

Monthly Migration Movements

Financing migration journeys

March 2018

Introduction

The Mixed Migration Monitoring Initiative (4Mi) in Asia region aims at gathering data on regional mixed migration flows. Data is currently collected in Afghanistan as well as with Afghans on the move toward the East and West and analysis are produced monthly. The purpose is to increase knowledge about drivers of movement and protection risks faced by Afghans on the move.

4Mi is a core activity for the Mixed Migration Center (MMC), which has been established in February 2018. It brings together various existing regional initiatives – hosted or led by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) – engaged in data collection, research, analysis and policy development on mixed migration issues into a new global network of mixed migration expertise. The MMC focuses on five core regions: Eastern Africa & Yemen, North Africa & Southern Mediterranean, West Africa, Middle East & Eastern Mediterranean and Asia. The 30 staff members of MMC are based in Geneva and Copenhagen and in its regional hubs Amman, Dakar, Nairobi, Tunis and Kabul, where it works in close cooperation with regional partners, stakeholders and donors.. To read more about MMC please look at:

[Introduction to Mixed Migration Centre.pdf](#)

This report is focused on how Afghans finance their migration journeys. Migration requires the allocation of funds to cover journey costs. Some migrants start their journey with enough money to travel straight to their envisioned destination, while many others start with a small amount of money and stop on the way to borrow, work, etc. to provide the required resources. Sometimes, acquisition of financial resources is so difficult that these stops take a long time, so that the country of transit may turn to the country of destination.

The findings are based on a sample size of 253 interviews with Afghan interviewed in Afghanistan during February 2018 who are in a process of leaving the country.

Main financial sources prior to departure

According to the 4Mi data, financing a migration journey for Afghans, largely depends on individual financial capacity/own savings and support networks such as family,

friends and relatives who they borrow money from to cover costs for the journey.

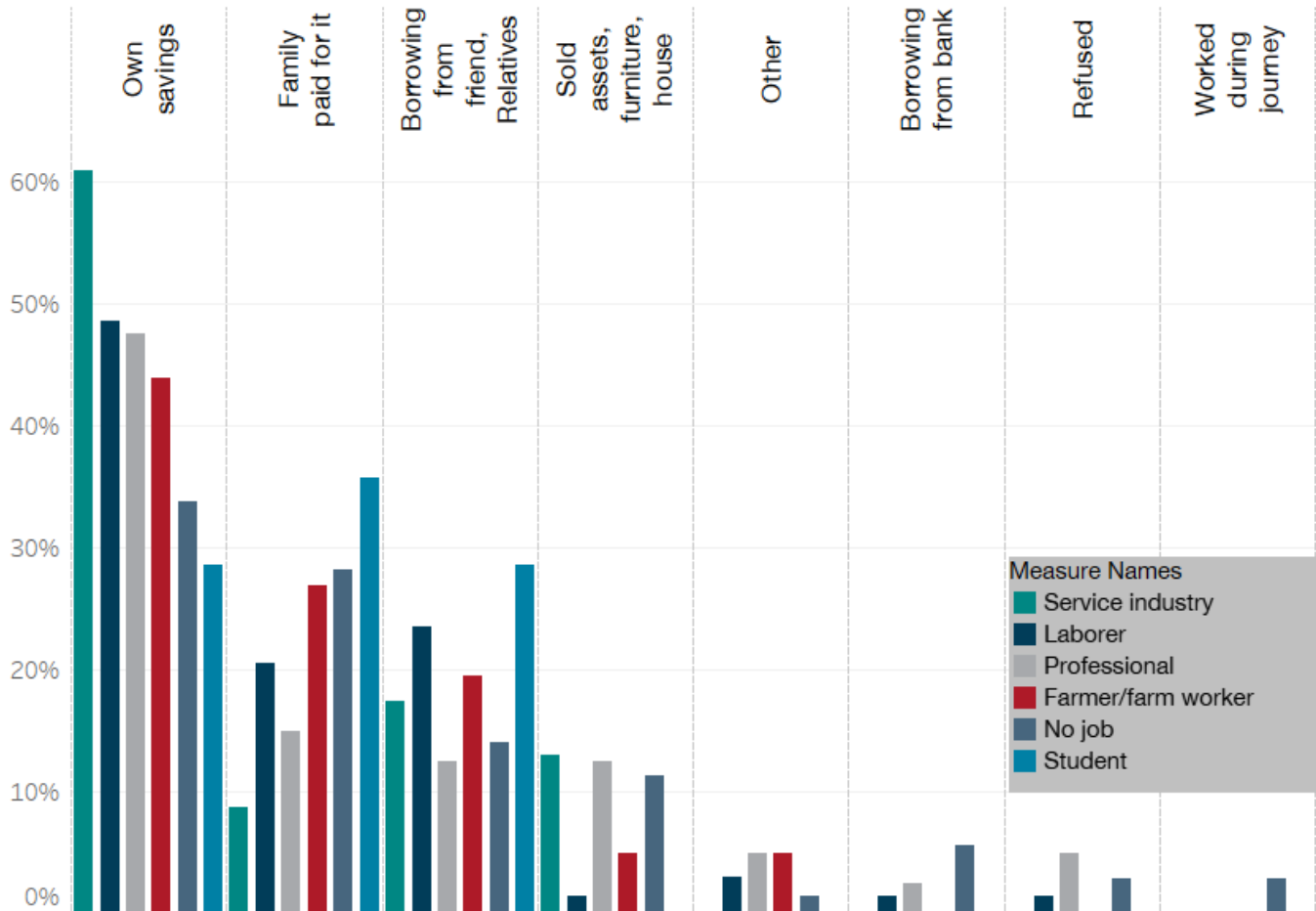
As shown in Graph 1, the most important source of finance among Afghan is their own savings independently on occupation. According to the 4Mi monitors however and in case of irregular journeys, migrants tend to not bring their entire saving with them on the route, but rather give some of their money to someone trusted - a third party or hawala network in the country of origin - to only guarantee payment upon safe arrival to their destination country.

Paying for the journey with financials provided by family or borrowing from friends and extended relatives are also important ways of financing a migration journey for Afghans. Usually, as mentioned in previous reports, sending a family member as an economic migrant to neighboring countries is considered as a livelihood strategy among Afghan families (see: March & April 2017 CASWA 4Mi report). Therefore, families provide the necessary funds to cover the travel costs. The financial support from family members, friends, and relatives can come from both origin country and the diaspora.

Afghans try as far as possible to prepare the full journey costs before setting foot on route to reach to their destination as soon as possible and not have too long stops on the route in order to find the required money to continue their journey. It's only a small number of interviewees who plan to work during journey (0.8%) and pay for the costs along the way.

Graph 1. Main financial sources disaggregated by occupation

Main financial sources disaggregated by occupation
(n=253)

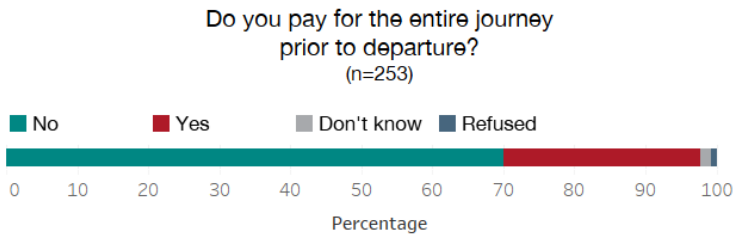


Payment arrangements

In cases of regular migration journeys payments include standard payments for visa fees, travel tickets, insurance, etc. These arrangements are different for irregular movements. There are three prevalent payment methods among 4Mi interviewees; full payment for the entire journey prior to departure, payment for travel along the route, and payment post safe arrival at destination country. Although most Afghan migrants prepare the full cost of the journey prior to departure, the latter seems to be the preferred option among Afghans (see Graph 3). Since most Afghan migrants tend to follow the same irregular migration routes, the costs and various mechanisms for payment are to a certain extent agreed among migrants and smuggling networks.

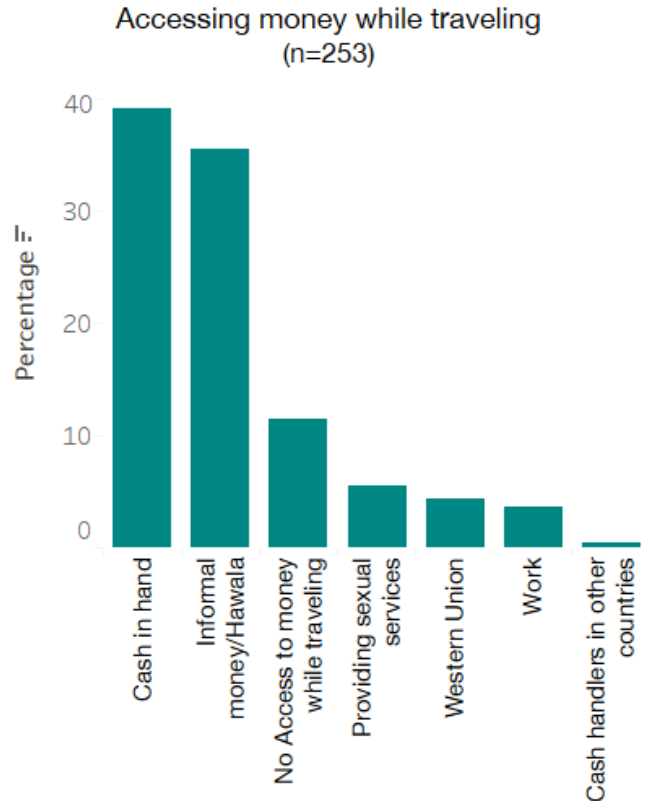
Based on contextual information provided by the 4Mi monitors, following an agreement with a smuggler, a payment is usually done by transferring money through an official currency exchange office or depositing the money to a trusted third party (usually Hawaladar). The agreed money is blocked by the guarantor and will be released to the smuggler once the migrant has arrived at the destination.

Graph 2. Do you pay for the entire journey prior to departure?

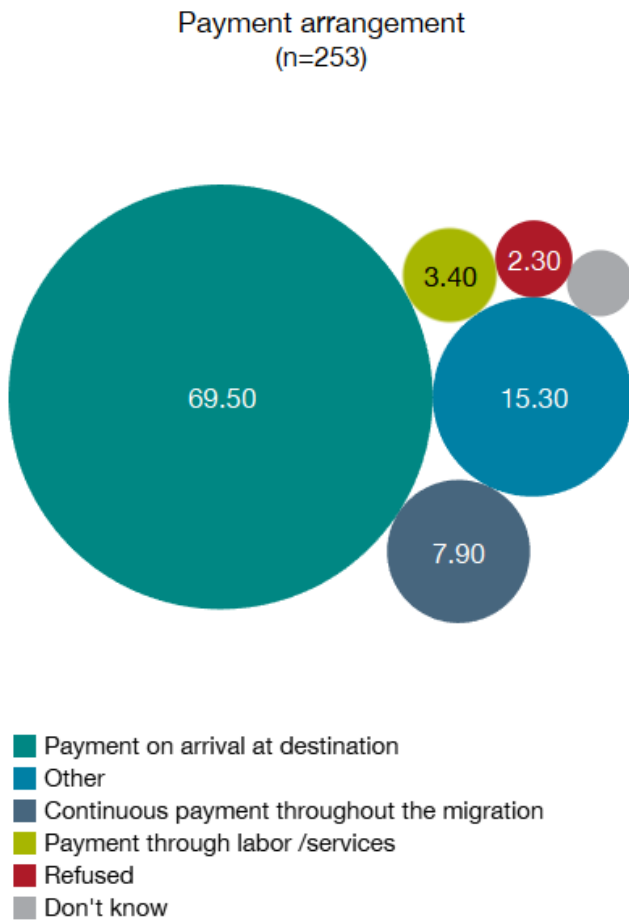


Receiving money through informal money transfer systems (35.6%) is another way for Afghan migrants to access money while traveling.

Graph 4. Accessing money while traveling



Graph 3. Payment arrangement



Accessing money on route

Most 4Mi respondents report that they plan to save enough cash for the entire route, so that they do not face financial problem along the way (39%), see graph 4. It may be assumed, that having large amount of money at hand makes them an ideal target for thieves, criminal groups and militants in Afghanistan and along the route. The previous 4Mi reports show that robbery is one of the frequent incidents that occur on the route to Afghan migrants before and after crossing the border.

Disclaimer
4Mi data, graphics and analysis are based on the accumulated, ongoing data collection by 4Mi field monitors through direct interviews with migrants/refugees on the move. Sample sizes are clearly indicated and represent a limited section of those on the move. All findings derive from the surveyed sample of migrants/refugees and should not be used to make any inferences about the total population of any mixed migration flow.

Profile of the interviewees
The Afghans interviewed by 4Mi monitors in Afghanistan, which form the basis of analysis in this report, were mainly single Pashtun, Hazara and Tajik men coming from urban areas in Afghanistan. More than 60% of them have primary, secondary or high school level of education, mostly laborers or without job.

They are originating from different provinces, mainly Kunduz, Herat, Mazar and Kabul, and leaving the country for economic (43.1%) or political (17.0%) reasons.