

Protection monitoring report #1

West Guji – Gedeo situation (Oromia and SSNP regions)

December 2021

Context

The conflict affecting West Guji (Oromia) and Gedeo zones (SSNRP) had led to mass displacement of nearly one million people between April and July 2018. Currently, it is estimated that over 670,000 people remain in a situation of internal displacement seeking a durable solution, or are even newly displaced due to the repeated surge in violence in the area. The response arena has seen a reduction in partner presence, operations and funding, resulting in compounded humanitarian needs, with protection risks aggravating and durable solution opportunities left unmaterialized.

Key informant profiles & areas covered

This protection monitoring report is based on the harmonized Ethiopia Protection Monitoring Tool (E-PMT). The data was collected in the month of November 2021.

- For this baseline report, a total of 203 key informants (KIs)¹ were interviewed in the two zones: 147 males (72%), 56 females (28%).
- Of those interviewed, 30% were heads of IDP households, 29% were local authorities, 12% were community volunteers, 9% religious leaders, 4% female leaders, 3% youth leaders, 3% members of community representation structures, 3% site management, 3% teachers and school administrators, and 2% of respondents were health personnel.
- 65% of the KIs were interviewed in Gedeo zone (Yirgachefe, Gedeb, Kochere, Churso, Wenago, Chelektu, Rape woredas), while 35% of the interviews took place in West Guji zone (Abaya, Kercha, Gelana, Hambela Wamena woredas).



Figure 1. Zones covered by the Protection Monitoring in November 2021

Population Movements

Overall, according to 67% of key informants, the population movement situation is static, with another 22% of key informants suggesting minimal new arrivals (below 200 persons) in the past month. In particular, new albeit minimal internal displacement was reported in Kercha and Yirgachefe woredas (including Yirgachefe town).

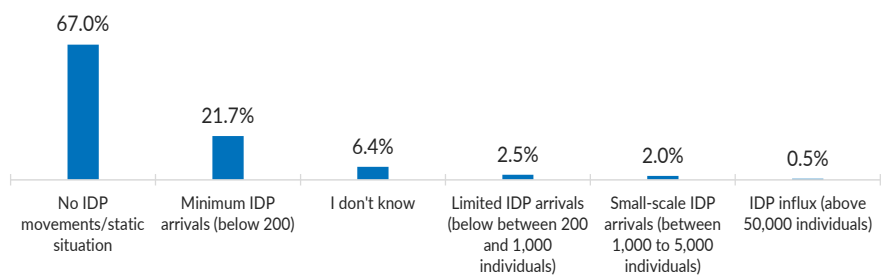


Figure 2. Population movements

Respondents portray a similarly static situation regarding IDP returns, with 65% and 24% respectively reporting no or limited new return movements (between 200 to 1000 people) to their location in the past four weeks.

¹ 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 unaccompanied or separated children (UASC), followed by single women, persons with disabilities, child-headed households and persons with chronic illnesses.

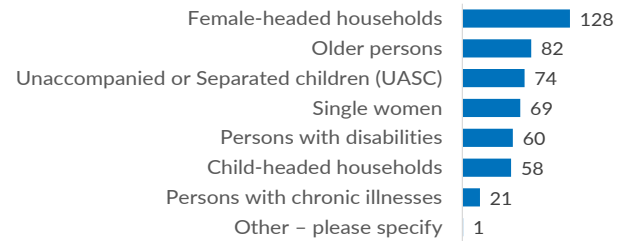


Figure 3. Disadvantaged groups in accessing assistance

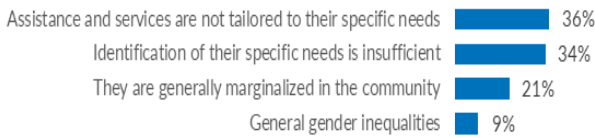


Figure 4. Reasons for disadvantages in accessing assistance

The main reason why these groups are particularly disadvantaged relate to 30% to a broader marginalization and gender inequalities, while 36% and 34% of the respondents noted inadequate tailoring of assistance and services and insufficient identification of specific needs as main reasons.

Access to humanitarian assistance and services, including food, shelter, health, education, sanitation, water, energy and markets is overwhelmingly characterized as ‘bad’ by key informants across the two zones.

- Access to health services is assessed as bad or very bad at 100% by key informants. It has the highest inaccessibility rating.
- Access to food is bad or very bad according to 84% of key informants.
- Access to shelter, education, sanitation, water and energy is rated bad or very bad by a range of 71 to 78% of key informants, while access to markets is assessed to be slightly better at 61% bad or very bad access.

When prompted about priority needs, the top three were food (56%), shelter (14%) and legal aid (8%). This prioritization is however limited due to the key informant methodology.

Main obstacles to access to humanitarian assistance and services relate to the unavailability of the respective commodity or service in general or within a reachable distance, the lack or unaffordability of available transport, lack of needed documentation e.g., to pass checkpoints, ongoing insecurity and conflict, and conflict impact.

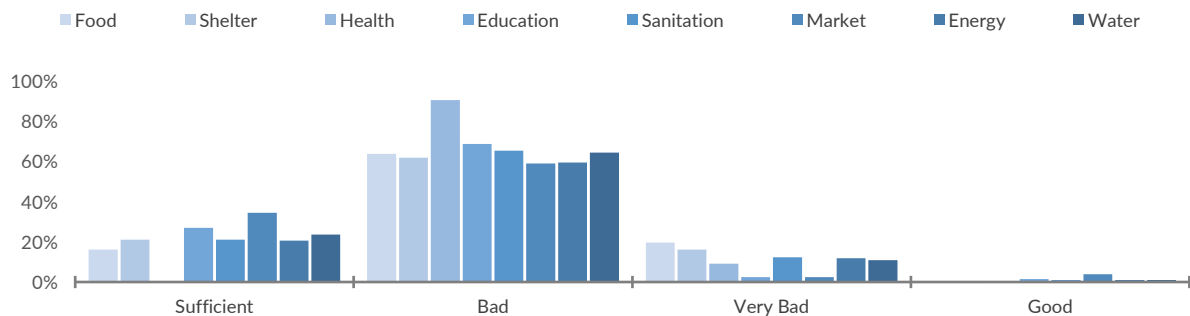


Figure 5. Rating of accessibility of basic needs

At woreda-level, **Kercha woreda** in West Guji zone stands out in terms of poor access to humanitarian assistance and services across most sectors, including food, shelter, health, sanitation and water. Also, access to humanitarian assistance and services is particularly challenging in **Abaya woreda**, also in West Guji zone, according to key informants.

Coping mechanisms

To meet basic needs, populations in the two zones rely sometimes or commonly on coping mechanisms, some of them harmful. Key informants also suggest a reliance on humanitarian assistance and support from host community to meet basic needs.

- Particularly alarming are the reported instances of early marriage and school drop outs, both among girls and boys, as coping mechanisms.
- Begging and illegal activities, such as theft, also stand out as prevalent coping mechanisms. Considered together with use of savings, borrowing, selling or exchange of personal possessions and the limited income generation, this points to an overall impoverishment of the community.

	Never	Sometimes	Common	Very Common	Always	No Answer	Total
Early Marriage	7%	64%	27%	2%	0%	0%	100%
Girls dropping Out of School to Work	5%	46%	34%	14%	0%	0%	100%
Boys dropping Out of School to Work	5%	44%	37%	13%	0%	0%	100%
Humanitarian assistance	18%	70%	9%	1%	0%	0%	100%
Illegal activities (such as theft)	16%	59%	21%	1%	0%	2%	100%
Begging	16%	35%	36%	13%	0%	0%	100%
Support from local/host communities	31%	55%	13%	1%	0%	0%	100%
Support from local authorities	38%	47%	14%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Use savings	49%	34%	15%	0%	1%	0%	100%
Borrow or loan money	47%	32%	18%	3%	0%	0%	100%
Working and salaries	58%	25%	14%	2%	0%	0%	100%
Sell or exchange personal possessions or productive assets	35%	42%	21%	1%	0%	0%	100%
Selling humanitarian assistance received	33%	40%	18%	8%	0%	0%	100%

Figure 6. Coping mechanisms

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.

- For **women and girls**, movement restrictions are reportedly particularly prevalent in Chelelektu town and Rape woreda, as well as Kochere woreda and Yirgachefe in Gedeo zone, as well as to a lesser extent in Hambela Wamena woreda in West Guji zone.
- For **men and boys**, movement restrictions are also reportedly highest in Cheleketu town and Rape woreda, followed by Kochere and Yirgachefe in Gedeo zone.

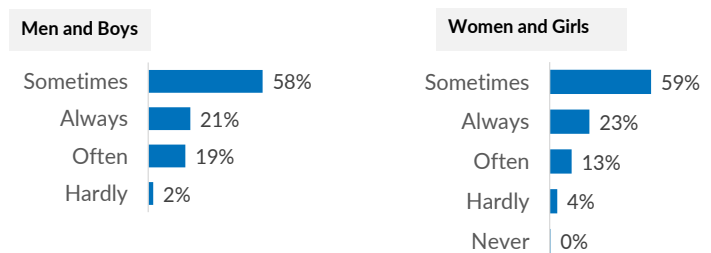


Figure 7. Freedom of movement

Obstacles to the freedom of movement differ between genders: Lack of proper documentation, curfews and insecurity, generalized violence and conflict in the area are the reported top three obstacles to the freedom of movement for men and boys, while for women and girls fear of kidnapping, harassment and restrictions imposed by the family are the dominant restrictions reported, followed by lack of proper documentation.

Access to justice and conflict resolution

Community structures, family and religious leaders are the three predominant ways in which people in the two zones approach and try to resolve protection concerns and disputes, with a relatively low reliance on formal mechanisms or support by the humanitarian community.



Figure 8. Access to justice and conflict resolution

Documentation

According to the respondents, IDPs have access to **identification documents**, notably the Kebele ID, but in general not to passports. However, access to **civil documentation**, including birth, marriage, divorce or death certificate, is generally lower and varies considerably between locations:

- **Marriage and divorce certificates:** Marriage certificates are reportedly the most accessible civil document, but mostly only available to obtain in Yirgachefe, Kochere, and Chelelektu in Gedeo zone, and in Hambela Wamena and Abaya woredas of West Guji zone. Divorce certificates are generally not accessible, with the exception of Yirgachefe, according to key informants.
- **Birth and death certificates:** Birth certificates are reportedly the second most accessible civil document, but mostly only available to obtain in Yirgachefe, Rape, Kochere, Chelelektu in Gedeo zone, and to a lesser extent in Hambela Wamena woreda in West Guji zone. Death certificates are practically only available to obtain in Yirgachefe, according to key informants.

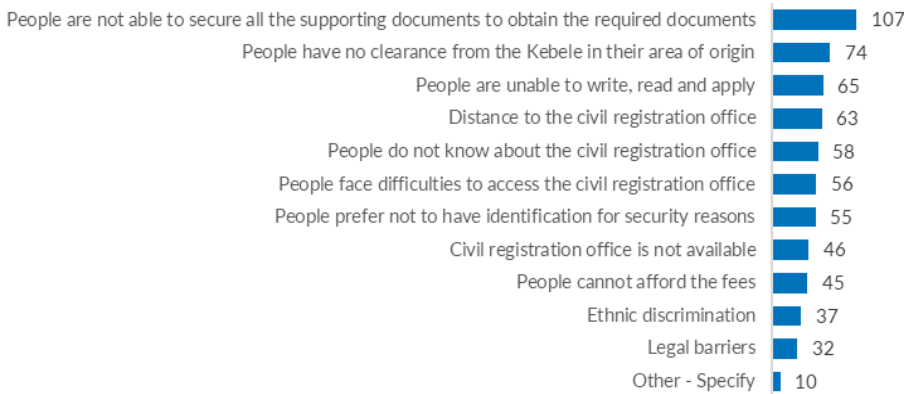


Figure 9. Obstacles to documentation

According to key informants, **barriers** to obtain documentation are manifold, including the lack of supporting documents, lack of awareness and illiteracy, lack of availability, affordability or accessibility of civil registry services, alongside challenges to obtain the needed clearances from the Kebeles in the areas of origin.

Consequences of lack of documentation reportedly include difficulty in accessing humanitarian assistance and services, difficulty of moving through certain areas, difficulty accessing medical services, finding employment, registering children for school or opening a bank account. It also renders people vulnerable to exploitation.

Housing, Land and Property

IDPs' access to **proof of ownership** for housing, land and property is generally limited according to key informants, with a comparatively better ability to obtain such documentation in Yirgachefe town and in Kercha woreda.

Loss of property and possessions, and/or respective proof or records, is commonly reported in the two zones, both for IDPs as well as for returnees. In West Guji zone, the reported [loss of property and possessions](#) is comparatively higher with 64% reporting that most IDPs and returnees suffered such losses, in comparison to 34% in Gedeo zone. With regards to [loss of HLP-related documentation](#), in West Guji zone, 43% of key informants report that most IDPs and returnees lost their record, while this percentages stands at 25% in Gedeo zone.

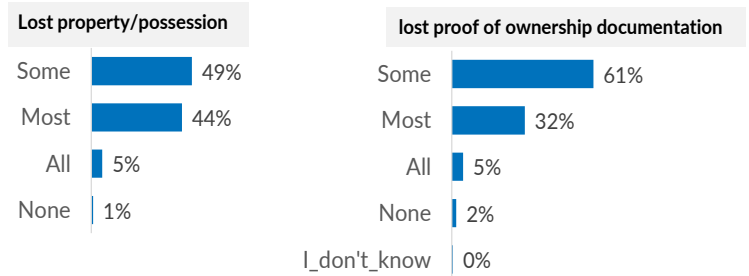


Figure 10. lost property/possession and lost proof of ownership documentation

The top three concerns related to housing, land and property related to damage and destruction of HLP, or respective documentation or records, as well as security. Other HLP challenges tend to be more localized, with concerns related to the destruction of crops, farming and other agricultural assets reported in particular in Kercha woreda (43%); secondary occupation stands out as a concern in Gedeb town (67%), and HLP-related disputes are reported to be a particular challenge in Wenago woreda. Key informants report concerns related to explosive hazard contamination predominantly in Kercha and Wenago woredas.

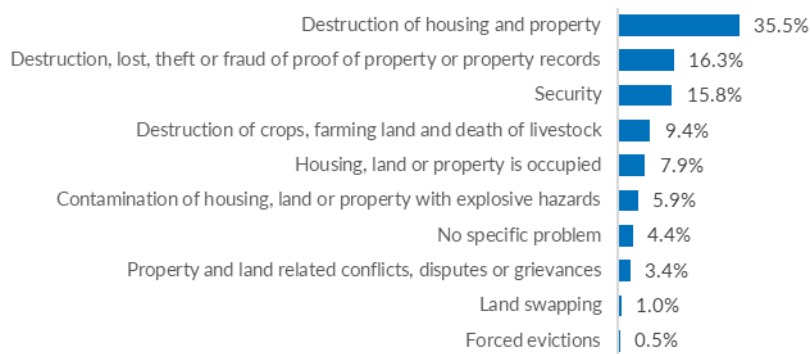


Figure 11 Main HLP concerns

Gender-Based Violence

When prompted, key informants suggest that in their view GBV is a key concern in the area at 40%, while 60% thought it is not. Female respondents assessed this slightly differently than male key informants. Female key informants considered GBV as a main issue at over 55%, while male respondents only did so at 33%.

Factors increasing GBV risks: Lack of access to basic needs, unsafe routes to collect firewood or water, challenging accessibility of sanitation facilities or public places, such as markets, overcrowding of shelters and collective facilities, or 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 49% confirmed access to GBV services, with a significant geographic variation, with comparatively better access to GBV services in West Guji than in Gedeo zone. In particular, key informants note the entire lack of access to GBV services in Gedeb (including Gedeb town), Kochere, Rape woredas, and Yirgachefe town.

According to key informants, the lack of safe space and privacy, harassment and lack of access to assistance and services are the three most significant problems women and girls face.

Alarming is that 7% of key informants report sexual violence affecting women and girls in the two zones, predominantly reported for Gelana woreda in West Guji zone at 71%, and at 13% for Yirgacheffe woreda in Gedeo zone.

Abduction and kidnapping are predominantly reported as a concern among women and girls in Kercha and Gelana woredas of West Guji at 44% and 7% respectively, and in Wenago woreda of Gedeo at 11%.

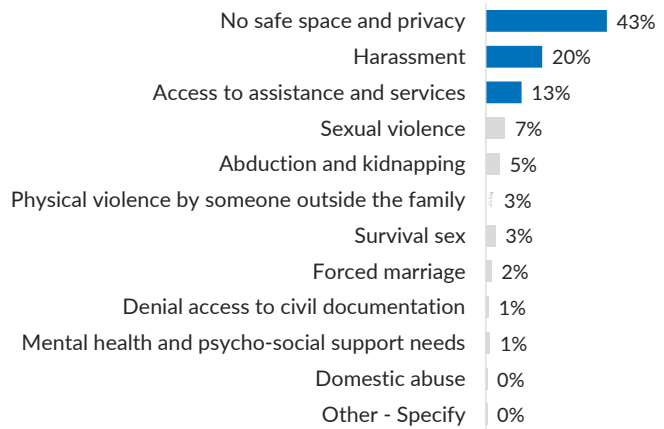
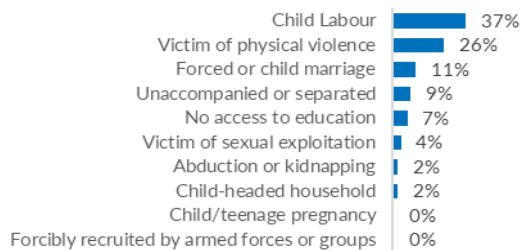


Figure 12. Three most significant problems women and girls are facing in the community

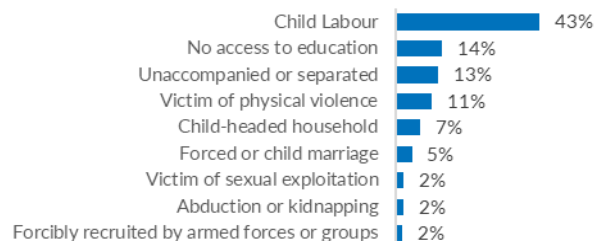
Child Protection

Nearly all key informants, at 97% said that either most (25%) or some (72%) children are affected or at risk to be affected by violence or exploitation. 40% 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, abandonment of children or death of parents. 64% of the respondents noted the absence of an alternative caregiver in such situations, while 11% and 7% respectively said that neighbours, friends or acquaintances, or members of the IDP community are acting as caregivers to UASC. In 2%, other children reportedly act as caregivers.

Child protection concerns affecting girls



Child protection concerns affecting boys



Explosive hazards

Awareness of the presence of explosive hazards among key informants is limited. Over one third however noted that they are aware of some contamination in their area or surroundings. Prevalence of explosive hazards was reported at 90% and 100% respectively Hambela Wamena woreda in West Guji zone and Rape woreda in Gedeo zone. 27% of key informants noted that they are aware of an accident related to explosive hazards.

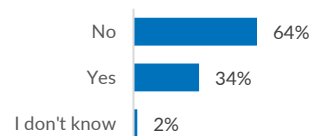


Figure 13. Awareness of explosive hazard prevalence

Access to information, community representation and relations

There are four main means through which people receive information: The most important one is word to mouth information channels among community members, followed by mobile or text messages, local authorities and radio. The use of radio is only reported to be prevalent in woredas of Gedeo zone, but not West Guji zone.

Humanitarian organizations play a significantly lesser role as a provider of information.



Figure 14. Access to information

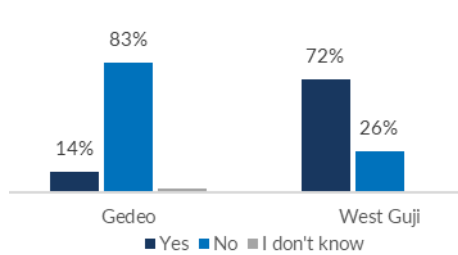


Figure 15. IDP community structures

Over one third of key informants state that there are IDP community structures in place. However, such community representation structures are significantly less prevalent in Gedeo zone than in West Guji zone.

Where such structures exist, they are generally deemed at least somewhat legitimate (73%) and representative (84%). According to key informants, the IDP community overwhelmingly feels that the role of these structures is at least somewhat useful (73%)

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

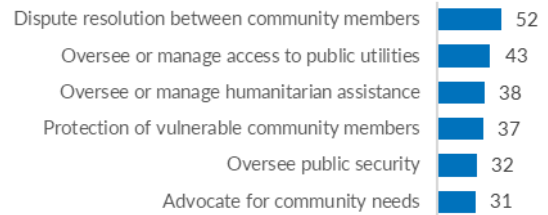


Figure 16. Purpose of IDP community structures

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