SEEFAR

Pushed Towards Migration:

Understanding how irregular migration dynamics and attitudes are evolving in Afghanistan

Results from the second wave of a longitudinal study of Afghans planning irregular migration to the European Union

July 2018

OUR VISION

is for a world in which vulnerable people have more opportunities to advance themselves.

THE PURPOSE

of our social enterprise is to work with those people to build a better future.

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Abbreviations

AOG	Armed Opposition Group
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
EU	European Union
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant / Daesh
OCHA	The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar (national currency of the United States of America)

Introduction

Seefar is committed to helping stakeholders understand and responsibly respond to irregular migration. This requires a robust evidence base that allows the voices of affected women, men and children to impact programmes and policies designed to address this critical issue.

This report is the second component of a longitudinal study into the dynamics of irregular migration from Afghanistan. The first round of data collection in August 2016 - referred to as Wave 1 in this report - piloted the research methodology on a small sample of Afghans planning irregular migration to Europe (40 male subjects from Nangarhar).

The current round of data collection - Wave 2 - broadened the sample size to 210 respondents in 14 provinces. Seefar administered a structured survey to these respondents in January and February 2018. Ten respondents from Wave 1 were also present in Wave 2 and 200 respondents were new to the study. Over the next year, Seefar will conduct a longitudinal analysis of the migration perspectives and prospects of the current respondents. A more detailed discussion of the research methodology can be found in Annex 1.

Using this report as a baseline study, Seefar will publish three subsequent benchmark reports every three months. The longitudinal dimension of the study will allow for a clear understanding of how the circumstances impacting migration decision-making in Afghanistan evolve over time.

As the start of a longitudinal study, this report provides insights into:

1. the motivations of Afghans planning to use irregular channels to reach Europe; [1]
2. the conditions that affect an individual's migration decision;
3. the influences on motivating, planning and facilitating an irregular journey abroad; and
4. how migration decision-making has changed since Wave 1. [2]

While this study has a larger sample size than Wave 1, the findings are not intended to be representative of all potential Afghan migrants[3] to Europe but are indicative findings that will inform future rounds of data collection.

[1] The study's screening criteria sought Afghans who hoped to migrate to Europe, and consequently the study's findings do not speak to Afghans interested in migrating to other locations.

[2] This study compares key migration metrics with Wave 1 and adopts a case study approach to examine how migration decision-making has evolved for the ten respondents who were also included in Wave 1.

[3] This report uses the term 'migrant' broadly. Movement in and around Afghanistan is extremely complex and often multi-causal. In this context, the term 'migrant' should be viewed as an umbrella for various categories of people on the move, including asylum-seekers. This report makes no judgment on the merits of an individual respondent's potential claim to asylum.

Key Findings

Economic and security push factors continued to drive migration aspirations

While both insecurity and economic conditions strongly influenced migration aspirations, financial factors appeared to play a stronger role in motivating migration than the security context. With high unemployment rates, the Wave 2 sample echoed the first report in flagging the importance of economic migration drivers. Pull factors were largely absent from the data; respondents focused entirely on these two push factors when describing their migration motivations.

Short-term gains would facilitate migration; long-term improvement would discourage migration

Most Afghan respondents would be dissuaded from migrating if they could sustainably improve their economic well-being. The data reveals significant job dissatisfaction even among those who had jobs (73%, 61 of 83 respondents), emphasising that livelihood *quality* - not just availability - is a key dimension of migration decision-making. The length of time that respondents had lived in their current locations is correlated with their employment status: those who are employed are less likely to be currently on the move. Similarly, most of those who had not yet left their homes to begin a migration process had lived in the same location for five or more years. Conversely, short-term economic gains may facilitate migration plans, as some respondents shared that they are simply waiting for sufficient funds before beginning their migration journeys.

Family and friends at home encouraged or dissuaded migration decision-making

Family and friends at home were the most-trusted sources of information on migration among all respondents and had a strong influence on migration plans. Specifically, the Wave 2 sample included ten Afghans who also took part in Wave 1. Among these respondents, four had abandoned their migration plans. While many factors influenced the decision to stay in Afghanistan, each of these respondents noted that their family's opinion influenced their decision. They also noted that policy changes in destination and transit countries towards Afghans (e.g., asylum procedures, detention policies, involuntary return) were a secondary reason why they chose to change their migration plans.

Preliminary longitudinal data shows unrealistic migration timelines

Among the six Wave 1 respondents present in Wave 2 who still intended to irregularly migrate, each reported advancing their migration planning 'stage'. However, these respondents were far behind schedule - on average, 17 months behind schedule - based on their migration plans expressed in Wave 1. This data suggests that Afghans intending to migrate may hold unrealistic expectations of their migration journey, as exemplified by poor estimations of their departure date.

Personal networks abroad directly influenced migration planning

Family and friends living abroad were also an important source of migration information for respondents, particularly related to migration planning. Their stories generally provided respondents with a positive view of life abroad, though some also shared negative migration experiences. Connections abroad also strongly influenced destination preferences. For example, respondents who reported that their largest international network was in Germany were disproportionately likely to prefer Germany as a migration destination.

Respondents showed increased migration motivation

Most Wave 1 respondents indicated that they would be open to reconsidering their intention to migrate. For example, 88% of Wave 1 respondents said that improvement to their personal or family's economic situation would encourage them to stay in Afghanistan. This number fell to just 24% in Wave 2. Nearly a quarter of Wave 2 respondents said that *nothing* would dissuade them from their migration plans (23%). This will be a key area to explore in subsequent rounds of data collection.

Increased migration motivation was also reflected by respondents' long-term time horizons. About 7% of respondents cited an overall lack of future in Afghanistan as a reason for their migration. The pervasive lack of hope regarding the future could help explain why all new Wave 2 respondents planned to live abroad for more than one year.

Migrants preferred Germany and largely held positive views of life abroad

Germany was the most common location of respondents' overseas contacts in Wave 2 (35%), followed by Belgium (12%), Sweden (12%) and the United Kingdom (10%). Similarly, most respondents who had a specific migration destination in Wave 2 preferred Germany (27%), Sweden (14%) and France (11%). Most respondents said that their overseas contacts gave them information on the possibilities of finding work, migration policies, routes, and hazards of the journey. These conversations provided most respondents with positive impressions of life abroad.

Background

Contextual analysis

Afghanistan has experienced decades of political instability, economic difficulty, conflict and insecurity. This context has created a complex picture of migration and displacement. Between 2012 and 2016, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Afghanistan more than tripled. Today there are over 1.5 million IDPs in Afghanistan, many of whom have been displaced multiple times or live in protracted displacement[4]. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports over 400,000 conflict-induced displacements in Afghanistan in 2017 alone.[5]

The domestic situation is further complicated by the recent influx of returnees from Iran and Pakistan, driven largely by the decreased willingness of Afghanistan's neighbours to continue hosting large numbers of refugees. An average of 300,000 people has returned to Afghanistan annually since 2012,[6] including a spike of nearly 1 million returnees in 2016.[7] Many returnees who lived abroad for decades return involuntarily to a country that they do not know. Thousands more Afghan refugees remain in Pakistan today under constant threat of return and in difficult living conditions - a reality that leaves families uncertain about their future.[8]

While some returnees receive cash-based assistance on return, there is little long-term reintegration support available in Afghanistan. Returnees arrive in Afghanistan with little information regarding the ongoing conflict or knowledge on how to access livelihood opportunities and social support. In this context, many returnees become de facto IDPs.

Many Afghans seek domestic and cross-border migration in pursuit of livelihood opportunities, or for mixed security and economic motivations. While many travel irregularly to Iran or Pakistan, thousands more continue their journey in an effort to reach Europe. In 2017, Afghans were the third-largest national group arriving in Greece, the principal point of entry for irregular migrants on the Eastern Mediterranean route.[9]

With legal pathways for international migration limited or unavailable for the majority of Afghans, those wishing to leave the country generally adopt irregular

4 http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/afghanistan

5 https://data.humdata.org/organization/ocha-afghanistan

6 https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/escaping-war-where-to-next2/nrc_idp_escaping-war_where-to-next.pdf

7 https://www.voanews.com/a/over-one-million-afghan-refugees-returned-home-in-2016/3641761.html

8 https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/unhcr-supports-pakistan-afghanistan-secure-sustainable-solutions-afghan-refugees

9 UNHCR recorded 3,653 arrivals of Afghan irregular migrants to Greece between January 1, 2017 and January 31, 2018. See http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean/location/5179 (accessed February 28, 2018).

channels of movement. For many, the outcomes of irregular migration have been disadvantageous or dangerous. Migrants may be stranded in transit countries, vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking, or suffer physical and psychological trauma.

Assessing the quality and amount of information available to potential migrants is a key part of understanding decision-making on irregular migration. Migrants may come to regret the decision to migrate when the anticipated rewards of irregular migration - usually some combination of safety and economic prosperity - do not justify the physical, economic, and emotional investments made. For example, migrants may underestimate the fees they need to pay smugglers, while overestimating the ease and speed of finding work at their destination. Thus, Afghans may make the decision to irregularly migrate on the basis of poor, misleading, or misinterpreted information. While legal options are hard to come by, many Afghans dismiss the possibility of legal alternatives based on poor information, including poor understanding of how to access legal and regional migration opportunities, local economic activities, or educational offers.[10]

Research need

Existing research tends to focus on high-level, structural drivers of migration. While this approach makes clear that endemic economic and physical insecurity are deeply related to Afghan migration, it often fails to explain why some people choose to leave their homes while others do not. Moreover, research tends to focus on migrants who have reached the EU and applied for asylum. Such research consequently excludes those who are unsuccessful or who do not depart at all. Thus, this method does not offer a full picture of the complex and dynamic decision-making process that leads an individual to leave his or her home country in the first place.[11] Further challenges in this approach include:

- migrants struggle to retroactively describe their decision-making processes – as do most people when asked to recount thought processes, especially after traumatic events;
- the reasons a migrant may not want to return home can be (or become) different from why they left in the first place; and
- non-longitudinal research gives a 'snapshot' of how migrants think and feel at a certain moment in time, but does not capture how their views evolve over time as a result of changes in the local context.

While studies conducted at a potential migrant's location of origin (not limited to Afghanistan) with a focus on decision-making are growing in number, these studies tend to focus on populations already on the move (e.g., IDPs and returnees).[12] Others highlight government harassment and corruption as key concerns, although these factors are often mentioned by respondents in the context of constraints on their economic progress.[13] For some former employees of Western armed forces and organisations, migration is a response to the fear of reprisals by local armed actors, including the Taliban and the Islamic State group (referred to as ISIS in this report).

On the other hand, the aim of this study is to engage with potential migrants before departure, while they are making the decision to migrate. Over the last few years, development actors have been redirecting funding to address the 'root causes' of migration, yet programming may be inefficient without a clearer understanding of how and why people make the decision to leave. By understanding migrant aspirations and motivations, donors can better direct development spending to construct safe and legal alternatives to irregular migration, while also empowering potential migrants to make fully-informed migration decisions.

This study will build on existing knowledge to explore, over a two-year period, how Afghans in key migration-affected provinces decide whether irregular migration

10 Statement based on Seefar's research and programmes in Afghanistan, which have reached thousands of potential Afghan migrants.

11 For a deeper discussion, see https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Before%20the%20Boat-Townsend-FINALWEB.pdf.

12 See, for example, the variety of research studies commissioned by NRC-Afghanistan in recent years.

13 http://www.gsdrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/HDQ12432.pdf, 3.

is the best response to their circumstances. The data collected by this longitudinal study will:

- offer insight into individual decision-making processes from the perspective of migrants themselves, and explore why some Afghans embark on irregular migration journeys while others stay put;
- elucidate what kind of interventions at origin might help change minds, and where such an intervention could be cost-effective for policymakers; and
- provide a better understanding of how potential Afghan migrants understand, process and react to policies in transit and destination countries.

Research locations

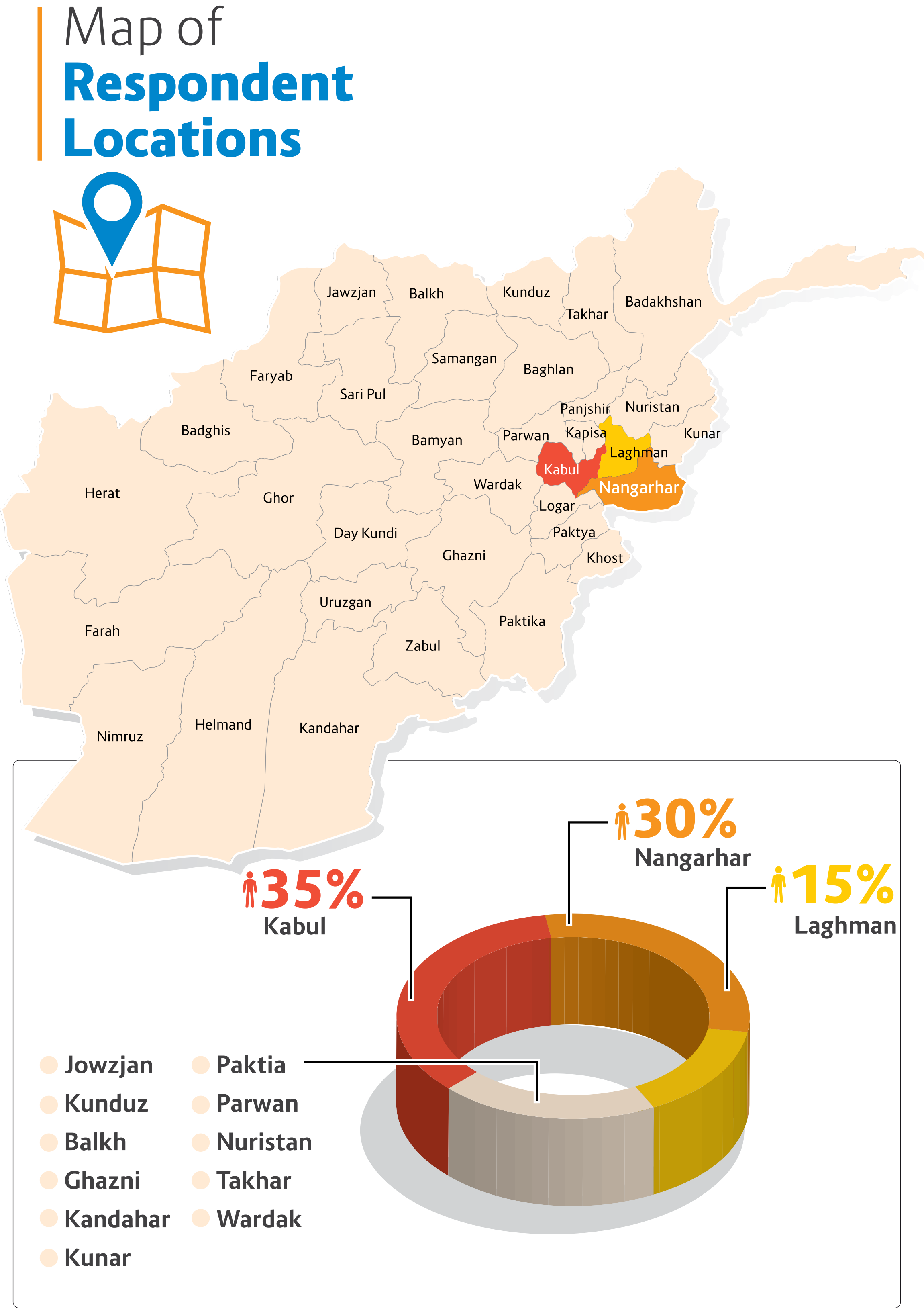
Wave 1 focused exclusively on Afghans in Nangarhar, interviewing respondents based primarily in Jalalabad and Behsood. The current sample had a much broader geographic scope and reached Afghans in over a dozen provinces, as shown in Figure 1. However, most of the research focused on respondents in Kabul, Nangarhar and Laghman - three areas that have long been characterised by migration and displacement dynamics.[14] Each of these provinces contains a highly transient population that includes large numbers of returnees and IDPs.

Kabul Province holds Afghanistan's eponymous capital, also the nation's largest city, which is frequently a stopping point for migrants beginning their migration journeys. While precise population figures are unavailable due to rapid population changes in recent years, a 2015 estimate put the city of Kabul's population at around 4.6 million people.[15] It is home to countless informal settlements of IDPs, returnees, and aspiring migrants. Some stay in the province briefly, while others - unable to return home, or lacking a home to return to - have remained in Kabul for years or even decades. Kabul is also increasingly the site of targeted violence and attacks carried out by the Taliban and other Armed Opposition Groups (AOGs) against the Government of Afghanistan.

[14] See, for example, https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/escaping-war-where-to-next-the-challenges-of-idp-protection-in-Afghanistan/

[15] http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/kabul-population/

Figure 1: Provinces of residence for respondents in Wave 2 (%)



Nangarhar is a mountainous province in the east of Afghanistan bordering Pakistan. It is home to a majority-Pashtun population of approximately 1.5 million people.[16] The eastern provinces of Afghanistan have a long history of circular migration, displacement, and trade across the border with Pakistan. Millions of Afghans sought refuge in Pakistan during periods of conflict and violence, including the Soviet War in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan, and the more recent conflict pitting internationally-supported Afghan troops against the Taliban and ISIS.

Across Nangarhar, one in three people is either a returnee or an IDP. The 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) notes that 'the number of informal settlements [in Nangarhar] increased from 29 to 53 between February and July 2017 and the population size from approximately 429,000 to just under one million'.[17] This enormous influx of returnees and displaced persons - as well as migrants arriving in Nangarhar en route to Pakistan - has put extraordinary pressure on local services such as housing, education and healthcare, leading to a boom in property prices.

Neighbouring Laghman shares many similarities with Nangarhar. While it does not directly share a border with Pakistan, it is a largely rural province with a highly mobile population. In recent years, it has similarly been affected by the influx of returnees in the east of Afghanistan. The Government of Afghanistan has a very small footprint in Laghman, and humanitarian actors have faced increasing difficulty operating there in recent years due to the presence of the Taliban and ISIS. The complex migration contexts in Laghman and Nangarhar are deeply affected by the volatile security environment. Insurgent activity, including attacks with Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and kidnappings, is common.[18] Clashes between the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the Taliban took place throughout 2016 and 2017 amid confrontations between different non-state actors.

Both the Government of Afghanistan and international forces have conducted airstrikes against AOGs in the provinces.[19] Cross-border shelling, which has become a major concern of humanitarian actors, has resulted in displacement, injury, and death along the border with Pakistan, particularly affecting Nangarhar.

16 http://www.landinfo.no/asset/3493/1/3493_1.pdf, 7.

17 https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/document/afghanistan-humanitarian-needs-overview-2018

18 Ibid.

19 https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/us-cites-progress-against-islamic-state-in-afghanistan/2017/04/06/70609d38-1ace-11e7-8598-9a99da559f9e_story.html?utm_term=.24724976fc13.

Wave 1 Summary

Wave 1 of this research study took place in August 2016 in Nangarhar. Researchers administered structured surveys - nearly identical to the Wave 2 survey instruments - to 40 Afghan men planning to migrate to Europe. Several key findings emerged from this report.

- **Income and security concerns motivated migration decisions.** Respondents generally cited employment (55%) and insecurity (50%) as reasons for migration. Specific threats triggered migration decisions in several cases.
- **Short-term financial gain increased migration motivation.** Immediate financial gains were viewed by many respondents as means for financing migration; when respondents saw economic improvements as long-term or sustainable, they were more likely to stay.
- **Migration decisions were made over a period of months.** This incubation period means there is ample opportunity to provide potential migrants with more information about the realities of irregular migration.
- **Social networks and family heavily informed migration decisions.** Personal networks - particularly friends and family - conversations with returnees, and word of mouth information strongly influenced migration planning.
- **Respondents understood that irregular journeys are risky.** Respondents were generally aware of the dangers of an irregular migration journey, listing

dangerous border crossings, police brutality, and the possibility of drowning in the case of sea voyages as examples.

- **Respondents found smugglers easy to access.** Many respondents said that a smuggler could easily be found through family and friends, and 40% had already contacted a smuggler.

This first wave raised three areas for examination in the current report. First, many respondents chose to migrate reluctantly and may be responsive to interventions that improve long-term economic opportunity. Future waves will be able to track how attitudes towards migration change as local economic conditions fluctuate. Second, better understanding the influence of returnees on potential migrants - and particularly the influence of returnees who share negative migration experiences - will be a research focus. Last, the influence of Afghan and international policies on migration decision-making remains unclear. Future waves will shed more light on the dynamics of social networks, the profiles and roles of smugglers, and the reality of the journey versus respondents' expectations.

Deciding to Leave

Understanding the Wave 2 sample

The research focuses specifically on Afghan men (ages 15 and older) who plan to migrate to Europe - a sampling decision reflective of the overwhelmingly male composition of Afghan arrivals in Europe.

Given its larger scope and sample size, the Wave 2 sample is more diverse than the previous round of data collection. Instead of focusing only on Nangarhar, respondents were scattered across 14 provinces, though primarily concentrated in Kabul, Nangarhar, and Laghman. Both samples are predominantly Pashtun, but Wave 2 included a higher proportion of Tajiks (36%, 75 out of 210 respondents) and included several respondents identifying as Hazara, Uzbek, or Arab. Single men, ages 19-34 with no dependent children, represented the majority in both samples.

The diversity of the Wave 2 sample – age, ethnicity, education and other characteristics highlighted in more detail in Annex 2 – illustrates how migration transcends many traditional demographic categories in Afghanistan. Moreover, it reveals the highly individualized and varied circumstances in which respondents were planning their journeys.[20]

The sample displayed a high degree of mobility: most respondents in Wave 2 had only lived in their current location for two to four years. Some respondents were returnees or had previous migration experience, including 28 respondents who had returned to Afghanistan in either 2016 or 2017 (13% of the sample). While the survey did not assess causes of internal movement, the broader context of insecurity and poverty makes it likely that respondents may have included IDPs in addition to internal migrants and returnees.

The sample also displayed a clear urbanisation trend, as shown in Figure 2 below. While about one-third of respondents were born in a rural location (32%, 67 out of 210 respondents), about 90% of respondents lived in urban environments at the time of their interview (189 out of 210 respondents). This trend differs from the data in Wave 1, where 60% of respondents lived in a rural environment and 80% were born in a rural environment.

[20] The Wave 2 sample is not statistically representative of all potential migrants in Afghanistan, but nonetheless includes a diverse range of in respondent age, ethnicity, location, location of origin, migration plans, and other characteristics.

Figure 2: Respondent environment (rural, urban) in Wave 2 (%, #)

Urbanisation

Is your current environment rural or urban	WAVE 1 %	WAVE 1 #	WAVE 2 %	WAVE 2 #
Rural	60%	24	10%	21
Urban	40%	16	90%	189
Total	100%	40	100%	210

As in Wave 1, respondents revealed high unemployment levels, as shown in Figure 3 below. Just 40% of respondents (83 out of 210 respondents) reported any type of employment (part-time, self-employment, or full-time employment). Only 13% of respondents (27 out of 210 respondents) reported full-time employment. In Wave 1, 55% of respondents reported some type of employment (22 out of 40 respondents). There are no meaningful differences in employment rates between respondents in urban and rural locations. Among respondents who are 18 or younger, just four out of nine (44%) were in full-time education; of the remaining five, one described himself as working part-time, while the other four said that they were unemployed and looking for work.

Figure 3: Employment status for respondents in Wave 1 and Wave 2 (%, #)

Employment Status on **Respondent**

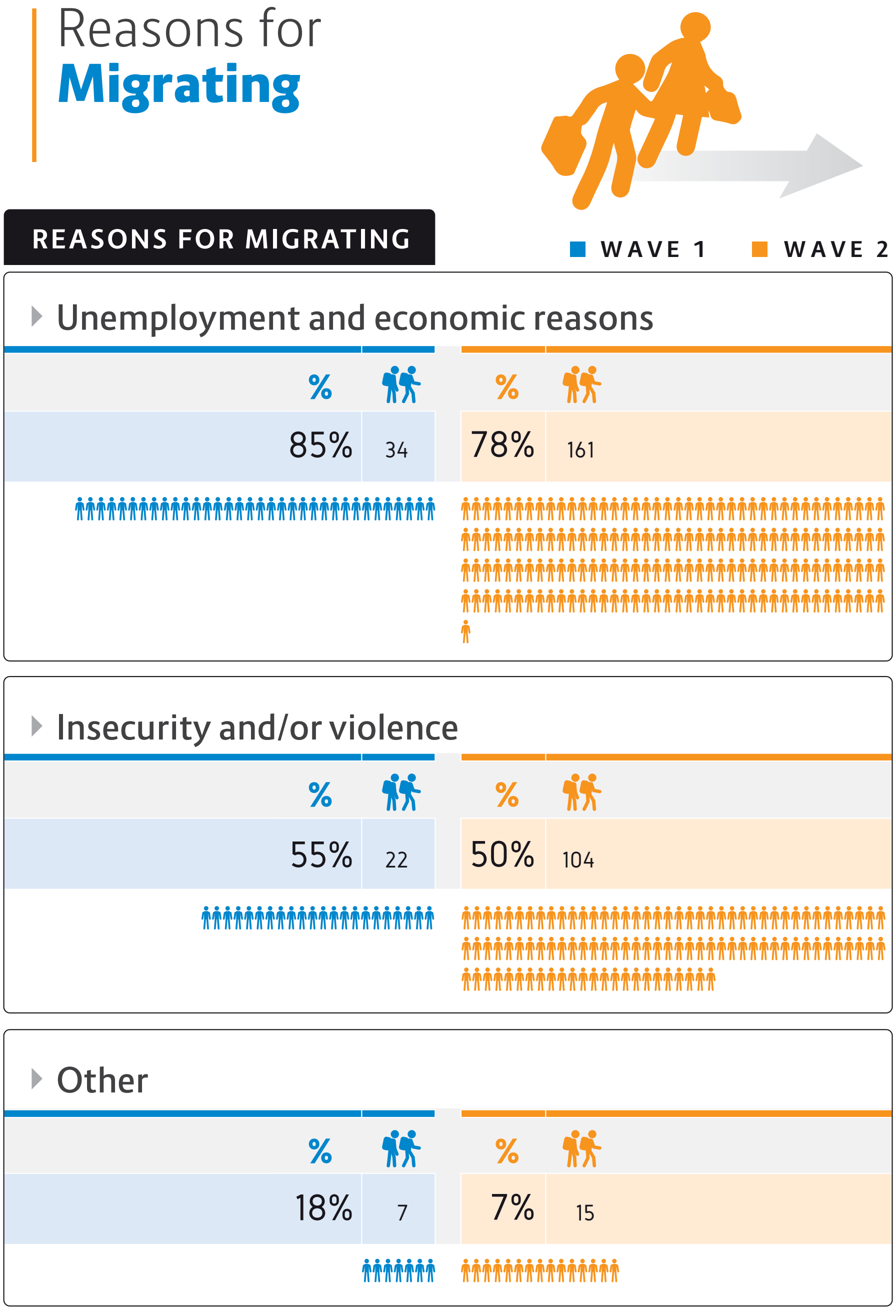
Rising unemployment is a difference between the two waves. Here's the data:

What is your employment status?	WAVE 1 %	WAVE 1 #	WAVE 2 %	WAVE 2 #
Full-time salaried employee	45%	18	13%	27
Part-time salaried employee	5%	2	26%	54
Self employed	5%	2	1%	2
In full-time education	10%	4	2%	5
Unemployed, looking for work	35%	14	49%	102
Unemployed, other	0%	0	9%	20
TOTAL	100%	40	100%	210

Reasons for migration

Respondents overwhelmingly cited push factors in explaining their migration decision. Few discussed hopes and aspirations in determining their migration plans. In Wave 1, a small percentage of respondents noted hope for improved education (for themselves or their children) as a pull factor incentivizing their migration. Such pull factors were all but absent from the Wave 2 data, where respondents focused on dangers at home, lack of opportunities in Afghanistan, and an overall sense of hopelessness in their country as explanations for their desire to migrate. These sentiments align with recent research on the national mood in Afghanistan by The Asia Foundation.[21]

Figure 4: Reasons for migration in Wave 1 and Wave 2 (%, #)



21 See The Asia Foundation's Survey of the Afghan People, available at https://asiafoundation.org/where-we-work/afghanistan/survey/

Economic and conflict-related factors were the leading explanations for migration. Both Wave 1 and Wave 2 respondents cited economic concerns as the primary motivation for migration (85% in Wave 1, 78% in Wave 2). Both waves also mentioned conflict as a strong push factor (55% in Wave 1, 50% in Wave 2). The similar distribution of responses in both waves is striking (though not statistically significant) and provides a degree of insight into the fundamental importance of both factors in motivating migration.

The data from Wave 2 reinforces a key finding from Wave 1 that in addition to unemployment, underemployment (e.g., insufficiency of pay, infrequency of work, etc.,) was a major factor in the migration decision-making process. There are extremely high levels of employment dissatisfaction among respondents in the Wave 2 sample who are currently employed. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of those who are employed reported being either somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their work. This number varied based on employment status. Among full-time workers, 64% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their work; whereas 84% of those reporting part-time work or self-employment said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.[22]

> 'No place is secure - not even our own homes. There's no work. We can't even afford the rent of our house, so we want to leave.'
>
> Pashtun male, 19-24 years old, Batikot

The influence of unemployment and job dissatisfaction is particularly acute in contrast with Wave 1. In the first wave of data collection, 75% of respondents reported being the principal income-earners for their household; in Wave 2, about half of respondents (48%) report being the main breadwinner for their families. The fact that economic pressures are just as acute in a larger sample with fewer primary income-earners highlights the importance of livelihood availability and sustainability on migration decisions.

The length of time an individual has spent in their current location is correlated with their employment status. Among respondents who report full-time employment, 85% have lived in their current location for more than 4 years. This evidence may support a key finding from the Wave 1 report: long-term economic well-being is correlated with lower levels of movement and mobility, while short-term economic gains may facilitate migration plans.[23]

In addition to economic factors, security concerns clearly play an important role in the migration decision-making process. For example, about 19% of respondents who reported having a specific destination country in mind said that they expected to feel safer in their desired destination (22 out of 114 respondents). While the Wave 1 report found that specific fears of persecution, violence, crime, and targeting by non-state actors motivated migration plans, this finding was not substantiated in the current sample.

About half of the Wave 2 sample (104 out of 210 respondents) indicated that concerns about violence and war were the primary reason they planned to migrate. Yet few offered specific details about such fears. One respondent mentioned 'war with the Taliban', but no other specific parties to the conflict aside from the Government of Afghanistan were mentioned.

The data in this wave suggests that general fears of insecurity and violence - not targeted fears - are a motivation of migration. This could provide insight into a greater percentage of respondents pointed to

> 'In Afghanistan, there is no job security. Also, the security situation is not good. My children do not have access to a good education. I need to go to Germany and work from there and send money back to family. Once I got my passport than I can invite my children to come to Germany'
>
> Pashtun male, 25-34 years old, Jalalabad

[22] Chi2 distribution of responses is stat sig (p=.025)

[23] Technical note: both Chi2 and Pearson's R tests are stat sig at p<.05 between variables representing duration of stay in current location and indicator variable for full-time employment.

changes in national and regional-level security (39%) as an influence on their migration decision-making in contrast with respondents who said that changes to their personal or family security situation would encourage them to stay (27%). However, more detailed information on specific security threats should be a key area to target in the next wave of data collection.

In addition to economic and security factors, about 7% of respondents cited an overall lack of future in Afghanistan as a reason for their migration. As one respondent succinctly explained, ‘One’s future is not guaranteed here’ (Pashtun male, 25-34 years old, Jalalabad). This insight can help explain the long-term view of migration held by respondents: all respondents new to the Wave 2 sample not only planned to migrate but planned to migrate for an extended period of time (more than one year).

Previous migration experience

Both the Wave 1 and Wave 2 samples included sizable representation of Afghans who had previously lived abroad for at least six months. In Wave 1, 36% of respondents (13) had lived outside of Afghanistan; in Wave 2, about 33% of respondents (69) had previously lived abroad for at least six months. Among those respondents who had previously lived abroad, most had lived in Pakistan (72%), followed by Turkey (19%) and Iran (9%). No respondents reported previous migration experience in Europe.

In addition to location, previous migration experiences varied significantly by time spent abroad. About 38% of Wave 2 respondents said that they stayed abroad for six to 12 months while 33% said that they stayed abroad for four or more years. When asked about their most recent migration experience, 41% of respondents who had previously lived abroad returned in 2015 or 2016; 33% returned prior to 2010. No one returned in 2017. Among those who had previously lived abroad, about 19% of respondents (13 respondents) had left the country twice, and two respondents had left the country three times before.

War and insecurity were, by far, the leading reasons cited by respondents for why they previously left Afghanistan, cited by 81% of returnees in the Wave 2 sample (85 out of 105 respondents). Lack of employment opportunities and inability to access healthcare were each cited by about 12% of respondents as reasons for their previous migration. This data highlights a shift from security migration motivations - referenced by returnees in describing their previous migration - to the widespread economic motivations that characterised the Wave 2 sample.

Most Wave 2 respondents who had previously lived abroad returned voluntarily to Afghanistan (69%, 48 respondents), and 6% (four respondents) reported returning voluntarily with the support of an international organisation. Another 25% of respondents who had previously lived abroad (17 respondents) reported that their return was not voluntary: they were deported. This represents an increase from the Wave 1 sample, where just one respondent said that his return was involuntary.

While most did not provide an explanation for their return aside from its ‘voluntary’ nature,[24] many described difficulties abroad as reasons for their return (30%). Such difficulties included general unease abroad, deportation and the dangers of the passage.

The profiles of respondents who had lived abroad previously are similar to respondents who had never left the country. For example, employment (and unemployment) rates are similar between the two groups,[25] and they report the main causes of migration in relatively similar numbers.

> ‘Security was good before. Jobs were easy to find. Now security is bad; so too is the job situation. That’s why people are leaving.’
>
> Pashtun male, 19-24 years old, Batikot

[24] The term ‘voluntary’ was used as both a description of the type of return as well as an explanation by many for why they chose to return.

[25] X^2 tests were not statistically significant.

Perceptions of migration and migrants

In Wave 1, 83% of respondents (33 respondents) reported that migration had grown more popular over the past year. The 'net migration popularity' change in Wave 1 was +68.[26]

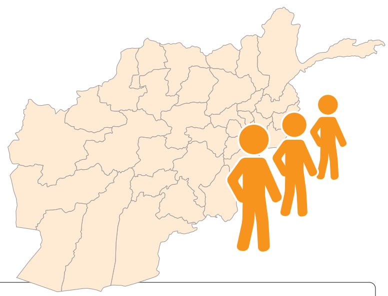
Wave 2 respondents had a more muted response to this question, as illustrated in Figure 5. Nearly a third of respondents in Wave 2 (31%, 65 respondents) reported that migration had become more popular in the last year, while 13% (27 respondents) said that migration had grown less popular. The remaining respondents answered 'not sure', 'do not know', or said that migration has stayed at the same level of popularity over the last year. Overall, Wave 2 respondents reported a net migration popularity change of +18.

By far, respondents viewed insecurity and unemployment as the biggest reasons for migration becoming more popular. Unemployment was cited by 94% of respondents as a reason for migration becoming more popular; insecurity was mentioned by 46% of respondents.

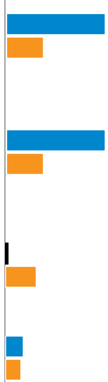
There was some variance in perceptions of migration's popularity based on the respondent's province, as shown in Figure 6. For example, 41% of respondents in Nangarhar (26 out of 63 respondents) reported that migration had grown more popular over the last year: this was that highest rate in the sample. As a major

Figure 5: Migration popularity in Wave 1 and Wave 2 (#, %)

Migration
Popularity

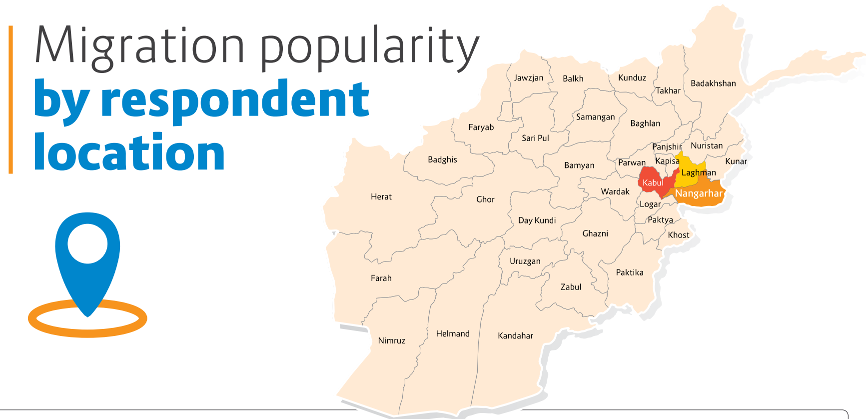


In your opinion, how was the popularity of migration changed over the past year, if at all?	WAVE 1 %	WAVE 1 #	WAVE 2 %	WAVE 2 #
Migration is more popular	83%	33	31%	65
No change	0%	0	30%	64
Don't know/not sure	2%	1	26%	54
Migration is less popular	15%	40	13%	27
TOTAL	100%	40	100%	210



[26] 'net migration popularity' is derived by subtracting the percentage of respondents who report that migration has grown *less popular* from those who report that it has grown *more popular* over the last year.

Figure 6: Migration popularity by respondent province in Wave 2 (#, %)



Migration popularity over the last year

PROVINCE OF RESIDENCE	MORE POPULAR	LESS POPULAR	NO CHANGE	DO NOT KNOW / NOT SURE
Kabul	28	14	20	11
% of Kabul	38%	19%	27%	15%
Laghman	8	2	13	8
% of Laghman	26%	6%	42%	26%
Nangarhar	26	9	16	12
% of Nangarhar	41%	14%	25%	19%
Other	3	2	15	23
% of Other	7%	5%	35%	53%
Total	65	27	64	54
% All respondents	31%	13%	30%	26%

site of migration and displacement in Afghanistan, it is reasonable to expect that residents of Nangarhar would believe migration to be more popular. This also can help explain why Wave 2's data on migration popularity is markedly different from the Wave 1 sample, as all respondents in Wave 1 were based in Nangarhar.

On the other hand, 19% of respondents in Kabul (14 out of 73 respondents) said that migration had grown less popular over the last year, and there are other regional trends in this dimension illustrated in the figure above.

However, these regional differences are not statistically significant. Instead, they may suggest that further research on migration perceptions by region would be useful in future research waves.

Most respondents - they themselves planning to migrate to Europe - held mixed views on those who choose to leave Afghanistan. In the first wave, 28% of respondents (11 out of 39 respondents who answered this question) held negative impressions of Afghan migrants; this number decreased to just 2% of respondents in the second wave (4 out of 210 respondents). Yet Wave 2 respondents did not generally hold positive views of migrants, either: only 20% of Wave 2 respondents reported an 'overall positive impression' of migrants, similar to the 13% of Wave 1 respondents who reported the same. In both samples, a majority of respondents either said that they had a 'mixed impression' of migrants or a 'neutral impression / no impression'. Qualitatively, the widespread recognition of economic and conflict factors at home was mentioned in the context of neutral perceptions of migrants.

Migration motivations

Across the data, respondents broadly agreed that changes in either their security or economic well-being would encourage them to remain in Afghanistan. However, The Wave 1 and Wave 2 samples differed on the specific factors that would encourage respondents to stay in Afghanistan instead of pursuing migration. In Wave 1, nearly all respondents (88%, 35 out of 40 respondents) said that the strongest influence on their migration plans would be a positive change to their personal or their family's financial situation. This number fell to just 24% of Wave 2 respondents (50 out of 210 respondents). Wave 2 respondents appeared to roughly equally weigh security and economic considerations as potential dissuading factors on their migration planning, though security conditions were represented in slightly greater numbers.

The Wave 1 report found that those considering migration were swayed more strongly by long-term economic well-being rather than short-term economic gain. Specifically, immediate improvements in a family's economic situation was viewed as a means of financing migration plans, whereas sustainable livelihood opportunities were viewed as a factor that would dissuade migration. In the Wave 2 data, the decreased prominence of the individual or family's economic situation on migration plans may affirm this finding - if respondents are thinking in the short-term. Respondents in the Wave 2 sample frequently mentioned a variation of 'I am waiting for the right time to leave' in explaining their migration motivations. Thus, subsequent waves of data collection should carefully inspect this motivation.

> 'The situation is bad, so is the security... we are faced with many domestic problems, that's why we want to leave.'
>
> Pashtun male, 25-34 years old, Asadabad

This change reflects that the Wave 2 sample was far more motivated to migrate than Wave 1 respondents. Just two respondents in the Wave 1 sample indicated that 'nothing would stop' them from migrating; in the Wave 2 sample, 23% of respondents (48 out of 210) said that nothing would prevent them from pursuing migration. Moreover, in each area that could influence migration plans, a lower percentage of Wave 2 respondents reported that their migration plans could be swayed than the percentage of Wave 1 respondents, as reflected in Figure 7. For example, personal or family security improvements would have encouraged 53% of Wave 1 respondents (21 out of 40 respondents) to stay, but such changes would only lead 27% of Wave 2 respondents (55 out of 206 respondents) to stay.

The two samples also differed in how they perceived personal-level changes and national-level changes in relation to their migration plans. Wave 1 respondents were highly influenced by changes at both the personal level and at the national-level, as shown in the figure above. Conversely, the Wave 2 sample appeared to be more sensitive to national and regional changes. From the Wave 2 respondents, 68% cited national or regional-level changes to their economic or security environment as influences on their migration plans, while 51% of respondents cited personal economic or security conditions as factors that could encourage them to stay.

Figure 7: Reasons for staying in Wave 1 and Wave 2 (%, #)

Reasons for **Staying**

REASONS FOR STAYING	WAVE 1 %	WAVE 1 #	WAVE 2 %	WAVE 2 #
National/regional security	60%	24	39%	81
National/regional economic	50%	20	29%	59
Personal/family security	53%	21	27%	55
Personal/family financial/economic	88%	35	24%	50
No, there is nothing that would stop me from leaving	5%	2	23%	48

The top factor that would encourage Wave 2 respondents to stay in Afghanistan was positive changes in the national or regional security environment (39% of respondents); this was closely followed by changes in the national or regional economic context (29% of respondents). The shift from personal to national factors could be a natural result of a broader sample, or it could suggest a pervasive hopelessness about Afghanistan among the respondents. Further research on this point in subsequent research waves would be valuable, particularly in the context of research on the national mood in Afghanistan by The Asia Foundation.

The absence of certain other factors in the dataset was noticeable. For example, none of the Wave 2 respondents said that policy changes at their destination country would encourage them to change their migration plans. Similarly, respondents were unmotivated by local opportunities - no respondents said that new opportunities at home would encourage them to change their plans. Lastly, while some Wave 1 respondents said that government corruption and poor governance related to their desire to migrate, not a single Wave 2 respondent said that improvements to national or regional governance would encourage them to stay, and just one respondent said that improvement to local governance would encourage him to stay.

Planning the Journey

Influences and information sources

The Wave 1 report found that the personal networks of potential migrants heavily influence their migration planning. Such influences included networks abroad, word of mouth information, and family and friends. This finding was firmly supported in the Wave 2 data, as discussed below.

Contacts abroad: Most respondents in the Wave 2 sample did not have a large network outside of Afghanistan - just 24% of respondents (51 respondents) spoke with at least one person outside of Afghanistan at least once per year. This is a decrease from the Wave 1 sample, where 88% of respondents (35 out of 40) reported speaking with at least one person outside of Afghanistan at least once per year. However, among the minority of respondents in Wave 2 who did speak with someone regularly outside of Afghanistan, they tended to have large networks. Specifically, 63% of those with a network abroad (33 respondents) spoke with between four and nine people outside of Afghanistan at least once per year.

Germany, by far, was cited as the location of contacts who lived abroad (35%), followed by Belgium (12%), Sweden (12%), and the United Kingdom (10%). While most respondents did not receive remittances or financial support from contacts abroad, they received information on the possibilities of finding work, migration policies, routes, hazards of the journey, and a variety of other information (discussed in subsequent sections). These conversations gave most respondents positive impressions of life abroad. More than three-quarters of those with contacts abroad cited positive impressions of the security context, job opportunities, and quality of life in those countries. One respondent said: 'Life's easy there. People live a peaceful life. Security is good. Life's very good there' (Pashtun male, 19-24 years old, Behsood).

Only a handful of respondents had formed negative impressions of countries abroad through conversations with their migrant contacts, and just one respondent specified adverse conditions in the countries that their contacts lived in (e.g., few job opportunities or difficult life conditions). He said: '[My contacts abroad] said that life in Western countries is very difficult. There is no work and we cannot make money. You should not come, you have good job in Afghanistan and you have a home'. However, the same respondent noted that such advice may not be true for everyone. He went on to say: 'But IDPs living in this area have no chance for a good life here' (Pashtun Male, 25-34 years old, Jalalabad).

Facebook Messenger was by far the most common form of keeping in touch with contacts abroad, cited by 75% of respondents. This data aligns with the findings from Wave 1, where 78% of respondents (31 out of 40 respondents) used Facebook Messenger to communicate

> 'They are telling me to come. They can support my travel costs - they said that they can pay half of the cost of my trip. But they say, 'please come the safe way'. They have very good jobs in France and are making good money'.
>
> Pashtun male, 19-24, Jalalabad

with their networks abroad. Other methods of communication with contacts abroad included Viber (37%), WhatsApp (24%), and Facebook.[27] Mobile phones were rarely mentioned by respondents in Wave 2: Just 6% said that they used mobile phone SMS to communicate with contacts abroad, and just 1 respondent said that mobile phone calls were his primary means of communication with contacts abroad.

Returnees: Few respondents reported knowing returnees - individuals who had previously been abroad but had since returned to Afghanistan. Just 13 Wave 2 respondents who were in communication with a network abroad in Wave 2 reported knowing returnees. In contrast, 60% of Wave 1 respondents (21 out of 35 who answered the question) reported knowing returnees. All 13 respondents did speak with these contacts post-return, suggesting that returnees are an important source of information for potential migrants. Similarly, 86% of Wave 1 respondents who knew returnees said that they had discussed their migration plans with them.

The Wave 2 respondents were mixed about whether or not these returnees influenced their migration plans. Roughly half said that these conversations had no influence on their plans; several said that the conversations encouraged their migration; and two respondents said the conversations with returnees actively discouraged their migration plans. The influence and role of returnees remains a source of interest for future research waves.

Sources of information on migration: The three primary sources of information on migration cited by respondents were Facebook (38%), word of mouth communication (38%), and television (34%). Both waves of data collection have the same top two sources of information on migration, as shown in Figure 8.

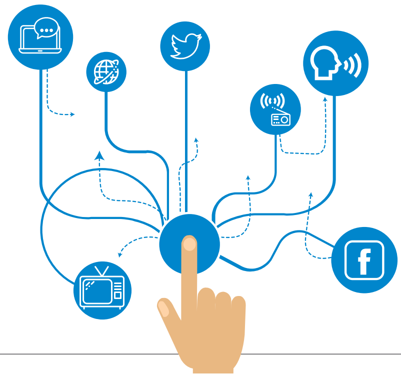
While Facebook was the most popular source of information, word of mouth communication was the most-trusted source of information in both Wave 1 and Wave 2. About 74% of Wave 1 respondents and 39% of Wave 2 respondents reported that word of mouth and informal communication was their most-trusted source of information on migration. While no other source of information on migration received more than three positive responses as a trusted source of information in Wave 1, the data collected in Wave 2 revealed a higher degree of trust in other sources of information. Word of mouth was followed by TV (31%) and Facebook (30%) as the most trusted sources of information by Wave 2 respondents.

Sources of information - and trust in such information - changed in the sample depending on whether or not a respondent had a preferred destination country. Respondents with a specific destination country pointed more to Facebook (45%) and TV (41%) as their primary sources of information about life at their destination. For those respondents, word of mouth was cited by 21% as a source of information on life at destination.

[27] Referring to the social media website, not Facebook Messenger.

Figure 8: Sources of migration information in Wave 1 and Wave 2 (%, #)

Sources of **migration information**



Where do you receive information about migration opportunities or the migration experiences of others?	WAVE 1 %	WAVE 1 #	WAVE 2 %	WAVE 2 #
Facebook	58%	23	38%	80
Word of mouth	93%	37	38%	79
TV	5%	2	34%	71
Other social media	3%	1	10%	22
Online	25%	10	8%	16
Radio	0%	0	2%	4
Twitter	0%	0	1%	3

word of mouth

In both Wave 1 and Wave 2, **the most trusted source of information** on migration was **word of mouth.**

Migration logistics

Planning the journey: Seefar's previous research, including the Wave 1 report, has consistently found that the Afghan context is not often characterised by rapid migration decisions.[28] Instead, migration decisions are made over time and generally follow a series of key steps. Earlier stages consist of logistical and financial planning, while later stages focus on acquiring the means of travel: identifying service providers, negotiating rates, and making final preparations before departure.

The Wave 2 sample represented multiple Afghans at each of these stages. About 33% of respondents (68 out of 206 respondents who answered this question) were at the preliminary planning stage, where they focused on big-picture arrangements and plans. Another 25% of respondents (52 out of 206 respondents) were actively making plans to finance their migration, including selling property or borrowing money. Some 20% of respondents (42 out of 206 respondents) were looking for a smuggler, while 10% (20 out of 206 respondents) had contacted a smuggler, and 5% (10 out of 206 respondents) had contracted either a smuggler or other service provider. Only 7% of respondents (14 out of 206 respondents) reported that all of their arrangements were made, and they were just waiting for their departure. As seen below, financial concerns tend to force a prolonged pause.

About half of the sample (112 out of 210 respondents) had already left their homes or places of habitual residence to begin their migration at the time they were interviewed. Those who reported having already begun the migration process - meaning that they had left their homes already - reported more advanced stages of the migration planning process. Among those who had not yet left their homes, about 75% were in the financial or logistical planning stage; this number was about 50% for those who had already left their homes. Respondents who had already left their homes were much more likely to be looking for a smuggler or in contact with a smuggler (41%) than those who had not yet left their homes (17%).

'For now, I am trying to save money to be ready for the trip. After that I will call the smuggler to come and we will start the trip.'

Pashtun male, 25-34, Jalalabad

Similarly, the length of a respondent's residency was highly correlated with the status of respondents' migration plans. Notably, 68% who have not yet left their homes to begin a migration process have lived in their current location for five or more years, in contrast with 14% of the respondents who have already left their homes.

The sample was split between respondents who planned to migrate alone (43%) and those who planned to leave with friends (37%). The remaining respondents either planned to travel with family or others who were neither friends nor family.

Anticipated departure: Most Wave 2 respondents expected to migrate within three months of the time of the interview (87%). More than a quarter of respondents said that they planned to leave within one week (27%, 55 out of 206 respondents who answered the question), and more than half within one month (57%, 118 respondents).

Surprisingly, those who reported more advanced planning stages were not statistically more likely to report a nearer departure date. For example, about 33% respondents who reported being at the early stages of the migration planning process (either planning logistics or finances related to migration, but not yet reaching out to service providers) said that they planned to depart within one month. This figure is almost identical to the anticipated departure date of respondents who had already made all of their migration plans: five out of 14 respondents (36%) who reported that all migration plans were complete said that they planned to leave within one month. This data suggests that potential migrants do not necessarily have an accurate understanding of the amount of time migration planning entails.

28 This statement is distinct from instances of displacement; as noted previously, Afghanistan has experienced substantial internal and cross-border displacement, where Afghans may need to flee rapidly.

This point is reinforced when looking at the respondents present in both Wave 1 and Wave 2. All six of those still intending to migrate irregularly had underestimated how much time their migration planning would take. On average, these six respondents were about 17 months behind schedule relative to their anticipated departure date reported in Wave 1. For example, in Wave 1 one respondent said that he planned to leave in six to 12 months. In Wave 2 (18 months later), he said he planned to leave within the week.

Smugglers and costs

Service providers: The complexity of irregular migration usually encourages migrants to seek support from smugglers, agents or brokers. Smugglers were usually not known by respondents but part of extended networks. In the Wave 2 sample, about 15% of respondents said that they knew someone who could help them with migration (i.e., a smuggler or service-provider). Most respondents who reported knowing such a person planned to use their services. However, this figure does not entirely map onto the earlier discussion of migration 'stages', where roughly 21% of respondents (44 out of 206 respondents who answered the question) said that they had contacted a smuggler, contracted a service-provider, or made all arrangements. This data disparity may indicate a slight reluctance to discuss smugglers with researchers. Alternatively, it could be indicative of the fact that some Afghans may not know smugglers very well, even if they are in contact with them.

Among those who knew of a service-provider (23%, 50 out of 210 respondents), smugglers were reported to offer a range of migration-related support. Specifically, expected services from smugglers included:

- producing genuine travel documentation (36%, 18 out of 50 respondents)
- providing accommodation and food to migrants in transit (32%, 16 out of 50 respondents)
- arranging and providing transportation (16%, 8 out of 50 respondents)
- offering assistance in obtaining refugee status at destination (12%, 6 out of 50 respondents).

Just three respondents said that a service provider guaranteed safe arrival at destination. Most respondents indicated that smugglers would not provide assistance with jobs or work opportunities upon arrival.

The specific smugglers and service providers that Wave 2 respondents were in contact with were generally viewed as trustworthy. This point reinforces the finding from the Wave 1 report that smugglers are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by potential migrants, rather than being branded in a general group. In other words, one negative experience with a smuggler does not turn Afghans away from all smugglers - instead, a negative experience would encourage them to turn to a more reputable service provider. In the Wave 2 data, 32% of respondents in contact with a smuggler (10 out of 31 respondents) reported high levels of trust in their service provider; 42% (13 out of 31 respondents) said that they 'somewhat trust' their service provider. Only 26% (8 out of 31 respondents) reported that they 'somewhat distrust' their service-provider.

Costs and payment arrangements: The anticipated cost of migration varied tremendously among respondents and suggests that many potential migrants either overestimate or underestimate the cost of migration. About 16% of respondents (5 out of 31 respondents) in contact with a smuggler said that they did not expect to pay, while others expected to pay over USD 10,000 (13%, 4 out of 31 respondents). Most of respondents in contact with a smuggler expected to pay between USD 7,000 - USD 10,000 (58%, 18 out of 31 respondents).

Seefar's previous research has found that a 'realistic' estimate of an irregular migration journey from

> 'I will leave money here in Nangarhar with the saraf [money agent in Kabul]. Once I start my travel, I will ask the saraf to release some amount to the smuggler. Once I reach Turkey, the smuggler will receive another amount. After that I will go with the smuggler from Bulgaria to France.'
>
> Pashtun male, 19-24, Jalalabad

Afghanistan falls between USD 5,000 and USD 9,000.[29] Based on these figures, about 26% of respondents (8 out of 31 respondents) in contact with a smuggler underestimated their migration costs and 23% of respondents (7 out of 31 respondents) overestimated the cost of their journey.

Payment arrangements depended on the individual and service provider. Most respondents who planned to use a specific service provider said that they would pay all migration costs after they arrive at their destination (61%, 19 out of 31 respondents). About 19% of respondents (6 out of 31 respondents) expected to pay part of their costs before departure and part upon arrival. Just one respondent said that he expected to fully pay for the cost of his journey before departing.

Most expected to pay in USD via a deposit directly to a saraf (intermediary who serves as a money agent between the smuggler and the migrant) - almost no respondents said that they would directly pay cash to a smuggler.

Routes

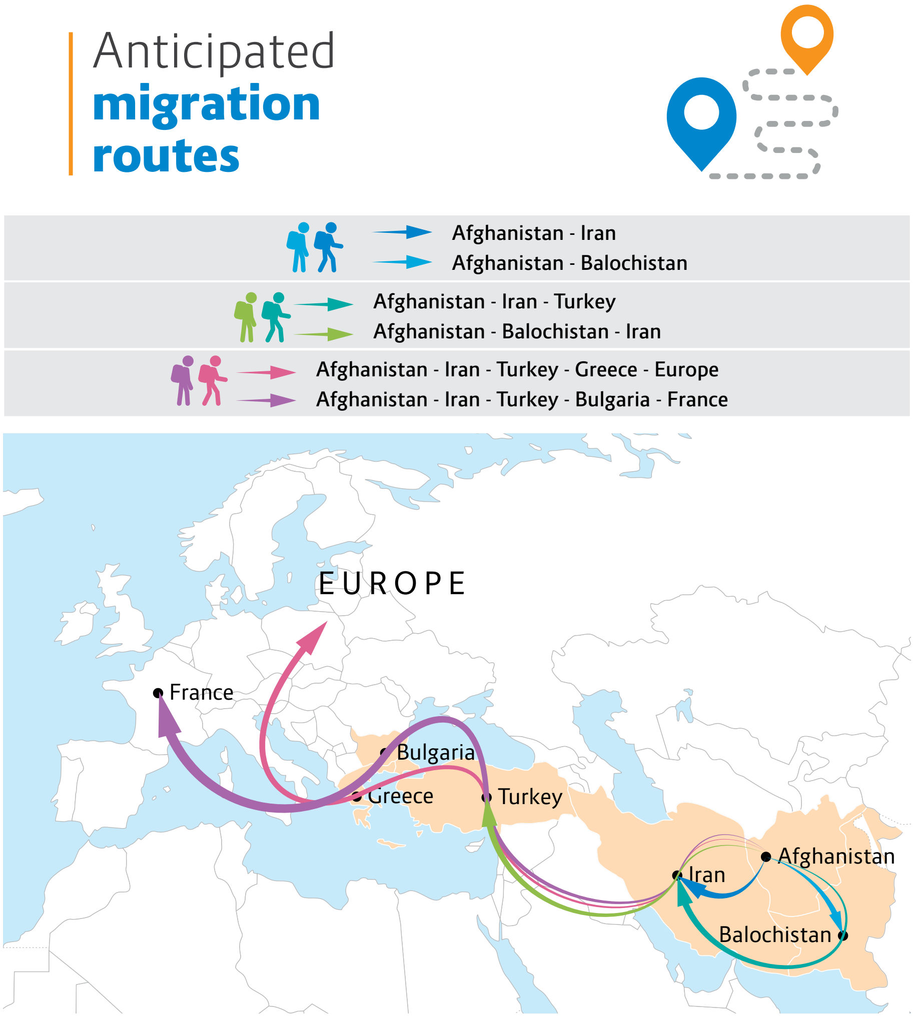
A key finding of this report is that respondents generally had low levels of understanding about their migration routes. When asked about their route, respondents frequently offered responses such as 'everyone knows the route'; still others said that they would simply take the route preferred by their service provider.

About 8% of respondents (15 out of 198 respondents who answered the question) could only name one country along the way (generally Iran); 34% (67 out of 198 respondents) could only name two countries. A full 27% (53 out of 198 respondents) either did not know, refused to answer, or said that they would take the route preferred by their service provider.

Most respondents identified that they would travel through Iran en route to Europe; others noted that they would enter Iran via Balochistan. Others said that they were intending to travel from Iran to Turkey; a small number were able to specify onward movement from Turkey to Bulgaria or Greece. These routes are illustrated in Figure 9.

[29] Actual migration costs vary depending on the route and included services; these figures serve as a general benchmark.

Figure 9: Respondents' anticipated migration routes in Wave 2



The lack of awareness of specific places and means of travel was also striking. Respondents were not asked to list the countries that they would travel through, yet country names were often all that they could tell the researchers. No respondents mentioned any cities along the way by name, whether they would be traveling via land or by sea, or other key details on the route they would take to Europe.

Figure 10: Respondent destinations and international networks in Wave 2 (%, #)

Networks **and destination preference**

53% of respondents who have an overseas network and specific destination choice want to migrate to the country of their strongest network.

	FIRST DESTINATION CHOICE		STRONGEST NETWORK	
	% PERCENTAGE	NUMBER (Base 114)	% PERCENTAGE	NUMBER (Base 51)
Germany	27%	31	31%	16
Sweden	14%	16	10%	5
Austria	8%	9	10%	5
France	11%	12	6%	3
United Kingdom	10%	11	6%	3
Belgium	10%	11	6%	3
Italy	4%	5	2%	1
Canada	4%	5	2%	1
Turkey	4%	4	8%	4
Denmark	4%	4	6%	3
Iran	1%	1	6%	3
Greece	1%	1	2%	1
Other	4%	4	6%	3

Destinations

Respondents were about evenly split on whether or not they had a specific destination country in Europe. Approximately 55% of respondents (114 out of 206 respondents) said that they had a specific destination; in contrast, most Wave 1 respondents indicated a specific destination preference rather than aiming for 'Europe' in general.

Among Wave 2 respondents with a specific destination preference, Germany was the most popular destination country (27%), followed by Sweden (14%) and France (11%). These responses are fairly similar to Wave 1 data, where France, Germany, and Belgium were the top destination preferences.

The top second preferences of destination were Germany (24%), France (21%), and the United Kingdom (10%). About 10% of respondents who had selected a first choice of destination did not have a second preference; this displays a higher level of destination awareness (or opinions about potential destinations) than the Wave 1 sample, in which 70% of respondents (28 out of 40 respondents) did not have a second-choice destination country.

Contacts living abroad in European countries played a strong role in the choice of destination, as shown in Figure 10 on the previous page. Among respondents who were in contact with people abroad and had identified a specific destination, about half said their destination was the same as the country of their foreign contacts. For example, among the respondents who said that their largest network was in Germany, five out of eight (63%) said that Germany was their first preferred destination. Among the three respondents who said that their largest network was in Austria and had picked a specific destination, all reported that their first preferred destination was Austria.

Expectations of migration and Europe

Dangers and risks: In the first round of data collection, many respondents highlighted their knowledge of the risks of irregular migration - particularly physical dangers of the journey. For example, respondents in the first sample identified sea crossings as a widespread

> 'If the [French] Government accepts me as eligible for asylum, I will have very good life - I can stay with my friends and I can find job there. But if the Government doesn't accept my plan then I will stay in the camp, where life will be very difficult.'
>
> Pashtun male, 19-24, Jalalabad

fear. This finding was seen again in the Wave 2 sample, albeit to a more limited degree. Some respondents specifically identified dangers en route, financial risks of the journey, and difficulties of life in a camp setting as challenges inherent to migration. However, as in Wave 1, the data also suggested that those planning to migrate may not accurately assess the likelihood of personally experiencing such hazards. One respondent summarised this view by saying, 'There is difficulty on the way, but everything will be fine once you get there' (Pashtun male, 15-18 years old, Jalalabad).

Length of travel: Most respondents said that they expected their journey to take several months. The most popular response was an expectation that they would arrive in their destination in four to six months. A small minority of respondents said that they expected to arrive in one to four weeks.

Expectations upon arrival: As in the previous wave of research, just over half of respondents who identified a specific destination country expected to find a job upon arrival (55% in Wave 1, 54% in Wave 2). About a quarter of respondents in Wave 2 (29 out of 114 respondents) said that they expected to make more money in their destination than in Afghanistan.

However, other expectations upon arrival were markedly different in the sample, as illustrated in Figure 11. About half of Wave 1 respondents said that they expected to receive legal status upon arrival (48%, 19 out of 40 respondents). In contrast, potential migrants with a specific destination in Wave 2 overwhelmingly expected to gain legal status upon arrival (88%, 100 out of 114 respondents). It is unclear what motivated this change between the two samples. The Wave 2 finding is particularly peculiar as policy changes in EU countries over the last few years have, in many cases, made it more challenging for Afghans to receive legal status upon arrival. This finding is a key area for the next research wave to explore.

In both samples, a small percentage of respondents said that they expected to feel safer at their destination than they do currently in Afghanistan. Only 13% of respondents in Wave 1 (5 out of 40) and 19% of respondents in Wave 2 who answered the question (22 out of 114) said that they expect to feel safer in their destination country. The relatively lower percentage of respondents who emphasised security and safety expectations stands in stark contrast with the high percentage of respondents in both research samples who noted economic and legal expectations of life in the EU. This finding also aligns with the earlier discussion on causes of migration: while both security and economic factors influence decision-making, the data indicates that economic factors - at home and abroad - play a greater role in influencing migration decisions in the sample.

Figure 11: Expectations at first preferred destination country, Wave 2 (%, #)

Expectations at **first preferred destination**

	% PERCENTAGE	NUMBER (Base 114)
Gain legal status	**88%**	100
Get a job	**54%**	62
Make more money	**25%**	29
Feel safer	**19%**	22
Feel more freedom	**12%**	14
Get a better education	**6%**	7
Receive money from the government	**3%**	3
Receive housing from the government	**2%**	2

Preliminary Longitudinal Findings

As previously noted, this report will serve as the baseline report for subsequent waves of data collection. However, the report permits preliminary longitudinal analysis between Wave 1 and Wave 2 in two ways: comparing aggregate data in each sample to assess trends and looking more closely at the ten respondents who were present in both waves of data collection.

Most respondents in Wave 1 that were interviewed in Wave 2 had not moved far (or at all). Seven out of ten respondents reported their city or town of residence the same in Wave 2 as in Wave 1. The three respondents who changed their place of residence did not go far: two moved from Behsood to Jalalabad and one moved from Jalalabad to Asadabad - locations that are just a short drive from each other.

Evolving migration decision-making

Change in migration plans: In Wave 1, all respondents planned to migrate to a Western country in the next 12 months; however, in Wave 2 just six out of ten respondents from Wave 1 still intended to migrate to a Western country in the next 12 months; four changed their minds, and now no longer plan to migrate irregularly in that time frame (one still hopes to migrate eventually, but not in the foreseeable future).

Slow progress towards migration: The six respondents who still plan to migrate irregularly appear to have progressed in their planning process. For example, one respondent who said in Wave 1 that he was making logistical arrangements for his departure reported in Wave 2 that he is currently making financial arrangements for migration. Another respondent had told the researchers in Wave 1 that he was reaching out to smugglers to facilitate his migration; in Wave 2, he reported that all arrangements had been made and he was waiting for his departure date. As previously noted, all six respondents were far behind schedule relative to their migration intentions in Wave 1.

Different perceptions of migration: Several respondents changed their response to the question relating to migration's popularity. In Wave 1, nine out of the ten respondents said that migration had become more popular; in Wave 2, just four out of these ten said that migration had become more popular. As with the rest of the Wave 2 sample, explanations for the perception that migration has become more popular almost entirely revolved around push factors – lack of employment and rising insecurity. However, no respondent in Wave 2 provided an explanation for why they thought that migration has become less popular in the last year. It is possible that personal context could explain these responses: three of the four Afghans who decided to abandon their migration plans between Wave 1 and Wave 2 said that migration had become less popular over the last year.

Influences dissuading migration

Four Afghans decided to abandon their migration plans between Wave 1 and Wave 2. Their stories reveal two realities of the migration decision-making process. First, migration decision-making is influenced by multiple factors and most powerfully by the physical dangers of the journey, the risk of losing their money, and their family wanting them to remain in Afghanistan. Second, the single biggest influencers on the decision to abandon migration was the role of family and friends in Afghanistan.

- **Physical dangers of the journey**: Two respondents noted that the physical risks and hazards of migration influenced their decision to abandon their migration plans. Those same two respondents noted that these fears were the most important reason they are no longer planning to migrate.

> 'My father passed away and I am the only one at home who can make money and support the family. I don't have the money to go.'
>
> Pashtun male, 25-34, Jalalabad

- **Family in Afghanistan**: All four respondents who decided not to migrate said that their family in Afghanistan influenced their decision. For one respondent, family in Afghanistan was the single greatest reason why he chose to abandon his migration plans. Three respondents also said that information from family and friends in Afghanistan was the greatest influence on their change of mind.

- **Financial risks**: All four respondents noted that fear of losing their money is part of the reason why they are no longer migrating. Similarly, all four said that the inability to raise the money contributed to their decision to abandon their migration plans.

  For example, one respondent said:

  'I don't have the money now to pay for a smuggler. Also, now there is less of a chance to [successfully] arrive at my destination. There is no need to accept that financial risk' (Pashtun male, 25-34 years old, Jalalabad).

- **Improved economic well-being**: Two respondents reported that improved job prospects at home encouraged them to rethink their migration plans and another two cited increased income as an influence on their decision-making. Overall, three out of four of those who chose not to migrate experienced either an improvement to their employment status or increased household income. In both Wave 1 and Wave 2, all four respondents also mentioned that positive changes to their personal or family's economic situation would encourage them to stay.

> 'Now I am working as soldier and I don't want leave the country. I am happy to grow and do my education here in my country. I don't want to go.'
>
> Pashtun male, 19-24, Jalalabad

- **Policy changes abroad**: The four respondents appeared sensitive to policy changes abroad. Two said that policy changes in destination countries towards Afghans (e.g., asylum procedures, detention policies, involuntary return) were part of the reason why they chose to change their migration plans. Three also said that policy changes in non-European countries influenced them to abandon migration.

- **Other sources of information**: One respondent said that information received from friends and family abroad influenced him not to migrate. Two respondents said information from the Government of Afghanistan influenced them, and two said that radio programmes influenced their decision-making.

- **Less relevant factors**: Improvements to education access was cited by only one respondent as an influence on their migration decision-making. None of the four respondents cited security context improvements as influences on their decision-making - likely because the broader security context in Afghanistan has not improved between Wave 1 and Wave 2. In terms of information sources, none of the four respondents pointed to information from returnees, NGOs, or international organisation as influences on their decision to migrate. Similarly, none identified TV or Facebook as a significant influence.

‘My family and friends who are in Afghanistan told me that the situation in European countries is not good. Some know people who returned from Turkey; they explained that there has been a lot of changes for illegal migration. Those in camps in Germany or other countries are not accepted and they cannot work. So, I decided to stay in my country and start my own business here. I think I am in a better position compared to those who left Afghanistan.’

Pashtun male, 25-34, Jalalabad

Case studies

Case study 1: Zabih

Zabih[30] is a 19-24-year-old Pashtun man from a rural area in Batikot (Nangarhar), where he has lived for most of his life. He is a university graduate who reported plans to irregularly migrate from Afghanistan in both Wave 1 and Wave 2. Zabih is single and has no children.

In Wave 1, Zabih was a full-time university student at the undergraduate level and was not working. He currently works part-time but reports only middling levels of satisfaction with his employment. Over the last year, Zabih's perception of his role in his household has changed. In Wave 1, Zabih reported that one of his siblings was the primary income-earner for his family, but in Wave 2 he said that he himself was the primary breadwinner for the family.

Though he has never personally left the country, **Zabih knows multiple people outside of Afghanistan.** In Wave 1, he said that he regularly spoke with one to three contacts outside of Afghanistan. In Wave 2, that number grew to four to six persons. In addition to growing in number, Zabih's international networks have shifted locations over this period. In Wave 1, he reported that his strongest networks (and most overseas contacts) lived in the Netherlands. In Wave 2, most people he spoke with were in Germany and his strongest network was in France.

'I don't have a job and security is getting worse by the day. Everyone is uncertain of what the future holds. If I had a good job I wouldn't leave my country.'

Zabih, Wave 1

Zabih does not receive remittances from his contacts abroad, but his overseas contacts clearly influence his destination choice. Zabih's destination in Wave 1 was the Netherlands, but in Wave 2 he reported a preference for Germany and a second-choice preference for France. Zabih also noted in his first interview that his friends abroad were the biggest influence on his choice of destination; while in Wave 2 he said that family members at home were the biggest influence. In practice, his decisions suggest that his friends abroad play a key role.

The means Zabih uses for keeping in touch with his contacts abroad have evolved as well. He used to depend on mobile phone calls to communicate with his network in the Netherlands, but today relies on Facebook Messenger to reach his networks in Germany and France.

Zabih's knowledge of life abroad appears to have grown over time, though still lacks details. In Wave 1, he spoke in vague terms about his contacts' lives - for example, he knew that they had reached their destination and the route that they took, but nothing else. In Wave 2, he spoke more broadly about the experiences and impressions of life abroad. 'Life is easy there,' he said. 'There's work. All of life's facilities are available there'. Zabih also noted a safer security environment in his

[30] Name changed for privacy reasons.

desired destination. 'Life is good there,' he said. 'There is security and no killing.' At the same time, Zabih's perception of migrants is juxtaposed with this view - he said in Wave 2 that he holds a negative view of those who leave Afghanistan.

His impressions of migrant and destination countries are likely influenced by his information sources. **Zabih reports that he receives information on migration from TV and Facebook and listed both as his most-trusted source of migration information.** Zabih also knows returnees in Afghanistan but claims that these conversations have not influenced his own migration planning.

Zabih believes that migration has grown more popular over time - a sentiment he communicated in both Wave 1 and Wave 2. **He thinks that migration is more popular due to the deteriorating security context and high levels of unemployment.** He reported the same reasons for his personal migration decision: violence, insecurity, and joblessness.

Zabih's migration plans have progressed over time but fall far short of his original ambitions. In Wave 1, Zabih said that he was at the first stage of migration planning (making logistical arrangements and general plans). He has since progressed to the financial planning stage. Yet Zabih's original estimate of his departure date was far off the mark. In Wave 1, he said that he would depart in six to 12 months. In Wave 2 - conducted more than 16 months after his first interview - Zabih said that he would leave in one to three months. Thus, while Zabih has clearly made progress in advancing his migration plans, his case - along with the other longitudinal cases in this sample - underscores that Afghans may underestimate the time it takes to prepare for a migration journey.

> 'Security was good before. Jobs were easy to find. Now, security is bad; so too is the job market. That's why people are leaving.'
>
> Zabih, Wave 2

The factors that influence Zabih's migration decision-making have changed over time. In Wave 1, he reported that the only change that would encourage him to stay in Afghanistan would be an improvement to his personal or his family's financial well-being. In Wave 2, he expanded that list to include his family's security situation, national or regional security, and national or regional economic conditions. In light of the lengthy preparation time discussed in the previous paragraph and the growing list of influences on his migration decision-making, **Zabih exemplifies a key finding from the first report: he is a 'reluctant' migrant**, who may only be considering migration as a last resort.

In both waves, Zabih reported an irregular migration route via Iran, Turkey, and Greece. Yet his expectation of the length of migration appears to have shifted. In Wave 1, he expected the journey to take less than 1 month. In Wave 2, he expected the journey to take four to six months. This suggests that he has acquired a more realistic understanding of the length of migration over time.

At the same time, Zabih's expectations upon arrival have changed - and perhaps become less realistic. In Wave 1, his only expectation upon arrival in the Netherlands was to gain legal status. In Wave 2, he still expected to gain legal status but also said that he would get a job and make more money.

Figure 12: Zabih case study

ZABIH

A reluctant but persistent aspiring migrant.

EDUCATION
Tertiary

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS
Part-time job

WAVE 1 MIGRATION PLANS

MIGRATION MOTIVATIONS:
Insecurity and unemployment

ANTICIPATED DEPARTURE DATE:
Spring/Summer 2017

ANTICIPATED LENGTH OF JOURNEY:
1 month

STRONGEST NETWORK ABROAD:
The Netherlands

DESTINATION:
The Netherlands

ROUTE:
Afghanistan
Iran
Turkey
Greece
Netherlands

MIGRATION STAGE:
logistical planning

WAVE 2 MIGRATION PLANS

MIGRATION MOTIVATIONS:
Insecurity and unemployment

ANTICIPATED DEPARTURE DATE:
Spring/Summer 2018

ANTICIPATED LENGTH OF JOURNEY:
4-6 months

STRONGEST NETWORK ABROAD:
Germany and France

DESTINATION:
Germany

ROUTE:
Afghanistan
Iran
Turkey
Greece
Germany

MIGRATION STAGE:
finacial planning

Case study 2: Tamim

Tamim[31] is a 25-34-year-old Pashtun man who grew up in rural Behsood (Nangarhar) but later moved to an urban location in Jalalabad. Tamim has a university undergraduate degree. He is married with three children, and he views himself as his household's primary income-earner.

> 'I'd take an entry-level job for 5,000 Af [USD 80] per month, but the sad part is that even such low-level jobs can't be acquired without bribing or knowing someone. I feel like my human dignity is disrespected every day.'
>
> Tamim, Wave 1

Unlike Zabih, who slowly - though reluctantly - progressed with his migration plans over time, **Tamim abandoned his migration plans between Wave 1 and Wave 2**. Tamim did not attribute this change to any one factor, but it is likely that his personal financial and economic well-being played an important role in his migration decision-making. In Wave 1, Tamim was unemployed and economic factors were a key concern. Despite high levels of education, computer training, and English proficiency, Tamim could not find work. 'I wouldn't leave my country if I had a job,' he told the Wave 1 researchers.

By Wave 2, Tamim had cancelled his plans to migrate. **He had found full-time employment and reported being 'very satisfied' with his work situation.** In May 2017, about nine months after his Wave 1 interview, Tamim decided to abandon his migration aspirations. In Wave 2, he reported no future intention to migrate irregularly. Tamim's migration decision-making was influenced by multiple factors - beyond just economic conditions - and offers insight into migration decision-making.

Tamim's case is characterised by a robust network of overseas contacts. In Wave 1, he was in regular contact with four to six people abroad who were based in the US and Austria (with Austria being home to his strongest network). In Wave 2, Tamim said he was in regular touch with over ten people abroad, with his strongest network located in Germany. Tamim generally keeps in touch with these contacts through Facebook Messenger, though he also uses Viber to communicate.

> 'To be honest, most people who have made it [to their destination] don't tell the truth about the realities of their lives. Only close friends and relatives tell us the truth and guide us correctly. Most of them have gone through people smugglers.'
>
> Tamim, Wave 1

Tamim's large international network informed his perceptions of migration. In Wave 1, when he was planning to leave Afghanistan irregularly, he said that life abroad would always be better than life in Afghanistan - no matter what challenges exist in destination countries. For example, he said: 'Both my cousins went by air, they are both settled there and have legal statuses... I think no matter how bad their lives are there, it will be still far better than here. At least they won't be afraid of suicide attacks and death.'

In this context, he believed in Wave 1 that migration had become more popular over the past year. Yet in his responses in Wave 1, Tamim appeared extremely aware of challenges related to migration, though he still planned to leave Afghanistan. For example, he said: 'I know life in the West lacks social [cohesion and culture] as we know it. There are far less human interactions and less warmth, but what can I do by staying here'.

In Wave 2, Tamim also pointed to the influence of his contacts abroad when discussing his decision to abandon his migration plans. His contacts overseas

> 'They said that life in Western countries is very difficult. There is no work and we cannot make money. You should not come; you have good job in Afghanistan and you have a home.'
>
> Tamim, Wave 2

[31] Name changed for privacy reasons.

discouraged him from migration, noting specifically that work was difficult to find abroad. In light of this information and his own decision-making, Tamim reported in Wave 2 that migration had become less popular over the past year. While his impression of those who leave Afghanistan was negative in Wave 1, in Wave 2 that impression shifted to be more neutral.

Tamim reported that TV and Facebook were major sources of migration information in both Wave 1 and Wave 2. He specifically pointed to Tolo TV as a source of information in Wave 1, saying: 'Tolo TV is showing some advertisements against migration. While it educates people, those who want to leave will leave. If one cannot provide for his family, he will die trying to provide for them'. Facebook was also a highly-trusted source for Tamim on migration.

In Wave 1, Tamim had advanced far in his migration planning process. He had contacted a smuggler and was planning to migrate to Germany with a group of five to six friends. In Wave 1, he said: 'The aim is to leave in a couple of months' time. I myself haven't spoken to the smuggler, but my friends have spoken to him'. He planned to leave within three months of the Wave 1 interview and expected the journey to take another one to three months. Tamim had originally sought to travel from Nimruz to Iran, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Hungary before arriving in Germany. He noted concerns about the challenges of crossing borders in Iran and Hungary. Influenced by his friends abroad and word of mouth, Tamim noted that if he could not make it to Germany, he would then travel to Italy.

> 'I'd like to go to Germany because they accept refugees with ease and within a short period of time. Some of my friends went to the UK about 5 years ago and they are still not accepted; some are even in hiding. In contrast, Germany accepts people and offers housing and healthcare. My cousin got accepted in Austria with six months, where he has a job and earns about 1,200 euro per month.'
>
> Tamim, Wave 1

Tamim expected the smuggler to provide accommodation, food, and transportation in transit. He also said that the smuggler would connect him with other service providers en route. Tamim estimated he would pay between USD 7,000 - 8,000 for guaranteed passage to Germany, regardless of how many times he would be deported. However, if Tamim changed his mind about migration after being deported, he said that his arrangement with the smuggler would not permit a refund of his money. However, Tamim reported extremely low levels of trust in the smuggler. He said: 'My friends abroad tell me that people smugglers tell many lies: they say the journey is easy, but it is as hard as hell, so I cannot trust them'.

Interestingly, Tamim said in Wave 2 that **he chose to abandon his migration plans primarily due to his fear of losing money on the journey.** Lack of trust in his service provider was likely one component of this fear. In addition to financial risks, he said that three other factors impacted his decision-making:

- improvements to his employment situation and an increase in income
- inability to raise sufficient funds to finance the journey
- family members wanted him to remain in Afghanistan.

Conversely, Tamim said that his decision-making was not influenced by the dangers of the journey or migration-related policies (including policies in the EU and in transit countries). However, Tamim's comments in the box to the bottom - which displays at least some understanding of policies and life in the EU - reflect some scepticism of this remark. He also noted that there had not been improvements to the security context

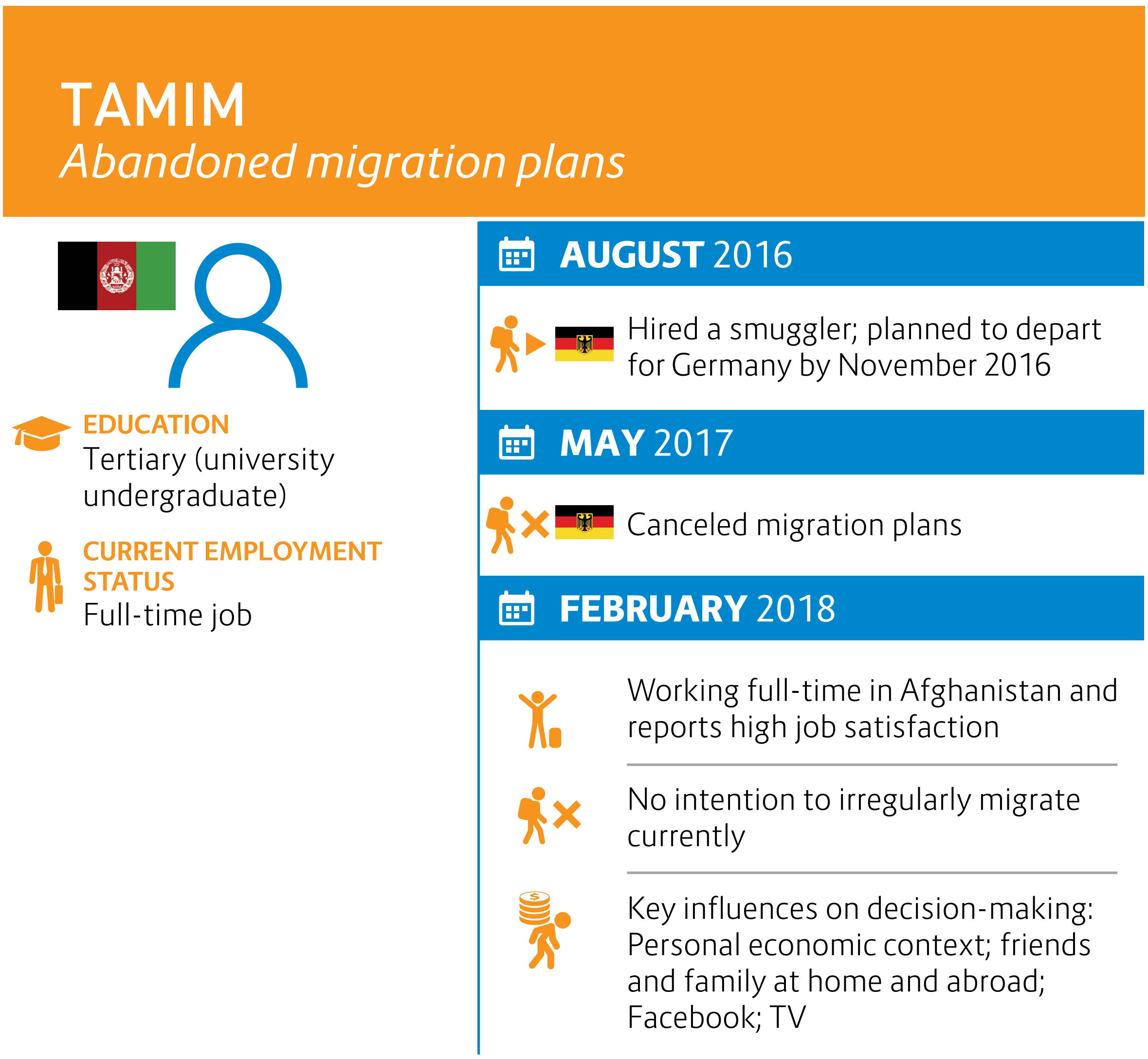
> 'Today, the situation in Germany is not good for migration. Also, going from Afghanistan to Western countries is not good. I don't have money as well.'
>
> Tamim, Wave 2

in Afghanistan, and consequently positive security condition at home did not influence his decision-making.

Information sources were also highly important to Tamim's decision-making. In Wave 2, he noted that information from friends and family - both at home and abroad - played a significant role in dissuading him from migrating. Tamim also pointed to information from the Government of Afghanistan, radio programming, and social media; in fact, he said that Facebook was the most important source of information that influenced his decision not to migrate. However, information from UN or international organisations, NGOs, TV, religious organisations, and returnees did not factor into his decision-making.

While Tamim's story provides insight into how various factors can discourage or alter migration decisions, **it is worth noting that he had not permanently ruled out the possibility of irregular migration in the future**. In Wave 2, though he was not planning to migrate at that moment. 'I will try to stay here and see if the situation becomes good; then I may take a loan to go,' he said, 'Otherwise, I don't want to go'.

Figure 13: Tamim case study



Conclusion

With a larger sample and scope, the Wave 2 study largely affirms and reinforces findings from the Wave 1 report. In both waves of data collection, insecurity and economic factors drove migration decision-making. Economic well-being goes beyond short-term financial gains (or the creation of low-quality jobs): those planning to migrate point to long-term sustainable livelihood opportunities as major influences that would lead them to consider abandoning their migration plans. Tamim's case study particularly brings this point to life.

The study also provides strong evidence of the importance of personal networks in influencing migration decision-making. Family and friends play a powerful role in encouraging potential migrants to remain at home and providing information related to the journey. Contacts living abroad are correlated with migration methods, routes, and destination choices. They also serve as an important source of information on the realities of migration, including life in destination countries. Most portrayed migration and life abroad in a positive light, though there were instances in the data where contacts told potential migrants about evolving migration policies that could restrict or negatively affect migration.

The longitudinal dimension of analysis in future waves of data collection will add further insight to many of the findings of this report. For example, how do destination preferences vary over time? What percentage of respondents abandon their plans to migrate, and why? The preliminary longitudinal findings between Wave 1 and Wave 2 - for example, that four out of ten respondents had abandoned their plans to irregularly migrate, or that most respondents had delayed their migration plans - allude to the wealth of data that awaits in the full longitudinal study.

This study also raised several interesting questions for exploration in future research. Specific areas for follow-up include:

- What are the specific fears of violence and insecurity that motivate migration? Who are the actors driving such fears? Do respondents feel personally targeted?
- How does the perception of migration's popularity vary - and change over time - by province?
- To what degree do returnees influence potential migrants? Are they viewed as sources of information about the journey, destinations, or policies? Why do many respondents say that returnees do not influence migration plans?
- Why do the majority of respondents believe that they will be offered legal status upon arrival at their destination country? Where does this information come from?
- Was the shift from personal-level factors influencing migration decisions (Wave 1) to more regional- and national-level factors (Wave 2) a marker of a broader trend or the result of random chance? Is the sense of hopelessness about Afghanistan driving this change?
- What are specific examples of short-term economic gain facilitating migration? What are specific examples of sustainable jobs dissuading migration?
- What percentage of respondents who report abandoning migration plans 'permanently' cancel their migration plans? How many choose to pursue migration at a later time?

Annex 1 – Methodology

The first wave of data collection - Wave 1 - sampled 40 Afghans in Nangarhar in August 2016. Respondents were purposively sampled for their intention to migrate onwards to Europe within 12 months. In purposive sampling a subset of the population is selected that share at least one common characteristic. Respondents were identified using a snowball sampling technique through referral of other Afghans within the same target group. While this technique reduces risk, it comes at the expense of introducing bias because the technique itself reduces the likelihood that the sample be representative of the larger population.

This study adopted a non-representative and non-random sampling strategy for several reasons. There is no central list of Afghans considering migration. A random sampling approach through enumeration poses security concerns, raises costs, and introduces bias in location selection. Last, the goal was to identify respondents who plan to migrate today and who would be willing to take part in future rounds of data collection, screening criteria more easily applied to a non-random sample. To be clear, the report makes no claim of representativeness or causality. All claims of statistical significance are limited to the sample at hand.

The second wave of data collection followed this same approach on a larger scale. A total of 210 face-to-face and telephone surveys were conducted in January and February 2018 across Afghanistan. Two hundred of these respondents were new to the study. Each of the 200 new respondents were screened to ensure that they intended to migrate to a European destination within the next 12 months.

Researchers attempted to contact all 40 Wave 1 respondents, ultimately interviewing ten respondents who were a part of the preliminary report. These respondents were not screened for intention to migrate and were given an expanded survey that included specific questions targeting respondents who had abandoned their migration plans between Wave 1 and Wave 2.

The high attrition rate of Wave 1 respondents can be attributed to the passage of time between Wave 1 and Wave 2 (about 16 months between samples). Other relevant factors could include the frequency with which Afghan respondents change mobile phone numbers, and the possibility that some of the Wave 1 respondents may have left Afghanistan. Future waves of data collection are expected to have a substantially lower attrition rate based on more frequent contact with respondents. There will be three future research waves for this study, with data collected approximately every three months. No new respondents will be added to the study. Future waves of data collection will survey the respondents from Wave 1 and Wave 2.

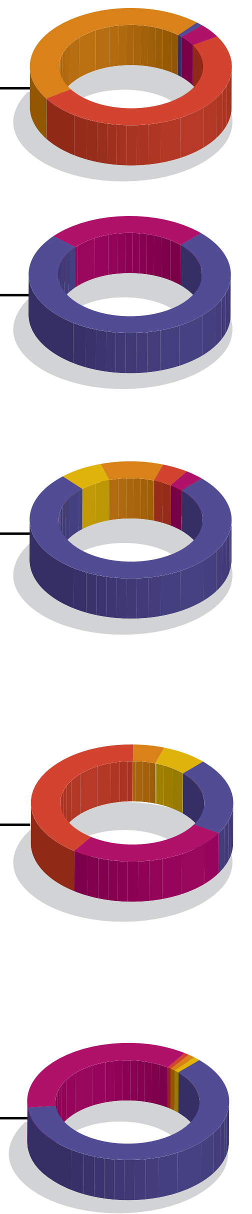
Annex 2 – Demographics

All respondents were male Afghans. Specific demographic information is listed in the figure below:

Figure 14: Demographic information of respondents in Wave 2 (%, #)

Key Demographics

	% PERCENTAGE	NUMBER (Base 210)
AGE		
15- 18 years old	**4%**	9
19 - 24 years old	**49%**	103
25 - 34 years old	**45%**	95
35 - 44 years old	**1%**	3
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	**74%**	155
Married	**26%**	55
DEPENDENT CHILDREN		
None	**76%**	160
1 child	**7%**	15
2 child	**10%**	22
3 child	**4%**	8
4 or more child	**3%**	5
EDUCATION		
No formal education	**21%**	45
Primary	**26%**	54
Secondary	**40%**	85
Post-secondary	**5%**	11
Tertiary	**7%**	15
ETHNICITY		
Pashtun	**61%**	128
Tajik	**36%**	75
Hazara	**1%**	2
Arab	**1%**	2
Other	**1%**	3



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