



West Darfur, Sudan

Food Security Monitoring, February 2015



World Food Programme

Executive Summary

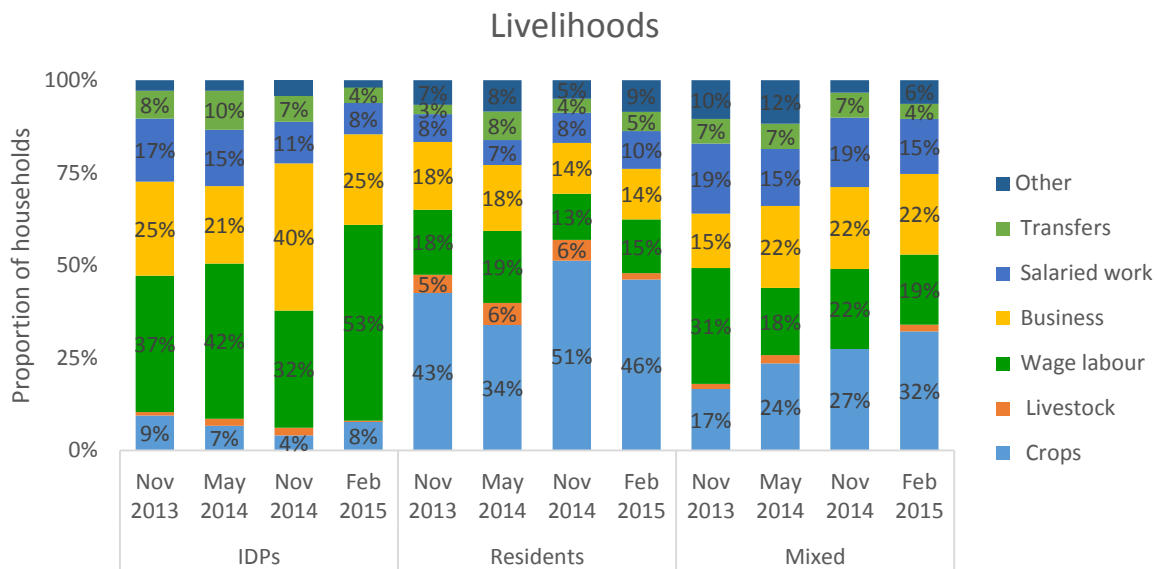
- The overall food security situation deteriorated for households in surveyed IDP camps between November 2014 and February 2015. Surveyed households in resident communities experienced a similar deterioration, while the sampled households in Mixed communities improved. Thirty-nine percent of surveyed households in IDP communities were food insecure, compared to 27 percent of households in Residents and Mixed communities.
- Household food consumption improved moderately among surveyed households in IDP communities and Mixed communities from November 2014 to February 2015. Surveyed households in Resident communities experienced a moderate deterioration over the same period. Approximately 60 percent of households in Resident and Mixed communities exhibited acceptable food consumption, while the corresponding percentage was slightly lower for IDPs (56 percent).
- The cost of the local food basket (LFB) was considerably lower in February 2015 (SDG 4.94/person/day) compared to November 2014 (SDG 6.51/person/day). Despite the recent price decrease, the average sorghum prices in Geneina market were slightly higher than the same period last year, and more than 75 percent higher than the five-year average. Sorghum prices had decreased steadily since their peak in July 2014.
- The decrease of the cost of the LFB did not result in improving purchasing power. In fact, among sampled households in IDP and Resident communities, purchasing power had deteriorated steadily from November 2013 to February 2015. Mixed communities also saw their purchasing power deteriorate over this period, but the decline stabilized and a minor improvement was seen from November 2014 to February 2015. Purchasing power was similar for the three community types, with approximately 80 percent of households being unable to afford the local food basket.
- Crop production, wage labour and small business were the main livelihoods among the surveyed households. No major changes were seen in the livelihood patterns of the population between November 2014 and February 2015, except that among IDP communities the proportion of households engaged in small business decreased and the proportion of households engaged in wage labour increased.
- The sex of the head of the household continued to be an important predictor of food security status: 50 percent of the male headed households were food secure compared to only 34 percent among female headed households.

A Description of the Sample

Data collection was carried out in collaboration with the West Darfur State Ministry of Agriculture (SMoA). The data collection of the February round of the food security monitoring was delayed due to operational challenges (it took place in March and April 2015). This time of the year was the beginning of the lean season. A total of 618 households from 25 locations in West Darfur were interviewed.

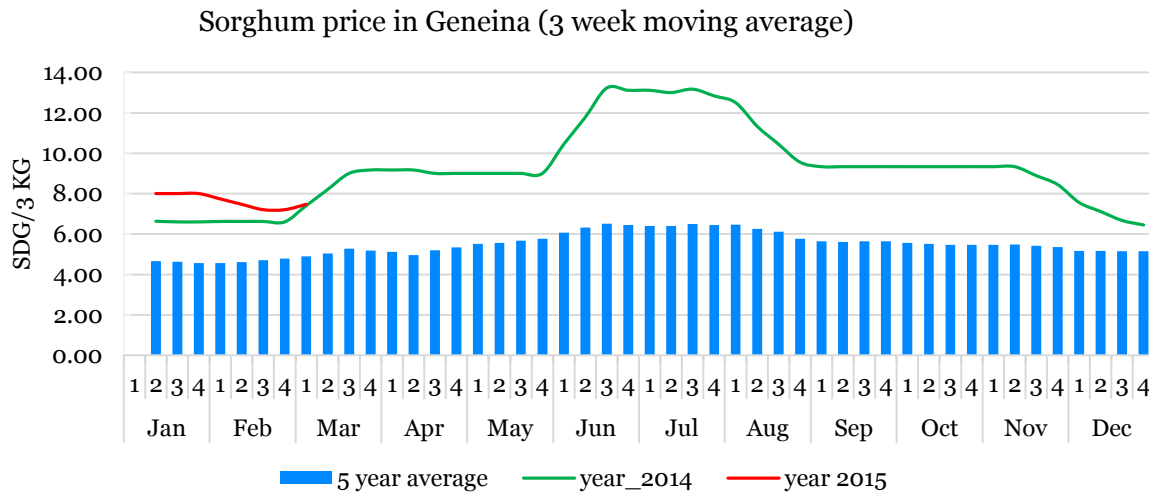
Livelihoods

Crop production continued to be the predominant livelihood in Resident and Mixed communities, constituting the most important livelihood for 46 and 32 percent of households, respectively. Crop production was still only of minor importance to IDP communities despite the prolonged period of displacement for most of this population. Not having access to farming lands was the leading factor behind IDPs being less likely to engage in crop production. Rather, IDPs tended to rely on wage labour and small business to a higher degree than Residents and Mixed communities.



Markets and Prices

The average sorghum prices in Geneina market were slightly higher than the same period last year and more than 75 percent above the five-year average. Following a normal seasonal trend, the sorghum prices decreased from SDG 8 (per kora, or 3.5 kg) in November 2014 to SDG 7.2 in February 2015, mainly because of increased supply in the market as a result of the good harvest. The decreasing trend in prices also extended to other foods as discussed in the next chapter.

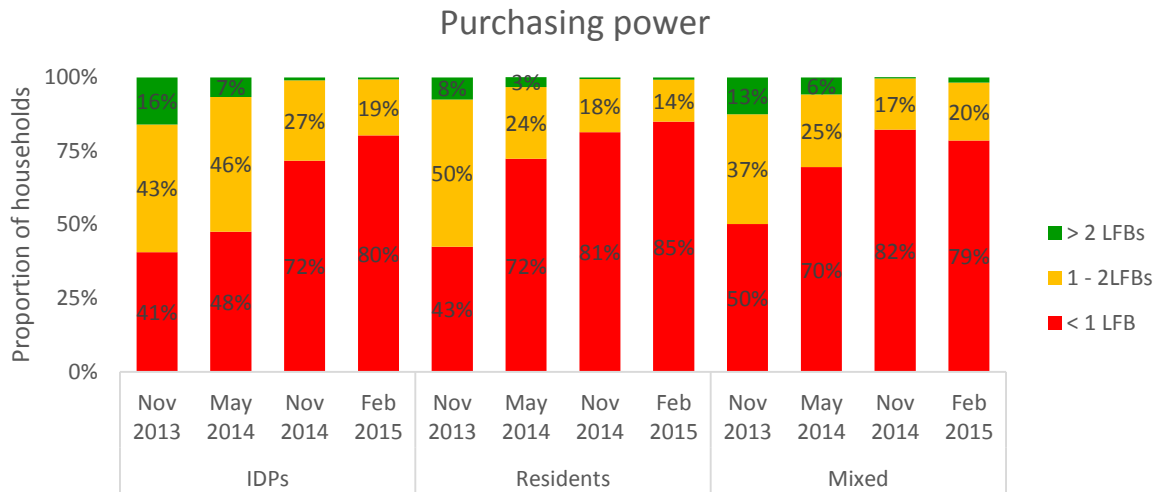


Purchasing Power

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 price of the local food basket (LFB) in February 2015 – SDG 4.94 (per person/day) – was considerably lower than in November 2014 (SDG 6.51). The decline in the price of the LFB may have been caused by a decrease in demand, due to a decrease in the level of income. The decrease in the cost of the LFB did not result in a strengthening of purchasing power, as incomes decreased. As indicated in the chart below, more than three quarters of households, across the community types, cannot afford the cost of one LFB. Purchasing power was found to be similar across the three community types.

The Local Food Basket (LFB)

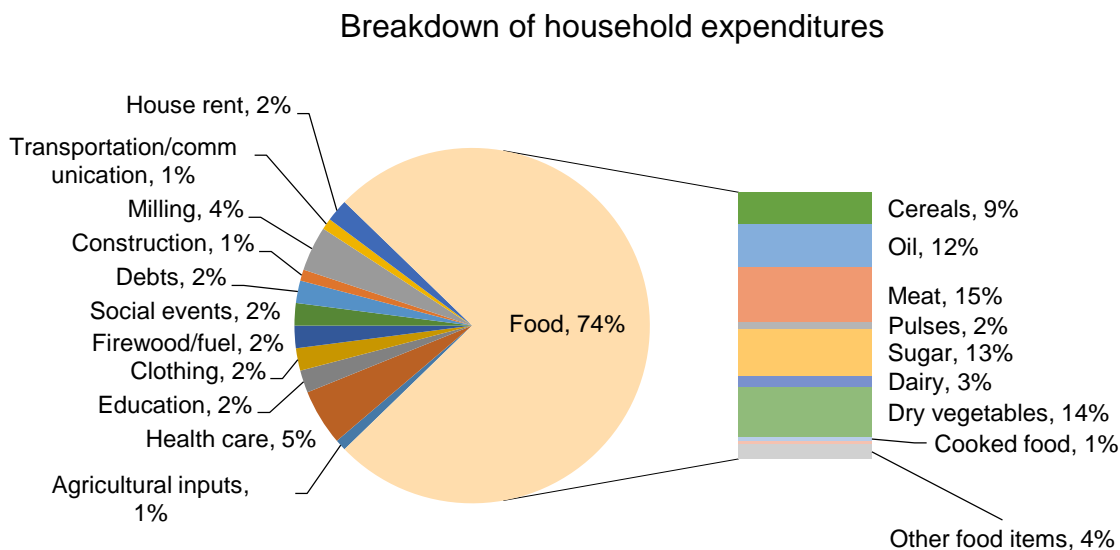
The LFB consisted of the following food items: cereals (sorghum), milk, dry vegetables, cooking oil, goat meat, cow meat, onions and sugar. The amount of each food item was computed so as to minimize the cost of the basket, while meeting the minimum requirements of 2,100 kilocalories per person per day. 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).



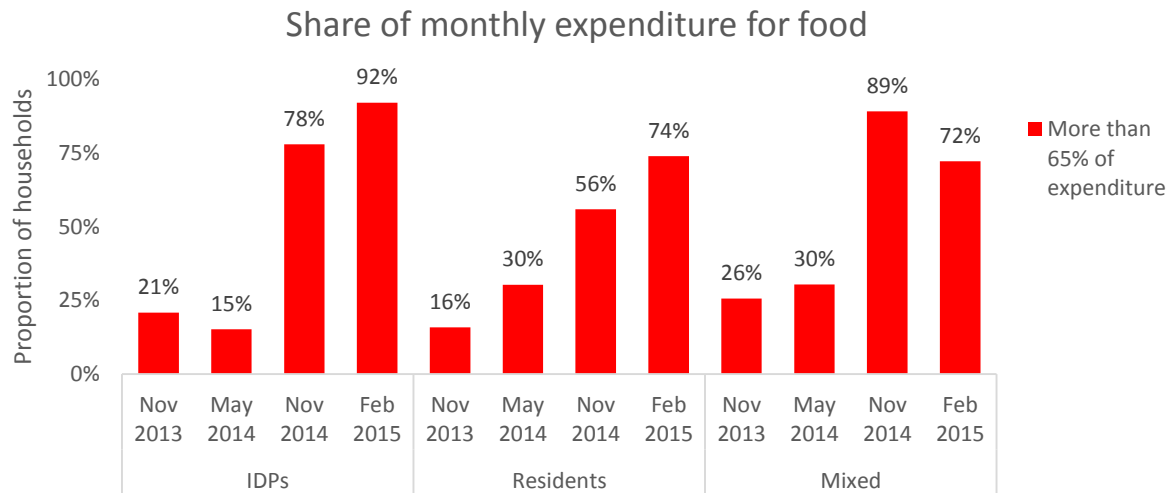
Among IDP and Resident communities, households headed by females had moderately better purchasing power compared to households headed by men (the difference in the proportion of households that are below 1 LFB was 7 and 13 percentage points, respectively). In Mixed communities, 75 percent of male headed households was below the 1 LFB line, compared to 89 percent among female headed households.

Household Expenditure

The largest components of household total monthly food expenditure were meat (15 percent of total monthly household expenditures), dry vegetables (14 percent), sugar (13 percent), oil (12 percent) and cereals (9 percent). Spending three quarters of the total expenditure on food left households with less expenditure on non-food items which reduced their economic access to health care (from 10 percent of total expenditure in November 2014 to 8 percent in February 2015) and education (from 5 to 2 percent).



The expenditure on food as a percentage of total monthly expenditure was used as a proxy indicator of household economic stress: The higher a household's the share of food expenditure, the greater the likelihood of increased vulnerability to price and income shocks. A commonly used threshold for the share of food expenditure (above 65 percent) were used to identify households more exposed to economic vulnerability. The proportion of vulnerable IDP and Resident households increased substantially, to the point where 92 percent of IDP household spend more than 65 percent of their total expenditure on food. Surveyed households in Resident and Mixed communities exhibited a moderately lower level of stress, compared to IDPs, as a result of better access to more diversified income sources.



Household Food Consumption

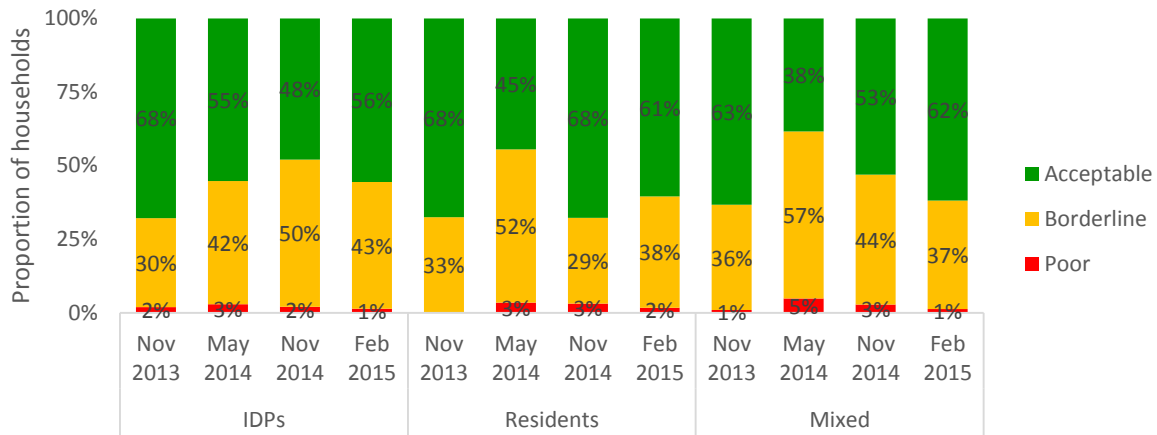
Household food consumption improved moderately among surveyed households in IDP communities and Mixed communities from November 2014 to February 2015. The proportion of households with acceptable food consumption increased from 48 to 65 percent among IDPs during this period, and from 53 to 62 percent among Mixed communities. The improvement could be attributed to the decreased cost of food indicated in the discussion of the purchasing power, above. Surveyed households in Resident communities

experienced a moderate deterioration over the same period. As in the previous round of monitoring, surveyed IDPs had worse food consumption than Residents and Mixed communities: Approximately 60 percent of households in Resident and Mixed communities were classified as having acceptable food consumption, while the corresponding percentage was slightly lower for IDPs (56 percent).

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

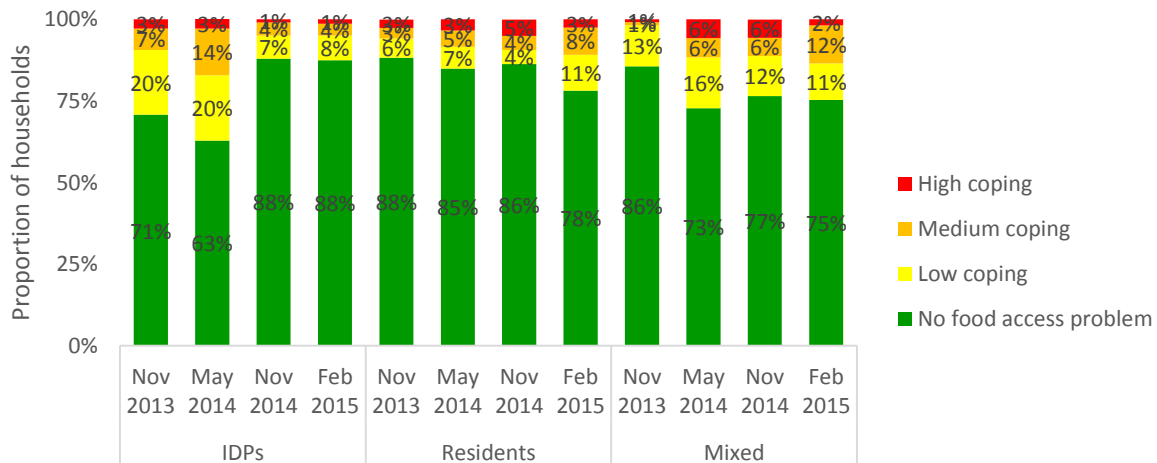


The gender gap was found to be considerable, as households headed by men were more likely to have acceptable food consumption. The difference in the prevalence of acceptable food consumption between male and female headed households was 10, 18 and 23 percentage points for households in IDP, Resident and Mixed communities, respectively.

Perceived Food Access Problems

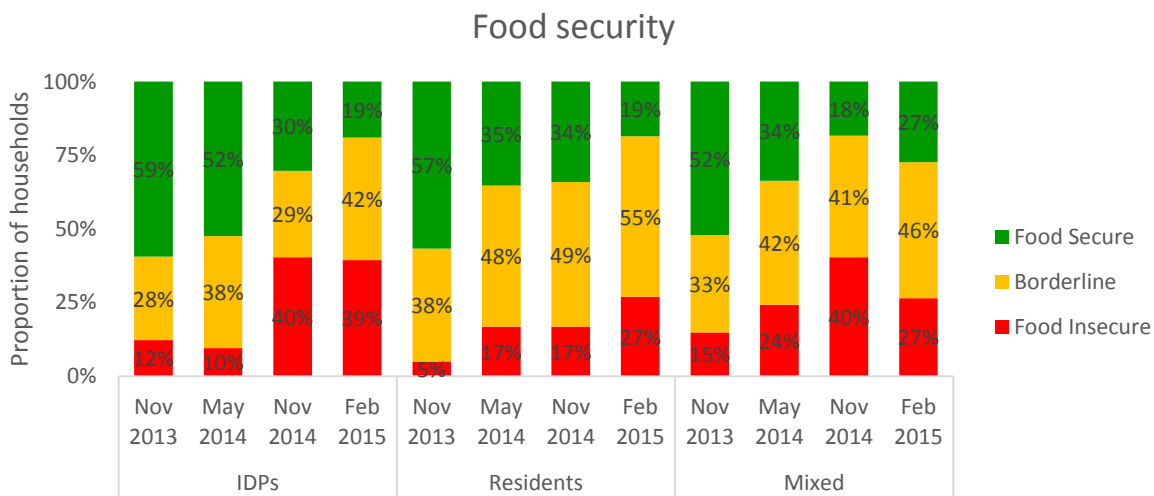
Households were asked if in the last seven days prior to the interview they experienced a situation where they did not have enough food (or money to buy food). If they experienced such situations, they were asked what strategies they employed to cope with their situation. The percentage of households who reported experiencing food access problems increased for households in the Resident category – from 14 to 22 percent – but remained largely unchanged for IDPs and Mixed communities compared to November 2014. Surprisingly, IDPs were the least likely to report food access problems, possibly as a result of the prolonged displacement normalizing a relatively food insecure situation.

Coping strategy



Food Security

The overall food security situation deteriorated for households in IDP camps from November 2014 to February 2015, mainly characterized by the expansion of the borderline category at the expense of food secure category; the proportion households classified as food secure shrank by 11 percentage points. More than one third of IDPs were considered food insecure. Food security deteriorated also for the Resident communities to the point that 27 percent of households were found to be food insecure. After an improvement in food security since November 2014, Mixed communities were the most food security community type, with 27 percent of households being food secure.



Gender Analysis

The sex of the head of the household continued to be an important predictor of food security status: male headed households tended to be more food secure than female headed households, as 50 percent of the male headed households were food secure compared to 34 percent of the female headed households. The difference between the two groups was especially pronounced in Resident and Mixed communities where the spread was 12 and 24 percentage points, respectively.

Food security, by gender of households heads

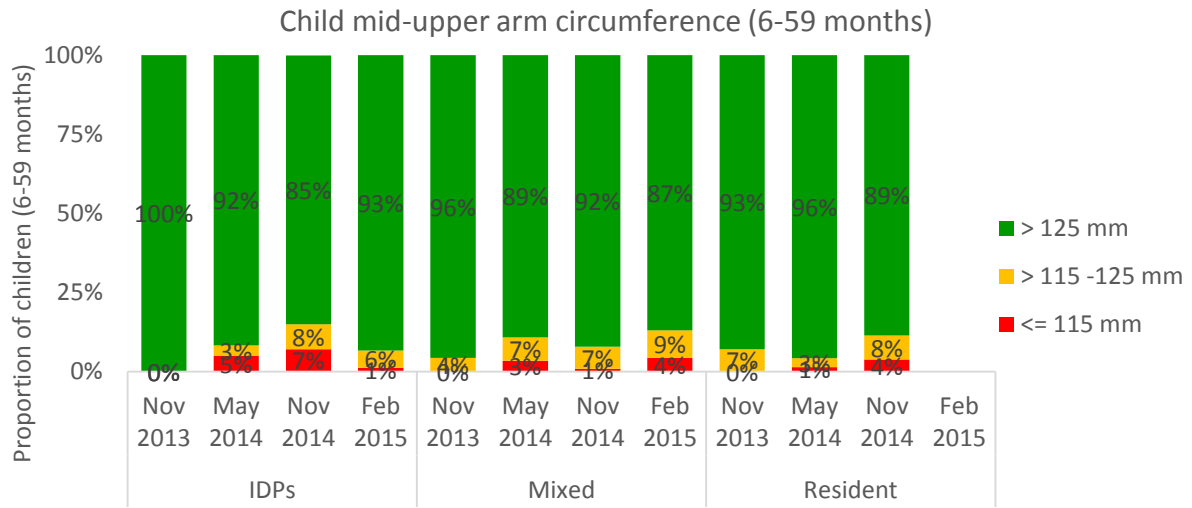


Additionally, the higher the educational level of the head of the household, the more food secure the household tended to be. The prevalence of food security was 37 among households whose heads were illiterate, compared to 43 percent for those that had completed primary education, and 57 percent among those that had completed secondary education. Food security was also linked to household assets ownership: It was found that 53 percent of households who owned mobile phones were food secure compared to only 27 percent of those who did not own one. Households with few (1-3) members were found to be more food secure than larger households (4 and above).

Child Nutrition

The mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) was measured on 694 children aged 6-59 months and classified as very low (below 115 mm, a proxy indicator for severe acute malnutrition), moderately low (between 115 and 125mm, a proxy indicator for moderate acute malnutrition) and normal (above 125 mm). Children in IDP households had better MUAC measurements compared to the previous two FSMS rounds and to other community groups: the prevalence of normal MUAC had increased from November 2014 to in February 2015, from 85 to 93 percent. The trend was the reverse for Mixed and Resident communities.

No statistical relationship was found between the results of MUAC measurement and household food security, nor with household food consumption score. The sample size for Residents was too small to be reported on for February 2015.

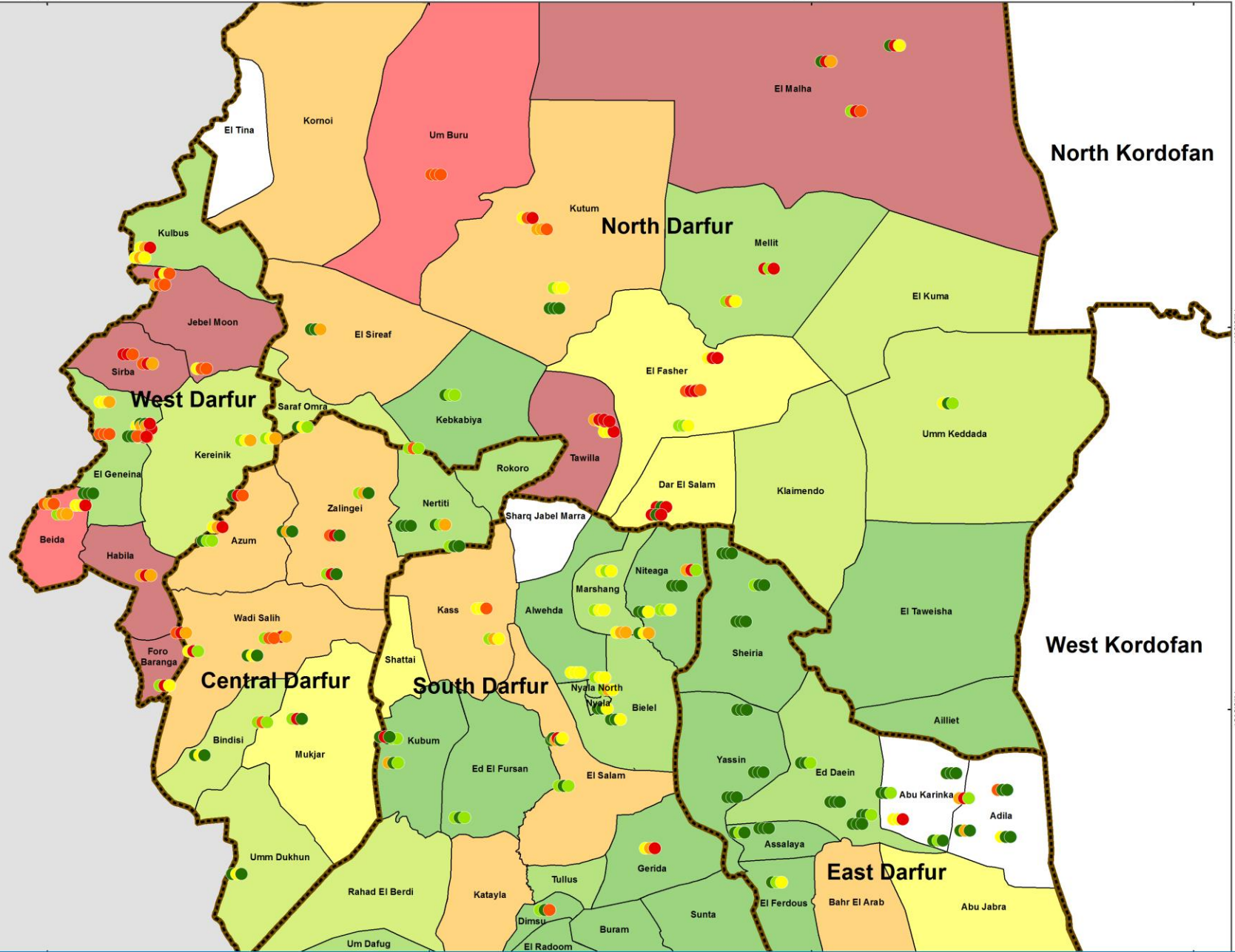


Darfur

Food Security Monitoring

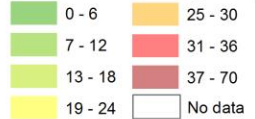


22°00'E 24°00'E 26°00'E 28°00'E



14°00'N 12°00'N

Food insecure households (percent)



Food Security Monitoring



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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