

LEGAL AID & AWARENESS

Factsheet January - September 2021

UNHCR in partnership with the Universities of Bule Hora, Dila and Wollega provides legal aid to and raises legal awareness among internally displaced persons (IDPs), returning IDPs and members of the host community with specific needs.

The 19 legal aid clinics of the three law schools provide legal aid and awareness services in East and West Wollega, Geddo and West Guji zones of Oromia and SNNP regions.

Total people supported: **24,266**

Women & girls: **48%**

Men & boys: **52%**

Legal aid: **77%**

Legal awareness: **23%**

- **Providing quality legal services:** Legal aid and awareness are critical protection services. They are needed to ensure people know their rights, to address challenges IDPs and others in need face in obtaining and restoring identity and civil documentation and housing, land and property rights, as well as to facilitate access to justice, including for survivors of gender-based violence. The services provided range from awareness raising sessions, to the provision of legal information, legal counselling and advice, legal assistance as well as legal representation before courts, tailored to the needs of the community and individuals.
- **Supporting IDPs in achieving durable solutions:** Internally displaced people need a long-term solution to their situation. Being able to access justice, receive needed documentation and have land and property rights restored is an important step towards a durable solution.
- **Leveraging expertise through local partnerships:** The partnership with the Universities of Bule Hora, Dila and Wollega is an asset and allows to leverage local legal expertise for quality services to people in need.

“I lost my husband recently. I am having a difficult time raising my two children and I needed to go to court to prove my case, but could not afford to hire a lawyer. If the legal aid centre had not helped me, I would have lost my property.”

32-year old female

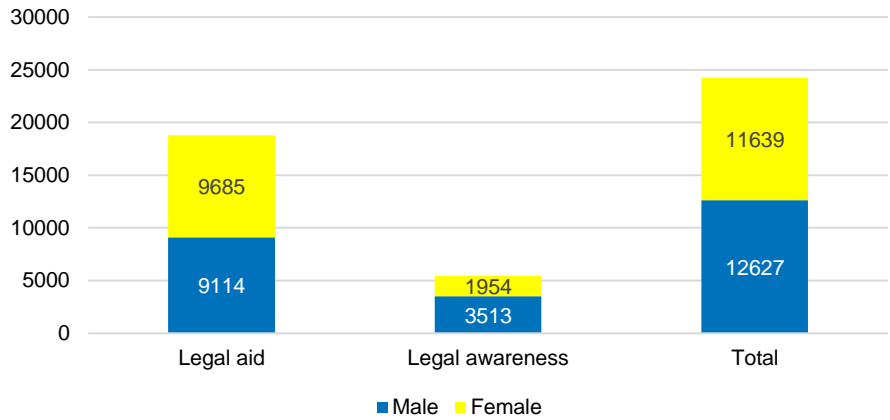


UNHCR and Wollega University visiting Nekemte Free Legal Aid Centre, October 2021

People supported

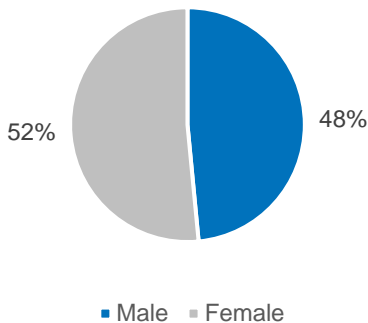
Between January and September 2021, **24,266** people benefitted from legal aid and legal awareness activities. Of those, 77 per cent received legal aid, while 23 per cent benefitted from legal awareness activities. Overall, of those supported with legal aid and legal awareness, 52 per cent were male and 48 per cent female.

Legal aid and awareness
January to September 2021

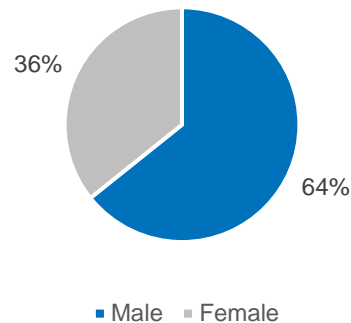


Women and girls often face additional layers and challenges in accessing justice, obtaining documents or enjoying their housing, land and property rights. For widows, these challenges can compound even further. The gender breakdown by activity type shows that the percentage of women and girls supported with legal aid services stands at 52 per cent and at 36 per cent for legal awareness activities.

Legal aid
January to September 2021



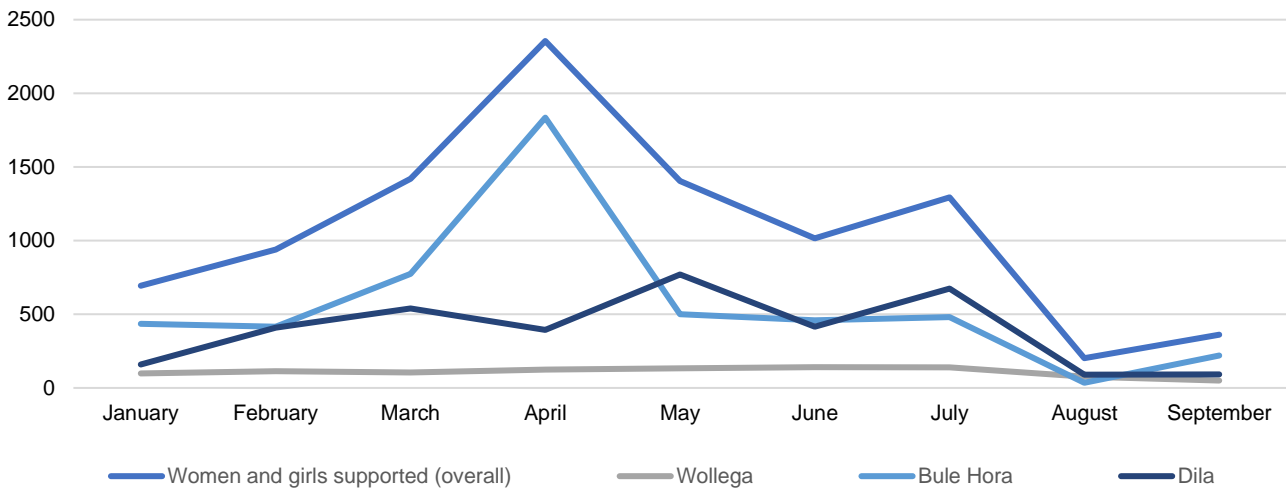
Legal awareness
January to September 2021



While the seven legal clinics of the Wollega University were providing legal aid services at a consistent level throughout the first seven months of the year, it is noteworthy that the number of women and girls who received support has gradually increased from March onwards with an average of 140 women and girls assisted in June and July. In August and September, fewer females were supported with legal aid (77 and 50 women respectively), which is related to the overall decrease in persons reached due to Court vacation and the volatile situation in several of the areas where legal aid clinics are located. Also, more women and girls benefitted from legal aid services at the legal aid clinics of the Bule Hora and Dila Universities - on average 573 and 394 females respectively each month.

Legal aid services are generally well accessible to women and girls due to functioning referrals by other partners. Together with the legal aid clinics, UNHCR is exploring ways to further increase the outreach capacity to the community to reach women, girls and persons with specific needs, such as older persons or persons with disabilities, even better.

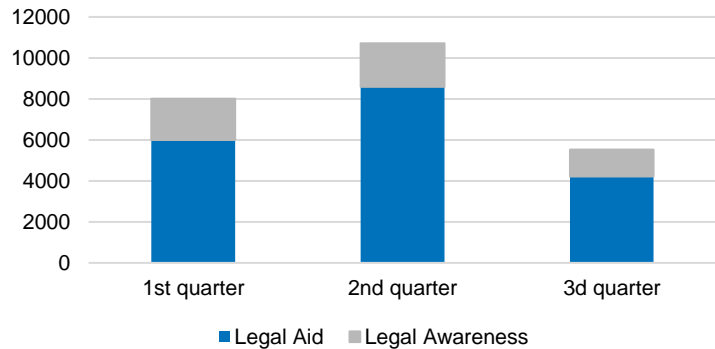
Women and girls supported with legal aid January to September 2021



People supported with legal aid and awareness activities

A total of 24,266 people benefitted from legal aid and awareness activities in the first three quarters of the year with an increased reach in the 2nd quarter (44 percent), followed by a drop in activities in August due to Court vacation and volatility in several of the operational areas of the legal aid clinics, with one clinic temporarily suspending services. In September, the overall activity level started to increase again slightly, notably for legal aid.

Legal aid and awareness by quarter January to September 2021



Legal aid and awareness activities by month January to September 2021

