

## **Pakistan Fights Militant Extremism [Operation Zarb-i-Azb] and the Challenge of Internally Displaced Persons: A Threat to Human Security**

**Umbreen Javaid\***

### **Abstract**

*Large-scale internal displacement of the population has persistently haunted the state of Pakistan. It remains one of the important security concerns for the policy-makers. The military operation, Zarb-i-Azb, against militants in the North Waziristan, has created a large number of IDPs, but there has been a lukewarm response from the concerned authorities in gauging the seriousness of the issue. This paper examines the dynamics of the state engagement with the miserable plight of the IDPs. It also examines the process of rehabilitation and the possible lacunas, which can be addressed to make the entire socio-political effort more fruitful.*

**Keywords:** Human security, militants, Pakistan, Zarb-i-Azb, internally displaced persons (IDPs).

### **Introduction**

The geo strategic position of Pakistan, coupled with its inherent hostility with India has been instrumental in shaping the trajectory of its political moves in the global politics. Both the Afghan War and War of Terror caused irreparable damage to the socio cultural fabric of Pakistani society. The internal security of Pakistan is facing the lethal threat to its survival; the element of terrorism has damaged the political structure of the state as well. In the second decade of War on Terror, the Pakistani nation is under continuous duress due to the growing terrorism that almost in the form of a cataclysm affected all the areas of human activity ranging from the practice of everyday life to the preserving its ideological and national narratives. On the international front, it tarnished the image of Pakistan as a liberal, modern and progressive state.

FATA, the tribal area happens to be the fault line between the state of Pakistan and the militants. It comprises of seven agencies i.e Bajour, Orakzai, Khyber, Mohmand, North Waziristan, South Waziristan and Kurram agency. FATA is considered as the most inflamed area of Pakistan and hub of mutiny by the non-state actors. It is also facing adverse socio-economic, political and security concerns. As it is said by one of the IDPs that FATA used to be a very clean and healthy with fresh fruits and vegetables, clean air and water were abundant once. Since 2004, Pakistan's security forces have conducted some 475 major and 133 minor operations to clear

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\*Author is Chairperson of Department of Political Science, and Director, Centre for South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore – Pakistan.

all agencies of FATA, including Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai and South Waziristan besides the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA), Malakand Division including Swat. North Waziristan Agency is also facing human displacement since 2009 due to insecurity, increased violence, military strikes and operations. "Pakistan faces a pronounced challenge of IDPs as majority of its population live below the poverty line, there has been a slow recovery from two natural disasters within past five years, and situation got worst by being the battling ground for the Global War on Terror" (Mohsin 2013: 33).

### **Operation Zarb-i-Azb**

Zarb-i-Azb is the military operation that has been launched within the Pakistani territory by the Pakistan armed forces. The main purpose behind this combat is to promote peace and security by eliminating all the militants' sanctuaries in North Waziristan (Munir 2014: 23). The operation started on June 15, 2014, after the civil leadership had exhausted all the possibilities of dialogue between the warring discourses. The Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, soon after coming to power, initiated the negotiation/peace process. The process involved all the political parties for collective decision against the growing militancy and extremism of TTP. The TTP leadership was busy with indiscriminate targeting of the security forces, sectarian rivals, and also the political leaders, foreigners and foreign interests, and public and private infrastructure. During the peace talk, the TTP demanded for the handover of some 4000 Taliban prisoners in the custody of Pakistani security forces, an end to drone attacks, the formulation of anti U.S. foreign policy with the withdrawal of military troops, and a pledge to keep them in the barracks, imposition of the TTP version *Sharia*, and lastly that the TTP will continue to run its fiefdoms in the tribal areas. The failure was a writing on the wall as the demands were supra constitutional.

During the peace negotiations between the government of Pakistan and Taliban, different terrorist groups launched 20 major terror attacks from January 29 to June 8, 2014, in which 195 Pakistanis embraced *shahadat* (*martyrdom*). The military with the civil leadership reacted against the terrorist hideouts in North Waziristan, after the June 8, 2014 attack on the Jinnah International Airport Karachi. Later on, the failure of talks with Taliban culminated in the heinous Karachi incident that reflected the intent of the militants who were now blatantly challenging the peace in the whole country by targeting soft targets. (Karachi incident shows anti-state actors have become active again 2014). The assault resulted in security impairment, extinguishing of a nascent peace process and loss of many innocent lives. "Gunmen attacked one of Pakistan's biggest airports on

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Sunday and at least 23 people were killed, including all 10 of the attackers, media reported” (Hasan 2014: 3).

The Pakistan Army backed the operation against the militant hideouts in NWA, initially the civil government was pro-negotiations rather than conducting military operation but due to talks’ failure and their continuous terror attacks, the government supported the action. Zarb- i-Azb launched an all-out military operation unlike the selective ones, which did not produce the desire results. The operation is addressing the menace of terrorism without any discrimination of good and bad Taliban (Yousaf 2014: 11).

The Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif declared that the offensive strategy against TTP is to usher in peace and eliminate Taliban and Al-Qaida strongholds (Pakistan North Waziristan Agency 2014). The Defense Minister, Khwaja Asif, said the Pakistan Army was rendering great scarifies for the country, which would be remembered forever. “We wish for early completion of the operation, which will ensure repatriation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their homes” (‘Operation Zarb-i-Azb Successfully Underway: Khawaja Asif’ 2014). The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) stated “using North Waziristan as a base, these terrorists had waged a war against the state of Pakistan and had been disrupting our national life in all its dimensions, stunting our economic growth and causing enormous loss of life and property” (Sherzai 2014: 2).

Therefore, the operation Zarb-i-Azb is very important for the endurance of Pakistan’s national security structure and its people, but the undue consequences that have been faced by the indigenous population of the North Waziristan has problematized the entire effort to bring peace and security in the region. The operation resulted in severe concerns about the placement of the internally displaced persons and their rehabilitation process. It forced thousands of people to vacate their places and move to other areas as Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Karak, Dera Ismail Khan and Khaot in KPK province.

### **Conceptual Framework of Human Security**

The concept of security is one of the most ambiguous and vigorously contested concept despite “the plethora attempts to “redefine” security since the end of cold war” (Baldwin 1997: 23). Tadjbakhsh (2009: 22) defines security as the absence of insecurity and threat. In Freedman’s words “once anything that generates anxiety or threatens the quality of life in some respect becomes labeled a ‘security problem’ the field risks losing all focus” (Roberts 2005: 5). Analytically the concept of security is essentially contested in

nature due to its complexity and seamlessness, due to lack of factual objectivity, the concept has to be understood with help of broader approaches. "It is a subjective problem that involves many realities depending on one's ontology" (Roberts 2005: 7).

The concept of security has multiplicity of meanings. Thus, it needs to be contextualized. According to Barry Buzan, people do not coincide on single idea of security due to their moral, ideological, and normative differences. Therefore, the security perspective is always defined with support of other established theoretical framework in the realist framework security is seen as derivative of power or mere synonym to for power (Stone 2009: 2) while the idealists believe in peace to attain security. The concept of security is highly dependable and relational in nature, thus security can be defined or understood within its own particular and specific circumstances and it varies according to the existing dependable factors.

### **Traditional and Non-traditional Security**

'People rather than states' denoted the obvious shift from traditional to non-traditional security measures. The traditional geopolitical security traits were prioritized during the Cold war era under the conventional view of security in the Westphalia state system. It considered the state as the sole actor and centered on state's security, preservation of its territorial integrity and political sovereignty against any military threats. "Under traditional security ideas, the only real security concern is for a state to maintain its survival, power, and political influence against external threats from rival states" (Kim 2010: 85).

The Westphalian outcomes moved the world towards globalization, which was characterized by two synchronized trends of global politics and its existential insecurity implications, and secondly the economic integration. In later decade of 1980's the economic aid the environmental aspects were also included to notion of security as 'comprehensive security'. In 1990's the conceptual trajectory indicated an obvious paradigm shift from the material security threats to the normative social security threats. It appeared a major shift in the Westphalian order of international affairs that brought the individual at the center of state's concerns. The non-traditional threats challenged the traditional phenomenon of security; it included dangers such as environmental, pollution, transnational terrorism, massive population, and infectious diseases that posed a threat to the individual security.

In post-Cold war, it has become obvious that individual's security cannot be

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protected by the military capabilities. Therefore, it included the concept of human security. “Accordingly, the international relations of the new millennium in impelling many analysts to broaden their conception of security to include issues of human security broadly defined” (Morgan 2005: 69). Human security is a social phenomenon; it preaches freedom from fear and wants. “Beginning in the mid-1990s, the concept of human security has begun to visibly influence and challenge global politics, institutions, and governance” (Tsai 2009: 20). Human security was first coined in 1982’s Commission Report on Common Security. In 1993, the UNDP document formally articulated and stressed that “the concept of security must change from an exclusive stress on national security to a much greater stress on people’s security, from security through armaments to security through human development, from territorial security to food, employment and environmental security” (Zambelli 2002: 175). In the Human Development Report 1994, an Asian scholar Mahbub-ul-Haq, initially advocated the broad idea of human security. The HDR formalized and defined the concept, which equates security with people rather than territories, with development rather than arms, survival should not be threatened so ‘freedom from wants’ and prioritized human dignity with no violence so ‘freedom from fear’. The notion reflected a new shift in international climate and dominance of human rights protection.

“The United Nations Report United Nation Development Programme (1994) as mentioned the increasing human security entails, as follows:

- Investing in human development, not in arms;
- Engaging policy makers to address the emerging peace dividend;
- Giving the United Nations a clear mandate to promote and sustain development;
- Enlarging the concept of development cooperation so that it includes all flows, not just aid
- Agreeing that 20 percent of national budgets and 20 percent of foreign aid be used for human development; and
- Establishing an Economic Security Council” (United Nation Development Programme 1994)

Human Security has four essential characteristics that justify its meanings; it is a universal phenomenon, its components are

interdependent, it is the best ensured through prevention and lastly it is individual-centric. It emphasizes the protection of individuals from different social aspects as economy, food, health, environment, personal, community, and political oppression. The notion of the concept is to fight for the individual's rights rather the territorial interests; the emergence of this concept reflects the influence of values and norms on security studies, as opposed to the influence on national security (Tsai 2009: 22). Tadjbakhsh (2009: 19) lists number of aspects in order to explain broad meaning of human security, the definition insists on integrated solution for multifaceted issues, as follows: 1) the recognition of new threats beyond traditional tools of violence, 2) the recognition of new security referent objects beyond the state, and lastly 3) the recognition of how development, human rights and security are interlinked.

However, broadly speaking two conceptual schools of thoughts arise that group most definitions in the 'narrow' or broad conception of Human Security. The narrow conception of human security seeks to prioritize insecurities related to military and physical threats that endanger survival. The broader understanding of human security (that encompasses most definitions on human security) aims to include a far wider range of threats that also affect non-physical aspect like social, psychological, political and economic aspects of vulnerability (Eldering 2010: 19).

### **Theoretical Understanding of Human Security**

In the beginning, the international political concern was based on the established theoretical approaches of Realism and Idealism. The shift in the conceptual framework occurred, after the unpredictable end of Cold war. However, the focus of International Relations included the social aspects besides the material aspects that led to the shift from national security preferences to the dominance of human security among the developed world. The core of this human-centered approach is normative and can be traced from social constructivism. "Thus, on the ideational move away from the narrow, realist concept of national security towards more expansive notions of security, such as human security, as shift that illustrates the power of ideas to shape how humans socially construct their relations globally" (Kim 2010: 93). The concept of human security brought all the social fields together, which was never included in International Relations and International Law as human rights, humanitarian affairs, human development and security

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(Oberleitner 2005: 8). The newly perceived globalized threats made the *real politike* obsolete and turned the focus from the physical security to psychological well-being.

State's failure in providing human assistance to its own people can invite the international community to respond. The concept of human security advocates the global community to intervene in the domestic affairs of the state in case of serious violation of human rights. However, some states as China do not believe the judgment that the human security issues can be dealt by outsider's approach. These states argue that it is truly a domestic issue to be catered for by the internal security experts. Thus, according the Eastphalian perspective that human security shouldn't provide the grounds for foreign intervention in domestic affairs of any state; this proves that the Asian approach follows the same grounds of Westphalian sovereign state system. The Asian offer little for the advocates of human security, they stand that power and principles are not two sides of the same coin in international relations.

Some Asian governments and analysts see human security as yet another attempt by the West to impose its liberal values and political institutions on non-Western societies. Others question the 'newness' of the concept, claiming that the emphasis of the human security idea on a broad range of non-military threats mirrors earlier, home-grown notions of 'comprehensive security' formulated by many regional government (Acharya 2001: 443).

The concept of human security is criticized widely due to its normative approach. Some of the scholars echoed that it might become an ideological instrument contrary to state's foreign policy. It opens the way for foreign intervention, which against the national interest and state's sovereignty. It is perceived that other national interests are persuaded under concealed agenda of ethical concerns. Mahbub-ul-Haq proposed the idea of human security on the basis of new partnership between the North and the South based on human justice not charity; on an equitable market sharing not aid; on two way compacts not one way transfer; on mutual cooperation not unilateral conditionally or confrontation (Tadjbakhsh 2009: 87).

### Human Security and the Status of IDPs

"Physical displacement is *prima facie* evidence of vulnerability" (Weiss 2013,

p. 11). In the recent unfolding of humanitarian crisis in FATA, the issue of IDPs emerged as one of the most threatening aspect to human rights. IDP's, as defined by Deng (1999: 484) are the persons or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situation of generalized violence, violation of human rights or natural or human made disaster, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state. The issue of IDPs is not a new one. Prior to this, the question of the plight and status of refugees was the primary concern of human rights. Pakistan is ranked at 146<sup>th</sup> out of 187<sup>th</sup> countries in the UN's 2013 Human Development Index (HDI) annual ranking. The report is worked out by combing different indicators as life expectancy, educational attainment and income ('Pakistan ranks 146 on UN's Human Development Index', 2014). Nevertheless, the structural change occurred due to the changing nature of warfare within the states and due to state's fear of refugees flow across their borders. By the outset of 1990's, the changing scenario led a decrease in number of refugees and a dramatic enhancement in the number of IDP's about 25 - 30 million. As per Phuong (2010: 38) "the common denominator to these displaced populations should be the existence of human rights violation". Thus she argues that protection of IDPs falls in the domain of human rights debate and their rehabilitation is states' obligation.

Oberleitner explains that human security fills the gap between humanitarian law and human rights in an armed conflicting situation. "Human security has twofold impact on military operations: it gives priority to the protection of people over pursuing military objectives and it puts limitations on warfare that go beyond the constraints of international humanitarian and human rights law" (Oberleitner 2005: 23). According to Astrid Suhrke, human security stresses on 'vulnerability', with reference to three categories of victims: those of war and internal conflict, those living at or below subsistence levels, and victims of natural disasters (Acharya 2001: 447). It ensures the survival and dignity of the people as human being. "The human security concept is heavily influenced by human rights principles; thus, the substantive content of human security has a universal quality across nations and culture" (Kim 2010: 87). The concept of human security makes it mandatory for the states to provide their citizens an atmosphere free from violence and basic requirements of life. It is the states' prime responsibility to provide protection to its people from any internal and external aggression. It complements and better defines that how security measures are implemented in a state, human security has inter-dependable relation with states' security. Thus, human security covers



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many aspects of particular importance in a conflict situation as refugees, asylum seeker, migrants, internally displaced persons and trafficked persons.

The internally displaced persons, due to war conflict or a natural disaster, can pose a challenge to human security and development. It has been argued that the protection and durable solution for the IDPs should be one of the primary concern for the development and peace building agenda of human security. “The plight in internal displacement requires a comprehensive policy of assistance and protection. From a human security perspective a comprehensive policy is not the sum of the different strategies for displaced people, but a right-based policy that takes the human being as the integrative factor” (Benedek, Matthias et al. 2011: 26). Gary King and Christopher also contributed that the international community could enhance the efforts at compensation by creating organizations to provide insurance against financial costs associated with the major risk to human security. The subject of human security should be advocated at the global level to equate every individual at the domestic level. “We categorize efforts to enhance human security, ranging from ex ante to ex post, as risk assessment, prevention, protection, and compensation, risk assessment involves improving and communicating knowledge of the risks that particular population” (Gray, King et al. 2001: 19).

### **Operation Zarb-i-Azb and the Challenge of IDPs**

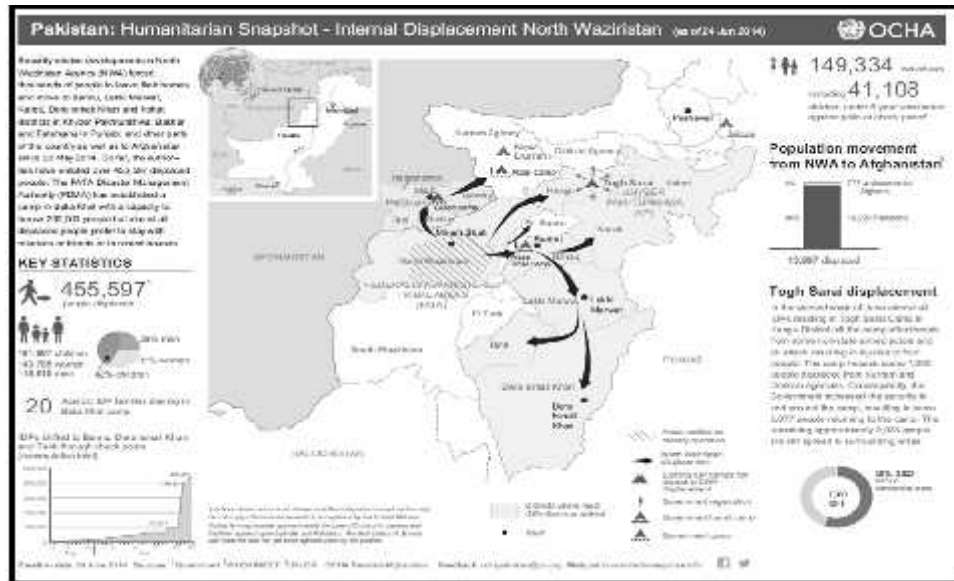
The state of Pakistan is faced with the vital question of resettlement and rehabilitation of IDPs in FATA. This issue is not a new one. FATA has been facing the ill-fated IDPs since 2007. Around 3 million people have been displaced. Many IDPs had already left their native places in an attempt to evade the militants’ oppressive measures like illegal tax collection, kidnapping for ransom and other security threats. Before the initiation of Zarb-i-Azb, “the total registered IDP families were 374,819. NADRA verified around 298,600 displaced families, whereas 76,219 IDP families were not registered and 151,287 IDP families returned home, yet there still are 285,694 IDP families living in extreme vulnerable condition” (Mohsin 2013: 111). It ultimately points out that poor state performance has been instrumental in complicating the crisis situation. According to Mullah Khel, the chairman of IDP *Shura*, “we were those tribal people whose *Hujra* was never closed and remained open for the needy and poor. The Pashtuns have always been hospitable and welcoming but the state authorities seem incapacitated to respond to the gravity of the situation. Our people have led their lives with dignity and soberness even with limited resources. This situation has made our women and children beg even for food. You have exploited the Islamic teachings on religious sentiments and the nationalists

have exploited the Pashtun tradition” (Mohsin 2013: 128).

In post operation scenario, according to the data that has been released on different websites initially concludes that so far 34,625 families have crossed over from North Waziristan areas, due to Zarb-i-Azb and have been registered. The statistics include, males – 111241, females – 133722, children – 178523, and the total individuals are – 423666 ('IDP crisis - post operation Zarb-i-Azb', 2014). Later, around 90,750 families consisting of 9, 92,649 persons have been registered as IDPs in North Waziristan. So far, more than 800,000 IDPs have been registered, in which about 80% are women and children, it is not easy to accommodate such a large number of IDPs within a country, which is already passing through a political turmoil and monsoon floods (Khan July 22, 2014: 2).

It is marked, after Swat operation, as the second largest internal displacement during the recent years in Pakistan. In the present scenario, the Zarb-i-Azb IDPs are facing many issues like harsh weather, no shelter, and limited access to health facilities, no food assurance, and vulnerability to diseases.

Fig.1 NWA Displacement



Source: (Pakistan: humanitarian snapshot - internal displacement NWA and the rest of KP and FATA, 2014).

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As of 15 July, the total registered displaced population from North Waziristan (NWA) is 992,649 individuals (90,756 families): 256,272 males; 284,191 females; and 452,186 children. Overall, 74 per cent of the total displaced population is women and children. All stakeholders agree that the numbers are unlikely to be accurate, and believe number between 500,000 and 600,000 is more realistic. Priority needs remain around food, health, protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) activities. The

Preliminary Response Plan by the UN HCT for vital humanitarian assistance for six months requires \$99 million to provide the planned response.

Figure 1, Source: (Pakistan: humanitarian snapshot - internal displacement NWA and the rest of KP and FATA, 2014).

### **Government Response to the Issue of IDP's**

The question of dealing with the IDP crisis and their rehabilitation with human dignity has become of the utmost importance for the civil and military establishment. The Pakistan army initiatives of Zarb-i-Azb is considered as the most promising operation aimed at curtailing extremism and free people's life from fear of terrorism and allow them to spend lives according to their desires. "General Raheel Sharif assured that the army would play its role in rebuilding and restoring normalcy in North Waziristan" (Raza 2014: 7).

The sole responsibility of the protection and re-habilitation of IDPs rests with the government. "It is not the international community but national authorities that have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to the IDPs within its jurisdiction" (Mohsin 2013: 6). It was stated, "the government as well as the parliament will meet all out requirements of the military operation. All resources will be used to facilitate the peace-loving men, women and children who will be displaced due to the operation till they settle again", ('Rs 500 mn allocated for Zarb-i-Azb, NWA IDPs: Dar', 2014). According to

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ACAPS briefing note about the local and national response capacity, the government has assigned the task of IDPs rehabilitation to Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON). NDMA is providing necessary support to FATA Disaster Management Authority, Provincial Disaster Management Authority KP, Pakistan Army and other stakeholders for effective crises management. The government has also made a formal request to UN for assistance (Pakistan North Waziristan Agency 2014).

From June 19, 2014, 30,000 IDPs fled from their respective zones, as the curfew eased down in some of the areas of North Waziristan towards Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa and thousands of the families fled to Afghanistan as well. Registration points and camps have been setup to cater the IDPs influx at different stops, and they issued ration packs containing biscuits, tea, sugar and milk (30,000 flee as curfew eased in some areas, 2014). By June 21, 2014, the Civil Secretariat of FATA claimed that food stamps and ration cards of 7,000 per month for each family will be issued only to the NADRA verified IDPs. The government also promised to issue mobile phone for the IDPs to receive Rs. 7,000 monthly relief through cell phone messaging services. The state run IDPs' camps also made arrangements for 20,000 people with number of washrooms and shades; electricity was also supplied to a camp at Bakakhel and health care on 24-hour emergency basis to the IDPs ('Displaced people to get cash grant through mobile Sims', 2014). By June 25, 2014, the government announced that she was fully prepared to look after the IDPs; she also claimed that so far she has released Rs. 1.5 billion for disbursement among 36,392 registered families. "The NDMA has released 2000 tents which have been placed at the disposal of FDMA (Ghumman July 7, 2014). By June 26, 2014, the government also started vaccination against Polio in order to eradicate the lethal disease. She also increased the cash grant for IDPs to Rs. 40,000, especially for the Ramadan month. "Each IDP family is being given a stipend equal to basic minimum wage of Rs. 12,000 per month besides Rs. 20,000 Ramadan package" ('North Waziristan IDP's Registration completed', 2014). Beside the Ramadan extra package and stipend the Army Chief General Raheel Sharif also visited the IDPs camps in Bakahel camp in Bannu and the Zarb-i-Azb troops in North Waziristan on the Eid day to keep their moral high and to express that they are not alone ('Army chief celebrates Eid with troops, IDPs', 2014).

The gradual rise in the number of IDPs enhanced governments' fear, that they would not be able to accommodate such huge influx of internally displaced people. Therefore, beside the government efforts, the army also established 33 points countrywide to collect donation from the public. The United States also announced a contribution of \$ 8 million to help the

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Pakistani government in order to meet the food and nutritional needs of the IDPs due to operation Zarb-i-Azb. The contribution has been provided through USAID. The effort is part of the ongoing understanding between the U.S. authorities and the United Nations' World Food Program (WFP) under the Twinning Program. "The United States' commitment to the Twinning Program is a demonstration of our support to the internally displaced population from the Fata and the incredibly important partnership between the government of Pakistan, WFP, and the international community" (Haider July 22, 2014: 2) Later, United States and UAE disbursed \$ 31 million and \$ 20 million for the IDPs relief (Ghumman 2014: 36). In addition to the previous funding, the United States announced an additional contribution of \$9.3 million to help Pakistan in order to meet the health, water, sanitation, and livelihood needs of IDPs from North Waziristan Agency. These funds will be provided through USAID. This new funding will amount to the total of \$17.3 million that will benefit IDPs from North Waziristan (Ghumman July 7, 2014: 2). By September, the government announced that so far she had released a total sum of Rs. 2.8 billion to FATA Disaster Management Authority in four tranches, to rehabilitate the IDPs focusing on their needs and requirements ('Rs1 billion released for IDPs', 2014). By November 12, 2014 the international lenders indicated at appropriating about \$ 700 million for the rehabilitation of the IDPs against the government appeal of more than 2 billion for the affectees of Zarb-i-Azb and floods. This "multi donor trust fund shall help the IDPs in three phases: relief that is ongoing, return management and recovery within 24 months, and reconstruction that was beyond 18 months" (Kiani 2014: 116).

The government and the international community also emphasized on vocational training of the IDPs to provide jobs in their native area, "the UNDP and ILO have decided to impart vocational training and job opportunities to 200 women who were dislocated from North Waziristan because of Operation Zarb-i-Azb" ('IDPs to get vocational training', 2014). By the end of November, a grand *Jirga* had been held that emphasized the early return and the rehabilitation of the IDPs. The army also proposed a strategy [approved by the government] for the IDPs' rehabilitation and their early return to the areas clear from terrorists ('Govt. approves army's plan for IDPs' return', 2014). By March 2015, the return of the IDPs to their homes were ensured, the Chief of the Army staff General Raheel Sharif called for better coordination among the departments responsible for the rehabilitation of the IDPs. "Over 150,000 families were displaced from North Waziristan and Khyber tribal regions when military operations were launched in the last three years" ('IDPs' return likely to begin next week', 2015). Beside the return of Zarb-i-Azb operation's IDPs, it had been announced by FDMA, the registration of Rah-i-Nijat IDPs, who were

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displaced since 2009. About 70,000 families of Mehsud tribe left their homes when security forces launched the operation against the strongholds of Taliban in 2009. It was also announced that the IDPs would be getting return travelling expense with six months ration and cash of 10,000 per family (Mehsud March 9, 2015: 3). According to Fata Disaster Management Authority that they provided the following assistance to the IDPs on their return to their homes to provide them complete rehabilitation facilities, free transport, standardized NFIs kit, hygiene kit, vaccination, refreshment box and mineral water, child protection desk, nutrition services, hygiene kits for reproductive health, womendesk and ambulance.

**FATA Table -1 TDPs Statistics as of 25-04-2015** Table 1

Agency	Total Registration	NADRA Verified	Registered Return	Spontaneous Return	Un-Regd. Return	Active for Food	Total Balance
Bajaur	86,407	72,895	72,895	0	0	0	0
FR-Tank	2,256	2,228	1,852	0	0	376	376
Khyber	176,396	97,367	28,480	0	14,761	68,887	68,887
Kurram	56,122	47,802	21,937	6,135	2,022	19,730	25,865
Mohmand	48,954	36,759	36,759	0	0	0	0
NWA	128,646	103,688	180	0	0	103,508	103,508
Orakzai	48,656	38,275	8,660	8,367	14,114	21,248	29,615
SWA	94,096	71,124	7,379	44	7,455	37,755	63,745
Grand Total	641,533	470,138	178,142	14,546	38,352	251,504	291,996

Source: <http://www.fdma.gov.pk/dps-statistics-2015>,

**IDPs Issues and Challenges**

It has been observed that the government of Pakistan lacks long-term vision in the process of rehabilitation and development of FATA and its IDPs. The IDPs faced many difficulties as health, hygiene, education, access to livelihood, food security, shelter, gender based violence, crime, child protection, lack of infrastructure facilities, repatriation and reintegration, and security threats ('Crisis of IDPs in FATA: issues, challenges and way forward', 2014). Beside these difficulties women are the most victimized displaced persons. They already exist in a narrow cultural doom due to the traditional values and norms of FATA. This displacement forced them to come out and face the patriarchal harsh society with no resources and other survival threats.

By June 19, 2014, as it was mentioned that about 30,000 IDPs flee as the curfew eased down in some of the areas, the Chief Minister, Pervez Khattak told at a press conference that over 70,000 displaced persons had already been registered, while more were pouring in from the North Waziristan. Despite all the government arrangements, the IDPs kept on complaining about the unavailability of transportation and other facilities. The people travelled and covered long distances on foot to reach save places. As a tribal youth, Nasr Minallah said that "it's like a sea of people heading towards Bannu, some of them are going on foot and some on trucks with their belongings" (Salam 2014: 2).

The IDPs dissatisfaction shows governments' inability to respond to the huge influx of population. Many IDPs voiced their concerns against the government for forced evacuation and maltreatment at the hands of different relevant authorities. According to FDMA, there is only one food distribution point for over 36,800 families. "The military operation in the agency was on the cards since long, but the way people were evacuated and the mismanagement at the distribution point showed lack of coordination between law enforcement and disaster management authorities" (Ali 2014: 4).

The IDPs faced different types of problems; their rigorous and narrowly defined culture and trust deficit did not allow them to stay at governments' camps with their women and children. Most of the IDPs preferred to stay and move at their own, in which they were faced with more difficulties, as Loya Khan, 78 years from Datta Khel spoke that "when we entered Sindh, we were asked all sorts of questions. A police officer, who was my son's age, asked me whether I am a Taliban supporter and will help them once I am settled in Karachi. I just folded my hands and asked them to let us go. They

allowed us to go but not without paying Rs. 1000, which was the collective amount with my family". Another IDP, Zar Wali, 45-year old told the same story that "the IDPs are being treated like animals" (Baloch July 29, 2104: 4).

The inactivity and inefficiency of the civil government delayed the relief initiatives for the North Waziristan's IDPs. By July 14, 2014, the Director General of FATA Disaster Management Authority, Mr Arshad Khan was suspended due to complaints of delays in cash disbursement and non-registration of IDPs. The reporter also mentioned that some 9000,000 internally displaced persons have already registered with the FATA Disaster Management Authority including 235, 499 male and 261,734 female, and the rest 393,636 are children. Almost half of them were mostly children and women who faced serious health hazards due to poor hygienic conditions, in addition to severe hot weather, which has increased acute respiratory infection, gastro infections, skin and other water borne diseases (Sherzai July 14, 2014: 3). Beside the financial hardships, livelihood, violence, harsh weather, diseases, unacceptable norms and culture, the IDPs were under continuous security threat. On September 29, a blast occurred in a camp in Hangu, which left seven dead and thirteen injured (Paracha September 29, 2014: 8). In the context of this bleak picture, the tribal elders demanded a specified period for their return to their native places. They have also reiterated that the situation was becoming grave with every passing day "There were some 92,000 families out of which the SIMs of some 52,000 families were blocked. They did not get any financial assistance so far owing to double address or other issues with their registration", they took those issues with the authorities but they did not resolve the same even after consoling them that they would do so (Shah 2014: 21).

### **Conclusion**

Terrorism is an open threat to human rights and human security. The issue of IDPs in North Waziristan appeared due to the armed operations against the increased militancy and extremism in the region. Terrorism exposed the IDPs of FATA to many social, economic, political and health issues. Therefore, the state authorities opted for all clear operation in North Waziristan. Zarb-i-Azb constitutes our national will to fight terrorism. It is a national effort involving all segments of the Pakistani society to curtail terrorism. There is a national consensus to back up the armed forces in these hard times. It is obvious in such critical scenario of internal disorder; there is likelihood that unforeseen difficulties may arise. The people of the North Waziristan have been facing the issue of internal displacement since 2007 for a variety of reasons. Zarb-i-Azb only added a degree of



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complexity to already deteriorating socio cultural conditions.

The incumbent government, army and the international community are well aware of the issues faced by the IDPs of North Waziristan Agency. The IDPs complaints are genuine. The governments' ineffective strategy of risk assessment led to a number of problems in settling the IDPs. According to Zakia Rubab Mohsin, an Islamabad based anthropologists; the government so far has never been efficient in settling the IDPs and their related issues. The fundamental human rights of safety and security assurance, right to dignity, protection of basic human necessities, compensation of lost property, and freedom from fear and wants is never achieved. The political failure aggravated the situation by widening the gap between the state authorities and IDPs. "These gaps need to be bridged and attention given to ending the impunity of perpetrators of human rights violation. Equally urgent is meeting the life-saving needs of the people through humanitarian assistance" (Taylor 2004: 22).

The political instability, the civil-military conflict, floods, and lastly the mismanagement at the state level contributed to the worsening of the situation in the war torn areas. "More than one million people displaced from NWA appear to be the main sufferer of the ongoing political crises in the country, because neither the federal government nor the KPK government seems to be willing to own them" (Wasim 2014: 12). Although the government announced many supporting packages, handsome amounts and plea for international aid, but when it came to the process of distribution, it was mishandled. In the aftermath of Zarb-i-Azb, it has been observed that the role of the armed forces of Pakistan is more pragmatic than the past and the incumbent government in resolving the humanitarian crisis. The armed forces seemed more focused and motivated in the rehabilitation and IDPs settlements process. So far, the Pakistan army catered the issue of IDPs in a very well manner, which would have visible effects once the Zarb-i-Azb is completed. However, the IDPs' issue remains the primary concern for the state authorities and still a lot more efforts are needed in this regard. Pakistan army has shouldered the responsibility to greater extent but the reliance on military institution in matters that fall in the domain of civilian administration is a practice detrimental to the democratic norms and values. It is, hence, a matter of great concern, which needs immediate reforms and capacity building to ensure smooth functioning of democracy.

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