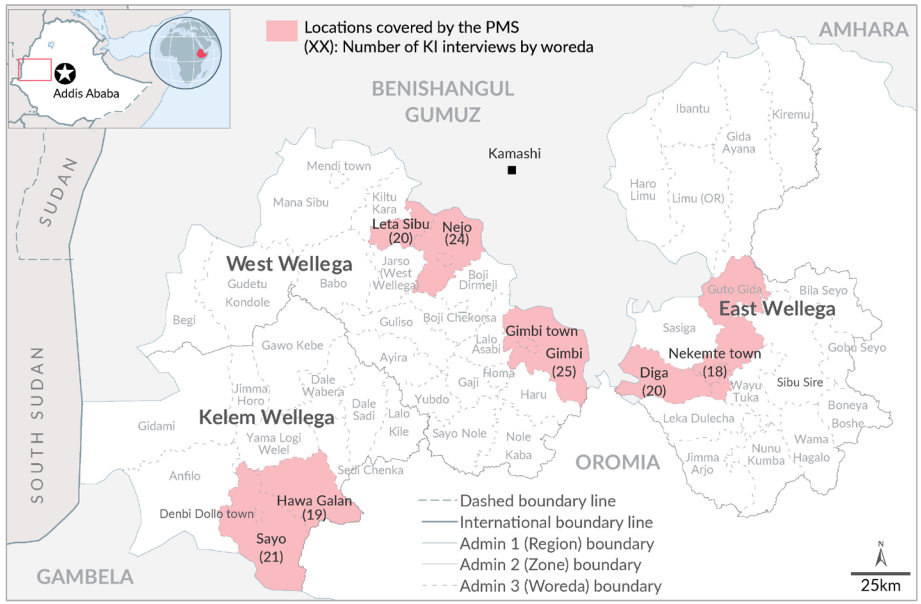
ETHIOPIA | PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS MONITORING (PSM)

Report #11 | Oromia Region (East, West and Kellem Wollega) | December 2023

OVERVIEW



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

This protection monitoring report in Oromia reflects the views of key informants across three zones, an effort that was achieved with the commitment of UNHCR's partners to reach far-flung voices. The picture painted by the Key Informants (KI) remains dire, particularly for persons with chronic illness and disability, child-headed households, female-headed households, and unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). The ensuing conflict is the primary cause of displacement for over 66% of IDPs sampled in accessible sites in the DTM Round 16 Report (June 2023). The report estimates that over 1 million IDPs are still displaced in the broader Oromia region.

The Wollegas is one of the areas highly impacted by conflict and insecurity within Oromia region. East, West, Kellem, Horo Guduru Wollega, and West Shewa Zones of Oromia have been impacted by insecurity and continuing conflict for the last 5 years. In August 2023, according to government estimates, over 28,000 people were displaced from Yaso Woreda of Kamashi zone (Benishangul Gumuz Region) to Haro Limu Woreda in East Wollega. In November, about 4,500 individuals were displaced to Amuru Woreda (Horo Guduru) due to conflict in Bure Woreda (West Gojam). The ongoing conflict in the Wollegas continues to impact the protection situation of vulnerable individuals – especially women and children – most of whom have suffered multiple displacements since 2018. The conflict-induced displacement continues to exacerbate heightened protection-risk exposures for these vulnerable women and children.

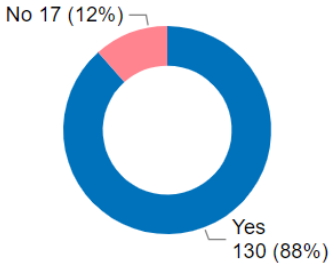
Summary of the key findings

- The conflict in the Wollegas is leading cause of displacement and other human rights violations.
- IDP Women/girls impacted by Gender Based Violence (GBV) - including Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) have limited access to specialized services including MHPSS.
- Lack of access to basic needs is the leading risk factor for GBV.
- Child labor is prevalent because displaced families facing economic hardships resort to sending their children to work in order to survive.

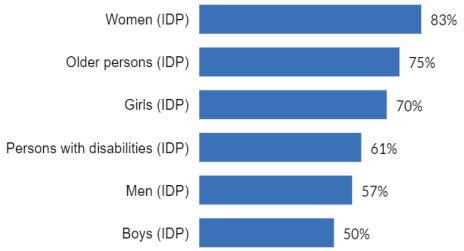
KEY FINDINGS

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

Have you observed signs of distress among the different populations in this location?



Which persons/groups within the IDP community show more signs of distress



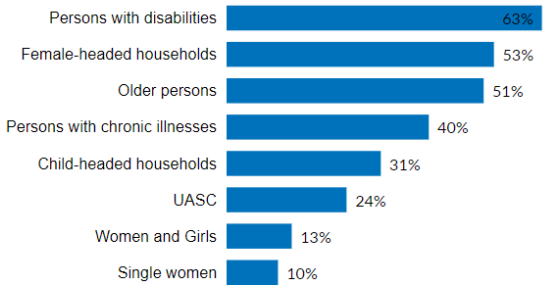
9 out of 10 key informants reported to have observed signs of distress among the different populations in their locations.

Amongst IDPs and IDP returnees, **women and girls** emerged as the group showing more signs of distress.

Access to Fundamental Rights and Basic Needs

Persons with specific needs face the greatest challenges or particularly disadvantaged in accessing assistance and services.

The top 3 persons with specific needs facing the greatest challenges by location are: persons with disabilities, female-headed households, and older persons.

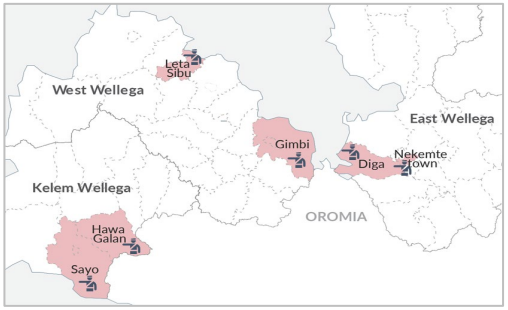


KIIs reported those groups to be 'marginalized', 'lacking serious attention', 'forgotten' or 'helpless. For these reasons, the abovementioned groups need special attention in the locations where their needs are overlooked.

Obstacles to access basic needs

Sector	Top 3 obstacles *Percentages are out of the total Key informant*	Quotes
Food	▪ Inflation (63%) ▪ Shortage of cash (46%) ▪ **Armed elements on the way (38%)**	***"Infertile soil and termites"*** Female, 42, KI from host community in Gimbi Woreda, West Wollega Zone
Health	▪ Can't afford medical fees (71%) ▪ Lack of medicine (72%) ▪ **Armed elements on the way (30%)**	***"No ambulance for emergency service."*** Male IDP, 70, Gimbi Woreda, West Wollega Zone
Education	▪ Can't to afford scholastic materials (86%) ▪ No enough learning material (50%) ▪ **Lack of safety for children (37%)**	***"School age boys and girls are helping their parents by getting money from daily wages."*** Female, IDP returnee, 36, Sayo woreda, Kellam Wollega zone
WASH	▪ Insufficient water storage capacity (60%) ▪ Lack of available water (54%) ▪ Price increase for soaps (36%)	***"Special in this area the lack of water is the serious problem for a long period of time."*** Male, IDP, 55, Sayo woreda, Kellam Wollega zone

"Armed elements on the way" has been reported as obstacle to access basic needs in 6 woredas out of 7. In the 6 woredas, there is sporadic armed conflict between Ethiopian security forces and UAGs. There have also been reported incidents of temporary road blockages, and unwarranted searches by UAGs. Furthermore, there are also reports of abduction and destruction of civilian property in these woredas. Most GBV survivors, persons with chronic illness, pregnant women & lactating mothers are unable to access health care assistance due to the presence of armed elements and conflict.



Locations with "Armed elements on the way" as obstacle to access basic services/needs and lack of safety for children to access

Price increase is impeding access to food and basic WASH items such as soap. Insufficient water storage capacity appears as a main obstacle to access potable water.

Coping strategies to meet basic needs.

Harmful coping strategies impacting children **(Child labor and Withdrawal of children from school)** appear as the most common coping strategies (highest rate of 'Always').

- Child labor and withdrawal of children from school was reported as 'always' by all respondents in Kellam Wollega zone IDPs have been displaced multiple times over the past five years and most vulnerable families are unable to meet their

basic feeding requirements, and afford the cost of living in most urban/semi-urban displacement areas. Hence, most IDP family's resort to child labor as a coping mechanism. The children are forced to work & support their families. IDP children face high GBV risk exposure because they work long hours away from their homes. Some IDP children are separated from their family to work as maids, babysitters, and waiters in other town/regions.

- Early marriage for girls was reported as "Sometimes" by all respondents in East Wollega and 9 out of 10 respondents in West Wollega. Most IDP families in protracted displacement are unable to afford the cost of living. Early marriage is one of the harmful coping mechanisms IDP families engage in when they are unable to support their family.

- Transactional sex was reported as Sometimes by 90% of respondents in Sayo woreda, Kellam Wollega. The conflict led to family breakdowns and weakened the traditional social support system, therefore, IDP girls and women are the sole providers in Child & women-headed households. Hence, most vulnerable IDP women/girls engage in transactional sex to support themselves and their families.

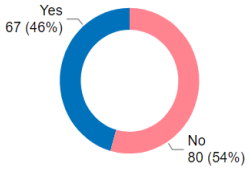
Coping Mechanism	Always	Don't know	Never	Sometimes
Begging	5%	3%	14%	79%
Buying food on credit or through borrowed money from relatives and friends	37%	1%	3%	59%
Changing place of residence and accommodation to reduce expenses	39%	7%	2%	52%
Child labor	46%	1%		53%
Early Marriage for girls	20%	1%	1%	78%
Illegal activities (such as theft)	6%	22%	16%	56%
Selling humanitarian assistance received	20%	11%	5%	63%
Sold house and/or land	12%	24%	29%	35%
Transactional sex	11%	19%	2%	68%
Withdrew children from school	47%	1%		52%

Safety and Security

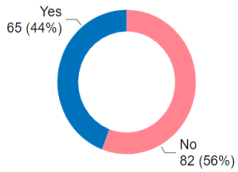
1 out of 2 respondents reported that men, boys, women, and girls are not able to move freely in their communities.

The main reasons limiting freedom of movement for women and girls are Insecurity in the area and fear of rape, and sexual harassment. For men and boys the top reasons are fear of arrest, insecurity in the area and lack of documentation.

Are men and boys able to move freely in your community?



Are women and girls able to move freely in your community?



Documentation

According to 67 percent of respondents, IDPs can obtain Kebele ID in their locations especially in East Wollega and West Wollega.

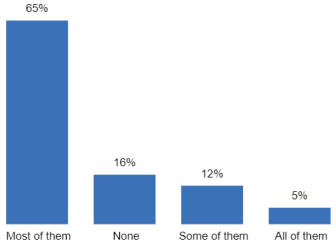
90 percent of respondents in Kellam Wollega has reported **no document** can be obtained by IDPs.

> ***"Civil registration office is totally destroyed."***
> IDP, Male, 55, Sayo woreda, Kellam Wollega

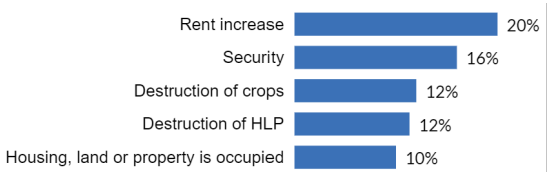
The Main barriers to having or obtaining legal documentations in Kellam Wollega are: 'People have no clearance' (40 percent of respondents) and 'Civil registration office not available' (40 percent of respondents).

Top 3 risks community members encounter as a result of lacking documentation: **difficulty passing checkpoint**; difficulty moving and **difficulty opening a bank account.**

Housing, Land and Property (HLP)



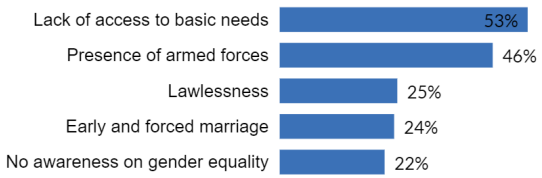
Proportion of people returned who have their houses fully destroyed.



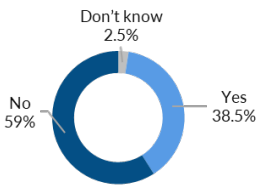
Top 5 problems IDP returnees are facing with regards to HLP

Rent increase, insecurity and destruction of crops have been reported as overall the top 3 HLP issues faced by IDP returnees.
65% of KIIs have reported that most people who returned have their houses fully destroyed and 78% have reported that IDP don't have access to land for farming.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)



Factors increasing the risk of GBV.

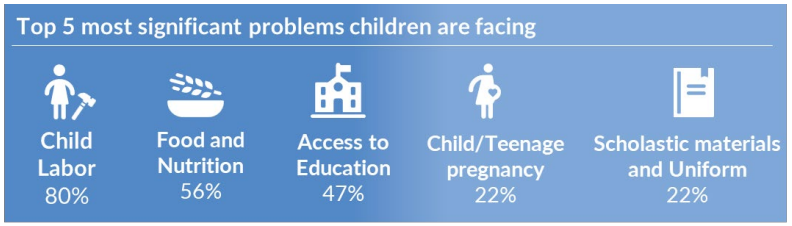


Do GBV survivors have currently access to specialized services?

During the reporting period, lack of access to basic needs (53% of respondents), presence of armed groups (46%) and lawlessness (25%) are the top three risk factors increasing the risk of GBV in all three zones covered for this report.
Locations presenting the highest rate by risk factors are:

- Early and forced marriage: reported by 46% of respondent as factor increasing risk of GBV in Leta Sibu woreda (West Wollega).
- Lack of separate shelter for male and female: reported by 35% of respondents in Diga woreda (East Wollega)
- Presence of armed forces: reported as GBV risk factor in Gimbi (43% of respondents) and Sayo (24% of respondents).

Child Protection



Child labor has been reported as the most significant problem children are facing by 80% of the Key informant correlating the finding of Child labor as top coping mechanism. IDP children are unable to attend school due to lack of scholastic materials and uniforms. Furthermore, most are engaged in difficult labor works for long hours to support themselves and their families. IDP children as young as 9 years of age work as daily laborers in most woredas.

Explosive Ordnance

Are you aware of any incidents related to unexploded ordnance/UXO or other explosive remnants of war during the last 3 months?

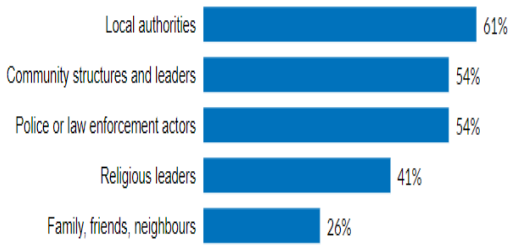
18% of total respondents reported being aware of incidents related to landmines.

The top 3 locations where respondents reported being aware of incidents related to unexploded ordnances and other explosives remnants of war are:

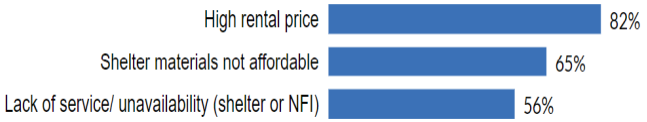
- Nekemte town, East Wollega zone (72%).
- Hawa Galen, Kellam Wollega zone (42%) and
- Sayo, Kellam Wollega zone (30%)

Access to justice and conflict resolution assistance

Most likely person or authority that people would approach with protection concerns, problems, and disputes.



Shelter and Non-Food Item



Main obstacles to access shelter/houses for the community

Most urgent Shelter and NFI needs.

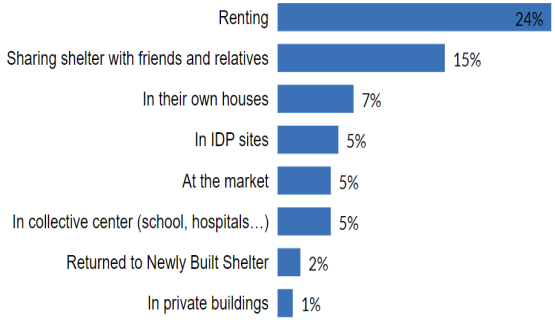
Main obstacles to access shelter/houses are high rental prices, shelter material not available and lack of shelter services.

Most urgent shelter NFI needs are blankets, emergency shelter and kitchen sets.

69% of key informants have reported that their communities don't receive any NFI support during the last 6 months and beneficiary selection process is the top factors to be improved during shelter and NFI assistance.

IDP returnee's situation

According to 1 respondent out of 4, IDP returnees are renting houses.
The average amount of rent reported is 1,100 ETB in Kellam Wollega and 540 ETB in West Wollega.
Most IDP HHs are unable to afford the cost of rent. Therefore, two or three HHs share one premise to afford payments. This leads to overcrowding and increased risk of GBV.



Where IDP returnees are currently living

Top 3 main issues affecting IDP returnees by zone	
East Wollega (Nekemte town)	• Discrimination (reported by 24% of respondent) • Lack of access to bank and financial institution (20%) • Lack of essential services and infrastructure (School, Health, market…) (16%)
Kellam Wollega (Sayo, Hawa Galan)	• Food and Nutrition (30%) • Inflation (27%) • Loss of personal belonging (10%)
West Wollega (Gimbi, Leta Sibu)	• Inflation (23%) • Food and Nutrition (18%) • Loss of personal belonging (16%)

Issues affecting IDP returnees vary from a location to another. Discrimination appears as the top1 issue in Nekemte town.

CRITICAL NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GBV Prevention, Risk-Mitigation and Response: The conflict exacerbated the GBV concerns IDPs face in the Wollegas. Child marriage, Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV), and forced marriage are the main issues. There are 4 One-Stop Centers in the wollegas, but most IDPs live in kebeles far from these centers. The centers are overwhelmed due to lack of resources, qualified personnel, and medical equipment. Therefore, improving the quality of service delivery, building the resilience of GBV survivors, and economic empowerment of women and girls is essential to GBV.

Child Protection: IDP children have limited access to education, and most are engaged in daily labour away from their family. There are several children at risk of GBV while working long hours. Safeguarding against child labour requires a holistic approach of addressing the family's basic needs. Improving access to livelihood opportunities for large, child headed & single headed households will reduce child labor and other child protection risk exposures. Enhancing access to education and keeping IDPS students provides a safe space which protects them from GBV. Provision of scholastic materials and uniform is essential to improve access to education for IDP children. Scaling-up funding and child protection interventions is required to address child protection issues, including child labour.

Peacebuilding and Peaceful Coexistence: Most IDPs are unable to return and/or access basic services due to the ongoing conflict. Promoting peace building efforts and conflict resolution mechanisms should be up scaled while also improving the engagement of women and youths in the process.

Durable Solutions: IDPs are living in protracted displacement in the wollegas for more than five years. Some IDPs have spontaneously returned to areas with improved security conditions. However, the general security context remains challenging and unpredictable. Therefore, coordination with the government is essential to ensure safe, voluntary, and dignified returns. Where these conditions are met – supporting returns with an "area-based approach" will enable displaced families to build a better future.

METHODOLOGY

This protection monitoring report is based on the harmonized Protection and Solutions Monitoring and (PSM) Tools. UNHCR and its partners, AAH and DEC collected the data in June, July, August, and September 2023. This report covers 07 woredas in 3 zones (East Wollega, West Wollega and Kellam Wollega).
Data and information for this report were collected through **147 Key Informant interviews (KIIs).** 97 males (66%) and 50 females (34%). Of those interviewed, 48% were host community/affected population, 46% were IDPs and 5% were IDP returnees.
16 KIs are persons with chronic illness; 16 KIs are persons with physical disability.

Partners

Donor support

UNHCR would like to thank the following donors for their support:

To make PMS data more interactive and user-friendly for partners, an in-depth analysis on PMS data can also be obtained through the interactive below:

Key informants

Focus group discussion with IDP returnees

Facility Mapping in areas of return