

POPULATION MOVEMENT BULLETIN

The *Population Movement Bulletin*, published by the UN in Afghanistan, highlights issues of population movement as it relates to Afghanistan and is designed to consolidate the large amount of media coverage and many statistics into one place. The *Bulletin* includes trends in internal displacement, population movement to and from neighbouring countries and Europe, and policy developments and programme responses, drawing upon public sources as well as information gathered by the agencies, funds and programmes of the UN system, particularly those working on issues related to population movement – nationally and internationally – and the challenges faced by these groups of people.

Commentary

Since initiating the Population Movement Bulletin in March 2016, we have argued that the needs of those on the move – in their different categories – are pressing, but that short-term responses driven by political pressures do not offer a solution that will endure for either Afghanistan or the countries hosting its citizens. At the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, the Government and international community are focusing on Afghanistan's significant national development needs at the same time as large numbers of Afghans – some forecast possibly as many as 250,000 by the end of the year – return to the country. The scale of these demands underlines the challenges facing the country.

Those returning between now and Spring of 2017 will have humanitarian needs; traditionally, returns to Afghanistan have dwindled from the late Summer, simply due to the weather making it a hard job for people to travel and start to re-build their lives. The massive upsurge in returns to Afghanistan have prompted the launch of a Flash Appeal, seeking US\$150 million to support the humanitarian response to meet the needs of rapidly increasing numbers of new people on the



Brussels Conference on AFGHANISTAN

4-5 October 2016

PARTNERSHIP FOR PROSPERITY AND PEACE

The Brussels Conference on Afghanistan presents a major opportunity for the country and its long-term development. The present pressing demands of population movement should not distract from that – otherwise, they will simply become cyclical and repetitive

move, including the newly displaced, returns and undocumented Afghan returnees. At the same time, Afghanistan has terrific development needs – the country has made huge progress against a swathe of development indicators since 2002, but the scale of the remaining challenges is immense.

We look forward to the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan extending the international commitments made to Afghanistan in recent years – indications at this stage are that there will be strong support for the country over the next 4-5 years.

We also hope that international partners will avoid seeing Afghanistan's challenges as

competing, requiring either humanitarian or development assistance. The solutions for the massive numbers of Afghans displaced – internally, and those outside its borders – lie in long-term and enduring responses, even when there is a pressing demand driven by people on the move now.

We welcome the Government's foresight in incorporating long-term responses to displacement in the development framework that will be presented to the Brussels Conference, and encourage international partners to continue to support both immediate humanitarian needs and durable solutions in line with the Government's vision.

Latest News Headlines

EU's secret ultimatum to Afghanistan: accept 80,000 deportees or lose aid

September 28 - When international donors and the Afghan Government convene in Brussels next week, the EU secretly plans to threaten Afghanistan with a reduction in aid if the war-torn country does not accept at least 80,000 deported asylum seekers.

According to a leaked restricted memo the EU will make some of its aid "migration sensitive", even while acknowledging that security in Afghanistan is worsening.

More at The Guardian <http://bit.ly/2cL4JmQ>

IOM: Migrant Arrivals in Europe Decreasing but Death Toll Rising

September 28 - The number of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe has fallen sharply this year but migration to the continent has grown more deadly, according to new data released by IOM.

From January 1 through September 25, 302,149 migrants and refugees entered Europe by sea, a drop of more than 40 percent from the same period last year, the IOM — the largest migration organization in the world — reported.

More at Greek Reporter

<http://bit.ly/2d8HdTG>

Afghan refugees have settled in Pakistan for decades. Now they're being ordered to leave.

September 25 - Saeed Hamid's restaurant is covered with touristic murals from Afghanistan. But Hamid's nostalgia stops right there. His parents fled their conflicted homeland before he was born, and he grew up in Pakistan's capital.

So it is easy to understand his anxiety about the future. In the past year, more than 250,000 undocumented Afghan refugees have returned to their impoverished, insurgent-plagued country under pressure from Pakistani authorities.

More at Washington Post

<http://wapo.st/2dkLP4j>

Austria Pledges to Protect EU's Outer Borders to Control Illegal Migration

September 24 - Austria's chancellor vowed Saturday to better protect the European Union's outer borders to curb illegal migration, as he held a summit with his German, Greek and West Balkans counterparts to debate strategies to deal with Europe's migrant crisis.

More at WSJ <http://on.wsj.com/2dF123L>

Finding Europe Untenable, More Migrants Return To Their Home Countries

September 23 - The International Organization for Migration says more people are opting to voluntarily return to their home countries, rather than staying in host countries as migrants. In a report released Friday, the IOM says it assisted more than 51,000 people leaving host countries, most of them leaving Europe, in the first six months of 2016.

More at NPR <http://n.pr/2ctGOK8>

Forced repatriation of Afghan refugees worst example of cruelty: Fazal-ur-Rehman

September 22 - A prominent Pakistani politician and religious scholar Maulana Fazlur Rehman has slammed the Pakistani government for its hard stance against the Afghan refugees, saying forced repatriation of Afghan refugees is the worst example of cruelty.

More at Khaama Press

<http://bit.ly/2cD9mfz>

Relief Web provides the latest humanitarian and development information on Afghanistan. <http://reliefweb.int/country/afg>

Population Movements: IDP Trends in 2016

Conflict Induced Displacements (as of 25 September 2016) Actual displacements between 1 January 2016 and 18 September 2016

From 1 January 2016 to 18 September 2016, 271,584 individuals fled their homes due to conflict. A total of 31 out of 34 provinces had recorded some level of forced displacement. Constrained humanitarian access hinders assessments, thus preventing verification of the full extent of displacement and undermining the provision of assistance and services. Displacement affects all individuals differently with needs, vulnerabilities and protection risks evolving over time due to exhaustion of coping mechanisms and only basic emergency assistance provided following initial displacement. Inadequate shelter, food insecurity, insufficient access to sanitation and health facilities, as well as a lack of protection, often result in precarious living conditions that jeopardises the well-being and dignity of affected families.

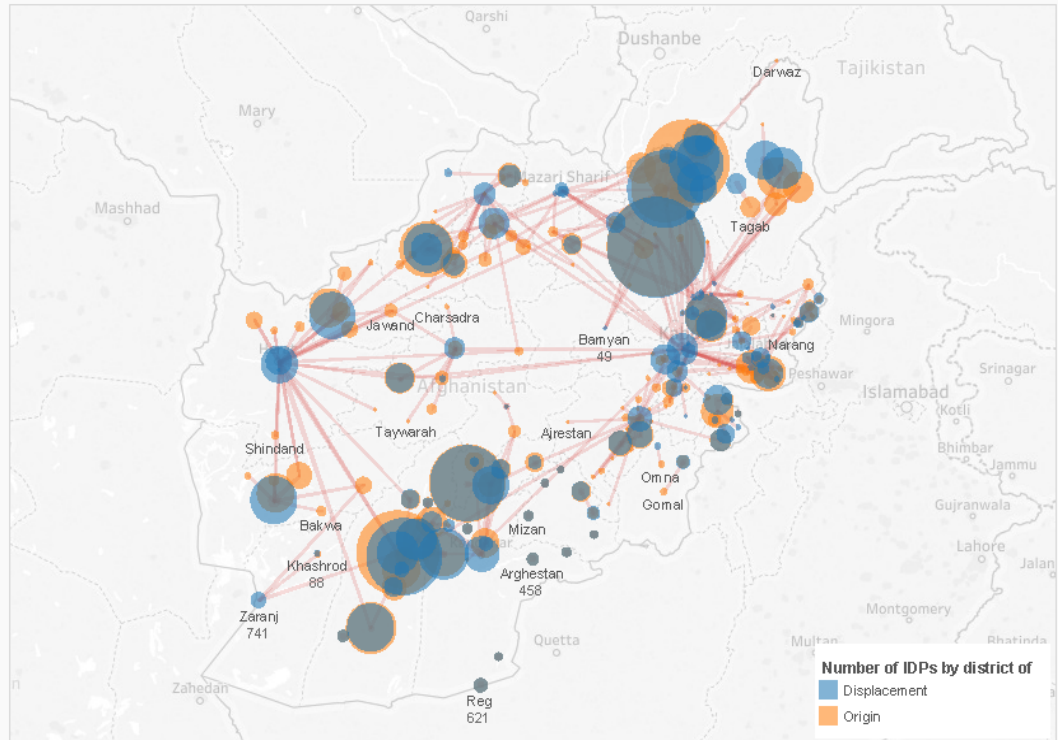
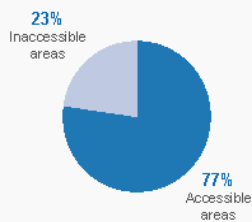
Time period

1 January 2016 to 18 September 2016

Key figures

- Individuals displaced **271,584**
- Families **39,169**
- Adult male **22%**
- Adult female **23%**
- Children under 18 **56%**

Percentage of IDPs within accessible and inaccessible areas (2016)



Locations with displacements

- 31** out of **34** provinces
- 184** out of **399** districts

Locations hosting IDPs

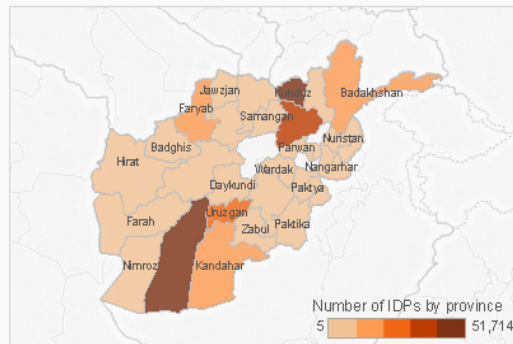
- 34** out of **34** provinces
- 114** out of **399** districts

Organisations involved in assessments

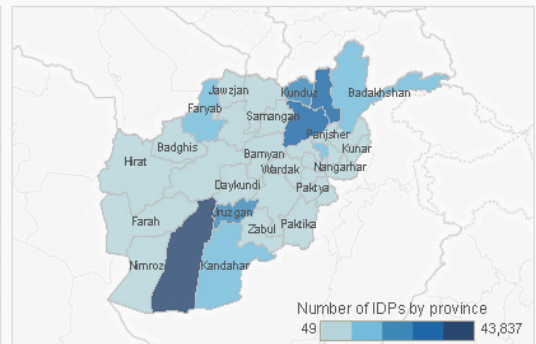
50 organisations

ACF AFGHANAID ADA APA ANDMA
 ARPD ACTED ARAA CARE CDC
 CONCERN CHA CRDSA CTG
 DACAAR DRC DORR DORRD
 FOCUS HN-TPO HRDA HAPA IDSH
 IMC IOM IRC MA MMRC ME
 NRC OHD OHW OTHER PEVO PIN
 PU-AMI NPO/RRAA SCI SFL
 SOLIDARITES SI SCA UNICEF
 UNHCR WSTA WAW WOW WFP
 WHO ZOA

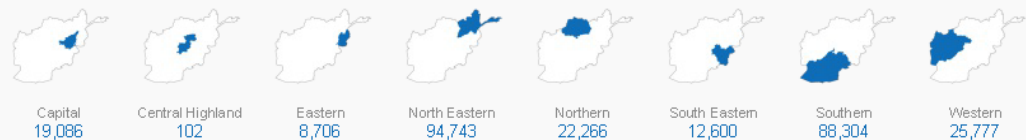
Province of origin



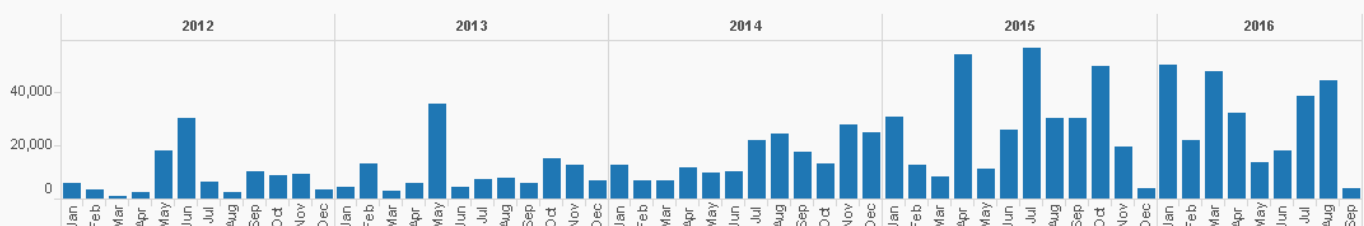
Province of displacement



Regional overview (click on the maps below to filter by region)



Monthly trends (2012 to 2015)



Notes: Newly displaced population due to conflict as of. All compiled by OCHA sub offices based on inter-agency assessment results. Assessments are ongoing in the field and these numbers are expected to change as new information becomes available. IDPs data for 2015 and earlier from IDP Task Force / UNHCR Population Movement Tracking System (PMT). Datasets used to create this dashboard can be downloaded from the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) website: <http://aoo.gl/KBczq>
Feedback: mailto:ocha-afg@un.org **Website:** <http://afg.humanitarianresponse.info>

Population Movements

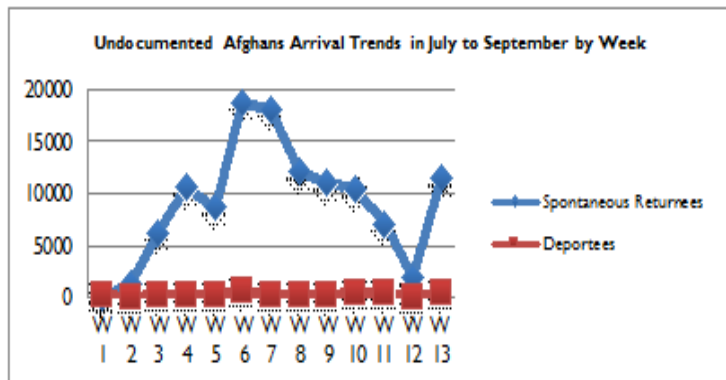
Return of undocumented Afghans from Pakistan

Weekly Update as of 24 September 2016

From 18-24 September, a total of **11,873 undocumented Afghans** spontaneously returned or were deported from Pakistan through Nangarhar and Kandahar Province’s Torkham and Spin Boldak border crossing points according to the Border Monitoring Team of the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR). Out of the total, **11,455** were spontaneous returnees in family groups and **418** were deported individuals.

The total number of returnees and deported undocumented Afghans during the week of 18—24 September, represents an **82% increase** in comparison with last week. The renewed spike in the influx of returnees is projected to continue post Eid and ahead of winter weather.

IOM assisted **2,785 (23%)** undocumented Afghans out of the total number of returnees through the Torkham crossing with post-arrival humanitarian assistance including meals and accommodation at the IOM Transit Center, NFIs for families, special assistance to Persons with Specific Needs (PSNs), a one-month food ration from WFP and family and hygiene kits from UNICEF.



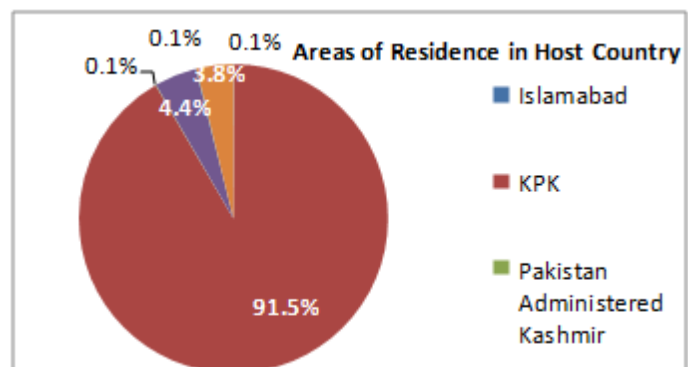
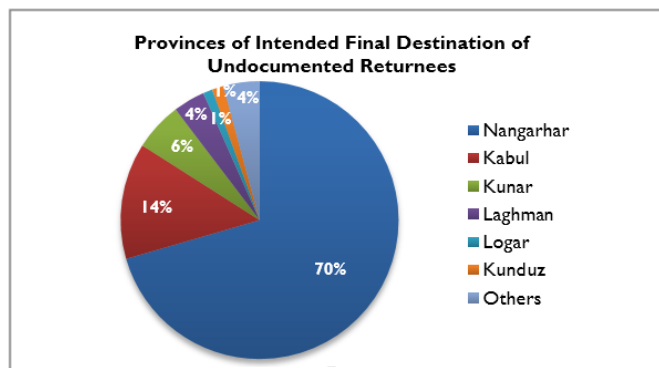
Average Daily Totals: 2015 vs. 2016

Type of Returnee	2015	2016	Comparison
Spontaneous Undocumented Individuals	344/day	515/day	33% Increase
Deported Undocumented Individuals	47/day	73/day	35% Increase

Returnee Projections from August—December 2016:

The daily average return from 1 August to 24 September stands at a combined **1,717** from Torkham and Spin Boldak crossings. If this trend continues, the total projection for September would be **51,511** and **206,042** for the remainder of 2016. The most vulnerable population from the total for the coming 4 months would equal **82,417**. IOM can assist up to **10,432** individuals over the coming 4 months at current funding levels.

From 01 January to 31 August 2016, the DoRR Border Monitoring Team registered 17,251 families (103,730 individuals) who returned through Torkham into Afghanistan. The below charts represent the findings of this registration showing the top six provinces of intended final destination as well as the areas of residence in Pakistan.

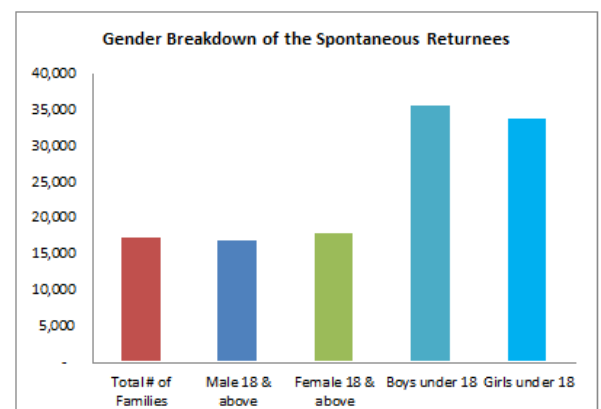


Number of Undocumented Returnees in 2016 (Torkham & Spin Boldak)

Gender Breakdown of the Returnees January—August 2016

Date	Spontaneous Returnees		Deportees		Total
	Torkham	Spin Boldak	Torkham	Spin Boldak	
Jan - 2016	676	1,090	1,448	1,390	4,604
Feb - 2016	930	886	1,172	1,401	4,389
Mar - 2016	1,784	1,092	1,613	736	5,225
Apr - 2016	3,901	678	2,262	1,148	7,989
May - 2016	3,605	1,377	1,121	669	6,772
Jun - 2016	1,803	1,446	1,033	631	4,913
Jul - 2016	26,724	1,139	1,133	339	29,335
Aug - 2016	64,284	1,517	1,392	524	67,717
Sep 1 - 3	4,334	188	131	211	4,864
Sep 4 - 10	6,671	502	341	274	7,788
Sep 11 - 17	1,848	193	74	79	2,194
Sep 18 - 24	10,430	1,025	110	308	11,873
Totals	126,990	11,133	11,830	7,710	157,663

The findings of the initial registration of the undocumented family returnees from Pakistan via the Torkham border from 01 January to 31 August 2016



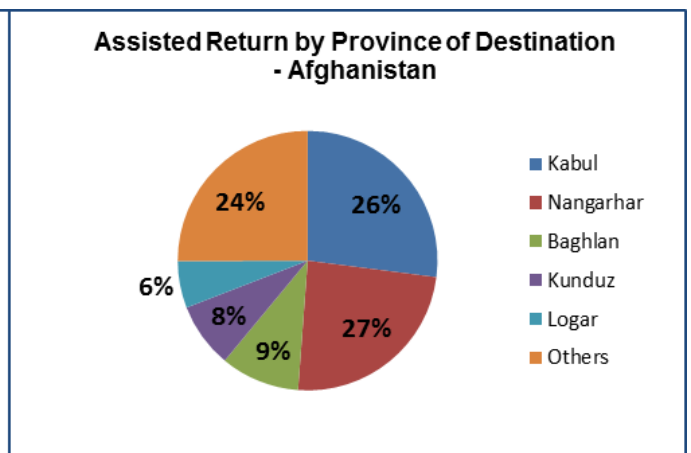
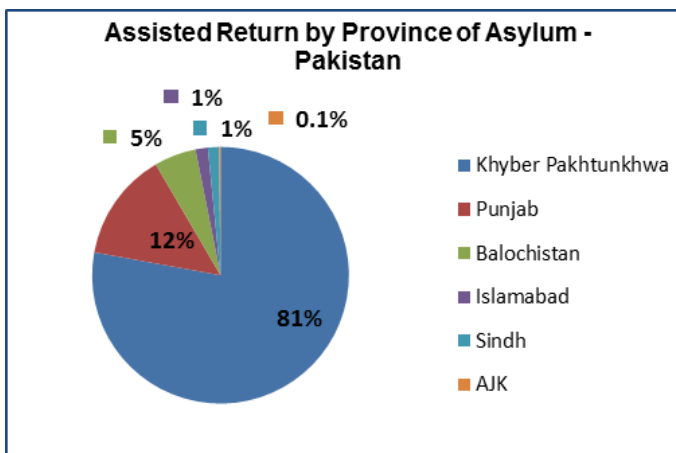
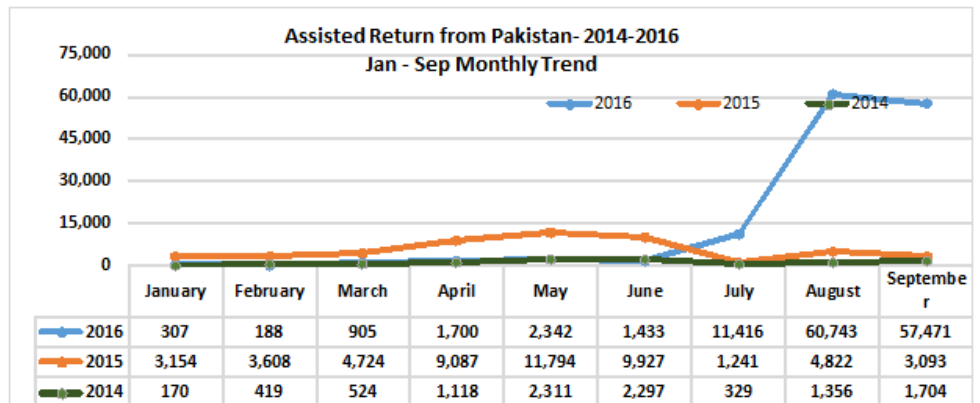
Repatriation of Registered Afghan Refugees

As of 24 September, 137,860 Afghan refugees have returned with 135,765 (98.5%) from Pakistan, 1,971 from Iran, and 124 from other countries. Of those from Pakistan, 81% came from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province followed by 12% from Punjab.

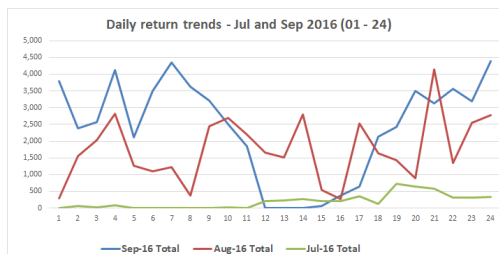
The rate of return of Afghan refugees through UNHCR's organised repatriation is increasing significantly; 7,804 Afghans returned in the first six months, compared to over 130,000 since July.

Return trends in the last week have shown a rapid increase, with an average 3,560 per day. These numbers are expected to increase further given that many families are leaving after Eid, tribal elders are advising Afghans to return and the numbers of individuals registering at the VRCs in Pakistan have reached over 6,000 people per day.

76% of Afghan refugees are returning to five provinces: Kabul, Nangarhar, Baghlan, Kunduz and Logar.



The significant spike in return has coincided with a deterioration of the environment for Afghan refugees in several areas of Pakistan, in particular Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province with decreased acceptance by hosting communities and local authorities, loss of self-reliance opportunities and the uncertainty of the renewal of PoR cards beyond March 2017. Undocumented Afghans remain even more exposed to episodes of harassment and detention.



Date	Pakistan				Iran			
	2015	2016	Difference compared to 2015		2015	2016	Difference compared to 2015	
	Individuals	Individuals	Weekly Ind	Weekly %	Individuals	Individuals	Weekly Ind	Weekly %
26 Jun - 02 Jul	251	190	(61)	-24%	64	22	(42)	-66%
03 Jul - 09 Jul	176	81	(95)	-54%	47	50	3	6%
10 Jul - 16 Jul	134	982	848	633%	58	156	98	169%
17 Jul - 23 Jul	31	2,929	2,898	9348%	52	104	52	100%
24 Jul - 30 Jul	839	6,182	5,343	637%	162	107	(55)	-34%
31 Jul - 06 Aug	1,150	10,101	8,951	778%	76	141	65	86%
7 Aug - 13 Aug	1,365	11,967	10,602	777%	70	106	36	51%
14 Aug - 20 Aug	846	9,979	9,133	1080%	78	97	19	24%
21 Aug - 27 Aug	1,461	18,185	16,724	1145%	74	93	19	26%
28 Aug - 03 Sep	876	19,850	18,974	2166%	148	108	(40)	-27%
04 Sep - 10 Sep	1,054	23,362	22,308	2117%	94	74	(20)	-21%
11 Sep - 17 Sep	829	2,901	2,072	250%	110	24	(86)	-78%
18 Sep - 24 Sep	152	22,304	22,152	14574%	71	59	(12)	-17%
Total	51,268	135,765²	84,497	165%	2,406	1,971	(435)	-18%

1 The numbers for September 2016 are as of 24 September, hence the apparent drop. The numbers for 2014 and 2015 are for the entire month
 2 Between 26 June and 17 September, 106,709 people returned. This chart compares recent weekly trends between 2015 and 2016.

Policy Development

Saving our ship: A global response to refugees and migrants

By Ban Ki-moon UNSG

Perhaps no issue on the global agenda is more susceptible to manipulation by grandstanding demagogues than refugees and migrants. 'Us' versus 'them' is a timeless if irresponsible unifier, used throughout history to obscure our common humanity by those with dangerously self-serving interests. The difference now is that more people are on the move than ever before, and in an era when storylines spread with viral speed, we see xenophobia rising and too often erupting into violence.

This week's United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants represents a breakthrough at a breaking point. With so many shrill voices dominating the debate, governments from around the world are responding in measured tones that can yield real results if promises are kept.

The Summit marks the first-ever gathering of top leaders to discuss refugees and migrants. It will adopt a groundbreaking consensus agreement: the New York Declaration. Fittingly, that document honours a city renowned for its vibrant diversity, symbolized by the Statue of Liberty standing tall in New York Harbor. Most importantly, the Declaration sets a principled and pragmatic approach for addressing the challenges of people on the move while upholding our most cherished values.

The stakes are high. There are 244 million migrants in the world. More than 65 million people are now forcibly displaced. Half of them are children. Refugees running for their lives too often face grave dangers on their journey to safety. When they arrive, many suffer discrimination and even detention. Facing difficulties in a mobile world, they often travel farther in search of safety and stability. But legal pathways are scarce, and unscrupulous smug-

glers take advantage, charging exorbitant sums for a risky chance to escape.

Wars are lasting longer and refugees are finding it harder to return home – with the length of displacement in some cases stretching across generations.



People on the move. Photo: ©N Bishop/IOM 2016.

Contrary to prevailing impressions, the vast majority of refugees are not in rich countries; 86 percent are in the developing world. And the poorer countries hosting refugees do not receive nearly enough help. Last year, United Nations humanitarian appeals received barely more than half the funds that were sought.

Resettlement options are also a fraction of what they should be. Nearly a million people were identified as needing resettlement in 2015, but just over 100,000 received it.

The challenges are enormous – but we should not forget the benefits. With the right approach, refugees and migrants can bring benefits to both their adoptive societies and their home countries. This well-documented upside should not be lost in the debate.

The New York Declaration should be seen in the wider context of new and ambitious international efforts to improve conditions where people live so they are not forced to leave. Central to this is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, our global plan for peace and prosperity on a healthy planet. We are also pushing to prevent and resolve conflicts – and to sustain peace once the guns fall silent.

The Summit will feature testimony from those directly affected. I am especially looking forward to meeting again with an extraordinary young woman I first encountered last month at the Olympic Games in Rio.

Yusra Mardini is Syrian – but she competed on the new refugee team established for athletes who, like millions of other people around the world, have been forced out of their homelands.

Before she swam in races, Yusra was in a race to save lives.

Last year, she left Syria on an overcrowded boat. When its engine died, she dove into the Aegean Sea and started pushing the vessel, along with a few other swimmers among the group. It took a grueling three hours to reach the shore. They arrived exhausted – but they had proven the power of human solidarity to ferry us to safety.

Humanity is together in one boat. Stoking fear, blaming the 'other' or scapegoating minorities will only increase the dangers for all.

Wise leaders understand that we should instead endeavour to save everyone, optimize the contributions of each, and steer our common ship to our shared destination: a future of opportunity and dignity for all.

Humanitarian crisis unfolds in eastern Afghanistan

By Nassim Majidi, PhD

Co-founder of Samuel Hall, a research think tank based in Kabul, Afghanistan.

A humanitarian crisis is unfolding in eastern Afghanistan. Daily, thousands of undocumented and documented Afghan families are returning across the Pakistani-Afghan border. In mid-August, there were an estimated 113,378 returns. (1) In the West, an additional group of deportees continues to arrive daily from Iran to Herat and Nimroz, with an average of 30,000 deportees per month. (2) Their situation is the latest recurrence of migration crises in the region and in Afghanistan. With host countries pushing for returns at an uncertain and insecure time for Afghanistan, the international community and the Government of Afghanistan face three key challenges:

How to envisage returns – and integration – when civilian casualties have hit a record high, with over 5,166 killed or injured in the first half of 2016? (3)

How to protect the asylum space in the region and think about durable solutions beyond return?

How to support families' returns in a meaningful way, from both a humanitarian and early recovery perspective, all the way to a development perspective?

To these three challenges, this article provides three recommendations to frame discussions at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan (BCA), co-hosted by the European Union and the Government of Afghanistan early next month (October 4-5, 2016).

Regionally, *post deportation monitoring* is needed to "improve refugee policy and prevent refoulement" (4) (i.e. the forced return of refugees and asylum seekers to a country where they are liable to be subjected to persecution). A key recommendation of the UNHCR report on the Annual Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations is to draw on post-deportation monitoring to inform decisions. Such post-deportation monitoring needs to integrate a cross-border dimension, with monitoring teams able to ensure evidence is independently collected on the profiles of returnees, drivers of return and conditions of return.

Nationally, the Government of Afghanistan, civil society and the international community need to work together to go beyond categories of 'people of concern' – to see beyond the documented/undocumented returnee dichotomy. There are over one million Afghan refugees in Pakistan who are undocumented, without basic protection and under threat of forced return. Their situation needs to be addressed in Pakistan and in Afghanistan alike. The International

Organization for Migration has taken over the brunt of the assistance – but one organisation cannot cover all needs. NGO partners have called for a more contextualized and just response to both registered and unregistered returnees and for UNHCR to step in at a time of a growing humanitarian crisis.

Locally, in the East, the possibility of this crisis spreading is clear. Urban absorption capacities are being overstretched, with most returns centered on the city of Jalalabad. This trend does not bode well for social cohesion, economic security or overall wellbeing of host and returnee communities. Integration and wellbeing measures, price indices and inflation will all worsen an already volatile situation.

Data collected by Samuel Hall since 2008 has consistently shown that deportees and forced returnees fare worse than other returnee groups – especially when they are not assisted. These figures, and the context, demand equal attention be given to forced and voluntary returns and documented and undocumented families and individuals. A successful response requires a three-tiered strategy at regional, national and local levels. It is not possible to put forward legal categories when humanitarian indicators point to such an emergency in one of the world's strategic borderlands.

(1) IOM (2016a) Weekly Report for the Year 2016_20160821.

(2) (2016b) Return of Undocumented Migrants from Pakistan-Updates as of 20th August; (2016b) *Cross Border Return and Reintegration: Return and Deportation of Undocumented Afghans from Iran and Pakistan*, January-March 2016.

(3) UNAMA (2016) Protection of civilians in armed conflict Mid-Year Report, July 2016, Afghanistan.

(4) UNHCR (2016), Report on the Annual Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations, 15-17 June 2016, Geneva, Switzerland.

Programmatic Responses

Humanitarian assistance for undocumented Afghan returnees

Undocumented Afghan families make the hard 'choice' to come home

Nicholas Bishop

Afghanistan's Torkham border crossing with Pakistan is the country's busiest. Nestled between imposing mountains on either side with nothing but stony outcroppings for as far as the eye can see, the bustling highway is an economic lifeline for a country that continues to struggle with a violent insurgency. The road to Jalalabad is lined with a thriving market that sells everything from vegetables to used car parts from half a world away. Approaching the stone arch that signifies the end of Afghanistan and the entry into Pakistan, towering, rainbow colored lorries ply the road alongside men pushing wheel barrows filled with every possible type of merchandise and not infrequently family members.



Traders ply the road towards the Pakistani border arch. Photo: ©N Bishop/IOM 2016.

From the opposite direction a slow parade of men, women and children are reluctantly returning home. Some to a country they barely know after decades spent in an exile which for some began in 1979 when the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan. Undocumented Afghan returnees, as many as 1.5 million of whom reside in the border regions within Pakistan's tribal areas, are those persons who don't hold identity documents from Afghanistan or Pakistan nor do they have refugee status in Pakistan. They are increasingly coming under pressure from local authorities to return home leaving undocumented Afghans little choice but to take the tortuous decision to exit their adopted country and enter into the unknown where they may or may not have relatives who can help bridge the transition to life back at 'home'.

From January to June 2016 only 33,000 undocumented Afghans chose to make the return journey from Pakistan but in July alone a further 29,000 people crossed the border. In August, this number rocketed to nearly 70,000 additional arrivals. The week of 18-24 September saw one of the highest number of returnees this year with over 11,000 persons crossing the frontier. IOM's mission in Afghanistan is projecting that as many as 407,000 returnees may come back by 31 December 2016. Many are coming with next to no possessions after travel made in haste. Others have managed to demolish their homes and pack rented trucks sky-high to the point of tipping over with building supplies,

livestock, food and personal possessions with family members riding on the pinnacle of these awe-inspiring moving mountains.

On 21 September, IOM together with UNICEF, OCHA, UNHCR and WFP led a joint assessment mission to the border area. IOM is the lead agency providing services and post-arrival assistance to the most vulnerable undocumented Afghan returnees.

Chenoor Gul, 75, has a long white beard, a tanned face and impressive hands that speak volumes about a life that has been hard fought. Fleeing his home in the late 1970s in the midst of the war against the Soviets, Chenoor built a life over 45 years spent in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Working as a daily labourer to support his three sons, wife and new grandchild, he made the difficult decision to leave Pakistan after a series of nighttime raids over the past 2 months by police forces convinced him it wasn't safe to stay any longer. He broke up his simple home and put together what possessions he could before paying the exorbitant USD 300 equivalent cost of hiring a truck and crossing the border.

"I have nothing in Afghanistan- no land, no family- I am a stranger here but I will do my best to start a new life for my family. We want to live in dignity." Chenoor repeatedly shakes his head and removes his turban emphasizing his sense of hopelessness.

Chenoor is fortunate that he has been able to bring some supplies with him but his wife suffers from hypertension and he expresses concerns about being able to care for her while seeking shelter in a land which is foreign to his children.

His exhaustion frequently bubbles to the surface as he is on the verge of tears. An IOM staff member extends a comforting hand in reassurance and directs Chenoor, as the head of his family, to the Department of Refugees and Repatriation's registration office where his personal information is collected and he is issued with an entry document.

After this process is completed, IOM screening staff are on hand to assess his case to see if he and his family fall within well-established vulnerability criteria. Based on his advanced age and his wife's condition IOM will provide him and his family with a post-arrival assistance package. Three kilometers from the border towards Jalalabad city, IOM maintains a Transit Center where undocumented returnees are registered for assistance, given a medical checkup with TB screening and vaccinations, a hot meal, there are limited overnight accommodation facilities for 30 families and a package of non-food items which includes household and kitchen items and blankets plus a one-month food ration from the World Food Programme to help them start life anew.

IOM currently assists 100-120 families a day (700-840 persons) or roughly 20% of the daily influx from Pakistan through the Tork-

ham crossing. On 16 September, as part of a broader UN emergency Flash Appeal, IOM launched its own appeal to the international community for an additional USD 20.9 million in order to scale up its staff presence on the border and at the Transit Center with improved services and distribution packages for as many as 136,000 returnees by the end of the year. 15 November marks a deadline set by the Pakistani government for all undocumented Afghans to acquire a passport and valid visa. Chances of this happening on time seem slim to nil.

One of Chenoor's main concerns ahead of winter is finding a home for his family. "Finding shelter for my family is my priority. Many Afghans are returning home now and it will be difficult for us to begin again especially before the cold and wet weather days in the winter. We need land and a place to live," insists Chenoor as the worry on his face intensifies. At his age most men are well into retirement but he does not have the luxury.

The Afghan government has actively encouraged the undocumented to return to Afghanistan with promises of land allocations in spite of the ongoing conflict, lack of jobs and inflationary impacts the surge in returnees is already having on local rent and commodity prices. Nangarhar province now hosts up to 120,000 undocumented returnees or 90% of the total in 2016. Rents have doubled in the past two months in several districts around Jalalabad while there has been a corresponding rise in fuel costs and a drop in daily wage labour. The sizeable returnee population is putting a strain on already



IOM's Transit Centre near Torkham where undocumented Afghan returnees can receive assistance. Photo: ©N Bishop/IOM 2016.

stretched services with local area doctors recording over 80 patients per day.

At the Transit Center, Chenoor provides further detailed information as part of a Beneficiary Screening Assistance Form through an IOM staff member. He is given a beneficiary card and proceeds to bring his family inside the TC where they collect their food rations and household items. He is grateful for the assistance package with his daunting reintegration into life in Afghanistan looming overhead. His sons hoist their new supplies into their already crammed truck and the family drives off down the highway towards Nangarhar and an uncertain future.

Return of qualified Afghans: Coming home to help build back better

Reflections from Mr. Eskandary, an Afghan-Dutch national who temporarily returned to Afghanistan under IOM's Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals programme; which is funded by the Government of the Netherlands.

“From the beginning of my career, I have been dedicated to serving Afghanistan. I graduated from Kabul University in 1977, and after receiving my Master’s Degree in International Relations from Leicester University in 1984, I joined the Afghan diplomatic service where I worked for 12 years.

After the seizure of Kabul by the Taliban, safety became more and more of a concern. In 1997 I decided to immigrate to the Netherlands. Now I have Dutch nationality, and I am proud to be a Netherlander as well as an Afghan.

I served my native country for a long time, and still has always been my dream to serve Afghanistan and contribute to its peace and prosperity. Even after settling in Holland, I still wanted to come to my home land and

help my Afghan compatriots. That is why I was so grateful to IOM for giving me this opportunity to go back to Afghanistan and make my small contribution by sharing my knowledge and experience with the young diplomats in the Consulate Department of the

ministrative meetings to evaluate the department’s work and develop solutions for the challenges we faced; provided on-the-job training to staff members and helped them to do their jobs more effectively; prepared the monthly, quarterly and annual plans of the department; and worked on the machine-readable passport project, which is a critical initiative for the government and Afghan people.

Based on my past experience, I was also able to deliver a series of lectures for staff on topics ranging from globalization and skilled labour migration, humanitarian intervention theory and practice, and other diplomacy and security-related topics.

I believe my presence had a positive impact on the Ministry, and I would strongly recommend that this programme continue, and that more Afghan scholars and professionals from various fields return to help and advise Afghan institutions. Through this sharing of experience and knowledge, I am more confident and hopeful for a peaceful, progressive and democratic Afghanistan.”



Mr. Eskandary sharing ideas with MFA colleagues. Photo: IOM

Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During my assignment with the Ministry, I assisted the head of the Consulate Department with his duties; organized weekly ad-

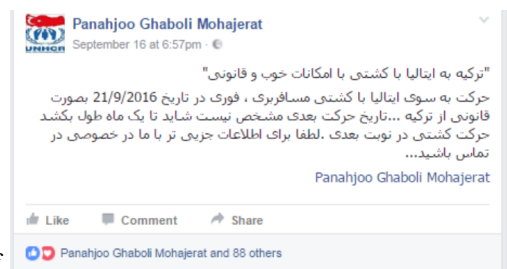
Communicating with communities: Key findings from UNHCR’s monitoring of social media traffic in Pashto and Dari

UNHCR’s *Communicating with Communities* initiative, which monitors social media traffic in Dari and Pashto to better understand trends and changes in popular opinion regarding migration options, has found increasing pessimism and despair among Afghan asylum seekers in Europe over what they see as their increasingly precarious fates. Over the past two weeks, social media traffic was dominated by criticism of the Afghan government for signing an agreement with Germany on the return of failed asylum seekers. In Norway, Afghans expressed concern regarding the growing number of rejected asylum claims among Afghans, linking apparent declining acceptance rates to the Afghan Government’s willingness to facilitate the return of failed asylum seekers. The reports are generally accompanied by debates over worsening security conditions within Afghanistan and bewilderment and sadness over the widely-perceived inability of the Afghan people to protect its people.

The burning of the overcrowded Moria refugee camp in Greece also attracted considerable social media traffic. According to an Afghan analyst, the incident occurred after a clash between Afghan and Syrian asylum seekers over the posting of new interview dates, underscoring the growing frustration and potential for conflict among groups who see themselves in competition for limited numbers of asylum slots.

Smugglers continue to adapt new methods of attracting customers via social media sites, often misusing the UNHCR logo to enhance credibility. One announcement advertised regular boats from Turkey to Italy, while another site advertised Schengen visas exclusively for Afghan families. The renewed

social media outreach appears to coincide with increased interest among young men in departing for Europe, as evidenced by a widely-shared and commented-upon Deutsche Welle report documenting an increasing trend of young men, encouraged by families, to find work in Kabul for the express purpose of eventual payments to smugglers. At the same time, refugees in Europe continue to report on the dangers of the journey, such as the potential for arrest en route in parts of Eastern Europe.



Programmatic Responses

Humanitarian Chief visits Afghanistan and launches Flash Appeal 2016

The UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O’Brien, made his first visit to Afghanistan on 6 to 7 September as the UN Humanitarian Chief. The USG called on the international community to scale up support to over one million people on the move who are anticipated to be displaced internally and across borders by the end of the year.

Afghanistan is facing a humanitarian crisis, as highly vulnerable families will experience the severity of Afghan winter, many for the first time. Over 5,000 displaced Afghans are returning from Pakistan every day. As a result of this sudden influx of returnees, the Humanitarian Community in Afghanistan decided to launch a Flash Appeal requesting around US\$150 million to support the humanitarian response to meet the needs of the spike in numbers of new people on the move, in-

cluding the newly displaced, returns and undocumented Afghan returnees.



USG Stephen O'Brien visits conflict-displaced children in Kabul. Photo: OCHA/Stacey Winston

“Families have lost their homes and livelihoods. Displaced people are living in tents, unable to feed their children and have had little or no formal education. This cyclical pattern of prolonged conflict must end to

avoid another of generation of children being lost to war and suffering.”

said the UN humanitarian chief concluding his two-day visit to Afghanistan.

During his mission to Afghanistan, Mr. O’Brien met with humanitarian partners, Government officials and the diplomatic community. The USG also visited with displaced families affected by the continued conflict in the Kabul Informal Settlement Site and the CHF-funded EMERGENCY (NGO) trauma hospital for the war-wounded.

The humanitarian impact of this prolonged conflict in Afghanistan is severe. More than 1.1 million people displaced from their homes by the conflict, including more than 271,000 people since the beginning of 2016. As the conflict ensues, humanitarian needs are increasing and access constraints have escalated.

Number of Assisted Undocumented Afghans at the Torkham crossing:

Date	Spontaneous Returnees		Deportees		Total
	Torkham	Spin Boldak	Torkham	Spin Boldak	
Jan - 2016	527	0	249	0	776
Feb - 2016	755	0	185	0	940
Mar - 2016	1,368	0	233	0	1,601
Apr - 2016	2,724	0	316	0	3,040
May - 2016	2,218	0	125	0	2,343
Jun - 2016	1,033	0	89	0	1,122
Jul - 2016	3,446	0	169	0	3,615
Aug - 2016	9,668	0	221	0	9,889
Sep 1 - 3	1,001	0	8	0	1,009
Sep 4 - 10	1,918	0	22	0	1,940
Sep 11-17	558	0	8	0	566
Sep 18 - 24	2,781	0	4	0	2,785
Totals	27,997	0	1,629	0	29,626

Partners Assisting Returnees in IOM Transit Center:

WFP: from 1 August to 24 September WFP provided one-month food ration to 1404 families (9,801 individuals) in addition to those 1180 families that have received the full package of post-arrival assistance from IOM which also includes a one-month food ration.

UNICEF: provided 1,055 families (7,385 individuals) with Hygiene and Sanitation and Family Kits, that include; bed nets, tarpaulins and jerry cans.

WHO: provided the IOM Transit Center Clinic with emergency medical kits and essential medicines for 1,000 individuals.

From 01 January to 24 September, IOM provided Post-arrival humanitarian assistance at the Torkham border to 29,627 undocumented Afghan returnee representing 21% of the overall number of returnees that entered Afghanistan via Torkham (138,820). The assistance included the following items and services:

- Initial screening and referral of identified beneficiaries by the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR) and secondary screening by OM;
- Provision of refreshments and meals once the returnees are identified as Persons with Specific Needs (PSNs);
- Distribution of hygiene kits and clothing to UAMs and other vulnerable cases;
- Transportation from the Zero Point to IOM’s Transit Centre 3km from the border;
- Distribution of non-food item (NFI) kits to families;
- Provision of UNICEF hygiene kits and UNFPA dignity kits to families;
- One-time distribution of WFP one-month food packages to families (to be expanded to 3-months);
- Provision of over-night accommodation for vulnerable cases before onward travel at the transit centre with meals, sanitation facilities and basic medical services;
- Health screening for Tuberculosis; vaccinations for polio and measles for children 10 and under; provision of basic essential medicines; ambulance service to hospital in Nangarhar for emergency cases with secondary referrals for serious and chronic illnesses;
- Protection screening and referral for psychosocial counselling;
- Special transportation arrangement for serious medical and single female cases;
- Transportation support from the Transit Centre to intended final destination.
- Registration of beneficiaries in the IOM database (launched in December 2012)