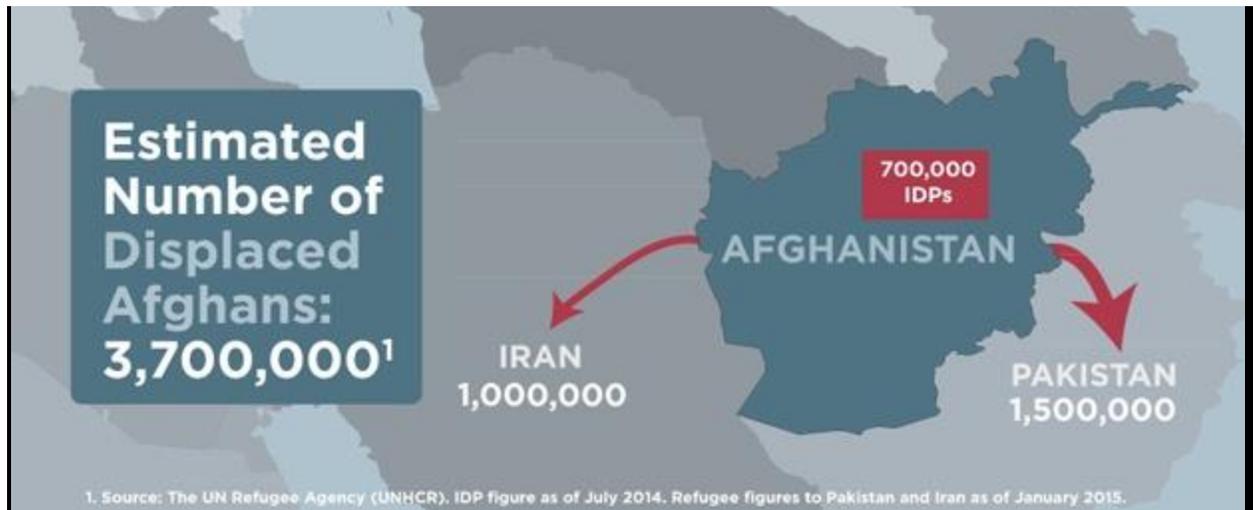


AFGHAN REFUGEES



Before the recent surge of violence in Syria and Iraq, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that Afghanistan remained the world's top producer of refugees for the 32nd year in a row. As of July 2014, the UNHCR estimated there are approximately 700,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Afghanistan. Violence has been the major factor in involuntary population movements among Afghans.

The vast majority of Afghan refugees reside in Pakistan and Iran, where they face an uncertain political situation, according to Human Rights Watch (HRW). Iranian officials, for example, deport thousands of undocumented Afghans without allowing them the opportunity to demonstrate a legal right to remain in Iran or to lodge an asylum application.

When Afghan refugees do repatriate, they return to a country that remains plagued by war, poverty, and lawlessness. According to a 2012 report by the Feinstein International Center, one in three Afghan children are malnourished, with rates far higher in conflict-affected regions. Access to health care remains very limited, with 15 percent of the population without access to even basic healthcare services. In areas where fighting continues, militants lack respect for the neutrality of health care facilities, making visiting these facilities dangerous.

Key Findings

- A quarter of refugees worldwide are Afghan. The vast majority live in Pakistan or Iran, where they face an uncertain political status.
 - Afghan IDPs and repatriated refugees unable to return to their original places of origin often live in informal settlements, where many people have died due to cold and illness.
 - Key public health indicators in Afghanistan are poor, with access to basic health care very low and rates of child malnourishment high.
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Recommendations

- The Congressional Research Service should submit an annual report to Congress on displacement and refugees in regions where the US is at war.

(Page updated as of April 2015)

This information came from Brown University

<http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/human/refugees/afghan>