



ACTED

Agency for technical cooperation and development.

RAPID NEEDS ASSESSMENT SWAT DISTRICT

19TH – 24TH JULY 2009



IDPs returning to Swat dt. 19.07.2009

Headquarters

33, rue Godot de Mauroy
75009 Paris – France
Tel: +33 1 42 65 33 33
Fax: +33 1 42 65 33 46
e-mail: paris@acted.org

Country Coordination

House No. 3, Street No. 29
F-7/1, Islamabad
PAKISTAN
Tel: +92 (0)512298011
e-mail:
islamabad@acted.org

ACTED Pakistan

JULY 2009



SYNOPSIS

This report is prepared following a rapid needs assessment mission conducted by ACTED between the 19th and 24th of July 2009. During this time the mission team sought to gain an understanding of the context and to determine the needs of conflict affected communities, as described by over 30 questionnaires which were completed through interviews with community members from across 5 Union Councils in southern Swat preselected with the support and input of the DCO at the time of the mission. ACTED greatly appreciates the support of the security establishment and of the local and national authorities for their support both in making this assessment possible and for taking the time to answer the questions of the assessment team.

Table of Contents

1. Background: Reviews the development of the situation in the region – focussing particularly on the returns process.

- 1.1 Context
- 1.2 Mission Objectives

2. Security Conditions / Operational Constraints: Provides an overview of the security situation in the district and expectations of how it will develop, and outlines key constraints that will affect ACTED's operation ability in the district.

- 2.1 Current Security Context
- 2.2 Expectations

3. Needs Assessment Review: Consolidates the findings of the assessment and puts the identified needs into context according to operational sectors of intervention.

- 3.1 Summary Review
- 3.2 Methodology and Respondent Review
- 3.3 Sector Review

5. Conclusion

1. Background

1.1 Context

Swat District, like much of the NWFP, witnessed a significant shift in power relations between three primary actors: (a) the civilian authorities (District Coordination Office, Municipal Council, Nazim); (b) the Pakistani Military; and (c) the Taleban. For over two years, residents of the Swat valley have been affected by the rise in dominance of the Taleban and the ensuing power struggle between the militants and Government of Pakistan as the latter sought to re-assert its authority in the region. In April/May 2009 the conflict entered a new phase with the launching of Operation Rah-E-Rast by the Pakistani Army, which involved a sizeable escalation in fighting. As a result, according to NADRA, almost 38% of the population in Swat joined those of other neighbouring districts to flee the fighting and take refuge as IDPs in Malakand Agency and the districts of Peshawar, Nowshera, and Swabi in one of the largest displacements in the history of Pakistan. At the height of the displacement in early July it has been estimated that over 2.2 million persons were living in official camps and with host communities in the above-mentioned areas.

On July 13th 2009, the Authorities officially declared major combat operations terminated and announced that IDPs would be allowed to return back to cleared areas in a phased approach that sought to ensure the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of IDPs. For Swat District, this meant that IDPs would be able to return to a limited number of Union Councils in southern Swat (see Table 1 below), with most of the northern and western areas



remaining closed. Since July 13th over 52,469 families (approx. 419,752 individuals) returned to their homes in the space of one week.

To put this into perspective: out of the total population of Swat of 1,744,954 individuals or 218,119 households, Government sources state an average of 38% of the total population was displaced; the equivalent of 663,082 individuals or 82,885 households.¹ Considering the total displaced population at the height of the crisis of 2.2m (approximately), Swat residents contributed to one third of the IDPs. With 68,321 (see table below) having already returned as of writing this report, the equivalent of 82% of displaced persons from Swat, the process has moved extremely quickly and is likely to be completed in the near future. This is corroborated in fact by the announcement in the news that the fourth phase of operations would be started early in the week starting 27.07.09 (see Map Annexed herewith as **Annex B** for a graphical representation of the phased approach adopted by the ERU).

Table 1: UCs Open for Return in Southern Swat

Open Union Councils	
Kota	Rural UC
Ghaligay	
Barikot	
Udigram	
Tindodag	
Landikas	Urban / Peri-Urban UC
Gulkada	
Saidu Sharif	
Rangmala	
Nawekale	
Amankot	
Rahimabad	
Parn / Sharifabad	
Barn	

Source: ERU dt. 27.07.09

Table 2: Summary Table: Returns

Swat Return Follow-Up Effective Repatriation		
	Date	No. of Families
Phase I	13/07	585
	14/07	612
Phase II	15/07	1,818
	16/07	3,421
Phase III	17/07	8,787
	18/07	8,719
	19/07	11,060
	20/07	5,936
	21/07	6,902
	22/07	4,629
	24/07	4,606
	25/07	7,034
	26/07	4,212
	TOTAL	68,321

ACTED responded to the IDP crisis by scaling up operations in Peshawar, Mardan, Nowshera, and Swabi, implementing relief activities in both camps and host communities. Activities included: NFIs, provision/rehabilitation of institutional WASH services, support to income generation, and construction of shelter and summerisation shades.

With the announcement that IDPs were to be allowed to return to Swat, ACTED's strategy was to quickly adapt its operations and look to support returnees as well as those affected by the conflict but who remained behind. At the outset of the mission, ACTED considered the following activities for a potential intervention in Swat:

- Support to the agricultural sector through provision of inputs;
- Support to community infrastructure and agricultural land/infrastructure;
- Promotion to food security through provision of cash generation opportunities;
- Hygiene promotion;
- WASH infrastructure rehabilitation/reconstruction as per needs assessment.

¹ Note: Population data from the 1998 Census has been projected using a growth rate of 2% p.a. to determine the population of Swat in 2009. Data related to the IDP emergency continues to vary widely, however for the purpose of consistency all data referred to herewith is that provided by the ERU / Government sources (www.helpidp.org). Note further, that variations exist in the calculation of the percentage of Swat residents displaced during the crisis. Again, ACTED has used the data provided by the ERU.



1.2 Mission Objectives

The Mission to Swat valley, comprising of 7 ACTED staff was undertaken with the following objectives:

- Undertake a rapid needs assessment in 5 Union Councils selected as potential target areas for an ACTED intervention (Barikot, Ghaligay, Tindodag, Shadara, and Landikas) through:
 - Primary sources (Individual Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Ad-hoc group discussions);
 - Secondary sources (meetings with DCO / ACO / Revenue Officer / Relevant Departments / Military commanders)
- Review the operational context;
- Determine processes / permissions needed to develop operations in Swat in a coordinated manner;
- Present ACTED and its activities to local military and civilian authorities, and coordinate activities in order to support the global rehabilitation and reconstruction effort.

2. Security Conditions / Operational Constraints

2.1 Current Security Context

The security in Swat is described as being “at the highest level” in the last 2 years, though skirmishes and sporadic clashes continue throughout Swat. At the time of this report, fighting persists in the North and West regions of Swat, resulting in limited or no access for IDPs and international organizations. A general curfew has been declared across Swat District that is relaxed somewhat from 9am to 2pm. The only movement allowed during these times is for those in possession of Curfew Passes that are provided by the District Coordination Officer 's (DCO) office and counter-signed by the Major in charge at the circuit court headquarters in Mingora town. Curfew passes are generally forthcoming if in possession of the authorising request, though for the time being they are not issued on a long term basis. Note that the **curfews are strictly imposed**.

How the security situation evolves from herein out is unclear, though whatever happens it is clear that with the return of the general population, the security services are faced with very difficult challenges to its security approach as a prolonged general curfew will have a negative impact the general population. In an encouraging sign, during the duration of the assessment the curfew was relaxed on an ad-hoc basis and some shops were open for business albeit with limited ‘fresh’ food stockpiles and somewhat higher prices (though during ACTED discussions with the trade union representatives they stated that there was a commitment by shopkeepers not to gouge prices).

However the general security context evolves, **the threat to NGOs remains significant** given the announcement by the Taliban leader in Swat (Mullah Fazalullah) two months ago that NGOs would be directly targeted and their bases in the District destroyed. As such it is advisable to maintain strict security guidelines and liaise closely with the authorities and security apparatus to ensure that areas of implementation / travel can be accessed safely.

2.2 Operational Constraints

The following have been identified as being potential constraints to daily operations:

Curfew & Passes

The imposition of a general curfew limits ability to move both personnel and materials around areas of intervention unless in possession of a curfew pass, though it is still advisable to proceed prudently when a curfew is imposed.

Passes for logistical arrangements will equally need to be arranged as any movement of materials will have to be requested in advance and in detail – providing truck and driver I.D., proof of origin of the materials, explanation of the contents / materials being transported with provision of any serial numbers (if applicable), time and date of travel, and reason for transportation.

Security



Given the volatility of the situation, security will fluctuate on a daily and even hourly basis. This will clearly affect operations. Moreover, the primary aspect which needs to be addressed that will likely limit operational capabilities is staff security at the field level. With NGOs directly threatened by the Taleban in Swat, it is imperative that staff security in the field be properly ensured.

Two issues make it a very insecure environment for NGO staff: (1) being identified as an NGO worker makes staff instantly visible to potentially hostile individuals/groups; and (2) those local to the area place their family and relatives at risk through being associated with an NGO worker. As such, the composition of the team should be carried out carefully, to ensure a correct balance between knowledge of the area and key contacts, and operational / programme capabilities.

3. Needs Assessment

3.1 Summary Review

Key Priorities Identified during the Mission

There are a number of priorities that were regularly mentioned by all actors during our meetings/conversations which are listed below according to their relative importance from the highest at the top and decreasing as you go down the list:

1. **Access to Cash:** With (a) income generation opportunities severely limited as a result of the impact of the conflict on all sectors of the economy – particularly the agricultural sector and; (b) given the significant economic cost of displacement and, now that IDPs are returning, reconstruction and replacement of lost assets, access to cash is a major concern for all households irrespective of their previous economic status. **In particular Female Headed Households have very limited income-generation opportunities.**
2. **Water Supply:** The Tehsil Municipal Authority is working to restore civic services in the urban area though it is still at a vastly reduced capacity (so far out of 452 employees, 292 have yet to report for duty according to news sources). A significant number of water tanks/water supply schemes have suffered some sort of damage in rural areas and further, due to power outages and damage to electricity installations, about 30% of water supply schemes cannot be operated. Moreover, the lack of water is also affecting the sanitary practices of households, who in particular are not using latrines as they become less sanitary.
3. **Food Security:** All indications are that food security is a key concern for most households, though particularly for those in rural areas at a distance from the main road, and will further gain importance if the security situation remains volatile and curfews remain in place and strictly enforced. *Note that it is interesting that food is not the top priority for households but rather access to cash is, which is indicative of the fact that households prioritise early recovery of their livelihoods as a means to secure food as opposed to relying on the generosity of others or distributions by the authorities or humanitarian community.*
4. **Infrastructure Rehabilitation:** It is still too early to get a clear picture of the damage incurred to infrastructure, public buildings, utilities, and schools – the civil administration was conducting a damage assessment review at the time of the mission. Reliable data is available only up until the 30th April / 5th May 2009, at which time 476 out of 1576 schools had been partially or fully destroyed. Considering the intensity of the conflict since then, this figure is expected to be higher still today. With the school year starting in August and given that a large number of respondents indicated that the conflict has taken a significant toll on children who are in need of support and distractions, school rehabilitation / reconstruction must be undertaken as a priority.
5. **Other Priorities:**
 - Lack of access to seeds in markets;
 - Support to restoration of income generation activities;
 - Scarcity of Fuelwood as the Taleban cut down vast areas of forest to be sold on the market;
 - Lack of recreational activities for children as well as adults who have experienced varying degrees of psychological trauma;



- Lack of electricity in rural villages;
- Need to rehabilitate / reconstruct the homes and replace looted/damaged assets.

3.2 Methodology and Respondent Review

The team focussed on the collection of data from two sources: (1) directly from field interviews with individuals and wherever possible small groups, and; (2) from the civil administration, TMA (Tehsil Municipal Authorities), and local government departments (i.e. Internal Revenue department).

Overall, the team faced a number of constraints while undertaking the needs assessment that ultimately affected the collection of data, these were:

1. Access to rural areas further away from the main road was limited thus meaning that respondents were from areas with 'easier' access to bazaars and services.
2. An initial hesitance to speak to external / unknown actors meant that the typology of respondents was limited.
3. With the team consisting only of men, access to female respondents was particularly difficult as such the vast majority of respondents were male - limiting the possibility of a fully representative assessment.
4. The timing of the assessment having been undertaken within a short time of the return of the displaced Swat residents often meant that the population was still re-orientating themselves to their surroundings.

Overall a total of 35 interviews were undertaken over a 4 day period across accessible areas in 5 Union Councils in southern Swat. The following tables below provide an overview of the assessment undertaken:

Overview of Primary Data Sources

Union Council	Location of Interview	Number of Interviews	Respondent Description[s]
Barikot	Barikot;	6	n/a
Ghaligay	Chara Baba; Mullano; Mohalla; Kuz Chum; Mainar	8	Disabled person; Farmer; Medical Technician; Teacher; Student; Businessman
Tindodag	Tindodag; Panjigram	9	Fruit Supplier; Teacher; Farmer; Lecturer
Landikas	Bangladesh; Makanbagh; Hajibaba; Mulababa; Landikas; Sharifabad	7	Government employee; Tailor; Teacher; Community leader; Shopkeeper; Fruit & Vegetable dealer.
Shadara	Watkey; Nawakalay; Amir Khan	8	Security officer; Councillor; Property dealer; Transporter; Labourer; Businessman; Shopkeeper
Total # of Interviews Completed		38	



Key Statistical Data:

UC's and their divisions + Mingora MC	Population		
	Total 1998	2009 Projection	
		Total (assumed average growth rate per year since 1998 : 2%)	Total household (8 members by family)
MALKANA LANDAKASS UC	19,691	24,003	3,000
CIRCLE NO 03	10,253	12,498	1,562
CIRCLE NO 08	9,438	11,505	1,438
SHAHDARA NAIJAN KALAY UC	19,924	24,287	3,036
CIRCLE NO 01 (PART)	9,639	11,750	1,469
CIRCLE NO 04 (PART)	6,839	8,337	1,042
CIRCLE NO 04 (PART)	3,446	4,201	525
BARIKOT UC	24,553	29,930	3,741
BARIKOT	12,106	14,757	1,845
GURATAI	4,307	5,250	656
NAGOHA	2,348	2,862	358
PARRAI	5,792	7,060	883
GHALI GAY UC	25,825	31,481	3,935
GHALIGAY	11,269	13,737	1,717
KARAKARR	1,170	1,426	178
IANY AR	6,130	7,472	934
NAGIGRAI	2,635	3,212	402
SHANGARDAR	4,621	5,633	704
TINDODAG UC	12,188	14,857	1,857
GOGDARA	5,870	7,155	894
PANGIGRAM	2,568	3,130	391
TINDODAG	3,750	4,571	571

* Source: 1998 Census Data projected for 2009 utilising a growth rate of 2% per annum.

Overview of Secondary Data Sources

Location / Type of Interview	Respondent Name / Position	Remark[s]
Saidu Sharif / Field Visit with respondent	Mohammad Amin / Internal Revenue Dept.	Field visit undertaken during interview to Bhatti and Amir Nawad Khan villages in Burn UC.
Military HQ Saidu Sharif / Discussion	BridgTahir / Head of Military Ops in Swat	
Circuit House, Saidu Sharif / Discussion	Mr. Khoshal Khan / DCO;	
Circuit House, Saidu Sharif / Discussion	n/a / Trade Union Representatives	
EDO Office, Saidu Sharif / Discussion	Kamin Khan / Executive District Officer, Education	
Tehsil Municipal Administration Office / Discussion	Mohammad Yousuf / Superintendent TMA, Mingora	



3.3 Sector Review

The following section provides a sector-by-sector synopsis of the key issues discussed during evening reviews of the data collected on each day.

Water and Sanitation

Water

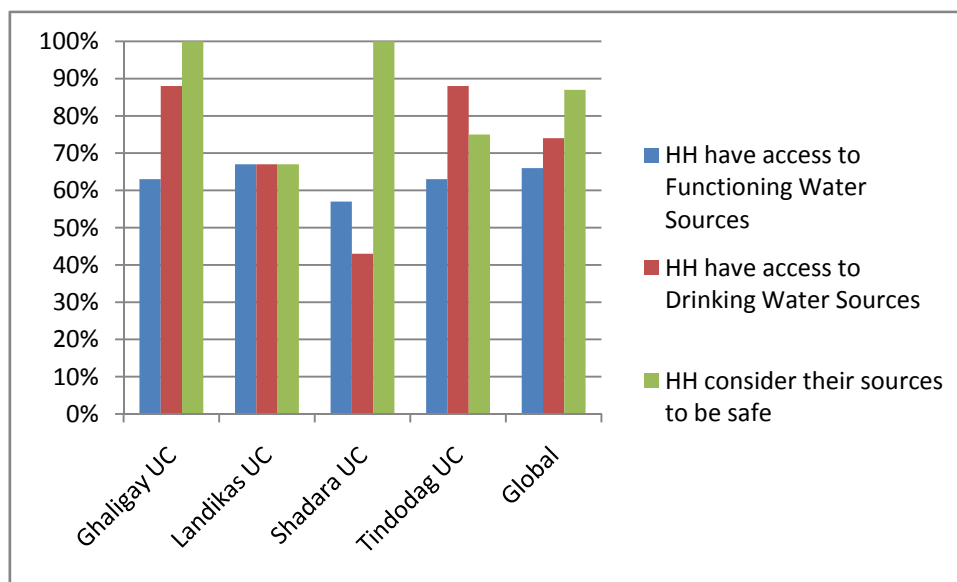
Overall, the availability of water is a problem reported by most respondents as a result of the following key reasons:

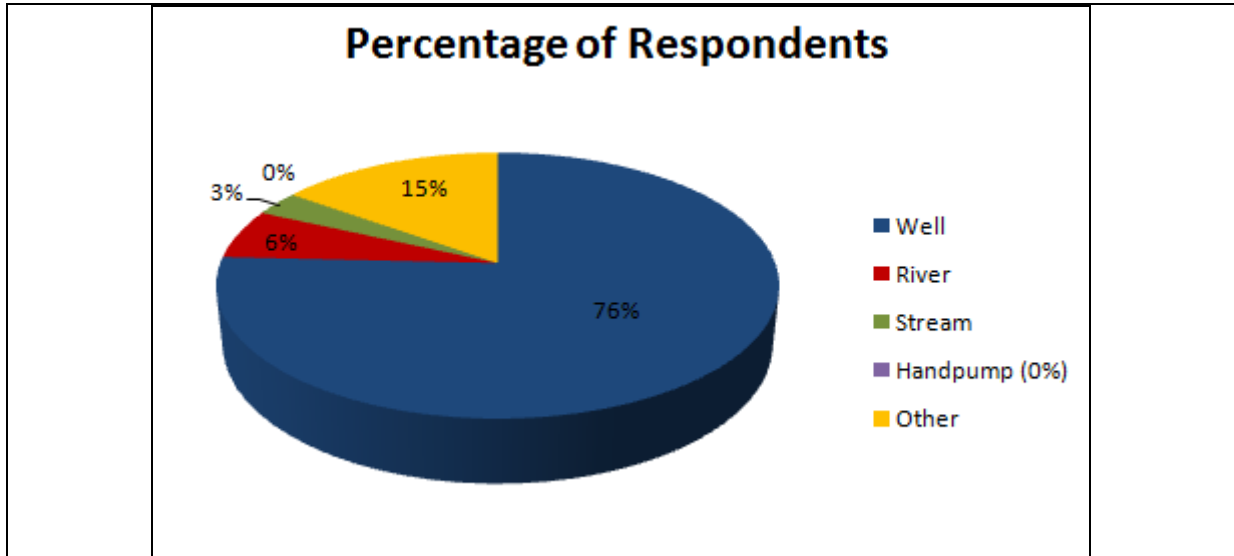
- Widespread damage exists to water supply schemes, particularly to the electrical pumps linked to tubewells, and to the water tanks and their distribution lines fed through a gravity system. Electrical pumps in particular have been damaged as a result of the low voltage within the electricity distribution network.
- Distribution pipes generally require maintenance work as many are rusted or damaged by blasts. These would also benefit from being secured as many were stolen and sold during the conflict.
- Handpumps are required to be installed in some locations identified by the Tehsil Municipal Authority (TMA). The damage assessment report undertaken by the civic authorities will provide more comprehensive data on the overall state of tubewells in each UC. The water table for these tubewells is approximately 20 – 40 meters below the surface according to the specific location.

Water quality was indicated as being poor by a minority of respondents, though a direct link has been made by respondents between the state of the whole supply system (tubewell, tanks, or pipes) and the quality of water. Also note that while respondents said they had access to drinking water, this water is not necessarily potable but rather looks clean and may be considered to be suitable for drinking by respondents. Water testing is needed to determine percentage of potable water sources.

Key Statistical Data:

- 76% of respondents say their household had access to at least 2 containers (10-20ltrs) with which to carry water and 61% responded that they had a water storage container in their homes.





Sanitation

The most widely described sanitation problems were:

- Lack of access to latrines in rural areas primarily at the household level and in urban areas in public spaces such as at bus stops and markets/bazaars. Moreover, a lack of access to water has meant that latrine sanitation is rapidly decreasing leading households to open defecation rather than using unhygienic latrines.
- Clogged and damaged drainage infrastructure is causing water stagnation, often a problem exacerbated by the lack of adequate waste disposal systems and corresponding resources.
- Open defecation is high amongst males in particular.
- A number of respondents indicated that there is a lack of access to hygiene & sanitation items/materials, particularly materials specific to the needs of women.
- *Note – a high percentage of respondents reported they had access to latrines whilst open defecation was common. This is a result of the poor sanitation of latrines or non-functioning latrines, which results in respondents defecating in the open rather than using unsanitary facilities.*



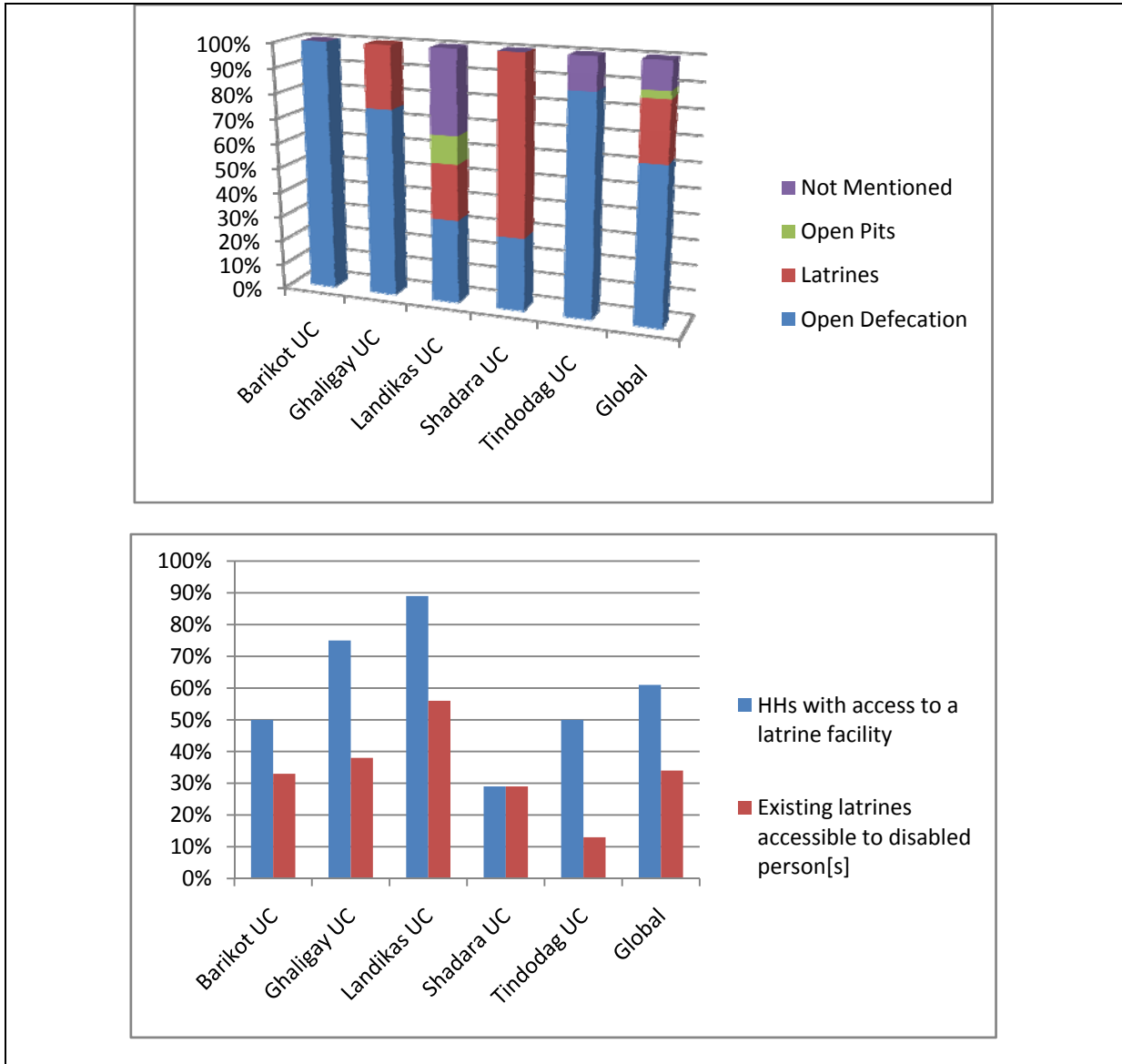
Clogged drainage as a result of waste being improperly disposed of.



Gravity fed water scheme: water tanks (circled red) are often in open though fairly difficult to reach areas. The pipes run down the hill above ground and thus are prone to damage/theft.

Key Statistical Data:

Primary Areas Where People Defecate



Health

- Emergency health services such as the hospital in Mingora are functioning only in urban areas at a severely diminished capacity and in need of medicines and resources. The inconsistent supply of electricity further hampers the operational capability of the hospital.
- Diagnosis capabilities in medical / health centres are currently unavailable across Swat.
- The assessment was unable to get a clear picture of the state of private clinics, however few were seen open and moreover cash-strapped households are unable to afford the cost of private health-care.
- Since almost all of the dispensaries and pharmacies were shut at the time of the assessment, the team was unable to determine what the availability of basic medicinal supplies was available for purchase.
- **Perhaps most importantly**, the key issue facing the health sector is the difficult access to those health services that are open as a result of the curfew, given that these are primarily only available in Mingora.

Food Security

Food security is a key concern for households with most respondents reporting access to anything between 0 and 14 days of food stocks. The situation however varies widely on a number of different axes:

- Between rural and urban areas where: (a) access is significantly easier in the latter areas; and (b) larger more prosperous businesses were able to stockpile foods – though still large quantities of stockpiles are expiring as time passes.



- Between those who did and did not receive (and were able to bring back) food items prior to their return / during their displacement – which on the ground translates into a difference between those that were registered during their displacement and those that were not, and between those that were displaced in the first place and those that stayed behind.
- Between those with and without access to some liquidity to purchase those goods which are available in markets - **note** that although prices are currently higher than prior to the escalation in the conflict, the representatives of the Trade Union council had mentioned that there would be a commitment by its members to trade at regular prices.

As such, it is important to take into consideration some of the limitations of the assessment with regards to the issue of food security.

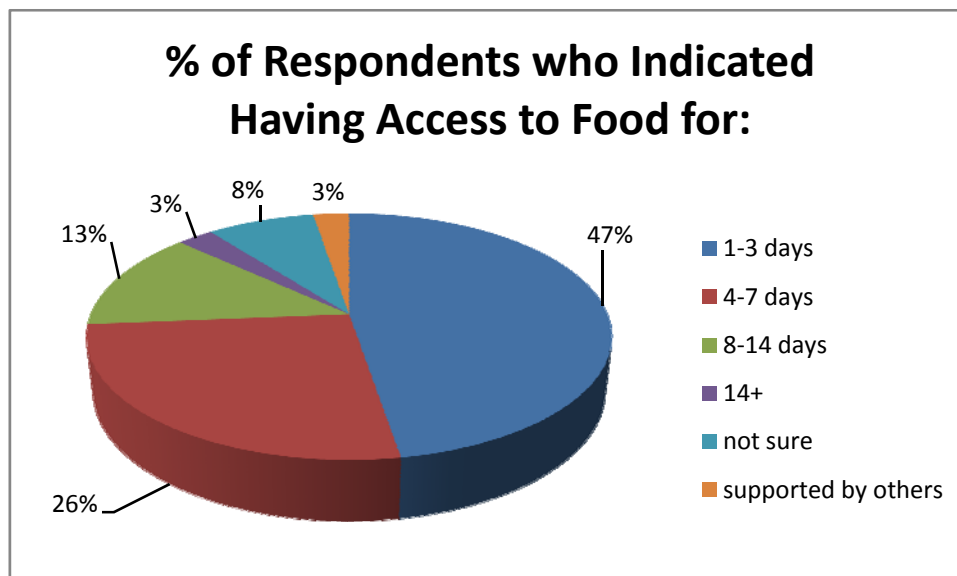
1. The relatively limited access of the team to rural areas further away from the main road has meant that a whole segment of the rural, generally more vulnerable, population was missed out from the assessment. From the data collected however, one could infer that given the more restricted availability of markets and supplies in rural areas, the issue of food security is likely to be much more significant in these areas.
2. Much the same argument also holds true with respect to the fact that most of the respondents were from the 'middle-class'. As such, it is likely that the situation will be much more severe amongst the poorest, most vulnerable families.

Whatever the case, one fact is clear: with the passing of time and without an improvement in the security situation, allowing for the resumption of trade, an easing of access and the resumption of livelihood / income generation activities, food insecurity at the household level will become a critical issue for the conflict affected families.

Some food distributions by local organisations have been taking place in Mingora for the poorest most affected families largely as a result of donations by the wider community. In particular, there has been an increase in the number of families from Upper Swat who have arrived in Mingora and are thus still heavily reliant on the support of either governmental/non-governmental support or that of hosting communities (see below *Emergency Needs*).

Statistical Data:

- 66% of households with access to food stocks had cereals, 3% vegetables, 8% cooking oil, 24% other items.
- 34% of households questioned had received food through distribution, though it was not asked whether the distributed items had been received prior to/- or after their arrival in Swat.





Income Generation / Livelihoods

Agriculture:

Across the agricultural sector differing intensities of damage has been inflicted by the conflict. Some key points:

- On average 85% of peach, wheat, plum, apricot, and onion crops have been lost either as a result of farmers not being able to care for the crops or due to the fact that crops could not be harvested/transported to market and were left to spoil on the land.
- The only UC in which farmers reported having been able to transport their produce (primarily fresh fruit) to vendors was Barikot.
- Wheat crops that were eventually harvested were still spoilt as they could not be threshed due to a lack of electricity and/or manpower.
- All maize crops were destroyed by the military.
- Rice paddies were affected by the fact that transplantation could not be undertaken at the proper time, and as a result to improper irrigation due to damaged irrigation canals.
- Landowners who usually received payment either in the form of rent or crop-sharing have been affected not only by the loss of the current crop[s] but also as a result of Taleban policy in which rents to landlords by tenant farmers were banned.
- Spoiled crops left in fields now risks further damaging the productivity of the land as the roots develop while farmers return to assess their damage. Uprooting of spoiled crops is expected to be a priority activity for farmers who will set about rehabilitating their land in time for the next cultivation cycle.

Small-Medium Businesses:

SME owners/businessmen reported the following:

- Widespread looting of their shops and warehouses by the Taleban and confiscation of items in their stores by the military;
- Food stocks with best-by dates rapidly expiring;
- Lack of customers due to (a) the imposed curfew; (b) as a result of the displacement; and (c) as a result of the low purchasing power of the general population.
- Lack of logistics capability and significantly increased costs of transportation ultimately eating into their ability to make a profit if the extra costs cannot be passed on to the customers.

Other:

- Daily labourers, who rely primarily on the agricultural sector and value-added activities derived from agriculture, report having been unable to generate income for the last 5-6 months.

Case Studies

Shopkeeper in Saidu Sharif – General Store

- Over 1 lakh of products expired with losses coming from foodstuffs: (46%), ice-cream or frozen products (15%), vegetable products i.e. pickles (5%), juices (15%), imported medicines and cosmetics (12%), and chips/snacks (7%) ... in addition to the loss of business due to the lack of customers.

Furniture Showroom Owner

- In a first assessment of his business, the value of items looted is placed at about 1.5 lakh rupees.
- Damage incurred to the showroom and damage to furniture estimated at 13.75 lakh rupees.
- His estimated costs of reconstruction amount to approximately 20 lakh rupees.

Car Mechanic

- Home hit by mortar.
- Used to make an income of around 4,000 PKR per day.
- Estimates losses at approximately 360,000 rupees in forfeited earnings.

Farmer

- Farmed crops of onion, cauliflower, radish, wheat, and maize.



- Rents a total of 5 acres at a cost of 1.2 lakh per annum.
- Used to generate incomes between 4 and 5 lakh per year from farming activities.
- In this past season, prior to the conflict intensification, he invested a total of 111.500 PKR in his activities: 40.000 in labour, 40.000 in an onion nursery and seed inputs, 24.000 in fertilisers and 7.500 in pesticides.
- He was able to harvest 300Kg of wheat, from 2.5 acres of land 50 bags of onion which he sold at 900 rupees per bag.
- Transportation costs incurred amounted to 24.000 PKR, thus putting his net income at around 17.000 rupees.

Key issue faced:

- Labourers are demanding 3-4 times the average daily wage (approx 600PKR/day) to compensate for security conditions, and often refuse to undertake fieldwork citing security at critical junctures of the crop cycle.

Dairy Farmer

- Owns 20 buffalo and 2 cows with an asset value of 1 lakh and 1.2 lakh per animal respectively.
- Used to sell milk in the market which generated an income of about 2.2 lakh per month.
- For the past 3 months there has been no market for milk, so he has been forced to provide milk free of charge to his community rather than dispose of it.
- As a result of a lack of electricity, he has not been able to produce Ghee, which would have ultimately diminished his losses from spoilt milk.
- Over the period of conflict he lost 4 of his livestock.

Key issue faced:

- The lack of feed and fodder availability has meant that his animals have stopped milking. As such he plans to sell the animals to a butcher who will likely pay him about half the asset value. With the money, he will procure new livestock and restart his activities.

NOTE: 1 Lakh Rupees is equivalent to: 100,000 PKR. To translate these figures into USD, the exchange rate of the day is of 80 PKR / 1 USD.



Ripe peach fruits fallen to the ground and spoiling



Widespread damaged sustained to shops and small businesses.

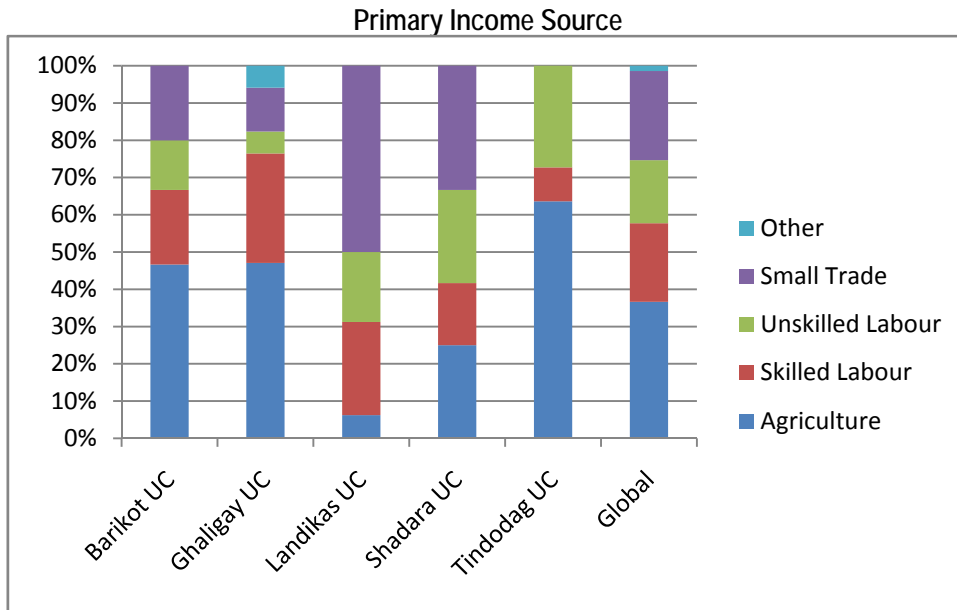


Statistical Data:

- 100% of respondents said they did not have access to cash either for daily needs or to restart their livelihood activities;
- The most significant expenditures faced by respondents were food and health-related costs;



- No households indicated having access to savings.



Infrastructure / Shelter

When asked to comment on the damage to infrastructure, most respondents immediately linked the question to schools and utilities infrastructure. While damage is widespread, a much more comprehensive assessment is required to be able to get a clear overview of the situation. As previously mentioned, this is currently being undertaken by the local authorities.

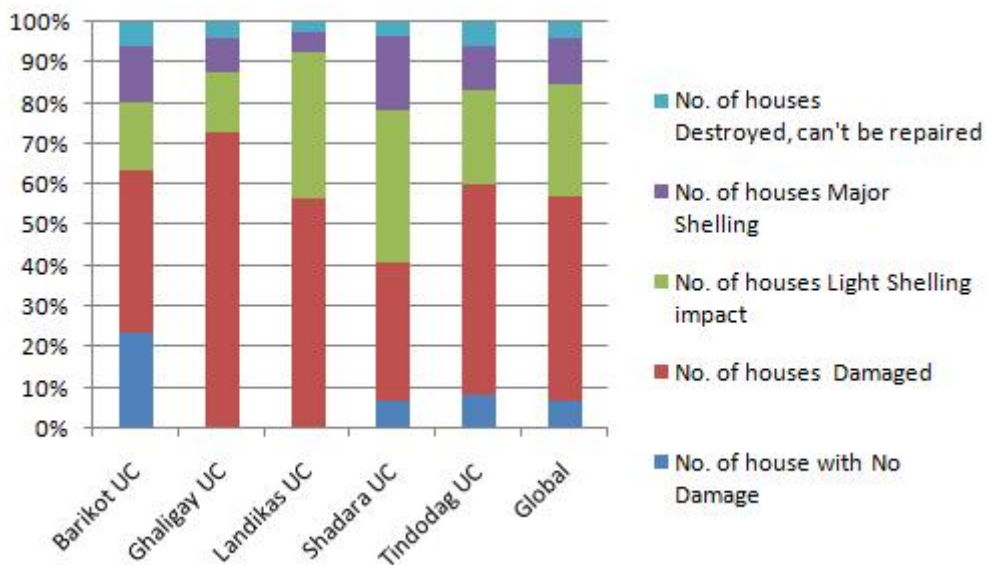
In relation to shelter, it is clear that the majority of homes have sustained some form of damage, ranging from bullet holes and broken windows to full and partial collapse of the structures (see pictures below).





Statistical Data:

Houses Reported Affected:

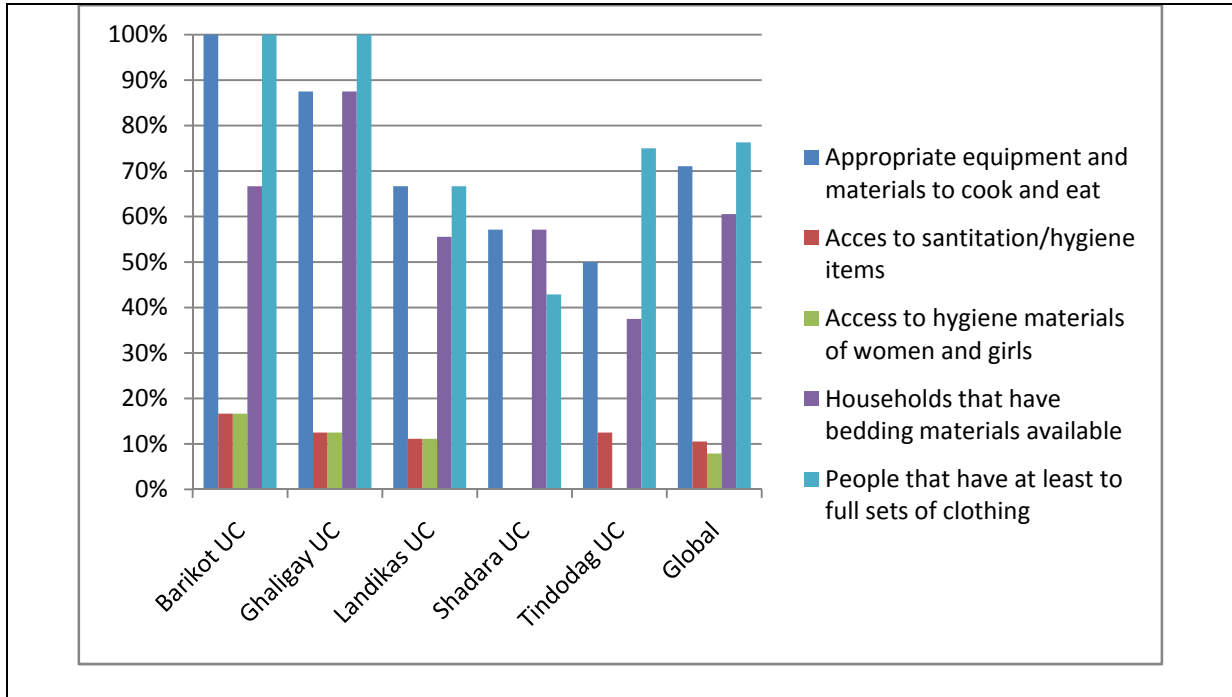


NFIs

When asked about NFI materials, almost all respondents made reference to the lack of hygiene materials, particularly in relation to items specific to women's needs. Some respondents indicated a need for household items, particularly for cooking.

Statistical Data:

Respondents Indicating having Access to:



Education

In almost every community there has been extensive damage to schools, especially girls' schools, and there is a reported lack of materials and furniture. With the government adamant to ensure that education services resume by 1st August (as reported by numerous news sources) the priorities in this sector will be:

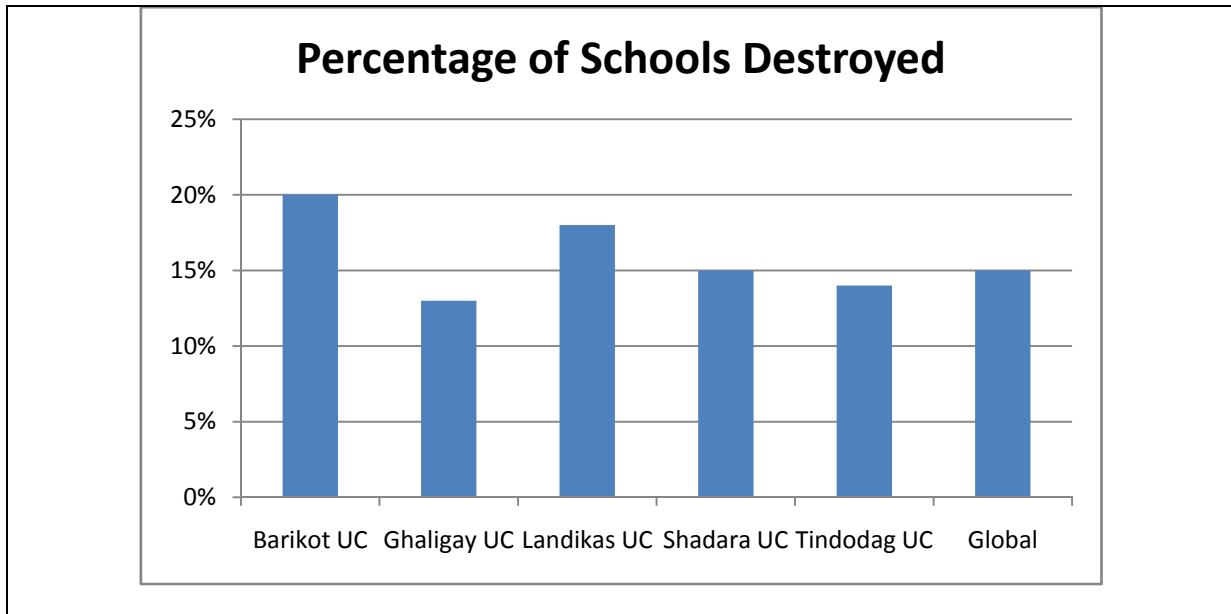
- The rehabilitation of those schools not entirely damaged;
- Provision of tents for those schools either occupied by security forces or requiring complete reconstruction;
- Provision of school materials including furniture, schoolbooks, notebooks, writing and teaching utensils, etc.
- Potentially introduce psycho-social therapy and recreation activities for children either within the realm of the school or directly within communities.

In the longer term, efforts will have to be made to re-introduce qualified women as teachers, engage poorer households to send their children to school, and reconstruct fully damaged schools.



Statistical Data:

- Total number of schools in Barikot (90), Ghaligay (240), Landikas (49), Shadara (34), Tindodag (35), Total (448).



Emergency Needs

Although the returns process has been carefully phased by the authorities with the initial focus being on open areas in southern areas, there has been a growing trend of returnees from northern areas reaching Mingora before finding that they could not proceed further. As such there is a growing IDP population within the Swat district, that is slowly but steadily increasing as the returns process continues. The team was unable to collect clear data on the numbers of IDPs in Mingora as this trend was still in its early stages and many are expected to live with relatives during this second phase of displacement. Nonetheless, local organisations such as the Omar Trust are collecting and providing food to those families living on the riverbanks in Mingora.

If the population of these Swat IDPs grows quickly, there will be a need to quickly facilitate the organisation of temporary camps or other shelter alternatives and sanitation infrastructure, as well as provide support to those hosting IDPs. Access to food and drinking water will quickly become priorities, given that the civic infrastructure, already significantly debilitated, will come under strain from this extra population load.

Protection

Psychological trauma amongst children and adults was repeatedly mentioned as a clear need within communities in both rural and urban areas. Particularly, as returnees return to some semblance of stability within their homes and villages, there has been a growing awareness of the limited availability of opportunities for children to engage in recreational activities and for women to re-engage with activities practiced prior to the period of control by the Taleban.

A further point raised indicated that there is a growing sense of dependency on external support amongst returnees, which is limiting the capacity of the social fabric of a community to take care of marginalised and most vulnerable groups in the community.

Children:

Conversations with children and their parents repeatedly led to stories of children running for cover at the first sight of helicopters, troop transporters, men with beards, and other occurrences that they associate with the fighting and displacement. Parents all indicate the lack of opportunity for recreational activities as negatively impacting the return for children now finding their familiar environments being littered with debris and signs of conflict. Child-friendly spaces within communities are thus much needed.

Women:

With Swat having once been a relatively liberal area prior to the rise in power of the Taleban, women were amongst those that had lost the most in terms of civil liberties and access to income generating opportunities, etc.



Two women-friendly bazaars that provided a safe environment for women to engage in mainstream activities, have been closed down and income generation possibilities within sectors that had traditionally had a large participation by women (i.e. health, education, Community Based Organisations / Networks and local NGOs, handicraft / embroidery shops) are now severely limited since these sectors similarly have been affected by the conflict.

4. Conclusion

The main conclusion to be drawn from this assessment is that a rapid transition to early recovery activities is required to effectively support communities in a way that empowers them to recover from the effects of the conflict and displacement. The authorities have committed themselves to the restoration of civil services, and our activities must seek to support this effort wherever possible. However, NGO added value is in supporting the most vulnerable members of communities to **(a)** restart their livelihood activities, **(b)** ensure that they have access to basic services (especially in terms of water supply and availability of sanitation infrastructure); **(c)** provide work opportunities for cash-strapped families with few income generation possibilities to get access to cash in return for supporting activities that rehabilitate community infrastructure such as schools and drainage; and **(d)** support community efforts to provide psycho-social support to those traumatised by events to date.

The key aim of the further missions to Swat must be to develop a practical, multi-sectoral implementation strategy for programmes to be implemented in the district. With the return of families to southern Swat who are unable to proceed further as a result of ongoing security operations, there should however be a dual-track approach to programming focussing on **(a)** the provision of drinking water, food, and non-food relief items (such as household kits or hygiene kits) to those returnees who remain unable to proceed; and **(b)** the early recovery of communities in southern areas who have benefitted from the relatively improved security situation and who now require support *through a participatory approach* as they seek to recover from the conflict and more recent displacement.