



Tropentag, October 5-7, 2011, Bonn

“Development on the margin”

## Afghan Migrants Working in Iran’s Agricultural Sector, Impacts on the Livelihood Security of their Families Left Behind: Case Study Tehran

DAVID M. ECHE<sup>1</sup>, BEATRICE KNERR<sup>1</sup>, HOUMAN LIAGHATI<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*University of Kassel, Dept. of Development Economics, Migration and Agricultural Policy, Germany*

<sup>2</sup>*Shahid Beheshti University, Environmental Sciences Research Institute, Iran*

### Abstract

Despite the massive repatriation of Afghan migrants conducted by the Iranian government and the OIM, the recent census data states that there are nearly 920,000 Afghans still remaining in Iran holding a refugee status. Nowadays, the magnitude of the human displacement in Afghanistan has placed to this country with the second largest refugee population in the world. This mobility is a key livelihood strategy for Afghan families and it may be seen as an economic contribution for reconstruction and temporal stability of the country through remittances sent by Afghans living in Iran.

The aim of this study is to show the importance of remittances earned with toil and trouble by Afghan migrants, as well as it is for their families left back in their homeland. These remittances are broken down to gain a wide viewpoint of the economic situation of the Afghan labour force in Iran, a case study: Tehran. The data collected denotes the relation among remittances and household size, remitters, time living in Iran, migratory status, age, as well as to briefly demonstrate the main use of remittances by the recipient families in order to cope with the unleashed poverty in Afghanistan. In the other hand it point outs the harsh situation that Afghan migrants have to deal daily to remain in Iran although the government have strongly decided to repatriate all Afghan migrants living in Iranian ground and to implement a better control of the labour market. The Iranian government argues that Afghan migrants in the short and long term are weighting down the economic development of Iran, and even they have caused underdevelopment for Iran’s agricultural sector by the existence of an Afghani army labour force offering constant cheap manpower.

**Keywords:** Afghan labour force, Afghan migrants, Afghan refugees, Agricultural sector of Iran, Remittances