

Central Darfur, Sudan

Food Security Monitoring, November 2014



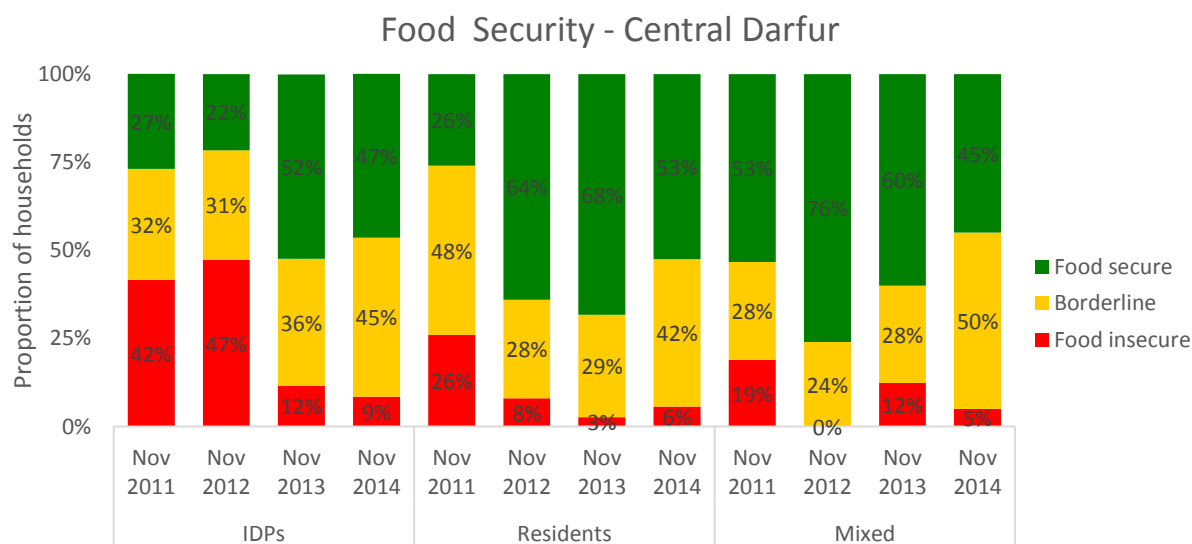
World Food Programme

Executive Summary

- Data collection was conducted in November 2014 from a total of 415 households distributed across 20 sentinel sites in Central Darfur. Community groups covered by the food security monitoring system (FSMS) included IDPs, residents and mixed communities.
- The overall food security situation deteriorated for all community groups in Central Darfur state compared to November 2013. The increase in food prices was the most important factor contributing to the deterioration in food security. The severity of food insecurity was similar for the three community groups.
- Food consumption had deteriorated very slightly for households in all community groups to a point where approximately half of households were found to have acceptable food intake. Mixed communities were slightly better off compared to IDPs and residents.
- The cost of the local food basket (LFB) increased from 4.84 SDG (per capita, per day) in November 2013 to 6.34 SDG in November 2014 – a 31 percent increase. Inflation resulted in a significant deterioration in households' purchasing power among all communities groups from November 2013 to November 2014. Over 65 percent of households across the community types could not afford the cost of one local food basket.
- Surveyed households tended to rely on a diverse set of income sources, including sales of crops and wage labour. The relatively large proportion of households relying on sale of crops indicated improved accessibility to farming activities and production.
- Nearly all IDP households (97 percent) reported having received food assistance in the last three months. The coverage was more extensive compared to the same time in 2013.

Food Security

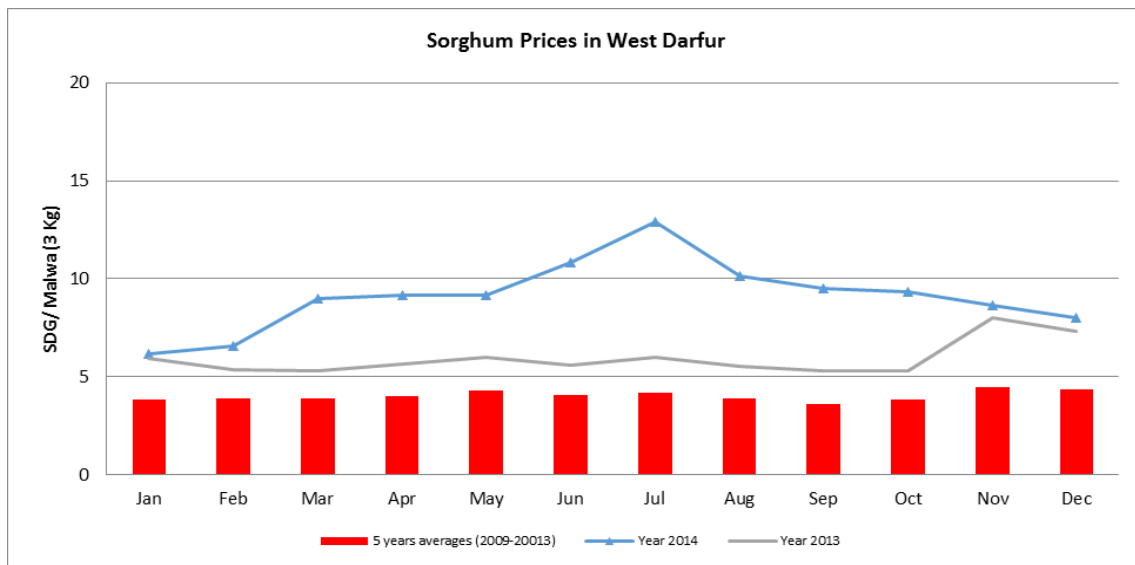
The overall food security situation has deteriorated for all community groups in Central Darfur state compared to November 2013. The deterioration was slight for IDP communities and significant for resident and mixed communities. The severity of food insecurity was similar across community types, with between 45 to 53 percent of households being food secure. The increase in food prices was the most important factor contributing to the deterioration of the food security situation in Central Darfur state.



Markets

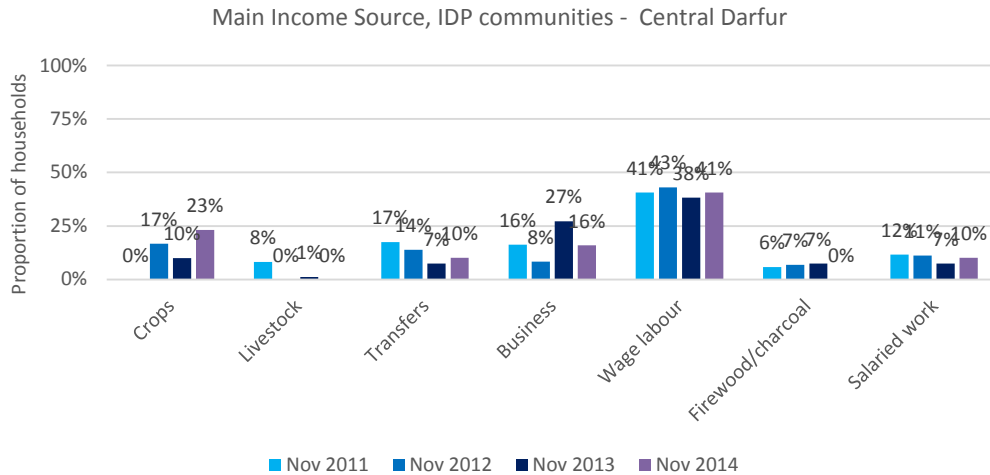
In Zalengei, the prices of essential food items, such as meat, vegetable oil, dry vegetables (tomatoes) and sugar had increased considerably over the last year. This resulted in an increase in the price of the LFB from 4.84 SDG (per capita per day) in November 2013 to 6.34 SDG in November 2014 – an increase of 31 percent, which is above the general rate of inflation. The main prices increases were recorded in dry vegetables and vegetable oil; both items were main components of the household food basket.

For food price trend analysis, Geneina market was used as a proxy for Central Darfur, due to the lack of historical market price information from Zalengei. In November 2014, the sorghum prices in Geneina market were slightly higher compared to November 2013, but almost double the five-year average, largely because of the lingering effects of high inflation. The removal of the oil subsidy in 2013 was a key contributing factor in increasing commodities prices that put inflationary pressure on sorghum prices, through higher costs of agricultural inputs and transportation. Sorghum prices followed a downward trend since the August 2014, when the anticipation of a good agricultural season interrupted a 6 month period of continuous price increases.

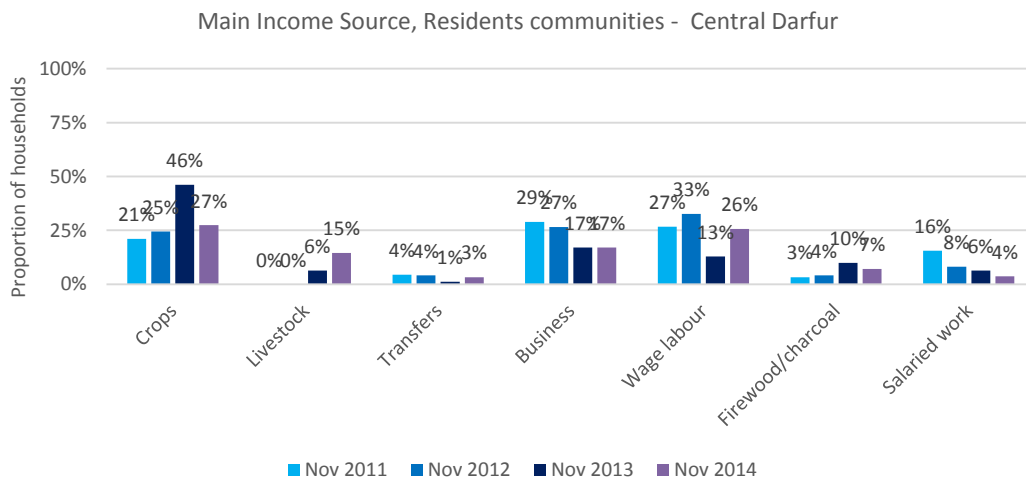


Income Sources

The surveyed IDP communities in Central Darfur tended to rely on a relatively diverse set of income sources that included wage labour, sales of crops, small business, transfer and salaried work. The proportion of IDP households that engaged in sale of crops was relatively high compared to IDPs in others states, indicating that many IDPs in Central Darfur had access to farming lands through seasonal migration back to their places of origin or through renting lands in other areas. Agricultural activities such as agricultural wage labour and sales of crops were the most common income sources among IDPs in November 2014, as a result of the good agricultural season.

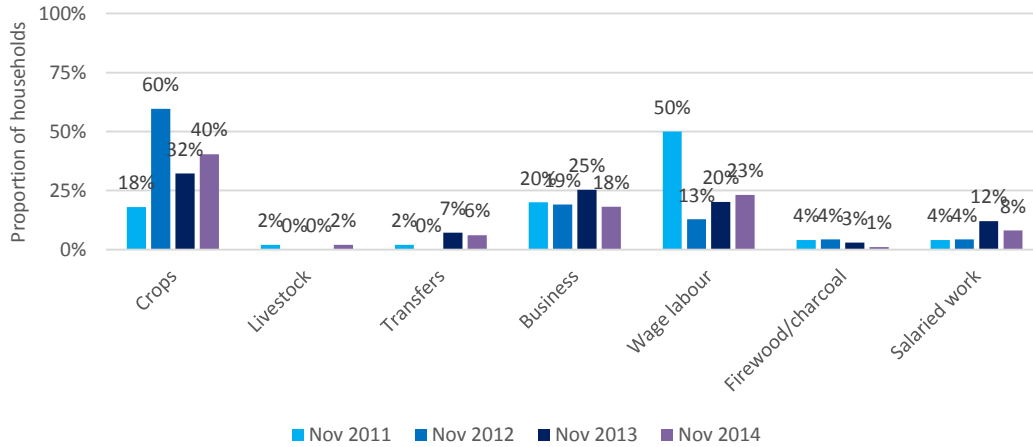


Income generation of resident communities during November 2014 followed a typical harvest period pattern. Sales of crops and livestock products accounted for more than 40 percent of households, illustrating good access to lands. The proportion of households that reported agricultural activities as their main income source grew as a result of the promising rainy season and improvements in the security situation in some parts of the state. That same set of circumstances also increased the opportunities for agricultural job opportunities as seen in the proportion of households engaged in wage labour.



Sales of crops was the main source of income for households in mixed communities. An increase in the proportion of households that indicated sale of crops as their main income sources, from 32 percent in November 2013 to 40 percent in November 2014, may be a result of improvements in the level of access to agricultural land. Small business and wage labour accounted for 18 and 23 percent of households, respectively. Both activities remained important, as in previous years, and helped diversify the income generation profile of mixed communities.

Main Income Source, Mixed communities - Central Darfur

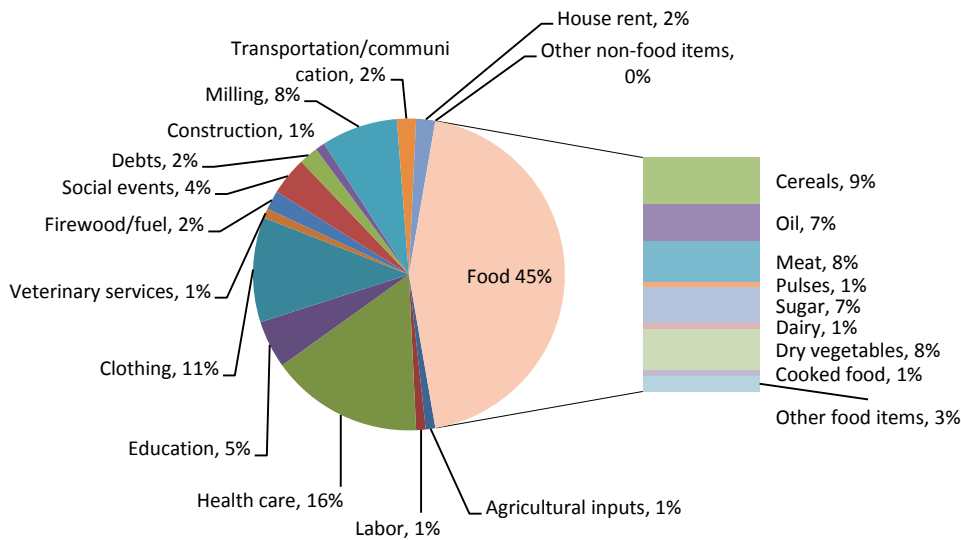


Expenditure

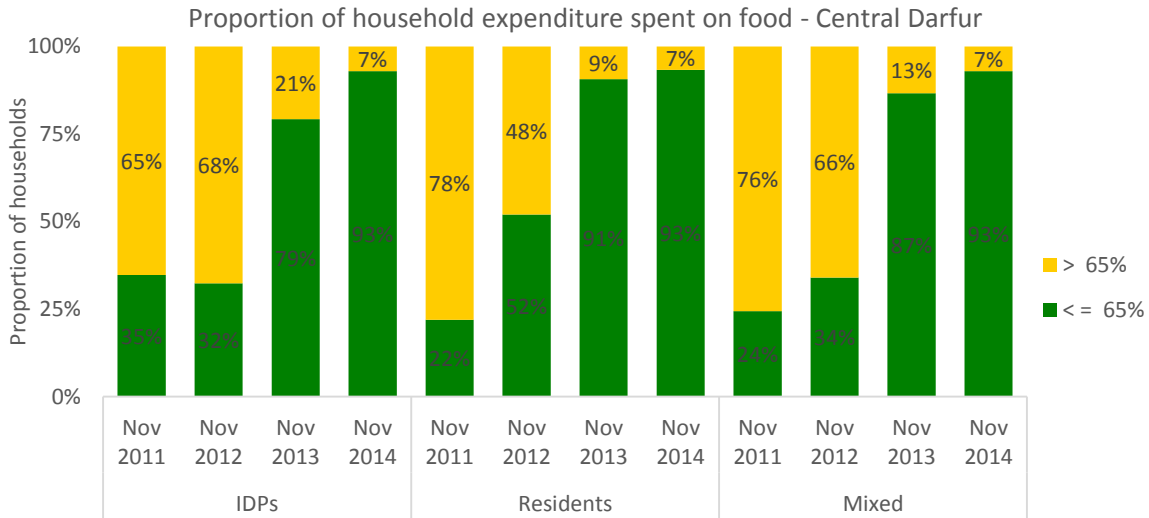
A breakdown of expenditure data revealed that households in Central Darfur spent 45 percent of their total expenditure on food – 6 percentage points less than that of November 2013. While expenditure on cereals, vegetable oil and pulses remained unchanged, households reduced their spending on meat, dairy and dry vegetables possibly due to availability from own production.

The most important non-food expenses were health care (partly due to the prevalence of malaria during rainy season), clothing and education.

Breakdown of household expenditures - Central Darfur

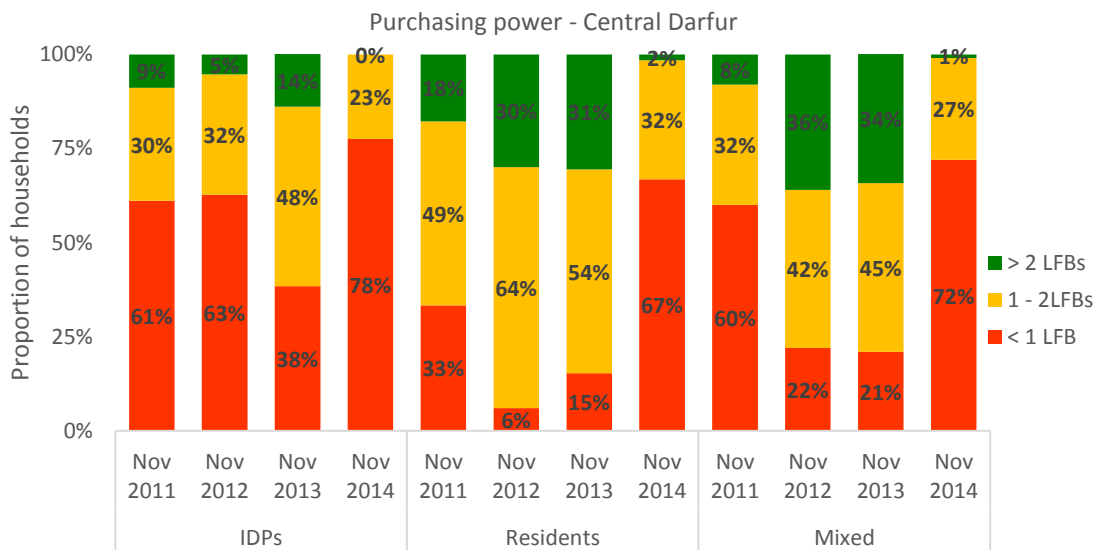


The percentage of households who spent more than 65 percent of their expenditure on food (a threshold above which households are more likely to experience economic stress) decreased for all community groups in November 2014. Access to food sources from own production, gathering and food assistance limited the extent to which households were required to rely on market purchase for their food needs.



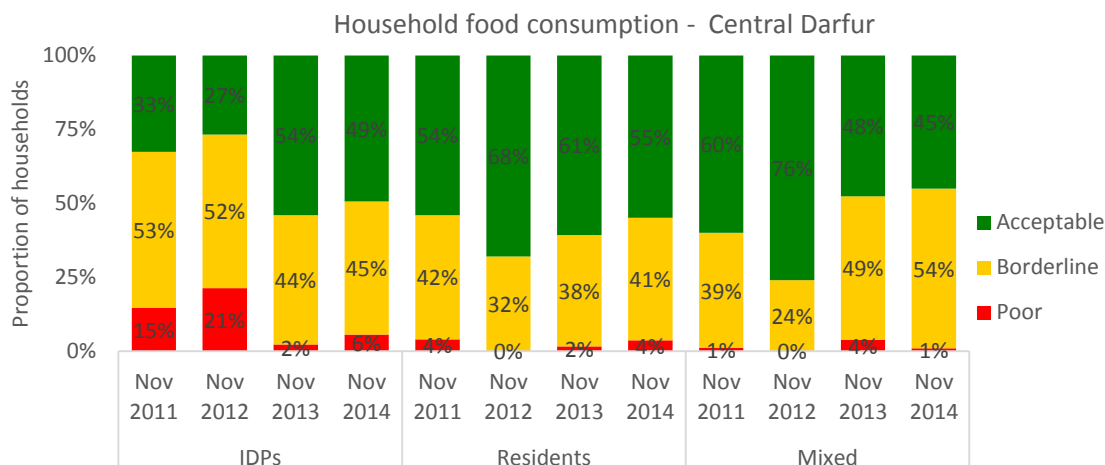
Purchasing Power

The purchasing of the all residential categories deteriorated dramatically from November 2013 to November 2014. The 31 percent increase in the cost of the local food basket from November 2013 to November 2014 left 70 percent of surveyed households unable to afford to buy all their food needs from the market (compared to approximately 25 percent in November 2013). Differences in purchasing power between community groups were small.



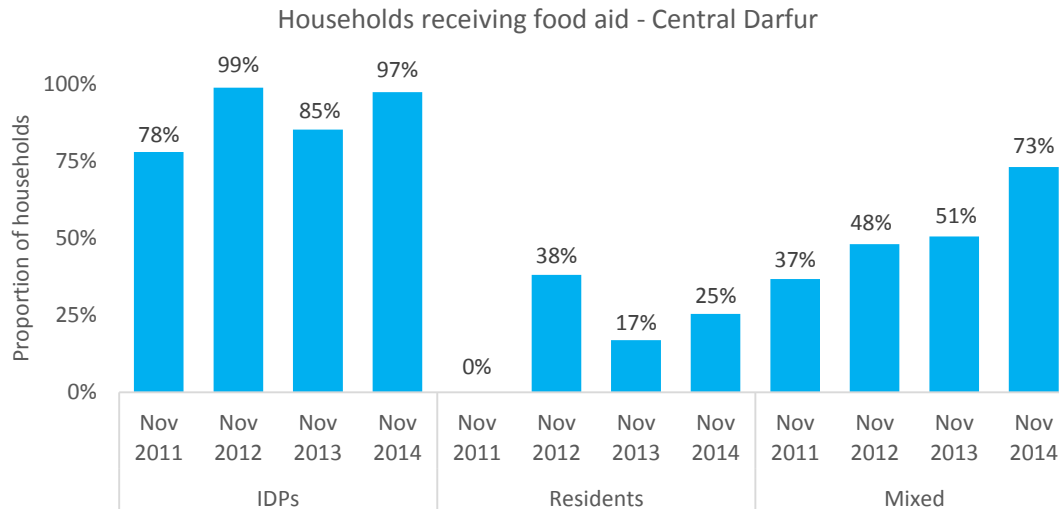
Food Consumption

In November 2014, the frequency and diversity of food consumption deteriorated very slightly for all community groups, compared to 2013. Similar to last year, 52 percent of households were found to have acceptable diets. No significant differences were seen between community types. It would seem that the serious erosion of purchasing power was offset by alleviated food access during the good harvest season.



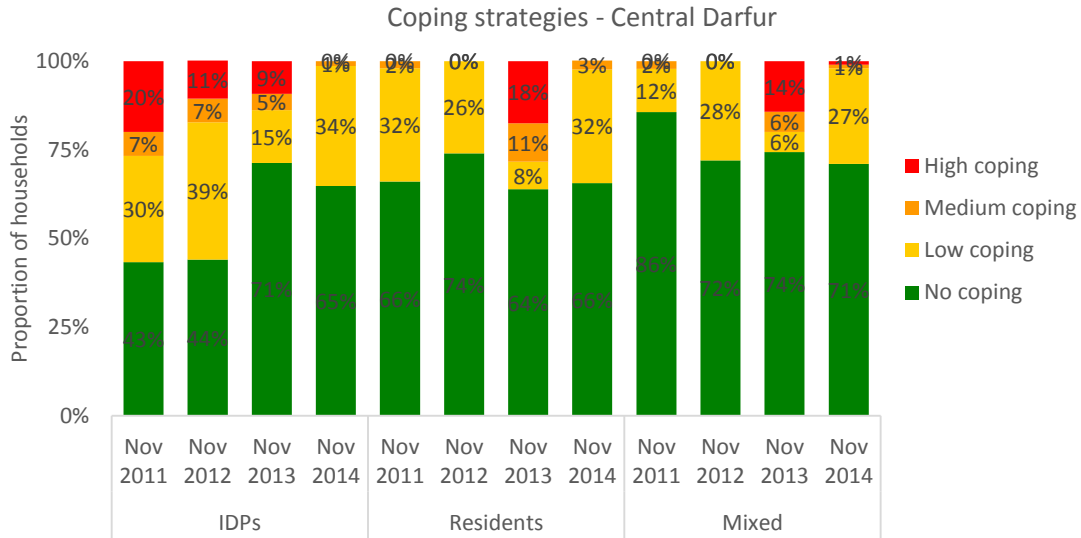
Food Assistance

Nearly all IDP households (97 percent) received food assistance at some point in the three months prior to data collection. This proportion increased compared to November 2013 (when it was 85 percent) and to levels similar to November 2012. Food assistance provided to IDPs included in-kind distribution and vouchers. The proportion of households in resident and mixed communities who received food assistance increased compared to November 2013.



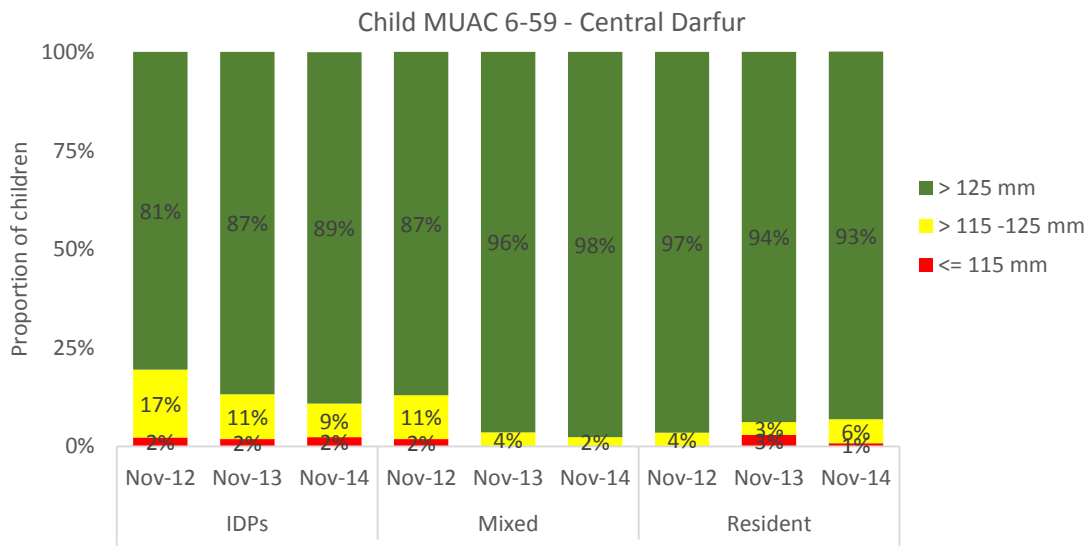
Perceived food access

Households were asked if there were times in the one week prior to data collection when they did not have enough food (or money to buy food). If they experienced such situations, they asked what strategies they employed to cope with the shortage. The proportion of households who reported experiencing food shortage remained largely unchanged compared to November 2013. However, for the households who experienced food shortage, the coping strategies they employed were less severe compared to last year. Among IDPs, the problem of food shortage was perceived as being much worse in 2011 and 2012, compared to 2013 and 2014.



Child health

The mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) was measured on 432 children (aged 6-59 months) and classified as very low (below 115 mm, a proxy for severe acute malnutrition), moderately low (between 115 and 125mm, a proxy indicator for moderate acute malnutrition), and normal. The MUAC measurements of children in all three community groups remained similar to that reported in November 2013. Children in IDP communities had comparatively worse measurements, with 11 percent of children having either very low or moderately low MUAC. The corresponding figures for mixed communities and resident communities were 2 and 7 percent, respectively.



Who were the Food Insecure?

Women headed households were more likely to be food insecure than households headed by men, as was the trend in the past years. Five percent of male headed household were food insecure compared to 8 percent of female headed households. Ten percent of households headed by illiterate persons and 2 percent of those headed by persons who had only completed primary education were food insecure, compared to 0 percent of households headed persons having completed secondary school.