ERRM/USAID – Kisili 4 Project

Rapid Gender Analysis Report

MALI - SÉGOU, MOPTI, TIMBUKTU AND GAO REGIONS

Bamako, November 2020
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## Abbreviations and acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BHA</td>
<td>Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAFO</td>
<td>Coordination des Associations et ONGs Féminines du Mali (Coordination of Women’s Associations and NGOs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMP</td>
<td>Commission Mouvement de Population (Population Movement Commission)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRDSES</td>
<td>Direction Regional de Development Social et de l’Economie Solidaire (Regional Direction of Social Development and United Economy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERRM</td>
<td>Emergency Rapid Response Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDPs</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAD</td>
<td>Gender Age and Dignity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-Based Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAL</td>
<td>Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRA</td>
<td>Multisectoral Rapid Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>Non-Food Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDM</td>
<td>Post-Distribution Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRM</td>
<td>Rapid Response Mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLDSES</td>
<td>Service Locale de Développement Social et l’Economie Solidaire (Local Service of Social Development and United Economy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary

This Rapid Gender Analysis is part of Phase 4 of the ERRM-Kisili project implemented by CRS in partnership with local NGOs and the Regional Direction of Social Development and the United Economy (Direction Régional de Développement Social et l’Économie Solidaire, DRDSES) thanks to funding from USAID/BHA. Undertaken in September 2020 in the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao, this analysis contributes both to understanding the challenges and to developing strategies that will ensure all beneficiaries receive equitable access to the project services and active participation in decision-making process at all levels without harming the culture and traditions of the target population.

The study employed a qualitative approach (semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups) and included the ethnic groups prevalent among internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Mali. The study covered the sociolinguistic groups of the Fulani, Dogon, Songhai, white Tuareg and black Tuareg ethnic groups. The data collection involved 146 people including 95 IDPs, 15 returnees and 36 hosts (60% women/girls and 40% men/boys). All focus group and interview participants were members of polygamous and monogamous households directly or indirectly affected by the population movements and were beneficiaries of the Kisili project. In each region, one focus group discussion was conducted with women, one with men, and one with girls aged 13 to 17.

PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are also issued to ensure that responses meet the needs of women. The Kisili project is already in the process of implementing some of the following recommendations as part of its activities to assist people displaced by the crisis in Mali:

- Meet with female leaders or village counselors during needs assessments and discuss with them the specific needs of women and girls.
- Avoid cash transfers where there is a potentially high risk of creating family tensions related to the use of money, especially in polygamous households.
- Awareness-raising for households on the use of cash transfers, with a focus on polygamous households.
- In polygamous households, register the man as the head of household but each wife as a recipient of the assistance for each household.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- The data indicate a degree of similarity between the Dogon and Songhai ethnicities and between the Fulani and the Tuareg in terms of household dynamics.
- Women and girls are the most affected by displacement and are the most numerous in IDP sites because of the migration of men caused by the conflict.
- In all the ethnic groups encountered, the man is the head of the household, even if this role is increasingly attributed to women because of the migration or death of the husband.
- Cash transfers from humanitarian organizations or gifts from outside the household are controlled exclusively by the husband and are a source of conflict in polygamous households when women wish to maintain control.
- As a result of displacement, women are the main providers of income and meet food and health expenses for all household members, including the husband even if present.
- Cash transfers in polygamous households are very often sources of psychological, emotional, and even physical violence between spouses. They also create a situation of jealousy between the wives when one of them is not a recipient.
- Displaced women do not participate in community associations and participate less in community decisions, which remain under the control of men.
Introduction

1.1. BACKGROUND
Mali has one of the highest levels of gender inequality in the world, ranked 182\textsuperscript{th} according to the UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII), out of 189 countries for which data is available.\textsuperscript{1} Women represent 52\% of the rural population, and 64\% live below the poverty line.\textsuperscript{2} The birth rate among teenage women is 169.1 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19. For every 100,000 live births, 587 women die from pregnancy-related causes in Mali.\textsuperscript{3} These inequalities are aggravated by the multidimensional crisis that Mali has faced since 2012. This crisis has generated massive population displacement, both inside and outside the country. The latest report from the Commission on Population Movement (Commission Mouvement de Populations, CMP) indicates there are 287,496 IDPs, of which 54\% are women and 46\% men.\textsuperscript{4} These forced displacements have a negative impact on the lives of IDPs. Even when displaced, women remain key players in development: they represent 70\% of the agricultural workforce, 80\% in food production and 60 to 90\% in trade.\textsuperscript{5} Women strongly contribute to the household economy and to the local market. Despite this active contribution, women and men have unequal and inequitable access to the benefits of these achievements and to economic opportunities.

Faced with the population movements in central and northern Mali, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), with financial support from USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and in partnership with local NGOs and the Local Services for Social Development and the Solidarity Economy (Service Locale de Développement Social et l’Economie Solidaire, SLDSES), is providing a vital response to displaced people through food security assistance, emergency shelters, household items and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) kits. In its three previous phases between August 2017 and April 2020, the Kisili project reached 33,017 households or 246,120 individuals including 228,933 IDPs in the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu, Gao and Menaka.

Population movements affect women, girls, boys, and men differently. These distinct impacts mean that they have different needs in terms of humanitarian assistance and protection. The results of Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) during the previous phases of the Kisili project showed that the situation of internally displaced women remains marked by limited participation in decision-making processes at all levels, particularly in the use of the assistance provided by the Kisili project. Recognizing the importance of a gender-specific multisectoral response to the needs of displaced and host populations, CRS deemed it necessary to conduct a rapid gender analysis with IDPs in the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu, and Gao. This study sheds light on the challenges and informs strategies that will ensure all beneficiaries receive equitable access to the project services and active participation in decision-making process at all levels, without negatively impacting the cultural practices and traditions of target populations in line with humanitarian “do no harm” principles.

For its 4\textsuperscript{th} phase implemented over 24 months, the Kisili team will continue its interventions based on the results and recommendations of this gender analysis, in order to better respond to questions of gender equality at all levels.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE RAPID GENDER ANALYSIS
The rapid gender analysis was intended to guide the Kisili project in developing an appropriate gender integration strategy. More specifically, it involved the following:

\begin{itemize}
\item UNDP. Gender Inequality Index 2018. p.41 \url{http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-5-gender-inequality-index-gii}
\item UNDP - Mali: Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2020
\item UNDP, op. cit., 2018, p.41.
\item CMP, Report on population movements, July 2020, p.1.
\item PS/SDR, Agricultural Survey 2008-2009.
\item ALPHALOG (Ségou), Cariats Mopti (Mopti), ASG (Tombouctou), CRADE and TASSAGHT (Gao), CSPEEDA (Koulikoro) and GARDL (Menaka and Kidal)
\end{itemize}
INTRODUCTION

- Contribute to a better understanding of gender relations and disparities in the context of the implementation of the Kisili project.
- Formulate recommendations to encourage and promote regular and more in-depth internal reflection on cultural, security and logistical constraints to better account for the project’s Gender, Age and Dignity (GAD) approach.
- Identify the most important actions and strategies to best address gender equality issues in Kisili project interventions.

The rapid analysis aimed to understand the gender situation in the selected areas by answering the following principal research questions:

- How has the displacement affected the community? Are women, men, boys, and girls affected differently?
- How are/were the power relations between the displaced men and women before and after displacement?
- How has displacement changed or exacerbated gender inequalities; what has changed in the roles of men, women, girls, and boys?
- What are the inequalities between the sexes and other factors of diversity (people with disabilities, ethnicity, age, etc.), and what are the implications for access to and use of assistance? Who has access to which goods and services, and what prevents others from accessing assistance?
- What are the main types of gender-based violence, who are the perpetrators, and who are the victims? What mitigation mechanisms exist, and what are the gaps to be filled?
- What are the specific gender-related obstacles and opportunities that can enable the equitable participation of women in decisions on household income management including assistance received from the Kisili project?
- What mechanism does the community currently use to make decisions? Who participates in the decision-making processes?
- What actions are needed to ensure that women, men, boys, and girls all have access to project assistance?
- Which key community members have the most influence on individual and family behaviors that the project can collaborate with on gender promotion?

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out through a participatory qualitative approach inclusive of ethnic groups present among the IDP population in central and northern Mali, using the following collection tools: focus group discussion guides and questionnaires for individual interviews with key informants.

The information gathered complemented a review of the existing literature, in particular the national gender policy and the publications and evaluations of the various stakeholders in the northern and central regions of Mali. The literature review on gender in Mali informed the development of the tools for collecting the complementary information.

Focus groups were organized separately with displaced women, men, girls and boys and host communities (Fulani, Dogon, Songhai, black Tuareg and white Tuareg) in the post-Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) zones in the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao, taking into account socio-cultural and gender diversities (ethnic groups, means of subsistence, types of disabilities, marital status, age, etc.). For example, in Ségou, as IDPs are mainly Fulani, we carried out focus groups with adult Fulani women and young Fulani girls ages 13 to 17 years.

In addition to focus groups, individual interviews with key informants (community and religious leaders, gender focal points of local and international NGOs and the United Nations system) were conducted in each region.

In addition to the primary information gathered from the target population, the analysis was complemented by national secondary data collected in activity reports, newsletters and documents provided by OCHA and other humanitarian actors.

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7 Because of their very small number among the displaced population, the survey did not include the Arab/Moorish community.
Table 1: Breakdown of Surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ségou</th>
<th>Mopti</th>
<th>Timbuktu</th>
<th>Gao</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data collection was carried out from August 5 to September 3, 2020 in the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Tombouctou and Gao, targeting 146 people, including 95 IDPs, 15 returnees, and 36 host community members (60% women/girls and 40% men/boys). The selection of focus group participants was made at random with the support of leaders from the host and IDP communities. The gender focal point of the ERRM-Kisili project oversaw data collection with the support of enumerators recruited by the local NGO partner who understood the language of the survey area. In total, four enumerators (one per region) supervised by the gender focal point of the ERRM-Kisili project collected information in the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao. The data collection team identified a local guide/gatekeeper to facilitate introductions and the acceptance of communities in Gao Region. The Kisili gender focal point facilitated focus groups with men.

1.4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In each region, the data collection teams explained their association with the organization conducting the mission (CRS and local partner), the objectives of the research, and the procedures for conducting the interview and obtained the informed consent of the interviewees. Only people who provided their informed consent were interviewed.

Issues related to gender-based violence (GBV) are very sensitive, particularly in the Fulani and Tuareg communities. Perceptions around GBV were collected from key informants at the community level and from government structures, notably the those working for the promotion of women, children, and families. The team did not encounter any survivors of GBV.

1.5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This rapid gender analysis was limited gender dynamics in IDP sites post-displacement, due to the rapid evolution of the conflict in the target regions and its impact on the populations. The analysis does not provide insight into gender dynamics linked to the conflict itself. Due to the difficulties of obtaining flights to Ménaka, data was not collected in this region.

We were not able to collect information from GBV survivors due to the lack of expertise and clear methodology to conduct the interviews without potentially causing further harm to such individuals.

Chapter 1: Demographic profile

2.1. POPULATION DATA DISAGGREGATED BY SEX AND AGE

The total population of the regions addressed by the study is estimated at 7,611,777 inhabitants, according to the population data for Mali projected for the drafting of the harmonized framework in November 2019. The geographic distribution of the study zone favors the regions of Ségou (42%) and Mopti (37%), accounting for over three quarters of the total population. On the other hand, the population of the regions of Gao and Timbuktu (1,598,238 inhabitants) is less than 30% of the total.

Women are slightly more numerous than men. There are 3,797,286 men (49.6%) and 3,814,491 women (50.4%), i.e. a ratio of 98 men to 100 women. In terms of age structure, the population is extremely young: children represent 54% of

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More details on the sample are in the annexes, available on request.
the population (26% girls and 28% boys), the 18-59 age group represents 41% (21% women and 20% men), and the population aged 60 and over only 6% (3% women and 3% men). The average age is 20 years for the whole population.

The study population is majority Muslim and the average number of people per household is just over 6. In the Malian context, a family may be made up of several households. A household is defined as a group of people who normally live and take their meals together. In polygamous households, each wife and her children are treated as a separate household.

Table 2: POPULATIONS BY REGION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONS</th>
<th>0-17 YEARS</th>
<th>18-59 YEARS</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAO</td>
<td>174,820</td>
<td>185,622</td>
<td>142,349</td>
<td>131,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOPTI</td>
<td>729,673</td>
<td>774,760</td>
<td>594,147</td>
<td>550,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEGOU</td>
<td>837,945</td>
<td>889,721</td>
<td>682,308</td>
<td>631,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMBUKTU</td>
<td>241,811</td>
<td>256,753</td>
<td>196,898</td>
<td>182,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>1,984,250</td>
<td>2,106,855</td>
<td>1,615,702</td>
<td>1,495,959</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The latest report of the Commission on Population Movement (CMP) of July 30, 2020 recorded 252,389 IDPs in the regions of Gao, Mopti, Ségou and Timbuktu. The CMP estimates that the majority of IDPs are in the region of Mopti with 45% (more than 100,000 people), mainly in the Bandiagara cercle. Women and girls represent 54% of IDPs. About 58% of the internally displaced population is made up of children under 18. The most represented ethnic groups are the Fulani, the Dogon, the Songhai, the white Tuareg, and the black Tuareg. According to the results of the phase three evaluations of the ERM Kisili project, 36% of IDP households are headed by women. When the men have left the IDP site or remained behind in the village of origin, they leave the management of the household to the women.

KEY FIGURES

- Mali’s 2017 gender inequality index, which takes into account disparities in the sectors of reproductive health, education and access to employment, is 0.678, ranking it 157th out of 160 countries;
- 44% of the national population lives below the poverty line. This rate rises to 64.2% for women, 83.6% of whom are underemployed (2019 gender report, Ministry of the Economy and Finance);
- 8% of women own rice plots in the Ségou region and 14.7% of women own rice plots in the Mopti region;
- 95% of women’s work is concentrated in agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing, trade, processing activities, domestic activities and hotels and restaurants;
- Women have limited access to credit, with only 16.8% of women having available credit;
- 15% of women over 25 have attained secondary education (21% for men);
- The prevalence of malnutrition among children under 5 is higher among boys than among girls;
- Each Malian woman gives birth to 6 children on average;
- The maternal mortality rate is 587 per 100,000 live births;
- The rate of adolescent girls aged 15-19 giving birth is 169 per 1,000.

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10 CRS, Project ERRM-Kisili 3, 2020
11 Helené Lackenbauer, Magdalena Tham Lindell and Gabriella Ingerstad, A Gendered Analysis of the Armed Conflict in Northern Mali, FOI, November 2015.
HIV prevalence among 15-49 year-olds is 1.8% for women and 1% for men.

The law provides for a minimum quota of 30% of women in elected or appointed positions in Mali. The average percentage of women in the 2013-2018 legislature was 9.52%, 41.02% at the level of the Supreme Court, and 22.22% at the level of the Constitutional Court, which is chaired by a woman. At the municipal level, 8.60% of mayors are women and 1.14% of councilors. Women represent 16% of the government formed in October 2020.

About 75% of women and 58% of men agreed that decisions within the household should be made by the head of the household, meaning the husband.13

34.6% of married women face domestic violence.14

Among women who have been married, about 44% have experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence from their current or previous husband.

2.2. WHO ARE MOST AFFECTED?

Among IDPs in Mali, households headed by women are growing in number and households headed by children are also an important vulnerable group. Data from the needs assessments of the Kisili project Phase 3 (2018-2019) indicate that, out of 30,325 households assessed, 36% are female-headed.

The currently displaced households are mainly made up of women and children, and vulnerable household members, such as elderly and the disabled, may remain in the villages of origin due to the challenges of displacement. Overall, in female-headed households, 45% of women are unmarried (widowed, separated or divorced) and among those who are married (55%) the husband is often absent.15

Pregnant women, representing 4% of IDPs according to the results of the Kisili 3 assessments (2018-2019), were designated as most vulnerable by focus group participants. Women and girls lack life-saving emergency obstetric care due to the lack of access to health services.

2.3. SOCIO-CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY POPULATION

The survey addressed Fulani (21%), Dogon (25%), white Tuareg (26%), black Tuareg (14%) and Songhai (14%) girls, women and men from the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao who are most affected by population displacement in Mali. While many share certain socio-cultural practices, each group also has their own specific features. Analysis of the study results identified the gender dynamics common and internal to each ethnic group.

A majority of the target population belong to the Muslim religion. However, there are a small number of Christians, who were only encountered in Mopti region.

13 EDS, Mali 2019
15 CRS, Kisili Project: Report on the assessment of the living conditions and means of subsistence of IDPs who are beneficiaries of the Kisili project, Region of Ségou, Mopti, Tombouctou, Gao and Ménaka, Bamako: Mali, October 2019, p.16
2.3.1. GENDER AND AGE
The survey was mainly qualitative, only targeted certain groups and was not representative of the entire population. The survey covered 146 people, majority women/girls (60%). The analysis shows that women/girls are the most numerous among those affected by population displacement apart from Mopti Region, where girls are sent to larger towns for the purpose of working as housekeepers in order to support their parents.

A majority of respondents (85%) were 18-59 years old (76% of women and 93% of men). However, girls aged 13-17 (19%) and people over 60 (6%) also participated in the survey. Young boys were not as present at the IDP sites, either because they had migrated to other countries, such as Ivory Coast or Senegal, or continued on to other sites in Mali.

2.3.2. MARITAL STATUS
Figure 2 indicates that 77% of respondents are married (75% of women and 79% of men.) Early marriages are common among all the ethnic groups. Nearly 50% of girls aged 13 to 17 who participated in the survey are already married. In addition, polygamous marriage is more prominent among the Fulani, Dogon, Songhai and black Tuareg ethnic groups, with more than one in three people aged 13 and over (38%) part of a polygamous family. More women (42% versus 33% for men) are part of a polygamous marriage.

Among the white Touareg, living in a highly matrimonial society, monogamy is the rule, even if divorces and remarriages are frequent. Nomadic life limits the feasibility of large families and women tend to be heads of the household; in the event of divorce, the man is often the one forced to leave.

Finally, the data show that single-headed households among all ethnic groups are mainly the result of widowhood, which affects women far more (9% compared to 0% for men). Men are more likely to lose their lives in conflict and leave behind their wives with the responsibility of supporting their households. These trends are consistent with national data from the 2009 census, which indicates that 5.6% of women are widowed versus 0.7% of men.  

2.3.3. LEVEL OF LITERACY
The education level of those surveyed is very low. Nearly 8 out of 10 people (77%) have received no education. Of those who have attended school, most have only a basic level of education, with primary education is the highest level for the majority of survey participants. Gaps between men and women as well as between ethnic groups remain significant. Among the Dogon and the Fulani, 86% of the people surveyed have not received any education, compared to 90% among the Tuareg and the Songhai, and 69% of men have not received any education compared to 84% of women. In addition, the literacy rate is 10% across the study population, regardless of ethnicity. The differences by sex clearly show that men are significantly more literate than women (7% for women compared to 14% for men). Women are more literate in the Mopti Region, at 35%. It is important to note that whatever the indicator considered, women in the Tuareg and the Songhai

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ethnic groups are less educated. Among these northern ethnic groups, there is a strong link between early marriage and education. The girls are often married off at a young age and are subject to the practice of force-feeding to gain weight, which is considered attractive in this culture; meanwhile boys are sometimes sent to school. Girls usually have to take care of the house and do not benefit from education.

2.3.4. MEANS OF SUBSISTENCE
The economic activity of the surveyed areas is dominated by agriculture (47%) and livestock (48%), which remain the principal sources of income for both men and women. Most are subsistence farmers, who grow rainfed crops on small plots of land. However, the conflict caused the collapse of agricultural production, reducing household assets. Agriculture is the main source of income for the Dogon and Songhai ethnic groups, while animal husbandry is the main source of income for the Fulani and Tuareg.
Chapter 2: Results and Analysis

This chapter presents an analysis of the qualitative information collected on gender dynamics in the context of displacement. Specific subjects include gender roles, decision-making at the household level, participation in decision-making, access to and control of resources and humanitarian assistance, and gender-based violence.

2.4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEN AND WOMEN

2.4.1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE DISPLACEMENT

Whether their displacement is caused by conflict or natural disasters, hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes since 2012, moving to other safer areas located dozens of kilometers away using rural tracks or paths through forests. Depending on the IDP population we surveyed, the displacement was carried out on foot, on donkeys, by carts or by small boat. It is important to understand that the displacement brings about an evolution of traditional roles, which are fluid and not fixed in time. During the displacement, women and girls actively take on roles traditionally assigned to men.

Since women and men have different culturally determined social roles, they approach the displacement in different ways. In the Fulani context, women and men leave their villages separately to avoid violence linked to their cultural identity. Men are the first to leave and may choose a different destination from the women. When they arrive at their destination, they instruct their wives to leave the village of origin to go to a different village. Host sites are always chosen by men based on social ties established with host communities. Women borrow vehicles, because the host sites tend to be very far away, and they also take on the responsibility of protecting and overseeing the transport of the elderly. Infants and children under ten are supervised by older girls until they reach their destination.

Similarities exist in the process of displacement among the Dogon, the Songhai and the Tuareg. Men and women move together when the male head of household or the village chief decide to leave the village. Women and young boys take care of old people who often travel on donkeys or in carts. Sometimes young boys or adult men carry old or sick people on their backs to their destinations. The girls look after infants and children under 10 years old. The journey typically lasts two to three days.

While men and boys continue to other areas to find employment, the women and girls stay to safeguard household assets and means of subsistence; care for elderly, young or sick household members; search for their missing relatives; and even to assess the degree of insecurity in order to determine whether displaced family members could stay or return to the village of origin. They can even decide to return to their village of origin when the security situation allows it, even in the absence of the husband who left to look for work. When they manage to contact the husband, the decision is taken together even if it is the wife who assesses the situation. Women then find themselves alone to shoulder the economic and emotional burdens of displacement. Among the Dogon, parents send their children (both girls and boys) aged 13 years or older to town centers to work in order to support the household or find food. Parents believe this strategy protects the girl even while exposing them to potential protection concerns outside the home. They think their daughters are better protected in large towns, because they can at least get enough to eat and are safe from the violence perpetrated by armed groups in rural areas.

2.4.2. RESOURCE CONTROL

In all the ethnic groups encountered, the man is the head of the household, even among the Tuareg. This status of men in the household is reinforced by national legislation. In areas with agricultural livelihoods, the production and consumption of staple crops are carried out jointly by men and women in households, but the management is carried out by the head of the household. Agricultural land belongs to the head of the household, who decides on the areas to allocate to the woman and what to grow. The head of household manages food stock, decides how much to sell, and distributes the

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quantity to be consumed. In many Dogon households, women have small gardens that they managed alone when they were in their home villages.

In polygamous households from all the sociolinguistic groups studied, individuals have control over income and assets. Within these households, the husband and all wives each have individual control over their own income. There is no expectation of transparency or revenue pooling. The head of the family retains control of the income from the sale of crops and animals that belong to him. He also retains control of the cash distributed on behalf of the household. Each wife must consult her husband when using cash received in her own name. Essential household non-food items are the sole property of the wives. Wives control the income generated by their small gardens, their small businesses, or other income-generating activities. Prior to displacement, the women used their income to cover their personal needs and those of their children as well as for social obligations, such as weddings, baptisms, and funerals. However, following displacement, all women’s income is used to support household expenses.

Meanwhile, monetary transfers or gifts intended for the household—for example cash transfers from NGOs—are not always shared among household members. The donations or assistance intended to support the household’s basic needs are exclusively controlled by the husband and are often a source of conflict between husband and wife or between co-wives in polygamous households when one wife benefited directly while the other wife’s share was collected by the husband.18 Men prefer to be in control of all assistance intended exclusively for the household.

White Tuareg households do not follow the model mentioned above, but rather have management practices that center around women. The woman has her own property (jewelry, cattle, etc.) which she has full control over without influence from male household members (father, brother or husband). Throughout the marriage, the Tuareg woman collects valuable jewelry, which she will leave to her daughters. After marriage, the woman continues to manage her dowry, which she keeps in the event of divorce. Goods and transfers or gifts from outside intended for the household or the woman are managed by the woman. She maintains control over all the resources that enter the household. On the other hand, the Tuareg man has control over his own property (cattle, land, etc.), which he manages in conjunction with his wife.

2.4.3. DIVISION OF LABOR (DOMESTIC)

In Mali, relations between the sexes are very complex and vary between the North and the Center as well as between ethnic groups. The crisis has brought about a reorganization of work in households, which results in a new distribution of tasks between men and women. As a result of displacement, there is also a large proportion of households headed by women and adolescents over 16. Women represent a significant proportion of the displaced population and are often the head of their household, because they have been separated from their husbands. In these households, the work usually reserved for men is carried out either by the woman herself or by her daughters. Before the crisis, men were responsible for covering household costs, such as condiments, health and education. With the displacement, among all the ethnic groups encountered, the woman plays the role of purveyor of condiments and must identify strategies for feeding the household. Men who have left behind their means of subsistence lose the ability to fulfill responsibilities related to their traditional role as head of household. However, they retain this role without assuming all the responsibilities that it entails. This situation is not a source of tension in the family, because the women often feel pity for their husbands.

“In our village, our husbands bought us condiments at the weekly fair. Women did not go to the market. Since we arrived here, we have done all of the shopping at the market because our husbands are not here and the market is much closer.” - FOCUS GROUP IN SOREWÈLE (DISPLACED FULANI WOMAN), NIONO CERCLE, SÉGOU REGION.

“Our husbands no longer have the financial means to feed us. In our village, the husband gives part of the harvest to his wife to go and sell in the market so that she can prepare food. Since we arrived here, the

18 The approach of the RRM Kisili project consists in recording each wife in polygamous households as a recipient, while the man retains his status as head of each household.
women have been feeding their families. There are no opportunities for our husbands. The displacement has strengthened the ties with our husbands. We see them every day and we have more affection and empathy for them.” - FOCUS GROUP IN BANDIAGA (DOGON WOMAN), MOPTI REGION.

Among the Dogon and Songhai, all household members are expected to contribute to agricultural production. In the Dogon context, before the displacement, the woman collected the harvest and took it to the market to sell. Income from the sale of the harvest was used to purchase condiments for the meal. In the Songhai context, the woman was involved in sowing and transplanting. However, they did not participate in the plowing of the land and the sale of the harvest. In the displaced Fulani and Tuareg households, which are mainly pastoralists, women do not generally participate in agricultural activities. They deal with the preparation and sale of livestock by-products, including the sale of milk, butter and other items made from animal skins.

Meanwhile, the physical and material wellbeing of all the members of the household relies only on female labor. In the Dogon, Fulani, Songhai and black Tuareg contexts, these tasks include carrying water, cleaning of household and surrounding spaces, laundry, dishes, care (for all members of the family and particularly for those who are in a state of dependency, namely babies, young children, sick or disabled people and the elderly) and the preparation and serving of food. The displacement has also led to a decline in agricultural activity within the family because of the lack of land to cultivate in the host sites. Meanwhile, household activities remain reserved for female members. Although these roles were also attributed to the woman in white Tuareg households prior to the displacement, it is not uncommon to see a Tuareg man drawing water for family consumption or caring for other household members. Activities previously considered a fundamental part of female identity are now carried out by men in IDP sites.

In polygamous households, household activities are distributed first among the co-wives, then among all the daughters-in-law of the head of household. The wives of the head of household, assisted by their daughters, are responsible for carrying out all the tasks until the arrival of the daughters-in-law. As soon as daughters-in-law arrive, most of the tasks performed by their mothers-in-law are delegated to them. Single daughters of the head of the household are expected to help their mothers with all their activities. From the moment mothers delegate tasks to their daughters-in-law, they themselves are exempt. This pattern of organizing work within the household is identical in all households and has not changed much with displacement. The man and the woman are both involved in receiving humanitarian assistance, although male focus group participants remarked that the women are best placed for this task because they are more patient while waiting at distribution sites.

“In the household, the woman is like the roots of a tree and the man constitutes the leaves. The woman is the interior of the household and the man represents the exterior of the household.”
– MALE FOCUS GROUP IN ESSERAD (TUAREG MAN), TIMBUKTU CERCLE, TIMBUKTU REGION.

“When the curse enters the household, only the woman can cast it out and introduce the blessing”
- FULANI COMMUNITY LEADER IN SOROWEL, NIONO CERCLE, SÉGOU REGION.
In addition, displacement reduces the birth rate because of the absence of men, who move to seek work in the cities or who have died in conflict. Even if men do manage to accompany their families during displacement, there is often a lack of privacy in the shelters at IDP sites. Very often, due to a lack of adequate shelter, men are separated from their wives. The following words from a displaced woman help to better understand the difficulties linked to reproduction, especially in cases where households share collective sites, as well as the distance between spouses that displacement creates:

“Since we arrived here, no woman has become pregnant. We don't have enough space to live with our husbands. So, to avoid sexual violence against the girls in the households, we decided to separate men from women. The space for women is also cleaned by the young boys to avoid a woman bending down in front of men and provoking desire” – FEMALE FOCUS GROUP (DOGON) IN BANDIAGARA, MOPTI REGION.

However, it should be noted that in all the contexts studied, specific activities are linked exclusively to male identity and can never be performed by a woman. Buying livestock at the market, slaughtering livestock, or inviting members of the household to pray are activities only carried out by male members of the household. In households where a woman is alone with her daughters, these activities are performed by other displaced men on a voluntary basis.

2.4.4. ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES AND SOURCES OF INCOME

The decline in work related to the livelihoods of displaced households leads to the emergence of new income-generating activities that rely on female labor. Such activities include selling handicrafts, small trading, domestic work in the households of the host community and agricultural labor. The woman uses her income to cover household expenses. Among the Dogon people in Bandiagara, the wives sell fodder for livestock or work in the households of the host community. All the resulting income is intended to meet the needs of the household, including expenditure on the food and health of household members. In Timbuktu, the Songhai and black Tuareg wives work in the fields and in the host households to earn money. The lack of opportunities for men in the host sites has contributed to the reorientation of women’s incomes towards basic household needs. Some men migrate to the big cities to find work to support their household. Others remain in IDP sites without any work and live on the women’s income.

“We sell grass every day at the Bandiagara market and this earns us from 1000 to 1500 FCFA per day. We buy condiments and food to cook for our husbands and children. Some of us also buy the husbands tobacco, cigarettes, or cola” - FEMALE FOCUS GROUP (DOGON) IN BANDIAGARA, MOPTI REGION.

Some displaced women do market gardening at home, in the courtyard of host community houses, or on plots loaned to them either by relatives in the host community or by the village chief.

In addition, white Tuareg women earn income from handicrafts or the door-to-door sale of livestock by-products to meet their own needs or those of their children. Some displaced women/girls have benefited from capacity building and vocational training programs, especially in the Mopti Region. IDPs in Bandiagara have received professional training from the NGO GAS Mali as part of an Income Generating Activities (IGA) support project funded by UN Women. During our research, we met approximately ten displaced female entrepreneurs who participated in the project. Some of them are obliged to take charge of all domestic tasks and to practice their IGA for the benefit of the whole family. Below is an account from Nana Djibo (in her twenties, originally from Goro, Bandiagara Cercle, Mopti Region) regarding her experience with the IGA project:
“In November 2019, non-state armed groups gave us an ultimatum to immediately abandon our village of Goro (Doucoumbo Commune, Bandiagara Cercle, Mopti Region). For fear of reprisals, accompanied by my five children and my husband, I quickly left the village without taking any belongings. We walked nearly ten kilometers to Bandiagara to stay in houses provided by the Social Development Service. My husband and I would go days without eating. We gave the meals received from the host community to our children. After a few days, I received food assistance and household and hygiene kits from CRS as part of the ERRM Kisili project funded by USAID/BHA. This assistance allowed me, my husband and my children to survive for just over a month. Afterwards, we became vulnerable again, and I reduced the number of meals per day for my children to ration the food over several days. To survive and feed my children and my husband, who was no longer working, I sold firewood that I collected from a very dangerous location more than 5 km from our host site. After more than 6 months, I was identified by the Groupe d’Animation Action au Sahel – Mali (GAAS Mali) as part of a support project for Income Generating Activities (IGA) funded by UN Women. I received training in tailoring and received a sewing machine that allows me to feed my family and pay for my health costs and those of my family. Today, I want to return to my village to practice sewing and earn enough money to educate my children.”

2.4.5. DECISION-MAKING

2.4.5.1. WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD

Although the woman may want to participate in community activities, visit family members, or travel to another location, she always needs her husband’s permission. The husband or the father has the last word with regard to the movement of his wife or daughter in the household, including participation in community activities and those offered by humanitarian organizations. The decision to use donations or other cash from outside, for example cash transfers from NGOs, is unilaterally taken by the husband, although some men claimed they had consulted with their wives. When the cash is given directly to the woman, she is not be able to decide how it is used. If she tries to do so, she may be the victim of physical violence or divorce, especially in the Dogon and Songhai context. About 75% of women and 58% of men agreed that decisions within the household should be made by the head of the household, meaning the husband.19

Examination of the various interviews and focus groups shows that, among all ethnicities, the final decision on use of household resources rests with the man. Although men remain, even in times of crisis, the main decision-makers within the household for upholding family norms and for the use of resources, women have acquired new decision-making positions as a result of displacement. Several women have become heads of households because of the departure of men to other areas to seek more opportunities for the household. This new status gives them a new decision-making role in the household that they run alone in the absence of the husband. However, this new role is not welcomed by all women, who want a return to security and to be reunited with their husbands. Some women feel the burden is too great for them, and that they become fragile and vulnerable in the face of this situation.

2.4.5.2. DECISION-MAKING REGARDING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The contexts studied are made up of traditional societies where dominant cultural attitudes, patriarchal structures or Islamic fundamentalism assign women an inferior status in the community and limit their participation in public life. Indeed, women are considered “weak” and to be protected. Men are the final decision-makers inside and outside the household. Regarding humanitarian assistance, distribution sites as well as distribution times are generally chosen by men.

19 EDS, Mali 2019.
In some cases, the assistance is received by male community leaders, who are responsible for distributing it among households. Often, the primary recipients of the assistance are men.

Women are less willing to participate in public affairs, even those relating to humanitarian assistance. For example, when choosing the distribution modalities and focal points of the intervention, because of traditional norms and roles, especially among the white Tuareg and the Dogon, women hesitate to speak up and make their points of view known. Their participation in managing the assistance received is further hampered by women’s low self-esteem, especially outside the household regarding public matters. Among the Dogon people, women cannot participate in public meetings that take place in the *taguna* or *shonan*,²⁰ because they are not allowed access to this physical space.

When women are asked about their level of participation in decision-making around humanitarian assistance, they all answer that: “It’s men’s business. We women take care of what needs to be managed in the households and the men take care of the village. The woman is the household and the man is the exterior of the household. The decisions of our men are fine with us and they know what is good for us” - FOCUS GROUP IN SOREWÈLE, NIONO CERCLE, REGION OF SÉGOU.

On the other hand, although infrequent, women have participated and were consulted at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the programs as female leaders or female heads of households. In the North, women felt that they had a say, particularly in decisions about the location of water facilities. Among the Dogon, activities linked to the management and monitoring of community activities, such as shared cooking, are carried out by female leaders who are very often older women.

Finally, humanitarian workers should pay close attention to Islamic fundamentalists, which are currently widespread in areas occupied by non-state armed groups affiliated with the Support Group for Islam and Muslims (Groupe de soutien à l’Islam et aux musulmans - GSIM, or Jama’a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin’ - JNIM). In the areas occupied by these groups, women are often veiled and must be separated from men. They are not consulted and cannot participate in discussions that concern public affairs.

### 2.5. **CAPACITIES AND COPING MECHANISMS**

Due to very limited economic resources, lack of employment opportunities, loss of livelihoods, and restricted mobility of displaced households, women, men, boys and girls rely heavily on humanitarian assistance. The types of coping mechanisms most used, when humanitarian aid is late or insufficient, include the sale of jewelry for women, the sale of productive assets for men, and migration for boys and girls. However, whether households are able to bring their productive items with them depends on the context of their displacement. Rapid needs assessments conducted by the Kisili ERRM project reveal that very few goods are brought in by households due to the rapid and urgent nature of their displacement. During Kisili Phase 3, the Non-Food Items (NFI) score of farming tools exceeded the vulnerability threshold established by the shelter/NFI cluster (3.8) in all regions, with an average score of 4.76.

Host communities share their resources with newly arrived IDPs and employ coping mechanisms, such as significantly reducing food consumption and selling small items. When significantly reducing household food consumption, it is common for women in the household to eat last, but pregnant women and children under 5 are sometimes the most

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²⁰ The *taguna* or *shonan* (“word hut”) is a structure present in each village, where male village elders meet to discuss common affairs without the presence of women.
prioritized. Among the Tuareg IDPs, the men make do with a single meal to allow women and children to get two or three meals a day. Usually, only children eat three meals a day.

In addition, displaced women in Dogon, Fulani, Songhai and Tuareg communities demonstrate their tenacity and capacity to undertake new commercial activities in the public sphere to support their families:

“When we arrived here, we started to engage in commercial activities that we did not do at home, in our village of origin. Here we sell hay and wood to feed our family while in our home village we earn our income from the small gardens made available by our husbands” - FOCUS GROUP OF WOMAN (DOGON) IN BANDIAGARA, MOPTI REGION

2.6. MOBILITY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS
The crisis has reduced the mobility of women and girls. They have difficulty accessing local markets to sell and purchase products, because of robberies, intimidation, and explosive devices, and typically cannot travel more than 5 km from the host sites. Women who leave to collect firewood or work in the fields are among the victims of anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordnance. They are at risk of violence on the way to collect wood or to health centers when these are not nearby. On the other hand, they feel safe on the way to water collection points and to distribution points, which are generally located a few hundreds of meters from their homes.

In addition, they often lack legally recognized identity documents issued in their name enabling them to move between towns or to pass through checkpoints, which are widespread in central Mali.

Legend: Freedom of movement
- Green: Women can go alone
- Orange: Women can go in pairs
- Gray: Women can only go with a man

Figure 3: Freedom of movement for displaced women. Source: Focus group data

2.7. ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SERVICES AND RESOURCES

2.7.1. ACCESS TO WATER, HYGIENE AND SANITATION
Rapid assessments of the ERRM Kisili project indicate that the majority (63%) of IDPs used non-potable water sources and 79% of them never treat their water (18% sometimes, 4% always). Among all the ethnicities studied, except the white Tuareg, women and girls are largely responsible for collecting water and often travel long distances to find water. At several IDP sites observed, the water collection points were very far from the residential areas, especially in the regions of Gao and Timbuktu. This distance increases the risk that women will be injured or victims of violence, as a result of attacks or land mines for example. Collecting water also takes a disproportionate amount of time, which could be spent on economic activities or social activities. Among the white Tuareg, fetching water is the responsibility of men and children.

Women also play a critical role in promoting healthy behaviors at the household level, including hygiene practices such as hand washing with soap, proper waste disposal, food preparation, and management of water collection, storage and treatment. As part of the response to phase 3 of the Kisili project, 7,270 women (18 in Séguéla, 2,013 in Mopti, 2,636 in Timbuktu, 1,931 in Gao) received awareness-raising on hygiene and sanitation practices.
In addition, men, women and girls interviewed at all sites agreed that the lack of clean toilets and hygiene was a serious concern and those that were built by humanitarian actors have no segregation between men and women and were not well lit, therefore exposing women to more violence. In northern Mali and particularly among the Tuareg, women opt for open defecation rather than latrines.

Note that in all the cultural contexts studied, women are not prepared to participate in initiatives aimed at creating a new water point or a latrine. They think that it is men’s business. When participating with men, women are reluctant to speak up and make their point of view known. More often than not, the problem is not resistance from the community, nor reluctance on the part of the women themselves. On the contrary, women think that the points of view offered are enough, or that they have nothing to contribute.

2.7.2. FOOD SECURITY
Agriculture and livestock are the key sectors in the economies of the households surveyed. Women play an integral and often unacknowledged role in the agricultural sector, taking on various functions related to food production, processing and sale. They also play an important role in the management of livestock at the household level, especially among the Fulani and Tuareg. Both young girls and boys can herd cattle. Among all ethnic backgrounds studied, women are responsible for food preparation and other key components of family nutrition.

Due to poor living conditions and lack of employment in host sites, households have had to resort to negative food coping mechanisms such as reducing food consumption. When food is scarce, women are the first to eat less but still carry on their heavy domestic workload. According to the National Food and Nutrition Security Survey (ENSAN), more female heads of household (42.3%) employed non-food coping strategies compared to male heads of household (33.8%). The same is true for emergency crisis strategies more widely practiced among women heads of household (19.5%) than among men (13.5%).21 Households headed by women remain more vulnerable than those headed by men, with a survival strategy index twice as high that of male heads of household (2.25 vs. 1.05 for men).22 In fact, households headed by women have fewer productive assets, earn less income, are the most indebted and use more coping strategies to acquire food. In addition, the rate of malnutrition remains precarious to urgent in the areas studied, especially among women who tend to eat last, after the rest of the family. According to the same survey, 38.4% of households in Gao and 23.3% of those in Mopti face food insecurity. Levels of acute and chronic malnutrition among women and children are high, due to women’s lack of education, poor nutritional status and related problems arising from a lack of essential services such as health care and water and sanitation facilities. In addition, the report points out that boys suffer more from wasting and stunting than girls, and boys are more affected by acute and chronic malnutrition than girls. More than 70% of children do not consume a minimum acceptable level of dietary diversity and are likely to have a low density of micronutrients in their diet. The survey also found that 4% of women aged 15 to 49 were malnourished.

Female focus group participants also expressed obstacles to accessing food assistance from certain humanitarian actors due to lack of documentation making it difficult to register women, boys and girls, and lack of mobility due to domestic work and security constraints. Food assistance distributed to female heads of household is often taken by the man, especially in polygamous households where violence is often exercised by the husband on one of the wives after the distribution in order to force them to share their food assistance with the other wives and members of their other households. When food assistance is provided in the form of cash, the subsequent wives (second, third, etc.) who receive cash for their households are forced to return the money to their husband, who already received money in the name of the first wife’s household. The women believe that, in the targeting approach of certain humanitarian organizations, the truly vulnerable people are not registered by the local authorities (mayors, village chiefs); some women were forced to pay to appear on the list of beneficiaries; and those lacking in financial resources were forced to make up for their failure to pay by agreeing to join political parties. These comments are regarding organizations that carry out targeting on the basis of lists provided by community leaders or communities without conducting a census or individual registration.

Discussions with the women revealed that beyond food needs, there were also other household priorities. The women fled without being able to take their pots and other cooking utensils. In addition, access to drinking water and fuel wood was an issue. The women also felt that the local beans provided by some humanitarian actors required lengthy cooking,

21 INSTAT, National Food and Nutrition Security Survey (ENSAN Mali), February 2020, p. 58
22 INSTAT, ENSAN, February 2020, p. 57

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forcing them to travel considerable distances to find enough fuel wood. Such trips not only reduced the time available for other activities, but also put women and children at risk, as some walk for more than four hours under difficult conditions to collect the firewood needed to cook the meal.

### 2.7.3. SHELTER

Among the Tuareg and the Songhai, shelters are traditionally built by the woman, who receives the support of her peers in the community. By contrast, in the Dogon context, the construction of shelters is the work of men. Women-headed households depend on men to help them build their shelters. However, the shortage of building materials and construction tools in the villages has relegated the needs of female-headed households in terms of community support. At the IDP site, where the economic situation is harsh, female-headed households cannot afford the high cost of materials or pay for construction. The cash provided by some humanitarian actors for the construction of shelters is not sufficient to build safe and decent housing and is used instead to pay for condiments. The cash is not only insufficient, but the households also have other more urgent unmet needs, such as food and healthcare.

In other areas, especially in northern Mali, the shelters provided as part of humanitarian assistance do not offer privacy. Women and men are forced to share their shelter with their children or people who do not belong to the household. The shelters do not respect the cultural imperatives of separating sleeping spaces for different family members. The safety and well-being of children is not guaranteed, as they are sometimes forced to sleep outside or leave their accommodation for extended periods in order to provide the required privacy to their parents. In Bandiagara, IDPs separated the women from the men in the houses of the Attbougou site provided by the Social Development Service, because they did not offer enough privacy for couples.

Due to the lack of economic resources, households cannot purchase additional blankets or clothes, having abandoned everything during displacement. Infants, pregnant and lactating women and the elderly are particularly vulnerable during the winter months, which are very harsh in the northern regions.

### 2.8. PARTICIPATION

There are different types of women’s associations at all the IDP reception sites. The most well-known groups of NGOs and women’s associations include the Coordination of Women’s Associations and NGOs (CAFO). Women are often organized in savings groups or mutual funds supported by some humanitarian organizations. However, even if displaced women participate in women’s associations in their village of origin, these are dissolved as soon as the displacement process is triggered. When they arrive at the IDP sites, they do not resume these activities and encounter difficulties in joining the women’s associations at the host site. They are not supported neither by humanitarian organizations nor by women’s organizations in the host communities.

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23 Food Security Cluster: Operational presence of partners, Mali: September 2020
In the regions of Ségou, Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao, several local and international organizations are working with women under the leadership of the Protection cluster, the Gender-based violence sub-cluster and local technical services for the advancement of women, children and the family. However, actions that exclusively target displaced women are weak or even non-existent in places. Women’s organizations do not have sufficient technical and financial means to cover all the localities, especially those hosting displaced people. None of the sites visited receives support from an association or a humanitarian organization to develop community participation or female leadership among displaced women.

Women are represented in community decision-making bodies by their leader, who are older women often selected by men. Women are village councilors among the Fulani and the Songhai. By contrast, we did not encounter any women village councilors among the Dogon and the Tuareg. Women are consulted during community decision-making through their leaders and councilors, who convey the ideas of the women after having consulted them.

2.9. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

According to the results of the interviews and focus groups, displaced women, men, girls and boys were exposed to protection risks along the way, including risks of robbery, sexual violence, and land mines. Once at the reception sites or collective shelters, risks to protection exist due to depression, lack of economic resources and separation of families, leaving women, girls and boys exposed to exploitation.

In all the social settings studied, the categories of gender-based violence cited by the respondents include insults, assault and battery, rape, abuse, FGM, sexual harassment, repudiation, early and/or forced marriage, abduction of women, levirate/sororate marriages, the forced wearing of the chador, the prolonged abandonment of the woman following the migration of the husband, the force-feeding of young girls destined for early marriage, etc. Discussions with the women highlighted the fact that armed groups have committed numerous rapes and sexual abuse of women and girls, including kidnapping and forced confinement. In polygamous households, physical violence has been reported arising from assistance provided, especially when it is in the form of cash transfers. This violence is not generally the subject of complaints, out of ignorance of the law or fear of criminalization of the victim or the complainant by society. Only a few cases are reported by women’s associations and NGOs. According to the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS), nearly 70% of women who have experienced violence have hardly spoken to anyone about it for fear of reprisal or stigma or because of lack of access to services, including costs of legal proceedings.26 The victims suffer from anxiety from living in a community where violations continue to be committed.

“I received two displaced women from a village who received food assistance through a cash transfer. The two women were both their respective husband’s second wife. They each bore marks of assault and battery on their bodies caused by their husbands. These women were registered during the assessments as head of household while their husbands were present. After receiving the assistance, the husbands demanded to take control of the money. They then refused to give the money. As a result, they were abused by their husbands and one was even repudiated by her husband. I frequently receive complaints of this kind.”

- B. YEBIZE, HEAD OF THE LOCAL SERVICE FOR THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN, CHILDREN AND THE FAMILY OF BANDIAGARA.

In cases where rape causes pregnancy, women face social repercussions resulting in exclusion and rejection of the child. Girls who are victims of unwanted pregnancy, whether arising from rape or otherwise, are cast out of the household or abandoned by the whole community, especially among the Tuareg. Among the white Tuareg, the girl can only become pregnant within the context of marriage; if pregnancy happens outside of marriage, she is banished by the entire community. The force-feeding of young girls is practiced by both white and black Tuareg in order to give them the

24 Levirate marriage is a matrimonial system which requires the younger brother of the deceased to marry the widow of his older brother. Sororate marriage is a matrimonial system according to which a widower can or must remarry the younger sister of his deceased wife.
25 Black veil worn by Muslim women
26 GBV Information Management System - Secondary Data Form from GBV actors in Mali
appearance of women of marriageable age. Early marriage exists in all the communities studied. Girls are promised to men as wives from birth to strengthen family ties, as these marriages are most often endogenous. When girls are 14 years old, marriage is often takes place against their will. Boys responsible for unwanted pregnancies are also forced into marrying the girl but often flee the village to avoid this obligation.

FGM is a very widespread practice among the Dogon, the Fulani and the Songhai. It is practiced on girls considered in the course of that they become economically self-sufficient and communities, meaning that widows seholds and communities, meaning that widows reported by women, of which 29% cases of GBV continue to increase in conflict zones, with a 27% increase. Displaced women can also reported by women, of which 29% cases of GBV continue to increase in conflict zones, with a 27% increase. Displaced women can also meet their needs and those of the people they are responsible for. Women therefore disappeared have been left alone to meet their needs and those of the people they are responsible for. Women therefore expressed a need to support their livelihoods so that they become economically self-sufficient at the household level. Women prefer interventions in literacy, vocational training and education will not only help women to generate income but also give them a sense of achievement, empowerment, and self-esteem. The displaced Dogon and Tuareg women also expressed a desire to resume their traditional economic activities and improve their income-generating capacity by producing vegetables as part of a market garden association. Fulani women stated that IGAs based on livestock were more suited to their context.

In addition, women need privacy to maintain their safety, dignity, personal health, and hygiene. They require not only food, but also the means to prepare them, such as fuel (wood, charcoal, etc.) and basic utensils. Improved stoves would save women valuable time collecting firewood while also protecting the fragile environment.

Finally, women expressed specific needs in terms of protection. The needs of displaced women relating to, among other things, privacy, respect for physical security, access to care and reproductive health could be considered in the course of planning. They aspire to assistance that is not only tailored to their specific needs but also equitable.

This emphasis on women in no way negates the needs of men or people with disabilities. The situation of women is inextricably linked to the plight of men: they are part of the same households and the same communities. Secondly, assistance provided to men may indirectly improve the situation of women.

27 GBV Information Management System - Secondary Data Form from GBV actors in Mali
28 INSTAT, Demographic and Health Survey 2018, Bamako, August 2018.
30 GBV sub-cluster, mapping of GBV services, April 2020

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RAPID GENDER ANALYSIS REPORT
Conclusion

This study helped raise awareness of how women, men, girls and boys from the Fulani, Dogon, Songhai and Tuareg ethnic groups are affected by conflict-related displacement in central and northern Mali. This rapid gender analysis provides information on the different needs, capacities and coping strategies of women, men, boys and girls in the event of mass population displacement, by examining the relationships between women, men, boys and girls. Due to the rather volatile security situation in some areas of the country, this document is intended as a first analysis of gender relations within the communities affected by displacement. Nonetheless, this analysis and recommendations for more gender-sensitive programming will inform the USAID/BHA-funded Kisili ERRM project to ensure it responds adequately to the specific needs of different groups while protecting women, men, boys, and girls.

The results of the field survey indicate a high level of similarity between ethnic groups and polygamous households in terms of gender dynamics. The level of uniformity of the responses is striking although not surprising, given that most of these groups share the Muslim religion as the main factor which governs relations between men and women and live under similar socioeconomic conditions. However, the study revealed important differences between ethnic groups on which gender-responsive programming can be based.

The process of displacement is accompanied by additional burdens placed on women, such as the economic pressures of taking over the household, coupled with the emotional pressures of losing loved ones. Women in displacement are not passive nor necessarily “victims.” In all the social environments studied, women become the pillars of the household during displacement by undertaking livelihoods activities to support their families. This capacity on the part of women shows that the involvement of women in projects to assist IDPs has significant benefits for communities and humanitarian actors.

Meanwhile, providing assistance that is blind to gender dynamics exposes women and girls to the risk of physical, emotional, and sexual violence. For example, certain approaches to distributing cash or other forms of assistance to households, particularly among polygamous families in Dogon, Fulani and Songhai contexts, weakens women’s status in the household and creates tensions among spouses.

The inclusion of women and girls (both those who receive assistance and those responsible for providing it) in the evaluation, implementation and monitoring of projects is an approach that enables more precise definition of the needs of women and girls and ensures their involvement in a concrete and effective manner. In turn, their participation ensures more efficient and sustainable programming, and reduces the risk of exploitation and abuse.
Recommendations

Recommendations have been issued to ensure that humanitarian responses meet the needs of all sectors of the target population. The Kisili project is already in the process of implementing some of the following recommendations as part of its activities to assist people displaced by the crisis in Mali. It will continue to build on some of these best practices.

2.10.1. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Professional and educational training** - While livelihood activities are often ruled out at the acute emergency stage and the potential duration of displacement is unknown, IGA support following the acute phase is important for morale (keeping busy and having a purpose), as well as learning skills for securing a stable income to support one’s family over the long term. For example, displaced women could be trained to make improved stoves and, once they return to their village of origin, they will be able to use their new skills to build similar stoves at home.

- **Income-generating activities** - Examine the Kisili ERRM rapid needs assessment findings and discuss with the NGO partners the possibilities that might exist in terms of complementary IGA assistance. Based on the needs assessments and market analysis, examine feasible options to support IGAs for displaced women and host communities.

- **Mental health support** - Mental health counseling and support should be provided to women, men, boys, and girls through methods such as the circulation of information on locally available services and awareness-raising sessions.

- **Female leadership** - Strengthen the capacities of women in leadership and entrepreneurship in order to equip them with the skills to organize and participate in community decisions.

- **Positive masculinity** - Develop awareness-raising and education sessions targeted toward men and boys that help them to ascribe new definitions of acceptable male roles in society and reduce the association of masculinity with the violence exerted by heads of household on their wives.

2.10.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KISILI

- Train Kisili staff on psychological first aid and on integrating GBV prevention and case referral into the project implementation approach. As a first responder immediately following displacement, Kisili should integrate the GBV considerations into its approach to identify cases and refer them to more specialized bodies.

- Evaluate the technical and institutional capacities of partners in the implementation of gender-sensitive programming and provide recommendations and support to local implementing partners based on findings.

- Meet with women leaders or village councilors and discuss with them the specific needs of women and girls.

- Explore how best to reflect women’s voices with existing accountability mechanisms using the most accessible channels for women. Women prefer direct phone calls or individual surveys, as well as focus groups after lunch. Village savings and loan group meetings are also suitable spaces to collect their feedback.

- Ensure that distribution sites are accessible to men, women, and girls and that there are separate distribution lines for women, especially among Tuareg and Fulani populations.

- If the rate of heads of households with disabilities or elderly is high, suggest undertaking home delivery to reach these vulnerable individuals.

- Avoid cash transfers if the risk of creating tensions among spouses is high (e.g. where polygamy is widely practiced) and review the process of registering polygamous households.

- Conduct awareness-raising for households on the use of cash transfers, with a focus on polygamous households.

- Involve women in the humanitarian alert system and in relevant training to increase their access to crisis alert notifications and ensure that women and men have the same access to alert systems.

- Hygiene promotion should separately target men, women, boys and girls. Currently, hygiene promotion in Kisili focuses on women and men, especially the head of the household, and does not tailor its messages to boys and girls. Explore the possibility of giving special attention to adolescent girls and people with disabilities.

- When repairing or constructing community latrines, ensure that there are separate latrines for men and women, that they are well-lit, that handwashing stations are available and that they provide privacy and security.
- Review the current content and distribution of menstrual hygiene management kits, and where appropriate, align the approach with UNFPA best practices.
- Provide suitable cookware (e.g. aluminum bowls) and improved stoves to enable women to save time when collecting firewood and help them protect the environment.
- Among the Dogon and the Fulani, provide female-headed households with adequate shelter materials adapted to their context (wood, mud, bamboo, tarpaulin, etc.) and ensure that households requiring additional assistance to construct their shelter have access to this support.
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