Kandahar provinces in southern Afghanistan had been summoned to Kabul to take over security in the capital. Their local culture has a strong tradition of revenge, known as "Badal." Taliban's central leadership has often been concentrated in Kandahar and in nearby Quetta, Baluchistan province, Pakistan. Resistance fighters in the area of the Panjshir Valley take control of Pul-e-Hesar district of Baghlan province. The Government of Uzbekistan does not appear sympathetic to Afghan refugees and returned 150 refugees to Afghanistan.

AUGUST 21ST: Military helicopters and special operations forces teams pick up several hundred US citizens and Afghan nationals from various parts of the city. The German military reportedly deploys two helicopters for the same purpose. The US Embassy in Kabul issues a Security Alert advising US citizens to avoid traveling to Hamid Karzai International Airport and to avoid airport gates due to "potential security threats outside the gates at the Kabul airport." There is an acute cash shortage. Fighting reported in Andarab, Deh Saleh, and Banu districts. So far, territorial gains by resistance fighters have not opened safe corridors for overland evacuations from Kabul.

AUGUST 22ND: Overland evacuation is high-risk. Overland evacuees should expect to pass through local militia and/or Taliban checkpoints enroute to the border. Instructions and routes for accessing the airport are constantly changing. Suspected Islamic State-Khorasan Province terrorist plots targeting evacuees have emerged. Taliban control the major border crossings, there are multiple reports of commercial traffic and individuals entering and exiting the country. Pakistan does appear to be accepting travelers at the present time. Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan surged troops to their side of the border in early July and conditions appear to be relatively stable. The Sher Khan Bandar border crossing, north of Kunduz, is the primary trade route into Tajikistan. This trade route is a lucrative source of income for the Taliban, making any long-term interruptions counter to the Taliban's interest. Tajikistan has committed to support up to 100,000 Afghan refugees and has begun construction on refugee camps. Iran is not accepting Afghan refugees. Turkmenistan is not permitting commercial traffic to enter their country. Armed resistance to the Taliban appears to be gaining momentum in the north, and risks may increase over the short term on the route to and north of Kunduz.

AUGUST 26TH: The Taliban and Northern Alliance agree to stop attacking each other. At least two explosions were reported at HKIA and the nearby hotel. Several were killed and injured, including American military members. The attack seems to originate from the ISK. Before today, there are an unreported number of casualties from the chaos at the airport and borders, though at least seven people died at HKIA as of August 22. An estimated minimum of 120,000 refugees have been evacuated from Afghanistan. The US estimates it has evacuated over 82,000 people from Afghanistan since the mid-August takeover. There may be up to 1,500 citizens still left in the country.

AUGUST 27TH: Gates at HKIA are closed. Pakistan is not currently hospitable to refugees, even though refugee infrastructure is in place. The Pakistani police say there have been no refugees entering Pakistan so far, despite other reports. The National Resistance Front/Northern Alliance appears to have rejected negotiations with the Taliban since yesterday's Kabul bombings, which they condemned; now may be a future counter-terrorism partner for Russia and NATO. Taliban put a Tajik leader of the terrorist group Jamaat Ansarullah in charge of the Tajikistan border in five districts of Afghanistan's Badakhshan region. Three districts of Takhar and Badakhshan are now contested. ISKP presence predominantly in Nuristan, Laghman, and Kunar provinces, and one specific area of Ghazni province. Australia and France have completed their evacuations.

AUGUST 28TH: Taliban checkpoints are turning away large numbers from the airport. Drone strike kills 2 high profile ISIS targets. US State Department reports approximately 350 Americans are still looking to evacuate. The US is leaving Kabul

airport, though currently still in charge of airport and airport gates. Reports of 100 aircraft still to depart every 24 hours from HKIA. **France and Britain will propose an emergency resolution on Monday 8/30 to create a safe zone in Kabul to protect people trying to leave the country.** Banks are operational with a max of \$200 every 24 hours. Civil servants are protesting at banks, needing more. The Taliban cannot access the central bank's \$9 billion in reserves. The International Monetary Fund has also suspended the transfer of some \$450 million. The Taliban asked women doctors and health care workers to return to work. The UK has completed evacuations. Turkey recognizes the Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, working with Qatar to operate the airport in consortium.

AUGUST 29TH: A large explosion heard in a neighborhood northwest of HKIA - US air strike against a vehicle containing one or more ISK suicide bombers. Reports of a family, including 9 civilians, killed in a secondary explosion this morning, following the US strike. There is a NOTAM from the FAA: US operators are now banned from operating in country outside specific flights to Kabul. Taliban condemns ISIS-K strike at HKIA and strike following the US. strike. Zabihullah Mujahid says the Taliban expects to take full control of Kabul airport following US withdrawal and will announce a full cabinet in the coming days. Pakistani border guards shot dead a suspected Afghan refugee and wounded three others on Friday as they allegedly tried to cross over illegally from Afghanistan. Taliban and rebel forces skirmished just outside the Panshir Valley. The Taliban cut telephone and internet connections to the valley. National Resistance Front/Northern Alliance refute claims that Taliban has seized Panshir Province.

AUGUST 30TH: At least one attempted rocket attack has occurred against HKIA; landed in a nearby neighborhood. The Uzbekistan government is in opposition to receiving refugees as the US Embassy struggles to process SIV applications in the country. The government of Uzbekistan will not grant flight clearance to any plane that does not have an onward destination and clearances. The government of Uzbekistan will not allow Afghans without a valid Uzbek visa to stay in Uzbekistan during the long-term procession of US visa applications. Refugees are crossing the Panj River into Tajikistan by raft/boat. ISK claims responsibility for the rocket attack directed against HKIA.

AUGUST 31ST: The United States government has officially announced its withdrawal of military and diplomatic assets from Afghanistan. The Taliban has overrun the former Afghan government and is currently constructing its new formal government mechanism in Kabul to include members from affiliate networks such as Al-Qaeda Haqqani network.

Concilium is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. We are a Gospel-centered, Great Commission ministry focused on risk, security, and crisis management resources to empower the voice and presence of the Gospel throughout the nations. Concilium is connected to over 100 mission sending organizations. In this capacity we constantly provide subject matter expertise in personal and organizational security as well as crisis management through training, consulting and written products. Click here to view our [financial information](#).