



Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees

to Support Voluntary Repatriation,
Sustainable Reintegration
and Assistance to Host Countries

Portfolio of Projects
2015-2016



Islamic Republic of
Afghanistan



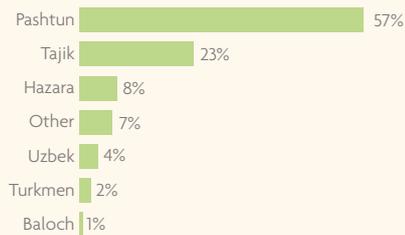
AFGHANISTAN: Afghan Returnee Overview

August 2015

Afghan Returnees

5.8 million returned to Afghanistan since 2002, of which **4.8 million** facilitated by UNHCR
20% of the total population

Ethnic breakdown of Afghan returnees



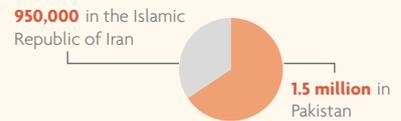
Afghan refugee returns from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran



Afghan Refugees



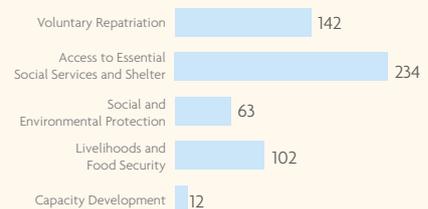
2.5 million remaining Afghan refugees in the region



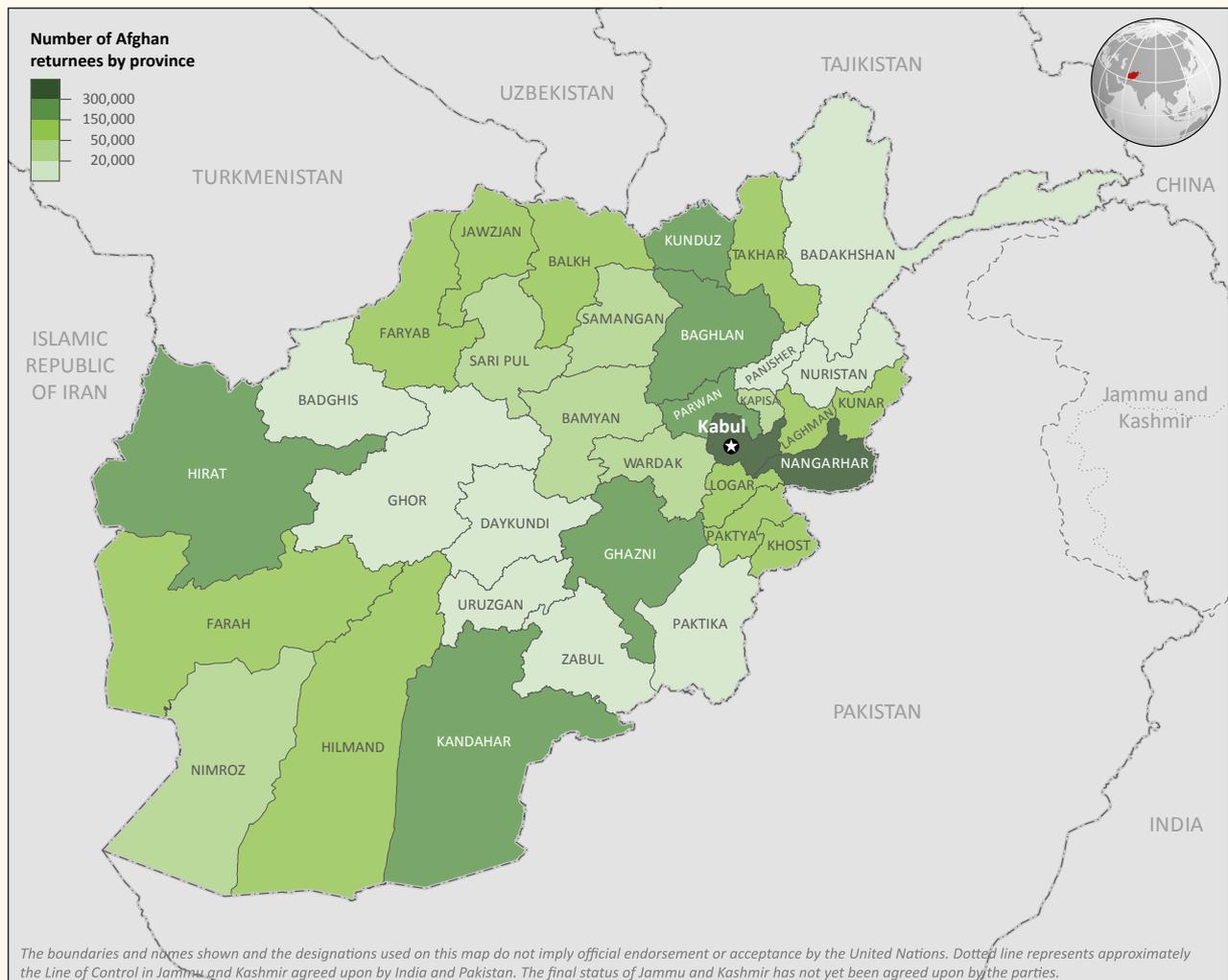
SSAR Financial Requirements

US\$ 553 million

Total budget per outcome (in million US\$)



Assisted Afghan Returnees by Province



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

Sources: UNCS, UNHCR, UNPD

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I. Introduction

The Afghan refugee situation, which remains one of the world's most protracted displacement situations¹, has now lasted close to four decades. The Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) developed in response by the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, with the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), seeks to facilitate voluntary repatriation and reintegration in Afghanistan and to assist refugees and hosting communities in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, with an aim to find lasting solutions for this population. Endorsed by the international community in May 2012, the SSAR currently presents the primary regional framework for cross-border engagement and stay arrangements in refugee hosting countries. In Afghanistan it is complemented by a national voluntary repatriation and reintegration plan, which is being finalized by the National Unity Government², as endorsed by the Tripartite Commission Meeting with the Government of Pakistan and UNHCR in August 2015.

The era of large-scale returns to Afghanistan witnessed in the period between 2002 and 2008 with over 4.3 million refugees returning home, is likely to have ended.³ The subsequent dwindling of returns has been caused largely by the increasing volatility of the security situation, uncertainty around the success of the political transition building since 2013, which has led to sharp reductions in economic growth and the emergence of a fiscal crisis.

The needs of Afghan returnees far exceed the capacity of humanitarian actors operating in Afghanistan. Needs assessments carried out under the SSAR indicate that community-based development investments have a meaningful impact on sustainable reintegration. In this regard, the SSAR also aims at strengthening partnerships with development actors as well as with relevant Government entities, local and international stakeholders in order to comprehensively address these needs.

As part of efforts by the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and UNHCR to implement comprehensive solutions for Afghan refugees in the region, a portfolio of proposed projects was prepared by the three Governments in 2014. These included projects by Government entities, UN agencies and local and international non-governmental agencies to be implemented during the year. In early 2015, the three Governments and UNHCR agreed to update the Afghanistan country portfolio for 2015-16, to align humanitarian and development needs and gaps on the ground with existing and new proposals for assistance provision. The updated Afghanistan portfolio includes 30 projects implemented or proposed by 18 line ministries, UN agencies, NGOs and foundations. The projects cover the five outcomes of the SSAR and propose interventions in a number of key sectors, including shelter, education, health and social protection. The overall funding requirements stand at approximately USD 553 million. This portfolio will be reviewed after six months.

The Portfolio is structured into two parts. Part One includes a situational analysis, highlighting needs, gaps and current as well as planned responses. It further includes a brief discussion of progress and challenges faced in the implementation of the SSAR, an overview of coordination mechanisms and the resource mobilization strategy for the portfolio. Part Two presents a summary of proposed projects, including a description of the target population, objectives, activities and corresponding budgets and financial requirements, and details on the actors engaged.

¹ Under UNHCR's mandate

² Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration plan, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, August 2015 (to be finalised)

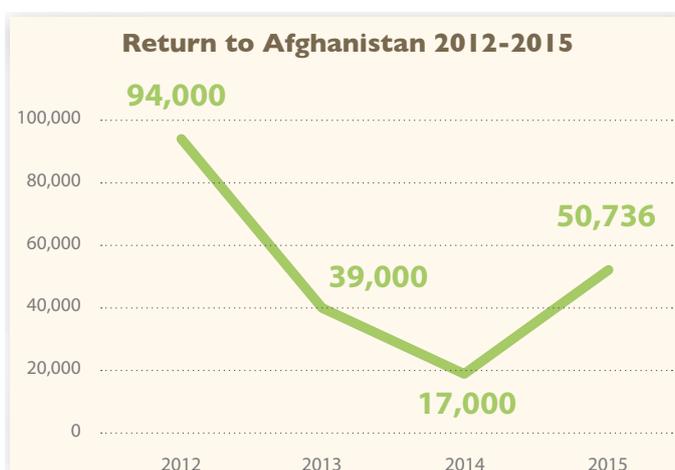
³ The total figure of returnees who have returned since 2002 today is closer to 4.8 million.

2. Situational Analysis

Context

Between 1978 and 2002, a quarter of Afghanistan's population sought refuge in neighbouring countries, primarily in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan. With the fall of the Taliban regime in 2002, displacement dynamics in the region began to shift, as over 5.8 million Afghans have returned home and constitute about 20 per cent of Afghanistan's total population today.

In his inaugural address in September 2014, President Ashraf Ghani highlighted the need for balanced and inclusive development across the country as a prerequisite for ending the 'national refugee situation,' noting that unless all refugees returned home, the Afghan nation would remain incomplete. Central to this effort, he noted, is the need to place vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women and children, at the core of development planning and engagement. He expressed his aspiration to eliminate the word 'displacement' from Afghanistan's vocabulary within five years. He has expressed on several occasions, including in discussions with neighbouring countries, that voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Afghan refugees is a priority for the new government. This was also reflected in the joint communiqué following the London Conference on Afghanistan in December 2014. Similarly, the Chief Executive of the National Unity Government, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, has on several occasions, including regular cabinet meetings, expressed the unity government's intention to strengthen interventions on behalf of returnees, including through the SSAR, to end the protracted situation of Afghan refugees in exile.



To this end, the National Unity Government has developed new coordination bodies to enhance inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral support for reintegration in Afghanistan and is currently in the process of finalizing the Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration strategy, identifying major needs and response gaps, and tailoring assistance for returnees to these. As the main coordinating body for returnee-related affairs, the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) has demonstrated the National Unity Government's leadership and renewed commitment to finding comprehensive and lasting solutions for returnees by spearheading policy development and implementation, bilateral and trilateral consultations on return and reintegration with neighbouring host countries, the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan. The majority of Afghan refugees remaining in these two countries have been displaced for thirty years or more, with second and third generations of children born in exile with few links to their ancestral country and extremely weak support networks and coping mechanisms in place to facilitate their successful reintegration. They may therefore be among the most vulnerable, and in need of particular, targeted assistance and support.

Despite the National Unity Government's resolve to end the Afghan displacement and progress made at the policy level, the overall situation for return to Afghanistan remains complex. Ongoing insecurity in parts of the country not only results in new displacements and significant humanitarian needs, but also jeopardizes prospects for returnee families to safely re-establish themselves in areas

of origin and rebuild livelihoods.⁴ Set against a backdrop of decreasing financial resources available to address humanitarian and development needs in Afghanistan, joint prioritisation efforts and improved coordinated action of Government stakeholders, donors, the UN, NGOs and civil society are necessary.

The need for consolidated and comprehensive action is reinforced by the effects of the recent slowdown in Afghanistan's economic growth on increasing vulnerability and poverty levels.⁵ Poverty in Afghanistan remains endemic while access to basic resources, such as water and land, continues to present a major challenge and is a driver of conflict between communities.⁶ The successful return and reintegration to Afghanistan therefore entails the need to address simultaneously humanitarian needs and longer-term development needs. Based on a comprehensive approach that seeks to encourage community-based assistance provision through national development structures, the SSAR in Afghanistan focuses on bridging gaps between short-term and longer-term assistance provision.

People of concern

Between the beginning of January and the end August 2015, 50,763 refugees repatriated to Afghanistan. The number of returns in 2015 has quadrupled in comparison to the same period in 2014.⁷ With the onset of winter and the conclusion of the return season by late September/early October, returns are expected not to exceed 89,000 in 2015.⁸

On this basis, the projected return figure for 2016 is of 100,000 – 150,000 registered Afghan refugees from the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan.⁹ This projection represents a significant increase from the original projection for 2015 and is based on the following assumptions:

- Implementation of the MoRR Strategy for Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration, including increased access to services;
- Continued localized violence and insecurity due to conflict with anti-government elements in areas of refugee origin, including parts of the North, Northeast, and South preventing large-scale return;
- Limited absorption capacity within Afghanistan in urban areas and areas of potential high return necessitating the continuation of a relatively gradual voluntary repatriation exercise.

Simultaneously, conflict-induced internal displacement continues to be on the rise as almost 135,000 individuals (20,750 families) have been recorded as displaced in the first seven months of 2015 – an increase of almost 41 per cent compared to the same period in 2014. Conflict-induced displacement is affecting an increasing number of provinces in the country and will likely continue to rise. Currently, there are approximately 980,324 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Afghanistan.¹⁰

⁴ Conflict-induced internal displacement (estimated to have reached 950,000 by 30 June 2015) and the recent increase of refugees returning to Afghanistan (over 46,000 returnees by 4 August 2015) have led to a sharp rise of needs and demand for assistance. UNHCR (2015) IDP Update, June 2015; UNHCR (2015) Voluntary Repatriation Update, July 2015.

⁵ World Bank (2015) Afghanistan Overview; <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview> and World Bank (2014) Afghanistan Country Snapshot, October 2014, pp. 1, 3

⁶ UN Country Team Afghanistan (2014) UNDAF Afghanistan Narrative 2015-2019, p. 7

⁷ During the same period of time in 2014, 12,137 individuals voluntarily repatriated to Afghanistan, partly as a result of the protracted presidential elections, concerns around an outbreak of violence around the elections and the transition of power in the security sector from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

⁸ UNHCR (2015) Country Operations Plan for Afghanistan 2015-2016.

⁹ UNHCR (2015) *ibid.* Please also see GoIRA/MoRR (2015) Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Strategy, Kabul, August 2015.

¹⁰ Figure as of the end of June 2015. Please see UNHCR Afghanistan (2015) 'Conflict-induced internal displacement Monthly Update June 2015' for an analysis of the internal displacement situation, figures and trends in Afghanistan.

Policy framework

National frameworks

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), finalized in 2008, is the overarching national development framework for reintegration of Afghan refugees. It has been brought into accord with the outcomes of the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) Conference¹¹ and further adjusted at the 2014 London Conference on Afghanistan¹², where the National Unity Government presented the “Realizing Self-Reliance” reform strategy.¹³ In September 2015, progress was reported on five key reform areas identified in the strategy¹⁴ reflecting important opportunities for returnees in terms of access to a job market and equal rights to participate in and benefit from development.

The National Priority Programmes (NPPs) through which the Government is implementing its development strategy, aim to strengthen sub-national governance and community-led development in a bid to enhance access to basic services, including health, education and livelihoods. The NPPs are currently being revised and reduced from a total of 22 to 12 programmes. The NPP revision process provides an opportunity for the mainstreaming of returnees’ rights into key national programmes. Out of these 12 NPPs, six concept notes have been developed, outlining areas for future NPPs, including a Citizen’s Charter, rural and urban development programmes, a National Women’s Economic Development Plan and National Infrastructure Plan. The Citizen’s Charter, focuses on the development and rehabilitation of rural areas through the empowerment of communities and promotion of their participation in local development. The Citizen’s Charter has therefore a significant potential to reach returnee communities and to contribute to their sustainable reintegration. The new NPP for Urban Development will be also of importance to for returnee communities, as it covers the issue of land allocation and affordable housing schemes in urban and peri-urban areas.

Turning words into action, the Government of Afghanistan has taken active steps to address the issue of return at the policy-level. The MoRR under the leadership of Minister Balkhi has, following an agreement at a Tripartite Commission Meeting between the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan and UNHCR in March 2015, developed a national Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Plan. Complementing the Solution Strategy as an overarching regional framework and the Ministry of Refugee and Repatriation’s five year Strategy and Action Plan¹⁵, the Afghan Government’s Comprehensive Plan includes the policy framework for an integrated approach to voluntary repatriation and reintegration and its translation into concrete actions.

The plan gives particular attention to the needs of returnees for a period of two years during which they will have access to social services and be included in individual and community-based initiatives. This initial return period is seen as crucial in determining the success of the reintegration process, bridging some of the challenges that returnees may face in the short- to mid-term. Other key measures include new strategies for development of land allocation sites in urban and peri-urban settings and the inclusion of returnees into livelihood and Income Generation Activities (IGA).

¹¹ The Tokyo Conference, a meeting between the Afghan Government and international community on 8 July 2012, together with the Chicago Summit of Afghanistan and ISAF contributing countries of May 2012, established a renewed, stronger foundation for partnership to support sustainable growth and development of Afghanistan throughout the Transformation Decade (2015–2024). The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) establishes an approach based on mutual commitments of the Government and international community to help Afghanistan achieve its development and governance goals.

¹² The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the International Community along with other partners, met on 4 December 2014 in London to reaffirm and consolidate their partnership. They renewed their commitment to the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) and the Afghan Government presented a reform strategy built around regional connectivity, good governance, and investments in productivity.

¹³ See ‘Realizing Self-Reliance: Commitments to Reforms and Renewed Partnership’, London Conference on Afghanistan in December 2014.

¹⁴ See “Afghanistan’s Road to Self-Reliance: The First Mile Progress Report” Kabul, Afghanistan, 5 September 2015.

¹⁵ MoRR 5 Year Plan and related action Plan will be finalized in August 2015.

Building on lessons learnt, the priority status for returnees would ensure a comprehensive, inter-ministerial response to returnees under the supervision of the President and the High-Commission on Migration (HCM). Such a coordinated Government approach would enable humanitarian and development actors to better complement ongoing efforts by providing more focused assistance in areas where continued gaps are noted. In addition, it would allow humanitarian and development actors to better support the Government to address the immediate needs of returnees.

The Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Plan is aligned with existing international development frameworks, such as the United Nations' Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019 (UNDAF). Similar priority areas are identified as under the UNDAF, including:

- Ensuring equitable rural (and urban) development;
- Improving access to basic social services and enhancing social protection;
- Considering women and youth as priority population groups with specific vulnerabilities.

The Government plans to implement its policy along the following broad areas of intervention:

1. The provision of assistance and services to returnees currently in place, will be maintained.
2. MoRR, together with UNHCR, plans to provide an Enhanced Voluntary Return and Reintegration Package (EVRRP) – subject to the availability of funding, which will help facilitate the long term reintegration of returnees.
3. This will be complemented by measures envisioned in the Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Plan, including through the integration of repatriation and reintegration needs in existing development platforms and strategies. The increased targeting of appropriate development assistance to areas of chosen settlement among returning refugees, whether urban settings or rural villages of origin will be considered. Also, linkages to markets, and livelihood programmes that reflect the skills developed and resources accumulated by Afghans in exile will be strengthened.

Constraints and challenges to the implementation of the Solutions Strategy

Challenges to return

Insecurity, conflict and ongoing internal displacement continue to pose challenges to return to Afghanistan. Recurrent drought, severe landslides and other natural disasters, the rapid growth of urban slums and a disproportionately high number of young people without access to gainful employment impede efforts to encourage return and to creating an environment of sustainable reintegration.

Lack of sustainable support services and access to them

Humanitarian concerns remain significant in Afghanistan, often exacerbated by weak and limited Government capacity to provide adequate security and access to basic services. National and international actors have been filling some of these gaps by providing basic services to the most vulnerable communities. Currently, national development and recovery initiatives do not necessarily target or address the lack of equal access to services that many returnees are currently experiencing.

Urbanization

Urbanization remains a complex issue in the context of displacement and is recognized as a key development concern. The Ministry for Urban Development is developing a national strategy for urban development, to guide the process of strengthening communal infrastructure in urban areas across the country. It is expected that one of the pillars of this strategy will be the development of an urban National Priority Programme (NPP), which will, for example, focus on the strengthening of communal infrastructure in urban areas.

Limited development engagement

Community-driven development initiatives, such as the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) have been very successful in Afghanistan, leading to the proliferation of a community-centric development approach. Despite the prevalence of community-based assistance programmes, their impact on returnees and returnee communities are difficult to assess due to the lack of disaggregated data. UNHCR's efforts to map reintegration activities provides a starting point for identifying major reintegration actors and will facilitate focused advocacy with development actors to ensure their robust, targeted engagement with communities of return.

Key achievements and results

2014 presented a challenging environment for the successful implementation of projects in Afghanistan. The protracted election period, concerns around the possible outbreak of violence around the elections in addition to the complex security transition and the delays in the establishment of the new administration all contributed to the slowing, and in some cases halting, of project implementation.

Despite this environment, substantial progress has been made at the policy level in terms of ensuring the representation of return and reintegration-related concerns at the highest levels of Government. The new administration's determination to address the displacement situation has resulted in the formation of the inter-ministerial High Commission for Migration (HCM) and subsidiary bodies to facilitate the formulation of comprehensive responses at the national level. To ensure improved coordination of return and reintegration activities at the national level, the Government of Afghanistan has facilitated the establishment of additional SSAR coordination mechanisms (see 'National Coordination Mechanisms', p.30), to encourage greater exchange and interaction with interested donors, UN agencies, NGOs and civil society.

MoRR's concerted advocacy efforts have led to the cabinet approval of a proposal to exempt Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan from paying fees normally levied for the verification of education documentation gained in countries of asylum. This is a great achievement, as returnees previously stated that the verification fees had been prohibitively high, often disabling them from having crucial documentation verified. Similarly, MoRR and UNHCR have been actively advocating for the revision of Presidential Decree 104 – the decree on the basis of which the Land Allocation Scheme (LAS) has been developed. While the revision is still under consideration by the Presidential office, MoRR has already taken steps to simplify and improve the transparency of the land distribution process.

In addition, key achievements in 2014 include the following:

- Over 3,038 shelter units were constructed in return areas (503 in Central and Central Highlands, 844 in Northern, 368 in Western, 300 in South-eastern and 1,023 in Eastern Regions), benefitting 18,228 individuals.
- 167 community-based projects were implemented in return areas across the country. Projects included 142 potable-water wells, a hydropower/electrical project, a water-supply project, flood-protection walls and the rehabilitation of a water-irrigation system.
- A water-pipe scheme, the purification of existing water points and the construction of 170 tube wells was completed which benefited 1,224 returnees and host community members. One wind-powered electricity plant was constructed and benefits 1,795 persons.
- Over 5,800 returnees received vocational/livelihood training in five regions of the country. This aimed to empower vulnerable women, men, and youth through marketable job skills, providing productive assets and enhancing business-development skills.
- Six schools were constructed (including boundary walls for schools, provision of school furniture, solar lighting, rehabilitation of co-educational rooms).
- A total of 98,682 individuals benefited from the Information, Counseling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) programme.

3. Strategy

Programme rational and principles

Recognizing the complexity of refugee issues in the region, the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, with the support of UNHCR, initiated a quadripartite consultative process in 2011. These consultations resulted in the development of the *Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration and Assistance to Host Countries (SSAR)*, which was endorsed by the international community at a conference in Geneva in May 2012. The SSAR acknowledges the cross-border linkages of the Afghan displacement and seeks to implement comprehensive solutions. It is the primary regional framework providing policy guidance on voluntary return and reintegration for Afghan refugees and the foundation for the Government of Afghanistan's Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Plan.

The SSAR is structured around three main components: creating conditions conducive for voluntary repatriation through community-based investments in areas of high return; building Afghan refugee capital based on livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan to facilitate return and enable sustainable reintegration; and preserving asylum space in host countries including through enhanced support to refugee hosting communities and resettlement in third countries.

The design and implementation of projects proposed in this portfolio will support the following five outcomes:

1. Support for voluntary repatriation

A key outcome of the SSAR is to support the voluntary return of Afghan refugees in safety and dignity.

2. Access to shelter and essential social services for returnees and host communities

Access to land, shelter and basic social services including health and education are among the key concerns of returnees. Often returning to areas with limited absorption capacity, the SSAR advocates for a community-based support system to improve access to land, shelter and essential services for returnees and host communities.

3. Improved and diversified livelihood opportunities and enhanced food security

Access to sustainable and gainful employment remains one of the largest obstacles to return for returnees. Strengthening returnees' and host communities' self-reliance and resilience by facilitating entry into the labour market and by ensuring food security is therefore a priority under the SSAR.

4. Social and environmental protection of returnees and assistance and support to host communities

Refugees returning home may display unique vulnerabilities linked to protracted stay in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan. Households headed by women, older persons or minors, and other households with specific needs are recognized as a particular target group under the SSAR.

5. Capacity development of national authorities, associations, organizations and communities concerned with returnees and host communities

Advocating for the mainstreaming of assistance to returnees into national programmes, the SSAR recognizes the importance of strengthening national and local capacity to address returnees' needs through community-based initiatives.

To achieve these outcomes, the following basic conditions need to be fulfilled:

- An improvement in the security situation and tangible progress towards peace in the areas of refugee origin;
- An improvement in political, economic and social absorption capacities in key sectors and areas;
- A voluntary repatriation and reintegration action plan with clear priorities and a strong coordination platform among concerned government ministries and departments;
- Continued support to refugee-hosting countries to ensure that all return remains voluntary and to maintain asylum space until refugees decide to return in conditions of safety and dignity; and
- Continued support by the international community for the displacement situation.

The SSAR provides an entry point for the development of a national strategy for voluntary repatriation and reintegration. The establishment of National Steering Committees (NSC) in all three countries provides a forum for joint planning and programming between relevant line ministries to facilitate comprehensive planning of interventions. As the newly-established inter-governmental structures regulating repatriation and reintegration at the national level take shape, MoRR plays a critical coordination role in ensuring national development initiatives complement the overarching objectives and activities planned under the regional SSAR.

The SSAR Country Portfolios

In a bid to better coordinate refugee and returnee interventions in the three countries, it was agreed that portfolios of projects would be developed by the ministries handling refugee and returnee issues in the three countries: MoRR in Afghanistan, the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants' Affairs (BAFIA) in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) in Pakistan.

While the country portfolios for the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan were launched in the course of 2014, the complex political situation in Afghanistan and the delays in establishing the new Government resulted in the postponement of the official launch of the portfolio. Instead, the three Governments and UNHCR agreed to update all country portfolios and launch them at UNHCR's annual Executive Committee Meeting in Geneva in October 2015.

Based on a comprehensive and multifunctional needs assessment conducted in 2013¹⁶, results of which were updated in 2014, and recent efforts to map reintegration activities across Afghanistan (UNHCR August 2015),¹⁷ a consultative process with line ministries and partners was initiated in March 2015 to identify ongoing and planned reintegration activities including in high-return areas for the period 2015 -2016.

An important cross-cutting theme in this portfolio is the focus on women and youth, as well as a need to strengthen and increase the sustainable livelihoods opportunities available to returnees. Providing equitable access to education, skills development, employment and health services with a focus on the meaningful engagement and empowerment of women and youth is recognized to be a priority in Afghanistan. Successful youth engagement initiatives have illustrated the positive effects of actively including youth in local decision-making processes on intra-communal relations, improving communication and enhancing mutual understanding and empathy within communities.

¹⁶ UNHCR (2013-2014) Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

¹⁷ See section 4 "Linkages to other initiatives" for details.

The Afghanistan portfolio includes 30 projects implemented by six line ministries (MoRR, MRRD, MOE, MOWE, MOAIL, MUDA), seven United Nations agencies (UN-Habitat, UNODC, UNOPS, UNHCR, UNDP, FAO) and other international organisations (IOM) and four NGOs (DACAAR, NRC, Mercy Corps, WHH) and one foundation (Agha Khan Foundation). The portfolio's total requirements for 2015 and 2016 amount to USD 553 million of which 21 per cent (USD 117 million) funding has been received to date.

Return to Afghanistan: Needs, Gaps and Responses

The Government of Afghanistan is committed to ensuring that returnees' specific vulnerabilities are recognized and comprehensively addressed. The portfolio takes into consideration the needs of returnees in urban and rural areas, while maintaining a special focus on women and youth. Utilizing inclusive approaches that build on community-driven development models, the portfolio includes strong co-existence components as they seek to ensure that inter-communal relations are not affected by the provision of assistance.

While the vast majority of refugees originate from rural areas of Afghanistan, a large number return to urban centers. Returnees have cited a range of reasons for not returning to their place of origin. Reasons include lack of public/basic services (54 per cent)¹⁸, lack of housing (49 per cent), lack of job opportunities (38 per cent), perceived insecurity (32 per cent) and lack of land (16 per cent). Several studies cite severe difficulties faced by families attempting to re-establish themselves, with some estimates suggesting that about 40 per cent of returnees struggle to fully reintegrate upon return.¹⁹ Monitoring of refugee returnees has shown that a significant percentage of returnees who initially return to their villages of origin end up migrating to larger cities within two years of their arrival in Afghanistan. Other challenges experienced by returnees in rural areas include continued insecurity, conflict, drought, limited livelihood opportunities, rising food prices, limited access to basic services (water, health, education, electricity), inadequate shelter and challenges with land tenure.²⁰

Increased urbanization is a global trend with far-reaching consequences. Irrespective of efforts to improve access to services in rural areas, MoRR assumes that the urbanization trend among returnees will continue to rise in the coming years. The Ministry sees its engagement with entities active in urban areas as a key priority to ensure adequate and systematic assistance to returnees in urban areas. MoRR is working with the ARAZI (land authority), the Independent board for New Kabul, Ministry for Urban Development, municipalities, and the Independent Directorate for Local Governance to identify plots of unused land within cities which could be redistributed.²¹

In parallel, MoRR is cooperating closely with UNHCR and international technical agencies to identify particularly vulnerable returnees in need of shelter assistance in urban areas.

Brief descriptions of projects included in the portfolio are given below. Overviews of the projects and funding requirements can be found in Part Two of the portfolio.

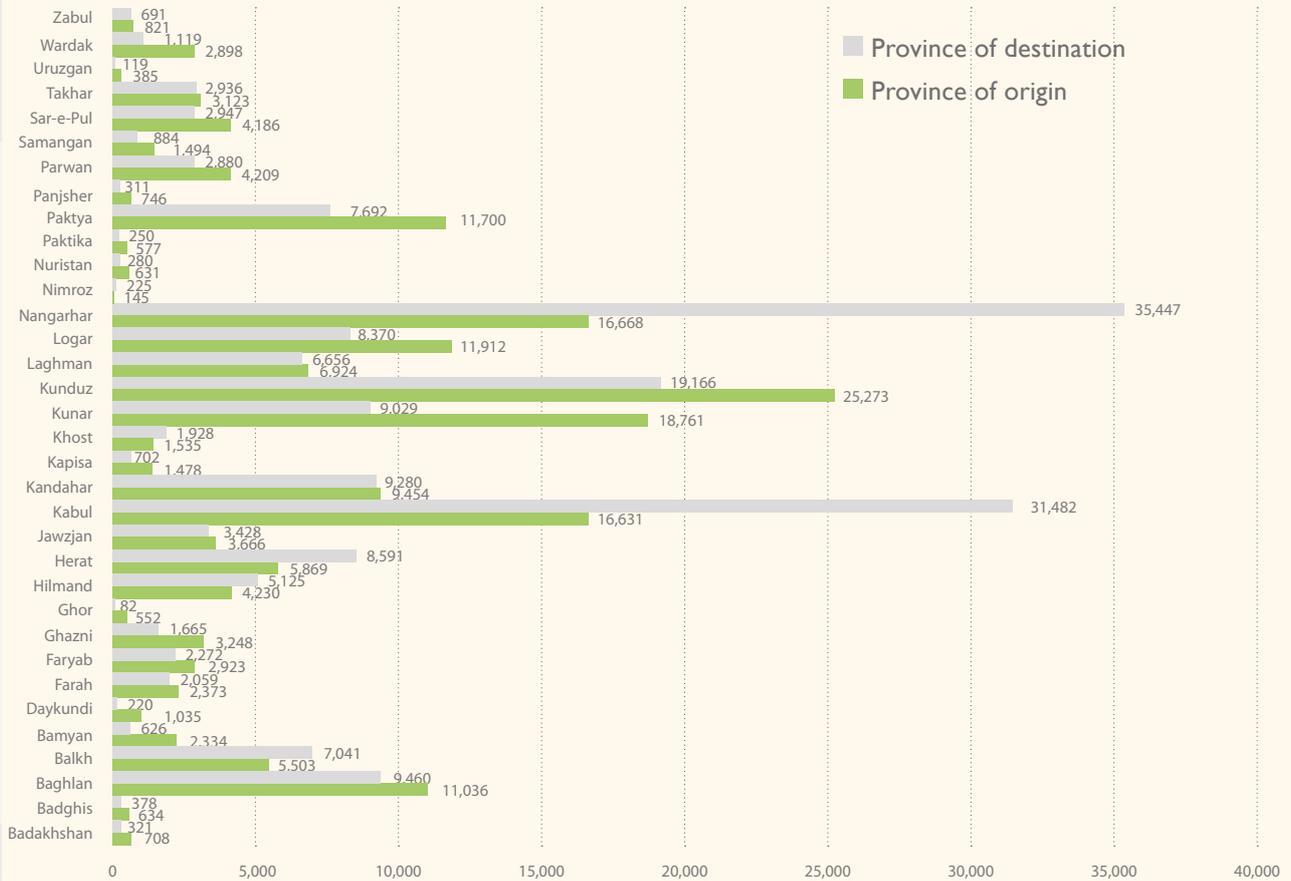
¹⁸ Please refer to the UNHCR Voluntary return and border monitoring monthly update covering the period 01 January 2015 – 30 April 2015.

¹⁹ See, for instance, Livelihoods, Basic Services, and Protection in Afghanistan. Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit. June 2012

²⁰ Returnee monitoring is carried out by UNHCR across the country at community and family levels through phone interviews, home visits, focus group discussions and exit phone interviews with returnees randomly selected in the 5 Encashment Centres upon arrival in Afghanistan. This exercise helps to identify protection issues, assistance needs and gaps, coping mechanisms which provide a useful base for further interventions to ensure the sustainable return of refugees to their communities of origin or chosen settlement.

²¹ The successful redistribution of land within cities requires the reform of Presidential Decree 104.

Assisted return 2012-2015 Return by province of origin vs province of destination



Outcome 1: Support for voluntary repatriation

Needs:

The significant increase of returns in 2015 combined with the largely unplanned nature of return, have resulted in refugees displaying greater vulnerabilities in terms of personal assets and preparedness. Communities' low absorption capacities have also meant that recent returnees have displayed a greater need for immediate and longer-term assistance to find adequate accommodation, food/water and livelihoods. Additional resources and mechanisms for returnees' participation to help adequately address the situation are therefore essential.

Response:

- Projects listed under this outcome include the provision of cash assistance to cover transportation to the final destination and reintegration activities. It further includes monitoring activities to enable MoRR and UNHCR to provide targeted assistance to the most vulnerable returnees.
- The Government of Afghanistan-led Enhanced Voluntary Return and Reintegration Package (EVRRP) aims to support return and allow families to better re-establish themselves through the phased provision of cash over a six month period which will help to facilitate the long term reintegration of returnees. The EVRRP, subject to the availability of funding, seeks to complement the currently provided cash grant of USD 200 per individual by including an additional long-term reintegration component of USD 3,000, irrespective of the family size. The EVRRP is complementary to the broader efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to create improved conditions conducive for reintegration by enabling returnees to self-direct financial assistance received towards addressing basic needs (access to land, housing, education, health) or income-generating activities (small entrepreneurial activities, purchasing productive/livelihoods assets). The provision of multi-purpose cash grants as part of the EVRRP pilot, which is included as a core activity under MoRR's Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Plan, empowers returnees to be able to access improved livelihood opportunities as identified under the Plan.

Outcome 2: Access to shelter and essential social services for returnees and host communities

Needs:

Access to land

Access to adequate land remains a major challenge in Afghanistan and a root cause of major conflict among communities. Often, multiple and contested claims to land arise either from disputes over inheritance, or have historical roots. The resolution of such conflicts is complicated as customary law, sharia law and state law are operating simultaneously.²² Conflicts over land take the form of land grabbing and other types of land encroachment disputes, including between returnees and communities of origin.²³

Many returnees occupy and settle on land to which they have no legal right to tenure. The risk of eviction is a constant threat and rights to services is often limited to land acquired in the location of origin. Refugees' concerns about returning home reflect concerns regarding access to land and shelter – a profiling exercise conducted in Pakistan demonstrates, for instance, that challenges in accessing shelter and land in Afghanistan presents a major concern and may even prevent return.²⁴

²² Rao, S. and Turkstra, J. (2014) 'Enhancing security of land tenure for IDPs', Forced Migration Review 46: Afghanistan's displaced people: 2014 and beyond; <http://www.fmreview.org/afghanistan/rao-turkstra>

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ministry of SAFRON and UNHCR (2012) Population Profiling, Verification and Response Survey of Afghans in Pakistan 2012: Final Report', p. 14

Land Allocation Scheme (LAS)

In an attempt to address the issue of landlessness among refugee and IDP returnees, MoRR developed a land allocation scheme (LAS) in 2005, which was endorsed by the Government of Afghanistan on 6 December 2005 by Presidential Decree #104. According to MoRR, over 300,000 land plots were demarcated in over 30 sites across Afghanistan.²⁵ This land has been allocated on the basis of eligibility criteria determined by MoRR. As a prerequisite for eligibility to apply for land under the scheme, returnees and IDPs are requested to prove prior non-possession of land. Similarly, land is currently only allocated in locations or areas of origin – not settlement. By June 2014, up to 57,595 plots of land had been distributed to refugee and IDP returnees, with 39,074 individuals having received legal title to their plot of land. The distribution of land under the LAS has, however, not been without challenges, including the transparent allocation of viable land; claims and disputes over land ownership; insecurity in certain areas and lack of funds for the development of infrastructure and facilities. The Decree further stipulates that land is only to be distributed to returnees in their locations of origin; with 46 per cent of returnees returning to areas other than those of their origin, there is a clear need to revisit the Decree.

²⁵ Majidi, N. (2013) 'Home sweet home! Repatriation, reintegration and land allocation in Afghanistan' in *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée: Guerre et terre en Afghanistan*; <http://remmm.revues.org/8098>

The Government of Afghanistan aims to continue with the land allocation scheme where additional elements including facilities and services such as education, health, sanitation as well as livelihood opportunities can be provided. This issue of land reform—and the provision of viable land for settlement to returning refugees—is complex and will require a concerted effort and commitment across various line ministries. Overall, a strategy is needed to make the land allocation process more effective, sustainable and transparent. A more systematic approach is also needed with regard to the revision and enforcement of the Presidential Decree in a more equitable manner, and in the development of the sites. MoRR has taken steps to simplify the land distribution process and is working with the provincial Departments of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR) to implement the changes.

As for urban areas, the Government together with partners is launching a nation-wide survey and certification of all informal urban settlements, which aims at clarifying ownership, encourages investment, and reduces people's fears over illicit land grabbing.²⁶ Discussions between MoRR and the municipalities have shown a shift towards the consideration of the distribution of unused land in urban areas to displaced persons. As municipalities have little experience on issues of displacement, substantial advocacy and support will be needed to facilitate the municipalities' assumption of new responsibilities. Capacity-building support needs to be closely linked with a broader strategy for assistance in urban settings, to streamline beneficiary selection and vulnerability criteria and ensure that the most vulnerable are appropriately targeted.

²⁶ See "Afghanistan's Road to Self-Reliance: The First Mile Progress Report", Kabul Afghanistan, 5 September 2015.

Shelter

Afghans living in exile, as well as those who have returned, have cited lack of shelter/adequate accommodation as a serious concern. It is estimated that more than 500,000 homes were either totally or partially damaged during the three decades of conflict in Afghanistan. Immediately after their return, many returnees have no choice but to live with their relatives or friends, often in overcrowded conditions. Others are compelled to live in sub-standard public buildings that often lack basic facilities.

Alternative forms of shelter support, including cash assistance to cover rent, are increasingly examined as a possibility of circumventing some of the issues around land tenure and proving title deeds.²⁷

Access to Essential Services

In addition to land and shelter, access to basic and social services remains an obstacle to reintegration. Despite concerted efforts at driving development in rural Afghanistan, access to potable water, water for irrigation, health and educational services remains uneven across the country. Although the coverage of health facilities has expanded into all rural districts, only 31 per cent of Afghanistan's population is able to access basic health services through the Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS).²⁸ Accessing quality health care outside of urban areas also continues to present a major obstacle reinforcing rural flight.

Returnees note the long distances that need to be covered to access adequate health services, and frequently, the lack of ambulances to provide emergency health support. Active and joint advocacy on this issue – alongside key actors, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) is needed to ensure that services are extended accordingly.

The difficulty of accessing quality education in Afghanistan remains a major concern for returnees, particularly refugees returning from Iran.²⁹ Although large gains have been made in increasing school attendance and enrolment across Afghanistan, access to education – particularly for girls – remains low in rural areas.³⁰ The Government, through relevant ministers, including the Ministry of Education, is committed to facilitating re-entry of children into the national education system in Afghanistan upon return.

Response:

In a bid to address some of the concerns around land allocations, tenure insecurity and disputes, as well as providing actual shelter support, organisations such as UN Habitat, UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council provide support for conflict resolution and community mobilisation around these issues. Improved access to essential social services including education, healthcare and water and sanitation are designed to benefit all Afghans including refugees, IDPs, returnees and host communities.

The resolution of development issues around land, shelter and basic services are issues which are also recognized as three main areas for action under the 2015-2019 UNDAF for Afghanistan. Concerted action will therefore be seen across the UN system in the coming years in a bid to resolve some of the major obstacles hindering equal and fair access to land, shelter and basic services.

- Addressing major development issues including access to services, land and shelter, the Government is providing block-grants to communities through the National Solidarity Programme (NSP).

²⁷ See UNAMA Rule of Law Unit (2014) 'The Stolen Lands of Afghanistan and its people: the legal framework', 'Private land ownership and land rights', p. 35 for a more in-depth discussion on title deeds.

²⁸ UN Country Team Afghanistan (2014) UNDAF Afghanistan Narrative 2015-2019, p. 9. The BPHS aims to improve the health and nutritional status of Afghanistan's rural poor by expanding access to free basic health services.

²⁹ Samuel Hall (2015) 'Agency and Choice Among the Displaced: Returnees' and IDPs' Choice of Destination in Afghanistan - Behind the Decision Making Process' for DACAAR, p. 31.

³⁰ UN Country Team Afghanistan (2014) UNDAF Afghanistan Narrative 2015-2019, p. 10.

- To cater for shelter needs of refugees returning home or those that have experienced multiple displacements, UNHCR, NRC and UN-Habitat provide cash grants, shelter units and shelter assistance. UN-Habitat also provides block grants for basic infrastructure in inner-city areas and peri-urban areas. The Ministry for Urban Development Affairs (MUDA) is planning to construct 1,000 affordable housing units for 6,000 returnees in Kabul city while ensuring these units are placed in areas with access to social services. Selection of returnee families will be based on vulnerability criteria and returnees will have access to loans. The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development is constructing shelters for returnee households in Badakhshan. Other locations for shelter projects in high return areas will be identified in 2016. The Danish Committee for Aid to Afghans Refugees (DACAAR) is working on access to water and sanitation facilities through rehabilitation and construction of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure.
- The Ministry of Education is spearheading a project in ten cities, providing education and literacy material to children and constructing water and sanitation infrastructure in schools. NRC is providing community-based education, livelihood and skills training as well as emergency education. Quality education that builds on existing skills and that equips young people with skills to be self-reliant is of particular relevance for refugees returning home.
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) project seeks to provide HIV/AIDS prevention and drug treatment support to returnees, IDPs and affected members of the host community. Refugee returnees are classified as a vulnerable population by the Ministry of Public Health in this regard due to the high prevalence of drug use/abuse.³¹ UNODC proposes to revive and strengthen HIV/AIDS drug prevention and treatment centers in Herat and Kabul.

Outcome 3: Improved and diversified livelihood opportunities and enhanced food security

Needs:

Afghan refugees have reported their inability to find employment matching their skill set in Afghanistan as a major obstacle for sustainable reintegration.

Unemployment rates for unskilled labourers remain equally high. In some cases, refugees may have acquired education or specific skills that do not match the available work opportunities in Afghanistan. Recent reintegration studies have highlighted the need for business/enterprise development training, access to credit, vocational training/skills development linked to labour market needs, public works employment programmes, and targeted support to vulnerable households.

³¹ See Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (2011), 'Fifth Report: Situation of Economic and Social Rights in Afghanistan', December 2011, p. 79 and UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2009) 'Drug Use in Afghanistan: 2009 Survey', p. 12 for a more detailed discussion.

The labour market in Afghanistan

According to the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA), conducted by the Afghan Central Statistics Office in 2011-12, the labour market in Afghanistan is characterized by low-paid, low-productivity employment, low female participation and the absence of social protection networks (pensions, insurance).

Afghanistan's labour market has further been marked by poor performance and a low absorption capacity – particularly in the face of up to 400,000 new labour market entrants annually. The NRVA notes that the increasing number of children and youth in Afghanistan already exceeds the labour market's capacity to respond adequately; this, in the context of recent substantial returns to Afghanistan, indicates that access to employment – in terms of availability of job opportunities – is extremely limited.

The NRVA estimates that 18 per cent of the urban labour force and 20 per cent of the rural labour force is unable to find adequate work. Unemployment is estimated to stand at eight per cent, with youth unemployment believed to be 10 per cent. Afghanistan's economy continues to be driven by agricultural cultivation, as some 40 per cent of the labour force is actively engaged in farming.

Response:

The successful integration of refugees returning from the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, who may have benefitted from targeted education programmes in their country of asylum and subsequently acquired a sophisticated skill set, has great value for Afghanistan. Constituting almost 20 per cent of Afghanistan's entire population, returnees' skills and knowledge contribute directly to the reconstruction of the country and the strengthening of the local economy. There is a real need to facilitate the economic integration of Afghanistan's displaced.³²

- The Government of Afghanistan has announced an initiative to create one million jobs over the course of the next two years, and MoRR is advocating for the inclusion of job quotas for returnees within this program. The Government will further extend its efforts in linking with development actors as well as private sector to expand livelihood opportunities in the areas of return.
- The MRRD-led Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme (AREDP) will facilitate and provide business development through enterprise establishment once returnees are settled. AREDP will support enterprises, provide technical and soft skills trainings, tools and equipment, business resources, product development and branding, sales, marketing and knowledge exchange visits.
- UNDP is developing a project to create an environment conducive to enterprise formation and growth at the district level. Specifically, the project is designed to facilitate entry of IDPs, returnees and host communities into the labour market within or outside the district through

³² Presentation/Launch of the Samuel Hall report (2015) 'Agency and Choice Among the Displaced: Returnees' and IDPs' Choice of Destination in Afghanistan-Behind the Decision Making Process' for DACAAR at the European Delegation in Kabul, 30 July 2015.

vocational, livelihood and skills training. A community based approach will be applied through community-led planning and service-provision through district development assemblies.

- The Ministry for Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MoAIL) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) both propose projects which seek to support small-scale landowners and farmers with tools, livestock and kitchen gardens while also supporting women and vulnerable individuals with livestock and equipment to ensure a basic level of food security and income.
- Targeted vocational skills training and educational support to displaced Afghan youth (including returnees and IDPs) provided by Mercy Corps and NRC will encourage the development of social support networks. At the same time, youths' sense of self-worth will be strengthened as they are provided with the necessary skills to be able to enter into gainful employment.

Outcome 4: Improved social and environmental protection of returnees and assistance and support to host communities

Needs:

As a result of prolonged stay in countries of asylum, returnees may have specific protection needs. Returnee women, girls and youth can find themselves in situations of particular vulnerability upon return to Afghanistan. Protection concerns they may face include sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including domestic violence, concerns linked to inheritance of property and assets, challenges regarding harmful cultural attitudes and their consequences for women and girls. Issues around potential social isolation, even confinement, particularly in urban areas also present a concern. Broader Government initiatives to build a social protection system are needed to address common challenges.

Response:

While plans to develop a comprehensive social policy for Afghanistan are underway, some international actors are already implementing activities to enhance refugee and IDP returnees' access to existing social protection interventions.

- In supporting the Government's efforts programmes submitted under the portfolio include standard protection activities that UNHCR conducts in Afghanistan, which include returnee monitoring, assistance to persons with specific needs and vulnerabilities and promoting women, girls' and boys' participation in decision-making processes at home and in the communities.
- The Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) programme, seeks to strengthen social protection mechanisms for returnees and other displaced persons by tackling issues such as lack of civil documentation and disputes regarding housing, land and property. The ICLA programme promotes the identification of sustainable solutions through the utilization of the formal and the informal justice system. In addition to providing direct support to returnees and vulnerable members of the host community, ICLA further helps to strengthen the capacity of Government officials, community decision-makers and beneficiaries through targeted trainings.

Outcome 5: Capacity development of national authorities, associations, organizations and communities concerned with returnees and host communities

Needs:

National development programmes, such as the National Solidarity Programme have focused on supporting community-based and driven development with a view to improving rural and agricultural infrastructure. In some locations, returnees have benefitted from these programmes, however community decision-making structures are frequently not able to swiftly absorb newcomers in large numbers. In cases where refugees return to communities that are benefiting from such programmes, they may not be considered as part of the beneficiary group until the next programme cycle, which in some cases can be up to three years later.

The inclusion of returnees into local decision-making structures is crucial to returnees' socio-political reintegration. Integral to the reintegration process and the reinstatement of full citizenship, the inclusion of returnees in local decision-making structures is frequently overlooked and needs attention going forward.

Response:

- Projects included under this outcome aim to strengthen communities' resilience and response to new arrivals. MRRD will support up to 200,000 returnees by facilitating integration into community-led development projects. This will be done through the targeted inclusion of returnees into community based programming through Community Development Councils across the country.
- Rather than targeting returnees as an individual group, the project by the Aga Khan Foundation seeks to provide assistance with grant-writing, natural resource conflict management and community awareness campaigns to reduce possible intra-communal conflict.
- In a bid to improve and centralize information gathering and analysis capacities in regard to returnees, IOM will support the establishment of an Afghan Returnee Information System (ARIS), which will be operated at the central level and at the provincial level in Herat, Nimroz, Nangarhar and Kandahar.
- Seeking to strengthen the coordination of return and reintegration-related activities in Afghanistan, UNHCR will establish and maintain SSAR coordination mechanisms at the central level and will support the establishment of similar mechanisms at the provincial level.

4. Partnerships

Partners

Multi-stakeholder engagement and coordination are core principles of the Solutions Strategy. This section illustrates some of the partnerships that have been created or enhanced since its inception in 2012, as well as emerging ones which will be further explored and cemented in the upcoming phase. The efforts of various stakeholders to create synergies, ensure complementarity and avoid duplication, have led to the successful implementation of several projects in the Solutions Strategy portfolio.

Government

In order to develop and implement interventions in close alignment with national programmes, coordination and partnership with Government programmes, such as the NPPs, are vital. Bilateral engagement between MoRR and key line ministries, such as MRRD and MUDA, has strengthened with the change in administration. Coordination with these two ministries focuses in particular on the inclusion of returnees in existing and emerging Government initiatives in rural and urban areas.

The establishment of the High-Commission of Migration and the National Steering Committee provide useful fora for broader inter-ministerial exchange and partnership, for instance in the areas of education, health and livelihoods. As MoRR is a coordinating ministry, this inter-ministerial engagement is crucial to ensure the implementation of MoRR's returnee policies and recommendations. There is also a need for coordinated action, under the leadership of the Government at the national level with all stakeholders including– UN agencies, NGOs and affected communities themselves. Interventions that are complementary and which allow for a bridging of the gap that exists between humanitarian and development programming cycles and objectives are required. The challenges to effectively bridging this gap are manifold and substantive. However, improved coordination at the local, provincial and national levels will ultimately also allow for improved regional-level interventions to finding truly durable solutions for displaced Afghans.

UN

Utilizing multilateral platforms such as the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), UNHCR – in close coordination with MoRR – has raised awareness around the issue of refugee returns in the context of the SSAR and has successfully increased the active engagement of UN agencies with returnee-related issues. SSAR coordination mechanisms, such as the Friends of SSAR, also provide opportunities for strategic exchange with a view to strengthening joint efforts to assess and prioritize needs, develop and implement responses. UNHCR, in coordination with MoRR, and other UN agencies are working closely together to address major development issues under the UN Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan (UNDAF). Identifying five priority areas, the UNDAF focuses on equitable economic development, the provision of basic social services, social equity and the investment in human capital, justice and rule of law and accountable governance. Utilizing the UNDAF results matrix, agencies already engaged in reintegration activities and with objectives in alignment with the five SSAR outcomes were identified and encouraged to participate in the SSAR in Afghanistan. In particular, the alignment of objectives under UNDAF priority areas two (basic social services) and three (social equity and investment in human capital) was sought between the two frameworks.

NGOs

Close engagement with the civil society, at both national and sub-national levels, has played an important role in the development of the portfolio of projects. At the national level, NGO inputs were solicited from the initial drafting stage through to the finalisation. NGO platforms, such as the Afghanistan Humanitarian Forum (AHF) and the Afghanistan Development Forum (ADF) have helped forge closer links with NGOs. Similarly, the creation of a reintegration working group at the national level will further strengthen close working relations between Government entities, UN agencies, NGOs and interested donors.

At the sub-national level, close working relations have been established with Community Development Councils (CDCs), consisting of democratically elected local representatives, with a view to better understand and respond to returnees' needs across the country. Engagement with the CDCs has enabled humanitarian and development actors to seek direct inputs from returnees and host communities regarding their perceived needs, perspectives on sustainable reintegration, progress and challenges.

Linkages to other initiatives

Regional processes and initiatives

At the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan in July 2012, specific reference was made to the Solutions Strategy in the conference declaration. It stated that the “sustainable return and reintegration of Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons is essential to security and stability” and the international community “reaffirmed the commitment to enhance the development and reintegration potential in Afghanistan to create communities that are viable in the long-term and support the increased return of refugees from neighbouring countries.”³³ The International Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Refugees in the Muslim World in May 2012 also acknowledged the Solutions Strategy and “called for effective implementation of the Strategy.”

Regional initiatives, such as the Istanbul Process, the Budapest Process and the Almaty Process, continue to develop close engagement with the Government of Afghanistan, including advocating for the inclusion of a confidence-building measure on refugees in the context of the Istanbul Process. UNHCR and its partners will continue to use such multilateral fora to advocate for the international community's continued support for the Afghan refugee and returnee situation and for the SSAR.³⁴

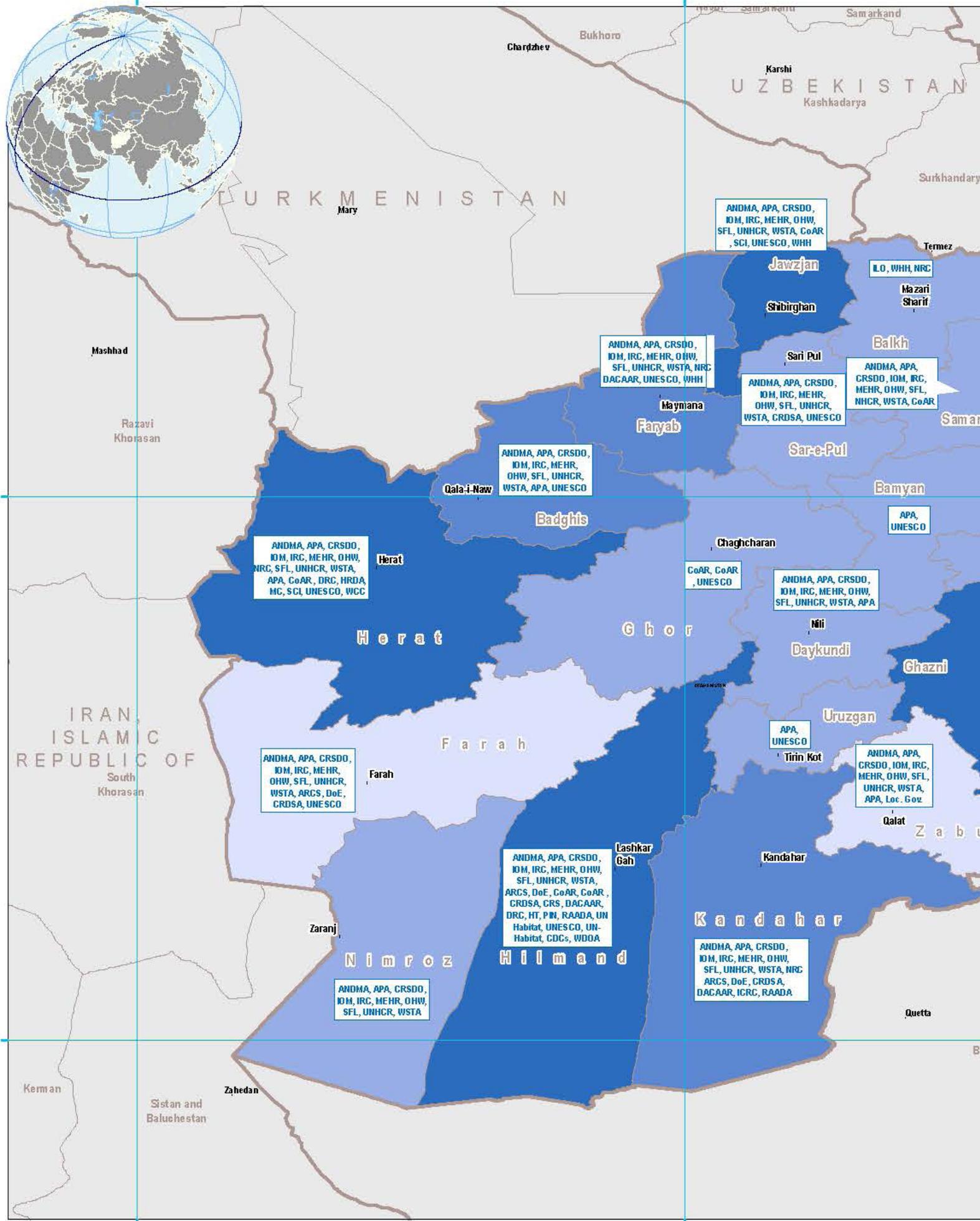
National Initiatives

In 2015, UNHCR led efforts to map reintegration projects in Afghanistan by sector and province, to help visualize on-going activities, as well as continued gaps in assistance (by sector and geographic location) across the country. The first of its kind, the maps are based on data³⁵ provided by 40 organizations active in Afghanistan, 171 projects and 519 reintegration-related activities. Data has been provided covering 13 different sectors in over 35 provinces. The sectors detailed here include: Co-Existence; Education; Environment; Food Security; Housing, Land and Property; Infrastructure; Livelihoods; Rural Development; Urban Development; Public Health; Water and Sanitation and Transitional Shelter. The maps will be regularly updated based on information received by organizations and entities implementing reintegration activities in Afghanistan.

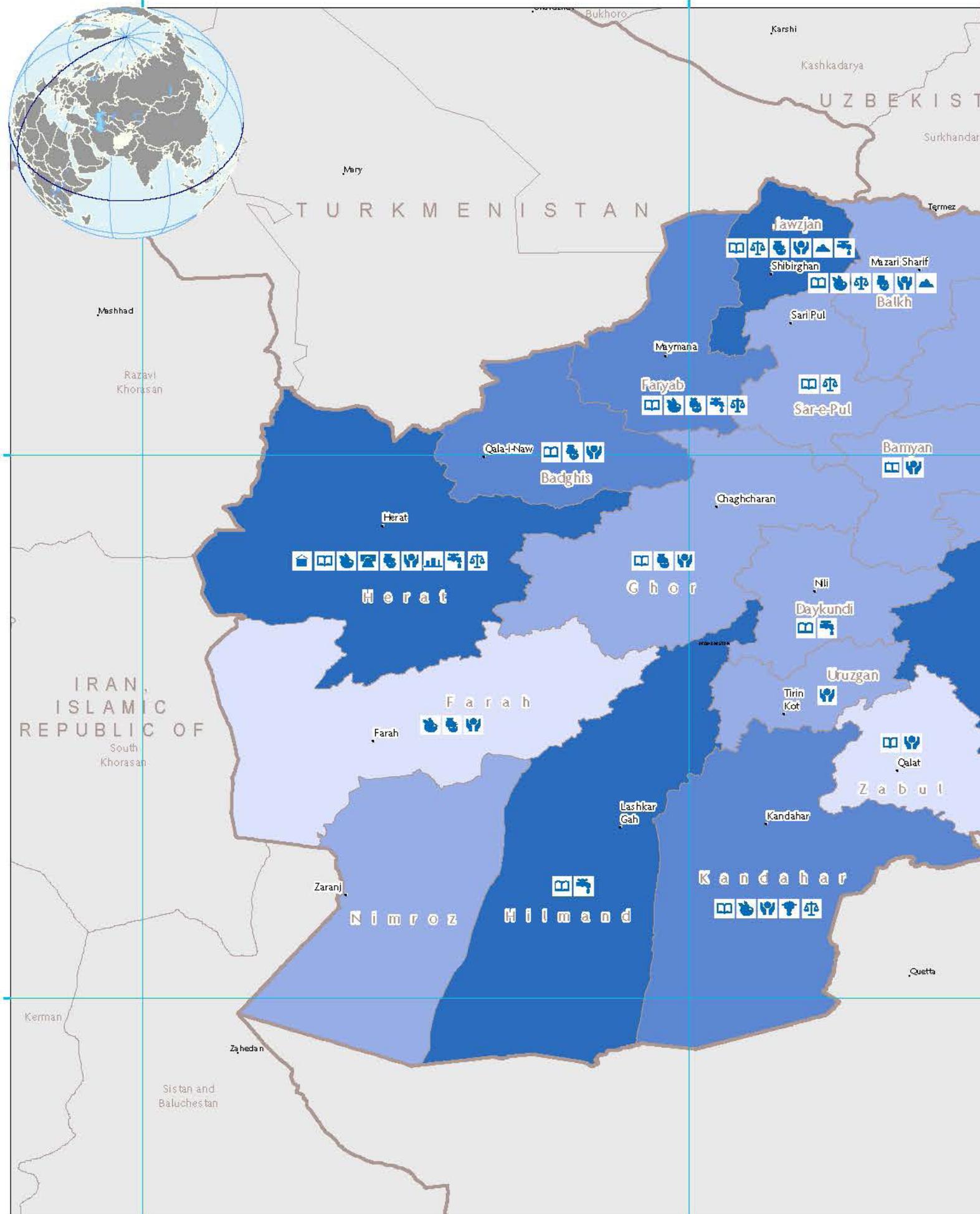
³³ Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan. The Tokyo Declaration Partnership for Self-Reliance in Afghanistan: From Transition to Transformation, 8 July 2012

³⁴ Ashgabat Declaration of the International Ministerial Conference of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Refugees in the Muslim World. Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, 11-12 May 2012.

³⁵ The number of organisations, projects, sectors and activities is by far not comprehensive and exhaustive and data provided by agencies is only partially valid.



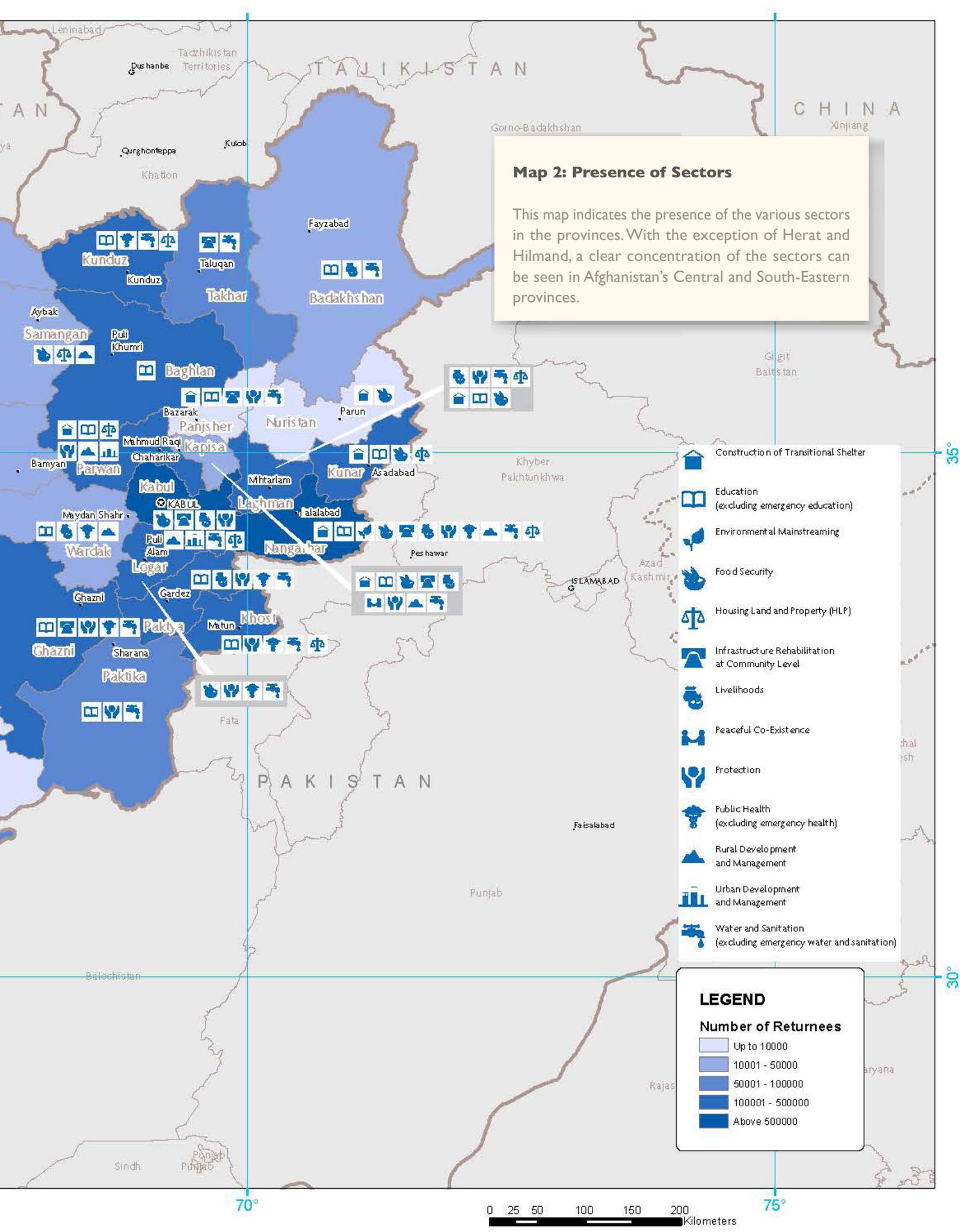
Disclaimer: Only 455 project activities out of 519 reported have accurate data. The Boundaries on this map are not necessarily endorsed by UNHCR. Data Source: UNHCR, CSO, OCHA. The figures above are almost certainly incomplete. Nevertheless the sectoral and geographic coverage shown above can be considered indicative of the overall response. Date 20/Aug/2015

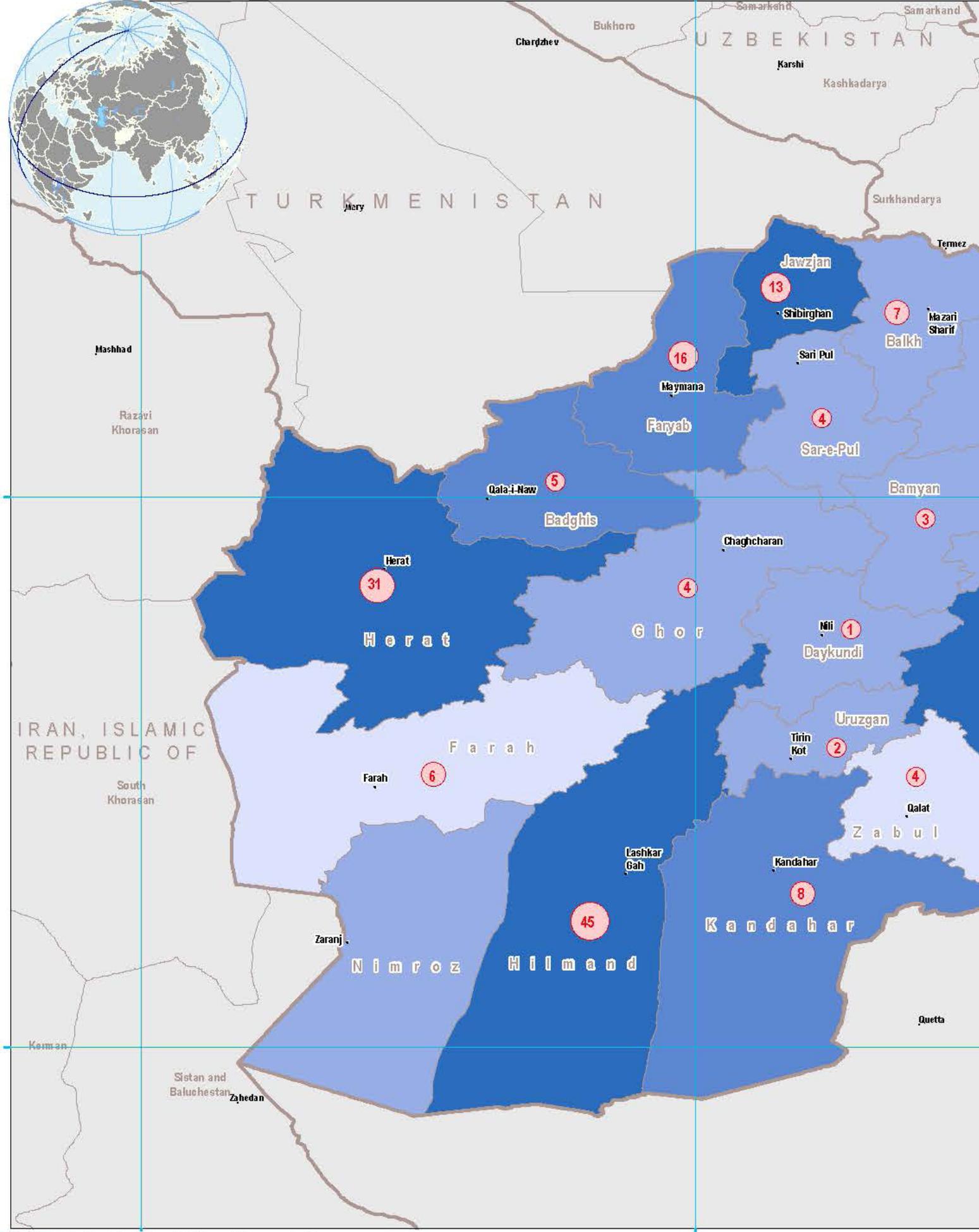


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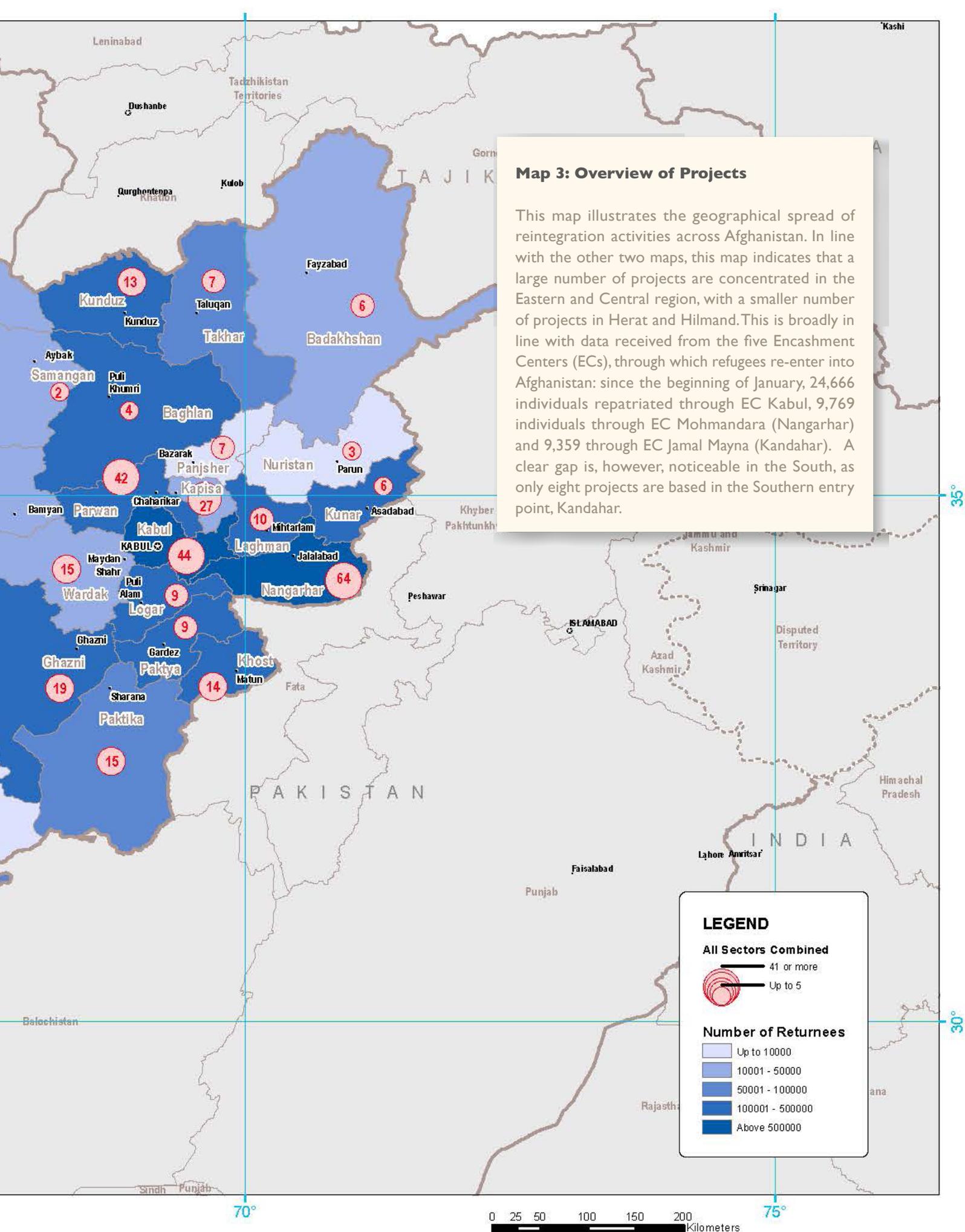
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5. Coordination and Resource Mobilization

Regional Coordination Mechanisms

The **Quadripartite Steering Committee (QSC)**, with the Governments of the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and UNHCR, constitutes the main decision-making and guidance providing body under the SSAR. Having met four times since establishment in October 2012, the QSC has provided direction on the operationalisation of the SSAR, joint resource mobilization activities and will deliberate on an adequate monitoring and evaluation framework.

National Coordination Mechanisms

- **National Steering Committees (NSCs)**, composed of representatives of key Government ministries and UNHCR, have been established in all three countries. It oversees the implementation of the SSAR at the national level and provides regular updates on progress and challenges to the QSC.
- **The Friends of SSAR (FoSSAR)** is a support group of donors, strategic partners and UNHCR and was first established in Geneva in 2012, following the endorsement of the strategy. In June 2015, a similar group was set-up in Kabul. Consisting of MoRR, representatives of the Governments of the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, donors, strategic and implementing partners and UNHCR, the Friends Group provides recommendations to the Government and UNHCR on policy issues, including on issues such as the integration of regional and national policy frameworks for return and reintegration, response gaps and the redirection of resources for reintegration activities. The FoSSAR will be chaired by donors on a rotational basis and will meet every 2-3 months.
- A **Reintegration Working Group** chaired by MoRR and UNHCR has been established. The working group will include line ministries, implementing partners and select donors and will oversee sectoral responses under the SSAR. The working group will prepare gaps analyses on reintegration and will provide the FoSSAR with analysis and draft recommendations.
- To improve internal coordination and collaboration on migration and displacement, the National Unity Government, following MoRR's recommendations, has established an inter-ministerial **High Commission for Migration (HCM)**, which held its first meeting in June 2015. As an executive decision-making body chaired by the President with participation of the ministers of all line ministries, the HCM provides a high-profile platform for decision-making on migration/displacement related issues. Emphasizing the importance of a unified approach to finding lasting solutions for refugees, IDPs and returnees, the HCM signals the National Unity Government's resolve to end long-standing situations of displacement. By providing a forum for high-level inter-ministerial exchange on displacement, the HCM has already firmly placed displacement issues on the agenda of the Government. Close engagement between the NSC and the HCM will be crucial to align regional strategies and interventions with plans and activities developed at the national level. Similarly, close interaction with major (and relevant) UN coordinating bodies as well as NGO coordination mechanisms will facilitate the process of jointly conducting needs assessments, prioritizing activities, planning and advocating on behalf of Afghanistan's displaced population.

Resource Mobilization

In 2013, the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan adopted a Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy, which serves as a framework for coordination and fundraising at both regional and country levels. Key elements of the strategy include ensuring predictable multi-year funding in support of the outcomes of the Solutions Strategy, as well as developing partnerships with non-traditional donors and development actors. Joint efforts, led by the Government of Afghanistan are taking place to secure funds for all activities contained in the portfolio of projects.

Within the framework of the Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy, MoRR will also take the lead on the mobilization of resources for the Enhanced Voluntary Return and Reintegration Package (EVRRP) pilot as part of greater resource mobilization efforts to support reintegration activities in Afghanistan. This initiative, led by the Government of Afghanistan, supported by the Government of Pakistan, and facilitated by UNHCR, has been endorsed by the Quadripartite Steering Committee in May 2015.

MoRR plays an important role in briefing donors and partners about recent regional and national-level developments under the SSAR, and heading discussions around aspects of the implementation of the SSAR in Afghanistan. Two such meetings have taken place to date where important recent developments, such as the establishment of the High Commission for Migration were discussed, as well as the need for stronger engagement of development actors and the need to strengthen the response in urban areas.

Regular donor briefings will be conducted according to interest, including both geographical and thematic focuses. Efforts will also be made to further involve donors in the programme planning, implementing and monitoring stages.

6. Measuring Progress

A draft national-level monitoring framework is being developed on the basis of inputs from partners participating in the Afghanistan SSAR portfolio 2015-2016, including line ministries, UN agencies and NGOs. Draft indicators at outcome and output/activity-levels have been jointly agreed upon through a consultative process. The framework will allow the measurement of progress against set targets. Subsequently, projects and programmes will be adjusted accordingly, in line with needs on the ground.

Baselines

Baseline information will be ascertained through needs assessments carried out by the relevant UN agencies, Government entities, and participating organizations. For UNHCR's interventions, the results of the needs assessment exercise conducted in September-October 2013, results of which were updated in 2014, will form this baseline. The results of the needs assessment will be updated again in 2015. For the needs assessment, UNHCR prioritized districts on the basis of return trends, the proportion of returnees and IDPs in selected areas, and direct accessibility by UNHCR. Consultations were undertaken with the local Departments of Refugees and Repatriation (DORRs) and other partners to compare and match available data and agree on sites. The assessment process involved multifunctional teams from UNHCR, implementing partners, operational partners and local authorities.

Reporting

Reporting against targets will take place on a quarterly basis and will feed into annual progress reports on the SSAR in Afghanistan. The NSC is expected to assume the overall role of monitoring and evaluation projects under the SSAR portfolio, participating agencies are responsible for meeting donor reporting requirements as stipulated in their respective donor agreements.

This part provides an overview of the proposed projects. It is a consolidation of the projects proposed by 18 key actors from the Afghan Government, UN agencies and NGOs, and includes information on prioritized activities and financial requirements. The total financial requirements for the Afghanistan portfolio of projects are approximately USD 553 million.

Every effort has been made to ensure the complementary nature of services and activities in these proposals, with minimal overlap in scope, geographic coverage and target beneficiaries. Within the overall framework of the Solutions Strategy, the proposed projects aim to address current gaps in the interlinked sectors of education, health and livelihoods. They strive to empower refugees in anticipation of sustainable reintegration upon return to Afghanistan. The proposed projects have been designed in line with the five outcomes of the Solutions Strategy.

Acronyms

ADF	Afghanistan Development Forum
AHF	Afghanistan Humanitarian Forum
CDC	Community-development council
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghans Refugees
EVRRP	Enhanced Voluntary Return and Reintegration Package
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GIRI	Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran
GoP	Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
HCM	High-level Commission for Migration
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
MRRD	Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MoRR	Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation
MUDA	Ministry for Urban Development Affairs
NRVA	National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
NSP	National Solidarity Programme
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WASH	Water, Hygiene and Sanitation

Summary financial requirements

2015-2016 Summary Requirements per Outcome			
SSAR Outcome	Lead Agency*	Budget USD	Total Budget per Outcome USD
Outcome 1: Voluntary repatriation	UNHCR	78,770,859	141,770,859
	MoRR and UNHCR	63,000,000	
Outcome 2: Access to shelter and essential social services	MRRD	2,500,000	233,648,103
	MUDA	28,800,000	
	MoE	9,105,822	
	MoEW	14,000,000	
	UNHCR	61,817,230	
	UN HABITAT	2,449,870	
	UNODC	561,356	
	UNOPS	12,721,676	
	DACAAR	31,510,652	
NRC	70,181,497		
Outcome 3: Livelihoods and food security	MoAIL	37,711,548	102,352,289
	MRRD	12,600,000	
	UNDP	20,140,000	
	UNHCR	23,431,756	
	FAO	3,450,000	
	Mercy Corps	3,600,000	
	NRC	205,000	
	WHH	1,213,985	
Outcome 4: Social and environmental protection	UNHCR	19,550,212	63,120,091
	NRC	43,569,879	
Outcome 5: Capacity development	MRRD	8,000,000	12,386,370
	UNHCR	2,286,200	
	IOM	2,000,000	
	Aga Khan Foundation	100,170	
Grand Total			553,277,712

*The lead agencies will implement the projects in close collaboration with a number of Government agencies and non-governmental organizations. For more details, please refer to the Summary of Project Proposals.

Project Proposals

Outcome 1: Support for voluntary repatriation

Lead Agency	Objective	Implementing Strategy Activities/Results
UNHCR	Immediate assistance to returning refugees at the five Encashment Centers across Afghanistan is provided through the distribution of cash grants	Supporting of the MoRR/UNHCR Encashment Centers, provision of a repatriation package of USD 200 per person; assistance to particularly vulnerable individuals and households, and support to the local DoRRs
MoRR and UNHCR	Mid to long term reintegration is facilitated	Provision of a multi-purpose grant of USD 3,000 up to USD 5,000 per family
SUB-TOTAL Outcome 1		

Outcome 2: Access to Shelter and Essential Social Services

Lead Agency	Objective	Implementing Strategy Activities/Results
MRRD	Shelter and infrastructure is established, improved and maintained and access to social services is facilitated	Provision of potable water, extension of current infrastructures to cover returnees, and construction of shelters
MUDA	Access to affordable housing in Kabul is facilitated	Construction of 1000 apartments of 60 m2 each in urban areas and integrated into existing communities with the required access to social services
UN Habitat	Shelter and infrastructure is established, improved and maintained and access to social services is facilitated	Provision of shelter assistance (incl. tenure security), community mobilisation, block grants for basic infrastructure in inner-city areas and peri-urban areas in Kabul, Jalalabad and Herat
UNHCR	Access to shelter is facilitated	Provision of shelter assistance amounting to +- USD2,300 (excluding transportation cost, warehousing, operational cost etc.) per returnee family.

	Location	Target Population	Partners	Budget (USD)
	Countrywide	172,000 returnees (individuals) to be assisted with a repatriation grant	MoRR, DoRR	78'770'859
	Countrywide	16,600 families (100,000 individuals) to receive a cash grant of USD 3,000 in addition to the transportation cash grant returnees receive as part of their return assistance package and have access to accompanying measures.		63'000'000
				141'770'859

	Location	Target Population	Partners	Budget (USD)
	Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Kunduz, Laghman and others to be identified based on returnee data	400 shelters for 400 returnee HHs are being constructed in Badakhshan and other locations will be identified in high return areas in 2016	DRRDs	2'500'000
	Kabul	2016: 6000 returnees (1000 HHs) can acquire affordable housing units per family based on a preferential financial offer and a vulnerability based selection (1000 HHs)	MoRR	28'800'000
	Kabul, Nangarhar, Herat	15,250 returnee, IDP and host community HH, incl. 11,250 HH in urban neighbourhoods in Herat, Kabul, Jalalabad (CBOs). At least 150 returnee families receive shelter assistance and 150 families receive security of tenure.	MUDA, MoRR, IDLG, ARAZI, Municipal advisors	2'449'870
	Countrywide	2015: 7981 HH receive shelter; 2016: 13,487 HH receive shelter assistance	MoRR	61'817'230

Lead Agency	Objective	Implementing Strategy Activities/Results
NRC	Access to shelter is facilitated	Provision of transitional shelter units and cash grants
MoEW	Access to basic services is improved	Improved access to electricity
DACAAR	Access to water and WASH facilities as well as sanitary and hygiene practices are improved	Access to water; improved access to WASH facilities and natural resource management (incl. poultry and farming training)
UNODC	Access to health, particularly HIV/AIDS treatment, is improved and maintained	HIV prevention and drug treatment services for returnees to be established
		HIV prevention and drug treatment services for returnees to be revived.
		Support for 2 functional HIV drug treatment and prevention centers for returnees
MoE	Access to education is improved and maintained	Provision of education and literacy kits and construction of WASH and other school infrastructure (labs)
NRC	Access to education is improved and maintained	Community-based education assistance and education in emergencies
UNOPS	Access to community infrastructure is enhanced	Construct and rehabilitate 14 schools, 3 clinics, 7 access roads

SUB-TOTAL Outcome 2

	Location	Target Population	Partners	Budget (USD)
	Kabul Kunduz Takhar Nangarhar Laghman Kunar	10,000 households receive transitional shelters and cash grants in 2015 and 2016 (tentative target subject to change)	MoRR/ANDMA	33'690'385
	Kabul, Balkh, Kunduz,	# of IDPs, returnees and host communities with access to electricity: Kabul: 24,000 Balkh: 6,500 Kunduz: 15,000 returnees, IDPs and host communities		14'000'000
	Kabul, Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Paktiya, Balkh, Kunduz, Takhar, Faryab, Herat	179,340 girls and boys, women and men, aged and disabled using safe water from water points. 1,236 water user groups and 9 water management committees operating and maintaining water points. 25,956 girls and boys, women and men, aged and disabled using latrines hygienically. 179,340 girls and boys, women and men, aged and disabled (70%) demonstrating sufficiently improved hygiene behaviour.	MRRD/DRRDs	31'510'652
	Kabul	A total of 600 male and female drug users and returnees receive HIV prevention and drug treatment and 15,000 returnees receive HIV prevention and drug treatment	MoPH	
	Nangarhar	A total of 500 male and female drug users (host community) and 19,966 returnees receive HIV prevention and drug treatment	MoPH	561'356
	Herat	A total of 900 male and female drug users and 18,287 general returnees will receive drug treatment and HIV prevention services.	MoPH	
	Kabul, Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Balkh, Baghlan, Kunduz, Herat, Farah, Kandahar	43,597 children (including vulnerable children, IDP children and returnee children) will be provided with education support		9'105'822
	Nangarhar, Kandahar	In 2015, 2,734 persons are provided with learning support through the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) in Nangarhar and Kandahar and 20 children benefit from the Early Childhood Education (ECE) programme in Nangarhar. In 2016, 500 families benefit from the ALP and ECE in Nangarhar, and 200 persons from the ALP in Kandahar.	MoE	36'491'112
	Nangarhar	14,693 documented returnee beneficiaries	Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG) of Afghanistan	12'721'676
				233'648'103

Outcome 3: Livelihoods and Food Security

Lead Agency	Objective	Implementing Strategy Activities/Results
MoAIL	Rural livelihood opportunities are enhanced	Provision of livestock, agricultural tools, gardening kits and green house units
MRRD	Livelihood opportunities for returnees are enhanced through business development support	The Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme will facilitate and provide business development support around business cycle to returnees once they are settled through enterprise establishment. AREDP will help incubate and nurture enterprises, provide with technical and soft skills trainings, tools and equipment, business resources, product development and branding, sales & marketing, knowledge exchange visits, exhibitions and mentoring & handholding.
UNDP	Livelihood opportunities for returnees are enhanced through business development support	Create a conducive environment for enterprise formation and growth at the district level; facilitate entry into the labour market within or outside the district (incl through support for vocational training, apprenticeships); continue community-led planning and service-provision through district development assemblies;
UNHCR	Livelihood opportunities for returnees are enhanced and diversified	Facilitate returnees' entry into vocational skills training and small-scale livelihoods activities
FAO	Rural livelihood opportunities are enhanced	Strengthening the resilience of farming families (incl. returnees wishing to return to an agricultural livelihoods) and supporting vulnerable populations (incl. returnees) with gaining a new livelihoods in dairy farming
Mercy Corps	Livelihood opportunities for displaced youth are enhanced	Supporting displaced and disadvantaged populations in Kandahar city to access sustainable livelihoods under the INVEST programme
		Supporting prospective returnees in Pakistan and returnees in Afghanistan by building and matching skills with the local market in Kandahar province
NRC	Livelihood opportunities for displaced youth are enhanced	Provision of livelihoods and skills trainings to returnee, IDP and host community youth
WHH	Livelihood opportunities for returnees are enhanced	1,000 IDP, returnee and host community adults have improved literacy skills up to a level equivalent to grade 3 in the AFG school system; 9,000 IDP, returnee and host community children have improved their communicative and expressive capacities, as well as their self-esteem; 810 IDP, returnee and host community women have improved access to sustainable livelihoods; 140 IDP, returnee and host community farmers have improved access to irrigation water and enhanced skills in agricultural production techniques; 25 Government officials have increased direct engagement with IDPs and host communities on the basis of the National IDP policy

SUB-TOTAL Outcome 3

	Location	Target Population	Partners	Budget (USD)
	Kabul, Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Balkh, Baghlan, Kunduz, Herat, Farah, Kandahar	Distribution of 58,000 milking goats, food processing equipment, vegetable gardens and 580,000 chicken for 29,000 women; 260 green houses for land-owning farmers; 12,400 pregnant or milking cows		37'711'548
	To be determined upon completion of a feasibility study and AREDP's presence in relevant province	4,500 businesses established for 4,500 returnee HHs	AREDP	12'600'000
	To be determined upon completion of the feasibility study	To be determined upon completion of the feasibility study	MRRD, MoLSAMD	20'140'000
	Countrywide	2015: 1,785 persons receiving livelihoods or skills training, 315 peaceful co-existence projects implemented; 2016: 3,764 persons receiving livelihoods or skills training, 2,488 peaceful co-existence projects implemented.	MoRR, MoAIL, MoLSAMD	23'431'756
	Kabul, Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman	2,583 HH for both projects (ongoing activities); 4,500 HH in 2015-16	MoAIL	3'450'000
	Kandahar	1,500 trainees in 2015, 2,250 trainees in 2016	MoLSAMD, MoE, DoWA	1'400'000
	Kandahar	In Kandahar: 200 beneficiaries (2015); 800 (2016)	MoLSAMD, MoE, DoWA	2'200'000
	Kandahar	100 returnee, IDP and host community youth benefit from livelihoods and skills training	MoRR, MoWA	205'000
	Kabul City, and Paghman and Shakar Dara (Kabul)	10,950 IDPs, returnees and host community members resident in Kabul province	MoRR	1'213'985
				102'352'289

Outcome IV: Social and Environmental Protection

Lead Agency	Objective	Implementing Strategy Activities/Results
UNHCR	Awareness of and access to legal remedies for GBV cases are enhanced, returnee protection is enhanced through monitoring	Monitor returnees for 1 year to track gaps and needs for sustainable reintegration and to identify and assist particularly vulnerable households; mainstream GBV activities across programmes, conduct GBV sensitisation and rights awareness-trainings
NRC	Awareness of and access to legal remedies are enhanced, returnee protection is strengthened	Provision of information, counselling and legal advice (ICLA) to displaced persons (identity documentation; land tenure)
SUB-TOTAL Outcome 4		

Outcome V: Capacity Development

Lead Agency	Objective	Implementing Strategy Activities/Results
MRRD	Community-driven development is strengthened and local capacity is supported	Incorporating returnees in the ongoing and planned block grants to CDCs
UNHCR	National capacity at the regional, provincial and local level enhanced	Establishment of SSAR coordination mechanism and strengthening of partnership with development actors (e.g Friends of SSAR, reintegration working group)
IOM	National capacity at the regional, provincial and local level to centralise data collection and analysis is enhanced	Establishing an Afghan returnee information system (ARIS) ; establishing an MoRR-led returnee reintegration system
Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan	Community-driven development is strengthened and local capacity is supported	Facilitating the reintegration process of returnees by strengthening local CDCs and district-level authorities through targeted capacity development and community sensitisation efforts
SUB-TOTAL Outcome 5		
GRAND TOTAL		

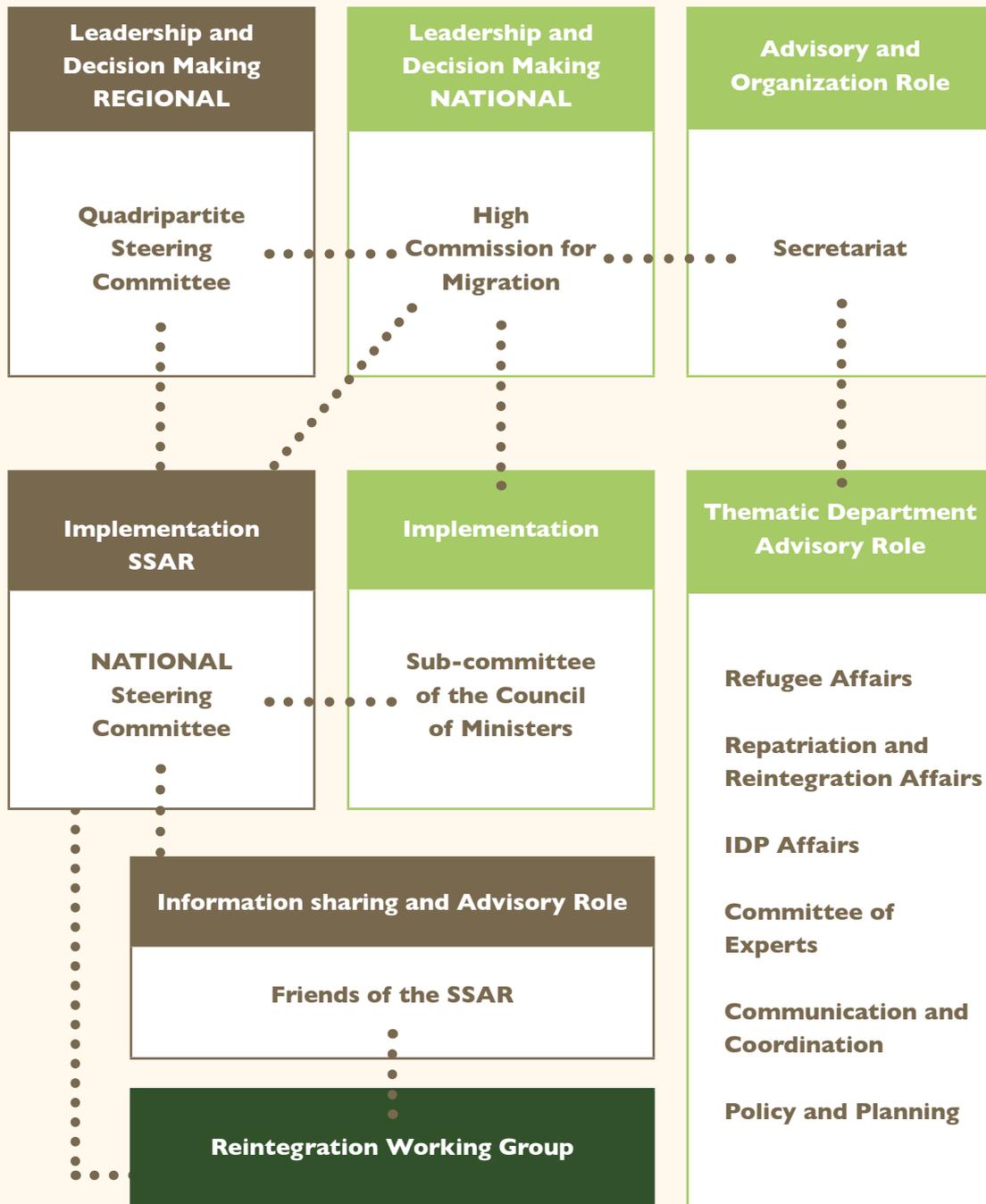
	Location	Target Population	Partners	Budget (USD)
	Countrywide	2015:135 community-based groups working on SGBV ; 2016: 215 number of partners and government counterparts trained on GBV prevention and response; returnee monitoring system established	MoRR, MoWA	19'550'212
	Balkh, Samangan, Sar-e-Pul, Jawzjan, Kunduz, Herat, Kandahar	27,050 displaced persons (IDPs and returnees) receive ICLA support with acquiring documentation, housing, land and property and other related protection issues	MoI/MoWA	43'569'879
				63'120'091

	Location	Target Population	Partners	Budget (USD)
	Countrywide	200,000 returnees, equal to 33,000 families benefit from community based programming through CDCs	DoRRs, NSP Facilitating Partners	8'000'000
	Countrywide	1 reintegration working group established at central level and similar working groups supported in at least three offices in the field. Friends of SSAR every quarter at the central level. Quarterly update of 4W maps and distributed to external partners	MoRR, MRRD, MUDA	2'286'200
	10 provinces, including 4 border provinces: Herat, Nimroz, Nangarhar, Kandahar and 5 high-return areas (to be jointly identified with MoRR and UNHCR)	Enable MoRR to operate ARIS at the central level and in four provinces, according to need and capacities; strengthen MoRR capacity at the central and provincial levels to coordinate a reintegration mechanism for Afghan returnees. 6 reports issued based on disaggregated data. 100% of Government line ministries, UN Agencies, NGO partners, donor community and International Financial Institutions have access to ARIS.	MoRR; DoRRs, MRRD, MoLSAMD	2'000'000
	Baghlan	Support to 1 CRIC in Pul-e-Khumri, 10 CDCs in Kilagay area of Doshi district, 76 returnee families (352 individuals) and hosting communities	MoRR, DoRR; MRRD, DRRD and other provincial, district-level and local authorities as necessary	100'170
				12'386'370
				553'277'712

ANNEXES

Annex I

Coordination Mechanisms for Migration in Afghanistan - July 2015



**Coordination Mechanisms for Migration
in Afghanistan - REGIONAL LEVEL - July 2015**

<p>Quadripartite Steering Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members: Governments of the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and UNHCR • Right of Initiative by each member • Decision on policies and strategies at regional level based on the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) • Provide guidance and oversight on strategies and policies at regional level
<p>National Steering Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Ministry for Refugees and Repatriation • Members: 13 line ministries (deputy ministerial level), UNHCR • Oversees the implementation of national policies and strategies based on the SSAR and decisions by the Quadripartite Steering Committee • Submits to the Quadripartite Steering Committee issues for decision or guidance • Endorses and oversees the SSAR Afghanistan portfolio
<p>Friends of the SSAR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotating Chair: Strategic Partners/Donors • Information sharing on regional and national level policies and implementation • Makes recommendations to the Government and UNHCR on policy issues including an integrated approach between regional and national policies and frameworks • Makes recommendations to the Government and UNHCR on response gaps and redirecting resources towards identified reintegration needs of returnees
<p>Reintegration Working Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Ministry for Refugees and Repatriation and UNHCR • Members: Key line ministries, implementing partners and donors • Coordinates sectoral response in the implementation of reintegration activities • Prepares gaps analysis on reintegration and provides Friends of the SSAR and the National Steering Committee with the required information. • Makes recommendations to the Government and UNHCR on response gaps and redirecting resources towards identified reintegration needs of returnees

Coordination Mechanisms for Migration in Afghanistan - NATIONAL LEVEL - July 2015

High Commission on Migration

- **Chair: President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**
- **Co-chair: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**
- **Members: Line Ministries (ministerial level)**
- Decision and ratification of refugee, IDP and returnee policies
- Decision on bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements with international partners
- Determination of national budget for return and reintegration
- Provides guidance and oversight on national level policies

Secretariat

- **Consists of a Secretary General and six thematic departments**
- **International Organizations (UNAMA, UNHCR and IOM) have an advisory role to the Secretariat and a right of initiative for various proposals**
- Preparation for HCM meetings
- Information sharing on HCM decisions between technical departments

Sub-Committee of the Council of Ministers

- **Director: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**
- **Members: Line ministries (ministerial level)**
- Implement plans, national policies and decisions taken by the HCM

Annex II

Summary table on progress achieved and areas for future intervention identified, based on the five outcomes of the SSAR and objectives of the Comprehensive Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration Plan

Progress	Areas for future intervention
<p>Livelihoods: Advocacy around returnees' need for sustainable livelihoods and the context of the Portfolio development has, for instance, already encouraged line ministries and partner agencies to direct resources towards the implementation of market-based, targeted skills-trainings, supporting small enterprises and facilitating youth to access apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Building on the Government's plan to create one million jobs in the coming years, coordinated advocacy will be necessary to ensure that returned are considered as a priority, for instance through the creation of specific quotas.</p>
<p>Shelter: The construction and identification of suitable permanent shelter solutions is supported through the provision of cash assistance, shelter material and the construction of shelter units in selected urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Affordable housing: Social housing schemes, including access to affordable housing in urban areas, such as in high-rise apartments, is increasingly being envisaged.</p>	<p>Land reform and distribution: There is a continued need for the reform of Presidential Decree 104, which governs the distribution of plots of land to returnees through the Land Allocation Scheme (LAS). It is expected that the reform will ensure prompt access to land for landless returnees – including in locations other than the area of origin.</p> <p>In cooperation with relevant line ministries and partners, a review of land allocation sites needs to be undertaken to identify viable plots of land which could be (re-) distributed to returnees.</p>
<p>Social Services: Sustainable access to WASH infrastructure and the improvement of local water management in both urban and rural areas is addressed.</p> <p>Education: In addition to MoRR's on-going efforts to facilitate returnees' access to education, interventions are being undertaken to cater for the education needs of returnee children in areas of return.</p>	<p>Health: In addition to the returnee-specific HIV health programmes proposed under the Portfolio, there is a need to promote privileged access to basic health facilities for returnees countrywide.</p>



Photo: UNHCR/S.Rich

Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees working for:

Education livelihoods
youth empowerment
skills training **health**

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