Fighting Hunger Worldwide

South Kordofan, Sudan

Food Security Monitoring, December 2015

WFP

World Food Programme

wfp.org

Executive Summary

- The food security situation deteriorated among sampled households from May 2014 to November 2015. Overall, the proportion of households categorized as food secure decreased from 82 percent in May 2014 to 70 percent in November 2015. The poor outlook for the main 2015/16 season impacted household economy by limiting household production and the demand for agricultural labour.

- The price of sorghum in Kadugli market has been stable since May 2015 and did not follow the seasonaly normal declining trend in the second half of the year. The price was 27 percent below the same period of the previous year and 25 percent above the five-year average. The moderate prices of this year were a result of a good harvest in the previous season, which stabilized the supply of sorghum to the market. However, the poor outlook for the 2015/16 season raised concerns about price increases in 2016.

- Purchasing power deteriorated significantly among sampled households. The price of the local food basket (LFB) increased from 3.6 SDG (per person per day) in May 2014 to 5.7 SDG in November 2015, a 57 percent increase. As a result, the proportion of households who were unable to afford the cost of one local food basket increased, from 16 percent in May 2014 to 42 percent in November 2015. The deterioration of the households' purchasing power could be attributed to general inflation combined with below-average household income generation (mainly due to the poor agricultural season).

- Household food consumption among sampled households remained at a generally acceptable and stable level. More than 4 in 5 household were found to have acceptable food consumption, indicating that despite negative shocks to purchaing power, most households were able to sustain acceotable diets.

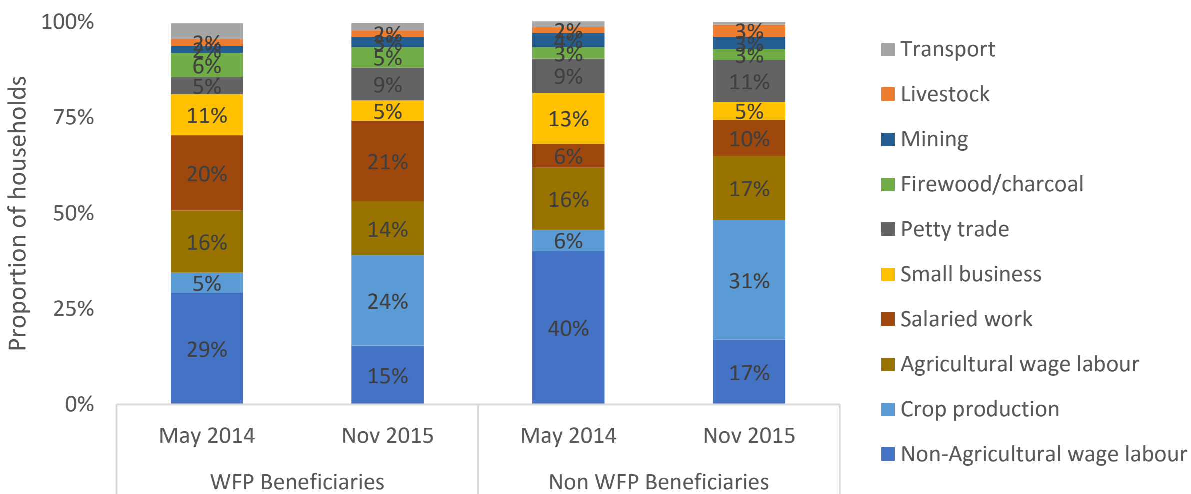
A Description of the Sample

Data collection for the second round of food security monitoring in South Kordofan was carried out in November 2015, which was the beginning of the harvest season. A total of 799 households were surveyed, across 40 sentinel sites.

Livelihoods

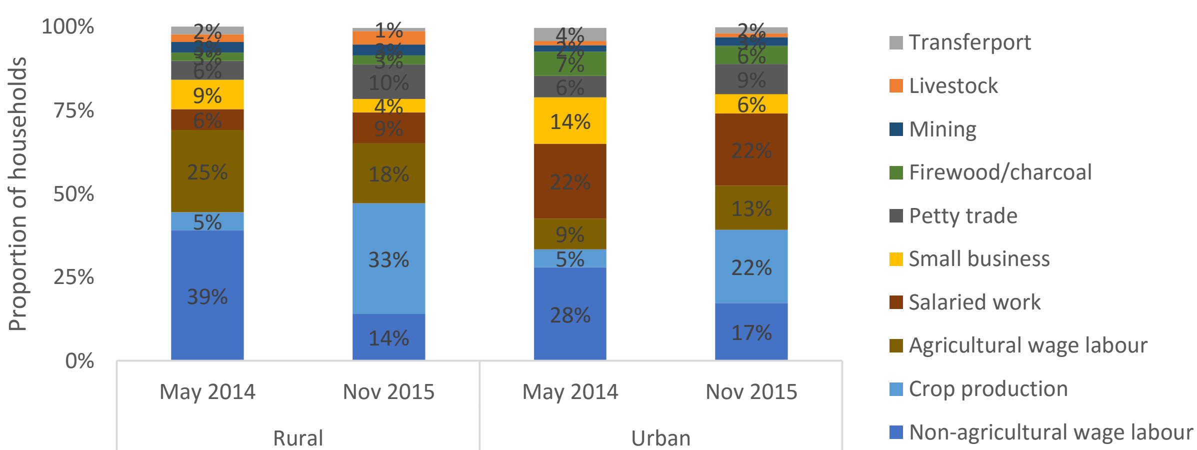
The most commonly reported livelihoods were crop production, (agricultural and non-agricultural) wage labour, and salaried work. The relative importance of the different livelihoods was different than in the previous round of food security monitoring, which took place in May 2014, largely as a result of seasonality. The proportion of households who engaged in non-agricultural wage labour had decreased, and a matching increase was seen in crop production, as a result of the ongoing harvest season.

Figure 1: Livelihoods



Main livelihood activities of rural households were crop production (accounting for 33 percent of households) followed by agricultural wage labour. The main activity of urban households was equally split between salaried work and crop production (22 percent each). The change in the main livelihood activities between the two rounds of food security monitoring was a result of normal seasonal patterns related to the agricultural calendar, combined with improvements in the security conditions in some rural areas.

Figure 2: Livelihoods, urban vs. rural

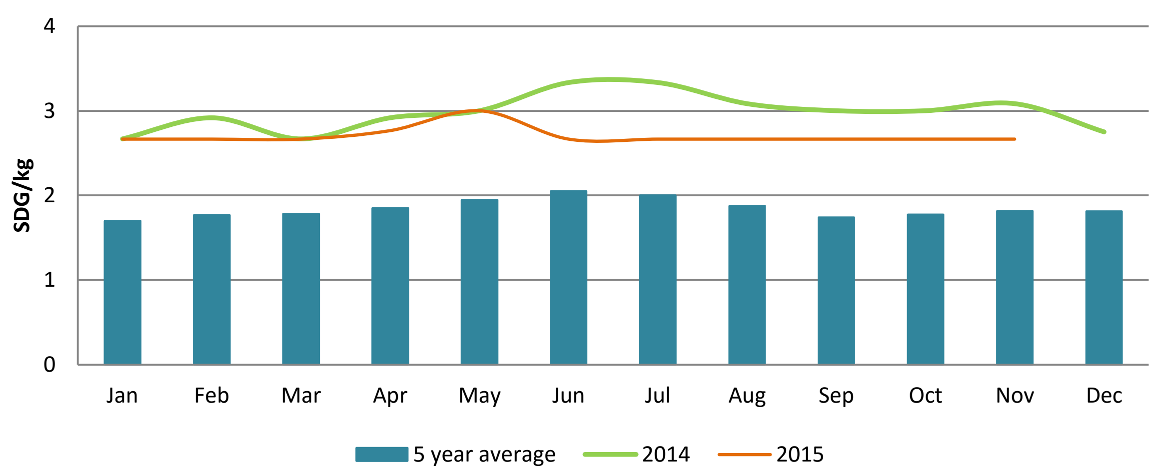


Markets and Prices

The price of sorghum (the main staple food) was stable in South Kordofan in the second half of 2015, during a time of the year when prices typically decline. The absence of a price decrease was likely related to the low expectations of the 2015/16 season. The sorghum price during the reporting period was 27 percent below the same period of the previous year and 25 percent above the five-year average.

The price of sorghum was expected to increase during the first and second quarters of 2016 as the result of poor production in the main rain-fed production areas during the last season. Careful monitoring is required to detect abnormal price increases as the lean season approaches.

Figure 3: Sorghum prices in Kadugli market



Livestock prices – approximated here by the price of goat – were 8 percent below November 2014 prices and 17 percent higher than the five-year average. The terms of trade between the goat and sorghum, i.e. the amount of sorghum that can be purchased by selling one adult male goat, decreased substantially compared to the same period of the previous year.

Household Purchasing Power

The purchasing power was determined by comparing the income generating capacity of households with the price of a local food basket (LFB) (see side bar).

The purchasing power deteriorated significantly among all household types, WFP beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries; and among both rural and urban households compared to May 2014. The proportion of households with acceptable purchasing power shrank significantly compared to May 2014. The deterioration of purchasing power was a result of low income from the poor agricultural season, compounded by an increase in the price of several commodities (including cooking oil, meat and vegetables), especially in areas affected by insecurity.

Rural households were more likely to have better purchasing power compared to urban households. More than one third of sampled households, and nearly half of urban households, could not afford one local food basket.

There was a small difference in purchasing power between the assisted and non-assisted households. The proportion of households who could not afford one LFB among WFP beneficiaries was 45 percent, compared to 37 percent among non-WFP beneficiaries.

The Local Food Basket

The local food basket 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 requirement 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).

The average price of the LFB in South Kordofan in November 2015 was 5.66 SDG per day per capita.

Figure 5: Household purchasing power

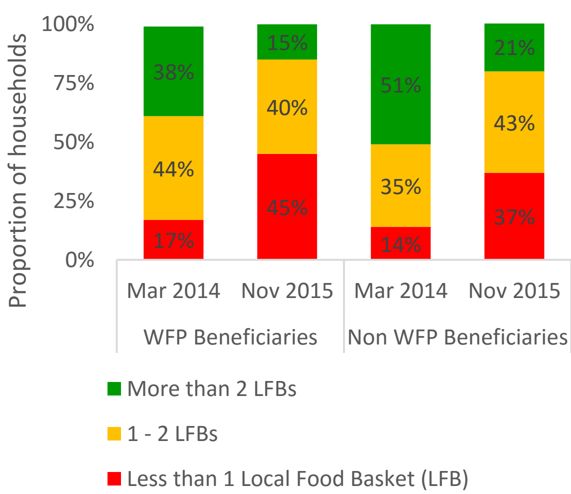
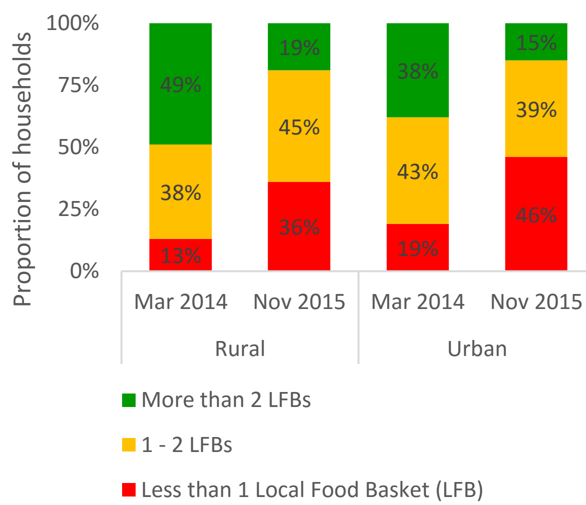


Figure 4: Household purchasing power, urban vs. rural

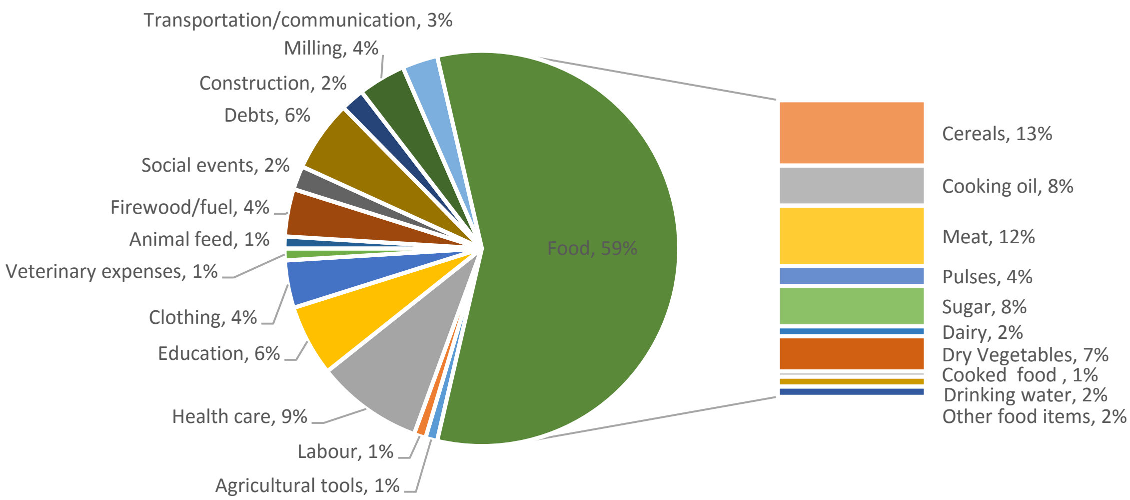


Household Expenditure

A breakdown of households' total expenditures revealed that sampled households spent on average 59 percent of their total expenditure on food in November 2015, considerably lower than in May 2014. The expenditure on cereals (accounting for 13 percent of total expenditure), represented the single biggest expenditure item, followed by meat (12 percent). Other food items included cooking oil, sugar (both 8 percent) and dry vegetable (7 percent).

Expenditure on health care remained the single largest non-food item, accounting for 9 percent of the total expenditure. Health care expenditures increased by 3 percentage points compared to the previous food security monitoring round, May 2014.

Figure 6: Household Expenditures Breakdown



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 compared to May 2014 across most localities. Because purchasing power decreased over the same period, it was believed that the smaller proportion of total expenditure that was spent on food was a result of households having to prioritize essential non-food items, especially during the early harvest season, rather than diminished economic stress.

Approximately 39 percent of WFP beneficiaries spent more than 65 percent of their total expenditure on food compared to 31 percent of non-WFP assisted households. There was no significant difference between rural and urban households.

Figure 7: Proportion of households spending more than 65 percent of their expenditure on food

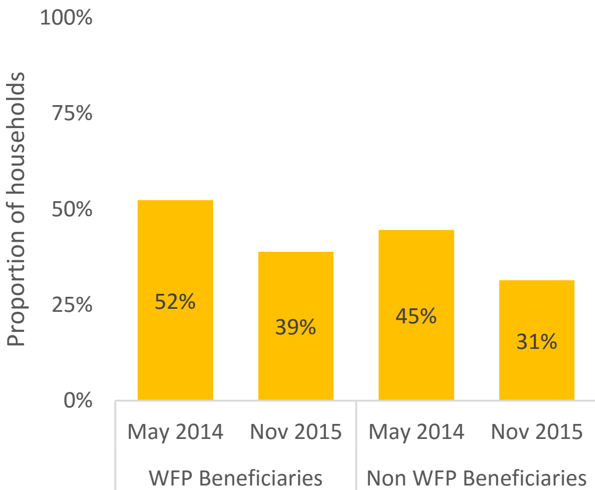
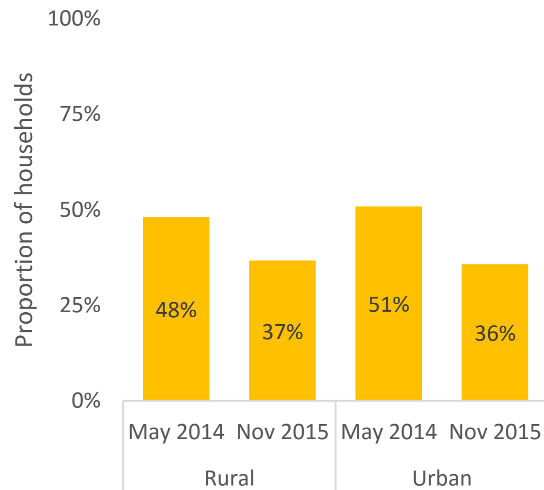


Figure 8: Proportion of households spending more than 65 percent of their expenditure on food, urban vs. rural



Household Food Consumption

Household food consumption in rural areas experienced a very modest deterioration compared to May 2014, within the margin of error. This was a result of poor access of many households to agricultural land due to insecurity in Habila and Dalami localities and limited agricultural land resource in Talodi and Gadir localities.

No meaningful differences in food consumption was observed between assisted and non-assisted or between urban and rural households.

Overall, a small minority of households were classified as having poor food consumption: 0 percent of rural and 2 percent of urban households. More than 4 out of 5 households were found to have acceptable 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 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.

Figure 10: Household food consumption, urban vs. rural

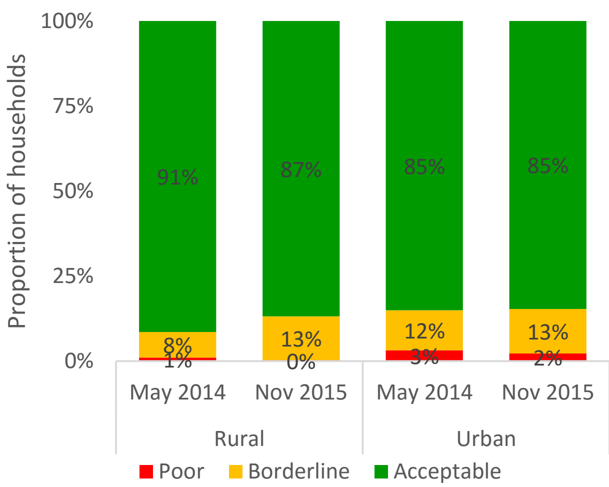
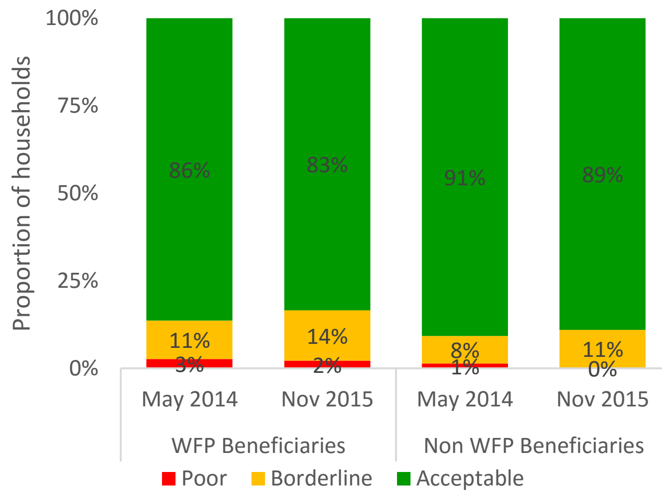


Figure 9: Household food consumption



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. The proportion of households who reported experiencing food access issues increased among households assisted by WFP, from 50 percent in May 2014 to 61 percent in November 2015. The proportion of households who employed coping strategies decreased among non-WFP assisted households from 57 percent in May 2014 to 46 percent in November 2015. The proportion of households who experienced food access issues was larger among urban households (59 percent) compared to rural households (50 percent).

Figure 11: Perceived food access

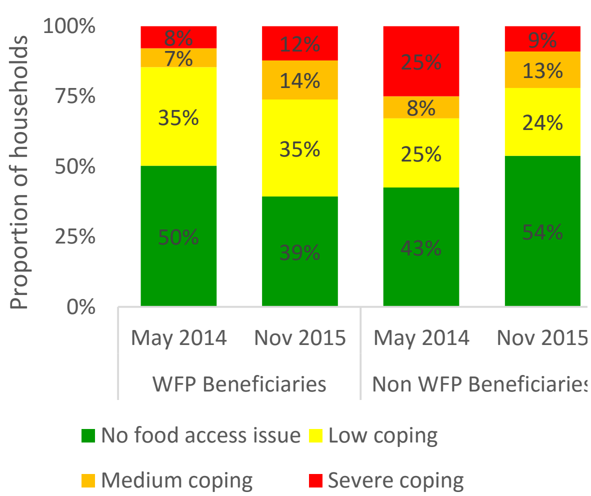
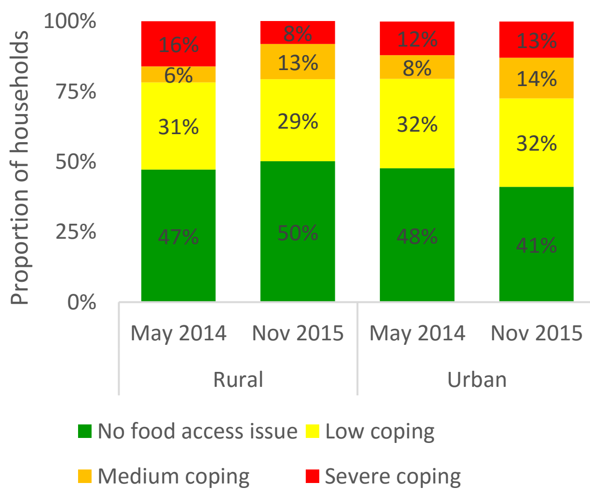


Figure 12: Perceived food access, urban vs. rural



Food Security

The overall food security situation deteriorated in most localities: overall, the proportion of households categorized as food secure decreased from 82 percent in May 2014 to 70 percent in November 2015. Food security was below-average among WFP beneficiaries and among urban households, where the prevelance of food security was 66 and 68 percent, respecitevly.

The reasons for the deterioration in food security ranged from scarcity of agricultural land in some localities, such as Elleir, to insecurity in Kadugli, and poor agricultural lands in ElGoz. Some localities, such as Abu Gebaiha were affected by difficulties in accessing markets. The poor outlook for the main 2015/16 season limited household production and the demand for agricultural labour.

The below-average food supply from the harvest season raised the risk of the 2016 lean season starting early and becoming deeper than average. Continued close monitoring was required.

Figure 14: Food security

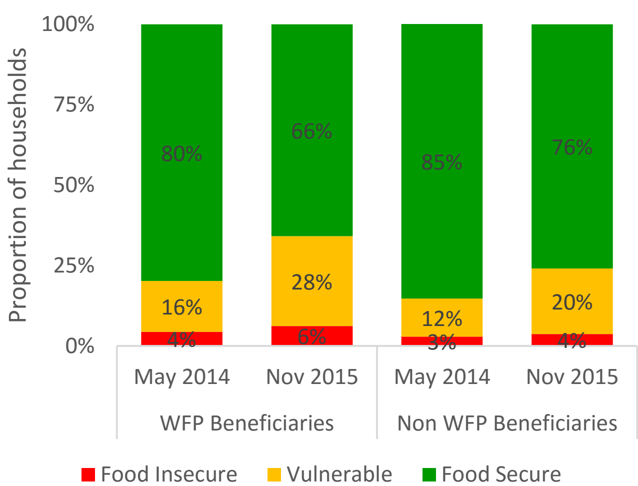


Figure 13: Food Security, urban vs. rural