A constant challenge faced by the Coalition Forces in Afghanistan is the ability of the Anti-Coalition Forces (ACF) to steadily reinforce its ranks through the recruitment of a seemingly unending supply of fresh human reserves. Though the Taliban, et al are known to recruit from a variety of sources (e.g. particular madrassas and more fundamentalist villages on both sides of the Durand Line), among the most lucrative hunting grounds are those places where refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) languish in political and geographic limbo.

While the numbers vary from one agency to the next, Refugees International estimates that at present over 3 million Afghans remain refugees. Nearly all reside in decaying, ramshackle camps lacking basic health, education, or food facilities and over 300,000 are approximated to be suffering from the effects of contaminated water and substandard food today. The overcrowded shelters provided most often consist of makeshift tents which cannot protect the inhabitants from the extreme environment, or provide women and their children with basic privacy and protection.

The needs of these Afghans are for the most part neglected by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IROA), CFS, and donors alike. In recent months many refugees and IDPs have made efforts return to their former homes. They are largely undocumented, disenfranchised, and unwanted where ever they go, leaving them, like their counterparts remaining in the camps, particularly susceptible to the attentions and motivations of ACF. Like any predator, Taliban and other ACF recruiting scouts are seeking the prey most vulnerable to their intentions. This includes individuals who, because of their experiences and circumstances, are both angry and malleable, such as young and impressionable males without much in the way of resources or future prospects and who lack sufficient mature patriarchal guidance. These landless, disenfranchised populations offer the ACF an abundance of low-hanging fruit.

Dr. Dianna Wuagneux holds an earned doctorate in international relations with a MBA in cultural studies. She is currently an independent international advisor for Fragile States and Nations in Transition in the former Soviet Union, N. Africa, the Middle East, India, and Central Asia with more than 18 years experience as an international adviser for international humanitarian organizations, the US military, government agencies around the world. In 2009- early 2010, Dr. Wuagneux worked border stabilization issues for the UN between Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan for UN Central Asia out of Dushanbe. During 2008, Dr. Wuagneux provided expertise as executive advisor the DOD (JIEDDO) relevant to nation-building, cross-border negotiations, governance, conflict mitigation, civil-society, capacity building, reconstruction and development for the nation of Iraq. Throughout 2006 and early 2007, Dr. Wuagneux served as the Senior Policy Advisor for reconstruction and development in Afghanistan for
both the Department of State and Department of Defense.

About the Author

![SWJ Editors](image)


Links:

{1} [http://smallwarsjournal.com/author/swj-editors](http://smallwarsjournal.com/author/swj-editors)
{3} [http://smallwarsjournal.com/comment/reply/9511#comment-form](http://smallwarsjournal.com/comment/reply/9511#comment-form)

Copyright © 2015, Small Wars Foundation. Select uses allowed by Creative Commons BY-NC-SA 3.0 license per our [Terms of Use](http://smallwarsjournal.com/). Please help us support the [Small Wars Community](http://smallwarsjournal.com/).