



Central Darfur, Sudan

Food Security Monitoring, February 2015



World Food Programme

Executive Summary

- The overall food security situation improved for Residents and Mixed communities from November 2014 to February 2015. For IDPs the results were more mixed: both the food secure and the food insecure group decreased, increasing the borderline group. In February 2015 the food security situation of IDPs was worse than that of other community groups.
- After having declined substantially in November and December 2014, sorghum prices in February 2015 in Zalengei market was at the same level as the same period last year. Still, the price was 40 percent above the five-year average, largely because of the lingering effects of high inflation in past years.
- The cost of the local food basket (LFB) decreased from 6.34 SDG (per capita, per day) in November 2014 to 5.33 SDG in February 2015. The decrease in market prices resulted in a significant improvement in households' purchasing power over the same period. The percentage of IDP and Resident households who could not afford the cost of one local food basket decreased, but remained high: 67 and 54 percent, respectively.
- Household food consumption improved for all community groups in February 2015. The percentage of households who had acceptable food consumption increased by 20 percentage points for Mixed communities, 16 points among Residents and 8 points among IDPs. A majority of households have acceptable food consumption.

A Description of the Sample

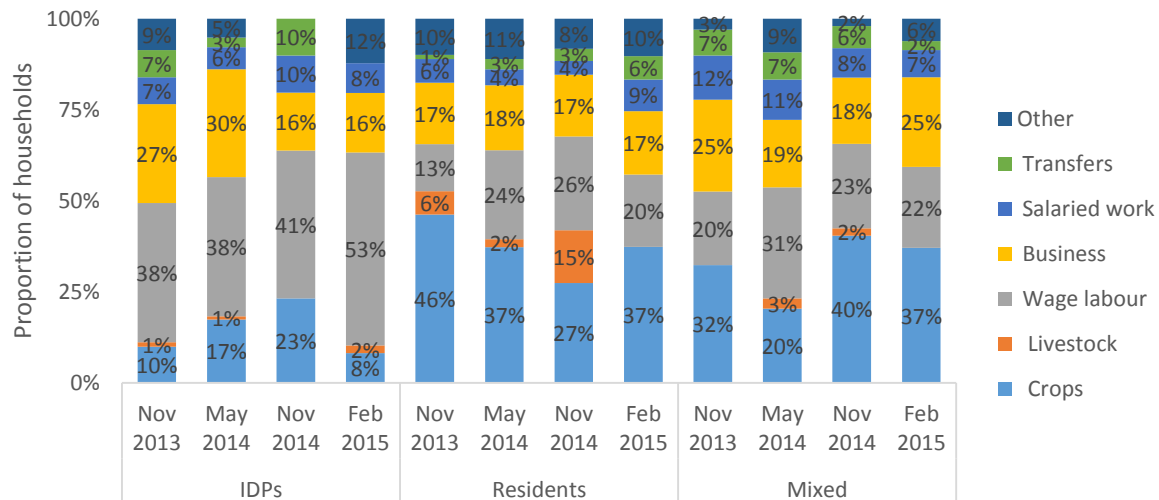
Data collection for round 19 was carried out in February 2015, which is the post-harvest season. A total of 415 households distributed across 20 sentinel sites and covered IDPs, Residents and Mixed communities in Central Darfur.

Livelihoods

Wage labour was the main livelihood for households in IDP communities in Central Darfur in February 2015 and grew in importance compared to 2014. The increased reliance on wage labour was a result of seasonal increase in opportunities for construction and bricks making. Small business, salaried work, firewood making and charcoal collection maintained their relative importance from November 2014.

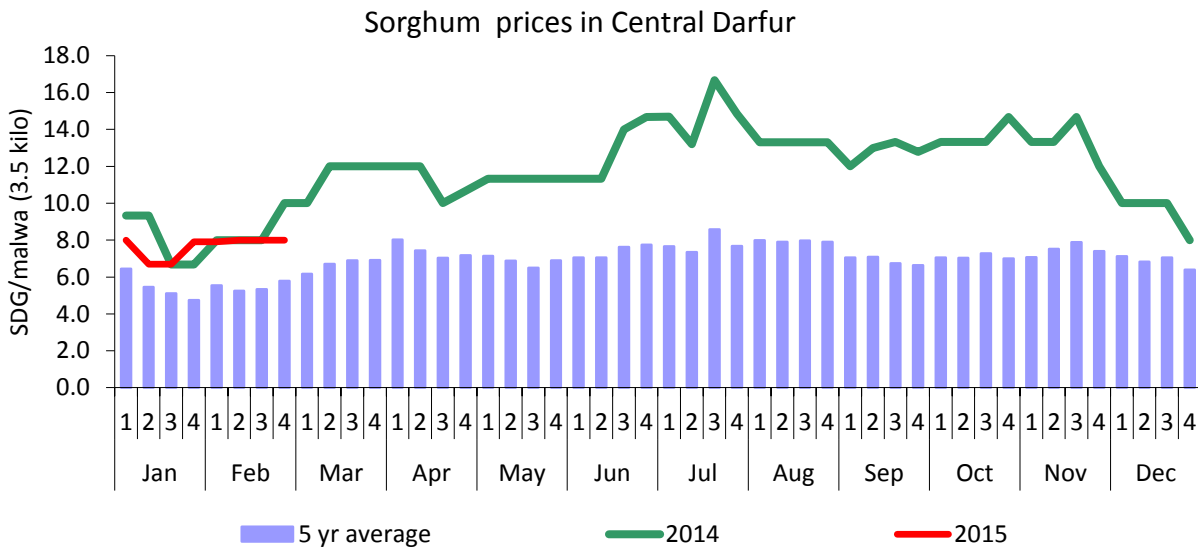
Resident households had relatively stable and diversified livelihoods compared to IDPs. Sale of crops represented over one third of households and the percentage of households engaged in the activity increased compared to November 2014.

As in the previous round, sales of crops continued to be the main livelihood for Mixed communities. This was mainly caused by the good harvest and improvements in the level of access to agricultural land, as a result of improved security. The proportion of households in Mixed communities engaged in small business increased in February 2015, following a normal seasonal pattern.



Markets and Prices

Unlike in many other markets, the price of sorghum in Zalengei remained at its seasonal high long after the rainy season reached its 2014 peak. Prices started to fall late, in November and December 2014. Current prices were in Zalengei was at the same level as the same period last year. Still, the price was 40 percent above the five-year average, largely because of the lingering effects of high inflation in past years.



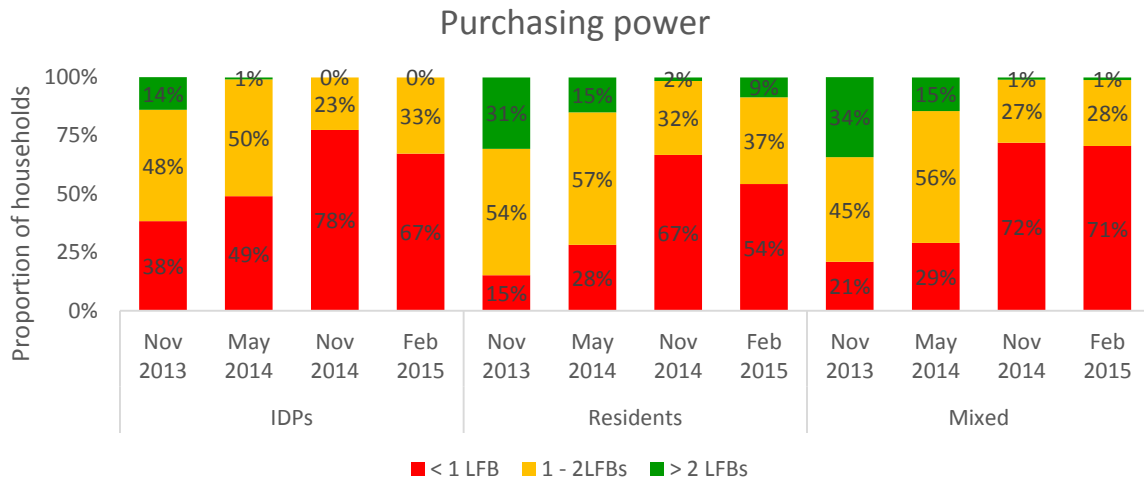
Purchasing Power

The price of a local food basket was used as a benchmark against which to compare household income, for determining the level of purchasing power. The purchasing power of IDP and Resident households improved in February 2015, illustrated by a decrease in the proportion of households who were unable to afford the cost of one LFB. The improvement of the households' purchasing power could be attributed to the absence of inflation for important food items during the last few months. Purchasing power among Mixed communities remained unchanged.

Women headed households were more likely to have poor purchasing power compared to male headed household across the community types.

The Local Food Basket (LFB)

The LFB consisted of the following food items: cereals (sorghum), milk, dry vegetables, cooking oil, goat meat, cow meat, onions and sugar. The amount of each food item was computed so as to minimize the cost of the basket, while meeting the minimum requirements of 2,100 kilocalories per person per day. Households were classified as having poor purchasing power (households that could not afford the cost of one LFB), borderline purchasing power (households that could afford between one and two baskets) and acceptable purchasing power (households that could afford more than two baskets).

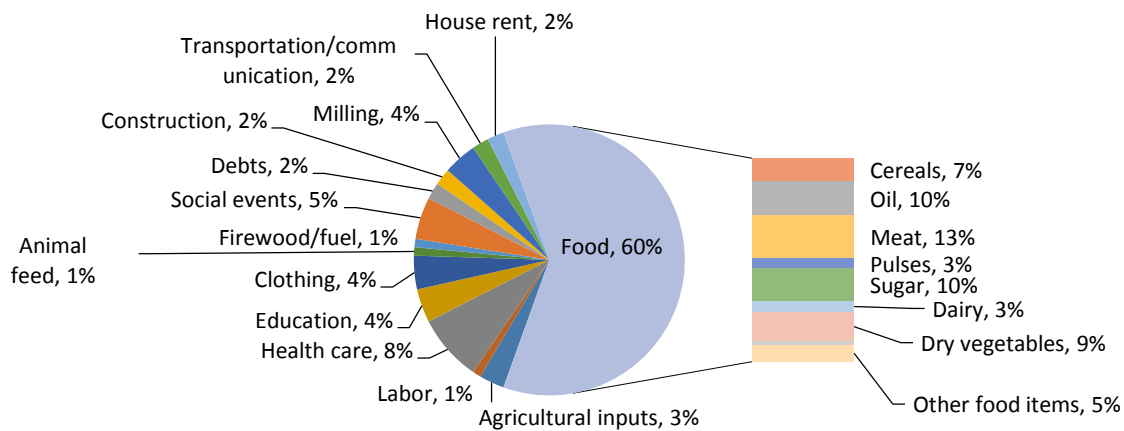


Household Expenditure

A breakdown of households' total expenditure revealed that Central Darfur households spent on average 60 percent of their total expenditure on food. The expenditure on meat represented the biggest single share (13 percent of total expenditures), reflecting the below-average need of households with remaining cereals stocks to purchase cereals from the market. Other food items that households spend on included oil, sugar (10 percent each) and dry vegetables (9 percent).

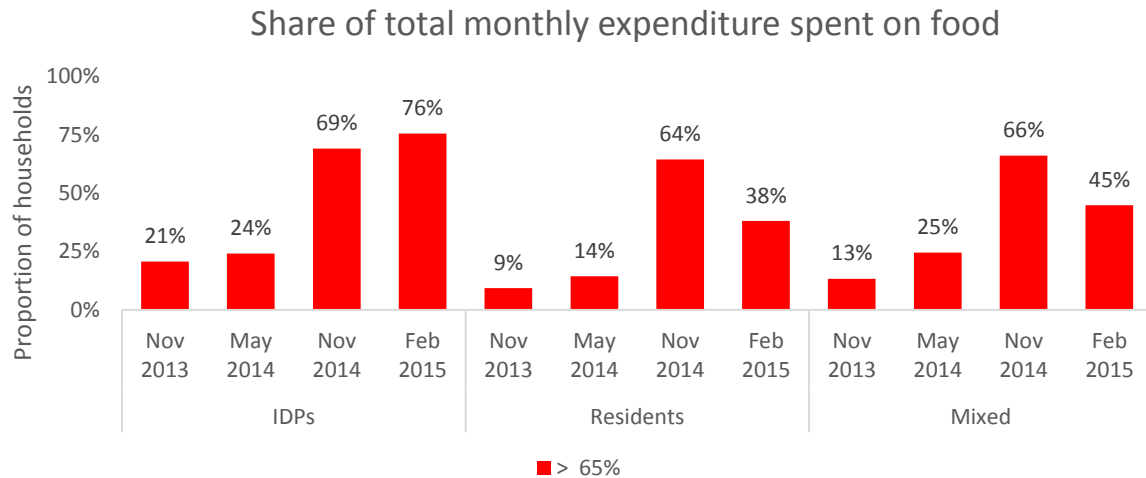
Health care (8 percent of total expenditures) remained the largest single items among non-food items. Health care expenditures tend to increase during the rainy and harvest season due to increased prevalence of malaria.

Breakdown of household expenditures



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) increased to 76 percent among IDP

communities in February 2015 compared to November 2014. The corresponding percentage among Residents and Mixed communities decreased, indicating diminished economic stress, or less reliance on market purchase as many households source their food from their own production. Thirty-eight and 45 percent of households in these groups, respectively, spent more than 65 percent of their total expenditure on food.



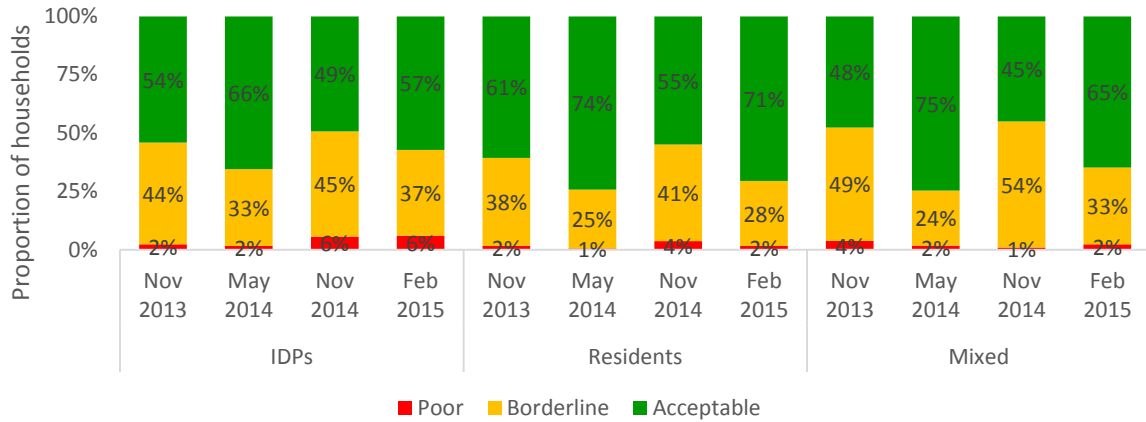
Household Food Consumption

Household food consumption improved for all community groups in Central Darfur state in February 2015. The proportion of households with acceptable consumption increased for all community groups, with the largest improvement being seen among Mixed and Resident communities. It seemed that strengthened purchasing power coupled with improvements in food access during the post-harvest season allowed many households to improve their food consumption.

The Food Consumption Score (FCS)

Food consumption data was collected and analyzed using standard WFP methodology: the variety and frequency of different foods consumed over a 7-day recall period was recorded to calculate a weighted food consumption score (FCS). Weights were based on the nutritional density of the foods. Using standard threshold, households were classified as having either poor, borderline or acceptable food consumption.

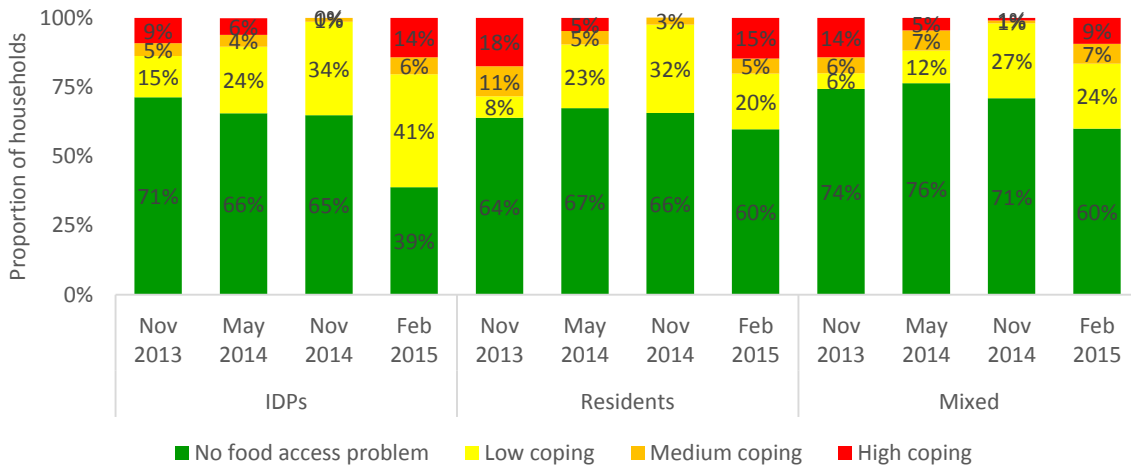
Food consumption



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 were asked what strategies they employed to cope with the shortage. Despite the improvement in the household purchasing power and food consumption in February 2015, the proportion of households who report experiencing food shortages increased considerably for all communities groups in Central Darfur compared to November 2014. The type of applied coping strategies were also more severe compared to last year. IDPs community was the worst hit groups: More than 60 percent of IDP households reported experiencing food shortage in the week prior to the data collection period.

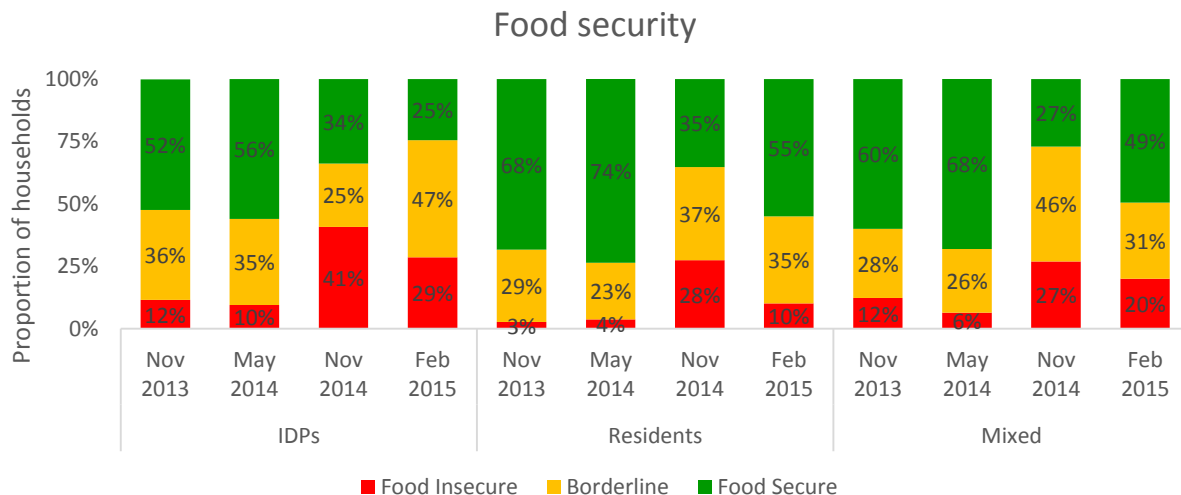
Coping



Food Security

In February 2015, the overall food security situation improved for Residents and Mixed communities. The results were more mixed for IDPs, where the borderline group increased in size at the expense of both the food insecure and the food secure group. The proportions of food insecure households decreased for all community groups. Three out of four IDP households were either food insecure or in the borderline group, reflecting a gradual deterioration among IDP communities over time.

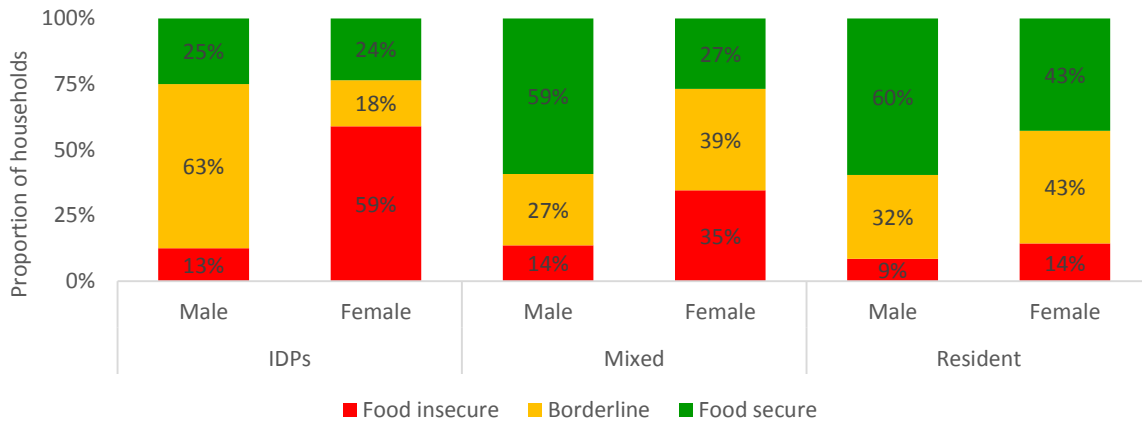
The improvement in the food security situation among the Resident and Mixed communities could be attributed to the very good harvest in the last agricultural season. The findings of the post-harvest report which was released recently revealed that the state could cover cereal its requirement from its own production. The high degree of cereal self-sufficiency helped stabilize cereal prices and improve overall household food security in Central Darfur.



Gender Analysis

Analysing food security based on the gender of the household head showed a major difference between female and male headed households: 59 percent, 35 percent and 14 percent of women headed households in the IDP, Mixed and Resident communities were food insecure compared to 13 percent, 14 percent and 9 percent of male headed household, respectively. Women headed households were also more likely to have poor purchasing power compared to male headed household across the community types.

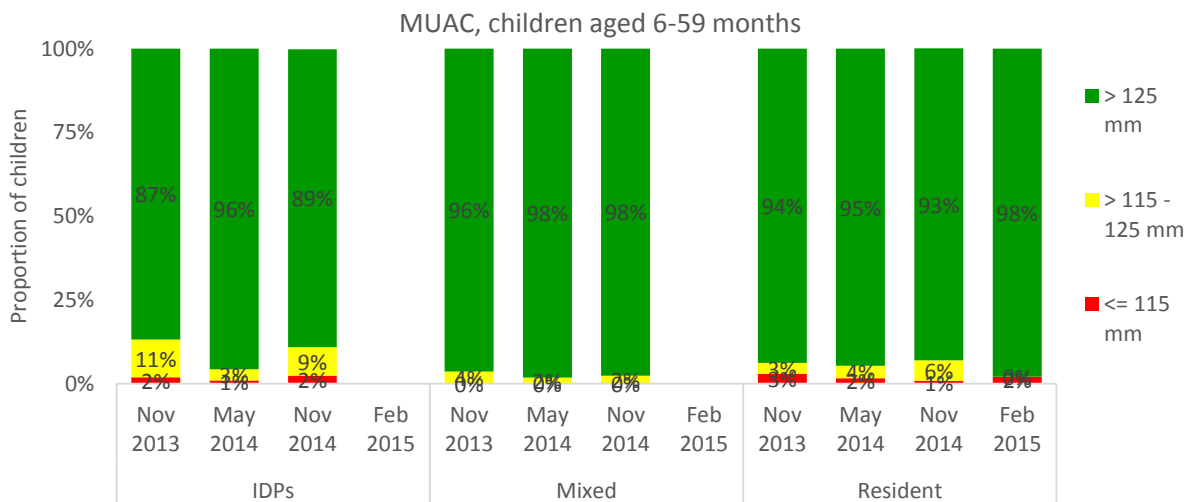
Food security, by gender of household head



Food security was also found to be positively correlated with the level of education of the head of households in the sense that 72 percent of households headed by persons who have completed secondary school were food secure, compare to 45 percent of households headed by illiterate persons.

Child Nutrition

The mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) was measured on 326 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 (above 125 mm). The MUAC measurements has slightly improved for children in Resident households compared to that reported in November 2014. The corresponding figures for IDPs and Mixed communities were not reported in this round due to small sample sizes.

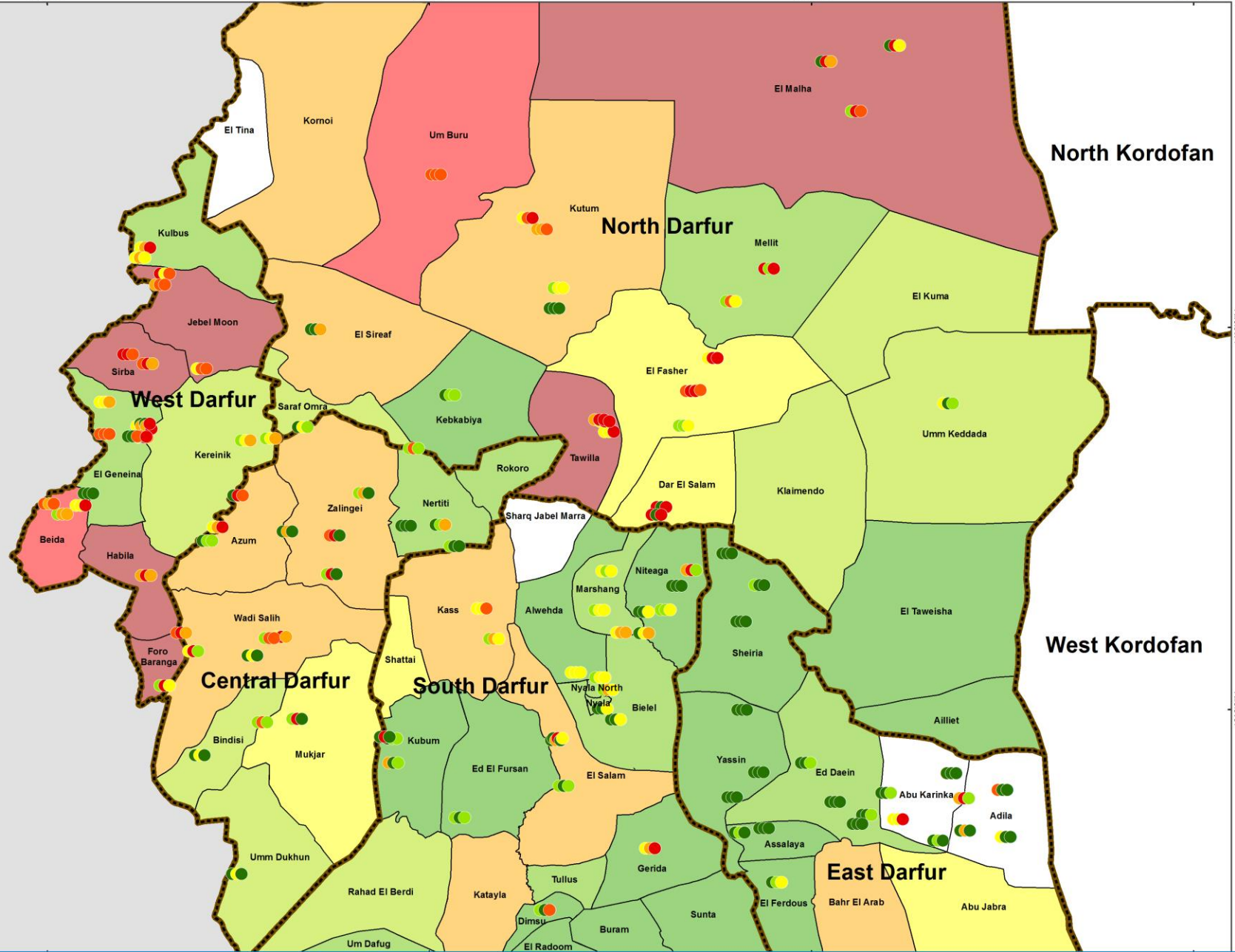


Darfur

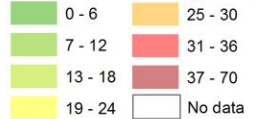
Food Security Monitoring



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Food insecure households (percent)



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Data Sources: IMWG, WFP CO Sudan

The boundaries and names and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



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