

4.1.4. Targeting of family members

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According to a human rights expert interviewed by the Norwegian COI Unit Landinfo in 2023, family members of former government officials may face various ill-treatment from the Taliban, including harassment, arrests, and, in some instances also killings.1141 Reports published by Rawadari and HRRL in the same year outlined that family members of individuals who had left Afghanistan were being targeted,1142 including wives, children and brothers of former security officials,1143 and brothers to former civil government employees.1144 These organisations also recorded cases in which family members had been detained and killed together with former military officials.1145 In more recent reports on targeted killings and arrests of former officials, UNAMA and Rawadari did not outline cases in which family members had been targeted,1146 while Afghan media in exile has been reporting on individuals cases in which family members of former civil and security officials have been arrested.1147

Kerr Chiovenda and Sharan noted that family members have been targeted to put pressure on former security officials,1148 including to force targets to come out of hiding.1149 Sharan stated that some girls related to former government officials have been forced to marry de facto officials.1150 Sara de Jong, Professor in Politics and International relations with the University of York, also noted how targeting sometimes shifted to other family members, and gave as an example families in which several brothers had served in foreign forces or security forces in different capacities. If the prime target would leave the country, the target sometimes moved to another family member that had a less significant background. Professor de Jong further noted that mostly male family members had been targeted in killings, although female family members might have been exposed to other forms of violence that go undocumented.1151

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