

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE IMPACT OF THE INFLUX OF REFUGEES FROM WAR-TORN CENTRAL AFRICAN, INTO CAMEROON: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to carry out a comparative analysis of the effect of the influx of Central African Refugees into the East Region of Cameroon. Specifically, the study investigates the effect of the refugee influx on education, health, security, food and water facilities. It equally investigates the most affected socio-economic sectors by the refugee influx and the natives' perception of the presence of refugees in the Community. In this light, questionnaires were distributed to respondents and three focus group discussions were organized in three different localities. Pre-tests were conducted to ascertain the reliability of the data, descriptive statistics were used to analyse the information collected from the field thanks to the use of SPSS statistic data editor. The results among others indicated that the host community has experienced improvement in education, health, security, food and water facilities due to the refugee influx with the most affected socio-economic sector being water, as 51% of the respondent indicated that the variation in water availability is as a result of the refugee influx into the community. In addition, results of the Focus group discussion showed that there has been a positive improvement in the socio-economic well-being of the host communities due to the refugee influx. This is policy wise relevant, as it is important that the host community should not only depend on camps for their survival for this may create a problem if or when the camps close down. Hence the Cameroon government and its development partners should develop strategies that are host community driven, like capacity building of the host population so that they should be less dependent on refugee's camps for their livelihood.

Key words: Refugee Influx, Host Community and Comparative analysis

1. Background to the Study

From a historical perspective, refugee movement and refugee related issues are not recent. The Israelites from a biblical¹ setting, were made refugees on several lands as they moved from Egypt to the Promised Land. Till date, pictures of persons moving away from their homes to presumably places of safety is still remarkable. The Syrian civil wars, the crisis in Afghanistan and Sudan are some illustrations of refugee movements indicating people escaping the depressing effects of war and civil unrest in this era. Considering the amount of conflicts in the world today and the significant number of refugees it produces, Earl and Leon (1983) have acclaimed that no part of the world is immune to a refugee situation. In the event of such a crisis, refugees are by right free to settle in host countries or communities. These settlements are generally not in an entirely uninhabited area. In most cases local communities are already present and living in and around the specific located area where the refugees will be accommodated. In such a case, the influx of refugees affects the lives of peoples living in and around these communities. This means that host communities have to adapt to changes, which might be positive or negative (Chambers, 1986). However, in such situations and according to Chambers (1986), attention is often focused on the refugee population disregarding the fact that the people of the host communities may have similar or even worst living condition due to refugee influx.

Forced displacement has been on the rise in most regions since the mid-1990s, but over the past five years the rate has been on a steady increase (UNHCR, 2015). In 2015, the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) statistics showed the highest forced displacement and associated sufferings in recorded times with 65.3 million displaced people as compared to 59.5 million people in 2014 (UNHCR, 2015). The world's refugee population measured against the world's population of 7.349 billion people means that, one out of every 113 people globally is either a refugee, internal displaced persons (IDP) or asylum seekers according to the 2015 UNHCR statistics. The remaining 112 people are forced to bear the burden of the refugee either directly or indirectly with the majority of the burden on the developing countries which host 86 percent of the world's refugee population as compared to developed countries who

¹Bible, Exodus 12:31-51

host just 14 percent of the world's refugee population as indicated by the same institution in 2015.

The Syrian civil war stands today as the single largest generator of worldwide force displaced persons producing 4.9 million refugees overtaking Afghanistan at 2.7 million refugees which had occupied the first position for more than three decades (UNHCR, 2015). Following the conflict in Syria, Turkey became the largest refugee hosting country worldwide with 2.7 million refugees in 2015 as indicated by UNHCR 2015 statistics. Refugee movements are usually sudden and unplanned. The needs of these people are overwhelming and their anguish is unbearable (Guterres, 2015). Reasons being, they are unable to transfer assets from their countries of origin to the host countries, and thus turn to be a problem or burden on the host countries and the host communities in particular. Such a tragic situation has ramifications not only for the refugees but also on those who receive and subsequently host these refugees (Kandohm, 2012). Despite the increasing clear and significant consequences of refugee influx on the host population, they have been treated as incidental by aid agencies and policy makers.

The African continent is a hot spot of conflict which leads to refugee crisis. The main rationale for rampant refugee problems in Africa are the problems of nation building and or the failures of nation building (Kandohm, 2012). Most post independent African countries have failed to put in place institutions to support nation building. The results are military takeover, ethnic tensions between rival ethnic groups and the disrespect of constitutional provisions (Kandohm, 2012). Moreover, conflicts which force people to move from their countries have dragged on for many years making it impossible for refugees to return to their home land (Kandohm, 2012). For these reasons, Africa's refugee population is now close to six million people, which is estimated to be one third of the world's total refugee population according to the UNHCR 2015 statistics.

In addition to this, five out of the world's top ten refugee hosting countries are located in African. They are, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Chad (UNHCR, 2015). Due to the conflict in South Sudan, Ethiopia has over taken Kenya to become the largest refugee hosting country in Africa sheltering 629.718 refugees as of the end of 2014, Kenya in comparison is host to 575.334 registered refugee and asylum seekers as indicated by the UNHCR 2015 statistics. Uganda, DRC and Chad hold third, fourth and fifth positions respectively. The burden of refugees and internally displaced persons falls more on the poorest countries (Alix-Garcia and Saah, 2009) which host 86 percent of the world's refugee population

(UNHCR, 2015). For this reason, the host country is compelled to put its limited resource into accommodating the refugees (Akokpari, 1998). Also, refugee camps in West Africa countries face a lot of problems, these camps are usually located in the poorest regions of the country (Aristide, 1992) which negatively impacts the livelihood of the host communities.

Cameroon, a country well noted for her hospitality has maintained an open boarder policy for asylum seekers over the years. Despite some difficulties Cameroon had with some of her neighbours such as Nigeria over the Bakassi Peninsular or with Equatorial Guinea over the Ntem River, peace still prevail and Cameroon remains stable. However, the peace that was regarded by many as a blessing has been a pull factor for many Africans fleeing wars, civil unrest and persecutions from their countries. Moreover, in Cameroon, 70% of the active populations are farmers whose main economic activities account for close to 20.6% of gross domestic product (GDP) which is farming and raising livestock (Cameroon Economy, 2016). Besides, farmers produce over 80% of the food consumed across the country as indicated by the same institution in 2016. This has made it a natural habitat for refugees fleeing their home countries for one reason or another.

The ongoing instability in the neighboring regions like Boko Haram in Nigeria and the civil war in Central Africa Republic has caused a huge inflow of refugees and asylum-seekers into Cameroon. In this regard, Cameroon adopted a Law defining the legal framework for refugee protection in July 2005, which was brought into application by a decree signed in November 2011 and is in line with the Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees that was adopted on 28 July 1951 and the 10 September 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention. In 2015 Cameroon hosted approximately 331,000 refugees of which 259,000 are from CAR and 72,000 from Nigeria². This refugee influx constitute a challenge for the local administration and the communities to manage. As a result of this, the inhabitants of the host communities are likely to suffer the most from the refugee influx.

The influx of refugees into Cameroon over the years has led to the creation of refugee camps to accommodate them. By 2014, Cameroon had refugee camps in Yokaduma, Lolo, Mbile, Timangolo, Gado Mborguene (now closed) and Gado Badzere in the East region, Ngam and Borgop in Adamawa and the Minawoa Camp in the Far North (Cameroon Humanitarian Situation Report, 2014). There are all together seven operational sites in the East and Adamawa and one refugee camp in the Far North region as indicated on the map in appendix one.

² UNHCR Country Operations Profile –Cameroon, 2015

The East region occupies the South-eastern portion of the Republic of Cameroon. It is bordered to the east by Central Africa Republic (CAR), to the South by Congo, to the north by the Adamawa region and to the West by the Centre and South Regions (appendix 1). It is the largest region in Cameroon with 109,002km² of land and a population of 771,755 inhabitants in 2005 according to the National Institute of Statistics (2011) but the most sparsely populated region. From the 259,000 refugees from CAR, about 150 thousand of them are located in the East Region of Cameroon, which happens to be one of the most under developed Regions of Cameroon (UNHCR country operations profile Cameroon, 2015). The population increase with limited natural resources, poor roads, limited healthcare facilities, limited educational facilities and a deplorable security situation has plunged the East Region of Cameroon into a humanitarian crisis which concerns not only refugees but the local population as well (Eva, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

The Central African Republic has witnessed a problem of nation building since independence (1960) which has led to frequent military take over. The country has been subjected to political instability and violent armed rebellion since the seizure of power by the former president François Bozizé in 2003. The overall instability led to the massacre of civilians, human right abuses and an internal displacement of half million of the population with another half million fleeing to neighboring countries like Cameroon, Chad and Democratic Republic of Congo (Humanitarian Implementation Plan, 2016).

The East region of Cameroon which happens to be amongst the most under developed regions of the country has experienced a brutal increase of its population by around 20 percent by the beginning of 2013 and end of 2015 due to huge refugee inflow from Central African Republic (Strategic and Prospective Analysis Bulletin, 2016). The impact of the CAR refugee influx into Cameroon is very visible more than thirteen years after their arrival from CAR. The demographic change with the limited resources has plunged the East Region of Cameroon into a humanitarian crisis which is likely to affect not only the refugees but the host population as well.

Refugees are usually housed in camps and are discouraged from mixing with the host community for security reasons (Finnstrom 2003). However, the situation in the East region of Cameroon seems to be different, as a good number of the CAR refugees have settled amongst the natives, inter-married with Cameroonians and some even own property (Eva, 2009). The integration of the CAR refugee into the community is facilitated by the cultural similarities shared by the CAR refugees and Cameroonians in the East region and also by the fact that the

Central Africans are Pastoral nomadic who practice transhumance across the Cameroon/Central African Republic borders (Eva, 2009). This is a problem in itself as the CAR refugees are likely gradually taking over a majority of the resources in the region. Moreover, humanitarian aid is usually directed towards the refugees and the host population in most case is neglected. In addition, assistance from the UNHCR, humanitarian partners and the Cameroon government who encourage self-reliance of the refugees, has likely made the refugees seems to have an advantage over the native host population in the East Region where a majority of them are poor.

The fact that refugees now make up a considerable portion of the population of this region is likely to pose a threat to the livelihood of the inhabitants of these communities. As the refugee influx has created a noticeable pressure on the scare socio-economic resources in the region. This pressure is particularly felt on social facilities (like education, health and security) and on the demand for food and water in the community. The pressure created on these resources as a result of the refugee influx could lead to conflicts between the refugees and the host population.

Given the above mentioned facts, the refugee crisis does not only entail the issue of hosting, feeding, clothing, resettlement or educating the refugees but also their impact on the host who in most cases are left with the burden of ensuring the survival and wellbeing of these refugees. According to Chambers (1986), Maystadt and Verwimp (2009) the exact knowledge of the impacts of refugees on the host community is still lacking as most studies like that of Kandohm (2012) and Hyndman (2000) focused on refugees only as they believed that the host community is far better than the refugees. In light of this, it is important to not only investigate the impact of the presence of refugees on the host communities, but also to do a comparative analysis of the impact of refugee influx on the livelihood of the host communities before and after their arrival.

This study hence deviates from the studies of Kandohm (2012), Gibney (1999), Dillon (1999) and Hyndman (2000), which focused on issues patterning to refugees themselves while ignoring host community analysis. While these studies might be appropriate in the context where the refugees are less likely to mix with the host community, it is likely inappropriate in the present context of Cameroon. In addition, studies that focus on refugees only can err policies, as today, humanitarian aid is usually directed towards the refugees and the host population in most case is neglected. The interaction in the East region between the host community and the refugees suggest a likely effect on the host community. How the refugee influx impact the host community depends on several factors and both positive and negative outcomes are possibilities (Maystadt and Verwimp, 2009). In light of the foregoing, there is an urgent need to do an in-

depth study of the impact of the refugee influx on the host communities in the East region of Cameroon.

Objectives of the Study

On the basis of the above background and problem statement, the major research objective that arise is:-

To carry out a comparative study on the socio-economic wellbeing of the refugee host communities in the East Region of Cameroon before and after the arrival of refugees.

Following this major objective we formulated the following specific objectives:

- To investigate the impact of the refugee influx on educational facilities in the host community while employing a comparative approach
- To investigate the impact of the refugee influx on health facilities in the host community while employing a comparative approach
- To investigate the impact of the refugee influx on security facilities in the host community while employing a comparative approach
- To ascertain the impact of the refugee influx on food in the host community while making use of the comparative analysis.
- To analyze the impact of the refugee influx on water in the host community while making used of comparative approach.
- To examine the most affected socioeconomic sectors by the refugee influx
- To explore the natives' perception of the presence of refugees in the Community.

Research Questions

On the basis of the above major objective, the major research question that arise is:

What is the situation of the socio-economic wellbeing of the refugee host communities in the East Region of Cameroon before and after the arrival of refugees?

Following this major research question, the specific research questions that were formulated are as follow:

- What is the impact of refugee influx on educational facilities in the host community?
- What is the impact of the refugee influx on health facilities in the host community?
- What is the impact of refugee influx on security in the host community?
- What is the impact of refugee influx on food availability in the host community?
- What is the impact of refugee influx on water in the host community?

- Which is the most affected socio-economic sectors by the refugee influx?
- What are the natives' perception of the presence of refugees in their Community?

Significance of the Study

There has been little academic research to the best of our knowledge on the impact of refugees on host populations regardless of the fact that the issue has caused growing concern on the part of the international community and host governments as indicated by Callamard (1994). While a majority of literature in the field of refugee studies centers on refugees like Kandohm (2009) Gibney(1999), Dillon (1999)and Hyndman (2000), recent years have seen an increasing amount of research that looks beyond the refugee communities to the host community like Chambers (1986), Aristide (1992) and Akokpari (1998). In particular, these studies look at how the host communities and communities living in and around refugee settlement areas are either directly or indirectly impacted by an unexpected refugee influx. According to Chambers (1986), Maystadt and Verwimp (2009) the exact knowledge of this impact and how they affect host communities is lacking.

However, humanitarian aid is usually directed towards the refugees and the host population in most case is neglected. In light of this, it is important to not only investigate the impact of the presence of refugees on the host communities, but also to do a comparative analysis of the impact of refugee influx on the livelihood of the host communities.

Maystad and Verwimp (2009) claims that knowledge and literature on these issues has not improved much since the analysis of Chambers from 1986. In this perspectives it can be said that more research and knowledge on this issue is needed to understand how refugee influx affects host communities (Maystadt and Verwimp 2009). Responding to this claim this study is framed with the aim of contributing to the gap in knowledge of the impacts of refugee influx on host communities by focusing on the host communities in the East region of Cameroon.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the prevalence of the refugee crisis in the world today, according to Callamard (1994) little research has been conducted on their impact on the host communities. The impact of refugee influx on the host community can be positive or negative (Chambers, 1986). Some researchers suggest that the refugee influx do not have a significant impact on the host

community (Landau, 2002). Other researcher like Whitaker (2002), Chambers (1986), Maystadt and Verwimp (2014) suggest that the impact of refugee influx on host community varies.

Whitaker (1999) scrutinized the implications of the presence of refugees and the relief operation for host communities in western Tanzania using a participatory field research method while focusing on who benefits and who loses from refugee influxes and why. The study revealed that the sudden presence of refugees, aid workers and relief resources significantly altered all aspects of life for people in this previously neglected corner of the country. Also, refugees can benefit hosts by providing cheap labor to local producers, expanding consumer markets for local goods and justifying increased foreign aid. In this light, the influx of refugees creates a new context in which hosts devised strategies to gain access to incoming resources and to maintain access to their own resources. Differing strategies and structures allowed some hosts to benefit, while others became worse off. However, she noted that less attention is given to the effects of this situation on the ecology, economy and politics of those already living in western Tanzania.

Rutinwa (2003), on the other hand conducted a study in Ngara and Kibondo districts to identify the impact of refugees in North- Western Tanzania using interviews and focus groups. The overall results revealed that Tanzania, a poorly resourced country, is being forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the refugee burden socially, politically and economically due to inadequate international assistance thus threatening to reverse the gains made so far by the country. In this light, the hosting of refugees is viewed as an overwhelming liability with no benefit accruing to Rutinwa (2003). He concludes that the international community should extend adequate assistance to Tanzania to enable the country to maintain internal and external security.

Butel (2013), analyzing humanitarian responses of the influx of refugees from the Central African Republic into eastern Cameroon and her analysis yielded three key insights, first, a professionalized international refugee regime has responded using best practices built on experience, which suggests a cultural shift toward evidence-based approaches to humanitarian interventions. Second, integration of refugees into local communities has benefits that extend beyond the humanitarian space in which refugee services are administered. These benefits impact Cameroon's processes of nation-building. Third, this nation-building reinforces Cameroon's position as a state within the international community, fitting it more firmly into the

“national order of things.” However, she has failed to bring out these benefits that extend beyond the humanitarian space in which refugee services are administered.

The impact of refugee influx on local education in the host communities has been met with mixed feelings. According to Boamah-Gyau (2010) who analyzed the impact of refugee camps in the Buduburam communities in Ghana, found out that locals can benefit from the construction of new schools. The increase in schools increases access to education which benefits both locals and refugees alike. In addition, when International Organizations (IOs) no longer have need for their building or when it terminates its mandate, the buildings and other capital assets are given to the local community (Jacobsen, 2002). Such a case occurred in Malawi in 1995 when UNHCR turned all equipment and infrastructure to the host country for their future use (Jacobsen, 2002). Furthermore, there have been instances where UNHCR has paid fees for school children whose parents were unable to pay including native children (Boamah-Gyau 2008). Rutinwa (2003), study shows that there has been provision of transport, provision of teacher and student books, increased number of qualified primary school teachers, improved living and teaching environment for teachers and construction of educational facilities in Kagera and Kigoma regions.

On the other hand, according to Aukot (2003), at the Kakuma refugee camps, refugees have more opportunities for education than the locals. This is because schools are constructed in the camps and refugee children have the liberty to attend school in the camps or local schools (Aukot, 2003). Moreover, most refugees themselves initiate educational activities before host governments or humanitarian agencies provide it (Dodds and Inquai (1983) cited in Preston (1991). According to Preston (1991), the main concern of these refugees is to provide education to their children. He cited studies in Honduras as an example where refugees initiated educational activities ranging from pre-school to adult literacy and vocational training programs. However, he noted that the case of Honduras is different because they believed that children without education will suffer future economic and social disadvantages.

Concerning health, according to Chambers (1986), in the initial face of a refugee influx, health centers are overcrowded. However, in the long run there are improvements in health and sanitation in the host communities. This brings benefit to local communities as they will have more access to these services. Rutinwa (2003) has a similar view to Chambers (1986). Evidence from her study shows that there has been improvement in the supply of health personnel, establishment of better equipped refugee hospitals that offer a free service to Tanzanians,

construction and rehabilitation of local district health facilities, donation of equipment, transport and drugs and direct support of health services to local populations. As a result, Ngara district is now well above the national average on several health indicators, as 26% of the population lives within five kilometers of a health center compared to the national average of 30%. Furthermore, according to Verwimp and Maystadt (2009) in some camps, locals are allowed to utilize the health services at the refugee camp.

However, to Bruijn (2009) there are cases where refugees have better health indicators than the surrounding villages which can lead to tension. For example, he cited studies of countries with large populations like, Nepal, Kenya, Uganda, Thailand, Tanzania and Bangladesh, where the refugees have a lower percentage of low-birth weight infants as compared to the national population.

In Cameroon, Tatah (2016) investigated the impact of refugee on mother and child health services in the host community. He uses Cameroon 2004 and 2011 demographic and health surveys to evaluate change in mother and child health indicators in the hosting community. His outcome variables were antenatal care coverage, caesarean delivery rates, place of delivery and child vaccination coverage. The exposure variable was residence in the refugee hosting community. He used a difference-in-difference analysis to compare indicators of the refugee hosting community to a controlled group selected through propensity score matching from the rest of the country. Their findings shows that none of the evaluated mother and child health services indicators deteriorated with the presences of the refugees. In fact, antenatal care attendance and caesarean delivery did not show any significant change but there was an increase in delivery in health facilities and complete vaccines.

Physical security is important for a country's political and economic growth. According to Hakourta (1988) the scope of refugee influx on host community has significant impact on security. Oroub-El-Abed (2009) asserts that refugees can be of benefit to the host governments if they are allowed to work unhindered and become productive members of the society. A good example in support of Oroub-El-Abed's argument is that of Palestinian refugees who have been integrated with the Egyptians to an extent that they are virtually undistinguishable (Laurie Brand, 1988). In this case therefore Palestinian refugees in Egypt are no longer perceived as a security threat by Egyptians. Furthermore, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides some support in security packages to host government.

However, according to Jacobsen (2002) this aid has been found to be inadequate in alleviating the added criminal pressures that refugees are perceived to inflict upon its communities. Moreover, the presence of refugees in many third world host states is further compounded by armed groups in exile actively engaged in political objectives (Loescher, 1994). Apart from conflict between the host government and the refugees, there is also conflict between the refugees and the inhabitants of the host community. In refugee-affected and hosting areas, there may be inequalities between refugees and non-refugees that give rise to social tension (Betts, 2009). In addition, results of Rutinwa (2003) findings also indicates that, internal peace and security has been affected by the increase in serious criminal activities such as murder, armed robbery and illegal possession of arms and ammunition. In Cameroon, Ackah-Arthur (2015), examining the international reactions to Nigeria's Boko Haram security issue. His work argues that states likely respond to an existing security threat when it begins to endanger individual national territories. As a result, the concept of human security in international security is therefore lacking adequate utilization during security crises and its correct application must be a strong focus within international security literature and policy.

Population increase due to refugee influx calls for a greater pressure on resources. This effect is felt hardest by the poorest of the host communities as they are the most dependent on common property for their livelihood (Chambers, 1986, p. 253 cited in Ongpin (2008). Common goods such as water experience great exploitation and use. To remedy this situation water sources are constructed by UNHCR and humanitarian organizations. A very large advantage to such investment is the spillover it creates into the local communities and their communal use. According to Rutinwa (2003), efforts of communities as well as investment from organizations such as UNHCR has improved access to water facilities in Tanzania. As a result of these investments, 64.5% of Ngara's population and 60.8% of Kibondo's population now have access to clean, safe water within the government recommended 400 meters.

However, according to Rutinwa (2003) in some regions of Tanzania, wells were destroyed and natural springs polluted, thus affecting the water supply for many of the surrounding villages. Also, according to Whitaker (1999), there is increased competition for scarce water resources during refugee presence. Water sources which benefits the camps are depleted and several rivers are diverted to the refugee camps from host villages. Furthermore,

Aukot (2003) explores the impact of refugee influx on host community water supply and concludes that refugee influx seriously compromise host community water supply.

Concerning food, Alix-Garcia and Saah (2007) analyzes the impact of the refugee inflows from Burundi and Rwanda on host populations in Western Tanzania. The analysis shows large increases in the prices of non-aid food items and more modest price effects for aid-related food items. Examination of household spending and assets show positive wealth effects of refugee camps on nearby villages. This contradicts previous evidence and suggests that under certain conditions, the interaction between refugees and their hosts may result in positive welfare effects for local residents. Moreover, given that refugee influx is often followed by food aid, Barret (2001) carried out a study on the effect of food aid on local price and comes out with results that shows that where food aid has been effectively handled the effect has been increased consumption by the targeted population with little or no effect on domestic food prices.

On the other hand, the analysis of Alix-Garcia and Saah (2007) show evidence that the refugee inflow into western Tanzania resulted in increases in the prices of maize, bananas, plantains, milk and all agricultural goods which are both consumed and produced by local populations in Tanzania. In addition, Whitaker (1999) discuss price increase in refugee host community and suggest that the local host population suffers from these price increase. Moreover, 'inflation of prices results in locals being priced out of the market by international organization (IO) staff who have a higher purchasing power' (Rutinwa, 2003, p. 50). In addition to this, when refugees are unable to acquire the material that they required for food or shelter, they turn to their surroundings. 'This has resulted in farms, fields and forests being scoured for food and resources, thus damaging the crop yields and environment' (Vas Dev, 2003, p. 115 cited in Ongpin (2008). The farmers would no longer be able to sell their expected amount of crops, thus affecting their economic yield (Landau, 2004, p. 49). This will result to a drop in agricultural yield which has a negative impact on the host communities. The poor in the community are hit hardest by this change in demand as they spend more to buy relatively the same amount of goods.

Moore-John, (2014) focused on agroforestry preferences among refugees and host-nationals in six villages in the Adamaoua Region of Cameroon. Visual methods were used to quantify preferences for eight agroforestry practices and tested for statistically significant differences across gender, ethnicity, and status as refugee or Cameroonian. He used differences in practice preferences as well as preferences for implementation in a group or as a family. Most

differences were between refugees and Cameroonians. Refugees were more likely to prefer practices that help meet basic needs and also more likely to prefer group implementation. He used open-ended comments to analyse the contextualize quantitative results. Overall, his results suggest that agroforestry preferences in refugee settings may relate to a greater degree on social class and experience rather than gender or ethnicity. Results also indicate common ground in that refugees and host nationals are likely to share many preferences

Different host communities have different perceptions of refugee habitation in the community. The impact of refugees on the host community starts from the moment of arrival and stretches throughout their stay in the host community. Some scholars have noted particular trends of refugee influx on the host communities. Whitaker (1999) focuses on changing opportunities facing host communities and concludes that, the influx of refugees creates a new context in which hosts devised strategies to gain access to incoming resources and to maintain access to their own resources. Different strategies and structures allowed some hosts to benefit, while others became worse off. In the end hosts developed ways to cope with negative aspects of the refugee presence while taking advantage of positive opportunities.

According to Chamber, (1986) and Whitaker (1999) the vulnerable members of the local population, such as the elderly, disabled and the poor, are affected the most. On the positive side, the poor locals who lived close to the camps are able to benefit from refugee health and water facilities. However, the elders of the village are neglected in care since some of the youth work in the camps. Farmers with ample land and large harvests benefit from the increasing food prices but such prices are detrimental to farmers with limited farm lands. Whitaker (2002) suggest that the negative effects are not noticeable until the goods and resources became scarce and lead to competition between the refugees and hosts.

3 Methodology

This study makes use of a comparative design method, as these methods will enable the testing of the socio-economic impact of the influx of refugee in the East region on the host community by making use of two different periods. The period before and after the refugee influx, using the period without refugees in the community as a lens to compare their impact on the present host community. By using the period without refugees (henceforth represented as period A) as a framework to evaluate the impact of the refugee influx (henceforth represented as period B) on the host community.

As a result, the research has employed a causal model which employs two variables, the dependent and independent variables. The independent variable is refugee influx while the dependent variables are education, health, security, food and water supply in the host community. To test the role of the independent variable on the dependent variable the following algebraic specification was made use of:

$$E, H, S, F, W = RI$$

Where:

E is education, H is health, S is security, F is food, W is water and RI is refugee influx.

The descriptive statistics makes use of words, tables and graphs to represent data collected with the help of questionnaires and focus group discussion. The data collected is represented on tables and graphs.

Sampling Techniques.

The study make use of the focus group study and the stratified random sampling technique. As concern the stratified random sampling technique, the respondent were first divided into various groups before making use of the simply random sampling. In this light, every member of the sampled population has an equal chance of being selected. Participants below the age of 20 were left out as they were considered not to have a good mastery of the socio-economic situation of the community before the refugee influx to compare with the present situation. Also, inhabitants who had not spent fifteen years or more in the study area were not considered. This is because participants were expected to have a mastery of the socio-economic situation in the area before the refugee influx to be able to appreciate the impact of the refugee influx on the host community. Moreover, those who meet the criteria but were not mentally capable as well as those who were seriously sick were not included in the study. Before giving out the questionnaire the respondents were orientated on the purpose for which the research was being carried out and how to go about the exercise. This was to ensure willingness in response.

In total, 100 questionnaires were answered and three focus group discussions conducted. The questionnaires were used to answer objectives one to six while focus group discussions were used to answer objective seven. The respondent was required to mark a tick against the corresponding respond to a question. Questionnaires were administered to respondents from 15 different localities in the East Region with different distances from the refugee Camps and

having refugees living in the communities. These communities include, Gado-Badzéré, Timangolo, Lolo, Yokaduma, Mbilie, Garoua-Boulai, Nandoungue, Zembe, Borongo, Ndokayo, Bambouti, Tongo, Mandjou, Batouri and Sodenou. The diagram on appendix three represents the communities and the sampled population in the study area.

Questionnaires were mostly administered in the evening when the respondents must have come back from their respective jobs. The questionnaire questions were divided into three groups of questions, the first set of questions ask questions to the respondent in relation to the time before the refugee arrived, the second set ask question after the refugee arrived and the third requires the respondent to compare the impact of the refugee influx on the mentioned socio-economic variable. The questions on the questionnaire and the focus group discussion comes from the study objectives.

As concern the focus group, we established three focus groups made up of 30 participants each, one involving business people, the second farmers and third the general population (involving mostly those of the private and public sectors) who have lived in the region for at list fifteen years. The focus group involving business people was carried out in Gado-Badzere that involving the general population was carried out in Manjoh and that of the farmers in Timangolo. Respondents to the questionnaires were exempted from the focus group discussion so as to increase the number of respondents.

Holding a focused group discussion is a good way to learn about people's perspectives, interest, attitude and desires of a targeted audience. We use focus group discussion to verify the opinion of the host population concerning the refugee living in the community on the socioeconomic development of the host community. We therefore adopted a holistic approach whereby we selected three focus groups made up of 30 participants each, one involving business people, the second farmers and third the general population (involving mostly those of the private and public sectors) who have lived in the region for at list fifteen years. The focus group involving business people was carried out in Gado-Badzere that involving the general population was carried out in Manjoh and that of the farmers in Timangolo. We sampled their opinions and their views which permitted us to verify the link between the impacts of the refugee influx on the socioeconomic wellbeing of the host community

The focus group discussion helped us to get the natives' perception of the presence of refugees in the Community. This is because focus groups are useful tools in identifying key

issues and questions. The group discussions were fruitful because it gave room for correction of ideas and to present different views. In each focus group organized, interview guide was used as a framework for conducting the interviews. Probing and follow-up questions were sometimes included to achieve more information on different issues. Details of participants in the focus group is represented on table one.

Table 1: Details of Participants of Focus Group Discussion.

Details of Focus group participants	Focus group one. Participants of farmers focus group in Timangolo	Focus group two. Participants of business people in Gado-Badzere.	Focus group three. Focus group participants of the general public in Manjoh.
Age bracket of participant	20-30=10 31-40=10 41-50=5 Above 50=5	20-30=5 31-40=10 41-50=5 Above 50=10	20-30=5 31-40=17 41-50=7 Above 50=1
Gender of participant	Male=20 Female=10	Male=21 Female=9	Male=20 Female=10
Education level of participant	Primary=20 Secondary=10	Primary=10 Secondary=20	Primary=15 Secondary=15
Occupation of participant	Farmers=30	Business people=30	Teacher=7 NGO workers=13 Traditional doctors=4 Traditional representatives=6

Source: researcher, from filed data

Analytical Approach.

The collected data was analyzed using the SPSS statistic data editor and was later on slotted into Excel. The information was arranged in preparation for analysis and inclusion in the result chapter. The method used seeks to test the socio-economic impact on the host community as a negative or positive function of the CAR refugee influx into the East region of Cameroon. This model compares two time periods, before and after the refugee influx, using the period without refugees in the community as a lens to compare their impact on the present host community. In this case, the impact of refugee influx on education, health, security, food and water supply on the livelihood of the host community, by comparing the change in the mentioned variables in period 'A' and period 'B' using a descriptive analysis. In addition to this, the results of the focused group discussion will be used to verify the link between the refugee influx and the socioeconomic impact on the wellbeing of the host population. From these variables a conclusion of the impact of refugee influx on the host community can be drawn.

As concern the Validity and reliability of instrument, following Bell (1991), in this study we administered a well-structured questionnaire. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was reviewed and approved by experts in that domain then was pre-tested in three localities and misunderstandings were corrected to ease respondents filling. The reliability of the data used for this study was tested using the Alpha Croncbach's method of reliability.

4.0 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA.

In this section we present the following socio-economic characteristics: gender, age, level of education and occupation of the respondents. These characteristics show the mechanism through which the socio-economic characteristic of the respondents can be evaluated. We also present the impact of the influx of CAF on education, health, security, food and water facilities in the host community. Finally, we present the natives' perception of the presence of refugees in their community and the most affected socio-economic sector as a result of the refugee influx into the community.

Distribution According to Gender of the Respondents

Figure one indicates the sex distribution of the sampled population of the study area. As seen on the diagram, 53% of the respondents were male while the remaining 47% were female. This observation shows that men are more active in income generating activities as opposed to

their female counterparts. In traditional African Societies men are the bread winners of the family while the women stay at home as housewives. It is true that trends have changed and men and women are equal partners in fending for their families. However, the reason for the domination of the male respondent over the female respondent in our case is simply due to the male willingness and availability to respond to the questionnaire. Moreover, women spend most of their days on their farms, only returning at night which is not an appropriate time to conduct interviews due to insecurity in some localities. The gender of the respondents is represented on figure one.

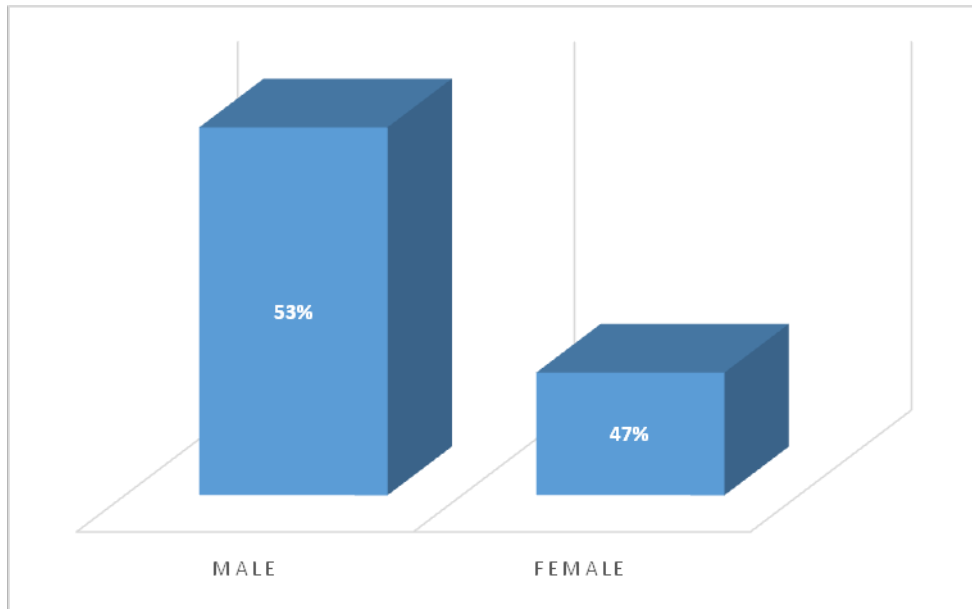


Figure 1. **Sex Distribution of Respondents.**

Source: Computed by researcher from field data using SPSS

Distribution According to Age Group of the Respondent

Figure two illustrates the age distribution of the respondent which is from 20 years and above. The age range with the highest respondents is the range 31-40 with 46.3% of the respondent followed by the age range 20-30 with 35.8% of the respondent. These age groups (20-30 and 31-40) is considered as the active population of most economy hence explains the reason for the high number of respondents from within this age group. As earlier mentioned, the region is one of the most under developed regions in the country which is dominated by the agricultural sector. This explains the high number of respondents within this age group.

The age range 41-50 represent 15.8% of the respondent and 51 years and above represents 2.1% of the respondents. According to the WHO data published in 2015 life expectancy in Cameroon is 55.9 for male and 58.6 for female (World Health Rankings, 2015) this explains why we could only register 15.8% of respondent in age range 41-50 and 2.1% in age range 51 years and above. Given the nature of the study and research topic, a majority of respondent from amongst these age groups would have been helpful since they will have been in a better position to appreciate the two time periods.

However, the sampled population was able to appreciate the two time periods since the respondents included only those who have been resident in the region for at least 15 years and more. The distribution of the age group of the respondent is represented on figure two.

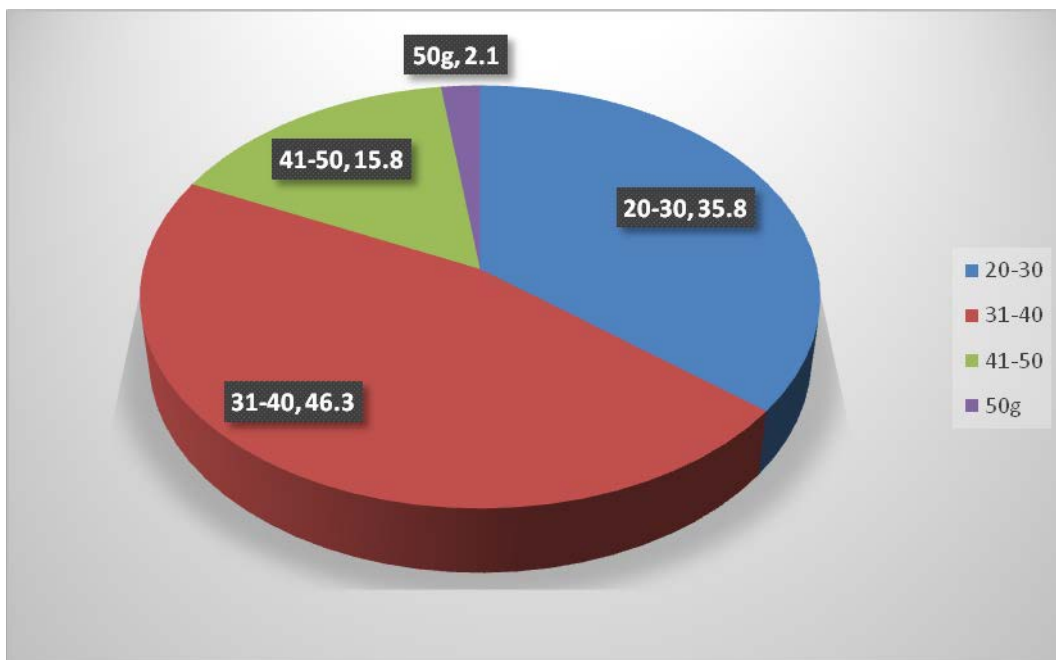


Figure 2.Age Distribution of the Respondents.

Source: Computed by researcher from field data using SPSS

Distribution According to Level of Education of Respondent in the Sampled Area.

Figure three illustrates the rate of literacy in the East Region of Cameroon. Here education was divided into, no education, primary, secondary\high and higher education, where higher education starts from one year of under-graduate studies and above. The total number of

people that did not school and those at higher education is zero percent so this variable were removed during presentation of results. The total number of persons that attended primary school is 37% and Secondary\high School is 63%. From the diagram on figure six it can be clearly seen that a majority of the respondents attended Secondary\high School. As illustrated on figure six, there were no respondents who had attended higher education. This is probably due to the fact that the region has very little opportunities hence, people with higher education turn to migrate out in search of better employment opportunities. Also those with higher education living in the region migrated into the region to work, hence they were not eligible to answer the questionnaire because they only came into the region after the refugee influx. This explains why the sampled population had no respondents with higher education. Generally and as indicated on figure three, the literacy level in the region is on a rise as they were no respondents without education.

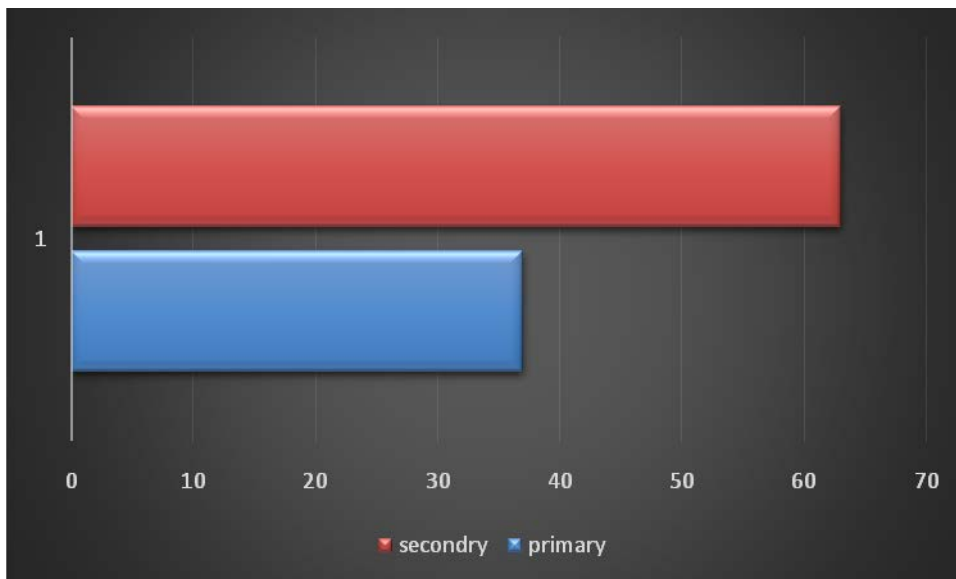


Figure 3. Level of Education of Respondents.

Source: Computed by researcher from field data using SPSS.

Distribution According to Occupation of Respondent in the Sampled Area.

Figure four illustrates the various occupations of the respondents which was divided into farmers, business and those in the private or public sectors. The diagram shows that farmers were the highest respondents with 57% respondents from the sampled population. The main economic activity of the region is agriculture. This explains the domination of farmers in the sampled population.

Business people make up 31% of the sampled population. The domination of farmers over business people is probably due to the fact that a majority of the farmer are indigenes who were born in the region and have spent most or all of their live in the region. This is as opposed to business people where a majority of them only migrated into the region to benefit from the economic advantage created by the refugee influx.

Finally those working in the private and public sectors make up only 12% of the population. The reason for the small number of respondents who work in the private or public sector is because a majority of jobs in this sector was created as a result of the refugee influx and a good number of workers in the sector migrated into the region to work there. Moreover, working in this sector requires a certain level of education and a majority of inhabitants with this educational qualification have moved out of the region in search of greener pastures. This is as opposed to farmers and some businesses that were in the region before the refugee influx.

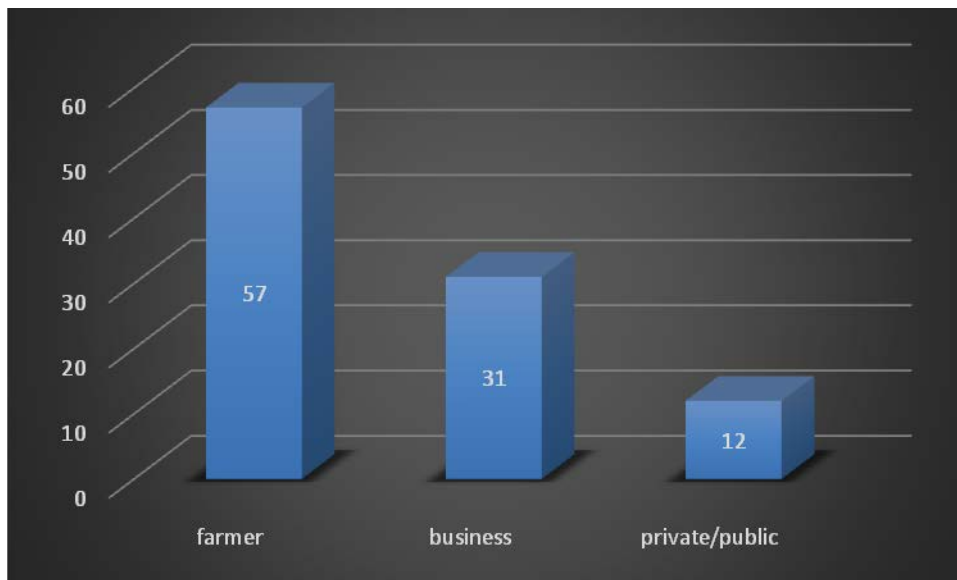


Figure 4. Occupation Distribution of Respondents.

Source: Computed by researcher from field data using SPSS

Situation of education in the region in period ‘A’ and period ‘B’

Table 2: The Impact of Refugee Influx on Education in the Host Community.

	Before Refugee influx.	Present situation.(Period B)	Contribution to Wellbeing

Variable	(Period A)							
	Frequency	Percentage	Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Low	52	52	Reduced slightly	4	4	Agree	55	55
Moderate	34	34	Remain same	5	5	Strongly agree	40	40
High	14	14	Increased	91	91	Disagree	5	5

Source: author from field data.

From the results on table two, it show that 52% of the sampled population say that education facilities in the region were low before the refugee influx while, 34% say it was moderate and 14% say it was high. According to the data collected on the field, a majority of the respondents say that education facilities in the community was low. However, with the coming of the refugee, Cameroon Government, regional and international bodies were engage in providing some social amenities to avoid a deterioration of the situation of both the refuges and the vulnerable host population. The result is a positive improvement in period B as 91% of the sampled population say that the education facilities has increased with the refugee influx while 5% say it has remained same and 4% says it has reduced slightly.

This positive impact is as a result of the construction of new schools in camps and improving on the existing ones in the host communities. This results goes in line with the writings of Boamah-Gyau (2010) which states that the local population benefits from the construction of new schools in the event of a refugee influx.

Comparing the situation of period A and B, 55% of the respondent agree that the variation in education facilities is caused by the arrival of refugees while 40% strongly agree and 5% disagree that the variation in education facilities is caused by the arrival of refugees in the community. As stated by Preston (1991) the availability of education to children depends on their family social and economic status. In this case, children who attend public schools feel the impact of the refugee influx the most because these schools are overcrowded as opposed to

private schools whose population is relatively smaller due to the high school fees. However, the buildings and other capital assets will benefit the local community (Jacobsen, 2002) as the increase in the construction of schools will increase access to school which will benefit both the refugees and the host communities in the long run. The details of this result is presented on table two.

Health Situation in the Host Community in Period ‘A’ and ‘B’

From the results on table three 45% of the respondents say that health facilities in the communities was low before the refugee influx while 43% say it was moderate and 12% say it was high. However, with the coming of the refugees, Cameroon government, regional and international humanitarian bodies got involve in providing health facilities to take care of the general population. As a result of these improvements, 25% of the respondents say that health facilities in the community has increased while 72% say it has remained same and 3% say it has reduced slightly. This results show that although there has been a positive improvement in health facilities in the host communities the impact is not really felt by the host population.

As seen on table three, comparing the two time periods, 43% of the respondents agree that the variation in health facilities is caused by the arrival of refugees while 46% strongly agree and only 11% disagree that the variation in health facilities is caused by the arrival of refugees in the host community. Comparing period A and B we realize that although there has been infrastructural development in health facilities, the impact is not felt by the host population. This situation can lead to conflict if the refugees have better health facilities than the host population. Like in the studies of Bruijn (2009) where he states that there are cases where refugees have better health indicators than the surrounding villages which can lead to tension. However, this is not the case in the East region as the health indicators of the host population is better than that of the refugees.

Table 3: The Impact of Refugee Influx on Health in the Host Community.

Variable	Before Refugee influx. (Period A)		Variable	Present situation.(Period B)		Variable	Contribution to Wellbeing	
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
LOW	45	45	Reduce	3	3	Agree	43	43

			d slightly					
Moderate	43	43	Remain same	72	72	Strongly agree	46	46
High	12	12	Increas ed	25	25	Disagre e	11	11

Source: author from field data.

Security Situation in the Host Community in Period ‘A’ and ‘B’

As illustrated on table four, 45% of the respondents say that security was low in period A, while 49% says it was moderate and 6% says it was high. With the outbreak of the Civil war in CAR, insecurity from the CAR spread into the East Region of Cameroon. This was closely followed by the Cameroon government improving security in the region. This improvement in security has a positive impact in security as 90% of the respondents say that there is an increase in security while 4% say that it has remain same and 6% say it has reduced slightly. The security situation of the host community is seen from two angles. At the international level (that is relationship with bordering countries) and at the internal level (relationship between refugees and the host population). The civil war in CAR is characterized by cross border attacks by CAR rebels in the East Region of Cameroon and in the host communities there is conflict between the refugees and the host population (farmer\grasser conflicts). These conflicts have resulted to insecurity in the region. This result is in accordance with the writings of Betts (2009) which states that in refugee-affected and hosting areas, there may be inequalities between refugees and non-refugees that give rise to social tension.

A majority of the CAR refugees in the East Region are very poor. In addition to this the standard of living in the camps are low. This has led to social mischief by the refugees which has resulted to tension between the refugees and the host population. As a result of this 42% of the respondents agree that the variation in the security situation is caused by the arrival of refugees while 48% strongly agree and 10% disagree that the variation in the security situation is caused by the arrival of refugees in the community. This result is in accordance with the work of Sanjugta(2002) who says refugee settlements are associated with social problems such as drunkenness, prostitution, sexual promiscuity and mischief. The detail of this result is presented on table four.

Table 4: The Impact of Refugee Influx on Security in the Host Community.

Source: researcher from field data.

Variable	Before Refugee influx. (Period A)		Variable	Present situation.(Period B)		Variable	Contribution to Wellbeing	
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
LOW	45	45	Reduce s slightly	6	6	Agree	42	42
Moderate	49	49	Remain same	4	4	Strongest agree	48	48
High	6	6	Increase	90	90	Disagree	10	10

Food Situation in the Host Community in Period ‘A’ and ‘B’

From the results on table five, 22% of the respondent say food supply in the community was low in period A, while 62% say it was moderate and 16% say it was high. With the influx of refugees in period B, 12% of the respondents say that there has been a slight reduction in food supply while 5% say that food supply has remained same and 83% say there is an increase in food supply in the host communities. This situation if not well handled can result to possible conflict situation as food aid in refugee situation is usually directed towards the refugees and the host population in most cases is neglected. However, this increase in food supply as a result of food aid, if well-handled can be beneficial to the host population as stated by Barret (2001).

On the other hand, 17% of the respondents say food demand in the community was low in period A while 70% say it was moderate and 13% say it was high. In period B, 11% of the respondent say food demand has reduced slightly while 4% say it has remained same and 85% say food demand has increased. This increase in food demand has a positive impact on the development of the host population.

An increase in population due to refugee influx will cause an increase in demand for goods and services which will lead to an increase in price (Rutinwa, 2003). According to

Whitaker (1999) the impact of population increase by refugee influx on local food supply has a potential effect on local prices through increase demand for food. This increase in food demand is followed by an increase in farms cultivated by farmers who have excess land. This has resulted to an increase in food supply in the refugee host communities.

UNHCR provides aid to refugees in the form of food rations. According to Whitaker (1999) although food aid distributed to refugees is for personal use, it is common that portions of it are sold or exchanged for different food or other items at local markets in camps. It has been noted by UNHCR that some of these food rations end up in local markets sold by refugees in exchange for different items. This indicates that a significant part of food aid finds its way to markets which is also available for non-refugees. According to Chambers (1986) such local markets and trading areas could have social effects on the relationship between the host and refugee populations where mutual benefits could be a possible outcome.

However, in this case study, food aid provided by IOs is not sufficient to satisfy the refugees. As a result of this the refugees turn to their surroundings for extra food supplies which destroys food crops and affects the expected yield negatively. This is in line with the writing of Landau (2004) that farmers will no longer get their expected yields as a result of refugees raiding their farms resulting to hardship on the host communities.

According to Chambers theory (p, 15-18) the presence of refugees may result in either food becoming scarcer through increasing prices and pressure on resources, or the opposite of relief food increasing food accessibility also for hosts. Similar findings are found in the work of Barret (2001) and Ongpin (2008) that food aid in refugee host communities if well-handled will result in a positive effect on food availability and consumption in the host community. As seen on the results on table six, 66% of the respondents agree that the variation in food supply is caused by the arrival of refugees while 28% strongly agree and 6% disagree that the variation in food supply is caused by the arrival of refugees in the community.

Similarly, the results on table six show that 69% of the respondent agree that the variation in food demand is caused by the arrival of refugees in the host community while 27% strongly agree and 4% disagree that the variation in food demand is caused by the arrival of refugees in the community. The details of these results is presented on tables five and six.

Table 5: The Impact of Refugee Influx on Food Supply in the Host Community.

Variable	Before Refugee influx. (Period A)		Variable	Present situation.(Period B)		Variable	Contribution to Wellbeing	
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
LOW	22	22	Reduced slightly	12	12	Agree	66	66
Moderate	62	62	Remained same	5	5	Strongly agree	28	28
High	16	6	Increased	83	83	Disagree	6	6

Source: author from field data.

Table 6: The Impact of Refugee Influx on the Demand of Food in the Host Community.

Variable	Before Refugee influx. (Period A)		Variable	Present situation.(Period B)		Variable	Contribution to Wellbeing	
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
LOW	17	17	Reduced slightly	11	11	Agree	69	69
Moderate	70	70	Remained same	4	4	Strongly agree	27	27
High	13	13	Increased	85	85	Disagree	4	4

Source: researcher from field data.

Water Situation in the Host Community in Period “A” and “B”

From the results on table seven, 63% of the respondent say that water availability in the host community in period A was low, while 31% say it was moderate and 6% say it was high. With the arrival of the refugees in the region, IOs in collaboration with Cameroon government engage in providing water points through the digging and construction of bore holes. The

improvement in water facilities has a positive impact on the host community. As a result of these improvements, 89% of the respondents say water availability has increased in period B, while 6 say it has remained same and 5 say it has reduced slightly

Comparing water availability between the two time periods, 45% agree that the variation in water availability is caused by the arrival of refugees while 51% strongly agree and 4% disagree that the variation in water availability is caused by the arrival of refugees in the host community. This results is contrary to the ideas of Aukot (2003) who holds that the host communities' water supply is negatively affected by refugee influx. The details of this result is presented on table seven.

Table 7: The Impact of Refugee Influx on Water in the Host Community.

Variable	Before Refugee influx. (Period A)		Variable	Present situation.(Period B)		Variable	Contribution to Wellbeing	
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
Low	63	63	Reduced slightly	5	5	Agree	45	45
Moderate	31	31	Remain same	6	6	Strongly agree	51	51
High	6	6	increased	89	89	Disagree	4	4

Source: researcher author from field data.

The Most Affected Socioeconomic Sector by the Refugee Influx in the East Region of Cameroon.

Table eight presents the most affected socioeconomic variable in the host community as a result of the refugee influx.

Table 8: The Most Affected Socioeconomic Sector by the Refugee Influx in the East Region of Cameroon.

Variables			
Social sector indicators.			

Variable	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree
Education	55	40	05
Health	43	46	11
Security	42	48	10
Water	45	51	4
Economic sector indicators.			
Food supply	66	28	6
Food demand	69	27	4

Source: researcher from field data.

As seen from the results on table eight, the refugee influx has led to the improvement in the socio-economic wellbeing in the host community through the construction of schools, health centers, improvement in security, increase in the availability of food supply, increase in the demand of food crops and improvement in the availability of water in the host community.

Looking at table eight, we realize that according to the respondents the most affected socioeconomic sector as a result of the refugee influx in the host community is water. The results show that 51% of the respondents strongly agree that the variation in water availability is caused by the arrival of refugees into the host community.

This is followed by security where 48% of the respondents strongly agree that the variation in security is caused by the arrival of refugees into the host community. Then health sector where 46% of the respondents strongly agree that the variation in the health sector is as a result of the refugee influx in the host community. Education takes fourth position where 40% of the respondents strongly agree that the variation in education is caused by the refugee influx into the community. Finally the least affected socio-economic sector is food. Food supply takes fifth position where 28% of the respondents strongly agree that the variation in food supply is caused by the refugee influx into the community and 27% of the respondents strongly agree that the variation in food demand is caused by the refugee influx into the host community.

The Natives' Perception of the Presence of Refugees in their Community.

The principal aim of this point is to examine the natives' perception of the presence of refugees on the socio-economic wellbeing of the host Community. This is done using three different focus groups, one involving business people, the second farmers and third the general population (involving mostly those of the private and public sectors) who have lived in the region for at least fifteen years. The focus group involving business people was carried out in Gado-Badzere that involving the private and public sectors was carried out in Manjoh and that of the farmers in Timangolo with 30 participants each.

Findings from the Focus Groups and Proposed Outcome.

In this section, we present the findings from the different focus groups discussion (FGD) by linking the impact of the refugee influx to the socio-economic livelihood of the inhabitants in the region.

Table 9: FGD on Socioeconomic Indicators before the Arrival of Refugees in the Host Community.

socio-economic variables	Farmers group in Timangolo	Business peoples' group in GadoBadzere	Private and public sector group in Manjoh
Education	1	1	0
Health	1	1	1
Security	1	1	1
Food situation	0	0	0
Water situation	1	1	1

Source: researcher from field data.

NB: 0 means that the socio-economic variables was available and accessible, 1 means that the socio-economic variables was available but limited in supply.

From table nine, we observe that all focus groups acknowledge the availability of education facilities in the region before the refugee influx. However 2/3 of the participants revel

that the educational facilities were limited while the remaining 1/3 says the educational facilities were available and accessible.

Generally, the respondents' reactions were directly related to the existing socioeconomic situation of their immediate community. The focus group discussion of farmers and business people was held in Timangolo and Gado-Badzere respectively. Their infrastructural development is not as advanced as that existing in Manjoh which is more developed. Therefore, school children in Timangolo and Gado-Badzere have to track for longer distance to go to school as opposed to their counterparts in Manjoh. In all the three FGD held, the participants noted that schools were available but had limited teachers. It can be noticed from table ten that farmers and business people had a different view to that of the public/private sector workers concerning the availability of educational facilities in the various host communities.

From the information gathered from the different FGD represented on table nine, all participants acknowledge the availability of hospital facilities although they were limited. Generally, from what the participants say, doctors are hardly available in public health facilities, there is lack of drugs in the hospital pharmacy and consultation and drugs are expensive. Some participants went ahead to say that they preferred to take treatment at home due to the poor conduct of some health personnel and overcrowding in some public hospitals.

All participants in the FGD acknowledge the presence but difficult accessibility of security in the community. The East Region of Cameroon is the most under-developed region in the country. For this reason there are limited infrastructures and security amenities are limited in the region. The participants explained that although the population in period 'A' was smaller than the present, security was less because the forces of law and order were not reliable in case of emergencies.

Cameroon's East Region is vast, fertile and sparsely populated. All participants in the FGD acknowledged the availability and accessibility of food in the community. A majority of the food consumed in the region is cultivated in the region. In addition to this, the region is linked to the political capital with tarried roads making transportation of some food stuffs into the region easy.

Finally, all participants in the FGD acknowledged the availability but limited in supply of water in the communities. The participants explained that getting portable drinking water has

always been a challenge in the community and women and children had to track for long distance to fetch water.

Table 10: FGD on Socioeconomic Indicators in Period B

Socio economic variables	Farmers focus group in Timangolo	Business people focus group in Gado-Badzere	Private and public sector focuses group in Manjoh
Education	2	2	-2
Health	2	-2	2
Security	-2	2	2
Food situation	3	3	3
Water situation	2	2	2

Source: author from field data.

NB: 2 represents a positive impact, -2 represents a negative impact and 3 represents no change on the socio-economic wellbeing of the host community as a result of the refugee influx.

From the information gathered from our different FGD, there has been a positive impact on Educational facilities with the refugee influx. Schools have been provided for the refugee population and the host community under the supervision of UNHCR. This results goes in line with the writings of Rutinwa (2003), which shows that there is the provision of transport, teacher books, increased number of qualified primary school teachers, improved living and teaching environment for teachers and construction of educational facilities in Kagera and Kigoma regions.

However, School attendance has increased in the East Region, filling already crowded classrooms with children from refugee families. At the sites there are schools that can accommodate the refugee children, however, there is still a shortage of educational facilities in some host communities which can accommodate both the refugee children and the local population. In response to this, the UNHCR and UNICEFF constructed schools in the camps and extended existing schools in some affected areas. This has led to a positive change in

education as 2/3 of the respondents say that there has been a positive impact on education as a result of the refugee influx.

That notwithstanding, in Manjoh, the respondents say that the refugee influx has had a negative impact on education in the host community. A majority of the FGD participants in Manjoh say that although the limited schools have been extended, there is still over-crowding in these schools. This is because in Timangolo and Gado-Badzere which have refugee camps, there are schools in the camps for the children. Whereas in Manjoh the urban refugees attend community schools together with the locals resulting to overcrowding in these schools. This result is similar to that of Aukot (2003), at the Kakuma refugee camps, which holds that refugees have more opportunities for education than the locals. This is because schools are constructed in the camps and refugee children have the liberty to attend schools in the camps or local schools (Aukot, 2003) as opposed to the local children who can only attend local schools.

Generally and in most refugee host situations in Africa, there is usually a reported positive impact on the health sector in the host community (Rutinwa (2003) Chambers (1986). Health centers are constructed in the camps with free medical services offered to the refugees by humanitarian organizations. However, in the present case study, the participants say that the health centers in the camps are poorly equipped with little or no drugs. This has made many of the refugees in the camps to seek medical attention in the near-by villages. This has resulted to over-crowding in the health facilities available in the host communities. For this reason, 2\3 of the FGD participants say that the refugee influx has had a positive impact and 1\3 say that the refugee influx has a negative impact on the health sector in the host communities.

The security situation in the region has improved according to 2/3 of the participants in the FGD. The participants of the FGD of business people and the private/public sector worker say that the security situation have improved as the Cameroon government has improved on security measures in the region in response to the insecurity from the neighboring central Africa Republic. This action of the state has resulted in improved security in the host communities. However, the farmers still expressed some dissatisfaction as they say that the refugee influx has resulted to a negative impact on the security situation in the region. The reality is that insecurity has been reported in some boarder areas with the CAR, increase farmer/grazer conflict and crops theft by the CAR refugees. Insecurity has increased in the region, particularly in places like Yokaduma, Kenzu, Mbile, Lolo, Batouri, Kette and Gbiti. In addition, many refugee camps are places of insecurity and outright danger for both refugees and relief workers. By virtue of their

destabilizing effect it is insecure for those living around the camps. As a result, the participants of the FGD in Timangolo say that the impact of the refugee influx on security in the host community is negative.

As seen on table ten, food situation in the host community has remained unchanged according to all the respondents. Although the farmers complained of crops destruction by cattle and theft by the refugee population, the crops yield has remained almost the same. They explained that to benefit from the increase in food demand created by the refugee influx farmers with surplus land increased their farms. This has maintained the quantity of food supply in the community almost at the same level as that existing before the refugee influx. In addition to this, food aid given to the refugees by UNHCR makes up for the added demand of the refugee population.

The participants say they do not see any marked change in the food situation in the region because prices of food stuff are almost the same in period “A” and “B”. However, the slight increase in price cannot be totally attributed to the refugee influx because other internal factors independent of the refugee influx like inflation have a role to play in the change of price of food stuff.

The East Region has for long been affected by low access to portable water. UN agencies have ensured access to water through the construction of bore holes to avoid a deterioration of the humanitarian situation. This has led to a positive improvement in the water situation in the communities. As a result of these innovations in water, all the FGD respondents say that there has been a positive improvement in water situation in the host community.

Implication of the Results

The major concern of this chapter has been to investigate the impact of the refugee influx on education, health, security, food, water, examine the most affected socio-economic sectors by the refugee influx and explore the natives’ perception of the presence of refugees in the Community

From the findings of the study, we have been able to see that, the socio-economic situation in the host communities before the refugee influx was poor. As seen from the results presented above, the refugee influx has led to a positive improvement in social infrastructures in the host community which has resulted to a positive impact on the wellbeing of the inhabitants. Comparing the impact of the refugee influx on the socio-economic sectors we come to the

conclusion that the most affected is water (table eight). Finally the results of the FGD shows that the inhabitants in the host communities agree that the refugee influx has resulted to a positive improvement in the socio-economic sectors of the host community (table nine and ten).

However, we realize that a majority of conflict between the refugees and the host population is over water and agro-pastoral or farmer\grazer conflicts. Water supply has been ensured through the digging of bore holes and WASH programs provided under the supervision of UNICEF. However, it should be noted that these water points are insufficient for the population. In addition, maintenance of the water points is not regular, this gives added stress on the population as there is usually overcrowding at the water points.

The farmers in the East region have raised fears of potential farmer/grazer conflicts as some of the refugees came into Cameroon with their cattle. The arrival of the Mbororo has led to conflicts with the local population over crop destruction. According to the Government authorities, most Mbororo cattle herders have permission to graze their cattle without legal restrictions. In some cases, local authorities give them pastoral plots. This notwithstanding, cattle still encroach into farms destroying crops. The cost of living has been impacted. Food has become scarce and the prices of goods and services are increasing.

Although there are many negative impacts of the CAR refugee influx into the East Region of Cameroon, the host community has benefited from some positive improvements in their socio-economic wellbeing. The results of the findings therefore show that the host communities have benefited socio-economic development as a result of the refugee influx.

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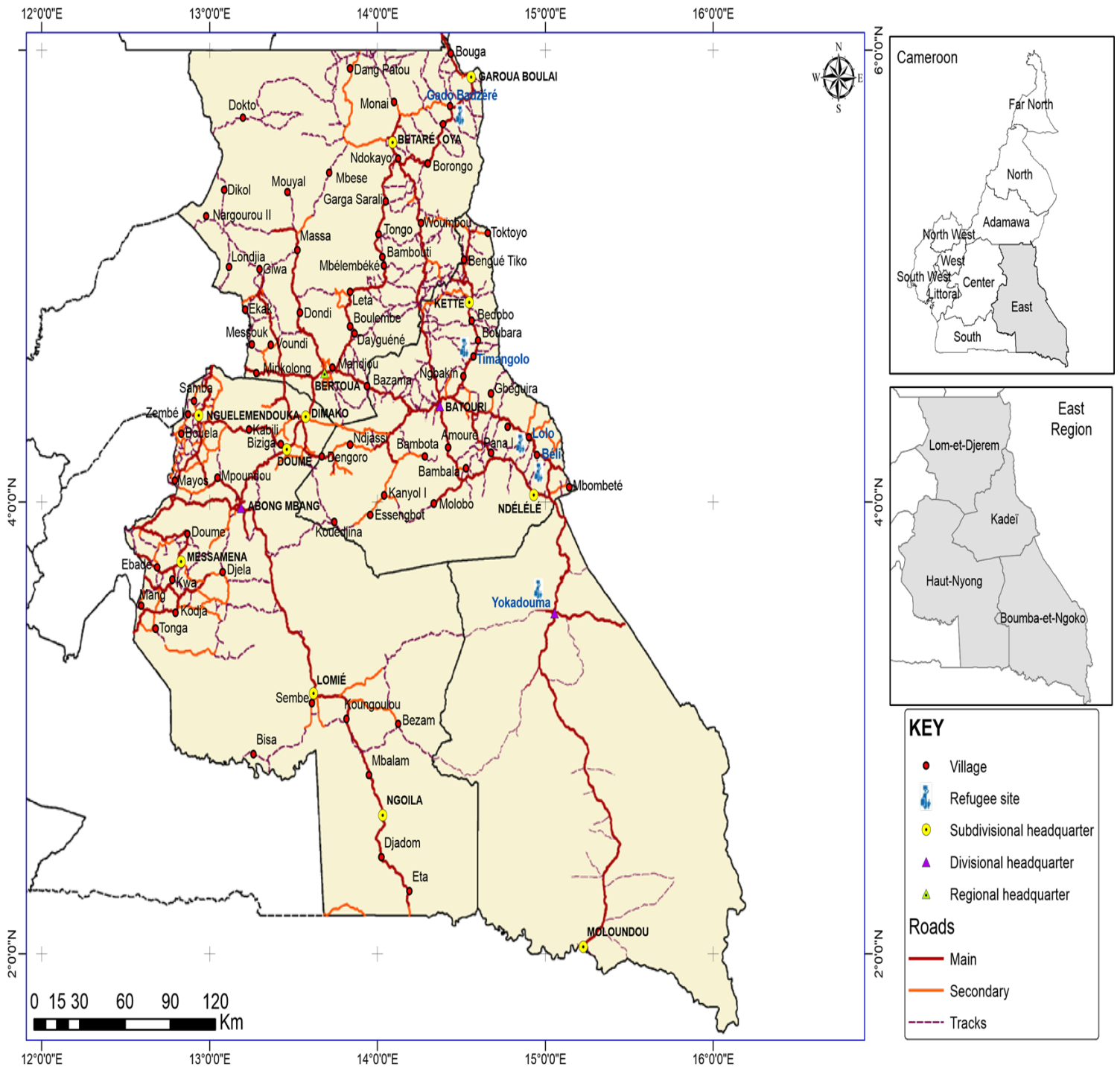
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APPENDIX ONE

MAP OF THE STUDY AREA.



Appendix Three

Refugee Host Communities and Sampled Population.

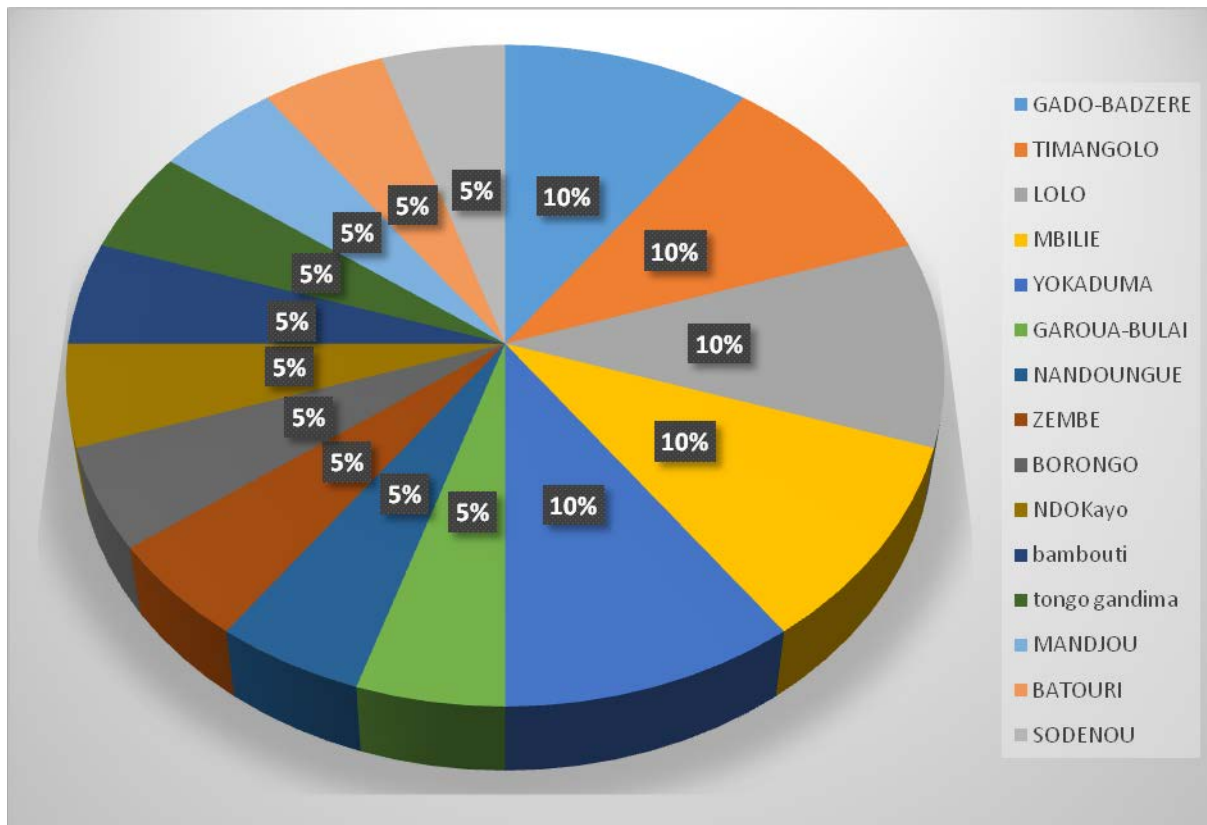


Figure 3. Refugee Host Communities and Sampled Population.

Source: Computed by researcher from field data using SPSS

Appendix four

Some pictures of the focus group discussion.

FGD IN MANJOH

FGD in GADO-BADZERE

