

Coping with protracted displacement: how Afghans secure their livelihood in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan

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Coping with protracted displacement

How Afghans secure their livelihood in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan

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SUMMARY

This *Working Paper* addresses the situation of Afghans before, during and after their displacements in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. Its aim is: (1) to understand how internally displaced lower-class Afghans, refugees who have returned and Afghan refugees staying in Pakistan and Iran perceive their current living conditions and what activities they pursue towards securing their families' livelihood; (2) to establish the influence of socio-economic class dispositions on the displaced persons' abilities and agency and on the strategic forging of networks in translocal space as a way of securing their livelihood, and (3) to contribute towards elaborating an analytical livelihood approach that can explain agency in protracted displacement situations caused by violent conflict—thereby going beyond established assumptions of migration and conventional refugee studies.

The authors elaborate on the significance of translocal networks for Afghans as a livelihood pillar and consider 'established-outsider relations' as enabling condition. The authors argue that both dimensions are constitutive for a livelihood approach that has analytical value in conflict contexts. The evidence-based identification of these two components for a comprehensive livelihood approach in displacement contexts should subsequently guide assistance to displaced people. Entry points are the support of translocal networks and collective approaches to securing livelihoods (e.g. targeting extended families) and the equal consideration of host and (re)integration communities in assistance programming. In the case of displaced Afghans, a support of translocal networks could amount to a 'fourth durable solution'.

The empirical data highlight the difference in livelihood options between lower- and middle-class Afghans. While lower-class Afghans generally have fewer options, some may be able to acquire skills and education during their displacement and thus have a greater chance to secure their livelihood more sustainably in the future. Yet both are affected by national policy constraints and ethnic boundary-drawing that inhibit access to resources and assets and the chance of political participation in the host contexts of Iran and Pakistan. Currently, increasing violence in Afghanistan, heightened tensions and adverse policies against Afghans in Pakistan and Iran as well as restrictive European refugee policies contribute to the narrowing of livelihood options.

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Main findings

Conceptually, i.e. the application of a livelihood approach to violent conflict / protracted displacement

Translocal networks and accord within communities are crucial for securing livelihoods

Securing a livelihood involves various activities of collectives or individuals) within their social environment and social interaction in times of emergency with the aim of retaining the basis for resuming 'their way of life' when the emergency is over. Two components are crucial for applying a livelihood approach to protracted displacement situations: Translocal networks as livelihood option and established-outsider relations as framing / enabling condition.

Research and assistance must consider that people are under pressure to navigate local power structures

The following aspects must be taken into account: (1) The significance of access to powerholders; (2) the ability to negotiate one's family's everyday existence in adverse conditions as one livelihood option; (3) the enabling role of the informal economy; and (4) the tension between enabling and inhibiting effects of the absence of the rule of law in the displacement and (re)integration environment.

In terms of content, i.e. how Afghans secure their livelihood

Social class affiliation determines livelihood prospects

Livelihood options of displaced persons differ considerably depending on their social class as the availability of assets, access to education and regular employment for individuals and their extended family vary. Lower-class Afghans who have less or no access to such options cannot secure their livelihood in the same way as middle-class Afghans can. Lower-class people mostly must do with network relations whose financial means at most allow them to survive in precarious livelihood conditions and largely provide moral support. In contrast, the networks of middle-class Afghans are spatially and economically more diversified.

Translocal networks are a pillar of livelihood security for Afghans in protracted displacement

Strategic translocal networks enable additional livelihood options; the networks provide social arrangements for self-help of extended Afghan families and have become indispensable for securing their livelihood in protracted displacement situations. Long-established translocal networks, that have long been established and have amplified during the past forty years of violent conflict, therefore, constitute a livelihood pillar rather than purely an option. Currently, these networks are massively under pressure. A consequence of this is the decline of self-help capacities and agency, in particular among the lower class.

Gaining skills during displacement enables future social mobility for lower-class Afghans

Education and skills acquired during the displacement phase/s are likely to have a positive effect on making a livelihood in the future.

In practical terms, i.e. how to apply findings to policies and operational assistance work

Support of transnational networks is necessary to enhance self-organizing capacity of displaced people

Refugee and aid policies as well as implementing agencies need to pay systematic attention to options that could enhance self-organizing capacities of displaced persons on the move and in displacement and return contexts. This implies adapting measures to the logic of translocal networks and their context-specific role in sustaining a livelihood in conflict and protracted displacement situations. Currently, however, translocal networks do not always receive the same attention as other livelihood options. Likewise, established-outsider relations would be another point of intervention to apply leverage for support.

A safe legal status is a precondition

The provision of political entitlements to those who were born in Iran and Pakistan or have been living there in the second or third generation as well as assuring access to land, housing and employment would be the first step to create a sustainable livelihood for lower-class Afghans.

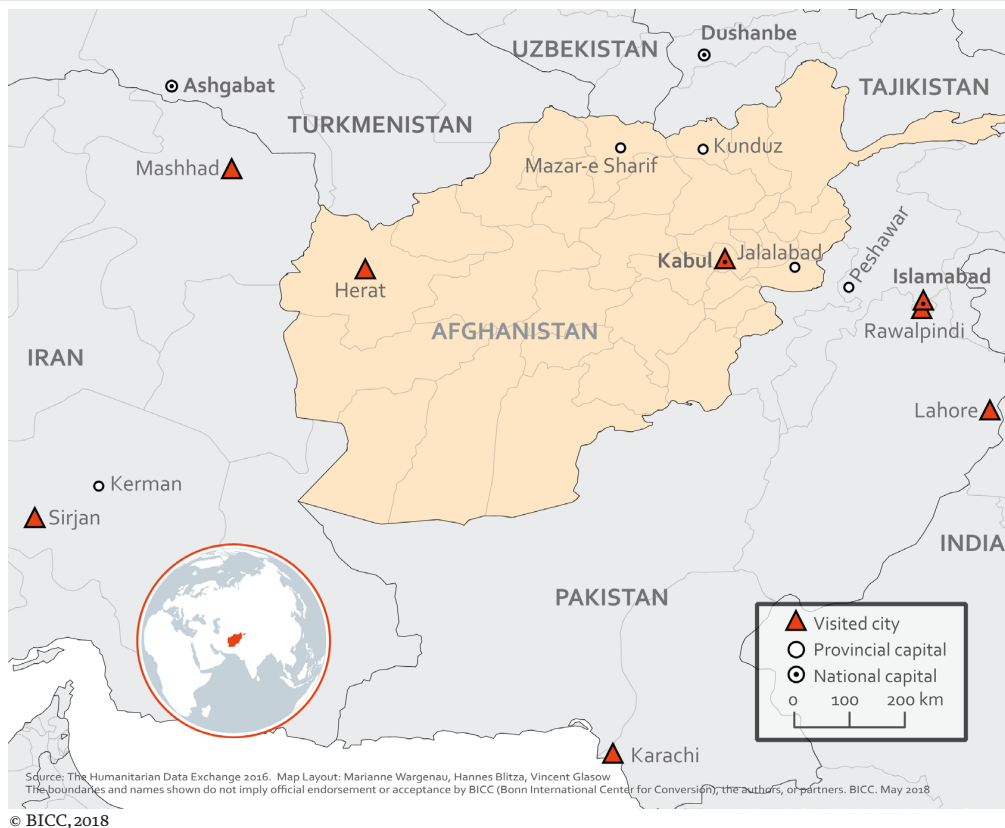
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\ Map 1

Map of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan with interview locations



Introduction: Securing livelihood as a function of class, agency and translocal networks

Afghanistan is synonymous with protracted violent conflict and displacement¹. Afghanistan's wars have triggered waves of refugees during escalations of armed conflict and mass returns during declines of violence since the late 1970s. The neighbouring countries of Pakistan and Iran have hosted around five million Afghans throughout these decades, whereas the population of land-locked Afghanistan comes to an estimated 30 million plus. Throughout the protracted violent conflict, the lives of Afghans who were displaced across the borders and within Afghanistan have transformed considerably. When unconditioned aid declined massively after the end of the Cold War, they relied largely on their own abilities and agency.² They attempted to integrate into certain locations temporarily or longer, find jobs and tried to 'belong'. For decades, most Afghans have been coping with adverse conditions of living outside humanitarian supervision, acquiring a high degree of mobility so that families have become scattered in different locations inside and outside conflict areas within Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. Many Afghans support each other through networks of family members located inside and outside the country; some have done so for a long time, some only temporarily (Monsutti, 2005). Circular displacement has become rampant;³ numerous Afghans secure their livelihood outside of what constitutes formal migration regimes.

This *Paper* elaborates how a livelihood approach can be meaningfully applied to analyse protracted conflict and displacement situations. The conceptual argument is made in three steps: First, underpinned by the hypothesis that attributes of positionality determine individuals' ability to act and thus imply differences in moulding translocal social networks with regard to quality and shape, we introduce the variable of social class into the discussion on securing

a livelihood in protracted displacement situations. This serves to illustrate how the livelihood options of lower-class versus middle-class Afghans differ. We argue, second, that—in the case of Afghan-translocal networks are not only an important livelihood option, but constitute a pillar of livelihood due to the strategic nature of social networking and the translocal networks' significance for securing livelihood (understood as ensuring a life in dignity at the concerned person's or group's own measure, see section 'Applying a livelihood approach ...'). Third, we argue that in protracted displacement situations—no matter whether during or after displacement or return—local community relations between 'settled' (established) and 'new-comers' (outsider) must be taken into account. The nature and quality of the established-outsider relations should be considered as it is highly significant for processes of inclusion vs exclusion, marginalization and/or belonging at the location of interaction.

Research questions and approach

The agency of displaced Afghan people has already been the subject of a range of academic research, spanning about forty years of forced migration due to repeated surges of armed fighting and frequent incidences of violence in Afghanistan and including the second- and third-generation of people born as displaced abroad who have never been to Afghanistan.⁴ Whereas scholars focused on the Afghans' transnational networks that have emerged over the decades (Monsutti, 2005; 2008; Harpviken, 2014), in this *Paper*, we examine the role of translocal networks⁵ as one

1 \ We consider protracted displacement along the lines of UNHCR which defines situations where more than 25,000 persons have been forced to stay abroad for five years or longer without any perspective for a solution as protracted refugee situations (UNHCR, 2004). Throughout this *Paper*, we use the term displacement to comprise refugees as well as internally displaced people (IDPs).

2 \ Aid flows accompanying the political and military interventions after 9/11 2001 focused on reconstruction and development.

3 \ Cf. Monsutti (2005), who states that "recurrent multidirectional movement" (p. 241) is the means by which Afghans have been securing their families' livelihood for many decades. Accordingly, there are few family groups without at least one member abroad.

4 \ Cf. among others Abbasi-Shavazi, 2012; Rohani, 2014; Noghani & Akhlaghi, 2014. According to informed estimates, about 90 per cent of all Afghans currently living in Pakistan were born in Pakistan during the years of refuge. Interview with NGO head implementing for UNHCR, Islamabad, 21 March 2017.

5 \ Throughout this *Paper*, we use the term translocal (networks or relations) to signify network relations between individuals at several locations which potentially transgress international borders but might also be limited to a large extent to one nation-state context. As with migration, any displacement (whether internal or across borders) exposes the displaced to new contexts and experiences that can be assumed to transform the respective individual, family or other social grouping (in potentially several respects), the 'local' (as expressed in translocal rather than mere 'transnational') deserves consideration, especially when analyzing patterns of agency and its contextual formation. The choice of terminology does not contradict scholarly work that prefers to highlight the cross-border dimension, thus using the term 'transnational' (as Harpviken, 2014, Rouse, 1991, or Monsutti, 2005

livelihood option among others for Afghans in protracted displacement situations. Accordingly, we endeavour to analyse the empirical material on displaced Afghans within and outside Afghanistan with an academic livelihood approach. The *Paper* builds on earlier studies following Robert Chambers' appeal to enable sustainable livelihoods as a development approach that safeguards the own agency of the rural poor, not least in order to reduce "distress migration" (Chambers, 1988, p. 11). Hence, from the outset, concepts of livelihood have been linked to forced migration. We go a crucial step further by applying the livelihood lens to situations of protracted displacement, assuming that this approach allows a better understanding of the agency of people in such situations. Moreover, as livelihood options are likely to differ according to social class, we look into the agency of lower-class Afghans and compare it with that of middle-class Afghans in the three countries. We further assume that the specific circumstances of protracted displacement will yield indications for the necessity to refine the existing academic approach to livelihood studies.

The various ways in which long-term displaced Afghans secure their livelihood as internally displaced persons (IDPs), as returnees within Afghanistan and as (first-, second- or third-generation) refugees in the regional neighbourhood of Pakistan and Iran provide the empirical basis on which the authors intend to develop the livelihood approach further for research on protracted displacement. We thus pose the overarching research question:

How could the existing academic approach to livelihood studies be extended or refined to apply it to situations of protracted displacement—with an analytical surplus value? Put differently, which dimensions need to be included in an academic livelihood approach that can comprehensively explain how people in protracted displacement situations secure their livelihood?

do); it is meant to specify the object of study more clearly and take into account the described process dimension of agency formation (constant 'becoming') during displacement trajectories.

The empirical sections below address the following research questions:

- \ How do internally displaced lower-class Afghans, Afghan returnees and Afghans remaining in Pakistan and Iran—the countries that have been receiving the largest numbers of Afghan refugees—perceive their conditions of living and their social, economic and political context?
- \ How do they describe their activities towards securing their livelihood in protracted displacement situations before, during and after having been displaced?
- \ Which efforts do lower-class Afghans undertake in situations of long-term forced displacement to secure their livelihood in the long run?

Translocal networks as a livelihood option

'Securing a livelihood' denotes "maintaining the way of life" (Grawert, 1998, p. 2), i.e., ensuring life in dignity according to the particular social group's own measure. In this sense, securing a livelihood is the cause and effect of the formation of translocal networks. Establishing new networks or making use of already existing translocal networks are important livelihood options for families in situations of economic distress and—as we illustrate in this *Paper*—protracted displacement. The networks can contribute to livelihood security through remittances, information exchange, hosting—at least temporarily—further relatives and guiding them towards overcoming bureaucratic hurdles of all kinds. Translocal networks can enable young men to generate bridewealth and marry, thus providing future-oriented livelihood options from which other family members can benefit. Inter-marriage with inhabitants of host communities can expand network support and thus increase the livelihood security for scattered family members (for Afghans in Iran, cf. Abbasi-Shavazi, 2012). Family members who have established themselves abroad use their knowledge of the local labour market and mobilize relationships with people from the same country or in the host community to find jobs for the newcomers in the foreign labour market. If this is not

successful, they may move on after some time to places promising better opportunities. A further effect of translocal networks can be enhanced business ties across borders, which are likely to be perpetuated when the armed conflict subsides and parts of the family return. Translocal networks are a means of maintaining what people in protracted displacement situations consider a more or less appropriate way of life for their scattered families. If they do not succeed in achieving or re-gaining the desired way of life they may be able to pave the way for future generations.

Hence, these future-oriented options of livelihood sustain and reproduce translocal networks.

Especially in times of emergency, social groups mobilize extended relations to secure their livelihood. These relations have been termed ‘livelihood network’ and include all persons and collectives that participate in securing the livelihood of a selected group or family. People’s social interconnections or livelihood networks are thus a crucial part of people’s agency towards livelihood security. Livelihood networks are dynamic and change through shocks and other political, economic, social or cultural influences, which often have the effect of closing options or opening new ones and narrowing or widening networks (Grawert, 1998, pp. 10–20; 153–176; Grawert, 1998a).

Securing livelihood in violent conflicts and protracted displacement situations

The empirical insights presented below confirm and build on earlier extensive research on Afghans’ translocal networks that suggested that the pattern of chain migration not only pertains to labour migrants, but also to displaced people.⁶ With its attention on how Afghans secure their livelihood in protracted displacement situations, this *Paper* thus shifts the focus from livelihood and translocal networks in migration studies towards a conflict and/or

6 \ Usually it is difficult to distinguish people who arrived as refugees and were faced with protracted displacement situations from migrants; the distinction is merely a function of legal status. Scholars, therefore, have proposed to consider more strongly the similarities between migration and protracted displacement situations. Subsequently, our analysis disregards status ascriptions of Afghans as refugees or labour migrants because these categories inevitably become blurred in protracted displacement situations (Monsutti, 2005, p. 20).

refugee studies perspective. A household’s decision-making process for migration resembles a displaced household’s decision-making process for return. In both cases, there are rational reasons for ‘split household’ strategies with the subsequent development of ‘transnational households’ (Harpviken, 2014, p. 58).

There are some differences between the decision to migrate and the decision to flee due to imminent violence or being caught in a war zone, which does not allow a thorough planning and decision-making process. Nevertheless, those who escaped as refugees or IDPs may well be faced with similar situations as migrants when their displacement becomes protracted, because—like migrants—they will need to secure their livelihood in different places—including temporarily in the country of origin, moving in the so-called transnational migrant circuit (Harpviken, 2014; Rouse, 1991). This suggests taking a perspective on people in protracted displacement situations that does not stress the differences between refugees, IDPs, returnees, deportees and migrants. The main argument of this *Paper* is that differences in class are much more relevant for the livelihood options open to displaced people.

Entering positionality and class into livelihood analysis

Broadly defined as the ability to act, an individual actor’s agency encompasses the possible scope of action as a function of her or his own capacities vs. desires on the one hand and the external structural factors framing his or her everyday existence on the other (Houte et al., 2015, p. 693).⁷ Such ‘external’

7 \ Translocal networks are not only the result of the agency of displaced people aiming to secure their own and their scattered families’ livelihood. On the one hand, governments often have an interest in exporting or receiving migrants. Exporting migrants can be a strategy of governments to alleviate pressure on the domestic labour market. The refugees and migrants abroad can be used as a bargaining chip for negotiations about more aid or security support as unemployed returnees may cause unrest and put pressure on the domestic labour market. This in turn keeps aid agencies taking the responsibility of engagement and induces governments to support them as donors. On the other hand, governments hosting refugees and migrants, like Iran and Pakistan, can use them as a bargaining chip as well, in particular when they are illegal. According to international law, each state is obliged to take its citizens back if migrants are no longer wanted (Bradley, 2008). Hence,

factors incorporate the nature of the immediate environment of settlement—whether in a displacement situation, after return or in transit. Hence, livelihood options also depend on the enabling and disabling effects of established settler vs newcomer relations (what we introduce in the section ‘Applying a livelihood approach ...’ as ‘established-outsider relations’). If translocal networks are factored in, agency of displaced people can be described as a function of translocal positionality (Anthias, 2008); agency manifests in translocal modes of living that vary in different degrees of emplacement and belonging⁸ and, subsequently, may lead to de facto integration—or not.⁹

Moreover, if translocal networks or households are viewed to encompass more than just bidirectional movement and exchange, where practices of emplacement in one location do not replace the other but complement it, it has to be acknowledged that translocal modes of living also affect the surrounding context (Greiner, 2010, p. 137; Smith, 2011, p. 187; Anthias, 2009, p. 12), i.e. the local neighbourhoods of origin, return and current residence. While this has been pointed out in particular in the literature on the migration-development nexus (Benz, 2014; Nyberg-Sorensen et al., 2002), scholars have also shown that development and social mobility (of new arrivals as well as ‘established’) in the migration, return or residence context is not an automatic

governments can use migrants to put pressure on the ‘sending’ government towards agreements (e.g. to take migrants back to get aid). International political relations hence have a strong impact on the growth or decline of translocal networks and thus on their viability as a livelihood option.

8 \ Belonging marks the emotion-laden process of situating oneself as individual or group (Pfaff-Czarnecka, 2012, p. 12); it encompasses practices of locality-generation, which produce “a structure of feeling ... (by) particular forms of intentional activity and yielding particular sorts of material effects” (Appadurai, 1996, p. 182). According to Anthias (2006, p. 21), it is “through practices and experiences of social inclusion that a sense of a stake and acceptance in a society is created and maintained”. The different degrees of emplacement and belonging can also be described as multidimensional embeddedness (cf. Houte et al., 2015). If the creation of belonging is understood as a laborious act that, besides emplacement practices, also always encompasses boundary-making practices, it is obvious that the outcome is uncertain and dependent on multiple factors, not least structural (context) conditions (cf. Mielke, 2016).

9 \ See Mielke (2016) on the example of traditionally mobile groups in Kabul’s camps in a state of liminality, i.e. between seeking to belong through locality-generating practices and to (re)integrate in Afghan society vs. certain context-producing effects or structural conditions that increasingly prevent social mobility and de facto integration.

consequence of movement.¹⁰ Thus, an individual is structurally situated or socially positioned and can generate a certain ability to position him- or herself in the respective context. In translocal networks, positionality (situatedness & situating, cf. Anthias, 2006) and, thus, agency, is determined by different factors such as age, gender, class, socio-economic status, ethnic belonging, education, legal status/ citizenship, whether voluntary or involuntary (forced and / or deported) return or migration has been experienced, etc.

Social class constitutes an important marker of positionality and thus informs agency, which is seen as a determining factor for the extent to which livelihood can be secured and its quality. The concept of social class contains power relations that establish and consolidate inequality in ownership and access to land, capital, influential positions and sustained employment (Offe & Wiesenenthal, 1980). In Afghanistan, equality of citizens is institutionalized normatively in the constitution, but in fact, is undermined by competing norms and practices rooted in patriarchal gerontocracy and patron-client relations with elements of feudal relations that normatively establish inequality.¹¹ Ethnic, cultural, religious and homeland identities conceal class affiliation at least in subjective perceptions (Tapper, 1983). Nevertheless, in this *Paper*, the authors endeavour to compare the livelihood options of lower- and middle-class Afghans, assuming that class differences have become more pronounced in the context of rapid urbanization, extreme mobility and protracted displacement of large parts of the population due to wars and economic needs. In the context of countries like Afghanistan, where hardly any industrial or agricultural working class has emerged, ‘lower class’ mainly comprises the low-income groups of workers and self-employed outlined by the International Labour Organization (ILO & Samuel Hall, 2012) and those groups that Standing (2014) has termed the “precariat”, that is, those working and self-employed people who are denied labour rights and social services. The authors trace empirical

10 \ Van Houte, (2015, p. 701), for example contradicts this assumption of the migration-development nexus for the transnational context.

11 \ For the difference between normative inequality based on privilege and inequality that requires sociological research cf. Offe & Wiesenenthal (1980, p. 68).

manifestations of lower-class Afghans not only within Afghanistan but also across borders. By focusing on the different ways, lower-class people secure their livelihood, and by contrasting this with insights from middle-class livelihood options in the same settings, we elaborate a comprehensive livelihood approach to protracted displacement situations.

Remarks on methods of field research

The research presented in this *Paper* is based on field visits, observations and discussions with Afghans from various backgrounds in the cities of Kabul and Herat in Afghanistan, Mashhad (urban) and Sirjan (rural) in Iran and Karachi and Lahore in Pakistan between October 2015 and March 2017 (see Map 1). With in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, we contribute to knowledge on protracted displacement situations, presenting explanations that IDPs, returnees, refugees and deportees give for their decisions, actions, ideas, desires and criticism.

Social research¹² is difficult in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan for reasons such as inaccessibility of areas due to insecurity, political sensitivities when it comes to the subject of refugees and formal procedures when acquiring research permits. In addition, research involving lower class Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran or displaced inside Afghanistan often means encountering particular practices—starting from the very ‘illegal’ existence in cases where Afghans do not possess legal documents or other documentation that are acknowledged in the country of residence—that render data collection especially sensitive and the protection of respondents an additional challenge. It is mainly for these reasons that we preferred qualitative methods of research.

However, another reason is that for our purposes, quantitative figures are questionable in at least two

¹² \ “What is working well in protracted displacement situations?” is the guiding question of the research project “Protected rather than protracted. Strengthening refugees and peace” conducted at BICC with financial support of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Within its framework, a team of researchers has been conducting case studies of South Sudanese and Congolese, Burundians and Somalians, Columbians and Venezuelans, Syrians, Palestinians and Iraqis, Myanmaris, Liberians und Sierra Leoneans (Bohnet et al., 2015; Bohnet & Rudolf, 2015; for South Sudanese, see Bohnet, 2016 and 2016a; for Myanmar, see Rudolf & Schmitz-Pranghe, 2018) to which this *Paper* adds the case of Afghans.

respects: First, a lot of data that humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have collected tend to be ‘snapshots’ or quantitative according to criteria relevant for the distribution of aid (Mielke, 2017). Second, numbers and figures are not reliable in the local context¹³, especially given that respondents tend to have no clear ideas about time and quantities or because they try to hide knowledge and information, especially regarding possession of property or received assistance to make themselves eligible for aid or other forms of assistance.

We used snowball and purposive sampling to cover different groups varied according to age, gender, ethnic belonging and social class and focused the discussions with the interview partners on forms of agency (see list of interviews in Appendix II). For this *Paper*, we highlight a few cases that represent different protracted displacement situations for an analysis of how varied social groups that have to cope with displacement secure their livelihoods.

Structure of the *Paper*

We provide the accounts related to these cases in detail in Chapter 1. The case studies cover lower-class and underprivileged displaced people across the region, in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. Each reported account is followed by an analysis of the respective individuals’ and groups’ experiences with regard to their livelihood activities, neighbourhood relations and translocal networks. The second chapter reflects on the differences in livelihood options and ways of pursuing livelihood security between the lower class and members of the Afghan middle class in protracted displacement situations in the region. The third chapter outlines the comprehensive livelihood approach that we suggest adopting for future research on situations of protracted displacement and outlines implications for refugee studies and policies. The final chapter summarizes the arguments made throughout the *Paper*. For readers’ background information, we provide a detailed overview of the refugee policies towards Afghans in Iran and Pakistan in the Appendix.

¹³ \ For an overview of challenges relating to data deficits in urban contexts of Afghanistan, see UN Habitat, 2015, pp. 50–52.

Livelihood accounts of lower-class Afghans

This chapter introduces various ways of securing a livelihood by lower-class Afghans. It collects case studies from IDPs living in irregular settlements (camps) in Kabul, from a deportee camp and an IDP camp in Herat, from pistachio pickers in rural Iran, poor workers and families in Mashhad, Iran, as well as in Lahore and Karachi, Pakistan. The majority of Afghans—either first- or second-generation—in protracted displacement situations, originate from rural Afghanistan. According to World Bank estimates, 73 per cent of the Afghan population still live in rural settings today (World Bank, 2016).¹⁴ The first example of lower-class people in protracted situations of displacement is elaborated extensively, as it contains numerous aspects that also pertain to many other lower-class Afghans. The example shows that the same person can be an IDP, a refugee, a labour migrant and a returnee repeatedly over time. This fundamentally questions a static perspective on people coping with protracted violent conflict and hence, the distinction between particular ‘target groups’ that informs the action of humanitarian agencies.

In irregular settlements in Kabul

Afghanistan’s violent conflicts surged between 2014 and 2017. In 2016, about 600,000 persons and in 2017, more than 445,000 people fled their homes due to armed conflict (UNAMA, 2017; UNOCHA, 2018). At the time of field research, in 2015 to 2016, more than 40,000 IDPs were estimated to be staying in about 50 ‘camps’ in Kabul, among tens of thousands who were not allotted the label of IDP. The term ‘camp’ indicates that these are state-owned or private areas used for temporary housing (cf. Mielke, 2016). Occasionally, the police evict camps on behalf of influential individuals for private land use or for the establishment of a market in a municipality (Majidi, 2013). In ten out of the 22 districts of Kabul, irregular houses exceed the number of regular buildings; in eight out of these ten districts, there are more than 10,000 and in four dis-

14 \ Afghanistan has seen unprecedented levels of urbanization not only since 2001 but even before that, during the decades of conflict. Whereas only five percent of the population lived in cities in 1950, it was 20 percent in 2001, which increased to 24 percent by 2014 (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2015, p. 10).

tricts more than 20,000 irregular houses. A high number of poor people live in these camps, which are densely populated (GIRoA, 2015, p. 52).¹⁵ Among the urban poor, numerous IDPs inhabit the camps. Their number has been on the rise since 2015.

In 2015, the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) stopped funding humanitarian aid to the camps and so did the German Welthungerhilfe as a major implementing agency in Afghanistan, as they considered the camp population no longer to be a humanitarian, but a “chronic” case (interview with Dr Fashid and Mr Berger, Welthungerhilfe, November 2015). This decision terminated previous measures addressing health, education and skills development for women as well as psychosocial projects in the irregular settlements of Kabul. Only the most vulnerable people would receive wood, fuel and food during winter provided by a task force consisting of Islamic Relief, the World Food Programme and the Danish Refugee Council (interview with Welthungerhilfe, November 2015).

An oral history account of a displaced man and his aunt who both live in an irregular settlement in Kabul is presented here at length, as it provides insights into nearly all facets of life in ‘protracted refugee situations’ from the perspective of people from a low social class. They explain how the family left Afghanistan and kept moving on until they got to this camp, how they have been making a living, and which relationships they have had with the population in the neighbourhood of the places they had stayed in.¹⁶

Irregular camp in Kabul

Tapa Bagrami 2 is part of Nasaji Bagrami in Kabul police district PD 8. It is an irregular camp 17 located in an industrial area opposite the Coca-Cola factory, where most premises are stores for construction material supplies or factories. The camp consists of small, densely constructed mud houses with roofs partly covered with plastic sheets. Narrow pathways run

15 \ In these districts, the population density reaches 25 up to 35 dwellings per residential hectare (GIRoA, 2015, p. 52).

16 \ As the interview partner put it, “we are illiterate and do not remember date and time”; therefore, throughout the following sections, years are derived from events we were told, aided by the research assistant.

17 \ Visited in November 2015.

through the settlement. There is no sewage system, so the waste from 'toilets' runs behind the houses. A few chickens are roaming between the houses, and at the edge of the settlement at the foot of a hill (tapa), cows and goats are grazing on scarce grass. The settlement contains more than 150 families.

The inhabitants have built their houses themselves from the clay ground, using wood, scrap metal, plastic and other waste materials. Rain damages the houses so that the inhabitants are always busy repairing them, digging out more clay with spades and wheelbarrows. The camp is an irregular settlement where IDPs set up homes in 2010 without being registered.

Aid agencies have surveyed and clustered the inhabitants to facilitate the distribution of materials such as stoves, wood and charcoal for cooking and heating, blankets, bedsheets, carpets and sleeping mats. For this purpose, three elected persons represent the camp population as members of the camp council and contact persons for the aid agencies.

The persons interviewed in Tapa Bagrami 2 camp in Kabul experienced several incidences of internal displacement, became refugees and returned voluntarily and spontaneously to Afghanistan more than once. People that are not taken care of by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have to seek their livelihood on their own, and livelihood options for poor, unskilled people only exist in the so-called informal economic sector. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises prevail in this sector and usually maintain a considerable degree of self-organization.¹⁸ They often follow particular regulations emanating from informal institutions (Wilde & Mielke, 2013). Nevertheless, in fragile and conflict-affected settings as in Afghanistan, power holders including state officials engage with the informal economy in complex ways, often entailing negotiated arrangements over taxation or regulatory policies. State officials may pursue informal economic activities themselves, having vested interests in mechanisms that fuel the

informal economy (Schoofs, 2015; Grawert et al., 2017, p. 27). These power relations affect even the poorest dwellers in the irregular settlements of Kabul.

INTERVIEW 1—PART 1

The interview partner represents 26 families. He reports that there are two more representatives of families in the camp, who have problems with each other. They always try to find some organization to provide things for them, but they do not "have a way". The night before the interview, a baby had died of hypothermia due to the lack of heating. Many older women were consoling the family and therefore could not meet us for an interview.

Origin and first movement: From a village in Kapisa to a village in Nangarhar: The representative's family belongs to the Pashtun Safi tribe.¹⁹ It originates from Kapisa (north of Kabul), where the parents had been farm labourers in a village in Tagab district without owning a plot or house. Six related families left Kapisa by bus during the civil war [1990–1994] and spent about three years in a village near Jalalabad. The adult family members worked as land labourers there and managed to save some money, which they planned to use when moving on to Pakistan. When one relative was killed in a bomb attack there, the six families left and walked across the mountains on foot until they reached a place called 'Tal' near Peshawar in Pakistan.

Second movement: A village near Peshawar, Pakistan. The six families did not know anybody in this area. The family heads contacted the representative of the area and asked him to give them a place to stay. He allocated them a plot near a refugee camp that was registered with the government of Pakistan. There, they built a shelter and, later, mud houses. Those living in the refugee camp received small kits and food rations. However, the six families were not registered in the refugee camp. The interview partner states: "Only those with power could register, those without power could not" and explained that "those with power" were around ten or twenty Afghan families who had

18 \ The Afghan Ministry of Commerce and Industries estimates that 70 to 80 per cent of SMEs are not formally registered because of their fear of bureaucracy and corruption (Mashal, 2014, p. 10).

19 \ A major part of the Safi tribe lives in Mohmand Agency and Bajaur of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, where they have extended networks (see CAMP, 2010).

representatives “making contact with aid agencies” and then were allowed to be registered.²⁰ Moreover, the six families were never registered in Pakistan, as identity cards were not required at that time. In the words of the interview partner, “refugees were free”.

The six families made friends in the refugee camp and prayed in its mosque. They met many people because they lived near the road leading to the refugee camp. Soon, the male family members found jobs as day labourers. The interview partner and some of his relatives got small carts to carry goods to the market. He earned about 20 Rupees (US \$0.65) per day. Other family members sold vegetables or worked as shop assistants. After some time, the interview partner also became a shop assistant, and later he worked as a vegetable trader. His brother brought the vegetables from nearby farmers, and the interview partner sold them. It was a small business. His two other brothers also were vegetable traders. Then the two brothers died with all their children and wives in an accident. Four families remained.

Analysis 1 : Family bonds and livelihood options; exclusion from the refugee camp and integration in the local ‘informal economy’²¹

This part of the story indicates a strong inclination towards joining forces in extended families, even during displacement. Where possible, families seek support from aid agencies; where not, they take up occasional jobs in transport or trade and similar small businesses. This includes the children who have to contribute to the family’s

livelihood in the low social strata. The death of male family members always strikes a heavy blow on the family’s livelihood options. The story also contains a narrative of exclusion through influential people, who considered this family not eligible for being included in the camp. The fact that a) the government of Pakistan did not insist on registering refugees at that time, b) Pashto was spoken as the common language in the receiving area and c) the ease of building relations with other Afghan refugees from the camp contributed to a rather easy integration in the local informal economy (cf. also Grawert et al., 2017a, pp. 30–34).

Interview 1—Part 2

Third movement: Back to Nangarhar, Afghanistan:

The four families returned to Jalalabad when the *mujahedin*²² had toppled the government of Najibullah, and Burhanuddin Rabbani became President [1992–1996]. They stayed with other relatives in a refugee camp in Samarkhail near the town for some days but were not registered by the UNHCR. As they had come with their own tents from Pakistan, the four families stayed in their tents. Many IDPs from Tagab district in Kapisa region and Kandahar lived in the camp, which was big and still exists. The families tried to find jobs. The interview partner made bricks for a person who built a house in Jalalabad.

Fourth movement: To Punjab, Pakistan: About one month after the Taliban had taken over power in Kabul [1996], the interview partner and members of three related families left Afghanistan again and moved to Mansehra, Abbottabad, in Punjab. Some relatives remained in Jalalabad, among them his elder brother and mother. The four families rented a house in Mansehra. They gathered scrap metal and other things and sold them at the market. The contact with the Punjabis improved after the family members had picked up the language, Urdu. However, they were always treated as refugees, not as equals.

20 \ This statement might hint at the dominance of one *mujahedin* faction in the refugee camp, to which the six families did not belong. The contact might in fact well have been made with the *mujahidin*, not aid agencies.

21 \ According to ILO (2016), “the informal economy comprises half to three-quarters of all non-agricultural employment in developing countries. ... It most often means poor employment conditions and is associated with increasing poverty. Some of the characteristic features of informal employment are lack of protection in the event of non-payment of wages, compulsory overtime or extra shifts, lay-offs without notice or compensation, unsafe working conditions and the absence of social benefits such as pensions, sick pay and health insurance. Women, migrants and other vulnerable groups of workers who are excluded from other opportunities have little choice but to take informal low-quality jobs.”

22 \ *Mujahedin* groups spearheaded *jihad* against the Soviet occupation forces in Afghanistan until their withdrawal in 1989. They comprised seven Sunni groups operating from Peshawar, Pakistan, which also formed the interim government of Afghanistan in 1992. Afghan refugees in Pakistan and local commanders only qualified for assistance if they affiliated with and showed loyalty to one of the seven groups (Adamec, 2006, p. 265).

Analysis II: Return—But not to the area of origin; repeated displacement; livelihood options in the informal economy; experience of exclusion from host community

Returning with their families to Afghanistan as soon as the political conditions changed has been common for many Afghans. As the families have no home they can return to, they pursue the same strategy as in Pakistan and settle with their own tents near a refugee camp. Again, they engage in occasional jobs. Political change—which was accompanied by violent fighting—drove part of the family out of the country again, to an area in Punjab Province (Pakistan), where they could make a living in the informal economy. This time, the language difference contributed to a feeling of exclusion from the host community; the families remained outsiders in this part of Pakistan.

Interview 1—Part 3

Fifth movement: Back to Afghanistan, then to Iran, and back: After the US-forces had helped to remove the Taliban government [2001] and the interim administration headed by Hamid Karzai [2002] had taken over power, relatives in Afghanistan informed the families that Afghanistan was safer, and hence they decided to return to Afghanistan.²³ They were not part of a repatriation programme, but the UNHCR registered them when they crossed the border from Pakistan to Afghanistan.

In 2004, the interview partner went to Kunduz, where he stayed in a rented house and worked as a casual labourer to send money for food for the family, which remained in the camp near Jalalabad. One brother went to Jalalabad city, another to another village, where he stayed with his in-laws. The interview partner then travelled to Tehran, where he stayed with some relatives for about three months. He reports: “In Tehran, everything is clean. People’s behaviour is good. They are smart and soft-speaking.” He assisted his relatives in construction and learnt

²³ \ Between 2002 and 2004, Karzai had announced that the government would allocate land to returnees. He appealed to them as being Afghans who should return and join in the rebuilding of the country.

how to build properly. [He mentions that therefore his house in Tapa Bagrami 2 is built well and is used to receive guests visiting the camp].

Sixth movement: Back to Nangarhar, then to Kabul: In around 2005, the interview partner returned to Jalalabad city, where he rented a house. He, however, was not able to find a job there. Therefore, he moved to Kabul with parts of his extended family.

Analysis III: Family decision to return and to split up for livelihood security; skills acquisition abroad

The family network of the interview partner in Afghanistan encourages voluntary return to Afghanistan of the partial family. The family splits up further as the men move to towns and start to support the family members left in the camp with their earnings. The movement expands to Iran, where the family network has already extensions. Here, the man acquires new building skills which he makes use of after having moved to Kabul. The family has become involved in circuit migration²⁴ and has established a translocal network to secure their livelihood in a protracted refugee situation. There is only a very fine line between being an IDP or refugee and an irregular migrant.

Interview 1—Part 4

Movement within Kabul: The family moved to Nasaji Bagrami in PD 8, to Qalai Ahmad Khan, an area behind the Coca-Cola factory where several IDPs had settled with tents. However, people attacked the IDPs, stole their belongings and destroyed their tents. The problem was that an organization of disabled people intended to build houses for the disabled in the same area. The two groups had a fight; a camp inhabitant was beaten up by some of the disabled. The IDPs of Qalai Ahmad Khan called a council meeting (*shura*) and decided to attack the camp of the disabled. The

²⁴ \ From a global perspective, Afghans have established “a single community spread across a variety of sites” (Bammer, 1992, p. ix); a “transnational migrant circuit” (Rouse 1991, p. 14), where different locations play different roles. In Pakistan, there are places where Afghans have sought refuge among relatives in or around refugee camps when they were expelled from Iran or driven out of Afghanistan due to fighting. Iran offers better income opportunities and hence, is chosen as a place to earn money, even though living conditions in Iran are precarious due to the absence of international aid, in contrast to Pakistan (Harpviken, 2014).

head (*rais*) of the organization of the disabled had an office and a bodyguard and intended to distribute plots to the disabled or sell them to others. However, people from the neighbouring communities attacked both the IDPs and the disabled and destroyed their camps. The contested land belongs to the Ministry of Finance, which sent the police to clear the land from all inhabitants. The interview partner's family—still six or seven relatives—settled across the road in the industrial area, where gradually about 150 IDP families established the current camp. Now the land behind the Coca-Cola Company is protected by the police.

Analysis IV: Violent competition among marginalized groups and movement from camp to camp; violent displacement by the police on behalf of a power holder; lack of governmental policy

The displacement from one irregular settlement to the other in Kabul has been a common feature for the poor of Kabul. In this case, two disadvantaged groups are competing—and do not hesitate to use violence—for a place to settle down. The harsh action by the police and thus, the government, points to a larger problem regarding irregular land seizures by powerholders and a lack of policies towards a solution for the issue of irregular settlements in Kabul and beyond (cf. also Mielke & Grawert, 2016; Mielke, 2016). The Ministry for Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) has not taken action despite numerous petitions by IDPs; the government refuses to connect the settlements to the town's infrastructure because they are irregular. Aid agencies have proposed to turn to advocacy measures and establish dialogue platforms to support the cause of the poor. However, the MoRR has tightened the control of NGO activities claiming that any regularization or improvement will become a pull factor, enlarging the 'camps' even more (interview with Welthungerhilfe, November 2015).

Interview 1—Part 5

Movement of the aunt and her family branch: The family of the interview partner's aunt had not joined the six related families, but moved to Kunduz during the civil war [1992–1996]. However, 'mujahedin' came to their house and forced the men to join the armed group and fight. She lost two brothers and a nephew in the war. The family left Kunduz and went to Shimali (north of Kabul), where they stayed during the Taliban rule [1996–2001]. Her husband did every kind of unskilled work, whereas she worked in vegetable production on the land of others. However, in winter there was no work. They moved to Jalalabad and stayed in a place called 'Taranuta' near the town during winter, where her husband worked as a casual labourer. In summer, they went back to Charikar in Parwan province north of Kabul. They always stayed "in a tent like a Kuchi"²⁵. [After the US intervention in 2001], they left Jalalabad and went to Tagab in the Kapisa region. There was fighting between the government and the Taliban. Insecurity was severe under the rule of Karzai. She was injured during a bomb attack. Since then, she has "memory gaps". She re-joined her nephew only after he had arrived in Kabul in 2010.

Analysis V: Precarious livelihood options with severe impact of death and injuries of family members

The story of the aunt, who remained an IDP throughout, nevertheless resembles the story of the rest of the family with regard to continuous re-combinations of livelihood options in casual work in rural and urban environments. Death and injuries also strongly shape the conditions under which this part of the family is trying to secure their livelihood. The strength of family ties is evident as she joined with other parts of the displaced and scattered family network.

²⁵ \ The term 'Kuchi' popularly denotes Pashto-speaking groups of former and current (semi-)nomadic herders. A 2003 government survey established the number of Kuchi in Afghanistan to be approximately 2.4 million, of whom 1.5 million were reported to be still migrating with livestock (Weijer 2007, p. 12). Offsetting these numbers with the estimates for the overall population of Afghanistan in the same year, it turns out that 10.5 per cent of the entire Afghan population are Kuchi and that 6.3 percent of the population are migratory pastoralists.

\ Map 2

Movements of the interview partner and his aunt



Interview 1—Part 6

Livelihood options of the camp population at the time of field research (November 2015): The livelihood of the interview partner in the camp consists of aid supplies and casual labour. Occasional assistance comes in the framework of a UNHCR winterization programme and food distribution by the MoRR. A project of the German GIZ against youth radicalization has involved him as a football trainer. Tapa Bagrami 2 is the first place where he receives aid after all the years of displacement. His aunt was given a document that entitles her to some financial reward from the Ministry of Works and Martyrs’ Affairs as she had lost her brothers in the civil war. However, she had lost the document when she fled from home, and in the Ministry, they claim to have no record about it. Her request for the reward was rejected. She says, “we are living in a bad situation. There are no

job opportunities for my sons. The government should pay attention and offer places for work.” Her sons try to earn some money washing cars outside the camp and get about 15 AFN (US \$0.22) per car, like many other boys from the camp starting from the age of ten. ‘Legal’ car washers earn 200 AFN (US \$2.95) per car.

The interview partner never attended school and runs a small unregistered transportation business, pushing small carts to deliver goods to shops in the nearby market. He had acquired practical skills from different jobs in construction and small business abroad. He is not yet married. Being the youngest son in the family, he had lived with his mother—who died in 2013—and his sister until the time of the interview. In the meantime, 25 related families from the same area of origin in Kapisa region have moved to the IDP camp. The aunt, who also never attended school, lives in a

mud house next door and sews sleeping mats which she sells. She joined the family when they stayed in the IDP camp behind the Coca-Cola factory. She lives with her aged husband and two sons, age 18 and 16. The boys support the family through car washing jobs.

Two brothers of the interview partner went to Germany in September [2015] and came back. They had faced a lot of problems there. The family was angry because they had spent so much money for the journey, US \$600, which family members had collected for them. According to the interview partner, “we could have provided a shop for them here. If the German government paid the Afghan refugees money, they would all go back and live here.”

Relationships within the camp and with the neighbours: Both interview partners describe the camp neighbourhood as difficult. They report hostile acts of neighbours such as the destruction of the mud houses, violence perpetrated by drug addicts and competing groups interested in building houses on the same land. The land where the IDPs have settled belongs to the Ministry of Finance. If they build solid houses in this area, they will not belong to them. The IDPs repeatedly have requested the government to give them plots of legal land.

The interview partner mentions another conflict at the current IDP camp. Previously, there was one single representative for the whole camp. However, he did injustice to the community. When donors and NGOs provided the IDPs with assistance, he took a lot for himself and his family. People started to support the interview partner, and the elders decided that there should be three representatives and the former one should only represent 36 families. They held a council (shura) meeting to find a just representative who would deal with the donors in a good way. They chose the interview partner because he can make contacts well and is fair. Now he represents 26 families. There have been no efforts towards reconciliation between him and the other representative.

The aunt states, “I am not feeling safe here.” Her son was stabbed and badly injured over a quarrel about his car washing job along the main road near the camp. Those working in the nearby carwash centre

repeatedly called the police. They beat the boys and warned them not to serve customers again. Moreover, the IDP youth are often threatened by violent drug addicts roaming the camp and its neighbourhood. “Drug addicts come and fight with our youth. It is not a safe area to live in. The social environment with the neighbourhood is not good.” She also mentions that people come and try to prevent them from repairing or building the mud houses. “They do not allow us to build the camp. The walls were destroyed in the rain. People would come here and push us when we repair the walls.” The man explains, “they always send people—workers of the Nasaji factory—to see the place, and if they see someone building, they will call the police and tell that we are grabbing land.” The IDPs in the settlement fear forced removal of the houses and suffer from repeated interference by neighbouring inhabitants when the IDPs try to repair their mud houses after rains and destructions, which altogether creates an unsafe environment.

Analysis VI: Persistence of precarious livelihood options; exclusion from community while family builds up a critical mass in the camp; contestation over political representation at camp level; failure of extending translocal family network to Germany

This part of the story provides details of the current livelihood activities of the interview partners, which do not deviate from what they have tried to do in other places. The main problem is the competition with the ‘established’, those that have settled near the camp. Relationships are hostile, and there is not the least indication of inclusion of the new arrivals (Sanders, 2011) or ‘outsiders’ (cf. also Elias & Scotson, 2013). One of the reasons is the unsolved land issue in Kabul, but other reasons seem to be related to the fear of encroachment of ‘these others’ in the area. Within the camp, however, due to the high number of members, the family has established itself, and, due to his good reputation, the elders appointed the interview partner as an official representative of a large part of the camp. Again there is competition with the previous representative which the elders solved by splitting representation among three persons. This indicates the establishment of elders as the most powerful and re-

spected decision makers within the camp, although acting in the background, as it is the case in any other Afghan community. This part of the story highlights the manifold activities and the organizational engagement of the interview partner and his family in their affairs under highly adverse conditions and with a minimum of external assistance.

The attempt to send two family members to Germany was clearly driven by strategic considerations to expand the livelihood network beyond the region. Many Afghans believed, when the German government opened its borders to the growing number of refugees in September 2015, that the country needed more workers.²⁶ To them, this policy appeared as a unique opportunity to arrange better support for the starving families through remittances to be sent by male family members earning money in Germany. This strategy failed in the case of the interview partner's relatives.

Interview 1—Part 7

Critical comments on humanitarian aid operations and the government: The interview partner criticizes that “assistance is not regular. They put us in a bad situation. They make us look for help from others, the MoRR and other organizations. ... Support should not just be aid, but jobs—in cooking, driving, anything. Aid will affect our children; they will always ask for help.” He adds that IDPs should get vocational training for two years to learn a proper trade. “Vocational training is needed.”

Moreover, IDPs should receive plots legally on government land and be allowed to build houses. They should get job and income opportunities in an area where they can stay legally. The aunt adds, “the government should provide places for work and vocational training, for example, tailoring. I am old, but I want my sons to have a better life in the future.”

The aunt tries to explain the deterioration of assistance politically, stating: “There was one president. Now we have two.”²⁷ One is doing something, the other

one blocks it. Now there are two persons on one horse, trying to run toward two different directions. We have a proverb in Pashto, saying, “on a horse, there is one saddle. They have put two persons on one saddle.”

The aunt tells us that during the period of the election campaign [in 2014], Ashraf Ghani had invited the elders and told them that the IDPs would be allowed to stay on the land. However, “Ashraf Ghani has small hands like me” (indicating that he is physically not strong like the aunt). She asks, “Why did he lie? Why did he make promises and then did not do anything?”

The interview partner mentions that he had received “life skills training” by GIZ, which should enable him to raise demands. However, he believes that if he voices the IDPs’ interests in public, he will be punished. He believes that he cannot take this risk because he has to take care of his family.

Analysis VII: Demand for sustainable means of livelihood through training to avoid aid dependence; perception of political stagnation; fear of voicing IDP interests in public

The interview partner, as camp representative, does not ask for more aid, but for training and job opportunities and legal plots for housing. Currently, there is hardly any avenue for the camp inhabitants to create their livelihood security for the future, which would include a sustainable livelihood for their children.

The context of this statement is that humanitarian and aid agencies’ funding has decreased so that they had to limit their work to specific assistance for particular target groups based on needs assessments and proposals submitted to donors. This assistance can only be provided as a response to very specific requests, such as winterization assistance for “slum” dwellers in Kabul, most of whom are long-term displaced people. Aid agencies were even unable to meet these requests appropriately in 2015 because other hotspots of armed conflict attracted the bulk of donations.²⁸ The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operation

²⁶ \ This was frequently stated by Afghan interview partners in 2015 and 2016.

²⁷ \ The aunt refers to the so-called Afghanistan National Unity Government elected in 2014, of which Ashraf Ghani is the president and Abdullah Abdullah the ‘Chief Executive Officer’. Whereas Ghani is perceived to serve Pashtuns’ interests above all, Abdullah is said to represent those of the Tajik community as second major section of the population (ICG, 2017).

²⁸ \ Reports by staff of a range of humanitarian and development agencies during a workshop in Kabul in May 2016, convened by E. Grawert within the BMZ-funded research project, indicate that many aid agencies started operating in the countries neighbouring Syria and Iraq.

(ECHO) funded emergency measures in particular for returning refugees and undocumented Afghans (ECHO, 2016), but not for people in protracted displacement situations. This indicates a gap between goals and practical achievements in providing “global and local solutions for displaced persons ... towards self-reliance” (Council of the EU, 2016).

The critical statements of the interview partners about the failure of the government to keep its promises and improve the conditions for the camp inhabitants by legalizing their stay on the land indicate two things. One is awareness about the political neglect of the conditions of the poor population. The other is the fear of being punished for claiming the demands of the poor in public, implying that the camp representative is conscious about the real power relations and therefore will not take risks that can severely affect his whole family.

As the above account indicates, these conditions pertain to the informal economy in Pakistan as well, and there is no difference when it comes to the informal economy in Iran. Like the interview partner in Tapa Bagrami 2, many lower-class Afghans have made their living in the informal economies of either country, arriving there as displaced people, refugees or as irregular migrants and sometimes a combination of all. According to the national policies and their enforcement in the destination countries, Afghans without legal stay and work permits currently risk being deported from both countries.

In the vegetable wholesalers' market (Sabzi Mandi) of Lahore, Pakistan

In Pakistan, most Afghans live in the Pashtun-majority provinces of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan that border Afghanistan. In contrast, Punjab province with its capital Lahore has attracted fewer refugees.²⁹ Those who settled throughout the

29 \ According to the only census of Afghans in Pakistan (conducted in 2005), the bulk of Afghan refugees (87 percent) concentrated in the two border provinces with Afghanistan, then North West Frontier Province (renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) hosting 61.6 per cent and Balochistan hosting 25.2 percent. The remaining 13.2 per cent were registered in Punjab (6.8 per cent or 38,293 families), Sindh (4.5 per cent), Islamabad (1.5 per cent), and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) (0.4 per cent). Cf. Government of Pakistan, 2005, p. 17.

province outside the one still existing large camp³⁰ have either worked as manufacturers of valuable niche products, such as carpets (Uzbeks and Turkmans in particular), become businessmen or, as poor workers, managed to immerse themselves in the local informal economy of Pakistan's second-largest city Lahore. At the time of field research in late February and early March 2017, all Afghans were in a situation of either having to duck or expose themselves to above average harassment by the Pakistani authorities (esp. police) and what came to be known as ‘racial profiling’.³¹ The background were two terrorist attacks; one on Lahore's main traffic artery on 13 February and one on one of the famous shrines in Sindh province (in Sehwan Sharif) on 16 February 2017. The attacks were immediately blamed on Afghans (refugees) and even when it emerged in the course of the investigation that domestic groups were the perpetrators, authorities still blamed Afghanistan (and its people) for the attacks claiming that the responsible group of the Pakistani Taliban (Jamat al-Ahrar) had been harboured on Afghan soil. Consequently, Pakistan closed its border with Afghanistan³² and started an unprecedented crackdown on Afghans³³ in Pakistan that saw 600 people arrested³⁴ as part of the first-time country-wide anti-terror operation Radd-ul-Fasaad that was

30 \ The camp Kot Chandna in Mianwali was established in 1982 and, according to the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR) in Punjab-Website (last updated on 10 April 2015), “The registered population of the Camp consists of 21,613 families and 132,058 persons but in fact presently 4,799 families and 27,273 persons are residing in and around the Camp” (Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees Punjab, 2015).

31 \ The term denotes a number of discriminating practices, e.g. inciting hatred against Afghans by the media and authorities, calling on Pakistanis to report Afghans to the authorities. For examples reported on the news, see Niazi (2017), “Pashtun profiling” (2017).

32 \ The border closure lasted effectively until 21 March 2017, with a short two-day opening on 7-8 March to release the pressure on the stranded 25,000 people and allow them to cross towards both sides. Among the stranded were many Afghans who wanted to go for medical treatment to Pakistan (with valid visa).

33 \ Arrests started immediately after the terror attack on the shrine in Sindh, cf. “205 suspects, mostly Afghan nationals, held in Punjab” (2017).

34 \ Pakistan's Urdu newspaper Jhang (Lahore section) reported on 26 February 2017 that the facilitators of Jama't al-Ahrar included Afghans. Indicating the grossly negligent journalistic attitude of Pakistan's media it is worth mentioning that in the same article the former Minister of the Interior was cited stating that Afghans had also been involved in the murder of Benazir Bhutto in 2007 as if this further justified the renewed crackdown on Afghans throughout Pakistan.

launched on 22 February 2017.³⁵ The provincial apex courts initiated the legal underpinning for specifically targeting Afghans; the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Apex Body, for example, ordered a crackdown on unregistered Afghans to take place under section 14 of the Foreigners' Act implying their subsequent deportation to Afghanistan.³⁶

Interview 2

Circumstances of movement and return of unregistered family member: We meet two brothers who have carved out a living as wholesalers for onions and potatoes at Sabzi Mandi Lahore.³⁷ The interview is being conducted as we are sitting among large stacks of onion sacks in the open with a makeshift roof to protect the goods from sunshine. Both brothers are illiterate.

Their movement to Pakistan occurred as part of a chain movement of family members after two elder brothers with their families had moved to Pakistan at the beginning of the ensuing civil war in Afghanistan after the Soviet forces' withdrawal in 1989. The reason why they left Afghanistan is described by the younger brother as mainly having to do with three factors: Their father was killed during the Soviet invasion just shortly before the troop withdrawal was completed in 1989; they had lost livestock, and one of the brothers needed medical treatment. The family originates from rural Khanabad district of Kunduz province in northeast Afghanistan. Their father was a *kuchi* (semi-nomadic pastoralist). The elder brother is just over 35 years old, 28 of which he has lived in Pakistan—in his own account. The second respondent was born in Pakistan. The two interviewees have three other brothers, two of whom migrated to Pakistan around 1989 and still live there.

Another brother had returned to Afghanistan a few months before the interview because he reportedly

did not have a refugee card.³⁸ When the Pakistani government authorities had started to fine landowners who rented rooms to unregistered Afghans a couple of months earlier, his landlord had asked him to leave. The brother took his family and returned to Afghanistan along with 20 to 25 other families six to eight months before we met. Currently, he is trying to make a living as a day labourer in Kunduz. The interview partner describes this as very challenging because his brother has to feed five children, and “there is war going on. ... The condition in Afghanistan is bad. You wake up in one place or village and go to sleep in another because you have to escape during the day and take refuge somewhere else all the time.” This and the fact that they do not have land are reasons why the younger of the two respondents does not want to go back. Their father's house is heavily damaged, and they would need to invest a lot to do the repairs as even the boundary walls are destroyed. They cannot afford it.

Translocal networks, livelihood-generation and established-outsider relations (then): When the two respondents came to Pakistan (probably in the early 1990s) it was on the request of their elder brothers who wanted to unite the family after their father's death and also have their mother around in Sialkot (Punjab). The older respondent was six years old at that time. They could not afford education as they had to contribute to the family income. As children, they worked for 30 Rupees a day³⁹ in a local restaurant

35 \ According to Duniyaneews.tv, “100,397 Afghan refugees have been registered in the province through biometric system” already by 26 February 2017, i.e. four days after Radd-ul-Fasaad started. Cf. Duniyaneews.tv (2017).

36 \ Dawn: “KP apex body orders crackdown on unregistered Afghans”, 14 March 2017, p. 7. Generally, if unregistered Afghans are arrested, they are being deported by the GoP Home Department. Five to six thousand Afghans were sent back from Karachi to Afghanistan between 2015 and 2016. Interview with refugee protection agency, Karachi, March 2017.

37 \ On 28 February 2017

38 \ This refers to the ‘Proof of Registration’ (PoR)-cards the Pakistani government handed out to Afghan refugees who had registered in the one-time countrywide registration process during 2006-07 (following the census of 2005). Initially, the card allowed travel abroad and visa applications to third countries from Pakistan. The status of registered refugees/ PoR-cardholders is regularly extended based on the initial registration (see Annex I for details). Many Afghans who did not register at that time due to fear or other reasons, plus those who sought refuge after 2007 did not have any possibility to register and get PoR-cards. Over time, especially since the December 2014 public army school attack in Peshawar, the PoR-card came to signify a minimum standard of protection against all-too arbitrary harassment and discrimination by the authorities. In contrast, Afghans without a PoR-card, have since then been subjected to forced return, i.e. deportation.

39 \ The amounts mentioned in this paragraph cannot be converted exactly because the dates given by interview partners were vague. The year 1998 is taken as reference (because historical online currency converting goes back 20 years (cf. <https://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>), the amount of 30 Rupees would equal US \$0.68; 10,000 Rupees equals US \$227, 20,000 Rupees US \$454 respectively; 1,000 Rupees US \$22.7 and 2,000 Rupees US \$45.40.

(hotel) serving tea and washing dishes. The younger brother accounts how he came to Lahore at the age of 14 or 15 years for want of more income. Their mother was sick, and the family went through a difficult time with many expenses. An ‘uncle’ had been working in Sabzi Mandi and told them that there was a lot of work available. They both worked in a local fruit market from early morning until noon on a daily basis and afterwards went to the vegetable market (sabzi mandi) for the rest of the day. Looking back, these years are described as learning years with low wages, hard manual labour (loading and unloading trucks for four years) but an opportunity to establish relations and trust with the local wholesalers. This enabled the interview partners to take a loan of between 10,000 and 20,000 Rupees and start their own wholesale distribution business. Asked whether the money was lent by Afghans or Pakistanis, he replies that nobody even made a distinction between Afghan origin or Pakistani citizens at that time.⁴⁰ As members of a savings group, they had saved 6,-7,000 Rupees⁴¹ and borrowed the rest from relatives and friends. One of the interview partners explains: “I had built up a good reputation and relations with the elders in the market by always helping them; so everybody was ready to give me some money, that is between 1,000 and 2,000 Rupees”.

40 \ Afghans and Pakistanis generally report that ethnic differences did not play a role throughout the period of war (Soviet invasion, civil war, Taliban rule) in Pakistan until the preconditions for refugee return were not met, i.e. at least 2002. At the political level, Afghans’ presence became increasingly politicized with the rise of Pakistani domestic terrorism. Among ordinary people, the politicization and institutional discrimination took effect in ostracizing Afghans especially because media and state officials actively supported it. The situation is worst since the Peshawar Public Army school attack with many casualties in December 2014.

41 \ The practice of so-called casting committees is widespread in Pakistan and beyond. It involves a group of people who agree to give a certain amount of money to a particular person every month. The total amount thus collected from all members is then given to one of the members at a time and this continues until at the end all the members got their amounts back in lump sum. This amount is then given to one of the contributing members so that he or she can meet any major need. It is easier for anyone to take a relatively small amount in Rupees—in this example Rs. 300 (= 2.90 USD in February 2015)—out from their income every month than saving at home alone or over a longer term in a bank account. See Nasir & Mielke, 2015..

... and now: *Everyday harassment*. As the interview goes on, we learn that the brothers had three encounters with the police as recently as in the last 36 hours preceding the interview (in the context of the police raids mentioned in the Introduction of this case study). First, the previous evening at five p.m., three police officers had come and taken them to the station to check their documents. They were allowed to leave because one police officer whom they knew ‘guaranteed’ for them. In the interview, they complain about the conduct of the police that amounted to pure harassment. Reportedly, the Afghan brothers told the police, “You cannot throw us out just like this; there is a process to follow. Send us to Peshawar, and there will be the UN ... but you cannot just ask us to leave from one day to the other.” In a second encounter, the police came to their house at 2 a.m. and arrested two Afghans without PoR-card. Again, ‘friends at the police station’ managed to get their people released. In the third encounter, a police van turned up in front of the mosque at Sabzi Mandi in the morning and took in everybody who came to open their shops. The elder brother was agitated and reported how he had told the police, “Look, we have our card, our children go to school here, this is our home.”

Asked whether they feel lucky that they ‘have friends’ among the police, they explain that these are not actually friends, but they are police officers who can be bribed to get them out of custody. “They abuse us, they call us names ... also we cannot negotiate with them ourselves. We contact somebody who comes, talks to them and pays them ... Sometimes, Pashto-speaking people (elders) from Peshawar come to help us, but they also suffer verbal abuses by the police.” The sum that has to be paid is not that high and apparently has not increased (since large-scale extortion intensified from 2015 onwards); it depends on how many people are arrested and how many police officers are there; on average between 500 and 1,000 Rupees (US \$4.70–9.40) are paid. The brothers add that they also have friends they can rely on in emergencies; among them are Punjabi customers and suppliers.

According to the respondents, the police disturbances seriously started in 2013 “after Nawaz Sharif came to power”; since then they have been asked to go back to Afghanistan. Their standard reply is that if they had any possibility to return they would not be standing there discussing with the police, but it is impossible to return because there are no facilities in Afghanistan. Since the PoR-cards are no longer extended⁴² and the government only issues paper documents as proof of extension, the police harassment has increased considerably. The police usually argue that the card is invalid, and they do not acknowledge the paper extension as they want to extort money. Moreover, access to goods and services has been restricted more severely in the perception of the respondents. For example, bus tickets or public hospital treatment are difficult to obtain now. They have to refer to private clinics and private medical stores that are costly.⁴³ Asked whether they ever hide that they are Afghans, the elder brother replies that they never lie. If they claimed to be Pakistani Pashtuns, for example, this would not help much because in this case they would be asked for the Pakistani identity card (CNIC) which they do not possess.

Prospects of (forced) return: “Now we feel that we will have to leave OUR country”: Speaking about the prospects of (forced) return to Afghanistan, the elder brother states that they had always been confident that Pakistan would not throw them out. “Now we are afraid that we might have to leave, but how can the government of Pakistan throw us out? We are not strangers (*ghair*)!” Pointing to the difficult conditions in Afghanistan, he adds, “There is no longer any honour (*izzat*) for us in Afghanistan. We have our income and business in Pakistan; our children go to school here.” They do not want to go back to Afghanistan, “leaving here is leaving home”. The only time the elder brother

had been to Afghanistan in the past 20 or 25 years was for a wedding. He says he had felt uncomfortable and unhappy there.

To them, the most important conditions for a return to Afghanistan are peace, the absence of war, the creation of a business environment and work opportunities. Another older man who joined the interview setting explains that he does not have a refugee (PoR-)card and wants to return before he gets expelled by force. However, he is unable to afford the transportation costs. In his view the UN should provide transportation and construction materials so that they can build up (their) houses and “be safe”. Asked whether they have received any information on return programmes and options, the elder brother suggests that all that Afghan refugees in Pakistan need is time. This would help 90 per cent of them; they could work for three more years, earn enough money and then go back. Not in a rush, like now, being pressured to leave from one day to the next. There is limited information about the situation in Afghanistan and what is available obviously does not satisfy them: “We are not sure about our country and that we can meet our livelihood needs there. We ask every one of our compatriots who comes from Karachi, Peshawar or other places whether somebody has been able to improve the conditions in Afghanistan. This is what we constantly discuss among ourselves. Has the UN or the United States done something? Possible progress or betterment is constantly on our mind.” Asked about the peace process in Afghanistan, the brothers confirm that they have heard rumours about the peace process between the Taliban movement and the government but have no real opinion on it.

42 \ The last one-year renewal of the PoR-cards occurred in December 2015.

43 \ The statement is underpinned by an anecdote of how one brother consulted a doctor in a private hospital a couple of days earlier. When asked for his origin and when he told the doctor that he was Afghan, he received a major bashing. The brother responded, reminding the doctor that every community includes people who do wrong things.

Analysis: Translocal networks exist and persist but exclude material flows for livelihood-generation; established-outsider distinctions have been markedly felt since 2013 and determine unequal access and participation in societal affairs; voluntary return to Afghanistan is out of the question as long as survival is possible in Pakistan

The interview accounts show how among the illiterate poor, translocal networks play a facilitating role in generating a livelihood but only regarding information-sharing, enabling chain migration and providing non-material support. The two respondents migrated to Sialkot in Punjab because older family members had already settled there. This means that they did not take any risks of uncertainty about where to stay and how to survive when they left their home village in Afghanistan. Similarly, the move to Lahore was encouraged by the knowledge of an uncle who informed them about employment opportunities in Lahore's Sabzi Mandi.⁴⁴ The network extends beyond their family network to Afghans who regularly come to bail them out of police custody: a network relation of moral and authoritative support. The supporters have to be paid, of course. Lastly, the brother who returned to Kunduz with his family and family members who had always stayed behind or spouses who were recently married belong to the translocal network. Given that the respondents are poor to the extent that they—even as onion wholesalers in Lahore's Sabzi Mandi—are unable to support the brother and his family back in Kunduz financially through sending remittances, the translocal network can be described as weak in terms of livelihood-generating effects.

The social status of the respondents, e.g. as self-employed workers in the Sabzi Mandi, their lack of education and—more significantly—the lack of robust documentation of their refugee status (including the denial of Pakistani identity documents even though by the time of the interview the majority of the family members had been born in Pakistan and never seen their putative homeland Afghanistan), their status of marriage in Pakistan and the lack of Afghan valid documents (especially Afghan passports with Pakistani visa) heavily influences their agency and thus voice in and access to local affairs. All these factors together constitute a risk to securing their livelihood on an everyday basis.

44 \ In Pakistan and Afghanistan the vegetable markets (*sabzi mandi*) cater to the lowest income strata and provide mostly occasional jobs or daily labour for transporters, cleaners or *karachiwalas* (fruit and vegetable sellers who rent a hand-push cart and get vegetables on commission to sell throughout the day in the city).

However, given that the next generation (their children) go to school in Pakistan, they might fare better in generating their livelihood and giving the translocal network a boost.

While the relationship with the surrounding community—the 'established' in the terms of Elias & Scotson (2013)—was unproblematic in the past, the political developments in Pakistan over roughly the last ten years, i.e. the evolution of domestic terrorism and the subsequent misuse of Afghan refugees' presence in Pakistan as scapegoats who any attack can be easily blamed on, have made relations difficult. Politicization of their presence, populist spread of hatred, biased media reporting and discrimination through authorities (interrogation, checks, arrests, extortion) has become part of their daily existence; bribing the police and living with extortion practices constitutes part of the survival and livelihood-making of lower-class Afghans in Pakistan these days. The degree of agency the respondents have and the decision-making power over various choices decrease with every terrorist attack that is carried out and that the Afghans are blamed on (whether justified or not). According to the elder brother, if survival in Pakistan becomes completely impossible, they will be forced to return (being counted as 'voluntarily' repatriates). At the current point of time, choices still exist, agency is derived from and manifest in their network relations that provide moral and authoritative support when arrested by the police, for example.

The contradiction between seeing Pakistan as home and sharing nostalgic and vague feelings about Afghanistan as true place of belonging and origin is striking. It is clear that the actual relationship with Afghanistan is more emotional than substantial. Further, the respondents and their families would not be able to meet their livelihood needs in Afghanistan; the country does not offer them any perspective. There is no security lest peace, no employment, no land and no opportunities that would allow investment in a future back there. Given their family's socio-economic status (landless, low-income) and long absence from the milieu of origin in Afghanistan, they are likely unable to negotiate the local power tapestries and social networks in their home district and province that would be necessary to be tapped to (re)integrate successfully. However, the more they are treated as outsiders (*ghair*) in Punjab, the more they feel forced to consider a return in the mid-term. They increasingly recognize that their efforts to achieve a secure livelihood according to their own measure do not prevent them from sliding into a status of outsiders in Pakistan as well as in Afghanistan.

In a camp for internally displaced persons in Herat

Maslakh, the largest IDP camp around the town of Herat, is located a few kilometres outside the town. It hosts more than 4,000, maybe 5,000 families many of whom arrived after the US intervention of 2001. A large group of inhabitants had been farmers or pastoralists in Faryab previously but have settled into camp life for a long time. They have long given up their previous way of life and remained without skills to take up work in a town like Herat. Besides Kuchi families, who are the majority in the camp, there are also about 300 Hazara and Tajik families.⁴⁵ Residency is largely organized according to ethnic belonging. The standard of services is low; there is no electricity, and only recently wells have been dug and pumps installed. There is a small market, a Qur'an school and one public school for girls and boys up to grade nine in the camp.

Interview 3

Account of a group of Kuchi elders in the IDP camp: We visit the compound of one elder, a Kuchi man, who is the deputy head of one of the five community development councils (CDCs, vernacular: *shura*) of Maslakh camp.⁴⁶ His wife and another elder join the discussion, and later, the other members including the head of the shura sit down with us. The houses consist of one room each and are made of mud with a mud wall around the compound. We are invited to the 'guesthouse', a room with mats and a carpet, with the rules the shura had decided and the IDP policy written on the wall.

The elder tells the interviewers that most of the families moved from Faryab near the border of Turkmenistan to Herat when Dostum seized Mazar-i Sharif and took over control of the north of Afghanistan [in 2001].⁴⁷ A large group of Kuchi people had come to

Herat through Turkmenistan at that time. Most of them had lost their livestock. One of the elders recalls that he had had 2,000 ewes and 70 to 80 camels. War and drought killed most of them; the remaining livestock was looted. When he heard that Herat was safe, he came with his family.

One of the elders had left Faryab earlier [around 1992] when the *mujahedin* toppled the government of Najibullah Ahmadzai⁴⁸ for which he had been working as a commander of the border police. He had arrived with his sheep and cows at Golran district in Herat province but sold his livestock when the Taliban forced him to leave Golran. He joined his relatives in Maslakh camp.⁴⁹

The elders tell us that when they arrived in 2002, there was a bakery, and humanitarian agencies distributed loaves of bread for free. The agencies had drawn a map of the camp and destined a place for the Kuchi families. For a short time, when Ismail Khan was governor [until 2004], many organizations were distributing food. At that time, the elders went to meet the then President Karzai and received a letter referring to Presidential Decree 104⁵⁰ according to which the IDPs should be given land. However, the government ignored the decree, and the elders lost the document. Free food distribution stopped, and they had to buy food at the market. Many camp inhabitants sent their sons to Herat city to find jobs in the market or to Iran for work. However sometimes, on their way back, robbers looted or kidnapped the men. The elders claim that "all younger men up to the age of 50 are working in Tehran". They send money through the *hawala* system, and the elders collect the

48 \ Najibullah Ahmadzai was installed as a president by the Soviet government in 1986.

49 \ People from Faryab also live in other communities in Herat.

50 \ Decree 104, officially the Executive Decree on Land Distribution for Housing to Eligible Returnees and IDPs, 2005, No 104, issued in Kabul on 6 December 2005 (15.9.1384) establishes the eligibility, mechanisms, and processes to allocate state land to IDPs and refugee returnees. Under this presidential decree, the Afghan land agency (ARAZI since 2010) is charged with identifying arid and virgin land subject to distribution under the decree and transfers this land to the MoRR, which is then responsible for distributing this land to IDPs and refugee returnees. According to the DoRR in Herat, Maslakh is a first case where Decree 104 is being implemented. The land on which IDPs are squatting was handed over to municipalities who subsequently issue their own decrees and can supply people with land (Interview with Mr Khatimi, DoRR Herat, November 2015).

45 \ Hazara and Tajiks are separate ethnic population groups that can be categorized as Dari-speakers (although the Hazaras' own language is Hazaragi) in Afghanistan's official two-language framework. Many Hazaras and Tajiks live in Herat province.

46 \ In November 2015 and again in April 2016

47 \ The men refer to the ousting of the Taliban in Mazar-i Sharif by Northern Alliance forces in 2001.

money from people they know at the border or in Herat. The wives and children of the men remain in Maslakh camp while the husbands work in Iran illegally without documents. Some women started to make carpets from wool which they got from shopkeepers in the market.

Development plans and desires of Kuchi camp inhabitants: The elders explain that they like the place and have given up their nomadic life. They emphasize that they will stay here as they have built their houses and have shallow wells here. They claim that the governor had informed them that the department of agriculture owned this land and had handed it over to the municipality which was supposed to transfer 400 square metres of land plots to each IDP family. According to them, the government had promised that the families would have to pay only a low price in instalments. During our visit in 2017, it was not clear whether the government had registered all the families living in the camp.

The elders report that the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) had indicated that it would bring development to Maslakh. At our second visit in Maslakh camp in April 2016, UN-Habitat had dug a new well with a pump run by solar power for each of the five camp areas represented by a CDC. The local government had bought the solar panels with the funds of the CDCs.⁵¹ Meanwhile the local government of Herat had demarcated the camp area to become a township of Herat. The elders anticipate that the mud houses will be demolished; there will be trees and better houses and a market; roads will be built as well as public places, schools and clinics, planned by UN-Habitat. The communities are involved in the planning process through the five camp CDCs, which delegate one person each to the overarching monitoring and evaluation council. There is contention among the elders whether UN-Habitat will pay any compensation when the houses are demolished. They report that the governor had told them that the economy would improve. The communities are expected to contribute their labour force to cover ten per cent of the cost.

51 \ The CDCs have received block grants from the World Bank within the Afghanistan National Solidarity Programme since 2003.

The five CDCs each represent 350 houses—those that have a door opening to the street. Members of the CDCs are mixed to some extent; the elders claim that theirs include Pashtun groups of different backgrounds. The Hazara in the camp have their own CDC.

The elders are satisfied with the new governor who congratulated them on receiving the land. They report that previous fears about insurgents threatening the area have not come true. They emphasize that they are well-connected with the government.⁵² When asked if they would like to raise sheep and goats again, the elders give a positive answer, but caution that they cannot afford it.

We also visit the small mud house of about twelve square metres in the same compound where the women are staying. The house has a corner made of mud for cooking with wood, some pots and a kettle, a bast mat on the floor, mattresses around, a heap of blankets in another corner, things covered by a carpet on a wall and about 20 people—six women of different ages, many girls and a few small boys are sitting in a circle in the house. In front of them is wool in plastic bags, and many of them are making yarn threads rolled up in balls for carpets.

Account of Kuchi women at Maslakh camp

An older woman explains that ten families live in the compound. One middle-aged woman tells us: “We came from Faryab province about 15 years ago due to fights. We came here directly. The Uzbeks killed my husband and then we came to Herat. We did not go back because Herat was peaceful and secure. However, we do not have anything here. We need and want land, and we do not have water. There is one shallow well borehole [in 2015], and we are always fighting with one another over using the well because there are so many people who need the water [this changed when the new well was constructed in 2016].

52 \ The emphasis may be a response to widespread distrust of the Kuchi in the region. Other camp inhabitants believe that some of the Kuchi sons were recruited by criminal gangs or the Taliban and that the Kuchi elders have weapons in their houses. Some local government officers are afraid of the camp inhabitants as they might have insurgents among them.

When we moved here, Ismail Khan⁵³ helped us in the first years, but there has been no assistance from anyone since he left Herat.”

The woman recalls the past in Faryab province. As Kuchi, they were used to having freedom of movement there; but now they are confined to small houses “and feel very bored”. The other women complain that there is no clinic in the camp and no source of income for them. Therefore, they make threads from the wool that the shopkeeper provides and then he collects the yarn. The women receive 40 AFs (US \$0.58) per kilogramme of yarn, which requires four days of work. They hand over the money to their husbands. They claim that they do not have money for health treatment, only for food.

The older woman reports that there is a women’s council with five members in the camp. One member is the sister of the household head, and there are two members from the Hazara inhabitants. “We have gathered twice since the establishment of the council, and we have not met since then. We were told that they would give us sewing machines, a processing machine for noodles, carpet weaving equipment and wool. We were also promised other assistance.”

The woman concludes that life is peaceful in Herat, and that they want to stay here. Even if there is peace, they will not want to resume the previous life of herding sheep and goats; they want to do some other work or at least get land where they can stay. Then their life can improve. Currently, the family has only one room where they all live and where she bakes bread and cooks food. The smoke of the fire badly affects her own and her children’s health.

53 \ Ismail Khan was the governor of Herat from 1992 to 1995, then again after the US intervention in 2001 until 2004, and after that, he was Minister of Energy and Water in the central government (2004–2013). He is affiliated to the Jamiat-e Islami party and an influential powerholder in western Afghanistan (Masoud, 2015).

Analysis: Legal access to land and housing is most important for IDPs; adjustment from aid receivers to family networks extending to Iran and taking care of IDP needs; communities of people from the same area of origin and similar ethnic background have formed in the camp; the IDPs do not believe that aid agencies will provide the planned development measures. The relationship with the local government and other camp communities is ambiguous. Women also request land, better and healthier housing, a clinic and, also, more and better-paid job opportunities. They expect the government and aid agencies to provide this to them. They do not want to raise livestock again but miss the freedom of movement they had in their previous life.

As has been shown for the IDPs in Kabul, also in Herat, the issue of obtaining a legal plot where people can build a house to stay is most crucial for the displaced people interviewed. Differently from Kabul, in Herat, the Decree 104 has started to materialize. Land was handed over to the municipality which decided to give it to the IDPs. The Kuchi inhabitants have changed from nomadic life to camp life and have adjusted to the growing need to pay for their food and other items. While the younger generation contributes to this by working in Herat town or Iran, the women make balls of wool in their houses. The elders are eager to see the results of the plans made for upgrading the camp and are annoyed by the slow pace of development. The Kuchi families have remained closely connected to others originating from Faryab.

Even though the houses in the camp are small and made from mud, the women appreciate living in a peaceful place. Over the years, they have adjusted to a way of life that differs from the nomadic life they had led previously. Their view differs from the older men in the camp who stated that they would be happy if they were allowed to raise sheep again. The women, although they have to give their earnings to their husbands and are confined to their houses, are content doing work and earning an income. Like the other interview partners, they expect services and a legal plot to be provided by the government or humanitarian agencies and assume that life would significantly improve under these conditions.

Interview 4

In the Hazara quarter of Maslakh camp: We are invited into the living room of a mud house, roofed with wooden beams and furnished with a carpet and pillows. A very small door leads to the adjacent room where there are several women. The large compound is surrounded by a mud wall.

Seven older and young men receive us in the room. Some of them are members of the Hazara *shura* in the camp. They originate from different parts of Afghanistan, among them Day Kundi and Bamyan and had left due to disputes, family quarrels and drought in their home areas. They had no land or property there but had stayed on a rented plot of land on which they had been farming. They came to Herat province during the Taliban era between 1996 and 1999. At that time, many IDPs arrived in Herat and settled in an area near the police station; first a few hundred, then more than 1,000 families. After 2001, some people who had owned land in Afghanistan returned to their villages. The head of the *shura* had tried to flee with his family to Iran, but they were captured and deported.

The men complain that the main shortcoming at Maslakh camp is the lack of income opportunities. The son of one of the elders works in the camp's market; others work in construction or services, making bricks or carrying goods to the shops. One son is in Iran, and another one is employed at the customs loading and unloading trucks. Three women weave carpets for low wages; a company brings the material and buys the carpets. The women receive wages of 20,000 AFN (US \$291) per six square meters of carpet produced. The men tell us that all of them sent their children to school.

The men explain that the houses in Maslakh camp were constructed by NGOs and the government, and the inhabitants built rooms like the one we are in. Under the government of Karzai (2004-2014), bulldozers would come and destroy self-made houses in the camp. Luckily, the interview partners stayed in the middle of the camp and were saved. Some people left the camp. The men report that Pashtuns put families inside the houses or threw stones at the

bulldozers; therefore the government had stopped the destruction for the past two years. The head of the council describes the tension and its solution as follows: The deputy Minister of Defence came and made a speech, telling the IDPs that they had to leave and should return to their own provinces. If they did not go, they would be considered as members of al-Qaeda, kidnappers, or drug smugglers. When a representative from the Pashtun community wanted to speak, the deputy turned him down and called him an al-Qaeda man. Then a man from the Hazara community spoke up and proposed that the government either should provide the IDPs with shelter anywhere in Afghanistan or destroy the camp and kill all people or open the border so that they could leave Afghanistan legally. A representative of the municipal government said that the IDPs were innocent people, but that 'the engineers' from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UNHCR who claimed to help the people were thieves and divided food among themselves instead of serving the camp inhabitants. The meeting ended without any decision. The deputy Minister said that he did not have the authority to shelter the IDPs but assured them that no more bulldozers would come.

One elder, who is an imam at the mosque, adds that before that meeting there had been many disputes between the Hazara and Pashtuns and a strong repudiation of the Hazara by the Pashtuns. However, due to the bold words of the Hazara representative during the meeting, the Pashtuns appreciated the ability of the Hazara to speak on behalf of the whole community, and after that the relationship improved considerably. He says, "now the Pashtuns also protect us." He refers to an incidence where someone from Herat claimed that part of the camp had been built on his land and started farming near a spring at the nearby mountain. Some Pashtuns drove him away. The camp inhabitants believe that this incidence had been incited by others, not by the man himself. The imam emphasizes that it is good that the Pashtuns are there as the government is "more careful with them" and they have built up more resistance against being displaced from the camp.

The members of the Hazara *shura* had not received the information that the land was legalized; they were only informed about the five wells UN-Habitat was building and about plans that a joint *shura* would be established in the camp. The head of the Hazara *shura* said, “maybe they have not informed us yet”.

Analysis: Land and informal work of younger people and women are crucial for IDP livelihoods; those who have land are more likely to return home; those without land remain in a situation of protracted displacement and over the years start to struggle for the right to stay. This struggle can have a unifying effect on camp inhabitants from different ethnic groups who otherwise distrust or disrespect each other

People without land and property are more likely to remain IDPs as this may provide them with access to assistance (maybe even land and legal housing in the future); those who still have land may return home when the armed conflict subsides. The Hazara IDPs sustain their families' livelihood through informal work of the younger generation and the women like IDPs from other groups in the camp. Government policies aiming to remove the camp by force have been a threat to the camp inhabitants, but through the resistance by Pashtun groups combined with the respect or fear the government has towards them the IDPs were able to stay. From the perspective of the Hazara elders, their representative's outspoken criticism of the government's attempts to remove the camp had dissolved previously tense relations with the Pashtuns by clarifying their common interest. It remains unclear why the shura of the Pashtuns has already been informed about the legalization of the land and that of the Hazara not; however, the elders did not show any embarrassment in front of us.

Interview 5

Account of a shopkeeper in a tailoring shop in the camp market: The interview partner arrived from Uruzgan province in 2002 where he had been a land labourer. He says, “I did not have my own land and I had to do farming some time in one place for one person and some time in another place for another person. My life was like that of a Kuchi (nomadic), because I

sometimes did farming in one place and then in another. Now I have a shop, and I have a sewing machine and I do any kind of tailoring work for people. I was poor before and I still have to work hard. Life in Uruzgan was somehow better than here, because I was easily earning enough to support my family.”

The man explains that the family had to leave their farming tools and household items behind every time when there was a fight and escape without carrying anything with them. Luckily no family member was injured. He decided to leave Uruzgan due to repeated fighting and thought that his life would improve in Herat as there was no fighting there. He moved directly to Herat with his six children and his wife. A Herati man advised them to settle in Maslakh camp. They joined another IDP who went to this camp.

Livelihood activities in the camp: The interview partner reports that when they arrived, they had only two blankets, a kettle and some tea glasses brought from Uruzgan. The “other IDP” who had brought them to the camp gave the family a small room and provided them with food for the first day and night. There was a shallow well installed by the UN from which the camp inhabitants took the water. On his second day in Herat, the interview partner started to work in a brick manufacturing company. He tells us that this was very heavy work that made him very weak, and that he and his family had only bread with green tea for seven days. Then they were able to buy other food items. After one year, the UN built two rooms where the family could stay, and the man built surrounding walls for the compound. They still live in the compound. After seven or eight years of working in the brick factory, he bought a sewing machine and then opened his shop. No one else from the family works. His two elder sons attended one of the schools in Herat city and one is studying at the university in Balkh province and another one at Herat University. In the course of the talk the man admits that he got in trouble economically. “I am the only one working and I have taken loans from my neighbours and from shopkeepers.”

The man tells us that the government has never helped them and that only once did an organization distribute food items to them in a winter season after elders of this camp had complained to the local government's Department for Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR). He claims that no one asked them anything when they arrived, neither did anyone register them. After one year, NGOs started to come to the camp and have done surveys "about 20 times".

Neighbourhood relationships and security: The interview partner states, "I am very happy about the people of Herat. They have tried to help us from the first day we arrived here. My sons have studied in Herat and have made many friends. I and my family are invited to weddings and other gatherings in Herat." However, later during the talk, he admits that the family had problems with the neighbours over water [in 2015; the new wells solved the water problems]. His way of dealing with conflicts in the neighbourhood is avoidance or mediating. When there are any issues between his neighbours, he tries "to make them calm and mediate between them".

The man states that he used to feel secure in Herat. However, this has changed recently. "For the past year [2014/15], I haven't felt safe, because we hear in the news that Taliban attack and capture places, and the government does not have control over all of Afghanistan. I am afraid now because Taliban can be everywhere. There are security issues, and I don't feel safe".⁵⁴

Analysis: A story of relative success of an IDP who started as a land labourer, became a factory worker and then a shop owner and sent his sons to university; good relationships with the neighbours who help the IDP through times of hardship are crucial.

The account of the shopkeeper reveals that the availability of unskilled employment (here in a brick factory) can provide the basis for a career as a small entrepreneur. It remains unclear how the man acquired sewing skills, but he seems to be able to secure the livelihood for the whole family and to

send his children to school and even to university—albeit at the price of being highly indebted to some of his social environment. The good relationships with the neighbours proved to be crucial for the success as they helped him to get started and later provided him with loans. The man considers the conflicts over water as something related to the adverse conditions of camp life and not as a personal issue, which helps to maintain the good relationship in the neighbourhood. He and his family never relied on aid; however, he criticizes, like other IDPs, that aid agencies were there but that there was no visible result of their activities. He considers mainly the government to be responsible for developing the camp into a township with basic services and demands cooperation by the camp inhabitants to this end.

In a deportee camp in Herat

Deportation can be defined as "the forced removal of foreign nationals from a given national territory" (Drotbohm & Hasselberg, 2015, p. 551) and hence, as the forced return of people to their country of origin. This affects mainly those who are considered irregular labour migrants and their families who lack a legal stay and work permit; however, according to policy shifts, refugees can become part of this category when their registration cards expire or when they stay as undocumented refugees in the region.⁵⁵ The extent to which the police of a country deports people depends on government policies, bilateral treaties between the country of origin and destination of migrants and the seriousness of implementing policies and regulations.

Since 2006, incidences of deportation or de facto forced but officially 'voluntary' returns of Afghans from Iran have increased. Since 2014, hardly any voluntary return has taken place from Iran; those who arrived in Afghanistan were predominantly deportees—mostly lower class Afghan men and boys who migrated and were caught. In 2015, 239,992 Afghans were deported from Iran. In 2016, the number in

54 \ In fact, there has been an increase of armed violence in Herat province committed by the Taliban since 2014 (cf. UNAMA, 2015, 2016).

55 \ According to the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 35 percent of Afghans residing in Iran either hold no civil documentation or have expired documents (NRC, 2017).

creased to 246,838 (IOM Afghanistan, 2017a) and in 2017 to 276,088 (IOM Afghanistan, 2017).⁵⁶

The province of Herat has about 2.5 million inhabitants of whom the Central Statistical Organization of Afghanistan identifies more than one-third (33.4%) or 808,000 persons as ‘migrants’ (CSO, 2017, p. 29). This term covers IDPs, deportees and returnees who have remained in Herat although this is not their area of origin as well as people (mainly Afghans) coming from Iran or elsewhere abroad. In Herat city—with an estimated population between 500,000 (Leslie, 2015, p. 8) and 800,000 (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan 2015, p. 12)—47 per cent of the inhabitants are ‘migrants’, of whom 43 per cent came from other districts of Herat province, nearly 30 per cent from other provinces in Afghanistan and 27 per cent from abroad, mainly Iran (CSO, 2017, pp. 30-31). In every village and quarter of the town, there are different IDPs, from Gholghan, Kushki Konat, Shindand, Farsi, Badghis, Ghor and Faryab. Their arrival has a substantial impact on the economy and job opportunities. They work for less pay than the Herati people so that these often lose their jobs. Therefore, many Heratis have left for Iran.

Since the 1990s, the Iranian government has used deportation as a threat looming over the Afghan irregular migrants and as a political wildcard towards the government of Afghanistan. However, as a matter of fact, the Iranian rulers had neither seriously engaged in forced repatriation nor strictly enforced the control of Iran's border with Afghanistan (Rohani, 2014, p. 21) until about 2015. The IOM is running camps in Herat, where people who have been deported from Iran are taken care of for a short period of time and receive the transport fare to return “home”.

Interview 6

We visit one of the rooms in Ansar camp⁵⁷ at the outskirts of Herat, where we meet six boys, between 12 and 17 years of age. They were taken to the deportee camp the day before our visit. The boys explain why they had crossed the Iranian border, how they lived

there, and how they were caught and deported. Although they had come from different provinces of Afghanistan (Faryab, Takhar, Kapisa), Nimroz had been the starting point for their movement to Iran. From there, each of them had been taken towards the border by a pick-up truck, got out of it near checkpoints and walked around them, entered another car and finally walked to the border for eight up to 24 hours until they could cross it. Then a car took them to Tehran. Being trafficked from Nimroz to Tehran costs 1.5 million Toman (US \$450). Each boy had relatives in Iran who sent them the money to pay for the traffickers. The relatives expected the boys to work in Iran and pay the money back from their wages.

One of the boys had helped farm his father's land together with his brother. One month ago, he had decided to travel to Iran to work there. He was arrested by the police when he was on his way to work. Two of the boys had left Afghanistan only one week ago. Both came from Takhar in north-east Afghanistan where one had worked in a bakery and the other one in a food shop. They planned to look for work in Tehran, but the Iranian police arrested them when they were near Tehran province. Another boy had moved to Iran two months ago and was caught by the police one week before our visit. He had finished grade seven, left school and unsuccessfully looked for a job for one year. He travelled to Tehran where he worked for one month. Then he was arrested on the way to his job. Another boy had been in Iran previously and had been arrested near Shiraz four months ago.

At the police station, the boys had to pay 500,000 Toman (US \$150). Otherwise, the police would mistreat them and beat them and then put them in a detention camp. As the boys did not have money, the relatives deposited the amount in a bank account on their behalf. The Iranian police took the boys to the Afghan border. IOM officers received them there. The IOM only takes deportees who are under age or sick, accommodates them and sends them back to their families.

Nearly all the boys plan to try again to go to Iran for work to pay the money back to their relatives. Only one boy says that he will not do it but return home and work on his father's farm again. He had

⁵⁶ \ Between January and June 2018, IOM registered 179,000 deported Afghans from Iran, whereas 132,000 persons returned to Afghanistan on their own accord (IOM, 2018a).

⁵⁷ \ Visited in November 2015.

received the money from his brother. The others are certain that their relatives in Iran will pay for the trafficking a second time. They all are aware that as soon as the Iranian police take their fingerprints, it will become hazardous to be caught again as this will mean three to six months of detention in prison.

Plans, desires and rationales of the deported boys:

The boys tell us that they will be kept in the deportee camp in Herat for one or two days and then be sent to their families, either accompanied or just receiving money for the transport. They intend to spend some time with their families before they try again to cross the border to Iran. They explain that as a labourer in Iran, they can earn up to 700,000 Toman (US \$234) per month, and if they find jobs in shops or supermarkets, about 500,000 Toman (US \$150). The best jobs are in construction, where labourers can earn up to 1.3 million Toman (US \$434) per month.

The boys claim that there are no jobs in Afghanistan for them; therefore they have to leave the country. The father of one of the boys had died four months ago. As his mother is already old, it is now up to the boy to care for the family. Another boy says that his parents did not want him to go to Iran. When he returns, they will keep an eye on him so that he does not leave again. A third boy explains that he is the eldest son. His father has a small vegetable shop, but as there is no business, he is just hanging around. The first boy summarizes, “we do not have work here, so therefore we will have to go again.”

Details about being trafficked and caught: During a second visit of the Ansar deportee camp,⁵⁸ we meet eight unaccompanied (male) minors who had spent between ten days and one-and-a-half years in Iran before they were deported. Two of them had never attended school; four went to school until grade four and one until grade eight. One boy was older and had completed his Bachelor at Kabul University and worked with his relatives as a carpenter in Tehran. Four of them had gone to Iran and had been deported before; one of them four times. One boy had been imprisoned for two days when he was caught for the second time; others had not, but were detained in a

camp in Shiraz for several days and had to pay 56,000 Toman (US \$18.50) municipality tax. The police beat them when they were noisy, smoked or did not obey. One boy was pushed into a car with the hands tied on his back. The police would keep them in the camp until their number reached at least 500; then they would take all of them together to the Afghan border. All boys had their fingerprints taken in Iran.

Seven boys have friends or relatives in Shiraz; one boy went to Shiraz because his trafficker suggested it. The boys report that nowadays the traffickers do not recommend going to Tehran. The usual payment to be trafficked from Zabol, Afghanistan, to Shiraz is 1.6 million Toman (US \$530). The boys pay in monthly instalments. Most of them knew their traffickers before, and if not, one would guarantee for the other that he will pay. They also knew that the trafficker could reduce costs or make payment due later, after the boy had gotten a job in Iran. The boys claim that the cheapest way is through Balochistan province of Pakistan, which costs only 1.2 million Toman (less than US \$400). Five of the boys are indebted to traffickers.

In Iran, four boys had jobs in construction, two in farming or garden work, one in tiling and one in plastering. Some boys heard rumours about Afghans who had gone to fight alongside the Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Syria; one boy was approached by a taxi driver from the army who suggested connecting him to the Iranian Army so that he could join the Syrian war, but he refused. Another boy had a friend who went to fight in Syria. He tells us that he was offered six million Toman (nearly US \$2,000), but he still did not want to join.

One of the boys explains that being the eldest son, he will go again to Iran. In his home area, he cannot work for the government—the Taliban would kill him. Another boy has to support his mother and therefore has to go back to Iran. Two further boys will go again to pay back their debts. Three of the boys intend to look for work in their home village or try to join the Afghan Army as they cannot afford to leave for Iran again.

58 \ In April 2016.

Analysis: Eldest sons are under pressure to support their families; wages in Iran are attractive; boys get into a vicious cycle of indebtedness and repeated illegal border crossings irrespective of experiences of detention; Iranian Army officers recruit young Afghan illegal migrants for war in Syria.

The accounts of the young boys indicate that in the tradition of the rural areas where most of them come from, as eldest sons, it is their responsibility to contribute to the livelihood of their families. However, paid occupations are hardly available in rural Afghanistan. Therefore, they are attracted by the opportunity to earn more money compared to Afghan average wages when they manage to find employment in Iran. This livelihood option is not only supported by some family members, but, it seems, also by some of the parents. Relatives advance the money for traffickers to take the boys across the border. This means that the boys are highly indebted not only because they have to pay back the money paid to the traffickers but also as they have to send money home to their families. Hence they have very few options in Afghanistan; either to become traffickers themselves or join armed groups or the national army, or try to cross the border again after having been deported. While the boys are aware of the risk of being beaten up, tortured and imprisoned by the Iranian police, they see no other option to fulfil their role to contribute to securing the livelihood of their families. Although most of the boys do not claim violent conflict or displacement as a reason for leaving Afghanistan, the accounts of some boys indicate that the conflict context in their areas of origin has an impact on their decision to seek jobs abroad, for example, when they feel threatened by Taliban groups while working for the Afghan government. The reports of the boys however indicate that in Iran they may witness attempts of recruiting them for fighting by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps. This confirms media reports about young Afghans joining the war in Syria on the side of the Iran-supported Syrian government (HRW, 2017).

The deportee camp inhabitants are not only boys under age but also families. One example sheds light on the motivation for a family to take the risk of staying illegally in Iran

Interview 7

Account of a deported family: A woman explains that she was arrested two days ago together with her husband and her two-year-old child and then deported. The family had started the journey from Kabul to Nimroz about 25 days ago. When they reached Kerman, they were arrested and deported to Nimroz. They started again and crossed the border from Nimroz to Iran. Somewhere near the city of Shiraz, the Iranian police arrested them and deported them to Herat.

The woman tells us that about 14 years ago, she and her father, mother and siblings had moved from Pakistan to Iran. Her parents got Iranian passports and now have a small construction business there. Three years ago, she got married in Iran to an Afghan man from Maidan Shahr, Wardak province. After one year, they left Iran and moved to Maidan Shahr to stay with her husband's family. The area was under Taliban control, and there were no jobs for them. Whereas people who had land were farming, she and her husband did not have land. As her husband had been working as a construction worker in Iran, he then tried to find a similar job in Kabul. However, he failed and came back home with no money. The family depended on his father for their daily expenses. These conditions made them decide to leave Afghanistan for Iran again.

Analysis: Lack of land and jobs pushes rural families to cross the border to Iran illegally; families split up between Taliban-controlled areas, government-held towns in Afghanistan and Iran

The report of the woman shows that a combination of lack of land and employment for unskilled rural men, the need to sustain a family with children and job opportunities and relatives in Iran provide sufficient incentives for a whole family to undertake the risky illegal journey to Iran. As in the case of the deported boys, desperation about the lack of livelihood options in Afghanistan prevails. Failed attempts to secure livelihoods in rural and urban areas induce the family to try and cross the Iranian border again.

In Mashhad, Iran

The majority of registered Afghan refugees and migrants stay in Iranian towns. A census conducted in 2006 showed that 32.7 per cent of these lived in Tehran (with about 15 million inhabitants in 2015), and 13.3 per cent in Mashhad, the second-largest city of Iran (2.7 million inhabitants in 2015) (Omidvar et al. 2013, p. 357; estimates by geographers of the University of Tehran 2016).⁵⁹ Whereas the standard of living in Iran is significantly higher than in Afghanistan, the legal barriers for regular employment or business are also high, and Afghans depend on the goodwill of authorities and Iranian hosts to stay and make a living. With initially whole families moving to Iran, women were able to enter the labour market and contribute to livelihood-generation (where permissible)⁶⁰ and enrol their children in schools. The fact that they insisted on seeking education for their children proved to become a significant variable for refugees' upward social mobility (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005).⁶¹

Until 1995, Afghans had access to subsidized food and health care as well as free education in schools but were not permitted to own businesses, land, or properties. Working as street vendors was not permitted even to Iranians, but was one of the illegal income-creating activities for Afghans in Iranian towns besides low-wage employment and casual labour (Rajaei 2000, pp. 47-48, 56-57). When the subsidies were cut, and work permits became more expensive in the 1990s, most Afghans stopped renewing their

work permit⁶², which is required whenever they change employer. Frequent change of employer is common for casual labourers in construction, one of the most common occupations of Afghan men in Iranian towns. As illegal workers, Afghans are permanently at risk of being deported.

Afghan lower class people tend to live in the cheaper quarters of Iranian towns forming particular townships that may be nicknamed 'Little Kabul' or similar, as they acquire a shape that Iranians consider typically Afghan. These townships are also home to lower class Iranians, as in Golshahr, one of the eastern suburbs of Mashhad, with more simple and less well-maintained houses than in other quarters available for low rents from Iranian landlords (cf. also Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005).

Public buses that move between these suburbs and the city centre are full of Afghans going to work in the wealthier quarters in the morning and returning in the evening. Whereas in general, Iranian citizens treat Afghan immigrants with politeness, they express a lot of clichés and prejudices as soon as these Afghans leave the bus. It is common among Iranians to describe Afghans as not educated, hard (unskilled) workers, being after money, pretending to be poor but in fact running huge profitable businesses such as carpet trading, being terrorists, and mothers being prepared to send their sons to the war in Syria with the Iranian army to acquire high compensation payments when they die as martyrs. Some believe that Afghan refugees are treated better than Iranians (observations and informal talks in the women's compartment in public buses in Mashhad, October 2015). Afghan women often feel uneasy in the presence of Iranian women and tend to remain among their peers, avoiding closer contacts with Iranians beyond work relationships or being schoolmates. The behaviour of Iranians and Afghans—superficial politeness

⁶² \ Obtaining/renewing a work permit costs nearly as much as one month's wages. Therefore, many Afghans in towns are hired without a work permit as cheap and compliant labourers doing jobs that Iranians would not do for low payment. Besides in construction, Afghans work as shopkeeper assistants or cleaners, household helpers or carriers, that is, in more or less invisible service jobs (interviews with Afghan wives of construction workers in Mashhad, October 2015).

⁵⁹ \ Conference "Political Reordering of Space and Optimal Governance of Tehran City" at the Center of Excellence in Political Geography at Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, March 7-8, 2016.

⁶⁰ \ Women worked, for example, in a prayer shop or an NGO in Mashhad; sometimes they joined political activities; especially Hazara women were active in the Afghan Shi'a party Hezb-e Wahdat in Mashhad (interviews with a university professor in Mashhad and a film producer in Kabul, March 2016).

⁶¹ \ Afghans who had arrived during the Khomeini regime (1979-1989) had received a green card, and their children were allowed to attend school like Iranian children. Afghans who arrived later no longer had this privilege. Nevertheless, many Afghans, even if they were labourers, sent their children to school in Iran until they completed primary school and if possible, beyond, thereby making every effort to keep the children in school despite obstacles set up by Iranian teachers, the authorities (temporary stay permit) and relatively high fees (interview with a returnee in Kabul, March 2016).

and tolerance while dealing with each other but suspicion and prejudices once the other is no longer there—turn their relationship into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Many Afghans without legal documents are second-generation immigrants and have never been to Afghanistan.⁶³ They have adapted to the Iranian way of life and managed to earn an income.⁶⁴ The poorest among them mainly consist of female-headed households, households with male heads with a low level of education, low socio-economic status, unemployment or precarious job status, families belonging to the Sunni community and Afghans without a legal residential status. For these groups, marginalization does not only mean income poverty but often also food insecurity (Omidvar et al. 2013, p. 356) and dropping out of health care schemes (interview with a lower class family in Mashhad, 2015).

Analysis: Lower class Afghans form the lowest segment of society in Iran, doing work that Iranians despise and being socially marginalized and excluded.

Exclusion is a mutual process that reinforces itself through prejudices, fear and suspicion. Nevertheless, working in Iranian towns has remained a valuable livelihood option for lower-class Afghans whose job opportunities dwindled in Afghanistan. Against this backdrop, the policies and policy enforcement of the government of Iran always have been ambiguous. Perceptions of cheap Afghan labour vary as being useful in sectors like construction and agriculture, as cannon fodder in Iran's proxy war in Syria, or as threatening when Iranians fear that Afghans compete for jobs, as in the fields of informal business, trade and services.

63 \ The stricter law enforcement in Iran against undocumented Afghans, the statelessness of many second-generation Afghans and the grim future perspective prompted many young Afghans to try and escape to Europe through the Bulgaria route or across the Mediterranean Sea in 2015 (author's interviews with Afghans in Tehran and Mashhad, 2016).

64 \ According to a survey of second-generation Afghans in Iran, nearly 36 per cent have integrated and acculturated themselves, whereas 33 per cent have maintained a separated social life. 17 per cent have undergone a process of downward assimilation due to low job opportunities and nearly 14 per cent have been marginalized (Abbasi-Shavazi & Sadeghi 2015).

Around Al-Asif Square of peri-urban Karachi, Pakistan

The Pakistani harbour metropolis of Karachi is famous as the “city of migrants”. It started in 1947 with the foundation of Pakistan and the city's transformation from being a harbour town to a state's capital. This transformation attracted many Muslim refugees from India.⁶⁵ Two immigration movements can be identified since then: The economic significance Karachi acquired from the 1950s onwards caused internal rural to urban migration of diverse sectarian and ethnic groups from all over (West) Pakistan to settle in Karachi in search for work and income. After the war in 1971, immigrants from Bangladesh (East Pakistan) also settled in the city. It became the economic centre of Pakistan (even when it lost the capital status in 1958), with an estimated 12 million people (2005), at the time of writing 14.9 million. 66 In 2005, estimates spoke of about 500,000 people of Afghan origin residing in Karachi, who made up about 10 per cent of the workforce in the construction, transport and wholesale and retail sectors (CSSR, 2005, p. 6). In spring 2017, informed interviewees estimated the number of Afghans in Sindh province, including Karachi, at 120,000 to 130,000 persons; 60,000 of whom are registered PoR-card holders.⁶⁷

The melting-pot character of Karachi conditioned that even before the outbreak of violent conflict in Afghanistan in 1978, Pashto was one of the languages prevalent in the city, and not only Pakistani Pashtuns but also Afghans entertained prior relations with

65 \ The population of Karachi more than doubled within one year from 425,000 in 1947 to 1948 due to the influx of 472,000 refugees over a period of roughly nine months. In the 1941 census, its population was 386,000, in 1953 more than 1.3 million people. Cf. Ansari, 2013, p. 377.

66 \ The current figure is taken from Table 7 of the Provisional Census results (PBS, 2017). Population estimates have to be read with care for several reasons: On the one hand, all estimates from 1999 to 2017 were based on extrapolations of the census of 1998. Afghans and non-citizens were never included in the census, and until 2006-07 no census of Afghans in Pakistan has taken place. On the other hand, especially for Karachi the population estimates have to take account of administrative changes in the local urban governance framework. Here, several switches occurred between 2001 and today, with models like city district and metropolitan area incorporating also surrounding rural areas into the city realm and erasing the distinction of urban vs. rural until this was reversed again (cf. Hasan et al., 2015, p. 33).

67 \ Interview with SHARP-representatives in Karachi, March 2017.

business partners and relatives in the city (CSSR, 2005, p. 17). Various interviewees—Afghans of diverse ethnic backgrounds and professions—mentioned this continuity in March 2017. Although the interviews (see Appendix) were conducted in a guesthouse of the local community leader (Akakhel), interviewees not only resided in the Al-Asif apartment blocks but came from the larger Sohrab Goth area and reported about their livelihood-making and relations with Afghan settlements throughout Sohrab Goth.⁶⁸ Although the Afghan refugees were supposed to be accommodated in camps, so-called Afghan refugee villages, the two provinces Northwest-Frontier and Balochistan along the border with Afghanistan, Karachi and its outskirts witnessed a considerable refugee influx in the 1980s.⁶⁹ Afghans who by majority hailed from different Pashtun tribes, either managed to move to Karachi after having registered in one of the Afghan refugee villages or they went there directly. Initial settlements were razed during violent turmoil in the mid-1980s when immigrant ‘Afghan Pashtuns’ were not distinguished from Pakistani Pashtuns in Karachi political fights between different ethnic factions. Interviewees mentioned several living areas around Al-Asif Square with different degrees of poor living conditions where destitute individuals squat on government land without tenure security. At Al-Asif Square itself, the apartment blocks house a mix of residents, from more affluent, middle-class traders and skilled workers to lower middle and low-class labourers. In 2005, the number of residents was estimated at 20,000 (CSSR, 2005, p. 12), of whom between

60 (CSSR, 2005, p. 12) and 75 per cent (Interview, March 2017) were Afghans of different ethnic backgrounds (except Hazara) and the remaining 40 to 25 per cent were Pakistani Pashtuns. In the 1990s, an additional wave of refugees arrived after food aid and other support was stopped initially for the Afghan refugee villages. For example, Jhangabad, near Al-Asif Square on the Super Highway, evolved as a result of this (CSSR, 2005, p. 12). It is not developed and in transition from a basic squatter camp to a *katchi abadi* (irregular housing area without tenure security). It is home to garbage collectors, vegetable and market sellers and unskilled day labourers. Sohrab Goth’s Afghan population is estimated at 90,000 (2017); many of the residents are second- or third-generation migrants.

One Uzbek respondent, 55 years of age and 31 years in Pakistan (PoR-card holder) at the time of the interview (March 2017), reported how the Afghans increasingly settled in Sohrab Goth area. They (he had a family with two children by then) set up tents and founded an Afghan *basti* (village) which came to be known as refugee camp, and they even received ‘rations’ from the government of Pakistan. He worked in a nearby company as a low-skilled labourer, tried carpet weaving for some time and daily labouring jobs; the family had to collect shrubs and fuelwood for cooking and heating near the settlement. Amenities like gas for the stone housing blocks came later, only after 5,000 to 6,000 more people had arrived. He reports how his father’s house in Khanabad in Kunduz Province, was destroyed by Soviet forces. Today, Taliban rule beyond the main road. Nevertheless, because of the land that is still bringing some income, he visits Khanabad twice a year. His parents also came to Pakistan, and his mother is buried in the graveyard nearby. Besides land and trade relations, social networks are solidified through marriage arrangements.

The large-scale absence of formal support as it was provided in Afghan refugee villages in the other provinces, barred many Afghans in Karachi from education. Interviewees complain about the lack of access, not a single government school is located in the area, whereas *madrassa* education was possible until these Islamic schools were banned in 2001. This

68 \ Sohrab Goth was once a rural area 25 kilometres north of the city along the main Karachi-Hyderabad highway. With the (administrative) devolution scheme of 2001, it was included in the city administration because the scheme abandoned the rural-urban distinction. From its infrastructure and settlement character, it is best described as a peri-urban area today. Interestingly, the (formerly nomadic) Akakhel tribe that is said to dominate affairs in Al-Asif Square since at least 1994, has a history of seasonal migration from Afghanistan to Pakistan and seasonal/ winter camping in this area for decades, if not the entire 20th century at least (cf. CSSR, 2005, p. 8 and interviews with Akakhel elders and other residents in Al-Asif Square in March 2017). The first Akakhel apparently settled down in the Sohrab Goth area in the 1960s, received domicile certificates and were later given Pakistani citizenship (interviews, March 2017).

69 \ By the mid-1980s, only one of more than 300 Afghan refugee villages was not located in these two provinces, but in Punjab (Mianwali) (Ghufran, 2011, p. 947). There were no camps in Sindh Province, the capital of which is Karachi.

leaves the better-off with the option to send their children to private schools and offers the poorer families an excuse to send their sons to work from a young age (cf. CSSR, 2005, p. 15, 27). In the health sector, the situation is slightly better. Although a newly built government hospital is not functional as there is no staff, a UN hospital is accessible to the Sohrab Goth Afghans.

Police harassment and extortion is a central challenge for the poorest. They report that the majority of their income goes into bribing the police. Even garbage pickers have to pay 20 Rupees (US \$0.19) upon entering and exiting one street. The police do not acknowledge the PoR-card extension and night raids with arrests are common, even though the arrested have the correct papers. In such cases, they bribe officers with an average of 6,000 Rupees (US \$57) to get out. In many cases, the arrested or their relatives contact representatives of SHARP, an implementing agency for the UNHCR, for legal assistance. This organization is reportedly preferred to the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR) because of its practical legal assistance and experience. CAR representatives “only speak to large groups of refugees and represent them towards government officials” (Interview with vegetable seller, March 2017).

Analysis: Less outsider-status because of Karachi's genesis as a migrant city, livelihood niches as in Iran, and close connections with Afghanistan

As in Iran, lower-class Afghans form the lowest segment of society and occupy a niche providing hard manual labour. Al-Asif Square resembles a microcosm where many unskilled jobs cater to the Afghan community itself because of its high concentration in the peri-urban outskirts of Karachi. Even though Afghans are an equal group among all immigrants that form Karachi's population, Karachiites and ordinary Pakistanis have observed that there is more of a distinction between Afghans and Pakistani Pashtuns, and both groups of Pashtuns encourage the boundary-drawing between Afghans and non-Afghan Pashtuns respectively. Just like in other areas of Pakistan or Iran, their precarious legal status

does not protect Afghans from police harassment, extortion and detention. Lower-class Afghans fear that the balance between being able to eke out a living and being extorted and discriminated against by the police and rangers might soon be disrupted. None of the respondents is willing to go back to Afghanistan, however. Existing networks and occasional visits provide sufficient information and indicators that cause them to categorically reject that they can make a living in Afghanistan. The networks are mainly immaterial, but the asset base of lower-class Afghans is diverse. Marriage relations and land property in Afghanistan, the harvests of which can be tapped to some degree, provide the substance of translocal networks.

In an agricultural area in Kerman province, Iran

With the onset of a “closed-door policy” (Rohani, 2014, p. 20) of the Iranian government from 1988 onwards (see section on History of refugee policies in Annex 1), two parallel processes could be observed: On the one hand, Afghans were no longer registered and, because they tended to stay in Iran, their status became illegal. Under these conditions, a process of downward assimilation of Afghans started, with Afghans accepting less payment than offered to Iranians for the same jobs (Rajaei, 2000, pp. 50, 56-57). On the other, Afghans increasingly crossed the border to Iran illegally during the Afghan civil war (1992-1996) and the Taliban regime (1996-2001), seeking seasonal unskilled jobs in agriculture, construction, mines and quarries as well as casual work in urban markets and businesses (Rohani, 2014). Many unregistered Afghan refugees and irregular migrants henceforth have avoided the towns and sought job opportunities in the rural areas of Iran where the social tensions appear to be lower (Tober, 2007).

Interview 8

Account of an Afghan farm worker near Sirjan, Kerman province: We meet an Afghan worker on a farm near Sirjan, a small town south of Kerman.⁷⁰ He originates from Farah province, where he has a farm of four hectares and had cultivated wheat and barley, grown pomegranates and raised sheep and had “good water” there. Then his wife died. He left his parents and children at the time when the Taliban conquered parts of western Afghanistan including Farah [around 1995]. He says that the Taliban came and left two or three times, then they stayed. He went to Iran, “because no money, no work. Taliban are dangerous; they cut heads”. He travelled straight to Kerman, where he found jobs in construction, mixing soils and making bricks. After two or three years, he returned to Farah and left again to continue working in Iran. He believes that he learned enough to work in construction in Afghanistan in the future.

He married an Afghan woman in Kerman. Initially, he used to have a work permit, but it expired. Nevertheless, he visited his family in Farah seven or eight times in all these years. He reports that it has become difficult to cross the border to Iran. Last time he went through Balochistan, Pakistan, with traffickers transporting “fourteen people in a small car like sheep” and entered Iran through Zahedan. One year before our interview, his second wife died, and he left Kerman after 17 years. He went to Sirjan to work on farms there.

The interview partner still has his land in Afghanistan. His parents work in the field and rent out part of the land. His children are married and live in Farah. He says, “They are okay there. It is easier when I send money, although it is little”. If the situation changes, he would like to return to Farah; however, the Taliban are still strong in Farah. Therefore he cannot go.

⁷⁰ \ In October 2015.

Analysis: Refugee and irregular migrant categories become blurred in response to policy shifts towards deterring immigration; circular migration between Afghanistan and Iran as a livelihood option for the extended family; acquisition of new skills in construction in Iran

The account of the Afghan worker discloses a blurred category of an irregular migrant and refugee, a typical feature as shown by the stories of the deportees. A combination of the need for cash income and political threat (here through Taliban groups) pushed him across the border; he has remained in touch with his family in Afghanistan and has visited them several times, then returned to Iran to continue working and sending money home. He plans to return finally when the conditions improve. As a construction worker, he has acquired new skills; as a farm worker, he has been able to make use of his previous occupation. Afghans in Iran frequently do both types of work, as Iranians would not work in these fields for the amount paid to Afghans.

Interview 9

Account of an Afghan pistachio picker in the fields outside Sirjan: The owner of a pistachio farm introduces us to one of his farm workers who had arrived in Kerman from Ghazni, Afghanistan, in 2008. The farm owner and his wife are present during the interview. During the interview, the farm owner is smoking an opium pipe and offers it to the interview partner, but he refuses and enjoys a piece of melon instead.

The interview partner had rented and run a supermarket in Ghazni and lived there with his extended family of eight or nine including his son. He mentions that his home area has been under the control of Taliban fighters since 2004 and that he had been on their side. He left Ghazni because there was fighting, and it had become impossible for him to work there. After he had initially joined the fighting, he did not want to continue. He first went to Mazar-i Sharif, spent nine days there and then travelled to Nimroz where he crossed the border to Iran. He had friends in Kerman and went there by bus—he says no one controlled the passengers on the bus, so he arrived safely.

Like his friends, he started working in various pistachio farms of the province, digging, making compost and harvesting. He tells us that he would like his family to come to Kerman; however, as long as the Taliban do not permit this, this is quite impossible. In 2011, he returned to Ghazni. He stayed with his family for three months and joined the fight of the Taliban for one month. Soon, he “was tired of them” and left Afghanistan for the second time, returning to Kerman. This time, he had an Afghan passport. He sends part of his earnings to the farm owner’s account who, in turn, transfers it to the account of an acquaintance at the border. From there, the remittances enter Afghanistan and reach the man’s family. In Kerman, he is in touch with other Afghans and stresses that he has no problems with the Afghans in the area. He mentions, however, that they avoid talking about politics here. He tells us that he may go back again and fight for the Taliban.

The wife of the farm owner is getting very nervous, because she realizes that this Afghan worker has been fighting together with the Taliban. The interview partner emphasizes that as a good Muslim, he never lies. He reports that he had studied theology for eleven years and adds that he had been a mullah in Ghazni and talked to the people in the mosque. He says that he has memorized the Qur’an and could immediately recite large parts of it by heart.

Asked about his plans and desires, the interview partner answers: “An easy life, relax, and work ... live without tensions, and work”. He adds that it will be important to end the war first. Asked if he was interested in participating in the peace process, he replies that he would like to be part of the negotiation process, “part of the solution”. He would speak for the refugees and their interests. He says that participating in the peace process will not be easy for him, however, because he is with the Taliban, and the government will not accept him.

Analysis: Job opportunities in Iran to secure families’ livelihoods in Afghanistan attract not only Shi’ites but even “Taliban” who have lost their economic basis and had to face social demise due to fighting in their home area; remittances are transferred through the Iranian employer acting as a broker

The account of the pistachio picker with a Taliban background in Iran indicates, first, that income opportunities in Iran attract Afghans who are not necessarily Shi’ite (the dominant faith in Iran and also, of the high number of Afghan Hazara staying in Iran). Second, it shows that the connections the government of Iran has built with some of the Taliban since 2014 do not only materialize at high political and military levels (Levkowitz, 2017), but that there are Taliban supporters among the irregular migrants and refugees who flee from the violence in their Afghan home areas like any other Afghan to secure their livelihood in Iran. Relationships with Afghans who are considered as ‘friends’, as well as good relations with the employer, who helps with the money transfer to Afghanistan (taking advantage of the fact that he can have a bank account, and certainly, taking some fees for his services), alleviate the stay in Iran. While the support of undocumented persons by Iranians provides some protection, at the same time, this creates dependence on the goodwill of the Iranian protectors, who profit from the brokering services.

The account also reveals the importance of family bonds within Afghanistan which, like in the previous case, are maintained by occasional visits home and remittances. To finally return is the desire, but to a peaceful and economically attractive environment, not to an area at war. In this regard, the interview discloses an ambiguous position of the man with regard to war and peace, as, even though he occasionally joins the fight, he longs for peace and would even be ready to participate in peace negotiations if he was given a chance. We were not able to identify in the interview whether he had joined the fighting on the side of the Taliban for ideological, financial or ‘loyalty display’ reasons.

Finally, this case reveals the difficulties in categorizing Afghan displaced persons or irregular migrants according to social class. The interviewee’s work as an agricultural labourer suggests that he belongs to the lower class.

However, his past as an educated mullah and shopkeeper in Afghanistan would instead make him part of the middle class. As the man has lost his shop and freedom to choose (otherwise he would have taken his family to Iran), depends on unskilled work to sustain his family and on occasionally joining the war as a combatant, he appears to represent a case of downward social mobility.

Summary: Livelihood options of lower-class Afghans

The previous empirical material and analyses relied on selected narrative interview accounts of people whom we considered lower class because they a) did not have any assets (such as land or houses or a shop)⁷¹, b) no or little formal education or c) were working as casual labourers. Some people shared all of these three characteristics, others one or two of them. Equipped with these limited assets and capabilities, the livelihood options of lower-class Afghans are diverse but on a low threshold level. Wherever possible, Afghans try to preserve their way of life within the extended family in one place because in their perception this is the best way to protect them from physical harm. Nevertheless, economic misery and needs but also the trajectory of violent conflict in Afghanistan have caused families to split up and expand existing or establish new translocal networks.

Seasonal migration of entire family sections has always been a feature of certain segments of lower-class Afghans (e.g. winter stays in comparably warmer Jalalabad or the peripatetic mobility of harvest workers, trinket sellers and the like), as have the strategic efforts put into building translocal networks (before the outbreak of violent conflict mainly for enhancing options of labour chain migration).

However, the wars and increasingly adverse political conditions in the neighbouring host countries

71 \ Some of the interviewees have assets 'back home', e.g. land that relatives or children use for securing their own livelihood. In one case, a respondent was able to travel to his land from Karachi twice a year and get his owner's share of the harvest.

Pakistan and Iran have added new options with war recruitment in Syria for the Iranian regime (Quds Forces), seasonal fighting in either Afghanistan or Pakistan with Taliban groups or joining the Afghan national defence forces.⁷² While these options are only taken up by a very small minority of displaced, the most common activity to secure one's livelihood is to embrace options in the informal economy in the displacement context. As the examples throughout this Chapter have shown, these include child labour—often thus perpetuating the systematic exclusion of lower-class children from education—and women's informal work from home (Kuchi women spinning wool, making yarn threads). Men take up occupations in market niches, often involving specialized garbage collection, labouring in local markets and the like. Where aid agencies have ceased to provide food rations and cooking fuel, collecting wood in the surroundings of settlements constitutes another segment of securing a livelihood.

Importantly, the ability to negotiate a family's everyday existence in informal settings—be it that one, several or all of the family members do not have the required status documents to stay in host contexts during displacement—is a cornerstone in securing one's livelihood during displacement, and it also intersects with neighbourhood relations. It encompasses the constant assessment of the trade-off between advantages and disadvantages of staying in exile, i.e. the relative livelihood security (although it has to be laboriously achieved from day to day) vs discrimination and constant fear of arrest (especially in Pakistan) and deportation (rampant in Iran).⁷³

72 \ Armed conflicts often create livelihood options in the shadow economy, such as smuggling, trafficking, arms sales, ancillary jobs for armed groups, looting, extortion, kidnapping, or joining armed groups as mercenaries or as paid fighters.

73 \ The general threat of arrest and deportation has been much more prevalent in Iran over the last decades given the existence of different formal status ascriptions to Afghans by the authorities and state administrative persecution of Afghans outside the formally defined channels, which also changed over time. In comparison, many Afghans in Pakistan were less discriminated against (of course, with regional and temporal variance)—both economically and legally—given the informal nature of the social, economic (and particularly employment) sector in Pakistan. As described in the previous sections, slow change set in after 2001. The situation worsened with the ensuing 'war on terror' - manifest in the census of Afghan refugees and a subsequently introduced distinction between those with a legal status

Thus, the involuntary submission to discrimination and extortion—also bribing has to be afforded—can also be categorized as a livelihood option. This and the social network- and trust-building with the neighbouring social context in the best case provides Afghans in Iran and Pakistan with similar chances as local citizens, e.g. to obtain access to the housing market, land, or business licenses. In settings where the ‘outsider’ status of displaced people is less felt by them (e.g. in Peshawar), Afghans are also more easily able to take loans from neighbours and immerse themselves in local society.

This said, however, it is important to be aware that even among these lower-class people, there are significant differences with regard to the category of future livelihoods. Some of them manage to send their children to school and even higher education so that the next generation may have the opportunity of middle-class livelihood options leading to a professional career in Afghanistan or abroad. Education and skills acquired during the displacement phase/s are likely to have a positive effect on future livelihood-making because they add options to the range of activities family members can undertake to secure livelihoods. Then again, in the regional social context where there are neither a rule of law nor governmental pro-poor policies, education does not suffice for social upliftment. As some of the accounts of those we have identified as lower-class people indicate, links with power holders are crucial for social mobility—and the fall of a power holder is likely to have an adverse effect on his followers.⁷⁴

(proof of residence, i.e. PoR-card) and those without and culminated after the Peshawar school attack in late 2014. Since then, the threat of arrest and deportation exists equally in Pakistan for non-PoR card-holders.

74 \ The account of the Kuchi elder in Maslakh camp who had been an officer in the regime of Najibullah and, after the regime was toppled, fled with his livestock, sold it and became an inhabitant of the IDP camp is a case in point. The mullah who sided with Taliban in Ghazni and worked as a pistachio picker in Kerman province in Iran may be another example for the reliance on powerholders.

Middle-class livelihoods in situations of protracted displacement

In the following, we briefly point out findings from the analysis of interviews with people from the middle class in protracted displacement situations in Afghanistan and its neighbourhood. We will show how these markedly contrast the livelihood-generation of lower-class displaced people, because members of the middle class can rely on assets / dispositions and access opportunities that are not available to the lower class⁷⁵, including relationships with influential individuals and their social networks. The argument is made in three steps: First, we provide analytical insights from our interviews on how middle-class Afghans handle the challenges of integration and established-outsider relationships in the displacement context. Second, we look into the relocation context after the return and specifics concerning the organization of the return movement to Afghanistan. Third, we discuss the large-scale refusal of Afghans (especially of the middle class) to return. Even if return is emotionally aspired to, it is generally considered not safe and for many Afghans not at all realistic in the current circumstances because sustainable livelihoods cannot be secured. The Chapter ends with a summary of class differences in livelihood options by comparing those of the lower class vs the middle class.

Specifics of local integration in the displacement context

Regarding local integration, poor and middle-class Afghans have long faced common challenges that in the past had more to do with the ethnic background than with social class. In the early days after the Afghan refugees' arrival in the 1980s, the Iranian and Pakistani people unanimously welcomed them. They were considered muhajerin (refugees)—a term also used for the Prophet Mohammad's forced exodus from Mecca to Medina. However, under conditions of increasing pressure from the authorities of both Iran

75 \ These include, for example, access to higher education until the final exam, a professional career, property such as ownership of a house, land, a shop, etc., employment in government, in private companies or in media agencies.

and Pakistan, money and socio-economic status have become more important for official local acceptance. This is especially true in Pakistan where, after Afghan refugees irrespective of their socio-economic status were allowed to settle down wherever they wanted, Afghan businesses constitute an important part of the national, even if largely informal, economy. Afghan entrepreneurs have dominated several sectors of the Pakistani economy for decades, e.g. the transport sector and carpet-making and trade (even though via intermediaries). The ongoing ousting of Afghans from Pakistan implicates losses for Pakistan's economic production and affects employment.⁷⁶ On the flipside, sentiments against Afghans are growing. A Pakistani businessperson and member of the Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association in Lahore stated that the Afghans should 'go back'.⁷⁷ A Pakistani carpet seller in Lahore's Landa Bazaar explained, "all the Afghans who used to be around this bazaar left four to five days ago because of the attacks", alluding to the comprehensive security operations by police and rangers following the bomb attacks that took place just a few days earlier (see the empirical sections on Pakistan). They are back "where they belong. Afghans are not only carpet weavers and traders; they are also terrorists."⁷⁸ This statement captures the current attitude shared by many Pakistanis towards Afghans that reportedly has evolved since 9/11. The blanket insinuation of Afghans being terrorists affects those most strongly whose features can clearly be identified to be of Afghan origin.

76 \ For example, one carpet trader mentioned that he employs 40 Pakistani workers for carpet finishing (washing and cutting) alone. Interview in Lahore, February 2017.

77 \ He explained, "50 to 70 per cent of the Afghans in Pakistan have already left to Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan is getting better. Of the ones I know personally, about 70 per cent are gone. Those remaining have established their businesses here; their kids go to school. However, now the businesspersons are also leaving. Their preferred destinations are Norway, the US, Canada and India. It takes about two years for them on average to sort out business closure and arrange their departure. This is beneficial to our local carpet industry" (interview with Pakistani carpet trader, Lahore, February 2017).

78 \ Interview, Lahore, February 2017.

Today, legal status and possession of a passport increasingly depend on the policies of the host country and thus constrain people from the middle class in the same way as from the lower class. The difference between the lower and upper middle class lies in the absence or presence of connections to influential figures (political and other authorities) and their networks which might be able to navigate access barriers. The interviews in Pakistan revealed, for example, that because in Pakistan the legal documents are only as strong as their holder/s, lower class Afghans are deprived of their rights, i.e. obtaining SIM-cards, driving licences, admission to schools and hospitals. In contrast, middle and particularly high(er middle) class Afghans benefit from the highly corrupt system and large-scale absence of the rule of law. In the words of one respondent, “the law is for poor people ... for rich people there are no problems, the only ones who have any problem are poor people.”⁷⁹

Middle-class Afghans who had lived in Iran explain how Hazaras, in particular, feel discriminated against in Iran, being mocked about their way of dressing or their ‘Mongolian faces’. “The Iranian government does not like the Hazaras despite the common Shi’ite religion, because of their faces”.⁸⁰ Afghans feel that Iranians look down on them. Several interview partners talk about the discrimination of Afghans in education institutions, which has always been blatant both in Iran and Pakistan. Afghans in Pakistan speak of systematic discrimination in the Pakistani education system, stating that only two per cent of those with a secondary school leaving certificate (‘matric’) can join high schools and claim that there is not a single Afghan national who is pursuing a PhD in Pakistan. The institutional administrative hurdles are too high. In Iran, middle-class Afghans in Iran fared better than their poorer compatriots, because Iranian schools used to demand higher school fees from Afghans with temporary stay permits than from Iranians. In schools and universities, Afghans prefer to have Afghan friends; “they get along with Iranians but do not become friends” due to cultural

barriers (language, behaviour, food, lifestyle, differences in parents’ employment status), temporary stay permits and lack of same rights as Iranians have; often Afghans try to hide their origin or try “not to enter the Iranians’ space.”⁸¹ To circumvent discrimination, Afghans have established schools for Afghan children in areas densely populated by Afghans, such as Golshahr in Mashhad. These schools are unlicensed and charge lower tuition fees than Iranian schools do. Moreover, enrolment does not require residence permits. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), “Iranian authorities have issued warnings to these schools and have sporadically closed them down” (Bezhan, 2017).

It goes without saying that young Afghans in particular struggle with severe identity problems. A Pash-tun Afghan student at the University of Punjab, Lahore, who was born in Haripur Hazara⁸² refugee camp and currently studies on a foreigner’s admission slot, reports from an incident when they had a Japanese guest lecturer who—upon learning that he was actually Afghan—burst out, “you are the terrorist people”, and walked away from him in front of his classmates. Now, when he is asked about his origin, he usually replies that he is from Peshawar and does not mention Afghanistan. He adds, “now we are [being called] ‘Hindus’ because of the Indian engagement with the Government of Afghanistan” which is looked critically upon by the Pakistani government.⁸³ “Earlier it was just that they called us Afghans or refugees.”⁸⁴ Another Uzbek Afghan student shared his coping strategies to avoid discrimination at his faculty, saying, “I look like a Chinese. They [in my department] love me because I am the Chinese guy.” Another

81 \ Student in Mashhad, March 2016; lecturer and film producer in Kabul, March 2016; cf. also Noghani & Akhlaghi, 2014.

82 \ Hazara refers here to the Hazara district in Pakistan, which is distinct from Hazara Afghan connotation. The student’s family hails from Sherzad district of Nangarhar Province in Afghanistan and returned after “22 to 25 years in the camp” to Jalalabad (Nangarhar’s provincial capital) in 2007. For his studies at Punjab University, he obtained an official study visa. The study expenses amount to US \$1,000 per year plus fees. His father—a shopkeeper and clothes trader—has reportedly taken a loan without interest; his brother remits from London to afford his education (interview in Lahore, March 2017).

83 \ Because of the Pakistani-Indian political enmity since partition in 1947 (cf. Harpviken & Tadjbakhsh, 2016).

84 \ Interview, Lahore, March 2017.

79 \ Retired businessman, Lahore, March 2017.

80 \ Head of *shura* in Jabrail, Herat, April 2016.

graduate from Balochistan reports that misleading people about their origin is a common strategy that also Afghan Hazaras in Quetta (Balochistan's provincial capital) apply; "they change their accent to protect themselves and mislead people who could think that they are from Afghanistan".⁸⁵

In the Iranian context, issues with identity are caused by frequent attempts to return to Afghanistan and renewed movement because the standard of living in Iran is higher than it is in Afghanistan (regarding

Box 1

Narrative reflection of a second-generation Pakistani citizen with Afghan origin

The Punjab University graduate who hails from Quetta, Balochistan, is a second-generation Pakistani and CNIC-holder (Pakistani citizenship). His father and grandfather originated from Helmand in Afghanistan. His grandfather moved from there to Balochistan as a recruit of the British Indian army. The graduate complains that despite his being a second-generation Pakistani, a regular scholarship holder at Punjab University with a BA in Sociology and MA in Psychology, currently a guest lecturer and a core member of the university's rugby team, the segregation and stereotyping "is all the same. As Afghan in Quetta you are not liked; if you are caught speaking Persian you get shot... if you speak a different Pashto you are suspicious; if you come over here [to Lahore, Punjab], you are also questioned. If you have a beard and wear shalwar kameez [traditionally-cut local dress, common among Afghans and Pakistanis], you are suspected and looked at strangely. I am in a Pakistani rugby team; half of my team members would not shake hands with an Afghan team member." Talking further about his experience in Quetta, he adds, "If something happens, Afghans cannot leave the house because they are afraid of being targeted and made responsible. The businesses of Pakistani Pashtuns in Quetta completely depend on Afghans. But now [in these circumstances] these customers withdraw from relationships, take a step back, corner Afghans and treat them as outsiders."¹ He goes on arguing that Afghans have suffered a lot and are deeply traumatized because of decades of conflict. Referring to himself as Afghan again, he states, "We want to move on, we don't want to be in conflict 24/7. It's like we have been painted and the colour won't go off; nobody can see who or how I am under that colour."

1 \ Interview, Lahore, March 2017.

85 \ Focus group discussion, Lahore, March 2017.

food, electricity, water, housing, TV).⁸⁶ In the case of Pakistan, especially middle-class Afghans reflect on the negative influence of the Pakistani media and populism in politics that target Afghans as terrorists and contribute to public hatred (ethnic profiling). As one interviewee put it, "each time Ashraf Ghani [Afghanistan's president] says something wrong about Pakistan it affects us here immediately. We are arrested in droves the day after the news."⁸⁷ Also, the recently launched policy directives of the government of Pakistan have complicated their situation. The order to landlords to no longer rent to Afghans or the ubiquitous checks and arrests mentioned in the previous section are cases in point. Unlike lower-class Afghans, middle-class Afghans like entrepreneurs and students often actively seek the connection with Pakistani authorities as a pre-emptive strategy to avoid harm from their extended families and wards. They usually have the paperwork ready and patiently fill in forms at police stations about the family members living with them; they seek information on new extensions of the documents now replacing the PoR-cards. Several interviewees showed a minimized copy of the latest extension letter that they carefully laminated and carry with them all the time in case they are being stopped and need to argue with coarse police officers whose main aim is extortion.

According to interviewees' accounts, local integration was practically (even if not legally) given in Pakistan until 2014 at least. Most interviewees insisted that during social interaction it is neither visible nor tangible that they are non-Pakistanis.⁸⁸ The high number of bi-national marriages especially until 2008

86 \ Film producer in Kabul, March 2016..

87 \ Interview with Afghan-origin NGO worker in Islamabad, March 2017.

88 \ Interviews with carpet traders and a student, Lahore, March 2017.

Within Pakistan, however, there is broad intra-societal ethnic- and class-based discrimination that is also perceived by Afghans residing there. Especially because of the ethnic dominance of Punjabis and their administrative and other discrimination against Pashtuns from the (north- and south-) western part of the country, especially the tribal areas (FATA), Afghan Pashtuns are also subject to prejudices and discriminate behaviour and sometimes share the grievances of members of these groups of Pashtuns, e.g. from South-Waziristan. As one human rights activist pointed out, although there are many Pakistanis who are more vulnerable than Afghans in Pakistan, only refugees enjoy broad advocacy of legal rights (interview in Islamabad, March 2017).

is witness to this. However, such families have been facing administrative difficulties, and experienced personal tragedies since Pakistan's anti-Afghan policy peaked in 2015/16. The CNICs of Afghan-origin males, who married Pakistani women and had (in some cases most likely illegally) obtained Pakistani citizenship previously, were blocked.⁸⁹ Especially the educated and young respondents articulated some degree of dissatisfaction with the Pakistan(i government and people); since 2015 they have been sensing distrust and have had the impression that Pakistanis look down on Afghans. The feeling of juridical inequity, e.g. the lack of de facto protection,⁹⁰ in the view of some middle-class Afghans, is harder to accept than the deprivation of other rights (e.g. obtaining driving licenses, bank accounts, SIM-cards⁹¹, exclusion from government jobs, property ownership, rental contracts for houses, private company registration). It affects business people in cases of business conflicts, in particular, e.g. when some Pakistanis do not want to pay the service or product delivered by the Afghan entrepreneur.

Among the better-off Afghan residents in Lahore and Sohrab Goth/ Al-Asif Square in Karachi, many have had a migration background before their displacement to Pakistan (see Box 1 above). Several Uzbek and Turkman Afghans reported that their parent generation had migrated from the former Soviet Union to northern Afghanistan. Thus, for them, the renewed resettlement, adaptation and local integration efforts

were part of a longer chain of movement events.⁹² As Monsutti had expressed already in 2005, migration is normal for Afghans, and large parts of Glimpses from interviews indicate how fragile their residence status was—in previous living ('host') contexts (see Box 1 above)—and still is.. For example, one Turkman interviewee pointed out how the GoA considers Afghanistan's Turkmen to be refugees from what is now Turkmenistan whereas Turkmenistan sees Afghan Turkmen as a threat to its domestic security. In another example, an Uzbek woman from what is today Uzbekistan had married an Afghan Uzbek before conflict-induced displacement caused them to restart in Pakistan (interviews in Lahore, March 2017). The Afghan society are not rooted in land. Their culture is shaped by mobility. Links between people are established over a long distance, and social relations are more decisive than places (Monsutti, 2005, p. 19).

Specifics of return and reintegration in Afghanistan

Under the conditions of enhanced efforts by the governments of Iran and Pakistan to drive Afghans out of their countries, middle-class repatriates can rely on strong networks that lower class people do not have. These networks may include relatives who host the returnees temporarily; they may own land and properties to settle down or to use as an asset to obtain other property and/or seed money.⁹³ Moreover, strong networks generate seed capital from relatives abroad. One respondent describes, for example, how having a transnational network of family

89 \ Legally, only Afghan women married to Pakistani men could get Pakistani citizenship. Children from marriages of Afghan men and Pakistani women are stateless (interview with a lawyer in Islamabad, March 2017). Thus, Pakistan has acquired the largest number of stateless people in the world (Interview with GIZ-SAFRON advisor, Islamabad, March 2017).

90 \ According to the constitution, Afghan PoR-cardholders can file complaints (First Information Report, FIR); however, no police station will accept and register a FIR in practice.

91 \ According to various interview accounts, Afghans in Pakistan had SIM-cards and bank accounts under their own name. However, this has become increasingly problematic since 2014. Registering a SIM-card now requires a lot of effort and usually support and assistance is required from a Pakistani rights-NGO.

92 \ Glimpses from interviews indicate how fragile their residence status was—in previous living ('host') contexts (see Box 1 above)—and still is.. For example, one Turkman interviewee pointed out how the GoA considers Afghanistan's Turkmen to be refugees from what is now Turkmenistan whereas Turkmenistan sees Afghan Turkmen as a threat to its domestic security. In another example, an Uzbek woman from what is today Uzbekistan had married an Afghan Uzbek before conflict-induced displacement caused them to restart in Pakistan (interviews in Lahore, March 2017).

93 \ Abbasi-Shavazi et al. report that return to Afghanistan was "considered to be more viable for those with capital and/or assets, or with education or literacy, or skills; respondents aspired to save sufficient capital prior to returning to Afghanistan in order to purchase property there" (2002, p. 1).

members—including some in Canada, Australia, the United States or European countries, Iran and cities in Afghanistan—provides safety. “It works like a backup. If a family member faces a problem, the Australian or Canadian members help—or even the family part in Iran”.⁹⁴ Social networks are crucial, also for finding employment. Whereas this is also true for those from the lower class, the middle-class networks enable them to establish relations with influential people who can be helpful in obtaining well-paid jobs or public positions. Commonly, these networks are based on kinship or ethnic ties (cf. Monsutti, 2005; Harpviken, 2014).

Besides strong networks, skills and education are noteworthy entry points for context-situated ‘successful’ (re)integration after return. Due to education and training, which middle-class displaced people can afford in contrast to the urban lower-class, they enjoy better starting conditions upon return. Combined with the other factors—strong networks with seed money, contacts to holders of influential positions, information-sharing, eventually own property or assets—the reintegration and return trajectories of middle-class Afghans are highly distinct from that of their lower class countrymen who lack most if not all of these resources.

As in displacement contexts, ethnic boundary-drawing between Afghans of various backgrounds becomes virulent after their return to Afghanistan or their relocation after internal displacement. Group identities are narrowed down to one’s own ethnic group or extended family in the context of competition for access and resources to generate livelihoods in a highly politicized context. This has been most pronounced in the case of Hazara returnees (see Box 2 below). Not only do they have to grapple with new stereotypes as being returnees but also with old-time patterns of racial discrimination. The gap between

Hazaras and Pashtuns sounds irreconcilable in many of the Hazaras’ accounts documented in the interviews. Their persecution during the civil war in the 1990s by Tajik and Pashtun militias of the various warlords has added to their grievances of being discriminated against by the Afghan state since its very inception (Ibrahimi, 2012, 2017; cf. also Monsutti, 2005). As returnees from Iran, Hazaras and others are discriminated against because of their Iranian accent, but the fact that Hazaras are also discriminated against because of their race multiplies their perception of discrimination. One university lecturer stated, “It is easier for a Hazara to make friends with a Dutch or a French person than with a Pashtun. The gap is deep. The way they behave, their mindset, how they throw the money to you, does not show respect—as if they want to eat you ... whereas even though the cultural difference with a French person is huge, we can accept our difference”.⁹⁵ Thus, all communities prefer to settle down in neighbourhoods of members of the same ethnic group.⁹⁶

Specifics of middle-class ‘non-return’

While the prevalence of ‘strong networks’ among middle-class displaced people seems to suggest that they would readily agree to repatriate because of their comparably better prospects for reintegration, the field data shows the high reluctance of this group to return. Many see no perspective in Afghanistan; very few voluntarily return from Iran and Pakistan; return, de facto, is forced. Importantly, the interviews indicate that the better the Afghans are established as entrepreneurs with their businesses, the less they feel pressured to leave.⁹⁷ Thus, voluntary, de facto forced return involves mainly poor Afghans. This was corroborated by explanations obtained from several Afghan-origin carpet traders in Lahore who mentioned that almost all of their contracted Afghan carpet

94 \ He adds, “However, whereas in Afghanistan families used to have close ties and helped each other, in modern families, they start to be more individualistic; uncles and aunts do not help, only brothers, sisters and parents” (film producer in Kabul, March 2016).

95 \ Film producer in Kabul, March 2016

96 \ This leads to almost ‘segregated’ settlement patterns in the high return areas, especially Kabul, but also Herat and Jalalabad. See Mielke (2015) for Kabul.

97 \ Representative of this is the interview with a Tajik storeowner in one of Lahore’s posh markets who had lived in Pakistan for 29 years at the time of the interview in February 2017.

Box 2**Settlement of Pashtuns and returning Hazaras in Herat**

Many Pashtuns from central and southern Afghanistan moved to Herat under the rule of the Taliban (1996-2001). Their immigration to Herat was accepted by the Heratis because Pashtuns had supported the governor of Herat, Ismail Khan (himself a Tajik), who was well respected by the Herati inhabitants during the 1990s. After the ousting of the Taliban regime in 2001, many Hazaras returned to Herat from Iran and many other parts of Afghanistan, buying land and settling down, for instance in the Jabrail quarter of Herat. However, most Heratis rejected the newcomers as they suspected that Iran paid them as a strategy to increase the Shi'ite population. They were also rejected due to local causes related to a power struggle between Afghan parties that took on a sectarian dimension when the governor Ismail Khan disarmed the Afghan Hezbollah party led by a Shi'ite.¹ This power struggle culminated in violent clashes and the ban for Hazaras to celebrate Ashura during Muharram² by Herati authorities. After the mediation of a joint council of religious leaders, the Hazaras were granted the right to celebrate in their neighbourhoods, but not in other public places. With armed fighting surging again since 2014, newly displaced people from various Afghan provinces such as Faryab and Farah where Taliban groups had expanded their control sought refuge in Herat. Herati citizens are concerned that their modest economic wealth cannot be maintained when insecurity is driving investors out of the country, and increasing numbers of newcomers settle in the town. Many fear a crisis due to growing unemployment, and Herati labourers consider Hazaras and people from Badghis and Farah as competitors for jobs because they work for much less pay. Heratis also fear terrorist attacks from newcomers endangering the comparatively peaceful life in the town. This said, when seven Hazaras were cruelly murdered by putative Daesh-Khorasan in Afghanistan in Ghazni in November 2015, people from all groups—Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Tajiks and Hazaras—took to the streets in huge protest demonstrations, signalling unity and the potential for reconciliation among the ethnic groups.³ Still, distrust remains, as expressed by the head of an Afghan NGO in Herat as follows: “The ember is still there. It needs a small wind to restart the fire. We are working hard to wipe it out.”⁴

1 \ Khalid Ali Ahmad, who later became head of the intelligence (NDS).

2 \ Muharram is the first month in the Islamic calendar and the time when some Shi'ites celebrate Ashura, the mourning about the murder of Imam Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Mohammed.

3 \ Interviews with the local head of an Afghan NGO and with Hazara elders of Jabrail council in Herat, April 2016; see also Qazi, 2015.

4 \ Interview in Herat, April 2016.

weavers had left. While most of them returned to Afghanistan, few moved to Peshawar—with the effect that the traders lost a pool of workers: “Large carpet weaving ‘factories’ had existed in Haripur, Peshawar, Quetta and other places. (...) Those Afghans who go back cannot work as carpet weavers, using their skills; they have to sell goods or so in the bazaars now or find daily labouring jobs. It’s a pity when carpet weaving masters go back, and their skills are lost.”⁹⁸

The reasons why middle-class representatives are reluctant to return are highly insightful. Just like their poor compatriots, they are also concerned about the overall (deteriorating) security situation in Afghanistan, both in urban and rural areas.⁹⁹ The lack

98 \ Interview with carpet trader originating from Farah, Lahore, February 2017.

99 \ The head of one business family involved in carpet-making describes, “If we go back to Afghanistan we cannot get our land back or rebuild our houses. Now it is not just the Taliban but Daesh has a presence in

of facilities, e.g. quality schooling, employment and investment infrastructure, constitutes the other side of the coin. “We can neither stock carpets in Afghanistan nor have a showroom because of the instability and bad security situation. The risk that the goods get burned because of bombs, etc. is too high. Also, it is cold in Afghanistan. We would not be able to wash and colour carpets for five months of the year. Then, there is no efficient export system.

our areas as well”. Another one adds, “Even if you find a way to work in Afghanistan, you are subject to extortion by the Taliban and Daesh. It’s a war-like situation. If you have a patient [somebody in need of medical treatment] you do not get anywhere [because services are not available].” Focus group discussion with Uzbek carpet entrepreneurs in Lahore, March 2017. Another interviewee active in an NGO facilitating return to Afghanistan stated that people often refuse to go back because of political enmities they have, especially with the Taliban (interview, Islamabad, March 2017).

Here we can call the haulier at noon, and it will be on the road by night. In Afghanistan, until recently it took three months to arrange exports. Now reforms have been implemented and sending would take five to seven days. However, this requires a lot of bribes. Also, there is no efficiently organized carpet association.”¹⁰⁰

Similarly, Afghan transport and liquid gas company owners in Iran (in joint ventures with Iranian citizens) rely on customers in the region. They prefer having their main offices in Iran and making investments in Iran rather than in Afghanistan. Reasons range from high corruption of Afghan government authorities, lack of skilled workers and engineers in Afghanistan to security risks. In line with Iranian law, they employ Iranians for operations in Iran; some use undocumented Afghan workers for loading and unloading. They only hire Afghan drivers and workers for transports through Afghanistan.¹⁰¹

The interviews in Pakistan carry the general undertone that all of the respondents would happily take on Pakistani citizenship; they deeply regret that there is no such opportunity or legal way to obtain citizenship in Pakistan. Representative of the remarks by middle-class businessmen were comments like these: “We have spent 36 [25, etc.] years in Pakistan, we are familiar with everything here. We should get more rights, our own land and offices because we are settled here. We need further progress here. Going back is not an option. We tried hard to obtain export licenses, but they are always denied to us. [...] My brother left Pakistan in 2002 for Turkey with US \$30,000. After five years, he received the Turkish citizenship—in 2008; he is safe, settled and well established. One of his sons serves in the Turkish military; one is a police officer. I wish we had these possibilities in Pakistan, too. Our sons and family members are also qualified to work in the government services here.”¹⁰²

100 \ Carpet trader in Lahore, February 2017; for the changes in transport regulations in Afghanistan cf. Grawert & Shirzad, 2017.

101 \ Focus group discussion with Afghan transport company Chief Executive Officers in Mashhad, October 2015; cf. also Grawert & Shirzad, 2017.

102 \ It is worth mentioning that Afghans are excluded from government employment in Pakistan (interview with carpet business trader in Lahore, February 2017).

Rather than returning, the carpet traders admit that they have seriously considered the option of asking for third-country asylum. However, they express that there is no proper information available to them about this option. “All the NGOs have vanished after 9/11. We just rely on NGO support in cases of trouble, e. g. when we are in need of SIM-cards or want to rent places. The situation in Pakistan is getting worse every day. Whether it be obtaining SIM-cards, property or bank accounts—we cannot do it.” that they have seriously considered the option of asking for third-country asylum. However, they express that there is no proper information available to them about this option. “All the NGOs have vanished after 9/11. We just rely on NGO support in cases of trouble, e. g. when we are in need of SIM-cards or want to rent places. The situation in Pakistan is getting worse every day. Whether it be obtaining SIM-cards, property or bank accounts—we cannot do it.”¹⁰³

Summary: Class differences in livelihood options

The insights from interviews with members of the Afghan middle class, i.e. those with (some sort of) assets, (higher) education and access to other employment than daily labouring, highlight significant differences compared to Afghans from the lower class. First of all, the quality of networks stands out, i.e. what has been termed above ‘strong networks’. These entail persons (relatives and other resource persons) and flows that can generate material support, such as seed money for settling down or investments like opening a shop or other business. Second, contacts or access to influential persons due to the immaterial (education, skills, status or family background and existing networks) and material assets (property) are common and help to secure their livelihood in displacement situations and upon return. They provide access to employment, shelter, and assistance. The

103 \ Interview with carpet business trader in Lahore, February 2017.

Afghans were never officially allowed to purchase property in Pakistan. However, it was common practice to obtain land or real estate through Pakistani middlemen or bribes. With the crackdown on Afghans since 2014 this has become increasingly impossible.

networks of middle-class Afghans are spatially and economically more diversified and constitute an important factor in their successful risk aversion in comparison to the rather ‘weak networks’ of the members of the lower class. The quality of the information exchanged in the latter, and the low-level material support that is dominating the flows among the lower class often reduces their networks to provide moral support and roughly enough material support to ensure survival and the maintenance of dignity in their own measures in conflict settings.

As a rule, the socio-economic status of the middle-class respondents enables them to arrange a somewhat organized movement into exile or refuge and a somehow ‘ordered’ arrival. Mobility has to be afforded¹⁰⁴ and backed socially by ‘strong networks’ even if it means seeking refuge because of forced displacement. Historically, Afghan refugees who had had government positions or were scholars and had fled for political reasons during the different waves of displacement (1978/79, 1990/91, 1994-1998) used, for example, their assets and networks of relatives and acquaintances and sometimes professional networks¹⁰⁵ to arrange shelter, assistance (access to UNHCR-card) and employment. Even access to a refugee camp with free education and food distribution was alleviated through connections with a political party, power holder or warlord.¹⁰⁶ Confirming the contrast to lower class people’s displacement trajectories, a respondent whose father had social ties to Peshawar and Quetta

104 \ Cf. among others Monsutti (2005, pp. 150-205), where he describes the routes Hazaras used during the 1990s, indicating the costs involved and the ways of money transfers to finance circuit migration between Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran.

105 \ This is also a strategy of business people. For example, one store-owner in Lahore’s Liberty Market pointed out how he had developed close relations with the employees of the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul before the outbreak of the war in 1979 and that the embassy’s driver helped his family to move to Pakistan (interview in Lahore, February 2017). In another example, a carpet trader in Lahore reported that his father had had business ties with shops in Quetta before 1979 (interview in Lahore, February 2017). Local delegate-representatives (*wakil*) in Zahir Shah’s government and important families had access to political asylum but often did not use this possibility because they hoped their displacement would only be temporary and they would be able to return soon (interview with son of Turkman wakil in Lahore, February 2017).

106 \ Interview with a journalist in Kabul, November 2015, who also mentions that the ‘cost’ of this beneficial relationship, was to induce a family member to join a warlord’s armed group.

remarked in one interview, “We were among the lucky refugees. We saw the problems of the other refugees who did not have relatives in Pakistan.”¹⁰⁷

The empirical sections above show further how networks help to negotiate an individual’s or family’s position in the displacement context as well as ‘back home’. In exile, social and cultural skills of adaptation, expanded social ties to different locations, the ability to move goods and money across borders and, in the ideal case, free movement of persons between dispersed family locations are the basis for successful integration of refugees. Altogether, this has the effect of minimizing risks due to the spatial and economic diversification of livelihoods, which sustain family parts in the long run (Monsutti, 2008, p. 71). The ability to overcome constraints connected to the refugee status and to afford education, a work permit, sometimes even informally ‘owning’ a flat,¹⁰⁸ opening a joint venture, accumulating capital to buy property in Afghanistan upon return, or arranging for resettlement distinguish the middle from the lower class.

Middle-class Afghans with education and skills sought to move to urban areas, e.g. the towns of Tehran, Mashhad, Isfahan, Shiraz or Qom in Iran and to Quetta, Peshawar and Karachi in Pakistan where they often run joint ventures with Iranians¹⁰⁹ or teach in Afghan schools under semi-legal conditions or make use of opportunities in the labour market. Lower-class Afghans in Iran, however, work as unskilled labourers in construction or petty trade, as shopkeeper assistants or cleaners, household helpers or carriers in towns and as agricultural labourers in the rural areas of Kerman and the southern provinces. In Pakistan, most of the lower class Afghans initially got absorbed in refugee camps that concentrated just across the border from eastern Afghanistan, i.e. in Pakistan’s

107 \ Son of a former army officer in Kabul, November 2015.

108 \ Middle-class Afghans in Mashhad managed to ‘own’ their flats based on an informal “deed of title negotiation between the buyer and seller without official government registration” that allows for legal recognition (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005, p. 30).

109 \ Afghans in Iran are not allowed to buy a house or a vehicle unless they have registered a joint venture with an Iranian partner.

Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and outside of Peshawar (former Northwest-Frontier Province, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).¹¹⁰ As in Iran, Afghans are not allowed to open their businesses or establish trade in Pakistan, where this restriction strongly affects, for example, the carpet traders of Afghan origin. As Afghans (even with valid documents), they are unable to acquire a membership in the Pakistan Carpet Trade Organization which is a precondition for obtaining export licenses. In consequence, Afghan carpet businesses have to partner with a Pakistani trader or middleman to be able to advertise and showcase their work at national and international exhibitions and sell internationally. The label under which their products are sold is always 'Made in Pakistan' (cf. Recknagel & Tahir, 2007). Nevertheless, middle-class Afghans are highly reluctant to leave Pakistan and return (to misery and war) as long as the prospects of sustainable livelihood cannot be met in Afghanistan.

Despite the different options of securing one's livelihood that middle- and lower-class Afghans have, other factors such as the ethnic framing of group belonging and livelihood chances, as well as the restrictive national refugee policies, inhibit Afghans' agency and activities to secure a sustainable livelihood. Current context conditions—which also include the lack of government support for IDPs inside Afghanistan—at most allow ad hoc and temporary measures to secure livelihood with a constant risk of loss. The fact that options of obtaining business licenses or property in displacement contexts abroad are withheld and, more generally, the difficult access to land and other assets undermine sustainable

livelihoods. Established-outsider (or settled-arrivals / citizen- newcomer) relations underlie this dilemma and amplify exclusion which is most painfully felt by lower-class Afghans. Citizenship for Afghans in Pakistan and Iran or the regularization of their legal stay (status), especially for those born in either country or the families living there in the second generation, is a desired but unattainable option in the current political circumstances.

110 \ Monsutti (2005, p. 168) observed that the Hazaras rarely stayed in refugee camps in Pakistan and did not ask international aid agencies for assistance in return or repatriation. They pursued strategies of social advancement in urban settings such as Quetta. According to interview accounts, the Pakistani government allowed Afghans to leave the refugee camps and settle throughout Pakistan as of 1996 onwards. The UN food programme ended in the early 1990s, which caused the commissioner of the biggest camp of Afghan refugees then, in Swabi, to issue documents for Afghans that they could go wherever they wanted in Pakistan. Subsequently, the governors of all four provinces in Pakistan reportedly agreed and signed the according documents (interview in Lahore, February 2017).

Applying a livelihood approach to protracted displacement situations

This chapter briefly reviews how livelihood emerged as an analytical approach highlighting that it goes beyond mere basic needs provision, including the notion of a dignified life. Based on the insights from empirical research provided in the previous chapters, we suggest that incorporating the established-outsider figuration as a lens and translocal networks as livelihood options—and indeed livelihood pillar in the case of Afghans—develops Chambers’ concept of sustainable livelihood further by enhancing its applicability to protracted displacement situations. The last section examines implications of the elaborated comprehensive livelihood approach for refugee studies and refugee/ aid policies.

Livelihood as an analytical approach to protracted violent conflicts and displacement

How people secure their livelihood has preoccupied social scientists as well as development agencies since the early 1980s when mass migration of drought and famine refugees in the Sahelian countries brought the precarious situation of large population groups to the attention of scholars and the public. With Sen’s entitlement approach (Sen, 1981) as a lens to study how the great Asian and African famines of the 1940s to the 1970s unfolded at the micro-level, Chambers first developed the notion of ‘sustainable livelihood’ emphasizing that it is “secure control by the people over resources that can provide them with adequate livelihoods” (Chambers 1988, p. 11). In academia, the entitlement focus that pointed to the deprivation of access to food supplies was subsequently expanded by a broader notion of ‘access’ to resources. Scholars of gender studies, in particular, differentiated between access to and control over resources, pointing to the power relations involved (Gallin et al., 1989; Goetz & Gupta, 1996). Later, Ribot & Peluso (2003) defined ‘access’ as the ability (and hence, ‘power’) of various social groups to benefit from a certain resource.¹¹¹

111 \ According to Ribot & Peluso (2003), individuals constitute nodes in larger webs of social relations where power manifests itself. These individuals rely on bundles of power to claim and enforce access. The conception of power resources being bundled in individuals is a purely analytical, albeit useful, exercise to understand differential access patterns and their dynamics (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 158). Mielke (2015)

Building on notions of entitlement and access to resources, the livelihood approach takes up the perspective of people’s agency and identifies the livelihood options people use to make their living in a given context and period of time, and how they maintain the basis of making a living for the future.¹¹² It is pertinent to consider that the notion of livelihood involves more than the everyday survival or supply of (assumed) basic needs and more than material provision, entitlements or access to food. Scholars have also included access to social capital and examined the combination of ‘livelihood resources’ in the pursuit of different livelihood strategies such as intensifying or extending cultivation or migration (Scoones, 1998). For the use of development agencies, these insights have practically materialized in the ‘livelihood framework’, developed by the British Department for International Development (DFID) (DFID, 2001).¹¹³ Central to the framework is the analysis of the range of formal and informal organizational and institutional factors that influence sustainable livelihood outcomes.

extended the notion of ‘resource’ beyond its economic content and included dispositions, such as location-based factors, belonging to a social community, authority and social status in the meaning of the term. In this sense, resources of individuals or collectives enable or constrain their access to further resources, with the effect of empowering or disempowering individuals or groups.

112 \ Livelihood research deriving from rural studies revealed that the priority of peasants in contexts of long-term drought was to save seeds—even for years—until the rain comes back to resume their previous activities as peasants as soon as possible after the drought. Families split up activities between their members, with some taking jobs as wage labourers, some as temporary migrants, other members making some money as petty traders, collecting wild fruits, taking alms or food from wealthy family or community members and collecting food from the distribution points of international aid agencies, among other things. All these activities were interim solutions for survival until the impoverished and starving rural people could go back to their fields and sow the grain they had kept to be able to resume being peasants (De Waal, 1989; Gray & Kevane, 1992; Grawert, 1998).

113 \ “The framework depicts stakeholders as operating in a context of vulnerability, within which they have access to certain assets. Assets gain weight and value through the prevailing social, institutional and organizational environment (policies, institutions and processes). This context decisively shapes the livelihood strategies that are open to people in pursuit of their self-defined beneficial livelihood outcomes” (Kollmair & Gamper, 2002, pp. 4-5).

Only in 2012 did humanitarian agencies adopt the livelihood approach for displaced people and refugees (UNHCR, 2012). In this context, the original intention of development agencies to establish an approach that focusses on people's agency has given way to a highly bureaucratic and technical approach that inevitably tends to objectify people as 'target groups'. Accordingly, the livelihood programmes of development agencies have been criticized from a research perspective, as they are establishing "frameworks, toolboxes and flow diagrams with mechanic feedback arrows and little historical and theoretical depth" (Haan, 2017, pp. 3-4).

From an analytical perspective, the livelihood approach examines the agency of individuals and groups towards making use of available livelihood options. It includes the particular social relations, attitudes, and culture that are associated with the economic activities of a specific social group. Securing livelihood in times of emergency involves a range of activities of collectives (in some cases, possibly also of individuals) within their social environment and through social interaction with the aim of retaining (or re-gaining) the basis for resuming what the group considers as 'their way of life' when the emergency is over (Grawert, 1998). Power relations and social positions—bounded by social class, caste, ethnic group, gender, age, among others, with varying permeability—determine to what extent different persons or groups can access and make use of livelihood options. Especially in times of emergency, social groups mobilize extended relations to secure their livelihood. These relations have been termed 'livelihood network' and include all persons and collectives that participate in securing the livelihood of a selected group or family. People's social interconnections or livelihood networks are thus a crucial part of people's agency towards livelihood security. Livelihood networks are dynamic and change through shocks and other political, economic, social or cultural influences, which often have the effect of closing options or opening new ones and curtailing or widening networks (Grawert, 1998, pp. 10-20; 153-176; Grawert, 1998a).

Livelihood takes on different forms according to conditions and context because livelihood options and people's measures of their way of life are changing over time and vary significantly between different societies and sub-societies, social classes and cultures. The livelihood options of displaced people hinge on protective measures by governments, aid agencies, and most importantly, on relationships with mostly family or community members as well as host communities. Livelihood as an analytical concept hence requires an understanding of the context and the dynamics in society or sub-societies under scrutiny.¹¹⁴

In livelihood studies, core activities and social arrangements that are indispensable for livelihood security within a certain group or sub-society in a certain period have been characterized as 'pillars of livelihood' (Grawert, 1998; Grawert 1998a). These pillars vary according to the special features and structures of sub-societies and the conditions they are in. The empirical case of the Afghans suggests that the significance translocal networks have for their efforts to secure livelihood take on the quality of a livelihood pillar.¹¹⁵

The established-outsiders figuration as a new lens in livelihood studies

As empirical research in Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan has revealed, people in protracted displacement situations face the empirical fall-out of government policies at the societal and, in particular, the community and neighbourhood level. Thus, the relationships within societies that host people in protracted displacement situations and the existence of social inequalities influence the success of translocal networks as a livelihood option, especially for the lower class. According to De Haan (2017), social

114 \ Moreover, scholars take into account the range of available and newly emerging options people use to secure their livelihood as well as options that get lost or are locked up by particular actors or through certain events. For example, food aid only tends to treat the symptoms of a crisis but does not lead to sustainable livelihood conditions (cf. Buchanan-Smith, 1990) and can even block livelihood options in the long term.

115 \ In addition to the discussed lenses of livelihood options and pillars, livelihood studies further distinguish 'livelihood sectors' (Grawert 1998, pp. 10-15; cf. also Grawert, 1998a).

exclusion as a phenomenon that stems from patterns of distribution of economic wealth can be addressed through “a layered analysis of exclusionary practices encountered by the poor when organising their livelihoods” (De Haan, 2017, p. 6). Beyond access to resources and opportunities, power relations and “impeding structures” (ibid.) form the layers of livelihood. Studies that analyze people’s livelihood through these layers can identify the power relations that exclude and marginalize certain social groups and thus perpetuate poverty (De Haan, 2017, pp. 6-9).

This relational approach builds—among many others—on an early study Elias & Scotson (2013) published in 1965, which provides insights into interdependencies and power relations emerging in the figuration between the established and outsiders. As this appears to be a crucial figuration that displaced people frequently find themselves in, and as the relational dimension has re-surfaced on the research agenda, we suggest incorporating the figuration perspective more systematically in the concept of livelihood when applied to violent conflicts and protracted displacement situations. A closer look into the functioning of the established–outsider figuration reveals how the relationships in host communities can affect livelihood options.

In their book on established and outsiders, Elias and Scotson (2013) use the term ‘figuration’ for a rather solid pattern of interrelations that tends to perpetuate a power imbalance, a sense of inequality, and entrenched perceptions of a community consisting of superiors and inferiors. Based on research in a small homogeneous community, they developed an empirical paradigm, which can be used to identify common structures and problems affecting much larger and differentiated societies as well as reasons for differences in functioning and how they develop according to different conditions (p. 10). The scholars’ observations revealed that power differentials emerged due to differences in internal cohesion and degree of organization within the two groups. The

group of the established was more cohesive and better organized as they had been together longer than the newcomers. Their superiority evolved because of intensive interaction over generations, and the presence of outsiders increased social control among the established. Outsiders were denied access to common activities of the established. The group of the established enhanced cohesion by reinforcing markers of identity that were derived from characteristics of the role models of the best performers of their group. The outsiders, on the other hand, were stigmatized according to identity markers derived from their weakest performers. The established used this difference to reserve social or political positions for their members, reinforcing their cohesion, while members of the outsiders were excluded. Over and above, the outsiders identified themselves with the negative characteristics allotted to their group and accepted the established as superior. However, as soon as the position of power occupied by the established eroded, counter-stigmatization started to occur. Potential consequences are conflicts and violence in the community (Elias & Scotson 2013, pp. 11-27).

These findings by Elias and Scotson question the sole importance of power derived from material wealth, ethnicity, education and other resources that ostensibly explain power differences between established community members and displaced people or refugees.¹¹⁶ Moreover, these insights are gained when the dynamics in these communities are observed over a longer period, not only with regard to the arrival of IDPs, refugees or returnees but also to the long-term development of interrelations within the group of the established, their ways of creating coherence and the role the interdependency with the IDPs or refugees plays in this regard. Understanding the figuration between host communities and displaced persons as well as between communities of origin and returnees can explain why (re-)integration may fail

116 \ Methodologically, they suggest considering the descriptions by members of the established communities of the displaced or refugees, the characteristics attached to the established by the newcomers, and the self-description of each group. The research underlying this *Paper* followed this approach as closely as possible, albeit with limitations due to practical (security) constraints during fieldwork in Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

or end up in renewed migration. Considering both groups equally and identifying potentials for integrative dynamics within the figuration can explain successful (re-)integration (cf. Mielke, 2015a).

To sum up, established-outsider figurations shape the social interaction between displaced people and the host communities in neighbouring countries as well as in different (mostly urban) communities in the country of origin where displaced people mostly settle after return. Even when returning to their former community, they will face significant changes due to the time lapse or due to new dynamics in the local community; moreover, the returnees themselves will have changed during their long absence (Warner, 1994). As the empirical case studies have shown, people in protracted displacement situations often find themselves as outsiders in the new communities they have joined or in the changed communities they return to after years of displacement. Securing the livelihood in these different contexts requires building supportive relationships to get access to existing livelihood options and, more often than not, seeking to find livelihood niches at the margin of the (host) community. The insights obtained from qualitative interviews with Afghans in Iran and Pakistan highlight how legal constraints such as limitations of work permits and business licenses and the insecure legal status of residency often induce displaced people to make their living in the irregular economy, always under threat of being arrested or deported. These conditions prevent an equal status and the potential of (re-)integration as equals in the community, thus consolidating the established-outsider figuration between those who have stayed in the community for a longer time and consider themselves as the established and the newcomers, who are perceived and tend to perceive themselves as un-equals and outsiders. The established-outsider figuration thus has to be regarded as a crucial—formative and limiting—aspect of the livelihood options of people in protracted displacement situations.

Implications for refugee studies and policy approaches towards Afghan displacement

Migration research has established that sustainable livelihood options influence migration decisions (Grawert, 1998; Fratzke & Salant, 2017). Our findings point out that in violent conflict and protracted displacement situations, sustainable livelihood options determine return decisions (whether assisted or not) and influence the prospects of local integration in displacement or after return. With the example of the displacement of Afghans we have shown that the consideration of translocal networks¹¹⁷ and established-outsider relations is vital for local integration, return and (re)integration in the return context. We argue that these insights have implications for research and policy design intending to aid displaced people.

Most research on return and the reintegration of refugees looks into the processes and effects of the three durable solutions¹¹⁸ for protracted refugee situations¹¹⁹ proposed by the UNHCR.¹²⁰ These solutions are closely linked to the idea of international law (of nation-states) and methodological nationalism (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002) that prescribes clear categorizations of belonging to nation-state entities (citizenship). This has the effect that support for displacement, return and integration is designed from a statutory legal perspective, which resembles governmental priorities in dealing with migration. In this logic, the subjects of migration—people who have been displaced, refugees, returnees, repatriates—are rendered objects that have to be administered and taken care of. These particular temporal and

117 \ While refugees from other countries with long-term war face almost the same challenges and conditions, not all refugee populations build translocal networks as one of several livelihood options.

118 \ These are: Voluntary repatriation, resettlement abroad and integration within the host community (UNHCR, 2017).

119 \ The UNHCR defines a protracted refugee situation as a situation “in which refugees find themselves in a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. A refugee in this situation is often unable to break free from enforced reliance on external assistance” (UNHCR, 2004)

120 \ . Cf. among others Stein, 1986; Couldrey & Morris, 2004; Hathaway, 2005; Black & Gent, 2006; Bradley, 2007; Long, 2013; Gerver, 2015.

socio-political signifiers do not indicate facts but reflect the context in which refugee policies have emerged and are implemented, and they shape the perspective of a large part of (critical) refugee studies.¹²¹

The conceptual approach and empirical insights of this Paper contribute to a strand of research on protracted displacement that adopts a historical perspective and takes into account that in contexts of protracted violent conflicts, aid usually declines after some years. This means that the lives of displaced people and refugees transform; they rely on their own (cap)abilities (agency) and might integrate at a specific location temporarily or longer, develop belonging, become ‘normalized’ and ‘established’ while at the same time entertaining relations with their family and friends in the origin context and contexts stemming from previous stages of forced migration. Despite large-scale evidence of such processes and the consideration of agency of displaced people in several academic papers and books,¹²² these insights have hardly informed policies so far.

In 2012, the UNHCR and other agencies assisting refugees agreed with the governments of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan on a ‘Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees’. One of the portfolios developed in this strategy is called “improved and diversified livelihood opportunities and enhanced food security” (UNHCR, 2014). It focuses on training and skills improvement for refugees in various professional fields to alleviate inclusion in the local labour market and business environment of Iran and Pakistan as well as reintegration in Afghanistan. The strategy also includes a portfolio labelled “social and environmental protection of refugees and returnees, as well as assistance and support to host communities” (UNHCR, 2014) indicating that the UNHCR and the three governments acknowledge that tense established-outsider relations will not serve reintegration in Afghanistan or local integration in the neighbouring countries. However, the solutions strategy addresses the refugees and members of the host communities as individuals,

offering them and the lower class population in the host communities training and skills upgrading, thus opening up various new livelihood options. This strategy neglects the collective approach Afghans usually adopt towards securing their way of life as families, and hence, the translocal networks that they have built towards this end. The aid agencies thus remain mainly at the economic level of providing entitlements (often paid for by the agencies or through financial transfers to the governments of the host countries) and do not provide livelihood security in the comprehensive sense outlined above.

Political entitlements are largely excluded from livelihood assistance. In the current policy framework, one of the most obvious characteristics of refugees is the fact that they are deprived of the entitlement to the status of citizenship, which is the basis of entitlements to land, housing, work, property, business licenses, education and health services. The UNHCR, through bilateral or multilateral agreements with governments, provides temporary entitlements to the minimum of humanitarian needs. IDPs, on the other hand, lose the entitlements to land, housing, and property, although they remain citizens. Depending on their social class, IDPs and refugees can afford to (re-)gain entitlements, or—as the narrations of lower-class Afghans show, they cannot.

Our findings point out that agency matters, albeit with varying degrees as it is primarily determined by social class, and that it realizes its potential in the social (translocal) network relations that often span continents. Given the significance of self-organized translocal networks of displaced Afghans for extended livelihood options and, in consequence, a dignified life according to their own measures, the support of translocal networks and collective approaches to secure livelihoods (e.g. targeting extended families) could take on the significance of another (fourth) durable solution for Afghans (cf. Grawert & Mielke, 2018).

121 \ For a comprehensive review of research perspectives on return and reintegration of refugees cf. Grawert, 2018.

122 \ Cf. for example, Monsutti, 2005; Muggeridge & Dona, 2006; Monsutti, A., 2008; Omata, 2012; Harpviken, 2014; King et al. 2015; Paasche, 2016; Porobič, 2017.

Conclusions: Livelihood in violent conflicts and protracted displacement situations

Livelihood studies have not systematically been adapted to contexts of violent conflicts and protracted displacement. This Paper contributes to closing this gap in research. By tracing the specifics of livelihood options of lower-class Afghans in protracted displacement situations—via comparison with members of the middle class—this Paper has enhanced Chambers' concept of sustainable livelihoods and developed it further for analytical application in conflict and displacement contexts. The renewed occurrence of high numbers of Afghan refugees since 2015¹²³ allows us to make this a most eligible case for a study of how people are coping with protracted displacement inside and outside the country, with forced mobility and forced immobility in camps, multiple places of temporary stay and scattered families securing livelihoods—among other options—by weaving translocal networks.

The elaborated comprehensive livelihood approach defines securing livelihood as enabling a social group's life in dignity according to its own measure, thus 'maintaining its way of life'. The constitutive components of the suggested approach are livelihood options—one of many comprises the flows that networks enable—and established-outsider relations. We have argued that translocal networks are established because they offer the prospect of upward social mobility, that they can be used to escape violent conflict settings and thus, offer protection. In Afghan displacement, translocal networks should be considered as a livelihood pillar, because in their significance they are indispensable for securing collective livelihoods of a family or extended group. Translocal networks are forged strategically to secure livelihood; at the same time, networks form the basis and prerequisite of other livelihood-generating activities. Among Afghans, networks have long been established and their number, density and significance have amplified since the outbreak of violent conflict 40 years ago.

Class affiliations determine the extent to which networks enable substantial material flows and support that allow displaced people, returnees or those on the move to participate in the sub-society they are temporarily or newly part of before, during or after displacement. The empirical data illustrates the difference in livelihood options of lower- and middle-class Afghans. It also shows how assets—partly channelled through translocal networks—and the existence of the translocal connections itself open livelihood options and contribute to maintaining the members' way of life. It is pertinent to consider that livelihood options of the lower class are mostly precarious. The networks more often than not provide moral support and the minimum material support necessary for bare survival.

Violent conflict and political or economic disruptions have a substantial impact on the availability of livelihood options; for example, armed conflicts often create livelihood options in the shadow economy, such as smuggling, trafficking, arms sales, looting, kidnapping, joining armed groups as mercenaries or as paid fighters, etc. This contributes to expanding, perpetuating and exacerbating the violence and often blurs the original cause of conflict. New livelihood options may open up through special relationships with local powerholders who dominate the war economy. Many previous livelihood options tend to erode or become blocked entirely, at least temporarily.¹²⁴ Empirical studies show that even after the original conflict subsides, war economies and the associated power relationships tend to persist for a long time, leading to so-called fragile and conflict-affected settings (NIMD, 2016; Grawert et al., 2017, p. 11). Therefore, violent conflicts and their repercussions lead to the displacement of large numbers of people, forcing them to compete with others for scarce resources in safer areas of the same country or neighbouring regions or to flee further to far-away countries or another continent. The livelihood options of displaced

123 \ With more than 250,000 Afghan refugees arriving in Europe in 2015/2016 (IRC, 2016).

124 \ For Darfur, cf. Grawert, 1998, pp. 73-77; 199-203; Grawert, 2015, pp. 272-278; 295-297; for Afghanistan, cf. Strand, 2013 and Goodhand & Mansfield, 2013; for the features of war economies in general, cf. Ballentine & Nitzschke, 2005, p. 2.

people hinge on protective measures by governments, aid agencies and, most importantly, on relationships with mostly family or community members as well as host communities.

In the context of the newly escalating violent conflict in Afghanistan, increased violence in Pakistan and the mounting economic crisis in the three countries, the option of securing one's livelihood through translocal networks has declined. This has driven Afghans who have already been in protracted displacement situations to flee on to other countries including Europe and Australia, extending their family networks further. Even though large numbers were forced to return to Afghanistan, as they have only very limited livelihood options there, they are likely to move abroad again—to prevent destitution or because of renewed displacement through armed conflict and (the threat of) violent attacks. At the current juncture, insecurity and the lack of a future perspective generate a massive crisis with regard to the ability to act towards maintaining the way of life for large numbers of lower-class Afghans.

Policymakers and implementers can draw two lessons from the insights of this Paper:¹²⁵ First, development and other assistance for displaced persons need to adapt to the logic of Afghan translocal networks and their role in sustaining a livelihood. Systematic attention must be paid to options that support lower-class Afghans in enhancing self-organizing capacities on the move and in the displacement and return context. Second, the findings on the significance of established-outsider relations show that applying this concept would be another worthwhile intervention point to use as leverage for support which ultimately enables the returnees or arrivals eager to integrate in a host context to participate in the local sub-society, that is, ensure access to land, shelter, education and employment. A move away from treating displaced people as objects towards acknowledging them as subjects with agency and implementing programmes that strengthen the latter in protracted displacement situations is badly needed to alleviate the narrowing prospects for self-help of extended families in securing a livelihood.

¹²⁵ \ For further policy implications of the analysis and detailed recommendations see Policy Brief 5/2018 by Grawert & Mielke.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASA	alternative stay arrangement scheme	ASA
ACC	Afghan citizen card	ACC
CAR	Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees	CAR
CDC	community development council	CDC
CNIC	computerized national identity card	CNIC
CRP	Comprehensive Regularization Plan	CRP
DoRR	Department for Refugees and Repatriation	DoRR
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas	FATA
FIR	First Information Report	FIR
GoA	Government of Afghanistan	GoA
GoI	Government of Iran	GoI
GoP	Government of Pakistan	GoP
IDPs	Internally displaced persons	IDPs
IOM	International Organization for Migration	IOM
IRR	Iranian Rial	IRR
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force	ISAF
MoRR	Ministry for Refugees and Repatriations	MoRR
MRRD	Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development	MRRD
NADRA	National Database and Registration Authority (of the Government of Pakistan)	NADRA
NDS	National Directorate of Security	NDS
PoR card	proof of registration card	PoR card
SAFRON	Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (of the Government of Pakistan)	SAFRON
SSAR	Solution Strategy for Afghan Refugees	SSAR
UN Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme	UN Habitat
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	UNOCHA

Annex

Annex I:

Data-factsheet on Afghan displacement

	Numeric data on displacement and return of Afghans in Iran and Pakistan	
	Iran	Pakistan
Number of documented refugees	951,142 in 2018 (UNHCR, 2018b), thereof three per cent (less than 30,000) in refugee camps	1,391,921 in January 2018 (UNHCR, 2018)
Estimated number of undocumented Afghans	1.5 to 2 million (Willner-Reid, 2017); 2 million (European Commission, 2018; based on BAFIA estimation)	up to one million (ECHO, 2017a)
Percentage of second- or third-generation refugees		74 per cent (UNHCR, 2016)
Number of refugee returns ('voluntary repatriation' by UNHCR)	920,161 (2002–2014) (UNHCR, 2015); 6,096 (between January 2015 and November 2017) (UNAMA, 2016a; 2017; UNHCR, 2017a; 2017c); ¹ 1,428 (between 1 January and 30 September 2018) (UNHCR, 2018c)	4,357,683 (2002–October 2017) (UNHCR, 2017e); ² 59,020 (Jan–Dec 2017); 11,735 (between 1 January and 30 September 2018) (UNHCR, 2018c)
Percentage of refugee returns born in exile	31 per cent (IOM-UNHCR, 2018, p. 6)	21 per cent (IOM-UNHCR, 2018, p. 6)
Share of refugees returning to province of origin	32 to 60 per cent; 68 per cent planned to move to Kabul in 2017 (UNHCR, 2017c) Kabul (and for returnees from Pakistan particularly Jalalabad) are preferred destinations for settlement, mostly for reasons of perceived insecurity, lack of housing, shelter and land in refugee returnees' areas of origin (UNHCR, 2017c).	
Number of refugees who departed for resettlement	13,765 (1999–2014) (UNHCR, 2015); 2,082 (between January 2015 and June 2017) (UNHCR, 2016a; 2017d)	10,082 (1989–2014) (UNHCR, 2015, p. 2)
Number of deportees (forced return)	917,743 (2012–15) (IOM 2015, p. 4); 194,763 (Jan–Dec 2016) (IOM, 2017a); 271,982 (Jan–Dec 2017) (IOM, 2017); 350,122 (Jan–03 Nov 2018) (IOM, 2018b)	19,237 (Jan–Dec 2015) (IOM, 2016); 22,584 (Jan–Dec 2016) (IOM, 2017a); 4,106 (Jan–Dec 2017) (IOM, 2017, p. 2); 2,048 (Jan–3 Nov 2018) (IOM, 2018b)
Number of spontaneous returnees	1,099,136 (2012–15) (IOM 2015, p. 4); 248,764 (Jan–Dec 2016) (IOM, 2017a); 194,321 (Jan–Dec 2017) (IOM 2017); 308,468 (Jan–3 Nov 2018) (IOM, 2018b)	100,042 (Jan–Dec 2015) (IOM, 2016); 225,470 (Jan–Dec 2016) (IOM, 2017a); 94,034 (Jan–Dec 2017) (IOM, 2017); 26,556 (Jan–3 Nov 2018) (IOM, 2018b)
Main areas of residence of refugees	Tehran (33%), Khorasan Razavi (16%), Esfahan (13%), Kerman (8%), 30% dispersed in other provinces (ECHO, 2017)	Peshawar and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (43 Afghan Refugee Villages, 62 per cent), Quetta and Balochistan (10 Afghan Refugee Villages, 20 per cent), Karachi, Lahore and Mianwali Afghan Refugee Village (Punjab, 11 percent) (UNHCR, 2018; percentages from Roehrs 2015)

¹ Registered Afghan refugees who apply for voluntary return and repatriation are eligible for US \$200 paid by the UNHCR for travel expenses, setting up a household in Afghanistan and paying costs of living for about six months (UNHCR, 2017c).

² "The number of refugees repatriating to Afghanistan has fluctuated over the years and has decreased substantially from around 450,000 in 2005 to 58,211 in 2015. 2016 saw an increase of over 381,275 returns which was the highest recorded number of returns since 2005" (UNHCR, 2017e, p. 1).

**Annex II:
Pillars of refugee policy**

	Iran	Pakistan
Regional framework	Tripartite Solution Strategies for Afghan Refugees (SSAR)³ regional multi-year strategy, currently past its second phase, 2015–17⁴	
Operational counterpart of the UNHCR	<p><i>Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (BAFIA) of the Ministry of the Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran</i></p> <p><i>The UNHCR and BAFIA coordinate the refugee assistance and operate with “multi-functional teams for key intervention areas at a technical level and advocacy for progressive policies at senior management level” (UNHCR, 2016, p. 3). UNHCR closely cooperates with line ministries such as the ministries of health and education.⁵</i></p>	<p><i>Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR) under the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) of the Government of Pakistan</i></p> <p><i>CAR was established by the Government of Pakistan (GoP) in 1979 with branches in each province and a Chief Commissionerate in Islamabad.</i></p>
Documented Afghan refugees	<p><i>Since 2003, documented refugees have received a refugee identity card (amayesh⁶ card) from the GoI. Amayesh cards have to be renewed regularly and allow refugees access to basic health services and, since 2008, to attain work permits for 87 specified job categories (UNHCR, 2016, p. 14). Work permits have to be renewed annually or upon change of the employer. Amayesh cardholders have to stay in designated areas and have no permission to acquire driving licenses, open a shop or start a business, or enroll in institutions of higher education. Since 2009, vulnerable refugees holding the amayesh card have been exempted from the municipality tax due for urban dwellers (UNHCR, 2010). In 2016, the UNHCR assisted 117,000 amayesh cardholders to ensure access to the Iranian national health insurance scheme (UNHCR, 2017b).</i></p>	<p><i>Pakistan is not a party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees/1967 Protocol and has neither enacted national legislation for the protection of refugees nor established procedures to determine the refugee status of persons who are seeking international protection within its territory. Such persons are therefore treated in accordance with the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946. However, documented Afghans are exempted. After, in 2007, a one-time registration process was terminated, registered refugees received so-called Proof-of-Registration (PoR) cards issued by NADRA (National Database and Registration Authority of the GoP). Besides temporary legal stay, the PoR-card allows freedom of movement. The first cut-off date for renewal was 31 December 2009. Subsequent extensions became ever shorter, i.e., for only a month after 31 December 2017 (until January 2018), then 60 days until 31 March 2018. Since end of December 2015, the regular PoR cards have expired; they are replaced by mere official documents – a copy of the subsequent extension letters, which Afghan individuals often carry a minimized laminated copy of.</i></p>

3 “The SSAR is a multi-year regional strategy based on an agreement between the UNHCR and the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. It was launched in 2012 and aims to ensure the protection of Afghan refugees and find durable solutions for them. Five outcomes guide the strategy in Iran: 1. Voluntary repatriation; 2. Essential services and shelter; 3. Livelihoods and food security; 4. Protection and resettlement; and 5. Coordination and support (UNHCR, 2017d). By 2016, 29 partners had joined the SSAR (FAO, 2016).

4 At the trilateral SSAR meeting on 1 December 2017, “the governments of Afghanistan and Iran and UNHCR agreed to the extension of the SSAR framework for 2018-19. The Government of Pakistan committed to present the proposed SSAR framework for 2018-19 to its Federal Cabinet for consideration” (cf. UNHCR, 2017f, p. 2).

5 In 2016, the UNHCR operated in 20 communities in projects mainly targeting vulnerable refugees and children who were school dropouts (mostly because of work). In 2017, the project continued in 13 communities (UNHCR, 2017d).

6 Persian word for ‘logistics’ or ‘preparation’ (HRW, 2013).

	Iran	Pakistan
Education	<p>Since May 2015, undocumented Afghan children have gradually been registered according to a decree by Ayatollah Khamenei. Until May 2016, their parents were obliged to pay US \$70–90 in school fees. Since May 2016, documented refugee children have the right to equal treatment; paying the same fees for “schools and other curricular and extra-curricular activities” as Iranian children (UNHCR, 2016, p. 17). According to an Iranian government official from BAFIA, 60 per cent of the refugees in Iran receive education, among them 48.7 per cent females (Watt, 2017). Since September 2017, Afghan children have been officially integrated into public schools.⁷ Afghan students in Iran receive a ‘red passport’ that is limited for four years and involves a denial of work permit. The students have to pay high fees and a high final payment (7 million Toman (US \$2,333) to get the transcript and bachelor certificate.⁸ According to the Iranian government, 19,000 students are enrolled in Iranian institutions of higher learning (Watt, 2017). According to the UNHCR, most of the Afghan returnees intend to obtain passports in Afghanistan and apply for a visa to enroll in tertiary education in Iran (UNHCR, 2016, p. 18), which implies that they plan to return to Iran.</p>	<p>The registration and PoR-cardholder status has not entitled Afghans to education <i>per se</i>, i.e., not in Pakistani government schools. Within the camps (Afghan refugee villages), Afghan refugee schools were successively opened over time, teaching an Afghan curriculum and in Persian. Wealthier Afghan families outside the camp context send their children to private schools. The 2005 Census of Afghans in Pakistan does not mention education at all. According to the 2011 Afghan Population Survey, the overall literacy rate of Afghans aged 10 and above is 33 per cent, with a gross enrolment of 61 per cent. “44% of the children (5 to 14) and 20% of youth (15 to 24) are currently studying.” (SAFRON, 2011, p. 13). Literacy among women and girl refugees is at 7.6 per cent.</p> <p>By 2012, of the then estimated 1.74 million Afghan refugees, only five per cent had completed primary education, and the enrolment rate was reported to be 20 per cent in primary schools (cf. Muhammad, 2012).</p>
Other legal stay arrangements	<p>Documented Afghans without amayesh cards:</p> <p>Besides documented refugees, there are more than 620,000 Afghans who hold Afghan passports with Iranian visas (‘blue passports’). Some of them are refugees who previously held amayesh cards and then applied for the visa. Others never had amayesh cards and have registered in the so-called “Alternative Stay Arrangement scheme” (ASA). A third group of Afghans stayed in Iran as undocumented migrants. About 800,000 of them registered or renewed expired amayesh cards when BAFIA implemented the “Comprehensive Regularization Plan” (CRP) in 2017 (UNHCR, 2018f). Iranian visas allow Afghans to access services that are unavailable to refugees such as driving licences, university education, greater job opportunities, and freedom to travel out of the country (UNHCR, 2016, p. 16).</p>	<p>Visa-regimes for different categories of Afghans (workers, students, patients, investors) have been discussed since 1999, picking up again since 2006 and are currently re-enforced.</p> <p>Since July 2017, undocumented Afghans have been able to register for issuance of Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC). By early January 2018, 525,273 ACC had been verified and were in the process of production, whereas another 140,222 were still in the process of verification (IOM, 2018).</p>

7 About 48,000 children who were enrolled without being documented could be legalized through this decree.

8 Iranian students are obliged to work in Iran for ten years before they receive the final exam documents. Those who want to leave the country earlier have to pay this amount as well (information by former Iranian students in Mashhad, 2015).

**Annex III:
History of refugee policies⁹**

	Iran	Pakistan
1979 to 1988/92	1980–1989/92: ‘Open-door policy’ of GoI towards Afghans until 1992: Afghans entering Iran have the right to stay indefinitely and enjoy the same access to public services as Iranian citizens. The aftermath of the Iraq–Iran war (1980–1989) and international economic sanctions have devastated the Iranian economy and have exacerbated tensions within society. Iranians turn against Afghans as they are perceived to be competitors for scarce jobs, housing, and social services.	until 1988: Afghans entering Pakistan are openly welcomed and migration and refugee movement facilitated, e.g., more than 300 Afghan refugee villages are set up by the mid-1980s
1988/92–2001/02	The government of Iran puts pressure on Afghans to return to Afghanistan, aggravates procedures for renewing documents of refugees and refuses registering newly arriving Afghans as refugees. The government denies Afghan refugees access to free (subsidized) public services (HRW, 2013). After a large return movement of about 1.3 million people to Afghanistan between 1992 and 1995, a new wave of Afghan refugees arrives in Iran, displaced due to war and the seizure of power by the Taliban in 1996.	Openness without facilitation for the second (1988–96) and third wave (1996–2001) of Afghan refugees entering Pakistan. Repatriation is encouraged through cash incentives and the later recognition of the Taliban government by GoP. After UNHCR and WFP end food aid for the camp residents, refugees move to the large cities for work. In 1999, an attempt is made to subject Afghans entering Pakistan to a visa regime, i.e., requiring Afghan passports and Pakistani visa.
2003	The government of Iran introduces the amayesh card to register all Afghan nationals living in Iran who had been granted residency rights in Iran in the 1980s and 1990s. UNHCR and BAFIA treat amayesh card holders as de-facto refugees implying that they are eligible for basic health care services, have to stay in designated areas and are not allowed to study. ¹⁰ The card protects Afghans from being denied the refugee status by the Iranian government without a worthwhile cause, although they have not legally been granted asylum. Most of the Afghans arriving since 2003 have been denied the amayesh card. Between 2001 and 2005, about half a million undocumented Afghan labour migrants, mainly in construction and agriculture, continued to move between Iran and Afghanistan (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005). ¹¹	2003–05: A first tripartite agreement between GoA, GoP and UNHCR establishes a legal framework for future repatriation.

9 Migration from Afghanistan to Iran and Pakistan has a long history, and its size has varied greatly according to political and economic push factors driving Afghans out of their country as well as pull factors related to economic opportunities and the varying migration policies of the governments of Iran and Pakistan. Most of the refugees to Iran are Shi’ite families, who have fled to Iran because of discrimination and targeted killing of Afghans of the Hazara groups (Rohani, 2014, p. 19). Especially Farsi-, Dari- or Tajik-speaking Afghans were easily able to establish networks and find jobs in Iran, as they faced little language barriers. Pakistan attracted Pashtuns in the first place, but also considerable numbers of all other ethnic groups, including Hazara (to Quetta) and Tajiks. Uzbeks and Turkmen carpet manufacturers (weavers, dealers, etc.) had no difficulties making a living and blending into Pakistani society either.

10 If Afghans intend to study, they have to return the amayesh card and receive a student identity card (locally ‘red passport’) (interview with Afghan students in Mashhad, April 2016).

11 Abbasi-Shavazi et al. summarize, “the migrants borrowed money from, and loaned money to, family and Afghan acquaintances mainly for illness and accidents, funeral costs and housing bond – constituting a safety net in Iran” (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2005, p. 1).

	Iran	Pakistan
2004–2012	<p>2004–2010: The government of Iran changes the amayesh card system nine times, demanding the annual renewal of the card (for payment) and imposing complicated bureaucratic procedures on the refugees. If they make any mistake, they will lose the refugee status and are at risk of being deported. The government appeals for changing the status of amayesh card holders in favour of residence and work permits (which cost US \$70 and has to be renewed every six months) (HRW, 2013; Long, 2013, p. 210).</p> <p>2010–2011: The GoI introduces the ‘Comprehensive Regularization Plan’ (CRP) and the ‘Alternative Stay Arrangement’ (ASA). These programs offer refugees and “undocumented Afghans an opportunity to register officially and apply for temporary visas and work permits with the possibility, but not the guarantee, that they would be extended” (HRW, 2014). To obtain the visa, Afghan men without families or family heads have to travel to Afghanistan to get a passport and apply for visas. The Iranian authorities continue to encourage Afghan amayesh cardholders to return the cards and apply for Iranian residential visas (HRW, 2014).</p>	<p>GoP initiates a Census of Afghans in Pakistan (SAFRON, 2005) which reveals that there are more than three million Afghans residing in the country. More than 80 per cent do not intend to return, mainly due to lack of shelter, livelihood and insecurity (in this order) (SAFRON, 2005, p. 7f). As result of the registration process following the census in 2006–07, 1.7 million Afghans receive PoR-cards valid until December 2009. Subsequent extensions until 12/2015 and 12/2017 follow.</p> <p>Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas Programme (RAHA) is launched in 2009 and evolves into an integral part of the SSAR first phase (until 2015) with the objective of enhancing the social cohesion of communities and of stabilizing such communities that host large numbers of refugees for an extended period.</p> <p>2011: SAFRON and UNHCR undertake an “Afghan Population Profiling, Verification and Response Survey” that shows that 85 per cent of the Afghan households have at least one PoR cardholder (SAFRON, 2011, p. 13).</p>
2013–2014	<p>The GoI announces plans to cut the student fees for Afghans by half to provide access to free primary schooling for all children (including undocumented Afghans), and a six months visa extension for Afghans staying in Iran (HRW, 2014).</p>	<p>GoP adopts the National Policy on the Repatriation and Management of Afghan Refugees, which provides a framework for the continued temporary legal stay of Afghan refugees and further contemplates the elaboration of a national refugee law.</p>
2015–2016	<p>2015: The government of Iran permits amayesh cardholders to join the public health insurance scheme (which has to be paid for) that provides Iranians and now also refugees with basic health care. The UNHCR supports 142,000 vulnerable Afghan refugees by paying the insurance fees (UNHCR, 2016, pp. 16–17; UNHCR, 2016b).</p>	<p>2015: GoP issues “Comprehensive Policy on Voluntary Repatriation and Management of Afghan Nationals beyond 2015” in line with the regional solutions strategy (SSAR). Commitment to extend PoR cards until December 2017.</p> <p>2015: GoP adopts National Action Plan in the aftermath of Peshawar Army School attack in December 2014 that was blamed on Afghans. The action plan is an anti-terror package that also foresees to carry out a census of all undocumented Afghans in Pakistan as well as a review of Citizen National Identity Cards (CNICs). The presence of Afghans in Pakistan is politicized as never before, and Afghans are equalled to terrorists in popular perception. Discrimination and harassment increase to unprecedented levels.</p> <p>2016: From January to December, 381,300 Afghans return due to political pressure and discrimination by Pakistani police and security organs (de facto forced repatriation).</p>

	Iran	Pakistan
2017	<p>The cost of the amayesh card has nearly doubled for a family of five between 2013 and 2017 (from IRR 6,693,900 (US \$266) to IRR 12,321,000 (US \$372)) (NRC, 2017).¹² An estimated 250,000 Afghans hold temporary residency cards ('blue passports') and work permits issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Eqbal, 2017), whereas 35 per cent of the Afghans in Iran have invalid, expired or no documents (NRC, 2017). Adults who have resided in Iran for at least five years and prove a clean record and possession of sufficient property or employment that ensures a livelihood can apply for Iranian citizenship (Iran Data Portal, 2013). Iranian citizenship is denied to children of non-Iranian fathers. These laws provide unsurmountable hurdles for the majority of Afghans in Iran. Media reports indicate that the families of Afghans who joined the Fatemiyoun Division in Syria, which is affiliated with the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and fights on the side of the Syrian government under Bashar al-Assad, will receive Iranian citizenship when their sons die in the war (Daily Sabah Mideast, 2017).</p>	<p>24 February: SAFRON notification for PoR cards extension until 31 December 2017 (after Cabinet decision on 7 February 2017)</p> <p>Within the framework of the 2015 National Action Plan of the government of Pakistan, the documentation of undocumented Afghans was carried out by NADRA at 21 Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) Centers in 17 districts nationwide from July 2017 to 2 January 2018. SAFRON and MoRR collaborate in the effort; 665,495 undocumented Afghans have applied (IOM, 2018) hoping to legalize their stay in Pakistan, though for an unspecified period. "ACC cards grant undocumented Afghans temporary stay in Pakistan, pending their return to Afghanistan, to regularize their legal status by acquiring a passport and visa." (IOM, 2018).</p> <p>At the Tripartite Commission Meeting between the GoA, GoP and UNHCR on 30 November 2017, Pakistan reports on Inter-Ministerial discussions on national refugee law and the implementation of a flexible visa regime for different categories of Afghan nationals in Pakistan as approved by the Federal Cabinet and commits to another PoR-card extension, "encouraged" until 31 December 2018 ("Conclusions...", 2017). Visa categories include students, investors/work, skilled/unskilled labour, inter-marriages, health/medical (SAFRON, 2017).</p>
2018	<p>By February 2018, at least 77,000 undocumented Afghan children have become eligible for enrolment in schools for free. Remaining barriers to access are payment by undocumented refugee children for an enrolment card and books. Language barriers exist for Pashtun-speaking children; others are important breadwinners for their families (UNHCR, 2018b).</p>	<p>January: Extension of PoR cards until 31 January 2018 only.</p> <p>9 February: Extension of PoR cards until 30 June 2018 (SAFRON 2018)</p> <p>As of 30 June:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The validity of PoR cards and ACC cards extended until 30 September 2018 (SAFRON, 2018a). - Total number of Afghan refugees (PoR cardholders) in Pakistan: 1,394,308 (50 per cent children; 72 per cent women and children; 54 per cent male / 46 per cent female), of which 32 per cent are registered in refugee villages (UNHCR, 2018e)

¹² According to statistics by the Tehran Governor's Office of Foreign Nationality, around 32,000 children in Iran did not have birth certificates because their fathers were not Iranian citizens in 2011 (Alikarami, 2016). For the problems related to the growing number of stateless children (mostly with Afghan fathers) in Iran, cf. Abbasi-Shavazi, 2012 and Rohani, 2014.

Annex VI. List of interviews

AFGHANISTAN

Kabul

- \ Young man and his aunt in Tapa Bagrami 2 (Nasaji Bagrami in governorate PD 8), November 2015
- \ Hazara man in Dasht-e Barchi, PD 13, Hazara quarter in Kabul, November 2015
- \ Son of a former army officer in Dasht-e Barchi, PD 13, Hazara quarter in Kabul, November 2015
- \ Retail trader in Dasht-e Barchi, PD 13, Hazara quarter in Kabul, November 2015
- \ Kiosk owner in Dasht-e Barchi, PD 13, Hazara quarter in Kabul, November 2015
- \ Government officer in Dasht-e Barchi, PD 13, Hazara quarter in Kabul, November 2015
- \ Journalist in Naw-e Abad, Kabul, November 2015
- \ Youth *shura* representative in Naw-e Abad, Kabul, November 2015
- \ Lecturer at Kateb University, March 2016
- \ Pump producer, head of branch of Swedish company in Kabul, March 2016
- \ Owner of a transport company in Kabul, November 2015
- \ Class of IT students in Kateb University, Kabul, March 2016

General information collected from

- \ TLO staff working with IDPs in Kabul: Sharifullah Ehsas,
- \ Staff of Deutsche Welthungerhilfe: Dr Fashid & Mr Berger, November 2015
- \ Staff of UN Habitat:
- \ Stakeholders of humanitarian, aid and development agencies during a workshop in Kabul in May 2016, convened by Elke Grawert within the BMZ-funded research project

Herat

- \ Six boys, between 12 and 17 years old, in Ansar camp for deportees, November 2015
- \ Eight boys under age in Ansar camp for deportees, April 2016

- \ Family (wife, husband, child) in Ansar camp for deportees, November 2015
- \ Family with three children in Ansar camp for deportees, April 2016
- \ Group of elder Kuchi men in Maslakh camp, November 2015 and April 2016
- \ Group of Kuchi women and children in Maslakh camp, November 2015
- \ Group of Hazara camp inhabitants, April 2016
- \ Members of community council of Jabrail quarter of Herat, April 2016
- \ Police officer in Jabrail, Herat, April 2016
- \ Founder of a new quarter in Herat, April 2016
- \ Head of an Afghan NGO in Herat city, April 2016

General information collected from

- \ IOM staff, April 2016
- \ DoRR: Head of department Mr Hamidullah Khatimi, November 2015

IRAN

Sirjan, Kerman province

- \ Afghan farm worker
- \ Afghan pistachio picker
- \ Iranian pistachio field owner

Mashhad

- \ Afghan split-up family (mother and children in Iran, father in Australia), March 2016
- \ Afghan wives of construction workers, October 2015
- \ Afghan poor family (mother, two children, sick husband), October 2015
- \ Two Afghan students, one born in Iran, one arrived from Pakistan as a school boy, March 2016
- \ Iranian hotel manager in Mashhad, March 2016
- \ Afghan owner of a transport company, October 2015
- \ Focus group discussion with seven Afghan transport company Chief Executive Officers in Mashhad, October 2015

PAKISTAN

Lahore

- \ Tajik Afghan shop owner, Liberty Market, February 2017
- \ Councillor of Khan Colony (in Khan Colony), February 2017
- \ Chairman of Khan Colony, February 2017
- \ Afghan, Pashtun and Punjabi shopkeepers in Landa Bazaar, February 2017
- \ Punjabi carpet shop owner nearby Lahore Hotel, February 2017
- \ Afghan carpet businessman, February 2017
- \ Lahore Vegetable market, March 2017
- \ Turkman Afghan carpet traders, February 2017
- \ Three students/ two lecturers of Afghan origin at Punjab University, March 2017
- \ Biographical follow-up interview with one of the students, March 2017
- \ Uzbek Afghan carpet traders, March 2017
- \ UNOPS risk manager with background working with Afghan refugees in Punjab, March 2017
- \ Wealthy Afghan businessman/ trader settled in Pakistan, March 2017

Karachi

- \ Afghan representative in Al-Asif Square, March 2017
- \ Pakistani journalist working on Afghans in Karachi, March 2017
- \ Uzbek Afghan in Al-Asif Square, March 2017
- \ His father, Al-Asif Square, March 2017
- \ Second generation Afghan in Al-Asif Square, March 2017
- \ Tajik Afghan in Al-Asif Square, March 2017
- \ Afghan from Kunduz in Al-Asif Square, March 2017
- \ Two representatives of SHARP, UNHCR implementer working on behalf of Afghan refugees in Sindh Province, March 2017
- \ Former police officer in Al-Asif Square, March 2017

- \ Three other Afghan residents of Al-Asif Square, March 2017
- \ Non-Afghan Taxi driver familiar with Al-Asif Square, March 2017

Islamabad

- \ Representative/ project director of Sharp, national office and Punjab, Islamabad, March 2017
- \ Chairman and lawyer, Sharp, Islamabad, March 2017
- \ Biographical interview with Afghan-origin employee of Sharp in Sharp office, March 2017
- \ Representative of Hanns Seidel Foundation, Islamabad, March 2017
- \ GIZ advisor to Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) of Government of Pakistan, March 2017
- \ Afghan woman/ civil society activist married to a Pakistani in Islamabad, March 2017

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