

# Situation Overview: Greater Bahr el Ghazal Region, South Sudan

October - December 2019

**REACH** An initiative of  
IMPACT Initiatives,  
ACTED and UNOSAT

## Introduction

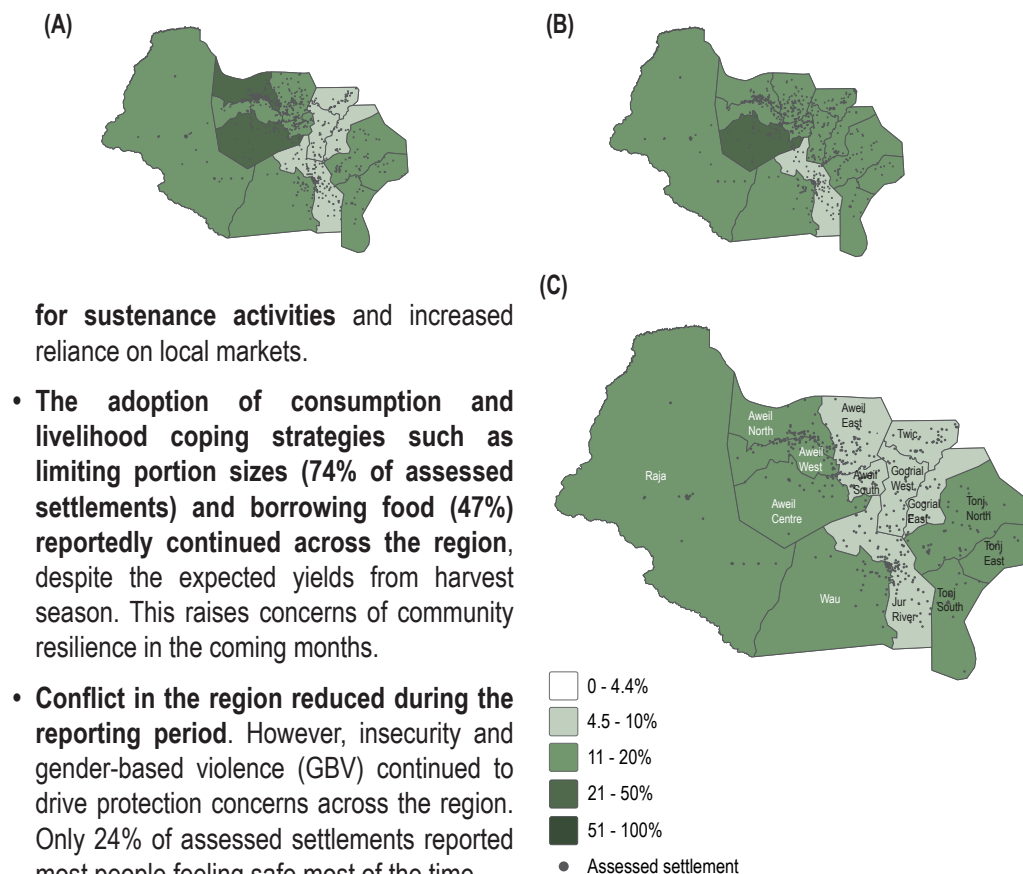
The humanitarian situation in the Greater Bahr el Ghazal (GBeG) region in the fourth quarter of 2019 was affected by flooding in Northern Bahr el Ghazal (NBeG) and northern Warrap, as well as insecurity in southern Warrap and parts of Western Bahr el Ghazal (WBeG). This compromised access to food and livelihoods during a period of expected improvements.

To inform humanitarian actors working outside formal settlement sites, REACH has conducted assessments of hard-to-reach areas in South Sudan since December 2015. Data is collected on a monthly basis through interviews with key informants (KIs) with knowledge of a settlement and triangulated with focus group discussions (FGDs). This situation overview uses this data to analyse changes in observed humanitarian needs across GBeG in the fourth quarter of 2019.

## Key Findings

- **Flooding continued to drive displacement in the fourth quarter of 2019** NBeG and northern Warrap. **Insecurity in Jur River County in WBeG, which caused disruption to cultivation season**, resulted in continued movement to Wau Town.
- **Flooding and insecurity impacted crop**

Map 1: REACH assessment coverage of the GBeG region, October (A), November (B) and December (C) 2019



for **sustenance activities** and increased reliance on local markets.

- **The adoption of consumption and livelihood coping strategies such as limiting portion sizes (74% of assessed settlements) and borrowing food (47%) reportedly continued across the region**, despite the expected yields from harvest season. This raises concerns of community resilience in the coming months.
- **Conflict in the region reduced during the reporting period.** However, insecurity and gender-based violence (GBV) continued to drive protection concerns across the region. Only 24% of assessed settlements reported most people feeling safe most of the time.
- **Waterborne diseases was the second most commonly reported health problem in assessed settlements across the region (21%)** after malaria, with health conditions worsened by the flooding in some regions.

# of key informant interviews conducted: **2,216**  
# of assessed settlements: **1,826**  
# of counties covered: **14 (of 14)**  
# of focus group discussions conducted: **4**

## METHODOLOGY

To provide an indicative overview of the situation in hard-to-reach areas of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State, Western Bahr el Ghazal State, and Warrap State, REACH uses primary data from key informants who have recently arrived from, recently visited, or receive regular information from a settlement or "Area of Knowledge" (AoK). Information for this report was collected from the protection of civilians (PoC) site, collective centres, and through phone calling in October, November, and December 2019.

In-depth interviews on humanitarian needs were conducted on a monthly basis using a structured survey tool. After data collection was completed, all data was aggregated at settlement level, and settlements were assigned the modal or most credible response. When no consensus was found for a settlement, that settlement was not included in reporting.

Only counties with interview coverage of at least 5% of all settlements in a given month were included in analysis. Due to access and operational constraints, the specific settlements assessed within each county each month vary. In order to reduce the likelihood that variations in data are attributable to coverage differences, over time analyses were only conducted for counties with at least 70% consistent payam<sup>2</sup> coverage over the period.

Quantitative findings were triangulated using secondary sources of information.

More details of the methodology can be found in the [AoK ToRs](#).

1. To calculate the percentage of AoK coverage, the total number of settlements per county is based on OCHA settlement lists in addition to new settlements mapped by KIs reached each month.

2. Payam is the administrative unit below the county-level.

Health conditions have reportedly impacted settlements' ability to access enough food across the region.

- **Poor sanitation continued to be driven by limited access to clean water sources, poor handwashing practices, and low access to latrines.** Only 45% of assessed settlements across the region reported any individuals using a latrine. Of assessed settlements that reported not using a latrine, 62% reported that this was primarily due to lack of availability.
- **Tukuls remained the most commonly reported shelter type across the region** (93% of assessed settlements) with internally displaced persons (IDPs) housed primarily in tukuls or rakoobas. Of concern, several counties in the region reported a high proportion of IDPs living out in the open.
- **Access to non food items (NFIs) remained low;** 74% of assessed settlements reportedly did not receive any NFI distribution in the past three months.
- **Reported access to education remained the same as the previous reporting period,** with 81% of assessed settlements in December reporting an education facility within walking distance. Of those with no access, 39% of assessed settlements reported that this was due to a lack of facilities. School fees remained a key barrier to education for both boys and girls (22% of assessed settlements).

## Population Movement and Displacement

### Displacement due to flooding

In the last quarter of 2019, flooding continued to be reported as the main displacement driver of host community populations in Warrap State, with 75% of assessed settlements reporting flooding as the main reason for people leaving in December 2019. Critically, 100% of assessed settlements in Gogrial West county reported the same. Displacement motivations changed in Twic county compared to the previous reporting period. In September, 100% of assessed settlements reported that the host community were leaving assessed settlements due to flooding. However, in December 2019, assessed settlements overwhelmingly reported the lack of access to food as the main displacement driver (100%), likely attributed to damaged crops in the region as a result of the flooding.

There was no reported host community displacement within NBeG, perhaps due to the water levels receding in the last quarter of 2019. However, increased market reliance due to poor cultivation in NBeG, particularly in Aweil Town, has reportedly resulted in cross-border movements to Khartoum for casual labour opportunities.<sup>3</sup>

### Displacement due to conflict

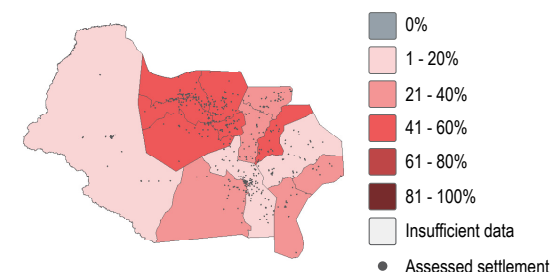
Although conflict has reportedly declined across the region, inter-communal violence (ICV) and perceived insecurity were reported as the highest push factors for IDP displacement

in assessed settlements in WBeG (43%) and Warrap (38%) in the last quarter of 2019.

IDPs most recently arrived to assessed settlements in Twic county reported leaving their former settlements due to insecurity and killing in December (75%, of assessed settlements that reported the presence of IDPs), a marginal decrease from the end of the previous reporting period (91% in September). Assessed settlements in Greater Tonj<sup>4</sup> reported a decline in recent large-scale displacement as a result of ICV and insecurity, from 58% of assessed settlements in September 2019 to 0% in December 2019. This could be due to conflict mediation in the area successfully reducing insecurity and ICV. Cattle migration in the beginning of the first quarter of 2020 could test whether this agreement will hold, due to historic tensions between cattle owners and agro-pastoralists in the region.<sup>5</sup>

Across WBeG, protection concerns continued to driver displacement. In Raja, 43% of settlements assessed in December 2019 reported that insecurity or killing was the main push factor for IDPs that had most recently left their former settlement. Although this represents a 27 percentage point decrease compared to the previous reporting period (70% of assessed settlements in September), perceived insecurity remains one of the most commonly reported motivations for displacement. FGD participants from Wau county in December 2019 reported that IDPs still continue to arrive in Wau Town to seek safety and access to food.<sup>6</sup> There was an increase in the proportion of assessed settlements reporting cattle raiding as the main

**Map 2: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting the presence of IDPs, December 2019**



reason the most recently arrived IDPs left their former settlements in Jur River County (14% in September to 43% in December 2019). Reports indicated that cattle migration has begun much earlier this season compared to previous years due to the earlier onset of dry season.

## Situation in Assessed Settlements

### Food Security and Livelihoods

The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food remained unchanged in Warrap in the fourth quarter of 2019 (54% in December 2019), whilst assessed settlements in NBeG and WBeG reported a 33 and 10 percentage point increase respectively (36% and 27% in December 2019); this could be attributed to the cultivation of late growth crops such as sorghum, one of the primary sources of livelihoods.<sup>7</sup>

Flooding has continued to impact access to food, because of damage to crops and increased market reliance. Of concern, 61% of assessed settlements with inadequate access to food in NBeG and 64% in Warrap reported

3. REACH KI, Aweil Town, December 2019

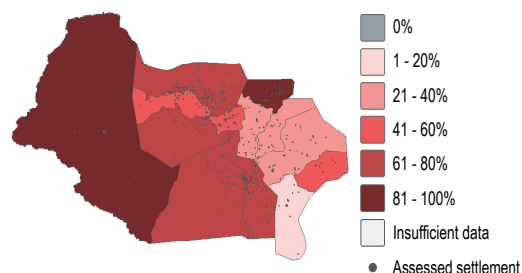
4. Greater Tonj in this report refers to Tonj North, Tonj East and Tonj South.

5. REACH KI, Wau Town, December 2019; FAO, UNDP, UNMISS Rule of Law Advisory Section: Joint Analysis on Cattle- and Migration-Related Conflict in the Tri-State Border Areas of Wau, Tonj, and Gogrial, South Sudan. October 2019

6. FGD with participants from Wau County, December 2019

7. FEWSNET Livelihood Zones, 2018.

**Map 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food in GBeG, December 2019**



that increases in cereal prices have affected households' ability to access enough food (an 18 percentage point increase in Warrap since the previous reporting period). This needs to be monitored in regions that are already heavily relying on markets as the main source of food. Heavy rain in October 2019 delayed food trucks on the Yirol-Rumbek road, and resulted in limited general food distribution (GFD) in the region in October and November 2019.

### Warrap State

Overall, 45% of assessed settlements in Warrap State in December reported adequate access to food, unchanged from the previous reporting period. Whilst the proportion of assessed settlements reportedly relying on cultivation as the main source of food remained the same (44% in December 2019), the proportion of assessed settlements relying on bought food across the state increased by 12 percentage points (33% in December), most likely due to flooding impacting cultivation yields. Market reliance was high in assessed settlements in Gogrial East (47%) and Gogrial West (46%),

which represents a 38 and 31 percentage point increase from September respectively.

Flooding was reportedly the main reason people could not access enough food in assessed settlements across northern Warrap state. Assessed settlements in December in Gogrial East (74%), Gogrial West (75%), and Twic (83%) all reported flooding as the main reason for inadequate access to food, which represents a reported 61, 66 and 64 percentage point increase respectively compared to September 2019. Average rainfall in Gogrial West county was 25mm above the average rainfall for the county<sup>8</sup> in October 2019, with reporting at 75mm.<sup>9</sup> There was similar reporting in Twic, with reported rainfall slightly under 75mm in October 2019, also 25mm above the average rainfall for the county.

The proportion of assessed settlements in Twic county reporting that most people consumed only one meal per day increased from 36% in September to 62% in December 2019, suggesting that access to food has not improved following expected seasonal harvests. Of further concern, 54% of assessed settlements reported hunger to be severe due to a lack of access to food, a 23 percentage point increase compared to the previous reporting period (31% in September). Forty-four percent (44%) of assessed settlements in Twic county reported that the arrival of IDPs had impacted access to enough food in December, a 14 percentage point increase since the previous reporting period. High displacement to the region coupled with reduced access to expected seasonal harvests due to flooding will

continue to be monitored into the dry season.

In Greater Tonj, in assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food, new arrivals were reported as the main contributing factor (44%, 11% and 29% of assessed settlements in Tonj East, Tonj North and Tonj South respectively). Access to healthcare (35%) and access to food (23%) were the main push factors for IDPs that had most recently left their former settlement. Crops being destroyed by pests was one of the most commonly reported reasons amongst assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food, with 22%, 21% and 14% of assessed settlements in Tonj East, North and South respectively in December 2019. This indicates potential capacity gaps for settlements to support the needs of newly displaced persons.

### Northern Bahr el Ghazal State

Access to food improved across NBeG throughout the reporting period with 36% of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food, a 35 percentage point increase since the previous reporting period (3% in September 2019, with 4 out of the 5 counties in Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 4 in August 2019).<sup>10</sup> Further, there was an improvement in the number of settlements reporting the consumption of only one meal per day, which decreased from 96% of assessed settlements in September to 58% in December 2019.

Although there have been regional improvements, the destruction of crops due to the flooding (reported by 37% of assessed

settlements in NBeG) perhaps resulted in a sustained use of markets as the main source of food (29%). Of assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food, Aweil Centre (48%), Aweil East (37%), Aweil South (41%) and Aweil West (46%) had the highest proportion of assessed settlements reporting floods destroying crops as the main reason in December 2019. While these proportions were equally high in the previous reporting period, a 27 percentage point increase was reported in Aweil Centre.

Higher dependence on markets implies that residents are likely to be less reliant on cultivation in the reporting period compared to previous years. Although there was a 35 percentage point increase in cultivation as the main source of food, these findings are atypical for this time of year as cultivation is historically one of the key livelihoods in the region. As cultivation was already low in September (reported as the main source of food for 11% of assessed settlements in NBeG), this raises

**Figure 1: Proportion of assessed settlements with inadequate access to food reporting main reasons people could not access enough food in GBeG, December 2019**

|                             | WBeG | Warrap | NBeG |
|-----------------------------|------|--------|------|
| Crops destroyed by flooding | 0%   | 45%    | 37%  |
| Crops destroyed by pests    | 1%   | 10%    | 34%  |
| High food prices            | 25%  | 3%     | 2%   |
| Short growing season        | 4%   | 4%     | 13%  |

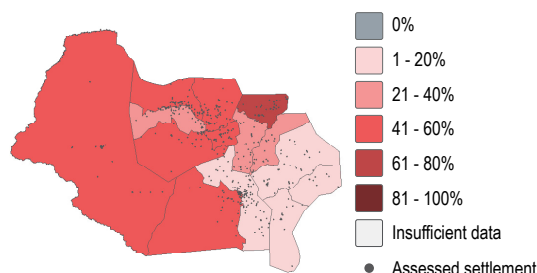
8. Average county rainfall is calculated using the mean rainfall between 2000 and 2018.

9. Early Warning Signs: <https://earlywarning.usgs.gov/fews/ewx/index.html?region=af> as of January 2020

10. South Sudan: IPC Snapshot, August 2019.



**Map 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food and did not engage in crops for sustenance as a livelihood activity in GBeG, December 2019**



concerns of the availability of food stocks to sustain assessed settlements through the lean season. Furthermore, in December 2019, 58% of assessed settlements reported residents eating wild foods as part of the main meal.

### Western Bahr el Ghazal State

There was a small increase in assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food across WBeG (27% in December 2019), though it remained the most food insecure state across the GBeG region. Of concern, despite cultivation season in the last quarter of 2019 and reporting that the state's food resources were largely unaffected by the flooding, only 40%, 28%, and 11% of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food in Wau, Jur River, and Raja counties respectively.

Jur River was the only county with a reported increase in cultivation as the main source of food (90% of assessed settlements in December, compared to 74% in September). In 2019 both short term and long term crops were planted in Jur River, which will reportedly

support consumption throughout the lean season.<sup>11</sup> In Jur River, 25% of assessed settlements that reported inadequate access to food reported that this was due to the theft of crops. Reportedly theft has been common from plots abandoned by host community that fled Jur River following the violence that started in April 2019; when households returned in the last quarter of 2019, some of their cultivation sites and storage space had been looted.<sup>12</sup>

Unchanged from the previous reporting period, 36% and 39% of assessed settlements in Wau and Raja respectively reported cultivation as the main source of food despite anticipated increases with the reduction of ICV. Of concern, there remained to be heavy reliance on bought foods in Wau (60% of assessed settlements) and Raja (50%) from the previous reporting period. Although there has been a decrease in violence across the state in 2019, FGD participants reported that there are still some areas around Wau where restricted access to land for cultivation and access to other resources due to localised violence has contributed to food insecurity. Participants reported that this situation has persisted for the past three years.<sup>13</sup>

The heavy reliance on bought foods is potentially problematic. Thirty-seven (37%) and 49% of assessed settlements in Raja and Wau respectively, where insufficient access to food was reported, claimed that this was due to high prices in December. This represents a 19 and 20 percentage point increase, respectively, compared to the previous reporting period (September 2019). High prices may be related

to brief road blocks in Abyei that prevented the flow of commodities from Khartoum<sup>14</sup> in early December. FGD participants reported that this resulted in some individuals travelling long distances to access other markets.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, across WBeG, assessed settlements reported casual labour as the main livelihood (98% in December 2019, unchanged from the previous reporting period), which means that a decrease in casual labour opportunities would likely have negative implications for access to food through markets.

### Coping strategies

Throughout the final quarter of 2019, food consumption coping strategies such as limiting portion sizes (74% of assessed settlements in December) and reducing meals (62%) were adopted to maximise food stocks. Furthermore, livelihood coping strategies such as borrowing food (47% of assessed settlements in December), borrowing money (27%), and begging (26%) were commonly adopted.

The majority of assessed settlements across the region reportedly employed food consumption coping strategies in December 2019, which is a key indicator of food insecurity. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of assessed settlements in NBeG and 50% in WBeG reported residents reducing the number of meals to extend food stocks. Furthermore, 82% of assessed settlements in Warrap reported the use of the same coping strategy, a 28 percentage point increase since the previous reporting period (September 2019). This is indicative of the impact of flooding damage to crops (see FSL

section) as well as localised insecurity in the region limiting access to food.

Adults skipping meals remained the main reported consumption coping strategy across the region (37% in December 2019) since the previous reporting period, with high reporting in NBeG (41%) and WBeG (24%). Furthermore, 74% of assessed settlements in WBeG reported that most mothers in the community changed how they fed or prepared food for their children due to shocks in the community. The use of this coping mechanism was reportedly high in Wau County (91%), with 78% and 62% reporting this in Jur River and Raja respectively.

Livelihood coping strategies were commonly adopted across the GBeG region. Consuming seed stocks (54%), borrowing food (47%) and borrowing money (27%) were the most commonly reported strategies. The consumption of seed stocks raises concerns that households were not able to plant in the most recent season, or have already consumed seed stocks for the next season, the latter perhaps amongst displaced households that did not have access to land to plant. Further, at the county level, 21% of assessed settlements in Wau and 11% in Jur River reported displacement as the primary means to find new sources of food. It should be flagged that 49% of assessed settlements in Raja and 53% in Wau reported the adoption of borrowing money as a key livelihood coping strategy; these are two counties that are very reliant on bought food as the main source of food and casual labour as a primary income. FGD participants from Wau reported that borrowing

11. FGD with participants from Jur River, November 2019

12. REACH KI, Jur River, December 2019

13. Ibid

14. REACH KI, Wau Town, December 2019

15. Ibid.

**Figure 2: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting water borne diseases as the main health concern in the GBeG region, December 2019**



from friends and relatives remains a prominent coping strategy, and that there is an awareness that the majority of networks have diminished stocks to share.<sup>16</sup> This raises concerns around community resilience to future shocks.

### Protection

Insecurity and gender-based violence (GBV) characterised protection concerns across the region. Only 24% of assessed settlements reported feeling safe most of the time.

Greater Tonj had the highest proportion of assessed settlements reporting most residents feeling unsafe most of the time (85%). This is likely due to localised violence in the region. In Tonj North, there was a 33 percentage point increase in the proportion of assessed settlements that reported any incident of conflict that resulted in the death of a civilian (44% in December 2019); this can most likely be attributed to cattle raiding in Meshra Ashol in December, which resulted in fatalities. This region has been the primary destination for cattle keepers who have been refused entry into Jur River and Wau due to the ban on weapon-holding, and could see increased violence in the coming months.

The proportion of assessed settlements

reporting fatalities due to conflict remained low in Wau and Raja, with 0% and 6% of assessed settlements reporting this respectively in December 2019. However, only 34% and 36% of assessed settlements in Wau and Raja respectively reported feeling safe most of the time. This may be attributable to negative perceptions of security caused by violence in previous years. In Jur River, only 5% of assessed settlements reported feeling safe most of the time, with 40% of assessed settlements in December 2019 reporting incidences of looting in the previous month.

Unchanged from the previous reporting period, NBeG reported the highest proportion of assessed settlements with domestic violence as the main protection concern for both women (52% of assessed settlements) and girls (44%). Domestic violence was also reportedly a major concern across NBeG for boys (24% of assessed settlements). Further, 32% of assessed settlements in NBeG reported that early marriage was the main protection concern for girls, with particularly high reporting in Aweil North (40%) and Aweil East (35%). Early marriage can be a coping strategy adopted by households looking to receive a bride-price during periods of food insecurity, especially in regions with cattle ownership.

### Health

Malaria remained the primary reported health issue across all three states, unchanged from the previous reporting period (35% of assessed settlements) with more common reporting in NBeG (38%) and Warrap (45%) compared to

WBeG (25%). Higher reporting of malaria in the aforementioned states could be due to stagnant water from the flooding. Assessed settlements across NBeG and northern Warrap that were most affected by the flooding had the highest rates of malaria (Twic, Gogrial East and Gogrial West). Of note, the reporting of malaria as the main health problem in assessed settlements in Gogrial West increased by 23 percentage points during a period of expect decline (75% of assessed settlements in December).

Waterborne diseases remained the second most commonly reported health problem in assessed settlements in GBeG (21%), which may be linked to the continued consumption of unsafe water sources. This issue was highly reported in Aweil East (33% of assessed settlements, a 19 percentage point increase since September 2019), and Tonj East (33%). In WBeG, despite being unaffected by the flooding, 36% of assessed settlements reported that waterborne diseases were the most common health issue. Please see the WASH section for more details.

Furthermore, 33% of assessed settlements in NBeG and 27% in Warrap (especially flood affected areas of Warrap such as Twic county (69%) and Gogrial West county (36%)) reported that health had a large impact on the ability to access enough food.<sup>17</sup>

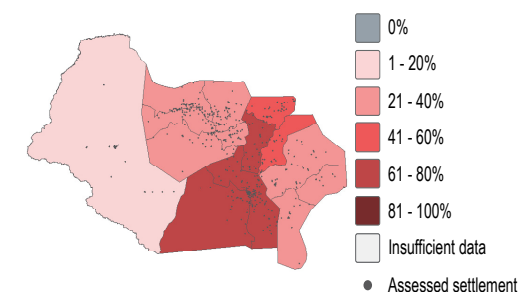
### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Access to functional boreholes did not change from the previous reporting period. Seventy-six percent (76%) of assessed settlements across GBeG reported access to at least one functional borehole in December 2019, with high reporting

in NBeG (69%) and Warrap (56%). Twenty-percent (20%) of assessed settlements across GBeG reported that a pond, river or swamp was their main water source, perhaps explaining why waterborne diseases remained the second most common health problem in GBeG (see health section).

WBeG had the poorest reported access to protected water sources, with assessed settlements reportedly using a pond (13%), river (7%) or swamp (1%) as their main source of water. Findings from Jur River raised concerns, as 25% of assessed settlements reported that a river and 10% reported that a pond was the main source in December 2019. Further, 13% of assessed settlements in the state reported donkey carts as the main source of water. Whilst donkey carts are a readily-available source of water in Wau County (it was reported to be the main water source in 43% of settlements), it typically costs 40-50SSP per jerry can,<sup>18</sup> which may limit access to sufficient water for those unable to afford. Furthermore, 25% of assessed settlements in Wau County

**Map 5: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting drinking from an unprotected<sup>19</sup> water source in GBeG, December 2019**



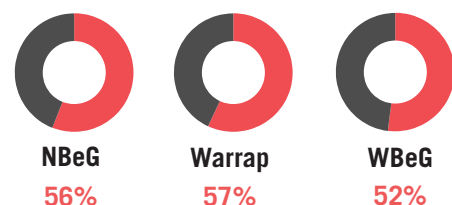
16. FGD with participants from Wau County, Cathedral Collective Settlement, November 2019.

17. Amongst settlements already reporting inadequate access to food.

18. REACH KI, Wau Town, November 2019.

19. An unprotected water source included a dug well, an unprotected spring, surface water (such as a river, lake, pond, stream or irrigated channel).

**Figure 3: Reported proportion of assessed settlements not using latrines in GBeG, December 2019**



reported a reliance on wells as one of the main sources of water. FGD participants raised concerns of the use of wells as many have been reportedly contaminated since the beginning of the conflict, and individuals are therefore reliant on donkey carts and a few hand pump boreholes available in town.

Distances to safe water sources reportedly continued to limit access to water compared to the previous reporting period, with 22% of assessed settlements in GBeG reporting a full round trip to a water source between 1 hour to half a day. Long trips to water sources raises concerns not only because they may lead to insufficient access to water, but also because the time allocated to this task detracts from a household's ability to engage in other vital livelihood activities. Access reportedly worsened in Aweil East, with 29% of assessed settlements reporting that the trip took between 30 minutes to half a day, a 13 percentage point increase from the previous reporting period. This suggests that the flooding continued to impact water access. Assessed settlements in Tonj East also reported that distances to water sources were far in the last quarter of 2019, with 67% - the highest reporting

in the region – reporting in December that a full round trip of water collection took one hour to half a day.

Protection concerns reportedly continued to limit access to preferred water sources in 33% of assessed settlements in Warrap State in December 2019. Reporting did change at the county level. The number of settlements in Gogrial West where protection concerns limited access to water decreased by 31 percentage points (7% in December) compared to the previous quarter, most likely due to receding flood levels enabling quicker access to water points. However, the situation reportedly worsened in Tonj North, where 63% of assessed settlements reported that residents were limited to accessing their preferred water sources because they feared for their safety. (compared to 28% in September). This increase is mostly likely due to increased rates of cattle raiding in the region in December, with further tensions on the border with Rumbek North exacerbating fears of violence. Women and girls reportedly hold the primary responsibility in households of collecting water in most households, raising protection concerns for this demographic.

Access to sanitation services reportedly remained low, with only 45% of assessed settlements across the region reporting that any individuals used latrines (44%, 43% and 48% in NBeG, Warrap, and WBeG respectively). Furthermore, 62% of assessed settlements across GBeG reported that the main reason residents could not use a latrine was because there were none available. The absence of latrines was most common in Jur River (85%

of assessed settlements). NBeG reported the highest proportion of assessed settlements reporting less than half of the population used latrines (72%), a 15 percentage point increase from the previous period. This may be one of the factors contributing to the reported prevalence of waterborne diseases in the area (see health section above).

Poor sanitation due to a lack of basic hygiene practices such as handwashing remained a concern across the region, with only 25% of assessed settlements across GBeG reporting residents washing their hands with soap, as was the case in the previous reporting period. A further 35% of settlements reported that residents only used water, and 24% reported that residents used ash. The lack of necessary hygiene practice coupled with low reported use of latrines raises serious health concerns in the region. The situation has reportedly remained unchanged since the second quarter of 2019, which highlights the gap in humanitarian planning in this region.

### Shelter and Non-Food Items

Tukuls reportedly remained the primary shelter type in 93% of assessed settlements in December 2019. Forty-percent (40%) of assessed settlements in Wau and 11% in Raja reported permanent shelters as the main shelter type, indicative of the urban spaces (Wau Town and Raja Town) where permanent shelters are more common. This is therefore not representative of the whole county.

IDPs remained primarily housed in tukuls or rakoobas (38% and 45% respectively),

similar to the previous reporting period. Across the region, 85% of assessed settlements in December that reported the presence of IDPs reported that IDPs lived with host community households. There are concerns of IDPs' access to shelter in Raja County, as many have reportedly occupied land with no housing land or property (HLP) paperwork.<sup>20</sup> This is of particular concern due to an anticipation of increased returns to the region, which could cause tension. FGD participants reported that a lack of shelter availability in Raja Town was a major issue.<sup>21</sup>

Of concern, there continued to be a high proportion assessed settlements reporting the presence of IDPs in Gogrial East, Gogrial West, and Twic (43% across the region in December) with IDPs reportedly living out in the open (55%, 10%, and 50% respectively). Whilst this proportion has decreased in Gogrial West since the end of the previous reporting period (37%), it increased by 28 percentage points in Twic. Furthermore, this raises protection concerns in the region because these counties have been heavily affected by the flooding. Twenty-one percent (21%) of assessed settlements in Gogrial East, 11% in Gogrial West and 9% in Twic reported that flooding had caused people to leave their home to sleep somewhere else.

Assessed settlements in most regions reported that residents had not received an NFI distribution in the past three months (74%), unchanged from the previous reporting period. Reported NFI needs for items such as blankets increased following the previous reporting period, with 30% of assessed settlements

20. REACH KI in Raja Town, December 2019

21. FGD with participants from Raja, Wau PoC, December 2019.



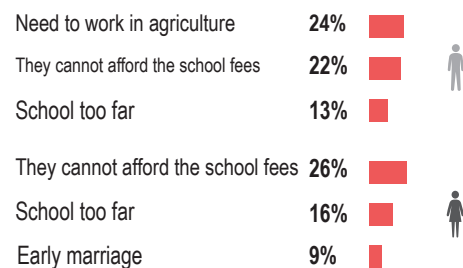
across the region reporting this as the greatest need in December. Unchanged from the previous reporting period, plastic sheets (28%) and sleeping mats (6%) were still in demand, perhaps due to a lack of alternative means to access NFIs other than distributions, of which there have reportedly been few. Due to seasonal changes in the prevalence of mosquitos, the need for mosquito nets slightly decreased compared to the previous reporting period by 13 percentage points (10% in December).

## Education

Access to education remained the same compared to the previous reporting period, with 81% of assessed settlements in December reporting that there was at least one educational facility within walking distance. Of assessed settlements that reported no access to education facilities, 39% reported that this was due to the lack of facilities, a 13 percentage point increase from the previous reporting period.

Although reporting did not change at the state level, reported access to education decreased in Gogrial West (94% of assessed settlements in September to 79% in December). Access

**Figure 4: Main reasons why boys and girls were not attending school in GBeG, September 2019.**



to education reportedly improved somewhat in Jur River (18% in September to 30% in December), mostly likely as reduced conflict in the region enabled access. Of the assessed settlements in Jur River that reported a lack of access to any education facilities (69%), the most commonly reported reasons were the lack of facilities (36%), and that teachers had fled (20%), perhaps due to insecurity in Kawajina and Rocrocdong payams.

Girls' attendance in schools remained low, with only 29% of assessed settlements reporting that more than half the population of school age girls (aged 6-17 years) were attending school. In assessed settlements that reported that no girls were attending school, school fees (24%), the distance to the education facility (15%), early pregnancies (10%) and early marriage (8%) were the most commonly reported reasons for non-attendance. The latter two reasons are indicative of two key protection concerns impacting girls across the region (see protection section). Although the proportion of settlements across the region where no girls attend school was low (12%), reporting was particularly high in WBeG (46%). Of concern, 69% of assessed settlements in Jur River county reported that no girls were attending school, primarily due to early marriage (35%) and the need to work in agriculture (22%) and in the household (22%). These indicators could indicate an increased use of livelihood coping strategies, which may be linked to depleting resources caused by recent conflict in the area.

The proportion of settlements where boys reportedly attend school also remained

unchanged (38%), which is comparatively higher than female attendance. Non-attendance rates were similar to girls. Fees remained to be the primary reason across the region that boys could not attend school (in 24%, 26% and 31% of assessed settlements in NBeG, Warrap and WBeG respectively. Assessed settlements in Jur River also reported the highest levels of non-attendance (69%) with the need to engage in agriculture (67%) as the main reason.

## Conclusion

Flooding across parts of the region has reduced access to food and livelihoods across the region. Consequently, this raises concerns of the populations' capacity to access food throughout the coming dry season.

Access to WASH facilities remains a key concern across the region, unchanged from the beginning of 2019, due to the impact of issues such as waterborne diseases on ability to engage with livelihoods. Furthermore, perceived insecurity, even in regions with reportedly reduced or no conflict, continues to characterise barriers to food and services. It is likely that these conditions will continue to be exacerbated in the first quarter of 2020 and contribute to increased humanitarian needs.

## About REACH Initiative

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

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