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Afghanistan: Compilation of Country of Origin Information (COI) Relevant for Assessing the Availability of an Internal Flight, Relocation or Protection Alternative (IFA/IRA/IPA) to Kabul

December 2019

This document provides decision-makers with relevant country of origin information (COI) for assessing the availability of an internal flight, relocation or protection alternative (IFA/IRA/IPA) in Kabul for Afghans who originate from elsewhere in Afghanistan and who have been found to have a well-founded fear of persecution in relation to their home area, or who would face a real risk of serious harm in their home area.

UNHCR recalls its position that given the current security, human rights and humanitarian situation in Kabul, an IFA/IRA is generally not available in the city. See: UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum-Seekers from Afghanistan*, 30 August 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b8900109.html>, p. 114.

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1. The relevance of Kabul as an IFA/IRA: the security situation for civilians in Kabul

1.1 Security Trends and Impact on Civilian Population in 2019

In its 2019 Quarterly Report covering the period from 1 January to 30 September 2019, UNAMA documented the “highest number of civilian casualties that it has recorded in a single quarter since it began systematic documentation in 2009”.¹ According to UNAMA, civilians living in Kabul, Nangarhar, Helmand, Ghazni, and Faryab were most directly impacted by the conflict within this reporting period, with the highest number of civilian casualties reported in Kabul province, namely 1,491.²

Similarly, for the period from 1 January – 31 May 2019, the NATO Resolute Support Mission reported that 15 percent of the total civilian casualties in Afghanistan occurred in Kabul Province (402 casualties).³

Action on Armed Violence reported that there were 1,013 civilian casualties from explosive violence across Afghanistan in July 2019, reportedly the highest number recorded since AOAV began monitoring casualties in October 2010.⁴ According to AOAV, Kabul was the city most impacted, “with almost a third of all civilian casualties occurring in the capital (30%)”.⁵

Timeline of Security Incidents in Kabul: January – September 2019

On 14 January 2019, a suicide vehicle-borne IED detonated near Green Village compound in Kabul City.⁶ Reporting on the event, UNAMA stated:

“Six civilians were killed and 140 injured, including 51 children and 18 women, which was the highest number of civilian casualties caused in any single incident in the first quarter of 2019. Many residential homes and businesses in the area suffered damage. Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.”⁷

On 7 March 2019 mortars were fired into a crowd of people in Kabul’s western neighborhood of Dasht-e-Barchi as the public gathered to mark the anniversary of the death of a prominent ethnic Hazara

¹ UNAMA, *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 September 2019*, 17 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2qAHo0Z>, p. 1.

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³ Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress*, 30 July 2019, <https://bit.ly/38IRnZ3>, p. 70.

⁴ Action on Armed Violence, *Worst Month for Afghan Civilians in over Eight Years of Casualty Recording*, 5 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P5dsDw>.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Aljazeera, *Fatal Blast Rocks Afghan Capital Kabul*, 15 January 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PuH5x0>; Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, *Four Killed, 90 Wounded in Kabul Car-Bomb Attack*, 14 January 2019, <https://bit.ly/2Pz4DkC>.

⁷ UNAMA, *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019*, 24 April 2019, <https://bit.ly/2LDfgS0>, p. 4. Taliban posted claims of responsibility on Twitter, available on: <https://bit.ly/2PvibbJ>.

leader.⁸ Sources reported that the attack killed 11 civilians⁹ and left between 95¹⁰ and 104¹¹ wounded. Daesh/ISKP claimed responsibility for the incident.¹²

On 16 March 2019 Khaama Press reported that, according to security officials, at least two people were killed or wounded in an explosion triggered by a magnetic bomb in Kabul city.¹³ The same source further noted that “[t]he anti-government armed elements have stepped up magnetic bomb attacks in Kabul city and other large cities and provinces of the country during the recent years”.¹⁴

In its 2019 Midyear update, UNAMA stated the following:

“UNAMA continues to express serious concern about the rising level of civilian harm as a result of aerial operations, particularly those conducted in support of Afghan forces on the ground and strikes on civilian structures. For instance, on 25 March at around 2200 hrs in Surobi district, Kabul, Afghan National Army and United States military forces conducted a search operation in a residential area of a local Taliban commander, which led to an exchange of fire with Taliban. Air support was called in, resulting in five civilians killed (including three women and one boy) and four injured (including three women). Resolute Support acknowledged in a media statement shortly after the incident that four women and one child were killed.”¹⁵

On 8 May 2019, the Taliban carried out an attack “using a vehicle-borne IED, small arms fire and grenades against Counterpart International, a non-governmental organization [...] claiming that the organization had ‘promoted inter-mixing between men and women’ and had ‘groomed Kabul administration security and other personnel in implementing pro-Western objectives’”.¹⁶ Reporting on the event, the BBC stated that “[s]ecurity forces exchanged gunfire with insurgents in the compound in the busy Shahr Naw area of the capital city”.¹⁷ According to UNAMA’s 2019 Midyear update, the attack resulted in “eight civilians killed and 27 injured. While none of the staff members of Counterpart International were among the victims, three staff members of the neighbouring CARE International NGO were among the dead”.¹⁸

In relation to events of July 2019, UNAMA reported that:

“On 1 July, the Taliban carried out a complex attack on the logistics and engineering hub of the Afghan Ministry of Defence in Kabul, causing 151 civilian casualties (7 deaths including one

⁸ Action on Armed Violence, *Mortar Attack on Shia Gathering Kills 11 in Afghanistan’s Capital*, 8 March 2019, <https://bit.ly/2LDfpF2>.

⁹ UNAMA, *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019*, 24 April 2019, <https://bit.ly/36ms9aX>, pp. 3-4.

¹⁰ Aljazeera, *Death Toll Rises to 11 in Attack on Shia Gathering in Kabul*, 8 March 2019, <https://bit.ly/356lXm7>; Action on Armed Violence, *Mortar Attack on Shia Gathering Kills 11 in Afghanistan’s Capital*, 8 March 2019, <https://bit.ly/2qzu1Ou>.

¹¹ UNAMA, *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019*, 24 April 2019, <https://bit.ly/38iltNO>, pp. 3-4.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4; Action on Armed Violence, *Mortar Attack on Shia Gathering Kills 11 in Afghanistan’s Capital*, 8 March 2019, <https://aoav.org.uk/2019/mortar-attack-on-shia-gathering-kills-11-in-afghanistans-capital/>.

¹³ The Khaama Press, *I Killed, Another Wounded in a Magnetic Bomb Explosion in Kabul City*, 16 March 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PtTO2V>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ UNAMA, *Midyear Update on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 June 2019*, 30 July 2019, <https://bit.ly/2E1iBWW>, p. 9.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3. See also, The Guardian, *Taliban Suicide Attack Targets Kabul Offices of US Aid Group*, 8 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/2t1sHVx>.

¹⁷ BBC News, *Taliban Attack US Aid Group’s Office in Kabul*, 8 May 2019, <https://bbc.in/2sc0wCl>.

¹⁸ UNAMA, *Midyear Update on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 June 2019*, 30 July 2019, <https://bit.ly/2rt6peU>, p. 3.

child and 144 injured including 28 children). The Taliban detonated a truck used as suicide vehicle-borne IED, allowing two men armed with AK-47s to enter the compound. They opened fire while two other attackers entered to the vacant upper floors of a building, which were under construction, while on the ground floor a school was located. Subsequently, the Afghan special police unit CRU-222 arrived on the scene and ended the attack. Six nearby schools sustained damages.”¹⁹

According to OCHA’s August Humanitarian Update, on 28 July 2019 “an attack on the office of a political party in Kabul resulted in the deaths of 25 people (15 civilians) and an additional 70 civilian injuries”.²⁰ In its 2019 Report on Election-Related Violence in Afghanistan, UNAMA provides the following account of the same event:

“On 28 July [2019], Anti-Government Elements carried out a complex attack in Kabul targeting the Green Trend²¹ office causing 71 civilian casualties (21 deaths and 50 injured). One suicide vehicle-borne IED and one vehicle equipped with a remote controlled IED detonated outside the building where Amrullah Saleh, a vice-presidential candidate, was meeting with a group of supporters. Subsequently, armed attackers, including one suicide bomber, entered the building. The Afghan special police unit CRU-222 evacuated people from the building and ended the attack. No group claimed responsibility for the incident.”²²

On 7 August 2019 various media sources corroborate that a car bomb exploded outside a police station in Kabul.²³ The Taliban took responsibility for the attack, claiming that they had “targeted a ‘recruitment centre’ to kill soldiers and police officers”.²⁴ Quoting a health ministry spokesman, Reuters reported that “95 wounded people had been taken to hospitals. Most were civilians, including women and children”.²⁵ Reporting on the same event, BBC News stated that the bomb had “killed at least 14 people and injured nearly 150 [...] most of those wounded were civilians”.²⁶ A later report by OCHA in August 2019 corroborated that some 150 people, the majority of whom were civilians, were injured in the attack.²⁷ However, OCHA reported that 36 people had been killed. Action on Armed Violence added in the context of this attack, that “[e]xplosive violence is on the rise in Afghanistan and it is civilians that are paying the price”.²⁸

¹⁹ UNAMA, *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 September 2019*, 17 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2RASjTw>, p. 4. See also, UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security – Report of the Secretary General*, 3 September 2019, <https://bit.ly/345AwGC>.

²⁰ OCHA, *Afghanistan: Monthly Humanitarian Update*, August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2s8AFfa>, p. 1. See also, The Guardian, *Kabul Attack: 20 Killed, 50 Injured in Bombing and Gun Battle at Politician’s Office*, 29 July 2019, <https://bit.ly/2LC5eR0>; UN General Assembly and UN Security Council, *The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security – Report of the Secretary General*, 3 September 2019, <https://bit.ly/344PTPi>, para. 7.

²¹ Green Trend is a political party in Afghanistan founded by Amrullah Saleh. UNAMA, *Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict – Special Report: 2019 Election-Related Violence*, October 2019, <https://bit.ly/38vrpm2>, p. 3.

²² UNAMA, *Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict – Special Report: 2019 Election-Related Violence*, October 2019, <https://bit.ly/33ZfsSQ>, p. 3.

²³ BBC News, *Afghan Violence: Taliban Bomb Kills Many Amid Peace Talks with US*, 7 August 2019, <https://bbc.in/345B3s6>; Reuters, *Kabul Attack: Nearly 100 Injured in Taliban Bombing, Say Officials*, 7 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/34a6phm>.

²⁴ Action on Armed Violence, *Out of Sight: British Press Ignores the Continuing Horror in Afghanistan*, 15 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/33ZfsSQ>.

²⁵ Reuters, *Kabul Attack: Nearly 100 Injured in Taliban Bombing, Say Officials*, 7 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/354PbTJ>.

²⁶ BBC News, *Afghan Violence: Taliban Bomb Kills Many Amid Peace Talks with US*, 7 August 2019, <https://bbc.in/38npVtO>.

²⁷ OCHA, *Afghanistan: Monthly Humanitarian Update*, August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2qAJaPH>, p. 1.

²⁸ Action on Armed Violence, *Over 150 Killed and Injured by Car Bomb in Afghanistan’s Capital*, 7 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/344yyX5>.

On 17 August 2019 a suicide bombing took place during a wedding in a wedding hall in a Western Shia district of Kabul.²⁹ Islamic State Khorasan (ISK), the Islamic State's Central Asian arm claimed responsibility for the attack.³⁰ The initial death toll stood at 63³¹, however Radio Free Europe, quoting an Interior Ministry Spokesman, reported that "some of the wounded had died in hospital", taking the death toll up to 80.³² In September 2019, OCHA reported that the attack had killed 85 people and injured 187 others.³³ According to Radio Free Europe, this "attack was the 17th to take place in Kabul since the beginning of the year and the second deadliest one in August alone. [...] At least 193 people have died and nearly 900 others have been injured in the attacks".³⁴

In its 2019 Quarterly Report covering the period from 1 January to 30 September 2019, UNAMA also documented incidents of the Taliban "deliberately targeting individuals and infrastructure associated with the Salaam Telecommunication network" in a number of provinces in Afghanistan including Kabul. According to the source:

"On 26 August, the Taliban issued a statement declaring the company and its infrastructure as military targets [...] On 8 August in Kabul city, a magnetic IED on a car belonging to the Chief Commercial Officer of Salaam Telecommunications detonated, killing him and injuring his bodyguard. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. [...] UNAMA also verified incidents in which the Taliban attacked Salaam facilities in Kabul, Kandahar city, and Khost city after the statement was issued".³⁵

Reporting on the month of September 2019, Action on Armed Violence recorded:

"[S]ix high civilian casualty incidents (more than 40 dead and injured) of explosive violence by the Taliban. Five were suicide attacks and one was a mortar shelling. The worst of these incidents occurred on September 2nd, 2019, when a suicide car bomb hit a residential area near Green Village, a large compound housing aid agencies and international organisations, in central Kabul. The attack left at least 135 civilians dead and injured."³⁶

Action on Armed Violence further noted in relation to the 2 September 2019 attack on Green Village that "Green Village is a frequent target of attacks. However, the main victims of these attacks are typically local Afghan civilians".³⁷

On 5 September 2019, a Taliban suicide car bombing in Shash Darak, a heavily fortified area adjacent to the Green Zone, killed at least 10 people and wounded over 40.³⁸ According to BBC News, "[t]he

²⁹ The Telegraph, *Islamic State Bomber Kills 63 at Afghan Wedding in the Worst Attack in Months*, 18 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/36lB3G2>.

³⁰ Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, *Death Toll from Afghan Wedding Attack Rises to 80*, 21 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P5zF11>.

³¹ Voice of America, *Suicide Bombing of Wedding Party in Kabul Killed 63*, 18 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/34016AZ>; Aljazeera, *Afghanistan: Scores Killed in Kabul Wedding Blast*, 18 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/38o6ocD>; The Telegraph, *Islamic State Bomber Kills 63 at Afghan Wedding in the Worst Attack in Months*, 18 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P3K2Wj>; Bloomberg, *IS Says It Carried Out Afghan Suicide Bombing That Killed 63*, 18 August 2019, <https://bloom.bg/2LEggwy>.

³² Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, *Death Toll From Afghan Wedding Attack Rises to 80*, 21 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2sf3WEL>.

³³ OCHA, *Afghanistan: Monthly Humanitarian Update*, August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2Po2B6E>, p. 1.

³⁴ Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, *Death Toll From Afghan Wedding Attack Rises to 80*, 21 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/38fRntD>.

³⁵ UNAMA, *Quarterly Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: 1 January to 30 September 2019*, 17 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/38jpFMs>, p. 7.

³⁶ Action on Armed Violence, *Explosive Violence in September 2019*, 8 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2qzOWRv>.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Aljazeera, *Taliban Claim Deadly Attack Near US Embassy in Kabul*, 5 September 2019, <https://bit.ly/38pwU5M>.

attack took place on a road near the Nato office and US embassy [...] and destroyed cars and nearby shops. The Taliban said they had targeted a convoy of foreign forces”.³⁹ Reporting on the same events, Aljazeera noted that “Farid Ahmad Karimi, general manager at the Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital close to the bomb site, told AFP news agency that both civilians and security personnel were among the dead and wounded.”⁴⁰

On 17th September 2019, 11 days before Afghanistan’s presidential election, which Taliban commanders had “vowed to violently disrupt”, two suicide bombings occurred, one of which was in Kabul.⁴¹ The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack in the capital. ⁴² According to media sources, Rahimi, the Interior Ministry spokesman, said 22 people were killed and 38 wounded.⁴³

Quoting a civilian in Kabul, The Guardian noted in relation to the same event:

“[S]hopkeeper Rahimullah said he had been sitting inside his shop in the capital at the time of the second explosion. ‘The wave broke all the windows,’ he told AFP. ‘I rushed outside and saw several bodies just across the street. This is the second time in less than a month that a blast has broken our windows. I just fixed them a week ago.’”⁴⁴

1.2 Presence and Activity of the Taliban in Kabul

A report written by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative published in December 2018 notes that “[p]olitically speaking, the Taliban remains present at both the local and national levels and is very visible in Kabul, where its leaders make and communicate decisions.”⁴⁵ The authors point to the absence of the central authorities in Kabul:

“Many Afghans do not perceive the central authority in Kabul to be aware of, or concerned with, the daily realities of life in conflict. Rather, there is a perception that the central authorities are staying safely behind closed doors, trying to maintain their positions of power and influence, engaging with international powers imposing their agendas over the country, and discussing the challenges of Afghanistan only in international fora.”⁴⁶

1.3 Presence and Activity of ISIL in Kabul

With regards to the activity of ISIL in Kabul and Afghanistan more generally, the Secretary General reported on 1 February 2019 in a report to the UN Security Council on the threat posed by ISIL (Da’esh) to international peace and security, that:

“Throughout 2018, ISIL is assessed to have carried out 38 terrorist attacks in Afghanistan, many of them high profile, including some in Kabul. ISIL targets have included Afghan security forces, the Taliban, North Atlantic Treaty Organization military personnel, diplomats, employees of the

³⁹ BBC News, *Afghanistan Violence: Car Bomb Attack in Kabul Kills 10*, 5 September 2019, <https://bbc.in/2rkcxww>.

⁴⁰ Aljazeera, *Taliban Claim Deadly Attack Near US Embassy in Kabul*, 5 September 2019, <https://bit.ly/38fREq9>.

⁴¹ Reuters, *Taliban Attacks Kill 48, Afghan Leader Unhurt as Bomber Targets Rally*, 17 September 2019, <https://reut.rs/2PtKn3B>.

⁴² Aljazeera, *Taliban Suicide Attacks Kill at Least 48 Before Afghan Elections*, 17 September 2019, <http://bit.ly/2Yv25YC>.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ The Guardian, *Taliban Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan Leave Dozens Dead*, 17 September 2019, <http://bit.ly/2s9TT3U>.

⁴⁵ Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, *Fragile Future: The Human Cost of Conflict in Afghanistan*, December 2018, <http://bit.ly/2Ytw4QM>, p. 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

United Nations and non-governmental organizations, journalists and medical institutions, as well as religious minorities viewed by ISIL as soft targets.”⁴⁷

In its 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview, OCHA noted that:

“Looking ahead to 2020 and 2021, and notwithstanding the various challenges associated with projecting that far into the future [...] [t]he physical threat posed by Daesh is unlikely to be fully eradicated, however, and while no meaningful expansion of territorial control is foreseen, they are expected to retain their capacity to carry out spectacular mass casualty incidents in major urban centres, such as Jalalabad and Kabul, as well as attacks against NGO and UN targets, both of which may increase in the coming years.”⁴⁸

1.4 Other Security Threats in Kabul

In addition to conflict-related violence, media sources report that Kabul city is “often gripped by gun-toting crime syndicates that receive protection from the country’s elite”.⁴⁹ In May 2019, France 24 reported “a rising tide of killings and kidnappings [in Kabul], as war-scarred residents complain of increasing lawlessness”.⁵⁰ In the same article, France 24 reported that a “brutal mugging” took place near the Green Zone, in which two men stabbed a teenager and left him for dead. France 24 further noted that:

“Officials and stressed-out residents say crime is surging in Kabul, where police are already pushed to their limits attempting to prevent insurgent attacks by the Taliban and other groups including Islamic State. [...] The rise is hard to quantify. The interior ministry this month said it had recorded 100,000 crimes over a five-year period, but did not provide a breakdown. Abdul Khaliq Zazai Watandost, a member of Kabul’s provincial council who helps monitor crime rates, told AFP that criminals have killed 70 people in the capital and its surrounding areas in the past two months, with dozens more locals kidnapped. ‘Crime has become a bigger problem than terrorism for Kabul residents,’ Watandost said. [...]

Aside from murder and kidnappings, car thefts are common, the narcotics trade is booming and criminal gangs sometimes target foes by slapping “sticky bombs” under their cars. [...] Residents are changing their routes to work, while carrying guns and keeping weapons at home are also common. [...] Deputy interior minister General Khoshal Sadat acknowledged the psychological toll crime is taking. ‘It is threatening the physical and mental security of people in the city,’ Sadat said [...] [R]esident Mohammad Elham wrote on Facebook that the security in the capital ‘is so bad that criminals kill people in the daylight, in front of a police checkpoint -- and nobody cares’.”⁵¹

⁴⁷ United Nations Security Council, Eighth Report of the Secretary-General on the Threat Posed by ISIL (Da’esh) to International Peace and Security and the Range of United Nations Efforts in Support of Member States in Countering the Threat, 1 February 2019, <http://bit.ly/36eW8ll>, para. 39.

⁴⁸ OCHA, *Afghanistan: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview*, 6 December 2018, <http://bit.ly/357HFaO>, p. 18.

⁴⁹ The New York Times, *In Chaotic Afghan Capital, Crackdown on Crime is Turning Heads*, 16 January 2019, <https://nyti.ms/38oPzyj>.

⁵⁰ France 24, *Never Mind the War: Kabul Residents Fear Surge in Violent Crime*, 22 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/2s9Uhzo>.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

A report by the Afghans Analysts Network pointed in January 2019 to “criminality as one of the current problems afflicting the Afghan capital”, listing up several neighborhoods affected by this issue, ranging from illicit trade to kidnappings and criminal gangs linked to local commanders’ networks:

“In his 2019 AAN report, analyst Fabrizio Foschini indicates criminality as one of the current problems afflicting the Afghan capital, mostly affecting certain city neighbourhoods such as Mandawi area/Chowk (widespread theft and illicit trade), Koh-e Asmai/TV Mountain and Aliabad Hill (criminal gangs), Shahrara and Pule Sukhta (drug-related criminality), Kot-e Sangi (common criminality mixed with insurgent infiltration), the edge of PD 7 (common criminality), Kart-e Naw (house raids and robberies), the area around Jalalabad road (common criminality), Taimani and Qala-ye Fathullah (kidnappings), Wazirabad (robberies and house raids), Khairkhana (raids and robberies, ‘gang sub-culture’), higher Paghman valley (kidnappings by politically connected criminal networks), Qasaba (notorious criminal networks), PD 17 (criminal gangs linked to local commanders’ networks) and PD 21 (theft and robbery).”⁵²

Similarly, UNAMA reports “continued abductions by illegal armed groups and criminal gangs, particularly in large cities such as Kabul, which are under-reported.”⁵³

According to Afghan news agency Tolo News, members of the private sector complained about an increasing crime rate in Kabul:

“Political instability and insecurity have been the biggest challenges on the way of private sector’s activities and investment development. Extortion and kidnapping have increased due to political instability and insecurity and has prevented the private sector from improving,” said Nusrat. [...] “Last night, three to four men stabbed a boy and took his money and phone,” said Ehsanulla, a Kabul resident. Another resident, Mujtaba, said it is hard to go out of home in the evenings. “People cannot get out of their homes at night. There are some individuals who walk on streets and have knives, pistols and other weapons with them,” he said.”⁵⁴

In March 2019, a 6-year old girl was kidnapped and killed in Kabul, causing large turmoil among the Afghan population.⁵⁵

The Afghan news agency Pajwok pointed to an increased level of insecurity, harassment and murders in a neighborhood in Kabul due to prevailing heroin trade:

“Murtaza Hazara, a resident of the area that falls in the 10th district of Kabul City, told Pajhwok Afghan News that heroin locally known as ‘power’ [sic] was openly sold in the street in broad daylight. He said the illicit trade had grown in the last four years, thus creating serious issues for locals. “The street’s actual name is Sayed Nizam Mosque, but now it is known as ‘the street of powder sellers.’ Two days ago, a person was murdered, and two others were wounded in a

⁵² Cedoca (Documentation and Research Department of the Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRS)), *Afghanistan. Security Situation in Kabul City*, 15 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/355ENv0>, p. 15. For the original source, see; Afghan Analysts Network (AAN), *Kabul Unpacked. A Geographical Guide to a Metropolis in the Making*, January 2019, <https://bit.ly/2LACND8>.

⁵³ UNAMA, *Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict - Annual Report 2018*, February 2019, <https://bit.ly/2YxsANh>, p. 30.

⁵⁴ Tolo News, *Concerns Rise on ‘Increasing’ Threats to Business Community*, 23 April 2019, <https://bit.ly/35b8mvi>.

⁵⁵ Reuters, *Kidnapping and Killing of Six-Year-Old Girl Enrages Afghans*, 13 March 2019, <https://reut.rs/2rvSxiX>.

gun attack in the street,” he said. He said drug sellers usually harassed other people and they once shot and injured a 14-year-old boy in the foot with a pistol one year and a half years back. He said local residents had time and again complained to the relevant police district, but they did nothing, and ‘powder’ was continued to be sold openly. “Police detain these powder sellers, but they are back to the business after a few days,” he added.”⁵⁶

2. Socio-economic situation in Kabul

2.1 Absorption Capacity, Infrastructure and Housing

Official population estimates by the National Statistics and Information Authority of Afghanistan for 2018 to 2019 indicate that the base population of Kabul Province stands at 4,860,880.⁵⁷ However the population figure is disputed, with some sources claiming it amounts to almost 6 million.⁵⁸

Since the fall of the former Taliban regime in 2001, the city of Kabul has seen the largest population increase in Afghanistan.⁵⁹ The Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016 – 17, published in 2018, notes that “Kabul province – and more specifically, the capital – stands out as the main gravitational centre for migrants in the country, both for those who move internally and for those returning from abroad.”⁶⁰

According to IOM’s most recent Baseline Mobility Assessment for Afghanistan, the total inflow of returnees and IDPs into Kabul Province since 2012 stood at 443,238 as of 30 June 2019, taking the total population to 5.3 million (with returnees and IDPs representing more than eight per cent of Kabul Province’s total population).⁶¹

IOM’s Baseline Mobility Assessment for Afghanistan reports that Kabul District ranks sixth in the top 25 districts hosting the greatest numbers of returnees and IDPs: as of 30 June 2019, Kabul District hosted according to IOM 77,241 returnees and 113,452 IDPs.⁶² According to OCHA data, between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2019, Kabul District received 3,413 conflict-induced IDPs.⁶³ OCHA estimated the population in Kabul District in 2016/2017 to be of 3,817,241 persons.⁶⁴

OCHA’s 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview reports that as many as two-thirds of all people displaced outside their province are moving towards the five regional capitals including Kabul.⁶⁵ The Vienna

⁵⁶ Pajwok, *Rise in Drug-Related Crimes Worries ‘Powder Street’ Dwellers*, 18 November 2018, <https://bit.ly/2qFrgel>.

⁵⁷ This number does not include IDPs and returnees. International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Afghanistan: Baseline Mobility Assessment – Summary Results, Round 8, Mar – Jun 2019*, 15 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2sc7RSM>, p. 2.

⁵⁸ Afghanistan Analysts Network, *Kabul Unpacked: A Geographical Guide to a Metropolis in the Making*, January 2019, <https://bit.ly/2LA6S60>, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and ACAPS, *Displacement and Access in Afghanistan: Scenarios - Possible Developments in the Profile of the Displaced Population and Humanitarian Access Over the Next 18 Months*, June 2019, June 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P41J8l>, p. 11; Cedoca, *Afghanistan. Security Situation in Kabul City*, 15 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/2s8Hxcs>, pp. 6-7; and Samuel Hall, *Urban Displaced Youth in Kabul Part One: Mental Health Matters*, 1 June 2016, <https://bit.ly/350ki2J>, p. 7.

⁶⁰ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Central Statistics Organization, *Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016 – 17*, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2EcDpel>, xxxviii.

⁶¹ IOM, *Afghanistan: Baseline Mobility Assessment – Summary Results, Round 8, Mar – Jun 2019*, 15 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2YwhqAG>, p. 2.

⁶² IOM, *Afghanistan: Baseline Mobility Assessment – Summary Results, Round 8, Mar – Jun 2019*, 15 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PmbcGM>, p. 6.

⁶³ OCHA, *Afghanistan: Conflict Induced Displacements (as of 27 October 2019). Actual Displacements Between 1 January 2019 and 8 October 2019*, 27 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/342Saea>.

⁶⁴ OCHA, *Afghanistan - Estimated Population 2016/2017 (Archived)*, undated, <https://bit.ly/2tOz5wh>.

⁶⁵ OCHA, *Afghanistan: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview*, 6 December 2018, <https://bit.ly/356c611>, p. 15.

Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC) writes that “[s]ince 2002, Kabul, Nangarhar and Kunduz provinces have become the top destinations for returning registered refugees, while 52% of unregistered refugees returned to Nangarhar and Kabul.”⁶⁶

The New Humanitarian writes that “[t]he majority [of IDPs] [migrate toward cities](#), which are now home to one third of Afghanistan’s population of 36 million. According to UN Habitat, 80 percent of urban areas in Kabul are informal settlements.”⁶⁷

The same source points to the fact that “[t]he majority of former refugees and asylum seekers returning from abroad, for example, settle in urban areas, where they may need both short-term aid and and [sic] more long-lasting help.”⁶⁸

The Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016 – 17 found that the provinces Kandahar, Kabul, Herat, Balkh and Kunduz together accounted in 2016 and 2017 for 80 per cent of the urban poor, with “Kabul alone accounting for about half of all the urban poor. In part, this trend may be driven by IDPs and returnees turning to urban centers in search of security, jobs and services. If this trend continues, the pressure on urban centers will likely increase.”⁶⁹

Along the same lines, IOM concludes that Kabul is “potentially susceptible to social instability induced by large influxes of returnees and IDPs, who face limited access to basic services and livelihoods, jeopardizing reintegration prospects and fuelling secondary displacement”.⁷⁰ The same source further reported that in Kabul Province 49,490 arriving IDPs are living in informal settlements.⁷¹

According to a World Bank survey conducted in 2018 with Afghan returnees, the peri-urban areas of the big cities, including Kabul, are facing much pressure due to the large influx of returnees:

“Kabul and Nangarhar alone account for a third of all returnees; and returnees who do not settle in their province of origin move to relatively urban areas in search of safety, services and jobs. This tendency is likely putting additional pressure on urban and peri-urban areas, which are already hosting internally displaced populations.”⁷²

Similarly, according to an article published by the Afghan Analysts Network (AAN) in January 2019 the large growth of Kabul has increased infrastructure problems in the city:

“[...] this burgeoning growth has compounded the problems already afflicting the capital: inadequate housing and sanitation, land grabs and lack of ownership documents, poverty, traffic [...], pollution and criminality. Urban growth has made their solution much less likely and has created new problems,

⁶⁶ Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC), *Refugees Return to Poverty, Unemployment and Despair*, 5 November 2018, <https://bit.ly/36sODaH>, p. 19.

⁶⁷ The New Humanitarian, *As Afghanistan’s Capital Grows, Its Residents Scramble for Clean Water*, 19 February 2019, <https://bit.ly/2E33fkA>.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Central Statistics Organization, *Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016 – 17*, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2RzIPZH>, pp. 110-111.

⁷⁰ IOM, *Afghanistan: Baseline Mobility Assessment – Summary Results, Round 8, Mar – Jun 2019*, 15 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2DY6fPi>, p. 6.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁷² World Bank, *Living Conditions and Settlement Decisions of Recent Afghan Returnees. Findings from a 2018 Phone Survey of Afghan Returnees and UNHCR Data*, June 2019, <https://bit.ly/2PxEZMO>, p. 6.

especially because of the increasing levels of political violence to which the city's population has been exposed.”⁷³

AAN points to the insecurity in tenure and ownership, combined by the informality, illegality and instability in Afghanistan's capital city:

“A recurrent characteristic of the housing sector in Kabul seems to be the insecurity of tenure and ownership, and the new developments are often the sketchiest of all. Relatively comfortable shahraks and shabby shantytowns may seem to be situated at the far ends of the social, economic and political divide which is crippling Afghanistan (and which finds in Kabul its most glamorous stage), but they share one thing: they are often, in public perception as in legal status, a zorabad, a term that came to describe a place occupied by force (zor) without the consent of the authorities and without legal ownership. The informality, illegality and instability – for even the rich developers of many shahraks can fear a sudden reversal of their political fortune and consequently a danger for their ill-gained possessions – is what links them all to create the landscape of Kabul nowadays.”⁷⁴

Similarly, a paper published by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) from 2019 about informal settlements in Kabul, describes the situation for IDPs and returnees:

“In Kabul there are at least 55 informal settlements, ranging in size from dozens to hundreds of dwellings, and accommodating some 55,819 internally displaced people and refugee returnees in mainly tents or mud brick and tarpaulin shelters. [...]

[D]isplaced persons living in informal settlements continue to live under the threat of eviction, and in sub-standard shelter conditions that threaten their life chances and weaken their prospects of becoming economically self-sufficient and productive. They have few of their basic rights upheld, and remain in a perpetual state of displacement, woefully far from any durable solution. [...]

[D]isplaced families living in informal settlements live at the mercy of the actual or purported landowners who are renting, selling, or lending land to IDPs and returnees; these landowners exploit the vulnerabilities of displaced families and the weaknesses of legal frameworks in order to further their own interests at the expense of those who have little choice but to accept the conditions forced upon them. [...]

Regardless of the land ownership, the research shows that for settlements within the city, residents are forbidden if not by the landlord then by the government from building permanent shelters.”⁷⁵

In an article published in February 2019, the news agency Reuters notes that many of around three million Afghans who have returned from camps in Pakistan and Iran since 2015 end up living in squatter

⁷³ Afghan Analysts Network (AAN), *Kabul Unpacked. A Geographical Guide to a Metropolis in the Making*, January 2019, <https://bit.ly/342X8Yh>, p. 1.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

⁷⁵ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), *Stuck in the Mud; Urban Displacement and Tenure Security in Kabul's Informal Settlements; Background Paper to the Main Report*, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2rkipQ0>, pp. 3- 4, 12.

villages. Reuters points to the lack of water supplies, heating fuel or schools in these informal settlements:

“In the shadows of mountains east of the capital, Kabul, families recently displaced by fighting join others who have been there for years, scratching out a living with no access to reliable supplies of water and heating fuel, or schools for their children. [...]”

Pul-e Shina, a mix of mud-walled huts and tarpaulin shelters, is home to some 3,800 people and part of a network 50-odd “informal settlements”, in which an estimated 100,000 displaced people have joined Kabul’s urban sprawl. As well as lacking basic amenities, residents of such villages invariably hold no land rights or title, leaving them at the mercy of developers or government planners. [...]”⁷⁶

Action Against Hunger reports about the unaddressed needs of IDPs in Kabul due to limited humanitarian funding. The organization further reports on the lack of attempts to include Kabul’s informal settlements into the Kabul City Master Plan and provide these with basic services or infrastructure:

“In fact, the needs and rights of IDPs are often unaddressed by both development and humanitarian interventions. For instance, despite significant health and nutrition needs in the 70+ informal settlements across Kabul (Kabul Informal Settlements – KIS), there is limited humanitarian funding for their needs and there has been so far no attempt to integrate these settlements into the Kabul City Master Plan or to extend much needed basic services or infrastructure to these areas.”⁷⁷

In an article published in August 2019 by Nafay Choudhury in the Knowledge Management Fund, Afghan returnees “create a new set of land related challenges as many find strangers residing on their land upon their return to the country. Rather than relying on the government, returnees may be better able to secure their rights through powerbrokers who are aware of the movement of families due to civil unrest and land usage patterns over time, thereby bolstering the authority of these powerbrokers”⁷⁸

Further, in a joint report on displacement and humanitarian access in Afghanistan, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Assessment Capacities Project concluded in June 2019 that “[t]he influx of IDPs and returnees to Herat, Jalalabad, and Kabul has put a strain on resources and public services (many people have extremely limited access to basic services) while increasing the number of unemployed”.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Reuters, *Life in Kabul’s Squatter Camps Highlights Challenge for Any Afghan Peace*, 15 February 2019, <https://reut.rs/36hNsdN>.

⁷⁷ Action Against Hunger, *No Afghans Left Behind. Calling for a Collective People Centered Approach to Hunger*, November 2018, <https://bit.ly/2rtK3dg>, p. 12.

⁷⁸ N. Choudhury, *Power, Inequality and Local Land Conflict in Kabul’s Peri-Urban Areas*, Knowledge Management Fund (15 August 2019), <https://bit.ly/2PvSnRw>.

⁷⁹ Norwegian Refugee Council and Assessment Capacities Project, *Displacement and Access in Afghanistan: Scenarios - Possible Developments in the Profile of the Displaced Population and Humanitarian Access Over the Next 18 Months*, June 2019, <https://bit.ly/2DX46n5>, p. 5.

2.2 Unemployment

The Asia Foundation reports in its 2018 Survey of the Afghan Returnees, published in May 2019, that in Kabul, “91.8% of respondents cited unemployment as a major problem for returnees [...]”⁸⁰ Further, “[...] returnees in urban and rural Kabul (82.0% and 82.4%, respectively) were most likely to report experiencing a worsening employment situation than returnees anywhere else [...]”⁸¹

The Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC) notes that Pakistan “forcibly expelled more than half a million Afghan refugees” in the second half of 2016, leading to a large influx of returning Afghans. “Tens of thousands of returnees settled in and around Kabul and other major cities in eastern Afghanistan, hoping to find employment. Many however have inadequate skills to adapt to life in urban economic settings.”⁸²

According to Hashim Rasuli, program coordinator for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in Kabul, “skills alone are insufficient for returnees and IDPs to find employment. Without money to start or invest in businesses and/or connections to the Afghan elite [...] it is extremely difficult for returnees to integrate into the workforce.” Also Bilal Zadran, Livelihoods and Food Security Coordinator for the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), notes that “returnees’ skills do not match the demands of Afghanistan’s labor market.”⁸³

Further, in a paper published in June 2018, the think tank Overseas Development Institute reports that in cities “not commonly considered as under Taliban control”, including parts of Kabul, the Taliban routinely collects taxes of businesses, shops, and private clinics:

“Businesses, ranging from shops in the bazaar to private clinics, are routinely taxed [by the Taliban] at least one-tenth of their income, including in district centres and cities not commonly considered as under Taliban control (i.e. Lashkargah, Kunduz City, Ghazni City, parts of Kabul). These taxes may or may not be referred to as *oshr*.”⁸⁴

2.3 Restricted freedom of movement

According to a study conducted by the Swedish Migration Agency Lifos, published in December 2018, “the frequent attacks have a great impact on people’s perceived security in the capital, and many Kabul residents limit their movement in the city to only necessary travel, avoiding traveling at times when many military convoys and other government targets are moving about the city.”⁸⁵

In a reportage by the Dutch television programme Nieuwsuur about a family that was deported from the Netherlands to Kabul, the parents explain that they do not allow the children to go to school out of fear of attacks.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Asia Foundation, *A Survey of the Afghan Returnees 2018*, 14 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/2YwuKMY>, p. 25.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁸² Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC), *Refugees Return to Poverty, Unemployment and Despair*, 5 November 2018, <https://bit.ly/2rte8JW>, p. 4.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

⁸⁴ Overseas Development Institute, *Life Under the Taliban Shadow Government*, June 2018, <https://bit.ly/2DYubSv>, section 3.4.2.

⁸⁵ Lifos (Migrationsverket), *Säkerhetsläget i Afghanistan*, 4 December 2018, <https://bit.ly/38qwsnR>, p. 6.

⁸⁶ Nieuwsuur, *Zo leven uitgezette Afghanen. Leven in Kabul 1/4*, 23 March 2019, www.youtube.com/watch?v=pP482zcUSfw.

UNAMA's annual report about the year 2018 reported that the Taliban "temporarily gained control of strategic check posts, including along major roadways leading to Kabul city, further restricting freedom of movement for residents and hampering movement of goods and people between major cities."⁸⁷

2.4 Food Security

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization FAO pointed in August 2019 to Afghanistan's food crisis, world's third in 2018. This can be traced to drought, increased violence, and mass displacement, affecting several provinces including Kabul in the first place:

"In terms of numbers of acutely food-insecure people, Afghanistan constituted the world's third worst food crisis in 2018. A combination of widespread drought severely affecting wheat production and pastureland with increased violence drove mass displacement. [...] Many vulnerable groups continue to need urgent assistance to protect livelihoods and mitigate food consumption gaps. These include more than 132 000 households newly displaced by conflict in the first five months of 2019, and mainly hosted in the provinces of Kabul, Kunduz, Takhar, Faryab, Farah, Badghis and Herat."⁸⁸

2.5 Water and Sanitation

Several sources point to a water shortage and difficult access to clean water in Kabul. The Asia Foundation's 2018 Survey of the Afghan People found that 55.4 per cent of the residents in Kabul reported a worsening access to clean drinking water.⁸⁹ According to the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016 – 17, "[i]n Kabul, the population with basic sanitation services is almost 50 percent."⁹⁰

Al Jazeera noted in May 2019 that Kabul is "particularly vulnerable to water shortages. [...] Particularly, the most elevated parts of Kabul do not receive sufficient water for drinking."⁹¹

Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty noted in January 2019:

"Residents of the Afghan capital, Kabul, are drilling deeper and deeper for water as the country's drought takes hold. The water shortage has been exacerbated by the city's burgeoning population, which has grown to some five million, boosted by people fleeing war and poverty."⁹²

Along the same lines, the New Humanitarian points in an article published in January 2019 to the lack of water supplies in Kabul, which, combined with the drought and "overstretched" resources of the city due to migration, leads to a stress situation and pollution of surface water.

"Afghanistan's capital is running dry – its groundwater levels depleted by an expanding population and the long-term impacts of climate change. But its teeming informal settlements

⁸⁷ UNAMA, *Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict - Annual Report 2018*, February 2019, <https://bit.ly/2Yy2tp6>, p. 8.

⁸⁸ FAO, Monitoring Food Security in Countries With Conflict Situations. A Joint FAO/WFP Update for the Members of the United Nations Security Council, August 2019, <https://bit.ly/345JPWZ>, p. 1.

⁸⁹ Asia Foundation, *A survey of the Afghan People - Afghanistan 2018*, 4 December 2018, <https://bit.ly/2rxtz3R>, p. 100.

⁹⁰ Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Central Statistics Organization, *Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016 – 17*, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2PwT90I>, p. 244.

⁹¹ Al Jazeera, *War, Drought, Diplomatic Rifts Deepen Afghanistan's Water Crisis*, 5 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/3558mgd>.

⁹² Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, *Devastating Drought Dries Up Kabul*, 14 January 2019, <https://bit.ly/36mJAZf>.

continue to grow as decades-long conflict and – more recently – drought drive people like Rahimi into the cities, straining already scarce water supplies. With large numbers migrating to Kabul, the city's resources are overstretched, and aid agencies and the government are facing a new problem: how to adjust to a shifting population still dependent on some form of humanitarian assistance. [...]

"Most of Kabul's water was accessed through wells, but the situation is now under stress," Workneh said. "Surface water is polluted by industrial waste, pit latrines and chemicals leaping into the rivers. With rainfall patterns decreasing, sources don't fill up as quickly anymore." While Kabul is starting to tackle the issue of informally built properties – including the registration of many houses initially constructed without permission – one fact remains: the capital grew too quickly.

"The city had 4.6 million people in 2002 and, by 2012, the numbers went up to 7.1 million," said Koussay Boulaich of UN Habitat, which is offering technical support to a government project responding to the city's urbanisation trend."⁹³

According to the Afghan news agency Tolo News, the Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) warned that "underground water reserves in Kabul will dry up within the next 10 years amid an increasing demand and use of water in the capital city."⁹⁴

Returnees face a higher risk of poor access to water and sanitation services, as OCHA notes in its 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview. According to OCHA, 60 per cent of returnees live in informal settlement with limited or no services:

"Based on WASH cluster data, the families of both documented and undocumented returnees, especially those coming from Pakistan, face a higher risk of poor access to improved WASH services, with more than 60 per cent of returnees living in informal settlements with limited or no services. Kabul, Kandahar and Nangarhar are the provinces with the highest WASH needs for returnees."⁹⁵

2.6 Mental Health⁹⁶

UNAMA writes that out of everyday fear of explosions and attacks, ordinary Afghans are barely able to live a normal life:

"Beyond the immediate and direct harm caused to victims and their families, the long-lasting effects of suicide and other IED attacks on the wider civilian population cannot be ignored. The unpredictable nature of these types of attacks, often away from the fighting and in civilian

⁹³ The New Humanitarian, *As Afghanistan's capital grows, its residents scramble for clean water*, 19 February 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P3wTwI>.

⁹⁴ Tolo News, *Kabul's Underground Water Reserves 'To Dry Up Within Years'*, 13 July 2018, <https://bit.ly/345ESqX>.

⁹⁵ OCHA, *Afghanistan: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview*, 6 December 2018, <https://bit.ly/38qxa4v>, p. 45.

⁹⁶ This section focuses on mental health in Kabul. For more in-depth information about mental health in Afghanistan in general, see; Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Afghanistan: Little Help for Conflict-Linked Trauma*, 7 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2rl4R6O>; Foreign Policy, *Endless Conflict in Afghanistan Is Driving a Mental Health Crisis*, 27 September 2019, <https://bit.ly/346p3Gy>.

populated areas, has caused ordinary Afghans to live in fear of the next explosion, severely curtailing their ability to carry out normal lives.”⁹⁷

According to OCHA’s 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview, the rapid population growth in Kabul is likely to further exacerbate disrupted and inadequate access to health services; “the problem is only likely to become more pronounced as basic services struggle to cope with the additional strain placed upon them.”⁹⁸

OCHA further reports a high percentage of trauma cases in Kabul:

“In October 2018, healthcare workers estimated that 41 per cent of trauma cases in their facilities were caused by events related to active conflict. In order of highest severity, civilians living in Kabul, Nangarhar, Faryab, Hilmand, Kandahar were most affected by the conflict in terms of deaths and injuries. The number of conflict-affected people requiring health support is expected to further escalate in 2019.”⁹⁹

In a report about mental health in Afghanistan from interviews conducted in April 2019, Human Rights Watch provides several examples of persons who witnessed or lost a beloved person in a deathly attack in Kabul. Even though several persons show signs of trauma, most did not seek psychological counselling and most of them were not aware of mental health services:

A 23-year old man witnessed a suicide bombing in Kabul and was not offered psychological counselling. Two years after the incident, he is still affected by the trauma:

““Ahmad S.,” 23, was offered no psychological counseling after a suicide bombing attack that killed at least 20 people. “It was time to leave the office, about 4 p.m.,” he said about the attack near the Supreme Court in Kabul. “The suicide bomber passed by me and stepped on my shoe, so I took a tissue to clean it and then the explosion happened. I saw dead bodies all around me and parts of bodies.”

Ahmad was treated for injuries at the military hospital, but “Nobody came to ask about my mind,” he said. “They only treated my body.” Two years later, Ahmad sought help, but the trauma remains. “I still have flashbacks, all night I can’t sleep,” he said. “I get angry easily, [especially] when people make noise. But I was keeping that anger inside, and I was very sad. I don’t know what kind of treatment should be provided but there should be people asking about our needs.””¹⁰⁰

Human Rights Watch reports a “lack of mental health literacy and [a] stigma and incomprehension that come along [...]” among the Afghan population such as a lack of training among health professionals to identify mental health conditions and properly patients to community-based programs, social services, and psychosocial counsellors. As an example, a man who survived a suicide bombing in Kabul and looked for psychological support was provided with sleeping medication, a tablet and syrup:

⁹⁷ UNAMA, Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict Special Report. Increasing Harm to Afghan Civilians from the Deliberate and Indiscriminate Use of Improvised Explosive Devices, October 2018, <https://bit.ly/2RAfAFa>, p. 2.

⁹⁸ OCHA, *Afghanistan: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview*, 6 December 2018, <https://bit.ly/2P5nyED>, p. 15.

⁹⁹ OCHA, *Afghanistan: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview*, 6 December 2018, <https://bit.ly/343cNXq>, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰⁰ Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Afghanistan: Little Help for Conflict-Linked Trauma*, 7 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P4gPur>.

“Siddiqui J.,” a 62-year-old man from Bamiyan, survived a suicide bombing during Ashura celebrations at Kabul’s Abu Fazl mosque in 2011. He lost a hand during the attack and received medical treatment. But when he looked for support to deal with the psychological impact, the doctors provided sleeping medication that he said did not help.

Siddiqui said that shortly after the attack, he began to experience psychological distress. “When I try to sleep, war memories come to my mind and my body starts shaking. Everything gets dark and I lose consciousness. I feel hot in the body and pressure on my shoulders, so I get out of bed and then fall unconscious,” he said.

Siddiqui finally sought help from a doctor six years later. “He only prescribed me a medication and said that I am OK,” he said. Since his condition did not improve, Siddiqui went to see another doctor six months ago. “I went for my body and said I can’t sleep and the doctor prescribed me medicine to sleep,” he said. “When the doctor asked why I can’t sleep, I told them what had happened, and I got a tablet and syrup. He referred me to a ‘brain doctor’ but [he] only prescribed me medicine to sleep.”¹⁰¹

The same source quotes a psychiatrist working at the public Kabul Mental Health Hospital, who notes constraints in the budget and resources which would allow a follow-up with survivors of traumatic violence:

“We should follow up with survivors [of traumatic violence], go to their homes and follow them over months,” said Dr. Shafi Azim, a psychiatrist working at the public Kabul Mental Health Hospital. “But the budget and resources do not allow for this.”¹⁰²

In September 2019, the Afghan public health minister Dr. Feroz Ferrozuddin confirmed in an email to Human Rights Watch “that his ministry is aware of the inadequacies of mental health services and that “further policy and financial investment is required given the extent and scope of the challenge to ensure we can effectively address it.”¹⁰³

3. The situation of Afghans who are returned to Kabul

In a study about the situation of Afghans who were deported from Germany to Afghanistan, published in September 2019,¹⁰⁴ Friederike Stahlmann reports that a “significant number” of deported Afghans leaves the country within a short period of time.¹⁰⁵ Only one out of 51 persons indicated that he planned to stay in the country.¹⁰⁶

The Mixed Migration Centre, which conducted interviews with Afghan returnees, points to the fact that particularly in Kabul, the interest in re-migration was strong:

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ In her study, Stahlmann documented 55 deported Afghans from Germany. About her study, see also Tagesschau, *Abgeschobene Afghanen. Statt Perspektiven droht Gewalt*, 9 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2qEtVFs>.

¹⁰⁵ F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2Yw6hr2>, p. 278 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

“There appeared to be greater interest in employment aspirations among returnees in Nangarhar than in Kabul; conversely, there was stronger interest in re-migration among returnees in Kabul.”¹⁰⁷

3.1 Security issues and violence

According to Stahlmann, 90 per cent of the studied deportees in Kabul experience violence upon their return,¹⁰⁸ yet incidents of violence in Afghanistan go often underreported.¹⁰⁹

Two deported Afghans who participated in the study did not know where to stay in Kabul and decided to return to their home provinces. On the way, they were apprehended at Taliban checkpoints. In both cases, the reason why they were suspect in the eyes of the Taliban was the fact that they did not have a beard. Both were mistreated –one during several hours, the other for two days– because they were suspected of working for “the infidels”. The Taliban attempted to recruit two other deportees.¹¹⁰

Along the same lines, the British newspaper Independent reported that an Afghan deported man was shot dead after his return to Afghanistan:

“An Afghan man who sought refuge from the Taliban in the UK has been shot dead in his home town after being deported by the British government. Zainadin Fazlie had lived in London with his wife, who had refugee status, and their four British-born children. But after committing a number of minor offences, the 47-year-old was sent back to Afghanistan after 16 years in Britain, despite threats to his life. [...] Mr Fazlie was deported to the Afghan capital Kabul. With no connections there and in a city with a faltering economy, he struggled to find work and decided to return to his home town. His wife said that once he was there, it became difficult to maintain contact. She said he would tell her that if he came out from where he was, they were “going to kill him”. ”¹¹¹

According to Stahlmann’s study, several deported Afghans faced renewed targeting upon their return to Afghanistan, either by the Taliban or by their own family members.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Mixed Migration Centre, *Distant Dreams - Understanding the Aspirations of Afghan Returnees*, January 2019, <https://bit.ly/2qzW8Nv>, p. 53.

¹⁰⁸ In the case of one Afghan returnee, the Taliban learned within one week about his return, captured the person and mistreated him during three days, punishing him for the flight and forcing him to cooperate. The person was able to escape through the help of an acquaintance, who shortly was with the Taliban. After the incident, he left the country immediately. Some of the returned Afghans in Stahlmann’s study were so badly injured in an attack that they needed emergency treatment in the hospital. In the case of another returnee, his house was attacked and severely damaged, he only escaped the injury because he was not home at that time. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/356RgOO>, pp. 278-279, 286 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

¹¹⁰ F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/346pzEu>, p. 279 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹¹¹ Independent, *Afghan Father who Sought Refuge in UK 'Shot Dead by Taliban' After Being Deported by Home Office*, 13 September 2018, <https://bit.ly/3574fjE>.

¹¹² This happened to seven Afghans who participated in Stahlmann’s study. In one case this was an open feud, in four cases the deported person was sought by family members, who had learned about the deportation. For example, a deportee had left Afghanistan fleeing from his brother-in-law who tried to recruit him for the Taliban. Upon his return he hid at a friend’s place. Police officers –allegedly on behalf of the Taliban– then arrested the friend in Kabul and questioned him about the whereabouts of the returnee. In the case of another deportee who had fled from Afghanistan because of a Taliban recruitment attempt, his family was asked immediately after his return to hand him over for his punishment. The family then had to flee. Another deportee received a threatening letter from the Taliban in his home province, asking him whether he preferred to join them or be killed. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2P45Yk3>, p. 279 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

Twenty-five per cent of the studied returnees in Stahlmann's study was affected by criminal violence in Kabul; two of the deportees were injured so severely that they had to be treated in hospital.¹¹³

Furthermore, Amnesty International reports that criminal gangs assume that returnees have money because of their contacts with Europe, therefore making returnees to targets of kidnappings and abductions.¹¹⁴

Afghan migration minister Alami Balkhi recognized in a speech to the Netherlands in March 2019 that forcibly deported persons "could be recruited by terrorist groups or become undesirable citizens here [in Afghanistan]."¹¹⁵

In a reportage by Nieuwsuur about a family who was deported from the Netherlands to Kabul, the family states that the city is dangerous; that the family is afraid of extremists in the neighbourhood; and that out of fear of attacks the children do not go to school. The father barely survived a bomb attack carried out by ISIS shortly after their arrival in Kabul. The youngest daughter refuses to wear a veil, which exposes her to negative attention of other inhabitants of the neighbourhood.¹¹⁶

3.2 Recruitment

Several sources point to the fear of recruitment faced by IDPs and Afghan returnees in Kabul. In an article of May 2019, the Guardian quotes an IDP from Nangahar living in Kabul, according to whom members of insurgent groups occasionally come to his neighbourhood to attempt to recruit the neighbourhood's inhabitants for money.¹¹⁷

An article published by the Center for Strategic Studies of the ETH Zurich in 2019 shows that impoverished Afghans, including returnees, join the Taliban as part-time fighters. Some hours per week they work for the Taliban, while the rest of the time they are normal citizens. Unemployment is reported to be the main reason behind the surge of "part-time Taliban-members".¹¹⁸

Save the Children writes in a report about returnee Afghan children from Europe that several children were victims of attempts of recruitment after their return to Herat or Kabul:

"Ten of the 53 children who completed questionnaires stated that someone 'attempted to recruit them to fight in combat, commit acts of violence, or otherwise engage with armed groups'. This includes all three types of returned children – unaccompanied, returned at 18, and children returned with their families, and occurred both among those returned to Kabul and Herat."¹¹⁹

¹¹³ *Ibid.* p. 279.

¹¹⁴ Amnesty International, *Rückkehr in Schuld und Scham*, 28 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2rkk87W>.

¹¹⁵ NOS, *Afghaanse migratieminister vraagt Nederland uitzettingen te stoppen: 'Land niet veilig'*, 23 March 2019, <https://bit.ly/38qydbt>. A few months after, the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Office (IND) fell a controversial decision to repatriate an Afghan family with four underage children. NOS, *Gezin uitgezet naar Afghanistan, mensenrechtenorganisaties woedend*, 9 July 2019, <https://bit.ly/2E2LiTu>.

¹¹⁶ Nieuwsuur, *Zo leven uitgezette Afghanen. Leven in Kabul 1/4*, 23 March 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P3y52N>.

¹¹⁷ The Guardian, *'There is Less Fear': Restoration of Kabul Repairs the Ravages of War*, 13 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/36sQHzt>.

¹¹⁸ "By some estimates, up to 70 percent of the Taliban are unemployed young men just looking for a way to make a living. [...] Mohammad Omar Rassouli, chief of police of Pushtrod district, confirmed Abdullah Jan's story, pointing to unemployment as the main motivating factor in the surge of these Taliban day-laborers." ETH Zurich, Center for Strategic Studies, *The Occasional Taliban*, 2019, <https://bit.ly/2rvVVeF>.

¹¹⁹ Save the Children, *From Europe to Afghanistan. Experiences of Child Returnees*, 16 October 2018, <https://bit.ly/2s9uQOB>, p. 37.

3.3 Targeted harassment by security forces

According to Friederike Stahlmann, in the context of violent attacks, security forces generally do not intervene when they are not involved in the attack themselves. Deportees often lack social and political support as well as money for bribing security officers in order to ensure their help.¹²⁰

Security forces and officials regularly accuse Afghan returnees of having betrayed their country by fleeing, to be infidels or even converts. Several deportees reported that state actors insulted or threatened them with violence. This includes not only members of pro-government militias. Some deportees reported that security forces at the airport questioned whether they were Afghans, on the basis that Afghans are expected to defend their fatherland instead of seeking safety abroad. Some deportees reported that the officers denied them the issuance of their ID-card, on the basis that they had fled to Germany.¹²¹

3.4 Society's perceptions of returnees¹²²

Stahlmann writes that deported Afghans and their relatives and friends in the country are threatened by several actors due to of their flight and their life in Europe. The fact of having been in Europe is enough to be targeted by the Taliban.¹²³ From the Taliban's point of view, Afghans who risked their lives to ask the "infidel occupiers" for protection "clearly defected to the other side." They are not only accused of being infidels, but also of being spies and traitors.¹²⁴

Furthermore, perceived un-islamic behaviour can lead to persecution by the Taliban and other members of society.¹²⁵ Perceived un-islamic behaviour –which can include eye contact, gestures, linguistic expression– can lead to social stigmatization and violence, including murder. The majority of the participants in Stahlmann's study were either threatened directly by the Taliban or by other individuals telling them that they would inform the Taliban about their presence. Regular public reporting about deportations on Afghan television also often makes deportees recognizable.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2RxK7mL>, p. 280 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

¹²² More about the situation of returnees perceived as „westernized“ in Kabul, see the in-depth report of Asyllos: *Asyllos, Afghanistan: Situation of Young Male 'Westernised' Returnees to Kabul*, August 2017, <https://bit.ly/2LCiWUd>.

¹²³ F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2PqWVsB>, p. 279 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹²⁴ In two cases, the returnees received threatening letters which referred explicitly to the country where they had applied for asylum. One family had to pay protection money to neighbours because they had been threatened to tell the Taliban that their son had returned. Another returnee was threatened that if he did not transfer his inherited house to the neighbour without payment, he would notify the Taliban about his presence. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/38g09rz>, p. 279 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹²⁵ For instance, one person had helped with the cleaning of a church in Germany, which through the linking of the regional newspaper on Facebook became known in Afghanistan. He was accused of conversion from Islam. Shortly after his deportation, his family was pressured to hand him in. The person had to leave the country. Another deportee was refused treatment by a doctor, who told him to „return to Germany and get treatment there“. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/355sEWL>, pp. 279-280 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹²⁶ Five deportees had been recognized and identified as such by strangers. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2LEpsJY>, p. 280 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

In their communities in Kabul, deported Afghans encounter the prevailing belief that they, because of having been deported, are serious criminals, leading to additional difficulties.¹²⁷

Along the same lines, according to a study conducted by Save the Children in the cities of Herat and Kabul, Afghan child returnees from Europe want to avoid being identified as returnees out of fear of stigma or risks associated with it:

“The fear of stigma or risks associated with being known to have lived abroad means that child returnees from Europe may try to avoid being identified as such. [...]

One child said: “Since returning, all of my family are trying not to draw attention from people. At school, I told the other students I returned from Iran. Outside, I don’t speak Norwegian, for example when I’m with my brother. [...] We are very careful with our language, attitude, behaviour. We had to lie, I lied to my classmates” 19-year-old boy returned from Norway when he was 17.”¹²⁸

According to an article by Amnesty International published in August 2019, persons in the neighbourhood suspect returned Afghans of having behaved in an un-Islamic way while being in Europe: having drunk alcohol or met young women. Many returnees fear being targeted as alleged infidels.¹²⁹

3.5 Access to livelihoods

The Asia Foundation found in its 2018 Survey of the Afghan Returnees that “[a]larmingly, and perhaps a consequence of over-population and restraints on local economies, 70.3% of returnees in rural Kabul said that their household financial situation had worsened since returning to Kabul [...]” 68 % of returnees in urban Kabul indicated this.”¹³⁰

According to Stahlmann’s study about Afghans who were deported to Kabul, private support by relatives in Afghanistan plays a “negligible” role for the returned Afghans. Of the 24 Afghans who assumed that they had relatives in the country, three were not able to find them, seven were either threatened by their relatives or denied contact and only in two cases the family was willing and able to support the returnee financially for a limited period of time. The other persons had to pay for their daily expenses themselves.¹³¹

Deported Afghans are particularly vulnerable when accessing the labour market. One returnee who found work with relatives was asked to hide and leave the country for the sake of the family because they considered the danger of his public presence to be too serious. Another deportee reported having been mistreated by his boss, the latter claiming that “everybody knew that nobody would protect him.”

¹²⁷ Or instance, in order to find a regular living, returnees must be able to gain the trust of the community, a particular challenge for returnees. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2sTlmam>, p. 283 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹²⁸ Save the Children, *From Europe to Afghanistan. Experiences of Child Returnees*, 16 October 2018, <https://bit.ly/36f0fhf>, pp. 18, 36.

¹²⁹ Amnesty International, *Rückkehr in Schuld und Scham*, 28 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/356SAkk>.

¹³⁰ Asia Foundation, *A Survey of the Afghan Returnees 2018*, 14 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/356WFFH>, p 53.

¹³¹ F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/356WU3z>, p. 282 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

Only one participant in Stahlmann's study was able to make a living from his work, which he found through his uncle.¹³²

The large majority of the studied deported Afghans in Kabul indicated that the most important financial source was support from relatives and friends outside of Afghanistan, yet in none of the cases this support sufficed for the person's subsistence.¹³³ Almost all returnees in need of medical aid cannot finance it.

Many deportees stayed upon their return with friends or relatives. Due to social control and the fact that their presence endangered the returnee's hosts, their stay was only possible for a short period of time. Stahlmann's study notes that a number of deportees who did not know where to stay in Kabul decided to go to their home villages or to other acquaintances in other villages or cities outside of Kabul.¹³⁴

The fact that deportees are targeted by the Taliban puts the deportees' landlords in danger. Many deported Afghans decided, therefore, to hide in ever-changing hotels, mosques, or tearooms, passing themselves off as travellers. Several deportees were temporarily or permanently homeless, many of them despite support from Germany.¹³⁵

A study conducted by the Mixed Migration Centre with returnees in Kabul and Nangarhar in October and November 2018 found that financial needs were a primary source of stress for returnees in Kabul and Nangarhar, which returnees linked to "psychosocial challenges, food insecurity, inability to access healthcare and the ability to prepare for the winter."¹³⁶

The study further reports about a young man in Kabul who does not have a place to live, however, he cannot leave Kabul due to threats of armed groups in the villages:

"“We don't have a home to live in. We are just moving around Kabul city. Sometimes we are in one place and sometimes in another place. We can't live in any of the villages because of threats from the Taliban or other armed groups.” Male, Kabul, 22.”¹³⁷

A report published in November 2019 on the basis of interviews conducted between April and November 2018 with 50 rejected Afghan asylum-seekers who were deported from European countries to Afghanistan noted that 42 of the deportees (or 84%) were unemployed, with only 8 deportees (or 16%) being formally employed or self-employed in Afghanistan.¹³⁸

Safe the Children notes that children returned to Herat and Kabul work in uncertain and insecure sectors:

¹³² However, he had to be strictly silent about his flight to Europe and his deportation. When the shop where he was working, had to close, he lost his job. His uncle told him he was not able to help him anymore and asked him to leave the country. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2YuMq44>, p. 283 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹³³ One person admitted that, despite financial support from Germany, he had to steal in order to survive. F. Stahlmann, *Studie zum Verbleib und zu den Erfahrungen abgeschobener Afghanen*, Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration (September 2019), <https://bit.ly/2LCjfyI>, p. 283 of Asylmagazin, issue 8-9/2019, Draft Version.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 284-285. See also; Amnesty International, *Rückkehr in Schuld und Scham*, 28 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2P6rhSd>.

¹³⁶ Mixed Migration Centre, *Distant Dreams - Understanding the Aspirations of Afghan Returnees*, January 2019, <https://bit.ly/2YyfnUs>, p. 31.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹³⁸ Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization, *Deportation to Afghanistan: A Challenge to State Legitimacy and Stability?*, November 2019, <https://bit.ly/2RBC48y>, p. 17.

“[...] for the majority of the 15 returned children interviewed who work (now all over 18), they do so in insecure, economically uncertain sectors: car washing, metal workshops, shop keeping, daily labour.”¹³⁹

Another article by The New Humanitarian of August 2019 reported about an Afghan returnee family's difficulties in Kabul. According to the family's father, there is “little to no assistance from both the government and aid groups. Four years after leaving, the family survives on money sent from relatives still in Pakistan.”¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Save the Children, *From Europe to Afghanistan. Experiences of Child Returnees*, 16 October 2018, <https://bit.ly/2rvWPYB>, p. 37.

¹⁴⁰ The New Humanitarian, *Coming Home to Conflict: Why Afghan Returnees Say They Were Better Off as Refugees*, 1 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/342VLsG>.