EU IM3 PROJECT | ETHIOPIA | PROTECTION MONITORING AND SOLUTIONS (PMS)

Afar Region | Hari Zone | Telalak Woreda | December 2025

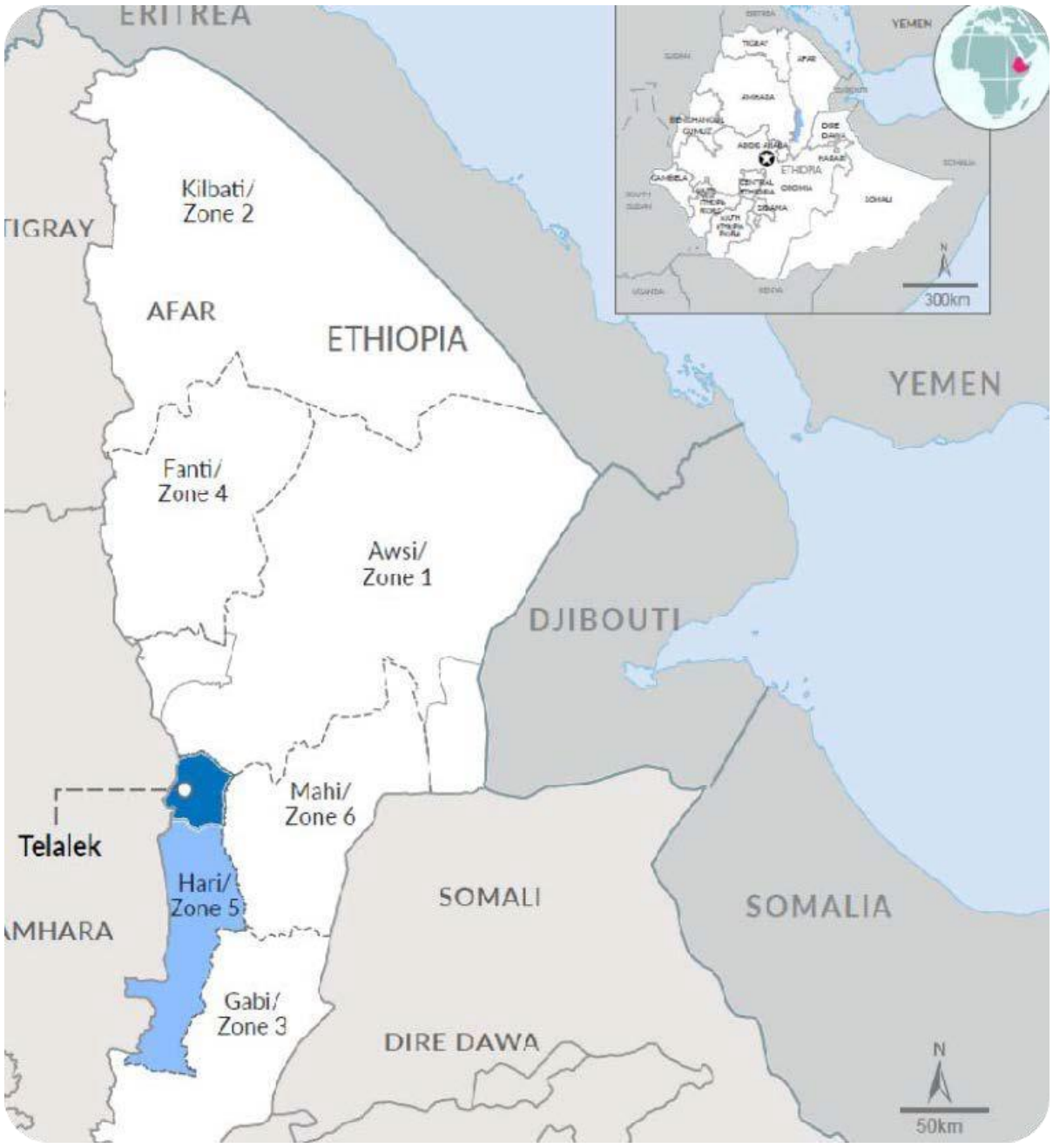
OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

OVERVIEW

Afar Region continues to experience recurrent natural and conflict-related shocks that have driven protracted displacement, including the Afar-Issa conflict and the northern conflict. Although large-scale displacement has largely subsided, IDP returnees in Telalak Woreda, Hari Zone (Zone Five) remain exposed to persistent vulnerabilities, highlighting the need for continued protection monitoring and targeted assistance.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This Protection Monitoring and Solutions (PMS) Report was developed in collaboration with UNHCR's protection partner, EOTC-DICAC, under the EU IM3 Project, within the protection monitoring and solutions component. It presents an in-depth and updated analysis of protection risks and needs in Afar region, particularly in Telalak Woreda, Zone Five (Hari Zone) and presents evidence-based recommendations to inform humanitarian response.



*Boundaries and names shown do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

KEY FINDINGS & METHODOLOGY

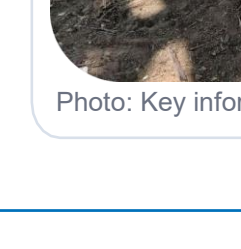
TOTAL INTERVIEWS

121 Key Informants (KIs)

POPULATION GROUP

99% IDP Returnees **1%** Host

GENDER BREAKDOWN



58% Female

42% Male

RESPONDENT PROFILE

Heads of Households (64%)

Students (15%)

Housewives (11%)

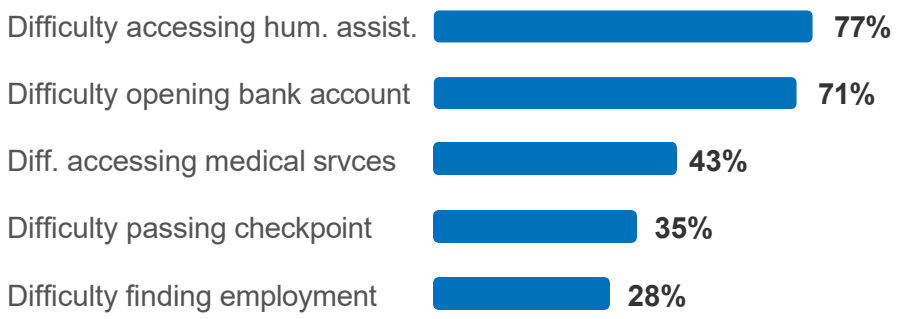
Volunteers (6%)

Community Reps (3%)

Photo: Key informant interview in Telalak

LACK OF DOCUMENTATION RISKS

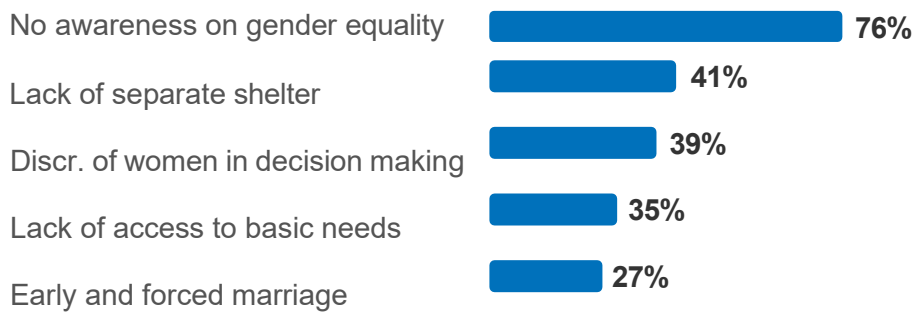
Top 5 protection risks community members encounter due to lack of documentation.



Lack of civil documentation mainly restricts access to humanitarian assistance, health, banking, movement and opportunity to get employment.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

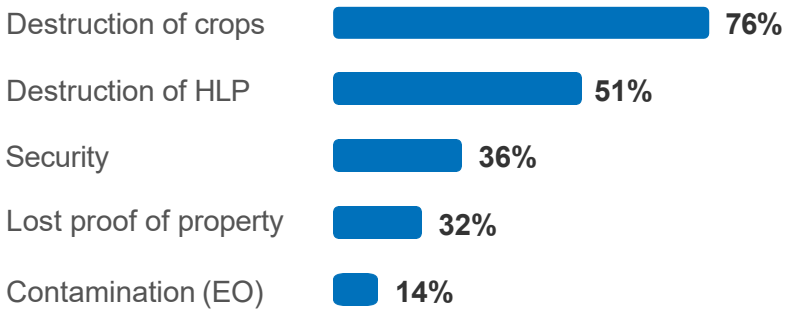
Top 5 factors increasing risk of GBV



According to respondents, GBV risks are mainly driven by low awareness of gender equality (76%), lack of separate shelter (41%), and discrimination against women in decision-making (39%), with unmet basic needs (35%) and early or forced marriage (27%) also contributing factors.

HOUSING, LAND & PROPERTY (HLP)

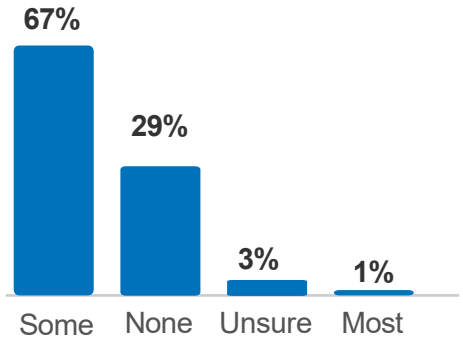
Top 5 issues faced by IDP returnees regarding HLP.



In Hari Zone, IDP returnees' HLP challenges are largely driven by destruction of crops (76%) and property (51%), with security concerns, lost documentation, and Exploded Ordnance contamination further hindering safe return.

ACCESS TO FARMING LAND

Proportion of IDPs/returnees accessing land.



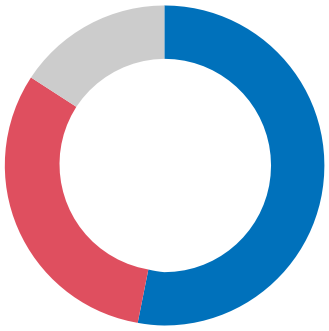
Access to land for farming among IDPs remains very limited, with 29% reporting no access and 67% indicating that only some IDPs can farm, while very few reported accesses for most (1%).

ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED SERVICES

Do GBV survivors have access to specialized services?

Results:

- Yes: 56% (63)
- No: 35% (39)
- Unsure 10% (11)



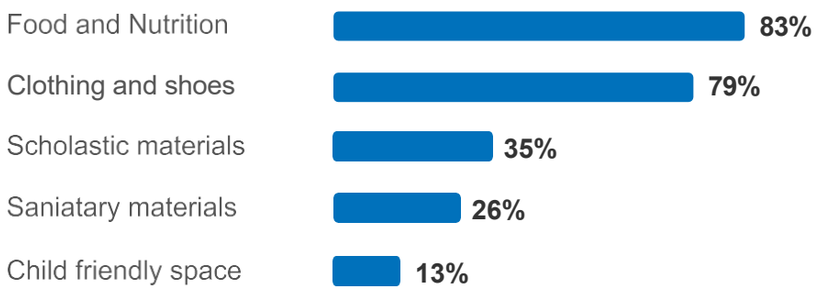
Most GBV survivors in Hari Zone lack access to specialized services, according to the survey results. While 56% (63 respondents) reported no access, only 35% (39 respondents) confirmed availability, and 10% (11 respondents) were unsure.

Methodology & Resources

The framework and the questionnaires of key informant interviews (KIIs) with IDPs and IDP returnees are based on the following global resources on internal displacement: the UN Secretary's General Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons and the Inter-agency Durable Solutions Indicator Library

CHILD PROTECTION

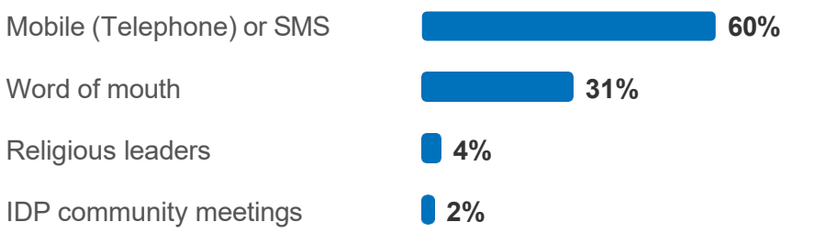
Top 5 protection issues children (boys and girls) encounter



Children face significant protection challenges, primarily related to food and nutrition (83%) and lack of clothing and shoes (79%), followed by limited access to scholastic and sanitary materials and a shortage of child-friendly spaces, underscoring critical unmet basic and protection needs.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

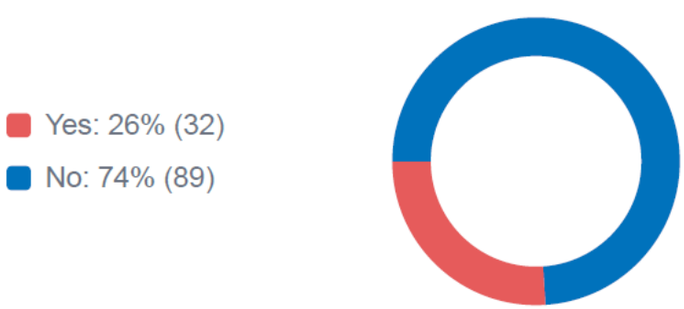
Major communication channels that people receive information



In Hari Zone, information is mainly accessed through mobile phones or SMS (60%) and word of mouth within the community (31%), while formal channels such as religious leaders and IDP community meetings play a limited role.

EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE

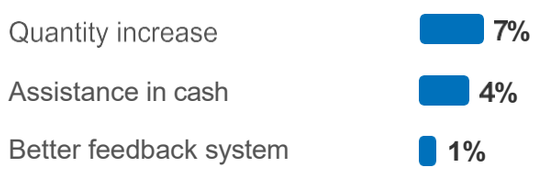
Are you aware of incidents related to unexploded ordnance UXO or other explosive remnants during the last 3 months?



Most respondents (74%) reported no recent incidents related to unexploded ordnance or other explosive remnants of war, while 26% indicated awareness of such incidents, pointing to localized explosive hazard risks that require continued monitoring and risk education.

SHELTER

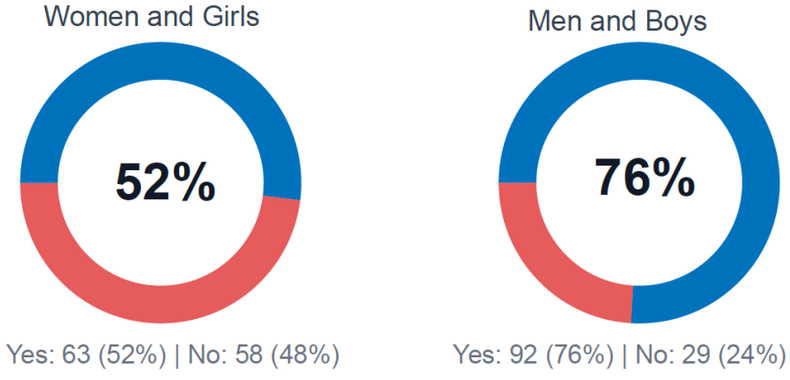
Things to improve during shelter and non-food Item assistance



In Hari Zone, respondents identified the need to increase the quantity of shelter and NFI items (7%) as the main area for improvement, followed by a preference for cash-based assistance (4%) and the strengthening of feedback mechanisms (1%), indicating targeted gaps in shelter assistance delivery.

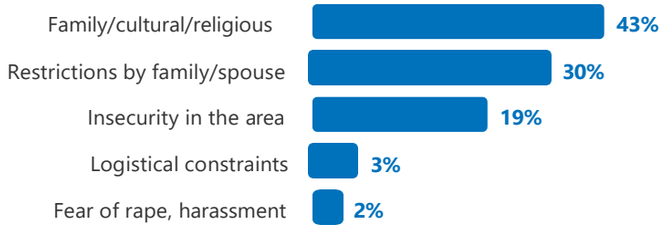
SAFETY AND SECURITY

Are women and girls, men and boys always able to move freely in your community?



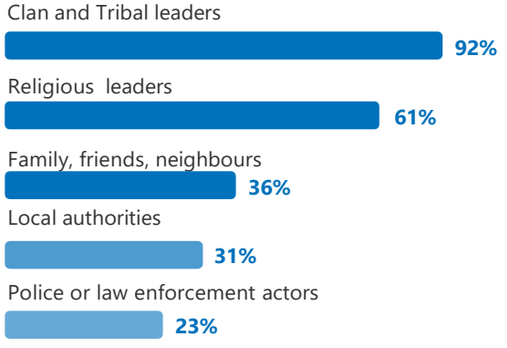
In Hari Zone, women and girls face greater movement restrictions, with 52% reporting free movement compared to 76% of men and boys, highlighting persistent gender-based mobility constraints.

Main reasons limiting freedom of movement for women and girls:



ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION ASSISTANCE

Most likely authority approached for concerns:



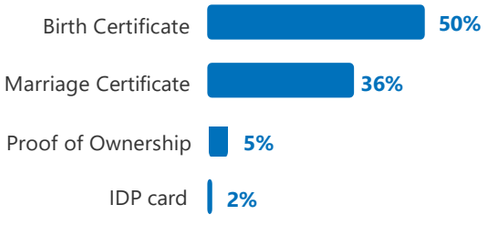
Insight:

In Hari Zone, community members overwhelmingly rely on clan and tribal leaders (92%) and religious leaders (61%) to address protection concerns, while fewer approach family networks (36%), local authorities (31%), or police and law enforcement actors (23%), indicating a strong preference for informal and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms.

DOCUMENTATION

In Hari Zone, birth certificate is the most accessibly documents (50%), followed by marriage certificate (36%), showing limited but essential access to civil documentation. The findings however underscore the need for strengthened civil documentation services. Fewer respondents cited proof of ownership (5%) and access to IDP cards (2%), indicating significant gaps in access to essential documentation.

Documents IDPs can obtain in the community:



MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

OBSTACLES TO BASIC NEEDS

FOOD
Inflation (75%), Lack of food (64%), Drought (50%)

HEALTH
Can't afford fees (92%), No medicine (70%), Not available (36%)

EDUCATION
Learning materials (92%), Can't afford items (79%), Distance (66%)

WASH
Water shortage (84%), Storage capacity (41%), Contamination (40%)

EDUCATION BARRIERS
In Hari Zone, education access is mainly constrained by insufficient learning materials (92%), unaffordable scholastic items (79%), and long distance (66%).

GROUPS FACING GREATEST CHALLENGES

The findings highlight older persons and persons with disabilities as the most vulnerable groups (60% each), followed by female-headed households (51%), child-headed households (40%), and unaccompanied and separated children (36%), indicating widespread, layered protection risks across population groups.

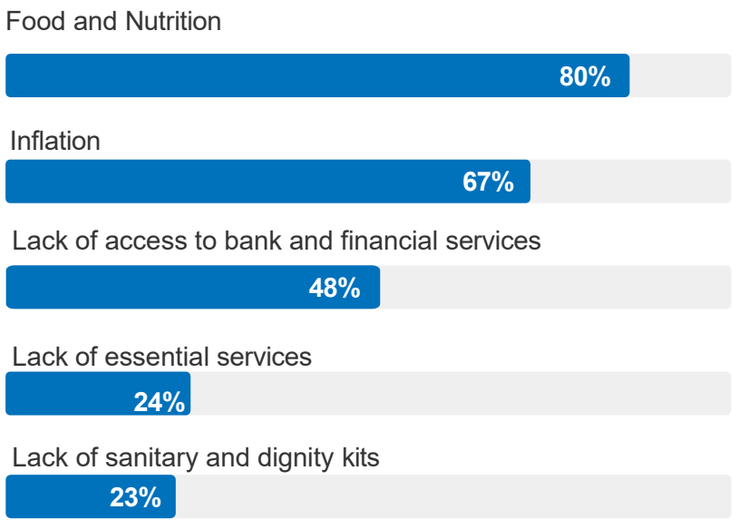
COPING STRATEGIES (HEATMAP)

	Sometimes	Always
Buying food on credit Girls	80%	16%
early marriage Illegal	74%	2%
activities (e.g. theft)	74%	-
Selling humanitarian assitce.	70%	2%

In Hari Zone, negative coping strategies are predominantly practiced sometimes rather than always, with the most common being buying food on credit (80%), early marriage for girls (74%), engaging in illegal activities such as theft (74%), and selling humanitarian assistance (70%). Limited proportions report these strategies as occurring always, indicating recurrent but situational reliance driven by ongoing economic and protection pressures.

TOP 5 PROTECTION ISSUES

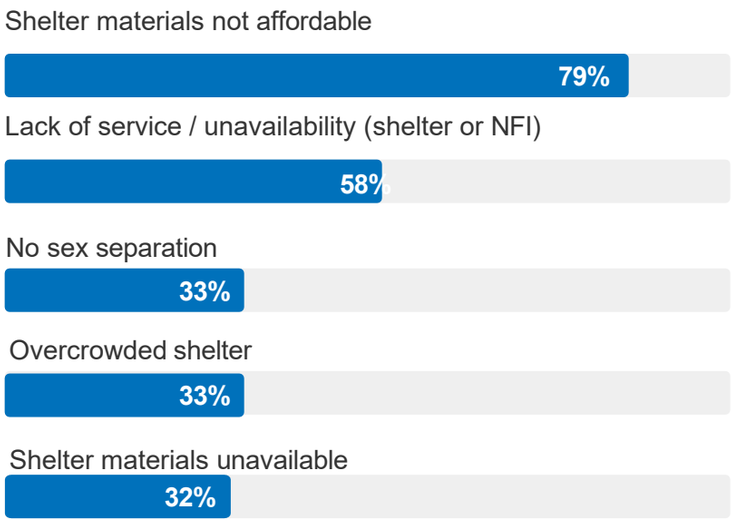
Issues IDP returnees are facing (Multiple Select)



In Hari Zone, IDP returnees' main protection challenges are food and nutrition (80%) and inflation (67%), followed by limited access to financial services (48%) and gaps in essential services and dignity items.

HOUSING & SHELTER CHALLENGES

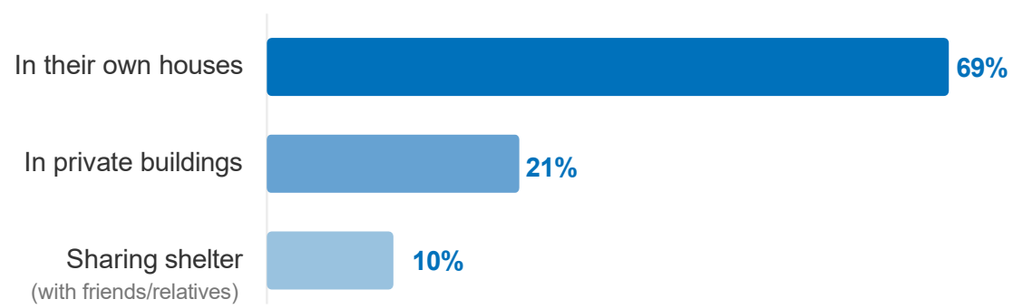
Issues IDP returnees are facing with housing



In Hari Zone, IDP returnees face acute housing challenges, primarily due to unaffordable shelter materials (79%) and limited availability of shelter or NFI items (58%). Overcrowding, lack of sex-segregated shelter, and unavailability of materials further compound inadequate living conditions and protection risks.

CURRENT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Where IDP returnees are currently living



The majority of IDP returnees are currently living in their own houses (69%), indicating substantial return to places of origin. However, a notable proportion continue to reside in private buildings (21%), or shared shelters with relatives and friends (10%), while very few have returned to newly built shelters, highlighting ongoing shelter and reintegration needs.

Critical Needs

Findings indicate persistent, multidimensional protection and humanitarian challenges driven by protracted displacement, environmental shocks, and constrained access to basic services.

Basic Needs & Livelihoods

- Food and nutrition (80%) and inflation (67%) are the main concerns.
- Limited land access, crop loss, and livelihood disruption increase negative coping strategies.

Shelter, Housing, Land & Property (HLP)

- Unaffordable shelter materials (79%) and limited shelter/NFI services (58%).
- Overcrowding, lack of sex separation, crop destruction (76%), and property loss constrain return.

Protection Risks & Civil Documentation

- Missing birth (50%) and marriage certificates (36%) restrict access to services, movement, and livelihoods.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) & MHPSS

- Elevated GBV risk linked to low gender-equality awareness (76%) and lack of separate shelter.
- Limited access to specialized GBV services.

Child Protection

- Food and nutrition (83%), clothing and shoes (79%), dignity kits, child-friendly spaces, and education access.

Recommendations

1. Scale up integrated basic needs assistance, prioritizing food, water, and livelihood recovery through coordinated multi-sector responses, including cash-based interventions where feasible.
2. Strengthen shelter and NFI responses by improving availability and affordability of materials, ensuring safety and dignity (incl. sex- segregated arrangements), and supporting shelter repair for returnees.
3. Enhance HLP and civil documentation support through legal assistance and administrative facilitation to restore documentation and improve access to land and property rights.
4. Expand GBV prevention and response with increased community awareness, strengthened referral pathways, and improved access to specialized survivor-centered services.
5. Scale up child protection, focusing on nutrition support, clothing and dignity kits, child-friendly spaces, and improved access to safe education.
6. Strengthen MHPSS with targeted support for women, older persons, and other high-risk groups, including referral for specialized care.
7. Improve accountability and communication using preferred channels (mobile, community networks) and strengthen feedback mechanisms.
8. Promote conflict-sensitive and community-based protection approaches, engaging traditional and religious leaders while reinforcing linkages with formal justice and protection systems.

Partners

Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (EOTC-DICAC)

Donor Support

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