UNDOCUMENTED AFGHANS IN PAKISTAN

IOM Return Intentions Survey 2.0

November 2019

IOM
THE UNITED NATIONS MIGRATION AGENCY

Undocumented Afghans in Pakistan: IOM Return Intentions Survey 2.0

Acknowledgements: The preparation of this publication was overseen by the IOM Pakistan team. The IOM team is grateful to all Return Intentions Survey (RIS) respondents, local enumerators and other key partners who supported the RIS exercise, including the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees (CAR), the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, UNHCR Pakistan, IOM Afghanistan, and Afghanistan's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MORR).

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FOREWORD

In 2019, the International Migration Organization undertook the Return Intentions Survey 2.0 (RIS) – the second survey to gauge the needs, aspirations and return intentions of Afghan migrants in Pakistan. Coming two years the first RIS exercise in 2017, this second RIS report updates information on the profiles, vulnerabilities, needs and intentions of Afghans in Pakistan. It provides an up-to-date, evidence-base to inform effective humanitarian and development programming for Afghans who voluntary return to Afghanistan or who choose to remain in Pakistan.

The vulnerabilities faced by Afghan migrants are manifold, both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. As many Afghans have lived in Pakistan for more than four decades, scores of second and third generation Afghans were born in Pakistan. When they return to Afghanistan, most leave behind their homes and livelihoods, often incurring major debt to finance their journeys. As most returnees have never lived in Afghanistan, they have nothing to "go back to". Since 2017, a huge number of Afghans in Pakistan have obtained or are eligible for Afghan Citizen Cards – affording them invaluable proof of identity, residency and citizenship that regularizes their temporary stay in Pakistan. Nevertheless, Afghans in the country tend to live in poverty, with little or no education, and with few prospects for improving their lives.

The survey's findings reaffirm that survival and safety remain the leading concerns for Afghans in Pakistan. Their needs and intentions are largely linked to improving their economic prospects and keeping their families safe from insecurity. In Pakistan, Afghans require financial assistance, medical treatment, job placements, employment and recognition of certification earned in Pakistan. The primary needs of returning Afghans include livelihoods, vocational training and financial support to set up businesses. Information needs among Afghans who plan to return centre on housing and shelter, livelihood opportunities and security conditions in Afghanistan.

Whether they return to Afghanistan or seek to stay in Pakistan, there is a need to identify and implement solutions to address Afghan migrants' needs, along with those of host communities. . If such assistance is to make a real difference, it must address the challenges they face and cater to the varied needs of women and men, girls and boys, the elderly, persons with special needs. The results of the Return Intentions Survey 2.0 highlight challenges and priorities on the ground, making this report highly significant. IOM remains dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all, while ensuring practical solutions to migration challenges and the provision of humanitarian assistance for migrants in need.

Davide Terzi
Chief of Mission, IOM Pakistan

ACRONYMS/GLOSSARY

ACC process: The Afghan Citizen Card process was initiated by the Government of Pakistan in 2017-2018 to register undocumented Afghans in Pakistan.

ACC: Afghan Citizen Cards are identity documents issued by the Government of Pakistan which allow undocumented Afghans to legally remain in Pakistan until the Government of Afghanistan issues them passports or other documents. ACCs provide legal protection from arbitrary arrest, detention or deportation.

ACC Token: Afghan Citizen Card Tokens are receipts issued to Afghans who have registered for an ACC, proving that they have completed the documentation process. After verifying the holder's information, the authorities decide on their eligibility for an ACC.

PoR: Proof of Registration cards are identity documents issued by the Government of Pakistan. PoR card holders are legally recognized as registered refugees.

Returnee: An individual returning to their area of origin.

IOM	International Organization for Migration
PKR	Pakistani Rupee
RIS	Return Intentions Survey
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USD	United States Dollar

Undocumented Afghan: An individual of Afghan origin in Pakistan who: (i) has no valid documents (PoR card, ACC or Pakistani visa); (ii) only possesses an Afghan national identity card (*Tazkira*); (iii) has a PoR card that expired before 2015; or (iv) either has no passport, has a passport with an expired Pakistani visa, or has a passport with no visa.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

The context of Afghan migrants in Pakistan is multi-faceted and complex. Fleeing 40 years of conflict, 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees live in Pakistan – one of the world's largest protracted refugee populations.[1] In addition, 880,000 Afghans who have either received, or are entitled to register for, an Afghan Citizen Card (ACC)[2] and an estimated 300,000-500,000 entirely undocumented Afghans remained in Pakistan in 2019.[3] Most are uneducated, unskilled and impoverished. Many are considered acutely vulnerable, including women, children, orphans, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.[4]

Afghans in Pakistan are concentrated along the 2,430 kilometre porous border between the countries in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, its Merged Districts (formerly known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas) and the province of Balochistan. Many also reside in major urban centres elsewhere in Pakistan, such as Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad. Registered refugees, who are issued with Proof of Registration (PoR) cards, enjoy de facto protection from refoulement, legal temporary residence, access to basic services and freedom of movement. Migrants who have obtained Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs) – following a drive by the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan since 2017, in line with Pakistan's Comprehensive Policy on the Repatriation and Management of Afghans – are ensured legal protection from arbitrary arrest, detention or deportation under the Foreigners Act (1946). These cards allow Afghans to remain in Pakistan until they can be issued with key documents, such as passports, by the Afghan Government. ACC holders are still technically considered undocumented migrants, albeit migrants who are registered with the Pakistani authorities. Afghans who remain completely unregistered and undocumented continue to live in fear of arrest or deportation, while being unable to access services such as education and healthcare. Without recourse to formal employment, they are confined to informal arrangements that leave them rife for exploitation.

Between 2017 and September 2019, 77,575 refugees and 148,229 Afghan migrants returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan, largely through Torkham and Chaman – the two official border crossings between the countries. They included 60,000 registered refugees and 100,000 undocumented Afghans in 2017[5], 13,600 refugees and 32,000 undocumented Afghans in 2018[6], and 3,975 refugees[7] and 16,229 undocumented Afghans between January and September 2019.[8] One of every two returnees is a child, and one in ten is considered acutely vulnerable.[9] The scale of returns has had – and will continue to have – serious implications for Afghanistan's fragile context, particularly given simultaneous returns from Iran.

Returns are taking place against a backdrop of increased internal displacement and violence, where Afghanistan now ranks second behind Syria and ahead of Yemen for the most civilian casualties in the world. Afghanistan's capacity to absorb new arrivals remains under significant strain. Negative coping mechanisms are prevalent among returnees, such as re-migration. Many returning Afghans leave their homes, livelihoods and assets behind, making the need for assistance and relocation support all the more urgent. Most of those returning from Pakistan have never lived in Afghanistan – in fact, the majority were born in Pakistan – and have nothing to "return to". Those who are undocumented return without pre-departure support, including medical, in kind or transport assistance. Most returnees enter Afghanistan with limited capital and, often, major debt.

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[1] IOM and UNHCR Afghanistan (2019) Returns to Afghanistan: Joint IOM-UNHCR Summary Report 2018. Kabul: IOM and UNHCR. Available: https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reports/iom_unhcr_2018_joint_return_report_final_24jun_2019english.pdf

[2] Ibid; IOM (2019) Pakistan 2019: Humanitarian Compendium. Available: https://humanitariancompendium.iom.int/appeals/pakistan-2019

[3] IOM (2019) Pakistan: Migration Snapshot. August 2019. IOM: Bangkok.

[4] IOM and UNHCR Afghanistan (2019) Returns to Afghanistan: Joint IOM-UNHCR Summary Report 2018. Kabul: IOM and UNHCR. Available: https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reports/iom_unhcr_2018_joint_return_report_final_24jun_2019english.pdf; IOM (2019) Pakistan 2019: Humanitarian Compendium. Available: https://humanitariancompendium.iom.int/appeals/pakistan-2019

[5] IOM and UNHCR Afghanistan (2018) Returns to Afghanistan: Joint IOM-UNHCR Summary Report 2017. Kabul: IOM and UNHCR. Available: https://migration.iom.int/reports/afghanistan-%E2%80%94-returns-afghanistan-2017-28-february-2018

[6] IOM and UNHCR Afghanistan (2019) Returns to Afghanistan: Joint IOM-UNHCR Summary Report 2018. Kabul: IOM and UNHCR. Available: https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reports/iom_unhcr_2018_joint_return_report_final_24jun_2019english.pdf

[7] UNHCR Afghanistan (2019) Afghanistan Fact Sheet (as of 15 September 2019). Kabul : UNHCR. Available: https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/unhcr-afghanistan-fact-sheet-15-september-2019

[8] IOM Afghanistan (2019) Return Of Undocumented Afghans: Weekly Situation Report 15-21 September 2019.. Kabul: IOM. Available: https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reports/iom_afghanistan-return_of_undocumented_afghans-_situation_report_15-21_september_2019.pdf

[9] IOM Pakistan (2019) Pakistan 2018: Flow Monitoring of Undocumented Afghan Migrants. Bangkok: IOM. Available: https://www.globaldtm.info/pakistan/

TIMELINE of key events for undocumented Afghans living in Pakistan 1979-2019

1979 - onward
Influx of millions of Afghans into Pakistan begins with the Soviet-Afghan War

2006, 2009, 2012
Government of Pakistan registration drives provide millions of Afghans with PoR cards

2016
381,275 refugees and 248,189 undocumented Afghans return to Afghanistan from Pakistan

Feb 2017
Government of Pakistan approves Comprehensive Policy on the Repatriation and Management of Afghans

Aug 2017
Drive to register migrants and provide Afghan Citizen Cards begins

Feb-Oct 2017
IOM's first Return Intentions Survey (RIS) & report

2017
60,0000 refugees and 100,000 undocumented Afghans return to Afghanistan

2018
13,600 refugees and 32,000 undocumented Afghans return to Afghanistan

Sep 2018 - Oct 2018
IOM's Return Intentions Survey (RIS) 2.0

Jan - Sep 2019
3,975 refugees and 16,229 undocumented Afghans return to Afghanistann

1.2 Survey Objectives

IOM Pakistan's Return Intentions Survey 2.0 explores the needs, aspirations and return intentions of undocumented Afghans who live in Pakistan. Its principle objectives are to:

1. **Offer a snapshot of the socio-economic profile of undocumented Afghan nationals living in Pakistan**
2. **Enhance understandings of the vulnerabilities, critical needs and return intentions of Afghans in Pakistan**
3. **Provide a baseline for future interventions to support Afghans in Pakistan**

1.3 Survey Methodology

The Return Intentions Survey 2.0 followed the methodological approach of the first RIS exercise in 2017, emphasizing participation, partnerships and local ownership. Local enumerators – working with IOM-led teams – liaised with community networks to determine undocumented Afghans' profiles, needs and vulnerabilities. The survey process prioritized collaboration with key partners, including Pakistan's Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON); the Chief Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees (CCAR) in Islamabad and the Commissionerate's Office in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; UN agencies, especially UNHCR Pakistan; and stakeholders in Afghanistan through IOM Afghanistan, such as the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MORR).

Every effort was made to ensure that respondents constituted a representative sample of the Afghan migrant population in Pakistan. The sample size was 1,095, with respondents selected through a comprehensive scoping exercise to determine which localities would be surveyed. Although IOM's pilot exercise revealed that undocumented Afghans tend to live in the same communities as registered refugees, the RIS 2.0 did not limit its sampling to camps and refugee villages. Instead, it also targeted host communities in residential areas to minimize bias. Given the high number of undocumented Afghans in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – as confirmed by the Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees (CAR) – several districts in this province were targeted. Unlike the first Return Intentions Survey, the second RIS exercise in 2019 also included respondents in other parts of Pakistan with a high proportion of undocumented Afghans, specifically major cities such as Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore.

Sex disaggregated data remained a priority for the survey, which targeted both women and men as respondents. In line with IOM's ethical standards and data confidentiality principles, the survey was guided by a respect for respondents' right to privacy. All participants were made aware of the survey's objectives and consented to their data being used anonymously for research purposes.

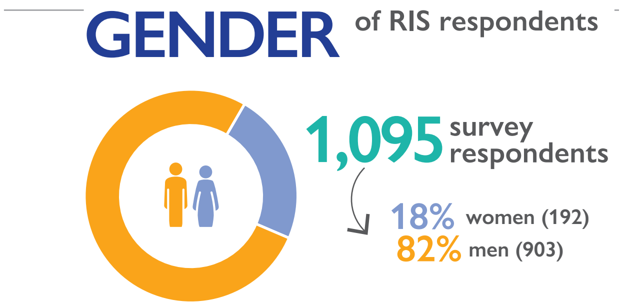
2 KEY FINDINGS

2.1 Profile of Respondents and their Families in Pakistan

2.1.1 Gender and Location

IOM Pakistan's Return Intentions Survey 2.0 surveyed 1,095 Afghans in Pakistan, 82% of whom are men and 18% are women. This reflects an increase in the proportion of women surveyed, as only 13% of respondents were women in the first edition of the Return Intentions Survey in 2017.

Over one-quarter (26.39%) of respondents live in Peshawar, the capital and largest city of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A significant proportion resides in the district Nowshera (15.34%) on the Afghan-Pakistan border, followed by Pakistan's economic hub, the city of Karachi (11%) in the province of Sindh. The remaining respondents are based in other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as well as in two major urban centres elsewhere in the country – namely, Islamabad Capital Territory and Lahore, the capital city of the province of Punjab.



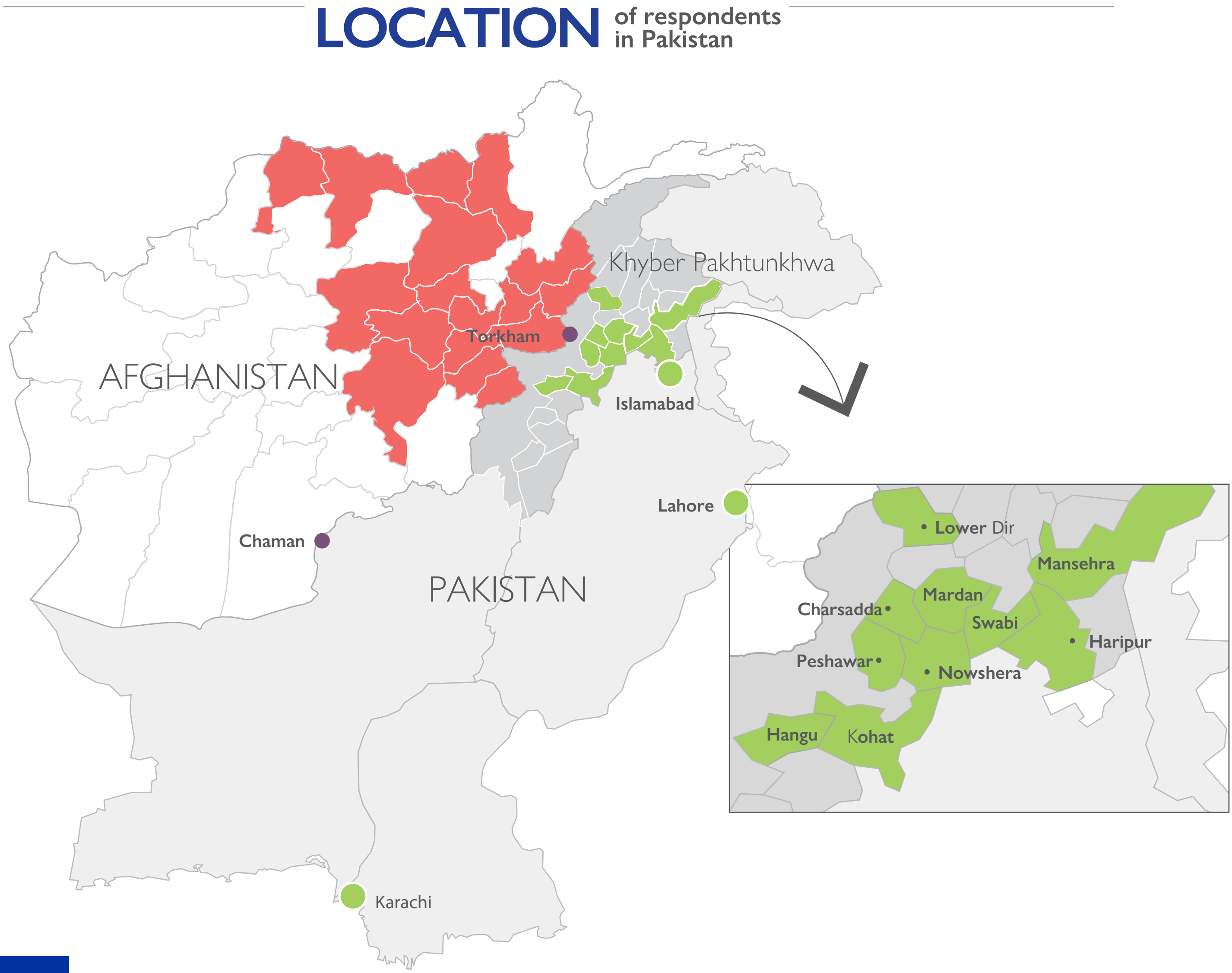


Table 1: Return Intentions Survey 2.0 respondents by district

District	Number of RIS 2.0 respondents	Percentage of RIS 2.0 respondents	Total number of undocumented Afghans (CAR estimates 2017)
Peshawar*	289	26.39%	170,000
Nowshera	168	15.34%	49,000
Karachi, Sindh	120	10.96%	N/A
Swabi	91	8.31%	52,000
Islamabad Capital Territory	74	6.76%	N/A
Lahore, Punjab	59	5.39%	N/A
Mardan	59	5.39%	27,000
Haripur	44	4.02%	83,000
Charsadda	41	3.74%	25,000
Hangu	40	3.65%	45,700
Kohat	40	3.65%	53,000
Lower Dir	39	3.56%	24,000
Mansehra	28	2.56%	40,000

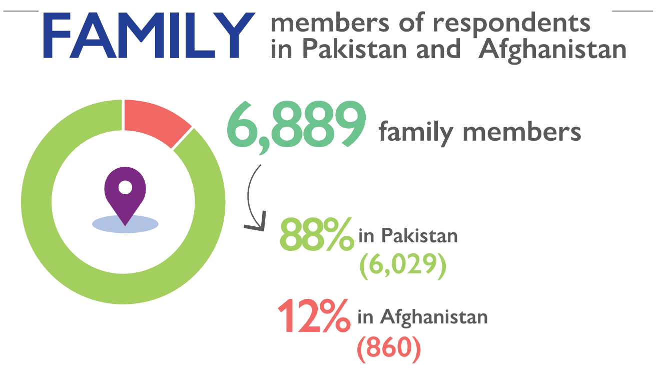
*Note: All of the districts in this table are in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the exception of Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore.

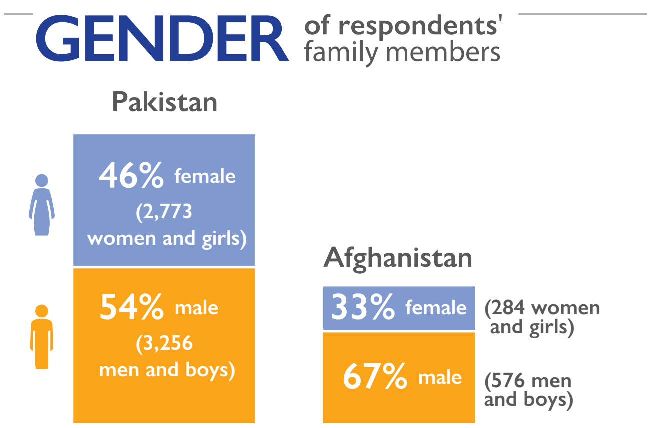
Survey respondents represent 6,889 family members in both Pakistan and Afghanistan, signifying an average family size of 6.37 among the survey sample.

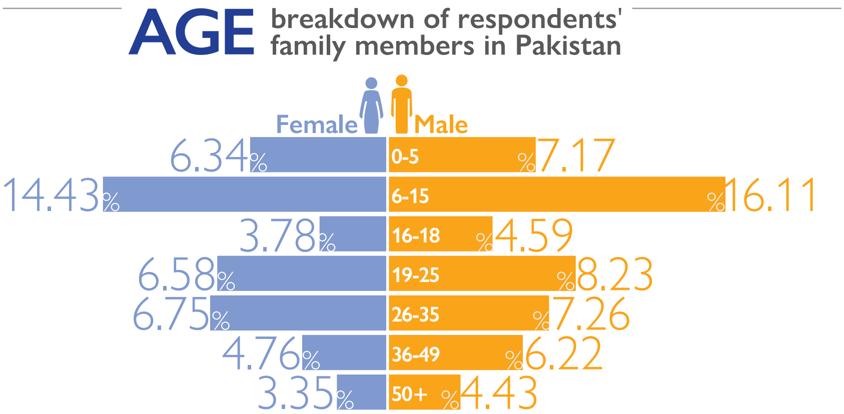
Of these family members, the vast majority (87.5%, or 6,029 relatives) reside in Pakistan. When both respondents and their family members in Pakistan are considered, this figure rises to 6,125 people. Some 860 family members of those surveyed reside in Afghanistan.

The proportion of respondents' male relatives in Pakistan (54%) is higher than that of female family members (46%).

Comparing the findings of the first and second RIS exercises, it is worth highlighting that survey respondents represented significantly more family members in 2019 than in 2017 (6,889 vs 5,863). The proportion of family members who reside in Pakistan has also risen – nearly 88% in 2019, compared to 77% in 2017.





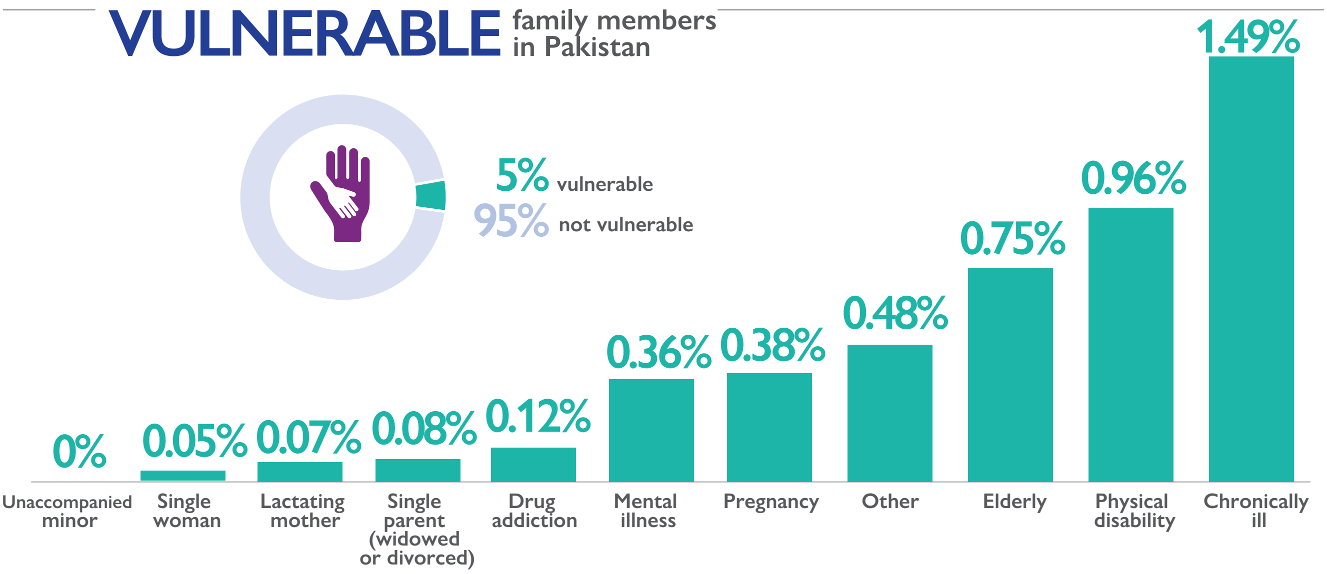


Across all age groups, the proportion of males is significantly higher than that of females. This represents a shift from 2017, when there was a roughly 50/50 ratio evident across most age groups, with the exception of 6-18 year olds and persons over the age of 50. Over half (52.42%) of the respondents' family members are minors. While 47% of these relatives under the age of 18 are girls, 53% are boys. Over two-thirds (67%) are under 25 years old[10] and the overwhelming majority (81%) are under the age of 35.

As in the first RIS exercise, this affirms the high proportion of young people, particularly young men, among the Afghan population in Pakistan. The age breakdown of respondents' family members largely continues trends observed in 2017. However, the proportion of minors has fallen slightly – from 59% in 2017 to 52% in 2019 – as has the proportion of persons under the age of 25 – from 71% in 2017 to 67% in 2019.

2.1.2 Vulnerability and Disabilities

There are significant vulnerabilities among the Afghan population in Pakistan. Overall, 5% of respondents' family members (or 286 people) have some form of disability or vulnerability. Among them, 31.4% are chronically ill or in need of medical attention (1.5% of the total number of family members), 20.3% have physical disabilities (0.96% of the total) and 15.7% are elderly[11] (0.8% of the total). Others may be considered "vulnerable" by virtue of pregnancy (0.4% of the total), mental illness, drug addiction or having recently given birth. Compared with data from the first RIS exercise, there is a slight decline in the proportion of vulnerable individuals – 6% in 2017, compared to 5% in 2019. There has been a considerable decrease in chronically ill persons, but a modest increase in persons who have disabilities or are elderly.



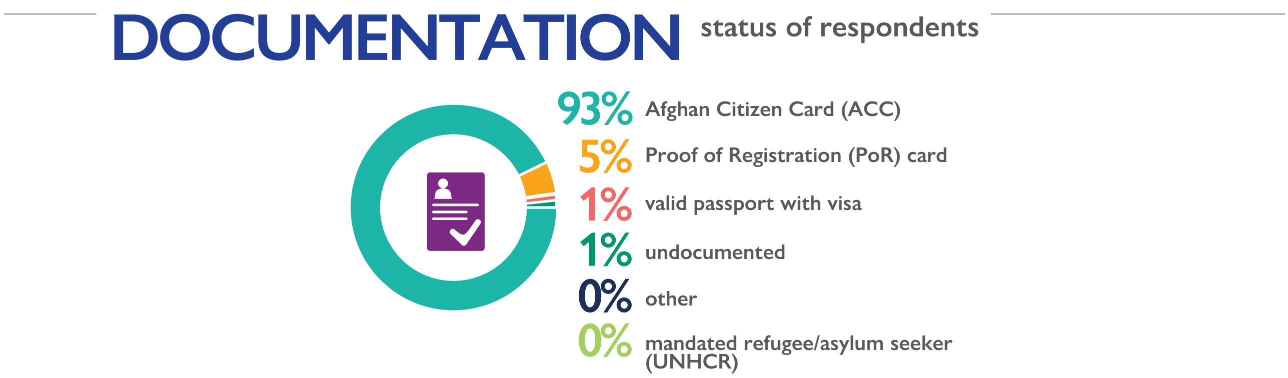
[10] The UN defines "youth" as persons between the ages of 15 and 24, see http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/

[11] The UN defines the "elderly" as persons over the age of 60, see https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA-Report-Chapter1.pdf

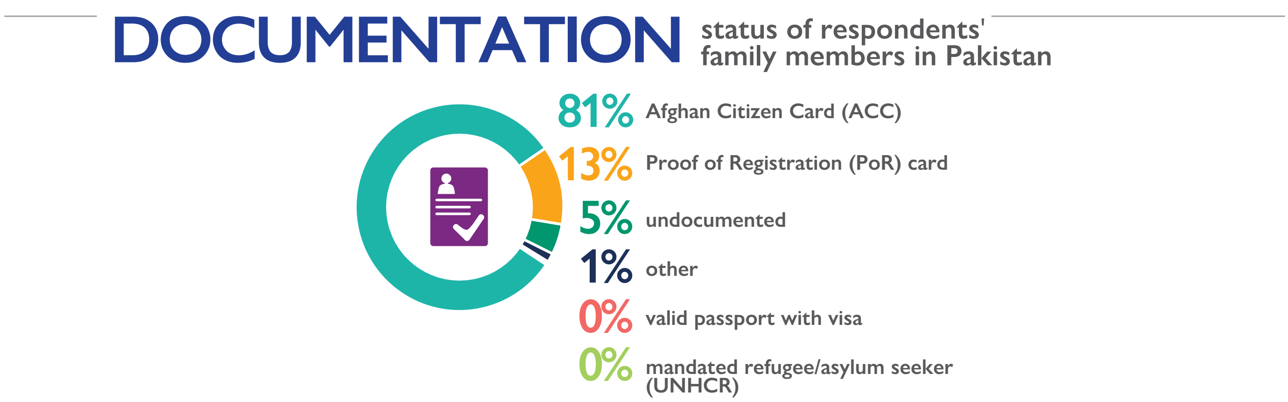
2.1.3 Documentation

In terms of their legal status in Pakistan, approximately 5% of respondents possess Proof of Registration (PoR) cards, reflecting their recognition as refugees in Pakistan. Only 1% have valid Afghan passports with a Pakistani visa – a significant decline from 2017, when 9% of respondents were passport holders. The vast majority of respondents (93%) hold Afghan Citizen Cards or ACC Tokens.[12] As noted above, ACC holders are technically considered undocumented migrants; however, they are registered with the Government of Pakistan and have been accorded the right to temporary legal stay in the country. Overall, only 1% of respondents are entirely undocumented and unregistered, a sharp decrease from 2017 when 91% of those surveyed were "undocumented" as they did not possess any form of valid documentation permitting their residence in Pakistan.

This reflects an immense upsurge in the proportion of Afghans with some form of valid documentation in Pakistan between 2017 and 2019. This is in line with official trends, such as the fact that 879,198 undocumented migrants applied for an Afghan Citizen Card in 21 different locations across Pakistan between August 2017 and February 2018.[13]



A similarly low proportion of respondents' family members are undocumented – 5% in 2019, a marked decline from 94% in 2017. Among the 95% with valid documents, 81% of respondents' relatives possess Afghan Citizen Cards or Tokens, while 13% hold PoR cards. The fact that a higher proportion of family members than respondents are undocumented suggests that the legal status of members of Afghan families in Pakistan continues to differ – while one family member may be documented, others are undocumented.



[12] See the Acronyms/Glossary section for more information on Afghan Citizen Cards and Tokens.

[13] IOM (2019) Pakistan: Migration Snapshot. August 2019. IOM: Bangkok.

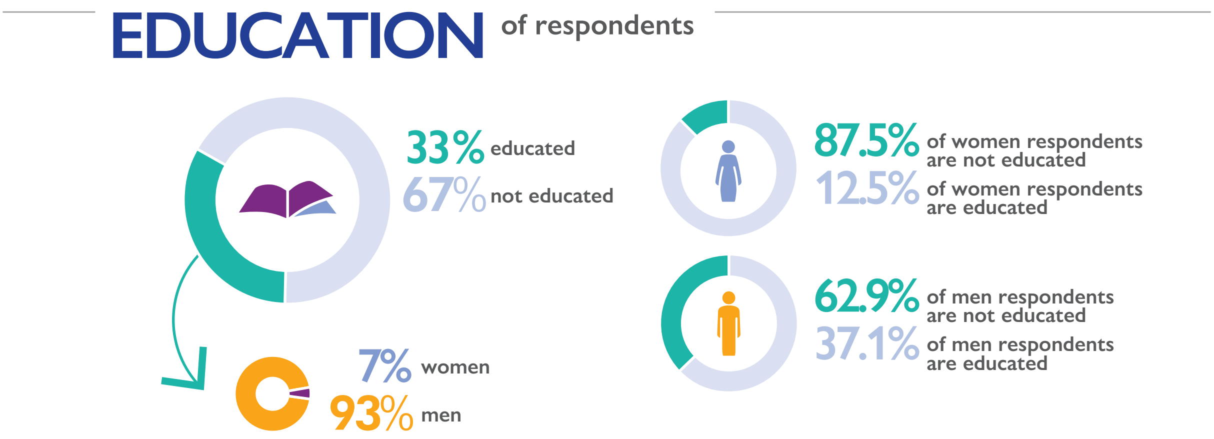
2.1.4 Education

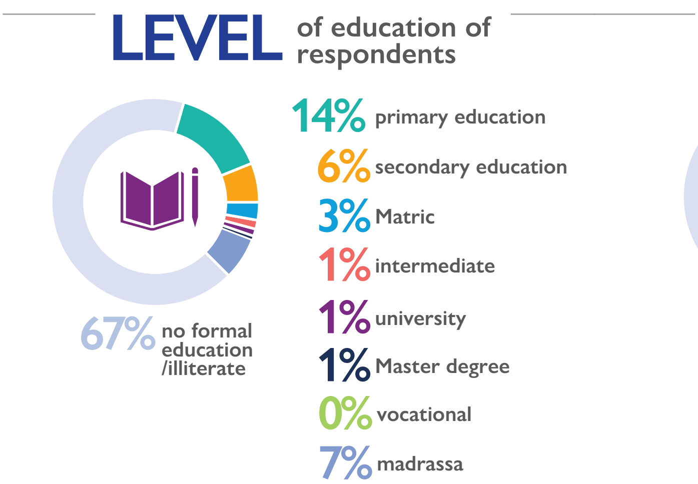
The 2019 survey found high rates of illiteracy among Afghans in Pakistan – at even higher levels than in 2017. Over two-thirds of respondents (67%) of respondents are illiterate or have received no formal education, an increase from 61% among those surveyed in 2017. Literacy rates vary significantly between men and women. Among the men surveyed, 62.9% identified as illiterate or without a formal education, compared to 87.5% of women respondents.

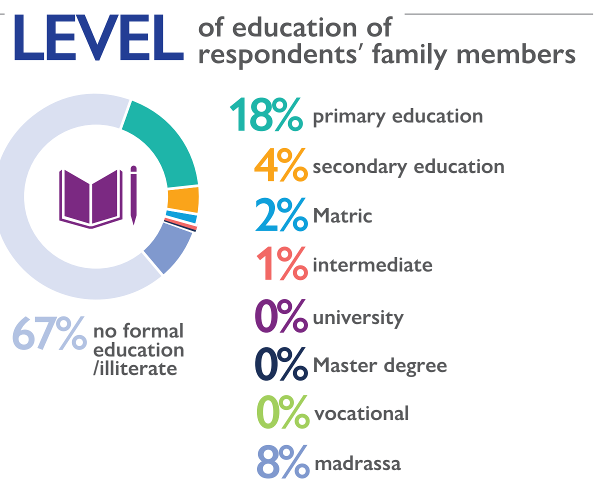
Of the 33% of respondents who have received a formal education, there are far more men (93%) than women (7%). As the level of education rises, the proportion of women declines, as does the proportion of respondents in general. This reflects the low levels of educational attainment among undocumented Afghans in Pakistan, particularly among Afghan women. While 14% of respondents with some level of education completed their primary schooling, only 6% have a secondary education, 3% obtained Matric-level certification, and 3% studied beyond the Matric-level – spanning intermediate studies, university degrees, Master degrees, and vocational training. Overall, 6% of respondents were educated at madrassas (religious seminaries).

Similarly, 67% of respondents' family members are illiterate or have received no formal education. Slightly more family members (18%) than respondents have completed their primary education. However, far fewer family members (4%) than respondents have a secondary education. Only 2% of respondents' family members have attained a Matric-level certification, and only 1% obtained higher education at the intermediate level, university degrees, Master degrees or vocational training.

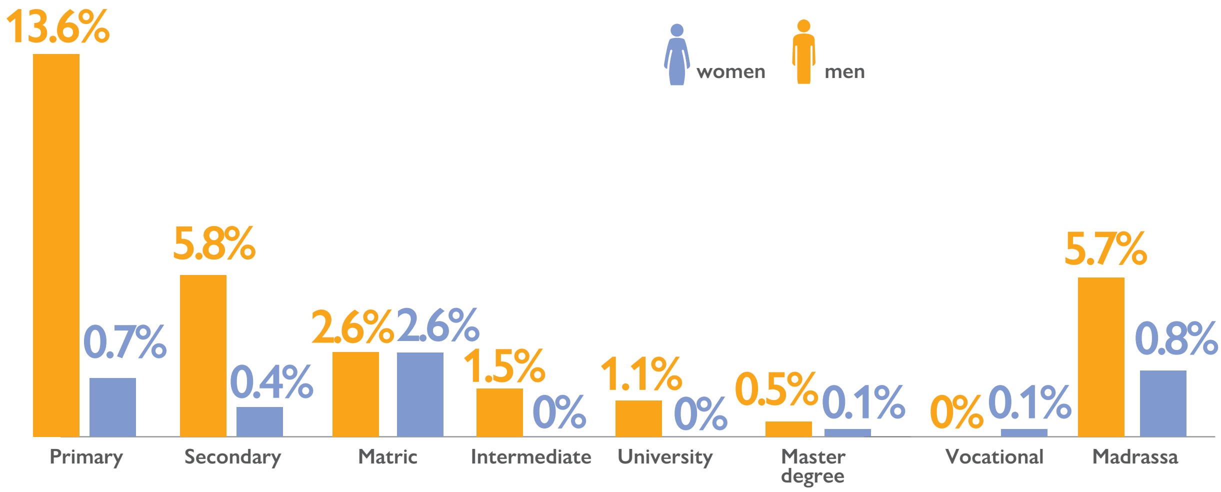
Illiteracy does not vary significantly between respondents' male and female family members. Of those family members who have received no formal education, 49.9% are men and 50.1% are women. Far more of respondents' male relatives have obtained a formal education than female family members. Even at the primary level, the proportion of educated female relatives is roughly half that of males. The higher the level of education, the lower the proportion of women enrolled. It is worth nothing, however, that only respondents' female relatives have completed vocational training, and a higher proportion of girls (5%) were educated at madrassas than boys (3%).



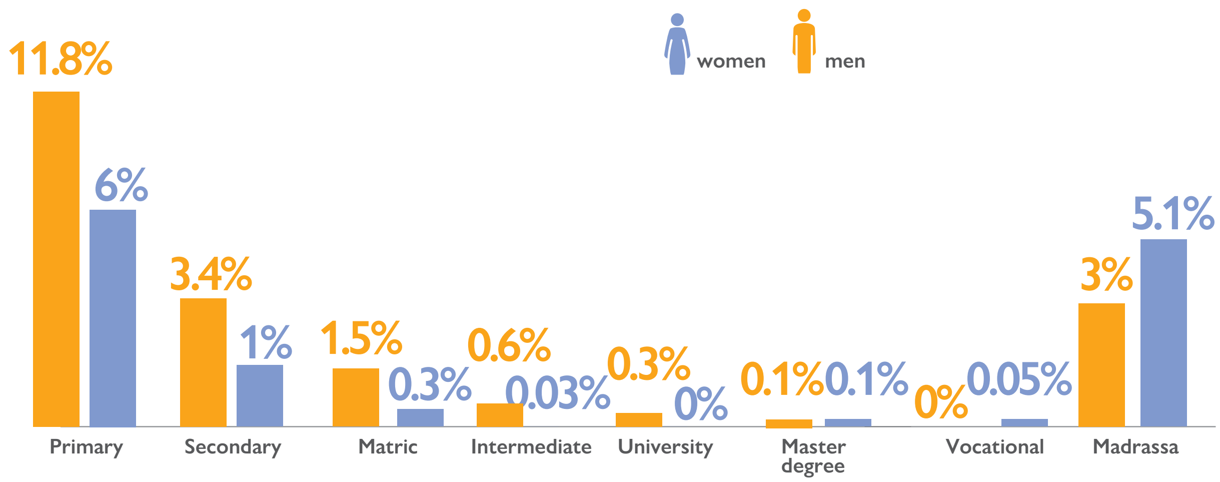




GENDER breakdown of respondents' level of education



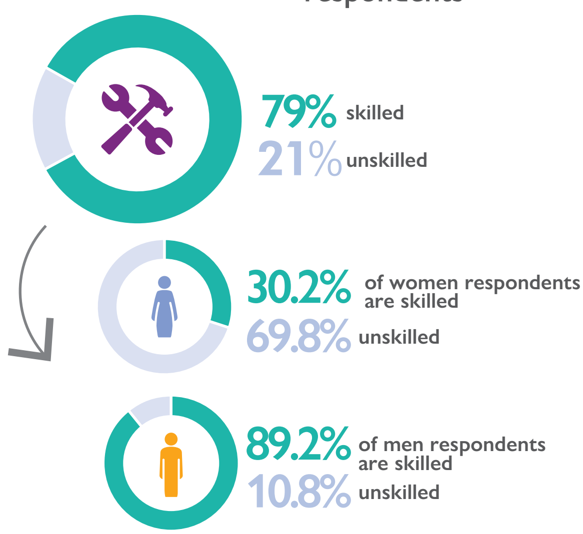
GENDER breakdown of respondents' family members' level of education



2.1.5 Skills

The RIS exercise 2.0 reveals that many Afghans in Pakistan tend to be clustered in low-skilled, potentially poorly remunerated work. While 21% of respondents identified as unskilled and 79% as skilled, overall64% of respondents' family members identify as ‘unskilled’. This represents a decline from 84% unskilled individuals recorded by the 2017 survey. Nevertheless, this remains a high proportion, reinforcing the particular vulnerability, marginalization and deprivation experienced by Afghans in Pakistan. This is especially true of Afghan women. While relatively few men surveyed reported being unskilled (10.9%) an extremely high percentage of women respondents (69.8%) identified as unskilled.

SKILLED vs unskilled respondents



SKILLED vs unskilled respondents' family members

36% skilled
64% unskilled

Respondents' skills relate to sales, tailoring, driving, farming, car and motorcycle repair, plumbing, carpeting, welding, electrical work, mobile phone repair, house painting, barbering and house wiring. Despite high levels of low-skilled daily wage labour (38% of respondents), it is clear that a significant proportion of Afghans in Pakistan entrepreneurs or skilled workers.

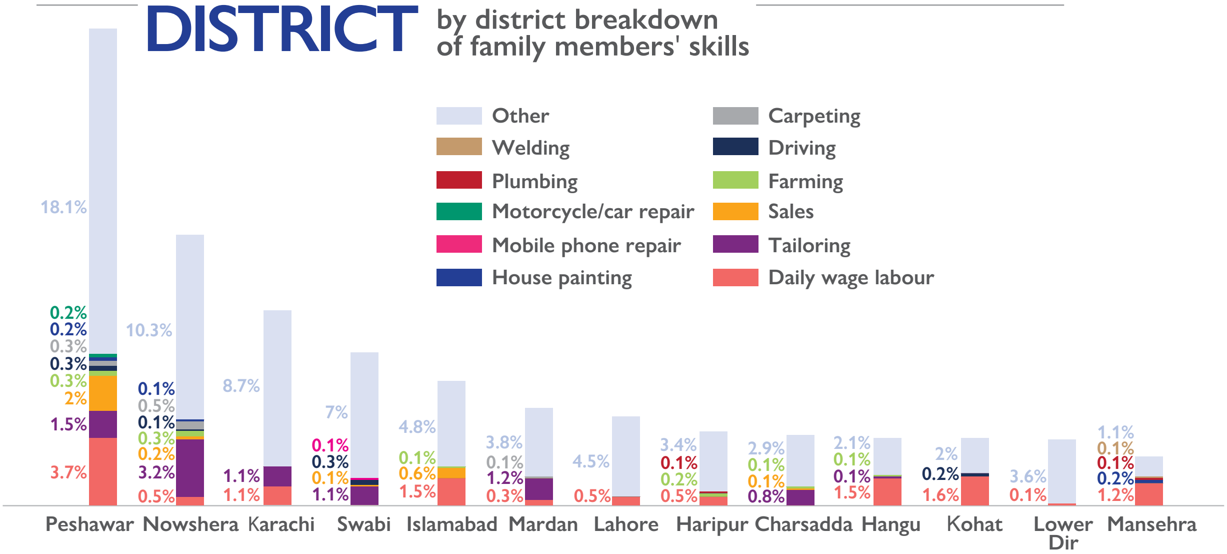
Breaking down this information by districts is significant as it sheds light on undocumented Afghans skills' in specific geographic areas. For instance, a marked proportion of respondents in Peshawar possess tailoring and sales-related skills, whereas the greatest proportion of unskilled Afghan workers who rely on daily wage labour reside in Peshawar, the capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

SKILLS of respondents

35% other (e.g. teaching, construction, business, domestic care work, etc.)

38% daily wage labour
9% sales
6% driving
6% tailoring
2% farming
1% plumbling
1% car/motorcycle repair
1% carpeting
1% welding
<1% electrician
<1% mobile phone repair
<1% house painting
<1% barber
<1% house wiring

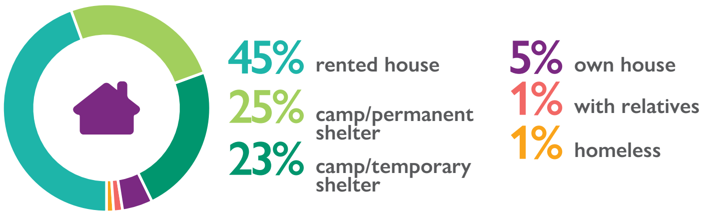
DISTRICT by district breakdown of family members' skills



2.1.6 Living Conditions

Nearly half of all respondents live in rented homes (45%), or in camps and shelters (48%) – including permanent (25%) and temporary shelters (23%). This reflects a significant increase in rented accommodation compared to 2017, when 37% of those surveyed by the first RIS exercise rented accommodation. It also marks a considerable decrease in Afghans living in temporary shelters or camps (38% in 2017) and an increase in those residing in permanent shelters or camps (17% in 2017). Very few respondents owned their homes (5%) – a level which has not changed since 2017. Others live with relatives (1%) – a slight decrease from 2% in 2017 – or are homeless (1%). Two years ago, no respondents identified as homeless.

LIVING arrangements in Pakistan

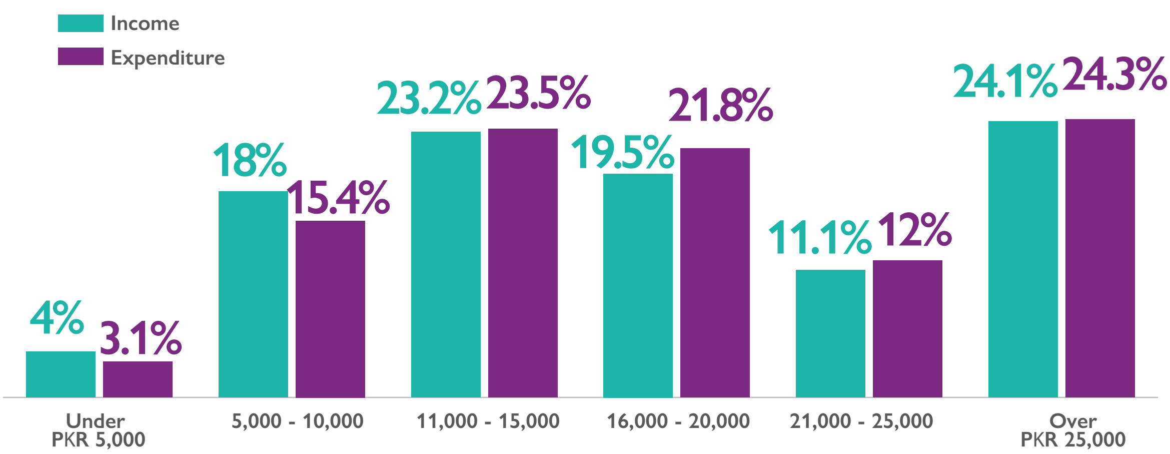


2.1.7 Income and Expenditure

The prevalence of temporary accommodation arrangements points to poverty among Afghan households in Pakistan. This is largely in line with data on income and expenditure among respondents' households. Only 24% of respondents have incomes of over PKR 25,000 per month (approximately USD 160) – signifying that 76% of surveyed households earn less than this sum per month. This represents a change compared to 2017, when 84% of RIS respondents earned less than PKR 25,000 each month. Similarly, fewer households in the second RIS exercise earned under PKR 5,000 (USD 32) – 4% in 2019, compared to 7% in 2017. Both surveys found a sizeable chunk of respondents belonging to the PKR 11,000 and 15,000 range (USD 70-96) – 23% in 2019, compared to 31% in 2017. It is worth highlighting that a recent spike in inflation has significantly depreciated the value of the Pakistani Rupee. Therefore, for example, whereas PKR 25,000 was equivalent to roughly USD 235 in 2017, in 2019 it is only equivalent to USD 160.

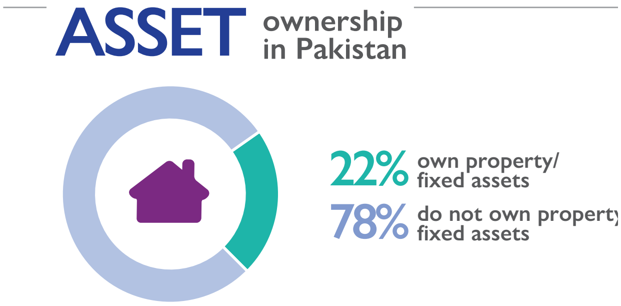
Respondents' monthly expenditure tends to mirror – or sometimes to exceed – monthly income. This reflects trends observed in 2017 and continues to suggest that undocumented Afghan households in Pakistan have little or no savings. Expenditure most frequently exceeds income in households with earnings of over PKR 11,000 per month. This may also be indicative of debt.

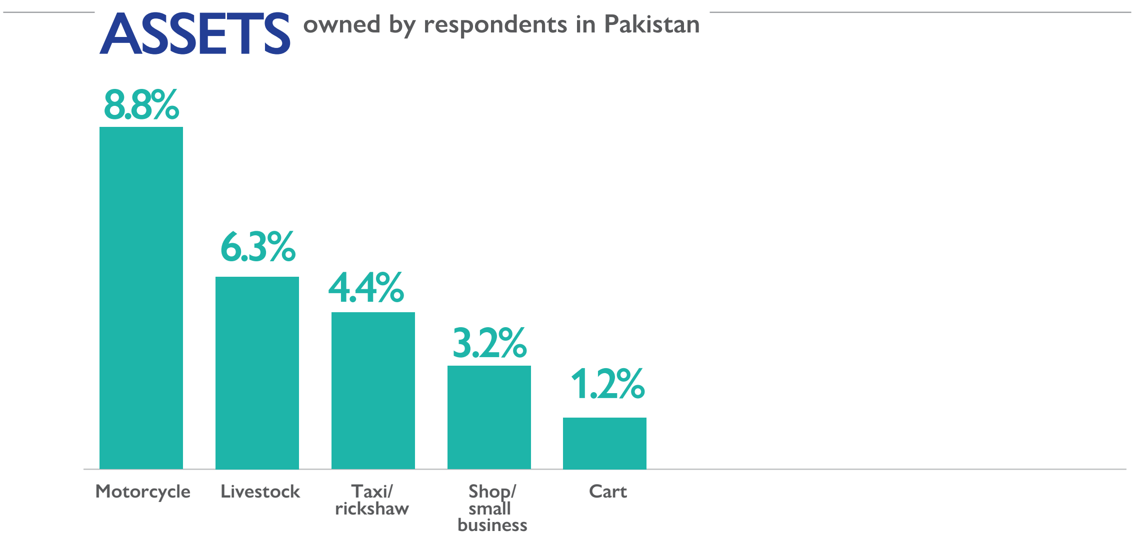
INCOME and expenditure among respondent households (monthly average)



2.1.8 Assets

There are low levels of fixed asset ownership among RIS respondents. Only 21.7% of respondents own fixed assets or property in Pakistan – a modest increase from 17% in 2017. Of these respondents, the most commonly owned assets are motorcycles, livestock, and homes, apartments or rooms. Very few respondents own land for agricultural or housing purposes.



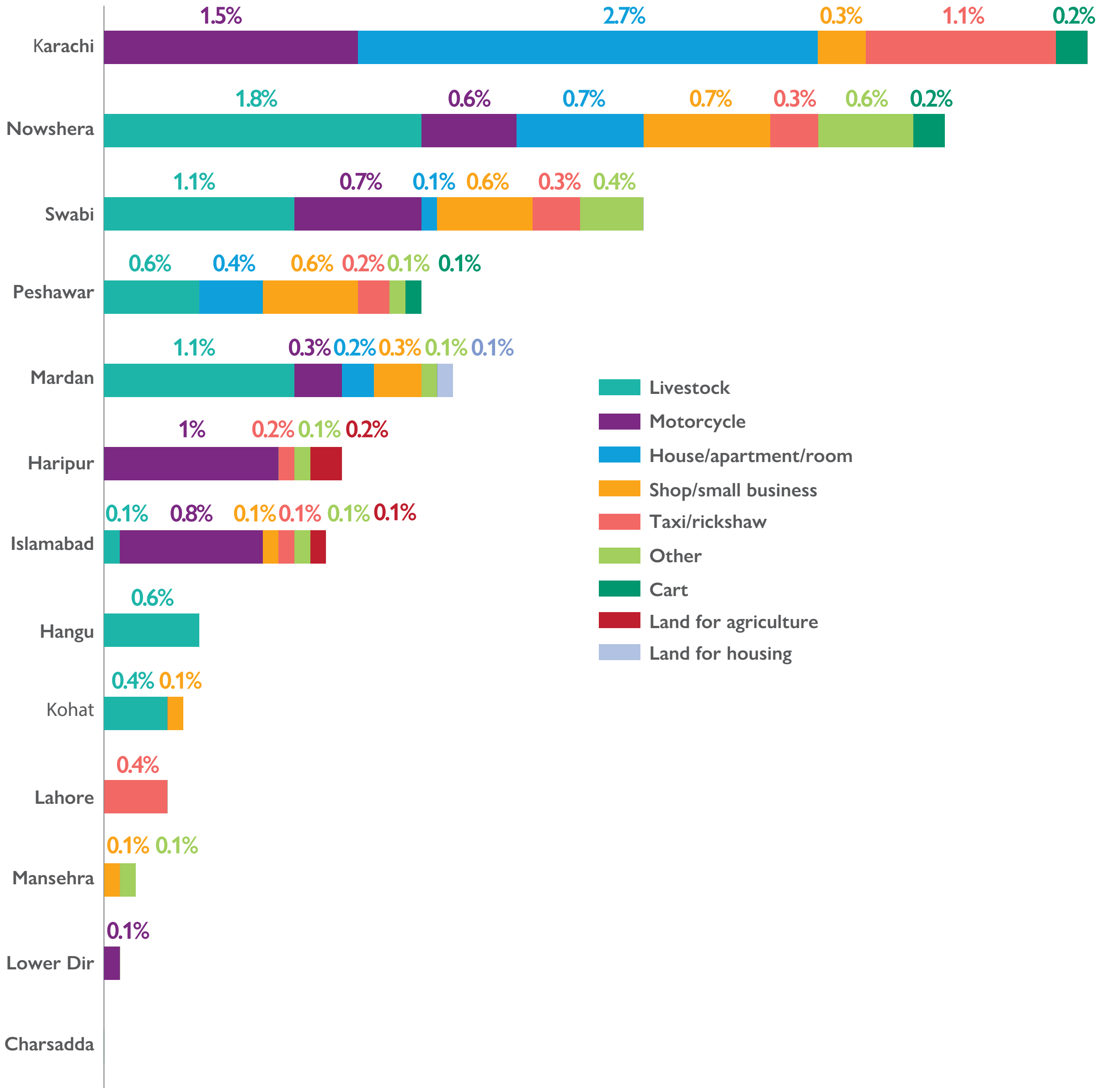


Compared to the findings of the 2017, there has been a modest increase in property ownership (up from 3.5% in 2017) and a significant increase in motorcycle ownership (2.8% in 2017). However, livestock ownership has decreased from 6.8% in 2017. The difference between the proportion of respondents who reported living in homes which they own (5%) and those who reported owning property assets (4%) may suggest that respondents have built homes on land owned by local landlords (khans) who retain ownership rights.

Most respondents own fixed assets "without papers". For instance, only 11% of homeowners possess paperwork to prove their ownership of their houses, apartments or rooms. Land for housing purposes is the only form of asset for which respondents consistently have the correct paperwork. By contrast, assets owned without papers include all land for agriculture; 96.6% of small businesses and shops; 92% of taxis and rickshaws; 88.6% of houses, apartments and rooms; 74% of motorcycles; and 70% of livestock. A lack of paperwork is likely to make it difficult for respondents to sell their assets at the market price. A lack of "seed money" from the sale of their assets would make relocation to Afghanistan more difficult for these families if they choose to return.

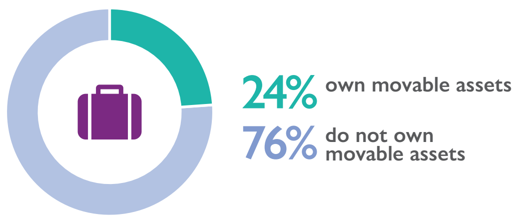
There are significant variations across districts in fixed asset ownership. Asset ownership is most common in the city of Karachi, Pakistan's economic hub, followed by the districts of Nowshera, Swabi, Peshawar and Mardan. No respondents in Charsadda reported owning any kind of fixed asset. The kinds of assets owned also vary by location. While home ownership is most common among respondents in Karachi (2.7% of the total respondents), no respondents in the metropolis own livestock. By contrast, livestock ownership is pronounced in Nowshera, Swabi and Peshawar, Mardan and Hangu and Kohat, but entirely lacking in Haripur, Lower Dir and Charsadda. No respondents own shops and small businesses in Haripur, Hangu, Lahore or Charsadda.

DISTRICT by district breakdown of fixed asset ownership



As with fixed assets, very few respondents own movable assets (24%). This is a significant decrease from 2017, when 36.9% of respondents reported possessing movable assets which they could take to Afghanistan. This implies that the remaining 76% lack even the most basic household goods, with serious implications for their needs – both in Pakistan and if they return to Afghanistan.

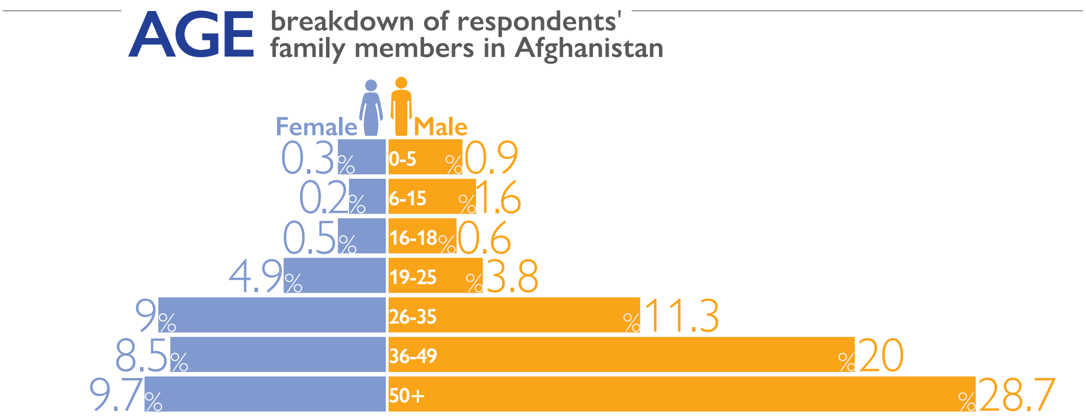
MOVABLE asset ownership in Pakistan



2.2 Profile of Respondents' Families in Afghanistan

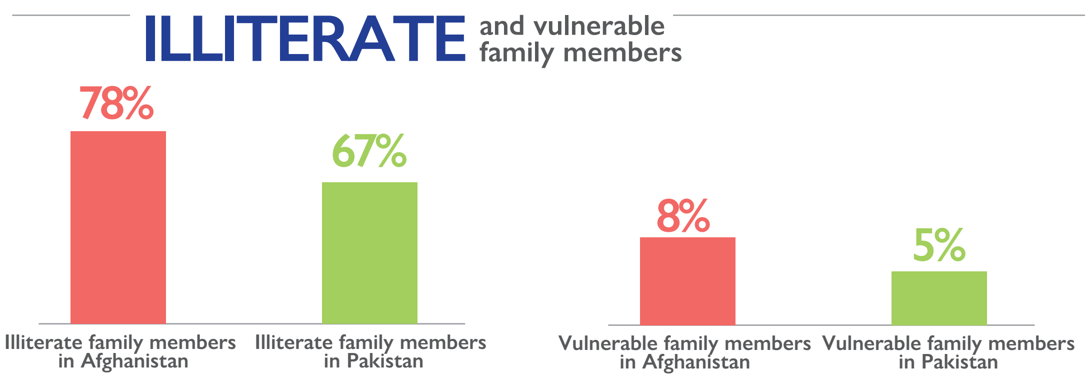
Survey respondents also provided information on their family members in Afghanistan – totalling 860 persons (or 12.5% of their relatives). The gender-divide among their relatives is more pronounced in Afghanistan than in Pakistan, and their age groups differ. Of the respondents' family members who reside in Afghanistan, 67% are men or boys, while only 33% are women or girls.

Well over one-third of their relatives in Afghanistan (38.4%) are over 50 years old, and the majority (66.9%) are over 35. This is a marked contrast to respondents' relatives in Pakistan, most of whom are under the age of 35 (81% in Pakistan, compared to 33% in Afghanistan). This is line with trends observed in 2017, when the first RIS exercise found a high proportion of older men among respondents' relatives in Afghanistan. However, there has been a further decline in the proportion of children and youths among respondents' family members in Afghanistan – whereas 30% were under 25 years old in 2017, this is true for only 12.9% in 2019.



In addition to the lower ratio of women to men among these family members, there are even higher rates of illiteracy. Whereas 67% of those in Pakistan are illiterate, this rises to 78% among family members in Afghanistan. However, this reflects a lower proportion of illiteracy when compared to survey results in 2017, which found that 85% of respondents' relatives in Afghanistan had no formal education.

While vulnerabilities in both countries are largely similar, a higher percentage of respondents' family members in Afghanistan are significantly vulnerable (8% vs 5%). This reflects a decline from 10% of respondents' family members being identified as vulnerable in 2017. Specifically, there are more elderly individuals and persons with disabilities among respondents families in Afghanistan (each 3.1% of the total number surveyed), but fewer individuals with chronic illness or in need of medical attention (0.6% of the total).

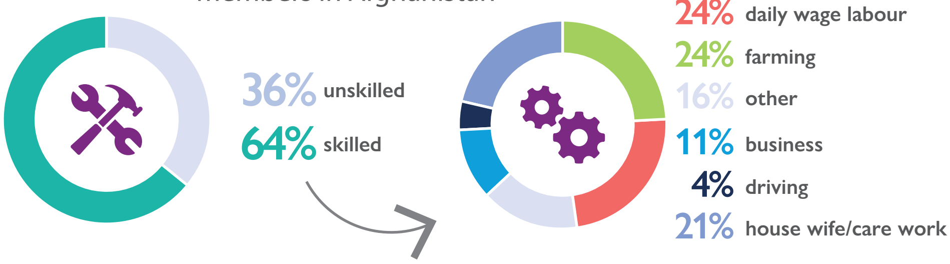


A far higher proportion of respondents' family members in Afghanistan are skilled workers (64%) than in Pakistan (36%). Of these skilled workers, two-thirds earn a living from agriculture and farming (31%), and from daily wage labour (30%). The remainder are engaged in other occupations (19%), business (14%) and driving (6%).

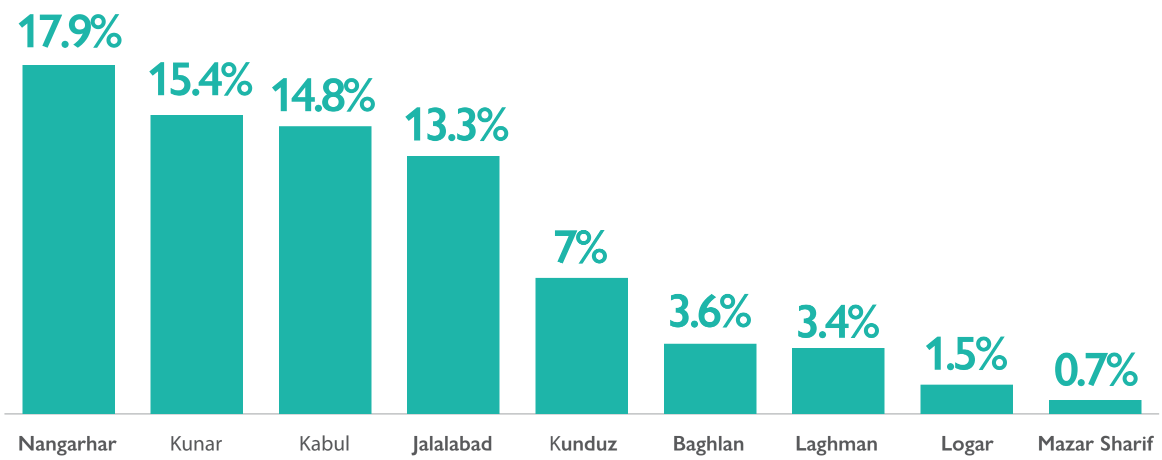
Most respondents' family members in Afghanistan live in the province of Nangarhar (17.9%), followed by Kunar (15.4%), Kabul (14.8%) and the capital city of Nangarhar, Jalalabad (13.3%). While most have lived in Pakistan at some point in their lives (73%), just over one-quarter (27%) have always lived in Afghanistan.

Of those who have returned from Pakistan, most (58%) did so within the past five years – concretely, 26% in the last year, 12% in the past two years and 20% sometime in the last 5 years. This is in line with the trend of returnee migration observed between 2017 and 2019, which has slowed down compared to earlier return patterns, particularly those between 2002 and 2005.[14]

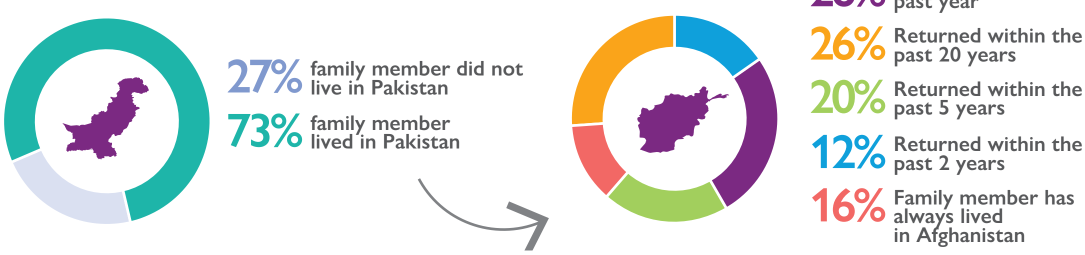
SKILLS of respondents' family members in Afghanistan



LOCATION of respondents; family members in Afghanistan



RETURN of respondents' family members to Afghanistan from Pakistan



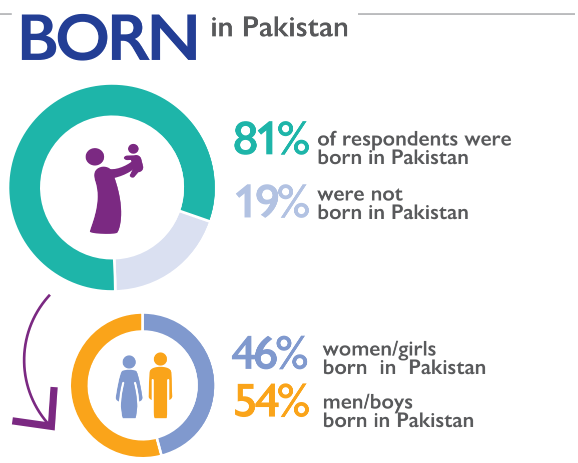
[14] IOM (2019) Pakistan: Migration Snapshot. August 2019. IOM: Bangkok.

2.3 Displacement History

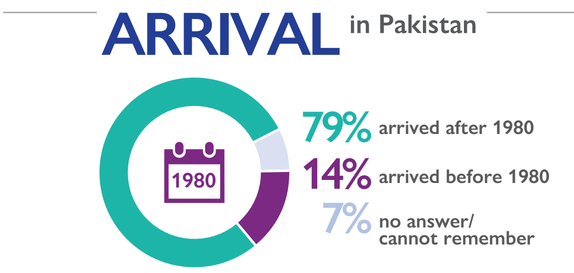
2.3.1 Arrival in Pakistan

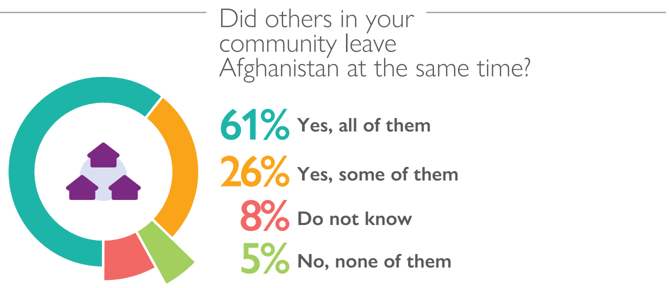
Most respondents' family members (79%) arrived in Pakistan in or after 1980, commensurate with the major upheavals of the Afghan-Soviet war (1979-1989). Well over half (61%) of respondents indicated that their entire communities left Afghanistan at roughly the same time as their own families.

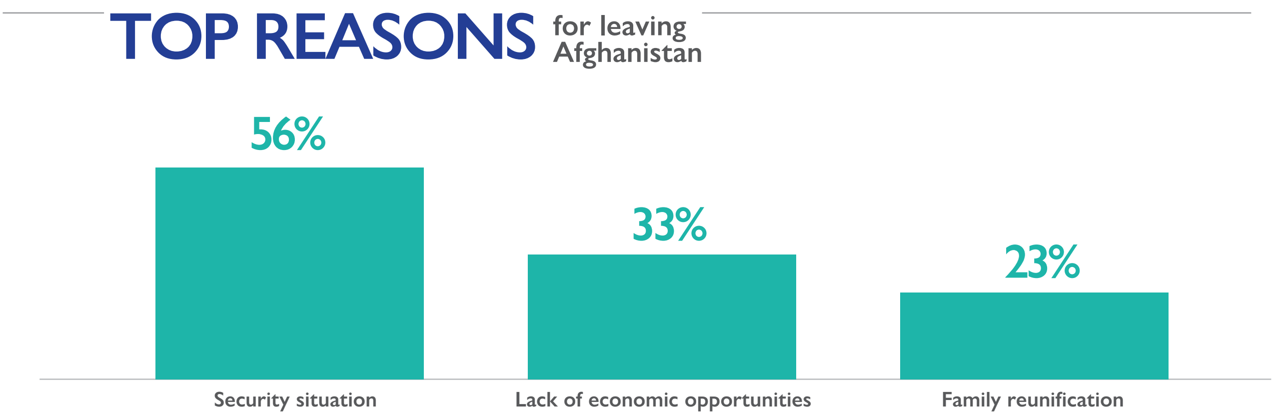
It is worth highlighting that the vast majority (81%) were born in Pakistan and, therefore, never "left" Afghanistan. This means that only 2% of respondents' relatives arrived from Afghanistan after 1980. A slightly higher proportion of men and boys (54%) were born in Pakistan than women and girls (46%).



Explanations of why respondents' families left Afghanistan highlight insecurity as the leading impetus for their move – the security situation in the country was cited by 56% of respondents. A lack of economic opportunity and the quest for family reunification were the second and third most commonly cited causes, selected by 33% and 23% of respondents, respectively.



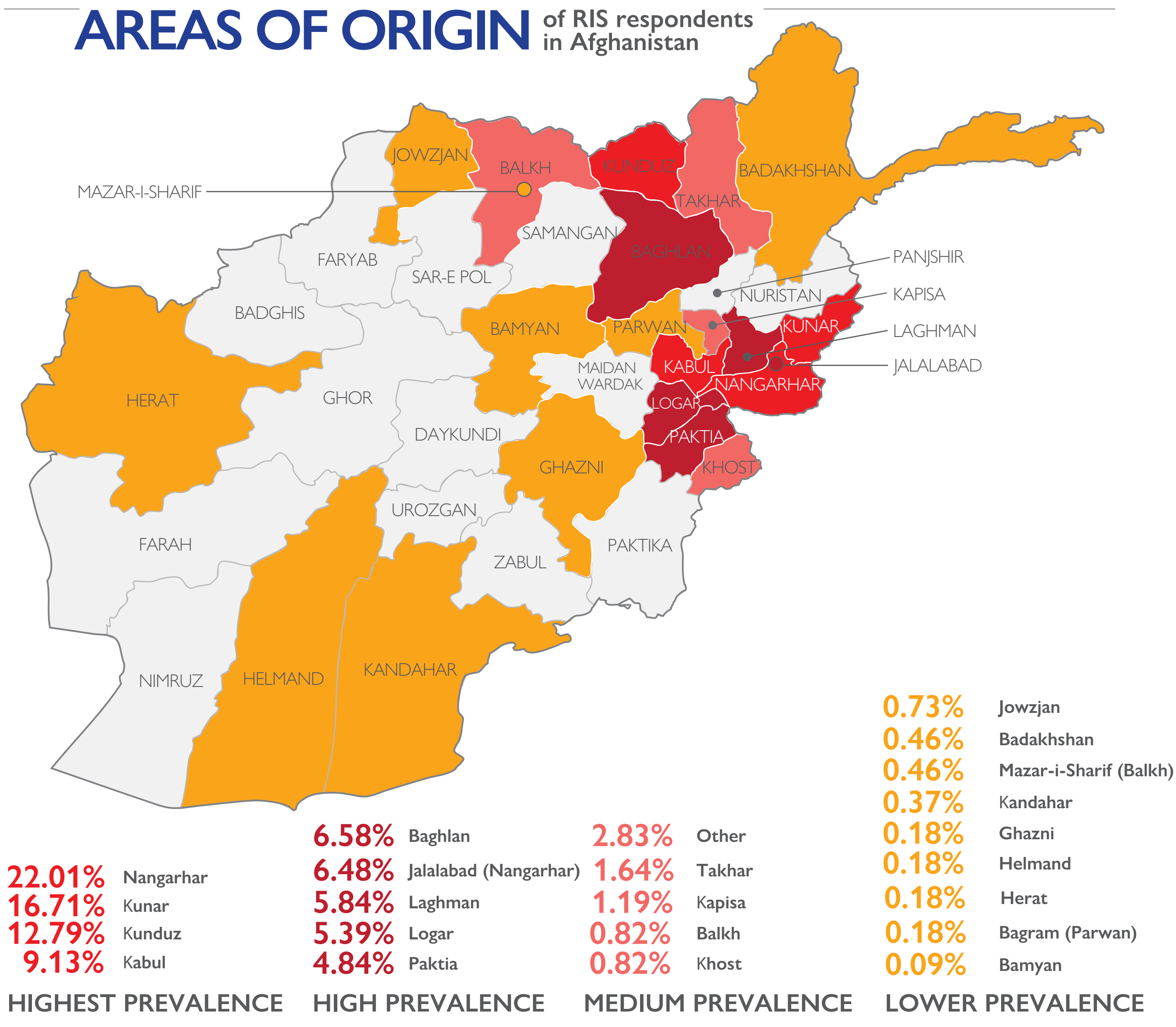




2.3.2 Area of Origin in Afghanistan

The most common areas of origin among respondents are two provinces bordering Pakistan: Nangarhar and Kunar. Nearly one-third (28.5%) are from the province of Nangarhar in eastern Afghanistan – 22% from the wider province, and 6.5% from its capital, Jalalabad. Another 17% of respondents cite Kunar as their area of origin. When considering cities, the proportion of respondents from Kunduz (13%) was higher than those from Afghanistan's capital, Kabul (9%). The number of respondents whose families originate from Nangarhar may also be linked to the fact that most residents of the province, are Pashtuns and therefore share their linguistic and cultural background with the inhabitants of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

However, significantly fewer respondents from Nangarhar are among those surveyed in 2019 compared to 2017 – 28.5% in 2019, down from 49.5% in 2017. This may indicate that a significant proportion of Afghans in Pakistan have returned to the province of Nangarhar in the past two years. By contrast, almost exactly the same proportion are originally from Kunar – 16.7% in 2019, compared to 16.4% in 2017 – and more respondents in 2019 are from Kabul (9%) than in 2017 (6%), possibly indicating limited returns to these areas. Moreover, it is worth noting that more respondents identified Baghlan, Laghman and Logar as areas of origin in 2019 than in 2019 than in 2017. This trend is especially pronounced for Baghlan – which 6.6% of respondents indicated as their area of origin in 2019, compared to 1.3% in 2017 – followed by Laghman (5.8% in 2019 vs 3.1% in 2017) and Logar (5.4% in 2019 vs 3.8% in 2017). As noted in the 2017 survey, areas of origin are important to consider as respondents' return intentions suggest that most plan to return to these regions (see Section 2.5.2).

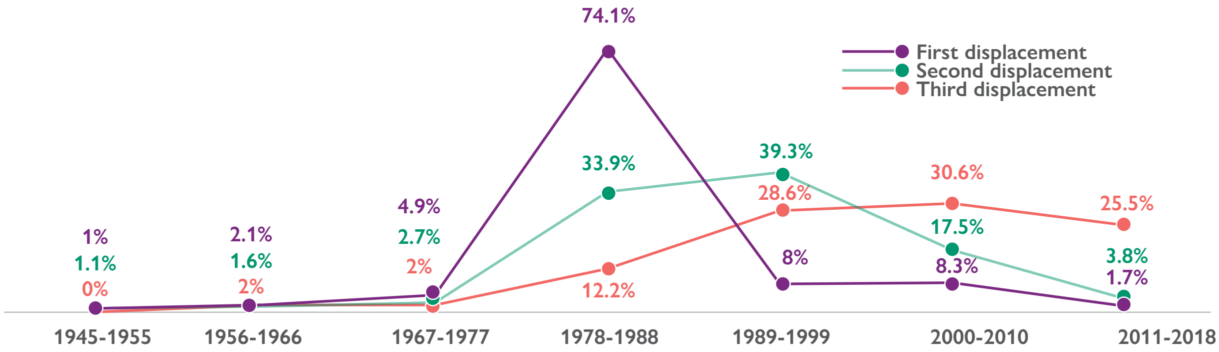


2.3.3 Internal Displacement in Pakistan

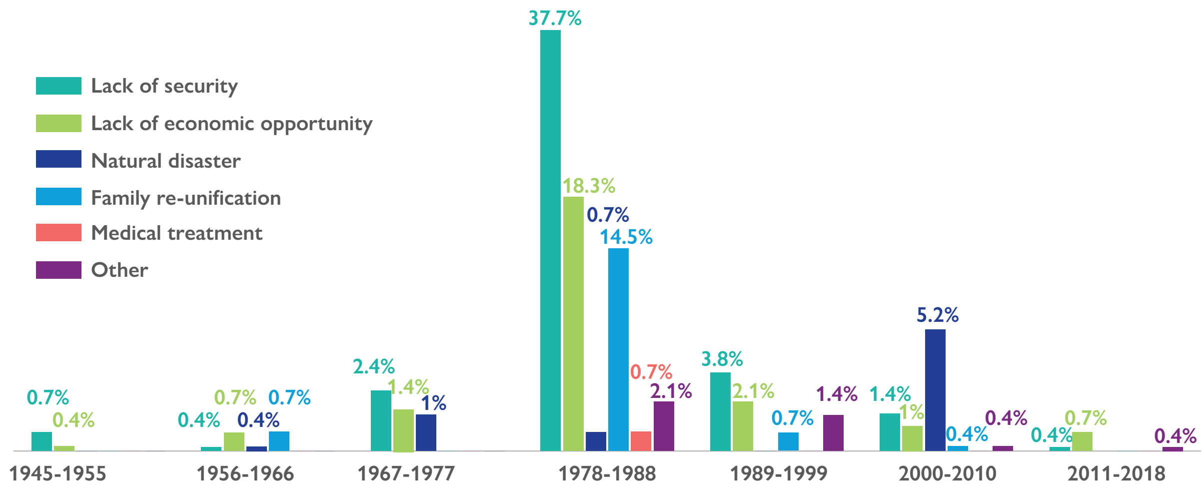
Over one-quarter (26.3%) of those surveyed have experienced displacement within Pakistan. Of these respondents, most have been displaced twice (12.2%), slightly fewer only once (9.7%), and a smaller proportion three or more times (4.4%). Rates of and reasons for internal displacement in Pakistan vary by time periods. Between 1978 and 1988, a lack of security was by far the most common reason for displacement. Between 2011 and 2018, the greatest driver was a lack of economic opportunity, followed in equal measure by insecurity, natural disasters and "other" reasons. By contrast, the 2017 RIS exercise found that family reunification was a major driver of displacement.

DISPLACEMENT within Pakistan

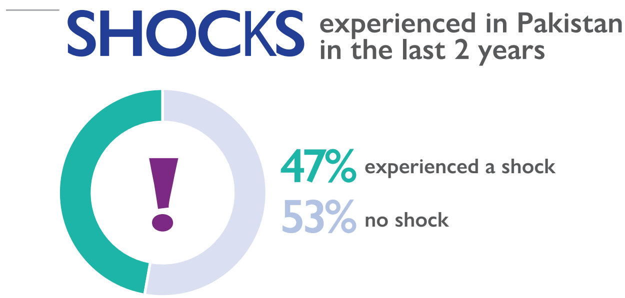
DISPLACEMENT in Pakistan by year

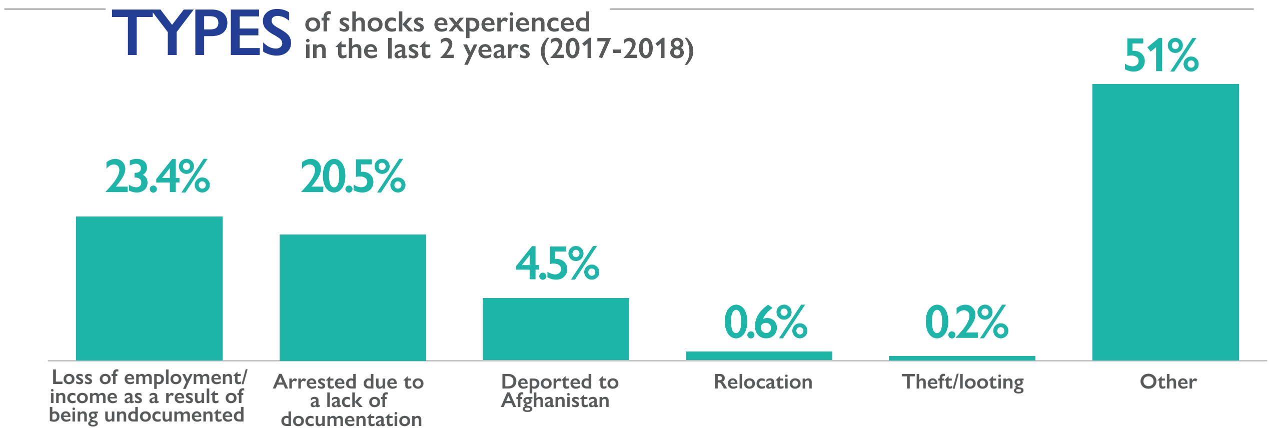


REASONS for respondents' first displacement in Pakistan



In the past two years (2017-2018), nearly half (47%) of all survey respondents experienced major shocks. While most cited unspecified traumas, frequently cited shocks included a loss of income or employment as a result of being undocumented (23.4%) or arrest due to a lack of documentation (20.5%). Only 4.5% reported experiencing deportation, 0.6% relocation, and 0.2% theft.





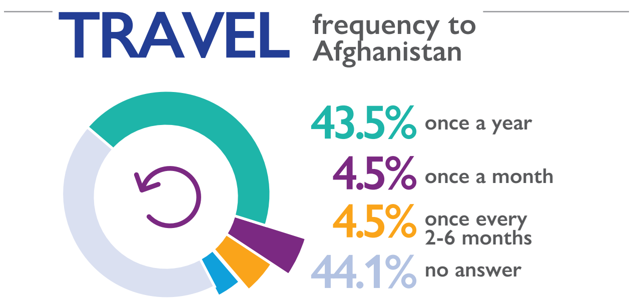
2.4 Recent Travel to Afghanistan

2.4.1 Travel Frequency and Motives

Nearly half of the respondents (43.5%) visit Afghanistan every year. Far fewer visit on a more regular basis, either between twice and six times per year (4.5%), or every month (4.5%). This is substantially more than in 2017, when only 27% of RIS respondents reported being able to travel to Afghanistan.

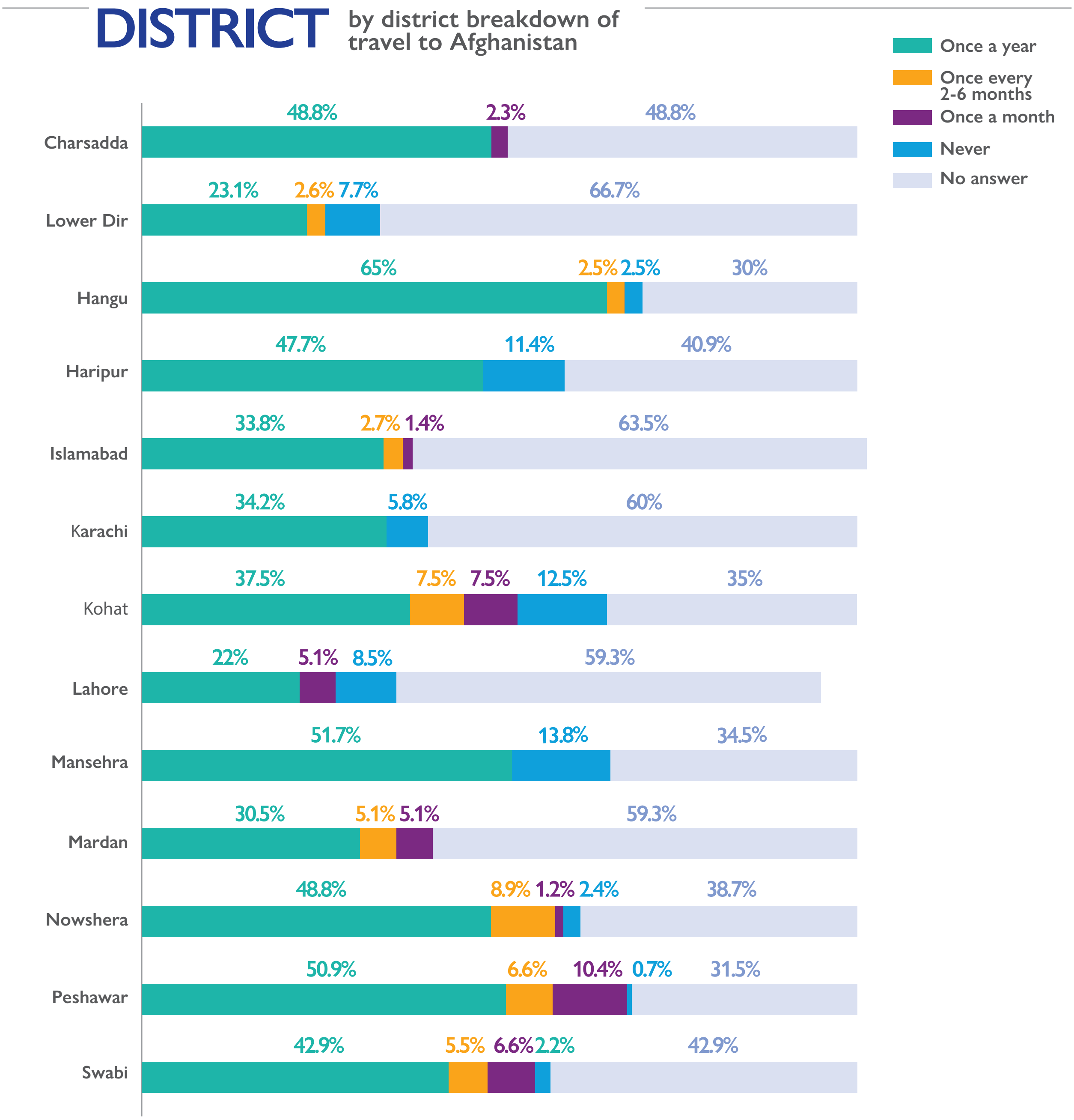
Overall, 3.5% of respondents and their relatives have never visited Afghanistan. The fact that so many respondents travel to Afghanistan fairly regularly may be linked to their possession of Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs) and improved prospects for legal documentation in Pakistan. However, it is worth noting that just under half (44.1%) of those surveys did not provide information on recent travel.

Frequent travel to Afghanistan is most common among respondents who reside in Peshawar, Kohat and Swabi, followed by Mardan and Nowshera. This suggests close links between families, friends or communities on both sides of the border. In terms of areas visited in Afghanistan, the most frequently cited destinations are Nangarhar, Kabul, Kandahar and Kunduz, followed by Baghlan, Kunar, Paktia, Laghman, Logar and Helmand.

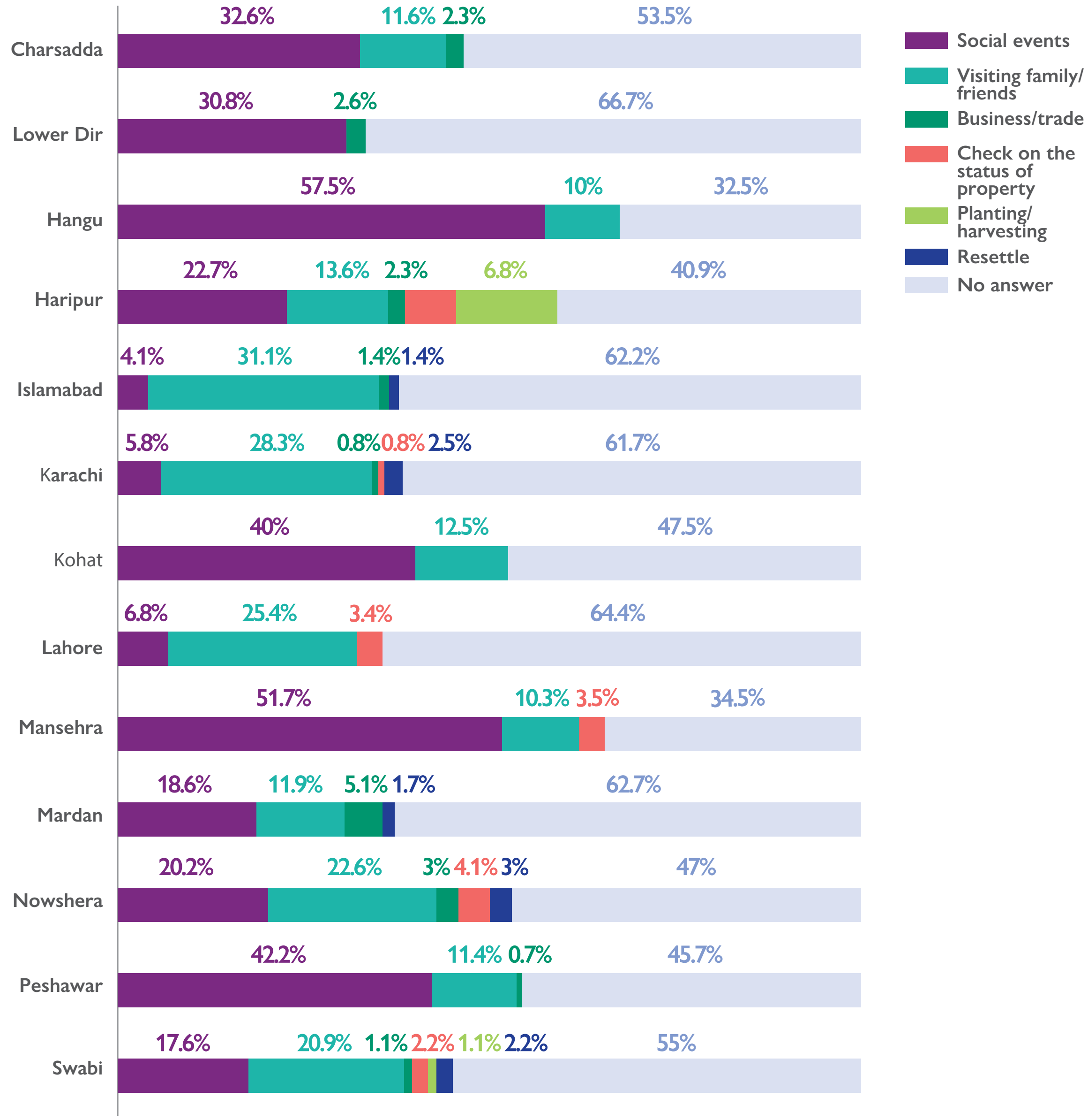


Close community ties are also reflected in respondents' reasons for travelling to Afghanistan. Social events are the leading reason for travel, cited by over half of the respondents (54%), followed by visiting family and friends (36%). Both of these reasons were also identified as leading motives for travel in 2017. Far fewer respondents cited business and trade (3%) or a desire to check on the status of property (3%). As in 2017, this indicates that the majority of those surveyed do not have significant business ties to Afghanistan, nor do they own property in the country. While only 2% of respondents listed planting and harvesting' as a motive for their visits, this is an increase compared to trends observed in 2017 – suggesting that slightly more Afghans based in Pakistan now have a stake in arable land in Afghanistan.

An analysis of by district reveals that respondents who are especially prone to travelling to Afghanistan for social events or to visit family and friends are based in Hangu, Mansehra, Peshawar, Kohat, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi and Haripur. This underscores close social ties between Afghans on both sides of the border, particularly when they reside in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



REASONS for travelling to Afghanistan by district of residence in Pakistan



2.4.2 Border Crossings

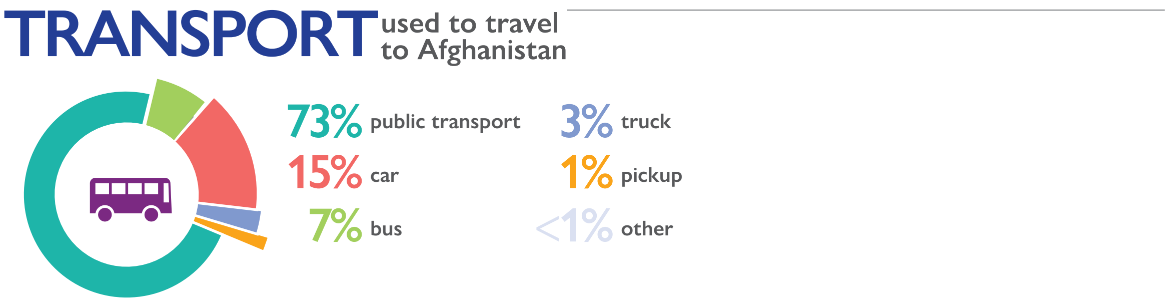
Roughly half of those surveyed (50%) use the Torkham border crossing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to travel to Afghanistan, whereas only 5% cross the border further south at Chaman, on the Afghan-Balochistan border. Only 1% reported using other routes. This reflects a decrease in respondents who pass through Torkham compared to 2017 – when 97% of those surveyed used this border crossing. However, as 44% of respondents did not provide information on where they crossed the border, it is unclear whether Torkham's popularity has materially declined. More respondents listed Chaman as their crossing point in 2019 (5%) than in 2017 (1%).

The fact that most respondents reside in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and their areas of origin in Afghanistan are concentrated along this province's border, appears to explain why they favour the proximity of Torkham. A RIS exercise in Balochistan would likely reveal different trends, particularly as the border between Afghanistan and Balochistan is far longer and more porous.

2.4.3 Modes of transport

Most respondents use public transport (73%) to travel to Afghanistan. This is a significant decline from 2017, when 94% of those surveyed exercise used public transport. Nonetheless, it still underscores the importance of ensuring the availability of adequate public transport to meet demand, particularly in terms of safety for vulnerable groups including women, minors, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Significantly fewer respondents travel by car (15%), by bus (7%), or by truck (3%). However, these figures represent a significant increase in the proportions travelling by car (4% in 2017) and a slight increase in the use of trucks (2%). While 1% rely on pickup trucks which can accommodate an average of seven people, 1% of those surveyed reported using "other" modes of transport. In some cases, respondents travelled by foot .

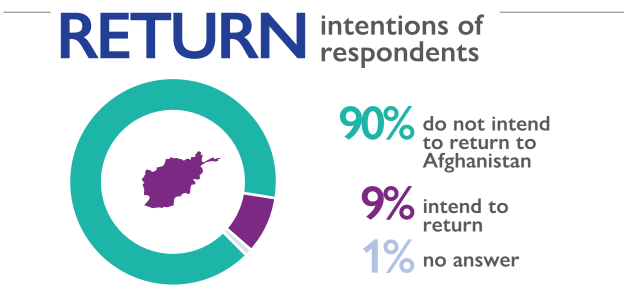


2.5 Return Intentions

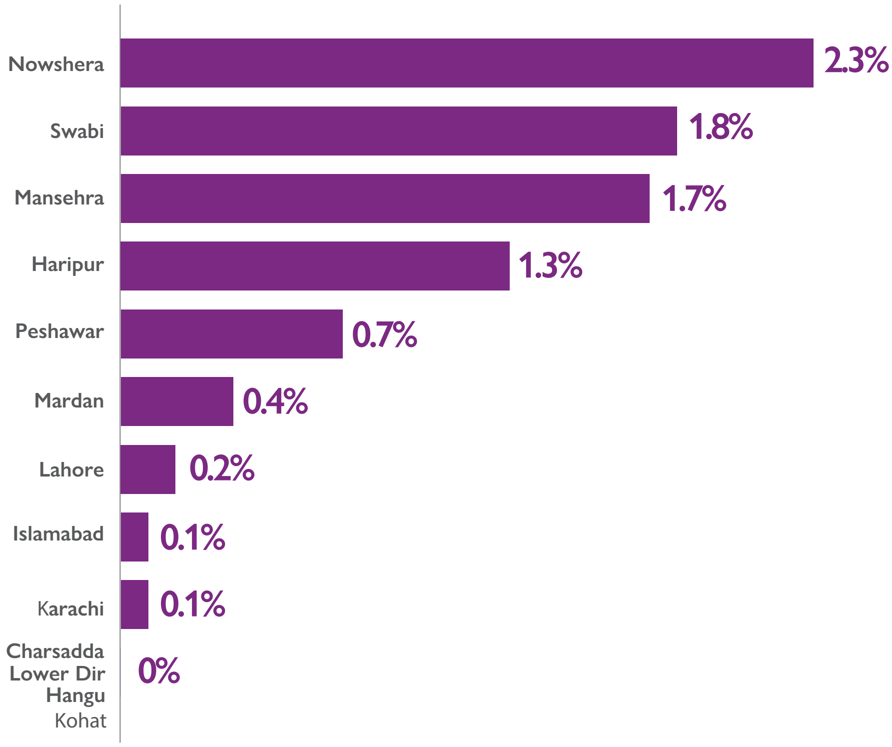
2.5.1 Intentions to Return to Afghanistan

Almost all (90%) survey respondents have no plan to return to Afghanistan. Only 9% expressed an intention to return, while 1% were undecided. This reflects an increase in respondents with plans to relocate to Afghanistan, as only 5% of respondents in 2017 had plans to return.

Intentions to return were more commonly expressed by respondents in Nowshera, followed by Swabi, Mansehra, Haripur and Peshawar. No respondents in Charsadda, Lower Dir, Hangu or Kohat intend to return to Afghanistan.

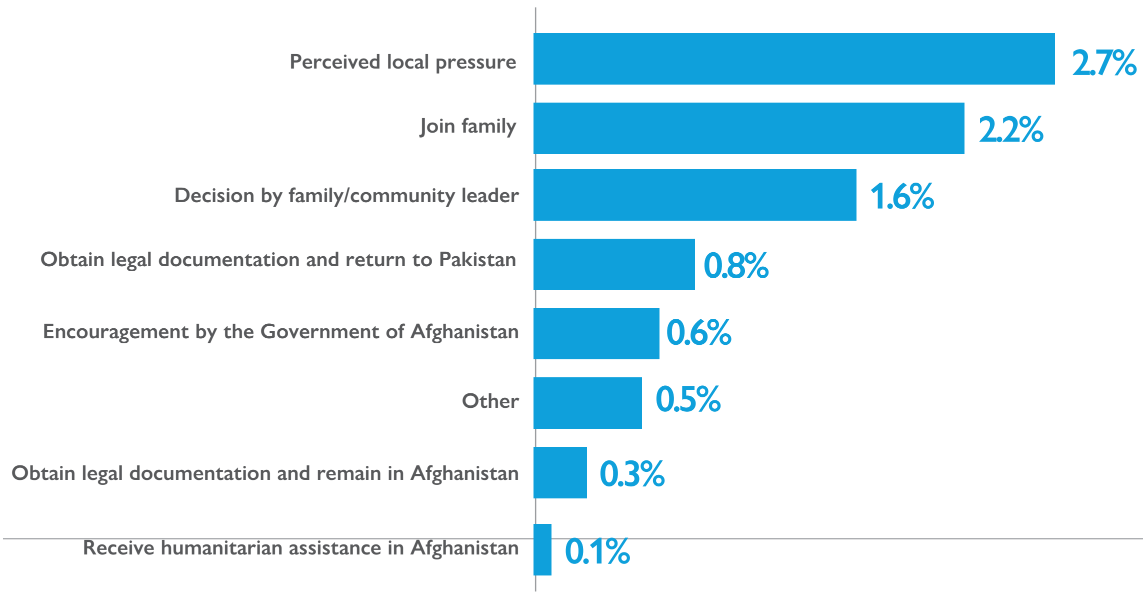


DISTRICT by district breakdown of return intentions

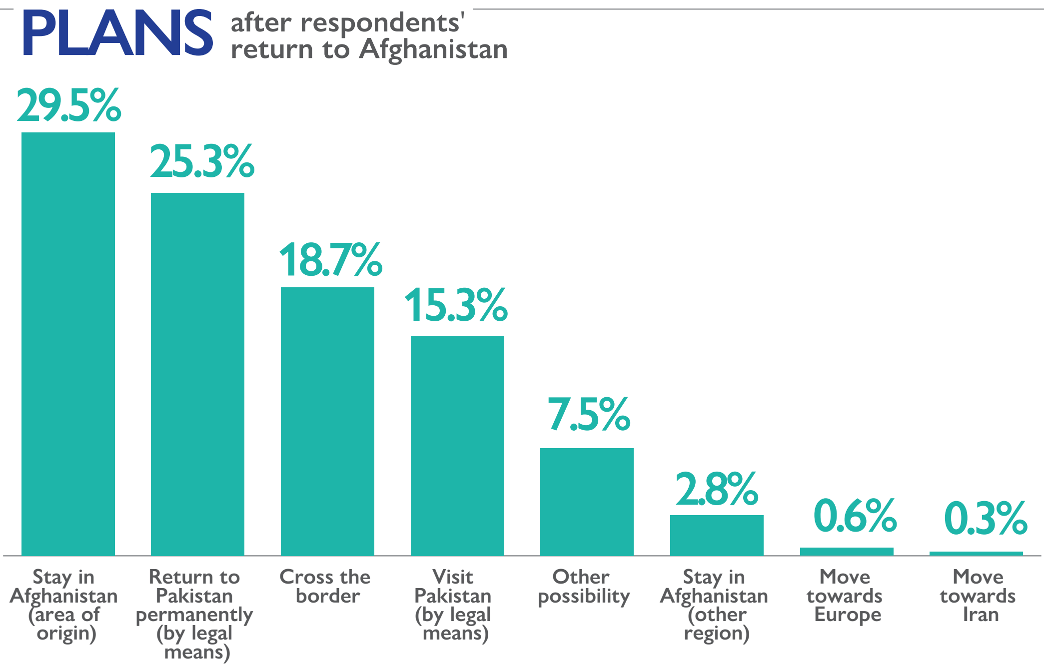


Among those who plan to return, mounting local pressure is the most frequently cited reason for their decision (2.7% of the total respondents), followed closely by a desire to join other family members (2.2%). Other drivers for returns include decisions taken by families or community elders (1.6%), the prospect of obtaining legal documentation and returning to Pakistan (0.8%) and encouragement by the Government of Afghanistan (0.6%). Some respondents intend to obtain legal documentation and remain in Afghanistan (0.3%), while very few wish to avail themselves of humanitarian assistance in the country (0.1%).

REASONS for planning to return to Afghanistan



When asked about their future plans after returning to Afghanistan, similar proportions of respondents indicated that they would remain in their area of origin in Afghanistan (29.5%), or return permanently to Pakistan by legal means (25.3%). Compared to 2017, proportionally fewer respondents favour either of these plans – the first RIS exercise found that over half of those surveyed wished to settle in their area of origin (50.3%) and one-third wished to permanently return to Pakistan (33.1%). Very few respondents plan to resettle in Afghan regions other than their area of origin (2.8%). In 2019, far more (18.8%) respondents indicated an intention to cross the border legally or illegally, compared to just 2.4% in 2017. There remains little inclination among respondents to move to Iran (0.3%) or to migrate towards Europe – 0.55% in 2019, slightly down from 0.6% in 2017.



2.5.2 Intended Place of Return in Afghanistan

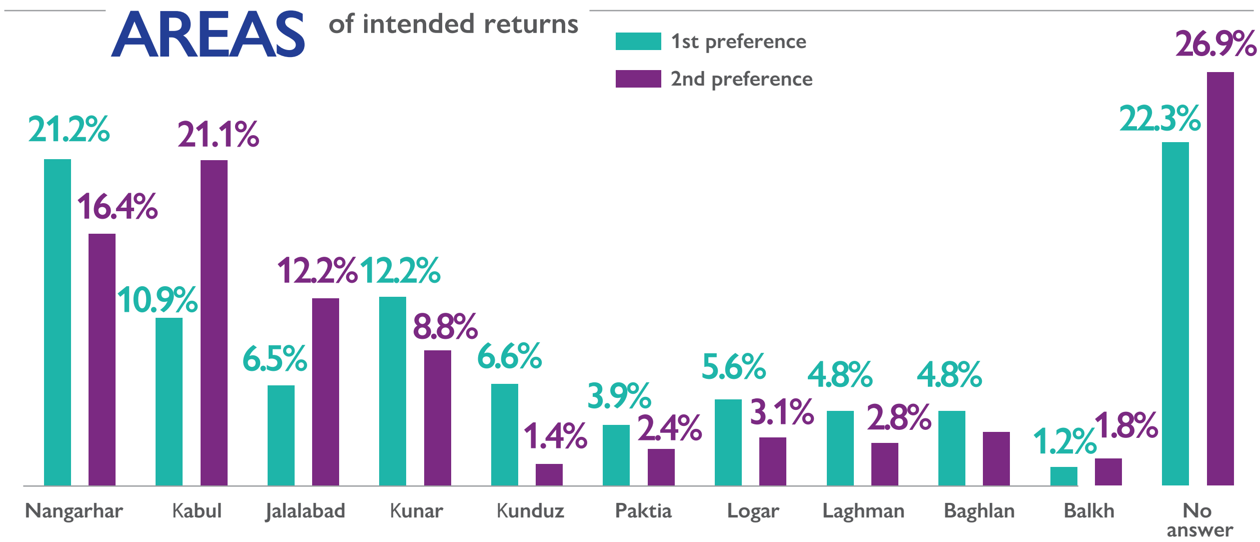
The destinations which respondents plan to return to broadly reflect their areas of origin (see Section 2.3.2), While the majority (21%) listed Nangarhar as their first preference, significantly fewer respondents plan to return to this province than in 2017 (39%). This was followed by Kunar (12%), Kabul (11%), Kunduz (6.6%) and Nangarhar's capital city, Jalalabad (6.5%). Kabul is the most frequently cited second preference (21%), followed by Nangarhar (16.4%) and its capital, Jalalabad (12.2%).

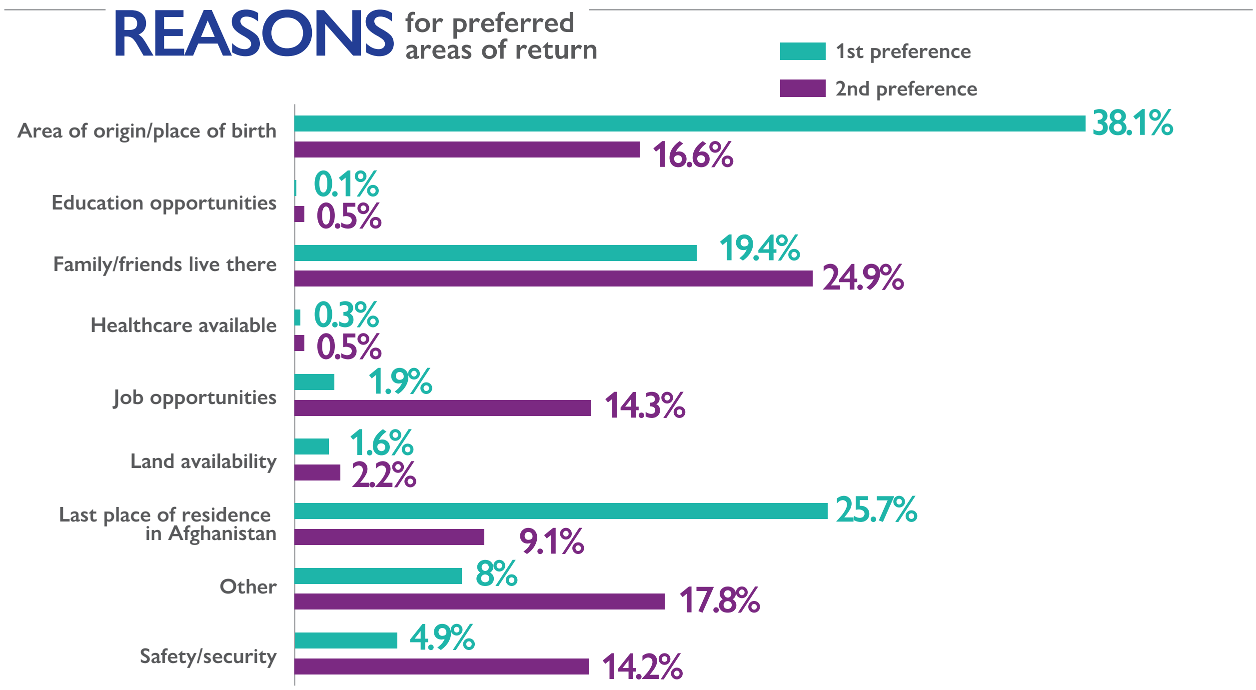
In addition to areas of origin, intended places of return include large cities with relatively broad economic opportunities, such as Kabul and Jalalabad. Respondents explained their selected locations as either being their area or origin (38.8%), their last place of residence in Afghanistan (25.7%) or because friends and relatives live there (19.4%). These factors also influence their second choice of return location, as do concerns such as economic opportunities, safety and security. Very few respondents selected areas of return due to the availability of healthcare, education or land – potentially reflecting that these services and assets are in short supply across Afghanistan. These findings suggest that the provinces bordering Pakistan are most likely to be affected by a large-scale inflow of returning Afghans – a trend observed by border monitors in the past two years. For instance, at the end of 2018, IOM Afghanistan's Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) found that, of the 3.2 million who have returned from abroad since 2012 – particularly from Pakistan, Iran and elsewhere – a significant proportion (15%) have established themselves in the province of Nangarhar, on the border with Pakistan.[15] The matrix also highlights Nangarhar as the "top priority" province with the most returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Afghanistan, and the second highest priority province in need of shelter assistance and medical clinics.

[15] IOM Afghanistan (2019) DTM Baseline Mobility Assessment: Summary Results Round 7. Oct-Dec 2018. Kabul: IOM. Available: https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/Reports/iom-afghanistan-baseline-mobility-assessment-summary-results-december-2018-english.pdf

In light of the RIS 2.0 findings, it is clear that further planning for increased returns is necessary in the provinces of Nangarhar and Kunar, as well as Afghanistan's eastern provinces more generally. These border provinces will require the greatest investment, support and services – especially in terms of job creation and other forms of resettlement assistance – to meet the needs of returning Afghans. Planning in major population centres such as Jalalabad, Kunduz and Kabul, among others, is equally vital. Moreover, the fact that more respondents in 2019 identified Baghlan, Laghman and Logar as their areas of origin highlights the need for an upsurge in planning and programming in these areas.

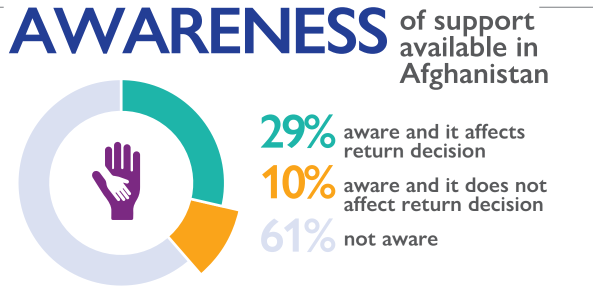
While the RIS exercise offers no direct evidence of trends among undocumented Afghans based elsewhere in Pakistan, it is likely that they too will return to their families' areas of origin or to major cities.





2.5.3 Support in Afghanistan

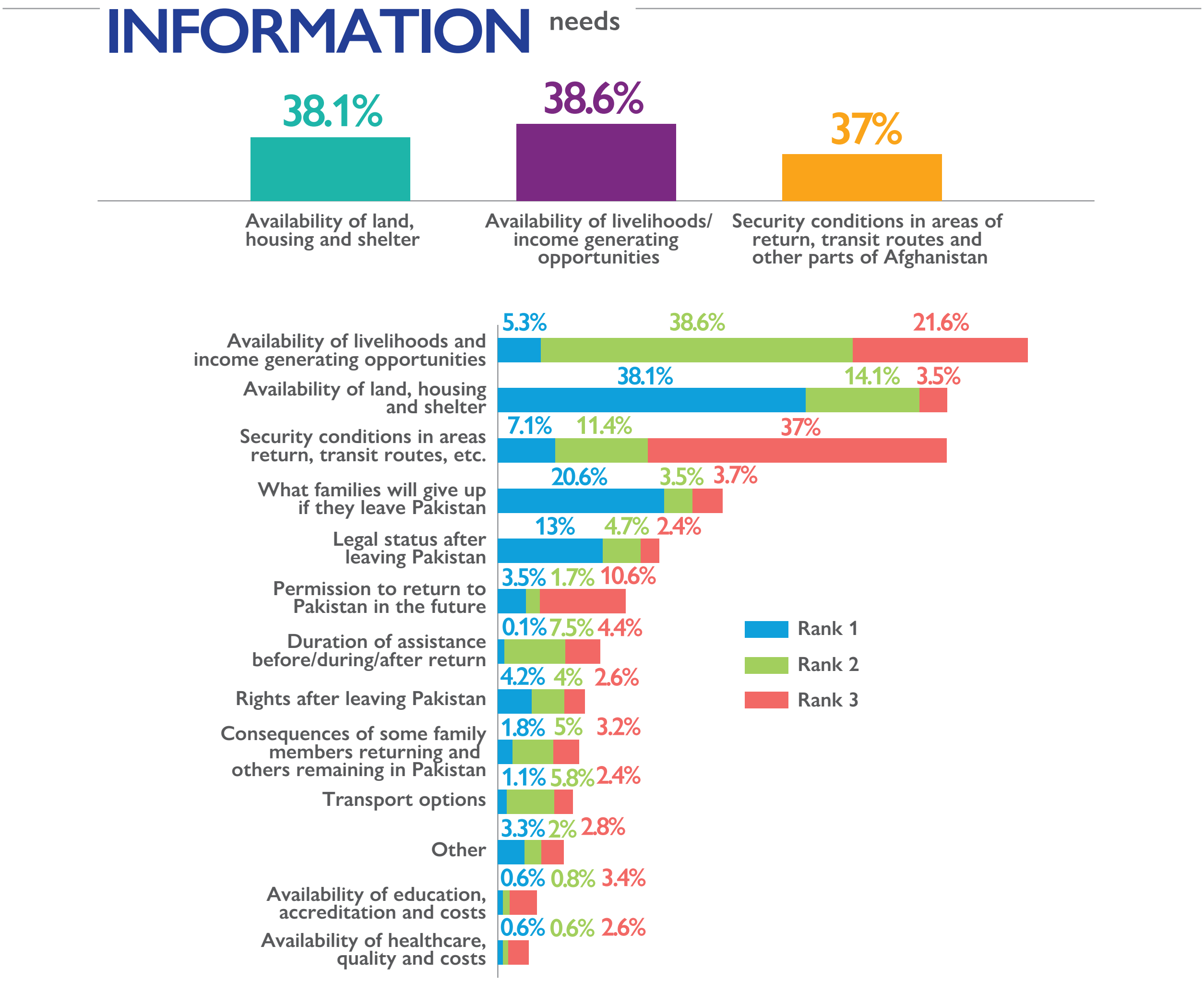
Over half of those surveyed (61%) are unaware of the support available for Afghans who return to Afghanistan. This highlights the need for enhanced communication to make sure that Afghans understand what assistance is available, and are able to access it. It also represents an immense decline in awareness of support compared to 2017, when 57% of RIS respondents were aware of support, although it did not affect their return decisions. In 2019, roughly one-third of respondents (29%) are aware of available assistance but it has not affected their decision to return. Only 10% indicated that available support has affected their decision to return.



2.6 Needs and Vulnerabilities

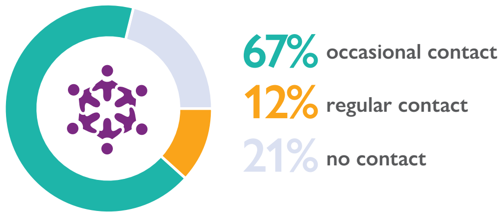
2.6.1 Information and Communications Needs

The most pressing information needs among Afghans who plan to return concern the availability of housing and shelter, livelihoods and income generating opportunities, and security conditions in Afghanistan. Respondents are also concerned by what they will have to give up should they leave Pakistan, their legal status after leaving, permission to return to Pakistan and the duration of return assistance in Afghanistan. The survey also reveals concern about the consequences of some family remaining in Pakistan while others relocate to Afghanistan, transport options and the availability of services such as healthcare and education.



While most respondents (76%) have contact with relatives or friends living in Afghanistan, nearly one-quarter (24%) do not. The frequency of updates they receive appears sporadic. While 67% receive information updates from Afghanistan "occasionally", only 12% receive regular updates. Roughly 21% receive no updates from Afghanistan whatsoever.

CONTACT with relatives or friends in Afghanistan

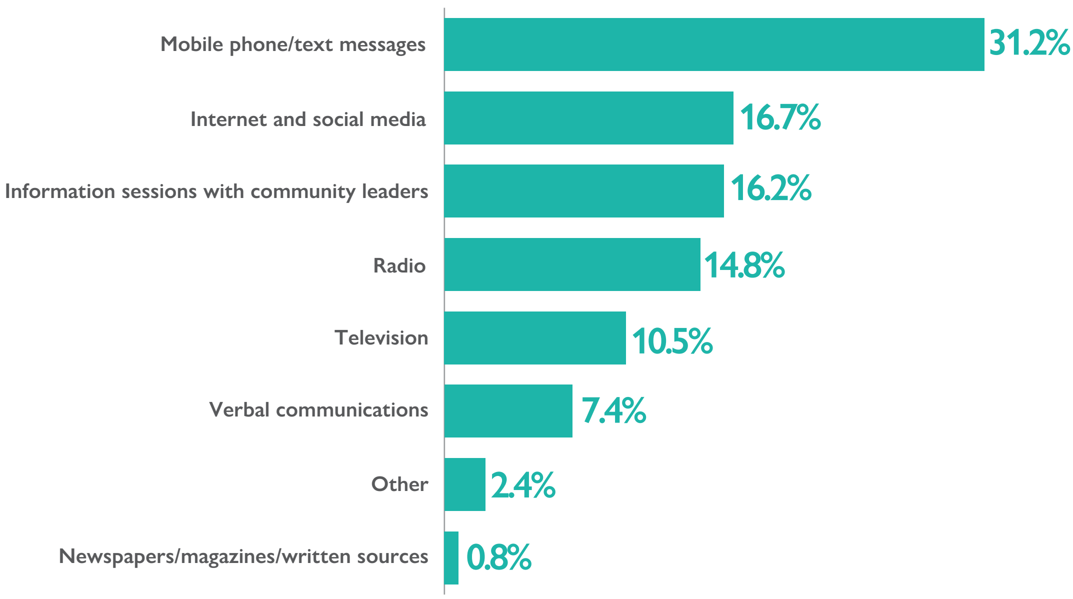


Mobile phones and text messages remain the most popular source of information for respondents (31%), although reliance on these tools has halved compared to 2017 (63%). Instead, the use of the internet and social media has risen sharply – these sources were used by 16.7% of respondents in 2019, compared to just 9% in 2017. Obtaining information from the radio remains common, although it has declined – 14.8% of those surveyed relied on the radio for updates, down from 22% in 2017. Information sessions with community leaders (16%) remain a key font of information, although reliance on verbal communications (7.4%) and television (10.5%) has fallen – from 21% and 16%, respectively, in 2017. Particularly few respondents receive information through the print media (0.8%), which appears in line with low levels of literacy or formal education among Afghans in Pakistan.

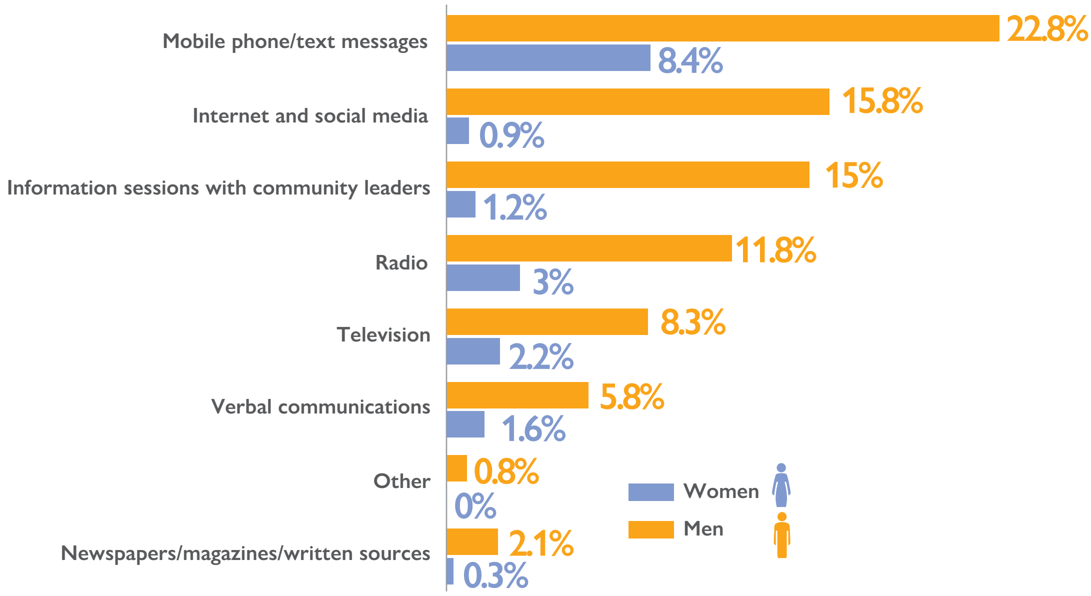
These findings underscore the importance of mobile phones for disseminating information to Afghans in Pakistan, as well as the growing prominence of the internet and social media. Overall, 82% of respondents own mobile phones – 84.9% of all the men surveyed, and 69.8% of all the women respondents. While most respondents have access to basic cell phones (60.8%), a growing proportion own smart phones – 21.5% in 2019, a significant increase from 14% in 2017. Proportionally more men than women possess smart phones – 26.3% of the men who own mobile phones have smart phones, compared to 24.6% of women.

The growth in smart phone ownership may explain the rising use of the internet and social media as sources of information for Afghans in Pakistan. It also underscores the need to ensure that accurate, reliable, up-to-date information is available online, guarding against the increasing prevalence of "fake news" on social media platforms around the world. Overall, all sources of information are used with greater frequency by men than women. This may point to women's lack of agency to seek out information, or to access sources of available information.

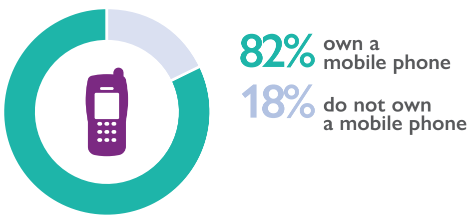
SOURCES of information for RIS respondents



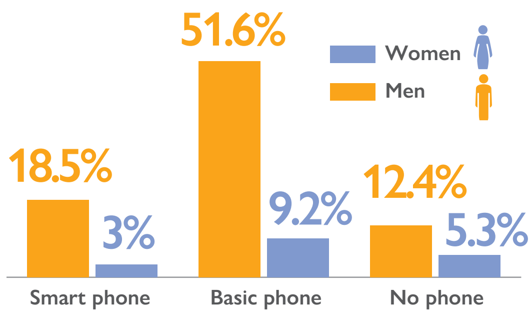
GENDER breakdown of sources of information



MOBILE phone ownership



PHONE ownership by type and gender



*Note: The percentages in this figure are calculated based on the pool of women respondents and of men surveyed, respectively.

2.6.2 Needs in Pakistan

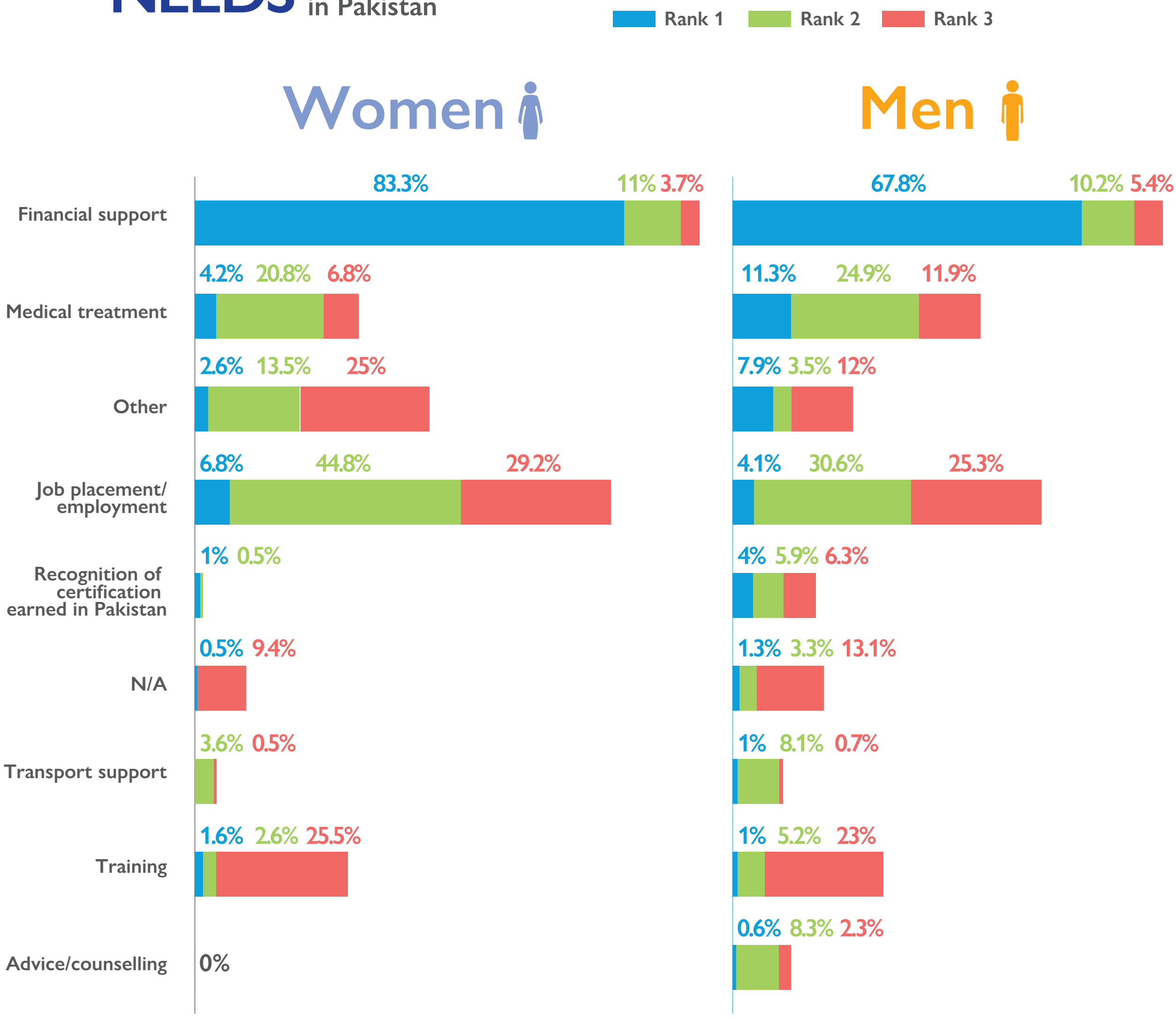
Respondents highlighted financial assistance as their leading need in Pakistan – listed by 45% of those surveyed. This is followed by job placement and employment, and different forms of training. Other highly ranked needs include medical treatment and the recognition of certification. The prominence of health-related assistance among these needs sheds light on the importance of ensuring that those with illnesses, health problems or disabilities, as well as the elderly, can access quality care. Their responses also underscore the importance of avenues for the recognition of certification attained by Afghans in Pakistan.

While women and men broadly identified the same needs, more women listed financial support as their leading need than men. When second and third ranked needs are considered, similar proportions of men than women identified medical treatment, job placements or employments and training as pressing needs. More men than women highlighted a need for transport support, the recognition of certification earned in Pakistan and advice or counselling.

NEEDS in Pakistan (top 3 needs)

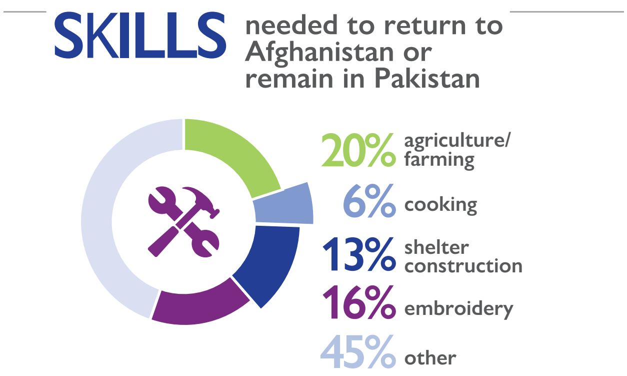
*Note: Each respondent was able to provide more than one answer. For this reason, totals do not add up to 100%.

NEEDS of women and men in Pakistan



*Note: The percentages in this figure are calculated based on the pool of women respondents and of men surveyed, respectively.

Although training was not especially highly ranked by respondents in response to broad questions on their needs, other survey questions identified skills support as essential to their integration in Pakistan and return to Afghanistan. For instance, respondents emphasized their need for skills support to related to agriculture, embroidery, construction and cooking. As noted below, respondents stressed vocational training as the single most significant form of assistance they require for their livelihoods in Afghanistan. These results point to the importance of skills development – especially for young men and women – to enable voluntary, sustainable returns to Afghanistan and provide real solutions for those who wish to remain in Pakistan.

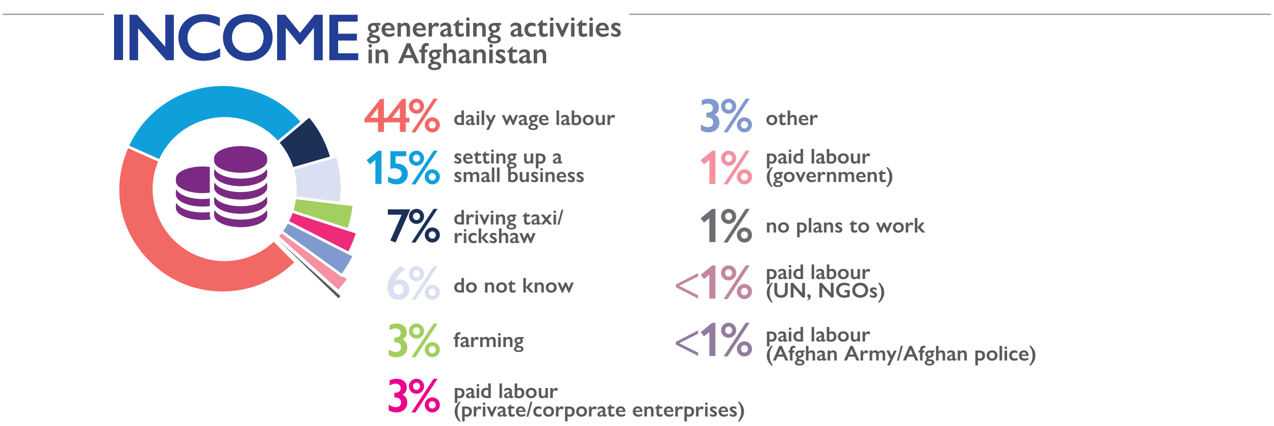


2.6.3 Needs in Afghanistan

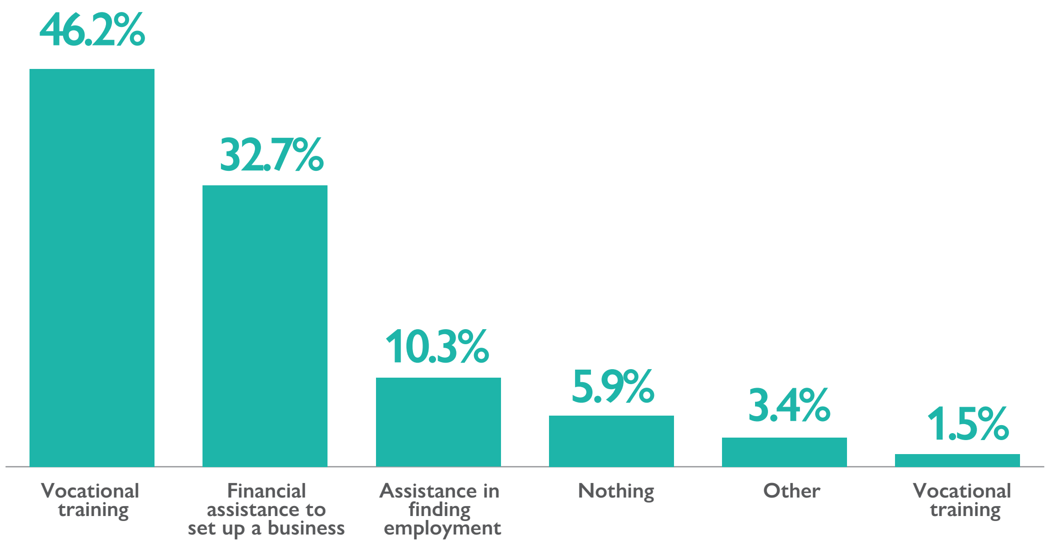
The second RIS exercise highlights that most Afghans in Pakistan are not well prepared for a move to Afghanistan. Most (84%) do not feel they will be able to make a living in Afghanistan. Concerns that respondents will not be able to support themselves or their families continue trends observed in 2017.

As in 2017, nearly half of those surveyed (44%) expect to work as day labourers. Nearly one-third (32%) envision setting up small businesses as street vendors, carpet weavers or pursuing other entrepreneurial activities. Significantly fewer respondents hope to drive taxis and rickshaws (7%), to work in agriculture (3%), or to engage in paid labour – either for private enterprises (3%), the Afghan Government (0.6%), UN agencies or non-governmental organizations (0.3%). Very few respondents plan not to work at all (1.5%). Whereas in 2017 1% of respondents intended to work for the Afghan army or police force, no respondents reported such an intention in 2019. These planned professional pursuits overlap somewhat with respondents' skill sets and current occupations in Pakistan. Although the data on respondents' skills (see Section 2.1.5) reveals a high proportion of unskilled labour and reliance on daily wage labour, it also underscores a strong entrepreneurial strand.

In terms of livelihood assistance required in Afghanistan, there is a strong demand for vocational training – cited by nearly half (46.2%) of those surveyed. This is followed by financial assistance to set up small businesses (32.7%). There is also a clear need for support to secure employment (10.3%) and educational training (1.5%). Moreover, it is worth recalling the findings on return intentions discussed above (see Section 2.5), which highlight the importance of support related to security, shelter and land – alongside support for their basic health and education needs.



ASSISTANCE needed for livelihoods in Afghanistan

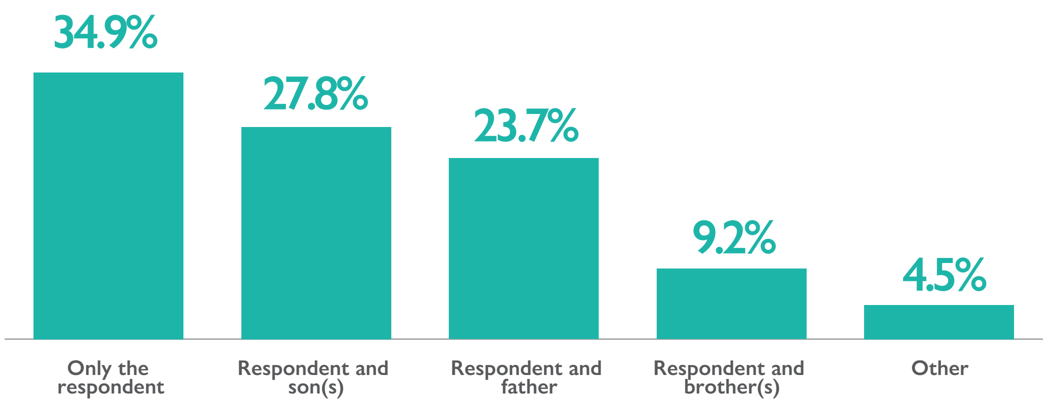


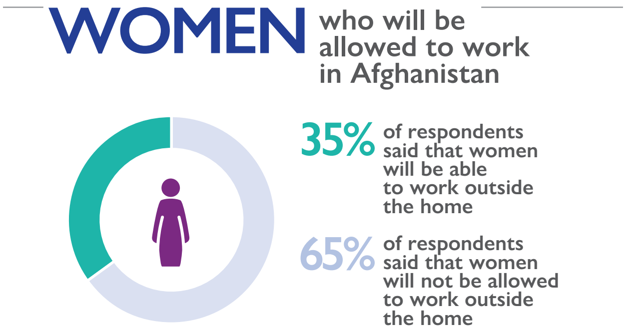
Among over one-third of respondent households (34.9%), only one family member will engage in income generating activities in Afghanistan. This is a notable change since 2017, when 51% of respondent households expected a single member of the family to work. Among the remaining 65.1%, two or more members intend to work – most often respondent's son(s), father or brother(s).

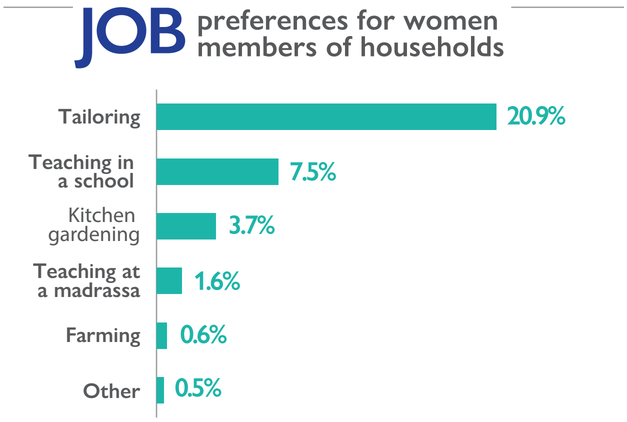
Well over half (65%) of respondents will not allow their female relatives to work outside the home in Afghanistan. This is significantly lower than in 2017, when 74% of RIS respondents were not amenable to women working outside the home. This shift may tentatively point to changing attitudes towards women's employment, underlining the importance of continued efforts to sensitize communities and provide women with opportunities to expand their skills and access income generation opportunities.

In terms of job preferences for women, the survey revealed a strong inclination for work related to tailoring (21%), teaching in schools (7.5%) and kitchen gardening (3.7%), far more so than farming (0.6%). Respondents were less inclined to women working at religious schools (madrassas) (1.6%) than they were in 2017. Given these findings, skills training and employment opportunities for women would be most useful in the spheres of tailoring, teaching and education, and kitchen gardening.

FAMILY members who will work in Afghanistan

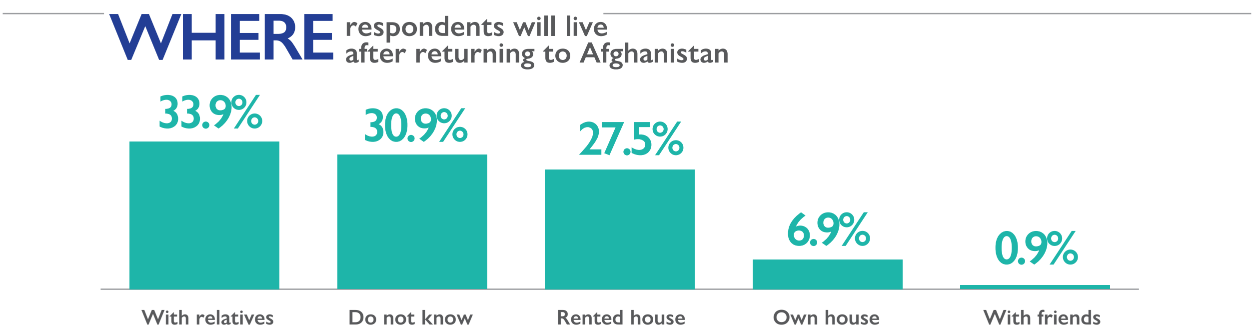






Nearly one-third of respondents (30.87%) do not have concrete plans for living arrangements in Afghanistan. A similar proportion plan to live with relatives (33.9%) or to rent accommodation (27.5%). Only 6.9% will live in their own homes – almost identical to findings in 2017 (6%) – reflecting that most Afghans in Pakistan do not have homes to return to, and are either unable or unwilling to purchase homes in Afghanistan. Nearly half of the respondents (45%) report that they will only be able to pay modest rents of up to PKR 2,000 per month (equivalent to USD 13). While 23% anticipate paying rents of PKR 2,000 – 5,000 (USD 13-32), 28% feel that they can afford rents of PKR 5,000 – 10,000 (USD 32-64). Only 6% consider themselves able to pay between PKR 10,000 – 50,000 (USD 64 – 320). Fewer than 1% of households feel able to afford more than this sum. These estimates appear in line with the data above on average household income (see Section 2.1.7), which found that only 24% of respondents have household incomes of over PKR 25,000 per month (approximately USD 160).

Soaring rental prices in Afghanistan will likely be a major challenge for returning households, as in 2017. For instance, the average rental price for a family house in the province of Nangarhar rose by 25% between 2016 and 2017 to USD 77.5.[16] Taking into account RIS respondents' average monthly income, such rents are likely beyond the reach of many returning households. It is likely that most earnings will have to be spent on basic subsistence – including shelter costs – potentially to the detriment of expenses associated with food security, education, water, sanitation and healthcare. This is likely to take a particularly severe toll on women-headed households, as they tend to be poorer and have fewer opportunities for income generation.

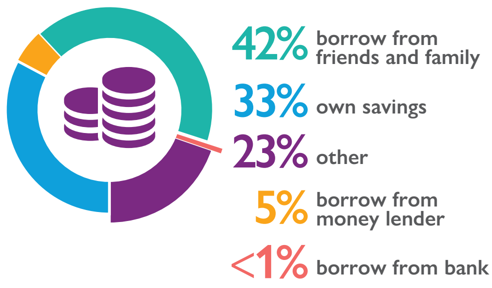


A high proportion of respondents plan to borrow money to pay for rental payments, either from friends and family (42%) or money lenders (5%). Only 0.4% plan to borrow from banks. Roughly one-third (33%) will rely on their own savings. This reflects positive trends compared to 2017, when only 22% of respondents planned to rely on their own savings, while 66% envisioned borrowing from relatives and acquaintances, 14% from money lenders and 2% from banks.

[16] IOM Afghanistan (2019) Afghanistan: Baseline Mobility Assessment Summary Results (March - June 2019). Kabul: IOM. Available: https://migration.iom.int/reports/afghanistan-%E2%80%94-baseline-mobility-assessment-summary-results-march%E2%80%94june-2019

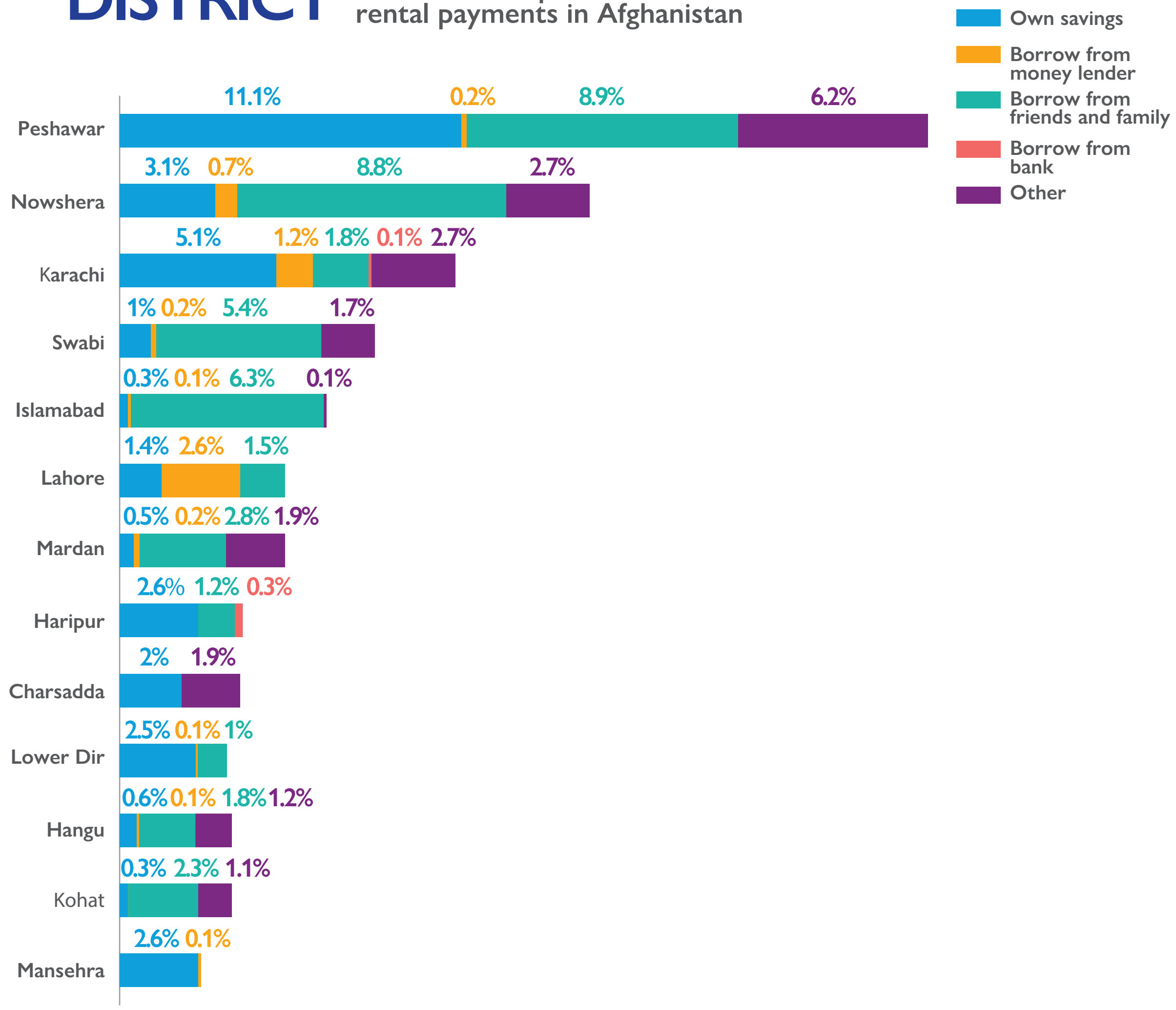
Significant district variations are evident in terms of how respondents plan to pay for accommodation. Savings appear highest in Karachi, Peshawar and Nowshera. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of respondents based in Peshawar, Nowshera, Swabi and Islamabad will rely on charity from relatives. The high rate of those who stipulate that they will borrow to cover rental payments reaffirms findings in 2017, which pointed to the likelihood of returning Afghans falling prey to cycles of debt from which they may struggle to extract themselves, thus keeping families trapped in cycles of inter-generational poverty. Underestimating rental prices, while overestimating the rapid the amounts that may be loaned to them from relatives or provided through, stands to prompt households to become more indebted and more vulnerable.

SOURCES of funds planned for paying rent in Afghanistan

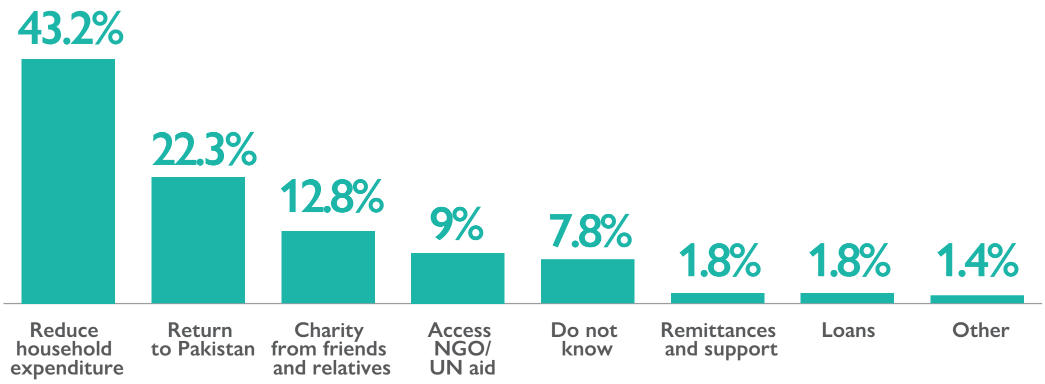


In the absence of livelihood opportunities, and without significant savings, respondents will seek to reduce household expenditure (43.2%), return to Pakistan (22.3%) and seek charity from friends and relations (12.8%). These strategies are broadly in line with the findings of the first RIS exercise in 2017. Fewer respondents aim to access international aid – 9% in 2019, compared to 13% in 2017 – or to depend upon remittances – 1.8% in 2019, down from 11% in 2017. While very few plan to take out formal loans, there is a significant impetus to borrow. This is likely to heighten returnees' vulnerability.

DISTRICT breakdown of planned sources of rental payments in Afghanistan



STRATEGIES for income generation in the absence of livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan

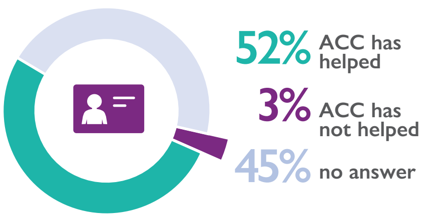


2 .6.4 Experience of Afghan Citizen Cards

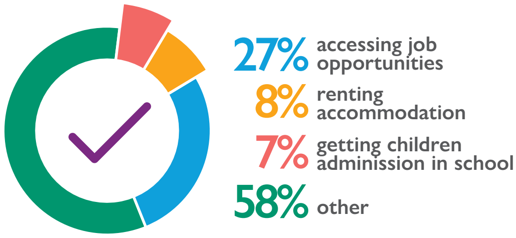
Respondents largely view the Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) as beneficial – 95% of those who responded to this question reported that possessing the card has been helpful (52% of the total respondents). Those surveyed indicated that ACCs have benefitted them in terms of accessing employment opportunities (27%), renting accommodation (8%) and securing children's admission in schools (7%).

A very small proportion of those surveyed (4%) reported a negative experience during the Afghan Citizen Card procurement process. Most respondents had positive (63%) or adequate (33%) experiences at Afghan Citizen Card documentation centres. Closed documentation centres were the leading reasons why some respondents had not obtained Afghan Citizen Cards, followed by procedural delays at Pakistan's National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and the substantial distance of centres from their homes. To facilitate documentation processes for Afghans living in Pakistan, it is important to ensure that documentation centres are open and easily accessible to all, while striving to minimize procedural delays. Most respondents who replied when asked about future documentation drives (97.5%, or 39.6% of the total survey participants), stated that another round of documentation would be beneficial.

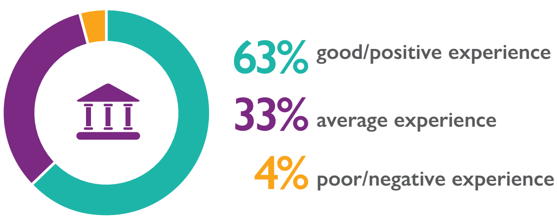
ACC Has the Afghan Citizen Card helped respondents?



HOW have Afghan Citizen Cards been useful?



EXPERIENCE at Afghan Citizen Card documentation centres



3

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There has been a surge in the share of Afghans with valid documentation in Pakistan between 2017 and 2019. The drive to issue Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs) is at the heart of this rise, and has had a number of other positive effects – such as helping card holders to access employment, rent accommodation and enrol children in schools. **The survey's findings suggest that another round of documentation would be highly beneficial.**

The majority of Afghans living in Pakistan were born in the country – Pakistan is the only country most of them have ever known. **Their links to Pakistan are important to bear in mind when devising solutions for Afghans in Pakistan.** This is especially relevant as the legal status of many Afghan households continues to vary – while one family member may be a registered refugee, another may be undocumented.

A high proportion of Afghans in Pakistan are young, and young men represent a particularly large share of the population. **Youths clearly require support in the form of skills development and employment opportunities to enable voluntary, sustainable returns to Afghanistan and provide real solutions for those who remain in Pakistan.** In this regard, young women should not be ignored. While there appears to be a gradual trend towards greater acceptance of women working outside the home, returning households are largely averse to women's formal employment. This may be due to fears for their safety in Afghanistan, or due to conservative social and gender norms. **This indicates a pressing need to ensure women's security, facilitate their mobility, and provide opportunities for vocational education and training – particularly in the spheres of tailoring, teaching and kitchen gardening. Efforts are also needed to engage women, men, households, communities and leaders in awareness raising and behaviour change interventions to advance women's empowerment.**

Undocumented Afghans in Pakistan are generally poor and poorly educated. Low levels of education are especially common among women. This has major implications for their well-being, whether they stay Pakistan or return to Afghanistan. Dependence on daily wage labour is likely to keep households trapped in cycles of poverty, especially if children drop out of school and seek work to supplement their family's income. The chances of this are most pronounced among vulnerable households, which represent a significant share of the Afghan population in Pakistan. These include women-headed households, those whose members have disabilities or chronic illnesses, and those headed by elderly individuals. **Calls for financial assistance and livelihood opportunities ring out throughout the RIS 2.0 exercise, underscoring the importance of supporting opportunities for employment, prospects for education and training for vulnerable, impoverished undocumented Afghan households in Pakistan.**

Afghans in Pakistan tend to be clustered in unskilled, poorly remunerated work. Despite the prevalence of low-skilled work, it is clear that a significant proportion of Afghans in Pakistan entrepreneurs or skilled workers. **It is important to nurture this entrepreneurial spirit and the use of skills to build sustainable livelihoods – whether in Afghanistan or Pakistan.** To this end, the survey highlights calls for financial support to set up businesses in Afghanistan, and for vocational training and job placements in Pakistan.

Afghan households' in Pakistan typically have modest incomes, which either closely matches or sometimes exceeds expenditure. Thus, it is likely that most undocumented returnees will have little or no savings on which to rely upon their return. Many may become trapped in a vicious cycle of debt to finance their return. **Provisions must be made to enable undocumented returnees to free themselves from debt, and offer schemes that support livelihoods and entrepreneurship among returnees.**

The families of most Afghans in Pakistan are originally from Afghan provinces along the border **The survey affirms that returnees plan to return to areas of origin or to major cities, signalling the need for further investments, planning and services in border provinces, such as Nangarhar and Kunar, and major urban centres, particularly Jalalabad, Kabul and Kunduz.** Shelter is a particularly pressing need, given the rising prices of rents in provinces like Nangarhar with a high concentration of returnees, most of whom will not be able to afford high rental payments.

The vast majority of undocumented Afghans do not want to leave Pakistan. Decisions to return are largely contingent on mounting local pressure, employment prospects and Afghanistan's security context. Despite the prevalence of family ties on both sides of the border, Afghans in Pakistan are not well-prepared for a move. As in 2017, they have nothing to "return to" – they lack land in Afghanistan, have no significant business ties in the country, and few livelihood prospects. They are not confident about their ability to make a living upon their return; most plan to survive by engaging in daily wage labour or borrowing from relatives. **To facilitate sustainable returns, security must be ensured for returnees, alongside livelihood opportunities, basic services, and the availability of land and housing.**

In light of the most pressing information needs among Afghans who plan to return, **it is essential to provide information on the availability of housing and shelter, income generation opportunities, and security conditions in Afghanistan.** They continue to require information on the modalities of return, documentation and integration to ensure that their return decisions are well-informed and sustainable.

Mobile phones, text messages, the internal and social media are the most common sources of information for Afghans in Pakistan. **These channels – particularly the growing use of online sources and social media – must be borne in mind by communications initiatives to maximize outreach and the dissemination of time-sensitive information about documentation, return processes, services and opportunities.**

Undocumented Afghan households' leading needs in Pakistan include financial assistance, medical treatment, employment and the recognition of certification earned in Pakistan. **The prominence of health-related assistance among their needs sheds light on the importance of ensuring that those with illnesses, health problems or disabilities, as well as the elderly, can access quality care.** Findings also underscore the **importance of avenues for the recognition of certification attained by Afghans in Pakistan.**

Return Intentions Surveys should be replicated on a regular basis to track the evolving profiles and needs of Afghans in Pakistan. The second RIS exercise expanded its focus to urban centres with a high density of Afghan residents, such as Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore. RIS exercises in other areas would be useful for identifying the aspirations, vulnerabilities and intentions of Afghans who live elsewhere in Pakistan.

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