

Situation Overview: Greater Bahr el Ghazal, South Sudan

October - December 2018

REACH An initiative of
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Introduction

Ongoing insecurity in Western Bahr el Ghazal (WBeG) State and Greater Tonj Area (GTA)¹ and environmental shocks in Northern Bahr el Ghazal (NBeG) State and GTA continued to drive food insecurity and limited access to resources for settlements in the Greater Bahr el Ghazal (GBeG) region from October to December 2018. Despite the arrival of the seasonal harvest, minimal crop yields in some areas due to conflict and erratic rainfall resulted in low reported access to food in assessed settlements in the GBeG region and restricted access to services.

REACH has been assessing hard-to-reach areas in WBeG since April 2017, NBeG since March 2018, GTA since January 2018 and Gogrial East County since November 2018. The data was collected through key informant interviews (KIIs) carried out on a daily basis with key informants (KIs) from settlements in Jur River, Wau, and Raja counties in WBeG

of key informant interviews conducted: **1,117**

WBeG **597**
NBeG **373**
GTA+GE² **147**

of assessed settlements covered: **864**

WBeG **373**
NBeG **348**
GTA+GE **143**

State; Aweil North, East, South, Centre and West counties in NBeG State; and Gogrial East and Tonj North, South and East counties in Warrap State. This is the first quarter REACH collected data on Gogrial East County, Warrap State. In the absence of a baseline for Gogrial East County, only data reflecting key concerns, such as food security and livelihoods (FSL), displacement and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), are reported in this overview.

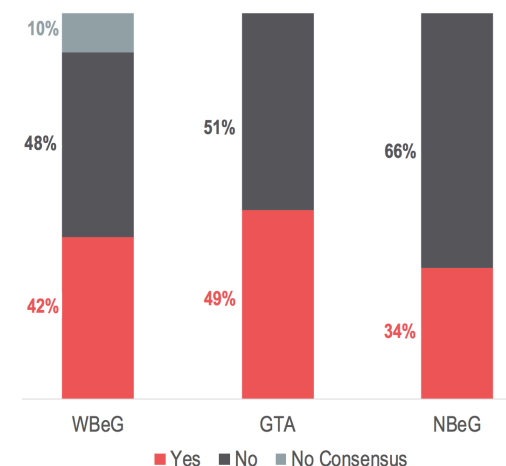
In the fourth quarter of 2018, REACH interviewed 1,117 KIs across 864 settlements in 12 counties in the GBeG region. To ensure

an up to date understanding of current humanitarian conditions and displacement dynamics in settlements across WBeG State, NBeG State, GTA and Gogrial East County, Warrap State, REACH interviewed KIs who were new arrivals in either IDP sites or settlements from the area of knowledge or KIs who were in contact with an individual from the assessed settlement within the last month.

To triangulate the findings, REACH conducted 4 Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL) focus group discussions (FGDs) and 2 Participatory Cattle Migration mapping FGDs. Additionally, 5 key informants from humanitarian organisations were also consulted during the quarter. The findings were supplemented with secondary data sources and past REACH assessments of hard-to-reach areas.

This situation overview evaluates changes in humanitarian needs and displacement dynamics across the GBeG region from October to December 2018. The first section analyses

Figure 1: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting IDPs present in settlements, WBeG, GTA and NBeG, December 2018

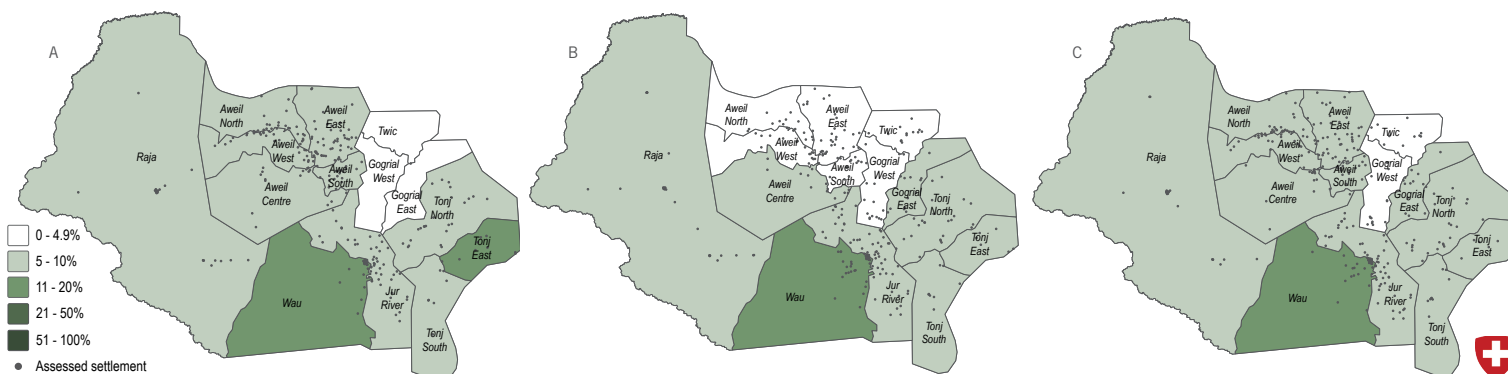


displacement and population movement and the second section addresses access to food and basic services for both internally displaced persons (IDPs) and local populations in assessed settlements in the GBeG region.

Population Movement and Displacement

Renewed conflict and insecurity triggered forced displacement and unseasonal population movement in WBeG State, GTA and Gogrial East County between October and December 2018, while water stress in parts of WBeG and NBeG states caused population movement to riverine areas. Flooding in NBeG State

Map 1: REACH assessment coverage of the GBeG region, October (A), November (B) and December 2018 (C)



1. Greater Tonj Area (GTA) includes Tonj North County, Tonj East County and Tonj South County

2. Gogrial East County



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METHODOLOGY

To provide an overview of the situation in hard-to-reach areas of Western Bahr el Ghazal (WBeG) State, Northern Bahr el Ghazal (NBeG) State, and the Greater Tonj area and Gogrial East County in Warrap State, REACH used primary data provided by key informants who have recently arrived, or receive regular information, from a location or "Area of Knowledge" (AoK).

Information for this report was collected from key informants in the Wau PoC site, the five collective centres in Wau town, Aweil town, and through remote phone calling to key informants in Warrap State in October, November and December 2018.

In-depth interviews were conducted with selected participants using a standardised survey tool comprising questions on displacement trends, population needs, and access to basic services.

After data collection was completed, all data was examined at the settlement level, and settlements were assigned the modal response. When KIs reporting on the same settlement reported differing answers for an indicator and there was no consensus across the majority of KIs, then the responses were deleted to maintain data quality and reported as no consensus (NC). When KIs reported not knowing an answer or preferring not to answer, this was also reported as NC. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and geospatial analysis.

To assure the comparability of findings, trends over time are only reported for quarters in which 70% or more of the same payams were assessed during data collection.

Data reflects findings from October to December for WBeG State and Greater Tonj Area. For NBeG State findings from October and December are reported and for Gogrial East County only December.

and GTA also resulted in minor displacement and early labour migration in select counties.

The proportion of assessed settlements in WBeG State and GTA reporting the presence of IDPs remained consistent between the third and fourth quarter, while NBeG saw a decrease in the proportion of assessed settlements reporting IDPs living in the community, from 47% in October to 34% in December (Figure 1).

Displacement in the Greater Baggari area, Wau County, WBeG State

In early October 2018, renewed insecurity in the Greater Baggari area triggered forced displacement to Wau town and settlements around Wau town. The insecurity in the Greater Baggari area has been ongoing since June 2018, causing displacement primarily to remote areas south and southwest of Wau town. In December, 38% of assessed settlements that reported an

IDP presence in their community in Wau County reported that the most recent IDPs had arrived in the last 3 months, and 62% reported they had arrived since July 2018, just after the conflict began. See the REACH July-September 2018 Situation Overview for more information on displacement in the Greater Baggari area.

Populations reportedly remained displaced in Wau County in December; 60% of assessed settlements reported that half or less than half of the original population remains in the settlement and the proportion of assessed settlements that reported the presence of IDPs in their community in December (55%) was consistent

with September (47%).

Returns in WBeG State

By the end of the fourth quarter, Wau, Jur River and Raja counties began to see the return of some IDPs.³ In December, 78% of assessed settlements in WBeG State reported that former IDPs had returned after being displaced in another area of South Sudan. Congruently, IDPs reportedly made up a smaller proportion of the host communities in assessed settlements in Wau County in December, also suggesting some IDPs have likely started returning to their settlements. In September, 38% of assessed settlements reported that IDPs made up half or more of the community, which slightly decreased to 27% in December 2018 in Wau County.

Map 2: Displacement and population movement in Greater Bahr el Ghazal, October-December 2018

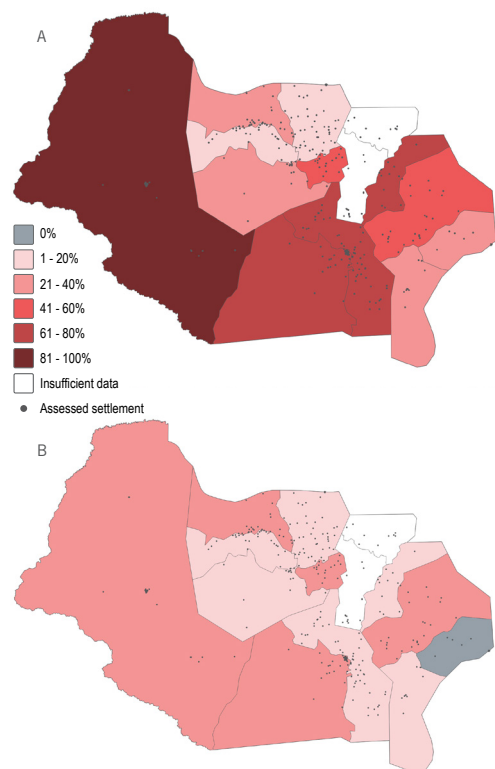


3. Humanitarian Coordination Forum meeting minutes, December 2018

4. This is specifically the head-counted population. The registered IDP population is 35,496 individuals

5. DTM, monthly displacement population figures

Map 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting the presence of returnees in the settlement (A); Proportion of assessed settlements reporting returnee arrival in the last 3 months (B), December 2018



The number of IDPs in the Protection of Civilian Adjacent Area (PoCAA) site and IDP collective centres also continued to decrease in size in the fourth quarter, with 15,272 individuals head-counted in the PoCAA in December.^{4,5} Following the signing of the revitalised peace agreement, International Organisation for Migration's (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) carried out an IDP Intentions survey, finding that 40% of HHs in the PoC site intend to leave the PoC in the next 3

months, while 44% of households (HHs) intend to remain there.⁶ However, areas of return are reportedly still not entirely suited for population return; 74% of respondents that own houses or land reported their property was destroyed during conflict.⁷

Water stress migration in WBeG and NBeG states

Water stress in the Greater Baggari area of Wau County, WBeG State as well as in Aweil East County, NBeG State reportedly caused population movement towards riverine areas in December 2018 (dry season).⁸ Broken boreholes and the far distance to natural water sources in the dry season reportedly drove secondary displacement of IDPs in the Greater Baggari area. IDPs moved east from the rural areas southwest of Wau town where they were previously displaced by conflict to the banks of River Jur to access water (See Map 2).⁹

In the highlands of Aweil East County, NBeG State, the northern portion of the county, there is reportedly a seasonal inaccessibility of water for HHs from December to May.¹⁰ A KI from a humanitarian organisation in Aweil town reported that some HHs seasonally migrate from the highland areas to the Akuem Kou, Ajaac and Wardit areas of the river between December and May, due to the dried up groundwater (Map 2). In December 2018, there were also reportedly dysfunctional boreholes which further decreased access to water, driving water stress migration.¹¹

Displacement due to flooding in NBeG State and GTA

Excessive rainfall and the flooding of rivers in north-western NBeG State and GTA reportedly caused population movement during the fourth quarter.

The proportion of assessed settlements reporting that flooding had caused HHs to leave their home in NBeG State more than tripled from 15% in August to 53% in October and more than doubled in GTA from 24% in August to 58% in October. In NBeG State, there was 34% more rainfall (by millimetre) in mid-August than the 20-year-average and in GTA, rainfall exceeded the 20-year-average by 40% in early September,¹² causing flooding and consequent displacement from shelters, most prevalently reported by assessed settlements in Tonj South (86%), Aweil East (66%), and Aweil North (58%) counties.

In Aweil North County, flooding caused severe damage to the 2018 cultivation, causing both working-age males and entire HHs to travel north to Sudan in search of casual labour opportunities and access to food given the lost harvest.¹³ For more information, see the Food Security and Livelihoods section of this Situation Overview.

Displacement in GTA and Gogrial East County, Warrap State

Escalation in cattle raids and insecurity in GTA in December 2018 drove population movement in the area. Cattle raids seasonally become more frequent in December in GTA due to the seasonal cattle migration from home settlements to toichs (swamps) for cattle grazing during the dry season, at which point cattle keepers from multiple counties and states congregate.

Episodic cattle raids and insecurity in Tonj North and East counties, primarily near the toich along the border with Unity State caused unseasonal population movement and minor displacement west primarily to Warrap town, Akop and Theit in December 2018. KIs from Warrap State reported that such insecurity is likely to escalate in the following dry season months.

In Tonj South in December, a cattle raid in neighbouring Cueibet County, Lakes State involving cattle keepers from Tonj South resulted in the unseasonal return of cattle keepers and displacement of some HHs along to border with Cueibet County north-west to Tonj town (Map 2).¹⁴

In Gogrial East County, insecurity in Mangok drove displacement southeast to Liet-Nhom, the capital of Gogrial East County (Map 2). Given repeated waves of displacement in Gogrial East County in 2017 as well as in years prior, the new episodes of displacement reportedly further exhaust host community resources and increase vulnerability, which could prevent displaced HHs from cultivating in 2019.¹⁵

Situation in Assessed Settlements

Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL)

Adequate access to food remained low in the GBeG region during the fourth quarter, with reported adequate access to food in assessed settlements remaining consistently low region-wide. October to December is the harvest and post-harvest period in the GBeG region; however, despite the expected seasonal access to crop yields, food security did not improve. In NBeG State and GTA, environmental shocks

6., 7. International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Wau PoCAA Intention-Perception Survey, December 2018

8., 9. Reported by a humanitarian organisation that did a recent assessment in area

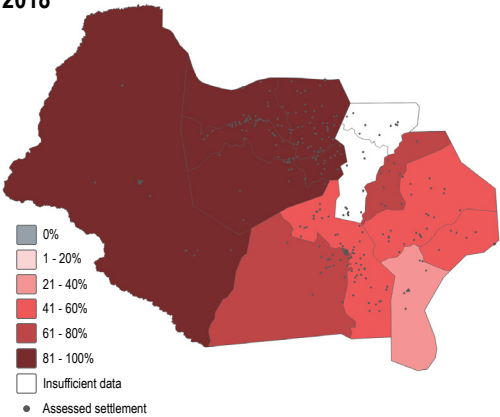
10. Reported by a KI from the region

11. Reported during a coordination meeting with humanitarian partners in NBeG State

12. World Food Programme Vulnerability Assessment Mapping, Dataviz, Rainfall, December 2018

13. REACH, Aweil North County FSL Brief, December 2018

Map 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food, December 2018



reportedly limited access to food, while in WBeG State, insecurity and land access issues reportedly restricted access to enough food.

Western Bahr el Ghazal State

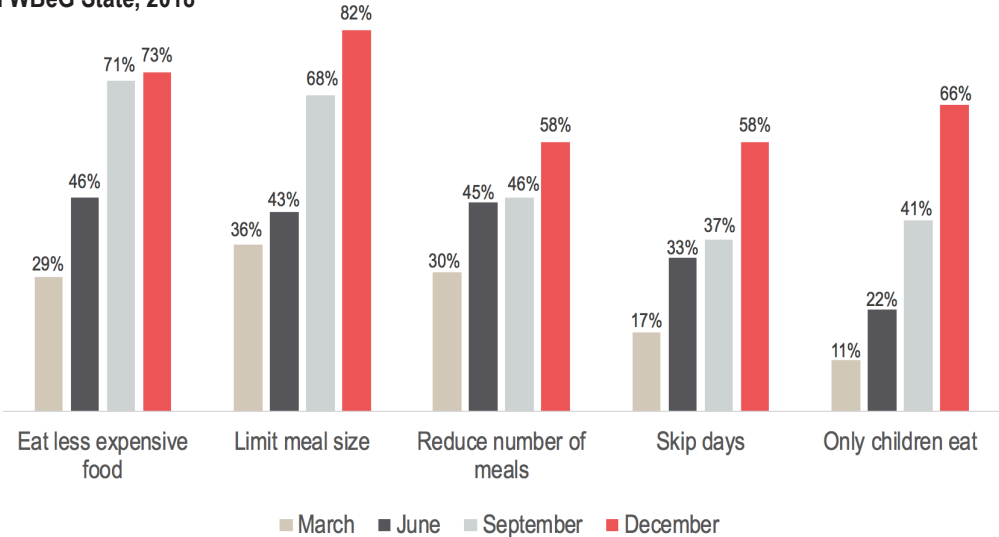
Ongoing insecurity in WBeG State continued to negatively impact access to food in the fourth quarter; only 27% of assessed settlements reported having adequate access to food in December state-wide.

Clashes in October during the harvest season in the Greater Baggari area of Wau County limited harvest yields, increased perceived insecurity and restricted population movement, decreasing access to food. Consequently, by December, 20% of assessed settlements that reported not having enough food in Wau County reported the reason for having inadequate access to food was because their crops were destroyed by fighting and 29% reported it was due to it being unsafe to travel to cultivation land. While agriculture is traditionally the key livelihood source in WBeG State, only 11% of assessed settlements in Wau

County reported crops for sustenance as a main livelihood activity in October, a considerable decrease from the 42% reported in September, likely driven by the insecurity and poor harvest.

In Raja County, only 3% of assessed settlements reported having adequate access to food in December, the lowest reported in the state. FGD participants from Raja County reported that the insecurity in both 2016 and 2017 caused many rural HHs to move from conflict-affected areas to Raja town, where they no longer had access to land, preventing full cultivation. In December, 29% of assessed settlements in Raja County that reported they did not have adequate access to food reported that people could not access enough food due to the lack of access to land for cultivation. Consequently, most HHs reportedly exhausted their harvests within 2 months, driving some families to move to Wau town, NBeG State or Sudan in search of food.¹⁶ The limited harvest caused high

Figure 2: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting consumption-based coping mechanisms in WBeG State, 2018



14. Reported by a KI from Tonj South County
15. Reported by a KI from a humanitarian organisation working in the region
16. Reported by FGD participants from Raja County, WBeG State

market reliance in Raja County, where 55% of assessed settlements reported relying on purchasing their food as their main food source.

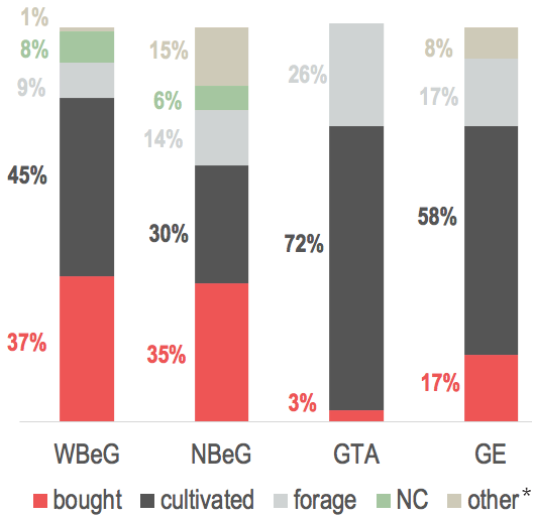
To cope with major food gaps, assessed settlements in WBeG State increasingly relied on consumption-based coping strategies in the fourth quarter, with over half (58%) of assessed settlements reporting people were skipping entire days of eating in December (Figure 2). This is concerning given it is the post-harvest period when food stores should be at their greatest.

Northern Bahr el Ghazal State

Heavy rains, flooding and pest infestations in August and September resulted in minimal crop yields in 2018 in NBeG State, causing inadequate access to food state-wide during the fourth quarter. Reported adequate access to food in assessed settlements in NBeG State was the lowest in the region in December.

Following the harvest in September and

Figure 3. Reported main source of food in assessed settlements in the GBeG region, December 2018

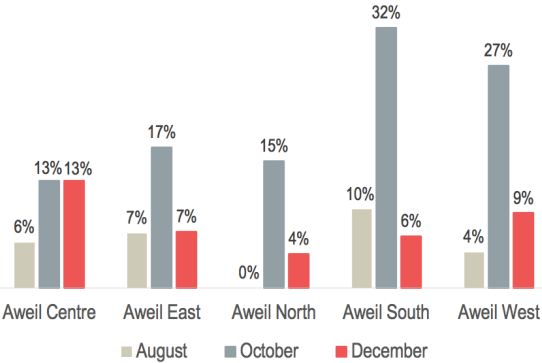


October, the proportion of assessed settlements in NBeG State reporting having adequate access to food expectedly increased from 5% in August to 20% in October (Figure 4). However, by December, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting having adequate access to food dropped back down to 7%. This is likely indicative of the early exhaustion of crop yields due to the series of environmental shocks during the harvest season. While 44% of assessed settlements reported cultivation was most people's primary source of food in October during the harvest, this decreased to 30% by December. In its place, purchasing food became the most common food source (Figure 3).

Likely due to the decrease supply and increased demand for food, market prices continued to rise, reported by 93% of assessed settlements in December, reducing HH purchasing power and consequently restricting access to food

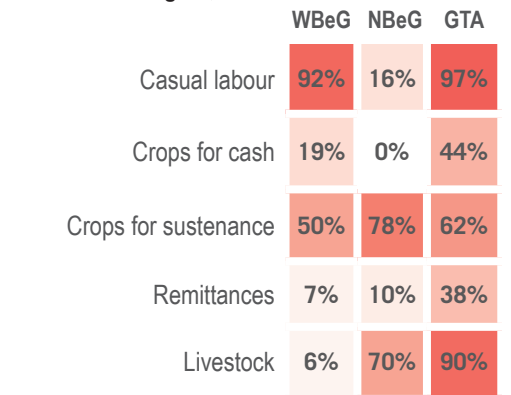
* "Other" can include food sources such as livestock, bartering, fishing and humanitarian food assistance

Figure 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food in NBeG State by county, August, October, December 2018¹⁴



in assessed settlements. Over half (51%) of assessed settlements reported that the cereal price increases had a large impact on the ability for most people to access enough food. With the growing unrest in Sudan, market prices are projected to continue to rise, given that some trade routes have reportedly been obstructed causing a decrease in supply to the markets, which will likely continue to negatively impact adequate access to food.¹⁷

Figure 5: Primary reported livelihood activities in the GBeG region, December 2018



HHs in assessed settlements reportedly relied heavily on consuming wild foods in December. Seventy-four percent (74%) of assessed settlements reported people consume wild foods as part of their main meals, with 48% of assessed settlements reporting that wild foods comprised half or more of main meals for most people in the community. While wild food consumption remains high in the state, a decreasing proportion of assessed settlements reported that people are consuming wild foods that make them sick, dropping from 53% in October to 36% in December, likely due to the type of seasonally available wild foods and the access to crop yields in some settlements.

NBeG State is predominantly agro-pastoral;^{18,19} access to livelihoods reportedly decreased during the fourth quarter. In December 34% of assessed settlements reported that most people in the settlement own cattle, while 70% reported livestock as a primary livelihood activity and 60% reported having access to land for cultivation, while 78% reported cultivation as their main livelihood activity. Only 4% of assessed settlements reported that most people have access to enough tools and seeds for cultivation in NBeG State in December, which is concerning given that land preparation will begin in the coming months for the 2019 cultivation. The reported lack of seeds and tools for upcoming cultivation is further exacerbated by HHs consuming seeds to cope with food consumption gaps, reported by 76% of

assessed settlements in December.

The use of livelihood coping strategies in Aweil North County was particularly high. In December, there was excessive and early reliance on livelihood coping strategies due to the poor harvest from flooding. Such coping mechanisms included collecting firewood, reported by 71% of assessed settlements, and cutting grass, which over-taxed natural resources and flooded the market. This caused the value of firewood to decrease considerably and reduced purchasing power²⁰ in a county where 38% of assessed settlements reported most people buy their food.

Greater Tonj area and Gogrial East County, Warrap State

Reported adequate access to food remained consistent in GTA between the third and fourth quarters, with 59% of assessed settlements reporting adequate access in December. In Gogrial East County 33% of assessed settlements reported having adequate access to food in December.²⁰ The majority of assessed

Map 5: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting hunger as severe or the worst it could be, December 2018

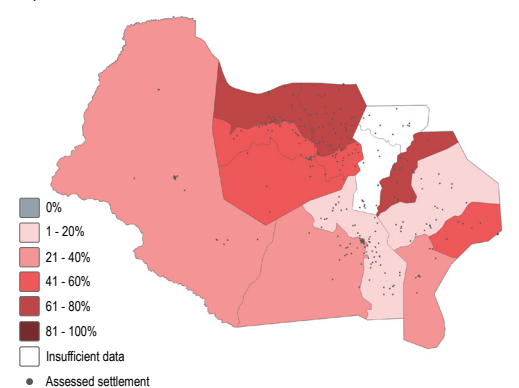
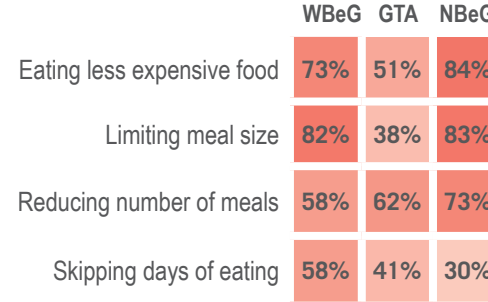


Figure 6: Primary reported consumption-based coping mechanisms in the GBeG region, December 2018



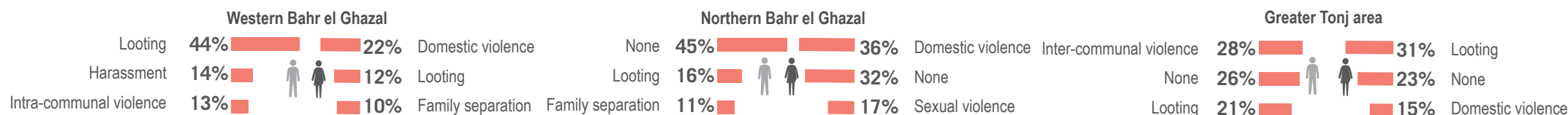
settlements in GTA (72%) and Gogrial East County (58%) reported that people were still relying on crop yields as their primary food source at the end of the fourth quarter, indicating harvests have not yet exhausted in the area. Additionally, the ongoing humanitarian food assistance (HFA) in GTA likely contributes to the higher reported access to enough food; 44% of assessed settlements in Tonj South and 33% in Tonj East reported accessing HFA in the last three months in December.

However, erratic rainfall and environmental shocks during the cultivation and harvest seasons negatively impacted harvest sizes in the area. Over a third (38%) of assessed settlements in GTA that reported having inadequate access to food reported that the lack of rains had hindered access to enough food, while 19% reported the short growing season due to the late rains caused the lack of adequate access to food in communities in GTA. In Gogrial East County, 63% of assessed settlements that reported they lack access to enough food reported environmental-based

17. REACH, Aweil North County FSL Brief, December 2018

18. In NBeG State, August is pre-harvest season, October is harvest season and December is post-harvest season
19. FEWSNET, Livelihoods Zone Map and Descriptions for South Sudan (Updated), August 2018

Figure 7: Most commonly reported protection concerns for men and women in the GBeG region, December 2018



factors (flooding, lack of rain or a short growing season) as the main barrier to accessing enough food while a quarter (25%) reported that crops were destroyed during conflict. Perceived insecurity due to inter-communal conflict in Gogrial East County interrupted cultivation in both 2017 and 2018, and continues to negatively impact access to food.²¹

To cope with the food consumption gaps in December, assessed settlements in GTA primarily reported people were reducing the number of meals they consume per day (62%). The proportion of assessed settlements that reported consuming only one meal per day increased from 69% in October to 81% in December 2018. Assessed settlements also reported relying on purchasing less expensive food (51%) and restricting portion sizes (38%) in December.

While livestock is one of the most common livelihood activities in GTA, reported by 92% of assessed settlements in December, 50% of assessed settlements in Tonj East County and 42% in Tonj North County reported relying on selling livestock early as a livelihood coping mechanism. This is typically considered an extreme coping mechanisms and is particularly concerning given there is a high reliance on livestock as a livelihood activity in GTA.

Protection

Inter-communal conflict in GTA, insecurity in WBeG State and looting in NBeG State caused protection concerns in the GBeG region from October to December 2018.

With the resurgence of insecurity in the Greater Baggari area in October, the proportion of assessed settlements in Wau County reporting that an incident of conflict in the last month had killed a civilian increased from 7% in September to 21% in October, peaking at 30% in November 2018. The insecurity is likely also linked with the high reported looting; 95% of assessed settlements in Wau County reported there had been incidents of looting where most or all of items were stolen from one or more HHs in October, the highest reported in the GBeG region all quarter.

Episodes of inter-communal violence in Tonj East County caused a high perceived lack of safety in communities and was reportedly the primary protection concern for men and boys in the fourth quarter. No assessed settlements reported that most people felt safe most of the time in December. The insecurity also resulted in reported incidents of conflict that caused a civilian death, reported by 50% of assessed settlements in Tonj East County in December, the highest in GTA.

Reported incidents of looting increased between the third and fourth quarters in NBeG State, reported by 23% of assessed settlements state-wide in August and 39% of assessed settlements in December. The increase in reported looting could be driven by the acute food insecurity in the state causing individuals to turn to more extreme measures to fill resource gaps.

Sexual and gender-based violence continued to be a major protection concern for women and girls (18 years or below) in the GBeG region in the fourth quarter. Early marriage was a primary protection concern for girls in NBeG State, primarily in Aweil South and Aweil East counties, reported by 63% and 41% of assessed settlements, respectively, in December. Meanwhile, domestic violence was reported as the primary safety concern for girls by assessed settlements in Aweil North (29%), Tonj South (22%), Raja (21%), and Jur River (20%) counties and for women by assessed settlements in Aweil South (63%) and Aweil Centre (44%).

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFI)

Shelter conditions were poor in the GBeG Region in October 2018 following heavy rains and flooding in August and September in GTA and NBeG State, as well as periodic

episodes of conflict in GTA and Wau County, WBeG State through the fourth quarter.

Excess rainfall and flooding of local rivers caused shelter damage in NBeG State and GTA, where 54% and 58% of assessed settlements reported having to leave their shelters due to flooding, respectively. By the end of the quarter, shelter conditions in these areas reportedly improved with the onset of the dry season.²²

Episodes of inter-communal conflict in GTA and the ongoing insecurity in Wau County also damaged and destroyed shelters during the fourth quarter. In October, 29% of assessed settlements in Tonj South County reported that shelters had been partially or entirely destroyed because of fighting. In November, 50% of assessed settlements in Tonj East County and 20% in Wau County also reported conflict-based shelter damage and destruction.

Continued insecurity, displacement and environmental shocks reportedly limited IDPs' access to essential NFIs in the GBeG region during the fourth quarter. Following the flooding, 48% and 36% of assessed settlements in NBeG State and GTA that reported hosting IDPs, respectively, reported that IDPs primarily needed plastic sheets in December. Cooking pots, mosquito nets and soap were among the other most

20. December is the first month of data collected in Gogrial East County

21. REACH, Aweil North County FSL Brief, December 2018

22. Reported in a coordination meeting in NBeG State and by a KI from Tonj East

commonly reported NFI needs reported in assessed settlements with IDPs in the region.

Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Access to clean water was limited in WBeG and NBeG states during the fourth quarter of 2018, with only 34% and 30% of assessed settlements in WBeG and NBeG states, respectively, reporting access to a functioning borehole in the settlement in December (Figure 8). Consequently, unprotected water sources were heavily relied on as primary water sources in assessed settlements. Wells were the most commonly reported sources of water, reported by 38% and 30% of assessed settlements in NBeG and WBeG states in December, respectively. Rivers (20%) in NBeG State and ponds (11%) in WBeG State were also frequently reported as main water sources in assessed settlements. In addition to the limited infrastructure, an

increased proportion of assessed settlements in NBeG State reported that perceived insecurity prevented access to preferred water sources, doubling from 20% in October to 45% in December 2018. The lack of perceived security following inter-communal conflicts in Tonj East and Tonj North counties also prevented access to preferred water points, reported by 67% and 38% of assessed settlements respectively in December 2018. The restricted access to clean drinking water is concerning given the onset of the dry season when some water sources start to become unavailable in the region. Thirty-five percent (35%) of assessed settlements in WBeG State reported water sources were seasonal, which was notably high in Jur River County where nearly half (49%) of assessed settlements reported their preferred water sources were only seasonally available. As discussed in the Population Displacement section of this Situation Overview, there is

Figure 8: Boreholes and water sources in assessed settlements in the GBeG Region, December 2018

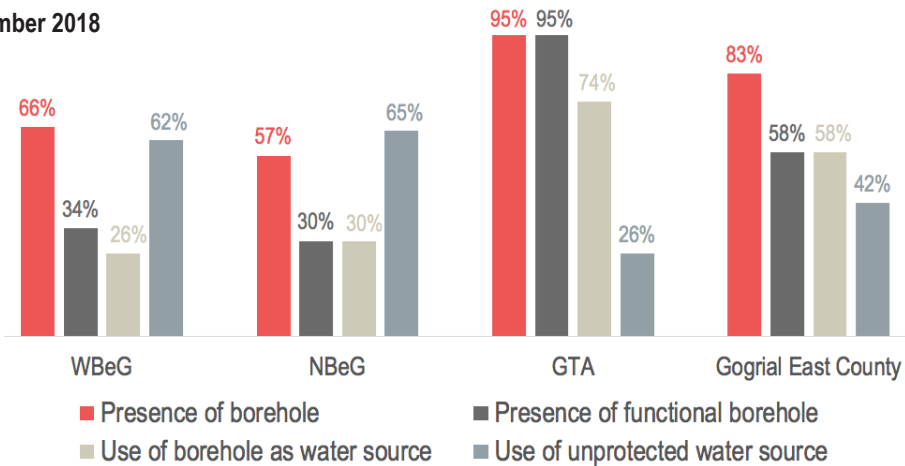



Figure 9: Primary reported health concerns in the GBeG region, December 2018



	WBeG	NBeG	GTA
Malaria	22%	31%	18%
Diarrhoea	7%	12%	18%
Typhoid	13%	10%	8%
Malnutrition	4%	14%	18%

seasonal inaccessibility of water in Aweil East County, NBeG State, where 34% of assessed settlements reported their preferred water points were only seasonally available, the highest reported in NBeG State in December. This lack of access to water has driven seasonal water stress migration from the highland areas to the lowland riverine areas in the south in December (Map 2). The proportion of assessed settlements reporting that livestock and other animals were either sharing water sources with humans or being kept near shared water-sources increased in GTA from 55% in October to 77% in December 2018. Using the same water source as livestock is a major sanitation concern and can lead to water-borne diseases and have negative impacts on community health care. Sanitation concerns were particularly acute in NBeG State and Jur River County, WBeG State during the fourth quarter. Open defecation continued to be a commonly reported practice; in December, 92% of assessed settlements in NBeG State and 98% of assessed settlements

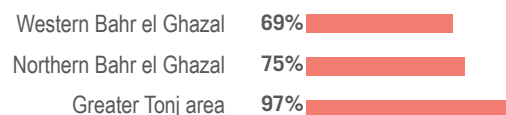
in Jur River County reported that no individuals use a latrine. Compounding this, hand washing practices were reportedly poor in December with 67% and 63% of assessed settlements in Jur River County and Aweil South County respectively reported they only use water to wash their hands. Access to health care services reportedly decreased during the quarter in NBeG State. Given the poor sanitation in combination with the limited access to health care services, the threat of waterborne diseases is particularly concerning in assessed settlements. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting access to health services dropped from 71% in October to 53% in December and in December nearly a quarter (24%) of assessed settlements state-wide reported it took individuals half a day or more to reach health facilities by foot. Health care access was reportedly lowest in assessed settlements in Aweil East, Aweil West and Aweil North counties in December, where 57%, 50% and 46% of assessed settlements reported there were no functioning health care services accessible by foot from the settlement, respectively. The lack of access to health care facilities state-wide was primarily reported to be due to a lack of nearby health facilities, reported by 73% of assessed settlements that reported health care facilities were not accessible in December. The continued conflict and displacement in WBeG State during the fourth quarter led to restricted access to health care facilities in Wau County. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting that the main barrier to accessing health care services was a lack of health care workers doubled from 13% to 26% from October to December, which is likely attributable

to the displacement of health facility staff. Malnutrition was a commonly reported primary health issue in the GBeG region in December, which is concerning given that it was the post-harvest season when HHs would typically still have access to crop yields and there are continually high levels of food insecurity region-wide. Malnutrition was most commonly reported as the main health problem in assessed settlements in Tonj East (30%), Aweil South (25%), Aweil East (20%) and Tonj North (17%) counties. In GTA, 18% of assessed settlements perceived that hunger or malnutrition was the primary cause of death for people in the settlement in December.

Education

Availability of education services reportedly remained consistent in assessed settlements in WBeG State and GTA and decreased in NBeG State during the fourth quarter. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting access to education services in NBeG State decreased from 86% in October to 75% in December, with the most notable decrease reported in assessed settlements in Aweil East County from 83% to 61%. A humanitarian organisation in NBeG State reported that the seasonal water stress migration and dysfunctional boreholes in the Aweil East County drove some schools to close, which may account for the decrease in reported availability of education services as well as low student attendance in December.²³ The proportion of assessed settlements in Aweil East County reporting that half or more girls attended school decreased from 38% in October to 18% in December

Figure 10: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting availability of education services in the GBeG Region, December 2018



and for boys nearly halved from 64% to 34%.

With October being peak harvest season for sorghum and other key crops in the GBeG region, youth participation in agriculture work was a main reported barrier to school attendance for boys. Of the assessed settlements reporting that not all boys attended school in October, 71% in Jur River, 41% in Raja, 43% in Tonj South and 38% in Aweil South counties reported the reason was due to the boys needing to work outside the home.

School fees remained the primary reported barrier for female school attendance region-wide in WBeG State, NBeG State and GTA in December 2018. However, gender-specific barriers, such as menstruation, early marriage and early pregnancy were commonly reported factors preventing girls from attending school in assessed settlements in Aweil Centre (38%), Aweil North (32%), and Aweil East (26%) counties in NBeG State and Jur River County (26%) in WBeG State.

In Wau County, the ongoing conflict in the fourth quarter resulted in an increase in assessed settlements reporting insecurity as the primary cause for the lack of education services, reported by 40% of assessed settlements in November. Subsequently, in December, 62% of assessed settlements that reported education services were unavailable in the last month reported that it was due to teachers having fled. KIs from

humanitarian organisations have reported that schools remained closed in the Greater Baggari area in the fourth quarter due to the continued insecurity and displacement.

Conclusion

Renewed insecurity in October and the lasting impacts of environmental shocks from September contributed to continued limited adequate access to food and resources in areas of the GBeG region during the fourth quarter of 2018.

Population movement and forced displacement during the quarter due to insecurity, inter-communal conflict, flooding and water stress resulted in high reported presence of IDPs in assessed settlements as well as restricted access to services and essential resources, including food, WASH, health care and education in some areas of NBeG and WBeG states, GTA and Gogrial East County.

Environmental shocks disrupted 2018 cultivation in areas of NBeG State and GTA, limiting crop yields and restricting access to food. Consequently, assessed settlements reported relying on coping mechanisms, such as limiting meal sizes, purchasing less expensive food and reducing the number of times HHs eat per day.

The inter-communal conflict in GTA drove down perceived safety in assessed settlements during the fourth quarter, as well as reportedly causing shelter destruction and inhibited access to preferred water points in the area. Episodes of insecurity in Wau

County, WBeG State also resulted in limited access to health care facilities, clean water and education services through the quarter.

While following the annual harvest period settlements would normally expect to see sizeable increases in access to food and services, the crops yielded in the 2018 cultivation seemingly had minimal positive impact on reported access to food in assessed settlements in the fourth quarter. With the series of shocks affecting cultivation through the GBeG region, yields are likely to exhaust more rapidly than in a normal year, suggesting the continued deterioration of access to food, decrease in access to basic services and the early onset of the lean season in 2019 in the GBeG region.

About REACH

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23. Reported in the Inter-Cluster Working Group Meeting in NBeG