Main Findings

- Data collection was carried out in May 2011, which corresponds to the pre-hunger season and all the 22 sentinel sites were reached.
- The overall food security situation has deteriorated for all community groups (IDPs, mixed and resident communities) compared to February 2011 with a shift of households from the food secure to the moderately food insecure category. The deterioration in food security is mainly attributed to a weak purchasing power, less income opportunities in the pre-lean season and decreased food consumption scores.
- Employment status and the education level of households’ heads have a clear impact on households’ food security status.
- Food consumption has improved considerably among IDPs in camps. Meanwhile, food consumption scores are deteriorated among both refugees and mixed communities.
- The price of sorghum in May 2011 is similar to that reported in February 2011, however, it remains above the five-year average.
- The price of the Minimum Healthy Food Basket (MHFB) in May 2011 is 1.45 SDG/person/day, which is a 10 percent increase compared to February 2011 price (1.32 SDG/person/day). Between February and May 2011, the price of vegetable oil and sugar has increased by 69 and 28 percent respectively.
- In May 2011, households spend on average 68 percent of their income on food items, a seven percent increase compared to February 2011.
- Compared to May 2010 and February 2011, the purchasing power has deteriorated for households in all community groups. Some 29 percent of the households in mixed communities cannot afford one minimum healthy food basket. The proportion of households who cannot afford minimum healthy food basket have remained similar for IDPs and refugee groups.
- Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) data show that the situation has improved compared to February 2011 and to the same period last year. The proportion of malnourished children among the refugee group, however, is higher compared to children in other community groups.
- The dietary diversity of children between 6-23 months reveals an overall improvement among IDPs, mixed community and residents. There is slight increase, however, in the proportion of children consuming less than four food groups among refugee groups.
1. FOOD SECURITY

In May 2011, the overall food security situation has deteriorated for all community groups compared to February 2011. There has been a shift among households from the food secure to the moderately food insecure category.

IDPs have the highest proportion (57 percent) of moderately food insecure households compared to refugees, mixed and resident communities.

There has been an increase in the percentage of households in the severely food insecure category, most notably in the mixed communities and for refugees.

The deterioration in the food security is affected by a weaker purchasing power, less income opportunities in the pre-lean season and decreasing food consumption scores.

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

The price of sorghum is similar to that reported in February 2011, however, it remains well above the five-year average. Two factors have contributed to the increase in cereal price in El Geneina market, compared to the five-year average; some quantities of cereals were moved out of West Darfur into North and South Darfur; and the government—through Strategic Reserve Corporation—has purchased large quantities of cereals from West Darfur markets.

The terms of trade (ToT) between the numbers of sorghum sacks purchased per male goat has slightly decreased compared to February. In May 2011, a livestock owner could purchase one sack of sorghum (90 kg) by selling one male goat. However, the ToT is lower than the five-year average, when the livestock owner could purchase 135 kg of sorghum for one goat.

With the upcoming lean period, a slight reduction in the livestock prices was observed in El Geneina market. The price of the MHFB in May 2011 was 1.45 SDG/person/day, a 10 percent increase compared to February 2011 when the price was 1.32 SDG/person/day. This can be attributed to the increase in the prices of some food items that are included in the food basket, mainly vegetable oil and sugar prices that have increased by 69 and 28 percent respectively.
**Income Sources**

This section reflects the importance of different income sources according to how much each of them contributes to the total household income.

The most important income generating activities for the IDPs in May 2011 include wage labor (39 percent), small business (17 percent) and sale of crops (16 percent). The contribution from these income sources remains stable compared to February 2011, however, when comparing percentages to May 2010, the contribution from sale of crops have increased from seven to 16 percent.

The contribution from firewood collection has decreased significantly from 22 percent in May 2010 to six percent in May 2011. This is mainly due to risks associated with firewood collection and the long travel distance people travel to collect the firewood. Thus, IDPs have changed to other income generating activities, such as wage labor and sale of crops.

For refugees, wage labour remains the most important income source (59 percent), followed by small business (13 percent) and sale of firewood (seven percent). The contributions from wage labor, small business and sale of crops have decreased compared to February 2011 and May 2010.

The contributions from firewood sales and other income sources, however, have increased compared to February 2011 and May 2010. This is can be attributed to limited working opportunities.

Residents and mixed communities have access to more diverse income generating activities.

In resident communities, wage labour is the most important income source (29 percent) followed by sale of crops (20 percent) and salaried work (17 percent).

In mixed communities, wage labour is also the most important income source (29 percent), followed by sale of crops (24 percent) and small business (13 percent).

During this round, sale of livestock and firewood have significantly increased compared to February 2011.
Expenditure

Among the overall sampled households, an average of 68 percent of the households’ monthly expenditure was spent on food items in May 2011. This represents an increase from a 61 percent reported in February 2011. Analysis of the proportion of expenditure on food by community type shows that a high proportion of households among different community groups has spent over 65 percent of their income on food items. This is mainly attributed to an increase in the price of some food items.

The food items that a typical household tend to spend on include sugar (14 percent), meat (13 percent), cereal (11 percent), oil (10 percent) and vegetables (nine percent). Major non-food expenditures were on health care (six percent), milling (four percent) and clothing and social events (both three percent).

The household purchasing power has deteriorated in May 2011 compared May 2010 and February 2011, among all community groups. In the mixed communities, 29 percent of the households cannot afford one minimum healthy food basket. The percentage is similar for IDPs and refugees. Residents have the highest percentage of households that can afford more than two food baskets (36 percent). The main reasons behind the deterioration include an increase in the cost of the minimum healthy food basket and limited income generating activities during the pre-lean season.

Analysis of the median income per location per capita in this round shows a significant decrease in Garsila IDP camp, Abata and Delej compared to February 2011 and May 2010, due to limited income opportunity.
Food Consumption

The overall food consumption situation in West Darfur is acceptable. For the resident communities, the situation is stable with 81 percent in the acceptable category. There is an increase in the proportion of IDPs households having acceptable food consumption in May 2011 compared to February 2011.

Mixed communities have experienced a decline in the percentage of households in the acceptable food consumption from 71 to 56 percent, and an increase in the proportion of households in the borderline category. The weak purchasing power for the mixed communities is believed to be the main reason behind the decrease in the food consumption score.

A deteriorating food consumption situation was also found among refugees with a decrease in the percentage of households in the acceptable food consumption category, while the percentage of households in the poor food consumption category has increased compared to February 2011.

Analysis of the food consumption situation by location shows that the food consumption score has decreased considerably in Abata and Shabab IDP camp.

In both locations, the situation is deteriorating due to the significant decrease in the income/person/day in May 2011 compared to February 2011 and May 2010. The dietary diversity analysis shows that the food secure households in all community types have a considerably varied diet compared to the severely food insecure households.

2. Coping Strategy Index

In May 2011, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of households who are forced to use various forms of coping strategies in all community groups, compared to February 2011 and May 2010. The majority of the households had to engage in low risk coping strategies, with a percentage ranging from 39 percent among refugees to 23 percent of resident communities. Furthermore, four percent of the IDP households and the resident households had to use medium risk coping strategies. Refugees are in the most difficult position compared to the other community groups with 12 percent having to engage in medium risk coping strategies and three percent in high risk coping strategies. The most commonly used coping strategies in West Darfur are to rely on less preferred or less expensive food and to eat borrowed food or borrow money to purchase food.
3. Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC)

Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurement was applied on 839 children in the age between 6-59 months in 22 sentinel sites. Findings indicated that the overall situation has improved compared to February 2011 and May 2010. Malnutrition rates are higher among refugee children compared to children in other community groups. Three percent of the refugee children are severely malnourished while nine percent are moderately malnourished. Two percent of IDP children and five percent of resident children are moderately malnourished, however, there are no severely malnourished children in these two categories. For children living in mixed communities, one percent is severely malnourished and three percent are moderately malnourished.

4. Child Health and Dietary Diversity

This section reflects dietary diversity of children in the age between 6-23 months with data collected from 291 children. Overall, the majority of households in all community groups did not provide their children with the essential four food groups and the children are thus not receiving the nutrients required for growth.

However, there has been an improvement in the situation of IDPs, mixed and resident communities compared to February 2011, and a larger percentage of children in these three categories are now consuming more than four food groups. In refugee camps, the situation has deteriorated, and a lower percentage of children are now consuming more than four food groups compared to February 2011. Mixed communities have the highest percentage of children (66) who consume less than four food groups.
5. Food Assistance

In May 2011, the percentage of IDPs receiving food assistance has decreased significantly to 45 percent, compared to 93 percent in reported in February 2011. Mixed communities have also experienced a drop in the percentage of households that receive food assistance. This could be attributed to the applied targeting strategy, and also due to changes in seasonal support which normally runs from June to October every year in mixed and resident locations. In order to implement the caseload verification exercise in El Geneina and the food vouchers program, distributions schedules were adjusted.

There has been a reduction in the percentage of IDP households that report to having sold food assistance from 16 percent in February 2011 to eight percent in May 2011.

In the mixed communities, the percentage is relatively stable at 25 percent.

The main reasons for selling food assistance are to buy other food items that are not part of WFP food basket (8.2 percent) and to cover milling cost (4.3 percent).

6. Who are the food insecure?

Employment status and the education level of the head of the household have a clear impact on households’ food security. Some 40 percent of IDP households where the head of the household was unemployed were severely food insecure compared to nine percent of households where the head of household was employed.

In mixed communities, 28 percent of households, where the head of household was unemployed were severely food insecure, compared to 15 percent of households where the household head was employed.
Analysis of the education of the household head and the food security situation show that the education level has an effect on the food security status among mixed as well as resident communities.

In these community groups, there are a higher percentage of households where the head is educated in the food secure category compared to the severely food insecure category. For IDPs and refugees, this trend is less clear.

Having disabled members in the household has a clear impact on the food security situation. In West Darfur, 27 percent of the households with disabled members are severely food insecure compared to 13 percent of households without disabled members.