

# BASELINE SURVEY REPORT



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This document summarizes the results of the baseline survey undertaken by DDG in Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba between September and October 2016 in the context of the project, "Strengthening Community Security and Resilience in Southeast Tunisia along the Libyan Border" funded by the European Commission and Canadian Government.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
OBJECTIVES.....	3
CONTEXT.....	4
METHODOLOGY.....	5
Limitations.....	5
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE.....	6
Employment.....	6
Education.....	6
Income.....	7
PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY AND WELLBEING.....	7
Community Concerns.....	7
Levels of Perceived Violence.....	8
Experiences of Violence.....	8
Information Gathering.....	8
PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY PROVIDERS.....	9
Role and Responsibilities of Security Providers.....	9
Operational Performance of Security Providers.....	10
Incident Reporting.....	11
Improving Operational Effectiveness.....	11
Relationships of Security Providers with Communities.....	12
MANAGING CONFLICTS BETWEEN SECURITY PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITIES.....	13
Sources of Conflict.....	13
Frequency of Conflict.....	13
Conflict Management Strategies.....	14
Improving Conflict Management.....	14

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report aims to summarize the results of the baseline survey undertaken by the Danish Demining Group (DDG) in Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba between September and October 2016 in the context of the project “Strengthening Community Security and Resilience in Southeast Tunisia along the Libyan Border” funded by the European Commission and Canadian Government. It aims to capture perceptions of local communities in the project sites prior to the implementation of the project and, by extension, to facilitate the measurement of the outcomes following the implementation phase. Notably, it seeks to assess community perceptions of security and wellbeing, security providers, and local-level conflict management.

The data analysis resulting from this process highlighted the following key trends:

- Approximately 26% of those surveyed in both towns stated that they were **unemployed**, with youth and women suffering disproportionately.
- In Ben Guerdane, 46% of respondents reported that **terrorism** was among their top three concerns for their security, followed by spillover violence from Libya, robbery or theft, and traffic incidents. In Dhehiba, 42% reported **traffic incidents** among the greatest threats, followed by spillover violence and confrontations with security providers.
- Despite the low levels of actual violence in both sites, almost all respondents, 96% in Ben Guerdane and 98% in Dhehiba, were concerned that a family member may become a victim of violence, demonstrating a **strong fear of possible threats**.
- Respondents typically focused on **formal security providers** to conduct various tasks related to local security. Local civil authorities were perceived by both sites as the least effective actor, while the **military** and **National Guard** were viewed most favorably with respect to operational effectiveness and their relationships with local communities.
- With respect to conflict between security providers and local communities, 63% of respondents in Ben Guerdane noted that the top source of conflict was a **disregard by security providers for local livelihoods**, followed by **disproportionate and excessive use of violence** and corruption. In Dhehiba, 65% agreed that disregard for local livelihoods, followed by disproportionate and excessive use of violence and poor communication were the most significant root causes.

The following report expounds upon these trends. Moreover, future reports will further synthesize this data in the context of qualitative assessments and context analysis.

## OBJECTIVES

This report aims to summarize the results of the baseline survey undertaken by the Danish Demining Group (DDG) in Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba between September and October 2016 in the context of the project “Strengthening Community Security and Resilience in Southeast Tunisia along the Libyan Border” funded by the European Commission and Canadian Government. It aims to capture perceptions of local communities in the project sites prior to the implementation of the project and, by extension, to facilitate the measurement of the outcomes following the implementation phase.

<b>IMPACT:</b> Strengthened community security and resilience in southeast Tunisia (Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba) along the Libyan border
<b>OUTCOME 1:</b> Improved conflict sensitivity, dialogue, and conflict prevention between communities and security providers on issues of cross-border trade, border safety, and smuggling of illicit goods
<b>OUTCOME 2:</b> Enhanced awareness and options of youth to be resilient in the face of armed criminality, violent extremism, and dangerous migration
<b>OUTPUT 1.1:</b> Skills of communication, conflict sensitivity, and dialogue gained by community leaders and security providers
<b>OUTPUT 1.2:</b> A platform for regular dialogue between community representatives and security providers on mutual concerns established
<b>OUTPUT 1.3:</b> Joint conflict analysis and preventive and responsive actions undertaken by community-security provider task force
<b>OUTPUT 2.1:</b> Push and pull factors, indicators, and behaviours related to risk and resilience of local youth analysed
<b>OUTPUT 2.2:</b> Key actors who influence local youth positively and negatively identified by young people
<b>OUTPUT 2.3:</b> Activity plans and programming recommendations for the engagement of local youth developed by youth and other key stakeholders

Figure 1: Project Intervention Logic

## CONTEXT

The communities of Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba are located in southeast Tunisia along the Libyan border. Far from the central Tunisian state, these communities suffer from endemic underdevelopment, high unemployment, and socio-political marginalization. Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba are adjacent to the two official border crossings with Libya and have long relied on cross-border trade as their primary livelihood. Since the Tunisian Revolution and collapse of the Libyan state in 2011, this trade has become increasingly lucrative, yet simultaneously problematized and sensitive to shocks. Despite promises of investment and engagement after the democratic transition, there have been few tangible results. These challenges are compounded by cross-border security concerns, including smuggling of illicit goods (drugs, arms, and people), lack of communication or coordination with Libyan border authorities, risk of youth involvement in violent extremism, and attempted attacks by Daesh on Tunisian territory. Consequently, the ongoing real and perceived threat of terrorism has caused the government to crack down on border trade through the imposition of austere border controls and heightened security measures. These approaches have furthered mistrust and tensions between security providers and local communities, often culminating in violent protests. The work of DDG in Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba aims to address these tensions, and thereby reduce the risk of violent conflict.

## METHODOLOGY

A face-to-face household survey was undertaken as the principal component of the baseline assessment. The survey was conducted in the towns of Ben Guerdane (Medenine Governorate) and Dhehiba (Tataouine Governorate). DDG hired local enumerators, who were provided with a two-day training on survey methods. Quality control measures were implemented throughout the process, including daily meetings between enumerators and DDG staff, random spot checks (observations) of enumerators, and daily review of all questionnaire forms to check for inconsistencies and errors.

DDG used a combination of stratified and systematic sampling methods to best capture the populations and geographies of Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba. Stratified sampling was representative across three variables: gender, age group (15-29, 30-49, 50+), and sub-delegation. Based on a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 4.5, the resulting sample size was  $n = 471$ , 0.59% of the total population in Ben Guerdane, representatively distributed across the 12 sub-delegations; and  $n = 427$ , 9.9% of the total population in Dhehiba, distributed across the 2 sub-delegations. DDG systematically surveyed an individual from every 50<sup>th</sup> household in Ben Guerdane in each respective sub-delegation, and every 2<sup>nd</sup> household in Dhehiba in each respective sub-delegation. The data was compiled and analyzed in-house using Microsoft Excel.

In parallel to the survey, DDG staff facilitated a series of focus group discussions with civil authorities, traders, civil society, and change agents, aimed at understanding how local communities understand local security and seek to manage conflict with security providers. The findings resulting from these qualitative methods will be included in future reports.

## LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this survey are intrinsically linked to the nuanced nature of the project and of conflict management and violence prevention programming more broadly.

The concepts measured within the survey are highly complex and culturally specific. As the survey sought to determine perceptions of local security and conflict management, there are distinct difficulties quantifying such concepts in meaningful ways. The words 'conflict,' 'violence,' and 'security' not only have varied and multi-layered meanings across communities and individuals, but also are highly sensitive. Given the tenuous relationship between the surveyed communities and the state, which often extends to a mistrust of any formal institutions, including INGOs, the respondents may have answered such questions warily, providing answers that they believed would do the least harm, rather those that they believed most closely aligned with their reality. This may have been the case despite enumerator training on confidentiality and ethics. Moreover, surveyed communities maintain a sentiment of disillusionment with respect to the prospect of positive local development and social change, which may influence the ways in which respondents answered such questions.

Linked to the complexity of the terminology is the issue of translation. The core concepts may possess different connotations in English and Arabic, and moving between the languages may have altered the essence of certain questions and resulted in misunderstandings regarding their intended meaning and relevance. Enumerators expressed particular concern about the translation of the word 'conflict'.

Lastly, surveys associated with humanitarian organizations are often assumed to be the precursor to the provision of aid or services. This assumption may lead respondents to over-emphasize the services or needs they want met by the organization rather than the reality of the local context.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The demographic profiles of Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba demonstrate similar trends. Both sites have overall high levels of unemployment, high educational levels within younger age groups and low educational levels among older age groups, and overall lower incomes.

### EMPLOYMENT

For both towns, approximately 26% of those surveyed stated that they were unemployed when asked about their occupation. The unemployment rate among youth was 39% in Ben Guerdane and 44% in Dhehiba. In Ben Guerdane, the unemployment rate among women was 30%, with 39% responding that they worked in the home (domestic work). Likewise, in Dhehiba, the unemployment rate among women was 25%, with 48% saying that they worked in the home (domestic work).

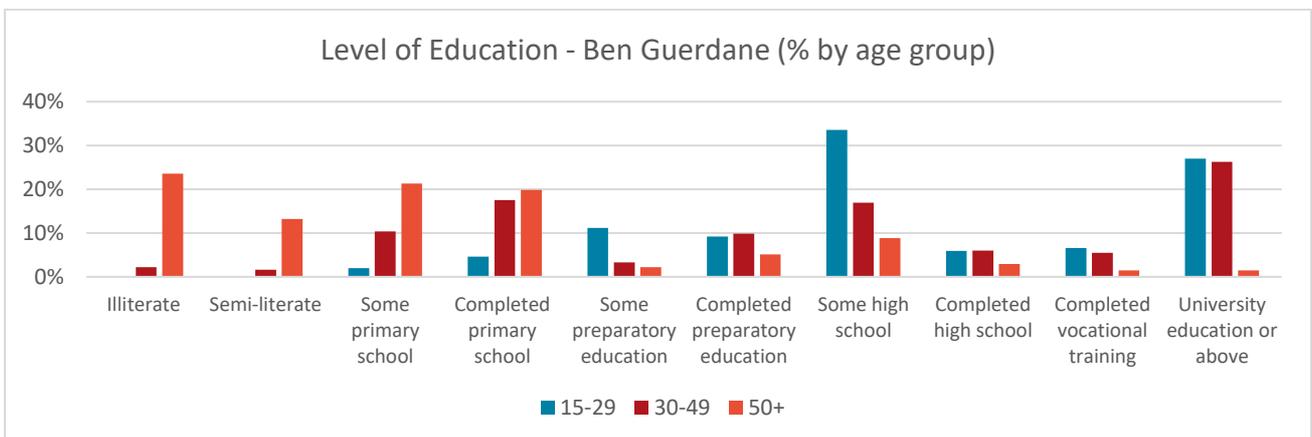
Moreover, 12% of respondents in Ben Guerdane and 10% in Dhehiba stated that they were self-employed, and an additional 16% in Ben Guerdane and 12% in Dhehiba stated they were day labourers. These responses were predominant among males. In Ben Guerdane, of those employed (including part-time or informal work), 25% were involved in trade, 19% in agriculture or livestock, and 17% in education. In Dhehiba, 23% were involved in agriculture or livestock, 17% in trade, and 15% in government as their primary economic activity.

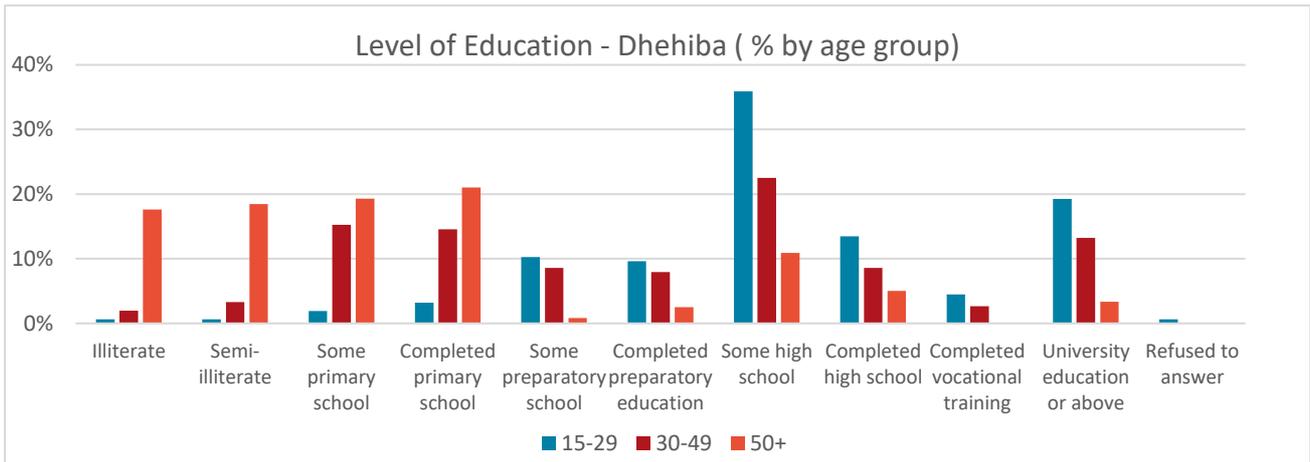
### EDUCATION

Levels of education show similar trends in both locations, with level of education demonstrating an inverse relationship with age, particularly among women, whereby younger generations typically reach higher levels of education, while older generations suffer higher levels of illiteracy. Overall, both men and women achieved higher levels of education in Ben Guerdane than in Dhehiba.

In both towns, more women than men achieve university-level education. In Ben Guerdane, 23% of women across all ages and 38% of women between the ages of 15-29 had completed university, compared to 15% of men overall, and 15% of men between the ages of 15-29. Of all women surveyed in Dhehiba, 15% had a university education compared to 11% of men, while 27% of women between the ages of 15-29 had a university education, compared to 12% of men in the same age group.

With respect to early school dropout rates, men and women between the ages of 18-35 in Ben Guerdane were compatible, with 54% of men and 53% of women leaving school at some point before completing high school. Meanwhile, in Dhehiba, 66% of men and 50% of women aged 18-35 had dropped out of school early.





Tables 1 & 2: Level of education from illiterate to university level, as % of age groups

## INCOME

The most common income bracket in both Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba was below 200 TND per month. There were few significant differences across age groups; however, women were more present in the lower income brackets (<200 TND) in both locations. In Ben Guerdane, 25% of respondents earned less than 200 TND per month and 25% earned 200-400 TND per month. In Dhehiba, 26% earned less than 200 TND per month, with 20% earning between 200-400 TND.

The annual poverty line for smaller towns stands at 1158 TND (according to data from 2012). Current estimates indicate a higher poverty line to account for annual inflation and general increases in cost of living in the post-revolutionary state. The minimum wage is between 289 and 338 TND per month depending on hours worked.

These figures indicate that a significant percentage of the population in both locations make less than the national minimum wage, although many of those surveyed do sit above the absolute poverty line. The low incomes add weight to two of the top community concerns, employment and poverty (discussed below).

## PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY AND WELLBEING

### COMMUNITY CONCERNS

In Ben Guerdane, men and women across every age group indicated employment as the highest priority issue in their community. In total, 78% stated that lack of opportunity for employment was among their top three concerns for their wellbeing, over poverty at 36%, marginalization at 30%, followed closely by corruption at 28%. That all demographic groups equally emphasized unemployment as a critical issue demonstrates its pervasive nature in the region, touching nearly all members of the community either directly or indirectly. This was also the case in Dhehiba, where 68% of respondents indicated unemployment as a top concern, followed by poverty at 41%, and marginalization at 35%. Additional concerns, including lack of health care and transportation, reflect the notable underdevelopment in Dhehiba. Overall, these concerns demonstrate how these communities suffer both from acute economic malaise as well as deeper issues of social marginalization.

When asked about their top security concerns, respondents were slightly less decisive. In Ben Geurdane, 46% of respondents indicated terrorism as one of the biggest threats. As the survey was conducted only 6 months after the Daesh attack on Ben Guerdane in March 2016, this concern likely reflects fear of another such

incident. In addition, 32% of respondents selected spillover violence from Libya, 31% robbery or theft, and 24% traffic incidents as among their top three security concerns. In Dhehiba, traffic incidents ranked as the greatest security concern in the community, with 42% of respondents selecting it among their top three concerns, followed by spillover violence from Libya at 30%, and confrontations with security providers at 23%.

## LEVELS OF PERCEIVED VIOLENCE

Despite the above concerns, respondents in neither Ben Guerdane nor Dhehiba found the current situation in their communities to be particularly violent, with an average of 84% in Ben Guerdane and 83% in Dhehiba suggesting the situation was between 'neither peaceful nor violent' and 'very peaceful'. In contrast, 40% of those surveyed in Ben Guerdane stated that the situation one year ago was violent or very violent. This may again be a reflection on the March 2016 incident as well as the force used by security providers in the wake of the attack. In contrast, the situation in Dhehiba seemed to remain stable, with 83% of the community stating the situation was between 'neither peaceful nor violent' and 'very peaceful' one year ago.

Looking forward, both communities were generally optimistic about the prospect of peace, as 51% in Ben Guerdane and 30% in Dhehiba envisioned the next year as peaceful. However, there was less certainty in Dhehiba, with a decline by 22% of those who believed the situation would be between 'neither peaceful nor violent' and 'very peaceful' in the coming year. These fears are likely a reflection of the ongoing construction of the border wall and associated escalation of force used by security providers against the community.

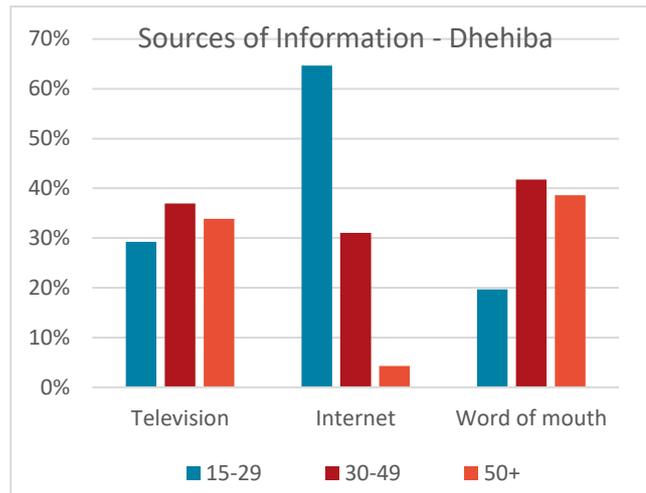
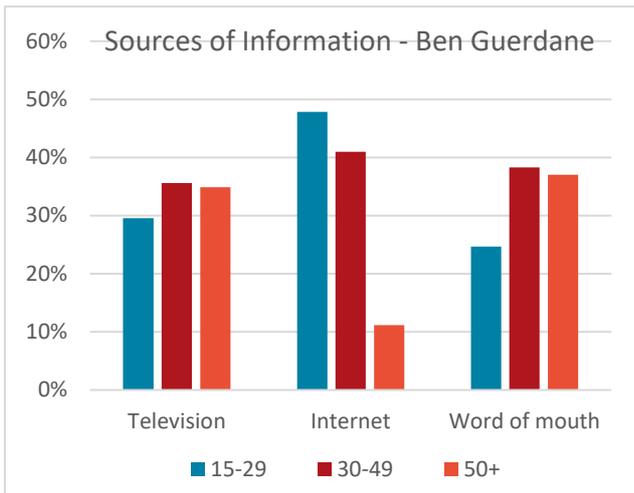
## EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE

In Ben Guerdane, only 10% of those surveyed had had a member of their household subject to violence in the past year. This was similar in Dhehiba, where 14% had recent experience of violence in their households. For those who did encounter violence in their households, respondents in both Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba listed traffic violations as the top threat. In Ben Guerdane, other significant threats included robbery or theft and presence of arms. Meanwhile, in Dhehiba, threats included intercommunal/tribal violence, family disputes, as well as confrontations with security forces. The difference in threats is linked to the distinct dynamics of each location – Ben Guerdane is a larger city, where economic crime may be more prevalent; while Dhehiba is a small village community, where prominent families and tribes have greater influence in local relationships. That said, in both sites, most respondents did not answer this question or answered it as 'not applicable'.

Despite the low levels of actual violence in both sites, almost all respondents, 96% in Ben Guerdane and 98% in Dhehiba, were concerned that a family member may become a victim of violence, demonstrating a strong fear of possible threats. This was consistent across age and gender.

## INFORMATION GATHERING

Most people accessed information about relevant security issues and community concerns through television, internet, and word of mouth. In Ben Guerdane, the internet was the most important source of information, used by 41% of respondents, which is reflected by the strong role that social media plays in providing information. This was followed by television at 38%. In Dhehiba, word of mouth was the most popular method with 41% of respondents using this means, followed closely by the internet at 38%. In both towns, youth aged 15-29 were the principle user of internet for information, accounting for 48% of internet users in Ben Guerdane and 65% in Dhehiba.



Tables 3 & 4: Top 3 sources of information, disaggregated by age group

## PERCEPTIONS OF SECURITY PROVIDERS

### ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SECURITY PROVIDERS

Respondents were asked to list up to three actors who fulfilled each of a number of tasks of security provision in their communities. Respondents typically focused on formal security providers; however, elders were preferred for addressing local conflicts.

#### Ben Guerdane

Across all security functions, an average of 66% of respondents associated the National Guard with providing core security services in Ben Guerdane, closely followed by an average of 64% associating police with the same services. Despite this strong perception of the National Guard as providing a diversity of services, respondents tended to prefer another actor for each specific function. With respect to arresting criminals and wrongdoers, 93% associated the police with the task, compared with 88% for the National Guard and the military at 55%. Meanwhile, 88% decisively associated the military and 52% associated the National Guard with providing security in the case of external threats and fighting from outside the community. With respect to protection from fighting in the community, 77% associated the National Guard with the job, followed by 76% for the police and 53% for the military. The same was true regarding keeping law and order, as respondents equally associated the National Guard and police with the role, at 68% each, followed by the military at 53%. In the case of addressing local conflicts, 55% associated elders with this task, followed by 44% for the National Guard and 41% for police, which was consistent across all age groups and both men and women.

#### Dhehiba

The National Guard were considered the predominant actors in Dhehiba, with 88% associating them with arresting criminals and wrongdoers, 77% with protection from internal fighting, and 68% with general provision of law and order. The military was the second choice in each case with an average of 31% associating them with these services, while the police was a distant third option, at only 18%, demonstrating the prominence of the National Guard and military in such remote border regions. Only the Border Police are present in the area of Dhehiba, but have little relevance in the town. Meanwhile, 92% associated the military with protection from external threats. In the case of addressing local conflicts, such as land issues or family disputes, 62% associated elders with the task compared with 49% for the National Guard.

## OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF SECURITY PROVIDERS

The following section looks at three components of measuring security provider's performance in the community – efficiency, accessibility and transparency. Local civil authorities were perceived by both sites as the least effective actor across the three factors, while the military and National Guard, were viewed most favorably. Respondents consistently ranked security providers lower with respect to transparency than efficiency and accessibility, highlighting the lack of access and rights to information. Lawyers and judges were predominantly irrelevant to security provision in both contexts.

### Ben Guerdane

Almost half of respondents in Ben Guerdane indicated considerable disapproval of local civil authorities, with an average of 47% scoring them as 'somewhat bad' or 'very bad' on efficiency, accessibility and transparency.

For police, 35% of respondents rating them 'somewhat good' overall. A total of 40% of respondents said that police were 'somewhat good' with respect to efficiency, and 39% on accessibility. Transparency ranked marginally lower, with 28% rating the police as 'somewhat good,' and an additional 23% rating them as 'bad' or 'very bad,' which is demonstrative of the closed nature of the Tunisian state and internal security forces.

The National Guard was viewed slightly more positively than the police, with 42% viewing them as 'somewhat good' on efficiency, and 40% on accessibility. Similarly, National Guard marked lower with respect to transparency, with 33% marking them as 'somewhat good' on this measure. An average of 38% saw them as 'somewhat good' across all three components.

Perceptions of the military were generally very positive with 30% seeing them as 'somewhat good' and an additional 27% as very good across all factors. As with the police and National Guard, on transparency, the military scored marginally lower as 'very good,' and marginally higher as 'very bad.'

### Dhehiba

Local civil authorities ranked as the clear underperformer in all categories, with 39% stating that they were 'very bad' on efficiency, 33% on accessibility, and 45% on transparency, considerably higher than for other local actors. Most respondents, 58%, saw the local authority as either 'somewhat bad' or 'very bad' overall, demonstrating the particularly poor performance of the state in such a remote location.

Police were viewed somewhat more positively, with 24% of respondents scoring them as 'somewhat good' across all factors, including 27% on efficiency, 24% on accessibility, and 23% on transparency. However, 23% of respondents also suggested they did not know how to rate the police on these measures, indicating the limited presence and relevance of the police in Dhehiba.

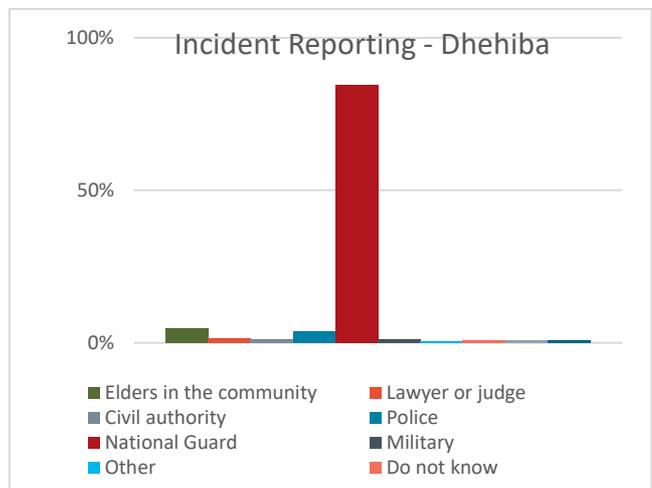
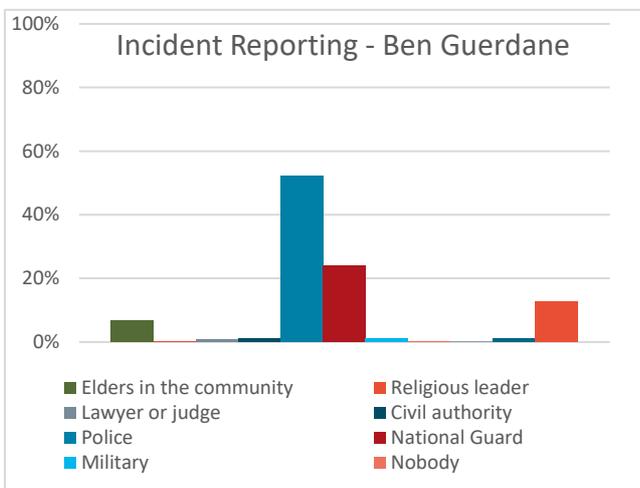
The National Guard were viewed significantly more positively, with 37% of respondents rating them as 'somewhat good.' They were seen as 'somewhat good' in efficiency at 40%, accessibility at 38%, and slightly lower in transparency at 32%. An additional 13% rated them as 'very good' overall.

Finally, the military were viewed very highly, mostly between 'neither bad nor good' and 'very good.' The response of 'somewhat good' garnered 30% of respondents, as an average across all three indicators, with 31% rating them as 'somewhat good' on both efficiency and accessibility, and 29% on transparency. A notable 19% additional respondents scored them as 'very good' overall, with 25% marking them as 'very good' on efficiency.

## INCIDENT REPORTING

Across both towns, respondents were aware of a variety of ways to report information in the case of a crime and felt strongly that they would do so. A total of 86% of respondents in Ben Guerdane and 81% in Dhehiba indicated that they would inform someone if they saw or experienced a crime.

In Ben Guerdane, among those who answered that they would report a crime, 52% stated that the police would be their first preference to contact, followed by the National Guard at 24%. Of those who responded that they would not report the crime, 30% feared reprisals from security providers, and an additional 25% feared the security providers were in fact connected to the incident. In Dhehiba, the National Guard was outstandingly the primary preference at 85%, with police, military and as additional options. Of those who would not seek any assistance in response to incidents of crime, 24% feared reprisal by security providers and another 15% believed that the security providers were linked to the incident.



Tables 5 & 6 : Choice of security provider for reporting crime, as % of total population

Even though respondents would seek assistance and knew who to contact, the majority (an average of 91% in Ben Guerdane, and 96% in Dhehiba) had not sought protection or assistance from the local civil authority, police, National Guard, or military in the past year. Interestingly, although respondents in Ben Guerdane reported that they would prefer to report incidents to the police, in reality, only 4% had done so, while 8% had communicated with civil authorities to seek assistance. These results could demonstrate a low level of need among respondents to contact the relevant security providers, or alternatively, poor access.

Across all respondents, considering age and sex, official phone calls were the preferred mode of communication with security providers, with 66% of respondents in Ben Guerdane and 50% of respondents in Dhehiba using this channel. Office visits were more likely in Dhehiba, where they accounted for 33% of respondents preferred mode of communications with security providers.

## IMPROVING OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Following from the above assessment, communities reported a number of factors that they believed impeded security providers from effectively doing their jobs. In Ben Guerdane, respondents tended to focus on issues of working conditions, with 41% acknowledging lack of resources, 41% lack of government support, 31% overall poor working conditions, and 30% low pay or benefits as key causes hindering security providers.

In Dhehiba, 36% of respondents agreed that lack of resources and 33% that overall poor working conditions served as key inhibiting factors. The issues of resources and government support is undoubtedly linked to the geographical remoteness of both Dhehiba and Ben Guerdane, coupled with a highly-centralized administration of the state. In addition, 35% recognized poor relationships with the local community as a significant barrier to security providers doing their jobs well. The community in Dhehiba also acknowledged that a lack of understanding among security providers of their own roles and insufficient training on engaging with communities also impeded their operational effectiveness.

As such, in Ben Guerdane, 49% of respondents believed that more or better equipment, 48% better government support, 38% better pay or benefits, and 33% more or better training would enable security to better perform their functions. In Dhehiba, respondents largely agreed with this prescription, with 39% recommending more or better equipment, 28% more or better training, 23% better government support, and 19% better communication skills as the most impactful contributions to improve the operational effectiveness of security providers. This distinctive recognition among the Dhehiba community of the need for security providers to improve their relationship with communities deserves further attention.

## RELATIONSHIPS OF SECURITY PROVIDERS WITH COMMUNITIES

The following section describes how respondents rate the relationship of security providers with the community, considering four components: trust, shared goals, commitment to peace, and collaboration. Consistent with the assessment of the operational effectiveness of security providers, the community ranked local authorities very negatively, while police, National Guard and military scored positively, particularly on their commitment to peace.

### Ben Guerdane

In Ben Guerdane, local authorities ranked extremely poorly across all four components, as an average of 71% of respondents viewed local authorities as between 'neither bad nor good' and 'very bad,' and scoring particularly poorly on trust and collaboration. Judges and lawyers received ambivalent ratings, with an average of 32% rating them as 'neither good nor bad' and an addition 24% stating that they did not know.

With respect to more traditional security providers, the police scored positively, with 51% rating them as 'somewhat good' or 'very good' across all factors, and 41% stating that police maintained 'somewhat good' commitment to peace. Respondents also viewed National Guard positively, tallying 55% as 'somewhat good' or 'very good' overall, and 42% for commitment to peace, following similar trends to the police. The military received the most positive assessment, garnering 63% of responses between 'somewhat good' and 'very good.' Notably, 41% of those surveyed rated the military as 'very good' on commitment to peace in Ben Guerdane.

### Dhehiba

Local authorities in Dhehiba also emerged as the least favored actor in their relationship with the community, with 75% scoring them between 'neither bad nor good' and 'very bad' overall, and 45% as 'very bad' with respect to trust. Nonetheless, 29% still recognized them as 'somewhat good' or 'very good' in their commitment to peace. For judges and lawyers, 83% did not know how to respond or refused to answer, indicating the irrelevance of these actors across the region. Similarly, the highest average score for the police was listed as 'do not know' at 31%, followed by 'somewhat good' at 24%, demonstrating the limited role and relevance of police in Dhehiba.

With respect to the National Guard, 50% of those surveyed saw them as ‘somewhat good’ or ‘very good’ overall, with 24% indicating that they were ‘very good’ in commitment to peace and 38% as ‘somewhat good’ in their collaboration with communities. Lastly, the military also received 50% of responses as ‘somewhat good’ or ‘very good’ overall; however, with a greater percentage ranking them as ‘very good’ than for the National Guard. Similar to Ben Guerdane, 32% rated the military as ‘very good’ in their commitment to peace.

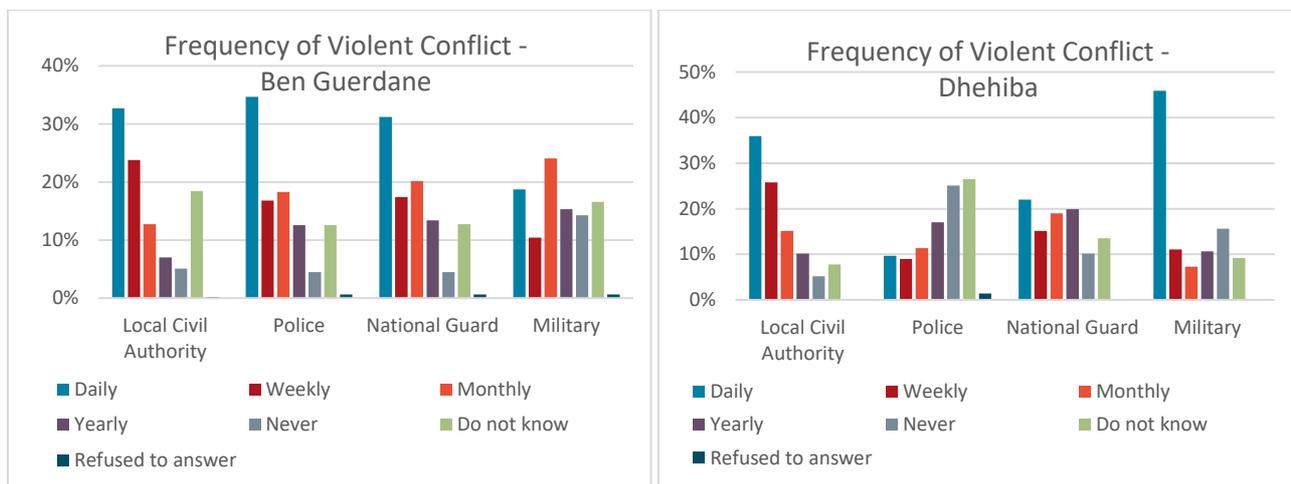
## MANAGING CONFLICTS BETWEEN SECURITY PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITIES

### SOURCES OF CONFLICT

In the context of the above relationships between security providers and communities, respondents were asked to assess the extent to which the relationships were conflictual and why. In Ben Guerdane, 63% of respondents noted that the top source of conflict was a disregard by security providers for local livelihoods, including parallel trade and smuggling. This was followed by 60% reporting disproportionate and excessive use of violence, likely referring to responses to protests and sit-ins. Additionally, 36% mentioned corruption as a root cause, likely in relation to bribery involved in cross-border trade. Poor communication with communities and profiling of community members as terrorists were also highlighted as key sources of conflict.

In Dhehiba, 65% agreed that disregard for local livelihoods and 54% that disproportionate and excessive use of violence were root causes of conflict, likely a reflection of the nearly completed border wall and increased security presence and crackdown on cross-border movement in the region. Subsequently, 37% of respondents noted poor communication and 25% highlighted corruption as primary sources of conflict.

### FREQUENCY OF CONFLICT



Tables 7 & 8: Frequency of conflicts resulting in violence, as % of total population

Interestingly, many respondents from both Ben Guerdane and Dhehiba suggested that conflicts resulting in violence occur frequently between various security providers and the respective communities. In Ben Guerdane, 35% of respondents stated that conflicts resulting in violence occurred with the police on a daily basis, with 33% reporting daily incidents with local authorities, and 31% with the National Guard. Conflicts with the military occurred less frequently; however, 24% still believed that they took place on a monthly basis.

In Dhehiba, 36% of respondents noted daily violent conflicts with local authorities and 22% with the National Guard. This outcome with respect to the military was even more surprising, as 46% of respondents suggested that conflicts occur with the military on a daily basis. Considering that the military was also rated most positively among the security providers in its relationship with the community, this result should be further investigated. The seemingly contradictory response may also relate to the increasingly forward position of the military along the border, and therefore indicate that the relationship with the community is in fact shifting.

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

In response to these conflicts, respondents expressed a number of strategies for trying to manage or resolve such issues. In Ben Guerdane, 54% contended that they typically utilize protest as a means to engage security providers, which aligns with reported incidents. In addition, 47% allegedly aim to engage security providers in dialogue, and 34% continue to develop alternative livelihood strategies, such as continuing cross-border trade through unmonitored desert routes, or shifting types of commodities. Less common strategies include attempts at legal action at 30% and attempted bribery of border officials or relevant authorities at 19%.

In Dhehiba, 53% of respondents claimed to develop alternative livelihoods, while 43% engaged in protest, 40% in attempted dialogue, and 21% in bribery as their top three choices in an attempt to manage or resolve conflict with security providers.

In parallel, the community in Ben Guerdane reported that security providers usually solve try to resolve conflicts with the community through legal action at 44%, attempted dialogue at 41%, and progressive use of force at 38%, followed by increasing border security at 34%. In Dhehiba, 58% indicated that security provider have increased border security in response, followed by 37% claiming that security providers aim to engage them in dialogue, and 34% highlighting progressive use of force as the preferred strategy of security providers. In both locations, communities also noted that security providers merely refer such issues to their superiors.

## IMPROVING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

In order to improve the management of conflict, communities noted that they needed more skills and better understanding of security providers. In Ben Guerdane, 33% suggested that they required dialogue and mediation skills, 25% skills to analyze and peacefully resolve conflict, 24% communication skills in order to peacefully manage conflict. In addition, 36% believe that better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of security providers would help them peacefully manage conflict, followed by 28% recommending better understanding of the specific procedures and protocols utilized by security providers, and 24% for better understanding of the community's role in local issues of peace and security.

In Dhehiba, 38% suggested better dialogue and mediation skills and 29% communication skills, while 26% recommended a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of security providers, and 24% regular opportunities for communication would enable them to peacefully manage conflict.

Most respondents already had positive attitudes toward peaceful means for conflict management and their ability to utilize them. Notably, 73% in of respondents in Ben Guerdane and 80% in Dhehiba strongly believed that dialogue and other peaceful means could help manage tensions between security providers and the community, which was consistent across sex, age and level of education. In addition, 45% in Ben Guerdane and 62% in Dhehiba strongly agreed that they could positively affect peace and security in their communities.