

Emergence and Trend of Displaced Persons within the Context of Trans-Border Insecurity in the Far North Region of Cameroon

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Abstract

Trans-border insecurity remains a major preoccupation in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and particularly in the Far North Region of Cameroon. The porous borders of states in the Lake Chad region has enhance trans-border insecurity stemming from the illicit movement of people, goods and arms leading to the displacement of persons across borders. This is the case of the Far North Region of Cameroon hosting displaced persons in two of its six divisions (Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga) due to the nefarious activities of Boko Haram terrorist sect. The study employed a mixed research design made up of the descriptive and quantitative designs in accordance with the stated objectives. This design permitted the collection of pertinent data from both secondary and primary sources. Secondary information was obtained from libraries, archives of institutions such as end of year reports of local NGOs and other international institutions working with displaced persons. From the libraries of ENS and National Polytechnic Maroua, information on trans-border insecurity and the management of displaced persons were obtained from text books and already defended dissertations. Results revealed that, the categories of displaced persons in area include; IDP (50%), refugees (36.4%) and returnees (13.6%). The numbers of attacks reached its peak in 2014 and Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga recorded over 250 attacks. Results also show fluctuating trend of displacements between 2012 and 2022. The years 2012 to 2015 was marked by increasing wave of displaced persons with IDPs recording 77,695, out of Camp refugees 6870 and returnees 10,316. Between 2017 and 2018, there was relative calm as the number of displaced (IDPs) dropped rapidly to 21,312 persons while the number of returnees increased to 4,397. Out of Camp refugees also recorded a drop in numbers that is 32,669 people. Between 2019 and 2020, a 7.8% increase in displaced persons was witnessed in Mayo Sava while Mayo Tsanaga registered an increase of 3.9%. Between April 2019 and March 2021, the numbers of attacks increased with IDPs surging to 341,000 while returnees in 2021 also rose to 124,300 persons. Therefore, the number of attacks greatly affects displacements and response strategies must engaged local leaders.

Keywords: Trans-border insecurity, Displaced persons, Boko Haram, Far North Region, Cameroon.

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CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In the World today, one in every 122 human beings is either a refugee, an internally displaced or asylum seekers resulting from trans-border insecurity, wars or persecution. According to the UNHCR (2016), there are currently 59.5 million people across the world who have been displaced, 19.5 million of these are refugees generated from trans-border insecurity and misery in their nations. Since the heightened security alert of 2015, migrants and refugees fleeing from instability, hardship and conflicts have tried to reach the shores of Italy and Greece by foot through the Balkan route. Consequently, some are deported, others end up in detention facilities where violence of human right is

exercise on them while others are stranded at sea Yuval-David *et al.*, (2017).

Studies have revealed that trans-border insecurity resulting to the forced displacement of people has been increasing and stood at 65.6 million in 2016. This growth has been particularly phenomenal over the past decade (Grandi, 2017). In 2007, the population of forcefully displaced persons numbered 42.7 million. Over the last 10 years, the figure has increased by over 50 per cent. Today, 1 out of every 110 persons in the world is displaced, compared with 1 out of 157 a decade ago, with much of this increase having occurred over the last five years. While the Syrian conflict

contributed significantly to trans-border insecurity, there have been other major displacements throughout the world over the last five years, notably in and from Burundi, Central African Republic, the DRC, Iraq, Myanmar, South Sudan, Sudan, Ukraine and Yemen.

In America, Chavez (2010) realized that National security principles and policies of the United States for more than a hundred and fifty years were not considered in the region till after the September 11 terrorist attacks. It was discovered that new pressures cause significant challenges, specifically on the conditions of the U.S. Mexico border, that include heavy immigration inflow patterns and policy controls and, for the moment, drug violence that is the result of a trafficking war (trans border insecurity). It was equally noted that interdependent and complex models of interaction include a complex set of variables that function actively between nations sharing borders or intense relations

In Africa, the growth of trans-border insecurity is alarming in Northeastern Nigeria led by the Boko Haram terrorist group whose violent and bloody incursions into Chad, Niger and the Far North Region of Cameroon have impacted the lives, society, and the economies of these countries just like the Somalia-based Al-Shabaab terrorist organizations, which have launched numerous attacks into Kenya and Ethiopia, and the Seleka Opposition movement in the Central African Republic, which has conducted trans-border raids thereby rendering thousands homeless and generated IDPs and refugees. In SSA, Cameroon and Niger face the greatest risk to Boko Haram as they share considerably vast borders (Adamu and Haruna, 2016).

Fonkeng (2019) carried out a research on "Insecurity, forced migration and internally displaced persons along the Cameroon-Nigeria Border, 2003-2018" and found out that the Cameroon-Nigeria border is plagued with insecurity challenges and serious threats to the border communities. It was also discovered that following the Boko Haram attacks, the counter-offensive by the Cameroonian and Nigerian armed forces, and the attacks between the Southern Cameroons separatists and the Cameroonian forces as a result of the Anglophone Crisis, the population along the Cameroon-Nigeria border were forced to abandon their towns and villages into neighboring communities. The porous nature of West Africa's borders owes its origin to the hasty way the colonialists carved up the African thereby exposing the countries to easy attacks (Omolara, 2019). Karimbhoy (2017) found out that, the first Boko Haram's attacks in the Far North in 2014 were considered by the Cameroon Government as Nigerians problem until it spilled over to Cameroonian territory. This later led to the closure of borders into Cameroon. Trade routes between Cameroon, Nigeria

and Chad were shut down as well as markets, schools and health facilities. The emergence of all these led to the growth of displaced persons in Mayo Sava and Mayo Sava as they seek refuge from the attacks of armed groups especially the Boko Haram sect group.

The penetration of Boko Haram in Cameroon took place gradually and in several phases as they spread their religious ideology, mainly in the Logone and Chari and Mayo Sava divisions of the Far North, recruiting Cameroonians as fighters and using this part of the territory as safe heaven. Between 2011 and 2013, they established their networks of arms caches on Cameroonian territory, with Kousseri serving as their logistics base. At the same time, just like Chad, the Far North of Cameroon served as transit points for weapons bought by Boko Haram from Libya and Sudan. Fotokol in Cameroon has been one of the entry points of these arms from Nigeria (Heungoup, 2016). Their activities through suicide bombing, kidnapping, raiding of villages both in Nigeria and in the Far North of Cameroon has led to the growth of displaced persons evident in the Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions of the Far North Region of Cameroon. These divisions host huge numbers of trans-border displaced persons (refugees, IDPs and returnees) since the onset of the nefarious activities of Boko Haram terrorist sect in Northern Nigeria, CAR, Niger and Cameroonian territories including killings, abductions, suicide bombings, amongst other. As such, trans-border insecurity in the region has displaced a large population which has led to the creation of the Minawao refugee camp in the Far North Region of Cameroon in order to accommodate and re-habilitate the displaced persons.

The major problem with the emergence and trend of displaced persons in these areas stems from rapid population growth that exerts pressure on the scarce resources in the host communities. Their presence here is as a result of pushed factors causing them to flee their countries as a result of the nefarious activities of Boko Haram terrorist sect in the region. Most often, the country leaves the management of displaced persons to UNHCR who are mandated to receive, register and provide protection mechanisms to these displaced persons. In addition, the spatial distribution and the organization of displaced person's activities is always a problem in most areas inhabited by displaced person. Also, a common source of discontent for the local population has also been identified as a problem where displaced persons are settled especially with one that is natural-resource poor like in the Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions. This study investigates the emergence and trend of displaced persons within the context of trans-border insecurity in the Far North Region of Cameroon and advocate measures on how they can be sustainable integrate and effectively managed by the various concerned stakeholders.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF TRANS-BORDER INSECURITY

For this study, trans-border insecurity is used to refer to a situation where by the population of a neighbouring country are exposed to risk or vulnerable to danger or threat of danger on lives and property. Achumba *et al.*, (2013) considered trans-border insecurity as a peril, deathtrap, ambiguity, the state of being prone or vulnerable to danger or threat of danger or the tendency of experiencing hurt based on insufficient measures against danger between two states. The concept has equally been looked at as a state

of being subject to danger or threat. Under this scenario, people's state of mind concerning safety could be categorized by self-doubt and defenselessness and such persons could consider themselves targets for harm as they are forced to cross boundaries (Ajodo-Adebanjo and Okorie, 2014). The recent phenomenon of non-violent conflicts within the least developed countries has prompted scholars to perceive trans-border insecurity as threats to human life (Saliu *et al.*, 2007). The operationalisation of trans-border insecurity for this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Operationalization of Trans-border insecurity for this study

CONCEPT	DIMENSION	VARIABLES	INDICATORS
Transborder insecurity	Demographic	Identification	Sex
			Age
			Marital Status
			Level of education
		Reason for displacement	Increase in suicide bombing
			Terrorist attacks
			Wars
			Environmental crisis
			Burning of house
			Increase fear
		Category	Attacks from neighbouring villages
			Number of displaced persons
			Number of refugees
		Origin	Number of returnees
			Number of Cameroonians
			Number of Nigerians
		Evolution of displaced persons	Number of Chadians
			Number of displaced persons before 2015
			Number of displaced persons in 2015
			No of displaced persons 2016
Number of displaced persons in 2017			
Number of displaced persons in 2018			
Number of displaced persons in 2019			
Number of displaced persons in 2020			
Number of displaced persons in 2021			

Source: Authors' Conception (August 2021)

Table operationalised the concept of trans-border insecurity leading to the displacement of people who seek refuge in the Far North Region of Cameroon. From the table, the dimensions, variables and indicators of the concept were identified and analysed concerning the displaced persons (refugees, IDPs and returnees).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

The Far North Region is northernmost and one of the ten regions of Cameroon. Its headquarters is Maroua in the Diamare Division. It is bordered to the south by the North Region, to the east by Chad and to the west by Nigeria. The study sites consisted of the two of the six divisions mostly hosting displaced persons in the region; Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava

Divisions. Mayo-Tsanaga and Mayo-Sava are located at the geographical coordinates of Longitude 9°50'N and 11°35'N of the Greenwich meridian and Latitude 13°E and 14°15'E of the Equator. Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava divisions are located at the south and north western part of the Far North Region. They are bounded to the West by North Eastern Nigeria, to the North by Logon *et* Chari and to the East and South East by the Diamare Division (Figure 1). The two divisions harbour the majority of the displaced persons resulting from trans-border insecurity caused by the dreaded activities of Boko Haram. The study sites consist of seven localities in the two divisions hosting displaced persons. These are Mokolo, Koza, Maskota, mozogo sub-divisions in Mayo Tsanaga and Mora, Tokombere and Kolofata sub-divisions in Mayo Sava Division.

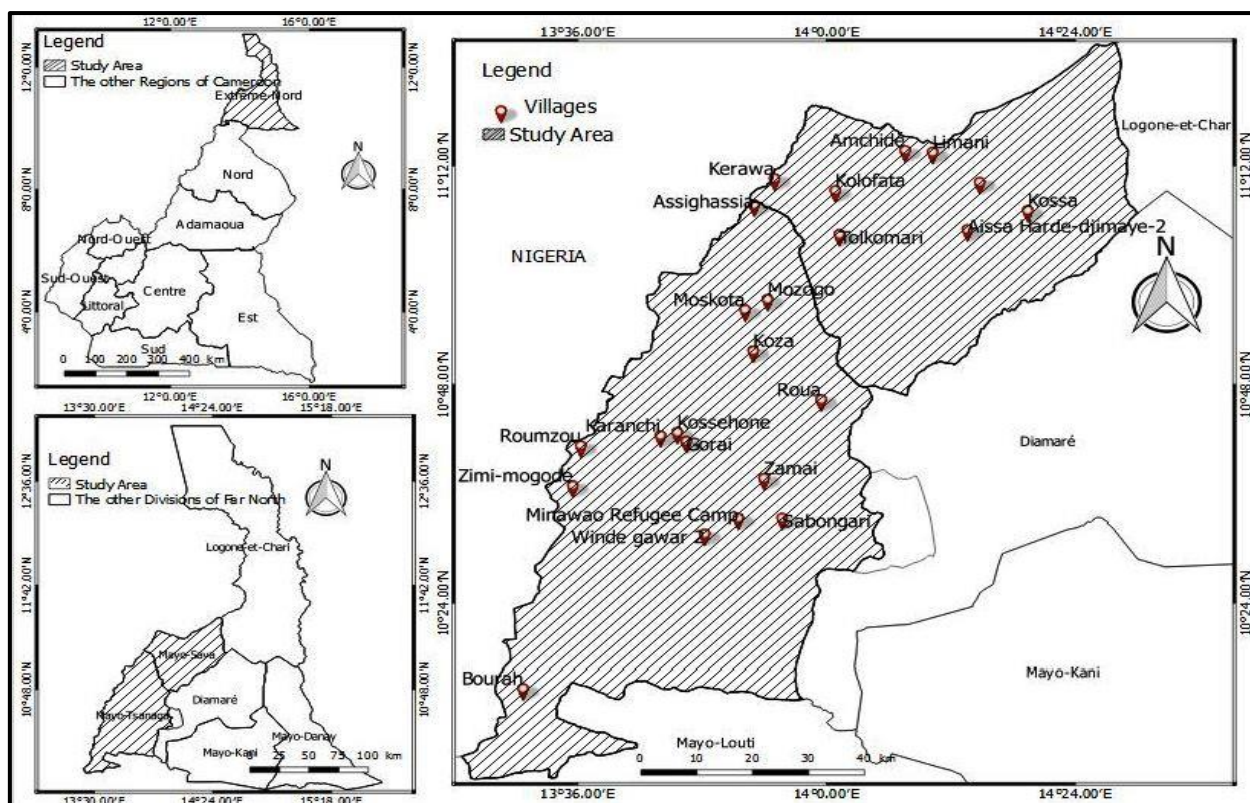


Fig. 1: Location of the study area

Source: Atlas for Cameroon schools and Colleges (1985), modified by Tamasang and Mobara (2021)

Methods

This study employed a mixed research design made up of the descriptive and the Quantitative or inferential research designs in accordance with the stated objectives. This design permitted the collection of pertinent data from both secondary and primary sources. Pertinent data for this study were obtained from secondary and primary sources. Relevant information from the secondary sources were obtained from National Polytechnic and ENS-Maroua libraries (text books, journal articles and dissertations), internet (e-books or electronic books, theses/dissertations, reports and journals) and institutional end of year reports from international NGOs working with displaced persons like UNHCR, Plan International,

OCHA, UNICEF and INTERSOS. Concerning primary sources, reconnaissance surveys were carried out between August and September 2021 during which relevant data were collected via observation, administration of questionnaire, interviews and focused-group discussions. A total number of one thousand one hundred (1100) questionnaires were administered to displaced persons within Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga Divisions who constituted our target population and another three hundred (300) to the local population in these Divisions (Table 2) whose opinions were sampled, seeking to know their perspective on trans-border insecurity and displaced persons and their growth in these divisions.

Table 2: Distribution of population size according to questionnaires and interview administration

Displaced population		Local population		Stakeholders
Divisions	IDPs, Refugees and Returnees	Villagers	International Organizations/NGOs	Councils
Mayo Tsanago	550	150	6	4
Mayo Sava	550	150	6	3
Total	1100	300	12	7

Both structured and semi structured interviews were equally conducted with international organizations like UNHCR, OCHA, Plan International, UNICEF, Intersos and the local councils working with displaced persons. The interview for each group of persons lasted for 10 to 15 minutes. Questionnaires prepared to the displaced population contain components of both

structured and unstructured questions. All questions to be answered by interviewees were prepared. However, additional questions were asked during the course of the interview to clarify and/or to further explain certain issues. All these were used to obtain information on trans-border insecurity and the trend of displaced persons in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions.

Finally, focused group discussions were also granted with some displaced persons and the local population residing in these areas. The exercise grouped 10 to 15 persons and notes were taken at each discussion session. The exercise with each group lasted 20 to 30 minutes. For the local population, four groups were met, two in the Mayo Tsanaga and two in the Mayo Sava divisions.

As far as data analyses were concerned, the study analyzed collected field data with the use of computer software programs. The data collected with the use of questionnaires was manually tallied and analyzed using SPSS and excel 2013 to obtain tables, graphs and charts for interpretation. Cartographically, the Qgis version 2.0 and google earth maps were used to realized maps used in this study.

RESULTS

EMERGENCE OF DISPLACED PERSONS IN MAYO TSANAGA AND MAYO SAVA DIVISIONS

Result on the emergence of displaced persons in the study area is analysed according to categories, duration of stay, reasons for departing the origin areas, attacks by the terrorist sect and arrival of new groups of displaced persons. Displaced persons in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava are of different nationalities and of different categories. They are made up of Cameroonians (IDPs, 50.9%), Nigerians (Refugees, 40.2%) and Chadian (Refugees, 8.9%) of the displaced population.

The displaced population in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava were grouped according to their

categories. This included; IDPs (50%), refugees (36.4%) and returnees (13.6%) of the displaced population. IDPs in Mayo Sava registered 35.1% compared to Mayo Tsanaga with 14.9%. Refugees in Mayo Tsanaga constitute 30.1% compared to Mayo Sava with only 6.3%. The presence of the Minawao Camp in Mayo Tsanaga explains why refugees are more in this Division. Returnees are present both in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava but more in Mayo Sava with 8.1% to 5.5% according to field investigations.

Some displaced persons in these two divisions have stays for more than ten years in their various sites. Some 45.3% of the displaced population have stayed in their present site for a period of between 6 to 10 years. Whereas only 7.1% this population have stayed for less than 1 year. This therefore means that a majority of the displaced population in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava divisions have either been IDPs, Returnees or refugees for six years and above. Very few of them came recently following the recent attacks.

The increasing number of displaced persons in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava divisions is because of trans-border insecurity. This, provoked by the dreaded activities of Boko Haram has rendered 51.3% persons homeless because of terrorist attacks. 12.1% of the population left because of increasing suicide bombings while 7.3% of them left because of war. Some 22.3% of the population gave reasons of environmental hazards and finally 7.1% of the displaced persons moved for other reasons not mentioned. The reasons for the departure of displaced people were equally analyzed at the divisional level as presented in Figure 2.

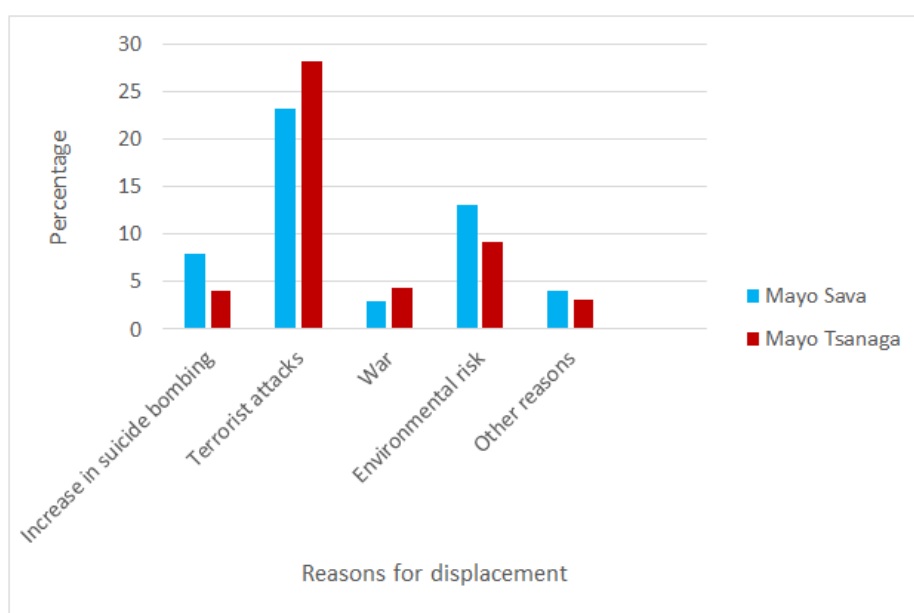


Figure 2: The reasons for Displacement according to Divisions

Source: Fieldwork (Augus/Septt, 2021)

Figure 2 presents the reasons that pushed displaced persons out of their areas of origin to their present sites according to divisions. Findings reveals that a greater number of displaced persons from Mayo Tsanaga with a 28.2% were forced to displaced following terrorist attacks and 23.1% in Mayo Sava for the same reason. 8% in Mayo Sava escaped following suicide bombing while in Mayo Tsanaga it resulted to 4.1%. Environmental hazard has also been one of the reasons for displaced persons as Mayo Sava registers 13.1% displacement rates following environmental displacement and 9.2% in Mayo Tsanaga.

Investigations from the field reveal that there have been increase number of attacks in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions in the past years. For instance, 53.2% of the population strongly agreed that their displacement resulted from increase in the number of attacks in the Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga divisions. Some 17.3% of the population equally agreed to this making the majority. 17.9% of the population are not certain with their response while 6.4% and 5.3% of

the populations disagreed and strongly disagreed that there has been no increase in attacks to cause the displacement of population. At the divisional level, out of the 53.2% of the population who strongly agreed that there has been an increase in the number of attacks, 28.1 of them were from Mayo Sava and only 25.1 from Mayo Tsanaga. This show that, the population of Mayo Sava experienced more attacks as compared to the population of Mayo Tsanaga. Only 2.1% strongly disagreed that there were no increasing attacks in Mayo Sava and in Mayo Tsanaga only 3.2% strongly disagreed. From a general look of things, it shows that there was an increase in the number of attacks as observed in both divisions though more in Mayo Sava.

The peak of these attacks and bombing could be traced back since 2014 where hundreds of people had been killed and many injured with materials lost. Table 7 presents some attacks experienced in the region back in 2014. This is based on the places and circumstances that it took place and also the death toll from the attacks.

Table 3: Attacks and death tolls in 2014

Date 2014	Place and circumstances of attacks	Death toll
4 th May	Brigade gendarmerie of Kousseri	2 deaths 1 gendarme ; 3 kalachnikov, 1 fusil d'assaut léger and munitions seized
5 th May	Locality of Gambarou Ngala-Fotokol	2 deaths recorded
17 th May	Attack on the base of a Chinese enterprise on Public works in Waza	1 Military death, 4 injured, 10 chinois kidnapped and 12 vehicles seized
23 rd May	Attack embarcation along the Logone near Hilé Alifa	1death recorded
27 th May	Attack in the village of Guitsinad-Hitawa toward Tourou (Mayo-Tsanaga)	2 deaths, 1 injured
7 th June	Attack at the military tribunal in Maroua	No victims
7 th June	Attack on the BIR post of Blangochi toward Tourou (Mayo-Tsanaga)	4 deaths with 2 military, 3 injured, and 1 young girl kidnapped
16 th June	Attack at the Kerawa village (Mayo-Sava)	2 deaths including the quarter head of Dogolé-Kerawa
22 nd June	Attack of the 35 ^e camp BIM in the advance post at Kidjimatari-Kolofata	1 soldier injured
8 th July	Gendarmerie Brigade of Zina	1 gendarme death, 22 arms seized
9 th July	Razzia à Bamé-Kolofata	1 death, 57 cattle seized
11 th July	Attack at the gendarmerie post at Bonderi (Mora)	1 gendarme injured ; 1 military car and 3 bikes seized
18 th July	Attack at the commissariat of Limani-Mora	1 police killed and 1 injured
21 st July	Attack at the Naba village toward Bonderi	1 death, 1 injured, and many houses burnt
24 th July	Attack at the BETAP camp at Bagaram toward Hilé Alifa	6 soldiers killed, 6 soldiers injured, 2 vehicles of armes lourdes, munitions of service seized
25 th July	A trap of mines agains the Cameroonian army between Kousseri and Kamouna	More than 10 soldiers killed
27 th July	Locality of de Kolofata	14 persons killed, 6 cars seized, 17 persons kidnapped with the wife of the vice-prime minister of Cameroon Amadou Ali
6 th August	Attack of the locality of Zigagué	12 persons killed, 2 2 cars and 1 police car seized
8 th August	Attack at the village of Tchkramari	2 deaths, 5 moto bikes seized
13 th August	Attack of Bonderi	3 soldiers injured, 1 military car seized
17 August	Attack of brigade of Greya (Mokolo)	3 persons slaughtered, 17 persons taken on hustage, 300 goats and 200 bags of rice seized, 1 school burnt

Source: Field inquiries, Dikalo, N°1574 du 6 mai 2014; L'Œil du Sahel, N°601 du 12 mai 2014; L'Œil du Sahel, N°617 du 10 juillet 2014; L'Œil du Sahel, N°623 du 31 juillet 2014 ; L'Œil du Sahel, N°622 du 29 juillet 2014, L'Œil du Sahel, N°629 du 21 juillet 2014, L'Œil du Sahel, N°629 du 21 août 2014

Table 3 presents the different places and circumstances of Boko Harams attacks and the death toll recorded. The period between May and August 2014 recorded the highest numbers with almost daily attacks and abduction of citizens.

These attacks from Boko Haram have been further traced according to the different divisions that is Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava. Taking in to consideration the numbers of attacks per division, the different sub divisions. This is presented on Table 4.

Table 4: Number of attacks per Divisions and Sub Divisions of Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava

Département	Number of attacks	Sub-divisions	Number of attacks
Mayo-Sava	250	Kolofata	157
		Mora	90
		Tokombéré	3
Mayo-Tsanaga	88	Koza	5
		Mayo-Moskota	69
		Mokolo	14

Source: Fieldwork (August /Sept, 2021)

Table 4 presents the principal localities in the Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava that were highly attacked by Boko Haram. From field investigation, it was realized that Mayo Sava was the most affected with over 250 attacks. The highest numbers of attacks were recorded at the sub division of Kolofata with 157 attacks, 90 were recorded at Mora while Tokombere registered the least with only 3 attacks.

On the other part, that is Mayo Tsanaga, a total of 88 attacks were recorded with the highest coming

from Mayo Moskota with 69 attacks. Mokolo recorded 14 and Koza recorded 5. This gives the clue on the number of attacks in these two divisions.

Further research on Boko Harams attacks were to investigate the types and frequencies of these attacks. Information gotten from the field on the types and frequencies of Boko Harams attacks between 2016 and 2018 are presented on Table 5.

Table 5: Types and frequencies of Boko Harams attacks between 2016 and 2018

	Other attacks of book haram			kamikazes attacks			Explosions of mines			TOTAL
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	
Mayo-Tsanaga	14	15	5	4	5	1	5	1	1	51
Mayo-Sava	73	25	12	16	45	1	13	7	2	194
Total	87	40	17	20	50	2	18	8	3	245

Source: Fieldwork (2021); PUI, 2019

From Table 5, it presents the different attacks from 2016 to 2018. In 2016, a total of 87 other attacks not mentioned were recorded with 73 occurring in Mayo Sava and 14 in Mayo Tsanaga. In 2017, 40 other attacks were recorded with the greatest numbers, 25 from Mayo Sava and 15 in Mayo Tsanaga. In 2018, it reduced to 17 attacks with 12 registered in Mayo Sava and 5 in Mayo Tsanaga. In 2016, a total of 20 kamikaze attacks were recorded at the Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga divisions. 16 in Mayo Sava and 4 in Mayo Tsanaga. In 2017, there was an increase with a total of 50. Mayo Sava still top the lead with 45 while Mayo Tsanaga followed with only 5 attacks. There was relative calm in 2018 as both divisions recorded only 1 attack each. Finally, in 2016, a total of 18 mines explosions were recorded. In this same year, Mayo Sava recorded 13 explosions while Mayo Tsanaga recorded 5. In 2017, 8 recorded and 7 from Mayo Sava while only 1 came from Mayo Tsanaga. A relative drop in 2018 with 3 recorded. 2 in Mayo Sava and 1 in Mayo Tsanaga. Conclusively, Mayo Sava has been a very hot zone after Logone et Chari. This is seen from field statistics as on a total attack of 245 of all types in these

two divisions, Mayo Sava alone registers 194 attacks and Mayo Tsanaga registers only 51 within the 3 years of high picks of attacks following Boko Harams activities.

Finding further reveals that there has been new arrival in the different sites harbouring displaced persons. 41.6% of the population agreed that new groups have settled where they are. Also, 27.1% of them strongly agreed to that same fact while 19.7% of the population were uncertain of the arrival of new comers. Some 7.1% of the population disagreed to the fact that new groups have arrived their sites while 4.5% strongly disagreed. From statistical analysis and from field findings, it is glaring that a greater percentage of the population.

Following the influx of displaced persons in these divisions, the councils together with NGOs have stepped in to support these people with basic necessities like food, drinking water through the digging of bore holds and the constructions of classrooms school to accommodate and educate the displaced persons. For

instance, 28.8% of the population agreed that both the councils and NGOs supports the displaced population with basic needs. Also, some 27.8% of the population strongly supported the idea that NGOs and the council help the displaced population. Some 11.5% were neutral while 20.2% of them disagreed to the fact that councils and NGOs contribute to support the displaced persons. Also, (11.6%) strongly were against the opinion that the councils and NGOs support the displaced population.

TRENDS IN THE GROWTH OF DISPLACED PERSONS IN MAYO TSANAGA AND MAYO SAVA DIVISIONS

This has been analysed for 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2020 for IDPs, displaced persons out of camp, refugees, returnees and the overall scenario or trend between the two studied divisions. The continuous movement of population in to Northern Cameroon from neighbouring West African countries and within the different divisions and sub-divisions of the Northern Regions resulting from the dreaded terrorist group Boko Haram has been on an increase. Field investigation reveals that as of November 2015, a total population of 200,383 persons were displaced in the Far North. This population comprised of IDPs, Refugees and Returnees. Still within that period, the total number of IDPs registered were 158,316 in 27,919 households. Refugees out of the Minawao camp stood at 11,482 in 2,362 households while returnees amounted to 30,582 in 6,068 households. During this same period, 87% of this population displacement was caused by insurgency while only 13% was caused by flood and other natural disasters. Further studies also reveal that, before 2014, 15% of the population of this region was displaced. In 2014, the number increased by 36%. In 2015, it rose to 49% following continuous attacks. An estimated 84% of displaced persons in the region lives in host community while 16% of them live in spontaneous settlements. Out of the three groups identified, IDPs recorded the highest number with 49.9% in Mayo Tsanaga while Mayo Sava recorded 50.1 % of IDPs. Refugees out of camp were also registered with a total of 635 refugees. The majority of them that is 82.7% were registered in Mayo Tsanaga while Mayo Sava registered 17.3%. Then 2834 returnees were identified of which all were found in the Mayo Tsanaga division. This gave a 100% returnees in the Mayo Tsanaga division with a 0% in the Mayo Sava. The growth of the displaced persons in these divisions resulted from trans-border insecurity caused by Boko Haram.

In 2017, increasing attacks, suicide bombing, burning of homes and the indiscriminate killing in the Northern states kept increasing the numbers of displaced persons in the Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava. Investigations from the field reveals that between the 2nd and the 13th of October 2017, the number of IDPs stood at 241,987 persons giving a 72.2%. Refugees out

of Camp stood at 29,337 with 8.8% immigrants in to the country. A total of 63,692 returnees were registered giving a 19.0%. Further inquiries showed that, 92% of the displaced population was as a result of arm conflict while 8% of the displaced person were as a result of flooding in the region. These displaced persons are mostly hosted within the communities with 47%. Some 23% are located in spontaneous sites, 16% rent while only 1% live in open air. In this same year, IDPs registered stood at 241,987 in these divisions.

In 2009, Mayo Sava witnessed an increase of 1,613 IDPs in a population of 6122. A majority of them were coming from Kerawa (840), Walade (532), Meme (3,250), 300 from Pivou 1 and 1,200 from Pivou 2. This was after the incursion of the arm groups in the localities of Goumouldi and Igawa Doulo in the Mora sub division. The main reason for population displacement in this division has been attributed to armed conflict resulting from the activities of Boko Haram. Also, Mayo Tsanaga witnessed a total population of 4,219 IDPs who later on increased to 5,111 IDPs in total principally in the Mokolo sub division with (2,417) displaced, and in the Moskota sub division (1,469). Still in the Moskota Sub- Division, displaced persons from the localities of Zelevet, Kerawa and Mafa fleeing from the armed group found themselves here in early July 2019. In addition, an additional 2,225 displaced arrived the Tourou site in the Mokolo Sub-Division during this period following the July attack in Gossi. These attacks left the population with no choice rather than being displaced from one area to the other. In Mayo Tsanaga, Mokolo topped the list with 2,417 IDPs followed by Moskota with 1469 and Tourou with a total of 1225 IDPs as of 2019.

In 2020, Mayo Tsanaga, witnessed an increase of 7,227 IDPs principally in Mokolo with an additional 4,895 and Koza with 1,802 additional IDPs following the incursions of armed groups. Still in Mokolo, 9 new localities were identified to have received IDPs making a 70% increase. They were installed in the spontaneous sites of Sirak-Gorai and Zamalva in the Koza sub-division. Also in the locality of Gaboua, 540 IDPs were identified coming from Moskota in the locality of Mavoumay and 250 IDPs came from Mozogo. This period witnessed an increase as compared to 2019. In Mayo Sava, there was an increase in the number of attacks in Mayo Sava which had increased the number of displaced to 12,393 IDPs. This increase was seen in the Mora sub-division with 8,299 IDPs. The continuous attacks led to the dissolution of 5 localities with the creation of spontaneous sites with the most affected being the Gouderi of Kolofata as about 7,961 left and in the locality of Kordo with 2,020 reduced IDPs. Most of these IDPs moved to the Mora sub-division as displaced persons. Mora recorded 45.4% while Kolofata registered 43.6%. Other areas and villages like Kordo registered just 11%. These IDPs migrated to areas with

military post as the feel protected and safe in such areas. Field inquiries reveal that; Mayo Sava leads in the number of attacks with 70.9% as compared to Mayo Sava with 29.1%. This shows the intensity of Boko Haram activities in the Mayo Sava Division.

Concerning out of camp refugees, the trend in 2027 showed that the region registered 29,339 out of camp refugees. Between August and October 2017, there was a decrease in the number of out of camp refugees in the region as most refugees return back home to Nigeria. A total of 391 people were sent back to their homeland in Nigeria. In Mayo Sava registered 0 out of camp refugee were registered. This is explained by the refugee's repatriation campaigns to Banki, Nigeria in June 2017. Their voluntary return to Nigeria was due to a drop in the numbers of attacks as it encouraged the refugees to go back to their areas of origin with the hope that complete security and peace will gain back its place. Also, it was before this period that the refugees in Mayo Sava were sent to the Minawao camp coupled with the repatriation of some. During this same period, Mayo Tsanaga hosted 2,488 out of camp refugees. A majority of them lived in the Mogode district with about 1,335 refugees present. There was a slide increase of 3%. This increase resulted from the influx of 8 households (58 people) in to Ldamang village in Mokolo district from Vizik in Nigeria. This was following the attacks in August 2017. Mogode registered the greatest number with a total of 1335 out of Camp refugees while Mokolo registered 1153 out of camp refugees during this same period. The greatest number of out of camp refugees settled at the Kossehona area while host communities accommodated up to 404. Only 42 were able to rent.

In 2019, attacks in the locality of Goumouldi and Igawa Doulo in the Mora sub-division saw a reduction in the number of out of camp refugees in Mayo Sava. These attacks led to the return of 35 households and 162 Nigerians refugees that were present in these areas back to Nigeria. This therefore reduced the number of out of camp refugees in Mayo Sava Division. After the return of out of camp refugees, another group of 146 refugees were identified in the Mayo Tsanaga division between June and July coming from Nigeria. This therefore explains the fact that, there were other attacks in another part of Nigeria that pushed the population to penetrate the division.

In 2020, the region registered 552 out of Camp refugees in Mayo Tsanaga. All the refugees were from Nigeria following the insecurity situation in Nigeria. This division witnessed an increase in the number of out of camp refugees with the greatest number in the Mayo Moskota sub-division. In this sub-division, new localities like the Moundougoua received some 350 out of camp refugees. These attacks of between May and June greatly affected the population of Mayo Tsanaga

as far as displaced persons were concerned. In the Mayo Sava division, an increase of 264 out of camp were identified with all of them coming from Nigeria following the most recent incursions of armed groups during that period in their villages of Origin. A majority of them were relocated in the new spontaneous site of Touski with over 318 refugees. Also, some 47 settled in Talla Lawan in the Mora sub-division.

As far as returnees are concerned, Mayo Tsanaga division in 2017 harboured 16,745 returnees which gave a 26% at the regional level and made her the second after Logon and Chari division. This division witnessed a 4% increase. A majority of these returnees are located at Mokolo (6,232) people, at Mozogo (4, 146) and Koza (2,182) returnees. It should also be noted that, Zileng in the Mokolo district host the greatest concentration of returnees with 1,448 people. The village of Zelewet and Woudal was evaluated to host 276 returnees respectively. Out of the 16,745 returnees in Mayo Tsanaga, 11,075 were formal IDPs and 5,670 were from Nigeria. Also, 1,782 households returned to their original dwellings while 988 households lived with host families and 226 lived in rented homes. Mokolo recorded the highest number of returnees followed by Mozogo and Kora. This high rate of returnees resulted from a relatively calmed atmosphere during this period. On the other hand, Mayo Sava registered total of 13,467 and a 21% returnees at the regional level. On a comparative note, Mayo Tsanaga outnumbered Mayo Sava as concerns the number of returnees in 2017. The number of returnees in Mayo Tsanaga top the list with 16,745 as compared to Mayo Sava with 13,467 returnees divided over the different villages in their sub-divisions.

In 2019, there was a remarkable return of displaced persons in the Sub-division of Mayo Moskota with some 608 returnees in the locality of Djibrilli that was deserted up to the month of May. This population deserted their area and was installed in the locality of Sanda Wadjiri in the Mayo Sava Division. The Mokolo sub- Division witnessed some 506 secondary displacements toward the Tourou site as a result of the incursion of armed groups in July. Their distribution in the Mayo Tsanaga Divisions are; locality of Djibrilli had a total of 608 returnees while Mokolo registered 506 this same year. In Mayo Sava, new returnees were identified in the locality of Baldama with 90 persons and in Oudjila with 200 persons. The Amchide locality also witnessed an increase of returnees of 300 persons and 100 at Kerawa in the Kolofata sub division. Also in Tayer, an additional 150 returnees were registered in the Mora sub division. This period witnessed a bit of calm as far as insecurity was concerned in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions.

In 2020, Mayo Tsanaga division witnessed a decrease of 1,180 displaced persons because of increase attacks. This was significant in the Mokolo sub-division as more returnees moved toward the localities of Zamalva, Idamtsai and Gorai since January 2020. In effect, 900 new returnees were registered in the new locality of Moundougoua in the Mayo Moskota sub-division. In the Mayo Sava Division, there equally existed increasing insecurity which limited the number of returnees in 2020. In the Kolofata sub-division, 3 villages Dougza, Bia and Kordo that hosted some 757 returnees were evacuated as a result of attacks. This was also witnessed in the Mora sub-division where the localities of Igaoua, and Doulo hosting some 921 returnees were also emptied.

The trend between divisions shows that after the Logone and Chari division in the Far North Region, Mayo Sava is the second highest division that accommodates IDPs. A total of 59,967 that is 25% of IDPs were registered in Mayo Sava in 2017. The district of Kolofata had 14,448 IDPs and Mora registered 43,697 IDPs. The reason for increased number of IDPs here is because these areas are regularly affected by the security incidents. Most of the attacks like burning of housing, kidnapping and murder

have pushed people to leave their houses for safety zones. In this division, 51,232 households lived in spontaneous sites as IDPs, 3,190 were in rented homes and 2,141 lived with host families. The distribution of IDPs in the three sub-Divisions of Mayo Sava in 2017 are as follows, a total population of 59967 IDPs were recorded and distributed in the sub-division as follows; Kolofata haboured 2,401% of IDPs, Mora hosted 72.9% while Tokombere hosted only 3.0%.

While in Mayo Tsanaga, a total of 36,319 IDPs were registered, representing a 16% of the regional IDPs. IDPs in this division are concentrated in the district of Koza with over 16,244 IDPs registered. In Mokolo, 10,297 were registered while 9,778 came from Mozogo. The reason for this high rate of displacement is because Mayo Tsanaga is a neighbouring division to Nigeria and so most of the attacks even in Northern Nigeria have a direct impact on the population of Mayo Tsanaga especially those living around the borders. In this division, 129 household of IPD lived in spontaneous sites, 1,126 lived in rented house while 198 lived in collective centers and 5,188 lived with host families. Therefore, Mayo Sava recorded more IDPs in 2017 more than Mayo Tsanaga. The 2019/2020 situation of displaced persons is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Evolution of displaced population in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions in the years 2019 and 2020

Divisions	Displaced in (000) persons in 2019	Displaced in (000) persons in 2020	Total population of displaced in 2019/2020	Difference observed	Percentage change
Mayo Tsanaga	89,240	96,498	185,738	7,258	3.9%
Mayo Sava	118,289	144,298	262,587	26,009	7.8%
Total	207,529	240,796	448,325	33,267	7.4%

Source: Field Work, (August/Sept, 2021)

Table 6 presents the situation of displaced persons in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava within the years 2019 and 2020. In 2019, Mayo Sava observed and registered 118,289. In 2020, Mayo Sava registered 144,298 displaced persons. This therefore means that within 2019 and 2020, a total population of displaced persons in Mayo Sava resulted to 262,587 persons. This variation in 2019 and 2020 in Mayo Sava gave a 7.8% increase in the number of Displaced persons in the Division. There was a significant change in the percentage increase in the number of displaced in the Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions between 2019 and 2020. Findings revealed that, Mayo Sava witnessed

a 7.8% increase of displaced persons between 2019 and 2020 while Mayo Tsanaga registered an increase of 3.9% within the same period. Therefore, Mayo Sava was affected by the crisis more than Mayo Tsanaga.

The population of Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga has lived in fear and uncertainty before 2015 to date. The continuous attacks, burning of houses and raiding of communities rendered many as displaced persons. The fluctuating calmed situations have made some return and others move to other places. Figure 3 illustrates the evolution of displaced population before 2015 to 2021.

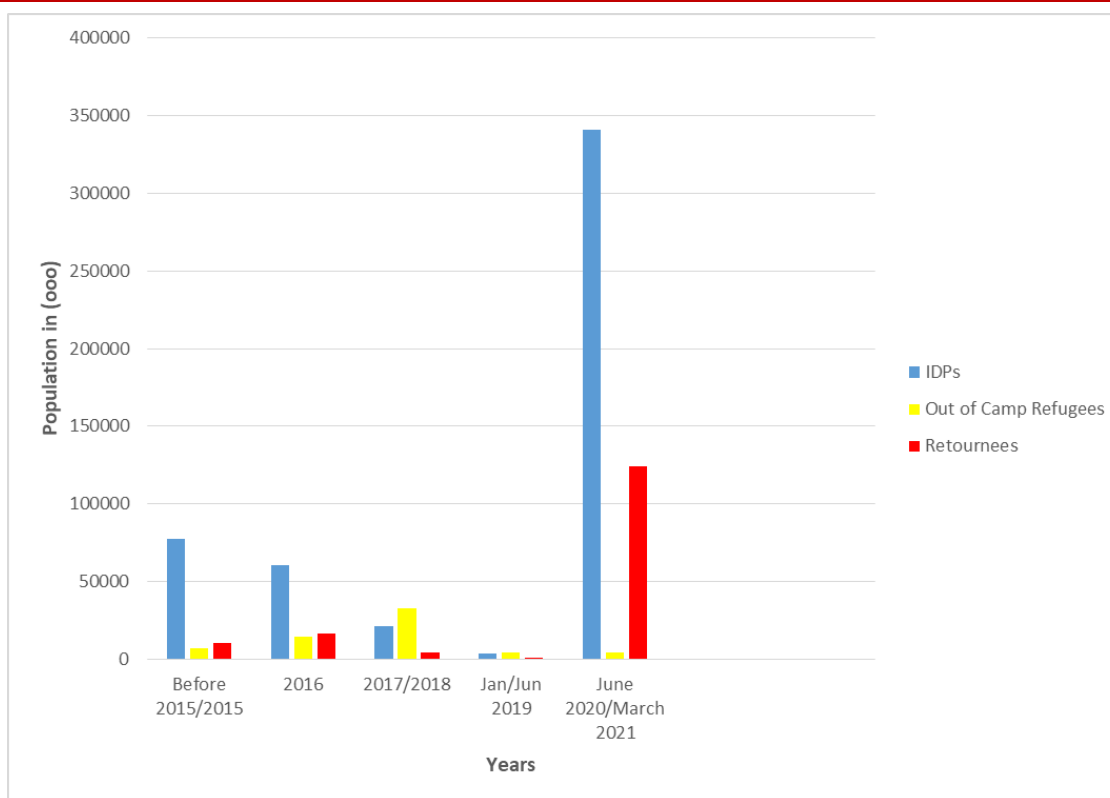


Figure 3: The evolutionary trend of displaced persons in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions before 2015 to 2021
Source: Fieldwork, (August/Sept, 2021), IOM (2019); HCR (2015, 2019); OCHA (2021)

Figure 3 presents the evolutionary trend of displaced persons before 2015 to 2021. The outbreak of Boko Haram and the intensification of its dreaded activities before 2015 caused so much displacement of persons within Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava as identified in figure 3. Before 2015, IDPs were at 77,695 while in 2016 it dropped to 60,527 persons. Out of camp refugees recorded before 2015 were 6,870 and by 2016 it stood at 14,421 refugees. Returnees within these same periods before 2015 recorded 10,316 persons while 16,785 were registered in 2016. Between 2017 and 2018, there was a relative calm as the number of displaced (IDPs) dropped rapidly to 21,312 persons while the number of returnees instead increased to 4,397 as compared to 2017 that recorded 3,154 as they move back to their areas of origins. Out of Camp refugees also recorded a drop in numbers that is 32,669 people as some of them return back to their home countries. Between January and March in 2019, calm continued where both IDPs, returnees and out of camp refugees were very low as the numbers became insignificant. IDPs recorded 3,512, out of camp refugees recorded 4,124 refugees and returnees stood at 901 people. By April and July still in 2019, there were again attacks and the population started moving out. Between June 2020 and March 2021, the numbers have been alarming with IDPs increasing to 341,000 while returnees in 2021 also increased to 124,300 persons.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The dreaded activities of the terrorist group Boko Haram that started in Nigeria and later spread to Northern Cameroon in 2012 and became intensified in 2014 led to the separation of families both in Cameroon and in neighbouring countries. The incursion by these armed group have led to the displacement of persons in Mayo Tsanaga and Mayo Sava Divisions. Amongst the displaced population are IDPs, Refugees and Returnees coming from Nigeria, Tchad and Cameroon. IDPs dominate followed by Refugees and returnees. Since 2012, the rate of displaced persons have been increasing following the different attacks. While IDPs are dominant in Mayo Sava, refugees are the majority in Mayo Tsanaga. The number of attacks greatly affects displacements as reduction in the number of attacks reduces the number of internally displaced persons and refugees while increasing returnees.

It is recommended that, all NGOs and International organizations coming for response mission or with projects to help remove the displaced population from suffering and misery should pass through the administrative authorities like the Divisional Officers, Senior Divisional Officers and Mayors, and the local authorities like the Lamido's and even through their religious leaders of these areas. This is because, from field observations, these associations come with their pre-conceived projects to realize in the field in the name of helping the vulnerable population whereas the projects do not tie with the needs of the

population. Therefore, passing through these authorities who know and master the needs of their people will be in a better position to outline priority projects that they can invest in in other to serve and help the population. An example of such project is the distribution of vegetable oil to refugees as help. On the contrary, this oil floods markets and end up in the kitchen of the well to do. The reason is because, the refugees need millet and corn for sustenance but oil is given which they do not need it much. So they sell at lesser value to obtain the millet they need. Therefore, the local population needs to be consulted on what priority they need at that point in time.

Furthermore, the state should come in to subsidize education or better still offer free education to children of displaced persons in areas affected by crises and in areas harbouring displaced person. This is because, the affected population on their path have lost track of their economic activities and have become vulnerable with little or no means to sponsor their children. Offering free or subsidized education will help the children educated and will reduce the number of vagabonds in that society. But if this is not done, the rate of insecurity especially in Mayo Sava and Mayo Tsanaga will instead increase in the nearest future. This is because, the uneducated and frustrated children will pick up arms to join the Boko Haram group who will in turn fight back the government and as a result increase the rate of insecurity in the region and country at large.

The last but not the list, sensitize the population on the effects of crisis of this nature to avoid them being misled by the members of the armed group. The population especially the host community needs to be sensitized on the spirit of love and togetherness so that they will always accept the vulnerable population coming in to their community and not isolate or have conflict with them. They need to be made to understand that it may be them tomorrow. As such, mass sensitization needs to be done both to the local population and to the displaced persons living in the host communities.

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