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POPULATION DEVELOPMENT
IN
KANDAHAR PROVINCE

ESTIMATION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION NUMBER,
THE PRESENT AND ABSENT NUMBER OF FAMILIES,
AND THE POPULATION PRESSURE ON CULTIVABLE LAND.

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Introduction.

As the result of 14 year of war, the population development of Kandahar province is misty, because many of its inhabitants have fled to Pakistan and another numerous group is internal displaced. During the last years, a few attempts have been made to estimate the total number of inhabitants for the Kandahar Province, such as UNIDATA and USAID in 1990, and very recently the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (1992). Based on the available statistical information, I have tried to make new estimations on the total population number and the number of present population. Especially in 1992, a great number of refugees have decided to return back to their own villages and cities in Kandahar Province. For repatriation and development agencies it is important to know the demographic situation and its development in order to adjust their efforts to the changing situations. The repatriation and installation of the refugees could create new problems in the local communities: land disputes, availability of housing, food shortage, lack of health care and educational facilities, etc. Access to cultivable land is a pre-requisite for a sustainable livelihood for many rural families. In the densely populated districts of Kandahar Province, the availability of cultivable land is under pressure. Many families will not be able to find a livelihood in agriculture, because they do not have (enough) land or do not have access to it. For them, non-arable economic opportunities will be the only alternative; livestock breeding, kitchen gardening, food processing, handicraft, trade, transport, and other services. A second alternative is migration to other areas, where arable land is still available, or to the cities. MCI should be aware, that many poor rural households already find a great share of their income in non-agricultural activities, and in the (near) many more will have to do the same. Therefore, development activities should be created which reinforce the opportunities of poor rural households to create a livelihood in the non-agricultural sector, in order to avoid a massive migration of these poor rural families to the Afghan cities.

1. Population in 1979.

The 1979 Census estimated the total population at 567,204. The 1979 Population Census determined the urban population to be 178,409 or 31.5 percent of the total provincial population. There were 1,865 localities, of which 1,817 were main villages and 48 were sub-villages with an average population per locality of 304 persons, or approximately 43 households. The last population census of 1979 remained incomplete because of reforms instituted by the government and the civil turmoil that followed the introduction of these reforms. The census did not have separate data on population for the districts of Dand and Shega and the sub-district of Nesh. (UNIDATA: 16-18)

Population characteristics in 1979.

	settled population	density of pop. sq.km.	number of households	number of localities	average hh. size
ARGHANDAB	43,047	74	6,617	75	6.5
ARGHISTAN	19,868	5	3,504	226	5.7
KANDAHAR	277,508	1,233	35,271	190	7.9
DAMAN	17,005	4	2,692	84	6.3
DAND	-	-	-	-	-
GHORAK	5,514	3	851	50	6.5
KHAKREZ	13,166	11	2,205	114	6.0
MAIWAND	38,559	4	6,445	172	6.0
MARUF	19,040	6	3,004	285	6.3
NESH	-	-	-	-	-
PANJWAI	72,666	17	9,945	167	7.3
SHAHWALIKOT	24,966	8	4,010	286	6.2
SHEGAH	-	-	-	-	-
SHORABAK	6,616	1	979	38	6.8
SPIN BOLDAK	28,146	6	4,333	174	6.5
REG	1,103	0	165	4	6.7
TOTAL	567,204	12	80,021	1,865	7.1

source: (UNIDATA: 17)

UNIDATA placed family size at 7. Household size has been affected in many ways. Poor security conditions and damage to shelter caused by war forced families with close ethnic and clan ties to live together. These families are common in urban and rural areas attacked by the mujahideen or subjected to government air raids. So the war sometimes increased the average household size. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the war, the younger generation fled the country. This decreased the household size. People over 40 usually stayed at home.(UNIDATA: 18)

2. Population in 1990.

In 1990, UNIDATA estimated the total population of Kandahar province at 737,762, of which 445,120 live actually in the province, and 292,640 are refugees in Pakistan and Iran. Without the refugees, the population density is 9 in 1990. The urban population constitute 8.2% of the total. The number of nomads is estimated at 53,796.(UNIDAT: x)

Population and refugees: 1979 and 1990

	population		refugees		adjusted 1990 pop. at home	population per sq. km.		
	1979	1990	Pakistan	Iran		1979	1990	1990 adj.
ARGHANDAB	40,413	62,029	17,158	2,000	42,871	67	106	73
ARGHISTAN *	18,652	24,031	39,952	-	4,806	4	6	1
KANDAHAR	172,211	225,430	30,497	20,200	174,733	4,438	5,810	4,019
DAMAN	15,965	23,594	3,192	-	20,402	12	17	17
DAND	88,320	115,512	15,627	5,000	94,885	166	217	208
GHORAK	5,177	5,849	59	-	5,790	3	4	4
KHAKREZ	12,361	15,334	1,358	-	13,976	11	14	12
MAIWAND	36,200	51,481	25,333	5,000	21,148	3	5	2
MARUF *	17,875	19,020	33,061	-	3,804	5	6	1
NESH	7,276	9,624	-	-	9,624	4	5	5
PANJWAI	68,220	92,409	68,375	5,000	19,034	17	23	5
SHAHWALIKOT	23,439	50,838	1,813	-	49,025	8	17	17
SHEGAH	4,499	6,053	-	-	6,053	1	2	2
SHORABAK *	6,211	6,323	9,049	-	1,265	1	1	0
S. BOLDAK *	21,925	29,500	46,961	-	5,900	5	7	1
REG	1,036	735	-	-	735	0	0	0
TOTAL	539,780	737,762	292,435	37,200	474,051	11	15	10

* nomadic population is not included.

Compiled from USAID/UNIDATA Mapping Service, 1990.

source: (UNIDATA: 19-20)

With the refugee population, the total population of Kandahar province increased with 197,982 (+36.7%) in the 11 years from 1979 to 1990; 3,3% per year. Without the refugee population, the population decreased with 65,051 persons (-12,2%). In 1990, 329,635 (registered) refugees from Kandahar province were still living in Pakistan and Iran; 44,7 percent of the total provincial population in 1990. Of those who became refugees, 89 percent moved to Pakistan and 11 percent to Iran. The approximately 240,000 refugees from Kandahar province account for nearly 10 percent of all Afghan refugees registered in Pakistan. Considerable internal displacement of the population has also taken place toward Kandahar City, whose pre-war population of nearly 200,000 is thought to have doubled. Should all refugees return in the near future, the country's population will double by the year 2010.(UNIDATA: 20-21)

3. Population in 1992.

During July and August 1992, The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has conducted a survey in Kandahar Province, which covered 523 villages in the five districts of Arghandab, Arghistan, Dand, Panjwai and Shega. Of these, 46 villages were found to be abandoned. In all, a total of 3,361 individuals from 477 inhabited villages participated in the interviews. Based on their field experience, the enumerators estimated that they surveyed all of the villages in the districts of Arghandab and Shega. For Arghistan, Dand and Panjwai, they estimated that they covered about half of the villages in the district. Based on this information, I have made an extrapolation of the results in order to estimate the total population number for the surveyed districts and for the whole Kandahar Province.

3.1. SCA Survey 1992.

Number of families in the 477 inhabited surveyed villages in 1992.

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF INHABITED VILLAGES	NUMBER OF ABANDONED VILLAGES	NUMBER OF FAMILIES 1991	NUMBER OF FAMILIES 1992	CHANGE 1991-1992		NUMBER OF ABSENT FAMILIES	NUMBER OF TOTAL FAMILIES	PRESENT AS % OF TOTAL FAMILIES
					NO. FAM.	%			
ARGHANDAB	118	2	5,307	6,413	1,106	21	1,888	8,301	77
ARGHISTAN	110	6	1,631	2,288	657	40	1,239	3,527	65
DAND	81	31	1,754	3,419	1,665	95	4,380	7,799	44
PANJWAI	119	0	4,159	7,158	2,999	72	2,150	9,308	77
SHEGA	49	7	380	742	362	95	968	1,710	43
TOTAL	477	46	13,231	20,020	6,789	51	10,625	30,645	65

source: SCA (October, 1992): 3-10)

In aggregate, about two-thirds of the total population of the 477 inhabited villages was present during July and August 1992. SCA Assumes that there are between six and nine individuals per family. The present population of the 477 inhabited villages ranges from 120,000 to 180,000 individuals. Using the same assumptions about family size, there are between 64,000 and 95,000 individuals that have not returned to the inhabited surveyed villages in the five districts. The size of the absent population increased if the abandoned villages are taken into account. This is especially true for Dand which has 31 abandoned villages. Assuming that abandoned villages are of average size for their districts implies that an additional 21,000 to 32,000 individuals have not returned. (SCA: 10)

I prefer to use an average family size of 7.1 individuals, based on the 1979 Census.

Total population of the 477 inhabited villages, based on the assumption that the average family size is 7.1 individuals, in 1992.

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF INHABITED VILLAGES	NUMBER OF ABANDONED VILLAGES	NUMBER OF POPULATION 1991	NUMBER OF POPULATION 1992	CHANGE 1991-1992		NUMBER OF ABSENT POPULATION	NUMBER OF TOTAL POPULATION	PRESENT AS % OF TOTAL POPULATION
					NO. POP.	%			
ARGHANDAB	118	2	37,680	45,532	7,853	21	13,405	58,937	77
ARGHISTAN	110	6	11,580	16,245	4,665	40	8,797	25,042	65
DAND	81	31	12,453	24,275	11,822	95	31,098	55,373	44
PANJWAI	119	0	29,529	50,822	21,293	72	15,265	66,087	77
SHEGA	49	7	2,698	5,268	2,570	95	6,873	12,141	43
TOTAL	477	46	93,940	142,142	48,202	51	75,438	217,580	65

Average size of a village, total population of abandoned villages, and total population of the five districts. (average family size is 7.1 individuals) in 1992

DISTRICT	AVERAGE NUMBER OF FAMILIES PER VILLAGE			NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	NUMBER OF ABANDONED VILLAGES	TOTAL NUMBER OF POPULATION IN ABANDONED VILLAGES	TOTAL POPULATION IN INHABITED AND ABANDONED VILLAGES
	PRESENT	ABSENT	TOTAL				
ARGHANDAB	54.3	16.0	70.3	499	2	998	59,935
ARGHISTAN	20.8	11.3	32.1	228	6	1,368	26,410
DAND	42.5	54.4	96.9	688	31	21,328	76,701
PANJWAI	60.1	18.1	78.2	556	0	0	66,087
SHEGA	15.1	19.8	34.9	248	7	1,736	13,877
TOTAL	41.8	23.4	65.2	463	46	25,430	243,010

The total number of individuals, who are absent in the 46 abandoned villages should be estimated at 25,430 persons. Therefore, the total population of the five district could be estimated at 243,010 persons, of which 142,142 individuals were present in the 523 villages in July and August of 1992; 58.5% of the total estimated population.

The average number of families of the surveyed villages is estimated at 65.2, of which 41.8 families were present and 23.4 were absent at the moment of the survey. The distribution of village size is presented in the next table.

Distribution of village size (number of present and absent families) in 1992.

DISTRICT	LESS THAN 50		51 - 100		101 - 200		MORE THAN 200		TOTAL
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	
ARGHANDAB	51	43.2	54	45.8	10	8.5	3	2.5	118
ARGHISTAN	95	84.8	15	13.4	2	1.8	0	-	112
DAND	37	45.7	22	27.2	15	18.5	7	8.6	81
PANJWAI	67	55.8	29	24.7	13	10.8	11	9.2	120
SHEGA	40	81.6	7	14.3	2	4.1	0	-	49
TOTAL	290	60.4	127	26.5	42	8.8	21	4.4	480

source: SCA: 11

3.2. Estimation of the total population for the five districts.

The estimation is that the SCA Survey covered all the villages in the districts of Arghandab and Shega and about half of the villages in the districts of Arghistan, Dand and Panjwai. Based on this estimation, it is possible to estimate the total number of villages in all five districts.

Estimation of the total number inhabited and abandoned villages in the five surveyed districts in 1992.

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF SURVEYED INHABITED VILLAGES	TOTAL NUMBER OF INHABITED VILLAGES	NUMBER OF SURVEYED ABANDONED VILLAGES	PERCENT OF TOTAL SURVEYED VILLAGES	TOTAL NUMBER OF ABANDONED VILLAGES	TOTAL NUMBER VILLAGES
ARGHANDAB	118	118	2	2	2	120
ARGHISTAN	110	220	6	5	12	232
DAND	81	161	31	28	63	224
PANJWAI	119	238	0	0	0	238
SHEGA	49	49	7	13	7	56
TOTAL	477	786	46	9	84	870

On the basis of the estimated total number of inhabited (786) and abandoned (84) villages in the five districts, it is possible to estimate the total size of the population. In order to estimate the total population size, the following assumptions are made; the average family size is 7.1 individuals, and the non-surveyed villages have the same average size as the surveyed villages have.

Estimation of the total size of the population of 870 inhabited and abandoned villages in the five surveyed districts in 1992.

DISTRICT	TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES			TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS			PRESENT POPULATION AS PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION
	PRESENT	ABSENT	TOTAL	PRESENT	ABSENT	TOTAL	
ARGHANDAB	6,413	2,029	8,442	45,532	14,406	59,938	76.0%
ARGHISTAN	4,576	2,863	7,439	32,490	20,327	52,817	61.5%
DAND	6,838	14,865	21,703	48,550	105,542	154,092	31.5%
PANJWAI	14,316	4,300	18,616	101,643	30,530	132,173	76.9%
SHEGA	742	1,212	1,954	5,268	8,605	13,873	38.0%
TOTAL	32,885	25,269	58,154	233,483	179,410	412,893	56.5%

It is now possible to compare the total estimated population size of 1992 with the figures of 1979 and 1990, in order to see if a trend is visible.

Population characteristics of the five districts in 1979, 1990 and 1992.

DISTRICT	TOTAL POP. 1979	TOTAL POP. 1990	PRESENT POP. 1990	PRESENT POP. AS PERCENT TOTAL POP. 1990	TOTAL POP. 1992	PRESENT POP. 1992	PRESENT POP. AS PERCENT TOTAL POP. 1992
ARGHANDAB	40,413	62,029	42,871	69.1%	59,931	45,532	76.0%
ARGHISTAN*	18,652	24,031	4,806	20.0%	52,817	32,490	61.5%
DAND	88,320	115,512	94,885	82.1%	154,092	48,550	31.5%
PANJWAI	68,220	92,409	19,034	20.6%	132,173	101,643	76.9%
SHEGA	4,499	6,053	6,053	100.0%	13,873	5,268	38.0%
TOTAL	220,104	300,034	167,649	55.9%	412,893	233,476	56.5%

* nomadic population not included. source: UNIDATA: 19-20; SCA 1992.

If we compare the population sizes of 1990 and 1992 for the different districts, the following trends can be identified, which need an explanation. For Arghandab District the total population size should have decreased from 62,029 persons in 1990 to 59,931 in 1992 (-3.4%) The total present population shows an increase of 2,661 persons (+6.2%) from 1990 to 1992. The enormous increase in population

size for Arghistan District can be explained by the fact, that in 1990 the nomadic population was not included in the statistics. For Dand District, the sharp decrease of present population is remarkable; from 94,885 persons in 1990 to 48,550 in 1992 (-48.8%) Consequently, the total population/present population rate fell from 82.1% in 1990 to 31.5%. I suppose that the present population size of 1990 is far over-estimated.(see refugee statistics in § 3.4) For Panjwai District the present population size shows a sharp increase of 434%! The 1990 statistics claimed that there were no absent families in Shega District. But the 1992 SCA Survey shows that still 43.5% of the population is absent in this district. The total population size of the five districts together shows a sharp increase from 300,034 individuals in 1990 to 412,893 persons in 1992 (+37.6%) The size of the present population increased even sharper with 39.3% between 1990 and 1992. In the total population size of 1990 the nomadic population from Arghistan District are not included. The Office of A.I.D. Representative for Afghanistan Affairs' study *Afghanistan's Population Inside and Out* estimated the total number of nomadic population in Arghistan District in 1990 at 20,728. If this number of nomadic population is included, the total population number for this district rises to 44,759 individuals. It is impossible to estimate how many of the nomadic population were present in Arghistan District in 1990. Therefore, we should be careful with the interpretation of the different trends.

In 1990, the total population size for Kandahar Province was 737,762 persons (the nomadic population of Arghistan, Maruf, Shorabak, and Spin Boldak were not included). The USAID Population Study estimated the total number of nomadic population at 65,923 persons in 1990. If this number is included in the total population size for Kandahar Province, it increases to 803,684. If we extrapolate the increase rate of the five surveyed districts to the total population size of Kandahar Province, this province could have a total population of about 1 million inhabitants in 1992. The total present population of Kandahar Province could be estimated at around 565,000 individuals at home in 1992. Hence, the number of refugees could be around 435,000 persons; 43.5% of the total provincial population.

3.3. Population density.

On the basis of the available population figures, it is possible to calculate the population density for the five surveyed districts. (per km²)

Population density for total area.

DISTRICT	1979	1990		1992	
		TOTAL POP.	PRESENT POP.	TOTAL POP.	PRESENT POP.
ARGHANDAB	67	106	73	102	78
ARGHISTAN	4	6	1	12	8
DAND	166	217	208	290	91
PANJWAI	17	23	5	33	25
SHEGA	1	2	2	5	2
TOTAL	18	24	14	33	19

source: UNIDATA: 19-20; SCA 1992.

The population density for the five surveyed districts has a wide range: from 2 persons per square kilometer in Shega District to 91 persons per km² in Dand District in 1992. If all the absent families should return to their villages and cities, the population density will increase sharply; in Dand from 91 to 290 persons per km², while in Shega District the population density will rise with 150 percent; from 2 to 5 persons per km². The average population density for the five surveyed districts together will increase from 19 to 33 persons per square kilometer. If all the refugees have had returned to the five surveyed districts, the population density would have been increased from 18 in 1979 to 33 persons per km² in 1992: an increase of 83.3%.

3.3.1. Population pressure on arable land.

The population density related to cultivable and cultivated land shows the following pattern.

Population density for cultivated and cultivable land in 1980 (area in jeribs)

	FALLOW 1980	CULTIVATED 1980	CULTIVATED/ FALLOW RATIO	CULTIVABLE LAND 1980	POPULATION 1979	POPULATION DENSITY	
						CULTIVATED	CULTIVABLE
ARGHANDAB	10,000	49,000	4.9 : 1	59,000	40,413	1.21	1.46
ARGHISTAN	10,580	77,340	7.3 : 1	87,920	18,652	4.15	4.71
DAND	76,180	214,310	2.8 : 1	290,490	88,320	2.43	3.29
PANJWAI	20,190	70,980	3.5 : 1	91,170	68,220	1.04	1.34
SHEGAH	-	-	-	-	4,499	-	-
TOTAL	116,950	411,630	3.5 : 1	528,580	220,104	1.87	2.40

source: UNIDATA: 19-20, 44.

In 1980, for each person in one of the five districts an average 1.87 jeribs of cultivated and 2.40 jeribs was available. In Arghandab and Panjwai Districts the population pressure was higher. An average family of 7.1 persons had an average access to 13.28 jeribs of cultivated land and 17.05 jeribs of cultivable land in 1980.

Population density for cultivated and cultivable land in 1990 (area in jeribs)

	FALLOW 1990	CULTIVATED 1990	CULTIVATED/ FALLOW RATIO	CULTIVABLE LAND 1990	POPULATION 1990	POPULATION DENSITY	
						CULTIVATED	CULTIVABLE
ARGHANDAB	8,070	50,930	6.3 : 1	59,000	62,029	0.82	0.95
ARGHISTAN	1,890	86,030	45.5 : 1	87,920	24,031	3.58	3.66
DAND	145,330	145,160	1.0 : 1	290,490	115,512	1.26	2.51
PANJWAI	7,330	83,840	11.4 : 1	91,170	92,409	0.91	0.99
SHEGAH	-	-	-	-	6,053	-	-
TOTAL	162,620	365,960	2,3 : 1	528,580	300,034	1.22	1.76

source: UNIDATA: 19-20, 46.

In 1990, the cultivated area decreased with 45,670 jeribs between 1980 and 1990: -11.1%. The total (estimated) population increased from 220,104 to 300,034 individuals between 1980 and 1990; an increase of 79,930 (+ 36.3% or 3.6% a year). The average access to cultivated and cultivable land decreased to 1.22 and 1.76 jeribs, respectively.

On the assumption that in 1992 the total area of cultivated and cultivable land was the same as in 1990, the pressure on this agricultural resource increased further: 0.89 and 1.28 jeribs, respectively.

Population density for cultivated and cultivable land in 1992 (area in jeribs)

	FALLOW 1990	CULTIVATED 1990	CULTIVATED/ FALLOW RATIO	CULTIVABLE LAND 1990	POPULATION 1992 ESTIMATED	POPULATION DENSITY	
						CULTIVATED	CULTIVABLE
ARGHANDAB	8,070	50,930	6.3 : 1	59,000	59,931	0.85	0.98
ARGHISTAN	1,890	86,030	45.5 : 1	87,920	52,817	1.63	1.66
DAND	145,330	145,160	1.0 : 1	290,490	154,092	0.94	1.89
PANJWAI	7,330	83,840	11.4 : 1	91,170	132,173	0.63	0.69
SHEGAH	-	-	-	-	13,873	-	-
TOTAL	162,620	365,960	2,3 : 1	528,580	412,893	0.89	1.28

source: UNIDATA: 46; SCA 1992.

Population density for cultivated and cultivable land in 1990 and 1992, related to present population (area in jeribs)

	CULTIVATED 1990	CULTIVABLE LAND 1990	POPULATION PRESENT IN 1990	POPULATION DENSITY		POPULATION PRESENT IN 1992 (EST)	POPULATION DENSITY	
				CULTIVATED	CULTIVABLE		CULTIVAT.	CULTIVAB.
ARGHANDAB	50,930	59,000	42,871	1.19	1.38	45,532	1.12	1.30
ARGHISTAN	86,030	87,920	4,806	17.90	18.29	32,490	2.65	2.71
DAND	145,160	290,490	94,885	1.53	3.06	48,550	2.99	5.98
PANJWAI	83,840	91,170	19,034	4.40	4.79	101,643	0.82	0.90
SHEGAH	-	-	6,053	-	-	5,268	-	-
TOTAL	365,960	528,580	167,649	2.18	3.15	233,476	1.57	2.26

source: UNIDATA: 19-20, 46; SCA 1992.

If we consider the estimated present population in 1990 and 1992, the pressure on cultivated and cultivable land shows the following pattern. In 1990, the average access for the five surveyed districts was 2.18 and 3.15 jeribs per persons, while in 1992 the population pressure increased to 1.57 jeribs for cultivated land and 2.26 jeribs for cultivable land.

Total number of families and average access to cultivated and cultivable land in 1990 and 1992. (area in jeribs; average family size is 7.1)

	CULTIVATED 1990	CULTIVABLE LAND 1990	TOTAL NO. FAMILIES 1990	POPULATION DENSITY		TOTAL NO. FAMILIES 1992 (EST)	POPULATION DENSITY	
				CULTIVATED	CULTIVABLE		CULTIVAT.	CULTIVAB.
ARGHANDAB	50,930	59,000	8,736	5.83	6.75	8,441	6.03	6.99
ARGHISTAN	86,030	87,920	3,385	25.42	25.97	7,439	11.56	11.82
DAND	145,160	290,490	16,269	8.92	17.86	21,703	6.69	13.38
PANJWAI	83,840	91,170	13,015	6.44	7.00	18,616	4.50	4.90
SHEGAH	-	-	853	-	-	1,954	-	-
TOTAL	365,960	528,580	42,258	8.66	12.50	58,154	6.29	9.09

source: UNIDATA: 19-20, 46; SCA 1992.

For the total (estimated) number of families (present and absent), the average access to cultivated and cultivable land was 8.66 and 12.50 jeribs per family in 1990, while in 1992, the pressure has risen to 6.29 and 9.09 jeribs for an average family of 7.1 individuals.

Number of present families and average access to cultivated and cultivable land in 1990 and 1992. (area in jeribs; average family size is 7.1)

	CULTIVATED 1990	CULTIVABLE LAND 1990	NO. PRESENT FAMILIES 1990	POPULATION DENSITY		NO. PRESENT FAMILIES 1992 (EST)	POPULATION DENSITY	
				CULTIVATED	CULTIVABLE		CULTIVAT.	CULTIVAB.
ARGHANDAB	50,930	59,000	6,038	8.43	9.77	6,413	7.94	9.20
ARGHISTAN	86,030	87,920	677	127.08	129.87	4,576	18.80	19.21
DAND	145,160	290,490	13,364	10.86	21.74	6,838	21.23	42.48
PANJWAI	83,840	91,170	2,681	31.27	34.01	14,316	5.86	6.37
SHEGAH	-	-	853	-	-	742	-	-
TOTAL	365,960	528,580	23,613	15.50	22.39	32,885	11.13	16.07

source: UNIDATA: 19-20, 46; SCA 1992.

If only the present number of families are counted, the average access of an average family to cultivated and cultivable land was 15.50 and 22.39 jeribs, while in 1992 it was reduced to 11.13 and 16.07 jeribs. In 1992, the population pressure of present families on arable land was already high in Arghandab and Panjwai Districts. If all the refugees will be repatriated to their own districts, the population pressure on arable land will sharply increase; in Arghandab and Panjwai District the average access to cultivable land for an average family will be 6.99 and 4.90 jeribs; 1.4 and 0.98 hectares!

3.3.2. Village size.

Distribution of village size for 786 inhabited villages in the five surveyed districts (number of present and absent families) in 1992.

DISTRICT	LESS THAN 50		51 - 100		101 - 200		MORE THAN 200		TOTAL
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	
ARGHANDAB	51	43.2	54	45.8	10	8.5	3	2.5	118
ARGHISTAN	187	84.8	29	13.4	4	1.8	0	-	220
DAND	74	45.7	44	27.2	30	18.5	14	8.6	161
PANJWAI	133	55.8	59	24.7	26	10.8	22	9.2	238
SHEGA	40	81.6	7	14.3	2	4.1	0	-	49
TOTAL	485	61.7	193	24.6	72	9.2	39	5.0	786

source: SCA 1992: 11

More than 60 percent of the villages in the five surveyed districts are smaller than 50 families (355 individuals), 25 percent have a size of 51 to 100 families (355-710 inhabitants), while nearly 15 percent of all the villages have a population number, which is larger than 100 families. Especially, the villages in Arghistan and Shega Districts are small: 84.6 and 81.6 percent are smaller than 50 families. The predominance of relatively smaller villages in Arghistan and Shega represents the constraint of resources on settlement size; particularly water and irrigable land.(SCA: 11)

3.4. Refugees and returnees.

Since 1991, and largely in the period May through August 1992, the population of the surveyed districts has increased by more than 50 percent, growing from 13,231 to 20,020 families. A total of 6,296 families were identified as repatriated refugees, or about one-third of the total of 20,020 families. In the six months prior to the survey, 5,384 families (86 percent of the repatriated families) have repatriated from Pakistan. Repatriation in the six months prior to the survey accounts for 79 percent of the return since 1991.

Total population and repatriated families for the 477 surveyed villages in the five districts.

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF FAMILIES 1991	NUMBER OF FAMILIES 1992	CHANGE 1991-1992		IDENTIFIED REPATRIATED FAMILIES			REPATRIATED FAMILIES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL PRESENT FAMILIES
			NUMBER	%	1992	PRIOR 1992	TOTAL	
ARGHANDAB	5,307	6,413	1,106	21	674	53	727	11.3%
ARGHISTAN	1,631	2,288	657	40	576	330	906	39.6%
DAND	1,754	3,419	1,665	95	1,387	76	1,463	42.8%
PANJWAI	4,159	7,158	2,999	72	2,402	449	2,851	39.8%
SHEGA	380	742	362	95	345	4	349	47.0%
TOTAL	13,231	20,020	6,789	51	5,384	912	6,296	31.4%

source: SCA: 5-6.

Proportion of 1992 repatriated families in total number of repatriated families and 1991-1992 population increase in the five surveyed districts.

DISTRICT	REPATRIATED FAMILIES		1992 REPATRIATED FAMILIES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL REPATRIATED FAMILIES	REPATRIATED FAMILIES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION INCREASE 1991-1992
	1992	TOTAL		
ARGHANDAB	674	727	92.7%	60.9%
ARGHISTAN	576	906	63.6%	87.7%
DAND	1,387	1,463	94.8%	83.3%
PANJWAI	2,402	2,851	84.3%	80.1%
SHEGA	345	349	98.9%	95.3%
TOTAL	5,384	6,296	85.5%	79.3%

source: SCA: 5-6.

The statistics show us that a great majority of repatriated families have returned during the first 8 months of 1992. The average number for all five surveyed districts is 85.5%, but for the districts of Arghandab, Dand and Shega the proportion of 1992 returnees in the total number of repatriated families was higher than 90 percent.

Estimation of repatriated families and total number of population in 786 villages in the five surveyed districts.

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF FAMILIES 1991	NUMBER OF FAMILIES 1992	CHANGE 1991-1992		IDENTIFIED REPATRIATED FAMILIES			REPATRIATED FAMILIES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL PRESENT FAMILIES
			NUMBER	%	1992	PRIOR 1992	TOTAL	
ARGHANDAB	5,307	6,413	1,106	21	674	53	727	11.3%
ARGHISTAN	3,262	4,576	1,314	40	1,152	660	1,812	39.6%
DAND	3,508	6,838	3,330	95	2,774	152	2,926	42.8%
PANJWAI	8,318	14,316	5,998	72	4,802	898	5,702	39.8%
SHEGA	380	742	362	95	345	4	349	47.0%
TOTAL	20,775	32,885	12,110	58	9,749	1,767	11,516	35.0%

source: SCA 1992.

Estimation of the time in which all refugees will be repatriated in the tempo of 1992 for the 870 inhabited and abandoned the five surveyed districts.

DISTRICT	NUMBER OF FAMILIES REPATRIATED DURING FIRST 8 MONTHS OF 1992	NUMBER OF ABSENT FAMILIES	ABSENT/ 1992 REPATRIATION RATIO	REQUIRED NUMBER OF MONTHS
ARGHANDAB	674	2,029	3.0 : 1	24.0
ARGHISTAN	1,152	2,863	2.5 : 1	19.9
DAND	2,774	14,865	5.4 : 1	42.9
PANJWAI	4,804	4,300	0.9 : 1	7.2
SHEGA	345	1,212	3.5 : 1	28.1
TOTAL	9,749	25,269	2.6 : 1	20.7

source: SCA 1992.

In 1992, an estimated number of 25,269 families in the five surveyed districts were still absent and lived as refugees in Pakistan and Iran. During the first 8 months, an average of 1,219 families returned to one of the five surveyed districts a month. In this tempo, all the 25,269 absent families could be repatriated in 20.7 months. But for the separate districts, the required number of months for repatriating all their absent families in the tempo of the first 8 months of 1992 shows great difference: from 7.2 months for Panjwai District to 42.9 months for Dand District. This calculation only gives an indication of the time that is required to repatriate all the absent families to their own districts. The reality is more complex.

Summary and conclusion.

In 1992, the number of repatriated families in the five surveyed districts has increased sharply. UNIDATA estimated the total population number at 737,762 in 1990 (nomadic population not included). Based on the SCA 1992 Survey in the five districts, I estimate the total population of Kandahar Province at about 1 million in 1992. This means that the total population increased with 6 percent a year between 1979 and 1992. The SCA 1992 Survey mentions that 58.5% of the total population was present in 1992; 5.3% of the villages were abandoned. The average inhabited village has 65.2 families, of which 23.4 were absent during the survey. In 1992, 61.7 percent of all the villages in the five surveyed districts had a size of less than 50 families (\pm 350 inhabitants).

The population density in the five surveyed districts was 18 persons per square kilometer in 1979; in 1990, it was 24 persons/km² for the total population and 14 individuals/km² for the present population. In 1992, the population density for the total estimated population was 33 persons/km² and 19 for the estimated present population. Consequently, the population pressure on cultivable land has also risen, which could create new problems in the local communities. In 1990, the population pressure on cultivated and cultivable land was 1.22 and 1.76 jeribs for the total estimated population, while for the estimated present population the pressure was 2.18 and 3.15 jeribs. In 1992, the average access of the total population to cultivated and cultivable land was 0.89 and 1.28 jeribs; for the estimated present population the average access was 1.57 and 2.26 jeribs. An average family (7.1 persons), which was present in 1990, had an average access to 15.50 jeribs of cultivated land and 22.39 jeribs of cultivable land. In 1992, this average access had decreased to 11.13 and 16.06 jeribs, respectively. If all the refugees had returned to Southwest Afghanistan in 1990, the average access to cultivated land for an average family was 8.66 jeribs; and should this be the case in 1992 the access for an average family was 6.29 jeribs. For the total amount of cultivable land, the average access of the total estimated number of families was 12.50 and 9.09 jeribs, respectively in 1990 and 1992. In order to increase the access of the returnees to cultivable land, all the irrigation systems should be rehabilitated. But this will not be enough, because the access to important agricultural inputs (fertilizer, seed, and pesticides) is a big problem in order to start agricultural activities and to assure a livelihood for the rural families. If all the refugees will return to their local communities in the rural areas of Kandahar Province, there will be not enough cultivable land available for all of them. Especially the poor rural families without land will have to look for alternative economic opportunities. MCI could help these families with special programs, which are focused on poverty alleviation. Consequently, non-agricultural activities should also be considered by MCI.

If all the refugees from Southwest Afghanistan will return in the same pace as during the first eight months of 1992 in the five surveyed districts, it would take 20.7 months to repatriate all the (registered) refugees to their own communities; for Dand District it would even take 42.9 months. If this will happen, it would create (more) problems, because for many of these returned refugees there will be no housing and the food shortage will aggravate. Also the pressure on the available cultivated land will increase sharply, which will create land disputes and tension in the local communities. The availability of social services (drinking water, education, and health care) is already insufficient for the actual present population, and will become worse if all the refugees return to their "homes".

LITERATURE.

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