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**Rapid Independent Assessment**

# **The Problem of Chronic Internal Displacement in Papua**



*This research is supported by*



**Communion of Churches  
in Indonesia**

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# 1 | Executive Summary

The research underpinning this Rapid Independent Assessment was conducted by a group of researchers with expertise from various fields, including migration, political science, law, social justice, religious matters, and humanitarian affairs. Data was collected in July-August 2024 and obtained directly or “firsthand” from 70 IDPs in addition to group interviews. Displacement in Papua is constantly evolving. The number of people displaced over the past five years has been reported to range from 45,000-100,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). By mid-2024, the situation is likely to have changed significantly because IDPs have on average experienced protracted displacement for more than three years. It should be emphasized that in this field research, it is still unclear how many IDPs in total remain displaced in each of the displacement contexts visited, namely Nabire, Sorong, Maybrat, and Wamena.

## A. The main needs of IDPs in Papua

The group most affected by displacement in Papua is indigenous Papuans; in our survey 99% of IDPs were indigenous Papuans. Their four main needs are lack of food (97%), lack of access to health services (87%), economic/livelihood stresses (81%), and almost all IDP's reported being unable to go to school/education (90%). Respondents received assistance from a range of sources including church groups (30%), family/relatives (29%), and/or NGOs (24%). Local government assistance was reported to be extremely low. After more than three years, half of the respondents reported not receiving any assistance at all. It is, therefore, not surprising that two-thirds of IDPs do not feel safe in their current situation.

## B. Causes of displacement in Papua

All respondents cited “armed conflict” as the leading cause of their displacement (100%). “Fear” was also mentioned by 97% of all respondents. A total of 41% of IDP respondents reported intimidated by the conflicting parties and 39% of respondents said that their families were directly threatened. IDP respondents reported that their average displacement period of three years included between one and two years spent living in the open and walking long distances through the jungle. Around two-thirds of respondents were constantly moving, usually on foot, either sleeping in the open or under tents/tarpaulins. These findings underscore that IDPs in Papua have a very high capacity to endure cumulative trauma. The three main considerations that influence IDPs thinking in relation to returning to their home villages are as follows:

- Security in their place of origin (70%) and the status of armed conflict in their place of origin (64%) – it is also worth noting that **39% clearly stated that they did not want to return because of threats from the conflicting parties.**
- Economic and livelihood concerns (53%).
- The availability of protection and assistance now (57% of IDPs reports needing protection from violence now) *and* in their place of origin (27%).

### C. Key findings

1. Displacement in Papua is a complex phenomenon and is not simply a matter of counting IDPs. The main cause of displacement is armed conflict and its victims are clear: **99% of IDPs are indigenous Papuans.**
2. Displacement in Papua has become a chronic problem when viewed from: the duration and intensity of displacement (on average for more than three years including 16 months spent living in the jungle and constantly moving); extremely poor living conditions (97% reported not having enough food; only around 10% of IDPs reported being able to attend school), psychosocial trauma and vulnerability; and the resilience of local communities increasingly being tested (66% of respondents feel unsafe in their current location). All of these factors indicate that IDPs are acutely vulnerable.
3. Chronic displacement in Papua should be a wake-up call for government and non-government actors to address the multiple vulnerabilities experienced by IDPs. The data from this report clearly shows that:
  - Food, schooling, and economic/subsistence needs are critical and require urgent intervention.
  - Chronic displacement is a challenge that requires a comprehensive policy response at the national, local, and host community levels. Targeted assistance must be driven by data, not outdated approaches or simply counting IDP numbers.
  - Church-led and NGO-led IDP registration initiatives through the issuance of identity cards should be considered. IDPs are more likely to trust assistance from Churches.
  - There are strong indications of very high levels of exposure to violence and cumulative trauma. An independent and credible organization needs to conduct a psychosocial needs assessment of IDPs in Papua.





Forest in the Baliem Valley, West Papua.  
Photo: Alex Drainville/Flickr”





# Foreword by the Bishops' Conference of Indonesia (KWI)

Pope Francis is extremely concerned about the matter of internal displacement due to the various crises that impact on the suffering of millions of men, women and children causing them to migrate. There are many reasons why people have to flee their homes. Internal displacement occurs due to various causal factors. The main trigger is usually armed conflict (for example in Papua), which leads to violence, human rights violations arising from social problems, and people fleeing for their safety.

Through this report on displacement in Papua, we are all being made aware that Indonesia is not doing well in terms of internal displacement. The prolonged conflict between the TNI-POLRI and armed groups in Papua has had an impact in terms of increasing fear and anxiety in the community. Many people, because they feel unsafe, leave their hometowns due to frequent armed violence. They leave their villages and go to other places for safety and in search of a more hopeful future.

Their migration from their original villages to new areas is not at all easy. In addition to the problems of adaptation, adjustment, social security, and an uncertain environment, cultural issues become a singular challenge. The impact of migration is not confined to livelihoods and the damaging economic effect on family income; also the problem of children's education, public health, family resilience, and social relations all become vulnerabilities. Through this research, it is increasingly clear that the displacement problem in Papua has become an urgent humanitarian problem and must be tackled immediately and resolved by the state, which after all has the authority in this matter.

Although the displacement problem in Papua is the responsibility of the state, in terms of internally displaced people the Indonesian Catholic Church is not standing still. Through the related commissions – Migration Commission and the Commission on Socio-Economic Development – the Catholic Church has not abandoned them or allowed their plight to go unseen. The presence of parishes through the related commissions of the Catholic Church have done a lot, and while there are shortcomings, they will continue to move to respond to internal displacement in Papua. Moreover, in relation the problem of internally displaced

people, the Pope has firmly conveyed his message to all of us.

Through the document "Pastoral Orientation on Internally Displaced People" the Pope emphasized that when dealing with the problem of internally displaced people there are four main things that the Church must do: welcome, protect, promote, and integrate. Through this document the Catholic Church highlights several challenges in terms of internal displacement due to the challenges caused by various problems within the global context. This is why these pastoral guidelines were delivered by Pope Francis as a means of pastoral consideration to immediately help internally displaced people.

The Catholic Church, which has a maternal concern for internally displaced people in Papua within its pastoral care, is significantly helped by this kind of research. If we are unable to acknowledge the reality before our very eyes, the Church's nurturing role would not be as meaningful and keenly felt by so many people. Through this research on displacement in Papua, we are provided with an explanation: "this is a humanitarian issue, many of our brothers and sisters and children have been displaced from their ancestral lands due to armed conflict". With this explanation, the Catholic Church, especially the local Diocese, can use this data and research as a pastoral basis for immediate action. With the help of this research and analysis, the local Catholic Diocese will find it much easier to devise and implement humanitarian programs: thereby better *welcoming, protecting, promoting, and integrating people*.

*Jakarta, 28 August 2024*

With Greetings of Love and Humanitarian Solidarity

**Reverend Clementinus Eko Aldilanto, O.Carm**

**Executive Secretary of the Commission for Socio-Economic Development**

**Indonesian Bishops' Conference (PSE-KWI)**





Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja  
di Indonesia

# Words of Support from the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI)

The Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) supports and expresses its deepest appreciation for the research on the current situation faced by internally displaced people (IDPs) in Papua as conducted by the diverse and multi-disciplinary team and set out in this Rapid Independent Assessment. PGI considers the efforts made by this team of researchers in exploring and documenting the challenges confronted by IDPs, in addition to their proposed solutions to improve their quality of life, to be of tremendous value.

As a church called to proclaim God's peace and welfare across the world, PGI has always pays special attention to humanitarian developments and environmental issues in Papua. Our concern is expressed through the establishment of PGI's Papua Bureau, which is tasked with advocating humanitarian and environmental issues in Papua and communicating them through our church-based humanitarian networks and extensive ecumenical efforts, as well as through government and other related institutions.

PGI fully understands that the conditions facing IDPs are complex and speak to various humanitarian and environmental considerations within Papua, but their plight has still not received serious attention from the government or other humanitarian focused institutions. PGI believes that through in-depth and systematic participatory research, we can identify the underlying conditions and basic needs of IDPs, and thereby formulate appropriate steps to meaningfully assist them.

PGI is committed to participating and supporting IDPs recovery and integration through

collaboration with various parties, including humanitarian organizations and the government.

We hope that the results of this study will be used as a reference for broader and more sustainable action, raise public awareness, and enlighten public officials on the importance of paying more attention to the conditions experienced by IDPs in Papua. We believe that every individual has the right to receive equal protection and opportunity, regardless of their background.

*Jakarta, August 30, 2024*

**Reverend Jacklevyn Manuputty**

**Secretary General**



## Communion of Churches in Indonesia

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# Foreword by the Papuan Council of Churches (DGP)

The current crisis in Papua in over the last seven years was triggered by a series of incidents related to armed conflict in Papua. The first incident in December 2018 broke out with the murder of 26 road workers in Nduga Regency on account of the contractor not respecting the request of the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB) for contractors to take leave or withdraw their workers.

After the murders in Nduga, a large-scale military operation occurred. As a result, the Nduga community from several districts such as Yigi, Mugi, and Mapenduma left their hometowns. The following year, in December 2019, another military operation took place in Intan Jaya Regency. The Moni people fled to Paniai, Puncak, and Nabire Regencies. The following year in September 2021 there was another wave of military operations in Puncak Papua Regency, Bintang Highlands led to displacement in Maybrat, Southwest Papua in the same month, then in Yahukimo in October 2021.

Whilst military operations were underway to pursue the TPNPB, another incident occurred on 16 August 2019, namely racism at a Surabaya Student Dormitory. This incident quickly became big news that rapidly spread through social media. The racist epithets against Indigenous Papuans were met with protests against racism and mass demonstrations in the cities of Jayapura, Manokwari, Sorong, Kaimana, Jayapura, Deiyai, and other parts.

Since these incidents, the escalation of violence has increased from both the TPNPB and TNI/POLRI. Tens of thousands of troops have been deployed to Papua and thousands of residents have fled their villages. According to Theo van den Broek, a Catholic priest, these violent incidents have prompted the government to design a security approach predicated on the appearance of authority whilst relegating Papua's political fight for human rights to being that

of an afterthought.

Papuans feel that they have been led to a dead end. There is no clear way forward. This report on displacement landed in my hands a few days ago. Without realizing it, since the people of Nduga, Maybrat, and Intan Jaya began to flee, their fate sometimes only appeared in our minds with words like 60,000 Papuans still living in displacement. This report describes the story of the experiences of Indigenous Papuans during displacement, a story which is still far from over because Papua remains mired in armed conflict. Perhaps in the future, more research focusing on displacement in Papua will be possible. After all, we will not understand the human rights violations and history of the Papua's Indigenous People over the last 60 years if we do not dig deeper into this topic.

*Jayapura, Thursday, 29 August 2024*

**Rev. Benny Giay**

**Moderator**

**Papuan Council of Churches**



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# Preface: The Urgency of Aid for IDPs in Papua

Over the past five years, the number of internally displaced people in Papua has been widely reported to range between 45,000-100,000 people. I was again shocked to read the latest report entitled, “Rapid Independent Assessment: Chronic Internal Displacement Problems in Papua” that you now have in front of you. The reason why this report is important is because it is the most recent analysis available today of the needs of internally displaced people, for which it paints a clear picture of an acutely vulnerable population that is manifestly struggling to survive. *To just survive.*

Various groups in Papua and outside Papua have repeatedly voiced the importance of ending the armed conflict there through an approach based on conflict resolution towards peace. Despite these efforts, the situation facing internally displaced people (IDPs) in several parts of Papua has not been properly handled.

This carefully researched report paints a heart-wrenching but tragic picture of the acute vulnerability and neglect experienced by internally displaced people in Papua. This report makes it clear that the conflict in Papua has affected indigenous Papuans more than any other ethnic group. The patterns of vulnerability documented in this study should be a wake-up call to government and non-government agencies in Indonesia that claim to be working to improve the situation in Papua.

The government may want claim to be providing direct cash assistance to Papuans. The problem is that this initiative only serves to 'connects the dots' in terms of the central government's accumulation of capital and exploitation of Papua's natural resources.

Moreover, the problem is further exacerbated when initiatives claimed to be for the benefit of Papuans come with a large military presence in Papua that directly causes enormous suffering for the indigenous Papuan population, especially internally displaced people. However, we – and I am talking as someone working in the humanitarian sector in Papua – have known for a long time that the situation is really bad. This report shows us again that the situation has become chronic and we need to take urgent action.

The most important thing for the state to acknowledge is that displacement in Papua is categorically caused by armed conflict. Not natural disasters. Not because the indigenous Papuan population is primitive or unable to adapt to modernity. Not because other ethnic groups in Indonesia are migrating to Papua. Displacement has become a chronic problem due

to the conflict and armed violence that is closely linked to the exploitation of Papua's natural resources, which in turn directly causes displacement.

I was saddened to read that the average displacement period for internally displaced people is three years, which includes between one and two years spent living in the open walking through the jungle. To say that the Papuan jungle is extreme is an understatement. It is some of the most inhospitable terrain in the world with steep mountains. Walking hundreds of kilometres is not only challenging, but also extremely risky, especially for children. We have seen from other reports that displaced Papuan children died of starvation in 2018-2019.

Of most concern to me are the potential psychosocial impacts of displacement highlighted in this report. Prolonged stints of sleeping outdoors or in caves and beneath trees, fleeing armed violence in one place multiple times, then only to reach safety whilst starving, unemployed, and unable to access basic services such as health care and school education - these are unimaginable forms of injustice.

The situation depicted in this report is truly heartbreaking and completely unacceptable. No Indonesian should have to endure such humiliation. Therefore, there must be immediate action from the central government to resolve the problems that cause displacement, namely armed conflict, by opening up and exploring dialogue towards a peaceful settlement. At the same time, the central government also needs to be more open to involvement of independent providers of humanitarian aid.

*Jakarta, 30 August 2024*

**Usman Hamid**

**Executive Director**

**Amnesty International Indonesia**





Ibukota Nduga di Kenyam  
Foto: Wikipedia



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## 2 | Introduction

The research underpinning this Rapid Independent Assessment was conducted by a group of researchers with expertise from various fields, including migration, political science, law, social justice, religious matters, and humanitarian affairs. It is based on a survey and interviews with more than 140 internally displaced persons (hereinafter referred to as “IDPs”). The aim was to examine the conditions experienced by IDPs who fled to four regions, namely: Maybrat and Sorong Regency (Southwest Papua Province), Nabire (Central Papua Province) and Wamena, Jayawijaya Regency (Papua Highlands Province). The findings and recommendations contained in this report focus on the current needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs in these four regions. Displacement, like all other forms of migration, is dynamic, and the conditions discussed in this report are by no means a new phenomenon. On average IDPs in Papua have experienced protracted displacement for more than three years. The vulnerabilities reported by IDPs in Papua are now extremely urgent, especially in terms of protection and basic needs.



Forest in the Baliem Valley, West Papua.  
Photo: Alex Drainville/Flickr”

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## 3 | Methodology

The data collected in this Rapid Independent Assessment during July-August 2024 was obtained directly or “firsthand” from 70 IDPs plus group interviews with around 75 people in four areas, namely Maybrat and Sorong in Southwest Papua Province, Nabire in Central Papua Province, and Wamena in Papua Highlands Province. The selection of respondents was in the form of “snowball sampling” due to access limitations and the non-permissive security environment in each displacement context visited.<sup>1</sup> It should also be noted that respondents in several areas, especially Wamena, had doubts and complaints in relation to previous research and data gathering efforts not leading to tangible forms of assistance. **The proportion of respondents surveyed by region was as follows: Maybrat 27%, Wamena 31%, Sorong 26%, and Nabire 16%.**

Most of the 70 respondent interviews were conducted individually, but there were situations where these interviews were more relaxed because families and other IDPs, both adults and children, were curious or wanted to listen in or participate. Given the inherent vulnerability and security issues in situ, this was accepted as a realistic contextual feature of IDPs displacement experience in Wamena, Nabire, Maybrat, and Sorong.

During fieldwork, there were many responses and perspectives from IDPs that revealed traumatic events or exhibited psychosocial impacts related to the circumstances around their displacement. Because the experience of trauma is intrinsically complex and beyond the scope of this Rapid Independent Assessment, the experiences and perspectives discussed in this report should only be treated as indicative or a preliminary assessment. A comprehensive psychosocial assessment by a specialized independent organization or team is needed to specifically analyze the levels of cumulative trauma experienced by IDPs in Papua.

Quantitative and qualitative data was collected individually and in groups and the average age of most respondents was around 37 years old with the majority of respondents being male, except in Sorong. Most respondents were heads of families. Except for one respondent in Sorong, in Maybrat, Wamena, and Nabire all respondents were indigenous Papuans (i.e. the Aifat, Nduga, Migani/Moni ethnic groups). Only respondents in the Maybrat and Sorong Districts (West Papua Province) did not require translation to Bahasa Indonesia and were more open to being part of field research. This meant that approximately 53% of respondents were IDPs in Maybrat and Sorong. Most respondents from Nduga living in Wamena, Jayawijaya District and IDPs from Intan Jaya living in Nabire District (Central Papua Province) required translation and were initially reluctant to accept the presence of field researchers.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique used primarily in research to identify and recruit respondents from hard-to-reach populations. It begins with a small group of initial subjects who then refer additional participants from their social networks, creating a “snowball” effect as the sample size expands.

2 Although, the largest group present during a group meeting occurred in a group interview with with Intan Jaya IDPs in Nabire Regency.

## 4 | Protection needs and vulnerabilities faced by IDPs

**"We are not free like before, to enjoy life from nature, to be able to hunt, tend to our gardens, or fish in the river without disruption and that is the happiness of life based on our customs and culture. Now, we are like guests who have returned and become confined like foreigners in our own village. We are confused about who is the guest and who owns this land..." – IDPs respondent Maybrat.<sup>3</sup>**

Displacement like all other forms of migration is dynamic, and the situation discussed in this report is by no means a new phenomenon. In fact, IDPs report an average displacement period of three years, which included between one and two years spent living in the jungle and moving on foot through dense forest. The total number of people displaced has been repeatedly reported by human rights organizations<sup>4</sup> and the media<sup>5</sup>. The total number quoted ranges significantly between 45,000-100,000. In early 2022, a number of human rights experts from the United Nations (UN) put the "the overall number of displaced, since the escalation of violence in December 2018, at between 60,000 to 100,000 people".<sup>6</sup>

Due to the limitations of this Rapid Independent Assessment, which is not comprehensive, it is not possible to validate these numbers. However, there is no reason to doubt that at some point and at various points the number of IDPs lies somewhere in the range of the abovementioned figures. However, by mid-2024 the situation is likely to have changed as IDPs have been displaced for an average of more than three years. Again, migration is dynamic in all contexts, including in Papua.

While there has been reporting on the situation of IDPs in Papua, there is a deficit in understanding their current needs and how to channel assistance to the most vulnerable groups of IDPs. Based on our survey, the four main needs at this time are lack of food (97%), lack of adequate healthcare (87%), economic/livelihood stresses (81%), and almost all IDPs are unable to attend school/education (90%). Other needs including shelter, electricity, internet, clean water, menstrual products, and other protection concerns were also cited as urgent.

It is important to emphasize here that after three years more than half of the respondents (51%) reported not receiving any assistance. Lack of money is also a major factor when IDPs need to access health services.<sup>7</sup>

3 Maybrat 6, Woman, 33, Aifat Selatan, 14 July 2024

4 "HRM Annual Report: Human rights and conflict in West Papua 2023", Human Rights Monitor, 11 April 2024. <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/id/laporan/laporan-tahunan-2023-hak-asasi-manusia-dan-konflik-di-tanah-papua/> and news clipping entitled, "In West Papua, thousands upon thousands of displaced people lack basic life-giving services", World Council of Churches, 2 February 2023, <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/in-west-papua-thousands-upon-thousands-of-displaced-people-lack-basic-life-giving-services>

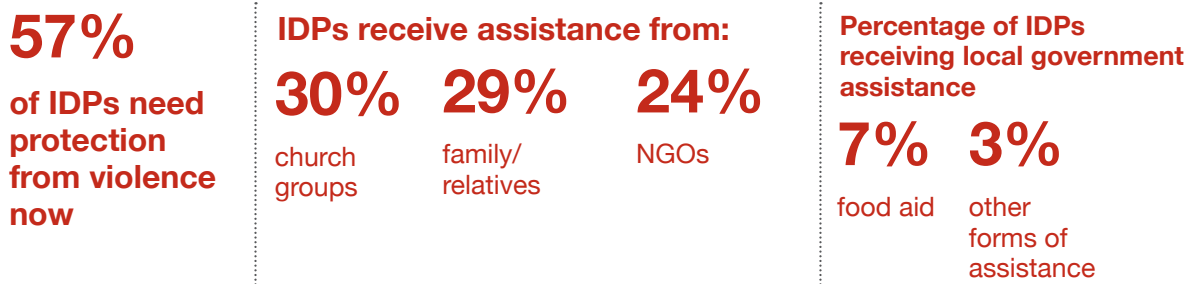
5 "SKP Gereja Katolik se-Tanah Papua nyatakan 46.926 warga sipil di Tanah Papua masih mengungsi", Jubi, 14 October 2023. See: <https://jubi.id/tanah-papua/2023/skp-gereja-katolik-se-tanah-papua-nyatakan-46-926-warga-sipil-di-tanah-papua-masih-mengungsi/>

6 "Indonesia: UN experts sound alarm on serious Papua abuses, call for urgent aid", 1 March 2022, see: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/indonesia-un-experts-sound-alarm-serious-papua-abuses-call-urgent-aid> and <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1113062>

7 It was reported (unverified) that eleven (11) IDPs died while at the Karang Mulia Village IDP camp, Nabire District, Nabire Regency (source: Nabire 6, Male, 30, Karang Mulia, 5 August 2024).



More than a quarter (i.e. 24-30%) of all respondents received assistance from a range of sources including church groups (30%), family/relatives (29%), and/or NGOs (24%). Across the sample and in all areas surveyed, especially Nabire, local government assistance was reported to be extremely low with only 7% of IDPs receiving food assistance and less than 3% for other forms of assistance. It is, therefore, not surprising that some two-thirds of IDPs do not feel safe now and 57% said they need protection from violence that they are currently experiencing.

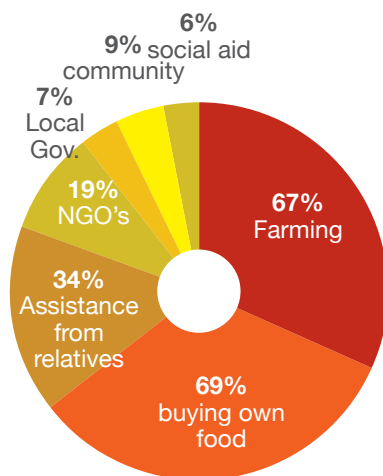


The three main concerns influencing IDPs in relation to what are seen as the main considerations for them to return to their home villages are as follows:

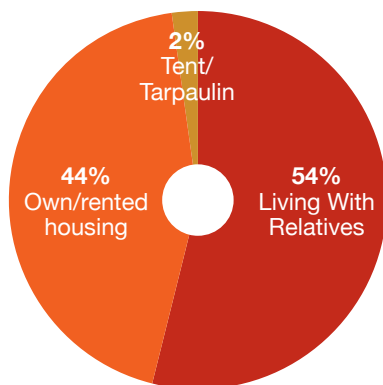
- 1. Security in their place of origin (70%) and the status of armed conflict in their place of origin (64%) – it is important to emphasize that 39% clearly said they did not want to return home due to threats from the conflicting parties.**
- 2. Economic and livelihood issues (53%).**
- 3. The availability of protection and assistance now (57% of IDPs reports needing protection from violence now) and in their place of origin (27%).**

The main needs of IDPs today can be organized into three categories, namely access to the means of survival (i.e. food, clean water, shelter, and water sanitation), access to education, and protection needs, including psychosocial issues, as well as IDPs' perspectives on returning to their place of origin.

## A. Access to the means of survival



**Food insecurity:** Most worrying here is that almost all respondents (97%) reported not having enough food. IDP families described their main source of food as being dependent on various forms of self-reliance with farming/ gardening (67%) and purchasing their own food (69%) cited as the main sources. Assistance from relatives was an option for some IDPs (34%). Externally provided food from NGOs (19%) were available for some, but food provision from local government (7%), local communities (9%), and/or social assistance (6%) was very limited.



**Shelter/housing:** Currently more than half of IDPs (54%) live with family members, relatives, or siblings. Another 44% have their own housing (either under construction or already built) or are renting. In other words, almost all IDPs surveyed have a form of shelter that meets their most basic needs. Given that this is the situation after three years, this shows that the adaptation and resilience of IDPs is quite high. Another important related aspect of their displacement and resettlement is that IDPs have significantly spread out.

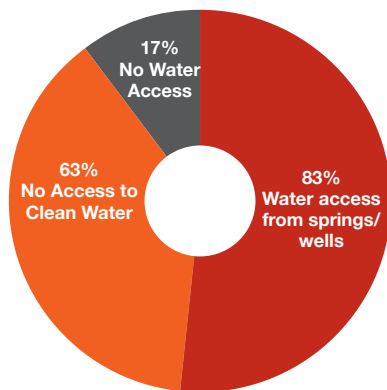
“ There are four points, including; Jayanti, Karang Mulia, Kampung Pepaya and Kaladiri and others are still stuck in boarding houses. ”  
– IDP respondent Nabire.

“ We are spread out in Wamena city, some in boarding houses, renting houses, with family, or living in huts (honai) ” – IDP respondent Wamena.

For some IDPs, housing options are very expensive. For example IDPs in the capital of Maybrat Regency who survive in part on Dana Kampung<sup>8</sup> (Indonesia's "Village Fund") use the money for rent – rent for one house can be around IDR 40-50 million per year (i.e. USD2,500-3,200).<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, this survey clearly found that respondents were not directly assisted by local government or external institutions in finding housing. Again, as with the need for food, the main means of obtaining housing seems to be based on the self-reliance of the IDP themselves. The majority of IDPs in all locations, with the exception of IDPs living in Sorong, live with their families/relatives or are renting accommodation at their own expense.

8 Dana Kampung, or the Village Fund, in Indonesia refers to public funds directly allocated to villages (desa) from the national budget for rural development and empowering local communities.

9 Maybrat 2, Woman, 42, Kumurkek, 13 July 2024.



**Access to clean water:** Around 83% of IDPs have access to water from wells or natural springs, however around 63% of IDPs still report they lack access to *clean* water. Nearly 17% have no access to water at all. Sorong and Wamena IDPs appear to have the poorest access to clean water. IDP respondents report extreme variability in distance to water sources, but it is typically between 10-100 meters with Wamena IDPs having to walk the furthest to get water.

**Water sanitation:** Around 24% of IDPs currently practice open defecation. This practice has serious health implications for them and their communities, especially among vulnerable groups such as children and pregnant women. Some IDPs in Sorong have access to toilets and washing facilities in their homes and all (100%) IDPs in Maybrat have access to toilet and washing facilities outside their homes. IDPs in Sorong and Wamena experience the greatest challenges with water sanitation due to open defecation.

### B. Access to education

When IDPs were asked, “Can you still study locally now?” 90% of respondents reported that they had no access or were not allowed to attend school in their current location. Interestingly, almost 24% of IDP respondents report having completed primary school. Given the challenges of illiteracy and low participation in primary school in Papua, IDP respondents appear to have relatively high levels of education.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately, their expectations in relation to education have been severely impacted by their prolonged displacement. Around 10% of IDPs in Maybrat, Sorong and Wamena were continuing their education, while IDPs in Nabire were either unable to study at all or were not allowed to do so. In Sorong, access to education was easier than in the other three IDP contexts in part due to the Church’s support for IDP children’s education in Catholic schools.

Reasons for why 90% of IDPs are unable to continue their education are due to various factors: lack of funds to send their children to school, school buildings are still being used by the authorities as military posts (e.g. Maybrat), feeling unsafe to let their children attend public schools due to the road to school passing through military checkpoints, access to schools is too far, and/or a lack of transportation means to get to school.<sup>11</sup>

### C. Protection needs, perspectives on returning to their place of origin, and psychosocial problems

All respondents cited “armed conflict” as the main cause of their displacement; similarly, “fear” was the second most frequently mentioned cause by 97% of all respondents. As many as 41% of IDP families reported that they were intimidated by the conflicting parties and 39% of respondents said that their families were directly threatened. These findings underline that IDPs have a very high capacity to endure trauma.

<sup>10</sup> Almost 19% of respondents reported having a university diploma or similar qualification, but this is not truly representative of any particular IDP group, but rather it is an inherent consequence of “snowball sampling” – those with higher education are easier to access and communicate with.

<sup>11</sup> Maybrat 9, Man, 51, Kumurkek, 14 July 2024.

**“ Our homes were burnt down...Then, several months later we were told to return to our villages by the local government ” – IDP respondent Maybrat.**

**“ Houses were burned down, our garden crops were destroyed, our livestock were killed, and our property was confiscated. ” – IDP respondent Nabire.**

Around 79% of IDP respondents were forced to flee or move more than once (IDPs moved an average number of three times). Whilst IDP respondents reported that their average displacement period was more than three years, this included between one and two years (the average period on the move was sixteen months) spent living in the open and walking through dense jungle. IDPs in Wamena and Nabire were on the move for the longest duration - an average of 20 months. IDPs in Wamena and Maybrat experienced the highest frequency of displacement. It should be noted here that there is significant variability in the sample, which reflects that IDP families did not have uniform experiences when moving or fleeing their places of origin. IDPs in Maybrat and Sorong experienced the most acute displacement including living under tents/tarpaulins or sleeping in the open for extended periods of time.

Around 43% of IDPs reported being constantly moving, usually on foot, with 23% sleeping under tents/tarpaulins or out in the open. A significant number (21%) now live with family or relatives. A quick glance at the responses to “How long have IDPs been here?” shows that IDP communities in all four contexts have been displaced from their homes and places of origin for more than three years.

The psychosocial impacts of displacement, prolonged exposure (e.g. “sleeping outside or on the side of the road”), and the various forms of violence that accompany flight from armed conflict can have a significant impact on both individuals and their groups or communities. Displaced children and adolescents are at increased risk for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety, and impaired mental health later in life. Trauma resilience related to the psychosocial impacts of displacement is complex and beyond the scope of this Rapid Independent Assessment; however, findings related to the duration and frequency of IDP respondents’ displacement are strong proxy indicators of cumulative trauma.



## 5 | Displacement pathways in Papua 2018-2023

“ Fled so many times, from Yigi Nduga District then to Kiyawage then to Ilaga to Nabire and to Jayapura then settled in Wamena City ”  
 – **IDP respondent Wamena.**

There is a similar pattern across IDPs' displacement escape routes. Following armed violence, IDPs generally make their first escape to nearby forests. The extremely challenging experiences of IDPs across Papua's unforgiving topographical terrain are fraught with physical risks. IDPs' typical experiences sheltering in nearby jungle would last for weeks or months; again, the average duration of time spent on the move was sixteen months. Erecting tents while in the jungle, or living in caves and beneath trees. IDPs reported a range of food assistance from external sources such as NGOs and the Church (16%), and interestingly, local government (13%), however the vast majority of IDPs (70%) report hunting and gathering and other forms of self-reliance. Once the situation is considered safe or IDPs wanted to join their relatives in other districts that are considered safer, IDPs usually found their way to nearby districts either on foot or with locally available transport if they had money.

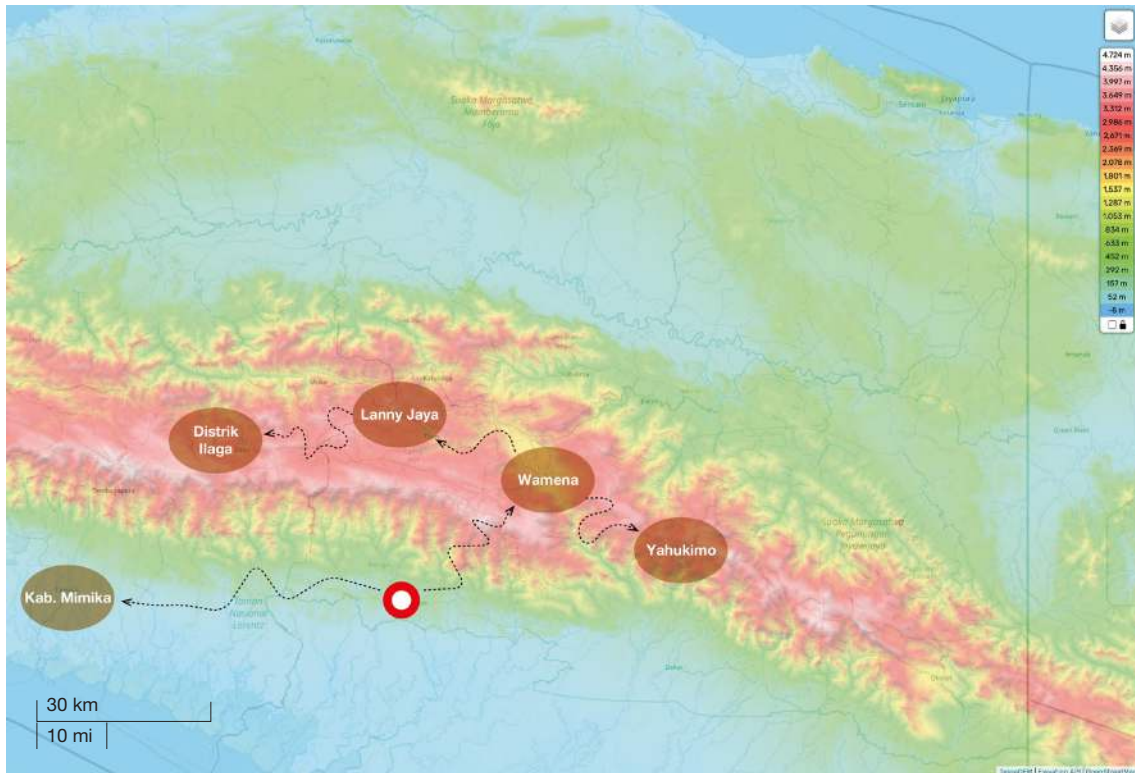
### A. Displacement pathways for IDPs in Wamena

The attack on PT Istaka Karya workers by the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB) led by Egianus Kogoya on 2 December 2018 in Yigi District became an incident that triggered residents to flee to Wamena, Jayawijaya Regency, Puncak Regency, Mimika Regency and Yahukimo Regency. A joint "military operation" by Indonesian National Army (TNI) and Police (POLRI) at the end of December 2018 led to residents from various districts in Nduga, Yal, Mapenduma, Mugi, Yigi, Kenyam, Nirkuri Regencies fleeing en masse.

Later, the hostage-taking of the Susi Air pilot from New Zealand, Captain Philip Mark Mehrtens, on 7 February 2023 led to an intensification of the number of IDPs fleeing from Nduga. People fleeing from Nduga exhibited a pattern. The community fled together from each village and district. While on the run, the inability of IDPs to communicate in Hubula, Lani, and/or Bahasa Indonesia made social interactions difficult and only further stoked the tensions and suspicions felt by fleeing IDPs.<sup>12</sup> Some IDPs from Wamena reported receiving assistance from Churches whilst on the run<sup>13</sup>, but again, the vast majority of IDPs (70%) report hunting and gathering and other forms of self-reliance.

<sup>12</sup> Wamena 3, Woman, 44, Wamena kota, 31 July 2024.

<sup>13</sup> Wamena 20, Man, 55, Muliama, 30 July 2024



IDPs from Nduga Regency that we interviewed in Wamena first fled to nearby forests around their districts in Mugi, Yal, Yigi and Kenyam (capital of Nduga Regency). Then they scattered. The distance from their district to nearby forests ranged from around 10-20 KM. Some settled in Puncak Jaya Regency, Yahukimo Regency, Lanny Jaya Regency and Mimika Regency. The length of time IDPs lived in the jungle varied, some for several months, some for more than a year. IDPs also reported that there was a helicopter attack on surrounding forests which caused IDPs to flee in disarray, which in turn led to some suffering from respiratory complaints.<sup>14</sup>

Once armed violence subsided, IDPs from these districts then moved to Kwiyawagi, Lanny Jaya Regency (approx. 30-35 KM). They then walked to Ilaga District, Puncak Jaya Regency, a distance of around 50 KM.<sup>15</sup> From Ilaga District, some would pass through Tiom District or move directly to Wamena by renting a vehicle (for those who had the money) or proceeded on foot (around 90-157 KM). For those who had to walk with their parents and children, the journey on foot would take up to one week. In Wamena District some IDPs lived with their relatives, whilst others would rent houses or find somewhere to board. There are also those who moved and settled in other districts, such as in Muliama District in western Wamena.

IDPs in Wamena have not received any assistance from the local government.<sup>16</sup> This has led to many residents rejecting requests for research or data collection in relation to the IDP situation, mostly due to the minimal amount of assistance received, especially from local government. Meanwhile, even though IDPs are already living in an IDP camp in Muliama District, western Wamena, IDPs report that local authorities increasingly suspect them of being connected or associated with the TPNPB.<sup>17</sup> This in turn makes parents afraid to send their children to nearby schools.<sup>18</sup>

14 Wamena 7, Man, 68, Wamena, 31 July 2024

15 Wamena 11, Woman, 50, Wamena, 31 July 2024

16 Wamena 16, Man, 40, Muliama, 30 July 2024

17 Wamena 6, Man, 48, Muliama, 30 July 2024

18 Wamena 14, Woman, 27, Muliama, 30 July 2024

The chronic lack of adequate transportation options makes it difficult for IDPs in Muliama and other points outside the center of Wamena town to access healthcare services<sup>19</sup>, schools, and sell their agricultural products.<sup>20</sup> Water access comes from nearby wells that IDPs have to dig themselves, but the water quality is reportedly poor.<sup>21</sup> Some IDPs in Muliama received assistance from a local tribal chief in the form of land, housing, and other means of survival during their displacement.<sup>22</sup> For IDPs living in the center of Wamena they reported finding it extremely difficult to gain employment or find jobs.<sup>23</sup>

## **B. Displacement pathways for IDPs in Maybrat and Sorong**

At the time of writing this report, IDPs have fled to several districts in Maybrat Regency (Southwest Papua Province), including: Kumurkek, Aitinyo, Kais Darat District and Teminabuan District in South Sorong Regency (Southwest Papua Province). IDPs have also fled to Sorong district and city and Teluk Bintuni Regency (West Papua Province).

IDPs currently living in Sorong and Maybrat Regencies, generally come from the Aifat people, which is one of the three large ethnic groups (Aifat, Aitinyo and Ayamaru), although there is also an immigrant community in the region who work as teachers, civil servants, pastors/priests, and ordinary people who have married and live in districts around the red zone (i.e. conflict-prone areas).<sup>24</sup> Maybrat residents, especially those from South Aifat, East Aifat, South East Aifat, Eastern Central Aifat and Far Eastern Aifat Districts, were displaced due to the TPNPB attack on 2 September 2021 in Kisor Village, South Aifat District. Joint TNI and POLRI sweeping operations in South Aifat District followed, which then spread to Far Eastern Aifat District. A few days after the incident, residents from the Kisor and surrounding villages fled en masse.<sup>25</sup>

Around 6 September 2021, joint patrols did not locate the TPNPB fighters. The sweeping operation was then carried out directly on houses abandoned by residents and local churches.<sup>26</sup> At around this time TNI and Police Mobile Brigade (Brimob) forces constructed military checkpoints along the South Aifat road, starting from Sabah Village to Far Eastern Aifat.

Most residents in South Aifat District had begun to evacuate on the first and second days after the incident (i.e. 3-4 September 2021). They fled to nearby forests around South Aifat District. Some of them survived in the forest for six months to a year. Meanwhile, residents in villages around East Aifat District, Eastern Central Aifat, South East Aifat, and Far Eastern Aifat began to evacuate on the third to fourth day after the incident (i.e. 5-6 September 2021). Most IDPs fled using locally available vehicles to Kumurkek, Sorong Regency, but some also fled to the jungle on foot.

19 It was reported (unverified) that three (3) children died during their displacement due to lack of access to health care and high medical costs. (Source: Wamena 21, Woman, 33, Muliama, 30 July 2024)

20 Wamena 28, Man, 27, Muliama, 30 July 2024

21 Wamena 17, Man, 48, Muliama, 30 July 2024

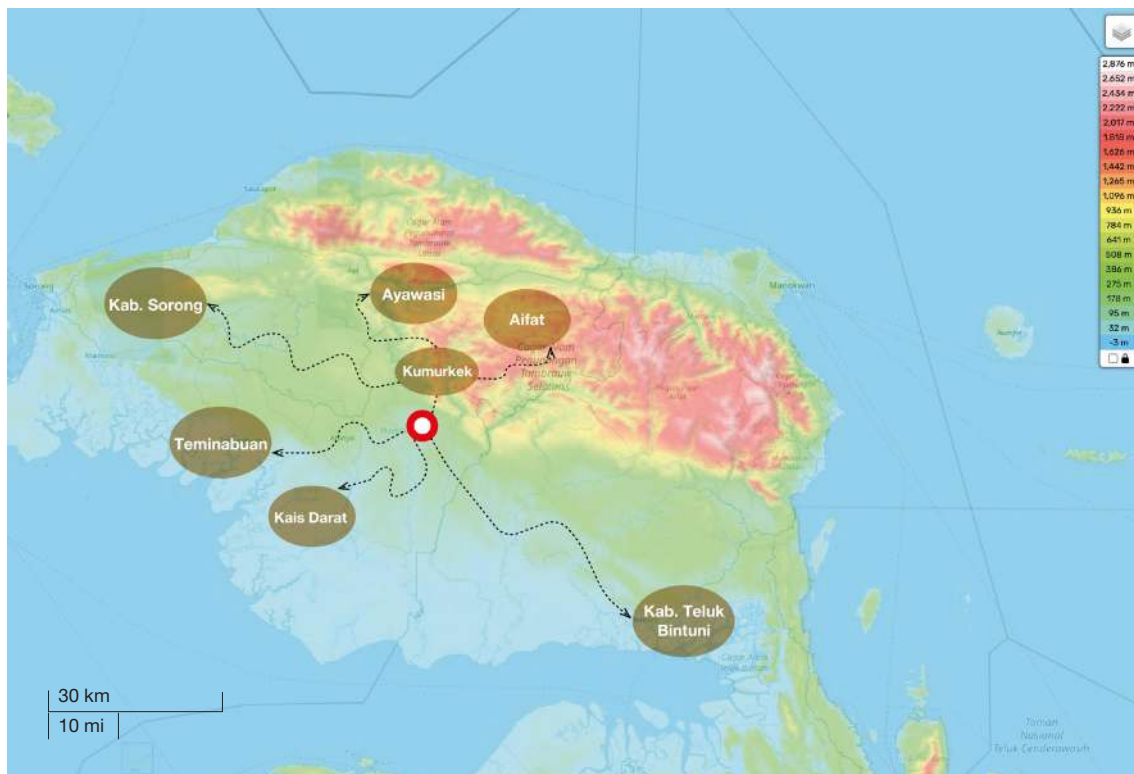
22 Wamena 16, Man, 40, Muliama, 30 July 2024

23 Wamena 12, Man, 28, Wamena kota, 31 July 2024.

24 In Papua, a red zone is defined as an area affected by security disturbances and serious threats to public safety and instability.

25 After this incident, Kisor Village residents who did not know anything about the tragedy the next day felt threatened, although according to respondents most of the perpetrators of the attack were not actually from Kisor village (source: Interview in Regency Sorong, Woman, 27, 16 July 2024).

26 Maybrat 1, Man, 49, Kumurkek, 13 July 2024.



IDPs in Sorong and Maybrat regencies fled from Sabah Village, Kisor Village, Tashimara Village, and Imsun Village (South Aifat) to the Kamundan forest; Faan Kahrio, Aifam, Saud, Frambu, Kamat, and Ayata villagers (Central East Aifat) fled to nearby forests around their district and Kamundan forest; Womba and Wormu villagers (South East Aifat) fled to the forests around their district; Aikrer and Sawin villagers (East Aifat) fled to the Susumuk forest, Kais Darat, and Teminabuan, South Sorong Regency (South West Papua Province) or to Teluk Bintuni Regency (West Papua Province). The distance traveled on foot by IDPs over extremely harsh terrain varied from 11 KM to 89 KM.

The length of time the IDPs were living in the open also varied. Some were only four days and others stayed as long as two years in the jungle. After fleeing to nearby forests for refuge, they then scattered to various places: Kumorkek (capital of Maybrat district), Ayawasi (North Aifat), Bori Village (Aifat), Sasari Village (South Sorong Regency), Susumuk forest (Aifat), Aitinyo District, Kais forest in South Sorong Regency, and SP 1 and SP 2 in Sorong Regency. IDPs who tried to return did not feel safe to carry out their livelihoods inside or on the edge of the jungle.<sup>27</sup> According to IDP respondents joint patrols were suspicious of residents if they were seen to be in the jungle for too long, suspecting them of aiding TPNPB fighters. On the other hand, these same IDPs reported being equally worried about being seen as TNI and POLRI "informants" by TPNPB fighters.<sup>28</sup>

There were also IDPs who fled as family units using rented vehicles. In such cases they would flee directly to Kumorkek or to Sorong town of the surrounding regency. These same IDPs then rented houses, lived in temporary IDP sites, or stayed with relatives at their homes. For families whose villages lack vehicle access, they would usually flee with just enough provisions, walking for weeks in the jungle, sleeping in the open, but following the same routes as as mentioned above.

27 Maybrat 7, Man, 32, Aifat Selatan, 14 July 2024.

28 Maybrat 1, Man, 49, Kumorkek, 13 July 2024.



IDPs who fled to Kais Darat and Teminabuan, South Sorong Regency (Papua Barat Daya Province) usually stayed with their relatives for several weeks or months at a time, then moved to Sorong City and/or Regency hoping to find work and the enrolling their kids in local schools.

IDPs who fled to Sorong Regency report not having received any assistance from the local government<sup>29</sup> or any allocation of funds whatsoever from the Sorong Regency government or the West Papua Provincial government.<sup>30</sup> IDPs from Kisor village felt that they were the most discriminated against because they were treated as the cause of the Kisor tragedy on 2 September 2021.

According to several IDP respondents, promises made by the Maybrat Regency government to provide assistance in the form of living expenses for six months upon return to their places of origin have not been honoured.<sup>31</sup> At home their gardens have been damaged, their livestock gone, and fish ponds drained by the conflicting parties. In several instances after military operations, residents' houses were damaged, but despite promises made by local government to repair the houses, only some (not all) of the doors and windows of residents' houses were repaired.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, Maybrat Regency government officials urged residents to immediately return to their original villages in the South Aifat, East Aifat, Eastern Central Aifat, and Far Eastern Aifat Districts despite the fact that these districts are still classified as red zones (i.e. conflict-prone).<sup>33</sup>

At the insistence of local government officials some of residents from South Aifat and East Aifat were forced to return, but residents from the Eastern Central Aifat and Far Eastern Aifat Districts have not returned. IDPs from South Fuog Village, South Aifat District who had returned to their original villages in December 2023 were forced to flee again after authorities suspected the presence of TPNPB fighters operating in their villages.<sup>34</sup>

### C. Displacement pathways for IDPs in Nabire

As a result of increasingly dangerous armed violence in Intan Jaya in September 2019, Intan Jaya residents fled to Nabire, Paniai, Dogiyai, Deiyai and Mimika. This wave of IDPs started towards the end of September 2019 and has since increased when Pastor Yeremia Zanambani was killed after being shot on 19 September 2020<sup>35</sup> and then Pastor Ebi Bagau was killed in a church along with three other people on 10 April 2023.<sup>36</sup> Intan Jaya residents from Hitadipa, Sugapa, Homeyo, and Agisiga Districts proceeded to evacuate en masse.

Initially, IDPs tried to take shelter at nearby churches, where they stayed for a few days or weeks (i.e. inside church compound) until the armed violence stopped, after which they returned to their respective homes. However, when joint patrols began military sweeping operations in the villages, residents fled Intan Jaya Regency. IDPs' displacement pathways were not significantly dissimilar from IDPs experienced fleeing to Wamena, Sorong, and Maybrat. When they no longer felt safe taking refuge in the local church, residents fled into nearby forests and took refuge under tents or in caves for one to two months. After this they moved and took refuge in the Catholic Church in Sugapa District.

29 Sorong 1, Man, 63, Regency Sorong, 16 July 2024.

30 Sorong 2, Woman, 49, Regency Sorong, 16 July 2024.

31 Maybrat 6, Woman, 33, Aifat Selatan, 14 July 2024.

32 Maybrat 6, Woman, 33, Aifat Selatan, 14 July 2024.

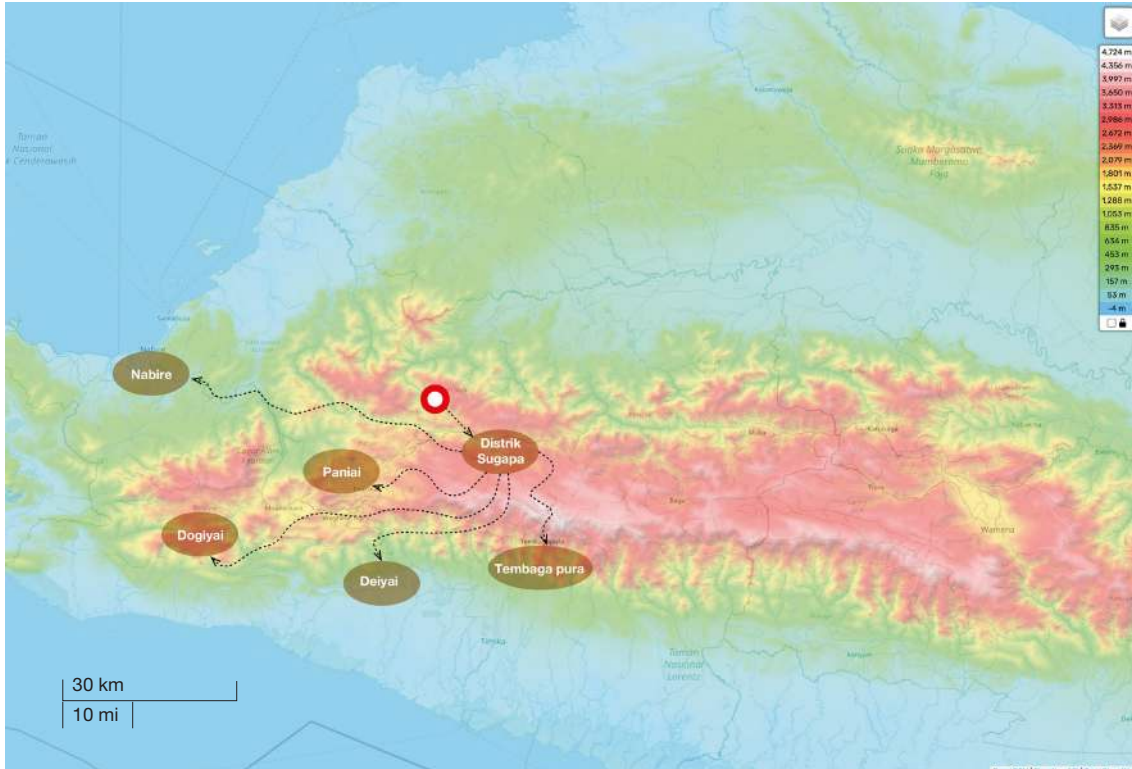
33 Maybrat 7, Man, 50, Kumurkek, 14 July 2024.

34 Maybrat 1, Man, 49, Kumurkek, 13 July 2024.

35 "Komnas HAM Beberkan Hasil Temuan dalam Kasus Penembakan Pendeta Yeremia", Komnas Ham Republik Indonesia, 20 October 2020, <https://www.komnasham.go.id/index.php/news/2020/10/20/1609/komnas-ham-beberkan-hasil-temuan-dalam-kasus-penembakan-pendeta-yeremia.html>

36 "Konflik Bersenjata di Intan Jaya, Seorang Pendeta Dikabarkan Hilang", Suara Papua, 14 April 2023, <https://suarapapua.com/2023/04/14/konflik-bersenjata-di-intan-jaya-seorang-pendeta-dikabarkan-hilang/>

After the conflict situation calmed down in Sugapa, there was a priest who escorted and accompanied IDPs through each military post until they left Sugapa District.<sup>37</sup> The same thing also occurred in Munimani Village and Ndugisiga Village. IDPs moved together and then scattered to Mimika, Dogiyai, Deiyai, Paniai and Nabire regencies.



Some IDP groups from Sugapa, Hitadipa, Homeyo, Agisiga districts fled directly to nearby forests around 10-20 KM away. The length of time they were in the jungle varied from about a week to six months. Those who fled from Sugapa District to Tembaga pura (Mimika Regency) had to walk 66 KM, which took approximately one to two months. Meanwhile, those who fled on foot from Sugapa, Hitadipa, Homeyo and Agisiga districts towards Enarotali Village (East Paniai District, Paniai Regency) walked 67-82 KM. Those who did not have the money to rent a vehicle were forced to walk again to Nabire Regency, which was approximately 200 KM away, a journey of several months.

It is not clear how many IDPs from Intan Jata are living in Nabire Regency, as they are spread out with some living in rented houses and others staying with their relatives. Typically, multiple residents live together in the same house (sometimes more than 20 people), a pattern we witnessed in Jayanti, Kaladiri and Karang Mulia villages, Nabire Regency. IDPs would live together, build very simple houses, tend gardens, and farm together on their relatives' land in Kaladiri, Jayanti and Karang Mulia villages. The majority of IDP families' children do not have access to healthcare and schooling.<sup>38</sup> IDPs in Kaladiri and Karang Mulia villages also report feeling afraid and intimidated due to the frequent monitoring by TNI and POLRI officers.<sup>39</sup>

The Catholic Church was frequently mentioned by IDPs as a more dependable source of assistance for IDPs from Intan Jaya and Paniai in Jayanti Village, Nabire.<sup>40</sup> IDPs in Karang Mulia Village reported that the Intan Jaya local government has only provided assistance four

37 Nabire 10, Man, 48, Jayanti, 3 August 2024.

38 Nabire 5 dan 6, Man, 30, Karang Mulia dan Kaladiri, 4 dan 5 August 2024.

39 Nabire 5 dan 6, Man, 30, Karang Mulia dan Kaladiri, 4 dan 5 August 2024.

40 Nabire 3, Man, 34, Jayanti, 3 August 2024

times in the last five years.<sup>41</sup> Healthcare is very difficult to access, and a lack of funds is a major risk when IDPs need to access health services in the event of an emergency.<sup>42</sup> It is clear that the assistance available to IDPs in Nabire is far from sufficient, which in turn leaves them withdrawn and frustrated with requests for data and research.<sup>43</sup>

#### D. Actors most mentioned by respondents

### “ Pressure from the host community to move out ” – IDP respondents Maybrat and Sorong.

Respondents mentioned various actors in relation to during their experiences fleeing their villages, moving on foot through the jungle, walking for weeks on end, and ultimately their protracted displacement in the four contexts of Nabire, Maybrat, Sorong, and Wamena. Security forces, local government, family/relatives, NGOs, and the Church were all mentioned, albeit for different reasons.

It's important to underscore that the Church was repeatedly cited by IDPs as a neutral actor seen as most acceptable by IDPs for communicating and delivering assistance. Conversely, TNI/POLRI were uniformly described as a source of fear.

Local government in particular is considered an actor who has failed to fulfill its promises to provide adequate assistance and services. Based on interviews with IDPs, assistance from local government was reportedly very low – it is unclear whether this is due to the IDPs' lack of confidence or the local government's own negligence (or both).<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, the Church's presence in Maybrat, Sorong, Wamena and Nabire is seen as a gateway or source of assistance and safety, not a rival to local government.

41 Nabire 6, Man, 30, Karang Mulia, 5 August 2024

42 It was reported (unverified) that eleven (11) IDPs died while at the Karang Mulia Village IDPs point, Nabire District, Nabire Regency (Source: Nabire 6, Man, 30, Karang Mulia, 5 August 2024)

43 Nabire 5, Man, 30, Kara Diri, 4 August 2024

44 Only 7% of IDPs reported receiving food assistance from local government and less than 3% of IDPs reported receiving any other forms of assistance from local government in their current situation.

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## 6 | Displacement in Papua has now become a chronic problem

Chronic displacement is a complex phenomenon that goes beyond simply counting the number of displaced people or analyses attributing displacement to conflict and internal migration issues. Recently, there have been two important reports on the issue of displacement, namely the 2023 annual report of the NGO Human Rights Monitor and the report of the Secretariat for Justice and Peace of the Catholic Church in Papua dated October 2023.<sup>45</sup> Both reports put their estimates of the number of IDPs between 46,926 and 76,919 displaced civilians. Unfortunately, the challenges of obtaining clear numbers of IDPs and their distribution tends to be used as an excuse or obstacle for various parties in providing assistance to IDPs - in other words, they don't know where to start.

Given its chronic nature, the IDP problem in Papua should be a call to action for government and non-government actors to respond to the various vulnerabilities experienced by IDPs. In fact, the vulnerability and chronic nature of IDPs problems in Papua are clearly described by IDP respondents. Only 7% of IDPs reported receiving food assistance from local government and less than 3% of IDPs reported receiving any other forms of assistance from local government in their current situation. This contrasts with 28-30% of IDPs receiving a range of assistance from churches and NGOs. This situation has a huge impact on the very low levels trust towards humanitarian assistance programming in the eyes of IDPs. This multi-layered problem is actually well past time to be addressed seriously and humanely.

All displaced individuals and groups face unique challenges based on their background, including age, gender, ethnicity, and health status. The trauma caused by displacement often leads to mental health disorders, including anxiety, depression, and PTSD. Understanding these psychosocial impacts is critical to providing targeted support. However, due to the fact that this research was rapid and not comprehensive, it is not possible to accurately describe the different types of trauma experienced by respondents in this report.

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45 "HRM Annual Report: Human rights and conflict in West Papua 2023", Human Rights Monitor, 11 April 2024. <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/id/laporan/laporan-tahunan-2023-hak-asasi-manusia-dan-konflik-di-tanah-papua/> and the news clipping entitled, "In West Papua, thousands upon thousands of displaced people lack basic life-giving services", World Council of Churches, 2 February 2023, <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/in-west-papua-thousands-upon-thousands-of-displaced-people-lack-basic-life-giving-services>. "SKP Gereja Katolik se-Tanah Papua nyatakan 46.926 warga sipil di Tanah Papua masih mengungsi", Jubi, 14 October 2023. See: <https://jubi.id/tanah-papua/2023/skp-gereja-katolik-se-tanah-papua-nyatakan-46-926-warga-sipil-di-tanah-papua-masih-mengungsi/>



**Key elements of chronic displacement shared by IDP respondents include as follows:**

**Living Conditions:** In terms of food security, around 60% of IDP respondents meet their food needs through farming/gardening or buying their own food, but almost everyone (97%) reported not having enough food. Although 57% of IDPs have some sort of access to a health center and 13% to a hospital, 17% of IDPs have no access at all to healthcare, and around 87% stated that their access to healthcare is inadequate. This Rapid Independent Assessment also found that 90% of IDPs were unable to access education/school after more than three years of protracted displacement.

**Social positioning and vulnerabilities:** 99% of IDPs are indigenous Papuans, which suggests underlying vulnerabilities of this population and raises questions for security agencies why this population is disproportionately exposed to acute forms of violence leading to protracted displacement. Other secondary forms of vulnerability emerge as a result of displacement ranging from 97% don't have enough to eat, inadequate access to schooling, unmet healthcare needs, all of which are likely to disproportionately affect women, children, and the elderly.

**Trauma exposure and psychosocial needs:** The many and varied forms of violence, the circumstances around fleeing multiple times, the protracted period of being on the move, usually on foot (i.e. on average for 16 months), are all strong indicators of prolonged and cumulative adverse experiences. While further research is needed, it is not at all controversial to conclude that IDP families in the four displacement contexts are at elevated risk of clinically significant mental health problems.

**Community support and resilience:** In general IDPs feel that they are living in an environment that does not accept them. This is reflected by the fact that 57% of IDPs said they need protection from violence now and two-thirds (66%) of respondents reported feeling unsafe. The reasons for this are very straightforward; prolonged displacement typically impacts levels of community resilience negatively. Given that IDP families are experiencing profound economic vulnerability, their economic instability and profound sense of insecurity is likely to persist without assistance.

**Duration and intensity of displacement:** IDPs in the four displacement contexts have been there for an average of 38 months – so this is not a new phenomenon. However, it is a humanitarian crisis that has received very little attention and IDPs in Papua have been neglected.

## 7 | Recommendations

“ Currently, I have moved to a school in Sorong Regency. Previously, I went to school in Susumuk, Maybrat Regency. If the village is safe.... TNI has been withdrawn.... If the situation is safe and the teaching and learning environment has returned to normal. I would be willing to return to my home village ” – **IDP respondent Sorong**

Presently the four main needs of IDPs are as follows: lack of food (97%), healthcare (87%), economic/livelihood support (81%), an inability to attend school/education (90%). Other needs such as shelter, electricity, internet, clean water, menstrual products, and protection issues are also listed as urgent needs. IDPs also have the right to receive appropriate assistance and protection from threats and intimidation from both the government and non-governmental organizations.

If IDPs want to return to their place of origin, they need assistance and protection free from intimidation by conflicting parties. The three main considerations that influence IDPs thinking in relation to returning to their home villages are as follows:

- **Security in their place of origin (70%) and the status of armed conflict in their place of origin (64%) – it is also worth noting that 39% clearly stated that they did not want to return because of threats from the conflicting parties.**
- **Economic and livelihood concerns (53%).**
- **The availability of protection and assistance now (57% of IDPs reports needing protection from violence now) and in their place of origin (27%).**

**Given the chronic patterns of vulnerability in Papua, there are several recommendations emerging from this Rapid Independent Assessment as follows:**

- 1. Enough food:** 97% of IDPs reported not having enough to eat. Assistance posts should provide basic food in the form of dry goods, fresh fruit and vegetables. Packaged food assistance will be viewed with suspicion, likewise dry goods with markings (e.g. from security agencies/ministries). It is highly unlikely IDP families have adequate storage facilities, hence food should be provided twice weekly and as far as possible be non-perishable. Dry goods, fruit, and vegetables should be provided in accordance with the IDP family size in question.
- 2. Access to School for Children:** Prior to IDP registration and ID card issuance, local schools should be approached to provide spaces for students on a temporary and permanent basis. The Church and NGOs involved in the IDP initiative should wherever possible accompany IDP families to assist with registration of students at participating schools.

- 3. Tackling underemployment:** Prior to provision of grants and/or finance to IDPs, a labour market assessment needs to be conducted in all displacement contexts in order to identify jobs and the overall labour market absorptive capacity. Based on IDP respondents existing habits the most likely areas for income-generation assistance are as follows:

  - (a) Temporary or permanent provision of arable land for farming/gardening provided that the IDP has the means to work that land.
  - (b) Provision of inputs including tools/equipment, seeds, poultry, livestock, and/or building materials as necessary. Such assistance should be based on what IDPs are already doing.
  - (c) Access to transport means such as shared usage of loaned vehicles for moving people, livestock, produce, accessing markets, and/or helping people go to school.
  - (d) Simple and cheap android mobile phones with a monthly data plan pre-installed.
- 4. Mainstreaming the role of the Church:** Across the testimonies of IDPs, the Church is repeatedly viewed as a place of refuge or temporary transit for IDPs. The accompaniment of the priests who assisted IDPs to leave the red zone is crucial. Every home visit or resettlement or repatriation process should always be accompanied by a Church representative.
- 5. Protection and Case Management:** All IDPs should have the contact details of a caseworker (and his/her alternate) in the event of issues around access to assistance, resettlement issues, repatriation, and/or any other protection matter. A case management approach should be used in order to ensure IDPs receive effective support and actually make the best use of limited resources.
- 6. Public Policy Implications:** Chronic displacement poses significant challenges that require comprehensive policy responses. Chronic displacement should be integrated into local and national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. This ensures that the needs of IDPs are considered in broader socio-economic policies, which can help mitigate the long-term impacts of displacement on communities and local economies. Policies must focus on achieving durable solutions for IDPs, including safe return, local integration, or resettlement. This requires long-term investment in building national capacity, fostering professionalism, and adopting collaborative service delivery mechanisms that support both IDPs and host communities.
- 7. Targeted assistance:** Targeted interventions should be data-driven. Understanding the scope and nature of chronic displacement should inform program design and in turn be used to integrate displacement into existing local and national development frameworks. Both local and national government agencies need to recognize the specific vulnerabilities faced by different groups within displaced populations, particularly the indigenous people of Papua, children needing to go to school, people chronically under-employed, and malnutrition.

- 8. Psychosocial dimensions:** This report highlights extremely high levels of exposure to violence and cumulative trauma. This report is not based on a comprehensive approach to understanding the specific forms of trauma, levels of resilience, or identifying the specific needs of individuals burdened with traumatic exposure to violence, protracted displacement, and the constant deprivation they have experienced for an average of three years across the entire sample. A qualified independent organization needs to conduct a psychosocial needs assessment of IDPs in Papua to better understand the short and long term mental health needs of IDPs.
- 9. IDP Registration through ID card issuance:** A consortium of church groups and non-government organisations should lead the registration of IDPs, which is crucial for providing targeted assistance, protecting their rights, and ensuring equitable service provision. While the primary responsibility lies with national authorities, the Church and NGOs already play a trusted role in protection and assistance in Papua. Coordination is important to ensure that ID cards issued are recognized by local government agencies and can be used to access services and receive assistance. ID cards should include a unique identification number, the holder's name, and a photograph for verification purposes. ID cards should not contain sensitive information that could put IDPs at risk of discrimination or harm.
- 10. Decentralised assistance posts:** The Church and NGOs should establish decentralized registration and assistance posts in areas with high concentrations of IDPs. The process of registration and data collection should be conducted at the same place as where assistance is provided. The emphasis should always be on referral and provision of assistance and protection. Data collection, while important in identifying IDPs, assessing their needs, and targeting assistance, should be a secondary priority at the start.
- 11. Avoiding unnecessary data collection:** The Church and NGOs should regularly update the ID card database to maintain accurate records and ensure that assistance reaches the intended beneficiaries. This also will minimise the frequency and intensity of data collection.
- 12. Professionalism:** The Church and NGOs will require training for their staff on data collection, storage, protection protocols, and case management in order to ensure consistency and reliability in the registration process. Capacity building helps in maintaining high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct. The provision of protection and assistance should, however, be locally led.
- 13. Collaborative Initiative:** For an IDP registration and assistance initiative led by the Church and NGOs to be plausible and effective, participating organisations need to reach a common understanding of their collective priorities based on a clear set of principles in which victims are the core focus. The focus should not be collection of data, public relations, or in any way be seen to be pursuing political objectives in relation to the conflict in Papua. An example of a memorandum of understanding setting out the minimum objectives and principles of such a collaborative initiative (in Bahasa Indonesia) is enclosed at Annex B.



## 8 | Conclusion

Displacement in Papua has become a chronic problem and this report should be seen as a call to action for government and non-government actors to respond to the various acute vulnerabilities experienced by IDPs. Based on the results of this Rapid Independent Assessment survey with 70 IDPs respondents in addition to group interviews, armed conflict is categorically the main cause of chronic displacement in Papua. In the last five years, armed conflict between the TPNPB and TNI-POLRI in Nduga (late December 2018-present), Intan Jaya (September 2019), Maybrat (September 2021), Oksibil District, Bintang Highlands (September 2021), and Paniai (April 2024) have only added to the number of displaced people. The most important element now is the safety and well-being of IDPs in their current locations. The possibility of safe and secure repatriation to their place of origin is a second priority, and regardless of the situation, the humanitarian needs of IDPs must always be prioritized over the need to collect data.

**Chronic displacement poses significant challenges that require a comprehensive response at the policy level, both national and local, and even individually.**

Chronic displacement in Papua has created a humanitarian crisis and will continue to have long-term impacts on local communities, the local economy, and most importantly the IDPs themselves. The problem is multi-layered and it is well past time for it to be addressed seriously and humanely. In particular, addressing the gaps in food/hunger, access to schooling, and employment/subsistence is urgently needed and critical.

## 9 | Terminology

There are several terms and abbreviations in this report that are defined as follows:

<b>Joint patrols</b>	: Joint patrols refers to collaboration between various institutions or agencies of the police, military, and other government institutions, working together to achieve a common goal.
<b>District</b>	: Administrative areas under a regency or town.
<b>IDP</b>	: internally displaced persons
<b>Armed conflict</b>	: A situation in a particular place where there is the use of military force between two or more parties, which can involve the security apparatus of a sovereign state, armed groups, or a combination of both.
<b>NGO</b>	: Non-governmental organization.
<b>Indigenous Papuans</b>	: All indigenous peoples in "Tanah Papua".
<b>Pemda</b>	: Local government
<b>POLRI:</b>	Indonesian National Police
<b>Tanah Papua</b>	: All regencies, districts, and regions in the seven provinces of Papua, namely Papua Province, West Papua Province, South Papua Province, Central Papua Province, Papua Mountains Province, and Southwest Papua Province.
<b>TNI</b>	: Indonesian National Army
<b>TPNPB</b>	: West Papua National Liberation Army

# Acknowledgements

The report you are reading is the result of a collaborative research effort to examine the humanitarian situation in Papua, specifically in relation to internal displacement. The fieldwork, analyses, and writing of this report was performed just as the report title implies, independently.

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Last but not least our highest appreciation goes to the respondents and their families that participated in this research. Their profound patience and generosity made this entire endeavor a reality!

# ANNEX A: SURVEY FORM

## Respondent

- Individu  
 Kelompok

## Usia

---

## Lokasi

- Wamena  
 Maybrat  
 Sorong  
 Nabire

## Lokasi 2

---

latitude (x.y °)

---

longitude (x.y °)

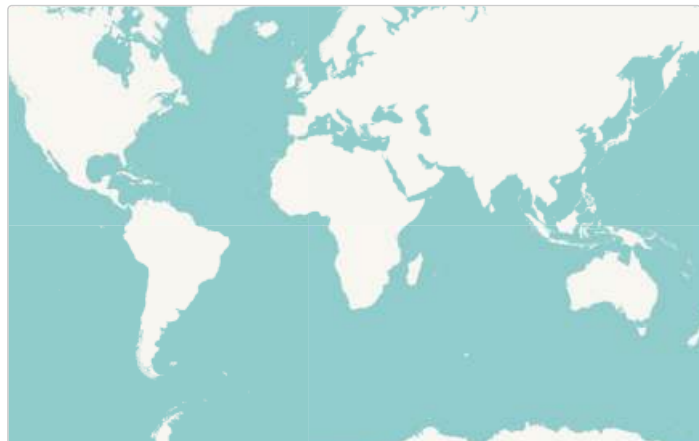
---

altitude (m)

---

accuracy (m)

---





**Kelamin**

- Laki
- Perempuan
- Lainnya

**Etnisitas**

- OAP
- Non-OAP

**Jelaskan etnisitas**

---

**Pendidikan**

- Tidak sekolah
- SD
- SMP
- SMA
- Diploma ke atas

**Sekarang masih dapat belajar di tempat?**

- Masih/sedang belajar
- Tidak dibenarkan
- Tidak ada sekolah

**Berapa bulan?**

---

**Status sekarang**

- Kawin
- Janda/Duda
- Tidak Pernah Kawin

**Status Keluarga Sekarang**

- Punya anak
- Tidak punya anak
- Bersama orang tua

**Berapa orang bersama:**

---

**Nafkah/Pekerjaan Sebelum lari/pengungsi**

- Pelajar/Murid sekolah
- Pemerintah daerah
- Wiraswasta/Pedagang
- Petani/Tukang kebun
- Karyawan swasta
- Buruh Harian
- Tidak Bekerja

**Apakah ada kerja/bisnis sampingan? Jelaskan:**

---

**Nafkah/Pekerjaan Setelah lari/pengungsi (sekarang)**

- Pelajar/Murid sekolah
- Pemerintah daerah
- Wiraswasta/Pedagang
- Petani/Tukang kebun
- Karyawan swasta
- Buruh Harian
- Tidak Bekerja

**Apakah ada kerja/bisnis sampingan? Jelaskan:**

---

**Tempat tinggal sekarang**

- Rumah Sendiri (sedang/telah dibangun)
- Rumah Kontrak/Sewa
- Bersama Keluarga/Famili
- Tenda/terpal
- Tidur terbuka/pinggir jalan
- Pindah-pindah

**Berapa bulan?**

---

**Tempat tinggal sewaktu sedang lari/pengungsi (sebelum ini)**

- Rumah Sendiri (sedang/telah dibangun)
- Rumah Kontrak/Sewa
- Bersama Keluarga/Famili
- Tenda/terpal
- Tidur terbuka/pinggir jalan
- Pindah-pindah

**Berapa bulan?**

---

**Berapa besar/jumlah pengungsi disini?****Berapa orang/pengungsi?**

---

**Berapa keluarga pengungsi?**

---

**Berapa lama para pengungsi berada disini?**

---

**Ada berapa titik?**

---

**Apakah pengungsi datang secara bergelombang, berkala?**

---

**Biasanya pengungsi datang setiap tahun atau bermusiman? Apa sebabnya? Jelaskan:**

---

**Migrasi**

- Hanya pindah/lari sekali
- Pindah-pindah

**Berapa kali lari?**

---

**Akses ke air bersih sekarang**

- Perusahaan Air Negara
- Air Sumur
- Sungai
- Mata Air
- Tidak ada akses ke air

**Jarak terhadap sumber air (meter)**

---

**Kondisi sanitasi sekarang**

- Ada MCK dekat di luar rumah
- Tidak ada
- Di dalam rumah
- Tempat terbuka (kebun,Sungai,danau dsb)

**Kondisi sanitasi di tempat asal**

- Ada MCK dekat di luar rumah
- Tidak ada
- Di dalam rumah
- Tempat terbuka (kebun,Sungai,danau dsb)

**Akses ke sumber pangan/makanan sekarang**

- BANSOS
- Pemerintah daerah
- Aparat keamanan
- Beli sendiri
- Bantuan keluarga
- Bantuan Lembaga Non Pemerintah, NGO
- Bantuan masyarakat setempat
- Bercocok tanam/pangan sendiri

**Mencukupi atau tidak?**

- Ya
- Tidak



**Akses ke sumber pangan/makanan Sesaat sedang lari/pengungsi**

- BANSOS
- Pemerintah daerah
- Aparat keamanan
- Beli sendiri
- Bantuan keluarga
- Bantuan Lembaga Non Pemerintah, NGO
- Bantuan masyarakat setempat
- Tidak ada makanan
- Cari/Buru sendiri di hutan/sungai

**Mencukupi atau tidak?**

- Ya
- Tidak

**Layanan kesehatan sekarang**

- Puskesmas
- Klinik swasta
- Rumah Sakit
- Bidan/Mantri
- Pengobatan Tradisional/Mandiri
- Bantuan NGO
- Bantuan Gereja
- Tidak ada layanan kesehatan

**Mencukupi atau tidak?**

- Ya
- Tidak

**Layanan kesehatan di tempat asal**

- Puskesmas
- Klinik swasta
- Rumah Sakit
- Bidan/Mantri
- Pengobatan Tradisional/Mandiri
- Bantuan NGO
- Bantuan Gereja
- Tidak ada layanan kesehatan

**Mencukupi atau tidak?**

- Ya
- Tidak

**Penyebab lari/perpindahan /menjadi pengungsi**

- Bencana Alam
- Konflik antar suku
- Konflik komunal OAP/non-OAP
- Konflik bersenjata
- Pengeboman/tembakan
- Kampung dievakuasi
- Rumah dibakar
- Intimidasi oleh pihak konflik
- Keluarga terancam
- Takut

**Penyebab lain. Jelaskan:**

---

**Tantangan sekarang yg dihadapi apa saja?**

- Tekanan dr masyarakat setempat
- Tekanan dr PEMDA untuk kembali
- Tidak mau balik karena ancaman dr pihak konflik?
- Faktor ekonomi/nafkah
- Faktor pribadi
- Kekerasan rumah tangga
- Konflik antar suku
- Konflik komunal OAP/non-OAP
- Konflik bersenjata
- Pengeboman/tembakan
- Kampung dievakuasi
- Rumah dibakar
- Intimidasi oleh pihak konflik
- Keluarga terancam
- Kekerasan seksual
- Pemasaran
- Takut

**Alasan lain atau keterangan tambahan. Jelaskan:**

---

**Sekarang ini apakah keperluan mendesak?**

- Pembalut wanita - phrasing
- Makanan
- Perlindungan dari kekerasan
- Access ke air bersih
- Kesehatan/pengobatan
- Sekolah/pendidikan
- Rumah yang layak huni
- Listrik
- Internet
- Transportasi untuk belanja, bisnis
- Pekerjaan/nafkah tetap

**Bantuan dan perlindungan yang diterima sekarang?**

- Bantuan PEMDA
- Bantuan TNI
- Bantuan POLRI
- Bantuan NGO
- Bantuan Gereja
- Bantuan Mesjid/Organisasi Beragama lainnya
- Bantuan Anggota DPRD
- Bantuan keluarga
- Bantuan Parpol
- Bantuan masyarakat setempat
- Tidak menerima bantuan apapun

**Apakah anda merasa aman sekarang?**

- Ya
- Tidak

**Apa yang menjadi pertimbangan utama untuk kembali ke tempat asal?**

- Bantuan keuangan untuk kembali ke rumah asal
- Keadaan aman di kampung asal
- Ada bantuan dan perlindungan di rumah
- Faktor ekonomi/nakfah di rumah
- Unsur kekerasan antar suku
- Konflik komunal antar OAP dan non-OAP
- Unsur intimidasi dari pihak konflik
- Konflik bersenjata
- Tekanan dr PEMDA untuk kembali
- Tekanan dari aparat keamanan untuk pindah
- Tekanan dari masyarakat setempat untuk pindah

**Jelaskan:**

---

**Migrasi ke tempat lain? Kemana?**

*Apa menjadi pertimbangan utama untuk pindah ke tempat baru?*

---

**Kemana?**

---

**This Dataset– can be made available upon written request. Researchers who wish to use the dataset from this report (i.e. “Rapid Independent Assessment: The Problem of Chronic Internal Displacement in Papua 1 September 2024”) must clarify the purpose for which the data will be used. A data management plan must be submitted by email ([data.ria.2024@proton.me](mailto:data.ria.2024@proton.me)). Requests must detail how the data is used, shared, and how the dataset will be protected. Any and all findings derived from this dataset must be clearly noted as originating from “Rapid Independent Assessment: The Problem of Chronic Internal Displacement in Papua 1 September 2024”. All users granted access to this dataset must ensure that the data will be used responsibly and that the rights and confidentiality of participants, authors of this report, and data encoders are properly safeguarded. Researchers granted access to this dataset are also required to ensure that any sensitive or personally identifiable information is anonymized to protect the privacy of individuals represented in the dataset.**



# APPENDIX B: EXAMPLE OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

## NOTA KESEPAHAMAN (MOU) “INISIATIF UNTUK PENGUNGSI DALAM NEGERI (IDP) DI TANAH PAPUA”

Antara

[Nama Organisasi 1]

[Nama Organisasi 2]

[Nama Organisasi 3]

[Tanggal]

### A. Inisiatif Untuk Pengungsi Dalam Negeri (IDP) di Tanah Papua

Nota Kesepahaman (MoU) ini menetapkan kerangka kerja kolaboratif di antara organisasi-organisasi yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini untuk menerapkan mekanisme pendaftaran dan bantuan yang efektif bagi Pengungsi Dalam Negeri (IDP) di [lokasi tertentu, misalnya Maybrat, Sorong, Wamena, Nabire]. Fokus inisiatif ini adalah untuk memberikan dukungan dan perlindungan penting bagi IDP sambil memastikan bahwa kebutuhan mereka diprioritaskan di atas segalanya.

### B. Tujuan Inisiatif IDP

- ❖ Untuk menetapkan proses pendaftaran yang transparan dan efisien bagi semua IDP yang secara akurat mencerminkan kebutuhan dan keadaan mereka sekarang.
- ❖ Untuk memfasilitasi akses yang adil terhadap bantuan dan layanan bagi semua IDP yang terdaftar.
- ❖ Untuk melindungi hak dan martabat IDP selama proses pendaftaran dan bantuan. Untuk memastikan bahwa kegiatan organisasi yang berpartisipasi bebas dari pengumpulan data untuk tujuan pencitraan atau *public relations* ataupun tujuan politik apa pun yang terkait dengan konflik dan segala bentuk kekerasan yang sedang berlangsung di Tanah Papua.

### C. **Asas-Asas Inisiatif IDP**

Prinsip-prinsip berikut akan memandu segala aspek pelaksanaan Nota Kesepahaman ini:

- ❖ **Pendekatan yang Berpusat pada Korban:** Kebutuhan dan hak-hak IDP akan menjadi inti dari semua kegiatan dan keputusan.
- ❖ **Anti-Diskriminasi:** Semua IDP, terlepas dari latar belakangnya, akan diperlakukan secara adil dan tanpa diskriminasi.
- ❖ **Perlindungan:** Informasi pribadi yang dikumpulkan selama proses pendaftaran akan dijaga kerahasiaannya dan hanya digunakan untuk tujuan pemberian bantuan.
- ❖ **Kolaborasi:** Organisasi yang berpartisipasi akan bekerja sama dalam semangat kerja sama, berbagi sumber daya dan informasi sesuai kebutuhan.
- ❖ **Transparansi:** Semua proses akan dilakukan secara trangeejasparan, dengan komunikasi yang jelas kepada IDP mengenai hak-hak mereka dan layanan yang tersedia bagi mereka.

### D. **Tanggung Jawab Inisiatif IDP**

- ❖ Setiap organisasi yang berpartisipasi akan menunjuk perwakilan untuk mengoordinasikan segala bentuk upaya pelaksanaan dan memfasilitasi komunikasi di antara para mitra MoU Inisiatif IDP ini.
- ❖ Organisasi-organisasi tersebut akan bersama-sama mengembangkan dan melaksanakan proses pendaftaran, termasuk pelatihan bagi staf yang terlibat dalam pengumpulan data dan pemberian bantuan.
- ❖ Pertemuan rutin akan diadakan untuk menilai kemajuan, mengatasi tantangan, dan menyesuaikan strategi jika diperlukan.

### E. **Durasi & Jangka Waktu**

Nota Kesepahaman ini akan tetap berlaku selama [sebutkan durasinya, misalnya, satu tahun] mulai dari tanggal penandatanganan, dengan opsi perpanjangan berdasarkan kesepakatan tertulis bersama.

### F. **Amandemen & Perubahan**

Setiap amandemen atau perubahan terhadap Nota Kesepahaman ini harus dibuat secara tertulis dan ditandatangani oleh semua organisasi yang berpartisipasi.

Nota Kesepahaman ini berfungsi sebagai dokumen dasar untuk kolaborasi antara kelompok gereja dan LSM. Ia menekankan pentingnya pendekatan yang berpusat pada korban sambil mempertahankan fokus yang jelas pada pemberian bantuan dan perlindungan kepada para pengungsi IDP tanpa motivasi politik apapun. Dengan menandatangani di bawah ini, organisasi yang berpartisipasi menyetujui semua ketentuan dan asas yang diuraikan dalam Nota Kesepahaman ini.

[Nama Organisasi 1]

Tanda tangan: \_\_\_\_\_

Nama: \_\_\_\_\_

Jabatan: \_\_\_\_\_

Tanggal: \_\_\_\_\_

[Nama Organisasi 2]

Tanda tangan: \_\_\_\_\_

Nama: \_\_\_\_\_

Jabatan: \_\_\_\_\_

Tanggal: \_\_\_\_\_

[Nama Organisasi 3]

Tanda tangan: \_\_\_\_\_

Nama: \_\_\_\_\_

Jabatan: \_\_\_\_\_

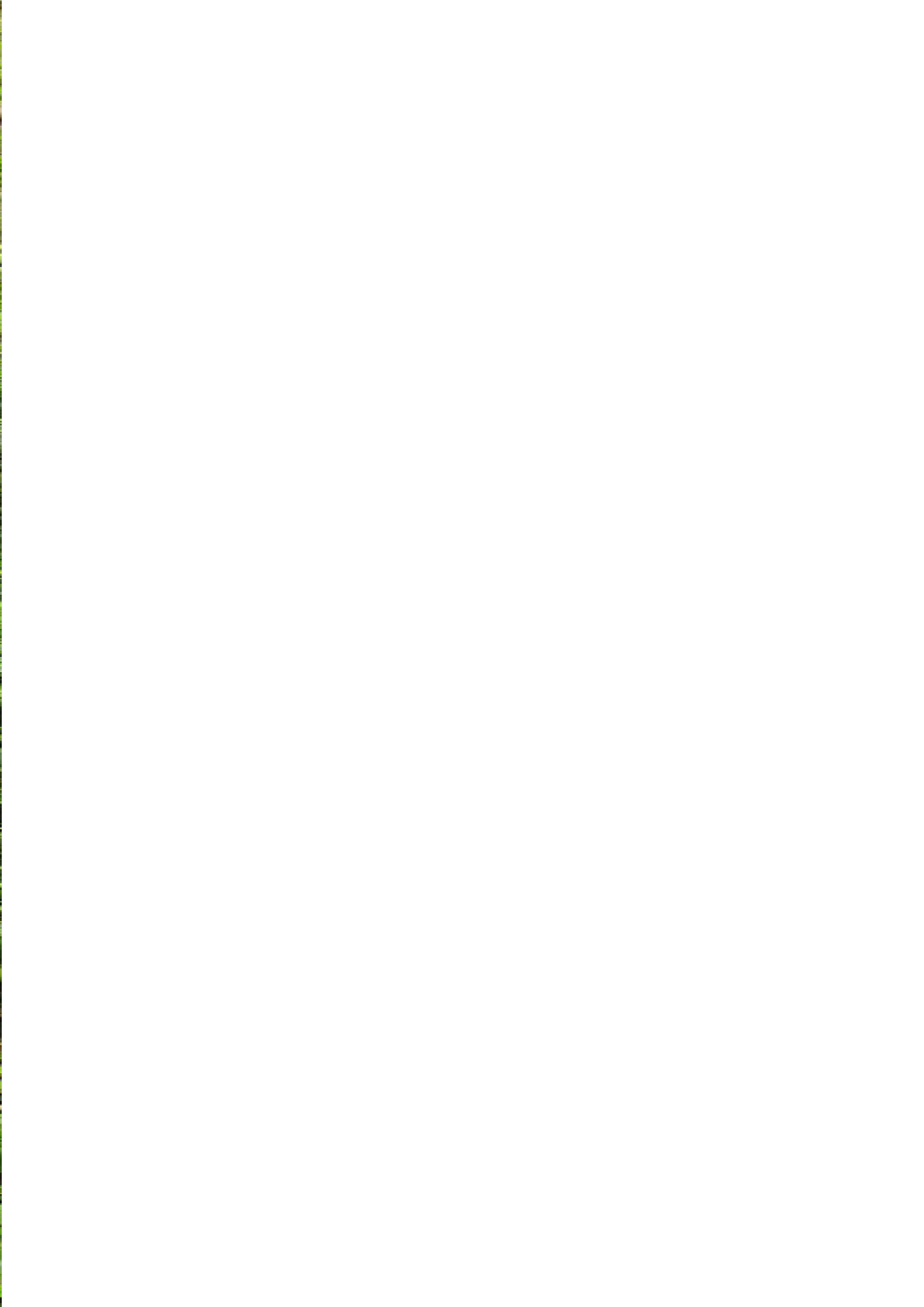
Tanggal: \_\_\_\_\_





Muddy trail - Baliem Valley, West Papua  
Photo: Alex Drainville/Flickr





# 99% of IDPs are Indigenous Papuans

On average, IDPs were displaced for more than three years, including **16 months on the move, usually on foot**

**100%** mentioned 'armed conflict' as the main reason for their displacement

**39%** of respondents revealed that their families were directly threatened

**97%** feel afraid to return to their villages

**39%** of respondents explicitly stated they do not want to return due to threats from conflicting parties

**97%** IDPs reported not having enough food

**87%** of IDPs lack adequate healthcare

**90%** did not have access to school/education

**57%** need protection from violence now