

Durable Solutions for Urban IDPs in Afghanistan

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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Background

- 40 years of conflict has resulted in mass internal displacement in Afghanistan. IOM DTM has tracked 6.2 million IDPs in Afghanistan – a country of some 40 million.
- Conflict has been the driving force of internal displacement during the two-decade war(2001-2021); more recently droughts associated with climate breakdown have caused displacement in Western and Northern Areas.
- Many IDPs live in protracted displacement in urban informal settlements: located in hazard-prone areas; lacking basic services, adequate housing; and subject to frequent evictions by authorities.
- UN-Habitat builds on a two-decade history supporting urban IDPs achieve durable solutions.
- This presentation will provide an overview of durable solutions pathways, and provide a case study of ongoing UN-Habitat activities.

Durable Solution Pathways for urban IDPs in Afghanistan

1. Integration at (typically urban) sites of displacement

- Afghanistan's cities are key sites of displacement: 85% of IDP settlements across the country are located in urban or peri-urban areas (REACH, 2021)
- UN-Habitat has conducted extensive profiling of these sites, which shows many are already integrated into municipal systems.



Fig 1: Years residing in informal settlement (% of HHs)

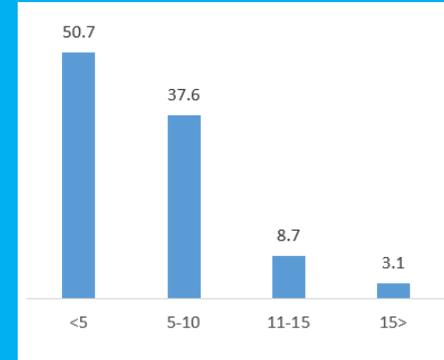
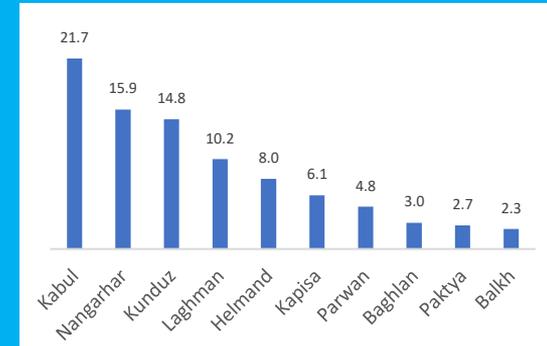


Fig 2: Top 10 province of origin Kabul IDP sites (% of HHs)



- Local integration of IDP sites is the current focus of UN-Habitat HLP- durable solutions programmes in Afghanistan

- Advocate for local integration as lead of the HLP AoR;
- Directly implement local integration projects in the cities of Kabul and Herat (see case study).

- However, our profiling shows barriers for local integration:

- Settlements have insecure HLP rights, particularly more recent settlements in central areas;
- Lack of livelihood opportunities and very low incomes, particularly for women;
- Located in hazard-prone areas with severe service, housing and infrastructure deficits

Fig 3: HH income per month (AFG) by gender of HH head (% of HHs)

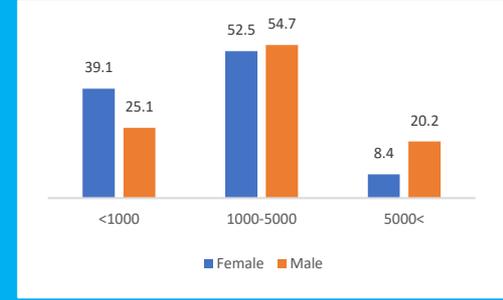
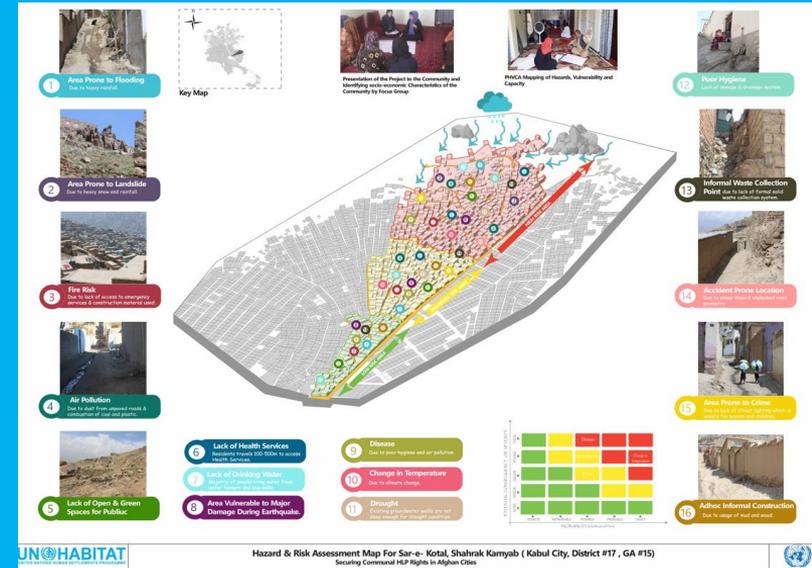


Fig 4: Participatory hazard map of IDP sites

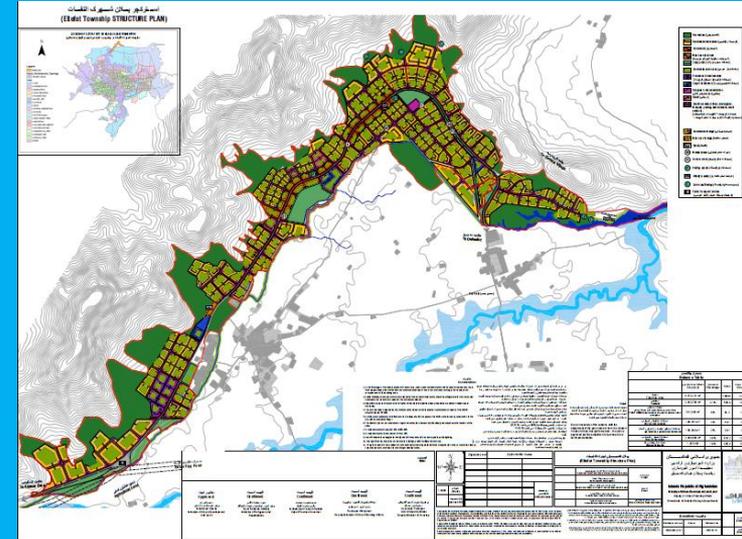


Durable Solution Pathways in Afghanistan

2. Land Allocation Schemes

- Allocating plots of state land to IDPs in new ‘townships’.
- A long-standing state policy in Afghanistan, with various policy frameworks since 2004.
- From 2017-2021, UN-Habitat provided support in improving land allocation mechanisms for sustainable settlements: identifying suitable land, developing an inclusive legal framework, settlement planning and implementing a pilot in Kabul and Herat.
- The De Facto Authority is trying to resurrect land allocation as a key durable solution pathway.

Fig 5: UN-Habitat settlement plan for land allocation site



- Challenges for Land Allocation:
 - Unsuitable settlement sites: UN-Habitat study of 50 sites found most sites are located far from livelihoods and subsequently abandoned;
 - Political economy of land allocation: state reluctant to distribute well-located, high-value land to IDPs;
 - Status-based rather than area-based: relies on individuals applying for land and determining eligibility (difficult);
 - High costs difficult to implement at scale.
- UN-Habitat are currently participating in discussions with DSWG to engage with DFA land allocation in a positive way
 - Advocate for land allocations in close proximity to cities/livelihoods;
 - Ensure that land distribution is gender equitable.

Fig 6: Estimated costing for settlement of IDPs

	Transitional housing and supporting infrastructure	Durable housing and supporting infrastructure
1,000 families / 7,000 people	\$1.7m	\$5.2m
2,000 families/ 14,000 people	\$3.4m	\$10.4m
3,000 families/ 21,000 people	\$5.1m	\$15.6m
4,000 families/ 28,000 people	\$6.8m	\$20.8m
5,000 families/ 35,000 people	\$8.5m	\$26m

Durable Solution Pathways

3. Returns to place of origin

- A favoured approach of the De Facto Authority: argue that now war is over IDPs should return.
- UN-Habitat profiling show many IDPs cannot return to place of origin (long term climate breakdown; lack of land, livelihoods); particularly for women.
- In context of community resistance, De Facto Authority has evicted some IDP settlements in central urban areas;
- UN-Habitat as HLP lead advocate with CCCM, DSWG and HCT to stop evictions of IDP sites.

Fig: 7: Durable solution preference (% of HHs)

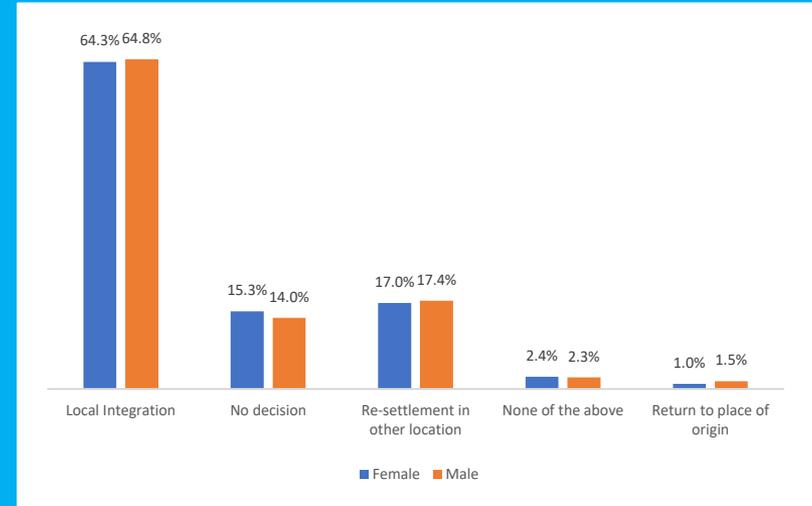
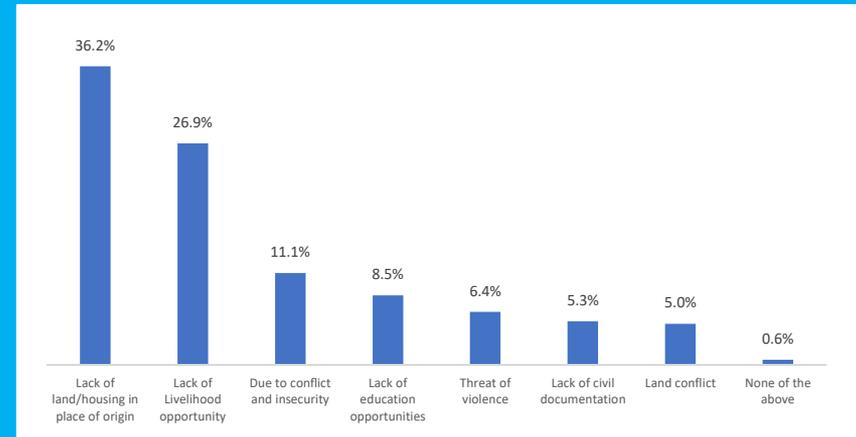


Fig 8: Reason for not return to place of origin (% of HHs)



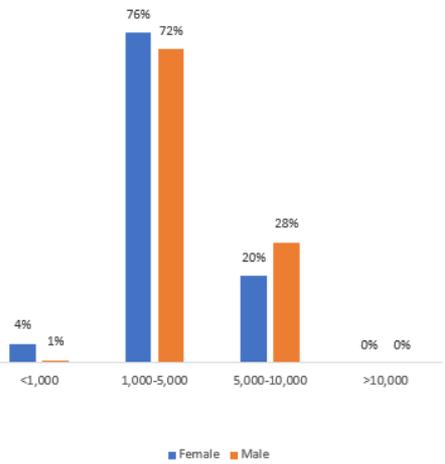
Case study of UN-Habitat programme under pathway 1: local integration through HLP and climate programming

- IDP informal settlements are key sites of HLP and climate vulnerability because of their physical attributes, the socioeconomic characteristics of their inhabitants, and their existence outside formal governance systems.
- Insecure HLP rights are linked to climate vulnerability: restricting household and settlement upgrading investments.
- Plot integrates HLP and climate tools in a settlement in Herat - Afghanistan's second largest city and the capital of the drought-prone Western Region.
- It promotes durable solutions by strengthening land tenure and climate resilience, providing a foundation for socioeconomic development.
- The case study settlement of Kart-E-Maiwand includes 347 households, accounting for 1,885 people; 30 percent of households are headed by women.





Income by gender of household head



Assessing HLP needs and climate vulnerability



Full coverage household survey and Participatory Hazard Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment undertaken to identify key sources of HLP and climate vulnerability



Hazards: droughts, flash flooding, disease



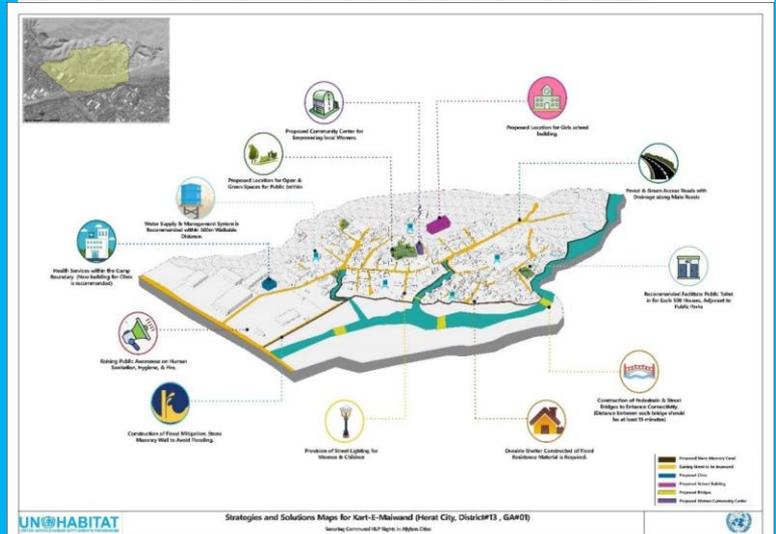
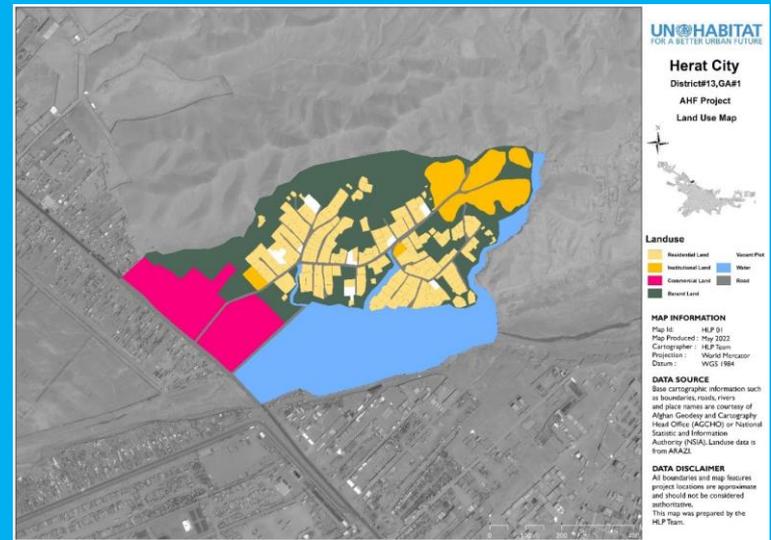
Vulnerability: Insecure HLP rights, low quality shelter, lack of basic services, extremely low incomes, women most vulnerable



Capacity: Community-based organizations

Actioning an HLP and climate response

- The UN-Habitat project deployed an integrated communal HLP and climate resilience approach:
 - strengthening community HLP rights at the settlement scale;
 - planning and implementing climate resilient community investments.
- Land use mapping was conducted to create a spatial record of the settlement, endorsed by CBO and local authorities
- Participatory hazard, strategies and solutions maps developed to address climate risks, endorsed by CBO and local authorities
- Climate resilient investment actioned to reduce flood risk, using cash-for-work modality



“Before we occupied the land was vacant, located between the mountains and the river. We have no documents for this land. The flood canal solves some the biggest challenges for the community, such as the stagnant wastewater causing diseases, impassable commuting routes, and most importantly protection against flooding from the river. With the construction of the canal, we can also use the river water to wash dishes and clothes, because we can access the river safely. The project has also improved the income of our family. My husband works as a labourer on the project curing the cement for construction. The cash he has received supports our family and pays our living costs.”

Zainab, 30-year-old mother of seven and resident of Kart-E-Maiwand.



integrated HLP
and climate tools
for durable
solutions

Tool	Tenure outcome	Climate resilience outcome
Household survey	Creates socioeconomic record of occupancy history linked to parcels.	Provides detailed gender-disaggregated data on climate vulnerable to inform investments.
PHVCA workshop	Identifies sources of tenure insecurity and associated vulnerabilities.	Identifies climate hazards, vulnerability and capacity to respond.
Land use mapping	Creates spatial record of land use and customary claims. Endorsed maps confer authorities' recognition of communal land tenure rights.	Provides a spatial profile of the area that is useful for future climate resilient planning and investment.
Hazard and solutions mapping	Endorsed maps confer authorities' recognition of communal investment and development plan.	A key tool informing appropriate climate resilience investments that meet the needs of the population.
Infrastructure investment	Consolidate the settlement to increase tenure security.	Increases resilience of settlement to climate hazards
Cash-for-work	Labour deployed to construct community assets that strengthen tenure.	Strengthens economic capacity of community to respond to climate shocks.
Capacity building of CBOs	Strengthened community structures to negotiate for tenure security.	Strengthened community structures to identify, implement and monitor climate resilient infrastructure construction, and increase social resilience of community,

Thank You!