

Perspective from the Kabul River Basin

Dr. Azeem Shah
Senior Regional Researcher
Water Governance, IWMI

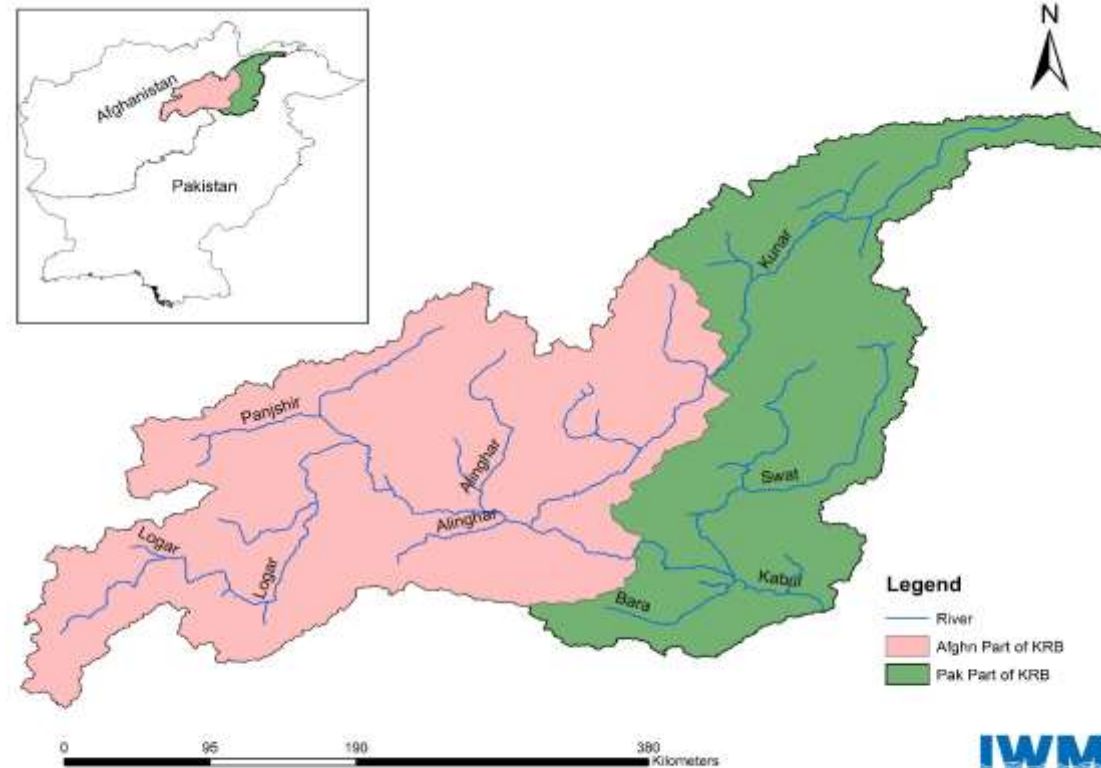
Innovative water solutions for sustainable development

Food · Climate · Growth

River Basins between Afghanistan and Pakistan

There are several small and large rivers common between Pakistan and Afghanistan

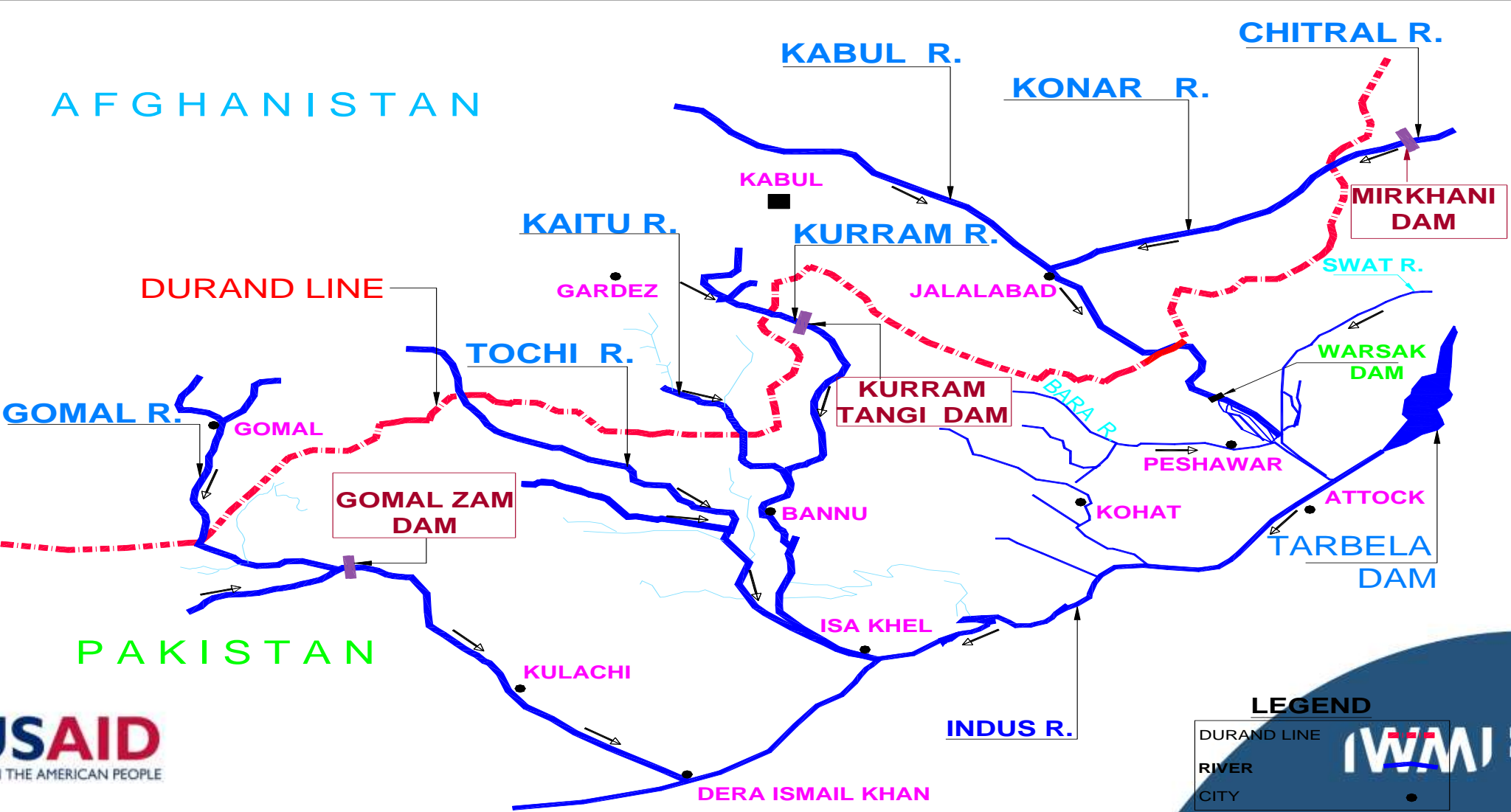
Kabul is the major one forming 90% of the total waters of common rivers



COMMON RIVERS WITH AFGHANISTAN

MAIN RIVERS	MAJOR TRIBUTARIES	AVERAGE ANNUAL INFLOWS (MAF)
KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA		
Kabul	Chitral/Konar	17.44
Kurram	Kaitu & Tochi	0.89
Gomal	Zhob & Kandar	0.79
BALUCHISTAN		
Abdul Wahab Stream	Turwa	0.0039
Kandar	Nagandi Oba, Ashiwat	0.0212
Kand	Tirkha	0.00293
Kadanai	Tashrabad, Aghbergai, Hasna Zemal, Maran, Warjaroba	0.0058
Pishin Lora/ Bore Nallah		0.095
Kaisar	Gori	0.0175
Total:		19.266

Common Rivers with Afghanistan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan



LEGEND

- DURAND LINE (Red dashed line)
- RIVER (Blue line)
- CITY (Black dot)

International Water Management Institute

Kabul River Basin

- In Kabul basin outflows from Pakistan are about 8 MAF while Inflows are estimated as 17.4 MAF
- Its home to about 35% population of Afghanistan
- It encompasses about 12% of Afghanistan territory and 26% of total annual river flows
- Kabul River contributes almost 12% flows to the Indus River
- Kabul is an early riser which means its contribution is towards the late Rabi or early Kharif crop when water is most needed in Pakistan
- Flows entering Pakistan are expected to decrease by ~1.8MAF by 2030

Indus vs Kabul River Basin

Indus River Basin

Conflict over shared resource between India and Pakistan after partition in 1947

Solution: interstate agreement to Divide the basin

Repercussions: Damage to environmental flows, GW issues, energy problems, climate change impact neglected .. Later in 1991 Intrastate water apportionment accord to further divide water within provinces Pakistan..

Kabul River Basin

NO major water issues between Afghanistan and Pakistan up till now.

Severe issues of terrorism, tribal conflict and instability

Can we afford a transboundary water issue?

Solution: Should we learn from Indus Water Treaty and use a shared basin approach for KRB?

Benefits: conserve ecology, manage floods, contribute in development of the shared resource for the benefit of its inhabitants

International Water Laws/Conventions as a Starting Point?

The Helsinki Rules on the Uses of the Waters of International Rivers, 1966

Dublin Principles (1992) - non-binding declarations for action at the local, national and international level to reduce water scarcity

Berlin Rules on Water Resources, 2004 - non-binding and applicable only to the extent no agreement exists between basin states.

Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses - only enforceable international law that impacts transboundary aquifers, entered into force on 17 August 2014 following its thirty-fifth ratification. The Convention is not applicable to non-signatories and does not affect the right of any watercourse state arising from any prior agreement.

Both Afghanistan and Pakistan have not yet Ratified UN Watercourse Convention – Is this a starting point?



International Water
Management Institute

Thank You

Dr. Azeem Shah
a.shah@cigar.org

Innovative water solutions for sustainable development

Food · Climate · Growth