Executive Summary:

- WFP carried out data collection jointly with the state ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources in West and Central Darfur states. The exercise was conducted between May and June 2012, which is the start of the lean season.
- The food security situation of IDPs, mixed communities and refugees has deteriorated compared to the same period in 2010 and 2011, mainly due to poor purchasing power of these groups as a result of the increase in commodity prices in the minimum healthy food basket (MHFB). The situation remained relatively stable for resident communities compared to May 2010 and 2011, however, the situation for DPs, refugees and mixed communities remained similar to that reported in February 2012.
- In May 2012, the food consumption has deteriorated for IDPs, mixed communities and refugees compared to May 2010 and 2011. There is a considerable shift from households in the acceptable food consumption group the to borderline and poor consumption groups. However, it is of significance to note that data collection was carried out during the peak of the hunger season, when dietary diversity is expected to decrease. Compared to February 2012, the food consumption situation has slightly improved for IDPs, mixed communities and refugees.
- The price of the MHFB has increased by 27 and 66 percent compared to February 2012 and May 2011 respectively. This is mainly attributed to the increase in the prices of cereals, vegetable oil, meat (cow and goat), dry vegetables and sugar.
- The increase in the price of MHFB has considerably affected the purchasing power of all community groups; among IDP and refugee groups around 45 percent of the surveyed households cannot afford to purchase one food basket; around 28 and 11 percent of mixed and resident community households respectively cannot meet the cost of one MHFB.
- Wage labour continued to be the most important source of income for IDPs, mixed communities and refugees. It contributes to 23 percent of IDPs’ total income; 28 percent of mixed communities’ income; and 67 percent of refugees’ income. Sale of crops contributes with 27 percent of the total income of resident communities.
- The proportion of children who did not consume the essential four food groups remained similar among IDPs and mixed communities, but has increased among refugees and resident communities, compared to May 2011. Findings indicate that around 60 percent of children in households of IDPs, mixed and resident communities were not provided with the essential four food groups. Among refugees, 87 percent of children had not received the essential four food groups in their diet.
- The mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) was measured on 817 children of the age between 6 and 59 months and indicates that 10 percent of children among all population groups are moderately malnourished. The percentage of severely malnourished children among residents and mixed communities is around three percent, while it is one percent among IDPs. In comparison to May 2011, severe malnourishment rates have slightly increased among IDPs, mixed and resident communities, while it has slightly decreased among refugees.
1. FOOD SECURITY

The overall food security situation varied among the different population groups in West and Central Darfur states. The food security situation has deteriorated among IDPs and refugees, as 20 percent of the surveyed households are found to be food insecure. The decline in the food security situation is attributed to the deterioration in household dietary diversity combined with an increase in prices of essential food items, hence impacting the cost of the MHFB. The food security situation for residents, however, has improved compared to that reported at the same period last year, while it remained similar to that of May 2010. Diversified income sources as well as adequate food consumption score were key factors leading to the stability of the food security situation of resident communities.

The food security situation for IDPs and resident communities remained similar to that reported in the last FSMS round conducted in February 2012. The situation has improved for mixed communities, while it deteriorated for refugees. The deterioration of food security among refugee groups is mainly attributed to limited income opportunities.

A. Market situation

At the start of the lean season (May/June) cereal prices have approximately doubled compared to last year’s prices, mainly due to poor cereal production in the previous season.

Sorghum prices in El Geneina market are 29 percent higher compared to prices reported in February 2012, while prices of other essential food items, such as meat, vegetable oil, dry vegetables (tomatoes) and sugar have considerably increased. This has resulted in an increase in the price of MHFB per capita per day in May 2012 to SDG 2.41 compared to 1.90 reported in February 2012 and 1.45 in May 2011.

The Terms of Trade (TOT) for a sorghum sack purchased per male goat (medium size) sold in El Geneina market has been in favor of livestock owners who can purchase one sack and 12kg of sorghum in exchange for one medium size goat. The TOT just follows the five-year average trend but remains slightly different compared to May 2011.
B. Income Sources

Wage labor (domestic labor, agricultural labor, skilled labor, construction work, etc.) remains the most important source of income in May 2012 for IDPs, refugees and mixed communities. The usual share of income contributed by wage labour to IDP households has decreased. Considerable contributions were recorded from firewood collection, donations and small businesses. Compared to May 2010, contribution to income from firewood collection and small businesses has remained the same.

For resident communities, sale of crops was the most important source of income, contributing with 27 percent, followed by small businesses which contributes by 26 percent while wage labor represents the third source of income contributing with 23 percent to the total household income of resident communities.

Among the mixed communities wage labor contributes 28 percent, an almost similar percentage to May 2010 and 2011. Income generated from small businesses has increased compared to May 2011; however, it remains comparable to May 2010.

Income generated from salaries and donations has increased compared to May 2010 and 2011. Contributions received from donations are mainly remittances from migrant labor as well as sale of food assistance.

Findings indicate that refugees have limited diversity in terms of income sources as compared to other community groups. Wage labor remains the most important income source for refugees, contributing with 67 percent of their income, while donations (gifts, begging, etc) constitute some 10 percent of the total income of a refugee household.
C. Expenditure and Purchasing Power

The proportion of monthly expenditure on food has slightly increased from 64 percent in February 2012 to 69 percent in May 2012. The majority of households’ food expenditure is mainly spent on cereals, meat, sugar, cooking oil and dry vegetables, due to increased prices of these essential food items. Relative expenditure on food by communities groups reflects that refugees spent 80 percent followed by IDPs with 60 percent, resident communities with 55 percent and mixed communities with 50 percent. Compared to findings reported in May 2010 and 2011, expenditure on food items has increased for refugees, IDPs and resident communities, due to high prices and limited income as well as depleted food stocks at household level.

Purchasing Power:

In May 2012, the cost of the minimum healthy food basket is 2.41 SDG/person/day. This is a 27 percent increase compared to February 2012. Moreover, MHFB price has increased by 66 percent in comparison to prices reported in May 2011. The increased cost of the MHFB is due to the increase in the prices of food items mainly cereals, vegetable oil, dry vegetables, sugar and meat (goat and cow). The proportion of households which cannot afford the cost of the MHFB has increased among IDPs and refugees compared to May 2010 and 2011, while the proportion of households which can afford more than two MHFBs has decreased. The proportion of households that can meet the cost of one to two MHFBs has remained similar to May 2010 and 2011 for refugees. However, the proportion has increased for IDPs compared to May 2010 and remains similar to May 2011.

The percentage of households among IDPs, mixed and resident communities which can afford more than double the cost of MHFB has decreased from 11 to 6 percent. A decrease from 29 to 26 percent and from 50 to 30 percent was reported among mixed and resident communities respectively. Income opportunities and food prices have improved in February, the post-harvest period, compared to those reported in the lean season (May-June). Hence, the substantial increase in MHFB prices compounded by poor income opportunities have negatively impacted households. The purchasing power among the resident communities remain relatively similar to May 2011 with approximately one third of households capable of affording more than two MHFBs. However, the household proportion has decreased compared to May 2010.
**D. Food Consumption**

Food consumption is categorized as poor, borderline and acceptable based on the variety and frequency of different food items consumed by the interviewed households in seven days, prior to the FSMS data collection.

The overall food consumption situation has deteriorated among all population groups. One of the reasons for this deterioration is the high prices of all food commodities. The proportion of IDP households with a borderline food consumption has increased to 50 percent from 8 and 17 percent reported in May 2010 and May 2011 respectively. Among IDP groups, four percent of the households now have a poor food consumption.

The proportion of refugee households with a borderline food consumption has drastically increased to 57 percent from 7 percent reported in May 2010 and 25 percent in May 2011. Refugees were found to rely mainly on food assistance. A break in WFP food pipeline resulted in reducing individual ration size to 205 gram instead of 355 grams /person /day (667 kcal/p/day). This was exacerbated by limited income opportunities in areas where refugee camps are located.

Among the mixed communities, some 40 percent of the households fall within the borderline category. This is considered a large increase compared to 10 percent reported in May 2010 and 16 percent in May 2011.

The percentage of IDPs and mixed communities households with an acceptable food consumption has increased from 37 percent to 46 percent and from 55 percent to 59 percent respectively in May 2012, compared to February 2012.

A minor increase was also recorded in the proportion of IDP households with poor food consumption; from two percent in February 2012 to four percent in May 2012. The decrease was observed in proportions of resident and refugee households that have an acceptable food consumption; residents from 85 percent to 79 percent; refugees from 46 percent to 43 percent.
2. Households’ responses to food shortages (coping)

The proportion of households which adopted coping strategies upon facing shortages in food or cash (to purchase food) has considerably increased within IDP and refugee communities, compared to May 2010 and 2011.

The proportion of IDPs who faced food shortages and adopted coping strategies has increased from 21 percent in May 2010 and 43 percent in May 2011 to 57 percent in May 2012. Among those households which adopted coping strategies, the majority (40 percent) relied on less preferred food or less expensive food items and have borrowed food or cash to purchase food items.

The proportion of mixed communities which faced food shortages has increased to 30 percent from 9 percent reported in May 2010; however, the situation remained similar to May 2011 as around one third of households faced food shortage. Among the households which adopted coping strategies, some 23 percent relied on less preferred food or less expensive food while 7 percent borrowed food or cash to purchase food.

Refugees have the highest proportion of households which faced food shortages (78 percent). This represents a large increase compared to 13 percent reported in May 2010 and 53 percent in May 2011. The increase comes as a result of limited income opportunities. The majority of households (56 percent) borrowed food or cash to purchase food items.

Among resident communities, the proportion of households which faced shortages in food or in cash to purchase food items has increased in May 2010 from 6 percent to 21 percent; however, the percentage remains similar to that reported in May 2011. Around 19 percent of households which faced food shortage indicated that they borrowed food or money, relied on less preferred or less expensive foods.

3. Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC)

The Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) was measured for 817 children (6-59 months) within the 22 visited locations in West and Central Darfur. The results indicate that the proportion of severely malnourished children is approximately 3 percent for mixed and resident communities, while the proportion of moderately malnourished children is approximately 10 percent among all population groups. The situation remained relatively similar to May 2011.
4. Child Health and Dietary Diversity

This section reflects information on dietary diversity of children (6-23 months) within a recall period of 24 hours. Data was collected from 269 children in visited locations in West and Central Darfur states.

Findings indicate that around 60 percent of children in households of IDPs, mixed and resident communities were not provided with the essential four food groups (grains, legumes, proteins and vitamin A rich vegetables and fruits) 24 hours prior to data collection. This percentage remains the same as that reported in 2011. Among refugees, 87 percent of children had not received the essential four food groups in their diet, which is considered a high percentage compared to May 2011.

5. Food Assistance

This section reports information on receipt and utilization of food assistance within a recall period of three months. All IDPs in camps as well as refugees receive food assistance through regular food distributions on a monthly basis at a standard ration of 310 gram/per person/per day, except for May 2012 when IDPs received 180 gram/per person/per day due to pipeline challenges. Among the mixed communities, only two locations of Um Dokhon and Delej receive regular food distributions on a monthly basis at a standard ration of 310 gram/per person/per day with the exception of May 2012. Resident communities receive seasonal support, usually from May/June to October every year. The proportion of households who reported selling food assistance has decreased among IDPs to 5 percent from 14 percent and 8 percent in May 2010 and May 2011 respectively. In comparison to February 2012, this proportion has slightly decreased from 7 to 5 percent. This is mainly due to high food prices as well as limited income sources. Refugee households who sell food assistance have relatively decreased to 10 percent from 15 percent in May 2010, a percentage similar to that reported in May 2011. However, in comparison to February 2012, a relative increase was reported in the proportion of refugee households selling food assistance.

6. Who Are the Food Insecure?

For IDPs, male headed households represent 24 percent of the food insecure compared to 28 percent food insecure female headed households. Around 40 percent of IDP (female and male headed) households are vulnerable to food insecurity. IDPs rely on food assistance, complemented by engaging in wage labor. Some 23 percent of female headed households in mixed communities are food insecure compared to 16 percent male headed households. Furthermore, approximately one-third of female and male households are vulnerable to food insecurity. Refugees have the highest percentage (29) of female headed households in the food insecure category compared to 21 percent food insecure male headed households. Among refugees, 29 percent of male headed households are food secure compared to 18 percent of female headed households. The two refugee camps are located in the rural areas of Um Shalaya and Mukjar, where some IDPs from surrounding villages have also settled. This has contributed to limiting work opportunities in these locations which has negatively affected the refugees.

- 20 primary sites visited
- 28 percent of the households assessed are female headed;
- Average household size is 6.8 persons;
- 58.2 percent of the households are IDPs living in camps;
- 24.1 percent resident;
- 15.6 percent IDPs outside camps;
- 2.1 percent returnees.