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Border Closures, Conflict, and the Trade of Perishable Goods

Policy Challenges for Pakistan–Afghanistan Relations

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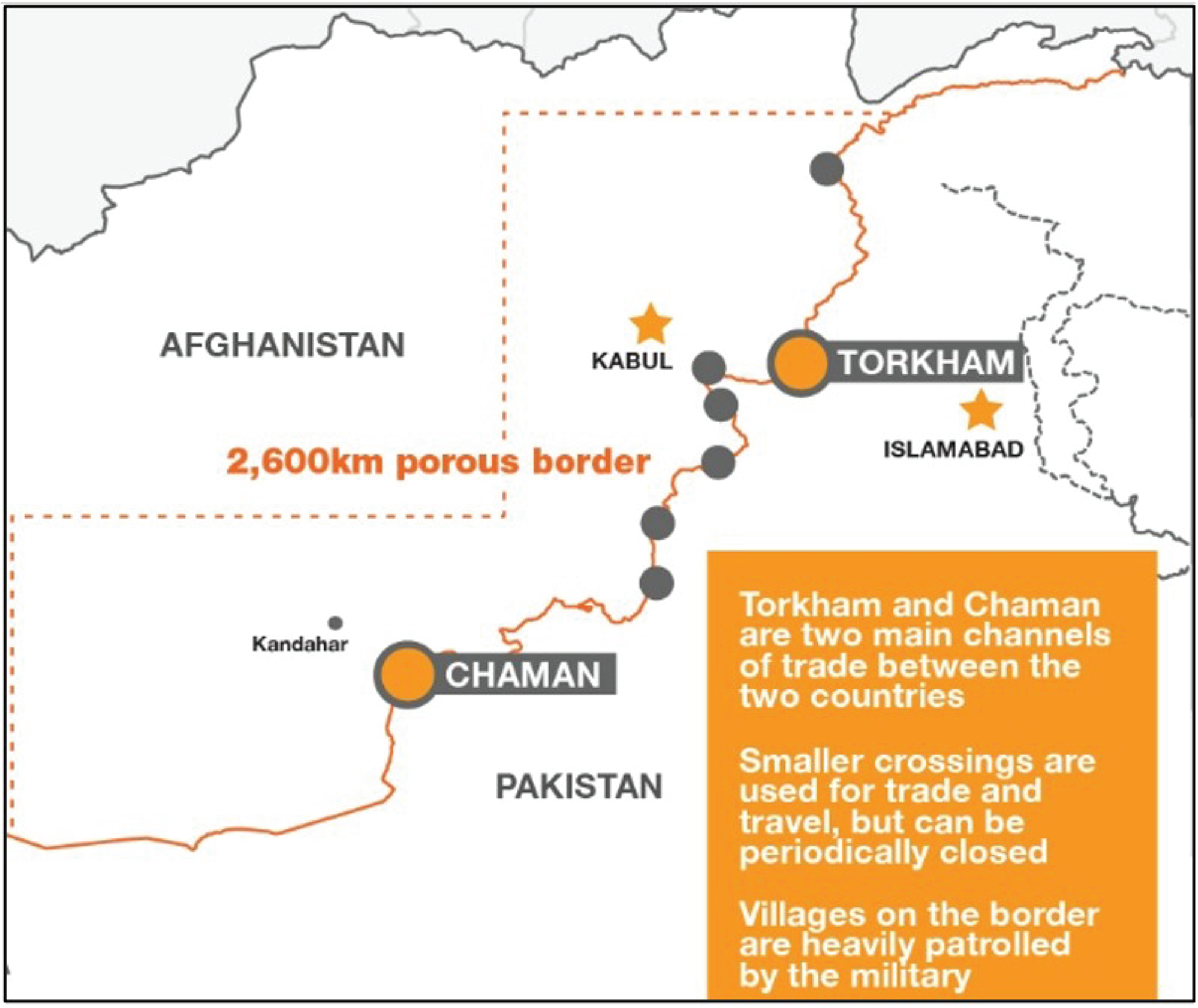
1. Introduction

The Pak–Afghan trade corridor has long served as a critical channel for the exchange of perishable commodities, linking producers, traders, and consumers across both economies. In recent years, however, recurring border closures driven by security concerns and geopolitical tensions have increasingly disrupted this flow, particularly affecting time-sensitive goods such as fruits and vegetables (Rlung, 2024). Given the highly perishable nature of these commodities, even short delays lead to significant spoilage, income losses, and market distortions. These disruptions not only affect bilateral trade volumes but also create price volatility, supply-demand imbalances, and uncertainty across domestic markets (Qasim, 2025). Moreover, the economic costs extend beyond the immediate losses, influencing the production decisions, trade relationships, and food security outcomes over time (Herbert & Idris, 2024). PIDE's recent research on Pak-Afghan bilateral and transit trade has clearly mentioned the decline in trade and the need for confidence building to reverse it (Khan & Iqbal, 2025). This policy viewpoint is built on the extant work by particularly focusing on border closure from October 2025 onwards. It marked the objective of the study as to see how this border closure affects the trade and value chain of perishable commodities between two countries and to identify the practical yet policy pathways that can help this trade to remain continue in future episodes of geopolitical conflict. The analysis stands on trade statistics, media reporting, and a consultation with senior custom official. This study is also based on the institutional study on trade relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, provided by Khan and Iqbal (2025), according to which regular border management, confidence-building measures and institutional coordination are vital in maintaining bilateral trade under political uncertainty. The current Policy Viewpoint expands upon this conversation by specifically discussing the influence of border closures on the trade of perishable commodities. The analysis is merely an indicative preliminary study, pointing out the need for additional research to validate the figures provided above. In addition, the analysis does not assume that all market-related processes are attributed to border closures alone. It explores how the border disruptions have influenced other macro-economic factors affecting bilateral trade.

While policy discourse has largely focused on security dimensions, limited attention has been given to the economic consequences of such disruptions, particularly in terms of value chain impacts and price dynamics The Policy Viewpoint seeks to achieve only one thing: to evaluate how the October 2025 border closure has affected the trade and value chain of perishable commodities, and what policies can be implemented to ensure continuity of trade flows. Neither does it discuss economic stability in general terms, nor does it provide a stakeholder consultation process. The single practitioner interview provided in Section 5 serves as a preliminary illustration only.

Fig:1 PAK-AFGHAN Border Crossings



Source: Al Jazeera News (May 5, 2017); reproduced for structural representation of primary transit channels (Torkham and Chaman)

2. Situational Analysis

Afghanistan has not only been a destination market, but also a transit route for trade to Central Asia. This makes Afghanistan significant for Pakistan's regional trade and economic connectivity. It serves as an export corridor for surplus perishables and produce that doesn't meet the stringent phytosanitary standards of the EU or Gulf markets. Pakistan exports fruits (citrus, mangoes), vegetables (potatoes, tomatoes) etc., to Afghanistan, and imports fresh fruits (grapes, pomegranates) and vegetables, along with multiple other goods from Afghanistan.

In mid-October 2025, following a deadly military escalation and clashes between Pakistan security forces and Afghan Taliban, the Pak-Afghan border closed for trade. This border closure appears to create economic challenges for Pakistan, leading to a drop in bilateral trade of about 28%, from $2.46b in 2024 to $1.77b in 2025 (BISI, 2026). On average, Pakistan's exports have lost $177m/month since closure, a significant drop of 56% as of early 2026 (Arab News Pakistan, 2025). An economic loss exceeding $4.5 billion has already been reported (BISI, 2026); as this is an accumulative number, and the methodology behind the figure has not been made clear by the source, it should be interpreted as an indication of the approximate scale rather than a verifiable loss estimateThe logistical overhead now exceeds the value of the produce itself, with container rent and fuel for reefers (refrigerated trucks), as well as demurrage and detention fees reaching $150 to $200 per container per day. PAJCC reports an estimated monthly loss of Rs. 50 billion (about $6 million a day), due to

10,000-12,000 containers are stuck at the main borders (The News, 8th February 2026). Similar crisis is highlighted by CAREC Corridor Performance Measurement and Monitoring (CPMM) framework. CPMM's empirical assessment reports that Torkham and Chaman remained the most time-consuming BCPs. There exist structural bottlenecks, complicated anti-smuggling checks and poor infrastructure that raise the clearance costs even on the normal days, which definitely spike in the period of active conflicts (CAREC, 2025). These figures have been derived from government sources, industry associations, and media reports and should thus be considered indicative estimates and not independently verified loss estimates.

Table 1: FOOD GROUP EXPORTS TO AFGHANISTAN
Oct–Dec Quarterly TREND (2022–2025) (Values USD Million)

Indicator	Oct-Dec 2022	Oct-Dec 2023	Oct-Dec 2024	Oct-Dec 2025*
Total Pakistan Exports (USD m)	**7,073.6**	**8,083.4**	**8,725.7**	**7,535.7**
Total Pakistan Imports (USD m)	**14,879.8**	**14,022.6**	**14,425.3**	**17,473.7**
Trade Balance (USD m)	-7,806.3	-5,939.2	-5,699.6	-9,938.1
Pakistan Exports → Afghanistan (USD m)	**267.0**	**293.9**	**511.6**	**64.0**
Pakistan Imports from Afghanistan (USD m)	**302.3**	**197.6**	**297.1**	**~5**
Total Food Group Exports (USD m)	828.7	1,542.7	1,488.7	834.2
Fruits, Veg & Prep Exports (USD m)	146.9	165.9	150.6	126.6
Rice Exports (USD m)	525.9	1,233.3	1,153.3	521.3
Afghanistan Share of Pak Exports (%)	4%	4%	6%	1%
Food Group Share of Pak Exports (%)	**11.72%**	**19.08%**	**17.06%**	**11.07%**
Pulses Imports (USD m)	287.1	213.4	324.6	190.4

Note: Data extracted from Quarterly Review of Foreign Trade published by PBS Pakistan. On October 11, 2025, Pakistan closed the Torkham and Chaman border crossings with Afghanistan following heightened security tensions. These crossings are the primary conduits for bilateral trade, including time-sensitive perishable goods. The closures coincided precisely with the Oct–Dec quarter — Pakistan's peak export season for rice and fruits/vegetables to Afghanistan.

Statistics in Table 1 depict the magnitude of disruption in Pak-Afghan trade, particularly in food group. Total exports of Pakistan are stable, but the exports to Afghanistan have declined from $ 511.6 million to $64 million (from Oct-Dec 2024 to Oct-Dec 2025), which is a very sharp decline and an immediate impact of border closure. Looking at the share of exports, a drastic decline from 6% to 1% is evident, indicating a collapse of this regional corridor. Exports of the food group fall from $1488.7 million in 2024 to $834.2 million in 2025, underlining the vulnerability of perishable trade to logistical disruptions. This observed sharp decline provides indicative evidence of on how border uncertainty can lead to enormous trade compression. The trend is consistent across the broader food group, including rice exports, which account for a major share of food exports, also declined sharply from $1,153.3 million in 2024 to $521.3 million in 2025. Perishable foods such as fruits, vegetables, and preparations dropped from $150.6 million to $126.6 million during the same period (Table 1). These numbers also suggest that even the less perishable items like rice are also disrupted due to border closure, whereas for highly perishable commodities the losses are compounded due to time sensitivity and lack of cold chain infrastructure. This analysis also confirms that border closure unevenly affects the exports of different food groups, with a disproportionately high frequency of losses for highly perishable commodities. These findings are also in line with the study conducted by Khan and Iqbal (2025), who cite policy uncertainty, border disruption, and poor institutional frameworks as the major constraints to the development of trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The border closure of October 2025 represents an extreme case of these long-standing institutional problems.An important dimension of this risk is the limited ability to quickly develop alternative trade channels with adequate storage capacity, which places traders under significant pressure. This is particularly critical for perishable commodities such as citrus fruits, potatoes, and tomatoes, which were already ready for export at the time of the closure. The closure of the border, however, has resulted in food wastage and degradation of food products; there have been cases reported in the trade media where there was a 100% loss of food products because of the absence of cold chain services at the borders (Shayan, 2025)5000 trucks carrying goods were stranded at the border for weeks in October 2025. Grapes from Afghanistan worth $50 million spoiled on border resultantly Pakistan face loses of around $2 million a day (Shayan, 2025). Due to trade blockage, the farmers across the borders were forced to dump their harvest or to sell at the fraction of cost. The scarcity of food items has led to a surge in prices. For instance, the price for tomatoes has increased by more than 400% in October 2025 (The Dawn, 24 Oct, 2025).

The perishable goods, especially fruits and vegetables, have a short post-harvest life. For perishable goods, reaching the market quickly is more important than getting a better price. Owing to export failures, these perishables have been dumped into local markets in Peshawar, Quetta, and Lahore, which has lowered the wholesale prices, leaving farmers unable to recover their input costs (seeds, fertilizer, and electricity). This translates into significant losses for those small-scale farmers, who have taken loans to plant crops with the expectation of high-margin Afghan exports. The border closure has shifted the economic burden onto the domestic population, notably to the farmers, resulting in economic damage. Many farmers defaulted on their informal loans. Furthermore, the disruptions in exports have resulted in lower GDP growth in recent quarters, reduced agricultural income, and a decline in export earnings (Rlung, 2024). To fuel the fire is the lack of Value-Added Processing systems, such as dehydration plants or cold-storage facilities near the border. To avoid future losses, the farmers needed to adjust their behavior. To secure their annual income, the farmers have now started shifting from perishables toward less profitable but storable crops. Farmers are already facing global challenges such as increased fertilizer costs and resulting supply chain disruptions, which are forcing them to shift towards less fertilizer-intensive crops. All of this will potentially reduce productivity and output in the short run. In the long run, such crop shift might result in food security problems (Herbret & Idris, 2024). With the decrease in production of staple crops lower supply will be there in the domestic markets, and a threat of higher prices for consumers. To meet the supply shortage, the government may likely to import food from international markets (in dollars) and would subsequently subsidize to make food affordable. This can create pressure on foreign exchange reserves and a fiscal burden on the government value.

The price and trade dynamics discussed above have very much been synchronized with the closure of the border on October 2025 and hence the present Policy Perspective regards it as the primary cause for the same due to the coincidence and impact of such movements. However, there were many other forces at work during the same time period which is not separately analyzed in this policy viewpoint and which includes general deterioration in security relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, exchange rate dynamics, domestic inflation levels and commodity prices worldwide. This is just to point out that the figures discussed above are indicative of the level of disruptions caused by the border closure.

3. National Security Perspective of Border-Closure

The disruption of cross-border trade in perishable food items between Pakistan and Afghanistan, particularly during episodes of political tension and border closures, constitutes a multidimensional national security risk for Pakistan. While often framed as a bilateral trade issue, the existing literature suggests that such disruptions generate systemic vulnerabilities across food security, border governance, and internal stability with wider implications for the overall country's stability (Pooya, 2025; The Diplomat 12 March 2026; Hasht-e- Subh, 2 Nov, 2025). It is important to keep in mind that much of the evidence used in this section is from cross-country literature regarding food price shocks and trade-related informality, and not from empirical studies relating specifically to the Pakistan-Afghanistan corridor; the mechanisms highlighted below are identified as potential risks worth watching out for. Recent studies and policy reports highlight the potential consequences of border closures, particularly their implications for national security and domestic stability, as summarized below.

Urban Stability

At times, disruptions in perishable trade directly translate into food price volatility and supply shocks, particularly in urban consumption centers. The Pak–Afghan trade corridor is a critical conduit for fresh fruits and vegetables, and its sudden closure leads to immediate shortages and sharp price increases due to the non-storability of these goods. This situation is supported by the extant literature. For instance, a study by Arezki and Bruckner (2011) utilizing panel data on 120 countries offers findings that low-income countries are more likely to be vulnerable to food prices, which may lead to significant deterioration of democratic institutions and an increase in the incidence of anti-government demonstrations, riots, and civil conflicts. Another highly relevant study by Hendrix and Haggard (2015) drawing on a dataset of urban unrest in 55 major cities finds the effect of global food prices on protests and rioting, where democracies are more prone to urban unrest during periods of high food prices than autocracies. In a country already experiencing inflationary pressures, such volatility can exacerbate public discontent and trigger urban instability, an established precursor to broader political and security challenges.

Expansion of Informal/Illegal Trade Networks and Terror Financing Risks

Alongside other structural and geopolitical factors, disruptions at the Pakistan–Afghanistan border might generate significant unintended consequences. Two interrelated policy concerns are particularly salient.

First, repeated border closures and interruptions to formal transit trade tend to incentivize the expansion of illicit trade networks. While not limited to perishable commodities only, such disruptions may alter the risk–reward calculus for traders in big cities such as Peshawar and Quetta, encouraging a shift toward informal and illegal channels. The extant research suggests that constraints on formal trade are frequently accompanied by diversion into smuggling, under-invoicing, and re-export arbitrage (Khalil et al., 2025). Over time, these practices become institutionalized, undermining state authority and regulatory oversight in border areas. Moreover, such informal economies are often embedded within broader cross-border criminal ecosystems, with potential linkages to militant financing and other illicit activities (Carter et al, 2024). In this context, restrictive border measures may paradoxically weaken the very security objectives they are intended to achieve by fostering parallel, unregulated systems of exchange. Secondly, the economic fallout of disrupted trade is disproportionately borne by borderland economies, particularly in provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Trade, transport, and logistics activities linked to Afghan transit trade constitute a critical source of employment and income in these regions. Prolonged disruptions can suppress formal economic activity, erode household livelihoods, and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. Such economic dislocation can be one of the plausible reasons that may contribute to increased population movements, including cross-border migration, and heightened local insecurity.

From a policy perspective, these dynamics create a feedback loop: weakened livelihoods and reduced economic opportunities increase susceptibility to social unrest and may facilitate recruitment into non-state or anti-state networks. Consequently, abrupt or prolonged disruptions to border trade risk amplifying internal security challenges rather than mitigating them. A more calibrated approach,balancing security imperatives with economic continuity remains essential for sustaining both stability and state legitimacy in border regions.

Strategic Supply Chain Vulnerability

Pakistan faces growing strategic and geo-economic risks as the regional markets of Afghanistan may diversify away from Pakistani trade routes. Persistent uncertainty, driven by frequent closures and procedural bottlenecks, has already prompted (Saeed and Ullah, 2023). Afghan traders to shift toward alternative corridors (Business Recorder, 6th January, 2026), including Iran and Central Asia. This not only weakens Pakistan's economic leverage in the region but also undermines its long-term strategic position as a transit hub for Central Asian trade.

The border disruptions expose a critical policy gap in integrating trade and security frameworks. The absence of contingency mechanisms, such as protected "green channels" for perishables or coordinated bilateral protocols, exacerbates the economic and security fallout. Taken together, the recurring disruption of perishable food trade represents not merely an economic inefficiency but a structural national security vulnerability. It generates a reinforcing cycle of inflation, informality, border instability, and strategic economic loss. This underscores the urgent need for policy prioritization that integrates trade facilitation with security management, ensuring resilience in critical food supply chains while maintaining border control objectives.

4. Value Chain Implications

Conflict-induced border disruptions affect the functioning of the whole value chain across two countries and amplify the economic vulnerabilities. Since fruits and vegetables are highly time-sensitive, so even a short-term interruptions generate losses from the production node to consumption.

Citrus from Pakistan is highly export oriented with Afghanistan remaining its key regional market, but the recent closure in the peak harvest season resulted in unsold produce in the market, causing distress sale for farmers. Post-harvest losses account for 20-30% in normal circumstances, which intensifies multifold due to logistical disruptions (FAO, 2021), resulting in a collapse of prices at farm gate level, not only reducing the farm income but also affecting the ability of farmer to repay their formal and informal credit. The whole production cycle incentives weaken for future.

The aftermaths such as Rs. 50 billion per month losses to traders and exporters due to stranded ships and spoilage forces the small and medium traders to exit the market and hence an incentive for a shift towards illicit channels are mentioned previously. The cold storage infrastructure is underdeveloped in Pakistan, with only hardly 10% of perishable produce handled through modern cold chain systems (World Bank, 2020). This factor is also responsible for the losses at the border and hence reduces the export competitiveness as well.

At the wholesale and retail market level, such disruptions created asymmetric supply shocks. On the one side, Pakistan experienced guts due to restricted exports. While on the other hand, Afghanistan faces shortages. It leads to price divergence and failure of the price transmission mechanism across both countries.

For consumers, the price hikes in the deficit region. Restricted imports from Pakistan cause food price inflation in Afghanistan. In Pakistan, though prices fall in the short term, but due to production disincentive the prices are likely to rise in the upcoming season, leading to a compromise on food security and a potential threat to low-income households. Apart of these micro-level effects, these disruptions also have macroeconomic implications. Moving away from the barter-based trade arrangements due to disruptions means a shift towards dollar-denominated transactions, which puts a pressure on foreign exchange reserves. Altogether, border disruptions do not merely interrupt trade flows, but propagate across the entire value chain, amplifying transaction costs, weakening production incentives, and creating both microeconomic inefficiencies and macroeconomic risks. Table 2 summarizes the lost estimates by the various actors of the value chain.

Table 2: Indicative Value Chain Losses (October 2025-February 2026)

Value Chain Actor	Indicative loss/impact	Basis and Source
Farmers (citrus, potato, tomato growers)	Distress sales at collapsed gate prices; input costs largely uncovered	Baseline Post-harvest loss of 20-30% in normal conditions (FAO, 2021), reportedly compounded during closure (Shayan, 2025)
Border Daily wage laborers (Chaman)	Approx. PKR 13.3 billion cumulative loss over 9 months across roughly 12000 workers	Khan & Iqbal, PIDE Research Report 2025:218
Traders and Exporters	Approx. PKR 50 billion per month in demurrage, spoilage and lost sales	PAJCCI (2026)
Transporters	Demurrage and detention of $120-200 per container per day, on an estimated 10-12 thousand stranded containers	PAJCCI (2026)
Consumers in Pakistan	Short-term price relief from dumped surplus, followed by price hike for restricted imported items from Afghanistan (like tomato price increased over 400% in October 2025 and onwards)	The Dawn (2025)
Consumers in Afghanistan	Shortages and price increase for Pakistan-sourced staples and inputs	Qualitative trade press reporting

Note: figures are compiled and drawn from various secondary sources and they are not additive

5. Practitioner Perspective

This section presents the preliminary and illustrative practitioner perspective. For this purpose, Mr. Mukarram Ansari[1], Pakistan Customs, Federal Board of Revenue has been consulted. He reinforced that the border disruptions should not only be analyzed through physical security perspective rather it should be seen from a comprehensive national security lens where food security and economic stability matters a lot.

He mentioned that persistent closures at the Afghan border continuously cause trade diversion for those commodities previously sourced from Afghanistan, causing significant losses. Portion of cross-border trade operates through barter system; disruptions shift the trade towards formal settings. Formal trade settings with alternative international partners require dollar denominated transactions which exacerbate the pressure on Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves and current account balance.

He further added that for highly perishable agriculture items, proximity to border really matters. Bottlenecks at the major proximities like Torkham etc. inevitably resort the trade towards informal channels. Hence, operationalizing multiple, shorter border crossing points is critical to keeping transit costs viable and reducing smuggling. This customs-side perspective is a useful starting point but it may or may not represent the views of farmers, exporters and other stakeholders of value chain.

6. Economic Diplomacy and Trade Diversion

In the current era of ongoing geopolitical tensions, sustainable trade requires a rational policy framework that excludes security conflicts. Economies having such conflicts often adopt "managed interdependence" rather than full economic disengagement. For example, India and China have expanded bilateral trade despite the security conflicts. Both countries have strategized in a way that allowed economic cooperation alongside strategic rivalry. More prominently, they have principally developed a consensus that security disputes should not disturb the economic relationships, hence continued trade agreements, joint ventures, and supply chain integration. The same goes for US – China relationships, while China is competing with US for the status of superpower, but their trade has grown over the decades. Based on these global practices, the concept of "Pakistan Geo-economics Pivot" by Moeed Yusuf draws its strength for the advocacy that Pakistan's national security should be rooted in economic resilience rather than traditional geopolitics. The need is to "de-hyphenate" the border disputes from commercial interests by continuing economic connectivity and regional integration, despite border tensions. Pakistan's geography makes it a strategic transit hub for trade between Central and South Asia. Thus, the political friction should not halt the economic flow of goods, energy, and investment. Trade should continue despite political friction. This approach supports Pakistan's broader strategic vision outlined in the National Security Policy of Pakistan 2022–2026, which identifies economic security as the foundation of national security. Policy certainty has a pivotal role for economic actors.

A deeper investigation of such economic relationships reveals certain implications. First, countries restrict the sensitive sectors. However, regulated channels are used to continue the broader trade relations. Second, they continue the diplomatic dialogs specially to keep the economic integrations alive to avoid complete breakdowns. Third, governments try to provide facilities to promote joint ventures, business approvals and relaxing visa rules in order to ease the operational constraints. In the conflict of India and China, significant policy shifts have been observed that includes allowing collaboration in multiple sectors, relaxing the business restrictions and recognizing supply chain dependence on Chinese inputs as a major necessity.

In the conflict settings of Russia-Ukraine War, similar settings have been observed. They continued the trade of essential commodities through negotiated transit corridors. In addition, they preserved critical supply chains through international mediations. Iran faced sanctions since quite long. Nonetheless, focused on barter trade, alternative payment systems, and regional currency settlements. Hence it led them to improve international trade.

1. Authors highly acknowledge the time and input provision of Mr. Mukarram Ansari, Pakistan Customs, Federal Board of Revenue

These strategies implicate the following three significant tools.

- Controlled trade corridors
- Flexible financial arrangements
- Diversification through intermediary or regional markets

These tools reduce uncertainty, maintain supply flows, and stabilize domestic markets even under extreme geopolitical stress.

For Pakistan, these lessons point toward two immediate priorities. First, the government should formalize a bilateral "Essential Trade Continuity Mechanism" with Afghanistan. This can be materialized by establishing protected corridors for perishable goods with guaranteed clearance protocols during periods of tension. Second, Pakistan should initiate a targeted trade diversification strategy, particularly toward China and regional markets. This should be supported by investments in cold chain infrastructure and regulatory facilitation. By combining institutionalized economic diplomacy with strategic diversification, Pakistan can transition from reactive disruption management to a resilient trade framework that safeguards perishable commodity flows and broader economic stability.

7. Forward-Looking Risks

Previous sections of this study makes it understandable that disruptions are not a static or one period phenomenon rather it generates inter-temporal effects in terms of their influence on future crop cycles, production decisions and overall economic relationship future.

Agriculture production dynamics are at the verge of major risk where the cropping pattern might shift from high-valued perishable crops towards the less risky alternatives. This intertemporal response will lead to reduce the comparative advantage of Pakistan in horticulture exports which will ultimately translate into a major undermining of long term sectoral growth. From the trade structure perspective, there is a risk of permanent market erosion of this historically largest regional trading market of Afghanistan, the bilateral trade valued around $2 billion annually prior to disruptions. The trade form Afghanistan may have diverted towards the other destinations like Iran and Central Asia. Once the alternate supply chains will be established, then the re-entry of Pakistan back into the Afghan market will be costly and uncertain (World Bank, 2023). Losing the neighborhood trade channel will expose the Pakistan to global price shocks, in this current environment of rising global food price volatility (FAO, 2023). Continuous disruptions will permanently erode the trust between the two nations and will halt the economic diplomacy as a stabilizing mechanism. Governance challenges may rise due to illicit economic activities, further complicated the settings towards the trade normalization in future.

8. Conclusion and Policy Implications

The analysis provided in this brief has precisely demonstrated that conflict induced disruption across Pak-Afghan border generate not only short term loses but have long term consequences as well. For perishable commodities, the losses are spread to whole value chain and upcoming production cycles as well. Price signals got weaken, trade relationships halted, food security is at stake and a broader macroeconomic risk has been created because of the disruptions and conflicts. This will ultimately lead to structural weakness and spoilage of regional economic integration. So from the perspective of policy there is an urgent need of intervention through short term, medium term and long term measures. As mentioned repeatedly in the paper, a number of estimates and causal connections made in this Policy Viewpoint are suggestive and are based mostly on secondary/cross-country literature and not from original studies relating specifically to the Pakistan-Afghanistan corridor; primary data collection and causal analysis is highly recommended as follow-up.

Immediate measures:

1. Establishment of “green channels” at the key Pak-Afghan borders for perishable commodities in order to ensure the clearance process even at the time of high security risks.
2. Introduction of a support mechanism for the affectees of value chain especially farmers and traders through the price support and compensations.
3. Ensure the provision of mobile cold storage near border.
4. Reduce the procedural bottlenecks across border through better coordination.

Medium to long-term measures:

1. Development of a formal bilateral trade continuity agreement with Afghanistan in which protocols should be decided for the uninterrupted movement of essential goods across the borders even at the time conflict.
2. Investment in cold chain infrastructure and value added processing.
3. Promotion of trade diversification strategies in order to reduce the reliance on close border countries.
4. Strengthen the data basis and monitoring mechanism for trade flows, prices and any upcoming supply chain disruptions,
5. Integration of trade policy with the national security strategy for the sake of ensuring the food security along the national security.

Disclaimer

During the preparation of this work, the author used Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to improve grammar, sentence structure, clarity, and readability. After using the AI tool, the author reviewed and edited the content as necessary and takes full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the final content. The research idea, conceptualisation, methodology, empirical analysis, interpretation of results, and conclusions are entirely the author's own.

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