

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Pakistan's erstwhile FATA: Issues and Challenges

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Abstract

The 9/11 attack on the US and the subsequent Global War on Terror to eliminate militancy and terrorism led to counterterrorism operations by the Pakistan military in Pakistan's erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). It created a volatile environment for the tribal inhabitants where they got stuck between the Pakistan military and terrorist groups. They had to leave their native areas for more stable places, becoming Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). IDPs from the tribal region have been facing many challenges, and their vulnerabilities have increased. In such a context, the research paper attempts to understand the issues and challenges being faced by the IDPs across the tribal areas. It analyses the national and international responses to resolve the internal displacement crisis and delves deeper into the issues of internal displacement, human security and governance in the erstwhile FATA. Primarily, a qualitative approach has been adopted to analyse the relevant findings. The findings indicate that the lack of any national policy on internal displacement and ad-hocism has rendered IDPs

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highly vulnerable from socio-economic, politico-administrative, and security-related viewpoints. An attempt has also been made to provide viable suggestions to ensure the human security of IDPs, thereby contributing to regional peace in South Asia.

Key Words: FATA, Governance, Human Security, Internal Displacement, IDPs

Introduction

As per the Internal Displacement Index 2020 Report, 50.8 million people are internally displaced worldwide till the end of 2019 for various reasons, including violence, conflict or disasters (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2020, p. 6). It shows that challenges to IDPs are ample, and their lives have been in constant danger for one or another reasons. As per the United Nations *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) can be defined as “persons or group of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situation of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised State border” (United Nations, 2004, p. 1). The definition of IDP substantively hints that there are two crucial components attached to it: (a) movement is involuntary or coerced, which helps in distinguishing IDPs from voluntary or economic migrants; and (b) unlike refugees, IDPs necessarily remain under the globally recognised State borders (European Union & United Nations, 2020, p. 19).

Human Security and Challenges of Internal Displacement

The traditional security paradigm has been mostly centric on the militaristic conception, while the non-traditional security paradigm prioritises human security as one of its key priorities. The human security paradigm helps to identify structural problems relating to socio-economic and politico-administrative set-ups in the specific region. As intra-state conflicts are increasing over time, it has been observed that forced displacement is taking place and rendering people internally displaced with their vulnerabilities.

According to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), in the 1990s, it was witnessed that people were being uprooted within their own country due to multiple reasons, including ethnic strife, armed conflict and human rights abuses. In 1982, the first global estimate was taken to account, and it showed that almost 1.2 million people were internally displaced in 11 countries. Surprisingly, the count of IDPs increased to 20 to 25 million people by 1995, covering nearly 40 countries. This estimated count was observed to almost double the number of refugees across these countries. (IDMC, n.d.). For addressing concerns associated with internal displacement, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were framed in 1998. According to the Guiding Principles, IDPs are entitled to the same rights and liberties as other citizens of their country under domestic and international law, without discrimination. As per the principles, IDPs must not be discriminated against merely because of their forced relocation or because of their ethnicity, language, sex, religion, social origin, or other similar considerations. The principles reaffirm the right to not getting displaced unjustly and arbitrarily and ban displacement based on racial, ethnic

or religious considerations. In this context, these guiding principles fill in specific critical gaps in IDP protection by directly expressing what international law implies. (IDMC, n.d.).

The global refugee regime has garnered ample attention and global recognition legally and institutionally because of the presence and authority of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). However, the rights of IDPs have not been ensured either through institutional mechanisms or through international law (Koch, 2020, p. 22).

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Pakistan

Erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan has remained a region with a tumultuous past due to various geographical, economic, political, administrative, social and cultural reasons. Whether it is British and Soviet rivalry or the United States-led Global War on Terror (GWOT), ultimately, tribal inhabitants of the northwestern region have suffered the most. Over the years, the conflict-ridden tribal region has posed significant challenges to the people. They have been compelled to flee the area for their security, becoming internally displaced persons.

It is pertinent to delve deeper into the multiple dimensions which expose the vulnerabilities and challenges associated with internally displaced persons in the erstwhile northwestern tribal region. Therefore, the research paper covers such crucial dimensions to provide a comprehensive picture of the issues associated with IDPs. It has been argued that the prevailing conflict situation and Pakistan's counterterrorism operations induced the forced internal migration leading to the internal displacement of Pashtuns of erst-

while Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Human security has not been prioritised the way it should have been for the internally displaced persons of erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas. As mentioned in figure 2, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre statistics, there are 8,06,274 IDPs in Pakistan because of disasters as of 31 December 2020. Moreover, if the data is analysed, 1,04,000 people are supposedly living in the precarious situation of internal displacement resulting from specific reasons emerging from conflict and violence. As per the IDMC statistics, merely in the year 2020, a total of 390 new displacements were reported because of conflict and violence. It shows that conflict and violence have been found to be major push factors for the tribal inhabitants of erstwhile FATA, compelling them to leave their tribal lands in search of a safer place.

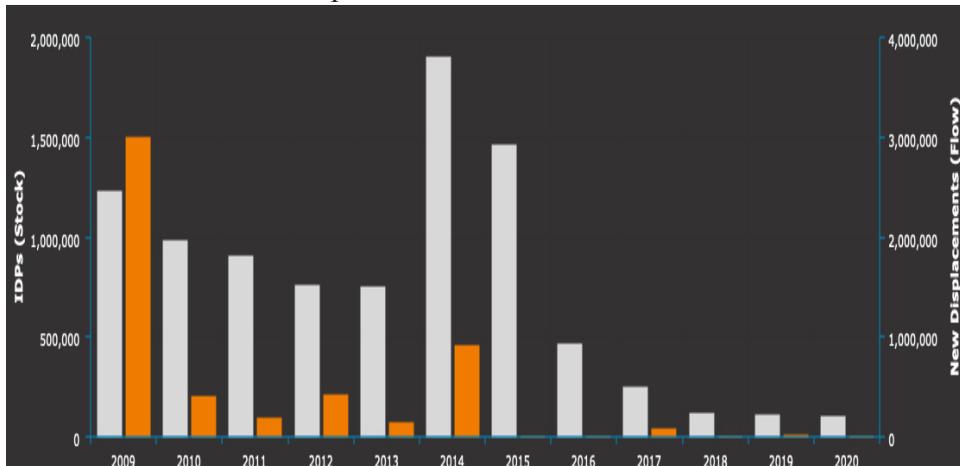


Figure 2. Source: IDMC (2020), Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, URL: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/pakistan>

IDPs in erstwhile FATA: Governance Dynamics

The multi-layered exigency that erupted in 2008 in the northwestern region of Pakistan (encompassing the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and erstwhile FATA) as a result of military operations against the insurgency displaced more than five million FATA residents from their homes and places of origin. Even though the Government of Pakistan (GoP) has managed the de-notification and return of the bulk of IDPs in an orderly manner, approximately 0.43 million Pakistanis continue to remain displaced. (FDMA, Govt. of Pakistan, 2016).

The then Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) secretary-general I.A. Rehman has argued that since independence, there was a need for a comprehensive displacement policy to deal with the issues of citizens facing displacement (Dawn, p. 27 November 2015). The Internal Displacement Index 2020 Report explicitly mentions that “Pakistan does not have a national policy on internal displacement” (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2020, p. 85). It clearly shows that country has not prioritised the rights of one of the most vulnerable groups in the country- IDPs. The lack of any national-level policies provides the space for ad-hocism, which cannot be considered as the most viable solution to reduce the vulnerabilities of internally displaced persons.

Civil Society in Pakistan finds that the Pakistan government failed to bring any legal framework for IDPs. Hence, its Foreign Office ordered the FDMA and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, that the term “Temporarily Dislocated Persons” or TDPs should

be used instead of IDPs in the context to the FATA (Khan M. A., 2015, p. 17). Tasnim Aslam from the Foreign Office of Pakistan argued that “these people (IDPs from Fata) have not been displaced as a result of war or occupation of their area. Our law-enforcement agencies have started action in tribal areas to re-establish writ of the government that is why affected population of Fata should be called TDPs and not IDPs” (Ali, 2014). However, merely changing the terminology cannot serve the purpose of reducing the vulnerabilities and challenges being faced by the IDPs. As reported by Dawn, an analyst put words aptly that “whatever name is given to the people forced to leave their hometown does not make their situation any different, nor does calling them TDPs or IDPs have any meaning if they don’t know when they are returning to their homes” (Ali, 2014).

Danyal Adam Khan finds that “those displaced from Orakzai have also taken up residence in adjoining Khyber Pakhtunkhwa districts, mainly Hangu, since 2010. For more than a decade, the agency’s administration, too, has been operating from Hangu city rather than from its original headquarters in Kalaya in Tirah Valley” (Khan D. A., p. 25 May 2018). All such accounts suggest that the government response varied during the crises because of “lack of a legal framework for displaced populations in Pakistan, donor fatigue and Pakistan’s recent political crisis” (Khan M. A., 2015, p. 17). Nazia Khan has argued that the military operations were launched by the Pakistan army without communication with the international community, and the government failed to prepare citizens in advance; coordinate agencies at the local level and interact with the global community, compelling people to seek shelter in the tribal areas, which was already ill-equipped to handle

the influx. She observed that the collateral damage caused by these factors led to the situation of a humanitarian crisis, which poses security concerns to Pakistan (Khan N. , 2015). It shows that all the successive governments failed to formulate any such comprehensive policies which could address the issues of internally displaced persons.

Forced Internal Displacement: Causal Analysis

Muhammad Waqas Chughtai posits that in the beginning, small activities were shown by the militants, which later on emerged at the broader level. Gradually, the actions of militants became more violent, which opened the spaces for other extremist groups resulting in the destruction of the socio-economic fabric of tribal areas. It led to the military operations and intensification of terrorist activities, which led to the displacement of people from this region into several other parts of Pakistan (Chughtai, 2013, p. 20). Pakistan military launched various operations from 2001 onwards to counter the terrorism and militancy prevalent in the tribal areas. It displaced a large number of people in the tribal region. People had to flee as they were “sandwiched between 80,000 Pakistani armed forces and fighter groups” (Chaudhry & Khan, 2014, p. 17). It is also worth noting that civilians have been forced to flee their homes in north-west Pakistan, where multiple causal factors, including continued fighting between both the Pakistani military and Islamist non-state armed groups (NSAGs), fierce clashes amongst NSAGs, sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia Muslims, and local and tribal clashes over available resources have been responsible (IDMC, 2015).

Zulfiqar Ali argues that operations by security forces in FATA started in 2003 to “wipe out sanctuaries of local and foreign militants, including those from Al-Qaeda and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan” and to restore the State’s “writ in tribal areas as well as in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa” (Ali, 2014). Displacement started from the South Waziristan agency in 2007 and from the Bajaur agency in 2008, leading to the North Waziristan agency and Khyber agency in 2014 (Khan M. A., 2015, p. 17). Many military operations were launched by the Pakistan military, including Operation Al-Mizan (2002), Operation Zalzal (2008), Operation Sher Dil (2008), Operation Sirat-e-Mustaqeem (2008), Operation Rah-e-Nijat (2009), Operation Koh-e-Sufaid (2011), Operation Zarb-e-Azb (2014) and Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad (2017). All these military operations have adversely impacted the lives of the tribal inhabitants of the erstwhile FATA. Danyal Adam Khan provides the following account of the forced displacement:

“Militant activity and military expeditions to counter it have resulted in large-scale displacement of tribesmen. Since 2008, when the army launched its first operation in Bara tehsil against banned militant outfits such as the TTP, Lashkar-e-Islam and Ansar-ul-Islam, over 91,000 people have been displaced from the area. This is the second highest number of internally displaced persons in Fata after North Waziristan’s 106,000 families who were forced to leave their houses and shift to nearby Bannu district at the launch of Zarb-e-Azb” (Khan D. A., p. 25 May 2018).

Moreover, it is evident that the major reason for forced migration has been “a decade long armed conflict between the state and militants” (Chaudhry

& Khan, 2014, p. 17). Moreover, military operations have also become the reason for the displacement as these operations have “destroyed the basic infrastructure; livelihood opportunities are very rare; and most importantly lives of the people are insecure” (Chaudhry & Khan, 2014, p. 17). These multiple accounts by various scholars provide the perspective that the forced displacement of the tribal inhabitants could have been avoided by sincere efforts and political will. The Pakistan military could have played a crucial role in consultation with the locals before the sudden launch of operations. It would have provided an opportunity for building trust between the tribal inhabitants and the Pakistan military. However, deliberate negligence or deliberate strategy of ethnic profiling resulted in forced displacement.

Unfurling the Gender Dimensions in erstwhile FATA

It has been observed that the overwhelming majority of IDPs are children and women who remain at immense risk of abuse of their fundamental rights. It has also been witnessed that “more often than refugees, the internally displaced tend to remain close to or become trapped in zones of conflict, caught in the cross-fire and at risk of being used as pawns, targets or human shields by the belligerents” (OHCHR, n.d.). Both the questionable legal status of FATA for so long since independence and the entrenched militancy in the region have posed an enormous challenge to women in particular. Many times, women have not been able to register themselves because of a lack of personal documents and sometimes also for the reason that women have fled from such an area which was not officially notified under the ‘calamity-hit’ category (IDMC, 2015). On some occasions, the unavailability of private space and female personnel at registration points

have prevented women from doing registration and obtaining Computerised National Identity Cards (CNIC) (IDMC, 2015, p. 7).

Pashtun women have been in more vulnerable situations that are emerging out of conflicts and leading to forced displacement. Usually, all systems are based on the edifice of logic so do the patriarchal system in which girls and women are perpetually discriminated against and exploited (Levine, et al., 2019, p. 30). The impact on women has proved to be catastrophic as “robbed of any protection by the state, and living a culture where a notion of ‘honour’ permits- or, in some cases, obliges- men to kill women for even the suspicion of breaking a strict code, they live under sufferance, their very existence subject to the will of those who control them” (Levine, et al., 2019, p. 6). The survey by FDMA reported that female-friendly facilities were lacking in the cash collection process when women returnees went in place of the male head of the house to collect cash, and in mobile cash-out points, women had to communicate with male shopkeepers (FDMA, Govt. of Pakistan, 2016, p. 32).

As per the FATA Research Centre report titled *Crisis of IDPs in FATA: Issues, Challenges and Way Forward*, women conveyed that Talibanization has been the primary cause of their displacement, which was witnessed when the Taliban took over the tribal areas and initiated people for multiple reasons like Taliban tax (forced collection of money) (Chaudhry & Khan, 2014, pp. 17-18). Taliban’s stronghold posed immense challenges to the tribal inhabitants and affected women adversely as the cultural restrictions got entrenched with the Taliban’s decrees.

Mariam A. Khan authored a report titled *Women and the FATA Conflict: Unfulfilled Promised* provides ample pieces of evidence to showcase the plight of women in camps established for internally displaced persons (IDPs). The report observes that displaced families, particularly women, have been left unprepared and vulnerable due to a lack of information on the registration process and available aid (Khan M. A., 2015, p. 30). Moreover, Hussain argues that “authorities keep away the community-based organisations and political parties from the relief support in the name of *chaddar*, pride and safety of the displaced persons”, which seems to be unjustified (Dawn, p. 27 November 2015). It is an indication of the abdication of due responsibilities by Pakistan’s successive governments. It shows that the governments did not establish credible and sustainable mechanisms for IDPs, which could have proved very beneficial for them.

The government of Pakistan-led cash programme for registered IDPs of FATA served as an exemplary initiative in creating a positive impact for women as it resulted in more family discussions or consultations to discuss the modalities of spending cash, thereby leading to more family cohesion in particular and social cohesion in general (FDMA, Govt. of Pakistan, 2016, p. 9). Additionally, some good initiatives have been taken by UN agencies. For instance, UNDP’s Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) Programme has proved to be beneficial for those women of FATA who received the cash and new skills. Capacity-building of women hailing from FATA was done through particular training in dressmaking, block-printing, weaving, tie-dye and embroidery. Additionally, necessary equipment and some cash amount were also given to women. (FDMA, Govt. of Pakistan, 2016,

p. 37). Such good practices can be replicated by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial government for the welfare of concerned IDPs, specifically women.

Return and Rehabilitation Prospects for IDPs

When it comes to returning and rehabilitation mechanisms, multiple dimensions need to be taken into account to understand the broader picture by delving deeper into the challenges associated with it. The then Director-General of FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA) stated in 2017 that “around 3,50,000 verified and 2,00,000 unverified families of tribal areas have returned to their areas, while 49, 000 families of Data Khel and adjacent areas are yet to return due to security situation and unavailability of basic facilities” (Zia, 2017). It is pertinent to understand that almost 98 per cent of registered IDPs hailing from northwest Pakistan usually reside with host communities and avoid living in camps due to multiple reasons, including the fear of attack by non-state armed groups, poor conditions and lack of private space (IDMC, 2015, p. 6).

Some instances show that the government is making half-hearted attempts or sometimes even discouraging the return and rehabilitation. For instance, those who wanted to return to their native places were compelled to sign the North Waziristan Security Agreement, which required Pashtun people to not engage in any activity which endangered the “security” of the State (The New Humanitarian, p. 24 June 2015). Document of eight-page did not limit here and asked them to “stop the enemies of Pakistan, its constitution, and its institutions” (The New Humanitarian, p. 24 June 2015). Moreover, it has also been reported that the “military is not opening areas until tribal

elders sign the security agreement”, which is slowing the pace of returning process of IDPs (The New Humanitarian, p. 24 June 2015).

There are various voices among the displaced people on the possibility of a return to their native places. Predominantly, for men, community life is a major missing for which they want to return in addition to the economic incentives as they are “struggling to pay for rent and food in displacement” (Levine, et al., 2019, p. 25). Moreover, both men and women are missing “life in nature, with fresh air, a good climate and clean water” (Levine, et al., 2019, p. 25). Most women are reluctant to go back to their native places permanently because of a lack of facilities like hospitals, electricity, and the unavailability of modern schools for children (Levine, et al., 2019, p. 26). The FRC report suggests that the “majority of the IDPs wished to resettle in their places of origin; however they feel insecure; basic facilities are missing and infrastructure needs to be rebuilt”, and some are reluctant to come home because of insecurity (Chaudhry & Khan, 2014, p. 17). Return and Rehabilitation should have been the prime responsibility of the government, with full accountability for the safety and security of IDPs. However, there has been a lack of prioritisation seen in the mindset of concerned authorities.

The Government of Pakistan launched an unconditional cash assistance programme for North Waziristan Agency registered IDPs in camps and hosting zones. Each family was given US\$170 (PKR 17,000) from the start, including \$120 (PKR 12,000) for a monthly living allowance and \$50 (PKR 5,000) for a one-time purchase of essential non-food item necessities. Every month, around 600,000 Pakistanis who were displaced, were sent money via electronic transfer (FDMA, Govt. of Pakistan, 2016, p. 8). In

essence, the cash transfer programme earmarked for IDPs and returnees led by FDMA reduced stress. It was used for a variety of purposes, including allowing households to eat the food they wanted, resolving medical concerns, sending children to schools, paying debts to shopkeepers in order to restore their trust, and paying the rent, transportation, and also other expenses. In addition, other families said they used the cash assistance to buy essential items like solar plates, fans, and batteries which helped them ameliorate their living conditions. (FDMA, Govt. of Pakistan, 2016, p. 8). Such initiatives are appreciable as they prioritise human security over the traditional notion of ‘state security’.

Forced Displacement: Opportunities in Disguise for IDPs?

It has been observed that migration from the FATA to some other nearby safer places opened up opportunities for many Pashtuns. The underdevelopment of FATA, entrenched with the conflicts, emerged as a massive challenge for the tribal people. The feudalistic culture of the tribal region also proved to be a hindrance to them. IDPs now have the opportunity to get a good education from reputed institutions, get better health care, and earn enough money to support their family (Chaudhry & Khan, 2014, p. 18). Comparatively better places in terms of security and employment opportunities have turned the crisis into an opportunity for some of the IDPs.

The Humanitarian Policy Group Report titled *The Impact of Displacement on Gender Roles and Relations* explains the gender perspective aptly and comprehensively in the following words:

“A gender perspective of displacement from Khyber Agency shows

that much has improved in the lives of women and girls, and, from a non-economic perspective, for many boys and men too. For women, the physical act of displacement created an opportunity. It enabled them to leave behind a highly exploitative and often cruel way of life, that was maintained by a mesh of interwoven forces that determined the logic of the JFS and supremacy of males. It was also an opportunity to engage in new experiences: to see and learn from different ways of living, to take advantage of education, services and utilities as were available, and to construct a new way of living together, with less exploitation. It has also transformed their relationship as citizens to their state. Women now possess CNICs, giving them a formal independent identity, and they are increasingly seeing state services as their right as citizens” (Levine, et al., 2019, p. 30).

Mainstreaming of the tribal inhabitants in general and IDPs in particular with the rest of the Pakistani society has opened up cultural barriers, which have been profoundly patriarchal and have hindered the autonomy and progress of tribal Pashtun women for quite an extended period.

Complex Web of Issues being Faced by IDPs

FATA Annual Security Report 2016 by FATA Research Centre observed that the dignified return of Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDPs) to tribal areas could not take place as per the government’s deadline of 2016. It observes the following concerning the repatriation process of TDPs:

“Although the agencies are cleared of militants, the unguarded borders of these agencies with Afghanistan provide hundreds of routes

to the militants to infiltrate into these agencies and carry out attacks on civilians and law enforcement agencies. This unwarranted infiltration of militants is making it difficult for the government to carry out the repatriation process of TDPs to their ancestral abodes in FATA” (Mahsud, Mateen, Aslam, Irfan-U-Din, & Bukhari, 2016, p. 25).

As per the official statistics, terrorism and conflicts have claimed around “50,000 civilians across the country, while over 5,000 personnel of the LEAs died in combat operations” (Ali, 2014). Prevailing conflictual dynamics in FATA have forced IDPs into vulnerable situations. Specifically, the Mahsud tribe of South Waziristan Agency are finding it difficult to return to their original homeland South Waziristan as they are finding themselves more secure in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Bukhari & Mahsud, 2016). According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal assessment of FATA for 2017, 5.3 million citizens of tribal areas have faced displacement since 2008 many times because of the counterterrorism operations conducted by the Pakistan army. Almost 4.8 million people have returned to the region. An assessment was made at the multi-cluster level on IDPs, confirming the essential need for basic services to ensure dignified survival. Numerous IDPs refuse to return to the war-torn areas as they would get nothing there. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, then Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, stated in January 2017 that the government would deregister those IDPs who are declining to return to their native places (South Asia Terrorism Portal, 2017).

There is an ethnic dimension also, which needs to be highlighted, as Pashuns have historically been discriminated against in the northwestern tribal region since the independence of Pakistan. Afrasiab Khattak argues that

“Pashtuns are discriminated against by the rulers who regard the peripheries of the country as dispensable” (Boone & Harrison, 2014). Khattak finds that many internally displaced persons are observing that the term “IDP” has become synonymous with “Internally Displaced Pashtun”. Most of the Pashtun people suffering the displacement are of the view that the government consider their territory dispensable (Boone & Harrison, 2014). The military operations have left significant imprints on the region, which is facing a humanitarian crisis now. The anger of the Pashtun people towards the government could become a serious source of instability for the government (Khan N. , 2015). The emergence of the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) is a vindication of this argument. PTM has started to raise their demands, which mainly call for dignified living without the fear of enforced disappearance.

The report by *Amnesty International* on the condition of FATA inhabitants describes the current scenario in these words:

“Internally displaced Pakistanis face an intolerable situation. They suffer if they stay in the conflict zone, but have to brave long curfews and run an obstacle course of road blocks to flee. Even once away from the front lines, displaced civilians find themselves without sufficient assistance to fulfill their basic needs and security. Domestic and international humanitarian relief organisations had limited access to the newly displaced. Thousands of internally displaced people have sought shelter and assistance in camps once dedicated to helping Afghan refugees. However, far more have shunned the difficulty and indignity of living in camps and have instead settled with friends and family or in urban areas far from

the fighting—without access to regular monitoring and assistance” (Amnesty International, 2010, p. 14).

Along similar lines, Khadim Hussain of Bacha Khan Education Foundation blames the adamant attitude and improper policies of bureaucracy for the worsening scenario of IDPs. He has made strong observations that “there are three challenges. We have seen two kinds of people with guns in conflict areas- one in uniform and the other without uniform. The ordinary people fear both and the third challenge for the IDPs is ‘helplessness’” (Dawn, p. 27 November 2015). IDPs are often complaining of “people charging extortionate rent for basic shelter and Islamabad’s failure to hand over promised financial handouts” (Boone & Harrison, 2014). Hussain observes that during the displacement journey, numerous cases of exploitation and abuse have been reported. It shatters their collective ego, and the trust deficit starts to widen with time. Such a deplorable scenario provides a platform for the extremists and militant groups to recruit displaced people (Dawn, p. 27 November 2015).

International Support for IDPs

The World Food Programme (WFP) has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2020 for its efforts “to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict” (The Nobel Prize, 2020). Efforts of WFP have proved to be immensely helpful for persons residing in conflict-ridden areas. Ghani Rahman, one of the IDPs in his late fifties, argues that the Pakistan government

has not offered anything to them. He says that this food is not provided by the Pakistani government; it is provided by the World Food Programme, and we are grateful to the WFP because my family would not be able to exist without it (Boone & Harrison, 2014). There are ample pieces of evidence which show that the WFP has played quite a significant role in providing much-needed food and thereby saving precious lives.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Refugee Agency, provided “4,000 tents, 8,000 plastic sheets and 4,000 core relief items kits to the FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA) to support the government efforts to facilitate return of the IDPs to South and North Waziristan” (Zia, 2017). In broad terms, approximately \$200 million was provided by UNHCR from 2010 to 2016 for the “IDPs operations in Pakistan, primarily for shelter and non-food items, camp coordination and camp management and protection” (Zia, 2017). In addition to various UN agencies, many countries have also been providing financial and capacity-building assistance to help displaced persons.

Way Forward: Recommendations

Challenges associated with IDPs are multifaceted and hence require a multi-pronged approach which prioritises human security over the traditional conception of ‘state security’. It needs to be noted that young tribesmen are especially prone to terrorists’ violent ideology while they live in host communities and camps (Chaudhry & Khan, 2014, p. 33). Therefore, necessary capacity-building initiatives need to be undertaken by the civilian governments for the youth of the tribal society. Employment opportuni-

ties also need to be given to the youth of the erstwhile FATA. The Director of FATA Youth Forum (FYF), Mehreen Afridi, noted that during the last decade of terrorism in erstwhile FATA, terrorists demolished academic institutions, hospitals and other medical centres, bridges, roads, and governmental infrastructure, as well as tribal people's homes and businesses. Therefore, Afridi suggested that government needs to reconstruct the necessary infrastructure (South Asia Terrorism Portal, 2017). The presence of basic infrastructure is a prerequisite for the smooth functioning of essential activities, including transportation, teaching, and medical check-ups. Nazia suggests that with an inclusive vision, Pakistan must recognise its ethnically varied makeup and design actions and policies that promote its citizens' well-being. Furthermore, the government must improve coordination and communication between the civilian, military and local authorities (Khan N. , 2015). Nazia Khan aptly suggested the viable strategy in the following words:

“The government must accurately communicate when and where cleared areas exist. A cleared area should be defined as one in which damaged health and education facilities have been rehabilitated. Even after civilians return, the government must shepherd investment in pathways to longer-term economic recovery and representation. Development agencies need immediate access to information to prescribe solutions and ask donors for specific support to fully redevelop the region” (Khan N. , 2015).

The report by FATA Disaster Management Authority suggests a few specific recommendations, including better coordination and sharing of infor-

mation to prospective beneficiaries; initiation of cash transfer programmes to generate income for returnees; linking of cash transfer programmes with rural markets rehabilitation in tribal areas; and improvement of cash transfer programmes through the creation of women-friendly services as per the prevailing cultural norms (FDMA, Govt. of Pakistan, 2016, pp. 40-41). Although legally non-binding in nature, Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons guides in achieving durable solutions (European Union & United Nations, 2020, p. 24). IASC Framework prescribes precisely eight criteria to achieve durable solutions, as mentioned in figure 3:

S r . No.	IASC Framework Criteria
1.	Safety and Security
2.	Adequate Standard of Living
3.	Access to Livelihoods
4.	Restoration of Housing, Land and Property
5.	Access to Documentation
6.	Family Reunification
7.	Participation in Public Affairs
8.	Access to Effective Remedies and Justice

Figure 3. Source: (European Union & United Nations, 2020, p. 24)

The conditions which compelled the tribal inhabitants of the mountainous northwestern tribal region need to be pondered upon so that successful initiatives can be put into action for return and reintegration. Pakistan's government need to own the responsibility for IDPs and implement a sustainable strategy for the protection, return, resettlement and reintegration of

tribal inhabitants into the tribal region. Ethnic profiling must be shunned in true spirit so that the trust deficit between the tribal inhabitants and the military can be bridged.

Conclusion

Pakistan's civilian governments and Pakistan military need to understand the severity of issues faced by IDPs and devise a sustainable strategy that takes into account the socio-economic development and human security dimensions. In addition, implementing these viable policies needs to be ensured in letter and spirit. The research paper has attempted to explore the crucial dimensions associated with the IDPs of erstwhile FATA. The lack of accurate data from conflict-ridden tribal areas has proved to be a constraint. However, it has been observed that IDPs from the tribal region have been facing multiple challenges associated with socio-economic, politico-administrative and security-related dimensions. On the one hand, forced internal displacement has emerged as a critical challenge for the internally displaced persons residing in tribal areas for a long time. On the other hand, certain trends suggest that being ethnically Pashtun has also proved to be a convenient excuse for the concerned authorities to discriminate against tribal inhabitants because of their ethnic identity. Therefore, there is a need to prioritise human security discourse in alignment with the international instruments that have evolved over the years.

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