USAID Ethiopia Resilience Learning Activity

GENDER AND CONFLICT ANALYSIS

The Effects of the Northern Conflict on Women and Men in the Amhara Region

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Meaning
CFSTF	Community Food Security Task Force
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
FGD	Focus group discussion
GBV	Gender-based violence
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IP	Implementing partner
KFSTF	Kebele Food Security Task Force
KII	Key informant interview
L4R	Livelihood for Resilience Activity
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program
PTA	Purposive Text Analysis
RFSA	Resilience Food Security Activity
RLA	Resilience Learning Activity
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region
SPIR II	Strengthening PSNP 5 Institutions and Resilience
TDF	Tigray Defense Forces
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VESA	Village economic and social association
VSLA	Village savings and loan association
WFSTF	Woreda Food Security Task Force

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To enable learning and adaptive management under the USAID/Ethiopia Resilience Learning Activity (RLA), this gender and conflict analysis provides an in-depth analysis of the gendered impact and coping mechanisms taken up by women, men, and youth who were affected by the conflict that began in Tigray in 2020, which had spillover effects across the rest of Ethiopia. The target audience for this report are USAID and its implementing partners (IPs) who operate resilience related programs.

This gender and conflict analysis is a result of a desk review and primary data collection in North and South Wollo communities to generate in-depth qualitative information on gender's intersection with conflict and recurrent multiple shocks. Data collection design was guided by the principles of ethnographic research in seeking to understand how targeted PSNP households and their communities currently cope with the everyday hardships of poverty and chronic food insecurity in addition to the 2020–2022 conflict and its compounding shocks.

Led by an ethnographer and research team from South Wollo University, three research questions guided the study, with the analysis concluding the following:

1. ***Gender's Intersection with Armed Violence:*** *In what ways, and to what extent, did reported wartime roles and behaviors of men, women, and youth vary?*
   The analysis reported little to no significant change in the conflict's intersectionality with traditionally expected gender-based roles and responsibilities. Wartime household exigencies largely reinforced common gender norms that delegate combat roles exclusively to able-bodied men, while women perform all domestic work and related civilian roles. When Tigray Defense Forces (TDF) took control of communities, men migrated outside of their homes to fight or find safety. Yet, during this time, women did step into roles as breadwinners in managing the household and its assets while also representing their households in community affairs. Not surprisingly, the absence of sufficient male labor and the additional responsibilities to support war efforts posed a significant time burden on women, particularly those in female-headed households.

2. ***Gender Dimensions of Conflict Impacts:*** *In what ways, and to what extent, did women, men and youth suffer differently?*

   Our findings confirm the consensus that the conflict had varying effects on every person, regardless of sex, age, and social mobility. Community members recognized the additional burden of work posed on women, whether wives in male-headed households or heads of their own households. Both men and women spoke of the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war as civilians and TDF combatants deliberately raped and sexually assaulted wives, female family members, and close relatives of "wanted, high-profile men" to avenge similar atrocities they presumed to have happened in Tigray. Despite women and girls being disproportionately affected by these acts of

sexual violence, communities empathized most with young men (aged 18–35) who were emasculated by these acts of sexual violence on their loved ones and spouses while also being heavily targeted to fight as combatants in defense of their country.

3. ***Conflict and Women's Engagement in Local Institutions:*** *What are the customary local institutions and cultural mechanisms that communities use for coping with recurrent climate shocks in addition to violent conflict and political instability?*

   Our study found that in the process of responding to and recovering from conflict and compounding shocks, rural people frequently drew on customary community mechanisms and social institutions to mitigate impacts. This included religious and cultural institutions that relied on their members for both physical and emotional support during recurrent climate-related shocks, economic impacts from political instability, and coping with the death of loved ones because of violent conflict. While these institutions remain deeply entrenched in traditional gender norms, these existing structures offer IPs the opportunity to leverage them in aiding rebuilding efforts among households and social transformation across these communities.

The research team also conducted a systems analysis based on secondary and primary data collection; specifically, the team used a process called Purposive Text Analysis (PTA), which the team applied to the focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and desk review documents to identify causal statements, unique factors, and causal interactions to then group and produce a series of system maps to identify the most influential factors. The most influential factors in the system are *Conflict*, followed by *Gender* and then *Combatants*, meaning they are potential leverage points in the system and that policies that directly seek to address these factors could have an outsized impact on the rest of the system. The most influenced (or dependent) factor is *Household Decision-Making*, followed by *Women*. The position of these two factors in the influence map indicates that they are indeed the most affected factors and thus the "outcomes" of the system. Monitoring changes in these factors can serve to assess systems change that results from altering other factors in the system.

This study outlines program considerations for USAID and its resilience partners when implementing interventions in highly volatile and conflict-affected communities. These considerations include designing interventions that improve access to trauma-informed care for both household members and IP staff, increasing access to financial services that are tailored to the needs of women and girls, and adapting PSNP to bolster economic growth for its participants in mitigating the effects of conflict and inflation. The study also outlines key knowledge gaps and opportunities for continued learning for the resilience community through the RLA mechanism. Additional areas of exploration related to gender and conflict that may act as key learning priorities for RLA in building more effective resilience programs include leveraging existing community structures to transform gender norms, exploring cross-learning among IPs to support community rehabilitation and improve social solidarity, and enabling IPs to integrate gender and conflict into their work through closer coordination and learning under RLA's communities of practice.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. ACTIVITY CONTEXT

RLA is a five-year (2022–2027) learning project implemented by LINC. RLA aims to spearhead learning and facilitate collaboration, communication, and knowledge management for USAID and more than 15 USAID projects working to increase resilience in Ethiopia. RLA, in this capacity, is a "learning sidecar" for USAID's resilience investments working to strengthen a culture of learning, sharing, evidence generation, substantiation, and triangulation. Its ultimate objective is to build a common understanding and direct investments in resilience-building strategies and interventions that demonstratively result in more resilient households, communities, and systems. RLA's four components are:

1. Platform and Backbone Support for Collective Impact
2. Resilience Evidence and Research
3. Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting Capacity and Culture
4. Resilience Innovation and Scaling

RLA provides support with learning processes and frameworks, development and consolidation of learning and research agendas, and support to resilience partners for adaptive management, results measurement, and the increased integration of systems thinking and rapid feedback into their respective toolboxes.

This gender and conflict analysis is intended to provide an in-depth analysis of the gendered impact and coping mechanisms taken up by women and men affected by the conflict that started in Tigray in 2020 and spread to parts of Amhara and Afar regions. It seeks to draw on the lived experiences of individuals, households, and communities to enable gender-responsive and socially inclusive practices among IPs that are working in conflict-prone areas under the PSNP portfolio.

1.2. ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT

Since November 2020, Ethiopia has experienced conflict, beginning in Tigray and then spilling over into nearby highlands areas. This conflict has disproportionately affected women, girls, and marginalized people, including internally displaced people, elders, people with disabilities, and children. The conflict has further limited these populations' access to resources, education, employment opportunities, basic health services, and protection of their basic human rights and has further subjected them to violence, exploitation, and harmful traditional practices. These underlying stressors lead to a host of conditions in the highlands that affect community resilience, including population

pressure, gender and social inequity, gender-based violence (GBV), poor infrastructure and services, and fraught livelihoods, health, and nutrition.[1]

Household income, through employment, is one tool for overcoming such stressors. In Ethiopia, agriculture serves as a key source of employment for an estimated 75 percent of Ethiopia's workforce, making it vital to the country's economy. It constitutes 40 percent of national gross domestic product and 80 percent of national exports (USAID, 2023). Ethiopia's Highlands (Amhara, Tigray, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region [SNNPR], and Oromia), are key to the country's agriculture and overall economic activity with the region's high rainfall making it ideal for growing coffee, oilseeds, grains, and especially subsistence crops, such as wheat and sorghum (Agriculture on the Ethiopian Plateau, 2017). The highlands also source important transboundary rivers and have significant national and global environmental importance (Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.-c).

While there have been improvements to the region following a major drought in 2011, a large proportion of the highland's population (nearly 45 million Ethiopians) is living in extreme poverty and unable to absorb shocks and stressors (Little et al., 2006). Compromised resilience is driven by a complex, multi-layered risk landscape—a mix of ecological, political, social, and economic factors—along with uncertainties related to COVID-19 and political unrest that hamper access to and use of absorptive, adaptive, and transformative resilience capacities.

2. METHODS

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE GENDER AND CONFLICT ANALYSIS

In line with USAID's commitment to gender-inclusive development, as captured in USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and Automatic Directives System (ADS) 205 (USAID, 2021), WI-HER conducted a gender and conflict analysis for RLA with the overarching goal of supporting IPs to mitigate gaps and barriers to gender equality to better address the needs of women and girls in conflict-prone settings. More specifically, this gender and conflict analysis explores how the 2020–2022 conflict and related ethnically motivated political upheavals have affected women and men and girls and boys across the highlands region of Ethiopia. The RLA Design Team and USAID/Ethiopia's Program Office, particularly the Mission gender advisor, and IPs are the intended key users of this report.

[1] See, for example, Dercon, S., Hoddinott, J., & Woldehanna, T. Growth and chronic poverty: Evidence from rural communities in Ethiopia. *Journal of Development Studies* 48, no. 2 (2012): 238–253. See also Sharp, K., Devereux, S., & Amare, Y. *Destitution in Ethiopia's Northeastern Highlands (Amhara National Regional State)*. Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, 2003.

2.2 Analytical Approach

This conflict and gender analysis applies an ethnographic approach to provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of selected communities. An ethnographic approach enables the study of affected communities and individuals in their own environment through face-to-face discussions and interviews. In this analysis, it uncovers the unequal distribution of impacts, with sensitivity to gender roles and relationships especially at the household and community levels, when armed control of rural villages and towns shifted, and in some cases re-shifted, between warring factions. The analysis achieves this goal through a two-part research strategy: a rapid desk review of existing gender analysis reports and primary ethnographic fieldwork in selected conflict-affected communities. At each phase, we explore possible answers to three key guiding questions:

1) In what ways, and to what extent, did reported wartime roles and behaviors of men, women, and youth (broadly defined to include older girls/young women and older boys/young men and recently married younger women and men)[2] vary?
2) In what ways, and to what extent, did women, men, and youth (of varying ages, socioeconomic status, ability, etc.) suffer differentially?
3) What are the customary local institutions and cultural mechanisms that communities use for coping with recurrent climate shocks in addition to violent conflict and political instability?

Applying an ethnographic approach to this analysis and, in particular, the data collection, consists of systematically reading data collection notes (via KIIs and FGDs) to identify and track key expressions, patterns, and themes that arose in participants' responses. Qualitative coding software was not used; rather, detailed notetaking of key themes and patterns informed the analysis. The analysis includes a section that discusses what was learned from the analysis by way of answering the three guiding questions. Together, the ethnographic evidence the research team explored around these questions contributes to improved understanding of both the gendered impact of the conflict and the coping mechanisms adopted by women, men, and youth in the study communities.

2.3 Overview of Methods

WI-HER developed this gender and conflict analysis through application of the first two steps of its innovative, evidence-based iDARE methodology (summarized in Exhibit 1). WI-HER also considered the USAID five domains of gender (laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices; cultural norms and beliefs; gender roles, responsibilities, and time use; access to and control over assets and

[2] The 2004 Ethiopian National Youth Policy defines youth as those aged "between 15-29" (p. 5). Our analysis finds a vernacular perception of youth that broadly encompasses "all who were either too young or yet unborn to receive a government-allotted share when land was last redivided in 1990/91." Building on this local perception, which emphasizes both biological growth and culturally expected household developmental cycle, we define youth in this report to include part of the society who are between 18 to 35 years old.

resources; and patterns of power and decision-making) as analytical frameworks for the desk review and primary data collection.

Exhibit 1. Overview of iDARE Steps

STEP	DESCRIPTION
Identify	**Identify** gaps and barriers across the socio-ecological environment affecting an intended outcome. Findings are validated through desk reviews, analysis, key informant interviews, and stakeholder engagement.
Design	**Design** a detailed plan with culturally and contextually appropriate solutions to address identified gaps and barriers to achieving a specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound goal. Leverage existing resources and capacities to design local solutions.
Apply	**Apply** and assess solutions through the use of relevant tools and qualitative and quantitative data; develop diverse capacities through approaches aligned with local priorities. Always adhere to the Do No Harm principle.
Record	**Record** performance improvement, qualitative and quantitative data, best practices, lessons learned, and knowledge generated in line with effective and transparent learning and monitoring and evaluation methodologies.
Expand	**Expand** and scale up solutions, if proven successful; if proven ineffective, identify and design other changes to reach mutually agreed upon local objectives and goals.

2.3.1 Desk Review

The gender and conflict analysis began with a desk review of key documents, which was structured around the five USAID domains of gender. The desk review included previously conducted gender and conflict analyses from the Ethiopian highlands and IP-led projects, relevant national laws and policies, and relevant organizational reports and analyses.

2.3.2 Primary Data Collection

WI-HER conducted one-hour consultative meetings with five IPs working under USAID/Ethiopia's resilience programming, from mid-January to mid-February 2023, to understand their specific needs related to gender and conflict. Key takeaways from those meetings, in addition to supplementary material sourced from those calls, informed the design of primary data collection tools and choice of fieldwork sites. A complete list of documents sourced from IPs is referenced in Annex I.

The results of the desk review and the consultative meetings and sourced material informed the design of primary data collection tools for generating in-depth qualitative information on gender's intersection with conflict and recurrent multiple shocks. To achieve this objective, the research team leveraged its previous research experience in the region to use a combination of two rapid ethnographic data collection methods: KIIs and FGDs. Consisting of two male and one female ethnographers, each bringing complementary knowledge of the Ethiopian highlands, the team conducted a series of KIIs and FGDs with households participating in PSNP, along with consultations with RLA IPs and local partners to gather insight on gender-related barriers and the intersectionality of gender and conflict as related to RLA objectives. The team purposely identified stakeholders based on their knowledge of the project's key themes or areas of interest. The team targeted PSNP households and communities currently coping not just with the everyday hardships of poverty and chronic food insecurity but also with the complexity of rebuilding their livelihoods after the 2020–22 conflict and their compounding shocks. The team obtained consent from all participating households and community members and applied principles of Do No Harm during KIIs and FGDs.

Site Selection

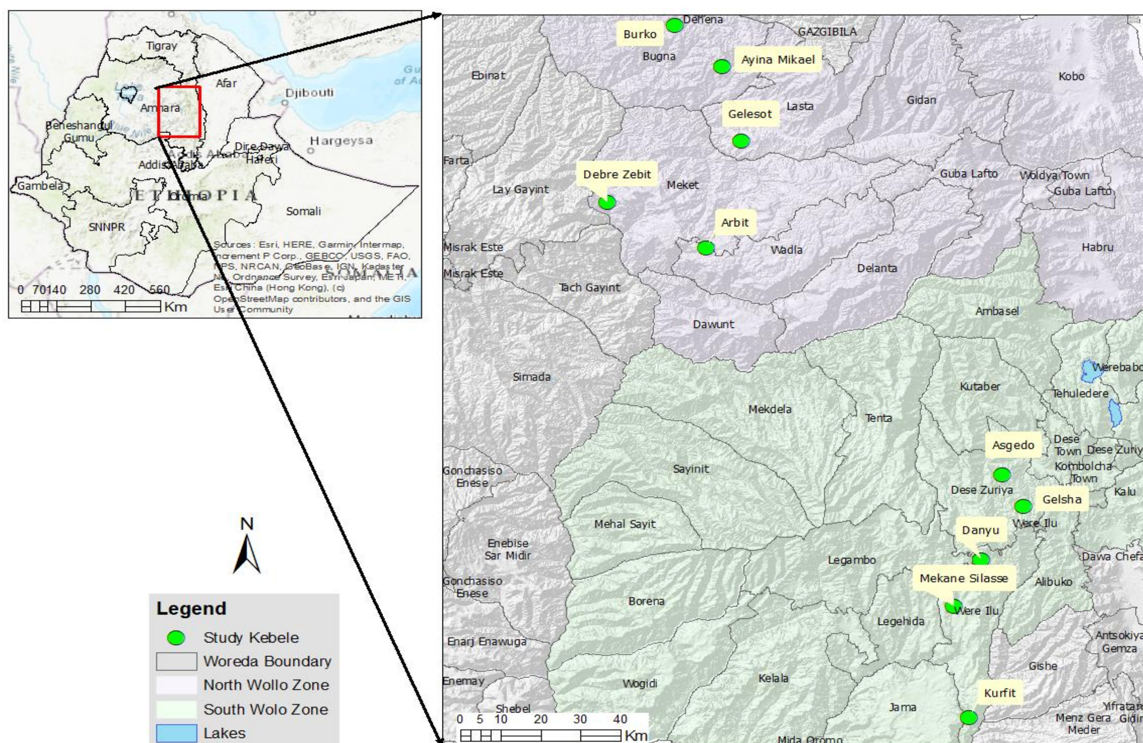
The analysis draws on the lived experiences of selected PSNP targeted households and communities in conflict-affected areas of South and North Wollo administrative zones of Amhara region (see a map of site selection in Exhibit 2). While there was a desire to expand the scope of the data collection to sites beyond the Amhara region, because of constraints on timing and resources to conduct the analysis, the team strategically chose South and North Wollo zones in an effort to be specific to the goals of the analysis and the ability to answer the research questions, but also to select areas that could result in analytical findings and learning that could be applied to other areas where IPs are working. Within these conflict-affected and drought-prone areas, the team selected 10 communities in five districts to provide opportunities for comparative analysis. Communities were selected for sharing the following commonalities:

1. Farmers across the communities are currently responding not just to the cumulative impacts of recurrent climate anomalies, market shocks, and everyday hardships, they are also facing the complexity of rebuilding their livelihoods and communities after over three years of ethnically based political strife, inter-community distrust, and armed violence.
2. All the five North Wollo communities are predominantly Orthodox Christians, while those in South Wollo are Muslim majority but with a demographically significant Christian population living side-by-side.
3. The communities are all located within the larger RLA project area that includes chronically food insecure and historically famine-affected districts in the Amhara region.

However, these communities differed in two major ways, which enabled the team to explore the range of variations in both recurrent climate-related shocks and household responses:

1. They vary in agro-ecology (moderately cool highland or "dega" vs. moderately warm midland or "woina dega") and have contrasting cropping complex; the wet highland communities have two growing seasons (spring, or *belg,* and summer, or *meher*), while the semi-dry midlands grow mainly with summer rains.
2. The communities vary in physical proximity to major towns, market centers, and other opportunities for engagement in income-enhancing on- and off-farm activities such as small-scale trading, brewing, milk processing, and sale of firewood, homemade crafts, and market gardens.

Exhibit 2. Map of Data Collection Sites



Sample Size of Data Collection

For the FGDs, the data collection team used thematic, pre-designed, open-ended questions on gender's intersection with conflict and recurrent shocks to guide discussions with households and community members. Participant characteristics varied by sex, age, and marital status (see Exhibit 3 for participant breakdown). The team conducted a total of 16 FGDs, with each FGD consisting of 6–8 participants. A data collection team of three ethnographers facilitated the discussions.

Exhibit 3. Number and Type of FGD by Analysis District

DISTRICTS	NUMBER AND TYPE OF FGDS						
	Female-headed household	Male-headed household	Wives in male-headed household	Youth[3] (girls)	Youth (boys)	Mixed sex (other)	Total
Dessie Zuria	1	1	1		1		**4**
Wereillu	1	1	1	1	1		**5**
Meket	1	1		1			**3**
Bugna	1[4]					1[5]	**2**
Lasta	1	1					**2**
Total	**5**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**16**

The data collection team conducted a total of 16 in-depth KIIs with respondents from different sections of local society (see Exhibit 4 for participant breakdown). KIIs generated rich information for understanding gender and conflict intersectionality with a range of social relational and cultural factors affecting the well-being and participation of respondents.

[3] The 2004 Ethiopian National Youth Policy defines youth as those aged "between 15–29" (p. 5). Our analysis finds a vernacular perception of youth that broadly encompasses "all who were either too young or yet unborn to receive a government-allotted share when land was last redivided in 1990/91." Building on this local perception, which emphasizes both biological growth and culturally expected household developmental cycle, we define youth in this report to include part of the society who are between 18 to 35 years old.

[4] The eight participants of this group varied by marriage and social status. Five of them were female heads of household who also served as nuns at the nearby "Horehor Abo" Monastery. Two of them were recently divorced women, while the remaining one was a wife within a male headed household.

[5] This was an internally displaced people's group, consisting of five women and two men. Four of them were displaced from Tigray during the 2020–22 war. The remaining came from Oromia (2) and SNPP (1).

Exhibit 4. Number and Type of KIIs by Analysis District

DISTRICTS	NUMBER AND TYPE OF KIIS				
	Religious leaders	*Kire* (community) leaders	Kebele officials (elected farmers)	Other groups (IDPs, elders)	Total
Dessie Zuria	1	1	0	1	3
Wereillu	0	1	3	0	4
Meket	1	1	1	0	3
Bugna	1	0	0	2	3
Lasta	1	0	0	2	3
Total	4	3	4[6]	5[7]	16

2.3.3 Data Analysis

The data collection team recorded and transcribed all FGDs and KIIs to identify key expressions, patterns, and themes relevant for understanding the gendered dimensions of conflict. The team stored all audio files in one location. The team first transcribed the audio files into Amharic scripts before translating them into English, then examined the content of both translated scripts and original Amharic audio files to ensure reliability of information and effective and timely analysis. The sections below outline the key findings and recommendations from this primary data collection process.

2.3.4 Causal Mapping

In addition to the thematic analysis of FGDs, KIIs, and desk review documents, the team simultaneously conducted a causal mapping analysis of the same documentation to visualize the complex

[6] Two of the four kebele officials interviewed were women in Wereillu district.

[7] Three of the five "other groups" interviewed were women. In total, 5 of the 16 people interviewed for KIIs were female (31 percent), which is consistent with existing literature where most leadership positions are male dominated.

interconnections of factors affecting gender and conflict outcomes. The purpose of the causal mapping analysis was to first visualize the system of factors and actors affected by conflict in the study regions, and then to use this information to systematically analyze the connections between these factors to identify potential leverage points. Here, the term "leverage points" refers to potential areas of focus that, when strengthened or directly addressed with present or future programming, could potentially lead to cascading effects throughout the system, ultimately improving key outcomes such as women's and girls' livelihoods and other gendered dimensions of conflict impacts.

The causal mapping analysis employed a process called Purposive Text Analysis, which extracts cause-and-effect relationships from rich qualitative data through a systematic coding process. These codes, or factors, are then analyzed to build an understanding of the different roles that each factor plays in the system and how the interconnections between these factors drive or restrict outcomes of interest (e.g., household income, access to resources, GBV). This causal mapping analysis process produces nuanced systems insights that point to potential leverage points in the system, or places where a small change can lead to larger cascading changes in desired system outcomes. An overview of the mapping and analysis process along with findings detailing potential leverage points is presented in Section 6. Systems Analysis of Gender and Conflict.

2.3.5 Limitations

This analysis draws on rapid ethnographic fieldwork among selected PSNP targeted households. In each community, coverage was limited to a small sampling of household heads and key informants, systematically selected to represent variations not just in type of PSNP benefits (recipients of food/cash-for-work vs. direct cash transfers) but also in sex, age, and culturally expected household developmental cycles. Although this analysis covered ten communities that varied in agro-ecology, religious composition and, to some extent, salient features of local culture, the sample size of primary data collection is limited to only five districts, all of which are in South and North Wollo administrative zones. While two of the North Wollo analysis districts are RFSA-affiliated through the USAID-supported Strengthen PSNP 5 Institutions and Resilience (SPIR) II Activity, the team was unable to travel to other RSFA project areas in Wag Hemra Zone because of security and safety concerns. Furthermore, because of the time and resources available for this analysis, the team had to focus on the number of sites and areas chosen for data collection. It was with this limitation in mind that site selection had to be very strategic and result in findings that could most easily lend themselves to applicability and relevance to other zones and regions.

3. OVERVIEW OF CONFLICT AND RECURRENT SHOCKS IN ETHIOPIA

Poverty in Ethiopia is multidimensional and widespread. Despite substantial reductions in poverty over the past two decades, much of this progress was in urban areas, where the poorest 20 percent did not experience any economic growth (World Bank, 2023). The ability of households to graduate out of poverty remains fraught. Between 1997 and 2005, 15 percent of rural households that escaped poverty subsequently fell back into poverty, while another 25 percent became impoverished over the same period (Mariotti & Diwakar, 2016).

Even if households migrate out of poverty, they remain susceptible to it (Haile et al., 2022). Millions of Ethiopians living in the northern and central highlands are responding to the everyday hardships of poverty, chronic food insecurity, and poor governance while coping with the dynamic trends, patterns, and cycles of multiple shocks such as climate anomalies, fluctuating markets, outbreak of crop pests, and violent armed conflict. These cascading shocks push vulnerable households into poverty traps, making it exceedingly challenging for them to sustainably recover without external assistance. This section discusses the different types of shocks—political, economic, climate, health, and cultural—that have occurred since the conflict in Tigray first began, which will be used as context to understand the intersectionality of gender dynamics within these conflict-affected communities.

3.1 Types of Shocks

3.1.1 Political Shocks

In April 2018, many Ethiopians celebrated the disintegration of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPDRF), which had ruled the country with an iron fist since 1991 (Fuller, 2020). Ethiopians also witnessed the rise of a new prime minister, Dr Abiy Ahmed, who promised to transform the country into a more inclusive and united one, as opposed to an ethnically divided nation. Abiy's reforms were initially applauded both at home and abroad. This support was cited as one of the reasons for Abiy's receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2019 (BBC News, 2018). Over the ensuing years, however, the promised political openings were met by a series of ethnically motivated violent events and political upheavals.[8] Together, these conflicts caused untold deaths and destabilized millions, turning Ethiopia into the home of one of the largest humanitarian and internally displaced people crises in the world.

In November 2020, conflict resulting from power struggles and political reform broke out in northern Ethiopia, which was seen as the start of the conflict in Tigray (BBC News, 2020). While this conflict was mainly in the Tigray region, it has spilled into nearby regions, including Amhara. Fighting and conflict have made it challenging to reach populations in need and has resulted in many people

[8] For detailed timeframe and location of each phase of the Tigray war: (Ethiopian Peace Observatory, 2022)

migrating for safety and work. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency, Ethiopia is now home to 4.2 million internally displaced people and more than 1.5 million internally displaced returnees as a result of the northern and localized conflict (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, n.d.). Internally displaced people have limited protection and access to social services, and unsafe shelters have put women and girls at an increased risk of violence and sexual exploitation (Ministry of Health, Ethiopia, 2022). The conflict has destabilized populations, resulted in thousands of deaths, and left 350,000 people living in famine conditions. As of June 2022, 9.4 million people in Ethiopia were in urgent need of food assistance (Relief Web, 2022). U.S. officials estimated that food insecurity among Tigray's population increased from 15 percent in November 2020 to 80 percent by May 2022 with malnutrition rates of 13 percent and 60 percent for children under five and pregnant and lactating women, respectively (The Guardian, 2022).

Women, men, and children act and are affected differently in periods of conflict and in post-conflict settings. As further explained in the coming sections of this report, the conflict in Tigray has limited these populations' access to resources, education, employment opportunities, basic health services, and protection of basic human rights, and has subjected them to violence and harmful traditional practices. Looting and destruction of public infrastructure has resulted in many people being unable to access basic social services. GBV has become more prevalent, and only half of health facilities in Tigray are providing reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health services because of the conflict (Ministry of Health, Ethiopia, 2022). A full picture of the multidimensional impacts of the conflict is still unknown, but a landmark peace deal in November 2022 signaled the end of the two-year conflict in Tigray (Harter, 2022).

3.1.2 Ethnic Shocks

Ethiopia is home to more than 90 distinct ethnic groups (Minority Rights Group, 2015). Its variety of minority and indigenous communities differ by ethnic, language, religious, and regional identity, with more than 80 languages spoken across the country. The conflict in Tigray triggered a refugee and displacement crisis that has exacerbated tensions between other ethnic groups outside of Tigray. In April 2021, a state of emergency was declared in Amhara because of violent conflict between members of the minority Oromo communities in some parts of the region and their Amhara neighbors (Center for Preventative Action, n.d.). This resulted in massive property damage and widespread displacement (Human Rights Watch, 2022). The conflict has caused bordering regions, like Amhara and Afar, to ally themselves with either federal troops or Tigrayans, leaving many residents vulnerable to attack.

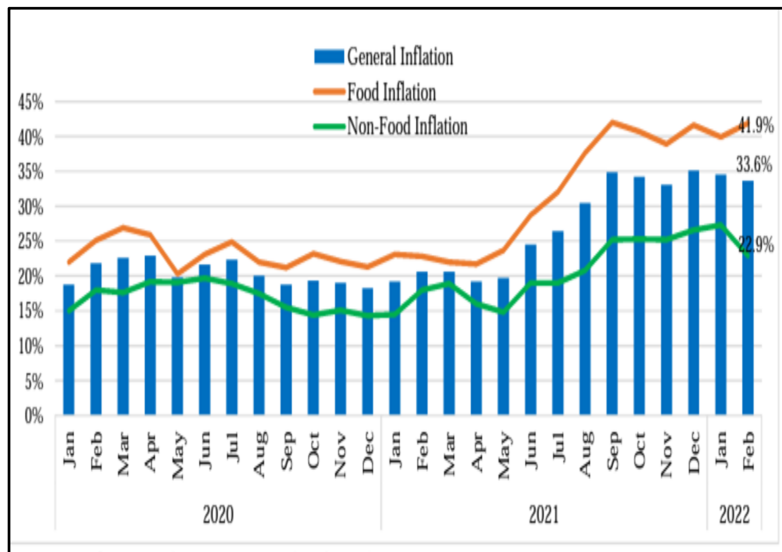
In the Afar region, conflict—which began escalating in 2014—has manifested over disputes related to resources, territory, political struggles, inter-clan leadership, and nationalist sentiment about unfair treatment and neglect by governments (Berhe & Adaye, n.d.). While the underlying causes of these internal conflicts are complex, they often have spillover effects into neighboring states, with households and civilians being disproportionately affected. In Afar, tensions escalated to violent conflict

in 2021 between kebeles situated on the Somali and Afar borders. Key findings from a rapid gender analysis report conducted by CARE Ethiopia found a loss of productive resources for both women and men and heightened concerns from women and girls regarding safety and protection risks, inadequacy of personal and menstrual hygiene products, and lack of social protection support (Kebede, 2021). Additional context on how households within North and South Wollo grappled with ethnic conflict will be described further in the coming sections.

3.1.3 Economic Shocks

Inflation has remained consistently high in Ethiopia over the past five years. This is primarily because of spikes in food costs, resulting in food inflation constituting more than half (54 percent) of general inflation as demonstrated by Exhibit 5 (USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, 2022). Accordingly, to the International Monetary Fund, Ethiopia's gross domestic product was estimated to have grown only 1–2 percent in 2021, as opposed to 5–10 percent in the past five years.

Exhibit . Inflation Trends in Ethiopia (year-on-year)



Supply chain disruptions from COVID-19 and additional government spending to support the armed conflict alongside the steady depreciation of the national currency have contributed to the high rate of inflation. Between February 2017 and 2022, the local currency depreciated by 28 percent. Most recently, the Ukraine-Russian war has caused food prices, primarily for cooking oils, wheat, and non-alcoholic beverages to skyrocket. Because both Ukraine and Russia are major suppliers of these products to Ethiopia, local prices have increased by nearly 50 percent. Furthermore, research has shown that periods of drought and armed conflict are positively correlated with increases in food prices, leading many more households to become food insecure.

> "...the price for a quintal of fertilizer has gone from Birr 400 just a few years back to 6000 Birr this year. We wish that the government regulates prices."
>
> *Male FGD participant in Degnu, Woreillu district, March 26, 2023*

3.1.4 Climate Shocks

In recent years, climate change has caused temperatures to rise, disrupted rainfall, and significantly degraded farmland, resulting in periods of extreme drought and famine in the highlands (UNICEF Ethiopia, 2022). In less than three months, a prolonged period of drought increased the number of people who required food assistance from 8.2 million in October 2015 to 10.2 million in December 2015 (Oxfam and CARE Ethiopia, 2016).

The highlands support over 85 percent of the country's population (Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.-c). Its heavy reliance on rain-fed cultivation, using oxen-pulled plough, makes these rural households highly vulnerable to climate-related shocks (Haile et al., 2022). Over the past couple of years, there have been significant changes in the highlands' landscape composition and configuration, including decreasing and disappearing stream flows, declining levels in groundwater, drying up of springs, siltation from the erosion of lake basins, and more frequent floods and droughts (UNDP, n.d.). In August 2020, heavy rain in the highland areas of Tigray and Amhara caused severe flooding in Afar that displaced over 70,000 people and resulted in loss of land and livestock—significantly hampering their livelihoods (Kebede, 2020).

> "Ours is '*yenuro buti'* (literally, 'wrestling [with nature] to survive]). We are trying to live while constantly being punched by unpredictable climate-related shocks such as poorly timed rains, outbreak of crop pests, killer frosts and hailstones."
>
> *Male FGD participant, Gelsha, Dessie Zuria district. March 25. 2023*

The combination of crops not able to grow on dry farmland and livestock dying by the millions as a result of frequent flooding has made food scarce for rural households who are heavily reliant on farming as their source of income (Relief Web, 2022). In early 2020, Ethiopia dealt with its worst locust plague in 25 years, primarily in the Oromia region, which destroyed crops and resulted in significant food shortages for farmers (Relief Web, 2021). Intensive monoculture farming has reduced soil fertility, forcing farmers to relocate to marginal lands for better cultivation (Yohannes et al., 2020). However, the expansion of land for cultivation has led to a loss of biodiversity, increased watershed contamination, and a significant decline in natural vegetation.

3.1.5 Health Shocks

Ethiopia, like many countries, has also been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As of April 12, 2023, there were just over 500,000 reported COVID-19 infections and over 7,500 COVID-19-related deaths (World Health Organization, n.d.). Beyond its adverse health effects, the COVID-19 pandemic in Ethiopia has led to households experiencing further shocks. Between March and October 2020, three out of four households experienced a reduction or total loss of household income, with nearly one-third (32.3 percent) of these households selling their assets or reducing their food and nonfood expenditures to cope with income loss (Diab, 2021). Only 13 percent of Ethiopian

households had received some form of government assistance by October 2020, which was primarily targeted at PSNP households. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the already existing unequal distribution of work between men and women. Women faced additional barriers, such as taking care of ill relatives and increased caretaking responsibilities during school closures, which also prevented those employed from transitioning back to work during the economic recovery phase (Weiser et al., 2020).

Surveys conducted by the World Bank Ethiopia Team, in collaboration with the GoE, reported that the pandemic exacerbated existing gender gaps among women and women-owned firms, who faced worse economic consequences than their male counterparts. While male-headed households and female-headed households experienced overall food insecurity during the onset of COVID-19, women's economic outcomes, including employment and income, have been consistently worse than their male peers (Weiser et al., 2020). Although they constitute only 42 percent of the national workforce, 57 percent of workers laid off in June 2020 were women. Female-headed households experienced more substantial total household income losses, especially in rural areas. In May 2020, nearly half of female-headed households reported a reduction or complete loss in income compared to only 25 percent of male-headed households. While rates of closure were similar for men and women at about 40 percent, the pandemic widened the gender gap in business earnings, with women-owned firms drastically underperforming compared to men-owned firms in terms of sales and profits.

In addition to COVID-19, the outbreak of other infectious diseases has been both common and difficult to manage within the context of Ethiopia's humanitarian crisis. Most recently, a measles outbreak in early 2022 quickly spread throughout the regions of SNNP, Amhara, Oromia, and Somali, whose rates of vaccination uptake are lower than the national average (Bagcchi, 2022). More recent outbreaks of cholera in Oromia and Somali regions and chikungunya in Somali have been reported alongside malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDs, and non-communicable diseases. The ability of Ethiopia's health system to respond to and fight these diseases is significantly hampered by the multidimensional facets of poverty, antimicrobial resistance, community hesitation, and political instability.

4. FINDINGS BY GENDER DOMAINS

4.1 LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

Ethiopia is a signatory to multiple global agreements and frameworks that ensure and promote gender equality and social inclusion, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Salemot & Birhanu, 2021). While constitutional policies promote gender equity and social inclusion, findings from recent project-level gender analyses reveal that policy

implementation on gender is weak or inconsistent across all sectors (Social Impact, 2020). Policies tend to lack clarity on the enforcement or monitoring of gender-responsive programming, which prevents consistent implementation. The following are key policies and programming relevant to the context of RLA.

4.1.1 Social Safety Net Programs

In 2005, the GoE established Ethiopia's PSNP as a large national social safety net program to respond to chronic food insecurity among Ethiopia's poor and short-term shocks, such as droughts and flooding. As a practical model for designing social safety nets to meet the social protection needs of the most vulnerable and reducing their risk from disaster and climate-related impacts, PSNP targets a highly climate-vulnerable population and provides participants with either food or food and cash in exchange for labor on public works (Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia, 2020).

Our analysis concluded that PSNP is an important component of household income. With the collapse of the formal government structure during the 2020–2022 conflict, however, the program was discontinued across the analysis communities of North and South Wollo. It resumed functioning starting in June 2022. Enrollment in PSNP—whether for direct cash transfers or cash or food-for-work—appears participatory, with clear procedures for targeting households and redressing grievances.

The fifth phase of PSNP (PSNP 5), launched in 2021, emphasizes women's participation in task forces and committees to enable greater prioritization of interventions that benefit women and enhance accountability measures for implementation of gender and social development provisions. It places greater emphasis on implementing sub-projects that reduce women's regular work burden and enhance their opportunity for productive work. To facilitate women's priorities to receive greater attention in the planning process, PNSP 5 increases women's active participation in the community, including kebele food security task forces and community watershed teams. PSNP 5 is also designed to ensure that men, women, youth, and people with disabilities benefit equally from the program by promoting their participation in PSNP decision-making structures and responding to women's responsibility for both productive and reproductive work. There is additional consideration to how access to productive resources differs among men and women in each household, including female-headed households and women in married households (Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia, 2020). However, additional research is needed to evaluate whether, and to what extent, this new PSNP approach has been successful in bringing all these desired changes.

PSNP Enrollment Process

According to the PSNP Implementation Manual, targeting in PSNP involves a range of decisions regarding who qualifies for what benefits, when, and for how long (Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia,

n.d.). Not surprisingly, these decisions are made not by a single body, but by a suite of stakeholders at different phases of implementation. From what the research team gathered in the analysis, the targeting process involves four major steps as outlined in Exhibit 6.

Exhibit 6. Steps to Target Households for PSNP Enrollment

STEP	DESCRIPTION
Step 1	The Community Food Security Task Force (CFSTF) of each community, which is an elected body of farmers tasked with the responsibility of ranking resident households based on targeting criteria, prepares a list of households that qualify for either direct cash transfers or cash-/food-for-work payment on public work programs.
Step 2	The Kebele Food Security Task Force (KFSTF) prepares a more comprehensive list inclusive of kebele-wide socio-economic data to identify extremely poor and vulnerable households.
Step 3	The final list is validated by the general assembly of all resident household heads.[9] The assembly compares all potentially PSNP-eligible households in the list through a rigor process locally called "*ticheta*" (literally, screening).
Step 4	The KFSTF forwards the list of selected households to the Woreda Food Security Department (WFSD) for budgeting and scheduled benefit distribution. USAID/Ethiopia's local IPs, like Organization for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara, are involved at the last stage of the targeting process. Project staff of IPs collaborate with the WFSD to layer and sequence USAID-funded support programs to selected PSNP households and communities.

While the goal across these steps is to ensure that eligible intended recipients (i.e., the ultra-poor) are correctly identified and targeted, the research teams' analysis found that PSNP selection criteria have more recently prioritized the enrollment of internally displaced people and severely conflict-affected individuals—such as surviving spouses of veterans, tortured men, rape survivors, and traders or local entrepreneurs who lost their business establishments—who may or may not qualify as ultra-poor. In theory, this decision makes logical sense. In practice, however, this shift in priority has implications for effective implementation.

PSNP's public works component provides full-time work (i.e., eight hours a day, five days a week) to its participants in exchange for cash and/or food, which greatly restricts their mobility to migrate

[9] During this time, excluded household heads may file grievances to have their case reviewed by the Kebele Administrative Council.

elsewhere in pursuit of new opportunities. Wages of 79 Birr per day are often lower than what could be found in better off areas and remain especially restrictive for internally displaced people, who are often moving in search of work. In speaking with implementing officials (e.g., WFSD, KFSTF, CFSTF), there is also a lack of capacity to accommodate these additional groups amid lack of program funding and historically low graduation rates among PSNP households. A possible alternative to limit the restrictiveness of the PSNP program is to provide temporary direct cash transfers, which will be further explored in the "Access to and Control Over Resources" section.

Implications of the Enrollment Process

Across the analysis communities, we observed that the increased demographic pressure on PSNP enrollment has caused unexpected reductions in the eligible household size of targeted recipients. A majority of the pre-conflict targeted PSNP households, whether male- or female-headed households, reportedly experienced some reduction in family size as Kebele officials tried to accommodate these newly qualified targets. Regardless of this drawback, the emphasis on reaching spouses of deceased veterans, internally displaced people, and GBV survivors is ultimately benefiting women. This trend in women's enrollment in PSNP strongly aligns with the GoE's commitment to women's participation under PSNP 5 but does not negate the fact that some of these women may not qualify as ultra-poor.

Both local implementing officials and the general public agree on the urgency to help war victims and internally displaced people. In the words of one kebele chairman interviewee, "Considering the severity of the crisis we are dealing with, it makes pragmatic sense to give something to eat for everyone in need, as opposed to continuing to support only the poorest of the poor."[10] Although we did not get a chance to ethnographically observe this, we believe that this sense of fairness and consideration of non-economic factors does greatly influence how the general assembly selects its participants. It also influences whether households that file grievances will be reconsidered for PSNP enrollment. This shift in PSNP targeting may be an opportunity for implementers and policymakers to consider whether the existing mechanisms for addressing grievances are still working.

For assembly members, supporting these more marginalized groups would likely be acceptable on culturally perceived paternalistic images of the state as provider to and protector of the weak regardless of the households' economic condition. In this understanding, the emphasis is on pragmatic—and to a greater extent subjective—assessment of who are the deserving recipients, as opposed to adhering to pre-designed selection criteria for PSNP enrollment. For more politically active individuals in the assembly, such as members of the ruling Amhara Prosperity party and other nationalist public mobilizers, prioritizing families of war veterans and "ethnically fellow" internally displaced people would likely be a worthwhile endeavor in supporting political acts to rally ethnically

[10] Interview in Arbit, Market district, March 31, 2023.

based emotional and popular support against the so-called collective ethnic enemies, imagined or real, of Amhara people.

4.1.2 Agriculture

Since the mid-1990s, Ethiopia has sought to address climate-related shocks by implementing a comprehensive national agricultural extension program, which received more government funding and donor support than other similar programs in Africa (T. A. Adem, 2012). When viewed through a gender lens, this program tended to reinforce traditional gender roles and relationships in which women's participation in day-to-day and season-to-season farming activities often ended up being "socially hidden" (H. Pankhurst, 1992). More about this will be discussed in the "Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use" section.

In 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Resources released the Gender Equality Strategy for Ethiopia's Agriculture Sector (2016–2020) (Agriculture Knowledge, Learning Documentation, and Policy Project, Ethiopia, 2018). The strategy aimed to support both male and female rural farmers, pastoralists, and agro-pastoralists to improve their food and nutrition security, increase their incomes, and bolster their resilience to climate change by enabling equitable and fair opportunities to participate in and benefit from agricultural development. While progress under the strategy is not clear yet, the strategy contains detailed monitoring and evaluation frameworks, operational approaches, a roadmap for implementation, and an action plan to incorporate gender into agriculture activities (Social Impact, 2020).

4.1.3 Legal Rights

The GoE has instituted gender-sensitive laws to increase women and girls' capacity for resilience and to eliminate harmful practices. The 2000 Revised Family Code for example increased the legal age of marriage from 15 to 18 years (Martin, 2019). This has resulted in positive impacts such as a 9 percentage point reduction in risk of adolescent birth for exposed cohorts, an 8 percentage point reduction in child marriage, and a 10 percentage point reduction in sexual initiation before age 18 (Rokicki, 2021). Labor force participation in these five regions also rose 15–24 percent compared to regions that had not yet implemented the revised family code, particularly among young women (Hallward-Driemeier & Gajigo, 2015). While this law represents a powerful commitment from the government to improving women's status in marriage and shifting traditional gender norms, child marriage continues to be widespread in Ethiopia, with 40 percent of girls in Ethiopia married before the age of 18 and 14 percent married before the age of 15 (CSA/Ethiopia & ICF, 2016).

The law also gives both spouses in a marriage equal right to property at the beginning, during, and end of marriage. However, if property is inherited by a spouse or acquired prior to marriage, it is considered the personal property of that spouse unless a marriage contract states otherwise. Although

men inherit valuable properties in almost all cases, this restriction places women at a disadvantage. This restriction, along with discriminatory traditional practices that prioritize granting land to sons despite equal acquisition laws, perpetuates women's unequal access to resources and compromises their resilience capacity (Social Impact, 2020). There are widespread concerns that legal measures do not adequately address customary dispute resolution mechanisms, which are predominantly addressed outside of the formal court system in rural communities. Evidence from case studies and from our own analysis suggests that in much of rural Ethiopia, there are patriarchal norms within customary institutions that are less likely to rule in a woman's favor. These cultural practices continue to shape land inheritance practices and restrict women's ownership of assets, which will be discussed further in the "Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use" section.

Ethiopia's penal code criminalizes GBV and harmful traditional practices. In 2013, the GoE launched the National Strategy and Action Plan on Harmful Traditional Practices Against Women and Children, which aims "to see a society free of all forms of harmful traditional practices in which women and children enjoy their human rights, and economic and social opportunities without compromising their life choices" (Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth & UNICEF Ethiopia, 2019). In August 2019, the Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs released a National Costed Roadmap to End Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation. Despite these new gender laws, communities primarily use customary dispute resolution mechanisms, in which village elders are used to resolve conflicts instead of state-sponsored courts. This practice is supported by Ethiopia's Constitution, which grants customary and religious institutions the right to handle personal and family matters with consent from the conflicting parties. These resolution mechanisms rely heavily on cultural norms, the guidance of elders, and the motivation to maintain peace within a community, rather than on the legal rights of those against whom an offense has been committed. Without clear guidance on what types of crimes constitute a criminal matter, many cases of GBV and harmful traditional practices are addressed outside of the formal court system and remain underreported (Enyew, 2014).

4.2 Cultural Norms and Beliefs

Summary

Rape was used as a weapon of war, with combatants deliberately targeting the wives of "wanted, high-profile men." This also invoked violence among civilians, both male and female, who sought to avenge the harm caused to their loved ones.

The conflict had varying effects on every person, regardless of sex, age, and social mobility. The extent of sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV) resulted in a sense of collective victimization among ethnic Amhara. While women and girls were disproportionately affected, the extent of SGBV during the conflict took on a collective dimension when it came to healing, which in turn often led community members to minimize individual suffering among SGBV victims. Acts of SGBV against one were seen as acts against all and as a result, healing was seen as needing to take place as a group, collectively.

Gender norms refer to informal and deeply entrenched social and cultural beliefs, attitudes, and expectations about gender roles, power relations, and how men, boys, women, and girls should behave in a particular social context and time. Learned and internalized early in life, they are ideas or "rules" about how girls and boys and women and men are expected to be and act (United Nations Population Fund & United Nations Children's Fund, 2019).

4.2.1 Harmful Traditional Practices

Despite GoE commitments to end harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and early marriage, socio-cultural norms continue to drive these practices, which disproportionately affect girls and women in all regions of Ethiopia (Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth & UNICEF Ethiopia, 2019). Harmful practices toward girls and women are frequently motivated by families trying to attain social acceptance for themselves and their daughters in their communities and are often perceived as a matter of status and honor. For example, gender norms in relation to chastity and respectability often underlie a family's decision to marry off their daughters at a young age. The conflict seems to have had no or very little effect on such long-held cultural expectations. However, respondents across the study communities reported a substantial increase in the occurrence of parentally arranged marriages mainly caused by the long closure of schools first due to COVID-19 and then by the conflict. In most cases, these marriages reportedly occurred without the consent of girls and rarely with the consent of boys.

4.2.2 Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

SGBV is defined as physical, psychological, financial, and/or sexual violence. According to the 2016 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), Addis Ababa had the highest rate of SGBV in Ethiopia among adolescent girls (aged 15–19 years) at 56 percent, compared to the national average of 35 percent

(CSA/Ethiopia & ICF, 2016). GBV rates among adult women (aged 20–49 years) were fairly consistent across all regions, though highest in Oromia, as evidenced by Exhibit 7. There are gaps in tracking SGBV incidence among boys and men. Since the 2016 DHS, there is an absence of nationally representative data on the incidence and factors tied to SGBV. Incidence of GBV is largely tied to more focused studies; concerning SGBV, in times of conflict, reports find the occurrence to be widespread and likely underestimated because of the stigma and trauma attached to SGBV (OHCHR, 2022).

Exhibit 7. Incidence of SGBV among Adolescent Girls and Adult Women in 2016, by region

BY REGION	ADOLESCENT GIRLS (15–19 YEARS)	ADULT WOMEN (20–49 YEARS)
Ethiopia	35.0%	35.0%
Addis Ababa	55.5%	32.1%
Amhara	45.2%	34.3%
Oromia	37.4%	39.4%
SNNPR	18.2%	30.9%
Tigray	29.4%	35.4%

Despite Ethiopia's progress in adopting highly commendable legal frameworks for the protection of women and girls from SGBV, our desk review of relevant gender analysis report show significant gaps in enforcement. Weak legal enforcement mechanisms, as well as longstanding masculine and militaristic cultural ethos contribute to the occurrence and perpetuation of SGBV. General public attitudes toward SGBV, as measured by attitudes toward wife-beating in different scenarios, are prevalent in highland regions. Exhibit 8 contains illustrative examples of three trends in attitudes toward wife-beating for three different scenarios from the most recent DHS (CSA/Ethiopia & ICF, 2016). Attitudes justifying SGBV were more prevalent among women than men in all regions except for Amhara and Tigray, where men more frequently had attitudes justifying wife-beating than other project regions.

Exhibit 8. Trends in attitudes toward SGBV/Attitudes: Percentage (%) of women (ages 15-49 years) and men (ages 15-59 years) that believed wife-beating is justified, 2016.

LOCATION	SCENARIO WHERE GBV IS ACCEPTED					
	If the woman goes out without telling her husband/partner		**If the woman neglects the children**		**If the woman argues with her husband/partner**	
	Women	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**
Ethiopia	44.5%	18.0%	48.4%	20%	43.1%	17.1%
Addis Ababa	10.3%	2.8%	16.1%	4.3%	8.7%	2.8%
Amhara	39.2%	25.8%	47.5%	33.5%	42.4%	25.7%
Oromia	54.3%	18.3%	52.2%	17.4%	48.5%	16.8%
SNNPR	46.7%	11.9%	53.0%	12.2%	45.5%	10.9%
Tigray	39.2%	20.3%	54.0%	23.7%	46.1%	18.5%

4.2.3 Conflict's Impact on SGBV

There is a growing consensus that the 2020–2022 Ethiopian conflict exacerbated both the occurrence and severity of SGBV, including physical violence, assault, and rape.[11] According to a joint investigation by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the conflict in Tigray, all parties—including members of the Ethiopian and Eritrean defense forces—committed a range of unquantified sexual violence (EHRC & OHCHR, 2021). In particular, women and girls in TDF-controlled areas faced widespread and systematic SGBV that was intended to demoralize, dehumanize, and punish communities, often indiscriminately and sometimes in a targeted manner. These findings are consistent with reports from RLA IPs as outlined in Annex I that highlighted the occurrence of wartime rape and SGBVs among women and girls, which aligns with conclusive testimony from this report's analysis communities (PATH Development Consulting and Research, 2023). In 2022, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission built on the joint report, concluding that based on the evidence collected to date, it is likely that at least hundreds of women and girls have been victims of SGBV. Further, the true magnitude of SGBV is likely severely underestimated because of the stigma and trauma experienced because of SGBV (OHCHR 2022).

[11] In Meket, a government official referred at least 10 rape victims to an area hospital for possible medical support and psychosocial services during the summer of 2021 when TDF forces occupied.

The evidence we gathered also suggests that sexual violence was used as a weapon of war.[12] In some cases, TDF combatants deliberately targeted the wives of "wanted, high-profile men" such as incumbent local officials, armed militia men, pro-government well-off farmers, or influential kire leaders who were publicly supportive of the Ethiopian Defense Forces (ENDF). In recounting acts of rape and torture, respondents cited incidents to perpetrators daring their victims to call for help to their cowardly men or husbands—who were sometimes referred to by various degrading slurs, like "that donkey," "Abiy's servant," or "farting Amhara." Even when husbands happened to be around, they had no option in the face of such aggression but to be bystanders in the act. These atrocities appeared to be both an intentional and systematic use of sexual violence by TDF combatants to avenge similar atrocities that presumably happened in Tigray.

The research team's findings about the targeted and contextual nature of SGBV are also ethnographically supported by fellow researchers at Addis Ababa University. Drawing on qualitative data collection in Lalibela town and surrounding rural communities, their ongoing analysis finds that wartime SGBV, including rape, occurred in specific times and places that motivated combatants to be revengeful and furious.[13]

In addition, respondents also felt that TPLF combatants, as well as army-embedded ethnic Tigray civilians, intentionally used rape as a military tactic not just to emasculate Amhara men, but also to invoke collective humiliation of the Amhara as the "ethnic enemy" of Tigray. The responses we gathered suggest Tigrayan perpetrators used sexual violence to seek vengeance on the perpetrators reported to have harmed their loved ones. This finding coincided with Amnesty International's report in Tigray in which survivors recount perpetrators using ethnic slurs against them, in a way that suggests that sexual violence was deliberate and targeted (Amnesty International, 2022). This finding also shows broad familiar resemblance with global research from the United States Institute of Peace, which found that perpetrators of sexual violence are often civilians, not armed actors, and that perpetrators are not exclusively male, nor are victims exclusively female (Cohen et al., 2013).

Our findings confirm the general consensus that the conflict had varying effects on every person, regardless of sex, age, and social mobility. However, responses from both women and men respondents appeared less straightforward when asked about who in the community had been most affected by the conflict. While people recognized the additional burden of work that women took on to support war efforts, both men and women understood and interpreted wartime SGBV as primarily directed at humiliating men, and by extension, feminizing all members of the Amhara ethnic group

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[12] We reached this conclusion by triangulating relevant information from three different sources: (1) personal accounts of victims themselves, (2) community-supported validation testimonials, and (3) local government-issued medical and service referral letters. Testimony from study respondents is included in Annex II.

[13] Personal communication with Dr. Alula Pankhurst and Tirsit Sahledingle in Dessie on January 8, 2023. These researchers are currently leading a European Union-funded study to explore whether men and women are differentially affected by war. Findings have not been published yet.

collectively. While it is still the research team's conclusion that women and girls were disproportionately affected by these acts of violence, this response demonstrates the extent to which many communities have normalized SGBV as an accepted behavior in conflict settings. Moving forward, the team sees this as an opportunity to support practices that enable trauma-healing and peacebuilding as a way to rebuild trust among community members and provide victim-centered care for survivors.

Our emphasis on the spatial, temporal, and contextual dimensions of SGBV, as opposed to statistical count of incident cases, builds on comparative literature that argues that SGBV may not necessarily be an inevitable wartime behavior, if armed groups do not engage in sexual violence (Wood, 2009). In recognizing that leaders of armed groups set an example for whether sexual violence is prohibited or tolerated, policy and humanitarian interventions should focus on holding leaders legally responsible for this behavior (Cohen et al., 2013). This also opens up space for determining conditions in which some combatants did (not) engage in sexual violence, which can assist policymakers in clearly identifying who the perpetrators are and what their real motives were. At a broader level, this can also help implementers in designing post-conflict interventions that support trauma-healing for victims, which will be discussed further in the "Opportunities for RLA" section.

4.3 Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Summary

Wartime conditions temporarily changed traditional gender norms. Often, men and male youth left the home while women stayed to care for the household and protect their assets (e.g., livestock, land). This resulted in many women overseeing both financial and domestic responsibilities as breadwinners for short periods of time.

To cope with the aftermath of SGBV, women called upon other women as first-line responders, which speaks to the role of women as healers in times of crisis and trauma.

Household and other responsibilities are a more significant time burden for women than men, and the conflict exacerbated women's unequal workload because of the additional work of housing internally displaced people, feeding armed militia, and taking care of the land.

Young men were targeted early on to join the war as combatants and as a result were the majority of casualties. Groups of youth were often feared by armed militia, but community members were more likely to empathize with the hardships of male youth in recognizing their internal struggle as defenders of their country and protectors of their families.

Women play diverse but underreported roles in agriculture despite cultural beliefs implying that women do not contribute to farm work.

Engagement in non-farm and off-farm activities was correlated with greater risk for income loss. This is mainly because the conflict restricted the mobility of these women and youth and hampered well-functioning market chains, which are key drivers to operating profitable off-farm businesses.

Gender norms in Ethiopia delegate the majority of domestic work, such as child rearing, cleaning, food preparation, wood and water collection, and food production, to women and girls (Martin, 2019). This contrasts with gender norms where men—typically heads of household—act as breadwinners, enabling them to spend more time on income-generating activities and less time on unpaid household labor (Social Impact, 2020).

The research team explored variations in culturally expected wartime roles of women, men, boys, and girls to understand how traditional gender roles changed in the context of conflict. The purpose was to develop an in-depth understanding of how respondents, as well as their neighbors and relatives, responded and coped when armed control of their communities shifted, and sometimes re-shifted, between warring factions. The following section discusses the broad patterns we found, which suggest direct correlations between severity of wartime conditions and reinforcement of traditional gender roles and responsibilities.

4.3.1 Labor Participation

Women in Ethiopia more often participate in non-agricultural employment (sales; services; professional, technical, and managerial roles; clerical roles; and both skilled and unskilled manual labor) than agricultural employment (Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.-a). While women in Ethiopia are employed in most sectors, the roles they take on within a sector tend to be low-skill and low-pay and do not give them decision-making influence. One workforce study found that the highest rates of unemployment were in young women. Cultural norms and household responsibilities often result in women's exclusion from various groups related to agriculture. Because of cultural beliefs that women are not able to plow or work the land because it is too labor intensive, they are often excluded from participating in agricultural collectives, land ownership, and having access to agricultural extension services (Food and Agriculture Organization, n.d.-b). Most cooperatives are facilitated by male local officials, with a low number of female agricultural extension workers (Woldu & Tadesse, 2015). Although cultural beliefs imply that women do not engage in farm work, women play diverse, but underreported roles in agriculture (World Vision, 2018). According to the 2016 DHS, 41 percent of women participated in agricultural labor compared to 60 percent for men. Among the women surveyed, 70 percent indicated that their participation was unpaid labor (CSA/Ethiopia & ICF, 2016).

In the context of conflict and political upheaval, however, the analysis data suggested that increased engagement in non-farm and off-farm activities was correlated with greater risk for income loss. This is mainly because the conflict restricted people's mobility and hampered well-functioning market chains, which are key drivers to operating profitable, off-farm businesses. In Meket district alone, a kebele chairman reported that the conflict destroyed more than 13 women- and youth-operated roadside retail shops and business establishments. This was further compounded by the shocks of COVID-19, where women- and youth-owned small businesses suffered greater setbacks than their male counterparts (Weiser et al., 2020).

In addition to the collapse of state structure and destruction of health care facilities, rural communities cited the destruction of service cooperatives, which greatly affected the livelihoods of their business owners. These collectively owned retail stores sold basic consumer goods, such as soap, salt, cooking oil, sugar, and light solar lamps, whose limited supplies caused both demand and price to increase. In Asgedo, South Wollo, for example, the service cooperatives lost the flour mill on which residents relied for grinding grain at an affordable price. In several other communities, service cooperatives also lost unquantified amounts of stored chemical fertilizers and improved seeds waiting to be distributed for farmers.

4.3.2 Women's Role in Agriculture

The Ethiopian highland's plow-based system is rigidly gendered in nature. Plowing is associated with the plow man, which is by definition male. Women are culturally prohibited from plowing, but actively engage in a range of other farming activities, such as growing and harvesting spices, vegetables, and oil seeds—often through a mixed-cropping method that prioritizes staple crops. During the conflict, women did perform a range of tasks traditionally defined as men's work, including harvesting, threshing, and storing crops, but only for a short period. This was often the result of necessity when men left home—either for safety somewhere else or to fight on the side of government forces—so wives assumed the interim role as heads of household.

In recounting their own lived wartime experience, discussants also pointed out the bravery of women in protecting their wealth (i.e., assets) from TDF combatants. In some cases, women stepped outside of the home to directly confront TDF combatants who were stealing their livestock and poultry, which in a pre-conflict setting would have been an uncommon role for women to play. Despite these examples that suggest a shift in day-to-day agricultural activities, the research team believes that these effects were short-lived. Because the conflict only lasted for one farming season, it was likely not enough time to produce transformational shifts in gender norms. However, this change could be too early to detect, which invites the opportunity for additional ethnographic research to evaluate these intra-household dynamics over a longer period of time.

4.3.3 Women's Time Use

For girls and women, time and caretaking responsibilities increase with age, with the greatest burden of work on older women (Martin, 2019). The time women and girls spend on household responsibilities can reach up to 15–17 hours per day, leaving little time to attend to personal needs and limiting access to networks, information, employment, and educational opportunities while increasing the risk for early school dropout or exit from the formal labor force altogether (Social Impact, 2020). The emphasis on men's work outside the home and women's work inside the home can hinder women's access to health services. These findings are supported by RLA IP reports as outlined in Annex I, most notably USAID/Ethiopia's Livelihoods for Resilience (L4R)'s "The Her Time"

study, where women reported spending more time on household chores than economic activities (CARE Ethiopia, 2022).

The southward expansion of the conflict in Tigray into parts of Amhara region beginning in 2021 played a role in exacerbating women's unequal workload across the analysis communities. In preparing meals and dry rations for ENDF and TDF units positioned in the area, for example, women were burdened with having to cook longer for more people. During this time, women also shouldered the additional burden of hosting internally displaced family members and relatives from TDF-controlled areas. The laboriousness of this responsibility was further exacerbated by conflict-induced destruction of the electric supply system, which forced women to stone grind grains by hand. Some respondents reported additional challenges of hosting internally displaced people from TDF-controlled towns whose cultural preferences and household standards were different than their own.

Under TDF control, wartime household exigencies forced a majority of women to perform additional roles as breadwinners for a short period of time. In the absence of male labor, women were forced to combine their regular domestic tasks with the extraordinary responsibilities of being sole breadwinners and urgent caregivers. In a few cases, women also took part in military training drills that lasted long hours and several weeks. Ironically, the same women who previously contributed both labor and food items to feed ENDF contingents also found themselves being responsible for feeding TDF combatants at later stages in the conflict.

The research team's analysis found that, rather than the remaining men sharing the burden of these extra responsibilities, women simply took on more work, in part because most of the additional conflict-related work was traditionally seen as women's work (e.g., hosting internally displaced people, cooking for armed militia). These findings are consistent with pre-conflict DHS data, where only 37 percent of men in Ethiopia helped their wives/partners with household chores, and only 18 percent did so on a regular basis. Men's engagement in household chores decreased from 2011 to 2016 in all regions, except for Tigray, where men's engagement in household chores stayed the same, and Addis Ababa, where it increased by 42 percent, as outlined in Exhibit 9 (CSA/Ethiopia & ICF, 2016).

Exhibit 9. Pre-conflict Trends of Male Engagement in Household Chores in Relevant Regions

REGION	2011	2016	% CHANGE
Ethiopia	24%	18%	-25%
Addis Ababa	24%	34%	42%
Amhara	22%	17%	-23%

Oromia	21%	14%	-33%
SNNPR	34%	19%	-44%
Tigray	17%	17%	0%

4.3.4 Women's Role in Conflict

For several weeks prior to the southward expansion of the conflict in Tigray, women across the analysis communities contributed to the war effort by preparing dry rations for ENDF. Jointly coordinated by local government officials and kire leaders, this task became increasingly compulsory and frequent as TDF took control of more areas in Amhara region and ENDF retreated further south. Local officials, especially women incumbents and ruling party members, mobilized women to support the war effort by cooking meals and preparing dry rations. Because of the increasing control of TDF and the propaganda efforts by the GoE to mobilize public support, several women across communities in South Wollo also signed up to receive military training and eventually joined local militia groups as armed combatants.[14]

Later on, when TDF controlled the analysis communities for the first time, most women stayed home to take care of their children and dependent household members, including elderly parents and sick people. In contrast, a majority of men and adult boys left home for at least a few days because of public apprehension that TDF combatants would arrest and/or forcefully conscript all able-bodied Amhara men. As previously described, the absence of men forced women to perform numerous additional tasks, including caring for domestic animals and safeguarding homes from looting. In most cases, women also became responsible for feeding TDF combatants either by providing them with readily available cooked food or flour and other ingredients to take to camp for cooking large group meals. Women were compelled to provide combatants with food when militia men either surrendered as defeated combatants or escaped to government-held areas to continue the fight.

With the exception of a few women in South Wollo who received military training to become combatants in local militia units, the analysis did not find a lasting difference in gender roles and behaviors of women and men, and young boys and girls. Responses collected across the analysis communities referred to limited wartime gender role adjustments related to the absence of male labor, power outages, breakdown of market chains, and a range of other household-specific challenges.

[14] In one South Wollo community, for example, 150 women received military training. Six of these women actually received weapons from the district and served as members of the local militia unit. TDF controlled the areas while the remaining women were still waiting for weapons to be delivered from the district government.

All of these qualitative examples further suggest that the 2020–2022 Ethiopian conflict did not open up opportunities for transforming gender roles and responsibilities. Instead, the demands of feeding soldiers and hosting IDPs at different phases of the conflict ended up reinforcing them.

In considering the role that women played as healers in their community, female respondents spoke openly about the abuse and violence they endured by armed militia. To cope in the aftermath of rape, women called upon other women as first-line responders. Women spoke openly of their trauma, which permitted others to do the same. These informal support networks were the purest forms of healing and a coping mechanism that women used to rationalize their trauma. While this may have reduced the stigma and shame brought upon women who were survivors of SGBV, it also could have contributed to desensitizing them to the severity of this violent behavior by presuming that the perpetrators primarily targeted the collective (ethnic Amhara) and only derivatively targeted individuals. This emphasis on collective victimization tends to belittle variations in the severity of pain experienced at household and individual levels. Still, by more fully understanding who women draw support from in periods of shock, RLA is better positioned to understand how Activity programming can support SGBV survivors by providing trauma-informed care, which is further explored in the "Opportunities for RLA Adaptation" section.

4.3.5 Young Men's Role in Conflict

Respondents across the analysis communities were particularly empathetic to the hardships faced by youth, particularly young men, during the conflict. Young men are defined as unmarried or married men aged 20–35 and often have young children and elderly parents to care for. In traditionally patriarchal societies, men see themselves as fighters in defense of their family and community. However, as people responsible for raising small children and caring for elderly parents, these men were often compelled to stand back and face humiliation, including watching TDF combatants abuse their loved ones, rather than risk being killed and leaving their dependents without a caretaker. This perceived emasculation of ethnic Amharas during the southern advance of the TDF appears to have resulted in community members empathizing with the hardship of male youth.

At the beginning of the conflcit, Amhara nationalist politicians and public mobilizer activists encouraged youth to sign up for military training and join the force either as a combatant, member of a voluntary youth group, "*Fanno*," or the regional state's special force. The mobilization intensified as the conflict expanded to parts of North Wollo. By the summer of 2021, thousands of young men had become combatants with limited military training. Those who did not receive training supported the army in

other capacities, including delivering rations to different regiments, helping wounded soldiers, and burying the dead. As a result, casualties of the conflict were primarily young men.[15]

This led TDF combatants to see any youth in occupied Amhara communities as a potential danger. In the words of one eyewitness, "TPLF combatants assumed all Amhara youth to be Fanno. This made them nervous whenever they saw young people hanging together. In Felegehiwot, for example, combatants brutally kicked a group of unsuspecting youth, alleging that they were government spies."

4.4 Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Summary

Traditional land practices drive the more frequent passing of land and livestock to men and sons through inheritance than to women and girls, who gain access to land through marriage. This results in women and girls being unable to equally benefit from asset ownership (i.e., land, livestock) compared to their male counterparts.

Because of strict land redistribution practices in the highlands, informal land sharing arrangements provide households with opportunities for adjusting their assets and strategies in response to shocks or other constraints.

PSNP remains a reliable source of income for households despite wages from off-farm activities being reasonably higher than income gained from cash/food-for-work programs, which restrict movement.

Both men and women from PSNP households actively and equally participate in traditional saving clubs, such as village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) and microfinance institutions, which are integral to accessing credit and financial services in rural settings.

Female-headed households tend to be more food insecure than male-headed households. Although households have traditionally coped with shocks by sharing food among each other, these traditional food sharing mechanisms have become less common as a result of the conflict, free market trade, and donor-funded programming.

The conflict exacerbated agro-ecological and seasonal shocks where land was destroyed, primarily during peak harvesting and threshing season, increasing the effects of food insecurity on PSNP households.

4.4.1 Access to Land

Beginning in the mid-2000s, Ethiopia implemented a comprehensive land registration program that issued title certificates to qualified holders of all agricultural parcels. This program is widely acclaimed for significantly enhancing the tenure security of title holders—typically for older men and women—who qualified to receive a government-allocated share when land was last redistributed (Quisumbing & Pandolfelli, 2008). With increased demographic and commercial pressures on agricultural land,

[15] Official figures on casualties are not publicly available; this analysis' generalization draws mainly on eye witness accounts from FGD participants.

however, the tenure security of these groups tends to pose serious challenges to the land rights of young men and women who came of age without access to government-allotted shares of land (T. A. Adem, 2019).

The ethnographic analysis emphasizes the continuity of this generational tension. While young men and women who came of age after the final land redistribution in the late 1990s did not have their own land, they could claim a "child's share of land" (in Amharic: "*yelij dirsha*") from the total land that their family received. The recognition of this share legally entitles the bearers (i.e., children) to inherit a share of the family land. However, this right tends to be only theoretical, as the holder of the land (i.e., parents) can designate their favorite heir(s). Based on the analysis findings, a father's designated heir tends to be his son—very rarely his daughter—who commits to caring for both the land and aging parents by staying in the village. Siblings of this chosen heir are often excluded from this right and are more likely to leave the village in search of better options elsewhere and/or become salaried employees by attending school or vocational training.

Outside of the household, the research team observed that most of these male farmers—who benefited from this right—accessed other peoples' land through a range of local informal arrangements (Ghebru & Holden, 2008). Across the analysis communities, the most common type of arrangement is for households with sufficient oxen and male labor to access the land of those who lack these two resources in exchange for either a share of the harvest, fixed rent, or a combination of both (Planel, 2010). Informal land sharing arrangements provide households with opportunities to adjust their assets and strategies in response to shocks or other constraints (Robertson, 1987). For example, when a prolonged drought looms, poor households typically migrate in search of work, often to cities or commercial farms, and give their land to a trusted sharecropper to tend while they are away.

The typical pattern is that poor land owners choose fixed-rent arrangements during periods of shock (Gebregziabher & Holden, 2011). The income generated from these fixed-rent arrangements is often used either for household consumption and/or covering the transport cost for migrating family members (Gray & Mueller, 2012). In normal rain years, however, poor households choose a sharecropping arrangement, which guarantees them—depending on the actual terms—up to half of the yield (Bezabih, 2009). Female-headed households are more reliant on these arrangements because they lack male labor (Amare, 1999). Therefore, rights to one's land are dependent on households living in the community. Because land sales are prohibited by the GoE, people are unable to migrate or move elsewhere for labor without losing their land in the process (Morrissey, 2013). In northern Ethiopia, where agriculture is the dominant industry, land rights are especially restrictive, which is why these informal land arrangements are so common.

The ethnographic data also confirmed that rural women working in the agriculture sector continue to encounter additional barriers that hinder their ability to optimally benefit from the land they own.

Young widows and female-headed households are especially vulnerable to increased tenure insecurity and costly disputes over asset transfer rights, largely because of inheritance practices (Ege, 2017). Traditional practices drive the more frequent passing of land and livestock to men/sons, with women usually gaining access to land through joint titling from marriage as opposed to inheritance, which would allot independent ownership and decision-making over the land (Social Impact, 2020). Gender inequality is prevalent in ownership of land and assets across the highlands, as outlined in Exhibit 10, where women are more likely to share ownership of houses and land compared to sole ownership by men (CSA/Ethiopia & ICF, 2016).

Exhibit 10. House and Land Ownership by Sex and Region (2016)

REGION	WOMEN				MEN			
	House ownership		Land ownership		House ownership		Land ownership	
	Alone	Jointly	Alone	Jointly	Alone	Jointly	Alone	Jointly
Ethiopia	14.7%	33.9%	15.2%	24.4%	36.2%	17.3%	35.1%	14.9%
Amhara	8.1%	53.7%	14.2%	36.1%	20.7%	30.8%	21.6%	23.6%
Oromia	19.0	26.5%	17.6%	18.8%	44.7%	9.0%	43.8%	9.8%
SNNPR	18.9%	30.2%	16.6%	29.5%	37.1%	15.1%	37.4%	16.9%
Tigray	8.9%	35.0%	17.4%	19.2%	25.5%	12.7%	27.2%	6.1%

4.4.2 Access to Finance

Across the analysis communities, one common feature among PSNP-targeted household heads was their high dependence on non-farm activities to generate income. They all have too little land and productive assets to produce sufficient food, relegating them to pursue locally available non-farm activities such as selling local drinks and beverages, retailing consumer goods in weekly marketplace stalls and/or roadside shops, and petty trading in a range of locally available or desired products. Collectively referred to in local parlance as "*yedihnet nuro*" (literally, poverty livelihoods), these pursuits rely on the laborers' ability to move freely. During times of conflict, however, mobility is

significantly hampered, and the resulting income loss from non-farm activities prevents households from being able to graduate out of poverty.[16]

> "[Prior to the conflict,] I was a VESA community facilitator and I used to earn a decent income for that from the project. But, during the conflict, VESA ceased to operate, and I lost my income. I don't have any other means of income now except the cash-for-work I earn from [public work component of the] PSNP."

During field analysis, for example, the daily wage rates ranged from 50 birr (about $0.92) for season-long employment in publicly funded nursery stations to 200 birr (about $3.70) for casual construction work. The going rate for laborers in PSNP's public works program was as low as 79 birr (about $1.46) per day. While we don't have comparable data for judging the daily income of petty traders and drink sellers, we presume that income from these "free market" pursuits is relatively higher than that of laborers despite the risk associated with this work being seasonal and inconsistent. This insight was generated from an extended FGD with some non-PSNP-targeted, female internally displaced people currently living with host families in Bugna district. When asked if they wish to be targeted for public work projects, they responded that they would rather use the time to brew and sell local drinks or migrate away in search of better paying work. Comparing PSNP's public work component with perceived opportunities elsewhere, these respondents felt that the program could inhibit labor movements in search of better paying opportunities elsewhere.

However, this concern was not raised in any of our FGDs with the core intended recipients of PSNP, who are categorized as ultra poor. In exploring whether respondents would consider PSNP as one of their main sources of income, all of them confirmed this to be the case. Furthermore, many of these recipients, both men and women, actively and equally participated in both traditional saving clubs (equib) (Aredo, 1993) and newer microfinance institutions, like the Amhara Credit and Saving Institution (ACSI) which, although recently rebranded as a full-fledged Tseday Bank, remains a ubiquitous household name across the analysis communities. However, despite participation among PSNP households in microfinance activities, women's ownership and use of bank accounts remains persistently low compared to men, as shown in Exhibit 11 (CSA/Ethiopia & ICF, 2016).

Exhibit 11. Ownership and Use of Bank Accounts and Mobile Phones, by Sex and Region (2016)

	OWNERSHIP AND USE OF BANK ACCOUNT		OWNERSHIP AND USE OF MOBILE PHONES	
Region	Women	Men	Women	Men

[16] This conclusion agrees with a 2012 L4R report, which shows the increased vulnerability of off-farm pursuits such as wage labor employment and petty trading during conflict-induced mobility restrictions.

Ethiopia	15%	26%	27%	54%
Amhara	20.9%	33.6%	21.2%	48.4%
Oromia	8.4%	17.0%	23.3%	53.5%
SNNPR	8.0%	18.7%	20.4%	49.5%
Tigray	22.7%	35.5%	31.4%	62.3%

In North Wollo, a majority of PSNP households also participated in village economic and social associations (VESAs) under CARE Ethiopia's Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development (GRAD) project. Originating from CARE's highly successful VSLA, VESAs leverage the group savings model by having female and male members engage together in formal organizations. This supports social transformation in facilitating discussions among different genders related to women's empowerment, food security, and financial inclusion. A study by L4R found that having a VESA account in one's name enabled women to mobilize savings and have more control over their finances and credit (CARE Ethiopia, 2022). Despite this promising model, L4R's recent gender analysis found that households have stopped saving in their VESAs on account of the economic impacts of the conflict, which calls for further investigation.

We also observed that the use of group collateral as a measure to guarantee return of financial credit to young men and women, which was one of the EPRDF government's strategies for youth engagement, appears to have been discredited as an effective strategy. Respondents reported that it caused increased intra-group rivalry and disputes among members and showed no or very little excitement about borrowing capital against group collateral to jointly engage in rural enterprises for on- and off-farm activities. Instead, ambitious young respondents across both sexes displayed more passion and energy when talking about what they envisioned, and in some cases tried, to pursue on their own as independent operators.

4.4.3 Access to Food

According to data from the World Food Programme, female-headed households are better off than male-headed households in Ethiopia, when it comes to food security. This can be attributed to female-headed households having fewer members, decreasing intra-household demand, and improving food access (Government of Ethiopia, World Food Programme, 2019). However, female-headed households generally have less access to resources such as labor, education, assets, landholding, and

inputs that can then limit their ability to engage beyond subsistence agriculture, and they are more likely to select household consumption crops that have higher dietary diversity but less income-generating potential than cash crops, whereas male-headed households are more likely to grow cash crops that have more income-generating potential but may be more vulnerable to market changes.

Regardless of variations in the vulnerability context, the responses we gathered from communities highlight the presence of a range of informal and formal mechanisms for coping with food insecurity. For instance, well-off farmers on important occasions will invite their less fortunate neighbors to eat with them. Poor household heads also borrow grain from others, most commonly relatives or land-sharing partners, to make up for seasonal food shortages. Grain borrowing becomes especially important during periods of drought. Despite these coping strategies, respondents across the communities noted a long trend of general decline in a needy person's ability to draw on traditional food sharing mechanisms. When asked whether his household drew on cultural resources to borrow or lend food during the conflict, an elderly man in Bugna district responded that this type of help had ceased long ago. He presumed that the rich had become too impoverished to help others. While it is plausible that the number of rich villagers has declined over time, the real driver of this trend appears to be households' increasing reliance on donor-funded aid programs and market-based mechanisms. This respondent's perception, then, appears to be at odds with recent research that confirms the success of Ethiopia's poverty reduction efforts (Stifel, 2017).

4.4.4 Conflict's Impact on Agricultural Production

Reflecting on the broad temporal context in which the 2020–2022 conflict occurred, both men and women respondents emphasized the centrality of "time" in affecting their crop yield. Broadly construed in vernacular parlance as "*weqt*" (context or situation), time for rain-dependent farmers can be both a friend, by fostering productivity and harvesting yields, and foe, by exacerbating proneness to crop-destroying hazards such as poorly timed rains, pest outbreaks, killer frosts, and invasive weeds. There were notable agro-ecological and seasonal differences in the ways the 2020–22 conflict exacerbated this sensitivity across the analysis communities.

For most of the communities in North Wollo, the conflict started at the optimal seeding time in July 2021, continued through the peak weeding time in August and September, intensified during the prime harvest time beginning in late November, and finally subsided at the start of the threshing period in mid-December. By contrast, TDF took control of the South Wollo communities only beginning in October when some of the crops—most notably maize in-home gardens and beans and peas on hillside plots and along the main roads—were almost ripening. Although the TDF occupation only lasted for about 40 days, the last few weeks and days leading to the end of the conflict in the first week of December coincided with the peak harvesting and threshing season. For this reason, destruction in South Wollo was more significant than North Wollo because of the timing of the harvesting and threshing season.

When asked to explain the direct impacts of the conflict on day-to-day agricultural activities, respondents emphasized the significant landscape-level variations. Across all communities, the conflict's physical presence included military bases that were located along strategic access points and camping sites. As a result, land closer to sites of actual military operations was significantly destroyed, while crops on plots located in more remote areas and inaccessible off-the-road valleys remained unaffected. Respondents also noted that combatants often positioned themselves inside plots covered with thick and high-stem crops such as maize, beans, and wheat. Combatants preferred these plots because the ripening and vegetatively tall crops served as both camouflage and food sources.

4.5 Patterns of Power and Decision-Making

Summary

Household managers are more likely to rearrange the size and composition of their household in hopes of deriving the maximum benefit from government services as a result of coping with recurrent shocks. This is particularly apparent among youth who have identified themselves as dependents to qualify for additional benefits as part of PSNP's targeted focus on landless youth.

Kire groups, which are traditional community structures to support households during periods of death and crisis, were leveraged during the conflict to cope with war- and climate-related effects. These groups offer potential benefits to support adaptive and transformative resilience, despite being patriarchal in nature.

Religiously affiliated informal associations remain both present and socially important in predominantly Christian communities and were leveraged during the conflict to support trust and rebuilding among their members.

Despite political engagement increasing at the local level, women's leadership in political groups remains limited.

Our analysis showed that the basic unit of social organization across the analysis communities is the household (*beteseb*, "people of the house"). A typical household in the highlands consists of a married couple, their children, and, depending on their economic situation, elderly parents and some poor relatives and orphans. Decision-making related to agriculture is greatly vested in the man of the house (*Aba Wara*). The man of the house also represents the household in public affairs. In most cases, however, the wife also plays an important role both in co-managing household economic decisions and engagement with relatives, community members, and social networks, which is consistent with existing literature on household dynamics. Other household members, including unmarried adult sons and daughters, are expected to respect the authority of their parents, especially their father.

4.5.1 Household Decision-Making

Despite the traditional household structure, the highland Ethiopian household model continues to allow for "rapid turnover" in household membership as a coping mechanism to adapt to changes in the availability of productive assets and sufficient food. Household managers may rearrange the size and composition of their household in hopes of deriving the maximum benefit from publicly funded,

and/or donor-supported, post-conflict intervention programs including cash transfers. In times of emergency food aid distribution, for example, research has shown that young men (rarely girls) who had previously identified themselves as dependents of their parents sought to qualify for more benefits by presenting themselves as heads of their own household (Adem, 2004).

Although we lack solid demographic data to empirically test this theory, our research suggests that households in the analysis communities are more vulnerable than ever because of their increased exposure to recurrent multiple shocks. One piece of evidence for this is the high turnout of young men and women, including adolescent boys and girls, that were observed at PSNP distribution centers. This trend is partly related to the government's desire to target landless youth, which it categorizes as youth (aged 15–29) who are heads of newly established autonomous household units (Ministry of Health, Ethiopia, n.d.). However, some youth respondents, both boys and girls, interpreted this rule differently and continue to be dependent members within stem parental households.

The increased presence of youth at PSNP events during field observations was matched by the near absence of elderly men. Respondents stated that this trend is in line with the government's desire for PSNP 5 to not target well-established household heads who received land when it was last redistributed. When viewed in broad structural terms, however, both trends appear at odds with the presumed patriarchal nature of highland Ethiopian core values where elderly men continue to influence most domains of life, including by mediating domestic disputes and defining the terms for redistributing culturally expected entitlements (Levine, 1965; Hoben, 1963).

4.5.2 Community Mechanism for Mutual Help and Coordination

In our analysis, we sought to explore whether participants were actively engaging in local institutions, which are broadly conceived to encompass a range of formal and informal cultural mechanisms, relationships, and practices that shape social expectations related to sharing key resources such as land, labor, traction power, livestock, food, and other social support. The following outlines the existing structures that exist in the analysis communities and what opportunities there are to leverage these structures to support RLA's resilience programming.

4.5.2.1 Overview of *Kire* Groups

Most respondents, including women and married youth, are actively engaged in residence-based groups called "*kire*" in rural Wollo and "*iddir*" in towns in other parts of Ethiopia (Pankhurst & Mariam, 2000). In both North and South Wollo, there were up to five neighborhood *kire* groups in each analysis community (Castro, 2001). *Kire* groups are primarily concerned with providing their members with labor, material, and emotional support in times of death and other crises, such as arson, accidental death of oxen, and drought. Each household head, regardless of gender or wealth, is a member of at least one *kire* (Hoddinott et al., 2009). While women and youth are represented in these groups, their

roles and responsibilities are gender-specific (e.g., women cook while men bury the dead), which reinforces existing gender norms.

Our analysis identified explicit examples of how *kire* groups were leveraged to support households in coping with the effects of conflict. For example, in Wereillu district of South Wollo, *kire* members collectively protected their common resources, including an NGO-installed solar panel to generate power for a community water pump, from looters. To protect the pump from TDF combatants, male *kire* members guarded the solar panel on rotating shifts. In another community, a male *kire* group member negotiated with TDF leaders to convince them to loosen mobility restrictions on community members. In the battle-hit Arbit community, male *kire* members coordinated to bury the dead, and in Gelsha, respondents spoke of elderly women who provided much-needed comfort and psychosocial support to rape survivors and surviving family members of a deceased veteran, including his grieving widow.

4.5.2.2 The Impact of *Kire* Groups

FGD participants in several communities argued that the conflict threatened to weaken the solidarity of *kire* members by instilling fear and inter-personal suspicion. This is because TDF combatants used local informants to pursue militia men and incumbent local government officials, whom they considered dangerous unless captured and disarmed. In most cases, locating these wanted men and collecting guns that they reportedly hid required frequently visiting their homes and harassing remaining family members. The visits often combined asking detective questions and threatening uncooperating family members with severe punishments. This practice had reportedly caused conflicts between alleged TDF collaborators and pro-government groups. Similarly, the conflict caused ill feelings between individuals suspected of using the political unrest to steal property from neighbors and public institutions. The latter included service centers of local farmers' unions, local government offices, health care facilities, and schools.

Yet, such conflict and mistrust appeared limited to a few individuals. Our study confirmed the continuity of *kire* groups in the face of these conflict-induced divisions. As in the pre-war years, *kire* groups combined important features of a collective action group and facilitated wider social capital among their members (IFPRI, n.d.). As a collective action group, each *kire* embodies clearly defined roles and responsibilities, conflict resolution mechanisms, and accountability measures for noncompliance. As a network of households, the analysis also showed that *kire* groups have an impressive ability to collectively enforce social norms that facilitate coordination, cooperation, and social trust among members.

These features provide some potential benefits for supporting adaptive, and even transformative, resilience. In the roadside Arbit town in Meket district, for example, off-farm laborers, primarily engaged in loading and unloading grain, reportedly formed a brand new *kire*-like association to increase

their collective bargaining power both with local freight operators and government officials (Aspen & Ege, 2010). In another part of Ethiopia, a study found that household heads joined multiple "*iddir*" (i.e., *kire* groups) at different territorial scales to better access networks and resources outside of their community (Dercon et al., 2008). These networks are often leveraged to obtain labor help, which is especially critical when poorly timed rains threaten to destroy yields (Krishnan & Sciubba, 2009).

In linking social capital, *kire* groups can be an important platform for connecting households with publicly funded and donor-supported government programs that work to mitigate ecosystem degradation (IFPRI, n.d.). *Kire* groups are well suited to collectively build expert-recommended soil, water, and forest conservation schemes, which aligns with how they have traditionally been working in communities to reconstruct flood damaged roads or community water wells and control invasive plants (Adimassu et al., 2017). Of particular interest to RLA will be the extent to which these *kire* groups may have been integrated with formal government structures such as neighborhood-based development teams (Amharic: "*limat budin*") through which new technologies and service delivery models are implemented.

4.5.2.3 Existing Community Structures

Outside of *kire* groups, the analysis demonstrated the enduring presence and social importance of faith-based informal associations in predominantly Christian communities like Gelesot (Lasta) and Ayna Mikael (Bugna). The most important of these include weekly (*sänbätê*) and monthly (*mahbär*) religious congregations established around local Christian patron churches. In addition to preparing feasts in honor of their favorite patron, these congregations provide members with opportunities to nurture friendship and trust in each other, which often translates into support during times of need.

Respondents reported similar stories of drawing on cultural and religious resources to coordinate collective action and mutual help in North Wollo, too. They shared stories about two area priests who used to visit the local TDF war camp, often carrying the holy cross and dressed in ceremonial regalia, to ask forgiveness on behalf of the family of captured warriors. Over the course of the occupation, the priests reportedly assisted four young men, including a severely beaten and sick son of an elderly woman. These responses confirm that both men and women draw on residence- and religion-based community mechanisms to cope with crises and rebuild their livelihoods during periods of shock.

Contrary to the continued ubiquity and social importance of both residence and faith-based institutions, interviewees made no or very little reference to major types of institutions for sharing labor, such as reciprocal labor ("*wonfel*") and festive labor (variously known as "*dabbo*" in South Wollo or "*wabara*" in parts of North Wollo), that appear in the general anthropological and historical literature on Wollo ("From Poverty to Famine in Northeast Ethiopia – Penn Press," n.d.; Adem, 2012). In some parts of South Wollo, this absence suggests that the effectiveness of these institutions might

have greatly declined with the rise of formal labor markets (Carter et al., 2007). Other possible reasons may include the availability of food/cash-for-work payments on PSNP public work projects and the ability of laborers to benefit from wage work elsewhere through migration (Gray & Mueller, 2012).

The analysis also revealed that both men and women farmers across the analysis communities actively participated in organized political parties as grassroots party leaders and mobilizers. While data on party membership is hard to come by, data publicly posted in one South Wollo community reported that the ruling Prosperity Party had 725 registered members. This accounted for more than 50 percent of the total 1,345 resident household heads. These members were locally organized into 20 primary party branches with each primary party further divided into smaller subsections called cells. During the research team's visit, the kebele had a total of 152 party cells. Of this, 114 cells (75 percent) were led by male party representatives and the remaining 38 (25 percent) by female leaders.

The lower percentage of women in leadership positions is consistent with public data showing that women are often underrepresented at the regional and local levels of government, except in local courts. Feedback from women interviewed for a study on women in leadership and decision-making indicated that there are insufficient support systems for developing leadership skills in women and absence of strategies to lessen women's household responsibilities so they can assume more leadership roles (Social Impact, 2020). Women in this context have limited access to education and training to prepare and position them for leadership roles and often do not have the time to fully engage in these roles regardless.

5. DISCUSSION: WHAT DID WE LEARN ABOUT THE KEY STUDY QUESTIONS?

The analysis provides some answers to the following exploratory research questions relating to gender's intersectionality with conflict and compounding impacts.

A. Gender's Intersection with Armed Violence: In what ways, and to what extent, did reported wartime roles and behaviors of men, women, and youth vary?

Apart from a few women in South Wollo who received military training to defend the community as part of armed local militias, our study did not find significant changes in the conflict's intersectionality with traditionally expected gender-based roles and responsibilities. Instead, responses across communities reinforced common gender norms that delegate combat roles exclusively to able-bodied men and domestic work and related civilian roles to women.

Early on, when the study communities were still under government control, local officials, especially female incumbents and ruling party members, mobilized women to support the war effort by cooking

meals and preparing dry rations. Meanwhile, men supported the cause by becoming militia men and by donating cash and in-kind contributions.

Later on, when TDF controlled the communities, a majority of men, most notably militia men, incumbent local officials, and influential well-off farmers, were compelled to leave home. Some escaped to government-held areas to continue the fight. Others went into hiding to stay safe. Meanwhile, women continued performing not only already expected domestic work, such as child rearing, cleaning, food preparation, wood and water collection, and food production, they also had to cope with the added burden of managing their households in the absence of husbands, adult sons, or other male relatives. Not surprisingly, the absence of sufficient male labor posed a significant burden on women who are heads of their own households, too. The burden was typically felt in having no, or insufficient, male labor around to hire for wage payment or to call upon by drawing on informal community mechanisms. In both cases, the increase in women's workloads was exacerbated by some of war's well-known compounding effects such as the breakdown of market chains, power outages that disabled flour mills, destruction of health care facilities, and restriction of labor mobility. Although we did not get the opportunity to empirically measure it, the increase in women's workload appeared especially significant in large households that also suffered from war's cascading effects, such as the challenges of hosting newly arriving internally displaced relatives who had to be fed and cared for, protecting homesteads and valuables from intruders, herding domestic animals, and harvesting ripening crops on time. In many of these cases, women also needed to represent their households in community affairs, including contributing food to feed combatants.

B. Gender Dimensions of Conflict Impacts: In what ways, and to what extent, did women, men, and youth suffer differently?

Our findings confirm the general consensus that the conflict had varying effects on every person, regardless of sex, age, and social status. However, responses from both women and men respondents were less straightforward when asked about who in the community had been most affected by the conflict. To be sure, respondents recognized the additional burden of work that women, whether wives in male-headed households or female heads of household, took on to support conflict efforts, while also coping with the challenges of the absence of sufficient male labor, restricted mobility, and poor access to markets and social services. Furthermore, both men and women agreed that some TDF combatants, and possibly embedded Tigrayan civilians, deliberately raped and sexually assaulted the wives, and to some extent female family members and close relatives, of "wanted, high-profile men" such as incumbent local officials, armed militia men, pro-government well-off farmers, or influential *kire* leaders who were publicly supportive of Ethiopian defense forces.

However, both men and women (including the victims themselves) interpreted perceived causes and consequences of these atrocities in ways that tended to belittle or minimize the individual suffering of women victims of SGBV. Men and women claimed that TDF combatants targeted young Amhara men as the real enemy to be controlled and pacified. When this was not achieved militarily (mainly because men escaped to safe areas or regrouped to fight back from a strategic location), TDF reportedly rounded up the wives (occasionally sisters and mothers too), these "wanted men", and allegedly perpetrated SGBV. Furthermore, respondents believed that TDF combatants did this to avenge similar atrocities that presumably happened in Tigray. Through these acts of revenge, the interpretation goes, TDF combatants wanted to affirm the emasculation of the Amhara male on their "wanted" list. In recounting acts of rape and torture, for example, respondents cited reference to perpetrators daring their victims to call for help to their cowardly men or husbands—who were sometimes referred to by various degrading slurs, like "that donkey," "Abiy's servant," or "farting Amhara." Even when husbands happened to be around, they had no option in the face of such aggression but to be bystanders in the act.

The resulting ethnically shared anger and feeling of collective victimhood was sharply revealed during the FGDs with women. As mentioned above, women FGD participants gave detailed accounts of atrocious incidents of SGBV, commissioned either personally on themselves or on other women they care about, often close family member, neighbor, or a relative. While the research team encouraged both the victims and witnesses to speak without fear or shame, the FGD participants also wanted us (the ethnographers) to carefully write down and audio-record their nuanced testimonials. Paradoxically, however, the same women wanted us to clearly note that these acts were primarily meant to severely humiliate militarily targeted Amhara men by publicly demonstrating that they could not even defend their own wives and beloved family members.

Perhaps because of this perceived emasculation of ethnic Amharas during the southern advance of the then victorious TDF, respondents across the analysis communities rated young men as the most severely conflict-affected of all other social groups. Broadly defined to include men in the 18–35 age range, many of them either recently married or managing a growing household consisting of small children and dependent elderly parents to care for, there is public sympathy for the structural dilemmas these men faced during the conflict. Men wished to fight in defense of their family and community against what appeared to be a collective Tigrayan cruelty. As household heads responsible for raising children and caring for elderly parents, however, these men were compelled to stand down and face humiliation, including through TDF combatants using sexual violence against their loved ones or the men themselves being forced to carry loads of military ware, "like a donkey."

At the beginning of the conflict, Amhara nationalist politicians and public mobilizer activists wanted young men to sign up for military training to become combatants, either as members of the voluntary youth group, Fanno, or the Amhara Special Forces. The mobilization intensified beginning in the late

spring of 2021 when TDF expanded the conflict south into parts of North Wollo Administrative Zone. By the summer of 2021, thousands of young men had become combatants, often only receiving two weeks of military training. Those who did not get training also supported the army in other capacities including delivering rations to different regiments, helping wounded soldiers, and burying the dead. All these factors led TDF combatants to regard any youth they saw in occupied Amhara communities as a potential danger. In the words of one eyewitness:

> "TPLF combatants assumed all Amhara youth to be Fanno. This made them nervous whenever they saw young people hanging together. To determine whether a young man had served as Fanno combatant, they looked on the shoulder for signs of bruises from carrying a rifle, both sides of the waist for traces of wearing a bomb-armed military belt, and finally the inner side of the feet to detect marks of long trekking. The investigation often involved calling the subjects with hate words and shaming them to stand naked. They did all these often in the presence of other armed Tigrayans who would further humiliate the victims by cursing, and laughing at, them. In some cases, the combatants terrorized young men by publicly shooting and killing some of them. In the North Wollo village of Felegehiwot, for example, combatants brutally tortured and finally killed three innocent youth in daylight, alleging that they were government spies." (Interview with a former soldier, Arbit March 31, 2023)

These acts reinforced a shared perception of all armed Tigrayan men as collectively cruel people. One elderly man described the level of this burning hatred toward the combatants with the following laments:

> "There is no one here [mentioning the name of the community] who is not related to ethnic Tigrayans by marriage, blood or both. We are one people who used to sing or grieve together. When I was young, for example, we used to sing to usher in Meskel Holiday both in Amhara and Tigray with the following couplets.
>
> Arare… Arare… Meskel is commencing today…All over [the homelands of] Amhara and Tigre[17]…
>
> But now, armed Tigrayan men are behaving like a mad dog who can't differentiate between family members and strangers. They caused untold death and suffering on us.

[17] Our translation of the Amharic couplets;

"አራሬ አራሬ፤
መስቀል ገባ ዛሬ፤
በአማራ በትግሬ።"

> They did the same to ordinary Tigrayans (their own people) by instigating a counter-response." (KII in Bugna District, April 2, 2023)

C. Conflict and Women's Engagement in Local Institutions: What are the customary local institutions and cultural mechanisms that communities use for coping with recurrent climate shocks in addition to violent conflict and political instability?

Our study also shows that in the process of responding to and recovering from conflict and compounding shocks, rural people frequently draw on customary community mechanisms and social institutions to mitigate impacts. When Gelsha and neighboring communities in South Wollo were about to fall into the control of TDF, for example, an area sheik prepared community members to stay united by invoking his power to curse wrong doers. The sheik said,

> "If you cooperate with the invaders by providing them with identifying information on militia members, incumbent local leaders, rifle owners and other potentially wanted members of your community, I curse you to wear the skin of Kunesh [a mythical animal with strong offensive odor] that can't be cleaned by any means."

In Degnu, Wereillu district, *kire* members collectively protected their common resources, such as an NGO-installed solar panel to generate power for a community water pump, from looters. At some point, *kire* members heard that TDF combatants had inspected the panel and could possibly take it for themselves. From then on, the *kire* guarded the solar panel every single day by assigning members in a rotating shift. In another community, the *kire* negotiated with TDF leaders to convince them to loosen mobility restrictions on villagers.

Similar stories of leveraging cultural and religious resources to coordinate collective action and mutual help were reported in North Wollo. In the battle-hit Arbit community, for example, neighborhood *kire* groups coordinated to ensure that any human corpse, including that of soldiers from both warring factions, was decently buried. Respondents also relayed a story about two area priests who used to visit the local TDF war camp, often carrying the holy cross and dressed in ceremonial regalia, to ask forgiveness on behalf of the family of captured warriors. Over the course of the occupation, the priests reportedly assisted four young men, including a severely beaten and sick son of an elderly woman.

In Gelsha, respondents spoke of elderly women who provided much-needed comfort and, perhaps in their own way, first aid psychosocial support to rape survivors. The same women also reportedly eased the sorrows of surviving members of a deceased veteran, including his grieving widow. These responses confirm that both men and women could draw on residence- and religion-based community mechanisms to get much-needed support to cope with crises and rebuild their livelihoods.

All these institutional responses confirm that the cultural and institutional features that communities use for recurrent climate-related shocks also help in mitigating the impacts of ethnically mobilized violent conflict and political instability. However, most of these institutions remain deeply male-oriented at their core. *Kire* groups are one example of this: the core constituents are household heads, typically consisting of a majority male and a minority of female heads of household. Wives within male-headed households are members only indirectly through their husbands. The *kire* needs these wives to perform a range of women's tasks during both bad and good times; yet, wives and unmarried adult household members are rarely involved in making critical decisions related to the *kire* group's roles and participation in different domains such as managing common pool resources, determining membership dues, etc. Similarly, women and youth tend to be marginalized in the inner workings of both faith-based associations, whether church-based or Islamic, and kinship groups. In both cases, leadership is dominated by influential men to the near total exclusion of women.

While proudly recounting the mitigating roles of local institutions, respondents also lamented that the conflict, together with recent market shocks and deep frustration with undelivered development promises, has caused some unresolved tensions and less solidarity within communities. In some cases, community members suspected some individuals of using the lawlessness created by the conflict to loot local public offices and/or property of unsuspecting neighbors. In other cases, community members felt that some of their neighbors actively supported TDF to redress personal grievances against certain local government officials or armed militia men, or felt that the conflict had exposed deep-seated political tensions between supporters of the ruling Prosperity Party and supporters of the now disintegrated EPRDF in which TPLF was the dominant party.

Respondents used a variety of expressions to describe what became of their social solidarity because of the conflict. Most of the respondents invoked the metaphor of "a pack of greedy hyenas, biting each other for no apparent reason" to argue that the conflict had caused unhealthy rivalry among households. Others described the post-conflict setting as a time of excessive selfishness where the pursuit of personal self-interests reign. Still others emphasized the rising cost of living to argue that the conflict ended but only after causing an "economic war" that relegated thousands of people to sink into deepening poverty and destitution.

6. SYSTEMS ANALYSIS OF GENDER AND CONFLICT

6.1 CAUSAL MAPPING PROCESS OVERVIEW

Alongside the thematic analysis presented above, the research team conducted a causal mapping process of the FGDs, KIIs, and IP reports. The purpose of the causal mapping analysis was to first visualize the system of factors and actors affected by conflict in the study regions, and then to use this information to systematically analyze the connections between these factors to identify potential

leverage points. Here, the term "leverage points" refers to potential areas of focus that when strengthened or directly addressed with present or future programming could potentially lead to cascading effects throughout the system, ultimately improving key outcomes such as women's and girls' livelihoods and other gender dimensions of conflict impacts.

The research team undertook this process by reviewing the KII and FGD responses and the IP reports for causal statements where the respondent or author explicitly links two or more factors together by identifying one as the cause(s) of the other(s). The factors are then coded with the terminology that the respondent or author uses and the linkages between them are recorded in a coding sheet. This process is called Purposive Text Analysis (PTA) (Kim and Andersen 2012).

As an example of how this process works in practice, consider the following statement in which a participant from an FGD responds to a question about how they support their livelihood by saying the following.

"We are recruited by the safety net because of the shortage of agricultural products in our area, and we are not able to raise our children properly because of the limited resources in our area."

- Focus group "A" Tirsit (March 25, 2023)

In this statement, the FGD participant indicates that because of a lack of agricultural products, they are not able to support their children, and therefore they are recruited into the safety net program because of limited resources in the area. Using the PTA process, the research team identified three causal relationships represented as:

shortage of agricultural products → ability to support their children
limited resources → recruited into the safety net program
safety net program→ ability to support their children

Accordingly, each of these causal statements is recorded in the coding sheet with the first factor in each statement (to the left of the arrow) listed as the "cause" and the second factor (to the right of the arrow) listed as the "effect." This example also illustrates how factors can act as both a cause and an effect; in this case, the role of the safety net program. Using this process, multiple factors can be linked together to create a comprehensive and detailed causal map consisting of factors and their interconnection to one another.

As described above, to accurately represent the respondents' or authors' statements, the coding process extracts the specific terminology that is used in the text to identify the factors. However, this often results in a lengthy list of factors—in this case, over 200—many of which can be grouped together to reduce the overall breadth of factors and focus the analysis to better identify the main drivers of the system's outcomes. As an example, many of the FGDs participants described in various

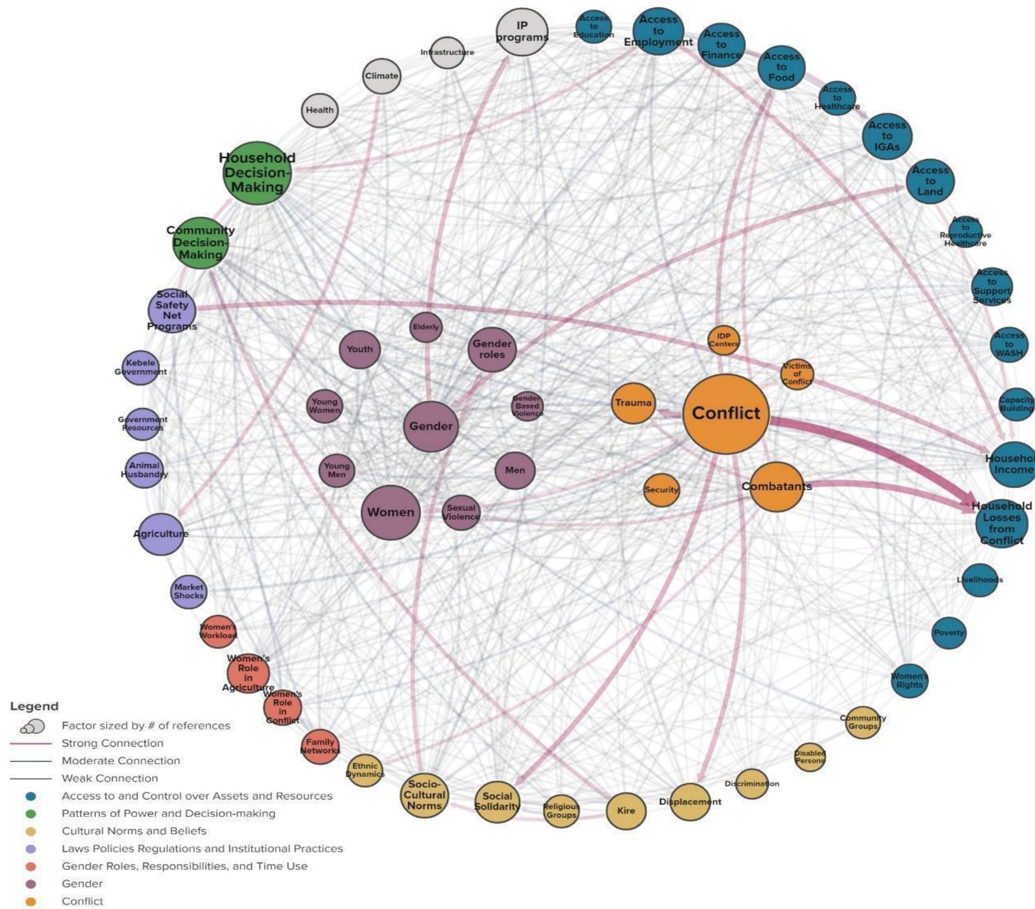
terms their loss of possessions, income, money, homes, and animals as a result of the presence of combatants and conflict in their area. As the causes and effects of these losses were often the same or similar factors, these factors were all grouped under an aggregated factor category called "Household losses from conflict." This process was repeated for all of the factors identified in the coding until the team reached a point of "saturation," where no additional factors or interactions were identified.

6.2 Systems Analysis Findings

Applying the PTA process to the FGDs, KIIs, and desk review documents, the team identified 1,532 causal statements consisting of 208 unique factors, resulting in 1,042 unique causal interactions. Once these unique factors were grouped into aggregate factors, this process produced a system map consisting of 55 aggregate factors with 643 unique interactions between them. Additionally, each of the aggregate factors was coded to its appropriate gender domain to align the systems analysis with the gender and conflict analysis (see Annex IV).

These factors, their interactions, and the related gender domain are represented in a master systems map (Exhibit 12 below) where each element is represented based on its size as relative to the frequency of references extracted from the text. Additionally, the factors are color coded based on their respective gender domain, and the interconnections are colored based on the number of references where *weak connections* (only one reference) are shown in grey, *moderate connections* (2–4 references) are shown in blue, and *strong connections* (seven or more references) are shown in red.

Exhibit 12. Master Systems Maps showing Factors (circles) and Connections (arrows)



Note: *Factors are colored by gender domain and sized relative to the number of references of each factor. Connections are also sized relative to the number of references extracted from the text. Gender factors are shown at the center of the map for clarity. All map excerpts throughout the report contain the same information as this map. An [interactive version of this map] can be viewed on Kumu.*

6.2.1 Findings by Exploratory Research Questions

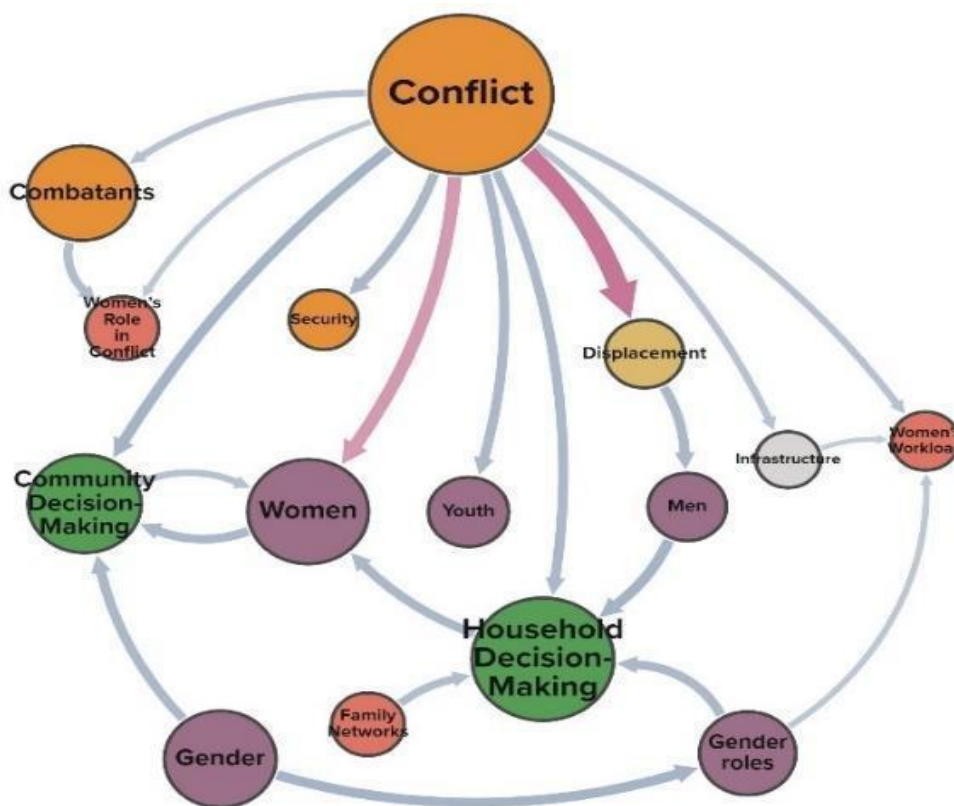
Using the master systems map above as a guide, the research team analyzed the map to understand factors that specifically addressed the assessment's main exploratory research questions as presented below. The following sections present excerpts from the master systems maps showing the most relevant components and associated with each research question, each with its own map. In all of these maps, *Conflict* and the actions of *Combatants* play an outsized role in the system. Essentially, since none of the other factors mentioned by participants in the KIIs and FGDs have direct (or indirect) effects on the conflict itself, there are no feedback loops that flow from feedback back through the other factors. This is often the case in a scenario where an event has disrupted a system, such as a flood, hyperinflation, or other system-changing shock. Thus, to the best degree possible, this analysis can only identify how the effects of conflict are inter-related as opposed to how any of these factors

can be leveraged to change the conflict itself, which is the largest and most impactful factor in the system.

Additional findings on the whole systems map, including information about the role of influence, dependence, centrality, and feedback are presented in Annex IV.

Gender's Intersection with Armed Violence: In what ways, and to what extent, did reported wartime roles and behaviors of men, women, and youth vary?

Exhibit 13. Systems Map 1: Gender's Intersection with Armed Violence



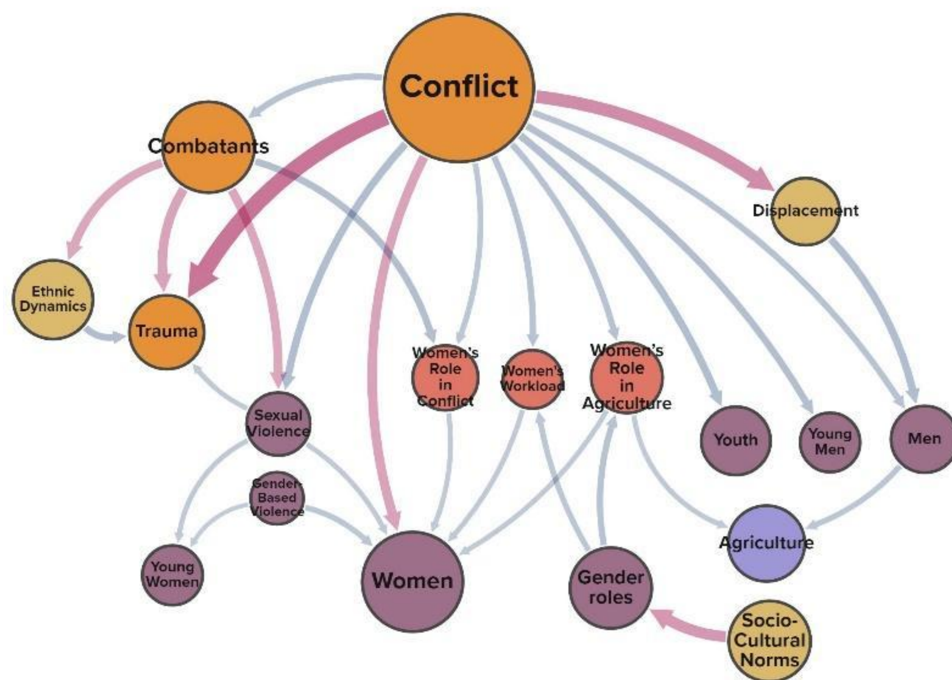
- As noted in the previous sections, there were no definitive signs in the data analysis of substantial shifts in gender roles as a result of the conflict. Rather, because of existing gender roles, women were more directly affected by the conflict through decisions made at both the household and community level.
- Men and youth were more directly affected by the conflict, mostly as a result of having to leave their homes for fear of being targeted by combatants when they arrived in their towns shown in the map above as Displacement.
- This exodus of men and their labor affected household decision-making for women, mostly around how to balance their need to leave the home to conduct domestic work (providing

food, water, shelter) with trying to stay safe from the threat of assault and harassment from enemy combatants.

- Women were also affected by their family networks and community members when they had to increasingly care for displaced people who had come to their households.
- The loss of critical infrastructure, most notably the loss of electrical grid functionality and thus milling operations, also directly affected women's workload because much of the milling of agricultural products needed to be done by hand.

Gender Dimensions of Conflict Impacts: In what ways, and to what extent, did women, men, and youth suffer differently?

Exhibit . Systems Map 2: Gender Dimensions of Conflict Impacts



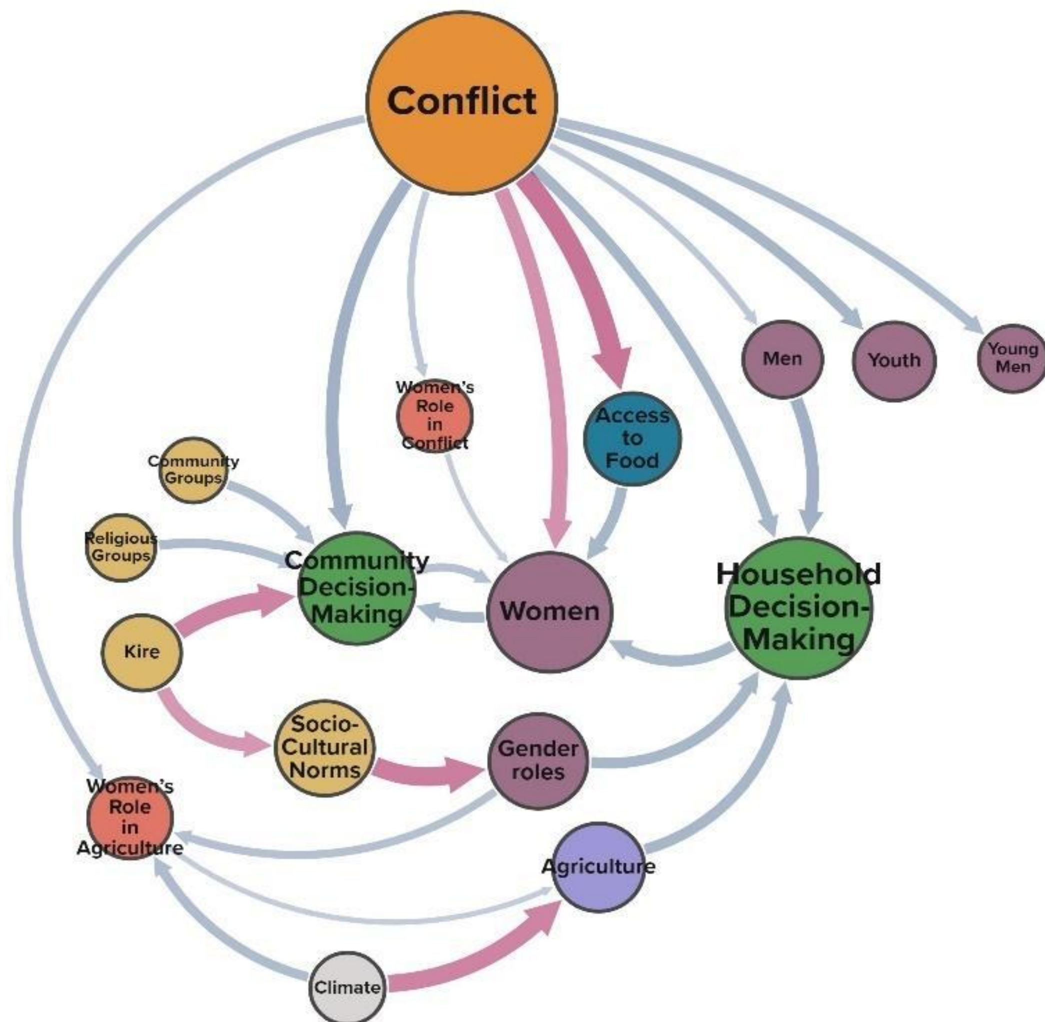
- The analysis supports the conclusions above that men, women, and youth—especially young women—were affected in different ways by the conflict.
- As mentioned above, many men were displaced by the conflict, which directly changed women's workload, especially their role in agriculture, because of the loss of men's labor as they fled the area.
- However, women were still burdened with their normative workload as a result of traditional gender roles supported by longstanding socio-cultural norms. At the same time, they also

reported being consistently harassed by combatants throughout their occupation of towns, leading to widely reported trauma.

- All of these burdens are compounded by the sexual violence perpetrated by combatants against women. In many instances, women reported that combatants taunted women with ethnic slurs and threatened them with sexual violence. This was especially a danger to young women if they travelled outside the home, resulting in restricted movement for them and women of all ages.

Conflict and Women's Engagement in Local Institutions: What are the customary local institutions and cultural mechanisms that communities use for coping with recurrent climate shocks in addition to violent conflict and political instability?

Exhibit . Systems Map 3: Conflict and Women's Engagement in Local Institutions

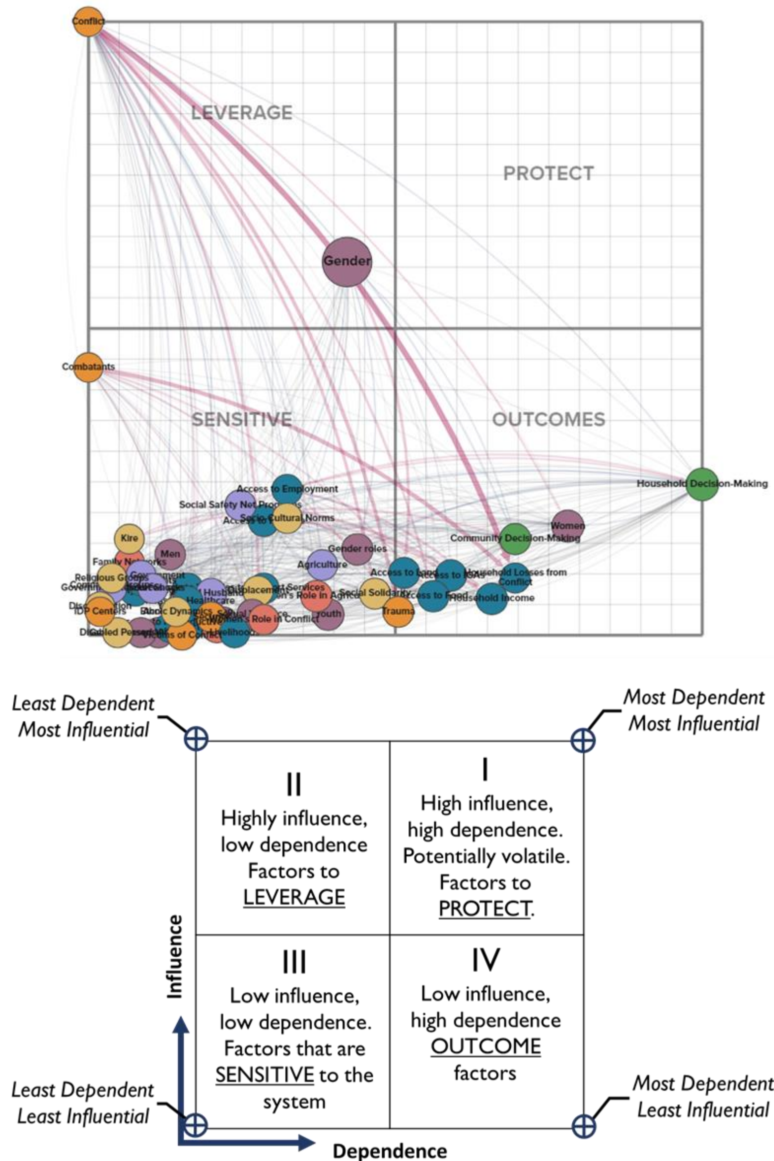


- The response of community groups and local institutions to the conflict had a direct impact on outcomes for women in the community, even in the absence of many men who were traditionally the members of these groups, such as *kire*.
- For example, many *kire* groups undertook the responsibility of burying combatants throughout the conflict, regardless of their affiliation.
- Similarly, many community and religious groups decided to actively resist the impact of the conflict in their own ways including protecting essential infrastructure such as water sources and encouraging their members to not collaborate with combatants.
- This demonstrated these groups' role in upholding socio-cultural norms and keeping the community safe, decisions that had profound effects on women.
- Along with the impact of these community groups, the conflict and climate both adjusted women's role in agriculture as they were forced to adapt to the loss of men's labor as a result of their displacement. This, along with a lack of access to food as a result of the conflict resulted in substantial effects on women directly.

6.3 Systems Analysis Influence Map

In addition to the causal systems maps presented above, the research team also investigated the interaction between gender domains through the lens of influence mapping, where interactions are represented through a square grid graph where each factor is plotted on a normalized X-Y axis based on the number of times it is referenced as an effect (X-axis) and a cause (y-axis). The influence map is shown in Exhibit 16 below with an associated key to reading it. Plotting factors on an influence map helps to build a better understanding of how the factors interact with one another and how they can be leveraged to promote improved outcomes for the whole system.

Exhibit 16. Full Influence map (top) with key (bottom) showing four quadrants containing factors to target (upper left), factors to protect (upper right), outcome factors (lower right) and factors of low significance (lower left). Factors are seized based on a centrality metric where the larger the factor the more connected it is to other well-connected factors in the system.



The "full" influence map above represents the same information shown in the master systems map (Exhibit 12) and the maps disaggregated by the exploratory research questions (Exhibit 13–15). This map emphasizes the dominating role that *Conflict* (upper right-hand corner) plays in the system as it is the main driver, along with *Combatants*, affecting all the other factors identified in the analysis. In this case, the role of all the other factors is diminished in the face of such a large and unilateral force. For this reason, the map was further modified to abstract the role of conflict and remove it from the influence map so that a better understanding of the role that other factors play in the system could be examined. In this revised map (Exhibit 17), factors related to conflict have been removed and the system re-analyzed to highlight the influence and dependence of the rest of the factors in the system.

Exhibit 17. Priority Influence Map (above) with Conflict and Combatant factors removed. Map shows four quadrants containing factors to target (upper left), factors to protect (upper right), outcome factors (lower right) and factors of low significance (lower left). Factors are sized based on a centrality metric where the larger the factor the more connected it is to other well-connected factors in the system.

Key findings related to the priority influence map (Exhibit 17):

- In the revised map, the most influential factor overall is the role of the *Social Safety Net Programs*, followed by *Socio-Cultural Norms* and *Access to Finance* (moving from top to bottom). These factors in turn have strong influences on *Household Income*, *Access to Income-Generating Activities,* and *Gender Roles*.

- The other factors located in the leverage quadrant include *Kire, Gender Roles, Climate, Gender, Access to Employment, Men, Family Networks*, and *Agriculture* (in order of influence from top to bottom). This indicates that once the role of conflict is removed from the map, these factors can potentially be targeted to improve conditions in key outcomes (see next bullets).
- Regarding the outcomes of the system, the role of *Household Decision-Making, Community Decision-Making, Women*, and *IP Programs* have all moved from the lower right-hand corner (Outcomes) to the upper right-hand corner (Factors to Protect). This highlights the feedback effects that occur as a result of changes in these factors. For example, the map shows that *Household Decision-Making* is affected by *Social Safety Net Programs*, *Family Networks*, *Access to Employment, Agriculture*, and *Access to Food*, and these effects are then propagated through the system, as *Household Decision-Making* is connected to nearly every other factor in the system. As the most central factor in the system (largest circle, most connected), this indicates that it plays a key role in gendered responses to conflict.
- The remaining outcome factors all relate to the *Access to and Control Over Assets* and *Resources* themes, including: *Trauma, Access to Land, Access to Food, Access to Income-Generating Activities, Household Income*, and *Household Losses from Conflict* (from least to most affected). This finding more closely aligns with findings from the thematic analysis indicating that these are some of the main outcomes of the system and key areas to monitor to determine if systems strengthening activities are having their intended effect.
- Lastly, the map shows two central factors (larger circles), *Women's Role in Agriculture* and *Youth*, that are located in the sensitive quadrant (lower left-hand). This indicates that while these factors have many connections to other factors, they are neither the most influential nor most influenced. This suggests that they act more as outcomes through which many other factors are connected and thus should be monitored for system changes like the other main factors.

Overall, the priority influence map highlights some of the more nuanced roles of factors across the system. In particular, it shows the role that *Household Income* plays as a major outcome because it is strongly affected by *Social Safety Net Programs* and *Access to Employment*. These factors, along with *Access to Finance, Socio-Cultural Norms, Gender Roles,* and *Agriculture*, show large potential, if effectively acted upon and strengthened, to move the system toward more improved outcomes in *Access To and Control Over Assets and Resources* for women and youth in conflict-affected areas.

7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR USAID AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS AND FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Based on the conclusions drawn in the gender and conflict analysis, the following section outlines program enhancement opportunities for USAID and its resilience IPs to consider when implementing interventions in conflict-affected communities. This section also outlines knowledge gaps and research opportunities that RLA can continue to support through its collective action platform.

7.1 OPPORTUNITIES FOR USAID AND RESILIENCE IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

7.1.1 Incorporate trauma-informed program approaches into ongoing and upcoming interventions.

The analysis found that households members, primarily women and girls, have been the victims of violence allegedly committed by TDF combatants and some civilians who followed them when the conflict expanded from North and South Wollo. This is not a unique finding; nearly all IP reports related to conflict (see Annex I), as well as publicly available data, attest to this. While many women have normalized this behavior and speak about it openly and objectively, their acceptance of SGBV speaks to the scale of the problem. Findings from this conflict analysis support the following:

- **IPs should consider building awareness and capacity among all their staff (gender and technical teams) on SGBV and trauma-informed programing approaches to equip team members with the skills and knowledge to effectively interact with program participants and not cause further harm.** Trauma-informed care emphasizes a victim-centered and inclusive approach to healing. IPs can train their staff in how to identify suspected cases and support referral mechanisms that maintain patient confidentiality, foster trust for aid workers, and facilitate safe and respectful access to care for those who desire it. Training can also include helping staff to assess their own biases and using an inclusive lens for working with communities. For example, while our analysis did not find reports of rape among boys and men, existing literature from IP reports and public data have reported this. Because of issues of underreporting and cultural stigma, it can be more difficult to quantify, but men and boys must be accounted for in trauma-informed programing.

- **IPs can investigate the viability of using existing structures such as neighborhood kire groups for rebuilding community cohesion and for implementing group-based psycho-social therapy.** Kire groups have already proven themselves to be effective not only in food rationing and labor sharing, but also in helping grieving families cope with their loss and sorrows. These roles suggest that *kire* groups can also help with tracing how memories of previous shocks and stressors have been transmitted and filtered through therapeutic

rituals, song, dances, and folklore.

- **IP staff who are often confronted with difficult situations especially when operating in a conflict and post conflict environments need support to ensure their wellbeing**. IPs should consider establishing comprehensive support systems for their staff which includes making group and/or individual counseling available and providing access to stress management and self-care training programs,

7.1.2 Reassess economic empowerment programs within the context of conflict.

Our findings found that off-farm activities suffered more because of the conflict than on-farm activities and that businesses and social enterprises operated by women and youth suffered greater losses than those run by men. To curtail further economic shocks that propel these groups deeper into poverty, USAID and IPs can consider the following:

- **Economic empowerment interventions currently offered might need to be adjusted to be more responsive to the needs of communities emerging from conflict** to incorporate a better understanding of the unique circumstances of internally displaced people, the economic burden on host communities (e.g., diverting PSNP resources from the extreme poor to internally displaced people), and the short-term nature of their stay need to be better understood.
- Participants remarked positively on the VESA approach and its equal participation among women, men, and youth. In recognizing the impacts that the conflict may have had on women and youth's ability to save and pay back their loans, **further research is required to understand how financial saving models and their suite of products can best be tailored to enable survivors of conflict and violence, including VESA and VSLA members, can bounce back quicker.** This may include shorter loan installments and lower interest rates among existing customers in addition to innovative credit options that are uniquely tailored to improve access to finance among women and youth.
- **To better serve the financial pursuits of ambitious women and youth, IPs might need to consider new and innovative approaches that depart from conventional group guarantee schemes.** Respondents, primarily youth, reported that borrowing capital against group collateral is not working. It has reportedly caused numerous cases of irreconcilable intra-group conflicts, between those who allegedly failed to pay their due shares of loans and interests on time and those who did pay. The lack of trust may have been further eroded by the conflict.

7.1.3 Consider incorporating systems mapping and analysis to inform and adapt programs.

The systems map made available through this research is a demonstration of how information generated by IPs, such as various assessments, reports etc., can be used to build and analyze information through a systems approach. IPs can also use and manipulate the systems map available in this report to understand leverage points for change and impact to consider adaptations in their respective activities. Other IPs could consider a working session with RLA systems mapping experts to build their capacity to manipulate and use system maps for adaptive management.

7.2 LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

In addition to the findings from this analysis, there are some high-potential opportunities to foster positive resilience impacts that require further exploration under RLA. Additional areas of exploration related to gender and conflict that may act as key learning priorities for RLA in building more effective resilience programs across Ethiopia are highlighted below.

7.2.1 Learning Priority 1: Leveraging existing community structures to transform gender norms

The role of existing community structures, such as *kire* groups, in transforming gender norms is a potential learning priority for RLA to explore further. The analysis found that communities frequently draw on customary local mechanisms and social institutions, like *kire* groups, to respond to and recover from conflict and compounding shocks. *Kire* groups are the backbone of how households have historically coped in times of struggle. The analysis highlighted explicit examples of how *kire* groups have responded to climate shocks and conflict-induced impacts, demonstrating their adaptive nature. This included food rationing, labor sharing, and helping grieving families cope with their loss and sorrows. However, *kire* groups are traditionally patriarchal in nature and there is very little understanding of how they have further reinforced existing gender norms, or if shocks like conflict have provided an opportunity for change. These dynamics can be further explored to see how groups like *kire* and others can be better leveraged for program delivery.

7.2.2 Learning Priority 2: Strengthening coordination among IPs to integrate more robust gender-responsive programming in post-conflict settings.

RLA's primary goal is to foster learning and collaboration among IPs. In speaking with IPs to inform the analysis design, it was clear that information-sharing among IPs is fragmented and partners were not benefiting from the rich programmatic insights of one another. To bolster knowledge dissemination and learning among IPs related to gender and conflict:

- **USAID and RLA can consider creating space for further learning and sharing about program approaches and interventions** that successfully address psychosocial support needs and programing that incorporates trauma-healing for both PSNP households and IP staff. USAID and RLA should promote information-sharing and high-potential interventions focused on trauma-healing, as well as delivery models, entry points, and technical capacity-building for staff.
- IPs should further explore how women's roles have evolved since the conflict ended as part of primary data collection under routine gender assessments. Despite women stepping into more male-dominated roles as breadwinners, negotiators, and peacemakers during the conflict, our research found that traditional gender norms remained unchanged. However, additional ethnographic research may be required to evaluate intra-household dynamics over a longer period of time to identify whether changes in household responsibilities and shared decision-making did positively benefit women and youth over time

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ANNEX I: LIST OF REPORTS FROM IPS

Below is a list of USAID/Ethiopia-funded IPs whose programming supports PSNP households in both highland and lowland areas of Ethiopia. The following table outlines a list of IP-generated reports that were used to inform findings related to this conflict analysis.

NAME OF IP	NAME OF PROJECT	GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS[18]	MATERIALS REVIEWED
CARE Ethiopia	Livelihoods for Resilience (L4R) Program	• Meket and Wadla districts in North Wollo • Eastern Tigray	• Livelihood for Resilience Women's Empowerment Study Key Findings, 2022 • Rapid Cash Market and Gender Analysis, 2021
CARE Ethiopia	SPIR II	• Meket and Wadla districts, North Wollo	• Her Time: Findings from a Time Use of Women Participating in Livelihood Programs in Ethiopia, 2022
CARE Ethiopia	Resilience in Pastoral Areas (RiPA North)	• Somali, Afar, and Oromia • Six woredas in Afar • Five woredas in Afar region	• Gender Analysis, 2021 • Rapid Gender Analysis for Conflict in Afar, 2021 • Rapid Gender Analysis for Afar Flood, 2020
Family Health	Poverty Reduced Sustainably in an Environment of Resilient and Vibrant Economy (PReSERVE)	• 11 food insecure districts in Wag Hemra, South Gondar, and Central Gondar Zones of Amhara region	• Gender Analysis Report, 2022

[18] L4R, PRESERVE, and CRS operate in the highlands region of Ethiopia, which is most applicable to RLA. However, most of the documentation related to RFSA (highlands-specific areas) is missing from this table.

Catholic Relief Services	Development Food Security Activities (DFSA)	• Seven districts in eastern Oromia and Dire Dawa	• Gender and Youth Analysis, 2017
Catholic Relief Services	Livelihood for Food Security-Oromia (LFSO)	• Seven districts in eastern Oromia and Dire Dawa	• Gender and Youth Analysis, 2017

ANNEX II: TESTIMONY FROM RESPONDENTS

Below are direct, personal accounts from rape survivors interviewed as a part of this conflict analysis.[19]

Case One: A Militia woman (interviewed in Gelsha, South Wollo, March 25, 2023).

> "A group of armed Tigre men came to our village which is located on a low lying open field that appears safe from cross-fire bullet exchange of the warring factions. Amhara special forces and Ethiopian defense forces were camped on a high-rise chain of hills that run north to south right in front of us. The Junta has camped up the hill on this side of the valley. The main highway crosses through the lower slope of the hill but on the upper side of our village. My children had already left home, but I decided to stay because I have no relatives in other places to go. My parents-in-law live close by, but I didn't want to go to them as we have not been on good terms for some time due to a dispute over land. As the armed men approached my house, I overheard them saying that they were looking for members of local militia, Amhara Special Forces, and [Ethiopian] Defense. I felt that someone unkind must have told them about my being one of few female members of our local militia. I knew that they were coming for me.
>
> One of the armed men rushed into my house and then started threateningly asked if I were staying there to spy [on TDF]. I replied that I was not anybody's spy but an ordinary farmer minding my business. Then he threatened to beat me for trying to lie to him. He became even more furious and interrogated me saying, "Where did you hide your gun and [militia] uniform?" I told him that I didn't have any uniform with me and no longer served in the militia. At this point, one of the armed men started searching my house and unfortunately found the baton I received while attending military training. He confronted me furiously, shouting "What is this?" I tried to deny having the baton and claimed that one of the children must have found it somewhere and picked it out of curiosity. At this point, our conversation got the attention of three of his armed friends who had been waiting outside. They all rushed into the house and said something to him in Tigrigna. After a while, one of them turned his face towards me and spoke in pure Amharic, instructing my interrogator to kill me. He declared me as "Servant of Abiy [Prime Minister] who must be killed." The three men then went out again. Then after, the interrogator ordered me to sleep on the floor. I refused and he used force to throw me on the floor, beating my stock with the butt of his rifle and kicking me by his feet. At this point, he threated to rape me whether I like it or not. I pleaded that I am too old to be

[19] Consent was obtained from respondents to share their direct testimony for this report, but their names have been removed to protect their privacy.

treated this way and incapable of having sex. He then raped me by force, holding me on the floor and pulling my dress up. I cried and screamed a lot. But there was no one to help. After trying to defile me by raping, the man pushed the tip of his rifle inside me. I screamed as loud as I could but still no one came to help. Then when he finally left, I was too sick to stand on my feet. I was bleeding for a week. I later went to Dessie Hospital and received treatment for the pain inside my private part. Doctors also checked me for possible HIV infection and Alhamdulila I seem fine so far. As a militia woman, I am not ashamed of to speak about this because I know I was raped and attacked for exactly that reason."

Community (Other Persons') Testimonials:

Testimonial I: FGD, March 31, 2023

"A woman [we all know here in Meket] has died after the TPLF forces sexually abused her. Six TPLF soldiers have had sexual intercourse with this single woman. There is also the widely known case of a female student who was raped by a group of three juntas. She died recently, a slow death that every one weeped about at her funeral. The same group who raped this now deceased girl also raped her younger sister. Since she was so young, she needed to be treated in a hospital immediately. Her parents saved her life by taking her to Gaynt hospital. She is still alive, but she has been embarrassed and psychologically disturbed."

Testimonial 2: FGD, Arbit, April 2, 2023

"Here in Arbit, the Junta sexually abused a woman just in front of her husband. They tied her husband using a rope. In Woqeta, they first had sexual intercourse with a girl and finally killed her."

Testimonial 3: Interview with *Kire* leader, Debre Zebit, March 31, 2023

"One late afternoon, two TDF combatants unexpectedly came to search my house. With me were my elderly father and a young niece of mine who stayed to assist me in caring for him. After spotting the girl, one of the combatants stared at me and demanded to know whether she was my wife. I quickly responded, confirming that the girl is my sister. Upon hearing this, the other combatant instructed his friend, in Amharic, by saying, "Leave her if she is his sister." I knew why he said that because they enjoy humiliating men by raping wives as they watch. The combatants have done that to several respected men here in Debre Zebit. They know how much it hurts a husband to see his loving wife being raped in his watch."

ANNEX III: SYSTEMS MAPPING DATA

Systems Mapping Overview

In addition to the thematic causal analysis provided in the body of the report, this section details information about further quantitative systems analysis the research team used to support the identification of key findings and insights. The information in the following section pertains to analysis of the full master systems map, separate from the analysis of the map as it relates to the exploratory research questions.

Using the information generated from the master systems map, the team conducted three systematic analyses on the data: influence mapping, centrality analysis, and feedback loop analysis. Each of these analyses provided unique insights into a different aspect of the system's functionality and the different roles that each factor plays in driving system outcomes. Combining outputs from each analysis allowed the research team to systematically identify potential leverage points in the system, or areas where a small change can lead to a larger cascading change in the system's outcomes. The outputs of each analysis are summarized in the table below along with desired leverage point qualities from each analysis.

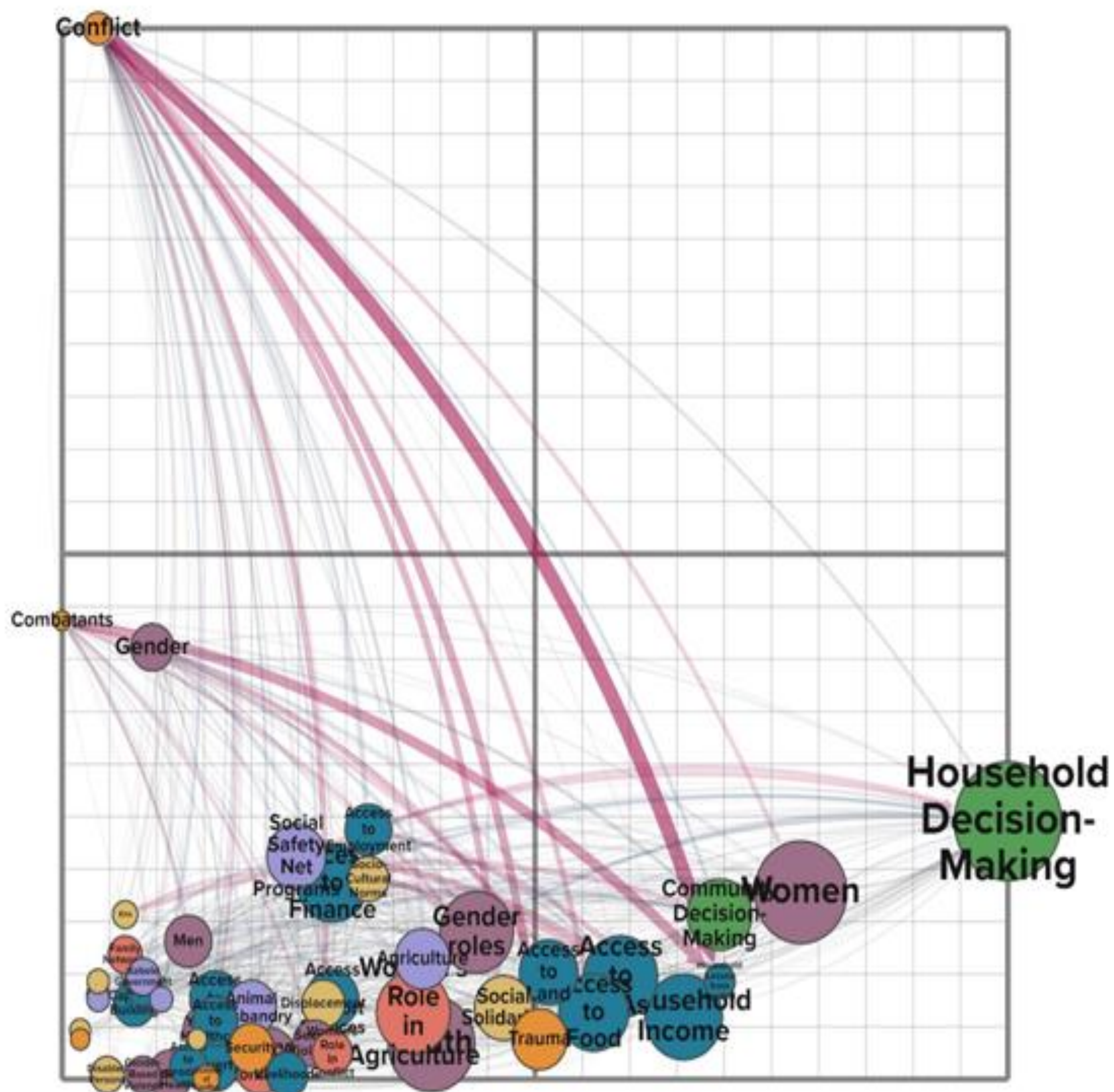
Exhibit 18. Systematic Analysis Summary

SYSTEMS ANALYSIS	OUTPUTS	LEVERAGE POINT QUALITIES
Influence Mapping	Rankings of the relative influence (the degree to which a factor affects others) and dependence (the degree to which each factor is affected by others)	Factors with a high influence (cause) but low dependence (effect)
Centrality Analysis	Ranking of how much factors are connected to one another, directly and through other factors (indirectly), and which factors are most central	Factors that are central to the system and bridge connections between other factors
Causal Loop Analysis	Prioritized lists of circular cause-and-effect chains of factors that generate either reinforcing (compounding growth or decay) or balancing (pushing towards and equilibrium) behavior	Factors that are consistently present in highly ranked feedback loops based on the number of references to connections within each loop

Influence Map

The first systems analysis, influence mapping, is represented through a square grid graph where each factor is plotted on a normalized X-Y axis based on the number of times it is referenced as an effect (X-axis) and a cause (y-axis). The influence map is shown in Figure 8. Below with an associated key to reading the map. Note that in this figure the size of the factors is represented by a centrality measure as opposed to the total number of references as it is shown in the mast map above. This centrality metric is described in the following section.

Exhibit 19. Influence Map (top) with key (bottom) showing four quadrants containing factors to target (upper left), factors to protect (upper right), outcome factors (lower right) and factors of low significance (lower left). Factors are seized based on a centrality metric where, the larger the factor the more connected it is to other well-connected factors in the system.



Least Dependent
Most Influential

Most Dependent
Most Influential

II
Highly influence, low dependence Factors to LEVERAGE

I
High influence, high dependence. Potentially volatile. Factors to PROTECT.

III
Low influence, low dependence. Factors that are SENSITIVE to the system

IV
Low influence, high dependence OUTCOME factors

Influence

Dependence

Least Dependent
Least Influential

Most Dependent
Least Influential

Exhibit . Influence Map with Conflict Domain Removed for Clarity on Gender Domains

Gender
Social Safety Net Programs
Access to Finance
Access to Employment
Socio-Cultural Norms
Men
Gender roles
Household Decision-Making
Community Decision-Making
Women
Access to Food
Household Income
Social Solidarity
Role in Agriculture
Animal Husbandry
Displacement

Influence Map Findings

- The most influential factors in the system are *Conflict*, followed by *Gender* and then *Combatants.* The position of the two most influential factors (*Conflict* and *Gender*) in the upper left-hand quadrant indicates that they are potential leverage points in the system and

that policies that directly seek to address these factors could have an outsized impact on the rest of the system.

- The most influenced (or dependent) factor is *Household Decision Making* (far right), followed by *Women* (lower center). The position of these two factors in the influence map indicates that they are indeed the most affected factors and thus the "outcomes" of the system. Monitoring changes in these factors can serve as a way to assess systems change that result from altering other factors in the system.
- Most of the factors are located in the lower left-hand quadrant, indicating that while they are indeed part of the system and connect many factors to one another, none of them individually are influential or could functionally serve as potential leverage points. It is a common finding in systems analysis that many factors fall into this quadrant.

Centrality Analysis

The influence map shown above also contains information from the centrality analysis where the factors are sized based on social network analysis metric called Eigenvector centrality. This measure provides insights into how well connected a factor is to other well-connected elements based on the strength of its connections to other factors. This measure, which differs from analyses that only measure how many total connections a factor has (called "degree"), provides insight into how factors can serve as potential leverage points by distributing information and resources throughout the system based on their own network of connections. A factor that is well placed to have a high potential to leverage the system would have an Eigenvector score that is higher than other, less connected factors in the system. In addition to the graphic representation of centrality in the influence map (Exhibit 18), information on the centrality scores for each factor is presented in Annex IV, and for select factors in Exhibit 21 below.

Centrality Findings

- The top five factors with the highest Eigenvector score are, in order of rank: *Household Decision-Making, Women, Youth, Household Income, Access to Food,* and *Gender* (see Exhibit 21 below).
- The main finding from this analysis is that even though *Household Decision-Making* is the most notable outcome in the system, it is also closely connected to the rest of the system because of its relationships with other influential factors in the system including its influence on *Women* and *Access to Income Generating Activities (IGAs).* It is also heavily influenced by *Gender, Access to Employment, Conflict, Socio-Cultural Norms*, and *Social Safety Net Programs*. This implies that changing how *Household Decision-Making* operates may have a large influence on the system overall.

- The role of *Gender* as a centrally connected figure is also notable because it is the only factor in this list that is also in the upper left-hand quadrant of the influence map. This finding confirms the accuracy of the analysis because gender (and conflict) were the main focus areas of the data collection. However, it also demonstrates how important the perception of *Gender* is in driving outcomes of the system overall.
- Because *Women* and *Youth* are related dimensions of *Gender*, it is not surprising that they are also central factors in the system for the same reasons as *Gender*. However, this also highlights the nuance of how women and youth are both uniquely affected by other factors including *Conflict, Household Decision-Making*, and *Access to Food*.
- Finally, the central nature of *Household Income* and *Access to Food* highlights their strong interconnectedness. While these factors are located in the lower left-hand quadrant, they also represent factors that may be more easily targeted than others in the system, which is evidenced by the role of the social safety net programs, which seek to address these factors. While they do not have large leverage point potential, they do represent places in the system that are easier to influence than *Conflict* or *Combatants*.

Feedback Loop Analysis

Using the master systems map above developed through the PTA and coding process, the research team conducted a multi-dimensional feedback loop analysis to systematically identify and prioritize all of the possible feedback loops—unique chains of cause-and-effect relationships—that affect the system's outcome. This analysis is built on the logic that through feedback loops, information and resources are "fed back" through the system, leading to either compounding (reinforcing) or stabilizing (balancing) behavior in the factor at the beginning of the sequence.

By combining the feedback loops with the strength of references to each causal interaction, it is possible to infer which feedback loops are most likely to drive the behavior of the system. Using this process, a list of feedback loops ranked by their relative strength can be developed from the master systems map. Examining each of these dominant feedback loops helps to develop insightful narratives of the possible pathways that either lead to or inhibit the system's outcomes.

Feedback Loop Findings

- The top factors that focused most prominently in the feedback loop analysis were *Conflict, Combatants*, *Gender,* and *Household Decision-Making*. Because all of these factors were noted as influential and central to the system above, their presence in the strongest feedback loops further confirms their important role in the system.

- In addition to the prominent factors mentioned above, the analysis identified three additional factors that were present in many of the feedback loops: *Access to Employment*, *Social Safety Net Programs,* and *Socio-Cultural Norms.*

- In the case of *Access to Employment, Access to Finance,* and *Social Safety Net Programs*, these three factors had many connections in the system that were closely related and present in many of the feedback loops. For example, *Access to Employment* influenced 18 other factors, and was affected by another 14 factors. Similarly, the *Social Safety Net Programs* factor influenced and was affected by 15 factors. Frequently mentioned with both of these factors was *Access to Finance,* which had substantial influences on access to land and IGAs. This shows the highly interconnected nature of these factors and their symbiotic relationship on one another, where they were frequently present in the same feedback loops.

- The role of *Socio-Cultural Norm*s also showed a highly interconnected set of relationships with many of the main factors in the system including *Gender, Conflict*, and *Household Decision-Making* as well as *Access to Land*, *Access to Healthcare*, *Access to IGAs*, *Access to Support Services*, and *Access to Finance*. This finding demonstrates how a factor can be highly interconnected in combinations of cause-and-effect relationships without being highly influential on its own.

Systems Analysis Conclusions

The following table displays a summary of the analysis presented above, with top potential leverage point factors ranked by their relative influence, dependence, centrality, and presence in feedback loops. The resulting order of factors represents the order in which they are most likely to create change within the system. The factors that are most influential on the system now are referred to as drivers, whereas the factors with the potential to affect change are called leverage points. A description of each group of factors is presented below.

Exhibit 21. Ranking of Factors by Influence, Dependence, Centrality, and Presence in Feedback Loops (in that order)

LABEL	INFLUENCE RANK	DEPENDENCE RANK	CENTRALITY RANK	FEEDBACK LOOP RANK
Conflict	1	5	42	1
Gender	2	39	6	3
Combatants	3	1	55	12

Household Decision-Making	4	55	1	22
Access to Employment	5	40	22	18
Social Safety Net Programs	6	33	14	30
Socio-Cultural Norms	7	40	33	15

Drivers of the Current System

- **Conflict and Combatants:** These factors are no doubt the main drivers of the current outcomes of the system. This finding is based not only on their outsized presence as the most influential factors in the influence map, but also their prominence in the excerpts from the FGDs, KIIs, and desk review documents. The presence of conflict and combatants in the study areas greatly upended all aspects of people's livelihoods and led to dramatic changes in their day-to-day lives. Ending the conflict and controlling combatants' behavior would clearly lead to dramatic changes in the system, however, these actions are not within the control of the RLA IPs.

- **Gender:** The presence of gender as a central driver of the system lends validity to the systems analysis because this was the framing of the assessment and data collection. If the gender factor was less influential in the system, it would indicate that perhaps the data collection was not properly oriented to capture sufficient information to produce the necessary systems insight. Similar to conflict and combatants, RLA IPs cannot fundamentally change gender because it is an inherent dimension of society. Thus, it is not listed as a leverage point below, even though it is highly influential.

- **Household Decision-Making:** In many dimensions of the analysis, household decision-making was a highly affected, but also centrally connected factor. This indicates that the mechanisms that determine household decision-making are indeed having a notable influence on many factors in the system. Shifting dimensions of this factor can likely lead to larger changes in the system overall, which is why it is listed as a leverage point below.

Leverage Points to Create Systems Change

- **Household Decision-Making:** While this factor was initially identified as the major outcome of the system, it also plays an important feedback role in affecting others in the system. Because this factor relates to individual choices made at the household level, it is possible to design programs that seek to shift the way current decisions are informed and made in order to lead to more beneficial outcomes in other factors, particularly *Household Income*, Access to *Employment, Access to Finance, Access to Land, Access to Education and Access to Food*. The role of *Household Decision-Making* in the system illustrates how in a closely interconnected system, factors that represent outcomes to be measured can also serve as leverage points themselves depending on the context.

- **Access to Employment, Finance, and IGAs:** While these two factors did not feature prominently in the influence mapping or centrality analysis, they were frequently mentioned by FGD and KII participants as both key concerns and possibilities for improving their livelihoods. Moreover, many participants pointed to *Access to Finance* as a necessary precondition to achieve access to land, IGAs, education, and other factors that directly affected their livelihoods. This indicates that focusing on improving access to these three resources can have a direct, near-term influence on the individuals' and households' livelihood outcomes.

- **Social Safety Net Programs:** The role of social programs and PSNP in particular featured heavily in FGD and KII respondents' narratives about how they supported their families, with nearly every participant referencing the programs at some point in their responses. The role of these programs in the system is not an accident or unknown phenomenon; they were designed and implemented to directly affect individual and household livelihoods by supplementing their income in the face of multiple shocks. As the *Security, Conflict*, and *Climate* factors continue to affect livelihoods in this study area, these programs will be essential to maintain. Their presence as a leverage point in the analysis also supports the recommendation that they be expanded to cover more individuals and with more funds.

- **Socio-Cultural Norms:** Similar to *Social Safety Net Programs*, the role of *Socio-Cultural Norms* was not necessarily prominent in the analysis, but when the factors are viewed from the perspective of their combined influence, dependence, centrality, and feedback mechanisms, this factor rose to the top of the list. This is likely because socio-cultural norms greatly underpin many of the mechanisms that drive decision-making both at the household and community level. As these norms have a direct connection to *Household Decision-Making*, they exert a secondary influence on *Access to Finance, Access to Employment, Access to IGAs, and Access to Education*, thus overall influencing individuals' health and livelihoods. As a result of these intricate and broad connections, programs that seek to shift *Socio-Cultural Norms*, while likely difficult to implement and measure, can have an outsized

impact on many of the factors that ultimately affect individual, household, and community livelihood outcomes.

Exhibit 22. Aggregate Factor Information for Master Systems Map with References as Cause and Effect in Excerpted Causal Relationships

FACTOR	DOMAIN	CAUSE REFERENCES	EFFECT REFERENCES	TOTAL REFERENCES
Access to Education	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	10	17	27
Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	57	34	91
Access to Finance	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	45	30	75
Access to Food	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	16	59	75
Access to Healthcare	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	14	17	31
Access to IGAs	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	24	62	86
Access to Land	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	25	54	79
Access to Reproductive Healthcare	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	4	14	18

Access to Support Services	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	19	30	49
Access to WASH	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	19	17	36
Agriculture	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices	28	40	68
Animal Husbandry	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices	17	21	38
Capacity Building	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	18	8	26
Climate	-	36	2	38
Combatants	Conflict	104	0	104
Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making	38	73	111
Community Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	20	4	24
Conflict	Conflict	237	4	241
Disabled Persons	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	2	5	7
Discrimination	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	12	2	14

Displacement	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	18	29	47
Elderly	Gender	2	12	14
Ethnic Dynamics	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	10	15	25
Family Networks	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use	25	5	30
Gender	Gender	146	33	179
Gender-Based Violence	Gender	2	9	11
Government Resources	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices	19	4	23
Health	-	9	23	32
Household Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making	81	144	225
Household Income	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	15	69	84
Household Losses from Conflict	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	23	73	96
IDP Centers	Conflict	10	2	12
Infrastructure	-	14	7	21

IP Programs	-	42	52	94
Kebele Government	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices	24	9	33
Kire	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	38	7	45
Livelihoods	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	2	25	27
Market Shocks	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices	19	11	30
Poverty	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	4	17	21
Religious Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	23	4	27
Security	Conflict	8	21	29
Sexual Violence	Gender	9	28	37
Social Safety Net Programs	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices	51	26	77
Social Solidarity	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	17	49	66
Socio-Cultural Norms	Cultural Norms and Beliefs	46	34	80

Trauma	Conflict	10	53	63
Victims of Conflict	Conflict	1	16	17
Women	Gender	43	82	125
Women's Role in Agriculture	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use	16	39	55
Women's Role in Conflict	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use	7	30	37
Women's Rights	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources	22	9	31
Women's Workload	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use	4	22	26
Young Men	Gender	12	16	28
Young Women	Gender	6	23	29
Youth	Gender	9	41	50

Exhibit 23. Nuanced Factor Information for Master Systems Map with References as Cause and Effect in Excerpted Causal Relationships

FACTOR NAME	CAUSE	EFFECT	TOTAL	AGGREGATED FACTOR	DOMAIN
Ability to support family	5	63	68	Household Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-Making

Ability to travel	21	10	31	Household Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-Making
Access to agriculture inputs	11	12	23	Agriculture	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Access to aid	10	18	28	Access to Support Services	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to capital	2	1	3	Access to Finance	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to childcare	1	0	1	Access to Support Services	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to education	6	15	21	Access to Education	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to employment information	3	0	3	Access to Support Services	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to finance	37	25	62	Access to Finance	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to food	10	44	54	Access to Food	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to healthcare	14	17	31	Access to Healthcare	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to IGAs	8	11	19	Access to IGAs	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to justice system	1	1	2	Women's Rights	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to land	11	48	59	Access to Land	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Access to market information	8	1	9	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to markets	9	9	18	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to nutrition	6	5	11	Access to Food	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to reproductive services	4	14	18	Access to Reproductive Healthcare	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to services	0	11	11	Access to Support Services	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to wage labor	4	1	5	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Access to WASH	7	11	18	Access to WASH	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Administrative budgets	1	0	1	Government Resources	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Ag plot size	2	0	2	Agriculture	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Agricultural yield	6	20	26	Agriculture	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Agriculture	8	7	15	Agriculture	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Agriculture labor	10	16	26	Women's Role in Agriculture	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Agriculture programs	4	4	8	IP programs	

Animal husbandry	14	20	34	Animal Husbandry	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Animal needs	0	1	1	Animal Husbandry	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Animals for transport	1	0	1	Animal Husbandry	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Awareness of programs	6	6	12	IP programs	
Bribery	1	0	1	Women's Rights	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Business development	0	1	1	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Capacity building	3	1	4	Capacity Building	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Capacity development	5	4	9	Capacity Building	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Caring for parents	0	1	1	Elderly	Gender
Child marriage	1	0	1	Socio-Cultural Norms	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Childcare	0	9	9	Youth	Gender
Children	4	13	17	Youth	Gender
Civilian casualties	1	16	17	Victims of Conflict	Conflict
Climate	7	0	7	Climate	
Combatants	61	0	61	Combatants	Conflict

Communication channels	4	1	5	Access to Support Services	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Community cohesion	6	18	24	Social Solidarity	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Community coordination	1	5	6	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Community groups	10	3	13	Community Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Community leadership	5	6	11	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Community looting	8	9	17	Household Losses from Conflict	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Community management	9	3	12	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Community needs	2	29	31	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Community participation	6	10	16	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Community safety	11	20	31	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Conflict	234	3	237	Conflict	Conflict
Conflict loss of animals	3	12	15	Household Losses from Conflict	Conflict
Conflict loss of food	0	10	10	Access to Food	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Conflict loss of home	1	8	9	Household Losses from Conflict	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Conflict loss of income	4	12	16	Household Losses from Conflict	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Conflict loss of possessions	6	30	36	Household Losses from Conflict	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Cost of goods	2	2	4	Market Shocks	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Cyclical shocks	1	1	2	Climate	
Dagu	5	1	6	Community Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Disabled persons	2	5	7	Disabled Persons	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Disabled youth	1	1	2	Discrimination	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Discrimination	10	1	11	Discrimination	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Displacement	15	23	38	Displacement	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Distance barrier	3	3	6	Household Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Division of labor	3	4	7	Gender roles	Gender
Domestic responsibilities	5	16	21	Gender roles	Gender
Drought	2	0	2	Climate	
Education	4	1	5	Access to Education	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Education - young women	2	6	8	Young Women	Gender
Education programs	0	1	1	Access to Education	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Elderly	2	11	13	Elderly	Gender
Electrical system	2	2	4	Infrastructure	
Energy	0	1	1	Infrastructure	
Entrepreneurial skills	1	0	1	Capacity Building	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Ethnic discrimination	10	12	22	Ethnic Dynamics	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Ethnic narratives	0	3	3	Ethnic Dynamics	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Family network	11	2	13	Family Networks	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Family relations	0	3	3	Family Networks	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Family size	14	0	14	Family Networks	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Farmer cooperative	1	0	1	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Farmers	1	2	3	Women's Role in Agriculture	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Farming	1	0	1	Women's Role in Agriculture	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Female-headed households	4	3	7	Women	Gender
Formal employment	1	1	2	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Funeral services	0	9	9	Socio-Cultural Norms	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
GBV	2	9	11	Gender-Based Violence	Gender
Gender	63	6	69	Gender	Gender
Gender mainstreaming	23	1	24	Gender	Gender
Gender roles	16	9	25	Gender roles	Gender
Gendered targeting	4	3	7	Gender	Gender
Girls' workload	1	0	1	Women's Workload	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Government action	10	3	13	Government Resources	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Government forces	6	1	7	Government Resources	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Government programs (gender equality)	2	0	2	Government Resources	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Harvest	1	3	4	Women's Role in Agriculture	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Health	5	16	21	Health	
Health programs	1	0	1	Health	
Household decision making	17	10	27	Household Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Household income	8	66	74	Household Income	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Household nutrition	2	7	9	Health	
Household resources	12	11	23	Household Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Household responsibilities	8	9	17	Gender roles	Gender
Hunger	0	4	4	Poverty	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Idir	3	0	3	Community Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
IDP centers	10	2	12	IDP Centers	Conflict
IDPs	3	6	9	Displacement	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
IGAs	14	35	49	Access to IGAs	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
IKUB	2	0	2	Community Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Individual decision-making	1	8	9	Household Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Inflation	8	4	12	Market Shocks	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Informal employment	1	0	1	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Infrastructure	12	4	16	Infrastructure	
IPs	3	1	4	IP programs	
Kebele government	7	6	13	Kebele Government	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices

Kebele leadership	3	0	3	Kebele Government	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Kire	38	7	45	*Kire*	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Knowledge uptake	0	1	1	Capacity-Building	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Labor work for safety net	7	3	10	Household Income	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Lack of labor	1	0	1	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Land tenure laws	4	2	6	Access to Land	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Late planting	0	2	2	Women's Role in Agriculture	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Livelihood opportunities	2	16	18	Access to IGAs	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Livelihood security	0	22	22	Livelihoods	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Livelihoods	0	6	6	Security	Conflict
Livestock	1	0	1	Animal Husbandry	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Livestock programs	1	0	1	Animal Husbandry	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Local economy	9	5	14	Market Shocks	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Local government	14	3	17	Kebele Government	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices

Marital status	8	0	8	Gender	Gender
Market shocks	7	7	14	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Marriage	2	2	4	Socio-Cultural Norms	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Men	32	14	46	Men	Gender
Mental well-being	1	23	24	Trauma	Conflict
Merchant trading	0	3	3	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Military recruitment	3	1	4	Conflict	Conflict
Modern living	0	1	1	Livelihoods	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Multiple shocks	2	2	4	Livelihoods	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Natural shocks	1	0	1	Climate	
Nature	12	0	12	Climate	
NGOs	1	0	1	IP programs	
Non-combat areas	0	2	2	Household Losses from Conflict	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Nutrition programs	1	1	2	IP programs	
Opportunists	0	4	4	Security	Conflict
Parentally-allocated land	10	4	14	Access to Land	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources

Participation in financial institutions	6	4	10	Access to Finance	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Patient-centered services	1	0	1	Health	
Perception of division of labor	2	8	10	Gender roles	Gender
Perception of youth	2	0	2	Youth	Gender
Perception of disability	1	0	1	Discrimination	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Political vengeance	6	6	12	Security	Conflict
Poverty	4	10	14	Poverty	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Poverty backsliding	0	3	3	Poverty	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Pregnant & lactating mothers	1	12	13	Women	Gender
Program availability	1	1	2	IP programs	
Program outreach	2	2	4	IP programs	
Program participation	6	12	18	IP programs	
Program participation - Men	0	3	3	IP programs	

Program participation - Women	3	16	19	IP programs	
Program participation - young men	1	1	2	IP programs	
Program participation - young women	0	2	2	IP programs	
Program participation - Youth	0	2	2	IP programs	
Program promotion	1	0	1	IP programs	
Program strategies	13	1	14	IP programs	
Qere/Edir	2	0	2	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Rainfall	7	1	8	Climate	
Reliance on family support	4	2	6	Family Networks	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Religion	3	1	4	Religious Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Religious leaders	9	0	9	Religious Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Religious services	10	3	13	Religious Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Religious leaders	1	0	1	Religious Groups	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Resistance to combatants	0	4	4	Women's Role in Conflict	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use

Rural residents	1	0	1	Household Losses from Conflict	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Safety net assistance	51	26	77	Social Safety Net Programs	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Seasonal shocks	6	0	6	Climate	
Security	2	5	7	Security	Conflict
Seed support	1	0	1	Access to Support Services	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Sexual violence	9	24	33	Sexual Violence	Gender
Shift in division of labor	5	8	13	Socio-Cultural Norms	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Shifts in social norms	5	8	13	Socio-Cultural Norms	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Single mother	4	2	6	Women	Gender
Skills training	9	2	11	Capacity Building	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Social norms	33	7	40	Socio-Cultural Norms	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Social solidarity	11	31	42	Social Solidarity	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Soil quality	1	1	2	Agriculture	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
TDF combatants	30	0	30	Combatants	Conflict
TPLF forces	13	0	13	Combatants	Conflict
Trauma	9	30	39	Trauma	Conflict

Unemployment	2	0	2	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
VESA	1	0	1	Community Decision-Making	Patterns of Power and Decision-making
Victims of conflict	7	26	33	Women’s Role in Conflict	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Victims of sexual violence	0	4	4	Sexual Violence	Cultural Norms and Beliefs
Wage Labor	24	10	34	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
WASH facilities	4	2	6	Access to WASH	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
WASH services	5	4	9	Access to WASH	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Water resources	3	0	3	Access to WASH	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Women	34	65	99	Women	Gender
Women awareness of rights	16	4	20	Women's Rights	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Women workload	3	22	25	Women's Workload	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Women's agency	3	3	6	Women's Rights	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices
Women's rights	1	1	2	Women's Rights	Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices

Women's role in agriculture	3	16	19	Women’s Role in Agriculture	Gender Roles, Responsibilities, and Time Use
Young men	12	16	28	Young Men	Gender
Young women	4	17	21	Young Women	Gender
Youth	1	18	19	Youth	Gender
Youth opportunities	0	1	1	Access to Employment	Access to and Control over Assets and Resources
Youth workload	2	1	3	Youth	Gender

ANNEX IV: REFERENCES

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