

CHAPTER 04:

Internally displacement associated with conflict and violence: The case in Burkina Faso

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« A la fin de ce mois; ça fera 3 mois qu'ils ont gâché notre vie par rapport à l'agriculture, à l'élevage. Ça fait 78 jours, qu'ils ont gâché notre vie à M-village et nous sommes venus ici. Nous sommes ici, nous n'entendons pas de bruit et nous ne devrions pas nous enfuir. Vraiment nous avons la paix du cœur depuis que nous sommes ici. Mais on dit que ta ville natale et la ville où tu te promènes pour chercher quelques choses ce n'est pas la même chose. » (IDP GL de Namentenga)

[At the end of this month it will be 3 months since they ruined our agriculture and livestock. It's been 78 days since they ruined our lives in my village and we came here. We are here, we do not hear any noise and we should not run away. Truly we have had peace of heart since we have been here. But they say that your hometown and the town where you go to look for things are not the same thing.] (a quote from an IDP)

Introduction

This chapter focuses on my reflections nourished by the fieldwork I conducted in two regions of Burkina Faso (centre-North and centre – Kaya, province of Sanmatenga, and Ouagadougou, province of Kadiogo) between November 2023 to February 2024. It focuses on the experiences of the internally displaced persons (IDP) following and during terrorist attacks, services offered to the adult IDPs, and the social workers role in assisting them. I will also provide a narrative overview about the legacy of colonial relationship between Burkina Faso and France that shapes the experiences and needs of the population during the present-day terrorist attacks. The chapter will first provide an overview of the country. Second, it will present the context of the terrorist attacks while focusing on the case of the vulnerable population comprising internally displaced persons (IDP) and host families / communities. Third, it will examine the social work context and role shaped by the humanitarian urgency faced by both the IDPs and host families-communities. Finally, I offer an overview of the key findings about the needs of the IDPs and their impact on social workers.

A brief overview of Burkina Faso

History of Burkina Faso, a West-African country, as written by the Burkinabe historians, is not available in English language. The name Burkina Faso replaced Upper Volta under the 1983–1987 revolutionary government led by Thomas Sankara. Burkina Faso is a former French colony that gained its independence on the 5th of August 1960. The French colonial conquest in West Africa, which started in 1895, was characterised by intrigues, rivalries, resistances, and accommodations between the colonial administrators, the chiefs, kings, traditional, and religious leaders, as well as the remaining population of the country (Royer, 2021). As Upper Volta, the country was colonised in 1919 and dissolved in 1932, with the territory shared between the present-day Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast, Mali, and Niger. After World War II, in 1958, it was reconstituted within its colonial territorial borders. Current experiences of terrorism, focused on the occupation of different parts of the territories within the Burkina Faso borders, echo those prior territorial manipulations, related to France's colonial legacy.

Results of the 2019 population survey suggest that more than 70% of the population is rural (INSD, 2022) and predominately young, with 45.3% of the 20,505,155 inhabitants being under 15 years of age, and further 32.6% aged between 15–34. Country is administratively organised into thirteen regions headed by Governors, forty-five provinces headed by High Commissioners, three hundred and fifty departments headed by Prefects, three hundred and fifty-one communes (forty-nine urban and three hundred and two rural) headed by elected Mayors or by Councillors. Municipalities of Ouagadougou (national capital) and Bobo-Dioulasso (economic

capital) hold special status as the two major urban areas. This grants them increased autonomy compared to other communes in the country.

French used to be the official language in the country. In 2024 it was relegated to the status of 'work language' (*langue de travail*), giving it the same status as the English language. There are around sixty languages spoken across the country, the main ones being Moore (52.9%), followed by Fulfulde (7.8%), Gulmancema (6.8%), Dioula (5.7%), *bissa* (3.3%), *bwamu* (2.0%) and *san* (2.0%) (INSD, 2022). Country also has four main religious groups: the Muslims represent 63.8% of the population, followed by the Catholics (20.1%), animists (9.0%), and Protestants (6.2%); (INSD, 2022, p. 42). Economic activity in the country is based on agriculture, livestock, trade, and small-scale industry. The United Nation Human Development report (UNDP, 2024) ranks the country as 185th among 193 countries. Burkina Faso is therefore seen as a developing country, dependent on foreign aid programs and mechanisms for the development of its economy and welfare.

Currently, Burkina Faso remains in pseudo-independence. It is an independence that does not lead to emancipation noted in the agreements signed during the decolonisation negotiations. Independence was negotiated as a bridge to neocolonialism; therefore, decisions related to national defence, diplomacy, educational systems, health, social services, and economic development were assigned to remain under 'guidance' (read: decision making) from France. For example, France continues to control the currencies, access to the financial accounts, and regulates the economies of Burkina Faso and thirteen other countries in West Africa (Agbohou, 1999).

Since 2015, Burkina Faso has experienced a continued deterioration in its security due to the on-going terrorist attacks.

Analysis by the African Critical Terrorism Studies (CTS) scholars link the spread of terrorism across Western Africa to the flow of weapons following the 2011 fall of the Muammar Gaddafi regime in Libya (Atta, 2022). Since 2011, Libya has become a hotbed for jihadist extremist groups, armed movements, and the preferred transit country in the region for the activities of individuals and drug trafficking networks (Eljarh, 2016). Some authors argue that the political and institutional vacuum in Libya is linked to the 2012 infiltration of terrorist groups in Mali (Zimmerer, 2019) which later expanded to Burkina Faso (Moisseron & Belalimat, 2012).

Religious differences, access to natural resources and/or weapons, as well as human trafficking are listed as the main reasons for the attacks. These are perpetrated by various groups within the Islamic State in the Great Sahara (EIGS) and the regional branch of Al-Qaeda who take advantage of poverty and unemployment across the Burkinabe communities to recruit new members (Dakono, 2022; Hagberg et al., 2019). Other authors also suggest that terrorism is linked to the downfall of Blaise Compaore, former president of Burkina Faso (Batenga, 2014). He governed the country for twenty-seven years following the assassination of Thomas Sankara. Compaore was in favour of the France's continued control of countries' politics, economy, and education (Association Survie, 2014) while also allowing Burkina Faso to serve as stopover and meeting ground for terrorist groups. Compaore was forced to step down due to a popular insurrection in October 2014. Following the insurrection, there was no longer a mediator to negotiate with the terrorists, making the country a target for them (Nsaibia & Weiss, 2018; Jaffré, 2019). In 2021, more than 60% of the territory was under the control of armed terrorist groups (Atta, 2023).

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Failure by the President Kaboré to halt insurgencies led to a 2022 insurrection by the military Captain Ibrahim Traoré, who is now recognised as the interim leader of the country. Traoré enjoys popular support throughout the country. Since he took power, Burkina Faso has played a key role in the withdrawal of three West African states (Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali) from the regional body ECOWAS and the formation of an alternative, the Alliance of Sahel States (Eizenga, 2025) also known as the AES (Hagberg & Kibora, 2023). Within the country, Traoré is seen as leading the fight against the terrorist groups and the neocolonial, so-called “Françafrique”, influences of France throughout its former colonies. Across the region:

Sahelian response to the conflicts ushered in a new world order, thereby underlining the fact that in dealing with Africa, international partners should consider the sovereignty of African states and, by extension, prioritize African solutions to African problems as the major respite model out of her impasses (Ndah et al., 2025).

The issues of colonial continuity that was evident in Burkina Faso and which the current government wants to abolish are important in the context of the study. Economic and political rules are still under the French colonial policies which affect public services such as health, education, social action, and humanitarian activities. This means that social work practice is also shaped by colonial influences, terrorism, as well as attempts to break free from the Françafrique.

A brief overview of social work education and practice in Burkina Faso

« En fait, ce n'est pas peut-être la compréhension de notre rôle qui a changé, c'est plutôt les cibles ou bien la problématique que vivent nos cibles qui a changé parce que nous ne

sommes pas habitués à prendre en charge quelqu'un qui s'est déplacé parce qu'il ne peut plus repartir chez lui. » (Association TS-1)

[In fact, it is not perhaps the understanding of our role that has changed, it is rather the targets [read: service users] or the problems that our targets are experiencing that has changed, because we are not used to taking charge of someone who has moved because they can no longer return home.] (Association TS1)

Social work education and practice in Burkina Faso started in the late 1950s through two programmes, a secondary level training programme in Bobo-Dioulasso and post-secondary level training programme in Ouagadougou (United Nations, 1964a and 1964b). Much like in other African countries, colonialism shaped this development, with suggested practice models focused on remedial actions rather than social development (Chitereka, 2009). This is still the case today, as local social work literature is still limited (Kreitzer et al., 2023).

After the independence in 1960, these educational institutions became public ones through the decree from July 11, 1961, which led to the creation of the Ecole Nationale des Aides Sociales (ENAS). Two current educational institutions – the Ecole des Cadres Moyens en Travail Social (ECMTS) and the Institut National de Formation en Travail Social (INFTS) – are the results of the transformation between 1900–2000 (INFTS, 2021). Both institutions prepare social workers to become civil servants. Social work training is composed of three streams : 1) 'Assistance Sociale' focused on working with individuals, groups, communities, and organisations ; 2) 'Education Spécialisée' concentrated on intervention with children, youth, adults, elderly, and individuals experiencing disabilities; 3) 'Education

feminine' focuses on intervention with women, girls, women's groups and associations. There are three categories of social workers as civil servants, based on their education levels. First is Category C, for social workers who have a ten year secondary school certificate called BEPC. Second is Category B, for social workers who have a thirteen-year high school diploma called BAC. Finally, Category A social workers have a Bachelor or Masters-level education in social sciences and humanities. The allocation of levels and advancement from one level to another are both coordinated by the Ministry of Civil Service and the Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action, National Reconciliation, Gender and Family (MSHANRNGF). As civil servants, social workers work in a range of settings – schools, healthcare, NGOs, as well as in central and decentralised public sector offices (villages, districts, communes, regions, and provinces). Practice models include counselling, group work, community practice, forum-theatre, basic psycho-social support, and referrals. Western European and American literature on Burkina Faso focuses on health protection (Kadio et al., 2019; 2023; Ridde et al., 2014) and child protection (Akesson et al., 2021; Canvera et al., 2018; 2020). All are linked with transformation projects, such as the Strengthening of Social Protection System in Burkina Faso, funded by the EU, ILO, and Unicef (see <https://socialprotection-pfm.org/partner-countries/burkina-faso/>).

The government decree on the Protection and promotion of internally displaced persons and other persons affected by terrorism and community conflicts (Decree 2023/N0 0173 MSAHRNGF) delegates the Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action, National Reconciliation, Gender and Family (MSAHRNGF) as the lead agency to support the IDPs. Therefore, social work is at the forefront of managing internal displacement caused by terrorism.

Study methodology

Conducted as a country case study and funded by the British Academy Visiting Fellowship, the study presented in this chapter aimed to explore the impact of on-going terrorist attacks on the organisation and delivery of services to the internally displaced people (IDPs) in Burkina Faso, with a particular insight into existing service needs, barriers and enablers for effective adult services. It utilised qualitative methodology for both the data collection and analysis (MCDougal III, 2017). Due to the continuing French colonial legacy at all levels of the societal organisation of Burkina Faso, the anti-colonial discursive framework is the theoretical framework that has been used to reflect on the preliminary results. It is a theoretical reflection that does work with the notion of colonialism to openly address situations and relations of power that are manifesting in the repressive presence of colonial oppression. Colonial is understood as not only 'foreign or alien', but also as 'imposed and dominating;' it means an oppressive form of outside-inside struggle against hegemonic colonial relations (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Fanon 1964). The impact of such an oppressive relation is that it renders colonised bodies and minds incapable of thinking about their own condition, anticipating strategies, and problem-solving (Dei & Imoka, 2018; Simmons & Dei, 2012). The discursive theory, therefore, offers critical reflections about liberation and problem-solving avenues.

Main data collected during the fieldwork are twenty-three semi-structured interviews with IDPs, family-host communities (12 interviews), social and health care workers, stakeholders, social workers' associations, social work educational institutions, and local-international non-governmental organisations (11 interviews). Figure1 (INSD, 2022, p. 32) below shows

the population distribution across all administrative regions. Fieldwork was conducted in two regions (Centre-North and Centre); specifically, in Kaya, province of Sanmatenga, and Ouagadougou, province of Kadiogo.

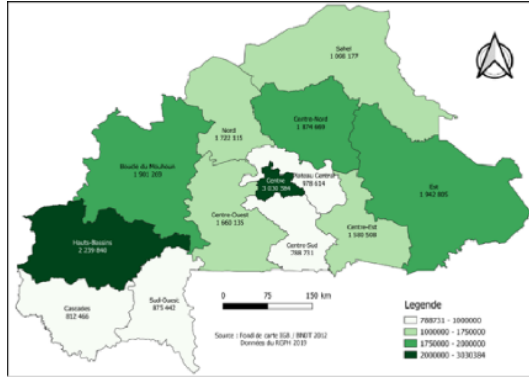


Figure 1: Population distribution across the country (INSD, 2022, p. 32)

The study received the ethical approval from the University of Sussex (UK) where I was a Visiting Fellow at the time of the study, and a data collection approval from the Ministry of Solidarity, Humanitarian Action, National Reconciliation, Gender and Family – Government of Burkina Faso (MSAHRNGF). Interviews were conducted in French and Moore. I used French as my primary linguistic frame to transcribe the audio recorded interviews. Quotes are, therefore, presented in two languages (French and English) to provide the readers with the source of the English translation. All quotes have been anonymised, bar references to each of the two main fieldwork sites (Ouagadougou and Kaya).

I have lived outside Burkina Faso for the past 20 years. I completed my social work training in Germany, emigrated as a skilled worker to Canada, and settled in Alberta, Canada.

From 2015, I am on a continuous learning journey about the African diaspora and its complexity of beauty, richness, and blackness (Ouedraogo, 2014; Asante, 2005). Alongside this journey, I have been keeping my ties in Burkina Faso through my PhD fieldwork which focused on the integration of Burkinabe labour migrants from Ivory Coast to Burkina Faso due to the 2002 political crisis in Ivory Coast (Ouedraogo, 2013). This current research on internal displaced persons, social work, and the terrorists' attacks in Burkina Faso is my second fieldwork in the country. It is a way for me to continue nurturing my belonging ties to the land and people while exploring avenues to develop the study and connections to social work in Burkina Faso. My approach to my academic work and creative writing is informed by my international exposure to formal and informal intercultural learnings (Ouedraogo, 2014; 2021) that I have been forming through my lived experiences. Afrocentricity (Asante, 1998) and anti-colonial (Dei, 2012) works have been shaping my theoretical analytical frame of references as I am continuing to liberate my body and mind from oppressions while embracing this journey with courage and dignity.

Findings

Increasing pressures on social workers

As civil servants, social workers are employed in social services across administrative organisation units within the country (regions, provinces, communes, and villages). Territorial divisions are also classified as urban, semi-urban, and rural areas. A government respondent articulated the two-fold advantage of the decentralised organisation of social services:

social workers are the first contact of IDPs (knowing that the profession first practice is to collect data to identify the needs as well as understand the problem) and therefore there are local data from which the government relies to develop its humanitarian responses.

«...le maillage du territoire par les services sociaux, est un élément capital dans l'accompagnement des personnes déplacées internes. Le maillage, le fait que si on prend par exemple, deux pays voisins, le Burkina et le Mali, le Mali à commencer à vivre sa crise avant nous, et aujourd'hui quand on demande au Mali, ils ne peuvent pas faire en fait la situation, le point de la situation exhaustive des déplacées internes, y'a pas de données, ça n'existe pas. Notre avantage, c'est que nous sommes représentées jusqu'au niveau commune, au niveau village.» (Structure-gov-1)

[...the coverage of the territory by social services is a crucial element in supporting internally displaced people. The network, for example, two neighbouring countries: Burkina and Mali; Mali began to experience its crisis before us, and today when we ask Mali, they cannot in fact do so. The situation, the exhaustive situation of internally displaced persons, there is no data, it does not exist. Our advantage is that we are represented up to the commune level, to the village level] (Structure-gov-1).

Covering administrative and direct practice roles, social workers in Burkina Faso reported that their routine services were more focused on promotion, sensibilisation, training, and education in areas like family work (parenting and couples counselling), work with disabled people (adaptation and adjustments), youth work (schooling, friendship, and stress management), and unemployment (co-ordination of the income generative activities). Due to terrorism, social workers are now ful-

filling humanitarian responders role under the title gestionnaire de site [site manager]. Site managers are responsible for recording the personal information of IDPs upon arrival on site, assessing their needs, informing them about the rules of life on the site, referral to other resources and services, and basic psychosocial support for the IDPs. They are also involved in the distribution of food and clothing, co-ordination of the partner activities and visits on-site, and assistance with the organisation of life in the IDP sites, and within the host community.

These new roles sit alongside their existing service roles. Due to the diversity and scale of needs they are facing, they have been working extra hours throughout a 7-day week. One practitioner noted:

«...donc il faut dire que nous travaillons sous-pression voilà le volume horaire moyen dépasse les 40 [heures par semaine] là. Pour ne pas dire 24/7 parce que souvent on a le temps pour aller dormir mais s'il y a des situations, la nuit, ils nous interpellent et nous nous levons pour faire face donc à ces difficultés. Le nombre de personnes à prendre en charge et les préoccupations aussi diffèrent d'une personne à une autre et les problématiques aussi se sont amplifiées.» (Professionnel TS-1).

[so it must be said that we work under pressure, the average hourly volume exceeds 40 [hours per week] there. Not to say 24/7 because often we have time to go to sleep but if there are situations, at night, they challenge us and we get up to face these difficulties. The number of people to be taken care of and the concerns also differ from one person to another and the problems have also increased] (Social Worker TS-1).

In Kaya, there were two models of housing provision for the IDPs – temporary sites (SAT), occupied just by the IDPs, and host sites (ZAD), where a space is shared by the host commu-

nity members and IDPs. In Kaya, both models are managed by a social worker as a recognised site manager. Elsewhere, host family sites are not recognised by the government. A host family shares their material and non-material resources with the IDPs. SATs are spaces which are equipped with the required minimum living facilities like water, sanitation, co-ordination of international/local NGO activities, and a designated (social worker) as the site manager.

In Ouagadougou, I have visited a host family site in Ouagadougou where social workers work with the IDPs and the host community even if they do not have an officially recognised title as site managers. Hence, both SATs and ZADs have led to new roles and increased responsibilities for the social workers, regardless of whether it is recognised or not by the government.

« ...quelque chose qu'on peut relever, voilà, on a dans notre tâche quotidienne, parce que dans nos politiques, [soufflement de vent] on ne connaissait pas cette histoire de question de déplacé, de gestion, voilà, la problématique est là, le phénomène de population déplacée est là, voilà, on peut dire que ça fait partie maintenant intégrante de notre tâche quotidienne, voilà, parce du moment que ce sont des personnes, c'est des individus, on est là aussi pour la promotion et la protection des droits des gens. Voilà, on ne peut pas aussi faire fi de ça, voilà, on est obligé d'intervenir quand, en tout cas, on est interpellé. Voilà c'est pour dire que c'est un plus encore à notre charge quotidienne de travail qu'on fait » (Professionnel TS-3).

[something that we can note here, we have in our daily task, because in our policies, [wind blowing] we did not know this story of the question of displaced people, of management, there you go, the problem is there, the phenomenon

of displaced population is there; that's it; we can say that it is now an integral part of our daily task; that's it; because as long as they are people, they are individuals, we are also there for the promotion and protection of people's rights. There you go, we can't ignore that too, there you go, we are obliged to intervene when, in any case, we are questioned. This is to say that it is an addition to our daily workload that we do] (Social Worker TS-3).

Despite their expanded and new roles, social workers reported a lack of recognition for these tasks in terms of remuneration and recognition of risk indemnities. They found this discouraging, particularly as they frequently rely on their own funds to fulfil their responsibilities to support the IDPs.

« C'est dans votre maigre salaire là, vous prélever ça, par moment même, tu es obligé de mettre la main dans poche pour soutenir les PDI. Ça c'est une difficulté aussi, vous n'avez pas d'argent pour ça, c'est vos propres engins vous utilisez, si c'est pour venir travailler au service repartir, on peut comprendre... mais les sorties terrains, vos propres engins, vos propres carburants, vos propres frais de communications. Peut-être que si le salaire était élevé là on pouvait vraiment comprendre, la rémunération que vous gagnez, ce n'est pas à la hauteur. Y'a des risques dans le travail, vous n'avez pas d'indemnités de risques, voilà » (Professionnel TS2).

[It's from your meagre salary, you take that from you, at times you are even forced to put your hand in your pocket to support the IDP's. That's a difficulty too, you don't have money for that, you use your own engines, if it's to come and work in the service and leave, we can understand. But field trips, your own gear, your own fuel, your own communications costs. Maybe if the salary was high there we could really understand, the remuneration you

| earn is not up to par. There are risks in the job, you don't have risk compensation, that's it] (Social Worker TS2)

Social workers reported that the situation of insecurity has imposed its rhythms on professionals, overcome by the needs of IDPs who are forced into a new environment which has its own problems and difficulties that they need to adapt to.

The internally displaced people and their expressed needs and challenges

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (2024) stated that, as of January 2024, there are some seventeen million people in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger who need humanitarian assistance and protection. In Burkina Faso alone, as of 31st of March 2023, there were 2,062,534 internally displaced people across 297301 households. They are spread over 303 municipalities, with the highest number in the central north region (493 954). The province of origin is Soum (532 873 people) and the host province is Sanmatenga (SP CONASUR, 2024a). Hence, 10.44% of the overall population is currently experiencing internal displacement due to the conflict and violence.

«Un jour seulement après la prière de «zafaré» [prière musulmane de vers 13h], des gens sont venus avec des armes et ont dit, vous de M-village, de U-village, nous ne voulons pas que demain à cette heure vous soyez toujours ici. Nous n'avons pas discuté davantage avec eux. Le soir arrivé, nous avons ramassé les enfants et certains animaux. Nous sommes allés pour récolter le mil mais ça on n'a pas pu.... Ils nous ont dit qu'on ne peut pas aller ramasser encore» (PDI RG de Namentenga).

| [Only one day after the "zafaré" prayer [Muslim prayer around 1 p.m.], people came with weapons and said, you from M-village, from U-village, we do not want that to-

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morrow at this time you will still be here. We did not discuss further with them. When evening arrived, we picked up the children and some animals. We went to harvest millet but we couldn't do that....] (IDP RG de Namentenga).

Most of the IDPs usually live from farming and informal economy (farmers, breeders, artisans, and traders), as well as jobs as civil servants and workers in independent, public, and private sectors.

Internally displaced persons fled mostly in groups as family or members from the same village. They now mainly live from donations, income generated within the informal sector, and begging. In one site, over 600 members of the same family settled with their family member (referred to as 'the little brother') who owns a farm in the peripheral district in Ouagadougou. Such peripheral districts across the country host a large number of IDPs.

«ah vraiment, le chemin était vraiment le chemin parce que si 12 localités se vident en même temps et se croisent sur la route, c'était vraiment du monde et on est arrivé à P-village. Par l'aide de Dieu, nous avons un petit frère ici, c'est grâce à lui que nous aussi on est arrivé ici.» (PDI GL de Namentenga)

[ah really, the path was really the path because if 12 localities empty at the same time and cross each other on the road, it was really crowded and we arrived at P-village. By the help of God, we have a little brother here, it is thanks to him that we also got here] (IDP GL de Namentenga).

In providing space to install tents and welcoming his family members, he became responsible for a host family site and receives some government support (food, clothing, letter ad-

dressed to public schools in the district to enrol children and youth), but he is the first respondent for the entire process for the duration of the group's stay.

Most IDPs noted food scarcity as their main need, regardless of where they are accommodated. There is a lack of access sufficient choice and number of meals. They lack ingredients such as flour, and don't have enough fuel to cook.

«Si non pour la nourriture non, je n'ai pas reçu que Dieu les aide aussi parce qu'il n'y a pas de méchanceté entre nous... actuellement la nourriture qui est ma préoccupation. Parce que même si vous me donnez dix millions je vais payer à manger.» (PDI YB de Soum).

[If not for the food no, I have not received that God also helps them because there is no malice between us... currently the food which is my concern. Because even if you give me ten million I will pay for food] (IDP YB de Soum).

As there are insufficient (government) resources to provide enough food, local NGOs workers reported sharing their own food with IDPs.

«Je peux dire que souvent même nous, ce que nous mangeons, nos propres vivres même là, parce que vous savez, quand vous êtes dans ce, dans ces genres d'associations là ou bien dans ce milieu-là, tu deviens, je ne sais pas comment dire, quand tu vois quelqu'un qui souffre toi-même tu souffres dans ton âme. Ça fait que souvent nous-même comme ça là, ce que nous consommons à la maison on enlève même donner. Pour dire à quel point la situation est difficilement gérable.» (ONG-3 Kaya).

[I can say that often even we, what we eat, our own food even there, because you know, when you are in this, in these kinds of associations there or in this environment,

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you become, I don't I don't know how to say it, when you see someone suffering, you suffer in your soul. This means that we often take away what we consume at home and even give it away. That is to say how difficult the situation is to manage] (NGO-3 Kaya).

Food scarcity is also caused by crop burning, land occupation, land mines covering agricultural soil which has either slowed down or stopped food production altogether. Food is consequently prioritised over health needs. A lack of job opportunities also creates food scarcity.

« ... se nourrir car on ne cultive plus, on élève [élevage] plus et il y a les maladies. En tant que chef de famille même quand je suis malade je force pour que tous gardent le courage » (PDI YR du Soum).

[... feed ourselves, because we no longer cultivate, we no longer breed and there are diseases. As the head of the family, even when I am ill, I force myself so that everyone maintains the courage] (IDP YR du Soum).

« Cash...c'est la pauvreté seulement, la pauvreté nous fatigue. Si tu es assis et que tu as à ta charge des femmes et des enfants, c'est dur. Les femmes voudront du savon et tout... Le manque d'argent nous fatigue. Mais tout doit être acheter maintenant, que ça soit le gombo, le sel, les feuilles, tout. Si tu n'achètes pas tu ne pourras pas cuisiner. Mais si on donne l'argent. Tu peux décider aujourd'hui je veux du riz, et tu pars acheter et tu viens cuisiner et manger. Si demain tu veux du to, tu paies du maïs, et les condiments tu paies pour ta cuisine. Mais si on te donne du riz, du haricot et du maïs, tu es assis ; c'est difficile de varier. vous savez le riz, tu en manges beaucoup, ça donne des maladies si on ne combine pas avec beaucoup de légumes. Ce n'est pas ça qu'on dit que ça amène le bérubéri » (PDI BD de Sanmatenga)

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[Cash...it's only poverty, poverty tires us. If you're sitting and you have women and children to take care of, it's hard. Women will want soap and everything.... Lack of money tires us. but everything must be bought now, whether it's the okra, the salt, the leaves, everything. If you don't buy it, you won't be able to cook. But if only we could give the money. You can decide today I want rice, and you go and buy and you come to cook and eat. If tomorrow you want to, you pay for corn, and the condiments you pay for your cooking. But if you are given rice, beans and corn, you are seated; it's difficult to vary. you know rice, you eat a lot of it, it causes illness if you don't combine it with a lot of vegetables. That's not what they say, it causes beriberi] (IDP BD de Sanmatenga).

Children and youth lack access to education. Parents and the IDP community are worried particularly about the youth as they are at a vulnerable age where they need more parenting and community safeguarding to prevent criminal exploitation of young people.

« Nous les conseillons, qu'ils s'écartent des faux travaux, si quelqu'un à un travail qu'ils peuvent faire et avoir un peu d'argent, qu'ils le fassent. Qu'ils restent honnêtes et intègrent 'halal'. Pour ça que nous asseyons la journée ou la nuit nous leur disons ça » (PDI GL de Namentenga).

[... we advise them to stay away from false work, if someone has a job they can do and have a little money, they should do it. Let them remain honest and integrate halal. That's why we sit down during the day or at night we tell them that] (IDP GL de Namentenga).

Interviews helped identify four main challenges for the IDPs, their SATs and ZADs, and consequently for social workers who support them. The first challenge is access to training and

opportunities for income generating activities for trades such as hairdressing, mechanics, baking, beadwork, and tailoring. IDPs described their difficulties finding jobs. If employed, they are frequently underpaid due to job scarcity. However, regardless of their age, all IDPs would like to be independent, rather than dependent on donations and government support.

«...nous qui avions la force, souvent on avait des petits boulots journaliers mais tout ça ne fonctionne plus bien. Quand on arrive, ils disent que ce sont des déplacés, donc peu importe le prix qu'ils vont dire, vous êtes obligé de travailler» (PDI BD de Sanmatenga).

[We who had the strength often had small daily jobs but all that no longer works well. When we arrive, they say they are displaced people, so no matter what price they say, you are forced to work] (IDPs BD de Sanmatenga).

«...nous n'avons rien à faire, si nous sortons à la recherche de travail, nous ne gagnons pas... Ils disent que tu es vieille. On ne nous donne pas, et nous revenons bredouille pourtant les enfants doivent aller à l'école, nous même nous voulons manger » (PDI EG de Sanmatenga).

[we have nothing to do, if we go out looking for work, we don't earn... They say you are old. We are not given anything, and we come back empty-handed, yet the children have to go to school, we ourselves want to eat] (IDP EG de Sanmatenga).

A second reported challenge is the inability of urban areas to accommodate IDPs agricultural skills. Both IDP's and host family members reported being worried to see their family members being constrained to the urban life that many IDP's find difficult. That explains the reason why one host family member reported using his trade capital to buy agricultural land to relo-

cate his IDPs family members as a temporary solution:

« Les gens veulent repartir car ils n'aiment pas la vie à Ouaga ils sont oisifs et se sentent mal et par moment les regarder au quotidien me peine, la vie ici leur est difficile ... la terre cultivable et le forage sont des dépenses sans compter les imprévus ... je n'arrive plus à voyager pour mes affaires commerciales car j'ai utilisé mon capital » (HFC5 Ouaga11).

[People want to leave because they don't like life in Ouaga, they are idle and feel bad and at times watching them on a daily basis pain me, life here is difficult for them...the cultivable land and drilling are uncountable expenses. unforeseen events... I can no longer travel for my business affairs, because I have used up my capital] (Host Family Member Ouaga11).

A third shared challenge is the insecurity that continues to prevail across the territory, preventing IDPs return to their home villages.

« ... l'apprentissage de métier et tout c'est bien mais aidez-nous à retourner chez nous ... si nous arrivons à partir ça sera bien.... la nourriture même vient avant mais nous voulons rentrer chez nous » (PDI BD de Sanmatenga).

[... learning a trade and everything is good but help us to return home ... if we manage to leave it will be good.... even food comes first but we want to go home] (IDP BD de Sanmatenga).

The fourth challenge are the assessment criteria used to prioritise support due to high demand. All stakeholders – government representatives, social workers, development workers, and IDP's – reported that these criteria represent a barrier for timely support, and job satisfaction for the workers.

«L'aide Eeh, on nous aide un peu un peu. Ils viennent mais ils font un tirage, s'ils choisissent que tu es dedans, mais ils peuvent choisir et tu n'es pas dedans» (PDI EG de Sanmatenga).

[Help Eeh, they help us a little bit. They come but they draw, if they choose you are in, but they can choose and you are not in] (IDP EG de Sanmatenga).

«Si chaque fois on se retrouve avec ce qu'on a, ça n'arrive pas à toujours couvrir les besoins c'est toujours des sélections, des sélections et des sélections et qui parle de sélections, il peut y avoir inclusion ou exclusion» (ONG-2 Kaya).

[If each time we end up with what we have, it does not always manage to cover the needs; it is always selections, selections and selections and who is talking about selections, there can be inclusion or exclusion] (NGO-2 Kaya).

Conclusion

These initial results from the study demonstrate the pervasive impact of terrorism on the overall security and stability, for the host communities, IDPs, and social workers alike. Permanency of this humanitarian crisis is causing distress for all of them. This shapes the expansive role of social workers and their capacity to deliver relevant support in a sustained and sustainable way.

Furthermore, there is a need to contextualise and develop social work in Burkina Faso without colonial legacies. This goes hand in hand with establishing of funding for their work which is not driven by donors imperatives, but the needs of the IDPs and social workers. Finally, I bring this citation from Thomas Sankara (1985) as it aligns with the overall philosophy

of this research which is opening voice to those who do not have and encourage the oppressed to dare to invent the future:

“You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness. In this case, it comes from nonconformity, the courage to turn your back on the old formulas, the courage to invent the future. It took the mad men of yesterday for us to be able to act with extreme clarity today. I want to be one of those mad men... we must dare to invent the future.”

May our African Ancestors continue centering us to do worthy works.

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