

CAMEROON

Supporting Socioeconomic Integration & Statistical Inclusion of IDPs in West Cameroon

Case Study • May 2026

This case study, developed by JIPS with contribution from UNHCR Cameroon, highlights the broader and longer-term benefits of JIPS' support to the project Promoting Economic and Social Participation of Internally Displaced Persons and Host Population Communities (PESoP) of the German Society for International Collaboration (GIZ).

Since 2016, Cameroon has faced escalating violence between the central government and non-state armed groups in the Southwest and Northwest regions, also called the Anglophone crisis. As of September 2024, an estimated 334,000 persons were still internally displaced, with around 114,000 IDPs recorded in Cameroon's West region – many of which were in protracted conditions in cities, towns, and peri-urban areas.

Recognizing the need to address displacement challenges across the country, Cameroon ratified the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) in December 2014, providing a first legal basis for durable solutions for IDPs. In November 2024, a draft strategy on durable solutions for IDPs was developed with support from international actors and an inter-ministerial committee was set up to guide the follow-up process (source).

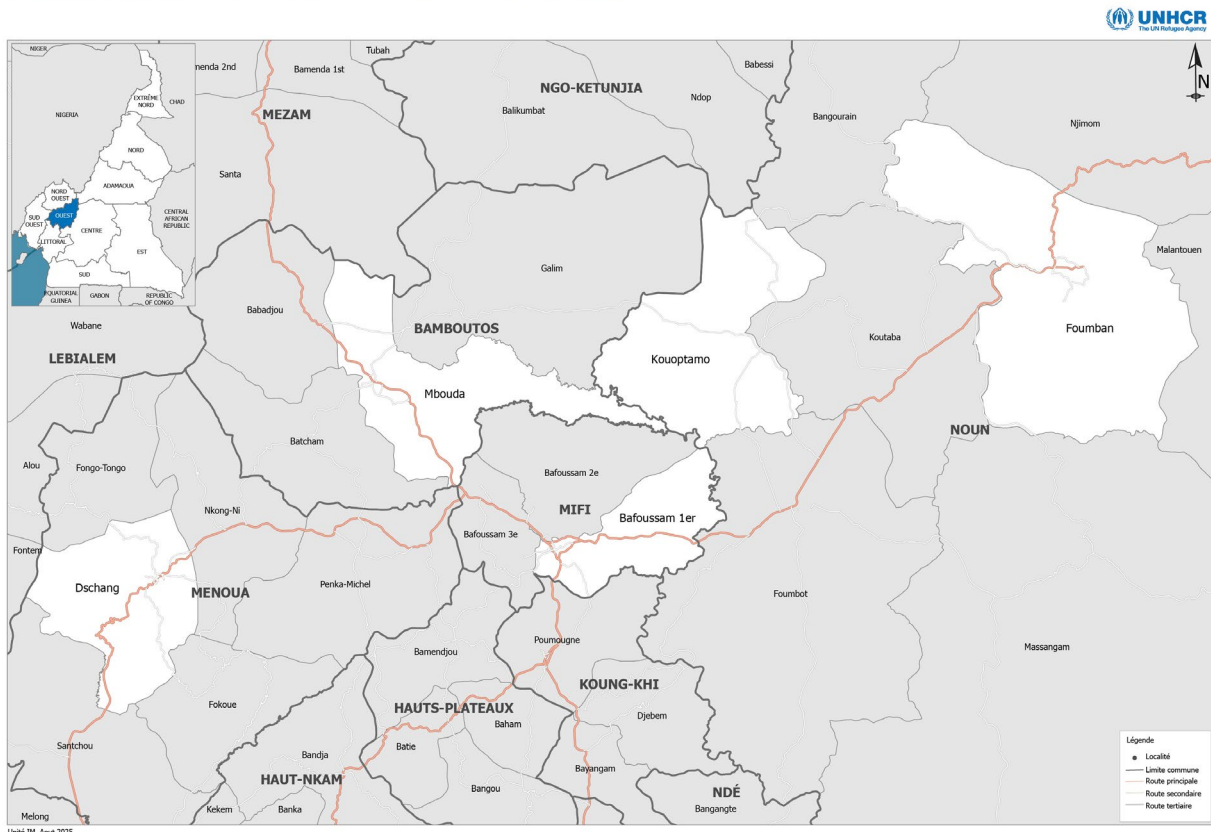
In West Cameroon, while many municipalities have been hosting a significant number of IDPs since 2016, they have struggled to achieve a granular understanding of the profiles, conditions, and challenges faced by the hosted IDPs. This has critically undermined municipal and regional authorities' ability to effectively coordinate local assistance for IDPs with humanitarian and development actors. It has also prevented local authorities from including IDPs in local development planning and safety networks with a view towards supporting durable solutions through local integration.

Durable solutions profiling across five municipalities in West Cameroon

In response to these various challenges, a profiling was conducted in 2023-2025 as part of the project Promoting Economic and Social Participation of Internally Displaced Persons and Host Population Communities (PESoP) of the German Society for International Collaboration (GIZ) together with UNHCR. The study covered five municipalities estimated to collectively host about 34 percent of the IDPs in the West region: Bafoussam 1^{er} (Mifi), Dschang (Menoua), Fouban and Kouoptamo (Noun), as well as Mbouda (Bamboutos) (see map).

The exercise specifically looked at the conditions and challenges of displaced and non-displaced households in the municipalities, to strengthen the socioeconomic inclusion of IDPs in those areas. JIPS supported UNHCR, GIZ, and the municipal authorities to facilitate the multi-stakeholder collaboration process as well as to collect and analyse the IDP data, building on national and international standards and frameworks.

The profiling exercises were shaped in a consultative and collaborative way, with the support and participation of municipal authorities, sectoral ministries (MINDDEVEL, MINEPROFF, MINEFOP, MINPMEESA, MINJEC, MINJUSTICE, MINSANTE, MINMIDT, MINADER, MINAT), technical government entities (INIS, BUCREP, BUNEC) as well as community representatives. All these stakeholders formed the Extended Piloting Committee which functioned as the key coordination structure for the profiling. The implementation of the profiling was led by UNHCR, GIZ, BUCREP, INS, and technically supported by JIPS.

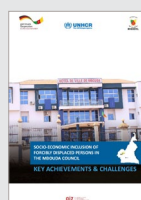
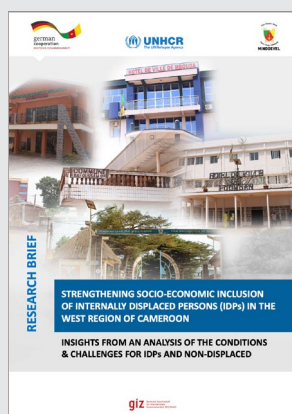


Map of the West Cameroon region: Municipalities of the PESoP project.

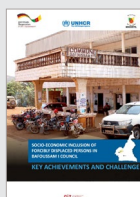
Benefits Beyond the Data: Advancing Data Harmonization & Solutions Monitoring

Consolidated insights from the studies across the five municipalities found that overall, the socioeconomic situation of IDPs was similar to that of the non-displaced persons, indicating that local integration was progressing. The studies pointed to displacement-specific vulnerabilities when it came to loss of property, access to services, lack of birth certificates for newborn IDP children, and food insecurity.

Meanwhile, youth unemployment and inactivity stood out as a key concern for both population groups, thus calling for inclusive development investments across the local and regional levels. Concurrently, the profiling also pointed to areas where progress on local integration could already be observed, with similar conditions for IDPs and non-displaced persons. This included safety, school attendance, and social cohesion.



The reports from Dschang, Fomfong, Bafoussam 1er, Kouoptamo, and Mbouda are available online.



The research brief consolidates insights from all localities to inform regional-level development planning.

Beyond the immediate achievements of the profiling exercises in West Cameroon – including the granular understanding of the internal displacement situation across the five municipalities and establishing a solid baseline data for solutions monitoring – three key success factors stood out in amplifying the broader use and impact of the exercises implemented in West Cameroon:

Direct engagement of national statistical actors benefitted methodology design, shared learning and local-national alignment

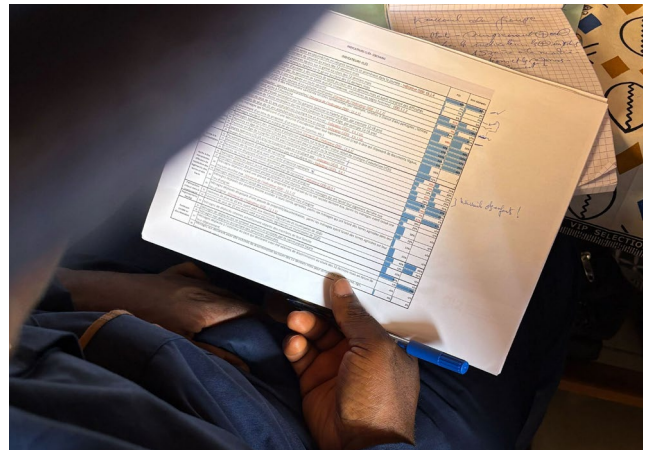
The National Institute for Statistics (INS) and the Census & Population Study Bureau (BUCREP) were involved from the outset of the profiling exercise and throughout, including: methodology design, sampling, indicator specification, analysis and reporting. The close collaboration ensured a technically sound and context-adapted approach, underpinned by a jointly validated methodology and tools that benefitted from complementary expertise and shared capacities.

This provides for a sound profiling and durable solutions analysis approach that has been ground-truthed and can be replicated in other parts of the country to fill critical data gaps while ensuring coherence. It also offers important experiences and lessons for future standardization of methodological components, such as for identifying IDPs in surveys, representative sampling, and sound solutions monitoring. At the national level, this can contribute to the ongoing efforts for mainstreaming IDPs into the national statistical system (NSS).

The close collaboration at the technical level between INS, BUCREP, UNHCR and JIPS resulted in a joint analysis process and shared reporting. Results were jointly reviewed, while INS and BUCREP led the drafting on half of the municipal reports. Such collaboration at the technical level helped ensure locally and nationally anchored and owned interpretation of the results, which facilitates uptake and contributes to state accountability in responding to and resolving internal displacement.

Aligning the indicator framework with national and international standards amplified data use

The analysis plan of the exercise, essentially the monitoring framework for solutions, was developed through a joint effort involving series of municipality- and regional-level workshops and technical sessions. This approach enabled alignment of the durable solutions indicator framework not only with international standards, such as the Interagency Durable Solutions Indicator Library and the SDG framework, but also with established national instruments namely for employment statistics. As a result, the profiling data is comparable with national statistics, thus directly contributing to national-level monitoring efforts of priority topics. Simultaneously, the evidence-base generated serves as a sound local-level baseline for the IDP and the local population in the West region, in support of local authorities' development planning and monitoring of progress towards solutions.



Joint analysis workshop in Dschang, West Cameroon. May 2025 © JIPS.

In the meantime, the Government of Cameroon has announced plans to integrate forced displacement data into the national statistical system. During 2026 IDPs will be captured in the 4th General Population and Housing Census (RGPH) as well as in two national-level routine surveys - the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and the Poverty Survey (ECAM). These efforts will enable robust and nationally owned displacement data and lay the critical foundation for the integration of forcibly displaced persons into the national public safety net programmes and development planning. The lessons from the solutions monitoring piloted in the West can inform the forthcoming reporting and monitoring that will be possible with the national level data from aforementioned surveys. Thus, the experiences from the West region can contribute to future national-level efforts to build a national monitoring framework for durable solutions to internal displacement.

The inclusive process empowered municipal actors' leadership in coordination and response

Municipal actors participated in the identification of the profiling scope (thematic and geographic) for each municipal profiling. They reviewed both the preliminary results, sharing feedback and input during interactive workshops in each municipality, as well as the final reports. The profiling outputs were fully endorsed by the different municipalities, as evidenced by their foreword. All these factors contribute to building government leadership and accountability in internal displacement responses. They nurture a collaborative mindset and way of working, which is necessary to effectively address IDPs' vulnerabilities as well as broader development needs.

Conclusion

As Cameroon continues to face critical challenges in preventing, responding to, and sustainably resolving protracted internal displacement across the country, IDP data and statistics offer a critical conduit towards a more equitable and cohesive society. The diverse achievements and learning from the durable solutions analyses in the West region can be elevated to the national and international levels to help advance high-quality data and statistics on IDPs, ensuring forcibly displaced people are made visible in official statistics and not left behind in national and local policies and development plans.

Acknowledgement

This case study, developed by JIPS with contribution from UNHCR Cameroon, highlights the broader and longer-term benefits of JIPS' support to the project *Promoting Economic and Social Participation of Internally Displaced Persons and Host Population Communities* (PESoP) of the German Society for International Collaboration (GIZ).

Working with UNHCR, JIPS helped collect and analyse data on internal displacement as well as strengthen local IDP registration systems in five municipalities in the West Region: Foumban, Dschang, Kuoptamo, Mbouda, and Bafoussam I. These municipalities host an estimated 34 percent of the IDPs in the West Region.

The PeSOP project was implemented in collaboration with diverse local, national, and international partners, bringing complementary expertise to the initiative. This ensured that the project was contextually grounded and technically robust, with a focus on achieving lasting, community-driven solutions.

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