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Saad Sayeed, Radha Shah

Displacement, Repatriation and Rehabilitation

Stories of Dispossession from Pakistan's
Frontier

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Ludwigkirchplatz 3-4
D-10719 Berlin
Telefon +49 30 880 07-0
Fax +49 30 880 07-100
www.swp-berlin.org
swp@swp-berlin.org

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List of Abbreviations

ANP – Awami National Party
CNIC – Pakistani Identification Card
DIK – Dera Ismail Khan, city in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province
FAFEN – Free and Fair Election Network
FATA – Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FDMA – FATA Disaster Management Authority
IDMC – Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP – Internally Displaced Person
IOM – International Organization for Migration
ISI – Inter Services Intelligence, the Pakistan Army’s intelligence wing
ISPR – Inter Services Public Relations
KP – Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan’s northernmost province bordering the FATA
MQM – Muttahida Quami Movement
NADRA – National Database & Registration Authority
NOC - No Objections Certificate
NDMA – National Disaster Management Authority
PDMA – Provincial Disaster Management Authority
PMLN – Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz
PPP – Pakistan People’s Party
SAFRON – Ministry of States and Frontier Regions
TTP –Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan
UNDP – United Nations Development Program
UNHCR – United Nations Human Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA – United Nations Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
URC – Urban Resource Centre

Executive Summary¹

In the years following September 11, 2001, there have been unprecedented levels of internal displacement in Pakistan. Ongoing military conflicts in the country's north have displaced approximately 5.2 million people since 2009, while the 7.6 magnitude earthquake in 2005 left 3.5 million people homeless, and floods in 2010 affected a further 20 million. During this time, the country has begun developing a disaster management infrastructure, which did not previously exist until 2007. The various government, non-government, and military organisations involved claim to have successfully repatriated the majority of displaced peoples. Although some earthquake and flood affectees do remain in displacement, due to ongoing anti-state and sectarian violence in the country's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), large numbers continue to be displaced from the region, particularly North and South Waziristan. This paper will outline the country's history of displacement, but its main focus will be Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from these regions, part of a dispossessed population that continues to live in conditions of instability throughout the country. While this population has not been the focus of extensive research, flawed data collection of their numbers, the paucity of their voices in humanitarian aid recommendations, and the lack of planned government programming to facilitate their return and the rebuilding of their homes significantly shapes their experiences.

Analysis of the scale of displacement from the FATA is based on data whose collection is highly flawed. The government and United Nations agencies have only collected data for registered IDPs – people who possess valid identity cards and have signed up at government registration sites to list themselves as displaced during a limited sign-up period. Only these individuals and their families are eligible for state benefits.

¹ This Working Paper was written within the framework of the project entitled "Forced displacement and development cooperation – Challenges and opportunities for German and European politics", funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

There are four primary issues here that are important to consider: first, anyone listed as working outside the FATA cannot register as an IDP; second, not all FATA residents have a valid Pakistani identification card, called a Computerized National Identification Card (CNIC); third, most women from the FATA do not have CNICs, meaning widowed women who are not the heads of households are unable to register; and finally, many families who were initially afraid of registering with the state and missed the window can no longer claim benefits. Despite this, UN records are collected only for registered families, based on these numbers, where the state is claiming an 80 percent repatriation rate.

Another issue with the calculation of repatriation figures is that a large number of people sign up as IDPs but return only to collect their housing benefits. Many return to see their homes after years of displacement, but they do not return to the FATA. They have established lives in other parts of the country or find that it is not feasible to rebuild their homes and lives in the region. In addition, many have grown tired of living under the draconian, colonial-era frontier crime laws that govern the FATA, allowing the armed forces to punish entire communities for crimes committed by individuals. These restrictions also mean that FATA IDPs have found it impossible to have their voices heard and believed. Their stories rarely appear in the media, in print or on television, in English or Urdu, meaning there is a lack of awareness on what is happening on the ground in the FATA and no empathy toward the displaced. Again, this has significant consequences when it comes to aid procurement and delivery, and also on how aid and reforms are managed.

The lack of civil society support and aid delivery, compared to that provided to IDPs from earlier disasters, makes repatriation for conflict affected FATA IDPs particularly difficult. The region is subject to high levels of security, and the military and government have placed numerous restrictions on NGOs attempting to operate there. Foremost is the procurement of No Objections Certificates (NOC), which are no longer being granted to many organisations because of the kind of work they are producing about the region. Therefore, in the name of

security, the state intelligence agencies have also begun to curb dissent and critically important relief work in the FATA. This corresponds with a pre-existing and now growing xenophobia in Pakistan that informs public perception of FATA residents and regulates what kind of assistance they are willing to provide. Increasing anti-FATA attitudes have not only limited the interest civil society has in the regions; they have also limited FATA residents' access to mobility and employment opportunities. Advocacy workers and FATA IDPs themselves talk about not being able to travel freely across the country, being subjected to surveillance while living in cities and towns, and not being granted jobs on the basis of their point of origin. This means that while living in displacement, families are unable to move forward with their lives because they are unable to settle in their new communities.

The state has taken few measures in dealing with the displaced peoples despite a long history of managing both IDPs and refugees. A disaster management authority at the national and provincial levels was only developed in 2007 after the 2005 earthquake. These bodies are still only mandated to handle natural disasters and not to administer aid to conflict-based IDPs. Government agencies are therefore handling disasters such as the one in the FATA on an ad hoc basis and are often not equipped to respond in a timely manner. Finally, there are serious allegations against the Pakistan Armed Forces about their role in the FATA both in terms of how the locals are being treated and in terms of what kinds of deals are being made with the Taliban. The FATA is also undergoing legal reforms, with the region slated to become part of the country's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. While this is a welcome legislative measure, there are concerns about whether locals have been consulted on how this process might be initiated and also on how tribal customs are being turned into law. While this paper does not discuss this reform process in great detail, it does consider the lack of democratic processes in the region. This is a significant area for policy intervention: ensuring that the voices of FATA residents are heard and incorporated into law making in the region.

Introduction

This paper examines the IDP experiences of North and South Waziristan agencies in the FATA. Conflict between the state and militant groups began in South Waziristan in March 2004. At the time, encounters were isolated to low civilian density regions, resulting in small displacement numbers. 2009 saw the first major military operation in the area, *Rah-e-Nijat* (path to salvation), creating over one million IDPs. The major motivating factor behind the military response was the Taliban's simultaneous expansion in 2009 in the Swat Valley, a region considerably more important to the state, as a tourist destination and symbol of national pride, than the border regions of Afghanistan. During that five-year period, South Waziristan had become a Pakistani Taliban stronghold, with the organisation having formed a *de facto* government, while also planning and carrying out attacks from this region. People began to flee after the establishment of Taliban rule, but large-scale displacement took place only after the Pakistan Army launched a concerted military operation.² In 2014, the Pakistan Army began an operation in North Waziristan, called *Zarb-e-Azb* (sharp and cutting strike), claiming that the Taliban had largely shifted operations.

Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* in North Waziristan left an additional one million people displaced. The two previous military operations, in South Waziristan and Swat Valley, left over 3 million people homeless.³ Today, at least a million North and South Waziristan IDPs remain dispossessed despite ongoing repatriation and community rebuilding projects in the region. In contrast, IDPs from Swat Valley, as well as those created by floods that affected the entire country in 2010, have by and large returned home. State and civil society responses to the two operations were vastly different, with Swat getting a great deal of media attention and aid. South Waziristan IDPs who came primarily from the Mehsud tribe were

less fortunate, largely viewed as terrorists in the national discourse.⁴ The leadership of the militant Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP) was also from the Mehsud tribe and this affiliation was enough to vilify over a million displaced people. Tellingly, while Swat IDPs were repatriated soon after the operation in that region, South Waziristan IDPs continue to live in displacement and are only now beginning to be sent home.

Figures on repatriation vary to a large degree. For one, the Pakistani government no longer categorizes people who left Swat as IDPs, and therefore does not collect their demographic data. Between 2007 and 2016, the acceleration of state responses to militant groups throughout the FATA has resulted in the displacement of between five and six million people,⁵ including 1.6 to 2.2 million from Swat.⁶ Further complicating such counts is the fact that (IDPs) fit into two categories: those registered with the government as displaced and those who have fled but are not registered. Of this total figure—4.6 to 6.2 million—the IDMC estimates that 1.8 million continue to be displaced. This points to one of the reasons the IDP phenomenon in Pakistan is little understood, and long-term solutions are not in place despite its prevalence in all provinces.

The government, in partnership with the UN, World Bank, and a series of donor countries,

⁴ The people of the FATA are distinguished by tribal allegiance, belonging to specific communities that share a common last name that designates their tribe and living in a specific district. The Mehsud tribe is the dominant group found in South Waziristan and has been largely vilified in the rest of the country since the emergence of the Pakistani Taliban, which has drawn its leadership from this tribe.

⁵ UNOCHA data estimates total displacement from the FATA at 303,791 registered families, which amounts to around 2.1 million people, given the rubric of seven people per family. However, FDMA data includes unregistered families and estimates 447,924 displaced, which amounts to over 3.1 million people. In addition, we estimate that these figures do not include people who have found refuge in Afghanistan or families that fled violence in the FATA before the official operations began in 2009 and 2014.

⁶ Walsh, Declan. "Swat valet could be worst refugee crisis since Rwanda, UN warns". <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/may/18/swat-valley-pakistan-refugee-crisis>. Accessed on December 31, 2016.

² See: <http://www.dawn.com/news/958082/four-million-living-under-taliban-rule-in-pakistan>

³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). "Pakistan IDP Figures Analysis". <http://www.internal-displacement.org/south-and-south-east-asia/pakistan/figures-analysis>. Accessed November 20, 2016

provides IDPs with monthly food assistance and cash allowances. After the clearing of large parts of North Waziristan during the ongoing military operation, government authorities and the Pakistan Army began repatriating the displaced population of the FATA. Since March 2015, when repatriation in the FATA began, the UNOCHA estimates that 205,053 families (or approximately 1.4 million people) have been returned to their homes. To facilitate this process, the UNDP, working with the government of Pakistan, designed the FATA Sustainable Return and Rehabilitation Strategy, giving people transportation grants, and between 400,000 and 160,000 rupees (4000 to 1600 USD) to rebuild their homes. Together, these organisations also conduct studies examining what kinds of development interventions are needed in the region for its reconstruction.

In September 2016 The FDMA and PDMA in collaboration with UNOCHA published a jointly conducted study examining the living conditions of FATA returnees and IDPs living in KP.⁷ The study, “Multi cluster Assessment of IDPs and Returnees: KP/FATA”, involved surveys and interviews of households, and used findings to identify and assess the state of communities in terms of health, education, women’s needs (health and safety), sanitation, community infrastructure, food security, and nutrition. The study found that of the sample surveyed, the top priorities among IDPs were securing livelihood and employment opportunities, followed by health, cash support, housing, and education. It also reported that the main challenges communities faced were a low performing agricultural sector, low employment opportunities, and inoperable businesses and markets. The report goes on to recommend a number of solutions that humanitarian organisations can provide and help support the building of, including “cash for work” programs, until there is a more sustainable labour economy; solar energy sources where there are electricity shortages; revitalizing the agricultural sector by rebuilding irrigation infrastructure; the provision of improved food and medication for livestock; personnel, equipment, and medicine to redevelop health

⁷ UNOCHA. “Multi-Cluster Assessment of IDPs and Returnees KP/FATA”. August 2016.

service centres; schools that focus on girls’ education and vocational training for youth; and safe drinking water. Finally, and most importantly, the report calls for interventions that are IDP driven, which are “rights based rather than time-bound”, and also include support for permanent moves to other parts of the country. Other than this single, critical statement that calls attention to the roles that humanitarian agencies and the government play in administering development, such reports are mainly comprised of a list of actions that ought to be taken to improve communities in the FATA.

In this way, the UNOCHA report was written to examine what kinds of humanitarian aid and support were needed to provide communities with ‘livelihoods opportunities’ and ‘early recovery’ using ‘comprehensive reforms’. This is the discourse that the development sector, donor organisations, and government agencies commonly use to understand and discuss the needs of beneficiaries, emphasizing a requirement for ‘interventions’ that will have a ‘sustainable’ and ‘long-term impact’. Despite such claims to a structural understanding of the instability in the region, and the need for comprehensive and ‘strategic’ responses, such organisations are unwilling to name the root causes of instability: how this region has been governed historically, and the subsequent military operation. For instance, the FATA Sustainable Return and Rehabilitation Strategy maps out a long-term vision for repatriation, resettlement, and rehabilitation in the region.⁸ The study outlines reconstruction as the primary challenge alongside the repatriation of IDPs—UNDP representatives argue that without repatriation, the region cannot be reformed but IDPs will not return until the FATA has been developed to livable standards. Based on a “needs assessment” study, the strategy outlines a legal and administrative reform process, to counter “[years] of regional instability underpinned by decades of poor governance”. Such framing of the socioeconomic history of this region as exceptionally and endemically unstable avoids holding the federal government accountable for

⁸ FATA Secretariat & UNDP, “FATA Sustainable Return & Rehabilitation Strategy”. March 2015.

its role in exacerbating conflict and humanitarian crises.

Until the large-scale humanitarian disaster created by Pakistan's military campaign in the region, little collaborative work addressed the colonial-era governance system in the region that contravened basic human rights standards and facilitated systemic underdevelopment. Such studies point to the severity of underdevelopment in the region, but do not directly identify the wars that the government of Pakistan has waged on the backs of its own people as the cause of the destruction of their communities. At the same time, while suggesting a number of recommendations, these reports do not include a detailed discussion of *how* to reconstruct communities and lives, nor does it address the challenges humanitarian organisations face engaging in such work. Additionally, findings, analyses, and recommendations are disconnected from one another. For instance, research on the FATA shows that school buildings have been destroyed; yet, the UNOCHA report's analysis is that parents in returnee communities see educating children as "low priority". The recommendation that follows is that there is a need for efforts that "change the community perspective and inculcate the importance of education". Such narratives that the people in vulnerable, marginalized, and unstable communities must undergo an attitude change in order to accept development intervention is out of place, given the ground realities these very reports cite.

Our research analyzes the roles of the federal and provincial governmental organisations tasked with administering repatriation; the army in declaring areas free of violence and safe for return and providing a security apparatus for IDP return travel; and local and international NGOs in providing aid in the form of humanitarian assistance and sustainable development interventions. International and local NGOs are constantly shadowed by military personnel and face the threat of having their NOCs—government issued paperwork that allows them to work and operate in Pakistan—revoked. In this way, the Pakistan Army becomes the main state body in charge of executing the repatriation process. While NGOs are able to work coopera-

tively with government agencies to both administer repatriation and provide aid, army control and involvement in repatriation is in direct competition with the former initiatives because the military looks at the FATA from a strategic perspective which often involves putting defence matters before humanitarian ones. NGOs and their personnel are by and large silent on the army's involvement in repatriation. In their public narratives, they instead focus on the numbers repatriated, the amounts of funding disbursed, and the amount of work still remaining to rehabilitate people into their former homes and communities.

NGO literature often reads as a series of chronological success narratives; however, a study of media reports and interviews with journalists illuminates how these, coupled with government announcements that a repatriation program has officially begun or been completed, are claims that require much deeper investigation. To this end, we also document IDPs' firsthand experiences with dispossession and repatriation, providing a counterpoint to the official narratives. Field research was conducted at three sites: the Dera Ismail Khan (DIK) border, the South Waziristan Agency, Bannu, the bordering North Waziristan Agency, and the urban centre of Karachi. These regions host some of the largest IDP populations from Waziristan and provided for a semi-rural and urban contrast. IDPs experience severe forms of discrimination and public rhetoric that frames them as terrorists.

Plan of the Paper

The paper is divided into five sections, each examining a different component of the IDP dispossession and repatriation. The first section provides a historical backdrop of internal displacement in Pakistan since the Partition in 1947, outlining the magnitude of internal displacement in the country since fighting began in the FATA in 2004. Here we shall also show that while the Pakistani state has been involved in providing welfare assistance to displaced populations for decades, it has simultaneously been involved in the—at times coercive—control of these populations through measures such as class and ethnicity based housing schemes,

collective punishment laws aimed at tribal peoples, and the use of force against dissident ethnic and peasant movements.

Similarly, today, the IDPs of the FATA secure rights and provisions through federal and provincial government agencies by appealing to them for aid delivery, repatriation assistance, and legislative changes in their region. This is an ongoing theme in Pakistan where one arm of the state is involved in coercive control and the other in social assistance. Keeping this history in view, the following section examines government aid delivery to IDPs and commitments to the repatriation process. Here, we outline government initiatives such as cash assistance and setting up camps for displaced families, and identify the major state actors involved in their administration. The role of the military is also discussed, as the government avails itself of army manpower to rebuild roads, reconstruct schools and hospitals, as well as to securitize the movement of large numbers of repatriates. This means that the civilian government is not equipped to carry out large-scale development operations, and that it appoints the army to carry out this work. Finally, taking into the account the recent establishment of disaster management agencies in Pakistan, the shortcomings of these organisations are also discussed; most significantly, their lack of capacity and experience in dealing with issues of a national scale.

Section three looks at how IDPs in DIK and Bannu live in displacement, and the difficulties those who move to the southern tip of the country, Karachi, face. Here, we introduce the stories of IDPs, who talked to us about their lives and their interactions with the state. In Karachi, our main source of information was journalist and researcher Zia Ur Rehman, who has worked extensively on IDPs who have migrated to the city's outlying low-income regions. These interviews highlight the kinds of everyday difficulties IDPs face, many of which are a consequence of persistent stereotypes about the people of the FATA. Expanding on the preceding analysis, section four examines how FATA IDPs are subjected to xenophobic perceptions about their civilizational 'backwardness' and propensity toward violence, part of widespread stereo-

types of Pashtun people.⁹ Entire populations are believed to be either involved in or sympathetic toward terrorism. This section outlines the continuing use of the colonial Frontier Crimes Regulations laws by the Pakistani government, and brings together IDP stories and the analysis of critical researchers to explain how these perceptions affect aid delivery and the lives of people in displacement.

Section five outlines the role played by the development sector in handling the FATA IDP issue both in terms of providing aid and liaising with government agencies. Here we examine their approach in administering aid delivery, and later juxtaposing their documentation with on-the-ground IDP stories about receiving aid. As part of this analysis we also look at the challenges of carrying out humanitarian work in Pakistan. Finally, the concluding section of this report documents IDP stories, beginning with their exodus from North and South Waziristan, to living in displacement, treatment by the armed forces, and stories about loss of life and property. Virtually every IDP who was willing to speak to us wanted their story to be told, and felt that they had received little attention in the media.

⁹ Pakistan's Pashtun population, which is approximately 15 % of the total population, has been subject to racist stereotypes since the colonial period. The Pashtuns were designated a martial race by the colonial regime and were considered to have low intellectual capabilities. These ideas have persisted in post-Partition Pakistan and ideas of backwardness and lack of intelligence amongst the community have only grown stronger. There are many prominent Pashtuns in Pakistan, and the community is not restricted from achieving social mobility, but the majority of Pashtuns are regarded through a racialized lens by Pakistanis from other regions. Pashtuns living in the FATA are even more closely affiliated with these racialized ideas than those from KP. See Metcalf, Thomas *Ideologies of the Raj*. Cambridge University Press, 1997. Also see Alimnia, Sanaa. "On Discrimination against Pashtuns: Reflections from Peshawar". <http://www.tanqeed.org/2015/08/on-discrimination-against-pashtuns-reflections-from-peshawar>. Accessed on December 31, 2016.

History of Displacement in Pakistan

In order to understand the federal government's approach to dealing with the current IDP crisis, first it is important to understand the history of migration and refugees in the country. Stories of migration and displacement are embedded in Pakistan's history. From its inception as a new nation in 1947, following the Partition of India, the country has been involved in relocating refugees and displaced populations. In 1947, over seven million people crossed over into Pakistan. The basis for forming the country was justified by this influx, and Pakistan was characterized as a new homeland for the displaced Muslims of post-Partition South Asia. Much of the urban development and community-building that has taken place in Pakistan has been a consequence of assisting these displaced populations. However, the movement of populations to and within Pakistan has also resulted in multiple central governments implementing targeted forms of stratification along class and ethnic lines as well as state attempts to control the settlement and mobility of displaced peoples. Karachi, for instance, the country's largest metropolis, was expanded in the 1950s onwards to house new communities that had migrated from India.¹⁰ It was planned along class lines with poorer, working-class migrants given homes in outlying regions that bordered industrial zones. This history has been precedent setting and informs how the country deals with violence within its borders and administers solutions.

Disaster-Induced Displacement

Floods, and to a lesser extent, earthquakes, have been the major natural disasters in Pakistan. Before the Partition, a large earthquake in Quetta, Balochistan in 1935 killed between 35,000 and 60,000 people.¹¹ The city's train

¹⁰ Gayer, Laurent. *Karachi: Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

¹¹ Dawn. "Lahori's Notebook: The great Quetta Tragedy". <http://www.dawn.com/news/1068419/dawn-features-october-25-2005>. Accessed on December 31, 2016. Also see: National Centers for Environmental Information. https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/nndc/struts/results?eq_0=3550&t=101650&s=13&d=22,26,13,12&nd=display. Accessed on December 31, 2016.

station, which was destroyed by the earthquake, now stands as a monument to those who lost their lives. The first major natural disasters to strike post-Partition Pakistan was flooding in 1950, which resulted in 2,190 lives being lost and "flooded 10,000 villages, spreading over an area 17,920 square kilometers".¹² In 1973, floods swept through the country's Punjab province, affecting 9,719 villages.¹³ Rescue operations were carried out by the Pakistan Army,¹⁴ which to this day remains among the main bodies responsible for humanitarian relief, making responses to conflict-based disasters extremely complicated, as the Army is often involved in the conflict itself. Detailed records of these disasters are unavailable, however, and little is known about the state's response to these events¹⁵.

Three years later, in August 1976, another flood that affected 18,390 villages prompted the government to establish a Federal Flood Commission.¹⁶ Over the course of the next twelve years, there were significant floods in 1977, 1978, and 1988. In August and September 1992, the country was affected by the worst floods in its history, until the events of 2010. Between August and October, over 9 million people were affected by flooding caused by torrential rain.¹⁸ Another 2.3 million people were

¹² Khan, Azam. "History of disaster" Floods affecting lives, economy since independence". <http://tribune.com.pk/story/590504/history-of-disaster-floods-affecting-lives-economy-since-independence/>. Accessed on December 31, 2016.

¹³ Pakistan Water Gateway. "Floods in Pakistan". <http://waterinfo.net.pk/?q=fip>. Accessed on January 24, 2017.

¹⁴ Aaj News. "Chronology of the worst floods in Pakistan". <http://aaj.tv/2014/09/chronology-of-worst-floods-in-pakistan/>. Accessed on December 31, 2016.

¹⁵ Archival data may exist in some form for floods and earthquakes but going to government archives to retrieve this data was beyond the scope of this study.

¹⁶ Pakistan Water Gateway. "Floods in Pakistan". <http://waterinfo.net.pk/?q=fip>. Accessed on January 24, 2017.

¹⁷ Abbasi, Arshad. "Floods in Pakistan – institutional failures". <http://tribune.com.pk/story/39915/floods-in-pakistan-institutional-failures/>. Accessed on January 24, 2016

¹⁸ ReliefWeb. "Pakistan Floods Sep 1992 UN DHA Situation Reports 1-8". <http://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/pakistan-floods-sep-1992-un-dha-situation-reports-1-8>. Accessed on January

affected by flooding between 1995 and 1996. The numbers provided are for overall affectees, however, with accurate figures on long-term displacement unavailable due to a lack of data gathering or a proper disaster management infrastructure.

In 2005, Pakistan's northern areas, and Kashmir in Particular, were struck by a major 7.6 magnitude earthquake. The Pakistani government engaged in concerted humanitarian appeals after the earthquake and received large donor aid from Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the UAE, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, as well as food and humanitarian assistance from all over the world. Within Pakistan, one of the most lasting impressions was made by the assistance provided by Cuba: the Cuban government sent over 2,400 doctors and paramedics and established hospitals and relief centres in the affected region. These doctors brought medical equipment with them and provided aid that had an immediate impact on the population.¹⁹ Cuban aid during the earthquake therefore provided an important example of the kinds of assistance that make an impact both immediately and in the long-term on displaced people and disaster affected areas. This event left between 85,000 and 100,000 dead and over 3.5 million displaced, and resulted in the formation of Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority and a Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) established for each province.²⁰ These events are more significant in Pakistan where large-scale development and humanitarian efforts have historically been tasked to the military, despite their coming under the purview of the civilian infrastructure.

Finally, the 2010 floods affected all four of Pakistan's provinces and impacted over 20 million people, leaving 10 million without

24, 2017.

¹⁹ Gorry, Conner. "Touring Cuban Field Hospitals in Post-Quake Pakistan". http://www.medicc.org/publications/medicc_review/0406/international-cooperation-report.html. Accessed January 24, 2017.

²⁰ Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI). "The Kashmir Earthquake of October 8, 2005: Impacts in Pakistan". https://www.eeri.org/lfe/pdf/kashmir_eeri_2nd_report.pdf. Accessed January 22, 2016.

homes and causing an estimated 25-40 billion USD in economic damage²¹. The movement of such a large population put immense strain on government resources, with large portions of urban centres designated to house flood-affected IDPs. Official data suggests that most flood affectees have been successfully repatriated but there are suggestions that many people continue to live in displacement, particularly in the Sindh province.²²

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) "From 2008 to 2013 disasters displaced a total of 13.76 million people, placing Pakistan fourth worldwide in absolute terms".²³ Since the establishment of the the NDMA and a PDMA in each province, state capacity to deal with disasters has improved significantly but still needs considerable development to reach the standards required. At the moment, these organisations still do not have the capacity to handle major disasters. An important area for international assistance would be to help Pakistan develop these agencies during non-disaster periods.

²¹ Khan, Ilyas. "Pakistan floods: Damage and Challenges". <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11104310>. Accessed on December 31, 2016.

²² Karachi has a smaller but still significant population of IDPs left over from the 2010 floods. A polio campaign worker identified 30 families from Larkana district in Northern Sindh residing in Karachi's Jamali Colony, which has a sizable Sindhi population. A further 150 households have been set near the super-highway on the outskirts of the city. Zahid Farooq, joint director of the Urban Resource Centre, a Karachi-based advocacy NGO, verifies this latter statement: "There are people living in flats in Musharraf colony [near the southern end of the city]. There was an action against them yesterday [November 16, 2016]. There were 1,000 flats built for labourers, which housed the IDPs during the floods so these people are now being forced to vacate. People have gotten used to [city] life". Farooq also mentioned another settlement living in Gulshan-e-Mymar, a suburban neighbourhood in the northern part of Karachi.

²³ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC). "Pakistan IDP Figures Analysis". <http://www.internal-displacement.org/south-and-south-east-asia/pakistan/figures-analysis>. Accessed November 20, 2016.

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Conflict-Induced Displacement

Pakistan is globally known for its role in taking in Afghan refugees after the 1979 Afghan War, housing over three million Afghan refugees, with an entire generation of Afghans born and raised in Pakistan. The proxy war in Afghanistan, sponsored by the US government as part of Cold War era policies, left Pakistan, along with Iran, responsible for the welfare of the Afghan refugee population.²⁴ These refugees have lived in Pakistan for over 30 years and many have children who were born and raised in Pakistan. Afghan refugees have been allowed to integrate, seek employment, open businesses, and develop their own social and professional networks within Pakistan. However, these refugees have received little investment and assistance from the state. The narrative of the Afghan refugee population is therefore seen as a contemporary historic success on the one hand, and on the other, there are cases of large-scale extreme poverty.

In 2016, the Pakistani government passed a resolution to deport or repatriate the Afghan refugee population. Political tensions between the two countries were responsible for this decision but the Pakistani government has seen fit to deport three million Afghans, many of whom are married into Pakistani families. It would be accurate, then, to describe Pakistan as a country that has both dealt with the welfare of displaced populations and been involved in creating them. Contemporary history has witnessed an exacerbation of this problem, while the contours of the problem have remained largely the same: state violence has been central in displacement and a lack of preventative structures has magnified the scale of natural disasters. A similar lens, then, can be applied to understand the country's own conflict-induced IDPs. Because these displaced persons are often both the recipients of government aid and also living in regions where the Pakistan Army is carrying out military operations, the treatment they receive is markedly different from populations affected by natural disasters. Writing about conflicts in Pakistan in terms of historical

²⁴ Mamdani, Mahmood. *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*. Three Leaves Press, 2004.

displacement is difficult because of both a lack of data on the subject and the state's national interest based efforts to silence these histories.

What can be said is that there have been anti-state insurgencies in the country's Sindh and Balochistan provinces, with the latter still ongoing. A full-scale insurgency erupted in Balochistan in 1973 as Baloch nationalists grew resentful of the central government's ongoing extraction of natural resources in the province without any state funds being invested in the region. Another insurgency began in 2004 and is currently ongoing, and Baloch leaders regularly complain of activists, social workers, nationalists, and intellectuals from the region being routinely disappeared. There have also been a few reports of mass graves found in parts of the province. The Pakistani government blames Baloch separatists for these acts, arguing that they are engaged in an intimidatory campaign against the people of the region.

Perhaps the darkest and most well-known chapter of internal conflict was in 1971, and resulted in the bifurcation of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. What began as a struggle for electoral parity and language rights turned into a struggle for national liberation after Pakistan's Bengali population was continually denied rights by the centre and continued to be disenfranchised by the political leadership in then West Pakistan. When a democratically elected Bengali prime minister, Mujeeb ur Rehman, was refused office and instead imprisoned by the military regime of General Yahya Khan, Bengali nationalists responded by starting a movement for self-determination. Pakistan responded with a military operation that, according to estimates, resulted in an estimated 7 million people fleeing their homes for West Bengal in India.²⁵

Data dealing with these conflicts is non-existent in Pakistan and therefore producing figures for historical displacement is impossible. For contemporary conflicts there has been collection of migration data associated with aid and repatriation efforts, although this is also subject to glaring disparities. The ongoing contemporary

²⁵ See Ian Talbot (1998) *Pakistan: A Modern History*. St. Martin's Press.

conflicts in North and South Waziristan as well as the concluded operation in the Swat Valley have already been discussed in the introduction, but it is worth repeating here that estimates for FATA IDPs range from anywhere between 1.8 and 3.2 million depending on where data is procured. Additionally, figures for the Swat conflict are subject to similar fluctuation, ranging from 1.6 to 2.2 million people displaced, although this population has been successfully repatriated according to government officials.

This study, then, focuses on the lived experience of conflict-induced IDPs from North and South Waziristan within a climate of state assistance and simultaneous negligence and often repression. Despite over 12 years of continuous displacement in the years following 2004, the government has not yet enacted any specific policies or legislation to deal with these IDPs. The problem, however, appears to be a long-term one: there are encouraging dips in the number of militant acts but no real permanent entente in sight. Even the national and provincial bodies created after the earthquake in 2005 to deal with disaster management operate on a case-by-case basis with little long-term planning. The government has dealt with contemporary refugee crises on an *ad hoc* basis, seeing it fit to allocate aid and resources only after a crisis has hit. Both the Pakistani government and army continue to understand displacement as an immediate problem, with the majority of the focus placed on repatriation and redevelopment. Aside from NGO involvement, the government and army are the two groups most responsible for solving this problem, yet they do not have or share a long-term vision.

The Government Agencies

“The historical background of the IDP situation is the militancy and the military operations that have been taking place in the FATA agencies since 2004”, says the Director General of the FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA), Muhammad Khalid.²⁶ “These populations

²⁶ The FATA represents seven districts, with each one given the title of an “Agency”. Each one of these is governed by slightly different laws and their own tribal councils. The seven agencies are North Waziristan,

migrated to different parts of KP and some to other parts of the country”. Data provided by UNOCHA puts the number of IDPs at 303,791 families with 205,053 families returned as of November 10, 2016.²⁷ However, UN data, acquired through the FDMA, does not account for unregistered IDPs—families that have not registered with NADRA and do not possess state identification cards. According to FDMA data, there are at least an additional 100,000 families that are unregistered. The definition of a ‘family’ is another issue that requires clarification. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), defines FATA families as 5.2 members, whereas FDMA representatives calculate the family at seven people. Exact figures for total population are therefore difficult to ascertain with estimates varying between 1.8 and 3.1 million people displaced from the FATA.

In order to repatriate these large populations, the federal government has assigned regionally based government agencies to administer their movement and distribute aid. These include the FATA Disaster Management Authority (FDMA), the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) of KP, the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the FATA Secretariat, and the National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA). This section outlines the effectiveness of the work done by these organisations and critiques of their role as put forward by IDPs and some in the NGO sector. Interviews were conducted with representatives from the first three of these agencies. The FDMA and PDMA are the primary aid and assistance organisations, tasked with delivering food and cash assistance to IDPs, housing people in camps, and assisting with repatriation and rebuilding. SAFRON is the legislative body that connects the FATA to the federal government, and in this capacity, it forwards aid money from the centre to the FATA Secretariat and to the FDMA. The FATA Secretariat manages the overall governance of the region, and is the official local government of the region. NADRA oversees identification of IDPs from the FATA, ensuring that individuals have CNICs and are eligible for registration. NADRA issues CNICs

South Waziristan, Bajaur, Mohmand, Kurram, Orakzai, and Khyber agencies.

²⁷ UNOCHA weekly snapshot November 10, 2016.

to IDPs, which they need in order to be able to, one, register as IDPs, and two, apply for benefits.

The primary reason for establishing natural disaster management authorities in each province of Pakistan was to handle related aid and relief operations. These bodies, along with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), were established after the 2005 earthquake, making organized disaster relief a new and developing area of government attention. Due to the scale of the IDP crisis, they have also been tasked with aiding in the management of displaced populations. For natural disasters, the PDMA, KP was in charge of administering aid outside camps and overseeing reconstruction. For FATA IDPs created in 2004 onwards, the PDMA, KP works within the camps. But because the FATA is not administered provincially, all aid administration outside the camps is handled by the FDMA. “The two agencies then coordinate on a return taskforce, chaired by the FDMA’s director general, and co-chaired by the UNHCR and the director operations of the PDMA”, explains Adil Zahoor, director operations of the FDMA. These agencies, however, find themselves facing a number of constraints that prevent them from doing their work effectively. For example, Wajid Khan, assistant director of disaster risk management at the PDMA launched the following complaint: “We don’t have a one-liner budget that the PDMA can use as per its needs or requirements. While the government is quite generous when there is a disaster, this causes delays in providing assistance”. What this means is that the PDMA does not have resources allocated to it at all times, having to apply for resources when a disaster takes place. Local NGO workers also expressed the view that government agencies such as the FDMA and PDMA are ill equipped to carry out such work.

Naveed Shinwari, CEO of Community Appraisal & Motivation Program (CAMP), which had worked in the FATA until being denied an NOC, argues that the government agencies are not equipped to handle the ground realities in terms of operational capacity. In contrast, most representatives from the PDMA, KP and FDMA see their organisations’ work as effective, efficient, and part of a constructive long term-plan for

rehabilitation and reconstruction in the FATA. Director General Khalid Muhammad says confidently that “We [the FDMA] administer the housing grant which is 400,000 rupees for a fully destroyed home and 160,000 for a partially damaged one and oversee any other repatriation requirements”. The inadequacy and unsuitability of this funding package becomes apparent in this story from Nisar Ali Khan Dawar, who was displaced from North Waziristan:

My house is on 6 canals. It is larger than this hotel, [he says] I live there with my family, my five brothers’ families, and my two uncles’ families. We have a joint family system. But they count that as one house and we are getting 400,000 rupees [4000 USD] to rebuild the house. They count it as one house, it doesn’t matter if the whole village lives in there.

This points to another problem with the housing compensation plan. Families cannot rebuild their homes with what little money being provided and they do not have means to start afresh in the FATA. “Things are more expensive there”, explains Dawar. “There is nothing in the region. All the raw materials are transported from other areas”. In addition, the lack of infrastructure means that there are no employment opportunities back in people’s hometowns and villages. While they want to return home, the process of repatriating is often too difficult.

According to Khalid, the camps are also run well and appropriately address the needs of IDPs. He attributes the low number of people accessing camps to cultural issues, arguing that people from the FATA do not feel comfortable living there and prefer to move in with relatives or rent homes of their own. Describing the administration of camps, he first emphasized that “only the most vulnerable sector of the population lived in camps...[amounting] to around ten to fifteen per cent of the IDP population”. At the height of the conflict, there were “some 28 camps established” in KP according to Khalid, with 22,000 families residing in these spaces. Currently, the largest of these camps, Jalojai, which hosts only 87 families (as of December 2016) and has been listed as decommissioned with the population, is

now listed for repatriation.²⁸ With similar confidence, Wasim Khattak, Chief Coordinator at the PDMA, referred to its work as complete: “our role was to organize and administer the camps. We took care of water distribution, food distribution, healthcare—all these things”.

The sheer figures of IDPs—documented in official PDMA and FDMA records—calls such uncritical narratives from their representatives into question. Mariam Khan, Director Programmes at CAMP, praised but also critiqued the organisation of IDP camps. Her candour provides a more nuanced understanding of the competing dynamics that characterize the IDP living experience within camps:

When they were full, the camps were well organized; there were different sections and people were registered as they came in...a lot of kids started going to school and some donors even funded us to run a psychosocial counselor, so we had women who had lost families come to us for counseling ... [But] there were issues such as *purdah* (privacy from the male gaze) for women, sanitation, and safety when going to the bathroom. Food packages also became an issue because the family was identified as six people.

Mariam explains how this can be problematic: “There were families where, for example, a widow and her children had been taken in so it was two families in one”, but only one family could get benefits. “Women in FATA often do not have CNICs”, she adds. This, of course, raises the larger issue of how women are represented in government data and official documentation as well as their access to such documentation, which has significant implications for their rights, especially during disaster management. “If a widow is not registered, she will not be recognized as the head of her household and most women in FATA do not have CNICs”. Those families who have not registered are not entitled to government benefits such as the monthly

²⁸ Jalozei, situated in Nowshera some 190 kilometres from Peshawar, was itself set up as a refugee camp for Afghans during the 1979 war. The camp was shut down in 2002, but was reopened to house IDPs from the FATA after army operations began in the region in 2009.

allowance and return cash grants. This represents the greatest hurdle to the resettlement and repatriation program. Similarly, as a World Bank representative also notes, “The biggest problem is unregistered IDPs because many people are not registered with NADRA...[they] do not come in any reckoning, they don’t get the cash transfer support, [and] they may not get any benefits from our project”.

IDPs are thus subjected to both a limitation of rights guaranteed to citizens, such as restrictions to mobility and access to employment (outlined in the section on IDPs living in Karachi), as well as a network of beneficence through monetary welfare grants and food assistance. A major program within the repatriation process has involved providing IDPs with CNICs. This card is required for Pakistani citizens to complete most transactions such as opening a bank account or purchasing a plane ticket. However, those who live outside the formal economy and do not use these structures often do not sign up for CNICs. In order to receive benefits, IDPs must register themselves with the government and possess a valid CNIC. Without this, they are denied assistance. Most IDPs who cannot access these benefits were either unable to register due to a lack of proper identification or missed the registration deadline. According to a representative from the International Organization for Migration (IOM)²⁹ “some are people with dual addresses—they might live in FATA but work elsewhere—so the CNIC reflects that...the government stated that people with dual addresses would not be eligible for registration...then there were people without CNICs...and some people missed the registration window”. These IDPs are unable to avail of the “monthly food assistance”, and other assistance packages, they “are not eligible for protection services”, and are not reflected in UNOCHA population data.

Initially, most FATA IDPs were reluctant to register with government agencies since the Pakistan Army was instrumental in destroying their villages and homes. But the military is the primary agency working on the ground and

²⁹ The opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM.

clears areas for return. “We coordinate with the military to find out when areas are cleared”, says Muhammad Khalid, unproblematically. IDPs have also come to rely on organisations such as the FDMA for assistance and support. According to Khalid, more IDPs have registered since benefits packages were offered. At the same time, they express a desire to be part of the wider state, wanting the FATA to be amalgamated into Pakistan’s provincial set up. Further complicating state organisation of IDP repatriation is the fact that other than the army, Pakistan lacks government departments that have the infra-structural capacity in terms of manpower, equipment, and expertise, to rebuild on such a large scale, particularly in the frontier regions. This highlights how the government is at once a benefactor handling IDP welfare, and at the same time involved in their coercion through the military. The army’s role in the FATA is highlighted in the final section on IDP stories.

In addition, IDPs are interested in gaining access to government benefits but not necessarily in repatriating, as the latter is not conducive to a sustainable livelihood. UNDP Governance & Reforms Advisor for the FATA Recovery Programme, Skye Christensen, says that “because there is an incentive to return people will go back, get the incentive, stay around for a while, until they get the housing compensation, and then go back to whatever settled area they were in”. This sentiment was echoed by Zia Ur Rehman, who is one of the most critical media voices on how the state has dealt with South Waziristan IDPs. “In South Waziristan, they demolished everything so it is very hard to live there. No one wants to stay there. They go to collect their compensation and then they come back [to Tank, DI Khan, or Karachi]”. Having lost their homes, and often members of their families, to war, North and South Waziristan residents understandably want to collect their compensation but are not always willing to return home. Many South Waziristan families have been away since the conflict began in 2009 and have established tenuous roots in urban centres such as Karachi or Peshawar and have little left to which to return.

This would suggest that official data documenting the number of people that have been

repatriated is inaccurate. These numbers are based purely on the total number of families that have collected their housing compensation at the original site of residence. Speaking about the towns and villages in Waziristan to which IDPs have been repatriated, Skye Christensen describes them as “more or less ghost towns”. While reconstruction is taking place, the towns remain sparsely populated with few people choosing to remain in the FATA due to a lack of existing infrastructure. To account for this issue with repatriation, there is no data available. Once IDPs have claimed their housing benefits, they are counted as repatriated and no longer figure in official displacement numbers. Therefore, there are two sets of IDPs that remain outside of official statistics: those who have returned but chose not to stay, and those who never registered.

All the major actors have flagged resettlement and redevelopment as the greatest challenge they are facing in dealing with displaced peoples. PDMA and FDMA representatives have also identified harsh weather conditions during the winter months as making repatriation more challenging and unfeasible given the lack of proper housing in the region. “After the military operation, most of the facilities were damaged or destroyed”, says Muhammad Khalid. “Everything you generally need while residing in a place needs to be rebuilt”.

What made this and previous humanitarian disasters more challenging for Pakistan was the lack of effective national disaster management agencies in the country. As mentioned previously, the NDMA, PDMA, and FDMA are all relatively new bodies and are mandated to handle disasters on a case-by-case basis. For this reason, the ability to prepare for and deal with disasters has been compromised. Some NGO workers involved with IDPs have also questioned the effectiveness of the methods employed by the FDMA, PDMA, and the FATA Secretariat. Speaking about the policies that have been created and followed by these groups, one said “these ideas were put in place without consulting IDPs or people on the ground”.

Mobility and Livelihood: How IDPs Live

Families that live outside camps are spread out across the country's major urban centres and in some of the FRs and their adjoining districts. Most IDPs gravitate toward urban centres where their communities have already established roots. Families from South Waziristan and Bajaur will therefore make the long journey to Karachi while those from North Waziristan move to Rawalpindi; residents of Khyber Agency move to adjoining Peshawar; and families from Kurram Agency migrate to Rawalpindi and Kohat. The majority of IDPs live in host communities, given shelter by family members, or they are able to rent properties of their own. They often choose to move to towns closest to their homes or sometimes migrate to larger urban centres. In the case of FATA IDPs, this means relocating to the closest Frontier Region (FR),³⁰ or moving to Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Peshawar.

The community of displaced persons South Waziristan has been in DIK for much longer than the people of North Waziristan residing in Bannu. Military operations have been ongoing in South Waziristan since 2002, with the most intense one, operation *Rah-e-Nijat*, taking place in 2009, leaving the majority of the region's people displaced. While we were not able to see where they lived, their stories were much harsher with greater emphasis on state brutality, lack of benefits, and identifiable institutionalized racism against people from the region.

One reason people move to urban centres, according to journalist Zia Ur Rehman, is because rents and living expenses are lower in the outlying *kaccha* (raw or unfinished) neighbourhoods than they would be in smaller districts close to the FATA. "Cities are large and it's easier to find affordable rents", he explains.

³⁰ Each agency in Waziristan has a corresponding FR, barring Bajaur and Mohmand, which are the two northernmost agencies. These FR units come under the governance of the FATA secretariat but are administered by officials from the adjoining district in KP. IDPs from each FATA agency were therefore required to register at the relevant office in their adjacent FR district. For example, displaced persons from South Waziristan would register at FR Tank or FR DIK. These Frontier Regions also became sites for refugee camps and registration centres.

"In Bannu and Tank, the rents are high so people come to Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi". We visited a community displaced from North Waziristan in Bannu to see how people are living in their temporary homes.

Bannu

Nisar Ali Khan Dawar is a community leader in his district Mir Ali in North Waziristan, and is now relocated to Bannu. Along with a group of elders from there who have all relocated, Dawar has spoken with the media and the government about their living conditions. He introduced me to a group of twenty people from Mir Ali and the bordering districts. In the time we spent together, it struck me that this community had managed to maintain strong ties despite its dispersal across different areas in Bannu. They do not all reside in the same neighbourhood, but many gather daily to talk and eat together near one another's homes. During one such meeting some 15-20 kilometers from Bannu City, a group of 20 men from the same village met over lunch and tea. They sat outside an unpainted brick house that was being rented by one family for 8,000 rupees (USD 80). To get there, one had to turn off the highway onto a makeshift mud road that had been flattened by traffic, and drive through a narrow path between trees before reaching a small field with four *kaccha* homes. "These houses belong to some of the locals, who themselves are poor. They have rented out two of the homes to families from our village", said Malik Ghulam, a representative of the Pakistan People's Party for North Waziristan. During the lunch gathering, it was the men who sat outside and discussed the difficulties they have faced.

"When we first arrived, the local people were hospitable", says Dawar. "We do not have anyone here. Our relatives are in [North] Waziristan. Bannu belongs to the Bannuchi. Waziristan is our home. When we got here [after the evacuation] there might have been 20 odd people from our district [Mir Ali] residing in Bannu. So the locals gave us space to live in their homes. We had five families living in one room [up to 40 people]". When asked about the government camps that had been set up in Bannu, Dawar says that people did not want to live there. "The

camps were in the mountains and people were afraid of the snakes and scorpions. Very few people stayed in those camps”. Dawar argues that facilities in Bannu immediately after the evacuation had not been set up and if not for the hospitality of the locals, things could have been much worse. “Some private NGOs came soon after and provided assistance but the government had not made arrangements at the start”, he says. “We were renting rooms in the local hotels and four or five families were sharing one room”.

Food was shared by the group and the largest portion of the meal was bread. We sat around the *dastarkhانا* [tablecloth or great spread] which was laid across the floor and ate a modest meal that appeared elaborate due to the presentation. After lunch, everyone was given a cup of *chai* and conversation about the IDP situation picked up once again. Some people were eager to talk about their experiences, while others appeared apprehensive. They had many questions about the purpose of this project, what kind of organisation it was being written for, and my professional background. The conversation kept moving toward broader political issues, which are covered throughout the paper. The men were reluctant to talk about their individual hardships. But when they did, issues such as access to education, lack of employment, and also poor disbursement of benefits were the primary grievances.

“Admittedly, from the government's side, everyone gets the monthly food assistance package”, says Dawar. “As for the 12,000 rupees, that is also received but there are often problems with SIM cards not working or messages not coming through, resulting in delays and sometimes people not getting the money. These are generally people from poorer families who do not have any connections. I get mine because I know government officials, but I know people who have not gotten the assistance or received it infrequently,” says Dawar.

Dawar also regrets a lack of emphasis placed on education, saying that families believed they would be in Bannu only for a few months. “People did not enroll their children in schools”, he says. “They did not look for employment and

their resources dried up and it became harder for people to settle into normal lives”. The cash assistance has been a lifeline for these families but the war in North Waziristan has brought the community to a standstill. Children are no longer going to school, people are unemployed, and there have not even been any new marriages. “Our population has also decreased in these two years. How? There have been no weddings since we were displaced. Because people are homeless and without resources. And because there is no joy in the community”, says Dawar.

Through these conversations, it became evident that IDPs, in both North and South Waziristan, had lost a great degree of faith in the state but continued to appeal to the same state for their rights. This perhaps also speaks to the desire amongst the people of the FATA to be amalgamated into the state and removed from the exceptionalism that accompanies governance under the frontier laws. “They [the soldiers] come at night”, says one man. “They don’t respect the walls of our homes. They come straight inside. They even beat women and ask where so-and-so is or where your uncle’s son is. Where are we supposed to produce this person from? He might have taken a different path than me but there is no law anywhere else that says I should be punished for this. Nor God’s law nor man’s says this. But this is the law in FATA. The whole village is held accountable for a crime that was committed in the area”. Sardonicly noting the lower value accorded to the lives of the people of FATA by the state, another remarks: “I have read that [South] Punjab too has a lot of militants. Will there also be an operation there?”

Dera Ismail Khan

The IDPs we met in DIK asked similar questions about our research, but their demographic was quite different. While IDPs in Bannu belonged to different age groups, those in DIK were all university students or young men who had recently joined the workforce and were active in highlighting the plight of their communities. Individuals with families were not willing to speak to us because of the high levels of surveillance in DIK. They were concerned about getting in trouble with law enforcement

agencies. The higher level of surveillance and policing points to differences between the experience of IDPs from North and South Waziristan. Those from the north living in Bannu spoke of government neglect, the desire to return home, a lack of development in the FATA, and the hardships of living in Bannu. People from the south residing in DIK shared similar stories but also spoke of direct encounters with intimidation, violence, and surveillance carried out by the state. There was a much greater level of fear amongst the people displaced from South Waziristan and they identified the state more clearly as an agent of oppression. For these reasons, we were not invited into their homes or even places of residence. They came to see us at our hotel and we finished the conversation at a local restaurant.

People interviewed from South Waziristan in DIK also agreed that, as in Bannu, food assistance was delivered promptly. Cash assistance, however, which is supposed to amount to 12,000 rupees (120 USD) per family, was a different matter: “There are some people who do not receive the cash assistance”. South Waziristan IDPs say that they have never received any cash assistance from the government. For families from the south, such hardships have resulted in greater emphasis on entrepreneurship and finding employment. “Our people have been displaced for seven years so we have had to find jobs and stand on our own feet”, says one IDP from Ladah *tehsil* (district). “Many people have bought Qingqi’s [mopeds turned into rickshaws made by Chinese company Qingqi, pronounced by the locals as “chin-chee”] and made a living driving these”. Families from the north, on the other hand, “have not paid attention to entrepreneurship in the way that we should have because from the beginning we believed that we would be returning”, says Nisar Dawar. “Some have become Qingqi drivers or gotten other jobs but most people are waiting to go home”.

The communities from South Waziristan appear to have been more resourceful than those from North Waziristan—at least in terms of finding employment and establishing themselves in their new homes. “Our displacement has been much longer than the north”, says a young man from Ladah *tehsil*. “We also have not gotten anything

from the government other than food assistance, so our people had to begin working right away to survive”. People have mostly found labour and transport jobs, but some have established their own businesses by purchasing trucks and rickshaws. In contrast, at the office of the assistant political agent for North Waziristan in Bannu, many IDPs gather to have domicile forms filled out for themselves and their family members. When asked what work people are doing, three responses are given: “I am too old to work now, my working days are behind me”, says one man. “We are doing odd jobs, he drives a rickshaw and I work as a labourer”, says another. “Work is hard to come by, we are just trying to get back to our lives” is the third response. These forms, which need to be signed by four government officials who can attest to knowing the person represented, allow residents of the FATA access to government identification such as the CNIC. A large segment of the FATA population, particularly women, do not have CNICs and people are now applying for this identification to access the benefits and to be able to repatriate.

Finally, there is the issue of increasing rents in both DIK and Bannu. Locals in both places appear to be unhappy about the continuing presence of IDPs. One man from Bannu who heard about our research volunteered the following information: “These people just want handouts, they want everything for free”. Similar sentiments were shared by people in DIK and this discourse is prevalent when talking about both FATA IDPs and Afghan Refugees throughout Pakistan. As a result, locals in Bannu and D. I. Khan have been raising rents over the past few years when letting out their properties to people from FATA. “When we first came here, rent was rupees 4,000 for a house outside the city”, says one person interviewed in DIK. “Now those same houses are being rented for 8,000 to 10,000”. IDPs in both Bannu and DIK identified feeling unwanted and unwelcome by the locals, even though those residing in Bannu insisted that the Bannuchi had been helpful in the early days of displacement. Those who made the journey further south, to the port city of Karachi, have found things to be much the same.

The Urban Attraction: IDPs in Karachi

When asked about the IDP population of the city, Faisal Edhi, son of the country's greatest and most loved philanthropist, the late-Abdul Sattar Edhi, recalls going to Gadap and Baldia six or seven years ago, two of the city's poorer neighbourhoods with large Pashtun populations. "There were some 100 families living there, and they were in need of rations—food and medical supplies". He remembers things vividly from the few days he spent working with those families: "The children were scared of planes flying overhead. They were still scarred by the memory of drones or fighter planes". When questioned about the organisation's offices in these regions and whether many IDPs come in, he responds: "we have a lot of Pashtuns come into our offices asking for assistance. But we don't ask them questions about where they are from. Our job is to help them".

Attracted by lower rents and long-standing family connections in the city, many South Waziristan IDPs have moved to the country's largest urban centre. However, IDPs have found Karachi both ill-equipped and often unwilling to care for them. Unlike its history as a city that has welcomed migrants and found room for them in its bustling and often cramped neighbourhoods, IDP families have been subjected to constant policing and found few employment opportunities in Karachi. "They cannot get jobs", says journalist and researcher Zia Ur Rehman. "When people see a FATA address on the ID card, they won't hire you". Rehman has worked extensively on the subject and met a large number of displaced families from South Waziristan that have resettled in Tank and DIK, which border South Waziristan, or gone all the way to Karachi. Additionally, because in Karachi the vote is divided among three political parties representing different ethnic groups—the Mohajir, the Pashtun, and the Sindhi—the arrival of IDPs has potential implications for the electoral landscape.

Two parties, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), have long battled for dominance over Sindh Province. Karachi's current population of 20-25 million³¹

³¹ There has not been a census in Pakistan since 1998.

represents approximately 50% of the entire population of the province. The ruling party in the city, the MQM, therefore has greater provincial ambitions. The same applies to the rurally dominant PPP, which wants to exert control over Karachi and increase its electoral base by procuring more votes in the city. Meanwhile, the city has seen an influx of Pashtun migration from the country's northern areas since the 1970s, making the Awami National Party (ANP) a competing political force in Karachi. "It is the ill-fate of Karachi that those who hold power in Sindh want control over Karachi and those who hold power in Karachi want control over Sindh", says Zahid Faoorq, Joint Director of the NGO the Urban Resource Centre, which does advocacy work for marginalized neighbourhoods and people in Karachi.

Karachi is also embroiled in the political wrangling that takes place around population statistics in Pakistan. "The census is highly political", explains Shahid Faiz, CEO of the NGO Free and Fair Elections Network (FAFEN), which collects data on legislative and parliamentary debates. A census can change the demographic status of entire ethnic groups both within an urban centre and within a province. "Urban Sindh, for example, contested [the census] because so many people from other parts have come to Sindh so if they were to be registered locally, then Sindhis would become a minority...the political elite is not in a mood to unsettle things". Faiz does not believe that the lack of IDP migration data is part of a fear of numbers, but that it is due to a lack of interest on the part of the government. He does agree that large scale movement of IDPs to urban centres such as Karachi poses a threat to the established political order. This became quite apparent when Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah vowed to keep North Waziristan IDPs out of the province—increasing security at provincial barriers—and then having to backtrack due to the unconstitutional nature of his statement. The MQM, too, has expressed reservations about IDPs since 2009, wanting to keep Pashtuns out of the city. In Parliament, MQM ministers have routinely complained about the influx of IDPs into the city

Official government data is therefore woefully out of date and cannot inform any real policy measures.

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and asked for specific timelines on repatriation. MQM leader Farooq Sattar, for example, made claims about the radicalization of Karachi via the arrival of the Taliban and that IDPs require screening when coming into the city.³²

Most IDPs have moved to the city's outlying neighbourhoods: Sohrab Goth and Gadap Town in the north-east, and Baldia Town and Ittehad Town in the west. These are high density, multi-ethnic neighbourhoods with low rental opportunities and both Baldia and Ittehad Towns are industrial zones. Zia Ur Rehman's estimates that somewhere around 180,000 IDPs from South Waziristan have settled in the city. This is based on qualitative research he has conducted involving meeting people in the community and writing news stories on the difficulties they face. A polio researcher working in Karachi estimates that this number is most likely accurate. His work in areas such as Sohrab Goth has involved collecting data on high-risk migratory populations. Polio workers often go into communities with large migratory populations as these people are considered high-risk for virus transmission. While he was not willing to share this data at the moment, as it was still a work in progress, he did say when presented with Zia's number that he would be surprised if it was less than that. Significantly, when we asked South Waziristan IDPs about how many from the community had migrated to urban centres, all mentioned one or two family members who had moved to the city and indicated that a large population from South Waziristan was housed in Karachi.

Yet there is no government data on this population and there is no IDP aid or infrastructure, nor are there any assistance centres in Karachi. Zia argues that this has a lot to do with perception and knowledge: "The NGOs think that people have moved to neighbouring districts such as Tank and DIK. They do not know that rents are very expensive in these areas. A house in Tank is 10,000 rupees (100 USD), in Karachi you can find something in 2,000 rupees (USD 20) in Sohrab Goth". In addition, due to a large, pre-existing

³² This statement was made in the National Assembly in November 2014. National Assembly data has been provided by FAFEN, which collects and provides data for journalists, researchers, and others at no cost.

population from South Waziristan settled in Karachi and working in the transport sector as truck and bus drivers, IDPs from the region can move to city and live with family until they are able to rent a home of their own. Others are unregistered IDPs who felt the cheaper rents and potential employment opportunities might make Karachi a better option.

However, these people have been subjected to increased surveillance and limitations on their mobility by the city's law enforcement that has pinned them as potential terrorists. "They are not allowed to travel freely from their neighbourhoods", says Zia. "Because they are Mehsuds, people think they are terrorists".³³ According to Rehman, and verified by reporting in Pakistani media, Karachi IDPs from Waziristan are kept under watch by police in their neighbourhoods of residence. People are routinely asked for identification while moving on the streets and are restricted access by the police if they try to travel to other parts of the city.

Karachi's IDPs suffer from this negative representation of being associated with terrorism. Most of the IDPs in Karachi arrived from South Waziristan and chose the city because of pre-existing family or tribal connections.³⁴ Migrants from South Waziristan have been coming to the city since the 70s to take on labour and transport jobs. However, because the leadership of the TTP also emerges from this region, this influx of displaced persons is looked at with suspicion and experiences strict policing within the city's slum areas. They are also denied employment and aid by government organisations. In stark contrast, IDPs that came to the city in 2009 from Swat and after the 2010 floods were given housing and aid

³³ The movement of Taliban militants into Karachi after the 2009 operation has only made matters worse for South Waziristan IDPs. The city's police force and the Pakistan Army has carried out concentrated operations against Taliban militants who began hiding in the city. This has made South Waziristan IDPs an even bigger target for surveillance and subjection to discrimination that paints the entire community as terrorists.

³⁴ Each agency in Waziristan is home to a few different tribes and the populations are administered based on tribal affiliations. Therefore, if one member of a tribe commits a crime against the state, the entire tribe is responsible for his apprehension or liable to face collective punishment.

by the provincial government, although these were tacitly contingent on their eventual repatriation.

Zia Ur Rehman says that people from South Waziristan who have fled to Karachi cannot get jobs because of their place of origin. “There are many negative perceptions so they are a victim of these stereotypes ... An entire tribe has been punished because the TTP leadership belongs to their tribe”. Local integration, then, would only be a feasible option if the province of Sindh and the municipal government of Karachi, including its opposition parties, cooperated and prioritized the interests of incoming and transient populations and constructively problematized how to include them in the city’s existing socio-economic landscape. This would include thinking through and building infrastructure for job provision, healthcare, and housing, among other basic human rights. Unfortunately, in Karachi, these rights are not provided to the existing local, vulnerable, labour populations. The following section further examines the negative characterization and treatment of IDPs on a national level.

Could They Be Terrorists? Negative Perceptions of FATA IDPs

“We have given our homes and our lands for the security of this country”, says a young man from South Waziristan. “But when we return home, how are we greeted? The call us *madarchod* [mother fucker], *bhenchod* [sister fucker], this is how we are greeted”. Perhaps one of the most understated issues affecting IDPs from the FATA, and both Waziristan agencies in particular, is a strong perception that they are either potential terrorists themselves, or affiliated in some way with militancy. There is a belief amongst critical journalists, advocacy workers, and even some development sector organizers that government efforts to seek aid, allocate resources, and treat people with dignity has been hampered by such perceptions. These perceptions are particularly strong for displaced peoples from South Waziristan.

“In 2009, the camps for the Swat IDPs were very well managed”, says Naveed Shinwari, CEO of

advocacy organisation, CAMP. But in the case of Waziristan, “they are punishing those people, people who are commoners, not terrorists. The narrative is that they gave shelter to terrorists, they didn’t react. But these people were surrounded by threats, I don’t think they had any mechanism to react”. By “react”, Shinwari is referring to the idea that ‘tribal’ villagers should have fought the Taliban themselves instead of succumbing to militant groups and allowing them to take over large parts of the region. “How can they expect us to fight the Taliban”, asks one person from Ladah in South Waziristan. “Our homes were destroyed, our children were killed, our markets were demolished, and they [the Taliban] are still sitting there. They had guns before and they still have those Kalashnikovs now”.

“The situation for members of the Mehsud tribe is particularly bad. The Mehsud areas of South Waziristan are heavily monitored and controlled”, says one journalist. “Not only NGOs but also their fellow Pashtuns from other tribes believe they are terrorists”, adds Zia Ur Rehman. In contrast, Naveed Shinwari, CEO, CAMP notes that “The Swat IDPs were very well treated and that was a good example, historically, because most of them were returned in nine months and NGOs were allowed to work there”. “There was good international appeal for aid”, he continues, “which did not take place this time so less aid was procured for FATA”, In this way, he pointed out how the state response to the humanitarian crisis in the FATA has involved less care and urgency than did previous crises.

Military officials approached for interviews to include in this study were unwilling to participate, but one remarked during casual conversation over a cup of tea that “these people should not have been given these benefits packages. They are workers who know labour and are made to work hard. Now they have these benefits and they have become lazy. They should not have gotten this”. It is a telling attitude from someone who belongs to an institution that upholds the Frontier Crimes Regulation in FATA. “The Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), is anchored in the principle of collective responsibility”, writes Gulman Afridi in *Dawn*. “Particularly oppressive in this regard is Section 21 relating to collective

responsibility and the blockading of an entire tribe. Sub-section A of the clause authorizes the “seizure, wherever they may be found, of all or any of the members of such tribe, and of all and any property belonging to them or any of them” for an offence committed by one or more members of a tribe.” In November 2016, for example, the Pakistan Army demolished an entire market at Wana in South Waziristan after a major was killed in an explosion at the same market.

It is therefore not surprising that the people of the FATA are in no rush to get back and would prefer to stay in urban centres, at least until an appealing infrastructure has been rebuilt in their districts. However, in the country’s urban centres, FATA IDPs have to deal with the stereotypes that persist about their region and Pashtuns in general. “People start thinking about this when their resources are pressured and now in Islamabad everyone is saying that so many Pashtuns have arrived, this is a kind of Paranoia and xenophobia. In Karachi there are similar issues”, says Shahid Faiz, CEO of Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN).

While meeting IDPs in Bannu, we also had the chance to converse with some of the locals. People did not have kind words to say about the “tribals” and they no longer wanted them living in their community. The main reason appeared to stem from a general dislike of those who have come from the FATA, associating them with backwardness and laziness. One man articulated the Bannuchi dislike of IDPs in the following way: “These people should go back”, he said. “They are lazy people. They just want handouts. They are not willing to work or do anything. They should go back and the government should not give them so much. It makes them lazier”.

There is little empathy for the suffering the people from the FATA have endured in the past 15 years. And there is no wider understanding of how the FATA has been neglected by the state since the Partition and subjected to laws based on punishment and control left over from British colonialism. Instead, people are convinced of the threat these people pose to the internal security of Pakistan. The movement of Taliban militants across Pakistan, and sometimes within IDP

populations (Karachi being the most widely cited case) has only made matters worse. But even for this, people from Waziristan have cutting responses: “We have to go through 15 to 20 checkpoints between Wana and DIK”, says one man. “At each one they ask for our ID card and make us wait. They ask us questions. Just from Wana to DIK. So despite all this security, how did Taliban members get from the mountains all the way to Karachi?”

While security concerns have informed initiatives to police IDP populations from the FATA, and discussions in the National Assembly have centred on the movement of these people throughout the country, no substantial policy measures have been taken in this regard. Instead, IDPs continue to be treated with hostility and governed as a threat to the overall security of Pakistan. Effective policy measures to deal with security without infringing on the citizenship and mobility rights of the FATA peoples would place greater emphasis on intelligence gathering and sharing, particularly amongst local authorities such as the police. At the moment, this information is closely guarded by the ISI as part of secretive agendas that often use militant groups for “national security” purposes, as discussed in the background section.

The Non-Governmental Response

Forms of assistance to IDP repatriation can be broadly categorized under three categories: international government funding, lending from international banks, and UN administered development work where it liaises with government agencies and subcontracts with local NGOs that have permission to work in the FATA. There are a series of smaller, local NGOs that were heavily involved in working with FATA IDPs until 2014, but have since been refused NOCs, a security step the government has taken in the past three years. To understand the terrain of these forms of assistance, we interviewed personnel from organisations in each category, as well as examined policy documents on the region. While print narratives oscillate between success stories of large numbers of those chronologically repatriated and the need for sustainable rehabilitation of former IDP homes

and communities, the local development workers and researchers we interviewed were extremely critical of such narratives and told a different story of the barriers to and difficulties of repatriation and community rebuilding. We interviewed one organisation affected by NOC revocation, CAMP, an NGO that used to do on-the-ground aid work. We also interviewed IDP researchers from the FATA Research Centre, a local think tank. Another, while agreeing to an interview asked to remain unidentified, for fear of being shut down by the army or government if vocally critical of repatriation and rehabilitation processes.

This points to the ways in which access to the FATA is limited to the concerned government agencies, the Pakistan Army, and international organisations such as the UN and the World Bank. The latter operate under military supervision, and a series of local NGOs that have connections with the Ministry of Interior were also allowed NOCs despite a lack of history working in the FATA. The non-issuance of NOCs for various organisations means that those able to work in the FATA are limited to a few handpicked organisations and aid agencies that syphon funding through the former, with the onus of implementation falling on the government itself. The responsibility of successful repatriation also falls on the UNDP, the main body involved in the reconstruction process: “Our focus is on small scale infrastructure, stuff that is very close to the community”, says Skye Christensen. These infrastructural needs include hand pumps and facilities for clean drinking water, rebuilding hospitals and procuring medical supplies, constructing link roads within villages, and reconstructing markets and places of business as well as people’s homes. However, the actual reconstruction is still handled by the government, specifically the Return and Rehabilitation Unit, which falls under the FATA Secretariat and was set up by the UNDP. “It doesn’t make sense obviously for the UN to be doing this stuff directly, it’s better to have the government do it”.

In mid-August 2015, the World Bank provided 75 million USD in aid to the Pakistani government to provide cash grants to IDPs, including 120,000 families across five agencies, making it the

fourth largest donor to IDPs after the US, the UK, and Chinese governments, respectively. The money would be used to provide initial lump sum grants of 35,000 PKR to each family, followed by monthly stipends of 4,000 PKR for four months to support what is called livelihoods rebuilding. The idea behind this funding package is that it is jointly supportive as an emergency response to the IDP crisis and at the same time assists with long-term sustainable development goals; for example, in areas such as child health. In this way, the World Bank’s main role is to provide funding, with a system of checks and balances to ensure that funding is spent effectively by the government.

Such work, as explained by a World Bank representative working on the IDP program, is part of the Bank’s FATA Rural Livelihood and Community Infrastructure Project (RLCIP). The representative described how this work is part of the World Bank’s broader mandate to provide funding for projects that rehabilitate underserved people into everyday life. For example, the World Bank conducted a rough survey of IDP needs and found out that water was the highest priority and as a short-term intervention provided hand pumps. Researchers also found that livelihood opportunities were low, as land in the FATA is not arable and the livestock was killed during the war. Training for non-farming jobs in other areas of the FATA, or Pakistan, or even elsewhere in the world, has therefore been identified as another area for funding. These forms of research and assessment are carried out by a consulting firm that works for and reports to the government. Overall, however, the representative admits that other than providing water pumps, there has not been much success in terms of returns. Now there is a plan to focus on gender-focused initiatives as part of the broader plans for rehabilitation.

The UNDP organizes a “cash for work” programme for IDPs that have repatriated to the FATA. This involves providing residents employment to rebuild their own communities. “We have been helping communities organize and put stuff back together”, says Skye Christensen. “Most of the time for this work we are paying local people to do the work to try and inject some money into the community”. The UNDP

also contracts work out to developers already working in the FATA for slightly larger projects, such as school rehabilitation, and they “in turn probably hire local labour” whenever possible. This is covered under the second phase of the FATA Return and Rehabilitation Strategy, which is broken up into five “pillars”: infrastructure development, law and order, government service delivery, building the local economy, and social cohesion and peacebuilding. In addition, the UNDP takes care of smaller-scale development and improving “service delivery in education and health”. Christensen points out that while schools exist in the FATA, the management and quality of education has always been an issue. Similarly, health care requires improvements in the quality of practitioners, availability of services, and presence of state-funded basic facilities.

The United Nations Organization for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has been involved in organizing the delivery of funding and the administration of IDP relief and repatriation, collaborating with both government agencies and other aid organisations. It has also been publishing reports on the figures and conditions of displacement and progress made in repatriation since 2014. OCHA produces “weekly snapshots” of the repatriation process and in November 2016, for example, recorded the disbursement of 51 million USD in Pakistani government funding for transportation and return grants. It also noted that 92,280 families had been returned in 2016, and 205,053 since 2015, for three agencies including North and South Waziristan and Orakzai. However, as noted earlier, return figures do not account for people who return but choose to leave immediately after seeing the scale of destruction to their homes.

IDPs receive communications support from IOM, which has been working with the Government of Pakistan and humanitarian clusters since 2009. “We have a humanitarian communication program through which we disseminate information using radio messages, newspaper advertisements, awareness raising sessions, and IEC material”, says the IOM representative. “When people left their homes and came to the adjoining districts, they were given information on where to enlist and this information was

shared with NADRA, and once verified by NADRA, families were given registered status”. IOM partners with the humanitarian clusters, FDMA, and PDMA and provides the communications assistance required by those two agencies. “Further, we sent out messages on air about where people will receive food, when food distribution will start, which families will be eligible for camps, where screening will start, etc.” IOM has also kept IDPs informed about cash disbursements: where people can collect their monthly cash disbursement. During the return process, this communication has been used to inform off-camp families about where people can come to collect their travel packages and on what date members of which community will receive this assistance.

In terms of working with the Pakistan Army, the development sector’s opinion is generally informed by a need to work alongside local power centres. As a representative for the World Bank remarked about the military’s involvement in the repatriation process

when there is a disaster, the Army is the first person in, and in my opinion they are not going to leave [FATA] anytime soon. So we might as well make friends with the elephant in the room so you can go about getting work done....There is no harm in the Army transporting people from FR Bannu to their homes in North Waziristan. In the process if they identify some militants then good, good for the country.

However, some within the sector are critical of its organisation and lack of transparency. There are significant allegations of corruption and mismanagement against the government agencies, donors, and many NGOs working in the region. “They are working with these small, unheard-of organisations. They have to spend some time developing their capacity and understanding. They can’t just emerge overnight”, says Naveed Shinwari. “Donors are looking for NOCs, no matter who is holding that NOC. They look for a partner, it does not matter how good that partner is. They just want to show they are involved and to burn that money in a year”. A representative from an NGO that has done work on the FATA explains it as follows:

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“The donor agencies are not concerned about who they work with. They often choose organisations affiliated with the army or the provincial government because those people do not have trouble getting NOCs. And then when those organisations indulge in large-scale corruption, who is going to ask a retired major or colonel about funds not being used properly in FATA. Also, the agenda of the donor groups and these establishment NGOs might be more closely aligned than it would be with an NGO headed by people from FATA itself”.

These Are Our Stories, Please Tell the World

“We are most grateful to people like you who come here and listen to our stories”, says Nisar Ali Khan Dawar from Mir Ali in North Waziristan. “We are also grateful for those who provide us aid but more so to you. We know that it benefits you to get information from us, but we too are able to share our stories”. This is how he began narrating his story. As an elder of his village, he has run for public office on an Awami National Party (ANP) ticket and continues to be a prominent member of the community even in displacement. “People left their homes for the welfare and safety of this country”, he says. “We walked all the way to Bannu [40 kilometres]. There was such a great rush of vehicles, people, animals, that it was no longer possible to drive. One million people evacuated the region in searing heat in three days”.

“Look how many items there are in this room, there are a lot of things in here”, he says, pointing at the hotel room we are seated in. “How many items are there in a home? We left these homes at the behest of the Pakistan Army, believing that our soldiers are honest and our belongings would be safe, because we are not terrorists”. Like this, the following stories and narratives focus on possessions in the sense of tangible objects that allow the interviewees to express their feelings of loss. But there remains a sense that these items do not encapsulate the essence of the loss itself, that there is always something left unsaid. Here, the speakers have been left unidentified for their own safety because the stories deal with the security establishment and their role in the FATA. Each

speaker expressed a desire to have these stories communicated to the wider public, so that the atrocities and hardships experienced by the people of the FATA are known to the world. The sections below with indentation are narratives that were collected through interviews, while the rest is analysis.

There was an old man who went back to his village after the region was opened up for return...It was in Ladha, which is one of the most populated areas of the south. When he got home, his house was empty, all his belongings were missing. He wanted to know where his fridge had gone. It's a big thing. He didn't think a fridge would be stolen. So he went to the army camp to find out where his fridge had gone. When he got there, they saw that he was old so they asked him to come in and sit down and offered him some tea. When he saw the tea kettle, he said “why have you brought this, I had come to ask about my fridge”. It was the tea kettle from his home. He just wanted to know where his fridge was but found that everything was with the army.

This is a fairly simple story which, of course, begs the question of how one can know whether it was the exact kettle from their home. But the narrative repeats in almost every interview. There are always stories about people recognizing things from their homes, whether at the army camp or at new government buildings, such as schools and hospitals. One very common anecdote is of people recognizing the doors from their homes at school buildings; another is about the roofs of markets being built using the *chadors* [cloth, but in this case a thick tarp-like cloth used for roofing] from people's homes.

At our houses, the roofs have these chadors [large cloths or tarps] on them; those have been removed. Where they have gone, how they went, who is selling them, how they are selling them, this everyone knows. They [the army] say that the chadors were removed so that terrorists don't hide out inside the houses. Okay, if you need to move them to find terrorists, just put them on the ground. But where did they go after they were put into the truck? Now there are

some IDPs who have gone back and seen the things from their homes kept with other people...the doors from their homes are being used in schools. Things have been taken from people's' homes and sold in Tank and DIK...There is an area in South Waziristan that is the border area for the Wazir and Nasrullah tribes. The Wazirs are close by and, because there was no real operation happening in their area, they could go and empty the houses in the conflict area at night and take the things to Wana. So there is a market in Wana that is selling the belongings of people from another village. People recognized their belongings when they went back. When they asked the shopkeepers how they got these things, they said that they bought them from the Taliban. They said they had negotiated with the Taliban to take the belongings and pay them a percentage.

The above narrative is from the south. The story about doors and roofs also repeats in another interview from North Waziristan:

There is corruption. Things from our homes have disappeared...you cannot even find a needle in people's homes. Who took all these things? If you go to the markets, who took all the things that were left in those markets? Forget the things, who took the debris from the markets? Homes no longer have roofs. Those have been taken too. When a school is built, the doors from houses are used in those schools. They remove the door from my home and put it in a school that is across from my house. Our homes have been made using bricks. Those bricks are now being used in the protection wall alongside roads. They knock down the walls of houses and take away the bricks.

Two of the most moving stories were about books. Not because the stories themselves were more powerful than others but because of the way they were told by the speakers. The men who told me these stories had been talking about bombs falling from the sky, having to walk long distances and watching children scream in fear as they traveled. But those things were mentioned almost in passing. When it came to the

books, they paused, spoke more slowly, and became more emotional. Both men cried when they mentioned the books. The first speaker was from North Waziristan:

When we left, we left more than half our belongings behind. Small things that were easy to carry or had great value like jewelry and money we were able to take. We were lucky in that respect. There was a small transport [pickup] truck that was in the neighbourhood and I was able to pay the driver to bring some of the belongings from our house. There were six families in the home so all of us were able to load some of our things into the truck. All little things though because each of us could only take a little. I completed my master's in Pashto. I enjoy learning. And I have a great interest in politics. I love to read. My greatest regret is my books. I had three shelves full of books that I had collected over the years. I really thought when I went back that they would still be there but nothing was left. The house was empty. My books were gone.

The other one of these stories comes from DIK. The shift in the speaker's focus here really caught my attention. He was talking about how soldiers treat locals when they return home.

One day there was a bombing in Ladha and people were caught till Marobi, which is 20 to 25 kilometers away. All the way till Marobi! And then they were all beaten and tortured. These were all IDPs who had returned. The soldiers think we are all criminals. I don't know what can compel a man to treat his fellow human beings like this. They call us names, insult us, beat us, rob us of our dignity.

Then there is silence. He thinks about what to say next and comes to this story:

My father is a funny man. There is little in this world he is attached to. But he was a teacher. He was a man of learning. And the thing that was dear to him were his books. Two cabinets full of them. When the bombs began to fall, we had to leave immediately. There was no warning. And he kept thinking about his books. But he could not take

them. In the time we spent here 'til they went back to see the village, he would talk about his books and wonder whether they were still there. I am certain he believed that they would have survived. But when he went back there was nothing. I have never seen him so hurt. Who took those books? Where did they go?

A person who was waiting to get documents attested at his local district officers' temporary office approached me outside the official building. We had asked him how things were while we were inside and he had said it was all fine. Outside, his story was different: he told me of having to pay increased rents and not having a job because he had anticipated going home much earlier. But the story he wanted to tell was about the day he left.

We were given three days warning to leave the region. People started leaving in large numbers. I packed my family off but I decided to stay. I did not want to lose all our things and our home. I locked the door and barricaded the windows and decided I would protect the home. Then the bombs began to fall and I decided I could not stay. I had to leave everything behind.

People were afraid of dying there. It was not a death with any dignity, we were told. If anything happened, no one was there to help. There were just mountains and the men in uniform were not going to assist the locals. People were scared of going back because of these stories.

There was a mehsud person who had a heart attack in Ladah. At night the pain began, his wife was screaming for help so there was another tent there...it's mountainous and cold...his wife was screaming so the person from the other tent came—he had a wife and two kids and this man also had a wife and two kids—so he said what can we do, this man has pain he needs to be taken to Tank or DIK but it's late at night and there is a curfew. There is a curfew after 5 p.m. and even if you are dying you can't go anywhere. So he used lights to signal the army officers, to let them know there was an emergency. But they said they were sorry, they don't have a medical facility and Tank is far and

there is no ambulance service and they cannot take him. So he just trembled and died over there. They didn't even help in burying him.

Travel stories were the hardest for people to tell. They brought back too many memories. When asked about the night they left the FATA, people found it hard to recall events in an uninterrupted manner. They remembered fragments and mentioned atrocities in passing.

I saw women and children lying dead on the streets,

said one man. When I asked him for more information he returned to talking about how long the walk was and that he could not hold onto his belongings:

it was a long distance to walk. There were so many people. I had to leave my animals and most of my things because we had to walk.

Trauma was another recurring theme. Almost everyone mentioned knowing someone who had "gone crazy" or been unable to recover from a loss. But while they narrated these events, and often had difficulty when talking about what they had seen, or became fixated on sounds and things, they never mentioned having any trauma of their own.

I have met fathers who have gone mad having to bury their sons. One woman we know, she had to bury her husband and seven children on the same day. Every few hours there was a knock on her door and a body would be delivered to her. They would knock, and the sound of the knocking, knock, knock, she just couldn't take it anymore. After that day she just kept hearing the knocking. She no longer closes the door. The knocking, knock, knock, knock, she can't handle the sound. So she does not close the door to her home.

The speaker here, himself, was fixated on the sound of the knocking as if he was trying to understand how it could drive one mad.

Another story focused on American drone attacks in the FATA:

you could hear the drones in the air all the time. The children, they would sometimes

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piss in their clothes. It would do something to you to have them flying around all the time. It would mess with your head. You never knew when a bomb could come down. You couldn't see them but there was this sound broom, broooooom, broooooom. I know people who still hear them in their sleep, or get scared during the day; they just keep hearing that sound broooooom, broooooom, broooooom.

Minutes earlier this speaker had told me a story about IEDs and how he tended to a child who had been injured in a landmine blast. He showed me a picture he took of the child on his phone:

This boy, he was bleeding from the ear, his arm and leg are badly injured. This was the 20th IED blast in the area and the army says the area has been cleared.

The story was short. The speaker clearly felt strongly about the issue and had tended to victims, but he did not spend too much time talking about these victims. Instead, it was when he came to the drones that he paused and kept repeating the sound over and over again.

During one interview in DIK, one participant finally mentioned the need for treatment for community members. "There is no trauma centre for us", he said. "People have suffered. Some people have been sent to Peshawar for treatment but over here there is no place where people can go and talk and deal with their trauma".

Looking Ahead: Policy Recommendations

In this paper we have discussed the repatriation process and the challenges people face attempting to return home after years of displacement. Particular emphasis is placed on why people are often unwilling to return: ongoing security concerns and a lack of community and socio-economic infrastructure that can support their long-term rehabilitation into their previous homes. In this section, we make a few policy recommendations with a view to holding international non-governmental organisations more ethically accountable for their approach to working among vulnerable populations; increasing public knowledge and opening up

discussion on the fraught politics of humanitarian crises and aid administering in Pakistan; and the absolute need for FATA reforms to be driven by the people who live in those communities.

Major lenders and donors such as the World Bank and USAID disburse funding by liaising with government agencies and development organisations. As discussed, this procedure has been red flagged by people within the NGO sector, and even IDPs have accused the government and NGOs of corruption, particularly in terms of administering aid and cash assistance. One NGO worker, who asked to remain unnamed, mentioned seeing people signing up for cash grants of up to 10,000 rupees but receiving envelopes with less than half that amount inside. Mariam Khan from CAMP also confirms this view: "There have to be ways for donors to monitor things better". Due to this oversight, the choices international donors make about which location organisation to work with have significant implications for people living in displacement. A more thorough system of partner selection needs to be implemented, which is not governed by restrictions put in place by Pakistani security agencies. The allotment of NOCs has been used as a way for the government and army to sideline organisations whose presence they do not want in conflict zones. The compliance of international NGOs with this system—in the name of wanting work to complete aid with ease and free of complications—allows it to prevail, and serves to reinforce authoritarian structures within the Pakistani state.

At the same time, however, we would also argue that human rights organisations, both local and international, need to have access to the region and be able to carry out independent verifications that people are being treated in accordance with international laws. Currently, the Pakistan Army has far too much control over what kind of information is produced and what access is granted to particular parts of the country. The international community has a moral obligation to ensure that a partner state such as Pakistan is not violating the rights of its own citizens in the name of global security and development initiatives. While Pakistan does face a challenge in dealing with terrorism, the armed forces'

treatment of displaced people from the FATA, who are often viewed as traitors and complicit in militant violence, is something the international community must monitor.

People displaced due to natural disasters received better government assistance and aid delivery than FATA IDPs. Much of this had to do with Pakistan not making a concerted formal request for international aid to help with the crisis in the FATA. The government has viewed the conflict in the region as a public relations nightmare and has been reluctant to invite international aid which would in turn draw attention to the problems in the region. Not calling for aid therefore falls in line with the official approach to conduct operations in the region fairly secretly with as little international involvement as possible. Sadly, those organisations that are involved in the process have not asked for greater oversight. Given the reality of problematic political involvement in IDP repatriation, government agencies need to be held accountable for the way they carry out repatriation and related development work.

Here, the media can also play an important role, but the restrictions the state places on local and international news outlets first need to be addressed. In other parts of the country, the media's presence serves as a form of accountability and keeps state violence in check. We recommend support for critical media reporting that better informs the public on the IDP and human rights situation in the FATA and other parts of the country to counter unexamined, baseless stereotypes that any Pashtun, particularly from the FATA, could be a militant. This is a population in need, and a number of stereotypes persist about it that illuminate the pervasive national neglect and racism. Robust, analytical reporting deconstructing common public narratives would be valuable for supporting NGO work and local advocacy organisations, pressuring the government, and providing the public with a more critical and informed way to think about national crises.

FATA reforms are an important initiative currently being considered by the Pakistani government in partnership with UNDP. These legislative reforms attempt to repeal the FCR and

make the FATA part of KP, however, there are concerns that these significantly lack input from people in the FATA. Efforts to codify the *rivaj*, tribal customs, and turn them into law are a serious concern. There are numerous examples from colonial history in the region where, without consultation with the community, traditional customs were turned into static laws, and in their modified form, became more restrictive and violent. Today, IDPs themselves have identified the need for psychotherapy, counselling, and trauma centres for people who have fled the FATA. People who shared these stories with us had endured significant psychological hardship, or knew others who had experienced the same. They indicated that therapy provision would be an important initiative both in communities where IDPs were relocated as well as for returnees following their repatriation.

List of Interviews

Adil Zahoor, Director Operations FDMA,
23/11/2016
Mohammad Khalid, Director General FDMA,
09/11/2016
Wajid Khan, Assistant Director DRM, PDMA,
09/11/2016
Israr Mohammad, Director R&R, PDMA,
09/11/2016
Wasim Khattak, Chief Coordinator at the PDMA,
22/11/2016
Mirza Muhammad Sana-ul-Haque, Deputy
Secretary SAFRON,
Unnamed representative, World Bank,
11/11/2016
Skye Christensen, Governance & Reforms
Adviser, UNDP, 05/12/2016
Provincial Programme Coordinator, IOM,
30/11/2016
Mariam Khan, CAMP, 07/12/2016
Naveed Shinwari, CAMP, 07/12/2016
Shahid Faiz, CEO, FAFEN, 24/11/2016
Zahid Farooq, Joint Director, URC, 17/11/2016
Zia Ur Rehman, Journalist, The News, 14/11/2016
Mansur K Mahsud, Executive Director, FATA
Research Centre, 13/12/2016
Dr. Ayesha Siddiqa, Political Scientist, 13/12/2016
Nisar Ali Khan Dawar, Tribal Leader, North
Waziristan, 20/12/2016
Malik Ghulam, PPP representative, North
Waziristan, 20/12/2016
IDP group 1 (12 people, Mir Ali district in North
Waziristan) 19/12/2016
IDP group 2 (4 people, Miramshah in North
Waziristan) 20/12/2016
IDP group 3 (3 people, Mir Ali district in North
Waziristan) 20/12/2016
IDP group 4 (6 people, Ladah district in South
Waziristan) 21/12/2016
IDP group 5 (2 people, Wana in South Waziristan)
22/12/2016