

24 August 2015

PAKISTAN

Solutions to displacement elusive for both new and protracted IDPs

As of July 2015, there were more than 1.8 million people displaced by insurgency, counter-insurgency and other related violence in Pakistan.

Military operations against non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee North Waziristan and Khyber agencies since May 2014. Both agencies are part of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in the north-west of the country, a region that has suffered fighting and displacement for a number of years. By the end of 2014, up to 907,000 people had been newly displaced, and as of July 2015, there were an estimated 1.56 million internally displaced people (IDPs) in the north-west, including those who fled in previous years and after deducting returns.



After a year in displacement, these IDPs are leaving New Durrani camp to return to their areas of origin in the central part of Kurram agency, FATA. (c) NRC/Shahzad Ahmad, April 2014

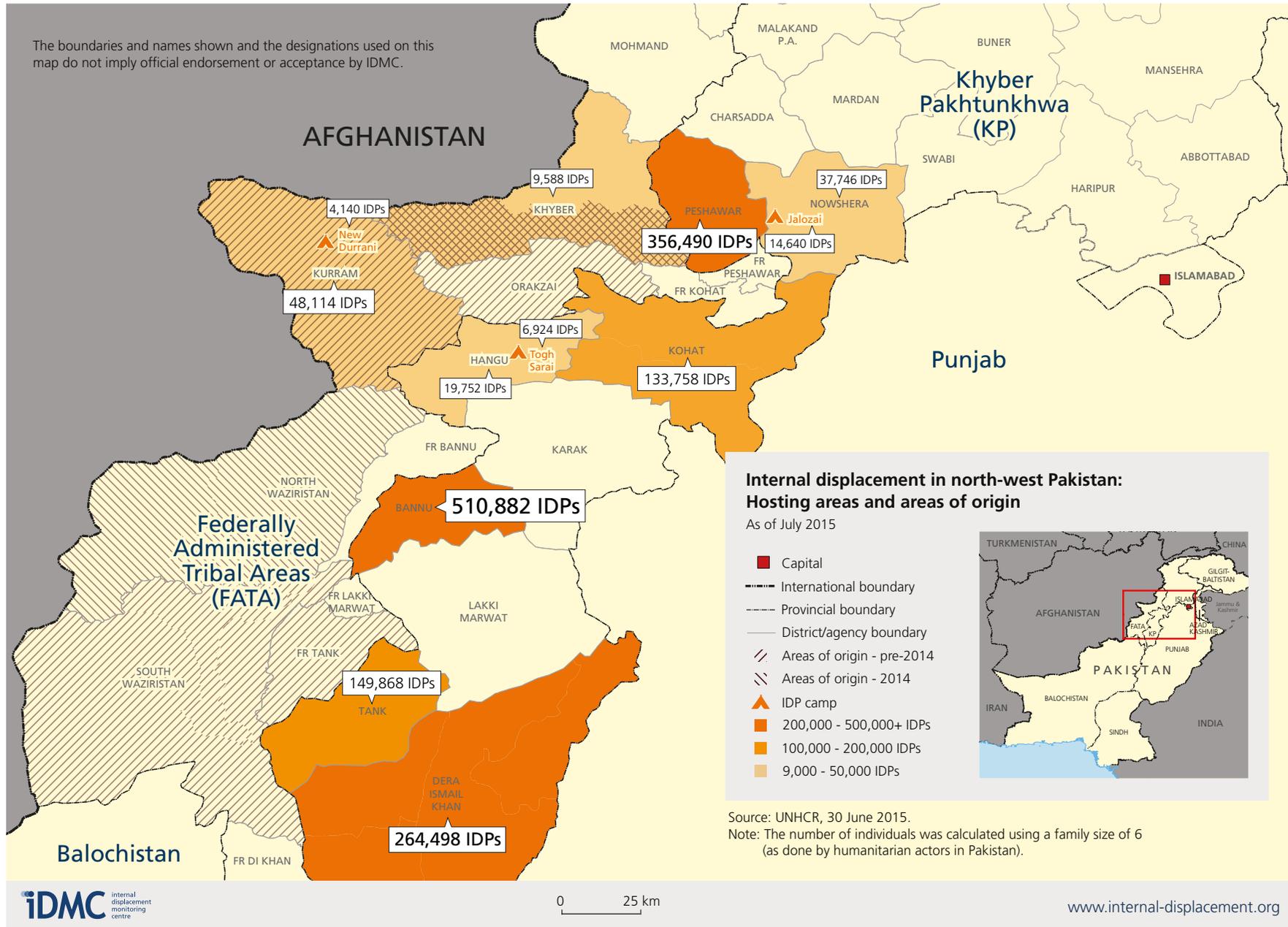
A separatist insurgency and military operations against it have also caused displacement in the south-western province of Balochistan since 2005. Up to 275,000 people are thought to be living in protracted displacement there and in other parts of the country, with no real prospect of achieving durable solutions.

Disasters induced by natural hazards such as monsoon rains and earthquakes have newly displaced 14.57 million people across wide areas of the country since 2010. The number of people still living in displacement following disasters in previous years is not known.

Before last year's spike in new displacements in FATA, 4.8 million people had registered as IDPs in the country as a whole since 2008, most of them as a result of violent clashes in the north-west. The majority have returned to their places of habitual residence, but many returnees continue to require assistance in achieving a durable solution to their displacement.

Most IDPs in the north-west live in rented accommodation in host communities. They tend to avoid camps for cultural reasons, including women's privacy, and seek refuge in such places only as a last resort.

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



Not all are officially counted because some, including women and vulnerable people, are unable to register for lack of personal documents, or because they fled from an area not officially notified as “calamity-hit”.

Registration is a precondition for receiving assistance, meaning that the needs of those unable to do so have not been fully addressed. Areas of refuge lack food, water, healthcare and sanitation, and IDPs struggle to re-establish their livelihoods.

Given the scale of the recent displacement in North Waziristan and Khyber, the immediate response of national and provincial authorities has been laudable. IDPs have been registered quickly and many of their most pressing needs have been met. The country, however, has no national policy or legislation on displacement, and no longer-term strategy to facilitate durable solutions.

Whether they fled as a result of conflict or disasters, people living in protracted displacement tend to become increasingly neglected over time. This in turn means some of their needs become greater, while much-needed aid is sometimes diverted to new IDPs.

International humanitarian organisations have been supporting the national and provincial response, but insecurity and bureaucracy – including a government requirement that they hold non-objection certificates (NOCs) before they can intervene on the ground – have hampered access to those in need.

Background and causes of displacement

Pakistan consists of four provinces - Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) - and four federal territories – the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Islamabad Capital, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. FATA

is still governed by the 1901 Frontier Crimes Regulation, under which tribal structures assume the roles of Pakistan’s higher courts and police ([Dawn](#), 27 October 2014; [FATA Research Centre](#), 4 September 2014; [ICG](#), 23 January 2014, p.3).

Since the US and NATO military intervention in neighbouring Afghanistan in 2001, and Pakistan’s alignment with Washington against al-Qaida and the Taliban, the country has had to deal with growing Islamist militancy. It has also experienced sectarian and ethnic violence, a stagnant economy, high poverty levels and recurrent disasters induced by natural hazards ([IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, p.3; [Arab News](#), 2 January 2014; [CIPE](#), 14 June 2013; [GoP](#), 6 August 2012, pp. 14, 20-21).

Pakistan’s four provincial capitals have suffered increasing violence, as they have become both bases and targets for criminal gangs, Islamist extremists and armed separatist groups ([ICG](#), 23 January 2014, pp.i-ii, 3; [HPG](#), May 2013, pp.1, 12; [GoP](#), 6 August 2012, p.16).

Militant groups have targeted religious minorities in violent attacks in several parts of the country. In March 2015, 15 Christians were killed and 70 injured in two bomb blasts that struck churches in Lahore, the capital of Punjab province ([IRIN](#), 19 March 2015). In May, attackers shot and killed 43 Ismaili Shia Muslims, a community which had not previously been targeted, in Karachi, the capital of Sindh. Members of other Shia groups were killed in bombings in Shikarpur, Sindh in January and in Peshawar, KP in February ([CNN](#), 14 May 2015).

Pakistan ranks 146th of 186 countries on the UN Development Programme (UNDP)’s human development index, which measures achievement in health, education and livelihoods ([UNDP](#), 24 July 2014, p.159). A third of its population live below the poverty line ([HPG](#), May 2013, p.21).

With almost 1.5 million registered and around 1.3 million unregistered Afghan refugees, Pakistan

also has the world's largest and most protracted refugee caseload ([UNHCR](#), December 2014; [FMR](#), May 2014, p.22; [Reuters](#), 16 July 2015). The increase in fighting and insecurity in Afghanistan during 2014 and the first half of 2015 means refugees' prospects of returning home are uncertain at best.

Under Pakistan's national policy on Afghan refugees adopted in July 2013, those registered are allowed to stay until the end of 2015 ([UNHCR](#), 25 February 2014; [FMR](#), May 2014, pp.22-23), but since a government crackdown following a deadly attack on a school in Peshawar in December 2014, about 133,900 Afghans have returned home ([OCHA](#), 30 June 2015, p.2; [AFP](#), 13 May 2015).

North-west Pakistan

Fighting between the Pakistani military and Islamist non-state armed groups (NSAGs), intense clashes between NSAGs, sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia Muslims, and tribal and local clashes over resources have all forced civilians to flee their homes in north-west Pakistan over the past 10 years ([IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, pp.3, 5; [IDMC](#), 10 January 2012, pp.3, 8; [The Friday Times](#), March 2012; [HRCF](#), March 2013, p.279; [IDMC](#), 6 September 2010, pp.21-24).

Human rights abuses committed by NSAGs have also caused displacement. These include targeted killings and indiscriminate attacks against civilians. NSAGs have also restricted access to schools and health services in their campaigns to destabilise both tribal and secular governance ([AI](#), 10 June 2010, pp.11-15; [ICG](#), 23 June 2014, pp.13-15). FATA and KP accounted for about a third of all civilians killed by militants in Pakistan in 2013 and 2014 ([SATP](#), last accessed 18 August 2015; [SATP](#), last accessed 11 August 2015).

The military has intensified its operations in the north-west since 2007 in response to the creation and expansion of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also known as the Pakistani Taliban ([OHCHR](#), 14

March 2013; [Geneva Call](#), November 2012, p.8). Its most recent focus has been on FATA's North Waziristan and Khyber agencies.

During the early months of 2014, a number of ceasefires and attempts at peace talks failed as NSAG attacks and counter-insurgency operations continued ([SATP](#), last checked 14 August 2015; [Reuters](#), 17 February 2014; [NYT](#), 17 February 2014; [AP](#), 1 March 2014; [AP](#), 9 March 2014; [Reuters](#), 16 April 2014). On 21 May the military began air-strikes against NSAGs in North Waziristan, leading to large-scale displacement ([PRCS](#), 18 August 2014, p.1).

On 8 June, TTP and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan launched an assault on Jinnah international airport in Karachi, in which 10 attackers and 26 others, including civilians and members of the security forces, were killed ([Guardian](#), 9 June 2014; [AP](#), 12 June 2014). A week later, the government announced operation *Zarb-e-azb*, Urdu for "sharp strike", against NSAGs in North Waziristan. It also imposed a curfew, which made it difficult for civilians to flee the fighting ([AFP](#), 15 June 2014; [OCHA](#), 24 June 2014, p.2; OCHA, Draft Preliminary Response Plan Afghanistan, July 2014, on file with IDMC; [OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, p.1).

On 16 October, the Pakistani military extended its counterinsurgency campaign by launching operations Khyber One and Two ([OCHA](#), February 2015, p.1). Both were completed by mid-July 2015, but operation *Zarb-e-azb* was still ongoing at that time ([IANS](#), 14 July 2015).

The US has carried out drone strikes against NSAGs in north-west Pakistan since 2004, in some cases causing displacement ([ICG](#), 21 May 2013, p.1; [Guardian](#), 14 April 2014; [CCC](#), 29 September 2012, p.24). The number of strikes fell from 128 in 2010 to 27 in 2013, and none were carried out between December 2013 and June 2014. There were plans to end them altogether, but they resumed in North Waziristan in June 2014 ([AP](#), 1 August

2013; [UNGA](#), 11 March 2014, p.6). In January 2015, two western hostages were among those killed. Whether the most recent strikes have caused displacement is not known ([AP](#), 12 June 2014; [AFP](#), 15 June 2014; [Reuters](#), 6 August 2014; [Guardian](#), 24 April 2015).

Balochistan

There are currently six ethnic secessionist NSAGs fighting the government for control of land and resources in the south-western province of Balochistan. The Balochi rebellion dates back to 2003, displacement began in 2005, and tens of thousands of people have since been unable to return to their homes ([BBC](#), 22 February 2014; [IRIN](#), 13 February 2014).

The province has also experienced religious violence, including attacks by Sunni extremists against the Shia minority and the targeting of schools ([BBC](#), 22 February 2014; [Reuters](#), 21 May 2014).

Disasters

Pakistan is prone to disasters brought on by natural hazards, including earthquakes, monsoon floods, cyclones and drought. In July and August 2015, monsoon floods affected 1.6 million people. The figure for 2014 was 2.53 million and for 2013 1.2 million ([OCHA](#), 10 August 2015; [OCHA](#), 2 October 2014; [OCHA](#), 13 September 2013, p.1).

The country has had to deal with successive and sometimes concurrent large-scale displacement caused by disasters and violence. New displacement often starts while recovery from a previous crisis is still ongoing, stretching the capacity to respond. For example, unprecedented flooding in Sindh province in 2010 followed large-scale displacement caused by military operations from KP's Swat valley the previous year, and many areas have been flooded in consecutive years since, while the country has had to deal with new and protracted conflict displacement as well ([IFRC](#), 13 July 2014, p.15; [IDMC](#), May 2013, pp.17-18). Measures to improve disaster preparedness and

reduce disaster risk are still urgently needed ([Reuters](#), 6 August 2015; [IRIN](#), 30 July 2015; [GoP](#), 20 August 2014, p.11).

Displacement figures

IDMC estimates that there were more than 1.8 million IDPs as a result of conflict and violence in Pakistan as of June 2015. They are concentrated in KP and FATA, which together host 1.56 million or 259,400 families ([UNHCR](#), 30 June 2015). Up to 275,000 protracted IDPs live in Balochistan and other parts of the country ([The News](#), 28 July 2010; [ICG](#), 23 January 2014, p.14; [IRIN](#), 13 February 2014).

Our estimate is based on a combination of sources. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) publishes regular information on the number of families registered as displaced in FATA and KP, based on data provided by provincial authorities ([UNHCR](#), 30 June 2015). To calculate the number of individuals displaced, we use an average family size of 6 (IDMC interview, August 2015).

No one regularly monitors displacement in Balochistan, and our estimate for the province is based on information from media and other sources ([The News](#), 28 July 2010; [ICG](#), 23 January 2014, p.14; [IRIN](#), 13 February 2014).

Our overall figure is likely an underestimate of the real situation. It does not include IDPs in KP and FATA who are not registered as such. Those who do not hold a computerised national identity card (CNIC), those who are registered at two addresses, and those whose CNICs contain inconsistent information are not eligible to register. Neither are IDPs who have fled areas the government has not declared "calamity-hit" ([OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, p.7; [OCHA](#), 18 June 2014, p.1).

The Internally Displaced Person Vulnerability Assessment & Profiling (IVAP), an independent

project set up in 2010 to profile IDPs, found that about half of the IDPs it surveyed in KP and FATA in 2014 were not registered (IDMC interview, January 2015). Nor is any information available on IDPs from KP and FATA who have sought refuge in other parts of the country, including urban areas.

More than 205,000 people from North Waziristan were registered as refugees in Afghanistan's Kost and Paktika provinces a year after counterinsurgency operations in the agency began ([UNHCR](#), 11 June 2015, pp.2, 3).

Disasters

The number of people currently displaced as a result of disasters brought on by natural hazards is unknown, because information on which to base estimates is only available for when they initially flee. There is none on those who remain displaced in the months and sometimes years following the onset of a hazard, nor on those who may have achieved durable solutions. Between 2008 and 2014, a cumulative total of 14.57 million people fled disasters in Pakistan - the fourth highest total in the world in absolute terms, and the sixth highest relative to its total population ([IDMC](#), 20 July 2015, p.32). Eleven million were displaced in Sindh alone in 2010, when a fifth of Pakistan's landmass was flooded ([IDMC](#), May 2013, pp.17-18; [IFRC](#), 13 July 2014, p.16).

In July and August 2015, monsoon floods forced 920,000 people to flee their homes. More than 175,100 people took refuge in camps across the country and almost 740,400 people were evacuated in Sindh province alone ([Reuters](#), 6 August 2015; [OCHA](#), 10 August 2015).

On 24 and 28 September 2013, two earthquakes struck Balochistan, displacing 170,000 people in Awaran, Kech, Kharan, Panjgur, Washuk and Gwadar districts ([IDMC](#), Disaster-induced displacement: Global data as of 9 October 2014; [OCHA](#), 23 October 2013, pp.1-2).

Displacement patterns

IDPs in the north-west tend to stay in the areas where they first take refuge. Protracted displacement has increasingly become an issue, with some having fled their homes as long ago as 2008 and 2009 ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, p.4; [Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, p.16).

Most IDPs from FATA live in KP. The displacement from North Waziristan in 2014 has made Bannu the largest hosting district, but there are also significant numbers in Peshawar, DI Khan, Tank and Kohat ([UNHCR](#), 30 June 2015). The influx of IDPs into Bannu has almost doubled the district's population from 563,000 to more than a million. Others have fled further afield, to Balochistan and Punjab provinces and to Karachi ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.5, 6). 79 per cent of new and protracted IDPs from Khyber agency live in Peshawar, and another 16 per cent live in Nowshera ([UNHCR](#), 30 June 2015).

Ninety-eight per cent of registered IDPs from the north-west live with host communities ([UNHCR](#), 30 June 2015). They choose to do so for a number of reasons, including the fact that camps are government-run, which makes them a target for NSAGs (see protection section below). Living conditions in camps are also poor, and they lack private space ([OCHA](#), 18 June 2014; [NYT](#), 20 June 2014; [Al-Jazeera](#), 26 June 2014; [IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, p.6).

As of July 2015, only around 4,300 families or 25,700 people were living in three camps in KP and FATA - Jalozi in Nowshera district, New Durrani in Kurram agency and Togh Serai in Hangu district ([UNHCR](#), 30 June 2015).

Some of the most vulnerable people displaced in 2014 were unable to afford to pay rent and had no family or friends to host them. They sought refuge in public buildings, including more than 1,600 schools in Bannu and 55 in Karak, where infra-

structure was overwhelmed and conditions overcrowded. The schools closed two weeks early for the summer holidays in order to receive the IDPs ([OCHA](#), 16 July 2014, p.1; [OCHA](#), 24 June 2014, pp.2, 3; [KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.3, 7, 8; [OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, p.4; [IRIN](#), 10 September 2014).

Displacement tends to take place from rural to semi-urban or urban areas, fuelling rapid population growth there ([IDMC](#), 6 September 2010, p.8). Peshawar and its surrounding district currently host one of the largest populations of refugees and IDPs in south Asia ([HPG](#), May 2013, pp.1, 12).

Planning, however, has failed to keep pace, and a large proportion of the population in Peshawar and other cities, including other provincial capitals, live in informal settlements without adequate housing, sanitation infrastructure, electricity supplies, roads, schools or hospitals ([ICG](#), 23 January 2014, pp.i-ii, 3; [IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, p.4; [HPG](#), May 2013, pp.1, 12).

Protection concerns

Life and physical security

IDPs' lives and physical security are threatened at all stages of their displacement. In 2014, NSAGs targeted government-run camps. In May 2014 a suicide bomber killed four people and injured eleven at a camp in Peshawar hosting IDPs from Tirah valley ([Express Tribune](#), 11 May 2014).

The following month, NSAGs threatened and then attacked Togh Sarai camp in KP's Hangu district, which was hosting around 7,000 IDPs from Kurram and Orakzai agencies in FATA. Four people were wounded and most of the IDPs left. By 23 June, 3,000 had returned to the camp after the government improved security in the area, but another attack in late September killed eight IDPs from Orakzai and injured 12 more ([OCHA](#), 23 June 2014; [The News](#), 29 September 2014).

Registration and access to assistance

In order to receive cash and other assistance from the government, IDPs have to be registered and "verified" by the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). People who do not hold a CNIC, however, are not eligible to register and so have difficulties accessing assistance, as was the case for significant numbers of IDPs from North Waziristan assessed in Bannu in 2014 ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.23-25).

Humanitarian organisations have made efforts to facilitate IDPs' registration and to assist those who have not been verified but are in need, including through an assessment of all vulnerable IDPs displaced from North Waziristan since May 2014, whether verified or not ([OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, pp.1,2).

Vulnerable groups

Women make up 23 per cent of the displaced population, and children 54 per cent ([UNHCR](#), 30 June 2015). Some of the most vulnerable IDPs, including women and children who are heads of household, older and disabled people, did not receive assistance. Not only were they unable to provide the documents required for registration, but many did not receive enough information on the process and its benefits ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.24, 31).

Many displaced women from North Waziristan and Khyber do not hold a CNIC, whether because other family members do not want them to have one, NSAGs prevented them from obtaining one or they are unaware of their importance. A significant number of displaced second, third and fourth wives do not hold a CNIC ([OCHA](#), 19 August, p.2; [Protection cluster](#), 3 November 2014, p.5; [Protection cluster](#), 31 December 2014, p.2; [OCHA](#), 19 February 2015, p.4).

A lack of female personnel and private space at registration points has also prevented some women from registering ([OCHA](#), 9 July 2014, p.2;

[OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, pp.3,7; [Protection cluster](#), 27 June 2014, p.5; [KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.26,28,32). Others have avoided areas where assistance is distributed for fear of harassment and gender-based violence. They have reported threats from officials and difficulties in lodging their grievances ([Protection cluster](#), 27 June 2014, p.5; [KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.26,28,32).

Women's cultural need for *purdah*, or privacy, has also limited their movement as IDPs more generally. Displaced women from FATA report feeling unsafe while on the move and in crowded places, and when using toilet and washing facilities that in many cases are shared with men.

Women's access to health services is inadequate, particularly for those pregnant or breastfeeding. Maternal health facilities in Bannu, where most IDPs from North Waziristan have taken refuge, are overstretched, and there has been an increase in the number of miscarriages, premature births and infant deaths ([Protection cluster](#), 27 June 2014, pp.4,5; [KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.28,30; [OCHA](#), 19 August 2014, p.1; [IPS](#), 8 October 2014).

Almost half of FATA's population is made up of children under the age of 14, and they are particularly vulnerable to traumatic events ([IRIN](#), 16 June 2014). Assessments of IDPs from North Waziristan reveal psychological stress among children to be a major concern ([Protection cluster](#), 27 June 2014, p.6).

Children living in protracted displacement in the north-west have difficulty in accessing assistance such as food and health services, possibly because aid is distributed to heads of household and may not be passed on to them. Some displaced children do not live with their parents, but with their extended families. Others live in *madrasas*, or religious schools, and other institutions where they receive free education, room and board ([Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, pp.28,30).

Assistance needs

FATA's population was already deprived prior to displacement, and their flight has made IDPs' situation worse still. It has also put receiving areas in KP under strain. Health and education infrastructure and services were already overstretched before the influx, and receiving areas lack food and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities ([OCHA](#), 9 July 2014, p.1).

Basic needs

A quarter of IDPs from North Waziristan did not have access to clean drinking water, and they lost around a third of their food supplies during their displacement. Local markets in their areas of refuge are generally accessible and well-stocked, but only a third of IDPs said they could afford to buy enough food. Three-quarters of the displaced population receive food assistance ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.12,13,16,36-37).

Two-thirds had access to toilets or communal latrines, but there were not enough facilities and defecation in the open was common ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, p.37).

Health and nutrition

The most common health problems among IDPs from North Waziristan were malaria, skin infections, diarrhoea and colds ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, p.14; [OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, p.3). NSAGs have also prevented children and others from being vaccinated against polio and other infectious diseases in their home areas ([AP](#), 1 March 2014; [AFP](#), 29 March 2014; [AFP](#), 14 April 2014; [AFP](#), 26 May 2014). The risk that such diseases might spread with the movement of IDPs is countered somewhat by the fact that their displacement has made it possible to vaccinate children outside the agency ([OCHA](#), 24 June 2014, p.2).

Very few mothers and children receive assistance to address their specific nutritional needs.

More than half of the children displaced from North Waziristan receive less food than before their displacement, and significant numbers are malnourished. According to a rapid nutrition assessment among IDPs in KP and returned IDPs in FATA in May 2015, the global acute malnutrition rate was at a critical level ([UNICEF](#), 30 April 2015, p.1; [KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.14, 17, 21-22).

Health services are available in areas of displacement, but they were already overstretched before IDPs' arrival. Those living in protracted displacement also struggle to access the healthcare they need, including reproductive health services, and there are no female health workers at facilities accessible to IDPs ([UNICEF](#), 30 April 2015, p.1; [KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.14, 17, 21-22; [Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, p.48).

Livelihoods

The majority of displaced families from North Waziristan in Bannu had no source of income. Half the population of FATA base their livelihoods on farming and herding, and IDPs were able to take 75 per cent of their livestock with them when they fled. Given the lack of land, shelter, water and fodder in their places of refuge, however, it has been difficult for them to keep their animals ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.3,10).

Having experienced similar challenges in previous years, protracted IDPs in the north-west have shifted their main source of income from farming and agriculture to unskilled day labour and reliance on aid. This has made them more vulnerable to income loss, leading to a lack of regular and nutritious food and access to healthcare (IVAP draft factsheet, Food security and livelihoods profile, 11 October 2014, on file with IDMC).

Education

As with displaced children in other countries, many of those in Pakistan have been taken out of

school either directly because of their displacement, or to work to help their families survive. Schools used as shelters for IDPs have been damaged and are in need of repair. Tens of thousands of children displaced from North Waziristan since June 2014 have had their education disrupted and large numbers were still out of school a year after their displacement ([IRIN](#), 18 June 2015).

That said, many children in FATA and KP had difficulty accessing education even before their displacement. NSAGs have attacked public schools, forcing teachers and pupils, and girls in particular, to stay at home and facilities to close. TTP's attempted murder of the teenage education activist Malala Yousafzai in KP's Swat valley in 2012 aimed to scare girls away from school ([Guardian](#), 12 September 2014). *Madrasas*, which are important recruitment bases for NSAGs, are not targeted and continue to operate.

In this context, displacement could have the positive effect of providing children from FATA and KP with better-quality schooling in other parts of the country ([ICG](#), 23 June 2014, pp.13-15; [ORG](#), June 2014, p.15; [IRIN](#), 16 June 2014). In reality, however, only very few displaced children from North Waziristan have benefitted in this way. This is because local schools were already under strain before their arrival, facilities have been used as shelters and many lost school books and other material during their flight ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.7,8).

A third or more of the children displaced by the 2010 floods in Sindh province had never been to school, and only began their education in their places of refuge ([ICG](#), 23 June 2014, p.15).

Housing, land and property

Most IDPs in the north-west rent their accommodation, despite high costs and a requirement that two locals attest contracts making it more difficult for them to do so ([KP PDMA and OCHA](#), 31 July 2014, pp.34-35; [Protection cluster](#), 25 November

2014, p.8). Two-thirds of respondents to a survey of protracted IDPs conducted in 2014 were tenants. Of them, more than half were not aware of their tenancy rights and three-quarters only had verbal agreements, but there were very few reports of forced evictions ([Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, pp.39-42,87-88).

Recent returnees to South Waziristan were in significant need of shelter assistance ([Shelter cluster](#), 28 July 2015, p.5). In other return areas, particularly Kurram, Khyber and Orakzai agencies, much land is under communal ownership and there have been reports of disputes among returnees over its use. *Jirgas*, traditional gatherings of Pashtun elders, and other mechanisms for resolving disputes only exist in some areas. Disputes over housing, land and property (HLP) can also be addressed through the revenue department, a mechanism female IDPs and returnees much prefer to *jirgas* ([Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, pp.81, 84-85).

Property is registered in Pakistan through *patwar khanas*, or property registration offices, but very few branches exist in FATA's return areas. As of May 2014, most of the returnees the protection cluster surveyed had not been allocated land. Nor had they received compensation for damage to their housing or land they lost as a result of their displacement. Of those who had been compensated, most were heads of households, the majority of them men ([Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, pp.87-89).

Durable solutions

Surveys indicate that the vast majority of IDPs would choose return over local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country as their preferred settlement option ([Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, p.23). That is also the government's preference, and returns are usually planned soon after people have been displaced. Once an area

has been denotified as "calamity-hit", the registration of its IDPs is revoked, which means they no longer receive formal assistance. It is not always clear, however, whether they take place voluntarily and in dignity.

Repeated displacement is common because of ongoing insecurity and unsustainable living conditions ([IRIN](#), 11 September 2013; [The Nation](#), 18 January 2014). Of around 45,000 people who fled fighting associated with counter-terrorism operations in North Waziristan between January and March 2014, most returned within weeks or months once security had improved somewhat ([OCHA](#), 18 June 2014, p.1; OCHA, Draft Preliminary Response Plan Afghanistan, July 2014; [Protection cluster](#), 4 March 2014; [ECHO](#), 10 March 2014). Despite widespread damage and destruction, the government had not notified their home areas as "calamity-hit", so they were not registered as IDPs ([OCHA](#), 18 June 2014, p.1). It is unclear whether the returns were sustainable, given continued insecurity and the extent of the destruction.

Further counterinsurgency operations in North Waziristan forced more people to flee from May through to the end of the year, this time in much larger numbers ([PRCS](#), 18 August 2014). More than 24,000 IDPs displaced from Khyber in 2012 returned in May, but counterinsurgency operations from October onwards caused further displacement. Many who had returned to the agency since 2008 were forced to flee their homes for a second time ([OCHA](#), 16 December 2014).

As a result of continued fighting in FATA, significantly fewer people have returned than the authorities planned. Around 91,000 did so in 2014, compared with the 270,000 envisaged. They included 45,000 people who had not been registered as IDPs ([OCHA](#), 31 May 2014; [OCHA](#), 3 June 2014; [UNHCR](#), 12 November 2014). The authorities planned for 154,400 displaced families, or around 800,000 people, to return in 2015, but as of July only 45,100, or around 235,000 people – less than

a third – had done so ([Protection cluster](#), April 2015, p. 2; [OCHA](#), 24 July 2015).

Given that conditions are not always conducive to sustainable returns, many of those who go back to their home areas continue to need assistance. Returns to Tirah valley in Khyber agency began in mid-September 2013, five months after residents had been displaced. A survey conducted in July 2013, however, revealed that no water, sanitation, hygiene, health or education facilities were in place, and that 80 per cent of homes had been destroyed, leaving returnees to face the winter without adequate shelter ([OCHA](#), 13 September 2013, p.2).

Many homes were still to be repaired as of May 2014, by which time most IDPs had returned ([IRIN](#), 26 May 2014; [OCHA](#), 3 June 2014). An assessment of those still displaced found that half of the families surveyed intended to split, with some members returning and others staying on in their place of refuge. The majority chose to do so because their homes were still damaged, and because their children had better access to education in their places of displacement ([Protection cluster](#), 24 June 2014, pp.4-5).

Following further destruction and new displacements in the context of the Khyber operations since October 2014, the lack of shelter and continuing insecurity were the main obstacles to sustainable returns in Khyber ([OCHA](#), 19 February 2015, p.1). IDPs who returned between March and June 2015 found 90 per cent of homes and other infrastructure destroyed. A third have no access to health services, and obtaining water and fulfilling other basic needs is also difficult ([OCHA](#), 27 June 2015, p.1; [FDMA and HCT](#), 3 August 2015, p.1).

IDPs returning to Kurram agency in April 2014 were confronted with a similar set of circumstances ([Protection cluster](#), 20 May 2014, pp.3-4).

The continued presence of NSAGs and ongoing insecurity limit returnees' ability to rebuild their

lives sustainably in many of KP and FATA's return areas ([Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, p.58; [Protection cluster](#), 26 April 2014, pp.3-5). NSAGs have targeted schools that have been rebuilt and are under military guard ([ICG](#), 23 June 2014, pp.14-15).

National response

National and provincial authorities, host communities, family networks, civil society and the military are all involved in Pakistan's response to internal displacement. At the national level, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) focuses on displacement caused by disasters, while the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) coordinates the response to that triggered by violence.

The FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA) and provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs) in KP, Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan coordinate the response at the provincial level. NADRA is responsible for issuing CNICs and registering IDPs.

The government has made substantial efforts to address IDPs' needs over the years. Registration has enabled hundreds of thousands of people, including large numbers who live outside camps, to receive assistance ([IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, p.10). Immediate relief has generally included shelter, cash grants, food, water, sanitation and healthcare services.

Returns to FATA are coordinated by a task force co-chaired by FDMA and UNHCR. In April 2015, the FATA authorities launched a sustainable return and rehabilitation strategy for 2015 and 2016, developed with technical support from UNDP and financial support from the World Bank ([FATA](#), 15 April 2015; [Dawn](#), 8 April 2015; [Dawn](#), 21 July 2015).

Despite these efforts, significant challenges remain in policy terms. Provincial-level frameworks have been put in place in KP and FATA to guide

the response to displacement caused by both violence and disasters, including the FATA early recovery assistance framework (ERF), but Pakistan has no national policy or legislation for IDPs' protection ([GoP and UNDP](#), 20 March 2013).

The national disaster management law of 2010, which covers both natural and human-made disasters, does not include a definition of an IDP, and the government prefers the term "temporarily dislocated person" ([Dawn](#), 23 June 2014). KP's PDMA does, however, use the term IDP ([PDMA](#), last checked 18 August 2015).

Given that registration is not comprehensive, the criteria for doing so should be brought into line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement so as to make all IDPs eligible for assistance based on their needs. Registration and the distribution of aid should ensure that the most vulnerable, including women, children, older and disabled people, have access to the help that they require.

Nor should the lack of registration deprive IDPs of their entitlements under human rights and humanitarian law. Return plans should be guided by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)'s framework on durable solutions, and local integration and settlement elsewhere in the country should be supported as settlement options if safe and sustainable returns are not possible.

International response

International humanitarian organisations assist and protect people displaced by both violence and disasters at the government's request ([OCHA](#), 24 June 2014, p.1). Authorities and international organisations co-chair clusters, which coordinate the international response at the national and provincial level. Annual humanitarian operating plans (HOPs) detailed activities and funding requirements in previous years, but none were published for 2014 or 2015.

UNHCR and its implementing partners support local authorities in registering IDPs in the north-west. "Grievance desks" also help to inform them about the registration process, the documents required and the assistance available. The protection cluster monitors IDPs' intentions in terms of return and conditions in home areas.

International aid has mirrored government assistance in prioritising new over protracted IDPs, and greater focus is needed on facilitating durable solutions ([Protection cluster](#), 31 May 2014, pp.19-20; [IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, p.11).

International humanitarian organisations have faced difficulties in accessing IDPs, because authorities have not always welcomed their involvement. In order to operate legally in Pakistan, they need a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government and non-objection certificates (NOCs) for travel and projects.

In practice, some have been operating without MoUs ([OCHA](#), 30 June 2013). The often long and cumbersome process of obtaining NOCs has hampered their response, though in some cases they have been able to operate with a government letter of permission instead ([OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, p.3; [Protection cluster](#), 27 June 2014, p.7).

Insecurity in displacement areas has also complicated the humanitarian response, and Pakistanis working for international organisations have increasingly been intimidated and targeted ([OCHA](#), 24 June 2014, p.6; [OCHA](#), 7 August 2014, p.9; [IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, p.11). There were 17 attacks on aid workers in 2013 and 12 in 2014, when Pakistan was among the five countries most affected ([Humanitarian Outcomes](#), 19 August 2014, p.2; [Humanitarian Outcomes](#), 2015).

Funding continues to be difficult to secure, because major humanitarian crises elsewhere in the world compete for resources, and donors are reluctant to fund programmes when access

to IDPs is uncertain ([IDMC](#), 12 June 2013, p.11). In mid-2015, ERF was replaced by the Pakistan Humanitarian Pooled Fund to cover return assistance provided by the clusters ([Protection cluster](#), 30 June 2015, p.6; [Shelter cluster](#), 28 July 2015, p.7). As of March 2015, protection activities were seriously underfunded ([Protection cluster](#), April 2015, p.6).

About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) is the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement. For the millions of people worldwide displaced within their own country, IDMC plays a unique role as a global monitor and evidence-based advocate to influence policy and action by governments, UN agencies, donors, international organisations and NGOs.

IDMC was established in 1998 at the request of the Interagency Standing Committee on humanitarian assistance. Since then, IDMC's unique global function has been recognised and reiterated in annual UN General Assembly resolutions.

Contact:

Anne-Kathrin Glatz
Senior Regional Analyst
Tel: +41 22 799 07 07
Email: ak.glatz@nrc.ch

IDMC
Chemin de Balexert 7-9
1219 Geneva, Switzerland
www.internal-displacement.org
Tel: +41 (0)22 799 0700
Fax: +41 (0)22 799 0701