

# Protection monitoring report #4

## IDP situation Benishangul Gumuz region (Assosa, Kamashi and Metekel zones) March 2022

### Context

The internal displacement situation in Benishangul Gumuz region is among the most neglected in the country. Currently, regional authorities estimate that over 410,000 people remain in a situation of internal displacement in the region or are among the recently newly displaced due to the surge in conflict in the area, including in Mao Komo special woreda and neighbouring Wollega zones in Oromia region. Humanitarian access in parts of the region has been constrained for long, with Kamashi and Metekel zones hosting the largest part of the displaced faced with serious access constraints for extended periods. However, through a localization strategy and flexible operational approaches, several partners have been able to implement their programmes in the concerned areas. The response arena has an alarming scarcity in partner presence and response capacity and is in urgent need of attention by humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors, and donors.

### Key informant profiles & areas covered

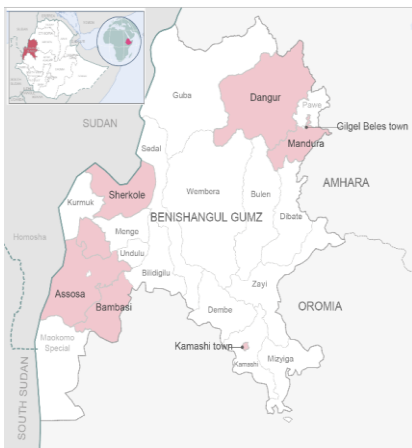


Figure 1. Locations covered by the protection monitoring

This protection monitoring report is based on the harmonized Ethiopia Protection Monitoring Tool (E-PMT). The data was collected in February 2022 by UNHCR, AAH and ANE, largely integrated in ongoing programming, which to some extent limited the geographic coverage in addition to security-related access constraints.

- For this baseline report, a total of 175 key informants (KIs)<sup>1</sup> were interviewed in the two zones: 105 males (60%), 70 females (40%).
- Of those interviewed, 50% were heads of IDP households, 22% were members of the IDP community structures, 9% were representatives of local authorities, 6% religious leaders and 5% female leaders were also interviewed, in addition to youth leaders, community volunteers, members of associations of persons with disabilities and medical staff.
- 53% of the interviews were carried out in Assosa zone, 32% in Metekel zone, and 13% of interviews were conducted in Kamashi zone.

### Population Movements

While overall, 55% of key informants noted the static nature of the displacement situation, new arrivals were reported in Metekel’s Dangur and Mandura woredas, as well as in Bambasi and Assosa woredas of Assosa zone as well as to a more limited extent in Kamashi town. No new arrivals have been reported for Sherkole woreda.

As regards return movements, respondents noted that overall, no significant return movements to monitored locations took place in the past month. However, pendular movements from Bambasi and Sherkole have been observed, while one third of respondents noted relocations to Mandura woreda in Metekel zone.

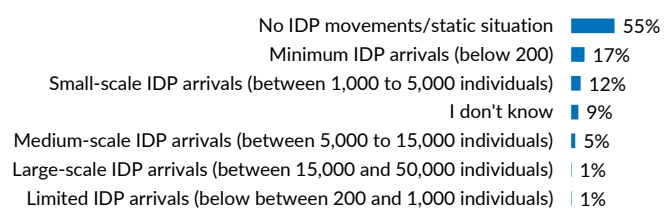


Figure 2. Scale of new displacement to this location observed during the past four weeks

<sup>1</sup> The information is obtained through key informants. Therefore, the findings are not statistically representative. Limitations relate to the role of the KI, the respective level of information, knowledge and prevalent biases. Access by protection monitors provides a further constraint.

## Access to Fundamental Rights and Basic Needs

According to the key informants, the top three **disadvantaged groups** in accessing humanitarian assistance and services are female-headed households, older persons and persons with disabilities, followed by unaccompanied or separated children (UASC), persons with chronic illnesses, and to a lesser extent single women and child-headed households. A very high prevalence of older persons in need was noted in Mandura woreda (Metekel zone), while in Assosa woreda (Assosa zone) the prevalence of UASC was particularly high, and in Kamashi town, single women stood out as a disadvantaged category.

The main reason why these groups are particularly disadvantaged relate only to 10% to a broader marginalization and gender inequalities, while 62% and 21% of the respondents noted insufficient identification of specific needs and inadequate tailoring of assistance and services as main reasons. This likely relates to the low presence and capacity of protection and other humanitarian actors and the ad hoc nature of the assistance and services provided.

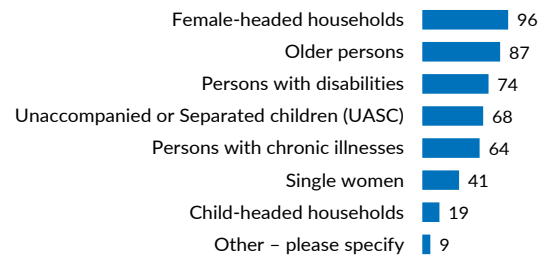


Figure 3. Disadvantaged groups in accessing assistance

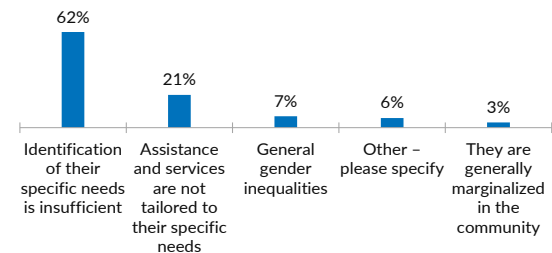


Figure 4. Reasons for disadvantages in accessing assistance

**Access to humanitarian assistance and services**, including food, shelter, health, education, sanitation, water, energy and markets is diverse, with highest inaccessibility ratings for health, food and sanitation.

- Access to health is rated as 'bad' or 'very bad' by 100% of key informants across the three zones. It has the highest inaccessibility rating. Access to food is rated as 'bad' or 'very bad' by 77% of key informants across the three zones. Access to sanitation has the third highest inaccessibility rating with 66% of key informants rating it as 'bad' or 'very bad'.
- Access to energy is deemed sufficient or good by 40% of key informants. Firewood is the predominant source of energy where IDPs have no access to other sources. Reportedly, this compels them to travel long distances, exposing in particular women to risk, and is also cause of tension with the host community.
- Access to shelter, education, water, market and energy is relatively better. Two thirds of key informants rated the accessibility to shelter and markets as sufficient or good, while access to education and water is rated more positively at 53% and 50% respectively as well.

When prompted about priority needs, the top three were food (69%), non-food items (13%) and health care and medicine (8%). This prioritization is however limited due to the key informant methodology.

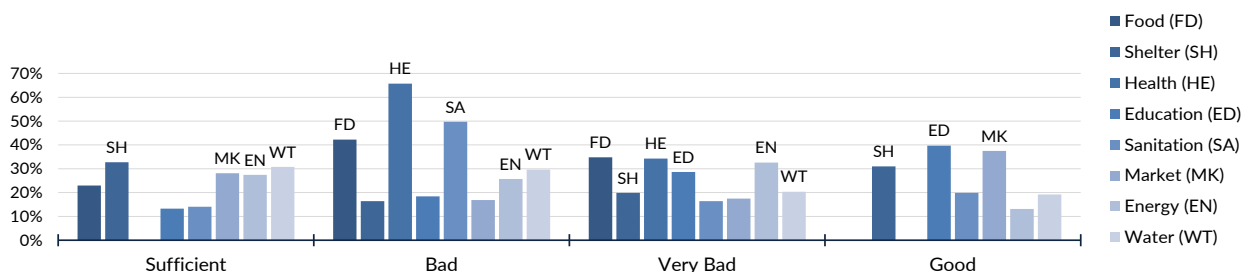


Figure 5. Rating of accessibility of basic needs

**Main obstacles** to access to humanitarian assistance and services relate predominantly to the unavailability of the respective commodity, service or market in general or within a reachable distance, the ongoing conflict and insecurity, including the presence of armed elements, as well as the lack or unaffordability of available transport.

Accessibility to such commodities and services also differs significantly between zones and woredas monitored according to key informants. Access to food for example is relatively sufficient in woredas in Assosa zone, with the exception of Sherkola and to a lesser extent Bambasi, while it is rated as bad for Mandura and Dangur woredas of Metekel zone and very bad for Kamashi town. Access to shelter on the other hand is predominantly rated as sufficient or good for the woredas monitored in Metekel zone, but medium in Bambasi and Sherkole woredas and very bad in Kamashi town.

## Coping mechanisms

To meet basic needs, populations in the three zones rely sometimes or in fewer instances commonly on coping mechanisms, some of them harmful. Key informants also suggest a reliance on humanitarian assistance with 94% of at least sometimes resorting to this coping mechanism, and support from local authorities and host community to meet basic needs. In particular in Mandura woreda of Metekel zone, the reliance on humanitarian assistance is particularly high according to 87% of key informants.

- While early marriage and school drop outs of girls and boys are reported as coping mechanisms, in particular early marriage is not generally resorted to according to 73% of key informants. An exception thereto is Kamashi town, where the resort to early marriage as coping mechanism is reported by 95% of key informants. School drop outs are slightly more common, with some 40% of key informants the prevalence of this coping mechanism commonly or at least sometimes. In Dangur woreda of Metekel zone and Kamashi town, school drop outs of boys and girls is reported to occur sometimes at 93% and 91% respectively. In Sherkole, 50% of key informants noted that this coping mechanism is sometimes or commonly prevalent, among girls and boys.
- Begging and illegal activities, such as theft, do not particularly stand out as prevalent coping mechanisms, with 54% and 59% of key informants reporting that these coping mechanisms are not resorted to. More prevalent are the use of savings, borrowing or loaning of money or use of work and salaries, as well as the selling or exchange of personal possessions or productive assets.

	Never	Sometimes	Common	Very Common	Always	No Answer	Total
Early Marriage	73%	21%	0%	1%	0%	6%	100%
Girls dropping Out of School to Work	37%	33%	7%	1%	0%	22%	100%
Boys dropping Out of School to Work	36%	35%	6%	1%	0%	22%	100%
Humanitarian assistance	6%	64%	22%	5%	2%	2%	100%
Illegal activities (such as theft)	59%	30%	3%	1%	0%	6%	100%
Begging	54%	38%	4%	1%	0%	3%	100%
Support from local/host communities	23%	58%	13%	5%	0%	1%	100%
Support from local authorities	16%	70%	13%	0%	0%	1%	100%
Use savings	26%	36%	9%	9%	17%	4%	100%
Borrow or loan money	14%	54%	26%	4%	0%	2%	100%
Working and salaries	18%	40%	12%	9%	17%	3%	100%
Sell or exchange personal possessions or productive assets	34%	49%	9%	3%	0%	5%	100%
Selling humanitarian assistance received	44%	37%	8%	8%	0%	3%	100%

Figure 6. Coping mechanisms

- In particular in Kamashi town, mining and the collection and selling of firewood was also a commonly reported coping mechanism. However, these activities are also reported in other areas monitored and reportedly the cause of a negative relationship with the host communities, notably in Sherkole.

## Freedom of movement

According to KIs, women and girls, and men and boys respectively face some limitations to their freedom of movement in their community, with females facing slightly higher restrictions. For males and females, such movement restrictions are highest in Kamashi town, with KIs reporting that movements are sometimes restricted at 68% for females and at 55% for males. Movement restrictions are also reported for Mandura woreda in Metekel zone, with key informants noting at 30% that females in particular face such restrictions sometimes.

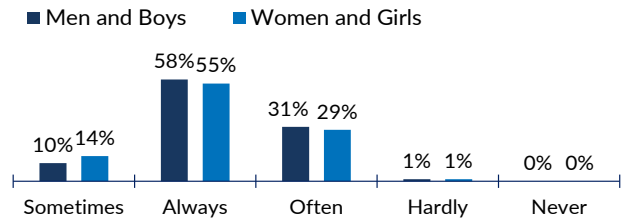


Figure 7. Freedom of movement

Obstacles to the freedom of movement related predominantly to insecurity and generalized violence in the concerned areas, concerns related to lack of documentation as well as fear of harassment.

## Access to justice and conflict resolution

Community structures, committees and leaders, followed by the police and other formal law enforcement actors are the two predominant avenues people pursue to address protection concerns. To a lesser extent, family and religious leaders are approached.

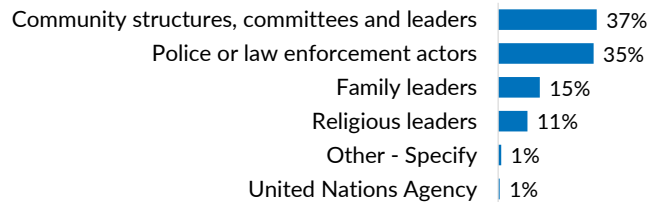


Figure 8. How are people most likely to approach with protection concerns, problems, and disputes

In Metekel zone's Mandura and Dangur woredas, according to KIs, there is a heavy reliance on police and other formal law enforcement actors, while in Kamashi town and Assosa zone, people rely predominantly on community structures, with a high degree of reliance on family and religious leaders in Assosa zone only.

## Documentation

According to the respondents, IDPs have access to **identification documents**, notably the Kebele ID in Mandura and Dangur woredas of Metekel and Kamashi zone, and to a much lesser extent in Assosa zone. However, reportedly, IDPs have not access to any other legal identity or civil document across the region. This is an area that requires urgent attention by protection actors.

According to key informants, **barriers** to obtain documentation are manifold, including the lack of supporting documents, challenges to obtain the needed clearance from the Kebele of origin, lack of awareness of or non-availability of civil registries (e.g. in Mandura woreda), illiteracy and unaffordability, alongside legal and other barriers to access services and documents.

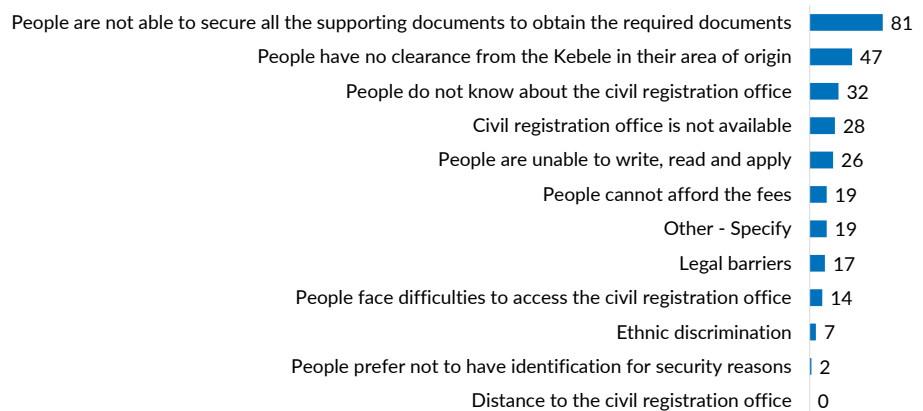


Figure 9. Obstacles to documentation

Consequences of lack of documentation reportedly include challenges related movement through concerned areas, difficulties finding employment or accessing humanitarian assistance and services, vulnerability to exploitation and abuse, difficulty accessing available basic services, such as medical services or schools, as well as difficulty to opening a bank account.

## Housing, Land and Property

IDPs have no access to proof of ownership for housing, land and property across the areas monitored, according to key informants. HLP actors will need to increase their scope of activity in the concerned areas.

Loss of property and possessions, and/or respective proof or records, is commonly reported in the areas monitored, with 89% of key informants reporting the loss of most or all property and possessions, and 86% the loss of respective documentation. In Kamashi town, key informants report that 100% of property and respective proof is lost, and in Mandura woreda of Metekel zone 87%.

The main two concerns related to housing, land and property related to damage and destruction of HLP at 74% overall, and 100% in areas monitored in Metekel zone, and to a lesser extent (10%) to property and land-related disputes. Such HLP disputes are predominantly reported for Assosa zone, and notably Sherkole woreda at over 40%. Other HLP challenges tend to be more localized. For example, land swapping and forced evictions was only reported as a main concern in Kamashi town, while secondary occupation was a concern predominantly reported by key informants in Assosa zone.

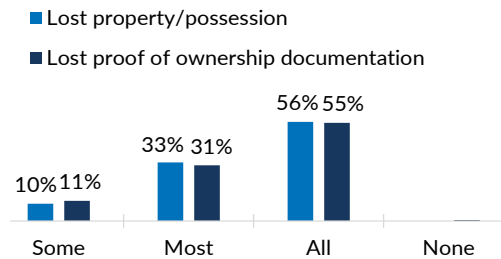


Figure 10. Have people hosted in this location or who have returned to this location lost property/possession or lost proof of ownership

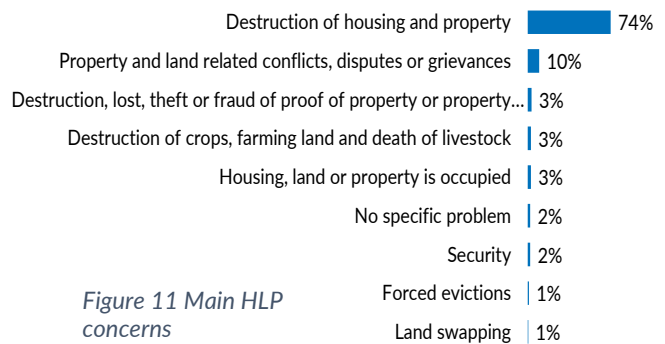


Figure 11 Main HLP concerns

## Gender-Based Violence

When prompted, key informants suggest that in their view GBV is a key concern in the area at 47%, while 45% thought it is not. Interestingly, female key informants considered GBV as a main issue at 43%, while male respondents identified it as a main concern at 50%.

Factors increasing GBV risks: Overcrowded shelter conditions, lack of access to basic needs as well basic services, such as WASH, and limited access to markets, the habit of collecting firewood and the unsafe routes this compels people to take, alongside the presence of armed elements are the main factors currently increasing the risk of gender-based violence in the area, according to key informants.

Access to GBV services: According to the key informants, only 52% confirmed access to GBV services, with comparatively better access to GBV services in Kamashi town, as opposed to the other areas monitored.

According to key informants, the lack of safe space and privacy, lack of access to assistance and services and unaddressed mental health and psycho-social care needs are the three most significant problems women and girls face. Other concerns are more localized. For example, forced marriage is predominantly reported in Dangur woreda.

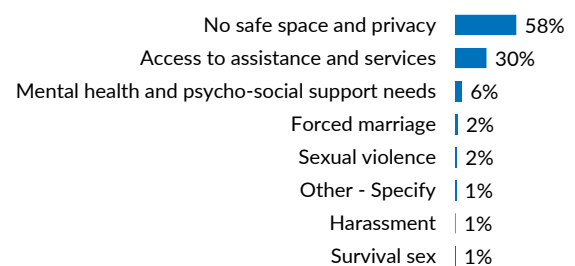
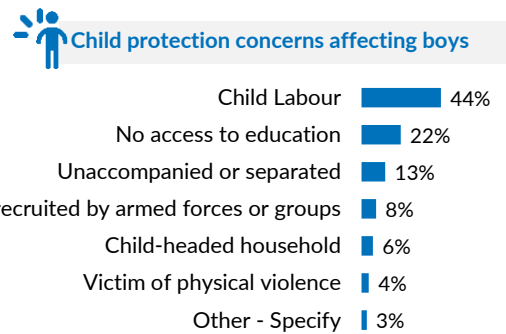
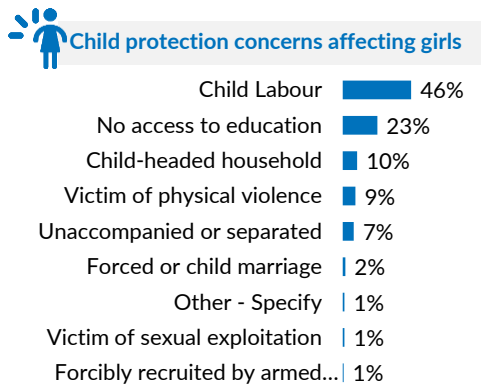


Figure 12. Most significant problems women and girls are facing in the community

## Child Protection

38% said that either most (9%) or some (29%) children are affected or at risk to be affected by violence or exploitation, however, with geographic variations. In Kamashi town for example, key informants said at 64% that most children are affected or at risk. 93% of key informants confirm that unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) live in their respective community. Main causes for this include separation during flight or just after the crisis and the death of parents, as well as due to abandonment of children. Neighbours and friends in the area of displacement are the predominant alternative caregiver at 60%, while at 21%, key informants note that the IDP community takes care of UASC in their community, notably in Kamashi town. 13% of key informants note that there are no caregiving arrangements, especially in Assosa zone.



## Explosive hazards

Awareness of the presence of explosive hazards among key informants is very limited, despite the presence of a legacy contamination in the region. The majority of key respondents said that they are not aware of the presence of explosive hazards, or related accidents in the areas monitored.

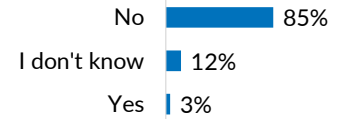


Figure 13. Awareness of explosive hazard prevalence

## Access to information, community representation and relations

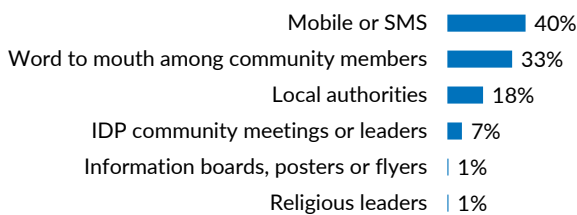


Figure 14. Means by which people receive information in general

There are four main means through which people receive information: Mobile or SMS, word to mouth, local authorities, or through IDP community meetings or IDP leaders. There are significant geographic variations: Mobile or SMS are not a predominant means in Kamashi town, where word to mouth is the most common means to access information, while in Metekel zone, local authorities are an important provider of information, which is less the case in the other areas monitored.

Nearly three quarters of key informants state that there are IDP community structures in place. However, such community representation structures are less prevalent in Metekel zone at 35% only. Where such structures exist, they are generally deemed at least somewhat legitimate (89%), representative (91%) and useful (92%), with Assosa woreda as a notable exception, where both legitimacy, representative nature as well as usefulness was questioned by the key informants.

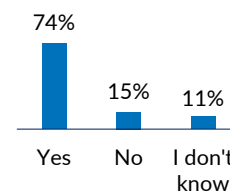


Figure 15. Existence of any IDP community structure to discuss and address issues and needs of the IDP community

The main purposes of such structures relate to community-based dispute resolution, to oversight or management of access to humanitarian assistance and public services, humanitarian assistance, as well as protection of vulnerable community members and collective advocacy for community needs, alongside security-related tasks.

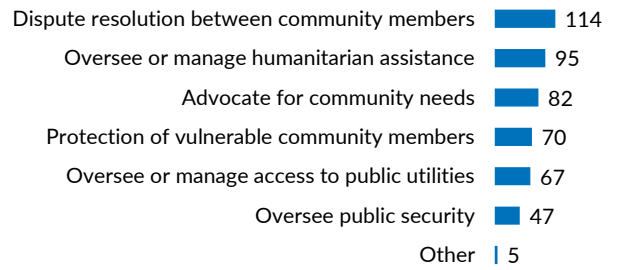


Figure 16. Purpose of IDP community structures

## Partners



## Donor support

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

