

Taliban Violence in Afghan Provinces (2014-2015)

Project Overview

In the longest war in its history, the United States has been fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan for almost 19 years. However, the Taliban violence has spiked in the country in 2014, after the number of U.S. and its NATO forces dramatically decreased. This created a vacuum for Taliban to fill. This project demonstrates the fluctuation in Taliban violence in 34 Afghan provinces between 2014 and 2015.

Research Question

In which provinces of Afghanistan did Taliban violence increase in 2014?

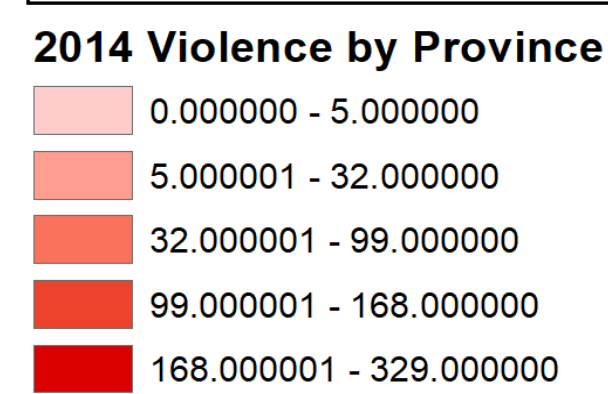
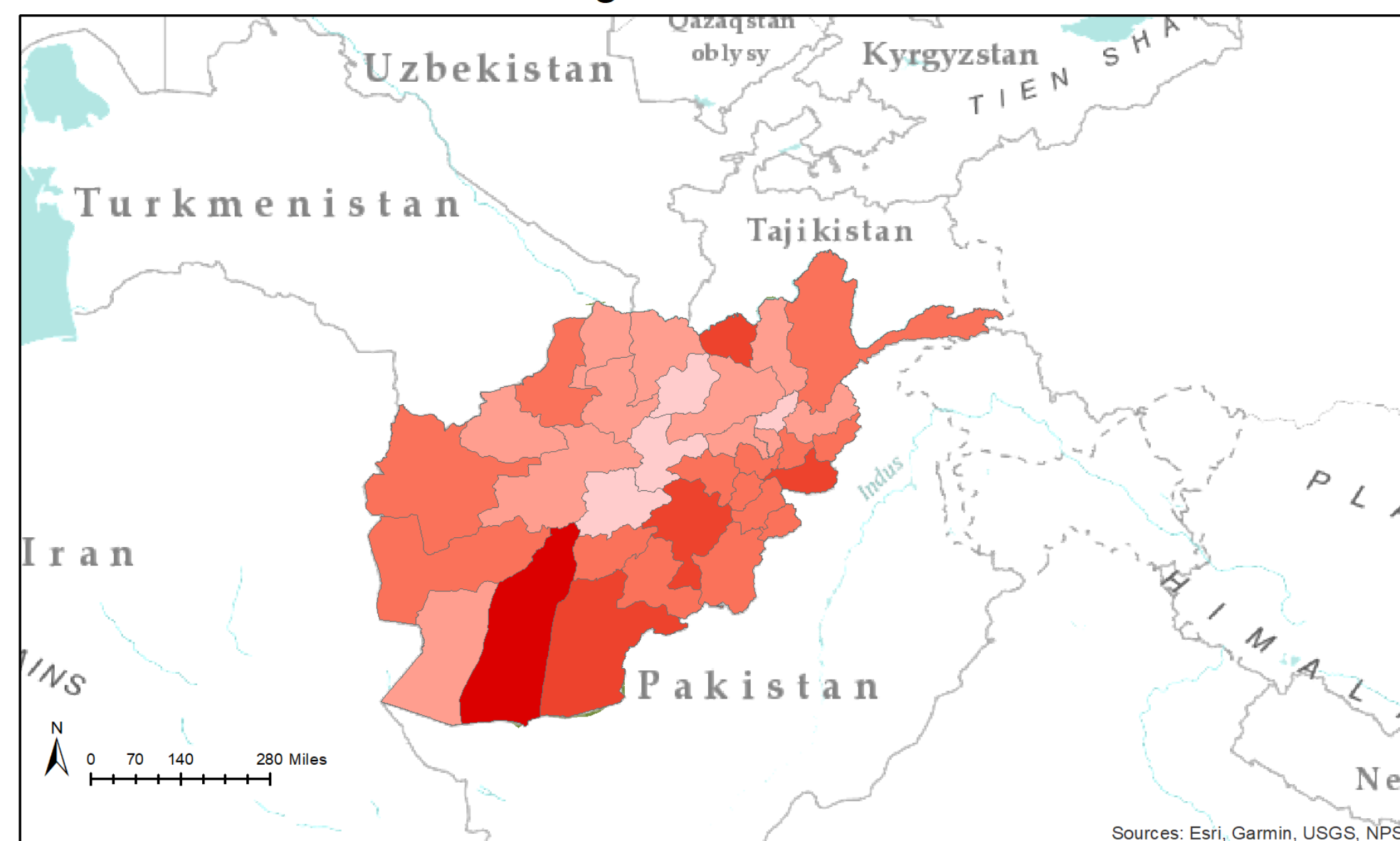
Which parts of Afghanistan continued to experience violence in 2015?

Comparing the level of violence between 2014 and 2015 and correlating it to the events on the ground, what is the outcome?

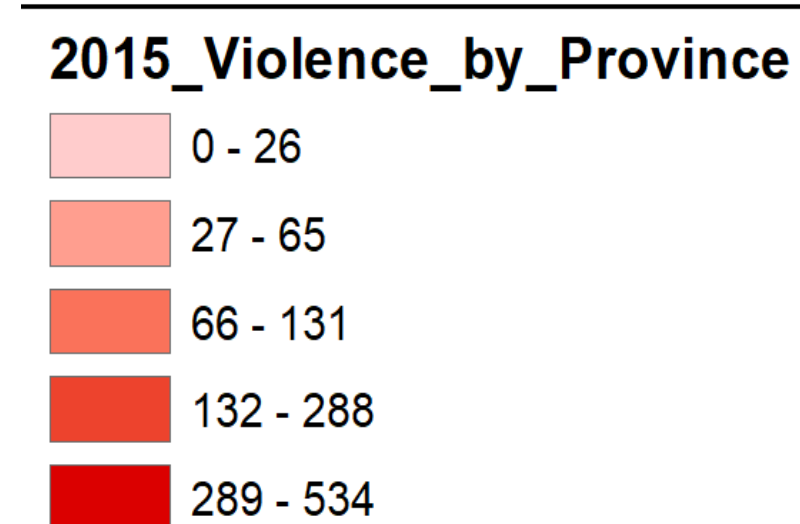
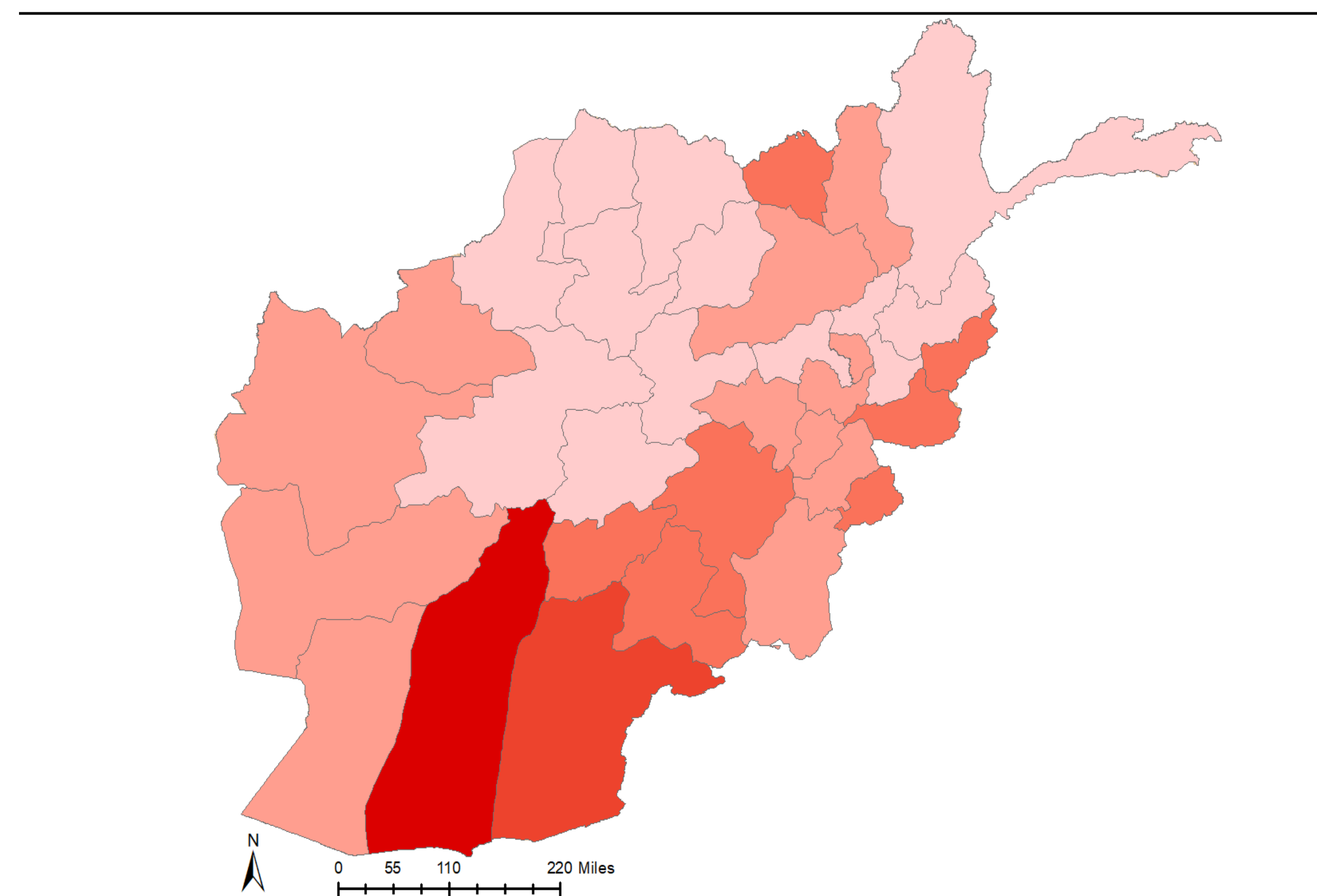
Analysis

Evolution of Conflict- Conflict events were collected for each province, then a joins and relates was performed to create a new polygon layer. A new field was created for 2014 to do a field calculation to count the number of attacks per province. The same was carried out for 2015. The change in number of attacks between 2014 and 2015 was symbolized that shows a slight decrease in violence.

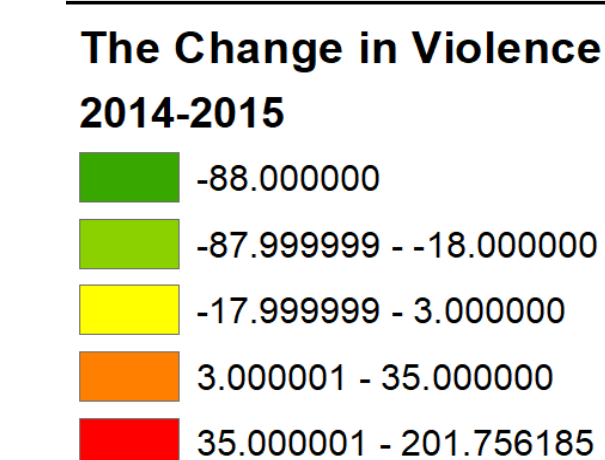
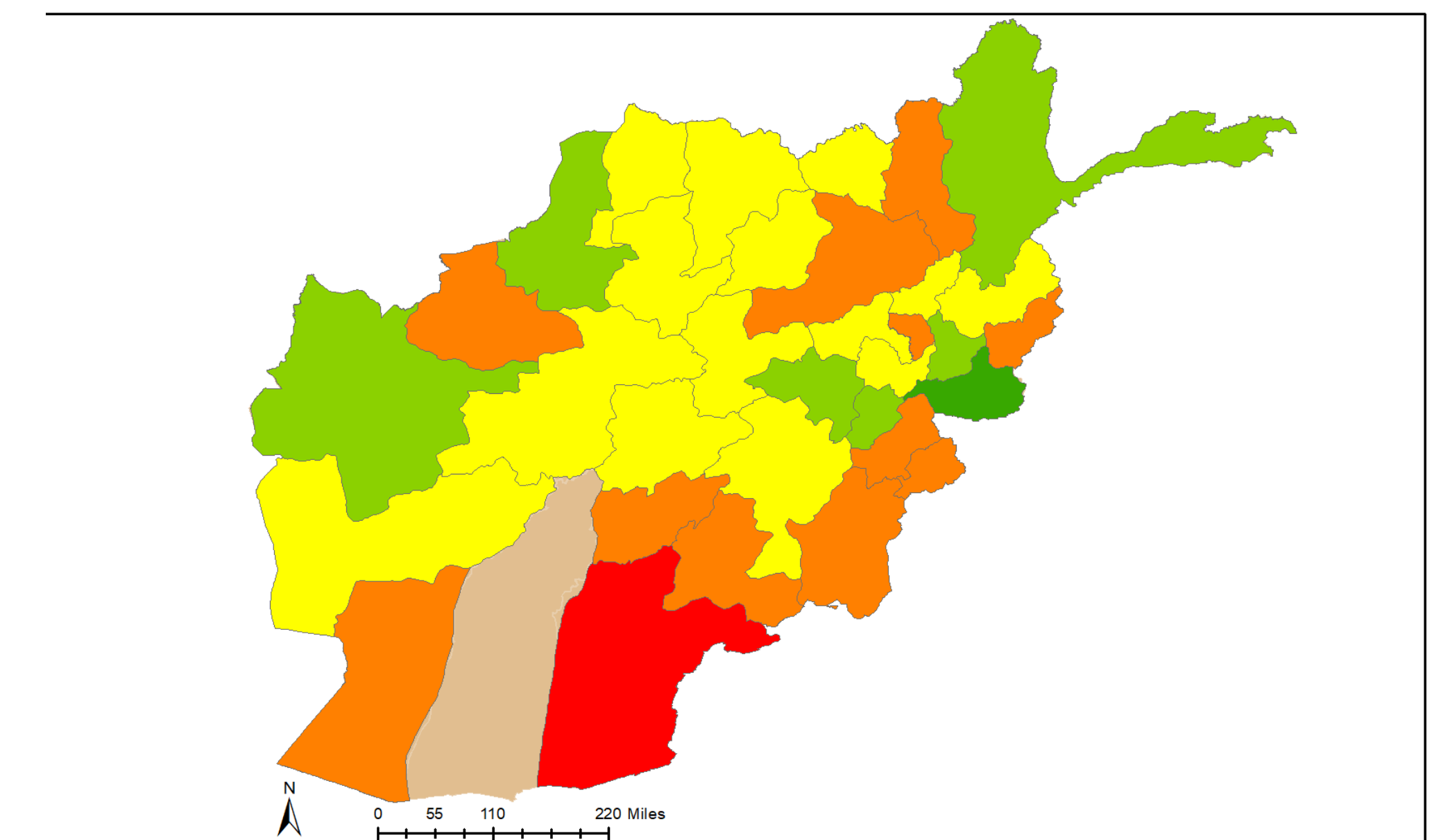
Taliban Violence in Afghan Provinces -2014



Taliban Violence in Afghan Provinces -2015



Comparing Taliban Violence-2014-2015



Methodology

Data: Conflict data was acquired from data world (Humanitarian Data Exchange). It includes the number of Taliban violence, the type of violence, location, the date and the impacts of these violence. The data was collected by various national and international media outlets such as BBC, Pajhwok and Reuters.

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Data Sources:

Coll, Steve. Directorate S: The C.I.A. and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan. 2018.

Malkasian, Carter. "How the Good War Went Bad." Foreign Affairs. Foreign Affairs Magazine, February 24, 2020. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2020-02-10/how-good-war-went-bad>.

Rubin, Barnett R. "A Tale of Two Skepticisms: Fighting and Talking with the Taliban During the Obama Years." War on the Rocks, February 25, 2020.

Results:

This analysis shows little decrease in the number of total violence from 2014 to 2015. Although the level of violence in the Southern provinces, specially, Helmand and Kandahar, remained steady, Northern Afghanistan experienced a relatively little violence in 2015.

This is because in 2014, Afghanistan was going through a political transition (Presidential Election), and security transition from NATO to Afghan Security Forces; two major events that enabled the Taliban to increase their offense in order to gain more territory and intimidate a broader audience. In 2015, the National Unity government took control of the situation and the country became politically stable, and Afghan Security Forces launched counter attacks on Taliban.