

Afghanistan

Migration Profile



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Afghanistan

Migration Profile

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ACRONYMS

ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
AMICS	Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
ANCB	Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau
ANDMA	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
APRP	Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSO	Central Statistics Organization
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DAB	Da Afghanistan Bank
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EU	European Union
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HAP	Humanitarian Assistance Programme
HDI	Human Development Index
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMCC	Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LAS	Land Allocation Scheme
MoEc	Ministry of Economy

MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
MoRR	Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ND	Natural Disaster
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPP	National Priority Programme
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
NSDP	National Skills Development Programme
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RQA	Return of Qualified Afghans
UAM	Unaccompanied Minor
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VoT	Victim of Trafficking
VRRP	Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme

FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the first Migration Profile for Afghanistan which provides detailed information on the migration patterns in Afghanistan with a focus on circular migration and remittances. It provides background information, historical details, root causes and the potential future of the Afghan migration dynamics. Due to security challenges and limited institutional capacities in data collection, a lack of reliable migration data poses challenges to policymakers in Afghanistan to develop appropriate migration policies and relevant migration programmes.

Today refugee movements no longer characterize the primary source of Afghan migration. Migration in search of livelihoods is currently the primary reason for migration and this occurs through rural-urban migration in Afghanistan or circular migration patterns as Afghans cross into Pakistan and/or the Islamic Republic of Iran. Afghans utilize their social networks to find low-skilled work in the cities or neighbouring countries. Afghans are also starting to migrate more to Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore in search of employment opportunities.

The Afghanistan Migration Profile Project has been generously funded by the IOM Development Fund. It is a tool to bring together available information, to assess the data gaps, to foster capacities for future data collection and enable more evidence-based policy recommendations. I hope that the Migration Profile will be used as a practical document addressing all facets of migration in Afghanistan.

Without active participation and contribution by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan entities such as Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Central Statistic Organization and UN agencies, this study would have not been possible. I would also like to thank all colleagues involved in this study especially colleagues from Maastricht Graduate School of Governance for their tireless work as they made this study possible.

I hope this Migration Profile will provide partners with a clearer understanding of Afghan migration dynamics. IOM's intension is to update it regularly so that it continues to provide a solid basis for developing migration policies and programmes in and for Afghanistan.

Richard Danziger

Chief of Mission, IOM Afghanistan

AFGHANISTAN – Key statistics

<i>Geography</i>					
Total area, sq km ^a	652,230				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<i>Human and social development</i>					
Life expectancy at birth, <i>annual averages</i> ^b	58.60	59.10	59.60	60.10	60.50
Gross enrolment ratio (primary and secondary combined), <i>per cent</i> ^c	73.43	73.64	78.04	77.33	81.68
GDP per capita, <i>USD</i> ^d	376.98	450.66	561.20	614.0	687.6
Human Development Index, <i>HDI</i> ^b	0.430	-	0.453	0.458	0.466
<i>Remittances and other financial flows</i>					
Remittance inflows, <i>millions USD</i> ^e	625.52	89.71	228.38	679.81	-
Remittance outflows, <i>millions USD</i> ^e	230.62	181.46	332.39	354.58	-
Remittance net flows, <i>millions USD</i> ^e	394.90	91.76	104.01	325.22	-
Foreign direct investment (net inflows), <i>millions USD</i> ^d	87.28	213.67	75.65	91.23	94.01-
Official development assistance (net inflows), <i>millions USD</i> ^d	4,875.07	6,235.26	6,426.38	6,884.70	6,725.03
Remittances inflows, <i>percentage of GDP</i> ^e	3.70	-0.70	-0.60	1.60	-
	2000	2005	2010	2050	
<i>Population</i>					
Total, <i>thousands</i> ^f	20,595	24,861	28,398	56,551	
Female, <i>thousands</i> ^f	10,116	12,187	13,983	27,895	
Male, <i>thousands</i> ^f	10,479	12,674	14,415	28,656	
Urban, <i>percentage of total population</i> ^g	20.60	21.90	23.20	-	
<i>International migration</i>					
Net migration rate, <i>per 1,000 population</i> ^f	1.20	-5.60	-2.60	-0.1	
International migrant stock, <i>thousands</i> ^d	75.92	86.45	90.88	-	

^a CIA, 2013.

^b UNDP, 2013b.

^c UIS, 2013.

^d World Bank, 2013.

^e Nabizada, personal communication, 2012 (Note that the data are reported on the basis of the following fiscal years: 2007/08, 2008/09, 2010/11, 2011/12).

^f UN DESA, 2013.

^g UN DESA, 2012.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present Afghanistan Migration Profile is a tool to be used to enhance policy coherence, evidence-based policymaking and the mainstreaming of migration into development planning. It was prepared in consultation with a broad range of government and non-government stakeholders.

The Migration Profile contains a lot of information, which is structured in five main parts: Part A: Afghanistan - A Country in Context, Part B: Migration Trends and Migrant Characteristics, Part C: Impacts of Migration, Part D: Migration Governance and Part E: Key Findings, Policy Implications and Recommendations. The Migration Profile provides:

- Background information on the context of Afghanistan in terms of social, economic and environmental trends (Part A).
- A comprehensive overview of currently available data on migration trends and migrant characteristics (Part B).
- An assessment of the impacts of migration by looking specifically at the linkages between migration and human, social and economic development in the Afghan context. Attention is given to the relationship between migration and the labour market, environment and health (Part C).
- A review of the policy, legal and institutional framework within which migration takes place as well as the institutions and organizations that play a key role in migration governance in Afghanistan (Part D).
- Conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the Migration Profile (Part E).

The report is further supplemented by two annexes, which will be made available online. The first one addresses return and circular migration in Afghanistan. The second provides a detailed overview of the Afghan remittances market, impacts and policies.

The presented information and analysis is based on all nationally and internationally available statistical and administrative data, the IS Academy Survey data and evidence from secondary sources as well as legal, regulatory and policy documents.

Mobility has been an essential aspect of Afghan history, including migration for both seasonal and permanent employment and, at times, to seek refuge.

These transient populations have been shown to contribute economically and socially to both host and origin countries. Records show that Afghans have been migrating primarily to neighbouring countries Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran for centuries, though more recently have also been travelling further afield, including to North America, the European Union and Australia.

The first large wave of modern outmigration from Afghanistan, caused by the Soviet invasion in 1979, saw refugees welcomed in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan and Afghans continued to flee from conflict across the borders in the following years. The number of refugees spiked in 1990 with more than 6 million.

The net migration rate of Afghanistan has fluctuated significantly in recent decades. During the Soviet occupation from 1979 until 1989, a large number of Afghans left the country, with a negative net migration rate of -56.7/1000 persons between 1980 and 1985. Between 1990 and 1995 this reversed to a positive net migration rate of 44.4/1000 persons. And as the strength of Taliban rule grew, during 1995 and 2000, this rate again sank below parity to -6.5/1000 persons. The fall of the Taliban at the end of 2001 and the implementation of UNHCR's voluntary repatriation scheme in 2002 led to high numbers of Afghan refugees returning to their home country. Between 2002 and 2012, 5.7 million Afghans returned home and 4.6 million of them received assistance from UNHCR.

Forced migration of Afghans occurs largely due to natural disasters and conflict, but also occurs through the trafficking of persons, either within Afghanistan or to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. A long history of poppy production in Afghanistan, and associated experience in smuggling narcotics across the border, has contributed to the existence of cross-border networks also used for human trafficking operations. Moreover, human rights violations like domestic violence, forced marriages, child marriages and child abuse commonly occur in Afghanistan. This creates an environment where human trafficking is tolerated and may even be fostered.

Similarly, Afghanistan faces significant issues of poverty. In 2007/08, 36 per cent of the population lived under the poverty line of AFN 1,255 (about USD25) per person per month (World Bank, 2010a) and, in 2009, the average per capita monthly expenditure of Afghanistan's 9 million inhabitants was less than USD 66 cents a day. More than 50 per cent of the Kuchi population are affected by poverty making this group the most poverty stricken group in the country. The Afghan Central Bank reported that inflation had accelerated to a peak of 43.2 per cent in May 2008. The unemployment rate in Afghanistan was 7.1 per cent

in 2007/08; however this relatively low rate disguises high underemployment. In 2010, Afghanistan's Human Development Index was 0.349, which gives the country a rank of 155 out of 169 countries with comparable data, and sets it below the regional average.

Afghanistan does not report data on remittances to the International Monetary Fund, though the World Bank estimates that 15 per cent of rural households in Afghanistan receive remittances from abroad, covering around 20 per cent of the family's daily expenditure. A 2007 report released by the International Fund for Agricultural Development estimated remittances to Afghanistan in 2006 at USD 2.5 billion, accounting for 29.6 per cent of the total GDP in Afghanistan at that time. Over 31 per cent of all Afghan households are estimated to receive remittances from the Islamic Republic of Iran or Pakistan alone, mainly from family members or friends. Across all expenditure quintiles, remittances amounted to around USD 34 per capita.

The annual value of remittances sent from the United States and Canada is also significant - possibly as high as USD 75 million. In 2008, EUR 79,664 in remittances was sent to Afghanistan from the Netherlands, and in 2004 EUR 22 million from Germany. These figures are all estimates, however, due to a lack of concrete data largely due to the extensive use of the more trusted, though less regulated, *hawala* system, and the common practice of physically taking cash across borders. In 2006, the first electronic money institution was launched in Afghanistan: the M-Paisa service, supported by Roshan Telecommunications, offering new possibilities for remittance sending to and from the country.

Pillar 7 of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, formally approved by President Hamid Karzai on 21 April 2008, focuses on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The aim of this pillar is to facilitate the planned and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs and the reintegration of returnees and IDPs into society. In accordance with this, a voluntary refugee repatriation programme is governed by an agreement between the Governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNHCR, ensuring the integrity and voluntariness of the migrant repatriation process. These agreements also exist between Afghanistan and other countries, including the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France and Australia. In April 2012, MoRR, UNHCR and UNDP started developing a Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme (VRRP) which was to be nationally managed and implemented with the aim of increasing access to effective and timely basic services and livelihood opportunities for returnees, IDPs and their receiving communities, and to foster sustainable socioeconomic integration, peaceful co-

existence and local economic development. Initially targeting 48 prioritized high return areas, the aim is to demonstrate that a holistic integrated community-based approach could be duplicated in other areas of need. The programme deliverables, which were developed in the framework of the *Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees*, will be integrated within the National Priority Programmes. The Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP) is an Afghan government-led internationally supported effort to reintegrate former combatants. The complementarities and synergies between the VRRP and APRP indicate a way of making effective use of resources and capacities of the latter.

Not all Afghans returning to Afghanistan do so voluntarily, however, as forced returns or deportations from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Europe or Australia occur on an ongoing basis. Some European countries are now also trying to address the issue of return of unaccompanied minors including potential forced return activities. The largest numbers of forced returns are recorded from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan. In total in 2011, 211,023 deportations were recorded from the neighbouring country, which averages at 578 deportations per day.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Labour Migration:

- A labour migration policy for Afghanistan¹ should be developed in order to a) protect and promote the rights of Afghan migrant workers overseas, b) enhance the development benefits of migration and c) effectively administer labour migration and promote overseas employment opportunities and d) establish secure and fair labour recruitment processes and bilateral cooperation.
- To further enhance labour mobility and protection of migrant workers, the GIRoA should aim to establish bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries and GCC countries, develop sub-legislation for the Regulation for Sending Afghan Workers Abroad and develop legislation on recruitment practices of migrant workers in Afghanistan. This should also contain the provision of information or training sessions to potential migrants.

Return Migration:

- In order to structurally facilitate return migration and improve planning and management of sustainable reintegration of return migrants in Afghanistan, the GIRoA should develop a return migration policy and related strategies.
- Strengthening of municipalities' capacity to respond to population influxes through enhanced urban planning and infrastructural development.
- Enhance research that aims to understand the effects of temporary return of highly skilled Afghans on development in Afghanistan. Consequently, such successful programmes should be continued to increase the transfer of skills and innovations in relevant sectors.

Diaspora:

- More research is required to understand the socioeconomic situation of the Afghan diaspora in countries that host the largest Afghan communities (including EU countries, the Russian Federation, India).
- Efforts should be made by the GIRoA to create and maintain links between migrants and their country of origin in order to encourage them to contribute human and financial capital to the development of their home communities.

1 A draft of a new Labour Migration Policy does exist, but it has not been endorsed by the cabinet yet. MoLSAMD is Ministry responsible for this policy.

- In order to engage the diaspora in a more efficient way the GIROA should focus on a specific policy to strengthen the ties with the diaspora. In addition, the GIROA should improve the passport and visa system to ensure that Afghan nationals have access to identification.

Remittances:

- In order to obtain a better understanding of remittance flows – and of the senders and receivers that generate them – better information on these flows has to be gathered both at the micro and the macro level.
- To better support money service providers and formal financial institutions so that they can extend the reach of their services into largely “unbanked” areas, a greater understanding of the actors that facilitate transfers should be gained.
- The GIROA should develop a remittance policy, specifically targeting large corridors.
- The future of money transfer in Afghanistan may lie in the telecommunication system due to its significant existing level of use, and, therefore, proper regulation and facilitation to strengthen this way of money transfer is needed.
- The GIROA should also leverage remittance flows for development by making cheaper, safer and more productive methods of remittance transfers available for both senders and recipients.
- Migration and remittances should not be viewed as a substitute for official development aid, since they represent private financial flows that do not reach all households within the country and therefore other financial sources are still needed in Afghanistan.

Border Management:

- Implementation of a well-enforced electronic border counting and identification system, which will allow better monitoring and management of cross-border movements along Afghanistan’s borders.
- A database should be constructed based on that information and used for evidence-based policymaking.

Human Trafficking:

- Additional training should be provided for those working with these groups so that there is clarity on the different types of movements and their consequences for the individuals involved.

- In order to prevent human trafficking, corresponding laws and regulations must be enforced and it should be ensured that victims of trafficking are not punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being trafficked.
- Conduct of field research with a particular focus on gender-based violence and criminal networks involving illicit activities such as human trafficking and smuggling.

Internally Displaced Persons:

- Legal instruments are required and need to be enforced to prevent and respond to internal displacement and ensure that the human rights of IDPs are fully respected.

Data:

- There should be efforts leading to capacity-building of government officials in terms of skills in statistics and information communication technology which will help them increase the efficiency of the responsible data and information units.
- Increase collaboration within the area of data collection between various UN agencies, NGOs and research institutions to further harmonize migration data collection and databases.
- In order to further enhance evidence-based policymaking, the Afghan government could consider expanding the migration and remittances section within the NRVA survey.
- The GIRoA should facilitate the establishment of a migration database, which includes insights into the reasons why people move or do not move in specific areas and thereby provide the basis for more effective migration policies. The database should bring together key stakeholders that would use and fund such data.
- Enhance and improve systematic data collection through the establishment of a bi-annual (every two years) holistic migration survey in Afghanistan.
- A working group should be established where ministries, international organizations and others involved in migration related issues can collaborate on a regular basis to share information and make better use of data in the formulation of policies.

PART A: AFGHANISTAN - A COUNTRY IN CONTEXT

A. I. MIGRATION HISTORY

MIGRATION BEFORE 1979

Mobility has been an essential part of Afghan history. Records show that Afghans have been migrating to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan for centuries. In the 1850s, thousands of Hazara households migrated to the Islamic Republic of Iran to flee natural disasters and other crises. Between 1880 and 1903, another 15,000 Afghan families are known to have settled in the area of Torbat-e Jam, in the east of Mashhad, Islamic Republic of Iran (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005).

Afghanistan has been a low-income country throughout the past century. Especially in the 1960s and 1970s, industrialization remained negligible and the Afghan population faced insufficient employment opportunities. As a result, the oil boom in 1973 attracted many Afghan labour migrants to Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and other Middle Eastern countries (Kronenfeld, 2008). When increasing numbers of Pashtun workers from Pakistan migrated to the oil-rich Gulf States, this provided opportunities for Afghans to take up the jobs becoming available in Pakistan (International Crisis Group, 2009). In addition, relatively high wages in the Islamic Republic of Iran and rising government taxes in Afghanistan at that time were decisive factors for Afghans seeking work abroad. As a consequence of this several hundred thousand Afghan migrant labourers were present in the Islamic Republic of Iran before the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (Stigter, 2006). During the oil boom, Afghans migrated to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan legally and were welcomed by both governments who benefited from the cheap labour force. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghans worked in construction, in brick factories and on farms and received much lower wages than Iranians (Ashrafi and Moghissi, 2002).

FIRST MIGRATION WAVE: SOVIET INVASION (1979)

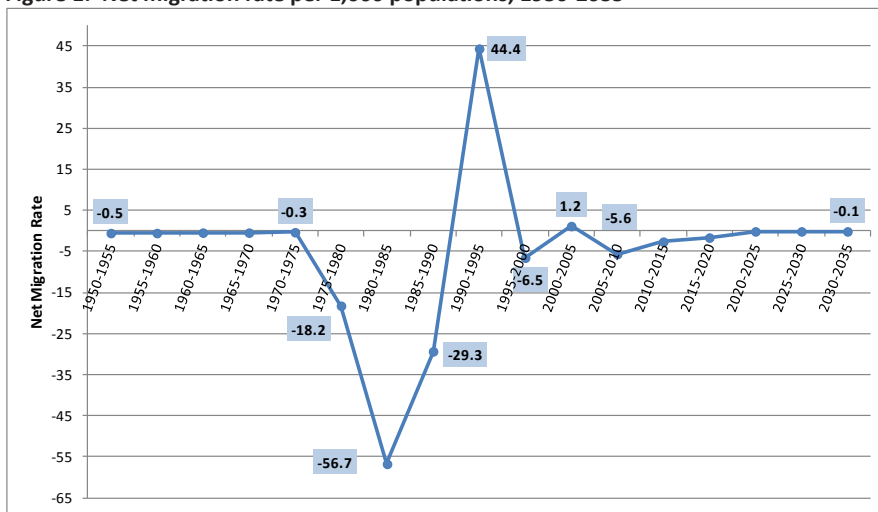
The first large wave of outmigration from Afghanistan was caused by the Soviet invasion in 1979. In the 10 years that followed, the resistant *mujahedeen* fought against the Soviet forces causing large-scale emigration flows throughout the decade (Stigter, 2006). Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran were the main destination countries of these Afghan refugees due to their geographic proximity as well as similarities in language, culture and religion (Ashrafi and Moghissi, 2002). The majority of refugees originated from rural areas and tried to escape bombing and combat (Monsutti, 2006). Between 1979 and 1989, about 2.6 million Afghans crossed the border to the Islamic Republic of Iran. At that time, the Iranian government welcomed their Afghan neighbours and handed out “blue cards” which provided Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran access to education, healthcare and food. It also granted them permission to engage in low-wage labour. Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran at that time were called *mohajerin*, which means involuntary religious migrant. It was seen as the duty of Iranian citizens to provide help to their religious brothers and sisters. Of the 2.6 million Afghans that came to the Islamic Republic of Iran during the Soviet occupation, only 5 to 10 per cent lived in refugee camps, while most settled in rural and urban areas in the eastern part of the country (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005).

The Soviet occupation in 1979 also triggered a mass movement of Afghans across the border to Pakistan. Over 1.5 million Afghans are known to have crossed this border between 1979 and 1980 (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005). The large numbers can mainly be explained by the strong cross-border ties among Pashtun tribes in the south and east of Afghanistan that fled to their tribal kin across the border in Pakistan. Most Afghans in these areas were Sunni, as was a large share of the Pakistani population across the border. Shia Hazaras also crossed the border to Pakistani cities with large Shia populations via routes that had been used by labour migrants for decades (International Crisis Group, 2009). Between 1981 and 1985, the war in Afghanistan intensified and caused many to flee the country to Pakistan. Figure 1 shows that during the Soviet occupation between 1980 and 1985 the net migration rate of Afghanistan’s population was -56.7/1000 persons.

In contrast to the Islamic Republic of Iran, most Afghans in Pakistan lived in refugee camps along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. During this time radical Islamist parties used these camps as their bases for action against the Soviet troops. These camps were also the reason the Government of Pakistan received relatively high humanitarian aid by the international community. The

United States of America, especially, wanted the Soviet position weakened and to establish an Islamic government in Kabul that could be controlled (Turton and Marsden, 2002). In 1989 the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, which was followed by intensified *mujahedeen* activity and another wave of migration from Afghanistan to Pakistan (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005). As a result, in 1990 more than 6 million Afghans were displaced as they fled bombing and combat, especially in rural areas. Afghans were the biggest group of displaced persons worldwide at that time, representing almost half of the total population of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (Monsutti, 2006).

Figure 1: Net migration rate per 1,000 populations, 1950-2035



Source: UN DESA, 2013.

SECOND MIGRATION WAVE: TALIBAN REGIME

The victory of the *mujahedeen* in 1992 caused the second migration wave out of Afghanistan. At this time, especially the urban and educated middle class fled Afghanistan towards the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan (Stigter, 2006). In contrast to the first migration, Afghans were no longer welcomed by the Governments of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Afghanistan also failed to receive as much attention from the international community, causing a significant decrease in financial support for Afghan refugees in Pakistan. In 1990, the first voluntary repatriation programme in Pakistan was established (Turton and Marsden, 2002).

The Islamic Republic of Iran started its first repatriation programme in 1992 under a tripartite² agreement between Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNHCR. From 1993 onwards, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran provided newly arrived and undocumented Afghans with a temporary registration card. They were then labelled as *panahandegan* which carried a negative connotation and granted them a much lower status than had been the case for refugees of the first migration wave in 1979 (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005). Between 1992 and 1995, over 1.3 million Afghans returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan voluntarily, with net migration as high as 44.4/1000 persons between 1990 and 1995 (Figure 1).

However, with the rise of the oppressive Taliban regime from 1994 onwards, major movements of Afghans to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan began once again and continued until 2000 (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005). Between 1991 and 2000, over 300,000 Afghan refugees fled to Pakistan. These events help to explain the negative net migration of -6.5/1000 persons in Figure 1. At the same time, UNHCR changed its policy in Pakistan and discontinued the provision of food aid to Afghan refugees, driving many refugees into the cities to look for work (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005). In 1995, the Islamic Republic of Iran closed its border with Afghanistan, which was now ruled by the Taliban. The Islamic Republic of Iran issued *laissez-passer*³ documents to Afghans, which only permitted them to travel out of the country. The Iranian government also stopped providing education and healthcare supplies to Afghan refugees and 190,000 undocumented Afghans were deported between 1998 and 1999 (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005).

THIRD MIGRATION WAVE: END OF THE TALIBAN REGIME (2001)

The third and most recent large-scale migration wave was caused by the war and associated bombing campaigns between the Taliban and United States-led coalition forces in 2001. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 caused increased attention from the international community towards Afghanistan (Turton and Marsden, 2002). The Governments of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran increasingly attempted to decrease the number of Afghans living in their respective countries despite the conditions in their homeland. The Islamic Republic of Iran increased the cost of living for Afghans and implemented

² An agreement is tripartite if three parties are involved. The name tripartite provides no indication of what the parties involved have agreed on.

³ *Laissez-passer* comes from the French and means: let pass.

policies that prohibited Iranian employers from hiring Afghan workers. Pakistan, on the other hand, closed many refugee camps that housed thousands of Afghans in border areas. Deportations from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan continue to take place, though in the Islamic Republic of Iran to a far greater extent than in Pakistan (Stigter, 2006).

In 2002 (March/April), UNHCR started its assisted voluntary return programme for Afghan refugees living in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan (Lumpp et al., 2004). By the end of 2002, more than 1.5 million had returned from Pakistan and more than 250,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran (UNHCR, 2012f). Of these, the numbers of returnees to urban areas (Kabul, Jalalabad and Kunduz) was much higher than anticipated (Lumpp et al., 2004). The official number of returnees, however, has limited explanatory power, as it refers only to those who received assistance from UNHCR. The provision of UNHCR assistance to returnees, especially the cash grant to cover transport costs, also resulted in an unknown number of “recyclers” signing up for repatriation and then returning to the country of asylum after having collected the assistance package. This was particularly prevalent among returnees from Pakistan, many of whom had relatively short distances to travel back to Afghanistan. Furthermore, the eastern and central provinces of Nangarhar and Kabul were the destination of 60 per cent of those documented to have returned by the end of August, though many returnees to these two provinces may actually have been seasonal migrants who had no intention of staying in Afghanistan beyond the summer. Consequently, the real figure of returnees may also be much lower than officially recorded by UNHCR (Turton and Marsden, 2002).

Between 2002 and 2005, Afghanistan observed an unexpectedly large wave of repatriation. With the assistance of UNHCR, 2.7 million refugees returned from Pakistan and more than 800,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran. During the same period (2002-2005), the number of spontaneous returns⁴ (known to UNHCR) amounted to almost 300,000 from Pakistan and about 570,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran. This level of repatriation shows a degree of confidence in the renascent state, but also reflects expectations created by donor pledges to rebuild the country and the deterioration of living conditions in the places of refuge (Monsutti, 2006).

⁴ *Spontaneous return* is defined in the IOM glossary on migration as: “The voluntary, independent return of an individual or group, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), or asylum-seekers, to their country of origin, usually without the support of States or other international or national assistance” (IOM, 2011a: 92).

Changes in the Afghan government after 2001 and worsening economic conditions in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, further contributed to a change in attitude towards refugees from Afghanistan. The high numbers of Afghan returnees represented a reduction in the burden of hosting and supporting a large refugee population for various stakeholders (namely Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNHCR and the donor community). Given the context in which these large return movements took place, however, it is questionable how sustainable this return migration of Afghan refugees shall be. Moreover, channels of pre-established transnational networks exist between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran and are likely to continue to exist in the future (Monsutti, 2006). In addition, security issues and the lack of economic opportunities (employment) and social services (health and education) continue to impose considerable barriers on Afghan returnees and their sustainable reintegration. This is demonstrated by the rate of return migration since 2005, as following years of exceptionally high activity, this rate has slowly but continuously declined (Figure 1). At the same time, the volume of migration linked to seasonal labour and trade continues to grow (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008b).

Today, some 1.6 million registered Afghans remain in Pakistan and about 840,000 in the Islamic Republic of Iran (UNHCR 2013b, 2013c). The profile of these Afghans is rather different from those refugees who have returned since the fall of the Taliban regime. The great majority of these individuals remaining in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran have been in exile for more than 20 years. Furthermore, almost half of the registered Afghan population in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan was born in exile. After two decades in these countries, the decision to return constitutes a major undertaking. Most returnees depend on their relatives and other social networks for their social and economic reintegration. However, many poorer families do not have these resources and thus depend on the assistance provided by local and international organizations, particularly with regard to water and shelter in their country of origin (UNHCR, 2008c).

A.2. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

POPULATION TRENDS

The United Nations Population Division Statistics Department publishes data on projected population growth in the coming decades. The Afghan population is expected to grow significantly until 2050 (Table 1). Whereas the current population is estimated to be around 30 million, the Afghan population is likely to grow to more than 55 million in 2050. It is also expected that men will further outweigh women in the population in the future (UN DESA, 2013; CIA, 2013). Table 1 also shows that the size of the Afghan population only decreased from 1980 to 1990, when millions of Afghans fled to other countries.

Table 1: Afghan resident population by sex (in thousands), 1950-2050

Sex	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Male	3,798	4,460	5,589	6,702	6,021	10,479
Female	3,653	4,315	5,426	6,478	5,710	10,116
Total	7,451	8,774	11,016	13,180	11,731	20,595
Sex	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	
Male	14,415	18,068	22,058	25,780	28,656	
Female	13,983	17,599	21,441	25,053	27,895	
Total	28,398	35,667	43,500	50,834	56,551	

Source: UN DESA, 2013.

Table 2 shows changes in the population growth rate of Afghanistan by time period. This allows consideration of how key political events may have affected population growth. The growth rate was -2.7 during the Soviet offensives but stabilised at the end of the 1980s and even increased to a peak of 8.1 per cent between 1990 and 1995. Population growth decreased again during the Taliban era between 1995 and 2000. From 2000 onwards population growth has remained fairly constant and estimates show that the Afghan population will further grow in the future, though to a slower extent than currently.

Table 2: Population growth rate (in %) and population change (in thousands), 1950-2050

Period	Population growth rate	Population change per year	Period	Population growth rate	Population change per year
1950-1955	1.5	112	2000-2005	3.8	853
1955-1960	1.8	153	2005-2010	2.7	707
1960-1965	2.1	198	2010-2015	2.4	722
1965-1970	2.4	250	2015-2020	2.2	732
1970-1975	2.6	307	2020-2025	2.1	781
1975-1980	1.0	126	2025-2030	1.9	786
1980-1985	- 2.7	- 330	2030-2035	1.7	764
1985-1990	0.4	40	2035-2040	1.4	703
1990-1995	8.1	1,171	2040-2045	1.2	615
1995-2000	3.2	602	2045-2050	1.0	528

Source: UN DESA, 2013.

The Afghan population is very young, with over 45 per cent of the population currently falling in the age range of 0-14 years (Table 3). This puts pressures on the labour market and unemployment rate. The population aged 15 to 59 is increasing in number and constituted close to half of the Afghan population in 2010. The oldest age group, including people aged 60 and above, will increase in coming years; this is, however, not related to migration patterns but rather to improved living conditions and developments in the healthcare, education and economic sector. Estimations show that the elderly population will remain small making up 8.5 per cent of the total population in 2050.

Table 3: Afghan population by age group (in %), 1950-2050

Age group	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
0 - 14	42.4	43.8	45.3	46.8	48.7	49.5
15 - 59	52.8	52.1	50.4	47.5	48.3	47.2
60 +	4.4	4.1	3.9	5.7	3.1	3.4
Age group	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	
0 - 14	48.6	40.3	33.3	28.9	24.1	
15 - 59	47.7	55.4	61.6	64.6	67.4	
60 +	3.7	4.3	5.1	6.5	8.5	

Source: UN DESA, 2013.

Table 4 presents data from the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/08, which show that the number of individuals aged 65 and above in Afghanistan is relatively low irrespective of gender. This group represented approximately 3 per cent of the Afghan population in 2007/08. The largest

proportion of elderly people compared to the general population can be found in urban areas, where elderly men represent 4 per cent of the population. In all other categories (rural, Kuchi and national) males aged 65 and over make up 3 per cent of the total population. The data in Table 4 also show that women aged 65 and above represent 2 per cent of the total population in all categories. Besides the fact that men outnumber women in the overall population, the higher number of elderly men in urban areas might be explained by a higher migration rate among males to urban areas (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Table 4: Elderly population (age 65+) by residence and sex, NRVA 2007/08

	Urban		Rural		Kuchi		National		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Thousands	102	57	313	175	26	17	441	248	689
% of total pop.	4	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3

Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

LIVING CONDITIONS AND POVERTY

Human Development Index

In 2013, Afghanistan's HDI⁵ was 0.468, which gives the country a rank of 169 out of 187 countries. The HDI of South Asia as a region was 0.588 in 2012, thus placing Afghanistan below the regional average. The HDI trends tell an important story both at national and regional levels and highlight the gaps in well-being and life opportunities of Afghan citizens. However, although Afghanistan's development remains very low in comparison to other countries, its HDI trend has steadily increased since 2000 when it was 0.341 (UNDP, 2013a).

Literacy rate and school enrolment ratio

Data from UNICEF's Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (AMICS) in 2010/11 showed that the adult literacy rate for Afghan individuals aged 15 and above was 29.0 per cent (CSO and UNICEF, 2012). In the NRVA 2007/08, the literacy rate of the population aged 15 years and over was, for both sexes combined, 26.2 per cent whereas the literacy rate for males was much higher

⁵ The Human Development Index (HDI) is a statistical instrument used to measure the social and economic development of a country. The HDI consists of three basic dimensions of human development, namely: health, education and living standards. The HDI sets a maximum and a minimum for each dimension (value between 0 and 1) and then shows where each country stands in relation to these values.

than for females: 39.3 per cent and 12 per cent respectively. With regard to specific age categories, the literacy for those aged 15 to 24 was 52.9 per cent for males and 23.9 per cent for females (Icon-Institute, 2009). The literacy rate of 22.2 per cent for women aged 15 to 24 years found in the AMICS of 2010 and 2011 was similar to the data from the NRVA. Furthermore, the latest AMICS data demonstrate that the literacy rate of women in rural areas is significantly lower than of those in urban areas (15.1% versus 51.6%) and that the literacy rate of women from the poorest households is 10 times lower than that for women in the richest quintile (5.1% versus 50.3%) (CSO and UNICEF, 2012).

The NRVA indicates that the literacy rate of the Afghan population aged 15 years and older was 26.2 per cent in 2007/08, indicating that 73.8 per cent of the Afghan population do not have basic reading and writing skills. This figure, however, does not demonstrate the differences between males and females or urban and rural populations. In comparison with other countries, together with Niger and Mali, Afghanistan ranks at the bottom of the scale in terms of literacy of the population (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Data collected by the NRVA 2007/08 revealed that the net enrolment ratio in primary education was 60 per cent for boys and a little over 40 per cent for girls (Icon-Institute, 2009). AMICS data from 2010/11 showed higher enrolment ratios of 62.9 and 46.4 per cent for boys and girls respectively and an average primary school attendance of 55.2 per cent. The school enrolment ratio varies considerably between those from the poorest (40%) and the richest households (79%) (CSO and UNICEF, 2012).

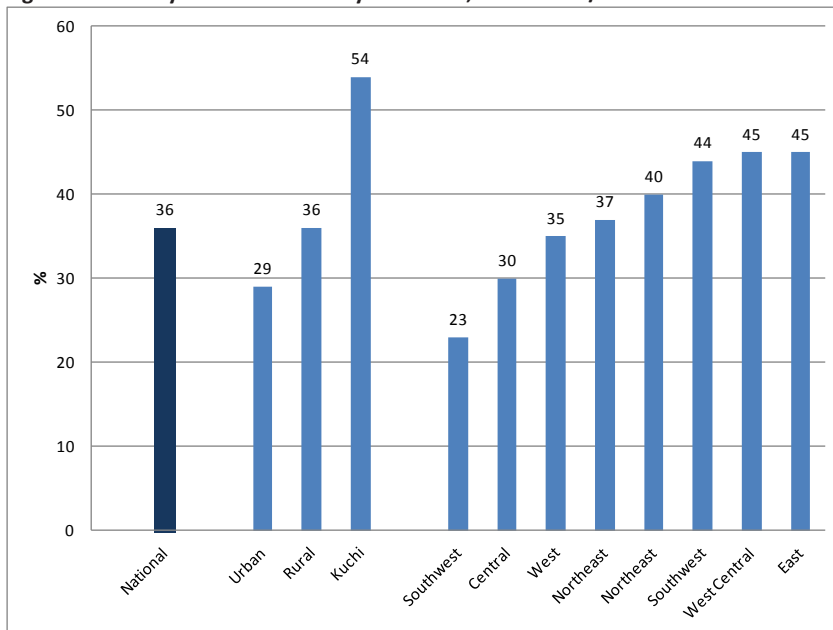
The primary school completion rate is almost 31 per cent, with that of boys being twice as high as that of girls (40% versus 20.8%). Large differences were observed in the completion rates by residence, region, wealth and mother's education (CSO and UNICEF, 2012). The net secondary enrolment rate for boys was 21.5 per cent and for girls 10.3 per cent. For both sexes combined it was 16.2 per cent in 2007/08 (Icon-Institute, 2009). This enrolment rate seems to have increased considerably in recent years as the 2010/11 data from the AMICS report an overall secondary school net attendance ratio of 32.4 per cent. The attendance rate of boys has remained twice as large as that of girls (42.8% versus 21.1%) (CSO and UNICEF, 2012).

The educational level of the household members that work in brick kilns is low. Of the household heads interviewed, 83 per cent had never been to school and were illiterate. Moreover, due to strong dependence on child labour, the large majority of children (85%) also did not attend school (ILO, 2011).

Proportion of population below the national poverty line

The national average poverty line of Afghanistan is AFN 1,255 (USD 27.09) per person per month, representing the typical cost of attaining 2,100 calories per person per day and meeting some basic non-food needs. The NRVA 2007/08 observed a high level of poverty in all provinces of Afghanistan. However, differences in poverty incidence with regard to residence and regions exist. As can be seen in Figure 2, poverty in the rural population is close to the national average (36%), whereas the incidence in the urban population is relatively low (29%). The highest poverty incidence was observed among the Kuchi population with over 50 per cent. Regionally, the lowest rate was observed in the Southwest (23%) and the highest in the East and West-Central (45%) (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Figure 2: Poverty headcount rate by residence, NRVA 2007/08



Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

With respect to the depth of poverty, the data reveal that there is on average an 8 per cent gap between the poverty line and consumption levels (treating the non-poor as having a gap of zero). This figure is much higher than the poverty depths of neighbouring countries such as Pakistan (4.4%), the Islamic Republic of Iran (0.5%) or Tajikistan (5.1%). Alternatively, when focusing on the population of poor people, the ratio of the poverty gap to the headcount index reveals that the average consumption level for poor people is 22 per cent below

the poverty line. The sum of all differences between the cost-of-basic-needs poverty line and the consumption level of poor people provides a measure of the total consumption shortfall. In terms of 2007 prices (quarter 1) this gap is about AFN 28.4 billion. (ca. USD 570 million) (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Poverty gap ratio

The NRVA 2007/08 reveals that the poverty gap ratio (or poverty gap index) across Afghan residential groups reveals the same pattern as that of the headcount rate for Afghan urban and rural areas: the rural figure is almost identical to the national rate (7.9%) with the urban rate being lower (6.2%). Yet, in the same proportion to the headcount rate, the urban poor are on average just as poor as the rural poor. In contrast, the poverty gap ratio for the Kuchi population is relatively high at 14.0 per cent, which indicates that the Kuchi not only suffer from a higher prevalence of poverty, but that the Kuchi poor are on average also poorer compared to other groups (Table 5) (Icon-Institute, 2009).

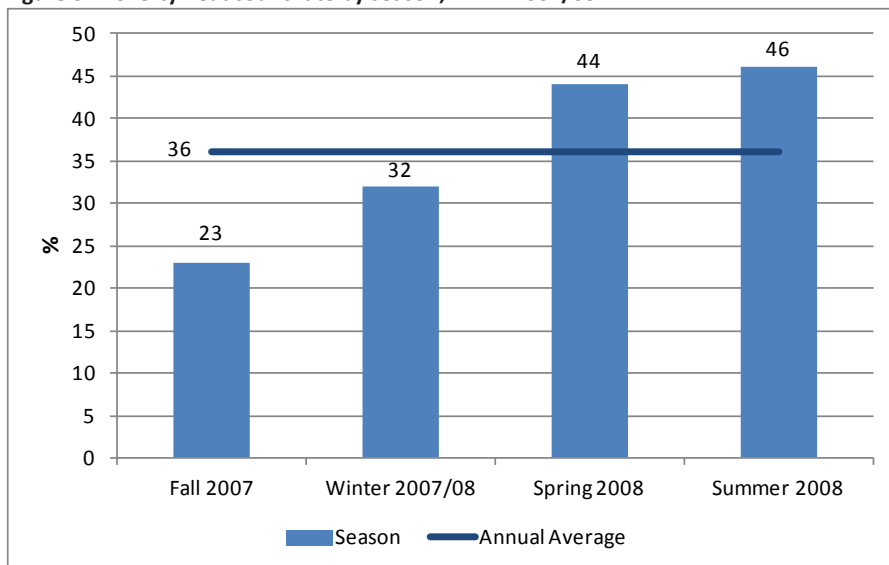
Table 5: Poverty measures, NRVA 2007/08

Poverty measure	Urban	Rural	Kuchi	National
Poverty head count rate	29.1	36.4	54.3	36.0
Poverty gap ratio (index)	6.2	7.9	14.0	7.9
Squared poverty gap index	2.0	2.6	5.2	2.6

Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

The analysis of poverty over the course of the year reflects variations associated with seasonality as well as the food price crisis in the first half of 2008 (Icon-Institute, 2009). Figure 3 illustrates how the poverty rate in Afghanistan climbed steadily through a 12 month cycle, beginning in fall (during harvest time) when poverty is lowest and then gradually increasing through winter and spring to summer, when poverty is highest (World Bank, 2010a). It should, however, be noted that food prices increased dramatically during the first half of 2008. The wheat flour price in Afghanistan, for example, rose by a national average of 58 per cent between January 2007 and January 2008. The observed trends are thus a combination of the two factors and more research would assist in isolating the effects of seasonality and food price crisis respectively (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Figure 3: Poverty headcount rate by season, NRVA 2007/08



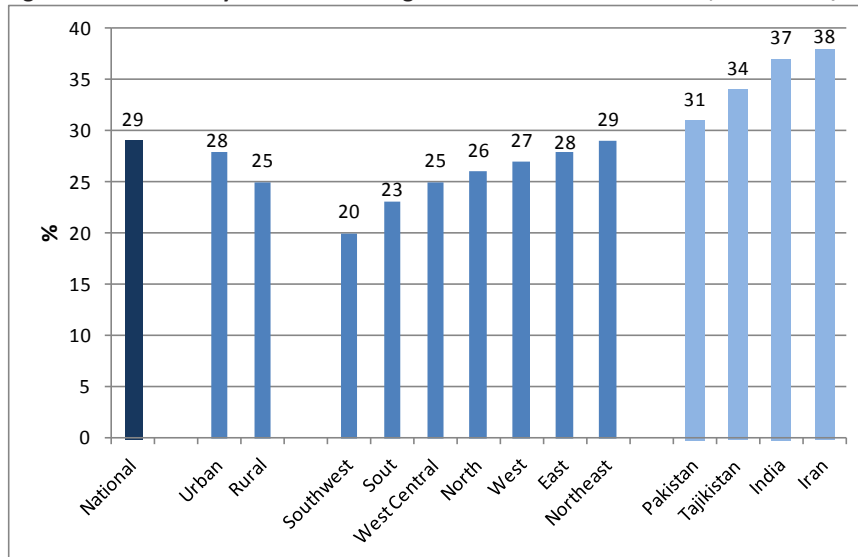
Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

Inequality and Vulnerability to Poverty

Overall inequality in Afghanistan, represented by the national Gini coefficient⁶ of 29, is low and also lower than in neighbouring countries in South and West Asia (Figure 4). There are, however, differences across regions in the sense that in the Southern and Western regions inequality is below average. It can be noted that the poverty incidence is high in regions, where inequality is lowest. This is the case in the Southwest and West-Central regions (Icon-Institute, 2009).

⁶ The Gini coefficient measures the extent to which the distribution of consumption among individuals or households within a country deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A value of 0 represents absolute equality with everybody consuming the same amount; whereas a value of 100 represents absolute inequality, where all consumption is concentrated in one person.

Figure 4: Gini Index by residence and region and for selected countries, NRVA 2007/08



Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

The distribution of per capita real consumption expenditure shows that the richest quintile has a share in total consumption expenditure of 39 per cent, more than four times higher than that of the poorest quintile (Table 6). The share of the poorest quintile in national consumption is 9 per cent. However, the shares of the two quintiles below the richest do not much deviate from the 20 per cent that would be implied by equality. This indicates that the inequality importantly originated in a relative wealthy top quintile and that the other successive quintiles only moderately differ from one to another. In fact the per capita expenditure of the middle quintile is close to the poverty line, suggesting that a significant proportion of the non-poor can be considered vulnerable to falling under the poverty line (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Table 6: Mean per capita monthly real consumption expenditure and share in consumption by population quintile and poverty status, NRVA 2007/08

Poverty variable	Population share (%)	Per capita expenditure	Consumption share (%)	Cumulative share (%)
<i>Population quintile</i>				
Poorest	20	758	9	9
Second poorest	20	1,100	13	22
Middle	20	1,416	17	39
Second richest	20	1,858	22	61
Richest	20	3,231	39	100

<i>Poverty status</i>				
Poor	36	950	20	20
Non-poor	64	2,079	80	100

Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

Health

After decades of conflict, political instability and a series of natural disasters, the health system in Afghanistan is among the poorest in the world. Many households struggle to secure basic needs like food and shelter. Access to health care facilities is limited and large parts of the population face concerning basic household sanitation. The average usage of improved drinking-water sources has increased from about 20 per cent in 2000 to 60 per cent in 2011. Over the same period, the share of the population using improved sanitation facilities has increased only slightly from 20 to 25 per cent. Consequently, the health status of the Afghan population remains relatively poor. The average life expectancy at birth is only 60 years, which is well below the global average (70) and the regional average (68) (WHO, 2013a).

Data from the Afghanistan Mortality Survey in 2010 (APHI/MoPH et al., 2011) indicate that the mortality rate for children under the age of five was 102 to 105 deaths per 1,000 births (Table 7). Data from the Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (AMICS) 2010/11 also report the child mortality to be approximately 102 per 1,000 live births. Large regional difference were found with the highest under-five mortality rate in the West (127), South East (124), North (122) and Central Highlands (122) and the lowest in the East (65) and South (71). Furthermore, the rate is higher in rural than in urban areas (105 versus 85). The influence of household wealth and the mother's educational level on the under-five mortality rate is apparent. The rates for the poorest and richest households are 105 and 84 respectively and that of children with mothers with no education versus those with secondary education or higher is 103 and 73 respectively. The findings of the survey are stated to be under-estimating the actual situation in Afghanistan (CSO and UNICEF, 2012). The World Health Organization reports a similar under-five mortality rate of 101 deaths per 1,000 live births. The most common causes of death in children under five are pneumonia (25%) and diarrhoea (16%). Only 36 per cent of births are attended by skilled health personnel countrywide (WHO, 2013a).

The mortality rate for women between the ages of 15 and 49 was 86 deaths per 1,000 and for men the rate was 90. When considering the age group 15 to 59 years, the mortality rate for women was 151 and for men 161. Life expectancy

was estimated to be between 61.5 and 64.2 years for women and between 61.7 and 64.6 for men. In terms of the causes of death, these differed considerably between men and women. When considering the general population, the most common causes were non-communicable diseases (35% of deaths) and communicable disease and infections (30%). Among women infections were the leading cause of death (33%) and haemorrhage the main cause of maternal death. In contrast, among men over the age of 15 almost 50 per cent of deaths were the result of injuries (21% for all ages) (APHI/MoPH et al., 2011).

Table 7: Mortality data from the Afghanistan Mortality Survey, 2010

Indicator	Afghanistan Mortality Survey
Life expectancy (in years)	
Women	61.5 - 64.2
Men	61.7 - 63.6
Maternal health	
Antenatal care from a skilled provider (in %)	68*
Medically assisted deliveries (in %)	42*
Maternal mortality	
Maternal mortality compared to live births (per 1,000 live births)	3 - 5 women die during pregnancy, childbirth or two months after delivery
Pregnancy-related mortality	1 in 50 women
Child mortality	
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	102 - 105

Source: APHI/MoPH et al., 2011.

Note: * tripled between the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in 2003 and the AMS 2010.

THE LABOUR MARKET

Labour force volume

According to the ILO, the labour force in Afghanistan increased 19 per cent from approximately 7.5 million in 2002 to approximately 9 million in 2006 (UNDP, 2009). It further increased to estimated 11.6 million in 2012 (ILO, 2012). The NRVA survey showed a labour force of 12 million in 2007/08 (Icon-Institute, 2009). Overall, Afghanistan has a surplus of labour and a lack of available and secure employment. The creation of employment opportunities will be increasingly important as the labour force currently grows by over 400,000 per year (ILO, 2012).

Due to the very large percentage of children, less than half of the Afghan population is in the official working age of 16 years and over. Within this working-age population of over 12 million people (12.057 million), 6.148 million were male and 5.909 million female in 2007/08 (Icon-Institute, 2009). Table 8 shows the national labour force by sex and age distribution.

Table 8: Labour force in Afghanistan by age group (in thousands), NRVA 2007/08

Age	Male	Female	Total
16-17	536	492	1,028
18-24	1,482	1,388	2,869
25-39	1,965	2,146	4,112
40-64	1,726	1,641	3,367
65+	439	242	680
Total	6,148	5,909	12,057

Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

It should be noted that within the working-age population of over 12 million people, approximately 4 million people were inactive and 8 million actively engaged in the labour market, either by working or looking for work. Of those actively engaged in the labour market, 5.3 million were male and 2.8 million female. The labour force participation rate is a key indicator in the analysis of the human resources available for the production of goods and services and for the projections of labour supply. Comparison of labour force participation for both sexes combined shows high rates in rural areas (71%) and among the Kuchi population (78%). This is typical for less developed economies where wage earning opportunities are few and most people are engaged in labour-intensive agricultural activities. In urban areas, the overall labour force participation is significantly lower (49%), indicating opportunities other than employment, such as school attendance and perhaps less necessity to work due to lower levels of poverty. The overall labour force participation rate of 67 per cent in Afghanistan conceals large differences in relation to sex and age. Although in general labour force participation is lower for females than for males, in the Afghan economy the gender gap is large. Less than half (47%) of working-age females are currently active in the labour market, compared to 86 per cent of males. The gap is relatively small in the rural and Kuchi populations (respectively 24% and 28%) due to female engagement in agricultural and pastoral activities. However, in urban areas the difference is as large as 60 per cent because of a very low female labour force participation of 21 per cent (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector

The share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector was 8 per cent during the NRVA survey implementation in 2007/08. This indicator is a measure of gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as the degree to which labour markets are open to women in the industry and service sectors. This affects not only equal employment opportunities for women but also economic efficiency through flexibility of the labour market and the economy's ability to adapt and change. A higher share in paid employment could secure better incomes, economic security and overall well-being for women. In Afghanistan, women remain disadvantaged in securing paid jobs. Their overall share in wage employment is even significantly below the average for Southern Asia (17%), the region with the lowest rate globally (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Wages

Based on the gross domestic product (GDP) and population figures in the UNDP Human Development Report 2007, the annual average wage for an Afghan worker was around USD 375 in 2007 (UK Parliament, 2007).

Poppy cultivation is a lucrative business for Afghans working in the agricultural sector. The average farm-gate price for dry opium at harvest was USD 169 per kilogram in 2010 - a 164 per cent increase from 2009, when the price was USD 64 per kilogram. Despite the drop in production, the gross income per hectare of opium cultivated increased by 36 per cent to USD 4,900. Although a study revealed that many farmers would like to stop poppy cultivation, the average annual income of opium-growing households in 2009 was 17 per cent higher than for households that had stopped opium cultivation (UNODC and Ministry of Counter Narcotics, 2010).

Other workers face much lower salaries. Prosecutors, for example, are known to earn USD 60 per month and judges USD 100. This low salary among judicial authorities is a major contributing factor to corruption and undermines public trust in the legal system (UNDP, 2009). Afghans with higher education and the skills in greatest demand such as university professors and physicians earn salaries of about USD 100 a month (Younossi, 2006). Although these figures vary with time and place of employment (rural versus urban), they demonstrate that working in Afghanistan is not very attractive for university graduates and even less for Afghans in exile. As a consequence, many Afghans search for work in other countries where salaries are often higher and working conditions better.

THE AFGHAN ECONOMY

Gross domestic product

Estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) for Afghanistan are by no means definitive. The CIA, for example, report that GDP per capita (purchasing power parity in 2012 USD) was USD 1,000 in 2010 and 2011 and increased to USD 1,100 in 2012 (CIA, 2013). UNDP, on the other hand, report GDP per capita (current prices) at USD 361 in 2008, USD 411 in 2009, USD 512 in 2010 and USD 586 in 2011 (UN Data, 2013).

In terms of GDP (in current USD), the World Bank estimates that GDP was USD 12.49 billion in 2009, USD 15.94 billion in 2010 and USD 18.03 billion in 2011 (World Bank, 2012b). Estimates of the CIA World Factbook are measured differently (using purchasing power parity in 2012 USD) and find Afghan GDP to be USD 29.09 billion in 2010, rising to USD 31.12 billion in 2011 and USD 34.29 billion in 2012 (CIA, 2013). Data from the Central Statistics Organization of Afghanistan report a constant GDP at market price of AFN 312,436 million (6,471 million USD)⁷ in 2007-2008, AFN 319,726 million (USD 6,622 million) in 2008-2009 and AFN 374,367 million (USD 7,754 million) in 2009 and 2010 (CSO, 2012a). In reality it could be that the true GDP is different from these estimates due to the challenges of measuring informal economies.

Difficulties in obtaining clear information relating to Afghanistan's GDP can make it tricky to monitor the development of the country. Nonetheless, Afghanistan's economy has grown since 2001, with agricultural and the service industry being key areas of growth. The country experienced a GDP growth of 22.5 per cent in 2009-2010. In the same year, however, the composition of GDP changed since official exports collapsed and were replaced by higher donor inflows. Results for the same year revealed a 10 per cent containment of operational expenditure and a 16 per cent surge in revenue. In contrast to these improvements, the budget for development represented just 28 per cent of the previous year's budget. Furthermore, several Afghan banks (including Afghanistan's largest private financial institution) nearly collapsed because of mismanagement and questionable lending practices. As a consequence, more controls and monitoring of the banking sector are needed in the coming years (World Bank, 2010a).

⁷ Using a conversion rate of AFN 1 = USD 0.0207125.

Inflation

After more than two decades of conflict, the Afghan economy was in disarray in 2001. Four versions of the same currency (Afghani) were simultaneously in circulation and the national currency was experiencing hyperinflation exceeding 495 to 600 per cent. For years, the Central Bank's sole function was to print money to finance ever-burgeoning budget deficits. Those who suffered most are the poor who lack the skills to cope with the negative effects of inflation. Furthermore, price stability is a precondition for achieving high and sustainable rates of economic growth, which boosts incomes across all segments of society (DAB, 2009).

Inflation is measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI).⁸ Estimates by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the annual percentage change in consumer prices for Afghanistan were 12.5 per cent in 2007, increasing to 23.4 per cent in 2008. The CPI decreased drastically to -10.0 per cent in 2009, then reached 7.1 per cent in 2010 and 10.4 per cent in 2011. In 2012, it decreased again to 4.4 per cent (IMF, 2013). The Central Statistics Organization of Afghanistan reports that in the 2005-2006 time period the CPI annual inflation rate was 9.0 per cent. Between 2006 and 2007, it was 4.5 per cent and then it reached a high of 22.5 per cent in 2007-2008, before strongly decreasing again to 4.9 per cent in the 2008-2009 period and -4.5 per cent between 2009 and 2010 (CSO, 2012b). It then increased again to 13.7 per cent in 2010-2011 and changed to 8.4 per cent in 2011-12 (CSO, 2013). In contrast, the Afghan Central Bank reported inflation to be between 4 and 8 per cent in 2007, reaching a peak of 43.2 per cent in May 2008. The Central Bank also states that inflation in Afghanistan mainly arises due to factors external to the country, like higher global commodity prices, the opium trade, donor assistance flows and to some extent remittances. Furthermore, the implementation of monetary policy in the country is challenged by sizeable inflows of foreign capital (especially donor funds) in the context of shallow financial markets (DAB, 2009).

The currency exchange between Afghani and US dollars remained fairly constant at between AFN 50 and AFN 52 to the US dollar between January 2006 and January 2009 (DAB, 2009) and remains at the same level until today (DAB, 2013). It is, however, increasingly evident that the Afghan economy remains vulnerable to general shocks (for example natural disasters) and external commodity price shocks (DAB, 2009).

⁸ The CPI reflects the annual percentage change in the cost to the average consumer of acquiring a basket of goods and services that may be fixed or changed at specified intervals, such as yearly (IMF, 2011).

Informal economy

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) states, that “the informal economy is seen as comprised of all forms of informal employment - that is, employment without formal contracts (i.e. covered by labour legislation), worker benefits or social protection - both inside and outside informal enterprises.” (Chen et al., 2004: 21-22) However, the fact that workers in the informal economy usually work without contracts and often have no right to employee benefits or social protection makes their work status irregular. The majority of Afghan workers are forced to work under conditions that violate the most basic standards of dignity, safety and health. There are Afghans who earn a high salary in the informal economy as entrepreneurs, but these are rare exceptions. In most cases the informal economy is characterized by low productivity, erratic and unpredictable salaries and is highly dependent on seasonal variations. Informal workers are generally under-employed rather than unemployed, working significantly fewer days per year than desired because of a lack of work opportunities (Wright, 2010).

The fact that they work without regulation or protection also means that these individuals are subject to harassment and extortion. In 2010, the informal economy constituted 80 to 90 per cent of Afghanistan’s total economic activity (Wright, 2010). In the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), the Afghan government recognized that the poorest workers are concentrated primarily in the informal sectors, which pay very low salaries and leave them without job protection (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008a). A report by the Human Rights Research and Advocacy Consortium (HRRAC) in 2010 showed that over 59 per cent of workers interviewed said that their work was irregular and 79 per cent said they would prefer more hours per day in paid work. A total of 73 per cent of informal workers said their work was seasonal and 40 per cent of construction and agricultural workers in the sample were without work for seven to eight months in the past year. Another 36 per cent were without work for five to six months in the past year. Over 88 per cent of informal worker households reported that they had been forced to buy food on credit during the past year (Wright, 2010). High rates of underemployment may be one factor that has contributed towards emigration from Afghanistan to neighbouring countries.

NATURAL DISASTERS AND SHOCKS IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan is a land-locked country with a high incidence of natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, landslides and droughts (ANDMA, 2008). Depending on their impact such shocks potentially force people to leave their usual place of residence and lead to their displacement, either temporary or permanently.

Earthquakes

Afghanistan is located in a zone of high seismic activity and hence the frequency of earthquakes is relatively high. Both northern Afghanistan and Pakistan are frequently hit by earthquakes, especially in the Hindu Kush area where the Eurasian and Indian tectonic plates collide. Due to very low population density in the Hindu Kush region, hundreds of small earthquakes go unrecorded. However, sources indicate that at least twice a year, Afghanistan is hit by earthquakes of the magnitude 5 to 6 on the Richter scale. These earthquakes often force thousands of people to leave their homes and move elsewhere in the region. This was, for example, the case in 1996 in the west of the country when an earthquake caused damage to houses and mosques and forced over 500 families to leave their homes. Two years later, an earthquake in the region of Rustaq damaged over 50,000 homes and killed 5,000 individuals. In 1999, an earthquake affected almost 20,000 families, many of which had to leave their homes and seek shelter elsewhere. Two earthquakes of a significant magnitude were observed in the Hindu Kush region in 2002, leaving over 25 people dead and over 10,000 people homeless. In April 2004, a powerful earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter was recorded along Afghanistan's north-east border with Pakistan. The populations of Jurm District and Yangaan district in Badakhshan were affected. The earthquake was also felt in the city of Kabul and other areas in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Poppelwell, 2007). During 2006 and 2009 several earthquakes of magnitudes 5-6 occurred in the Hindu Kush region (CNN, 2008). In April 2009, two earthquakes of magnitudes 5.5 and 5.1 rocked Nangarhar province, 90 kilometres east of Kabul. At least 19 people were killed and 20 wounded (Aljazeera, 2009). In April 2010, an earthquake with a magnitude of 5.3 hit Samangan province, about halfway between Kabul and the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif. The earthquake killed at least seven people and injured 30 (Fox News, 2010). In June 2012, landslides triggered by two earthquakes killed more than 80 people in Baghlan province (BBC, 2012).

Overall accurate information on the number of displacements caused by earthquakes is difficult to obtain as records and communication in Afghanistan's remote areas are sparse and casualty reports take time to reach authorities.

Floods and Landslides

Afghanistan has a long history of flooding that has caused displacement and damage to infrastructure. For example, flooding in the Hindu Kush area in 1992 caused deaths and led to displacement and the loss of household assets for many. A year later, mudslides in Kabul destroyed houses and left 1,000 people homeless. In 1995 and 1997, floods leading to landslides occurred in the mountains of Badakhshan in the northern region of Afghanistan. In the spring of 2002, the Western, Northern, North-Eastern and Central Highlands regions of Afghanistan experienced high levels of rain in a short period of time resulting in flash floods and mudslides affecting more than 2,000 households. The heavy rainfall caused crop damage, loss of housing and harm to livestock. As a consequence, many affected households moved to urban areas or sent a family member to seek employment. In March 2007, severe flooding occurred in various parts of the country, including Oruzgan, Badghis, Helmand, Nimruz, Daykundi and Herat provinces. An avalanche hit the province of Ghor, where 40 families were reported to be affected (Poppelwell, 2007). In 2010, major devastation by floods occurred in north-west Pakistan and Afghanistan. At least one million people were affected by these floods and up to 27,000 were stranded. This also caused many Afghans living in Pakistan to return to their home country since they had lost all of their property and livestock in Pakistan (Emergency Appeal, 2010). In 2011, IRIN reported that flash floods and heavy snowfall killed many people in Afghanistan and destroyed thousands of houses particularly in Parwan, Herat, Wardak and Daykundi (IRIN, 2011b). Between May and June 2012, Afghanistan witnessed severe flooding as a result of the harsh winter with a substantial accumulation of snow in the Northern region. An incident in the Sari Pul province in May had the biggest impact, when melting snow and heavy rainfall led to rising water levels in the Sari-Pul River, which subsequently flooded the city of Sari Pul. 19 people were killed and an estimated 10,000 displaced (Reliefweb, 2012).

Drought

In the past decades, Afghanistan has experienced severe droughts. Some affected the whole country and others were restricted to certain areas. During the 1970s, the area of Ghor was affected by a drought that lasted for three years. However, due to government interventions, the affected population was not

displaced and was able to recover from the shock. About 30 years later, parts of Afghanistan – notably Herat, Farah, Balkh, Samangan and Faryab – experienced four years of severe drought. The drought severely affected 2 to 3 million people and a further 8 to 12 million were affected to a lesser extent. Due to the absence of governmental help and a lack of support from the international community, entire villages had to move to camps in the areas of Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kandahar. In 2000 and 2001, when the drought was most severe, over half a million people had been displaced from their homes and were known to be living in camps around Herat. Another severe drought in 2006 mainly affected people in the Northern, Western and Central regions of Afghanistan. Many farmers from the North-Western province Badghis tried to reach the Kunduz region where they hoped to get water from the Amu Darya River. By the end of 2006, most rain-fed crops (estimated to constitute 85 per cent of the cultivated land) had failed. Additionally, many water sources had dried up and livestock mortality had increased. According to some sources, the drought affected over 2 million Afghans in 2007 (Poppelwell, 2007). One year later, the United States Department of Agriculture reported that this year had suffered the worst drought conditions in the past decade (USDA, 2008). This, combined with high food prices, meant millions were without enough food (AlertNet, 2010). In 2011, a severe drought in 14 provinces in northern and eastern Afghanistan led to severe food shortages and affected more than 12 million people (UPI, 2011). Heavy snowfalls in January 2012 ended this drought (Reuters, 2012).

While it is not yet clear how climate change will affect Afghanistan directly, sources indicate that it could potentially disrupt agricultural development by exacerbating drought (that is: a decline in surface or subsurface water resources, such as rivers, lakes, reservoirs and ground water) and increase the frequency and severity of heat waves (Rogers, 2010). Due to uncoordinated management and excessive extraction of water for agriculture purposes, the water level of the Helmand River has already drastically declined (UNDP, 2007).

PART B: MIGRATION TRENDS AND CHARACTERISTICS

B. I. IMMIGRATION

B. I. I. FOREIGN AND FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION AND IMMIGRATION

Stock of foreign migrants in Afghanistan

Migration to Afghanistan of people without Afghan heritage is limited. In 1990, the total stock of immigrants living in Afghanistan was 57,686 people. The number rose to 75,917 in 2000 and to 90,883 in 2010. Immigrants are defined on the basis of birth outside of Afghanistan and the cited numbers include people born in the Soviet Union who were designated as immigrants after the Union's collapse in 1990. Between 1990 and 2010, the share of female migrants was constant at 43.6 per cent of all immigrants (UN DESA, 2011).

Limited information is available on the country of origin of the foreign-born population in Afghanistan. Foreigners are required to register with their countries' embassies in Kabul and their employers or supporting organizations are required to request work permits from the Government of Afghanistan's Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD). Precise information on the number of these registrations is not available.

Annual emigrant flows towards Afghanistan (as reported by sending countries)⁹

Data on emigration flows towards Afghanistan as reported by sending countries are scarce. This is largely due to the fact that national migration statistics often include only the top destination countries of out-migrants. Additionally, some countries only report emigration flows toward a region rather than country. As a result, the total volume of annual emigrant flows destined for Afghanistan is unclear. While aggregate flows are impossible to gauge, individual country reports provide some sense of the scope of emigration to Afghanistan.

⁹ Information on voluntary return migration assisted by UNHCR and forced return migration of Afghan nationals to Afghanistan can be found in section B.4.

Australia

The Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship publishes data on out-migrants and their intended destinations. As can be seen in Table 9, the overall number of departures towards Afghanistan is relatively low, with the highest number of Australian-born individuals (36) moving to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010. In the same period, a total of 19 overseas-born individuals migrated to Afghanistan (Commonwealth of Australia, 2011).

Table 9: Permanent departures from Australia to Afghanistan, 2002-2011

Country of birth	2002 - 2003	2003 - 2004	2004 - 2005	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011
Australian born	3	2	12	9	9	9	18	36	27
Overseas born	8	6	8	7	12	8	16	19	20
Total	11	8	20	16	21	17	34	55	47

Source: Commonwealth of Australia, 2011.

The Netherlands

In the 1990s, the number of migrants leaving the Netherlands and travelling to Afghanistan was relatively small, with a total of 31 people migrating from the Netherlands to Afghanistan between 1995 and 2000. This number increased after the fall of the Taliban in 2001, reaching a peak in 2005 when 135 emigrants moved from the Netherlands to Afghanistan (CBS, 2013b). Since the 2002-2003 period, the number of emigrants leaving for Afghanistan could be explained by the installation of the new government in 2002 as well as a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on voluntary repatriation of Afghans concluded among Afghanistan, UNHCR and the Netherlands in 2003 (Kuschminder and Dora, 2009).

Table 10: Emigration from the Netherlands to Afghanistan, 2000-2009

Year	Emigrants	Year	Emigrants
2000	9	2005	135
2001	7	2006	123
2002	33	2007	112
2003	61	2008	117
2004	78	2009	113

Source: CBS, 2013b.

B.1.2. IMMIGRATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Efforts to rebuild the Afghan economy with a limited pool of domestic skilled labour have led to the active recruitment of migrant workers. The attraction of investment from foreign companies in specific sectors is one component of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). Such foreign companies often resort to recruitment of foreign nationals to satisfy their labour needs that cannot be met by local Afghan workers. This is particularly the case in sectors like mining and telecommunications, where much manpower with specific knowledge is required. In the construction sector foreign firms often obtain larger contracts and many bring in their own employees from abroad to fulfil them. The high number of permits granted to Pakistanis may be indicative of a growing trend of workers migrating to fill positions in the construction sector. The financial services and banking sector has also undergone formalization and expansions. The increased demand for workers in that field is mostly met by recruiting formally educated individuals from abroad (IOM, 2008a). Data from the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (personal communication, 2012) show that 17,833 work permits were issued to foreign nationals in 2011. Approximately 100,000 foreigners employed in Afghanistan are estimated to have an irregular status (Afghan Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, personal communication, 2012).

Table 11: Number of permits issued to foreign nationals working in Kabul, 24 March 2007-20 January 2008

Country of nationality	Number of permits
Pakistan	1,031
Turkey	843
India	662
China	439
Nepal	303
Tajikistan	112
Islamic Republic of Iran	56
Kazakhstan	6
Others	3,866
Total	7,318

Source: IOM, 2008a.

Immigration to Afghanistan for employment purposes also includes foreign military and development staff. The majority of foreign troops in Afghanistan are under the command of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force

(ISAF), which as of February 2013 included 100,330 individuals (NATO, 2013). In addition to ISAF forces, approximately 30,000 troops, mainly from the United States, are actively stationed at the border with Pakistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) (Livingston and O’Hanlon, 2013). The United Nations employed approximately 1,000 foreign staff (in addition to around 4,500 Afghan staff) in 2009, of which between 600 and 700 were present in Afghanistan at any given time (Rubin, 2009). The large sums of official development aid money available in Afghanistan have further attracted many national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to operate in the country, many of which employ foreign expert staff. International organizations also employ foreign consultants as advisors to the Afghan government (IOM, 2008a). This may further increase the number of foreign-born individuals working in Afghanistan.

B.1.3. IMMIGRATION FOR STUDY PURPOSES

Data on immigration for study purposes are not available and it can be assumed that, due to the security situation in Afghanistan, this kind of immigration remains limited. It is, however, likely that some of the returning refugees from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran do study at universities and other educational institutions upon return. There is reason to believe that this trend might increase in the near future due to changes in the attitude of Iran towards Afghan immigrants.

A recent change in Iranian legislation bans Afghans and other foreigners from enrolling in universities to study specific subjects. This affects thousands of young Afghan refugees, many of whom were born in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It does not make a difference whether the migrants are documented or undocumented. Among the courses of study for which access is restricted are defence, IT and energy-related subjects. This includes engineering, nuclear physics, computer network security and others. In addition, Afghans can only study in certain, non-prohibited regions of the Islamic Republic of Iran now. Even if they were already enrolled at an Iranian university before this decree was passed, they are still required to transfer to a university outside of the prohibited areas (UN Dispatch, 2012).

It is not yet clear how strict the implementation of this decree will be, but it has the potential to cause the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran. This limitation in access to higher education might lead to movements out of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Young Afghans may decide to return to Afghanistan in order to study at one of the public or private universities in Afghanistan or try to move further afield to study (UN Dispatch, 2012).

B.1.4. INVOLUNTARY IMMIGRATION

The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation and UNHCR reported that 53 asylum-seekers and 3,009 refugees resided in Afghanistan in 2011 (MoRR, 2011; UNHCR, 2012b). The number of refugees registered by UNHCR in Afghanistan increased significantly to 16,187 in January 2013, while the number of asylum-seekers remained relatively stable at 51 (UNHCR, 2013a). The country of origin of these refugees and asylum-seekers is not known, but it is likely that they originate from neighbouring countries.

B.2. EMIGRATION

B.2.1. CITIZENS RESIDING ABROAD AND EMIGRATION

Over the past 30 years, the main destination countries of Afghan migrants have been Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran due to the geographic, religious, social and cultural proximity. Permanent as well as circular migration between these countries and Afghanistan is common, while migration of Afghans to countries further afield is relatively rare. According to the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, about 7,000 Afghan citizens have been registered by recruitment companies as working abroad (personal communication, 2012).

Stock of Afghan migrants abroad

Table 12 provides an overview of stock number of Afghan migrants living in different countries in various years. The following paragraphs discuss the migration of Afghans to a selection of these countries in more detail.

Table 12: Stock of Afghan migrants abroad, various years

Country	Total	Year	Source
Australia	28,370	2011	Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2012
Austria	10,861	2012	Statistik Austria, 2013
Azerbaijan	7,500	2008	IOM, 2008c
Belgium	10,008	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Bolivia	3	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Bulgaria	313	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Canada	48,090	2006	Statistics Canada, 2006
Chile	26	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Cyprus	7	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Czech Republic	362	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Denmark	10,993	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Dominican Republic	9	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Ecuador	76	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Finland	2,862	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
France	3,430	2005	Eurostat, 2013c
Germany	100,000	2011	Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012b
Greece	567	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Hungary	781	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Iceland	9	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
India	8,414	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Islamic Republic of Iran	840,200	2011	UNHCR, 2013b
Ireland	451	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Italy	3,791	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Japan	710	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Latvia	43	2011	Eurostat, 2013c
Liechtenstein	3	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Lithuania	27	2008	Eurostat, 2013c
Luxembourg	51	2010	OECD, 2013
Mauritania	2	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Mexico	13	2010	World Bank, 2010b

Netherlands	32,820	2013	CBS, 2013a
New Zealand	2,145	2006	OECD, 2013
Nicaragua	34	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Norway	11,046	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Pakistan	1,649,630	2013	UNHCR, 2013c
Peru	6	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Philippines	973	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Poland	156	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Portugal	3	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Romania	8	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Russian Federation	4,939	2010	OECD, 2013
Saudi Arabia	17,227	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Slovak Republic	126	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Slovenia	8	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Spain	441	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Sweden	17,489	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Switzerland	4,201	2012	Eurostat, 2013c
Tajikistan	56,816	2010	World Bank, 2010b
Turkey	10,796	2010	World Bank, 2010b
United Kingdom	60,000	2012	Office for National Statistics, 2013
United States	65,560	2011	US Census Bureau, 2013
Venezuela, RB	9	2010	World Bank, 2010b

Note: Migrants are defined by country of birth except for a) Azerbaijan (Afghan nationals), b) Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan numbers reported by UNHCR) and c) the estimates by the World Bank, which use data on nationality of migrants where the country of birth is not available.

Pakistan

Most Afghan nationals living abroad reside in Pakistan. In January 2013, over 1.6 million Afghans were registered in Pakistan (UNHCR, 2013c), but the actual number of Afghans living in Pakistan is expected to be much higher. Underestimation of the number of Afghans living in Pakistan is likely due to the registration procedure during the registration exercise carried out by the Government of Pakistan with financial and technical support of UNHCR.¹⁰ This registration exercise was mandatory for the entire target population of those Afghans arriving to and being born in Pakistan after 1979, subject to the Census of 2005 and not holding Pakistani identity documents. An additional reason may be that undocumented Afghan migrants refrain from reporting to official

¹⁰ It was a condition to register as a family unit at centres that were especially difficult for the elderly, children and the disabled to access (International Crisis Group, 2009).

organizations such as UNHCR for fear of being officially recorded in the country and deported by Pakistan authorities (International Crisis Group, 2009).

A 2005 census of Afghans living in all provinces of Pakistan provides the clearest quantitative and qualitative demographic data for this group. The census registered 3,049,368 Afghans living in 548,105 households in Pakistan. This number includes all Afghans who arrived in Pakistan after 1 December 1979. Individuals who held a Pakistan Validity Card or had obtained a Pakistan Identity Card were not included in the census, however. The census found that the greatest proportion of Afghans lived in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) (61.6%; 1,878,170), Balochistan (25.2%; 769,268), Punjab (6.8%; 207,758), Sindh (4.5%; 135,734), Islamabad (1.5%; 45,259) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (0.4%; 13,079) (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005).

Of the Afghans registered in the 2005 Census, 1.29 million (42.3%) resided in camps at the time of the survey. The remaining 1.75 million (57.7%) had settled in urban and rural areas among Pakistanis (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005). Recent closures of refugee camps along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border are likely to have affected such residence patterns. It is likely that many refugees have either repatriated or resettled to other areas of Pakistan (IRIN, 2008).

The largest number of Afghan refugees arrived in Pakistan during the Soviet occupation, which caused major migration movements across the border in 1979 and 1980. Table 13 shows that over 1.5 million Afghans sought shelter and security in Pakistan during these years. After the Soviet invasion, another wave of Afghan migration occurred in 1985, when the war intensified and the Afghan countryside was becoming depopulated. A third influx occurred in 1990, when the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan resulted in increased efforts by the *mujahedeen* to oust the government left behind. The number of minority ethnic groups included in large migration movements rose over time, especially in the late 1990s when the Pashtun-dominated Taliban persecuted other ethnic groups such as the Hazaras (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005).

Table 13: Arrivals of Afghans in Pakistan, 1979-2005

Year of arrival	Individuals	% of total	Year of arrival	Individuals	% of total
1979	491,151	16.1	1993	34,124	1.1
1980	1,060,212	34.8	1994	16,301	0.5
1981	164,345	5.4	1995	61,398	2.0
1982	175,202	5.8	1996	23,089	0.8
1983	157,208	5.2	1997	31,355	1.0
1984	84,053	2.8	1998	30,345	1.0
1985	310,040	10.2	1999	26,935	0.9
1986	52,573	1.7	2000	21,812	0.7
1987	57,065	1.9	2001	14,266	0.5
1988	35,588	1.2	2002	10,965	0.4
1989	35,425	1.2	2003	9,128	0.3
1990	78,039	2.6	2004	9,834	0.3
1991	19,769	0.7	2005	4,998	0.2
1992	34,048	1.1	Total in 2005	3,049,268	100.0

Source: Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005.

Large migration movements between Afghanistan and Pakistan still occur, but the composition of the migration flows has fundamentally changed. In contrast to refugee flows caused by the Soviet invasion and the Taliban regime, when entire families crossed the border to Pakistan, the current migration flows consist primarily of single men who cross the border (mainly temporarily) for economic or social reasons (for more on border migration see section B.2.2).

Islamic Republic of Iran

More than 800,000 Afghans were registered in the Islamic Republic of Iran in January 2013 (UNHCR, 2013b), but the Iranian government estimates that a further 1.5 to 2 million Afghans reside in the country irregularly. Between 340,000 and 480,000 are expected to live in Tehran province alone. These Afghans are primarily single men originating from areas in Afghanistan where unemployment is high. While most Afghan migrants come to the Islamic Republic of Iran for a short stay of one or two years, many migrate between the two countries over longer periods of time¹¹ (Koepeke, 2011).

In contrast to Afghan refugees who entered Pakistan, most refugees who fled to the Islamic Republic of Iran in the early 1980s were free to choose where they lived. Most refugees thus chose to live in the outskirts of major

¹¹ More information on short- and long-term migration is provided later in this section.

urban centres rather than refugee camps, which partially explains the difficulty to register and obtain accurate statistics about Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Ashrafi and Moghissi, 2002). According to the 2006 Iranian census, approximately 1.2 million Afghan nationals lived in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The majority (72%) resided in urban areas and less than 3 per cent lived in refugee camps. One third of migrants resided in Tehran (32.7%) and significant numbers lived in Khorasan Razavi (13.3%), Isfahan (11.7%) as well as Sistan and Balochistan (9.3%); the remainder lived in other provinces spread across the country (Abbasi-Shavazi and Sadeghi, 2011). Research from Alzahra University (Ahmadinejad, 2011) similarly found that 38 per cent of Afghan refugees resided in Tehran, 17 per cent in Khorasan Razavi, 9 per cent in Kerman, 14 per cent in Isfahan and 8 per cent in Fars. In 2011, the majority of the Afghan population still lived in primarily Afghan-dominated neighbourhoods in urban areas (Koepke, 2011). The vast majority of Afghans who entered the Islamic Republic of Iran after 1992, however, are undocumented because authorities stopped providing refugee cards to Afghans (Alzahra University, 2011).

The largest migration wave of Afghans to the Islamic Republic of Iran occurred during the Soviet occupation. An influx of 2.9 million Afghans entered the Islamic Republic of Iran between 1980 and 1989. Based on estimates by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the movements of Afghans into the country increased consistently and reached a peak of 3 million in 1991. The number of new entrants has slowly declined since then (Abbasi-Shavazi and Glazebrook, 2006). A study by Wickramasekara et al.¹² (2006) found that the duration of residence of Afghan-born migrants in the Islamic Republic of Iran was 15 years, with over 70 per cent of the study population having been resident in the country for more than 10 years. This may not be representative of the Afghan population that currently resides in the Islamic Republic of Iran, but it does indicate that many of the households included in the study consist of long-term migrants who have no intention of returning back home in the short or medium term (Wickramasekara et al., 2006).

Gulf Cooperation Council Countries

The exact scope of Afghan migration to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries is uncertain. Sources indicate that at least 53,000 Afghan workers using Pakistani passports were hired in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2010. The Afghan Government (informally) indicates that more than 100,000 Afghan labour migrants are likely to be working in the GCC countries. Most of

¹²The study by Wickramasekara et al. (2006) covered 1,505 Afghan households (approximately 8,430 individuals).

these workers hold a Pakistani passport, many of which are thought to be fake (Overfeld and Zumot, 2010). It is likely that the majority of Afghan workers in the GCC states are young, single men who travel back and forth for work between their home country and the GCC states, but no data are presently available on the length of stay of Afghans in the GCC countries.

United States of America

In 2011, the American Community Survey registered 89,040 people of Afghan ancestry and 65,560 people born in Afghanistan living in the United States (US Census Bureau, 2013). Other sources in the United States estimate the number of resident Afghans to be as high as 300,000 people (The Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, D.C., 2006b). Of the 65,560 immigrants born in Afghanistan that were registered in the American Community Survey in 2011, the majority (42.9%) entered the United States before 1990, while 23.5 per cent arrived between 1990 and 1999. An additional 33.6 per cent arrived in the United States in 2000 or later. The numbers indicate that most Afghans fled to the United States as a consequence of the Soviet invasion of 1979 (US Census Bureau, 2013). The study by Oeppen (2009)¹³ of Afghans living in the San Francisco Bay Area in California indicated that only 50 per cent of the study sample that had arrived in the United States between 1985 and 1995 had fled directly from Afghanistan. Many interviewees had fled through Pakistan before continuing their journey to Europe or North America (Oeppen, 2009). Available data indicate that Afghans in the United States mainly reside in the San Francisco Bay area in California (40,000), northern Virginia (20,000), southern California (10,000) and in smaller communities in New York, Georgia, Oregon and Texas (The Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, D.C., 2006b). Such settlement patterns reflect several trends. Participants in the study by Oeppen (2009) stated that the first Afghan refugees arriving in the United States were placed in cities across the country as part of resettlement work undertaken by American charity organizations. Other Afghan refugees went to areas where they or relatives had been before as part of study exchange programmes between Afghanistan and the United States. New York and other areas in Virginia were important locations for Afghans who had been politically engaged in their home country and who wanted to continue to support their political stance in Afghanistan (Oeppen, 2009).

¹³ The study by Oeppen (2009) explores the Afghan refugee adaptation to life in the Afghan diaspora and how it relates to engagement with the country of origin. The study sample includes 49 Afghans living in the San Francisco Bay Area, California. Of these interviewees 21 were female and 28 male. The sample is not representative of Afghans living in the United States, as these Afghans belong to the Afghan elite, which means they are financially stable, highly educated and possess a relative high level of linguistic and cultural resources.

Canada

The Canada 2001 Census recorded 25,230 Afghans residing in the country; the 2006 census counted 48,090 people of Afghan origin.¹⁴ The 2006 number includes single and multiple ethnic-origin responses; counting only individuals who listed a single ethnicity, the number decreases to 41,590 people (Statistics Canada, 2006). The former Minister of Foreign Affairs Bill Graham estimated that the Afghan diaspora in Canada could be as large as 80,000 people in 2003 (Afghanistan News Center, 2003). Most Afghans in Canada reside in the South-Western region of Ontario and the Greater Toronto Area. In the 2001 Census, 13,645 Afghans were reported to be living in Toronto alone. Other significant communities resided in Montreal (2,905), Vancouver (2,545), Calgary (1,275), Ottawa-Hull (1,130) as well as Hamilton, Kitchener, Edmonton and Guelph (approx. 400-500 people) (Statistics Canada, 2001). The majority of Afghans came to Canada between 1996 and 2006. Before 1991, 4,165 Afghans resided in Canada and the number increased to 16,315 between 1991 and 2000. The highest numbers of Afghan migrants entering Canada were registered between 1996 and 2000 (10,960 individuals) and from 2001 to 2006 (17,845 individuals) (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Germany

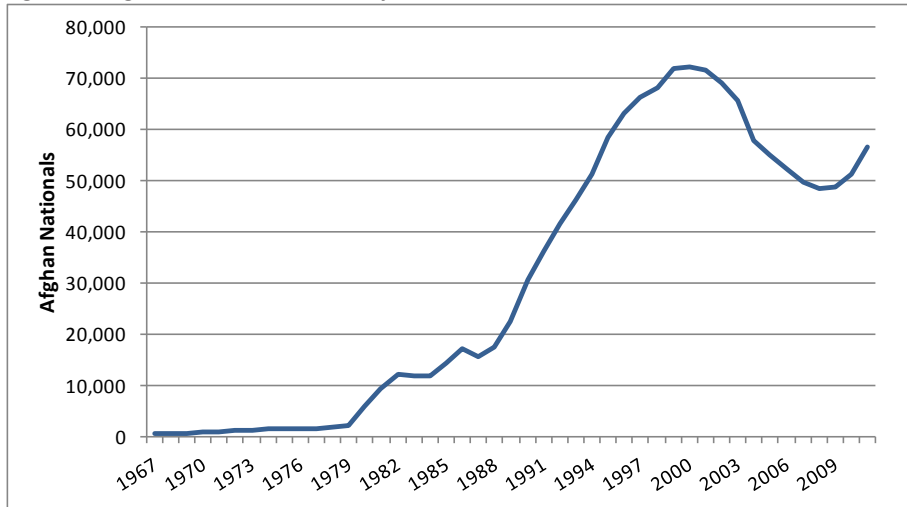
The largest Afghan communities in Europe can be found in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. According to the German Microcensus of 2011, approximately 145,000 Afghan migrants have settled in Germany. This figure includes all people of Afghan origin, including those who have gained German citizenship (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012b). Individuals who have acquired German citizenship are no longer registered with the Foreign Central Registry (Ausländerzentralregister), putting the official number of Afghan nationals residing in Germany at 56,563 in 2011 (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2012a).

In 2011, the majority of Afghans in Germany were living in urban areas, specifically in the states of Hamburg (12,312), Hessen (11,179), Bavaria (8,591) and North Rhine-Westphalia (8,477) (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012a). Figure 5 illustrates that only few Afghans resided in Germany before 1979; most were students or businessmen. A rapid increase in migration from Afghanistan to Germany occurred after the Soviet invasion in 1979. This first wave of Afghan migrants consisted mainly of members of the educated elite and included

¹⁴ Data from the Canada 2011 Census are not available yet.

students and teachers fleeing the repressive communist regime. By 2000, a total of 72,199 Afghan nationals were known to be living in Germany (Bauralina et al., 2006).

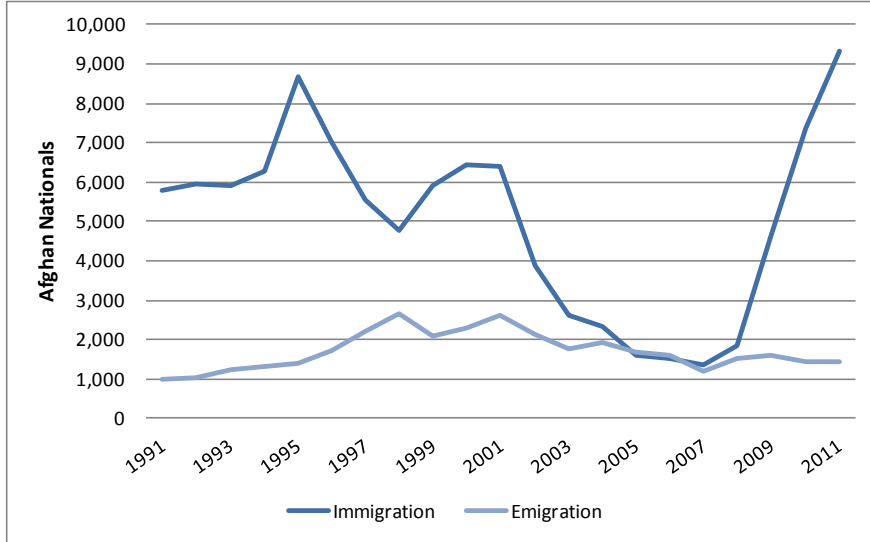
Figure 5: Afghan nationals in Germany, 1967-2011



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2013a.

Figure 6 shows the migration movements of Afghans to and from Germany between 1991 and 2011. Various immigration peaks can be seen. Firstly, immigration of Afghan nationals increased to 8,679 in 1995. After remaining relatively high until 2001, numbers decreased steadily until 2007. Since then they have been increasing rapidly up to 9,321 in 2011. Emigration of Afghans is much less common and peaked in 1998 with 2,639.

Figure 6: Immigration and emigration of Afghan nationals to/from Germany, 1991-2011



Source: BMI and BAMF, 2012.

Table 14 shows that most Afghans in Germany can be considered permanent migrants. In 2011, the median stay was 9.5 years, with 24.6 per cent of the total Afghan population having stayed in Germany between 10 and 15 years (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012a).

Table 14: Length of stay of Afghans in Germany, 2011

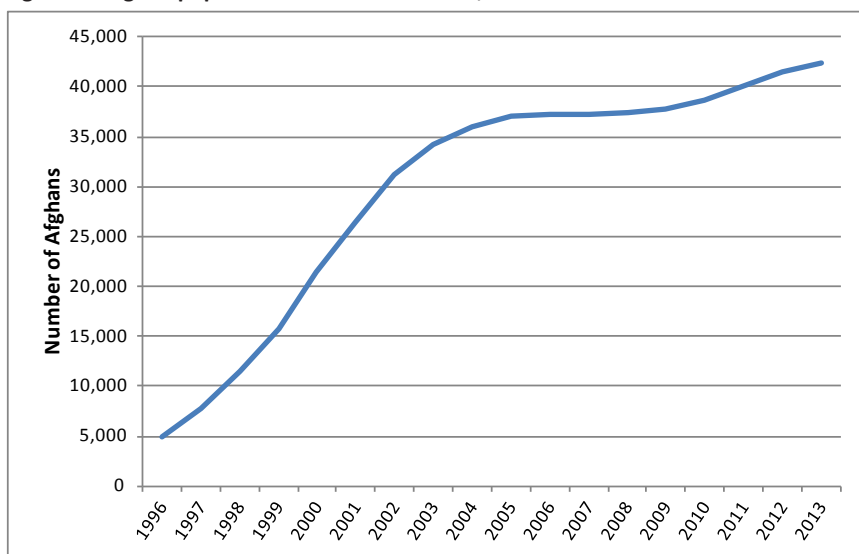
Length of stay in years	% of Afghans in Germany
under 1	14.7
1-4	22.1
4-6	3.3
6-8	4.2
8-10	6.0
10-15	24.6
15-20	15.3
20-25	7.0
25-30	1.8
30 or more	1.1
Afghans in Germany	56 600

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012a.

The Netherlands

In 2013, the Dutch Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek reported 42,348 Afghans as resident in the Netherlands. This number includes 32,820 first-generation Afghans and 9,528 second-generation Afghans (CBS, 2013a). Prior to the early to mid 1990s, migration from Afghanistan to the Netherlands was almost non-existent and information available prior to this time concentrates exclusively on asylum applications. Figure 7 shows that larger inflows of migrants to the Netherlands began in the mid 1990s and immigration peaked at the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s. As a consequence the Afghan population in the Netherlands increased steadily until 2004. The slower pace of growth of the Afghan population after this time is likely due to the fall of the Taliban in 2001 and subsequent high rates of return migration back to Afghanistan. More recently the Afghan population in the Netherlands started to grow more significantly again, most likely due to the ongoing conflict in the country and the uncertain and volatile economic and political future.

Figure 7: Afghan population in the Netherlands, 1996-2013



Source: CBS, 2013a.

Over time the Afghan diaspora has moved to different locations within the Netherlands: while in the 1980s most Afghans lived in the Northern provinces, where they resided in asylum accommodation, the geographic dispersion had changed significantly by 2000. The cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Arnhem and Eindhoven were home to the largest shares of Afghan migrants in 2010 (Siegel et al., 2010).

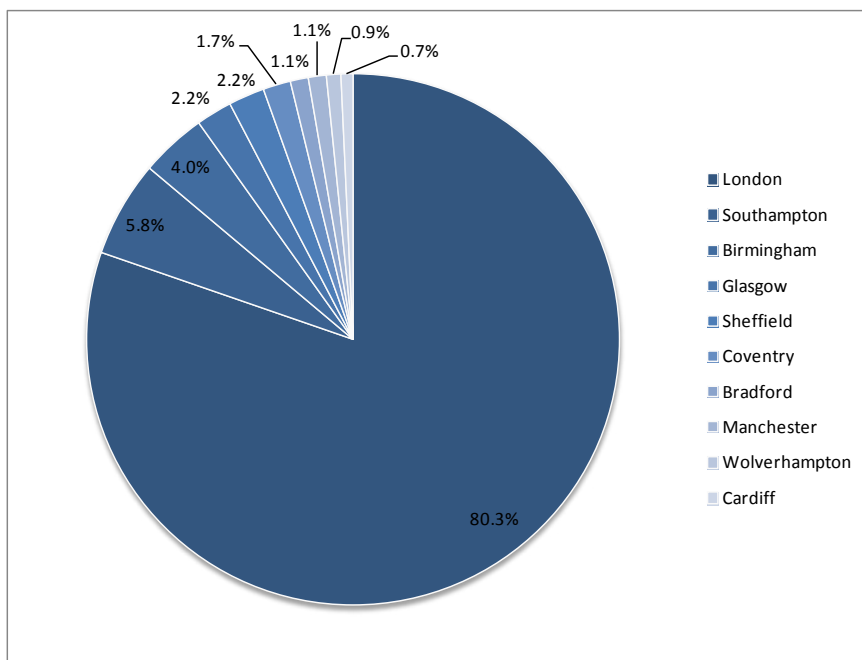
United Kingdom

There have been several waves of Afghan migrants to the United Kingdom, the first of which began in the 1980s in response to the Soviet invasion. The second wave began in the 1990s after the collapse of the communist regime and the beginning of the civil war. The third wave occurred at the end of the 1990s and the beginning of 2000, when the Taliban regime was strong before its collapse in 2001 (IOM, 2007).

In contrast to Germany and the Netherlands, the exact number of Afghans living in the United Kingdom is difficult to ascertain. The 2001 United Kingdom Census estimated that 14,481 Afghans lived in the country. Due to a large increase in asylum applications and refugees entering the country after 2001, however, the actual number of Afghans living in the United Kingdom is likely to be much higher. A further caution is that dependent children who were born in refugee camps in Pakistan or in other countries often do not report Afghanistan as their country of birth or origin. In contrast to the 2001 census, a mapping exercise conducted by the International Organization for Migration in 2006 estimated the Afghan population at 20,000 persons in London alone (IOM, 2007). The Office for National Statistics reported that in 2012 there were 60,000 people born in Afghanistan and 29,000 Afghan nationals living in the United Kingdom (Office for National Statistics, 2013). These numbers may, however, be underestimating the size of the Afghan diaspora considering that between 2006 and 2007, 46,000 births of children to Afghan parents were recorded in the United Kingdom (Jones, 2010).

The IOM mapping exercise showed that London is home to the largest portion (between 70% and 80%) of Afghan migrants and only small numbers live outside of the capital. As can be seen in Figure 8, small communities live, for example, in Birmingham, Bradford, Coventry, Manchester, Glasgow and Southampton (IOM, 2007).

Figure 8: Location of Afghans living in the United Kingdom, 2007



Source: IOM, 2007.

Information on the length of stay of Afghans in the United Kingdom is difficult to obtain. The Office for National Statistics estimates that the majority of Afghans living in the United Kingdom entered the country after 2001, which implies that most Afghans have had a relatively short residence in the United Kingdom (Jones, 2010).

Other countries

Many other European countries also accommodate Afghan diaspora communities. The international migration database of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that the stock of the Afghan-born population in 2011 was relatively high in Sweden (17,489 people), Denmark (11,134 people) and Norway (11,068 people). Within the OECD database the foreign-born population includes persons born abroad who retained the nationality of their country of origin as well as individuals born in the country of residence to foreign national parents, thus second and third-generation individuals may be included (OECD, 2013).

The Afghan communities in Greece and Turkey are difficult to assess, as both countries are primarily transit countries for migrants to enter other parts of Europe. While the number of Afghans resident in these countries is unknown, it is thought that sizable populations of mostly irregular migrants live there; whether these populations consist of short-term (transit) or long-term migrants is unclear (IOM, 2008b). In 2010, the World Bank estimated the number of Afghans residing in Turkey to be as high as 10,796 (World Bank, 2010b).

Beyond Europe, large Afghan communities live in Australia. There were 28,370 Afghan-born people recorded as living in the country in June 2011 (Australian Government Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2012), a significant increase from the 16,751 that were reported in the 2006 Australian Census data (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007).

Short- and long-term migration

Short-term migration

Only limited information is available on short-term migration to and from Afghanistan as defined by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA)¹⁵ survey of 2007/08 provides information on seasonal migration. The NRVA 2007/08 defines a seasonal migrant as “someone who during the past 12 months spent at least one month away from the household for seasonal work”.¹⁶ While this definition focuses on migrants who crossed a state border for work, it also includes internal migrants who moved within Afghanistan.

The NRVA 2007/08 revealed that 14 per cent of all households had at least one member engaged in seasonal work sometime in the 12 months preceding the survey, either within the country or abroad. With regard to specific residence categories (Kuchi, urban and rural), 22 per cent of Kuchi households were involved in seasonal work, whereas only 5 per cent of urban households reported to have a seasonal worker in the family. This relatively high number of

¹⁵ The National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) is the only comprehensive nation-wide multi-purpose household survey in Afghanistan. The NRVA enables a large amount of cross-section analysis and forms the basis of many policy developments in the country. The NRVA 2007/08 is the third of four successive rounds of surveys, following the NRVA in 2003 and 2005. The fourth round was conducted in 2011/12. The NRVA 07/08 was produced by the Afghan government with European Union funding and in collaboration with aid agencies. The survey collected data on 20,576 households in Afghanistan across 395 districts and 34 provinces in the time span of August 2007 – August 2008.

¹⁶ In the IOM Glossary on Migration seasonal workers are defined as: “A migrant worker whose work by its character is dependent on seasonal conditions and is performed only during part of the year.” The NRVA definition specifies that in order to qualify as a seasonal migrant, the migration period must be a minimum of one month long.

Kuchi involved in seasonal work is not surprising, as this group is characterized by a nomadic lifestyle. Among rural households, 16 per cent had a member involved in seasonal work. The Western region and also some provinces in the north-west, east and north-east had above-average involvement in seasonal migration with Ghor (66%) and Faryab (82%) reporting particularly high numbers (Icon-Institute, 2009).

The survey revealed that seasonal work was more often undertaken by those who had attended primary school, while individuals with at least a secondary education tended to be less involved. An exception was observed among urban residents, where highly educated individuals reported to be more frequently involved in seasonal work (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Urban seasonal workers were observed to migrate primarily abroad or to another urban area within the same province. In contrast, rural seasonal workers reported more diverse destinations with about half staying in a rural area within the same province or migrating to an urban area in another province. The Kuchi population mainly migrated to rural areas, both in and beyond the province of residence. The average duration of migration was slightly over four months; for urban seasonal workers, the migration period was longer at between five and six months (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Long- term migration

The NRVA 2007/08 also collected data on long-term “in-migrants” and “out-migrants”. An in-migrant was defined as someone who had lived outside their current area of residence for at least three consecutive months at some point in the past five years. This term includes individuals who migrated from elsewhere within Afghanistan or from abroad as well as individuals who had returned to an area of habitual residence following residence in another locale. In contrast, an out-migrant was defined as any individual aged 15 years or older who was considered a household member one year ago but who has since moved and is no longer considered a member of the household. This definition of out-migration is likely to underestimate the true scope of out-migration, as entire households that had migrated and were thus unavailable for an interview would be excluded from the sample (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Of Afghanistan’s 3.4 million households, a sizeable proportion (13%) had household members who had lived abroad or in another location in Afghanistan at some point during the five years preceding the survey and were therefore categorized as in-migrants. This figure hides significant variation among the

different groups analysed. Table 15 shows that 28 per cent of Kuchi households reported having long-term out-migrants, whereas only 9.7 per cent of urban and nearly 13 per cent of rural households reported the same. The survey also revealed that households in the Western region bordering the Islamic Republic of Iran were more likely to contain a migrant member (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Table 15: Afghan households by migration status during past five years and current residence, NRVA 2007/08

Place of Residence	Without any migrant		With migrant(s)		All households	
	Thousands	Percentage	Thousands	Percentage	Thousands	Percentage
Rural	2,235	87.2	328	12.8	2,563	100.0
Urban	616	90.3	66	9.7	682	100.0
Kuchi	139	72.0	54	28.0	193	100.0
Total	2,990	87.0	448	13.0	3,438	100.0

Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

Origin and destination of migrants

Table 16 shows that the Islamic Republic of Iran is the most common destination country for Afghan out-migrants. The close geographic proximity and similarities in culture and language are likely the main factors that draw Afghans to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Pakistan, in contrast, is a more important country of origin of in-migrants than country of destination for out-migrants. This may reflect the relatively stricter stance the Government of Pakistan has recently taken to Afghan citizens residing in the country. Countries in the Arabian Peninsula have also become more important destinations for out-migrants in recent years (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Table 16: Place of origin of in-migrants and place of destination of out-migrants, NRVA

Place of origin/ destination	In-migrants		Out-migrants	
	Thousands	Percentage	Thousands	Percentage
Same province, urban	77	10.6	19	6.0
Same province, rural	79	10.8	28	8.9
Other province, urban	119	16.3	22	7.0
Other province, rural	118	16.2	6	1.9
Pakistan	102	14.0	17	5.4
Islamic Republic of Iran	228	31.2	175	55.6
Arabian Peninsula	2	0.3	32	10.2
Other country	5	0.7	15	4.8
Total	730	100.0	315	100.0

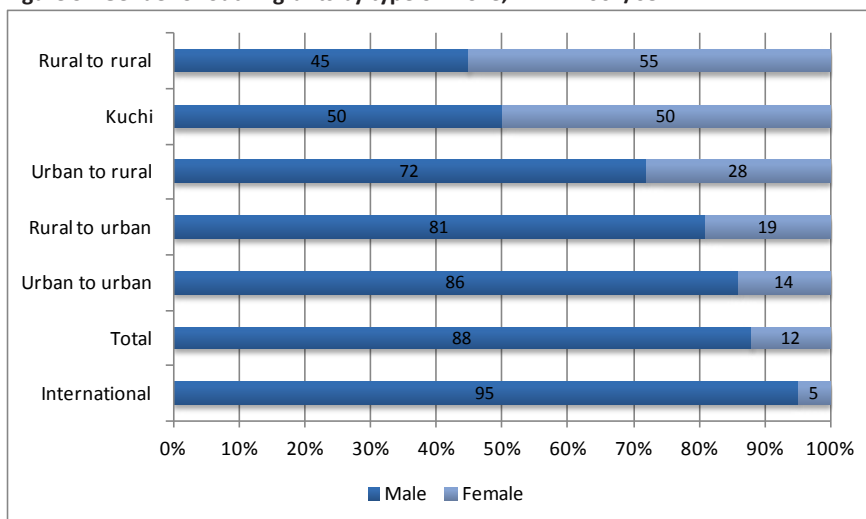
Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

The NRVA 2005 provides additional information on the country of destination and length of stay of Afghan migrants. As the NRVA 2005 used different migration categories and methodological procedures than the NRVA 2007/08, data collected by the two surveys cannot be compared. The results of the NRVA 2005 indicate that 75 per cent of Afghans who migrated to Pakistan did so seasonally and 47 per cent of those who migrated to the Islamic Republic of Iran did so seasonally. The majority of Afghans who migrated to Europe did so permanently, with an estimated 11,198 households containing a permanent Afghan migrant in Europe (MRRD and CSO, 2007).

Demographic characteristics of out-migrants

Among the international out-migrants included in the NRVA 2007/08, almost all were male (Figure 9), but female migrants constituted a larger share (55%) of rural-to-rural migrants, likely due to migration for marriage. Among the Kuchi population, men and women migrate equally. Out-migrants are considerably younger than the general population: almost half of all male out-migrants and two out of five female out-migrants were under the age of 25 (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Figure 9: Gender of out-migrants by type of move, NRVA 2007/08



Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

Characteristics of Afghans abroad

Pakistan

Over 3 million Afghans resided in Pakistan in 2005. Of these migrants 51 per cent were male and 49 per cent female. The 2005 census of Afghan migrants living in Pakistan found that there were 548,105 Afghan families living in Pakistan. The average family size was 5.6 people. Of the total population of 3 million, 592,740 individuals (or 19.4 per cent of the Afghan population in Pakistan) were under five years of age (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005).

The majority of Afghans in Pakistan (2,485,120 people, 81.5%) were ethnic Pashtuns. The remainder were Tajik (7.3%), Uzbek (2.3%), Hazara (1.3%), Turkmen (2.0%), Baloch (1.7%) or others (3.9%). At the time that the census was conducted, the majority of resident Afghans (82.6%) indicated having no intention to return to Afghanistan. Primary reasons for not returning to Afghanistan included the lack of shelter and livelihood opportunities in origin communities. Insecurity was also mentioned to a lesser extent (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005).

Islamic Republic of Iran

According to the Iranian Amayesh census¹⁷, 1,021,323 Afghans lived in the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2005. Within this population 54.7 per cent were male and 45.3 per cent female. The majority (84.3%) were documented, meaning that they either possessed an Amayesh card or were registered as refugees; the high level of documentation reflects the study's focus on documented Afghans and is therefore unlikely to be representative of real documentation trends (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2008).

Data collected by the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants' Affairs (BAFIA) in the Islamic Republic of Iran indicate that the majority of Afghans living in the country were Shia Hazaras (40.5%), Sunni Tajiks (22.1%), Sunni Pashtuns (8.8%), Sunni Balochs (3.1%) and Sunni Uzbeks (2.5%) (Koepke, 2011). A 2006 study by UNHCR and the International Labour Organization (ILO) confirms this ethnic composition (Wickramasekara et al., 2006). Data from the research by Ahmadinejad (2011) noted that 66.9 per cent of respondents were Hazaras, 17.4 per cent Pashtuns, 6.2 per cent Tajiks and 10.4 per cent Balochs.

¹⁷ Amayesh is a census aiming to identify Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is periodically taken by the Ministry of Interior.

A study by UNHCR and ILO found that the average household size of Afghan families in the Islamic Republic of Iran was 5.6 persons, which is higher than the general average of 4.1 persons in Iranian families (Wickramasekara et al., 2006). The study by Ahmadinejad (2011), found a similar average household size of 5.4 persons. This relatively high average household size may indicate a high fertility rate among Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Abbasi-Shavazi and Sadeghi, 2011), which would explain the relatively young Afghan population in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The median age of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran is 17.6 years for the female population and 17.4 years for the male population. Wickramasekara et al. (2006) use population pyramids to compare the age distribution of the Afghan and Iranian population in 2005 and then compare this to the Afghan population in the Islamic Republic of Iran. This arguably illustrates how the Afghan population has adapted to the living conditions in the Islamic Republic of Iran, converging toward a similar age distribution as followed by the Iranian population.

The UNHCR and ILO study revealed that 40 per cent of the surveyed households contained members age 14 or younger; 58 per cent contained members exclusively in the 15-64 age range. This indicates that more than half (53%) of the sampled Afghan population was born in the Islamic Republic of Iran and can thus be considered second generation (Wickramasekara et al., 2006). The study conducted by Ahmadinejad (2011) found a higher average age of 22.5 years among undocumented refugees and 23.9 years among documented refugees.

Table 17: Age structure of Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran (in %)

Age group	Afghan survey ILO and UNHCR (2005)	Amayesh census (2005)	Population census (1995)
0-4	11.3	3.7	10.3
5-17	37.0	42.2	37.0
18-59	47.9	51.0	50.4
60+	3.8	3.1	2.3
Sample size	8,430	743,856	60,055,000

Source: Wickramasekara et al., 2006.

United States of America

Of the estimated 89,040 ethnic Afghans living in the United States in 2006, 49.1 per cent were male and 50.9 per cent were female. In contrast to Afghans living in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, the median age of Afghans in the United States is much higher at 30.5 years. Table 18 shows this population

by age group. Of the entire Afghan population in the United States, 57,847 were foreign born and 31,193 were native born (US Census Bureau, 2013). The ethnic composition and religious affiliations of the Afghan population in the United States is diverse. The majority of Afghans are of Pashtun or Tajik ethnicity, but minority communities of Uzbeks, Hazaras, Afghan Jews and Afghan Hindus also exist (The Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, D.C., 2006b).

Table 18: Afghans in the United States by age group, 2011

Age group	Number
Under 5 years	5,431
5 to 17 years	18,342
18 to 34 years	26,267
35 to 64 years	31,877
65 years and over	7,123
Total	89,040

Source: US Census Bureau, 2013.

Canada

Of the 48,090 Afghans counted in the 2006 Census, 24,255 were male and 23,835 female. Some of these individuals, however, belong to the second or even to the third generation. Table 19 shows the age distribution of the ethnic Afghan population over the age of 15 in Canada broken down by first, second and third generation. The majority of Afghans living in Canada are relatively young, between 15 and 34 years of age (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Table 19: Age distribution of 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation Afghans in Canada, 2006

Age group	Total	1st generation	2nd generation	3rd generation or more
15-24	10,540	9,650	725	75
25-34	7,865	7,690	160	20
35-44	6,660	6,505	90	65
45-54	4,790	4,730	25	50
55-64	2,195	2,175	20	0
65-74	880	870	0	0
75 and over	395	380	15	10

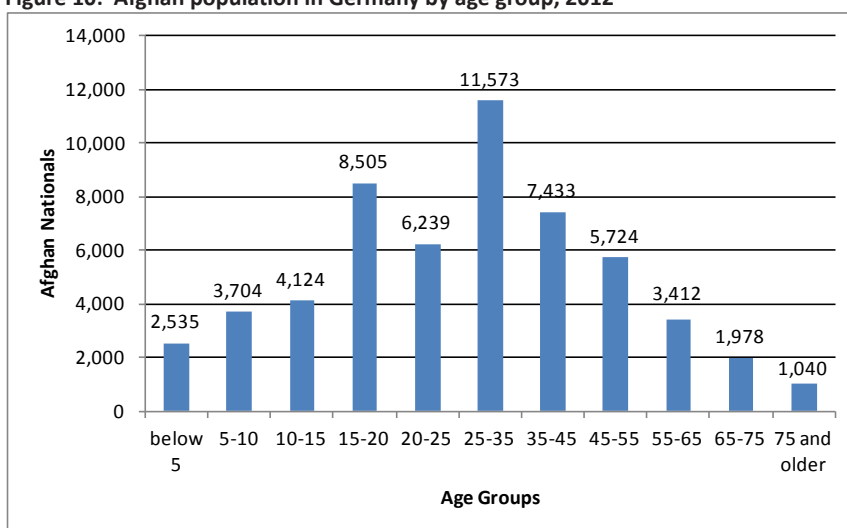
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006.

The 2006 Census found that age of arrival for Afghans also favoured the young: 3,575 younger than 5; 9,600 between 5 and 14; 8,900 between 15 and 24; 11,960 between 25 and 44; and only 4,180 older than 45 (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Germany

According to the Federal Statistical Office of Germany, a total of 145,000 first and second generation Afghans lived in Germany in 2011. Around 100,000 of these moved to Germany, while around 45,000 people of Afghan origin do not have a migration experience of their own (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2012b). In terms of gender distribution, males consistently outnumbered females between 2004 and 2011 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012a). The age distribution of Afghan citizens in Germany is displayed in Figure 10. The average age of the Afghan population in Germany is 31.0 years.

Figure 10: Afghan population in Germany by age group, 2012



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012a.

The Netherlands

The Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek reports that of the 42,348 Afghans living in the Netherlands in 2013, 22,586 are male and 19,780 female (CBS, 2013a). The Afghan population in the Netherlands is relatively young: in 2003, the majority (90%) of Afghans in the Netherlands was under the age of 44 and more than half (55%) was under 25 years of age. Sources indicate that around 30 per cent of all children with Afghan background were born in the Netherlands (Siegel et al., 2010). Table 20 shows the age distribution among Afghans in the Netherlands between 1996 and 2012.

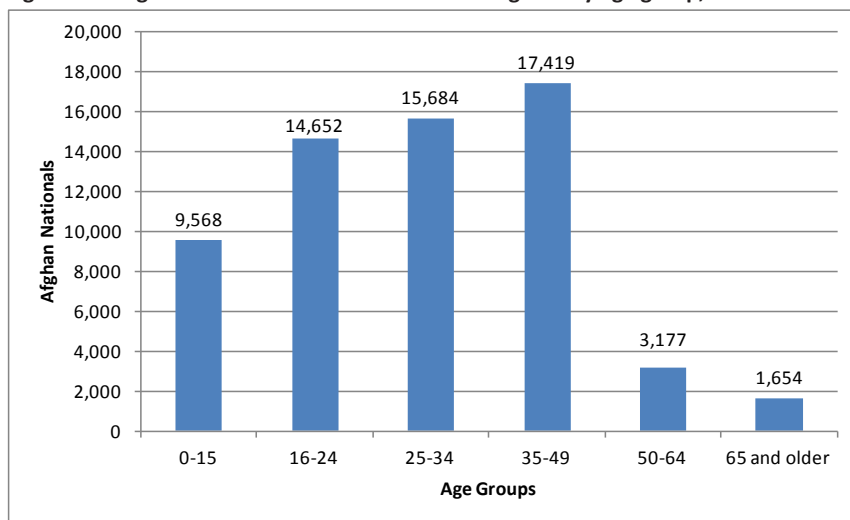
Table 20: Afghans in the Netherlands by age group, 1996-2012

Year	Total	0-20	20 to 65	65 and older
1996	4,916	2,303	2,543	70
1998	11,551	5,476	5,911	164
2000	21,468	10,166	10,963	339
2002	31,167	14,379	16,285	503
2004	36,043	16,187	19,173	683
2006	37,246	16,237	20,213	796
2008	37,370	15,481	20,996	893
2010	38,664	14,937	22,696	1,031
2012	41,473	15,211	24,999	1,263

Source: CBS, 2013a.

United Kingdom

The Afghan population in the United Kingdom was estimated to be 35,000 males and 20,000 females in 2009. Many young Afghan men are known to reside in London (Oeppen, 2009). The age distribution of Afghans living in the United Kingdom is shown in Figure 11. It can be seen that the majority of Afghans are of working age.

Figure 11: Afghan born nationals in the United Kingdom by age group, 2011

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2014.

Afghan permanent residents and citizens nationalized abroad

Pakistan

The Pakistan State Minister for Interior stated in 2008 that citizenship had been granted to some Afghans in accordance with the provisions of the Pakistan Citizenship Act 1951 and Naturalization Act 1926. Only very few Afghanistan-born migrants in Pakistan have obtained Pakistani citizenship: 110 Afghans were granted citizenship in 2008, in 2009 the number had decreased to 7, while 9 people received citizenship in 2010 (Taj, 2010).

Until 2007, when the first registrations took place and Afghan refugees in Pakistan were provided with Proof of Registration cards, Afghans had lived in Pakistan without any legal documentation for 28 years (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2009). The lack of formal status brought with it a number of legal problems for Afghans residing in Pakistan; under the Foreigners Registration Act, unregistered migrants could be stopped, searched and arrested without much legal recourse. In 2010, the Government of Pakistan extended the validity of registration cards for 1.7 million Afghans, allowing them to stay in Pakistan three more years (UNHCR, 2012c). The possession of valid registration cards has not provided full protection against arbitrary detention by the police, however (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2009). Citizenship acquisition law is unclear on the circumstances that must be fulfilled for Pakistani nationality to be granted. According to Pakistani citizenship laws and international practice, Afghans should be eligible to become Pakistani citizens after seven years of stay in Pakistan; some sources also claim that any child born on Pakistani soil should be entitled to citizenship based on *jus soli* provisions (Khattak et al., 2006).

Islamic Republic of Iran

Very few Afghans have obtained Iranian citizenship in the past decades. The Iranian parliament grants Iranian men the right to apply for citizenship for their foreign-born wives and children based on Paragraph 6 of Article 976 of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Civil Code stipulates that a foreign woman may acquire Iranian citizenship upon marriage to an Iranian man. The parliament has, however, only authorized the issuing of permanent residence permits to Afghan spouses of Iranian women under specific conditions, while they do not qualify for citizenship (Ashrafi and Moghissi, 2002). According to Article 2 of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Civil Code, anyone born to an Iranian father, regardless of place of birth, is considered an Iranian citizen under *jus sanguinis* provisions. The Civil Code does not outline any such provisions according to the mother's citizenship

and the father’s citizenship thus serves as a decisive factor in determining descent and bloodline (Shahrzad, 2002).

In contrast to Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran is a signatory of the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, but very few Afghans have actually been granted refugee status and given the right to settle in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Even those who arrived as refugees in the early 1980s were only granted temporary stay permits. A study by UNHCR and ILO reported that of the study sample of 4,295 Afghans residing in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 93 per cent claimed to have obtained some permit to stay in the country. Of the total sample, only 276 persons admitted to being without valid resident permits (Wickramasekara et al., 2006).

United States of America

Every child who is born within the United States, regardless of their parents’ nationality, is entitled to US citizenship under jus soli provisions. Information on Afghan migrants who naturalized or gained citizenship in the United States is available from 1994 to 2012. The number of Afghans who have naturalized in the United States has remained relatively stable over the years, with an exception in 1996, when a total of 4,141 Afghans obtained United States citizenship (Table 21). The 2011 American Community Survey revealed that of the 89,040 Afghans counted at that time, 42,269 persons had become naturalized United States citizens. Of these individuals, 46.5 per cent were male and 53.5 per cent female (US Census Bureau, 2013).

Table 21: Afghans naturalized in the United States, 1994-2012

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Naturalizations	1,995	2,031	4,141	1,839	1,736	2,752	2,832	1,938	1,424	1,235
Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	
Naturalizations	1,323	1,464	2,018	2,013	2,650	2,588	2,230	1,998	1,758	

Source: Homeland Security, 2004, 2010, 2013.

Interviewees in the study by Oeppen (2009) mentioned that family reunification was the main reason for applying for citizenship. Legal permanent residents of the United States can only sponsor the immigration of their spouse or unmarried children, while citizens are allowed to sponsor married children, siblings and parents. This also explains why family reunification has been the major source of Afghan immigration to the United States since the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan (Oeppen, 2009).

Canada

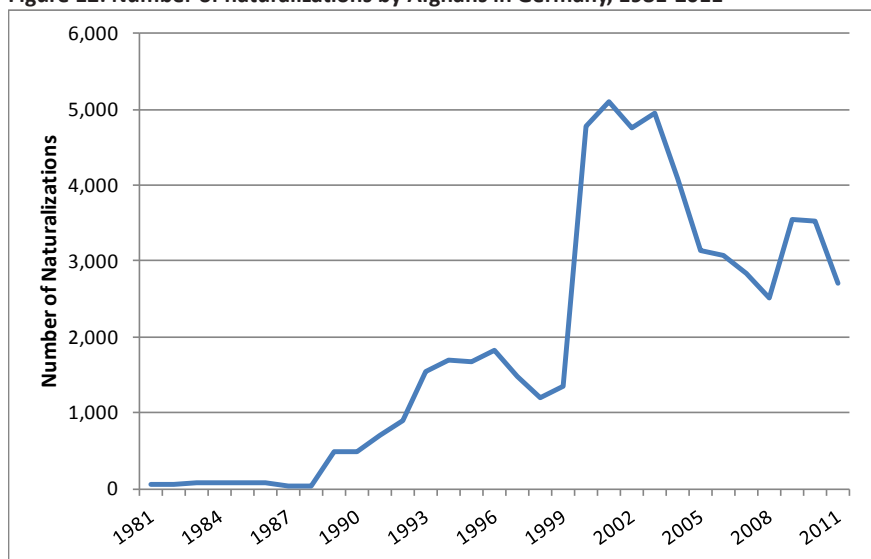
Of the 48,090 Afghans counted in the 2006 Census, 31,065 were Canadian citizens; of these, 27,030 held Canadian citizenship exclusively, while 4,035 individuals had dual citizenship (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Germany

Data from 2011 show that of the 56,563 Afghan nationals living in Germany, 15,171 had permanent residence status and 25,438 held a temporary residence permit. Only 2.4 per cent had the “Duldungsstatus” (which is a statutory temporary suspension of deportation) (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012a).

About 40 per cent of all Afghan migrants in Germany have German citizenship; the majority of those individuals entered the country before 1979 (Vadean, 2007). Between 1981 and 2011, 18,186 Afghans were naturalized as shown in Figure 12 (Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2013b). In comparison to other migrant groups in Germany, the naturalization rate of Afghan-origin individuals is relatively high.

Figure 12: Number of naturalizations by Afghans in Germany, 1981-2011

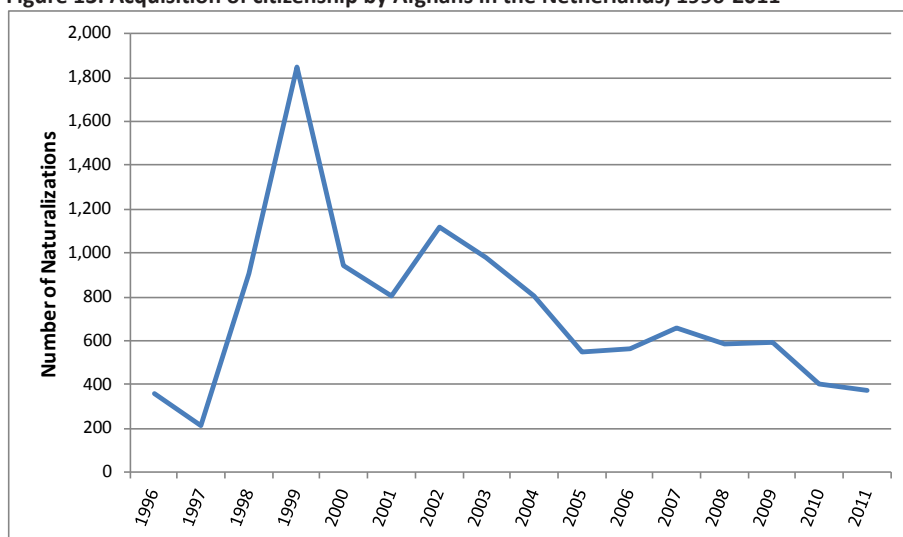


Source: Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland, 2013b.

The Netherlands

Among all Afghan-born individuals residing in the Netherlands, naturalization trends reflect overall immigration trends. Figure 13 shows that the number of citizenship acquisitions was relatively low in 1996 (360) and 1997 (217) but increased drastically to over 1,800 in 1999. The low numbers in 1996 and 1997 may be due to the small number of Afghans residing in the country for the number of years required for naturalization (CBS, 2013a). After 1999 the number of acquisitions fell constantly (with the exception of 2002) and reached 371 in 2011.

Figure 13: Acquisition of citizenship by Afghans in the Netherlands, 1996-2011



Source: CBS, 2013a.

Between 1996 and 2003, approximately 60 per cent of all Afghans who were naturalized did so independently, while 40 per cent did so as part of a family naturalization process (*mede-naturalisatie*) by which minors under the age of 16 acquire citizenship simultaneously with their parents (Siegel et al., 2010). In 2000, 3,870 individuals were dual Dutch-Afghan nationals; that number increased to 8,412 by 2005 and reached 11,797 by 2012 (CBS, 2013a).

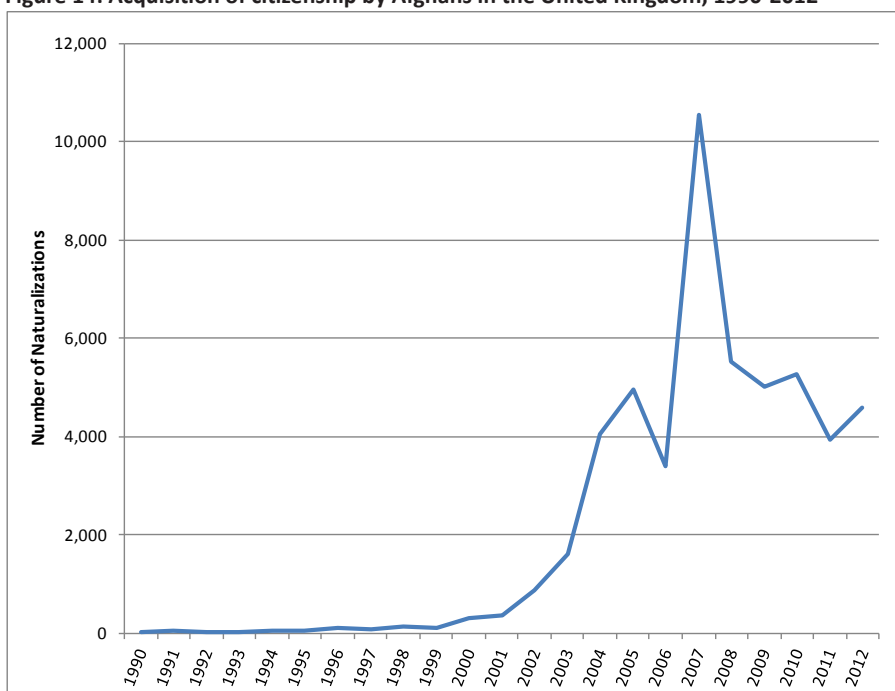
United Kingdom

The sharp increase of Afghan nationals seeking asylum in the United Kingdom has been met with increasing rates of naturalization (Change Institute, 2009). Foreign residents of the United Kingdom married to British citizens are

entitled to naturalization after three years of uninterrupted residence; five years of residence are required before individuals not married to British citizens can apply for citizenship (UK Border Agency, 2013).

Figure 14 shows that the first peak of citizenship acquisition occurred in 2005 and a second, much more significant one, in 2007. These trends correspond with high inflows of asylum-seekers from Afghanistan in 2001. In 2008, 5,540 Afghans were granted British citizenship, which represents a 48 per cent decrease from 2007, when 10,555 Afghans were granted citizenship (Home Office, 2008, 2009). In 2009, Afghans ranked 11th among all nationalities to be granted British citizenship, with 5,010 individuals gaining citizenship in that year (Home Office, 2010). The number has remained between about 4,000 and 5,000 annually since then (Home Office, 2013).

Figure 14: Acquisition of citizenship by Afghans in the United Kingdom, 1990-2012



Source: Home Office, 2013.

India

The Indian Express newspaper reported in 2006 that a Sikh woman was the first Afghan refugee who had ever gained Indian citizenship (Handique, 2006). At the time more than 9,700 Afghan refugees resided in New Delhi alone,

the majority of which had been living in India for over 10 years (Bose, 2005). In 2010, the Times of India reported that 1,083 Afghan nationals were granted Indian citizenship between January 2007 and December 2009 (The Times of India, 2010). Over 3,000 Afghan refugees had expressed an interest in acquiring Indian citizenship, but long waiting times, complicated application procedures and strict eligibility criteria make the process difficult (Handique, 2006). To gain Indian citizenship a foreign citizen must be married to an Indian citizen for a minimum of seven years; unmarried foreign nationals must have lived in the country for at least 12 years. Documentation in the form of a residence permit issued by the Indian government must be provided to prove residence duration, which is difficult to achieve for many Afghan refugees who entered the country without proper documentation. A recent increase in application fees from 2,100 rupees (USD 49) to 15,000 rupees (USD 347) further hampers the process of citizenship acquisition. As soon as an application for naturalization has been filed, the applicant must remain in India until the end of the process. In many families where men migrate out of India seasonally, mostly women apply for citizenship, a strategy that ensures that families have the option for circular migration. Access to Indian citizenship can also promote economic integration, as Afghan refugees do not have the right to work in India and thus often have to look for work in the informal sector where conditions are worse (Bose, 2005).

B.2.2. EMIGRATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Widespread poverty and a lack of income-generating opportunities drive many Afghans to look for employment abroad. The NRVA 2007/08 revealed that over 53 per cent (239,000) of Afghan households that had a member absent sometime in the past five years also included labour migrants. The Western region of Afghanistan has experienced above average rates of returning labour migrants. Labour migration is an almost exclusively male phenomenon, with 94 per cent of labour in-migrants being men, compared to 77 per cent of all in-migrants. Almost three out of four labour in-migrants did not attend school, with the exception of those migrants from urban areas, who often had primary or secondary education (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Table 22 shows that the Islamic Republic of Iran was by far the most important origin of Afghan labour in-migrants. It was also the destination of almost two in every three labour out-migrants. Labour migration is a strategy employed by many and it is all the more feasible for households in the region neighbouring the Islamic Republic of Iran. Mean duration of residence abroad

was 16 months, with most returning labour migrants (61%) staying abroad between 6 and 23 months (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Table 22: Place of origin of labour in-migrants and place of destination of labour out-migrants, NRVA 2007/08

Place of origin/ destination	In-migrants		Out-migrants	
	Thousands	Percentage	Thousands	Percentage
Islamic Republic of Iran	205	46.3	169	66.5
Other province	161	36.4	19	7.5
Same province	37	8.3	14	5.6
Pakistan	34	7.7	11	4.3
Other country	5	1.1	41	16.1
Total	442	100.0	254	100.0

Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

Demographic characteristics of labour migrants

Table 23 shows that more labour out-migrants (49%) were concentrated in the 15-24 year age group than were labour in-migrants (29%). The small group of female labour migrants stands out: they tend to be significantly older than the total group of female in-migrants (which is dominated by marriage migration), with more than 30 per cent of female labour out-migrants aged 40 years or older. They differ in this regard not only from female out-migrants in general (12 per cent aged 40 or older) but also from male out-migrants, only 9 per cent of whom are over 40 (Icon-Institute, 2009).

Table 23: Labour migrants by age group and sex (in %), NRVA 2007/08

Age group	% Male		% Female	
	In-migrants	Out-migrants	In-migrants	Out-migrants
15-24	29	49	28	35
25-39	50	42	42	33
40+	21	9	31	32

Source: Icon-Institute, 2009.

Employment and unemployment rate of Afghans abroad

Canada

The 2006 Census enumerated 33,235 Afghan individuals of working age, of which 16,725 were male and 16,510 female. Of this number 18,895 were in the labour market and 16,465 were employed (10,385 males and 6,080 females). The employment rate was estimated at 62.1 per cent for males, 36.8 per cent for females and 49.5 per cent for both sexes combined. The unemployment rate was 12.9 per cent of Afghans in Canada (10.6 per cent for males and 16.5 per cent for females). Of those Afghans who were employed, most worked in the following sectors: sales and service (7,660), trades and transport (2,555), business-finance and administration (1,930) and management occupations (1,405) (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Germany

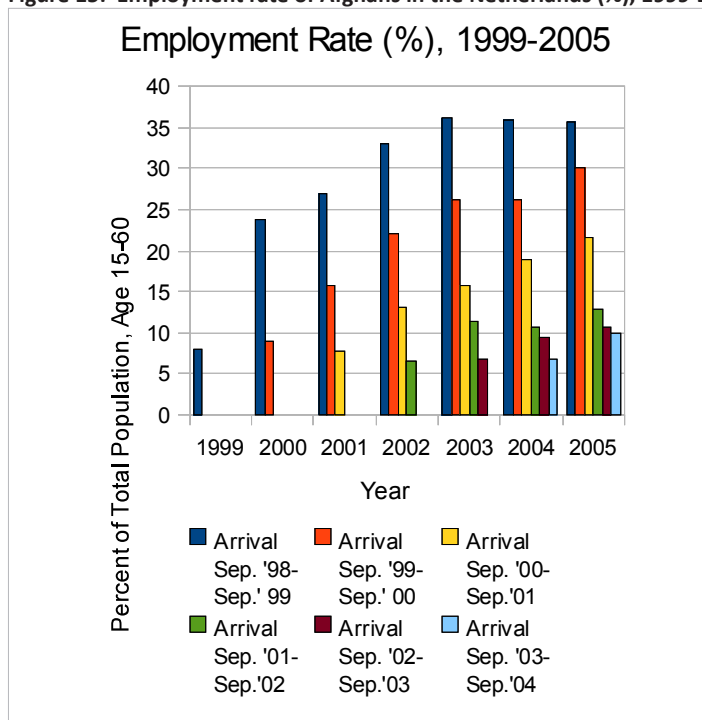
The socioeconomic characteristics and residence status of Afghan migrants in Germany are reflective of overall Afghan migration trends. Afghans who arrived before or around 1979 belonged to the educated elite and were thus better integrated in Germany than subsequent migrant cohorts. Many of the 1979-era arrivals have permanent resident status or German citizenship, while this is the case for less of those Afghans who entered Germany more recently. Afghans who acquired their education and training abroad often have difficulties getting their diplomas and qualifications recognized in Germany. Vadean (2007) found that 78.4 per cent of all interviewees had not received training or work experience in their profession after entering Germany. As a consequence, the majority of Afghans work in the low-skilled sector and experience declining social mobility compared to their study or professional status before they arrived in Germany (Vadean, 2007). Data from the Microcensus of 2011 indicate that, as of 2011, 54,000 Afghans and Germans with former Afghan nationality were employed. The largest group (28,000) worked as white collar workers, 16,000 as labourers and 9,000 were self-employed (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012b). This suggests a slightly more positive picture of the employment status of Afghans in Germany compared to Vadean (2007). Only a small group of Afghans in Germany were unemployed (8,000 persons) (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2012b).

The Netherlands

Figure 15 illustrates the employment rate in the Netherlands of the Afghan working-age population (ages 15-60) by year of arrival (1999-2005).

The employment rate for Afghans in the Netherlands increased each year, with an exception seen in 2004 when employment decreased for the more established cohorts and in 2005, in which the 1998 cohort saw a decline in employment. Siegel et al. (2010) report that Afghans between the ages of 30 and 50 have the weakest position in the Dutch labour market. This is largely due to limited transferability of skills and qualifications between Afghanistan and the Netherlands. Moreover, Afghans aged 30 to 50 face more difficulties in training or re-educating themselves. While practical knowledge required for technical fields is the most easily transferable, there are a number of problems for Afghans in the Netherlands in securing a job in this field due to lack of coordination in certifications and limited previous work experience in the Netherlands (Siegel et al., 2010).

Figure 15: Employment rate of Afghans in the Netherlands (%), 1999-2005



Source: Siegel et al., 2010.

United Kingdom

Oeppen (2009) found that 24 per cent of the economically active Afghan population in London was unemployed, compared to just 6 per cent of the total economically active population in London. A study by the Change Institute (2009)

that interviewed 205 Afghans in the United Kingdom also found that a majority of respondents faced socioeconomic problems. A lack of English-language skills was reported as a major obstacle for not gaining access to the labour market and many Afghans reported being engaged in low-paid employment that often involved long working hours and shift work. Low-skilled jobs such as taxi drivers or work in catering and restaurants were the most common. Some respondents did not have access to employment at their proper skill level due to limited recognition of foreign educational qualifications. Many interviewees stated that they had experienced a loss of social, economic and professional status since their arrival in the United Kingdom. This was especially the case for men who reported working in low-skilled jobs. Information on the prevalence of this kind of downward mobility is lacking, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the phenomenon of low skilled labour among Afghan migrants in the United Kingdom is widespread (Change Institute, 2009).

Competition with national labour force

Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan

Since their influx into the Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghan refugees have been permitted to work in those sectors of the Iranian labour market that have positions not easily filled by Iranian workers. Many Afghans therefore work in the informal sector under hazardous conditions (Koepke, 2011). Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran are a very competitive labour force willing to tolerate low wages and reputed to be hard workers (Majidi, 2008; Overfeld and Zumot, 2010). The Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) and the Collective for Social Science Research (2006) state that the Iranian employers hire Afghan workers for their high sense of responsibility and dedication, their readiness for difficult and hazardous jobs as well as their acceptance of lower wages compared to Iranians. Undefined regulations for employing Afghans coupled with difficulties in employing national workers further incentivize Iranian employers to hire Afghans. Majidi (2008) conducted interviews with Iranian employers in the cities of Isfahan, Shiraz and Yazd and confirms that Afghan workers are often preferred over Iranian workers because of their ability to work hard, their sense of responsibility, their effective use of on-the-job training and their willingness to work overtime and underwage without any contractual obligations for the employer. A study on the profile of Afghan households in the Islamic Republic of Iran identified hard work, flexibility, reliability and cost advantages (wages and product prices) as the main reasons for preferring Afghan over Iranian workers (Wickramasekara et al., 2006).

According to the Iranian Deputy Minister of Interior, approximately 2 million documented and undocumented Afghans were employed in the labour market in the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2010 (Koepke, 2011). However, according to a study by ILO and UNHCR, Afghans of working age in the Islamic Republic of Iran accounted for only 1.8 per cent of the total active labour force in 2006 (Wickramasekara et al., 2006).

In the 2005 Pakistan Census undertaken by UNHCR and the Government of Pakistan, 53 per cent (292,045) of Afghan respondents reported to be living on daily wages. The number may be much higher when considering that 19.2 per cent (105,249) reported being self-employed, which may include individuals who work in casual daily labour. Only 8.1 per cent (44,510) of the respondents reported being employed (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005).

In both Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, Afghans are held responsible, at least partly, for the rapid and often anarchic urbanization of provincial capitals. They have further been blamed for economic downturn by accepting lower wages and competing with the local poor for jobs (International Crisis Group, 2009).

Gulf Cooperation Council States

It is estimated that at least 53,000 Afghan workers using (sometimes fake) Pakistani passports have been hired in the United Arab Emirates. According to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), as many as 100,000 Afghan labour migrants may currently be working in Gulf Cooperation Council states (GCC) countries. A large number of Pakistanis who compete with the Afghan migrants for similar positions live and work in the GCC; it is estimated that approximately 100,000 Afghans compete with over 1.5 million Pakistanis in the same region. While approximately 4 million jobs have recently been created in the region, mainly in the construction sector, increasing unemployment among the GCC population further increased pressure on Afghan and Pakistan migrants alike, who compete with other low-skilled workers from other source countries in Asia as well. The authorities of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait have discussed the issue of job competition and proposed a policy that prioritizes each country's nationals over foreigners to secure employment. Such a policy mainly affects high-skilled positions in the GCC area (Overfeld and Zumot, 2010).

As in the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the willingness of Afghan labour migrants to work for lower wages than their Pakistani or GCC counterparts and to

accept much lower living standards remains a strong incentive for employers to hire them. Afghan migrant labourers in the GCC might be perceived as a growing competition to Pakistan labourers and a potential risk to Pakistan's economy. If managed properly (such as through country-based quota systems), however, increased Afghan labour migration to the GCC states could ultimately contribute to economic stability in the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan (Overfeld and Zumot, 2010).

Border migration

In 2008, UNHCR commissioned research to examine cross-border flows between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Data on migrants crossing the Afghanistan-Pakistan border were collected at two crossing points: Torkham (East) and Spin Boldak/Chaman (South). The research was based on a random selection of cross-border migrants both leaving and entering Afghanistan during late summer and fall, when seasonal migration peaks. A total of 2,023 interviews were conducted at both cross-border points. Additionally, a counting exercise lasting seven days was carried out in September 2008 (Majidi, 2009).

The responsibility for controlling the exit and entry of all individuals across the border, regardless of nationality, lies with the Afghan border police and passport office. Data on population movements are collected on a regular basis and are reported to the Ministry of Interior in Kabul. Table 24 shows the numbers of population movements for the week of 11-17 September, 2008 reported by the Ministry of Interior as well as those counted by the research team and UNHCR staff. The comparison shows a wide gap between the reported numbers, which is due to the fact that the official mechanisms in place only register people moving with a passport or valid visa. This represents only a minority of all movements, however, which highlights the high incidence of irregular flows through the border point in Torkham. While official records stated that 150 people crossed the border at Torkham on 11 September 2008, the counting exercise found 12,934 border crossings on the same day. High differences between official records and those collected by the research team were also observed on other days of data collection. Based on these discrepancies, it can be suggested that the border police and passport office at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border are not able to adequately control or document the nature and size of actual cross-border movements (Majidi, 2009).

Table 24: Comparison of legal versus irregular entry and exit at the Torkham border, September 2008

Date	Entry		Exit	
	Official Nr.	Actual Nr.	Official Nr.	Actual Nr.
11/09/2008 (AM only)	150	12,934	138	23,934
12/09/2008 (AM only)	75	12,507	64	18,993
13/09/2008 (AM only)	194	16,080	54	21,889
14/09/2008 (PM only)	91	5,454	78	8,392
15/09/2008 (PM only)	77	10,588	112	12,384
16/09/2008 (PM only)	141	10,220	70	11,953

Source: Majidi, 2009.

The areas that lie on the Pakistani side of the border include the NWFP, Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Balochistan. The border areas on the Afghan side – from North to South - are Badakhshan, Nuristan, Kunar, Nangarhar, Paktia, Khost, Paktika, Zabol and Kandahar. Nangarhar and Kandahar are two out of the five most populated Afghan provinces with 1,182,000 and 886,000 residents respectively. The two major official border crossing points of Torkham and Spin Boldak are located in these two provinces. However, hundreds of unofficial crossing points also exist. Since the border runs through Pashtun and Baloch tribal territory, with members of these groups living on both sides of the border, most people consider the border as fluid or non-existent. Many respondents of the study stated that they did not actually know where the border was located (Majidi, 2009).

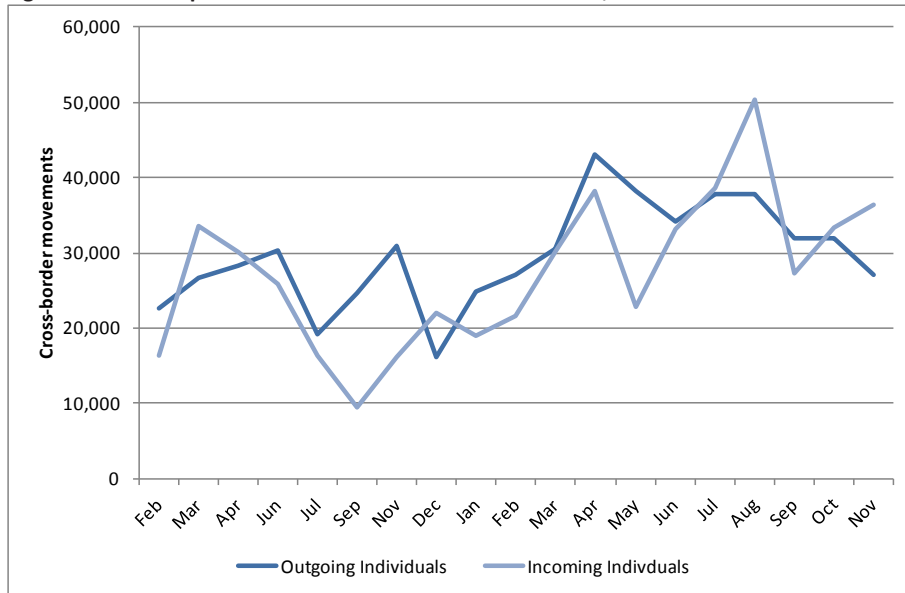
Data from the UNHCR border counting team are presented in Figure 16. The figure shows the evaluation (over 18 months in 2007 and 2008) of the outgoing and incoming flows of individuals at the Torkham border. Seasonal weather conditions have a significant impact on cross-border migration to Pakistan. A higher number of individuals crossed the border to Pakistan during the months approaching the winter; while hot summer months tend to bring Afghans back home, tough winter days draw them back to Pakistan. Overall, higher numbers of cross-border movements were observed at the time of the New Year¹⁸ in Afghanistan and continuing throughout the months of summer (Majidi, 2009).

The study conducted by Majidi (2009) also revealed that a far greater number of people cross the border at Torkham, in both directions, than at Spin Boldak. In September 2008, over 382,518 individuals crossed the border

¹⁸ *Nowruz* marks the first day of spring and is the name of the New Year in Iranian calendars. It is usually celebrated on March 21 or the previous/following day.

at Torkham in the monitoring week, compared to 181,292 at Spin Boldak. In November 2008, the average weekly flow was slightly higher, with 401,209 individuals crossing the border at Torkham and 224,480 at Spin Boldak. The difference might be, at least in part, due to a lower population density near Torkham, higher insecurity in the Southern region, the lower presence of Afghan refugees in the southern end of the border and the lower volume of trade moving through Spin Boldak than through Torkham (Majidi, 2009).

Figure 16: The scope of cross-border movement at Torkham, 2007-2008



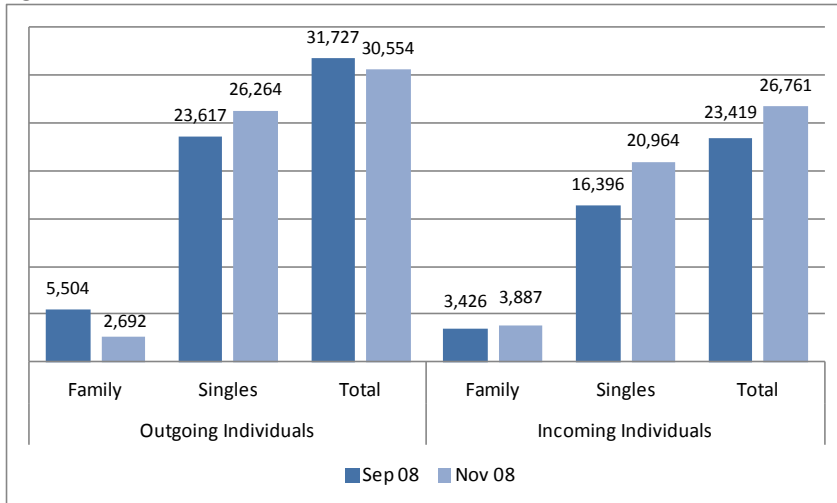
Source: Majidi, 2009.

The 2009 border crossing study revealed that at both border crossing points, the majority of migrants were single adult males (Figure 17 and Figure 18). Families made up only a small proportion of the total population flows (Majidi, 2009). The data from the 2011 annual border monitoring report of the UNHCR also show that the majority were single males (80-85%) who indicated that they were temporarily moving to Pakistan to look for work in order to provide for their families (UNHCR, 2012a). In the IS Academy data¹⁹ most migrants crossing the Afghanistan-Pakistan border (75.3%) were also males who travelled alone with the purpose of finding work in low-skilled profession in Pakistan. The 2009 border crossing study found that 81.2 per cent over the 2,000 interviewees

¹⁹ The IS Academy: Migration and Development Project was conducted by Maastricht University and co-funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the International Organization for Migration in Afghanistan. The study was conducted in partnership with the Afghanistan Central Statistics Organization and implemented by Samuel Hall Consulting. It is one of the main statistical sources for this Migration Profile.

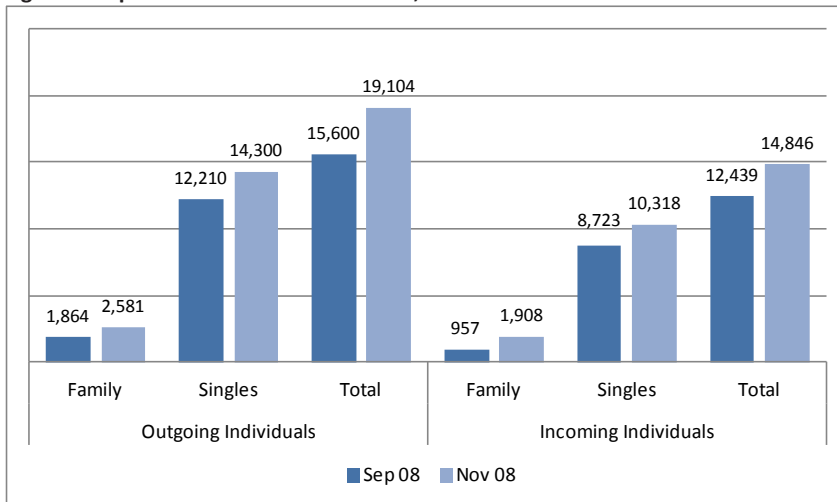
travelled without any type of documentation such as a passport, valid visa or ID document, which further confirms that official regulation of cross-border movement is limited (Majidi, 2009).

Figure 17: Torkham cross-border flows, Fall 2008



Source: Majidi, 2009.

Figure 18: Spin Boldak cross-border flows, Fall 2008



Source: Majidi, 2009.

Cross-border traffic declined in 2011 compared to 2010 (Table 25). This is likely due to the worsening security situation in Pakistan due to increased military intervention of the Pakistani army in the KPK region as well as increasing political tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2012a).

Table 25: Head count yearly comparison: outgoing and incoming movements (excluding voluntary refugee returnees), 2007-2011

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Outgoing	198,765	401,455	283,100	337,452	265,739
Incoming	167,841	364,733	274,387	322,589	270,343

Source: UNHCR, 2012a.

B.2.3. EMIGRATION FOR STUDY PURPOSES

About 25 public universities are operating in Afghanistan with over 100,000 students enrolled. Acceptance in universities is highly competitive and based on an entrance exam. As a result, many private universities and institutes have been established in the major cities. To meet the increasing demand for highly educated and technically competent young people who can contribute to the country's reconstruction, opportunities for education abroad have increased. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has been supporting exchange programmes with universities abroad and promotes collaborative partnerships between secondary schools, for example with California in the United States (The Global Connections and Exchange (GCE) programme in Afghanistan) (US Department of State, 2013a).

In addition to exchange programmes, many countries provide scholarships for Afghan students who want to pursue higher education outside their home country. In 2009, Pakistan announced that it would offer 1,000 scholarships to Afghan students to study in Pakistan. The scholarships are offered in almost all disciplines, with a particular focus on engineering, medicine and agriculture, as desired by the Afghan delegation. Other important areas include pharmaceutical studies, computer science, social sciences, business education and language studies. Pakistan and Afghanistan also agreed to collaborate on faculty development and student exchange, joint research programmes, distance education and institutional linkage programmes (University World News, 2009). Other scholarship programmes are also offered in Pakistan such as the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI), which has been operational for over 20 years. By 2006, more than 900 Afghan refugees in Pakistan had benefited from this programme since its inception in 1992 (UNHCR,

2006a). In 2010, Afghans were the top receiving nationality with more than 400 DAFI students (UNHCR, 2010a). Many other countries also offer scholarships to Afghan students to strengthen and enhance the development efforts of the Afghan government. The Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) programme for Afghanistan, for example, supports Australia's development assistance programme to Afghanistan by targeting human resource gaps within the Afghan government in selected priority ministries. These scholarships further foster strong relationships between the two countries. At least 20 scholarships are offered each year for masters-level degrees and postgraduate diplomas to employees of Afghan Ministries supported by the AusAID Development Assistance Facility for Afghanistan (DAFA) (Australian Government, 2011).

Many Afghan student associations (such as ASA4UK and ASA) have been created in destination countries (such as the United States, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Turkey) that are home to larger Afghan student populations. Afghan student associations aim to provide a social and academic platform for Afghan students and offer assistance for education, employment opportunities and integration (Afghan Students, 2013). Many new networks are evolving in other countries such as India, where Afghan students often make use of community platforms such as Facebook to establish contact with others.

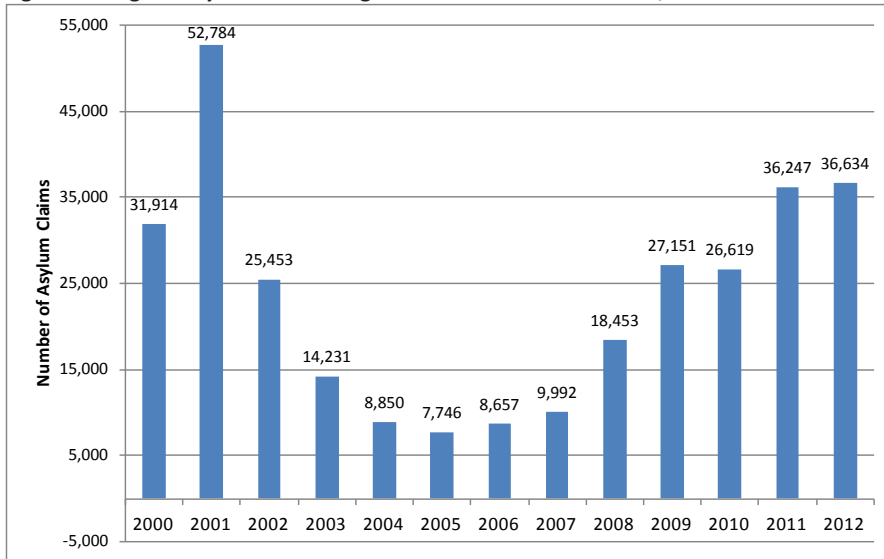
It is difficult to estimate the total number of Afghan students enrolled in tertiary education abroad. The World Education Digest of 2011 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reports a number of 3,810 Afghans that were studying abroad in 2009. The main destination countries were the Islamic Republic of Iran (676), Turkey (509), the United States (400), Germany (278) and the Russian Federation (228) (UIS, 2011).

The Canadian census, which collects data on Afghan students in secondary and tertiary education, provides further insights into the mobility of Afghans for educational purposes. The data from the 2006 Census found that 11,355 Afghans residing in Canada held a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree. Of that number, 4,360 received the qualification inside Canada (mostly Ontario) while over 7,000 people had received a degree outside the country, many in Pakistan (1,075), India (275), and the United States (175). The main fields of study in which tertiary qualifications were gained were architecture, engineering and related technologies (2,395), business, management and public administration (1,655), health, parks, recreation and fitness (1,535) and social and behavioural sciences and law (1,495). Other high-ranking fields included education, humanities and mathematics as well as computer and information sciences (Statistics Canada, 2006).

B.2.4. INVOLUNTARY EMIGRATION

In 2011, over 39,000 Afghans sought asylum worldwide (UNHCR, 2012g). Most of these applications were filed in industrialized OECD countries (mainly European countries, including Turkey, and Australia). In the same year, Germany and Sweden were the main destination countries of Afghan asylum-seekers with 7,767 and 4,122 claims registered respectively (OECD, 2013). In relative terms, Indonesia experienced a high increase in asylum applications from Afghanistan in 2009: some 80 per cent of asylum applicants in Indonesia originated from Afghanistan then (UNHCR, 2010c). In 2011, still more than 50 per cent of the 4,052 asylum claims in Indonesia were lodged by Afghans (2,118). The global total recognition rate of Afghan asylum applications in 2011 was 53 per cent (UNHCR, 2012g). Figure 19 shows Afghan asylum claims lodged in industrialised countries from 2000 to 2012.

Figure 19: Afghan asylum claims lodged in industrialised countries, 2000-2012



Source: UNHCR, 2003a, 2004a, 2005b, 2006b, 2007a, 2008b, 2009a, 2010b, 2011a, 2012d, 2013d.

Note: Between 2000 and 2005 the reported numbers include asylum claims in 36 countries; from 2006 onwards 44 industrialized countries are included.

Table 26 gives an overview of the inflow of Afghan asylum-seekers in selected OECD countries between 2003 and 2011. Further information on some of the main receiving countries is presented below.

Table 26: Inflows of Afghan asylum-seekers in selected OECD countries, 2003-2011

Country	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Australia	54	116	32	21	20	52	940	1,265	1,720
Austria	2,357	757	923	699	761	1,382	2,237	1,582	3,609
Belgium	329	287	253	365	696	879	1,659	1,124	2,774
Canada	151	152	264	268	308	488	445	399	373
Chile	12	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Czech Republic	50	15	7	1	20	36	4	10	26
Denmark	664	285	173	122	138	418	1,049	1,476	903
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	7	8
Finland	51	166	237	97	96	249	445	265	292
France	353	164	135	82	184	263	688	772	653
Germany	1,473	918	711	531	338	657	3,375	5,905	7,767
Greece	561	382	458	1 087	1,556	2,287	1,510	524	637
Hungary	469	38	22	13	35	116	1,194	702	649
Ireland	24	106	142	88	78	79	68	92	127
Italy	70	84	76	177	663	1,732	711	873	1,289
Japan	3	0	2	3	12	4	5	1	4
Korea	1	1	1	0	1	0	8	15	60
Luxembourg	2	6	3	8	3	4	13	15	22
Mexico	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1
Netherlands	492	688	902	932	143	395	1,281	1,364	1,885
New Zealand	4	0	1	0	3	2	2	5	11
Norway	2,050	1,059	466	224	234	1,363	3,871	979	979
Poland	251	57	6	11	9	4	14	25	35
Portugal	0	0	0	0	7	1	0	2	4
Slovak Republic	627	393	109	41	67	72	51	76	75
Slovenia	2	5	6	2	12	10	11	31	69
Spain	12	14	10	7	15	50	42	41	30
Sweden	811	903	435	594	609	784	1,694	2,393	4,122
Switzerland	218	207	238	233	307	405	751	632	1,006
Turkey	77	341	364	261	705	2,642	1,009	1,248	2,486
United Kingdom	2,590	1,605	1,775	2,660	2,815	3,725	3,540	1,845	1,528
United States	52	72	45	66	91	79	101	156	222

Source: OECD, 2013.

Pakistan

As Pakistan is not a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention or its subsequent protocols, Afghans crossing the border to Pakistan after 1979 were not considered asylum-seekers or refugees but rather “involuntary religious migrants”. Given this designation it was seen as the duty of Pakistan, sharing long historical and cultural ties with Afghanistan, to provide shelter and security to Afghans fleeing war and persecution in their home country (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, 2009).

In 1993, UNHCR started registering the Afghan refugee population residing in Pakistan, but due to complicated registration procedures and fraud, the actual number of refugees residing in Pakistan per annum is likely to be much higher than shown in Table 27.

Table 27: Estimated stock of Afghan refugees and asylum applicants registered by UNHCR in Pakistan, 1993-2012

Year	Refugee population end of year	Asylum applicants during the year
1993	1,467,876	-
1994	1,053,000	-
1995	1,200,000	-
1996	1,200,000	-
1997	1,200,000	-
1998	1,200,000	-
1999	1,200,000	-
2000	2,000,000	-
2001	2,197,821	-
2002	1,226,569	-
2003	1,123,647	4,992
2004	1,290,408	2,380
2005	1,084,208	1,450
2006	1,043,984	1,904
2007	886,666	1,929
2008	1,780,150	1,144
2009	1,739,935	1,178
2010	1,899,842	885
2011	1,701,945	948
2012	1,637,740	-

Source: UNHCR 2003b, 2007b, 2008d, 2009c, 2010c, 2011c, 2012g, 2013f.

Islamic Republic of Iran

Although the Islamic Republic of Iran is a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, Afghans emigrating to the country after 1979 were, as in the case of Pakistan, considered involuntary religious migrants rather than asylum-seekers or refugees. The Iranian government mainly refers to Afghans crossing the border as labour migrants. UNHCR started registering Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran from 1993 onwards. At this time, over 1.8 million Afghan refugees resided in the country (UNHCR, 2003b). Most of these refugees had come immediately after the Soviet invasion, but the actual number of Afghans in the country is likely to be much higher than UNHCR records show in Table 28. Registering Afghan refugees is generally difficult, as most Afghans who fled in 1979 did not settle in refugee camps, but rather settled in mainly urban areas across the country. The decrease in the number of Afghan refugees between 2002 and 2003 is likely due to UNHCR's voluntary repatriation scheme as well as the relatively strict policies and deportation efforts of Afghan refugees.

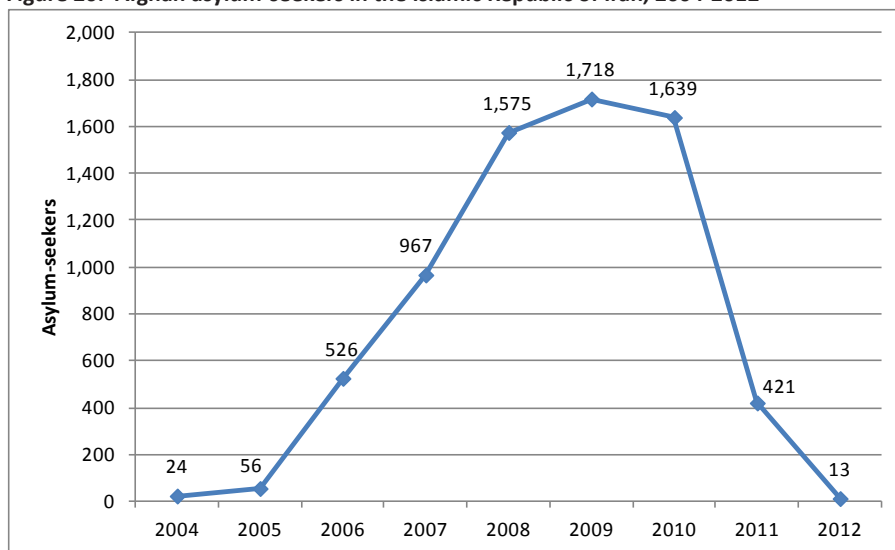
Table 28: Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1993-2012

Year	Refugee population end of year
1993	1,850,000
1994	1,623,331
1995	1,429,038
1996	1,414,659
1997	1,411,759
1998	1,400,722
1999	1,325,724
2000	1,482,000
2001	1,482,000
2002	1,104,909
2003	834,699
2004	952,802
2005	920,248
2006	914,260
2007	906,071
2008	935,595
2009	1,022,494
2010	1,027,577
2011	840,451
2012	824,087

Source: UNHCR, 2003b, 2013f.

Afghan asylum-seekers have been registered by UNHCR in the Islamic Republic of Iran from 2004 onwards (Figure 20). While there were only 24 asylum-seekers in 2004, the number increased steadily to 1,718 in 2009. Since then the number has declined significantly and there were only 13 in 2012.

Figure 20: Afghan asylum-seekers in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2004-2012



Source: UNHCR, 2013f.

Russian Federation

Afghan nationals are the largest group of asylum-seekers in the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation is often used as a transit country for Afghan migrants to reach Western Europe (Kenneth, 2001). Table 29 shows that the number of Afghans that has been granted refugee status in the Russian Federation is relatively low. The figures fluctuate erratically, as can be seen between 2006 and 2007 when the number of Afghan asylum-seekers increased sharply from 240 to 2,100. One year later, the number of Afghan asylum-seekers dropped to 800. Due to lack of information it cannot be determined whether this is due to different recording methods or actual changes in the inflows

The Russian Federation became a signatory of the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol in 1992. The implementation of this commitment, however, shows severe shortcomings. Asylum-seekers often face long waiting times for applications to be processed, high administrative fees and a lack of official documents that would protect them against forced repatriation. Afghans who entered the Russian Federation through neighbouring countries

such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are often blocked from refugee determination procedures under the safe third country rule, meaning that they could have sought refuge in the first country they entered from Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2007d).

Table 29: Afghan refugees and asylum applications in the Russian Federation, 1996-2011

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Refugees	121	234	376	513	521	491	1,493	1,541
Asylum applications	4,592	1,184	3,447	1,458	1,088	1,300	618	500
Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Refugees	1,488	1,294	1,200	1,300	2,400	2,100	2,000	1,700
Asylum applications	638	674	827	2,211	2,047	1,577	884	540

Source: UNHCR 2006c, 2007b, 2007c, 2008d, 2008e, 2009c, 2009d, 2010c, 2010e, 2011c, 2011d, 2012g, 2012h.

Of the Afghan refugees residing in the Russian Federation, only a small number have returned to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban. Some Afghans who supported the Soviet-backed regime would be in danger if they were to return, while many other Afghans have lost contact with relatives and now lack the necessary social support network to re-emigrate. Those who were born or educated in the Soviet Union may find it additionally difficult to adapt to less familiar Afghan culture and traditions. As a consequence many asylum-seekers who are unable to return to Afghanistan are simultaneously denied refugee status in the Russian Federation. Many Afghan asylum-seekers therefore see resettlement as their only hope. Between 2000 and 2006, more than 2,000 Afghans were resettled from the Russian Federation, mainly to Canada and the United States (UNHCR, 2007d).

Tajikistan

It was estimated that up to 20,000 Afghans lived in Tajikistan in 2006. Tajikistan passed its first refugee law in accordance with the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol in 1994. During this time, however, only 695 Afghan asylum-seekers were in the country (UNHCR, 2004b). As armed conflict in Afghanistan increased at the beginning of 2000, over 100,000 Afghans were displaced in the Kunduz Province, many of which tried to flee to the mountainous area of Tajikistan near the Afghan border. Over 10,000 Afghans tried to seek refuge in Tajikistan at this time, but Russian military forces that patrolled the area denied them entrance due to regional instability. As a consequence over ten thousand Afghans were stranded on two sand bars in the Pyandzh River between military forces on the Tajik border and the Taliban on the Afghan border (Erlich, 2006).

In 2002, Tajikistan passed a new refugee law that no longer complied with the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention. The new law prohibits the free movements of refugees within Tajikistan. Whereas it was mainly ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks from the north of Afghanistan who sought refuge in Tajikistan in the past, the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan has forced more Afghans from provinces such as Helmand, Kandahar and Kabul to flee to Tajikistan. There were 1,816 registered refugees in the country in 2004 (Table 30). According to UNHCR, 1,500 refugees were planned to be permanently resettled to Canada (1,250 refugees) and the United States (250) by early 2006, where a significant decrease in the refugee numbers is observed (Erlich, 2006). In 2008, over 1,300 Afghans sought asylum in Tajikistan. This number had almost doubled in the first five months of 2009. Reasons for the new influx were, among others, renewed attacks and armed conflict over the border in Pakistan (Demytrie, 2009). The number of Afghan refugees in Tajikistan increased further until 2011.

Table 30: Afghan refugee population in Tajikistan, 1994-2008

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Refugees	620	1,161	2,164	3,622	4,531	15,354*	15,336*	3,427	3,304
Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Refugees	1,816	1,006	917	1,126	1,790	2,673	3,126	3,270	2,196

Source: UNHCR, 2004b, 2006c, 2013f.

Note: *Includes those Afghans trapped in the Pyandzh River.

Canada

The Afghan refugee population in Canada steadily increased between 1995 and 2004, with over 15,000 Afghan refugees residing in Canada by the end of 2004 (Table 31). The largest number of new applications by Afghan asylum-seekers occurred during the Taliban regime in 1999, when 511 Afghan asylum-seekers entered the country. The number decreased to 151 in 2003 before increasing to 488 in 2008. The decrease in asylum applications after 2001 can be explained with high return migration rates of Afghans after the fall of the Taliban. Subsequent increases are likely due to the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan. In recent years the inflow of Afghan asylum-seekers has decreased again to 373 in 2011 (OECD, 2013).

Table 31: Afghan asylum-seekers and refugees in Canada, 1995-2012

Year	Inflow of asylum-seekers	Stock of refugees
1995	-	4,575
1996	378	5,056
1997	335	6,046
1998	380	6,754
1999	511	7,922
2000	488	9,115
2001	463	11,371
2002	204	12,957
2003	151	14,616
2004	152	15,242
2005	264	15,535
2006	268	14,419
2007	308	3,470
2008	488	3,147
2009	445	3,015
2010	399	2,727
2011	373	2,659
2012	-	2,609

Source: UNHCR, 2004b, 2006c, 2013f; OECD, 2013.

United States

Between 1999 and 2012, the highest number of Afghan refugees arrived in the United States in 2001, when 2,930 new applications were filed (Table 32). The number decreased to 481 new refugee arrivals in 2012 (Homeland Security 2004, 2013). To estimate the stock of Afghan refugees in the country before 1999, it is pertinent to look at data on Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers granted lawful permanent residency status in the United States. The fact that between 1981 and 1990 almost 23,000 refugees were granted permanent residency indicates that a large portion of Afghan refugees arrived in the United States shortly after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 (Homeland Security, 2004).

Table 32: Arrival of Afghan refugees in the United States, 1999-2012

Year	Refugee arrivals
1999	365
2000	1,709
2001	2,930
2002	1,683
2003	1,453
2004	959
2005	902
2006	651
2007	441
2008	576
2009	349
2010	515
2011	428
2012	481

Source: Homeland Security, 2004, 2013.

Germany

In 1995, when the total number of asylum applications filed in Germany was 127,937, 5.9 per cent were filed by Afghan nationals. In 2000, the proportion of applications filed by Afghans increased to 6.8 per cent and then decreased to 2.5 per cent in 2005 (BAMF, 2011). The highest proportion was 14.3 per cent in 2010, while Afghans constituted 11.6 per cent of new applicants in 2012, ranking second behind Serbia. In 2012, the absolute number of Afghans seeking asylum in Germany was 7,498. Table 33 shows that during the Taliban regime, the number of asylum applications filed in Germany was relatively high; the numbers decreased rapidly after international forces invaded the country. Due to the worsening security situation in Afghanistan, asylum applications once again increased since 2009 (BAMF, 2013).

Table 33: Afghan asylum applications in Germany, 1995-2012

Year	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Asylum applications	7,515	5,663	4,735	3,768	4,458	5,380	5,837	2,772	1,473
Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Asylum applications	918	711	531	338	657	3,357	5,905	7,767	7,498

Source: BMI and BAMF, 2009; BAMF, 2013.

The Netherlands

According to the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS), the number of applications for asylum lodged by Afghan nationals was steadily low until 1985, when the number of applications jumped to 140. The following year over 450 Afghan nationals filed asylum applications in the Netherlands (Siegel et al., 2010). Throughout the 1990s, the number of Afghan asylum applications in the Netherlands continued to increase. The greatest number of applications were filed in 1998 (7,120), 1999 (4,400) and 2000 (5,030). Much lower numbers of asylum claims were recorded during periods of high return migration to Afghanistan, such as in 2003 and 2007 when 490 and 520 applications were filed respectively (van der Leun and Illies, 2008). Prior to 2007, first and subsequent requests for asylum were not distinguished and therefore these figures may reflect repeated asylum requests. Table 34 shows that the number of total asylum requests doubled from 705 in 2008 to 1,400 in 2009. The number further increased to 2,395 in 2011 and then decreased to 1,620 in 2012 (CBS, 2013a).

Table 34: Number of Asylum applications by Afghans in the Netherlands, 2007-2012

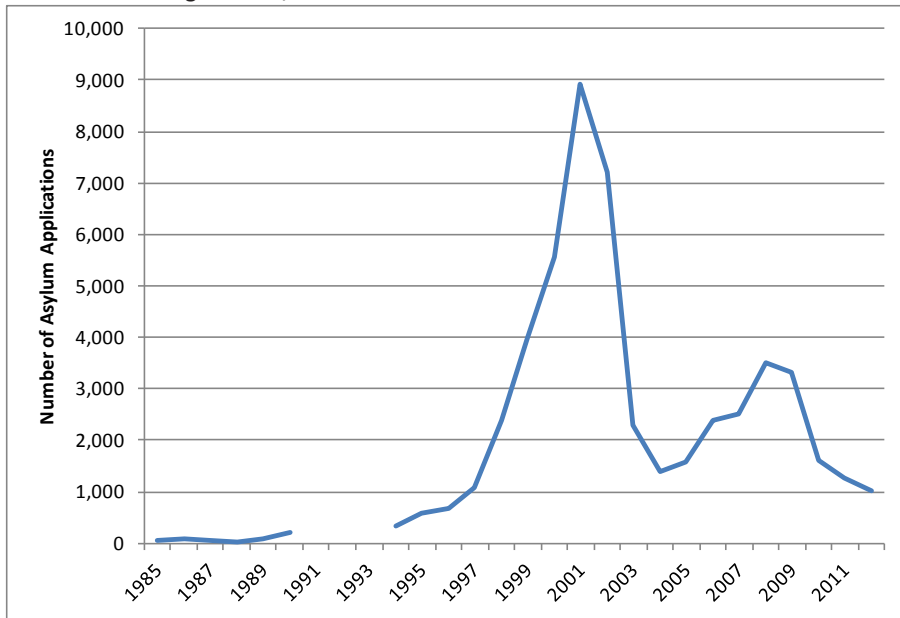
Year	Asylum applications
2007	520
2008	705
2009	1,400
2010	1,585
2011	2,395
2012	1,620

Source: CBS, 2013a.

United Kingdom

Figure 21 shows that the highest number of asylum applications by Afghans was recorded in 2001, when almost 9,000 applications were filed. The peak in 2001 relates to the invasion of Afghanistan by international forces. Between 2001 and 2004, the number of asylum claims by Afghan nationals fell by 80 per cent (Change Institute, 2009). In 2005, the number of asylum applications filed by Afghans was 1,578 and increased to 2,398 in the following year (Home Office, 2013). As a result, Afghans were among the top ten nationalities applying for asylum in the United Kingdom, accounting for 10 per cent of the total in 2006 (Change Institute, 2009). The number of Afghans claiming asylum further increased to 3,503 in 2008 and has since decreased to 1,008 in 2012 (Home Office, 2013).

Figure 21: Annual number of asylum applications to the United Kingdom from Afghanistan, 1985-2012



Source: Eurostat, 2013a; Home Office, 2013.

Note: Data is not available for the years 1991 to 1993.

Australia

In 2001, Australia recorded 2,100 Afghan asylum-seekers entering the country. Due to the fall of the Taliban and high return migration, the number dropped to 53 in 2002. In the following years, the number of Afghan asylum-seekers in Australia remained relatively low. In 2009, however, the number began to rise again, reaching over 940. In 2011, Chris Bowen, Minister for Immigration and Citizenship in Australia at the time, stated that over 4,300 Afghans had arrived in Australia by boat and claimed asylum since 2008. Over half of them were in detention and 732 had received a negative assessment (Pearce, 2011). Most Afghans who travel to Australia arrive by boat and the majority are young, non-Pashtun men who have fled increasing insecurity caused by Taliban insurgency activities. The migration route for Afghans to reach Australia is difficult and dangerous. Many Afghans are first trucked from Afghanistan to Karachi and then flown to Indonesia, where they are then transported by boat to Australian islands and reefs close to the Indonesian archipelago (Maley, 2000).

B.3. IRREGULAR MIGRATION

There are many different types of irregularity in migration; this section will cover trafficking in persons as well as irregular Afghan migrants in Europe and the residence of Afghan unaccompanied minors in other countries. The IS Academy Survey data collected for this Migration Profile in 2011 show that only 14 per cent of current migrants travelled with legal documents, while 5 per cent of return migrants migrated with legal documents. This implies that the majority of Afghan migrants travelled without proper documents and likely resided in other countries with an irregular status.

B.3.1. TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

The issue of human trafficking in the context of Afghanistan is complex. The country shares borders with six other countries and most parts of these borders are difficult to control. A lack of proper border management and weak law enforcement further hinders the control of illegal border crossings. The long history of poppy production in Afghanistan and associated experience of smuggling of narcotics across the border have likewise contributed to the existence of cross-border migration networks, which are also used for human trafficking. The population in Afghanistan is widely aware of the problem of trafficking in persons, but concepts like trafficking, smuggling and kidnapping are often mixed up (IOM, 2008d).

The majority of victims of trafficking (VoT), mostly children, are trafficked within Afghanistan's borders. Transnational trafficking also occurs, however, and the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan are the primary countries of destination. The main purposes for which Afghan children are trafficked are prostitution and forced labour in factories, brick kilns and domestic service. Female children are mainly trafficked to neighbouring countries and, to a lesser extent, India, for the purposes of forced marriages, prostitution or domestic service. Afghan men are trafficked to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, the Gulf States, Greece and Turkey for forced labour and debt bondage in agriculture and construction.

Many foreign women are also trafficked into Afghanistan for the same purposes; such trafficking victims mainly come from the Philippines, Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Tajikistan and China. It is thought that international security contractors are likely to be involved in trafficking for the purpose of forced prostitution and it is not uncommon that brothels and prostitution

rings run by foreign citizens are associated with larger criminal networks. An increasing number of individuals also migrate willingly to Afghanistan under false pretences of employment and high salaries. These migrants then often end up in forced labour once they arrive in the country of destination, as was the case for male migrants from Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Tajikistan that were found to have been enticed to Afghanistan with false promises of employment (US Department of State, 2013b).

Data on the scope of human trafficking in Afghanistan are not available, but the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a field study on the issue in 2008 “to provide an in-depth analysis of the trafficking phenomenon in, from and to Afghanistan.” (IOM, 2008d: 5)²⁰ Victims of trafficking (VoT) are a hard to reach group in migration research and this is reflected in the small sample size of this study. A survey of 20 VoTs revealed that most were young adults (45%) in the age group between 18 and 24, a smaller portion (35%) were minors under the age of 18 and four respondents were aged 25 years or above. The majority of victims were male (85%). All VoTs were Afghan nationals who originated from Herat (10), Faryab (7), Kabul (2) or Nangarhar (1) provinces. Consequently most of the respondents were ethnic Tajiks and Uzbeks. In terms of educational background, only two (10%) of the respondents had completed primary school education up to sixth grade, whereas the rest were totally or nearly illiterate (IOM, 2008d).

People fall victim to trafficking through various means such as coercion, deceit and abuse of power. In the IOM study, 80 per cent of the respondents answered that they followed the traffickers based on false promises, while the remaining 20 per cent said that they were taken by force. Younger victims were more vulnerable to forcible transfer. Forced labour was found to be the most significant destination of trafficked victims (80%), followed by sexual exploitation (20%). Most victims were promised higher wages, ranging between USD 250 and 500 for construction work or other low-skilled labour (IOM, 2008d).

²⁰ The study by IOM (2008d) took place in 2007 and research data were collected mainly from expert interviews and a field study in Kabul and nine border provinces: Khost, Nangarhar, Herat, Balkh, Faryab, Kunduz, Badakhshan, Kandahar and Farah. The study interviewed 220 community informants, 20 victims of trafficking, 43 victims of kidnapping and 19 smuggled migrants. The non-personal data of 115 victims of trafficking (VoT) referred to and assisted by IOM between 2006 and 2007 have also been included in the analysis.

IOM-assisted Victims of Trafficking

The study also found that 115 VoTs were assisted by IOM between 2006 and 2007. On the basis of this sample, different trafficking trends can be observed. Among the 115 VoTs assisted by IOM, 93 individuals were 25 years of age or older, six were between 18 and 24 years and 16 victims were below 18. The majority of these victims (94%) were female and most were non-Afghan nationals, mostly Chinese (79%), Iranian (6%) and Pakistani (3%). The remaining 12 per cent were Afghan nationals from 10 different provinces: Kabul, Kapisa, Kunduz, Ghazni, Kunar, Nangarhar, Laghman, Panjshir, Wardak and Peshawar in Pakistan (IOM, 2008d).

All Chinese victims were female and reported that they were taken to Afghanistan under false pretences. A further 11 victims of other nationalities reported being taken under false promises and 13 reported being taken by force. The high percentage of Chinese victims coerced under false pretences is reflected in the high number of these victims (88 out of 91) who came to Afghanistan by air, which cannot be easily achieved without the victim's cooperation. The remaining three victims declared that they had crossed the land border at Torkham from Pakistan. All other non-Chinese victims were trafficked by land. Nearly all Chinese victims (90 out of 91) were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, while among the Afghan, Iranian and Pakistani victims, 15 persons (62%) were trafficked for sexual exploitation and nine (38%) were trafficked for forced labour (IOM, 2008d).

Given the complex environment in which human trafficking occurs, the low number of respondents in the IOM study is not surprising. It is taboo to openly discuss the trafficking of women and children for prostitution and victims are often difficult to identify and access for this reason. Moreover, females trafficked for the purpose of forced prostitution are currently criminalized and face imprisonment in Afghanistan if found guilty of prostitution. In order to avoid stigmatization by the community, Afghan families often do not report if a member has been trafficked for sexual servitude, regardless of whether the act is voluntary or forced (IOM, 2008d).

Immigration routes and means of transport of migrants and victims of trafficking

The IOM study (2008d) on human trafficking in Afghanistan found that most respondents (75%) were trafficked to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan using unofficial land border crossing points and without any valid travel

documents. When crossing the border, approximately three quarters of the sample walked, while the remainder used vehicles. Most of those victims who were trafficked to the Islamic Republic of Iran mentioned that Baloch tribes on both sides of the Afghanistan-Iran border were involved in the process.

A study of cross-border movements between Afghanistan and Pakistan conducted by Majidi (2009) for UNHCR, observed that on any given day hundreds of smugglers were waiting with their cars or motorbikes at the Spin Boldak crossing point. The main task of these smugglers was to provide transportation for travellers from the town of Spin Boldak to the main border point. When considering the lack of control at the border and the short distances most migrants had to travel, however, many migrants did not make use of smugglers but rather crossed the border on their own (Majidi, 2009).

When destination countries are further abroad migrants often depend on smugglers to coordinate their journey and arrange their transport. In March 2011, Indonesian police arrested 43 Afghans who were trying to reach Australia illegally. The group of Afghan migrants had flown from Afghanistan to Jakarta and travelled by bus to Madura Island to continue from there by boat (Jakarta Globe, 2011). It is not uncommon on these complicated and dangerous routes that Afghan migrants do not arrive in the country that they intended to; smugglers often determine which country migrants are smuggled to. The few migrants that do make it to the final destinations of their choice can face discrimination and bureaucratic immigration procedures upon arrival. In some cases, such migrants are refused the right to enter or come ashore, as was the case for hundreds of Afghans who were shipped from Malaysia to Australia, refused refuge and later re-routed to an island (Nauru, Manus) in the Pacific Ocean (Parliament of Australia, 2012).

In January 2011, Italian police reported that they had arrested 26 suspected members of a gang that smuggled hundreds of Afghans into Europe. Investigators reported that up to 200 Afghans (including 40 minors) were brought to Europe every month by the gang. The immigrants came mainly from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and were brought to Italy through staging points in Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Greece. From Greece migrants were brought to Italy by ship. Final destination countries in Europe included Belgium, Germany and Sweden. Smuggled Afghans reported that they paid between EUR 3,000 and 3,500 (USD 3,900 to 4,600) to be smuggled from Afghanistan to Italy (EUBusiness, 2011).

Other forms of trafficking in persons

Child soldiers

The recruitment of children by pro-government military forces is another form of human trafficking in Afghanistan. Children are often used as foot soldiers and face sexual exploitation, which has been confirmed by the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC). The violation of human rights by pro-government militias is especially worrisome, as these militias do not fall under the formal and legal disciplinary structures in which the army and the police operate (IRIN, 2011a), and are therefore even more difficult to identify and prosecute. Children have also been recruited by the Taliban and other insurgent groups to act as suicide bombers (Bell, 2007). The extent of trafficking for this purpose is, however, not known.

Forced marriage and child marriage

Another form of child trafficking in Afghanistan is related to forced marriages, which are strictly prohibited under international human rights law. Forced marriages are also prohibited under Afghan law, but in practice it is difficult to distinguish between forced and arranged marriages. Research indicates that over 80 per cent of marriages in Afghanistan are arranged and for the majority it may be unclear if one or both of the partners are forced to accept the marriage contract against their will - thus making the line between arranged and forced marriage unclear. The issue of forced marriages is interlinked with child marriages. Officials in Kabul and other provincial capitals state that early marriages are prevalent in rural parts of Afghanistan, where poverty is high and marriage provides an outlet to adjust household size. The lack of data is an obstacle to understanding the scope of the problem (Amnesty International, 2005), but the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and AIHRC estimate that over 57 per cent of Afghan marriages are child marriages in which the bride is married before reaching the age of 16 (Human Rights Watch, 2009). The Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (AMICS) conducted in 2010 and 2011 by the Central Statistics Organization (CSO) with support from UNICEF found that 15.2 per cent of the women between the age of 15 and 49 were married before they turned 15. The highest rate of such marriages (29.8%) occurred in the Western region (for example the provinces Ghor, Badghis, Herat and Farah) and the lowest percentage (12.4%) in the Central region (such as the provinces Kabul, Kapisa, Parwan, Wardak, Logar and Panjsher). The influence of residence and education on early marriage is substantial. Early marriage before the age of 15 is more common

among women residing in rural areas (15.5%) than in urban areas (13.8%) and 17 per cent of the young women married before 15 had no education while 5.3 per cent had received at least secondary education. Around 46 per cent of all women between the ages of 15 and 49 reported being married at the age of 18 and almost one fifth of all young women between 15 and 19 reported being married. Around 7 per cent of all women are in a polygamous marriage.

The age differences between women and their spouses tend to be large, with an age difference of 10 years or more reported by 11 per cent of women in the 15 to 19-year age group and 14 per cent in the 20 to 24-year age group. This large spousal age difference is more common among women residing in urban areas and living in the wealthiest households (CSO and UNICEF, 2012). The young age of marriage and large age differences between women and their marriage partners may make it additionally difficult for women to advocate for themselves and withdraw from such arranged marriages, which could suggest that forced marriages are relatively more likely to occur in such situations.

Table 35: Early marriage and polygamy in Afghanistan, 2010-2011

	Percentage
Marriage before age 15	15.2
Marriage before age 18	46.3
Young women age 15-19 currently married	19.8
Polygamy	7.1
<i>Spousal age difference of 10 or more years</i>	
Women age 15-19	11.0
Women age 20-24	14.0

Source: CSO and UNICEF, 2012.

In addition to arranged and forced marriages, a third practice known as *baad* is still practised in Afghanistan and may contribute to human trafficking. Within this practise, families give away their daughters as a means of settling disputes. The practice allows communities or families to settle crimes, such as murder or thievery and to restore peace, order and unity among conflicting parties through marriage. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) found that the exchange of girls to settle disputes took place in communities throughout the country, especially in conflicted areas where state legitimacy and the rule of law were weak (namely in Tagab and Alasay district in Kapisa and Uzbin in Surobi district of Kabul province) (UNAMA and OHCHR, 2010).

B.3.2. IRREGULAR AFGHAN MIGRANTS IN EUROPE

The past 30 years of conflict have caused Afghans to emigrate to countries beyond neighbouring Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, including to countries in Europe. The main migrant routes from Afghanistan to Europe go through Turkey or the Russian Federation. Between 2008 and 2012, 2,300 Afghan nationals were refused entry to the European Union along the border, the majority of whom were rejected along Italy's border (Eurostat, 2013e). In 2011, 45,480 illegal Afghans were counted in different European countries. This number decreased to 33,805 in 2012 (Table 36). The main destination countries of irregular Afghan immigrants in Europe now include Greece, Germany, Austria, France and Sweden (Eurostat, 2013d).

Table 36: Afghan citizens found to be illegally present in the EU-27, Norway and Switzerland, 2008-2012

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Austria	1,045	1,865	1,545	3,445	3,715
Belgium	440	805	350	360	485
Bulgaria	65	95	85	135	140
Cyprus	35	60	45	20	60
Czech Republic	10	20	10	45	15
Denmark	25	45	10	100	220
Estonia	0	15	5	5	0
Finland	310	560	265	225	215
France	21,125	20,765	7,230	4,845	2,980
Germany	880	2,665	3,700	5,640	5,880
Greece	17,995	12,390	22,090	24,800	15,025
Hungary	0	25	50	85	-
Iceland	0	0	-	-	-
Ireland	70	90	45	65	45
Italy	1,310	745	680	540	365
Latvia	5	20	10	5	5
Liechtenstein	0	0	0	-	0
Lithuania	0	5	0	20	15
Luxembourg	-	0	0	5	0
Malta	0	0	0	0	0
Netherlands	155	350	310	385	-
Norway	30	85	-	100	-
Poland	5	10	25	35	35

Portugal	0	0	0	0	0
Romania	0	30	55	45	50
Slovakia	135	115	195	75	85
Slovenia	0	5	40	110	250
Spain	45	100	40	25	25
Sweden	0	1,570	2,265	2,425	2,605
Switzerland	-	-	-	20	195
United Kingdom	6,095	7,320	2,360	1,920	1,395
Total	49,780	49,755	41,410	45,480	33,805

Source: Eurostat, 2013d.

B.3.3. UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

Separated and unaccompanied children are one of the most vulnerable groups among all refugees and asylum-seekers, as the absence of a parent may expose such children to greater risk of exploitation and abuse. Three recent studies²¹ on Afghan unaccompanied minors (UAMs) provide more insight into the phenomenon. These studies have found that children are often involved in the decision to migrate to Western countries from Afghanistan. The two main factors that influence this decision are the security situation in the country - including the fear of being kidnapped, recruited or killed by criminal groups - and economic circumstances such as poverty, limited educational opportunities, high unemployment rates and low wages. When they leave Afghanistan, many children do not know their country of destination and the destination often changes during the migration process due to additional information about a potential destination or due to a smuggler's decision to move a child to another location. There are several common routes that children take to enter European countries from Afghanistan. The southern route starts in the Islamic Republic of Iran or Pakistan and then moves through Turkey and Greece further into Europe. The northern route moves through Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan to the Russian Federation and then to Hungary or Scandinavia (UNHCR, 2010d, 2010f; UNICEF, 2010).

²¹ One study was conducted by UNICEF (2010) on Afghan UAMs in the United Kingdom and Norway and on families in Afghanistan who had sent children to Europe. A second, much larger study, by UNHCR (2010d) provided an overview of Afghan UAMs in six European countries. The third study, also by UNHCR (2010f), focused on Afghan children in Sweden.

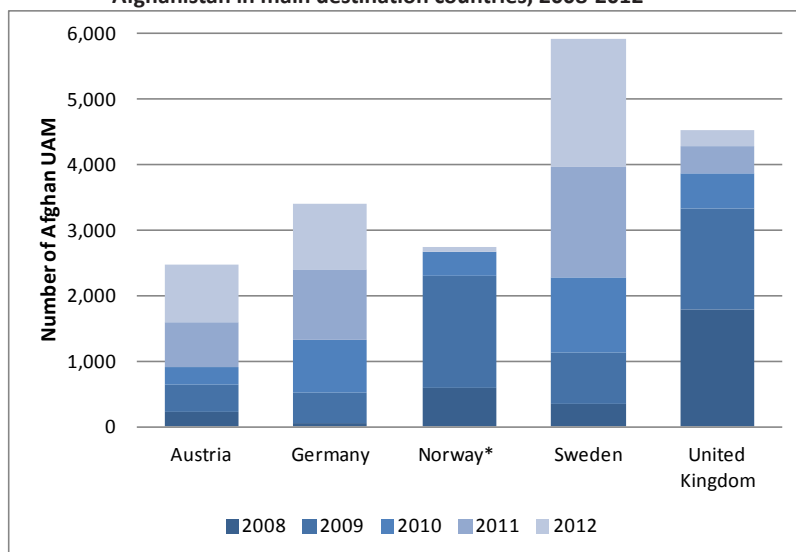
As do many migrants, families often use smugglers to ensure that their child makes it to Europe. Agreements with smugglers are often concluded on the basis of a handshake. Smugglers will try to smuggle the children into a European country up to three times and even if the child is caught and deported in the destination country, the smuggler will still receive the payment. If the child never makes it to the destination country or is deported before arrival, however, the family does not pay for the failed attempts. During the Taliban regime smugglers did not operate in Afghanistan and families instead relied on brokers in neighbouring countries. Since the fall of the Taliban brokers can be found in any city in Afghanistan (UNICEF, 2010).

Families often pay high sums to have their children smuggled into Europe: UNICEF (2010) reports the cost to be between USD 7,000 and 20,000 and UNHCR (2010d) mentions prices up to USD 15,000. Such high fees often drive families into debt and some families sell assets or take out loans just to afford the down payment (UNHCR, 2010d, 2010f; UNICEF, 2010). The children are then expected to pay back the money and support the family once they have settled in Europe (UNICEF, 2010).

The number of Afghan unaccompanied minors present in European countries increased significantly from 2008 to 2009. While in 2008 there were 3,840 asylum applications lodged by UAMs in the EU-27, Norway and Switzerland, the number jumped to 6,355 in 2009. The number dropped again to 4,425 in 2010 only to increase to 5,725 in 2011. In 2012, there were 5,475 registered Afghan UAMs in the EU-27, Norway and Switzerland. Sweden, the United Kingdom, Norway, Germany and Austria received the greater number (75.9%) of applications from unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan (Figure 22) (Eurostat, 2013b).

Among the 5,355 unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan registered in the EU-27 in 2012, 55.9 per cent were aged 16 or 17, a further 29.3 per cent of applicants were aged 14 or 15 and 8.7 per cent were children 13 years old or younger. The age of the remaining 6.1 per cent is unknown (Eurostat, 2013b). Unaccompanied minors represented 23 per cent of all asylum applications of Afghans in the EU in 2009, and even more in Sweden (46%), the United Kingdom (44%), Denmark (36%) and the Netherlands (25%). The rate at which asylum applications result in successful granting of refugee status is generally higher for Afghan unaccompanied minors than for adults (ICMPD, 2011). The recognition rate is especially high in Finland (100%), Norway (99%) and Sweden (90%) and markedly lower in countries such as Germany (77%), the United Kingdom (73%) and Switzerland (53%) (UNHCR, 2010c).

Figure 22: Asylum applicants considered to be unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan in main destination countries, 2008-2012



Source: Eurostat, 2012b.

Note: *Data for Norway are not available for 2011.

B.4. RETURN MIGRATION²²

Return migration can take very different forms depending on the reason for the initial migration, the duration of time abroad, the experiences in the country of migration, the reason for return (including voluntary or forced return) and the conditions upon return. Since 2002, return migration to Afghanistan has been significant with a volume over 6 million people, the majority of which are repatriating refugees from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Over the past 10 years, however, these flows have changed from repatriating refugees to current forms of return and circular migration for labour purposes. This complexity makes it difficult to comprehensively analyse return migration to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, this section will provide a brief overview of current knowledge on return migration to Afghanistan.²³

²² See Annex A for more detailed information on the different forms of return and circular migration and the impacts of migration on different types of return migrants.

²³ Table 2 in Annex A on Return and Circular Migration provides definitions for different forms of circular, cross-border and return migration.

B.4.1. RETURN OF TEMPORARY, CROSS-BORDER AND CIRCULAR MIGRANTS

While discussions about Afghan migration often centre on forced migration flows, it is important to also consider return migration to Afghanistan within its current context. The migration landscape in Afghanistan today is composed of Afghans who are regularly moving across the borders between Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the study on cross-border movements between Pakistan and Afghanistan, the main findings showed that the majority of Afghans travelling to and from Pakistan in 2009 were temporary migrants, far exceeding refugee movements in either direction. The study was based on interviews with 1,007 migrants crossing to Pakistan and 1,016 migrants crossing to Afghanistan, as well as a border-crosser counting exercise. The vast majority of surveyed migrants were males travelling alone (75.3%) and 64.7 per cent of those surveyed were economic migrants (Majidi, 2009).

The most comprehensive source of national data on temporary migrants come from the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/08 survey. The NRVA found that 1.2 per cent of households surveyed had an international seasonal migrant. Again the majority were male migrants seeking temporary work opportunities abroad, primarily in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Icon-Institute, 2009). It is therefore important that discussions on return migration to Afghanistan do not solely focus on refugee issues. Further details regarding the characteristics of temporary labour migrants can be found in Annex A.

B.4.2. REPATRIATING REFUGEES

Afghan refugees can be found in 82 different countries, however, 95 per cent of displaced Afghans reside in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran (UNHCR, 2013e). Since 2002, more than 6 million²⁴ Afghans are known to have returned to their home country (4.6 million with the assistance of UNHCR). Table 37 gives an overview of the number of assisted and spontaneous (unassisted) repatriated refugees between 2002 and 2012.

²⁴ Statistics regarding return flows vary by source. In particular, flows that are unassisted by UNHCR are difficult to measure accurately.

Table 37: Estimated refugee returns, 2002-2012

Year	Pakistan			Islamic Republic of Iran		
	<i>Assisted</i>	<i>Spontaneous</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Assisted</i>	<i>Spontaneous</i>	<i>Total</i>
2002	1,565,066	194,127	1,759,193	259,792	117,364	377,156
2003	332,183	45,125	377,308	142,280	124,615	266,895
2004	383,321	41,103	424,424	377,151	74,976	452,127
2005	449,391	11,597	460,988	63,559	225,815	289,374
2006	133,338	9,681	143,019	5,264	238,384	243,648
2007	357,635	7,541	365,176	7,054	155,721	162,775
2008	274,200	7,897	282,097	3,656	74,773	78,429
2009	48,320	-	48,320	6,028	-	6,028
2010	104,331	-	104,331	8,487	-	8,487
2011	48,998	-	48,998	18,851	-	18,851
2012	79,435	-	79,435	15,035	-	15,035
Total	3,776,218	317,071	4,093,289	907,157	1,011,648	1,918,805
Year	Other countries			Total		
	<i>Assisted</i>	<i>Spontaneous</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Assisted</i>	<i>Spontaneous</i>	<i>Total</i>
2002	9,679	-	9,679	1,834,537	311,491	2,146,028
2003	1,176	-	1,176	475,639	169,740	645,379
2004	650	-	650	761,122	116,079	877,201
2005	1,140	-	1,140	514,090	237,412	751,502
2006	1,202	-	1,202	139,804	248,065	387,869
2007	721	-	721	365,410	163,262	528,672
2008	628	-	628	278,484	82,670	361,154
2009	204	-	204	54,552	-	54,552
2010	150	-	150	112,968	-	112,968
2011	113	-	113	67,962	-	67,962
2012	86	-	86	94,556	-	94,556
Total	15,749	-	15,749	4,699,124	1,328,719	6,027,843

Source: UNHCR, 2009b, 2012a, 2013g.

Between 2002 and 2008, UNHCR estimates that 317,071 individuals returned spontaneously to Afghanistan from Pakistan and more than 1 million from the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, these numbers are based on border monitoring and can therefore only be viewed as estimates. Data are missing for spontaneous returns between 2009 and 2012 and therefore it is expected that these numbers underestimate true flows significantly. Between 2002 and 2012, a total of 4,699,124 individuals were assisted by UNHCR in their return. This brings the total estimated number of voluntarily repatriating refugee returns from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran to more than 6 million individuals.

Given that Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran have been the primary destinations for Afghan refugees, it is useful to consider return migration from these countries more closely.

Table 38: Assisted return by province of asylum in Pakistan, 2002-2008

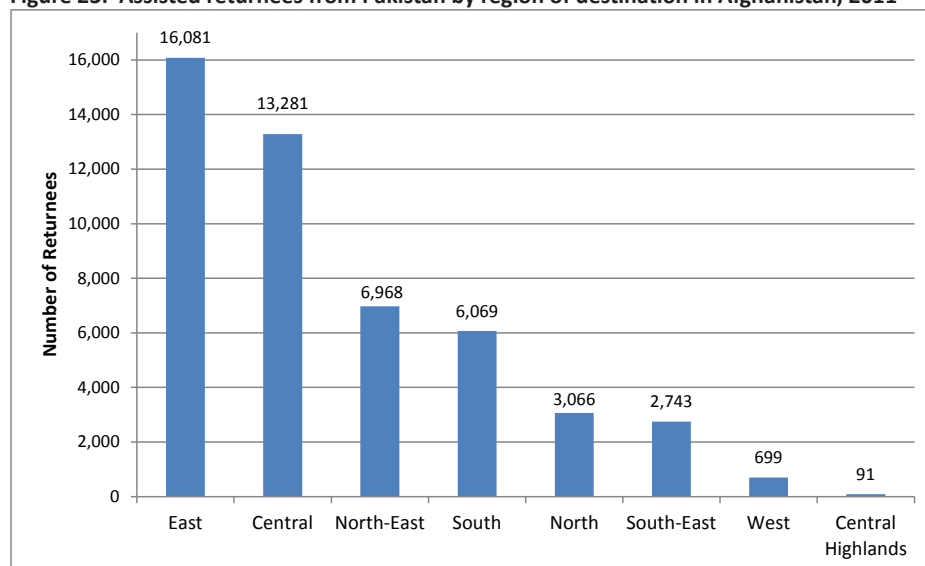
Province	Families	Males	Females	Individuals (in %)
NWFP	355,607	1,039,218	1,018,020	58.9
Punjab	106,559	310,116	292,214	17.2
Balochistan	92,608	273,162	262,462	15.3
Sind	55,027	152,151	139,156	8.3
Jammu and Kashmir	1,247	3,649	3,428	0.2
Unknown	232	823	735	0.1
Total	611,280	1,779,119	1,717,015	100.0

Source: UNHCR, 2009b.

Note: Departure date: 3 March 2002 - 31 October 2008.

Table 38 shows that the majority of Afghan returnees from Pakistan between 2002 and 2008 had settled in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) (59%), Punjab (17%) and Balochistan (15%). In the first four months of 2013, the large majority of Afghan returnees from Afghanistan had resided in Khuber Pakhtunkwa (60.6%), which used to be the NWFP, and to a lesser extent in Balochistan (24.6%). This is not surprising, considering the close proximity of these provinces to Afghanistan and the high number of refugee camps (over 150) that had been built at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in the North-West Frontier Province at the end of 2001. Return to Afghanistan from Pakistan decreased considerably (53%) from 2010 (104,331 returnees) to 2011 (48,998 returnees) and increased again in 2012 to 79,435. Between January and April 2013, the largest group of returnees went to the Central region in Afghanistan (30.0%), 25.2 per cent returned to the Eastern region and almost 14 per cent to the North-Eastern region. In the same period in 2012, the top three regions of destination were the same with most returnees settling in the Eastern region (31.9%), followed by the Central (27.3%) and North-Eastern (10.7%) regions (UNHCR, 2013g). Figure 23 shows that this same trend held true for returns in 2011.

Figure 23: Assisted returnees from Pakistan by region of destination in Afghanistan, 2011



Source: UNHCR, 2012a.

Over 50 per cent of Afghan returnees settled in the provinces of Tehran, Sistan and Balochistan and Isfahan during their exile in the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2002-2009. Other provinces that received relatively high numbers of refugees include Fars, Kerman, Khorasan, Qom and Hormozgan (Table 39). In 2011, 18,851 Afghans voluntarily returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is a 55 per cent increase compared to the 8,487 returnees in 2010. In 2012, the number of returns was 15,035 (UNHCR, 2013g). This trend may be explained by the economic difficulties in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the removal of subsidies for basic goods and services for Afghans by the Iranian government.

Table 39: Afghan returned refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran by province and gender, 2002-2009

Province	Individuals	Families	Males	Females
Tehran	311,526	49,066	190,973	120,553
Sistan and Balochistan	145,533	26,774	75,877	69,656
Isfahan	87,108	12,971	55,888	31,220
Khorasan	61,838	12,166	35,639	26,199
Fars	61,599	8,943	40,464	21,135
Kerman	48,035	8,048	28,186	19,849
Qom	31,334	5,909	17,780	13,554
Yazd	26,182	3,805	16,552	9,630
Hormozgan	21,989	3,775	11,714	10,275

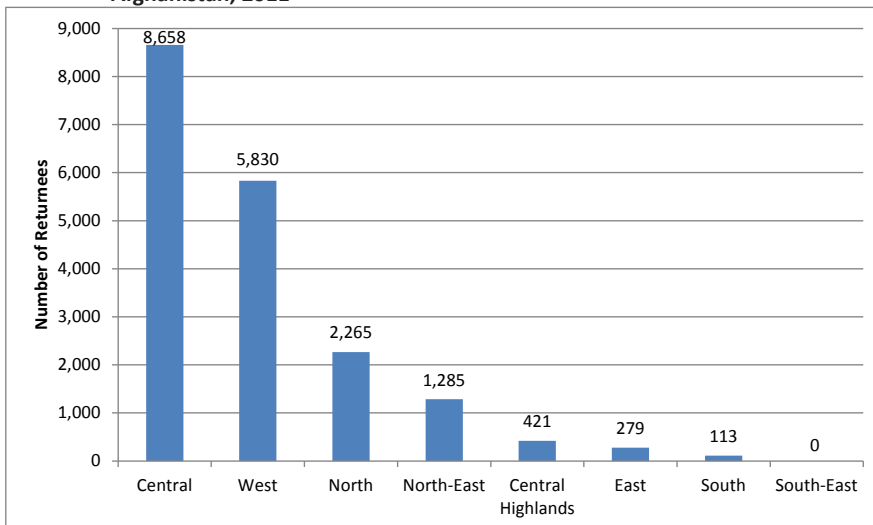
Markazi	13,493	2,290	8,067	5,426
Golestan	11,265	2,031	5,892	5,373
Khuzestan	8,440	1,339	5,082	3,358
Semnan	7,566	1,354	4,336	3,230
Qazvin	7,263	1,253	4,184	3,079
Bushehr	5,796	759	3,937	1,859
Mazandaran	5,296	927	2,988	2,308
Unknown	2,308	402	1,176	1,132
Gilan	1,032	180	630	402
Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad	894	164	524	370
Azerbaijan-e-S	166	33	93	73
Lorestan	98	19	57	41
Hamadan	75	17	43	32
Total	858,836	142,225	510,082	348,754

Source: UNHCR, 2009b.

Note: Departure Date: 9 April 2002 - 31 January 2009.

In contrast to the destinations of returnees from Pakistan, the destinations of returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran tend to be the Central region (45.9%), primarily Kabul, Kapisa and Parwan. The main destinations in the Western region (30.9% of returnees) were Herat and Farah and in the North-Eastern region (18.8%) Balkh, Balghan and Kunduz (Figure 24) (UNHCR, 2012a).

Figure 24: Assisted returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran by region of destination in Afghanistan, 2011



Source: UNHCR, 2012a.

Of the Afghans that returned with UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme between 2002 and 2009, 52.4 per cent were males and 47.2 per cent females. The following table (Table 40) shows the gender and age distribution of this group of returnees. The majority is below the age of 17 and there are more males than females across all age groups (UNHCR, 2009b).

Table 40: Returned males and females with UNHCR (in %), 2002-2009

Age-group	Male	Female	Total
0-4	9.1	8.9	18.1
5-11	13.5	12.5	26.0
12-17	7.1	6.2	13.3
18-59	21.0	18.5	39.5
60+	1.8	1.3	3.1
Total	52.6	47.43	100.0

Source: UNHCR, 2009b.

Note: Return between March 2002 and January 2009.

The survey conducted in Afghanistan as part of the IS Academy Project among returnee households displays a similar picture. Of the group of repatriated refugees, 53.4 per cent were male and 46.6 per cent female. The average age of this group was 22 years and 50.6 per cent of respondents indicated that they had obtained no formal education. For a more detailed profile of the survey respondents, their migration and return decisions and experiences see Annex A.

The following table (Table 41) gives an overview of UNHCR assisted Afghan returnees by country of asylum. Empty fields indicate that either no data were collected on returnees or the data were not accessible for a particular year. The value 0 indicates that no Afghan migrants returned home (UNHCR, 2009b).

Table 41: Assisted return with UNHCR by country of asylum, 2002-2008

Country of asylum	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
Pakistan	1,565,066	332,183	383,321	449,391	133,338	357,635	274,200	3,495,134
Islamic Republic of Iran	259,792	142,280	377,151	63,559	5,264	7,054	3,656	858,756
Tajikistan	9,064	324	65	18	51	27	15	9,564
Great Britain	-	88	19	354	523	387	347	1,718
India	129	223	77	58	68	25	7	587
Turkmenistan	283	45	169	9	-	1	3	510
Germany	-	-	5	197	172	46	32	452

Russian Federation	-	165	139	24	12	49	31	420
Netherlands	-	-	7	206	162	25	14	414
Uzbekistan	93	142	69	-	-	-	21	325
Greece	-	-	-	11	69	39	56	175
Norway	-	-	-	28	47	28	12	115
Kyrgyzstan	68	16	-	2	6	9	13	114
Azerbaijan	19	44	3	22	1	-	0	89
Kazakhstan	-	25	19	22	11	-	0	77
Denmark	-	-	-	65	5	4	1	75
Ukraine	1	41	7	7	6	7	1	70
Austria	-	-	12	25	22	2	8	69
Belarus	-	13	24	-	15	12	0	64
Unknown	-	-	23	30	-	-	-	53
France	20	15	-	7	4	4	2	52
Indonesia	-	-	1	4	5	13	24	47
Belgium	-	-	-	11	6	6	15	38
Sweden	-	-	-	6	-	11	19	36
Switzerland	-	-	-	7	-	8	4	19
Brazil	-	13	-	1	-	-	0	14
Australia	-	-	4	4	-	4	1	13
Swaziland	-	-	1	6	4	1	0	12
Georgia	2	-	-	9	-	-	0	11
Turkey	-	-	-	1	10	-	0	11
Finland	-	-	-	1	2	6	0	9
Bulgaria	-	7	-	-	-	-	0	7
Mexico	-	1	6	-	-	-	0	7
Syrian Arab Republic	-	7	-	-	-	-	0	7
Malaysia	-	5	-	-	-	1	0	6
Italy	-	-	-	2	-	1	2	5
Hungary	-	-	-	-	-	3	0	3
United States of America	-	-	-	3	-	-	0	3
Cambodia	-	2	-	-	-	-	0	2
Iraq	-	-	-	-	1	-	0	1
Ireland	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	1
Poland	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	1
Total	1,834,537	475,639	761,122	514,090	139,804	365,410	278,484	4,369,086

Source: UNHCR, 2009b.

UNHCR reports that of those Afghans who returned to Afghanistan between 2002 and 2009, Pashtuns accounted for up to 58 per cent, Tajiks 24 per cent, Hazaras 8 per cent, Uzbeks 4 per cent, Turkmen 2 per cent and others for 3 per cent (UNHCR, 2009b). In contrast to UNHCR figures, a case study in Karachi by the Collective for Social Science Research in 2005 stated that the majority of Afghans who have returned were Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras, hence ethnically non-Pashtuns. A possible reason for this difference is that while in total numbers Pashtuns may constitute the largest ethnic group to repatriate, this is not true in terms of proportions. That is, the proportion of Pashtun Afghans that have repatriated is much less than the proportion of non-Pashtuns and they are therefore less visible. In addition, UNHCR reports that the largest flow of Pashtuns into Afghanistan is from the NWFP, suggesting that not many of those Pashtuns settled in Karachi may have repatriated (Collective for Social Science Research, 2005).

Voluntary return of unsuccessful asylum-seekers to Afghanistan from European countries often occurs through Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes. Currently such programmes, that are run by IOM, are supported by Austria, Norway and Denmark. Additionally, post-arrival assistance projects are supported by the United Kingdom, Norway, Australia, Sweden, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. The first step in reintegration assistance is a post-arrival counseling session, which consists of a thorough discussion about the returnees' opportunities and options. Supported options include employment referrals, on-the-job-training, self-employment, educational training and vocational training. The decision is to be made by the returnee her-/himself with the informed advice by IOM staff members.

B.4.3. FORCED RETURNEES

Forced returnees are individuals that do not agree to return and are deported from the country of asylum. Forced removals have occurred from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as from European countries and Australia.

According to UNHCR, the Islamic Republic of Iran has engaged in the largest number of forced removals, totalling 1,898,524 individuals between March 2002 and June 2011 (UNHCR, 2011b). From January to March 2013, an average of 552 Afghan individuals were deported each day from the Islamic Republic of Iran compared to 684 individuals per day during the same reporting period in 2012. This means that a total of 49,708 Afghans have been returned from the

Islamic Republic of Iran in the first three months of 2013. In 2012, the total number of deportations was 258,146. The vast majority (98%) of those deported were undocumented single men who had migrated to the Islamic Republic of Iran in search of work. The numbers of deportations from Pakistan are much smaller. Between January and April 2013, 1,079 individuals were deported compared to 496 deportees in the same period in 2012 (UNHCR, 2013g). Still, these numbers are estimates and instances of multiple deportations have been discovered. In addition, some of these forced returnees include both registered and unregistered refugee families in the Islamic Republic of Iran, who, due to changes in policy and attitude, were at times intimidated into returning to Afghanistan, threatened with eviction and deportation (Majidi, 2008).

In European states, forced removals generally occur when a failed asylum-seeker or irregular migrant is offered the opportunity for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR), but refuses to take it. Alternatively, if the individual is convicted of a misdemeanour in the country of destination or is scheduled for deportation they will not be offered the option of AVRR.

B.4.4. OTHER FORMS OF RETURN MIGRATION

The IS Academy Survey collected data on the situation of return migrants in Afghanistan. For the purpose of this survey, a return migrant is defined as someone who lived outside Afghanistan for a minimum of one year and indicated their reason for migration as one of the following: economic opportunities, family reunification, family formation, moving with family, education, health or other. In total, 231 return migrant households in the sample fit into this category, which includes a total of 1,572 individual return migrants. A more detailed profile of this sub-sample is provided in Annex A.

There were slightly more male (52.7%) than female (47.3%) return migrants. The average age of the return migrants was 21 years and the majority were single (62.5%). The current activities of the return migrants varied and included: Self-employment (14.3%), paid work (9.8%), receiving education (8.2%) and homemaking (40.0%). The majority of return migrants were from the Tajik ethnic group (60.5%). The main destination countries were the Islamic Republic of Iran (67.6%) and Pakistan (31.2%). The most important causes for returning were personal reason (42.3%) such as a desire to be in their home country, to be closer to family and friends and wanting to be in their own cultural environment. This was followed by a large percentage returning due to the change in the political and safety situation in Afghanistan (31.7%).

(Temporary) return programmes for qualified Afghans

International organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNDP actively encourage and support Afghans abroad to return to their home country for the purpose of capacity-building and to fill skills gaps in the Afghan government and public services, invest in the private sector and assist with the post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan (Oeppen, 2009). To date, a total of 1,365 Afghan experts living abroad have returned to Afghanistan from 31 countries with assistance from IOM.²⁵ Many other organizations likewise aim to send skilled migrants home in this light.²⁶ For example, Internationalization of Entrepreneurship (IntEnt) in the Netherlands or the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) in Germany created return programmes for highly skilled Afghans who wish to return home after having worked or studied in the Netherlands or Germany. These organizations offer individualized advisory services to plan the experts' return home and furthermore support the migrants' own business ideas or forward suitable job vacancies and local contacts in the country of destination. Depending on the skills, additional payments to top up the local salary in the home country are made and financial assistance to cover travel and transport expenses is arranged by CIM (CIM, 2013). The IntEnt Foundation, in contrast, focuses explicitly on migrant entrepreneurs who wish to set up a business in their country of origin. In 2010, two start-up missions were held, during which nine Afghans carried out market research in their home country. All participants aimed to open their own business in Kabul. Among the participants was an architect who wanted to open his own architecture bureau and a physician who aimed to build his own healthcare centre. Each Afghan had starting capital; however, the bulk of finance was received either from financial institutions or family and friends. With regard to age and gender, all participants were male and relatively young with five participants between 23 and 29 and one participant in his mid-40s (IntEnt, 2011).

B.4.5. REINTEGRATION OF RETURNEES IN AFGHANISTAN

Since 2001, at least 6 million Afghans – around 20 per cent of Afghanistan's overall population – have returned from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In reality, the total number of individuals is likely to be much larger due to the undercounting of non-refugee returnees such as undocumented and registered labour migrants. This calls into question the refugee-lens used to view

²⁵ Table 20 in Annex A provides an overview of temporary return programmes by IOM.

²⁶ It should be noted that IOM, IntEnt or CIM do not offer return programmes exclusively for Afghans, but also support other migrant populations from, for example, Morocco, Ghana and Ethiopia

reintegration in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, many returnees have sought refuge abroad during Afghanistan's historically turbulent past and, as such, have spent a significant amount of time abroad before returning to Afghanistan. For second-generation Afghan refugees, who "return home", the term does not literally mean return as a majority of these second-generation Afghans have had little or no familiarity with living in Afghanistan (Saito and Hunte, 2007). The experiences of refugees and labour migrants abroad as well as the reasons for leaving in the first place, may have important implications for the reintegration process back in Afghanistan.

Studies of reintegration into Afghanistan reveal mixed results. A study undertaken by Altai Consulting in 2006 interviewed 600 households that had returned from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, across three provinces: 250 in Kabul, 175 in Herat and 175 in Nangarhar. Over 65 per cent of the interviews were conducted in urban areas and the rest in rural areas. Within the sample, the most common occupations cited were construction, manufacturing and craft-related or technical jobs such as metalwork, weaving, tailoring, shoe making or chauffeuring. The majority of respondents (48%) felt that their situation, whether social, professional or personal, had deteriorated, when compared to their situation prior to leaving Afghanistan. Another 22 per cent felt their situation had not changed and 30 per cent felt that it had improved. The research revealed that, although many Afghans returned to their home country with higher skill levels, they struggled economically in Afghanistan. Data from this study also indicate that the country of destination matters for the successful reintegration of returnees. For example, returnees from Western countries (particularly European countries and Canada) reported better reintegration outcomes compared to returnees from neighbouring states such as the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan (Altai Consulting, 2006).

What is unclear from repatriation trends is the proportion of returnees who eventually settle in Afghanistan for the long term and those who decide to migrate again. A study for the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) showed that half of the interviewed returnee respondents in Afghanistan had hopes or expectations of leaving the country again in either the short or long term, citing a wide range of reasons informed by a variety of emotional responses to the reintegration process (Saito, 2008). Another study by AREU observed that those returnees who are less educated and in the low-income category struggle with material survival and physical insecurity. However, the more educated respondents, particularly women, tend to face greater social and emotional hurdles during the reintegration process, as they strive for long-term resettlement in Afghanistan (Saito and Hunte, 2007). The desires of returnees

regarding the kind of programmes to help improve their situation were clear; over 75 per cent indicated that they wished to receive some training in finance to create their own business, 34 per cent indicated they wished to receive vocational training and 32 per cent would appreciate employment services. Other services such as training in English, computer courses or management courses were likewise mentioned (Altai Consulting, 2006).

The IS Academy Survey shows that, from a sample of 1,096 individuals, almost 90 per cent of returnees feel that they are part of a community in Afghanistan. The data suggest that the majority of returnees feel well integrated in Afghanistan and are happy to have returned to their cultural environment despite the challenges. Furthermore, 90 per cent of the returnee households interviewed felt strongly connected to their community. Additionally, nearly 53 per cent reported their household's situation improved compared to their situation before their exile.

Economic indicators also show that returnee and non-migrant households are at par, though overall in a weak position given a lack of stable employment, lack of savings and lack of land tenure security. At times, however, returnee populations fare better, either because their exile has taught them new and more marketable skills or because they have a greater awareness of credit systems. All in all, returnee and non-migrant households report similar levels of vulnerability to external shocks, whether it be job loss, illness, death or increases in input and food prices. Many of the issues confronting returnee households are therefore the same issues that confront non-returnee and non-migrant households; these are the structural issues of a country where development has not reached the mass of urban and rural poor. It also highlights the importance of evidence-based policies: without a rigorous study of the situations of returnee and non-returnee households, it is impossible to speak of reintegration levels and to develop national strategies.

B.5. INTERNAL MIGRATION

B.5.1. RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION

A study with the goal of better understanding rural-urban labour migration in Afghanistan was carried out by the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) in 2005 and examined 997 individuals in three cities of Afghanistan

(Kabul, Herat and Jalalabad). The study found that lack of employment in rural areas was one of the main reasons for rural-urban migration. In combination with perceived better employment opportunities in the cities, 42 per cent of respondents indicated lack of employment as a reason to leave their home villages. An additional 38 per cent of respondents indicated that the employment situation in rural areas alone was the main decisive factor. The study also revealed rapidly rising migration flows toward urban areas, with 72 per cent of the respondents arriving in the destination area during the previous year (Opel, 2005).

The findings of the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/08 confirm that employment is one of the major factors stimulating migration, but rural-urban migration was observed only among 3 per cent of the population; urban-rural migration was much more frequent, with 14 per cent of the population reporting this type of movement. Most migrants in the NRVA stated that they moved intra-provincially due to security issues. For short-distance urban migrants, marriage was an important reason to migrate, while for those moving to urban areas, education played a major role (Icon-Institute, 2009).

The NRVA 2005 revealed that for households with an internal migrant, that migrant's average length of stay in the city was 2.8 years. The longest duration of stay was in Herat City (3.43 years) and the shortest in Jalalabad City (1.39 years). For Kabul the average stay was 2.2 years (MRRD and CSO, 2007).

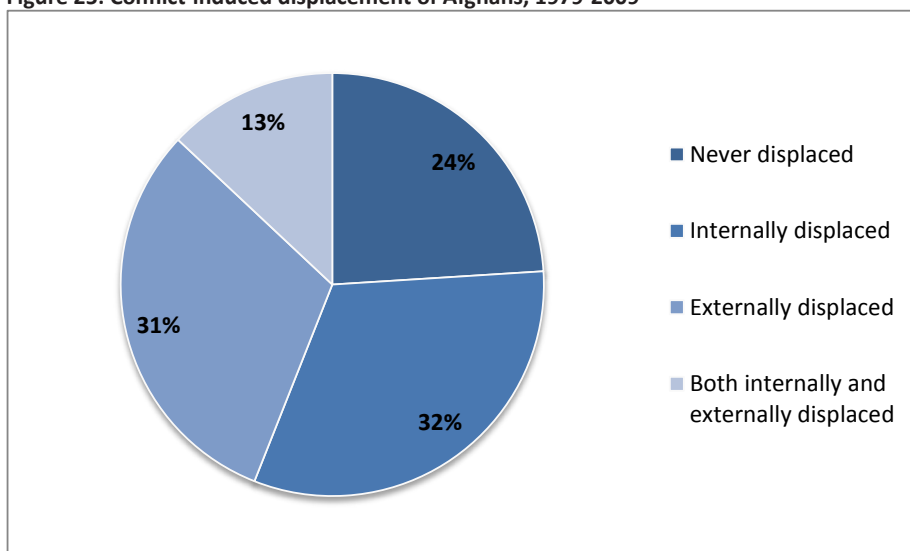
B.5.2. INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

The level of internal displacement in Afghanistan over the past three decades has been consistently high and is fast becoming one of the key humanitarian priorities facing the country. After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, over 1.2 million Afghans were internally displaced due to an increase in armed conflict. As a result of an improving security situation, a high number of these IDPs were able to return shortly after 2002. About 85 per cent of IDPs displaced in the post-2001 period left the camps within three years. In 2006 and 2008, the number of IDPs started to rise again, however, following a declining rate of return and new displacements in the south (IDMC and NRC, 2011). In 2008, UNHCR identified 235,833 IDPs in Afghanistan, of which more than 70 per cent were displaced as a result of conflict prior to and after the fall of the Taliban in 2001 or as a result of droughts of the 1990s. These IDPs were largely living in camp-like settlements in the south (119,958), the west (29,690) and the south-

east (12,341) of Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2008a). Conflict-induced displacement has been increasing again since 2010. According to UNHCR, there are currently close to 400,000 conflict-induced IDPs in Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2012e). Estimates by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) place the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) at more than 480,000 (MoRR, 2011). This number includes individuals displaced due to both conflict and natural disasters.²⁷

As Figure 25 shows, more than three-quarters of the Afghan population has had to leave their homes at least once between 1979 and 2009. Of those displaced, 32 per cent were displaced internally, 31 per cent externally and 13 per cent both externally and internally (Oxfam, 2009).

Figure 25: Conflict-induced displacement of Afghans, 1979-2009



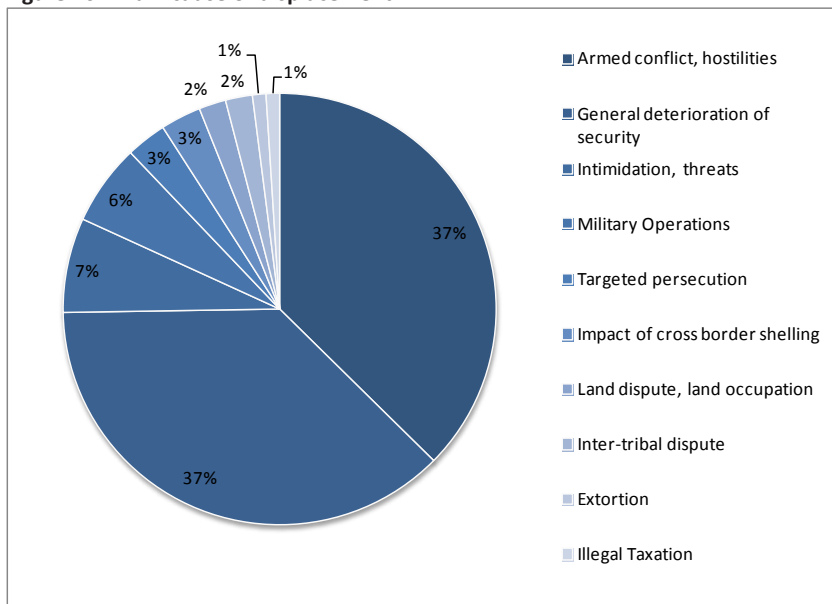
Source: OXFAM, 2009.

Figure 26 shows the main reason for displacement indicated by those IDPs registered by UNHCR. For decades armed conflict has been the main cause of displacement in Afghanistan, but the general deterioration of the security situation is as important as a driver for people to leave their place of residence. Some individuals also flee preventively, to escape anticipated improvised explosive devices, attacks or night raids. Others flee to escape present armed actors whose practices of intimidation and harassment include extortion, forced recruitment and the feeding of and caring for wounded combatants (Rothing, 2011). The reasons for displacement of any given individual or household are

²⁷ More information on environmentally induced displacement is provided in section C.6.

likely to be very complex, however, as conflict and human rights violations may often lead to increased poverty and decreased food security, contributing to a household's decision to migrate (IDMC and NRC, 2011).

Figure 26: Main cause of displacement

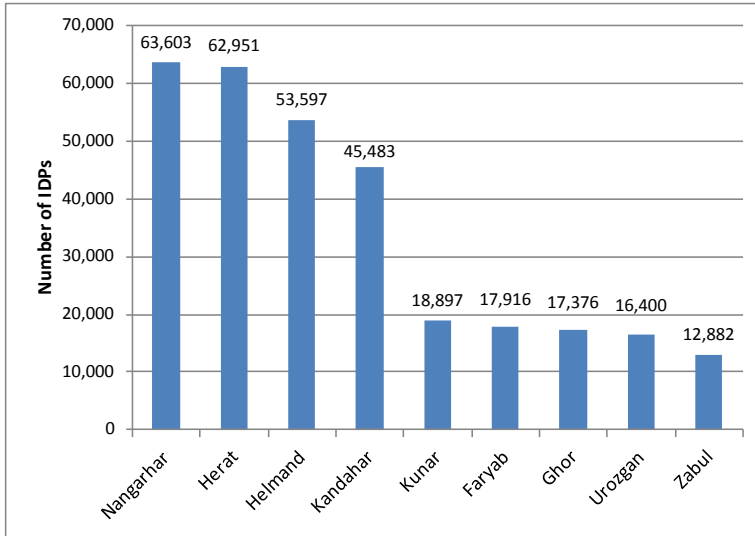


Source: UNHCR, 2012e.

Returning IDPs and refugees often face land or property seizure or occupation by local warlords, their relatives or others individuals. As a consequence, between 20 and 30 per cent of refugee returnees have been forced into secondary internal displacement over the past five years. Other reasons for secondary or protracted displacement, such as human rights abuses perpetrated by the Taliban, have also occurred, particularly in the South-Eastern, Southern and Central regions. The Taliban has also targeted members of minority Shia groups, leading to their displacement. Most of the documented mass displacements occurred in the context of offensives by international forces in their struggle against growing insurgencies, however (Rothing, 2011).

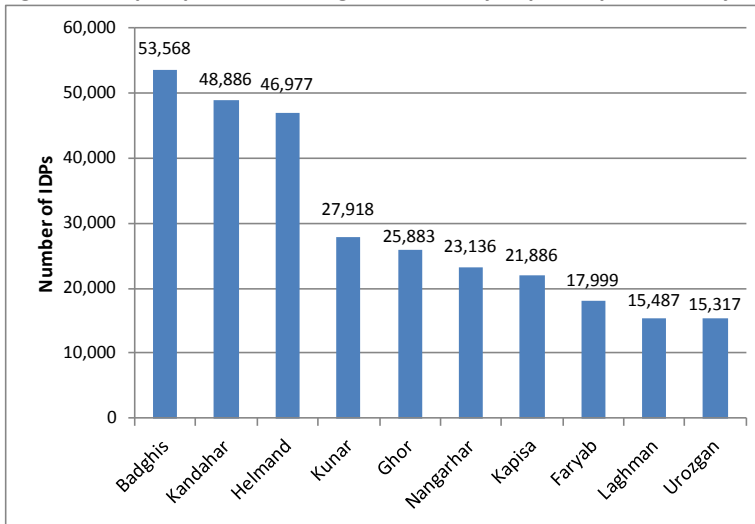
Most IDPs in May 2012 were residing in Nangarhar, Herat, Helmand and Kandahar (see Figure 27) and primarily originated from Badghis, Kandahar, Helmand and Kunar (see Figure 28).

Figure 27: Top 10 provinces of residence of IDPs, May 2012



Source: UNHCR, 2012e.

Figure 28: Top 10 provinces of origin of internally displaced persons, May 2012

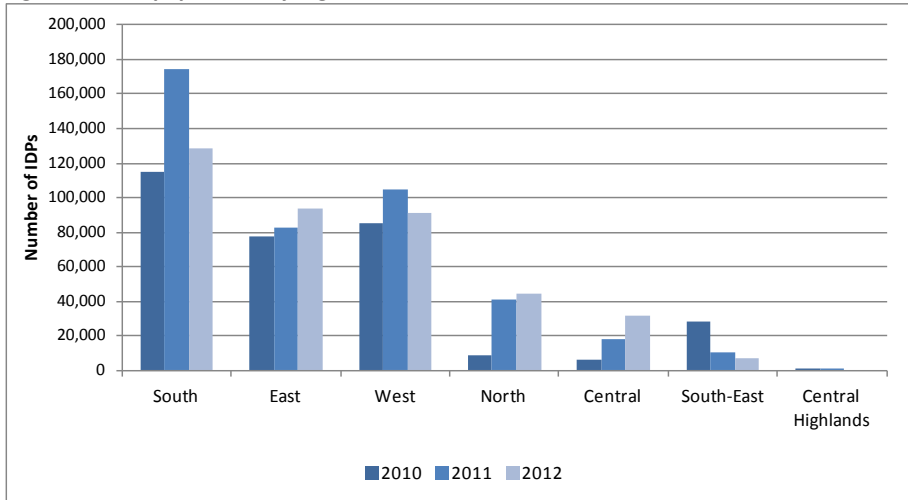


Source: UNHCR, 2012e.

Internal displacement per region

Figure 29 below shows the IDP population by region at the end of May for the years 2010 to 2012. It shows that the regions that are affected by displacement have changed during this time period (UNHCR, 2012e).

Figure 29: IDP population by region, 2010-2012



Source: UNHCR, 2012e.

The Northern and North-Eastern regions have been most burdened throughout the decades of conflicts, particularly during the Russian invasion in which these regions represented the front lines. Although approximately 21 per cent of all refugees registered in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan between 2002 and 2010 have returned to Afghanistan, for many it has been impossible to return to their (demolished) origin communities. Most of these returnees are thus living in a situation of internal displacement. Other factors seriously challenge the livelihoods of the current population in the Northern regions, which may not only hinder the return of refugees but also contribute to further displacement. Seasonal floods, landslides and heavy snow storms are common in the north of Afghanistan and the region also suffers from a lack of infrastructure, economic opportunities and development. The security situation has worsened recently as a result of expanding conflict between anti-government elements (AGEs) and pro-government forces (PGFs). In addition to the direct threat of violence, the conflict has also destroyed livelihoods, as crops and livestock are either abandoned by families fleeing the violence or are confiscated or destroyed by the conflicting parties (Afghanistan Protection Cluster, 2011b). In May 2012, almost 45,000 IDPs were reported in the Northern

region (UNHCR, 2012e). Internally displaced persons urgently require shelter upon their displacement. Many families that move to rural areas seek refuge with family, but as time passes without the possibility for sustainable return, the living conditions of IDPs and their host families deteriorate. Those displaced to urban areas predominantly rent houses, often cramped together with other families and often without a regular income. IDPs also suffer from a lack of access to food, water and education (Afghanistan Protection Cluster, 2011b).

The Eastern and South-Eastern regions are also strongly affected by conflict. More than 100,000 IDPs from these regions were registered by UNHCR in May 2012 (UNHCR, 2012e). The current military hostilities between the PGFs and AGEs mainly take place in these regions, which is of strategic importance to the Afghan National Security Forces and the International Military Forces. The border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan is very insecure and the Pakistani army regularly conducts military operations against active insurgencies in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). As a result, the numbers of civilian casualties and new internal displacements have increased. Data collection on conflict-induced displacement in the South-Eastern region is hampered by severe underreporting, but it is clear that the main cause of internal displacement in this region is conflict. Due to the deteriorating security situation, sustainable solutions for IDPs remain a challenge. The need for shelter is high among IDPs and although the majority find refuge with host communities, the ability of these communities to meet the needs of IDPs for an extended period is limited. As in the Northern and North-Eastern Regions, there is a lack of access to food, water, education and health facilities in these regions (Afghanistan Protection Cluster, 2011a).

In the Southern region more than 128,000 persons were reported to be displaced due to conflict in May 2012 (UNHCR, 2012e). Information on displacement to other areas in the region is limited. The presence of landmines and the destruction of livelihoods, including homes, livestock and crops, suggests that it will be difficult for displaced families to consider return even after the conflict has ended. The living circumstances of IDPs will likely deteriorate further due to the harsh climate in the region and the lack of (humanitarian) facilities in areas of displacement (Afghanistan Protection Cluster, 2011c).

Internally displaced persons in informal settlements

A study of the World Bank and UNHCR (2011b) examined IDPs residing in informal settlements in urban centres and their vulnerabilities. More than 90 per cent of the IDPs that participated in this study came from a rural area. As a result

of the conflicts, people in rural areas have suffered from large-scale destruction, including of their assets. Moreover, the physical and social infrastructure, consisting of, for example, irrigation structures, roads and markets, is still not at the level it was before the conflict. This implies that for current rural inhabitants there is a strong incentive to move to the more secure cities offering better economic opportunities. Furthermore, the capacity of the rural areas to absorb return migrants is limited, which also motivates them to move to urban centres upon return. Natural disasters, in particular the multi-year droughts that took place in the last decade, also contribute to forced or economic migration to urban areas. The reasons for displacement that were identified in the study confirm that the main push factors were conflict, food insecurity and un- and underemployment (in order of importance with the first being the most important) and that economic incentives were the main pull factor towards urban areas. In a profiling report of the informal settlements in Kabul, economic issues are also the driving force for people to settle in Kabul upon return to Afghanistan. The main issues are landlessness, lack of job opportunities and a lack of support infrastructure, such as social services, in the origin community (World Bank and UNHCR, 2011b).

This urbanization trend has led to the growth of informal settlements where inhabitants are faced with unsafe circumstances. In early 2010, 29 informal settlements were identified in Kabul city and its surroundings, which house more than 13,500 individual inhabitants (UNHCR SOK et al., 2010). This displacement seems to be permanent, as 70 per cent of the families had resided in these settlements for over two years, mostly in dangerous circumstances (World Bank and UNHCR, 2011a). Over 90 per cent expressed the intention to settle permanently in the urban area and approximately 80 per cent reported that they were unwilling to return to their (rural) origin communities due to inadequate livelihood opportunities there (World Bank and UNHCR, 2011b). Moreover, as time passes the motivation of families to return to their origin community decreases (UNHCR SOK et al., 2010).

The most pressing problems IDPs face concern employment, housing and food security. They struggle with social and economic integration in the cities due to their lower skill levels, even when compared with the urban poor. Their literacy rates and educational levels are considerably lower (especially among women) and their work experience tends to be limited to agriculture and the rearing of livestock. Consequently, over 50 per cent of male IDPs are employed in the construction sector, while 13 per cent of the urban poor work in this sector, the rest appearing to work in different sectors. Furthermore, 68 per cent of IDPs in the labour force work in casual daily labour, while most male

poor household heads (49%) in the cities are self-employed. Therefore, IDP households are dependent on more than one source of income and this makes newly displaced households particularly vulnerable, especially in the first two years of displacement. With regard to problems faced by IDP households, the most common are un- and underemployment, access to adequate housing and access to food (World Bank and UNHCR, 2011a, 2011b).

The housing conditions in which IDPs live are hazardous. As rent continues to increase in Kabul, many (return) migrants live in tents or other types of temporary shelter (UNHCR SOK et al., 2010). Approximately 60 per cent reside in some form of temporary shelter, shack or tent and their tenure is insecure, which puts them at risk of eviction. Furthermore, over 70 per cent are deprived of access to electricity (among the urban poor this is 18%) and the water and sanitation facilities are inadequate. The food insecurity of IDPs is also much worse than that of the urban poor with 14 per cent of IDPs reporting that they had problems fulfilling their food needs several times a month compared with 3 per cent of urban poor households (World Bank and UNHCR, 2011a, 2011b).

The World Bank and UNHCR (2011b) study on IDPs in urban informal settlements in Afghanistan showed that employment, housing and food security rank highest on the list of problems for IDPs. Employment remains a priority irrespective of settlement time, while concerns related to access to proper housing become more pressing the longer the duration of stay and food insecurity tends to decline. IDPs in informal settlements live in much more precarious housing conditions than the urban poor, namely in hazardous dwelling types (tents, temporary shelters or shacks), and 85 per cent do not have a land deed or any sort of security of tenure. The study also reveals the extreme vulnerability to food insecurity for IDPs in informal settlements. By comparing the data from the IDP survey to national data on the urban poor from the NRVA 2007/08 sample, the World Bank and UNHCR study showed that food insecurity among IDPs in informal settlement is much worse than that of urban poor households: only 7 per cent of IDPs reported to have never faced problems in meeting household food needs compared to 37 per cent of the urban poor. The study identifies the first two years of settlement as the most difficult for displaced households to provide for their livelihood. Due to the disruption of their social safety nets and lack of skill sets adapted to urban settings, IDPs' employment opportunities are initially confined to very poor quality daily labour with negative impacts on household budgets and wellbeing (World Bank and UNHCR, 2011b).

The basic human rights, especially of women and children, are not met in the informal settlements. In most settlements there is no primary school

available and children often have to work, thereby the children's rights to primary education are not respected. Furthermore, cases of sexual and gender based violence, which includes domestic violence and forced prostitution, have been reported (UNHCR SOK et al., 2010).

These findings indicate the immense need for development of sustainable solutions for this population. In this light the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan issued Decree 104 in 2005 on land allocation, which can provide a solution to some vulnerable settlement dwellers by presenting them with an option to return to their origin communities (for more information refer to section D.2). In 2006, the first families were relocated to land allocation sites mainly in Kabul and Parwan and since then more settlement dwellers have been relocated and provided shelter and assistance. However, the relocation has not been an enduring solution for all relocated families and some returned to live in informal settlements because of a lack of job opportunities or transportation services in the land allocation sites. It remains difficult to find a sustainable solution to this complex issue of informal settlements. These settlements continue to expand rapidly as the (capital) city keeps attracting returnees and IDPs (UNHCR SOK et al., 2010).

PART C: IMPACTS OF MIGRATION

C.I. MIGRATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT

Net migration

The net migration rate indicates the contribution of migration to the overall level of population change (CIA, 2013).²⁸ Looking at the net migration rate of Afghanistan per 1000 population during the Soviet occupation from 1979 to 1989 (Table 42), a large number of Afghan people left the country, contributing to a negative net migration rate of -56.7/1000 persons between 1980 and 1985. After the withdrawal of Soviet troops many Afghans returned, resulting in a net positive migration rate at 44.4/1000 persons between 1990 and 1995. However, when the Taliban was strongest, during 1995 and 2000, more people left Afghanistan than returned, precipitating a negative net migration rate of -6.5/1000 persons. With the fall of the Taliban at the end of 2001 and the implementation of UNHCR's voluntary repatriation scheme, high numbers of Afghans have returned to their home country, generating a positive net migration for the time period 2000-2005. Since then the net migration rate has further decreased to -5.6/1000 persons in 2005-2010 and -2.6/1000 persons for the 2010-2015 period. In 2020, it is expected that although more people will emigrate than immigrate the net migration rate will stabilize with a negative net migration of -0.1/1000 persons in the time period 2020-2050. However, these numbers are projections and should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Table 42: Net migration, 1950-2050

Period	Net migration (in thousands)	Net migration rate (per 1,000 population)
1950-1955	- 4	- 0.5
1955-1960	- 4	- 0.5
1960-1965	- 4	- 0.4
1965-1970	- 4	- 0.4

²⁸ The annual net migration rate is the difference between the number of persons entering and leaving Afghanistan in a specific year per 1,000 persons. An excess of persons entering Afghanistan is referred to as net immigration (5 migrants/1000 populations); an excess of persons leaving the country as net emigration (-8 migrants/1000 populations) (CIA, 2013).

1970-1975	- 4	- 0.3
1975-1980	- 235	- 18.2
1980-1985	- 701	- 56.7
1985-1990	- 341	- 29.3
1990-1995	651	44.4
1995-2000	- 124	- 6.5
2000-2005	27	1.2
2005-2010	- 148	- 5.6
2010-2015	- 80	- 2.6
2015-2020	- 54	- 1.6
2020-2025	- 4	- 0.1
2025-2030	- 4	- 0.1
2030-2035	- 4	- 0.1
2035-2040	- 4	- 0.1
2040-2045	- 4	- 0.1
2045-2050	- 4	- 0.1

Source: UN DESA, 2013.

Urbanization

It has been observed that the Afghan urban population has grown rapidly in the past decade. Table 43 shows that the urban population made up 5.8 per cent of the total population in 1950. This increased to 23.2 per cent in 2010 and is expected to further increase to 43.4 per cent by 2050. Urbanization is a common trend globally. Kabul and other urban centres are likely to continue expanding in the foreseeable future with security and living conditions deteriorating in rural areas. The associated phenomenon of informal settlements is a result of urban growth driven by a combination of natural growth, newcomers entering the housing market and migration patterns, whether rural-urban migration, secondary migration or direct migration of returnees and internally displaced persons (Majidi, 2011b).

Table 43: Urban and rural population, 1950-2050

Area	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Rural (in thousands)	7,679	8,898	10,645	11,962	10,666	18,152
Urban (in thousands)	473	773	1,320	2,224	2,366	4,704
Urban (in %)	5.8	8.0	11.0	15.7	18.2	20.6
Area	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	
Rural (in thousands)	24,112	30,929	36,631	40,759	43,148	
Urban (in thousands)	7,300	11,213	16,635	24,025	33,102	
Urban (in %)	23.2	26.6	31.2	37.1	43.4	

Source: UN DESA, 2012.

Urbanization has been largely prompted by refugees and internally displaced persons relocating to cities. Although the NRVA 2007/08 found a low frequency of rural to urban migration, figures of UNHCR and other studies have shown that the majority of Afghan returnees (between 2002 and 2009) settled in urban areas, mainly Kabul, upon their return. It can be concluded, therefore, that the high urbanization rate in Afghanistan is, at least in part, due to migration movements. At a time when approximately 70 per cent of Kabul is composed of informal settlements, with an urban growth rate of 5.4 per cent annually and an expected doubling of the population over the next seven years (Turkstra and Popal, personal communication, 2010), it is becoming increasingly difficult to track, estimate and assess the presence and profiles of returnee and IDP populations settling in urban areas. There are three broad categories of displaced person moving into cities, who can be grouped under the broader term of urban displacement: (1) returnees who came to settle directly to cities upon their return, (2) returnees who went to their areas of origin and were then forced to move again to the cities, in a pattern of secondary displacement, and (3) persons displaced internally by conflict, natural disaster and poverty (Majidi, 2011b).

Many returnees have claimed to originate from the capital in order to settle there directly upon their return. Levron et al. (2006) recorded that 90 per cent of repatriating refugees claimed that their place of origin was Kabul between 2002 and 2003. In many cases this is true given the large inflow of people into Kabul during the Taliban years, but it also reflects the preferences of refugees who have lived in protracted difficult situations abroad and therefore wish to relocate to urban centres in Afghanistan (Murnaghan and Kostohryz, personal communication, 2009). This is the case for returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan who were involved in the service or construction sectors rather than in the agricultural sectors, and would therefore struggle to revert back to rural modes of subsistence upon return (Majidi, 2011b).

It is, therefore, not known whether Afghan returnees moving to Afghan cities originate from these areas, but it can be assumed that returnees have taken advantage of the perceived benefits and livelihood opportunities offered by urban life. In 2005, around 70 per cent of urban citizens lived in only six cities: Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad and Kunduz. Consequently, the Afghan government is facing strong pressure in terms of urban governance and urban management (Beall and Esser, 2005). Of all cities in Afghanistan, Kabul remains the largest with an estimated population of around 3 million in 2005. The growth rate of Kabul was estimated as high as 17 per cent in recent years. Currently the city continues to grow annually by about 5 per cent. In 2009, the total number of people residing in Kabul was estimated at 3.57 million (Kantor, 2008).

Displaced populations in urban settings are living alongside the urban poor and reside in each of the major Afghan cities. Their arrival and stay, whether in the form of protracted or recent and temporary displacement patterns, has increased pressure on local infrastructure and city services, further exacerbating the vulnerabilities of residents and of the mass of urban poor. This is particularly the case with regard to access to shelter and land, water and sanitation, food and livelihood opportunities (Majidi, 2011b).

The IS Academy data in Table 44 show that the largest number of households with migrants live in rural areas (41.6%), with the remaining households residing in urban (38.9%) or peri-urban (19.5%) areas. Just over 50 per cent of households with a return migrant or with no migrants reside in urban areas. With regard to the provinces, the largest group of households with a migrant are in Balkh, whereas the number of return migrant households is much lower (about 15%). Approximately a quarter of return migrant households live in Nangarhar, compared to 17.3 per cent of migrant households and 14.0 per cent of non-migrant households. About a quarter of non-migrant households and just under 20 per cent of return migrant households reside in Kandahar, while only 4.3 per cent of migrant households lives in that province.

Table 44: Urbanization among migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Location Type								
Urban	72	38.9	514	50.8	417	51.5	1,003	50.0
Peri-urban	36	19.5	267	26.4	197	24.4	500	24.9
Rural	77	41.6	230	22.8	195	24.1	502	25.1
Province								
Kabul	39	21.1	219	21.7	144	17.8	402	20.1
Nangarhar	32	17.3	257	25.4	113	14.0	402	20.1
Herat	48	25.9	195	19.3	158	19.5	401	20.0
Balkh	58	31.4	152	15.0	190	23.5	400	19.9
Kandahar	8	4.3	188	18.6	204	25.2	400	19.9

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

C.2. MIGRATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Informal Economy

In a study of bonded labour at brick kilns in the Surkhroad district of Nangarhar province and Deb Sabz district of Kabul province, it was found that 98 per cent of the households that work in brick kilns were return migrants from Pakistan. The remaining 2 per cent of households consisted of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The return migrants had often worked in brick kilns during their time in Pakistan. As in Pakistan, the brick kilns rely strongly on debt bondage. The debts of these households mainly came about in order to pay for basic needs, primarily food and medical expenses. Migration has shaped the nature of work in brick kilns, in the sense that the experience of the return migrants as brick makers in Pakistan encourages them to accept the heavy work required in brick kilns. Local people in the two districts where the study was conducted refuse to work in the brick kilns. The average brick maker performs strenuous work for 70 to 80 hours a week and receives a small wage and a one-room shelter in return. Families that work here are entrenched in a debt cycle in which child labour is also common, as it substantially contributes to the household income. As women are not allowed to work and the average size of the household is 8.8, the household normally depends on child labour (ILO, 2011).

REMITTANCES TO AFGHANISTAN²⁹

The World Bank indicates that Afghanistan does not report data on remittances to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the form of balance of payments (BOP) statistics (World Bank, 2011a). Although not reported, remittances to Afghanistan exist and play a key role in the survival of Afghan families and the Afghan economy (Kapur, 2004). The World Bank estimates that 15 per cent of rural households in Afghanistan receive remittances from abroad, covering around 20 per cent of the family's daily expenditure (World Bank, 2005). A 2007 report released by the International Fund for Agricultural Development estimated remittances to Afghanistan in 2006 at USD 2.5 billion, accounting for 29.6 per cent of the total GDP in Afghanistan at that time (Orozco, 2007). The IS Academy data suggest that 7.6 per cent of Afghan households receive remittances. Remittances are also sent to Afghans in the near diaspora. For example, a study by the Collective for Social Science Research (2006) suggests that 40 per cent of Afghans living in the area of Hayatabad in Peshawar, Pakistan are reliant on remittances from abroad.

Based on the data collected for the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) in 2005, a study by Ahmed and Gassmann (2010) analysed the levels of vulnerability of Afghan households. The study revealed that the more vulnerable households in terms of income generating activities were those that relied on agricultural wage labour (25 per cent of all Afghan households) and livestock activities (18 per cent of all households). In contrast, only 10 per cent of households that relied on remittances as an income-generating activity experienced vulnerability. This is unsurprising as remittances tend to be countercyclical and relatively consistent while agriculture and livestock are very vulnerable to shocks such as environmental events like flood or drought. The study also revealed that Afghan households that derive their income from formal employment, opium production, sale activities or small businesses had the lowest incidence of vulnerability (Ahmed and Gassmann, 2010).

The purpose of remittances

Receivers

In Afghanistan most remittances are spent on basic needs such as food, clothes and medicines by recipients. A study of Afghan deportees from the Islamic Republic of Iran undertaken for UNHCR (Majidi, 2008) showed that the majority of single adult males migrated there alone with the goal of earning

²⁹ A more detailed overview of remittances in the Afghan context is provided in Annex B.

higher salaries and sending remittances back to their families. These remittances most often constitute the sole source of income for these families in Afghanistan. A study by Stigter (2004), however, revealed that a relatively high number of male migrants saved their money for the purpose of *mahr* (*dowry*), which is the amount of money to be paid by the groom to the bride's family at the time of marriage. Nonetheless, Stigter (2004) concludes that the vast majority of savings or remittances are used to cover the basic needs of family members remaining in Afghanistan. This was also confirmed in the study by Siegel et al. (2010) in which Afghan respondents living in the Netherlands reported that the main purpose of the money sent was to contribute to daily living costs. These findings are supported by Hanifi (2006), who also finds that the majority (86%) of cash remittances are used to meet basic daily needs.

Table 45: Primary use of remittances, IS Academy

Primary use of remittances received	Frequency	Percentage
Daily needs	114	78.1
Debt payments	13	8.9
Ceremonies	12	8.2
Healthcare	3	2.1
Business/ investment	1	0.7
Housing/ land	1	0.7
Other	2	1.4

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011

IS Academy Survey data confirm these findings. Close to 80 per cent of the remittances received were used to satisfy daily needs. A further 9 per cent to settle debt payments and 8 per cent for events such as a wedding or a funeral.

Senders

Data from the IS Academy Survey indicate that the main purpose for the migrant to send remittances is to satisfy daily needs (Table 46). Other reasons for sending remittances include paying for ceremonies, repayment of a loan or covering health care expenditures. It can, however, also be seen that the majority of remittance senders (42.5%) did not have any influence on the actual use of the remittances. More than one fifth, on the other hand, had complete control over the remittance use by the receivers.

Table 46: Primary purpose and actual use of remittances and the influence of the sending person, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Primary purpose of remittances sent</i>		
Daily needs	36	61.0
Ceremonies	11	18.6
Debt payments	8	13.6
Healthcare	2	3.4
Education	1	1.7
Other	1	1.7
<i>Influence of the sending person(s) on how the money is spent</i>		
No say at all	62	42.5
Very little say	37	25.3
Some say	17	11.6
Total say	30	20.6

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011

Among Afghans living in the United Kingdom, remittance patterns seem to vary between young men who are abroad on their own and those who are abroad as part of a family group. Young men on their own were significantly more likely to hold financial responsibilities for relatives in Afghanistan and, for the majority, the primary migration intention was to support their families back home. With respect to Afghans living in the Bay Area, California, interviewees mentioned a sense of guilt as the main reason for sending remittances, as many respondents reported feeling as if they were abandoning their home country and living safely in California whilst those in Afghanistan appeared to be suffering (Oeppen, 2009).

The positive impacts of remittances seem to be clear. Remittances are a valuable source of foreign exchange for Afghanistan and potentially an important addition to the gross domestic product at the macro-economic level. Moreover, remittances can alleviate the immediate effects of poverty in Afghan households who depend on these money transfers as a key livelihood strategy (Majidi, 2008). They are also an investment strategy for Afghans, paying for education and to build businesses (IOM, 2008a). However, remittances also have a negative side. The Afghan Central Bank stated that remittances, at least in part, contributed to inflation in the country (DAB, 2009). In addition, remittances seem mostly important for the survival of the family but less important for reconstruction or development of the country.

Formal means of transfer and costs of remitting

Formal remittance transfer options in Afghanistan are largely characterised by minimal (but growing) regional penetration, relatively high barriers to access, very low usage rates and limited levels of user trust. This is partly due to the greater functionality of, and familiarity with, the *hawala* system, which remains the preferred method of money transfer; particularly as an alternative to formal banking institutions. Formal transfer schemes such as banking systems normally provide the least risky but most expensive way of sending remittances. The funds-transfer sector is dominated by dedicated money-transfer firms, of which Western Union (which commands an estimated 15 per cent of the global remittances business) is the market leader, with over 300,000 agents in more than 200 countries (World Bank, 2013a). Western Union had 40 agents in Kabul and 60 others spread across Afghanistan in 2009. In contrast, MoneyGram had only 13 agents of which 8 were in Kabul and 5 across the major cities in Afghanistan. Changes in both the American market and the establishment of financial services in Afghanistan have made Western Union more attractive and competitive. With the reduction of transfer fees, the network today has a wider reach in Afghanistan and recipients are now paid in dollars more quickly. Moreover, companies such as Western Union charge a flat-fee for transferring money; while this may act as a disincentive to those sending small amounts of money, the flat fee can be a valuable service feature to those transferring larger sums. For instance, a flat fee of USD 10 on a USD 200 transfer represents a fee that is only 5 per cent of the total transfer sum, which would make Western Union equivalent to, or only slightly more expensive than, *hawala*, depending on the agent (Oeppen, 2009). Table 47 gives an example of the average transfer costs from a particular country to Afghanistan with Western Union and other formal remittance service providers.

Table 47: Overview of remittance sending costs

Sending country	Receiving country	Service provider	Amount	Cost
Netherlands	Afghanistan	ABN Amro, SNS Bank, Rabobank, ING Bank, Money Gram	EUR 100.00	EUR 15.00 -
			EUR 200.00	EUR 55.00
		Western Union	EUR 100.00	EUR 17.00
			EUR 200.00	EUR 20.50
Australia	Afghanistan	Western Union	AUD 100.00	AUD 10.00
			AUD 200.00	AUD 25.00
Canada	Afghanistan	Western Union	CAD 100.00	CAD 12.00
			CAD 200.00	CAD 20.00

Germany	Afghanistan	Western Union	EUR 100.00	EUR 14.50
			EUR 200.00	EUR 19.00
United Kingdom	Afghanistan	Western Union	GBP 100.00	GBP 2.90
			GBP 200.00	GBP 5.90
United States	Afghanistan	Western Union	USD 100.00	USD 12.00
			USD 200.00	USD 15.00

Source: Siegel et al., 2010; Western Union, 2013a-f.

Remittances sent via mobile devices

Electronic money institutions (EMI) are formal remittance service providers that enable funds transfer using mobile networks. This allows users to make peer-to-peer and consumer-to-business transfers (in addition to other services such as airtime purchases) (IFC, 2009). In 2008, M-Paisa was the first EMI to start operating in Afghanistan. The service is supported by Roshan Telecommunications. As of May 2013, there are three, soon to be four, competitors in the mobile money market: AfTel, AWCC, Etisalat and MTN (Rynecki, 2013).

Particularly for people without access to a bank account, this service is convenient and allows, among other things, money transfers and bill payments. Due to the fact that M-Paisa is associated with the largest telecommunication company in Afghanistan (Roshan), whose networks are also present in the rural areas of the country, this extends possibilities to receive money formally into rural areas (Roshan, 2013). This new way of transferring remittances using mobile phone technology is becoming a cheaper method of money transfer (IFAD, 2006). The number of mobile phone users in the country is steadily increasing. Whereas in 2002 only 0.1 mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 inhabitants were recorded, the number increased to 54.3 per 100 inhabitants by 2011 (UN Data, 2013).

The *hawala* system

Mistrust towards the banking system is very high in Afghanistan, which may be related to the low level of literacy and historically weak oversight of the financial sector. In 2011, only 17 commercial banks existed, mostly in the Kabul area (DAB, 2011). As a result bank usage rates are very low, particularly in rural areas. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) estimates that only around 3 per cent of the Afghan population can be considered 'banked' (IFC, 2009). Informal value transfer systems, such as the *hawala* system, have long provided Afghans access to key financial services that formal financial institutions have

largely withheld across low security areas of the country. Given the geographic penetration of *hawala* networks and the range of financial services that individual agents provide, most Afghans use the *hawala* system to facilitate money transfer to, from and within the country. When Afghan migrants and refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan or other neighbouring countries wish to send money to recipients in Afghanistan, they usually entrust their money to a businessman (usually someone from a close circle or own tribe) who specializes in remittances and is known locally as a *hawaladar* (Schaeffer, 2008).

Maimbo (2003) highlights the fact that the *hawala* system has severe weaknesses, including its anonymity and lack of record keeping, which could make the system vulnerable to money laundering and terrorist financing (Maimbo, 2003; IOM, 2008a). Maimbo argues that special regulations and supervision techniques are needed that do not sacrifice the *hawala's* most valuable attributes such as cost-effectiveness, convenience and regional reach. Moreover, he suggests that the Afghan Central Bank should consider its relationship with the *hawala* dealers, including how they could be brought into closer compliance with international regularity and supervisory standards. These concerns have resulted in the development of a specific regulatory regime that attempts to formalize informal remittance service providers. This formalization has led to the registration and subsequent monitoring of *hawala* businesses. Despite regulatory challenges that the *hawala* system can pose, findings of the IS Academy Survey show that families and households are overall satisfied with the *hawala* system, which they consider an effective, timely and reliable way of money transfer.

IS Academy Survey data on remittances

The IS Academy Survey data indicate that most remittances are sent through informal channels (for an explanation see the section on the *hawala* system above). Among those who received remittances from household members, 62.5 per cent reported receiving remittances via *hawala*, as did 35.7 per cent of those households that received remittances from non-household members. Remittances received from non-household members were often sent through a friend or relative (42.9%), but this channel was seldom used by households that received remittances from household members (16.3%). In terms of formal remittance channels, the bank is the most commonly cited channel, with about 15 per cent of households that receive remittances from household members and 21 per cent of households that receive remittances from non-household members reporting use of this channel. Money transfer operators were rarely reported as being used and no respondents reported use

of other channels such as postal transfer or stored value cards. Satisfaction with the remittances transfer method appears to be high, particularly among those who receive remittances from non-household members (see Table 48).

Table 48: Remittance channel used and satisfaction with it, IS Academy

	Household member		Non-household member	
	#	%	#	%
Remittance channel				
Shop keeper/ call house/ hawala (informal)	100	62.5	5	35.71
Friend/ relative brought it	26	16.3	6	42.86
Bank	25	15.63	3	21.43
Brought it him-/ herself	4	2.5	0	0.00
Money transfer operator	5	3.1	0	0.00
Satisfaction with transfer method				
Very unsatisfied	9	5.6	2	14.3
Unsatisfied	5	3.1	1	7.1
Neutral	3	1.9	0	0.0
Satisfied	72	44.7	4	28.6
Very satisfied	72	44.7	7	50.0

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

It appears uncommon for households to receive goods from migrants abroad, with only 18 households mentioning receiving goods from absent household members and only one household receiving goods from non-household members. This total of 19 households constitutes 0.9 per cent of all the households in the IS Academy Survey data. Moreover, the goods had mainly been received once or irregularly in the last 12 months. The kind of goods received tended to be clothing or shoes and, to a lesser extent, mobile phones (see Table 49).

Table 49: Remittances: Goods, IS Academy

	Household members		Non household members	
	#	%	#	%
<i>How often were goods received in the last 12 months</i>				
Irregularly	8	44.4	0	0.0
Once	4	22.2	1	100.0
Twice	0	0.0	0	0.0
Every 3 months	1	5.6	0	0.0
Once per month or more	5	27.8	0	0.0
<i>Kind of goods received</i>				
Clothing/ shoes	6	33.3	1	100.0
Mobile phone	4	22.2	0	0.0
Books/ CDs/ DVDs	2	11.1	0	0.0
Food	1	5.6	0	0.0
Medication	1	5.6	0	0.0
Other	4	22.2	0	0.0
Value of goods received in last 12 months (in USD)	179.2		20.7	

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Remittances from Abroad

Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan

In 1995, it was estimated that over 600 million Afghanis (about USD 140,000 at the time on the black market) were sent every day from Quetta (Pakistan) to the district of Jaghori (Afghanistan) (Schaeffer, 2008). A study by AREU confirms this result, adding that single, young Afghan men in the Islamic Republic of Iran send 70 to 80 per cent of their income as remittances (Stigter and Monustti, 2005), amounting to about USD 500 to 1,300 per person per year (Abbasi-Shavazi and Glazebrook, 2006; Stigter and Monsutti, 2005).

A study by the World Bank (2005) estimated that over 31 per cent of the remittance-receiving households in Afghanistan received remittances from the Islamic Republic of Iran or Pakistan, mainly from family members or friends. Households within the lower quintiles were more likely to receive remittances from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, while higher-expenditure households were more likely to receive money from further afield. Across all expenditure quintiles, remittances amounted to around USD 34 per capita, with

recipients receiving more in each successively higher quintile (the lowest quintile received USD 19 and the highest USD 47). In the lowest expenditure quintile, only 10 per cent of all households received remittances, but remittances were a significant income stream among those that did, representing 30 per cent of total household expenditure. Around 15 per cent of Afghanistan's rural population is estimated to receive remittances (World Bank, 2005).

United States and Canada

The Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) estimated that an Afghan person in the United States of America or Canada on average remits USD 1,500 annually to Afghanistan. AISA stated that the total amount of remittances sent annually from the United States and Canada to Afghanistan might be as high as USD 75 million, most of which is transferred via the *hawala* system (cited in Hanifi, 2006). The study by Hanifi (2006)³⁰ observed that a single *hawaladar* in Virginia can have a customer base of 2,000 to 3,000 people. In a typical non-holiday month, the *hawaladar* dealt with about 450 customers. The *hawaladar* handled about USD 110,000 - 120,000 per month, of which USD 60,000 - 70,000 went to Afghanistan and USD 50,000 - 55,000 to Pakistan. Transfers to Pakistan and Afghanistan reached approximately USD 1.3 million and USD 1.4 million annually respectively. The study indicated that Afghans living in Virginia send on average USD 250 per month to Afghanistan and Pakistan, with amounts increasing in the month of Ramadan. The majority of clients in the United States were repeat customers with variable periodicities and volumes of transfer activities. During the course of the study, the *hawaladar's* clientele included only Afghans; however non-Afghans, in particular European and American employees of aid and development agencies and non-government organizations working in Afghanistan, often also used the *hawala* system (Hanifi, 2006). This was also confirmed during the study by Maimbo (2003), who found that shortly after the fall of the Taliban, NGOs alone channelled at least USD 200 million in emergency relief and development funding through the *hawala* system (Maimbo, 2003).

The flow of remittances is multi-directional, however. Hanifi (2006) found that high amounts of remittances also flow out of Afghanistan. Likewise, the *hawaladar* in the study reported that he also moved money out of Afghanistan at a rate of approximately USD 100,000 per month. The *hawaladar* estimated

³⁰ The study by Hanifi (2006) explores the impact of social and material remittances on Afghanistan's development. In the study, data on remittance flows were primarily provided by an Afghan money transfer agent or *hawaladar* in Virginia, United States who allowed the investigator liberal access to his clientele and business records from November 2004-2005.

that about USD 1 billion leaves Afghanistan per month, with part of the money coming from the opium economy (Hanifi, 2006).

The Netherlands

With respect to the Netherlands, total workers' remittances leaving the country were EUR 798 million in 2006. Of that amount, remittances to Afghanistan accounted for just EUR 79,409. The amount remained relatively stable over the next two years, with remittances to Afghanistan hovering just over EUR 79,500 in both 2007 and 2008. In the study by Siegel et al. (2010) of Afghan migrants in the Netherlands, respondents mentioned that the amount of money sent varied with seasons and other periodic events such as Ramadan or drought periods. The study also showed that the value of remittances sent varied between EUR 100 and EUR 300 per person per transfer. Most respondents sent remittances between one and four times per year (Siegel et al., 2010).

Germany

According to Vadean (2007), over EUR 22 million in worker's remittances were sent from Germany to Afghanistan in 2004. This estimated figure is based on cash carried personally by foreign workers on trips to their home countries and on the number of employed and unemployed foreign nationals who are subject to the social insurance contribution system. Consequently, estimates of remittance outflows may not reflect the actual volume of remittances sent. This is because cash carried personally only requires declaration to customs if the amount exceeds EUR 15,000. Some migrants are also not covered under the social security system and therefore not accounted for in the statistics. Additionally, all Afghans who gained German citizenship in the past decades (about 40 per cent of the residents of Afghan origin) are not included in the estimations. Almost all Afghan households that were interviewed during the research sent remittances to their families in Afghanistan. Interviewees stated that mainly poor families were receiving remittances, in most cases for daily needs. Only in some cases were remittances sent for purposes of medical treatment or marriage. In general, Afghans in Germany sent relatively small amounts of remittances, on average EUR 200 per month (Vadean, 2007).

MIGRATION AND INVESTMENT

According to data from the IS Academy Survey, the number of migrants who invested in Afghanistan whilst abroad appears to be limited. The most common investment was in housing, as reported by around 12 per cent of respondents. A similar percentage of migrants sent remittances to their household while abroad and less than 1 per cent sent money to non-household members. The majority of these remittances were intended to satisfy daily needs, as shown in Table 50.

Table 50: Migration, remittances and investments, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
<i>While abroad migrant made an investment in</i>		
House in Afghanistan	135	12.3
Still own the house	120	88.9
Land in Afghanistan	55	5.0
Still own the land	5	83.3
House in country of migration	14	1.3
Still own the house	1	7.7
Business in country of migration	12	1.1
Still own the business	2	16.7
Business in Afghanistan	7	0.6
Still own the business	6	85.7
Land in country of migration	0	0.0
Still own the land	0	0.0
Sent remittances to household	127	11.56
Average amount (in AFN)	159,800 (min: 1,000, max: 2,500,000)	
<i>Primary reason sent money</i>		
Daily needs	51	83.6
Debt payments	5	8.2
Durable goods	1	1.6
Investment/ business	1	1.6
Savings	1	1.6
Other	2	3.3
Sent remittances to non-household	9	0.8
Brought money upon return	382	34.7
Average amount (in AFN)	80,056 (min: 1,000, max: 300,000)	

Primary use of this money		
Daily needs (foods/ drink)	44	26.4
Housing/ land	31	18.6
Debt Payment	15	9.0
Education	9	5.4
Investment/ business	4	2.4
Other	66	39.5

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Almost 35 per cent of return migrants brought money with them upon their return to Afghanistan, which was used to a lesser extent to meet daily needs and more for other purposes such as housing or land. In addition, 63 per cent of return migrants (strongly) agree with the statement that their migration experience increased their ability to contribute to their community (Table 51).

Table 51: Return migrants' perspectives on their ability to contribute to the community, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Migration increased my ability to contribute to my community</i>		
Strongly disagree	18	1.64
Disagree	226	20.55
Neutral	163	14.82
Agree	523	47.55
Strongly agree	170	15.45

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF AFGHANISTAN

According to the IS Academy Survey data, attitudes in Afghanistan regarding the contribution of migrants to their country appear to be positive (Table 52 and Table 53). About half of the households believe that current migrants still contribute to Afghanistan. Almost half of the migrant households and remittance-receiving households disagree with the statement that migrants have abandoned their country, while among return migrant and non-migrant households the percentage of those who agree is slightly higher. The opinion on whether remittances have a positive impact on the development of Afghanistan is also mixed, as migrant and remittance-receiving households tend to agree with this statement, while the reverse is true for the other household types. A similar distribution of opinions can be discerned concerning the contribution of return migrants to Afghanistan.

Table 52: Opinions of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households on the contribution of (return) migrants to the country, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>When people leave the country they still contribute to it.</i>								
Strongly disagree	4	2.2	28	2.8	39	4.8	71	3.5
Disagree	44	23.8	327	32.3	245	30.3	616	30.7
Neutral	24	13.0	142	14.1	145	17.9	311	15.5
Agree	90	48.7	441	43.6	326	40.3	857	42.7
Strongly agree	23	12.4	73	7.2	54	6.7	150	7.5
<i>When people leave the country they abandon it.</i>								
Strongly disagree	5	2.7	29	2.9	30	3.7	64	3.2
Disagree	79	42.7	332	32.8	270	33.4	681	34.0
Neutral	36	19.5	188	18.6	156	19.3	380	18.9
Agree	49	26.5	362	35.8	271	33.5	682	34.0
Strongly agree	16	8.6	100	9.9	82	10.1	198	9.9
<i>When people receive money from abroad it helps develop the country.</i>								
Strongly disagree	11	5.9	74	7.3	61	7.6	146	7.3
Disagree	49	26.9	376	37.3	299	37.1	724	36.2
Neutral	19	10.3	139	13.8	108	13.4	266	13.3
Agree	75	40.5	325	32.2	260	32.4	660	33.0
Strongly agree	31	16.8	94	9.3	78	9.7	203	10.2
<i>When people who have lived abroad come back they help the country.</i>								
Strongly disagree	4	2.2	55	5.4	46	5.7	105	5.2
Disagree	53	28.7	385	38.1	310	38.4	748	37.3
Neutral	22	11.9	114	11.3	89	11.0	225	11.2
Agree	67	36.2	335	33.1	259	32.1	661	33.0
Strongly agree	39	21.1	122	12.1	103	12.8	264	13.2

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 53: Opinions of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households on the contribution of (return) migrants to the country, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver		Non-remittance-receiver		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>When people leave the country they still contribute to it.</i>						
Strongly disagree	3	2.0	68	3.7	71	3.5
Disagree	32	21.0	584	31.5	616	30.7
Neutral	18	11.8	293	15.8	311	15.5
Agree	84	55.3	773	41.7	857	42.7
Strongly agree	15	9.9	135	7.3	150	7.5
<i>When people leave the country they abandon it.</i>						
Strongly disagree	5	3.3	59	3.2	64	3.2
Disagree	71	46.7	610	32.9	681	34.0
Neutral	28	18.4	352	19.0	380	18.9
Agree	38	25.0	644	34.8	682	34.0
Strongly agree	10	6.6	188	10.1	198	9.9
<i>When people receive money from abroad it helps develop the country.</i>						
Strongly disagree	7	4.6	139	7.5	146	7.3
Disagree	42	27.8	682	36.9	724	36.2
Neutral	17	11.3	249	13.5	266	13.3
Agree	59	39.1	601	32.5	660	33.0
Strongly agree	26	17.2	177	9.6	203	10.2
<i>When people who have lived abroad come back they help the country.</i>						
Strongly disagree	3	2.0	102	5.5	105	5.2
Disagree	48	31.6	700	37.8	748	37.3
Neutral	18	11.8	207	11.2	225	11.2
Agree	52	34.2	609	32.9	661	33.0
Strongly agree	31	20.4	233	12.6	264	13.2

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

MIGRATION, BORROWING AND SAVING

Migration seems to increase the likelihood that a household member has a bank account, but there are no significant differences in the savings behaviour of different household types. The total amount saved is less among migrant households than among non-migrant households. In contrast, among

return migrants the amount saved in the last 12 months is the highest of the three household types. Remittance-receiving households also seem to save less money than non-remittance-receivers.

The most common way for households to generate income is a loan from family or friends in Afghanistan. Among migrant households and remittance-receiving households, this number is lower than among other household types and may be because they are likely to be able to rely upon loans or gifts from family or friends abroad (Table 54).

Table 54: Borrowing and saving of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Household member(s) has/ have bank account	24	13.5	58	5.7	32	3.9	114	5.7
Household saves	25	13.5	143	14.1	102	12.6	270	13.5
Average amount saved in past 12 months (in AFN)	29,773.3		171,390.6		109,714.5		137,127.0	
Household money generating activity if needed								
Loan from family/ friends in Afghanistan	124	67.0	781	77.4	621	76.8	1,526	76.2
Own cash/ savings	12	6.5	90	8.9	62	7.7	164	8.2
Sale of household assets	10	5.4	59	5.9	41	5.1	110	5.5
Sale of animals	3	1.6	25	2.5	37	4.6	65	3.2
Sale of other farm/ business assets	5	2.7	20	2.0	15	1.8	40	2.0
Loan from family/ friends abroad	9	4.9	11	1.1	2	0.2	22	1.1
Gift from family/ friends in Afghanistan	1	0.5	5	0.5	10	1.2	16	0.8
Gift from family/ friends abroad	14	7.6	1	0.1	0	0.0	15	0.7
Savings association	1	0.5	1	0.1	6	0.7	8	0.4
Sale of crops	0	0.0	3	0.3	4	0.5	7	0.3
Other	6	3.2	13	1.3	11	1.4	30	1.5
If USD 100 are needed for emergency, household could obtain it within a week	113	61.1	643	63.6	446	55.1	1,202	59.9

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Migration also appears to increase a households' ability to cope with emergencies, as a larger percentage of the migrant (61.1%) and return migrant (63.6%) households can obtain USD 100 within one week in case of an emergency than non-migrant households (55.1%). Also among remittance-receiving households (65.1%) this number is higher than among non-receiving households (59.5%) (Table 55).

Table 55: Borrowing and saving of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver		Non-remittance-receiver		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Household member(s) has/have bank account	28	18.4	86	4.6	114	5.7
Household saves	24	15.8	246	13.3	270	13.5
Total amount saved in past 12 months	65,623.5		145,568.4		137,127.0	
<i>Household money generating activity if needed</i>						
Loan from family/ friends in Afghanistan	94	62.2	1,432	77.3	1,526	76.2
Own cash/ savings	14	9.3	150	8.1	164	8.2
Sale of household assets	6	4.0	104	5.6	110	5.5
Sale of animals	1	0.7	64	3.5	65	3.2
Sale of other farm/ business assets	4	2.6	36	1.9	40	2.0
Loan from family/ friends abroad	11	7.3	11	0.6	22	1.1
Gift from family/ friends in Afghanistan	1	0.7	15	0.8	16	0.8
Gift from family/ friends abroad	15	9.9	0	0.0	15	0.7
Savings association	1	0.7	7	0.4	8	0.4
Sale of crops	0	0.0	7	0.4	7	0.3
Other	4	2.6	26	1.4	30	1.5
If 100 USD are needed for emergency, household could obtain it within a week	99	65.1	1,103	59.5	1,202	59.9

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

C.3. MIGRATION, EMPLOYMENT AND THE LABOUR MARKET

The level of income/ salary of Afghans abroad

Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan

The average daily wage is USD 4 in Pakistan and USD 9 in the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, it should be noted that general cost of living is lower in Pakistan than in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Stigter, 2004). Nonetheless, possible employment opportunities and much higher salaries in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan are contributing to high migration flows between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries (as seen in section B.2.2 on border migration). A study commissioned by UNHCR in 2008 states that wages recorded during the migration period of Afghan migrants in the Islamic Republic of Iran are on average four times higher than wages earned by the same individuals upon their return to Afghanistan. In this study, Majidi (2008) compared wage levels, unemployment rates, duration of time spent finding employment and the availability of work between the two countries to highlight the attractiveness of the Iranian economy and the limitations of the Afghan economy, hence leading to an inevitable and one-sided labour migration flow and to economic difficulties encountered upon deportation back to Afghanistan. Migrant workers spent an average of six days before securing their first employment in the Islamic Republic of Iran, in part due to the long history of migration between the two countries and the presence of a solid network of friends, relatives and employers in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In contrast, upon their forced return to Afghanistan, reintegration efforts on the Afghan labour market were less successful for the same individuals and 36.9 per cent spent more than one month trying to find employment.

A study of Afghans living in the Islamic Republic of Iran carried out by the International Labour Organization (ILO) showed that the average weekly income of Afghan male employees was 33,400 toman³¹ (USD 31.54) compared to 10,600 toman for females (USD 10.01) in 2005-2006. Afghans usually received lower wages than their Iranian counterparts. The average wage of Iranian workers (per month) was USD 195 compared to USD 172 for Afghan workers, indicating

³¹ The rial (code: IRR) is the currency of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is subdivided into 100 dinar but, because of the very low current value of the rial, no fraction of the rial is used in accounting. Therefore, Iranians commonly express amounts of money and prices of goods in toman (1 toman = 10 rials).

a difference of about 13 per cent. The highest wages for both workers were in the industrial sector. In services, the wages ranged from USD 148 (Afghan) to USD 162 (Iranian). The total wages (including extra payments) ranged from USD 182 (for Afghans) to USD 224 (Iranians). In both cases, Iranians enjoyed a 10 to 23 per cent wage differential. Although it has been noted that the education level of Iranian employees (especially women) was much higher than that of Afghan employees, this only explains one aspect of the wage differentials between native and Afghan workers (Wickramasekara et al., 2006).

The Census of Afghans living in Pakistan in 2005 showed that a majority of Afghan households residing in Pakistan (53%) reported to be living on daily wages, meaning that most households had no regular income but had to search for work every day anew (Government of Pakistan and UNHCR, 2005). A study by the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) in 2001 and 2002 researched the livelihood strategies of Afghans in Karachi (Pakistan). The study found that the average household monthly income of Afghan households in urban Sindh was nearly three fifths higher (11,116 rupees) than for Pakistan as a whole (7,167 rupees). The urban Sindh household income was even 80 per cent higher than that of the rural North-West Frontier Province (6,334 rupees) (Collective for Social Science Research, 2005). Another study by AREU researched livelihood strategies of Afghans in Peshawar (Pakistan), showing that families had a monthly income ranging from USD 50 to USD 400. These income differences were reflective of the qualitative complexity and income ranges found in the Peshawar economy in general (Collective for Social Science Research, 2006). They are likely to also appear among other Afghan communities living in Pakistan.

Canada, the United States of America and the Netherlands

In 2005, the average employment income for the population of Afghan ethnicity in Canada (15 years and over) was CAD 18,269 per year. On average, Afghan men received a higher salary per year than women, with annual average wages of CAD 20,755 and CAD 14,746 respectively. The annual average employment income for all Canadians was CAD 40,991 for men and CAD 26,587 for women (Statistics Canada, 2006).

The annual per capita income of Afghan workers (both sexes combined) in the United States in 2011 was USD 18,971 whereas it was USD 26,708 for the total population in the country (US Census Bureau, 2013).

With respect to the Netherlands, Afghans have the lowest household income among all migrant groups in the country. In 2003, around two thirds of all Afghan households received less than EUR 900 per month and very few earned more than EUR 1,300 (Siegel et al., 2010).

MIGRATION, ASSETS AND INCOME

Table 56 and Table 57 report the assets of different types of households indicated by the IS Academy Survey. The data show that 20.7 per cent of households own land, with a slightly higher percentage among migrant and return migrant households. The average amount of land owned is lowest among migrant households and largest among non-migrant households. Also, the level of subsistence food production provided by the land is largest among non-migrant households. However, data comparing households who receive remittances to those who do not shows a different picture with the main difference being the average amount of land owned. This is considerably larger among remittance-receivers.

With regards to housing, the number of rooms in the houses of migrant households appears to be larger. Home ownership is considerable with 72.7 per cent of households owning a house, although this percentage is slightly lower among return migrant households (69.8%). When comparing remittance-receivers and non-receivers the percentage of home ownership is larger among the former (81.6% versus 71.9%).

The livestock of a household seems to consist primarily of poultry, goats and sheep. The average number of sheep is considerably larger among non-migrant households (12.6) than among migrant (7.3) and return migrant (6.6) households. The difference in the average number of sheep is also considerable between remittance-receiving (3.08) and non-receiving households (10.12).

The most common household good is a telephone or mobile phone, which is slightly more common among migrant and return migrant households (83.8% and 86.4%, respectively) than non-migrant households (80.2%). The difference among remittance-receiving (82.2%) and non-receiving households (83.8%) is even smaller. A stove or oven is another common asset that is owned more by migrant and return migrant households than by non-migrant households. A similar observation applies to remittance-receiving households, of whom 55.9 per cent own a stove or oven compared to 45.2 per cent of non-remittance-receiving households. Three other common large household assets are a

television, owned by almost 50 per cent of households, a radio (around 45%) and a sewing machine (44.6%). One interesting difference is that more non-migrant households and return migrant households own a computer or laptop (6.4% and 7.7%) than migrant households (3.8%), although this is not a common asset for any of the households. The same applies to large pieces of furniture, a refrigerator/freezer, radio, sewing machine and a washing machine/dryer, which are all slightly less common among migrant households. When comparing remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, a similar observation is found with respect to a sewing machine (46.7% of remittance-receivers versus 44.4% of non-remittance-receivers) and a computer or laptop (7.2% versus 6.8%), although the differences here are only marginal. Thus a mixed picture appears in which some items are owned more by migrant and/or remittance-receiving households (for example a stove/oven), whereas the reverse applies for other items (for example a sewing machine).

When considering agricultural assets, a plough or hoe is owned by 4.8 per cent of the households with slightly higher percentages among migrant households (6.0%) than among return (4.6%) and non-migrant households (4.8%). Also among remittance-receiving households this item is marginally more common (5.9% versus 4.7%). In terms of transportation assets, the two most common are a bicycle (29.0%) and a wagon or cart (23.2%). The percentage of migrant and remittance-receiving households owning a wagon/ cart, bicycle, motorbike and car/ van/ truck/ pick-up are all slightly lower than for the other types of households.

Table 56: Assets of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Land								
Household owns land	42	22.7	211	20.9	162	20.0	415	20.7
Average amount of land owned (in jeribs)	3.0		4.5		5.7		4.8	
Food consumption provided by own land								
Nothing	10	23.8	48	22.7	25	15.4	83	20.0
Some	29	69.0	128	60.7	101	62.3	258	62.2
Quite a lot	2	4.8	28	13.3	32	19.8	62	14.9
Almost all	1	2.4	7	3.3	4	2.5	12	2.9
Housing								
Average number of rooms (without bathroom and kitchen)	3.1		2.8		2.9		2.9	
Home ownership	138	77.5	709	69.8	610	75.2	1,457	72.7

Average number of livestock owned by households									
Sheep		7.3		6.5		12.6		9.6	
Goats		5.8		4.3		7.6		6.0	
Poultry		5.3		5.4		4.4		5.0	
Cows		1.2		1.4		1.7		1.5	
Camels		1.5		1.0		1.5		1.3	
Oxen		1.		1.3		1.4		1.3	
Donkeys		1.4		1.1		1.3		1.2	
Horses		0.0		1.0		1.5		1.2	
Donkeys		1.4		1.1		1.3		1.2	
Goods owned by households									
Telephone/ mobile phone	155	83.8	873	86.3	649	80.2	1,677	83.6	
Television	93	50.7	494	48.9	384	47.5	971	48.4	
Radio	81	43.8	459	45.4	388	48.0	928	46.3	
Stove/ oven	103	55.7	474	46.9	345	42.6	922	46.0	
Sewing machine	77	41.6	455	45.0	362	44.7	894	44.6	
Bicycle	41	22.2	313	31.0	227	28.1	581	29.0	
Wagon/ cart (wooden)	39	21.1	236	23.3	191	23.6	466	23.2	
Refrigerator/ freezer	22	11.9	161	15.9	107	13.2	290	14.5	
Motorbike	18	9.7	132	13.1	133	16.4	283	14.1	
Washing machine/ dryer	14	7.6	130	12.9	93	11.5	237	11.8	
Jewellery	19	10.3	128	12.7	74	9.1	221	11.0	
Computer/ laptop	7	3.8	78	7.7	52	6.4	137	6.8	
Car/ van/ truck/ pick-up	2	1.1	70	6.9	56	6.9	128	6.4	
Plough/ hoe	11	5.9	46	4.5	39	4.8	96	4.8	
Large pieces of furniture	4	2.2	43	4.2	37	4.6	84	4.2	
Dishwasher	0	0.0	10	1.0	11	1.4	21	1.0	
Tractor	1	0.5	7	0.7	8	1.0	16	0.8	
Total monthly expenditure		11,186.6		12,662.1		11,381.5		12,009.2	

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 57: Assets of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receivers		Non-remittance-receivers		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Land						
Household owns land	39	25.7	376	20.3	415	20.7
Average amount of land owned (in jeribs)	6.6		4.6		4.8	
Food consumption provided by own land						
Nothing	10	25.6	73	19.4	83	20.0
Some	26	66.7	232	61.7	258	62.2
Quite a lot	3	7.7	59	15.7	62	14.9
Almost all	0	0.0	12	3.2	1	2.9
Housing						
Average number of rooms (without bathroom and kitchen)	3.1		2.8		2.9	
Home ownership	124	81.6	1,333	71.9	1,457	72.7
Average number of livestock owned by households						
Sheep	3.1		10.1		9.6	
Goats	3.7		6.2		6.0	
Poultry	5.4		4.9		5.0	
Cows	1.2		1.5		1.5	
Camels	1.5		1.2		1.3	
Oxen	1.1		1.4		1.3	
Donkeys	1.4		1.2		1.2	
Horses	0.0		1.2		1.2	
Goods owned by households						
Telephone/ mobile phone	125	82.2	1,552	83.8	1,677	83.6
Television	75	49.3	896	48.3	971	48.4
Radio	71	46.7	857	46.2	928	46.3
Stove/ oven	85	55.9	837	45.2	922	46.0
Sewing machine	71	46.7	823	44.4	894	44.6
Bicycle	38	25.0	543	29.3	581	29.0
Wagon/ cart (wooden)	24	15.8	442	23.8	466	23.2
Refrigerator/ freezer	22	14.5	268	14.5	290	14.5
Motorbike	13	8.5	270	14.6	283	14.1
Washing machine/ dryer	17	11.2	220	11.9	237	11.8
Jewellery	17	11.2	204	11.0	221	11.0
Computer/ laptop	11	7.2	126	6.8	137	6.8

Car/ van/ truck/ pick-up	5	3.3	123	6.6	128	6.4
Plough/ hoe	9	5.9	87	4.7	96	4.8
Large pieces of furniture	3	2.0	81	4.4	84	4.2
Dishwasher	2	1.3	19	1.0	21	1.0
Tractor	1	0.7	15	0.8	16	0.8
Total monthly expenditure	12,065.0		12,004.7		12,009.2	

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

The total monthly expenditure is fairly similar for all types of households, at around AFN 12,000 per month. The most important income source of Afghan households appears to be unskilled day labour (Table 58 and Table 59). In addition, migrant households seem to also strongly depend on remittances from outside Afghanistan, which were mentioned as the primary income source in more than 20 per cent of migrant households. Furthermore, almost 30 per cent of the households who receive remittances mentioned these as their primary income source. However, the total average household income appears to be lowest among migrant households and remittance-receiving households, which might be due to the absence of a productive member of the household.

Table 58: Income and income sources of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant	Return	Non-migrant	Total
Most important source of income	Unskilled day labour 46 (25.8%)*	Unskilled day labour 342 (33.7%)	Unskilled day labour 267 (33.0%)	Unskilled day labour 655 (32.7%)
Average number of months household received most important income source	11.7	11.8	11.9	11.8
Total average household income (in AFN)	7,532.9	11,235.6	10,951.2	10,778.6

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Note: *For households with migrants, remittances from outside the country are also very important: 38 (21.3%).

Table 59: Income and income sources of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver	Non-remittance-receiver	Total
Most important source of income	Remittances* 45 (29.6%)	Unskilled day labour: 621 (33.5%)	Unskilled day labour 655 (32.7%)
Average number of months household received most important income source	11.7	11.8	11.8
Total average household income (in AFN)	7,205.5	11,072.3	10,778.6

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Note: *Unskilled day labour is a close second: 34 (22.37%).

Assets and access to facilities of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran

A study carried out by Alzahra University found that 81 per cent of Afghan households in the Islamic Republic of Iran resided in a rented house and only 8 per cent owned the house in which they were living with a slightly higher percentage among documented Afghans (8.3%) than among undocumented Afghans (7.2%). The average family home is 78 square meters and has two rooms. However, the average size of the accommodation differed considerably between those in colonies and settlements (about 41 square meters) and those in suburbs and cities (82.5 and 88.5 square meters respectively).

Table 60: Access to facilities of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran (in %)

	Independent access	Shared access	No access
Kitchen	83.8	11.4	4.8
Latrine	82.4	17.4	0.1
Bath	79.2	17.2	3.6
Piped water	66.1	32.3	1.6
Landline	48.9	4.8	46.4

Source: Ahmadinejad, 2011.

Table 60 shows the level of access to various facilities among Afghan households in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In general, the large majority of households have independent access to pipe water, a bath, a kitchen (including a refrigerator) and a latrine. In terms of the energy source that is used, gas is the most common (82.1%). Approximately half of households have access to a landline telephone and over 90 per cent of respondents reported ownership

of a mobile phone (Table 61). More than three quarters of respondents own a personal computer. It is not common for Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran to own a car, but almost one quarter of the sample owns a motorbike (Ahmadinejad, 2011).

Table 61: Assets owned by Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran (in %)

	Owned	Working tool	Not owned
Mobile phone	92.4	0.0	7.6
Refrigerator	92.1	0.0	7.9
Personal Computer	76.5	0.0	23.4
Motorbike	24.3	3.5	72.1
Car	5.2	0.6	94.1

Source: Ahmadinejad, 2011.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate was identified as approximately 9.6 per cent in the NRVA 2005, while in the NRVA 2007/08 the unemployment³² rate for males was 6.9 per cent and for females 7.4 per cent. Overall the unemployment rate in Afghanistan was 7.1 per cent in 2007/08. This relatively low rate disguises high underemployment, poverty and low productivity. In developing countries, that usually lack social protection schemes, many individuals simply cannot afford to be unemployed. Consequently, many must resort to dangerous, unproductive, low-paid jobs, often in the informal sector and for only a few hours. In this context, a low unemployment rate in Afghanistan reflects a poorly performing labour market rather than a sustainable employment situation (Icon-Institute, 2009). In contrast to the NRVA 2007/08, other sources (such as the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled) estimate that Afghanistan's unemployment rate is as high as 33 per cent. Human Rights Field Monitoring data suggest a much lower unemployment rate of 24 per cent among males in both urban and rural areas. The unemployment rate for females is estimated to be as high as 54 per cent among urban and 62 per cent among rural women (UNDP, 2009). The differences in reported unemployment rates are likely due (at least in part) to different sampling procedures and definitions used to define unemployment in Afghanistan.

³² Note: No agreed exact definition of employment and unemployment exists in the statistical system of Afghanistan. In accordance to ILO recommendations and the analysis used in the NRVA 2007/08, all working-age persons who are engaged in economic activities are classified as being employed. This also includes people who work only few (sometimes only one) hours a week (Icon-Institute, 2009).

The IS Academy data indicate that 32.5 per cent of households are employed, meaning that they are involved in a paid job, that they are self-employed or are active in community or military service. As this involves all the household members, including males, females and children, this may explain the low number of employment compared to the data presented above. Among migrants a higher percentage is employed, namely 47 per cent.

Employment as the reason to migrate

Another indication of the poor state of the labour market in Afghanistan is demonstrated by the IS Academy data, which show that the main motivation for the emigration of current migrants is seeking employment opportunities abroad (73.3%, see Table 62). However, the specific destination country selected was mainly the result of perceived ease of access to that country (Table 63). Better employment opportunities and working conditions were also a commonly cited factor.

Table 62: Reason for migration of current migrants, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
Employment opportunities	211	73.3
Moving with the family	20	6.9
Family formation (marriage)	13	4.5
Security/ political reasons	13	4.5
Family reunification	12	4.2
Education	10	3.5
Environmental disaster	8	2.8
Health	1	0.3

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 63: Factors influencing the country choice of return migrants, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
Easier to access/ gain entry	711	64.8
Better working conditions	183	16.7
Family or friends already there	3	0.3
Better living conditions	2	0.2
Other	142	12.9

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Employment of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran are allowed to work if they have a Temporary Work Permit for which only Afghan men aged 18-60 years can apply. The job areas in which permits can be granted are set by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and often involve manual labour. A study in five provinces of the Islamic Republic of Iran observed that 77 per cent of the male participants aged 18 and older had a job, 10.1 per cent were looking for employment, 9 per cent were studying and 1 per cent stayed at home to care for the children. In contrast, 78 per cent of women aged 18 and older were homemakers (Alzahra University, 2011). The labour force participation rate was 92 per cent for men (aged 18 and above) and 8 per cent for women. In terms of the type of jobs, 28 per cent of Afghan men worked in the construction sector, 29 per cent were daily labourers and 3 per cent worked in animal husbandry and agricultural fields. Afghan women mainly worked in tailor shops (48%) or as daily workers (32%) and to a lesser extent sold pistachios (6%) (Ahmadinejad, 2011; Alzahra University, 2011).

Skill shortages

Afghanistan's demand for high-skilled labour is evident at almost every level (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2006). The country faces many challenges in the health care and educational sector. Persistent gaps between supply and demand of science- and technology-trained workers are likewise present. Moreover, there is a high demand for skilled labour in relation to the communications infrastructure. Professionals are also needed to rebuild damaged and inadequate potable water, irrigation and flood control systems. In many areas people experience a shortage of electricity and have to earn their livelihood with obsolete agriculture practices. New technologies are urgently needed to ease undue pressure on the country's limited arable land. As a consequence, Afghanistan's development challenges are enormous and solutions will require strong visionary and innovative leadership, well-coordinated science and technology structures and an effective human resource strategy. There is a consensus that improving the quality of the higher education system is central to the economic improvement of Afghanistan. This is because higher education will provide the high-skilled workforce that the country so urgently needs. Higher education is therefore one of the eight pillars of the Afghan National Development Strategy³³ (ANDS) (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008a).

³³ The Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) is discussed in more detail in Part D.1.

Despite the importance of developing the education system in Afghanistan, it should also be highlighted that talented Afghans, who graduated secondary or tertiary educational institutions, are leaving the country and few are returning from abroad. Main push factors for highly skilled Afghans to leave the country are insurgent attacks and threats of violence across the country. Moreover, low salaries and widespread criminal activities discourage young people from remaining in the country. Therefore, most students surveyed during research at Kabul University stated that they wanted to emigrate as soon as they finish their studies. Afghans with key skills (such as physicians, teachers or university professors) know that they can earn far more and live more easily elsewhere (Younossi, 2006). Since it is almost impossible for a state to forcibly retain people (whether they are needed or not) the Afghan state and international organizations have reached out to skilled and educated Afghans living in the diaspora.

BRAIN DRAIN AND EDUCATION OF MIGRANTS

The emigration of skilled Afghans appeared mainly in the 1980s and 1990s during the Soviet intervention, when it was mainly the Afghan elite (professors, teachers and students) who migrated to Europe and North America. More recently data on the educational attainment of migrants were collected in the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment 2007/08. There was no indication of brain drain in current migration trends as there was almost no difference in the level of education of the resident population and the migrants who left Afghanistan. Moreover, international migrants do not seem to be more highly educated than internal migrants (Icon-Institute, 2009). Nonetheless, it is clear that Afghanistan is in need of highly skilled labour, particularly in the education and health care sectors. In 2000, the World Bank cited the emigration rate of the tertiary educated population to be 23.2 per cent and the emigration rate of physicians to be 9.1 per cent (World Bank, 2011a). The World Health Organization stated that there were a total of 17,257 nurses and 2,181 midwives in Afghanistan in 2009 and 6,901 physicians in 2010 (WHO, 2013b). That is roughly one physician per 5,000 people in Afghanistan. The low salaries of physicians (ca. USD 100 per month) make it even more difficult to attract physicians to come to or remain in Afghanistan (Kuschminder and Dora, 2009). Table 64 gives an overview of the annual physician emigration rate from 1991 to 2004, showing that although the emigration rate of physicians has decreased over time (from 11.3% in 1991 to 8.4% in 2004) the total number of physicians leaving the country has steadily increased from 302 in 1991 to over 500 in 2004 (Bhargava et al., 2010).

Table 64: Physician emigration from Afghanistan, 1991-2004

Year	Rate of physician emigration (%)	Total number of physician emigrants	Number of physicians in Afghanistan	Number of physicians per 1,000 people in Afghanistan
1991	11.3	302	2,368	0.13
1992	11.1	327	2,606	0.14
1993	11.0	348	2,816	0.14
1994	11.1	361	2,901	0.14
1995	12.2	393	2,814	0.13
1996	13.5	423	2,708	0.12
1997	14.0	419	2,583	0.11
1998	11.9	431	3,173	0.13
1999	10.5	444	3,799	0.15
2000	9.1	449	4,462	0.17
2001	8.1	448	5,049	0.19
2002	8.3	474	5,220	0.19
2003	8.3	486	5,391	0.19
2004	8.4	508	5,562	0.19

Source: Bhargava et al., 2010.

With respect to an increasing number of physicians leaving Afghanistan, it is relevant to consider their destination countries. Table 65 shows that most Afghan physicians migrate to Western countries where employment conditions are good and salaries are high. The highest inflow of Afghan physicians was recorded in the United States and Germany. These inflows may also be related to an existing Afghan diaspora in these countries, which makes it easier for new arrivals to access information and integrate into society.

Table 65: Number of physician outflows by country of destination, 1991-2004

Year	AUS	CAN	DEN	FRA	GER	ITA	NOR	SWE	SWI	UK	USA
1991	5	1	2	1	135	4	7	6	7	10	124
1992	6	1	2	1	146	4	7	9	6	11	134
1993	7	1	2	1	155	4	7	11	6	12	141
1994	8	1	4	1	158	4	7	14	5	12	146
1995	9	5	4	1	169	4	7	16	5	13	158
1996	10	6	4	1	195	5	7	19	4	12	160
1997	12	4	4	1	186	5	7	21	4	12	163
1998	13	4	4	3	181	5	7	24	4	13	173
1999	15	7	3	6	183	5	8	26	3	17	171
2000	16	6	6	6	172	5	8	29	3	21	178
2001	17	7	6	6	165	5	8	31	3	24	176
2002	18	8	7	7	180	5	9	34	3	25	179
2003	19	9	15	8	169	5	9	36	3	30	182
2004	20	10	23	9	169	5	9	36	3	37	184

Source: Bhargava et al., 2010.

Data from the IS Academy Survey suggest that migration seems to have a positive influence on the literacy and employment prospects of individuals in a household. Table 66 shows that almost 50 per cent of the members of households with migrants can read and write, dropping to 41 per cent in return migrant households and 37 per cent in non-migrant households. With regard to employment, the differences are even stronger with 47 per cent of migrant households reporting current employment, 23.5 per cent of return migrant household individuals working and only 12.6 per cent of non-migrant households.

Table 66: Literacy and employment of migrant, return and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Literacy of individuals (aged 6+) by household type	111	49.0	1,966	40.8	2,722	37.3	4,799	38.9
Employment of individuals by household type	108	47.2	1,206	23.5	1,274	12.6	2,588	17.6

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

In the IS Academy data the extent of brain drain of current migrants seems to be limited (Table 67 and Table 68). Migrants tend to be male members (92%) of the household in their productive years with a mean age of just under 25. In

more than 65 per cent of the cases the migrant was a child of the household head and one fifth were a sibling of the household head. In terms of education, the majority (46.2%) reported having no formal education and an average of four years of schooling was recorded for all migrants.

Table 67: Age and years of education of migrants, IS Academy

	Mean	Min	Max	Frequency
Age of migrant	24.5	1	60	233
Education (years)	3.9	0	16	225

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 68: Migrants' level of education and relationship to household head, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
Highest educational attainment		
No formal education	104	46.2
Any primary	52	23.11
Any secondary	64	28.4
Any tertiary	3	1.3
Relationship to the household head		
Child	152	65.2
Brother or sister	48	20.6
Head of household	12	5.1
Grandchild	9	3.9
Son or daughter in law	4	1.7
Father or mother	3	1.3
Spouse	3	1.3
Cousin	1	0.4
Nephew or niece	1	0.4

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

RETURN MIGRATION AND SKILLS

In terms of the work experience and skills migrants gain abroad, Table 69 shows that 68.3 per cent of the migrants worked while residing in the country of migration. Almost every return migrant had felt a part of the destination society. Only a small number of return migrants had received training or education while abroad, which seems to indicate that the number of formal skills gained whilst abroad is limited.

Table 69: Return migrants' migration experiences, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
Felt a part of the destination society	1,087	99.3
Employed in the country of migration at any time	751	68.3
Received education while abroad	57	5.3
Member of an organization while abroad	46	4.2
Received training while abroad	39	3.6

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

The positive contribution of emigration to the development of skills may also be limited by the irregular status with which they entered the country. Less than 14 per cent of current migrants reported having migrated with legal documents and over 95 per cent of return migrants did not have documents when they left Afghanistan. As long as the migrants continued to be irregular immigrants in the country of destination, their access to formal jobs and education may have been limited.

Table 70: Migration with and without documents, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
Current migrant migrated with legal documents	37	13.9
Return migrants who emigrated without documents	1,049	95.4

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

However, among return migrants the majority indicated that the migration experience improved their professional skills.

Table 71: Return migrants' perspectives on skills improvement, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Migration improved professional skills</i>		
Strongly disagree	13	1.2
Disagree	320	29.3
Neutral	65	5.9
Agree	578	52.9
Strongly agree	117	10.7

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Migrants who return seem to experience difficulties in finding work as only 23.3 per cent of return migrants were in paid employment since their return. Furthermore, on average it took about one year to secure employment. 10.6 per cent of the return migrants owned their own business.

Table 72: Return migrants' return experiences, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
In paid employment since return	256	23.3
Own their own business	116	10.5
Average number of months to find a new job		12.9 (min: 0, max: 96)

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

C.4. MIGRATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Migration and living conditions/ poverty

Migration seems to positively contribute to the living conditions of households in Afghanistan particularly through the impact of remittances (see Table 73 and Table 74). Among migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households no large differences in the current economic situation of the household are observed, but more remittance-receiving households than non-receiving households tend to report living comfortably.

For most households the living circumstances have improved over the last five years. However, the impact of migration on households seems negative, because the living conditions of a larger percentage seems to have worsened in the last five years among migrant households. A similar pattern is discerned among remittance-receiving and non-receiving households with the main category being an improvement of living conditions, although again a higher percentage of remittance-receivers than non-receivers indicated a worsening of the situation. An improvement of the living situation was also more common among households who received remittances and they were less likely to report a similar living situation as compared to five years ago. The perspective of return migrants on the improvement of the household's living conditions compared to pre-migration is primarily positive with 53.4 per cent of return migrants reporting an improvement. Return migrants also indicate that the migration has benefited their family (see Table 75). Therefore, the evidence from the IS survey data on the impact of migration on living conditions over time is mixed.

There is also no clear impact of migration on poverty with regard to the difficulty households experience in meeting basic food needs. Migrant households report that they never experienced them or that they experienced

them monthly more often compared to non-migrant households. However, remittances do seem to positively contribute to a decrease in difficulties meeting food needs.

Table 73: Subjective wealth of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Current economic situation of household								
Finding it very difficult	9	5.1	34	3.3	60	7.4	103	5.1
Finding it difficult	38	21.3	204	20.1	148	18.2	390	19.4
Coping (neutral)	97	54.6	594	58.5	452	55.7	1,143	57.0
Living comfortably	32	18.0	170	16.7	149	18.4	351	17.5
Living very comfortably	2	1.1	14	1.4	2	0.2	18	0.9
Living conditions of household compared to 5 years ago								
Became much worse	3	1.6	27	2.6	41	5.1	71	3.5
Became worse	52	28.1	212	21.0	125	15.4	389	19.4
Stayed the same	54	29.2	364	36.0	310	38.3	728	36.3
Improved	75	40.5	390	38.6	324	40.0	789	39.3
Improved very much	1	0.5	18	1.8	9	1.1	28	1.4
Frequency of difficulties in meeting food needs								
Daily	3	1.6	14	1.4	39	4.8	56	2.8
Weekly	9	4.9	61	6.0	57	7.0	127	6.3
Monthly	43	23.2	202	20.0	142	17.5	387	19.3
Once every few months	40	21.6	275	27.2	229	28.3	544	27.1
Never	90	48.6	459	45.4	342	42.3	891	44.4

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 74: Subjective wealth of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver		Non-remittance-receiver		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Current economic situation of household						
Finding it very difficult	4	3.3	98	5.3	103	5.1
Finding it difficult	27	17.8	363	19.6	390	19.4
Coping (neutral)	82	53.9	1,061	57.3	1,143	57.0
Living comfortably	36	23.7	315	17.0	351	17.5
Living very comfortably	2	1.3	16	0.9	18	0.9

Living conditions of household compared to 5 years ago						
Become much worse	3	2.0	68	3.7	71	3.5
Become worse	40	26.3	349	18.8	389	19.4
Stayed the same	39	25.7	689	37.2	728	36.3
Improved	69	45.4	720	38.9	789	40.0
Very much improved	1	0.7	27	1.5	28	1.4
Frequency of difficulties in meeting food needs						
Daily	0	0.0	56	3.0	56	2.8
Weekly	7	4.6	120	6.5	127	6.3
Monthly	29	19.1	358	19.3	387	19.3
Once every few months	35	25.0	506	27.3	544	27.1
Never	78	51.3	813	43.9	891	44.4

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 75: Return migrants' perspective on living conditions, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
Living conditions of the household compared to pre-migration		
Became much worse	13	1.2
Became worse	167	15.2
Stayed the same	300	27.3
Improved	586	53.4
Very much improved	31	2.8
Migration benefited my family		
Strongly disagree	26	2.4
Disagree	186	16.9
Neutral	174	15.8
Agree	587	53.5
Strongly agree	125	11.4

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Migration and access to and usage of facilities

Migration and associated remittances seem to contribute to a household's capacity to invest in access to certain facilities (Table 76 and Table 77). Although the differences are small, return migrant households seem to have more access to a private tap or well as their main source of drinking water, compared to both migrant and non-migrant households. When comparing remittance-receiving households to those who do not receive remittances, the main difference is that the latter group has more access to private taps, although for both groups a private well is the main source.

The primary type of toilet used by a household is a private pit or latrine, but almost 10 per cent of migrant and return migrant households have their own flush toilet compared to less than 7 per cent among non-migrant households. Also among remittance-receiving households, private access to to flush toilet is more common. This seems to indicate a positive influence of migration on household sanitation conditions.

For all types of households, the two types of fuel that are mainly used for cooking are gas (about 41% of households) and wood (about 34%). Return migrant households are slightly more likely to use wood and less likely to use animal dung compared to the other two kinds of households. Also among remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, gas and wood are the two principal sources of cooking fuel, although remittance-receiving households are more likely to use gas than non-remittances receiving households.

The type of lighting that households use is also fairly similar across all types of households with the two main sources being electricity from a public source (about 50%) and kerosene, gas or candles (about 36%). Remittances do seem to slightly promote the use of electricity from a private source.

Other facilities that household members use are public transportation (95%), a hospital (82%) and a health centre or clinic (81%). Among migrant households the use of banks, money transfer operators and microfinance institutions is more common than for the other two types of households, although this usage remains limited. The difference in usage of these three facilities is even more pronounced when comparing remittance-receiving with non-receiving households, where the former use these services significantly more often than the latter.

Table 76: Usage of and access to facilities of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>Primary source of drinking water for household in rainy season</i>								
Private well	49	27.5	332	32.7	253	31.2	634	31.6
Private tap	27	15.2	215	21.2	149	18.4	391	19.5
Shared well	38	21.4	171	16.6	152	18.7	361	18.0
Shared tap	27	15.2	134	13.2	103	12.7	264	13.2
River, lake, pond or stream	28	15.7	98	9.7	110	13.6	236	11.8
Bottled water	1	0.6	1	0.1	1	0.1	3	0.1
Other	8	4.5	64	6.3	43	5.3	115	5.7

Primary source of drinking water for household in dry season								
Private well	45	25.3	292	28.8	216	26.7	553	27.6
Shared well	46	25.8	243	24.0	226	27.9	515	25.7
Tap shared within community	27	15.2	154	15.2	115	14.2	296	14.8
River, lake, pond or stream	30	16.8	118	11.6	116	14.3	264	13.2
Private tap in house	21	11.8	140	13.8	95	11.7	256	12.8
Bottled water	1	0.6	3	0.3	2	0.2	6	0.3
Other	8	4.5	64	6.3	40	4.9	112	5.6
Type of toilet mainly used by household								
Private pit or latrine	153	86.0	835	82.2	690	85.1	1,678	83.7
Private flush toilet	17	9.5	94	9.2	53	6.5	164	8.2
Shared pit or latrine	5	2.8	73	7.2	53	6.5	131	6.5
No toilet	3	1.7	7	0.7	8	1.0	18	0.9
Shared flush toilet	0	0.0	7	0.7	6	0.7	13	0.6
Pan or bucket	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1	1	0.1
Type of fuel mainly used for cooking by household								
Gas	76	41.1	404	40.0	333	41.2	813	40.6
Wood	59	31.9	379	37.5	256	31.7	694	34.6
Straw, shrubs or grass	19	10.3	107	10.6	102	12.6	228	11.4
Animal dung	20	10.8	63	6.2	83	10.3	166	8.3
Charcoal	5	2.7	38	3.8	18	2.2	61	3.0
Kerosene	4	2.2	11	1.1	8	1.0	23	1.1
Electricity	2	1.1	9	0.9	8	1.0	19	0.9
Type of lighting mainly used by household								
Electricity (public source)	90	48.9	512	50.6	406	50.2	1,008	50.3
Kerosene, gas or candles	66	35.9	347	34.3	305	37.7	718	35.8
Electricity (private source)	20	10.9	103	10.2	66	8.2	189	9.4
Other	5	2.7	40	4.0	25	3.1	70	3.5
Electricity (combination)	3	1.6	9	0.9	7	0.9	19	0.9
Facilities used by household member(s)								
Public transportation	174	94.0	956	94.6	774	95.7	1,904	95.0
Hospital	153	82.7	819	81.0	669	82.6	1,641	81.8
Health centre or clinic	151	81.6	797	78.8	663	81.9	1,611	80.3
Bank	28	15.1	73	7.2	38	4.7	139	7.0
Internet café/ connection	4	2.2	38	3.8	24	3.0	66	3.3
Mircofinance institution	7	3.8	21	2.1	16	2.0	44	2.2
Money transfer operator	9	4.9	17	1.7	9	1.1	35	1.7
Post office	3	1.6	10	1.0	9	1.1	22	1.1

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 77: Usage of and access to facilities of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver		Non-remittance-receiver		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>Primary source of drinking water for household in rainy season</i>						
Private well	50	32.9	584	31.5	634	31.6
Private tap	19	12.5	372	20.1	391	19.5
Shared well	29	19.1	332	17.9	361	18.0
Shared tap	25	16.4	239	12.9	264	13.2
River, lake, pond or stream	23	15.1	213	11.5	236	11.8
Bottled water	0	0.0	3	0.2	3	0.1
Other	6	3.9	109	5.9	115	5.7
<i>Primary source of drinking water for household in dry season</i>						
Private well	43	28.3	510	27.6	553	27.6
Shared well	37	24.3	478	25.8	515	25.7
Shared tap	29	19.1	267	14.4	296	14.8
River, lake, pond or stream	25	16.4	239	12.9	264	13.2
Private tap	12	7.9	244	13.2	256	12.8
Bottled water	0	0.0	6	0.3	6	0.3
Other	6	3.9	106	5.7	112	5.6
<i>Type of toilet mainly used by household</i>						
Private pit or latrine	130	85.5	1,548	83.5	1,678	83.7
Private flush toilet	16	10.5	148	8.0	164	8.2
Shared pit or latrine	4	2.6	127	6.8	131	6.5
No toilet	1	0.7	17	0.9	18	0.9
Shared flush toilet	1	0.7	12	0.6	13	0.6
Pan or bucket	0	0.0	1	0.1	1	0.1
<i>Type of fuel mainly used for cooking by household</i>						
Gas	66	43.4	747	40.3	813	40.6
Wood	47	30.9	647	34.9	694	34.6
Straw, shrubs or grass	18	11.8	210	11.3	228	11.4
Animal dung	14	9.2	152	8.2	166	8.3
Charcoal	2	1.3	59	3.2	61	3.0
Kerosene	3	2.0	20	1.1	23	1.1
Electricity	2	1.3	17	0.9	19	1.0

Type of lighting mainly used by household						
Electricity (public source)	71	47.0	937	50.6	1,008	50.3
Kerosene, gas or candles	56	37.1	662	35.7	718	35.8
Electricity (private source)	19	12.6	170	9.2	189	9.4
Electricity (combination of public and private)	2	1.3	17	0.9	19	0.9
Other	3	2.0	67	3.6	70	3.5
Facilities used by household member(s)						
Public transportation	145	95.4	1,759	94.9	1,904	95.0
Hospital	128	84.2	1,513	81.6	1,641	81.8
Health centre or clinic	125	82.2	1,486	80.2	1,611	80.3
Bank	35	23.0	104	5.6	139	6.9
Internet café/ connection	8	5.3	58	3.1	66	3.3
Micrfinance institution	7	4.6	37	2.0	44	2.2
Money transfer operator	13	8.5	22	1.2	35	1.7
Post office	2	1.3	20	1.1	22	1.1

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Living conditions and poverty of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran

With regard to types of residence, the study by Ahmadinejad (2011) found that the largest group (46.0%) of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran was living in urban areas. An additional 36.9 per cent resided in semi-urban and rural areas, 9.5 per cent in colonies at a large distance from the cities and 7.6 per cent in government-run settlements. Unregistered Afghans appear to live primarily in suburbs, semi-urban and rural areas, possibly because the risk of being arrested and deported is lower in the country-side. In contrast, registered Afghans mainly reside in cities and urban areas.

Poverty is a big problem among Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Almost half of the Afghan refugees (46.2%) live below the absolute poverty threshold. Among households headed by women, which represent about 7 per cent of the sample, the headcount income poverty ratio is 58 per cent and among those headed by men it is 45 per cent. Furthermore, 47 per cent of children live in households in which the income is below the income poverty threshold. There are large differences in the income poverty indices per province with the lowest index in Fars (28%), the province that also has the largest number of refugees, and the highest in Kerman (65%) (Tehran has an index of 35%, Khorasan Razavi 45% and Isfahan 56%). The income poverty rate is highest among refugees

residing in camps (65%) and lowest among those living in colonies (34%). This finding may be explained by the social networks refugees can rely on in colonies as refugees tend to have kin there. The severe poverty rate is 2.4 per cent, while it is 5.9 per cent among female headed and 2.2 per cent among male headed households. For children this ratio is 2.2 per cent (Alzahra University, 2011).

EDUCATION

Migration and education

The IS Academy data suggest that children in households with migrants or return migrants attend school more regularly than children in non-migrant households (44% versus 40%). The same applies to households who receive remittances (45.5% versus 41.8% in non-receiving households). Child labour appears slightly more common among migrant households (11.4%), which might be due to the absence of a productive person in the household. Among households who receive remittances, the percentage of children that worked in the last week is similar to that of children in non-remittance-receiving households. Additionally, the type of household does not seem to influence the children's grades and the majority of households report that their child's school performance is average. The child's grades in remittance-receiving households do appear to be slightly higher.

Table 78: Child outcomes of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Child attended school in the last week	278	44.0	1,592	43.8	1,125	39.5	2,995	42.1
Child grades								
Below average (0-65%)	31	11.3	226	14.4	156	14.4	413	14.1
Average (66-79%)	170	61.8	946	60.4	666	61.7	1,782	61.0
Above average (80-100%)	74	26.9	395	25.2	258	23.9	727	24.9
Child labour in the last week	48	11.4	201	8.5	179	9.6	428	9.2

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 79: Child outcomes of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiving		Non-remittance-receiving		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Child attended school in the last week	236	45.5	2,759	41.8	2,995	42.1
Child grades						
Below average (0-65%)	22	9.4	391	14.5	413	14.1
Average (66-79%)	142	60.9	1,640	61.0	1,782	61.0
Above average (80-100%)	69	29.6	658	24.5	727	24.9
Child labour in the last week	33	9.5	395	9.2	428	9.2

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Education of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Although documented refugees have access to schooling in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the level of education is low among the sample of a study carried out in 2011. Of the persons aged 6 and over 33 per cent were illiterate and 36 per cent had obtained only primary education. When splitting the sample between documented and undocumented refugees, the illiteracy rate was 42 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively. The level of literacy is 7.5 per cent higher among males (Ahmadinejad, 2011).

SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF RETURN MIGRANTS AND THE IMPACT OF MIGRANTS ON THE ORIGIN COUNTRY

Social integration of return migrants

The migration experience does not seem to lead to a decrease in the social integration of the return migrants in their origin community in Afghanistan (Table 80). Upon return, almost 90 per cent of migrants feel very much a part of the community in which they live. Moreover, the return migrants' position in the household tends to have improved compared to the situation before migration, along with their social status in general. However, the migration experience itself appears to subjectively alienate people from their origin community.

Table 80: Return migrants' perspectives on their return, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Now that returned I feel a part of a community in Afghanistan</i>		
Not a part of a community	13	1.2
Somewhat a part of a community	100	9.1
Very much a part of a community	983	89.7
<i>Migration alienated me from the community</i>		
Strongly disagree	34	3.1
Disagree	302	27.5
Neutral	121	11.0
Agree	539	49.0
Strongly agree	103	9.4
<i>Position in household compared to pre-migration</i>		
Household status has decreased	99	9.1
Household status has not changed	346	31.7
Household status has improved	645	59.2
<i>Migration improved my social status</i>		
Strongly disagree	20	1.8
Disagree	230	20.9
Neutral	143	13.0
Agree	557	50.6
Strongly agree	150	13.6

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Opinions regarding return migrants seem to be generally positive (Table 81 and Table 82). IS Academy Survey data show that the majority of households seem to strongly disagree with the statement that return migrants do not fit into their community. Moreover, over three quarters argue that return migrants bring new ideas, knowledge and technologies to Afghanistan. This may result in changes in the traditional cultures and norms in Afghanistan as a result of the experiences that return migrants bring. However, the large majority of households strongly agree that return migrants receive preferential treatment - a perception that may impact the social cohesion of a community.

Table 81: Opinions on return migrants of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>When migrants return from abroad they do not fit in</i>								
Strongly disagree	22	11.9	107	10.6	82	10.2	211	10.5
Disagree	89	48.1	411	40.7	342	42.4	842	42.1
Neutral	22	11.9	186	18.4	184	22.8	392	19.6
Agree	42	22.7	246	24.3	160	19.9	448	22.4
Strongly agree	10	5.4	61	6.0	38	4.7	109	5.4
<i>When migrants return from abroad they bring new ideas, knowledge and technologies</i>								
Strongly disagree	1	0.5	11	1.1	20	2.5	32	1.6
Disagree	18	9.7	65	6.4	76	9.4	159	7.9
Neutral	21	11.3	138	13.6	123	15.3	282	14.1
Agree	82	44.3	500	49.5	380	47.2	962	48.1
Strongly agree	63	34.1	297	29.4	206	25.6	566	28.3
<i>When migrants return from abroad they receive preferential treatment</i>								
Strongly disagree	4	2.2	17	1.7	21	2.6	42	2.1
Disagree	16	8.6	88	8.7	102	12.7	206	10.3
Neutral	15	8.1	155	15.4	135	16.8	305	15.3
Agree	88	47.6	465	46.1	333	41.5	886	44.4
Strongly agree	62	33.5	284	28.1	212	26.4	558	27.9

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 82: Opinions on return migrants of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver		Non-remittance-receiver		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>When migrants return from abroad they do not fit in</i>						
Strongly disagree	20	13.2	191	10.3	211	10.5
Disagree	72	47.4	770	41.6	842	42.1
Neutral	19	12.5	373	20.2	392	19.6
Agree	37	24.3	411	22.2	448	22.4
Strongly agree	4	2.6	105	5.7	109	5.4
<i>When migrants return from abroad they bring new ideas, knowledge and technologies</i>						
Strongly disagree	1	0.7	31	1.7	32	1.6
Disagree	14	9.2	145	7.8	159	7.9

Neutral	14	9.2	268	14.5	282	14.1
Agree	69	45.4	893	48.3	962	48.1
Strongly agree	54	35.5	512	27.7	566	28.3
<i>When migrants return from abroad they receive preferential treatment</i>						
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	40	2.2	42	2.1
Disagree	13	8.5	193	10.5	206	10.3
Neutral	15	9.9	290	15.7	305	15.3
Agree	77	50.7	809	43.9	886	44.4
Strongly agree	45	29.6	513	27.8	558	27.9

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Remittances and social cohesion

The influence of remittances on social cohesion in a community seems to be mixed (Table 83 and Table 84). In particular, non-migrant and return migrant households appear to have more negative opinions towards people who receive money from abroad. More than one third of those households report that persons who receive remittances become lazier and about one third agree with the statement that it leads to resentment from others. The differences are even more pronounced among remittance-receiving and non-receiving households. More than half of all remittance-receiving households disagree with the statement that remittances make people lazier and lead to resentment from other, whereas a third of non-receiving households disagree. The higher incidence of reported resentment may be related to answers to the statement that people who receive remittances get rich. More than half of return and non-migrant households agree that these people get rich, while this percentage is 46.5 per cent among migrant households. However, among remittance-receiving and non-receiving households the general opinion is that they agree with this statement.

Table 83: Opinions on the receipt of remittances of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant		Return		Non-Migrant		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>When people receive money from abroad they become lazier</i>								
Strongly disagree	9	4.9	32	3.2	46	5.7	87	4.3
Disagree	90	48.7	320	31.6	249	30.8	659	32.9
Neutral	21	11.3	155	15.3	157	19.4	333	16.6
Agree	40	21.6	365	36.1	281	34.7	686	34.2
Strongly agree	25	13.5	139	13.8	76	9.4	240	12.0
<i>When people receive money from abroad it leads to resentment from others</i>								
Strongly disagree	4	2.2	20	2.0	15	1.8	39	2.0
Disagree	90	48.6	339	33.5	275	34.0	704	35.1
Neutral	38	20.5	232	23.0	181	22.4	451	22.5
Agree	45	24.3	333	32.9	274	33.9	652	32.5
Strongly agree	8	4.3	87	8.6	64	7.9	159	7.9
<i>When people receive money from abroad they get rich</i>								
Strongly disagree	2	1.1	2	0.2	5	0.6	9	0.5
Disagree	32	17.3	143	14.2	104	12.9	279	13.9
Neutral	47	25.4	195	19.3	168	20.8	410	20.5
Agree	86	46.5	536	53.1	437	54.0	1,059	52.8
Strongly agree	18	9.7	134	13.3	95	11.7	247	12.3

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Table 84: Opinions on the receipt of remittances of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver		Non-remittance-receiver		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>When people receive money from abroad they become lazier</i>						
Strongly disagree	6	3.9	81	4.4	87	4.3
Disagree	79	52.0	580	31.3	659	32.9
Neutral	16	10.5	317	17.1	333	16.6
Agree	31	20.4	655	35.3	686	34.2
Strongly agree	20	13.2	220	11.9	240	12.0
<i>When people receive money from abroad it leads to resentment from others</i>						
Strongly disagree	3	2.0	36	1.9	39	2.0
Disagree	82	54.0	622	33.6	704	35.1
Neutral	30	19.7	421	22.7	451	22.5

Agree	35	23.0	617	33.3	652	32.5
Strongly agree	2	1.3	157	8.5	159	7.9
<i>When people receive money from abroad they get rich</i>						
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	7	0.4	9	0.5
Disagree	28	18.4	251	13.5	279	13.9
Neutral	33	21.7	377	20.4	410	20.5
Agree	76	50.0	983	53.1	1,059	52.8
Strongly agree	13	8.6	234	12.6	247	12.3

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

C.5. MIGRATION AND HEALTH

Migration and HIV/AIDS in Afghanistan

The number of HIV infected people or those with AIDS in Afghanistan is not known. Officially reported numbers of HIV/AIDS cases in Afghanistan have been low in the last years and the issue of HIV/AIDS was not researched in the household survey of the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment 2007/08. The most recent data from 2009 reported 636 cases of HIV of in the country (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2010). This low number, however, might not be representative of the actual situation, considering that neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran have reported much higher incidences (74,000 and 14,000 respectively) (MRRD and CSO, 2007). In both Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as in Afghanistan underreporting of HIV/AIDS is very likely due to social stigma attached to the infection (World Bank, 2008). Since many Afghan refugees and labour migrants travel back and forth between these countries every day, more attention should be paid to this issue.

Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS is higher among certain groups in Afghanistan, particularly drug users, men who have sex with men and migrant households. An estimated 8 per cent (1 million people) of the adult population in Afghanistan are drug users, most of whom are men. The majority uses opium which is generally consumed externally. The estimation of the number of injecting drug users is in the range of 19,000 to 25,000 persons. The level of high-risk behaviour, such as sharing needles and low use of condoms, within this group has been shown to be significant and it leads to a greater risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. A study by the

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in 2009 (cited in Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (2011)) found that 28 per cent of injecting drug users started taking drugs while living in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 9 per cent while in exile in Pakistan.

Another issue that should be taken into consideration is the sexual exploitation and abuse of highly vulnerable adolescent men as well as consensual male-to-male sex in Afghanistan:

Along with the low level of HIV and AIDS knowledge, poor public health infrastructure, a lack of strategic information, lack of access to any appropriate sexual health services and appropriate psychosexual counselling, along with a culture of shame and religious intolerance that generates significant levels of stigma, discrimination, violence and denial, as well as what appears to be a significant and growing injecting drug use culture, Afghanistan needs to prepare itself towards dealing with an emerging concentrated HIV epidemic amongst [males who have sex with males] (Khan et al., 2009: 10).

Migration also influences the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in a different way. Many households rely on male seasonal and long-term migrant work in other countries, such as Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, India and countries in the Arab gulf, where commercial sex is more readily available. The same applies to rural-urban migration within Afghanistan. This poses a risk to these households in terms of vulnerability to HIV/AIDS (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2011).

The Ministry of Public Health of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (2011) is taking steps to address the issue of HIV/AIDS and has drafted a National Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS for the period 2011-2015 that aims to provide universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support to vulnerable and affected populations.

Some countries nowadays require that foreigners undertake a HIV test prior to entry. This information is usually required as part of a medical exam for long-term visitors, namely students and workers. So far, there is no information available that indicates that visitors or long-term migrants coming to Afghanistan are required to undertake such a test. However, other countries require HIV tests prior to arrival or within a particular time span after arrival. For instance, in the Islamic Republic of Iran anybody wishing to stay longer than three months must provide an HIV test certificate.

Health situation of children who work in brick kilns

Children working in brick kilns suffer from various health problems. The average age at which the children start working is seven or eight years. At the

age of 13 all the boys in a household are generally at work, whereas the number of girls that work decreases sharply from around the age of 10, because they stop working when they reach puberty. These children work around 10 to 15 hours a day, amounting to an average of 70 hours a week. Due to the physically demanding work in the brick kilns, children have a high risk of musculoskeletal problems, including pain in the lower back, neck and shoulders. The work can also lead to poor bone development and early onset of arthritis. The dust and emissions from the kilns can result in respiratory problems. Furthermore, half of the households face periods of food insecurity which means the risk of malnutrition and consequently, developmental stunting, is high (ILO, 2011).

Health situation of Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran

A recent study on Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Ahmadinejad, 2011) found that almost 8 per cent of the study's participants reported suffering from a chronic disease, of which the most common were heart diseases, back pain, diabetes and kidney disease. The fertility rate for women between the ages of 15 and 44 was approximately 95 births per 1,000 women with considerable differences by province. In Khorasan Razavi province the fertility rate was lowest with 53.1 births per 1,000 women, followed by Tehran with 88.6 per 1,000 women, Isfahan with 91.3, Kreman with 122.9 and Fars with 146.6 childbirths per 1,000 women. Another finding of the study was that 19 per cent of the childbirths had taken place without the supervision of health experts (Ahmadinejad, 2011).

Effects of migration on health

Migration may also serve to increase household access to health care in Afghanistan. In section C.2 on remittances, Table 49 shows that in a small percentage of cases the goods that were sent back to Afghanistan from an absent household member included medication. In addition, in 3.4 per cent of cases, the main reason migrants sent money to his/her household in Afghanistan was for health care and in 2 per cent of cases the main use of the remittances was health care. However, return migrants did not report health care as the primary reason for sending remittances or as the main purpose for the money they brought with them upon return. This suggests that the influence of migration and remittances on access to health care may be small.

Another effect of migration is the finding that more than two thirds of return migrants argued that migration improved their mental health (Table 85).

Table 85: Perception of return migrants on the impact of migration on mental health, IS Academy

	Frequency	Percentage
Migration improved my mental health		
Strongly disagree	24	2.2
Disagree	134	12.2
Neutral	190	17.3
Agree	610	55.5
Strongly agree	141	12.8

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

C.6. MIGRATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

IS Academy data on migration and shocks

The data from the IS Academy data show that the largest number of shocks reported in the past 10 years were environmental shocks (including drought and too much rain or floods) and price shocks (namely increases in input or food prices). Economic or market shocks (that is job loss, land redistribution or confiscation of assets), were also often cited but more so among migrant household than other household types (Table 86). Job loss is the main shock to every type of household. The tabulated data on remittance-receiving versus non-receiving households demonstrate similar results (Table 87).

Table 86: Shocks of migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households, IS Academy

	Migrant	Return migrant	Non-migrant	Total
Average number of shocks in the past 10 years				
Environmental/ price shocks	23.6	22.4	22.9	22.5
Economic/ market shocks	14.1	12.8	10.6	11.9
Household shocks	5.7	6.0	6.2	6.0
Theft/ crime	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.8
Average number of shocks during the last conflict period				
Conflict	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.4
Migration	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.3
Primary shock to the household				
Job loss*	85	473	384	942
%	45.9	47.3	48.1	47.5

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

Note: *This was by far the largest shock reported.

Table 87: Shocks of remittance-receiving and non-receiving households, IS Academy

	Remittance-receiver	Non-remittance-receiver	Total
<i>Average number of shocks in the past 10 years</i>			
Environmental/ price shocks	21.6	22.6	22.5
Economic/ market shocks	12.7	11.8	11.9
Household shocks	5.8	6.0	6.0
Theft/ crime	0.4	0.8	0.8
<i>Average number of shocks during the last conflict period</i>			
Conflict	0.5	0.3	0.4
Migration	0.2	0.3	0.3
<i>Primary shock to the household</i>			
Job loss	65	877	942
%	42.8	47.9	47.5
Serious illness of adult man	235	21	256
%	12.8	13.8	12.9
Serious illness of adult woman	116	17	133
%	6.3	11.2	6.7

Source: IS Academy Survey, 2011.

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT DUE TO NATURAL DISASTERS

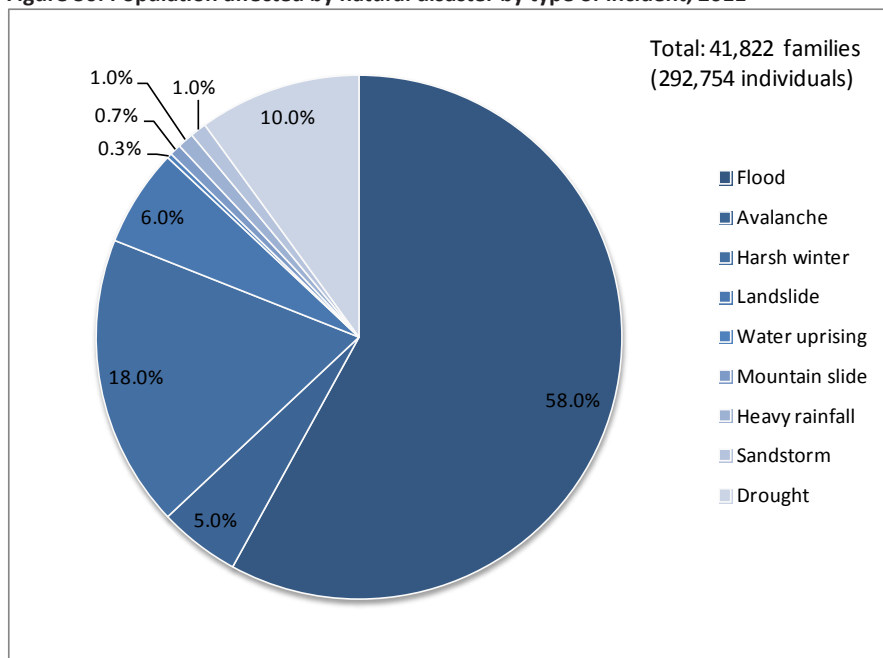
Table 88 below shows the large number of families and individuals that became internally displaced in 2011 because of natural disasters (NDs). In total almost 50,000 persons were internally displaced, with the majority of activity in December. Floods were the most common type of natural disaster that affected families (58%), followed by harsh winter (18%) and drought (10%) (Figure 30). When looking at the type of disaster that resulted in internal displacement for the years 2010 and 2011 the most common type of incident is drought (58%) with floods in second place (23%) (Figure 31).

Table 88: Number of natural disaster-induced IDPs per month by region, 2011

	North-east	North	Central High-land	West	South	South-east	East	Central Region	Total
Jan	-	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
Feb	71	3	-	120	-	-	-	-	194
Mar	-	-	2	24	-	-	-	-	26
Apr	34	185	-	12	-	-	-	-	231
May	67	12	-	197	-	-	-	-	276
Jun	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Jul	78	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	78
Aug	-	305	6	35	-	5	-	-	351
Sep	-	282	-	644	-	-	36	-	962
Oct	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Nov	-	787	-	197	-	-	36	-	1,020
Dec	462	3,272	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,734
Total Families	712	4,898	8	1,229	0	5	72	0	6,924
Individuals	4,984	34,286	56	8,603	0	35	504	0	48,468

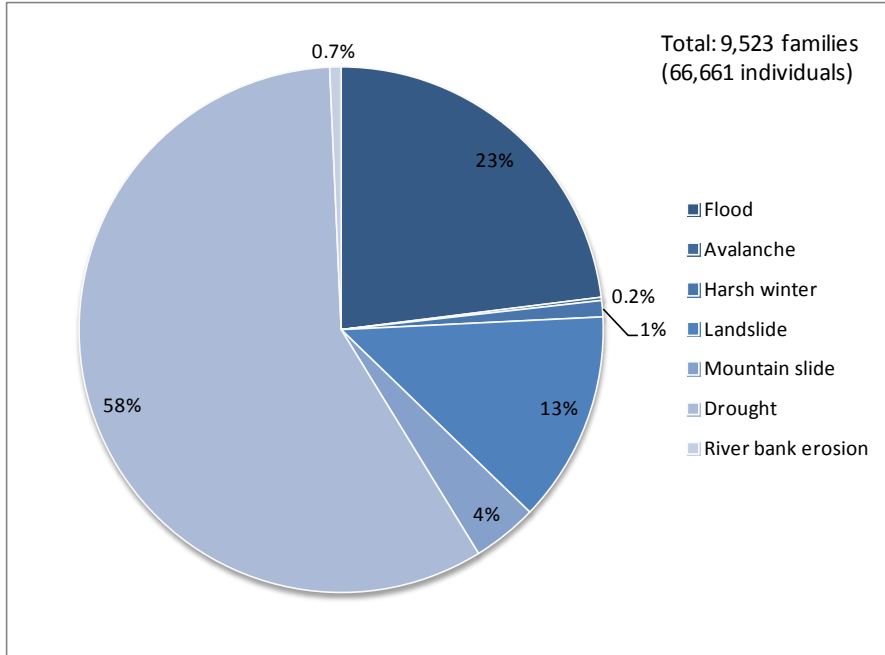
Source: IOM, 2012c.

Figure 30: Population affected by natural disaster by type of incident, 2011



Source: IOM, 2012c.

Figure 31: Natural disaster-induced IDPs by type of incident, 2010-2011



Source: IOM, 2012b.

The region most affected by natural disasters seems to be the north (Table 88) (IOM, 2012c). The Afghanistan Protection Cluster also reports that the Northern Region and North-Eastern Region have a high propensity for natural disasters (Table 89). However, displacement as a result of these disasters tends to be for a short duration, totalling a couple of hours or a few days spent in safer areas within the village or in neighbouring villages. Only in the case of disasters that affect the area for an extended period or permanently, for example as a result of a land or mountain slide, do displacements appear to be longer term. (Afghanistan Protection Cluster, 2011b).

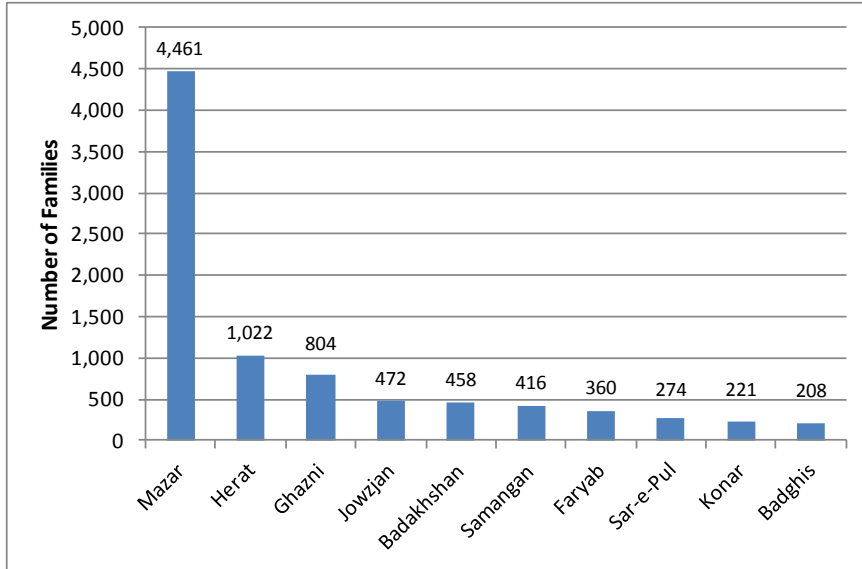
Table 89: Natural disaster-induced displaced families by location and type of disaster, 2010-2011

Date of displacement	Place of origin	Current location	Type of natural disaster	Families
22/02/2011	Balkh	Mazar (Nar Shahi)	Floods	3
06/04/2011	Balkh	Balkh (Marmul)	Landslide	185
09/04/2011	Balkh	Balkh (Marmul)	Landslide	120
10/04/2011	Faryab	Faryab (Sherin Tagab)	Floods	Have returned
29/09/2010	Badakhshan	Badakhshan (Yaftal Payan)	Mountain slide	156
22/05/2010	Badakhshan	Badakhshan (Yawan)	Land slide	76
13/06/2010	Badakhshan	Badakhshan (Argo)	Mountain slide	51
22/05/2010	Badakhshan	Badakhshan (Shari Buzarg)	Mountain slide	80
22/03/2010	Badakhshan	Badakhshan (Arghnchkhwa)	Snow avalanche	35
Total				706

Source: Afghanistan Protection Cluster, 2011b.

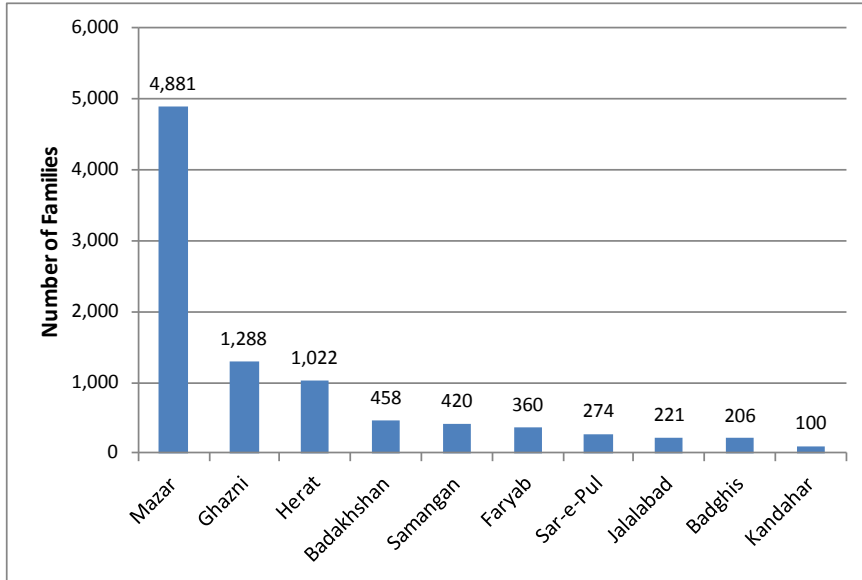
When comparing the 10 provinces most affected by ND-induced displacement (Figure 32) with the 10 provinces to which families migrate (Figure 33), the top three are the same: Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat and Ghazni of which Mazar is by far the largest province (IOM, 2012b). This suggests that most ND-induced IDPs stay in their own province, as was also observed by the Afghanistan Protection Cluster (2011b).

Figure 32: Top 10 provinces of origin of IDP families, 2010-2011



Source: IOM, 2012b.

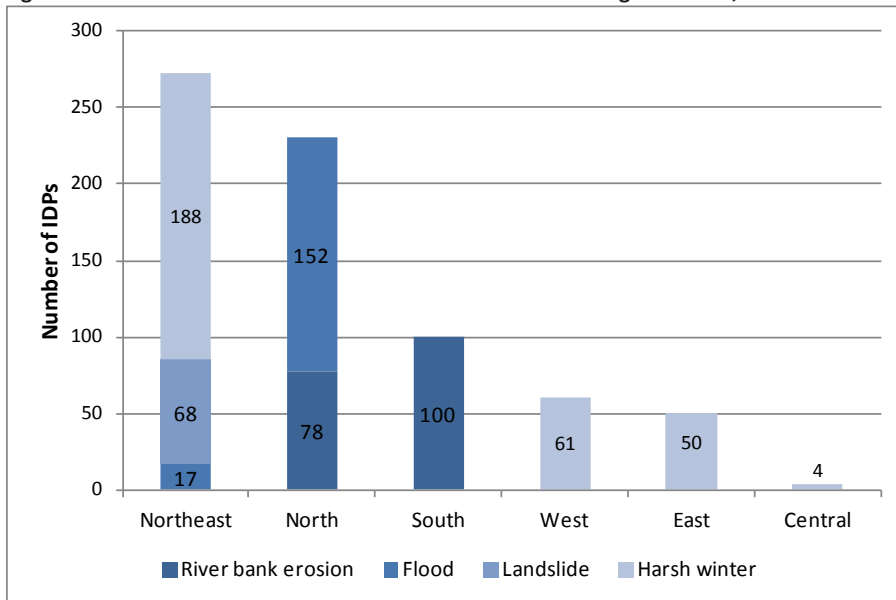
Figure 33: Top 10 provinces of displacement of IDP families, 2010-2011



Source: IOM, 2012b.

The type of incident that induces internal displacement also differs per region. The data for the first three months of 2012 indicate that in the northeast, the harsh winter was the main cause of internal displacement, whereas in the south and north it was floods (Figure 34) (IOM, 2012a).

Figure 34: Total number of natural disaster-induced IDPs at regional level, 2012



Source: IOM, 2012a.

The IOM Humanitarian Assistance Programme (HAP) provides aid to people affected by NDs and ND-induced IDPs by providing them with non-food item kits and referring them to other organizations if specific aid is required. Furthermore, the IOM promotes the capacity of the national and provincial government to respond to humanitarian emergencies. In 2011, HAP provided assistance to 22,787 families in Afghanistan, 18,716 of which had been affected or displaced by NDs (IOM, 2012a).

PART D: MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

D.I. MAINSTREAMING MIGRATION INTO DEVELOPMENT PLANS

AFGHANISTAN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2008-2013

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), formally approved by President Hamid Karzai on 21 April 2008, is the document that outlines the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's strategies for security, governance, economic growth and poverty reduction. The ANDS is the end product of intensive consultations between the GIRoA, NGOs, local authorities and representatives of the international community (The Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, D.C., 2006a). As Figure 35 shows, the Afghan government focuses, among other things, on refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons under Pillar 7 of the ANDS. The aim of this pillar is to facilitate the planned and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs and their reintegration into society (Table 90).

Figure 35: Structure of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy

Security		Governance		Social and Economic Development			
Pillar 1	Pillar 2	Pillar 3	Pillar 4	Pillar 5	Pillar 6	Pillar 7	Pillar 8
Security	Good Governance	Infrastructure & Natural Resources	Education & Culture	Health & Nutrition	Agriculture & Rural Development	Social Protection	Economic Governance & Private Sector Development
Sectors							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Justice ■ Governance, Public Administrative Reform & Human Rights ■ Religious Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Energy ■ Transportation ■ Water Resource Management ■ Information and Communication Technology ■ Urban Development ■ Mining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Education ■ Culture, Media and Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Health and Nutrition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Agriculture and Rural Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Social Protection ■ Refugees, Returnees and Internal Displaced Persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Private Sector Development and Trade
Cross Cutting Issues							
Capacity Building							
Gender Equity							
Counter Narcotics							
Regional Cooperation							
Anti-Corruption							
Environment							

Source: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008a.

Table 90: Expected outcomes of Pillar 7 of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy

No	Objective	Concerned group(s)
1	Save, voluntary and gradual return of refugees from Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and elsewhere.	Refugees Returnees
2	Better and sustainable reintegration programmes and interventions for returnees and IDPs. Provision of skill development training and public work programmes to create job opportunities.	IDPs Returnees
3	Improvement of social protection and disaster/ emergency preparedness for IDPs to ensure that timely and necessary support is provided to minimize hardship and suffering.	IDPs
4	Better management of cross-border movements and economic migration.	Border management unit
5	Preparation of plans to improve the response to the internal displacement crisis.	IDPs
6	Greater attention to the protection of the vulnerable groups among refugees and IDPs, including children and women.	Vulnerable groups
7	Facilitation of gradual return of all Afghans who wish to return voluntarily from Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and other host countries through policy negotiation and coordination.	Returnees
8	Strengthening of the government's capacity to plan, manage and assist the reintegration of returning Afghans and IDPs.	Government Returnees IDPs

9	Higher capacity of the government to plan for and respond to international displacement.	Government IDPs
10	Better terms of stay and conditions for Afghans in neighbouring countries. The improvement of health care for Afghan refugees in Mashhad and Zahedan, Islamic Republic of Iran. Legal aid and vocational training for Afghan refugees and support to the host communities in Pakistan.	Migrants and refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan
11	Progress towards the implementation of bilateral agreements on temporary labour migration.	Government Labour migrants
12	Better access to land for refugees and IDPs.	IDPs Refugees

Source: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008b.

Table 91 lays out the government’s action plan concerning Pillar 7 of the ANDS. The strategy allows the GIROA to coordinate and reintegrate refugees and IDPs into society. The planned and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs is expected to contribute to economic growth, the reduction of poverty and the strengthening of security and stability of the country and the region (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008b).

Table 91: Action plan matrix for the refugee, returnee and internally displaced persons sector

Outcomes	Policy actions or activities	Targets	Time frame	Responsible agencies
Voluntary refugees returned	Tripartite agreements between countries of asylum, Afghanistan and UNHCR, fully reflecting the principles of voluntary, dignified and gradual return, continue to guide the conduct of the voluntary repatriation operation	Scenario One Presented trend lines improve permitting 800,000 – 1,000,000 returns. Scenario Two Current trends continue permitting 600,000 – 800,000 returns. Scenario Three Current trends deteriorate permitting 400,000 – 600,000 returns.	2008 - 2013	MoRR MoFA

Government's capacity strengthened	Improved internal coordination mechanisms.	Policies adjusted to make provisions for returning refugees and IDPs in national programmes.	By the end of the first half of 2009	MoRR, MRRD, MoLSAMD, Ministry of Urban Development Affairs
	Institutional development in the form of inter-ministerial cooperation.	Budget allocations to sectors and provinces take into account population expansion as a result of returns.		
	Capacity-building and technical assistance.	National initiatives addressing returnee needs and local host communities developed and enhanced in housing, area-based and community development programmes.		
	Data collection, analysis and knowledge generation.	Improved knowledge and planning. Enhanced communications and interactions between Kabul and provinces.	By the end of 2009	MoRR, ANDMA, MRRD, provincial authorities
	Policy advice to provincial authorities, coordination of interventions and material assistance support.	More effective and efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance.		
Improved terms of stay and conditions for Afghans in neighbouring countries	Research and analysis to support policy advocacy.	Greater awareness of economic and social "stay" factors.	By the end of 2013	MoRR, MoFA
	Negotiations with neighbouring countries.	More predictable and clearer legal status and renewable documentation.		
	Identification of programme interventions to support policy objectives.	Improved employment opportunities, skill development, basic literacy and numeracy, access to health care.		
Bilateral agreements on temporary labour migration progressed	Research and analysis to support policy and public advocacy.	Reduced instances of deportations.	By the end of 2013	MoRR, MoLSAMD, MoFA, MoI
	Negotiations with neighbouring countries.	Fewer incidents of drug and contraband smuggling during irregular border crossings.		
	Identification of programme interventions to support policy objectives.	Increases numbers of Afghans travelling with documentation. Strengthened public management capacity to develop policy and negotiate agreements.		

Source: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008b.

MAINSTREAMING RETURN MIGRATION INTO DEVELOPMENT PLANS

At a time of record lows in repatriation figures³⁴, the priority since 2008 has been to improve absorption capacities, security and peace in areas of refugee origin and of high refugee return as detailed in the ANDS Pillar 7 Strategy on Refugees, Returnees and IDPs. In this context, both NPPs and Provincial Development Programmes (PDPs) were developed through national and sub-national consultations, formulating policy based on inputs which, among others, included prioritizing the inclusion of vulnerable social groups, such as refugees, returnees and IDPs.

MoRR's development budget activities are centred on managing the Land Allocation Schemes (LAS) through which land is sold at discounted rates to eligible returned refugees in their province of origin (see section D.2). Return migration to Afghanistan is still very much governed from a refugee perspective, insufficiently addressing mixed migration and other forms of return migration. As such, since 2002, policy initiatives have focused on the return and repatriation of refugees. However, with low and decreasing repatriation figures and a context of increasing insecurity and conflict in Afghanistan, return migration should be viewed more broadly.

In principle, MoRR is involved in all return programmes as per the Law on Non-Governmental Organizations. Semi-annual reports have to be submitted to the Ministry of Economy (MoEc) and approved locally by the Departments of Refugees and Repatriation before they are forwarded to the central MoEc. The latter has all the information on hand but is unable to extract information as it does not have an electronic data management system. NGOs have to share a copy of their activity reports with relevant line ministries. If this happens, it most often takes place at the provincial level, leaving MoRR at the central level unable to set up a system to retrieve reports for its own planning or analysis of return migration. Therefore, data and information on return migration for policy purposes are lacking: even the Ministry of Finance's (MoF) Donor Database, where optimally all donor assistance should be registered, does not take into account the budget of United Nations agencies present in Afghanistan – it only considers the contributions that have been made locally by donors in Afghanistan.

³⁴ Numbers released by UNHCR in February 2012 show a decreasing trend: from 112,958 returnees in 2010, the following year saw a decrease of 40 per cent down to 67,962 individuals. This was the second lowest repatriation number, preceded only by the year 2009 with 54,552 refugees having returned to Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2011b).

Since 2002, return migration has experienced differing degrees of policy importance. In 2007, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran began a wave of deportations of Afghan irregular migrants through its main crossing points into Herat and Nimroz. At the same time, European governments began encouraging the return of failed asylum-seekers and irregular migrants through both voluntary and forced return programmes. The latter were done in partnership with, and with the approval of, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan who authorized the returns from Europe to Afghanistan. However, upon return, the failure to mainstream these populations into development and reconstruction plans and the failure to plan for fully voluntary return in consultations with migrants, often led to their remigration either internally, regionally or internationally. Hence, increasing, rather than decreasing, their vulnerabilities and dependence on migration as a coping strategy.

D.2. LAWS AND REGULATIONS (NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS)

D.2.1. CITIZENSHIP LAW

Recently a new Afghan Citizenship Law was drafted. This is the third citizenship law for the country. It was passed through Parliament and sent to the President for his approval. In general, in order to pass a new law in Afghanistan five steps have to be gone through. The passing of the Citizenship Law in Parliament was the fourth step and the signature of the President remains the final, fifth step. However, according to the Constitution of Afghanistan, the President has to respond, positively or negatively, to such a request within a maximum timeframe of 30 days. If this is not followed, the law is automatically passed. This is the case for the new Afghan Citizenship Law.

D.2.2. PASSPORT SYSTEM

Although the Afghan passport system has improved since 2001, the system still has major weaknesses. This is because passports can mainly be obtained in the main urban areas such as Kabul city. Moreover, waiting times and procedures for application are lengthy and expensive. It is a common understanding that bribery allows for the facilitation of the process and a quicker receipt of an

official passport. As a result, a black market has developed for the sale of formal and fake passports. A formal passport on the black market costs approximately USD 400 and a fake passport about half that price, while a passport obtained through legal ways costs between USD 50 and 80. Faced with such high prices, Afghans travelling through Pakistan prefer to do so without any formal passport, as it is less costly and essentially a routine practice (Majidi, 2009).

In August 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs began issuing machine-readable passports to Afghan diplomats and civil servants. This new passport system was officially inaugurated for the whole Afghan population in 2013, meaning that every citizen can now apply for the new passports (IOM, 2013b). The new system also contributes to the collection of biometric data with a focus on cross-checking people's background as well as maintaining the records for future use. The fee for a new passport is AFN 5,000 for adults and AFN 2,500 for children and government staff holding Grade 3 or above.

D.2.3.VISA REGULATIONS

All foreign nationals planning to enter Afghanistan are required to possess a passport with a minimum validity period of six months from the date of visa issuance. Depending on the purpose of stay (namely leisure, studies, journalism, business, permanent residency, investment or religious activity) all individuals travelling to Afghanistan have to apply for a visa. This is done at the Afghan Embassy or Consulate located in the applicant's country of residence. The authorities responsible for foreigner arrivals in Afghanistan are the Afghan Department of Immigration and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who ensure that all visitors present the necessary travel documents upon arrival and only stay the period indicated in their visas. Moreover, immigration officers assess the foreigner's real purposes of stay and the foreigner's ability to be financially self-sufficient during their time in Afghanistan (Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

In order to obtain a visa to travel to Afghanistan, foreign nationals must show an invitation, from either an individual, an organization or a company, that is located in Afghanistan. For official work-related entries, a specific request has to be made by the company or organization looking to hire a foreign official. In the case of private companies, this request needs to be filed with the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) or the Ministry of Commerce where it is registered, then transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which will issue a visa number sent electronically to the specified Afghan consulate abroad.

The implementation of this system has not always been efficient due to some consulates not being able to adapt quickly enough to the new system, resulting in delays for the acceptance of visa applications and the granting of new visas. In recent years, the entry of foreigners to Afghanistan has been curtailed by new rules and regulations. Companies wanting to hire foreign nationals need to provide copies of diplomas, contracts and personal information in order to vouch for the necessity and relevance of hiring the specific person. Some embassies (such as the Afghan embassy in Paris) no longer provide long-term business visas, limiting travels to Afghanistan to short term only (Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

In addition to the above mentioned responsibilities, the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the authority to deport or detain any foreigners that do not comply with the rules of immigration. In this respect, immigration officers at the airport can refuse foreign nationals entry to the country if individuals do not have the proper visa to enter the country or if the individuals pose a threat to Afghanistan's national security. Moreover, persons who are mentally incapacitated or have serious health problems may be quarantined and, only if cleared, will be allowed to enter Afghanistan (Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

Waiting times and documents to be completed depend on the country in which the Afghan visa is being issued. Regardless of the country or overseas mission, applicants must complete at least one visa application form, hand in two recent passport size photos, hold a passport valid for at least 6 months and pay a visa processing fee. Additionally, a letter of introduction from the employer or sponsor stating the purpose and duration of the trip is required. In some cases, applicants must also undergo an interview and prove that they are able to cover financial expenses during their stay in the country (Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). Depending on the purpose of travel and reason to stay in Afghanistan, the following visas and permits can be obtained (Table 92).

Table 92: Types of visas for Afghanistan

Visa type	Description
Tourist Visa	In case foreign nationals are interested to travel to Afghanistan individually or in groups for the purpose of visiting the country or their relatives, they must obtain a tourist visa. This has to be obtained prior to travel to the country at an Afghan Consulate or Embassy. A tourist visa is valid for one month (30 days). <i>Note:</i> Foreigners are advised to go to their respective embassies in Kabul, the Afghan Tourist Organization and Afghan Police Department to register upon arrival.
Transit Visa	A transit visa is issued by the Afghan Mission abroad to those foreign nationals who pass through Afghanistan to a third country. The validity of this type of visa is 72 hours for air passengers and six days for those who travel over land.
Service Visa	This visa is issued by the Afghan Missions abroad to foreign nationals who hold service or special passports.
Double Entry Visa	This is issued to foreigners who already have a stay visa but intend to enter Afghanistan more than once.
Diplomatic Visa	This type of visa is for holders of diplomatic passports who intend to travel to Afghanistan. The diplomatic visa can be obtained at an Afghan Mission abroad. However, applicants must contact the Section of Diplomatic Passport and Diplomatic Visa of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs directly through their mission in Kabul.
Student Visa	A student visa is issued by the Afghan Missions abroad to foreign students who intend to study in Afghanistan. The respective university or academic institution must contact the Cultural Relations Department of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs directly.
Exit Visa	An exit visa is issued to foreign nationals who have entered the country with an entry work permit visa. The validity of this type of visa is one to six days and it can be extended in some instances.
Entry Visa for Work Permit	An entry visa for work permit is issued for business, economic, commercial, cultural and industrial purposes as well as for working for governmental or non-governmental organizations. This type of visa can be obtained from the Consulate Section of the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It can be extended through the Ministry of Interior.
Resident Visa	This type of visa is issued by the Ministry of Interior to foreign nationals holding an ordinary passport, who have already entered Afghanistan with a proper visa. The validity of this type of visa is between one month to six months and can be extended.

Source: Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013.

Visa fees depend upon the type of visa and the duration it takes to process the application. Charges also vary depending on the country in which the application is made as well as on the purpose of the visit. The fee for a single entry visa valid for a maximum of three months is USD 160. However, fees are generally lower in Afghanistan: with an average of USD 30 per month, a six month visa renewal in 2012 cost USD 180. If the visa has expired, the holder of the passport will be fined USD 2 for each day during the first month of the delay in reapplication or exit and a total of USD 5 for each day during the second month of the delay. This fine must be paid in order to be granted an exit visa. If the delay is more than two months the holder must pay the fine and will also be deported (Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

D.2.4. REFUGEE LAW

Following the ratification of the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Additional Protocol in 2005, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan made the commitment to develop a refugee law. The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), as the responsible governmental authority, is currently working with a legal advisor on the *Afghanistan National Refugee Law*. This is done in coordination with and support by UNHCR and the Danish Refugee Council. The law will also encompass regulations concerning asylum-seekers and citizenship (Rafiq, personal communication, 2012).

D.2.5. NATIONAL IDP POLICY

MoRR and UNHCR are tasked to co-chair the National IDP Task Force under the cluster coordination system, with the objective of coordinating protection and assistance responses. Responsibilities importantly include the provision of durable solutions for IDPs, particularly in terms of local integration, resettlement and voluntary return wherever possible.

Following extensive consultation processes, the National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons was endorsed in November 2013 at the Council of Ministers meeting.

D.2.6. RETURN MIGRATION³⁵

Presidential Decree 297 on the Dignified Return of Refugees

On June 3, 2001, Hamid Karzai, then President of the Afghan Interim Administration, signed Decree 297 on the Dignified Return of Refugees. This decree stipulated that Afghan nationals and refugees living abroad could return freely and without fear of harm to their homeland, without being subject to any harassment, intimidation or persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality or membership to a particular social group, hence ensuring protection from the state (Article 2).

³⁵ See Annex A on Return Migration for more detailed information.

Presidential Decree 104 on Land Allocation Schemes

In April 2004, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development started to implement a new programme with the major goal to promote the return of IDPs to their original home area. As part of this plan, the Land Allocation Scheme (LAS) was launched in 2005 under Presidential Decree 104. The LAS legalizes the distribution of uncultivated government land to landless returnees possessing UNHCR Voluntary Repatriation Forms (VRFs) and to IDPs in their province of origin. Selection is made by inter-ministerial commissions, who also set the price of the land. Priority has been given to those who have already applied for land (those that returned between 2002 and 2006) and the most vulnerable (that is the disabled and widowed). In 2008, over 520,000 applications have been registered, approximately 100,000 beneficiaries have been selected and 23,000 plots have been distributed. Multiple layered problems in the townships have prevented their development and the sustainable settlement of returnee populations. They are rarely connected to any provincial or local market and without such market linkages, livelihoods are missing. Beyond the lack of access to livelihoods, other obstacles, such as the lack of access to water, food, health, education and security have plagued the LAS. The scheme has additionally been weakened by land claims by private landowners, lack of coordination among government ministries and a weak selection process, resulting in speculation and favouritism. As a result, many of the LAS sites are only at about 20 per cent capacity today. This is the case, for example, in Aliceghan and Barikab in the province of Kabul or Dashte Shor Jalaluddin Balkhi in Balkh.

Voluntary return

In 2002, the “decade of repatriation” began in Afghanistan with the return of refugees, mainly from the neighbouring Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. The Volrep, a voluntary refugee repatriation programme, is governed by tripartite agreements between the Governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNHCR. Its aim is to ensure the integrity and voluntariness of the repatriation process.

In April 2012, MoRR, UNHCR and UNDP started developing the Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme (VRRP) which was to be nationally managed and implemented with the aim of increasing access to effective and timely basic services and livelihood opportunities for returnees, IDPs and their receiving communities. Its goal is to foster sustainable socioeconomic integration, peaceful co-existence and local economic development. Initially targeting 48 prioritized high return areas, the aim is to demonstrate that a holistic integrated

community-based approach could be duplicated in other areas of need. The programme deliverables, which were being developed in the framework of the *Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees*, will be integrated within the National Priority Programmes (NPPs). There will be no new structures set up for the VRRP, but it will make use of already existing programmes such as the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP)³⁶, the Afghan Rural Enterprise Programme (AREDP) and the National Skills Development Programme (NSDP) of MoLSAMD. The complementarities and synergies between the VRRP and these programmes indicate a way of making effective use of resources and capacities of the latter (MoRR et al., 2012).

A variety of bilateral and tripartite agreements have also been signed with European States to facilitate the return of failed asylum-seekers, those awaiting a decision and those with time-limited exception leave to enter or remain, but who wish to return to their country of origin. More information on these agreements is presented later in this section.

Forced return

Almost all of the bilateral agreements signed with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan treat return broadly, encompassing both voluntary and forced return, and are applied to all cases of failed asylum that should, by definition, result in a return to the country of origin. Some of these agreements were built on principles of return while others contain more specific and precise requirements for return and reintegration in Afghanistan. The GIRoA, through its Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, has contested certain deportation measures. In 2001, they disputed an agreement signed with the Government of Australia regarding the return of migrants and failed asylum-seekers. Routine forced return schemes, such as the UK's bi-monthly charter flights, however, continue to bring back failed asylum-seekers.

Forced returns or deportations are ongoing in Afghanistan, whether from neighbouring countries, Europe or further afield. Some European countries are now envisaging extending these forced return activities to include unaccompanied minors. Countries such as the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands are all involved in a European Return Platform for Unaccompanied Minors (ERPUM) addressing the issue of the return of unaccompanied minors who received a final rejection to their asylum application. In this framework, a proposal has been submitted to start deporting unaccompanied Afghans

³⁶ APRP is an Afghan government-led internationally supported effort to reintegrate former combatants.

with a commitment to tracing and reunification upon return – tasks that will become increasingly complex, if not impossible, in a country facing conflict and instability. This has never been attempted in Afghanistan before and the project has been paused for a couple of years, with disagreements over its content with the Afghan government (Lemberg-Pedersen et al., 2013).

Skilled return

Finally, there are policy measures that address temporary or permanent return of highly skilled individuals. One example of such a programme is the Return of Qualified Afghans (RQA) programme. These programmes are tripartite programmes signed between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the host government and, in this case, the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Temporary return programmes have been established in Afghanistan since 2001 to encourage the return and contribution of qualified and skilled Afghans within the Afghan government as well as in the public and private sectors. IOM has been at the forefront of some of these programmes, including the TRQN (Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals Program), as well as return programmes specifically from EU countries and neighbouring countries.

D.2.7. TRAFFICKING LAW

Afghanistan does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking set by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA). Besides the continued referral of identified trafficking victims to care facilities, an undeveloped judicial and prosecutorial system and weak coordination remain severe obstacles to effectively punishing trafficking offenses (IRIN, 2011a). As a result, Afghanistan has been placed on the Tier 2 Watch List of the US Department of State's annual Trafficking in Persons Report. This means that Afghanistan appears on a list of countries whose government does not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring its policy into compliance with those standards (US Department of State, 2013b). In addition to the lack of proper legislation, widespread corruption practices and weak border management make it easy for criminals to traffic humans across domestic and international borders undisturbed (IRIN, 2007).

Prosecution

The Afghan Law on Countering Abduction and Human Trafficking (2008) is the legal document of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan that states the penalties for trafficking for the purpose of sexual and labour exploitation. In general, the document states that penalties for sex trafficking and for labour trafficking are life imprisonment and 8 to 15 years in prison respectively. In 2009, however, another Afghan law was passed on the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW). This law supersedes other Afghan laws and consequently can be used to decrease the penalties outlined in the Afghan trafficking law. More specifically, the EVAW law states that the penalty for an offender who subjects a victim to forced labour is short-term imprisonment with a maximum sentence of six months. This reduction in penalty, compared to the penalty of 8 to 15 years outlined in the trafficking law, is significant. Moreover, an offender who forces females into prostitution may be punished with a maximum of seven years in contrast to the penalty of life-imprisonment in the trafficking law.

The US Department of State annually publishes its Trafficking in Persons Report. The associated study researches the context in which human trafficking in Afghanistan takes place and furthermore investigated how cases of human trafficking are handled by Afghan authorities and the judiciary. During the research in 2010 a total of 24 offenders in 19 alleged cases were arrested by the Afghan Ministry of Interior. It could not, however, be confirmed that all cases were related to human trafficking, as cases of human trafficking, smuggling and kidnapping are often conflated. Moreover, the United States Department of State could not determine whether all cases were handled under the Afghan counter trafficking law or another relevant law. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was unable, or unwilling, to provide further information that could have clarified the situation. In addition, the GIRoA did not make any efforts to prosecute government officials who were known to be involved in trafficking offenses. The IOM, in cooperation with international stakeholders, carried out training modules for authorities involved in trafficking prosecution and prevention, including the Afghan police, prosecutors, judges and other government officials. The aim of this training was to teach components that would help in the identification of trafficking and in distinguishing trafficking from other cases such as smuggling (US Department of State, 2010).

In their latest report, the US Department of State (2013b) pointed out that victims of trafficking are still punished for acts they may have committed as a direct result of being trafficked. In many cases victims were arrested and

locked up before it became known that they were victims of forced prostitution. In other cases women were punished because they tried to escape forced marriages. Many victims reported that they were raped by authorities such as the police, simply for walking on the street without their husbands or another male member of the family. It was also observed that some victims who could not find help or shelter voluntarily went to prison to seek protection from their male family members. During their research, the US Department of State also found no evidence that the police asked the victims to assist in investigations of their traffickers. Even if the police had asked victims to identify traffickers, however, it is unlikely that (a) the police would have taken action and (b) the victims would have identified his/ her trafficker because of the high personal risk involved (US Department of State, 2013b).

Prevention

The Ministry of Women's Affairs *Initiative to Strengthen Policy and Advocacy through Communications and Institution Building* launched and partially funded a public information campaign with foreign donor support. The campaign used, among others, TV and radio shows to distribute information on trafficking issues in all 34 provinces of the country. An evaluation of these mechanisms confirmed that increased public awareness was evident after information was broadcasted. In addition to awareness raising campaigns, the Afghan National Police committed to improve its age verification procedures to prevent child soldiers from joining its ranks. Related to this, more efforts are needed in birth registration and in the issuing of birth certificates, as fewer than 10 per cent of children are registered at birth and most of those who lack proper documentation are found in rural areas. At the end of 2009, the Monitoring, Reporting and Response Steering Committee was established to formulate an action plan for the government's work with the United Nations Task Force on Trafficking and Children in Armed Conflict. To date the plan has not yet been completed (US Department of State, 2010).

D.2.8. INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND TREATIES

Since 2001, Afghanistan has increasingly become an active member of the international community and established diplomatic relations with countries around the world (US Department of State, 2012). Furthermore, many tripartite agreements between Afghanistan, UNHCR and EU countries were put in place since 2002, according to which the repatriation of Afghan refugees is

on a “voluntary” basis. This kind of tripartite agreement was first initiated with Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran to govern the return of Afghan refugees and ensure the safeguarding of asylum space in neighbouring countries. These tripartite agreements have been renewed and renegotiated since 2002. On 17 February 2012, a joint statement on “enhancing trilateral cooperation” was made following the Third Trilateral Summit in Islamabad by the heads of the states of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan, reiterating cooperation over the safe, voluntary and early return of Afghan refugees to their homeland.

In early 2011, the Governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and UNHCR renewed their tripartite agreement on voluntary return of Afghan refugees. To encourage and motivate the Afghan refugees to repatriate, the repatriation package of USD 100 per person/returnee was increased to USD 150 per person. The Government of Pakistan also pushed the Afghan government to allocate sufficient funds for the rehabilitation of returnees in their Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) to ensure that repatriation is sustainable and does not result in further displacement (Balochistan Times, 2011). In the same year Afghanistan, Australia and UNHCR signed their first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), allowing Australia to send back unsuccessful Afghan asylum-seekers. In association with the MoU, the Australian Government agreed to undertake a number of initiatives intended to build capacity in relevant Afghan ministries and to assist in the repatriation of displaced Afghans. The largest undertaking was to fund the upgrading of Afghanistan’s passport issuing system to bring Afghan passports in line with international standards (Bowen, 2011). Moreover, in 2011, the Afghan Interior Minister signed a bilateral agreement with the Turkish Ambassador, establishing joint procedures with the Police Officer Candidate School in Siva, Turkey and allowing for the training of Afghan police officers in Turkey (NATO Training Mission Afghanistan, 2011). Many other bilateral agreements between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries exist, however most agreements tend to focus on economic cooperation and peace agreements rather than migration issues.

Tripartite and bilateral agreements on migration

Since 2002, Afghanistan signed tripartite agreements with various European countries and UNHCR. All agreements, lay down the scope, objective and methodology of repatriation. Moreover, the role of UNHCR in return is clearly defined. Tripartite agreements also exist with neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran and are reviewed and renewed on a regular basis. All agreements were made in compliance with the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol (Poppelwell, 2007).

In 2008, Afghanistan and Qatar signed a bilateral agreement to regulate the flow of Afghan labourers to Qatar and to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries. Kuwait and Qatar are engaged in a dialogue with Afghanistan to improve and deepen bilateral relations (Overfeld and Zumot, 2010). With regard to Pakistan, both countries (Afghanistan and Pakistan) are engaged in dialogue to resolve bilateral issues such as border security, immigration and trade (US Department of State, 2012). In 2009, the two countries signed the “Joint Declaration between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Directions of Bilateral Cooperation”. The declaration states that both countries agree to encourage “people to people exchanges” especially between academia, think tanks, media and civil society (Embassy of Pakistan, 2009). Afghanistan continues the dialogue on bilateral cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran, particularly in relation to counter-narcotics efforts, migrant workers and railway building (United Nations General Assembly Security Council, 2011).

The following table (Table 93) gives an overview of tripartite and bilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoU)³⁷ that are related to migration in and out of Afghanistan.

Table 93: Tripartite and bilateral agreements on migration between Afghanistan and other states

Agreement		Parties	Implemented
1.	Agreement between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Governing the Repatriation of Afghan Citizens in Pakistan	Afghanistan Pakistan UNHCR	March 2002
2.	Joint Programme between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and UNHCR for Voluntary Repatriation of Afghan Refugees and Displaced Persons	Afghanistan Iran UNHCR	1992 April 2002
3.	Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Netherlands, the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Afghanistan Netherlands UNHCR	March 2003
4.	Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (the MoU) between the Islamic Transitional State of Afghanistan, the Government of Denmark and the United High Commissioner for Refugees	Afghanistan Denmark UNHCR	October 2004
5.	Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (the MoU) between the Government of Norway, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Afghanistan Norway UNHCR	August 2005

³⁷ A memorandum of understanding (MoU) is an agreement between two parties in the form of a legal document. It is not fully binding in the way that a contract is. In comparison to a treaty, a MoU has many practical advantages as it can be kept confidential and put into effect in a timelier manner. In addition, a memorandum of understanding can be modified without lengthy negotiations.

6.	Tripartite Agreement between the Government of the French Republic, the Government of the Islamic Transitional State of Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Afghanistan France UNHCR	September 2002
7.	Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (the MoU) between the Government of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (the United Kingdom Government), the Transitional Islamic Administration of the Transitional State of Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Afghanistan United Kingdom UNHCR	October 2002
8.	Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (the MoU) between the Government of Australia, the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Afghanistan Australia UNHCR	January 2011
9.	Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding Between the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Afghanistan Sweden UNHCR	December 2007
Bilateral agreements/ dialogues			
1.	Bilateral Agreements that regulates the flow of Afghan labourers in Qatar	Afghanistan Qatar	April 2008
2.	Joint Declaration between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Directions of Bilateral Cooperation	Afghanistan Pakistan	2009
3.	Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran continue their dialogue on bilateral cooperation, particularly in relation to counter-narcotics efforts, migrant workers and railway building	Afghanistan Iran	-

Source: UNHCR 2012c; UNHCR Tripartite 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2010; Overfeld and Zumot 2010.

Recognition of migrant rights

On 2 September 2005, Afghanistan signed the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (UNHCR, 2005a). Furthermore, under the 7th Pillar of Afghanistan's National Development Strategy (ANDS) the Afghan Government focuses on refugees, returnees and internal displaced persons. The aim of the 7th Pillar is to facilitate the planned and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs and the sustainable reintegration of returnees and IDPs into society. The planned and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs is expected to contribute to economic growth, the reduction of poverty and the strengthening of security and stability in the country and the region more broadly (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008b). Furthermore, the Afghan government made clear its desire to facilitate regional cooperation and bilateral agreements ensuring migrant rights with those countries where the number of the Afghan diaspora is large. However, despite these efforts, few policies have actually been implemented since 2008 and those that have been put into practice are often hampered by security issues and corruption throughout the country.

D.2.9. REMITTANCES³⁸

In addition to policy introduced to address the migration process itself, the regulation of remittances should also be addressed here. While the process of sending or receiving remittance transfers is not directly addressed by an explicit remittance policy, the regulatory environment in which the remittance market is embedded can have strong implications for remittance trends. The constraints and opportunities faced by individual remittance service providers generally translate into specific services features (such as fees and identification requirements) to which potential service consumers must adhere.

In the post-Taliban era, the financial sector of Afghanistan has undergone radical reconfiguration and reform. Most of the key pieces of legislation produced as part of this reform package contain specific regulations and provisions that directly affect how the remittance market functions. Two key pieces of legislation are particularly relevant for the discussion: the 2003 Law of Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) and the 2004 Anti-Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Law.

The Law of Da Afghanistan Bank granted autonomy to DAB as the central bank of Afghanistan and specified the many functions DAB could perform. While this law provided a comprehensive outline of the functions and responsibilities of DAB for the creation and maintenance of a stable financial system overall, what is particularly important for the purpose of the current discussion is the law's specification of the supervisory activities DAB could perform for remittance service providers. The Law of Da Afghanistan Bank essentially provides the legal framework for remittance service provision. Through a series of regulations, the DAB Law specifies how remittance providers should be internally organised, the nature of services they can offer and how their businesses will be regulated by the central bank. Key among these regulations are those that address money service providers (a category that includes money transfer operators such as Western Union and MoneyGram), electronic money institutions like M-Paisa and informal value transfer system actors (like *hawala*) and those that address foreign exchange dealers (which are mostly *hawaladars*). These regulations have played a pivotal role in formalizing *hawala* businesses that have generally functioned outside of the scope of state regulation and monitoring. The regulations provide explicit guidance on the requirements a business must meet to receive a money service provider (MSP) or foreign exchange dealer license, the reporting procedures a business must follow to retain a license and the type of documentation a business must maintain about transactions.

³⁸ Annex B contains a more detailed discussion of policies affecting the Afghan remittance market.

The 2004 Anti-Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Law, which was designed to protect the financial system from potential abuse for the funding of illegal activities, affects the regulation of remittance service providers in similar ways.

Several aspects of these laws and regulations affect not only the types of businesses that can enter the formal remittance market but also how the businesses functioning as formal providers offer services. While Annex B provides a much more thorough discussion of the specific content of the various pieces of legislation and regulations (and their implications for the overall functionality of the remittance market), certain specific examples should be given here to illustrate how the regulatory environment can potentially affect the diversity of the remittance market and the types of services remittance senders and receivers have access to. The Anti-Money Laundering and Proceeds of Crime Law and the regulation on money service providers details the know-your-customer (KYC) standards that businesses must apply. Depending on the value (and frequency) of the transfer, a business can impose more or less stringent identification standards on customers. For high value transfers customers must provide a government-issued national identification card to send a transfer through a registered MSP. In a country like Afghanistan, however, where many people lack such forms of identification, such KYC requirements could discourage individuals who lack these forms of identification from using formal transfer channels.

D.3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

D.3.1. AFGHAN MINISTRIES

The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) is the main body responsible for returnees and internally displaced persons in Afghanistan. The ministry is supported by a Consultative Group on Refugees and IDPs, which includes representatives from other ministries, United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors. The main task of the Consultative Group is to support MoRR in its goal to reintegrate Afghan returning refugees and internally displaced persons into society.

In August 2004, the MoRR, in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNHCR, set up the Employment Service Centre to facilitate the returnee population's search for work. The centre is linked to other

initiatives and potential employers. Whilst the GIRoA is taking significant steps forward in tackling the issues faced by returnees and IDPs, its ability to do so is seriously hampered by the fact that it is still highly dependent on foreign aid (Poppelwell, 2007). In its National Development Strategy (2008-2013), the GIRoA lays out an action plan including key government ministries that are to be involved in the future management and coordination of IDPs, refugees and returnees (see section D.1) (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008a).

Accordingly, MoRR is enhancing national partnerships with other government entities to work more closely through NPPs already in place. These ministries include the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) (mainly for water projects and community development), the Ministry of Urban Development Affairs, the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (to conduct skills training and find employment for Afghan returnees), the Ministry of Women's Affairs (regarding gender issues) and the Ministry of Justice.

MRRD has been involved in implementing return programmes for IDPs in the south since 2003 (Poppelwell, 2007). In April 2004, the MRRD implemented a new programme with the major goal of promoting the return of IDPs to their original home area and, as part of this plan, the LAS scheme was launched (see D.2 for a fuller discussion of LAS). The government is planning to increase the provision of social services to returnees, refugees and IDPs. Currently, the Afghan government aims to further provide housing facilities, land plots and infrastructure to returnees to encourage voluntary return (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008b).

Other ministries whose responsibilities directly cover migrant and returnee populations are the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Ministry of Interior (Mol).

MoLSAMD programmes, such as the National Skills Development Programme (NSDP), have returnee populations among their target groups. With one in five Afghans being returnees, they are inevitably integrated into the programmes, even if this was not set as an explicit goal. In addition, specific efforts are made to provide returnee-focused assistance, namely through a partnership with IOM. IOM and MoLSAMD, with funding from the Government of Japan, conducted a profiling study of returnees in the border provinces such as Herat, Nimroz, Farah, Kunduz, Bamyán and Kabul. They subsequently targeted 2,000 recent returnees taken as a representative selection of unemployed

returnees above 15 years of age. The aim was to work together towards creating sustainable livelihoods for these returnees from neighbouring countries (Reliefweb, 2008).

MoFA is responsible for Afghanistan's foreign policy as well as issuing visas to foreign nationals travelling to Afghanistan through its consular offices worldwide. MoI is more broadly in charge of delivering passports to Afghan officials, processing visa renewals for foreign citizens through its passport office and ensuring that trafficking and smuggling acts are enforced and victims protected.

Coordination among Afghan ministries

In its National Development Strategy (2008-2013) the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) stipulates that, in order to manage and respond to population movements, interdepartmental government involvement is required. More dedicated policy, institutions and programme arrangements are needed that can mobilize the necessary resources and advocate for international support. The GIROA claims that closer coordination between Afghan ministries, including the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Ministry of Urban Development Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Public Health and international donors is critical to effectively manage return migration. This also requires improved communication between authorities at a local level and between Kabul and key provinces where return migration is prevalent. Furthermore, government ministries and programmes are asked to establish more systematic linkages between returnee destinations and resource allocation decisions (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008a).

In order to ensure the coordination and progress of the ANDS, the Afghanistan Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) was established. Its main purpose is to monitor the progress and attainment of benchmarks contained within the Afghan Compact³⁹ and to solve problems when obstacles are encountered. The JCMB is co-chaired by the Afghan Minister of Finance and the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations for Afghanistan. Members include Afghan government, international community and regional representatives. It meets at least three times a year and publishes its progress and findings in an annual report. Overall, the JCMB is the cornerstone and chief coordination mechanism between the international community and the government (Kabul Process, 2012).

³⁹ The Afghanistan Compact (AC) sets out detailed outcomes, benchmarks and timelines for delivery, consistent with the high level goals set by the ANDS. The AC was approved at the London Conference in January 2006 and endorsed by the United Nations Security Council (Norwegian Embassy, 2013).

In relation to migration issues, MoRR has been mandated as the coordinating ministry responsible for coordinating policy, mainstreaming migration and overseeing policy developments relating to migration, as opposed to other technical and sector-specific ministries. The lifespan of MoRR is supposed to be temporary, to be disbanded with the resolution of the refugee issue. However, given the current context and developments in Afghanistan and the region, MoRR remains a key ministry requiring additional resources to be able to further achieve its coordinating mandate. It is currently still a work in progress, having suffered from a lack of capacity (both human, technical and financial) and leadership that has hindered its ability to establish itself as a coordinating body on migration issues. Efforts are being made to address this situation and to attribute a stronger role to MoRR within inter-ministerial meetings and structures.

MoRR chairs the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee (IMCC). The legal framework of the IMCC are the Presidential Decree 297 on Dignified Return of Refugees and Presidential Decree 104 on Land Allocation Schemes. Its goals are to meet two overall strategic objectives that were derived from the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) Sector Strategy that have been stated as follows:

1. Enhanced policy development through greater Inter-Ministerial mechanisms and exchanges.
2. Transition from dependence on purely refugee and humanitarian frameworks and arrangements for managing population movements to more diversified policies and support.

IMCC is comprised of 14 members - including its chair MoRR - and their roles and responsibilities are well defined in its ToR which is already circulated to stakeholders. The list of IMCC members is:

- Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR)
- Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD)
- Ministry of Education (MoE)
- Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD)
- Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoSLAMD)
- Ministry of Agriculture (MAIL)
- Ministry of Interior (MoI)
- National Security Council (NSC)
- Ministry of Finance (MoF)

- Ministry of Economy (MoEc)
- Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWA)
- Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)
- Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)

D.3.2. MAIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

International Organization for Migration

IOM, with its over 20 year presence in Afghanistan and its nine regional offices, manages 25 projects in the following programmatic areas: Emergency and Post-Crisis Migration Management, Regulating Migration and Movement, Migration and Development and Migration Policy and Research. IOM implements several programmes targeting return and reintegration; namely the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Programme, the Return of Qualified Afghans (RQA) Programme and Cross-Border Return and Reintegration (CBRR) Programme. Each of these programmes targets a different category of returnees: failed asylum-seekers, migrants wanting to return, highly skilled and qualified Afghans for short-term missions for capacity-building and technical support. Overall, IOM targets returnees, natural disaster-induced IDPs and vulnerable Afghans through their work.

IOM also supports Afghan government institutions that are involved in migration management issues. One of its important tasks is to advocate for understanding of the Afghan migration context. While often viewed through a refugee-lens, IOM seeks to highlight that the Afghan context increasingly involves mixed and circular migration, as opposed to refugee migration. It is also in charge of ensuring protection and advocacy for natural disaster-induced displacement, with UNHCR integrating conflict-induced displacement within its mandate in Afghanistan.

In addition, the organization provides emergency relief to vulnerable displaced families, facilitates long-term return and reintegration to and within Afghanistan and stabilizes migrant communities for sustainable development in the context of extended mass population displacement. IOM works in close cooperation with the GIRoA, the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), The Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD), the Ministry

of Interior (MoI), the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and the many others that are involved in the implementation of the ANDS (IOM, 2013a).

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Since the mid-1990s, UNHCR has been the main international organization involved in the management and coordination of Afghan refugees. The groups of concern to UNHCR in Afghanistan include asylum-seekers, refugees, returning refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). UNHCR provides protection and supports policies and mechanisms that promote the sustainable reintegration of returning refugees. It also responds to the immediate humanitarian needs of IDPs and, where possible, pursues durable solutions for them. The main responsibilities of UNHCR include: ensuring the voluntary, safe and dignified return of Afghans from abroad, advocating for the reintegration of Afghan returnees and working with the government and other stakeholders to gather information and build policy on internally displaced persons (IDPs), with a focus on conflict-induced displacement in the country. Operationally, UNHCR assists returnees and IDPs with cash grants, shelter, non-food items and livelihood interventions. Moreover, the organization devotes resources to field monitoring, evaluation, analysis of the durability of return, refugee and migratory movements and related protection and human rights issues. UNHCR operates through national and local implementing partners for increased access on the ground in a context of shrinking humanitarian space (UNHCR, 2013a).

At a governmental level, UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) in the drafting of strategic approaches and legislation to address the needs of returned refugees and IDPs. Pending the establishment of government procedures, UNHCR conducts direct refugee status determination (RSD) and pursues durable solutions for those found to be in need of international protection. UNHCR provides legal information and advice to people of concern in Afghanistan and provides material assistance to vulnerable individuals and households, targeting specifically persons with specific needs.

In 2012, UNHCR started working on two projects alongside the GIRoA: the *Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees* and the National IDP Policy. UNHCR also works closely together with other international organizations such as ILO, the World Bank, IOM, United Nations organizations (such as UNAMA, UNDP, WHO and UNICEF), NGOs such as the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and other international and national organizations (UNHCR, 2013a).

United Nations Development Programme

UNDP offers short-term volunteer consultancies through the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) and Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) programmes. UNDP has also promoted the temporary return of diaspora members worldwide since 1987 as a means of improving government services and building capacity in developing states. TOKTEN programmes have operated in over 30 countries, including Afghanistan. Evidence from case studies suggests that TOKTEN volunteers may attract less resentment than long-term returnees, because their return is temporary, their compensation is modest and they are not directly competing for permanent positions (OECD, 2010).

In 2012, UNDP reiterated its willingness to target the returnee community specifically. It has entered into a new collaboration with MoRR, UNHCR, and some other key line ministries such as MRRD, to develop a “Voluntary Return and Repatriation Programme” and to feed efforts and resources into the *Solutions Strategy* aimed at targeting the return and reintegration of Afghan refugees. This marks a renewed involvement by UNDP on refugee issues and a renewed cooperation between UNHCR and UNDP to address both humanitarian and development needs of returned refugees and IDPs.

D.3.3. THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

Since the beginning of the 1980s, NGOs have played an active role in Afghanistan. They have primarily served as providers of humanitarian assistance and as the implementers of small-scale rehabilitation and development projects. Whilst the majority of NGOs originate from Afghanistan, the largest programmes are implemented by international or multinational NGOs (Poppelwell, 2007). In 2004, the GIRoA ratified a new NGO Law. The new law placed NGOs within a clear legal framework and marked a significant step forward in enhancing the legitimacy and operating environment for NGOs in the country (United States Institute of Peace, 2007). According to the Council on Foundations (2013) there are approximately 2,150 NGOs in Afghanistan. It should be noted that only 9 per cent of donor funds flowing into Afghanistan have gone toward rebuilding the NGO community. Despite this, the support that local NGOs provide to the Afghan community and their contribution to the reconstruction process of the country is urgently needed. With increased capacity, NGOs can provide a crucial partner to build local capacity and deliver services, particularly in areas that are inaccessible to international organizations. Moreover, providing assistance and

support to domestic NGOs and other organizations is crucial for creating a free and stable country (United States Institute of Peace, 2007).

The NGO community is composed of international NGOs working on returnee issues, including large, well-resourced NGOs such as the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and NGOs with proven regional experience such as the German NGO Help in the Western region. They are funded directly by international donors and United Nations agencies and are often fulfilling the roles both of implementation and operational partners. They are therefore seen to be credible as field and policy actors.

In terms of performance, many Afghan NGOs in Afghanistan are not able to boost development. This is particularly the case in Afghan's rural areas, where capacity is low and projects often have to be delayed. While there are about a dozen large Afghan NGOs that have developed significant capacity over time, most are in need of technical assistance, resources and support networks. Besides the lack of resources, NGOs in Afghanistan suffer from a substantial lack of legitimacy. This, however, is not surprising given how NGOs have operated in the past. The new law and increased public education campaigns have helped to rebuild the image of NGOs in past years. Still, much work remains to be done in terms of transparency.

The deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan represents another constraint to the sustained success of NGOs and other state institutions. Security conditions are not only threatening the opportunities for international NGOs to assist in developing Afghan civil society, but are also hampering the ability of local NGOs to increase their own capacity and legitimacy. In past years the number of attacks on NGO staff has dramatically increased. Moreover, attacks are no longer contained to the Southern and Eastern regions, but are now occurring also in the north and other parts of the country (United States Institute of Peace, 2007).

Non-governmental organizations coordination bodies

The main NGO coordination bodies in Afghanistan include the Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB), the Agency Coordination Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR), the Islamic Coordination Council (ICC) and the South West Afghanistan and Baluchistan Association for Coordination (SWABAC) (Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2006). All NGOs must register with the Ministry of Economy (MoEc), which lists on its webpage all international NGOs and provides information about NGOs that have been dissolved (Afghan Ministry of Economy, 2012).

Although ACBAR is today located in Afghanistan, the organization was originally established in Pakistan in 1988. This is because international donors and aid agencies were overwhelmed with the high number of refugees in the country at that time and thus demanded a coordinated approach to the situation. Today, ACBAR represents a communication platform for NGOs, United Nations donors and Afghan government institutions to enable sharing of best practice information, exchanging knowledge and discussing the efficient and effective use of donor funds for Afghan citizens (ACBAR, 2013). Three years after ACBAR was founded, the Afghan NGO Coordination Bureau was established in Afghanistan. It also coordinates the activities of its members including government representatives, United Nations agencies and other international organizations. The ANCB aims to enhance the capacity of its members (over 200 in the education, health, agriculture and human rights sectors) by organising workshops and seminars and by widening its network to reach other organizations (ANCB, 2012).

Many other coordination agencies and groups exist, however, rather than migration management they tend to focus on issues such as justice (for example the Transitional Justice Coordination Group – Afghanistan) or they provide frameworks in which individuals, donor agencies or governments can exchange information and share their expertise (such as the Afghan Youth Coordination Agency –AYCA).

D.3.4. THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN AFGHANISTAN

Besides NGOs, many other forms of organizations and community structures exist in Afghanistan. These include religious networks, voluntary associations, interest groups and typical Afghan community structures referred to as *shuras* or *jigas*. These Civil Society Groups (CSOs) have become increasingly important in the reconstruction process of Afghanistan and in many cases serve (namely international conferences) as a balance to military and political organizations (Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2006).

Between 2004 and 2006, the Foundation of Culture and Civil Society (FCCS) collected data in the 34 provinces of Afghanistan to analyse and define civil society in the country. During the study, over 1,119 CSOs were recorded in 33 provinces of Afghanistan (excluding Kabul province). Of these, 717 were registered with at least one registration authority and 402 were not registered. The data indicate that there was a high level of local initiative, particularly in the cultural education sector. A total of 567 CSOs were identified in the province of

Kabul. Most CSOs in Kabul were registered with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development. The main focus of CSOs was to provide the services that were not provided by the Afghan government, thereby playing a crucial role in the reconstruction process of the country. While some CSOs offered activities only in one area, most CSOs were engaged in several activities such as cultural or social activities, capacity-building, service delivery, information or advice provision and advocacy or representation (FCCS, 2007).

Since 2001, Afghanistan has witnessed an explosion of Civil Society Organizations, many of them being created solely for the implementation of one project. As a consequence, many CSOs disappeared as fast as they were established. The study by FCCS also found that Civil Society Organizations that were not in contact with international donors had very low budget levels. Despite this, the lack of funding did not necessarily lead to low levels of performance. The most effective organizations developed coping strategies to implement their activities with very low budgets. The high pressure and requirements of international donors for grant distribution, however, have become problematic for those Civil Society Organizations that have limited capacity and efficiency. As a result, very few CSOs get the opportunity to work with international donors, increasing the risk of a monopoly held by a small number of organizations. The research revealed that there was a very low distribution level of international funds to local Civil Society Organizations which has implications for the future sustainability of humanitarian projects (FCCS, 2007).

D.4. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ON AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan as a country and its development in terms of politics, economy and security have been the topic of many discussions among representatives from countries worldwide. Several global and regional conferences have been held for discussion on Afghanistan since 2001, two of which took place in Kabul (2010) and Tokyo (2012).

Kabul International Conference on Afghanistan (2010)

In July 2010, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan presented its 'National Development Strategy Prioritization and Implementation

Plan' at the Kabul International Conference. The aim of the conference was to encourage neighbouring states and other stakeholders to seek a more coordinated and united approach to regional cooperation on important themes including counter-narcotics, refugees and IDPs as well as economic cooperation. In essence, the new plan of prioritized national programmes confirmed the government's commitment to work towards the full implementation of the 7th Pillar of the ANDS. More specifically, the GIRoA assured enhanced capacity-building of relevant Afghan ministries in order to better manage repatriation and reintegration issues. Additionally, the government committed to improve job opportunities for Afghan returnees and, moreover, provide for basic needs (namely land, water, electricity, shelter, health-care and general education) of IDPs and refugees. A commitment to facilitate tripartite arrangements (regarding integration of Afghan refugees) with neighbouring countries was also made. Moreover, the GIRoA acknowledged the importance of economic cooperation and therefore continued to facilitate dialogues on labour migration between countries in the region (especially Gulf Cooperation Council countries) to better regulate labour flows and to increase receptiveness to Afghan labourers (Kabul International Conference on Afghanistan, 2010).

Tokyo International Conference on Afghanistan (2012)

The Tokyo Conference was the continuation of the Bonn Conference (2011), which highlighted the commitment of the international community to Afghanistan. It was held on 8 July 2012 and representatives from over 55 countries and 25 international and other organizations were present. The main objective of the conference was to discuss, decide on and support the economic cooperation of the international community for the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan in the Transformation Decade (2015-2024) and its long-term economic growth and fiscal self-reliance. The GIRoA made requests for pledges for the implementation of the National Priority Programmes (NPPs) to potential donors (Tokyo International Conference on Afghanistan, 2012).

By focusing development efforts on NPPs, the Tokyo Conference promoted an Afghan-led process and links into the sustainable development process during the Transformation Decade. The key to the partnership between the Afghan government and the international community in the economic growth and development of Afghanistan is the principle of mutual accountability in achieving jointly decided goals (Tokyo International Conference on Afghanistan, 2012).

The sustainable return and reintegration of Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons was also discussed as being essential to security and stability of the country. The international community expressed their commitment to the furthering of development and reintegration potential in Afghanistan to support the return of refugees from neighboring countries. The GIRoA and the international community discussed the situation in Afghanistan's neighbouring countries, in particular Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, in terms of providing temporary refuge to millions of Afghans. There is mutual commitment to continue working towards their voluntary, safe and orderly return (Tokyo International Conference on Afghanistan, 2012).

RETURN AND REINTEGRATION

It is both timely and relevant in the light of the 2014 transition, to assess the outcomes of the international cooperation and programmes on return, as outlined previously. At a time of decreasing funds, limited access for humanitarian and development actors, and strained relationships between foreign and national governments, all stakeholders implicated in broader return migration governance issues are forced to review and re-think their strategies, aiming for more cost-effective and efficient programmes.

The following excerpt from the OECD's report is enlightening as it holds significant implications for future migration governance and return migration initiatives:

Data from the Afghan diaspora indicates that many diaspora members are prepared to return to Afghanistan for short periods, but informal discussions with Afghan acquaintances - both those who had government positions in Afghanistan and those outside the country - indicate that there is a great deal of frustration about the slow pace of change in Afghanistan, and even more, about the precarious security situation. Dissatisfaction was generally the result of insecurity and work: insecurity was a major concern for all of the respondents; the slow pace of work, antiquated processes, and inability to foster changes in the working environment were the causes of dissatisfaction for three of our respondents. Two other factors - job prospects and women's roles - also contributed to dissatisfaction (OECD, 2010: 29).

These elements are indicators that return will decrease in the months and years ahead. This is further supported by the World Bank's predictions of the economic consequences of transition. In its preliminary presentations, the World Bank highlighted implications of the transition and troop withdrawals for economic growth, fiscal sustainability and service delivery (World Bank, 2011b) .

Looking ahead, donors and stakeholders will need to focus on the most sustainable policy options with regards to return and reintegration. Whether it be for refugees, IDPs, migrants or failed asylum-seekers, the most practical, pragmatic and proven option is to build efforts through existing national programmes. Actors working in the area of return migration should understand that return and reintegration are, first and foremost, a national responsibility. Hence, it is the responsibility and mandate of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and of its Ministries, to address the issues arising from migrant return and promote reintegration (Majidi, 2011a). Efforts are currently under way on several fronts, including a proposal to develop a National Return and Reintegration Strategy and a separate process seeks to develop a roadmap for the implementation of the National IDP Policy.

PART E: KEY FINDINGS, POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

E. I. MIGRATION TRENDS

Migration in Afghanistan is characterized mostly by international emigration of Afghans and internal migration; immigration of persons from abroad is observed to a much lesser extent. Mobility has been an essential aspect of Afghan history, including migration for both seasonal and permanent employment and, at times, to seek refuge. Records show that Afghans have for centuries been migrating primarily to the neighbouring countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, though more recently have also been travelling further afield, including to North America, European countries and Australia.

The net migration rate of Afghanistan has fluctuated significantly in recent decades and largely followed political events in the country. During the Soviet occupation from 1979 until 1989, a large number of Afghans left the country, with a negative net migration rate of -56.7/1000 persons between 1980 and 1985. Between 1990 and 1995 this reversed to a positive net migration rate of 44.4/1000 persons as many people returned. As the strength of Taliban rule grew, during 1995 and 2000, this rate again sank below parity to -6.5/1000 persons. The fall of the Taliban at the end of 2001 and the implementation of UNHCR's voluntary repatriation scheme in 2002 led to high numbers of Afghan refugees returning to their home country. Between 2002 and 2013, more than 6 million Afghans returned home.

Immigration to Afghanistan of third country nationals without Afghan heritage is limited. In 1990, the total stock of immigrants living in Afghanistan was 57,686 people. The number rose to 75,917 in 2000 and 90,883 in 2010. Efforts to rebuild the Afghan economy with a limited pool of domestic skilled labour have led to the active recruitment of foreign migrant workers. Data from the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs show that 17,833 work permits were issued to foreign nationals in 2011. Approximately 100,000 foreigners employed in Afghanistan are estimated to have an irregular status. In addition, immigration to Afghanistan for employment purposes includes foreign military and development staff.

There are significantly large Afghan populations in the neighbouring Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, but also in countries further afield. Particularly the United States, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom host large Afghan communities. Emigration to these countries is often permanent and citizenship is obtained in many cases when the required period of time has been spent in the country.

The labour market situation of Afghanistan is a large driver of migration as many face a lack of employment opportunities and therefore seek them elsewhere. Wages are significantly higher in neighbouring countries and countries further afield like the United States, Canada and the Netherlands.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan share a long history with Afghanistan and have been hosting large numbers of Afghan refugee flows since the early 1980s. Whereas both countries welcomed Afghan refugees in the beginning, today Afghan refugees are seen as a burden to their economy and a threat to internal security in these countries. Depending on the place of residence and community within these two countries, Afghans have integrated in the host country and often identify themselves as Pakistani or Iranian. Afghans are a competitive labour force, because they are willing to work for lower wages and do jobs the natives are not willing to do. On the other hand, studies have also shown that many Afghan refugees face harassment and exploitation in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. In order to better integrate Afghans in these countries, government and public perception and attitude about Afghan refugees needs to change. This would include, among other things, a change of policies such as easier access to work permits for Afghan migrant workers and the right to citizenship, especially for those Afghans who have been residing in neighbouring countries for several decades. In addition, the objectives mentioned under the ANDS 7th Pillar, regarding IDPs, refugees and returnees have to be put in place to better manage and safeguard the right of Afghan IDPs, migrant workers, returnees and refugees abroad.

In Western countries Afghans often face un- or underemployment. One major obstacle in accessing the labour market is a lack of language skills of the host country. Often Afghans also have problems finding employment at their proper skill levels due to limited recognition of foreign educational qualifications. Many Afghans reported being engaged in low-paid employment that often involved long working hours and shift work. Consequently many of them face a loss of social, economic and professional status in the host country. Amongst United Kingdom-born Afghans, there is a greater level of adaption to mainstream culture and changing views about the issues such as the role of women in society

than is the case for first-generation Afghans. This creates tensions between family members, with older people fearing the loss of their Afghan identity, and younger people looking to their parents to behave in a more westernised manner. Although this issue has not explicitly been researched among Afghan communities in other countries, it is likely that this phenomenon is widespread. In the United Kingdom and the US, Afghan community organizations are rather weak in terms of political representation (seen to a larger extent in the United Kingdom). This is mainly due to the ethnic, language and political differences among the Afghan population, which make it difficult to identify key leaders that are widely accepted across the community. As a consequence, there is a lack of representative community forums that could advocate on behalf of the community to central government and local public bodies. A direct recognition and representation of Afghans in local consultations and decision-making forums is needed to improve the current situation. Furthermore, identifying and working with organizations that could bridge the gap between local authorities and Afghan communities could also improve the situation (Change Institute, 2009). Overall, more research on the socioeconomic situation of the Afghan diaspora in countries that host the largest Afghan communities (including EU countries, the Russian Federation, India) is needed (the Netherlands has taken strides in this direction with the IS Academy on Migration and Development research on Afghans in the Netherlands as well as other new data collection on Afghans in the Netherlands).

As addressed at the International Conference on Afghanistan in London in 2010, many issues concerning labour migration could be solved through regional cooperation. In the past, labour migration between Afghanistan and its neighbours remained unregulated. Although the GIROA has recognised the importance of its migrant labour force and made attempts to regulate the flow of Afghan labour migration, more work needs to be done. Bilateral agreements with important destination countries such as the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan should be established to legitimise migrant workers and their right to search for work abroad and make sure they are not exploited due to the absence of documentation. The establishment of organizations that guarantee and control the rights of migrant workers abroad is essential (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2010a). Overall, it is crucial that labour migration is properly managed and takes place through safe and legal channels. Therefore, establishing secure and fair recruitment processes and bilateral cooperation will help to protect the rights of migrants and help tackle exploitation and human trafficking. Furthermore, providing knowledge about the migration process and possible obstacles in the destination country will also enhance integration and speed up the adjustment of migrants to the labour market in the host country (Ratha et al., 2011).

Education is another factor leading to emigration of particularly young Afghans. With a growing demand for highly educated and technically competent young people who can contribute to the country's reconstruction, opportunities for education abroad have increased. The GIRoA has strongly supported exchange programmes with universities abroad and promotes collaborative partnerships between secondary schools. In addition to exchange programmes, many countries provide scholarships for Afghan students who want to pursue higher education outside their home country. It is difficult to estimate the total number of Afghan students enrolled in tertiary education abroad. The UNESCO World Education Digest of 2011 reports a number of 3,810 Afghans that were studying abroad in 2009. The main destination countries include the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, the United States of America, Germany and the Russian Federation.

Afghanistan remain one of the main source countries of asylum-seekers worldwide. In 2011 alone, over 39,000 Afghans sought asylum worldwide. Most of these applications were filed in industrialized OECD countries (mainly European countries, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the Republic of Korea). In relative terms, Indonesia experienced a high increase in asylum applications from Afghanistan in 2009: some 80 per cent of asylum applicants in Indonesia originated from Afghanistan then. The global total recognition rate of Afghan asylum applications in 2011 was 53 per cent.

The issue of human trafficking is complex in the context of Afghanistan and data on its scope are not available. The majority of victims of trafficking, mostly children, are trafficked within Afghanistan's borders. Transnational trafficking also occurs, however, and the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan are the primary countries of destination. The main purposes for which Afghan children are trafficked are prostitution and forced labour in factories, brick kilns and domestic service. Females are mainly trafficked to neighbouring countries and, to a lesser extent, India, for the purposes of forced marriages, prostitution or domestic service. Afghan men are trafficked to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, the Gulf States, Greece and Turkey for forced labour and debt bondage in agriculture and construction. Many foreign women are also trafficked into Afghanistan for the same purposes; such trafficking victims mainly come from the Philippines, Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Tajikistan and China. The population in Afghanistan is widely aware of the problem of trafficking in persons, but concepts like trafficking, smuggling and kidnapping are often mixed up.

In order to prevent human trafficking, law and regulations against trafficking must be enforced. One of the most important steps is that the GIRoA has to ensure that victims of trafficking are not punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being trafficked. Furthermore, the definition of human trafficking must be clearly communicated to government officials to avoid confusion between kidnapping, human trafficking and human smuggling (US Department of State, 2013b).

A further problem in terms of human trafficking is the low number of organizations that work on trafficking issues in Afghanistan. The Afghan government should stipulate that more organizations get involved in its national counter-trafficking initiative and motivate the donor community to provide more resources to support such initiatives. In order to better understand the phenomenon of human trafficking, regular field research should be conducted with a particular focus on gender-based violence and criminal networks involving illicit activities such as human trafficking and smuggling. In addition, more attention should be paid to the psychological impact of trafficking on victims. The IOM provides clear recommendations for Afghan ministries to raise awareness among the Afghan population of human trafficking issues and how to prevent future instances of trafficking (IOM, 2008d). The recommendations are summarized and outlined in the following table (Table 94). Since 2003, IOM Afghanistan has implemented a variety of projects aimed at increasing public awareness of trafficking, protecting the victims and building the capacity of law enforcement agencies in investigating and prosecuting crimes.

Table 94: Human Trafficking - Action Plan Matrix

Aim	Task	Responsible Ministries
Increase prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct information campaigns on the risks of migration/trafficking to educate potential victims of trafficking. • Include all social groups in rural and urban areas. • Increase capacities of journalists and train local media personnel to ensure that reports on human trafficking are covered and communicated to the public correctly. • Strengthen the education system and decrease drop-out rates of students (this is as less educated individuals are more prone to fall victims of trafficking). 	Ministry of Woman Affairs (MoWA) MoLSAMD MoE

Enhance prosecution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen legislation of anti-trafficking law. • Develop a law enforcement database for effective investigation and prosecution. • Information of cases of human trafficking must be recorded, analysed and shared in a timely manner through a common database among relevant agencies. • Information sharing mechanisms between different units of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) must be streamlined. • Train border police to better identify VoT. • An increase in border patrols is needed since most VoT are trafficked through unofficial border points. • Increase awareness rising campaigns specifically targeting women, to inform victims of trafficking that they are entitled to seek assistance. • Create an environment where victims and families can report cases and cooperate with law enforcement bodies to facilitate and investigate prosecution of trafficking cases. 	MoWA MoI Ministry of Justice (MoJ)
Increase protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of shelters designed for victims of trafficking and train shelter staff to address the specific psychological and medical needs of VoT. • Increase the capacity of community leaders in detecting trafficking cases. • Educate communities to eliminate discrimination towards trafficked victims (particularly women) and ensure sustainable integration. • In terms of transnational trafficking, promote regional cooperation with neighbouring countries on issues such as border management, repatriation of victims, information sharing and extradition of perpetrators. 	MoWA MoLSAMD MoFA

Source: IOM, 2008d.

Between 2008 and 2012, 2,300 Afghan nationals were refused entry to the European Union along the borders. The majority was rejected along Italy's border. The main migrant routes from Afghanistan to Europe go through Turkey or the Russian Federation. In 2011, 45,480 illegal Afghans were counted in different European countries. This number decreased to 33,805 in 2012. The main destination countries of irregular Afghan immigrants in Europe now include Greece, Germany, Austria, France and Sweden.

Unaccompanied minors are one of the most vulnerable groups among all refugees and asylum-seekers. Families pay up to USD 20,000 to have their children smuggled into Europe. When they leave Afghanistan, many children do not know their country of destination and the destination often changes

during the migration process due to additional information about a potential destination or due to a smuggler's decision to move a child to another location. In 2012, there were 5,475 registered Afghan UAMs in the EU-27, Norway and Switzerland. Sweden, the United Kingdom, Norway, Germany and Austria are the main destination countries for this group.

Over the past 10 years at least 6 million people have returned to Afghanistan. These numbers largely consist of repatriated refugees. Since 2005, however, the number of registered refugees returning through the UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme has significantly decreased and other forms of return migration have increased. Presently the primary return flows to Afghanistan are returning migrants that have crossed the border temporarily to gain employment. The needs of these groups are vastly different, as returning temporary migrants primarily return on their own and can re-join their families in Afghanistan.

Despite the successful return of many migrants, many challenges remain. Since the mid 2000s, the number of returnees has decreased significantly. This is, in part, due to factors such as poverty, terrorism and a difficult humanitarian situation in the country. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) is fully committed to implementing the 7th Pillar of its national development strategy (ANDS), concerning refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. Under the ANDS the GIROA aims to increase its absorption capacity to better plan and manage sustainable reintegration of return migrants. Furthermore, strengthening capacity in relevant Afghan ministries dealing with repatriation, enhancing inter-ministerial coordination and mobilizing additional resources are also key foci under the ANDS (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2008b).

Not all Afghans returning to Afghanistan do so voluntarily. Forced returns or deportations from neighbouring countries, Europe and Australia occur on an ongoing basis. The largest numbers of forced returns are recorded from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan. In total in 2012, 258,146 deportations were recorded from the neighbouring country, which averages at 705 deportations per day.

In terms of reintegration, it can be said that return migrant households are not necessarily in a worse position than other households as there is a potential selection effect of those with more resources and connections returning to Afghanistan. However, many of the issues confronting returnee households are

the same that confront non-returnee and non-migrant households; these are the structural issues of a country where development has not reached the mass of urban and rural poor.

The International Crisis Group (ICG) has laid out recommendations to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to better manage and protect return migrants and those who still remain in neighbouring countries. According to the ICG, the GIRoA should, among other things, strengthen municipalities' capacity to respond to population influxes through enhanced urban planning and infrastructural development. In addition, existing land allocation schemes and land dispute resolution initiatives should be made more transparent, thereby ensuring the neutrality of the judiciary and clarifying property rights and documentation. As the GIRoA already laid out in the ANDS, the capacity of the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) is limited and will need upgrading to help with long-term resettlement. To improve efficiency, a branch specifically addressing returnees, refugees and IDPs should be established in each appropriate ministry that then work together. Moreover, the ICG suggests that the MoRR should turn into an inter-ministerial consultative and coordinating body. With respect to refugees still residing in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, the GIRoA should improve regional cooperation and enhance the protection of Afghans living in these countries by addressing the issue of unmanaged cross-border movements (International Crisis Group, 2009).

Another form of return is temporary return of highly skilled nationals (also termed reverse circular migration and brain gain). In Afghanistan highly skilled return programmes have been initiated since 2002 to contribute to building skills and capacity as the country rebuilt after the wars. Although evidence is limited, there are studies that indicate that temporary returnees were successful in being able to transfer knowledge and develop capacity in Afghanistan if programmes are implemented appropriately. This is not to say that all temporary return programmes are successful, however, further research is required to understand the effects of temporary return on development in Afghanistan. Consequently, such successful programmes should be continued to increase the transfer of skills and innovations in relevant sectors.

Internal migration of voluntary nature in Afghanistan is caused mainly by economic factors. People move to the urban centres to look for a job, because of a lack of employment in rural areas and perceived better employment opportunities in the cities. This has led to a stable urbanization trend. While in 2010 about 23 per cent of the population were living in urban areas, this will increase to 43 per cent in 2050. There is evidence that return migration to urban areas is a common occurrence further strengthening this urbanization trend.

Internal displacement in Afghanistan is on the rise, in particular due to increasing numbers of conflict-induced displacement. Currently there are more than 480,000 people internally displaced - the majority due to conflict (400,000) and the rest due to natural disasters. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) migrate to safer living conditions, whether in terms of physical or human security, and often find themselves included in mixed migration flows with rural-urban migrants, other displaced populations and return migrants. One of the durable solutions to internal displacement is return to the area of origin; however, many studies in Afghanistan have shown the often permanent nature of displacement and the multiplicity of displacement patterns, with secondary and tertiary displacement also on the rise.

Armed conflict is one of the main causes for internal displacement. As a consequence, to avoid an increase in IDPs, the Brookings Institution (BI) and The Liaison Office (TLO) suggested that military planners should integrate the issue of displacement into their counterinsurgency strategies, guidelines and standard operating procedures (Rothing, 2011).

Ultimate responsibility with regard to IDPs lies with the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR). With support from the international community, MoRR has formulated many policies and implemented programmes to address protracted displacement and reintegration of IDPs. Since 2012, MoRR has been tasked to establish a National IDP Policy. However, despite these efforts, legal instruments are required to prevent and respond to internal displacement and ensure that the human rights of IDPs are fully respected. Although this issue has been addressed in the Afghan National Development Strategy, the strategy does not provide a definition for an IDP in Afghanistan, nor does it prohibit discrimination against them.

Only USD 3 million were allocated to assistance to refugees and IDPs in 2009/10, but in order to meet the needs of IDPs and provide basic services such as food, water and shelter, more financial resources are needed. Additionally, in order for (international) NGOs and other humanitarian organizations to effectively work in the field, the security situation in the country has to improve. Especially in the past years, humanitarian staff has been increasingly targeted by insurgent groups making the provision of direct assistance very difficult if not impossible (Rothing, 2011).

It should be noted that many Afghans are also displaced due to natural disasters such as earthquakes, flooding, drought, landslides and avalanches. Though it is not possible to completely avoid natural disasters, suffering can

be minimized by raising awareness among the population and by developing suitable warning systems. Natural disasters cut across many boundaries, including organizational, political, geographical, professional, topical and sociological. This means that disaster information needs to be disseminated to all stakeholders at Shura, District, Provincial and National levels, both public and private. The International Organization for Migration is currently working on this with other partners.

Many parts of Afghanistan's border are characterised by weak control. Drug trafficking and other illicit cross-border activities are common in these areas (UNDOC, 2011). The border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is particularly marked by incidents of violence (Bajoria, 2009). The main responsibility in terms of control and management lies with the Afghan border police and passport office that officially control the entry and exit of all individuals at the border. However, studies have shown that the current passport and visa control system is not responding to the nature and size of movements. Regulation has so far failed and a new system and approaches need to be developed (Majidi, 2009).

Therefore, to better monitor and manage cross-border movements along Afghanistan's borders, the implementation of a concrete and well-enforced border management system is needed. Such a system has to consider the transnational networks of tribal populations that live in the border areas. An electronic system should be implemented and the collected data should be used to build up a database that can reveal changes and volumes of migration flows at different points along the Afghan border. Moreover, border officials should be monitored with regard to implementation of their responsibilities to make sure that no form of harassment or discrimination is occurring. Discrimination against non-Pashtuns is well known (particularly at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border). Therefore, a well functioning border system can only function if all individuals involved in the process are treated equally, regardless of race and ethnicity. This element should be integrated in the capacity-building and training of officials acting on behalf of the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan along the border (Majidi, 2009).

Border control policies should also recognise that migration is primarily an economic phenomenon (Ratha et al., 2011). Evidence from the US-Mexico border has shown that cross-border movements will continue regardless of any attempts to seal it (International Crisis Group, 2009). Even more, evidence from the US-Mexico border suggests that increasing the number of border control agents increases smuggler's fees, but is unlikely to curtail the number of migrants as intended. Instead, providing legal channels for temporary migration when

labour is in high demand in the destination country is more likely to enhance the benefits of migration for all parties (Ratha et al., 2011).

Recognizing Afghanistan's geographical location at the crossroads of Central Asia, its informal migration over centuries and decades of fighting and displacement both internally and across borders, the Afghan government has partnered with IOM to build capacity for migration management. In 2005, IOM launched the Australian-funded project Capacity-Building for Afghan Passport and Visa Issuance. The Afghanistan Passport Issuing System (APIS) and Afghanistan Visa Issuance System (AVIS) are now implemented and fulfill international standards. The goal of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, through the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IOM, is to provide its citizens with Machine-Readable Travel Documents (MRTDs). It will also help to establish a secure and reliable management system for handling and distribution of these documents throughout the country. IOM plans to provide training to approximately 250 staff members who will be working as operators of the new system in the Central Passport Department.

E.2. THE IMPACTS OF MIGRATION

Migration influences the population and demographic development, which for the 2010-2050 period in Afghanistan will be characterized by the continuous growth of the population and the process of population ageing. According to the estimates of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the population of the country will almost double from 28 million in 2010 to 56.5 million in 2050. The proportion of individuals 65 and older will increase from 3.7 per cent to 8.5 per cent in the same period.

The economy of Afghanistan has improved significantly since 2001, largely because of the volume of money from international donors that flows into the country and the growth of the agriculture and service sectors. GDP has constantly increased in recent years and it is expected that this trend will continue. The currency exchange between Afghanis and US dollars remained fairly constant since 2006. It is, however, increasingly evident that the Afghan economy remains vulnerable to general shocks (for example natural disasters) and external commodity price shocks. Additionally, there is much concern about what is going to happen to the many people that have service jobs with the international community as their employers leave the country.

Remittances represent an important inflow both on the macro-level as well as for many households on the micro-level. Despite the many challenges that confront the measurement of remittance flows, Da Afghanistan Bank has made important attempts to measure the movement of remittance transfers into and out of the country. According to remittance flows declared in the balance of payment framework, net remittances amounted to USD 325 million in the 2011 fiscal year. Remittance inflows were measured at USD 679 million, accounting for 1.6 per cent of gross domestic product in that year. Small-scale migration corridor studies and household surveys seem to suggest that the flow of remittances entering Afghanistan could easily exceed this amount.

Remittances of Afghan migrant workers can be seen as a key tool for household income generation and as a key contributing factor in national economic development. Although Afghanistan's banking sector is growing, the hawala system is likely to remain the primary mean of money transfer, particularly given the more flexible know-your-customer identification requirements employed by hawala. Advantages of the hawala system are also the people's familiarity with and trust in it as well as the relatively low fees. Many Afghans abroad, particularly in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, lack proper identification papers and are therefore unable to open bank accounts. In addition, distrust in the banking system is high and many Afghans in rural areas have no access to any form of formal financial institution. Nonetheless, further attempts to increase financial infrastructure should be made. In 2008, the M-Paisa mobile money transfer system was launched, introducing a novel and innovative remittance product to the Afghan remittance market. In addition to facilitating peer-to-peer money transfers, M-Paisa provides an efficient scheme for managing micropayments and electronic banking using text messaging. This new way of transferring remittances is proving to be a cheaper means of transferring money than using the banking system. Given the service's use of the expansive mobile network provided by Roshan Telecommunications, the service is accessible to individuals residing in rural areas. Considering that thousands of people subscribe to cell phone services each month, the future of money transfer in Afghanistan may lie in the telecommunication system and should therefore be further expanded. Many other mobile network operators are currently developing their own lines of mobile money transfer within Afghanistan.

Consequently, the GIRoA should further leverage remittance flows for development by supporting policies for cheaper, safer and more productive remittance sending. Yet, migration and remittances should not be viewed as a substitute for official development aid as they are private money that should not be expected to fund public projects. Also, not all poor households

receive remittances and official funds are needed to address the needs of these households. The GIROA and the international community should further acknowledge and facilitate the development potential of migration and remittances by increasing awareness levels of decision-makers, improving data on migration and remittances, facilitating labour mobility and recruitment across borders, while allowing for safe and affordable mechanisms for sending money back home (Ratha et al., 2011).

The emigration of skilled Afghans appeared mainly in the 1980s and 1990s during the Soviet intervention, when it was mainly the Afghan elite (professors, teachers and students) who migrated to Europe and North America. There is no indication of brain drain in current migration trends as there was almost no difference in the level of education of the resident population and the migrants who left Afghanistan and international migrants do not seem to be more highly educated than internal migrants. Nonetheless, it is clear that Afghanistan is in need of highly skilled labour, particularly in the education and health care sectors. Return migrants tend to state that the migration experience had a positive influence on their professional skills. They do, however, often face difficulties in finding a job and especially one where they can apply the gained skills.

In terms of human development, Afghanistan ranks at the 169th position out of 187 in the Human Development Index. This highlights the gaps in well-being and life opportunities of Afghan citizens. However, although Afghanistan's development remains very low in comparison to other countries, its HDI trend has steadily increased since 2000. Large shares of the Afghan population face severe poverty, with 36 per cent being below the national poverty line. Migration seems to positively contribute to the living conditions of households in Afghanistan particularly through the impact of remittances. Among migrant, return migrant and non-migrant households no large differences in the current economic situation of the household are observed, but more remittance-receiving households than non-receiving households tend to report living comfortably. For most households the living circumstances have improved over the last five years.

Efforts should be made by the GIROA to create and maintain links between migrants and their country of origin in order to encourage them to contribute human and financial capital to the development of their home communities. Migrants could also make better use of economic opportunities at home if mobility were facilitated by both the source and host countries and communities. The outward transfer of remittances through money transfer organizations such as Western Union is only an option for a limited number of citizens in Afghanistan.

This poses a serious limitation for diaspora members in Western countries who wish to invest in the development of Afghanistan. In addition, the GIRoA has to improve the pass and visa system to ensure that Afghan nationals have access to identification. However, in order to achieve this, the GIRoA has to reform its pass and visa system and decrease waiting times and high fees for passports and other identification. Moreover, the GIRoA should stress the importance of identification and labour permits in consultation processes with neighbouring countries. In the long term, the GIRoA should also establish mechanisms to better control the outflow of Afghan students. This could be done by issuing exit visas to those who wish to leave the country, collecting information on demographics and reason of emigration. More information is also needed with regard to foreign nationals entering Afghanistan. The GIRoA should expand the scope of administrative registration of foreigners to collect data on sex, age and reason for (short-term) residence in the country.

The migration experience does not seem to lead to a decrease in the social integration of the return migrants in their origin community in Afghanistan. The large majority of migrants feel very much a part of the community in which they live. Moreover, the return migrants' position in the household tends to have improved compared to the situation before migration, along with their social status in general. However, the migration experience itself appears to subjectively alienate people from their origin community. Opinions regarding return migrants seem to be generally positive. The majority of households seem to agree with the statement that return migrants bring new ideas, knowledge and technologies to Afghanistan. This may result in changes in the traditional cultures and norms in Afghanistan as a result of the experiences that return migrants bring. However, the large majority of households strongly agree that return migrants receive preferential treatment - a perception that may impact the social cohesion of a community.

The health system in Afghanistan is among the poorest in the world. Many households struggle to secure basic needs like food and shelter. Access to health care facilities is limited and large parts of the population face concerning basic household sanitation. The data collected for this profile do show a positive impact of migration and remittances on the access to and usage of such facilities.

Afghanistan is a land-locked country with a high incidence of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, landslides and droughts. Depending on their impact such shocks potentially force people to leave their usual place of residence and lead to their displacement, either temporary or permanently. About 50,000 Afghans were internally displaced due to natural disasters in 2011.

E.3. MIGRATION POLICIES

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) is the document that outlines the Afghan government's strategies for security, governance, economic growth and poverty reduction. Pillar 7 of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy for 2008-2013 focuses on refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) among other issues. The aim of this pillar is to facilitate the planned and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs and their reintegration into society. The strategy entails plans for capacity-building as well as cooperation with third countries in the aim to support Afghans living abroad. The planned and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs is expected to contribute to economic growth, the reduction of poverty and the strengthening of security and stability of the country and the region.

The national legal and regulatory framework concerning migration in Afghanistan is at this stage not coherent. As of now, there is no national policy specifically targeting migrants, returnees or IDPs. The GIRoA is, however, in the process of developing a National IDP Policy as well as a Refugee Law, which should both be launched in the foreseeable future. Currently, migration is managed by a variety of government regulations, legal instruments, action plans and strategies, both on the national as well as international level.

There are a number of state authorities and institutions directly or indirectly involved in the management of migration in Afghanistan. The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) is the main body responsible for returnees and internally displaced persons in Afghanistan. The ministry is supported by a Consultative Group on Refugees and IDPs, which includes representatives from other ministries, United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors. The main task of the Consultative Group is to support MoRR in its goal to reintegrate Afghan returning refugees and internally displaced persons into society. The two main international organizations working on migration and refugee issues in Afghanistan are the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Additionally, there are several NGOs and Civil Society Organizations that directly or indirectly affect the livelihoods of returnees.

Afghanistan has many bilateral and tripartite (with UNHCR) agreements with neighbouring states, European countries and Australia. While many of these are focused on Afghan refugees and their safe and sustainable return, it is becoming more apparent that there is a need for more agreements on Afghan

labour migration especially to the neighbouring countries and Gulf Cooperation Council states.

The commitment of the international community to the development of Afghanistan is evident as there have been several conferences on Afghanistan since 2001. Migration and refugees are frequently discussed topics at these occasions and it was at an international conference in Geneva in May 2012 that the *Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees* was endorsed by the international community. In July 2012, the Tokyo Conference promoted an Afghan-led, sustainable development process during the Transformation Decade (2015-2024). The key to the partnership between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community in the economic growth and development of Afghanistan is the principle of mutual accountability in achieving jointly decided goals. The sustainable return and reintegration of Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons is also an essential part of the discussions between the GIROA and international representatives as it is expected to contribute to security and stability of the country and the region. The international community expressed their commitment to the furthering of development and reintegration potential in Afghanistan to support the return of refugees from neighbouring countries.

E.4. RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING IMPROVEMENTS TO MIGRATION STATISTICS AND THE OVERALL EVIDENCE BASE

E.4.1. IDENTIFICATION AND EXPLANATION OF EXISTING DATA GAPS

Statistics on migration and remittances are often of poor quality, especially in developing countries. This is also the case for Afghanistan, where data on migration flows are relatively scarce and estimates of remittances and other indicators are not reliable. It is crucial for policymakers to have access to good migration data since statistics should form the basis for evidence-based policy development. However, data collection about Afghans remains a challenge. As could be observed throughout this report, migration data in Afghanistan on transit, circular or irregular migration are either not available or, where available, are not representative of the actual situation. In addition, the study by Majidi

(2009) for UNHCR on border migration between Afghanistan and Pakistan has shown that official records of cross-border movements are not representative of the actual volume. Therefore, it is very unclear how large the migration flows between Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries actually are.

Furthermore, Afghanistan has no common procedures or standards on how to collect data on migrant workers, refugees or IDPs due to a lack of capacities and coherent policies and the absence of clear definitions. Data on migrants coming to Afghanistan are likewise scarce. It is difficult, if not impossible, to access reports or data regarding immigrants or new airport arrivals, reported by national state authorities. This is because the information is either not accessible or no data have been collected so far. Personal email contact with state embassies in Kabul has shown that data on foreign migrants in Afghanistan are treated as confidential. Whether this is due to the deteriorating security situation in the country is not known.

Studies on border migration and human trafficking have provided insights into existing migration flows and determined that large migration movements are taking place. Neither of the studies was, however, able to depict the full scope of the phenomenon and therefore one can only guess how large actual cross-border movements and how high the numbers of VoT truly are. In this research, most data on migrants into and out of Afghanistan have been retrieved either from national censuses, official databases (for example of the United Nations or World Bank) or publications by (international) organizations such as UNHCR, IOM, AREU and ILO. However, differences in data collection methods and the inclusion or exclusion of certain target groups are an obstacle in the comparison of Afghan migrant groups or migration flows.

In general, information on Afghan migrants residing outside Afghanistan is of better quality and more accessible. This is especially the case for Western countries. However, different data collection methods and changes in nationality laws make it difficult to estimate the total stock of Afghans abroad. Data on specific Afghan groups such as “students” are difficult to retrieve. This is because national reports or censuses often cluster foreign migrants into one category (e.g. foreign or Asian) rather than displaying the country of origin or nationality individually. Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of data on different aspect of integration and well-being of the Afghan diaspora in Western societies.

Less information is also available about Afghans residing in countries such as the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, India and the GCC states. In 2009, the Change Institute published a report on the Afghan community in England. The

report was the first of its kind in understanding the Muslim/Afghan diaspora in England. Other countries have also started to research their Afghan populations, such as the Netherlands but more can and should be done in this regard. This is in line with the international community's commitment to support the development of Afghanistan and therefore should recognise the potential of Afghan Diaspora contributions to this process.

The same applies to information on remittances as official estimates of remittance flows to Afghanistan based on the balance of payments reporting frameworks are not reported by the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund because of concerns about the comprehensiveness and timeliness of the provided information (IMF, 2011). In the absence of functioning state machinery and a weak banking system, existing estimates on remittances are not likely to be representative of the true volumes, since large portions of remittances are sent through unofficial channels and data from those that are registered are often too numerous to deal with.

E.4.2. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO IMPROVE MIGRATION DATA

The GIRoA needs to recruit and train personnel with skills in statistics and information communication technology to enhance data gathering, entry, processing and analysis. Salaries of staff workers have to increase in many cases to counter corruption that makes data collection difficult, if not impossible. When training those who work with migrants, it is necessary to take into account differences in language, culture and ethnicity of both migrants and staff.

Furthermore, the GIRoA should facilitate collaboration more intensively with international migration organizations and research institutions to harmonize migration data collection and databases. The NRVA survey does already collect information on migration and remittances, however, a wider range of information on migration issues would benefit evidence-based policymaking in Afghanistan. More importantly, a database on Afghan migration information should be created. Such a database would give more insight into the reasons why people move or do not move in specific areas and thereby provide the basis for more effective migration policies. The database should include detailed information on migrants, as this enhances comparability of data collected between countries. There is a lack of data more generally in Afghanistan and there is no systematic way in which migration data are collected. This report clearly shows the need for better and more systematic data collection. We suggest that the best way to

deal with this need would be to institute a bi-annual (every two years) holistic migration survey in Afghanistan starting in 2015.

With regard to Western countries, migration data collection in these areas should also be improved. This is because major differences exist in the concepts used for identifying migrants and their descendants, which in turn poses a major problem for data comparability. Therefore, national statistics should consider collecting additional data on migration-related information that go beyond citizenship and country of birth. It is beneficial to present data in the most detailed possible breakdown to avoid incomparability between data sets. Moreover, data should become more accessible to researchers to allow for better use of existing information. In addition, researchers should emphasise the collection of longitudinal data and stress the importance of oversampling of target populations. These methods are important to better measure and understand the migration and discrimination issues. Finally, more time should be invested in awareness raising campaigns that stress the importance of high quality data and thereby appeal to politicians and researchers to provide the desired statistical information.

E.5. HOW TO REGULARLY UPDATE THE AFGHANISTAN MIGRATION PROFILE

In order to remain an effective information tool for policymaking, Migration Profile reports need to be updated regularly and used for policy development. The Afghanistan Migration Profile should be updated every two years. In this regard, institutions and ministries involved in migration issues should collaborate on a regular basis to share information and make better use of data in the formulation of national development policies. Subsequent revisions of the Migration Profile should include data from a national migration survey (internal and international migration) and should constitute a panel data set where possible. This could be done by interviewing the same households over time to ascertain dynamics.

Moreover, data should be collected in a user-friendly manner to update the Migration Profile. Data on cross-border movements (also collected by neighbouring countries) as well as data on new airport arrivals (collected by the Movement and Control Passenger Management Unit (Movcon)) should be incorporated into the Migration Profile.

In addition to the above mentioned improvements of data collection methods, the Migration Profile should slowly expand its capacity by incorporating more relevant migration data on a regular basis. In the long run, the Afghan Migration Profile can be used as an important resource of high quality migration data for policymakers and other stakeholders.

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