

Assessment of Internally Displaced Persons and Host Families in Swabi and Mardan Districts, North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan

Preliminary Findings

International Medical Corps

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BACKGROUND

Approximately 3.5 million people have been displaced since May 2 by conflict in NWFP, Pakistan and more than 18,000 families continue to flood out of conflict zones on a daily basis. Roughly 265,122 of IDPs are living in 19 camps located throughout NWFP and approximately 3.2 million have sought refuge in host communities throughout Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar and Charsadda. These IDPs have opted not to go to the camps and instead have found shelter discreetly, often in the poorest neighborhoods of unfamiliar communities, sometimes with friends and relatives, sometimes amid strangers in already overcrowded cities. In many cases, the communities hosting the displaced are as destitute as those they are helping and are facing severe shortages with regards to sanitation services and facilities. Humanitarian assistance has been in short supply for both IDPs and host communities. Currently, International Medical Corps (IMC) is engaged in supporting relief efforts for IDPs in Yar Hussain camp as well as for IDP and host communities in Swabi District through mobile medical units. With an objective to assess the needs and intentions of the rapidly growing IDP population in NWFP and the strain put on host communities, IMC conducted a rapid assessment in Swabi and Mardan Districts.

SURVEY METHODS

A representative sample of households in areas identified by local officials as having high concentrations of IDPs was randomly selected in Swabi and Mardan Districts. Interviews were conducted with a host family member (n = 109) and an IDP family member (n=127). All interviews are conducted in a private setting to the extent possible to ensure confidentiality. Participants gave their consent to be interviewed and were allowed to stop the survey at any time.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Demographic information for Respondents

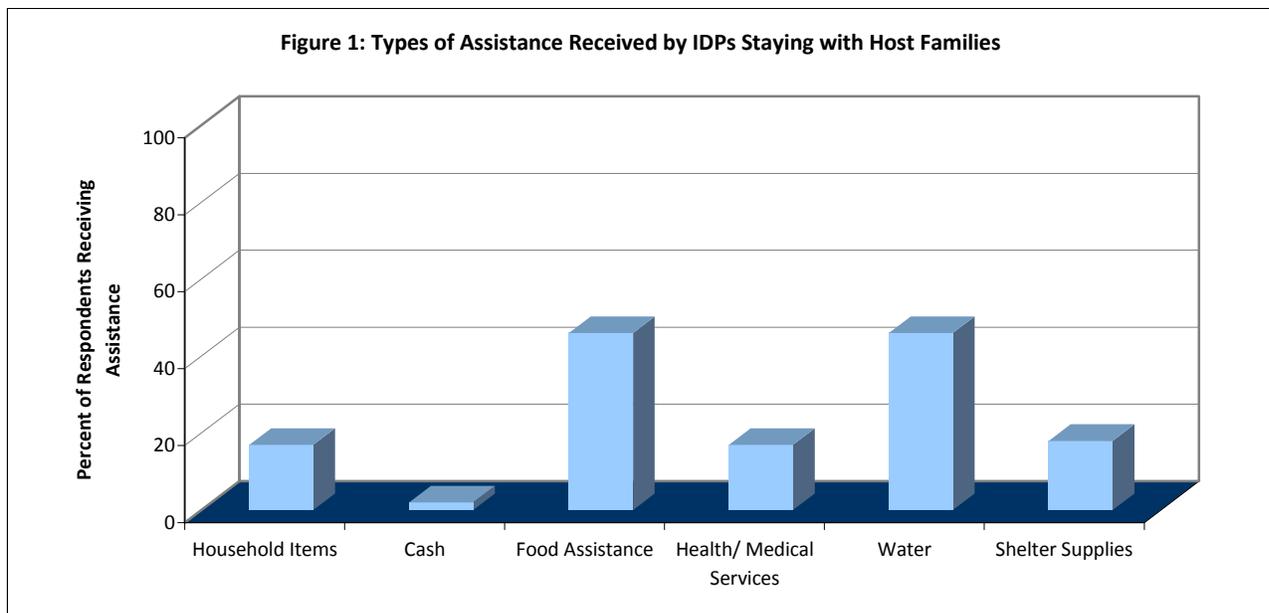
	Survey population			Location of Origin (for IDPs) or Location of Residence (Hosts)			
	Male	Female	Total	Buner	Swat	Mardan	Swabi
Host Family Respondents	49	60	109	--	--	32%	68%
IDPs Staying with Host Families	69	58	127	62%	35%	--	--

- The average household size of host families before the arrival of IDPs was 11.4, and for IDPs was 11.3.
- The IDP respondent population contains a small but notable number of people with special health needs: 55% of the displaced population is comprised of children under age 15, and approximately 10% of people are either physically disabled, mentally disabled, elderly, pregnant, or have a serious or chronic illness.
- Three-quarters of IDP respondents came from rural areas, and 70% owned land in their place of origin. The main source of income before displacement was typically daily labor or land and livestock cultivation.
- Nearly 60% of both IDP and host respondents have had no formal education.

KEY FINDINGS

IDPS IN HOST COMMUNITIES

- Virtually none of the displaced respondents (4%) had enough time to gather their belongings prior to leaving – almost half had less than 6 hours (43%), and another third (35%) had between 6 and 12 hours.
- Only half of IDP respondents have registered with UNHCR as displaced, highlighting the need for more coordinated registration efforts as IDPs must register in order for the international community to be able to identify needs and effectively deliver assistance.
- Three out of ten displaced respondents experienced a security incident during their displacement.
- Just under half of displaced respondents have received food and water assistance, and few have received health assistance, household items, or cash. The aid typically came from a UN agency or the government.



HOST COMMUNITIES

- The average host household has nearly doubled in size as a result of the influx of IDPs.
- On average, host households have 4 rooms excluding the kitchen and bathrooms, 2 of which are available for IDPs to sleep in.
- The majority of respondents report hosting a family for 2-4 weeks.
- Half of host respondents plan on permitting the IDP families to stay as long as they need support. However, the other half do not anticipate being able to host IDPs indefinitely. The primary reasons for this are too much of a financial burden and that there is not enough food to feed everyone —10% think that they can only support IDPs for less than 2 more weeks.
- Approximately 30% of both host and IDP respondents indicate familial ties, and another 30% are friends. Remarkably, 40% responded that they are neither friends nor family, but instead share a common religious affiliation, or have no relationship at all.

IDP AND HOST COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- The majority of IDPs are unsatisfied with the information provided to them about services for displaced persons – 39% have absolutely no source of information on services for IDPs (Table 2).
- More than two-thirds of all respondents are not confident that they will receive the assistance they require (Table 2).
- While both host and displaced respondents think that they have enough water for themselves and their families, only 61% of hosts and 28% of IDPs think that they have enough food. IDPs primarily have to purchase food with their own resources (Table 2).
- Approximately 30% of displaced respondents have concerns about access to education while displaced, the top concerns being the unavailability of schools and a lack of materials and supplies.
- Over three-quarters of IDP respondents have not enrolled their children in school while in displacement, whereas before displacement, only one quarter of children did not attend school.
- Although an overwhelming 94% of IDP respondents intend to return to their place of origin, naming physical safety, the restoration of basic services, and the absence of militants and government as the main prerequisites for return, 84% have no idea when they will be able to return.

Table 2: Concerns of IDPs and Host Families

Proportion of people who...	% of respondents	
	IDPs	Hosts
Think they have enough food for themselves and their families	28	61
Think they have enough water for themselves and their families	84	83
Experience an additional burden on their household due to hosting IDPs	-	42
Are confident that they will receive the assistance they require		
<i>Very confident</i>	0	0
<i>Fairly confident</i>	14	7
<i>Neutral/not confident</i>	71	66
Have concerns regarding access to education in displacement	31	-
Have concerns about their ability to access health services while in displacement	41	-
<i>Unavailability of health facilities</i>	14	-
<i>Lack of medicine and supplies</i>	18	-
Feel safe in their current location	80	-
Are satisfied with the information provided to them about services for IDPs		
<i>Satisfied</i>	7	-
<i>Neutral/unsatisfied</i>	65	-

ASSISTANCE NEEDS

- The first priority of displaced respondents is to obtain financial assistance (Figure 3). The next two greatest assistance needs are securing access to food and access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and electricity.
- Host family respondents named access to basic services as their greatest need, followed by financial assistance, food assistance, and access to health services as their next highest priorities.
- Respondents identified treatment for acute illnesses, followed by child health care and care for chronic illnesses as their top health priorities (Figure 3).
- One in five IDP respondents reported needing health services but not being able to obtain them, primarily because they could not afford it.

Figure 2: Main Health Priorities of IDP Respondents

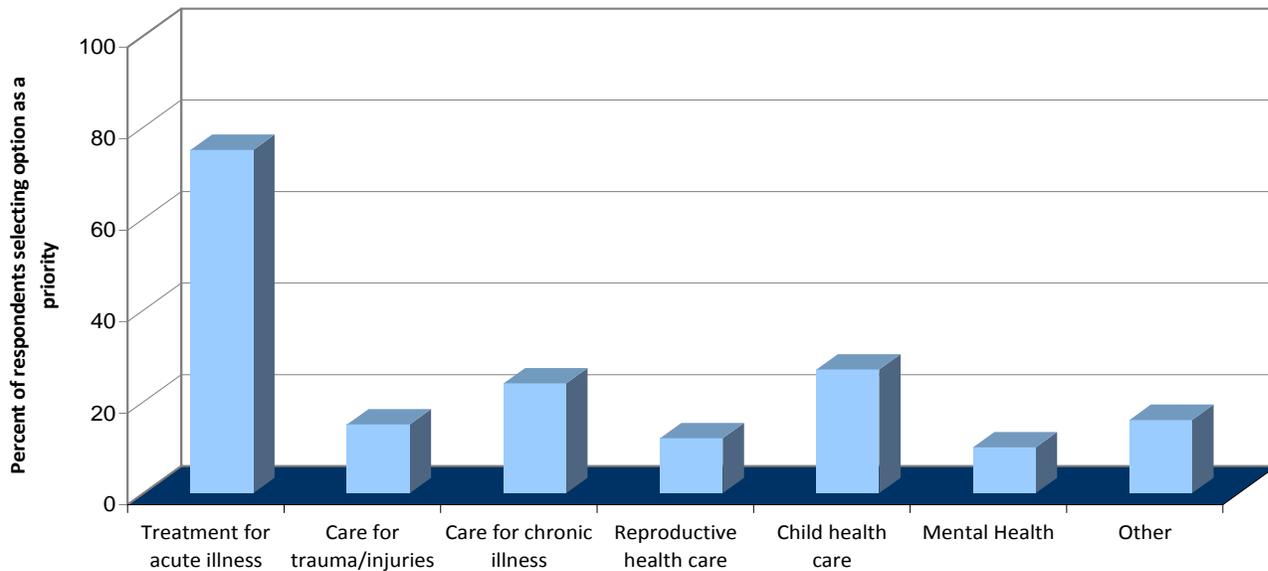
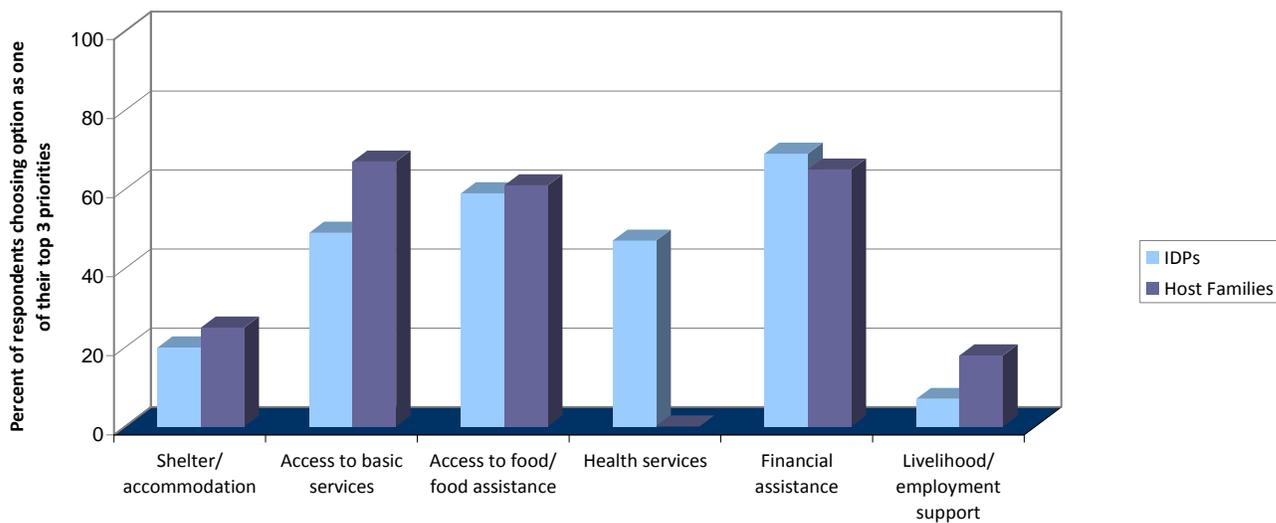


Figure 3: Greatest Needs for Assistance for IDPs and Host Families



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This assessment highlights the significant impact that the current displacement crisis is having in the lives of IDPs and the communities hosting them. Despite efforts to provide much-needed support, there continues to be a critical gap in assistance to both IDPs and host families, whose households have nearly doubled in size. Survey findings indicate a significant lack of registration by IDPs in host communities, without which it is difficult to deliver appropriate assistance. IDPs also lack sufficient information about available services and how to access them. Coordinated effort needs to be made to reach out to IDPs within host communities, with both information and much-needed assistance. Additionally, more attention needs to be paid to the needs of host populations. Concern is widespread, and increasing, within host communities about food supplies and access to basic services such as water and sanitation as the crisis continues. Equally important is the need to support health facilities, as many do not have adequate access to facilities nor the resources to use those present. Currently, neither IDPs nor host populations are receiving the assistance they require.

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