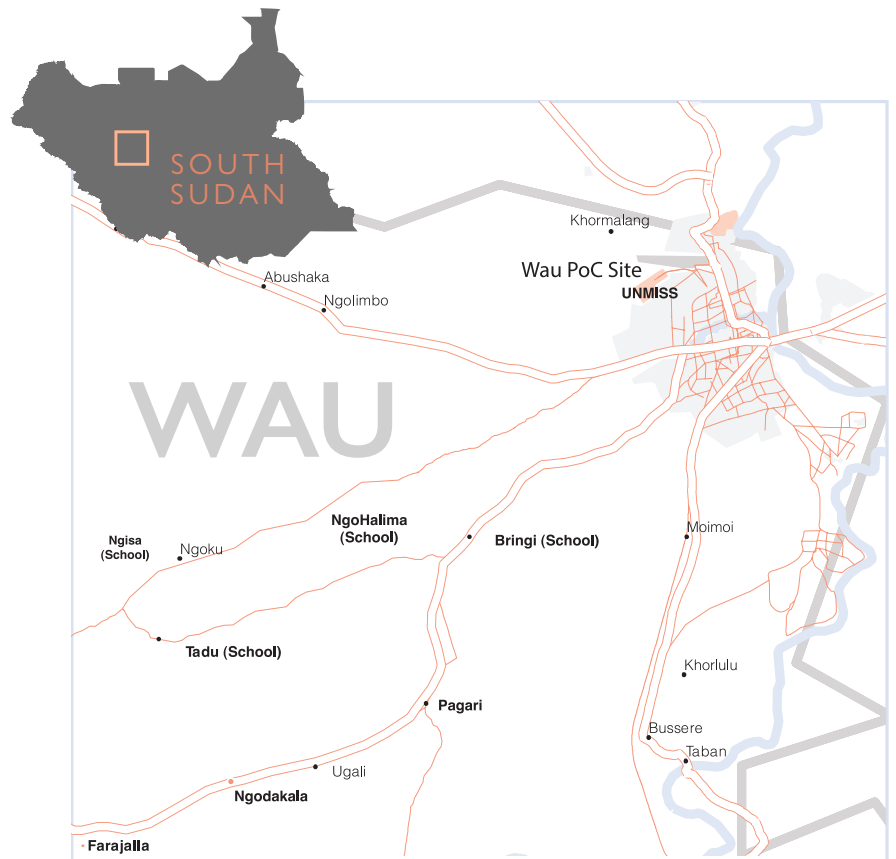


BACKGROUND

Wau Town has been steadily recovering from the shocks of series of significant incidents/clashes that occurred between June 2016 to May 2018. During that period, the Wau Protection of Civilian Adjacent Area (Wau PoC AA) site was created. There are 35,496 people biometrically registered in the site, though headcounts suggest that the number of those residing there is only 15,272, as of December 2018.

In December 2018, following the signing of the revitalized peace agreement, the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) team conducted an intention-perception survey to better understand the intention of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) within this new context. The survey aimed to establish how many intend to leave the Wau PoC AA site, the tentative time frame of return and return destinations.



METHODOLOGY

Findings for this report rely on 645 household interviews (23% men and 77% women respondents) conducted in Wau PoC AA between 18 and 24 December 2018. Surveys were collected using random sampling, whereby survey teams followed a computer-generated list which allocated specific shelters for household interviews in Zones A, B and C. Distribution across the three zones took into account the different population sizes of each sector, based on IOM DTM Headcount information from November 2018. The margin of sampling error is +/- 5% with a 99% level of confidence. Enumerator teams were composed of 36 per cent women and 64 per cent men enumerators. Respondents included 36 per cent individuals aged 15-25, 29 per cent of individuals aged 26-35, 30 per cent of individuals aged 36-59, and 6 per cent aged 60 or above. In addition, 14 focus group discussions (FGDs) were held, two per each of six origin locations prioritized (one with only women and another with only men respondents), covering Wau North, Wau South, Bagari, Bazia, Mboro/Beselia and Raja/Deim Zubir, and two additional mixed FGDs with participants from Wau North and Wau South (to include participants from areas not represented in the earlier Wau South and Wau North FGDs).

KEY FINDINGS

40% of households intend to leave the PoC site half of them within the next three months

Main destinations:

- Wau North (51%)
- Bagari (7.7%)
- Wau South (25.4%)
- Besselia (6.5%)

Among those intending to return, **40%** report that a family member has returned to their intended location of return in the past year, and another third know of a community member or friend who has returned

Potential for new arrivals
Among those with family living outside,

43% report some family members plan to come join them in the PoC site.

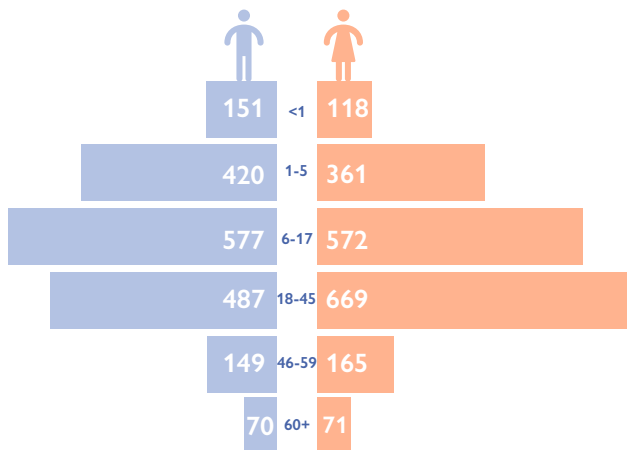
IN DEPTH

Demographics and household information

Respondents indicated that 71 per cent of households in the Wau PoC AA are female-headed. Over a quarter of the population (28 - 15% male and 13% female) is 5 years or younger, whilst another 30 per cent are children under the age of 18. Adults make up 42 per cent of the population, among whom four per cent are people aged 60 or above.

POPULATION PYRAMID

of interviewed households and their members living in WauAA PoC site



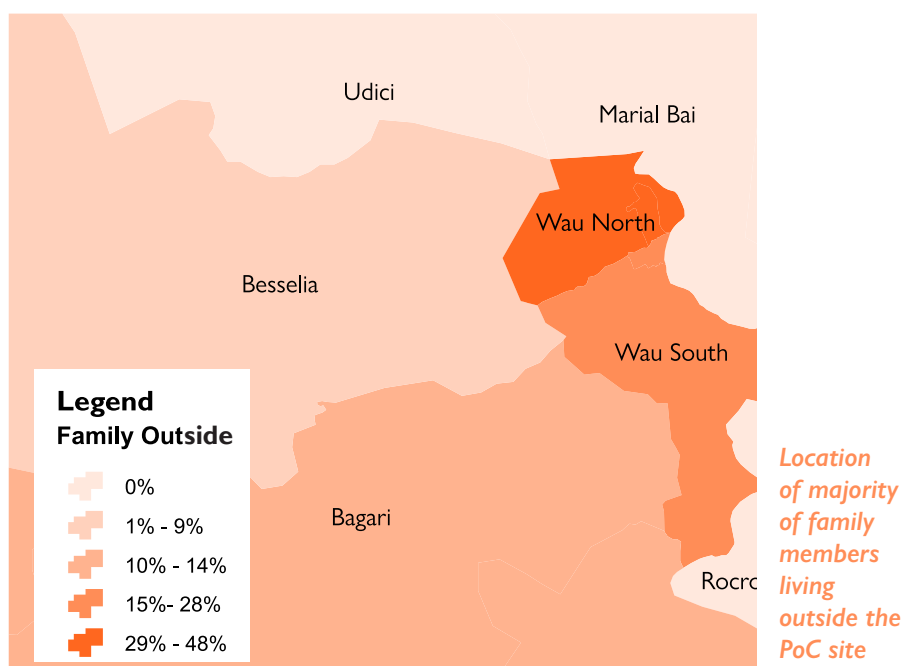
Among the female population aged 6 – 45, 25 per cent are lactating or pregnant. Six per cent of the population are reported to have long-term medical conditions. Six per cent are persons having trouble with vision, hearing, walking, remembering or concentrating, caring for themselves (washing/dressing), or being understood while communicating. Findings suggest that 10 per cent of Wau PoC AA residents are currently not biometrically registered. Whilst 92 per cent indicate receiving food services inside the PoC site, one per cent receive food outside and seven per cent indicate not receiving any food assistance. Among those receiving food assistance inside the PoC site, three per cent are not registered.

Half of the interviewed households report having nuclear family members living outside, totalling 1,370 individuals. By far the most common factor mentioned as reasons the family is not living together is schooling (112) followed by employment (88). Being separated when fleeing and some family left behind to guard property rank third (38), followed by short-term separation to visit friends/family, attend events or the like (36), and the location not being safe to live (31). Other factors mentioned included lack of means to pay for the transport, physical immobility of some family members, the road not being

safe to travel and medical treatment. The vast majority report that most of their family members living outside are located in Western Bahr El Ghazal (92%), with Wau county alone accounting for 88 per cent. Only five per cent reporting that the majority live abroad – mainly in Sudan, followed by Uganda and Ethiopia. Within Wau, the most prominent areas are Wau North (48%), Wau South (28%), followed by Bagari (14%) and Beselia (9%). Other Wau county locations account for the remaining per cent. Forty-three per cent of households report that some family members plan to come join them in the PoC site.

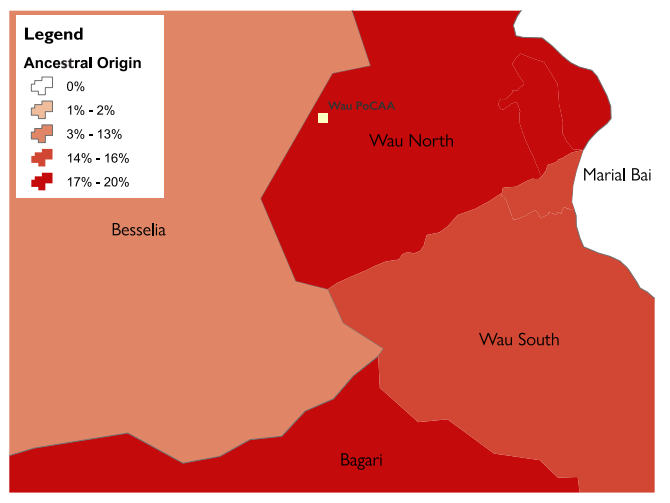
74% of respondents, who own a house or land report that their property has been destroyed

Nearly two-thirds (63%) report owning their own house or land. However, three quarters (74%) of those with a house or land ownership report that their house/land was destroyed, whilst 12 per cent indicate it is used by their family, six per cent indicate that other people are occupying their house, three per cent report renting it to someone, three per cent don't know the status of their land/house and two per cent report it is deserted or abandoned. Among those who do not own a house, the percentage of respondents saying they do not have an intention to return or they are undecided is 65 per cent, compared to 56 per cent among those who do own a house. When also taking into account housing status, those who report their house is destroyed indicate not having any intention to return or being undecided in 58 per cent of cases.

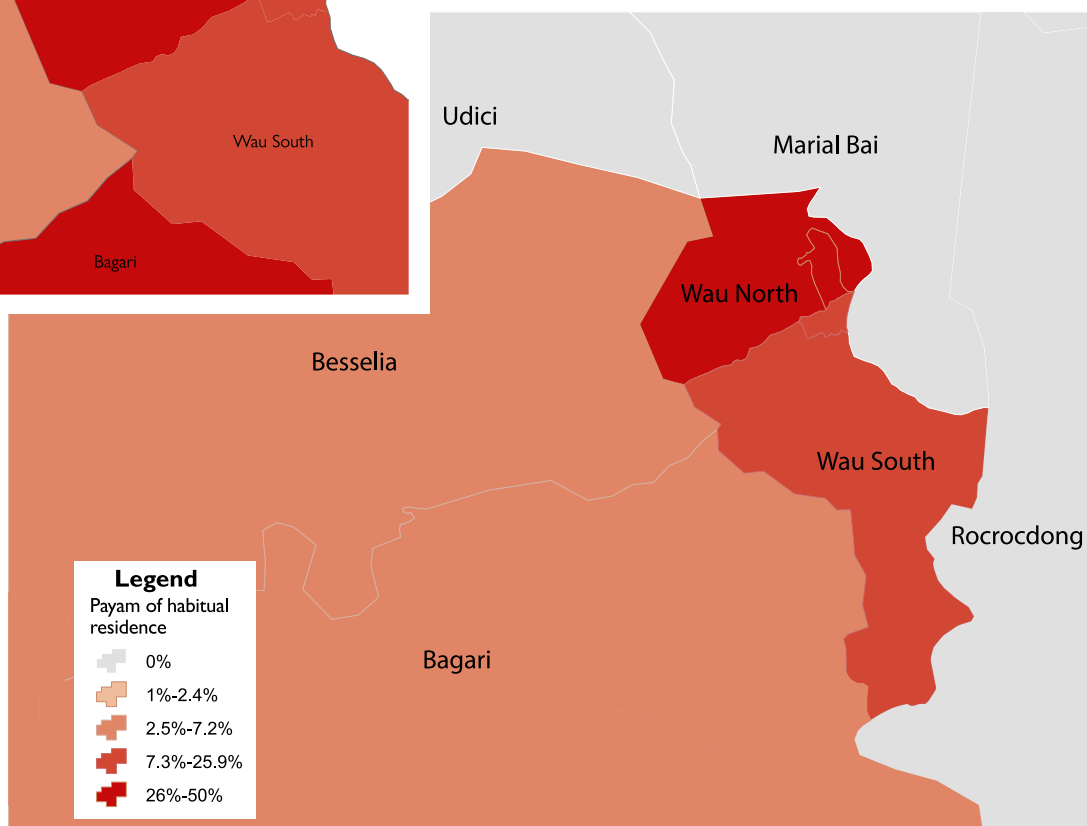


Displacement History

The vast majority (92%) of those surveyed indicate that their former habitual residence prior to displacement was located in Wau County. More than two-thirds (69%) lived there for more than three years prior to being displaced, whilst another 23 per cent considered a location in Wau County their habitual residence but had lived there for less than two years at time of displacement. The main year of displacement was 2016, when 81 per cent arrived to PoCAA, displaced primarily by the conflict.



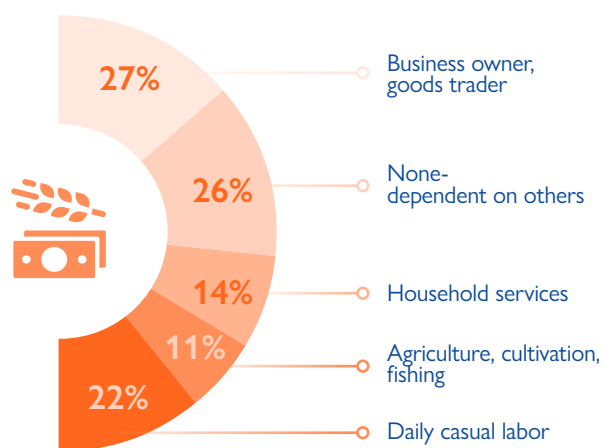
Below: Payams of habitual residence prior to displacement. Inset: Payams of ancestral origin of displaced populations living in Wau PoCAA site



Means of livelihood

Whereas, agriculture and fishing were the most prominent means of livelihood before displacement, followed closely by business, goods trading and shop keeping, with daily/casual labour ranking third, households now more frequently report having either no livelihood and depending on others, or pursuing daily/casual labour. Business, goods trading and shop keeping as means of livelihoods remains similar to pre-displacement levels, with a slight decrease (155 households post-displacement compared to 170 households prior to displacement). Other means of livelihood, which have seen less fluctuation in importance when comparing pre- and post-displacement, include household services, building trade, skilled professionals, restaurant/food services, keeping livestock and work with NGOs and UN organizations. Among those who report having no means of livelihood currently, the percentage of those who do not intend to return or do not know is above the general rate, at 69 per cent. Skilled professionals (both former and current means of livelihood) have a higher percentage of respondents saying they intend to leave, at 58 per cent and 56 per cent respectively.

CURRENT LIVELIHOODS



69% of individuals with no means of livelihood do not intend to return or do not know if they will return

Intentions

All respondents, independent of whether they currently have an intention to return or not, were asked where would be their preferred area of return. The majority (97%) have a preferred area of return in South Sudan, including Wau North (51%), Wau South (25%), Bagari (8%) and Besselia (7%). If looking at only those with a current intention to leave, the distribution of preferred areas of return is very similar: Wau North (49%), Wau South (25%), Bagari (8%) and Beselia (7%). Within Wau North, the most prominent neighbourhoods are, in order of importance, Hai Lokoloko, Aweil Jedid and Hai Bafra. In Wau South, the most important intended neighbourhoods of return include Hai Ingaz, Hai Kosti, Hai Jebel Kheir and Hai Bagari Jedid.

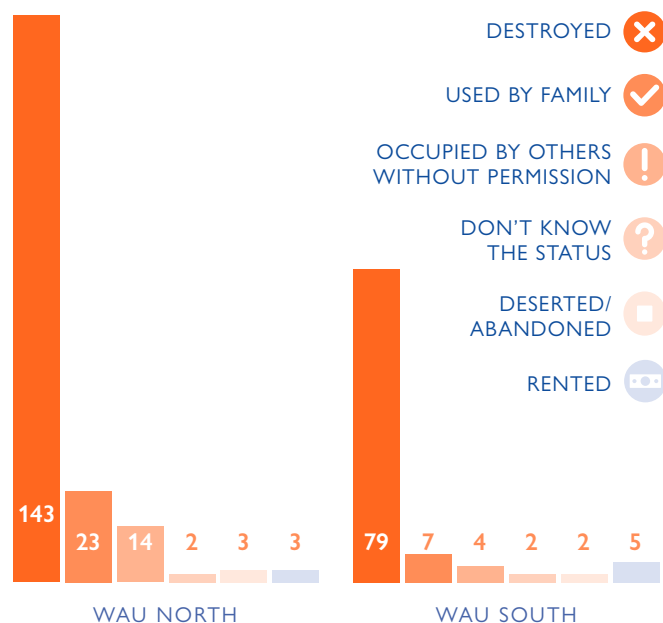
40% of households intend to leave, half of them within the next three months

The survey found that overall 40 per cent of households intend to leave, half of them within the next three months. A third (33%) are uncertain about the timing of their planned departure. There was no major difference in intention based on the gender of respondent – 44 per cent of men and 39 per cent of women indicated that they intend to return, with slightly more women saying they were unsure or did not intend to return. Women respondents were slightly more prone to indicate an intention to leave in the next three months or to say they are unsure, with men citing an intention to leave in four to six months more often (17% for male respondents compared to 9% for female respondents, n=29).

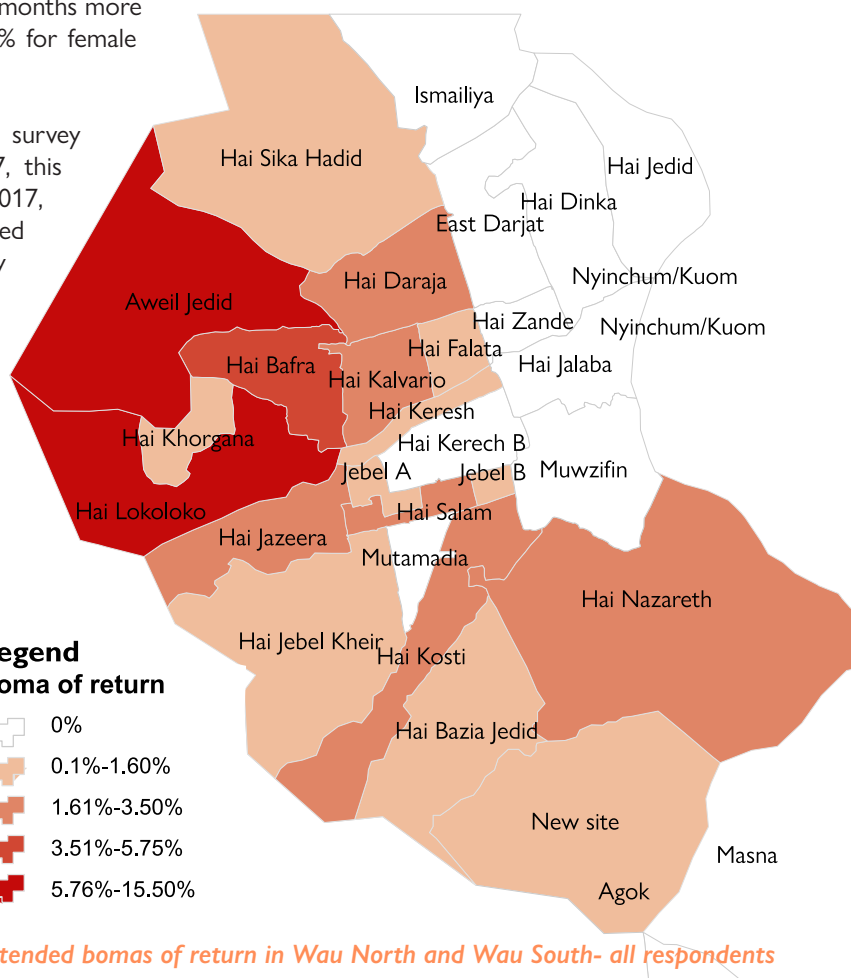
When comparing these findings to an intention survey conducted in Wau PoC AA in December 2017, this constitutes a significant increase. In December 2017, only 16 per cent of Wau PoC AA residents indicated intending to leave the PoC and among them, only 29% in the three months following the survey. As such, there are now more people intending to leave and more people intending to do so within a foreseeable time.

The majority (97%) of individuals surveyed have a preferred area of return in South Sudan

STATUS OF HOUSING IN TWO MAIN AREAS OF RETURN



*Bagari, Besselia and Raja feature similar percentages of housing destruction as Wau North, with slightly higher percentage of housing use by family (17% each). Six per cent of respondents from Beselia indicated that their property was occupied without permission.



THOSE WHO INTEND TO LEAVE

Of those intending to leave, half (51%) indicate intending to move to their own land/house where they will seek shelter, whilst a fifth (21%) intend to stay with friends or family and 16 per cent intend to rent. Others indicate relying on humanitarian support, the host community or refused to respond.

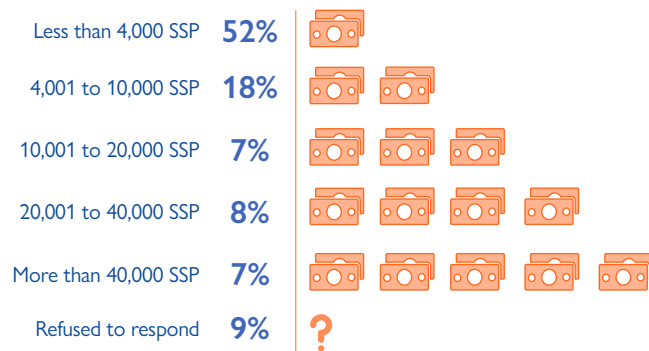
Main reasons for choosing their specific place of return were:



Other factors influencing decisions on where to return (besides having lived in that place previously) included, in order of importance, better economic and livelihood opportunities, cultural ties, access to humanitarian services (mentioned more frequently by men respondents (12%) than women respondents (6%), n=32) and access to housing. Over two-third (68%) indicated that they communicate with someone in that location, the majority either weekly or at least monthly. Forty per cent report that a family member has returned to that location in the past year, and another third (34%) know of someone from their community or a friend who has returned. A quarter have either only heard of people returning, whom they do not know personally, or do not know anyone who has returned.

To reach their intended destination, half (51%) intend to go there on foot, followed by donkey cart (17%), bus or car (16%) and other means including airplane, bodaboda or boat (16%). The option to go on foot is particularly popular among those intending to go to Wau North and Wau South. In terms of costs, half (52%) estimate the cost to be less than 4,000 SSP (approx. 17 USD), see graph. Most intend to finance the journey through their own means, either with money they already have (57%), or by selling household items (12%). Some intend to depend on humanitarian support (15%) or to borrow

ESTIMATED COST OF RETURN



from friends/family (7%), with remaining respondents refusing to respond or citing that they would not require resources given they will travel on foot. In FGDs, 'lack of resources to return' was repeatedly mentioned by those IDPs from areas outside of Wau Town, with participants requesting humanitarian support to return on trucks or busses as well support to restart their lives and provide essential services, such as water, medication and education in areas of return.

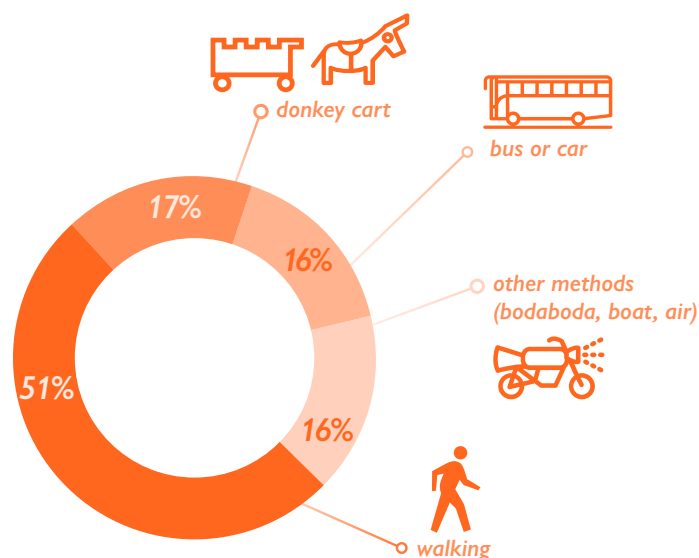
Eighty per cent intend to leave with their whole family

Eighty per cent intend to leave with their whole family. For the other 20 per cent, reasons for not planning to leave with the whole family include, in order of importance, first wanting to see if conditions in the intended destination are adequate, not having enough money for the transport, considering that conditions are not suitable in the intended destination for some family members and having family members who want to remain in Wau. In FGDs, some participants suggested that first a smaller group will go to scout the area and clean the compounds, then others will come, with the chief confirming if it is okay to proceed. Families will usually move together.

For those who want to leave with the whole family, two third (66%) intend to leave all at the same time, whilst 30 per cent want to first send some members to go ahead and report on conditions. Some are undecided or plan to send men and women separately.

FGDs highlighted discomfort with the congested communal living space as a potential push factor influencing people's decision to return. People also noted criminality as a concern and one of the factors making them feel pressured to leave the PoC, as reflected in the quantitative survey. Furthermore, some people prefer to live in town (provided they can afford it) to be closer to the schools their children attend.

METHODS OF RETURN



When asked which improvements in the preferred area of return would influence their decision, participants mentioned general improvement in the security situation most frequently, followed by assurances from the Government on safety

THOSE INTENDING TO STAY OR UNDECIDED

Among the 60 per cent of households who did not confirm an intention to return, 15 per cent say they are undecided and 44 per cent do not currently have an intention to leave. Those who do not know primarily cite dependency on political developments and whether the peace holds as factors that lead them to feel uncertain about whether they will return or not. Men respondents cited the political process more often than women respondents (38% compared to 27%). Only minor variations were observed for other variables, which include

Men respondents cited the political process more often than women respondents (38% vs 27%) and security repeatedly featured in FGDs

infrastructure and basic services in the preferred destination, as well as whether transport assistance and return package are provided. In FGDs, participants observed that those who are leaving often own shelters or plots, whilst those staying behind are the ones with least resources and little alternatives to meet their basic needs and re-establish livelihoods in the absence of humanitarian support. People repeatedly mentioned that their shelters and houses had been looted and destroyed, and all that remained was their empty plot. For those who were living in rental properties prior to displacement, lack of resources to pay rental costs is a significant hindrance to return. Furthermore, people are leaving knowing they will still be able to access food through their ration card in the PoC site, making it easier for them to restart their lives.

Those who do not know whether to return, and those with an intention to stay cite good conditions and services in the PoC site most frequently among the main reasons, followed by insecurity in the area of return and access to specific health/disability services in the PoC site. Security featured repeatedly in FGDs, with some participants citing lack of confidence that this peace was genuine and would indeed hold, despite positive indications acknowledged, such as government and opposition soldiers being able to move freely in Wau town and public events and celebrations sending a message of positive change. There remain reports about violence and lack of rule of law including in Wau North and Wau South as was emphasized by FGD participants. Concerns also remain about cattle keepers triggering communal clashes, soldiers maintaining their defensive positions and occupying

civilian areas and insecure roads connecting Wau town to areas of return. Lack of services in the area of return was also cited frequently, with adequate shelter and access to health services, employment and livelihood opportunities the greatest concerns. No significant difference in responses are observed based on the gender of respondent. FGDs reflected widespread concerns about access to basic services with respondents considering it key for humanitarian assistance and protection to be provided in intended areas of return. Respondents from Wau North and Wau South emphasized concerns with criminal gangs, presence of military on the streets intimidating civilians and daily reports of gunfire especially in abandoned or only partially populated neighbourhoods.

When asked which improvements in the preferred area of return would influence their decision, participants mentioned general improvement in the security situation most frequently, followed by assurances from Government on safety. Other important factors include humanitarian support, access to shelter and support in shelter repair. Access to land and resolution of communal clashes were also mentioned alongside resolution of housing, land and property issues. No significant difference in responses were observed based on the gender of respondent. In FGDs, most participants asserted that land titles were clearly understood



by those originating from their former habitual residence, but voiced concerns about potential occupation of land by soldiers or people not formerly resident in the area. Many reported loss of official documents during displacement.

“People may decide to go [to their former residence] if they see the peace is going well outside.”

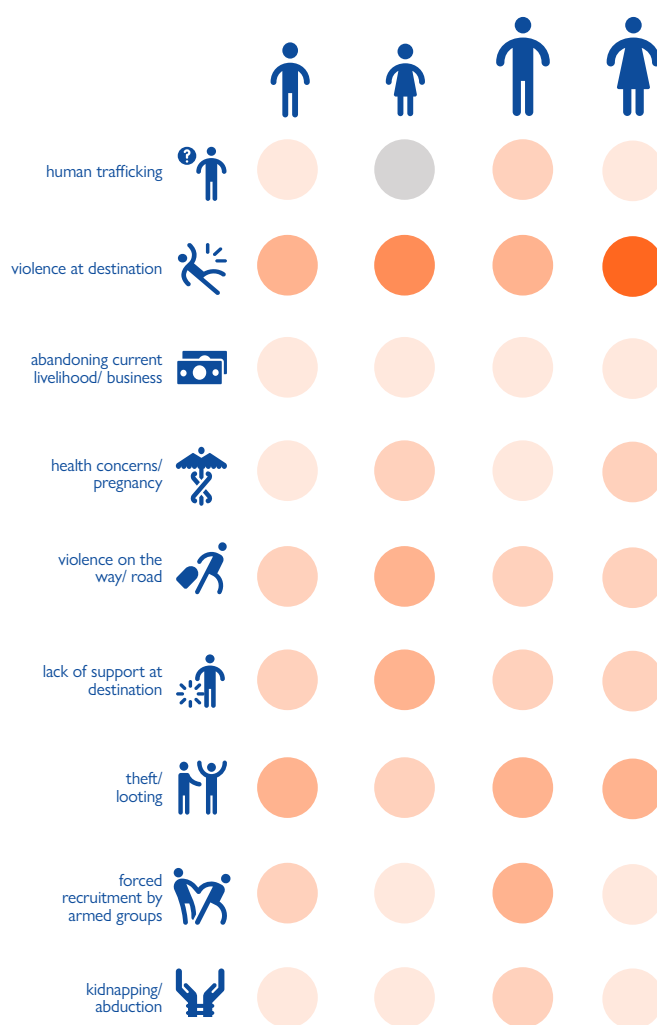
—FGD participant from Raja/ Deim Zubir

Participants from Wau South and Wau North voiced some concern about the existence of forged and backdated title deeds. Cultivation tools and seeds were requested by FGD participants from Mboro. The poor conditions in Deim Zubir were mentioned including lack of water, education and medication, making it difficult for people to return without humanitarian support. Those coming from Mboro and Beselia referred to the presence of soldiers affecting both those who fled to the PoC site and others who fled to the bush and do not feel safe to return. For FGD participants from Baggari, persisting insecurity and insufficient access to clean water were cited. Another common concern relates to remnants of war including mines and unexploded ordnance. Lack of clean water was also considered a problem for participants from Bazia, who indicate that infrastructure has suffered and boreholes and clinics need repairs and medicines, whilst education facilities need to be reopened and non-food items as well as tools and seeds are needed to restart their lives in this location.

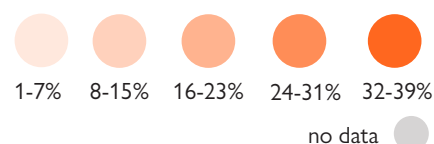
Independent of whether the household intends to return or not, all respondents were asked which risks they consider prevent women, men, girls and boys from returning. No significant differences were observed based on gender of respondent. A third (35%) consider there to be risks for women, most importantly violence at the destination, theft/looting, violence on the way to the destination and lack of support for women at the destination. Similar findings apply for girls, with 33 per cent considering that among the risks which prevent them from returning are, in order of importance, violence at destination, lack of support at destination and violence on the road. Slightly fewer (29%) consider there to be risks which prevent men from returning, primarily violence at destination, theft/looting and forced recruitment by armed groups. Twenty-three per cent of respondents considered there to be risks preventing boys from returning, primarily theft/looting, followed by violence at destination, forced recruitment, lack of specific support for boys at the destination, and violence on the road.

All households were also asked if they feel pressured to return, which 15 per cent affirmed (20% for male respondents). Among them, 71 per cent indicated they do intend to return – this was slightly higher for female respondents (73%) than male respondents (66%). Pressure was reported to come from humanitarian workers (especially among male respondents), followed by elders/community members and because they believe the assistance will stop and/or the site will be closed soon. These findings, however, could not be corroborated in FGDs, despite specific follow up on the issue. None of the participants indicated that they perceived any pressure from humanitarians to leave, though some mentioned pressure exerted by the Government– for example through interference

PERCEPTION OF RISKS



Risks preventing men, women, boys and girls from return, as reported by interview respondent's perceptions



with the market located outside the PoC, relocation of the bus stop, messages from local authorities that they should return to their homes, or for those who are working with the government that they are expected to return to Wau Town. Whilst findings on this issue remain inconclusive, it is recommended for humanitarians to exert caution when communicating about return options and to be fully transparent that any return decisions are to be taken solely by the affected population and not by any other party.

it is recommended for humanitarians clearly communicate available return support options and to be fully transparent that any decisions are voluntary and to be taken solely by the affected population and not by any other party

Sources of information and information needs

When asked about their main sources of information about preferred locations of return (again independent of whether the household currently has an intention to return or not), the radio emerged as the top source, followed by relatives or friends in that location, word of mouth, public announcements and community members in that location. Those living nearby their former residences or areas of intended return also visit the locations to see conditions, as became apparent in FGDs. Local authorities, church authorities, community leaders, NGO/ UN information and internet sources are all cited with much less frequency. In FGDs, participants elaborated that to some areas they maintain connection via phone calls, whilst other means of communication include sending letters with people who are travelling to and from the concerned areas or meeting with the same people to find out the latest developments. It was noticeable that there was less up-to-date information regarding those areas that were less accessible due to insecurity along the route, as fewer people were travelling to Wau town. Frequently, participants cited waiting for a signal from humanitarians to confirm whether the areas are safe.

Respondents named the radio as the top source for news and information



The type of information considered as important from these sources are, ranked by frequency, information about the security and safety situation in the preferred location of return (mentioned by more than half of households), followed by information about infrastructure, health facilities/services and education facilities/services all mentioned by about a quarter of households. Also mentioned were information about livelihood activities and agricultural facilities, and information about market facilities/services and family members/friends. More than half (58%) of households last received information about their preferred location of return in the past week. Another 19 per cent had word within the last month. Only seven per cent report not having heard about the situation in their preferred return location for more than six months.

70 per cent indicate that they need more information about their preferred destination. Again, information about the security and safety situation ranks highest, followed by information about education facilities/services, infrastructure, health services/facilities and livelihood opportunities. Fewer respondents also mentioned seeking information about agricultural facilities, markets, government support and contamination with land mines.

Shelter Dynamics

To better understand shelter dynamics, all households were also asked if they ever asked someone to guard their shelter in the PoC site while residents are away for some time, which just over a third (35%) affirmed. Among those, they reported most commonly asking neighbour or relative to guard their shelter on their behalf. Only 11% indicated that they paid the individuals who were guarding their shelter. In FGDs, some respondents mentioned that “people are leaving the PoC looking for a change of environment, but keeping property and shelters inside the PoC site because war could come back at any time.”

70 per cent indicate that they need more information about their preferred destination

Conclusions

More residents of Wau PoCAA show an intention to return currently as compared to a year ago. Some now see opportunities to re-establish their lives in their former habitual residences or a new area of their choice, with factors such as access to education and key services influencing decisions on where and when to move.

Nevertheless, many PoC site residents remain concerned with the durability of the peace, the conditions in their desired areas of return and the risks potentially posed to women, men, girls and boys en route as well as at their destinations. Findings of this survey and complementary focus group discussions also highlight the importance of clear messaging, ensuring that beneficiaries are provided with information about the situation in their intended areas of return to make informed decisions. This can be supported both by encouraging and enabling exchanges with those who have already returned or reside in these areas, as well as by sharing information through accessible communication channels such as the radio, information boards, communication centres, camp management structures, religious leaders, protection desks, and similar structures.

Information should be shared on the kind of options that are available to support beneficiaries moving outside the PoC site, along with eligibility criteria. Continuing to stress the voluntary nature of returns is also a key responsibility for humanitarian partners, especially in a context where some beneficiaries may perceive pressure from different entities to leave the site or fear that service provision will suddenly stop.

The provision of services in areas of intended destination forms a key element alongside improvements in safety and security, hence partners are encouraged to explore how their programming can be targeted to the needs of those who seek to re-establish their lives outside the POC site.



For further information, contact DTM South Sudan at southsudandtm@iom.int

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