

# AFGHANISTAN COUNTER PEOPLE SMUGGLING SCOPING STUDY

## FINAL REPORT

FOR THE ATTENTION OF  
ASUTRALIAN CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION SERVICE  
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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wise Strategic Communication (WSC) has conducted a scoping study among the Hazara population in four provinces from mid-September to the October 24<sup>th</sup>. This study aims to identify the level of situational awareness and both formal and informal communication channels to reach out Hazara population to inform them of the risks associated with illegal immigration to Australia via people-smuggling networks. The study conducted 50 interviews and 10 focus groups in various enclaves of Hazara people in four provinces. The following are the principle findings of the scoping study:

### KEY FINDINGS

- In all provinces, a vast majority of Hazara population is aware of various risks associated with illegal immigration to Australia via sea by the abetment of people smugglers. However, only a few Hazaras realize that migrants also face a risk of repatriation and detention by the Australian authority.
- Those Hazaras who are aware of potential repatriation are unlikely to risk illegal immigration to Australia. But many respondents said they would take the risks associated with treacherous journey and people-smuggling fraud if the Australian government accepts them as refugees.
- Respondents express different degrees of rejection and preference towards illegal immigration to Australia at a provincial level.
- Information on the dangers of illegal immigration is primarily spread by word of mouth communications, from migrants themselves or from their relatives stayed in Afghanistan. Returning migrants, victims of people-smuggling fraud, repatriated Afghans and friends/relatives currently residing in Australia are the most credible informants for Hazara to learn the risks of illegal immigration to Australia.
- Respondents from all provinces expect the GIRoA to take responsibility and promote situation awareness on the risks of illegal immigrations to Australia.
- BBC (World Service and Pashto Service), VOA (Ashana), Afghanistan Radio and Television (ART) Radio and Radio Azadi are by far the most popular and most trustworthy radio stations across the four provinces.
- News on local issues and interactive programming are highly popular and likely to increase message uptake among the Hazara population.
- Tamadon and Tolo TVs are, by far, the most popular TV channels across the four provinces. Rah-e- Farda, Ariana, and Lemar TV are also popular stations among Hazaras.
- Participants prefer visual presentations, such as billboards and news documentary, to receive information about the risks of illegal immigrations.

- Religious leaders, teachers, elders, and community leaders commend a high status among the Hazara population and present credible sources.
- Competing messages on immigration issues could come from family members, friends and relatives currently residing in Australia, religious leaders, highly influential figures in Hazara communities, as well as migrant smugglers themselves.

*Table 1: Brief Summary of Communication Channels and Awareness*

<b>Provinces</b>	<b>Radios</b>	<b>TV</b>	<b>Informal Channel</b>	<b>Awareness of Risks</b>
<b>Kabul</b>	<i>BBC, VOA, Radio Azadi, Farda, Neda, Ashana</i>	<i>Tolo, Tamadon, Rah-e-Farda, Negaah</i>	<i>Word of mouth, Teachers, Elders, Imam, Shuras, Returnees, Migrants, Mosques, Schools</i>	<i>High on risks &amp; people smuggling; Low on repatriation</i>
<b>Ghazni</b>	<i>BBC, Azadi, Farda, Ghaznawyan</i>	<i>Lemar TV, ART, Ariana, Tamadon</i>	<i>Word of mouth, Migrants, billboards, Diaspora living in Australia, Shura, Clerics, Elders</i>	<i>High on risks &amp; people smuggling; Low on repatriation</i>
<b>Bamyan</b>	<i>BBC, VOA, Azadi, ART, Radio Bamyan, Radio Iran</i>	<i>Tolo, Tamadon, Rah-e- Farda, Ariana</i>	<i>Word of mouth, Migrants, Returnees, Elders, community leaders, Shuras, Diaspora, Teachers, Schools, Mosques</i>	<i>High on risks &amp; people smuggling; Low on repatriation</i>
<b>Daykundi</b>	<i>BBC, VOA, Azadi, ART</i>	<i>Tolo, Tamadon, ART</i>	<i>Word of mouth, Tribal leaders, Elders, Parents, Friends, Billboards</i>	<i>High on risks &amp; people smuggling; Low on repatriation</i>

## II. ABOUT THE DATA

The WSC research team conducted 10 focus-group discussions and 50 interviews in Kabul, Daykundi, Bamyan and Ghazni provinces between September 20<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. All participants of the focus groups and interviewees were selected from various social strata among Hazara male (age from 15 to 50). Focus groups and interviews were spread in four provinces accordingly with the population of Hazara residents in each area. Accounting security reasons, some participants, especially in Daykundi, of the focus groups refused to reveal their occupations and other personal demographic information.

The field-research team was composed of ethnic Hazaras to minimize any potential distrust which might arise from contrasting ethnic identities. The research team held both interviews and focus groups at public venues, such as schools and mosques. According to the interviewers, individuals at face-to-face interviews were more inclined to speak out their opinion than the participants at focus-group discussion because of the fear that there might be the government’s intelligence among the participants. The following was the breakdown of the number of focus groups and interviews:

*Table 2: The distribution of focus groups and interviews in four provinces*

Province	Districts	Hazara population (Age 15-50)	Number of Focus Groups	Number of Interviews
Bamyan	Bamyan Centre (Urban)	42,569	1	6
	Shebar (Rural)	15,152	1	4
Ghazni	Ghazni Centre (Urban)	20,674	1	5
	Jaghuri (Rural)	90,632	2	8
Kabul	Dasht-e-Barchi (Urban)	407,883	3	18
Daykundi	Hiti (Urban)	20,979	1	4
	Shahristan (Rural)	34,133	1	5

### III. NARRATIVE REPORT

This section of the report is structured into both analyses of the focus groups and the interviews individually. To strengthen the transparency of the analysis and maximize the customizability of the communication strategy, the WSC team compiled each analysis at a province level. The analysts synthesized both focus groups and interview data to capture the overall picture of communication patterns among Hazara population in four provinces as well.

#### (III.A) ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUPS

### (III.A.1) Bamyan Province Focus Groups

#### 1. Existing awareness of the risks

- **Drowning at sea and deportation identified as most common risks facing individuals migrating to Australia illegally.**

The vast majority of focus-group participants from Bamyan are well aware of the dangers awaiting migrants who migrate via sea from Afghanistan to Australia. Lamenting the fate of migrants placed in perilous situations by people-smugglers, focus-groups participants identify different sets of risks related to illegal migration to Australia. These include threats to life, legal problems and financial impediments. Overwhelmingly, focus-group participants from Bamyan refer to drowning at sea as the major cause of concern for those illegal Afghan migrants bound for Australia. Arrest, detention and deportation by Australian authorities are also referred to as major complications for Afghan migrants in search of economic opportunities in Australia. Furthermore, additional risks such as starvation during the journey on smuggling ships and socio-economic difficulties for Afghan asylum-seekers are viewed by most focus-group participants as a disincentive to migration.

*"I think that travelling with smugglers is dangerous and it could put my life in danger. I am sure about this because I have heard that they [people-smugglers] are placing passengers somewhere under the boat engine." (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Member, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"If I was to migrate to Australia with smugglers, my life would be in danger. I would be at risk of drowning at sea and lacking food." (Hazara male, Teacher, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"Going to Australia with the help of smugglers is illegal. Australian authorities could send us back home." (Hazara male, Student, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

- **Information about the dangers of immigration to Australia spread by the media and migrants themselves.**

Focus-group participants from Bamyan indicate that awareness of the dangers of irregular immigration to Australia is frequently raised by radio and television news reports as well as by the detailed accounts of migrants themselves. Focus-group participants highlight the informative value of migrants' stories which detail the dangers faced on the open seas in small and decrepit boats, with no guarantee of reaching Australia or being granted asylum.

*"I hear about the dangers of immigration to Australia on the radio and TV channels, and also by phone when we talk to friends who live in Australia or any other country... I have heard about it from relatives, they live in Europe. They are telling us that it is dangerous to go to Australia using smugglers." (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Assistant, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Distrust of people-smugglers seldom based on first-hand knowledge.**

The vast majority of focus-group participants from Bamyan display a strong aversion for, and profound distrust of people-smugglers overwhelmingly described as unscrupulous and unreliable. Largely aware of the grim realities of engaging with people smugglers, focus-group participants from Bamyan have not, however, experienced first-hand smuggling activities, witnessed or come in direct contact with people-smugglers. Consequently, many focus-group participants hold perceptions on people smugglers based on rumour and hearsay rather than direct personal experiences. Specifically, word of mouth information leads one focus-group participant to believe that people-smugglers are based in Afghanistan's neighbouring countries, i.e. Iran and Pakistan.

*"I wouldn't go with the help of a smuggler because I think I would face many problems like drowning and prison. Smugglers are dangerous people; they will do anything to save themselves." (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Assistant, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"I don't know about any smuggler but I have heard about them operating in other countries, especially in Iran and Pakistan." (Hazara male, Member of Scholars' Assembly, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Unemployment and socio-economic hardship regarded as a primary motivation to migrate to Australia.**

The poor economic situation in many areas of Bamyan, and the impermanence of many traditional occupations in the region have enhanced the appeal of migration to Australia in purely economic terms. In particular, the widespread perception among focus-group participants that the region is blighted by economic stagnation and few job opportunities, aside from seasonal agricultural work, is considered a primary factor in the decision to migrate.

*"We have many problems. Those problems force our people to leave the country. The two main problems are unemployment and the weak situation of agriculture. As we all know, most of our people are farmers. The government should support them and make the agricultural situation better." (Hazara male, Assembly Assistant, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Factors such as insecurity and lack of basic services play a major role in encouraging Afghans to leave the country.**

Many focus-group participants from Bamyan indicate that pervasive insecurity in many areas of Afghanistan, along with the lack of basic services such as healthcare and education, is identified as a major factor driving migration of Bamyan residents to Australia in search of safety and higher standards of living. Perceived to be unsustainable, Afghanistan's volatile security situation leads many Afghans to resort to costly and perilous illegal migration to Australia.

*"We need roads and security. If they are not available, then we have to go." (Hazara male, Teacher, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"We need security in our country. If we don't have security, then we are not able to make a life here. Security will help us improve our life but we also need to have basic services like medical services. Medical services should be improved and everyone should be able benefit from them." (Hazara male, Bamyan Resident, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Despite a strong sense of localism, Hazaras decide to migrate due to the perceived ethno-political insecurity.**

A significant minority of focus-group participants from Bamyan express general resistance to the idea of moving from their local area, chiming with the widespread attachment they exhibit for their immediate surroundings and community. However, some focus-group participants from Bamyan describe ethnic clashes and discriminations as compelling issues for most Hazaras who decide to relocate to Australia.

*"I wouldn't like to leave Afghanistan anyway...I don't like travelling at all." (Hazara male, Village Elder, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"I have heard about immigration to Australia, most of Hazara people want to go to Australia because of the political problems we have here." (Hazara male, Bamyan Resident, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Responsibility for public outreach on the dangers of illegal migration falls with the Government.**

Overwhelmingly, focus-group participants from Bamyan indicate a desire that the GIRoA be responsible for informing the population about the dangers of irregular immigration to Australia. Specifically, focus-group participants call for public awareness campaigns using formal communication channels such as the radio and newspapers. They also believe that GIRoA should encourage the creation of outreach programmes on dangers of people trafficking and irregular migration at the local level. In this regard, teachers, religious

leaders, and elders retain considerable respect and authority within Hazara communities and are believed to be the best channels to reach the local population.

*"The government can use sources like the radio, printed media and school to inform us about the dangers of illegal immigration." (Hazara male, Teacher, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"They [GOA] can inform us by local shops, schools, and the local assembly (Shura) and the Imam of our mosque." (Hazara male, Head of Otapor and Shonbol local Assembly, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

## 2. Formal communication channels

- **International radios such as BBC and VOA are popular because of the quality of broadcasting and the range of coverage.**

A lack of infrastructure has meant that most residents of Bamyan receive their information principally from the radio. The BBC, in particular, is considered one of the most trustworthy radio sources, although Radio Azadi and Voice of America (VOA) are also very popular among focus-group participants from Bamyan. They primarily attribute such popularity to the radios' quality of broadcasting, range of programming and international capabilities. The popularity of the BBC and VOA is rarely undermined by their explicit Western origin. Rather, their long-standing presence in the region and wide coverage of Afghanistan news earned them high credibility among focus-group participants from Bamyan. Local radio stations available are ART radio, Radio Bamyan and Radio Iran, which are considered less equipped and reliable than international radios. Specifically, the latter are deemed particularly credible and objective when reporting about immigration issues and people-smuggling activities.

*"I trust the BBC and VOA radio stations because they have a wide coverage and many sources, so we can trust these two news sources... We listen to the BBC, VOA and Azadi Radio because they have good news broadcasts about international issues. Radio Bamyan can be also a source for international radios." (Hazara male, Bamyan University Professor, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"We trust international news sources like the BBC and VOA because they have a long background here. I trust radio stations like the BBC and VOA because they are reliable news source in the eye of our scholars, and I also trust them because they are telling the truth." (Hazara male, Bamyan Resident, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"I will trust those people who travel a lot. The people who travel a lot will know everything about smugglers and immigration. Therefore, I can trust them to receive information about smugglers." (Hazara male, Bamyan Resident, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

***A local base and cultural sensitivity remain crucial to the credibility of the radio channel in Bamyan.***

Several focus-group participants from Bamyan indicate that while local sources of information, including local radio stations, lack the infrastructure and capabilities of larger media; they enjoy high credibility among members of local communities. This stems largely from the population's strong sense of affiliation with their local environment and implicit trust in those considered to be familiar with their social norms and traditions.

Unsurprisingly, focus-group participants display a high preference for locally based and privately run media as opposed to governmental information sources, often perceived as lacking resonance within the local community.

*"We can depend on international news sources like the BBC and VOA. We can also trust local news sources but, because they don't have modern equipment, their coverage is limited. However, we can trust sources that operate inside Bamyan, they can inform people." (Hazara male, Bamyan Resident, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"We trust these radio stations because they respect our religion and other values that we respect. I trust private TV stations, not governmental news sources, and international Radio stations like the BBC, VOA and Azadi Radio which are reliable news sources for our scholars." (Hazara male, Member of Scholars' Assembly, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

**• The radio is most commonly accessed for news and cultural programming.**

Most focus-group participants from Bamyan declare accessing the radio no more than once to twice a day, typically in the early morning and at night. They listen to the BBC, VOA and Radio Azadi primarily for news and information. In addition, cultural and entertainment programming on these channels are particularly popular, especially the radio soap opera 'New Home New Life' on the BBC, which format is particularly effective among members of a rural audience.

*"I listen to the radio mostly twice in twenty four hours, around 5 am and 6:30 pm or 8:30 pm." (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Member, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"News and the 'New home New Life' program on the BBC are my favourite programmes." (Hazara male, Member of Scholars' Assembly, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"Social and cultural programming are my favourite ones on the radio. I like to know about other cultures, about the world we live in." (Hazara male, Literature Student, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"I mostly listen to the news and local cultural programs on the radio." (Hazara male, Head of Otapor and Shonbol local Assembly, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

- **Television channels operating independently outside state control enjoy high popularity, including in rural areas.**

While radio remains the most popular medium, television - particularly in the private sector - is particularly developed in the cities where electricity provision is not lacking. However, one focus-group participant from Bamyan notes that television has a growing popularity in areas of Bamyan province where radio coverage is limited. The most popular television channel is, by far, Tamadon TV deemed particularly reliable and trustworthy among focus-group participants regarding immigration issues. Other popular television channels include the Rahe Farda television channel, Tolo TV for its satirical comedy programme *Zang e Khatar* ('Danger Bell') and the Ariana Afghanistan Television Network for the show *Dariche Farda* ('Window to the future'), a platform where young people can express their views and concerns freely.

*"Private TV channels are famous here. Most people watch them, especially those who have electricity at home." (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Member, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"Radio does not have coverage everywhere. People here mostly watch TV channels like Noor TV, Arian TV, Rah-e-Farda TV and Tamadon TV, which is special for us." (Hazara male, Assembly Assistant, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"For me, a trustworthy source to receive information would be Tamadon TV especially, because it always has news about illegal immigration." (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Assistant, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"People here are paying attention to Ariana, Farda, and Tamadon TV channels. Tamadon TV is special. We also watch TOLO TV, especially the Zang e Khatar program and Rahe Farda TV channel for its movie programs." (Hazara male, Member of Scholars' Assembly, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"Dariche Farda' and other educational programmes are my favourite ones." (Hazara male, Bamyan Resident, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Little mention is made of the print media.**

Only one focus-group respondent from Bamyan mentions the existence of several newspapers, including the *8Sobh* daily newspaper distributed mainly in the central highland region of Bamyan province, the weekly *Mosharekat Milli* and *Jawanan* newspapers, and the *Jawanan* magazine also published weekly. The limited penetration of print media in Bamyan stems largely from low literacy levels in rural areas and problems of distribution.

*"We also have print media like 8Sobh, Mosharekat Milli, Javanan and Tafahom newspapers." (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Member, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

### **3. Informal communication channels**

- **Parents, elders and community leaders are highly respected informal decision-making structures.**

Focus-group participants from Bamyan indicate that regular and close interactions, past or present, with parents and tribal elders contribute to them being perceived as particularly influential figures within the community. In addition, focus-group participants place great emphasis on respect as a concept, which likely in part accounts for their deferential attitude toward adult members of their community such as parents and elders, seen as wiser and more experienced. The chief elected officials of the local council (Shura) and educated classes are also described as sources of guidance among focus-group participants. Taken together, this suggests that the degree to which specific figures hold sway on the Hazara population is often determined by their closeness to the population or their perceived role in society.

*"I want to consult with family and experienced people. My family is important to me and they have the right to give me some advice. Everyone should talk to experienced people because they can wisely direct us and show us the right way." (Hazara male, Bamyan Resident, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"I will consult with my family members, our area's elders with bright people...I will consult with my family at first, then the elders of my area and finally educated people." (Hazara male, Bamyan University Professor, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Raising awareness on the dangers of irregular immigration deemed the most effective via religious and community leaders.**

Religious leaders (imams) are highly trusted as conduit for information, especially on immigration issues. In particular, focus-group participants believe that Islamic piety and religious dedication guarantee the integrity and trustworthiness of religious leaders. These, along with members of the provincial assembly who play a central role in dispute resolution across the province, are widely believed to have the wider reach within the Hazara population in Bamyan. The influence ascribed to religious and community leaders by focus-group participants suggests that Hazaras from Bamyan are more inclined to receive information about the dangers of irregular immigration and people smuggling by authority figures within their local community rather than by national and foreign institutions.

*“Trustworthy sources to receive information about illegal immigration via smugglers would be the Imam of our mosque and the provincial assembly (Shura). The provincial assembly is very useful to inform people because members of the provincial assembly have connection with other people.” (Hazara male, Provincial Assembly Member, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*“I always trust sources like the media and religious scholars. The Imam of the mosque wouldn’t lie to us and because he has connections with many people, he can receive information about immigration...I trust the media and the Imams because they are helping direct people.” (Hazara male, Head of Zargaran local Assembly, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

#### **4. Potential obstacles/noise**

- **The lack of media penetration and absence of transport infrastructure limits meaningful exposure to messaging.**

The limited provision of transport infrastructure and electricity, combined with often poor telecommunications infrastructures especially in rural areas, are seen as the main cause of limited exposure to formal channels of communication and sources of information, such as radio, television and newspapers. In addition, the Internet penetration in Bamyan remains low because of the limited availability of electricity in the province, the lack of local content, and the high cost of bandwidth. In such environment, word of mouth communications are more likely to be effective in reaching the wider Hazara audience.

*“We can’t receive information about immigration to Australia when we can’t receive radio frequency and when the roads are closed.” (Hazara male, Head of Otapor and Shonbol local Assembly, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*“We can’t receive information about immigration to Australia when we don’t have any media and are not able to receive any news.” (Hazara male, Imam of Otapor and Blola, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*“We can’t receive information about immigration to Australia when we don’t have communication equipment.” (Hazara male, Blola School Teacher, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

- **Limited media capabilities are regarded as an obstacle to information.**

Several focus-group participants from Bamyan indicate that the inability of some media outfits to cover a wide range of issues or their lack of global outreach is regarded as an impediment to communication and information.

*“We can’t receive information about immigration to Australia when our media is weak and is not broadcasting news about it.” (Hazara male, Literature Student, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **The absence of direct communication between migrants in Australia and relatives stayed in Bamyan could limit awareness of immigration issues.**

Combined to a potential lack of reporting on immigration issues due to limited media capabilities, messaging on the dangers of irregular migration to Australia can be hampered by a lack of communications between the migrants themselves and their relatives stayed in Afghanistan. The subsequent dearth of word of mouth information on smuggling and migration patterns could undermine the effectiveness of situation awareness messaging.

*"If there were fewer immigrants, we wouldn't be able to receive information from them about immigration. They are telling their family about immigration, which, in turn, will tell us about it." (Hazara male, Bamyan University Professor, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

## 5. Significance of demographics

- **Knowledge of cases of migration to Australia is prevalent in rural areas of Bamyan province.**

Overall, focus-group participants from the rural Sheber district of Bamyan know more people, friends or relatives, who decided to migrate to Australia than focus-group participants from urban areas. The latter were virtually unanimous in saying that they have no acquaintance in Australia.

*"Our friends have relatives in Australia. We hear from them once or twice a year." (Hazara male, Teacher, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"I know many people who live there. We hear from them once every two months in average." (Hazara male, Blola School Teacher, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

- **In rural areas of Bamyan, radio is accessed only at night.**

The vast majority of rural focus-group participants from Bamyan indicated that they access the radio, listen to the news, predominantly at night. Such a situation is attributable to the demands of agricultural labour, which requires farmers to work on their orchards during most of the day.

*"I listen to the radio at night because I am not free during the day." (Hazara male, Teacher2, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

## (III.A.2) Ghazni Province Focus Groups

### 1. Existing awareness of the risks

- **The dynamics of the smuggling process to Australia are relatively well-known and understood.**

Most focus-group participants from Ghazni have knowledge of both smugglers and smuggling routes to Australia through Pakistan or Iran. The smuggling networks described remain largely informal and limited in size, with facilitators or connections in several countries along the smuggling routes. While there remains some diversity in the number and strategies of smuggling operations identified by focus-group participants, migrant smuggling is overall perceived as an expensive process. Focus-group participants from Ghazni consider people-smugglers unsavoury and dangerous though smugglers are not necessarily perceived as criminals.

*"I think they [people-smugglers] have agents around here. They introduce 4 or 5 people to a real smuggler. To go to Australia, I think there should be 4 or 5 smugglers." (Hazara male, University Student2, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"There is a smuggler in our area. He is helping people cross the Iranian border, and they have a connection to some Baloch people. He is using different ways, for example the mountains." (Hazara male, University Student1, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"I don't personally know any smuggler but they have an organized network in different countries. Most travellers are going to find them in Pakistan." (Hazara male, Student3, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"I know that people are paying 18,000 or 20,000 USD to smugglers to go Australia and start a new life, but most of them never reach Australia. I have also heard that many of them are living in camps right now." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper1, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

- **Personal experience and word of mouth are more effective sources than news received from others sources.**

The vast majority of focus-group participants from Ghazni declare being well aware of the risks awaiting migrants resorting to people-smugglers to reach Australia. Radio stations, especially the BBC and Azadi radio, are credited with helping inform the local population about those issues, mainly through their reports of incidents involving smuggling boats and the death of migrants. Nevertheless, the most credibility in raising awareness is attributed to accounts of migrants themselves, those who managed to settle in Australia as much as those who returned to Afghanistan. Most focus-group participants from Ghazni explain that perceptions of the degree of danger associated with irregular migration is most frequently shaped or reinforced by personal experience of the smuggling process. This suggests that penetration of immigration-related messages is dependent on foundation in reality and

fact, highlighting the actual and potential role of migrants in raising awareness on the dangers of irregular migration and migrant smuggling.

*"We hear about immigration to Australia from the BBC and Azadi radio stations. If an incident occurs, they are going to report about it. For example, if many people drown or if something bad happens to immigrants." (Hazara male, University Student1, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"We hear about immigration to Australia from televisions and radio stations and from people too. When we hear information like this, we do some more research about it to see we have any relatives or friends involved in incidents. Civilians have more information regarding immigration to Australia than the media, which tend not to broadcast the truth." (Hazara male, High School Headmaster, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"I heard a lot of things about immigration to Australia. A few years ago, I myself went to Dubai using smugglers. I encountered many risks and it was really hard going there by boat. Last winter, I was in Pakistan. I saw a lot of people trying to migrate to Australia and some of them were accepted, but some others were deported back to Pakistan." (Hazara male, Teacher, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"I don't think there is any particularly trustworthy source about the smuggling business. However, I think that those people who arrived to Australia will be a good source to rely on. We can trust those people who have gone through that process because they know everything and they have experienced it." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

- **Visual messaging and government channels are trusted to increase message uptake among the local Hazara population.**

Many focus-group participants from Ghazni believed that visual messaging, such as television advertisements or billboards, remains one of the most effective media to communicate on the dangers of irregular migration in an illiterate environment such as Ghazni province. In addition, most focus-group participants display a relatively high degree of confidence in official channels and national institutions, such as the Afghan Department of Immigration, to disseminate information about migration to foreign countries. Nevertheless, local authority figures and institutions, such as local Imams and teachers, are perceived as the best channels of communication to relay such information to local Hazara communities. These tend to particularly value and trust people they know as well as what they perceived as locally focused sources of information.

*"I think TV is a good source for informing people because it's easy for our people to see and understand pictures." (Hazara male, University Student1, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"The government should print the pictures of what happens to people who travel illegally and show them to students in schools and also inform them about the risks of this kind of travelling." (Hazara male, Student4, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"The government can inform people through the Department of Immigration because it is their job to inform people about immigration to other countries. This Department can inform school directors and chaplains (religious leader), who will, in turn, inform all people because they have a very close relation with most people." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

- **Migration to Australia is considered an acceptable option for Hazaras faced with heightened security and economic concerns in Ghazni.**

The vast majority of focus-group participants from Ghazni regard migration to Australia as a livelihood strategy and coping mechanism to respond to social and economic needs. The decision made by most Hazaras to migrate is perceived as being driven by both social and economic forces intimately embedded in the regional insecurity and ethnic stratifications. Overwhelmingly, focus-group participants believe that the cost benefit analysis clearly favours clandestine migration, with many individuals not seeing the benefit of staying in Afghanistan when confronted with unemployment, Taliban persecutions and little hope that the security situation will improve in the future.

*"In this condition we live in, even people who know about the risks of immigration with smugglers accept these difficulties." (Hazara male, Teacher, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"I don't think that there is anyone who won't understand the risks of illegal immigration. However, immigration is the only way for our people to continue living their life. There are a lot of factors that force our people to go to Australia, particularly insecurity and social problems." (Hazara male, Student3, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"People go to Australia because of the war and insecurity in Afghanistan. I don't think that going to Australia is a good idea but people have to go before Taliban kills them." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper2, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"The Hazara tribes are faced with a lack of security and many different problems such as killings, kidnappings. Our people are searched and arrested every day without a reason and we don't know what happen to them after that." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

## **2. Formal communication channels**

- **Radio, especially the BBC, is the most trusted information source in Ghazni.**

Along with Azadi radio, the BBC is considered one of the most trustworthy radio sources among focus-group participants from Ghazni. This credibility is attributable to the BBC's frequent news programming, its extensive coverage of local news, its international network of seasoned journalists, and the historical availability of its service in Afghanistan. Locally-based and operated radio stations are, on the other hand, deemed too susceptible to misuse by local vested interests. Focus-group participants from Ghazni listen to the radio primarily at night, between 6pm and 8pm, and are particularly fond of the *Khana Naw Zindag-e-Naw* programme on the BBC and Azadi radio's *Morabai Murch* talk show. Other popular radio stations include Farda radio and Ghaznawyan radio.

*"I trust BBC radio the most because they have news about the whole world and they broadcast truth. I also trust Azadi radio because it broadcasts news every hour." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"BBC the more trustworthy news source because they it has more experience in this field than any other radio station, it regularly broadcasts updated news, it has many reporters all over the world and it reports exact news." (Hazara male, Student4, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"I trust BBC radio because they have a long [professional] background here and a wide coverage over all local areas. I don't trust any local media, because they always belong to someone." (Hazara male, University Student3, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"On the BBC, my favourite programme is Khana Naw Zindah-e-Naw. On Azadi radio, I like to listen to jokes on the programme called Morabai Murch." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper2, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

- **Credibility of the television channel is shaped by perceptions of independence.**

Most focus-group participants from Ghazni attribute credibility to television networks and channels on the basis of their capabilities and public outreach, their coverage of local issues and incidents in local languages (Pashto or Dari), as well as their perceived objectivity and journalistic independence. In this regard, the Kabul-based Lemar TV is largely regarded as the most trustworthy television station in Ghazni province. Other popular television channels identified are the ART network, Ariana and Tamadon TVs.

*"I trust Lemar TV because Lemar TV does not depend on any political party or anyone else." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper2, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"I trust the media that have these three qualifications: 1. they should be public, 2. they should depict the needs and problems of a society, 3. they should be objective. That is why I trust Tamadon TV." (Hazara male, Teacher, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"I trust news sources such as Ariana TV, Tolo TV and ART TV. I trust ART TV more than the others. I also trust Lemar TV because their reporting is very accurate and they have news programs in Dari and Pashto languages." (Hazara male, University Student1, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

### **3. Informal communication channels**

- **Family members and professionals are the most influential people.**

Considered highly credible sources and positive role models for the younger audiences, parents are generally a figure of safety and support that can crucially influence the decisions of young focus-group participants. Nevertheless, professional and educated classes remain the most credible source of information regarding matters that require some expertise.

*"I will talk to my family if it is a personal issue. If it's not a personal issue, I will talk it to professional people, with experience on the subject. If it is an educational issue I will consult my friends." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper1, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

### **4. Potential obstacles/noise**

- **Limited media penetration and lack of mobility are the main hindrance to the dissemination of information in Ghazni.**

Similarly to findings in Bamyan and Daykundi provinces, the population's lack of free time and limited mobility due to poor transport infrastructure, the poor mobile phone coverage and limited Internet bandwidth in remote areas of Ghazni are the major obstacles to locals' reception of information.

*"We do not have access to Internet here so we cannot have access to all information directly." (Hazara male, Management Student, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"Another problem is that we cannot receive information. None of the communication companies has network coverage here." (Hazara male, Student2, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"Usually, I am busy with my job and telephones are not working in our area. That is why we cannot receive information." (Hazara male, High School Headmaster, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

*"The distance is a big problem that we have. I mean our area is far from city therefore we cannot receive information." (Hazara male, Student4, Jaghori District, Ghazni)*

- **Government bans on media reporting limits the population's exposure to a variety of information sources.**

Some focus-group participants refer to GIROA's recent instructions to local and foreign media to stop reporting live from the scene of terrorist attacks in the country for security concerns as an example of what could prevent them from receiving information about clandestine migration to Australia. Shutting down phone service and Internet connections for security reasons in conflict-ridden areas is another direct obstacle to Hazaras' uptake of any form of communications and messaging.

*"The media allow us to receive information about immigration to Australia and if the government bans such news, we would not be able to receive information about immigration to Australia. They cut the telephone lines or mobile signals when the security situation gets worse, which also prevents us from receiving information about immigration to Australia." (Hazara male, Teacher, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

### **(III.A.3) Kabul Province Focus Groups**

#### **1. Existing awareness of the risks**

- **There is widespread opposition to clandestine migration to Australia.**

The majority of focus-group participants from Kabul are strongly opposed to the process of irregular migration to Australia via migrant smugglers. Concerned about the risks associated with travelling across the Indian Ocean reportedly known as the 'dolphin's way', focus-group participants also mention the possibility of border police brutality as well as potential cultural barriers and humiliations awaiting those migrants who manage to reach the Australian territory. Alternatively, several focus-group participants emphasise the role played by restrictive border management policies in favouring migrants' reliance on a network of smugglers with numerous consequences on their safety. While, additionally, the financial burden of obtaining a visa is described as a considerable obstacle to legal migration, most focus-group participants from Kabul encourage Afghan migrants, especially the more wealthy migrants, to stay in Afghanistan and work to the country's reconstruction. Unlike focus-group participants from other provinces, focus-group participants from Kabul display a relative sense of patriotic duty whereby commitment to serve Afghanistan and its people outweigh the difficult living conditions that would otherwise push many Afghans to leave the country.

*"I have heard many rumours about migrating irregularly to Australia. Irregular migration to Australia is the most dangerous form of travelling. Some people call it the 'dolphin's way' because many people are eaten by these dolphins in the sea. In my opinion they should not go to Australia but should keep working inside their own country to rebuild it." (Hazara student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"I hope that those who have a good financial situation won't go to other countries. They should stay in Afghanistan to improve their own country." (Hazara student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"I have heard that many people who are travelling to Australia want to go by sea. I think that they should not go to Australia. They must stay in their own country and keep working hard to rebuild it." (Hazara vocational-school student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"Going to Australia is not worthwhile because first, they will sink and lose their way and then, if they pass the sea, then they will be faced with the police. Therefore, it is not worthwhile to go to Australia." (Hazara student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

- **Recognition of the plight of the Hazara population as a primary motivation for migrating to Australia.**

Most focus-group participants from Kabul believe that Afghanistan's Hazara population faces dire socio-economic conditions, various security threats and political discrimination, driving many Hazaras to migrate to Australia, their first-choice destination. Hazaras, who tend to be low-income workers and suffer from a lack of government's attention, are frequently forced to sell their possessions to pay the smuggling fees. Abandoning their homes, Hazaras who decide to migrate to Australia using people-smugglers are left with little or no viable means of rebuilding their livelihoods in Australia. In this regard, several of the focus-group participants from Kabul call for the creation of a new support network for the Hazara population struggling with their daily life in Australia. One focus-group participant even suggested the creation of a communication programme specifically aimed at raising awareness about the dangers of clandestine immigration to Australia among the Hazara population of Afghanistan.

*"You know that many people who migrate to other countries are Hazara people. Compared to other groups of population in Afghanistan, Hazara people are much poorer and face many economical problems. The government does not pay any attention to the remote areas where Hazara people live. If their issues and requirements are met, there will be no more need for them to travel by sea and put their lives at risk migrating to Australia." (Hazara university student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"Hazara people do not have much money to go to Australia. They sell their houses and shops for the travel expenses." (Chaplain from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"If there was a specific programme to spread information about the risks of immigration to Australia via sea to people that would be great, especially if it was specific to Hazara people, to help them be aware of the different aspects of life in Australia." (a shopkeeper from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

- **Migrant smugglers are believed to operate out of Iran and Pakistan.**

Many focus-group participants from Kabul believed that the people-smugglers resorted to by Afghan migrants who want to reach Australia are not Afghan citizens. Rather, migrant smugglers are widely perceived as living and operating in several cities of Pakistan, such as Karachi, and Iran. Focus-group participants added that people-smugglers are organised in networks, mainly informal, across several countries.

*"I do not know any smugglers because smugglers are not Afghans, they go from here up to Malaysia lawfully and from there, the smugglers take migrants to another country." (a student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"Many of the smugglers are living in Karachi and Iran. People ask information about their location and then, they go there to find them and figure out their travel issues especially to Australia." (a student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"We do not know exactly who the smugglers are but we have heard about their working process. The smugglers do not have a designated place they have partners. For example, one of them lives in Pakistan and some others live in Iran." (a university student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

- **Video clips and migrant stories are seen as particularly effective in shaping perceptions about the risks of clandestine migration to Australia.**

Several focus-group participants believe that visual messaging, particularly video clips and video footage, relating and/or showing the unfortunate experiences and tribulations of migrants attempting to reach Australia on smuggling boats, would be particularly effective in raising awareness about the dangers of people smuggling. Similarly, the vast majority of focus-group participants from Kabul consider storylines of migrants who have come in direct contact with people-smugglers to be very credible. Word of mouth therefore remains the most critical form of communication in Kabul province regarding immigration issues. While they emphasise the role of the television channel in broadcasting situation awareness video clips, several focus-group participants also highlight the key roles of the radio channel and local imams in reaching a wide audience.

*"The most important warning is the one given by people who have returned from the smugglers' area. They have good experience and can give examples to other people. People who have returned from risky places, we trust them because they have seen everything so they can't lie." (a university student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"The government is not able to video record images of people who are going with smugglers and then, show these adventures to other people. I think the government should have to record some video clips similar to the reality and showing these video clips to the nation. That*

*way, people may get to know the risks of immigration to Australia.” (a student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*“The government should inform people by radios and newspaper announcements. TVs also have an important role to play in showing some video clips for people who are not aware of these dangers [related to irregular immigration]. In my opinion, the best way is to alert Mullahs on these issues and the Mullahs should preach at the mosque for people. Many people are illiterate and do not understand media announcements. Furthermore, many people accept the Mullah’s remarks without any question.” (an English teacher from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

## **2. Formal communication channels**

- **There are some generational differences in radio broadcast preferences although news remains the most popular programme.**

While the younger audiences are drawn especially by youth-related entertainment programming, most focus-group participants listen to the radio primarily for news and information. Audience levels in Kabul are determined by the quality of broadcasting and range of programming, including popular entertainment programs such as BBC’s ‘New Home New Life’ programme. Focus-group participants also enjoy discussions and talk shows in which they can take an active role and participate. BBC World Service and Radio Azadi are the most listened to and the most trusted radio broadcasters among focus-group participants in Kabul. Other popular radio stations include VOA, and the local Farda, Neda and Ashana radio stations. Focus-group participants from Kabul listen to the radio in their free time for one or two hours a day, primarily in the morning (7-9am) and in the evening (6-8pm).

*“I like the radio programmes that talk about people’s problems and issues of the young generations. There is a program on Farda radio called ‘Homes and Family’ that I really love.” (a university studying social science from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul )*

*“I like music programmes. I like recreational programs about sports, music and football.” (a school principal from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*“The most reliable information sources for us are both foreign and international news sources, such as BBC World Service and Azadi radio. Among local news sources, we trust to Rahe Farda and Neda radios. Because these radios (BBC World Service and Azadi radio) are registered with world-class and high rank authorities, they really broadcast real news for every nation.” (an English teacher from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

- **Respect for television channels adhering to local traditions, customs, and social norms.**

While there is a general lack of television penetration in certain areas of Kabul province; Tamadon, Tolo, Rahe Farda and Negaah TVs are the most popular television channels among focus-group participants from Kabul. They explain that trust and respect is primarily accorded to those information sources that uphold social norms. Focus-group participants specifically highlighted the appeal of narratives rooted in the protection of Islam and preservation of traditional Afghan culture, crucial for their uptake of messages and knowledge transmission.

*"The most reliable sources of information for me are Rahe Farda and Negaah and Tamadon television stations. Here, we have different types of television channels and some of them broadcast things that are against the rules of our society, which we don't appreciate. Tolo broadcasts reliable information, compared to some other sources of information. I have been watching Tolo TV for eight years. This television channels spreads solid and reliable news for people therefore, I like this television station and I really trust it. We trust those TVs and radios that spread real information, in accordance with the rules of our Islamic state." (a university studying social science from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

### 3. Informal communication channels

- **Experience and professionalism are particularly respected qualities.**

Parents and teachers present viable credible sources for most focus-group participants from Kabul. However, professional and educated classes remain the most credible source of information and are thoroughly valued for imparting trustworthy guidance. Focus-group participants hold in high esteem several attributes such as knowledge and expertise in particular.

*"The best thing is to consult my books, but my second step is to consult my parents and then, I use my experience to see if I should do these sorts of deals or not." (a shopkeeper from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

*"When I do something in my life, I have to talk with a specialist that has specific experience in the designated branch. For example, if I buy a house I resort to a real estate agent or if I want to start a degree, I have to consult an experienced teacher." (a school principal from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

### 4. Potential obstacles/noise

- **Widespread perception that news dissemination and message uptake in Kabul province is virtually unlimited.**

Focus-group participants from Kabul believe that there is no particular limitation to the dissemination of information in the province, despite much cited security concerns.

However, such wide availability of all kinds of information including word of mouth communication could potentially compete with, or detract from, the efficacy of a campaign tailored to raise awareness of the dangers of illegal migration to Australia.

*"You know the security conditions in Afghanistan are not good. However, there are no restrictions for us if we want to receive information from any source about Australia or some other countries." (a student from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

## 5. Significance of demographics

- **There is better knowledge in Kabul of individuals having migrated to Australia than in other provinces.**

Focus-groups participants from Kabul tend to know of people who migrated to Australia more than focus-group participants from other provinces whose relatives and relations primarily reside in neighbouring countries such as Iran and Paksitan.

*"There are no friends or relatives of mine in Australia but my classmates have friends and relatives in Australia and sometimes he calls to ask them about their life conditions in Australia. Then I get messages from him about how life is in Australia." (an English teacher from Dasht-e-Barchi, Kabul)*

### (III.A.4) Daykundi Province Focus Groups

#### 1. Existing awareness of the risks

- **Widespread perception that Australia is a tolerant society and open to migrants.**

Primarily informed through conventional media and word of mouth communication about immigration issues, a significant minority of focus-group participants from Daykundi sees Australia as more open to migrants and more fair in their treatment of migrants than other countries. In reference to changes in Australian visa policy currently underway, one focus-group participant foresees a dramatic cutback in the numbers of legal immigrants welcomed in Australia in the next couple of years. Despite stringent border controls making irregular immigration to Australia increasingly difficult, focus-group participants largely see resorting to people-smugglers and taking the riskiest routes as an inevitable course of action to get to their sought-after destination.

*"I have heard about immigration issues primarily from media like the BBC and Azadi radio station. I have also heard about it from friends and relatives." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"I have heard they [Australians] are accepting immigrants from other countries until 2012. Therefore, people are trying to go to Australia with the help of smugglers." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

*"I have heard about immigration to Australia from a friend. He said that they spent seven nights at sea. It's hard but you have 99% chance that Australian authorities accept you as an immigrant." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

- **Despite awareness of the dangers stemming from irregular immigration, Australia remains a first-choice destination.**

The vast majority of focus-group participants from Daykundi are aware of all kinds of trials and tribulations faced by irregular migrants on their way to Australia. Fearing the effect of migration on their cultural and national identity upon arrival to Australia, focus-group participants mention the high likelihood that some migrants end up in prisons and/or border detention centres in Australia and Indonesia. Focus-group participants also make reference to the high risk of migrants suffering serious physical and psychological harm or death. However, Australia is still perceived to offer better socio-economic opportunities while staying in Afghanistan is considered no safe alternative.

*"Migrating to Australia is dangerous. We could get killed and it's possible that Australian authorities humiliate us. If we go there, we are going to be separated from our culture. If we go there with the help of smugglers we will face issues such as a language problems and threats to our safety. They could drown us in the sea; we have almost a 100 % chance of dying. There will be many problems for us, our life and our culture will be in danger." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"There is 80% chance of dying during the journey and not reaching Australian territory. But my first choice remains going to Australia." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"I have heard about immigration to Australia. Going to Australia is dangerous but from an economic angle, it is good to go there." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

- **Information about people-smugglers and their activities is widely spread by word of mouth communications.**

Several focus-group participants from Daykundi know people-smugglers operating locally by name. In addition, focus-group participants are relatively well aware of the networks and main routes constituting the expensive and dangerous smuggling process from Afghanistan to Australia. Key locations cited by focus-group participants include Pakistan, Iran and Indonesia. Interestingly, knowledge of people-smugglers and their activities is prevalent in urban areas of Daykundi.

*"I know Ibrahim and Ahmad, they are local smugglers." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

*"I know one person his name is Zabibullah, he is a local smuggler. He helps people to cross the border to Iran." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

*"I don't know much, but I have heard that there is one person operating in Australia. He is famous and goes by the name Tooran; he is a smuggler. I don't know anybody in particular, but they are operating in Iran." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

*"I don't know any smuggler, but I have heard that they are going to Pakistan then Indonesia and, from there, to Australia." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

- **Relocation to Australia is desired to alleviate the struggles of daily life.**

While some focus-group participants question Hazaras' motivations for migrating to Australia on a cultural level, emigration is often seen as a last resort option, particularly in a region blighted by economic and developmental stagnation. Factors influencing the decision to migrate to Australia include economic pull factors, educational factors, family reunification, some dissatisfaction with Afghanistan society and security situation, and more generally, the desire for a change.

*"I have heard about immigration to Australia. People are going to Australia because of their spiritual poverty. They want to become Australian citizens. However, going to Australia is not a good thing to do." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

*"I have heard about it. Australia is a good country for poor people to live in and work there, they have a strong economy." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

- **Use of conventional media, schools, and government officials is crucial for population uptake of situation awareness messaging.**

Most focus-group participants from Daykundi believe that awareness-raising campaigns to curb trafficking in persons and irregular migration to Australia should be broadcast through the most popular formal communication channels in Daykundi, such as the Arab Radio and Television network (ART) as well as the BBC. Specifically, some focus-group participants make reference to the radio soap opera 'New Home New Life' as a channel through which to recount storylines about irregular immigration and depict characters people can identify with. Other focus-group participants from Daykundi highlight the role that schools and ANSF could play in effectively relating awareness messaging about the dangers of immigration to Australia via sea.

*"They [GIROA] can inform us through schools, students, official people, and the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"They [GIROA] can inform people with radio programs like 'New home New life' (BBC) and news of past incidents." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"The government can inform people through the media, such as ART radio and TV. They can also educate people in schools, universities and mosques." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

## **2. Formal communication channels**

- **Radio is the most popular form of technological media due to its wide frequency coverage.**

The BBC and VOA and Radio Azadi are the most trusted radio stations in Daykundi province. Focus-group participants perceive their global outreach and speed of reporting as indicators of reliability. The ART network, particularly valued for local and cultural flavour, is also considered highly credible and essential listening. Most focus-group participants listen to the radio in the morning and the evening for about an hour. Prime time is between 6am - 8am and 7pm - 9pm. The most popular radio programs include news and cultural programming such the Morabai Murch programme on the Azadi radio station. While only few focus-group participants refer to the television penetration in Daykundi, the most popular television channels remain Tolo and Tamadon TVs.

*"I trust the BBC and VOA because they are telling the truth and they are not adding fuel to the fire in a country. I trust Azadi and BBC radio stations because they are telling the truth, are international and they also have wide news coverage." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

*"I trust ART TV because ART is a news source for all Afghans." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

*"I trust the BBC, Azadi and VOA radio stations because they are telling the truth about incidents and they are helping us understand our own country's situation." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"We are living in a mountain where we can receive the Azadi radio station and BBC radio station as well as ART and VOA radio stations." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

## **3. Informal communication channels**

- **Parents and tribal elders retain considerable respect and authority in Daykundi.**

Many focus-group participants from Daykundi explain that local elders play an important role in society. Described as sources of guidance, they are said to be willing to help in solving people's problems, albeit not always successfully. Parents were credited with similar roles to those of elders.

*"For advice, I will consult with my mother, my father and elder. I am always consulting with my mom and dad, then with local elders." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

#### 4. Potential obstacles/noise

- **Lack of free time and widespread illiteracy make formal channels of communication, in particular written material, redundant.**

Daykundi province remains a low-tech, relatively poor and society with high levels of illiteracy. The lack of free time is widely believed to inhibit the use of the media in rural Daykundi while, given high illiteracy rates, focus-group participants report that newsprint is not considered an important source of information in the rural villages of the province.

*"When we are not able to listen to or read certain media (printed media), and when we are at work and busy, we cannot receive information." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"When people's educational level is low or they are very busy, they cannot receive information." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

- **Limited access to modern media reinforces the significance and outreach of word of mouth information.**

Access to modern forms of communication, such as television, is unavailable in many households, particularly in rural areas and those lacking in electricity. Consequently, focus-group participants report that word of mouth remains the most important form of communication and the most trusted channel and source in Daykundi. In particular, stories from migrants or their relatives are widely believed to be first-class and trustworthy information on immigration issues.

*"We cannot receive information when there is no media and no immigrants from our area." (a focus-group participant from Shahrستان district)*

*"When we finally get the opportunity to work here, people will no longer be interested in migrating to Australia." (a focus-group participant from Hiti)*

## (III.B) ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

### (III.B.1) Bamyan Province Interviews

#### 1. Existing awareness of the risks

- **Awareness of the dangers of clandestine migration to Australia is spread through word of mouth communications.**

The vast majority of interviewees from Bamyan perceive the clandestine journey to Australia to be extremely dangerous, with migrants facing the risk of drowning at sea, being arrested by the border police and deported back to Afghanistan. There are also heightened socio-economic difficulties for those migrants who manage to stay in Australia. Interviewees explained that they hear about these risks and incidents involving migrants primarily through word of mouth, typically communications from relatives and migrants themselves including accounts of their reception in Australia. In this regard, several interviewees from Bamyan mentioned the significance of public gatherings and events such as weddings and other religious ceremonies; emphasising their role in maximising the spread of word of mouth communications and increasing the likelihood of information dissemination and uptake among the local Hazara population. Prone to unsubstantiated rumour and hearsay, word of mouth is, however, considered to depict a rather accurate picture of the smuggling process and migrant smugglers. Specifically, the latter are deemed hostile and predatory by the vast majority of interviewees.

*"I don't know any smuggler but I got information about them from my friends and those families who have contacts that are living in Australia." (Hazara male, 22, Provincial Assembly Member, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"I heard about immigration to Australia. I heard that people are going there illegally and that they face deportation, drowning at sea and economic problems." (Hazara male, 26, Unemployed, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"I hear information regarding immigration to Australia from the radio and by reading newspapers, and also from people in wedding parties and other religious ceremonies." (Hazara male, 22, Student, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"In my opinion, smugglers are not helping. They are making things worse. Drowning is a big problem in their old boats." (Hazara male, 36, Self-employed, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Yet for many, clandestine immigration is perceived as their only choice.**

Many interviewees from Bamyan, particularly among the lower income classes, feel that their opportunities in Afghanistan are virtually nonexistent and that clandestine migration is their only option. Interviewees are under no illusions that migrants, simply by crossing the Indian Ocean, are assured improved living conditions. On the contrary, most interviewees feel that the chances both of succeeding to enter Australia and succeeding to find gainful employment, adequate housing and an overall improved quality of life were not high. However, in many instances, such considerations do not compromise the economic and security justifications for migrating to Australia via people- smugglers.

*"Most people migrate to other countries because they don't have a job, or they have economic problems and the situation in Afghanistan forces them to immigrate in other countries. All of them know about the difficulties that they will face during their journey such as deportation and drowning at sea." (Hazara male, 26, Unemployed, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

- **Media, schools and mosques are believed to be particularly effective for the dissemination of situational awareness messaging.**

Several interviewees from Bamyan believe that the media, particularly radio stations such as Radio Azadi and the local Bamyan radio, are particularly effective in raising awareness about the dangers of people smuggling. In addition, schools and mosques are considered highly appropriate places to reach a wide audience on immigration-related issues.

*"The government must prevent smugglers from operating in the area and they can inform people via teachers in schools, chaplains in mosques, via radio programs, and via the gathering of people. They should inform people through individuals they trust." (Hazara male, 36, Self-employed, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"I hear about immigration to Australia from the Azadi radio and I hear a lot of this information from national and international radios. (Hazara male, 24, Agriculture Student, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **GIRoA remains seen as the key political agent, expected to provide social provisions to the population desiring to migrate.**

Most interviewees from Bamyan expressed both a strong desire and expectation that GIRoA plays a much greater role in the provision of employment opportunities, infrastructure and basic social services for the people of Bamyan. Beyond public outreach campaigns, the government's capacity to improve the socio-economic situation of Hazaras in Bamyan is perceived as the most meaningful initiative to prevent unconventional migration to Australia. Despite charges of government neglect and ineffectiveness, many

interviewees indicated that GIROA still remains the principal provider of services in their province, such as education and healthcare. Furthermore in the absence of alternative providers, some interviewees strongly believe that GIROA has an important role to play in their communities to detract the population from the perceived benefits of migrating irregularly to Australia.

*"Giving out scholarships to students and promoting education is a way to stop illegal immigration to Australia." (Hazara male, 50, Farmer, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"If employment, education, knowledgeable teachers, hospitals, were provided to people, they wouldn't immigrate to other countries." (Hazara male, 22, Student, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"Trust on immigration is important. I say that because I have no trust in the government and because of this, some people want to go another country to create a new future." (Hazara male, 36, Self-employed, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"It is the government's responsibility to create living facilities for people such as jobs, education, peace and security. If we had such things, people would never want to immigrate to another country." (Hazara male, 29, Farmer, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

## **2. Formal communication channels**

- **BBC and Radio Azadi enjoy widespread popularity in Bamyan and are relatively well trusted.**

BBC radio and Radio Azadi remain the most popular radio stations among interviewees from Bamyan, whether they live in the urban centre of the province or in rural areas. These radio broadcasters are globally favoured because of their perceived independence, as well as their broad and international news coverage. In addition, live broadcasting is particularly valued as an attribute of channel credibility among radio stations. While only a few interviewees claimed not to trust the BBC plainly, the local Bamyan radio is overwhelmingly perceived as biased and untrustworthy. In contrast, Voice of Bamyan radio is deemed more credible and retains a faithful audience among interviewees. In terms of programming preferences, the majority of interviewees from Bamyan tend to opt for news reports and live discussion programmes on issues ranging from politics and economy (agriculture) to music and poetry. Interviewees in Bamyan also frequently listen to religious programming. They mostly access the radio twice a day, once in the morning and once in the evening for about an hour or two each time.

*"I normally trust the BBC and Azadi radio because they do not belong to any group and they are non-governmental media." (Hazara male, 50, Farmer, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"I don't trust all radios and newspapers. I trust BBC radio but I don't trust Bamyán radio. National radio and television that broadcast in Bamyán province are trustworthy sources as well because they broadcast what really happens." (Hazara male, 24, Agriculture Student, Bamyán Centre, Bamyán)*

*"In a lot of cases we can see BBC reports are true when they have live broadcasts of an incident. Because of this, we know we can trust them." (Hazara male, 28, Farmer, Bamyán Centre, Bamyán)*

*"I don't trust BBC news because their reports are wrong and the radio is not independent." (Hazara male, 36, Self-employed, Bamyán Centre, Bamyán)*

- **The credibility of television channels relies on their coverage of local current events.**

Tamadon TV is by far the most popular television channel among interviewees from Bamyán. The station credibility is largely attributable to perceptions, widespread in Bamyán, that coverage of local news is extensive and objective. Other popular television channels include Ariana TV and Tolo TV.

*"I trust Tamadon television and other publications because they report local news without changing anything." (Hazara male, 36, Self-employed, Bamyán Centre, Bamyán)*

*"I watch Ariana television, Tolo television and Tamadon television." (Hazara male, 22, Provincial Assembly Member, Bamyán Centre, Bamyán)*

### **3. Informal communication channels**

- **Based on their experience of the smuggling process, migrants are a trusted conduit for information.**

The vast majority of interviewees from Bamyán declared that migrants were the most trustworthy source of information regarding the risks attached to people-smuggling from Afghanistan to Australia. Experience of the smuggling process, grounded in reality and facts, is therefore held in high respect and credited with the most informative value among interviewees from Bamyán.

*"The most reliable source of information is migrants that come back from Australia because they have direct experience." (Hazara male, 29, Professor, Bamyán Centre, Bamyán)*

*"I trust migrants because our decisions regarding immigration are not important for them so they don't lie." (Hazara male, 36, Self-employed, Bamyán Centre, Bamyán)*

- **Teachers and religious leaders are influential figures owing to their knowledge and expertise.**

Through both the formal syllabus and informal discussions, interviewees reportedly receive advice from teachers about some of the main threats in their community, including the dangers of clandestine migration to Australia. Similarly, Imams are widely perceived to be in-tune with the youth and are respected for helping out in the community. Both teachers and religious figures are considered highly credible owing to their knowledge and perceived expertise and messages spread through these authority figures have a better chance of being received and taken seriously by the Hazara population.

*"I trust chaplains because they don't lie and teachers because they are knowledgeable persons." (Hazara male, 22, Student, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"The government can inform people via village elders, mosque chaplains, school teachers and university professors." (Hazara male, 22, Student, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

*"If I need some advice, I request it from experienced people like chaplains, teachers and other knowledgeable persons." (Hazara male, 28, Farmer, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Relatives and friends remain highly credible figures of authority.**

For many interviewees, parents and immediate family members, older brothers in particular, are among the limited number of people they can trust and rely on for support. They also project values and attributes such as honesty and diligence to which interviewees can relate. Younger audiences display a strong trust relationship with their friends, and particularly admire friends who are older than them. Relatives and friends are part of a close social group that looks after and provides guidance to members of the Hazara population.

*"When I need to make a big decision, I take advice from my family, like my parents and my big brother, or my educated friends." (Hazara male, 26, Unemployed, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

#### **4. Potential obstacles/noise**

- **Access to print media as a source of information is limited outside of the educated and urban classes of Bamyan.**

Written advertising and newsprint were barely mentioned by interviewees from Bamyan as harsh socio-economic conditions and illiteracy tend to limit the penetration and effectiveness of these channels, particularly in rural areas. Correspondingly, no interviewees mentioned electronic media as a significant source of news or information about immigration in Bamyan. By contrast, and for the same reasons, oral communication is a more effective and reliable source of information within the province.

*"The government can inform people about the risk of immigration to Australia via the media. However, I want to mention that we don't have [many] newspapers and other publications here, which is a little bit of a problem." (Hazara male, 26, Unemployed, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

## **5. Significance of demographics**

- **Low-income populations are more prone to accept the risks of migrating clandestinely to Australia.**

Most Hazaras who decide to migrate illegally to Australia are driven from their homeland by a combination of factors that include economic necessity, political disturbance and insecurity. Nevertheless, economically-driven migration to Australia tends to be more noticeable among the low income Hazara population, who tends to believe that the benefits of potentially settling in Australia outweigh the risks attached to the clandestine journey. In the mean time, migrants have to find relatively large sum of money as initial investment to pay smugglers and travel expense to Australia. Other factors such as cultural proximity, social networks and informal links play a lesser role in people's decision to emigrate clandestinely.

*"I heard about immigration to Australia from people and I think it is dangerous to go. Besides these problems, immigration appears better than our situation here. Therefore people accept these difficulties and immigrate to Australia using smugglers." (Hazara male, 36, Self-employed, Bamyan Centre, Bamyan)*

- **Hazaras living in rural areas of Bamyan prefer Islamic countries to Australia as a destination for immigrants.**

Geographic and cultural proximity, believed to provide faster integration in the destination country, is a crucial factor determining the decision of rural residents of Bamyan to relocate abroad. Several interviewees from Bamyan's Sheber district cited Islamic countries such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, as their sought-after destination for relocation.

*"First of all, I don't have any interest in emigrating but if I had to relocate to a country, I would choose an Islamic country." (Hazara male, 50, Farmer, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"I would like to immigrate to Iran because it is an Islamic country." (Hazara male, 26, Unemployed, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

*"I would like to go to Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iraq." (Hazara male, 28, Farmer, Shebar District, Bamyan)*

### (III.B.2) Ghazni Province Interviews

#### 1. Existing awareness of the risks

- **GIRoA has limited reach and visibility but remains perceived as a key provider of information regarding irregular immigration to Australia.**

The majority of interviewees from Ghazni indicated that many districts in their province have only a rudimentary government structure and limited governance capacity. Few interviewees, especially those in more rural areas, have any meaningful contact with government authorities and/or officials. The limited presence of GIRoA significantly reinforces perceptions of government weakness and preferences for local and more traditional forms of governance and sources of information. Despite some criticism of GIRoA performance, there remains a strong desire for, and recognition of the need for, governmental information campaigns on the dangers associated with people-smuggling to Australia. Most interviewees still recognize the government in Kabul as the primary, legitimate, and appropriate provider of information on this topic. In particular, interviewees from Ghazni call for a more effective use of the media and local authority figures, such as school teachers, in public outreach campaigns.

*"Because our province and district are far away from the capital, the government doesn't pay attention to us. However, the government can inform people about the dangers of illegal immigration by advertising such messages in the media and also by using teachers in schools to inform students, who will, in turn, inform their family." (Hazara male, 57, Shopkeeper, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"I have heard different things about immigration to Australia. People talk about it almost every day but I never heard anything from any governmental source." (Hazara male, 33, Teacher, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

- **Illegal immigration to Australia is primarily seen as economically-driven.**

While poverty and unemployment are identified as the primary reason for Hazara migration to Australia, they are only one of a multiple sets of drivers that include insecurity and ethno-political disturbance. Moreover, some respondents indicated that development improvements (better provision of basic services, increased employment opportunities, etc.) had yet to contribute to a reduction in illegal immigration flows to Australia. In particular, there is a common demand for a GIRoA capable of delivering security, justice, and socio-economic development. Nevertheless, with little hope of a situational improvement in the near future, many Hazaras accept the risks awaiting migrants along

their smuggling journey as necessary in their search for enhanced economic opportunities outside Afghanistan.

*"If the government creates peace and security for people, allowing the merchants to make progress in their work, if people are provided with jobs and removed from poverty, immigration to Australia will be prevented as it will no longer be worthwhile for people to immigrate." (Hazara male, 33, Teacher, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"In my idea, if the government improves security and brings peace for people, it will prevent people from migrating illegally. However, if the current conditions endure, illegal immigration will continue to progress." (Hazara male, 33, Teacher, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"It is clear that it is illegal and comprises a lot of risks such as death, drowning at sea, spending money and facing deportation. However, because our living conditions are not good in Afghanistan, people tolerate those risks and difficulties. It means that living here forces them to migrate to another country." (Hazara male, 21, Teacher, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"In my opinion, when someone immigrates to a country, they know about the difficulties. I have made the decision to immigrate to Australia and I know the risks: drowning at sea, being captured by the police, being deported, etc. However, this is better than the difficulties we face in Afghanistan." (Hazara male, 39, Farmer, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

- **Australia is perceived to welcome Hazaras who face ethnic and religious hostility in Ghazni.**

Overwhelmingly, interviewees from Ghazni approve of Hazaras' decision to migrate to Australia. The majority of interviewees still believe that their political and socio-economic conditions would be improved if they manage to be granted asylum in Australia, thus dissipating the underlying factors, both ethnic and sectarian, they perceive to fuel hostility towards Hazaras in Ghazni. In addition, the limited capacity of GIROA to protect the Hazara population from mistreatment and discrimination as the Taliban are active in parts of Ghazni. Insecurity remains a major concern for most interviewees. They consequently consider immigration to Australia to be their last resort option despite the recent suspension of the processing of new asylum applications from Afghanistan introduced by the Australian Government in April 2010. Information about the benefits of migrating to Australia is widely spread through word of mouth communications, typically from Hazaras who live in Australia.

*"I heard a little bit about Australia that accepts Hazara people, and I heard all of this information from people. So in my opinion, immigration is good because we don't have a bright future in Afghanistan." (Hazara male, 60, Shopkeeper, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"I have heard about immigration to Australia from local people and from those people who have gone. In my opinion, it is a good thing because many people don't have a good job in Afghanistan. Insecurity, lack of judgment and lack of education force people to migrate to other countries." (Hazara male, 16, Student, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"Immigration to Australia is something to be informed about. People talk about it in every ceremony. In my opinion, immigration to Australia is a good thing because in Afghanistan we don't have peace, security or education, especially in our province. Such problems force me to call immigration a good thing." (Hazara male, 21, Teacher, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

- **There is a widespread belief that migrant smugglers, seen as unsavoury, are based in Pakistan.**

The vast majority of interviewees from Ghazni have a relatively good knowledge of the smuggling process of migrants from Afghanistan to Australia. People-smugglers are widely believed to be operating out of Pakistan. Such information is typically spread by word of mouth communications, in public gatherings and community events, from individuals who used to live in Pakistan. Overwhelmingly, smugglers are depicted as unscrupulous and dangerous people, frequently abusing migrants both financially and physically.

*"I don't know any particular smuggler, but many smugglers are in Pakistan. They are Pakistani and they take people to Malaysia and I heard that there is an Arab and that he is the big smuggler that takes these passengers from Malaysia to Australia." (Hazara male, 39, Farmer, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"I don't know exactly about smugglers but according to people, professional smugglers are in Pakistan and this information have brought by people that came to our area from Pakistan." (Hazara male, 21, Teacher, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"I have heard information regarding immigration to Australia from people. Also one night, I was listening to the radio, one person called and said that he sold all his possessions to pay the smugglers to Australia. However, since Australia has stopped accepting refugees, if the Australian government deports him, he will have nothing left in Afghanistan so the government of Afghanistan must pay attention to this point. In my opinion, going to Australia with smugglers is not good and hundreds of people are at risk." (Hazara male, 42, Pharmacist, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

## **2. Formal communication channels**

- **News and interactive programming are the most valued information carriers on the radio.**

Overwhelmingly, interviewees from Ghazni cited Radio Azadi as the most listened to radio broadcaster among Hazaras in the province and the most trustworthy news source,

particularly regarding migrant smuggling-related incidents. Similarly to the BBC, Radio Azadi is credited with a general receptiveness to the plight of local communities and praised for their extensive news coverage across Afghanistan. A few interviewees also mentioned VOA as a credible source of information in Ghazni. Besides news and information, interviewees from Ghazni favour discussion and talk shows on political issues, as well as religious programming. Radio call-in programmes, addressing in an interactive way combination subject matters ranging from education to security, are particularly valued.

*"I heard on the Azadi radio station that acceptance of migrants in Australia will take time because they want to find the source of these smugglers and prevent them from bringing more people." (Hazara male, 46, Teacher, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"In my opinion, the reliable information sources among the media are Azadi and BBC radios because these two sources broadcast in every area of Afghanistan and they broadcast about the real conditions of Afghanistan and its people." (Hazara male, 45, Unemployed, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"BBC radio and VOA news are trustworthy sources of information because their reports are not lies." (Hazara male, 57, Shopkeeper, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

- **Popularity of the television channel is driven by a relatively widespread trust in visual evidence and images.**

Several interviewees from Ghazni deem the television news more credible and trustworthy than the radio broadcasts or newspapers articles based on the widespread belief that what they can see cannot be a lie. Among the most popular television channels, Tamadon TV was particularly trusted for its willingness to demonstrate religious observance in its programming choices. Interviewees also regularly watch Tolo and Lemar TVs.

*"I trust the television because it portrays the news. I love Tolo and Tamadon TVs. These are the best TVs because they broadcast news independently...I trust the television because it is more reliable compared to the radio. The television broadcasts the news with pictures, whereas on the radio, we only hear the news." (Hazara male, 33, Teacher, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"I trust this source because it broadcasts the reality of the situation and incidents. Other media in here just broadcast songs but Tamadon TV broadcast programmes in accordance with Islam." (Hazara male, 30, Shopkeeper, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

### **3. Informal communication channels**

- **The Hazara Diaspora living in Australia is considered a highly credible source of information.**

Based on their experience of the smuggling process, Hazara migrants who managed to survive difficult travelling conditions and start a new life in Australia are particularly credible sources for the majority of interviewees. The latter tend to regard examples and anecdotes provided by migrants in the account of their journey tribulations as proof of truthfulness.

*"We can trust those who are living in Australia and their families living here because they have seen and they have experienced immigration." (Hazara male, 16, Student, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"I trust those people who have immigrated to Australia by smugglers experienced difficulties on the way because they have seen the difficulties by themselves." (Hazara male, 37, Shopkeeper, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

- **Ability to demonstrate religious dedication is an important attribute for a credible source.**

Islamic piety and leaning is regarded as an important quality. In particular, religiously educated man and scholars as well as Shia clerics have traditionally been trusted as conduit for information. They are particularly well positioned to communicate with a wide audience within the local community.

*"The reason why I trust chaplains is because they don't say lie. It is their religious job to inform people sincerely. They are not just reliable for me; they are reliable for many other people too." (Hazara male, 42, Pharmacist, Ghazni Centre, Ghazni)*

*"I trust chaplains in mosques because they don't have a bad reputation in Afghanistan. They are scholars of Islam." (Hazara male, 57, Shopkeeper, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

- **Parents and elders are respected and are an important source of moral guidance.**

Interviewees from Ghazni, especially in rural areas, overwhelmingly approve of local elders in their communities, expressing great respect and deference to their position and role in society. Similarly, interviewees regard parents as a powerful source of information and guidance, emphasising that they are noble individuals who can put individuals on the right path in life.

*If I want advice so I want advice from my family especially from my parents and because of these advices are that I have come from Pakistan to Afghanistan. (Hazara male, 39, Farmer, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"At first I get advice from my family and after that from the elders and leaders of our village."  
(Hazara male, 37, Shopkeeper, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"If I need some advice, I will ask myself: 'if I do such action, will it have good or bad consequences? Is this in accordance with Islamic regulations?' Usually I get advice from my family and experienced people, because asking for advice in Islam is such a good action in itself."  
(Hazara male, 45, Unemployed, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

#### **4. Potential obstacles/noise**

- **Limited penetration of visual media in rural areas of Ghazni lacking electricity.**

Access to television and internet is restricted by the low and inconsistent availability of electricity. In areas marked by remote and challenging terrain, media penetration is virtually nonexistent. While one interviewee made reference to the key role played by newsprint in areas where there is no electricity, low literacy rate among rural residents of Ghazni further restricts the channels through which they can be reached with immigration-related information.

*"The problems that we face are the absence of media like televisions, radios and communication companies and we don't have contact with government."  
(Hazara male, 16, Student, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

*"The big source of information interruption is high mountains. They are stopping the networks for communication and we don't have access to any other media than the BBC and Azadi radio stations."  
(Hazara male, 46, Teacher, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

- **Lack of adequate transport infrastructure prevents access to information in remote areas**

Many interviewees from Ghazni's rural Jaghuri district explained that access to information and other kinds of communications (e.g. mobile phone contacts) are very often hindered by the long distance that separates rural villages from urban centres. The lack of mobility among residents of these areas, combined to fairly limited media coverage, makes access to information very difficult for interviewees. As a result, interviewees from rural areas of Ghazni tend to primarily rely of the BBC and Radio Azadi, the only two radio stations broadcasting in the most remote areas, for news and information.

*"Look, I have been living here for about 50 years but I haven't seen any reporter coming here and talk about the living conditions in Afghanistan. The distance between here and the city is so long that it is not possible for them or the government to come here or pay attention to us. We don't have any [phone] network coverage here or any media other Azadi and BBC radios."  
(Hazara male, 60, Shopkeeper, Jaghuri District, Ghazni)*

### (III.B.3) Kabul Province Interviews

#### 1. Existing awareness of the risks

- **Split opinions as to whether migrating to Australia will offer a better socio-economic environment.**

Interviewees from Kabul are generally aware of the dangers awaiting migrants who attempt to reach Australia using people-smugglers. Furthermore, several interviewees believe that living in a culturally and geographically unfamiliar territory put additional strain on Afghan Hazaras seeking asylum in Australia. Confronted with humiliations, the loss of their livelihoods and legal difficulties, Hazaras in Australia are perceived to be in an even worse situation than if they had stayed in Afghanistan. Owing to such a high degree of difficulty and uncertainty, many interviewees perceive irregular immigration to Australia as not worthwhile. For others, however, illegal entry to Australia is believed to provide better opportunities, services and political environment for economically deprived Hazaras living in Afghanistan. Despite such views, there remains a widespread belief that the Hazara population should stay in Afghanistan and contribute to the pacification and reconstruction of the country as many interviewees still hold hopes for a better future in Afghanistan

*"I have heard that a lot of people who go to Australia die or go missing. Travelling legally is good but travelling illegally is not good." (Hazara male, 23, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I have heard many things about immigration to Australia and I think that immigration to Australia is a not good thing because I trust there will be a better future in Afghanistan, even though I am disappointed with the Government of Afghanistan." (Hazara male, 39, Tailor, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I think there are dangers such as drowning, being unemployed while seeking asylum and losing money." (Hazara male, 25, Teacher, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I know that many people immigrate to Australia, and in my personal opinion, this is good because if the Government of Australia accepts passengers they will have good life and access to a lot of services. That is progress." (Hazara male, 38, Shopkeeper, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I think travelling to Australia illegally is not good. We must live in our country, with all the problems, lack of services, and poverty that we face." (Hazara male, 35, Local Mullah, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

- **Yet, migration to Australia remains seen as a response to the pervasive security crises faced by Hazaras in the province.**

The Hazaras' long-standing history of persecution drives the interviewees' negative perception of ethnic relations in the country and the belief that the local Hazara population currently lives in dire socio-economic conditions. In addition, GIRoA is considered powerless to provide protection to Hazaras in remote villages of a province plagued by economic stagnation. Consequently, clandestine immigration is seen by many interviewees as the best option to put an end to a pattern of ethnic and religious persecution of Hazaras in Afghanistan.

*"[People will not migrate to Australia illegally] if there was peace, stability, no more racism against Hazara people and jobs provided by the government in places where Hazaras live." (Hazara male, 26, Driver, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"If the government provides jobs for people and put an end to the inequalities between Hazara, Pashtun and Tajik people; people will not immigrate to a foreign country." (Hazara male, 45, Library Employee, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

- **There are calls for enhanced GIRoA attention and effort in risk prevention campaigns.**

While several interviewees expressed a strong disappointment in GIRoA's lack of involvement in Hazara-dominated areas of the Kabul province, information exchange and dialogue between GIRoA and local Hazaras is seen as a core solution to the problems attached to irregular migration and people-smuggling. Given the perception, relatively widespread among interviewees, that a better knowledge of the risks involved with the smuggling process will serve as a disincentive for illegal migration to Australia, information and outreach campaigns carried out by the government are considered to be of the utmost importance. In addition, interviewees defined community involvement as an essential part of traditional Afghan culture. As such, for any form of governmental action to be respected and accepted, its officials must be perceived as accessible and in touch with its support base through the intermediary of local authority figures such as school teachers and imams.

*"The government can inform people about the risks of immigration to Australia using the media such as TOLO, Tamadon, Rahe Farda television channels. It can also use the Ministry of Education to inform teachers who, in turn, can inform students. Students will then inform their family." (Hazara male, 25, Teacher, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"If I become convinced that going to Australia involves many risks, I will think that going to Australia is not worthwhile." (Hazara male, 25, Teacher, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"The government should inform people through radios, newspapers, schools, especially workshops." (Hazara male, 23, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"The government can inform people about the risk of immigration to Australia using radios, televisions, advertising in publications and through imams." (Hazara male, 22, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

## **2. Formal communication channels**

- **BBC and Radio Azadi remain the most popular radio stations as a platform allowing voices and opinions to be heard.**

The BBC, in particular, is considered one of the most trustworthy radio sources, although Radio Azadi and Farda radio are also very popular among interviewees from Kabul. They primarily attribute such popularity to the radios' quality of broadcasting, especially regarding the coverage of immigration-related issues, as well as its global outreach and perceived professional independence. The radio is most commonly accessed in the early morning and in the evening due to work time constraints. Current affairs programmes and talk shows are particularly popular among interviewees from Kabul who mentioned, namely, BBC's *Sedaye Shoma* show and Radio Azadi's political programmes *Meze Gerd* and *Tahlilate Siyasi*.

*"Any kind of media that broadcasts information regarding the risks of illegal immigration will be reliable for me but I particularly trust the BBC and Radio Azadi." (Hazara male, 25, Teacher, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I always listen to Azadi and BBC radios because they have reporters all around the world and broadcast real news." (Hazara male, 35, Local Mullah, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"These two radios are trustworthy sources for me because BBC radio has experience in this field and on Azadi radio because broadcasts facts and breaking news." (Hazara male, 22, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"We trust BBC radio because it broadcasts all programs from London, and in London the people have freedom of speech, and this radio broadcast programs freely without any interruption and news from all around the world. I also trust Azadi radio for the same reasons." (Hazara male, 32, Lawyer, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I listen to 'Sedaye Shoma' on BBC radio and 'Meze Gerd' talk show as well as 'Tahlilate Siyasi' political discussions on Azadi radio." (Hazara male, 23, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

- **Television channels operating independently outside GOA control are deemed more credible.**

The most popular television channels are Tamadon, Rahe Farda and Negaah TVS. Tolo TV is also particularly favoured for its satirical comedy programme *Zang e Khatar* ('Danger Bell'). Unsurprisingly, interviewees from Kabul display a high preference for privately run television channels as opposed to governmental information sources. This finding chimes with the belief, widespread among interviewees of all provinces, that certain groups in Afghanistan control various media outlets. As a result, establishing itself as an independent and objective actor in society is a key attribute of credibility for the media in Afghanistan.

*"I trust Rah-e-Farda, TOLO, Negaah and Tamadon televisions [...] because they broadcast breaking news and are independent." (Hazara male, 25, Teacher, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I watch Negaah TV, Aryana TV, Tolo TV." (Hazara male, 26, Driver, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"We use the non-governmental sources of information (newspaper, TVs, and radios) and trust them more than governmental sources because the non-governmental news reflect the true events." (Hazara male, 23, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

### **3. Informal communication channels**

- **Parents are considered highly credible sources and positive role models.**

Parents and siblings, particularly older brothers, are highly influential figures in the lives of Hazara males from Kabul. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the father is seen as marginally more influential within young men's lives, frequently named as the authoritative figure who is responsible for leading his family (in his absence, this duty fell on the eldest brother).

*" [If I need advice], I will talk with my family and my older brother." (Hazara male, 39, Shopkeeper, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I receive a lot of advice from my father." (Hazara male, 32, Local Lawyer, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I get receive on my decisions from my close relatives like my parents, uncles and my big brother." (Hazara male, 25, Teacher, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

### **4. Potential obstacles/noise**

- **Poor electricity supply remains the most common impediment to the dissemination of information and message uptake.**

Access to modern forms of communication, such as television, is unavailable in many households, particularly in remote areas lacking in electricity. The population's lack of free time, limited reach of governmental information (especially regarding immigration issues) and limited internet bandwidth in remote areas of Kabul are additional obstacles to locals' reception of information.

*"The media does not broadcast any information about the risk of immigration to Australia here. We should have access to information programs and at least a little access to the Internet. Another big problem is that not every family in Kabul has access to electricity." (Hazara male, 22, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"The big problem that prevents the information from reaching us is not having electricity and without this energy source, we can't receive information about immigration from any many media sources such as television, Internet, etc." (Hazara male, 32, Lawyer, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

*"I think there is no information office in Kabul where we could get some information about immigration to Australia." (Hazara male, 23, Unemployed, Dasht-e-Barchi District, Kabul)*

#### **(III.B. 4). Daykundi Province Interviews**

##### **1. Existing awareness of the risks**

- **Awareness of the dangers of irregular migration to Australia is primarily based on second-hand information.**

Most interviewees from Daykundi hold views and attitudes toward immigration to Australia via sea based on second-hand word of mouth information. While having been aware of the risks incurred by migrants on their journey, interviewees have little knowledge of smugglers and limited contact with the migrants themselves. Most interviewees hear information about the smuggling process to Australia from friends at religious ceremonies and other public gatherings. Only few of them actually know individuals with a personal experience of migration. In addition to a relatively widespread lack of interest in the topic, limited communication with Afghan migrants living in Australia leads many interviewees from Daykundi to conclude that clandestine immigration to Australia is not worthwhile.

*"I usually hear about the dangers of illegal migration from people in wedding halls, from people who are still in Indonesia, from people who have been deported from Australia." (Hazara male, Farmer, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

*"Three months ago or more, I heard from friends in Kabul and Iran that some people are travelling to Australia illegally but I think that going to Australia is very dangerous because*

*many things can happen such as drowning, going to prison, getting shot by the border police.” (Hazara male, Farmer, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

*“I don’t know anyone [smuggler] here, but I think there are many smugglers in Pakistan.” (Hazara male, Farmer, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

*“I’m not interested about immigration to Australia and I don’t want to hear about it.” (Hazara male, Student, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

- **Attachment to the local community reduces the appeal of illegal immigration.**

The majority of interviewees from Daykundi hold a deep-rooted sense of affiliation with their local community, irrespective of the testing conditions prevalent among the Hazara population in many parts of Daykundi. Associated with this intense attachment to their immediate surroundings is an equally explicit dislike for travelling and moving out of the province. While several interviewees demonstrate a fundamental willingness to change their current circumstances, many indicate that hopes of social and economic progress in migrating to Australia are blunted by ties to land and a deep sense of attachment towards their local area. Rather, interviewees from Daykundi call for a better application of local governance, maintenance of security and service provision in the province. They also emphasize the importance of religious and cultural tolerance as well as ethnic reconciliation.

*“If we have jobs and a government operating on a timely fashion, we will never want to emigrate.” (Hazara male, Shopkeeper, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

*“If we had an occupation, all kind of jobs and security, we wouldn’t go to Australia because here, it’s our home town.” (Hazara male, Farmer, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

*“In general, we hear about some immigration issues but I am not interested about it because the trip is illegal and I would really hate it.” (Hazara male, Teacher, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

*“Security throughout the country, job opportunities, creating a friendly and peaceful environment among the different ethnic groups of the country and, most likely, the dangers of illegal trips would prevent illegal immigration to Australia.” (Hazara male, Teacher, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

- **Public outreach is deemed more effective via visual messaging and channelled through local authority figures.**

Interviewees from Daykundi believe that GIROA should do more to inform the local population of the dangers of clandestine immigration and people-smuggling, and should do

so primarily through television programmes, video documentaries and billboards. In addition, interviewees from Daykundi highlighted the importance of using local community and religious leaders, widely trusted by the population, to disseminate information to those individuals with limited access to, and/or limited interest in, conventional messaging.

*"The government can inform people about the risks of sinking in the ocean and being deported from Australia through the media (radios, televisions, live programs) as well as Mullahs and local elders." (Hazara male, Teacher, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

*"I think the government should inform us through TV channels, radio stations, education, information banners, and authority officials." (Hazara male, 20, Teacher, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

*"Awareness of the risks of irregular immigration would be more effectively conveyed through TV channels and radio stations, education, information banners, and documentary movies." (Hazara male, Farmer, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

## 2. Formal communication channels

- **Live coverage of key issues is a key attribute of channel credibility.**

Similarly to interviewees from other provinces, interviewees from Daykundi listen primarily to the BBC, which global outreach in terms of both reporting capabilities and audiences makes it a trusted presence in Daykundi. More importantly, the BBC's credibility stems from the capacity of its local teams to operate in difficult conditions and to talk to people in local villages and communities. The second most trustworthy radio station among interviewees in Daykundi is Ashna radio. Its popularity is predominantly driven by the perceived objectivity of its news coverage and independence of its network. Other popular radio stations in Daykundi include Azadi and Salam Watandar radios while the most popular television channels mentioned include Tamadon, Tolo and Rahe Farda TVs. Interviewees from Daykundi tend to access the radio daily, typically twice a day, confirming that the radio remains the primary news source for many listeners in the province. Interviews also enjoy recreational programming touching on cultural issues such as local music and poetry.

*"I always listen to BBC and Azadi radio stations and I watch Tolo and Tamadon TV channels. They are the reliable sources for me but they never talk about smugglers and their networks." (Hazara male, Student, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

*"I trust Ashna radio because Ashna radio broadcasts the most important news without being censored." (Hazara male, Shopkeeper, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

*"Among the media, the most trustworthy sources are radios, news magazines, and TVs but I prefer the radios to the television, especially Radio Azadi and the BBC." (Hazara male, 33, Former Teacher, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

### **3. Informal communication channels**

- **Different types of sought-after guidance are prioritised depending on the particular circumstances faced by individuals.**

Interviewees from Daykundi indicated that they tend to ask their relatives, particularly their parents and older siblings, for advice regarding matters of personal concern. Friends and tribal elders are generally consulted on more general issues related, for example, to education and career paths.

*"For advice about family affairs, I consult with my mother, father and older brother and about social affairs, I consult with elders of the local society who are living nearby, close to us." (Hazara male, Farmer, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

*"For personal issues, I get advice from my family and in my work I get advice from my friends and my older relatives." (Hazara male, Farmer, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

### **4. Potential obstacles/noise**

- **Low penetration of visual media limits the form that situation awareness communication can take in rural areas of Daykundi.**

Although interviewees from Daykundi believe visual messaging to be the most effective means of communication on the dangers of irregular immigration, limited or nonexistent access to television and Internet in rural areas hampers the dissemination of such information, subsequently restraining the likelihood of message uptake among the local Hazara population. While one interviewee indicated that some individuals have access to Tolo TV in these areas, radio remains the primary source of information in a rural environment.

*"Since we do not have access to the television or the Internet, we have to listen to the radio." (Hazara male, 33, Former Teacher, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

*"The lack of visual media information shows the weakness of the government." (Hazara male, 18, Shopkeeper, Shahrستان District Daykundi)*

*"The only obstacle for receiving information about immigration is the shortage of televisions and media." (Hazara male, Farmer, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

- **Family members can influence individuals' decision to irregularly migrate to Australia.**

As influential figures in the lives of Hazara males, parents and siblings can influence the migration decision of their relatives. Concerned about the risks incurred by their loved ones during the smuggling journey and frowning upon any form of family separation, family members are generally opposed to hazardous migration journeys. This finding suggests that familial ties have the potential to influence future migration intentions.

*"Usually, our family prevents us from travelling. They say that travelling with smugglers is very dangerous." (Hazara male, Local Leader, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

- **Direct communications with people-smugglers constitute competing messages to public outreach communication campaigns**

Despite their limited occurrence, contacts between the local population and migrant smugglers praising the benefits of immigration to Australia via sea can hamper the effectiveness of situation awareness messaging.

*"I hear about immigration to Australia from smugglers over the phone, or from those people who have contact with smugglers. They always talk about the advantages of travelling to Australia, like acquiring the Australian citizenship, making money, etc." (Hazara male, local leader, Hiti District, Daykundi)*

## **5. Significance of demographics**

- **Islamic countries preferred among Hazaras living in rural areas of Daykundi as a destination for immigrants.**

While interviewees from the urban Shahrستان district of Daykundi cited Western countries such as Canada, Australia and the Netherlands as their favourite destinations for relocation, the majority of interviewees from Daykundi's rural Hiti district preferred Islamic countries. Interestingly, many of them already have relatives living in Iran and Pakistan.

*"Actually, I have never been to a foreign country. However if I want to immigrate, Iran will be my first option because we have the same culture, customs and language." (Hazara male, 18, Shopkeeper, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

*"We have friends in Iran and relatives, my uncle and cousin, in Pakistan. (Hazara male, 33, Former Teacher, Shahrستان District, Daykundi)*

### **(III.C.) SYNTHESIS OF BOTH ANALYSES FROM INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS**

This section of the report synthesizes findings from all focus groups and interviews to portray a holistic pattern of communication related to illegal immigration to Australia among Hazara people.

- In all provinces, a vast majority of Hazara population is aware of various risks associated with illegal immigration to Australia via sea with the assistance of people smugglers.
- Although a few people have already learned of the risks of repatriation by the Australian government, the majority of Hazara people may not be aware of the possibility of asylum rejection even if immigrants reach to the country after treacherous journey.
- Those Hazaras who are willing to take the risks of illegal immigration via people-smuggling networks hold a strong perception that the Australian government would accept them as refugees once they reach to the country.
- There is a slight variation in Hazara's attitude towards illegal immigration to Australia. Bamyān participants of focus groups and interviews tend to oppose to the idea of illegal immigration to Australia while those from Daykundi appear to view it as a worthy course of action. Even in Daykundi, individuals with strong localism show reluctance to illegally immigrate to Australia. Hazara participants from Ghazni overwhelmingly perceive migration to Australia as a survival strategy. Kabul participants show strong sense of nationalism and generally reject illegal immigration to Australia.
- In all provinces, a majority of Hazaras learn of the risks attached to illegal immigration and people-smuggling agents from word of mouth and news coverage of incidents involving migrants.
- Returning migrants, victims of people-smuggling fraud, repatriated Afghans and friends/relatives currently residing in Australia are the most credible informants for Hazara to learn the risks of illegal immigration to Australia.
- The findings show that there is a widespread distrust of migrant smugglers across the four provinces. They are believed to be operating out of neighbouring countries, namely Iran and Pakistan.
- Interviewees and focus group participants displayed a strong attachment to their local community (especially in Daykundi, Kabul and, to a lesser extent Bamyān). However,

the decision to migrate was driven by a set of socio-economic, security, political and cultural factors perceived as compelling issues for most Hazaras.

- The findings show that interviewees and focus-group participants from all provinces expect the GIRoA to take responsibility and do more in terms of situation awareness messaging to inform people of the risks associated with illegal immigration and people-smuggling agents.
- BBC (World Service and Pashto Service) and VOA (Ashana) are the most trusted radio stations to inform people about the risks of illegal immigration. Among local stations, Radio Azadi and ART Radio are by far the most popular across four provinces. In Kabul and Ghazni, people also listen to less-popular Farda (Tomorrow) and Neda (Voice) stations. Local radio stations, such as Radio Bamyan, Voice of Bamyan, or even Radio Iran, are also preferred stations among Hazaras.
- In all provinces, respondents prefer privately operated media sources to government-owned media outlets or those associated with political organizations.
- Radio appears to be the most prevalent source of communication. Radio is accessed primarily in the morning and in the evening, at home, before and after work.
- Tamadon (operated by Hazaras) and Tolo (Sunshine) TVs are the most popular TV channels across the four provinces. Rahe Farda (Way for Tomorrow), which targets the Hazara population, Ariana, Kabul-based Lemar TV are also popular stations. Their credibility is primarily based on their perceived independence from local groups and political interests.
- There was little mention made of the print media and the internet across all provinces, probably due to high illiteracy rate and lack of proper infrastructure.
- Participants prefer visual presentations, such as billboards and news documentary, to receive information about the risks of illegal immigrations. Some participants also suggest community outreach programs and information sessions.
- Religious leaders and teachers commend a high status among the Hazara population and present credible sources. Since there is high respect for religion in the Hazara community in Afghanistan, especially in rural areas, messages spread through religious figures have a better chance of being received and taken seriously. Mosques, religious gatherings, schools and local meetings of village leaders are the best places to engage in spreading peace messages. Messages dispatched by these religious figures and teachers are best accepted and heard by the rest of the community as they are trusted more than outsiders are.
- Respect for parents, familial ties and heritage is important. Elders and community leaders are also widely respected and considered credible sources for situation awareness messaging.
- Lack of media penetration in remote areas (lack of news coverage and lack of electricity), lack of mobility and free time as well as widespread illiteracy appear to be major obstacles to reception of information regarding immigration. Little contact

between those Hazara currently residing in Australia and the community in Afghanistan is another obstacle hindering the message flow.

- Competing messages on immigration issues could come from family members, religious leaders, highly influential figures among Hazaras, as well as migrant smugglers themselves.
- In rural areas, Islamic countries were generally preferred as a destination for Hazara migrants.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ The message to the target audience must include not only the risks related to people smugglers and dangerous journeys but also the potential of repatriation and detention by the Australian authority.
- ❖ Any communication approach should be designed to reinforce the existing awareness and to prolong message retention by the target audience. Semi-permanent message structures, such as road-side billboards, can enhance message retention.
- ❖ Radio talk shows, frequent news report on the plight of illegal immigration, and TV documentaries on victims of people smuggling can strengthen the awareness among the target audience. Personal stories of returnees and victims of people smuggler are powerful and credible message instruments.
- ❖ A series of community outreach programs in various enclaves of Hazara population can educate people about the risks of illegal immigrations to Australia. The outreach programs, enlisting community organizers, religious leaders, school teachers and elders, can enhance credibility of messaging and public awareness on the predicaments of illegal immigration. The awareness events may be held at credible places, such as schools and mosques.
- ❖ Handbills and flyers can be distributed to the target audience at markets, mosques, high schools and universities.
- ❖ Any communication campaign should adopt a recognizable brand or theme to which people can easily link to the plight of illegal immigration in Afghanistan. Otherwise, such campaign efforts would be mistaken or confused with other on-going public-education drives among the target audience. Campaign branding would be essential to signify uniqueness and message highlights in Afghanistan.

## V. ANNEXES

### ANNEX A: RESEARCH METHOD

#### Research Objectives

This scoping study will focus on the following objectives:

1. To identify both formal and informal communication channels and spheres of influence
2. To examine the scope, reach and credibility of existing communication channels
3. To identify influential figures in the near and wider community and how to reach them
4. To identify potential obstacles/noise which could undermine the effectiveness of messaging
5. To recommend effective communication approaches

This study primarily used two qualitative methods in forms of focus group discussion and key informant interviews to fulfil the aforementioned research objectives. The focus group discussions and key informant interviews were implemented almost at the same time, and their data were synthesized to produce an analysis based on a multi-method approach.

#### **Training (September 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>)**

WSC has conducted six-day training at the WSC HQs from 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> September in Kabul. Prior to the training, WSC recruited journalists, graduates and students of social science program at Kabul University. WSC recruited candidates only from ethnic Hazara to minimize potential identity conflict between interviewers and interviewees.

At the end of the training, four field-collection teams conducted twelve pilot interviews and four focus group discussions. The instructors studied each transcript and recording of focus groups and interviews to ensure that interviewers were qualified enough to execute field work.

#### **Fieldwork (September 20<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>)**

Four field-collection teams were dispatched to Kabul, Ghazni, Bamyan and Daykundi provinces on 20<sup>th</sup> accordingly. All teams, except the Daykundi one, conducted their fieldwork without any incidents. Local authorities in Daykundi asked the WSC team to

produce an official authorization letter from the company. WSC HQs sent an official letter to the team member to confirm their work and contacted the local authorities as well. All team members returned to Kabul safe and sound and submitted their work to the HQs.

## ANNEX B: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

### ENGLISH VERSION

Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is.....and I work for an independent public-opinion research institute. I am one of the members of the research team which is studying the relationship between media and people's knowledge about immigration. This focus-group discussion is a part of the study to understand how people communicate and acquire information about immigration issues. We are interested in your actual experiences that can illustrate your understanding about immigration, and how you receive information related to immigration, especially to Australia via sea.

We realize that each of you have different personal experiences and vast information to share. It may be our opportunity to learn from each other. Therefore, it is critical that each of you shares your opinion and experiences with us.

Q1. What are the most reliable sources of information you normally trust?

Q2. Explain why you trust these sources?

Q3. Have you ever heard about immigration to Australia? What do you think of immigration to Australia?

Q4. How do you hear about this information regarding immigration to Australia?

Q5. How often do you listen to the radio?

Q6. What radio stations do you listen to the most?

Q7. What are the most favourite programs do you listen to the radio?

Q8. If you need an advice for a critical decision in your life, for example buying a new house or moving to a new place, who do you usually consult with?

Q9. Do you know of any people smugglers (Kochauk Bar<sup>1</sup>)? How do you hear about them?

Q10. What difficulties do you think you will encounter if you go to Australia with the help of people smugglers?

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<sup>1</sup> This word is neither positive nor negative in Afghan context; therefore, it is appropriate to use in a question without causing specification bias.

Q11. Under what conditions would you think the immigration to Australia is not worthwhile?

Q12. Who or which sources will be the most reliable for you to receive information about the risks involved with people smuggling network? For example, risk about immigration via sea to Australia.

Q13. Why do you trust this/these sources (make sure to repeat the name of the sources the respondents have identified)?

Q14. Under which conditions would you not receive information about immigration to Australia?

Q15. How should the government inform you about the risk of immigration via sea and people smuggling network?

Q16. Do you have friends or relatives in Australia? How often do you hear from them?

Q17. Thank you for your time and participation. Your discussions will provide us with valuable information to understand how people can be effectively informed of immigration issues. Is there anything else you would like to share?

## FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS IN DARI

1. شما به کدام منابع خبری صراحتاً اعتماد میکنید؟
- 2 - شما چرا به این منابع خبری اعتماد دارید؟ بیان سازید
- 3 - آیا راجع به مهاجرت و سفر به کشور استرالیا چیزی شنیده اید؟ ... راجع به مهاجرت به کشور استرالیا چه فکر میکنید.
- 4 - از کدام طریق و چطور راجع به کشور استرالیا معلومات را میشنوید ؟
- 5 - شما چند بار به رادیو گوش میدهید؟
- 6 - بسیار اوقات به کدام رادیو گوش میدهید؟
- 7 - در رادیو کدام پروگرام ها دلچسب و خوش آیند است که به آن گوش میدهید.
- 8 - اگر شما به معلومات بیشتر و یا نصیحت قاطع ضرورت داشته باشید معمولاً با چه کسی مشوره میکنید؟ به طوری مثال یک خانه میخرید و یا به کدام جای دور سفر میکنید.
- 9 - آیا از قاچاقبران کدام یک را میشناسید؟ چطور راجع به آنها اطلاع و خبر را میشنوید؟
- 10 - اگر شما به کمک قاچاقبر به کشور استرالیا بروید چه فکر میکنید که شما با چه نوع مشکلات مواجه خواهید شد.
- 11 - تحت چه شرایط فکر میکنید که رفتن و مهاجرت به کشور استرالیا ارزشمند نیست؟
- 12 - کدام منابع برای شما قابل اعتماد است که راجع به خطرات سفر با قاچاقبران برای شما معلومات را ارائه کند و ازین ماجرا با قاچاقبران آگاه شوید؟
- 13 - چرا شما به این منابع اعتماد دارید؟ متیقین باشید که اسم منابع را تکرار و معلوم سازید.
- 14 - تحت چه شرایط نمیخواهید که معلومات را راجع به مهاجرت به کشور استرالیا بدست آورید؟
- 15 - دولت شما را از خطرات مهاجرت و شبکه قاچاقبران که مردم را از طریق بهر انتقال میدهند چطور آگاه و واقف سازیم.
- 16 - آیا شما دوستان و خویشاوندان در کشور استرالیا دارید؟ چند بار با آنها تماس میگیرید.
- 17 - از اشتراک و وقت تانرا که با ما سپری نمودید سپاسگذارم. مباحث شما برای ما معلومات را آماده خواهد کرد تا مردم را از خطرات مهاجرت نیز واقف سازیم. آیا کدام چیزی دیگری هم دارید که با ما سهیم سازید؟

## ANNEX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### ENGLISH VERSION

Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is.....and I work for an independent public-opinion research institute. I am one of the members of the research team which is studying the relationship between media and people's knowledge about immigration. This interview is a part of the study to understand how people communicate and acquire information about immigration issues. We are interested in your actual experiences that can illustrate your understanding about immigration, and how you receive information related to immigration issues, especially to Australia via smuggling boats.

Your opinion will help us understand how people receive information about immigration. Your response is anonymous, and we, or any other institutions, will not identify your answers with your personal identity for any purpose. Your privacy is highly respected.

Q1. What do you enjoy the most living in Afghanistan? (Warm-up Question)

Q2. What are the most reliable sources of information you normally trust?

Q3. Explain why you trust these sources?

Q4. Have you ever heard about immigration to Australia? What do you think of immigration to Australia?

Q5. How do you hear about this information regarding immigration to Australia?

Q6. How often do you listen to the radio?

Q7. What radio stations do you listen to the most?

Q8. What are the most favourite programs do you listen to the radio?

Q9. If you need an advice for a critical decision in your life, for example buying a new house or moving to a new place, who do you usually consult with?

Q10. Do you know of any people smugglers (Kochauk Bar<sup>2</sup>)? How do you hear about them?

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<sup>2</sup> This word is neither positive nor negative in Afghan context; therefore, it is appropriate to use in a question without causing specification bias.

Q11. What difficulties do you think you will encounter if you go to Australia with the help of people smugglers?

Q12. Under what conditions would you think the immigration to Australia is not worthwhile?

Q13. Who or which sources will be the most reliable for you to receive information about the risks involved with people smuggling network? For example, risk about immigration via sea to Australia.

Q14. Why do you trust this/these sources (make sure to repeat the name of the sources the respondents have identified)?

Q15. Under which conditions would you not receive information about immigration to Australia?

Q16. How should the government inform you about the risk of immigration via sea and people smuggling network?

Q17. Do you have friends or relatives in Australia? How often do you hear from them?

Q18. How old were you on your last birthday?

Q19. What is your household come?

Q20. What is your highest level of schooling?

Q21. What is your current job status?

Q22. Gender

Q23. What is your occupation?

Q24. Do you have any relatives overseas?

Q25. Do you have any relatives in Australia?

Q26. If you are emigrating from Afghanistan, what country would you choose?

Q27. Thank you for your time and participation. Your discussions will provide us with valuable information to understand how people can be effectively informed of immigration issues. Is there anything else you would like to share?

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN DARI

### - سوالات مصاحبه

صبح بخیر/ظهر بخیر و ، اسم من ..... و من در انستیتوت مستقل تحقیقاتی افکار عامه کار میکنم . من یک تن از کارمندان تیم تحقیقاتی هستم و با ارتباطات رسانه ها کار میکنم و فهم عامه مردم را که به جا های دیگر سفر میکنند مورد مطالعه قرار میدهم.

مصاحبه هم یکی از بخش های سولاتتلا ما است که آنرا مورد فهم خود قاردهیم که مردم را بفهمانیم که چطور به کشور های خارجی سفر نمایند. معلومات مشکلات و خطرات که درین سفر های است بدست آورند و آنرا مورد مطالعه قرار دهند. ما علاقمند تجارب واقعی شما هستیم که میتوان فهم شما را راجع به مهاجرت ابراز کرد. شما چطور معلومات را بدست میاورید که مرتبط به مهاجرت است. مخصوصاً به کشور استرالیا از طریق بهر در کشتی ها.

نظریات شما مارا کمک خواهد کرد که مردم چطور معلومات را راجع به مهاجرت و سفرهای کشور خارجی بدست میاورند. جواب ، هویت و معلومات شخصی شما درین جا پنهان خواهد بود. معلومات پنهانی شما برای ما قابل تمجید است.

1. شما در کشور افغانستان زنده گی میکنید بیشتر از چه لذت میرید؟
2. شما به کدام منابع خبری صراحتاً اعتماد میکنید؟
3. شما چرا به این منابع خبری اعتماد دارید؟ بیان سازید...
4. آیا راجع به مهاجرت و سفر ها به کشور استرالیا چیزی شنیده اید؟ راجع به مهاجرت و سفر به کشور استرالیا چه فکر میکنید؟
5. شما راجع به کشور استرالیا چطور معلومات را میشنوید؟
6. چند بار به رادیو گوش میدهید.
7. بسیار اوقات به کدام رادیو گوش میدهید؟
8. در رادیو کدام پروگرام ها دلچسب و خوش آیند است که به آن گوش میدهید.
9. اگر شما به معلومات بیشتر و یا نصیحت قاطع ضرورت داشته باشید معمولاً با چه کسی مشوره میکنید؟ به طوری مثال یک خانه میخرید و یا به کدام جای دور سفر میکنید...
10. آیا از قاچاقبران کدام یک را میشناسید؟ چطور راجع به آنها اطلاع و خبر را میشنوید؟
11. اگر شما به کمک قاچاقبر به کشور استرالیا بروید چه فکر میکنید که شما با چه نوع مسکلات مواجه خواهد شد.
12. تحت چه شرایط فکر میکنید که رفتن و مهاجرت به کشور استرالیا ارزشمند نیست؟

13. کدام منابع خبری برای شما قابل اعتماد است که راجع به شبکه قاچاقبران معلومات بدست آورید که آنها در جریان سفر احتمال دارد شما را به خطر خواجه سازد. به طوری مثال، سفر و مهاجرت از طریق بهر به کشور استرالیا.
14. شما چرا به این منابع اعتماد دارید متیقن باشید که اسم، منابع و هویت جواب دهنده را یاد داشته باشید.
15. تحت چه شرایط فکر میکنید که رفتن و مهاجرت به کشور استرالیا ارزشمند نیست؟
16. دولت شما را چطور از خطرات سفر و شبکه قاچاقبران آگاه ازد که از طریق بهر توسط آنان برده میشوید؟
17. آیا شما دوستان و خویشاوندان در کشور استرالیا دارید؟ چند بار با آنها در تماس میشوید؟
18. در سالگرد اخیر تان چند ساله بودید؟
19. عواید خوانوده گی تان چقدر است؟
20. سطح تعلیم و تربیه تان چقدر است
21. حالت فعلی وظیفه تان چطور است
22. جنس
23. وظیفه تان چه است؟
24. آیا در کشور های خارجی اقارب تان زنده گی میکنند؟
25. آیا در کشور استرالیا خویشاوندان شما است؟
26. اگر شما از افغانستان مهاجرت کنید کدام کشور را انتخاب میکنید؟
27. از اشتراک و وقت تانرا که با ما سپری نمودید سپاسگذارم. مباحث شما برای ما معلومات را آماده خواهد ساخت تا مردم را از خطرات مهاجرت ها نیز واقف سازیم. آیا کدام چیزی دیگری هم دارید که با ما سهیم سازید؟

## ANNEX E. RESEARCH TEAM

### *Dr. Min Zaw Oo, Director of Research*

Dr. Min Zaw Oo is a specialist in political conflicts, risk analysis and multi-method socio-political research. With over ten years of experience in qualitative and quantitative researches, Min has been involved in major research initiatives, including those funded by the US government. Min was an independent consultant to the Genocide Early Warning Project which monitored high-risk countries around the world. Among various research projects, Min was involved with the Political Instability Task Force which was formed under the direction of the US Vice President in 1994. Before joining the WSC, Min has served as an interim executive director at Centre for Systemic Peace which manages major dataset, including the Polity Dataset which is a ubiquitous database for quantitative studies of political systems around the world. Min also contributes his analysis to Counter Networks and Narratives Weekly publication which circulates among counter-terrorism official and the Special Operation Command. In addition to data-intensive complex statistical research, Min has extensive background in Southeast Asia's conflict zones. Min conducted field research, including surveys, interviews, focus groups in high-risk areas. Dr. Oo was the director of outreach and strategy at Free Burma Coalition, which spearheaded the grassroots-based activism using internet to promote Burma's pro-democracy movement around the world. Min's background includes lobbying the US Congress and the administration to support democratization efforts in Burma. Min is also a regular contributor to British Broadcasting Corporation, Voice of America, Radio Free Asia and Norway-based Democratic Voice of Burma. Dr. Oo receives a Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University in 2010. His dissertation examines 115 democratic transitions worldwide to understand why democratic transitions consolidate democracy. Dr. Oo also holds a M.A. in Security Studies from Georgetown University, a M.S. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University, and a B.A., double-majoring I Public Relations, and Government and Politics from the University of Maryland.

### *Dr. Hafez Hafizullah, Research Manager*

Dr. Hafizullah completed his bachelor's degree between 1995 and 1999. From 1999 until 2006, he completed an M.D. at the Curative Faculty of Kabul Medical University. He has also taken extensive coursework in statistics at the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan, as well as a class in GIS applications delivered by Afghanistan Information Management Services (AIMS) and a two-month project management course at the American University in Afghanistan. In December 2006, Dr. Hafizullah joined HealthNet TPO as Research Associate, rising to the position of Research Manager in October 2007. His main responsibilities related to the collection of data on malaria incidence from Sentinel Surveillance sites in 24 Afghan provinces. Key duties included developing and executing surveys, questionnaires and focus groups; collecting, analysing and interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data using the STATA and SPSS software packages; designing databases using the Epi Info software package; training other staff in monitoring, evaluation and research skills; and presenting analysed data to the Ministry of Public Health.

***Laura Dubois, Analyst***

Laura holds a MA degree in International Security from King's College London and has a five-year diploma in Political Science from the French *Institute d'Etudes Politiques* in Aix-en-Provence. Laura is an Analyst and as such is responsible for a number of projects specializing in security issues in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region and the Americas. Laura worked in the French Consulate in Miami as the head of the Latin America desk. She also has experience working in risk analysis firms as well as international think tanks based in Paris, London and Washington DC.