

12 June 2013

NORTH-WEST PAKISTAN

Massive new displacement and falling returns require rights-based response

Counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations and violent clashes between non-state armed groups continue to lead to major, rapid movements of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Pakistan's volatile north-west. Within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Khyber and Kurram agencies are currently the worst-affected areas. More than 415,000 people were newly displaced in 2012, and at least 131,000 more have fled their homes since mid-March this year ([OCHA](#), March 2013, p.2; [OCHA](#), 6 June 2013). There are now 1.1 million IDPs registered as displaced by conflict in the north-west, and many more are unregistered in the region and elsewhere ([IDMC](#), 31 May 2011, p.1; [UNHCR](#), 7 May 2013).



A displaced elder for Tirah valley is waiting in queue for the registration in Jirna, District Kohat, Pakistan. Photo: NRC Pakistan/Shahzad Ahmad, May 2013

An estimated five million people have been displaced by conflict, sectarian violence and wide-spread human rights abuses in the north-west as a whole since 2004. Disaster-induced displacement has been even more extensive. Around 15 million people were displaced across the country by three years of monsoon flooding between 2010 and 2012, and millions more by earthquakes and drought over the years ([IDMC](#), January 2012, p.1; [IDMC](#), May 2013, p.18).

Conflict-related displacement reached a peak in 2009, when three million people were displaced in the north-west, 2.3 million of them from the Malakand region of Khyber Pakhtunkwa (KP) province. By the end of 2010, the number of IDPs had fallen to around one million, but returns have since been offset by new displacements. Today, Pakistan faces a renewed displacement crisis fuelled by massive new forced population movements in FATA, the current focus of conflict in the region.

Displacement leads to a range of serious protection challenges, including threats to life and freedom of movement. Those living in camps are generally considered most in need of assistance. That said, two thirds of IDPs outside camps live below the poverty line and do not have adequate access to food, housing and basic services. National and international responses have been substantial, but they have not consistently been rights-based. In the vast majority of cases, only IDPs who meet government criteria for registration are eligible for food assistance. Efforts towards improving the registration system have been made recently, but serious concerns persist that the provision of humanitarian aid is neither impartial nor targeted at the most vulnerable. Major reform is still required to bring the criteria for registration into line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and to deliver assistance to those most in need, including protracted and urban IDPs.

**FATA displacement crisis:
Hosting areas and areas of origin**

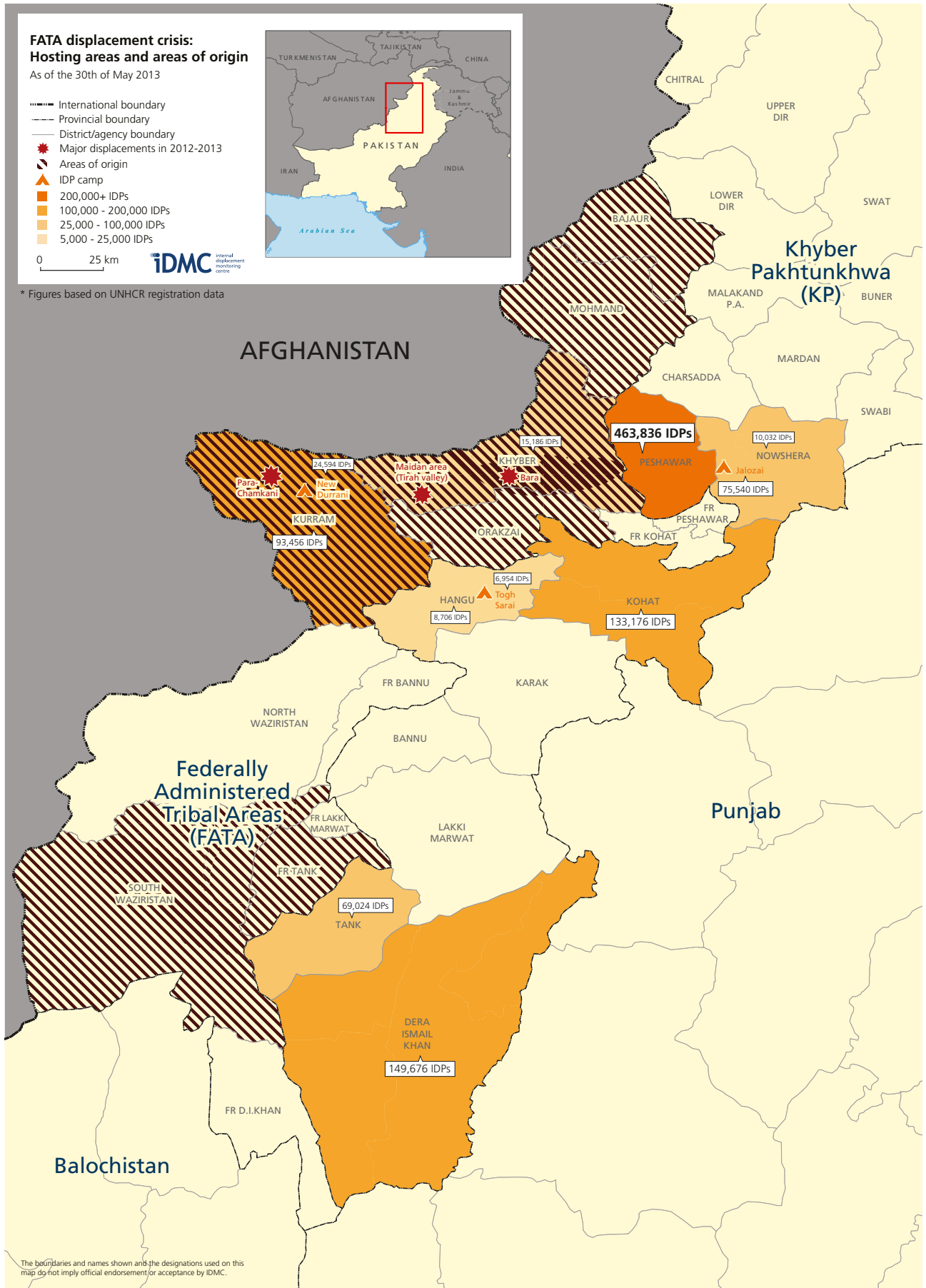
As of the 30th of May 2013

- International boundary
- Provincial boundary
- District/agency boundary
- ★ Major displacements in 2012-2013
- ▲ Areas of origin
- ▲ IDP camp
- 200,000+ IDPs
- 100,000 - 200,000 IDPs
- 25,000 - 100,000 IDPs
- 5,000 - 25,000 IDPs

0 25 km **IDMC** internal displacement monitoring centre



* Figures based on UNHCR registration data



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IDMC.

Source: IDMC

More maps are available at www.internal-displacement.org/maps

The government has favoured IDPs' swift return, and large scale voluntary repatriation has taken place along-side fresh displacement. Since 2008, more than three million people displaced by conflict have returned to parts of KP and FATA. Nearly all IDPs wish to return eventually, but factors including persistent insecurity, damaged housing and the inconsistent provision of compensation and return packages mean that tens of thousands of families are still unable to do so. Returns to FATA slowed dramatically in 2012, and that trend looks set to continue.

Urgent measures are required to address protracted displacement and create the conditions in which Pakistan's growing number of IDPs are able to achieve durable solutions. To this end, the government should register and assist vulnerable IDPs displaced for prolonged periods and introduce policies that support local integration. Integrated, community-based programmes that benefit host populations as well as the displaced are needed to ensure local integration in urban areas is a viable option. The endorsement of an early recovery assistance framework (ERAF) for FATA in March 2013 is a welcome step forward and could help create the conditions for sustainable returns. Action is now needed by the government and humanitarian and development actors to ensure its effective implementation, while also guaranteeing that any new returns are safe, informed and voluntary.

At the same time, the government must take urgent steps to reduce bureaucratic constraints on humanitarian organisations and expedite their access to the displaced. All parties should respect the basic principles of international humanitarian law and attacks on aid workers should cease immediately. The impact of the withdrawal of NATO and US troops from neighbouring Afghanistan in 2014 on the north-west's displacement crisis is uncertain, but whatever its effect sufficient international humanitarian funding for Pakistan's IDPs must be guaranteed in 2013 and beyond.

Background to displacement

Pakistan comprises five broadly distinct regions: Punjab in the north-east, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir in the north, Sindh in the south-east, Balochistan in the south-west, and Khyber Pakhtunkwa (KP) province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) which border Afghanistan in the Pashtun north-west. Since its creation in 1947, Pakistan has experienced alternating periods of civilian and military rule. Democracy was restored in 2008, and following parliamentary elections in May 2013 the first transfer of power between elected civilian governments in the country's history took place ([BBC](#), May 2013). Today, Pakistan faces enormous challenges on a range of fronts, including security and terrorism, sectarian and ethnic violence, a troubled economy and recurrent natural disasters ([GoP](#), 6 August 2012, p.14, pp.20-21; [IRIN](#), 2 July 2012; [IRIN](#), 14 September 2012).

Military intervention by the US and NATO in neighbouring Afghanistan since 2001 and Pakistan's alignment with the US against al-Qaida and the Taliban have fomented opposition to the government. Islamist armed groups seek to overthrow tribal governance structures in the north-west ([IDMC](#), 6 September 2010, p.7), and the government has struggled to maintain law and order. Indiscriminate suicide attacks, the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), targeted killings and intimidation by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) continue, claiming more than 360 civilians lives in KP alone in 2012 ([Dawn](#), 3 September 2012; [SATP](#), May 2013). Military operations against NSAGs, most notably Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), have escalated since 2007. The government, however, does not recognise the situation in FATA as an armed conflict despite the deployment of more than 145,000 troops there ([UN Rapporteur on Counter-Terrorism](#), 14 March 2013, p.1; [EU](#), 2013, p.2, p.6; [Geneva Call](#), November 2012, p.8).

Each of Pakistan's four provinces is headed by a governor appointed by the president, while FATA falls under the jurisdiction of the national government. Recent amendments to the country's constitution, in particular the 18th amendment, aim to strengthen democratic governance and enable greater provincial autonomy ([UNCT](#), 2012, p.1). FATA is not part of the national legal framework but comes under the jurisdiction of the 1901 Frontier Crimes Regulation, which makes tribal governance structures responsible for law and order. As such, the jurisdiction of Pakistan's higher courts does not extend to FATA ([WG on Disappearances](#), 26 February 2013, p.8, [IDMC](#), 10 January 2012).

Poverty indices have improved in recent years, but conflict and insecurity have hindered development and Pakistan ranks 146th out of 186 countries on the Human Development Index ([World Bank](#), 2013, p.1). Although the country is a major recipient of international aid, an estimated 40 million Pakistanis live on less than \$1.25 per day and malnutrition rates are critical ([EU](#), 2013, p.1). The north-west is one of the most underdeveloped regions. Around 29 per cent of its population are estimated to live in poverty, a figure seven per cent higher than the national average ([FDMA/UNDP](#), 2012, p.5; [HDR](#), 2013, p.18; HPG, May 2013, p.21; [UNDP](#), 27 October 2011). Natural disasters affect millions of people each year, and three years of consecutive flooding since 2010 have weakened communities' resilience. In 2012, monsoon flooding affected 4.8 million people while recovery from the 2010 floods was still on-going ([EU](#), September 2012, p.2; [OCHA](#), 2 May 2013; [IRIN](#), 21 May 2013)

Pakistan hosts the world's largest and most protracted refugee caseload ([UNHCR](#), 1 December 2012). More than 1.6 million Afghan refugees are currently registered in the country and a further one million are thought to be unregistered. Nearly 80 per cent of the registered refugees live in KP ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.9), and the vast majority do

not plan to return to Afghanistan ([Interaction](#), September 2012, p.2). In May 2012, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the authorities in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran endorsed the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees designed to support voluntary repatriation, sustainable re-integration and assistance for host countries over a number of years. A six-month extension of the "proof of registration" card, a legal residency and registration document, allows registered refugees to remain in Pakistan until 30 June 2013. The repatriation deadline is likely to be extended, but the longer-term position of Afghan refugees in Pakistan remains uncertain ([UNHCR](#), 1 December 2012; [Express Tribune](#), 4 June 2013).

Pakistan has among the highest rates of urbanisation in south Asia, and faces growing challenges as a result. In the KP capital of Peshawar, the population has roughly doubled since 1998 to about 3.3 million, driven by the arrival of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) and rural-to-urban migration. In the absence of adequate urban planning, this has increased pressure on infrastructure, particularly schools, hospitals and electricity supplies. Between 60 and 70 per cent of Peshawar is now made up of informal settlements, or slums, which lack adequate housing, roads, sanitation and other services ([GoP](#), 6 August 2012, p.16; [HPG](#), May 2013, p.1, p.12).

Causes of displacement in the north-west

Civilians have fled conflict between the Pakistani military and NSAGs, intense clashes between NSAGs and human rights abuses. In FATA's Kurram agency, sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia Muslims has displaced tens of thousands of people. Tribal and local conflicts over resources have been a further factor ([HRCP](#), March 2013, p.279; [IDMC](#), 6 September 2010, pp.21-24; [AI](#), 2012). NSAGs' serious abuses, including indiscriminate attacks against civilians, targeted killings and restrictions on schools and health services have fuelled displacement ([AI](#), June 2010, pp.11-15). The army's issuing of evacuation orders during coun-

ter-terrorist and counter-insurgency operations has also been a major driver of displacement. In some cases, there has reportedly been little or no advance warning of military operations ([MSF](#), 26 January 2010). People have also fled their homes as a result of aerial bombardments, arrests, house demolitions and military tactics that affect livelihoods ([HRCF](#), October 2010, p.10; [AI](#), June 2010, pp. 11-15; [HPN](#), February 2011). In some parts of FATA, the destruction of homes during US drone operations is also reported to have led people to flee ([Centre for Civilians in Conflict](#), 2012, p.24).

Since 2012, Khyber and Kurram agencies in central FATA have been worst affected. Military operations in Khyber have aimed to relieve pressure on Peshawar and protect NATO supply lines to Afghanistan, and the resulting clashes have been particularly intense, causing civilian casualties and frequent large-scale displacements ([IDMC](#), 10 January 2012, p.3). In early 2012, renewed operations in Bara sub-division caused major displacement to the Peshawar and Nowshera districts of KP. By mid-March 2012, 10,000 people a day were arriving at Jalozai displacement camp near Peshawar, and more than 415,000 people had fled the Bara area by the end of the year ([OCHA](#), March 2013, p.2).

Further major displacement from Khyber occurred in March and April 2013, when intense clashes between the TTP-backed Lashkar-e-Islam and the pro-government Ansar ul-Islam, and subsequent military operations, caused widespread destruction in the Maidan area of Tirah valley. By 7 May 2013, UNHCR had registered 80,000 new IDPs from the area ([OCHA](#), 21 May 2013; [PHF/NHN](#), 8 April 2013; [protection cluster](#), 5 April 2013, p.1; [BBC](#), 4 March 2013). By mid-May, large-scale displacement was also taking place in the Parachamkani area of Kurram as conflict spread from neighbouring Khyber. Military operations against NSAGs, including air strikes, had displaced an estimated 60,000 people by early June ([Tribune](#), 28 May 2013; [OCHA](#), 6 June 2013).

Disasters brought on by natural hazards have also led to huge displacements in Pakistan, including in the north-west. In July 2010, monsoon flooding caused widespread damage to homes, infrastructure and livelihoods in KP, particularly in Peshawar, Swat, Charsadda and Tank districts. FATA was also affected ([OCHA](#), 29 July 2010). Adequate investment in flood warning systems and disaster risk reduction programmes and other preparedness measures are urgently required ([IRIN](#), 21 May 2013; [IDMC](#), May 2013, p.17-18).

Displacement figures

As of June 2013, there were 1.1 million registered IDPs in KP and FATA ([OCHA](#), 21 May 2013). Most are from the agencies of Khyber (83,000 families), South Waziristan (36,000 families), Kurram (34,000 families) and Orakzai (21,000 families) ([UNHRC](#), 27 May 2013). The number of IDPs grew rapidly during 2012, when 415,000 people were registered as newly displaced, the majority from Khyber agency ([OCHA](#), March 2013, p.2).

There are also large numbers of unregistered IDPs. According to the IDP Vulnerability and Assessment and Profiling project (IVAP), 34 per cent of KP's displaced population, or 33,000 families, were not registered at the end of 2012. This includes families from Khyber, Orakzai, Bajaur, Mohmand, South Waziristan, Kurram and Hangu agencies and FATA's Frontier Region Tank ([IVAP](#), 2013). As of late May 2013, many IDPs from Tirah valley in Khyber were also believed to be unregistered following the suspension of registration (IDMC interview, May 2013). Unknown numbers of unregistered IDPs are living elsewhere in Pakistan ([Dawn](#), 11 April 2013).

Disasters associated with natural hazards have caused repeated waves of mass displacement across the country. Between 2010 and 2012, monsoon floods displaced nearly 15 million people. In 2010, around 11 million people were displaced

in the worst floods in the country's history. In 2011, an estimated 1.8 million people were newly displaced in large areas of Sindh and Balochistan, many of whom had also fled the 2010 floods. In September 2012, flooding displaced 1.9 million people, most of them in west Balochistan, south Punjab and north Sindh. As of April 2013, some areas were still inundated, with 1.2 million people still living in makeshift shelters near their original homes ([IDMC](#), May 2013, pp.17-18).

Large-scale return

Pakistan has witnessed periods of large-scale return. Between July and August 2009 up to 1.9 million people returned to the Swat valley and Buner district in KP, and since 2009 more than 1.3 million people have returned to FATA as part of voluntary repatriation projects. Areas of high return include Bajaur, Mohmand, Orakzai and South Waziristan agencies ([OCHA](#), March 2013).

Returns to FATA reached a peak in 2011, when 31,200 returnee families were assisted ([UNHCR](#), 2011, p.225). In 2012, they decreased substantially. Only 12,600 families, or 15 per cent of a projected 85,000, returned to their homes, most of them in Kurram, South Waziristan and Frontier Region Tank ([HOP](#), 2013, p.4; [UNHCR](#), 31 December 2012).

Displacement patterns

Roughly 90 per cent of registered IDPs (157,000 families) live outside camps, either with relatives or in rented accommodation. A range of factors influence this decision, including camp conditions, lack of privacy and tribal dynamics ([Save the Children](#), April 2012, p.7). That said, Pakistan's camp population is still substantial with nearly 18,000 families, or 10 per cent of registered IDPs (roughly 108,000 people) living in the region's three camps - Jalozai and Togh Serai in KP's Nowshera and Hangu districts, and New Durrani in FATA's Kurram agency ([UNHCR](#), 27 May 2013).

The movement of IDPs from KP in 2008 and 2009 has now been overtaken by displacement from FATA, where six of its seven agencies have experienced large-scale displacement ([Dawn](#), 11 April 2013). Over 90 per cent of IDPs from FATA live in KP, and they are generally displaced from rural to semi-urban or urban areas ([IDMC](#), September 2010, p.7). Many IDPs have gravitated to Peshawar district, and Dera Ismail Khan and Kohat districts are also major hosting areas ([UNHCR](#), 7 May 2013). Displacement has fuelled the rapid growth of the provincial capital Peshawar, which now hosts one of the largest populations of refugees and IDPs in south Asia ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.1, p.12).

The displaced population is, like the general population, young and roughly equally divided between men and women. Just over half of those displaced are children ([HOP](#), 2013, p.34). Many IDPs from FATA arrive as cohesive groups and create political, economic and social spaces for themselves, helping them to maintain a sense of community. They also utilise social networks from their home areas. Wealthier families have bought land and constructed homes in areas of KP bordering FATA ([IDMC](#), 10 January 2012, p.5). Displaced families frequently split to maximise their livelihood options. Some extended family members may live in camps and receive food assistance, while others are dispersed across Peshawar or elsewhere in KP and FATA ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.23).

On the whole, IDPs living in camps are the most vulnerable ([HOP](#), 2013, p.34). It is also true to say, however, that IDPs generally are highly vulnerable in economic terms. Those who were better off before displacement continue to have better living standards as they have more savings, wealthier relatives to offer them support and better chances of finding employment ([IDMC](#), 10 January 2012, p.4; IDMC interview December 2012).

Internal displacement occurs against a backdrop of seasonal migration and other population

movements from FATA. People from Bajaur and Mohmand often live away from the two agencies. Others from Khyber have second homes or jobs in neighbouring Peshawar ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.11). Research has found considerably fewer Khyber IDPs residing in Peshawar than were officially registered, suggesting they had come to register but then chose to continue living in Khyber or move elsewhere (IDMC interview, December 2012).

Protracted and multiple displacement

The length of displacement is increasing, straining traditional coping mechanisms and leading to increased vulnerability ([HOP](#), 2013, p.34; [IDMC](#), 31 May 2011, p.6). IVAP reports that half of Bajaur's IDPs have now been displaced since 2007 or 2008, while thousands of others from Kurram, South Waziristan and Orakzai have been living in displacement for more than four years ([IVAP](#), 2013). With little support available, a growing population of protracted IDPs has emerged, concentrated in the Peshawar valley but also in DI Khan and Kohat districts and Kurram agency. Other IDPs have been displaced multiple times. Many of the districts affected by the 2012 floods were still struggling to recover from those of the previous two years, while the recurrent "notification" and "de-notification" of some areas in FATA has also forced IDPs to flee repeatedly ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.18; [IDMC](#), May 2013, pp.17-18).

Protection concerns

Threats to life and physical integrity

Those displaced by conflict are at risk of physical attacks, threats and harassment at all stages of their displacement. In March 2013, ten IDPs and an aid worker were killed when a car bomb exploded in Jalozai camp in KP province ([UN](#), 28 March 2013). NSAGs have warned civilians not to assist IDPs, and IDPs fear reprisals if they accept help ([Express Tribune](#), 31 March 2013; [protection cluster](#), 10 May 2012, pp.11-12). According to one survey, 11 per cent of IDPs report mistreatment

during their displacement, including harassment and extortion at police checkpoints ([IVAP](#), May 2013, p.2; [protection cluster](#), 20 April 2013, p.3). Shia IDPs have been targeted on sectarian grounds, while displaced tribal leaders opposed to government or militant policies have been intimidated or killed, in some cases to prevent IDPs from returning ([IDMC](#), 31 May 2011, p.5). Urban IDPs are more likely to live in areas prone to higher levels of insecurity ([HPG](#), 2013, p.17).

Discriminatory access to assistance

Serious concerns persist that humanitarian assistance provided to IDPs displaced by conflict is neither impartial nor needs based. In the vast majority of cases, only those who meet government criteria for registration as IDPs are eligible for assistance. To be able to register, heads of household must originate from an area or tribe the government has "notified" as conflict-affected and hold a valid national ID card (CNIC). IDPs who flee preventatively or to escape abuses by NSAGs do not usually come from notified areas ([IDMC](#), 31 May 2011, pp.4-5; [IVAP](#), May 2013). Even eligible IDPs face numerous practical and bureaucratic challenges in accessing aid. These include restricted registration periods, static registration points in inaccessible locations and the loss or lack of a valid CNIC. Child-headed and female-headed households and the chronically ill have been disproportionately affected as a result of their limited mobility (PHF, November 2012, p.1; IDMC interview December 2012).

Restrictions on freedom of movement

Freedom of movement remains a key concern. IDPs have been forced to flee on foot, at night and without assistance. In some cases children and disabled and elderly people are reported to have died of exhaustion en route ([IDMC](#), 31 May 2011, p.5; [PHF/NHN](#), 8 April 2013). NSAGs have reportedly prevented others from leaving at all, sometimes by detaining or even killing them ([Protection Cluster](#), 5 April 2013, p.3). The government has also restricted IDPs' movements during

military operations in the past, and instructed some to seek assistance in camps ([IDMC](#), 31 May 2011, p.4; [IRIN](#), 23 February 2011). Authorities have had to strike a delicate balance between respect for freedom of movement and the need to guarantee the safety of IDPs and humanitarian agencies. Following the car-bomb attack in Jalozaï camp on 21 March 2013, authorities elected not to start registration for thousands of IDPs arriving in the Peshawar valley from Khyber on security grounds. On 27 April an alternative registration hub was opened at Jerma in neighbouring Kohat district for a limited period ([UNHCR](#), 1 May 2013). While several steps were taken to facilitate registration at this hub, further action is needed to extend coverage. Mobile registration points throughout the Peshawar valley would ensure IDPs were able to access assistance (IDMC interview May 2013).

Food, housing and work

IDPs living outside camps often struggle to meet their basic needs. Two-thirds of displaced families live below the poverty line, with an income of between 2,500 and 5,000 rupees (\$25.50 and \$51) a month ([IVAP](#), May 2013). Sixty per cent of IDPs rely on daily wage labour, and as pay falls and rental costs rise, many have been left struggling to pay for their food and housing ([IVAP](#), May 2013). In an effort to keep their costs down, many live in overcrowded conditions in substandard housing, often to the detriment of the health and welfare of women and children ([IRIN](#), 3 May 2012). Others face eviction if landlords find other tenants who are able to pay more. Rising rental costs in Peshawar have forced many displaced families to move repeatedly, often to informal settlements in the less secure outskirts of the city ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.1, p.26). IDPs living outside camps rely on existing social services, but these are often already insufficient to meet the needs of their host communities. Informal settlements in particular lack access to basic services (IDMC interview, December 2012).

Women

Displaced households headed by women face particular difficulties in accessing assistance. The need to ensure *pardah*, or privacy, restricts women's access to information, food distribution points and basic services, both in camps and host communities. Very little is understood about gender-specific protection needs ([HOP](#), 2013). In some cases, displacement to urban settings leads to additional restrictions on women's freedom of movement and livelihood opportunities. In others, however, it increases access to services and education opportunities ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.19).

Durable solutions

Safe, voluntary and well-informed return

More than 90 per cent of IDPs wish to return to their places of origin, but only when it is safe to do so. Citing security improvements, authorities have prioritised the swift return of registered IDPs to areas declared "de-notified", or no longer conflict-affected ([IDMC](#), 31 May 2011, p.6). Government projections that 97,000 families registered as displaced would return in 2013 were seen by many as unrealistic in light of last year's figures ([HOP](#), 2013, p.4), and raised serious questions about the principled and voluntary nature of the process.

Voluntary repatriation is coordinated through the Return Task Force, jointly chaired by the FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA) and UNHCR. Assistance includes documentation, transport and a six-month food package. This is generally only available to IDPs who have deregistered and opt to return (IDMC interview, December 2012).

To guard against premature returns and ensure they are safe and voluntary, the KP and FATA authorities and the humanitarian community are guided by a return policy framework endorsed in 2009 and 2010. In 2012, the UN Humanitarian Country Team adopted additional standard op-

erating procedures on returns ([HCT](#), 2 February 2012; [UN/FDMA](#), June 2010), but these were not endorsed by the KP and FATA authorities. Following advocacy by the humanitarian community, in 2012 a number of IDPs from Bajaur who were unable to return on clear protection grounds received additional assistance (IDMC interview, December 2012; [Protection Cluster](#), May 2012, p.5). Some returnees approaching food hubs in return areas were assisted despite their not being eligible under organised programmes. Humanitarian agencies attempted to monitor returns, but were generally unable to do so as a result of restricted access (IDMC interview, December 2012).

Durable solutions far from reach

The situation varies from one area to another, but those returning to KP and FATA generally face huge challenges. In FATA, 60 per cent of homes have been damaged or destroyed and three-quarters of returnee families are unable to meet their basic monthly expenses ([FDMA/UNDP](#), 2013, p.5). In some cases, military curfews and no-go areas, including grazing land, restrict their freedom of movement ([Protection Cluster](#), May 2012, p.5). Access to compensation schemes has been slow and inconsistent ([FDMA/UNDP](#), 2013, pp. 5-11, p.68). In the Malakand area of KP, which includes the Swat valley, reintegration has been hampered by continued insecurity, NSAGs' attacks on civilians, a lack of access to basic services and other factors ([ICG](#), 15 January 2013, pp. i-ii, p.38; [AI](#), 2012). In flood-affected areas, the pace of reconstruction has also been slow, and effective prevention and preparedness measures are still required to ensure that returns are sustainable ([UNCT](#), 2012, p.14).

Tens of thousands of families with no immediate prospect of return have chosen to remain in KP. Significant numbers are not registered and do not receive assistance (IDMC interview, December 2013). Some families do find livelihood opportunities and are able to restart their lives, but in many

instances this has not been the case, making IDPs more vulnerable the longer they are displaced ([IVAP](#), 2013, p.1). In Peshawar and elsewhere, urban IDPs lack access to livelihood opportunities and basic services, and protracted displacement is a growing concern. They also face increasing insecurity and discrimination from local officials ([IDMC](#), 10 January 2012, p.6; [IRIN](#), 7 February 2010, [HPG](#), May 2013).

National response

National and provincial authorities, host communities, family networks, civil society and Pakistan's armed forces are all involved in responding to displacement. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), established in 2007, coordinates responses to natural disasters but does not play a major role in the current conflict-related displacement crisis in the north-west (IDMC interview, December 2013). At the provincial level, response is coordinated through the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs). The PDMA in KP has a dedicated chief coordinator for IDPs. In FATA, FDMA is mandated to coordinate the response ([FDMA](#), 2013). Other key interlocutors include the law and order department of FATA Secretariat and the 11th Corps of the Pakistan army ([EU](#), 2013, p.5).

With the support of the humanitarian community, the government has registered and assisted hundreds of thousands of families displaced by conflict and disasters. Measures taken to assist IDPs include the swift provision of emergency shelter in camps, cash, food, health care, water and sanitation. Thousands of CNICs have been issued, while vulnerable female IDPs have benefited from assistance through poverty alleviation programmes ([GoP](#), 6 August 2012, p.14, p.18; [IDMC](#), January 2012, p.8). In February 2013, the national government approved an early recovery assistance framework (ERAF) to address the early recovery needs of returnees in FATA. Coordinated

by FDMA and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), it aims to assist returnees in Bajaur, Mohmand, Orakai and South Waziristan over an 18-month period. A ten-year national disaster management plan (NDMP) and a national disaster risk reduction policy were also approved in February 2013 ([NDMA](#), 21 February 2013; [NDMA](#), 21 February 2013).

Major challenges to IDPs' protection

Government efforts to respond to IDPs displaced by conflict have been substantial, but major challenges remain. KP and FATA authorities have developed a limited regional policy framework for those displaced by conflict, but the government is yet to adopt a national IDP Policy or law ([Dawn](#), 20 August 2012). Following a review by the UN's Human Rights Council in October 2012, the Pakistan government noted, but did not accept, a recommendation to "begin a national dialogue with the aim of adopting a rights-based national IDP Policy" ([GoP](#), 13 March 2013, p.2).

The national authorities do not consistently acknowledge their responsibility for protecting and assisting IDPs in the north-west or elsewhere in Pakistan. The provincial authorities in KP, the media and civil society use the term "IDP" widely, but the national government prefers the term "temporarily dislocated" or "affected" individual ([GoP](#), 6 August 2012, p.14; [BI/LSE](#), 2011, pp.39-40). Inadequate funding has reportedly constrained the KP authorities' response ([Dawn](#), 22 November 2012).

Pakistan's registration system for IDPs has enabled the provision of rapid relief to tens of thousands of families in the context of massive and complex population movements. One of its strengths has been to quickly determine who should benefit from assistance, including those who live outside camps and are not easy to identify (IDMC, 31 May 2011). That said, major flaws remain but despite signs of a possible change in government policy on registration, there has been little concrete progress to date.

To address the flaws in the current system, registration criteria should be brought into line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and assistance targeted at those most in need ([IDMC](#), January 2013; [Dawn](#), 10 May 2012). More registration hubs, and mobile registration teams for people with special needs, should be set up. Complaints mechanisms should be expanded, and the government's capacity to profile and count IDPs as a protection tool must be significantly strengthened.

Displacement is largely viewed as a temporary problem, and efforts to support durable solutions have been minimal. The return policy framework adopted by the KP and FATA authorities and the UN recognises local integration as a settlement option, but in practice authorities have favoured swift return. To help guarantee the voluntary nature of returns, IDPs' participation in decision-making should be ensured, and authorities should organise more "go and see" visits ([HOP](#), 2013, p.35). All vulnerable IDPs should be registered and assisted, and policies to support local integration developed, including for urban areas. Previous commitments made to returnees in places such as South Waziristan have not always been fulfilled ([IDMC](#), 10 January 2012, p.6).

International response

Assistance is coordinated through the cluster system, and at both national and provincial levels the clusters are co-chaired by the government. There is no Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP). Instead, Humanitarian Operating Plans (HOPs), developed in conjunction with the authorities, set out proposed activities to assist IDPs displaced by conflict and monsoon flooding. In 2013, the HOP for north-west Pakistan sought \$327 million in funding to meet humanitarian needs across eight clusters ([HOP](#), 2013, p.4). Early recovery needs are addressed under ERAF. Numerous other bilateral and development initiatives are also on-going,

supported among others by the US, Saudi and UK governments (UNDP/FDMA, 2013, p.29).

In the north-west, newly arrived IDPs and returnees are prioritised for humanitarian assistance (HOP, 2013, p.4). UNHCR and its partners carry out registration on behalf of FDMA and KP's PDMA. The creation of "grievance desks" to provide information on civil documentation and registration has been crucial in facilitating IDPs' access to assistance (IDMC interview, December 2012; [Protection Cluster](#), July 2012, p.5). The protection cluster has carried out intention surveys to monitor the voluntary and informed nature of returns, and it has also undertaken protection monitoring in return areas (HOP, 2013, p.36). Cooperation between IVAP and humanitarian agencies is on-going.

Principled assistance and durable solutions

Some international donors and aid organisations have aligned their humanitarian and development priorities with the national government. This raises critical questions about the impartiality of such assistance and whether aid is reaching the most vulnerable (IDMC, 6 September 2010, p.12). Assistance has been concentrated in KP, but those living in conflict-affected areas of FATA are often in as great or greater need. Increasing efforts are being made to ensure a more principled delivery of assistance (HPG May 2012, p.34; IDMC interview, December 2012). In late 2012, a working group chaired by UNHCR and with the participation of the KP authorities was established to conduct a comprehensive review of humanitarian policy on the registration of IDPs. Given the scale and complexity of displacement in the north-west, reform of the existing registration process presents significant technical challenges ([Protection Cluster](#), February 2013, p.6).

Response has focused on the provision of emergency relief, rather than support for long-term solutions (HPG, May 2012, p.2). In 2012, nearly two-thirds of funding for international NGOs targeted the new influx of IDPs from Bara arriving in KP,

while existing caseloads received proportionally less assistance. There has been very little support for urban IDPs and others living outside camps. Integrated, community-based programmes that benefit host populations as well as the displaced are needed to ensure local integration in urban areas is a viable option ([PHE](#), November 2012, p.3; [HPG](#), May 2012, pp.2-3).

Access and funding

Insecurity and government restrictions significantly hamper humanitarian access. The Pakistani government, especially at the national level, has not always welcomed international assistance. At the provincial level, authorities have been more supportive, but access is increasingly restricted by visa delays and the process of securing the no objection certificates (NOCs) that international NGOs require to be able to carry out their work ([IRIN](#), 23 April 2013; [ICG](#), 9 October 2012, p.6-8). Pakistani aid workers have been subjected to increasing intimidation and targeted attacks. Since January 2012, 34 aid workers have been killed, including 13 polio workers, leaving critical humanitarian programmes at risk ([Express Tribune](#), 2 January 2013; [ICRC](#), 2011, p.1; [OCHA](#), February 2013, p.2).

Humanitarian funding levels fell for the second running year in 2012 ([ECHO](#), 11 October 2012, p.6). The HOP was only 76 per cent funded, which led to vital services being curtailed for IDPs displaced both by conflict and natural disasters. Reproductive health services for 2,800 pregnant women were discontinued, along with protection services for children in KP and FATA's Kurram agency (HOP 2013 p.5). Funding shortfalls have particularly affected the assistance available to IDPs outside camps ([UNICEF](#), 18 September 2012, p.2). Donor fatigue, uncertainty regarding access to beneficiaries and a more competitive global funding environment have all contributed to the fall-off in funding, and there are concerns that the withdrawal of US and NATO troops by the end of 2014 will lead to further cuts.

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) was established by the Norwegian Refugee Council in 1998, upon the request of the United Nations, to set up a global database on internal displacement. A decade later, IDMC remains the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement caused by conflict and violence worldwide.

IDMC aims to support better international and national responses to situations of internal displacement and respect for the rights of internally displaced people (IDPs), who are often among the world's most vulnerable people. It also aims to promote durable solutions for IDPs, through return, local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country.

IDMC's main activities include:

- Monitoring and reporting on internal displacement caused by conflict, generalised violence and violations of human rights;
- Researching, analysing and advocating for the rights of IDPs;
- Training and strengthening capacities on the protection of IDPs;
- Contributing to the development of standards and guidance on protecting and assisting IDPs.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at www.internal-displacement.org

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