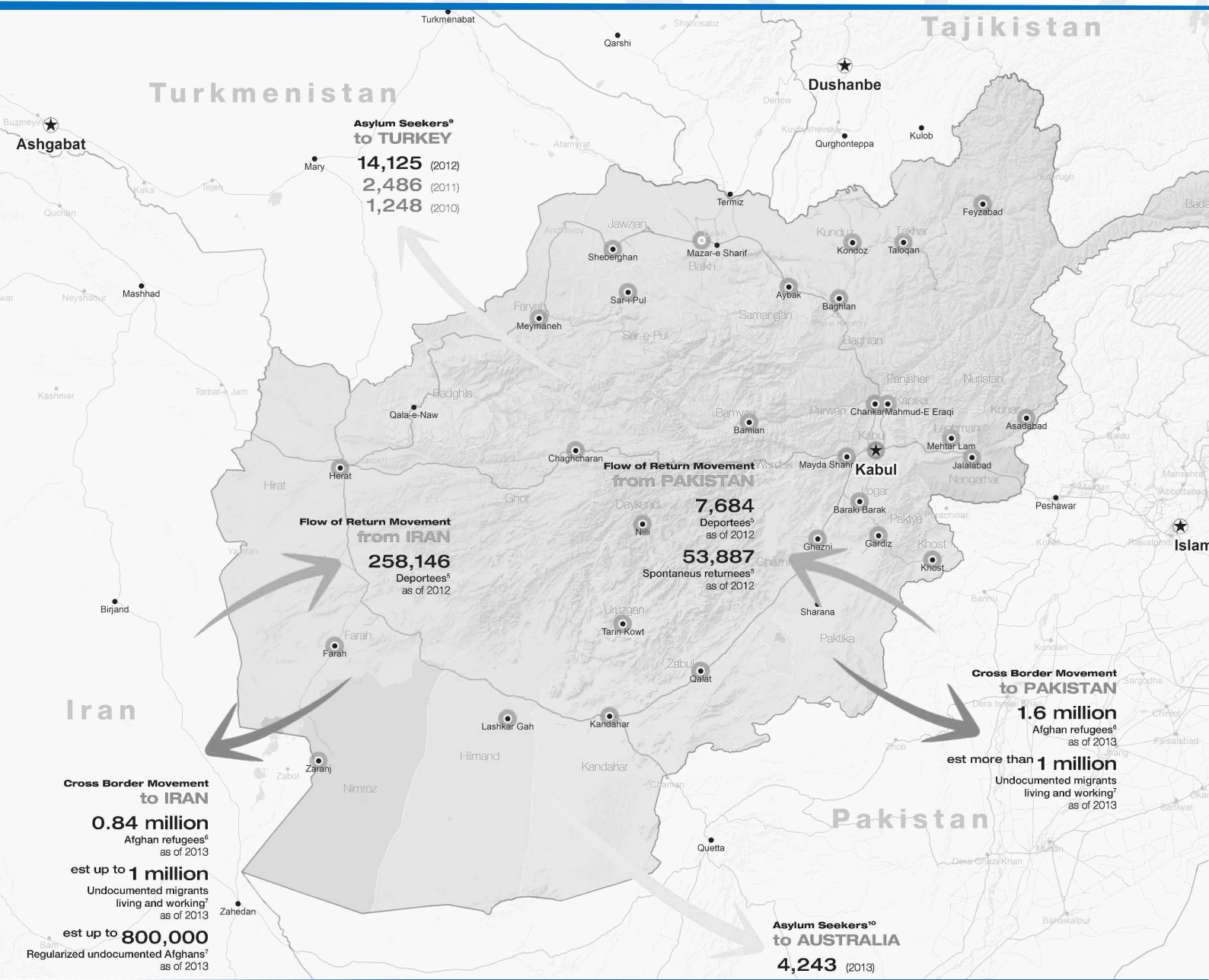


TRANSITION, CRISIS AND MOBILITY IN AFGHANISTAN: RHETORIC AND REALITY

January 2014



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Report prepared for IOM by Dr. Khalid Koser, Consultant

January 2014



International Organization for Migration (IOM)



AFGHANISTAN

a migration perspective • JAN 2014

GENERAL POPULATION

- up to **30%** Living in urban areas¹
Urban areas • as of 2012
- up to **70%** Urban population living in unplanned/informal urban settlement²
Urban areas • as of 2013

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

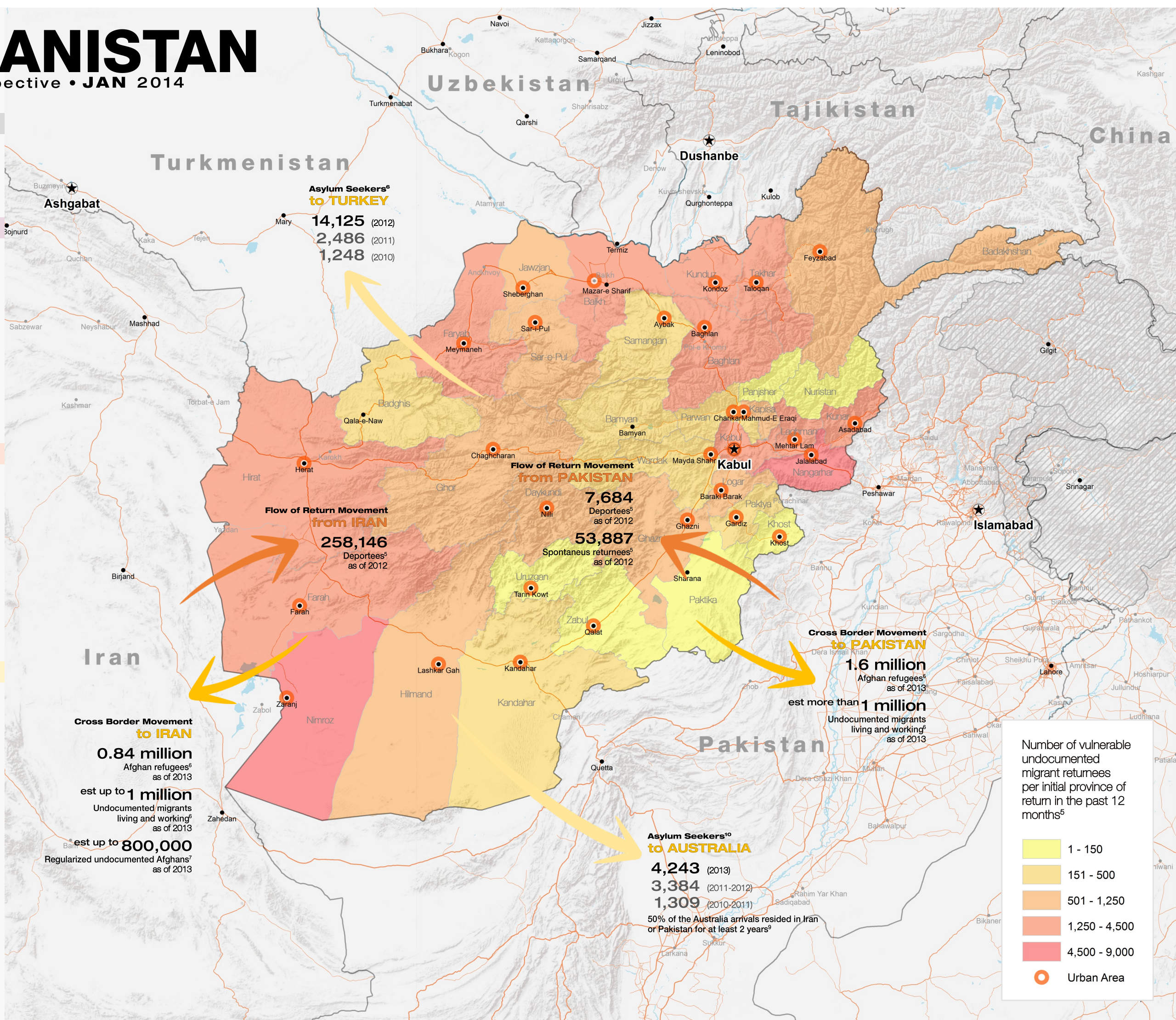
- 74,000** Protracted caseload in camps³
Mainly in the South region • as of 2012
South region refers to the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul and Uruzgan.
- 631,286** Displaced by conflict⁴
Mainly in the South, East, and West • as of Dec 2013
South region refers to the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul and Uruzgan. East region refers to the provinces of Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar and Nuristan. West region refers to the provinces of Badghis, Farah, Ghor, Herat and Nimroz.
- 9,365** Displaced by natural disasters⁵
Nationwide • In 2013
- UNKNOWN FIGURES** Urban IDPs
Urban areas
- UNKNOWN FIGURES** Development-induced displacement
Outside urban areas

RETURNS

- 94,316** Refugees voluntarily repatriated by UNHCR⁶
Nationwide • as of 2012
- 258,146** Deportees from Iran⁵
Nationwide • In 2012
- 7,684** Deportees from Pakistan⁵
Nationwide • In 2012
- 53,887** Spontaneous returns from Pakistan⁵
Nationwide • In 2012
- UNKNOWN FIGURES** Returning refugees and migrants not tracked by IOM/UNHCR

REFUGEES and MIGRANTS ABROAD

- 2.4** Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan⁶
MILLION
Iran and Pakistan • as of 2013
- 48,900** Afghan asylum seekers⁸
Worldwide • as of 2012
(2011) 35,729
(2010) 26,663
- est. up to **1.4** Undocumented migrants living/working in Iran⁶
MILLION
Iran • as of 2013
- est. up to **1** Undocumented migrants living/working in Pakistan⁶
MILLION
Pakistan • as of 2013
- 800,000** Regularized undocumented Afghans in Iran⁷
est. up to
Iran • as of 2013



Sources: 1. HPG (2012), 2. UNHCR (2013a), 3. UNHCR, 4. IDMC, 5. IOM (2013), 6. UNHCR (2013), 7. UNHCR (2013b), 8. UNHCR (2012), 9. DIAC (2013), 10. Expert panel on Asylum Seekers (2012); DIAC (2013)

This map is for illustration purpose only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.
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ACRONYMS

AAN	Afghanistan Analysts Network	ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)
AGEs	Anti-Government Elements	MCOF	IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework
AIHRC	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ALP	Afghan Local Police	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ANA	Afghan National Army	ODA	Official Development Assistance
ANP	Afghan National Police	PoR	Proof of Registration
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces	PRTs	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration	SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
BSA	Bilateral Security Agreement	SSAR	Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees
CAPD	Cooperation Agreement for Partnership and Development	UAE	United Arab Emirates
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management	UK	United Kingdom
CFC	Civil-Military Fusion Centre	UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
CNPC	Chinese National Petroleum Corporation	UMA	Unauthorized Maritime Arrival
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Australia)	UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan
DOE	Department of Operations and Emergencies (IOM)	UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	UNOCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
EU	European Union	US	United States of America
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas		
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council		
GDP	Gross Domestic Product		
ICG	International Crisis Group		
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross		
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre		
IDP	Internally Displaced Person		
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization		
IOM	International Organization for Migration		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This working paper has been commissioned by the Department of Operations and Emergencies of the International Organization for Migration. It has two main objectives: to provide national, regional, and international policymakers with insights into transitions in Afghanistan over the next year, including internal and external migration consequences; and to identify strategic priorities for IOM and its partners.

2. The paper is based on three main sources of data: a review of published articles and reports as well as internal IOM and UN documents; interviews with IOM officials, and a range of government, civil society and private sector representatives in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Geneva; and feedback provided on earlier drafts including during a roundtable discussion in Kabul in January 2014.

3. In forecasting future migration trends and humanitarian needs, it is important to understand the current migration environment in Afghanistan. First, displaced Afghans will be particularly susceptible to the effects of growing insecurity. Second, their migration experiences will influence migration strategies by Afghans in the future. Finally, there is already a significant (although incomplete) legal, institutional, and programmatic structure in place to support displaced Afghans, which provides a basis for further support over the next year.

4. The current migration environment has five main features. There are currently over 630,000 internally displaced persons, displaced for different reasons and over different time periods. Intertwined with internal displacement is urbanization, and Kabul's urban poor represent a particular humanitarian challenge at present. Afghan refugees number more than 2.4 million, mainly in neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. After very significant return flows over the past decade, the scale of repatriation has dwindled significantly during the last few years. In addition there are an estimated 1.4 million undocumented Afghan migrants in Iran and one million in Pakistan, whose status is insecure. Finally there is a considerable Afghan diaspora who have the potential to influence both peace and development in Afghanistan, and their migration consequences.

5. In predicting prospects for Afghanistan during and after 2014, international attention has mainly focused on the impact of the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). A number of variables are identified:

the nature of the continuing engagement between ISAF and the Afghan National Security Forces; the extent to which Afghan forces will be able to fill the security gap; and levels of insurgency activity in Afghanistan, which have both intensified and spread geographically in recent months.

6. However, just as important as the security transition is the political transition in Afghanistan – and specifically the outcome of the April 2014 Presidential election. An unfair or contested election, or perceptions of such, may precipitate a cycle of conflict, deteriorating security, and human and capital flight; as well as undermine a nascent spirit of democracy in the country. A fair election will also be important to maintain confidence and commitment to Afghanistan among the international community. There remain serious internal challenges to fair elections.

7. There will also be an economic transition during 2014. Most analysts predict a significant slowdown of the impressive growth of the last few years as political and security uncertainties limit private sector growth and undermine business confidence. The foreign troop withdrawal will have a direct impact on annual growth and employment. Neither is it certain that Official Development Assistance will continue at an adequate level to support continued economic growth.

8. Besides emphasizing that the withdrawal of international military forces is not the only variable likely to influence peace, security, and development in Afghanistan in 2014, most Afghan respondents had reservations about the entire focus of the international community on 2014 as pivotal for their country's immediate prospects. One reason is resistance to the idea that Afghanistan's fate is effectively in the hands of Afghanistan. Third, there is a sense that overly-negative forecasts for Afghanistan may create a self-fulfilling prophecy.

9. Afghan respondents instead viewed 2014 as a staging-post in a long-term project of state-building, and part of a wider transition between the past and the future. It is important that the ISAF withdrawal will not be a replay of the 1988-89 Soviet withdrawal and the devastation left in its wake. There are political uncertainties, but the electoral process is moving forward more or less according to plan; and the alignment of Afghanistan's neighbours around a priority for a stable

political transition is positive. Business confidence may falter, but too much economic progress has been made not to endure. Afghanistan's youthful population also has potential for building the country in the long-term.

10. The relationship between security and displacement is not always 'linear' or direct. First, the Afghanistan transitions will impact differentially on different people, in different places, and at different times. Second, individual-level behaviour is hard to predict, and a range of economic, demographic, social, political, and physical factors may affect individuals' mobility choices. Third, displacement may also be affected by external variables, such as policies towards migrants and refugees in neighbouring countries.

11. There is a general consensus that the most likely and significant displacement outcome of the Afghanistan transitions will be more internal displacement; while massive new refugee flows or cross-border migration are not generally envisaged. One reason is that many people are likely to be reluctant to move too far from their homes. Additionally for political and economic reasons the possibility and inclination to move to either Iran or Pakistan may decrease over the next year. Finally, for a significant proportion of Afghans internal displacement has become a common survival strategy.

12. Any new internal displacement would compound a fairly serious existing crisis. A particular challenge is the increasing number of urban IDPs and the need to find durable solutions for them as well as other urban poor among whom they settle. If conflict spills over the border into the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan, there is also the prospect of increasing internal displacement within Pakistan.

13. Should displacement outside Afghanistan occur the expectation is that most migrants and refugees would cross into Pakistan using official border crossings; whereas Iran may close its Afghanistan border. In Central Asia, an increase in flows to Tajikistan in particular cannot be excluded, especially of Tajik speakers if access to Iran proves problematic. Any cross-border movements are likely to be mixed, continuing the current asylum- and migration-related population movements out of Afghanistan.

14. Another likely migration category is those seeking asylum outside the immediate region. An exodus of educated, urban Afghans is already taking place in anticipation of 2014 although there are no estimates of how many. There has also been an increase in the number of Afghan refugees and

migrants (including unaccompanied minors) leaving Iran and Pakistan and heading for Turkey, Europe, and Australia.

15. Significant returns to Afghanistan during or soon after the transition in 2014 are not expected. Uncertainty over the future, and challenges related to the sustainability of voluntary repatriation and reintegration will reduce the likelihood of significant returns at the moment.

16. Across the 15 IOM sectors of assistance within the IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework, the following are identified as priorities in preparing for the transitions in Afghanistan in 2014: displacement tracking; shelter and non-food items; counter trafficking and protection of vulnerable migrants; (re)integration assistance; community stabilization and transition; disaster risk reduction and resilience building; technical assistance for humanitarian border management; migration policy and legislation support (including in the areas of labour migration and urban migration); diaspora and human resource mobilization; and health and psychosocial support.

17. At the same time, it is important to recognize that the transitions envisaged in Afghanistan during 2014 may directly impact the ability of agencies to undertake their work. First, humanitarian access is likely to decrease. Second, security for humanitarian workers is likely to be jeopardized. Third, even as the need to protect and assist more displaced people is likely to increase while humanitarian access and security are likely to become more difficult, international commitment to support humanitarian activities in Afghanistan is decreasing.

18. In addition, it will be important not to divert attention or resources from current projects and programmes for migrants and displaced persons in and from Afghanistan. These populations already have significant humanitarian needs, which in some cases, such as for urban IDPs, are not adequately being met. Furthermore they are likely to become even more vulnerable during the transition period.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION & METHODS

Introduction

This working paper has been commissioned by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Its main objective is to provide national, regional, and international policymakers and relevant humanitarian and assistance agencies with insights into transitions in Afghanistan over the next year, including as a result of the planned withdrawal of international military forces; and possible internal and external migration consequences. The paper is also intended to identify strategic priorities for IOM. The analysis in the working paper is structured according to the IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF)¹. This Framework is organized around two pillars, focusing in turn on distinguishing the phases of a crisis ('before', 'during', and 'after') to direct the type of response required; and identifying the different sectors of assistance required at each stage. Overall, the Framework is intended to improve and systematize IOM's response to migration crises, help crisis-affected populations, respond to the unaddressed migration dimensions of a crisis, and build on IOM's partnerships within existing response systems. However, unlike other countries for which IOM had developed the MCOF, Afghanistan is not in a phase of acute crisis. Rather, it is a nation facing a particularly eventful and uncertain year coming after 35 troubled years including the world's longest refugee and migration crisis.

After a brief description of the methods used to prepare this working paper, an overview of the current migration context within and outside Afghanistan is provided, emphasizing the enormous complexity of Afghan mobility in recent years, and highlighting current protection and assistance gaps. The next section turns to prospects for Afghanistan during and after 2014, emphasizing that in addition to the withdrawal of the majority of international military forces, there are likely to be political and economic transitions that will also impact peace, security and development in Afghanistan. Subsequently, mobility scenarios over the next 12 to 24 months are described and characterized. Finally, strategic priorities are identified for IOM and its partners to mitigate and address Afghanistan's emerging migration crisis.

Methods

This working paper is based on three main methods. The first is a review of the rapidly expanding body of academic literature, policy reports, and think-tank analysis on the transition in Afghanistan during and after 2014. As reflected in Section 4 below, it is worth noting that on the whole these

sources have presented only a partial perspective on the nature of the transition; and also have mainly focused on its causes rather than its consequences, including humanitarian and mobility consequences. A full list of references is provided at the end of this working paper, and an extensive 'drop-box' archive has been developed and shared between those directly involved in preparing and overseeing preparation of this working paper.

The second method has been interviews, either in person or by telephone and occasionally by e-mail. Between 16 and 23 July the author visited Pakistan (Islamabad) and Afghanistan (Kabul) in order to familiarize himself with the current context, become directly acquainted with current IOM operations there, and meet relevant stakeholders. Interviews were conducted with representatives from government, international organizations, academia, civil society, and the private sector. A few interviews also took place with IOM and other officials outside Afghanistan and Pakistan, in countries likely to be affected by migration and displacement from Afghanistan, as well as at IOM Headquarters and with representatives from other relevant Geneva-based agencies. A commitment was made during interviews not to attribute information contained in this report to named respondents; and to circulate the report to all interviewees. It was not possible to conduct a more thorough survey, which ideally would have included respondents in Afghanistan outside Kabul, as well as a wider range of Afghan respondents including women and youth.

Finally, this working paper has evolved as an iterative process. Comments on an initial draft were provided by IOM Headquarters, and IOM Missions in Kabul, Islamabad, Brussels and Washington, D.C. and these have been integrated into this final report. In addition a final draft of the report was presented at a roundtable meeting in Kabul in January 2014, attended by representatives of the Afghan Government, various Embassies, several UN agencies, and local Afghan NGOs, and further refinements have been made on the basis of that discussion. The initial plan for this working paper was this it might comprise a 'living document' with elements that can continue to be updated within IOM as more information becomes available and the potential migration crisis unfolds. In particular the 'drop-box' archive could be maintained as a useful in-house resource; the scenarios depicted in Section 4 can be updated; and the strategic priorities in Section 5 may help guide programming for IOM over the next year.

¹IOM (2012)

CHAPTER 2: THE CURRENT MIGRATION ENVIRONMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

Mobility has been a fundamental coping and survival strategy for Afghans over the last 35 years. Perhaps 10 million Afghans – or about one in three of the population – has been a refugee at least once during this period. Today, more than one in eight Afghans still lives outside the country, as refugees, undocumented migrants, or as part of the wider diaspora. Within Afghanistan, an estimated 20 per cent of the population comprises returned refugees, while perhaps one in thirty is internally displaced, and millions more have moved from rural to urban areas.

Understanding this migration context is integral to assessing the impacts of the security and other transitions in Afghanistan during 2014 on mobility outcomes and responses for at least three reasons. First, displaced Afghans are likely to be particularly susceptible to the effects of growing insecurity, as they are among the most vulnerable groups within Afghanistan. Second, their experience may mean that Afghans, who are well-acquainted with migration as a coping strategy during crisis, will quickly revert to migration in response to insecurity, stress or threat. Equally, some interviewees for this working paper suggested that Afghans are committed to making a future for their country, have often invested significant resources after returning, and may be unwilling to move again unless absolutely unavoidable. The extent to which previous migration experiences make Afghans more or less mobile will be a fundamental variable determining the extent of any migration crisis in Afghanistan over the next year. Finally, there is already a significant – though certainly not comprehensive – legal, institutional, and programmatic structure in place to support displaced and other mobile Afghans, both within Afghanistan and in the neighbouring countries. While there may be limitations on the capacity, coordination and effectiveness of these structures, at least there is a foundation for responses to any new mobility. Alternatively new migration and displacement may quickly overwhelm existing response mechanisms, and divert assistance from those currently in need.

Against this backdrop, this section describes the main internal and external mobility patterns in Afghanistan, providing as appropriate a brief historical context, highlighting particular vulnerabilities, and briefly assessing current policies and interventions.

2.1 Internal displacement

It is possible to distinguish at least seven ‘categories’ of IDP in Afghanistan,² although these are not clear-cut and there is some overlap between them, while also noting that data on

IDPs in Afghanistan is inaccurate³ and on the whole not disaggregated.⁴

First, there is a protracted caseload living in camps mainly in the south, and estimated by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to number about 74,000.⁵ Second, there are people recently and currently being displaced by conflict, especially in the south, east and west, but increasingly also in northern and central Afghanistan. In total, according to UNHCR, there were 631,286 people displaced by conflict inside Afghanistan in December 2013.⁶ The scale of internal displacement has been rising over the last couple of years, and IDMC estimates that in 2013 117,671 were newly displaced by conflict. These new conflict-affected IDPs include both the ‘battle-affected’ and the victims of inter-ethnic conflict often linked to scarcity of resources; and their number exceeds the number displaced by conflict in 2012.

A third category comprises people displaced by natural disasters; IOM estimates that 9,365 people (comprising 1,611 families) were newly displaced by natural disasters in 2013, adding to a growing population of natural disaster IDPs that is not enumerated accurately in existing statistics. IOM is global cluster lead on camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) in natural disasters. Fourth, there are returning refugees and migrants who are not willing or able to go to their areas of origin. Many of them have settled in Kabul or other urban centres where they add to a fifth category of urban IDPs. An economic revival in urban areas, especially Kabul, has resulted in rising land prices and increased rents, and is displacing poor urban dwellers outwards in a sixth form of development-induced displacement. Finally, arguably, internal trafficking in Afghanistan, estimated by several sources to take place at a significant scale⁷, constitutes a seventh example of internal displacement.⁸

² Koser and Schmeidl (2009)

³ Working with MoRR, UNHCR and other partners, IOM has started developing an IDP tracking system

⁴ UNHCR (2012)

⁵ UNHCR (2012)

⁶ UNHCR (2013a)

⁷ CFC (2013a)

⁸ Martin and Callaway (2011)

Conditions for many IDPs are poor and deteriorating⁹. They are reported to face a wide range of physical threats and restrictions to their freedom of movement. They often lack access to sufficient food and water, adequate housing, security of tenure and employment. National and international responses to internal displacement in Afghanistan to date have been described as inadequate, and clearly would be stretched by further internal displacement over the coming years.¹⁰ The Government of Afghanistan has a new national policy on internally displaced persons, but there will be significant implementation challenges related in particular to developing appropriate capacity at the provincial level, and allocating an appropriate budget.¹¹

Finally, and adding to the complexity, there have also been significant IDP returns. UNHCR estimates that during the last decade over half a million IDPs have returned to their homes in Afghanistan. The rate has dropped off significantly, but in 2012 UNHCR assisted 18,830 people to return home. This figure likely included at least some IDPs who were returned refugees.

2.2 Urbanization

Intertwined with internal displacement in Afghanistan has been mass migration of rural Afghans to towns and cities resulting in rapid urbanization. Up to 30 per cent of the population lives in urban areas and urban population growth is well above averages elsewhere in Asia.¹² It has been estimated that the population of Kabul has more than doubled in the last decade. One of the main contributing factors has been resource-limited health, education and social infrastructures and systems, and inequitable access to basic services especially in rural areas.

An estimated 60-70 per cent of Afghanistan's urban population now live in unplanned – or informal – urban settlements. In Kabul there are 55 such informal settlements, housing about 31,000 individuals (5,200 families).¹³ Despite enhanced preparedness and a stepped-up emergency response, overall conditions in these settlements remain adverse and below standard – especially as regards shelter, access to water, hygiene and sanitation. Equally there are concerns that rapid urbanization has been accompanied by a rise in petty crime, especially in Kabul.

Rural-urban migration is difficult to distinguish from internal displacement. A recent study estimates that the majority of Kabul's urban poor have been displaced either inside or outside the country, and often on multiple occasions.¹⁴ It has been suggested that displaced populations in urban areas tend to be more vulnerable than their counterparts living in camps, and the wider urban poor. At the same time the urban displaced are often beyond the reach of humanitarian agencies and outside formal assistance structures. Urban

displacement is a growing humanitarian problem, likely to be compounded in 2014, to which humanitarian approaches and responses are not yet adequately geared to respond.¹⁵ Faced with the prospect of rising numbers of urban IDPs, rather than trying to distinguish and assist them specifically, it has been suggested that specific humanitarian responses should join wider UN development efforts within Afghanistan to deal with the challenges of urbanization and the urban poor.¹⁶

2.3 Afghan refugees

There have been waves of refugee flows and returns from and back to Afghanistan since the Communist coup in April 1978, broadly paralleling the phases of conflict in that country.¹⁷ At their peak in the mid- to late-1990s there were over six million Afghan refugees, mainly in neighbouring Iran and Pakistan. According to the UNHCR there are currently more than 2.4 million Afghan refugees in exile in Iran and Pakistan.¹⁸

At the same time there has been very considerable repatriation of Afghan refugees. Two main waves of repatriation can be identified in the last 20 years or so, with *ad hoc* and intermittent trickle movements occurring throughout. Almost three million refugees returned to Afghanistan between 1992 and 1993 following the capture of Kabul by the Mujahideen. An estimated 5.7 million Afghans have returned in a second major wave after 2002, following the fall of the Taliban government. But the repatriation of Afghans has declined fairly steadily over the last five years or so numbering about 68,000 in 2011 and 94,556 in 2012.¹⁹ According to UNHCR by the end of November 2013, 37,749 Afghans had repatriated voluntarily – a 54 per cent reduction on the same period in the previous year.²⁰

UNHCR has developed a Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), endorsed by the governments of Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan as well as donors, with a three-pronged approach of pursuing voluntary repatriation, supporting sustainable reintegration, and providing assistance to host countries, while maintaining a focus on the rights of refugees. While repatriation remains a priority, as indicated above numbers have dwindled, and forecasts as explained below are for even fewer returns during 2014. Instead UNHCR has focused its attention and current Global Appeal on the other two priorities of SSAR. The agency estimates that 60 percent of returnees face reintegration

⁹ UNHCR (2013b)

¹⁰ Samuel Hall et al. (2013)

¹¹ Roehrs (2013)

¹² HPG (2012)

¹³ UNHCR (2013b)

¹⁴ HPG (2012)

¹⁵ HPG (2012)

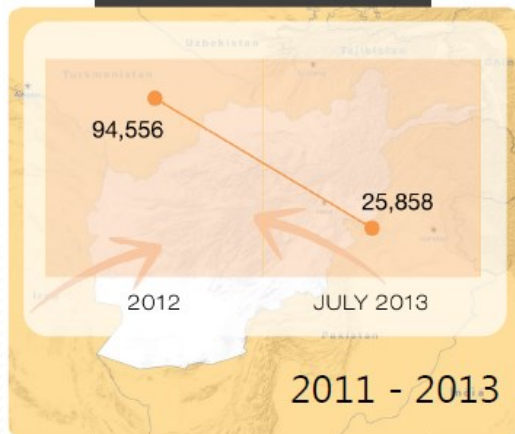
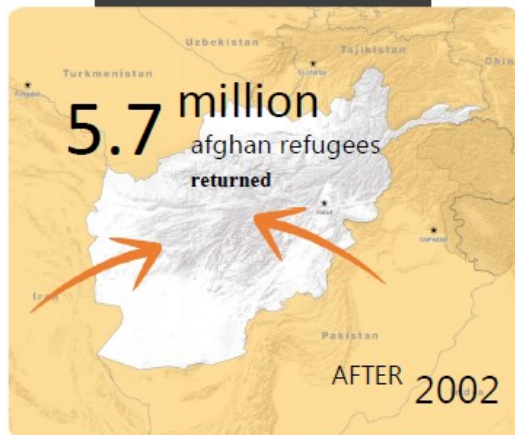
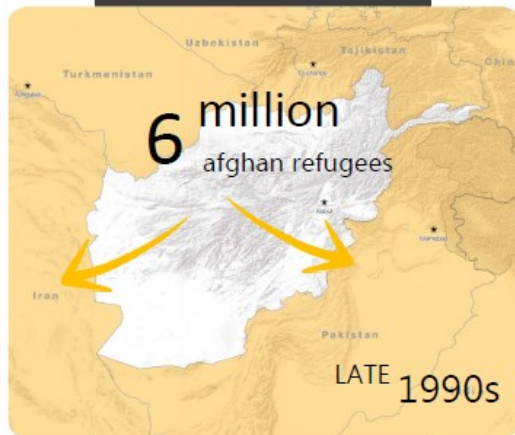
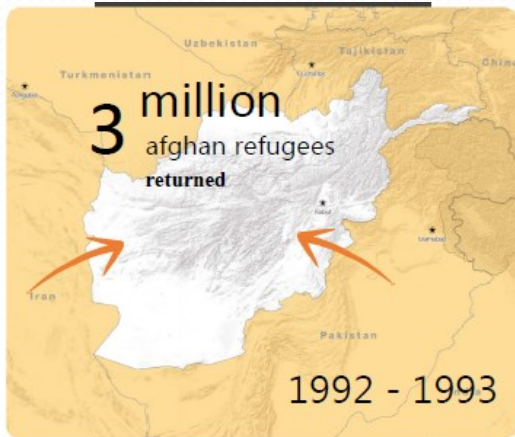
¹⁶ UNHCR (2013a)

¹⁷ Goodson (1998)

¹⁸ UNHCR (2013b)

¹⁹ UNHCR (2013c)

²⁰ UNHCR (2013d)



challenges, especially security concerns, access to livelihoods, and access to basic services. In addition to supporting the development of an institutional structure within Afghanistan, UNHCR is providing targeted humanitarian assistance to returnees and conflict-related IDPs. In host countries, UNHCR's main focus has been to preserve 'asylum space'. In Pakistan, the Tripartite Commission Agreement that expired at the end of 2012 was extended to the end of June 2013, along with the validity of Proof of Registration (PoR) cards for Afghan refugees; and a new interim measure by the government of Pakistan is awaited pending the drafting of a national policy on Afghan refugees. In Iran UNHCR is also currently working with the government to extend the stay for registered refugees.

2.4 Undocumented migrants

In addition to refugees, it has been estimated that there are one million undocumented Afghans living and working in Pakistan, and another 1.4 million in Iran.²¹ Mobility across the border, especially with Pakistan, is fairly fluid in both directions.

A March 2010 policy paper passed by the government of Pakistan stipulated that undocumented Afghans may be subject to immediate deportation; and according to IOM 7,684 Afghans were indeed deported in 2012; but only 238 between January and November 2013.²² In fact the government of Pakistan recognizes both that deportation is in practice impossible to implement on a significant scale; and that many Afghans are filling gaps in the labour market. In August 2013 the government requested IOM to proceed with the registration of undocumented migrants whilst also indicated its continuing support for their eventual return and reintegration. At the same time there are also 'spontaneous' returns by undocumented Afghans from Pakistan, numbering 53,887 during 2012 and 15,148 between January and November 2013 according to IOM.

In Iran, in contrast to Pakistan, the government has adopted a policy of formalizing the presence of undocumented Afghans by issuing short-term visas, work permits, and travel documents. It is estimated that between 600,000 and 800,000 individuals have benefited to date.²³ However, this does not preclude carrying out deportations of which there were 258,146 in 2012 according to IOM and a further 18,296 between January and November 2013. The Iranian economy has suffered a significant downturn due largely to the current embargo, and the government recently announced that Afghans would not have their work permits

²¹ UNHCR (2013b)

²² IOM (2013)

²³ UNHCR (2013d)

renewed after expiration and could become subject to deportation. To date, however, there has been no significant increase in the number of deportations. In addition between January and November 2013 it is estimated that there were 2,625 'spontaneous' returns to Afghanistan from Iran.

2.5 The wider diaspora

A significant number of Afghans also live outside the immediate region, and form what has been described as a wider diaspora. It is estimated that there are some 300,000 settled in the United States (US), at least 150,000 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), perhaps 125,000 in Germany, and smaller numbers in Canada, Australia and across Europe. While many of those in the UAE are temporary labour migrants, the majority elsewhere is settled permanently and often educated and skilled. It is estimated that there are about 10,000 Afghan refugees in India, mostly settled in Delhi, including many Hindus and Sikhs. The economic and political significance of the diaspora outweighs its numerical significance. It sends home remittances on a significant scale that support households and communities in Afghanistan (and in refugee camps), it invests in Afghanistan, and has contributed significantly to political processes over the past 12 years.

CHAPTER 3: TRANSITIONS IN AFGHANISTAN 2014

While much of the available international analysis has focused on the impact of the withdrawal of international military forces from Afghanistan in 2014, the political transition resulting from the planned April 2014 Presidential election will be just as important for security and stability in Afghanistan in the short-term. There are also concerns that an economic transition will reduce still further access to sustainable livelihoods for many Afghans, and this is likely to be just as important a driver for further migration as is insecurity.

While each of these variables – security, political and economic – is considered in turn in this section, it is important to recognize that they are inextricably linked. For example national security – or the perception of national security – will certainly influence business confidence and private sector investment in Afghanistan. Equally one of the most direct implications of the withdrawal of foreign troops will be the loss of employment for significant numbers of Afghans. An illegitimate election in 2014, or perceptions of such, will almost certainly provoke inter-ethnic tensions, factionalism, war lord rivalries and conflict. A significant reduction in Official Development Assistance (ODA), which is likely if security deteriorates, will in turn restrict the development of Afghan political institutions. Indeed one of the purposes of this paper is to encourage a more coherent analysis of the transition. At the same time, and as expanded briefly at the end of this section, there is also an argument not overly to focus on 2014 as a pivotal year for Afghanistan.

3.1 The security transition

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has announced that it will effect a major reduction in the number of international forces present in Afghanistan during 2014.²⁴ The US Government had reached agreement with the government of Afghanistan to retain an ongoing military presence until 2024, although there is still the possibility of no US troop presence after 2014 (the so-called ‘zero option’) should the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) between the US and Afghanistan not be signed. On 12 October 2013 President Karzai and Secretary of State John Kerry announced that most of the differences over the BSA had now been resolved,²⁵ and on 24 November 2013 a specially convened *Loya Jirga* endorsed the BSA and asked President Karzai to sign it. However President Karzai has stated that he will not sign the agreement but rather that it should be his successor who does so. Should the BSA be signed – and this is also a precondition for other countries to maintain some military presence – the size of the international military presence after 2014 remains unclear; although its

overwhelming focus will be on training.

There is significant uncertainty about the extent to which the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) – comprising the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) – will be able to fill the gap left by the withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). According to a recent US Congressional Research Service report, there are widespread doubts about the ability of the ANSF to take the security lead. Serious challenges are reported to include attrition, insurgent infiltration, substance abuse, and illiteracy. The US Department of Defense and others also question the combat readiness of the ANSF, highlighting command and control, air and indirect fire support, logistics, and medical evacuation as key gaps. There is certainly a consensus that the Afghan army and police will require significant international funding and support to continue to function: according to Jane’s Sentinel Country Risk Assessment for Afghanistan, the Afghan National Army currently lacks the resources and manpower to operate fully independently.²⁶ It is fair to add that the ANSF has surprised many and been widely applauded for its successes in battling insurgents in 2013 despite having suffered record casualties.

At the same time the potential threat posed by the Taliban and other anti-government elements (AGEs) is uncertain.²⁷ In recent months it has been reported that the Taliban continue to gain influence and territory. They have intensified their military campaign in 2013, targeting Afghan Local Police (ALP), Afghan National Police and local governments, while expanding their operations beyond the southern half of the country to Farah, Badghis, Faryab and Badakhshan in particular.²⁸ The UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) has also noted a geographical spread of militant activity outside the previous focus in the south and the east of the country and into the previously relatively quiet north and west, as well as Kabul.²⁹ UNAMA also announced a 16 per cent rise in the number of Afghan civilians killed or wounded during the first eight months of this year compared to the same period last year. For four eastern provinces bordering Pakistan this increase rose to 54 per cent.³⁰ Looking to the future, on one hand it has been suggested that those insurgents driven by resistance to foreign forces could pursue a negotiated settlement after the majority of foreign troops withdraw. It is also the case that the majority

²⁴ NATO (2013)

²⁵ Soufan Group (2013)

²⁶ JSCRA (2012)

²⁷ Koser and Marsden (2013)

²⁸ OCHA (2013)

²⁹ UNAMA (2012)

³⁰ These numbers were announced by UNAMA at a press conference in Jalalabad on 2 October 2013.

³¹ Asia Foundation (2012)

of Afghans oppose the return of a Taliban regime,³¹ although more would apparently accept a Taliban participation in Government as part of a negotiated outcome.³² On the other hand, insurgents may be able to retain a degree of support on the basis of the continued presence of some international troops. The ultimate power base of the Taliban may rely on local power dynamics across the country, with local power holders prepared to shift their allegiance. The outcomes of such processes are very difficult to predict.³³

Although most other analyses do not concur, it is worth noting the prediction of one US-based analyst that security will unravel fairly quickly in Afghanistan after 2014. Specifically he predicts a Taliban advance towards the east and Kabul region in the spring of 2014; that the Afghan regime will probably collapse in a few years; that political fragmentation, whether in the form of militias or the establishment of sanctuaries in the north, is laying the groundwork for a long civil war; and that the Taliban are likely to return to power after the collapse of the regime.³⁴ This scenario was however discounted by all those interviewed during the course of this research.

3.2 Political transition

Presidential and provincial elections are due to be held on 5 April 2014. President Karzai will already have served the two terms allowed for under the Afghan Constitution and will be required to step down. Several respondents interviewed for this study felt that the political transition in Afghanistan – and specifically the process and outcome of the Presidential election – will be as important in determining peace and security in Afghanistan as will be the security transition.³⁵ It is not just the outcome of the election that is at stake, but also the emerging spirit of democracy that it represents, for example through open campaigning and debate by the candidates, the widening transparency of the electoral process, and an active and engaged social media commentary.

Concerns about the election come on the back of the contested Presidential election in 2009 and parliamentary election in 2010, during which there was registration fraud and ballot-box stuffing.³⁶ It has been suggested that if the 2014 elections are also perceived as unfair and contested, this may precipitate a ‘vicious circle’ of conflict, deteriorating security, and capital flight.³⁷ The International Crisis Group (ICG) warned in 2012 that under current conditions, it is a ‘near certainty’ that massive fraud could compromise the 2014 elections.

To some extent these concerns have been allayed by the steady progress made in the electoral process: election and complaints committees have been appointed although there

have been some questions as to their degree of independence; registration of new voters has been implemented relatively smoothly throughout most of the country despite recurring reports of the sale of voter cards; and 27 candidates have registered for the elections. The EU is also actively supporting the process.³⁸ While the list of milestones successfully reached is impressive concerns remain, not the least of which is the important gap in voter education.³⁹ One disappointment for many Afghans is the absence of new faces among the presidential and vice-presidential candidates and the presence of a considerable number of former warlords among them.

Another variable in the political transition is the role of regional powers.⁴⁰ It has been suggested that uncertainty over the election and security has led to ‘hedging behaviour’ by neighbouring states, reluctant openly to support the Afghan government.⁴¹ A summary of the current reading of the interests of regional powers in the political transition in Afghanistan is as follows: In Iran, most commentators foresee no significant changes to Iranian policy on Afghanistan under new President Rowhani.⁴² There are indications that the new Government in Pakistan will maintain a constructive stance towards peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan. The role of India is often overlooked. A recent Joint Declaration on Regional Peace and Stability proposed trilateral talks between Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan; and support for India-Iran cooperation and common interests in Afghanistan.⁴³ India is also considering sending military experts to Afghanistan for the first time to contribute to the training of ANSF staff. In Central Asia the relationship with Afghanistan is mainly focused on business and trade,⁴⁴ supported by the US New Silk Road initiative⁴⁵ and the EU,⁴⁶ and on reducing narcotics imports. At the same time there are some concerns in the neighbouring Central Asian states that insecurity in Afghanistan may spill over the border and incite the rise of extremism.⁴⁷ Russia’s principal interest is stability in Afghanistan in order to avoid any spillover of terrorism and narcotics.⁴⁸ In other words – and in contrast to previous transitions in Afghanistan – the overwhelming interest of regional powers in Afghanistan is considered by most analysts to be stability. Outside the immediate region, the EU and US have also expressed a clear intention to help steer an effective political transition.

³² Giustozzi (2010)

³³ Dodge and Redman (2011)

³⁴ Dorransoro (2012)

³⁵ Wilder (2013)

³⁶ OCHA (2013)

³⁷ CFC (2013b)

³⁸ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/137590.pdf

³⁹ SDA (2013)

⁴⁰ PONARS (2013)

⁴¹ Financial Times (2013)

⁴² Koepke (2013)

⁴³ Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2013)

⁴⁴ Chambesy (2012)

⁴⁵ Jamestown Foundation (2011)

⁴⁶ FRIDE (2013)

⁴⁷ Afghanistan Regional Forum (2013)

⁴⁸ IFRI (2013)

3.3 Economic transition

According to the World Bank, there has been robust economic growth in Afghanistan even since the transition process was announced in 2010. Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in Afghanistan increased more than four percentage points from 7.3 per cent in 2010-11 to an estimated 11.8 per cent in 2011-12. Admittedly this growth has been driven by an exceptional harvest supported by favourable weather conditions, bringing wheat production close to self-sufficiency level, and thus reducing dependency on food imports; and during 2013 moderate rainfall has reduced the harvest to a more ordinary output level. The mining sector has also shown dynamic developments in 2012, as a result of the start of oil production by the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) in the Amu Darya oil fields, where production is expected to reach 4,000 barrels per day by the end of 2013. In addition work has started on reconstructing eight gas wells in Sheberghan. Very rapid developments in the services sector have also contributed to economic growth in 2012: the telecommunications sector has grown exponentially, and it is predicted for example that there will be 2.4 million internet users in Afghanistan by the end of 2013.⁴⁹

At the same time, the World Bank has predicted that this quite impressive rate of economic growth may not be sustained through 2014 and beyond; and its forecast is for a slowing of GDP growth in the medium-term. It is certainly not alone in predicting a significant contraction in the Afghan economy after 2014⁵⁰ and other analysts are far more pessimistic than the World Bank.⁵¹ The main factor cited by the World Bank is that in the next 12 to 24 months political and security uncertainties may limit private-sector growth; and in particular that business confidence will be lost by current and potential overseas investors. The difficulty of attracting investment in an uncertain security environment was also emphasized during several interviews for this working paper, as was the risk of undermining confidence through pessimistic declarations.

It has also been suggested that the planned foreign troop withdrawal by the end of 2014 will directly lower annual growth by at least two or three per cent, as a result of reduced local spending by these forces and by foreign civilian organizations with international and national staff. Unemployment is also expected to rise when local staff hired by foreign security and civilian organizations are laid off, military bases are closed and Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) projects come to an end. Estimates by respondents of the number of Afghans who may lose their jobs ranged from 50,000 to up to 360,000 taking into account all those employed by service providers and other contractors; and

that the impact will be multiplied by the fact that in Afghanistan today up to five families depend on a single income.

The continuing commitment of the international community to providing Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Afghanistan has been identified as critical by several sources.⁵² At the Tokyo donor conference in 2012 US\$ 16 billion was pledged to Afghanistan over the next four years. The European Union (EU) has pledged to keep its assistance spending to Afghanistan at 200 million Euros per year or more – amounting to about one billion Euros once member states' contributions are also factored in. Iran also seems set to maintain its development aid, and continue its strategic investment in trade and infrastructure.⁵³ At the same time, most analysts think it is likely that ODA will decline over time,⁵⁴ in part because of cuts to overseas development budgets in many major donor countries.⁵⁵ A reduction in ODA will in turn result in a decline in aid-related jobs, which according to some estimates number 65,000 currently.

Overlaying these economic consequences of the reduction of international commitment to Afghanistan, are the ongoing challenges of systemic corruption - in 2012 Transparency International rated Afghanistan the second most corrupt country in the world. There is also considered to be a risk that the drugs industry and organized crime will become an even more important part of the illicit economy and coping strategies, with increasing security risks also from general criminality.⁵⁶

3.4 Afghanistan 2014: Rhetoric and reality

Besides emphasizing that the withdrawal of international military forces is not the only variable likely to influence peace, security, and development in Afghanistan in 2014, interviews with a range of Afghan respondents for this working paper also revealed some reservations on their part about the entire focus of the international community on 2014 as pivotal for Afghanistan's immediate prospects.

One reason is an understandable resistance to the idea that Afghanistan's fate is effectively in the hands of the international community. Respondents instead tended to view 2014 as a staging-post in a long-term project of state-building, and part of a wider transition from the past to the future, and from an older generation to the burgeoning youth of Afghanistan. It is important that the ISAF withdrawal will not be a replay of the

⁴⁹ www.roshan.af

⁵⁰ Redman (2011)

⁵¹ CRC (2013b)

⁵² SIPRI (2013)

⁵³ CFC (2013c)

⁵⁴ NOREF (2012)

⁵⁵ Dorrnsoro (2012)

⁵⁶ Felbab-Brown (2012)

1988-89 Soviet withdrawal and the devastation left in its wake. There are political uncertainties, but the electoral process is moving forward more or less according to plan, and the alignment of Afghanistan's neighbours around a priority for a stable political transition is also positive. Business confidence may falter, but too much economic progress has been made not to endure. Several respondents also focused on the potential of Afghanistan's youth for building the country in the long-term.

Overall, there is a feeling that too much progress has been made – whether measured for example by the number of boys and girls in school, improved health indicators, or economic growth – to be reversed. This point is neatly encapsulated in the name of an increasingly influential civic-political youth organization – Afghanistan 1400. The date in its name refers to the coming eight years to the year 1400 in the Afghan calendar (2020-2021) which it views as critical for Afghanistan's future.

A second reason suggested by some respondents to resist the focus on 2014 was that it may distract attention from today's priorities in Afghanistan. There is a risk of suspending action while waiting to see what unfolds in 2014. But as already indicated in this working paper, in many areas, ranging from corruption through women's rights, rising unemployment, and the capacity of local government, to building investor confidence, action is required now. The same is true for migration – while 2014 may exacerbate a migration crisis, this is no reason not to deal with the dimensions of the crisis that already exist.

Finally, there was a sense that by focusing on Afghanistan 2014 a self-fulfilling prophecy may be created. Uncertainty over the future of Afghanistan, sharpened by international attention on 2014, is for example already influencing migration decision-making today. The scale of return by Afghan refugees has reduced significantly over the last year, an elite exodus from Afghanistan has also been reported, and there has been a dramatic increase in Afghans from Iran and Pakistan seeking asylum in Australia, Turkey, and EU countries, rather than risk going home.

⁵⁷ <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/10/23/opinion/dobriansky-verveer>

CHAPTER 4: MOBILITY SCENARIOS

It is important to note from the outset that the relationship between peace and security on the one hand, and migration outcomes on the other, is not always 'linear' or direct. In other words rising insecurity in Afghanistan may not necessarily result in more migration, for example; while by the same token increased security may not promote significant returns either locally or internationally. There is a host of intervening variables.

First, transitions such as those envisaged in Afghanistan will impact differentially on different people, in different places, and at different times. In this regard particular attention has been paid to the impact on women's rights of a return to the political process by the Taliban.⁵⁸ Second, from a sociological perspective, individual-level behavior is hard to predict, and there is a significant range of economic, demographic, social, political, and physical factors that may affect individuals' choices whether to migrate.⁵⁹ As mentioned above, several respondents for this working paper for example suggested that returnees to Afghanistan have often made significant investments in the place where they have settled, and as a result will be very reluctant to move – or at least to move for any significant period of time or over a long-distance.

A third significant variable is that to some extent, migration trajectories will be affected by circumstances outside Afghanistan as much as by internal circumstances. Although no respondents expected any significant changes, clearly a different attitude towards Afghan refugees or undocumented migrants on the part of the new governments in Iran or Pakistan would have implications for the scale of deportation and return. One respondent for this working paper suggested that as Central Asian countries become more integrated, this will result in an increasing draw for Afghan labour.

Finally, and as signposted above, the relationship between transitions in Afghanistan and migration outcomes may not be one-way – migration may be as much an independent as a dependent variable in the relationship.⁶⁰ For example remittances, investments, and political engagement by the wider diaspora may significantly impact economic development and long-term stability in Afghanistan. Equally, growing internal displacement may stoke local tribal and ethnic tensions, and contribute to rising insecurity in urban areas.

Noting these intervening variables, this section presents forecasts for migration and displacement outcomes in Afghanistan during and after 2014.

4.1 Internal displacement

Most studies and commentators expect that the most likely and most significant displacement outcome of the transitions in Afghanistan in 2014 will be more internal displacement in Afghanistan. (As already noted, it is difficult to distinguish internal displacement from internal migration, specifically from rural to urban areas). A number of reasons have been suggested. One, as alluded to above, is a reluctance to move too far from their homes, especially for the millions of Afghans who have returned from displacement and invested in a new life. Second, it is suggested that for a variety of reasons that affect some groups more than others, the possibility and inclination to move to either Iran or Pakistan may decrease over the coming years. Third, for a significant proportion of Afghans, internal displacement has become a fairly common survival strategy, in particular in the form of short-term and short-distance moves to escape sporadic localized violence, or on a seasonal basis driven by climatic effects. The significant urbanization process since 2001 reflects this. Finally, there are concerns that rising insecurity in Afghanistan will provide fertile grounds for an increase in internal trafficking.

Three drivers for an increase in internal displacement as a result of the transitions in Afghanistan have been specifically identified by respondents to this study – although analytically they overlap. First, it has been suggested that if provincial centres were to 'fall' to the insurgents, this would push out in large numbers people seen as loyal to the government, specific political parties, the Afghan National Police, the Afghan National Army and Afghan special forces. A second risk factor that has been identified is the rise of old and new warlords and their militia. Internal turf battles, like those that plagued the country in the 1990s pre-Taliban era, would probably cause local displacement including in urban areas. Third, it has been predicted that were the current skirmishes that are common especially in the south and east of the country to turn into small scale and localized armed clashes, then significant localized internal displacement could be expected. To an extent proximity to a border may determine whether such scenarios would result in internal displacement or cross-border flows.

A final note under the heading of internal displacement is the scenario that the effects of conflict in eastern border areas of Afghanistan may spill-over into Pakistan, and in particular the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Deteriorating security and law order may in turn increase the IDP population within Pakistan, and possibly also prompt new flows of people in refugee-like situations from FATA to Afghanistan.⁶¹

⁵⁸ ICG (2013)

⁵⁹ Adhikari (2012)

⁶⁰ NOREF (2012)

⁶¹ UNHCR (2013c)

4.2 Migration to neighbouring countries

As explained above, understanding the migration context of Afghanistan can be instructive in predicting future migration trends, and this certainly applies to forecasts for migration to neighbouring countries. First, seeking asylum in Iran and Pakistan has become a survival strategy of which a significant proportion of the Afghan population already has either direct or indirect experience. Second, and a related point, is that many Afghans have family members or other relatives in Iran and Pakistan, on whom they may be able to rely should they decide to leave Afghanistan. Indeed, relying on informal support is likely to become increasingly significant as the government in both Iran and Pakistan reduce their welcome for Afghan refugees, and this declining hospitality is another factor that may influence the decision whether or not to leave Afghanistan.

On balance, most published studies and respondents for this working paper do not envisage massive new refugee flows to Iran or Pakistan, nor towards Central Asia, during or in the immediate aftermath of the 2014 transitions. In addition to changing policies and circumstances in Iran and Pakistan making these two traditional countries of destination less accessible, two other reasons have been suggested. One is that Pakistan and Iran have become less attractive places to seek work, in very recent years, as the opportunities available within the urban economy of Afghanistan have provided alternatives to the harsh treatment which Afghans may suffer in Iran and Pakistan.⁶² However, in a situation in which it is the norm for families to diversify their income sources, the balance between these options is likely to remain very fluid. With the planned drawdown in the international military and civilian presence, the urban economy may not provide the same opportunities that it has in recent years and there may be a greater willingness to tolerate the difficulties which exist in Iran and Pakistan.⁶³

In the case of Pakistan, it has also been suggested that security concerns may put off potential migrants. It has been noted that Pakistan's own Pashtuns are currently moving away from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas because of insecurity, and these are the places traditionally that have absorbed largely Pashtun Afghan migrant and refugee populations. Specific mention has also been made of the situation of Hazaras who have become victims of targeted violence by Pakistan-based radical Sunni groups such as Lashkar-e-Janghvi.⁶⁴ Significant numbers of Afghan Hazara refugees have been killed and injured in such attacks in Baluchistan, which may deter Hazaras from seeking asylum in Pakistan as opposed to Iran. On the other hand, UNHCR Pakistan's growing resettlement programme, which has received media publicity in the

context of sectarian violence against Hazaras, may attract some Hazara refugees who would regard Pakistan as a transit country.

The following specific forecasts have been made regarding the scale, character, and geography of new refugee flows in light of the transitions in Afghanistan.

It is suggested in a recent STATT analysis that at least three conditions would need to be met in order to prompt large-scale movements across the borders.⁶⁵ First, the current intermittent clashes would have to turn into longer term fighting with the use of higher capacity weapons over a larger sway of land and civilians would have to be 'caught in the cross-fire' with large scale human rights violations. Second, if the fighting blocked vital roads towards the centre of the country or affected urban areas this might push populations outwards towards border areas. Third, the governments of neighbouring countries would have to be willing to accept new refugee flows.

It has also been forecast that new refugee flows would be significantly different from those experienced between the 1970s and 1990s, and in particular that ethnic considerations would be more of a factor this time: Pashtuns from the south and east would want to move to Pakistan, as might some Hazara seeking resettlement opportunities. Tajiks would want to move internally to Kabul and northwards, with some potential movement to Tajikistan and perhaps onwards to Kyrgyzstan. Hazaras would orient themselves towards Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif and Iran. At a smaller scale Uzbeks would be oriented towards Uzbekistan and possibly onwards to Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmen to Turkmenistan.

Should displacement outside Afghanistan occur, the expectation is that most refugees would cross into Pakistan using the official border crossings of Torkham in the east and Spin Boldak/Chaman in the south. In the west, potential refugees would need to continue to rely on irregular migration channels to access Iran. It is unlikely that the Iranian Government would make any provision to support such refugees, and may close its borders. In the north, it has been suggested that significant refugee flows into Central Asia would only occur if populations 'trapped' by conflict near border areas perceived no other alternatives but to cross borders, as was the case in 2001 – 2002. At the same time an increase in flows to Tajikistan in particular cannot be excluded, in particular of Tajik speakers if access to Iran proves to be too problematic.

⁶² PRDU (2012)

⁶³ Koser and Marsden (2013)

⁶⁴ BBC News Asia (2013)

⁶⁵ STATT (2013)

Any cross-border movements are likely to be mixed. In the most likely scenario, there would be a continuation of the current asylum- and migration-related mixed population movements out of Afghanistan. Under deteriorating circumstances, there may be an increased cross-border movement of combatants mixed with civilians, giving rise to implications for maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum and keeping borders open for refugees.⁶⁶

4.3 Migration beyond the region

Another category of migrants that might be impacted by transitions in Afghanistan is those seeking asylum outside the immediate region, and especially in Europe and Australia; originating both from Afghanistan as well as from Iran, Pakistan and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Importantly these movements are already taking place in anticipation of the transition: the number of Afghan asylum requests globally in 2011 was 35,729, representing a 34 per cent increase on 2010, mainly in Europe (especially Germany, Sweden, Austria, and Belgium), rising to 48,900 in 2012 of which over 36,000 were in industrialized countries.⁶⁷ In Australia the number of Afghans arriving as unauthorized maritime arrivals (UMAs) rose to 4,243 in 2013 compared with 1,601 in 2011.⁶⁸ There has also been an increase in the number of unaccompanied Afghan minors arriving in Europe.

An elite exodus from Afghanistan has already started in anticipation of the transition, and is predicted to increase over the coming months, and it is reported that a number of Afghan ministers have already settled their families in other countries to prepare for an exit after the troop withdrawal.⁶⁹

It is generally felt that individuals associated with, or perceived as supportive of, the Government and international community, including ISAF, are at risk of being targeted by anti-Government elements, especially in areas where these groups are active.⁷⁰ This risk was reiterated in the UNAMA mid-year report in 2012⁷¹ and in a fact-finding mission by the Danish Immigration Service. And these risks do not just concern the elite - they may extend to truck drivers, security guards, and interpreters for example. According to the Cooperation for Peace and Unity, the category of government employees most at risk are those in the security forces - including the police, intelligent services, and the military, followed by teachers and employees at health clinics.⁷²

More widely, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has warned that all employees of companies that have contracts with international forces or foreign organizations may be at risk, as will all staff associated with the US military, regardless of position or type of work - including contractors as well as service staff and drivers - and

especially on bases outside Kabul. UNHCR has also identified employees of international organizations as being at risk of intimidation and threats; although threats to employees of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are reported to have reduced in recent years. It is worth noting that while these risk analyses so far have focused on Afghanistan, but they may also apply in FATA in Pakistan should conflict in Afghanistan spill over the border there.

While neighbouring asylum countries are receiving modest numbers of such applications from Afghan former employees of ISAF, embassies, UN agencies and international NGOs (INGOs), it is believed that many others are making their own way to the West as asylum seekers. Among these groups, those with the resources and wherewithal are expected to leave Afghanistan in increasing numbers over the next year, using the neighbouring countries only as a transit to the West.⁷³ Many of them have already started to map out their routes.⁷⁴

There has also been an increase in the number of Afghan refugees and migrants leaving Iran and Pakistan and heading for the West. There has been a very significant increase in the number of Afghans seeking asylum in Turkey in recent months: in 2012 14,125 Afghans sought asylum in Turkey, compared to 2,486 in 2011 and 1248 in 2010.⁷⁵ There has also been an upswing in arrivals of Afghans (especially Hazaras) by boat to Australia: 1,309 in 2010-11 rising to 3,384 in 2011-12;⁷⁶ of whom at least half are reported to have resided for at least two years in either Iran or Pakistan.⁷⁷ A combination of factors probably explains these new onward movements - deteriorating conditions and opportunities in Iran (for example in the labour market) and Pakistan (for example for Hazaras); a desire if possible to avoid returning to Afghanistan given uncertainties over that country's immediate future; a reported increase in crime targeting middle-class and wealthy Afghans in Kabul; and the role of migrant smugglers.⁷⁸

Several respondents stressed the importance of educated people and businessmen and women remaining in Afghanistan at a time of such uncertainty. This was stressed not just for the obvious point that their skills and resources are needed for the continued social and economic development of the country, but also for the psychological

⁶⁶ UNHCR (2013)

⁶⁷ UNHCR (2012)

⁶⁸ DIAC (2013)

⁶⁹ IAGCI (2013)

⁷⁰ UNHCR (2010)

⁷¹ UNAMA (2012)

⁷² UKBA (2013)

⁷³ STATT (2013)

⁷⁴ LA Times (2013)

⁷⁶ Expert Panel on Asylum Seekers

⁷⁷ DIAC (2013)

⁷⁸ WSC (2010)

boost to overall confidence in Afghanistan's future that their resolve to stay would provide. It is important to note that many Afghans have ties to other countries both within and outside the region that would allow them to migrate perfectly legally.

4.4 Returns

Even recognizing that refugees sometimes return to pockets of safety in conflict zones, unsurprisingly no source consulted for this working paper envisages significant return to Afghanistan during or any time soon after the transition in 2014. As already indicated, the scale of voluntary return has been tapering off in recent years and the scale of return is expected to reduce still further during 2014 and possibly for the following years. At the same time it is worth noting that Afghanistan remains one of the top five countries of origin for IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes, and several EU member states are specifically tailoring AVRR programmes to Afghanistan (for example Greece).

Uncertainty over the future of Afghanistan is likely to deter significant returns over the next year; while for all the reasons described in Section 4 above there is good reason to suppose that conditions in Afghanistan will not be conducive to return for the majority of refugees perhaps for the rest of this decade. Equally, while conditions in Iran and Pakistan may not favour very large new refugee flows, neither are they envisaged to generate significant 'push' factors for those refugees already there.

There appears to be little prospect either for the return to their homes of IDPs in Afghanistan. Some are returned refugees who have become internally displaced in cities because their homes remain insecure or uninhabitable. Others have moved from rural to urban areas at least in part because of relatively greater security and economic opportunities in the towns and cities. According to an IDMC survey, over three quarters of IDPs now wish to settle permanently where they are.⁷⁹ This right is not however recognized by the Government, which continues to link assistance and solutions for IDPs to return to their place of origin. Under these circumstances, and without adequate international assistance, it is suggested that growing numbers of Afghans risk prolonged internal displacement. The number of these IDPs living in urban centres, coupled with overall rapid population growth, underscores the urgent need for the formulation and implementation of a sound urban development policy.

In terms of return, at the same time, there are some indications that countries where significant numbers of Afghan asylum-seekers have lodged claims in recent years may view the

transition as a political opportunity to return their rejected asylum-seekers.⁸⁰

Finally, and on a more positive note, interest in IOM's Return of Qualified Afghans programme continues unabated with a steady number of Afghans abroad applying to return and fill key positions in the government and private sector although admittedly many of these placements are for limited terms. Nevertheless, this is an indicator of a certain degree of confidence in the future of their country.

⁷⁹ IDMC (2013)

⁸⁰ IAGCI (2013)

CHAPTER 5: APPLYING THE MIGRATION CRISIS OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework is designed to help improve and systematize IOM's response to migration crises; help crisis-affected populations; respond to unaddressed migration dimensions of a crisis; and build on IOM's partnerships. The application of the framework to current and future developments in Afghanistan in this working paper yields conclusions and recommendations across each of these areas.

The preceding analysis suggests certain sectors of assistance that are likely to be particularly important as the Afghanistan transitions unfold. Immediate priorities include displacement tracking; shelter and non-food items; counter trafficking and protection of vulnerable migrants; (re)integration assistance; community stabilization and transition; disaster risk reduction and resilience building; technical assistance for humanitarian border management; migration policy and legislation support (including in the areas of labour migration and urban migration); diaspora and human resource mobilization; and health and psychosocial support. These are discussed in more detail in Annex 1.

At the same time it is important to note that the transitions envisaged in Afghanistan during 2014 may directly impact the ability of IOM (and other aid agencies) to undertake its work and deliver on these priorities.⁸¹ First, humanitarian access is likely to decrease. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), active hostilities continue to impede delivery of assistance to affected people in Afghanistan. As of May 2013, access by UNHCR for example had been reduced to about 70 per cent of the country and it is often out of reach for displaced people. Second, security for humanitarian workers is likely to be jeopardized. According to OCHA, during the first quarter of 2013 there was a 63 per cent increase in security-related incidents associated with humanitarians over the same period in 2012; and in the last few months there have been attacks on health facilities managed by NGOs, the Kabul office of the International Organization for Migration and the Jalalabad office of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Third, even as the prospects for needing to protect and assist more displaced people are likely to increase and humanitarian access and security are likely to become more difficult, international commitment to support humanitarian activities in Afghanistan is decreasing.

Nevertheless, ramping up preparedness in these sectors should put IOM and other agencies in a better position to

assist people who are likely to be affected by Afghanistan's transitions, in particular the internally displaced. Equally, as has been stressed throughout this working paper, there are already substantial numbers of Afghans who currently require – and generally receive – assistance, and it will be important not to divert attention or resources from current projects and programmes.

Indeed those populations already in need of assistance arguably comprise an example of an unaddressed migration dimension during crisis. During a crisis the tendency is to focus on those immediately impacted; whereas crises often occur in countries where there is already significant displacement and migration, and a pre-existing need for humanitarian assistance. As already explained above, Afghanistan is not facing an acute crisis but rather is the setting of a situation of protracted displacement, and the number of displaced has been growing over the last two years as can be seen from both IDP and asylum statistics.

There is not only a risk of diverting attention and resources from those people already in need, but also of ignoring the impact on them of current and future developments on them. As has been alluded to in this working paper, for example, one of the main migration outcomes predicted during and after 2014 will be more internal displacement especially towards cities. This can be expected to impact directly on the substantial numbers of urban IDPs who already are often living in sub-standard conditions, for example by increasing crowding, placing further strains on basic services, and by intensifying competition in the informal labour market. Another example is that increasing insecurity in parts of Afghanistan will make return less feasible for people currently displaced both inside and outside the country, thus extending the protracted displacement and its consequences.

This working paper has also identified a number of areas where partnerships and coordination are required. One is between the various priority sectors of assistance identified above. Bringing these different sectors together in a pragmatic and evolving approach is a significant challenge for IOM. Clearly across many of these sectors IOM will also work in partnership with agencies and existing frameworks, including the proposed EU Cooperation Agreement for Partnership and Development, the cluster approach, the refugee regime, security and peace-building frameworks, development frameworks, urban management, and mixed migration flows.

⁸¹ Koser (2013)

and evolving approach is a significant challenge for IOM. Clearly across many of these sectors IOM will also work in partnership with agencies and existing frameworks, including the proposed EU Cooperation Agreement for Partnership and Development, the cluster approach, the refugee regime, security and peace-building frameworks, development frameworks, urban management, and mixed migration flows.

Another requirement for coordination is between IOM offices in Afghanistan, Central Asia, Iran, Pakistan, and further afield, to expand on regional processes such as the Silk Route Initiative, Bali Process and Colombo Process. As has been explained, while the migration and displacement impacts of transitions in Afghanistan are likely to be focused in the country and neighbouring region, it will also likely impact more widely, including in Turkey and Greece, across the EU, and in Australia.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

Applying the IOM Migration Crisis Operational Framework will help focus on specific challenges as Afghanistan prepares for multiple transitions during and after 2014, and to identify priorities for IOM in preparing its response.

Equally, the Afghanistan context has provided new insights into the Migration Crisis Operational Framework and its applicability as the country is not facing a crisis in the traditional sense of an acute or abrupt change of circumstances as in the case of other countries covered in the MCOF paper series such as Mali and Syria. First, recognizing that the withdrawal of international military forces at the end of 2014 is only one aspect of a multiple transition combining security, political, and economic aspects, suggests that there may not be a discernible 'trigger' for a crisis. Accepting that there is no single trigger, second, makes the distinction between 'before', 'during' and 'after' crisis in Afghanistan blurred. Afghanistan already faces significant challenges, for example of governance, of security, and of poverty and unemployment. These are likely to be exacerbated by the 2014 transitions, and directly affect even more people.

But perhaps the most important conclusion of this paper is the need to place the current focus on Afghanistan 2014 into context, and in particular to respect the views of Afghans themselves. 2014 will certainly be a significant year for Afghanistan's immediate prospects, as a result of security, political, and economic transitions, which will in turn have migration and displacement implications. But still there are grounds for optimism, and the forward momentum of Afghanistan should not be disrupted by elevating rhetoric over reality. As one interlocutor said, "the focus on 2014 is punishing us; 2015 is more important."

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ANNEX I: SECTORS OF IOM ASSISTANCE

The Migration Crisis Operational Framework identifies 15 sectors of assistance, and emphasizes linkages to existing response systems and modalities for cooperation. Based on the preceding analysis, IOM has identified 12 out of 15 sectors as priorities for its programming in Afghanistan in the coming years.

Sector 1: Camp management and displacement tracking

This sector is relevant to IOM Afghanistan in so far as monitoring displacement flows ‘during’ and ‘after’ crisis stage.

Regarding displacement tracking, there is already a need for more support in Afghanistan irrespective of developments in 2014. It has been made clear throughout this working paper that data on many forms of mobility in and from Afghanistan is poor. Notable exceptions are registered refugees in Iran and Pakistan and registered asylum seekers elsewhere; but aside from these categories even basic data on IDPs (especially urban IDPs), ‘spontaneous’ returnees, and undocumented migrants, is lacking.

IOM Afghanistan’s strategy in IDP tracking relies heavily on collaboration and an information management capacity that advocates for data harmonization and comparability among UN agencies. More recently, IOM launched an IDP Movement Intentions and Needs and Vulnerability Analysis exercise in Helmand and Herat that seek to identify issues that negatively impact IDPs within Afghanistan. In addition to the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) and the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), IOM works especially closely with UNHCR on displacement information management as both agencies are mandated to assist and find solutions for IDPs: UNHCR for those displaced by conflict and IOM for those displaced by natural disaster.

Given the need of IDPs for emergency assistance and ultimately towards finding durable solutions, IOM will proactively advocate for the urgent need for accurate data for all categories of displaced populations while enhancing the information management capacity of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) to establish a common and clear understanding of the displacement situation – in terms of numbers, patterns, vulnerabilities, future intentions and protection challenges – in order to better target assistance, design programmes and develop effective advocacy initiatives.

Partners: MoRR, ANDMA, UNHCR, Afghanistan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), OCHA, NGOs

Sector 2: Shelter and non-food items

This sector concerns the need for shelter and non-food items (NFIs) of persons affected by both man-made and natural disasters and is relevant during the ‘crisis’ stage. IOM is an active member of Emergency Shelter and NFIs cluster since its establishment, initially as co-lead and now serving as deputy for the cluster and has coordinated its assistance with members to better serve the needs of the people in need of emergency shelter and NFIs. Afghanistan is vulnerable to recurrent natural disasters which are exacerbated by ongoing climate change. The country is ranked twelfth on the seismic risk index, twenty-second on the drought risk index and twenty-fourth on the flood risk index. Nearly half of Afghanistan’s 400 districts are hazard-prone and on average 250,000 Afghans are affected by natural disasters every year. Heavy rain and snow cause major problems across the region almost every year. The rural housing offers little protection against the torrential rain, and has been known to collapse on their occupants. The continued likelihood of natural disasters compounded by the lack of resources and capacity within government mandated ministries/departments means the demand for shelter and NFIs for vulnerable populations will continue to exist.

Between 2008 and 2013, IOM’s Humanitarian Assistance Programme has assisted over 820,000 individuals (117,000 families) with emergency shelter and NFI kits country-wide. IOM’s Humanitarian Assistance Programme Database is one of the few programmes in Afghanistan which gathers data from different types of joint assessment to provide actual number of people affected by natural disaster incidents and the type of damage done. The IOM assistance in the last five years has addressed urgent needs of between 25,000 and 30,000 families on average per year who are displaced or severely affected by a variety of natural disasters.

IOM will continue to support and address emergency needs of the natural disaster affected and displaced families in the form of NFI and shelter assistance. This will be carried out while providing technical support to IOM’s main national counterpart, ANDMA.

Partners: ANDMA, ARCS, NGOs, OCHA

Sector 3: Transport assistance for affected populations

Mobility scenarios discussed in the working paper include the potential for significant internal displacement, substantial but not massive cross-border flows, and very limited returns. There is one main category of mobile population where IOM's transport assistance may be required 'during' the crisis stage. Should Iran or Pakistan opt to expel undocumented Afghans in significant numbers, although this scenario seems currently unlikely, there will be a need for IOM transport assistance for those expelled and those who are forced to return (spontaneous returnees) from border areas. Additionally, Afghan irregular migrants and rejected asylum seekers may face growing pressure from countries of asylum outside the immediate region to return back to Afghanistan. For this group, no scaling up of IOM programming will be required as IOM already provides assisted voluntary return and reintegration assistance.

Besides a huge number of refugees hosted by the neighboring countries Iran and Pakistan, there is also a large number of undocumented Afghan migrants some of whom are being deported or forced to return to Afghanistan. Currently, approximately 1.4 million and one million undocumented Afghan migrants are being hosted by Iran and Pakistan, respectively. On average, every year 200,000 – 250,000 undocumented Afghans are deported from Iran where approximately 90% of them are the labour migrants seeking livelihood opportunities and the remaining 10 per cent are the families who have moved to Iran. In Pakistan, every year more than 30,000 undocumented migrants consisting of spontaneous and forced returnees, mostly families, are forced to return to Afghanistan out of whom only 1-2 per cent are deportees.

Since 2009 IOM has provided post-arrival assistance which aims to facilitate safe and dignified return of the vulnerable undocumented Afghan migrants to their final destination within Afghanistan. This assistance consists of screening, transportation and registration as well as post-arrival assistance (food package, provision of over-night accommodation, health screening, and transportation support to final destination and special assistance to Extremely Vulnerable Individuals). Between 2009 and 2013, IOM has assisted a total of over 114,200 deported/spontaneous undocumented Afghan migrants which included unaccompanied minors, single females and unaccompanied elderly people, and poor families from Iran. Since November 2012 to date, a total of over 22,500 undocumented Afghan migrants from Pakistan have been assisted by IOM.

IOM will continue to provide the post-arrival services to the very vulnerable undocumented Afghan migrants from Iran and Pakistan. At the same time, IOM has also prepared for a possibility of up-scaling this assistance as it participated in a

collective preparedness plan with other humanitarian actors on the ground, for the possible eviction of the undocumented Afghan migrants from Pakistan especially from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where the migrants are receiving forced eviction threats since April 2012. Thus far, the return from Pakistan has been moderate with a decrease since the second quarter of 2013. Notwithstanding, the same collective preparedness plan is under development for the western region in order to respond to mass deportation of undocumented Afghan from Iran.

Partners: MoRR, UN agencies, NGOs

Sector 4 and 5: Health and psychosocial support

While the number of undocumented returnees, deportees and spontaneous returnees is not expected to surge, there is a real need to address very vulnerable medical cases. This includes an increasing number of vulnerable drug-addicted cases and returnees in poor health, who arrive across the border and receive no government assistance.

Since 2010 IOM has assisted over 1,120 drug addiction and 2,875 other medical cases under its post-arrival assistance. In 2010 IOM funded and equipped a Drug Demand Reduction Centre in Herat for the treatment of the deported drug addicts. For other medical cases, IOM provides basic medical care to the returnees within its transit centers in Herat, Nimroz and Torkham and refers serious cases to the local public health facilities or at times private clinics in Kabul. In addition, IOM conducts TB screening through TB screeners within the transit centers in Herat and Nimroz to screen and refer suspected TB cases for further treatment.

In future programming, IOM is committed to mainstreaming health needs into its emergency response for returnees. Hence it sees the provision of emergency healthcare within transit centres as well as an expansion of TB screening as a potential necessary area of intervention. Sources in Herat reveal that one to two members of every returnee family are drug dependent and that a large number have no access to treatment: this is a gap that IOM plans on addressing with its partners. Lastly, in its assistance to vulnerable deported caseload in transit centres, IOM has observed a need to integrate psychosocial support within its post-arrival assistance as deportees/forced returnees often arrive in not only a very vulnerable physical state but also poor mental state.

Partners: MoRR, Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of Counter Narcotics (MCN), UNODC, NGOs

Sector 6: Reintegration assistance

Migrants returning from neighbouring Iran and Pakistan as well as from European countries, whether voluntary or deported, will continue to be in need of reintegration assistance. This is more so as they are a caseload not usually targeted by state-run livelihood programmes (such as the National Skills Development Programme).

Between 2009 and 2011 IOM has been implementing reintegration projects in West, North and Central regions with a focus on high-returnee districts. IOM's reintegration package consists of (i) construction of permanent shelters for those returnees who have lost their housing; (ii) vocational and business development trainings for heads of returnee families; and (iii) community infrastructure development projects which benefit returnees as well as the host communities (e.g. water and sanitation projects). During this period, IOM facilitated the construction of more than 1,785 permanent shelters, vocational and business development trainings for 8,185 vulnerable returnee families, and more than 197 communities benefited from the community development projects.

In the coming years IOM will continue supporting a variety of measures that contribute towards reintegration primarily focusing on income generation opportunities, especially for the younger generation of returnees in order to assist them in avoiding to engage in illicit or illegal activities or in needing to re-migrate.

Partners: MoRR, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyred and Disabled (MoLSAMD), NGOs

Sector 7: Support to community stabilization and transition

In Afghanistan as elsewhere, if confidence among individuals and community members in social, political and economic processes is absent, this can lead to an alienation from the state and consequently makes those individuals vulnerable to the attention of violent anti-government actors. It is important to address such grievances in local communities and establish structures that instill confidence and trust in administrative and government institutions thus inter alia preventing further displacement.

Currently, IOM community stabilization activities in Afghanistan are in two main areas. Firstly, IOM is working to increase resilience in areas vulnerable to insurgent exploitation by strengthening ties between local actors, customary governance structures, government officials and increasing cohesion among and between communities utilizing a small-grant

mechanism. Stabilization activities are currently being implemented in the North and West regions of the country.

A second area is through construction support in order to assist

in creating an enabling environment for returnees as well as the local population IOM infrastructure projects have provided opportunities for skilled and unskilled workers to obtain experience, improve their skills and contribute to the local economy, while providing urgently needed services. Since 2002, IOM has completed approximately 1,250 infrastructure projects: schools, clinics, hospitals, roads, irrigation systems, bridges as well as infrastructure for security, environmental protection and aviation. In the past year, IOM has finished several large projects including four provincial teacher training centres and three midwife training centres, and will soon complete two hospitals and several government administrative buildings and police training centres.

Partners: Various government ministries

Sector 8: Disaster risk reduction and resilience building

The capacity of many Afghans to cope with periodic natural disasters will continue to be a major challenge unless more is done to reduce the risks associated with such disasters. While there will remain a need for provision of humanitarian assistance for natural disaster affected populations, equal focus should be given to reduce the risks associated with the natural disasters. IOM has extensive experience in other parts of the world in implementing disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience-building programmes, and has also begun implementation in Afghanistan focusing on building the capacities of national and local authorities and communities.

The main component of IOM's DRR initiative to date has been light community-based engineering works such as the construction of flood retention walls in eight provinces throughout the country. These constructions have an important impact on surrounding communities, especially farmers who often suffer serious economic loss due to flooding. As with all IOM activities in the field of natural disaster management, DRR projects are implemented in close collaboration with ANDMA. In 2014, in addition to continued light engineering works IOM will develop community-based emergency preparedness measures including strengthening ANDMA's capacity.

Partner: ANDMA

Sector 10: Counter-trafficking and protection of vulnerable migrants

Human trafficking is already recognized as a problem in Afghanistan – especially internally for the purposes of forced labour and prostitution. Children and youth in large, impoverished families are particularly at risk, especially when the family is in debt. Migration and displacement further exacerbate vulnerabilities.

IOM's counter-trafficking strategy currently focuses on prevention and protection. At present, IOM provides support to the only four safe houses available nationwide which it established in Kabul, Herat, Jalalabad and Kunduz. These shelters have housed some 700 victims since 2008. However, despite the fact that MoLSAMD has taken over the official ownership of these four shelters from IOM in 2011, the Ministry has not yet established the required capacity in terms of human and financial resources to operate shelters on their own. IOM also continues to play an important protection role through its referral system as well as building the capacity of relevant government counterparts. The latter includes advice and support to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) legislation department on the editing of the trafficking law and policy and their implementation.

IOM's continued technical support is necessary to enhance the capacity of the relevant Afghan Government authorities and NGOs and civil society both to prevent trafficking and protect victims. Government counterparts have also requested more training especially for law enforcement and judiciary. One critical area for expansion will be increased awareness raising activities through information, education and communication (IEC) materials and community level activities.

Partners: MoJ, MoLSAMD, Ministry of Interior (MoI), Ministry of Woman Affairs (MoWA), NGOs

Sector 11: Technical assistance for humanitarian border management

Technical assistance for humanitarian border management is a key area of support to the government especially in light of the Afghanistan National Security Force (ANSF) taking over full responsibility for the country's security. Currently there is a critical need for technical assistance in border management in order to fight trafficking and smuggling of persons and protect the rights and well-being of victims.

To date, IOM's technical assistance in border management has focused on enhancing the capacity of border officials while providing the necessary equipment for them to effectively carry out their duties. This has included training in the field of document examination. IOM has also helped the Afghan government in rolling out machine readable passports and visas.

In 2014 IOM will continue to support the government with a number of immigration and border management capacity building initiatives including in the field of humanitarian border management. At the current time IOM is already implementing such a project on the border with Tajikistan incorporating training of both Tajik and Afghan border officials.

Partners: MoI

Sector 13: Diaspora and human resource mobilization

IOM has already had considerable success in mobilizing the Afghan diaspora to support development and reconstruction, and in the past decade about 1,000 Afghan experts have returned either temporarily or permanently to Afghanistan. There is a long-term strategic need for qualified Afghans to participate in the on-going reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in the country. This is something which IOM is doing on a programmatic basis, mainly with supporting the return of qualified Afghan nationals (RQA) currently in Iran and the Netherlands and other European countries.

IOM has been focusing on placing experienced individuals mainly in public administration sectors in Afghanistan that are still recovering from the period of conflict that lasted 23 years. While great strides have been made in the public sector since 2001, there still remain considerable capacity building needs. However, in light of the existing 'youth bulge' mentioned in Section 4.4, there will be an increased need to shift the focus of RQA activities on training and building the capacity of the emerging generation of young Afghans. The programme can enhance multifaceted models that enable diaspora members to invest their skills and resources back into their home countries. IOM together with public and private sector partners will identify and prioritize key sectors that can be considered crucial to human development particularly youth and can benefit from diaspora resource mobilization.

Partners: MoRR and other Ministries, public

Sector 14: Migration policy and legislation support

There is a clear need for Afghanistan to develop a coherent and effective legal and policy framework for migration. Whatever the outcomes of the transitions in 2014, mobility will remain an important aspect of the Afghan economy and society and as such will necessitate long-term efforts especially in the area of labour migration and urban migration. IOM is currently involved in the development of a Return Migration Policy Development Strategy for MoRR.

More recently, IOM has partnered up with ILO to develop a national labour migration policy for MoLSAMD, which is foreseen

to go parliament for approval in early 2014. Once this policy and an action plan are developed and endorsed, IOM will work closely with MoLSAMD on its implementation with the goal of ensuring both a sound mechanism for meeting domestic labour demand and a more coordinated and effective mechanism to support Afghans migrating to work abroad.

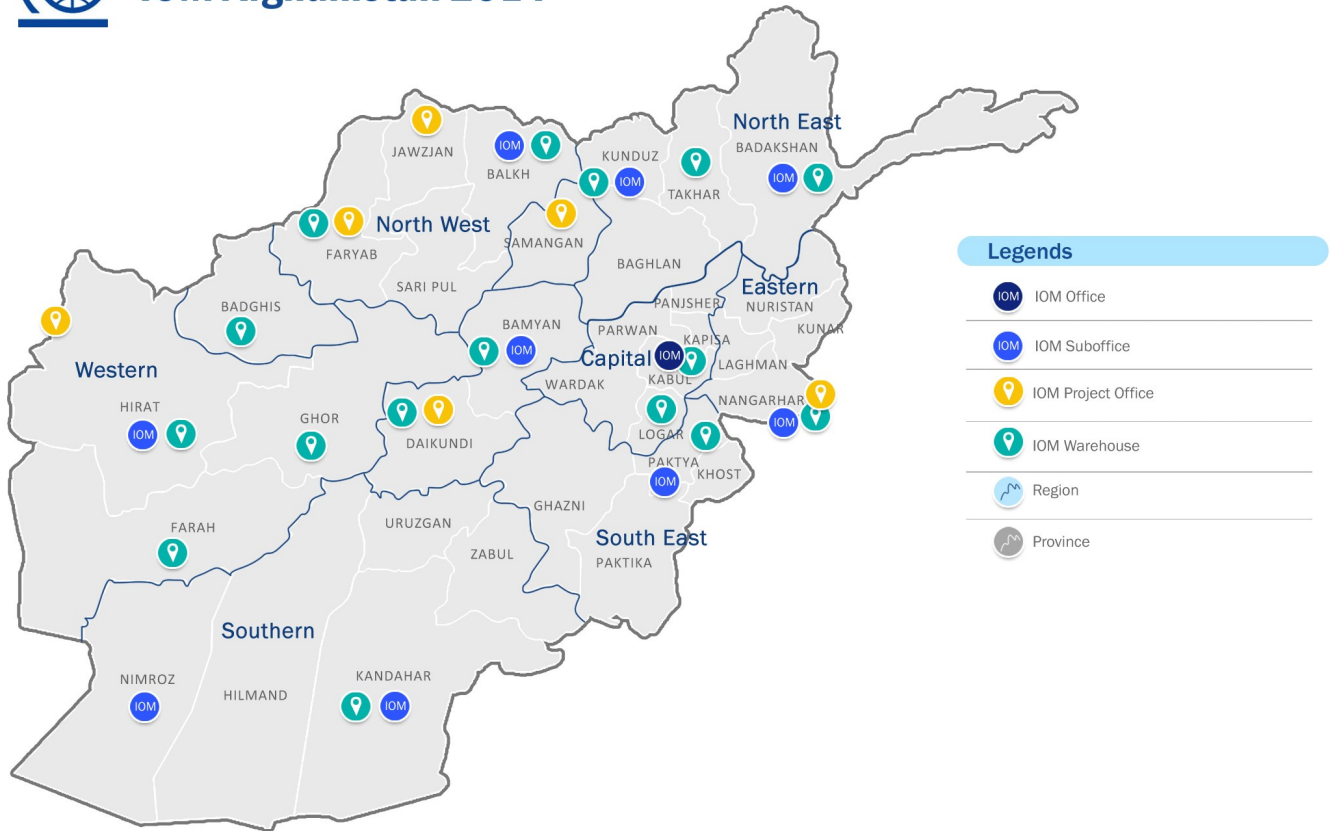
A pressing priority in the short term will be to work with the government, UNHCR and other partners to support implementation of its recently endorsed national IDP policy. In the longer term, IOM will engage its tools and expertise in supporting measures to address ongoing urban displacement, especially in light of IOM's upcoming World Migration Report 2015: Migrants and Cities.

Partners: MoRR, MoLSAMD, municipalities

ANNEX 2: IOM PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN



IOM Afghanistan 2014





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