

Profile
at a glance

Central African Republic

Kabo

“This survey has allowed us to obtain useful data, and also to be able to define strategic objectives.”

Patrice Effebi, Emergency Protection, Head of Project,
Danish Refugee Council

Two decades of internal conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR) have forced families from their homes. Some were internally displaced, and many became refugees abroad who are now beginning to return. Many have taken up residence in the Northwestern parts of the country, living with host families in towns, villages and rural areas. It is within this context that humanitarian and development actors decided to work together to learn more about the lives of an affected population in previously inaccessible and underserved areas of CAR.

Starting in 2011, a series of profiling exercises are being undertaken in order to understand the situation of conflict-induced displacement in CAR. The process started in Bamingui-Bangoran and in 2012 was extended to the Kabo and Markounda sub-prefectures. Kabo is largely a return area, experiencing expansion because of returning refugees as well as a number of people internally displaced.

With coordination and methodological support from the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS), this profiling process was undertaken with financial support from the Central Emergency Fund (CERF) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with leadership and oversight from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and implementation from local NGO Echelle.





- 6** Locations surveyed (3 IDP settlements and 3 host villages)
- 1,692** host family and IDP households counted
- 180** in depth interviews
- 24** male focus group discussions
- 25** female focus group discussions

Which methods were used?

The profiling exercise focused on villages and IDP settlements in Kabo. The methodology was designed in order to derive reliable age, sex and location disaggregated estimates and comprehensive information on the protection needs and return intentions of the displacement - affected population.

All accessible enumeration areas were selected and subsequently identified IDP and non-IDP households were

randomly selected to be surveyed. Before enumeration, interviewers canvassed their enumeration areas, using maps provided by OCHA (Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs).

By collecting information through this extensive household survey and a series of focus group discussions, the profiling team was able to assemble a comprehensive picture of the situation.

“The partnership developed with the local NGO Echelle as a result of JIPS training, made coordination easier”

Patrice Effebi, Emergency protection, Head of Project, Danish Refugee Council

What was the impact?

- The profiling results have been used in the data section of the 2013 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), which requires humanitarian actors and funding partners to include data on displaced populations.
- The results of this survey have been used to design protection and assistance programs for the population in Kabo. The results will also support programming to better serve this population by informing a more comprehensive protection strategy for the victims of the crisis, with the end objective of identifying durable solutions.
- In addition to data being used by the protection cluster for advocacy purposes, IDP, returnee, and host community members have also been provided with information about how to use the profiling results as an advocacy tool.
- Survey stakeholders were interested in additional information on social cohesion and the psycho-social status, as a result of which a new module was created in the questionnaire to capture that information. This has given programme planners insight into the mental health needs of the population.
- The report findings in the water and sanitation prompted an ECHO (Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission) evaluation of the water and sanitation situation in Kabo.

What were the findings?

Similar to the findings of the profiling exercise in Bamingui-Bangoran, the Kabo profiling results show no great differences in the situation of IDPs and non-IDPs. The only exception was the access to water and sanitation, and that IDP returnees have the hardest time finding economic activity in comparison to the other groups.

This once again indicates the considerable resilience of IDPs and IDP returnees, as well as the remarkable absorption capacity of the host community and the non-discriminatory detrimental effects of the conflict. However, the survey results indicate that many in the area could be helped by the availability of mental health services.

5,900-6,100 displaced
30,000-31,000 IDP returnees
1,000-1,200 non-displaced

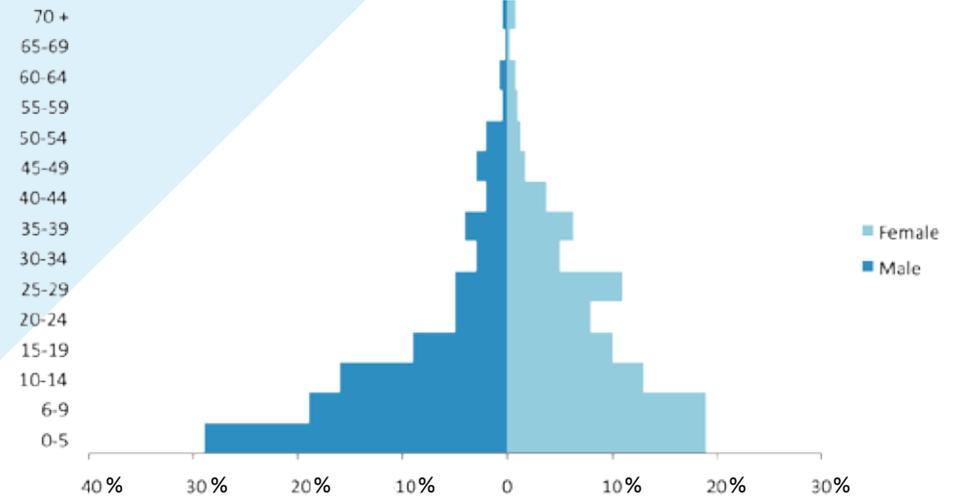
Disaggregated numbers

The profiling exercise found that Kabo has a higher number of IDP returnees and fewer IDPs than previously thought. Estimates give a total of over 37,000 individuals living in the villages and settlements surveyed.

“There was a need to include a module on social cohesion, so we worked together to create one and collect the needed data.”

Local implementing partner, Echelle

Figure 1: Kabo population pyramid



As figure 1 clearly shows, the surveyed population is a young population with those aged 0-19 making up 67%. The population pyramid also indicates that there are 10% more males aged 0-5 than females aged 0-5. There is also a slight dip in the male population from 20-44, which could be explained by increased conflict-induced mortality.

Among the IDP returnees, non-IDPs and IDPs, only the female IDP returnees are more populous than the males (55% of female IDP returnees compared to 45% male IDP returnees).

Households

Most households are of a nuclear type; with an average household size of six, consisting of an adult couple and four children. Among non-IDP women, a larger proportion of widows (13%) was identified, compared to IDP returnee (10%) and IDP women (7%). This could be related to increased conflict-induced mortality.

53% of
children
are full
or partial
orphans



Cause of displacement

The majority of displacement is linked to the destruction of homes by government reprisals and non-governmental forces. For both the displaced and the IDP returnee populations, their choice of residence was based on access to security, humanitarian presence, and family reunification.

Over a quarter (30%) of the IDPs/ IDP returnees live with host families, whose hosts house the displaced on their own initiative.

Food security

Overall, available food products in Kabo include manioc, peanut and millet. While it is not a situation of food insecurity, limited means and limited access to land are the largest obstacles to accessing food. A situation of limited seeds and land for cultivation put IDPs on the verge of food insecurity.

While collective agriculture is understood by many to be beneficial, the vast majority (75%) do not work collectively to manage their plots and agricultural yield. Programs that work towards providing inputs and increasing agricultural yield and cooperation are suggested for the next growing season.

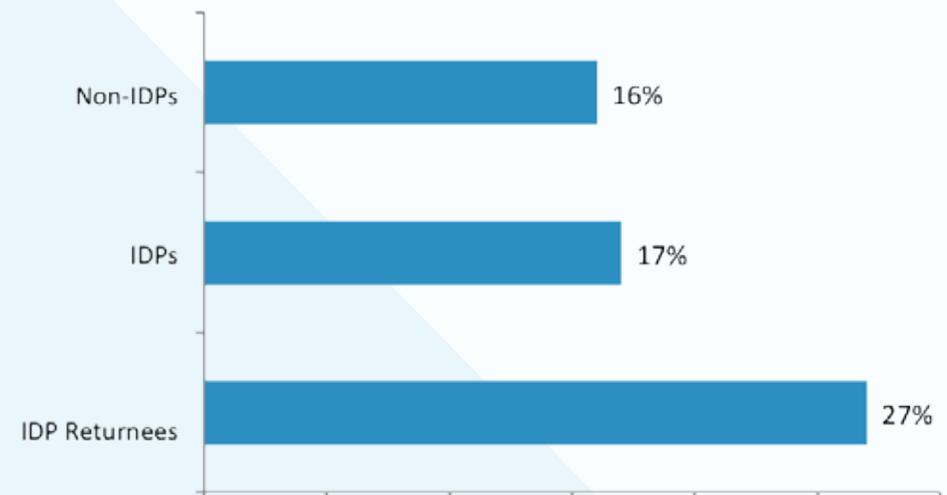
Livelihoods

In general, people were more economically active before the crisis, with a reported 23% drop in economic activity. It is interesting to note that IDP returnees were found to be the most vulnerable.

Figure 2 shows that IDP returnees (27%) are more often not engaged in an economic activity than IDPs (17%) and non-IDPs (16%) of non-IDPs. However, only IDPs indicated that discrimination and insecurity prevented them from accessing livelihood opportunities.

Around 16% of all children are engaged in economic activities. This proportion was higher during the crisis, when a quarter of all children worked. Children usually work part-time, and are active in agriculture and commercial activities.

Figure 2: Current economic activity



Education

School infrastructure was available for 86% of those surveyed, however there was a lack of qualified teachers and over-crowding in the schools, reducing the education system's reputation.

Among 6-25 year olds, half dropped out of school during the crisis, and many never returned due to school insecurity-related closures.

Two out of five respondents do not read or write and men tend to have a higher literacy capacity than women. These findings present the opportunity for adult basic literacy programs.

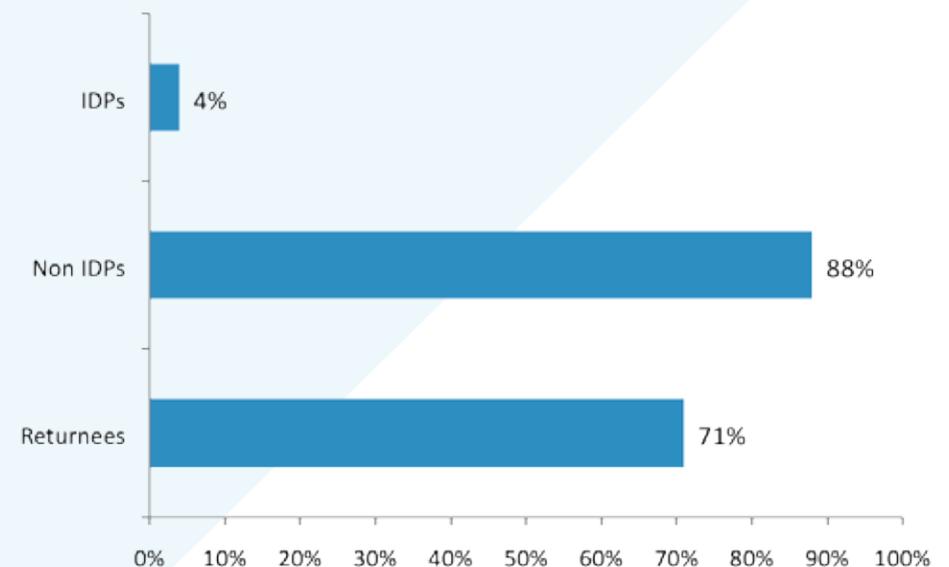
50% school dropout rate amongst 6-25 year olds due to crisis

Water and sanitation

73% of those interviewed had to travel over one kilometer to find a water point close to their household. Lack of water points close by was said to lead to long waiting lines.

43% of households use indoor latrines to dispose of human waste and 38% use the outdoors. There is variation in the level of sanitation among IDP returnees, non-IDPs and IDPs, with IDPs having by far the lowest access to latrines in their homes (figure 3). This is cause for concern because of the increased likelihood of spreading illness in unsanitary conditions.

Figure 3: Percentage of households with latrines available in household



Social cohesion and psychosocial status

High on the list of concerns for heads of households is the return of social cohesion. They would also like to see more community sensitization, realization of justice and access to water and sanitation. Over half (51%) of heads of households participated in community association activities.

Having witnessed war (45%), killing (27%) and rape (6%), it is not surprising that many suffer from mental illness, but they do have support mechanisms or treatment options to help them cope with their traumatic experiences. This is another area of support for humanitarian actors to scale up.

Protection risks

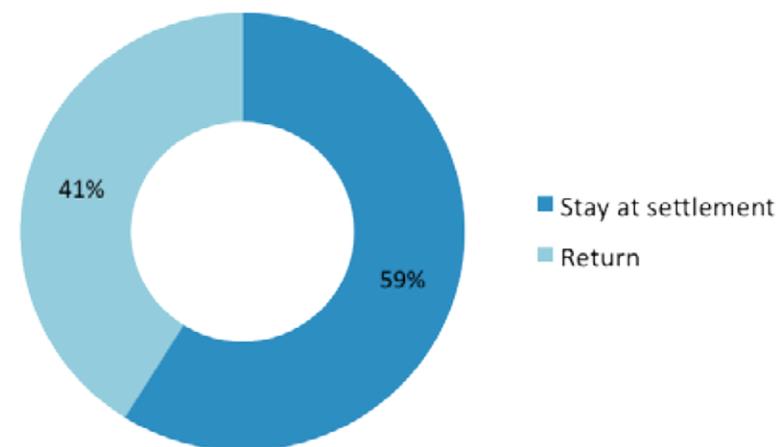
The displaced people of Kabo have experienced high levels of abuses during their journey. 81% of heads of household have experienced a loss of major assets: mostly livestock, but also family members, and housing. Many have been victims of physical, sexual or verbal abuse (46%), pillage/robbery of personal possessions (22%), verbal threats (22%) and murder (9%). IDP and IDP returnees were the most affected in terms of protection abuses. It is promising that many in the population reported a decrease in the level of criminality since the peak of the crisis.

Solutions/ return intentions

Access to their place of usual residence is not common to IDPs. 75% of female heads of household and around 54% of male heads of household indicate never visiting their place of residence because of insecurity, coupled with destroyed homes and personal belongings. Those that do visit their place of usual residence go for hunting and agricultural reasons.

Overall, 59% of IDPs do not intend to return to their place of residence because of fear of renewed conflict (figure 4). Another 41% indicate that they would return if the security situation improves and/or their goods are returned. Return intentions vary across the different settlements: in one settlement, as many as 97% indicated they had no intention of returning.

Figure 4: Solutions/ return intentions



What were the profiling lessons?

- Profiling processes should be adapted to the specific context being studied, but this does not mean each exercise needs to recreate the wheel! In CAR, methods and tools developed for profiling were adapted for each displacement-affected prefecture identified for a profiling exercise. In Kabo, the methodology used in Bamingui-Bangoran was adapted by including a module in the questionnaire on social cohesion and psycho-social status.
- Bringing in the support of specialized organizations at the data analysis and reporting stages can be hugely beneficial. In CAR, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF-Holland) took part in these stages and will now be using the findings to provide targeted services to the beneficiary communities. Echelle also received valuable health subject-matter insight through the collaboration.

- Local NGO Echelle, who has now conducted three profiling exercises in CAR, have consolidated their expertise as a resource on profiling for the humanitarian/development community in the country.
- The CAR profiling activities continue to highlight the importance of systematic provision of information and sensitization of local and national authorities, community leaders, and survey staff. Sensitization activities helped to increase participation and therefore the reliability of the data.
- Good documentation throughout the profiling process is crucial since it is important to plan for the possibility of staff departing during the activity. Good documentation allows for a smooth handover, which can minimize the negative impact of unexpected staff turn-over.

Good documentation is crucial for a smooth handover

*The full report, containing further analysis, and the profiling tools can be found at:
www.idp-profiling.org*

The profiling data is also available upon request.

This summary provides a glimpse into a collaborative IDP profiling process. Governmental and non-governmental actors contributed to the process, worked together to outline its objectives, to develop and modify its tools, and to collect and analyse the required data.

JIPS supported this profiling process by building the technical and management capacity of a local NGO, to expand and adapt the scope and methods as required for the local displacement context.

This glance into the profile of displaced persons in the Central African Republic hopes to spark interest in both the specific findings of this exercise, and profiling of IDP situations in general.

