

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.

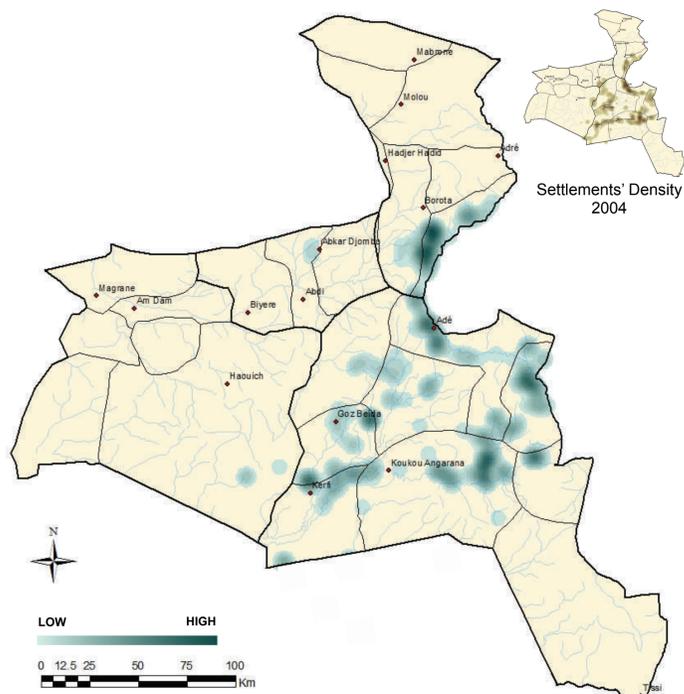
The study, thus, looks at the underlying motivations for the migratory movements of displaced population in conditions of protracted displacement and chronic insecurity, trying to identify significant correlations between returns' patterns and other phenomena in order to identify which factors are influencing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

The Context

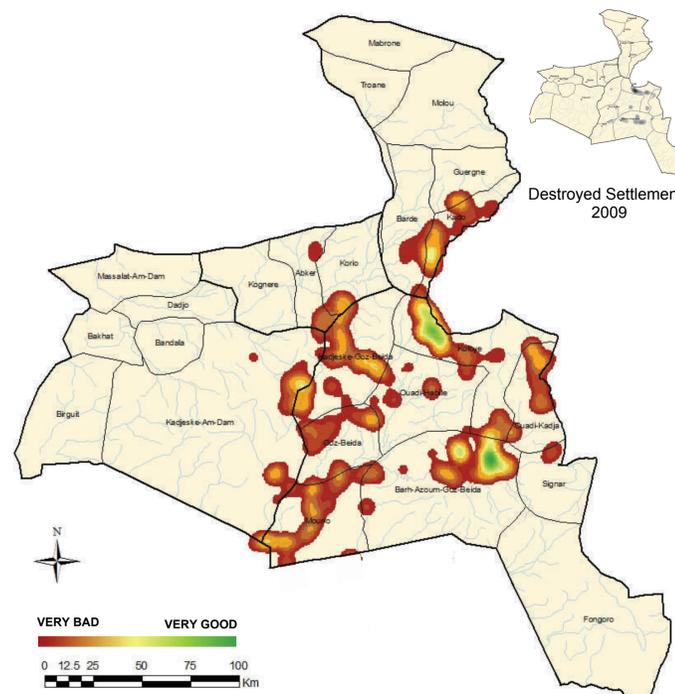
The Eastern part of Chad has been suffering from a conflict motivated by environmental degradation, ethnical rivalries, internal political dynamics and the effects of the conflict in the bordering Darfur. From 2005, the deterioration of the security situation in the Ouaddaï Prefecture of Chad caused displacement of a large part of the population in three successive waves.

In November 2007, the number of IDPs was believed to be approximately 170,000 people. In 2008, according to the International Displacement Monitoring Center around 185,000 individuals, or about one fifth of the population of eastern Chad, was displaced. 95 per cent of these were located in the Department of Dar Sila. As of September 2009, there were over 168,000 IDPs living in 38 IDP sites in eastern Chad, concentrated especially in the zone around the towns of Goz Beida, Koukou, Adé, Dogdoré and Kerfi. While the security only marginally improved, a significant percentage of displaced individuals started to leave the IDP camps where they were receiving assistance from international organizations and to return to their villages, or often simply areas, of origin. The geographical distribution of the population appear to be undergoing a process of change as a result of this process.

Density of settlements with returns



Perception of Security



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.



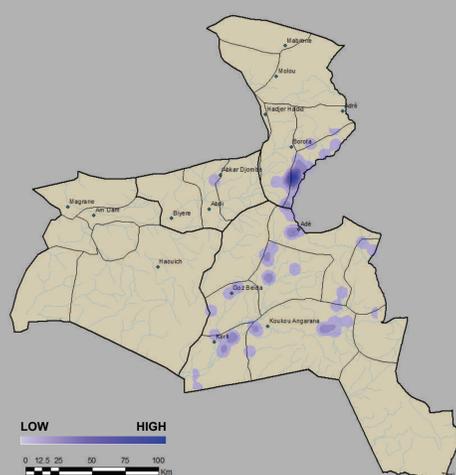
Displaced women in Gouroukoun IDP site gather to speak to members of the UN Security Council. IDPs fled janjaweed attacks on border villages and were displaced several times before reaching Goz Beida. Credit: **Hélène Caux / UNHCR**

Methodology

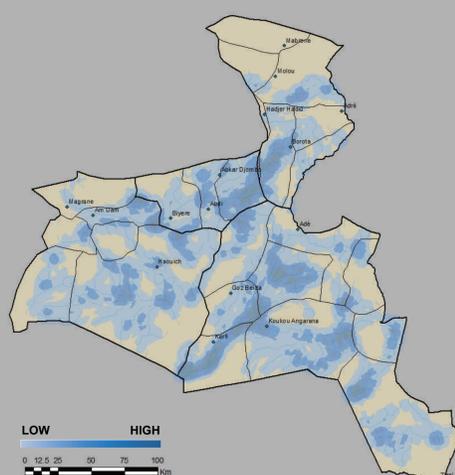
This study used a previously unexploited geo-referenced data set on 435 villages in South-Eastern Chad, gathered by two humanitarian organizations in partnership with UNHCR. Starting from 2005, in order to support returns, UNHCR partners undertook a cyclical profiling in the region attempting to capture 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.

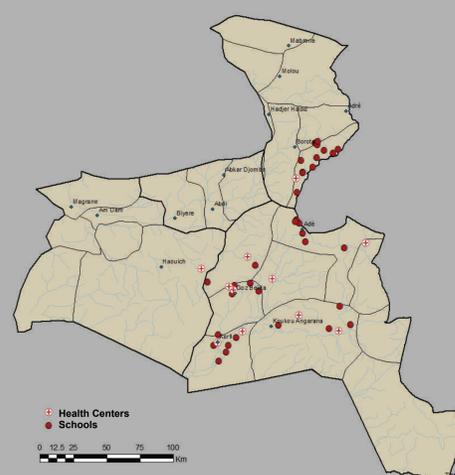
Humanitarian Assistance



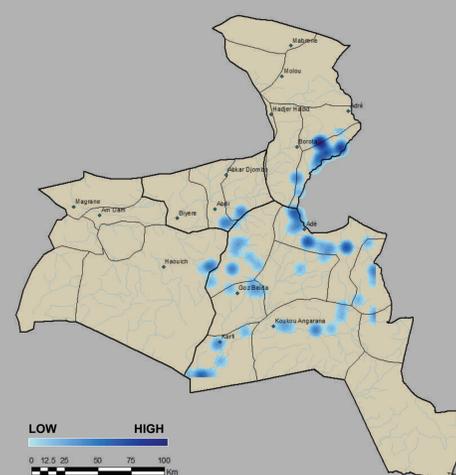
Water run-off Coverage



Presence of Services



Markets Proximity



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 for livestock and agriculture, the proximity to points where NGOs are distributing food and assistance—thus allowing returnees to differentiate their access to resources, and the proximity to services that can increase human capital (health posts, schools) all appear relevant factors. The fact that the higher market density can be observed in those areas with the higher returnees density, while seems more an effect than a cause, reinforce the idea that returns are driven by economic reasons.

Cartographers: Prisca Benelli & Claudio Deola

Projected Coordinate System: WGS 1984, UTM Zone 34N

Data Source: Intersos (<http://websig-tchad.intersos.org>), NGIA, GADMN

Date: 10th of May 2011