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Internal Displacement in Afghanistan: In Search of Safety

The ongoing military action in Afghanistan is deepening what was already a severe humanitarian crisis. Further displacement of civilians will have a profound impact upon the ability of the country and its people to recover.



Source: Oxfam

Food continues to be a main concern for most Afghans

The movement of civilian populations in search of security, as a result of conflict, or food, as a result of drought, has characterized the long conflict in Afghanistan. The continuing flight of civilians from urban areas, in the face of aerial attacks, compounds a humanitarian situation that was already grave, due to a long and devastating drought in many parts of the country. Over the coming winter, more than a million internally displaced persons (IDPs) will require emergency assistance simply to survive.

Apart from the immediate impact on the livelihoods of the displaced and their hosts, forced movement affects social relations and traditions within affected communities. It is important to take stock of these changes, and related shifts in community- or tribal-level politics that might occur during displacement, in efforts to support the recovery of vulnerable communities.

This policy brief aims to provide a concise point of reference for those planning responses to the complex range of issues resulting from displacement. It includes a number of active links to the most relevant and reliable information sources. It concludes with a range of operational recommendations for international organizations, governments and NGOs working on this issue.

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Internal Displacement in Afghanistan: An Overview

Internal displacement is not a new phenomenon in Afghanistan, where movement has often been the only option for communities to survive in a rugged environment. Seasonal movements between the arid lowlands and the mountains of Afghanistan have been a way of life for a significant proportion of semi-nomadic rural communities, upon whom many settled communities depend for trade and supplies.

Involuntary displacement in the region, however, has usually occurred as a result of political upheaval or natural disasters. While many Afghan communities have developed ways of coping with the range of physical challenges posed by displacement in the past, there are indications that the process can have an impact on the social relations within a community. Leaving one's area of origin is generally the last resort for vulnerable families, who will first sell off livestock, if they have any, in order to obtain cash for food. Others might try to survive by begging, by seeking casual employment. As a last resort, families might be forced to sell assets such as furniture, doorframes, windows, and other household goods, before moving. Displaced families often first seek shelter with relatives nearby, or move to urban centers where they attempt to find work, beg or seek assistance from relief organizations. Finally, many also head towards the borders.

Aid agency estimates indicate that some 180,000 Afghans have fled their areas of origin since September 11th, to join the million people already internally displaced as a result of the drought. **If the delivery of essential supplies such as food is disrupted, either by the ongoing military campaign or other factors, the chances of survival of the most vulnerable during the approaching winter are slim.**

The living conditions of potential host communities within Afghanistan are, in themselves, a cause for concern. UN reports suggest that some 6 million people, or about a quarter of the total estimated population of Afghanistan, currently live in extremely precarious circumstances. If hostilities continue for any length of time, there is likely to be a significant increase in vulnerability, with some UN estimates indicating that up to 8 million people might become reliant on food aid over the coming winter.

While significant numbers of families might move, the majority of Afghans will remain in their areas of origin, either through choice or because they cannot flee. This is borne out by the fact that initial fears of massive population movements within Afghanistan, in the lead-up to the US military strikes, have not in fact materialized. Among the communities who have not moved may be those who are arguably the most vulnerable, who might lack the means to subsist, and do not currently have access to external assistance.

One in four Afghan children dies before the age of five, and nearly 50% of all deaths among children occur due to preventable diarrhea-related diseases.

Related Links

For more information on children in Afghanistan, see:

[Afghanistan: IRIN interview with UNICEF head Carol Bellamy \(6 Dec. 2001\)](#)

[Watchlist on Children: Afghanistan](#) (International Rescue Committee, Fall 2001)

[Special Briefing: Child Soldiers and the West Asian Crisis](#) (Amnesty International, September 2001)

[Afghanistan Data Profile](#)
(World Bank)

Many rural communities have been affected by the continuing drought. A significant proportion of the urban population, particularly families who have left their rural areas of origin in order to survive, is dependent on external assistance. It is estimated that some 50,000 children in Kabul are forced to work in order to supplement their family income.

The symptoms of drought-related famine, beyond the seasonal and localized shortages of food that characterize parts of the north-east and central highlands, began to emerge early in 2000. NGO reports at the time indicated that livestock holdings had fallen on average by 70%, as families were forced to sell flocks to survive. In certain parts, household food stocks among vulnerable families were reportedly exhausted much earlier than would normally be the case.

In assessing the vulnerability of populations inside Afghanistan, it is important to take account of the significant disparities that exist between and within the different regions of the country. The impact of continuing military strikes will also have an impact on the relative vulnerability of certain populations.

The livelihoods of communities in the eastern provinces adjoining Jalalabad, Qandahar and Khost, where there are reports of significant levels of displacement during October, are closely linked to cross-border trade and smuggling to and from Pakistan. The same applies to communities in the far south-west, including Zaranj, where the border with Iran remains officially closed. Elsewhere in the west, Herat is now the temporary home of tens of thousands of displaced villagers from drought-affected parts of Ghor and Uruzgan. As in many other urban centers, these families are almost completely dependent on external assistance for their survival.

Last winter, over 500 of the internally displaced reportedly died from exposure, illness or starvation in Herat alone. Both Kabul and Mazar-I-Sharif have also seen significant in-migration from surrounding rural areas affected by drought or conflict. Most IDP "camps" have few services, and families live in rudimentary tents made of rags and plastic sheeting. Médecins Sans Frontières has expressed its concern at the extent of malnutrition among IDPs, due mainly to diarrhea caused by poor water quality and rudimentary sanitation. In the north-eastern provinces of Kunduz, Takhar and Badakhshan, the combined effects of conflict, drought and earthquakes have rendered many rural communities vulnerable, as is the case in the central highlands, or Hazarajat.

In a situation where deliveries of aid can only now be guaranteed to refugee communities, of whom there are estimated to be 3.5 million living in Pakistan and Iran, it might be argued that they will be among the least vulnerable Afghans during the coming winter. It is for this reason that many families continue to try to cross the borders, despite the fact that these remain officially closed.

It is reported by UNHCR that some 60,000 Afghan refugees might have crossed into Pakistan since mid-September, despite the official closure of the frontier

[Drought in Afghanistan](#)
(Assistance Afghanistan Site)

[Central Asia Region-Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #41](#) (USAID, 7 Jan. 2002)

[Humanitarian Crisis in Central Asia](#) (USAID)

[Coming winter spells grave danger for Afghan civilians, UN warns](#) (UN DPI, 2 Oct 2001)

[Relief organizations strive to improve Afghan health care](#) (Charlene Porter, ReliefWeb, 4 Jan. 2002)

[The State of the Afghan Economy](#) (Office of the UN Coordinator for Afghanistan, 1999)

been enforced. In the wake of aerial and commando raids on Qandahar, the numbers of people arriving at the Chaman border crossing has steadily increased during October. It is still not clear whether the Pakistani government will give approval for assistance to be provided to these groups, or limits that might be placed on their onward movements.

Despite early estimates of massive movements to the west or north, limited numbers are reported to have crossed to Iran, Turkmenistan, or Uzbekistan. Tajikistan's President Imomali Rakhmoniv stated that his country would not "*allow the penetration of a single refugee from Afghanistan into Tajikistan*", while Pakistan's Minister of Kashmir Affairs, Northern Areas, and Straits and Frontiers Region (SAFRON), Sarfraz Abbas Khan, has indicated that refugee camps in Pakistan would be a "*last resort for Afghans*".

Regional breakdown of internal displacement

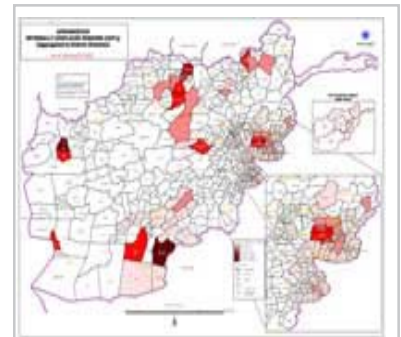
Kabul and the central region

Continuing reports of US strikes against strategic areas in and around the city of Kabul, and military installations in the central region, have caused significant numbers of people to leave the city, at least during the nights. Many outlying areas already suffered damage during the conflict between the mujahideen and forces allied with the occupying Soviet army, which withdrew from the country in 1989. Many public facilities inside the city were badly damaged in subsequent fighting between the mujahideen factions who replaced the Najibullah regime in 1992. It was estimated at that time that up to half of the urban population was internally displaced, and large parts of the city were rendered uninhabitable. The city of Kabul and the routes that lead to it continue to be of significant strategic importance to the current Taliban administration. Anti-Taliban forces loyal to the Northern Alliance occupy positions some 25 kilometres north of the city, in the once fertile Shamali plain, where fighting continues.

Conflict-related movements, most recently from the Shamali plain that was forcibly de-populated during 1999/2000, account for the majority of displaced people in the central region. Movements of villagers from the north compounded the problems of a city, which had already witnessed widespread internal movements between 1992 and 1995, and in-migration of rural communities from the south, as the result of the drought.

The vulnerability of the population of Kabul is illustrated by the fact that, as of August 2001, almost a quarter of the population of Kabul, or approximately 450,000 people, were receiving subsidized bread through WFP or CARE. Up to a million inhabitants, including 100,000 IDPs, receive some form of external assistance.

Number of Afghan refugees in
no-man's land rises to 7,000
(UNHCR, 11 Jan. 2002)



[Click here to view full map of
Afghanistan IDP's - Aggregated
to District Divisions \(HICFA, 2
Jan. 2002\)](#)

[Crisis in Afghanistan:
Humanitarian Situation](#)
(Oxfam, 20 Dec. 2001)

[Kabul tries to cope with
orphan influx](#) (Rory Carroll,
The Guardian, 31 Dec. 2001)

Since the start of US strikes against the city, there are reports of significant numbers of families seeking refuge in outlying villages in Logar and Wardak provinces to the south. Other reports indicate that families are responding to night-time attacks by returning to their homes during the day, possibly to try to protect their property from looting.

Central Highlands

The central highlands, or Hazarajat, are largely inhabited by Afghanistan's Shi'a Hazara minority. Largely unaffected by the conflict until the mid-1990's, the area was subsequently affected by internal fighting between opposing factions of Hezbe Wahdat, the mujahadeen group set up to defend the interests of the Hazara community. Since 1999, hostilities between a faction of Hezbe Wahdat and the Taliban have intensified, resulting in the depopulation of some valleys in the region, as a result of scorched-earth tactics. Human rights organizations have reported on atrocities against civilian communities in Yakawlang and Bamiyan, allegedly by fighters allied to the Taliban. A significant Hazara minority remains in southern districts of Kabul city.

There have been significant levels of displacement in the region over the past three years, due both to the direct impact of the conflict, and indirect effects caused by food blockades during 1998/9. This helped to deepen the progressive impact of the drought on marginal pastoral communities in the region, whose ability to re-establish their livelihoods will be affected. There are estimated to be some 500 IDPs in Panjao and Waras districts, forced out of their homes by fighting in the area. Many rural communities who were displaced initially moved to stay with relatives in Kabul, and subsequently made their way to areas further south or to Quetta in Pakistan (which has traditionally had a large Hazara community). Other reports indicate that, since the aerial attacks were intensified on Kabul, families have fled the city for Hazarajat, including parts Yakawlang and Bamiyan.

For more information on the health crisis in Afghanistan, see:

[WHO - Background for Afghanistan Humanitarian Crisis](#)

[ICRC - Afghanistan: Overview of current ICRC work, October 19, 2001](#)

[MSF - brings personal contact to IDPs in precarious health conditions, Sept. 21, 2001](#)

[Physicians for Human Rights - Women's Health and Human Rights in Afghanistan, 2001](#)

For more information on the Afghan refugee crisis, see:

[Refugees in Afghanistan](#) (UNHCR, 29 Nov. 2001)

[Solutions Not Imminent for Afghan Displaced and Refugees](#) (Hiram Ruiz, U.S. Committee for Refugees, 10 Dec. 2001)

[Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The Plight of Those Seeking Refuge from Afghanistan](#) (Oxfam, 9 Nov. 2001)

[Afghanistan's Internal Refugees: "Trapped at the Margins"](#) (Mir Hekmatullah Sadat, Lemar-Aftaab, January-December 2001)

[Testimony from Refugees in New Jalozei and Kotkai Camp, Pakistan](#) (Human Rights Watch, 25 Nov. 2001)

[Increasing refugee numbers heighten the need for emergency relief assistance](#) (UNICEF)

[Massacres of Hazaras in Afghanistan](#) (Human Rights Watch February 2001)

Estimated IDP populations September 10, 2001

Location	Number
Badakshan	94,000
Northern Region	387,000
Hazarajat Region	75,000
Herat	200,000
Southern Provinces	200,000
TOTAL	956,000

Source: *UNHCR*

Herat and the western region

The livelihoods of rural communities in the once-fertile valley of the Hari Rud river, and the population of the important city of Herat, have been transformed by four years of drought. Apart from the direct impact of the drought on the extensive orchards and vineyards in the region, hundreds of thousands of villagers converged during 2001 on Herat from Ghor and Uruzgan, in the hope of receiving external assistance. It is estimated that a total of 200,000 displaced people are now in the area, of whom over 150,000 people were reported to be living in 6 "camps", where living conditions are grim. As in other cases, the circumstances facing host communities is also serious, with up to 700,000 people estimated to be vulnerable in the region as a whole.

In the light of continuing aerial attacks on the city and its environs, there are indications of a mood of insecurity, with increases in criminality, and reports of increases in food prices of up to 20%. It is reported that some families have moved within the city, while those who can have moved to adjacent rural areas, which are perceived to be more secure. The expected flight of significant numbers of civilians to Iran, however, has not yet materialized, partly due to the closure of the frontier at Islam Qala.

Mazar-I-Sharif and the northern region

The northern region, where the terrain ranges from the steppes around Mazar-I-Sharif to the remote valleys of Badakhshahan, is currently the focus of some of the fiercest fighting. Many parts close to Kunduz and Taloqan were largely de-populated during fighting between the northern alliance and the Taliban during 2000-2001. Combined with the impact of the drought, it is estimated that up to 200,000 people have been displaced in the northern region, with another 300,000 villagers believed to be highly vulnerable. Efforts continue by NGOs, particularly in Sheberghan and Andkhai to deliver essential assistance to enable the latter group to remain in their areas of origin during the coming winter. Security is reportedly good in Badakhshan, and aid is being provided to the displaced, primarily from parts of Takhar, as planned. Elsewhere in the north, however, work has been affected by the ongoing military action, and by the closure of the frontiers with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, which might limit the extent of deliveries of much-needed food during the coming winter.

Continued aerial strikes against Mazar-I-Sharif, however, might result in significant outward displacement, at least for those who can find refuge in settled parts of Jawjjan and Balkh provinces. But the pattern is still far from clear, given reports of significant numbers of families arriving in Mazar-I-Sharif from Kabul and Kalafghan (Takhar) to seek refuge with relatives.

For more information on the food security crisis in Afghanistan, see:

[World Food Program Emergency Reports 2002](#)

[Food Security in Afghanistan: Strategic Directions \(Afghanistan Assistance\)](#)

[Latest News on Food Security \(OCHA, IRIN\)](#)

[Preparing for Afghanistan's Reconstruction Conference: Agriculture Recovery and Food Security \(Sakwa Bunyasi, World Bank, 29 Nov. 2001\)](#)

[FAO Special Relief Operations: Afghanistan \(FAO/TCOR\)](#)

[Maps: WFP Food Deliveries vs. Requirements \(World Food Program, 31 Dec. 2001\)](#)



Source: MSA of MIT

Jalalabad and the eastern region

While severely affected by fighting up until 1992, many communities in the strategically-important eastern provinces of Nangahar, Laghman, Kunar, Paktia and Paktika depend on cross-border trade with Pakistan. The impact of the drought has been relatively limited in the area, although the ban on the cultivation of poppy has had an impact on the livelihoods of farming communities in 2001. There are estimated to be up to 350,000 vulnerable people in the region.

The closure by the Pakistani government of frontier crossings at Torkham and elsewhere in early September has prevented many people from leaving Afghanistan, although there are reports of a significant flow of people crossing informally. In fact, the majority of the 180,000 recent arrivals at refugee camps in Peshawar are reportedly from Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Paktia and Khost, as well as Kabul. Some reports suggest that only a third of the population of Jalalabad remain in the city, suggesting that significant numbers must have moved to the homes of relatives in the adjacent rural areas of Nangarhar and Laghman.

Since early October, UN and other aid convoys have crossed at Torkham in order to deliver supplies to Jalalabad, and transit to Kabul. Given the strategic significance of the area, it is likely to continue to be a focus of hostility in the coming months.

Qandahar and the southern region

The southern region, including the city of Qandahar, is the effective seat of power of the Taliban movement, and therefore has been the focus of much recent military activity. Prior to the recent events in the region, there were an estimated 200,000 displaced people, who had left their homes as result of the drought in the provinces of Qandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Nimroz, and Uruzgan. Prior to September, aid agency reports suggested that there were up to 500,000 vulnerable people, including an unknown proportion of displaced, in the Qandahar area alone. Many of the inhabitants of Qandahar itself have sought refuge in the adjacent rural areas, while others have flocked to the frontier crossing at Chaman.

To see more maps of Afghanistan, click on the following links:

[Map of Afghanistan 2001](#)

[Map of Afghanistan \(Political\) 1993](#)

[Map of Afghanistan \(Political\) 1993 \(Shaded Relief\)](#)

[United Nations – Afghanistan Map, 2000](#)

Please click [here](#) to see IDP population data per province in Afghanistan.

[Third day of trouble at Pakistan border hotspot \(AFP, 23 Oct. 2001\)](#)

Humanitarian access

As has been the case during earlier times of instability in the country, the movement of goods by road continues in those parts not directly affected by hostilities or adverse weather. This has enabled aid agencies to resume cross-border deliveries of essential supplies, albeit on a limited scale, from Pakistan, Iran and Tajikistan, during the first weeks of October. Provided that further military action does not rule out movement of civilian traffic, it should be possible for the flow of supplies to increase. **Among the priorities for deliveries will be the highland zones that might soon be affected by winter snows, and the urban centers, whose populations depend on sustained supplies of food. An additional factor in the delivery and stockpiling of emergency assistance is the risk of looting, in the event of further breakdown in law and order. There are already reports of looting of aid agency assets in some parts of the north, and MSF has indicated that its ability to respond will be affected by the looting of its health facilities in the north and west of the country.**

The availability of supplies has not been the only constraint to humanitarian operations in Afghanistan. All expatriate staff were evacuated from Taliban-controlled parts of the country in mid-September, in anticipation of US military intervention in response to the events of 11th September. In the case of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) this evacuation of expatriates represented the first full withdrawal since it established permanent operations in Afghanistan in 1987. This withdrawal came at a crucial time, when preparations were being made for winter relief programs, including food distributions. While it has been possible for some agencies to continue core programs supervised by national staff in certain areas, few would dispute that these are adequate for the actual needs of the growing numbers of vulnerable people, including the displaced.

The ongoing military campaign inside Afghanistan has drawn much-needed international attention drawn to the plight of the Afghan people. The resulting pledges of international support have enabled aid agencies to pre-position essential supplies in Pakistan and Iran, either for use for incoming refugee groups or for cross-border delivery. Following the disruption of convoys from Pakistan in late September, a more regular flow of humanitarian supplies has reportedly resumed. Even with the continued risks posed by military strikes or reactions to these, it will be important to maintain and expand upon these levels of access. The real challenge, however, remains ensuring that these supplies get to those who most need them, in time.

For more information on population movements, see:

[Latest News on Refugees/IDPs](#) (OCHA, IRIN)

[IDPs in Afghanistan](#) (Global IDP Project)

[Pakistan: Refugees Not Moving Voluntarily](#) (Human Rights Watch, 5 Dec. 2001)

[A Multinational Force: The Best Option to Ensure Humanitarian Access in Afghanistan](#) (Refugees International, 5 Dec. 2001)

[Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis is not over yet](#) (Oxfam, 21 Dec. 2001)

[USCR Says Humanitarian Crisis in Afghanistan Remains Acute](#) (USCR, 7 Jan. 2002)

The ongoing military campaign is deepening Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis.

The ongoing aerial bombing of Afghanistan is consolidating the damage that has been done to the country over the past two decades of conflict. Even if attempts are made to avoid damage to civilians or non-military infrastructure, there will be an inevitable impact on living conditions, and the provision of essential services, including health care and education. The reported focus of aerial attacks on urban centers will inevitably have an impact on the modest rehabilitation measures that had been possible in recent years, and which provided rudimentary services for many vulnerable urban families.

In the current circumstances, it is difficult to assess the overall extent of internal movement. As has often proved the case, it is those who cannot move who may be the most vulnerable, and the least accessible. What is clear is that significant numbers of urban families have fled their homes for rural areas since the commencement of aerial attacks. These groups will be vulnerable, and need food and other assistance during the coming winter. Even if there is a degree of stability, and families begin to return to their homes, it could take several years for them to regain a degree of subsistence.

Leaving a village or area of origin, even on a temporary basis, is not a choice that most Afghans take lightly.

For most Afghans, the decision to move will be made once an area becomes insecure, or when food supplies are exhausted and remaining assets have been sold. In many cases, an entire community will move, once they feel unable to protect each other, or their collective resources have been exhausted. The act of displacement inevitably affects the customary tribal or clan-based social structures, which bind families into the community, and can provide for the collective needs on economic, social and psychological levels, even in exile.

As within refugee communities, the impact of the arrival of displaced people on the host community, even where these might be relatives, can be negative. Additional calls on stocks of food, fuel and other commodities can render the hosts themselves vulnerable, reducing the extent to which they can effectively assist their kin. In the case of many existing or potential host communities in Afghanistan, there is a very real risk that the movement of significant numbers of people, particularly as a result of military action, might result in widespread secondary displacement, with potentially serious consequences.

Current humanitarian aid programs are not a long-term solution to the displacement problem.

The provision of humanitarian assistance will do little more than alleviate the symptoms of the crisis that Afghans are currently facing. For both those displaced as a result of military action and drought, there will be a need to plan and seek the resources for longer-term investments in the rehabilitation and development of infrastructure that will result in more widespread access to services, as the basis for the recovery of war-affected communities. This will need to be matched by investment in initiatives that will promote the recovery of appropriate economic activity, to enable Afghan families to re-build their livelihoods, and provide for their basic needs.

- ***The United States and its allies must uphold international humanitarian law and take concrete steps to avoid worsening the plight of non-combatant Afghans, particularly the internally displaced.***

The United States government must uphold the principles of international humanitarian law, and take into account the fact that air strikes or other forms of military action in the country could result in civilian casualties. In order to limit further displacement, military action in the vicinity of residential areas or against civilian facilities should be avoided.

- ***The Taliban authorities, the Northern Alliance, and all other parties in Afghanistan should ensure full access to vulnerable groups, and guarantee the security of IDP camps and groups in areas under their control.***

The role of the parties to the conflict in Afghanistan in addressing the current IDP crisis is crucial. There is a continued need for attention to the responsibilities of all groups to ensure full access to vulnerable groups, including the displaced. All Afghan and other parties should be required to take appropriate measures to guarantee the security of all civilians in areas under their control, and ensure respect for international humanitarian law.

- ***Safe passage should be provided for essential humanitarian supplies, and staff engaged in needs-assessments and distribution, to reach priority areas in Afghanistan, prior to the onset of winter.***

UN agencies, with the support of operational NGOs, have the capacity and experience to address the immediate needs of displaced communities and others affected by this crisis in an appropriate manner. The effectiveness of any humanitarian initiative, however, will hinge on secure access for humanitarian personnel and supplies. In parts of the country that will be inaccessible during the coming winter, an immediate cessation of hostilities is vital to ensure delivery of essential supplies, and access for staff engaged in needs assessments or distribution.

- ***In addition to supporting those already displaced, efforts should be made where possible to mitigate against further displacement.***

The provision of emergency short-term relief is expensive and unsustainable. It can not only undermine existing coping mechanisms, but can act as a magnet for further displacement. A balance needs to be found between meeting short-term needs, and mitigation initiatives that target families still in their areas of origin, as a means of ensuring that they are able to sustain themselves. There is a risk that ongoing longer-term developmental assistance for many Afghan communities being undertaken by NGOs, may be overshadowed by the immediate needs of the ongoing emergency. It is important, therefore, to sustain and expand the scale of such work, where feasible, and ensure that the lessons learned are built into a coherent post-emergency strategy for Afghanistan as a whole.

- ***Neighboring countries in the region should open their borders to vulnerable Afghans, and receive the necessary support to provide for additional refugees***

Despite the official closure of the frontier, tens of thousands of Afghans have already crossed the border with Pakistan, in the face of aerial attacks on urban centers and bases in the south-east of Afghanistan. The other 5 countries bordering Afghanistan have also officially closed their borders. In order to ensure that civilians who are at risk can receive support, neighboring countries should open their borders and cooperate with international organizations in assisting the new refugees. The right of refugees not to be returned to a country where their lives or freedom are threatened is a fundamental principle of international customary law and is enshrined in the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees, to which Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and China are parties. In order to support the possible host countries, additional resources should be made available, particularly for Pakistan and Iran, which together already host over 3.5 million refugees.

ABOUT THIS BRIEF

This is an updated version of the policy brief *Internal Displacement in Afghanistan: New Challenges*, published on October 3. For more information on issues presented in this brief, the readers are invited to consult the links attached to the documents or to contact the Program as indicated on the cover page.

The Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research is a research and policy program based at the Harvard School of Public Health in Cambridge, MA. The Program is engaged in research and advisory services on humanitarian operations and the protection of civilians in conflict areas. The Program advises organizations such as the United Nations, governments and non-governmental actors and focuses on the protection of vulnerable groups, conflict prevention, strategic planning for human security, and the role of information technology in emergency response. The Program was established in August 2000 with the support of the Government of Switzerland and in cooperation with the United Nations.

Children in Afghanistan:

Afghanistan: IRIN interview with UNICEF head Carol Bellamy (6 Dec. 2001)

http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=17215&SelectRegion=Central_Asia&SelectCountry=AFGHANISTAN

Watchlist on Children: Afghanistan (International Rescue Committee, Fall 2001)

<http://www.theirc.org/wcrwc/Watchlist/wl01.html>

Special Briefing: Child Soldiers and the West Asian Crisis (Amnesty International, September 2001)

<http://www.amnesty-usa.org/children/soldiers/westasiancrisis.pdf>

Internal Displacement in Afghanistan: An Overview

Afghanistan Data Profile (World Bank, July 2000)

<http://devdata.worldbank.org/external/dgprofile.asp?RMDK=82662&SMDK=1&W=0>

Drought in Afghanistan (Assistance Afghanistan Site)

<http://www.pcpafg.org/programme/drought/>

Central Asia Region- Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #41 (USAID, 7 Jan. 2002)

http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/centralasia_fs41_fy02.html

Humanitarian Crisis in Central Asia (USAID)

<http://www.usaid.gov/about/afghanistan/>

Coming winter spells grave danger for Afghan civilians, UN warns (UN DPI, 2 Oct. 2001)

<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/480fa8736b88bbc3c12564f6004c8ad5/e4355e494ca0ca1585256ad900705791?OpenDocument>

Relief organizations strive to improve Afghan health care (Charlene Porter, ReliefWeb, 4 Jan. 2002)

<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/480fa8736b88bbc3c12564f6004c8ad5/c7753d62c8a54bc9c1256b3a003af3d5?OpenDocument>

Number of Afghan refugees in no-man's land rises to 7,000 (UNHCR, 11 Jan. 2002)

<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/+EwwBmeqtkpswwwwwnwwwwwwhFqnN0bltFqnDni5zFqnN0blAFqnN0blDzmxwwwww1FqnN0bl/opendoc.htm>

Regional breakdown of internal displacement:

Afghanistan IDP's - Aggregated to District Divisions (HICFA, 2 Jan. 2002)

<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/map.nsf/wPreview/0F66FEAEE122473F85256B350056ECA5?Opendocument>

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<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/atwork/emerg/afghanprogramme.htm>

Kabul tries to cope with orphan influx (Rory Carroll, The Guardian, 31 Dec. 2001)

<http://society.guardian.co.uk/disasterresponse/story/0,1321,626225,00.html>

Massacres of Hazaras in Afghanistan (Human Rights Watch, Feb. 2001)

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/afghanistan/>

LINKS

UNHCR Afghan refugee statistics (UNHCR, ReliefWeb, 10 Sept. 2001)
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/vID/81F3C45318379FABC1256ACB0039B878?OpenDocument>

Global IDP Project, 24 Dec. 2001
http://www.hic.org.pk/humanitarianwork/idps/idp_breakdown_per_province.pdf

Third day of trouble at Pakistan border hotspot (AFP, 23 Oct. 2001)
<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/s/556369B218D48E3CC1256AEE003BC882>

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