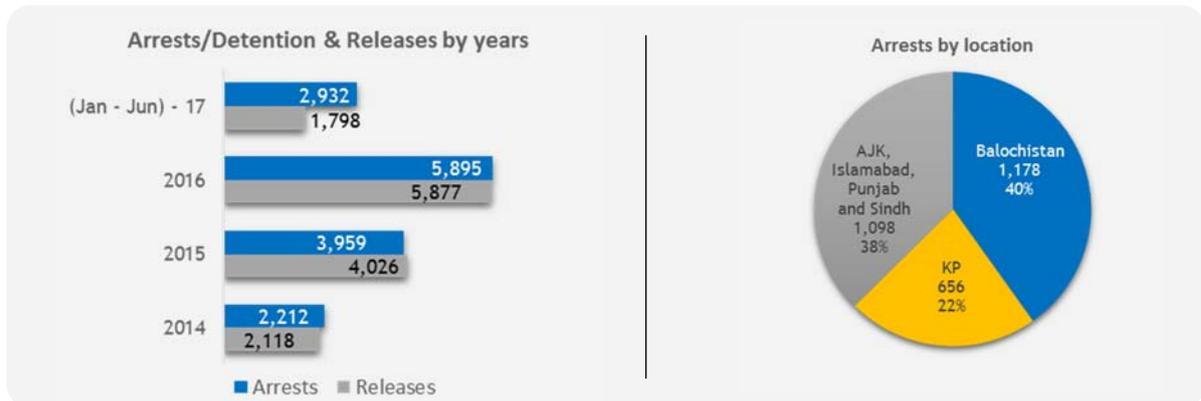
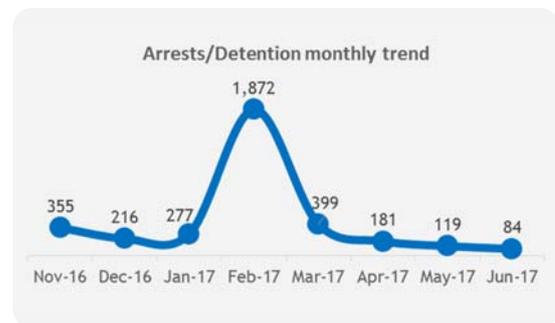


## UNHCR Pakistan Monthly Protection Trends Reporting Jun 2017

Repatriation had increased dramatically in 2016 for several reasons, including positive pull factors and some negative push factors. In order to more systematically monitor these factors and provide an objective analysis of the situation, UNHCR Pakistan is compiling a monthly note in order to inform key stakeholders of emerging trends and to raise formally and consistently any protection concerns that may arise.

### Analysis of Trends

The overall protection situation remained calm in June with no significant incidents. There were fewer arrests and detentions in June (84) compared to May (119). UNHCR is concerned about potential eviction cases in refugee villages in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to make way for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). After UNHCR intervention, a committee is being formed with CAR, UNHCR, MoRR Home Department and refugee elders to find a solution acceptable to all. Voluntary repatriation continued with fewer people returning due to Ramadan. The Government is moving forward on documenting the undocumented Afghans in Pakistan, with the national exercise slated to start from mid-August.



### Summary of Events

#### 1. Arrests & Detention

During June, 84 Afghan refugees were arrested during search operations and at security check points. UNHCR Advice and Legal Aid Centres (ALAC) intervened and secured the release of all those arrested. ALACs also provided court representations to 31 PoR card holders charged under the 1946 Foreigners Act and other preventive laws.

## 2. Evictions/ Eviction Notices

The Pakistani authorities are acquiring land for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and relocating settlements. Three refugee villages in Mansehra district are falling on or close to the road project and the authorities are planning to relocate these populations. A UNHCR team visited three refugee villages in Mansehra district and held meetings with the refugee elders and the authorities. UNHCR also raised the issue with the Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees (CAR) and district authorities. CAR informed that relocation of the refugee villages will be systematic and voluntary in nature. A committee will be formed to ensure refugee rights are respected. A group of 35 Uzbek refugees in Killi Kamalo in Balochistan reported that they had been given notice by their landlord that he wishes to use the property for other purposes. The refugees fear that such notice is going to be disruptive to their lives and they have indicated that they will seek to voluntarily repatriate soon. They do not wish to move elsewhere in the neighborhood.

## 3. Reports from Exit Interviews/Encashment Centre Reporting

In exit interviews at Chamkani and Baleli, Afghan refugees cited 'uncertainty related to the PoR cards extension' as a factor (34 per cent), followed by strict border entry requirements (18 per cent) and deteriorating living conditions (12 per cent). Seven per cent of the respondents considered 'fear or arrest and/deportation' as a push factor. For the undocumented Afghans returning to Afghanistan, major push factors were economic reasons, fear of deportation and lack of documentation (IOM).

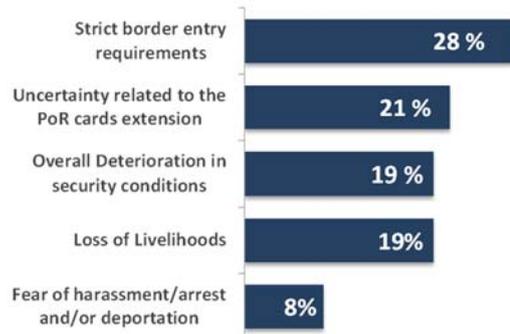
The interviews conducted with the returnee families at the Torkham border mainly cited that police harassment had led them to return to Afghanistan while other families reported that the new border management regime influenced their decision to return. In addition, vehicle drivers involved in the transportation of Afghan repatriating families to Afghanistan informed the border monitors that they had continually been subjected to violence and maltreatment by Afghan officials inside Afghanistan. The officials at each check post demand money and if drivers refuse, they were subjected to physical violence. As a result, the drivers were now reluctant to transport the repatriating Afghan families to Afghanistan.

Returnee monitoring at the Encashment Centres in Afghanistan showed the main reasons given for leaving Pakistan include lack of employment opportunities (29 per cent); harassment by police and

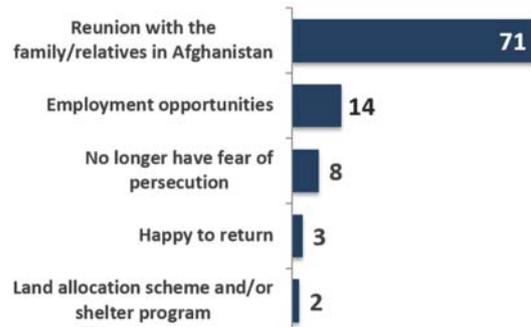
other State authorities (22 per cent); strict border controls resulting in separation of families (21 per cent); fear of arrest/deportation (9 per cent); and high cost of living (5 per cent). Other reasons such as eviction notices from landlords, discrimination by the local host community in Pakistan, and uncertainty about the extension of PoR cards were also cited albeit in smaller numbers.

As has been the case since last year, returnees respond differently to the question concerning push factors at various points, although the primary reasons are somewhat consistent. This could be due to any number of factors, including how the question is asked as well as who is asking. As such, the responses should be viewed as indicative and more of a means to observe trends than as conclusive.

### Push Factors



### Pull Factors



#### 4. Negative Media/Public Statements of Political or Government Officials

Impact Level for Refugees & Asylum Seekers



Low



Medium



High

*KP seeks early repatriation of Afghans:* Adopting a tough stand against the presence of Afghans in the province, like the Balochistan government, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has reportedly called for the early repatriation of refugees. PakistanKakhudahafiz – 6 June.



<http://www.pakistankakhudahafiz.com/kp-seeks-early-repatriation-afghans/>

#### Summary of significant actions to counter push factors

UNHCR Pakistan continues to follow up to the findings of the interviews with the repatriating Afghans in Encashment Centre in Afghanistan. UNHCR met the political administration of Khyber Agency, Commission for Afghan Refugees (CAR) and Afghan Ministry of Repatriation and Rehabilitation (MoRR) officials at the CAR office in Peshawar and discussed the reports of harassment/extortions and protection concerns at Prang Sam and Watch Khwarr (Dry Ditch) areas, during luggage and commodity checks by the authorities. CAR and Assistant Political Agent (APA) agreed that this is a systemic challenge, faced by Afghans as well as Pakistani citizens. The staff deployed are instructed to facilitate the returning refugees and APA / CAR will continue to convey the message that returnees should be facilitated. However, some check points are also managed by different authorities (police, an anti-narcotics check-point) who have an obligation to search any suspect vehicle or person. Additionally, there have been cases when drivers take additional items that are not listed by the returnees.

CAR further informed about long waiting times of several weeks for trucks at the Afghan side of the border to enter Pakistan. According to MoRR there are a certain number of vehicles that can enter Pakistan on any given day but this should not apply to returnees' truck drivers. The Governor of Nangarhar and MoRR ministry are requesting border officials to exempt vehicles transporting returnees from queuing at entry quota.

MoRR also shared that a group of 150 Afghan elders would travel to Afghanistan in the last week of July to meet President Ghani. As most of the relevant ministries (including transport and frontiers) would be present in that meeting, MoRR would raise these concerns there as well. A follow up meeting is to be held after Eid holidays.