

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

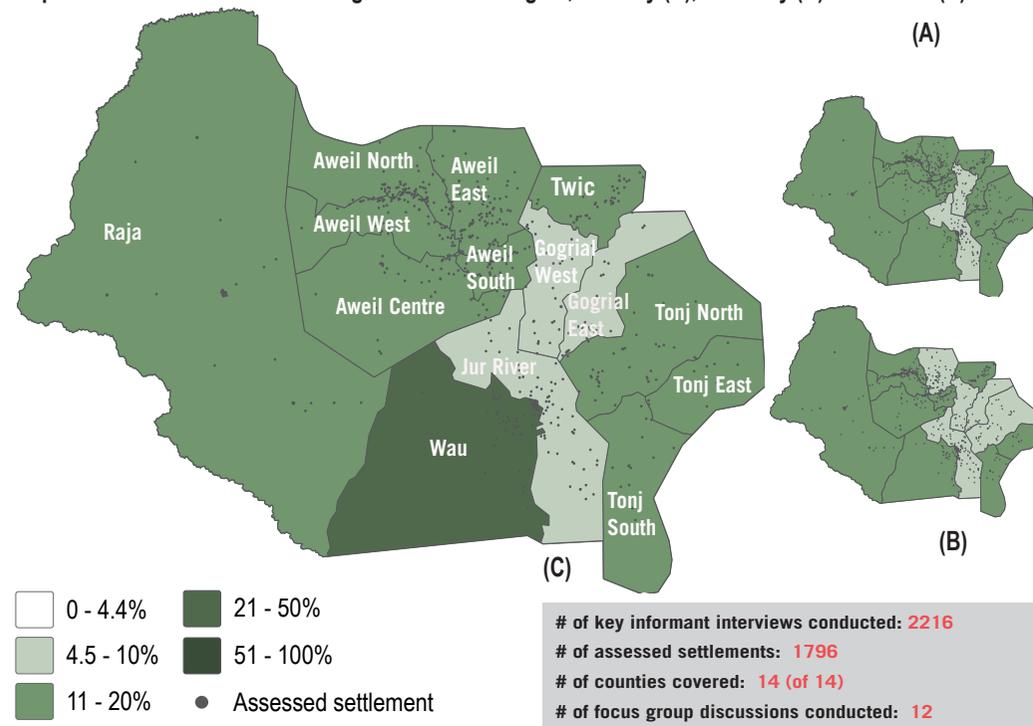
January - March 2020

## Introduction

The Greater Bahr el Ghazal (GBeG) region experienced intermittent episodes of intercommunal violence (ICV) in the first quarter of 2020, which contributed to gaps in access to basic services. As needs continue to persist across the region, access to reliable and timely information remains critical to humanitarian planning and prioritisation of interventions in the region.

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 first quarter of 2020.

Map 1: REACH assessment coverage of the GBeG region, January (A), February (B) and March (C) 2020



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.  
3. Greater Tonj is comprised of Tonj East, Tonj South and Tonj East counties.

## Key Findings

- **Population movement and displacement** were seemingly driven by intercommunal violence (ICV) in Warrap and Western Bahr el Ghazal (WBeG) states in the first quarter of 2020.
- In line with annual trends, access to **food** reportedly worsened across the region. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food remained low in March 2020 at 26%, with a slight decrease from December 2019 (34%), likely due to the early depletion of limited food stocks.
- Perceptions of safety seemingly remained unchanged from the previous reporting period; only 25% of assessed settlements reported feeling safe most of the time, with the lowest reporting in Greater Tonj (12%) and Jur River County (0%), in line with high incidents of ICV throughout the reporting period. Conflict-related **protection** concerns such as killing or injury were most commonly reported for men, whilst early marriage and domestic violence were the primary concerns for girls and women respectively.
- Malaria remained the most commonly reported **health** problem across the region (33% of assessed settlements in March). Waterborne diseases were also commonly reported (26%), indicative of long-term **water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)** issues

## 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 January, February, and March 2020.

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 focus group discussions (FGD) with community members from WBeG and NBeG states and secondary sources of information.

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

across the region. Ten percent (10%) of assessed settlements reported respiratory or lung diseases in March, indicating increased vulnerability to the effects of COVID-19.

- Access to functional boreholes reportedly worsened across the region, with 62% of assessed settlements in March reporting access, a 14 percentage points decrease from the previous quarter. Low reported access to latrines and WASH non-food items (NFI) such as soap also likely contributed to increased risk of waterborne disease in the region.
- Indicative of a recent displacement, 33% of assessed settlements with IDPs in Warrap reported IDPs living in the open in March, raising protection concerns for the most vulnerable populations.
- Access to **education** services within walking distance remained the same as the previous reporting period (86% of assessed settlements in March). Of assessed settlements with no access, the lack of facilities (44%), and the lack of teachers (16%) were the most commonly reported reasons for unavailability of education services in March.

## Population Movement and Displacement

Findings suggest that, in the first quarter of 2020, displacement was driven by insecurity (36% of assessed settlements), family reunification (12%), and lack of jobs (12%) which were reported as the main push factors for the recently arrived IDPs who left their settlements

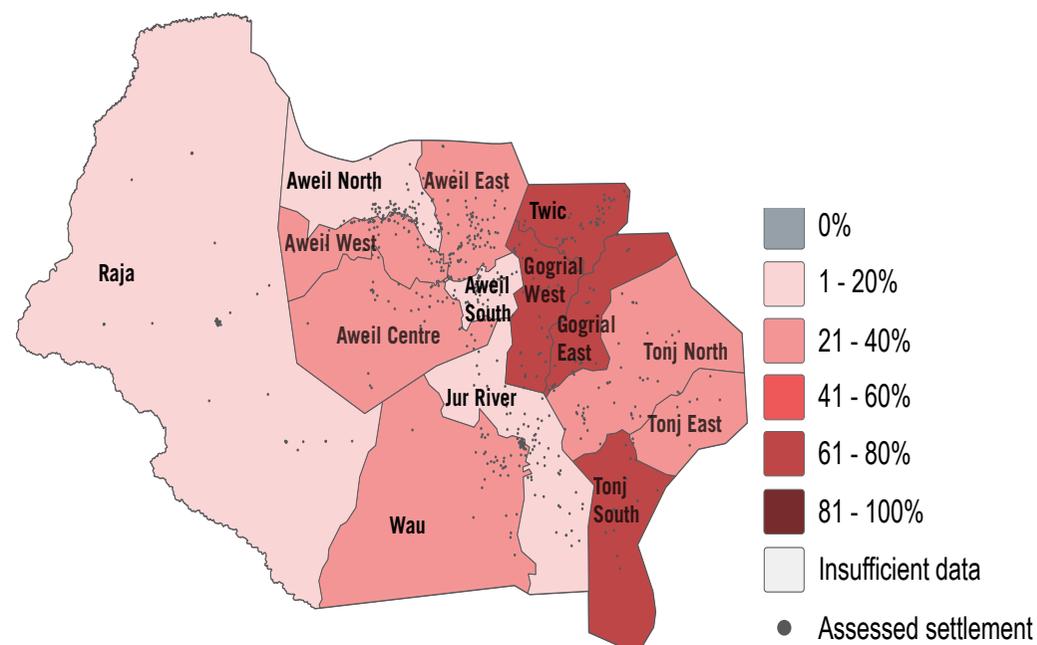
across the region. Thirty-two percent (32%) of assessed settlements reported the presence of IDPs in March, with the highest proportion reporting this in Warrap State (54%).

### Insecurity driven displacement

In the first quarter of 2020, intercommunal violence in Jur River County (WBeG), reportedly resulted in a large scale displacement. In March, 100% of assessed settlements in Jur River County reported a recent large scale displacement, and 88% reported cattle raiding as the primary reason the most recently arrived IDPs had left their home settlements. As a result of intercommunal fighting in Kuarjena area of Jur River County, an estimated 5,029 individuals were displaced.<sup>4</sup> FGD participants who recently arrived in Wau from Rocrocdeng (Jur River), reported that the displaced population fled to Wau Town, Dangachak, Dakum and Wathalel in WBeG State.<sup>5</sup> Participants further reported that the availability of humanitarian assistance, basic services, and security in Wau was a pull factor for IDPs.

In Raja County, 11% of assessed settlements reported insecurity and killing as the main reason why the recently arrived IDPs left their settlement, comparable to the previous reporting period (8% in December 2019). This is indicative of persistent violence in the region throughout the dry season, during which a decline in green vegetation in Sudan's Darfur region drives pastoralists to NBeG and Raja County (WBeG) in search of greener pastures and access to water for their livestock.<sup>6</sup> Cattle theft between the Sudanese pastoralists and host communities often leads to tension and

Map 2: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting the presence of IDPs, March 2020



violence during the migration season, creating insecurity and protection concerns for host communities.

In Warrap State, intermittent episodes of violent conflict reportedly contributed to internal displacement this quarter. The majority of assessed settlements in Warrap State reported the presence of IDPs in the settlement (54% in March), a 22 percentage point increase from December 2019. Similar to Raja County, the reported displacement across Warrap State may be attributed to the increased intensity of intercommunal violence, driven by competition over grazing pastures and disputes over land ownership.

Greater Tonj was reportedly the most affected

by intercommunal clashes during the reporting period. Of all assessed settlements reporting the presence of IDPs in Tonj East, Tonj North and Tonj South counties, respectively 100%, 71% and 89% reported insecurity or killing as the main reason why IDPs left their former settlement in March. Whilst the proportion of assessed settlements reporting the presence of IDPs remained consistent between December and March in Tonj North and Tonj East counties (22%), there was a considerable increase in Tonj South over the same period, from 29% to 64%. This reported increase in IDPs arriving in Tonj South may be due to an increase in intercommunal violence across the county as reported by FGD participants in Wau Town.<sup>7</sup>

4. IOM, Western Bahr el Ghazal Event Tracking Report, 24 March 2020

Retrieved on April 14, 2020

5. REACH, FGDs Notes on Jur River Displacement Dynamics, 18 March 2020.

6. REACH KI, Wau Town, March 2020

7. REACH KI, Wau Town, March 2020.

Similar to Greater Tonj, displacement in northern Warrap was reportedly driven by insecurity, in addition to lack of access to health services. There was an increase in the proportion of assessed settlements reporting the presence of IDPs across Gogrial East, Gogrial West and Twic counties between December 2019 and March 2020. This increase may be due to insecurity, which was reported as the main push factor by 100% of assessed settlements reporting the presence of IDPs in Twic, 20% of those reporting IDPs in Gogrial West, and 14% of assessed settlements with reported IDP presence in Gogrial East in March. Additionally, assessed settlements in both Gogrial West and East reported lack of health facilities (7% and 36% respectively) and seasonal movement (20% and 14%) as push factors.

### Displacement driven by COVID-19 contingency

The COVID-19 pandemic ushered in a new movement trend towards the end of March, with many IDPs reportedly leaving Wau PoC.

**Figure 1: Proportion of assessed settlements with inadequate access to food reporting main reasons people could not access enough food in GBeG, March 2020**

	WBeG	Warrap	NBeG
Crops destroyed by flooding	0%	35%	31%
Crops destroyed by pests	4%	5%	35%
High food prices	23%	4%	1%
Short growing season	0%	2%	7%

FGD participants reported that this movement was driven by the need to decongest the PoC as a preventive measure against contracting COVID-19. Most of those who left the PoC moved into shelters around Lokoloko and Nazareth in Wau town.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, movement between rural and urban areas tends to increase during the dry season and decrease in the wet season, with work, security and access to services as the main pull factors for those coming to towns.<sup>9</sup> The rural-urban movement is expected to decrease during the rainy season as people return to rural regions to begin planting.

## Situation in Assessed Settlements

### Food Security and Livelihoods

Across the GBeG region, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food decreased from 38% in December 2019 to 26% in March 2020, likely due to poor harvest caused by last year's flooding and pests in parts of the region.

### Western Bahr el Ghazal State

In WBeG, 25% of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food in March, a marginal decrease since December 2019. Whilst reported adequate access to food remained relatively high in Wau County (41% of assessed settlements in March), reported access remained low in Raja County (9%) and decreased in Jur River County from 28% in December to just 16% in March.

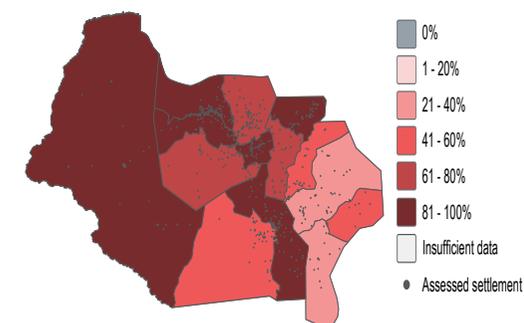
Despite the reported adequate access to food

in Wau County over the last two quarters, March data suggests future vulnerability for populations dependent on markets for food. In March, over half (53%) of the assessed settlements in Wau County reported that most people subsisted mainly on purchased food, which indicates potential vulnerability to shocks. Importantly, of the assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food, 37% reported high food prices to be the main reason. In parallel, 19% of assessed settlements reported an end of food distributions, which, combined with the above-mentioned high food prices and dependency on markets, highlights potential future access challenges for populations across Wau County.

A high proportion of assessed settlements in Raja County relied on bought foods (49%) and cultivation (33%) as the main source of food in March. Similar to the previous reporting period, high prices (reported by 27% of assessed settlements in March) was one of the main reasons why assessed settlements reported inadequate access to food in Raja County. Critically, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting the closure of food distributions as the main reason they could not access enough food, increased by 13 percentage points. Eighty percent (80%) of assessed settlements in Raja reported consuming one meal per day, unchanged from the previous reporting period. This high proportion of settlements reportedly resorting to negative coping strategies toward the dry season indicates an increased vulnerability to future food security shocks.

In Jur River County, inadequate access to food was reportedly driven primarily by theft of crops

**Map 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food in GBeG, March 2020**



reported by 22% of assessed settlements in March, likely due to previous reporting that former IDPs returned to their land to find many of their crops had been stolen.<sup>10</sup> Cattle eating crops was also reported by 13% of assessed settlements, and FGD participants reported that the early return of cattle in December 2019 meant many crops were consumed by livestock before they could be harvested.<sup>11</sup> While the reported eating of crops by livestock likely reduced seasonal harvest, movement restrictions due to insecurity reportedly increased dependence on humanitarian food assistance in the county.<sup>12</sup> Indicative of aid dependence, 20% of assessed settlements in Jur River County reported that GFD had stopped as one of the main reasons for inadequate access to food.

Recent insecurity in Jur River County may have contributed to the reported severity of food insecurity and the adoption of extreme coping strategies. Thirty-one percent (31%) of assessed settlements in Jur River County reported hunger to be severe in March, with 65% reportedly consuming one meal per

8. REACH, South Sudan REACH COVID-19 (CORONA VIRUS) health seeking and population movement mapping, March 2020.

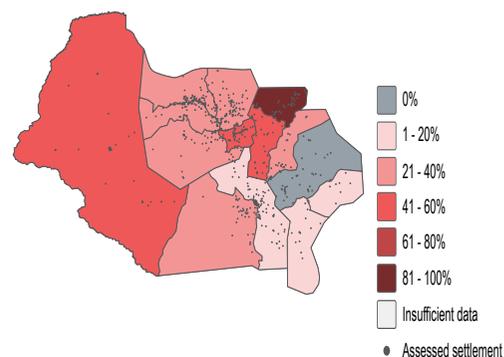
9. REACH KI, Wau Town, March 2020.

10. REACH South Sudan, Greater Bahr el Ghazal Situation Overview, October to December 2019.

11. REACH KI, Jur River, January 2020.

12. REACH, Jur River County Area of Knowledge Food Security and Livelihoods Focus Group Discussions, 12 March 2020.

**Map 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting inadequate access to food and most people not engaging in cultivation as a livelihoods activity in GBeG, March 2020**



day. Furthermore, a third (33%) of assessed settlements in the county reported adults not eating so that children could eat, a food consumption coping strategy indicative of high levels of food insecurity.

### Northern Bahr el Ghazal State

Access to food in NBeG decreased in the first quarter of 2020, from 36% in December 2019 to 19% in March 2020, with lower proportions reporting this in Aweil South and Aweil West counties. Assessed settlements reported destructions of crops by flooding (31%) and pests (35%) as the main reasons for inadequate access to food across the state.

While inadequate access to food remained a widespread concern across NBeG, Aweil South and Aweil West counties appeared to be the worst affected this quarter. The proportion of assessed settlements reporting adequate access to food reduced in Aweil South County from 37% in December 2019 to 24% in March

2020; and in Aweil West County from 41% to 8% during the same period. FGD participants reported that flooding disrupted cultivation in the low lands, and pests destroyed crops in the highlands, leading to a reduced seasonal harvest throughout the state.<sup>13</sup> The reported decrease in adequate access to food suggests a difficult lean season for populations in these two counties and other parts of the state.

Across the state, more extreme consumption based coping strategies were adopted in response to inadequate access to food. Among the most severe coping strategies reported by assessed settlements was allowing children to eat before adults (37%), a strategy considered to be adopted when other options have been exhausted. Furthermore, 79% of assessed settlements reported that most people consumed only one meal per day in March, with 42% reporting that hunger was perceived as severe. This suggests a deteriorating food security situation, likely due to flooding impacting the ability to gather sufficient food reserves from cultivation yields in 2019.

### Warrap State

Adequate access to food was reported by 42% of assessed settlements in Warrap state, a slight decrease from the previous reporting period. The situation was seemingly severe in Twic County, where 0% of assessed settlements reported adequate access to food, likely due to flooding lowering cultivation yields and insecurity limiting access to alternative livelihoods.

Similar to NBeG, areas of northern Warrap

experienced severe flooding in the last two quarters of 2019, and in March 2020, 35% of assessed settlements reported that crops were destroyed by flooding as the main reason for inadequate access to food. In March, a high proportion of assessed settlements reported destruction of crops by flooding as the main reason for inadequate access to food in Twic (84%), Gogrial West (54%) and Gogrial East (24%) counties. Twic County was reportedly affected heavily by the disruption of farming activities due to flooding in late 2019, alongside increased insecurity, and 70% of assessed settlements reported most people consuming only one meal per day in March. This depletion of food stocks is reflected in the increased proportion of assessed settlements relying on bought food as the main source of food, increasing from 31% in December 2019 to 67% in March 2020. The increased proportion of assessed settlements resorting to bought food much earlier than is typical raises concerns for future food security, particularly if access to Sudan is restricted due to COVID-19 contingency measures.

Findings suggest that new arrivals contributed to food insecurity in Greater Tonj, with 34% of assessed settlements reporting new arrivals as the main reason for inadequate access to food in March. In Tonj South, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting new arrivals as the main reason for inadequate access to food increased from 15% in December 2019 to 50% in March 2020. Similarly, assessed settlements in Tonj East (22%) and Tonj North (31%) reported not having enough food due to

new arrivals in March.

Consumption coping strategies were commonly reported across the state, with 79% of assessed settlements reporting people commonly reducing the number of meals in March. Proportions were particularly high in assessed settlements in Gogrial East (96%), Gogrial West (86%), and Tonj East (89%) counties. Furthermore, most likely due to high levels of food insecurity across Greater Tonj, 25% of assessed settlements across the region reported skipping entire days, a severe consumption coping strategy, which indicates that food insecurity may worsen toward the lean season when most households struggle to gain adequate access to food.

### Protection

Perceptions of safety remained relatively low across the reporting period, with 25% of assessed settlements reportedly feeling safe most of the time in March, with particularly low proportions of assessed settlements reporting this in Jur River (0%) and Tonj South (7%) counties. This may be due to disputes over land and cattle raiding affecting communities in both Warrap and WBeG states.<sup>14</sup>

### Warrap State

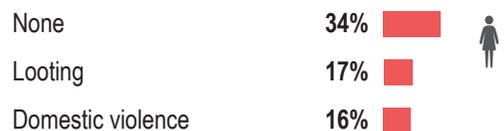
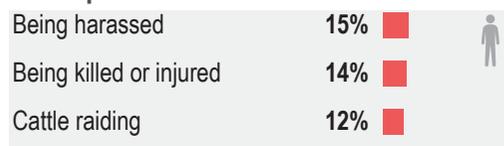
In Warrap State, protection concerns were primarily driven by intercommunal violence and land disputes, especially in Greater Tonj. In Tonj South County, the proportion of assessed settlements reporting land ownership disputes increased from 0% in December 2019 to 50% in March 2020. Land disputes and cattle raids reportedly resulted in the death

13. REACH, Aweil South FGD Notes, February 2020.

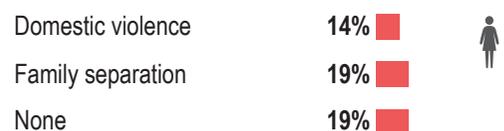
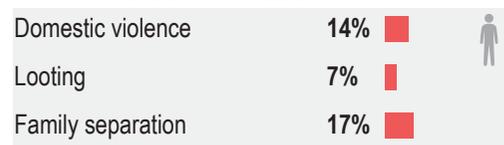
14. CSRF, County Profile - Jur River County, Western Bahr el-Ghazal State  
[https://www.csrfsouthsudan.org/county\\_profile/jur-river-county/](https://www.csrfsouthsudan.org/county_profile/jur-river-county/)

**Figure 2: Most commonly reported protection concerns for men and women in assessed settlements, March 2020**

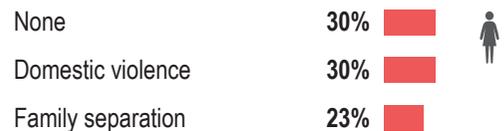
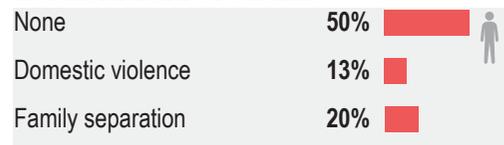
### Warrap



### Western Bahr el Ghazal



### Northern Bahr el Ghazal



of approximately 16 people in Tonj South in February.<sup>15</sup> The increased insecurity was reflected in a slight increase in the proportion of assessed settlements reporting an incident

of conflict resulting in the death of a civilian in Tonj South County, increasing from 9% in December 2019 to 19% in March 2020. Similarly, land ownership disputes were reported in assessed settlements in Tonj East (44%), Tonj North (40%), Gogrial East (44%) and Gogrial West (39%) counties in March, showing consistent patterns of conflict across the state. Furthermore, reported incidents of looting were high in Tonj North (45%) and Tonj South (50%) counties in March. The rise in cases of land ownership disputes may be attributed to competition over grazing land among pastoralist communities during the dry season.

Across Warrap State, 29% of assessed settlements reported feeling safe most of the time in March. Reported protection concerns for men were predominantly due to cattle-raiding and ICV across the state. Twenty-one percent (21%) of assessed settlements in Greater Tonj reported cattle raiding as the main protection concern for men; for boys, 11% of assessed settlements reported killing or injury from another tribe as the main protection concern.

The main reported protection concerns for women in March were looting (17% of assessed settlements) and domestic violence (16%). Looting could be attributed to increased rates of criminality reported across Warrap state, particularly in Tonj Town. Similarly, unchanged from previous reporting period, early marriage (16%) and sexual violence (12%) were the most commonly reported main protection concerns for girls across assessed settlements

in March 2020.

### Western Bahr el Ghazal State

In Jur River County, 98% of assessed settlements reported most people feeling unsafe most of the time in March. FGD participants, who fled conflict in Jur River County areas of Rocrocdeng, reported that it was unsafe to return to their homes following the recent outbreak of violence, which reportedly resulted in killing and looting of property.<sup>16</sup> The proportion of assessed settlements reporting looting of property in Jur River County remained high at 46% in March.

Overall, protection challenges across genders were likely related to the commonly reported domestic concerns. Family separation continued to be the most commonly reported protection concern for both women and girls, with 14% and 19% of assessed settlements reporting this in March. Whilst the proportion of assessed settlements reporting domestic violence as the main concern for women decreased by 17 percentage points (14% in March); rates reportedly remained the same for girls (13% in March).

### Northern Bahr el Ghazal State

In the first quarter of 2020, only 21% of assessed settlements across NBeG reported people feeling safe most of the time in March. Unlike other states of GBeG, protection challenges in NBeG were primarily driven by domestic concerns.

Domestic violence, early marriage, and family

separation were the most commonly reported protection concerns for both men and women across assessed settlements in NBeG in March. Family separation was reported as the primary concern for women and men by 23% and 20% of assessed settlements respectively, indicative of many family members living away from the household in cattle camps, in turn exposed to protection concerns associated with cattle raiding. Furthermore, domestic violence was reported by 30% and 13% of assessed settlements as a protection concern for both men and women respectively. Boys' main reported protection concern was domestic violence, reported by 17% of assessed settlements in March, likely stemming from domestic conflict within their families. Early marriage remained one of the key reported protection concerns for girls (44%), a 12 percentage point increase since the previous quarter. Although early marriage is a customary practice in many parts of South Sudan, the worsening economic situation likely contributed to this trend as vulnerable families are likely to accept dowry payment for their young daughters in order to mitigate the impact of declining livelihood opportunities.

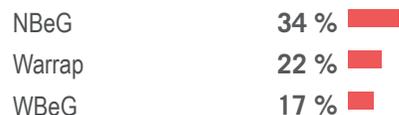
### Health

In the first quarter of 2020, majority (79%) of assessed settlements across GBeG reported access to primary health care centres (PHCC) within walking distance, whilst smaller proportions reported access to a hospital (35%) in March. During the same period, 56% of assessed settlements reported access to pharmacies within a walking distance. Access

15. UNMISS, UNMISS peacekeepers work to deter intercommunal violence in Tonj <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/unmiss-peacekeepers-work-to-deter-intercommunal-violence-tonj>

16. REACH, FGD Notes on Jur River Displacement Dynamics, 18 March 2020.

**Figure 3: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting waterborne diseases as the main health concern in the GBeG region, March 2020**



East (33%), Aweil East (47%), Aweil Centre (35%), and Aweil North (31%) counties. The persistence of waterborne disease in these counties may be related to poor access to safe drinking water (see WASH section).

Respiratory diseases were reported by 10% of assessed settlements in March to be the mainly perceived health concern, consistent with December 2019. Relatively high proportions of assessed settlements reported this in Tonj South (21%) and Tonj East (22%) counties; this is concerning since pre-existing lung conditions could make people more vulnerable to COVID-19.

### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Consistent with previous reporting periods, findings indicate that high WASH-related needs persisted in GBeG in the first quarter of 2020.

Overall, 62% of assessed settlements across GBeG reported access to a functional borehole in March, a 14 percentage points decrease from the previous quarter, possibly due to seasonal reductions in the water table in parts of GBeG. NBeG (75%) and Warrap (60%) had the highest proportion of assessed settlements reporting borehole access, whilst reported access in WBeG was relatively low (42%). Jur River County saw the lowest proportion (25%) of assessed settlements reporting boreholes as the main source of water in March. FGD participants reported that wells were the main sources of drinking water in remote parts of Jur River County, which were reportedly unsafe, as people had reportedly fallen sick after using them.<sup>17</sup>

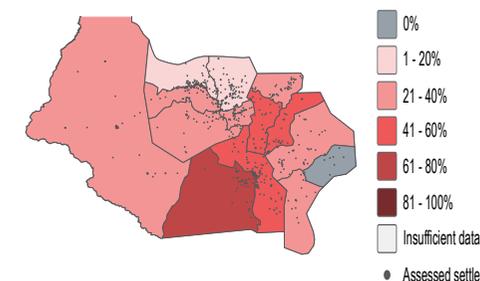
Populations lacking access to boreholes and wells reportedly collected water from unprotected sources such as ponds and rivers. Consequently, assessed settlements in Jur River (31%) and Twic (26%) counties, reported drinking from a river, pond or swamp, raising concerns of waterborne diseases.

Long distances appeared to continue to limit access to preferred water sources in GBeG, particularly in Tonj East and Twic counties. In March only 21% of assessed settlements across GBeG reported access to their preferred water source within a 30-minute round trip, whilst in Tonj East and Twic counties, 56% and 53% of assessed settlements respectively reported walking one hour to half a day to access their preferred water source. Distance from water points may reduce the quantity of water available for domestic consumption including regular handwashing, which is a preventive measure against COVID-19.

In Warrap State, distant water sources likely presented protection challenges for women and girls. Indicative of the persistence of intercommunal conflict in Warrap State, 30% of assessed settlements reported not being able to access their preferred water source due to safety concerns in March. In particular, a high proportion of assessed settlements reporting on this indicator were in Greater Tonj (35%) and Twic (44%) County in March. This is likely a result of dry season cattle raiding and ICV across Warrap State.

Access to sanitation services remained a concern across the region, with 46% of assessed settlements reporting access to latrines in

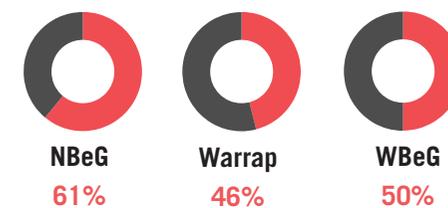
**Map 5: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting drinking from an unprotected water source in GBeG, March 2020**



March, unchanged from the previous reporting period. Reported access to latrines was high in Warrap (54%) and WBeG (50%) compared to NBeG (39%) in March, with particularly low reported access in Twic (21%), Aweil South (20%) and Jur River (15%) counties. Limited availability of latrines was reportedly the primary reason for low usage, with more than half (55%) of assessed settlements in GBeG reporting that people were not using latrines because there were none available. In the absence of latrines, populations are likely to practice open defecation, increasing the chance of diseases which result from fecal contamination of water sources.

Poor hygiene practices, exacerbated by limited

**Figure 4: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting not using latrines in GBeG, March 2020**



access to WASH NFIs continued to be reported across the region. Hand washing with soap was only reported by 33% of assessed settlements in GBeG in March, unchanged from the previous reporting period, likely due to limited hygiene awareness and lack of soap. Alternative hand washing practices reported included using water only (28% of assessed settlements in March), and ash (26%). The continued low proportion of assessed settlements reporting hand washing with soap over the last two quarters is perhaps linked to the frequent reporting of cases of waterborne diseases.

### Shelter and Non-Food Items

Since the last quarter of 2019, the most commonly reported shelter types for IDPs remained tukuls and rakoobas (42% and 38% of assessed settlements respectively in March). Across the region, only assessed settlements in Wau and Raja counties reported IDPs were living in permanent shelters (26% and 33% of assessed settlements with IDPs respectively), likely due to the availability of pre-existing permanent shelters for IDPs in Wau and Raja towns.

IDPs have reportedly integrated into host communities in assessed settlements across the region. In March, 29% of assessed settlements in GBeG reported IDPs were living within the host community. Warrap state reported the highest proportion (47%) of assessed settlements reporting that IDPs were living with the host community, compared to NBeG (24%) and WBeG (20%) in March. However, a quarter (25%) of assessed settlements in Twic County

reported that IDPs were living in informal sites in March, likely due to displacement caused by flooding in the previous reporting period, and insecurity in the first quarter of 2020.

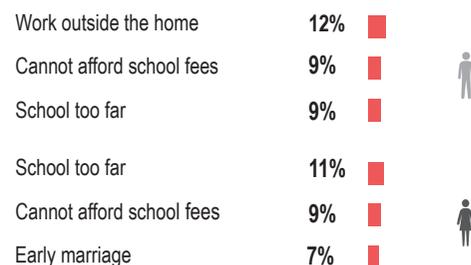
Indicative of recent displacement, 15% of assessed settlements in GBeG reported IDPs living in the open without shelters. A high proportion of assessed settlements reporting on this indicator were in Gogrial West County, which saw an increase in settlements reporting this from 10% in December 2019 to 50% in March 2020, raising protection concerns for the most vulnerable populations living in the open.

Across the region, NFI needs seemingly remained comparable to the last quarter of 2019. The most needed NFIs reported by assessed settlements in March were plastic sheets (34%), blankets (17%) and cooking pots (10%). In Wau, FGD participants reported that the most needed NFIs for recently-arrived IDPs were utensils, soap, mats, jerry cans and blankets.<sup>18</sup> The persistence of these reported NFI needs suggest repeated displacement in the region.

### Education

In March, 86% of assessed settlements reported that education services were available within walking distance, unchanged from the previous reporting period. Of assessed settlements reporting no access to education services in March, lack of teachers (16%) and teachers having fled (9%) were the most commonly reported reasons. The proportion of assessed settlements with access to education

**Figure 5: Proportion of assessed settlements reporting the primary reasons why boys and girls were not attending school in GBeG, January 2020.**



reporting girls' and boys' attendance remained comparable to the last quarter (36% and 43% respectively in March). One hundred percent (100%) of assessed settlements in Gogrial East County reported that insecurity was the main barrier to education services, raising concerns of the impact of ICV on access to education across the region, especially during the the dry season when competition over grazing pastures and cattle rustling usually creates insecurity and internal displacement.

Although reported access to education services in Jur River County remained comparable to the last quarter, the proportion (31%) of assessed settlements reporting this in March was the lowest across the region. Of assessed settlements that reported no access to education services, the main reasons reported in March were a lack of facilities (44%), lack of teachers (21%), and teachers having fled (12%). The reported factors disrupting access to education are indicative of ongoing conflict and patterns of displacement in Jur River County.

### Conclusion

Findings suggested that the effects of last season's flooding left many settlements in GBeG with depleted food stocks. This, coupled with continued protection concerns and displacement, seems to have impacted access to livelihoods, further driving increased food insecurity. In light of these factors and the movement restrictions implemented to control the COVID-19 outbreak, populations will likely require humanitarian assistance to meet both their immediate food and basic services needs across the region.

### 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).

Visit [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org) and follow us @REACH\_info.

18. REACH, FGD Notes on Jur River Displacement Dynamics, 18 March 2020.