



UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS IN PAKISTAN

IOM's Return Intentions Survey in
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province

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FOREWORD

Undocumented Afghan nationals in Pakistan face an uncertain future. Since 2016, socio-political developments on both sides of the border have prompted a surge in the number of undocumented migrants returning to Afghanistan. All too often, their experience is traumatic. Many Afghans, both undocumented and registered, have lived in Pakistan all of their lives. When they return, they leave behind their homes and livelihoods, often incurring major debts to finance their journeys – yet most have nothing to “go back to”.

While registered Afghan refugees are afforded protection by the Government of Pakistan (GoP), undocumented Afghans tend to fall through the cracks. With stricter regulations affecting illegal migrants, they worry about the viability of their future stay in Pakistan. Most toil in poverty, with little or no education, without access to essential public services and with few prospects for improving their lives.

This report heralds a new drive to support the safe, humane and dignified voluntary return of undocumented Afghan nationals. It presents the findings of the International Migration Organization’s **Return Intentions Survey (RIS)**, the first comprehensive survey that charts undocumented Afghans’ profiles, vulnerabilities, return intentions and – most crucially – their needs and concerns. The fact that information on undocumented Afghans has been sorely lacking is what makes this survey so important.

The publication of this report is timely, as the outflow of Afghans from Pakistan is projected to rise in the coming years. By shedding light on their vulnerabilities, intentions and needs – both in Pakistan and Afghanistan – this report offers an evidence-base to inform effective programming.

Safety and survival are the twin concerns which loom large across the survey – undocumented Afghans’ needs and intentions are largely driven by a concern for securing their economic livelihoods and keeping their families’ safe from conflict and instability. These concerns must be at the heart of our efforts to ensure that undocumented Afghans do not fall prey to destitution or desperation, to aid their dignified return and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan, and to devise solutions for those who choose to remain in Pakistan.

Davide Terzi
Chief of Mission, IOM Pakistan

ACRONYMS

ACC	Afghan Citizen Card	NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority
CAR	Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees	PAK	Pakistan Administered Kashmir
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas	PoR	Proof of Registration Card
FDG	Focus Group Discussion	PKR	Pakistani Rupee
GoA	Government of Afghanistan	RIS	Return Intentions Survey
GoP	Government of Pakistan	UN	United Nations
HH	Households	UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
IOM	International Organization for Migration	USD	United States Dollar
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa		

1 INTRODUCTION



1.1 Context

“PAKISTAN HAS BEEN HOST TO MILLIONS OF AFGHANS FOR OVER 30 YEARS. IT IS IMPERATIVE TO DEVISE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMMES THAT FACILITATE RETURNS, CREATE VIABLE OPTIONS FOR THOSE WHO DECIDE TO STAY, AND SUPPORT PAKISTANI HOST COMMUNITIES. IOM IS FULLY COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING TAILORED SOLUTIONS FOR UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS IN PAKISTAN.”

– Davide Terzi, Chief of Mission, IOM Pakistan¹

Who are the ‘undocumented Afghans’ living in Pakistan?

Issued with Proof of Registration (PoR) cards, **registered refugees** enjoy de facto protection from *refoulement*, legal temporary residence, access to basic services and freedom of movement in Pakistan. Afghans who are not registered, however, are subject to the strict provisions of the Foreigners Act (1946).² Despite three major registration drives since 2006 – which issued PoR cards to millions – scores of households were unable to navigate the registration process.³ Declared ‘**undocumented migrants**’, they live in fear of arrest or deportation, while being unable to access essential services like education and health care.⁴ Without recourse to decent work, they are confined to informal work arrangements that leave them rife for exploitation.

Pakistan’s *Comprehensive Policy on the Repatriation and Management of Afghans*, approved in February 2017, offers a measure of respite. In addition to extending the validity of PoR cards until the end of 2017, it aims to register all undocumented Afghans. Those registered under this scheme will receive Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs), with legal protection from arbitrary arrest, detention or deportation. These AC Cards will allow them to remain in Pakistan until they can be issued with documents, such as passports, by the Afghan Government. The initiative offers relief for many families, some of whose members are registered refugees, while others have no legal status.⁵

Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghans fleeing conflict and instability since the onset of the Soviet-Afghan war. Alongside 1.3 million registered Afghan refugees – the largest protracted refugee population in the world – an estimated **600,000 - 700,000 undocumented Afghan nationals** currently live in Pakistan,⁶ although anecdotal evidence suggests that the actual number may be much higher. They are particularly concentrated in areas along the 2,430km porous border between the two countries, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Balochistan.

Until 2015, the number of Afghans in Pakistan exceeded 3 million⁷ – 1.6 million registered refugees and 1.5 million undocumented migrants – before a plethora of socio-political, economic and security developments prompted a surge in the spontaneous return of Afghan nationals. The “push” and “pull factors” driving this spike include stricter border controls, stricter regulations affecting undocumented migrants, growing uncertainty over the viability of their future stay in Pakistan, perceived deterioration of long-standing relations within host communities, and promises of land and shelter by the Government of Afghanistan (GoA). The plight of Afghan nationals in Pakistan has become particularly concerning in the wake of a recent security crackdown, following a militant attack on Peshawar’s Army Public School in December 2014.

1 IOM (2017) *Australia Backs UN Migration Agency Assistance to Undocumented Afghans in Pakistan*. IOM Press Release, 23 June 2017. Islamabad: IOM Pakistan. <https://www.iom.int/news/australia-backs-un-migration-agency-assistance-undocumented-afghans-pakistan>

2 UNHCR (2014) *UNHCR Pakistan Fact Sheet*. Islamabad: UNHCR. <http://unhcrpk.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/UNHCR-Pakistan-Fact-Sheet-April-2014.pdf>

3 IOM’s Return Intentions Survey (RIS) found that most of the undocumented Afghans surveyed had unsuccessfully attempted to have themselves and their families registered. Many were unable to understand long, complex registration processes; faced technical glitches; or lacked physical access to registration sites. Challenges were particularly notable among vulnerable groups, such as women headed households.

4 UNHCR (2007) *Pakistan Press Release*, February 2007. Islamabad: UNHCR.

5 Khan, S. (2017) *Afghans dream of stepping out of the shadows with Pakistan ID scheme*. UNHCR Press Release, 21 July 2017. Peshawar: UNHCR. <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2017/7/5971efd54/afghans-dream-stepping-shadows-pakistan-id-scheme.html>

6 Daily Times (2016) *KP stopped from taking any action against Afghan refugees*. Daily Times, 15 November 2016. Peshawar: Daily Times. <http://dailytimes.com.pk/khyber-pakhtunkhwa/15-Nov-16/kp-stopped-from-taking-any-action-against-afghan-refugees>; Khan, Z. (2012) *Three million Afghans to be expelled by December*. Express Tribune, 18 July 2018. Islamabad: Express Tribune. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/409809/three-million-afghans-to-be-expelled-by-december/>

In 2016 alone, 381,275 refugees and over an estimated 248,054 undocumented migrants (39% of the total figure) returned to Afghanistan via Torkham and Chaman⁸ – the only remaining official border crossings between the countries. By contrast, the figure for 2015 was far lower – an estimated 150,000. This unprecedented increase in 2016 is a key reason that the recent surge in arrivals has turned into a humanitarian crisis, far surpassing the planning figures for the 2016 *Humanitarian Response Plans for Pakistan and Afghanistan*.

The Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR) predicts that a further 0.7 million people, both refugees and undocumented migrants, will cross the border into Afghanistan over the next two years. An estimated 60,473 Afghans have already returned from Pakistan this year, according to flow monitoring data collected between March and September, 2017.⁹ Over the same period (1 January – 16 September), some 49,816 registered Afghan refugees also returned from Pakistan.¹⁰ Since the repatriation of refugees commenced in March, it is useful to compare the figures for returning refugees and undocumented migrants between March and September, which reveals that caseloads are comparable. This mass influx will have significant implications for Afghanistan's fragile humanitarian context.

“IN THE PAST TWO YEARS THE LIVES OF VULNERABLE AFGHANS HAVE CONTINUED TO BECOME MORE AND MORE PRECARIOUS WITH SPIRALING LEVELS OF CONFLICT AND GROWING PRESSURE ON LOCAL HOST COMMUNITIES AS INFLUXES OF RETURNEES AND [INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS] (IDPS) STRETCH THEIR RESILIENCY.”

– Laura Thompson,
Deputy Director General, IOM¹¹

The vulnerabilities faced by undocumented Afghans are manifold, both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. IOM estimates that 40% of the returning population is **highly vulnerable**. An estimated 70% of returnees are women and children.¹² Their vulnerability is especially acute, as is that of orphans, the elderly, persons with disabilities, people with special health needs, those with low levels of education, and those who labour under the weight of multidimensional poverty. Many Afghans are forced to leave their homes, livelihoods and assets behind, making the need for humanitarian assistance and reallocation support all the more urgent.

Most of those returning have lived outside of Afghanistan for decades, while many have lived in Pakistan all their lives – in fact, the majority (72%) are second or third generation refugees or migrants, born in Pakistan.¹³ As they have never lived in Afghanistan, they have nothing to “return to” in a country already struggling with widespread conflict and displacement. Due to their undocumented status, most return without any pre-departure support, including medical, in-kind or transport assistance. Ineligible for any systematic aid, including cash assistance, they enter Afghanistan with limited human capital and, often, major debt.¹⁴ For instance, undocumented migrants do not receive repatriation cash grants of USD 200 - 400 per person, offered by UNHCR to registered returnees. This lack of access can prompt undocumented families to assume substantial financial burdens, including debts, to finance a return journey that may cost anywhere between PKR 5,000 - 95,000 (USD 47 - 900) – a figure which varies widely depending on how far these households travel.¹⁵ Families who have spent decades in Pakistan find it increasingly difficult to repatriate without being able to sell their assets. The “seed money” from such sales is sorely needed for starting new lives in Afghanistan.¹⁶

7 BBC (2016) *The reverse exodus of Pakistan's Afghan refugees*. BBC, 28 August 2016. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37163857>

8 UNHCR (2016) *Pakistan Voluntary Repatriation Update: November 2016*. Islamabad: UNHCR. Available: http://unhcrpk.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/VolRep_Summary_20161101_v1.pdf; IOM Afghanistan (2016) *Return of Undocumented Afghans from Pakistan and Iran: 2016 Overview*. Kabul: IOM Afghanistan. Available: https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reports/iom_afghanistan_-_return_of_undocumented_afghans_from_pakistan_and_iran_-_2016_overview.pdf

9 IOM (2017) *Flow Monitoring - Spontaneous Returns of Undocumented Afghans from Pakistan, 24th-30th Sep 2017*. Islamabad: IOM Pakistan. Available: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation_reports/file/Afghanistan_SR_20170924-30.pdf

10 OCHA (2017) *Pakistan: Afghan Refugees and Undocumented Afghans Repatriation (10 - 16 September 2017)*. Islamabad: OCHA. Available: https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/afghan_returns_20170920_0.pdf

11 IOM (2017) *IOM Transit Center on Pakistan Border Expands to Cope with Influx of Afghan Returnees*. Press Release, 21 May 2017. Kabul: IOM Afghanistan. <https://afghanistan.iom.int/press-releases/iom-transit-center-pakistan-border-expands-cope-influx-afghan-returnees>

12 UN Pakistan (2017) *Pakistan Common Country Assessment 2016: An SDG Baseline Analysis*. Islamabad: UN Pakistan.

13 UN Pakistan (2017) *Pakistan Common Country Assessment 2016: Meta Analysis*. Islamabad: UN Pakistan.

14 IOM (2017) *Socio-Economic Survey of Undocumented Afghans, February 2017*. Kabul: IOM Afghanistan.

15 Data was collected on average transportation costs from over 2,500 Afghans during IOM's flow monitoring exercises in January-February, 2017. These costs may considerably increase on a case-by-case basis, especially since 97% of surveyed cases were returning to Nangarhar, Kabul and Laghman, which lie directly on the border.

16 UN Pakistan (2017) *Pakistan Common Country Assessment 2016: Meta Analysis*. Islamabad: UN Pakistan.

Whether they return to Afghanistan or seek to stay in Pakistan, undocumented Afghans will need support to prevent them from falling prey to destitution, both on arrival, as they seek to reintegrate, or if they choose to obtain Pakistani visas and move back to Pakistan. If such assistance is to make a real difference, it must cater to the specific, varied needs, concerns and priorities of women and men, girls and boys, the elderly, persons with disabilities and those with other special needs.

Yet, there are significant **gaps in information** on undocumented Afghans – no reliable mapping of their areas of origin or their profiles exists, nor does detailed age and sex disaggregated data, information on their return intentions, the obstacles they face, or their most pressing needs. IOM Pakistan’s Return Intentions Survey (RIS), discussed in this report, aims to fill this gap.

TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS FOR UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS IN PAKISTAN



1.2 Survey Background

IOM Pakistan's 2017 **Return Intentions Survey (RIS)** provides comprehensive data on the profiles, vulnerabilities, return intentions and critical needs of undocumented Afghan nationals living in Pakistan. This will aid the returns process by offering information that could help predict the flow of returns to Afghanistan. Coupled with IOM's on-going flow monitoring at key border crossings, this survey provides an evidence-base to inform effective humanitarian and development programming that facilitates the coordinated, voluntary and dignified return of undocumented Afghans from Pakistan.

The RIS exercise collected in-depth information from 817 households in the 10 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the highest population density of undocumented Afghans. This large-scale survey in July-August 2017 was complemented by qualitative data gathered via 42 focus group discussions (FGDs) with 451 participants.

Conducted by IOM Pakistan with the support of the Pakistan Humanitarian Pool Fund's (PHPF) reserve allocation, the survey fulfills a key aim of IOM's *Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Response to Undocumented Afghan Returns in Pakistan* project – namely to support the returns process and strengthen humanitarian response by providing reliable information on the needs and vulnerabilities of undocumented Afghan migrants to the Government of Pakistan, humanitarian stakeholders and returning communities. This data, in turn, will guide informed decision-making on how best to meet their needs.

1.2.1 Survey Methodology

The survey's methodological approach was highly participatory, placing an emphasis on local ownership by engaging local enumerators who worked hand in hand with IOM-led teams. Liaising with community networks on the ground helped to accurately determine undocumented Afghans' profiles, needs and vulnerabilities, which will feed into reliable projections of returning caseloads.

The process prioritised close collaboration with key partners, including the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON); the Chief Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees (CCAR) in Islamabad and the Commissionerate's Office in KP; the Government of KP; fellow UN agencies, especially UNHCR Pakistan; and stakeholders in Afghanistan vis-à-vis IOM Afghanistan, such as the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MORR).

The roll-out of the Return Intentions Survey was built upon lessons learned during a pilot exercise, undertaken in two of KP's larger districts – Peshawar and Haripur – during February and March, 2017. The pilot involved a small household sample of 42 households (279 respondents) and four complimentary FGDs. This baseline assessment allowed IOM to develop relevant indicators, fine tune the survey's methodology, validate methods and tools, and obtain an initial snapshot of results to inform the overall survey.

Drawing on existing data, local knowledge and the long-standing experience of IOM and its partners, every effort was made to ensure that respondents constituted a representative sample of the undocumented Afghan population. A semi-random sample of over 817 households in KP was selected through a comprehensive scoping exercise that pinpointed relevant localities to be surveyed. As IOM's pilot exercise revealed that undocumented Afghans tend to live in the same communities as registered refugees, the RIS did not limit its sampling to camps and refugee villages (RVs). Instead, it also targeted host communities in residential areas to minimise bias.

Sex disaggregated data was a priority for the survey, which targeted undocumented Afghan heads of household – both women and men – as well as undocumented women and men via focus group discussions. In line with IOM's ethical standards and data confidentiality principles, the interviews were guided by a respect for respondents' right to privacy. All participants were made aware of the survey's objectives and consented to their data being used anonymously for research purposes.

SURVEY **OBJECTIVES**

OFFER A SNAPSHOT OF THE SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF UNDOCUMENTED AFGHAN NATIONALS LIVING IN PAKISTAN

ENHANCE UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE VULNERABILITIES, NEEDS & RETURN INTENTIONS OF UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS

PROVIDE A MUCH-NEEDED BASELINE FOR FUTURE INTERVENTIONS TO SUPPORT UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS

817 SURVEY RESPONDENTS

13% WOMEN
87% MEN

451 FDG PARTICIPANTS

45.4% WOMEN
54.6% MEN

SURVEY **RESPONDENTS**

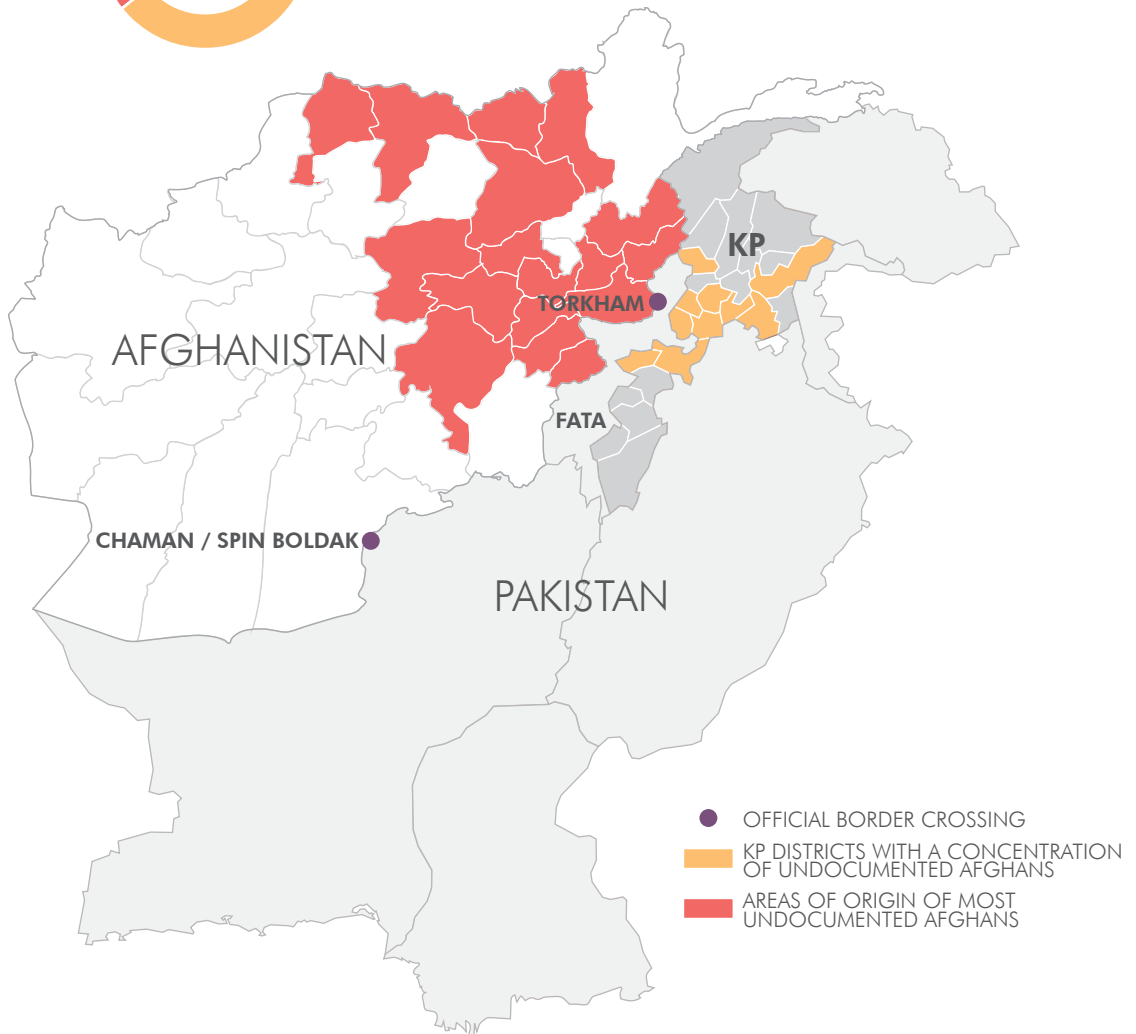


23% IN AFGHANISTAN

48% WOMEN
52% MEN

77% IN PAKISTAN

40% WOMEN
60% MEN



2 KEY FINDINGS

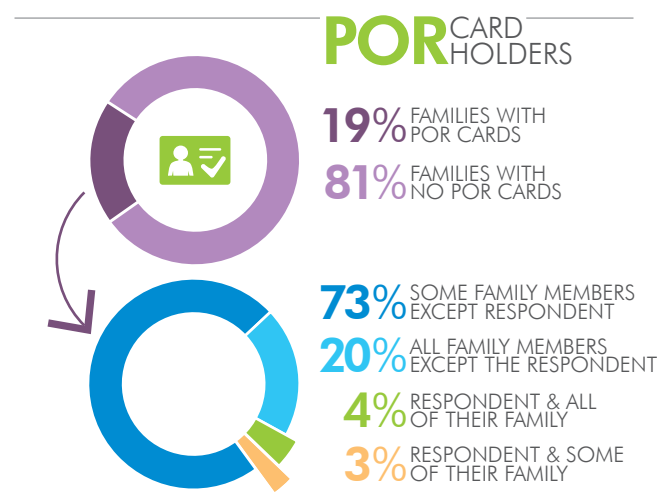
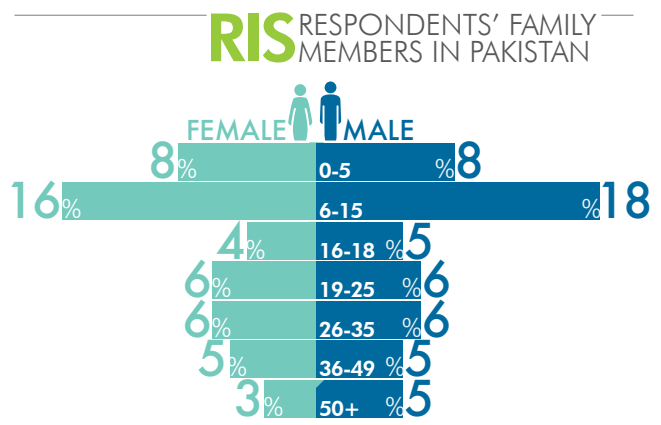
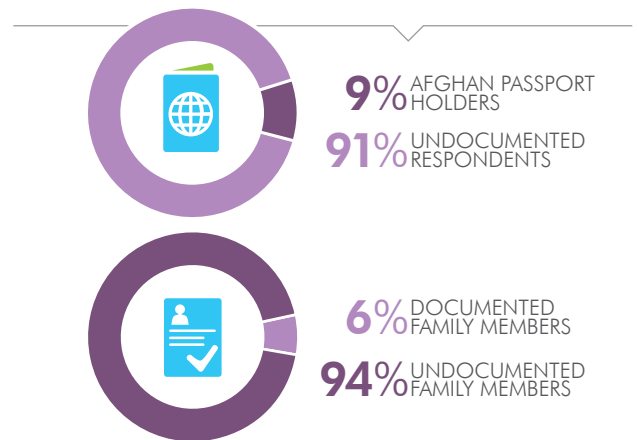


2.1 Profile of Respondents

IOM Pakistan’s **Return Intentions Survey** involved interviews with 817 undocumented Afghan heads of household, 87% of whom are men and 13% are women. Over one-third reside in Peshawar, KP’s capital and largest city. Far more men identified as heads of households than women, reflected in the low proportion (4.65%) of female headed-households engaged during the survey. Most female respondents (59.18%) identified as the spouse of a head of household. In addition to the household-level survey, 42 focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted as part of the RIS exercise. These involved 451 participants in KP, representing 204 families comprising 1,681 people – 54.6% of whom are men and 45.4% are women.

Survey respondents represent 5,863 family members in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, signifying that the average family size among the survey sample is 8. Over three quarters of these family members (77%, or 4,529 people) **reside in Pakistan**. The proportion of male family members in Pakistan (52%) is slightly higher than that of female family members (48%). Although a nearly 50/50 ratio is evident across most age groups, there are more boys between the ages of 6 and 18 (23%) than girls (20%), and more men (5%) than women (3%) over the age of 50. Over half (59%) of the surveyed family members in Pakistan are under the age of 18 (28% are girls and 31% are boys).¹⁷ Nearly three quarters (71%) are under the age of 25¹⁸ and the overwhelming majority (81%) are under the age of 35. This indicates an extremely **high proportion of young people, particularly young men**, among the undocumented Afghan population in Pakistan.

Of those interviewed, 71 respondents (9%) are Afghan passport holders. As such, the RIS data analysis focused on the remaining 746 respondents (91% of those interviewed), all of whom are considered “undocumented” as they do not have an Afghan passport and either have never been issued a Proof of Registration (PoR) card in Pakistan, or have an expired PoR card issued in 2010 or earlier.



¹⁷ Similar trends are evident in recent flow monitoring dashboards, which record 63-64% of undocumented Afghans as being under 18.
¹⁸ The UN defines “youth” as persons between the ages of 15 and 24. For more information, see <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/>

91% of surveyed family members are considered officially “undocumented”. The majority of respondents (81%) reported that neither they, nor any of their family members, are PoR card holders. Of the remaining 19%, only in 4% of cases (or 0.76% of the total households surveyed) did the respondents and all of their family members hold PoR cards. This finding is significant, as it indicates that an estimated one fifth of undocumented Afghans (19%) belong to **families whose members’ legal status differs greatly** – while one family member may be a registered refugee, others are “undocumented”. Some family members, for instance, may be married to Pakistanis and hold Pakistani citizenship themselves.

Most respondents (78%) had never taken part in a similar survey. Of the 22% who had, 15% did so in the past year, 7% within the past two years and 6 % over two years ago. Recent surveys in which they participated were undertaken by CAR (6%), specifically their initiative to list undocumented Afghans through community elders or “malaks”; UNHCR (5%); NADRA (2%), both during registration drives and the recent national census; IOM (1%); and the NGO Secours Islamique France (SIF) (1%), which conducted a survey on the distribution of shelter and food. While the locations in which surveys took place were diverse, Peshawar was most commonly listed (8%).

KP DISTRICTS WITH HIGHEST PREVALENCE OF UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS

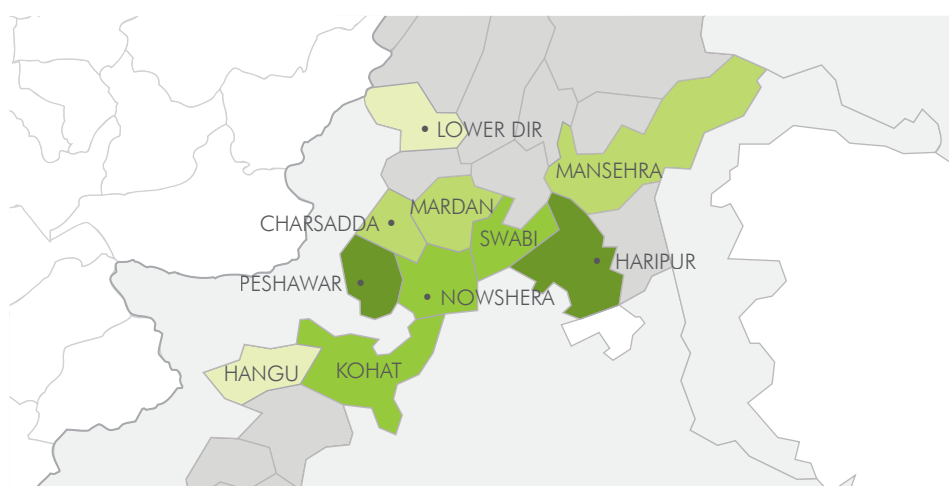


TABLE 1: RETURN INTENTIONS SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY DISTRICT

KP DISTRICT	TOTAL NO. OF UNDOCUMENTED AFGHAN FAMILIES ¹⁹	TOTAL NO. OF UNDOCUMENTED AFGHAN INDIVIDUALS	% OF TOTAL UNDOCUMENTED AFGHAN POPULATION	TOTAL NO. OF RIS RESPONDENTS	% OF TOTAL RIS RESPONDENTS	RIS RESPONDENTS ANALYSED (UNDOCUMENTE)	% OF TOTAL RIS RESPONDENTS ANALYSED
PESHAWAR	31,600	170,000	30%	273	33.42%	268	35.92%
HARIPUR	14,000	83,000	15%	102	12.49%	73	9.79%
NOWSHERA	9,800	49,000	9%	76	9.3%	72	9.65%
SWABI	9,000	52,000	9%	58	7.1%	32	4.29%
KOHAT	8,800	53,000	9%	87	10.65%	83	11.13%
MANSEHRA	6,700	40,000	7%	33	4.04%	33	4.42%
MARDAN	5,300	27,000	5%	52	6.37%	52	6.97%
CHARSADDA	5,000	25,000	4%	46	5.63%	45	6.03%
LOWER DIR	3,600	24,000	4%	46	5.63%	44	5.90%
HANGU	2,600	45,700	8%	44	5.39%	44	5.90%
TOTAL	96,400	568,700	100%	817	100%	746	100%

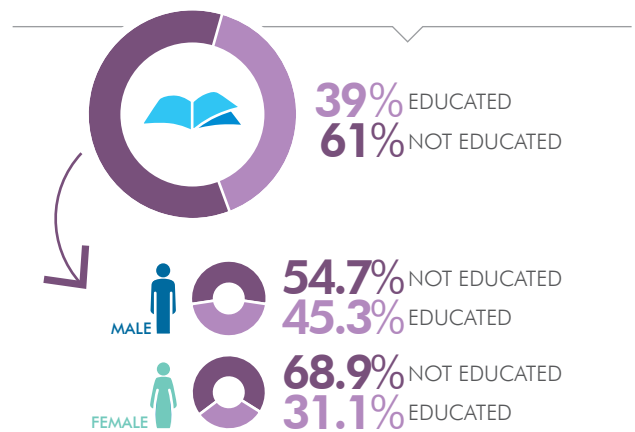
19 IOM 2017 estimate.

The RIS exercise found **high rates of illiteracy** among undocumented Afghans in Pakistan. 61% of respondents are illiterate or have received no formal education. Literacy rates vary for men and women. Whereas 45.3% of the men surveyed are literate, this falls to only 31.1% among women. These findings were echoed in the focus group discussions. Only 7 of the 251 FGD participants attended primary school, signifying that almost all (98.45%) are illiterate or lack a formal education.

While a number of FGD participants indicated that they are educating their sons or grandsons, or used the generic term “children”, no respondents explicitly mentioned girls’ education. All of the respondents, however, stated that they want support for their children’s education, citing the difficulties they face in attaining an education given their undocumented status and widespread poverty.

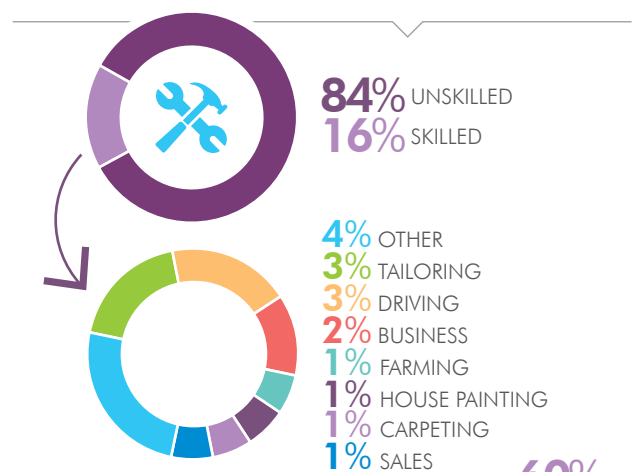
The survey data also demonstrates that most (84%) undocumented Afghan nationals are **unskilled workers**. This is significantly less than the proportion of unskilled workers among the registered refugee population (recorded as 51.71% in 2011²⁰), which reinforces the particular vulnerability, marginalisation and deprivation experienced by undocumented migrants. The remaining 17% of RIS family members surveyed have skills related to tailoring, driving, business, sales, farming, carpet weaving and selling, and house painting. Sources of income for undocumented Afghans, therefore, are predominantly tied to low skilled work, primarily daily wage labour. Similar findings emerged from the FGDs.

Notable **vulnerabilities** are apparent among the undocumented Afghan population. 6% of those surveyed – both respondents and their family members – were found to be highly vulnerable. 60% of these individuals are **chronically ill and in need of medical attention** (3.6% of the total number surveyed), 19% have **physical disabilities** (1.14% of the total) and 13% are **elderly**²¹ (0.78% of the total). Small proportions are vulnerable by virtue of mental illness, drug addiction, pregnancy, or their status as unaccompanied minors or single “unsupported” parents.

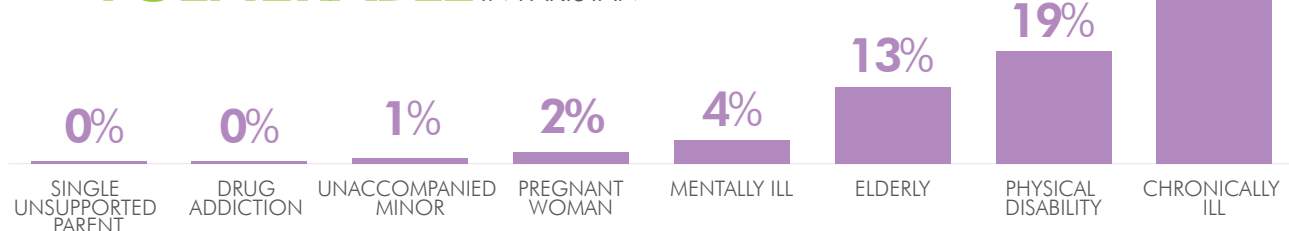


“THEY CAN’T STUDY. BECAUSE OF BEING UNDOCUMENTED, THEY CANNOT GET ADMISSION IN HIGH[-LEVEL] UNIVERSITIES OR INSTITUTES.”

- FGD respondent speaking of her grandson at the Zebabad Chakdara Camp in Lower Dir



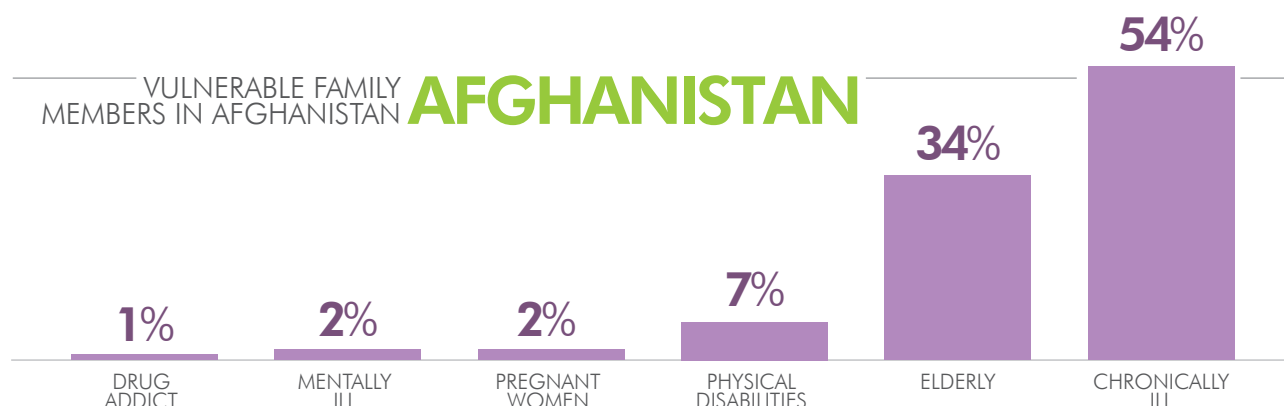
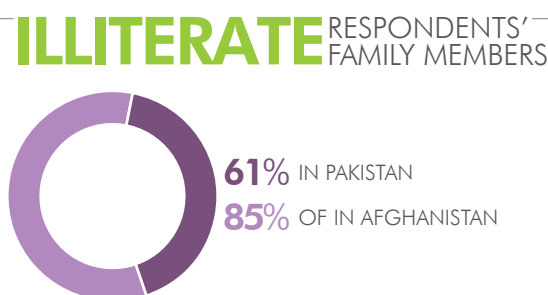
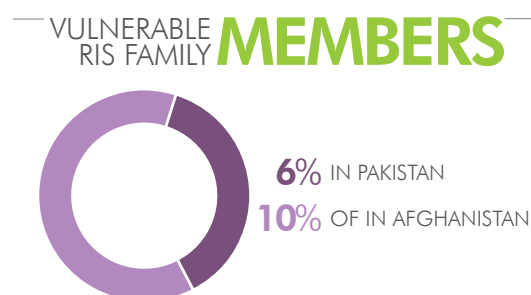
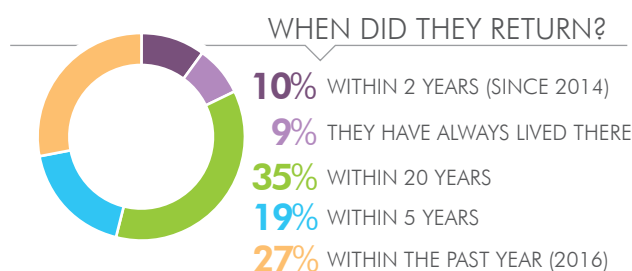
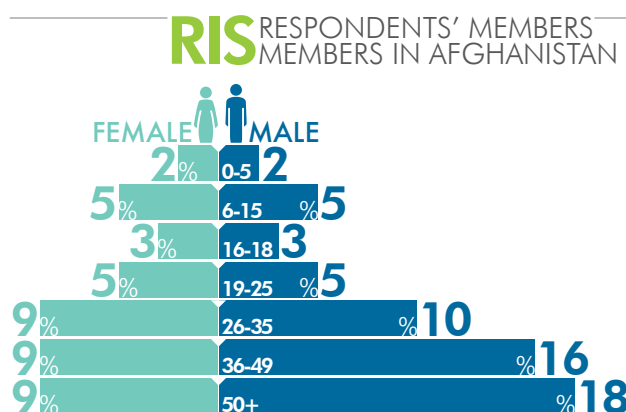
VULNERABLE FAMILY MEMBERS IN PAKISTAN



20 Government of Pakistan (GoP) and UNHCR (2012) Population Profiling, Verification and Response Survey of Afghans in Pakistan, 2011. Islamabad: GoP and UNHCR.

Respondents also provided information on their **family members in Afghanistan**. There is a lower ratio of women to men among these family members (40% vs. 60%), as well as even higher rates of illiteracy. Whereas 61% of those in Pakistan are illiterate, this rises to 85% among family members in Afghanistan (91% for women and 81.7% for men). While vulnerabilities in both countries are largely similar, a higher percentage of respondents' family members in Afghanistan are significantly vulnerable (10% vs. 6%). Specifically, there are more elderly persons among respondents' families in Afghanistan (3.4% of the total number surveyed).

In terms of legal status, 18% of respondents' family members in Afghanistan do not possess any identity documents – either passports or Afghan identity cards (*Tazkira*) – a far lower proportion than their relatives in Pakistan. While only 2.7% of these family members have valid passports, 74.6% possess *Tazkiras*. Some 9% of respondents reported that their family members have always lived in Afghanistan. Far more (91%) have returned from Pakistan – most within the past year (27%) or the past year 20 years (35%), and others in the past 5 years (19%) or the past 2 (10%). The spike in returns between last year and the past two years is in line with the overall surge in returns observed in 2016.



21 The UN defines the "elderly" as persons over the age of 60. For more information, see <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA-Report-Chapter1.pdf>

2.2 Displacement History

2.2.1 Departure from Afghanistan

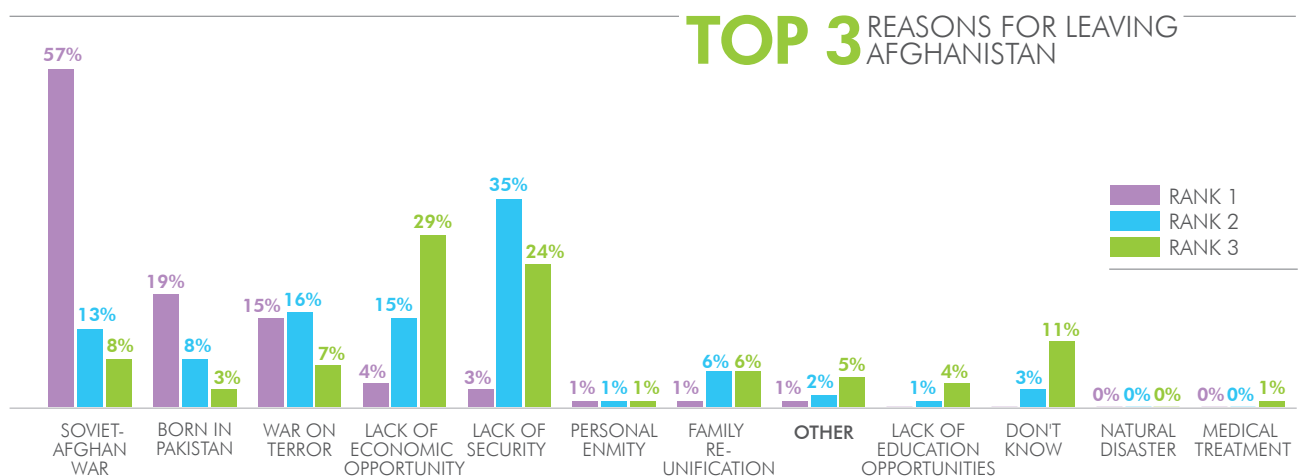
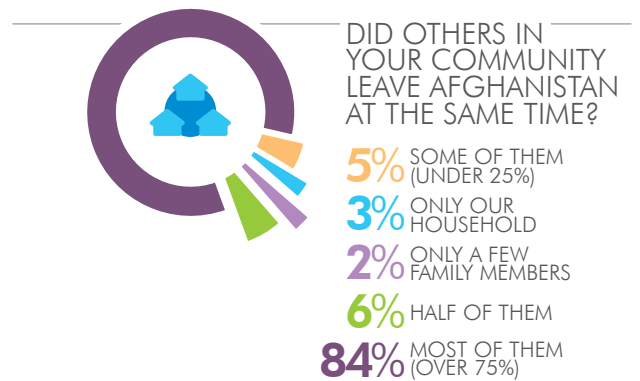
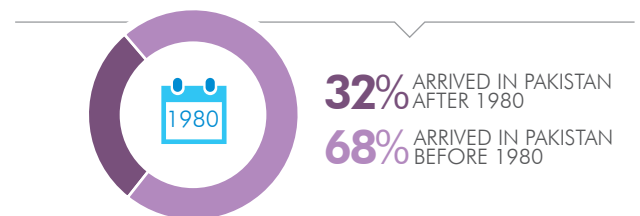
Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (68%) arrived in Pakistan in the year 1980, or later. The bulk of their family members (70%) arrived between 1978 and 1982, with arrivals peaking in 1980. Similarly, all of the FGD participants arrived between 1978 and 1987, the period which coincided with the major upheavals of the Afghan-Soviet war (1979-1989).

The impact of conflict on arrivals to Pakistan is reflected in participants' explanation of why they first came to the country. The Soviet-Afghan war is by far the most commonly cited reason, accounting for 57% of primary reasons for their move. The principle secondary reason (35% of "second ranked" responses) is the general lack of security in Afghanistan, while the most common third reason is a lack of economic opportunities (29%).

Overall, warfare is followed by the fact that many respondents were born in Pakistan (and therefore never "left" Afghanistan) and the war on terror. Far fewer respondents left for family reasons, due to a lack of educational opportunities, to seek medical treatment or due to natural disasters. These findings are echoed by the focus group discussions, wherein all of the participants listed the Afghan-Soviet War as the motive for their move to Pakistan. Only one FGD mentioned a lack of economic opportunities, another noted personal enmity, and two FGDs cited security concerns as drivers for their displacement from Afghanistan.

84% of survey respondents reported that their entire communities left Afghanistan at roughly the same time.

Approximately half of those surveyed (49.5%) are from the province of Nangarhar in eastern Afghanistan, including from its capital, Jalalabad. This makes Nangarhar by far the most common place of origin for RIS respondents, ostensibly due to its location on the border with Pakistan. It may also be significant that most residents of Nangarhar are Pashtuns and therefore share their linguistic and cultural background with the inhabitants of KP.

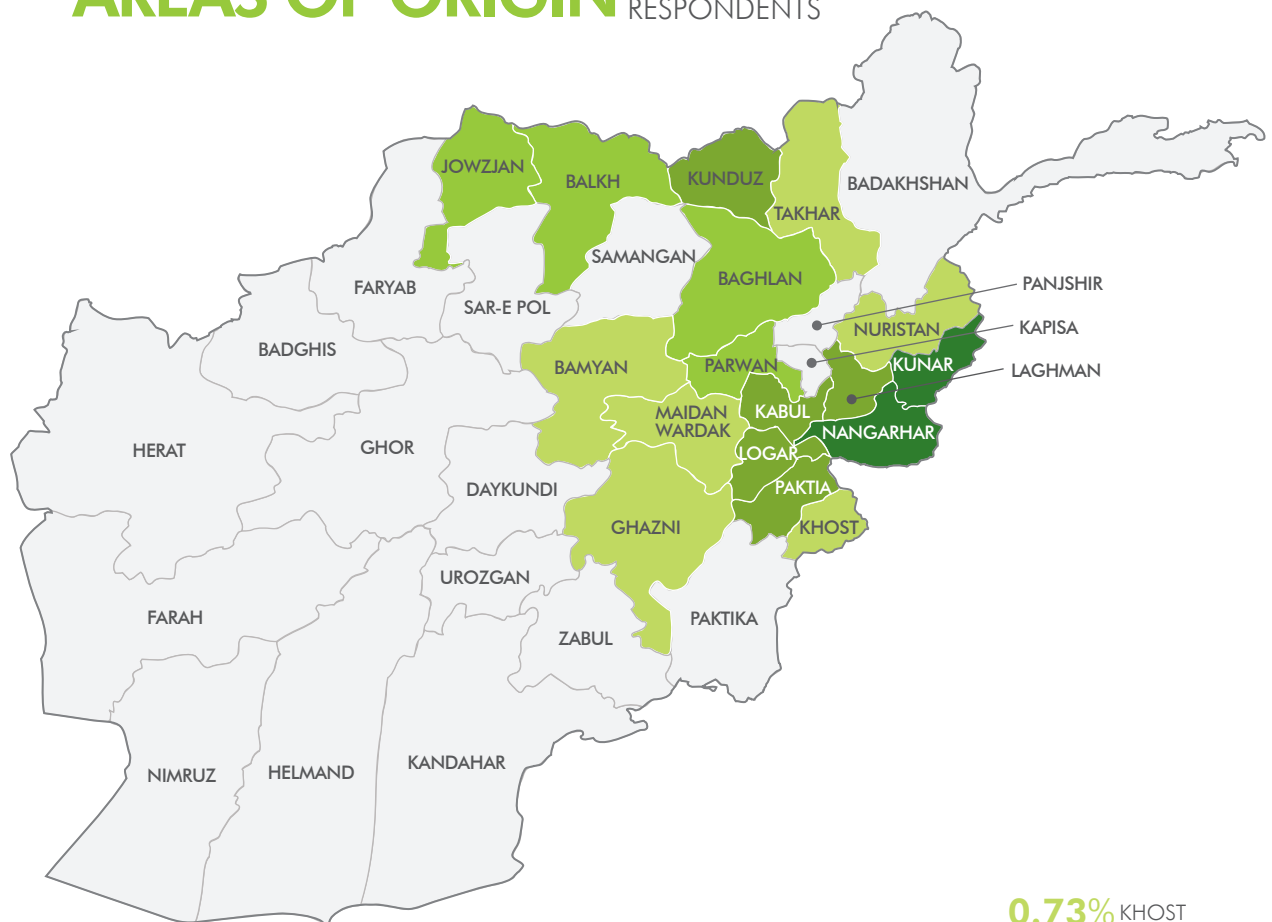


Places of origin are important to consider as respondents' return intentions suggest that many are likely to return to these areas (see section 2.4 below). This implies that the provinces which border Pakistan are most likely to be affected by a large-scale inflow of undocumented Afghans. For instance, the second greatest number of respondents (16.5%) hail from the province of Kunar in north-eastern Afghanistan, followed by the provinces of Kunduz (7.2%), Kabul (5.9%), Paktia (5.5%), Logar (4.4%) and Laghman (3.1%).

These trends highlight the need for significant planning for increased returns in the provinces of Nangarhar and Kunar, as well as Afghanistan's eastern provinces more generally. These **border provinces will require the greatest investment, support and services** – particularly in terms of job creation and other resettlement assistance – to meet the needs of returning Afghans.

Major population centres such as Jalalabad, Kunduz and Kabul, among others, are especially important sources of Afghans in Pakistan and must not be ignored. Similarly, while the provinces of Baghlan, Parwan, Jowzjan, Balkh, Khost and Ghazni are less frequently cited by RIS respondents, together they constitute the areas of origin for 6.7% of those surveyed. While the RIS offers no direct evidence of trends among undocumented Afghans based elsewhere in Pakistan, it would be logical and prudent to assume that they too are **likely to return to their areas of origin or to major cities**. As recommended elsewhere in this report, it is important to conduct a RIS survey at the Chaman border crossing in order to pinpoint data on areas of origin and return intentions among the considerable numbers of undocumented Afghans who live in Balochistan.

AREAS OF ORIGIN OF RIS RESPONDENTS



35.19% NANGARHAR
16.44% KUNAR
 HIGHEST PREVALENCE

7.01% KUNDUZ
6.41% PAKTIA
6.05% KABUL
3.75% LOGAR
 HIGH PREVALENCE

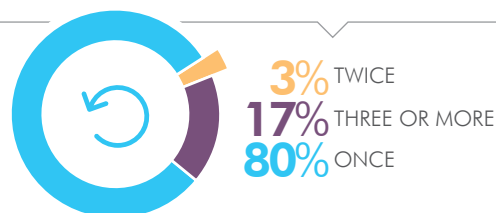
1.21% BALKH
1.21% PARWAN
1.09% JOWZJAN
1.33% BAGHLAN
 MEDIUM PREVALENCE

0.73% KHOST
0.12% TAKHAR
0.12% NURISTAN
0.12% WARDAK
0.12% BAMYAN
0.12% GHAZNI
 LOWER PREVALENCE

2.2.2 Displacement within Pakistan

Nearly a quarter (23.04%) of the survey respondents reported that they have been **displaced at some point within Pakistan**. In terms of the frequency of displacement, most of these individuals have been displaced once (80%). Far fewer have been displaced twice (4%) or three or more times (17%).

Roughly one-third of the respondents provided information on their first, second and third places of residence in Pakistan. Most of these individuals listed KP as the first place they had resided (80.5%, or 26% of the total survey sample), with far fewer respondents citing FATA (17.84%, or 5.76% of the total) or Karachi (1.66%, or 0.54% of the total). Similarly, KP was largely listed as respondents' second (91.73%, or 31.23% of the total) and third place of residence (96.5%, or 11% of the total). Nonetheless, a small number also mentioned Punjab as their second place of residence (6.7%, or 2.3% of the total). This indicates that most undocumented Afghans surveyed largely remained within KP, even if they had been displaced within the province.



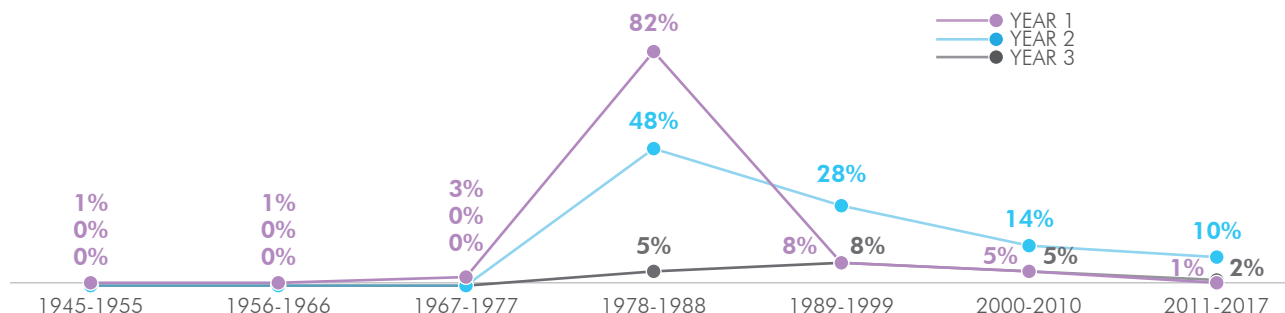
However, a strong trend of **inter-district displacement** is evident – 77% of those who have been displaced within Pakistan have been externally displaced and forced to move to other districts, rather than remaining within the same district (intra-district displacement).

Rates of and reasons for internal displacement in Pakistan have varied across different time periods. Between 1977 and 1989, a lack of economic opportunities, a lack of security and family reunification largely drove relocations from the respondents' first place of residence. In the past seven years (2011-2017), family reunification and employment concerns have been the biggest drivers.

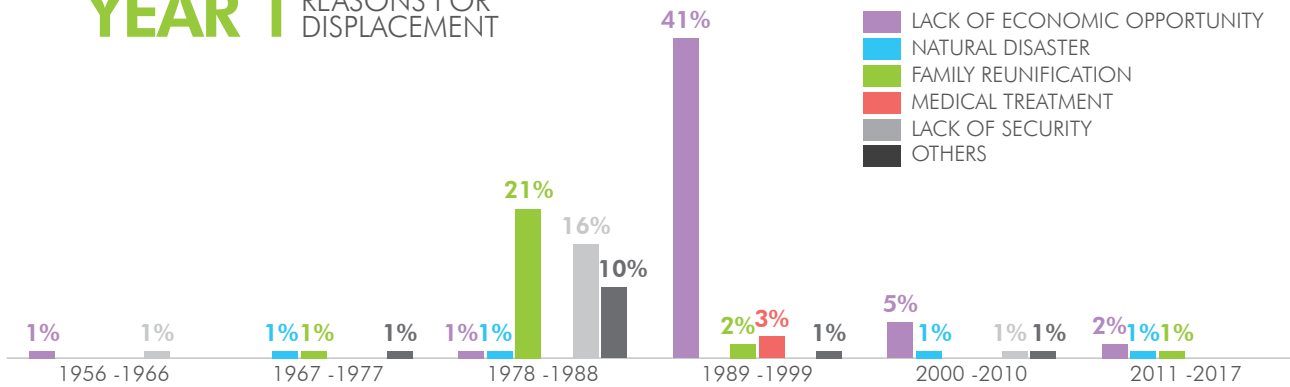
DISPLACEMENT IN PAKISTAN



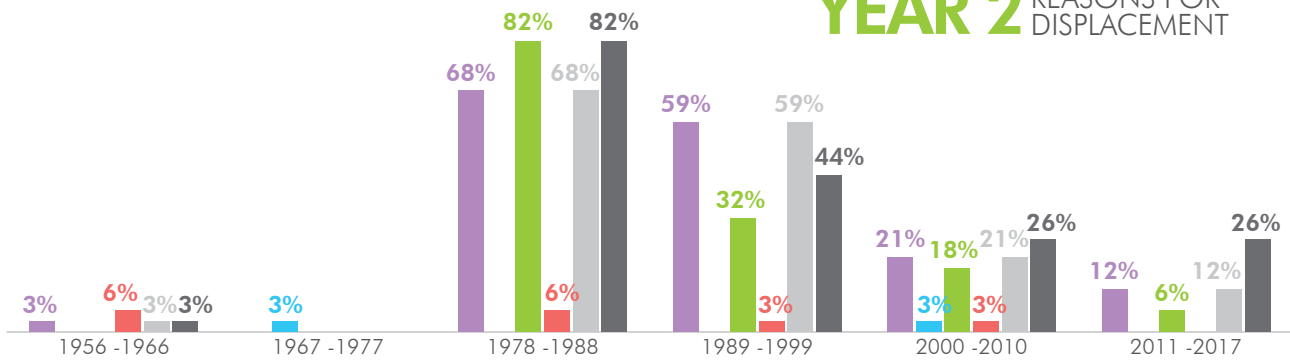
DISPLACEMENT IN PAKISTAN BY YEAR



YEAR 1 REASONS FOR DISPLACEMENT



YEAR 2 REASONS FOR DISPLACEMENT



HHS EXPERIENCES OF SHOCKS IN THE PAST 3 MONTHS

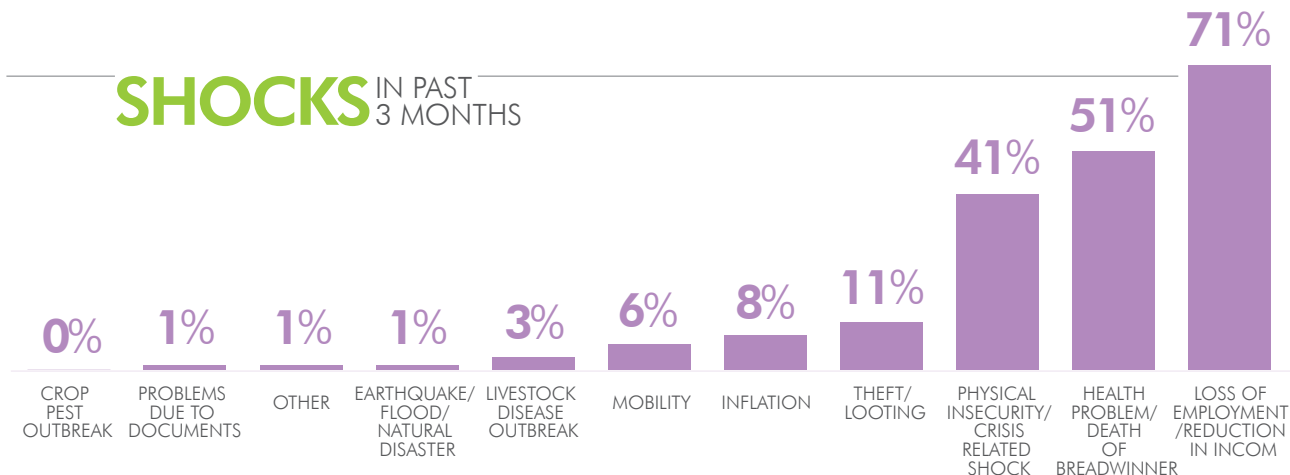


48% HHS EXPERIENCED SHOCKS
52% HHS EXPERIENCED NO SHOCKS

Reasons repeatedly cited by FGD participants for displacement within Pakistan included employment opportunities/financial reasons and family reunification/personal reasons. Causes mentioned less frequently include flooding, sectarian tensions, local pressure and a lack of aid.

During the three months prior to the survey (April-June, 2017) over half (52%) of the respondents did not experience major shocks. Of those who did, common challenges include the loss of employment (71%), illness or the death of the family breadwinner (51%) and physical or crisis-related insecurity (41%).

SHOCKS IN PAST 3 MONTHS



2.3 Current Status and Trends

2.3.1 Registration in Pakistan

As noted above, most respondents (81%) are not PoR card holders. 19% have some family members with PoR cards, and in only 4% of cases all members of a family, including respondents, have PoR cards.

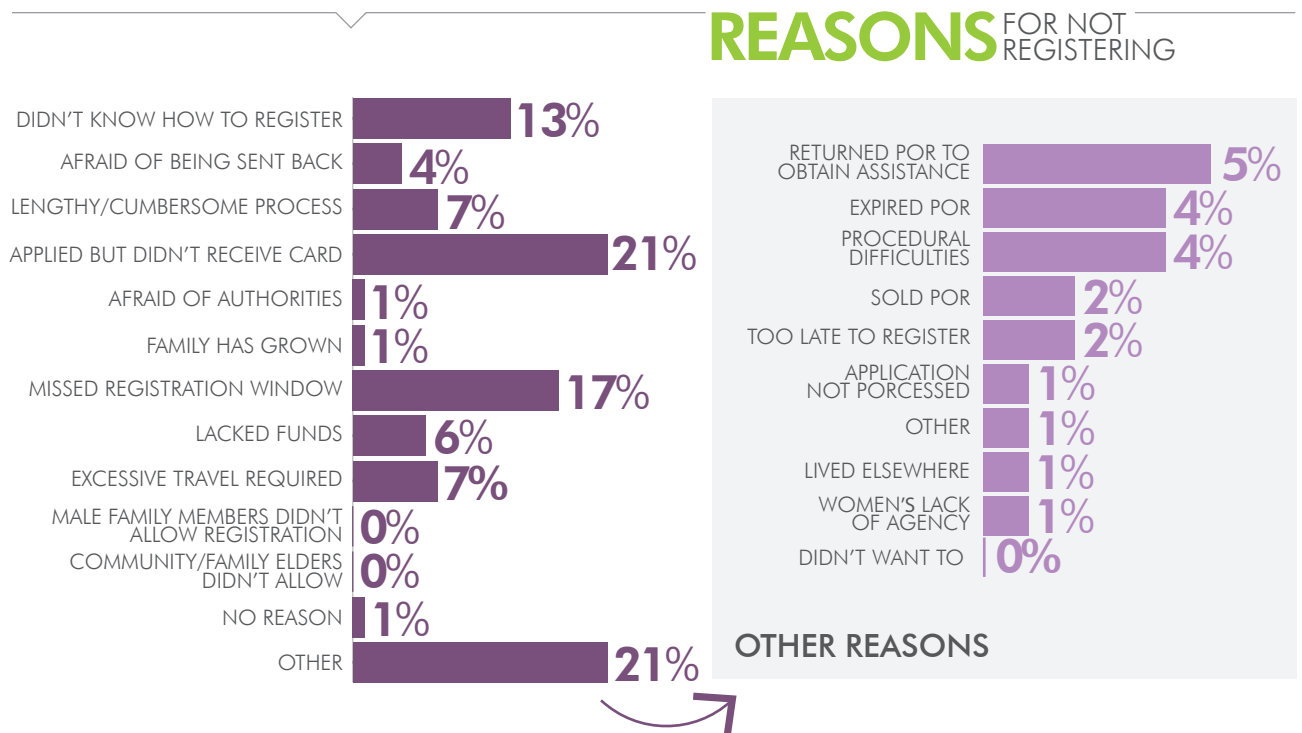
Roughly one-third (35.98%) of those surveyed indicated that they have tried to register, but were ultimately unsuccessful. Of the **reasons given for not registering**, common replies were that they applied but had not received PoR cards (cited by 21% of respondents), that they missed the window for registration (17%), and that they did not know how to register (13%). Several found the registration process too cumbersome, lengthy or difficult to understand (7%), felt that it involved excessive travel (7%), or indicated that they lacked funds (6%), for instance to travel to and stay in Peshawar. Responses also indicate fear of authorities (1%) or fear of being sent back to Afghanistan (4%) as factors which discourage undocumented Afghans from pursuing registration.

A high proportion of respondents (21%) selected "other" reasons for not being registered, for instance, the expiration of their PoR cards (4%). Perhaps most significantly, 5% reported that they had been registered, but were repatriated to Afghanistan before returning to Pakistan as undocumented migrants.

This underscores a strong trend of **circular migration** among the Afghan population in Pakistan, with serious implications for the efficacy of registration processes and border monitoring. Evidence of procedural difficulties (4%) also poses challenges. Replies by female respondents suggest that women's lack of agency is a hindrance to documentation, as several women reported that they were unable to travel to registration sites unaccompanied, or to navigate the registration processes without the support of male relatives or community elders.

"MOST OF THE PEOPLE LIVING IN CAMP[S] AND DECLARING THEMSELVES UNREGISTERED WERE ACTUALLY REGISTERED AND SENT BACK TO AFGHANISTAN IN 2016. NOW THEY ARE BACK AGAIN, [REPORTING] THEMSELVES AS UNREGISTERED."

– Camp administrator, FGD in Haji Zar, Charsadda



2.3.2 Living Situation in Pakistan

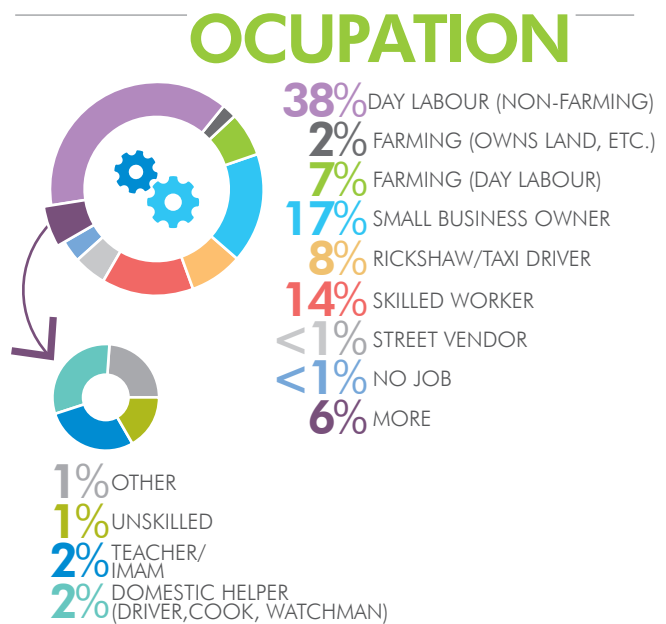
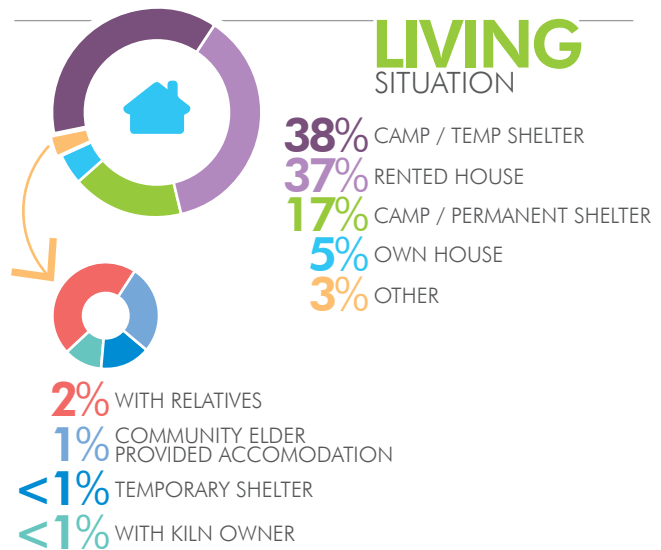
Roughly equal numbers of respondents live in camps or temporary shelters (38%) or rented accommodation (37%). Others reside in camps and permanent shelters (17%), with relatives (2%), or in homes provided by community elders (1%). Only 5% live in homes which they own themselves. The **prevalence of temporary accommodation arrangements** is, arguably, indicative of poverty among undocumented Afghan households.

This is tied to findings that respondents are clustered in low-skilled, poorly remunerated occupations. 38% of those surveyed work as daily wage labourers, while 7% are employed as day labourers in agriculture. A significant percentage, however, own shops or small businesses (17%), are skilled workers (14%), rickshaw and taxi drivers (8%), and farmers who own land and/or livestock (2%).

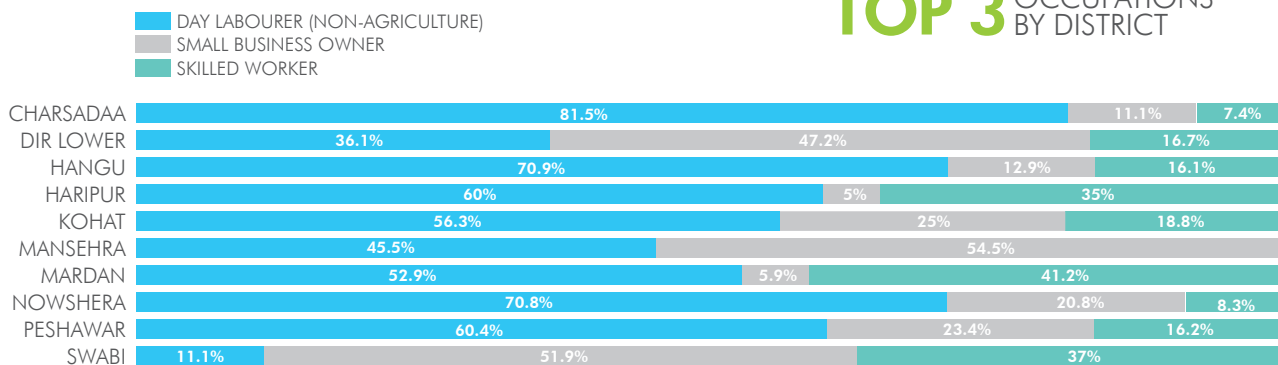
Notable variations exist across districts. For instance, while a higher proportion of respondents in Nowshera (70.83%) and Charsadda (81.48%) are daily wage labourers, there are far fewer in Swabi (11.11%) and Lower Dir (36.11%). Similarly, a high proportion of respondents in Swabi (51.85%) and Manshera (54.54%) are small business owners.

“THE TRAUMA OF WAR, SEPARATION, THE DEATH OF LOVED ONES, AND THE LOSS OF ALL THINGS THEY HOLD DEAR ARE FELT BY EVERY SINGLE AFGHAN.”

– FGD observations



TOP 3 OCCUPATIONS BY DISTRICT

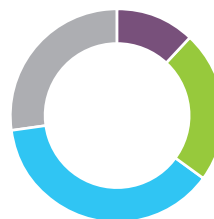


Less than 1% of respondents are unemployed. Reasons for not working include disabilities, illness or old age (38%). Roughly one-third (23%) of those without jobs are women, leaving them financially dependent on their husbands or sons. This may be tied to trends observed during both the survey and the FGDs, wherein participants showed a strong aversion to women working (see section 2.5.3).

High rates of **poverty are also evident in households' average monthly income and expenditure.** 84% of respondents earn less than PKR 25,000 per month (approximately USD 235), with 7% earning under PKR 5,000 (USD 48) and most (31%) between PKR 10,000 and 15,000 (USD 90-140). Monthly expenditure tends to mirror or exceed income, suggesting that undocumented Afghan households have little or no savings.

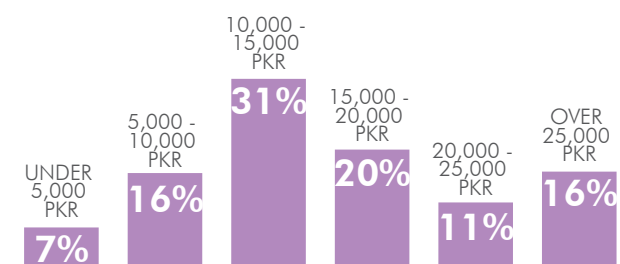
This may also be indicative of debt. While the RIS exercise did not identify specific data on respondents' patterns of debt, IOM Afghanistan's recent *Socioeconomic Survey of Undocumented Returnees*²² found that 56% of the heads of households they interviewed were in debt, generally amounting to PKR 10,000-30,000 (roughly USD 90-270), although 8% were more than PKR 50,000 (USD 475) in debt. This lack of funds will put immense pressure on returning families, particularly as the prices of rents and goods has begun to soar in Afghan cities, such as Kabul and Jalalabad, following the surge in returns²³. In addition to a lack of physical access to housing – given the absence of sufficient houses to accommodate the influx of returnees – economic access (affordability) is a major challenge. Recent estimates suggest that the average rental price for a modest house suitable for a family of seven in the province of Nangarhar has increased from USD 60.50 per month before 2016, to USD 77.50 as of March 2016.²⁴ Taking into account RIS respondents' monthly income, such rental payments will clearly be beyond the reach of many returning households.

BREAKDOWN FOR JOBLESS INDIVIDUALS

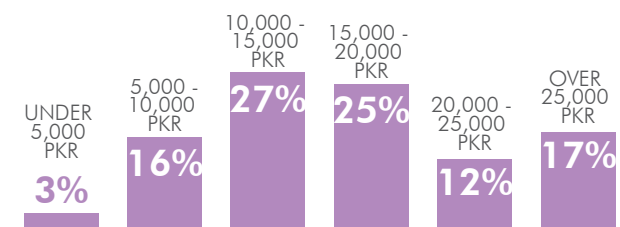


12% NO JOB, COMMUNITY / RELATIVES' SUPPORT
23% DEPENDENT ON FAMILY (SON/HUSBAND)
38% DEPENDENT ON FAMILY (DISABILITY, OLD AGE)
27% JOBLESS

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME



AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENDITURE



“THEY HAVE NO PROPERTY OR ASSETS ANYWHERE, SO NO SENSE OF BELONGING EXISTS. ALL SENSE OF PATRIOTISM HAS BEEN LOST.”

– FGD observations

22 The socioeconomic survey was conducted in November 2016 at IOM's Transit Centre at the Chaman border crossing.

23 Muhibi, R. (2017) “in your own home, you don't feel homesick”: The untimely return of Afghan Refugees”, *The Culture-ist*, 12 September 2017. Available: <https://www.thecultureist.com/2017/09/12/home-dont-feel-homesick-untimely-return-afghan-refugees/>

24 Oxfam (2017) *Labour and Housing market systems in Nangarhar Province, Eastern Afghanistan (Complex Conflict, Displacement, and Returnee Influx): Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis Full Report*. Kabul: Oxfam International and AHEAD. Available: http://fcluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/nangarhar_emma_report_-_final_12th_may_2017.pdf



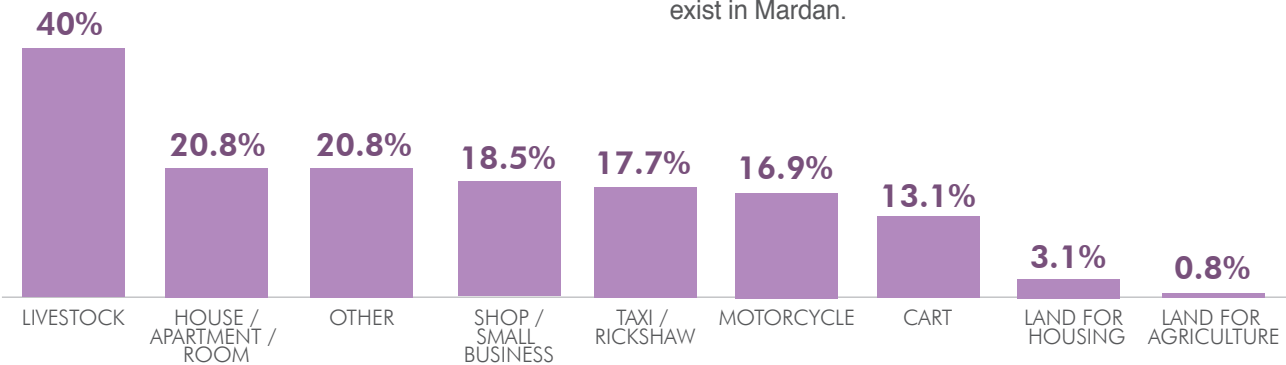
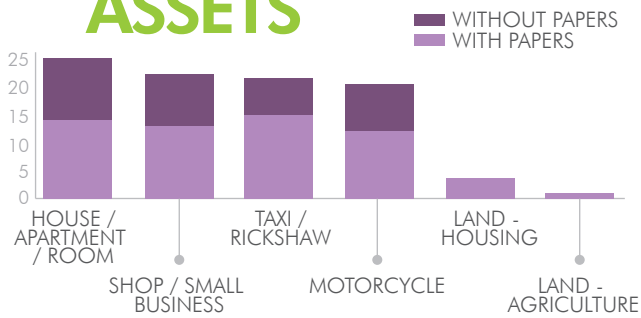
17% OWN PROPERTY/
ASSETS
83% DO NOT OWN
PROPERTY/ASSETS

Extremely low levels of fixed asset ownership are evident among RIS respondents. Of the 17% who own assets, most own livestock (40%) taxis and rickshaws (18%), shops and small businesses (18%), motorcycles (17%) and carts (13%).

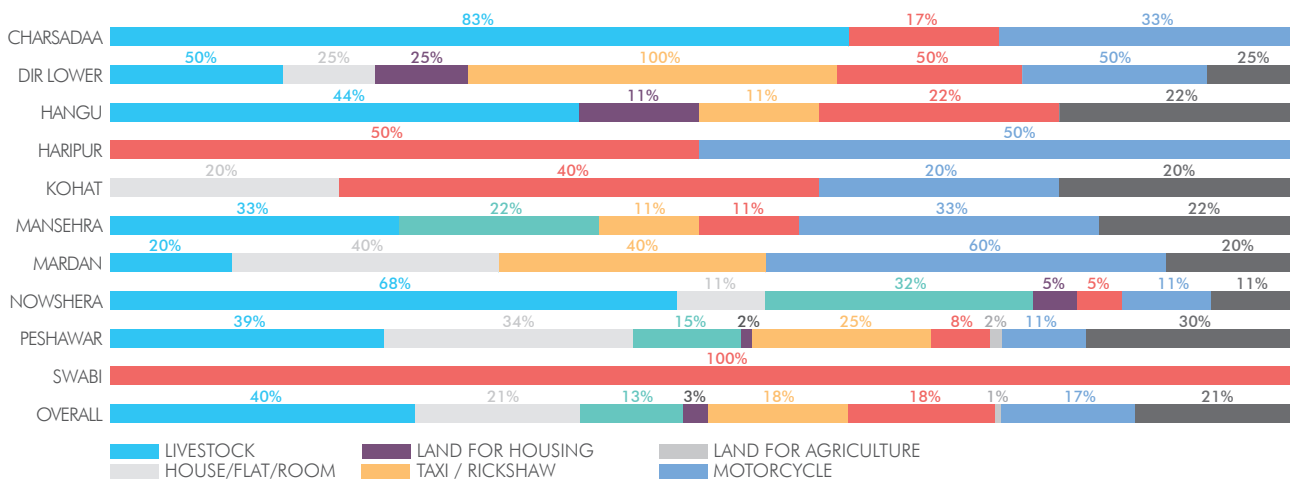
Only 3% own – or co-own – land for housing, and 1% have land for agriculture. 21% of those who own assets (or 3.5% of the total respondents) own some form of property – homes, apartments or rooms – ostensibly indicating co-ownership with Pakistani relatives or acquaintances. The apparent discrepancy between the percentage of respondents who reported living in homes which they own (5%) and those who reported owning property assets (3.5%) may be explained by the fact that many respondents have built homes on land owned by affluent landlords (local *khans*). While they typically have the latter's permission to do so, ownership rights belong to their landlords.

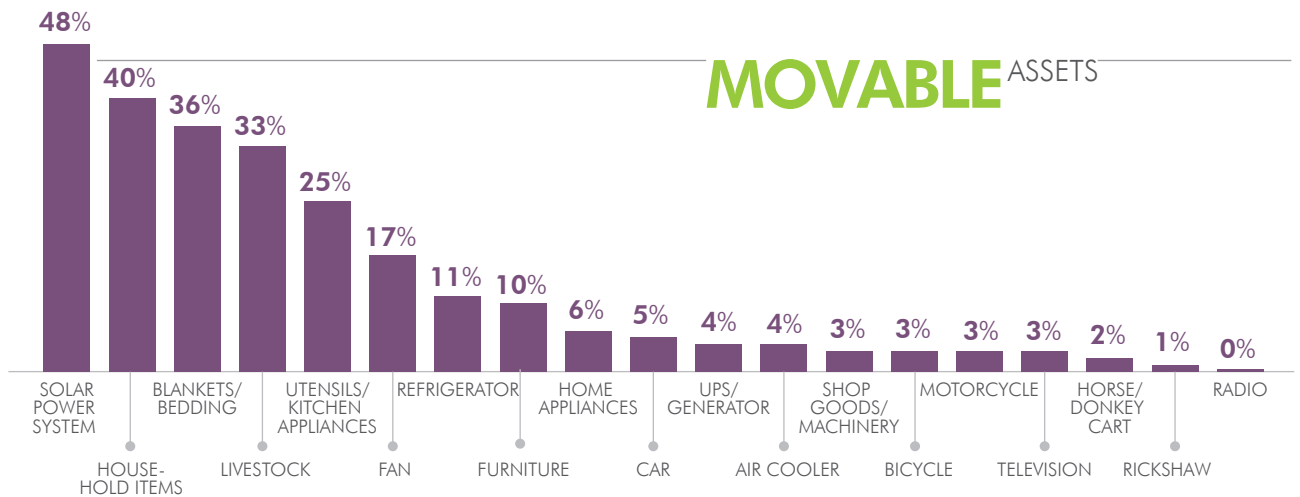
Considerable variations in asset ownership exist between districts. For instance, while 68% of respondents own livestock in Nowshera, no respondents in Swabi, Kohat or Haripur own farm animals. Similarly, while all of those surveyed in Swabi own shops or small businesses, no small business ownership appears to exist in Mardan.

ASSETS



DISTRICT WISE OVERVIEW OF ASSETS



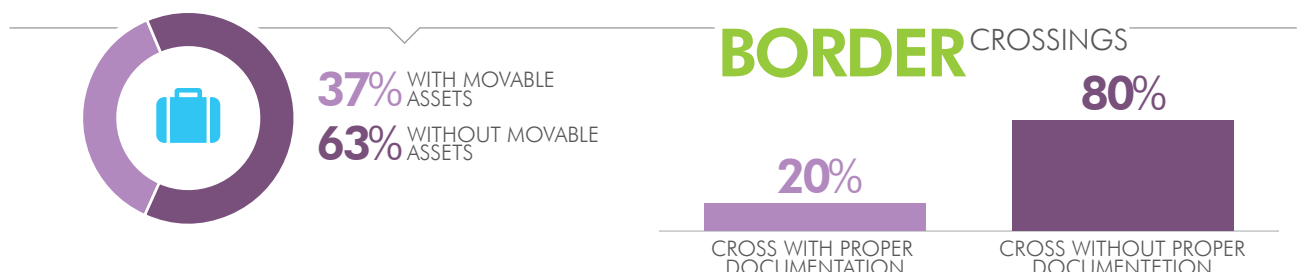


A significant proportion of assets are owned “without papers”. Although respondents have paperwork for land, almost half of those who own (or co-own) apartments or rooms and small businesses do not have complete paperwork for these fixed assets. This may make it more difficult for them to sell their assets at the market price. Respondents appear aware of this challenge, as 83% of those with assets plan to sell them off at below the market price before they return to Afghanistan. This signals their desperation and how disadvantaged their predicament renders them, notably the tribulations of having insufficient time to plan a major relocation. Without the “seed money” from the sale of such assets, they may struggle to survive once they return.

This struggle threatens to be especially acute as **only 36.9% of respondents have movable assets** that they will be able to take to Afghanistan. These include solar powered systems, panels and batteries (17.6%, of the total respondents), household items (14.7%), blankets and bedding (13.2%), and livestock (12.1%). The remaining 63.14% lack even the most basic household goods, which has major implications for returnees’ humanitarian assistance needs.

2.3.3 Recent Travel to Afghanistan

Nearly half of those surveyed (43%) have not visited Afghanistan in the last 5 years, while one-third (31%) used to visit before movement across the border was restricted in 2016. This reflects the marked impact of recent border restrictions on the lives of Afghan nationals in Pakistan. This is consistent with data on the number of people crossing the border at Torkham on a daily basis, which has fallen from over 20,000 people per day to 2,000-2,500.²⁵ Nevertheless, many respondents continue to travel to Afghanistan fairly regularly. A slight rise in regular travel in recent months, observed in both the survey and IOM’s inflow monitoring exercises²⁶, may be tied to the introduction of Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs) and improved prospects for legal documentation.



25 IOM (2017) *Assessment of Incoming Afghan Nationals (Torkham Border)*, June 2017. Islamabad: IOM Pakistan. Available: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation_reports/file/IOMPakistan_0617_AssessmentofIncomingAfghanNationals%28Torkham%20Border%29.pdf

26 Ibid.

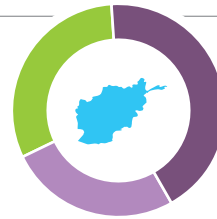
For those who visit Afghanistan (27%), travel tends to be annual (61% of responses) rather than extremely frequent. 80% of these respondents admitted crossing the border without proper documentation.

These trends are mirrored by the FGD findings – FGD participants also reported that they cross the border illegally, without documents.

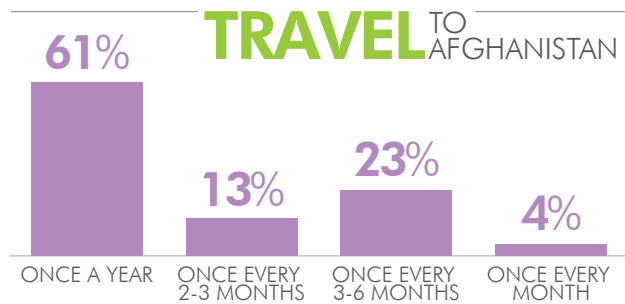
Almost all survey respondents (97%) use the **Torkham** border crossing in KP, whereas only 1% crossed the border further south at Chaman, on the Afghan-Balochistan border. As the respondents reside in KP, and are originally from provinces which border the province, it is logical that they would favour the proximity of Torkham. A second RIS exercise in Balochistan would likely reveal more variations in respondents' answers given that the border between Afghanistan and Balochistan is far longer and more porous.

Overall, the proportion of respondents who travelled frequently to Afghanistan before stricter border controls, as well as those who continue to travel frequently, is highest in the districts of Mardan, Swabi and Charsadda and Peshawar. Compared to other districts, a higher proportion of respondents based in Nowshera, Swabi and Peshawar currently visit Afghanistan very frequently. This suggests close links between families, friends or communities on both sides of the border.

This is reflected in respondents' stated reasons for travelling to Afghanistan. Over half of the reasons given were social events, weddings and funerals (55.63%), followed by visiting family and friends (35.56%).

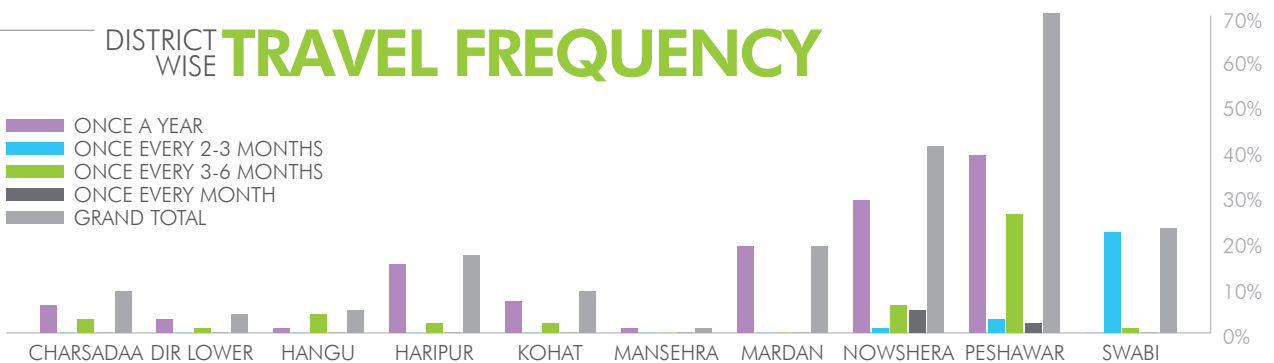


43% DO NOT VISIT
31% USED TO VISIT BEFORE BORDER RESTRICTIONS
26% STILL VISIT AFGHANISTAN



DISTRICT WISE TRAVEL FREQUENCY

- ONCE A YEAR
- ONCE EVERY 2-3 MONTHS
- ONCE EVERY 3-6 MONTHS
- ONCE EVERY MONTH
- GRAND TOTAL

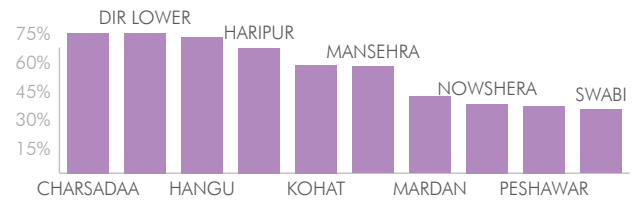


Other reasons included travelling for business or trade (3.52%) and to check the status of their property (5.28%). This demonstrates that the vast majority of those surveyed neither own property in the country, nor do they have substantial business ties to Afghanistan. No respondent travelled for planting or harvesting, indicating that undocumented Afghans do not tend to own arable land in the country.

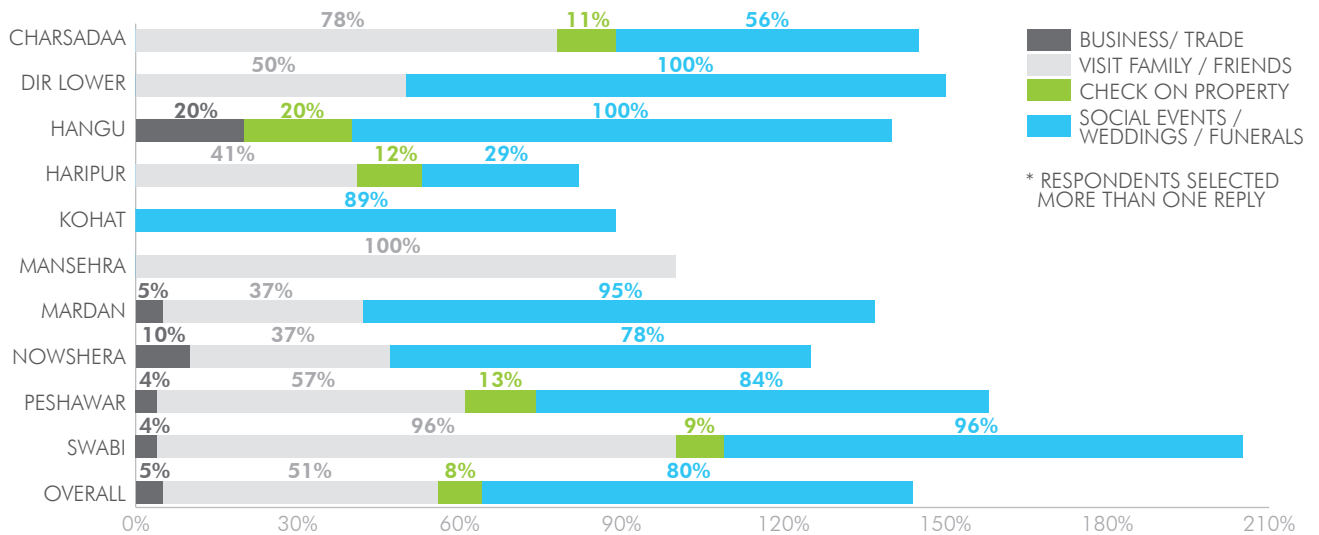
Almost all respondents (94%) use public transport (94%) to travel to Afghanistan. Far fewer travel by car (4%) or by truck (2%) and none by foot or by air. This points to the importance of ensuring the availability of adequate public transport to meet this demand, particularly in terms of safety for vulnerable groups including women, unaccompanied minors and persons with disabilities.

PROPORTION

WHO FREQUENTLY VISIT AFGHANISTAN (NOW & BEFORE BORDER CONTROLS)



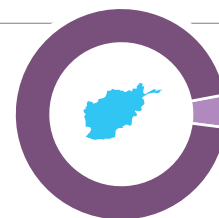
REASONS FOR VISITING AFGHANISTAN*



2.4 Return Intentions and Plans

Only 5% of those surveyed expressed concrete intentions of returning to Afghanistan. This was mirrored by FGD participants, 95% of whom have no intention of returning.

When asked what factors most influence their decision to return, **mounting local pressure was by far the most frequently cited factor** (86%) both during the survey and the FGDs. Other drivers for returns include decisions taken by family members or community elders, the prospect of obtaining legal documentation and returning to Pakistan, to join one's family, or encouragement by the Afghan Government.



5% PLAN TO RETURN
95% DO NOT PLAN TO RETURN

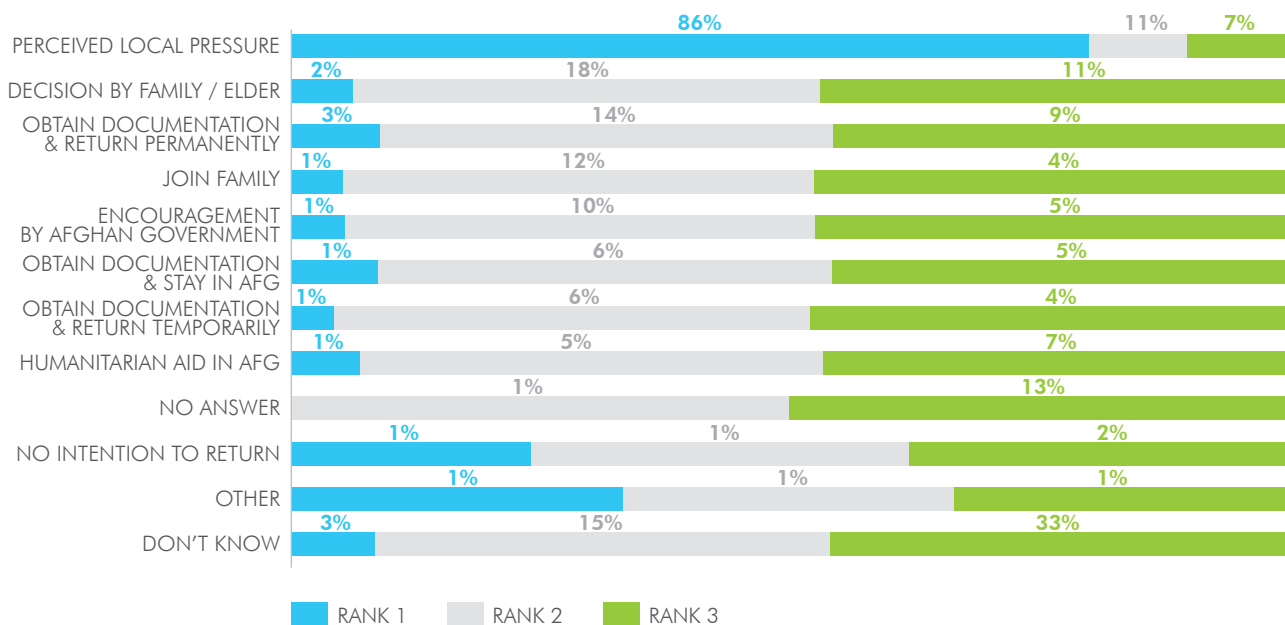
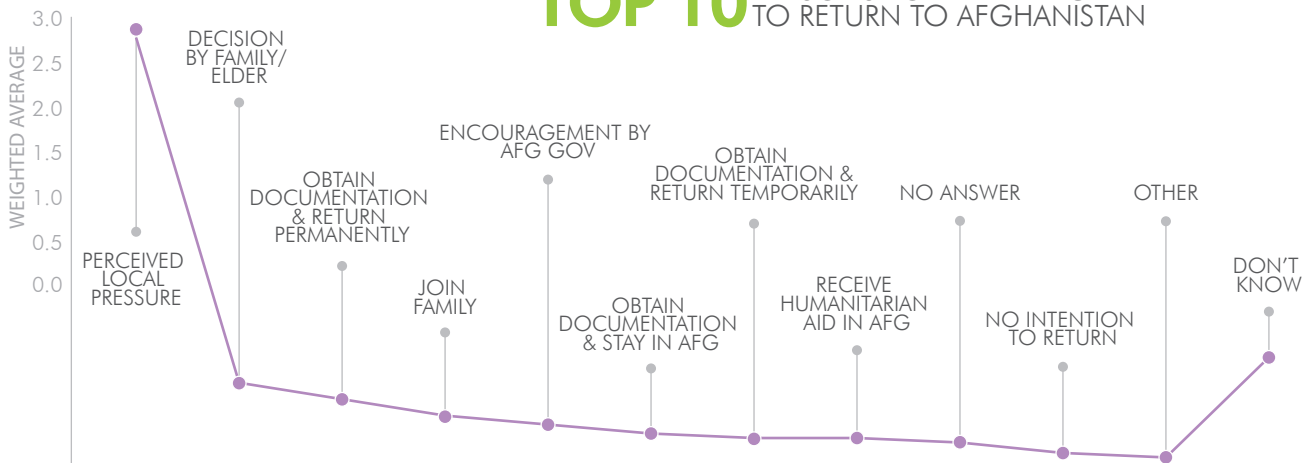
“NOBODY WANTS TO GO BACK. THEY WANT TO GET REGISTERED AND COME BACK TO PAKISTAN LEGALLY. ALSO, THEY WANT [THE] AFGHAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR SAFETY AND SURVIVAL.”

– FGD in Charsadda

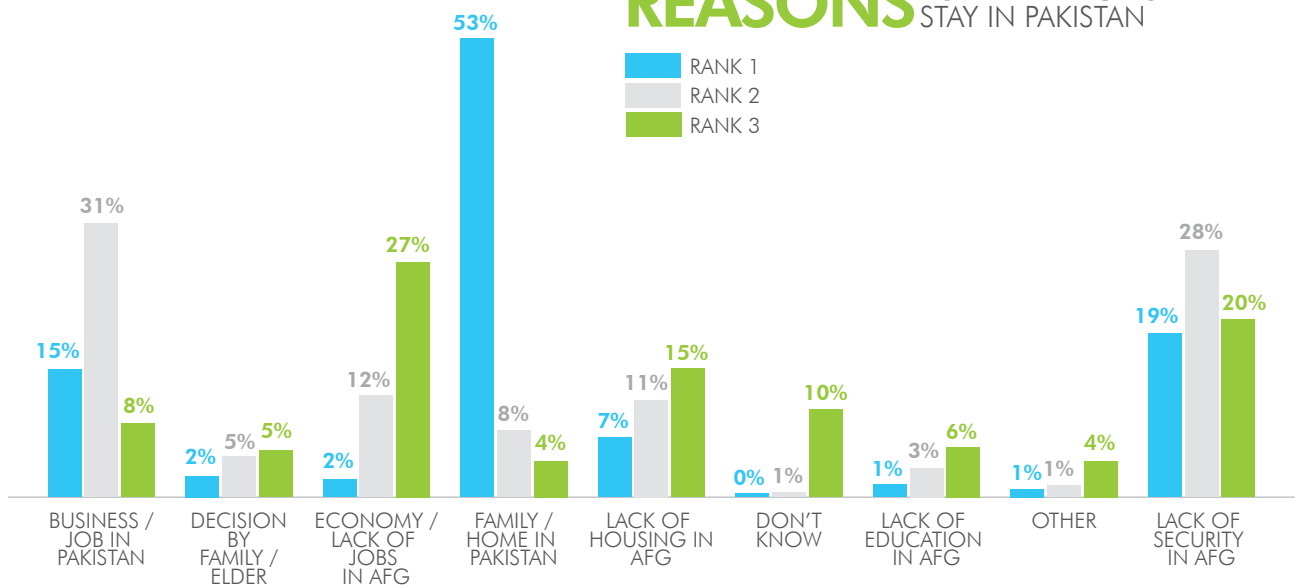


2% TRUCK
4% CAR
94% PUBLIC TRANSPORT

TOP 10 REASONS FOR PLANNING TO RETURN TO AFGHANISTAN



REASONS FOR WANTING TO STAY IN PAKISTAN

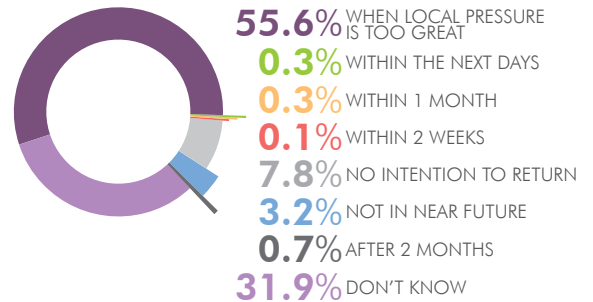


If it were possible to stay, respondents stated that they would do so because their families and homes are in Pakistan, as well as their businesses and jobs. Afghanistan's fragile economic situation and lack of security also weighs heavily on their choices, demonstrating the need for economic prospects and greater security for those who decide to leave for Afghanistan. The FGDs found that respondents' family members in Afghanistan often advise them not to return due to the country's complex context. Many are especially reluctant to leave as they fear it will make their return to Pakistan impossible, given their lack of documentation.

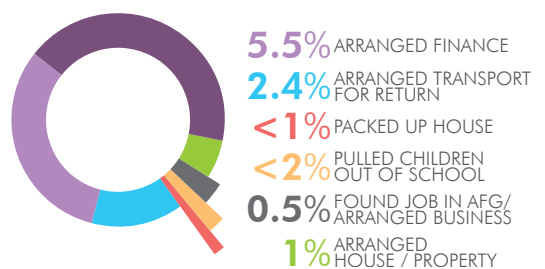
When asked *when* they plan to return, most respondents indicated that they will only return when local pressure is too great (55.6%). One-third do not know when exactly they will return (31.9%). A significant percentage (7.8%) has no intention of returning at all, or no intention to return in the near future (3.2%). Less than 1% of respondents plan to return within the coming months.

Given the **lack of concrete timelines**, the bulk of respondents have made **no arrangements to facilitate their return**. Only 7.36% have informed their family and/or friends, 5.5% have made financial arrangements and 2.4% have arranged for transportation. Juxtaposing data on timelines for returns and arrangements made reveals that those whose decision to return is contingent upon local pressure are virtually the only respondents who have made arrangements, indicating potential pressure on undocumented Afghan households in certain locations or situations.

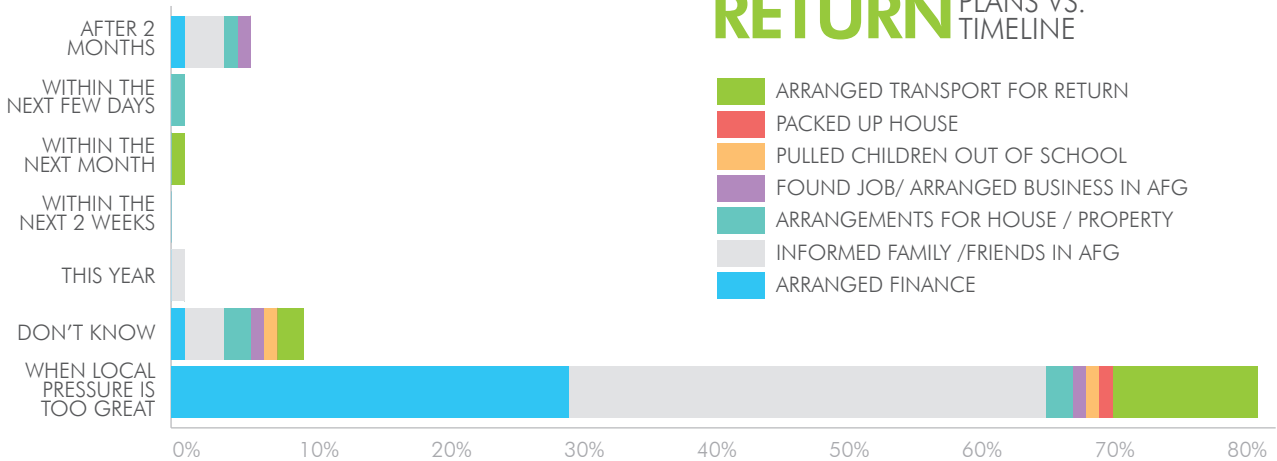
TIMELINE FOR RETURNS



RETURN PLANS



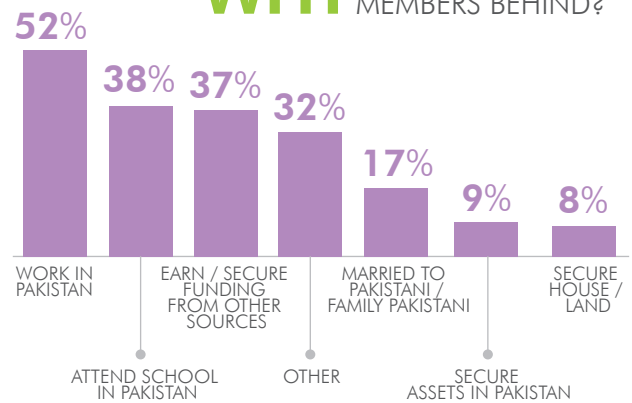
RETURN PLANS VS. TIMELINE



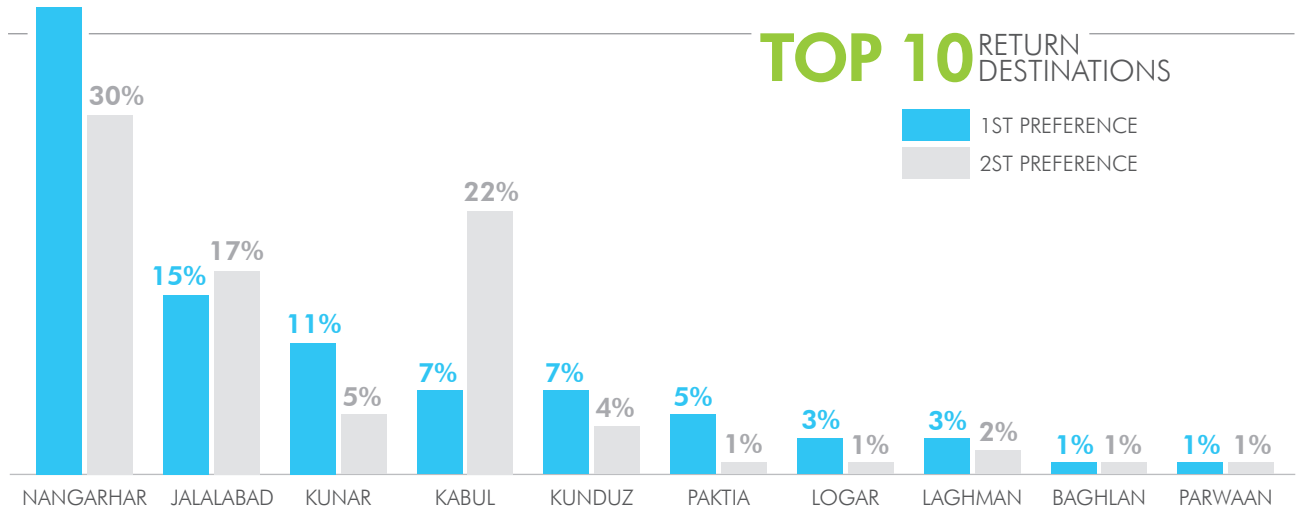
While most families plan to return together (88%), in 12% of cases some family members will remain in Pakistan because they are currently employed in the country, attend school, or to intend to secure an income. A significant proportion (17% of those who plan to remain) are married to Pakistanis or have Pakistani family members, underscoring the close links between Afghan and Pakistani communities in KP. Another 17% of those whose family members will stay in Pakistan will do so to secure land, accommodation or other assets in Pakistan, reflecting the desire of many undocumented Afghan households to remain in Pakistan.

The destinations which respondents plan to return to mirror the data on their areas of origin (see Section 2.1). Thus, the majority (39%) cited Nangarhar as their first preference. This is in line with respondents' reasons for returning to these areas, most commonly because these are their areas of origin, their last place of residence, or areas in which their extended families or friends reside.

WHY LEAVE FAMILY MEMBERS BEHIND?

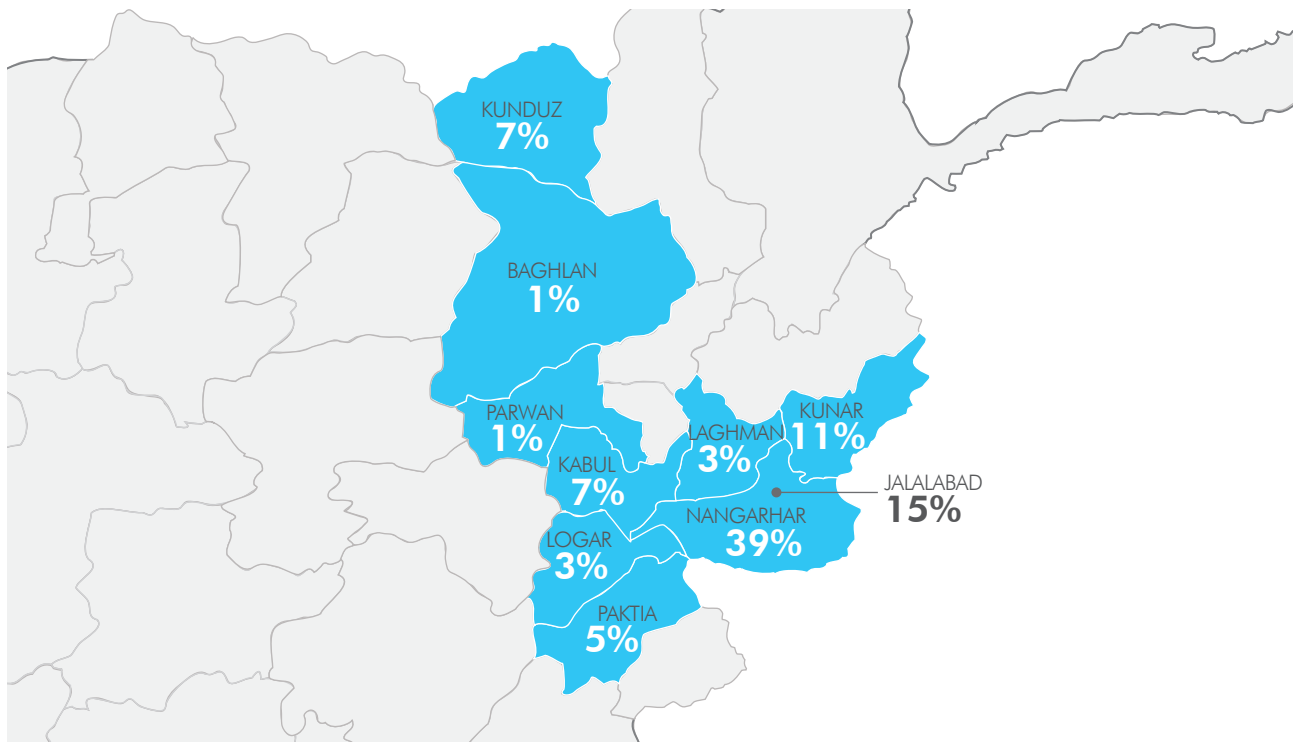


39%

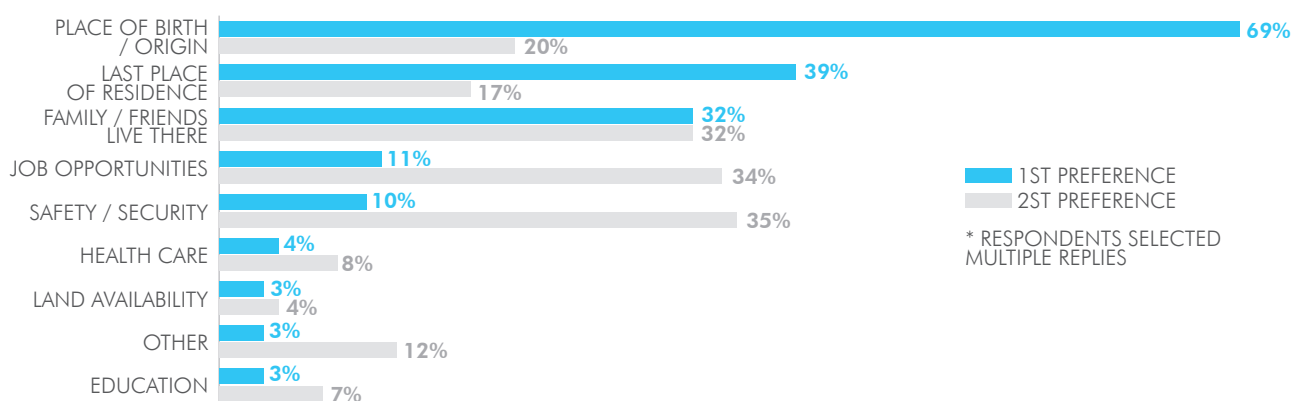


TOP 10 RETURN DESTINATIONS

1ST PREFERENCE
2ND PREFERENCE



REASONS TO RETURN TO 1ST PREFERENCE

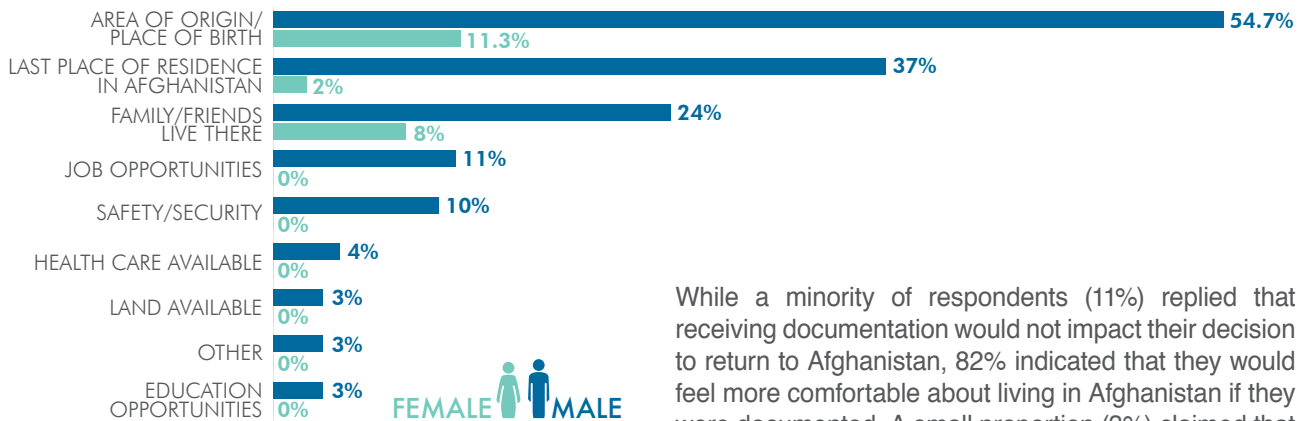


Other important determining factors in their choice of return destinations include security and job opportunities, once again indicating how key these concerns are for respondents. Several selected Kabul as their second destination of choice, despite the fact that only 6% are originally from the Afghan capital, ostensibly due to its relative security and job prospects.

Disaggregating the RIS data by sex reveals that both men and women prefer to return to their areas of origin and locations in which friends and family reside. Men appear far more driven by a desire to return to their last place of residence in Afghanistan, as well as by a concern for job opportunities and safety than women.

By contrast, women's preferences are intimately tied to the existence of family or community support networks in Afghanistan. It is also interesting to note that employment and education opportunities figured far less prominently as drivers of women's return preferences, which may be tied to their limited prospects for pursuing work or an education outside the home.

REASONS FOR RETURNING BY GENDER



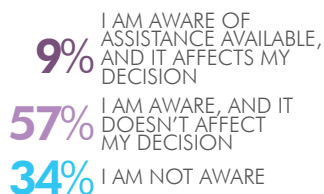
IMPACT OF DOCUMENTATION



While a minority of respondents (11%) replied that receiving documentation would not impact their decision to return to Afghanistan, 82% indicated that they would feel more comfortable about living in Afghanistan if they were documented. A small proportion (3%) claimed that they will not seek documentation specifically because they do not wish to return to Afghanistan (3%).

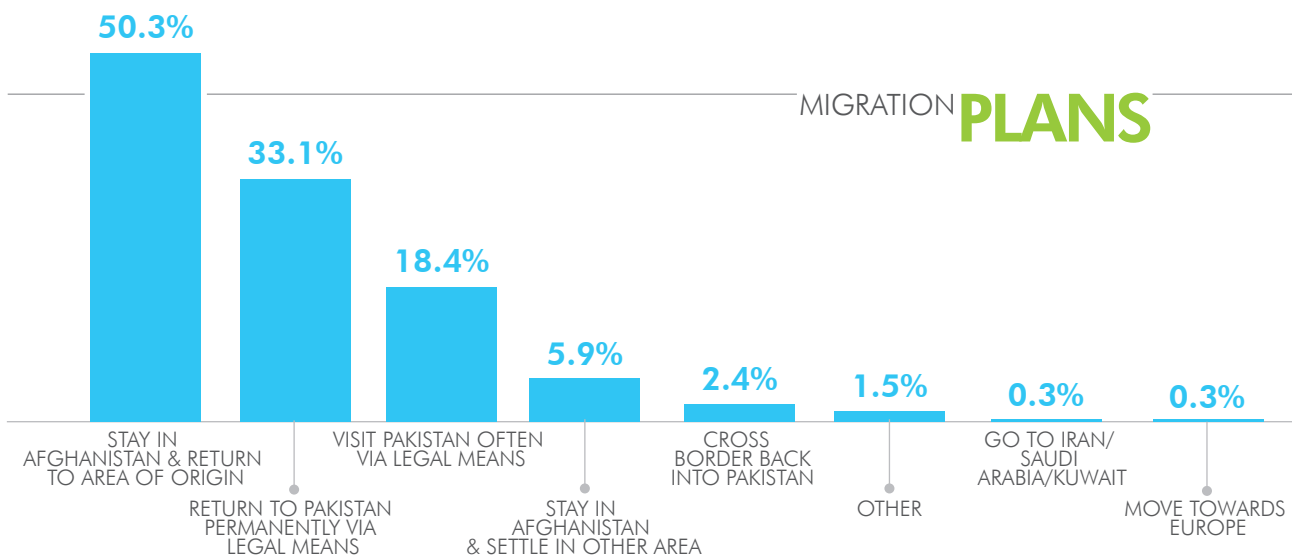
When asked about their awareness of support available to refugees, and whether this affected their decision to return, the majority stated that they are aware of assistance and it does not influence their decision (57%). Over one-third, however, are not aware of available assistance, underscoring the need for enhanced communication to make sure that undocumented Afghans understand what assistance is available and are able to access it. Overall, most respondents clearly want more support than is currently available to them.

ASSISTANCE



In terms of their future plans half of the respondents (50.3%) wish to **settle in their place of origin** in Afghanistan, while a small number plan to settle elsewhere in the country (5.9%). One-third of respondents said that they will seek to **permanently return to Pakistan through legal means** (33.1%), or visit Pakistan frequently (18.4%). Very few indicated that they will try to cross the border back into Pakistan illegally (2.4%), or migrate to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait or Europe (0.6%).

MIGRATION PLANS



2.5 Needs and Vulnerabilities

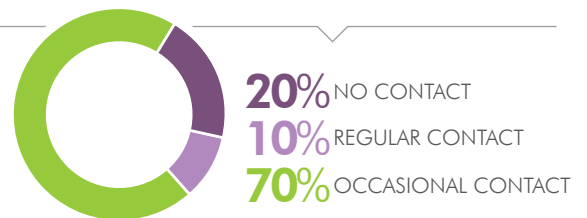
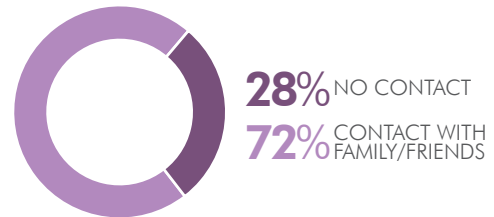
2.5.1 Information and Communications Needs

Nearly one-third (28%) of those surveyed have no contact with relatives or friends living in Afghanistan. While the remaining 72% are in contact with family or friends, the frequency of updates they receive appears sporadic. 70% receive information updates from Afghanistan “sometimes”, whereas only 10% receive regular updates. One fifth (20%) receive no updates whatsoever.

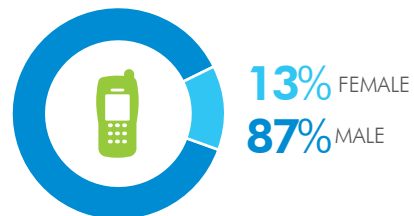
Mobile phones and text messages are by far the most popular source of information (60%), for respondents. Conversations with those who have recently visited Afghanistan (18%), the radio (16%), information sessions with community leaders (11%) and television (11%) also figured prominently among responses. Significantly fewer respondents receive information via print media (5%) or the internet and social media (9%). Return Help Desks were entirely absent from RIS respondents’ replies.

This highlights the importance of mobile phones – and to a lesser extent, the radio – for disseminating information to undocumented Afghans. Disaggregating the data by sex reveals that far more men (87%) than women (13%) have access to mobile phones. Respondents tend to have basic models, rather than smart phones, which may help to explain why the internet and social media are not more prominent sources of information. The lower proportion of information gleaned from written sources, moreover, may be related to the relatively low levels of literacy among the surveyed population. Overall, all sources of information are used with markedly greater frequency by men – for instance, whereas 21% of men gain information from conversations with acquaintances who have visited Afghanistan, this is true for only 1% of women. Such findings may indicate women’s lack of agency to seek out information, or to access sources of available information.

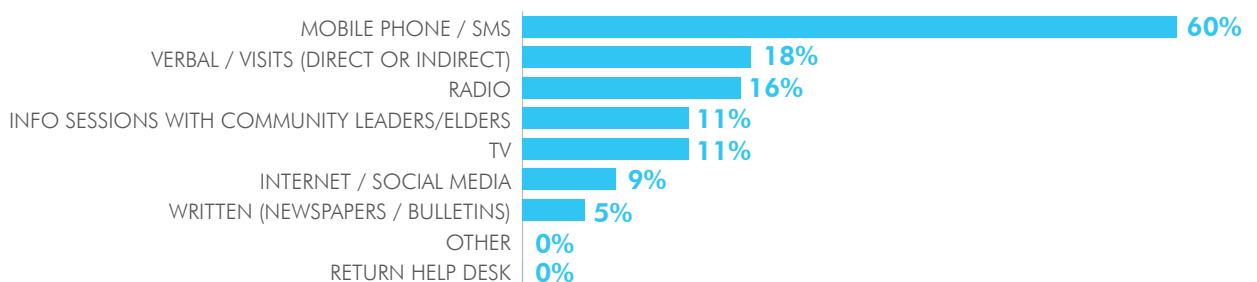
CONTACT WITH PEOPLE IN AFGHANISTAN



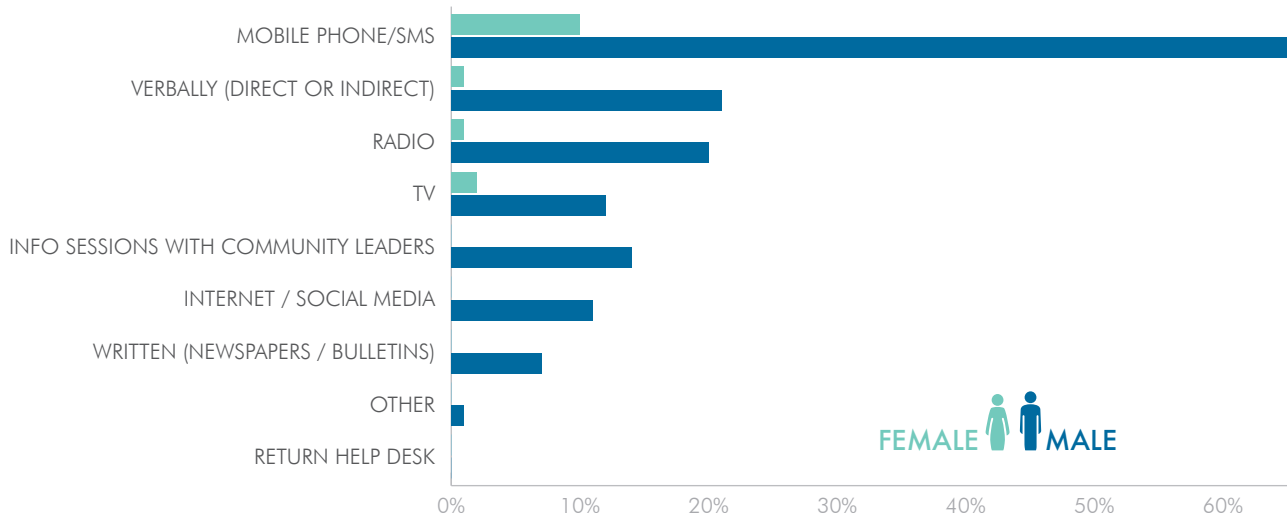
ACCESS TO MOBILE PHONES - GENDER



SOURCES OF INFORMATION



SOURCES OF INFORMATION - GENDER

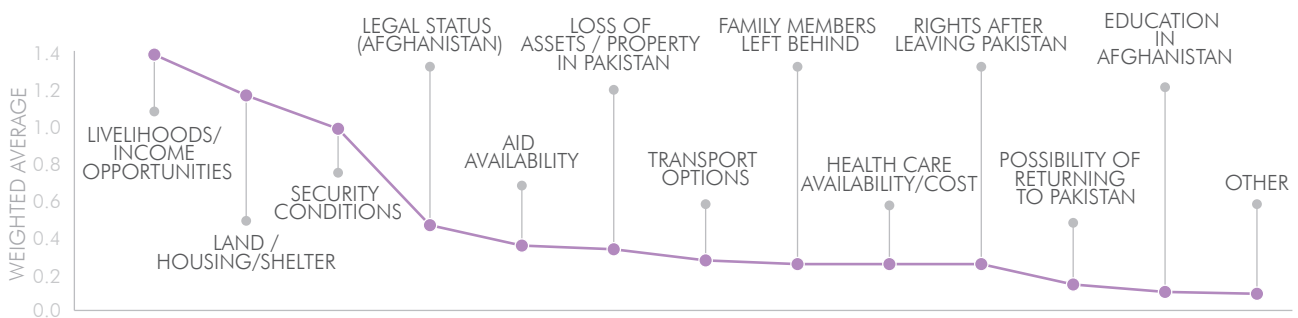


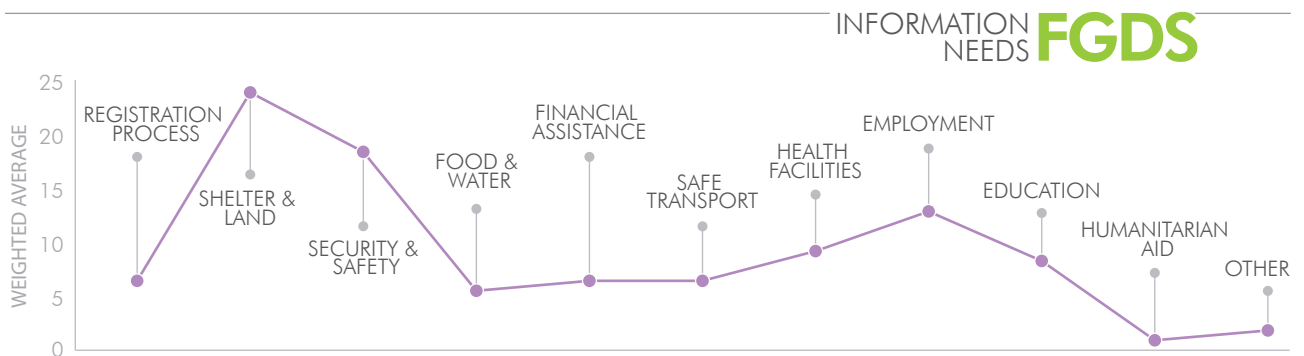
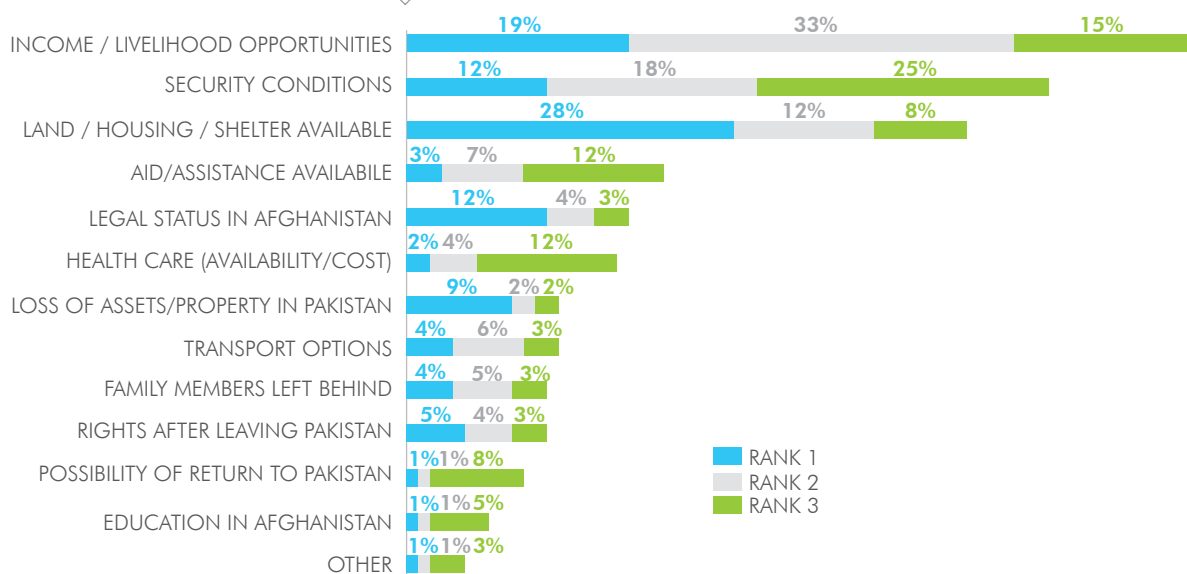
Undocumented Afghans' most **pressing information needs** concern the availability of **housing and shelter, livelihood and income generating opportunities, and security conditions**. These findings were reinforced during the focus group discussions.

FGD participants' responses placed an even greater emphasis on their need for information on the availability of housing, shelter and land in Afghanistan (23.85%), the security situation (18.35%) and health facilities (9.17%).

Other issues which featured prominently were information on education (8.26%), registration processes and obtaining legal documentation (6.42%), financial assistance (6.42%), safe transportation (6.42%), and food and drinking water (5.50%).

INFORMATION NEEDS





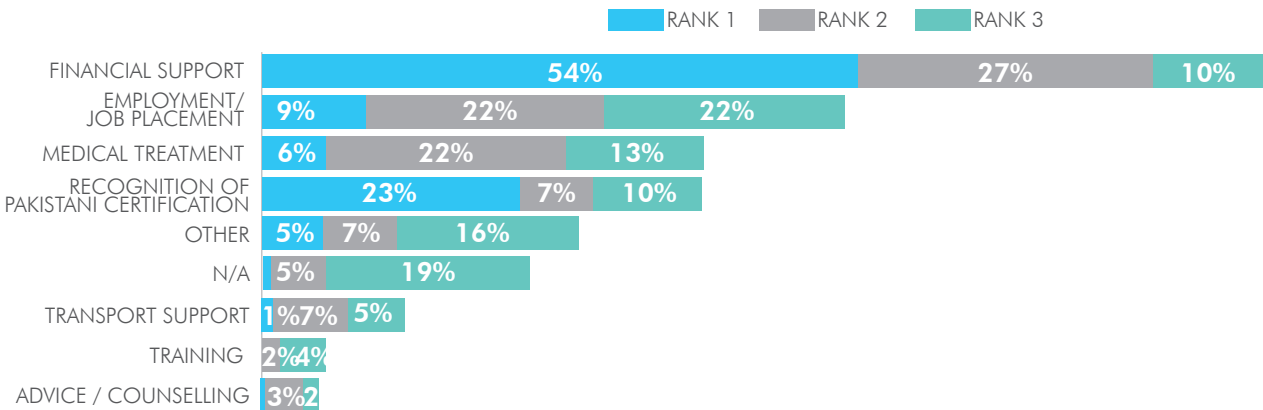
2.5.2 Needs in Pakistan

When asked to rank their **current needs in Pakistan**, RIS respondents highlighted the need for financial support (representing 53.89% of first ranked replies) followed by recognition of certification earned in Pakistan (23.32%). Medical treatment was highly ranked, indicating the need to ensure that those with illnesses, health problems or disabilities, as well as the elderly, can access quality health care despite their undocumented status – both in Pakistan and when they return to Afghanistan. Employment and job placement also figured prominently.

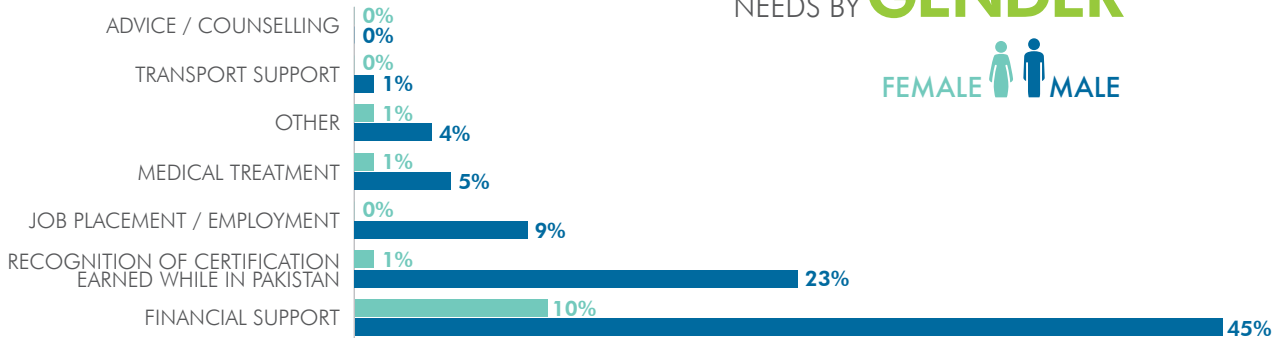
Men and women broadly identified the same overarching needs, although men cited financial support, recognition of certification and employment far more often. For women, financial support, medical treatment and employment were identified as especially important current needs in Pakistan.

Taking into account the low-income status of the undocumented Afghan population, these findings underlie their need for support to secure more lucrative, skilled employment. Their preoccupation with recognition of certification underlies their concerns about documentation. As such, it is vital to ensure that Afghanistan recognises certification by Pakistani institutions in order for returnees to secure job opportunities.

NEEDS OF UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS IN PAKISTAN



CURRENT NEEDS BY GENDER



While training was not especially highlighted by survey respondents, FGDs participants indicated a strong **desire for vocational training** related to occupations like driving; tailoring, sewing and embroidery; weaving, including carpet weaving; livestock rearing; brick making; cooking; jewellery making; painting and masonry; quilt making; small business

While training was not especially highlighted by survey respondents, FGDs participants indicated a strong **desire for vocational training** related to occupations like driving; tailoring, sewing and embroidery; weaving, including carpet weaving; livestock rearing; brick making; cooking; jewellery making; painting and masonry; quilt making; small business management; IT; automobile/ car mechanics and repair; shop keeping; fruit vending; and teaching. Women particularly expressed a desire for vocational training. This evidence highlights the need to support skills development, particularly among youths – both young men and women – to enable voluntary, sustainable returns to Afghanistan and provide real solutions for those who wish to remain in Pakistan.

“[AFGHAN NATIONS] ARE WORRIED AND FEARFUL ABOUT THEIR FUTURE. THEY HAVE TRIED GOING BACK AND GETTING SETTLED IN AFGHANISTAN, BUT [HAVE] HAD TO COME TO PAKISTAN AGAIN BECAUSE [THE] SITUATION IS WORSE IN AFGHANISTAN NOW.”

– FGD in Charsadda

2.5.3 Needs in Afghanistan

RIS evidence reveals that most undocumented Afghans are not prepared for the move to Afghanistan. Respondents offered only vague answers regarding their plans, indicating that they will largely **depend upon charity from relatives** and **seek work as low-income labourers**. The vast majority of survey respondents (85%) are **not confident that they will be able to make a living once they return to Afghanistan**.

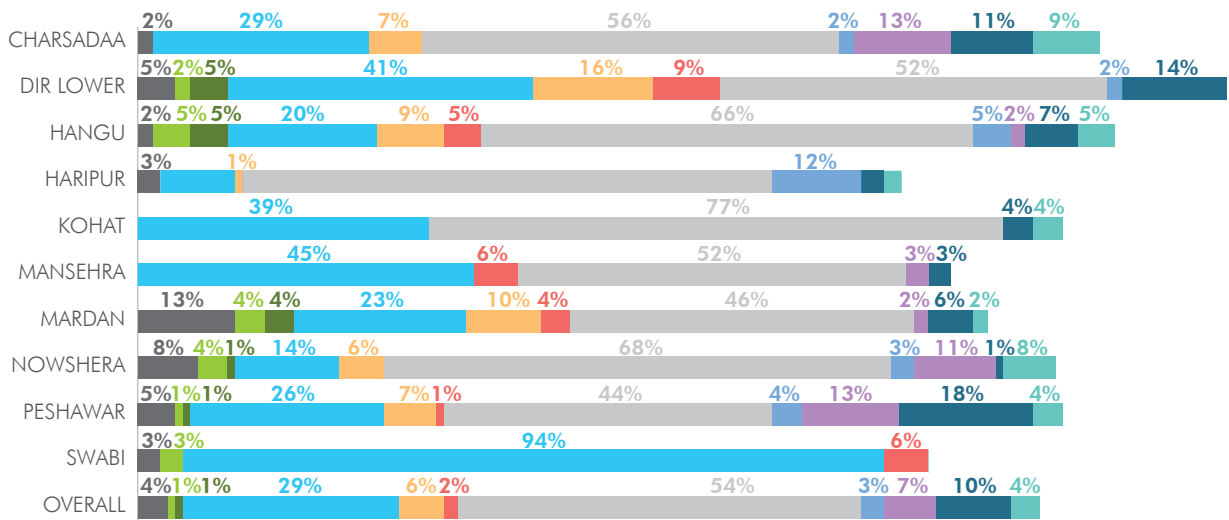


15% WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE A LIVING IN AFGHANISTAN
85% WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE A LIVING IN AFGHANISTAN



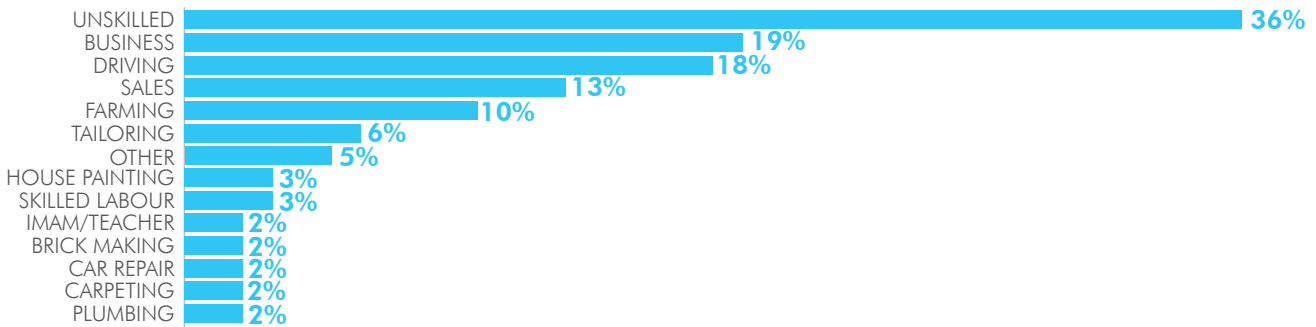
INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES IN AFGHANISTAN

- 44% DAY LABOUR
- 3% WILL NOT WORK
- 5% FARMING
- 8% DRIVE RICKSHAW/TAXI
- 3% OTHER
- 4% PAID LABOUR (PRIVATE/CORPORATE)
- 1% PAID LABOUR (AFGHAN POLICE, ARMY, SECURITY)
- 1% PAID LABOUR (GOVERNMENT)
- 24% SET-UP SMALL BUSINESS
- 5% DON'T KNOW
- 2% PAID LABOUR (UN, NGOS, INTL FORCES)



- PAID LABOUR (PRIVATE/CORPORATE)
- PAID LABOUR (AFGHAN POLICE, ARMY, SECURITY)
- PAID LABOUR (GOVERNMENT)
- SET-UP SMALL BUSINESS (STREET VENDOR, CARPETING)
- DON'T KNOW
- PAID LABOUR (UN, NGOS, INTL FORCES)
- DAY LABOUR

RIS RESPONDENTS' SKILLS



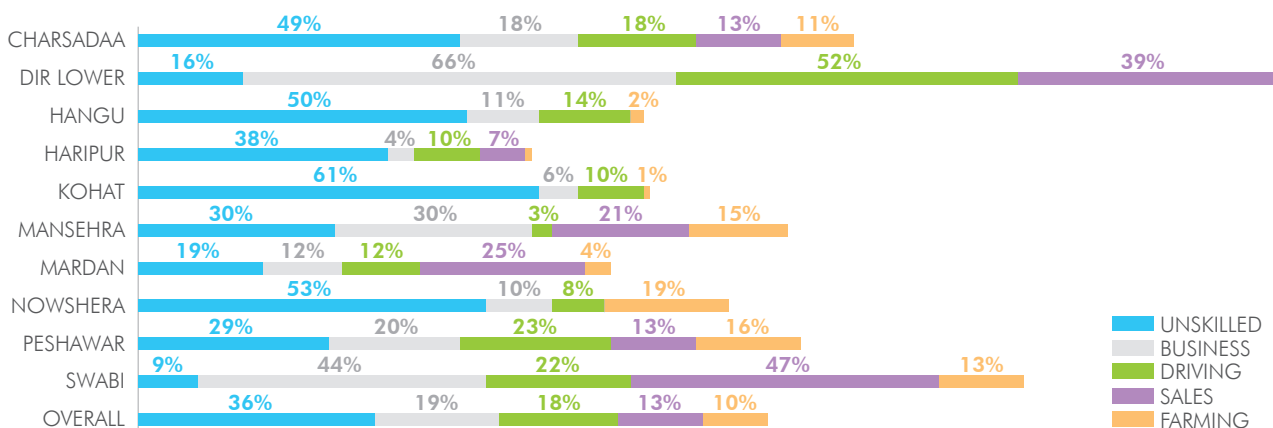
Nearly half (44%) envision working as day labourers. A significant percentage (24%) hopes to pursue entrepreneurial activities or skilled labour, including setting-up small businesses, becoming street vendors or working as carpet weavers. This entrepreneurial drive is particularly marked among respondents based in Swabi, which appears tied to the high proportion of these individuals who own small businesses (see Section 2.3.2).

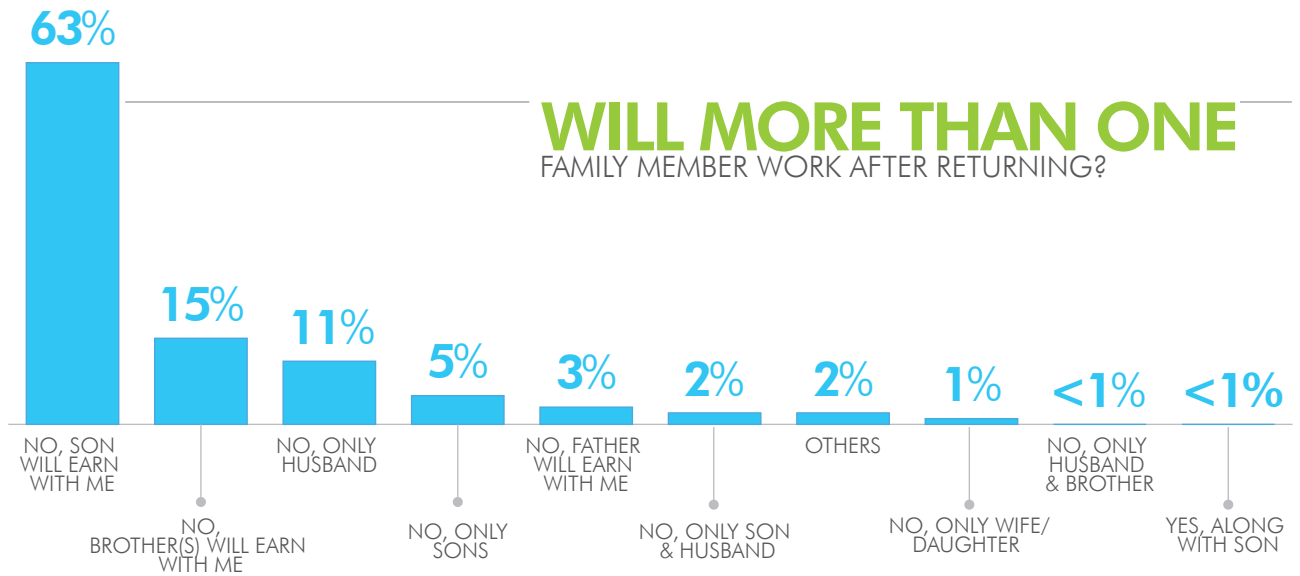
A small percentage of respondents plan to work in agriculture (5%), as rickshaw or taxi drivers (8%), or as paid labourers – either in the private sector (4%), for international organisations (2%), the Afghan government (1%), or law enforcement agencies and the Afghan army (1%). Some 5% of respondents have no clear idea of how they will earn a living. The 3% who do not plan to work include roughly equal numbers of men and women.

These planned professional pursuits overlap somewhat with respondents' skill sets. While 36% of respondents themselves identify as 'unskilled labourers', many have skills related to business (19%), driving (18%), sales (13%) and farming (10%). Others report skills in areas like house painting, teaching, brick making, automobile repair, carpet weaving and plumbing.

A breakdown of this information by districts is especially significant as it sheds light on undocumented Afghans skills' in specific geographic areas. For instance, a high proportion of respondents in Swabi (44%) and Lower Dir (66%) are skilled in business activities, whereas most of those in Nowshera (53%) and Kohat (61%) are unskilled workers.

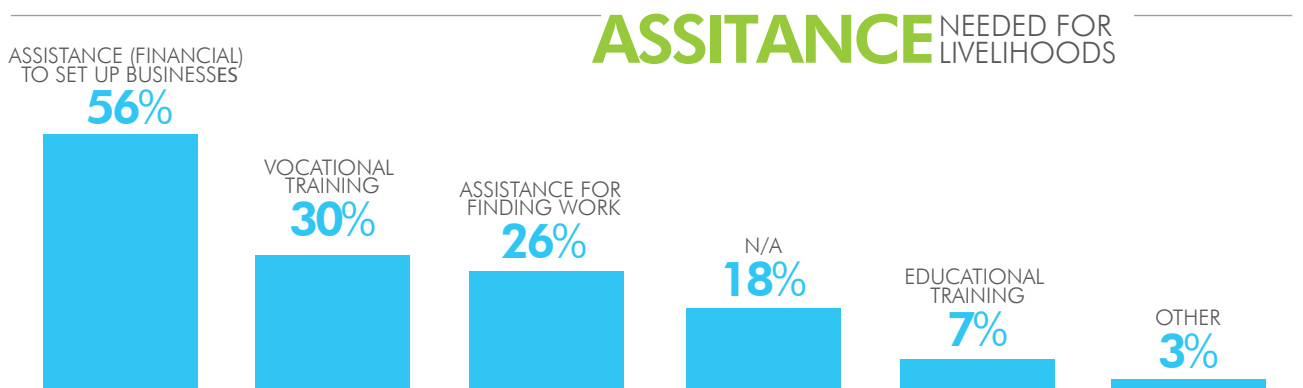
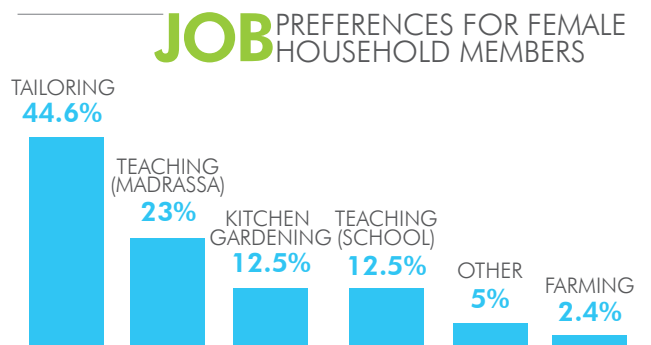
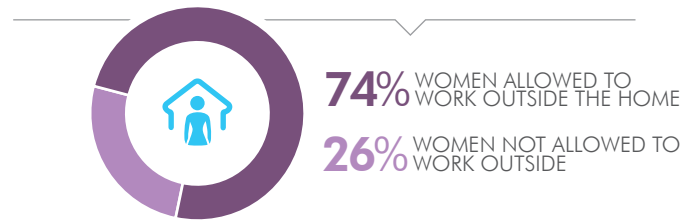
TOP 5 SKILLS BY DISTRICT



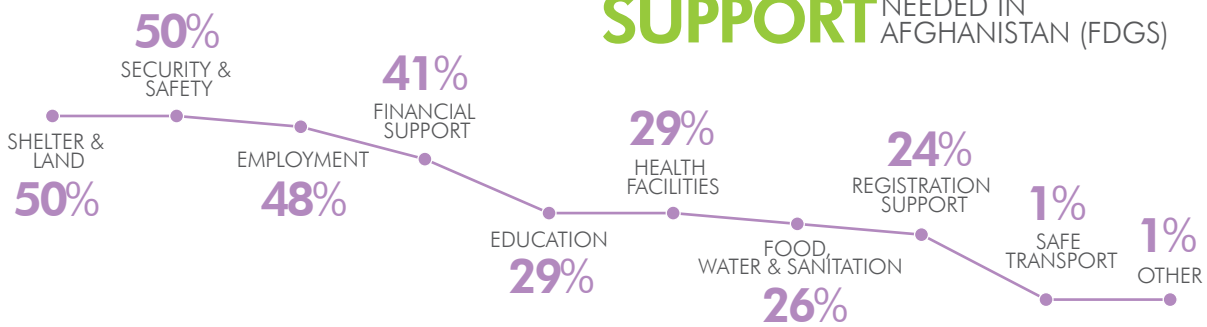


Among half of respondents' households (51%), **only one family member will participate in income generating activities** in Afghanistan. For the remaining 49%, two or more members intend to seek work, generally a head of household's son(s), brother(s) and father, or a combination thereof. Less than 1% indicated that their daughters or wives will engage in livelihood activities.

In fact, nearly three quarters (74%) of survey respondents **will not allow their female relatives to work** outside the home. The few FGD participants who were amenable to women working stipulated that women would either work from home, or alongside male relatives in order to ensure their safety and safeguard the family's reputation. Nonetheless, the FGDs found that women themselves want to work and are eager for training. **Almost all women involved in the FGDs have skills** related to tailoring, embroidery, weaving, domestic service or teaching. In terms of job preferences for women, the survey revealed a strong inclination for work related to tailoring; teaching, particularly at religious schools (madrassas); and kitchen gardening.



SUPPORT NEEDED IN AFGHANISTAN (FDGS)



In terms of the **support which RIS respondents require for livelihood activities in Afghanistan**, there is a strong need for financial assistance to set-up small businesses (56%) and support to find suitable employment (26%). There is also a clear need for vocational and educational training, called for by 30% and 7% of respondents, respectively.

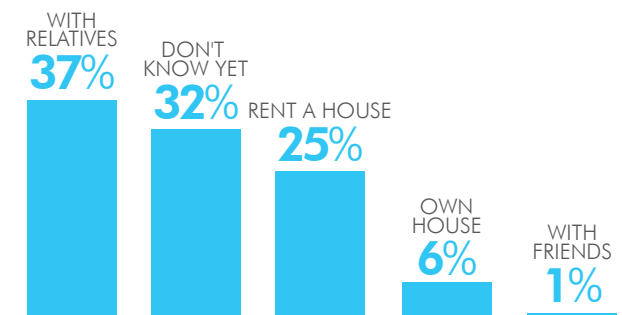
The **FGDs** stressed that the **support which returnees most need** is tied to **security, shelter and land, employment opportunities and financial assistance** – both to begin their new lives and to set-up businesses.

Support for their basic needs was also highlighted, including health care, food, education, clean water and sanitation. Support for registration was emphasised, as participants feel that legal documentation will make their lives significantly easier, both in Afghanistan and if they attempt to return to Pakistan legally.

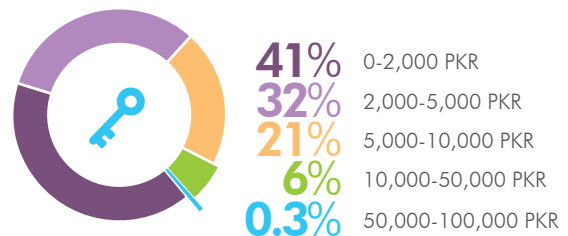
Most respondents indicated **vague plans in terms of their living arrangements in Afghanistan**, or no plans at all (32%). Well over one-third will live with relatives (37%) or friends (1%). Only 6% plan to live in their own homes, indicating that most undocumented Afghans do not have homes to return to and are unable or unwilling to purchase homes in the country.

Nearly half (41%) indicated that they will only be able to pay the most modest rents of up to PKR 2,000 per month (approximately USD 18), while 32% felt they can afford rents of PKR 2,000 – 5,000 (USD 18-47). Less than a quarter (21%) can afford rents of PKR 5,000 – 10,000 (USD 47-90) and only 6% are able to pay between PKR 10,000 – 50,000 (USD 90-475). No households feel they are able to afford more than this sum. This will be a major challenge for returning families particularly since, as mentioned above, the average rental price for a family house in the province of Nangarhar has risen to USD 77.50 in 2016.²⁷ Moreover, both the survey and the FGDs found that respondents tend to have unrealistic expectations of what is available and what they can afford.

WHERE WILL YOU LIVE IN AFGHANISTAN?

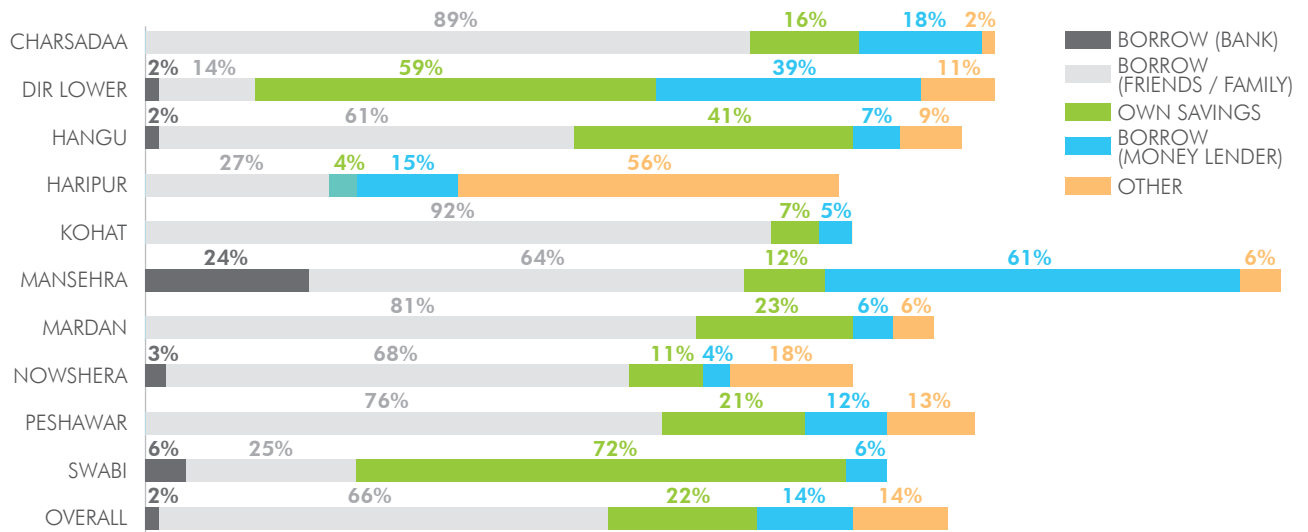


HOW MUCH RENT WILL YOU BE ABLE TO PAY?



²⁷ Oxfam (2017) *Labour and Housing market systems in Nangarhar Province, Eastern Afghanistan (Complex Conflict, Displacement, and Returnee Influx): Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis Full Report*. Kabul: Oxfam International and AHEAD. Available: http://fcluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/nangarhar_emma_report_-_final_12th_may_2017.pdf

ARRANGEMENTS FOR RENTAL PAYMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN

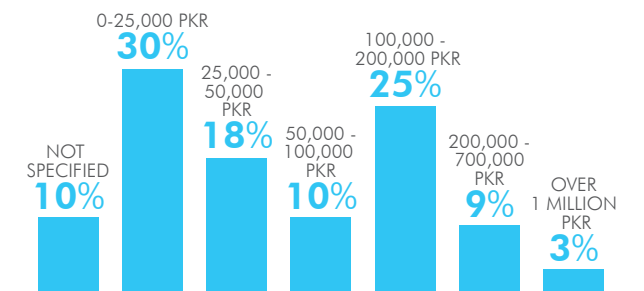


An extremely high proportion of respondents plan to borrow money to pay for rental payments, either from friends and family (66%), from money lenders (14%), or from banks (2%). Only 22% will be able to pay their rent from their own savings. Significant district variations are evident in terms of how respondents plan to pay for accommodation. While 89% of those who reside in Charsadda will rely on charity from relatives, 72% of those based in Swabi will be able to draw on their own savings. This appears tied to their current jobs and corresponding monthly income, discussed in Section 2.3.2. The high rate of those who stipulate that they will borrow from money lenders suggests the likelihood of undocumented returning Afghans falling prey to cycles of debt from which they may struggle to extract themselves, thus keeping families trapped in cycles of inter-generational poverty.

The chances of undocumented Afghans accumulating mounting debt are especially acute given their modest savings, largely generated by business activities (45%), household savings (48%) and productive assets (7%). One-third of the households surveyed have less than PKR 25,000 (USD 235) to their name. FGD participants noted that sums of a few hundred dollars are not sufficient for families to live on in Afghanistan.

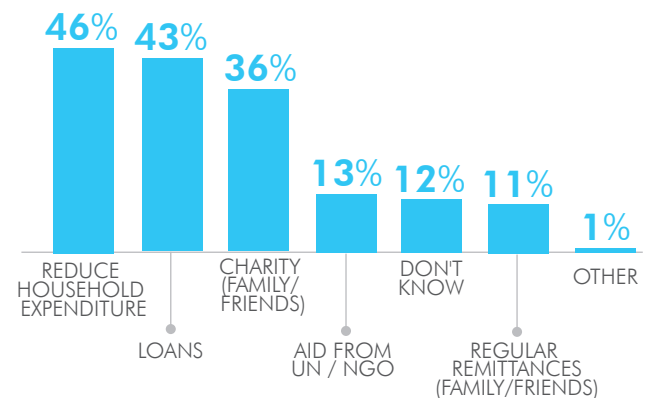
In the absence of livelihood opportunities, and without significant savings, respondents will seek to reduce household expenditure (46%); take out loans (43%); accept charity from relatives in Afghanistan, Pakistan and elsewhere (43%); try to access international aid (13%); or depend upon remittances from relatives (11%). These vague plans reinforce their dependence on borrowed funds, which will undoubtedly leave great swathes of undocumented Afghan returnees vulnerable and without recourse to regular, independent earnings.

INVESTMENTS AND SAVINGS



STRATEGIES

FOR INCOME GENERATION IN ABSENCE OF LIVELIHOODS



3 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



Undocumented Afghan nationals face unique challenges. In Pakistan, their undocumented status leaves them without recourse to basic services, subject to ever stricter regulations and border controls, and plagued by fear and uncertainty. Afghanistan's fragile humanitarian context and widening conflict mean that undocumented returnees are especially vulnerable – both on arrival and when they try to reintegrate after as many as three decades abroad. By shedding light on their profiles, vulnerabilities, return intentions and needs, IOM's Return Intentions Survey (RIS) offers a vital evidence base for effective immediate assistance and sustainable, long-term humanitarian and development programming.

Undocumented Afghans are clearly **attached to their homes and livelihoods in Pakistan**. As most fled Afghanistan in the 1980s, generally due to the chaos sparked by the Soviet-Afghan war, the majority of undocumented Afghan nationals have grown up in Pakistan – it is the only country that most of them have ever known. This must be borne in mind when devising solutions for them, especially as the **legal status of many Afghan households varies** – while one family member may be a registered refugee, another may be “undocumented”, a trend observed among one fifth of RIS respondents. The Government of Pakistan's drive to provide undocumented individuals with Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs) is a welcome move which should help to mitigate disparities in their legal status.

Pakistan's undocumented Afghan population is generally **poor and poorly educated** – many are completely illiterate. This has strong implications for their well-being in Afghanistan. Without an education, they will be unable to access more lucrative jobs. Dependence on daily wage labour is likely to keep families trapped in cycles of poverty, especially if their children's education is forfeited in the interests of them joining the labour force early to supplement their family's income. This is especially likely in the case of more vulnerable households, such as female headed-households, those whose members have disabilities or health problems, and those headed by elderly individuals who are unable to work.

While most undocumented Afghans are confined to low-skilled, low-income work in Pakistan, many have become successful **small-scale entrepreneurs**. Nonetheless, their income is generally modest, typically matching or barely exceeding household expenditure. Thus, it is likely that most undocumented returnees will have little or no savings on which to rely upon their return. Many may become trapped in a vicious cycle of debt to finance their return. Provisions must be made to enable undocumented returnees to free themselves from debts, either to relatives, money lenders or banks, as well as to offer schemes that support their efforts to set-up businesses in Afghanistan.

Most undocumented Afghans are young and the majority are young men. This highlights the need to support skills development and employment opportunities, particularly for youths, to enable voluntary, sustainable returns to Afghanistan and provide real solutions for those who remain in Pakistan.

Women's lack of agency is a hindrance to documentation, as women are often unable to navigate the registration process without support from male relatives or community elders. Impediments also exist to their financial independence. Women, who represent a high proportion of "jobless" undocumented Afghans in Pakistan, may be unlikely to work in Afghanistan, given men's evident disinclination to allow their female relatives to work outside of their homes. Nevertheless, women themselves are eager to work and participate in vocational training. Measures are needed to support their access to employment and training – including, but not limited to, home-based employment. Given the palpable aversion to the prospect of women working outside the home, efforts are needed to engage communities, households, women and men to promote concrete avenues for women's empowerment.

Those undocumented Afghans who reside in KP are generally from provinces bordering Pakistan, especially the Afghan province of **Nangarhar and Kunar**. Most RIS respondents plan to return to their areas of origin or to major cities, signalling the need for significant investments, planning and services in these areas to support the influx of returnees.

The vast majority of undocumented Afghans do not want to leave Pakistan. Their tension was palpable throughout the RIS process – they are extremely worried about their prospects, exhibiting a high degree of uncertainty about the future. **Decisions to return are largely contingent on host community dynamics, employment prospects and Afghanistan's security context**.

Despite family ties in Afghanistan, undocumented Afghans are **not prepared for the move**. The bulk of respondents have made **no arrangements to facilitate their return**, with very few having informed families and/or friends, making financial arrangements or arranging for transportation. Most have nothing to "return to" – they lack land in Afghanistan, have no significant business ties in the country, and few livelihood prospects. They are not confident about their ability to make a living upon their return, with most intending to rely on daily wage labour or the charity of relatives to survive.

Most respondents also do not own property or significant fixed assets in Pakistan. Those who do are sufficiently desperate to **sell off their assets at below the market value**. Those without any assets will lack the "seed money" necessary for starting their new lives. Their predicament is especially dire as over two-thirds of respondents do not own movable assets which they will be able to take to Afghanistan, including even the most basic items, such as household goods, bedding and blankets, or livestock.

Upon returning, **priority needs** include shelter, security, employment and livelihoods, food aid, access to clean water and basic services, including health care and education. **Employment opportunities and security** are the twin needs which Afghans are most concerned about, both in Pakistan and in Afghanistan. The lack thereof is predominantly what drove them to leave their homeland in the first place, especially in the aftermath of the Soviet-Afghan war, and has often provoked their internal displacement within Pakistan.

Current needs in Pakistan include employment, job placement and vocational training, recognition of certification earned in the country and medical treatment. Obtaining legal documentation to remain in, return to, or to visit Pakistan legally is a key concern for undocumented migrants.

Undocumented Afghans **want both the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan to provide them with tangible support.** They especially require critical information regarding modalities of return, documentation and integration activities, to ensure that their return decisions are as well-informed as possible.

Mobile phones, text messages and the radio are by far the most popular **source of information** for RIS respondents. Their most pressing information needs concern the availability of housing and shelter, livelihood and income generating opportunities, and security conditions. This must be borne in mind by communications initiatives to maximise outreach and the dissemination of time-sensitive information about documentation and returns processes, including IOM's media information campaign.

Circular migration is a trend which consistently emerged during the survey. For instance, many undocumented Afghans were found to have been documented – however, they were repatriated to Afghanistan and returned to Pakistan as undocumented migrants. This pattern merits greater attention given the burdens it is likely to place on documentation processes and visa issuance.

Further **area-specific information on profiles and needs** is required to inform humanitarian programming in the future. For instance, an RIS exercise at the Chaman border crossing in Balochistan is likely to yield more varied information on travel to and from Afghanistan, as the border is more porous there than it is around the Torkham crossing in KP.

Thematic studies are needed on specific key issues, such health coverage, livelihoods and education facilities in host communities, beginning with districts in KP with a high population density of undocumented Afghans. Such studies should ideally be extended to include Balochistan and urban centres, including Karachi, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Lahore.



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