

RAPID ASSESSMENT REPORT

*(Report on the quick assessment of IDPs of Lower Dir, Buner and Swat
conducted by ICMC Pakistan in Mardan and Newshehra Districts of NWFP)*



ICP Camp, Govt. Girls School, Shamsi Road, Mardan, NWFP
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1. BACKGROUND/SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

According to government and UN sources (11th May 2009), around 70,513 families and 485,087 individuals have fled from the troubled areas of Lower Dir, Swat and Buner since the launch of intensive military operation by Pakistan Army on April 28, 2009. The IDPs have settled in camps or with host families in Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and other areas of NWFP. According to the recent estimates of UNHCR, UNOCHA and Special Support Group (SSG) of the government, cumulative number (old and new influx) of the displaced population is expected to rise to around 1.5 million with the increase in military action.

2. ASSESSMENT APPROACH

In order to have the first hand information of the situation and to validate the facts and figures shared by the UN, government and various organisations in different meetings and through reports, a three member team of ICMC Pakistan conducted a rapid needs assessment of the IDP situation. The main purpose of the assessment was to assess the extent of the problem, observe and find out what problems are being faced by IDPs and understand the geographical spread, location and work of other organisations.

3. AREAS VISITED

3.1. Jalala TFC

Jalala Transit Facilitation Center is located at approximately 30 minutes drive from Mardan city on the Swat-Mardan road. The center is operated by SRSP with the financial support of UNHCR to provide transportation facility to the displaced persons coming from Swat, Buner and Dir districts to designated IDP camps.

3.2. Jalala Camp

Jalala IDP Camp is situated opposite Jalala TFC on Swat-Mardan road. It takes around 3 hours to reach the camp from Islamabad. The camp was established in the first week of May and was immediately fully occupied by the IDPs. Currently, the camps hosts around 1,200 families and is being managed by UNHCR and the District Social Welfare Department.

3.3. Government Schools

The assessment team visited two out of the seven government schools located on Shamsi road in Mardan city that currently host around 450 displaced families.

3.4. Jalojai Camp

Jalojai camp is located on a large piece of land, 10kms away from Pabbi in district Nowshehra. The site is one of the largest among all other established camps. Previously, the camps site was identified by the provincial government to host Afghan Refugees. In recent past, it was made available for the IDPs coming from Bajaur during the first phase of the military operation. During the assessment, the team visited newly established phase 9 of the Jalojai Camp to host IDPs from Swat, Buner and Lower Dir.

4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE ASSESSMET

The ICMC assessment indicates that although most of the initial shelter/ water and food needs of the IDPs residing in Jalala camp are being fulfilled by various local NGOs, UNICEF and UNHCR, the IDPs still require support in kitchen utensils and other non-food items. Since most of the agencies are focusing on camps, less consideration is given to the IDPs living in make-shift camps or host communities. Visit to the Government Girls school in Mardan and meetings with some volunteers who were busy collected data revealed that around 450 families and 3,150 individuals are residing in the seven schools located on Shamsi Road in Mardan city. None of the government departments and humanitarian organizations has yet visited these schools. So far, the host population living around the schools has provided food, bedding and other items of basic use to the IDPs which by no

means are sufficient. The conditions in which the IDPs are living in the schools is disturbing with 10 and more families living together in one room without sufficient bedding, mosquito nets, food and drinking water. The hygiene conditions are poor and will continue to deteriorate with every passing day. Findings of the assessment that includes discussions with displaced women and men clearly indicate the need for NFIs, hygiene kits, other non-food items and food ration. There is very clear indication of potential for protection issues for women and children. The separated children and female headed households also face severe psychological trauma, as their parents or husbands were either left behind or are dead. Hence, along with basic food and non-food items, there is a great need for psychosocial counselling, hygiene education and awareness about gender and protection issues.

5. DETAILED FINDINGS

5.1. Transit Facilitation Centre, Jalala

5.1.1. Overview

With the support of UNHCR, Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) established five Transit Facilitation Centres (TFSS) also known as reception points, to facilitate the transportation of IDPs from conflict zones to camps in Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda, Peshawar and Nowshera districts. The assessment team visited Jalala TFC on Swat-Mardan road in District Mardan. The TFC is currently catering to the IDP influx from Swat, Buner and Dir districts.

5.1.2. Services extended by organisations

With the financial support from UNHCR, SRSP is providing free transport facility to displaced persons to their destinations in host communities, camps or government schools. Displaced persons are also provided with information on registration points in each district, extended distribution points established by UN, location of camps and schools for shelter and addresses of functional government health facilities. There is a separate waiting area for men and women where they are provided with energy drinks, energy biscuits, drinking water. The TFC is equipped with electricity and sanitation facilities.

5.1.3. Main Problems

The TFC is well established and provides basic facility to the IDPs in their transit phase. Assessment team felt that the idea of TFC is very good in terms of providing initial support, guidance and facilities to the IDPs. Since the weather is becoming hotter, the only problem is that IDPs have to wait till a group of five to six families is formed before they are transported to their destinations. SRSP is doing its best by providing food, drinks and shelter facilities to the IDPs waiting to be transported.

5.1.4. Immediate Needs

Since TFC is only providing transit facility to IDPs, there is not much that is needed to equip the TFC. The IDPs are provided with drinks, food and have access to shelter and sanitation facilities. Any IDP requiring immediate medical assistance is transported to nearby health facility by SRSP. Fans have been installed and provision of electricity is ensured in the TFC.

5.2. Jalala Camp

5.2.1. Overview

Jalala camp was setup in first week of May by UNHCR for the IDPs of Buner, Dir and Swat. According to official record provided by Centre of Excellence for Rural Development (CERD), around 1,265 displaced families have arrived in the camp so far, and further arrival is expected with increase in military operation and occasional lift in curfew.

5.2.2. Services extended by organisations

UNHCR has erected around 1,000 tents to accommodate the IDPs. Since the space at camp site is limited, establishment of additional tents is not possible. Therefore, most of the displaced population is directed to other larger camps. UNICEF has established latrines to provide sanitation facilities. Al-Khidmat Foundation and other local NGOs are providing food and water to the camp population. Merlin operates an MCH in the camp with a female doctor and necessary medicines. CERD, SPARC and other local NGOs and charity wings of political parties are also providing services to displaced persons. CERD is currently responsible for the registration of IDPs as implementing partner of UNHCR. The assessment team was told that UNICEF is planning to setup Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) in the camp for the protection, education and psychosocial counselling of children. World Food Programme (WFP) has erected its warehouse and will start food-distribution in a day or two.

5.2.3. Main Problems

With the summer approaching fast the days and nights are becoming hotter with each passing day. Since the camp site lacks electricity, increasing heat coupled with mosquitoes is causing troubles for the dwellers of cold region. Apart from heat, all other basic needs are currently being fulfilled by the agencies working in the camp. However, many IDPs and representatives of NGOs pointed out the need of kitchen utensils, especially pots and containers to store water. In addition, there is a great need of psychosocial counselling and protection for the displaced population, especially women and children.

5.2.4. Immediate Needs

The assessment indicated that clothes, slippers, emergency lights, cooking utensils, hygiene kits, water coolers, washing detergents and bedding are some of the most immediate requirements of the displaced population living in Jalala camp.

5.3. Government Schools

5.3.1. Overview

Social Welfare Department with the assistance of UNHCR is carrying out registration process of all IDPs living outside camps with families and friends. So far, more than 77,516 families corresponding to 462,528 individuals have been registered outside the camps in 11 districts of the province. According to unofficial information, the district government has allocated more than 200 government schools in Mardan district to host displaced families due to unavailability of space at the camps. The assessment team visited two out of the 13 government schools hosting IDP population located on Shamsi Road in Mardan city. In the two schools visited, namely Government Girls High School No. 1 and Government Primary School No. 2 host around 70 families. Classrooms have been emptied to accommodate around 4-5 families in each room.

5.3.2. Services extended by organisations

Since the focus of government agencies, UN organizations and national and international NGOs is primarily on established camps, not a single organization had been to the two schools visited by ICMC assessment team. The displaced population is either taking care of themselves or getting enormous support from the local people from the neighbourhood. Neighbours collected funds to purchase floor mats and provide cooked food to the displaced persons.

5.3.3. Main Problems

The situation in the schools is very poor. Although, some local political figures and neighbours are providing support to the IDPs in terms of food, water and other basic NFIs, but still the support is not sustainable. The IDPs lack items of basic necessity such as clothes, slippers, towels, soaps, cooking utensils, beddings etc. Men, women and children are in need of psychosocial support and trauma counselling to cope up with the situation

they are facing. A number of families were separated or left behind and there is no information on location of the separated persons. This has caused a lot of uncertainty and depression among the IDPs. Lack of food, clean drinking water and poor hygiene conditions are causing distress to the residents and are expected to create serious health problems.

5.3.4. Immediate Needs

The displaced families are in immediate need of hygiene kits, cooking/kitchen utensils, food packs, mosquito nets, beddings, water coolers, life saving drugs (basic medicines), slippers and clothes. The children need to be involved in learning and recreational activities in a safe place to mitigate effects of conflict and displacement. In order to inform women, children and their families regarding issues and potential threats of child protection and gender based violence, regular awareness raising sessions must be conducted. The IDPs also need trauma counselling services to enable them to cope up with their situation.

5.4. Jalojai Camp

5.4.1. Overview

Jalojai camp is one of the largest camps situated 35 kilometres southwest of Peshawar, 10kms away from Pabbi in district Nowshera. The camp was originally established for Afghan Refugees in 1980. The camp was officially closed in February 2002 but was reopened in August 2008 to accommodate the influx of around 260,000 IDPs from Bajaur. With the recent military operation, Jalojai Phase 7, 8 and 9 were established to host the fleeing population from Swat, Buner and Dir. Currently, Jalojai phase 9 is being extended to host another 1,500 families.

5.4.2. Services extended by organisations

In phase 9 of the Jalojai camp, a number of organizations are providing services to the IDPs. The camp was established by UNCHR in terms of tent pitching and is currently managed by CERD and Commissionerate of Afghan Refugee (CAR). Social Welfare Department is registering the IDPs together with UNHCR, whereas basic NFIs and provided mainly by UNHCR and some other local organisations. WFP is providing food packets but various other NGOs and charity wings of some political parties are providing cooked food to the displaced population. UNICEF has established latrines and water containers. Water is provided through water tankers. Merlin has established medical health centre to provide basic health services.

5.4.3. Main Problems

Although, most of the immediate needs of the displaced population is being fulfilled by several agencies, but still some of the IDPs had few concerns. For example, a displaced person complained that food is not provided on time and the ration allocated to IDPs of Swat is distributed to IDPs of Bajaur. Due to the vast area and huge camp population, adults and children often get lost in the camps.

5.4.4. Immediate Needs

Apart from the services extended by several organisations, there is still need of mosquito nets, water tanks, beddings and doctors/medical facility. Camp management should also install directional signboards in the camps to ensure protection of women and children, avoid incidents of missing children and adults and provide easy access to IDP to and from their tents.

6. PICTURE GALLERY

JALALA TFC



JALALA CAMP



GOVT. SCHOOLS, MARDAN



JALOZAI CAMP



7. INTERVIEW/DISCUSSION REFERENCES

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2. Displaced females, Jalala TFC
3. Mr. Shahid Ali, Centre of Excellence for Rural Development, Jalala Camp
4. Mr. Hamid, Centre of Excellence for Rural Development, Jalala Camp
5. Dr. Alaina, Volunteer, Merlin MCH, Jalala Camp
6. Displaced females, Jalala Camp
7. Mr. Samdani, Camp In-charge, UNHCR, Jalala Camp
8. Haji Naseem-ur-Rehman, President, Mardan Chamber of Commerce, Government Girls High School No. 1, Shamsi Road, Mardan
9. Female Volunteers, Government Girls High School No. 1, Shamsi Road, Mardan
10. Mr. Mohammad Jamal, Volunteer, Government Primary School No. 1, Shamsi Road, Mardan
11. Medical Officer, Merlin, Jalozaï Camp
12. IDPs at Jalozaï Camp