

Cameroon | Far North Region | Return Intention Survey
Round 14 | 13 – 26 June 2018



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SUMMARY

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed a displacement tracking system, the *Displacement Tracking Matrix* (DTM) to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. DTM's tools gather information on various levels and of various kinds, including information on where displacements occur, why they occur, the length of displacement, and the intentions and conditions of migrants and internally displaced individuals. This information is shared with relevant stakeholders, including humanitarian and government.

The information presented in this report was collected directly from displaced populations (internally displaced, out of camp refugees and returnees) in the Cameroon's Far North Region between 13 and 26 June 2018.



4,064 households (or 32,159 individuals) were interviewed in 786 locations, in 6 departments in the Far North Region.



46% of surveyed households were IDPs, 38% were returnees and 16% were out of camp refugees.



36% of surveyed households received humanitarian assistance, especially food and non-food items.



82% of surveyed households were displaced due to conflicts. Among them, 82% were displaced due to attacks to their area of origin, 37% due to the destruction of their houses, and 26% due to attacks in the nearby locations. 17% of households were displaced due to floods, <1% due to inter-community conflicts, and <1 in search for aid.



74% of IDPs and refugees did not want to leave their current place. 22% wanted to return to their origin place and 4% wanted to move somewhere else.



IDPs' and refugees' main reasons to return to their area of origin were the search for livelihoods (51%) and lack of services (49%).



IDPs' and refugees' pre-conditions to return were the presence of security forces (69%), better access to basic services (38%), housing repairing (34%), and the provision of international assistance (26%).



Households' main reasons to return were the improvement of the security conditions in their origin location (70%), better livelihoods access in their origin place (34%) and the absence of humanitarian assistance in their current place (32%).

INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Since 2014, Cameroon has been affected by attacks perpetrated by the violent armed groups. The frequent threats and attacks on towns and populations continue to provoke significant displacement throughout the Far North Region. Due to its geographic position and cultural links (including proximity to Chad and Nigeria), the region has experienced significant material and human loss.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) established the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in the Far North region in November 2015 to gain insight into the profiles and movements of internally displaced people (IDPs), out of camp refugees and returnees, as well as their needs and vulnerabilities. The information collected is intended to provide both the Government of Cameroon and the humanitarian community with a better understanding of population movement and displacement in the Far North Region.

In order to ensure a common understanding of the populations targeted in this report, the following definitions are used:

- An internally displaced person (IDP) is a person who is forced to leave his or her place of origin and move to another location within the same country. These movements are generally caused by external circumstances, including natural disasters and conflict².
- An out of camp refugee is a person who is a national of a country other than the one he or she is currently in and who fled his or her country of origin, but is not living in an official refugee camp.
- A returnee is a person who had been living in an area other than his or her area of origin (within the same country or abroad) and has returned to his/her area of origin. A distinction is therefore made between former IDPs and returnees from abroad.

METHODOLOGY

During this round of data collection, DTM has carried out a number of evaluations at department, district and location levels, gathering information on the displaced populations in the Far North Region. Data collected during Round 14 will be presented in the Report 14 on displacements³.

In addition to these evaluations, DTM has carried out a survey on a sample of displaced households, which was defined during the first step of the evaluation, carried out at department level. The households that were part of the sample were randomly selected on the basis of a list of households, provided by the leader of each location evaluated. The list of locations surveyed was also established during an evaluation at district level and included the locations where displaced populations lived (IDPs, refugees and returnees).

² <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms>

³ <https://displacement.iom.int/reports/cameroon-%E2%80%94-rapport-de-d%C3%A9placement-14-13-26-juin-2018?close=true>

The sample method consists of carrying out an evaluation at household level. The household survey is based on the household sample defined in the departmental evaluation and the list of villages established in the district evaluation in coordination with the village chief. The sample was defined using a confidence interval of 95 per cent on a population of 359 222 individuals, with a margin error of 5 per cent.

DTM data collection was carried out by the enumerators who were deployed in the sites evaluated, under the direct responsibility of the DTM team. They were separated into three categories: focal points, team leaders and enumerators, thus facilitating the coordination while the information was gathered. The enumerators involved in the implementation of this tool were regularly trained on DTM methodology in Maroua and Kousseri. This capacity building exercise, conducted several times a year, is intended to strengthen local data collection and analysis capacity.

Electronic tablets were used during data collection to facilitate analysis and to improve data accuracy and validity. Four different forms were saved on the tablets, enabling a tailored line of questioning for each level of the exercise. These levels included the departmental level, the district level, the village level and the household level. The tablets were formatted to ensure coherent and complete information, thus minimizing human error.

The DTM data collection for this fourteenth round was carried out by 107 enumerators from 13 to 26 June 2018. During this round of data collection, 1591 households were surveyed, including 1,924 IDP households, 649 out of camp refugee households and 1591 returnee households. Data was collected in 786 sites, 37 districts, six departments in the Far North Region (Diamaré, Logone-et-Chari, Mayo-Danay, Mayo-Kani, Mayo-Sava and Mayo-Tsanaga).

The local authorities were involved in all the steps of the data collection and the final results were validated by the Governor of the Cameroon's Far North Region.

LIMITATIONS

Since the survey is based on a sample that was not completely random, the results of the data collection cannot be extrapolated or generalised to the whole displaced population of the Far North Region. However, the results were weighted in relation to the total number of identified displaced populations in the Far North Region, thus reducing the risk of bias linked to a non-random sample.

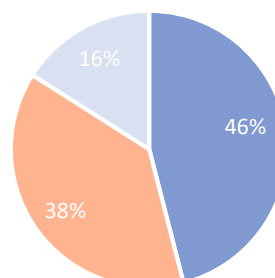
Moreover, it was difficult to access certain locations due to heavy rains and enclaving. In Logone-Et-Chari, the access to some location was impeded due to the security situation.

DISPLACEMENTS

DISPLACED POPULATION

Among 4, 164 surveyed households (32, 159 people), 46 per cent (or 1,924 households, or 14, 500 people) were internally displaced people, whereas 38 per cent (or 1,591 households including 13,054 people) were returnees and 16 per cent (649 households including 4,605 people) were refugees.

Graph 1: Breakdown of surveyed households by population category

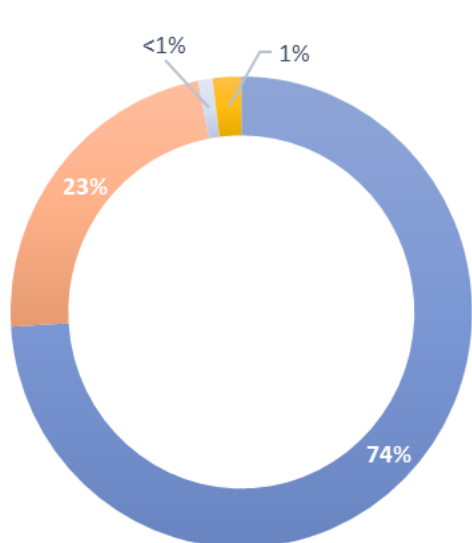


■ IDPs ■ Returnees ■ Out of Camp Refugees

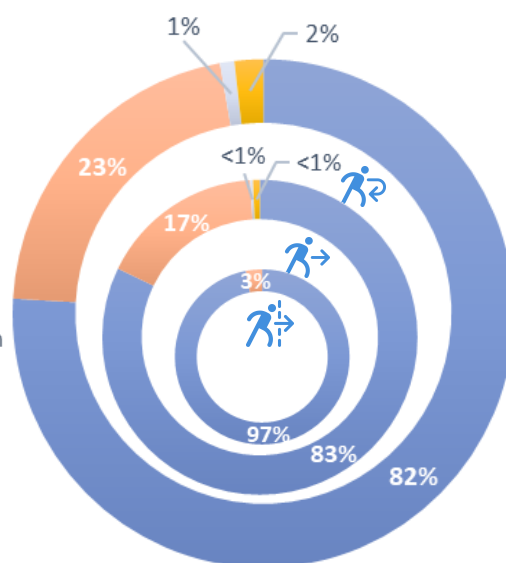
REASONS OF DISPLACEMENT

Eighty-two per cent of households (or 3,401 people⁴) were displaced due to the Boko Haram conflict, 17 per cent of them (or 5,043 individuals) were displaced due to natural disaster (floods), and two per cent due to inter-community conflicts or in search of humanitarian aid.

While almost all the refugees (97%) were displaced due to conflicts, 17 per cent of IDPs and 23 per cent of returnees were displaced due to natural disasters. The increasing number of returnees who had been displaced due to floods (19% and 21% during the last two rounds) seems to indicate that the conditions in the region have gradually improved, thus easing their return.

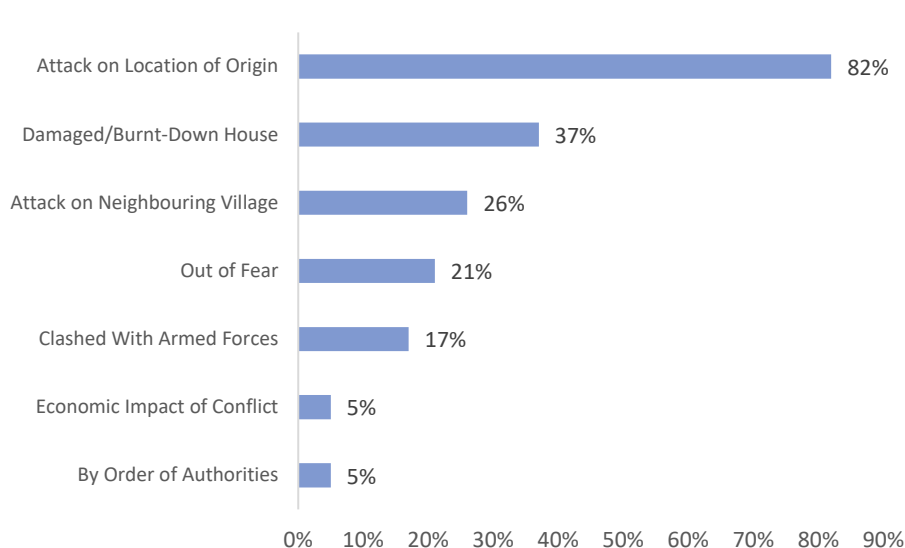


Graph 2 : Displacement reasons (total population)



Graph 3 : Displacement reasons (by population category)

⁴ Numbers were weighted in relation to the total number of displaced households identified during Round 14



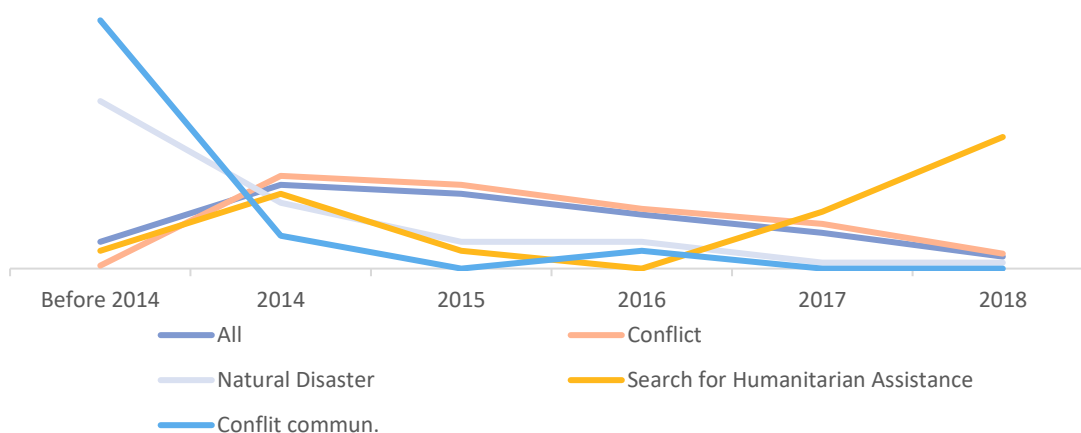
The main reasons of displacement reported by households displaced due to Boko Haram conflict were: attacks in their area of origin (82%), destruction of their homes (37%), attacks in nearby villages (26%), and fear (21%).

Graph 4: Displacement reasons (displaced population due to conflicts)

DISPLACEMENT PERIODS⁵

Most of households were displaced in 2014 (28% of displacements), when the Boko Haram conflict started in Cameroon and due to big floods. 25 per cent were displaced in 2015, and 20 per cent in 2016. The number of displacements has gradually decreased since 2014, reaching the lowest percentage at the end of June 2018, when 4 per cent of displacements occurred.

The displacement periods varied according to the surveyed households' reasons of displacement. Thirty-one per cent of the households displaced due to the Boko Haram conflict were displaced in 2014, 28 per cent in 2015, and 20 per cent in 2016. This period corresponds to the years where the Boko Haram group was very active in the Far North Region. On the contrary, most the households who were displaced due to floods (55%) were displaced before 2014, specifically after the floods that affected the Far North Region of Cameroon in 2012, and in 2014 (22%). Even though displacements linked to conflicts have decreased in the last few years, conflict continues to be a major cause of displacement.

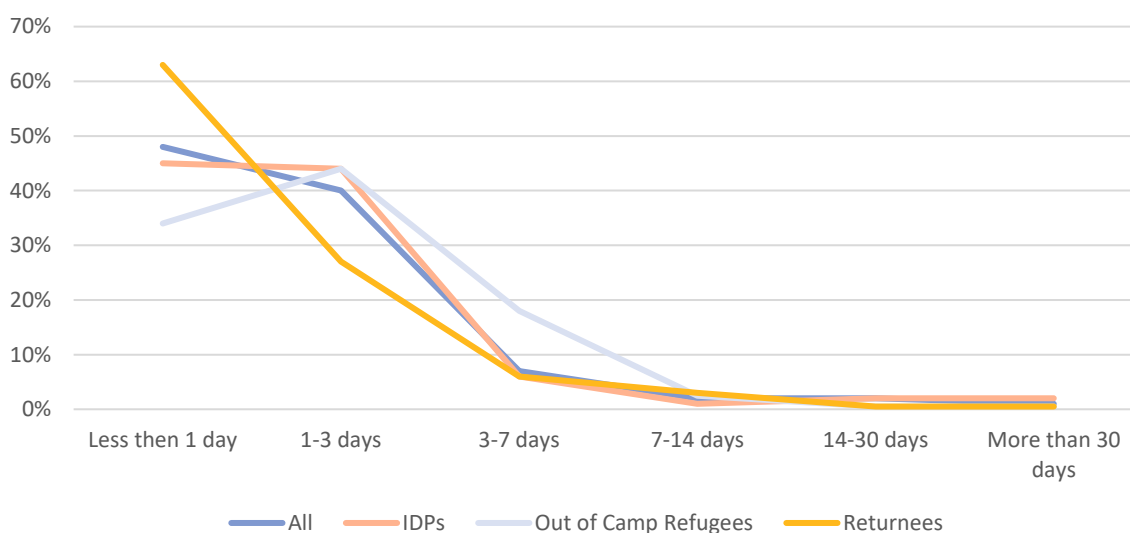


Graph 5: Period of displacement by reason of displacement

⁵ Numbers were weighted in relation to the total number of displaced households identified during Round 14

TRAVEL DURATION AND MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION⁸

More than 80 per cent of the displaced population (89% of IDPs, 78% of refugees and 90% of returnees) indicated having travelled less than three days from their area of origin to their area of destination with nearly half (48%) of the groups travelling less than one day. On the contrary, 18 per cent of refugees travelled for about a week. Most displaced households (76%) reached their destination by foot, thus suggesting that the area of displacement was relatively close to their area of origin.



Graph 6: Travel duration by population category

Nearly all the surveyed households were displaced together and only once (82%), or in small groups on the same day (15%). One per cent of the households still had part of their family in the area of origin.

While most of refugee households (77%) were displaced mainly in groups with other families, 46 per cent of IDP households, and 51 per cent of returnee households travelled alone.

CHALLENGES FACED

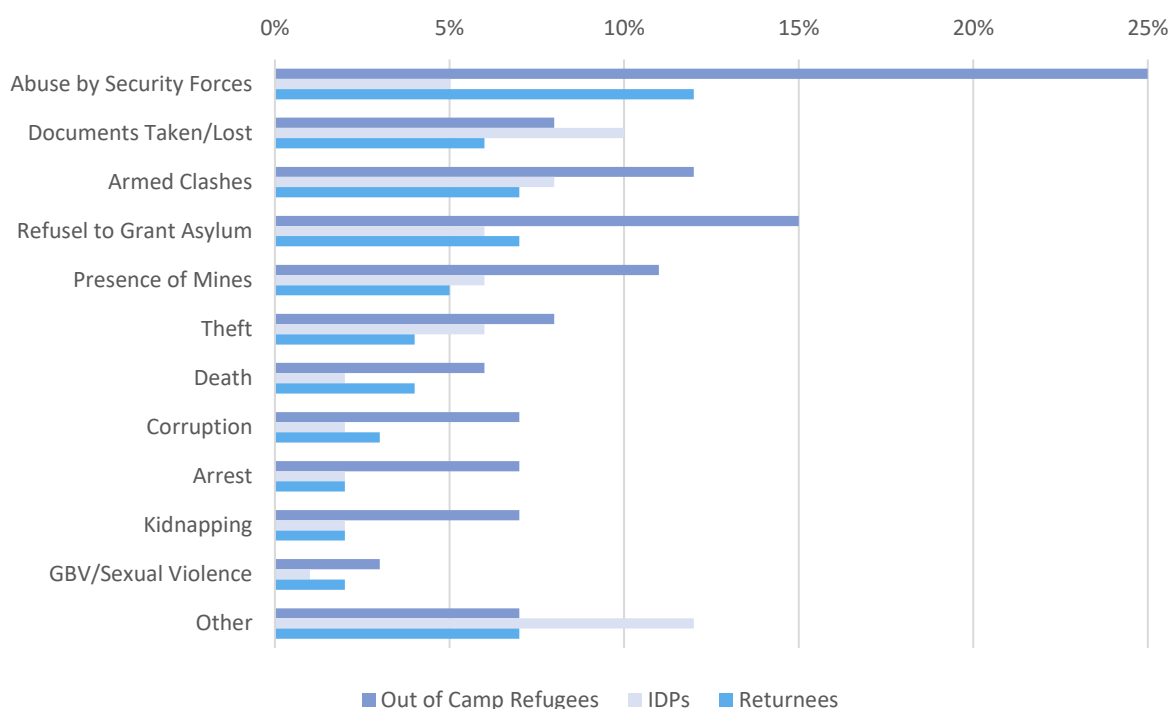
Among the surveyed households, refugees have faced the highest number of challenges compared to the other categories of displaced people. In fact, only 39 per cent of refugee households reported not facing any challenges, compared to 60 per cent in the case of both IDPs and returnees.

Internally displaced individuals, refugees and returnees faced similar challenges during their displacement. The most common reported challenges were abuses perpetrated by security forces (25% of refugee households and 12% of returnee households), denial in request of asylum (15% of refugees, 6% of IDPs and 7% of returnees), and armed violence (12% of refugees, 8% of IDPs and 7% of returnees).

More refugees than IDPs have reported facing some challenges during their displacement. This is particularly clear with regards to the abuses perpetrated by security forces (reported five times more by refugees than IDPs and twice more than returnees), arrests (reported four times more by refugees

than IDPs and returnees), kidnapping (reported four times more by refugees than IDPs and returnees), sexual violence’s (reported three times more by refugees than IPDs and twice more than returnees).

RETURN TO THE AREA OF ORIGIN



Graph 7 : Challenges faced during displacement by population category

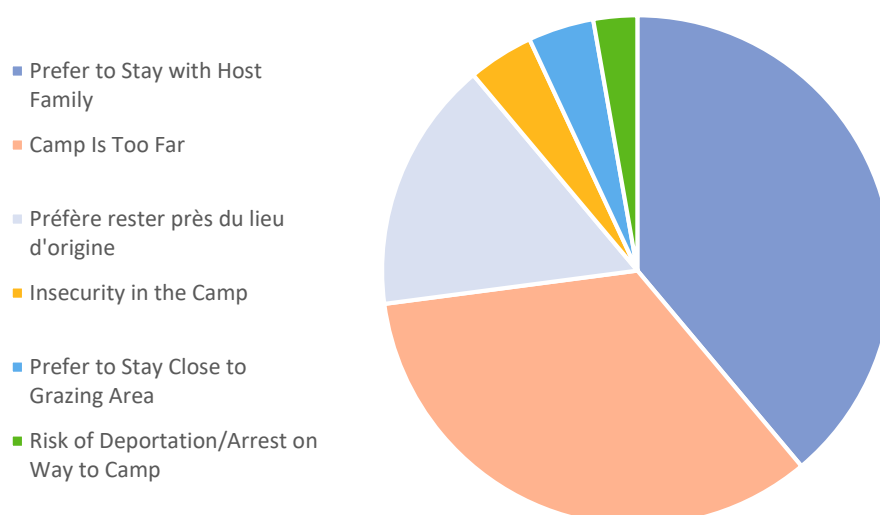
A minority of the surveyed displaced households (24%) regularly returned to their area of origin. The fact that a smaller proportion of refugees (6%) than IDPs (29%) returned to their origin area could be explained by the insecurity situation in the northeast of Nigeria and by IDPs’ greater distance to their place of origin. More households displaced due to floods (59%) than those displaced due to conflicts (18%) returned to their area of origin.

An increasing number of displaced households considered the possibility to return to their area of origin. A quarter of households (25%) reported that their main reason to return was to cultivate their land, while 23 per cent and 22 per cent have visited their area of origin to assess the possibility to return and to check the conditions of the area. Twice as many households displaced by floods (37%) as displaced by conflicts (16%) returned to their area of origin to evaluate a potential return, whereas, more households displaced due to conflicts returned to check the conditions of their area of origin (32% against 2%).

RELATIONS WITH THE HOST COMMUNITY

Less than one per cent of displaced households reported the existence of some tensions with the host communities. On the contrary, the majority (68%) of them reported that host communities wanted to help them, but they did not have the means to do so.

The existence of good relations between the displaced populations and the host communities explain why 56 per cent of refugees reported to want to live with their host family rather than going to live in Minawao camp. Moreover, nearly half of them (49%) reported that the camp was too far.



Graph 8 : Reasons why out of camp refugees do not want to move to Minawao camp

LIVELIHOODS AND ASSISTANCE⁶

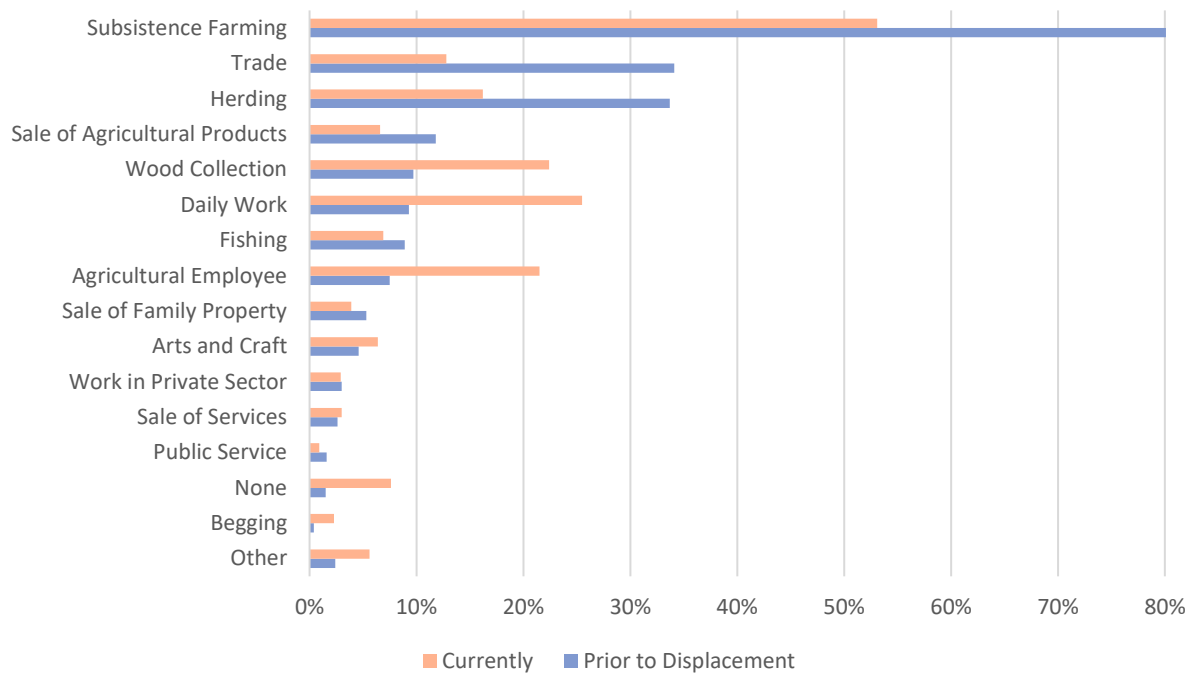
LIVELIHOODS

Before being displaced, most of the displaced populations (80%) were subsistence farmers, while others were traders (34%) or farmers (34%).

Livelihoods based on the production of their own food significantly decreased. Moreover, some of the main activities displaced population were doing before being displaced decreased due to their displacement. The number of surveyed trader households decreased by 63 per cent, while the number of households who were farmers decreased by 34 per cent.

On the contrary, the number of households who reported begging able to satisfy their basic needs increased by five times since displacement. The number of households collecting firewood doubled and the number of households selling their services for remuneration, either as farm workers or daily workers, tripled.

⁶ Numbers were weighted in relation to the total number of displaced households identified during Round 14

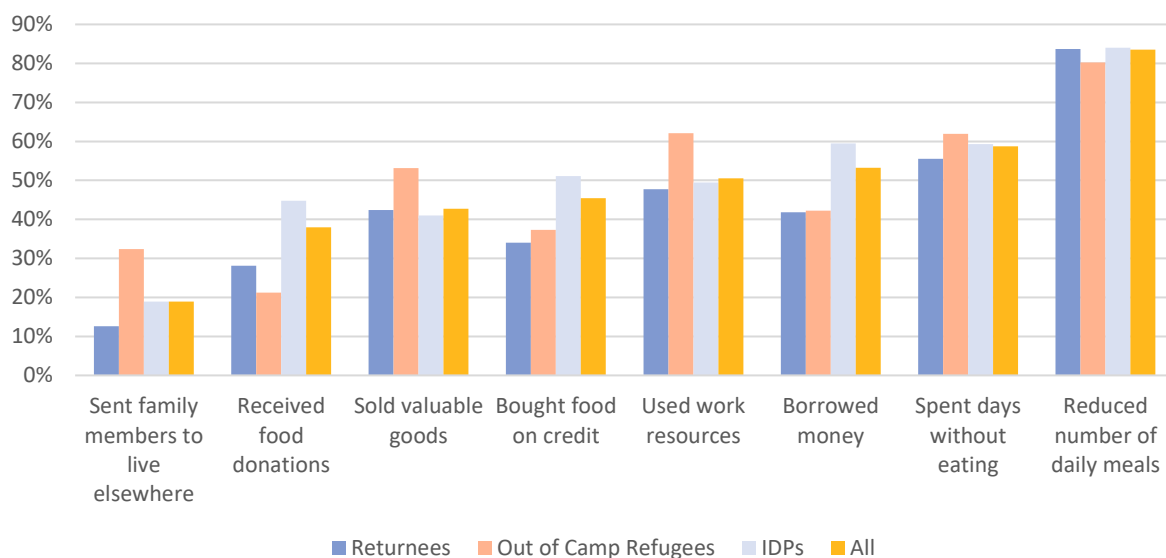


Graph 9: types of livelihood of surveyed households before and after displacement

SHORTCOMINGS AND NEEDS

Displacement significantly changed the ways and the means of subsistence of the displaced populations, who had to adapt their diet and life style, sometimes in a drastic way, in order to survive. Most of surveyed households (83%) reported having reduced the number of daily meals in the two weeks preceding the survey, while more than half (59%) did not eat for some days in the same period. Moreover, 53 per cent of households had to lend some money, and 51 per cent reported having to eat their supplies, cattle and seeds or to sell their tools to survive.

The comparison of the different displaced population categories shows that more IDPs than refugees and returnees had to borrow some money (60%), had to ask for a loan to buy some food (51%), and had to receive food donations (45%). On the other hand, more refugees than the other categories were forced to sell or use their work resources (62%), they did not eat for days (62%) and they sent part of their family to live somewhere else (32%).

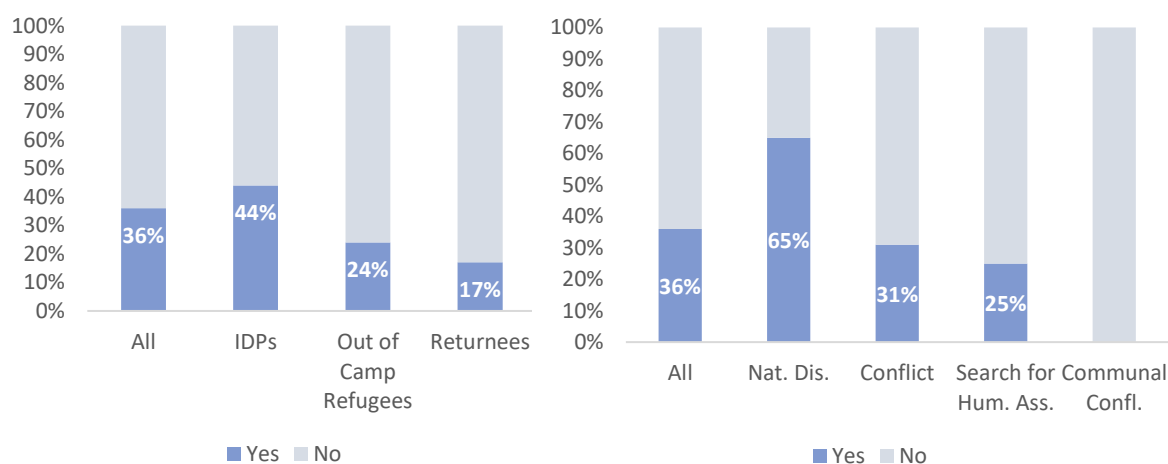


Graph 10: Coping strategies taken by surveyed households, by population category

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

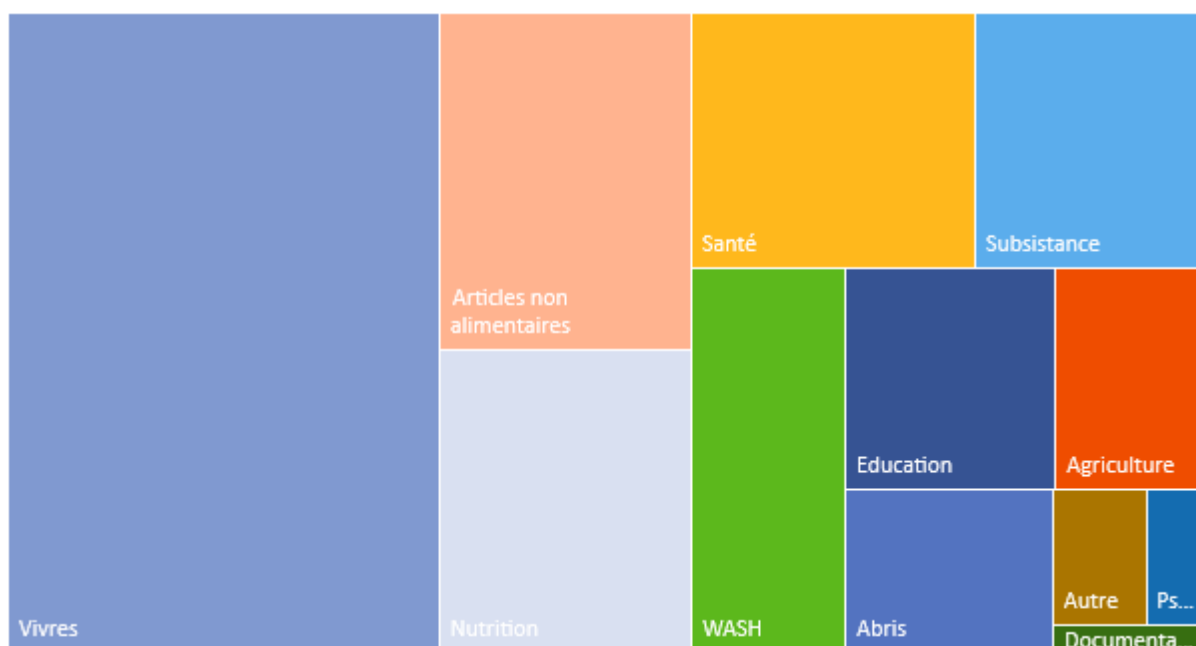
Thirty-six per cent of displaced households received humanitarian assistance, while 64 per cent did not receive any. A higher percentage of IDPs (44%) than returnees (24%) and refugees (17%) received humanitarian assistance.

While more than half of households displaced due to floods (65%) and 31 per cent of households displaced due to conflicts received some aid, those households displaced due to inter-community conflicts did not receive any assistance. Finally, only a quarter of the households seeking aid assistance reported having received some aid.



Graph 11 : Surveyed households who received humanitarian assistance, by population category and reason of displacement

The main types of assistance received by the displaced populations were food (65% of households), non-food items (20%), and nutrition. On the contrary, one per cent of households received assistance to obtain some documents, two per cent received psychosocial support and eight per cent received shelter aid. These proportions were similar across the different categories.

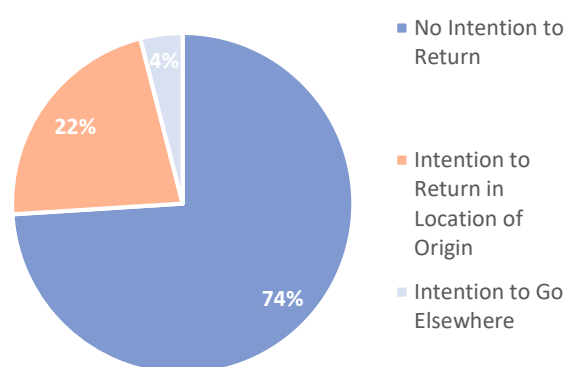


Graph 12 : Types of assistance received

INTENTIONS AND RETURN CONDITIONS

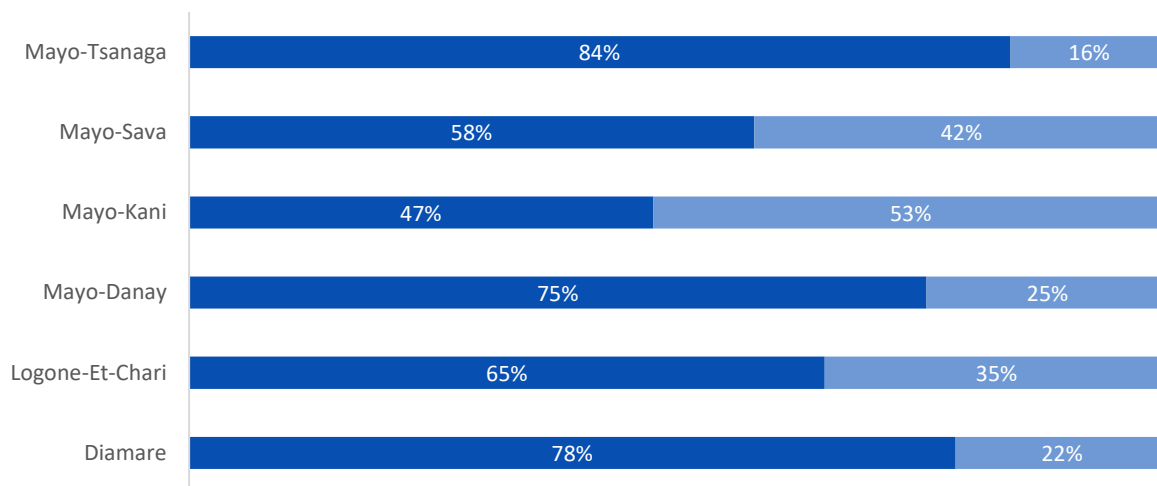
RETURN CONDITIONS

Most surveyed IDP and refugee households (74%) did not want to leave their current place of displacement. Among the households that wanted to leave, 22 per cent wanted to return to their area of origin, while four per cent preferred to go to other locations. More IDPs than refugees wanted to return (29% and 18% respectively). Moreover, more households displaced due to conflicts (27%) than due to natural hazards (18%) wanted to return.



Graph 13 : Return Intentions of IDPs and out of camp refugees

The analysis of displacement by department show that Mayo-Kani (53%), Mayo-Sava (78%) and Logone-Et-Chari (35%) were the departments that recorded the highest number of displaced people who wanted to leave their current location. This can be partially explained by the fact that these three departments were the most affected by the conflicts.

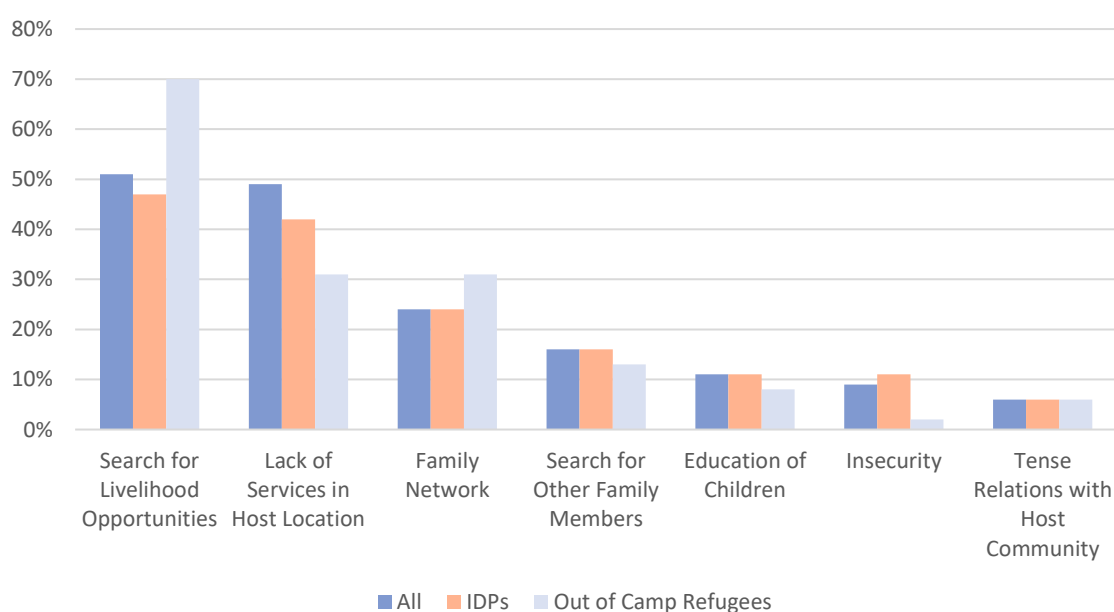


Graph 13 : Return Intentions of IDPs and out of camp refugees, by department

REASONS FACILITATING RETURN MOVEMENTS

Among those IDPs and refugees who reported their intention to return to their origin place, the main reasons why they wanted to leave their current place included the search of livelihoods (51%) and the lack of services in the current place (49%).

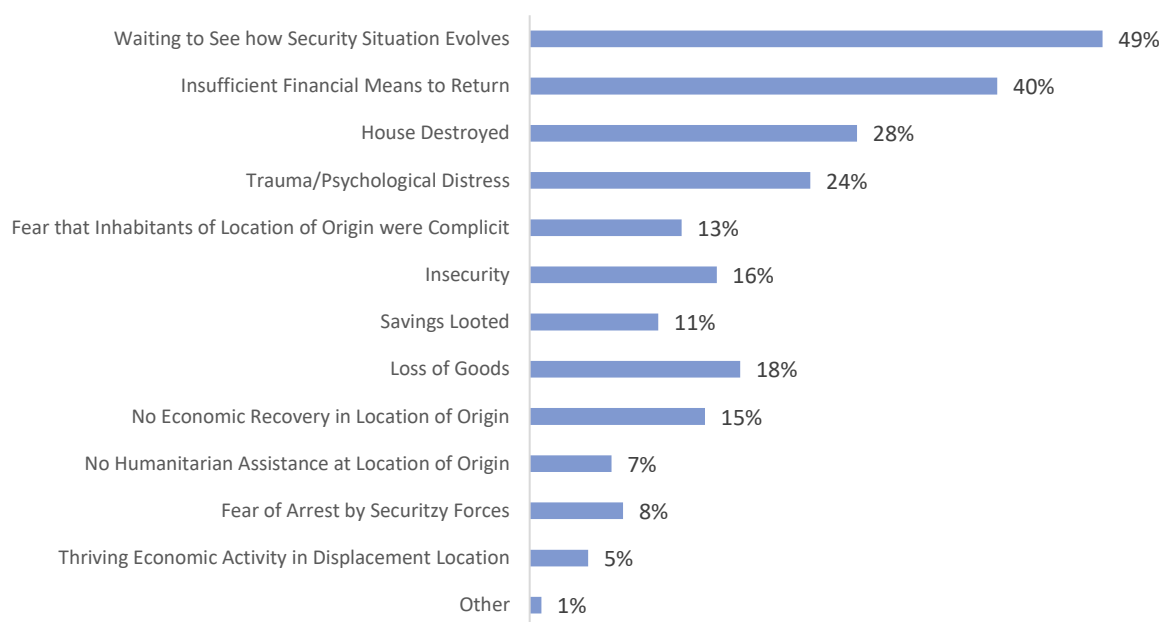
This is confirmed by other factors: many displaced households had to change their diet habits, they had to abandon the economic activity they were carrying out before being displaced (often a subsistence activity), and only a few received humanitarian assistance.



Graph 14: Reasons facilitating IDPs' and out of camp refugees' return

FACTORS IMPEDING RETURN MOVEMENTS

The factors impeding the return of the concerned household, varied between IDPs and refugees. The most common factors reported by IDPs were the worsening of the security situation (49%), the lack of financial means (40%) and the destruction of their houses in the origin place (28%). On the other hand, the main reasons mentioned by refugees were the plundering of the economies (40%), the destruction of their houses (35%) and insecurity (28%).

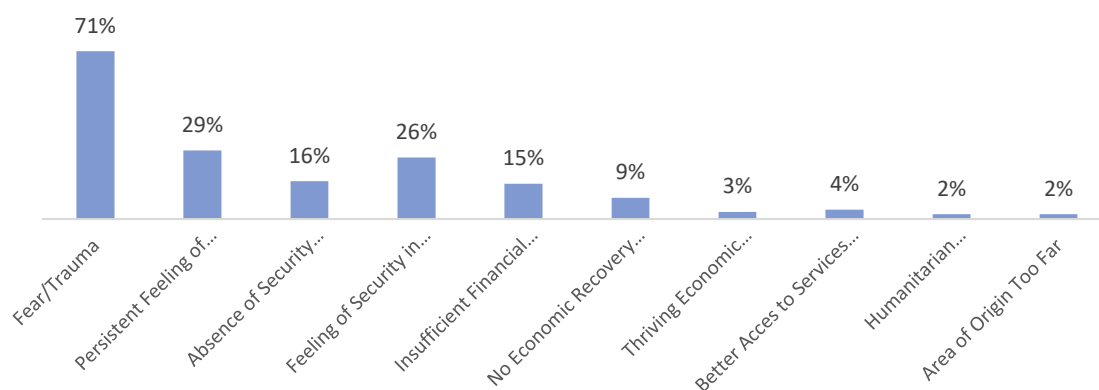


Graph 14: Factors impeding the return of IDPs and out of camp refugees

REASONS FOR NOT RETURNING

The security conditions were the main reason why the surveyed households did not wish to return. Most of the households (71%) reporting the intention to leave their current place mentioned fear and trauma as factors impeding their return to their area of origin. Other factors included: insecurity of the place of origin (29%), the feeling of insecurity in the origin area (26%), and the lack of military presence in their place of origin (16%).

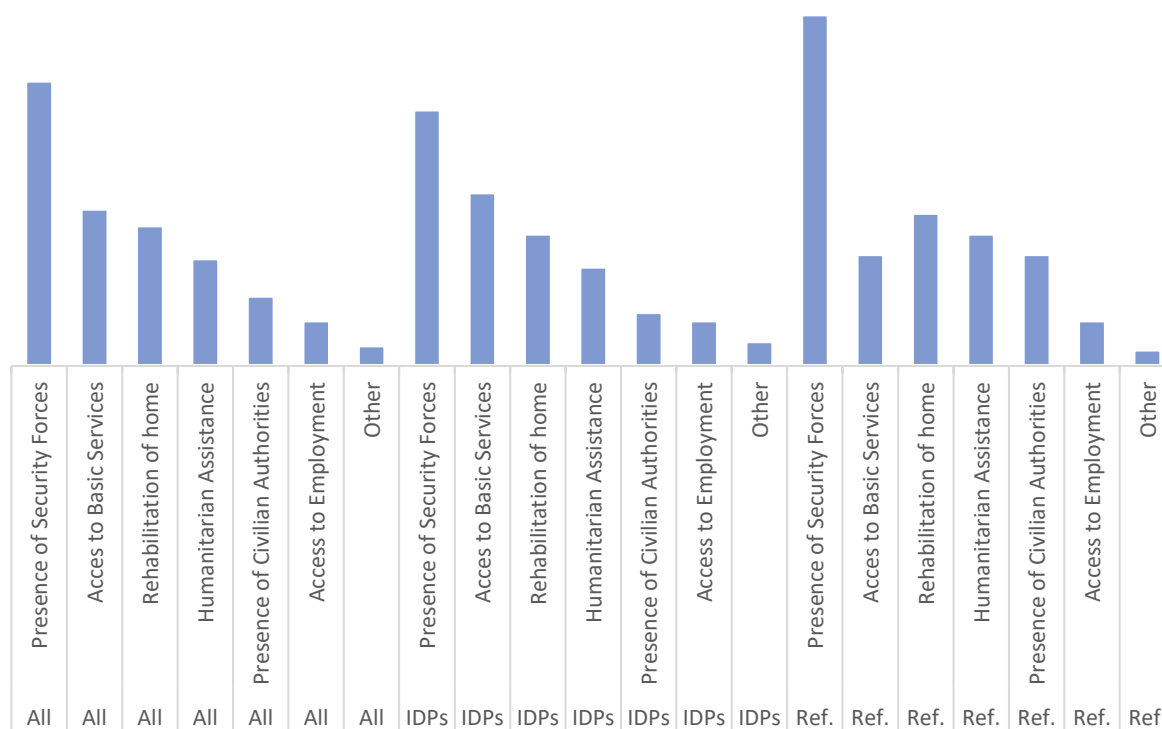
In relation to all the aforementioned reasons, especially for the factors linked to security, refugees seemed to be more affected than all the other categories.



Graph 15 : IDPs' and out of camp refugees' reasons for not returning

CONDITIONS OF RETURN

According to the surveyed households, the necessary conditions to make their return possible included: ensuring the presence of armed forces in areas of origin (69%), improving access to basic services (69%), repairing of housing (34%), and providing international aid in areas of origin (26%).



Graph 16 : Conditions of return (IDPs and out of camp refugees)

HOUSING CONDITIONS IN THE AREAS OF ORIGIN

Most of IDPs (56%) reported that their house where they were living before being displaced had completely been destroyed. The house of refugee households (53%) and of returnees (58%) was, on the contrary, in good conditions when they left their area of origin.

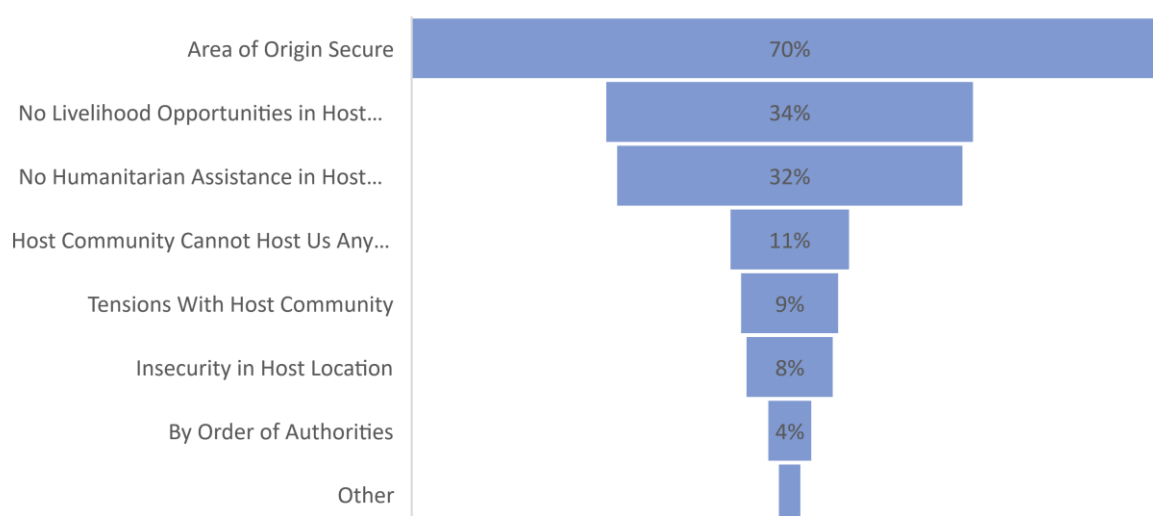
Most of IDPs (87%), refugees (91%) and returnees (83%) lived in houses made of fragile materials before being displaced.

REASONS FOR RETURN

REASONS FOR RETURN

The most common return reasons reported by returnee households were: the improvement of the security conditions in areas of origin (70% of returnee households) and the lack of humanitarian assistance in areas of displacement (32%). This is in line with the presence of security forces and of humanitarian actors in some areas of the Far North Region. The establishment of military bases and the presence of many security forces in some areas made these areas more secure, thus allowing humanitarian actors to operate safely. Thus, creating favourable conditions to facilitate the return of displaced populations.

The presence of subsistence means in areas of origin (reported by 34% of returnee households) was also an important factor facilitating the return of returnee households. Moreover, 11 per cent of returnees returned to their area of origin due to the inability of the host community to host them, whereas nine per cent of them returned because of intercommunity tensions.



Graph 17 : Reason of Return of Returnees

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents an overview of the results of a survey carried out at household level in the Far North Region of Cameroon between 13 and 26 June 2018.

The results show that there is an increasing number of displaced people in the Far North Region of Cameroon who have returned to their area of origin. This is demonstrated by different indicators, including the increasing number of surveyed returnee individuals, the greater proportion of people returning to their area of origin on a regular basis to evaluate a possible return, and the greater number of households who expressed their desire to go back to their area of origin.

The analysis has also highlighted that security is an important factor when considering to go back to areas of origin.

Since the return to areas of origin is one of the durable solutions for displaced populations, it is necessary that the government and the humanitarian community strengthen early recovery mechanisms for the returnees. Other important factors that would make the return of the displaced populations a durable solution include: the reinforcement of the State, especially of security forces in potential return areas, the improvement of basic social infrastructures (water, health and education) and the economic recovery.

Finally, the results have highlighted that displacement has changed displaced people's life style in terms of subsistence means and actions taken to survive, and that only a few have received humanitarian aid. The psychosocial needs and the assistance in obtaining identity documents were identified as important needs.