Displacement and Returns of IDPs in Conditions of Insecurity
A Spatial and Empirical Analysis on Ouaddaï Prefecture, Chad (2006-2009)

Study Objective
This study looks at the migratory movements of displaced populations, responding to a call in the literature to reorient research in this regard, by recognizing return of displaced populations as a form of migration and taking into consideration the element of choice involved.

The study, thus, looks at the underlying motivations for the migratory movements of displaced population in conditions of protracted displacement and chronic insecurity, trying to identify significant correlations between returns’ patterns and other phenomena in order to identify which factors are influencing the decisions to return.

Methodology
This study used a previously unexploited geo-referenced data set on 435 villages in South-Eastern Chad, generated by two humanitarian organizations in partnership with UNHCR. Starting from 2005, in order to support returns, UNHCR partners undertook a cyclical profiling in the region attempting to capture a picture of both the current and pre-conflict situations and to identify needs and gaps. The data, in Excel format, have been cleaned, and later displayed and analyzed with ArcGIS, generating new analytical categories by aggregating the existing ones. Few categories have then been hypothesized to be the most probable determinants of returns: security, presence of services, and several features which were expected to represent proxy indicators for livelihoods opportunities. Only few of these categories are displayed here, while others, which proved uncorrelated, have been ignored. Density patterns have been used instead of buffer or other techniques, based on the assumption that the proximity to the listed features has both direct and indirect effects, gradually fading as distance increases.

Limitation of the Study
There are few limitations to the present study, deriving in part from the data collection methodology and in part from the type of analysis.

In the first place, because of a combination of security problems, data collection methodology and timing, the data collected can present some minor bias. In many cases it has been impossible to gather many data on the settlements that have been destroyed or abandoned, given the fact that no reliable witnesses could be interviewed.

Concerning the data analysis, the main limitations derive from the geographical scope of the analysis. The borders between Sudan and Chad are extremely porous. Nonetheless, the present analysis has been contained within the Chadian borders. Therefore, it has not been possible to generate data on the distances from geographical features and resources located in Darfur, which could have had an impact on the decisions to return in villages nearby the border.

Findings
Our results indicate that there is no correlation between the perception of security and the decision to return.

Returns are a complex phenomena, influenced by a great number of factors, none of which can be singled out. Nonetheless, returns appear to be linked to livelihood opportunities. In particular, the presence of water, necessary for livestock and agriculture, is tied to proximity to services and to the perception of security and the decision to return.

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Projected Coordinate System: WGS 1984, UTM Zone 34N
Data Source: Intersos (http://websig-tchad.intersos.org), NGIA, GADM
Data: 10th of May 2011