



## **Situation Update on Housing, Land and Property (HLP)**

**20 May 2019, West Guji Zone**

### **Key Findings:**

- As most recent returns have been to a “site” within a kebele, not to individual homes, the full picture of housing, land and property (HLP) issues is still to be determined.
- The issues of HLP are likely to manifest after the IDP returnees start going back to their original homes/land.
- There have been some anecdotal reports of secondary occupation, however, the government has taken responsibility and has attempted to resolve the issue by “requesting” the secondary occupants to vacate and “go to their homes”. The displacement status of the secondary occupants that left the property needs to be confirmed.
- It has been reported that “host community” members are requesting remuneration from returnees for protecting their land/houses during displacement. Further assessment and verification of these reports is needed.
- The situation regarding HLP violations and potential solutions varies significantly from kebele to kebele.
- Instance of HLP issues are identified through protection monitoring teams to be referred to the Protection Cluster, NRC and HLP WG for documentation and follow-up.

### **Recommendations:**

- There are numerous complex and overlapping issues related to HLP in Gedeo and West Guji, including secondary occupation, forced evictions, disputes relating to ownership, and the targeted confiscation and/or destruction of HLP and legal identity documents.
- Given the above, humanitarian actors should conduct due diligence before implementing activities that require assumptions about, or may have future implications on, the ownership of land and property (including the reconstruction and/or rehabilitation of shelter). Due diligence should include, at a minimum, examining any documents that the person claiming ownership may have, as well as social confirmation practices to support or verify claims of ownership. It is essential that individuals of multiple ethnicities and ages participate in any social confirmation practices.
- Humanitarian actors should bear in mind that land use documents were not available to all individuals prior to the conflict, may not reflect unofficial ‘sales’ transactions, and that many of these documents have been destroyed; social confirmation practices are therefore also important when assessing ownership claims.
- Prior to providing assistance, humanitarian actors should try to understand how housing/land in a particular community has been allocated to IDPs and under what terms. Practices vary widely throughout SNNPR and Oromia and so it is thus important to make this inquiry at the kebele level.