

**Submission from the
Internal displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)
of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)**

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Internal Displacement in Pakistan

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The information in this report is drawn from and referenced in the following sources:

- The Pakistan page in the IDMC's "Global Overview 2011. People internally displaced by conflict and violence" April 2012
- The Pakistan country profile in IDMC's web pages April 2012
- The Pakistan overview "Displacement caused by conflict and natural disasters, achievement and challenges" January 2012

Please see: www.internal-displacement.org

Internal displacement due to conflict in Pakistan

I. Internal displacement due to conflict in Pakistan and the number of displaced

1. Conflict between government armed forces with non-state armed actors as well as local and tribal clashes have displaced millions of peoples within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and in the Pashtu-dominated Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) in northwest Pakistan since 2007.
2. **In Pakistan, there are currently at least 900,000 internally displaced persons**, compared to 84,000 in 2007, due to conflict. Ongoing insecurity, the destruction of infrastructure and land disputes continue to impede the return of many IDPs to areas of origin, even when they wish to. The figure does not include internal displacement due to natural disasters.
3. **In 2011, displacement continued throughout the year and more than 150,000 people fled their homes**, most of them escaping insecurity and fighting in Khyber, Kurram and Mohmand Agencies in FATA. In Lower Kurram alone, sectarian violence had led to the destruction of as many as 7,000 homes and public buildings and displaced more than 50,000 people. In Central Kurram, at least 60,000 people were displaced in the process of military operations. In Khyber Agency, military operations between the Government of Pakistan and non-state actors since 2007 have caused displacements, which have been peaking in the spring and autumn of 2011, and more recently in the first quarter of 2012.
4. During past operations, internally displaced persons were advised to leave the FATA and settle in camps in KPK province. Those displaced since late 2010, however, were further advised to flee to camps inside FATA so that people displaced to nearby areas will return more quickly to their areas of origin and reduce the pressure on host communities. Most IDPs, however, still prefer to seek refuge with relatives or other social networks instead of IDP camps. While many internally displaced persons have returned home between mid-2009 and mid-2011, however information on the outcomes of these returns has remained limited.

II. Main subjects of concern

Economic and social rights, in particular the right to an adequate standard of living

General situation:

5. Nearly all displaced households were better off before they fled their homes. Those who had more resources before fleeing continued to enjoy good living conditions once

displaced, while those who were poorer prior to displacement remained more marginalised in their places of refuge.

6. While most internally displaced men could access work, with a resulting fall in wages for all workers in places of refuge, **a national IDP survey suggested that most internally displaced families were highly vulnerable in economic terms. Seven out of ten were living below the national poverty line.** Being able to pay rent for housing was their greatest concern along with access to food and water. With food insecurity in Pakistan on the rise, displaced families have worse food consumption scores than the general population in both KPK and FATA. Up to 65% of registered displaced families had poor or border-line food consumption.

Freedom from discrimination and the right to an adequate standard of living

7. While fewer than ten percent of IDPs from FATA displaced in KPK want to settle in their current location, most IDPs have, instead, remained in areas of refuge or camps or have fled to other settlements due to ongoing insecurity and lack of basic services in their areas of origin. Other obstacles to return include the slow and complex process of recovering land and property. Access challenges in FATA reduce the ability of many independent organisations from fully assessing the humanitarian needs in the region.
8. Local Integration: For IDPs who are not able or choose not to return, policies to better integrate IDPs into host communities are required. **At reception areas in north-west Pakistan, some people with rural backgrounds often faced discrimination due to misconceptions about their background.** Some IDPs also face aggression from the host communities because most derive their principle source of income from work available in their places of refuge, where they accept lower pay than the local population therefore forcing wages down. In some areas, local people perceive IDPs as a security risk and so decline to offer them accommodation.
9. Settlement elsewhere: IDPs have also fled to Karachi, Peshawar, Islamabad and other cities where there are significant Pashtun communities. **The main problem they report are discriminatory law enforcement, limited employment opportunities and lack of safe drinking water, sanitation, health care and education facilities.**
10. Return: Measures to ensure IDPs' safe, dignified and voluntary return must be accompanied by governmental commitment and interventions to rebuild the shattered economy in their home areas. In 2011, there were some significant returns, for example: 10,000 registered IDPs from Mohmand Agency returned in early 2011; 23,000 households from Orakzai during 2010; and 6,600 of around 42,000 families displaced from South Warziristan . However, **for those who have returned, the government did**

not report on the progress of IDPs towards durable solutions, including attainment of the right to an adequate standard of living.

Freedom from discrimination and the right to an adequate standard of living of internally displaced women:

11. The impact of internal displacement on women has been greater. Food and other assistance, including cash support, have been mainly channelled through registered male heads of internally displaced households.

12. In addition, due to demands which purdah (honour) places on women, internally displaced women and girls in crowded and unfamiliar environments, including women who have fled without the male head of their household, may have faced exclusion, particularly in camps where they have no host family. Together, these factors have left displaced women, including older women, second wives and those seen as dependant on a male relative, with reduced access to assistance and essential services.

III. IDMC Recommendations to the Government of Pakistan:

On the respect of international humanitarian law concerning internal displacement:

13. Respect international humanitarian law and take measures:

- a. to ensure the right of civilians from arbitrary forced displacement; and
- b. to ensure that civilians are provided with sufficient advance warning prior to the start of military operations.

14. Provide access to national and international humanitarian agencies to all those in need of humanitarian assistance and protection

Particularly as a follow-up to the Government of Pakistan's statement on taking a number of measures to provide relief to IDPs, where it is required:ⁱ

15. Ensure that all IDPs, including women, have non-discriminatory access to shelter, food, water, education, medical care and livelihood opportunities

16. Guarantee respect for the IDPs voluntary choices to return, integrate locally or settle elsewhere

17. Work towards durable solutions for IDPs through specific measures and programmes that respect freedom from discrimination and fulfil their right to an adequate standard of living of IDPs, including those who have been able to return in the areas of return

18. Address the lack of a comprehensive government policy on IDPs and increase the government's budget allocation for IDPs

Word count: 1150

ⁱ UN A/HRC/8/42/Add.1 paragraph 34 "Report of the Working Group on the UPR – Pakistan; Addendum: Statement of Pakistan"