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Experiences of internally displaced persons in urban communities in post-colonial Africa: a case of Anglophone IDPS in Yaoundé, Cameroon

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Abstract

The prevalence of intrastate conflicts in post-colonial Africa promote internal displacement of persons from mainly rural to urban communities. The conflict in Anglophone Regions of Cameroon is no exception. Minimal information is available about the experiences of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in urban communities considered enemy territories. Data about social, cultural, and political factors that shape IDPs' integration and belonging is vague. Available information is sketchy, mainly showing trends and distributions of the number and location of IDPs. Research about the lived experiences of Anglophone IDPs in Yaoundé contributes to the literature aiming to address the paucity of knowledge in the area. The theory of Locality guides the framwework for this research. Central to its tenets, place−space nexus influence the meaning and interpretation of IDPs' lived experiences in enemy territories. For this research, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 15 research participants. Key findings show that in/visibility, hyper-precarity, and dilemmas of integration are significant markers of IDPs' lived experiences. In addition to contributing to scholarly literature, this research amplifies the need for a pragmatic integrated approach towards the governance of internal displacement. The approach departs from normative 'soft laws' and frameworks.