

East Darfur, Sudan

Food Security Monitoring, May 2014



World Food Programme

Executive Summary

- Data collection for Round 17 of the Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS) was carried out in May 2014 which typically marks the onset of the lean season according to the seasonal calendar of East Darfur state.
- The proportion of children with very low or moderately low mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) measurements (a proxy indicator for malnutrition) has increased amongst children in Mixed communities. The increase is from 8 percent to 40 percent for mixed communities and from 6 percent to 15 percent for children in Resident communities. Results for IDP are relatively stable and better than the other two community types. In-depth assessments are required to verify these preliminary findings.
- A large proportion of surveyed households are food secure with little difference between households in IDP camps, Mixed or Resident communities. Compared to May 2013, the proportion of surveyed households found to be food secure increased for households in IDP communities (from 79 to 88 percent) and Residents (from 67 to 87 percent). A moderate decline in food security is seen among households in Mixed communities (from 94 to 85 percent).
- The frequency and diversity of food consumption for most households, across the community types, is acceptable. Only 7 percent of the IDP households had poor food consumption, compared to 9 percent in May 2013. Generally, a greater proportion of households had acceptable food consumption compared to May 2013, especially among the IDP and Resident communities.
- The cost of the local food basket (LFB) in May 2014 is 4.00 SDG (per person per day), a decrease from 4.65 compared to May 2013. The decrease in the cost of the food basket is a result of lower prices of fresh milk, beef and onion. However, the price of sorghum *feterita* in Ed Daein market has increased sharply compared to the same period last year and remains above the five years average.
- The purchasing power for households from all community types has improved, but 29 percent of IDP households can still not afford one minimum food basket.
- Despite improvements on many food security related indicators, the proportion of households who report that they face challenges accessing enough food is 45 for IDPs, 71 percent for Mixed and 60 percent for Resident communities. Food shortage, and the severity of the strategies households use to cope with shortage, has deteriorated for households in Mixed and Resident communities compared the same period last year.
- The main livelihood activities for IDPs in camps are crop sales, wage labour, transfers, small business and salaried work, in a pattern similar to that of May 2013. IDPs report having more diversified income sources compared to households in other communities. Sale of crops, wage labour and salaried work continue to be the main livelihood activities for households in Mixed communities. For Resident households the main livelihood activity is crop sales, followed by wage labour and small business.

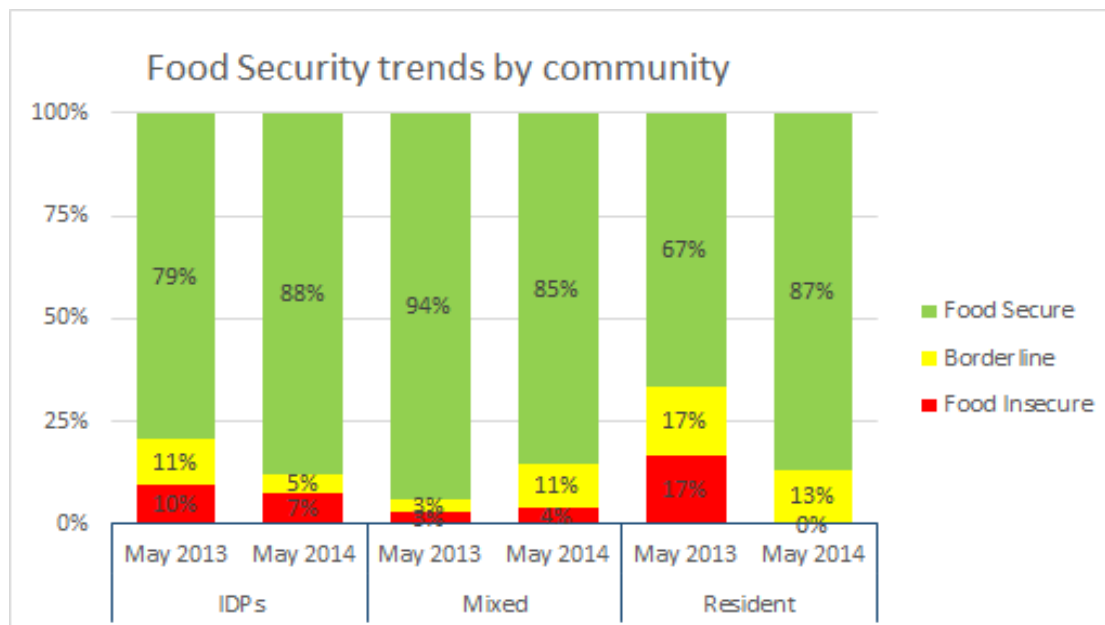
Characteristics of the Sample

- Fifteen sites were visited. A total of 315 households were interviewed.
- Female headed households constituted 35 percent of the sample. Average household size was 7 persons.
- Seventeen percent of the surveyed households were IDPs living in camps, 15 percent were IDPs outside camps, 8 percent were residents, and 29 percent were returnees.

Food Security

In May 2014, the food security situation of households in IDP and Resident communities has slightly improved compared to May 2013 with fewer IDPs households in the food insecure and borderline categories. Improvements in purchasing power appears to be one key driver of the improved food security situation. Other important factors include more regular food distribution in camps, for the IDPs, and access to own production, for the residents. IDPs in Elneem camp are also engaged in more

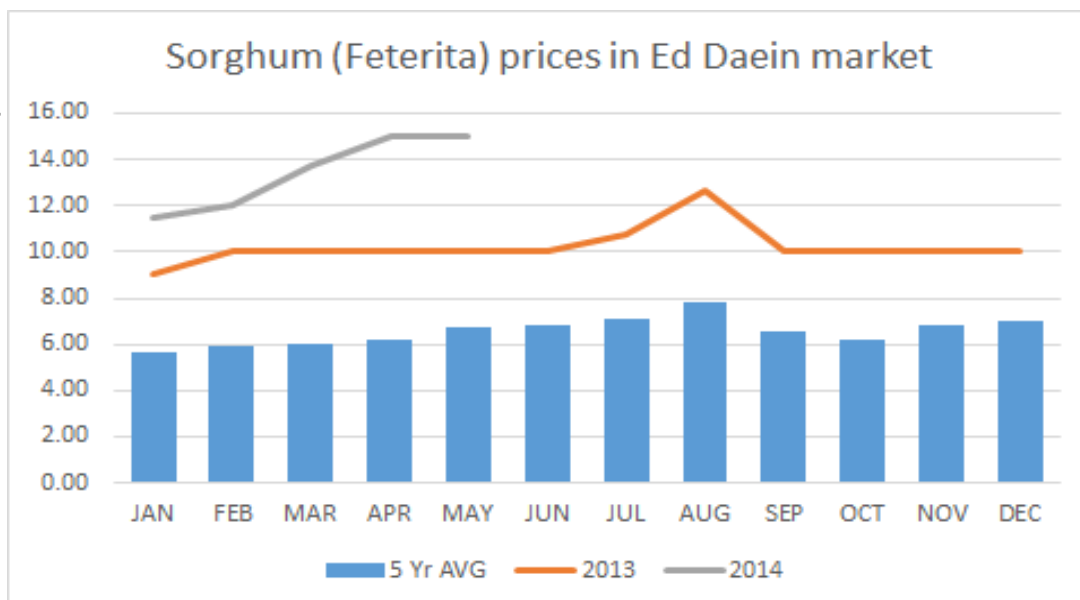
livelihood activities, with more household members working in the markets and farms as labourers. The food security situation of households in Mixed communities has deteriorated slightly compared to May 2013.



Market Situation

The price of sorghum in Ed Daein market is extremely high, both compared to same time last year and compared to the five years average. High prices are attributed to the poor harvest in the last season and high inflation. The demand for sorghum (*fetereta*) is relatively high in East Darfur, compared to South Darfur, due to the presence of large livestock herds. Vast areas of East Darfur state fall under the western agro-pastoral groundnut and millet livelihood zone, thus farmers in East Darfur conventionally concentrate more on planting groundnuts as the main cash crop rather than cereals and other food crops. Many sell their cash crops in the market and buy millet and sorghum to cover food demands. Groundnut cultivation is very prominent and the production is refined in local mills in Ed Daen as well as in Omdurman. Groundnut prices in May 2014 have had an upward trend following the poor harvest of the 2013/14 season.

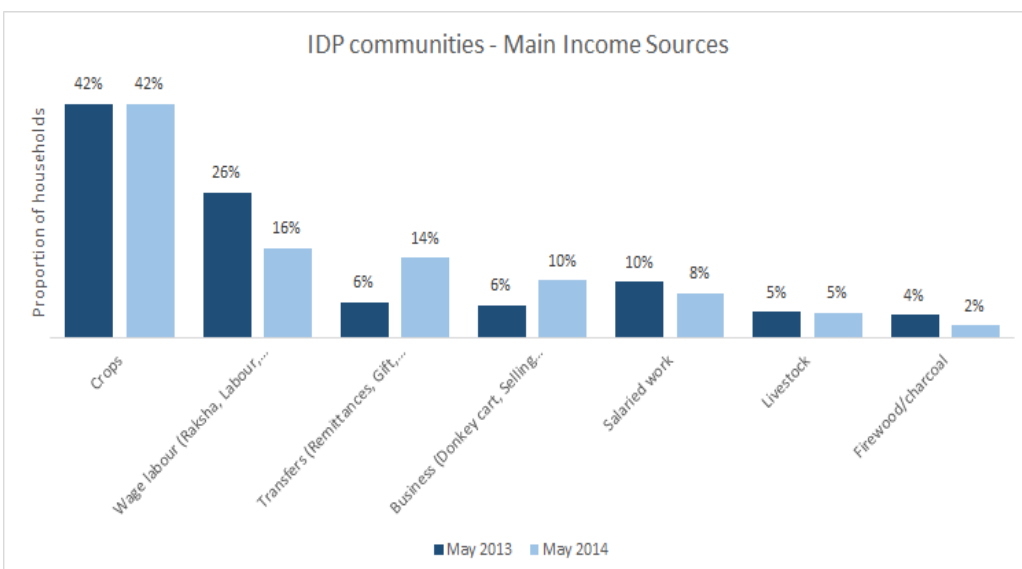
Tribal conflicts in the eastern parts of the state have had adverse effects on the dynamics of Ed-daen market since major supply routes between Khartoum state and East Darfur state have been severely affected.



Livelihood activities

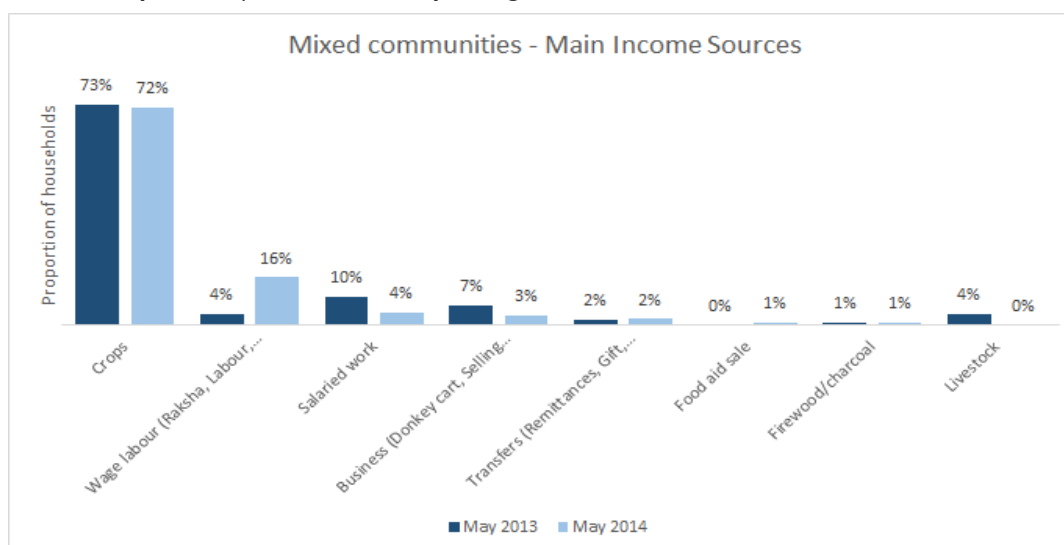
The main livelihood activities for IDPs in May 2014 were crop sales, wage labour, transfers, small business, salaried work and livestock. IDP households have more diversified income sources

compared to households in other communities. Crop sales remained the most predominant livelihood for IDPs as there is an improvement in access to land. The percentage relying on wage labour (IDPs represent a considerable proportion of the state's farming labour



force) has decreased while reliance on transfers has increased, compared to May 2013.

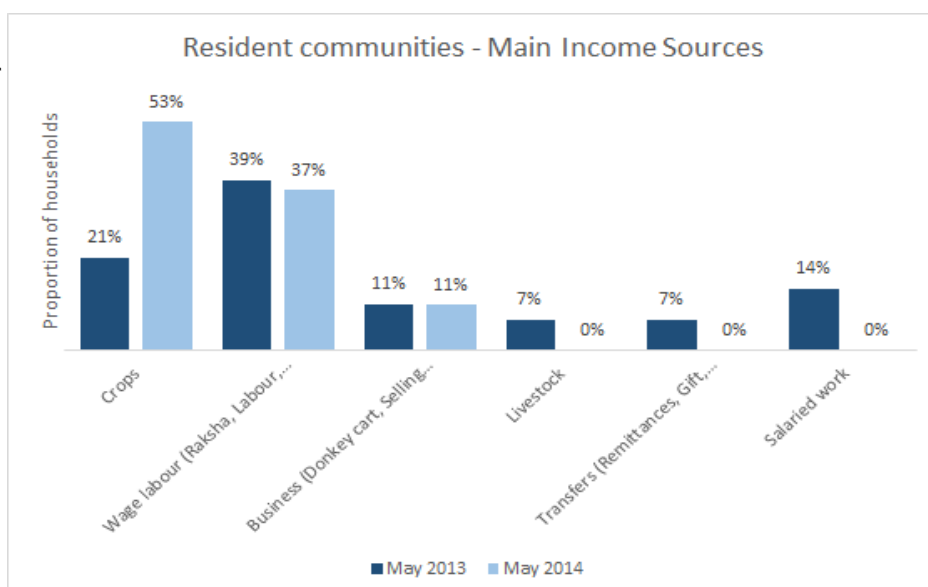
The most important livelihood activity for households in Mixed communities was crops sales (same as in May 2013), followed by wage labour, salaried work, small business and transfers. The



households in Mixed communities enjoy less diversified livelihood activities compared to the other community types, due to their heavy reliance on the sale of crops.

Among Resident communities, crop sales is the most important livelihood activities for

households followed by wage labour and small business. A reduction of the diversity of livelihood sources is observed as many rely significantly on crop sales. High crop prices may have caused farmers to sell more of their production. Farmers in East Darfur state have better access to land in comparison with South Darfur farmers.



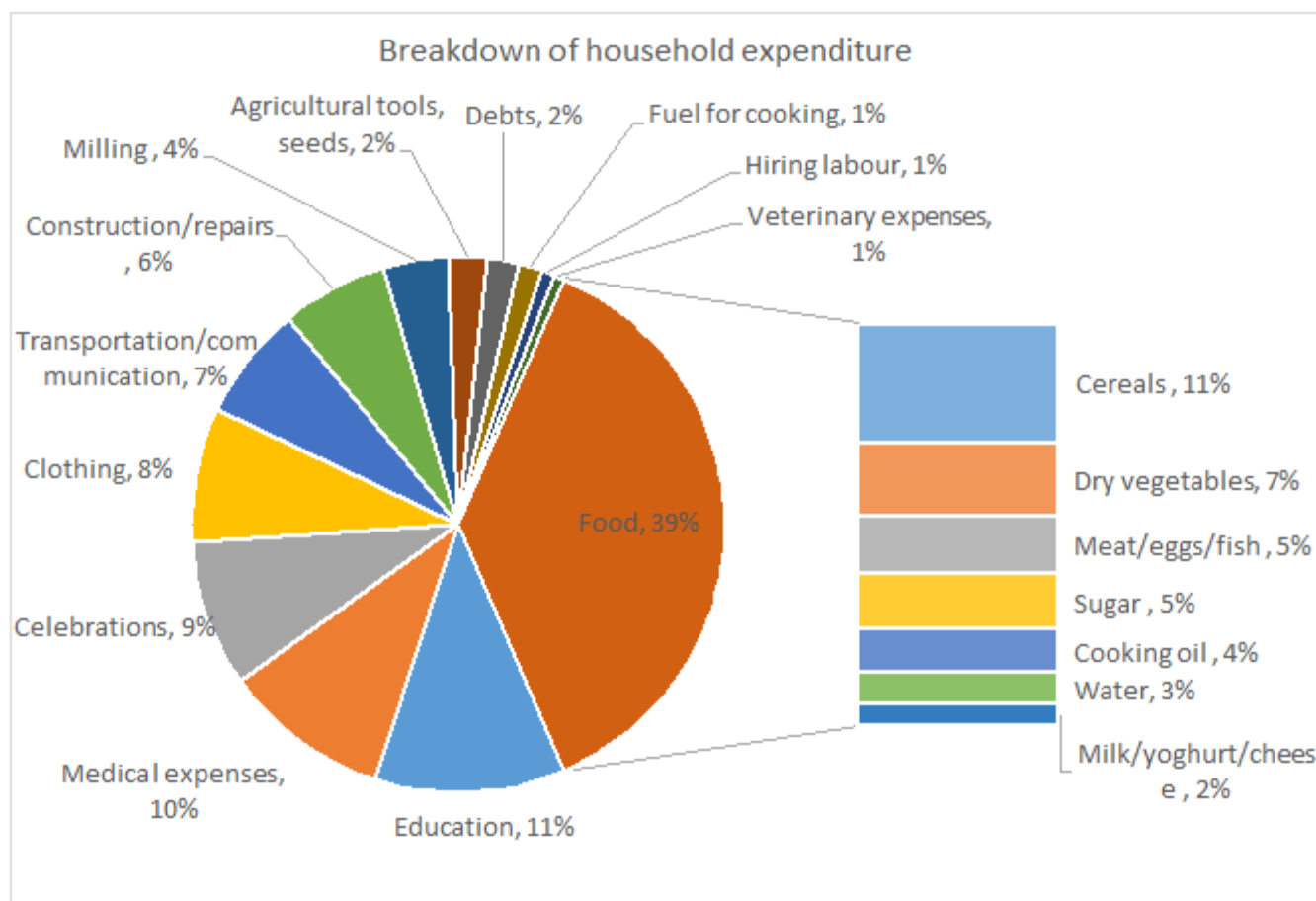
Expenditure

On average, households allocated 39 percent of total monthly expenditure for food. The proportion of expenditure spent on food is used as a proxy measurement of purchasing power: a large proportion can indicate a diminished ability of households to meet essential household needs.

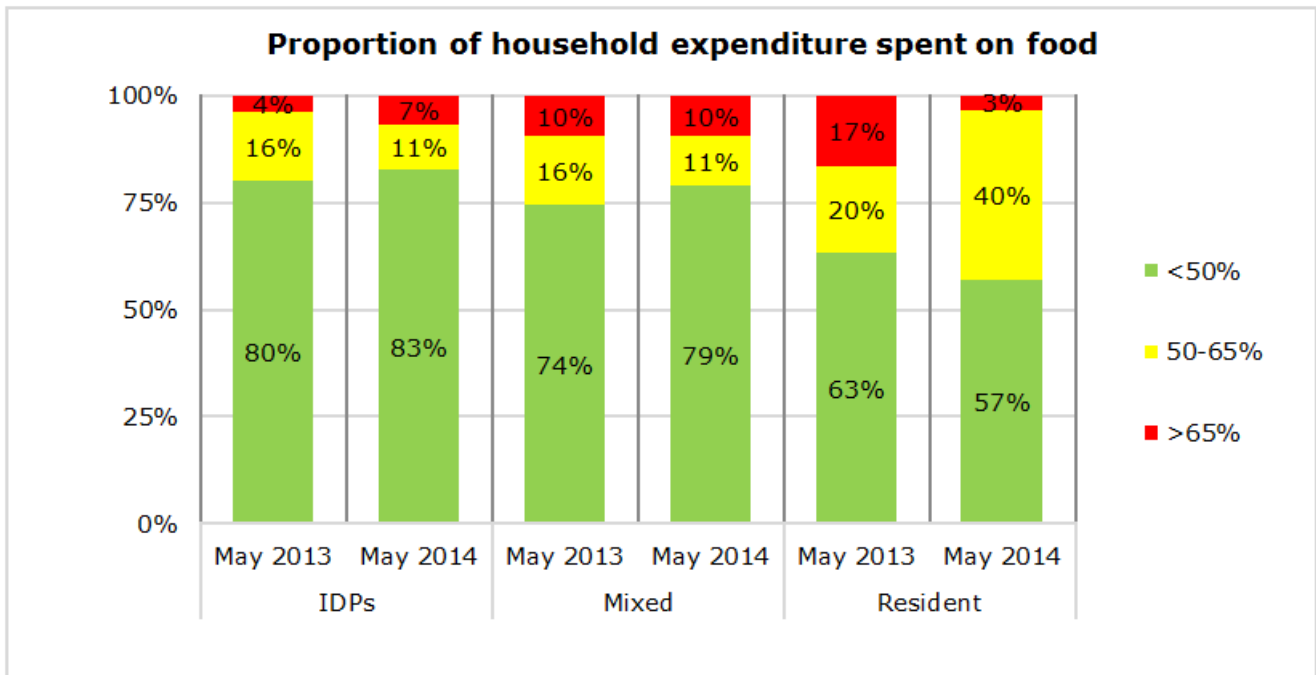
In this round, the share of total monthly expenditure for food was lower compared to the same time last year, possibly indicating less economic stress.

The most important food items were cereals (11 percent of total), dry vegetables (7 percent), meat and sugar (both five percent), cooking oil (4 percent), water (3 percent), and milk (2 percent).

The main household expenditure on non-food items was for education (11 percent), followed by health care (10 percent), celebrations/family events (9 percent), clothing (8 percent), transportation/communication (7 percent), construction repairs (6 percent), and milling (4 percent). The low amount allocated to purchase of agricultural inputs is surprising since so many of the household rely on farming for their livelihoods. This could also indicate that they received inputs from government, NGOs or through FAO's livelihood support programmes.



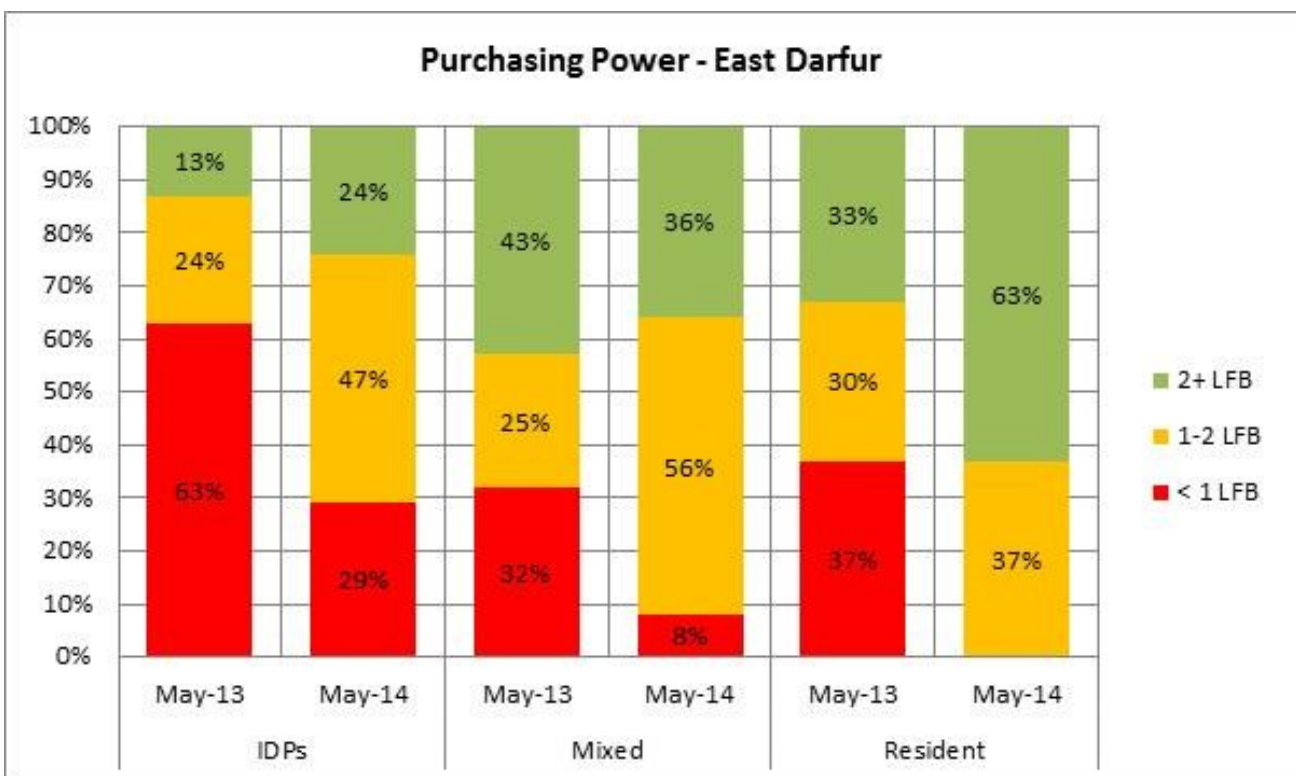
The proportion of total monthly expenditure for food has remained relatively stable compared to the same period last year. The proportion of households, especially in the IDP camps and in mixed communities, that is forced by low income and high prices to spend more than 65 percent of their total expenditure on food is relatively small, and shank among resident communities compared to same time last year.



Purchasing Power

The cost of the local food basket (LFB) was 4.00 SDG (per person, per day) in May 2014, below what it was in May 2013 (4.65 SDG). The 14 percent decrease is due to a shift among many households away from purchasing dried milk to buying less expensive fresh milk, and a reduction in the price of onion and cow meat. However, the prices of other major food basket items, such as dry vegetables, oil, sugar and sorghum, have increased following a national food price hike that hit the region since 2012. On balance though, household purchasing power has improved considerably across all community types.

The proportion of IDP and Mixed households that cannot afford the cost of one LFB are some 29 and 9 percent, respectively. Households from Resident communities have stronger purchasing power than the others. IDP households have a relatively higher proportion of households who cannot afford the cost of one MFB. Generally, households from Mixed and Resident communities are much better than the IDPs in terms of purchasing power.

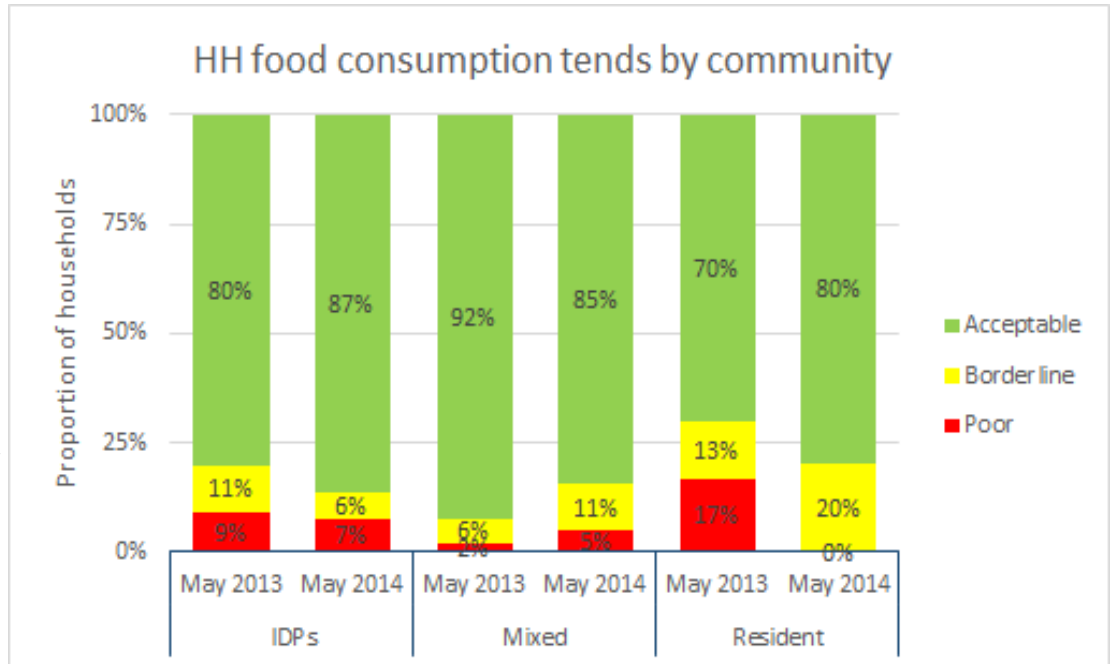


Household Food Consumption

Research has shown that dietary diversity and frequency are a good proxy measure of food consumption and food security at household level. Food consumption data was collected and analysed using the standard WFP methodology: the variety and frequency of different foods and food groups consumed over a 7-day recall period was recorded to calculate a weighted Food Consumption Score (FCS). Weights were based on the nutritional importance of the foods. Households were then classified as having either 'poor', 'borderline' or 'acceptable' consumption based on the analysis of the data.

The vast majority of households across all community types have acceptable food consumption. Only 7 percent of IDP households have poor food consumption. Household consumption is similar to last year except for those in Resident

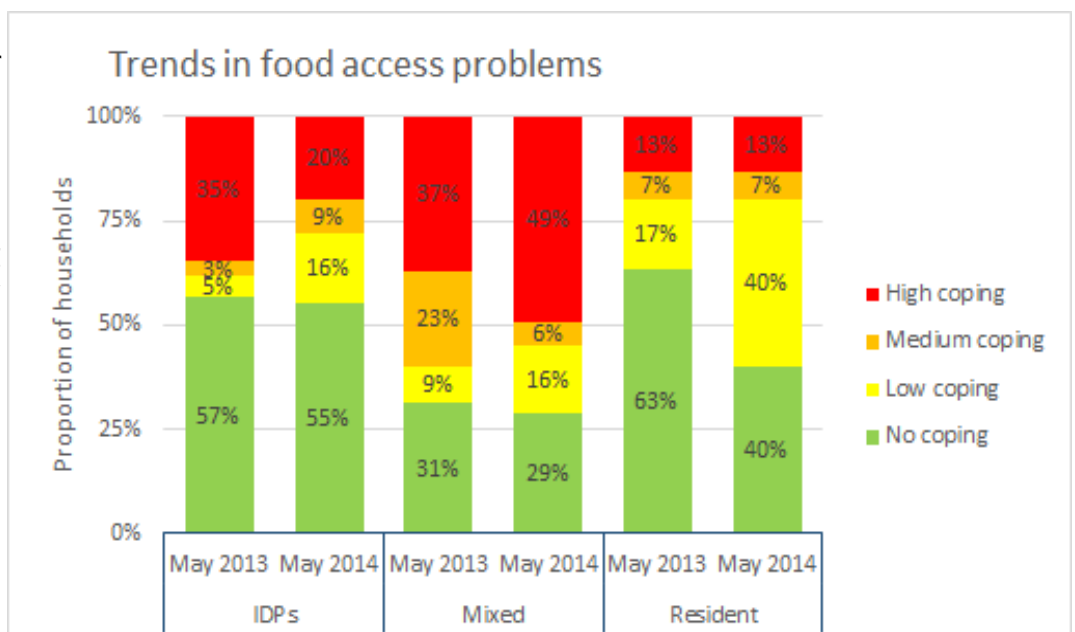
communities where there is some improvement, possibly due to increased household food production and improved purchasing power. Most households source the majority of their food from markets.



Coping with Food Insecurity

Many households in Mixed communities reported experiencing problems accessing enough food to meet their needs. Forty-nine percent of households in Mixed communities reported employing severe coping strategies - including limiting portion sizes, restricting adult consumption to allow children to eat and reducing the number of meals - in response to food shortages. These households in Mixed communities have less diverse livelihood activities. Households in IDP and Resident communities report having relatively fewer food access problems; only 20 and 13 percent of households, respectively, report using severe coping strategies.

The severity of coping strategies used by households in Mixed and Resident communities increased moderately compared to last year. A moderate improvement is seen among households in IDP communities.



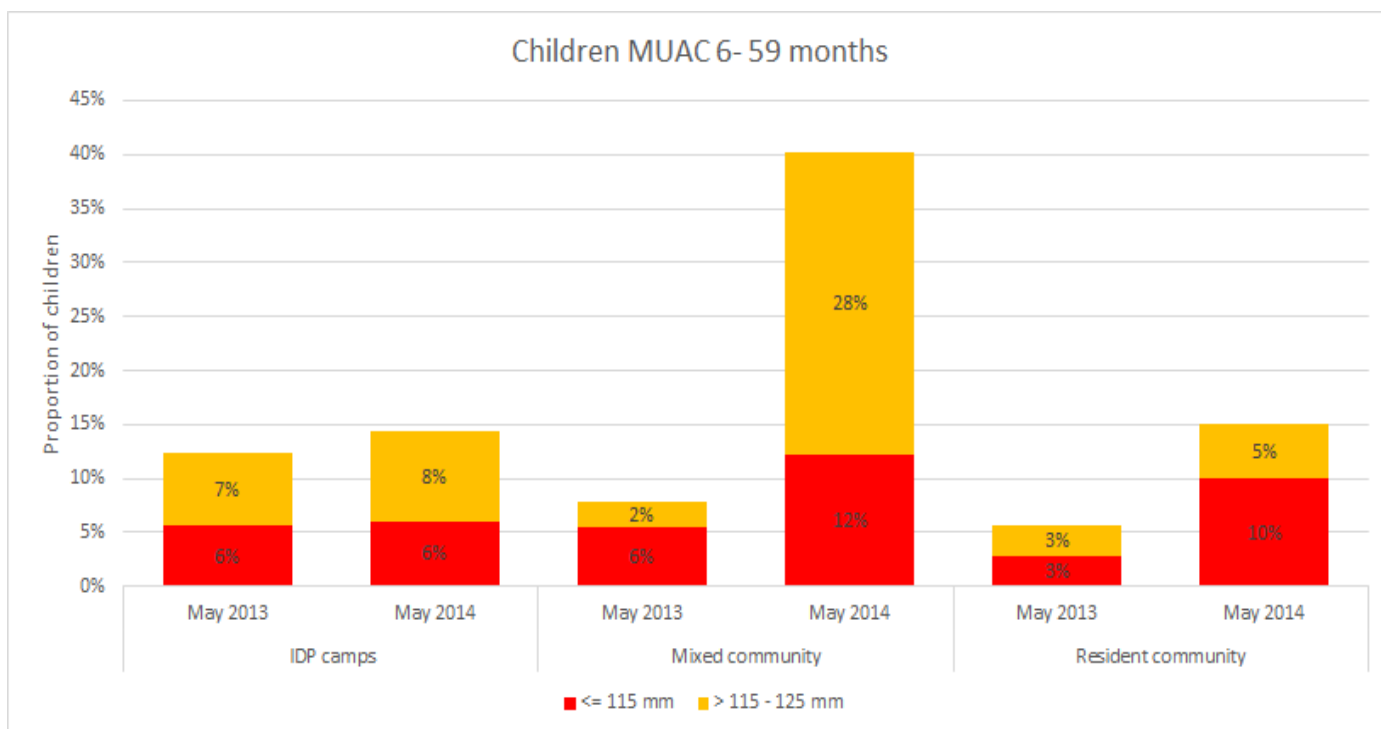
Child Nutrition

The mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) of all children aged 6-59 months in surveyed households was measured and classified as very low (below 115mm, a proxy for severe acute malnutrition), moderately low (between 115 and 125mm, a proxy indicator for moderate acute malnutrition), and normal. Combined, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and moderate acute malnutrition (MAM), are known as global acute malnutrition (GAM).

This round of monitoring finds that an extraordinary high proportion of children in mixed communities have very low and moderately low MUAC. The increase of proxy-GAM is from 8 percent to 40 percent, far above the emergency threshold (15 percent). Further, in-depth assessments are required to verify these preliminary findings and to determine the cause of the deterioration. Because food intake in May 2014 is comparable to May 2013, it may be that other factors beyond dietary frequency and diversity are the main drivers.

MUAC measurements are much better for children in IDP camps and resident communities, where proxy-GAM is 14-15 percent. Children in resident communities are seeing a moderate deterioration in their MUAC levels: the proportion of very low MUAC increased from 3 to 10 percent from last year.

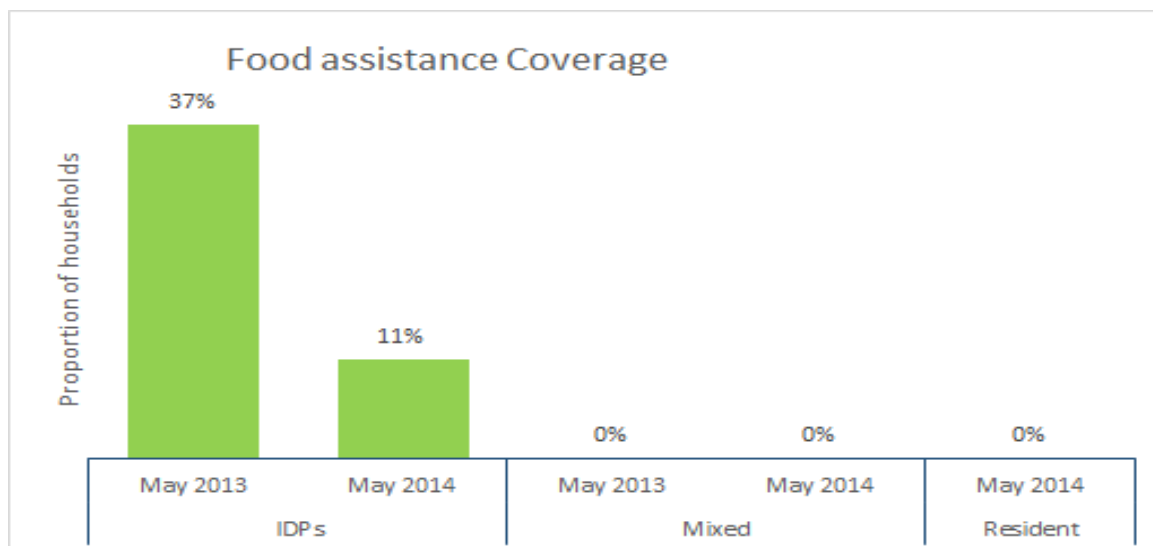
Results should be interpreted with caution, as they are not statistically representative and cannot be generalized for populations beyond the sentinel sites surveyed.



Food Assistance

The proportion of households in IDP camps who reported receiving food assistance in East Darfur was reportedly only 11 percent. The very low figure is due in part to a number of the surveyed IDPs having been removed from the distribution lists after the last beneficiary verification exercise in 2012. In addition, a significant number of new arrivals (newly displaced persons entering the camp) were not yet registered or verified.

The resident and mixed households have not received food assistance since the targeted seasonal support has not yet started in during the survey period.



Who are the Food Insecure?

Household livelihood and demographic characteristics were analysed to determine their relation to household food insecurity:

- The gender of the household head: In May 2014, 35 percent of the interviewed households are reportedly female headed households. However, no significant differences are observed in terms of food security status between male headed and female headed households.
- Educational level of the household head: Households headed by a well educated person is more likely to be food secure. The prevalence of food security for households with no education, only primary education and secondary education is 81, 88 and 96 percent, respectively.
- Livelihood activities: Households engaged in small business and salaried work as their main livelihood activity tend to have higher purchasing power compared to those that rely on crop sales and wage labour.
- IDPs are more likely to be food insecure than households from Mixed or Resident communities, much due to the fact that they are still displaced and have fewer livelihood opportunities, despite better access to land compared to IDPs in other parts of Darfur.