

Jalozai and Shamshatu Camps for Afghan Refugees North West Frontier Province, Pakistan

Assessment and Recommendations to USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance

6-10 February 2001

Final Draft

Background

Over the past year, several waves of Afghan refugees have entered Pakistan, fleeing persecution, fighting, and drought. The majority of these arrivals have settled in the camps of Jalozai, Shamshatu and Akora Khattak, near Peshawar, in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Successive waves of arrivals meant that repeated efforts to empty Jalozai camp by transferring 'verified' (i.e., screened) refugees to Shamshatu were unsuccessful. Early in 2001, new arrivals combined with difficulties in the refugee verification operations to generate a bad situation in Jalozai camp. By the beginning of February, UNHCR estimated that there were in excess of 85,000 people in Jalozai, and perhaps as many as 100,000 (although these figure probably overstate the real population); problems include acute overcrowding, insufficient basic services, a feared measles outbreak and crowd violence. Meanwhile, reports of dismal conditions for internally displaced persons inside Afghanistan heightened the awareness of the current crisis both internationally and in Pakistan, leading the GOP to halt verification efforts at Jalozai and the selection of an additional new arrivals camp.

In response, USAID/OFDA organized a flight of relief supplies to Peshawar (approximately 30 MT, consigned to the IRC) and two flights to Herat (a total of approximately 50 MT, consigned to UNOCHA), and dispatched a three-person assessment team to Pakistan. The objectives of the assessment team were to (1) assess the situation in Jalozai and Shamshatu, (2) recommend future steps for OFDA in the region, and (3) assist in the distribution of the relief supplies flown into Peshawar. The present report lays out the assessment's main conclusions and recommendations. The OFDA team is indebted to the US Embassy in Islamabad and the US Consulate in Peshawar for their support, to the PRM refugee coordinator in Islamabad (who organized most of the assessment and accompanied the team to the field) and to the Peshawar office of the International Rescue Committee for their assistance in setting up the camp visits.

Recent Refugee Influxes into NWFP

UNHCR estimates that up to 150,000 new refugees entered Pakistan in 2000. Many of these are northerners, who had never migrated out of Afghanistan in the last 20-odd years of conflict. Despite the closure of the border, refugees continue to trickle across: estimates vary but reach as high as 50-70 families a day. Some of these are undoubtedly Pashtun who find relatives in NWFP tribal area communities or in towns. The rest show up, for the most part, at Jalozai.

- *December 1999*: initial influx into Shamshatu (approx 200 families, 1,000 people). These people were mostly IDPs from the southern part of the Shomali plain (north of Kabul) who had fled their homes in 1999 when Taleban forces occupied the Shomali. Most of those who fled north toward non-Taleban areas found refuge in the Panjsheer valley. In late summer 1999, Northern Alliance forces took back Charikar and the northern part of Shomali but not the southern part, and these people could not return home. Faced with a harsh winter in the Panjsheer valley, some left for Pakistan via Laghman and Kapisa. Many of these people are Tajik.
- *July and August 2000*: further influx into Jalozai (1,200 families; 6,000 people). These were people from Baghlan, Takhar and western Badakhshan who fled fighting between Taleban and Alliance forces in May, June and July 2000. Mostly they fled through Badakhshan and Konar to Chitral, and then made their way south to Peshawar. Many of these people are Tajiks (including Ismailis), with some Uzbeks and Turkomans.
- *October 2000*: a much more serious influx into Jalozai (3,000-4,000 families; 15,000 to 20,000 people). People entered at Torkham (Khyber Pass), or further north from other parts of Nangarhar and Konar provinces. The increase in arrival figures and the fact that many of them were reported to be first time refugees prompted international recognition of the problem (although the UNHCR dates 'recognition' to September).
- *December 2000 – February 2001*: continued arrivals, including Pashtun people from the southern provinces who seem to be fleeing the effects of drought and food insecurity, and minorities fleeing persecution (Hazaras, Turmken, Uzbeks).

Three further points are worth noting:

- *Verification exercises*: UNHCR and the Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CAR) carried out several verification exercises with the aim of screening 'genuine' refugees and emptying Jalozai (September and November 2000, January 2001). The verified refugees were transferred to Shamshatu. But after every verification exercise, Jalozai continued to fill up again. Reasons for this include that Jalozai has become known as the 'registration' camp, the place to get registered as a refugee; that word of Jalozai's existence has traveled back to Afghanistan, especially in the Northeast (the Ittehad-e-

Islami controls the Old Jalozai settlement and has reportedly spread the word in the Northeast); and that even before being suspended by the GOP, the verification operations were too slow (300 families per day — at that speed it would take approximately six weeks to empty Jalozai, assuming no new arrivals).

- *People from Peshawar and other urban centers, or from old refugee settlements:* Aid agencies and Pakistani authorities both suspect that a significant number of the refugees at Jalozai are not new arrivals from Afghanistan but longer-term refugees who had initially settled in Peshawar or found refuge with relatives and associates in established refugee settlements. For these people, verification at Jalozai is an opportunity to become ‘official.’ And while one NGO country director referred to these people as “internally displaced refugees,” there is little doubt that refugees who are at Jalozai permanently (as opposed to some who might only be there during the day and have a better place to go to at night) are in need of assistance.
- *Movements of northern refugees to NWFP from other parts of Pakistan:* Many non-Pashtu (‘minority’) refugees — Tajik, Uzbek, Turkoman, Hazara, Ismaili — were reportedly reluctant to register with the Pakistani authorities when entering the country, for fear of deportation and harassment. While some sought refuge in NWFP’s urban areas, many chose to proceed further afield to towns in Baluchistan (Hazaras), Punjab and Sindh provinces. It is thought that, in a reversal of earlier times that saw minorities leave NWFP as quickly as possible, some of these people have now returned to NWFP, to Jalozai, in the hope of gaining refugee status.

Both Jalozai and Shamshatu, as well as Akora Khattak, are old refugee settlements. Over the years, they have become bona fide villages with permanent dwellings, physical and social infrastructure, and bazaars. A large number of the old refugee houses were abandoned when their inhabitants repatriated to Afghanistan in the early 1990s. These settlements are known as Old Jalozai and Old Shamshatu. The new arrivals have settled in areas abutting the old caseload settlements. These new caseload settlements, properly termed New Jalozai and New Shamshatu are referred to in this report simply as Jalozai and Shamshatu. The GOP (i.e., the CAR) has so far not designated the new settlement at Jalozai as a camp — it is therefore an unofficial settlement, but remains a camp nonetheless.

Causes of displacement

It is hard to single out the reasons why individual refugees have fled: in most cases, it is a multitude of reasons combining fear of persecution and acute destitution — destitution to the point where survival becomes an issue — that forced the decision to seek refuge in Pakistan. Nevertheless, based on interviews with Afghan and international relief staff and on the few conversations we were able to have with refugees, one can single out the following reasons, among which there is significant overlap:

- *Fighting:* Fighting continues along the Taleban-Alliance frontlines. Offensives, retreats and counter-offensives take a heavy toll on the civilian population. It is not so much the fighting itself than the attendant destruction, looting and scorched earth policies — and the prospect of the other side's rule — that force people to leave. The October 2000 influx for instance was directly linked to Taleban advances in Takhar province and to the fall of Taloqan.
- *Persecution and Repression:* Brutal policies on the part of both the Taleban and the Alliance are forcing people to leave. Minorities (Uzkeks, Turkomans, Hazaras, Tadjiks) in Taleban-held areas are especially vulnerable. The well-grounded reports of recent massacres in Yakowlang districts are an example of the harshness of Taleban rule on minority populations (in this case Hazaras). But repression is also a reality in Pashtun areas where it takes on different forms: forced marriages, forced recruitment, increased taxes, etc.
- *Drought and general economic destitution:* In many parts of Afghanistan, people are simply running out of options. The main reason for this is the three-year old drought, the impact of which has really been felt in the course of the last six-eight months. Many community water sources have run dry. With the widespread failure of the rain-fed crops, food stocks have run out, both at the household and the community levels. And people no longer have the resources (livestock and especially seed) to make it through a new agricultural cycle. But drought is not the only cause of economic destitution. Other causes include the gutting of the civil services, the ban of poppy cultivation without adequate support for substitute crops, and high taxes and levies.

Several points need to be made concerning population displacement and its causes in Afghanistan.

- First, while there is a general reluctance among aid agencies and to view economic migrants as bona fide refugees, there does come a point when destitution and poverty become an acute violation human right inasmuch as survival itself is at stake.
- Second, while it is difficult to pinpoint the causes of displacement for a given refugee family, some groups are more in need of protection than others (northerners and other minorities). This is important because it means that for those segments of the Afghan population for whom displacement comes out of economic necessity, assistance in situ offers a solution, especially in home areas (as opposed to IDP camps). For those fleeing persecution, on the other hand, fleeing the country may be the only immediate option.
- Third, none of the causes listed above are particularly new. What is new is the depth of crisis, and how the cause are combining to produce widespread misery. In meeting

after meeting, it was impressed upon the team that there is a new level of gravity to the current Afghan crisis. Many ordinary Afghans have run out of ways to survive. This is not crisis management as usual.

Old and New Caseload:

One of the results of the protracted Afghan crisis is the presence in Pakistan of generations of Afghan refugees. Many of these 'old' refugees, the majority of whom were Pashtun, integrated fully into the society and economy of the NWFP. Over the years, both the Pakistani government and international aid agencies have sought to further this integration as one way — along with repatriation and resettlement — to reduce the burden of assistance. The result today is twofold. First, there is reluctance in some quarters to consider the 'new' arrivals as bona fide refugees: for the Pakistani authorities they are economic migrants and should be returned home; for some of the aid agencies faced with acute funding problems, they are a caseload whose needs simply cannot be met under current levels of funding, or at least not they have 'verified.' Second, there is a fear that 'old' refugees will manage to slip into the ranks of the new caseload and draw benefits they are not entitled to. These issues complicate efforts to find solutions to the current refugee crisis, especially with regard to negotiations with the Pakistani authorities: no assistance without verification, and no verification because the new arrivals are not 'genuine' refugees.

And while the ability of aid agencies — especially UNHCR and WFP — to respond to an unlimited number of refugees is real, the distinction between old and new is unhelpful, for two reasons.

- There is no clear definition of what an 'old' or 'new' refugee is. By old caseload do we mean people who came during the Soviet war? Before CAR stopped issuing refugee cards (1995)? Before the latest series of influxes (i.e., before the end of 1999)? Before the GOP closed the border (November 2000)? The definitions keep moving; and the other yardstick, destitution, remains hard to measure against the backdrop of general poverty in Pakistan.
- Both new and old refugees have needs. First, many of the current refugees are clearly new refugees who have never been displaced before and who fled Afghanistan out of fear of persecution. They are undeniably refugees under international law, and are destitute. The GOP and the aid agencies must not delay in providing them with assistance. Second, to the extent that there are old caseload refugees in Jalozai who are not directly linked to the nearby settlement (i.e., people who have come from further afield in Pakistan), they clearly have dire needs; if not they would not stay in as grim a place as Jalozai waiting to be registered or to receive a modicum of assistance. Furthermore, the situation in Afghanistan makes it difficult for old caseload refugees who are not making it in Pakistan to return home: Pashtun people

from the south cannot return because of the drought; and minorities may not be able to return because their areas of origin are now controlled by the Taleban. These people, referred to earlier as “internally displaced refugees,” are stranded in a netherworld between refugee status and Pakistani citizenship.¹ And third, given the current hardening of the GOP attitude toward refugees and the worsening of the situation in Afghanistan, all Afghan refugees in Pakistan, both minority and Pashtu, are in need of increased protection. Differentiating between ‘old’ and ‘new’ does not help in that regard.

Aid Agency Response

UNHCR:

Given UNHCR’s long presence in Pakistan and on the Afghan border in particular, it is fair to ask how the situation in Jalozai could have developed without more forceful action having been taken. It appears in fact that UNHCR was well aware of the gravity of the situation, but was unable to react for lack of resources. According to NGOs in Peshawar, UNHCR’s Peshawar sub-office told them that it had no resources and that all it could offer was moral encouragement. The Peshawar sub-office relayed its concerns to UNHCR Islamabad, who in turn raised the issue with Geneva. Geneva seems to have been slow to respond. Upon receipt of \$2.9 million for 2001 (against \$4.3 requested) UNHCR Peshawar was told that these monies were for the existing case-load — and not for potential new influxes — and instructed to consider itself fully funded.

Despite these budgetary constraints, UNHCR Peshawar has by all accounts played a valuable role in coordination and advocacy. UNHCR has fielded experienced staff to concentrate on Jalozai and Shamshatu: an emergency officer, recently replaced by another, and a site planner who has taken the lead in coordinating water, sanitation and environmental health efforts of other organizations. These efforts have earned UNHCR praise from some of the main international NGOs taking part in the relief effort, MSF, IRC, Dacaar. And the recent visit by a high-ranking delegation indicates that Geneva is seized with the issue. More money has become available, and the visiting deputy regional director told PRM that more will come as needed.

Other agencies and NGOs:

A number of NGOs are working in the camps. Those that seem to have taken a leadership role are MSF, SNI, IRC and its umbrella grant partners, DACAAR and others. In the water and sanitation fields, both MSF and especially IRC are responding through IRC Umbrella Grant Project (UGP) partners, such as EPPP and ACLU. This is proving

¹ The claim of destitute old caseload refugees to assistance is also undermined, in the view of some, by Pakistan’s general context of grinding poverty: why them, at this point, and not the rest of the country?

both effective and economical, making it a very wise funding decision on the part of PRM.

The quality of the response in Jalozai is curtailed by the nature of the site and by the absence of verification. Shamshatu seems to be a well organized response that is about to shift from an (orderly) emergency phase to a maintenance phase. Some of the Few agencies had contingency funds for this crisis — some are working on funds and resources (including personnel) that have been borrowed from other programs. For some, this is not sustainable.

WFP is providing general ration distribution in Shamshatu through their implementing partner SNI. Jalozai does not get any distribution. WFP is concerned that current funding and donations will not meet the need beyond the current caseload. In that respect they are keen that all new arrivals be properly verified, and if numbers were to grow they would have to generate new resources. WFP's current EMOP for Recently Arrived Afghan Refugees in Pakistan (#6321) is 12 percent covered by the UK and USAID/FFP is pushing forward to cover an additional third (it is unclear whether PRM will respond).

Attitude of Pakistani authorities

There are clear signs that the stance of the Pakistani authorities vis-à-vis Afghan refugees has hardened. All interlocutors recognized this. The grievances are familiar and, in the eyes of some observers, carry some justification: Pakistan has been too generous for too long, the refugees are an economic burden that the country cannot sustain, international assistance has dwindled to a fractions of what it used to be, and neighboring countries are not held to the same standard (e.g., Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan)³. However, of particular concern is the fact that the authorities seem to be discriminating against northerners and non-Pashtun minorities (Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkomans, Hazaras). Current anti-refugee movements include the following:

- Closure of the border:

On 10 November 2000, the Federal Government moved to close the border at Torkham. Nevertheless, refugees continued to enter the country. According to one interlocutor,

² Given current drought conditions in Pakistan, WFP will not in 2001 have the luxury of borrowing Pakistani wheat as it did at several critical junctures in 2000, when Pakistan had enjoyed a bumper harvest. Pakistan's harvest forecast has been downgraded several times and is now below self-sufficiency. This will also have a negative impact on commercial flows of wheat into Afghanistan, further worsening the food security situation there.

³ Tajikistan continues to deny entry to 10,000 Afghan refugees stranded on the Piandzh (Amou Darya) river; in 2000, Iran strong-armed UNHCR into repatriating 100,000 Afghan refugees to war-torn areas of Afghanistan and has consistently denied access to new refugees (although many are said to enter Iran via Pakistani Baluchistan); and Uzbekistan has a long history of sealing its border to Afghan refugees.

NWFP authorities seemed reluctant and closed an eye to continuing crossings; but when the Federal Government threatened to deploy the Frontier Corps, the NWFP apparently quickly clamped down on the border.

- Attitude of Governor Iftikhar (NWFP):

The governor of the NWFP has been quite hard-line. In a meeting with high-ranking UNHCR and WFP officials, he reportedly stated that any Afghan who entered Pakistan after 1995 (when the last refugee cards were issued) was to be considered a 'new' refugee, and that new refugees were not real refugees but rather illegal migrants. And besides, the reasoning goes, there cannot be any 'new' refugees because the border has been closed since November — this obviously does not take into account the fact that many refugees continued to cross at Torkham and at unofficial border crossings. (The Governor reiterated these points in a meeting with the US Embassy on 7 February 2001.) In other meetings with international aid and diplomatic officials, as well as in the Pakistani press, he has reportedly downplayed the gravity of the situation in Afghanistan with regards to the political and military and to the state of the economy. He has also publicly announced that there would be no sites made available to the refugees in NWFP, and that it was time for other provinces to shoulder their share of the burden.

- Erosion of the protection regime:

In the course of past months, there have been numerous reports of roadblocks and ID checks by the security forces, and of subsequent deportations. It has also been reported that non-Pashtuns have been harassed at the border, including turned back or asked for bribes to enter the country (the closure of the border presumably makes it easier for Pakistani authorities to apply pressure on the incoming refugees). Beyond the discrimination they face from Pakistani authorities, several reasons make minority refugees more vulnerable at the border: it is more difficult for them to enter through unofficial crossings in the (Pashtun) tribal areas (although passers do operate); they are more desperate to get out of Afghanistan and more fearful of being turned back. According to UNHCR, some parts of the NWFP government seemed genuinely distressed by the reports of deportations; still according to UNHCR, these deportations have now decreased.

- The issue of verification

The Pakistani authorities unilaterally suspended UNHCR's Jalozai verification operation around 31 January 2001. The Governor told the Embassy that he saw verification as giving status to the refugees to live in Pakistan for a long time while his preferred solution would be to return them to Afghanistan. Despite high level requests from UNHCR, the authorities have so far failed to relent on the issue. UNHCR Peshawar says it cannot say whether permission will be granted "tomorrow" or never. On a more positive note, a senior CAR official reportedly told a UNHCR/NGO meeting that the

suspension of verification was linked to the fact that there was no site available (i.e., that it was a technical and not a political decision). But this would only be positive if a suitable site was approved speedily.

- Issue of a new site:

Finding a new site for the Jalozai refugees is a critical issue, on which the Pakistani authorities have been uncooperative. The only site they have offered is a place called Azakheil. According to NGOs and UNHCR's site planner who visited this site, it is wholly unsuitable for a refugee settlement. The site is waterlogged which would create significant water, sanitation and drainage problems, and malaria would become a serious health problem as the weather warmed up.

- Analysis:

Embassies and international agencies (UN and NGO) are concerned at the attitude of the Pakistani government. UNHCR's point of view is that they are on a "collision course" with the government; they feel that they have explored all the local avenues available to them, and that even a visit by the High Commissioner (a possibility apparently under consideration) might fail to unblock the situation. The planned visit of USG Oshima (OCHA) in the third week of February should give some indication of where things stand with the Government.

Despite this, uncertainty remains on the official Pakistani stance. To what extent is the hostility of NWFP driven by the Federal government, as opposed to merely endorsed? Do the current difficulties represent one of the cyclical hardenings of the Pakistani position on refugees, of which there have been several over the past twenty-odd years? Or do new factors — resurgent Pashtun nationalism, the organic yet uneasy link between Pakistan and the Taleban, the international isolation of the military régime in Pakistan, the radicalization of political Islam in Pakistan, the long term decline of international resources to NWFP, and so forth — mark a radical departure from Pakistan's overall attitude to refugees which has been on balance extremely open and welcoming. The last factor, the decrease in international aid, is clearly key; unfortunately, it is a difficult one to remedy. However, it is clear that multiple positions, voices and agendas exist within both the NWFP and the federal governments. This combines with a clear lack of understanding of internationally accepted definitions of refugee and the absence of domestic legislation dealing with political asylum to make the current attitude of the Pakistani authorities hostile to the refugees and uncooperative with the agencies that seek to aid them.

Assessment of Jalozai Camp

Jalozai is not an ‘official’ camp, in that it has not been recognized by the Pakistani authorities. New Jalozai hosts up to 87,500 in a site that is not fit to accommodate more than 500 to 600 families. The site is vastly overcrowded. Water and sanitation conditions are extremely poor. In the absence of verification, no food or non-food items have been distributed. And the camp continues to grow by 20 to 50 families per day. Given these conditions, it is a miracle that no major outbreak has occurred yet. While (incomplete) mortality and morbidity rates may not indicate an acute crisis (yet), there is no doubt that Jalozai is a disaster waiting to happen.⁴ The course of action to improve the situation is to transfer the refugee population of New Jalozai to a more suitable site.

Site and Population

- Jalozai is situated roughly 45 minutes by car southeast of Peshawar. From the town Pabbi on the main Islamabad-Peshawar (GT) road, an all-weather, all-season road that is narrow but in good condition covers the approximately 10 kilometers to the long-standing refugee village of Jalozai, beyond which stretches the new camp. There is an active bazaar some 200 meters west of the edge of the camp.
- The new camp is situated to the east of old Jalozai. The site is very poor: sandy, dusty, windy, no elevation, no shade, many dry gullies, poor drainage. The ‘settled’ part of the site is about two kilometers wide (east-west) and one deep (north-south). The refugees have set up makeshift tents made of cloth, blankets, quilts and bits of low-quality plastic sheeting purchased in the market. People believe, based on their experience, that when verification resumes it will start from the old settlement west; as a result, the refugees have tended to settle very close together, which has resulted in acute overcrowding. People have settled in the beds of the dry gullies, and there is an important risk of fire as people cook using dry bushes that are for sale in the market. On the other hand, crowding may have offered some protection from the wind. At least for these refugees, the lack of rain this rainy season has been a life-saving blessing.
- Estimations of the population vary widely. The official UNHCR estimate of 25 January 2001 is 87,500 refugees, based on an estimate of 35 blocks, 500 families per block, and 5 persons in each family⁵. Since then there have been new arrivals which would have further increased the number. However, the aid agencies’ working figure remains 14,000 families, i.e., 70,000 people. Of those, estimates of ‘real’ refugees,

⁴ Local press reports are more alarmist: quoting unconfirmed refugee reports, the 11 February 2001 edition of the Pakistan *Daily News* carried a report that six people had died of exposure in the previous 24 hours.

⁵ In Afghanistan, it is usually estimated that there are seven to eight members per family. It is unclear why the norm used by UNHCR and the aid agencies in Jalozai is around 5 (although in Shamshatu it is through verification). However, using a family size of seven or eight would lead to camp population numbers that would clearly be overstated.

defined as people who spend the night in the camp, vary between 30 and 70 percent. When queried by the team, a delegation of camp leaders claimed, in touching unison, that “no one” leaves the camp at night.⁶ MSF intends to carry out a night check in the near future, security permitting. MSF is also mapping the site as latrine work progresses (see below). Whatever the population, one thing is clear: the camp continues to grow.

- Despite its unofficial status, Jalozai has been used as a transition site to move people to Shamshatu. The camp has been filled and emptied 3 separate times. 1200 families were moved in September, 2000, 3000 to 4000 families were moved in October, 2000, and 4000 families moved in November, 2000.

Water

- MSF is trucking water from an outside source using a 14,000-liter lorry and four trips per day. Beginning on 5 February 2001, this was increased to seven trips per day and the use of another lorry that could haul 18,000 liters. Currently 140,000 liters per day is being provided. This amounts to approximately 1.6 lpd. MSF plans to obtain the use of additional trucks and tractors to haul water to the site.
- Water storage capacity is limited to four 500-liter steel tanks scattered throughout the camp. MSF installed faucets which were immediately stolen. However is not an immediate problem as there is a permanent line of people waiting to fill their containers, and the tanks are emptied as fast as they are filled. MSF is considering welding small spouts so as to facilitate water flow. The tanks seemed to be well protected from contamination.
- The source of water is from a tube-well in old Jalozai which currently serves approximately 8,000 to 9,000 families in the old settlement. Old Jalozai’s piped water system serves all families but has no holding facilities — water is allowed to flow through the distribution system once in the morning and once in the afternoon. When the MSF tankers fill up, this causes small interruptions in the water flow to the settlement, which may cause tension, although there are no reports to date.
- MSF began chlorinating the water on 12 January 2001. The tabs are dropped in the tanker truck upon departure from the well, and are well mixed by the time the lorry reaches the tanks in the camps.
- There is a constant stream of people ferrying water from the old Jalozai settlement to the camp. According to MSF, people are also able to get water at night from houses,

⁶ We have no way of knowing whether this delegation was representative of the various geographical and ethnic groupings present in the camp; there did not seem to be any obvious non-Tajik minorities.

wells and mosques. This clearly increases the amount of liters per person per day, but it is equally clear that water remains insufficient.

- For many people there is a serious dearth of water containers; to date, none have been distributed (for problems with distribution, see below). People collect water in any type of container they can find. MSF is sufficiently concerned with this situation from a health stand-point to be planning a distribution (through SNI) of jerry-cans, even in the absence of verification. They feel that, given the availability of water in Old Jalozai, a distribution of water containers would significantly improve the overall availability of water per person per day in the camp.
- Consideration of and estimated prices have been collected for hand pump wells, or extending current water system from old Jalozai to accommodate water supply problems. It is not desirable to take such action because the refugees are not intended to stay at this site.

Sanitation

- The geography of the camp will not allow for proper drainage. Several pools of water along the roads throughout the camp — the result of spillage from the water tankers — showed the potential for floods in the event of rain. An increase in the amount of water supplied would also aggravate drainage problems. This would create a health hazard as run-off from the defecation areas that are within the camp would spread throughout the living spaces. Furthermore, residents are now camped in locations that would be subject to water run-off flow and pooling.
- Until the first week in February there were no latrines in Jalozai camp. Refugees used — and continue to use — ad hoc defecation fields often located in between the makeshift shelters. To try and give more privacy to women, they have resorted to digging small holes in the ground that ‘serve’ a half dozen tents. Both solutions are clearly inadequate on both sanitary and cultural grounds.
- Current plans to improve the sanitation situation are restricted by necessity and remain inadequate. A joint MSF/IRC effort has led to plans to build 10 communal (as opposed to family) latrines per block. Work started on 8 February 2001. This means that there will be 50 families (250 people) per latrine — obviously an imperfect solution which cannot last. The initial plan was to dig the latrines on the periphery using motorized digging equipment (backhoe), and to organize the refugees to place and dig the latrine in the midst of the camp. The plan is now to rely entirely on refugee labor because it was impossible to get the equipment to the locations where the refugees wanted the latrines to be placed. A number of latrines per block will be earmarked for women and children (six or seven), as they are most affected by the lack of privacy. The situation will remain imperfect as the men will likely continue to

use defecation fields near and even in the camp. The communal latrines are expected to be completed within 5 to 10 days.

- UNHCR, MSF and IRC are discussing plans to lime the ad hoc defecation fields scattered around the camp and eventually clean them up.
- Currently there are no washing facilities in the camp (and there is not enough water available for washing anyway). This is especially problematic for women, who by custom require far more privacy in order to wash.
- Hygiene kits or other materials to clean with have not been provided pending verification. If SNI and MSF go ahead with their planned one-shot distribution of blankets and water-jugs, IRC is considering joining in with soap.

Health

- There are currently two NGO's operating basic health units (BHUs) within the camp: MSF runs one and PDH runs two (the second PDH BHU is currently closed for security reasons). Both functioning BHUs report seeing approximately 200 patients per day, but the MSF unit, staffed by Afghan medical staff, seems more professional. They seem well set up to provide basic PHC services, to make available drugs and other supplies, and to start basic health education services.
- MSF also provides basic supplementary nutritional feeding (dry cerelac mix) to moderately / severely malnourished children who visit the BHU (under 70 percent wfh).
- Cases that require further care or IP treatment are referred to the al-Jihad hospital in Old Jalozai (approx. 2 km walk). We were told that this hospital has about 65 beds, but is short-staffed and under-equipped.
- MSF provided the team with weekly morbidity tally sheets for the last week of December and January. Upper and lower respiratory tract infections are the largest percentage of the diagnoses (this is a common winter problem in the camps). MSF also reported suspected but unconfirmed reports of meningitis — meningitis would be disastrous in such a crowded camp, but remains a rare occurrence in NWFP.
- Nearly one in three persons seen in the MSF BHU in the last week of December complained of diarrhea, both bloody and non-bloody (figures are much higher than in Shamshatu). Chlorination of the water supply began in mid January, 2001. The number of diarrhea cases has dropped to nearly one in 12 with the case load increasing from 230 visits per week to more than 1000 visits per week. MSF continues to monitor the situation

- Jalozai has witnessed a recent outbreak of measles, including 55 total cases reported in January. Measles vaccination campaigns were conducted at the end of January and have vaccinated approximately 10,000 children as of February 1, 2001. A short investigation by a CDC epidemiologist seconded to WHO/Islamabad concluded that the increase in cases was commensurate with the influx of people and did not represent a major outbreak. He recommended that inoculation campaigns continue, and MSF has stressed that it will continue to aggressively monitor the measles situation.
- MSF reported six to eight deaths in the camp for the first week of February (MSF distributes white cloth for shrouds). Mortality rates among this population are much lower than expected. However, there is no way of knowing whether we are getting total figures or not.

Shelter

- There really is none. Tents and plastic sheeting have not been provided to families, pending verification. Refugees live in makeshift shelters of bits of cloth and plastic sheeting sewn together. Many of these

Other Considerations:

- *Food:* There is no general ration distribution in the camp, at least not on the part of WFP or other aid agencies. People purchase food with money earned either through menial labor or by distress sales of personal assets. We also heard at least one report that some food had been distributed, perhaps organized by al Ittehad-e-Islami, the Afghan group that controls the nearby settlement, or as alms by local Pakistani businessmen).
- *Security:* Security has been a recurring concern at Jalozai. There may be some inherent problems to the settlement given that the camp is such a mix of communities, although there was no report of intra-violence tension. We heard (unconfirmed) reports of a two incidents of violence against refugees on the part of the local Pakistani population; both involved theft. The main security issue remains the unhappiness of the camp population at the suspension of the verification operation. As a result, UNHCR have been the repeated targets of refugee unhappiness (as was PDH): following the suspension of verification, UNHCR banned all expatriate staff visits, resuming them on 6 February. According to NGOs, one problem appears to be the presence of stick-wielding Pakistani policemen that accompany some UNHCR visits. The OFDA team walked through the camp twice (once extensively). Security has also been an issue during distribution because of the general level of destitution (see below).

- *Distribution:* The absence of verification — and therefore of a clear picture of who is a refugee and therefore entitled to assistance — has all but made any distribution operation impossible, including that of badly needed items such as blankets, soap or water containers. Two previous attempts have been made to distribute materials but have encountered difficulty in determining who should and should not be eligible to receive these materials.
- *Camp leadership:* There are leaders for each block. It is unclear whether they represent the entire population of the camp, including the minorities, or what their relationship is to the Ittehad-e-Islami people who control Old Jalozai though one can assume that Ittehad's influence is strong in the new settlement as well. The leaders of the new camp are certainly well-organized, as the OFDA team witnessed (Roy 2 and our own experience).
- *CAR Administrator:* According to IRC, there is no CAR administrator for Jalozai. This should be confirmed, as it seems surprising that there should be no administrator for old Jalozai (perhaps it was no longer considered as an active refugee settlement; or perhaps there is one but he does not have jurisdiction over the new settlement).
- *Commercial Activity:* Small food stalls and an oven were visible as we walked through the camp.

Assessment of Shamshatu Camp

Site and Population

- Shamshatu is about 26 kilometers south of the Peshawar ring road on an all-weather hard-surface road. It is a one-hour, west-by-southwest drive from Jalozai to Shamshatu on a dirt road that is in good condition (no rains).
- The camp is set on a series of plateaus and ridges south of what is left of Old Shamshatu and the adjoining Pakistani settlement, and wedged in between the road to Peshawar to the west and a wide valley to the east. The site is sandy, dusty and treeless, which will make it a difficult place during the high summer temperatures.
- Shamshatu nevertheless offers important advantages. First, it has the merit of being available: many former landlords have reportedly been reluctant to make their land available for new refugee camps. Second, the site is elevated and offers good opportunities for drainage. Third, Shamshatu was the site of kacha (adobe) dwellings where Afghan refugees who have now repatriated once lived. Not much is left of these structures as the returning refugees often took the roof beams with them, and the mud walls then 'melted.' (Also, the landlord is said to have destroyed houses so as to prevent squatters from moving in.) But the newly transferred refugees found a site

lay-out that gave space to each family and is culturally appropriate. And the remains of the house and compound walls provide them some shelter for their tents or a foundation for plastic sheeting-based shelter or even new walls.

- The population of Shamshatu camp is estimated to be 55,000 based on 11,000 families and 5 people per family. However, following a house-by-house count in preparation for a nutrition survey, MSF estimates that there are only about 7,000 families. The theoretical carrying capacity of the camp is 14,000 families, according to UNHCR; MSF estimate a reasonable maximum to be 6,000 families. This seems low, especially as the deep wells come on line (see below).
- The camp is divided into four parts (Shamshatu I through IV) with a fifth beginning. There are approximately 3,000 families in sections one through three and 2,000 in section four. The 'borders' of the sections are not fixed, and their respective populations vary accordingly.
- All people officially resident in the camp have been verified and distribution of tents, blankets, plastic sheeting, and water jugs have been and continue to be conducted.
- The camp appears to be well planned with regard to placement of families, plans for water systems, latrines and wells.

Water

- There are currently 100 hand pump wells in each section of the camp, which provide 16 liters per minute. All appear to be protected and in good condition.
- There are three 10,000 liter tankers, which make five to seven deliveries per day.
- Shamshatu has four large 4,500-liter capsule tanks placed around the camp. In addition they have five small 500-liter tanks.
- Current work is being conducted to construct three deep wells (500 to 700 feet deep) and holding tanks, which will provide for a water system to be installed throughout the community. Completion of this project will be within the next 3 to 6 months based on the availability of funds and supplies (the wells will be done sooner as will the reservoirs but the distribution system will take longer and is contingent on additional funding).
- Based on the hand pumps being used 12 hours per day and including the water brought in by tanker, approximately 17.2 liters of water are available per person per day.

Sanitation

- There are currently 2,000 latrines placed in Shamshatu (925 built by IRC, 200 by PCDDP, and 875 by SNI.) The latrines are solid structures with slabs and doors. Latrines examined are clean and well ventilated. No odors or insect problems were noted. Based on the estimated population, there is currently one latrine for 25 people. There are plans for a total of 11,000 total to be placed in Shamshatu (one per family). Some temporary latrines are still visible throughout the camp and are still being used to supplement the permanent structures.
- Reports from the camp indicate latrines are being used for washing by some of the women in the camp. This is dangerous as it can cause subsiding of the pit's walls, a collapse of the slab, or excessive moisture in the pit that in turn can favor the development of insects. Some will not use them because they wish to have one only for the family. (In the old refugee settlement of Akora Khattak, separate latrines and brick washrooms were built as part of an SNI shelter project.)

Shelter

- Tents have been provided by UNHCR to all families in the camp. Building of more permanent kacha (adobe) structures has begun, often around the walls or portions of old structures that still exist.

Health

- Basic health units are located in each of the four sections. One is run by IMC and three by PDH. A fifth one is one by the Kuwaiti organization Lejnat ad-Dawa.
- A two-stage cluster sampling rapid health assessment was conducted by MSF from December 17 –20, 2000. The figures showed a crude mortality rate of 0.87 for the entire population, 1.75 for under-fives and 2.07 for under-twelves (bearing in mind that it is hard to determine the exact ages of children in Afghan communities). 85 percent of the people showed vaccination cards and 67.2 percent of the under-twelves were vaccinated against measles. 23.5 percent of the under-fives had diarrhea, against 6.5 percent of the population. About 39 percent of the people had complaints (50 percent of which were new arrivals).
- MSF conducted a two-stage cluster sampling nutritional survey in November, 2000. The global acute malnutrition rate, expressed in Z-scores, was 7.7 percent, including 2.0 severe (as percentage of median, this was 6.5 percent global including 1.4 percent severe). While the chronic malnutrition rate is high, the overall nutritional situation is not alarming, according to MSF. Their recommendations exclude the need for a supplementary feeding program, but call for three-monthly surveys to track evolutions in the trend (they are currently carrying out a three-monthly survey).

- Current morbidity and mortality data was not available for Shamshatu camp. (We were unable to meet PDH who run three of the camp's four BHUs, and might have more complete sets of morbidity data; more complete data sets might be available from UNHCR. MSF has incomplete mortality numbers which appear higher than in Jalozai, which is surprising — MSF's health coordinator intends to track this down this week.)

Other Issues:

- Current distributions of blankets, tents, and other supplies are currently being conducted. WFP, through SNI, distributes a general ration (the team heard that WFP had run out of pulses but were not able to confirm).
- CAR Camp Administrator: There is a CAR administrator for each of the four sections. The overall administrator is very good, more so than other CAR administrators, according to one experienced NGO staff member.
- Protection issues: The mixed ethnic composition of the camp population and the attitude of the Pakistani security forces toward minority refugees have led to protection issues. While walking through the camp, we encountered one Turkoman family who claimed their tents had been confiscated by Pakistani police. While it was impossible to verify this claim, it was unclear whether mechanisms for addressing these types of issues were in place or not.
- Security in Shamshatu does not seem to be a problem. The atmosphere of the camp is quite relaxed.
- One school was currently being built through a refugee initiative and reportedly without outside assistance. (There were a few boys and girls schools in the camp operated by NGOs. Shamshatu reportedly has a less educated population than Akora Khattak; and it might be more difficult to find teachers within the camp.)
- There is a bustling market about one to two kilometers north of the camp. Small stalls are moving into the camp selling basic food stuffs, fresh bread and cakes, and sundry household items. The stalls are run by refugees (the goods are loaned by businesses in town, prices are similar to the lowest in Peshawar). Several ovens were built and making bread for the community (the refugees bring dough and pay half a rupee, the normal price for nan bread being two rupees).
- IRC/HCR needs gap: UNHCR and IRC have put together a needs gap analysis that comes out at a little over \$2 million for the 11,000 families. It includes improved health services, schools and hard shelter for refugee dwellings.

General Conclusions:

As interviewees repeatedly stressed to the assessment team, the current refugee crisis in Pakistan (150,000 new arrivals in 2000) — and in Jalozai in particular — is a clear indicator of both the depth of the crisis in Afghanistan and the problems that Afghan refugees face in Pakistan.

- **The real problem is in Afghanistan:** In Afghanistan, continued fighting, widespread repression and human rights abuses, generalized economic destitution and the effects of the worst drought in 30 years have led to a sudden worsening of the humanitarian situation. And while none of these factors are new, their combined impact is coming into full swing to produce the worst humanitarian crisis since 1992. Food security has plummeted, internal displacement is massive (350,000 to 450,000 according to estimates), and there may be many more communities in remote areas who do not have the assets to move and for whom time is running out. People have exhausted their coping mechanisms, sold their assets and mortgaged what little future income they have. The country's devastated economy offers no means for people to recover from the devastation wrought by the drought — lost livestock and lack of seed. The sanctions, targeted though they may be, still carry an impact on Afghan society by the isolation they impose and even because the Taleban seek to recoup their 'losses' on the people. Even Taleban efforts to eradicate poppy cultivation, which current UN reports say are determined and effective, carry a price in terms of the income of entire communities in the absence of assistance programs. People are running out of options.
- **The causes for displacement are manifold.** To simplify: Pashtun refugees are mostly fleeing because of drought and destitution — although some may also be fleeing repressive Taleban policies such as forced poppy eradication and forced recruitment. Northerners, on the other hand, many of whom had never migrated in the last 20 years, are fleeing fighting and persecution, although the drought has also hit hard in Takhar, Parwan and Badakhshan.
- **Expect new influxes in mid-2001:** Come spring, when people realize they have no seed and when snow-bound roads open up, one can expect mass migrations, both within and outside of Afghanistan. There are large 'reservoirs' of people within Afghanistan. Many people have already moved into cities and close to borders areas, where they will not be able to sustain themselves over time. Jalozai is the tip of the iceberg, a harbinger of the extent of the crisis in Afghanistan, a taste of things to come.
- **In Pakistan, protection has become a major issue:** While aid agencies are legitimately concerned by their lack of resources for assistance activities, it is protection that remains the real issue in Pakistan. There is a feeling that Pakistani

generosity toward refugees is a thing of the past. UNHCR feels that the protection regime is eroded: Pakistani authorities have closed the border with Afghanistan, halted the verification of new arrivals, refused to find a suitable site for the refugees stranded at Jalozai, and harassed and deported refugees. The current hardening of the Pakistani position may be a response to the very real decline in international assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan. But it may also be linked to other internal political factors such as relations with tribal commanders in NWFP and the GOP rapport with the Taleban.

- **Danger of Magnet effect:** Assistance in Pakistan will provide an inevitable magnet effect in Afghanistan. According to several interviewees with contacts inside Afghanistan this is already happening.
- **USG assistance policies hobbled by lack of access to Afghanistan:** The ban on USG aid personnel (government employees or contractors) hinders the ability of US assistance programs to mobilize in an effective manner. This in turn undermines the diplomatic message that the US, while remaining the driving force behind sanctions, is committed to assisting the Afghan people and active in doing so.

Conclusions Concerning Jalozai

- **The situation in Jalozai is untenable:** The site is clearly unsuitable. Up to 70,000 people live in excessively crowded conditions under makeshift rag and plastic shelters. Only 1.6 liters per person per day are provided. One communal latrine for every 50 families is planned. There is no food distribution. To date, no blankets, tents, mats, water containers or soap have been distributed.
- **The surprisingly reassuring data does not detract from the gravity of the problem:** It is surprising that so far, mortality and morbidity rates do not appear higher than they are. There are several possible explanations for this. First, available data sets remain incomplete, especially with regard for mortality rates. Second, the overall population of Jalozai is probably far smaller than the official UNHCR estimates of 70 to 80,000 people, which means that the corresponding morbidity and mortality rates are probably higher. Third, some of the refugees clearly have coping mechanisms: relations with people in the established settlement, wage labor, assets, access to water, etc. However, it must be stressed that many refugees do not receive assistance from surrounding communities; that some refugees are exhausting their meager assets to buy food; and there will be a progressive deterioration in the condition of the refugees as they go longer and longer without appropriate assistance and sanitation.
- **A disaster waiting to happen:** The population at Jalozai remains vulnerable to rains (no shelter, no drainage, poor sanitation), the summer heat (no shelter, insufficient

water), disease outbreaks and fire (crowded conditions) and, as mentioned above, the progressive weakening of the population's physical and mental resilience. Given any one of these events, morbidity and mortality rates can be expected to soar in a very short period of time.

- **Mianwale (Punjab) as new site for Jalozai refugees:** Mianwale appears to be the most suitable site to take the refugees from Jalozai: it is a suitable site which can take up to 300,000 refugees according to one UNHCR official; it is not in the NWFP, but in Punjab, which may make it more politically acceptable to the GOP; and it is far enough from the border to 'weed out' eventual free-riders who hope to capitalize on assistance in NWFP. On the other hand, a recent NGO assessment states that the site can only carry 185,000 people because of water constraints, that flooding could be a problem and that relations between the new arrivals (mostly Tajik and other minorities) and the refugees already settled in Mianwale (about 45,000 of them, mostly Pashtun) could be tense because of the ethnic difference and because the old caseload receives no assistance while the new caseload would be dependent on assistance.

Conclusions Concerning Shamshatu:

- **Situation under control...:** The situation in Shamshatu seems under control in terms of basic needs (although MSF is investigating why mortality and morbidity figure seem to be high). The site, while windy and shadeless, offers good possibilities for the refugees to establish their compounds and build shelters. Drainage and sanitation are adequate. Work is underway (deep wells) to provide sufficient water. General ration distribution takes place. If the camp is to become permanent, which it shows all the signs of doing, further assistance will be required: shelter assistance before the hot season and social services and infrastructure (health, education).
- **...but the camp should not grow:** The current population of the camp may be less than the official 55,000, but it is probably as much as the site can take. Additional influxes will result in refugees settling in areas where water and sanitation conditions are marginal, and in tensions with abutting Pakistani communities.

Recommendations to OFDA

If necessary, OFDA should provide limited assistance in Pakistan while other, more suitable donors are able to come online. However, the main thrust of OFDA's effort in this crisis should be to increase its assistance inside Afghanistan.

- **In Pakistan**

Refugee emergencies are not part of OFDA's regular mandate. However considering the dire situation in Jalozai, OFDA should consider providing the following assistance in Pakistan until more suitable donors come on line. The main idea is to provide flexible and swift funding that strengthens the early responsiveness of NGOs that are already on the ground.

1. OFDA should ensure that the current donation of relief items and supplies are maximized. Bearing in mind the difficulties of distribution in Jalozai pending verification, the team recommended that IRC concentrate on increasing water tankering latrines and sanitation management efforts in Jalozai; that IRC liaise with SNI and MSF to contribute to an eventual one-shot distribution in Jalozai.
2. OFDA should take measure that increase the flexibility and responsiveness of one or two key NGOs on the ground. (Prime candidates seem to be MSF because of its lead role on the ground in Jalozai and Shamshatu, IRC because of its current activities in both camps and because of its invaluable umbrella grant partners, and SC (US) who have indicated an interest in helping out in the health sector if needed. This list is not exhaustive and suggestions of other NGOs may come up.) This could include the following measures:
 - Ear-marking cash (up to \$100,000) to enable NGOs to respond in a swift manner to any of the following events: a deterioration in Jalozai; a sudden move to Mianwale or any other suitable site allowed by the Pakistani authorities; an influx from Afghanistan.
 - Prepositioning relief items that are not available locally (such as reinforced plastic sheeting — most other items are available locally). A designated NGO would be responsible for the management (reception, in-country transport, warehousing, distribution) of the items with the understanding that other organizations can draw down from their stock.
 - Helping NGOs prepare for future needs (e.g., IRC wants to bring water treatment material and bladders from Kosovo).
 - Funding or partially funding an NGO emergency advisor for up to four months; the focus of the emergency advisor would be to provide added impetus to existing NGO response activities that so far rely on staff and resources that are earmarked for regular activities, and to focus on protection issues.
3. OFDA should, in the absence of other USG funding, consider funding activities in the early phase of a sudden transfer of the Jalozai camp population to Mianwale or any

other site, so as to make the move possible. This would most likely include site preparation, water and sanitation activities, and the distribution of non-food items.

- **In Afghanistan**

Afghanistan is where the crisis is hardest. Afghanistan is where the bulk of population displacement has taken place. Afghanistan is where further displacement can be avoided. Afghanistan is where the bulk of OFDA monies for the crisis should be spent.

1. OFDA should allocate priority funding community-based emergency activities that offer long term recovery and mitigation prospects such as seed distribution, drought recovery, water management, emergency health. This constitutes by far the best return in terms of support to local lives and livelihoods.
2. OFDA should consider cash grants to NGOs operating in isolated areas and towns such as Mazar-e-Sharif or the north in general; these could be used to set up contracts with local merchants and transport providers who can move goods more effectively than any relief agency.
3. Should OFDA wish to fund further airlifts, it should consider places that are more remote than Peshawar or Herat but that have operational airstrips, such as Maimana or Mazar. But it should only do so if approached by organizations on the ground.

General Recommendations:

- **Nothing permanent in terms of assistance to Jalozai:** Jalozai is not a suitable site. Costly site/water/sanitation investments will only make a marginal improvement in the conditions there, and would serve to relieve the pressure on the GOP to give the go-ahead for verification and a new site.
- **Priorities in Jalozai: verification and a new site** Verification is desirable, almost necessary. In the absence of a formal verification process, it is hard to see how an orderly transfer to a new site could take place. However, UNHCR should envision accelerating the verification process (faster than the 300 families/day of the last verification operation).
- **Mianwale:** Given the pros and cons of Mianwale discussed above, the assessment team does not feel it has enough information to issue a strong recommendation for or against Mianwale.

Assistance to Pakistan v. Afghanistan: There are clear needs for increased assistance to Pakistan — food is probably the most urgent (WFP EMOP 6321), and the needs of

refugees fleeing persecution must be covered. But at the same time, donors should be mindful of the magnet effect of assistance to Pakistan. The bulk of international assistance should go to Afghanistan — not toward IDP camps which are shown by experience to be impossible to manage and which would not provide minority populations with the protection they require — but towards sustainable, community-based programs than can help communities face down destitution and thereby avoid displacement.

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