

# Internal Displacement and its Ripple Effects on Urban Residential Instability and Mobility in Bamenda III Municipality

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**Abstract:-** Armed conflicts and generalised violence have been at the forefront of internal displacements in the world. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has witnessed a stable increase in internal displacements and untold sufferings in recent years. Cameroon has witnessed a continuous threat from the Boko Haram insurgency, insecurity in the East Region and the current Anglophone Crisis(socio-political) in the North West and South West Regions. The raging socio-political crisis rocking these two regions since 2016 and counting is at the forefront of residential instability and mobility in Bamenda III Municipality. In order to correlate socio-political crisis and residential instability and mobility in Bamenda III Municipality, the study adopted the qualitative and quantitative methods of data sourcing for secondary and primary data procurement. Related literature was reviewed alongside oral histories captured through interviews, news outlets, informal discussions and focus group discussions. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to 200 respondents (160 IDPs and 40 residents) and field observation constituted an integral part for data procurement. Results reveal that insecurity 98.75% (56.25% IDPs and 42.5% residents) is the main push factor of Internal Displacement in Bamenda III Municipality. It also reveals that females than males between the age brackets 40-59 are the main group of people (25.7% with 22.6% IDPs and 3.1% residents) that are highly affected by the crisis to relocate. Sustainable actions and strategies such as fundraising, charity and collaboration with local stakeholders will serve the short term while an inclusive dialogue incorporating warring partners will be the panacea.

**Keywords:-** Internal displacement, IDPs, socio-political crisis, residential instability and mobility, Bamenda III municipality

## I. INTRODUCTION

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are people who are forced to flee their homes due to armed conflict, generalised violence, violations of human rights, and/or natural or anthropogenic disasters, but who remain within their own country unlike refugees who are forced out of the country (UNHCR-AFRICA, 2022). The global internal displacement statistics portrays a substantial increase with 33.4 million internal displacements across 145 countries and territories in 2019 (IDMC-GRID, 2020), emphasising that most of the displacements are caused by disasters and adverse climatic

changes (tropical storms, floods, tornados, landslides, avalanches) as well as unabated conflicts which originate from political and linguistic differences (increased violence, death threats, kidnappings, forced relocation and residential instability) with sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) having 9.7 million IDPs in 2011 out of the estimated 26.4 million IDPs in the world (IDMC, 2011 and Ferris, 2012). The population of refugees of African origin has been on the rise (Adesina, et al., 2022). At the end of 2019, Central and West Africa recorded over 5 million IDPs (UNHCR, 2020). Disasters, particularly those associated with hydro-meteorological hazards such as floods, storms and drought, also triggered 2.6 million new displacements in 2019 (Africa Report on Internal Displacement, 2019). The term IDPs gained concern in the early 1990s when the international body began to increase its focus on the plight of IDPs (Goldman, 2009) and their practice and norms in extending protection and assistance to IDPs who do not enjoy as ancient roots as does the concept of asylum (Cheung, 2020). The term was first used around the time of negotiating the 1951 Refugee Convention; employed then not to include, but rather to exclude the internally displaced as persons who presented 'separate problems' from refugees and should not be assisted on the same terms (Cheung, 2020). Unlike persons who flee across international borders and may be entitled to the status and protective international legal regime applicable to refugees, IDPs remain within their country (Goldman, 2009). There were 16.8 million people living in internal displacement as a result of conflict and violence in Africa as of the end of 2018 (Africa Report on Internal Displacement, 2019) rendering them residentially unstable and mobile. Residential mobility is an adjustment or a household's response to dissatisfaction or stress situation influenced by environmental and political conditions. Residential mobility is a relocation phenomenon resulting from political, economic, and social events (Oh, 2020). Residential mobility is considered as a natural course in the human life cycle. Changes of residence occur daily in every major city or area and the reasons for such movements are varied not just for individuals and families but for cities and societies themselves. Certain human life events such as aging household, marital status and family size expansion pose reason for some households to consider moving out of their current house and moving in elsewhere to fulfil their needs and welfare (De Groot et al., 2011). In most Western and developed countries and in some parts of Asian and African contexts, an absolute majority of residential mobility resulting from internal displacements is motivated by the desire to move from renting to owning or from

smaller to larger houses, changing communities and jobs, peace and stability as well as a complex web of decisions related to the idea of improving both the economic and social contexts (Geist and McManus, 2008). The frequency of such residential mobility is higher among internally displaced persons, low-income households, renters, younger families, individuals or communities who move to improve housing situations or neighbourhood surroundings faced with social distress, political and health crisis, environmental calamities and other socio-economic challenges (Frei and Axhausen, 2007). Thus, the desire for mobility can be occasioned by any discomfort in the individuals or community's cultural heritage. Meanwhile the poor and less privileged will relocate to the most stable areas. Their low incomes, unemployment expose them to substandard housing and consequently the increase in urban residential mobility. However, forced relocation and residential instability is often higher in areas witnessing conflicts and disasters.

Identifying the mechanisms of residential mobility among low-income families is important because residential stability can reinforce family, educational, and neighbourhood stability (Evans, 2004). When a family moves, children often change schools and must make new friends, adults must integrate into new neighbourhoods and both the sending and receiving communities must adjust to new arrivals (Sampson, 2012). Residential instability has been linked to a wide array of social and health disparities (Jelleyman and Spencer, 2008; Sharkey and Sampson, 2012). Understanding why families move would promote our understanding of those disparities and which could inform policy solutions aimed at stabilizing disadvantaged families and communities especially for internally displaced persons. Many studies have explored why people move (Chen and Rosenthal, 2008), and until recently, a dearth of survey data meant that researchers typically had to infer people's motives for moving from the correlates of moves (Niedomysl, 2011). This approach indicates that people usually make different types of moves for different reasons (Lundholm et al., 2004). While long-distance moves are primarily undertaken for education or employment, people typically move short distances to adjust their housing and neighbourhood characteristics (Niedomysl, 2011). This is because people tend to be willing to make costly and disruptive long-distance moves only when this is essential for fulfilling highly valued goals or in abject cases in order to self-preserve their lives during political, health and other environmental crisis (Kley, 2011).

There are two reasons why it may be problematic to use residential mobility behaviour to understand why people move. First, recent survey analyses show that people often do not report the reason for moving that one might expect given their moving behaviour (Morrison and Clark, 2011). Although many of these analyses collapse non-job-related reasons, the quality of life, peace and stability or friendly environmental sites to accounts for their displacement (Lundholm et al., 2004; Geist and McManus, 2012), they nonetheless provide clear evidence that reported reasons for moving as it is more complex than often assumed (Niedomysl, 2011). Böheim and Taylor (2002) suggest that

some types of moving desire have a greater likelihood of being acted upon than others. In general, it seems likely that desiring to move in order to make urgent, major and targeted changes across life course careers is more likely to lead to actual mobility than desiring to move because of more diffuse feelings of dissatisfaction (Kearns & Parkes, 2003; van Ham & Feijten, 2008). Secondly, residential mobility in certain areas include age, living environment, employment opportunities, health, level of education, income margin, household sizes and other social stress factors such as wars and environmental hazards. In one recent study Kan (2007) noted that social ties play a key role in influencing residential mobility. Areas of relative peace and stability with strong social ties tend to be more stable and stay in place for longer durations. Households that own their home are less likely to move than those who rent. Thus, residency and home ownership are two primary determinants of mobility decisions, with both variables contributing to a lower likelihood of moving. Thus, the residential mobility decision at any point in time is not only affected by events at the time of the move, but past events in the history of the household. This indicates that we cannot assume that the reason a person expresses for desiring to move will match the explanation they subsequently provide for an actual move given that occupational change is a particularly important and targeted reason to move (Böheim and Taylor, 2002).

There are several studies that have extended the study of residential mobility beyond an examination of household life course events. Van der Vlist *et al.*, (2001) note that there is limited research on the study of the interaction between residential mobility and the structure of local housing markets and thus, deems such considerations necessary in residential mobility studies. Clark et al. (2003) noted that housing mobility decisions are examined with an explicit focus on commuting distance and commuting tolerance where housing location choice, and the decision to relocate, is influenced by workplace locations for household members and employment opportunities. Boheim and Taylor (2002) investigate the relationship between the labour market dynamics and residential mobility and noted that the mobility decision is taken if the expected gains from moving are greater than the expected utility of choosing not to relocate. This is in line with the views of Lawton et al., (2018) who found out that educational levels have been found to be positively related to spatial distances from the parental home. Moreover, in areas of environmental, health and political instability; this decision to move is inherent irrespective of other considerations as it causes ripple effects on housing infrastructures and other social facilities in their host communities (Kubis and Schneider, 2007).

Residential mobility affects not only individual families, but can contribute to the erosion of social control and social capital (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2012) which has a negative effect of residential turnover on a neighbourhood's collective efficacy linked to problems such as crime and delinquency, scarcity and inaccessibility to social amenities (Lee, Oroposa, and Kanan, 2010). This kind of changes is what characterizes the demographic or socio-economic mix, which in turn can reposition the

neighbourhood with institutions, resources, and the marketplace (Bruch and Mare, 2006).

Jihadist groups operating in the Sahel region escalated their attacks and triggered mass displacement in countries including Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Cameroon (The Sahel spotlight, 2020). This has triggered drastically the rate of internally displaced persons and its adverse effects on urban residential instability (IDMC-GRID, 2019). The spill over of this displacement and its ripple effects is evident in the considerable number of displaced persons especially in Cameroon, Nigeria and Chad. This movement adds pressure on the available resources on the host communities. One of such areas with common ripple effects of such internal displacement is in the domains of housing and infrastructure, health, education and security (IDMC, 2018). The decision to move is in itself imperative in order to be safeguarded, protected and to function like other citizens. This involves a cumbersome process finding a new dwelling and the search of opportunities which are of interests to the individuals or communities (Böheim and Taylor, 2002). For some, the opportunities are numerous and wide spread, but for others especially the poor, there may be little choice either in dwelling type or in location with the city.

The study of residential mobility in Cameroon provides insights into many ways in which the broader urban structure constrains the individual behaviour especially that of the internally displaced persons (IDMC-GRID, 2020). This is so because households often have a variety of characteristics which provides the basic mechanism for relocation, change in composition of quarters and communities. Literature holds that of the nearly 1 in 10 Cameroonians resident in the Northwest Region who moved residences between 2016 and 2021, over 100,000 moved primarily for housing and infrastructure, education, health, peace and stability stress and other socio-economic reasons induced by the armed conflict (ACAPS Thematic Report: Cameroon, 2021). These can be the mobility of the growing family to the suburb, the arrival of the rural migrant into the urban area, and the inflows and outflows associated with ethnic changes (ACAPS Thematic Report: Cameroon, 2021). Many more people moved for reasons in which peace and stability is implicated, such as moving to escape violent conflicts and confrontations between separatist's armed forces and the regular military, threats to the exercise of their professions, livelihoods, and daily socio-economic activities. This situation has since then deteriorated and the proof of this is the ever-increasing number of internal displacements and the high demand of housing infrastructures in peaceful and tranquil areas.

The influx of internally displaced persons in search for shelter, trade, education, health, and more in Bamenda III Municipality has created a certain urban regeneration in some of the urban quarters and has equally uplifted the face of the rural quarters. Residential mobility is higher than usual in the Bamenda III Municipality due to the influx of IDPs as a result of the arm-conflict within the region. This stresses and exerts pressure on the human life cycle exhibited in the state of age, ethnic status, household size, marital status, employment, income and length of stay (tenure). General theories of residential mobility have espoused the principles and concepts of invasion and succession, filtering process, life cycle and trade-off model (Short, 1978). These theories recognized that residential mobility is associated with life stage factors, which in turn relates to the household attributes, housing characteristics, housing market, and access to amenities (Winstanley, Thorns & Perkins, 2002). Residential mobility behaviour can be classified into actual moving and mobility thought or intention (Lee, Oropesa, & Kanan, 1994). Actual mobility is performed when there are no barriers to act whereas mobility thought refers to the act of thinking or indicating a wish to leave (Mulder & Hooimeijer, 1999). The main objective of this paper is to establish the correlation between the increase in internal displacement within and into Bamenda III council and its triggering ripple effects on urban residential instability and mobility as a result of the unabated armed conflict in the region. Aspects in consideration include (i) the age and gender of IDPs and residents, (ii) areas of origin of IDPs and ripple effect, and (iii) triggers of the IDPs phenomenon (residential instability and mobility).

## II. LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA

Bamenda III Municipality is located between longitudes 10° 10' 0" and 10° 14' 0" east of the Greenwich Meridian and latitude 5° 58' 0" and 6° 2' 0" north of the equator. It is bordered to the north by Bafut Municipality, to the east by Tubah Municipality, to the south by Bamenda I Municipality and Bamenda II Municipality to the west (Figure 1). The total surface area of Bamenda III is 22.9 km<sup>2</sup> with a total population of 110,253 inhabitants (Household and population census, 2010). As of 2019, the population was projected at 228,190 inhabitants following an annual growth rate of 2.54%. The recent armed conflict in the Northwest Region has triggered an increase in the population of the municipality to about 400,000 inhabitants (IDMC-GRID, 2020).



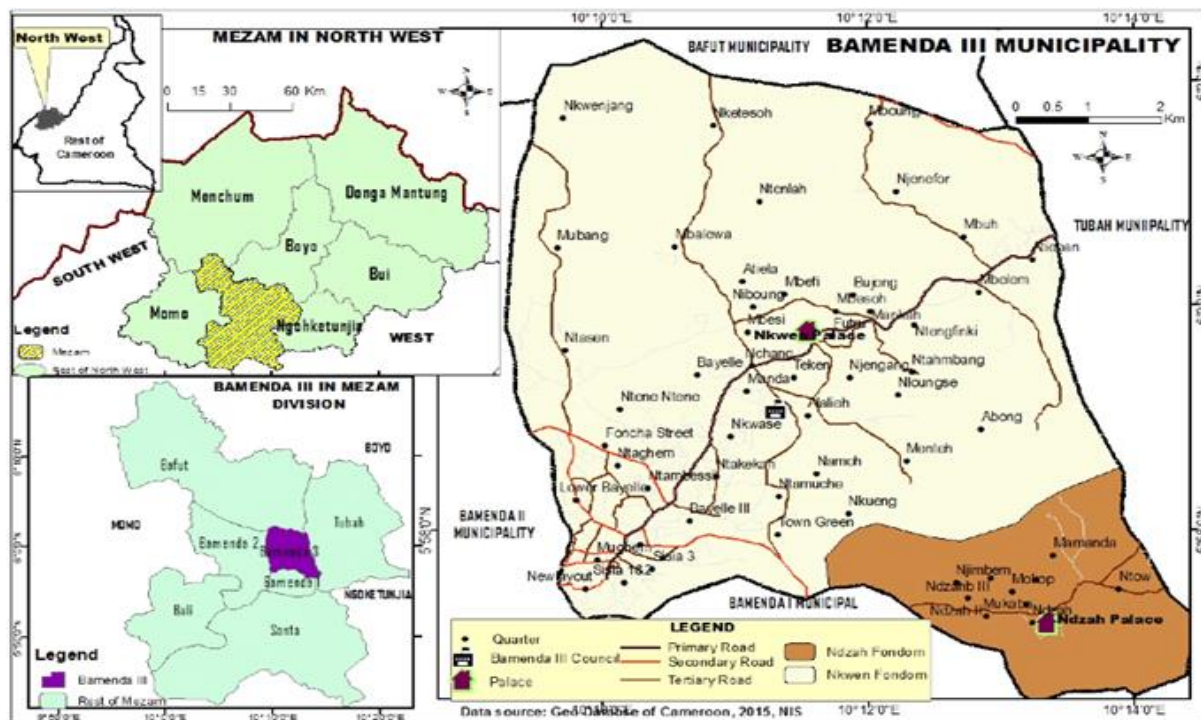


Fig. 1: Bamenda III Municipality in Mezam Division of the Northwest Region of Cameroon

Source: Geo-data of Cameroon, 2015, NIS. Adopted from Bamenda III Council, 2020

Bamenda III Municipality experiences an average temperature of 24°C at lower altitudes and 16°C at higher altitudes and an absolute annual average rainfall of 1700mm to 2824mm; sunshine is relatively abundant with an annual total of 1900 hours with 50% in the dry season, 37% in the growing season and 13% during harvesting (North West Regional Service for Meteorology, 2009). Humidity remains high at about 75-80%. The combination of high solar energy input, moderately high temperatures and high relative humidity accelerates the weathering process (Nchangvi, 2020). This prevailing and conducive climatic condition is similar to those of the peripheries wherefrom IDPs flee which also serves as an attractive factor for some market gardening activities in the municipality. This is supported by the relative peace and stability and the accessibility and availability of some basic resources and social amenities, thus, making Bamenda III Municipality a natural choice for most IDPs who cannot afford to move out of the region of origin.

### III. SOCIO- ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF BAMENDA III MUNICIPALITY

Bamenda being the regional capital of the Northwest Region, Bamenda III Municipality is one of the many sociocultural entities from across the region. These entities provide diverse cultural animation through their social and cultural associations. Community libraries, youth cultural centres, sports academy, museums, handicraft centres, palaces, ancient architectural structures, all portray a friendly cultural atmosphere. The presence of many schools (Primary, Secondary, University and Professional Education) offered by both state, religious and private entities provide a suiting reason for relocation to the

municipality. This is supported by the presence of many activities such as mainstream multi-dimensional activities (transportation, small businesses, and agriculture, banking services and a lot more). Since the outbreak of the political impasse of the region, many humanitarian nationals, international, governmental and non-governmental bodies are equally present in the region. A majority of and if not all of these services and activities are missing in the main parts of the divisions and subdivisions in the region since the birth of the aggravation of the Anglophone Crisis rocking the two English Speaking regions of the country, Bamenda III Municipality inclusive. The increasing number of internal displacements is at the forefront of a plethora of effects on residential instability and mobility in the municipality.

### IV. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the qualitative and quantitative methods of data sourcing for secondary and primary data procurement. Related literature was reviewed alongside oral histories captured through interviews, informal discussions and focus group discussions. News outlets and field observation constituted an integral part for data procurement as photographs were used for visual geography. Oral history was captured from a resource person in the study area and a focus group discussion was organized comprising of IDPs (males and females) on their plight in the study area. A total of 200 respondents (160 IDPs and 40 residents) provided answers to the questionnaire and one interview comprising of a native in Bamenda III Municipality was carried out to obtain useful information on internal displacement, plight of IDPs and effects on instability and mobility in the study area. Informal discussions were vital for the procurement of insightful information on IDPs in

relation to their reasons for relocation and the unprecedented instability in the study area. Inferential statistical techniques were used for data treatment and the results obtained were presented in the form of tables, percentages, and pie charts. Some quarters in Bamenda III Municipality were selected at random through balloting vis-à-vis Sisia I&II, Ndamukong, Ntaghem, Foncha Street, Ntamuche and New Lay Out as urban residence and Ntasen, Mbelewa, Njenefor and Atiela as rural residence. These sites were selected to represent

Bamenda III Municipality on internal displacement and its ripple effects on urban residential instability and mobility.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Age and Gender of IDPs and residents

The age bracket and gender of both IDPs and residents in the selected areas were taken into consideration to provide the basis for data collection and analysis for this study (table 1).

Age bracket	Gender of IDPS %		Gender of Residents %		Total %
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
16-24	3.7%	3.0%	1.2%	1.0%	8.9%
25-39	14.3%	9.1%	2.4%	1.0%	27.7%
40-59	22.6%	13.1%	3.1%	1.8%	40.6%
60+	15.0%	6.3%	1.3%	1.2%	22.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>31.4%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 1: Age and gender disaggregation of IDPs and residents

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

It is obtained from table 1 that majority of the respondents are IDPs with 87% (55.6% females and 31.4% males) coming from within the study area, the region and out of the region while residents constitute a minority proportion of 13% (8% females and 5% males). These residents are the sampled population resident in the study area before the commencement of the armed conflicts. The gender most displaced is the females who fall between the age brackets 40-59 years. This is attributed to the fact that females in general are vulnerable and susceptible to adverse situations (sexual harassment and torture); they have impounding family responsibilities (household food providers and carers) where they continuously search for peace, stability and better conditions for their families. The

small proportion of male IDPs is also attached to the fact that most of them are caught up in the conflicts or have deliberately refused to relocate. Lastly, individuals of age 60+ are less represented (15%) and are dependent on family members for safety. Some have strong affinities to their social status in the village and possessions.

## VI.

### B. IDPs and residents' areas of origin

A majority of the IDPs population in Bamenda III Municipality are those displaced within the North West Region, those from within the municipality and foreigners (figure 2). These are groups of people forced out of their original residents as a result of the armed conflicts.

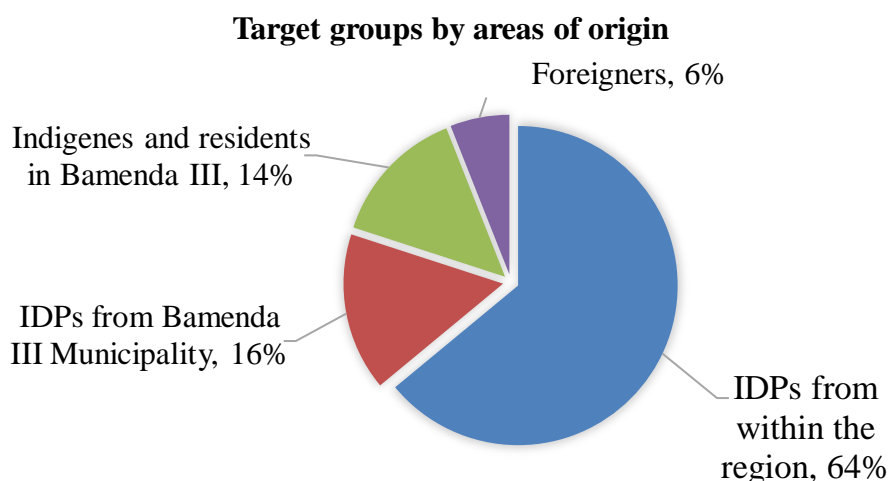


Fig. 2: Lay out of respondents by areas of origin

Source: Fieldwork, 2022.

As shown on figure 2, a total of 64% of the population of IDPs are from within the region (other divisions, subdivisions and villages) though some are from the other regions of the country particularly from the South West Region. IDPs escaping from the Boko Haram insurgency

from the North and Far North Regions of the county as well as Niger and Northern Nigeria (6%) are equally present in quarters such as Ntambang and Njegang. Still on figure 2, indigenes make up 14% of the residents within the study area.

### C. Place of current Residence and its ripple effects

The current residential areas of IDPs and residents were randomly selected from 10 quarters in the Bamenda III municipal to establish the correlation that exists between the ripple effects of internal displacement to the residential mobility and instability and housing infrastructure as a result of the armed conflict in the region in order to expound on the nature of the current residential situation in the various quarters. Most of the IDPs infiltrated and settled among the residents in the various quarters mainly in urban settlements where there is relative calm. Areas such as Ntase-Mbelewa, Njefefor and Atiela neighbourhoods are rural areas with frequent instability which discourages effective settlement. As obtained from field respondents, the massive influx of IDPs into the study area has triggered an unprecedented alteration to land. These IDPs in search of land for construction, business and other uses are spreading into the fringes causing urban sprawl as a result of available

and cheap land. This phenomenon has enabled some unscrupulous land dealers to perpetrate land double sales. This mal practice, however, has led most often to arm tussles between the land dealers and their potential buyers especially around the Menda-Mbelem neighbourhoods. As gathered from the field, the high influx of IDPs into the study area has intensified crime waves thus, aggravating urban residential instability. This instability caused by high crime waves has further triggered more internal displacements within the study area (figure 3). This residential instability and mobility has forced some IDPs and even residents to have no stable location within the study area. This is even aggravated by continuous violence from neighbourhoods surrounding the study area. Once violence increases, IDPs move from one location to another in search of safety and most often, they move to relatives, churches and at times, to popular joints where they attract sympathy from well-wishers.

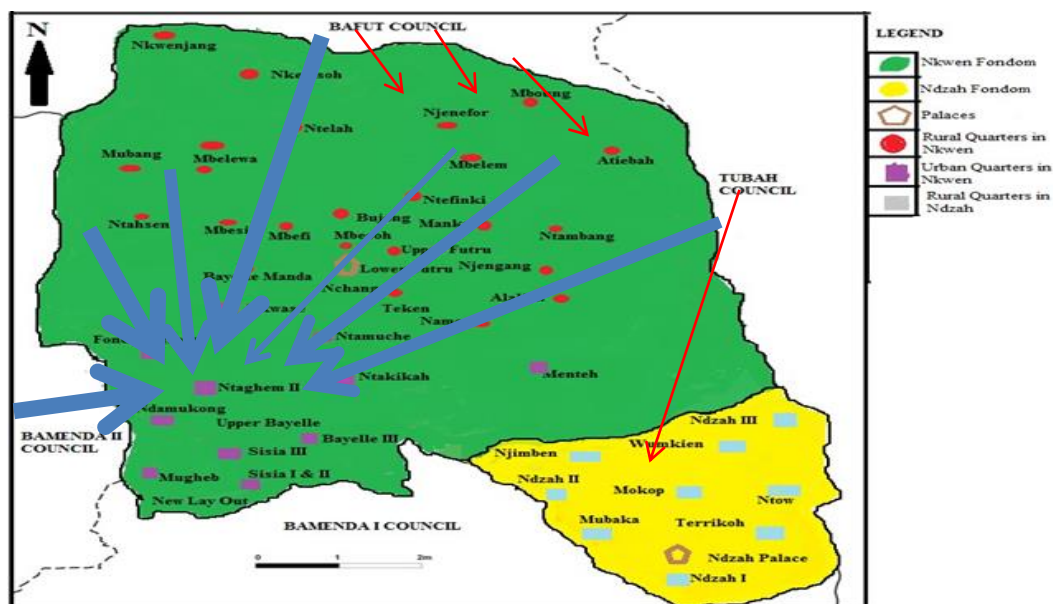


Figure 3: IDPs and residents flow in Bamenda III Municipality

- ← Movement weight from other municipalities and within Bamenda III Municipality to the urban areas  
 → Movement from other municipalities into rural areas of Bamenda III Municipality

Source: Adapted from Bamenda III Council, 2022 and fieldwork, 2022

As seen on figure 3, a majority of IDPs are from Bafut, Ntase and Bamenda II Municipality followed by Atiela, Mbelewa and Tubah Municipality into the urban centres of Bamenda III Municipality for its relative calm as against a smaller proportion that settles in the rural areas. Those who settle in the rural areas do so to safeguard their security before searching for safer areas as most if not all rural areas are characterised by violence emanating from the armed conflict. This continuous influx of IDPs has exerted pressure on available resources and facilities such as water, housing, education, health, transport and land use exacerbating shortages, degradation and conflicts. No movement is carried out from Bamenda I Municipality into Bamenda III municipality because it is the safest municipality in Mezan

Division. This is because it is the administrative centre with maximum security.

### D. Triggers of IDPs and the displacement phenomenon

Every displacement is due to some related reasons. However, there is always a dominant cause of the displacement of persons from their areas of origin. The ongoing armed conflict raging in the Bamenda III Municipality has triggered a massive and continuous internal displacement of persons with its ripple effects on multiple domains at social, economic, cultural and political levels. Most of the displacement is triggered by insecurity and/or reasons for which violence and instability are related (table 2).



Triggers for displacement	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
	IDP Respondents		Resident Respondents	
Insecurity (threats, kidnappings, torture, ghost towns)	90	56.25%	17	42.5%
Sexual harassment	21	13.1%	6	15%
Health risks & complications	11	6.9%	4	10%
Business opportunities	19	11.9%	5	12.5%
Education, employment	10	6.25%	3	7.5%
Scarcity of resources and home destruction	09	5.6%	5	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2: Triggers of internal displacement within Bamenda III

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

It is obtained from table 2 that 56.25% of IDPs and 42.5% of residents affirmed that their motivation to relocate is insecurity. They advanced threats, kidnappings, torture and to an extent, forceful integration into armed groups. As gathered from a focus group discussion, kidnappings are very common and release of any victim is based on the payment of ransom which ranges from 50000 FRS CFA to any amount. They also furthered that the numerous ghost towns which often last for many days is a hindrance to economic activities, thus, pushing them out of their residents of origin. Fieldwork also revealed that some victims are kept incommunicado for days and to an extent, are punished most often for a specific crime against the perceived rule(s) laid

down by the kidnappers. Because of this generalised insecurity, women and girls suffer from sexual harassment (13.1% for IDPs and 15% for residents) while 11.9% IDPs and 12.5% of residents relocate for business purposes. A total of 6.9% IDPs and 10% residents affirmed that the inaccessibility and unavailability of doctors and other health personnel in most medical institutions especially at the peripheries is another reason for their relocation into and within the study area. Some IDPs 5.6% and 1.5% residents confirmed their relocation to the scarcity of resources and the destruction of their homes, thus, forcing them into deplorable housing conditions in their areas of departure (plate 1).



Plate 1: photos (A &amp; B) Destroyed property and residence with the use of fire, photo (C) poor housing conditions

Source: Field Survey, 2022

## VII.

### VIII. DIVISIONS MOSTLY AFFECTED BY THE ARMED CONFLICT

The North West Region has seven (7) divisions and all of these divisions are affected by the armed conflict plaguing the two Anglophone regions. These divisions are affected at different scales (table 3).

Division	IDP respondents		Resident respondents	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Bui	41	24	11	27.5
Boyo	33	21	9	22.5
Menchum	29	18	8	20
Momo	21	13.5	4	10
Ngokentjia	19	12	3	7.5
Donga/Mantung	9	6.5	3	7.5
Mezam	8	5	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3: Divisions mostly affected in rank by the armed conflict

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

It is obtained from table 3 that the highest proportion of IDPs (24%) hail from Bui Division as confirmed by 27.5% of the resident population. This is followed by Boyo and Menchum divisions with 21% and 18% and as supported with residents response of 22.5% and 20% respectively. The table shows that 13.5% for Momo, 12% for Ngokentunjia and the least from Donga/Mantung and Mezam with 6.5% and 5% respectively. This is indicative that Bui, Boyo, and Menchum divisions constitute the epicentre highest of a high level of insecurity related to the Anglophone crisis. Most of the displaced from this division

are females and children (plate 2). This is attributed to the fact that a majority of the men flee into the bushes where some in the course of seeking refuge, embark on farming and craft work. The low percentage recorded for Donga/Mantung and Mezam divisions is the relative calm existing in most parts of their urban centres than in the rural areas where instability is the order of the day. It was gathered in the field that the concentration of military in urban centres scare away armed men and that a majority of those in Donga/Mantung are not interested in the conflict.



Plate 2: Photo (D) women and children in the open cooking for their various families and photo (E) women and children stranded by the roadside and photo (F) IDPs mostly women and children in a religious centre taking lunch

### IX. SOCIO-ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY OF IDPS

It is a truism that people displaced from their areas of origin will always find and experience hardship in their new destinations. Those displaced from other municipalities and even within the study area face a plethora of challenges ranging from hygiene and sanitation, family needs, housing issues and even education and employment in their new destination (table 4).

Characteristics	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Total %
Hygiene & sanitation, health & medical services	40	25	11	27.5	52.5
Family catering (basic needs, transport)	12	7.5	6	15	22.5
Housing and infrastructural conditions (rents, bills)	62	38.75	14	35	73.75
Education and employment	24	15	5	12.5	27.5
Food, water, capital	22	13.75	4	10	23.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4: Respondents' views on IDPs vulnerability within the study area

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Table 4 shows that 73.75% (38.75% and 35%) of IDPs in the study area face challenges in housing and infrastructural facilities. They attest that the available houses are expensive and given their IDP status, their inability to generate sufficient funds to handle rents and bills is an uphill task. This housing phenomenon is aggravated by landlords who exacerbate tough housing conditions. Most of them are squatting with relatives, friends and other family ties hoping to find a better place to resettle thus, furthering residential instability and mobility. Some of these IDPs are hosted by religious and humanitarian organisations especially of adolescents who in most cases have lost their family members to the armed conflict and have got no way to go. Apart from housing and infrastructural challenges; they also face the problem of hygiene and sanitation (52.5%). They furthered that obtaining basic needs such as hygienic towels, toiletries, proper waste disposal and treatment sites, as well as good toilets is not easy. This

situation has led to the frequent ill-health among the most vulnerable groups of people (women and children). Insufficient food needs, doubtful sources of water and inadequate capital (23.75%) are some of the causes of frequent ill-health. With insufficient funds, visiting the health units for diagnosis and treatment become challenging. This also trickles down with a negative impact on education. Unemployment has a detrimental effect on IDPs ability to initiate and execute projects with a proportionate relationship on survival (family catering) 22.5%. The acquisition of didactic materials and school fees as well as proving food items coupled with the spike in food stuff prices constitute a major challenge. This is aggravated by the difficulty to obtain a piece of land for agricultural practices from where revenue could be generated.



## X. IDPSINTENTIONS AND PERCEPTION ON DURABLE SOLUTIONS TO THEIR DILEMMA

The intention of IDPs as to voluntarily return to their places of origin, be integrated into their current residence or

be relocated portrays their varying degree of understanding pertaining to their perception about the crisis (table 5).

IDP intentions and perception	Age brackets				Gender		Percentage	
	16-24	35-39	40-59	60+	Male	Female	Male	Female
Remain in current place of residence	21	16	31	7	27	62	39	47.2
Relocate to other regions in Cameroon	11	6	6	2	11	9	16	6.9
Migrate abroad	9	23	6	1	20	20	29	15.3
Voluntary return to area of origin	7	2	11	19	3	14	4	10.7
Still confused	3	2	15	2	8	26	12	19.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5: IDPs intentions and perception of the nature of crisis by age and gender

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

It is shown on table 5 that the female (47.2%) as against the males (39%) in the age brackets 40-59 expressed their wish remain in their current place of residence while 29% of males than females 15.3% confirm their desire to travel abroad. The females explained that they will like to remain in their current place of residence and be integrated into the host community. This is because of the creation and operation of petit businesses, free entrepreneurial training for empowerment, education for their children and a relative calm environment. For the men, travelling abroad is the remedy as they will be free from violence both from the military and armed men. This is indicative of the increasing number of Cameroonians and most especially those from the Anglophone regions daring to travel illegally through the Sahara desert while many others play the American Direct Visa (DV) to try their luck. It is also seen on table 5 that 10.7% of females against 4% males of the age brackets 60+ expressed their wish to return to their places of origin. These females advanced that they will like to rest in eternity in their homes of origin (ancestral home) where the graves of relatives as well as some family members are found. They also explained that their houses and property are there and that they will not continue to live in deplorable conditions while for some, it is their emotional and religious affinity pulling them into their places of origin while the males are sceptical to return as they are those being hunted especially by the military that are in constant search of armed men. Some of the IDPs were still confused as per what to do. Many still doubt the state of the crisis and are sceptical to return to their places of origin especially the females (19.9%) as they are not sure of any effective and immediate long term solution to abate the raging conflict which is mutating daily and the spill over effects might be disastrous in the long run. Those between the ages 16-24 expressed their wish to relocate to other regions of Cameroon as they cited education to be their utmost priority. This is because schooling activities are not interrupted in other regions of Cameroon as is the case with the North West region and most especially in the study area.

## XI. CONCLUSION

The study found out that residential instability and mobility was strongly associated with insecurity stemming from the socio-political crisis rocking the two Anglophone regions of the country which was also age and gender selective. The older females expressed their wish to return to their places of origin due to the social, economic and ancestral affinities than the younger males who rather wished to travel abroad for greener pastures. The destruction of homes and property instigated a massive relocation of the population into Bamenda III Municipality. It is suggested that the warring parties with other stakeholders seek a lasting panacea to the root causes of this increased residential instability and mobility of IDPs population by tackling the triggers of the relocation, thereby, creating an enabling environment for returnees.

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