

ADSP | Asia Displacement Solutions Platform

Newsletter - July 2022



Photo: DRC Afghanistan

About ADSP

The Asia Displacement Solutions Platform is a joint initiative of the Danish Refugee Council, International Rescue Committee, and Norwegian Refugee Council, which aims to contribute to the development of comprehensive solutions for displaced persons across the Afghan and Myanmar displacement axes.

Welcome to the July 2022 newsletter from the ADSP. These newsletters are intended to shine a spotlight on some of the issues being tackled by our members, and the programmatic work done to improve outcomes for persons affected by displacement. In addition, the newsletter provides updates on global or regional processes which may otherwise go unexplored.

Each newsletter contains articles from members in ADSP focus countries, exploring interesting programme developments and regional migration trends. As we move into the second half of 2022, we encourage you to share ideas or information that you would like to see addressed.

The newsletter relies upon content created by member organisations, and everyone is welcome to contribute. If you have an idea for an article, on any subject, please feel free to contact me to discuss. We would love to publish overviews of your activities, interviews with staff, and photos which give an idea of the work being carried out in the field.

These newsletters are intended to improve information-sharing between ADSP member organisations, and to highlight the work of the platform more publicly.



A message from the ADSP Manager: Working towards ADSP's 2023-2025 Strategy

By Evan Jones, Asia Displacement Solutions Platform Manager



It is hard to believe that we are entering the second half of the year already. As with many other organisations, the past few months have been an incredibly busy time for the ADSP with a range of internal developments, advocacy, research, capacity-strengthening initiatives – and even a new project. In addition, ADSP has also welcomed its newest staff member, Iffat Anjum, who will be supporting ADSP's engagement with the PRRiA project, as well as through our wider engagement on Myanmar and Bangladesh. Welcome to the team Iffat.

In April, ADSP members from the region, HQ, and country-levels came together in Bangkok, Thailand. This meeting was held both as a validation exercise for ADSP's 'Impact and Governance Evaluation', as well as an opportunity for members to meet and discuss how to strengthen ways of working and elevate ADSP's ability to deliver impact in the region. Over the course of two days, our members engaged in a range of enlightening discussions that helped to position ADSP more strategically, and, build consensus around the need for further strategy development. As a result of this meeting, ADSP has subsequently embarked upon a Theory of Change and Strategy Development process. This will ensure clearer articulation of ADSP's value-add, and our ability to support both our membership and most importantly, displaced communities in our region. Thank you to all colleagues for taking the time to join this meeting.

Furthermore, ADSP is excited to announce the commencement a new partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) in a project supported by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). With a focus on engaging in research, advocacy, and capacitystrengthening initiatives for non-Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, the project will be centered around India, Malaysia, and Thailand. ADSP looks forward to working with all project partners in the implementation of this project.

Finally, the ADSP acknowledges the ongoing challenges faced by refugees and forcibly displaced persons in our region. In Afghanistan, humanitarian concerns remain acute, and events such as the recent earthquake highlight the need for even greater support. In addition, we continue to see movements of persons out of Myanmar to Thailand and India, and recognize that more targeted attention and work is required to support these new populations. The ADSP is committed to maintaining our focus on displaced persons from Afghanistan and Myanmar, and to continue to support in the development of responses that are geared to long-term solutions.

To conclude, I wish to thank all members and partners for your continued engagement over the past few months. Only through our continued collective engagement can we continue to press for the development of innovative solutions to protracted displacement in our region.

I look forward to continuing to work with you in the months ahead.

Evan Jones ADSP Manager



Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Asia (PRRiA) - Towards a coordinated regional approach



PRRiA project updates (April-June)

NDSP, in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council, the Geutanyoe Foundation, and the Mixed Migration Centre Asia, continues to support regional advocacy and programmatic work to improve protection and esponse for Rohingya refugees in the Southeast Asia region under its two-year HIP 'Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Asia (PRRiA) 2021-2023'. Throughout the second quarter of the year, project partners have worked ogether on a range of initiatives contributing to the overall project goal. Some notable activities include:

Partnership with Rohingya community-based organisations in Malaysia

As part of PRRiA project activities during this quarter, ADSP established partnership with two Rohingya community-based organisations in Malaysia, namely, Rohingya Society in Malaysia (RSM) and Rohingya Women Development Network (RWDN). Through this partnership, PRRiA partners will engage with the local refugee CBOs in research and advocacy acts and provide capacity building and mentorship support to create opportunities for refugees to actively participate in policy advocacy with government and international stakeholders.

Virtual Workshop: Coordinating Regional Advocacy to Address Rohingya Displacement and Humanitarian and Peacebuilding Challenges in Myanmar

ADSP partnered with APRRN and ICVA to deliver a regional advocacy coordination workshop on 10th and 17th May. The workshop addressed advocacy in two thematic areas: coordinated regional responses to protracted Rohingya displacement and humanitarian access and peace building in Myanmar. H.E. Ibu Yuyun Wahyuningrum, Indonesia's AICHR representative, and Adelina Kamal, former Executive Director of the AHA Centre presented in the workshop. 40 participants from humanitarian and human rights organisations and academic institutions joined the workshop to interactively map advocacy opportunities, barriers, and strategies. ADSP and partners have convened follow up discussions with participants in Thailand and Indonesia.



Research on Refugee protection, human smuggling and trafficking in South and Southeast Asia

This research is the first of three research reports to be delivered under PRRiA project. The objective of the research is to support the advancement of holistic protection of Rohingya in the South and Southeast Asia region, recognising their position, not only as refugees, but also as individuals who are highly vulnerable to smuggling and trafficking. It aims to support efforts to capitalise on regional interest in supporting anti-smuggling and anti-trafficking laws to advance policy that situates eligible Rohingya as deserving of protection due to affiliated risk factors, and support advocacy at regional and national level (Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia) regarding the expansion of existing protection mechanisms to facilitate responses to Rohingya refugees in line with international protection standards. TANGO International will be conducting the research, guided by MMC Asia and PRRiA partners during May-July 2022. The research report is expected to be launched in August.

Upcoming training on Strengthening Research and Advocacy Capacity for Rohingya Refugee Community-Based Organisations in Malaysia

ADSP and MMC have jointly organised a research and advocacy training for Rohingya refugees in Malaysia to take place on 16-19 July 2022 in Kuala Lumpur. The objective of the capacity building training is to equip the Rohingya refugees to generate evidence through research and pursue evidence-based policy advocacy to overcome their challenges. Around 20 members of RSM and RWDN are expected to attend the training. The impact of the training will be assessed through pre and post training assessment surveys. ADSP and MMC will support RSM and RWDN to undertake research and advocacy on selected policy issues following the training.

Protecting Rohingya Refugees in Asia (PRRiA) Project





ADSP Op-Ed: Amid Afghanistan's Emergency, Its Neighbours Need Support

By Evan Jones, Manager at the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform

On the world stage, Afghanistan risks becoming a forgotten crisis, despite rising humanitarian needs. But its closest neighbors don't have the luxury of looking the other way.

The economic, humanitarian, and social decline in Afghanistan since the fall of the country to the Taliban is welldocumented. Since August 2021, cash liquidity challenges have affected large swathes of the population; numerous public services such as healthcare are on the precipice of collapse; and women's and girls' rights continue to be curtailed. As a result of the multitude of compounding challenges, millions of people have lost their livelihoods, and tens of millions more are facing various degrees of food insecurity. The situation for the people of Afghanistan remains one of the most pressing humanitarian situations globally.

While the conditions inside Afghanistan are indeed alarming, ongoing efforts must also be directed to address the situation for millions of Afghans in neighboring countries, primarily Iran and Pakistan. The number of registered Afghan refugees in these countries is estimated at nearly 2.1 million, with another 4 million undocumented Afghans living within their borders. To put this in perspective, the number of Afghans in these countries is greater than the entire population of Norway.

Displacement from Afghanistan to neighboring countries is nothing new, and in fact is one of the largest protracted refugee situations globally. In many cases refugees have been displaced for up to four decades. According to UNHCR, from January 2021 to June 11, 2022, approximately 179,000 refugees have officially made their way to neighboring countries, either fearing persecution or seeking to escape the dire economic conditions. Of those, over 117,000 fled to Pakistan and nearly 43,000 to Iran. However, the number of actual arrivals – many of whom have not been able to officially register as refugees – is far higher. According to figures from the government of Iran, the number of recent arrivals to Iran alone is closer to 1 million.

Despite many refugees having been provided a semblance of immediate safety in these countries, their ability to remain long-term or to integrate is tenuous at best. Faeza, an ambassador for the Asia Pacific Network of Refugees (APNOR) – a regional refugee-led initiative – describes "a huge number of arrivals especially to cities such as Mashad." Further she describes many "arriving with no documents, and so access to education or any sustainable work is incredibly difficult." Access to protection and long-term solutions is scarce, and therefore, most Afghans remain in perennial limbo.

Are Afghanistan's Neighbors Doing Enough?

While far from perfect, both Iran and Pakistan have for many years maintained various progressive policies to support Afghan refugees in areas such as healthcare, livelihoods, and education. For example, in Iran, Afghan children (both officially registered and not) have access to education and are also exempted from school fees. Nearly 600,000 Afghan children are enrolled in Iranian public schools, studying together with their Iranian peers.

In Pakistan, refugees are also allowed to attend school, although there remain significant numbers of out-of-school children. In recent months, the Pakistani government, with the support of UNHCR, has also concluded a large-scale identity registration drive. This process provided hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees with identity cards, facilitating "faster and safer access to health and education facilities and to banking services." The Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees has also recently established the Urban Refugees Support Unit to address refugees' difficulties accessing sustainable livelihoods and other protection risks.



ADSP | Asia Displacement Solutions Platform

Newsletter - July 2022

On the flip side, there are numerous areas where host states still need to significantly improve their treatment of refugees. Some of the most prominent challenges currently faced by refugees in Iran and Pakistan include difficulty accessing asylum procedures, an inability to access adequate livelihoods, and the constant fear of return to Afghanistan. Understandably, host countries are struggling to absorb such large numbers of Afghans, and as such, thousands are being returned – or feeling compelled to return – to Afghanistan each week. However, the pace and nature of these returns raises concerns about the voluntariness of the process, as well as the safety and dignity being afforded to Afghans.

Therefore, it's important that donors more proactively support refugee-hosting governments to help them implement more progressive refugee policies. This can be done by supporting the development and implementation of refugee status determination procedures or through supporting sustainable livelihood opportunities and services such as health and education for refugees and local host communities alike. Another option can be offering support to host states to help them incorporate refugee-hosting arrangements into their national development plans. Such engagement from the international community can only further the existing contributions – both economic and social – of Afghans to Iran and Pakistan.

What Should Be Done First?

For displaced Afghans to have any hope of unlocking long-term solutions, the international donor community – in partnership with hosting states and institutions like UNHCR and IOM – must reaffirm common goals and take clear action. While there is a long list of things requiring support, there are several areas that should be prioritized for immediate action.

The need to preserve and expand asylum space in neighboring countries, while also allowing for registration of new arrivals from Afghanistan, is a pressing concern. Without this, refugees will not have access to basic protections, nor will they be able to live without fear of potential return. In addition, host and donor states must ensure that returns to Afghanistan are principled, safe, voluntary, supported, and well-managed. Finally, there also needs to be increased investments in education, more programs that support refugees to build their self-reliance, and an expansion of pathways for third country resettlement as well as alternative migration pathways.

Admittedly, this is no easy feat, or it would have been achieved already. The obstacles faced by Afghans during displacement are complex, and the expectation for refugee-hosting countries to provide all that is needed for them is unrealistic, especially with the existing low levels of international support. However, with new influxes out of Afghanistan, and no end in sight for the humanitarian needs inside the country, now is the time for the international community to take stock, recalibrate, and come together to support Afghanistan's neighbors more systematically in strengthening their protection systems.

Such support can be provided through existing mechanisms such as the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees as well as through additional innovative endeavors. It's prudent to note that the existing Support Platform operates with significant gaps in relation to its ability to meaningfully engage with NGOs and civil society. As such, the international community needs to forge new ways to work more closely together and develop inclusive refugee responses and coordination.

Pakistan and Iran have been hosting Afghan refugees for decades. This responsibility has been shouldered on top of their own internal social and economic challenges. With more arrivals expected in the months and years ahead, the role of the international community in supporting refugee hosting states is more important than ever.

This article originally appeared in <u>The Diplomat</u> and can be accessed <u>here</u>.



European Conference # DIASPORA Action for Afghanistan

15-16 May 2022 – Brussels, Belgium



Building upon the success of the 2019 conference, *"Diaspora Support to Durable Solutions: Afghans in Europe"*, the Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Programme organized a conference from 15-16 May 2022 in Brussels, Belgium to bring together Afghan diaspora from both across Europe and further afield. The "Diaspora Action for Afghanistan" conference brought together

The conference brought together 119 participants including 100 members of the Afghan diaspora from 19 European countries as well as Afghanistan, Australia, the United States, and Canada representing more than 70 diaspora organizations. The first day of the conference was internal and focused on "getting together", building trust and improving coordination and collaboration. The second day was: "A call to action" and included dialogue with external European actors on the role of the diaspora in relation to the new political and operating environment in Afghanistan. On the second day, participants launched the conference declaration: Afghan Diaspora Call to Action, a series of recommendations towards EU and Members States.

As an *official strategic partner* to the conference, the Asia Displacement Solutions Platform provided support in the development of the agenda, engaged in expert contributions to the Call to Action, and the ADSP Manager Evan Jones facilitated a session entitled *'Mechanisms for increased coordination and collaboration between the diaspora and civil society inside Afghanistan'*. This session brought together diaspora and civil society actors from Afghanistan to exchange upon how diaspora in Europe can support civil society efforts in Afghanistan. It looked at models for human rights monitoring, humanitarian response and coordinated advocacy and recommended pathways for increased coordination and collaboration. Importantly It was underlined that the diaspora must be representative of civil society outside Afghanistan, and must ensure that the principle of 'do no harm' is central to any engagement.



Newsletter - July 2022

REGIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

4Mi Snapshot: Journeys to Indonesia for Rohingya refugees

Mixed Migration Centre Asia and PRRiA partners

Rohingya refugees travelling to Indonesia from Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Malaysia face multiple risks including physical violence, health hazards, and exploitation, and are in need of protection and assistance in terms of solutions and fundamental rights. The June 2022 4Mi snapshot highlights the needs and risks reported by Rohingya while in Indonesia, as well as during travel. Data presented in this snapshot was collected between 10 December 2021 and 24 May 2022 from Rohingya refugees who had arrived in Indonesia within the past 24 months. This snapshot contributes to building a solid evidence base to inform targeted responses that improve protection for Rohingya refugees and shape advocacy efforts related to movements and protection of Rohingya refugees in Asia.

The production of this snapshot forms part of the work under the PRRiA 2021-2023 project. The full contents of the snapshot can be found on the Mixed Migration Centre's website <u>here</u>.



MMC Asia 4Mi Snapshot – June 2022

Journeys to Indonesia for Rohingya refugees: Routes, risks, assistance and needs

This snapshot traces the journeys of Rohingya refugees traveling to Indonesia. It also presents the needs and risks reported by Rohingya while in Indonesia, as well as their intentions for onward movements. Following two previous snapshots highlighting journeys and risks in transit for Rohingya traveling to Malaysia,¹ this snapshot contributes to building a solid evidence base to inform targeted responses that improve protection for Rohingya refugees and shape advocacy efforts related to movements and protection of Rohingya refugees in Asia.

Key findings

- 62% of respondents started their journey in Myanmar; 34% set off from Bangladesh; 4% traveled from Malaysia. For those leaving Myanmar, Bangladesh was a frequent transit country.
- 69% of respondents reported at least one dangerous location along the journey. Most of them reported the risk of physical violence (67 out of 75 respondents).
- Most respondents who reported protection risks considered **border guards/** immigration officials as the main perpetrator (52 out of 75 respondents), followed by military/police (39 respondents) and criminal gangs (33 respondents).
- 89% of respondents perceived that there are fewer resettlement options since COVID-19. Nearly half reported being stuck in Indonesia because of the pandemic.
- 96% of respondents were in need of assistance in Indonesia at the time of the survey. Of those, most said they needed assistance with resettlement, access to work, and cash.

Profiles

Data presented in this snapshot was collected between 10 December 2021 and 24 May 2022 with Rohingya refugees who had arrived in Indonesia within the past 24 months. Participants were located in Medan, Pekan Baru, Makassar, and Aceh. 109 surveys with Rohingya men (75%) and women (25%) were conducted over the phone (57%) and in person (43%). The share of female respondents in the survey was much lower than male respondents. Despite the small sample size and non-probability sampling method of the 4Mi survey, this potentially suggests a recent change in demographic characteristics of Rohingya refugees engaging in maritime movements compared to 2020-2021, when more than two-thirds of those traveling by boat were women and children.²

The average age of respondents was 26 years old. 25% arrived in Indonesia less than a year ago. 100% reported holding either refugee status or identified as asylum seekers. 3% self-identified as having a disability. 39% have children and 31% reported living or traveling with children in their care at the time of the survey.

Rohingya's access to education is restricted in Myanmar and Bangladesh, and the majority of survey respondents reported that primary school was the highest level of education they had completed, see Figure 1. 4% reported having completed secondary or high school, and 2% had attained a university degree.

About MMC:

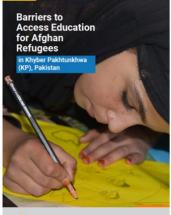
The Mixed Migration Centre is leading source of independent and high-quality data, research an analysis on mixed migration. The MMC aims to increase understandings of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move and stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. The MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

In Asia MMC's 4Mi survey is currently conducted in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Afghanistan, with plans to expand to Turkey and Thailand. For more information and access to MMC data please see 4Mi interactive or reach out to <u>Themba.lewis@mixedmigration.org</u>



ADSP Publications

In Q2, ADSP published two research studies that focused upon the protection and policy gaps of Afghan refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan. These studies were conducted as a result of a needs analysis from ADSP members and other stakeholders, and are designed to support advocacy interventions as well as inform donor priorities.



ADSP



The first report entitled <u>Barriers to Access Education for Afghan Refugees in Khyber</u> <u>Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan</u> explores the existing gaps for refugee children in the refugee villages to accessing education. Some such gaps included insufficient gender appropriate services, high teacher-student ratio, distance to schools, socio-economic factors and lack of extracurricular support. The report goes on to identify a range of potential recommendations to the international community including donors, INGOs and government stakeholders.

The research is aligned with the objectives of the Global Compact for Refugees and the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) in the region. Further, it will help to improve programming by development stakeholders, as well as provide recommendations to donors, UNHCR, and government stakeholders for designing future education programs for Afghan refugees.

The second report entitled <u>Barriers to accessing COVID-19 related healthcare for</u> <u>Afghan refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan</u> explores the:

1. Inclusiveness of the Pakistan government's COVID-19 response from the perspective of Afghan refugees, as well as potential gaps;

2. Knowledge and perceptions of Afghan refugees about the virus, prevention protocols, response services and efficacy of communication strategies;

3. Whether the COVID-19 pandemic has been an opportunity to promote wider health-seeking behaviors among Afghan refugees;

4. Requirements from health providers for engaging with Afghan refugee communities, adapting service delivery to enhance their willingness to seek healthcare; and

5. The current policy frameworks in Pakistan for treatment, and inclusion of refugees in COVID-19 vaccination programmes.

The data was collected from 15 September to 14 October 2021, using Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and questionnaires. The primary data was collected from Afghan refugees in Peshawar and Swabi in KP, as well as Islamabad. Importantly, a gender-sensitive process was followed to select an almost-equal number of respondents from both genders. In this regard, 47 percent of KIIs and 50 percent of focus group discussions were undertaken with females.



ADSP Workshops

Virtual Workshop: Coordinating Regional Advocacy to Address Rohingya Displacement and Humanitarian and Peacebuilding Challenges in Myanmar

On 10 and 17 May, ADSP, the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) hosted two virtual workshops to exchange information and interactively map regional advocacy opportunities in two thematic areas: (1) coordinated regional responses to protracted Rohingya displacement and (2) humanitarian access, peacebuilding and protection in Myanmar. Participants included international NGOs, national NGOs and academics from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

For the workshop, 'regional advocacy' was defined as advocacy that targets regional policymakers or duty bearers (e.g., ASEAN bodies, South-Southeast Asian states, UN agencies or donors) and promotes ASEAN-level or multilateral action to address refugee protection or humanitarian challenges of regional significance. The workshop provided a forum to strengthen relationships—particularly between INGOs and NNGOs—survey current advocacy strategies and activities, identify areas of collaboration or coordination, and pinpoint advocacy opportunities.

Day 1 focused on regional responses to Rohingya displacement. The first session included three presentations followed by Q&A. First, NRC shared updates on challenges facing Rohingya in Rakhine State because of COVID-19 and fallout from the February 2021 military takeover, and highlighted key barriers to the return of Rohingya refugees. Second, H.E. Yuyun Wahyuningrum, Indonesia's representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, outlined past efforts to promote a regional refugee response framework, and shared insights on current scope to revive regional approaches. And third, Adam Severson, ADSP's Regional Durable Solutions Specialist, described previous attempts to develop a regional framework to address Rohingya displacement, most recently UNHCR's 2018 Solidarity Approach, and summarized initiatives to build momentum toward new regional dialogue.

Following the presentations, participants divided into two breakout groups to map current and prospective opportunities to advocate with regional policymakers and duty bearers to support development of a regional response that adequately protects displaced Rohingya in the medium- and longer-terms and equitably share responsibility.

Day 2 addressed broader humanitarian, peacebuilding and protection challenges in Myanmar, and commenced with an overview of recent regional advocacy efforts by INGOs and NNGOs. Dr. Lina Alexandra, Head of the Department of International Relations at of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta, next compared the approaches of key Asian states to Myanmar. Adelina Kamal, former Executive Director of the ASEAN Centre, concluded the presentation segment by explaining the structure of the ASEAN Secretariat and the limits of the Secretariat to guide policy toward Myanmar. Day 2 concluded with breakout discussions on prospective advocacy opportunities, areas of overlap and means of better coordination.

The workshop is part of a sustained effort by ADSP and partners to improve communication and foster greater coordination and collaboration. ADSP and ICVA have held follow up meetings with participants from Indonesia and Thailand to further map key interlocutors in the Thai and Indonesian governments. A follow-up workshop is tentatively planned for October.

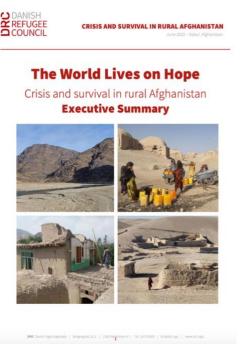


Newsletter - July 2022

ADSP Member Publications

The World lives on Hope: Crisis and Survival in Rural Afghanistan

By DRC Afghanistan



The *World Lives on hope: Crisis and Survival in Rural Afghanistan* report, published by DRC Afghanistan in June 2022, collates evidence from DRC rapid assessments and other qualitative primary data collection exercises and secondary research to build an evidence-based narrative on the humanitarian crisis facing rural, remote Afghan communities. It argues that the underlying driver of the crisis is the interaction between the effects of climate change, and the impacts of decades of conflict and failure of governance, which has left rural Afghan communities unable to adapt sustainably.

This report's title is taken from a common Afghan proverb, 'the world lives on hope'. The findings of the report provide evidence that emergency humanitarian aid is not an appropriate tool to meaningfully address crisis in rural Afghanistan, because needs are not primarily driven by immediate shocks which communities can be expected to recover from themselves. Moreover, long-established mechanisms and processes for aid delivery require urgent re-examination given the failure of much humanitarian assistance to reach the most vulnerable. The Executive Summary can be found on the DRC website <u>here</u>.

The survival for so long of many of the communities assessed by DRC is testament to the extraordinary resilience and capacity for hope of the Afghan people. Humanitarians must learn to match this hope by supplying Afghan communities with the means through which they can ensure their own survival through crisis.



Photo: DRC Afghanistan