



Internally Displaced Persons in Pakistan



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Introduction

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), in 2020, 829,000 people were internally displaced as a result of disasters and 390 due to conflict and violence (IDMC, 2021). Pakistan is susceptible to heavy rainfall; the monsoon floods in the country have caused massive destruction as a result. For instance, almost all internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the Malakand region were struggling to rebuild their lives because the flooding devastated much of the infrastructure, and it had already been affected by fighting. Currently, there are 1.4 million more people displaced from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), they were displaced by militancy and military operations, but some are now living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province. These disasters have proven to be challenging under any circumstances because the fragile civilian government is already tackling militants, and its institutions lack the capacity and means to provide sufficient food, shelter, health and sanitation without international assistance. The humanitarian crisis in FATA has also received less attention than displacement from KP's Malakand region. There are many people unable to register or receive assistance due to the military's tight control over access to humanitarian agencies in KP's Internally Displaced Person (IDP) hosting areas. In parts of FATA, most notably according to the Bajaur agency, families have been forced to flee repeatedly because of militant resurgence (International Crisis Group, 2010).

Consequently, with militants once again escalating, FATA internally displaced persons (IDPs) are unable to return home until the threats to their safety lessen. Moreover, the deprived resources, due to the nine years of military rule, Pakistan's civilian administrative and humanitarian system is now severely tested by the worst flooding in the country's history. The International Crisis Group reports that one-fifth of Pakistan and more than 20 million people have been affected by flooding. The State's response plan has been slow as a result of multiple factors, such as under-resourced State relief organisations, the absence of civil-military coordination and ineffective civilian control over military-led efforts. This inadequate response has angered hundreds of thousands of returnees, and this is making them vulnerable to jihadi recruitment. There has been international assistance but, on a scale, it's still far too small to meet the immense needs of urgent relief in Pakistan. The humanitarian community prior to the flooding had prepared a draft on a major policy document for Pakistan. The Post-Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA), set to identify development needs, it set proposals for political reforms in Malakand and FATA, and to devise a strategy for their implementation. However, the impact of the flooding on Malakand's returnees or on FATA's IDP is not yet clear (International Crisis Group, 2010). What is clear is the active militant groups, including the Taliban and Islamic State which are contributing to high levels of instability (acaps, 2022).



Temporary tents on ground in daylight. Source: © Ahmed Akacha/Pexels, 202

The Legal and Policy Frameworks

1. International Frameworks

Internal displacement describes the situation of persons who have been forced or obliged to leave or abandon their homes and who have not crossed an internationally recognised border. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement submitted to the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1998, have been recognised unanimously by heads of State and governments as 'an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons'. The UN General Assembly has, moreover, encouraged 'all relevant actors to make use of the Guiding Principles when dealing with situations of internal displacement' (EGRIS, 2020). These principles comprise of 30 principles that cover a range of IDP matters, such as assistance and protection needs during displacement, return, resettlement or reintegration.¹

Although the Guiding Principles imply a need for States to identify individuals and groups in need because displacement, including those who may have special needs linked to their age, gender or other diversity factors. The Guiding Principles do not create a legal status for internally displaced. They rather demonstrate the principle that IDPs have the same rights and obligations as other persons living in their own State. The Guiding Principles help identify the potential needs and vulnerabilities of those who have been forcibly displaced. These Guiding Principles are not legally binding, but they reflect and are consistent with international human rights (IHRL) and international humanitarian law (IHL), and refugee law by analogy and thus codify and make explicit protection guarantees for IDPs that are inherent in these bodies of law. The Guiding Principles have achieved almost universal recognition as the normative departure for dealing with internal displacement. They have also informed the development of regional agreements and national laws pertaining internal displacement (EGRIS, 2020).

Moreover, Pakistan has ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966) which means it is required under the Covenant to give domestic effect to its provisions.² It's declared in Article 2 (2), which states, if there are no existing legislative measures, each State Party to the Covenant must undertake the necessary steps to adopt laws and other measures necessary, to give effect to the rights recognised in the Covenant, in accordance with its constitutional processes and with the provisions of the Covenant in mind.³ Additionally, it's also worth noting that Article 26 states all persons are equal before the law and they are entitled without discrimination to equal protection of the law.⁴

1. UNCHR 'Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis M. Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission resolution 1997/39. Addendum: Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement' Doc E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2

2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 23 March 1976) 999 UNTS 171 (ICCPR)

3. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 23 March 1976) 999 UNTS 171 (ICCPR) art 2 (2)

4. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 23 March 1976) 999 UNTS 171 (ICCPR) art 26

2. Regional Instruments

The most significant regional instrument with respect to internal displacement since the Guiding Principles, is the legally binding African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention, 2012). The Guiding Principles are directly incorporated into the Kampala Convention's core provisions, such as the definition of IDPs. The Kampala Convention moves further to advance international norms on internal displacement such as the extension of responsibilities for IDPs protection beyond states to the African Union, international organisations, humanitarian agencies, civil society and non-state actors (EGRIS, 2020). The Kampala Convention also provides a range of human rights violations that can cause internal displacement, such as gender-based violence and other harmful practices or inhumane treatment (EGRIS, 2020).

The Kampala Convention was a precedent from the 2006 Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, which includes the Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons. The protocol served as the impetus for the African Union to draft the Kampala Convention by obliging states to incorporate the Guiding Principles into their legal frameworks. It exemplifies how regional bodies advised the incorporation of the Guiding Principles into national legislation. The Council of Europe has even called upon member states to use the Guiding Principles and incorporate them into their domestic laws and policies (EGRIS, 2020).

Furthermore, the regional level instruments explicitly describe the need for data collection on IDPs. The Great Lake Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons highlights that member states shall be responsible for assessing the needs of IDPs and provides for the establishment of databases in specific situations for the registration of IDPs. The Kampala Convention contains a similar provision, which imposes an obligation on states to assess or facilitate the assessment of the needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs and those of their host community with cooperation with international organisations and agencies. The Kampala Convention also requires State Parties, in collaboration with international organisations, humanitarian agencies and civil society organisations, to create and maintain up-to-date registration of all IDPs (EGRIS, 2020).

3. National Laws and Policies

The development, adoption and implementation of numerous national laws and policies addressing internal displacement is a sign of international acceptance of the Guiding Principles. The legal use of the Guiding Principles is visible in court rulings, such as the Constitutional Court of Colombia's Decision in 2004, which formally incorporated them into the country's legal framework. The German government additionally has taken the official position that 'the Guiding Principles can now be considered to international customary law' Additionally, the Iraqi government stated that the Guiding Principles had become part of international law, which all indicates a viewpoint that the Guiding Principles should provide guidelines for rules and regulations to be adopted at national level (EGRIS, 2020).

Pakistan, however, has no national laws or policies implemented to deal with internally displaced persons (Cazabat & O'Connor, 2021). The Land Acquisitions Act 1894 is the only legal document that refers to displacement. The Act is a remnant of Pakistan's colonial times, when landowners were marginalised and their land was forcibly acquired for a public purpose, often against their will (Hashmat et al., 2021). Pakistan does, however, have the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) a non-governmental organisation that reports on the internally displaced. It forms statements and reports and makes recommendations to the government on behalf of internally displaced people (IDMC, 2015). Moreover, at a provincial level, the government of Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) developed a Return Policy Framework with the UN Office for the coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in 2009. In the return policy, the provincial government was committed to ensuring internally displaced people are consulted through a stage of national responses. However, there is no evidence of consultations ever taking place (iDMC, 2015). There have been occasions where internal displacement was noted upon or where policies could have been adopted. For instance, the 2012 Climate Change Policy acknowledged displacement as a result of the effects of climate change and included prevention measures. In 2018 Guidelines on Foreign Assistance highlighted the government's leading role in disaster response and outlined the circumstances and coordination mechanisms for foreign assistance during large-scale disasters (iDMC, 2015).

Definition of IDPs in the Guiding Principles



Source: © Samina Kousar/Pixabay, 2015.

The definition of internally displaced persons can be found in the Guiding Principles and regional and national frameworks. The aim of the Guiding Principles was not to recommend that States assign IDPs a particular legal status because doing so would raise issues of status determination in regard to being granted the status and eventually it being revoked. It would also raise issues regarding the risks of excluding IDPs from benefits, the risks of any ensuing discrimination and could lead to difficulties in determining the end of status (EGRIS, 2020). Instead, the definition aims to give prominence to the potential risks, needs and vulnerabilities of internally displaced people. The Guiding Principles state that IDPs are 'persons or groups 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, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internally recognised state border (EGRIS, 2020).

The concept of an IDPs is based on two elements; one that their movement is coerced or involuntary and two that they remain within the borders of the country concerned. However, interpretations of the definition and practical operationalisation differ from State to State. According to research from the Expert Group on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics, when there are variations by States it can be problematic when they narrow it (EGRIS, 2020). This is because a law or policy may focus on a specific cause or phase of displacement or a specific group within the overall displaced population, but the State and other entities still have responsibilities to assist and protect all IDPs under the terms of the Guiding Principles. Therefore, a national legal instrument should not allow discrimination as stated in the Guiding Principles; instruments should be applied 'without discrimination of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinions, national, ethnic, or social origin, legal status, age, disability, property, birth or on any other similar criteria. Therefore, the elements of the IDP definition in the Guiding Principles should be considered (EGRIS, 2020).

Elements of the Definition of IDPs in the Guiding Principles

1. Forced or obliged to flee or leave

The forced or obliged nature of movement separates people who have a 'coercive or otherwise involuntary character of movement' from those 'who move voluntarily from one place to another solely in order to improve their economic circumstances'. The clarifications to the Guiding Principles state that both being forced and being obliged to flee, despite implying a different level of agency, are synonymous with a lack of voluntariness. In international criminal and humanitarian law, it suggests that force, or lack of voluntariness, is measured in certain circumstances by the lack of personal consent of an individual with the context of the surrounding circumstances (EGRIS, 2020). Moreover, a lack of voluntariness or obliged movement, particularly when it comes to human made or natural hazard disasters, can also be measured objectively. The inclusion of both subjective and objective elements in the definition as parts of what constitutes 'force' or 'obligation' highlights why both are relevant for assessing causes of displacement. It is also important to note that the element of force or obligation makes no reference to the lawful or unlawful nature of a movement, indicates that lawful and unlawful movements are included in the definition. The people who are lawfully displaced, such as evacuees, evictees or otherwise relocated persons, may also be counted as IDPs as such (EGRIS, 2020).

2. Homes or places of habitual residence

This element of the definition is important because it clarifies that IDPs do not need to be a citizen of the country concerned; habitual residence is enough. This is determined on the basis that the displaced persons is present in the country over a certain period of time and the intention of remaining. However, the definition found in the Guiding Principles does not provide a test for either basis. Hence, non-citizens, foreigners and stateless people who have their habitual residence in the country concerned may also qualify as IDPs if they meet the defining criteria (EGRIS, 2020). This element of the definition refers to a person's place of habitual residence at the time of the displacement causing event. It does not refer to the current location of the IDPs who may be residing away from in a settlement or who may be residing in their habitual residence but while still suffering the impact of forced displacement and who therefore should still be considered as IDPs (EGRIS, 2020).

The use of the concept 'habitual residence' raises a question whether pastoralists and nomads fall within the definition. The fact that they can become internally displaced is reflected in the particular obligation set in Principle 9 of the Guiding Principles, which declares that States are under an obligation to protect against the displacement of indigenous people, minorities, peasants, pastoralists and other groups with special dependency on the attachment to their lands (EGRIS, 2020). For instance, the government of Colombia recognises indigenous communities to be victims of conflict and includes the right for reparation of the territorial rights of indigenous groups. In the Great Lakes Protocol and the Kampala Convention this is also reflected. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons and the IDMC describe displacement of pastoralists as a process whereby a habitual living space on which their pastoral way of life is dependent become inaccessible (EGRIS, 2020).

3. As a result of or in order to avoid

This element of the definition acknowledges that people can become internally displaced in anticipation of coercive factors, hazardous events or life-threatening circumstances compelling them to move. These circumstances include emergency and mandatory evacuations or resettlement away from areas deemed to be unsafe or uninhabitable. Moreover, similar to the element of force, the anticipatory flight analysis is more difficult to assess in practice because the causal event has not taken place yet. Additionally, when the pre-emptive movements are linked to slow-onset disaster situation, the element of compulsion may even be more difficult to demonstrate (EGRIS, 2020).

Causes

The Guiding Principles list a number of potential causes of internal displacement. The list is not exhaustive and while national laws and policies expand upon or specify causes of displacement for their countries, others have limited their scope or focus to a shorter list of causes than those listed in the Guiding Principles. For example, Azerbaijan's Law on the Status of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons restricts the causes of internal displacement to military aggression, natural disasters or technological disasters (EGRIS, 2020). Moreover, the Peruvian Law Concerning the Internally Displaced and the Colombian Law on Internal Displacement do not include natural or human-made disasters as a cause in their definitions of internal displacement. In 2018, however, Peru adopted a law on climate change that includes reference to forced migration as a result of climate change. Additionally, it should be noted that in many situations a combination, sequence or accumulation of events and factors leads to internal displacement (EGRIS, 2020). However, the causes of internal displacement mentioned within the Guiding Principles is the following;

i. Armed Conflict

The concept of armed conflict is a precondition for the applicability of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law. This is worth noting because either one can cause internal displacement. In situations of armed conflict, forced displacement can be caused by the secondary effect to the hostilities within the country, such as fear (EGRIS, 2020). The direct effect of the hostilities and humanitarian consequences of international humanitarian violations, such as attacks and ill-treatment of civilians, destruction of property, sexual violence, and restricted access to healthcare. It can also involve the explicit order or deliberate intention to displace when forced displacement is used as a method of warfare (EGRIS, 2020). The IHL rules that protect IDPs and prevent internal displacement are generally found in the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols I and II (EGRIS, 2020).⁵

ii. Human Rights Violations

Human rights violations are common causes of internal displacement because these violations may include violations of general human rights covenants, treaties or national human rights provisions. For instance, the Colombian Victims Law defines 'victims' as persons who individually or collectively have suffered harm because of violations of IHL or IHRL, and as part of an internal armed conflict. These violations include land abandonment or dispossession, terrorist attacks, threats, crimes against sexual liberty, forced disappearance, homicide, use of landmines and kidnapping. According to the Colombian Single Victims Registry, 1 in 10 victims are internally displaced (EGRIS, 2020). The issue of displacement caused by land acquisition and forced internal resettlement as a result of large scale development projects and forced eviction requires particular attention. It's especially relevant to Pakistan because of the Land Acquisition Act 1894 allows the government to appropriate land for any public purpose upon the provision of just compensation (Hashmat et al., 2021).

5. Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), June 8, 1977

Moreover, the displacement caused by large scale development projects, that are not justified by compelling and overriding public interest is described as a form of arbitrary displacement under Principle 6 of the Guiding Principles. The Kampala Convention has a specific article on 'Displacement induced by projects' that describes the steps a State must take to avoid forced displacement of people during development (EGRIS, 2020).

iii. Natural or Human-Made Disasters

Natural disasters are a major cause for internal displacement. For instance, in Pakistan 829, 000 people were internally displaced in 2020 because of natural disasters. The number refers mostly to displacement triggered by flooding in Sindh due to monsoon rains between June and September. Further displacement occurred in August when the rain was particularly intense (iDMC, 2021). The widely accepted definition of the term 'disaster' is something that occurs from a combination of pre-existing vulnerabilities and exposure to hazards which may be 'natural' like heavy rainfall. The term 'human made' means situations like industrial accidents or 'socio-natural' which is a combination of both like floors poorly drained urban areas. It is primarily a person's vulnerability to such hazards and their lack of capacity to prevent or cope with a hazard is what creates a disaster. Internal displacement is often multi-causal as defined the terminology used for disaster risk reduction 'A sudden-onset disaster is one triggered by a hazardous event that emerges quickly or unexpectedly. Such sudden-onset disasters could be associated with earthquakes, volcanic eruption, flash floods and chemical explosions (EGRIS, 2020). The resulting displacement is relatively straightforward in identifying in the face of acute threats or the resulting impacts of such hazards, including emergency evacuations to remove people from immediately dangerous areas. On the other hand, a slow-onset disaster is defined as one that emerges gradually over time. These disasters can be associated with drought, desertification or rising sea levels. However, displacement is more complicated when trying to identify it in such contexts because the population movements evolve over time as the situation changes. Furthermore, monitoring a slow-onset displacement is complicated because various factors may contribute to the displacement, making it difficult to attribute displacement to one cause (EGRIS, 2020).

Internationally Recognised Border Not Crossed



Man wearing blue outfit sitting on a chair. Source: © Ali Hassan/Pexels, 2020.

The second core element to the IDP definition requires that an internationally recognised State border has not been crossed. This element is crucial because it highlights the difference between an IDP and a refugee. The component of remaining within State borders is to be understood in a broad sense. It can be the place where the displaced person finds refuge or simply stops in their migratory path. Yet this condition is also met, if a displaced person has to go through a neighbouring State in order to gain access to a safer part of their own country. If the person goes to another part of their country voluntarily and they find themselves unable to return because of events that make it impossible or unreasonable then this also qualifies (EGRIS, 2020). In this sense, national frameworks in some countries simply require the displaced person be within the territory of the country (Azerbaijan or Bosnia and Herzegovina) or living somewhere else in the country (Nepal). When a person seeks refuge abroad and then returns to their own country voluntarily or involuntarily, without being able to go back to one's home or place or residence or otherwise achieve a durable solution for reasons outlined in the paragraph 2 of the Guiding Principles may still qualify as internal displacement according to international frameworks. The concept of returning refugees and IDPs is therefore not mutually exclusive and under certain circumstances an individual can be both a refugee and an IDP (EGRIS, 2020).

Impact of COVID-19

1. Loss of Livelihood and Income

According to the World Bank in 2020, the spread of COVID-19 and the lockdown measures that came with it, affected the financial resources of the most vulnerable people. The virus and lockdown measures created an economic crisis, and because of this, local, national and global economies will likely have long term impacts (Hashmat et al., 2021). In regard to internally displaced people, the concerns are even greater because they are often dependent on insecure and informal employment (Hochrainer-Stigler et al., 2019). In countries like Pakistan, this is particularly true because it has a low and middle-income economy (Hashmat et al., 2021).

One displaced person even said; [...] I was working as a street hawker but now due to the lockdown, I have lost a significant proportion of my customers, which has led to the decrease in my livelihood (Hashmat et al., 2021). It factually is decreasing livelihoods, as according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), COVID-19 threatens the wellbeing of millions (United Nations, 2020). The price increase on food demonstrates this, as internally displaced people are unable to buy expensive items which impacts their nutritional health. One person said; [...] Due to the rising price levels of food items, it is nearly impossible to run the kitchen expenditure. And reaching to the pre-COVID level of nutrition is simply out of each now (Hashmat et al., 2021).

Furthermore, according to research by Marshall Reinsdorf in 2020, COVID-19 is negatively affecting currency markets, which results in devaluations and inflationary pressures. This causes prices to rise on food items which badly affects struggling households, particularly those who are marginalised and displaced. Additionally, internally displaced people reported a loss of payments from relatives abroad, who were also unable to work because of lockdown measures (Hashmat et al., 2021). This further aggravated the vulnerability of displaced people because these payments were a vital source of income (Bisong et al., 2020).

2. Health Security

The internally displaced have already communicated their challenges regarding poor nutrition but one person further stated; [...] We all used to have a full protein diet comprising meat, but now we are consuming a less calorific diet. Apart from physical health, it is also having a psychological impact resulting in constant fatigue and stress (Hashmat et al., 2021). According to literature reports, displaced people, contrary to nondisplaced people, have a greater risk of being exposed to illnesses because of their lack of food and as a result an unbalanced diet (Cao et al., 2012). Moreover, forced displacement and consequentially relocation of people has also taken its toll on the psychological health of internally displaced people (Hashmat et al., 2021).

According to a recent study, four of the most common psychological reactions of internally displaced people include PTSD (a reaction to violence or torture), depression (for example, as a reaction to loss) somatization, and existential dilemmas (where belief patterns have been challenges). All of this has heightened the risks for internally displaced people because the lack of financial resources is preventing them from seeking help. Furthermore, regarding protective equipment from contracting COVID-19, this has also been a serious issue with internally displaced people. There has been a lack of information regarding the public health sector, like testing facilities because people thought the vaccines were charged for and that they could not afford it (Hashmat et al., 2021). This was indicated by one person who stated;

[..] In March 2021, my husband got detected with COVID-19. Due to financial strain, we took him to the nearest government hospital, but it was already working at optimal level in treating COVID-19 patients; hence we were forced to bring him home. Fortunately, a charitable organization helped us in buying the antivirus injections and medications. Although he has recovered, systems of weakness and lower capacity still linger on (Hashmat et al., 2021).

Moreover, a study by Christelle Cazabat in 2020, revealed that anxiety and human isolation resulting from the lockdown measures further impacted internally displaced people (Hashmat et al., 2021). The psychological impact of quarantine further aggravates displaced people to anxiety, depression and other forms of distress (Brooks et al., 2020). It is also worth noting that displaced households, with a history of gender based violence, that become worse because of stress and financial strain have seen a surge in violence (Hashmat et al., 2021). One person stated [..] Due to lockdown and the closure of logistic transport, my husband, who is a driver, lost his contractual job. Because of staying at home, he was psychologically disturbed, which frequently led to the violence towards me (Hashmat et al., 2021).

3. Poor Housing Conditions

According to findings internally displaced people, are more likely to contract COVID-19 because of their poor housing conditions and limited space (Banbury et al., 2020). The poor conditions mean that displaced people are unable to self-isolate, implement physical distancing, or even access water and sanitation as depicted by one person who stated; [..] During the COVID times, because of bad sanitation condition in the house, my children have often fallen sick; we couldn't improve the sanitation condition due to lockdown (Hashmat et al., 2021). Moreover, this is further reiterated in other findings that displaced people are unable to follow instructions from health authorities. They have less space per person and are not able to isolate an ill family member, like nondisplaced people would (Mackworth-Young et al., 2021). It's also important to note that displaced people are at risk of evictions because they are unable to pay their monthly rent due to the loss of income. It has been noted by researchers already that displaced people were already struggling to pay their rent before the pandemic and during the pandemic it has added further strain (Hashmat et al., 2021).



Unrecognizable child walking in tent. Source: © Ahmed Akacha/Pexels, 2020.

4. Education

One of the core themes regarding the impact of COVID-19 in Pakistan has been the disruption of educational activities and its linked involuntary displacement. This is because when people are displaced, especially under severe circumstances, children often quit school and begin work to earn a living to help their family. The school closures because of COVID-19 has placed another challenge on top of one that was already there for displaced people (Hashmat et al., 2021). There are many who are behind in their education or who are facing difficulties in learning in the pandemic. One person stated' [...] Our children are facing stress and trauma associated with displacement. COVID-19 is further impacting their well-being. Their focus, confidence, and performance have been greatly affected (Hashmat et al., 2021).

There are challenges associated with taking online classes in a developing country like Pakistan. For instance, children have minimal access to internet facilities and that, the abhorrence of frequent load-shedding makes it difficult and challenging for them to attain education online (Hashmat et al., 2021). There is also the issue of behaviour among students during the lockdown, which increased (Noor et al., 2020). All of these issues are heightened for displaced children because, for example, the learning environment is further reduced by the closure of schools, out of school children are at higher risks of abuse in homes and the disruption of their education undermines their sociopsychological well-being. Furthermore, it potentially harms their long-term employment prospects (Hashmat et al., 2021).

Analysis

Pakistan has witnessed an influx of migrants and internally displaced people in the past decade, with limited responses. A recent international response was orchestrated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The IOM appealed to the international community to receive USD 589 million for a continuance of a revised Comprehensive Action Plan for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries⁶ which aims to provide a regional integrated response that eases the flow of migrants between borders as well as internal migration within Afghanistan and Pakistan (IOM, 2022). This money would go to increasing humanitarian assistance and addressing the medical and social needs of those most affected. From August to December 2021, the IOM was able to reach almost 600,000 individuals affected by the Afghani crisis in 6 neighbouring countries. They recognise, however, that this excludes millions more internally displaced even more people, with the current political situation signifying even more to come (IOM, 2022). The IOM's platform focuses on regional integration toward a response, that only if all parties across all borders agree to baseline conditions, then responses will be more coordinated, fast, and efficient (IOM, 2022).

However, the treatment of internally displaced peoples, minorities, by the Pakistani military has contradicted recent international coordination. The Pashtun minority in Pakistan, which make up 15 percent of the population, have remained in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) near the Pakistani border where the Taliban would try to rule across borders (Occhiuzzi, 2022). This conflict displaced many Pashtuns and fighting between the Pakistani military and the Taliban destroyed their homes and towns. Following the nationally publicised trial of Naqeebullah Mehsud, an aspiring Pashtun model who was murdered by police, the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) was created to protest Pashtun discrimination by Pakistani institutions (Occhiuzzi, 2022). This national movement is nonviolent and aims to bring justice through investigating extrajudicial murders and missing persons, while also aiming to remove landmines left in the FATA region, of which almost 48,000 have been cleared so far (Occhiuzzi, 2022). The movement has also pledged to demilitarise the Pashtun youth. However, despite this clear agenda, the government has accused the PTM of anti-state terrorism. Furthermore, journalists and the media are censored by the government, being told to not cover PTM rallies and protests (Occhiuzzi, 2022). A former journalist attested that a penalty was given to a colleague who tried to report on a PTM rally. After leaving journalism and becoming active in the PTM, he was harassed with cease and desist letters from the government. Members of the PTM voiced that their greatest fear was the return of the Taliban to power, which unfortunately has transpired. They claim that they will be Taliban's first target as their platform of education and deradicalisation are vehemently opposed to that of the Taliban (Occhiuzzi, 2022).

6. For the full text of the Comprehensive Action Plan for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries please follow this link:
<https://www.crisisresponse.iom.int/sites/default/files/uploaded-files/IOM%20Revised%20CAP%20AFG%20February%202022.pdf>

Numerous scholars have listed the issues that surround IDPs, humanitarian assistance for women and children, education, housing, food and water, jobs, and healthcare. Solutions point toward increasing international assistance to applying pressure to the Pakistani government to provide that assistance, all of them, however, recognising a need for all parties to understand the urgency and lack of funding of the situation and implement a coordinated response. WHO claims that internal displacement from conflict makes it a public health issue both physical and mental and requires appropriate responses from the government (Marwat, Ronis, & Khalil, 2018). Another prevalent issue is identification laws that obligate IDPs to have national identity cards to receive clothing, food, and medicine. Scholars have pointed toward the need to distinguish between those IDPs in camps and others in a host of other accommodations (Marwat, Ronis, & Khalil, 2018). Registering internally displaced persons in a peaceful, non-discriminatory and non-accusing manner. Furthermore, providing a framework for national agencies to give targeted relief is also needed to streamline efficient humanitarian assistance (Marwat, Ronis, & Khalil, 2018). Other studies have pointed toward the immense food insecurity of IDPs especially those in refugee camps. Some have recommended to combat this, governments in Pakistan and worldwide should utilise organ meat, as it contains vital nutrients, as an easier way to feed those most in need faster (Fayemi et. al, 2016).

Continued marginalisation and neglect of minority and internally displaced communities in Pakistan escape the rule of law as the government uses national security to justify their actions (Javaid, 2016). The military operation known as Zarb-i-Azb was conducted against militants in North Waziristan displaced thousands. However, the military has conducted over 600 operations in the FATA region which, coupled with natural disasters and already low socio-economic conditions, have added to the humanitarian crisis for IDPs. The Zarb-i-Azb was conducted in 2014 and was carried out without any planning for the future of affected civilians (Javaid, 2016). The media treatment of the Pashtuns was encapsulated by Mullah Khel a Shura spokesperson for the FATA IDPs, "You have exploited the Islamic teachings on religious sentiments and the nationalists have exploited the Pashtun tradition" (Javaid, 2016). Scholars within Pakistan, such as anthropologist Zakia Mohsin, argue that the government is aware of the severity of the situation for IDPs but has no effort to ameliorate more than for personal gain (Javaid, 2016). State authorities and IDPs have no dialogue between them; it is simply a one-way street for the government to decide when to give aid or when not (Javaid, 2016). Lack of efficient responses has worsened the situation, created more internally displaced persons and has created other unintended consequences for communities and the government (Javaid, 2016). Currently, the management of IDP affairs is not within one sole governmental body, being split between parliament, the army, NGOs, and foreign aid doled out by provinces. Creating a unified institution to create dialogue with IDP representatives is the first step in providing assistance efficiently (Javaid, 2016).

Conclusion

In light of the responsibilities of national governments toward internally displaced persons, the Pakistani government has not been fulfilling their obligations. International law dictates the minimum rights for peoples, especially IDPs who are refugees within their own country, which are being under met through social and economic means. Lack of food and water security, lack of sanitation and housing, and exposure to disease and mental illness remain salient issues. The gravity of the situation remains pervasive, with the recent takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban leading to millions more leaving the country, many of whom are finding refuge in Pakistan. Millions of IDP persist in both cities and the border regions of Pakistan, with discrimination remaining rampant from government forces, labelling IDPs, specifically Pashtuns, as terrorists and collaborators with the Taliban (Occhiuzzi, 2022). Other minorities such as Kashmiris are also marginalised, with military operations conducted in their region being mere political ploys, changing nothing about the ground relations of the conflict while further displacing people (Javaid, 2016). Solutions have stressed the need for the government to prioritise IDPs as a human right emergency as most live below the national poverty line and are afflicted with other difficult circumstances. Coordinated responses by the international community and regional governments are important to also aid an indebted country that claims to not be able to provide for its citizens as refugees have flooded the country as well as the War on Terror having displaced people.

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