



Executive Summary

- February is the post-harvest period, when food availability at household level typically improves and cereal prices are comparatively lower due to availability of food from production at household level. However, crop production in the 2011/12 agricultural season was poor, with findings from a post-harvest assessment conducted in December 2011, estimating a cereal gap of 147,830 metric tones (MT).
- The overall food security situation has slightly deteriorated compared to that reported in February 2010 and 2011. Findings from February 2012 indicate a slight increase in the proportion of food insecure households among camp IDPs and resident communities, among whom one-quarter of the households in each category are reportedly food insecure. Among mixed communities, the food security situation remains similar to that of February 2010 and 2011.
- The food consumption score (FCS) of the mixed communities has remained similar to that reported in the previous rounds of 2010 and 2011, with more than 90 percent of the households having acceptable FCS. However, the FCS of camp IDPs and resident communities has slightly deteriorated compared to the last two years.
- The price of the minimum healthy food basket (MHFB) has increased by 100 and 60 percent compared to February 2010 and 2011 respectively. It has also increased by 11 percent compared to November 2011. Of the eight food items included in the MHFB, cereals and cooking oil continue to reflect the highest price increases. The continued increase in the price of MHFB has negatively affected the purchasing power of camp IDPs and resident communities, particularly the poorest households in both categories. In both camp IDPs and resident communities, the proportion of households who are not able to afford the cost of MHFB is constantly increasing.
- Wage labour secure income for two-fifth, one-third and one-quarter of camp IDPs, mixed and resident communities respectively.
- Mixed and resident communities have access to more diverse income sources, unlike camp IDPs who rely to a large extent on wage labour as their main source of income. Other sources of income such as small businesses, livestock sales, salaried work, sale of crops and firewood collection also contribute to the overall household income.
- Overall, 64 percent of households' monthly expenditure was spent on food, of which 22 percent spent on cereals.
- Almost half of the resident community and one-third of camp IDP households reported to have been facing food shortages in the week before the assessment.
- The proportion of children who consume more than four food items has increased compared to November 2011.
- According to the mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) measurements, approximately 2 and 8 percent of the surveyed children were severely and moderately malnourished, respectively.

1. FOOD SECURITY

February is the post-harvest period, when food availability at household level typically improves and cereal prices are comparatively lower due to availability of food from households own production. However, the crop production in the 2011/12 agricultural season was reportedly poor. Findings from the post-harvest assessment conducted in December 2011, estimate a cereal gap of 147,830 MT. This has prompted the state authorities, as early as January 2012, to plan for interventions to meet the existing food gap, through providing subsidized cereals.

In February 2012, the proportion of food insecure households among IDPs in the camps has significantly increased compared to the same period in 2011 and 2010. This is mainly attributed to a sharp increase in prices of various food items and the reduction of income opportunities.

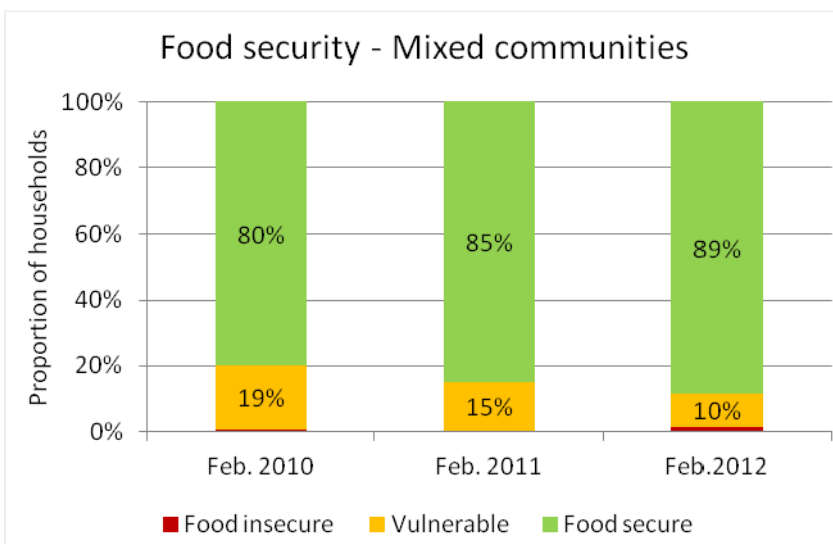
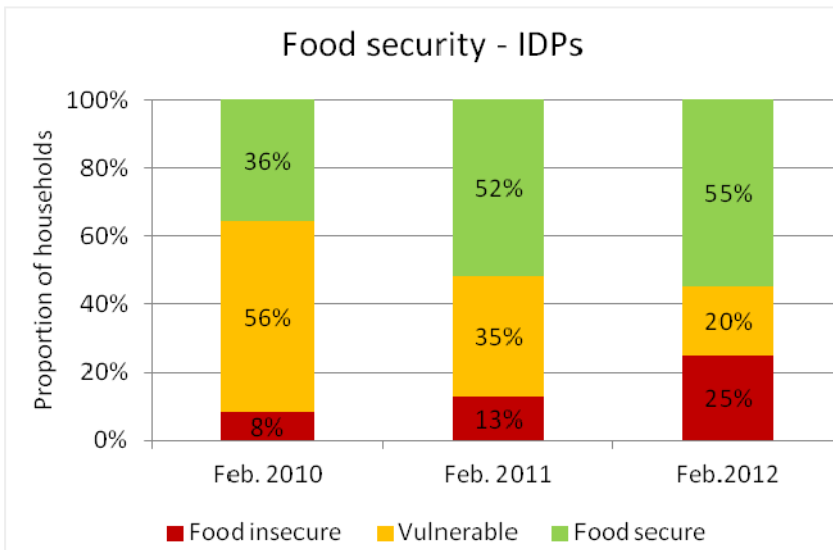
Simultaneously, there has been a reduction in the number of vulnerable households among camp IDPs, compared to February 2010 and 2011.

The mixed communities of Kebkabiya and Saraf Omra towns are better off compared to that of IDPs. This is due to the improved crop production in these areas due to good rainfall compared to the rest of the state, as well as irrigated summer cultivation of cash crops. The summer cultivation provides households with an off-season income source,

either through own production or additional working opportunities. In February 2012, 89 percent of the mixed community households are found to be food insecure, while 10 percent are reportedly vulnerable. This remains similar to the food security situation reported in February 2010 and 2011.

In February 2012, one-quarter of the households among resident communities are food insecure, a significant increase compared to February 2010 and 2011. Poor crop production for both cereal and cash crops, coupled with diminished household food stocks and price hikes are the main reason resulting in this increase. Poor cereal production has led to price increases in all state markets, representing an unusual pattern for the harvest season.

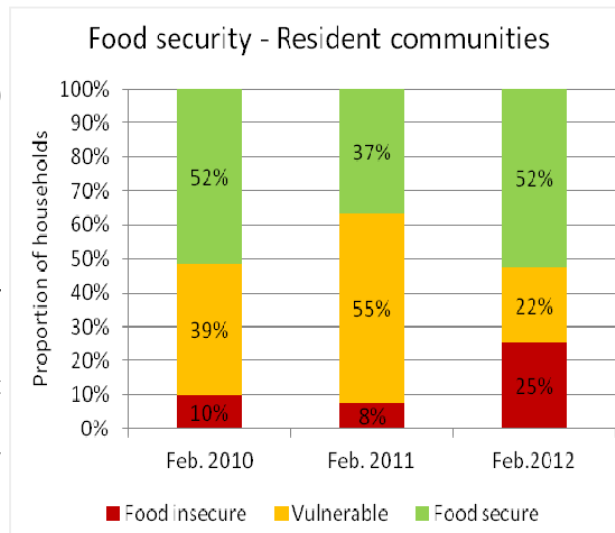
The lean season for poor households in the rural areas has started earlier than usual and is expected to last longer. Furthermore, only 500 MT of subsidized millet has been provided through the Agricultural Bank of Sudan. However, the effect of supplying this quantity has not materialized in terms of commodity availability or price in the local markets of the state.



Overall, the food security situation for all communities in North Darfur in February 2012 has deteriorated compared to February 2010 and 2011.

While the food security situation for IDPs and mixed communities has slightly improved compared to November 2011, no change has been reported on the food security situation for the resident communities.

With low supply of cereals to the market combined by the continuous increase in cereal prices, it is expected that the food security situation will deteriorate in the coming lean season.

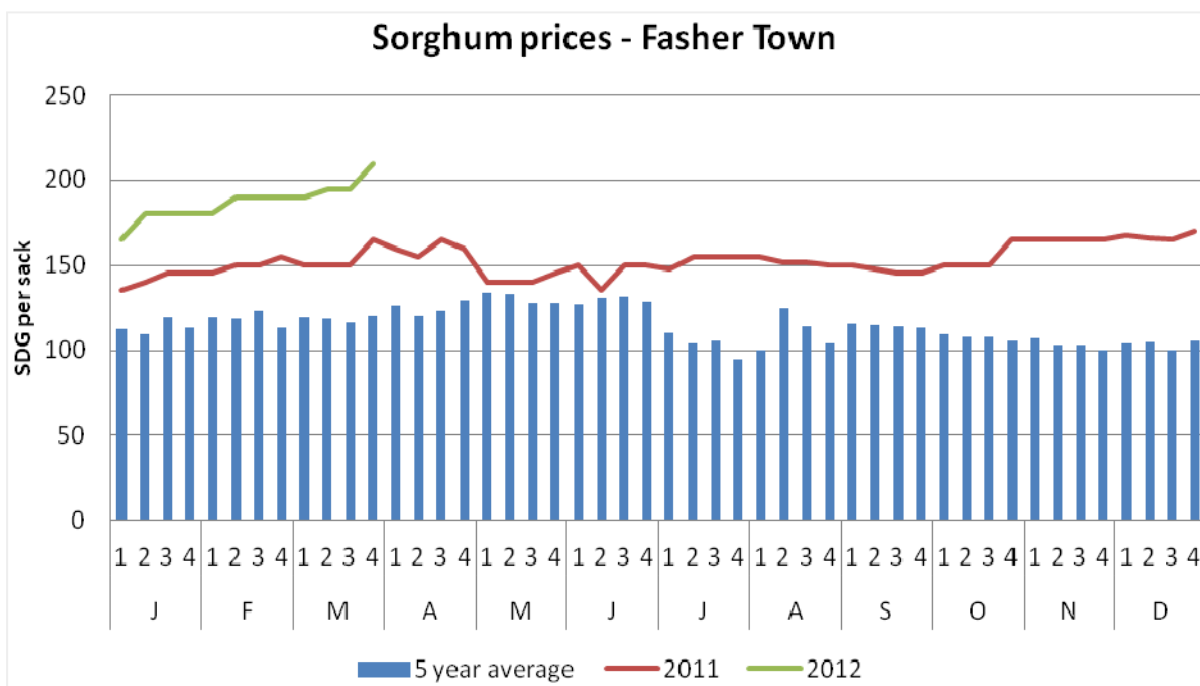


A. Market Situation

In 2012, cereal prices in El Fasher remained high since January, and has not followed the usual price decrease that usually occurs during the harvest season. With the expectation of a poor harvest, cereal prices continued to increase. This was mainly due to low supply from rural areas and traders withholding stocks in anticipation of further price increases.

In February 2012, food aid sorghum in the local market in El Fasher town has increased by 26 percent compared to February 2011. It is expected that sorghum prices will continue to increase during the coming months.

The terms of trade (ToT) between goat and food aid sorghum shows the number of 90- kg bags of sorghum that can be purchased through selling an adult male goat. The ToT remains higher compared to that reported in 2011, and in comparison to the five-year average. However, in the coming months, poor pasture and shortage of drinking water will reduce goat prices which will in turn decrease the ToT.



B. Income Sources

Wage labour remains the single most important income source for camp IDPs. In February 2012, this activity contribute to about two-fifth of households' income. The slight reduction in the contribution of wage labour to household income comes as a result of the reduction in agriculture related income sources this season, compared to the previous season.

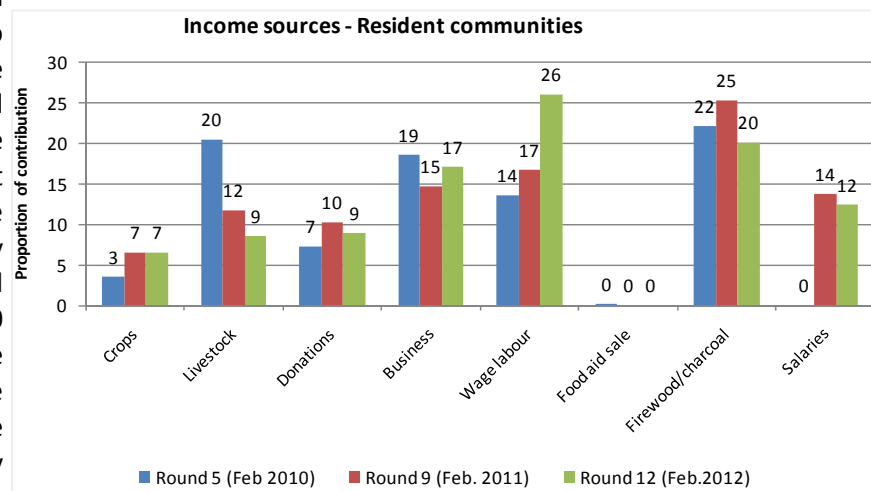
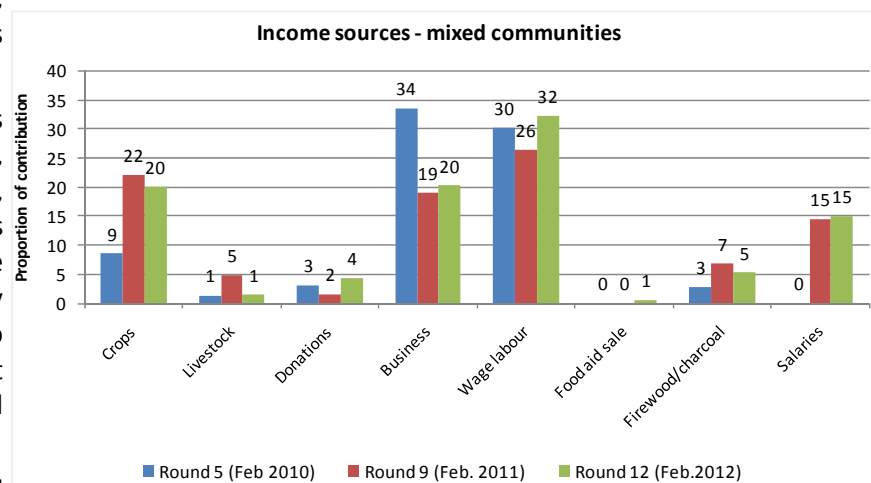
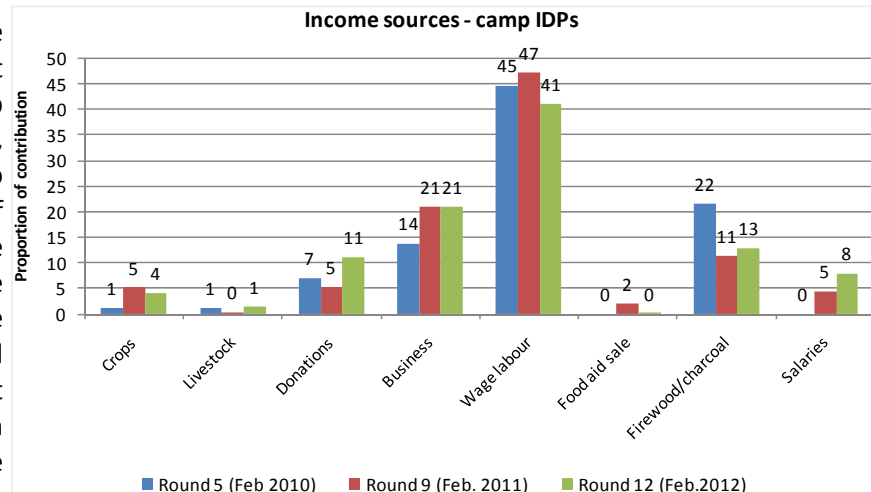
Other income sources include small businesses, collection of dry grass, firewood and charcoal, as well as donations. These sources collectively contribute to approximately 45 percent of household total income.

In February 2012, mixed communities continue to maintain relatively diverse income sources compared to camp IDPs. Wage labour remains the most important income source (32 percent), followed by sale of crops and small businesses (both 20 percent). Compared to the last round, the contribution of those sources remain largely similar with a slight increase in the dependence on wage labour.

Similar to resident communities, mixed communities have access to more diverse income sources.

In February 2012, there has been an increase in the contribution from wage labour (26 percent) compared to February 2011, and a reduction in the reliance on firewood and charcoal collection (20 percent).

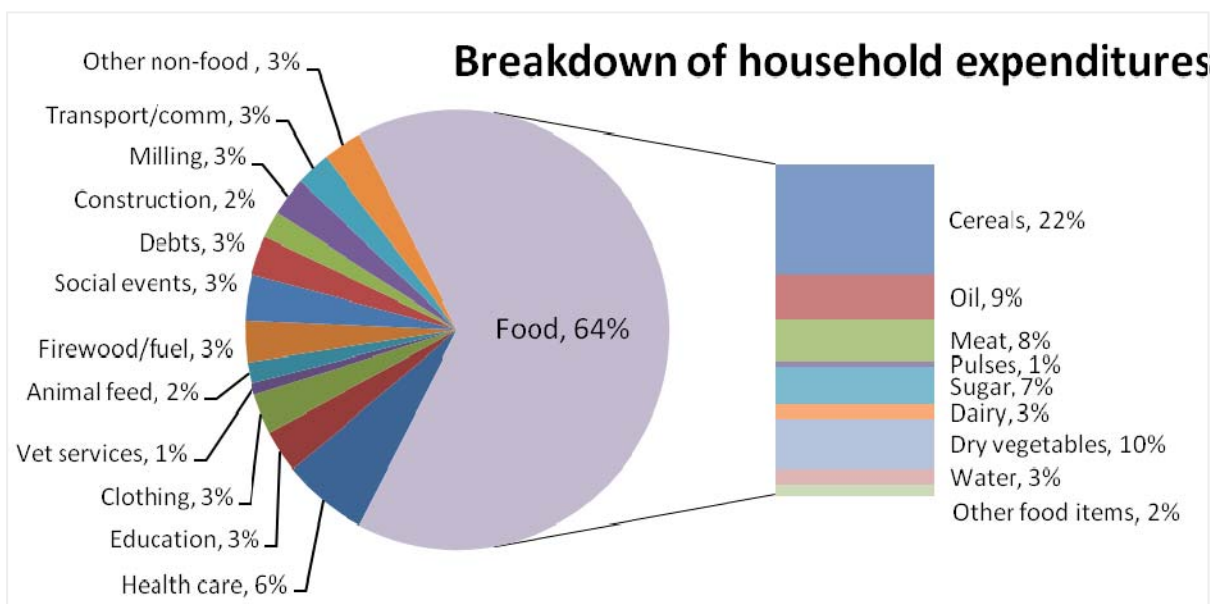
Other sources such as small businesses, salaries, livestock sales and crop sales collectively comprise about half of households' income in this round.



C. Expenditure

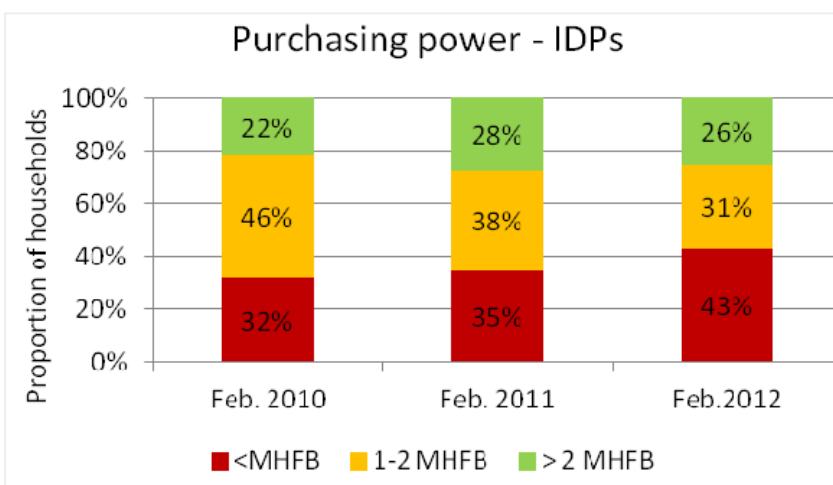
In February 2012, approximately 64 percent of the households' total monthly expenditure was spent on food items, representing a slight reduction compared to a 68 percent reported in November 2011. Poor agricultural production also has an effect on expenditure patterns. In February 2012, there has been an increase in the expenditure on cereals to 22 percent, compared to less than 15 percent in previous rounds. Cereal is followed by dry vegetables (10 percent), cooking oil (9 percent), meat (8 percent) and sugar (7 percent).

The most significant services include health care (6 percent) followed by milling, repayment of debts, clothing and transportation/communication.



Approximately, 43 percent of IDP households cannot afford the cost of one MHFB. This represents an increase compared to results of February 2010 and 2011, when roughly one-third of the households could not afford the cost of one MHFB.

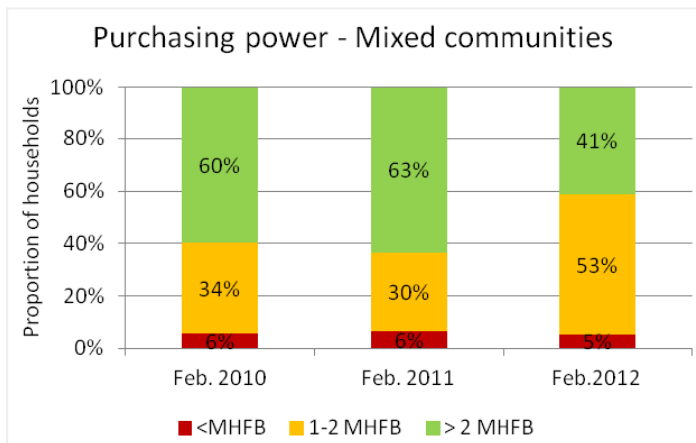
The increase in the proportion of IDP households who are unable to afford the cost of one MHFB is mainly due to the sharp increase in the cost of MHFB.



Compared to February 2010, the price of the MHFB has almost doubled, while it has increased by 60 percent compared to February 2011. However, despite the significant increase in the price of the MHFB in the last two years, the percentage of households that can afford more than 2 baskets has remained stable.

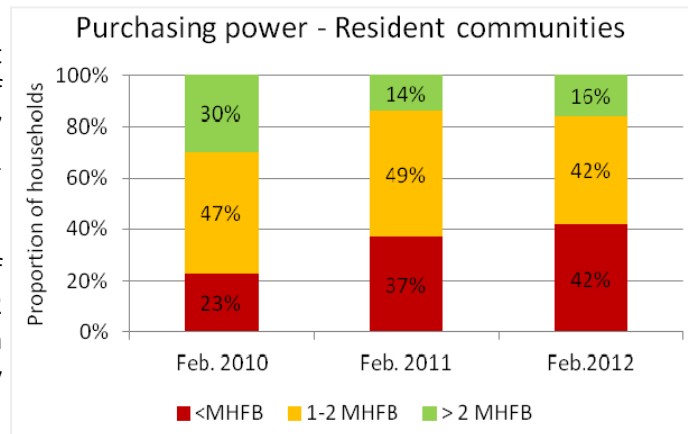
The proportion of households within the mixed communities who cannot afford the cost of one MHFB has remained stable. However, there has been a considerable reduction in the proportion of households that can afford more than two MHFBs.

In his round, approximately 40 percent of the households can afford more than two MHFBs, compared to approximately 60 percent reported in February 2010 and 2011.



For the resident communities, 42 percent of households cannot afford the cost of one MHFB compared to 23 and 37 percent in February 2010 and 2011 respectively.

Furthermore, the percentage of households who can afford the price of 2 MHFBs has decreased from 30 percent in February 2010 to 16 percent in February 2012.



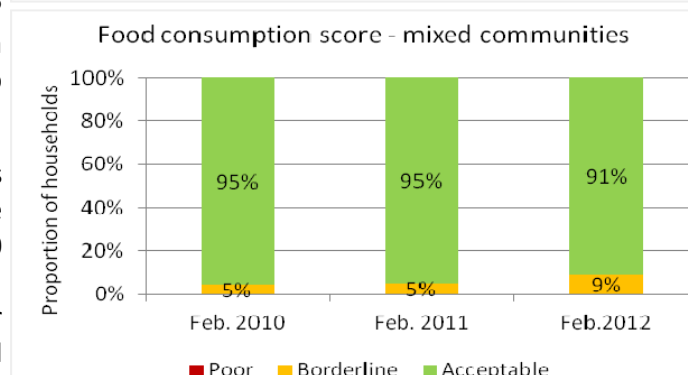
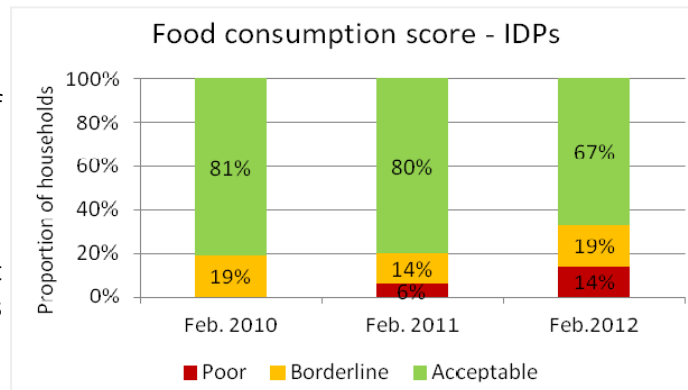
D. Food Consumption

In February 2012, roughly two-third of IDPs in camps have an acceptable food consumption score (FCS).

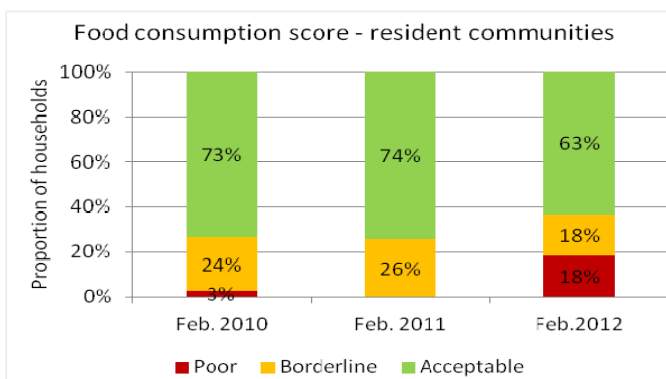
This reflects a slight reduction compared to February 2010 and 2011 when about four-fifth of the surveyed households have acceptable FCS.

In February 2012, 14 percent of IDP households have a poor FCS, showing a slight improvement compared to November 2011.

For the mixed communities, the FCS has remained similar to that reported in the previous two rounds of February 2010 and 2011, where nine out of ten households have acceptable FCS. Similar to IDPs, the FCS of the mixed communities has slightly improved compared to the last round carried out in November 2011.



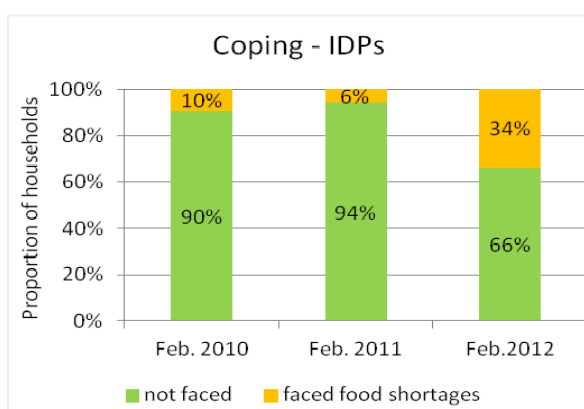
Within the resident communities, the FCS has deteriorated in this round compared to February 2011, with 18 percent of households reportedly having a poor food consumption score. Unlike other community groups where the FCS has slightly improved compared to November 2011, the food consumption situation for the resident community has slightly deteriorated.



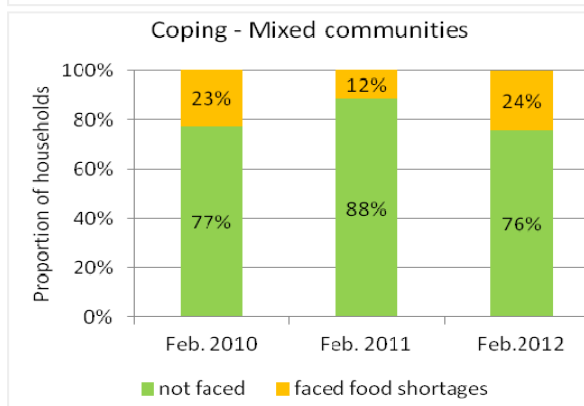
The majority of the surveyed locations have an acceptable FCS. However resident locations such as Umketera, Umkesrock and Neina in addition to Kassab camp fall in the borderline food consumption category. Camps like Rwanda camp, which usually record a poor FCS, has an acceptable food consumption score in this round.

2. Coping Strategy Index

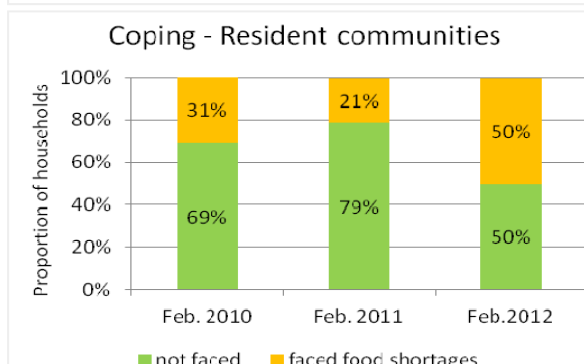
In February 2012, the proportion of households within camp IDPs that reported to have been facing food shortage in the last 7 days before the survey, has significantly increased compared to that reported during the same period in 2010 and 2011. However, the final results are similar to November 2011 when 35 percent of the IDP households have reported that they had been facing food shortages.



Within camp IDPs, the most frequently adapted strategies used in this round to minimize the effects of food shortages included consumption of borrowed food and reducing the number of meals per day.



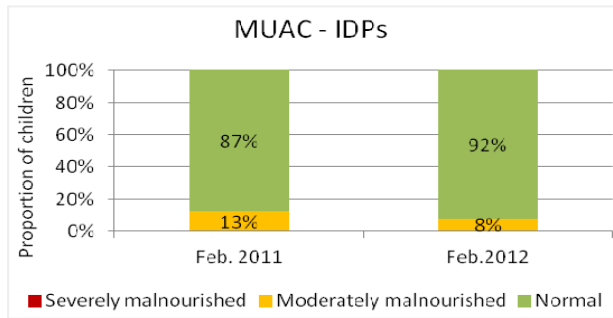
The proportion of households who faced food shortages within mixed communities remained similar to that reported in February 2010. However, it has doubled compared to that of February 2011. During this round, approximately one-quarter of the surveyed household reported that they had faced food shortage in the week prior to the assessment. However, this remains a significant decrease compared to 48 percent reported in November 2011. The most common strategies in February 2012 is borrowing of food items, followed by reducing the number of meals per day and relying on support from relatives.



For resident communities, half of the surveyed households have reported facing food shortages in February 2012, representing a significant increase compared to February 2010 and 2011. This also shows an increase compared to results obtained in November 2011, when 36 percent of the surveyed households reported facing food shortage. The most frequently adapted strategies include borrowing food, limiting the portion size and reducing the number of meals per day.

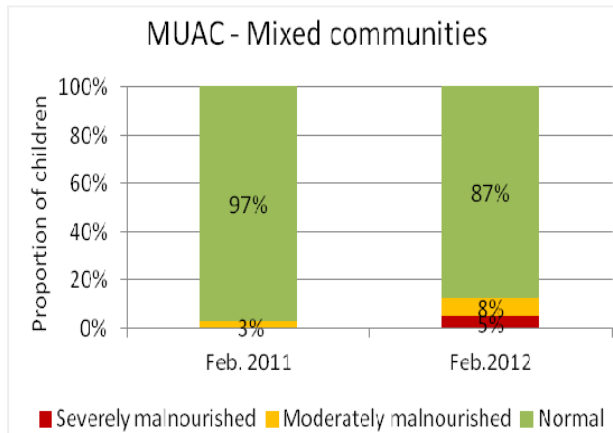
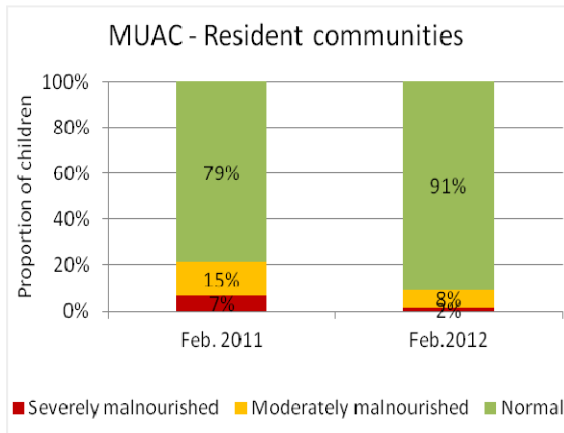
3. Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC)

A total of 600 children in North Darfur had their Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measured in February 2012, of whom 168 children were measured in IDP camps. Findings show that 8 percent of the measured children were moderately malnourished, while none were severely malnourished. These results are similar to those obtained in February 2011.



Within the mixed communities, five and eight percent of the surveyed children are severely and moderately malnourished respectively. However, this contradicts the food security situation of this community group, which is better compared to that of IDPs and resident communities. However, as the mixed community locations include large concentrations of IDPs in small towns with no proper sanitation, health related problems affecting the nutritional status of this group are expected.

Malnutrition rates for children in resident communities have improved compared to those reported in February 2011. Out of 352 children measured, two percent are reportedly severely malnourished while eight percent are moderately malnourished.



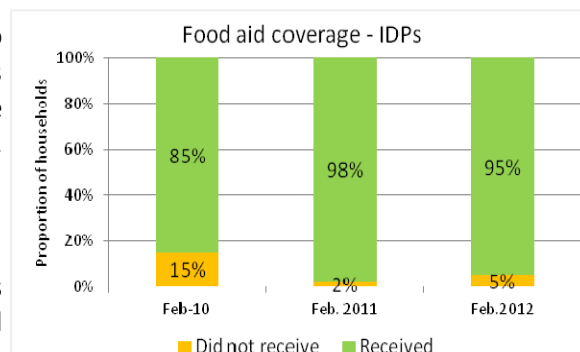
4. Child Health and Dietary Diversity

Some 52 percent of surveyed children are reportedly consuming less than four food groups. This represents a significant reduction compared to the findings reported in November 2011 with 94 percent of surveyed children consuming food from less than four food groups.

Analysis by community groups show that children within resident communities are more likely to receive food from less than four food groups (73 percent), compared to 58 and 30 percent for IDP children and those in mixed communities respectively.

5. Food Assistance

Food assistance is provided on a regular basis to IDPs in camps and mixed communities. Findings indicate that 95 percent of the camp IDPs have received food assistance, while approximately 82 percent of the mixed community households had received food assistance in the last three months. These results are similar to that reported in February 2010 and 2011. Resident communities fall under the category that receives seasonal support which has not yet started.



7. Who are the food insecure?

Food security by gender of head of household

In IDP camps, 7 out of 10 food insecure households are headed by a female. Meanwhile only one out of 4 food secure household is a female headed household. Camp IDPs continue to rely heavily on wage labour (41 percent), indicating that the number of adult working members in a given household is of greater importance to secure cash income of a household in a camp, while female-headed households are likely to have less family members at working age.

For mixed communities, approximately every food insecure household is a female-headed household, while on the other hand one in every three food secure households is a female headed household. Unlike camp IDPs, mixed communities have relatively diverse income sources, such as wage labour, sale of crops, small businesses and salaries.

Within resident communities, there are no remarkable differences in the food security situation by gender of household's head. This remains similar to results of previous rounds.

Food security by education level of head of household

Following analysis of the food security situation by the education level of the household head, findings show that in the camps education level of the head of household has a strong link to the food security of the household. In IDP camps, two out of three food insecure households are headed by an uneducated person, while about one out of three food insecure households are headed by a person who received primary education. Education level is therefore linked to the food security situation for all community groups; households tend to be more food secure when headed by a person who received secondary education and above.



DEMOGRAPHICS

- All 22 primary sites visited;
 - 36 percent of the households assessed are female-headed;
- Average household size is 6.5 persons;
 - 56 percent of the households are residents; 21 percent IDPs living in camps; 20 percent IDPs outside camps; and 3 percent returnees.