Assistance for Internally Displaced Persons in the Periphery of Ouagadougou in a Security Crisis Situation

El Hadji Yoro Deme
Economics Department, Aube-Nouvelle University, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Moustapha Kabre
Economics Department, Aube-Nouvelle University, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Abstract:
The situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) raises many questions due to a lack of information on the part of the government. The actors in the field do not always agree on certain points, especially with regard to the living conditions of IDPs and even the working conditions of the humanitarian organizations that provide them with assistance. The aim of this research was to know if the actions of socio-economic care of IDPs on the outskirts of Ouagadougou are effective. We used a non-probability sampling method. The observation units were selected according to their availability (reasoned choice). Thus, the survey involved a sample of 34 households, made up of 202 IDPs including 51 adults and 151 children. We also conducted interviews with three (03) representatives of the Social Action of the municipality of Ouagadougou, one (01) authority of the Town Hall of the District 09 of the municipality of Ouagadougou, three (03) members associations and organizations providing assistance to IDPs, and one (01) responsible for coordinating aid to displaced persons in the city of Ouagadougou. In view of the results, humanitarian aid is considered insufficient, it is therefore necessary to: (i) intensify and accelerate the empowerment of IDPs through income-generating activities. As a prelude, the State must assume its responsibilities and fulfill its most absolute duty, namely to take care of internally displaced persons wherever they are, without discrimination of zone.

Keywords: assistance, security crisis, internally displaced person, periphery, Ouagadougou.

Introduction
For thousands of years, human beings have been migrating in search of a better life and migration is the result of several factors; many people migrate to find better living conditions, earn a better salary, live in a more pleasant environment or join family or friends abroad (Dicko, 2020). According to Dicko (2020), a considerable proportion of migrants do not choose to leave but are forced to leave their homes against their will, these are refugees and internally displaced people who are fleeing persecution, or are victims of conflict, disaster or human trafficking. Burkina Faso has been facing a continuous deterioration in the security situation since the fall of Blaise Compaoré (Diallo, Rouamba & Claudine, 2022; Soma, 2021; Ouedraogo, 2022). Gradually, an unprecedented security crisis caused by armed violence is maintained by attacks by armed groups mainly against the Defense and Security Forces (FDS), State institutions, the Volunteers for the Defense of
the Fatherland (VDP) and civilian populations. Nowadays, more than 40% of the national territory is under terrorist influence according to Biederman (2022). Some populations have had to leave their localities of origin to flee the abuses of armed groups and other localities remain under terrorist blockade leading to their isolation, with serious difficulties in the supply of food and basic necessities. Terrorist violence combined with the explosion of community conflicts have also spawned crime, delinquency in multiple forms and extrajudicial executions and they have particularly destabilized the rural environment, precipitating the rural populations out of their economic and social for reasons of survival and security (Ouedraogo, 2022). This crisis in the rural world is the origin of forced population mobility which has plunged the country into an unprecedented humanitarian crisis (UNFPA, 2021; Unchr, 2021; Oxfam, 2020). Between 2018 and 2020, the number of internally displaced persons in the country multiplied by ten in March 2022, the country had more than 1,850,000 displaced persons, the number of which continued to increase due to the continuous pressure of armed groups (Diallo, Rouamba & Claudine, 2022). This security crisis gave rise to a protection crisis following the tragedy in Yirgou in January 2019 and between January 2019 and March 2021, the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) continued to increase, going from 87,000 to 1,147,699 people registered (UNFPA, 2021). Armed conflicts and acts of violence against the population continue to cause new displacements, particularly in the Centre-Nord and Sahel regions, which respectively host 40.3% and 30.2% of IDPs throughout the country; the country went from 5 humanitarian regions in 2020 to 6 humanitarian regions in 2021, which are the regions of Centre-Nord, Nord, Sahel, Boucle du Mouhoun, Est and Centre-Est (UNFPA, 2021). According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (Ocha) and the National Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (OCHA, 2022), 1,719,332 IDPs are registered in Burkina Faso as of September 30, 2022 (including 60.40% are children and 22.89% women) and 708,341 students are affected by the closure of 4,258 schools (Ocha, 2022). Others have preferred to take refuge in certain urban centers such as Ouagadougou where the Pazani, Rimkieta, Polesgo, Hamdalaye, Darsalam, Bissighin, Zagouli, Sogden, Yakenga, Yamga, and Roumtenga neighborhoods are makeshift reception areas (Soma, 2021).

The situation of IDPs raises many questions due to a lack of information on the part of the government. The actors in the field do not always agree on certain points, especially with regard to the living conditions of IDPs and even the working conditions of the humanitarian organizations that provide them with assistance. Indeed, in 2018, the sudden arrival of displaced people seems to have surprised the municipal and state authorities. Their difficult and ineffective management from the first moments fueled the debates and aroused great concern. All in all, in 2019, these displaced people had been ordered by the government to leave the city of Ouagadougou under penalty of a suspension of aid and a withdrawal of the State. The official withdrawal of the government, despite the actions of donations of food and materials by NGOs, associations and goodwill, the IDPs settled in the capital seem to have difficulty making ends meet. However, there are more and more people who are begging in the streets and they are mainly women and children, from the North and Sahel regions (the most affected by insecurity). To this end, we ask ourselves the question: are the assistance actions such as to enable the majority, or even almost all, of these people to meet their basic needs (eat their fill, shelter appropriately, take care of themselves, send their children to school, etc.)? In other words, are socio-economic support actions for IDPs on the outskirts of Ouagadougou effective? Specifically, it is a question of answering the following questions: (1) What is the structuring of assistance actions in favor of IDPs? (2) Do the majority, or almost all, of these people benefit from this aid? (3) What are the effects of these actions on the living conditions of IDPs?

This paper is structured around three (03) main sections, namely firstly the presentation of
Materials and methods

We have decided to adopt a mixed and non-probabilistic approach, given the analytical and complex nature of our research and this method allows us to bring together a set of feelings, opinions, opinions but also factual data around the issue of assistance to IDPs and to deduce trends and assess the effectiveness of the actions carried out, which would be difficult with a simple qualitative or quantitative approach. This research required a survey that took place in the Pazani district on the outskirts of Ouagadougou in district 9. Pazani is located in the far north of the Burkinabè capital and is home to several thousand IDPs who have fled their localities of origin because of the terrorist threat. It is one of the neighborhoods commonly referred to as unplanned, i.e. lacking in development facilities and basic social services (health, education, sanitation, drinking water, etc.). We used two data collection techniques (sample survey and interview), with the following tools a questionnaire and an interview guide. The observation units were selected according to their availability (reasoned choice). Thus, the survey involved a sample of 34 households, made up of 202 IDPs including 51 adults and 151 children. We also conducted interviews with three (03) representatives of the Social Action of the municipality of Ouagadougou, one (01) authority of the Town Hall of the District 09 of the municipality of Ouagadougou, three (03) members associations and organizations providing assistance to IDPs, and one (01) responsible for coordinating aid to displaced persons in the city of Ouagadougou. Survey and interview data collection took place from December 2022 to January 2023.

Results

The sample data comprises 57% women and 43% men and our results indeed showed that the majority of IDPs happen to be women and children. We have a largely illiterate population (65%) and the rest are more or less educated. For the few rare IDPs who have attended French school, the fourth (4è) class is the highest level. This may be due to socio-cultural constraints and precariousness. On the other hand, it should be noted that a significant part of the respondents (27%) can read and write in Arabic. Per household in our study area, there is an average of four (04) to six (06) dependent children. Households even reach the threshold of eleven (11) children and sometimes more. Some widows have to take care of their children alone and owe their salvation to the various gifts and aid they receive, even if these remain insufficient. It should be noted that children represent just over 70% of the population and the majority of IDPs interviewed have been present on the site for nearly three (3) years, i.e. 47% of the population. The oldest have four (4) years of presence on the site while others have only been present for two (2) to four (4) months. Only two regions are represented, namely the Sahel and the Centre-North, with a strong dominance of the first with 94% of respondents. The different localities of origin are among others Bourzanga, Silgadji, Djibo, Deou, Gorom, Tongomayel, Kelbo, Naamsiguiya. Figures 1 to 6 summarize the results of our research.

![Figure 1. Nature of the Shelter](image)

Source: Authors based on field survey data, January 2023
Figure 1 shows the nature of the shelters in which the displaced live. We observe that 64% of the households surveyed live in rental houses that they take care of themselves and whose prices vary (2,000, 5,000, 7,500 and 10,000 CFA francs) per month. However, some families are relieved of the payment of their rental charges thanks to goodwill and humanitarian aid associations. Under the aegis of these goodwills, others benefit from free housing (31%) and a few rare families live in their own houses, which are generally houses built in hard (clayey earth or cement). Figure 2 shows the types of assistance and their prevalence.

In our study area, assistance to IDPs is much more focused on food donations, health, and education with respective proportions of 100%, 65% and 50%. Only 35% were able to benefit from training (in saponification and spice production called in the Mooré language “kalgo”) organized by an association present on the site. However, the need is still felt given the insufficiency of aid which is certainly multidimensional but not holistic and does not benefit the majority of IDPs for the most part. Many children remain out of school to this day (out of one hundred and fifty-one (151) children of school age, sixty-seven (67) children are not enrolled due to lack of means); some children over the age of fifteen are in gold panning sites located in Gaoua or Boromo, to meet their needs as well as those of their respective families. Another characteristic of these aids lies in their irregularity over time, since food donations are received only two (2) times a week on average; and associations and other goodwill intervening in the field do the best they can and within the limits of their means.

Figure 3 traces the state of satisfaction of IDPs in relation to the aid received. Almost all the interviewees, while affirming (paradoxically) to be satisfied with the multifaceted assistance from which they benefit, think that it must be put into perspective; and it is these same IDPs who unanimously deplore the lack of aid.

The two Figures 4 and 5 respectively indicate the income-generating activities (IGA) practiced by the respondents before (in their locality of origin) and those currently practiced (in their host neighborhood). The first histogram reveals that agriculture and animal husbandry were the two main activities formerly practiced by the displaced in their homes before the deterioration of the security situation and the second announces a completely different reality in their host neighborhood with a strong reconversion in other activities (including trades of mechanics, waste oil dealers, masonry for men and for...
women, all age groups combined, it is mainly the collection of sand sold at 2500 f per tricycle trip, collection of used plastic bags for resale, paid laundry, sale of cakes, etc.). It should be noted that 27% of the people questioned are inactive and are mostly made up of new arrivals.

![Figure 4. Satisfaction with Assistance](image)

**Source:** Authors based on field survey data, January 2023

![Figure 5. Current Main Activity](image)

**Source:** Authors based on field survey data, January 2023

Figure 6 shows the cross-analysis between people who had the chance to receive training and their current activity. The logic of retraining is still remarkable with nearly 75% of people practicing activities outside of agriculture and livestock farming. But this high proportion challenges us because these other activities practiced remain outside the subject of the training received by these women. Indeed, the training focused on the production of soaps and the “kalgo” spice.

![Figure 6. Activity Status of Training Beneficiaries](image)

**Source:** Authors based on field survey data, January 2023

Only a few try as best they can to capitalize on the know-how acquired during their training, and the reasons are various; while some refer to the dropper release and low profitability of their products, others emphasize the lack of financial means to support production costs and although they have received start-up kits of their production activities, they denounce their insufficiency. The stakeholders identified in this locality are mainly IDP aid organizations, the government, local authorities and the IDPs themselves. Nevertheless, it comes from our research and according to the respondents the effective absence of the government from the IDPs living in the outskirts of Ouagadougou (in Pazani): ”since we have been there, we have not seen a government agent” witness a displaced person. Many internally displaced people in and around Ouagadougou refuse to return to the camps erected in Kelbo, Foubé, Barsalogo, etc. (at the request of the government) because they...
are not well treated there. Many had to leave these camps because of abuse, blackmail, etc.

Discussion

Since the start of the humanitarian crisis, the State, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and human rights organizations have been standing up to provide solutions to the difficulties encountered by IDPs. Over the years, their number has continued to grow due to the stagnation of the security crisis. In addition, difficulties such as the lack of financial means and humanitarian aid encountered by these organizations, IDPs are between a rock and a hard place. Indeed, torn from their land of origin, they have not finished living their ordeal in the camps for the displaced because they are often victims of exactions, rapes and the greed of certain people supposed to come to their aid. Faced with all these difficulties, the State bears the primary responsibility, since the full protection and care of IDPs is its primary responsibility, according to the United Nations guiding principles relating to the displacement of persons within their own country. All internally displaced persons, whether in Ouagadougou or elsewhere, share more or less the same difficulties, namely precariousness, insufficient humanitarian aid, problems of integration in their place of refuge, etc. In Ouagadougou, mainly in the Pazani district, we find that aid is much more oriented towards food donations, which remains insufficient. Those in Ouagadougou find themselves abandoned by the State, which urges them to leave the capital for other camps where the conditions are met for their optimal care. Notwithstanding this impotence of the State to carry out its sovereign tasks with regard to IDPs wherever they are, there are people of good will who carry out actions on the ground and some even foresee lasting solutions for the displaced by betting on their empowerment: there is particularly the NGO Plan international, the association Femmes en Marche in Ouagadougou (Created in 2019, following the drama of Yirgou). The association “Femmes en Marche” provides assistance to vulnerable women, particularly widowed or divorced IDPs. This association has a home called Training and Animation for Manual Trades (FAMA) where women have the choice between activities such as cooking, making handicrafts, etc., in which they are trained. Currently, ten (10) women have been trained in the various trades mentioned above and fifteen (15) others are being trained in the home where they are cared for with their children (housing, health, food, security) for 6 months and when they leave, the trained women are provided with installation kits to embark on IGAs for their empowerment. The association has educated 10 IDP children, residents of the home. However, it must be noted that some women are forced into prostitution in the camps and face the reduction in the food ration, which reflects the inadequacy of the humanitarian aid mentioned by Oxfam in 2020 in the Sahel regions, North and Centre-North. These reasons support those mentioned by Soma (2021) on the causes of the arrival of IDPs in Ouagadougou, where he put forward reasons such as the desire for peace and security.

Associative organizations and local authorities (Ouagadougou town hall and its districts) faced with the vulnerability of these populations in the capital, are trying as best they can out of humanism to fill this void in the government. To this end, the General Directorate of Social Action of the City of Ouagadougou provides occasional support to IDPs; it receives aid from associations, public or private institutions, individuals, mainly food and clothing, which it distributes through the association “Samu Social Burkina”. In 2022, 74 tons of cereals consisting mainly of rice, millet, sorghum were received by Social Action for IDPs, which is very derisory. The "Samu Social" has been working on six (6) IDP sites (including Pazani) in Ouagadougou for two (2) years, through activities such as socio-educational talks (one hundred (100) people met per week), social hotlines and medical, food and non-food support actions, AGR, etc. In November 2022, two hundred and 200 households were assisted in 4 districts (Pazani, Yagma, Wob Riguéré, Marcoussis), fifty-five (55) women and men settled with trades (weaving,
soap production) and a pilot project of Support for IDPs in these neighborhoods is being developed with a local microfinance agency. In addition, another equally remarkable approach to assistance is that of the African Youth Initiative for Development (AYID) association, which has been piloting its own project for three (3) years to sponsor internally displaced children from Pazani, to give them the opportunity to go to school despite the precarious situation of their families. In 2022, twenty-seven (27) children were able to be educated and monitored during the school year to improve the success rate and for 2023 a canteen has been set up for these children with the prospect of enrolling thirty-four (34) other children. Another project is the empowerment of women through IGA training. Despite all these efforts, a significant number of school-age children remain deprived of this fundamental right.

The majority of the IDPs interviewed present at the site are in a phase of protracted displacement, in accordance with the ICRC (2018) which defines “internally displaced people” as “persons or groups of people who have been forced or coerced into fleeing or leaving their homes or habitual residence, in particular due to armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, human rights violations or natural or man-made disasters or to avoid their effects, and who have not crossed internationally recognized state borders” (UNHCR, 2021). Two salient points of this definition are firstly that internally displaced persons are people who have been forced to leave their place of origin despite themselves. Then their point of arrival is not outside the country in which they have always been. Unlike internal displacement, migration can be on the one hand in all relativity a choice; to find a job, earn a better salary, live in a more pleasant environment or join family or friends; and a considerable proportion of migrants do not choose to leave but are forced to leave their homes against their will; they are “refugees” (Dicko, 2021). A refugee, within the meaning of the Geneva Convention of 1951, is any person who, having a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his race, his religion, his nationality, his membership of a certain social group or his political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and who cannot or, because of this fear, does not want to claim the protection of that country. There is also a non-legal meaning of the notion of refugee, which designates any person forced to leave their country of origin and unable to return (Dicko, 2021). In addition to being driven by the same or similar circumstances, IDPs, refugees and other vulnerable migrants face the same challenges as anyone uprooted from their familiar surroundings. In this case, IDPs are citizens or residents of the state in which they find themselves and as such should enjoy without any discrimination the same rights and freedoms as any other citizen or resident of that country (ICRC, 2018). Still according to the ICRC, internal displacement has four (04) phases: (i) pre-displacement characterized by the circumstances at the origin of the displacement and the event that triggers the flight; (ii) acute displacement marking flight and arrival in the new location, where displaced people may find themselves in life-threatening situations and where they may need emergency assistance; (iii) stable displacement (which may become protracted) corresponding to long-term stay in host families, private homes or camps; (iv) and finally the establishment of durable solutions for return, reintegration and local integration where people have been displaced, or resettlement in another region of the country (Cicr, 2018). Displaced persons do not always make a single journey. Being on the move to leave an area, and not to reach a specific destination, it often happens that they make several journeys, depending on the circumstances; they first seek to go to a nearby place where they feel safe and where they know someone likely to take them in temporarily, but the temporary setting in for the long term, sometimes they have to go back on the road, either because the host can no longer or no longer wants to accommodate them, or because the security context is deteriorating, or because they are considering other opportunities elsewhere (Hubert, 2022). In this quest for security, the majority of IDPs preferred to go to the capital Ouagadougou and found themselves in peripheral neighborhoods such as Pazani, which confirms the words of Soma (2021).
Agriculture and animal husbandry are the two main activities practiced by the displaced people in their homes before the deterioration of the security situation, but a completely different reality in their host neighborhood is the strong conversion to other activities. This information is in line with the study by the NGO ACTED (2022) conducted in the Center North and East regions where slightly more than half of the IDPs practiced agriculture and livestock farming as an activity of origin and very few continue in their host area; which is explained by the fact that these populations no longer have land to cultivate or animals to raise because they have been lost or robbed by their executioners. In any case and according to Manset et al. (2017), humanitarianism is currently experiencing a major economic and organizational crisis. Initially direct aid has over time been prioritized and standardized with a view to efficiency, making it counter-productive and exposing it to numerous criticisms, which has led to a refocusing on the ethics of action (of which one of the most explicit symptoms seems to be the growing attention paid to resilience) is then the capacity of a population, a system, a society to face, to adapt and to absorb a shock (Basabe, 2013).

Conclusion

IDPs in Pazani in particular, and in Ouagadougou in general, still live in precarious conditions. This research aimed to see the degree of effectiveness of assistance to IDPs on the outskirts of the city of Ouagadougou. Despite the assistance actions, there is certainly a more or less positive development today compared to their arrival in Ouagadougou with the help of the government at the beginning, but the situation is still difficult and the assistance is proving ineffective. With the withdrawal of the government, they are neglected and draw their salvation from people of good will and associations who spare no effort to give them a minimum of dignity. Unfortunately, their conditions are still difficult because given the large and growing number of IDPs, the results of this aid are insufficient. The majority of people are not affected by these aids. The displaced populations plead for more aid, especially in terms of food, health and education for children. Despite everything, associations and organizations are getting wet, adapting their offer to the evolution of the situation and improving their actions as they go. In view of the results, humanitarian aid being insufficient, it is necessary to: (i) intensify and accelerate the empowerment of IDPs through income-generating activities. As a prelude, the State must assume its responsibilities and fulfill its most absolute duty, namely to take care of internally displaced persons wherever they are, without discrimination of zone. It must take its place as a conductor of assistance to these IDPs in Ouagadougou by making sure to create a synergy of actions between the different actors; all the structures and goodwill that for a long time have given hope to these displaced people must have substantial support in terms of financial and organizational resources. In addition, agriculture is unambiguously the activity most practiced by these displaced people in their area of origin. Thus, the State will not have to put enormous resources for their supervision with the creation of collective fields where IDPs will produce various speculations and some will share their knowledge in their field with others and vice versa. Spaces can be requisitioned wherever possible to serve these displaced people for their agricultural activities; these include spaces available within the premises of State Public Establishments (district town halls, health and social promotion centers (CSPS), youth centers, municipal media libraries, etc.) where the resource in water is already available, green spaces, private land. Another aspect is the training of IDPs in other IGAs such as the production of soaps, spices, and many others; these trainings must be accompanied by installation kits and the beneficiaries monitored for the success of their activities and facilitation mechanisms can be designed to allow the displaced to take out loans from financial institutions and launch their activities; (ii) Allow internally displaced children to continue to go to school by enrolling them in establishments, always within the framework of a synergy of actions between the State and the organizations.
that assist IDPs. Temporary schools under straw huts can be erected to compensate for any lack of places; the hut school built for IDP children in the Nagrin district, with the help of the Japanese Embassy, is an example of this. Then, mechanisms must be put in place to keep them in school and avoid dropping out, which may be linked to difficulties in feeding themselves; in this, the establishment of school canteens in host establishments that do not have them seems to us to be a solution. In view of the situation, it is necessary for the State to take its responsibilities to accompany these internally displaced persons and support all these organizations which work to make them smile again. Above all, it means looking for sustainable solutions by giving them the means to empower themselves by carrying out income-generating activities and without forgetting to support them from start to finish. Also by giving children the chance to continue going to school. All in all, faced with this continuous arrival in the capital of people fleeing insecurity, the central question that arises and will continue to arise is the following: what is the place of vulnerable indigenous populations and these massive displacements of people will it not be at the origin of conflicts between the latter and the displaced?

Conflict of interests

No conflict of interest.

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