Main Findings

- Data collection was carried out in all planned 19 sentinel sites in May 2011, coinciding with the pre-hunger season.

- There is a slight increase in the proportion of food insecure households among IDPs in camps and resident communities. Within the mixed communities, there is a significant increase in the proportion of food insecure households. The reported food security situation is mainly attributed to increased commodity prices coupled with reduced agricultural work opportunities in May. Mixed communities continue to heavily rely on agricultural work as a source of income, however, work opportunities have diminished remarkably in May.

- Education, employment status and gender of the household head have a clear effect on households’ food security status.

- The food consumption score (FCS) remains similar to that reported in February 2011, where two out of three households living in the IDP camps have acceptable FCS. In the mixed and resident communities, three out of four households have acceptable FCS.

- The price of the minimum healthy food basket (MHFB) has increased by 11 percent in May compared to February 2011 (from 1.47 SDG/person/day to 1.63 SDG/person/ day), mainly due to an increase in the prices of sorghum and sugar.

- IDPs in camps and mixed communities rely heavily on wage labour and small business as their main income source. Resident communities have access to more diverse income sources, mainly firewood collection, salaried work, wage labour and sale of livestock.

- Overall, 68 percent of households’ expenditure was spent on food, an increase of 62 percent compared to February 2011.

- The proportion of IDP and mixed community households who have to use one or more coping mechanisms have increased significantly in May 2011 compared to February 2011, with an increase of households engaging in low risk coping strategies.

- A large proportion of children in all community groups consume less than four food groups and are therefore not receiving adequate nutrients required for growth.

- Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) results show that two percent of the children living in IDP camps and resident communities and one percent of children in mixed communities are severely malnourished.
1. FOOD SECURITY

May is the beginning of the lean season when income opportunities related to agricultural work decrease. The lean season coupled with price increases on food commodities due to limited market supplies and the exhaustion of household’s own food stocks, resulted in vulnerable food security situation for the surveyed households.

In May 2011, the proportion of food secure households among the camp IDPs has slightly decreased compared to February 2011.

For the mixed communities, there is significant drop from 84 to 54 percent in the proportion of food secure households compared to February 2011.

The mixed communities in Kebkabiya and Saraf Omra are extremely dependent on seasonal income sources, such as agricultural related work that is almost non-existent in the lean season.

The proportion of food secure households within the mixed communities, however, remains the highest compared to other community groups.

For resident communities, seasonal support ceased in October 2010 due to a relatively improved crop production in the last season, however, the food security situation remained unchanged compared to February 2011.

This could be attributed to availability of food stocks from the previous harvest and access to more diverse income generating activities compared to IDPs and mixed communities.

When compared to May 2010, the food security situation for all community groups remains stable.

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

Sorghum prices in El Fasher market in March and April were still higher than the prices in 2010 and much higher than the five year average. Starting from the first week of May 2011, however, sorghum prices started to decrease and by the last week of the month prices were similar to the prices of last year.

As most of the sorghum in North Darfur is supplied through either General Food distribution (GFD) or subsidized from the Strategic Grain Reserve (SGR) (no supplies so far this year), the sorghum prices in May were affected by distribution of WFP food assistance.

The Terms of Trade (ToT) between a 90 kg bag of sorghum and a male goat has increased in favor of livestock owners and the quantity of sorghum that can be purchased for one goat in May 2011 is higher than last year and higher than the five year average. The prices of the Minimum Healthy Food Basket (MHFB) have increased to 1.63 SDG/person/day in May 2011, which is a 10 percent increase compared to February 2011 when the price of the MHFB was 1.47 SDG/person/day. This can be attributed to the price increase of some food items included in the food basket and from February 2011 to May 2011, the price of sugar has increased by 24 percent and sorghum by 10 percent.
**Income Sources**

This section reflects the importance of different income sources according to how much each of them contributes to the total household income. For camp IDPs, wage labour remains the most important income source with 47 percent. The current contribution of wage labour to household income remains similar to February 2011, but higher than May 2010 (29 percent). Other important income sources are small businesses (14 percent), sale of firewood/charcoal (11 percent) and salaried work (11 percent). Collectively, these income sources contribute to more than one-third of households' income. In the pre-lean season, most of the agricultural related income sources diminish forcing urban IDPs to rely heavily on wage labour, small business and salaries, while rural IDPs depend on the collection of firewood and charcoal.

Mixed communities continue to rely on relatively diverse income sources in comparison to the camp IDPs. In May 2011, although wage labour contributes close to one-third of household income, other sources, such as small business (17 percent), salaried work (16 percent), sale of crops (13 percent) and donations/kinship (13 percent) are also of significance.

These sources contribute to about three-fifths of the households' income. The resident communities, like the mixed communities, have access to more diverse income sources, such as firewood (20 percent), salaried work (19 percent), wage labour (15 percent) and sale of livestock (13 percent).

In conclusion, the contribution of different income sources have not changed much, the level of income generated from these sources is lower compared to February 2011. The camp IDPs and mixed communities are extremely dependant on agricultural work, and are more vulnerable now in the pre-lean season.

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**Expenditure**

Among the overall sampled households, an average of 68 percent of the households’ monthly expenditure is spent on food items, an increase of 62 percent from February 2011. This is attributed to the high food prices at this time of the year.

Expenditure is mainly on key food items namely cereals (20 percent), oil (10 percent), sugar (10 percent), meat (nine percent) and dry vegetables (nine percent).
Expenditure on non-food items mainly includes health care (four percent), social events (four percent), milling (three percent) and firewood/fuel (three percent).

In May 2011, the proportion of IDP households who cannot afford the cost of one Minimum Healthy Food Basket (MHFB) price has increased from 35 percent in February 2011 to 45 percent in May 2011, and the proportion of households who can afford more than two baskets has dropped. This can be due to the increase in the cost of the MHFB and the more limited work opportunities in May compared to February.

For the mixed communities, there is a significant reduction in the proportion of households who can afford the cost of more than two MHFB from 63 percent in February 2011 to 38 percent in May 2011.

At the same time, there is an increase in the proportion of households who cannot even afford one food basket compared to February 2011, up from six to 18 percent.

Within the resident category, the situation is relatively stable across the rounds with fewer households who cannot even afford a food basket, and a higher percentage who can afford more than two baskets.

There is a considerable increase in the cost of MHFB in May compared to February, however, it remains similar to May 2010. The increase in the cost of the MHFB has a more serious effect on the camp IDPs and mixed communities compared to resident communities.
Food Consumption

In May 2011, the overall Food Consumption Score (FCS) is acceptable. Among IDPs, 67 percent have an acceptable food consumption score, in addition to 83 percent of the mixed communities and 76 percent of the resident communities. From February to May 2011, there has been an increase in the proportion of households who have borderline food consumption among the camp IDPs and mixed communities. Despite the fact that seasonal support was ceased in October 2010, there is only a slight increase in the proportion of IDP households who have a borderline FCS and even a decrease in the proportion of households with a poor food consumption compared to February 2011. For mixed communities, there is a slight increase in the percentage of households both in the poor and the borderline category.

Analysis of the food consumption by location indicate that the majority of the population in these locations have an acceptable FCS, except Neina, Kassab, Rwanda camp and Um Maraheek where the FCS falls in the borderline category. Neina and Um Marheek are resident locations that were previously assisted through seasonal support, however, have not received this support since October 2010.
The dietary diversity analysis shows that food secure households in all community types have a much more varied diet compared to severely food insecure households.

2. Coping Strategy Index

In May 2011, three out four IDP households reported that they had not engaged in any coping strategies, representing a significant drop from 94 percent during February 2011, but similar to May 2010. Within mixed communities, the proportion of households who have not encountered any food shortages has dropped significantly from 88 percent in February 2011 to 52 percent in May 2011. Despite the remarkable increase in the proportion of households that experienced food shortages among camp IDPs and mixed communities, the coping strategies they have to engage in are low risk coping strategies. However, nine percent of households within the mixed communities are forced to use high risk coping strategies.

For the resident communities, 71 percent of the households are not faced with food shortage, and the situation is relatively stable compared to previous rounds. Eight percent are engaging in medium risk coping strategies while another eight percent are forced to use high risk coping strategies. A reason for this increase can be the early termination of seasonal support in October 2010.

The most commonly used coping strategies used in North Darfur include relying on less preferred and less expensive food items, consume borrowed food or borrow cash to purchase food items.
3. Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC)

Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) is measured for children in the age (6-59 months). For IDP children, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of severely malnourished category, from zero to two percent. A similar decrease of two percent was reported among moderately malnourished children compared to February 2011, currently reflecting 11 percent. For children in mixed communities, one percent of the children are severely malnourished, while there has been a five percent increase up to eight percent for moderately malnourished children compared to February 2011. For children in resident communities, the situation has improved from February 2011, and two percent are now severely malnourished and 11 percent moderately malnourished.

4. Child Health and Dietary Diversity

Analysis of the dietary diversity of children between 6-23 months of age, showed that there has been an improvement in the situation of for IDP children with 50 percent of them consuming four or more food groups.

For children in mixed communities, there has been a dramatic increase in the percentage of children who consume less than four food groups from six percent in February 2011 to 56 percent in May 2011.

The situation for children in resident communities is stable with 64 percent consuming less than four food groups. This indicates that a high proportion of children in all community groups do not receive adequate nutrients required for growth.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**
- A total of 546 households were interviewed
- 29 percent were female headed households
- Average household size was 6.7 persons

Residents status:
- 34 percent IDPs in camps
- 25 percent IDPs outside camps
- 39 percent residents
- 1 percent refugees in camp
5. Food Assistance

In May 2011, food assistance is only provided to camp IDPs and mixed communities. Resident communities fall under the seasonal support which ceased in October 2010 due to the reasonably improved harvest in the last season. In the past, seasonal support was provided to all rural residents, however, in 2011 with the improvement of many of the conflict related issues WFP will provide targeted food assistance to the most vulnerable households in rural areas. Seasonal support for relatively vulnerable localities will start in June while the majority of locations will start in July 2011.

In May 2011, 40 percent of IDP households reported selling of food assistance with only one percent of the surveyed households within the mixed communities. The main reasons for the selling of food assistance included purchase of other food items (16.9 percent) and firewood/fuel (8.3 percent).

6. Who Are the Food Insecure?

A total of 29 percent of interviewed households were female headed household. Gender of the household head was clearly linked to the food security situation for all community types. Within the IDPs category, 46 percent of the female headed households are severely food insecure, compared to 20 percent of male headed households. Furthermore, 19 percent of the female headed households are food secure, compared to 39 percent of male headed households. As the camp IDPs are heavily relying on wage labour, the number of adult working members is of significance and the female headed households are likely to have less able bodied members in the working age.
Within the mixed communities, 22 percent of the female headed households are severely food insecure, compared to two percent of the male headed households. Similar to the camp IDPs, the IDPs within the mixed communities are also dependent on casual work opportunities which largely depend on the number of able bodies in the household. Furthermore, 63 percent of the male headed and 34 percent of the female headed households are food secure. The trend is similar for the resident communities. The employment status of the household head is also clearly linked to the food security situation and for all the community types, households where the head of household is working are more food secure compared to households where the head of the household is unemployed. For IDPs, this trend is very clear, where 23 percent of the employed households are severely food insecure compared to 72 percent of the unemployed. Furthermore, 37 percent of the employed households are food secure, compared to nine percent for the unemployed.

In both mixed and resident communities there is a clear indication that households where the head of household is educated are more food secure compared to households where the household head is unemployed. For mixed communities, 15 percent of the uneducated households are severely food insecure, compared to zero percent of the household where the household head has a higher education degree. Furthermore, 35 percent of households with an uneducated head of households are food secure while 100 percent of the households where the household head has a higher education degree are food secure.

Resident communities have a similar trend with 17 percent of households with an uneducated head of household are severely food insecure, compared to seven percent for households where the household head has a university degree. Furthermore, 22 percent of households with an uneducated head of household are food secure compared to 73 percent of the households where the household head has a university degree.

Having disabled members in the household has an impact on the food security situation. In North Darfur, 22 percent of the households with disabled members are severely food insecure compared to 16 percent of households without disabled members.