

Taliban ban Afghan women from working at NGOs and use water cannon on women protesting

From [Sky News](#)

The Taliban have banned Afghan women from working at non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the country.

It was not clear if the ban, announced in a letter and confirmed by the economy ministry, also applied to foreign women or those working for the United Nations (UN), which has a significant presence in the country.

The economy ministry says the ban applies to Afghanistan's coordinating body for humanitarian organisations, known as ACBAR – which does not include the UN.

The letter said female employees would not be allowed to work for NGOs until further notice because some had not adhered to the Taliban's interpretation of the Islamic dress code for women. The economy ministry said it had received "serious complaints" about female staff not wearing the "correct" headscarf or hijab.

In recent days, the Taliban has used water cannons to disperse those who have been protesting the ban on women attending university. Witnesses in the western city of Herat say more than 20 women were on their way to the provincial governor's house, on Saturday to protest, chanting, "education is our right," before being pushed back by security forces firing the water cannon. Video shows women screaming and hiding to escape the water cannon.



One of those organising the protests, Maryam, said between 100 and 150 women took part in the protests, moving in smaller groups. "There was security on every street, every square, armoured vehicles and armed men," she said. "When we started our protest, in Tariqi Park, the Taliban took branches from the trees and beat us. But we continued our protest. They increased their security presence. Around 11am they brought out the water cannon."