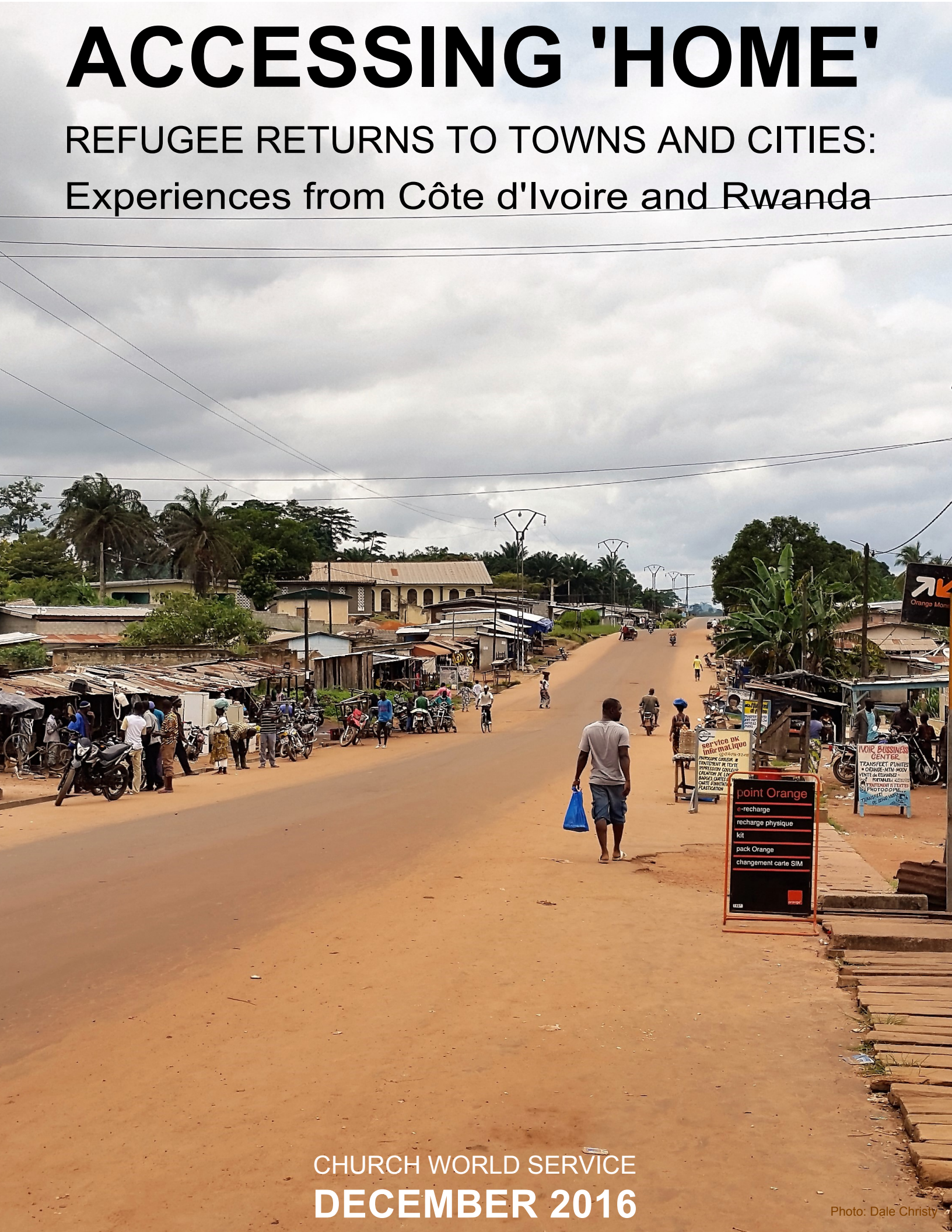
ACCESSING 'HOME'

REFUGEE RETURNS TO TOWNS AND CITIES:

Experiences from Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda



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Executive Summary

More than 60 percent of refugees worldwide are now estimated to live in urban areas, and increasingly humanitarian agencies are expanding their focus to become engaged with refugees and displaced persons living in cities and towns. Policy and operational shifts are underway, with emphasis on expanding access to protection, self-reliance and essential services among refugees who live in urban and non-camp locations.

Increased urbanization of forced displacement raises new opportunities and challenges in facilitating access to durable solutions, including the capacity and willingness of refugees to return to their countries of origin, and the prospect of increased returns to towns and cities rather than rural locations. With support from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), CWS undertook this research project with the goal of identifying factors that are related with relative success of refugee return to urban areas. Specifically, CWS sought to explore relationships between two variables – (a) place of origin in home countries and (b) place of settlement in countries of asylum – with refugees' capacity for successful return and reintegration into urban areas.

The project drew on both a review of relevant policy regarding voluntary repatriation and urban and non-camp refugees, and field research conducted in Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda. Data collection was focused in Gisenyi, Rwanda, a regional city of 106,000 inhabitants, and Bloléquin, Côte d'Ivoire, a town that is home to just over 30,000 persons. This served as an opportunity to examine return dynamics and urbanization in town and small city contexts, which may not receive the same attention from researchers nor humanitarian agencies as do large urban areas.

Policy Context for Urban Returns

UNHCR's Urban Policy (2009) and Alternative to Camps policy (2014) marked important advances for not only the legitimacy of refugee presence in urban and non-camp locations, but also in recognizing that forcibly displaced persons have agency and make rational decisions in an effort to live in as much safety and with as much dignity as possible. These two policy documents intend to inform the pursuit of durable solutions, though they tend to focus on broad principles rather than specific examples of how urbanization might be factored into planning and implementation of voluntary repatriation or other durable solutions. Two such principles set forth are self-reliance as a means of protection, and that development processes can and should be engaged when responding to displaced persons in urban or non-camp locations.

Review of UNHCR policy regarding voluntary repatriation finds that the most recent guidance, issued in 2008, reflected increasing awareness of the significance of return and reintegration to urban areas, and the broader implications of the urbanization of forced displacement on refugee return and reintegration. This marked an evolution from previous guidance issued in 1996 and 2004, which either did not mention specific challenges of return to urban areas, or only noted the risks of returns to cities rather than (presumed rural) areas of origin.

Meanwhile, a UNHCR desk review of projects conducted in 2009 noted that urban reintegration was becoming an accepted theme, but that shifts in program design and implementation had not yet taken root. Registration processes remained based largely on the assumption that intent to return equates with intent to return to place of origin, regardless of whether that is a refugee's actual intent. Anticipation of spontaneous returns were absent from reintegration planning, and

monitoring tended to be based on district or province but not allow for disaggregation of information by municipality or neighborhood. These observations were echoed in a World Bank desk review conducted in 2015, which observed that urbanization within forced displacement is becoming a permanent, not temporary, phenomenon and that facilitated returns only make up a portion of refugee returns to countries of origin.

With this policy context in mind, urbanized refugee settlement in countries of asylum and returns to urban or other non-camp locations may present several opportunities and challenges, including: (a) ensuring strong and meaningful urban refugee participation in the planning and implementation of repatriation initiatives; (b) developing realistic and innovative incentives for well integrated urban refugees to return voluntarily to their country of origin; and (c) identifying additional migration mechanisms that might make urban returns more sustainable. Key findings and recommendations (in sections 6 and 7 of the report) seek to address these and other assumptions set forth in the relevant policy guidance.

Field Research

The project used a mixed methods approach to the collection of primary field data, incorporating both quantitative data collected through household surveys and qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews. The household survey collected data on socio-economic, demographic and personal subjective variables. This included information regarding experiences during flight and in exile, decision-making regarding repatriation, and both the return and reintegration processes. Interviews explored the nuances and social complexities of refugee return to urban areas and, like the household surveys, elicited responses related to flight, asylum experiences, returns decision-making, and reintegration process.

Field research took place in Bloléquin, Côte d'Ivoire in August and September 2015 and in Gisenyi, Rwanda in April 2016. CWS included 552 respondents in the Bloléquin household survey and 416 in the Gisenyi survey, as well as 20 interview participants in both locations. In comparing the two case studies, some contextual differences and variations in sample characteristics should be noted:

Côte d'Ivoire	**Rwanda**
Returns to town setting (local hub)	Returns to city (regional hub)
Modest majority camp-based returnees (62%)	Slight majority non-camp returnees (53%)
Urban asylum context negligible (6%)	Urban asylum context small but not negligible (~25%)
Household returns experiences relatively recent (3-4 years prior)	Household returns experiences relatively distant (~20 years prior)

Key Findings

The two case studies reinforced or expanded upon premises regarding urban displacement and repatriation that were identified in the policy overview section. Some findings suggest that certain assumptions within the policy and academic literature may need to be considered more closely, or may be reflected more in some returns contexts than others. Key findings include:

Finding One: Urbanization occurs at multiple stages throughout the forced displacement and returns processes. The study's findings suggest that not only is urbanization taking place, it is doing so across various stages of displacement and return: (a) forced displacement into

country of asylum; (b) re-displacement within country of asylum; (c) return to country of origin; and (d) post-return internal migration within country of origin. This finding validates policy approaches that assume displacement-related urbanization is not a temporary phenomenon, and that increased movement to non-camp locations in asylum and urban locations upon return should be anticipated and factored into planning processes.

Finding Two: Urban returnees who had lived in non-camp settings tended to be less reliant on external assistance, and to engage in a wider array of livelihoods activities while in exile, compared to camp-based returnees. Recent policy and academic literature has noted that urban, non-camp settings offer greater opportunities for refugees to engage in livelihoods activities than camp or remote rural settings. The household survey responses indicated that urban returnees from non-camp settings reported a broader mix of activities that supported them during their time in exile, including business, labor and trading. Camp-based urban returnees were much more likely to report external assistance as their main source of support. While this does not confirm asset building per se, it does suggest the non-camp environment may be more conducive to asset building than the camp environment.

Finding Three: Non-camp settings still allow for refugees to access essential services, but not at the same rates as in camp settings. UNHCR registration rates and regular access to assistance was close to universal in the Côte d'Ivoire case, and in both the Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire cases was reported to be much higher by camp-based returnees than by non-camp returnees. Similarly, camp subgroups reported greater access to health care and education than non-camp subgroups. The household survey did not ask respondents whether services were inaccessible, or simply not accessed, while in exile.

Finding Four: Non-camp refugees are more likely to repatriate sooner and return 'spontaneously' to urban locations than their camp-based counterparts. In both the Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda cases, non-camp returnees tended to indicate that they had returned earlier than camp-based returnees. In the case of Bloléquin, returns from non-camp locations began at least a year before UNHCR-assisted repatriation was formally initiated. This supports the premise set forth in recent policies that circumstances of return will be different for urban or non-camp returnees, who may be accustomed to greater freedom of movement, self-reliance and autonomy as compared to refugees living in camps.

Finding Five: Perceptions of conditions in countries of origin are a key factor in voluntary returns to urban locations, although "push" factors still play a role. The perception that conditions back home have improved was the main factor noted in the household survey responses. A minority of Ivoirian respondents, about 25% in the Bloléquin sample, indicates that deterioration of conditions while in asylum was the main factor, and a number of interview responses indicated that this was a factor that influenced their decision. While respondents generally indicated their decision to repatriate was voluntary, it is possible that options were becoming constrained as time in exile went on, particularly for camp-based refugees who were reliant on assistance provided.

Finding Six: Quality of housing may be a concern for urban returnees, even after permanent shelter is accessed. The study found that while a majority of urban returnees have been able to access permanent shelter, this does not mean that the quality of housing is adequate, particularly from returnees' subjective viewpoints. Over-crowding was noted by several interview respondents in Abidjan and Bloléquin, to the point where larger households reported splitting up in order for all family members to have a place to stay. Threats of eviction and poor quality housing were also noted by Ivoirian respondents. Meanwhile, one-quarter of

Gisenyi respondents did not indicate that they had found permanent shelter, and several interviews indicated dissatisfaction with high costs of housing or lack of home ownership. Objectively, these might not be considered indicators of inadequate access to shelter, but subjectively they may be a source of negative feelings about housing for at least some segment of urban returnees, even well into the reintegration process.

Finding Seven: Economic challenges may exist, even if employment rates are high, and may be greater for urban returnees who had fled from rural areas. One challenge noted in policy discussion is access to employment, particularly for persons who had fled rural areas who may lack skills relevant to urban job markets. In Côte d'Ivoire, the study did not find meaningful differences in employment rates between urban and rural origin subgroups. It did, however, find a sharp difference in perceived income trends between urban and rural origin returnees to the town, with rural origin returnees much more likely to indicate that income was worsening. This may indicate economic challenges that the survey tool could not capture, such as the impact of lost land or property. Even among urban origin returnees, interview responses suggest many households in Bloléquin remain in "survival mode" and are doing what work they can, but struggling to make ends meet.

Finding Eight: Subsistence agriculture remains part of household livelihood strategies in urban returns contexts. In Bloléquin, more than 60% of urban returnees indicated they access land for cultivation, as did 39% of urban returnees in Gisenyi. Of those who do have land access, the vast majority – more than 90% in both cases – reported that land is being put to productive use. The majority in both locations are primarily consuming agricultural products rather than selling via the market, suggesting that production may contribute to household food security.

Finding Nine: Social networks are available to some, though not all, urban returnees (and could depend on whether returnees were originally from urban or rural locations). In both the Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda cases, support from family was noted by just over half of all respondents and support from non-relatives by around a third of all respondents, suggesting that social networks do play a role in assisting reintegration for some but not for all. Notably, the study found little difference in the level of support provided to urban and rural returnees by family members. In Bloléquin, urban origin returnees to the town were more likely to indicate support from family than rural origin returnees, suggesting that they were more likely to have lost family networks or that these networks do not "extend" into the town setting. In Rwanda, the level of support from non-relatives was reported by a greater percentage of rural returnees than urban returnees, but there was no difference in support from non-relatives in the Côte d'Ivoire case.

Finding Ten: Higher crime rates in large urban areas may negatively affect the safety and security of returnees. Concerns about crime and safety figured prominently in interview responses in Abidjan, where returnees noted the increased presence of armed youth gangs and violent crime, including armed robbery and killings. This concern was not observed in the responses from Bloléquin or Gisenyi, both smaller urban locations. Survey responses in those locations indicated high levels of feeling safe and to the extent safety concerns were expressed these were not connected to general crime or lawlessness.

Finding Eleven: Social ties with persons in countries of asylum are often maintained, though circular migration is not necessarily evident. One premise held by literature on returns in the context of urbanization is that circular migration occurs within repatriation, particularly in relation to pursuing livelihoods opportunities. The study did not identify examples

of this occurring within the interview responses, though the majority of Ivoirian returnees interviewed in both Abidjan and Bloléquin indicated that they keep in contact with friends or family who are in the country of asylum. Social ties were less evident among the Gisenyi returnees, though several noted they still maintained friendships, family or business ties in the DRC, and three indicated that they travel periodically to the DRC.

Recommendations

The study's findings reinforce empirically the assumption that urbanization is taking place alongside forced displacement, and that dynamics present in urban and non-camp settings should be factored into voluntary repatriation policy and operations. Recommendations based on these findings include:

A. Anticipate Increased Urbanization of Refugee Return

The CWS study showed that urbanization is taking place across all phases of forced displacement (i.e., flight, asylum, return, and post-return). This finding, along with broader studies that highlight urbanization as a global trend, suggests that where voluntary returns do take place they are increasingly likely to intersect with urbanization. Updates to operational guidance on voluntary repatriation should recognize that refugee return from urban or other non-camp areas may transform urban-rural relations in important ways. In particular, return to place of origin should not be considered a "default" setting, nor should rural origin refugees returning to towns and cities or post-return migration from rural to urban areas be considered indicative of "failed" reintegration.

Operationally, this might begin at the point of collecting information from prospective returnees in countries of asylum, and continue through engagement with returnees after repatriation. Information collection as part of voluntary repatriation registration could, for example, collect information on the types of locations where households lived, both before fleeing and during exile. It could also ask explicitly whether refugees are considering a return to a different location than the one which they had fled, so as not to assume that return equates with return to place of origin.

B. Explore New Routes for Refugee Return from Urban and Non-Camp Areas

Repatriation frameworks should go beyond affirming the right of refugees in urban or non-camp areas to return, and explore options for enabling this in a manner that that recognizes the specific characteristics and challenges of refugee life outside of camps. Operationally, this could include engagement of non-camp refugees in intentions surveys, registration or verification exercises, or other activities that are undertaken in countries of asylum in anticipation of voluntary returns. Given the study's findings, preparatory work should begin early on with non-camp refugees, as they tend to return to urban areas sooner than camp-based refugees.

Reaching out to spontaneous urban returnees in repatriation activities, including monitoring conditions of return and reintegration, could expand or strengthen routes to return from urban and non-camp settings. This is based on the study's finding that non-camp refugees were more likely to return to urban locations in a 'spontaneous' manner rather than via UNHCR facilitation. Intentional outreach to this group, such as extending opportunities to register for assistance or contribute input to monitoring exercises, may both increase access by spontaneous urban returnees to protection and essential services and ensure that program design is inclusive of this group's needs.

C. Promote Repatriation through Social Linkages Rather than Rupture

One of the great strengths of the most recent UNHCR policies is their recognition that expanding urban and non-camp options can benefit host communities and governments as well as refugees themselves. Refugees, including those located outside camp settings, should continue to be supported in accessing up-to-date and accurate information about conditions in countries of origin. This should include information about town and city locations, given that improvements back home were the main motivation for return for a majority of urban returnees.

For refugees who indicate intentions to return to urban locations, or who are considered likely to return to urban locations, an interactive "reintegration orientation" prior to returning could assist prospective urban returnees to prepare appropriately. This could provide an overview of access to public services, civil documentation, housing and labor markets in urban areas, as well as other themes as identified by prospective urban returnees, either based on findings from "go-and-see" visits or from other information available about conditions back home.

Prospective returnees living in non-camp, and particularly urban, locations are more likely to engage in a wider variety of livelihood activities. To the extent that this increases access to livelihoods assets (including, but not limited to, physical assets), it seems likely that refugees will factor in these assets into their calculus of whether, when and where to return. Working with urban refugees on asset mapping or other livelihoods strategic planning could assist them to identify ways to leverage human, financial, social and possibly even physical capital that they may have developed while in exile toward self-reliance after returning.

D. Enhancing Returns Monitoring in Urban Settings

One of this project's goals was to contribute to monitoring tools that could be applied in urban returns and reintegration settings. As an input to this recommendation set, CWS reviewed a small sample of existing voluntary returns monitoring and evaluation reports generated by UNHCR and its implementing partners. These reports suggested that monitoring has become more robust and systematically integrated into returns and reintegration operations over the past decade, which should provide a starting point for tailoring monitoring, so that it captures information relevant to urban returns. Generally, monitoring could more consistently allow for the disaggregation of data by neighborhood or municipality, which could enhance the application of findings in specific urban locations.

CWS identified a number of indicators that could be used to enhance monitoring of voluntary return and reintegration in urban settings, based on areas in which notable or actionable findings were identified in the two case studies. These indicators, presented in Section 7 of this report, are intended for use by UNHCR, implementing partners, and local government bodies or community-based associations in monitoring reintegration in urban settings. They could also be used in baseline surveys within urban communities receiving returnees to establish benchmarks against which returnee responses could be compared.

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The project was managed by Andrew Fuys (CWS, New York), who is the lead author of this report. Graeme Rodgers (independent consultant, New York) designed the data collection tools and prepared an initial draft of the policy overview section, and contributed valuable guidance throughout the project, including feedback to a draft of this report. Data collection in Rwanda was undertaken in partnership with the Gisenyi Campus of the Kigali Independent University (ULK), which provided critical operational support to the project.

Field work in Rwanda was led by Paul Gatemberezi Muzungu (ULK, Gisenyi), who co-authored Section 4 of the report, and Peter Shema (ULK, Gisenyi). Field work in Côte d'Ivoire was led by Kouamé Aya Charlotte (independent consultant, Abidjan) and Benjamin Bodo (independent consultant, Guiglo). These talented and dedicated field team leaders provided valuable contributions to this report, particularly Sections 3 and 4, through: written reports on the quantitative and qualitative data collection processes; conducting semi-structured interviews and preparing interview transcripts for analysis; review of preliminary quantitative and qualitative analyses; and providing feedback to the draft country case studies.

Survey data collection was made possible through dedicated teams of enumerators. In Côte d'Ivoire: Bordier Jean Claude Kpangni; Konate Hamed; Kpahe Pehoué Serge; Koffi Kouame Albert; Zoue Donhoule Roseline; Guei Mariette; and Doueu Ella Joëlle. In Rwanda: Nsabiyaremye Emmanuel; Habyarimana Egide; Kairu Mike; Nkurunziza Anicet; Manzi Alain; Bayingana Ismael; Rugamba Jean Bosco; and Gakwaya Amani.

Dale Christy (CWS, Nairobi) provided oversight to quantitative data integrity in both Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda, and informed the reflections on use of electronic tablets in field data collection in Appendix A. Julia Suryantan (CWS, Jakarta) provided valuable guidance to the quantitative data analysis strategy, and performed tests on quantitative data to determine statistical significance. Sandra Vines (CWS, New York) undertook preliminary analysis of interview data from Bloléquin, and provided valuable support in communicating with Ivoirian field team leaders. Halima Adams (CWS, New York) undertook preliminary analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data from Rwanda, and contributed to the country case study in Section 4. Mia Witte (CWS, New York) contributed to preliminary analysis of quantitative data collected in Côte d'Ivoire. Beth Oppenheim (CWS, Cape Town) and Erol Kekic (CWS, New York) shared valuable editorial comments and project guidance. Christina Levin (CWS, New York) provided design support and copy editing. UNHCR staff in Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda contributed helpful feedback to the study's design. Amal AlBeedh from UNHCR Rwanda provided valuable comments to Section 4 of the report.

CWS thanks the numerous individuals in Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda who responded to survey and interview requests, and who shared their personal stories of returning home. We hope this research report contributes toward safety and dignity for countless other men, women, girls and boys living as refugees who too aspire, someday, to return home.

The author remains solely responsible for the content and accuracy of this report.

List of Acronyms

CWS	Church World Service
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
MIDIMAR	Ministry for Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODK	Open Data Kit
PDES	Policy Development and Evaluation Service
QIP	Quick Impact Project
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
ULK	Kigali Independent University
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Introduction

> *"The growing urban dimension of displacement is a particular challenge, but also, importantly, a new opportunity. The vibrant and expanding city space offers opportunities that we need to explore, both when responding to displacement and when planning for solutions."*[1]

A shift in focus has occurred in recent years, in which humanitarian agencies are becoming more engaged with refugees and other displaced persons living in urban areas. This has been driven by a growing realization that globally, refugees are settling increasingly in urban areas, rather than in purpose-built camps or other remote places. By 2008, more than half the world's refugees were located in cities and towns, and this trend is likely to continue.

The growing urbanization of displacement prompted UNHCR to update its policy on refugee settlement in urban areas in 2009 (UNHCR 2009). The policy promotes refugee access to rights, increased refugee self-reliance and settlement on the basis of social and spatial integration with the local community. In 2014, UNHCR expanded on many of these principles through a new policy that commits the agency to pursuing alternatives to camps. Increased urbanization of refugee settlement and UNHCR's broader shift from camps towards the self-settlement of refugees raise new questions over access to durable solutions, particularly the capacity and willingness of refugees to return to their countries of origin.

CWS began this research project in late 2014, with the intention of assessing the degree to which self-settlement in urban areas influences refugees' decisions to return to urban locations, and their reintegration experiences following repatriation. Objectives for this project included identifying key factors in refugee decision-making regarding return to urban areas, and informing policy and operational practices related to voluntary return to urban locations based on case study findings. The project was undertaken with support from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Refugees, Population and Migration (PRM), and in consultation with UNHCR country offices and other local stakeholders.

The research focused on Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda, each of which has distinct experiences with forced displacement and returns. Large-scale forced displacement from Côte d'Ivoire occurred most recently in late 2010, when an estimated 250,000 Ivoirians were forced to flee their country. While returns have been underway on large scales since 2011, reintegration activities are still ongoing, and at the time the CWS study began, an estimated 30% of Ivoirian refugees remained in exile. In Rwanda, by comparison, the largest waves of repatriation occurred nearly 20 years before the study began, although modest numbers of Rwandans have continued to repatriate in recent years. By considering two such distinctive case studies, CWS hoped to identify elements of urban returns and reintegration processes that may be context-specific, as well as trends or characteristics that may have broader relevance to other returns contexts.

Within these two countries, data collection was focused in two smaller (relatively speaking) urban areas: Gisenyi in Rwanda, which is a regional city of approximately 106,000 inhabitants, and Bloléquin in Côte d'Ivoire, a town that is home to just over 30,000 persons. The decision to concentrate in these two areas partly reflected suggestions made by country stakeholders during initial research design missions, but also served as an opportunity to examine return dynamics in town and small city contexts, which may be under-examined as locations affected

[1] Solutions Alliance, Roundtable on Solutions, Copenhagen 2-3 April 2014, p. 2.

by urbanization. In Côte d'Ivoire, CWS also conducted qualitative interviews in Abidjan, so as to also gain insights to the experiences of returnees in a large city and compare these with those in a smaller town location.

This report opens with a brief literature review and an overview of relevant international policies, in Section 1. Section 2 describes the methodology used in the project, which included household surveys in two locations, and semi-structured interviews in three locations. Sections 3 and 4 present case studies from Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda, focusing on the experiences of urban returnees in Bloléquin and Gisenyi and comparisons between sub-groups of urban returnees who had fled from urban and rural locations, and of those who stayed primarily in camp and non-camp settings while in exile. These sections also include summaries of quantitative data that were collected through the household surveys. Section 5 briefly compares the two cases, with an eye toward similarities that may be generalizable beyond these two instances of forced displacement and repatriation. Section 6 presents key findings from the study, and notes areas of convergence (and, in a few instances, divergence) from premises that underpin the policy frameworks discussed in Section 1. Finally, Section 7 includes recommendations based on study findings, including possibilities to enhance monitoring of returns and reintegration processes in urban areas.

Section 1: Policy Overview

This section provides an overview of policy relevant to urban returns and reintegration. It was undertaken both to inform the framework for this research project, and to serve as a starting point for contextualizing research findings, particularly those with potential policy implications. It primarily considers two sets of UNHCR policies, one related to urban and non-camp settings, and the other to voluntary return and repatriation programs. It also summarizes relevant desk reviews conducted by UNHCR and the World Bank: the first focused on urban reintegration, and the second on addressing the development challenges of refugee returns. First, it briefly discusses relevant academic literature as context to a review of policy.

The Practice and Politics of Organized Repatriation

Compared to resettlement and local integration, historically, UNHCR had highlighted voluntary repatriation as the most desirable of the three recognized durable solutions, from the vantage point of both refugees themselves and of the international community.[2] This designation has to be interpreted, however, in relation to an evolving international environment in which the voluntary basis of refugee decision-making is often eroded by broader political and institutional pressures and dynamics.

International enthusiasm for repatriation was particularly strong in the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War, and the changes to the international refugee regime that followed. Many large refugee populations, including from Afghanistan, Cambodia, Guatemala and Mozambique, were faced with the possibility of returning to their countries of origin after periods of protracted exile (see Wood 1989; Wilson with Nunes 1994; Eastman and Odjendal 1999; Stepputat 1999, for example). This led to a period of enthusiastic support for large-scale refugee returns and UNHCR's declaration of the 1990s as the *decade of voluntary repatriation*.

However, the 1990s also witnessed the emergence of new conflicts, which were sometimes precipitated by the fallout from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the changing geopolitical landscape that followed. These "new wars" were often internal or civil wars characterized by high degrees of violence toward civilians, prompting massive forms of displacement—both internal and across national borders. These crises appeared at a time when many states that had hosted refugees generously over previous decades started making it increasingly difficult for asylum seekers to access their territories and secure recognition as international refugees.

The same time period included the rise of the "internally displaced person," or IDPs, as a prominent humanitarian category of concern, reflecting both the changing nature of conflicts, as well as a reduced willingness of many states to recognize and host large populations of refugees. It was also a period of considerable experimentation with displacement categories that refugee advocates argued contributed toward shrinkage of the humanitarian space for refugees (c.f. Helton 2002).

[2] UNHCR's 1996 Handbook on Voluntary Repatriation opens by stating: "Voluntary repatriation is usually viewed as the most desirable long-term solution by the refugees themselves as well as by the international community." (UNHCR: 1996: Preface) Its 2004 handbook states: "Voluntary repatriation (the free and voluntary return to one's country of origin in safety and dignity) is the solution of choice for a vast majority of refugees." (UNHCR: 2004: 1.3)

These debates about categories of legal protection continue, as does the increase in the number of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons globally.[3] At the same time, opportunities for voluntary repatriation are becoming scarcer, particularly as conflicts and forced displacement become increasingly protracted.[4] In the absence of other possibilities for durable solutions, both refugees and humanitarian agencies may find themselves between a rock and a hard place, i.e., in situations where return becomes the only available option, durable or otherwise, voluntary or otherwise (see Chimni 2004).

Refugee Decision-Making and the 'Voluntariness' of Repatriation

With regard to a more localized or situated politics of repatriation, early studies tended to question whether it was pursued in the interests of refugees, particularly with respect to the *voluntariness* of return (e.g., Harrell-Bond 1989). While the principle of non-refoulement underpins the 1951 Refugee Convention[5], the convention does not stipulate explicitly that return following the cessation of refugee status has to be voluntary. Indeed, the cessation clause in Article 1.c. of the 1951 Convention only stipulates that refugees need to be returned in safety. Advocates, however, have long argued that voluntary return is not only necessary to ensure the protection of the human rights of refugees but also a necessary precondition for sustainable post-conflict reconstruction.

Beyond debates over overt measures to compel refugees to return, some literature has highlighted humanitarian agencies' roles in manipulating aid to prompt refugees to repatriate (see Rodgers 2001, for example). In a review of UNHCR's policy and practice on refugee repatriation, Long (2013) concludes that while the principle of voluntariness remains sound, in practice it is often misunderstood or not adequately reflected in the implementation of return activities. The study notes, "UNHCR has found itself operating in conditions where the choice has been presented as one between imposed return with UNHCR assistance, or a state-led refoulement. Voluntariness has been stretched beyond all recognition in attempts to persuade refugees to return to their countries of origin. The result has been UNHCR's tacit acceptance, in some cases, of forced returns" (Long 2013).

Socio-Economic Aspects of Return and Repatriation

Analyses of repatriation over the last two decades have been dominated by anthropologically oriented studies that highlight the social complexity of the return process at the local level (e.g., Allen and Morsink 1994; Allen and Turton 1996; Black and Koser 1999). This literature touches on a number of relevant themes, including: (a) the re-establishment of home and belonging (Hammond 2004); (b) the relationship between refugees and 'stayees' – i.e., those who did not, for whatever reason, take refuge (Kibreab 2002; Stefansson 2004; Long and Oxfeld 2004); and (c) renegotiating land and property rights (Leckie 2007).

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[3] The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, issued in September 2016, cites an estimate of 65 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide, including 21 million refugees, 3 million asylum seekers and more than 40 million IDPs. (See UNGA: September 2016: 3.)

[4] This was noted in the UN Secretary-General's April 2016 report, *In safety and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants*: "With opportunities for voluntary repatriation at the lowest level in decades, durable solutions are becoming more elusive for those who were part of large cross-border movements occurring years — even decades —ago." (UNGA: April 2016: Para. 17)

[5] In its 2010 introductory note to the Convention, UNHCR states: "The principle of *nonrefoulement* is so fundamental that no reservations or derogations may be made to it. It provides that no one shall expel or return ("*refouler*") a refugee against his or her will, in any manner whatsoever, to a territory where he or she fears threats to life or freedom."

There is very little literature that examines directly the complex relationship between refugees in urban areas – or non-camp settings more broadly – and the return process. In some cases, it may be assumed that urban refugees have no interest in returning to original home areas (especially where these are rural and remote) or that they are able to determine their own individual arrangements. Neither of these assumptions has been demonstrated empirically, and may mask a much more complex relationship between refugee settlement in urban areas and return.

Refugees whose livelihoods are tied to urban environments may face different challenges and opportunities regarding the economics of their return. Unlike rural refugees, their livelihoods are frequently more dependent on networks and locality, and participation in the service industry, rather than in agricultural production. In her landmark anthropological study of Burundian Hutu refugees in Tanzania, Malkki (1994) compared the experiences of "camp refugees" and "town refugees," noting that the former are highly organized, socially and physically isolated, economically disciplined, agriculturally prolific and ultimately obsessed with going home. Urban refugees, on the other hand, were found to be markedly more individualistic, and culturally and economically creative and adaptive (Malkki 1995). For such a group, return to areas that are geographically remote and economically stagnant may pose significant challenges.

UNHCR Policy Framework for Refugees in Urban Areas

In September 2009, after a lengthy period of reflection and analysis, UNHCR updated its urban refugee policy. The significance of the 2009 policy can only be fully appreciated with reference to its earlier 1997 policy, which was criticized by advocates for portraying refugee settlement in urban areas as illegitimate or undesirable. By the early 2000s, amid a growing urban refugee population, the need to replace this earlier policy was recognized (UNHCR: 2009: Para. 6-8).

The 2009 framework adopts an explicitly positive and proactive approach to the settlement of refugees in urban areas, retracts endorsement of restrictions on urban refugee settlement, and celebrates the humanitarian benefits of greater freedom of movement and strengthened human agency for individual refugees. In contrast to its predecessor, the new framework update makes it clear that: "[UNHCR] considers urban areas to be a legitimate place for refugees to enjoy their rights, including those stemming from their status as refugees as well as those that they hold in common with all other human beings" (para.14). This approach – and UNHCR's reflections on its early implementation – has encouraged a rich body of literature, including internal reviews, empirical studies, policy-related debates and critical essays.

The 2009 policy commits UNHCR to a number of "key principles" that include the protection of refugee rights and the promotion of refugee self-reliance. On the basis of these principles, it outlines 12 main objectives that reframe the presence of refugees in urban areas more strongly in terms of their internationally recognized rights. This is set forth in Paragraph 17, which states these include (but are not limited to): "…the right to life; the right not to be subjected to cruel or degrading treatment or punishment; the right not to be tortured or arbitrarily detained; the right to family unity; the right to adequate food, shelter, health and education, as well as livelihoods opportunities."

The 2009 urban policy identifies "protection space" as a key determinant in urban refugee well-being. Protection space comprises "the extent to which a conducive environment exists for the internationally recognized rights of refugees to be respected and their needs to be met" (para. 20) and may shrink or expand in response to changing political, economic and social

circumstances (para. 21). The policy notes that in urban contexts, this includes freedom of movement and expression, preservation of family unity, access to livelihoods and protection from labor market exploitation, access to adequate shelter, and access to legal documents and secure residency rights.

Whereas the 2009 policy lists access to durable solutions as a principal objective and a key element of the "protection space" enjoyed by urban refugees, it does not recognize any distinctive challenges or needs that are specific for urban refugees. Paragraph 138 states: "the procedures employed by UNHCR to facilitate voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement will not differ significantly in the case of urban and camp-based refugees. At the same time, some specificities of the urban context will be taken into account." It does not expand on what these "specificities" might include, how they might be taken into account, or how implementation of the policy may impact of the ability of urban refugees to access durable solutions, in either positive or negative ways.

With reference to repatriation, the remainder of this section explores three areas where implementation of the 2009 policy may affect the willingness and ability of urban refugees to return successfully to their country of origin. These include: (a) the promotion of self-reliance in urban contexts as a mechanism for strengthening protection; (b) the delivery of refugee assistance through broader community development; and (c) increasing access to protection and self-reliance of urban refugees.

UNHCR Alternatives to Camps Policy

Five years after issuing its updated urban policy framework, UNHCR introduced its Policy on Alternatives to Camps, which further extended operational guidance in urban and other non-camp settings. Rationale for the 2014 policy includes a recognition that "enabling refugees to reside in communities lawfully, peacefully and without harassment, whether in urban or in rural areas, supports their ability to take responsibility for their lives and for their families and communities." (UNHCR 2014)

The Alternatives to Camps policy sets forth a number of principles that are relevant to planning, implementation and monitoring of reintegration programs, including: (a) consultation with both refugees and host communities; (b) engaging national development plans and international development cooperation, including in poverty reduction, housing and shelter, and infrastructure and service delivery development; (c) planning based on data, information and analysis, including from protection monitoring and vulnerability and needs assessments; and (d) maximizing mobility to allow refugees to build their livelihoods assets and become better prepared to achieve durable solutions. (UNHCR 2014)

Like the 2009 Urban Policy, the 2014 Alternatives to Camps policy intends to apply to all UNCHR operations – – including the pursuit of durable solutions – – but leaves open-ended the question of how these principles might be put into practice toward durable solutions, including voluntary return and reintegration as well as resettlement.

Together, the 2009 and 2014 policies advance not only the legitimacy of refugee presence in urban and non-camp locations, but also the notion that forcibly displaced persons have agency and are making rational decisions in an effort to live with as much safety and dignity as possible. Two key concepts set forth in these policies are self-reliance as a means of protection, and the relationship between urban displaced persons and development processes.

Self-Reliance as Protection

In a general sense, self-reliance refers to the capacity of refugees to achieve and maintain their own livelihoods and meet the demands of their daily needs. It began to be reflected in UNHCR programming in the early 1970s, initially centered on promoting rural livelihood activities in refugee camp contexts. These initiatives succeeded to varying degrees and in some instances, refugee communities produced higher agricultural yields than neighboring host communities, but their success often depended on outside investment. Refugee participation in these schemes was also subject to high levels of bureaucratic control and restriction, which increased experiences of alienation and frustration. (Hansen 1990, Malkki 1995)

In contrast to earlier, rural-oriented schemes, the 2009 policy promotes self-reliance through participation in the local economy rather than the establishment of a parallel economy. It also links self-reliance explicitly to the concept of protection, noting that "urban refugees are often confronted with a wide range of legal financial, cultural and linguistic barriers to their efforts to establish sustainable livelihoods" (para.100.) The policy commits UNHCR to strive to overcome these barriers and foster an "an environment which is amenable for urban refugees to establish sustainable livelihoods" (para. 103). This involves advocacy efforts to remove legal barriers to self-reliance and the provision of additional support to refugees where necessary, through vocational training, skills development, and language acquisition (para. 102).

In addition to enhancing the well-being of refugees in urban areas, the 2009 policy indicates a positive link between self-reliance and durable solutions: "The Office will place particular emphasis on the fact that self-reliance acts as an important path to durable solutions, whether in the country of origin, a resettlement country or the country of asylum" (para 103). In the context of the policy, this link is accepted as self-evident and is not elaborated further.

While this may be the case for refugees who access resettlement, for those who are able to integrate locally, the relationship between self-reliance in urban areas and voluntary return may be more complex. Self-reliance may signify greater social and economic *embeddedness* of refugees in urban environments, through relationships of employment to local networks around self-employment. These may or may not be transferrable back to countries of origin. Those who do choose (or are compelled) to return to their country of origin may experience disruption to their livelihood activities and, therefore, perhaps have less "protection space" than where they lived as urban refugees. On the other hand, self-reliance may also equip refugees with greater skills, capital and confidence to confront the challenges of repatriation more successfully, which could be correlated with increased levels of return to urban areas.

Urban Refugees as Development Beneficiaries and Agents

The 2009 policy on refugee settlement in urban areas highlights partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders as a "key component of UNHCR's work in urban areas" (para 30). These partnerships include governments, service providers, as well as development actors. Like self-reliance, UNHCR engagement with development organization began in the context of the "Refugee Aid and Development" approach of the 1970s (Crisp 2001). UNHCR partnered with large international development organizations, like the World Bank, to promote the development of areas hosting large numbers of refugees. Ultimately, these efforts had limited success, in part because of reluctance on the part of donors to invest resources in refugee areas, especially if the refugees were expected to return to their countries of origin. By the late 1980s, UNHCR began to focus much of its attention on refugee return. As Crisp (2001) notes:

"UNHCR ceased to be an organization that was 'reactive', 'exile-oriented' and 'refugee-specific', and became increasingly 'proactive', 'homeland-oriented' and 'holistic' in its orientation."

The opportunities for refugee return that emerged in the context of the ending of the Cold War witnessed the expansion of UNHCR activities in repatriation, reintegration, and the evolution of a new strategy of "returnee aid and development" (Crisp 2001). UNHCR's interest in development shifted from countries of asylum to countries of origin as millions of refugees contemplated the prospect of going home. UNHCR sought to mainstream its role in development in conflict-affected areas through initiatives such as the "Brookings Process", which sought to address the gap between short-term relief and long-term development. This expanded, in 2003, into the "4Rs" approach, in cooperation with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). This offered a more integrated approach to the inter-relationship between repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction (see Lippman and Malik 2004). Like earlier approaches, the "4Rs" approach was subject to criticism over its inability to realize its ambitious strategic objectives in challenging field settings (see Muggah 2006, UNHCR 2008, para.17).

The policy response to the increased urbanization of refugee settlement has once again shifted the "development lens" back to the country of asylum. The 2009 urban refugee policy highlights *the city* as the site for the delivery of development that is intended to benefit refugees. As noted by the UNHCR High Commissioner following issuance of the 2009 Urban Policy:

> "The plight of refugees and others of concern in urban areas cannot be treated in isolation but needs to be responded to in the broader context of the urban poor" (Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010: 8).

To the extent that the social and economic lives of refugees in urban areas may be linked inseparably with the urban poor, investment in the broader development of urban spaces occupied by refugees and their neighbors contributes toward expanding the "protection space" for urban refugees. The promise of increased development-related investment in urban areas also represents a positive incentive for governments to host urban refugees.

How this approach may contribute to durable solutions for urban refugees beyond local integration is less clear. For the majority of refugees, who are usually expected to return to their countries of origin, many benefits of the development of the urban spaces that they occupy are unlikely to be transferrable, in any physical sense. The benefits of increased development may also, however, provide returnees with greater social and economic capital to confront the challenges of return more successfully. The complex relationship between urban development and the ability and willingness of urban refugees to return is not addressed in the 2009 Policy, which expands overwhelmingly on urban spaces as appropriate sites for refugee settlement, leaving open the question of cities and towns as sites of refugee return.

The 2014 Alternatives to Camps Policy expands further on the potential link between refugees and local development, noting:

> "Refugees can better contribute to the communities where they are living when they are supported in achieving self-reliance in a way that is adapted to local conditions and markets. In many situations, the presence of refugees has stimulated local economies and development."

This further positions urban and non-camp refugees as economic agents in their own right, and the presence of refugees in urban areas as a potential driver of economic activity.

UNHCR Policy Framework for Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration

The sections above have considered how UNHCR's recent policy engagement with refugees in urban areas represents an important statement on refugee self-reliance, development and integration, which may have profound consequences for refugee return. This next section considers the existing repatriation framework and its ability to accommodate the changing policy environment related to urbanized refugee settlement. For the purposes of this discussion, UNHCR's repatriation policy framework is considered to comprise three major agency documents: *Voluntary Repatriation: International Protection* (1996); *Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities* (2004); and *Policy Framework and Implementation Strategy: UNHCR's Role in Support of the Return and Reintegration of Displaced Populations* (2008).

The 1996 and 2004 handbooks comprise the major operational and protection guidelines for UNHCR in assisting refugees to return to their country of origin. These documents echo the broader policy eras within which they were produced, focusing on different aspects of the repatriation process.

Produced in the midst of the UNHCR-declared "decade of repatriation," the 1996 Handbook establishes the principles of protection during the repatriation process. It emphasizes the right of refugees to return to their country of origin and highlights voluntariness of return and freedom of movement as essential elements of a safe and dignified return. It elaborates on the importance of voluntariness and return under conditions of safety, dignity and security, stressing the important role of UNHCR in monitoring returnee situations and assisting vulnerable groups. Although this handbook considers reintegration as the "anchor of repatriation," it devotes relatively little attention to this aspects of the process, beyond highlighting some narrow "minimum criteria" for returnees to live in conditions of safety and dignity (UNHCR: 1996: 52).

The 2004 Handbook expands on the protection foundation of the earlier handbook by offering detailed operational guidance on supporting the return and reintegration process. This handbook highlights the restoration of basic services to returnees, particularly related to housing, water and sanitation, health and education (UNHCR: 2004:1-5, 6-14). The handbook was a major policy output of UNHCR's "4Rs" approach and reflects a strong commitment to the application of development principles to supporting return through reintegration. In line with this approach, the 2004 Handbook emphasized the principle of non-discrimination in support for return-affected areas, community consultation, an emerging awareness of gender and age-related diversity in the provision support for return and reintegration, including returnees in regional development initiatives and emphasizing the importance of partnering with development organizations to facilitate access to basic services in a manner that "also contributes to laying the foundation for long-term development" (2004: 2-10).

The 2008 Policy Framework emerged from UNHCR consultations with its Executive Committee and focused greater attention on clarifying UNHCR's role in the reintegration process. The framework recognizes that return is not simply a reversal of the displacement process and that returning communities may have undergone profound social changes through the experience of refuge, particularly refuge over protracted periods (Para. 4). These changes may include new experiences of urbanization, prompting new patterns of return and reintegration:

> "For example, refugees and IDPs who have experienced urban or semi-urban lifestyles during their period of displacement may well move to towns and cities upon their return. Such forms of mobility should only be regarded as a failure of the reintegration process if returnees are unable to establish new livelihoods or benefit from the rule of law in their areas of origin, and thus feel that they have no choice but to settle in alternative locations. Rapid and unplanned urbanisation is a key feature of many societies emerging from conflict, and the reintegration process frequently unfolds within this broader context" (UNHCR 2008: para.5).

In contrast to the 2004 Handbook, the 2008 Framework reconsiders reintegration in terms of the language of rights. This ventures beyond the minimum criteria for return in safety and dignity, by highlighting reintegration as:

> "… A process which involves the progressive establishment of conditions that enable returnees and their communities to exercise their social, economic, civil, political and cultural rights, and on that basis to enjoy peaceful, productive and dignified lives" (UNHCR 2008: para. 5).

This paragraph goes on to highlight the sustainability of this process as linked closely to the willingness of the state to assume responsibility for the rights and well-being of its citizens and the re-establishment of the rule of law. Significantly, the framework recognizes the limits of UNHCR's reintegration activities to bring about fundamental social, political and economic changes to areas of refugee return (UNHCR 2008, para. 29). The 2008 Framework represents a departure from the 2004 Handbook, making it clear that UNHCR does not consider itself to be a development agency (para. 29) and redefines its role in reintegration and "essentially humanitarian in nature." It defines its role as easing the initial upheavals of return, the provision of basic inputs into livelihood opportunities for returnees, supporting local reconciliation initiatives, promotion of returnee access to national protection, mechanisms and only selective and carefully coordinated involvement in infrastructural rehabilitation and construction (para. 31).

The 2008 policy acknowledges the potential inter-relationship between refugee repatriation and the other durable solutions and recognizes this as positive:

> "Refugees who are resettled, who integrate locally in their country of asylum and who are able to access regular migration opportunities may be in a position to support the development of their homeland by means of remittances, the transfer of skills and technologies as well as the establishment of new trading and investment networks." (UNHCR 2008, para. 33).

On the basis of seven "reintegration principles and practices," the 2008 Policy Framework summarizes UNHCR's role in reintegration to three distinct areas. These include: (1) facilitating return by essentially clearing the pathways for refugee repatriation and establishing basic infrastructure to promote spontaneous returns; (2) engagement in core protection activities that address immediate needs related to ongoing conflict and displacement; and (3) support for local reconciliation and support for basic needs and livelihood activities that strengthen the sustainability of return.

UNHCR's repatriation framework at the time of this study comprises documents that pull the organization in very different directions on the question of reintegration. Apart from a brief mention in the 2008 Policy, this framework pays very little attention to return and reintegration in

urban contexts. The 1996 Handbook makes no mention of any specific challenges of return to urban areas, and the 2004 Handbook highlights only the risks of refugees moving to cities, instead of returning to their (presumed rural) areas of origin (UNHCR 2004: 1-23). The 2008 policy suggests an increasing policy awareness of the significance of return and reintegration to urban areas and the broader implications of the urbanization of refugee settlement on refugee return and reintegration.

UNHCR Desk Review on Urban Reintegration

UNHCR further explored these issues in a 2009 desk review of its engagement with urban reintegration. The report from this review describes its purpose as to "enhance UNHCR's understanding of the process of reintegration in urban contexts, and draw lessons which could inform a future policy and implementation strategy." (UNHCR OSTS/DOS: 2009: 1) Largely based on desk review of project documents and interviews with UNHCR staff, the report primarily draws on experiences from Afghanistan, Liberia and South Sudan, with additional reference to experiences in Angola, Burundi, Georgia and Somalia. Among other observations, the review concluded that, at the time, there was little documented agency knowledge on urban reintegration, and a relatively low level of familiarity with the theme among UNHCR staff.

The review considered national and provincial capitals, as well as district centers, as its scope, noting that the agency did not have a singular definition of "urban" applied in its operations. It noted that the presence of rural livelihoods does not necessarily preclude a location from being "urban" and that in some urban settings reviewed, agriculture is more prevalent than non-agricultural livelihoods activities.

Based on findings from project literature, the review proposed several generalizations about urban returnee profiles:

- Urban returnees are akin to other rural-to-urban migrants, in terms of seeking to take advantage of livelihoods opportunities and essential services, the latter of which may be more accessible or of better quality in urban locations.
- Urban centers may attract youth and women, if they are perceived as being socially less restrictive or conservative than rural environments.
- If displaced persons had initially fled rural areas because of security threats, they may be more likely to seek protection in urban locations upon return.

It also identified key challenges faced by urban returnees in reintegration:

- Access to housing and overcrowding within accommodation that is available.
- Unemployment and competition for jobs, noting: "it became apparent that the ability of returnees in urban areas to integrate themselves and become competitive on the job market depends strongly on their experience in exile and whether they lived in urban areas prior to or during exile." (UNHCR OSTS/DOS: 2009: 4.3)
- High crime rates in large urban areas, which negatively affect physical safety and security.
- Lack of traditional social networks, which tend to be stronger in rural areas compared to urban areas.
- Lack of documentation needed to access public services.

The review considered UNHCR's 2008 reintegration policy framework to represent a conceptual shift, in that urban reintegration is an acknowledged and accepted theme, but also observed that this alone does not represent a shift in operations or program design and implementation.

Registration for returns and monitoring reintegration were noted as examples where these latter shifts had not yet taken place. Registration processes remained based largely on the assumption that intent to return equates with intent to return to place of origin, regardless of whether that is a returnee's actual intent. Anticipation of spontaneous returns was absent from reintegration planning, and monitoring tended to be based on district or province but not allow for disaggregation of information by municipality or neighborhood.

World Bank Sustainable Refugee Returns

In 2015, the World Bank Group issued a report *Sustainable Refugee Returns,* based in part on desk review of Bank-supported activities in eight reintegration contexts. The study, which also incorporated a review of literature on returns decision-making, aimed to: "Identify the conditions that influence the decisions by refugees in protracted displacement regarding return to their home country - when, why, and by whom are decisions on return or other coping strategies made, and how are these decisions affected both by life in exile and by the situation in the country of origin." (Harild, Christiansen and Zetter: 2015) This study adds to a renewed discussion on ways to bridge the so-called divide between humanitarian and development responses.

The study observes that facilitated returns only make up a portion of overall flows of refugees back into their countries of origin. "In some displacement situations, 'spontaneous' unassisted returns involving substantial numbers of people have taken place," the review states, noting that even such spontaneous returns even occur to locations where peace and stability have yet to be established. (Harild, Christiansen and Zetter: 2015) Meanwhile, while voluntary repatriation programs do assist a significant number of refugees to return, they do not lead always lead to the actual return of forcibly displaced persons. Furthermore, return is identified as an "iterative process," and the report notes that "in many refugee situations mobility and ongoing and circular migration are key livelihood strategies that contribute to sustainable solutions…" (Harild, Christiansen and Zetter: 2015) These findings suggest dynamics at work that are outside the scope of formal voluntary repatriation support programs, but which very much intersect with longer term processes of reintegration, reconstruction and reconciliation, and planning surrounding these processes.

Urbanization is one such dynamic that the report identifies. It notes that "increasing urbanization is a feature of contemporary forced displacement situations," in large part because of opportunities to access services and livelihoods that refugees may not otherwise have in camp or rural contexts. Increasingly, persons seeking refuge in urban areas (or, perhaps, non-camp settings more broadly) are from rural areas themselves, but do not necessarily return to rural areas of origin if and when they decide to repatriate. The review suggests that "the implication of this is that the high rates of displacement-related urbanization in both host countries and countries of origin are not temporary phenomena," and that both humanitarian response and development planning should account for urbanization more systematically. (Harild, Christiansen and Zetter: 2015)

The review identifies four main factors that influence voluntary returns decisions: security, access to adequate services, housing, and livelihoods opportunities. Livelihoods in particular is part of the draw to urban spaces for returnees: "Research suggests that urban settings may provide better livelihood opportunities, even if this is often only marginally so, than the rural areas people were displaced from." (Harild, Christiansen and Zetter: 2015) Responding to this trend may require addressing development challenges faced by many city or town residents, such as physical loss of infrastructure and housing, and demands for functioning markets, land

access, and public goods and services that outstrip the capacity of local governments and non-governmental agencies. It may also require addressing specific needs of returnees that are not necessarily shared by 'stayees', such as lack of state-issued identification, limited family or community support networks, and after-effects of having survived the trauma of flight and asylum.

Monitoring returnees' ability to rebuild their lives within such a context is identified as a key need. Enhanced monitoring frameworks would allow for tracking of "outcomes that World Bank supported activities may have had for IDPs and returning refugees, and to monitoring indicators that could capture these outcomes." (Harild, Christiansen and Zetter: 2015) This is needed to both assess the degree to which reintegration support programs are achieving their objectives, and that broader development and institutional capacity-building are inclusive of returnees and 'stayees' alike.

More robust monitoring could also make it more likely that long-term development challenges associated with return and reintegration remain on policy and planning agendas over a sufficiently long period of time. As it is, the review finds that attention to reintegration tends to "disappear" by the second or third country planning cycle, in part because information currently available through monitoring does not allow for consideration of whether more sustained attention and resources are required, or whether deployment of resources might benefit from new or sharper targeting strategies.

Framing Policy Development within Urban Displacement Realities

Increased urbanization of refugee settlement, in line with UNHCR's updated policy response, may have important consequences for refugee return and reintegration in urban areas. For example, refugees that have enjoyed the benefits of greater freedom of movement, self-reliance and a strengthened 'protection space' are likely to return voluntarily under very different circumstances from the majority of refugees that return from camps. By confronting the challenges of reintegration through improved education, livelihoods (including improved opportunities to generate income and build asset bases), access to services and more extensive networks to rely on for support, urban returnees may preserve or even expand their protection space when they choose to repatriate from urban areas.

Urban or non-camp settlement may, however, also discourage some urban refugees from repatriating voluntarily; or refugees may be compelled to return to their country of origin under conditions that are less than voluntary, e.g., in response to a host government directive or deteriorating conditions of urban refugee life. In such contexts, the process may be far more challenging, characterized by high levels of social and economic risk and disruption and a notable shrinkage of their protection space.

Under both scenarios, returning urban refugees seem more likely to reintegrate into urban areas. For very different reasons, both scenarios are also more likely to retain ongoing social ties and migration links between urban sites of refuges of refuge and return. These may be established both by the opportunities of sustainable return, as well as the desperation of an unsustainable return process. With this in mind, some of the key challenges that urbanized refugee settlement and return may pose to the updating of the repatriation policy framework include the following:

1. Ensuring strong and meaningful urban refugee participation in the planning and implementation of repatriation initiatives: Organized voluntary repatriation programs have long

been criticized for being planned and implemented in a strongly "top down" manner, characterized by low levels of refugee participation (Harrell-Bond 1989). Whereas the current repatriation framework notes the importance of participatory approaches, it tends to focus on participation in implementing processes and decisions that are already determined, rather than engagement with refugee and returnee communities in shaping these processes. The 2009 Urban refugee policy's emphasis on promotion of self-reliance, freedom of movement, and enhanced refugee access to information sets a new tone for UNHCR's engagement with urban refugees. A policy on urban refugee settlement that is characterized by greater refugee agency, autonomy and capacity is more likely to succeed where refugees are able to actively shape the conditions of their return. This may require a shift in both the "how" and "where" of repatriation planning, in order to engage urban and non-camp refugees in meaningful ways.

2. Developing realistic and innovative incentives for well integrated urban refugees to return voluntarily to their country of origin: The principle of voluntarism remains at the core of UNHCR's efforts to promote refugee repatriation and successful reintegration. For UNHCR (1996) this goes beyond the "the absence of measures which push the refugee to repatriate", and arises from the ability of refugees to make a deliberate, free and informed decision. The question of voluntarism as a requirement for a legitimate refugee return process is complex and subject to ongoing debate, with some scholars suggesting that "safety and dignity" represents the minimum acceptable standard process, even if voluntarism is absent (Hathaway 1997 & 2005, see also Long 2013, Bradley 2014). Others have called on voluntariness to remain at the center of repatriation, and have stressed that "the notion of voluntariness should not be stretched so thin as to lose all meaning" (Crisp and Long: 2016). Voluntarism is also only required for as long as persons are recognized as refugees; refugee status may be withdrawn, for example, through government invocation of a cessation clause.

3. Building on the role of migration in making urban return more sustainable: There is a strong and growing research record that highlights the positive role of migration in making the livelihoods of refugees and returnees more sustainable. The current repatriation framework is based on assumptions of sedentary return processes, initiated by a return movement that is regarded as a once off event. This may not necessarily be the case, particularly where refugee settlement is complex and characterized by strong levels of integration. UNHCR appears to be shifting towards increased recognition of the role and benefits of migration for refugees and returnees and the contribution that migration can make toward making refugee return more sustainable.

Section 2: Methodology

Research Question
This research project sought to identify and explore factors that are related with relative success of refugee return to urban areas in Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda. Specifically, CWS sought to explore relationships between two variables – (a) place of origin in home countries and (b) place of settlement in countries of asylum – with refugees' capacity for successful return and reintegration into urban areas.

Data Collection
The project used a "mixed methods" approach to the collection of primary field data, incorporating both quantitative data collected through household surveys and qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews. To enable a meaningful case study comparison, the tools for each case study were as similar as possible for each location.

Data collection in Côte d'Ivoire was conducted directly by CWS, with a project team that included two Ivoirian research consultants, eight locally recruited enumerators, and a CWS data integrity specialist. In Rwanda, CWS worked in partnership with the Gisenyi campus of Kigali Independent University (ULK). The project team in Gisenyi included two ULK researchers working with eight Rwandan enumerators and a CWS data integrity specialist.

In both Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda, CWS requested and received approval for research activities from appropriate national government ministries. As part of the research application process, CWS shared a project overview and data collection tools for review. In neither location was CWS requested to modify its research tools or proposed sampling as a condition for research approval.

Household Survey
The household survey collected data on socio-economic, demographic and personal subjective variables. This included information regarding experiences during flight and in exile, decision-making regarding repatriation, and both the return and reintegration processes. (See Appendix 2: Household Survey Questionnaire.)

Design of the household survey took place in early 2015, building on a tool used in previous CWS household surveys with urban refugees, and informed by findings from initial review of relevant urban returns and reintegration policies. A draft survey tool was circulated to key stakeholders, including a CWS project advisory team, UNHCR country offices and PRM, for initial feedback. It was revised further after design missions to each project locations. Final versions of the survey tool were translated into French and Kinyarwanda for use in field data collection.

Questions were included on the following topics:
- Access to information pre-return concerning Country of Origin conditions and repatriation process.
- Participation in formal (e.g., UNHCR or NGO facilitated) or informal (e.g., family or community discussions) activities in Country of Asylum to prepare for return and repatriation.
- Skills and livelihood assets (i.e., financial, human, social and physical capital), pre-return and post-reintegration.
- Access to legal documentation and legal protections, pre-return and post-reintegration.
- Access to physical protection and level of safety, pre-return and post-reintegration.

- Access to essential services (e.g., health care, education, housing/shelter), pre-return and post-reintegration.
- Forms and sources of assistance received during return and reintegration process.

Demographic information (e.g., age, gender, head of household status) was also collected from respondents, as was information regarding location before fleeing their country of origin, primary location while in exile, and location upon repatriating. These sets of data were used to categorize respondents into urban or rural locations in origin, asylum and return; and into camp and non-camp for location in asylum.

CWS aimed to conduct surveys of between 300 and 500 households in each of the two sites. The systematic integration of this data with in-depth qualitative interviews intended to allow for more meaningful data analysis and greater reliability of conclusions.

Household survey data was collected using electronic tablets and the Open Data Kit (ODK) application. This application has recently become a viable option for field surveys, and offers possibilities to increase efficiency and accuracy of data collection, compared to traditional paper-based surveys. (See Appendix 1: Reflections on Using Electronic Tablets in Field Data Collection.)

Data was exported from ODK into Excel to form the data sets for quantitative analysis. The surveys included three questions regarding location before flight, in county of asylum, and upon return. Responses to these were used to categorize respondents into subgroups: urban or rural origin; urban or rural location in asylum; camp or non-camp location in asylum; and urban or rural place of return.[6] Excel pivot tables were used to identify response rates to the survey questions broken down by these various sub-groups. Statistical testing was conducted in SPSS[7] on certain variables that showed a notable or unexpected difference between sub-groups, so that statistical significance of the difference could be determined.[8]

Semi-Structured Interviews

CWS conducted 20 semi-structured interviews at each site, including in the two sites where household surveys were conducted, plus Abidjan. Interview questions were open-ended and based on standardized set of interview guidelines. (See Appendix 3) They were designed to explore the nuances and social complexities of refugee return to urban areas, and like the household surveys, elicited responses related to flight, asylum experiences, returns decision-making, and reintegration process. All interview data was transcribed into text, and analyzed manually using qualitative data grids to allow for comparison of responses across demographics and across three main themes: (a) experience during flight and while in exile; (b) returns decision-making and processes; and (c) experiences upon return and during reintegration.

[6] For the purposes of this study, responses “camp,” “village,” or “bush” were categorized as rural, and responses “town” or “city” were categorized as urban.

[7] Statistical Package for the Social Science, or SPSS software

[8] The case studies indicate variables for which a statistically significant difference was found at 95% confidence or greater; though, statistical testing could not be performed on all variables in which differences were observed.

Definition of Terms
The following were used as a definition of terms for the field research teams:

Assistance	Material provisions and services provided for humanitarian reasons, by government, the international community, and non-government organizations.
Country of Asylum	Country that the respondent fled to and settled in as a refugee. Note that in some instances a respondent may have lived in more than one country of asylum.
Divorce	A permanent ending of a union recognized as marriage. May be either recognized officially or through informal social and cultural institutions.
Documentation	Government-recognized documents that attest to the identity or status of an individual. May include birth certificates, marriage certificates, identity cards, voluntary repatriation forms, baptismal certificates, and educational qualifications, for example.
Education	Includes those institutions and the qualifications that they offer that are formally recognized by government, either within the country of asylum or country of origin.
Family	Persons that are directly related to the respondent, either by birth or marriage (parents, siblings, spouse, children).
Healthcare	Includes access to resources that promote health and well-being through modern biomedical approaches. Does not include traditional, religious or non-biomedical systems of health.
Household	Persons living under the "same roof" as the respondent and who generally "eat from the same pot."
Housing	A physical dwelling structure used for shelter. May be formal or informal, temporary or permanent.
Interviewer	The person conducting the interview.
Marriage	A recognized union between two individuals. Includes unions that are officially recognized, as well as socially or culturally recognized unions.
Occupation	An activity that contributes toward meeting personal and household needs. May be cash-based or non-cash based.
Refugee Camp	A settlement established formally and exclusively for refugees.
Reintegration	The process of legal, social and economic adjustment inclusion into the country of origin, after returning from exile.
Relatives	Persons that are more distantly or indirectly related to the respondent.
Respondent	The person being interviewed by the interviewer.
Return	Physical movement from country of asylum to country of origin that is intended to be permanent.
Returnee	An individual person that has returned from a country of asylum to their country of origin.
Urban	An environment characterized by denser settlement patterns than surrounding countryside, more diverse economic activities than surrounding countryside, and is generally regarded as a town or city by local residents.
Village	A pre-existing rural settlement established by nationals of the country of asylum.
Voluntary	A decision made freely, without any coercion or reservation.

Sampling Strategy
CWS identified a sampling approach in each location that reflected the state of knowledge of potential sampling frames, and conditions in the field at the time of data collection. In Bloléquin, Côte d'Ivoire, where the returnee household population is relatively well documented, CWS approached the full population of known returnee households within four main neighborhoods. In Gisenyi, Rwanda, a larger urban area than Bloléquin, stratified sampling on the basis of neighborhood was used to generate a representative sample. Interviews tended to rely on convenience or snowball sampling, particularly in Abidjan where community leaders served as entry points to identifying potential respondents.

Research Ethics
CWS provided the following guidelines for research teams to ensure confidentiality and protection of human subjects:

- Interviews should only be conducted with individuals aged 18 years or older. In addition to the stated age provided by a potential informant, the interviewer should also be fully satisfied that the person is indeed older than 18 years of age.
- All attempts to enlist returnee participation in this survey should be done on the basis of respect and sensitivity toward potential respondents, who may have endured traumatic experiences and be asked to recall some distressing memories. The psychological and emotional well-being of respondents should be respected at all times and should never be compromised for the sake of collecting data.
- Potential respondents should be informed explicitly that their participation in this study is entirely voluntary. They may also choose to refrain from answering specific questions, if they feel uncomfortable with these, or stop the interview completely.
- It should be made clear to all respondents before the interview begins that they cannot be remunerated for their participation in the study, as this may compromise the integrity of the data being collected.
- All respondents should be interviewed in a safe setting, where they feel comfortable answering the questions. They should not be interviewed in public or uncontrolled settings, where unknown persons could overhear their responses, or where crowds of curious onlookers can gather to observe them being interviewed.

Section 3: Côte d'Ivoire Case Study

In November 2010, Côte d'Ivoire held its first presidential election in 10 years. The national election commission declared the opposition candidate as the winner, with 54 percent of the vote; however, the incumbent claimed victory and refused to relinquish power. This set off the country's second civil conflict in less than a decade, and led to the forced displacement of upwards of one million Ivoirians, including tens of thousands who fled into neighboring countries and sought protection as refugees.[9] Violence was most intense in the country's western region, where in February 2011 loyalist troops attempted to close the border with Liberia, into which Ivoirian refugees were fleeing.

Western parts of Côte d'Ivoire, including the former Moyen-Cavally region, had experienced significant migration inflows since the country's independence. Responding to the demand for agricultural labor, migrants came to the region from both other parts of Côte d'Ivoire and as immigrants from neighboring countries. Tensions over access to land and disputes over nationality – themselves interconnected – created fertile ground for conflict to escalate.[10]

The 1972 Nationality Code, in effect at the time of both the 2003 and 2010-2011 conflicts, was based on *ius sanguinis*, i.e., Ivoirian nationality derived from having at least one citizen parent.[11] The country's 1998 Land Law prohibits non-Ivoirians from purchasing land and, coupled with the nationality law, led some factions to call into question the validity of land access by migrants and their descendants. While more than half of all Ivoirians live in urban areas, economic crises and an increasing poverty rate (it had reached 43% in 2008) had driven urban-to-rural return migration in years preceding the most recent conflict, intensifying competition for land-based resources.[12]

Most refugees from the country's western region fled into neighboring Liberia. At the outset of the refugee crisis, a majority sought protection in Liberian host communities, including an estimated 29,000 in Zwedru, the main urban center of Grand Geddeh County in eastern Liberia (PDES 2011). In July 2011, the Government of Liberia released a relocation policy that encouraged refugees to relocate to designated refugee camps by December 2012. Solo camp in southeastern Liberia opened in April 2011, as one of six refugee camps to be established, and was the place of residence for many camp-based returnees who were interviewed as part of the CWS study.

In August 2011, the governments of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire and UNHCR signed a tripartite agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Ivorian refugees. UNHCR-facilitated voluntary repatriation began in October 2011, by which time 'spontaneous' (i.e., self-facilitated) repatriation had already begun. The majority of the 220,000 Ivorian refugees who had sought protection in Liberia have since returned to Côte d'Ivoire, many (though not all) with the assistance of the UNHCR. Parts of western Côte d'Ivoire experienced widespread destruction of

[9] See UNHCR, "Côte d'Ivoire on the edge," 2011 http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/cote-divoire-edge.html; and IDMC, "IDPs rebuilding lives among a delicate peace," November 2012, http://www.internal-displacement.org/sub-saharan-africa/cote-divoire/2012/idps-rebuilding-lives-amid-a-delicate-peace.

[10] See Human Rights Watch, *That Land is My Family's Wealth: Addressing Land Dispossession after Côte d'Iovire's Post-Election Conflict,* October 2013, https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/10/09/land-my-familys-wealth/addressing-land-dispossession-after-cote-divoires-post.

[11] The nationality code was amended in 2013, and now provides broader access to citizenship rights by foreign-born residents and their descendants, based on date of arrival to the country. See HRW: 2013.

[12] See UN Security Council, *Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire*, March 2013, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/197.

homes, livelihood assets and essential service facilities (CARE et al 2011, UNGA 2013). The research sought the need to consider return and reintegration via the lenses of social and economic integration, as well as physical and legal protection, with attention to challenges that may be faced by the most vulnerable return households.[13]

Overview of Data Collection

Field research took place in Bloléquin and Abidjan in August and September 2015, including collection of household survey data in Bloléquin and semi-structured interviews in both locations. The field research team included two Ivoirian research consultants, eight locally recruited enumerators, and a CWS data integrity specialist.

Bloléquin town has a population of about 32,000 people and is the seat of an administrative department with the same name, which has a population of approximately 120,000 people.[14] It was the fifth largest urban center (city or town) in the former Moyen-Cavally region, before new administrative demarcations were instituted in 2011. The town serves as a market hub for farmers and traders in surrounding rural communities. Bloléquin was identified as the main focus of the field research following a preparatory mission to Côte d'Ivoire in January 2015, in which CWS discussed the project's focus and objectives with the UNHCR country office and other local actors.

Through the household survey, data was collected from a total of 552 respondents in four neighborhoods in Bloléquin: Kéibly, Gueré, Colonel and Gama. Data collection focused on these neighborhoods because of their high concentration of returnees.

Enumerators sought to administer the survey to all returnee-identified households in these neighborhoods. Some heads of households were not available or not home at the times that enumerators visited their house, and thus were not included (the overall response rate was not recorded). A few returnee households declined to participate in the survey, but these were the exception and not the rule.

Neighborhood	Number of Household Surveys
Keibly	150
Guere	204
Gama	135
Colonel	63
Total Bloléquin sample	**552**

Table 1: Neighborhood breakdown of Bloléquin household surveys

There were 276 men and 276 women interviewed, making for an even gender split among respondents. The median age of survey respondents was 37 years old, and the mean age was

[13] As of September 2013, an estimated 700,000 persons in Côte d'Ivoire were undocumented, stateless, or in the process of having their nationality verified. See: Mahoney 2013.

[14] Based on 2014 national census data, Bloléquin is fifty-third in size of Côte d'Ivoire's 104 departments, or approximately at the median. About 70% of the country's departments have populations of 200,000 or less. See: www.citypopulation.de/CotedIvoire-Cities.html and www.citypopulation.de/php/ivorycoast-admin.php.

40 years old. Of the 552 respondents, the vast majority – 96% – fled Côte d'Ivoire in 2011. Within the sample, returns largely took place between 2011 and 2014, with peaks in 2012 and 2013.

Semi-structured interviews, which were intended to capture qualitative information about the experiences of flight, return and reintegration, were conducted using a standard set of questions that were developed for the study. Interviews were conducted with 20 returnees in both Bloléquin and Abidjan, for 40 interviews in total. By including Abidjan, CWS sought to identify and compare qualitative trends between the experiences of returnees to Bloléquin, a town location, and Abidjan, a large urban center.

Figure 1: Map of Cote d'Ivoire (Source: http://fidpress.blogspot.com/2013/04/maps-of-ivory-coast.html)

In Bloléquin, interviews were conducted with returnees in each of the four neighborhoods where the household surveys were conducted. In Abidjan, interviews were conducted in the municipalities of: Yopougon, Abobo, Attécoubé, Cocody, Marcory, and the sub-prefecture Bingerville. These locations were identified through consultation with UNHCR and leaders of returnee community associations. In both Abidjan and Bloléquin, respondents were identified on the basis of convenience sampling, with attention to a diverse mix of respondents by age, gender, socio-economic status.

Urban and Rural Breakdown of Responses

Respondents were asked to indicate their main location (a) before flight, (b) while in country of asylum, and (c) upon return to Côte d'Ivoire. Response options were grouped together to reflect urban locations (town or city) or rural locations (village or "bush", i.e., non-settled locations such as forests, or camps in the asylum context). CWS focused its analysis on the urban returnee group, i.e., respondents who indicated that their place of return was a town or city.

Location upon return	Number	Percentage
Urban (i.e., town)	422	76.4%
Rural (i.e., village, bush)	130	23.6%

Table 2: Return location among returnees in Bloléquin sample

The first point of comparison that CWS used in its analysis of the household survey responses was place of origin. As shown below, there was roughly a 60-40 split in urban and rural origin among all respondents, based on responses regarding location before flight.

Place of origin before fleeing	Number	Percentage
Urban origin (i.e., town)	334	60.5%
Rural origin (i.e., village, bush)	218	39.5%

Table 3: Origin of returnees in Bloléquin sample

These responses suggest, broadly speaking, that forced displacement was correlated with urbanization, as the percentage of returnees who returned to an urban area (i.e., a town rather than a village) was greater than the percentage that had fled from an urban area.

The second point of comparison for analysis was main location while in exile.

Main location in country of asylum	Number	Percentage
Urban (i.e., city, town)	34	6.2%
Rural (i.e., village, bush, camp)	518	93.8%

Table 4: Main location during asylum of returnees in Bloléquin sample

Type of location in country of asylum	Number	Percentage
Camp	343	62.1%
Non-camp (i.e., village, town, bush)	209	37.9%

Table 5: Type of location during asylum of returnees in Bloléquin sample

Of the total sample, 38% of respondents mainly resided in a non-camp location (i.e., village, bush, town or city) while in country of asylum, and 62% mainly resided in a refugee camp.[15] As

[15] Notably, the same proportion of rural origin refugees sought asylum in a non-camp setting as did urban origin

such, the distinction between "camp returnees" and "non-camp returnees" was used as the second point of comparison the study.[16] This was a modification of the initial research question, which called for comparison of urban asylum versus rural asylum cohorts, but one that appeared more relevant to the experiences of Bloléquin returnee respondents given their experiences in country of asylum.

Finally, CWS compared responses between the urban returnees (i.e., those who indicated a return to town location) and rural returnees (i.e., those who indicated a return to village, camp or bush location). As shown in Table 2, 23% of respondents indicated that they had returned to a rural location, although they were physically located in town at the time of the interview. This likely represents onward movement from rural locations to the town after initial repatriation.

Experiences in Flight

The household survey responses indicate that flight largely occurred in 2011: this represented 96% of the overall sample, and 97% of the 422 urban returnee respondents. Interview responses from Bloléquin indicted, overwhelmingly, that respondents fled because armed groups were attacking their town or neighborhood. They heard gunfire at close range and ran into the woods, launching their flight to and across the country's border. Virtually all the household survey respondents (98%) sought asylum in Liberia, which was also the country of asylum for all 20 Bloléquin interviewees.[17]

By contrast, the flight paths and main causes of flight within the Abidjan interview group were somewhat more complex. For the majority of this group (18 of 20), Togo was the main country of asylum, with Mali and Senegal being the other two. Many interviewees indicated that they spent time in Ghana before crossing into Togo. In part, they moved on from Ghana because of preferences to seek protection in a francophone location.

While half the Abidjan interviewees noted general insecurity or armed conflict within their neighborhood as a main cause of flight, there were also a number who indicated fear of being targeted because of political affiliation, regional or ethnic identity; and at least five whom had friends or family who were killed or targeted for such reasons.

Conditions and Experiences in Asylum

The vast majority – 97% – of urban returnees who had stayed in a camp while in exile indicated that they were registered for assistance, compared to 58% of non-camp urban returnees.[18] Nearly all the survey respondents who had registered for assistance reported receiving it, meaning that non-camp residence was not an obstacle to accessing essential services, such as health care or education, so long as the respondent had registered for assistance.

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refugees: 83 of 218 from the rural origin respondents and 126 of 334 from the urban origin respondents, both equaling 38% of their respective group. This suggested that there was no correlation between rural or urban origin and decisions to reside in a camp or non-camp location in asylum.

[16] 94% of respondents indicated that their main location while in asylum was rural, i.e., a village, "bush" or refugee camp. Given that only 6% of all respondents primarily spent time in a town while in asylum, and none in cities, CWS did not compare the urban-asylum and rural-asylum subgroups of urban returnees.

[17] Other countries of asylum indicated in the household survey were: Ghana (six responses), Burkina Faso (two responses), Guinea (two responses) and Mali (one response).

[18] Difference was significant at 99%.

In interviews, several returnees also indicated that they continued to receive food rations or other forms of UNHCR or NGO assistance while living outside the camp. These responses do not specify if assistance was accessed for their entire time in non-camp settings or for part of that time. Health care and medicines were provided free of cost inside the camps, and access was facilitated in some non-camp locations, according to several responses.

No differences were observed in registration for assistance, or in access to education or health care, between urban and rural origin urban returnees, or between urban returnees and rural returnees. The rural origin subgroup was more likely to rely primarily on assistance than the urban origin subgroup (53% compared to 33%); as was the camp-based subgroup compared to non-camp subgroup (46% compared to 27%). This was most notable when the two variables were combined: 70% of rural origin, camp-based urban returnees indicated that assistance was their primary source of support, compared to 39% for urban origin counterparts.[19]

The non-camp group was slightly more likely than the camp-based group to rely on laboring, i.e., wage labor working for others (29% compared to 19%) and farming (16% compared to 7%), which suggests somewhat greater access to arable land and work opportunities outside of the camp setting.[20] Urban returnees were more likely to have had access to land in exile than rural returnees (31% compared to 17%).[21]

Interview responses from both Bloléquin and Abidjan returnees indicated that life in refugee camps was difficult, but that the camp allowed for survival strategies that were not available in non-camp settings, e.g., trading or other small business activities, assistance from UNHCR and NGOs, and (for some refugees) stipended employment with NGOs operating in the camps. (The survey responses, however, did not suggest that there was a difference in reliance on trading between the camp and non-camp groups.) Generally, those who were self-employed indicated some form of access to working capital, either from a humanitarian agency (UNHCR or NGOs), or from family or friends.

Among the 20 returnees interviewed in Abidjan, a much broader range of assistance – and, to a lesser extent, income sources – was noted by those who had stayed in camp locations. The role of UNHCR, in particular, was more prominent in the accounts shared by camp-based returnees: “UNHCR is like our parents while in exile,” in the words of one respondent.

Camp conditions in Togo were generally considered poor by the Abidjan returnee group, which recalled that there was no potable water, and that there were significant concerns about hygiene and sanitation. For some, this was a motivation to find new places to stay in nearby urban areas.

[19] Intra-group differences in reliance on assistance were not tested for significance.
[20] Differences were not tested for significance.
[21] Difference was significant at 99%.

Source of financial support while in country of asylum (not mutually exclusive)	Camp Interviewees	Non-camp Interviewees	All Interviewees
UNHCR	13	4	17
Family or friends	9	3	12
Self-employment	6	1	7
NGOs	2	2	4
Faith group (church, mosque)	2	2	4
Other employment	2	0	2
Local host	0	1	1

Table 6: Sources of support while in exile, as reported by urban returnees in Abidjan

The survey findings indicate that only a small percentage (9%), of all urban returnees had been displaced by threats or actual violence while in asylum. By this measure at least, the survey did not identify serious protection concerns in asylum. No difference was observed in this indicator in comparing camp and non-camp groups. [22]

Interviews with urban returnees revealed a more nuanced account of protection concerns while in country of asylum. A majority indicated that they generally felt safe, but this was not a universal response:

Did you generally feel safe while in asylum?	Camp Interviewees	Non-camp Interviewees	All Interviewees
Yes	13	8	21
Yes, but with caveats	2	2	4
No	8	7	15
Total	**23**	**17**	**40**

Table 7: Responses on Country of Asylum safety by urban refugees in Abidjan and Bloléquin

For those who mainly stayed in refugee camps, the camp was associated with safety, in large part because of the presence of UN security forces or host country police. For those who stayed in non-camp contexts (both towns and cities), safety was a function of close relationships with their hosts, including some who had relatives in the country of asylum. By contrast, several interviewees who were camp-based refugees expressed fear of the host communities.

Generally speaking, more interviewees indicated that they had not personally experienced problems or tensions with hosts than those who had. Some shared examples of locals welcoming them into their homes while in exile, or of actions by police in Liberia or Togo that extended protection. For those who did report tensions, they tended to mention “jealousies” (*jalousie*) that arose, in some cases over access to water or firewood, in others related to remittances that refugees received and perceptions of relative wealth that these created.

[22] A slightly higher percentage of rural origin respondents indicated that they had been forced to flee while in country of asylum, compared to urban origin groups (13% compared to 8%), but this difference was not statistically significant.

Returns Decision-Making and Process

The table below shows the percentage of household survey respondents returning to Côte d'Ivoire across the period 2011 to 2015.[23]

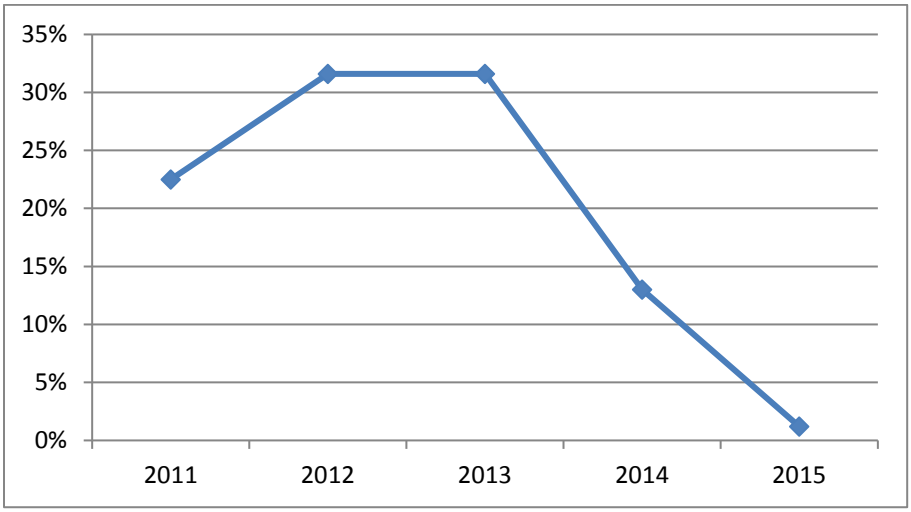

Figure 2: Returns by year, among Bloléquin survey respondents

Within the sample, the pace of voluntary repatriation picked up in 2012 and held at a peak through 2013, with 63% of all respondents indicating repatriation during those two years. A smaller percentage (13%) returned over the course of 2014, with the remaining 1% of the sample having returned during the first half 2015.

There was no difference in year of return observed in comparing urban origin and rural origin urban returnees, and little difference between urban returnees and rural returnees. The comparison of camp and non-camp urban returnees, however, showed a significant difference:

[23] One response indicates return before 2011; this data point is not reflected in the chart above.

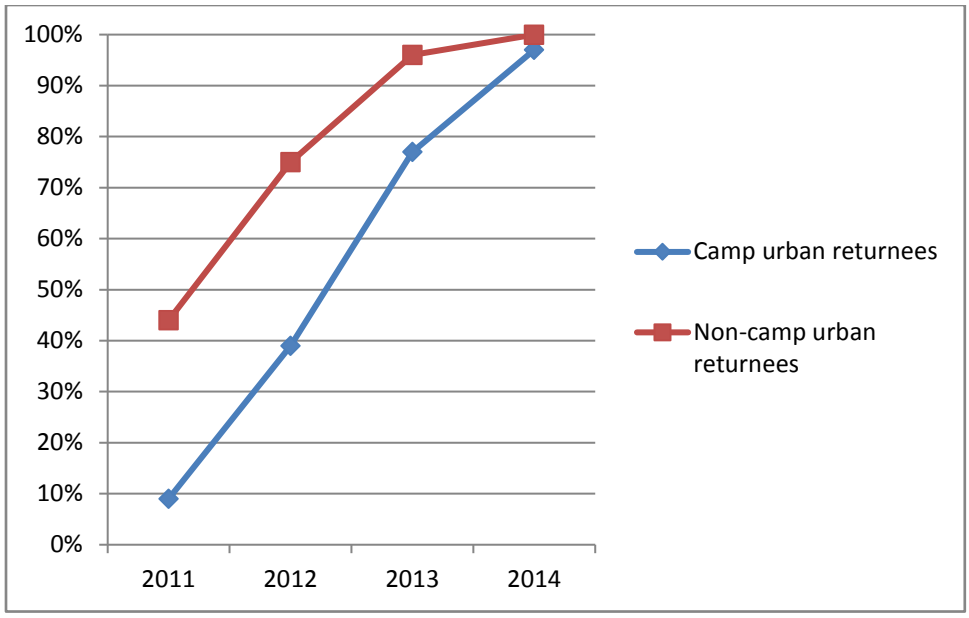

Figure 2: Cumulative returns within Camp and Non-Camp groups, 2011 to 2014

Urban returnees who came back to Bloléquin from non-camp locations were much more likely to have returned earlier, including 44% who returned in 2011 ahead of the start of UNHCR-facilitated voluntary returns.[24] Of camp-based urban returnees, 71% received UNHCR assistance to return, compared to only 22% of non-camp urban returnees.[25]

For more than 60% of all responding households, the decision to return was made primarily by heads of household. There was slightly more collective decision-making within the camp-based group, but not a statistically significant difference.

Interview responses overwhelmingly indicated that return to Côte d'Ivoire was voluntary. There was a range of factors that influenced refugees' decision to repatriate. The household survey responses in Bloléquin suggest that improved conditions in Côte d'Ivoire were a factor, with 69% of urban returnees indicating this as their main reason. Rural returnees were even more likely to indicate this as their main reason, at 84%.

One-quarter of urban returnees indicated deterioration of conditions in asylum as the main factor behind voluntary return; this response rate was roughly consistent across the two sets of sub-groups. Only 12% of rural returnees indicated worsening conditions in exile as their main motivation for return. In the interviews, though, deteriorating conditions were described more specifically and indicated by some urban returnees as a significant reason for their decisions. In returnees' own words: "I was suffering greatly in Mali, and had to return;" "UNHCR had ended assistance; it would be difficult to survive in Togo;" and "Some of our Ivoirian sisters began to prostitute themselves to have something to eat."

The Ivoirian government's call for its people to return home was cited as a second key reason among Abidjan returnees, but was mentioned only once among the Bloléquin interviewee group. Few indicated that an objective assessment of the level of peace or stability in Côte d'Ivoire was a consideration in their decision to return home.

[24] Differences in cumulative percentages of return were statistically significant at 99%.
[25] Difference was statistically significant at 99%.

One lone interview respondent, in Abidjan, indicated that their return was not voluntary. They had been involved in the political campaign on behalf of FPI before the 2011 elections, and had doubts about the safety of return. But, their parents had decided to return home, and UNHCR had stopped its assistance, so they took their luck in joining their family in returning, commenting "I'd still be in Togo, if UNHCR had not cut funding."

Reintegration Experiences

Upon return to Bloléquin, camp-based urban returnees were more likely to have received an assistance package from UNHCR: 69% of the camp subgroup received this, compared to 25% of the non-camp subgroup.[26] These figures mirror the percentages of camp and non-camp refugees who took part in facilitated returns (as opposed to those who self-repatriated). Among all urban returnees, urban origin households were slightly more likely than rural origin households to have received UNHCR assistance upon return, but this difference was not statistically significant. There was no significant difference found between urban and rural returnees, in terms of receiving UNHCR assistance to return, or receiving an assistance package after return.

Most interview respondents in Bloléquin (16 of 20) indicated that they received some form of assistance from UNHCR, NGOs or both. Beyond the UNHCR repatriation support package, this assistance included: support to re-establish small businesses; agricultural assistance; support to rebuilding houses; and food-for-work and cash assistance. Only a few of the returnees interviewed in Abidjan indicated similar kinds of formal assistance, generally start-up capital for business activities that they received from NGOs.

A number of Abidjan respondents referred to "broken promises" on the part of the government, which in their view did not take adequate steps to reintegrate them. A few mentioned support received through social networks, e.g., family, friends or faith community groups. A similar critique was observed among the Bloléquin interview respondents, one of whom stated "the Ivoirian government had promised reintegration assistance but has not taken concrete action… Returnees die more from non-assistance and lack of resources in their own country, than when they were in Liberia."

Overall, the survey responses indicate a relatively high percentage of returnee households in which at least one person is generating income. Employment rates are about even between urban and rural returnees (91% compared to 90%). A greater percentage of rural returnees than urban returnees reported someone in the household looking for work, but this difference was not statistically significant. Among all urban returnees, the employment rate was 98% for the rural origin subgroup and 89% for the urban origin subgroup.[27]

Urban origin does appear to have a relationship with perceived livelihood status and income trends. Among urban origin returnees who returned to a town setting, roughly the same percentage of respondents indicated that income is improving as those who indicated that it is worsening, with the largest percentage indicating that income is staying the same. Among the

[26] Difference was statistically significant at 99%.
[27] In 2014, ILO estimated national Ivoirian labor force participation rates to be 81% for men and 53% for women. (See: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS)

rural origin group, however, these responses were skewed significantly toward trends of worsening income.[28]

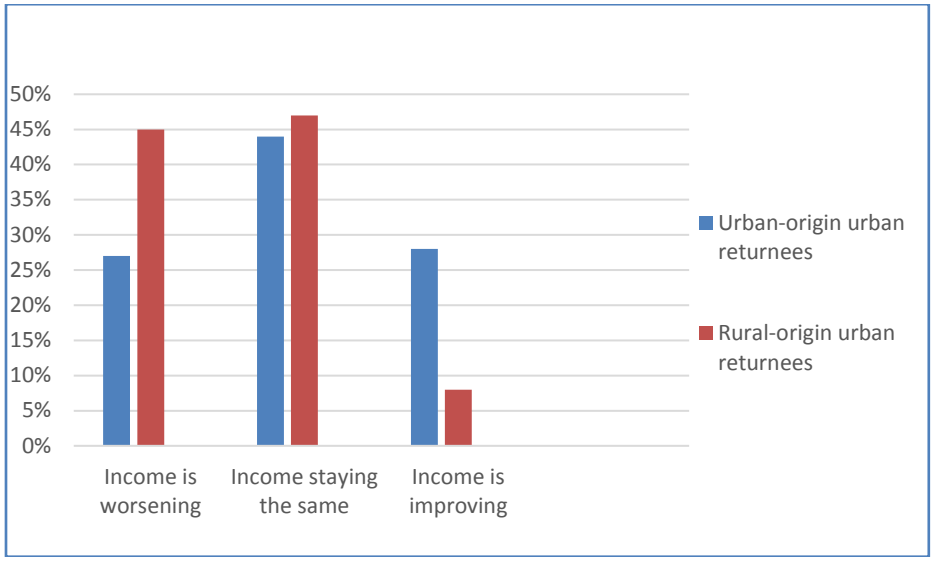

Figure 3: Income trends reported by Bloléquin urban returnees

Returnees in Bloléquin were also asked whether their lives had improved since they returned home. Among the urban origin subgroup, 70% responded "Yes," compared to only 46% of the rural origin subgroup.[29] This suggests a higher level of dissatisfaction among rural origin returnees to the town than among urban origin counterparts. This might be explained in part by the different perceptions of income trends between these two subgroups. Rural origin town returnees also indicated lower rates of support from other relatives, and higher rates of dissatisfaction with local government services, which may also contribute the sub-groups responses on whether life has improved since return.

By comparison, rural returnees responded a bit more positively to these questions than urban returnees, although this difference was not statistically significant. Rural returnees were also more optimistic than urban returnees regarding income trends (see Figure 4). Given that 87% of the rural returnee group was of rural origin, this suggests that rural origin households who returned initially to rural locations tend to feel better off than those who returned directly to the town setting.

Interview responses, in both Bloléquin and Abidjan, painted a somewhat bleaker picture. Overwhelmingly, returnees shared that they did not feel they are on track to recuperate their lives. They cited numerous challenges: lack of work opportunities, food insecurity, poor housing conditions, and risk of eviction. One person interviewed in Abidjan estimated that some 85 to 90 percent of returnees are living in poverty (by comparison, the national urban poverty rate in 2015 was 36 percent).[30] Several described previous asset bases – agricultural land, property, business supplies – that they had lost during or after their flight. Without access to these assets or other forms of working capital, they are in "survival mode," working when they can but without enough income to cover household expenses, much less to accumulate savings needed for small business activities.

[28] These differences were not tested for statistical significance.
[29] This difference is significant at 99%.
[30] Figure based on World Bank data. See http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.URHC?view=chart

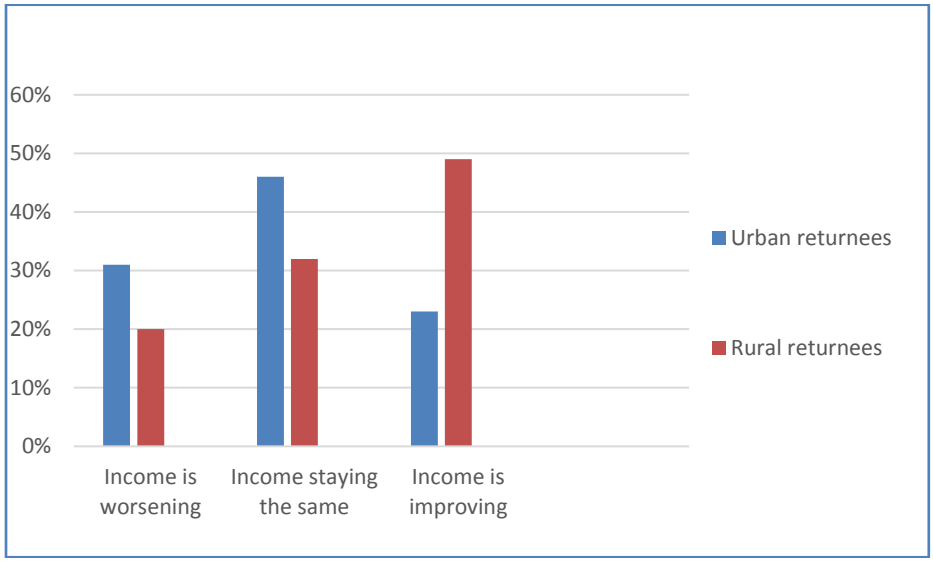

Figure 4: Income trends reported by urban and rural returnees

That said, interview narratives also point to positive developments, at least compared to life in countries of asylum. Returnees noted that food quality had improved (if not always in sufficient quantity), as had hygiene and sanitation conditions. A number indicated that, if nothing else, they are now reunited with their families and can move about freely, which they could not consistently do while in refuge. Several mentioned the intrinsic benefit of simply being back home: "Living at home is better than living in exile in another country," in one person's words.

The household survey results showed that camp-based urban returnees (34%) were somewhat more likely to receive food rations than non-camp returnees (24%), and tended to receive rations for longer periods of time than non-camp returnees.[31] This may indicate that food insecurity has been slightly higher among those returnees coming back from the refugee camp setting; though it is also possible that this difference reflects a bias toward camp-based returnees in targeting or delivery of food rations. By comparison, there was not a significant difference observed in either food security indicator among the urban origin and rural origin groups.

Land access rates reported by the camp and non-camp subgroups were virtually the same: 64% and 68%, respectively. Of all urban returnees who are accessing land, 90% indicated that they are producing, and 85% of those producing are primarily consuming agricultural products (as opposed to selling in the market).

Camp and non-camp urban returnees did not report significant differences in the enrollment rates of school-age children – around 65% for both subgroups – nor in access to health care. A slightly lower percentage of children in rural origin households are enrolled in school, 60%, compared 68%, among urban origin households.[32] (This figure is comparable to the national net primary enrollment rate, which was 69% in 2013.[33]) More significantly, 65% of rural origin households indicated access to health care, compared to 92% of urban origin households.[34]

[31] These differences are significant at 95% and 99%, respectively.
[32] This difference is significant at 95%.
[33] Based on UNESCO figures. See: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.NENR?view=chart
[34] This difference is significant at 99%.

The survey responses revealed a difference in perceptions of local public services between the rural and urban origin subgroups, as show in Figure 3 below.

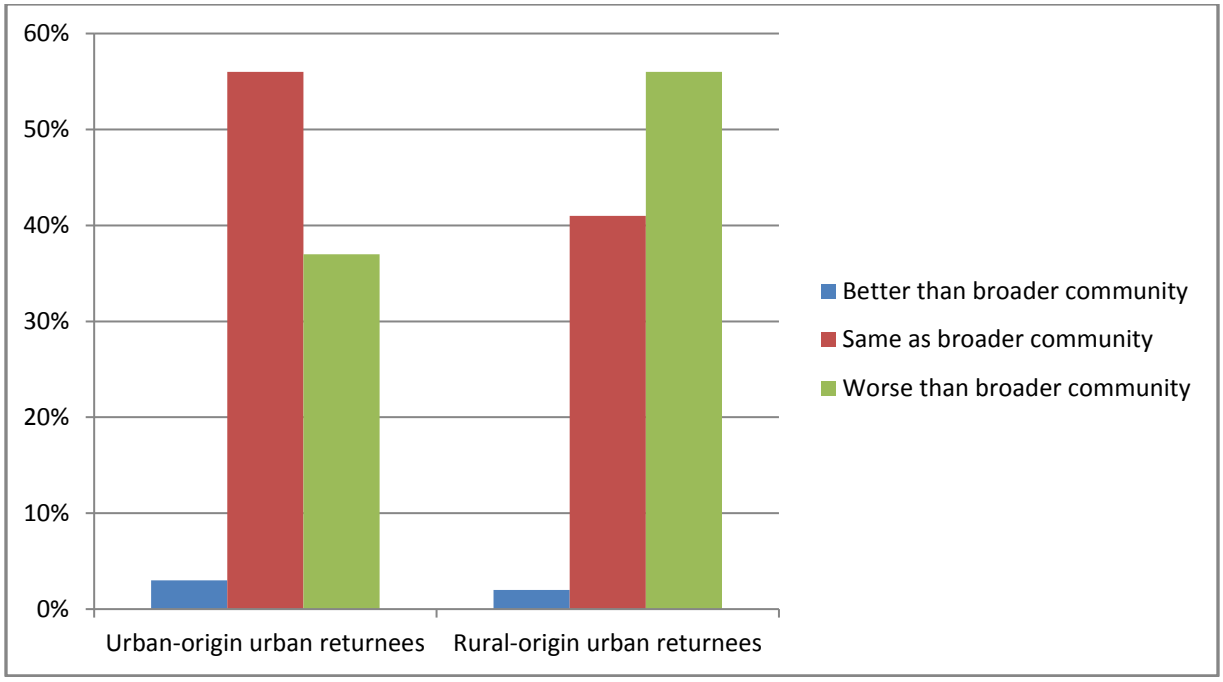

Figure 4: How would you describe local government services provided to returnees?

These responses indicate that confidence in local government services is lower among urban returnees from rural origin locations than among those from urban origin locations.

The household survey results indicate that most urban returnees had found permanent shelter by the time of the CWS survey. This was slightly higher among the non-camp subgroup (96%) than the camp subgroup (87%); and a slightly higher percentage of non-camp returnees went back to the same shelter that they had fled (65%) compared to camp returnees (54%).[35] This difference was greater between the urban and rural origin subgroups, with 62% of the former indicating that they returned to the same shelter as was fled, compared to 46% of the latter. Furthermore, within the non-camp subgroup, there was a large gap between urban origin returnees, 73% of whom returned to the same house they had fled, and rural origin returnees, of whom only 43% returned to their same house.[36]

In the interview responses, challenges in accessing shelter featured more prominently. At least 13 of the 20 returnees interviewed in Bloléquin indicated that they have not been able to return to their original homes, because they were destroyed or not yet rehabilitated. Housing was a key complaint among interviewees in both Abidjan and Bloléquin, with urban returnees noting poor housing conditions, overcrowding (forcing family separation, in some instances), and threats of eviction.

[35] These differences are both significant at 95%.
[36] This difference is significant at 99%.

Urban returnees overall were somewhat less likely than rural returnees to return to their same house or shelter that they had fled, and a bit less likely to own their home rather than rent or live as a guest (see Figure 5).

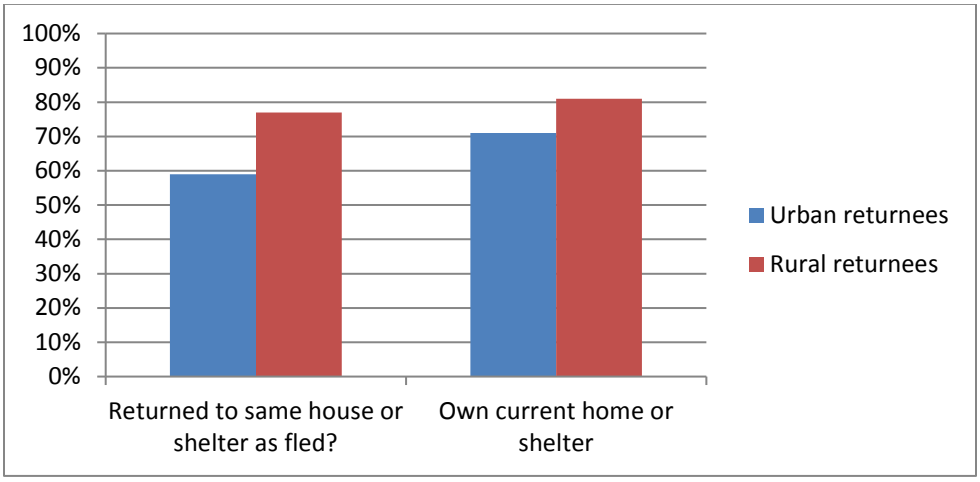

Figure 5: Access to housing or shelter, urban and rural returnees

Household survey and interview responses in Bloléquin indicate a general sense of safety, or at least did not cite specific examples of insecurity. From the household surveys, nearly 90% of all urban returnee respondents indicated that they feel safe in the community where they live. There were no differences between the camp and non-camp groups in perceived safety or physical protection concerns, and only a small difference between urban origin and rural origin subgroups of urban returnees.

This sense of security was echoed in the interview responses, in which 16 of 20 stated that they feel fully safe. The presence of police and military was cited by at least seven returnees as a key factor in feeling secure upon return. One man described how he was afraid at first for his personal security, until more people began returning and the police presence began to increase.

For those few who did express concerns, these were related to perceived political affiliation or actual partisan-related threats. One person indicated concerns for what may happen during the elections scheduled for later in the year.

Responses concerning safety among the Abidjan interviewees were more mixed: 11 indicated that they feel safe, compared to 8 who indicated that they do not. Gangs are the main factor cited for insecurity; this was mentioned even among returnees who said that they generally do feel safe (e.g., "yes, aside from the gangs"). As in Bloléquin, a few returnees expressed some fear that with elections approaching, violence could again break out.

Only 52% of urban returnees indicated that they possess a national identification card, compared to 72% of rural returnees.[37] Camp-based returnees were slightly less likely to possess national identification cards, compared to non-camp returnees (47% versus 58%). Most survey respondents indicated that this is their most important form of identification, so while this difference is small, it may still be relevant in targeting assistance to returnees to ensure access to essential legal documentation.

[37] Difference was significant at 99%.

Conclusions

Broadly speaking, the household survey findings suggest that spending time in non-camp contexts may have had an "urbanization effect" among the returnee population (see Table 7 below).

Rural origin refugees	Total	Urban return	Rural return
Camp	135	40%	60%
Non-Camp	83	59%	41%

Table 7: Breakdown of return location among rural origin refugees in Bloléquin sample

This does not mean that non-camp residence itself is a causal factor, but does suggest that the realities of refugee life outside of camp settings, or the characteristics or circumstances of refugees who are more likely to live outside of camps, influence return decisions.

There appears to have been greater reliance on humanitarian assistance while in exile among rural-origin urban returnees than urban-origin counterparts, as shown by percentages that indicated assistance as main source of household survival while in asylum. Given that rates of registration for assistance were about the same between these two subgroups, this may indicate greater resiliency among the urban origin group, i.e., a stronger asset base, including human and social capital, upon which to draw while in exile. The interviews of returnees from non-camp settings illustrated the value of social relationships, particularly with host community members, in pursuing livelihoods via trade or in maintaining personal safety.

Voluntary returns began earlier among the non-camp group than the camp group. These returns were not formally facilitated by UNCHR, and appear to have begun before facilitated voluntary return was underway. This could be viewed positively, as it suggests that non-camp refugees were able to access information and resources needed to take informed decisions to return, independently from external actors. While this indicates that formal assistance may not be needed for non-camp refugees to return, this does not necessarily mean that "spontaneous" returns should be left out of planning for repatriation and integration; rather, that the kinds and levels of support offered after return needs to be considered separately from the need for assistance to undertake return itself.

There was a stark difference in how well-off urban origin and rural origin returnees perceive themselves, with the latter group responding much more negatively to questions about income trends and whether life was improving, now one to two years after return at the time of the household survey. While access to livelihoods and income-generating activities is necessary for all returnees, rural origin refugees returning to Bloléquin town appear to face – or at least to feel – additional challenges to re-establishing livelihoods. This may warrant particular attention to access to productive assets and essential services by rural origin returnees in urban settings.

A high percentage of survey respondents indicated in that they had secured permanent housing, but, generally speaking, housing was also a common challenge cited by urban returnees in interviews, particularly among those from rural origins who may not have previously had a home in their return location. Efforts to improve access to housing should not solely focus on rebuilding housing that was previously occupied by returnees (i.e., returnees coming back to the same urban area from which they fled); it should also facilitate access to permanent housing among rural origin returnees who may not have a house in the urban area to which to return.

This would avoid inadvertently excluding rural origin returnees who are moving back to towns or cities.

Despite concerns raised about material conditions, urban returnees also expressed the importance of simply returning home or being reunited with their families; and some, the pain of having lost their relationships with loved ones. For those who are struggling, referrals to community-based psychosocial support (if such mechanisms exist) may be helpful.

Crime was noted as a threat in Abidjan much more prominently than in Bloléquin. Protection concerns in larger urban areas may stem more from general criminality and capacity of law enforcement to ensure citizen safety, rather than threats targeting returnees specifically. Assessing the frequency and kinds interactions that returnees have with law enforcement could identify whether there are specific barriers that returnees face in accessing protection, compared to urban residents as a whole.

Summary of Household Survey responses

Côte d'Ivoire: Bloléquin household surveys		All Urban Returnees (n=422)				All Responses (n=552)		
Theme / Question	**Responses**	**Urban origin (n=334)**	**Rural origin (n=218)**	**Non-camp in CoA (n=209)**	**Camp in CoA (n=343)**	**Urban returnees (n=422)**	**Rural returnees (n=130)**	**All returnees**
A. Current Household Livelihood Status								
Are any household members currently generating a cash income?	Yes	89%	98%	90%	92%	91%	90%	91%
(If yes) How many household members of are currently generating a cash income?	1 person	58%	52%	53%	59%	57%	64%	58%
	2 persons	34%	43%	37%	36%	36%	37%	34%
	3+ persons	7%	5%	10%	5%	7%	9%	7%
Are there household members currently looking for opportunities to generate a cash income?	Yes	68%	55%	64%	65%	65%	80%	68%
With regard to income, are things improving, staying the same or getting worse for your household?	Improving	27%	10%	21%	25%	23%	49%	29%
	Staying the same	47%	45%	45%	47%	46%	32%	43%
	Getting worse	26%	46%	35%	28%	31%	20%	28%
B. Flight and Refugee Settlement and Return Profile								
What year did you (or your family, if you were not born) flee Côte d'Ivoire?	2002	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%
	2010	1%	5%	2%	97%	2%	5%	2%

	2011	97%	94%	96%	0%	97%	92%	96%
	2012	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
	2013	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%
What kind of settlement did you (or your family) flee from in Côte d'Ivoire?	Village	0%	52%	18%	9%	13%	64%	25%
	Town	99%	0%	71%	77%	75%	12%	60%
	City	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
	Camp	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
	"Bush"	0%	48%	11%	12%	12%	23%	14%
How would you describe the place (in your country of exile) that you returned from?	Village	29%	44%	81%	0%	32%	28%	31%
	Town	8%	4%	18%	0%	7%	2%	6%
	City	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Camp	62%	52%	0%	100%	60%	70%	62%
	"Bush"	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Did you return to the same area that you (or your family) fled from initially?	Yes	94%	88%	92%	93%	93%	98%	94%
If not, what was the main reason for not returning to the same area that you (or your family) fled from?[38]	No access to land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Original housing was destroyed	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Ongoing community tensions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

[38] Responses to this and the following question were incomplete, and thus percentages have been omitted from the data summary.

	No economic prospects	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Better opportunities elsewhere	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Closer to family	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Did you plan to return to Bloléquin? (For those who did not return to place from which they had initially fled)	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
What kind of settlement did your household return to?	Village	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	93%	22%
	Town	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	76%
	City	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Camp	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	1%
	"Bush"	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Did you return from the same country that you (or your family) first fled to?	Yes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
C. Refugee Assistance and Livelihood in Asylum								
As refugees, did your household register with UNHCR for assistance?	Yes	82%	79%	58%	97%	81%	84%	82%
How frequently did you household receive assistance while you were a refugee?	Regularly	79%	76%	52%	96%	78%	78%	78%
	Occasionally	5%	6%	9%	2%	5%	7%	5%
	Never	17%	19%	39%	2%	17%	15%	17%
As refugees, did your household have access to land for cultivation?	Yes	30%	33%	34%	28%	31%	17%	27%

As refugees, were children in your household able to attend school?	Yes	40%	46%	30%	49%	41%	52%	44%
As refugees, were members of your household able to access medical care?	Yes	90%	89%	81%	95%	90%	95%	91%
What single activity contributed most to the survival of your household?	Farming	8%	17%	16%	7%	10%	8%	10%
	Trading	25%	10%	20%	22%	21%	28%	23%
	Laboring (i.e., work for others)	24%	18%	29%	19%	23%	20%	22%
	Business	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
	Assistance	33%	53%	27%	46%	38%	42%	39%
	Other / NA	9%	2%	11%	5%	7%	4%	5%
While in refuge, was your household ever displaced by violence or the threat of violence?	Yes	8%	13%	12%	7%	9%	7%	9%
If yes, when forced to flee, where did you mostly seek shelter or safety?	Town/City	28%	8%	35%	6%	21%	0%	17%
	Refugee / IDP Camp	44%	54%	10%	89%	47%	44%	47%
	Village	20%	38%	50%	0%	26%	50%	32%
	"Bush"	8%	0%	5%	6%	5%	0%	4%
D. Decision to Return								
What year did you return to Côte d'Ivoire?	2005	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	2011	23%	22%	44%	9%	23%	21%	22%
	2012	30%	30%	31%	30%	30%	36%	32%
	2013	30%	37%	22%	38%	32%	32%	32%
	2014	15%	9%	4%	20%	14%	12%	13%
	2015	2%	2%	0%	3%	2%	0%	1%

How was the decision made for your household to return to Côte d'Ivoire?	Collectively	23%	20%	19%	24%	22%	32%	24%
	By the household head	61%	71%	66%	62%	63%	65%	64%
	Individually	16%	9%	15%	13%	14%	4%	12%
What was the most significant factor informing your household's decision to return?	Improved conditions in Côte d'Ivoire	69%	71%	70%	69%	69%	84%	73%
	Deterioration of conditions in CoA	24%	27%	27%	23%	25%	12%	22%
	Family-related reasons	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%
	Reduced assistance or camp closure	5%	2%	3%	5%	4%	3%	4%
E. Experience of Return								
Did you return to Côte d'Ivoire with UNHCR assistance?	Yes	53%	46%	22%	71%	51%	52%	51%
By what means of travel did you return to Côte d'Ivoire?	Moto	4%	4%	2%	5%	4%	2%	3%
	Bus or truck	64%	58%	42%	77%	63%	59%	62%
	Private vehicle	5%	2%	8%	2%	5%	3%	4%
	Walking	19%	17%	35%	7%	18%	22%	19%
	Other / NA	8%	18%	13%	9%	10%	15%	12%
Following Return, did you receive an assistance package from UNHCR?	Yes	53%	46%	25%	69%	51%	49%	51%

Did you receive a food ration following your return?	Yes	28%	35%	24%	34%	30%	24%	28%
Is your household still receiving a food ration?	Yes	10%	0%	5%	8%	7%	10%	8%
If yes, for how many months did your household receive a food ration?	0-1 mo	27%	14%	17%	26%	23%	16%	22%
	2 mo	22%	25%	14%	27%	23%	26%	24%
	3 mo	22%	19%	12%	26%	21%	29%	23%
	4-6 mo	17%	36%	37%	14%	21%	26%	22%
	7-12 mo	7%	0%	7%	5%	6%	3%	5%
	13-18 mo	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
	> 18 mo	6%	3%	12%	1%	5%	0%	4%
F. Experiences of Reintegration								
Do you personally feel that your life has improved since returning to Côte d'Ivoire?	Yes	70%	46%	67%	62%	64%	72%	66%
Has anyone in your household participated in any income generating projects?	Yes	24%	17%	24%	21%	23%	20%	22%
Does your household receive support from relatives in the community that you returned to?	Yes	59%	43%	54%	55%	55%	58%	55%
Does your household receive support from neighbors (non-relatives) in the community?	Yes	36%	29%	37%	33%	34%	38%	35%
How would you describe the service provided by local government authorities to returnees?	Same as the broader community	56%	41%	52%	53%	52%	64%	56%

	Better than broader community	3%	2%	1%	4%	3%	2%	2%
	Worse than broader community	37%	56%	44%	41%	42%	34%	40%
Do you or other members of your household participate in Local community activities?	Yes	88%	89%	91%	87%	89%	92%	90%
Do you personally feel safe living in your community?	Yes	90%	82%	88%	88%	88%	95%	90%
G. Access to Land and Shelter								
Since returning, has your household managed to find permanent shelter?	Yes	91%	85%	96%	87%	90%	90%	90%
How many months did it take for your household to find permanent shelter?	0 mo.	11%	0%	9%	8%	8%	35%	15%
	1 mo.	37%	39%	35%	39%	38%	16%	33%
	2 mo.	9%	8%	9%	9%	9%	10%	9%
	3 mo.	14%	10%	15%	12%	13%	23%	15%
	4-6 mo.	12%	17%	11%	16%	13%	8%	12%
	7-12 mo.	9%	12%	12%	9%	11%	6%	9%
	13-18 mo.	3%	5%	5%	2%	4%	1%	2%
	> 18 mo.	3%	8%	5%	4%	4%	1%	4%
How did your household find shelter after returning?	Provided by local community	48%	93%	60%	57%	58%	50%	56%
	Provided by local authorities	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%

	Reclaimed previous housing	40%	6%	28%	35%	32%	37%	33%
	Built by household members	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
	Family-related access	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	8%	2%
	Other / NA	9%	0%	9%	6%	8%	4%	8%
Did your household return to the same house (shelter) from which it fled?	Yes	62%	46%	65%	54%	59%	77%	62%
On what basis do you live in your current shelter?	Ownership	72%	67%	75%	68%	71%	81%	73%
	Rent	16%	25%	15%	21%	18%	3%	15%
	Guest (non paying)	12%	8%	11%	12%	11%	15%	12%
Since returning, has your household been able to access land for cultivation?	Yes	66%	64%	68%	64%	66%	90%	71%
On what basis was your household able to access this land?	Recovered land	92%	89%	91%	91%	91%	95%	92%
	Land provided by community	8%	11%	9%	9%	9%	3%	7%
If accessing land, does your household currently produce anything from this land?	Yes	92%	82%	87%	91%	90%	94%	91%
If yes, is this produce sold or consumed by the household?	Sold for cash	18%	24%	18%	20%	19%	16%	18%
	Consumed by household	82%	76%	82%	80%	81%	84%	82%

H. Access to Documentation								
Do all members of your household over the age of 16 years have a National Identity Card?	Yes	54%	44%	58%	47%	52%	72%	56%
Has the birth of all persons in this household been registered with the Côte d'Ivoire authorities?	Yes	81%	73%	79%	78%	79%	80%	79%
For you personally, what is the most important identity document that you possess?	None - no identity documents	10%	15%	9%	13%	11%	8%	11%
	National Identity Card	85%	74%	87%	79%	82%	87%	83%
	Birth Certificate	2%	6%	2%	3%	3%	0%	2%
	Other / NA	3%	5%	2%	4%	4%	5%	4%
I. Access to Education and Health Care								
Do all children between 5 and 18 years of age attend school?	Yes	68%	60%	65%	67%	66%	58%	64%
Do HH members have access to health care, in the event of illness?	Yes	92%	65%	84%	87%	86%	89%	87%
What kind of health care facility is most important to you?	Government	99%	100%	99%	99%	99%	100%	99%
	Private	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%

Section 4: Rwanda Case Study

More than one million Rwandans fled their country in 1994, in the wake of genocide and civil war that took the lives of an estimated 500,000 to one million people.[39] Refugee camps in Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire were home to Rwandan refugees numbering in the tens to hundreds of thousands, with refugees also taking shelter in local communities and isolated forest lands.

The CWS research focused on returnees to Gisenyi, a city in northwestern Rwanda that borders the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, formerly Zaire). Gisenyi shares a border with Goma in the DRC, which served as a major point of crossing for Rwandans who fled the country during the 1994 exodus.

For Rwandan refugees who had fled into the northeastern part of the country then known as Zaire, threats persisted while in asylum, as camps were known to be home to armed groups that had escaped across Rwanda's borders into neighboring countries. Armed conflict, marking the start the start of the First Congo War, became the backdrop for the initial waves of returns among Rwandans displaced during the 1994 crisis.

As of 1996, UNHCR had estimated that 500,000 Rwandans who had fled in 1994 had returned home, with another 700,000 remaining in asylum.[40] By 2016, more than two decades later, approximately 300,000 Rwandans who had fled in 1994 remain officially recorded as living in exile.[41] Rwandan government statistics show that more than 3.4 million persons have repatriated to the country between 1994 and 2013, including (but not limited to) refugees displaced during the 1994 crisis.[42] Returning refugees continue to receive transportation and a modest return stipend, and other targeted support based on socioeconomic needs, through a voluntary repatriation support program that UNHCR administers.

As of the launch of this research project in late 2014, there had not been a recent evaluation of repatriation support in Rwanda, nor of refugee decision-making with regards to returns. At that time, a new campaign was being launched to disseminate information about repatriation assistance to Rwandans living in countries of asylum. In July 2016, the deadline for Rwandans in exile to request assistance to repatriate was extended an additional year, through December 31, 2017.[43]

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[39] MSF, *Genocide of Rwandan Tutsi 1994,* http://speakingout.msf.org/en/genocide-of-rwandan-tutsi. This was not the first large-scale refugee crisis that Rwanda had experienced, most notably preceded by the flight of an estimated 300,000 Rwandans during civil conflict between 1959 and 1962. For the purposes of the CWS study, focus was limited to returns of refugees who had fled in or after 1994.

[40] MSF, *Hunting and Killing of Rwandan Refugees in Zaire-Congo: 1996-1997,* http://speakingout.msf.org/en/the-hunting-and-killing-of-rwandan-refugees-in-zaire-congo.

[41] Jean Mugabo, "UNHCR extends deadline for repatriation support of Rwandan refugees," *The Rwanda Focus*, July 31, 2016. http://www.focus.rw/wp/2016/07/unhcr-extends-deadline-for-repatriation-support-of-rwandan-refugees/

[42] Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR), *Les Programmes de Repatriement et Reintegration des Refugies Rwandais & Apercu sur le Progres Socio-Economique au Rwanda*, 2014.

[43] Assistance to repatriate voluntarily had been set to end on December 31, 2016.

Overview of Data Collection

Field research took place in Gisenyi, Rwanda in April 2016, including collection of household survey data and semi-structured interviews. Data collection was led by two researchers at the Gisenyi campus of Kigali Independent University (ULK), working with eight Rwandan enumerators and a CWS data integrity specialist.

Gisenyi is an urban administrative sector in northwestern Rwanda, with an estimated population of 106,000. It neighbors the larger city of Goma, located across the border in the DRC. Gisenyi is a hub for cross-border trade with the DRC, which makes up one of its leading forms of economic activity.

Gisenyi was identified as a focus for the Rwanda field research following a preparatory mission to the country in February 2015, in part based on feedback from the UNHCR country office. As Gisenyi is a regional urban center rather than a national capital, CWS anticipated that research in this location could shed further light on dynamics in mid-sized urban areas.

Figure 6: Map of Rwanda (Source: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/rwanda.html)

The household survey was conducted in six of Gisenyi's seven cells, excluding one cell in which the population is mainly constituted of settled Rwandans who had not fled the country in or after 1994. Using a stratified sampling approach, enumerators sought responses from 10 households per each identifiable urban village within these six cells.[44]

[44] Cells are the second-lowest administrative unit in Rwanda's governance structure, and villages are the lowest administrative unit (this term is used in both urban and rural areas). One cell may comprise a number of villages.

Name of Cell	Number of Urban Villages	Target sample size for Cell
1. Umuganda	9	90
2. Kivumu	8	80
3. Nengo	6	60
4. Amahoro	5	50
5. Bugoyi	9	90
6. Rubavu	5	50
TOTAL	42	420

Table 8: Sampling targets by neighborhood in Gisenyi

A total of 416 surveys were conducted based on this sampling strategy. Respondents included 215 women and 201 men. The mean age of respondents was 45 and the median age was 43.

ULK contacted heads of villages before enumerators were deployed, to advise them of the data collection process. Village heads provided household lists, from which 10 households were randomly selected for response to the survey. Generally, enumerators located households independently; in some cases, village heads accompanied enumerators in locating households.

As the survey was administered during daytime hours, some household heads were not available, in which case responses were provided by spouses or adult children. In cases of younger respondents, information available on experiences during the household's time in exile was limited, given that some 20 years had passed since their families returned.[45]

Household surveys took place over a 12-day period. Its timing unfortunately overlapped with Rwanda's annual genocide commemoration week, which meant it was a particularly emotional and painful time for some respondents. Household respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could stop answering questions at any point. Some did decline to answer certain questions, and enumerators reported that others appeared hesitant at various points, which may suggest that certain topics raised fears or anxieties among respondents.

Urban and Rural Breakdown of Responses

Respondents were asked to indicate their main location (a) before flight, (b) while in country of asylum, and (c) upon return to Rwanda. Response options were grouped together to reflect urban locations (town or city) or rural locations (village or "bush", i.e., non-settled locations such as forests, or camps in the asylum context).

One point of comparison that CWS used in its analysis of the household survey responses was place of origin. As shown below, rural origin returnees made up a slight majority of the respondents, based on the survey responses of location before flight.

[45] 8% of respondents were 30 years old or younger.

Place of origin before fleeing	Number	Percentage
Urban origin (i.e., town, city)	170	40.9%
Rural origin (i.e., village, bush, camp)	245	58.9%
N/A	1	0.2%

Table 9: Origin of returnees in Gisenyi sample

Location upon return	Number	Percentage
Urban (i.e., town, city)	239	57.5%
Rural (i.e., village, bush)	177	42.5%

Table 10: Return location among returnees in Gisenyi sample

As in the Côte d'Ivoire sample, these responses suggest that, broadly speaking, forced displacement correlates with urbanization effect: the percentage of returnees who returned to an urban area was greater than the percentage that had fled from an urban area.

Main location in country of asylum	Number	Percentage
Urban (i.e., city, town)	115	27.6%
Rural (i.e., village, bush, camp)	301	72.4%

Table 11: Main location during asylum of returnees in Gisenyi sample

Type of location in country of asylum	Number	Percentage
Camp	194	46.6%
Non-camp (i.e., village, town, city, bush)	222	53.4%

Table 12: Type of location during asylum of returnees in Gisenyi sample

Just over half of the respondents indicated that, while in asylum, they mainly lived in non-camp settings. For the purpose of this case study, these camp and non-camp sub-sets served as a second point of comparison among the urban returnee group, as was used in analysis of the Côte d'Ivoire household survey responses.

A third point of comparison was between urban returnees who had spent time in urban and rural locations while in exile. As in Bloléquin, most respondents indicated that they mainly spent time in rural areas, but as there was a sizeable minority (27%) that reported mainly living in towns or cities, this comparison was included as part of the Gisenyi analysis.

A fourth point of comparison was between the urban returnees (i.e., those who indicated a return to town location) and rural returnees (i.e., those who indicated a return to village, camp or bush location). As shown in Table 3, 42.5% of respondents indicated that they had returned to a rural location upon repatriation to Rwanda. This group reflects onward movement from rural locations to the Gisenyi urban area at some point after repatriation.

Experiences in Displacement and Flight

Within the household survey sample, flight largely occurred in 1994, with more than 95% of the all respondents indicating that they fled that year. Among the urban returnees, there was a slight difference in responses when broken down by origin, with 98% of urban origin respondents fleeing in 1994 compared to 93% of rural origin respondents; 5% of the latter sub-set indicated that they fled in 1995. As might be expected, interviewees indicated conflict, violence and insecurity as key reasons driving their flight. One interviewee indicated that they fled the 1994 genocide itself rather than its violent aftermath, but this appears to be an outlier.

The vast majority of respondents to the household survey spent all or most of asylum in Zaire, apart from one person who was primarily in Burundi during exile. Interview respondents also were primarily in Zaire, particularly North Kivu province. A number of asylum locations were mentioned during interviews, including Kibumba and Mugunga refugee camps, rural villages in Masisi district, and the city of Goma.

The non-camp subgroup of urban returnees was largely urban in origin: 37% of respondents indicated they had fled from a town and 31% from a city. This "urban character" is even more prominent if only considering urban locations in the country of asylum. In this subgroup, 45% indicated they had fled from a town and 43% from a city, with only 12% indicating that they had fled from a rural location in Rwanda. This suggests that urban asylum locations were, in this case, primarily comprised of urban Rwandans. The composition of rural asylum destinations was more mixed, and included Rwandans who had fled from towns and cities, as well as villages, IDP camps and "the bush" (based on responses of urban returnees in the sample).

Conditions and Experiences in Asylum

In the context of asylum, residence in a camp as opposed to a non-camp setting was strongly correlated with access to essential services. Nearly all (95%) camp-based urban returnees indicated that they received assistance either regularly or occasionally, but close to two-thirds (63%) of the non-camp subgroup indicated that they had *never* received assistance while in the country of asylum. Only 32% of non-camp urban returnees had registered with UNHCR for assistance when in asylum, compared to 95% of the camp subgroup.[46] By contrast, the rates of registering for and accessing assistance between the urban and rural origin subgroups were almost identical, suggesting that this factor was unrelated to access to assistance.

Access to education by school-age children was reported as higher among urban origin returnees (50%) than rural origin returnees (36%), and to a lesser extent was higher among the camp subgroup (42%) than the non-camp subgroup (35%). From the interviews, it appears that older children and youth were unable to continue secondary or post-secondary education while in asylum, whereas younger children were more able to access educational instruction. Within camp settings, this included more formal (e.g., physical school building) and less formal (e.g., classes held under a tree) educational settings. One interview respondent noted that one child was able to complete school while in exile, but that their other children were not – suggesting that within the same household, education may not be equally accessible to all school-age children. One woman who was of secondary school age when in asylum indicated that she was raped and became pregnant, and that this forced her to discontinue her studies.

Health care was more widely accessible than education: more than 90% of urban returnees indicated that household members were able to access medical care while in asylum. The rates indicated were almost the same between urban and rural origin subgroups. The survey data does show a gap between the non-camp respondents, of whom 75% reported access to medical care, and camp respondents, of whom 95% reported access to health care. Several interview respondents noted that their spouses became ill or passed away from illness, and implicitly linked this to the experience of flight and asylum, but not specifically to the ability to access health care.

Different livelihoods sources while in asylum were evident in comparing both camp and non-camp subgroups and urban and rural origin subgroups. Assistance played a larger role in the

[46] This difference was significant at 99%.

livelihoods of camp-based urban returnees than their non-camp counterparts: 38% of the camp subgroup reported assistance to be their main source of income, compared to only 9% of the non-camp group. Business and laboring (i.e., wage labor working for others) were both reported more frequently among non-camp respondents than camp respondents: 35% versus 28% for laboring, and 17% versus 4% for business; whereas trading was reported at about the same rate across both subgroups. In comparing respondents from urban and rural asylum locations, the responses are similar. The percentage that relied mainly on business was slightly higher if considering only urban non-camp refugees than all non-camp refugees (24% compared to 17%), suggesting that the urban context may have been slightly more favorable to refugees building assets and conducting business activities.

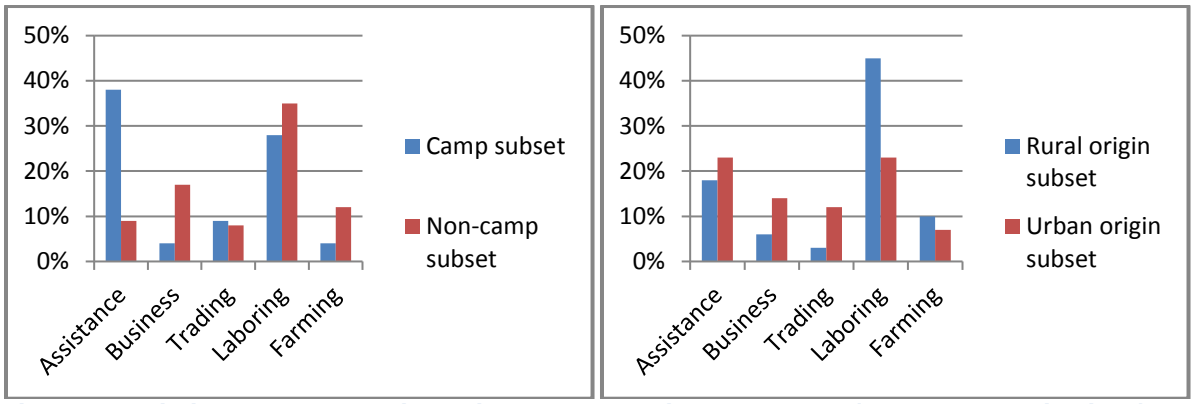

Figure 7: Main income sources in asylum, contrasts between Camp/Non-Camp and Urban/Rural origin subgroups

Among the urban and rural origin subgroups, the largest difference was in the percentage reporting wage labor as their main income source while in asylum: laboring was indicated by 45% of the rural origin subgroups compared to 25% of the urban origin subgroup. Business and trading (with the former interpreted as more formal, and the latter as less formal) were reported as the main income source by 14% and 12% of the urban origin subgroup, compared to just 6% and 3% of the rural origin subgroup.[47] While these percentages are not large for either subgroup, they suggest that urban origin refugees were more likely to have assets needed (including, perhaps, social and financial capital) to engage in commercial activities while in asylum, whereas rural origin refugees were more likely to depend on wage labor. Two interview respondents described receiving remittances from family members while living in urban areas in asylum. This was not a response option in the household survey, but suggests that family or other social ties may also have played a role in livelihood, particularly in non-camp settings.

Access to land[48] for farming was indicated by only a minority of survey respondents, though with some modest differences observed across the two subgroup groups. Land access was more prevalent outside camps, with 25% of the non-camp group reporting land access and 12% indicating that farming was their main source of livelihood, compared to 11% and 4% respectively within the camp subgroup. This might be expected, given the relative challenges of accessing land for any purpose, and particularly cultivation, within a refugee camp setting.

[47] The semi-structured interviews indicated very few examples of either formal business or informal trading activities while in asylum. One respondent indicated that they had a transport business using a car; a few indicated occasional and informal exchanges of food and other supplies with host community members, sometimes as barter and sometimes for cash.

[48] The CWS survey asked only whether land was accessed, not about the arrangements through which land was accessed, i.e., via rental agreements, purchases, extended family, common property, etc.

Rural-origin urban returnees reported a land access rate of 24%, compared to a rate of 16% among the urban-origin urban returnees.

About one-quarter of all urban returnee respondents indicated that they had been secondarily displaced by violence or the threat of violence while in the country of asylum. While this rate was almost identical between camp and non-camp subgroups, among those who reported that they were secondarily displaced, there were differences in where safety was sought (see Figure 8 below).

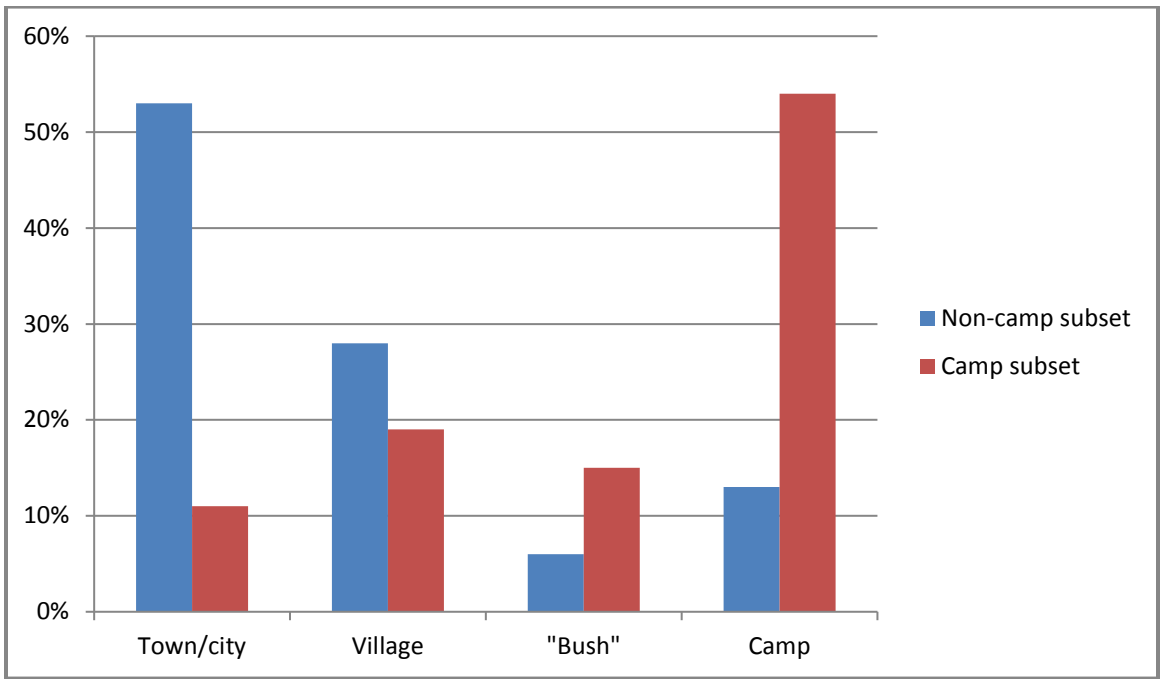

Figure 8: Locations where shelter or safety was sought, among urban returnees who were secondarily displaced while in country of asylum.

Nearly half (46%) of respondents displaced from within camps sought safety in a non-camp setting during their time in exile, while only 13% of those displaced from non-camp settings sought safety in camps. This suggests that secondary displacement in country of asylum contributed a net increase in non-camp populations over time.

Interview responses depicted a much lower feeling of safety and security in camp settings than in non-camp settings. Those who had been camp residents reported that security personnel provided by Congolese military or UN peacekeepers were untrustworthy, powerless, or perpetrators of violence within the camp in their own right. Several recounted assaults or threats of violence made by persons in neighboring host communities, or noted the presence of insurgents that were assaulting civilians in villages just outside their camp. One the other hand, one urban returnee who had lived in Goma while in asylum considered it a safer place than home, in part because of the presence of security personnel.

The interviews revealed a mix of positive and negative relations with local host communities. Some respondents described having local friends or business partners, including for trading goods. Others reported negative experiences and poor relationships with hosts, and recalled incidents where locals would threaten or steal from refugees. Several urban returnees who had primarily lived in camps described the camp setting as isolated and heavily guarded, thus

limiting any opportunities for them to engage with host community members, even local staff of humanitarian agencies.

Returns Decision-Making and Processes

As illustrated by Figure 9 below, among the survey respondents, those who were non-camp refugees tended to return to urban locations sooner than those who were camp-based refugees. The gap in cumulative returns between the two groups is greatest in 1994 and 1995, and then narrows and finally evens out in 1998, by which point about 95% of the entire sample had repatriated.[49]

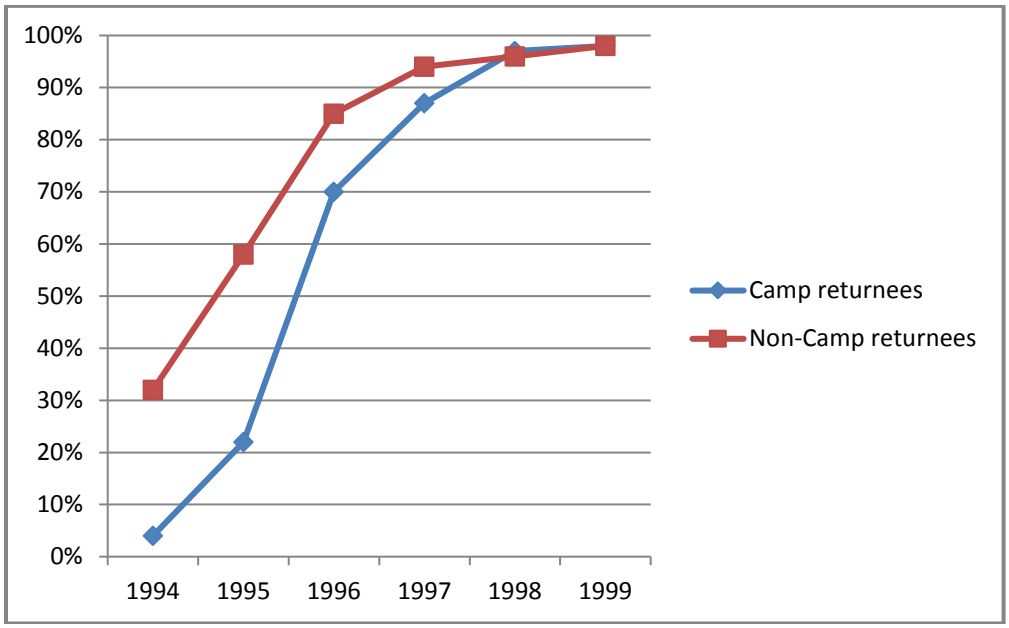

Figure 9: Cumulative percentage of urban returns, camp and non-camp subgroups

By comparison, the pace of urban returns is almost the same when comparing the urban and rural origin subgroups, as illustrated by the curves of cumulative returns nearly mirroring each other (see Figure 10). This suggests that location in country of asylum is the more telling factor of these two, with respect to the timing of urban returns.

[49] Differences in year of return were significant at 99%.

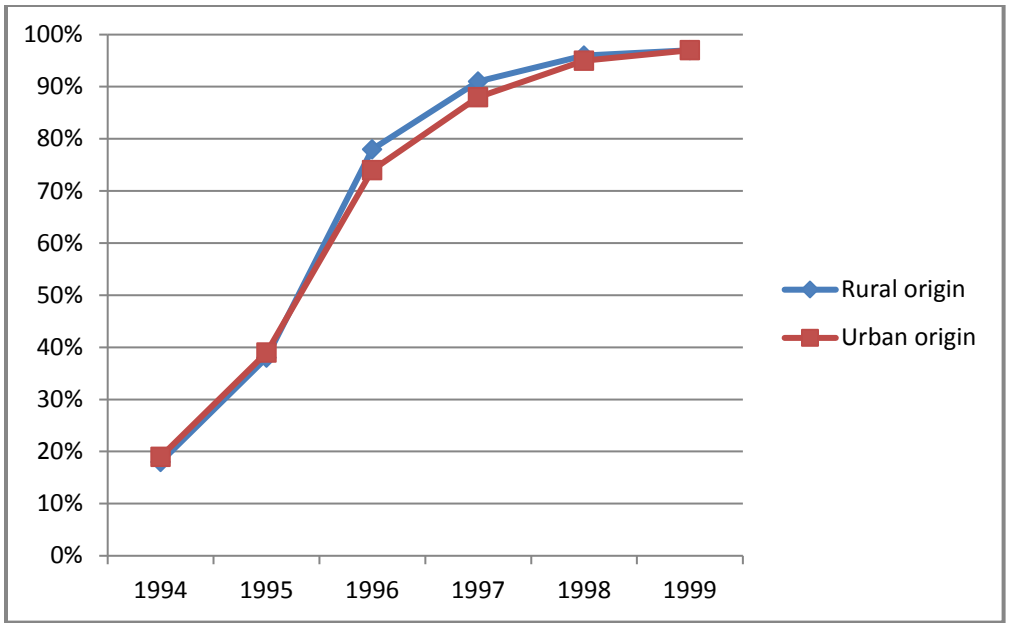

Figure 10: Cumulative percentage of urban returns, urban and rural origin subgroups

Among camp returnees, the decision to return home was slightly more likely to be made collectively than among non-camp returnees (77% compared to 68%), whereas heads of household were slightly more likely to have made the decision in the non-camp subgroup (21%, compared to 13% in camp subgroup). Collective decision-making was also most commonly indicated by both rural and urban origin returnees, at similar rates across those two subgroups.

UNHCR assistance in returning was reported by 41% of camp-based urban returnees, compared to 22% of non-camp urban returnees.[50] This was a larger difference than that observed between rural and urban origin subgroups, though in no one subgroup did a majority indicate that they had received external assistance in returning to Rwanda.

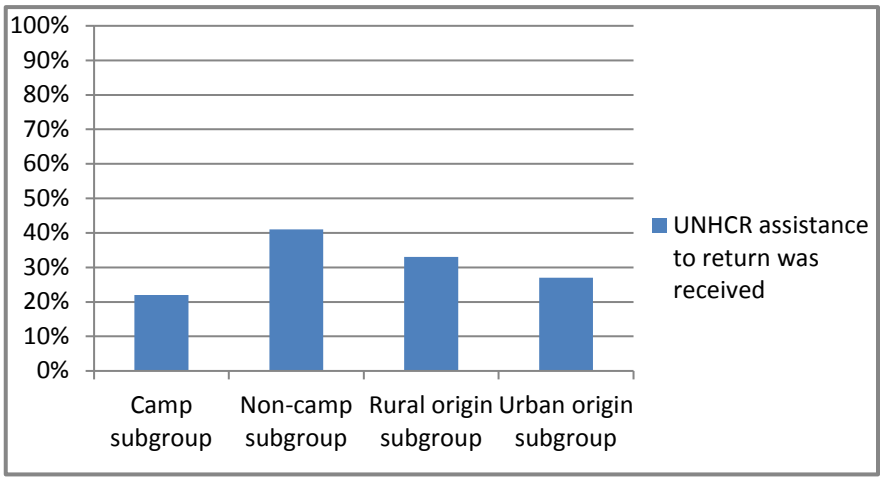

Figure 11: UNHCR support to return, across urban returnee subgroups

[50] Difference was significant at 95%.

UNHCR assistance in returning was noted by 51% of rural returnees, compared to 29% of urban returnees. Overall, 38% of the Gisenyi sample indicated that UNHCR had assisted them to return, meaning the majority of this sample returned “spontaneously."

In the interview responses, individuals largely reported that their return was voluntary (only one of 20 reported having been forcibly returned), motivated by a sense that peace and security had been or was being restored in Rwanda, and by having grown tired of living as refugees.

The majority of respondents indicated that they did return to the same area from which they had initially fled. For the small percentage (14%) which did not, the loss or destruction of their previous housing was the most common factor identified overall. Within camp and rural origin subgroups, though, “better opportunities” was as or more common a response.

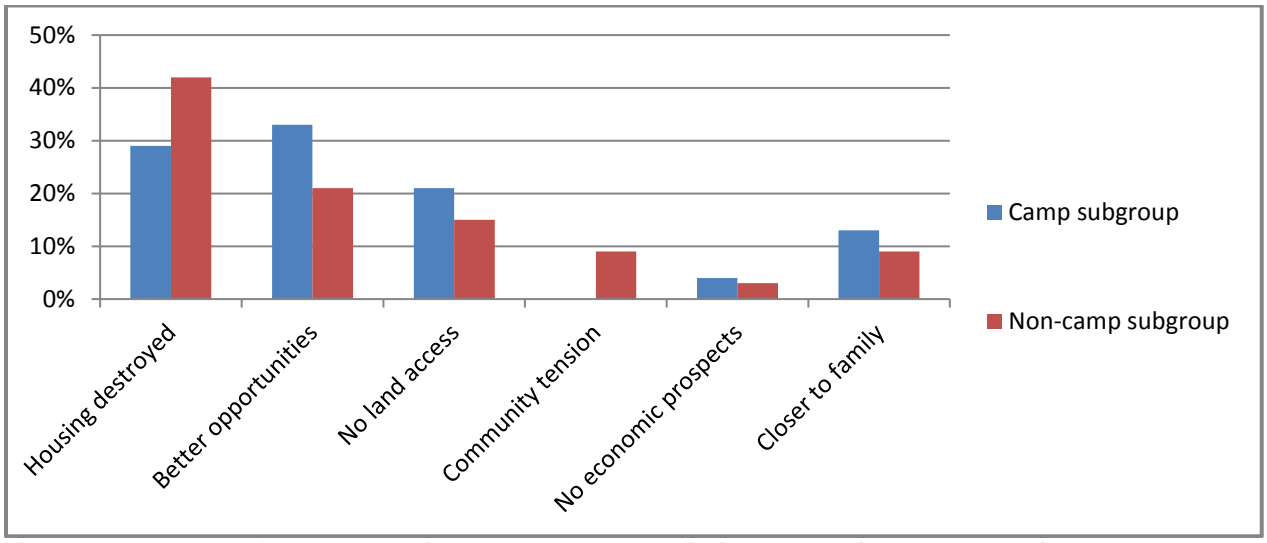

Figure 12: Reasons for not returning to same area as fled, camp and non-camp subgroups

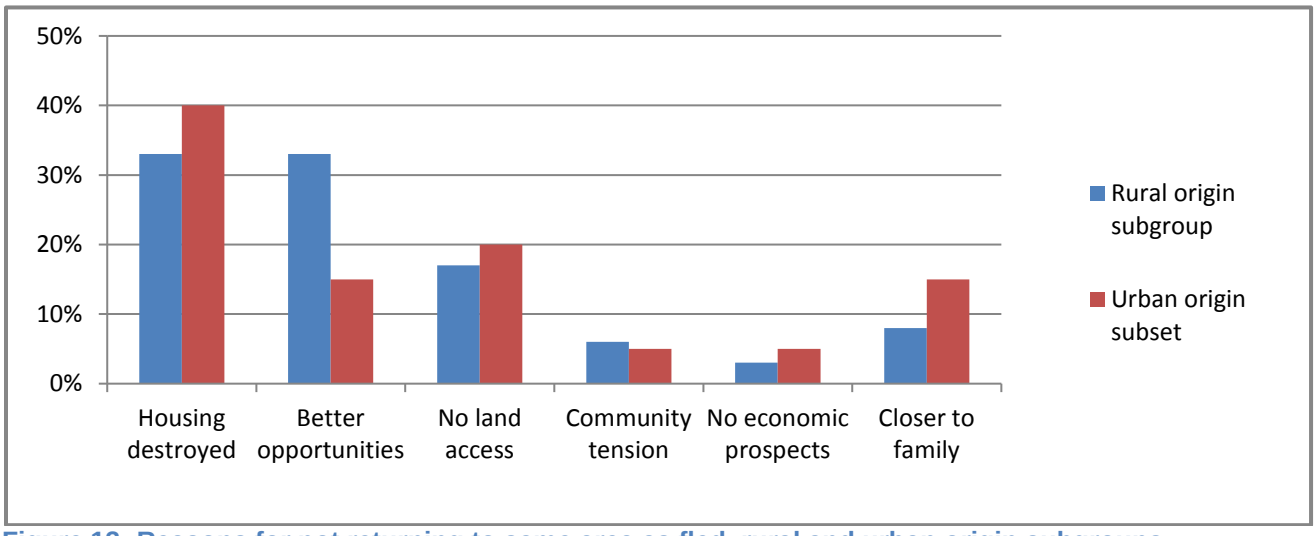

Figure 13: Reasons for not returning to same area as fled, rural and urban origin subgroups

Most of the urban origin subgroup (86%) reported that they returned to the same area from which they fled, compared to 55% of the rural origin subgroup.[51]

Destruction of original housing appears to have been a more significant factor for rural returnees than urban returnees. In both groups, 24% indicated that they were not able to return to the same area that they had fled. Of these responses, 59% of the rural returnee group indicated that loss of their original housing was the main reason, compared to 36% of the urban returnee group. Urban returnees who did not return to their original area were more likely to indicate better opportunities as a main factor.

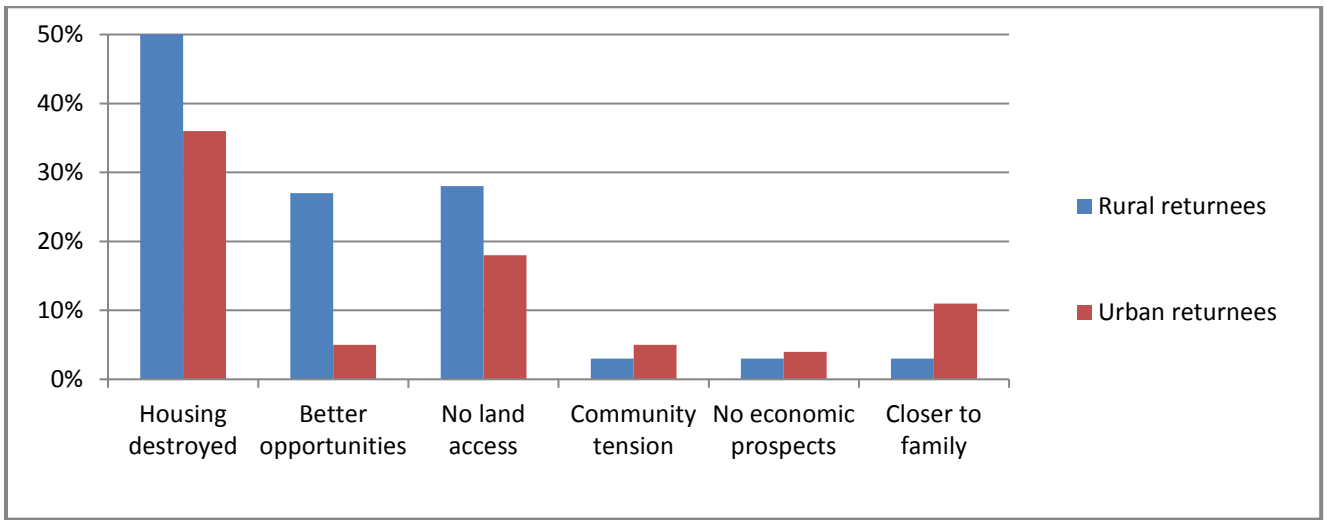

Figure 14: Reasons for not returning to same area as fled, urban returnees and rural returnees

Among respondents who had not returned to the same area from which they fled, the vast majority indicated that Gisenyi was an intentional destination. This was the case across all urban returnee subgroups (ranging between 88% and 100%). While this is a small subset of all respondents, suggests that this intention to return to Gisenyi was part of returnees' decision-making taking place before repatriation, rather than a response to conditions upon return to other locations.

Reintegration Experiences

Now two decades into the reintegration process for most of the households surveyed, nearly 95% of urban returnee responded that life has improved since returning, with similar response rates across both pairs of subgroups (urban and rural origin, and camp and non-camp in exile). This suggests that, over time, urban returnees who have remained in place are subjectively satisfied with their quality of life – one potentially key element in considering return "durable". The household survey, by nature of its sample, did not include anyone who had left (or fled) again after initially returning to Gisenyi. In this sense, it is a biased sample in terms of evaluating the extent to which urban repatriation overall has been durable.

Among urban returnee survey respondents, 78% of camp-based households received a UNHCR assistance package, compared to 52% of the non-camp households.[52] There was little difference in rates of accessing the UNHCR returns package between the rural and urban origin

[51] Difference was significant at 99%.
[52] Difference was significant at 99%.

subgroups. Very few urban returnees participated in NGO livelihoods projects after return, though slightly higher rates were observed in the non-camp subgroup compared to camp subgroup and the urban origin subgroup compared to rural origin subgroup, but these were not statistically significant.

There was an 84% employment rate among urban returnees in the sample, and nearly an identical rate among rural returnees. This figure is comparable to 2014 national averages, in which 85% of men and 86% of women were participating in the labor force.[53] A higher percentage of rural returnees than urban returnees indicated that at least person in the household is seeking income-generating opportunities, but this difference was not statistically significant.

When asked how they felt about income, the majority of urban returnee respondents indicated that it is improving[54], which is likely a key factor in their assessment that their lives as a whole have improved. Overall, 85% of urban returnees responded that income is improving, and a similar percentage reported that at least one person in the household is generating cash income. This rate was 93% among rural origin households and 81% among urban origin households, indicating a slight difference between subgroups; the gap was smaller between camp and non-camp subgroups. Rural returnees were also mostly positive about income trends: 79% indicated that income is improving, a percentage just slightly lower than that among urban returnee respondents.

Around 40% of urban returnee households indicated they have been able to access land for cultivation since returning.[55] This figure is slightly higher among rural origin respondents, but the difference is not statistically significant. The majority of land access has been through recovered land, particularly among the rural origin subgroup. A smaller percentage of urban origin households, 22% have been able to access land that was provided by the community – this is the case for only 3% of rural origin urban returnees. This suggests that few urban households are accessing land via other means, such as land rental markets or state distribution mechanisms. For those households who are accessing land, more than 90% are producing from the land, some for household consumption and others for sale.

More than three-quarters of urban returnees reported that they have found permanent shelter. Among those who responded yes to this question, non-camp returnees tended to need more time to find permanent shelter, compared to camp returnees. Urban origin households were somewhat more likely to have found shelter sooner: 33% found permanent shelter within a month of returning, compared to 20% in the rural origin subgroup.

[53] Based on ILO estimates. See: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS?view=chart.
[54] The CWS survey asked respondents, “With regards to income, are things improving, getting worse or staying the same for your household?” as a subjective indicator of income trends.
[55] The majority of respondents (more than 80%) indicated that land being accessed was “recovered land,” but this does not necessarily indicate the land tenure status.

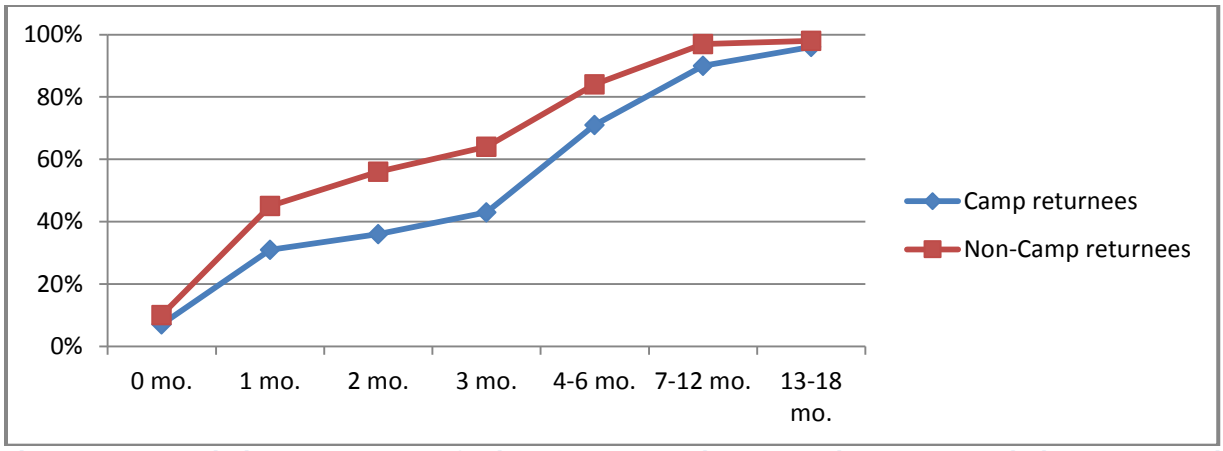

Figure 15: Cumulative percentage of urban returnees who secured permanent shelter, camp and non-camp subgroups

In addition to finding permanent housing more quickly, on average, camp-based urban returnees were also somewhat more likely to reclaim their previous houses than non-camp returnees, although the difference was not statistically significant.

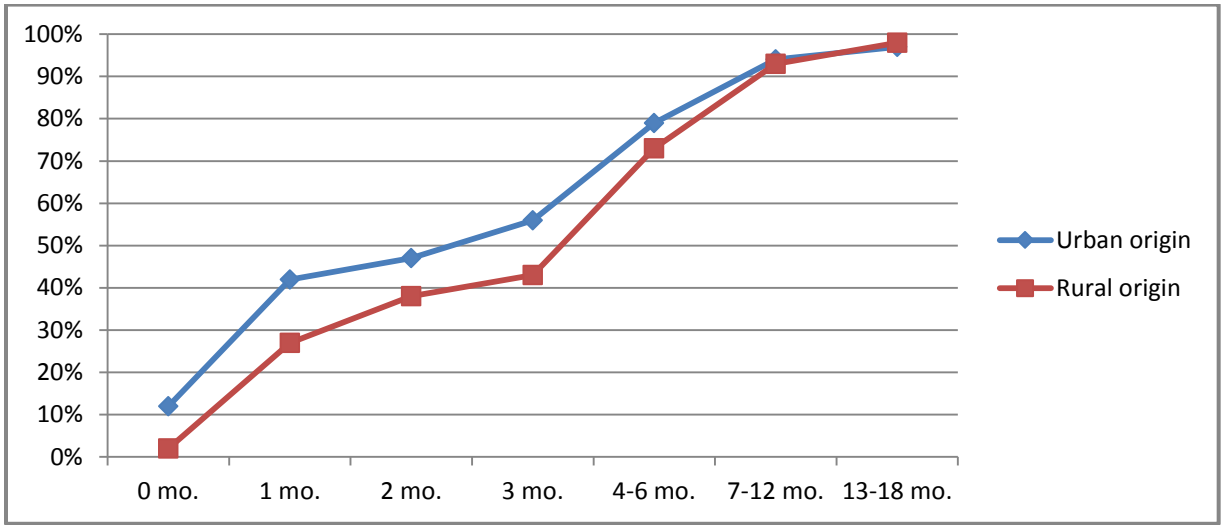

Figure 16: Cumulative percentage of urban returnees who secured permanent shelter, urban and rural origin subgroups

Around one-quarter of household survey respondents did not respond "yes" to having found permanent shelter since their return – even as many of these respondents are some 20 years into their reintegration process. It is not clear whether this reflects their interpretation of "permanent" or other factors. Interview responses largely indicated that respondents are satisfied with their housing, although several interviewees noted that they were not satisfied for various reasons, e.g., shoddy construction of their current house, or a desire to own their own home.

Home ownership was slightly higher among urban refugees who had mainly spent time in towns or cities when in asylum, compared to those who mainly spent time in rural areas, 84% compared to 72%. It was also higher among urban returnees than rural returnees, 77% compared to 62%. These differences, while not large, could be indicative of urban

environments being somewhat more conducive to asset building than rural ones, both while in asylum and upon repatriating.

Access to health care and to education for school-age children is more than 90% across all four subgroups, indicating that access to essential services is generally widespread.[56] Access to documentation, in the form of national identity cards, is also high. Camp-based urban returnees are the only subgroup out of the four in which this was reported at less than 90% (it was 88% for that subgroup). This high level of access to services and documentation was also reflected in the interview responses. An extremely high percentage of respondents – more than 95% of household survey respondents, and all of the interviewees – indicated that they feel safe in the communities where they live.

Generally, interview respondents remember being welcomed, supported and consoled by others in their communities upon return. The household survey data indicates, though, that camp returnees to urban locations were more likely to receive support from relatives upon coming home, compared to non-camp returnees: 64% in the camp group reported this form of social support, compared to 42% in the non-camp group.[57] The urban and rural origin subgroups do not show this difference, suggesting dynamics or circumstances within camp settings may have been more conducive to maintaining these family bonds, or something about non-camp settings that may contribute to weakening these bonds.

One kind of challenge described in interviews was loss of family, or the impact of illnesses or deaths on families' emotional as well as economic well-being. One person replied, "No, before fleeing I lived with my parents, now I have to survive alone." Another noted, "Before my husband passed away, we worked together to earn a living. Now I work alone and raise the orphans. We were better when my husband was alive and supporting us."

Conclusions

Over time, urban returnees in the Gisenyi sample reported nearly universal access to essential services and documentation, and relatively high levels of employment and satisfaction with income trends. These are important indicators of successful reintegration, and appear to be validated by the majority response that life has improved since returning to Rwanda. Relative to current employment rates, fewer urban returnees indicated that they had received assistance after returning, and far fewer indicated that they had participated in livelihood support programs.

The broader lesson from this case appears to be the importance of investing long-term in development processes that create economic opportunities and ensure access to key services such as health and education. In this sense, the experiences of Gisenyi survey respondents may provide an example for other urban returns and reintegration contexts. This does not necessarily mean that urban returnees do not face other challenges – interview responses mentioned high costs of housing and medication, and challenges in maintaining employment or accessing work capital from banks – but these may be more akin to those faced by the urban population more broadly. Additionally, the study's sample did not include any persons who may

[56] Nationally, the primary school enrollment rate was 96% in 2013, according to UNESCO figures. See: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.NENR?view=chart.
[57] Difference was significant at 99%.

have left Gisenyi (or Rwanda altogether) because they were not experiencing similarly robust reintegration.[58]

The percentage of refugees who returned to urban locations in Gisenyi was greater than the percentage of those who had fled from urban areas. This suggests that, overall, forced displacement and return was correlated with a net rural-to-urban migration. The percentage of rural origin refugees who returned to urban locations was about the same between the camp and non-camp subgroups.

Rural origin refugees	Total	Urban return	Rural return
Camp	123	37%	63%
Non-Camp	97	35%	65%

Table 13: Breakdown of return location among rural origin refugees in Gisenyi sample

It is worth noting the intentionality of return to Gisenyi among households that were not originally from this area. Returns intentions surveys may capture this kind of information – though in the case of Rwanda, a relatively low percentage of respondents returned without UNHCR assistance, particularly from the non-camp group. This suggests that efforts to survey refugee intentions should identify ways to reach persons who may return spontaneously (i.e., without facilitation by UNHCR or other formal agencies), so as to have a more robust estimation of the potential in-migration to urban areas that return may generate.

Loss of prior housing was the most common reason given by survey respondents as to why they did not return to locations from which they fled, particularly in the non-camp and urban origin subgroups of urban returnees. This information, if collected in advance of returns, might assist in reintegration planning in other settings, or with future returns to Rwanda.

Nearly one-quarter of urban returnees did not affirmatively respond that they had found permanent housing, even now two decades into their reintegration. While this does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of housing from an objective standpoint (i.e., as measured against national or international quality standards), it may indicate that, subjectively, a certain percentage of returnees may be dissatisfied with their housing situation. This, however, may also be the case among 'stayees' or the general urban population.

The case study shows that it took longer, on average, for the rural origin subgroup to find permanent housing than the urban origin subgroup. A similar gap was seen between camp and non-camp subgroups. This suggests that if housing assistance is limited in urban returns contexts, targeting could focus on rural origin and camp-based returnees as profiles that may benefit more from such assistance.

[58] See Cleophas Karooma*, Reluctant to Return? The primacy of social networks in the repatriation of Rwandan refugees in Uganda*, Refugee Studies Center working paper No. 103, August 2014. Interviews with Rwandans who remain in exile in Uganda suggest that continued fear of persecution, forms of discrimination and property restitution challenges are among factors in decisions not to return home from exile. An earlier study by the Jesuit Refugee Service in 2004 found that 700 of 2,000 refugees who had repatriated to Rwanda later returned back to Uganda.

Summary of Household Survey responses

Rwanda - Gisenyi household surveys		All Urban Returnees (n=239)						All Responses (n=416)		
Theme / Question	**Responses**	**Urban origin (n=150)**	**Rural origin (n=88)**	**Non-camp in CoA (n=130)**	**Camp in CoA (n=109)**	**Urban in CoA (n=94)**	**Rural in CoA (n=145)**	**Urban returnees (n=239)**	**Rural returnees (n=177)**	**All returnees**
A. Current Household Livelihood Status										
Are any household members currently generating a cash income?	Yes	85%	83%	83%	87%	83%	91%	84%	82%	84%
(If yes) How many household members of are currently generating a cash income?	1 person	57%	45%	60%	46%	63%	48%	53%	53%	53%
	2 persons	35%	44%	34%	43%	31%	43%	38%	37%	38%
	3+ persons	8%	11%	6%	11%	7%	9%	9%	9%	9%
Are there household members currently looking for opportunities to generate a cash income?	Yes	58%	65%	61%	61%	58%	62%	60%	76%	67%
With regard to income, are things improving, staying the same or getting worse for your household?	Improving	81%	93%	83%	88%	82%	87%	85%	79%	67%
	Staying the same	11%	4%	10%	6%	11%	7%	9%	16%	12%

	Getting worse	8%	3%	7%	5%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%
B. Flight and Refugee Settlement and Return Profile										
What year did you (or your family, if you were not born) flee Rwanda?	1994	98%	93%	96%	96%	97%	96%	96%	85%	92%
	1995	1%	5%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	2%
	1996	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	7%	3%
	1997	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
	1998	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
What kind of settlement did you (or your family) flee from in Rwanda?	Village	0%	61%	25%	16%	13%	27%	21%	63%	38%
	Town	56%	0%	37%	33%	45%	31%	37%	8%	25%
	City	44%	0%	31%	24%	43%	20%	29%	4%	19%
	Camp	0%	36%	6%	27%	0%	20%	13%	25%	17%
	"Bush"	0%	3%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
How would you describe the place (in your country of exile) that you returned from?	Village	8%	26%	26%	0%	0%	23%	14%	35%	23%
	Town	27%	9%	40%	0%	54%	0%	20%	6%	15%
	City	24%	5%	32%	0%	46%	0%	17%	5%	12%
	Camp	41%	58%	0%	100%	0%	76%	1%	1%	1%
	"Bush"	0%	3%	2%	0%	0%	1%	47%	53%	50%
Did you return to the same area that you (or your family) fled from initially?	Yes	87%	55%	75%	78%	79%	73%	76%	76%	76%

	No access to land	20%	17%	15%	21%	28%	13%	18%	28%	22%
	Original housing was destroyed	40%	33%	42%	29%	28%	39%	36%	59%	45%
If not, what was the main reason for not returning to the same area that you (or your family) fled from?	Ongoing community tensions	5%	6%	9%	0%	0%	8%	5%	3%	4%
	No economic prospects	5%	3%	3%	4%	6%	2%	4%	3%	3%
	Better opportunities elsewhere	15%	33%	21%	33%	33%	24%	27%	5%	18%
	Closer to family	15%	8%	9%	13%	6%	13%	11%	3%	7%
Did you plan to return to Gisenyi? (For those who did not return to place from which they had initially fled)	Yes	95%	92%	88%	100%	94%	92%	93%	82%	88%
What kind of settlement did your household return to?	Village	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	74%	30%
	Town	57%	62%	59%	60%	55%	62%	59%	0%	35%
	City	43%	57%	41%	40%	45%	38%	41%	0%	24%
	Camp	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	26%	11%
Did you return from the same country that you (or your family) first fled to?	Yes	98%	96%	97%	98%	98%	97%	97%	92%	95%
C. Refugee Assistance and Livelihood in Asylum										

As refugees, did your household register with UNHCR for assistance?	Yes	59%	61%	32%	95%	29%	78%	60%	69%	63%
How frequently did you household receive assistance while you were a refugee?	Regularly	49%	50%	27%	79%	24%	64%	49%	46%	48%
	Occasionally	13%	14%	9%	17%	8%	16%	13%	26%	19%
	Never	37%	36%	63%	4%	66%	9%	37%	28%	33%
As refugees, did your household have access to land for cultivation?	Yes	16%	24%	25%	11%	21%	18%	19%	21%	20%
As refugees, were children in your household able to attend school?	Yes	39%	36%	35%	42%	30%	43%	38%	34%	37%
As refugees, were members of your household able to access medical care?	Yes	81%	86%	75%	95%	70%	91%	83%	84%	83%
What single activity contributed most to the survival of your household?	Farming	7%	10%	12%	4%	7%	9%	8%	13%	10%
	Trading	12%	3%	8%	9%	9%	8%	9%	6%	8%
	Laboring (i.e., work for others)	23%	45%	35%	28%	32%	30%	31%	43%	36%
	Business	14%	6%	17%	4%	24%	4%	11%	15%	13%
	Assistance	23%	18%	9%	38%	8%	29%	21%	13%	18%
While in refuge, was your household ever displaced by violence or the threat of violence?	Yes	20%	33%	25%	24%	21%	27%	24%	32%	28%
If yes, when forced to flee, where did you mostly seek shelter or safety?	Town/City	50%	15%	53%	11%	56%	19%	34%	12%	23%
	Refugee / IDP Camp	23%	35%	13%	54%	11%	38%	29%	39%	34%

	Village	17%	35%	28%	19%	22%	26%	25%	45%	35%
	"Bush"	10%	12%	6%	15%	0%	16%	11%	4%	7%
D. Decision to Return										
What year did you return to Rwanda?	1994	19%	18%	32%	4%	28%	13%	19%	21%	20%
	1995	20%	20%	26%	14%	28%	15%	20%	16%	19%
	1996	35%	40%	27%	48%	28%	42%	36%	30%	34%
	1997	14%	13%	9%	18%	11%	15%	14%	15%	14%
	1998	7%	5%	2%	10%	3%	8%	6%	10%	8%
	1999	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	4%	3%
	2000	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
	2002 or later	2%	4%	2%	4%	1%	5%	3%	4%	3%
How was the decision made for your household to return to Rwanda?	Collectively	72%	73%	68%	77%	71%	73%	72%	74%	73%
	By the household head	20%	14%	21%	13%	21%	16%	18%	18%	18%
	Individually	7%	13%	9%	10%	7%	10%	9%	8%	9%
What was the most significant factor informing your household's decision to return?	Improved conditions in Rwanda	95%	88%	93%	92%	93%	92%	92%	76%	86%
	Deterioration of conditions in CoA	5%	10%	6%	7%	7%	7%	7%	21%	13%
	Reduced assistance or camp closure	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
E. Experience of Return										
Did you return to Rwanda with UNHCR assistance?	Yes	27%	33%	22%	41%	18%	36%	29%	51%	38%

By what means of travel did you return to Rwanda?	Aircraft	2%	0%	0%	4%	0%	2%	1%	3%	2%
	Bus or truck	25%	33%	28%	27%	30%	26%	27%	41%	33%
	Private vehicle	7%	10%	10%	5%	6%	9%	8%	4%	6%
	Boat	0%	3%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Walking	66%	55%	59%	52%	63%	62%	62%	51%	58%
Following return, did you receive an assistance package from UNHCR?	Yes	63%	65%	52%	78%	51%	72%	63%	57%	61%
Did you receive a food ration following your return?	Yes	67%	68%	65%	72%	70%	66%	68%	55%	62%
Is your household still receiving a food ration?	Yes	42%	53%	45%	46%	46%	45%	46%	32%	40%
If yes, for how many months did your household receive a food ration?	0-1 mo	50%	42%	44%	53%	42%	48%	47%	40%	44%
	2 mo	13%	28%	25%	11%	21%	16%	18%	20%	19%
	3 mo	0%	9%	2%	4%	4%	4%	3%	8%	5%
	4-6 mo	3%	4%	6%	1%	5%	2%	4%	3%	4%
	7-12 mo	4%	7%	4%	6%	4%	6%	6%	15%	8%
	13-18 mo	15%	7%	7%	17%	7%	15%	12%	10%	11%
	> 18 mo	11%	4%	13%	7%	16%	11%	11%	3%	8%
F. Experiences of Reintegration										
Do you personally feel that your life has improved since returning to Rwanda?	Yes	93%	95%	96%	92%	93%	94%	94%	91%	93%
Has anyone in your household participated in any income generating projects?	Yes	12%	5%	13%	6%	15%	7%	10%	8%	9%

Does your household receive support from relatives in the community that you returned to?	Yes	52%	51%	42%	64%	41%	58%	52%	52%	52%
Does your household receive support from neighbors (non-relatives) in the community?	Yes	30%	36%	32%	36%	29%	35%	33%	47%	38%
How would you describe the service provided by local government authorities to returnees?	Same as the broader community	87%	86%	87%	85%	90%	85%	86%	80%	84%
	Better than broader community	10%	10%	11%	11%	8%	11%	11%	18%	14%
	Worse than broader community	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Do you or other members of your household participate in local community activities?	Yes	98%	95%	95%	98%	98%	97%	97%	94%	96%
Do you personally feel safe living in your community?	Yes	99%	96%	98%	98%	97%	99%	98%	98%	98%
G. Access to Land and Shelter										
Since returning, has your household managed to find permanent shelter?	Yes	78%	76%	78%	76%	80%	76%	77%	72%	75%
How many months did it take for your household to find permanent shelter?	0 mo.	12%	2%	7%	10%	6%	10%	8%	4%	7%
	1 mo.	30%	25%	24%	35%	23%	31%	28%	17%	24%
	2 mo.	5%	11%	5%	11%	4%	9%	7%	16%	11%

	3 mo.	9%	5%	7%	8%	7%	3%	8%	11%	9%
	4-6 mo.	23%	30%	28%	20%	31%	21%	25%	25%	25%
	7-12 mo.	15%	20%	19%	13%	20%	15%	16%	16%	16%
	13-18 mo.	3%	5%	6%	1%	9%	2%	3%	9%	6%
	> 18 mo.	3%	3%	4%	1%	2%	3%	3%	4%	3%
How did your household find shelter after returning?	Provided by local community	20%	30%	26%	21%	30%	19%	23%	34%	27%
	Provided by local authorities	20%	28%	20%	22%	14%	28%	22%	17%	20%
	Reclaimed previous housing	44%	23%	32%	42%	34%	39%	37%	35%	36%
	Built by household members	4%	8%	7%	5%	3%	2%	5%	5%	5%
	Bought or purchased	4%	4%	2%	5%	4%	4%	4%	1%	4%
Did your household return to the same house (shelter) from which it fled?	Yes	68%	43%	52%	59%	60%	41%	60%	57%	59%
On what basis do you live in your current shelter?	Ownership	77%	75%	78%	73%	84%	72%	77%	62%	70%
	Rent	18%	24%	18%	24%	13%	24%	20%	37%	27%
	Guest (non paying)	3%	0%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Since returning, has your household been able to access land for cultivation?	Yes	35%	46%	35%	41%	39%	38%	39%	55%	46%
On what basis was your household able to access this land?	Recovered land	79%	92%	83%	87%	85%	84%	85%	91%	89%
	Land provided by community	12%	3%	9%	7%	3%	11%	8%	7%	7%
	Land provided by authorities	2%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%

	Rent land	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%
	Purchased land	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	0%	2%
If accessing land, does your household currently produce anything from this land?	Yes	92%	92%	93%	91%	91%	93%	92%	85%	89%
If yes, is this produce sold or consumed by the household?	Sold for cash	48%	32%	47%	39%	42%	41%	41%	33%	38%
	Consumed directly by household	52%	68%	53%	61%	58%	59%	59%	67%	62%
H. Access to Documentation										
Do all members of your household over the age of 16 years have a National Identity Card?	Yes	93%	84%	90%	91%	90%	90%	90%	94%	92%
Has the birth of all persons in this household been registered with the Rwandan authorities?	Yes	94%	93%	93%	94%	92%	94%	93%	94%	94%
For you personally, what is the most important identity document that you possess?	None - no identity documents	3%	12%	7%	5%	6%	6%	6%	14%	10%
	National Identity Card	97%	88%	93%	94%	94%	93%	93%	84%	90%
	Other / NA	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%
I. Access to Education and Health Care										
Do all children between 5 and 18 years of age attend school?	Yes	93%	97%	92%	95%	92%	96%	94%	91%	93%
Do HH members have access to health care, in the event of illness?	Yes	99%	95%	99%	96%	100%	97%	98%	99%	98%

What kind of health care facility is most important to you?	Government	93%	83%	86%	95%	89%	90%	89%	89%	89%
	Private	5%	11%	10%	3%	8%	7%	7%	5%	6%
	Other / NA	2%	6%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%	6%	4%

Section 5: Comparison of Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda Cases

The findings discussed in the Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda case studies suggest both generalizations that can be made about urban returns, and urbanization and returns more broadly, as well as case-specific observations that reflect the particulars of these two reintegration cases. In comparing the two cases, some contextual differences and variations in sample characteristics should be noted:

Côte d'Ivoire	Rwanda
Returns to town setting (local hub)	Returns to city (regional hub)
Modest majority camp-based returnees (62%)	Slight majority non-camp returnees (53%)
Urban asylum context negligible (6%)	Urban asylum context small but not negligible (~25%)
Household returns experiences relatively recent (3-4 years prior)	Household returns experiences relatively distant (~20 years prior)

Similarities between the Two Cases

Intentionality in urban returns locations. The majority of urban returnees in both cases indicated that they initially fled from that same area, suggesting that refugees who had fled from rural locations and returned to a town or city location may not have fled far from where they returned. However, among the minority of respondents that did not originally flee from the same area to which they returned, the vast majority indicated that return to Bloléquin or Gisenyi was intentional. This suggests that there could be ways to identify intentions more specifically, and to anticipate returns to urban locations in advance of returns taking place.

Access to services in exile. In both cases, there was a stark difference between camp and non-camp subgroups in registration rates with UNHCR while in asylum. Urban returnees from the camp subgroups reported higher rates of receiving assistance generally, and education and health care specifically, than non-camp counterparts.

Response to threats in exile. Protection concerns in exile were more prominently by Gisenyi returnees than by Bloléquin returnees, as reflected by the percentages who reported having to flee internally within their country of asylum. Among those who face physical threats, though, in both cases camp refugees were likely to have fled to other camp locations, and non-camp refugees to have fled to other non-camp locations.

Returns decision-making and "voluntariness" of return. In both cases, improved conditions in the country of origin were indicated as the primary factor motivating returns. In Côte d'Ivoire, 25% of all urban returnees indicated deterioration of conditions in asylum as their main motivation for returning, and several interviews noted that a reduction in humanitarian assistance made lives more difficult and that this factored into the decision-making process. Rwanda interviews did not indicate reduction in assistance as a factor, but nearly one-quarter of the survey respondents indicated that they had experienced threats while in asylum that forced them to flee. The experience of violence and physical threats in Zaire during the asylum period may also be considered a form of "deterioration of conditions" that factored into returns decisions.

Nature and timing of returns. Urban returnees from non-camp settings began returning sooner than those from camps, in both the Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda cases. 'Spontaneous' returns – i.e., those not facilitated by UNHCR– also were more prevalent among the non-camp returnees than camp returnees. In Côte d'Ivoire, the survey responses show that spontaneous returns preceded the formal launch of UNHCR-facilitated voluntary repatriation. A lower percentage of non-camp returnees received reintegration support packages upon returning.

Protection in reintegration. More than 90% of urban returnees in both Bloléquin and Gisenyi indicated that they feel safe in the locations where they now reside. The most significant mention of protection concerns came from interview respondents in Abidjan, several of whom noted an increase in crime and urban gang activity compared to before they had fled.

Social bonds in reintegration. The survey data from both Bloléquin and Gisenyi show similar rates of support from relatives (55% and 52%) and from non-relatives (34% and 33%) reported by urban returnees. This suggests social bonds existed and could be drawn upon for some, but certainly not all, urban returnees. In both cases, survey respondents indicated high rates (more than 90%) of participation in community activities.

Differences Between the Two Cases

Relative strength of "urbanizing effect" of forced displacement in camp and non-camp contexts. In both cases, there was an overall "urbanizing effect" related with forced displacement, in the sense that more refugees returned to urban areas than had fled from urban areas. In Côte d'Ivoire, though, this effect was more prominent in the non-camp subgroup of urban returnees than in the camp subgroup, as illustrated below. No similar difference was observed in these two subgroups in the Rwanda case.

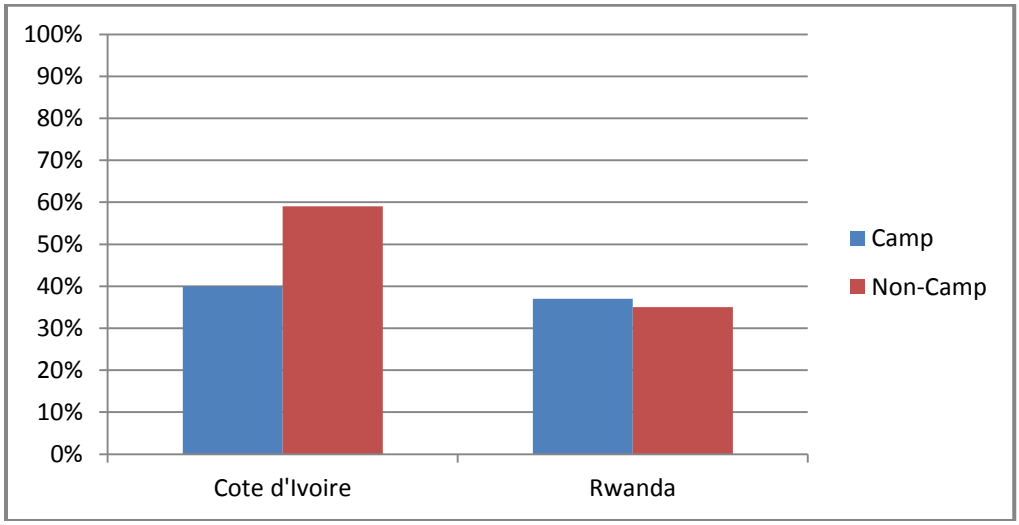

Figure 17: Percentage of rural origin respondents who returned to urban areas

Access to reintegration support packages. As noted earlier, in both cases the non-camp returnees were less likely to have received reintegration support than the camp returnees. In Côte d'Ivoire, the percentages of urban returnees who received support packages closely mirrored the percentages of those whom UNHCR assisted in repatriating – i.e., access to support packages appears to depend on whether someone returned spontaneously or with UNHCR facilitation. In Rwanda, though, rates of receiving reintegration support appear to have

been than rates of returning with UNHCR assistance, albeit still showing a gap between the camp and non-camp subgroups.

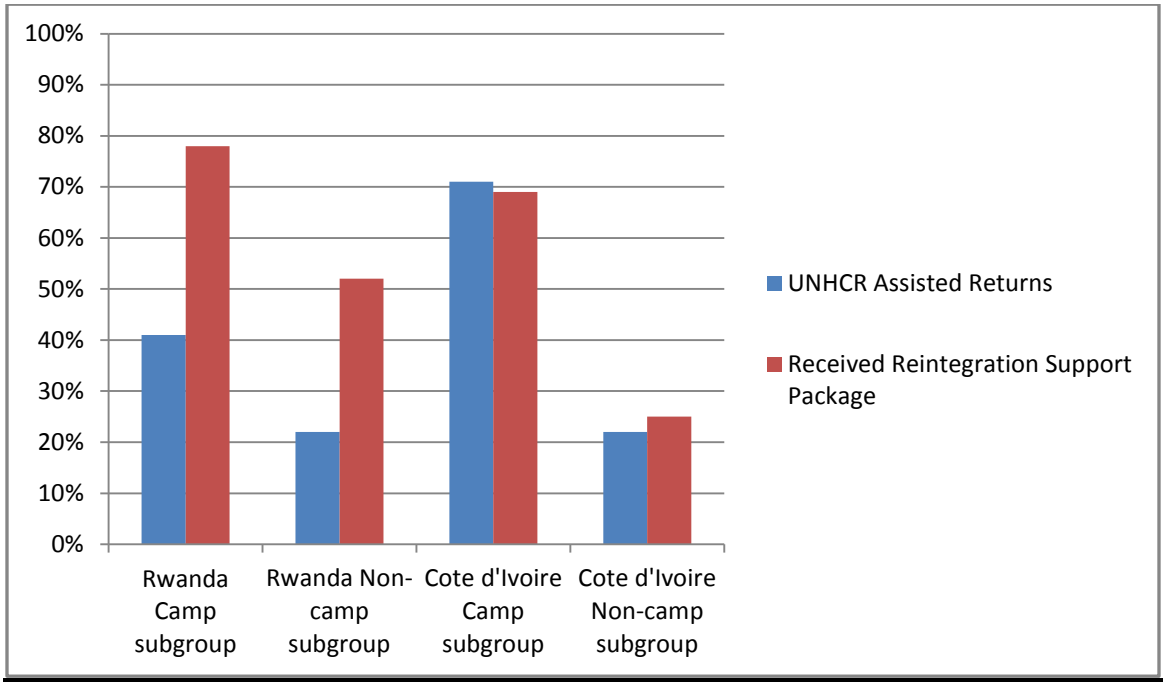

Figure 18: Access to Reintegration Support compared to rates of UNHCR Assistance in Returns

Perceptions of income trends and public services. In Côte d'Ivoire, there appears to be greater dissatisfaction with income-generating opportunities and local public services among rural origin returnees to Bloléquin town than among urban origin returnees. Such a gap between rural origin and urban origin returnees was not observed within the Gisenyi sample.

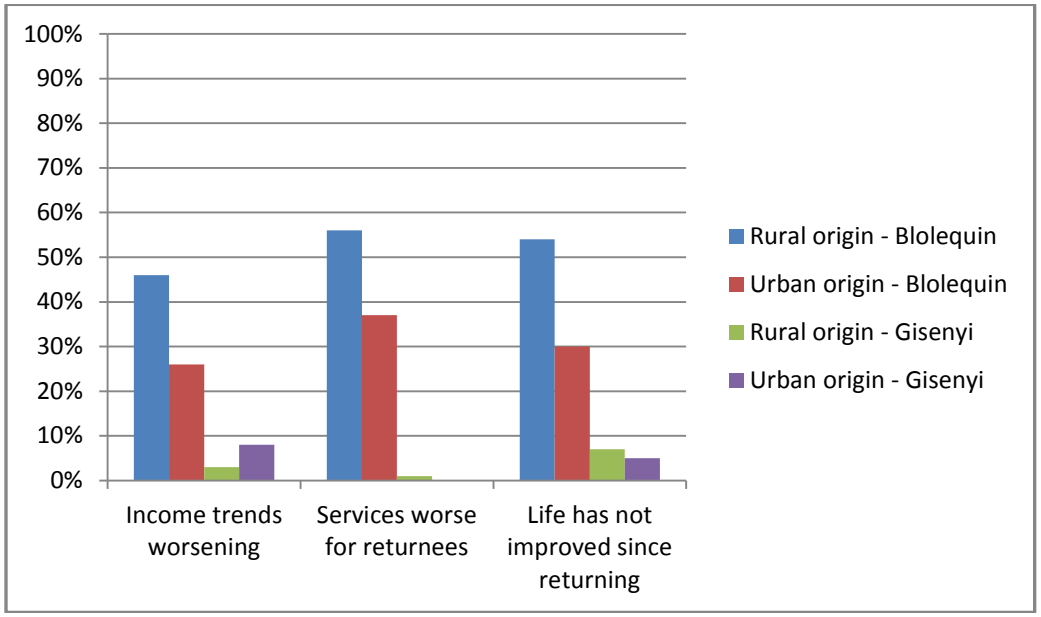

Figure 19: Prevalence of negative perceptions among urban returnee subgroups

Social bonds in reintegration. Approximately the same percentage of rural and urban origin returnees in Gisenyi indicated that they received support from family members as part of their reintegration experience. In Bloléquin, though, urban origin respondents were more likely than rural origin respondents to have received support from family.

Section 6: Findings

This section presents a summary of main findings from the study and builds on the analysis presented in the two case studies. A number of findings reinforce or expand upon premises regarding urban displacement and repatriation that were identified in the policy overview section. Some findings suggest that certain premises within the policy and academic literature may need to be considered more closely, or may be reflected more clearly in some displacement and returns contexts than others.

Finding One: Urbanization occurs at multiple stages throughout the forced displacement and returns processes. The study's findings suggest that not only is urbanization taking place, it is doing so across various stages of displacement and return: (a) forced displacement into country of asylum; (b) re-displacement within country of asylum; (c) return to country of origin; and (d) post-return internal migration within country of origin. This finding validates policy approaches that assume displacement-related urbanization is not a temporary phenomenon, and that increased movement to non-camp locations in asylum and urban locations upon return should be anticipated and factored into planning processes.

Finding Two: Urban returnees who had lived in non-camp settings tended to be less reliant on external assistance, and to engage in a wider array of livelihoods activities while in exile, compared to camp-based returnees. Recent policy and academic literature has noted that urban, non-camp settings offer greater opportunities for refugees to engage in livelihoods activities than camp or remote rural settings. The household survey responses indicated that urban returnees from non-camp settings reported a broader mix of activities that supported them during their time in exile, including business, labor and trading. Camp-based urban returnees were much more likely to report external assistance as their main source of support. While this does not confirm asset building per se, it does suggest the non-camp environment is more conducive to asset building than the camp environment.

Finding Three: Non-camp settings still allow for refugees to access essential services, but not at the same rates as in camp settings. UNHCR registration rates and regular access to assistance was close to universal in the Côte d'Ivoire case, and in both the Rwanda and Côte d'Ivoire cases was reported to be much higher by camp-based returnees than non-camp returnees. Similarly, camp sub-groups reported greater access to health care and education than non-camp groups. The household survey did not ask respondents whether services were inaccessible, or simply not accessed.

Finding Four: Non-camp refugees are more likely to repatriate sooner and return 'spontaneously' to urban locations than their camp-based counterparts. In both the Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda cases, non-camp returnees tended to indicate that they had return earlier than camp-based returnees. In the case of Bloléquin, returns from non-camp locations began at least a year before UNHCR-assisted repatriation was formally initiated. This supports the premise set forth in recent policies that circumstances of return will be different for urban or non-camp returnees, who may be accustomed to greater freedom of movement, self-reliance and autonomy as compared to refugees living in camps.

Finding Five: Perceptions of conditions in countries of origin are a key factor in voluntary returns to urban locations, although "push" factors still play a role. The perception that conditions back home have improved was the main factor noted in the household survey responses. A minority of Ivoirian respondents, about 25% in the Bloléquin

sample, indicates that deterioration of conditions while in asylum was the main factor, and a number of interview responses indicated that this was a factor that influenced their decision. While respondents generally indicated their decision to repatriate was voluntary, it is possible that options were becoming constrained as time in exile went on, particularly for camp-based refugees who were reliant on assistance provided.

Finding Six: Quality of housing may be a concern for urban returnees, even after permanent shelter is accessed. The study found that while a majority of urban returnees have been able to access permanent shelter, this does not mean that the quality of housing is adequate, particularly from returnees' subjective viewpoints. Overcrowding was noted by several interview respondents in Abidjan and Bloléquin, to the point where larger households reported splitting up in order for all family members to have a place to stay. Threats of eviction and poor quality housing were also noted by Ivoirian respondents.

Meanwhile, Gisenyi respondents indicated a surprisingly low rate of having found permanent shelter – 75% – considering that most had repatriated close to two decades prior. Interview responses suggest a minority of urban returnees remain dissatisfied because of high perceive housings costs, or that they are renting instead of owning their home. Objectively, these might not be considered indicators of inadequate access to shelter, but subjectively they may be a source of negative feelings about housing for at least some segment of urban returnees, even well into the reintegration process.

Finding Seven: Economic challenges may exist, even if employment rates are high, and may be greater for urban returnees who had fled from rural areas. One challenge noted in policy discussion is access to employment, particularly for persons who had fled rural areas who may who lack skills relevant to urban job markets. In Côte d'Ivoire, the study did not find meaningful differences in employment rates between urban and rural origin subgroups. It did, however, find a sharp difference in perceived income trends between urban and rural origin returnees to the town, with rural origin returnees much more likely to indicate that income was worsening. This may indicate economic challenges that the survey tool could not capture, such as the impact of lost land or property. Even among urban origin returnees, interview responses suggest many households in Bloléquin remain in "survival mode" and are doing what work they can, but struggling to make ends meet.

Finding Eight: Subsistence agriculture remains part of household livelihood strategies in urban returns contexts. In Bloléquin, more than 60% of urban returnees indicated they access land for cultivation, as did 39% of urban returnees in Gisenyi. Of those who do have land access, the vast majority – more than 90% in both cases – reported that land is being put to productive use. The majority in both locations is primarily consuming agricultural products rather than selling via the market, suggesting that production may contribute to household food security.

Finding Nine: Social networks are available to some, though not all, urban refugees (and could depend on whether returnees were originally from urban or rural locations). One assumption made in the policy literature is that traditional social networks tend to be stronger in rural areas than urban areas, meaning relatively less access to social capital for urban returnees. In both the Côte d'Ivoire and Rwanda cases, support from family was noted by just over half of all respondents and support from non-relatives by around a third of all respondents, suggesting that social networks do play a role in assisting reintegration for some but not for all.

Notably, the study found little difference in the level of support provided to urban and rural returnees by family members. In Bloléquin, urban origin returnees to the town were more likely to indicate support from family than rural origin returnees, suggesting that they were more likely to have lost family networks or that these networks do not "extend" into the town setting. In Rwanda, the level of support from non-relatives was reported by a greater percentage of rural returnees than urban returnees, but there was no difference in support from non-relatives in the Côte d'Ivoire case. It may be that the role of social networks should not be overstated for all returnees, not only urban returnees.

Finding Ten: Higher crime rates in large urban areas may negatively affect the safety and security of returnees. Concerns about crime and safety figured prominently in interview responses in Abidjan, where returnees noted that the increased presence of armed youth gangs and violent crime, including armed robbery and killings. This concern was not observed in the responses from Bloléquin or Gisenyi, both smaller urban locations. Survey responses in those locations indicated high levels of feeling safe, and to the extent safety concerns were expressed, these were not connected to general crime or lawlessness.

Finding Eleven: Social ties with persons in countries of asylum are often maintained, though circular migration is not necessarily evident. One premise held by literature on returns in the context of urbanization is that circular migration occurs within repatriation, particularly in relation to pursuing livelihoods opportunities. The study did not identify examples of this occurring within the interview responses, though the majority of Ivoirian returnees interviewed in both Abidjan and Bloléquin indicated that they keep in contact with friends or family who are in the country of asylum. Social ties were less evident among the Gisenyi returnees, though several noted they still maintained friendships, family or business ties in the DRC, and three indicated that they travel periodically to the DRC.

Section 7: Recommendations

The findings shared in Section 6 reinforce the premise that urbanization is taking place concurrently with forced displacement and voluntary returns, and that dynamics present in urban and non-camp settings should continue to be factored into voluntary repatriation policy and operations.

This section presents recommendations based on findings from this study. The first set of recommendations will focus on strengthening monitoring of returns and reintegration in urban settings. The second set of recommendations will focus on durable solutions programs and policy more broadly.

Enhancing Returns Monitoring in Urban Settings

One goal of this research project has been to contribute to monitoring tools that could be applied in urban returns and reintegration settings. As an input to this study, CWS reviewed a sample of existing voluntary returns monitoring and evaluation reports that have been generated by UNHCR or its implementing partners over the past 10 years. This included internal evaluations of repatriation and reintegration support activities in Angola (Crisp et. al. 2008), Kosovo (Romani 2013) and South Sudan (Duffield et. al. 2008), and monitoring reports from Afghanistan (2015), Iraq (2011), Kosovo (2013), Myanmar (2014), Somalia (2016) and Sri Lanka (2013).[59] The purpose of this review was to identify a snapshot of existing monitoring themes and indicators being considered in countries where returns are taking place or anticipated to take place, so that recommendations might build upon existing efforts.

Based on this brief review, it appears at first glance that monitoring of returns and reintegration has become more robust over the past decade. A 2008 evaluation of repatriation support in Angola noted that UNHCR had little or no means of regularly monitoring protection and welfare of returnees, and recommended that investment in monitoring be increased in future repatriation operations (Crisp et. al 2008). The monitoring reports reviewed from other, more recent returns contexts suggest that monitoring has become more systematically integrated into returns and reintegration operations, which should provide a starting point for tailoring monitoring so that it captures information relevant to urban returns.

Generally, the monitoring reports reviewed track similar themes, and themes comparable to the ones included in the CWS study, e.g., health and education, housing, employment and livelihoods, safety, and civil documentation. Access to adequate housing, livelihoods and safety were among the key challenges noted. The indicators used for each theme tended to vary, though some were more commonly used than others, such as employment status within returnee households. Each returns context has its own specific dynamics, so flexibility in indicators used provides space to collect information particularly relevant to a given setting (for example, accessibility of public services across different languages in Kosovo).

Several monitoring reports indicated that information collected could be disaggregated at a village (Myanmar, South Sudan) or municipal (Kosovo) level. It was unclear whether village-level monitoring took place only in rural locations, but this could be applied as well to urban "villages" or neighborhoods. In others, information appears disaggregated only at higher administrative units, e.g., district (Sri Lanka), province (Afghanistan) or governorate (Iraq).

[59] Documents reviewed are publicly accessible and were identified via the UNHCR website.

Thus, one lesson from this brief scan is that returns and reintegration monitoring could more consistently allow for the disaggregation of data by neighborhood or municipality, as this may enhance the application of findings in specific urban locations.

Indicators for Monitoring Urban Returns and Reintegration

Based on the study's findings, CWS identified a number of indicators that could be used to enhance monitoring of voluntary return and reintegration in urban settings. This list reflects the thematic areas in which notable or actionable findings were identified in the two case studies, as these may be indicative of areas where ongoing attention by local authorities and humanitarian agencies would be beneficial.

In some cases, these reflect questions already included in the CWS household survey tool, or information that is reflected in the returns monitoring reports that were reviewed. Others are newly proposed indicators, in the sense that neither the CWS survey tool nor the sampled monitoring reports appear to collect this information (these are highlighted in the table).

These are intended for use by UNHCR, its implementing partners, and local government bodies or community-based associations in monitoring reintegration in urban settings. These indicators could also be used in baseline surveys within urban communities receiving returnees (i.e., in surveys of 'stayee' households) to establish a benchmarks against which returnee responses could be compared.

Theme	Potential monitoring question	Relevance of information	Type of indicator
Returns Decision-Making and Movement	Did you initially return to another location, before moving to this location?	Identify levels and trends internal post-return migration, including motivations for internal migration (particularly with spontaneous returnees)	Subjective
	If yes, why did you move to this location?		
Housing and Shelter	How many persons sleep in one room in your house?	Level of overcrowding in housing available	Objective
	Are household members all living together?	Impact of housing constraints on family units	Objective
	What are your monthly housing costs? About how much of your monthly income is spent on housing?	Affordability of housing	Objective
	Do you own your home?	Home ownership rates as part of longer-term reintegration and asset building	Objective
	How satisfied are you with your current housing?	Levels of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with available housing among urban returnees	Subjective

Livelihoods	Are any members of the household currently generating a cash income?	Levels of employment, as defined by income generation	Objective
	Is there anyone in your household looking for opportunities to generate a cash income?	Level of demand for work opportunities among returnee households	Objective
	How often are you working or engaging in income-generating activities?	Assess regularity or stability of income generation	Objective
	About how much are your monthly household expenses? How much of these are covered by earned income? (e.g., none, some, most, all)	Measure of self-reliance	Objective
	Are opportunities to earn income improving, getting worse, or staying the same?	Assess urban returnee perceptions of work opportunities and labor market	Subjective
Land Access	Are you accessing land for agricultural production?	Assess extent to which agriculture is part of urban returnee livelihood or food security strategies	Objective
	If yes, how do you use what you produce? (e.g., mostly consume, mostly sell, mix of both)		Objective
	If yes, how do you access land? (e.g., rent, own, via extended family, commons)	Assess tenure security among returnees who do access land	Objective
Safety and Security	Do you feel safe living in your community?	Returnee perception of levels of safety	Subjective
	How confident would you feel in approaching police if you experienced crime or threats?	Level of confidence in local law enforcement to provide adequate protection	Subjective
Civil Documentation	Do you possess state-issued identification (e.g., national ID card)?	Assess extent of gap to civil documentation.	Objective
	If not, why?	Assess obstacles to securing civil documentation, e.g., cost, inaccessible locations, mistrust of authorities.	
	Did all your children who were born here (if any) receive birth registration?	Assess extent of gap to civil documentation.	Objective

	If not, why?	Assess obstacles to securing civil documentation, e.g., cost, inaccessible locations, mistrust of authorities.	
Education	Do all school age children attend school?	Extent of access to education	Objective
	If not, why?	Barriers to accessing education	
Health Care	Do all household members have access to health care in the event of illness?	Extent of access to health care services	Objective
	If not, why?	Barriers to accessing health care services	
Social Relations	Did you feel well received when you first returned?	Establish baseline returnee perceptions of being welcome back	Subjective
	Do you feel welcome back in your community?	Assess whether perceptions have changed since initial return, including any negative trends.	Subjective
	If not, why?		
Confidence in Public Institutions	Do you think local services for returnees are the same as for the broader community, worse or better?	Assess perceptions of bias in public services	Subjective
	Do you think returnees are treated fairly in dispute resolution?	Assess perceptions of bias in accessing justice	Subjective
Overall Return and Reintegration	Has life improved since you returned?	Assess overall satisfaction with decision to return, and factors contributing to satisfaction levels.	Subjective
	Would you advise others living in exile to return? Why or why not?		Subjective
	What are one or two aspects of your reintegration experience (either good or bad) that you think have been most significant?	Opportunity for returnee-driven identification of key urban return indicators	Subjective

Strengthening Operational and Policy Frameworks

Section 1 of this report describes how policy frameworks on refugee self-settlement and self-reliance has have shifted in recent years, in light of the urbanization of forced displacement. These shifts may have important implications for refugee preferences for and access to voluntary repatriation and other durable solutions. While the 2009 Urban Policy and 2014

Alternatives to Camps policy both reaffirm the three durable solutions for refugees, they do not provide much specific guidance on how urban or non-camp settlement may change the conditions of refugees' access to durable solutions.

The 2009 and 2014 policies appear to lean toward local integration as a new preferred durable solution, which would represent a tremendous departure from the 1990s, when local integration had become something of a "forgotten solution" (Jacobsen 2001). However, the ability of urban and non-camp refugees to access protection, pursue self-reliance and ultimately choose a path toward a durable solution will depend in no small part on the legal protections that are formally extended to them. Those who are unable to pursue other durable solutions may be forced to consider return to their country of origin, particularly if cessation clauses are invoked.

With this in mind, CWS identified opportunities to strengthen operational and policy frameworks, drawing on findings from this research project. In offering these recommendations, CWS recognizes that effective reform, particularly at the policy level, is a complex process that must involve multiple stakeholders. These recommendations are grouped into three sets: (1) anticipate increased urbanization of refugee return; (2) explore new routes for voluntary returns from urban and non-camp locations; and (3) promote reintegration through social linkages rather than rupture.

Anticipate Increased Urbanization of Refugee Return

Where refugee return does take place, it is increasingly likely to occur within urban areas, given the urbanization of experiences in countries of refuge. This was borne out in the CWS study, which observed urbanization trends at multiple points throughout the forced displacement and returns process.

The existing repatriation policy framework makes very little reference to the urban environments as destinations of return. Updates to this framework should recognize that refugee return from urban areas may transform urban-rural relations in important ways. Refugees that originate from rural areas and become urbanized through seeking refuge in cities or towns may prefer to return to urban areas, reinforcing the urbanization effect of displacement. There may still be a "rural bias" within existing repatriation handbooks and other relevant guidance, in which case these could be updated to reflect specific challenges that displaced persons are likely to face in returning to urban areas.

Return to place of origin should not be considered a "default" setting, nor should rural origin refugees returning to towns and cities or post-return migration from rural to urban areas be considered indicative of "failed" reintegration. Rather, it would be more productive to consider such movement "neutrally," similar to other contextual factors. In this sense, assessing rural-to-urban movement in displacement and return can provide valuable inputs to program design and implementation, so as to maximize the opportunities it provides.

Operationally, this might begin at the point of collecting information from prospective returnees in countries of asylum, and continue through engagement with returnees after repatriation. Information collection as part of voluntary repatriation registration could, for example, collect information on the types of locations where households lived, both before fleeing and during exile. It could also ask explicitly whether refugees are considering a return to a different location than the one they had fled, so as not to assume that return equates with return to place of origin. This may contribute to a more robust returns profile for a given person or household, as an input to designing repatriation support or targeting services and protection activities.

Explore New Routes for Refugee Return from Urban and Non-Camp Areas

Research over more than 15 years has demonstrated that communities affected by displacement may be re-established through a dynamic inter-relationship between local integration and repatriation. Through the pursuit of durable solutions in multiple ways, refugee communities are able to better manage the risks of return and expand their options for accessing resources and re-establishing their livelihoods.

Updates to repatriation frameworks should go beyond affirming the right of refugees in urban or non-camp areas to return, and explore options for enabling this in a manner that that recognizes the specific characteristics and challenges of refugee life outside of camps. Operationally, this should include engagement of non-camp refugees in intentions surveys, registration or verification exercises, or other activities that are undertaken in countries of asylum in anticipation of voluntary returns. Furthermore, if the CWS study's findings hold true in other locations, this preparatory work should begin early on with non-camp refugees, as they tend to return to urban areas sooner than camp-based refugees.

Reaching out to spontaneous urban returnees in repatriation activities, including monitoring conditions of return and reintegration, could expand or strengthen new routes to return from urban and non-camp settings. This is based in part on the finding from the CWS study that non-camp refugees were more likely to return to urban locations in a 'spontaneous' manner rather than via UNHCR facilitation. Intentional outreach to this group, such as extending opportunities to register for assistance or contribute input to monitoring exercises, may both increase access by spontaneous urban returnees to protection and essential services and ensure that program design is inclusive of this group's needs. Several of the monitoring reports reviewed (e.g., Iraq, Myanmar) suggest that outreach to spontaneous returnees is indeed underway in some locations. If this is the case, it could be beneficial for UNHCR to facilitate exchange of lessons on outreach and inclusion strategies with spontaneous returnees, particularly in urban areas.

Promote Repatriation through Social Linkages Rather than Rupture

One of the great strengths of the most recent UNHCR policies is their recognition that expanding options for refugees can be beneficial for host communities and governments as well as refugees themselves. Unfortunately, repatriation in many contexts has often been interpreted more about getting people *out of* places rather than getting them *into* places. Refugees that have achieved self-reliance in urban areas, and possibly even a measure of success beyond that, may not want to "start over" in their country of origin.

This could be addressed by continuing to ensure that refugees have access to information about conditions in countries of origin, including in town and city locations, as the CWS study confirmed that perceived improvements back home was a significant motivation for return for a majority of urban returnees. As noted above, this effort must be extended in non-camp and urban locations as well as camp settings.

For refugees who indicate intentions to return to urban locations, or who are considered likely to return to urban locations, an interactive "reintegration orientation" prior to returning could assist prospective urban returnees to prepare appropriately. This could provide an overview of access to public services, civil documentation, housing and labor markets in urban areas, as well as other themes as identified by prospective urban returnees, either based on findings from "go-and-see" visits or from other information available about conditions back home. In addition to improving access to information, this kind of activity could help to establish realistic expectations of opportunities and challenges that may be faced upon return to urban locations.

Prospective returnees living in non-camp, and particularly urban, locations are more likely to engage in a wider variety of livelihood activities. To the extent that this increases access to livelihoods assets (including, but not limited to, physical assets), it seems likely that refugees will factor in these assets into their calculus of whether, when and where to return. Working with urban refugees on asset mapping or other livelihoods strategic planning could assist them to identify ways to leverage human, financial, social and possibly even physical capital that they may have developed while in exile toward self-reliance after returning. This in turn could assist urban displaced households to make more informed and strategic choices regarding voluntary repatriation as a durable solution.

For prospective urban returnees who are less likely to have accumulated livelihood assets or marketable skills while in exile, e.g., rural origin or camp-based refugees, analysis of urban labor markets and livelihood opportunities could be linked to vocational training, asset-building or other livelihood activities that are offered in asylum locations. In reintegration, agricultural extension could be extended in urban returnee locations as well as rural ones, as a way of contributing to urban food security through gardening or smallholder farming.

Finally, in both urban and rural returns contexts, agencies involved in return and reintegration should be careful not to overestimate the level of social support – either from the state and public institutions, or from families and friends – that may be available to individuals and families who choose to repatriate. If possible, collecting information on known contacts (e.g., immediate relatives, extended family and friends) could be part of registration and planning processes and further inform the design of repatriation support or targeting for service delivery.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Reflections on Using Electronic Tablets in Field Data Collection

Household survey data was collected using electronic tablets and Open Data Kit (ODK) application, operated on an Android platform. This application has only recently become a viable option for field surveys. CWS incorporated its use into the data collection for this project, in part to test its potential application toward improving efficiency, accuracy and cost-effectiveness of field data collection, as compared to traditional paper-based surveys. In terms of using electronic tablets and ODK for data collection, the research teams identified the following advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages

- The system was fast and reliable.
- One could go back and correct errors during data collection as the respondents clarify more on the issues discussed.
- "Offline" operation: Devices did not have to be connected to the Internet when data are being collected in the field. They can be used in remote locations, with data being uploaded to a central server through Wi-Fi, whenever convenient.
- Increased rate of data collection: Electronic survey forms can be designed to include skip logic, drop down menus, pre-selected answers and a clean interface, leading to more rapid recording of data.
- Increased accuracy in data collection: By specifying the form and conditions of entered data, electronic tablets help to reduce data collection errors.
- Data backup: While there are certain risks of loss of data stored temporarily on tablets (through theft or malfunction), these are offset considerably if data are uploaded regularly. Once uploaded onto a secure server, expanding databases can be downloaded repeatedly as they expand, to provide localized backups.
- Respondent protection: Data collected electronically can provide a greater level of protection of respondent confidentiality than paper surveys. Once collected on a device, survey information cannot be easily accessed or interpreted if a device is stolen or lost.
- Easy to train enumerators: Today's smart-phone saturated world has made learning to use ODK a very quick and easy process for the end-user (enumerators). With that said, training time should definitely be taken to review each question with the enumerators, so that the context of each question and responses are clearly understood by all.

Disadvantages

- Research teams and respondents are accustomed to paper-based questionnaires, which can remain as hard evidence, and allow for comparison of data analysis with data collected. Some research team members expressed concerns that soft copies are vulnerable to viruses and other man-made mistakes. Steps should be taken during preparation to ensure high confidence in using electronic-based data collection tools.
- The enumerator may forget to save data collected and therefore risks losing the work.
- The only facet of the technology that did not work well was the GPS chips on the tablets. About one-third of them did not work very consistently. This was likely a hardware issue rather than a software issue.
- Only enumerators were allowed to use the tablets, in order to preserve data integrity and safeguard project assets. This, though, could be perceived by respondents as research teams maintaining "secrets". Direct participant responses should be explored in future data collection or monitoring activities.

Appendix 2: Household Survey Questionnaire (Gisenyi, Rwanda)

Q#	Question	Question Type	Answer Options/Constraints	Next Q#
	Respondent Profile			
1	Gender of respondent	Select One	Male	2
			Female	2
2	Year of birth of respondent	Numeric	Integer: [1900-1998]	3
3	Main occupation of respondent	Select One + Other	Farmer	4
			Student	4
			Casual Laborer	4
			Informal Trader	4
			Business	4
			Government Worker	4
4	Have you attended school?	Select One	Yes	5
			No	7
5	How many years of formal education have you completed successfully?	Numeric	Integer: [0-12]	6
6	Do you have any post-school or tertiary educational training?	Select One	Yes	7
			No	7
7	What country did you return from?	Select One + Other	Democratic Republic of Congo	8
			Uganda	8
			Tanzania	8
8	What year did you return to Rwanda?	Numeric	Integer: [1994-2015]	9
9	Are you the head of your household?	Select One	Yes	13
			No	10
	Head of Household Profile			
10	Gender of head of household	Select One	Male	11

			Female	11
11	Year of birth of head of household	Numeric	Integer: [1900-1998]	12
12	Main occupation of head of household	Select One + Other	Government Administration	13
			Teacher	
			Healthcare worker	
			Driver	
			Fishing	
			Carpenter	
			Hairdressing	
			Mechanic	
			Agriculture/Livestock	
			Street trading	
			Small business	
			Tailoring	
	Household Demographic Structure			
13	Can you answer basic questions about your household?	Select one	Yes	14
			No	End
14	How many people live in your household in total?	Numeric	Integer: [1-40]	15
15	How many are male and older than 18 years?	Numeric	Integer: [0-40]	16
16	How many are female and older than 18 years?	Numeric	Integer: [0-40]	17
17	How many are aged between 5 and 18 years?	Numeric	Integer: [0-40]	18
18	How many are younger than 5 years of age?	Numeric	Integer: [0-40]	19
19	How many children in this household were born in the country that you returned from?	Numeric	Integer: [0-40]	20
20	How many children in this household were born after returning to Rwanda?	Numeric	Integer: [0-40]	21

	Current Household Livelihood Status			
21	Are any household members currently generating a cash income?	Select One + Other	Yes	22
			No	26
22	How many household members of are currently generating a cash income?	Numeric		23
23	What is their main income generating activity?	Select One + Other	Government Administration	24
			Teacher	24
			Healthcare worker	24
			Driver	24
			Fishing	24
			Carpenter	24
			Hairdressing	24
			Mechanic	24
			Agriculture/Livestock	24
			Street trading	24
			Small business	24
			Tailoring	24
24	How regularly do they contribute toward meeting household expenses?		Regularly	25
			Irregularly	24
			Never	24
25	For how many years have they participated in this activity?	Numeric	Decimal: [0-40]	26
26	How many household members are currently looking for opportunities to generate a cash income?	Numeric	Integer: [0-40]	27
27	With regard to income, are things improving, staying the same, or getting worse for your household?	Select One	Improving	28

			Staying the same	28
			Getting worse	28
	Flight, Refugee Settlement and Return Profile			
28	What year did you (or your family, if you were not born) flee Rwanda?	Numeric	Integer: [1959-2015]	29
29	What kind of settlement did you (or your family) flee from in Rwanda?	Select One + Other	Village	30
			Small Town	30
			Large City	30
30	How would you describe the place (in your country of exile) that you returned from?	Select One + Other	Refugee Camp	31
			Local Village	31
			Town/City	31
			"Bush"	31
31	Did you return to the same area that you (or your family) fled from initially?	Select One	Yes	33
			No	33
32	What was the main reason for not returning to the same area that you (or your family) fled from?	Select One + Other	No access to land	33
			Ongoing community tensions	33
			No economic prospects	33
			Better opportunities elsewhere	33
33	What kind of settlement did your household return to?	Select One + Other	Village	34
			Small Town	34
			Large City	34

34	Did you return from the same country that you (or your family) first fled to?	Select One	Yes	36
			No	35
35	If not, what country did you (or your family) return from?	Select One + Other	Democratic Republic of Congo	36
			Uganda	36
			Tanzania	36
36	Did your household plan to return to Gisenyi?	Select One	Yes	38
			No	37
37	If not, what was your main reason for settling in or closer to Gisenyi?	Select One + Other	Better job opportunities	38
			Safety / security was better	38
			Better living conditions	38
			To be with family/community	38
	Refugee Assistance and Livelihood History			
38	As refugees, did your household register with UNHCR for assistance?	Select One	Yes	39
			No	39
39	How frequently did you household receive assistance while you were a refugee?	Select One	Regularly	40
			Occasionally	40
			Never	40
40	As refugees, did your household have access to land for cultivation?	Select One	Yes	41
			No	41
			Sometimes	41

41	As refugees, were children in your household able to attend school?	Select One	Yes	42
			No	42
			Sometimes	42
42	As refugees, were members of your household able to access medical care?	Select One	Yes	43
			No	43
			Sometimes	43
43	What single activity contributed most to the survival of your household?	Select One + Other	Farming	44
			Trading	44
			Working for others	44
			Business	44
			Assistance	44
44	While in refuge, was your household ever displaced by violence or the threat of violence?	Select One	Yes	45
			No	45
45	When forced to flee, where did you mostly seek shelter or safety?	Select One + Other	Village	46
			Town/City	46
			"Bush"	46
			Refugee Camp	46
	Decision to Return			
46	How was the decision made for your household to return to Rwanda	Select One + Other	Collectively, as a family	47
			By the household head, on behalf of the household	47
			Individually, by household members	47

47	What was the most significant factor informing your household's decision to return?	Select One + Other	Improved conditions in country of origin	48
			Deterioration of conditions in country of asylum	48
			Reduced assistance (e.g. from UNHCR)	48
	Experience of Return			
48	Did you return to Rwanda with UNHCR assistance?	Select One	Yes	49
			No	49
49	By what means of travel did you return to Rwanda?	Select One + Other	Aircraft	50
			Bus or truck	50
			Private vehicle	50
			Boat	50
			Walking	50
50	Following Return, did you receive an assistance package from UNHCR?	Select One	Yes	51
			No	53
51	Was this assistance provided as cash, goods, or both?		Cash	52
			Goods	52
			Both	52
52	How did your household use the returnee assistance package?	Select One + Other	Consumed and used directly by household	53
			Sold for cash	53
			Shared with broader community	53
53	Did you receive a food ration following your return?	Select One	Yes	54
			No	57
54	Is your household still receiving a food ration?	Select One	Yes	55
			No	55

55	For how many months did your household receive a food ration	Numeric	Integer	56
	Experiences of Reintegration			
56	Do you personally feel that your life has improved since returning to Rwanda?	Select One	Yes	57
			No	57
57	Has anyone in your household participated in any income generating projects?	Select One	Yes	58
			No	58
58	Does your household receive support from relatives in the community that you returned to?	Select One	Yes	59
			No	59
59	Does your household receive support from non-relatives (e.g., neighbors) in the community?	Select One	Yes	60
			No	60
60	How would you describe the service provided by local government authorities to returnees?	Select One + Other	Same as the broader community	61
			Better than broader community	61
			Worse than broader community	61
61	Do you or other members of your household participate in Local community activities?	Select One	Yes	62
			No	62
62	Do you personally feel safe living in your community?	Select One	Yes	63
			No	63
	Access to Land and Shelter			
63	Since returning, has your household managed to find permanent shelter?	Select One	Yes	64
			No	65

64	How many months did it take for your household to find permanent shelter?	Numeric	Integer	65
65	How did your household find shelter after returning	Select One + Other	Provided by local community	66
			Provided by local authorities	66
			Provided by a humanitarian organization	66
			Built myself / by household members	66
			Reclaimed shelter	66
66	Did your household return to the same house (shelter) from which it fled?	Select One	Yes	68
			No	67
67	If no, what was the main reason for not returning to the same shelter?	Select One + Other	Shelter was destroyed	68
			Shelter was occupied by others	68
			Shelter was sold by family members	68
			Shelter was taken by authorities	68
68	On what basis do you live in your current shelter	Select One + Other	Ownership	69
			Rent	69
			Guest (non paying)	69
69	Since returning, has your household been able to access land for cultivation?	Select One	Yes	70
			No	74
70	On what basis was your household able to access this land?	Select One + Other	Recovered land	71
			Land provided by community	71
			Land provided by authorities	71

71	Does your household currently produce anything from this land?	Select One	Yes	72
			No	72
72	Is this produce sold or consumed by the household?	Select One + Other	Sold for cash	73
			Consumed directly by household	73
	Access to Documentation			
73	Do all members of your household over the age of 16 years have a National Identity Card?	Select One	Yes	74
			No	74
74	Has the birth of all persons in this household been registered with the Rwandan authorities?	Select One	Yes	75
			No	75
75	For you personally, what is the most important identity document that you possess?	Select One + Other	None - no identity documents	76
			National Identity Card (Attestation d'Identite)	76
			UNHCR Voluntary Repatriation Form (VRF)	76
	Access to Education			
76	Do all children between 5 and 18 years of age attend school?	Select One	Yes	78
			No	77
77	What is the main reason for children (5-18) not attending school?	Select One + Other	Insufficient funds to pay for school	78
			Child or children need to work	78
			The gender of the child/children	78
			Children are older than school age	78

	Access to Health Care			
77	Are all member of your household able to access health care, if needed?	Select One	Yes	79
			No	78
78	If no, what is the main reason?	Select One + Other	Unaffordable / high costs	79
			Inability to obtain or access care	79
			No need or use for it	79
79	What kind of health services is most important to you?	Select One + Other	Government	80
			Private	80
			Traditional medicine	80

Appendix 3: Semi-Structured Interview Questions and Interviewer Guidance

This document includes instructions to interviewers collecting semi-structured interview data from individual refugees that have returned to urban areas. Specifically, it includes the following:

1. *Instruction to Research Assistants* in identifying possible respondents, approaching them, interviewing them, recording data and preserving the confidentiality.
2. A list of *Definition of Terms* used in the interview guide, below. Interviewers should familiarize themselves with these terms and their meanings in the context of this study.
3. The *Semi-Structured Interview Guide*: These questions should be drawn on by the interviewer, to guide the interview process and the organization of data collected.

Instructions to Research Assistant

- Semi-Structured Interviews should be conducted with *individual returnees* in *urban areas*. Potential respondents will be identified according to the sampling framework provided by the Principal Investigator.
- Interviews should only be conducted with individuals aged 18 years or older. In addition to the stated age provided by a potential informant, the interviewer should also be fully satisfied that the person is indeed older than 18 years of age.
- All attempts to enlist returnee participation in this survey should be done on the basis of respect and sensitivity towards potential respondents, who may have endured traumatic experiences and be asked to recall some distressing memories. The psychological and emotional well being of respondents should be respected at all times and should never be compromised for the sake of collecting data.
- Potential respondents should be informed explicitly that their participation in this study is entirely voluntary. They may also choose to refrain from answering specific questions, if they feel uncomfortable with these.
- It should be made clear to all respondents before the interview begins that they cannot be remunerated for their participation in the study, as this may compromise the integrity of the data being collected.
- All respondents should be interviewed in a safe setting, where they feel comfortable answering the questions. They should not be interviewed in public or uncontrolled settings, where unknown passers-by can overhear their responses, or where crowds of curious onlookers can gather to observe them being interviewed.
- The *Semi-Structured Interview Guide* below is designed to be implemented over 50 to 70 minutes. Interviews should not take longer than 70 minutes, unless the respondent displays a deliberate and unsolicited willingness to provide additional relevant information. Under these circumstances, interviews should take no longer than 100 minutes.
- It may not be possible for the interviewer to cover all questions for all respondents. In some cases, it may be appropriate for interviews to focus on specific questions that are most relevant to a particular respondent. The interviewer will use their discretion to focus on particular questions, depending on the profile, personality and willingness of the respondent to provide information.
- Interviews should be recorded by the interviewer in the form of written notes, taken during the interview. In some instances it may appropriate to record interviews with digital or tape recorders, to ensure that details are captured correctly. This should only be done with the expressed permission of the respondent *in advance of recording*. All copies of recorded interviews must be erased after the information has been transcribed.

- Interviews should be transcribed as soon as possible after the interview, through being typed in MS Word format. The name of the respondent should not appear on the typed transcription and the file should not be shared with anyone other than the Principal Investigator of the Study.
- Some questions require short and direct answers that require no further enquiry. Questions that include "explain" generally require the respondent to expand on their initial answer. The interviewer should pursue this expansion for about 2 minutes, on average, per answer. Note that not all questions that include "explain" will require further elaboration.
- Interviews should be recorded and transcribed with explicit reference to the question number that they refer to.

Definition of Terms

Interviewer	The person conducting the interview.
Respondent	The person being interviewed by the interviewer.
Country of Asylum	Country that the respondent fled to and settled in as a refugee. Note that in some instances, a respondent may have lived in more than one country of asylum.
Household	Persons living under the "same roof" as the respondent and who generally "eat from the same pot."
Family	Persons that are directly related to the respondent, either by birth or marriage (parents, siblings, spouse, children).
Relatives	Persons that are more distantly or indirectly related to the respondent.
Refugee Camp	A settlement established formally and exclusively for refugee settlement.
Village	A pre-existing rural settlement established by nationals of the country of asylum.
Urban	An environment characterized by denser settlement patterns than surrounding countryside, more diverse economic activities than surrounding countryside and is generally regarded as a town or city by local residents.
Occupation	An activity that contributes toward meeting personal and household needs. May be cash-based or non-cash based.
Healthcare	Includes access to resources that promote health and wellbeing through modern biomedical approaches. Does not include traditional, religious or non-biomedical systems of health.
Education	Includes those institutions and the qualifications that they offer that are formally recognized by government, either within the country of asylum or country of origin.
Housing	A physical dwelling structure used for shelter. May be formal or informal, temporary or permanent.
Marriage	A recognized union between two individuals. Include unions that are officially recognized, as well as socially or culturally recognized unions.

Divorce	A permanent ending of a union recognized as marriage. May be either recognized officially or through informal social and cultural institutions.
Return	Physical movement from country of asylum to country of origin that is intended to be permanent.
Returnee	An individual person that has returned from a country of asylum to their country of origin.
Voluntary	A decision made freely, without any coercion or reservation.
Reintegration	The process of legal, social and economic adjustment inclusion into the country of origin, after returning from exile.
Assistance	Material provisions and services provided for humanitarian reasons, by government, the international community and non-government organizations.
Documentation	Government-recognized documents that attest to the identity or status of an individual. May include birth certificates, marriage certificates, identity cards, voluntary repatriation forms, baptismal certificates, and educational qualifications, for example.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Respondent Profile
1. Gender of respondent
2. Year of birth of respondent
3. Main occupation of respondent
4. Education status of respondent
5. Main country of asylum
Respondent's Household Profile
6. How many people live in your household?
7. Was your household established before or after you returned?
8. Is your household located in an urban or rural area?
Flight and Refugee Settlement
9. Did you flee Rwanda or were you born in your country of asylum?
10. If fled, which year did you flee?
11. If fled, briefly describe the circumstance around your flight and search for refuge?
12. As a refugee, did you live mainly in a camp, village or urban environment? Explain.
Experiences of Refuge
13. Did your household receive assistance during your time in exile? Explain.
14. Did you live in a refugee camp at any time during your period in exile? Explain.
15. Did your household receive any support from (outside) relatives during your time in exile? Explain.
16. What was your relationship like with the local (non-refugee) population? Explain.
17. How did you and your household survive during your time in exile? Explain.

18. As a refugee, did you ever live in a city or town?
Social Services during Exile
19. Did you have access to education when you lived in exile? Explain.
20. Did you have access to healthcare when you were in exile? Explain.
21. What kind of housing did your household have access to while in exile? Explain.
Protection during exile
22. Did you generally feel safe, while living in exile? Explain.
23. Did you experience any specific incidents that threatened your security in any way? Explain.
24. Who could you rely on for protection while you were a refugee? Explain
Family events during exile
25. Were there any marriages in your household during exile? Explain.
26. Were there any divorces in your household during exile? Explain.
27. Were there any deaths in your family during exile? Explain.
28. Were any children born into your household during exile? Explain.
Return and Reintegration
29. When did you return to Rwanda?
30. By what means of transport did you return to Rwanda?
31. Was your return voluntary or were you forced to return? Explain.
32. If born in exile, was your return the first time that you had entered Rwanda? Explain
33. Did your entire household return together, or did some members remain in exile? Explain.
34. Did you return to the place from which you or your parents fled?
35. How did the community that you returned to receive you? Explain.
36. Do you generally feel safe since returning? Explain.
37. Have you received any assistance to reintegrate since returning? Explain.
38. What is your housing situation like, returning to Rwanda? Explain.
39. How do you access healthcare since returning to Rwanda? Explain.
40. Since returning, do children in your household have access to education? Explain.
41. Are your household members able to access essential documentation? Explain.
42. In general, what aspects of your life have improved since returning to Rwanda? Explain.
43. In general, what are your major challenges related to reintegration? Explain.
44. Do you feel that your lifestyle has been restored to levels that you enjoyed before take refuge? Explain.
45. Have you gone back to your country of asylum since repatriating to Rwanda? Explain.
46. Do you maintain any contact with any family, relatives or friends in your country of asylum? Explain.

14 direct questions – short answers – 2-5 minutes
32 answers that require explanation – 48 - 64 minutes

Appendix 4: Demographics of Bloléquin household survey sample

Country of Asylum

Country of Asylum	Number	Percentage
Liberia	541	98.0%
Ghana	6	1.0%
Burkina Faso	2	0.4%
Ghana	2	0.4%
Mali	1	0.2%
All respondents	552	100.0%

Gender

Gender of Respondent	Number	Percentage
Female	276	50.0%
Male	276	50.0%
All respondents	552	100.0%

Gender of Head of Household	Number	Percentage
Female	200	36.2%
Male	352	63.8%
All respondents	552	100.0%

- 79% of respondents (438 of 552) were heads of household

Age

Age of Respondents	Number	Percentage
18-29	166	30.1%
30-39	137	24.8%
40-49	100	18.1%
50-59	82	14.9%
60+	67	12.1%
Total	552	100.0%

Education Level

Level of Schooling of Respondents	Number	Percentage
None	184	33.3%
Primary or Secondary	334	60.5%
Post-Secondary or Tertiary	34	6.2%
All respondents	416	100.0%

Household Size

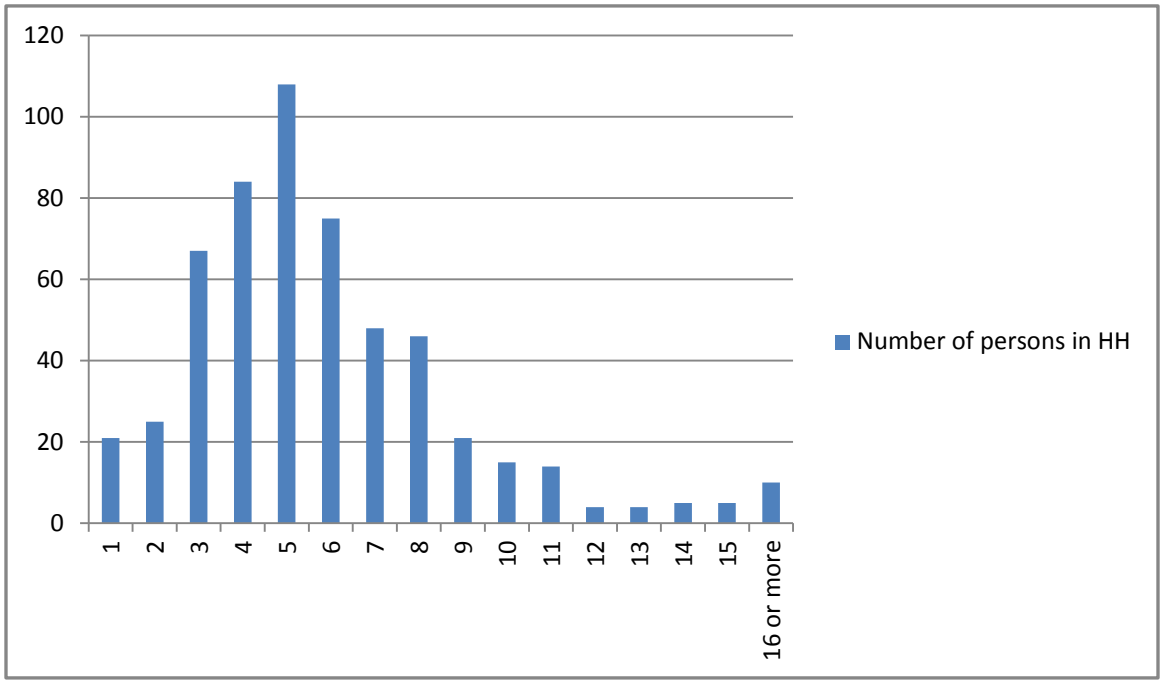

Figure 20: Household size, Bloléquin survey sample

Number of School-Age Children in Households

- Mean number of children ages 5-17 per household = 2.93
- Mean number of girl children ages 5-17 per household = 0.91
- Mean number of boy children ages 5-17 per household = 2.02

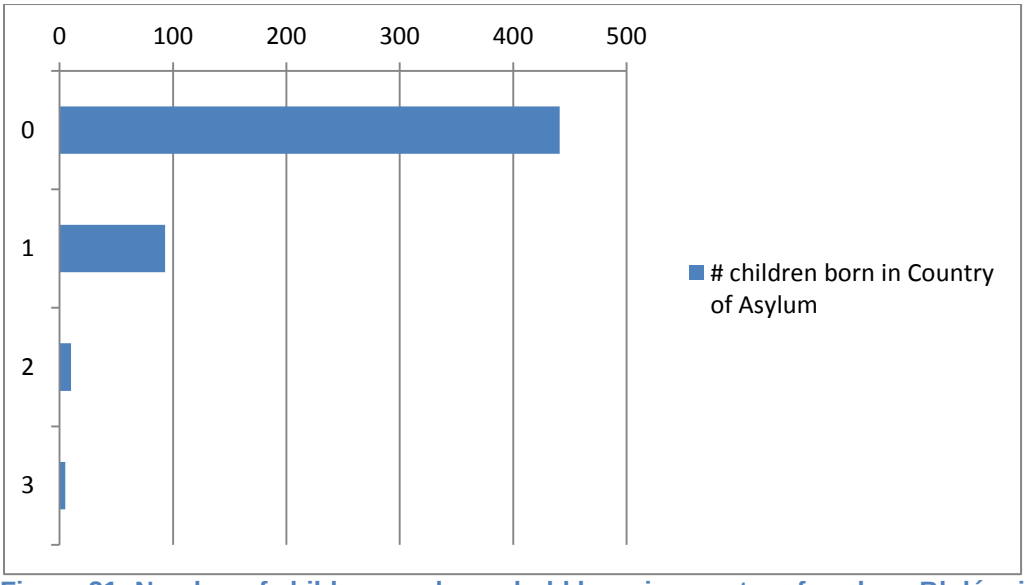

Figure 21: Number of children per household born in country of asylum, Bloléquin sample

- Mean number of children born in countries of asylum per household = 0.23
- Median number children born in countries of asylum per household = 0

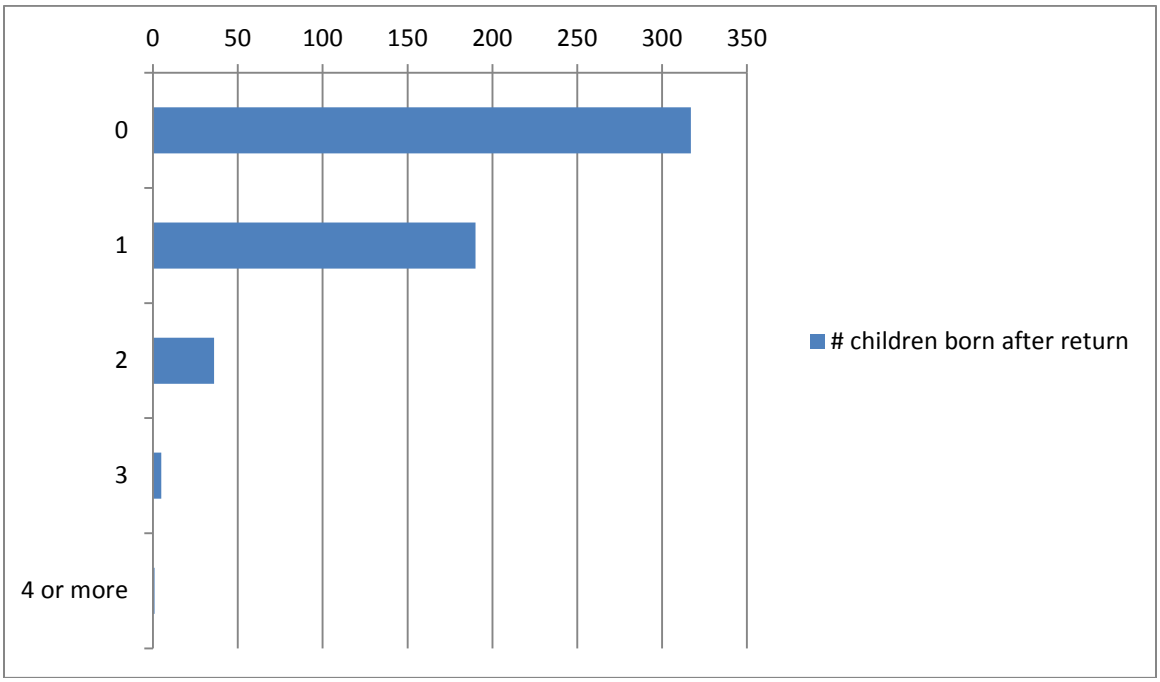

Figure 22: Number of children born after return per household, Bloléquin sample

- Mean number of children born after return per household = 0.5
- Median number of children born after return per household = 0

Appendix 5: Demographics of Gisenyi household survey sample

Country of Asylum

Country of Asylum	Number	Percentage
DRC	386	92.8%
Burundi	13	3.1%
Uganda	11	2.6%
Tanzania	4	1.0%
Kenya	1	0.2%
Zambia	1	0.2%
All respondents	416	100.0%

Gender

Gender of Respondent	Number	Percentage
Female	215	51.7%
Male	201	48.3%
All respondents	416	100.0%

Gender of Heads of Household

Gender of Head of Household	Number	Percentage
Female	148	35.6%
Male	268	64.4%
All respondents	416	100.0%

- 79% of respondents were heads of household

Age

Age group	Number	Percentage
18-29	30	7.1%
30-39	92	22.1%
40-49	85	20.5%
50-59	108	26.0%
60+	101	24.2%
Total	416	100.0%

Education Level

Level of Schooling of Respondents	Number	Percentage
None	59	14.2%
Primary or Secondary	199	47.8%
Post-Secondary or Tertiary	158	38.0%
All respondents	416	100.0%

Household Size

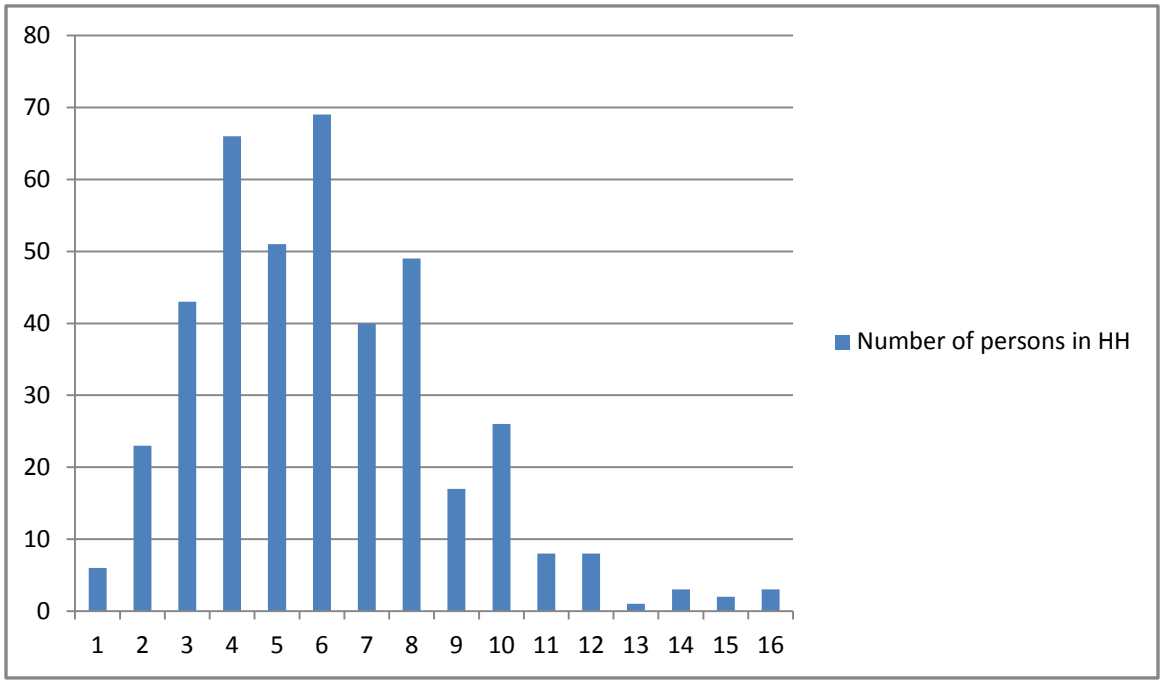

Figure 23: Household size, Gisenyi survey sample

Number of School-Age Children in Households

- Mean number of children ages 5-17 per household = 2.55

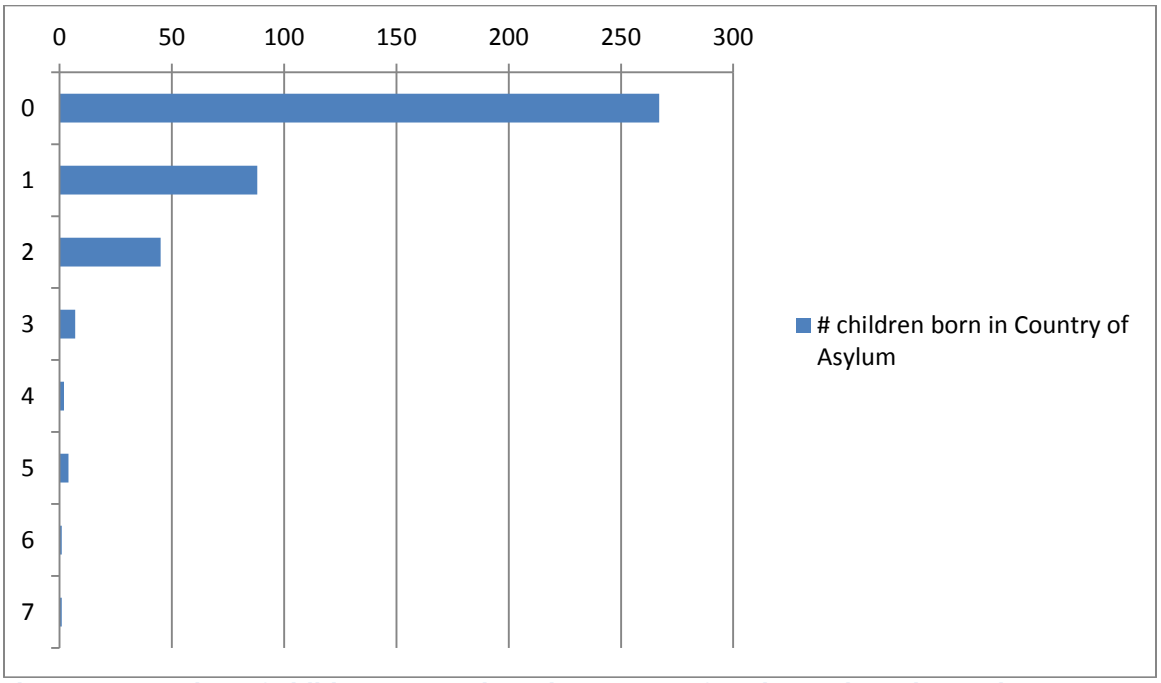

Figure 24: Number of children per HH born in country of asylum, Gisenyi sample

- Mean number of children born in countries of asylum per household = 0.57
- Median number children born in countries of asylum per household = 0

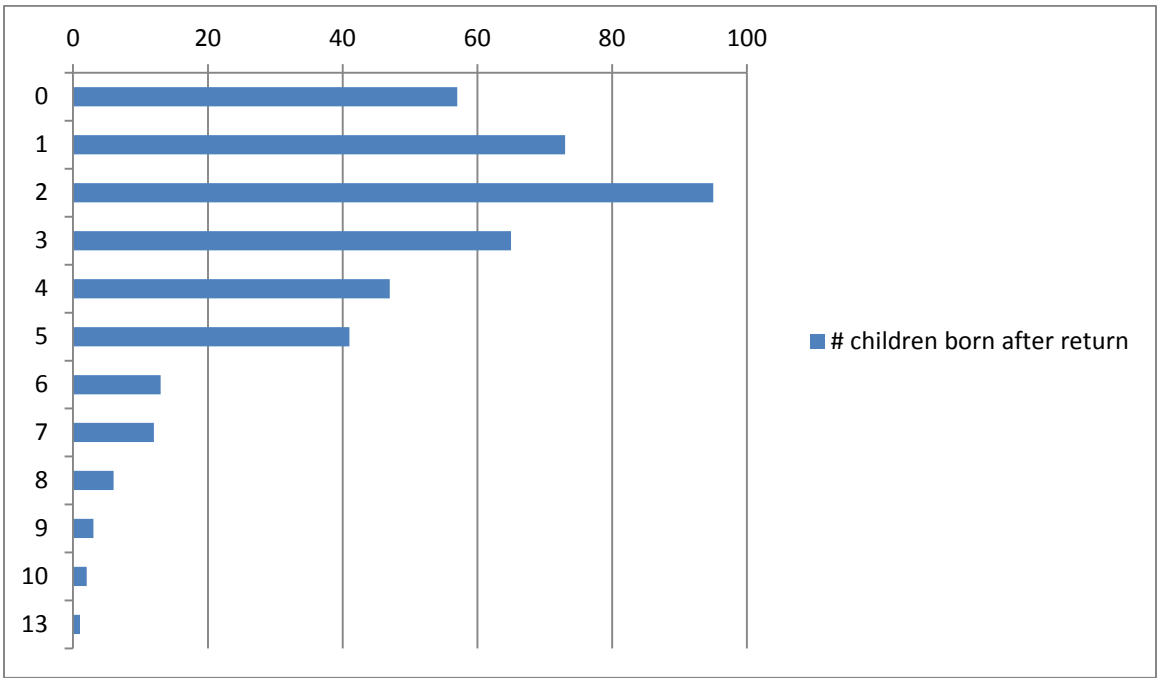

Figure 25: Number of children born after return per HH, Gisenyi sample

- Mean number of children born after return per household = 2.7
- Median number of children born after return per household = 2

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