Main Findings

- The proportion of food secure households in the IDP category has increased compared to February 2010. However, there is a significant drop in the proportion of food secure households in the resident community category compared to February 2010. This can be attributed to the increase in cereal prices and the early ending of seasonal support in October 2010.

- The price of the minimum healthy food basket (MHFB) has increased in February 2011 to 1.47 SDG per person per day, an increase of 24 percent compared to February 2010 and an 11 percent increase compared to November 2010. This is mainly due to the price increase on food commodities such as cereal, sugar and onion.

- IDPs in camps and mixed communities are heavily relying on wage labor and small business as their main income sources, while residents have access to more diverse income sources, such as firewood collection, livestock sales, donations in addition to wage labor and small business.

- On average, households spend 62 percent of their income on food, which is a slight increase compared to November 2010 (57 percent).

- More than four fifths of the interviewed households in February 2011 reported that they have not encountered any food shortages during February. This is a significant improvement compared to November 2010 and similar to the results from February 2010.

- There is a significant increase in the proportion of children (6-23 months of age) who consume more than four food items in mixed communities (94 percent), compared to August and November 2010.

- Some 13 percent of IDP children, 3 percent of children in mixed communities and 15 percent of children in resident communities are moderately malnourished. Furthermore, 7 percent of resident children are severely malnourished.
1. FOOD SECURITY

In February 2011, the proportion of food secure households among IDPs in camps has increased compared to the same period last year. This is attributed to a relatively improved harvest. This season, more IDPs cultivated their lands improving the food security situation. Compared to November 2010, the proportion of food secure households remains stable. The proportion of food secure households among mixed communities is similar to that reported last year, however it has decreased compared to November 2010, mainly due to the limited opportunities for agricultural work for IDPs, who constitute over three fifths of the mixed community category. Within resident communities, there is a significant drop in the proportion of food secure households in February 2011 compared to February 2010. This can be attributed to the increase in the price of food items and the early ending of seasonal support compared to last year. Analysis of food security by location indicates that only Rwanda camp falls below the lower threshold (food insecure). This IDP camp is served with a full general food distribution ration all year, however there are limited income opportunities as the camp is situated close to a deserted town with only agricultural casual work available during the post harvest period. Inadequacy of cash income opportunities forced IDPs to fund the purchase of other items with sale of food assistance. In this camp, education fees, health and water continue to be supported by sale of food assistance, although WFP expanded school feeding activities in camps. Other locations are situated above the higher threshold (food secure) except Marsus in Malha locality and Kassab camp in Kutum.

The food security indicator consists of: market situation and cost of minimum healthy food basket; income sources; expenditure; and food consumption.

**Market situation and cost of minimum healthy food basket**

In 2011, sorghum prices in El Fasher town were significantly high compared to prices of last year and the five-year average. This occurred despite the fact that the state’s total cereal production in 2010 agricultural season was reportedly four times as much as the previous season. The increase in sorghum prices can be explained by the destruction of market connections in 2004 with producing areas such as Kebkabiya locality, resulting in reduced cereal supply.

The Terms of Trade (ToT) between cereals and animal herders (i.e. the number of sorghum bags (90 kg) that can be purchased by selling one male adult goat) has increased in favour of livestock owners. This is mainly due to that the increase in goat price has been higher than that of sorghum.

The price of the minimum healthy food basket (MHFB) has increased to 1.47 SDG per person per day in February 2011, a 21 percent increase compared to November 2010. This increase mainly includes sugar and cooking oil. Sugar is mainly supplied from Khartoum and in February 2011 the supply route faced some difficulties that led to a reduced sugar supply and created scarcity. Combined with local traders’ speculation, that has led to price hikes in February and March 2011. Compared to February 2010, the price of the MHFB has increased by 24 percent.

The MHFB consists of eight food items (cereals (sorghum), milk, dry vegetables, cooking oil, goat meat, onion, sugar and cow meat). It is calculated based on kilocalories required for each item to meet the required 2100 kilocalories per person per day.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 19 sites were visited.
- 514 households interviewed.
- 6.4 persons is average household size.
- 33 percent are female-headed households.
**Income Sources**

Wage labour remains the single most important source of income for camp IDPs as well as for 47 percent of households. The current contribution of wage labour to households’ income remains similar to February 2010, but more important than in November 2010. The heavy reliance on wage labour by IDPs is due to the limited income alternatives in the post harvest period. Other important income sources for IDPs include small business (21 percent) and firewood and charcoal collection (11 percent).

Mixed communities however have access to more diverse income sources, of which the most important are wage labour (26 percent), sale of crops (22 percent), small business (19 percent) and salaries (15 percent). Households within mixed communities, unlike camp IDPs, are less vulnerable in case of loss of one income source as they have the opportunity to expand on other income sources to cover the gap. Resident communities, similar to mixed communities, have more diverse income sources, such as firewood collection, wage labour, salaries, small business, livestock sale and sale of crops. However; the contribution of essential sources such as sale of livestock and crops was expected to be higher when the increase in prices of these commodities occurred.

In February 2011, the proportion of IDP households who are unable to afford the cost of even one MHFB has slightly increased compared to November 2010. Over one third of the IDPs were found to be unable to afford the cost of one basket, which is similar to the situation reported in February 2010. As IDPs receive most of the MHFB items under GFD, the effects of price increases on them are minimal.

For mixed and resident communities, there is a reduction in the proportion of households who can afford more than twice the price of MHFB compared to November 2010. Within the resident category, there is a significant increase in the proportion of households who cannot afford the price of one MHFB in February 2011 compared to February 2010 and November 2010.

In conclusion, the substantial increase in the cost of the MHFB in February 2011 compared to November 2010 is due to the sudden increase in prices of sugar, onion and cooking oil. However, the increase will only impact resident communities as they are totally dependent on purchase from the market until the beginning of the seasonal support. IDPs in camps and mixed communities will only be partially impacted as they are covered under general food distribution.

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**Expenditure**

In February 2011, an average of 62 percent of household expenditure was spent on food items, a slight increase compared to February 2010 and November 2010. This is mainly due to the increase in prices of various food items. The most important food items are cereals, dry vegetables, meat and sugar and other food items. The expenditure pattern indicates that households are maintaining a diverse diet which enables them to meet their nutritional requirements.
**Food Consumption**

In February 2011, the food consumption score (FCS) remains stable compared to November 2010 and over three quarters of all households have an acceptable FCS. These results are also similar to February 2010. However, six percent of the households in IDP camps have a poor food consumption score.

The majority of these are from the Rwanda camp in Tawila where IDPs have to sell part of their food assistance rations to be able to cover expenses for health services, water and education fees. This camp is also faced with limited income opportunities, and unlike other camps the only work opportunity is seasonal agriculture related wage labour which is seasonal and mostly in Tombac (chewing tobacco) cultivation. Furthermore, the camp is located in a deserted administrative unit where the situation got worse after the expulsion of NGOs that had been providing various services.

Analysis of the food consumption by location indicates that all locations have an acceptable FCS except Rwanda camp and Neina, where the FCS is in the borderline category. Neina is a resident location which was previously assisted through seasonal support, ceased in October 2010.

### 2. Agriculture

The results from the harvest period indicate that the total cereal production in the state this year is approximately 89,000 metric tonnes. Most of this production was produced in Kebakbiya and Saraf Omra localities, however, surplus from these two localities is not expected to reach other localities as movement of commodities from Kebkabiya is restricted.

### 3. Coping Strategy Index

In February 2011, four out five households interviewed in all community groups reported that they had not encountered any food shortage.

These results show a significant improvement from November 2010, but are similar to the results from February 2010.

One fifth of the resident households faced food shortage at the time of the assessment; however they were only engaging in low risk coping strategies.
4. Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC)

The Mid Upper Arm Circumference was measured for children between the age of 6 and 59 months. Results indicate that 13 percent of IDP children, 3 percent of children in mixed communities and 15 percent of children in resident communities are moderately malnourished.

Furthermore, 7 percent of resident children are severely malnourished and in need of therapeutic care.

Analysis of child health by location showed that malnourishment was reported only in two locations, Malha and Marsus. Both located in the chronically food insecure Malha locality in the far north of the pastoral area of the state.

The vulnerability of Malha locality can be attributed to its remoteness from production areas and markets in the state. Communities in this locality are primarily dependant on market purchase, wild foods and kinship. Sources of income to undertake market purchase are primarily sale of livestock and remittances mostly coming from abroad (Libya in particular). In the post-conflict situation, wild food collection has become extremely difficult and limited, and the connection to markets continues to be restricted.

5. Child Health and Dietary Diversity

Parents of children of the age of 6 to 23 months were asked about the number of food items they feed their children using a 24 hour recall period. Findings indicated that there is a significant increase in the proportion of children in mixed communities who receive food from four or more food groups compared to August and November 2010. Also, 94 percent of the children were found to receive a nutritious diet. This increase is in line with this year’s good harvest in the mixed community areas of Kebkabiya and Saraf Omra, where post-harvest results indicated that this is the only surplus area in North Darfur State for the 2010/11 agricultural season. For the resident communities, there is a significant reduction in the proportion of children who consume more than four food groups compared to November 2010, but similar to the results of August 2010. In addition, 65 percent of children consume less than four food groups. For children in IDP camps, the situation has improved from August and November 2010, however, some 68 percent of children continue to receive less than four food groups. This indicates that a large proportion of children in IDP camps and in resident communities do not receive adequate nutrients that are required for healthy growth.