

Social Assessment and Social Development Plan

Sudan SOMOUD Enhancing Community Resilience Project – Component 2 (P181490)



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
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October 2024

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Appendix 1: Phase Two Social Assessment photos and Attendees at Community Consultations June – July 2024

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ABS	Agricultural Bank of Sudan
CP	Co-operating Partner
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESRS	Environmental and Social Review
FGD	Focus group discussions
FP	Farmer Organisations
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoS	Government of Sudan
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IDP	Internally Displace Person
KII	Key informant interviews
NA	Native Administration
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
SA	Social Assessment
SDP	Social Development Plan
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SHF	Smallholder farmers
SME	Small and medium sized enterprises
SSAULTC	Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

1. Executive Summary

A Social Assessment (SA) and Social Development Plan (SDP) is a disbursement requirement under the Somoud Environmental and Social Commitment Plan. The SA and SDP seek to assess the risks and impacts of the project on indigenous and vulnerable communities, including Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities, and to provide mitigation measures for those risks. The risks were identified through a desk-based research process, involving over 30 key informant interviews and a wide literature review, and this was supplemented by field research in Northern and Kassala states as a 'phase 2 social assessment'.

The legal review highlighted no affirmative action for minorities, and some stigmatization of religious minorities. Customary mechanisms managing land and governance structures prioritize 'native' tribes and create significant obstacles to 'settler' tribes. Further the Unregistered Land Act of 1970 undermined customary claims to land.

The socio-economic context is majorly shaped by the war that broke out in April 2023 and has split the country into RSF or SAF controlled territories, and smaller pockets by other forces, and significant warfare in territories contested by RSF / SAF. This has led to widespread food insecurity across all 3 states targeted by this project (Northern, River Nile and Kassala). There are a large number of tribes spread across these states, with native / majority groups, and 'settler' communities from elsewhere in Sudan or West Africa who are usually landless, not represented within governance structures, and reliant on providing agricultural labour for livelihoods. There are also pastoralist communities in all three states, but more pronounced in Kassala.

Cultural controls on women vary among the different tribal groups, with some tribes severely constraining women's rights, with significant effects on women's ability to participate in the workforce, and ability to control income generated by working or from sale of agricultural produce. There are also significant controls on women's roles within agricultural value chains, although there have been some small modifications since the outbreak of war in April 2023.

Land registration in Northern and River Nile is fairly unique, with a narrow ribbon of land beside the Nile privately registered to smallholder farmers (SHF). Elsewhere in these states, and in Kassala, land is largely not registered, with a lack of clear ownership status over land for most SHF. Land is caught up in conflict in many different ways in the three states of project area, including competing claims among tribes, which were further complicated in locations where tribal lands were integrated into irrigation schemes or allocated to private (Gulf) investors, or were lost to dam schemes, and between herders and farmers. There are also more micro conflicts over boundaries and plot subdivision. Conflicts also occur in the over identity and racial discrimination, and over inadequate representation and inclusion. Conflict resolution mechanisms do not function well, having been politicized in the past and usually do not meet human rights standards.

Agricultural co-operatives exist widely in Sudan, including for SHF, but have a mixed history with significant politicization in the past. Many were formed to access loans, others to gain land allocation

from Government of Sudan. SHF access loans through the Agricultural Bank of Sudan, as credit from middlemen in the agricultural value or as 'shiel' credit from local businesses. There is a mixed picture on repayment rates, but an overall picture of many SHF being highly indebted and facing exploitative terms for accessing credit.

Drawing from the document review, key informant interviews, and stakeholder consultations in Northern and Kassala states, a range of risks were identified, with a particular view on vulnerable underserved traditional local communities. These vulnerable communities are typically 'settlers' from West Sudan or West Africa, who do not have land access or representation in local governance structures, but also pastoralists and women are particularly vulnerable groups. Mitigation measures have been identified to manage these risks. These are set out in part 2: Social Risks and Development Plan.

2. Introduction

The World Bank's Appraisal Environmental and Social Review (ESRS) classified the SOMOUD project as high risk (social risks) due to the on-going conflict in Sudan. Other social risks identified include (i) exclusion of indigenous people and vulnerable groups from project benefits and decision-making structures; (ii) security risks and illegal activities, such as violence, extortion, theft, armed assault, looting, and vandalism of project materials and properties; (iii) Gender Based Violence (GBV), including sexual exploitation, harassment, and abuse; (iv) weak community participation and engagement during implementation; (v) social tensions or conflict between the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and host communities over project benefits and rejection of targeting criteria; and (vi) a possible increase in IDP mobility to the project areas to benefit from the project. The ESRS also noted the volatility of project implementation areas, in particular between hosts and the significant numbers of IDPs, among other issues.

The Social Assessment (SA) and Social Development Plan (SDP) is a disbursement requirement within the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), under ESS 7: Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities. The ESCP states that WFP will undertake a SA including an SDP, implement and update these throughout implementation, including setting principles for consultation, targeting and the implementation of Component 2 activities with respect to Indigenous People / Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities (SSAUTLC).

The objective of this SA is to assess the potential impact and risks of the proposed SOMOUD project activities on Project Affected Peoples in the project area, with a particular focus on effects on Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities (SSAHUTLC), vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to enhance their project benefit sharing mechanism. It includes a mapping of ethnic minorities and indigenous people/SSAHUTLC, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups who could be adversely impacted by the project (see table 5). The SA describes the baseline situation in the project area focusing on the vulnerable social sub groups: women, youth, IDPs, settlers, nomads, agricultural and mining labour (section 6). It further describes key issues that shape social risks of relevance to this project, including access to land, land conflict, farming types, agricultural co-operatives, loans, and middlemen in agricultural value chains. Part two of this document, the SDP, identifies potential social impacts and risks of the project on project affected persons and in particular on any specific vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including indigenous peoples / SSAHUTLC. Thus the SA helps shape project implementation through providing a deep research focus of the context, with a specific focus on specific vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including indigenous peoples / SSAHUTLC, feeding into a detailed, context- and project-specific set of risks and mitigation

measures (see table 10), which are captured in in the SDP. The roles and responsibilities for implementation are documented in the Social Development Action plan (see table 11).

The SA is part of a larger package of ESS Instruments, including:

1. Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
2. Stakeholder Engagement Plan
3. Social Assessment and Social Development Plan
4. Labour Management Procedures
5. GBV/SEA/SH Action Plan
6. Integrated Pest Management Plan
7. Chance Finds Procedure
8. Security Management Plan
9. Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMF)

The approach taken is to avoid repetition / duplication between documents, and to cross reference as much as possible. The one exception to this is the ESMF, which synthesises all the risks identified and commitments made into one coherent plan. WFP and its Co-operating Partner Mercy Corps, and any subcontractors to Mercy Corps, must adhere to the instruments.

3. Methodology

3.1 The two-phase process for research for the Social Assessment

It was agreed with the WB to split the social assessment into two parts – with the initial phase (pre-effectiveness / disbursement) being desk based, and a second phase once the project had reached effectiveness / disbursement which would involve on-the-ground research and community consultations.

During the initial phase over 30 Key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted, reaching thematic specialists (gender, land, conflict, tribes, pastoralism, farming, agricultural value chains, mining) as well as deep context-specialists. The key informants are listed below. The very rich body of information provided by these experts is embedded across the entire social assessment, and a simplified summary of points specific to project design are included at Annex 1.

Table 1: Key informants in phase 1 Social Assessment

1	Akiko Sakaue	UNFPA	Sudan GBV Sub-Sector Co-ordinator
2	Asha Gaigar	SRCS	Northern State
3	Asia Abdalla	WFP	Agricultural expert
4	Basil Daffala	CSF	
5	Chris Mutisya	CRS	Private sector specialist
6	Fatmah Mohamed	UN Women	
7	Hamdein Mutwakel	WFP	ESS specialist
8	Huda Abdalla	UNFPA	SGBV specialist

9	Hussein Sulieman	University of Gederef	Pastoralist specialist
10	Imad Alibabiker	WFP	Agricultural specialist
11	Joephine Wanjiru	UN Women	
12	Khalda Adam	WFP	Gender, Protection and Conflict Sensitivity Specialist - Kassala
13	Lamya Badri	Freelance – formerly UNW Sudan	Gender specialist
14	Manasik Hosseyn	UNFPA	Northern state Focal Point
15	Mohamad Saleh	Mining specialist	
16	Dr Mohammed Hamoud Elimam	IFAD	Agriculture and Agricultural co-operatives
17	Dr Moyeldeem Taha	UNDP	land and conflict specialist
18	Prof Momoon Daw Elbeit	Central Trading Company	Director
19	Musaab Eldukheri	FAO	Agronomist and peacebuilding specialist
20	Prof Musa Adam Abdel Jalil	University of Khartoum	Director of Peace Research Institute
21	Dr Moamer Eltalib	UNFPA	Kassala
22	Mwajuma Msanji	UNFPA	Northern, River Nile, Kassala
23	Dr Omer Egemy		Peace specialist and social scientist
24	Dr Rashid Fageery	ARC	
25	Tamer Tamed Abdel Karim	SOAS / University of Khartoum	Anthropologies, Deputy Director of Peace Research Institute at University of Khartoum
26	Dr Yahya Haroon Saleh Guma	University of Gederef	Director of Peace Research Institute
27 28	Anonymous 1 & 2	LNGO: Nada Elazhar	Women-led LNGO focusing on GBV, child protection, capacity building and service provision
29	Anonymous 3	Emergency Response Room Northern State	
30	Anonymous 4	Womens-led peace and development agency Sennar state	
31	Anonymous 5	Woman running training centre for women in fruit processing - Sennar	
32	Anonymous 6	Woman running a flour mill - Sinjar	

During June-July 2024 community consultations were convened in Northern and River Nile States, to draw perspectives from potentially affected communities on the design of the project, hear their views

on possible E&S risks of the project, and how to mitigate these. The assessment also aimed to explore the best means to communicate with vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

The research was planned for all 3 States – Northern, River Nile, and Kassala States. However during the research process the team had to adapt to demands for team members to support a separate World Bank project, and so the research plan adapted slightly, focusing on Northern and Kassala States only. Selection of localities for the project were near finalization, but not complete.

As the Farmers Organisations, SMEs and Consumer Cooperatives have not yet been selected, it is not possible to engage with selected beneficiaries, instead the field assessment undertook a purposive sample from among the SSAHUTLC, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups known to be present in the selected localities. The sampling criteria were:

1. Sampling across different tribal groups with different ability to access land:
 - a. Settlements that are known as ‘seasonal labour camps’ – majority Western Sudanese or West African tribes without land
 - b. Mono-ethnic tribal settlements with land
2. Sampling specifically in locations with pastoral movements
3. Sampling specifically among tribes that have different levels of controls on women – which is largely driven by the predominant tribe
 - a. Arab tribes
 - b. West Sudanese tribes

The following stakeholders were engaged in the community consultations. In Kassala it was feasible to establish FGD with landless ‘settler’ tribes, however in Northern State permission to meet with landless agricultural labour for a FGD in a ‘seasonal labour camp’ was not feasible. KIIs were instead convened with sharecroppers and an agricultural labourer.

Table 2: Key informants and Community consultations during field research for Social Assessment Phase 2

Northern State	
Farmers Co-operatives / multipurpose co-operatives	Arti-gasha Farmer’s Co-operative – Al Bourgaig Representatives from 8 Farmers / Multipurpose Co-operatives – Merowe Representatives from multiple Farmer’s Co-operatives, Amri Scheme, Merowe
Women’s Group	Selaim Women’s Organisation - Dongola
Sharecroppers / Agricultural Labour	4 individuals (anonymous) Korba village - Dongola
Civil Society	Al Fatah Mahmoud: Council of Disabled People - Dongola
Private Sector	Baha Khairi: Ultra Farm – Food processing SME - Dongola Muawia Abdullahi: Sweet manufacturer – Dongola SME in Merowe producing food items for export
Agricultural Scheme	Al Saddiq Osman – AmriScheme, Merowe
Local Experts	Abdelraheem Hussein - WFP

	Dr Rashied Fageeri - ARC
Kassala	
Wad Sharefai – Reifi Kassala	Community members – separate FGD with men and women Women’s consumer co-operative
Awadat village – Reifi Kassala	Community members - separate FGD with men and women
Al Medina village – Wadi El Hilauw	Community members – separate FGD with men and women
Shegrab village – Khasm El Girba	Community members – separate FGD with men and women
Dar El Salaam village - Khasm El Girba	Community members – separate FGD with men and women

A summary of the findings of the field consultations is included at Annex 2, and the findings are also integrated throughout this updated report. The semi-structured interview / focus group discussion guide for the field research is included at Annex 3.

3.2 Further assessments during selection and start up

Understanding the local nuance of the identified issues continues in project start up and implementation, principally through E&S screening and assessment of a) Farmers Cooperatives, b) SMEs and c) Consumer Cooperatives. The approach for this is set out in detail in the Environment and Social Management Framework (Annexes 1-6) which detail the specific E&S questions to be integrated into the screening process as part of selection, and the needs assessment process following selection. These questions drill down further on the identified social risks, and guidance is given for the mitigation measure design. Templates are also provided for the recording of identified risks and mitigation measures (Annexes 7-9 of the Environment and Social Management Framework).

4. Legal and institutional framework and current application relevant to inclusion and empowerment of ethnic minorities, indigenous people / Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups

There are over 500 ethnic groups, speaking numerous languages and dialects in Sudan. Sudanese formal law does not identify specific indigenous groups. The 2019 Constitution, developed under the Transitional Government, includes provision 66 on ethnic and cultural groups which states: *“All ethnic and cultural groups have the right to enjoy their own private culture and develop it freely. The members of such groups have the right to exercise their beliefs, use their languages, observe their religions or customs, and raise their children in the framework of such cultures and customs.”*¹

Under the Constitutional Declaration (2019) of the Transitional Government committed to combat discrimination under Article 48 (Equality before the Law) of the Bill of Rights which states that *‘[p]eople are equal before the law and have the right to the protection of the law without discrimination between*

¹ See https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Sudan_2019

them on the basis of ethnicity, colour, gender, language, religious faith, political opinion, racial or ethnic origin, or any other reason. The Criminal Act of 1991, which discriminated against certain sects and groups, was also amended under the Transitional Government period. The Juba Peace Agreement of Oct 2020 committed to respect ethnic, religious and cultural diversity without discrimination and should be managed *“in accordance with the standards that reflect national unity”*²

The Interim Constitution committed to social and economic programmes to empower marginalized groups, in particular women and youth, including the provision of healthcare, education housing and social security. Article 32 stated *“women and men have equal entitlement to all civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights”* while Article 15 stated *“the State shall emancipate women from injustice, promote gender equality and encourage the role of women in family and public life”*.³ However despite these commitments Sudanese women continue to suffer from discrimination, exclusion and subordination at all levels, with many existing discriminatory laws failing to be revised to conform to the Interim Constitution.

The 2008 Sudanese National Elections Act takes no affirmative action for minorities: *“The act embodied no particular provisions or measures for minority representation, and no proportionate representation of minority groups was provided for. Thus, the long-lasting political exclusion of some minority groups was not addressed. This legislative shortcoming negatively affected, among other reasons, efforts to build peace and peaceful coexistence in Sudan.”*⁴ Similarly the 2003 Local Government Act provides no guidance on ethnic or religious groups: *“Sudanese. Article 27(1)(2) of the Local Government Act details the process for electing local assemblies but does not address the issue of diversity management, and article 27(2) on seat allocation mentions nothing about minorities; instead, it mentions only the system for the special and direct election of women.”*⁵ In 2007, one renown political commentator described Government of Sudan (GoS) approach to ‘indigenous’ tribes thus: *“The Sudanese state has unwittingly maintained some colonial coercive institutions and brutally deployed them against its indigenous peoples (Salih 1999, p. 1) as part of its relentless endeavour aiming at building a socio-culturally homogeneous society”*.⁶

Article 6 of the 2005 Interim National Constitution provides for religious rights, and the Bill of Rights within that interim constitution re-affirms this under Freedom of Creed and Worship. However the GoS has not been neutral towards different religious groups, and some have been stigmatized. Under Article 47 ‘Rights of ethnic and cultural communities’ the Bill of Rights states: Ethnic and cultural communities shall have the right to freely enjoy and develop their particular culture: members of such communities

² Saeed, S., (Jan 2023) [Diversity Management in Sudan’s Democratic Transitional Arrangements](#) International IDEA p10

³ Cited in Elkarib, A (Dec 2017) [Gender analysis in the context of food security](#) WFP Sudan

⁴ Saeed op cit p5

⁵ Saeed op cit p7

⁶ Komey, G., (2007) [The denied land rights of the indigenous peoples and their endangered livelihood and survival: the case of the Nuba of Sudan](#) Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol 31, Issue 5

shall have the right to practice their beliefs, use their languages, observe their religions and raise their children within the framework of their respective cultures and customs.”⁷

However customary mechanisms relating to tribal homelands and native administration do provide specific protections for access to land and governance to ‘native’ tribes, and significant obstacles to other ‘settler’ tribes, creating significant vulnerabilities for these ‘settlers.’ Customary tribal homeland provided the initial basis of rights and access to land in Sudan, providing security of tenure to settled communities and access to rangelands for specific pastoralists. These tribal homelands are synonymous with ‘indigenous peoples’ but are not formally recognized as such. These tribal homelands were accompanied by a Native Administration – formally recognized by the British colonial authorities in a three-tiered system of customary governance (Sheikh, Omda, Chief), playing a role in local justice and natural resource management.

However in 1970 the Unregistered Land Act effectively nationalized all unregistered land, denying legitimacy to customary property rights, and entitled the GoS to use force to ‘safeguard’ its land. At the same time the Native Administration were abolished as part of an agenda to ‘modernise’ governance, replacing traditional authorities with administrative councils.

The Native Administrations were re-instated under the NCP but were significantly politicised, and the 2018-29 revolution highlighted the tensions between the Native Administration and other, youth-led initiatives such as Resistance Committees.

⁷ Redress (Jan 2014) [The Constitutional Protection of Human Rights in Sudan: Challenges and Future Perspectives](#) P37

Box 1: A Summary of land law affecting smallholder farmers

Land law involves both customary and formal law, but with little interlinkages. Customary tribal homeland provided the initial basis of rights and access to land in Sudan, providing security of tenure to settled communities and access to rangelands for specific pastoralists. Under colonial era land along the Nile in Northern and River Nile states was registered as private property. The Land Resettlement and Registration Act (1925) consolidated government ownership over land by establishing that all unoccupied land is presumed to be state land, although recognized customary land rights. The Unregistered Land Act (1970) was a major shift, which nationalized all unregistered land in the country, removing any legal legitimacy to customary property rights, and entitled the GoS to us force to 'safeguard' its land. It entitled the state to grant leasehold interests to individuals and entities, in effect allocating land for commercial development without regard for customary rights.

The 1970 Unregistered Land Act was accompanied by a further Act to abolish the native Administration system, the system which have hitherto managed land in rural Sudan. In 1984 the Civil Transaction Act recognized usufruct rights

The 1970 land act had a huge impact on SHF, leaving all except those registered in the 1920s without security of tenure, uncertainty in relation to customary claims to land, and a lack of collateral to use for obtaining formal loans.

While women's right to own land is recognized in the law, land is usually held by close relatives, and where a women inherits land rights this is usually a right to use the land, but not to own it.

See Egemi, O., (2022) Land Governance and Natural Resource Based Conflicts in Sudan – Rapid Assessment Report

<https://www.land-links.org/country-profile/sudan/#:~:text=Formal%20law%2C%20including%20Islamic%20law,formally%20recognized%20by%20the%20government.>

5. Project description

The overall Project Development Objective is to improve access to basic services and food security of select communities in the Republic of the Sudan. The project is designed to complement the current humanitarian aid to Sudan by laying a foundation for medium- and longer-term development support in areas with high concentration of IDPs. It builds for the future of Sudan by restoring access to basic services and food, protecting human capital, and enhancing communities' resilience using a bottom-up approach. It is sequenced to first meet immediate basic service needs of vulnerable groups in areas of high IDP concentration and relative safety and accessibility, followed by community-led planning and implementation of medium-term basic services. To address these communities' food insecurity, the project will intervene in rural areas that provide food to the target communities where agricultural production is possible to increase resilience, enhance production of select crops, and improve accessibility and affordability of food in local markets.

It will run for 5 years, with the current SA is focused on the first three years, which will be implemented in Northern State, River Nile, and Kassala. Component 2, led by WFP, focuses on improving food security through three inter-related strands of work around agricultural production, value addition, and enhanced purchasing power of consumers:

Increasing agricultural production and resilience through farmer organisations (FOs): The project will deliver in kind grants to FOs for agricultural production equipment and inputs. The project will focus on three value chains including wheat, sorghum and horticultural production, working with smallholder farmers' groups with some capacity to enhance production. The project will aim to support 20,000 smallholder farmers within the supported FPOs by the end of year 2. This component will include procurement of inputs from small and medium sized local enterprises, such as seed provision or land tilling services, on a competitive commercial basis, and the hiring of agricultural labour to work on farms.

Enhanced value chains: Cash grants of up to 100,000 USD will be given to each Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to enhance food value addition through processing activities including – sorting, storage, drying, milling etc. Companies provided with matching grants for up to 24 months duration.

Enhanced purchasing power through formation of consumer co-operatives: Up to 20 consumer cooperatives will be supported with various in-kind support including technical training on agricultural value addition, eco-friendly cooking equipment, and management organization to enable bulk purchasing and exploit economies of scale to achieve lower food prices for vulnerable host and IDP communities. They will be supported by digital platforms enabling market informations.

Component 2 will be implemented in the following localities within the selected states:

Table 3: Selected localities for Component 2

State	Locality
Northern	Ed Debba, Al Burgaig, Dongola
River Nile	Abo Hamad, Berber, and Ed Damer
Kassala	Kassala, Reifi Wad Al Hilaiw and Reifi Khashm Elgirba

[Title of document]



6. Baseline data: existing economic and social context focusing on vulnerable groups

In April 2023 war broke out in Sudan principally in the capital Khartoum between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which had previously been part of the Sudanese security services, headed by Mohamed Hamden Dagalo (often referred to as ‘Hemedti’). Fighting also erupted in other parts of Sudan, in particular in West Darfur, and in Kordofan. The fighting in Khartoum has caused widespread destruction in the capital and remains a protracted battleground between these two sides. Conversely in West Darfur the conflict shifted to ethnic-driven violence. The UN Panel of Experts on Sudan stated: “In West Darfur (El Geneina, Siraba, Murne and Masteri) RSF and allied militias targeted the Masalit community. The RSF and allied militias systematically violated international humanitarian law. Some of these violations may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. The RSF and allied militias targeted IDP gathering sites, civilian neighbourhoods, medical facilities and committed sexual violence against women and girls.”⁸ The Eastern Region, while not facing open violence, has its own set of conflict drivers related to tensions between different tribal groups, and a SAF recruitment drive in Eastern Sudan has fueled competition between tribes. As of June 2024 the majority of Darfur was in the control of the RSF, the East and North of the Sudan under control of SAF, and pockets of control by other groups, notably the SPLM-N (Al Hilu) having expanded the territory of the ‘Two Areas’ in South Kordofan / Blue Nile, and SLA-AW (Abdel Wahid) in Jebel Marra in Central Darfur. SLA-MM (Minni Minawi) and JEM (Gibril Ibrahim) also control territories in North Darfur. In early 2024 SAF has made some small inroads into RSF held areas, in Khartoum.

6.1 Key economic and food security data

Emergency Food Security Assessments conducted by WFP in Northern and River Nile States in Sept 2023 for both IDPs and the host community, and for new IDPs hosted by relatives in Kassala state in Nov 2023 identified the following key economic and food security data:

Northern State 9% of the population were moderately food insecure⁹, with Al Daba having the highest level of food insecurity. Across all localities 82% of households spend more than 65% of their expenditure on food. 22% of households are women-headed households. The main livelihood activities are shown in the chart below, with the primary source of income being informal transfers, including remittances (46% of households rely on this) – this was prior to the phone network outage.

⁸ Final Report of UN Panel of Experts on the Sudan

⁹ At the time of the assessment this was 94,328 IDPs. At current IOM Displacement Tracking Monitoring this would amount to 32,321 IDPs.

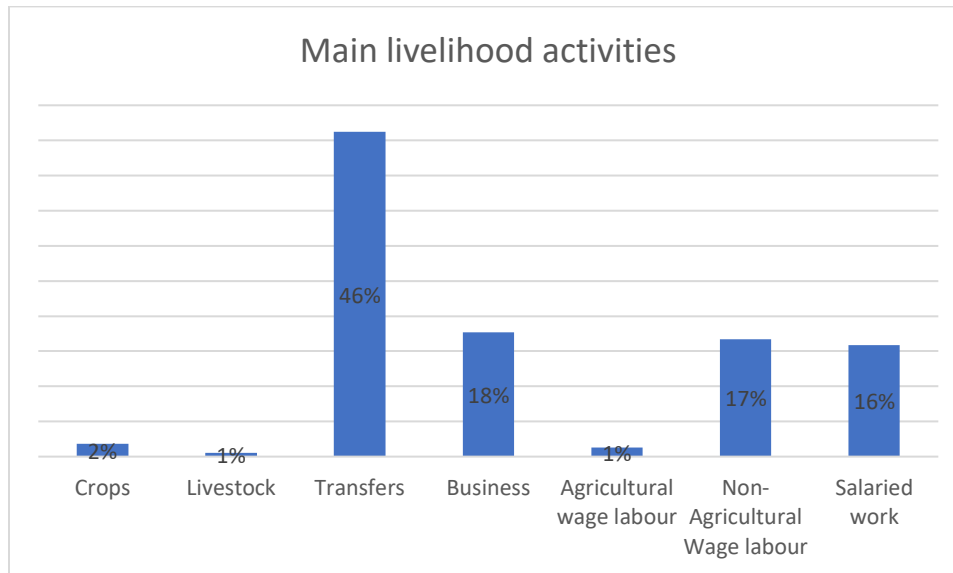


Table 4: Northern State: Main livelihood activities, Sept 2023¹⁰

River Nile State 30% of the population were moderately food insecure¹¹, and a further 5% severely food insecure, with particularly concerning situation in Ad Damer (14% severely food insecure). Across all localities 91% of households spend more than 65% of their expenditure on food. 24% of households are women-headed households. The main livelihood activities are shown in the chart below, with the primary source of income being non-agricultural wage labour (33% of households rely on this) with 24% reliant on informal transfers, including remittances, prior to phone network outage.

¹⁰ WFP (Oct 2023) Emergency Food Assessment in Northern State

¹¹ At the time of the assessment this was 25,504 IDPs. At current IOM Displacement Tracking Monitoring this would amount to 234,078 IDPs.

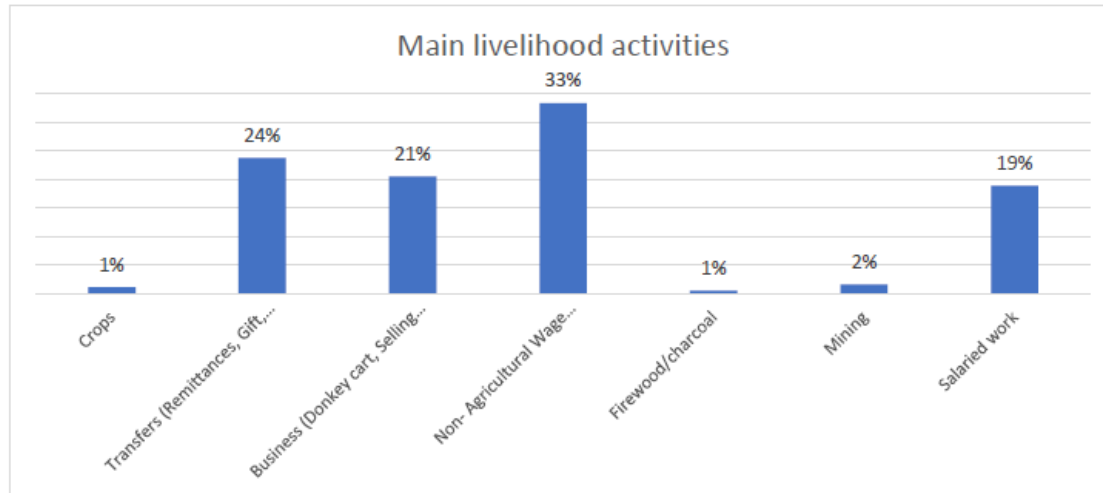
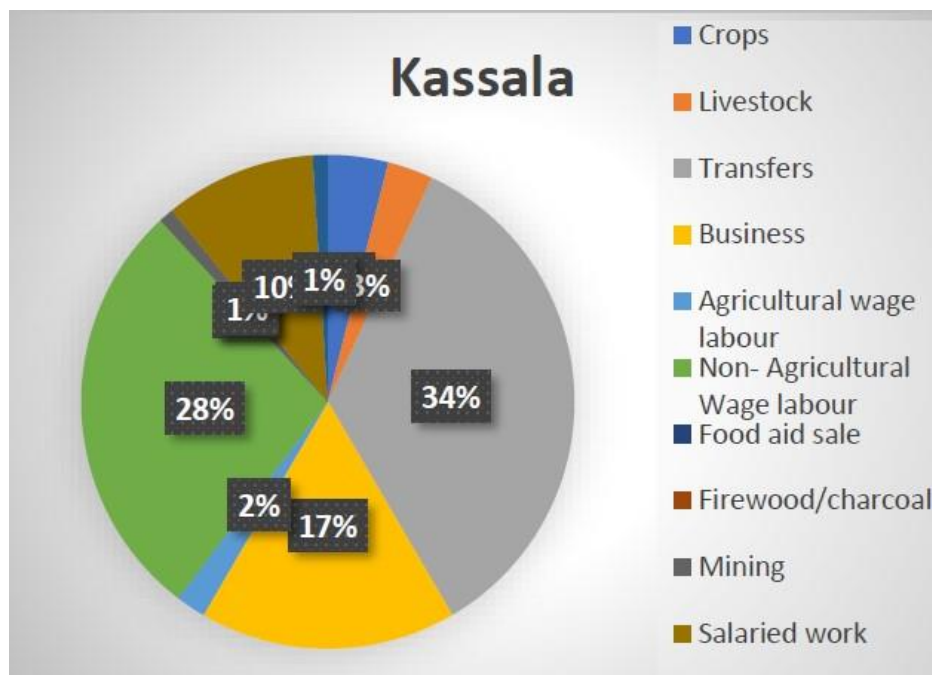


Table 5: River Nile State: Main livelihood activities, Sept 2023¹²

Kassala State: 74% of newly displaced IDPs hosted by relatives are food insecure, with food insecurity highest in Aroma and Girba. The main livelihood activities among these hosted IDPs are shown in the chart below, with the primary source of income being transfers (34% of households rely on this) followed by non-agricultural wage labour (28% of households are reliant on this). 14% of the newly displaced residing with residents cannot afford one local food basket.



¹² WFP (Sept 2023) Emergency Food Security Assessment in River Nile State

[Title of document]



Table 6: Kassala State: Main livelihood activities, Nov 2023¹³

¹³ WFP (Nov 2023) New IDPs hosted by their relatives in Kassala and Gaderef States

6.2 Tribal / ethnic mapping

The following table sets out the main tribes across all three states, drawn from key informant interviews and compiled specifically for this assessment.

Table 7: Tribal mapping of the project states

Northern	<p>Shaigiya / Shawiga – largest tribe in this state, and most of this tribe are found in this state. Many are settled with land growing dates and citrus fruits. Strongly conservative towards women. Some inter-marriage with Nubians.</p> <p>Shawiyahad– minor sub-branch</p>	<p>Nubian tribes: Halfaween, Danagla, Mahas – less conservative towards women compared to Arab tribes.</p>	
River Nile State	<p>Jaalian – largest tribe in this state. Very strongly conservative towards women.</p> <p>Shagigya – minority tribe in this state. Have land. Some intermarriage with Jaalian.</p> <p>Robotap – A subtribe of Jaalian. Large tribe in this area. Also, very strongly conservative towards women</p> <p>Manasir – Significantly affected by the Merowe dam</p> <p>Hamdab – Also significantly affected by the Merowe dam</p> <p>Amri</p> <p>Bushareen – fully nomadic with camels, not settled anywhere but use land.</p> <p>Haraween – fully nomadic with camels, not settled anywhere but use land.</p> <p>Kebabish</p>		<p>Berber – historically settled from North Africa but are largely now perceived as Arab tribe.</p>
Kassala	<p>Beja – considered ‘indigenous’ with several important sub-tribes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hadendawa - This is the largest group, mainly in North Kassala in the Gash delta and pastoral land. • Bani Amer – there is some debate over whether they are a sub-tribe or not. They are derogatorily regarded as ‘foreigners’ from Eritrea. They received citizenship under Bashir’s regime and are close to the NCP. They are spread from Eritrean border to Atbara River • Bisharin • Amarer • Halenga – small subtribe mainly in Kassala town <p>Badawit – from Northern state</p> <p>Rashida – Bedouin nomads, settled from Saudi Arabia. Land was granted to Rashida.</p>	<p>Nuba</p> <p>Halfawiyyan (Sub-tribe of Nuba) mainly based in Khasm al Girba / Half Al Jedidah</p> <p>Fur – Darfuri farmers who settled since 1950s.</p> <p>Zagawa - Darfuri farmers who settled since 1950s.</p>	<p>Hausa – settled from Nigeria</p>

	Shagiyya – settled in 19 th century, mainly in towns and in Gash basin Jaalian – as for Shagiyya Zebadiaya – nomads with camels and small ruminants Habab Shukriyya		
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With the selection of localities now completed, the tribal mapping has been further developed to map tribes for each of the selected localities.

Table 8: Detailed tribal mapping by locality

State	Locality	Main Tribes	Minorities
Northern	Ed Debba	Bederia	Hawaweir – Hassaina- west Sudanese- Nuba
	Al Burgaig	Danagala- Mahas-	South Sudansese -Nuba-West Sudanese
	Dongola	Danagla- Mahas -Halfawin- Shawiga- Bederia	Kababish- Hawawier- west Sudanese
River Nile	Abo Hamad	Rubatab	Shawiga- Jalein- Nuba
	Berber	Jalalien	Nuba- Shawaiga- “Nagada” West Sudan
	Ed Damer	Jaalien	Shawiga- Danagla- Nuba-West Sudan- Manaseir
Kassala	Kassala	Beni Amer Beja, Hadandawa, Hausa	West Sudanese tribes’ Barno, Fulani, Bargo, Nuba, shawaiga
	Reifi Wad Al Hilaiw	Mixed tribe; Humran, Hausa, Takareer, lehween	Dajo, Fulani, Barno, Bargo, Hadandawa
	Reifi Khashm Elgirba	Lahween, Shukria, Bini Amer, Hassania	Mixed west Sudanese tribes, “Four, Hausa, Fulani, Berno

6.3 Settlers

All three states in the project area have experienced waves of migrations going back over hundreds of years, mostly from within Sudan, but also a significant population from West Africa. The terms ‘native’ and ‘settler’ carry strong connotations - as noted under section 4, there are very significant differences between designation as ‘native’ or ‘settler’ in Sudan, and even migrants from other parts of Sudan are considered ‘settlers’ (or at least ‘non-native’) if they are from other tribes. Settlers face significant exclusions and vulnerabilities: there is a strong cultural code prohibiting sales of land to non ‘natives’ (particularly Northern and River Nile States) and settlers do not have representation within the Native Administration – they must instead defer to the host tribe ‘native’ structures. There is also some racism towards African farming tribes, who are perceived as former slaves, a legacy of a slave trade in the 1800s where African tribes were taken from the Nuba Mountains and Darfur by Arab traders to work in Sennar and River Nile States. The slave trade ended during the colonial period, and while some former

slaves returned to their point of origin, others remained, and became agricultural workforce, without any land of their own. There is more trust towards these longer-term settlers, but there is no intermarriage, they are considered lower class. There is significant sensitivity around this issue. In some locations settlers are in satellite camps referred to as 'seasonal labour' – although these settlements are permanent and have often been present for over 40 years. In other locations they live within the 'native' community. There were previously laws preventing settlers from building in long lasting materials, which left them not only disadvantaged and vulnerable, but also very distinguishable.

Denied the opportunity to own land, these settlers sometimes work as agricultural labour or take on sharecropping, and work within customary laws about the division of the crop – 1/3 to landowner, 1/3 to provider of the provider of the sapling, and 1/3 to the planter farmer. Community consultations in Kassala identified that female sharecroppers are particularly exploited – with female sharecroppers able to retain 33-50% of their crop compared to male counterparts retaining up to 75%. With many families fleeing Khartoum and Jazeira, where these agricultural labourers have been able to rent land they will likely now be evicted. Significant numbers of men in these settler populations have become miners (see 6.8 below). There have been different waves of settlers to Northern, River Nile and Kassala states, with different levels of integration, described in the following sections.

6.3.1 Kassala

There have been many waves of settlers in Kassala. The Beja trace their roots back to 4,000 BC, and as such are considered 'indigenous' tribe. Other Arab tribes have settled over several centuries, with the Shagiyya and Jaalin in 19th century especially in the Gash basin and South of Kassala town.

Western Sudanese, West Africans and Eritreans began settling as landless waged labour principally after the railway 1930s, and from 1960s-70s to work on the new large irrigated and mechanized farms. In 1964 there was a large resettlement of Nubians from Old Nubia to Halfa Al Jedidah, and during Eritrean war 1960s-70s there was a large influx of Eritrean refugees, including Bani Amer, Baria, Saho, Maria, Bilen and Tigrayen. In the 1980s there were several waves of IDPs who came from the Nuba mountains during drought to settle in Kassala. The Nubians do not own land, and similarly agricultural labour from Darfur (Zagawa, Fur) which came to work on sugar cane plantations do not own land. In some locations these settlers live in satellite villages described as 'temporary agricultural labour' or 'seasonal labour camps' although they have remained present for some decades, such as at New Halfa. The agricultural labour from Darfur are particularly marginal and vulnerable communities. In Girba locality in particular this was identified – where some settlements had face a deliberate hostile environment from the state which had refused to recognize the settlement and thus did not provide services, and had faced the threat of forced relocation over a long period, although this threat is now waning.

While Kassala is principally Beja, there is much ethnic diversity, especially around the irrigated schemes of Khasm Al Girba (Halfa Al Jadida) and Rahad. However, there is a strong tendency for clustering in rural and urban areas with communities in mono-ethnic groups (in towns there are tribal quarters), with local languages maintained. The Hausa community in particular are often in completely separate locations. There are several significant tribal groups in Kassala, and these are mirrored in Red Sea State (but with different proportions) with the result that tribal clashes in Kassala often spill over into Red Sea State and vice versa.

6.3.2 Northern and River Nile

in the 1980s famine many nomads of the Batuda desert who lost their cattle settled in satellite villages near existing settlements in Northern and River Nile. They provide cheap agricultural and general labour. There are strong cultural codes prohibiting land sales to non 'natives', although there is some inter-marriage and mixing with the 'native' community. These settlers are not expected to be part of agricultural co-operatives. Some specific tensions have emerged over land 'loaned' to settlers (see land below). Tensions can emerge between waves of settlers, due to resource competition. The community consultations in Northern State also identified a satellite village of Nuba / West Sudanese tribes without land, indicating the existence of 'seasonal labour camp' in this area.

The current conflict has led to an ethnic polarization in River Nile and Northern State, with a significant shift against settler communities. As SAF has sought to mobilise and arm the youth in these two states against the RSF there has been much media coverage denouncing the RSF and using ethnic language and discussing sleeper cells of RSF support (referred to as 'social incubators'). All people from Western Sudan are now assumed to be supporters of RSF, irrespective of their tribal origin, completely ignoring the violence of Arab tribes against African tribes in and around El Geniema in West Darfur. This is having significant effects on ethnic relations in River Nile State in particular and is also making settlers from Western Sudan collectively vulnerable including to arrest: there has been a significant increase in arrests of people from Darfur by police who want to run identity checks. This polarization appears to be having some perverse outcomes: Some IDPs from Darfur did join the RSF, their motivation understood to be due to a sense of marginalization prior to April 2023. Following an intervention by Minni Minawi with the Wali of River Nile State, a committee was established to verify the identity of settled Darfuris and public statements made to counter widespread rumours. Longer term 'settlers' are more likely to be able to prove their identity, meaning that IDPs since April 2023 are mostly likely to face difficulties proving they are not associated with the RSF.

6.4 Pastoralist communities

In Sudan, a wide spectrum of mobility exists among pastoral groups, from entire families moving with their herds, to only a section of the family moving with livestock while a part remains settled (called transhumance), to entire families remaining settled, either hiring labour to move with the herd or having given up herding altogether. Mobility patterns also vary in different parts of the country.

In all three states there are nomadic communities, in Northern and River Nile these are mainly nomads with camels, whereas in Kassala there are nomads with cattle as well as camels. In Northern state there are also some Arab nomadic communities with no cattle at all, who travel between communities doing small jobs, selling handicrafts, begging, and are believed to steal. They face discrimination from the settled population. Both nomads with and without camels are not welcomed by the 'native' community. Large investment projects in Northern state have confused the movements of pastoralists.

Many studies exist of pastoralists in the Gederef region of Sudan, but far fewer of the 3 states in the project area. The main studies highlight the reduction in herder routes (often due to farm expansion), the degradation of routes (in particular loss of vegetation cover) and rest spots that are small and degraded. A passing herd can only access a village hafir if it has sufficient water, and in some locations herders cannot move between corridors. Conflicts emerge between farmers and herders when cattle

trespass into planted farmland, and in many places farms have expanded into pastoral corridors, pastureland, and to enclose hafirs making them inaccessible during growing season. In some places cattle routes are more clearly marked, in others areas no route marking has been undertaken, or the route markers have been removed by farmers expanding into this land.

Since the outbreak of war in April 2023 some pastoralists have been changing migration patterns, to avoid conflict or risky areas. This has meant herders remaining in farming areas once crops are planted, when usually they would leave to other pasture areas, with a consequent increase in crop trampling and conflict. This compounds several other longer-term trends of climate change causing rainfall variability, which affects pasture availability, and the employment of younger herders, who do not always know the established routes. The juddiyya system, involving local elders (Ajaweed) provides a conflict resolution mechanism to handle problems of animal trespass.

6.5 Women in the workforce

There are extensive cultural controls on women, which have a major effect on women's ability to participate in the labour force, engage in consultation, and benefit from this project. Women are confined to the home in many parts of Sudan and forbidden from accessing markets. There are variations between different states, and within states, and these have also evolved since the major displacements following the outbreak of war in April 2023. Kassala is known as the most conservative state in Sudan, in which women's rights are severely constrained for Arab tribes in particular – in some areas women cannot even leave their home unaccompanied (Hameshkoreib) while among other Arab tribes women may be allowed to work in their own kitchen gardens or the family field but not as agricultural labour on the fields of others, while women from West Sudanese 'settler' communities in Kassala can work as agricultural labour on the fields of others. Significant variations in women's roles in farming among, and between, communities, was also observed in the community consultations:

- Awadat (Kassala) Halenga majority tribe: women are not allowed to be farmers and have almost no information about the farming activities of their husbands. Women used to be involved in farming, but the controls on women have increased and they have been excluded from farming. Hausa minority tribe: women work as agricultural labour, and get paid less than men.
- Dar Es Salaam (Kassala) Lahaween tribe: only old women or women headed households can work in farming
- Artigasha (Northern) Danagla tribe: women can work in husbands field , they can work as agric. laborers in other farms as well, and get paid.
- Almedina village (Kassala) Mixed Hausa / West Sudanese tribes: women getting increasing role in farming, due to economic needs
- Amri scheme (Northern) Manaseer tribe: 25% of land is farmed by women.
- Wad Sherifai (Kassala) W Sudanese / West African tribes: women are active farmers and in FCs

Some progress has been made in building buy-in among men to allow women in these conservative communities to engage in a small selection of income generating activities (perfume making, traditional

handicrafts). Northern state is also particularly conservative. Nationally, workforce participation was 29.1% for women, and 68.1% for men in 2021.¹⁴

Across Sudan as a whole, women are increasingly working outside the household to provide an income for their families since the outbreak of war, commonly in roles such as selling tea, cleaning houses, and doing laundry. Women remain responsible for domestic labour in the household, and this has increased since April since schools have been closed and children are at home. Combining domestic labour with agricultural work, women typically work a significantly longer day than men – for instance in South Darfur women work an average of 11 hours per day (varying between 6 and 16 hrs) while men on average work just 3 hrs per day.¹⁵ Research has shown there is a shift in household composition, with fewer men present, who are absent through injury / death in the conflict, active participant in the war, or migration for work.¹⁶

6.5.1 Women in agriculture and agricultural value chains

Women’s work on farms is usually hidden – for instance research in South Kordofan showed that women often participate substantially in work that is deemed ‘man’s work’ and their input is not acknowledged – for instance clearing of land for cultivation, conventionally understood as a ‘man’s job’, was shown to be distributed among men (42%), women (37%) and children (21%).¹⁷ Women’s contribution is often invisible yet sizeable, while the ‘farmer’ is usually conceived as male among policy makers, service providers (including for information provision), and developers of new farm technology, resulting in gender blind approaches.¹⁸

Land is almost exclusively owned by men, and when females inherit land this is usually only for use, not to own: the justification put forward is that women may marry men from another tribe and this would cause the breakup of lands. In some tribes’ women as a collective have been allocated land to use on an annual basis (Such as in South Darfur) but this is typically far from the village and the hardest land to till. One project experience shared from River Nile State by a local women-led NGO identified that, even though the tribal leadership had agreed to allocate a certain plot of land to a group of women, once the land had been prepared for planting it was taken back and allocated to a man. Without any collateral, women farmers are unable to access micro-credit. Women farmers do use the ‘shail system’ for agricultural loans, although this is exploitative (see section 6.13 agricultural loans).

Where women do own or rent land and have full control of the farm decisions and do all the work, the majority of their production is consumed by the household. However, the marketing of any surplus is exclusively handled by men – resulting in any income generated being controlled by the husband or other male relative.¹⁹ In Kassala for instance if a husband takes the wife’s surplus crop to market he

¹⁴ UN DESA. n.d. “Sudan.” UNdata. Accessed July 31, 2023. <http://data.un.org/en/iso/sd.html> cited in Whipkey, K., (2023) Rapid Gender Analysis Sudan – Khartoum, Al Gezira, East Darfur, South Darfur CARE p10

¹⁵ Elkarib, A (2019) Study on women farmer’s post-harvest losses reduction project WFP Sudan

¹⁶ Whipkey, K., (2023) op. cit.

¹⁷ Elkarib, A., (2017) Gender Analysis in the Context of food security WFP

¹⁸ Elkarib (2019) op. cit.

¹⁹ Elkarib (2019) op. cit.

usually keeps 50% of the sale value.²⁰ This is also the case where women work on the family farm – men control all sales of produce and so control all income. In some situations women work more than men on land owned and controlled by men, and still face this economic exploitation. A pilot project in Sennar run by a local NGO, supporting women to enhance agricultural production in kitchen gardens (small plots of land connected to house), who then sold their surplus production, found the majority of women were unable to control how the money they generated was spent.²¹ It appears that women are paid the same rate for agricultural labour as men, where women are allowed to work on the farms of others.

Women sharecroppers appear to face significant exploitation in farming. The FGDs in Kassala found women sharecroppers retaining 33-50% of their crop, while male sharecroppers retained 75% - thus landowners appear to be exploiting women in particular. In Awadat village (Kassala) women were provided with inputs by an INGO, and granted a plot of collective land to work, but once they had prepared the land and planted the crop it was taken over by the men and the women were excluded.

Women's roles within agricultural value chains are limited to cheese and yoghurt making, poultry and the processing and preserving of fruit and vegetables at a micro scale (within the home). All other roles in the value chain are culturally prescribed as 'men's work', although the research did identify two promising women-led initiatives in Sennar state: One is a small flour mill owned and run by a woman inside her house, who purchases grains, mills them, and then processes these into food for sale (soup, biscuits etc). The other is a woman IDP from Khartoum who has established a training centre in fruit, vegetable and dairy processing, and provides training to both men and women. In River Nile State one womens-led local NGO noted that while women may do a lot of work in the family farm, they do not have a role in food processing.

Key informants in Sennar and Northern State commented on some observed changes since the outbreak of war in April 2023 and the influx of IDPs principally from Khartoum, and now also from Wad Medani. As noted above, women are largely forbidden from attending markets, although there are some small shifts in this observed since April, with women making small increments in freedoms to engage in market activity, including selling homemade food items or groceries in the market or from the home, and retaining income from sales.

While small shifts in the mobility of women and their involvement in food processing and sale has been anecdotally observed since April 2023, this research identified different perspectives on the scope of women to participate in decision making. Observations in Northern State found women more engaged in decision making in relief committees, while other research found that, despite women taking on more income generating responsibilities, they had no additional decision making within the household.²²

These trends raise important questions about the approach of the project towards women's roles in value chains: should the project work within the existing cultural norms that severely limit women's

²⁰ KII – Kassala Women's led LNGO

²¹ This was a small pilot of 35 women, of which only 30% were able to spend the income generated from their agricultural produce as they had intended. This was in the context of an outbreak of war, although within a state not involved in the conflict.

²² Whipkey (2023) op. cit.

roles within the economy, and represent a form of structural violence against women, or should the project challenge these norms and seek to expand the scope of acceptable economic opportunities for women?

6.5.2 Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) is extremely widespread in Sudan, although data is scarce and reporting is limited since this usually triggers reprisals. This topic is discussed in the GBV/SEA/SH Action Plan – see that document for a discussion of forms and prevalence.

6.6 Children and Youth

A child is anyone under the age of 18 in Sudan. Children are widely expected to work on their family’s farm. Children also work as paid agricultural labour on the farms of others, although one respondent in Northern state noted that child labour is not preferred as children require more supervision and do not work as efficiently as adults. The community consultations identified that In Northern State 12-13 year olds were common, while in Kassala State 10 year olds were common, and young as 7. In some places they are paid the same as adults, but in some places they are paid less. One respondent in Sennar noted that children also work in restaurants, and are paid a lower wage than adults for their labour.

Youth in Sudan played a key role in the December 2018 revolution that led to end of the Bashir regime. Again in 2021 youth were at the forefront of protests at the coup that overthrew the Transitional Government. They have been key players in the ongoing revolutionary efforts within the Resistance Committees, and since April 2023 have been very active in establishing Emergency Response Rooms to provide humanitarian relief within Khartoum and across the country.

6.7 Recently arrived IDPs since April 2023

Table 9: Key data on recently arrived IDPs as at March 2024²³

Northern State 403,020 IDPs	56 % female and 44% male 51% below 17 years of age. 84% are accommodated in the host community, 8% in schools and public buildings, 8% in rented accommodation. The greatest priority needs include food security (72%), health (70%) and livelihoods (70%)
River Nile State 711,488 IDPs	50% female and 50% male 54% below 17 years of age 78% are accommodated in the host community, 7% in schools and public buildings. 16% in rented accommodation The greatest priority needs include food security, health, livelihoods, and non-food items (all 91%)
Kassala State 179,993 IDPs	55 % female and 45 % male 49 % below 17 years of age 73 % accommodated in the host community, 8 % in schools and public buildings. 18 % in rented accommodation The greatest priority needs include food security (77%) and health (76 %)

²³ IOM (Feb 2024) Displacement Tracking Matrix – Monthly Displacement Overview (06)

One key informant highlighted that there has been a number of people fleeing Khartoum who have returned to Northern / River Nile and taken back land which had been rented for many years to others, and these renter farmers (potentially 'settler' communities) are now displaced locally. These returnees may not have sufficient skills for a successful farm. Farmers fleeing from Jazeria or other farming areas may also seek to rent farmland in Northern, River Nile and Kassala, and this may increase the rental price of farmland. Women IDPs from Khartoum are facing significant additional cultural controls, which is influencing mental wellbeing.

The community consultations identified that in several locations it was clear that IDPs would not be provided with land, for instance the Amri Scheme (Merowe) and the Arti-gasha FC (Al Bourgaig). IDPs appear to be accessing land through reclaiming inherited land, and there is little known about the effects of this, in particular if there were previously people renting this land (possibly 'settler' tribes who do not otherwise have land access). The consultations did not provide insights on this issue. WFP's other resilience project in Northern State – SEWPP – has worked with IDP farmers in the 2023-4 growing season who have been provided land in FCs, Government Schemes and on inherited lands, so the provision of land to IDPs does occur.

6.8 Agricultural labour and mining

In Northern state it was observed that agricultural labour is paid according to area of land covered, and since 'natives' are experienced and fast, they typically earn more per day than new IDPs. Some farmers have a poor reputation and do not always pay the labourers, possibly due to over burden of loan repayments. The mechanism for recruiting agricultural labour in villages in Northern State involves middlemen who link up people seeking work with farmers seeking labour. The demand for agricultural labour is low, restricted to specific seasons (clearing land, planting, harvesting) and is usually sourced from within a community.

Over the last 10-15 years there has been a significant growth in mining, often attracting people who were previously working as agricultural labour in Northern and River Nile states. Some have shifted over fully to mining, others move seasonally between agriculture labour and mining: Nov – Mar as agricultural labour, the rest of the year as miners. Mining towns are often far from cities, with no real state involvement – no police or services. Miners are exclusively male, usually 15-35 yrs old, and child miners face much abuse – sexually, economically, and harassment. Miners retain about 30% of what they mine – the remainder is appropriated by landowners and traders, many miners make nothing from mining, and some miners are stuck at the mine sites, unable even to afford to return home. There are over 2m miners in Northern and River Nile State, mostly in River Nile State.

Mining requires a lot of fuel, which can be difficult to obtain. Farmers with 10 feddan or more have preferential access to fuel, many sell their fuel to miners as this generates a greater profit than growing crops.

6.9 Land

Land registration in Northern and River Nile States is very different to other parts of Sudan. Agricultural plots proximate to the River Nile (a narrow margin either side of the Nile) were registered in the 1920s,

with clear demarcation between what is privately owned land, and what is government owned land. This land has been handed down through inheritance within the same families across many generations, and while it can be sold, there is a strong social code that it not be sold to ‘settlers.’ There have been instances of compulsory government purchases of the land as part of dam building projects – see section 6.11.1 on the Merowe dam which affected Smallholder farmers in Northern State in 2006-2009).

Land in Kassala, and outside this narrow strip of registered land along the Nile in Northern and River Nile States is largely not registered, and has been subject to land legislation that is complex, and has resulted in lack of clear ownership of land for most smallholder farmers (SHF) see Box 1 on key elements of land law that have affected security of tenure for smallholder farmers. Long-established farmland along the Gash river (Kassala) has well established land claims, but most other land has no land title and improvements to land can trigger competition in Kassala.

6.9.1 Farming in Kassala, River Nile and Northern States

In Kassala, there are several agricultural schemes, the first dating back to the 1870s on Gash River, further developed in 1923, followed by the New Halfa scheme in 1964, and the Rahad scheme in 1980. However, by 1970s there were increasing reports of the failures of these schemes, the Gash scheme in particular, including that it was running at a loss by 1980s.

In Northern and River Nile there are three types of farming, all of which are proximate to the River Nile:

River banks: Small holdings on land that used to be regularly flooded by the Nile until dams were built upstream. They typically do not use modern agricultural techniques and remain within a family and inherited across generations.

Middle Terrace: These holdings are typically larger than those on the bank, but vary in size. Some of this land is owned by the user, much is rented from GoS. There are some rights of use assigned to specific families, which is inherited.

High Terrace: These holdings are large and use modern techniques and wells. Land is either leased from GoS or has been sold to international investors, in particular from the Gulf States, who use this land to grow export crops including potatoes and alfalfa for animal feed.

6.10 Drivers of conflict

Competition for land has contributed to the strengthening of tribal identities, based around the concept of ‘tribal lands’. This became bound up with alliances as different groups sought to become recognized, be allocated land and roles within the Native Administration governance structures.

There have been intermittent tribal conflicts over the past years, which increased since April 2019. The Eastern track of the JPA heightened tribal tensions, and the Beja rejected it entirely stating it lacked inclusive and adequate representation. Key drivers of conflict are:

Identity and racial discrimination – The 2019 revolution triggered grievances among the Beja community, who perceived that newcomer tribes have been given equal if not more rights in their region. There is a narrative of ‘citizen’ and ‘foreigner’ with the Bani Amer portrayed as ‘foreigners’ from

Eritrea. There has been much negative stereotyping between the Beja and the Bani Amer, and a prevailing belief that an individual is only as strong as their tribe, which feeds a competitive mindset.

Inadequate representation and inclusion – Local administrative structures are based on ethnic representation, which is also tied up with ‘tribal lands’. The rejection of the Eastern Track by Hadendowa reflected that it was negotiated by the Bani Amer. The Hadendowa had previously held a close relationship with the NCP and have lost this patron since the 2019 revolution. By making alliances with political parties the Rashayda achieved tribal representation in local governance and became powerful. Conversely the Lahawiyyan, who settled at a similar time to the Rashayda, affiliated to the Shukkriyya rather than seek recognition as an autonomous entity. They were excluded from the development of mechanized agriculture and were not supported in the 1980s-90s drought.

Conflict over land - The in-migration of different tribes has caused long standing conflicts among tribes over claims to tribal lands. The Rashayda have been in conflict with the Hadendowa as they are perceived to be intruding on Hadendowa land. The Zebidaya are in conflict with the Bani Amer over land, as they are perceived to be intruding on Bani Amer land.

Herder – farmer conflict - the degradation of animal routes, loss of grazing lands and lack of clearly designated water sources, resulting in animals entering farmland. (See above on pastoralism).

Climate change – causing the loss of crops and water and increasing competition over water.

Weak and polarized conflict resolution mechanisms – peace mechanisms have been politicised and have lost much respect, particularly since the role of the Native Administration in 2021

6.10.1 Conflicts over land relevant to smallholder farming

There are a range of conflicts over land used by smallholder farmers:

Boundary disputes: Conflicts over the boundaries of agricultural plots between different families

Subdivision of plots: Conflicts over internal boundaries within a plot among members of the same family inheriting the plot

Farmer / herder conflict: Similar to the elsewhere in Sudan, conflict among farmers and herders arises where herds damage crops, where migration routes become blocked by farms that have been expanded onto migration routes, or water points are made inaccessible by farmers. Climate change, with consequent effects on availability of water and pasture, is also causing shifts in routes and contributing to these problems. Farmer-herder conflicts occur in Kassala.

Tribal claims to land: In-migration of different tribes has caused long standing conflicts among tribes over claims to tribal lands in Kassala. See conflict over land above.

Allocation of land in irrigation schemes: In Kassala irrigated and mechanized agriculture has resulted in new forms of land conflict, as irrigation projects were undertaken on land considered ‘tribal lands’ by one group, and once irrigated the land was then given to other tribal groups. This included:

- Gash delta – the land is claimed by the Hadendowa, the new irrigation schemes did maintain a majority of Hadendowa (65%) but also introduced Hausa and Borno West African sharecroppers into this area
- Khasm Al Girba (New Halfa) – the land was claimed by Shukriyya, the newly irrigated land was given to resettled Nubians and other pastoral groups as well as Nile Riverarians. Several ethnic groups coalesced around their specific interests and rights in Khasm Al Girba scheme:
 - Halfawi (resettled Nubians)
 - Arab groups (Butana pastoral groups and Beja-speaking groups who got tenancies)
 - Settlers from Western Sudan or West Africa who did not get tenancies so can only work as share croppers or waged labour

Annual registration of land in irrigation schemes: Land titles are not held by individuals – farmers need to register with the Ministry of Agriculture to use specific land (including small plots of 3-5 feddan), and they need to re-register annually. If the farmer does not re-register, the land can be allocated to others, leading to conflict. More recently the GoS instructed farmers to form groups of 20-30 farmers and register together, however some farmers are not aware of this (re)registration process, and others instead register, thus the incumbent loses claim to the land.

Large scale foreign investment: The Unregistered Land Act of 1970 effectively nationalised all unregistered land in the country. Very little land was registered at the time, thus historic claims to land were undermined, and the government was able to over-ride customary understandings of land claims and provide land to investors. In 2013 the National Investment Encouragement Act was passed to accelerate foreign investment in land, and until now over 800,000 hectares of agricultural land has been acquired by Gulf investors, principally on the upper terraces of the Nile, where heavily water intensive farming practices are used to grow crops such as alfalfa which is exported back to the Gulf and used as camel fodder. Over the time period 2013-2023 approximately \$53bn was invested by Gulf states in agricultural land²⁴

6.10.2 Conflict resolution

The Native Administration (NA), rural courts, the Juddiya and specific local committees are various informal conflict resolution mechanisms available in Sudan – the mechanisms vary in different locations. Research by the Joint IDP Profiling Service in Darfur found that less than one third of population would approach any of these to resolve a conflict, as they were not felt to be able to handle issues relating to land or security²⁵.

The NA is responsible for allocation and administration of land, including resolving conflict over land. The NA was undermined through GoS legislation that abolished the system in 1971. In 1986 the GoS re-instated the NA, but with NA representatives being appointed by GoS, which politicised them and weakened their claims to legitimate representatives of the tribe. In some locations there are competing NA systems. In addition to losing credibility, the proliferation of small arms further undermines the

²⁴ Middle East Monitor 24th May 2023 <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20230524-sudan-fighting-threatens-50bn-gulf-investments/>

²⁵ Peacebuilding Fund Sudan JIPS (Oct 2021) [Thematic Brief: Strengthening the Rule of Law and conflict resolution mechanisms](#)

effectiveness of mediated approaches. However, they remain a key entry point for aid programming in any location. The NA also allocate resources within communities, and seek to be involved in targeting processes.

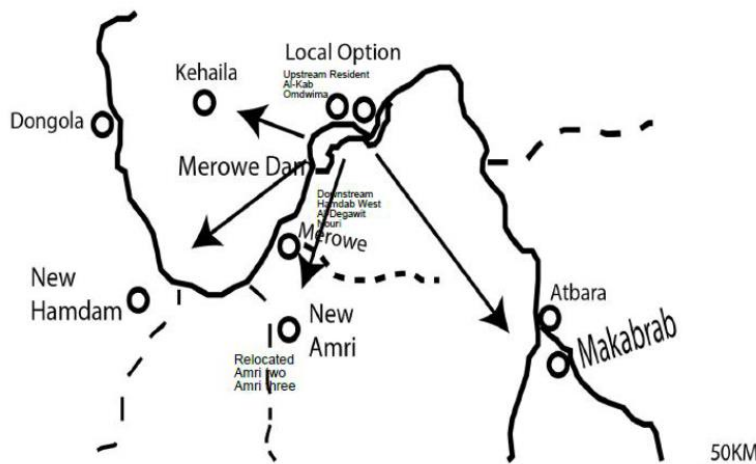
The traditional conflict resolution mechanism – Juddiya - involving elder men (called ‘Ajaweed’) promote dialogue and mediation approaches. However they often do not meet human rights standards, in particular in the treatment of women. There are also local committees, such as in Northern State there are committees organized around each pumping station to manage localized conflict over water allocation, or in Gederef there are Crop Damage Assessment Committees to handle issues of cattle trespass and crop damage. In Gederef these committees are comprised only of farmers, and are accused of bias against herders.

6.11 Dams and resettled communities

There are a number of dams along the Nile in the project states, in which forced / disputed relocations occurred in previous years as part of their development: the Merowe dam with relocated communities in both Northern and River Nile State (2006-2009), and the Upper Atbara and Setit dams, moving people 2009-2015 from both Gederef and Kassala. Compensation has been very problematic, and lands beside the dam have been leased to Saudi investors without consultation.

6.11.1 The Merowe dam

The Merowe dam (Northern State) caused the relocation of approximately 60,000 people between 2006-2009, spread over 100 settlements, affecting Manasir, Amri and Hamdab communities – Arab Riverian settled farming tribes. The Hamdab were relocated to Al Multaga (New Hamdab) in Northern State, about 45km from the dam, the Amri were relocated to New Amris deep in the Beyuda desert in Northern State, the Manasir were



partly relocated to Al Makabrab and Kehila in River Nile State, however these are high terraces with poor irrigation and thus poor farming, and many refused to migrate, instead staying near the lake’s shores in Alkhiar Al Maghali (‘locals choice’). The Manasir who did accept the relocation package in Al Makarab and Kehila were branded as traitors (‘Karazies’) and significant rifts emerged within the Manasir community.²⁶

²⁶ See in particular: Social impacts of a mega-dam project as perceived by local, resettled and displaced communities: a case study of Merowe dam, Sudan, Abdullah, Al-Noor, Rahman, Sanzidur and Displacement and resistance induced by the Merowe dam: the influence of international norms and justice, Dirar, A, Mghraby, A, Hashim, M & Zeitoun, M (2015)

There was strong criticism of the treatment of these relocated communities, in particular:

Relocation sites – Most sites were unviable, and there was no consultation with relocated communities about the location or the actual housing provided within. Households were unable maintain livelihoods – poverty rates among the Hamdeb jumped from 10% to 65% within 2 years of relocation.

Use of flooding to forcibly evict people – unexpected flooding in 2006 and then again in 2008 forced many people to flee their homes rapidly, losing their homes and belongings when floodgates were closed without warning and water rose rapidly.

Violence against communities – the Dam Implementation Unit used violent responses to peaceful protest, arrests, and even killed some protestors.

Compensation payments – lack of transparency and consultation on compensation, with payments made for date palm and mango trees but not for land. Conflict over the compensation package dragged on for years and left many smallholders farmers discontented with the final compensation package.

While the dam is no longer a contentious issue, grievances still exist over the compensation process. After the 2019 revolution these grievances resurfaced. Many people who didn't accept the resettlement package migrated to cities, but some of these are now IDPs and have returned to the area, and it is not clear where they have gone.

6.12 Agricultural co-ops

Farmers co-operatives (FC) have a long history in Sudan. FCs were established in Northern and River Nile around 1920s-30s, and the co-operative movement expanded into lots of areas, such as grinding mills, bakeries etc. However, by the 1970s there was a significant shift, with co-operatives becoming more focused on distributing sugar rations, increasingly involving local administration and corrupt practices. They became politicised, those overtly supportive to the NCP were provided with support, and those that did not show overt support were neglected. There was a loss of trust in co-ops and by the 1980s many were dismantled. Since 2010 an alternative platform to co-operatives was established: 'owners of animals and agricultural production set ups' under a different body of law to co-operatives, with a smaller minimum requirement of membership.

Following the revolution, co-operatives began to be re-introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture under the Transitional Government, however problems with lack of trust towards co-operatives remain. IFAD has been working with co-operatives in particular.

Large farmers have separate FCs to the smallholder farmers (SHF), and SHF FCs are largely dominated by men, where women do engage in co-operatives they typically form separate women's co-operatives which have less influence than men's although research has shown that bringing women together in associations has been found to strengthen their voice and agency.²⁷ WFP research in Gederef identified 1400 farmers associations within the Technical Committee Association covering all localities in Gederef. 400 of these associations were women-only.²⁸

²⁷ Elkarib (2019) op. cit

²⁸ WFP (2021) Value chain analysis of the sorghum subsector in Sudan: study case: Gederef State

Different perspectives were shared about whether settlers have joined SHF co-operatives: one view was that anyone could join, there was no discrimination, any tribe could participate including settlers, and no official land documents are required (Sennar). Another view was that settled nomads in satellite town would not form part of co-operatives (River Nile / Northern). The afore mentioned WFP research in Gederef identified the lack of trust among members of the farmers associations in Gederef, which prevented them from commercializing sorghum together.²⁹

Phase 2 social assessment identified at least two different models for FCs:

Model 1 - Model 1 – People form an FC and then ask GoS for land, which is then awarded to the FC. The FC then manages the land, allocating to its members for use. There are shareholders in the FC, who may not be farmers. All farmers must provide a percentage of their crop to the FC, which is then distributed as a dividend to the shareholders. All farmers working on the FC's land must be a FC member, but other SHF nearby who do not use the FC's land would not join this co-op. For example Arti-gasha FC, AL Bourgaig. It may be reported that women are part of such a FC but only be shareholders (not farmers) so care is needed to confirm which role. (It is possible also that women as FC members, could be allocated land in the FC, but since they will not be able to undertake farming operations by themselves, they could hire a man for this task and they would be treated as other farmers with same responsibilities).

Model 2 – Farmers already holding land choose to form a FC, usually for the purpose of accessing loans, since they were unable to obtain loans individually without land titles or collateral: a FC would definitely have some land, which acted as collective collateral. This is prevalent in the GoS agricultural schemes. For example, FCs in Amri Scheme, Merowe. In Kassala the farmers didn't have to have land to join this model.

The field research identified that not all farmers join FCs. In Model 1 above, SHF that were working on a proximate GoS agricultural scheme, or who inherited land, were not part of the FC. In model 2 above, farmers only joined the FC to access a bank loan, or if the FC could channel water to them. There were fees to join. In the Amri scheme (Merowe) between 30-50% of farmers are not members of the FC.

There have been some significant problems with power and corruption within farmers co-operatives. More powerful farmers have managed to take control of assets provided to the co-operatives (for instance a tractor provided to the co-operative could be accessible by all during the period of supervision of the loan by Agricultural Bank of Sudan (ABS), and once the loan period was over (3-4 years) the more powerful farmers take control of the assets and demand fees for other members to use the asset. These problems have affected large and small cooperatives, and contributed to a loss of interest in agricultural co-operatives. One informant in Sennar stated that there are no functioning farmers cooperatives in this state currently. The community consultations also heard about a range of governance problems in FCs. In Kassala (Wadi Sherifai) the FGD explained that there was significant bias in funding that was distributed via the FC, which was directed to friends and family of the FC management only. In another FC in Kassala (Shegrab) the FC was provided with a tractor, but this was not shared with poorer farmers who were not in the FC. In Al Medina (Kassala) women-only FCs were found, yet these were capped at 50 members per FC, without a clear rationale. In Al Medinat the land

²⁹ WFP (2021) op. cit

had been distributed by tribal group, and so the FCs mirrored the tribal groups. In Al Medinat and Awadat there were many FCs that had been used for distribution of subsidized sugar under the El-Bashir era, had become dysfunctional, and had closed down.

6.13 Agricultural Loans

SHF can access support from a range of sources, however there is a significant absence of micro finance, and existing sources of finance are fairly exploitative of SHF. Different options available to farmers include:

Agricultural Bank of Sudan – As noted above, ABS has shifted its loan structure from individuals to collectives, offering the ABSONI loan package for SHF, including for women, available in River Nile State and Sennar. For loan repayments ABS take loan repayments in form of crops from SHF at a value significantly below market rates,³⁰ and WFP research has shown that SHF in Gederef were paying back half their crop to repay ABS loans. In the event of crops failing the ABS would provide replacement seed to the farmer rather than take the SHF to court, although one informant in Northern state noted that a number of local SHF are living in fear of going to prison for non-payment of loans, in circumstances where reasonable living costs had absorbed all their income from farming.

Credit from middlemen - Middlemen, who purchase from SHF, aggregate and sell on to traders, are also a source of credit to SHF. Research on the role of middlemen in the tomato value chain in Khartoum identified informal loans to SHF by middlemen, often provided in-kind, with significant trust between the farmers and middlemen (see middlemen below section 6.14).

Local businessmen: Shiel system - The Shiel system is an informal micro-finance system, whereby farmers borrow from local businessmen (not necessarily those involved in trade of agricultural produce). The loan may be in cash or in kind, and is usually taken at the very early stages of the crop cycle to help with upfront costs such as seeds and inputs, land preparation etc. The loan is secured against an agreed amount of a specific cash crop, where the value of the crop is pre-determined and usually at a below market rate. These poor rates work against the interests of the farmer, who in some situations may end up providing almost the entire yield to the debtor.

Research across Sudan by WFP found that the average production costs per bag of Sorghum for SHF were higher than could be achieved through sale at farmgate prices.³¹ Thus loan repayments organized at below-market rates (ABS, shiel) do not cover the costs of production.

Different perspectives were shared among informants about loan repayments among farmers. One perspective was that farmers view ABS loans as ‘public money’ and that there is a social consensus that non-repayment of loans is acceptable. Another view was that repayments of loans is widespread – approx. 90% of farmers repay their loans, with the majority of these loans coming from informal lending.

³⁰ In Gederef WFP research found that the price received from ABS (the ‘salam’ price) was 2,000 SDG per jute bag, while large farmers were selling jute bags at 3,500-5,500 to large companies such as Sayga. WFP (2021) [WFP Value Chain Analysis of the Sorghum Subsector in Sector – Case Study Gederef](#)

³¹ Average production costs per 90kg of sorghum is 7,901 SDGs, while farmgate prices is 6,800 SDGs. Sekabira, H., Osman, M., Tsilosani, I & Sidaye, D (Nov 2021) [Debriefing report on the complementary sorghum value chain assessment mission](#)

A third view was that repayments to formal credit systems through ABS and other banks were low, at around 50%.

ABS also operates a buffer stock system, which is intended to create a minimum floor price for specific crops. It had a clear system for wheat until 2022, in which ABS declared the price at which it would purchase wheat before the planting season began. However several informants noted that the market interventions of ABS is no longer clear: in River Nile and Northern states farmers in the middle and upper terraces had faced problems with ABS offering purchase at an unexpectedly low value and so abandoned growing wheat. A similar problem was described for farmers growing beans in Northern State. WFP research in Gederef also identified a lack of a clear cut policy to stabilise sorghum prices, making it difficult for suppliers and producers to commit to prices under long term agreements.³²

6.14 Middlemen in value chains

Significant problems exist with middlemen in agricultural value chains, who are powerful players and strongly influence prices.³³ Research into the tomato value chain in Khartoum state is instructive here, which found that middlemen fix prices among them to compel SHF to sell at low prices, and that prices were not based on market forces or influenced by transport costs, with SHF easily exploited by the middlemen.³⁴ Farmers were unable to carry their produce home, and if sales were not made they could lose dramatically given the highly perishable crop. This research on tomatoes also found other salient roles performed by middlemen in providing transport to markets and providing credit to farmers (see above 6.13). Other research by WFP on sorghum production in Gederef identified price fixing among large farmers, who set prices collusively for any buyers approaching them. No similar price fixing was found by other actors in the value chain (millers, transporters, service / input providers).

³² WFP (2021) WFP Value Chain Analysis of the Sorghum Subsector in Sector – Case Study Gederef

³³ See Hanadi Abdelrazig, Mohamed Musa (2021) The role of middlemen in tomato value chain in Khartoum state, Sudan (2021) – published Sudan journal Research and Science vol 14 issue 27 march 2022, and WFP (2021) Value Chain Analysis of the Sorghum Subsector in Sector – Case Study Gederef

³⁴ Hanadi et al (2021) op. cit.

PART 2: SOCIAL RISKS AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

7. Social risks and mitigation measures

The social assessment was triggered by a concern for risks that are specific to indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities. However, the baseline shows that, contrary to many contexts, the notion of ‘indigenous’ or ‘native’ identity confers significant benefits to tribes in the project area – these groups have better access to land and to representation, while ‘settler’ groups, even those from within Sudan that have been settled for over 50 years, face significant obstacles including inability to access land for farming and limited representation. In some cases, there is discrimination or a deliberately hostile environment to these settler groups. Thus, the analysis of risks and mitigation measures takes an expanded view, considering risks not only to indigenous peoples / SSAHUTLCs, but also to other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. In addition to ‘settler’ populations this includes women and pastoralists in particular. The following table sets out identified risks, and proposed mitigation and monitoring measures concerning indigenous peoples / SSAHUTLCs, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Some risks are handled elsewhere (SGBV / SEA risks are handled in the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Action Plan, and labour risks are handled in the Labour Management Plan) so are excluded here.

Table 10: Potential social risks, mitigation measures and monitoring

Risks	Risk description	Mitigation measure	Monitoring
Project resources perceived to benefit one tribe over another	<p>The selection of location or beneficiaries could disproportionately direct resources to certain groups inadvertently. This becomes more likely and obvious when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - populations live in largely segregated communities - tribes traditionally engage in specific livelihoods - some tribes cannot fulfil key project entry points (eg no land, unable to join agricultural co-operatives) 	<p>Phase 2 social assessment to include tribal mapping in selected locations. COMPLETED</p> <p>Selection of locations will consider tribal balance (geographical mapping of tribes) and adjust to ensure no groups are disproportionately benefitting / excluded</p> <p>Selection of Farmer’s Organisations (FOs) will consider inclusivity and whether minority tribes are excluded from the FO, and how this relates to land access (see ESMF Annex 1 & 2 for E&S screening / assessment question guides)</p>	<p>Social assessment phase 2 reports include tribal mapping COMPLETED</p> <p>Reporting on selected locations / FOs to include commentary on tribal balance</p> <p>Monitoring mechanisms will track if land conflict is increasing, and if discrimination towards landless ‘settlers’ are worsening, utilising the following approaches:</p>

[Title of document]



		If land conflict or tribal discrimination escalates and there is a plausible link to the project then MC & WFP will investigate, including through field visit (if possible). Local conflict resolution actors will be approached to help resolve the matter. If the situation is threatening or violent the project will be suspended.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Post distribution monitoring 2) Systematically reviewing field team insights 3) Include these topics as specific flags in GRM
Project contributes to cumulative problems of support to farmers rather than herders	The Gos has held a policy position to support farming over herding for decades, creating and enabling space for farming to encroach on pastoralist resources. Aid programming has similarly largely supported agricultural production and been blind to pastoralism	The first two years are a quick impact project, to promote food production to prevent possible famine. The second phase of the project should expand to support pastoralist livelihoods, and this message to be communicated	
Project contributes to tensions between farmers and herders	Project support to SHF on agricultural land that has expanded into a livestock migratory route / pastureland or blocks access to water	<p>Mapping of livestock routes / pasture / water access as part of village selection to avoid supporting contested land</p> <p>ESS screening for FOs includes identification of land in conflict between farmers and herders, which are ineligible (see ESMF Annex 1 & 2)</p>	Completed maps
SHF expand production into land that is contested between them and neighbouring SHF	Conflicts over land occur particularly over boundaries between neighbouring plots. If land that has been unused for some time is being brought into production there may be some boundary issues	In the early stages of engaging with Farmers Organisations (FOs) the farmers will be required to identify the unused land they will bring into production, and collectively to determine and assure there are no conflicts over land claims including boundaries	Completion of planning stage with FOs to include collective statement from member farmers that plot boundaries are clear and uncontested
Investment in land may trigger old claims to land	Irrigation schemes were undertaken on land considered 'tribal lands' by one group, and the newly irrigated land was then given to other tribal groups (in particular Kassala). While there is acceptance of the temporary use of this land by others, investments in the land can trigger land competition	The nature of support to SHF will be temporary (inputs such as seeds / labour)	

[Title of document]



<p>Powerful men in co-operatives take control of new resources of project</p>	<p>There are experiences of powerful farmers taking control of assets provided to a co-operative, and charging other farmers to use them. This has been particularly due to farmers being unaware of the rules and entitlements relating to these assets</p>	<p>Establish MOUs for asset provision to FOs that clarify shared ownership and management processes</p> <p>Ensure all SHF are provided with information concerning their entitlements to use of asset</p> <p>Any farmers found trying to capture assets in this way will be excluded from the project</p>	<p>Completion of awareness raising events in planning stage with FOs</p> <p>GRM to capture any issues arising, and triggering spot checks and investigations if this problem is reported</p>
<p>Backlash by middlemen or transporters who loose market control or loose income streams from provision of loans</p>	<p>Middlemen are strongly influencing prices and controlling markets. They will lose profit and control and may act as spoilers try to retain their extraordinary profits</p>	<p>Value chain assessments in start up period will identify middlemen and others who may lose out from enhanced value chains, who may act as spoilers.</p> <p>Specific outreach will be undertaken to explain the project.</p> <p>Where possible, non-exploitative positions in the value chain will be highlighted for their involvement, but without preferential treatment</p>	
<p>For risks relating to SGBV / SEA please see separate GBV/SEA/SH Action Plan, for risks relating to women & children in the labour force, please see the Labour Management Plan</p>			

8. Social Development Action Plan

The follow plan is developed from the table of risks and mitigation measures above. There is some overlap with the GBV/SEA/SH Action plan.

Table 11: Social Development Action Plan

Action	Tasks	Time frame (tentative)	Responsibility	Means of verification
Develop and implement phase 2 Social Assessment	Develop research tools, conduct research & analysis, including tribal mapping	May-June 2024 COMPLETED Jun-July 2024	WFP Social safeguards team + Co-operating Partner (CP) + UNICEF	Assessment report (captured at Annex 2)
	Adapt programme design in light of findings	Aug-Sept 2024	WFP Social safeguards team + PIU + CP	Programme adaptations documented in ESS report
Integrate social risks into selection processes (FOs / SMEs / Consumer Co-ops) including mapping of pastoralist resources / land conflict relevant to FOs	Integrate social risks into design of screening and assessment processes of sub-projects	Jun 2024 COMPLETED	WFP Social safeguards team + PIU + CP	Screening and E&S assessment tools within ESMF
	Screening / E&S assessment processes conducted as part of selection process	Aug – Oct 2024 (first round)	CP	Findings reported in ESS quarterly reporting
	Selection of FOs considers tribal mapping	Aug – Oct 2024 (first round)	WFP Social safeguards team + PIU + CP	Findings reported in ESS quarterly reporting
Integrate social risk mitigations into asset provision to FOs (if provided)	Establish MOUs with FOs	TBD – prior to asset provision	WFP Social safeguards team + CP	Signed MOUs
	Disseminate information on entitlements to farmers	TBD – prior to asset provision	CP	Meetings / outreach reported in ESS quarterly reporting
Analysis of middlemen into Value Chain analysis	Integrate relevant questions into Value Chain analysis	Jun-Jul 2024 COMPLETED	WFP Social safeguards team + CP	TofRs Value Chain assessment

Outreach and communications	Develop communications materials (eg use of assets such as tractors)	Aug-Sept 2024	WFP AAP + social safeguards team + PIU + CP	Communications materials
	Engage with FOs	Aug - Nov 2024	WFP Social safeguards team + PIU + CP	Completed outreach events
	Engage with potential spoilers (including middlemen)	Nov onwards 2024	WFP Social safeguards team + PIU + CP	Completed outreach events
Establish functional and accessible GRM	Clarify processes WFP / CP / UNICEF	May 2024	WFP Social safeguards team + PIU + CP + UNICEF	Agreed structure / process for combined GRM
	Inform community about GRM	Aug-Nov 2024	WFP AAP + social safeguards team + PIU + CP + UNICEF	Completed outreach events and materials shared (eg posters displayed)
	GRM functioning: receiving and processing complaints	Jun onwards	WFP AAP + social safeguards team + PIU + CP + UNICEF	Complaints received, handled, resolved
Conduct regular monitoring of project sites	Spot checks by WFP	Sept onwards	WFP field monitors + social safeguards team	periodic monitoring reports
Reporting in periodic progress report	Provide update on action plan / implementation of mitigation measures in progress reports	ongoing	WFP AAP + social safeguards team + PIU + CP	Successful implementation of agreed SEA/SH action plan

Annex 1 – Top line summary of issues raised by key informants specific to project design

Gender dynamics, gender based violence

Drastic increase in domestic violence – with care needed to power balance within families especially. Increasing prevalence of FGM and child marriage. Significant numbers of girl children 13-15 year olds having cesarean section births. Project needs to be particularly tuned in to protection needs and able to refer. Difficulties of establishing referral processes for GBV services as service providers are increasingly under attack. Project team will need to link survivors to focal points rather than services directly. (This is discussed in the GBV/SEA/SH Action Plan)

Changes in gender norms observed since start of the war, although the perspectives were varied. One perspective identified an increasing role of women in decision making on relief distribution, several identified an increase access to markets, some stated that while women may have more economic activity (such as processing food) the husband still controls the sales and thus the revenue, although there were also views that some women were increasingly controlling the money they earned. There are good examples of income generating activities where women have shared their revenues to protect it from being taken by men. A project supporting women grow vegetables ended with husbands taking the revenue of sales from most women. Accessing women for consultation and programming in certain tribes (Beja, Rashida) is particularly hard

There are significant cultural controls on women's roles in food processing, and some of this is quite tribe-specific. There have been some successes in shifting this at the margins, particularly where women work in their own home. Women in Kassala state are not able to work in farms .

Children perform a lot of work on family farms, but are not preferred for hired labour on other people's farms. Boy children who work in markets are particularly vulnerable to SGBV. Lots of boy children are working in the mining sector, and face SGBV there.

Protection issues for women as agricultural labour if travelling long distances to/from the fields of others (this agricultural labour component later dropped from project).

Tribal dynamics and land

Selection of localities and SHF: Very clear tribal areas in Northern state – selection of localities will implicitly select tribal groups.

IDPs coming from Khartoum may be displacing landless farmers, who are likely from minority tribes, thus there may be recent tensions over land. There are also likely to be IDPs coming from KHT asserting claims to land previously farmed by a relative, resulting in plot subdivision. This may have an effect on who is in the farmers organization, and may mean some plots have become unviable.

Existence of 'seasonal labour camps' of long term landless agricultural labourers very notable in Kassala, found in RNS, less visible in Northern (landless labour relates more to prejudices against tribes deemed as 'ex-salves'). If project is to supply agricultural labour to SHF then need to be careful not to displace this vulnerable group from their usual income stream (this component got dropped). These

communities are outside local governance structures. They may have been renting land, but may be pushed off this land by the influx of IDPs from Khartoum who have land claims

Polarization against 'outsiders' (perceived as Western Sudanese) in Northern and River Nile, which is deepening tensions between ethnicities

Pastoralist movements have been significantly disrupted due to the war (southern areas especially), and there is increased risk of conflict as they are remaining in farming zones more

Grievances still exist among the relocated communities from the Merowe dam, and these communities were severely impoverished in that relocation. These communities need special care and attention

Agricultural value chains

Middlemen play a significant role in controlling markets and price fixing in certain agricultural value chains – they may be spoilers to this project and need careful handling.

Farmers sourcing loans from different places, most of which are very exploitative. Very different opinions expressed about level of indebtedness of farmers, of their willingness to repay loans, and that buffer stock system that supported prices recently abandoned – need to recognize that some farmers will be indebted. Sharecropping is also widely practiced. Many indebted farmers in Northern state, and fears over loan repayments

There has been a lot of corrupt practices in the handling of communal large scale agricultural inputs (tractors especially) with powerful men in FOs controlling these and charging others to use them. Project needs particular care on the management of such assets.

Co-operatives have been very politicised over the decades, combined with the corruption problems many farmers lost interest in co-ops. The project needs to be mindful of this history and how some SHF may view the FOs we are using as entry points/

Macro conflict

What is the expected future scenario for this project over the coming 2 years and beyond? IDPs are likely to stay displaced and conflict will continue and evolve.

Annex 2 – Summary of findings from field consultations Northern and Kassala states – June / July 2024

Farmers co-operatives

Farmers co-operatives take at least two different models, and this affects membership

Model 1 – People form a farmer’s co-operative (FC) and then ask GoS for land, which is then awarded to the FC. The FC then manages the land, allocating to its members for use. There are shareholders in the FC, who may not be farmers. All farmers must provide a percentage of their crop to the FC, which is then distributed as a dividend to the shareholders. All farmers working on the FC’s land must be a FC member, but other SHF nearby who do not use the FC’s land would not join this co-op. For example Artigasha FC, AL Bourgaig. It may be reported that women are part of such a FC but only be shareholders (not farmers) so care is needed to confirm which role. (It is possible also that women as FC members, could be allocated land in the FC, but since they will not be able to undertake farming operations by themselves, they could hire a man for this task and they would be treated as other farmers with same responsibilities).

Model 2 – Farmers already holding land choose to form a FC, usually to access financing as a group. This is prevalent in the GoS agricultural schemes. For example, FCs in Amri Scheme, Merowe. In Kassala the farmers didn’t have to have land to join this model

Not all farmers join farmer’s co-operatives, and thus an entry point of the farmer’s co-operative could result in some SHFs being excluded from the project – In Model 1 above, SHF that were working on a proximate GoS agricultural scheme, or who inherited land, were not part of the FC. Notably the SHF in the proximate GoS scheme faced severe water problems and as a result had unused land, while those in the FC did not face such significant water problems and had no unused land.

In model 2 above, farmers only joined the FC to access a bank loan, or if the FC could channel water to them. There were fees to join. In the Amri scheme (Merowe) between 30-50% of farmers are not members of the FC.

Sharecroppers and agricultural labourers do not join farmer’s co-operatives – Sharecroppers in Dongola highlighted that having land is a condition for joining a farmers co-operative, and so while their landlord was in a FC (to access a loan) they were not. Similarly for the agricultural labourer.

Sharecroppers may not be growing relevant crops for Somoud support - The sharecroppers interviewed were growing tomatoes, and had no interest in growing wheat. They were entirely unmechanized and had only 1 feddan each. It is not clear if this is a wider phenomena, potentially sharecroppers may be working on different agricultural value chains than those supported through Somoud, a second barrier to engagement in the project (in addition to non-participation in FCs).

Governance problems in FCs were reported in community consultations – In Kassala (Wadi Sherifai) the FGD explained that there was significant bias in funding that was distributed via the FC, which was directed to friends and family of the FC management only. In another FC in Kassala (Shegrab) the FC was provided with a tractor, but this was not shared with poorer farmers who were not in the FC. In Al

Medina (Kassala) the only womens FCs were found, yet these were capped at 50 members per FC, without a clear rationale. In Al Medinat the land had been distributed by tribal group, and so the FCs mirrored the tribal groups. In Al Medinat and Awadat there were many FCs that had been used for distribution of subsidized sugar under the El-Bashir era, had become dysfunctional, and had closed down.

Size of plots of SHF varies significantly – the max size the project will support will have significant effects – In Koori FC (Merowe) SHF have 3.5 feddan, in Artigasha FC (Al Bourgaig) they have 5 feddan, while in the Amri scheme (Merowe) they each have 6 feddans. Sharecroppers may have much smaller plots.

Unused land available land for agriculture

Unused land is largely due to significant irrigation infrastructure problems – Among the FCs and communities engaged in the consultations, large tracts of farmland were unused, and this was due to lack of water, often relating to major infrastructural issues that go beyond the scope of Somoud

- Addafufa scheme (Al Bourgaig, Northern State) pump from Nile is broken thus only 6-7,000 feddan functional out of 20,000
- Koori FC (Merowe, Northern State) borehole collapsed, 8,000 SHF now without water
- Barraka FC (Merowe, Northern State) no water 2,000 feddan not useable
- Marawi FC (Merowe, Northern) 3,000 feddan not used due to problems with generator for pump
- Awadat (Reifi Kassala) 25,000 feddan not used since while main canal is established, sub canals are not, progress stopped in 2019 with crisis. There is a further 100 feddan of land where the boreholes are now old and broken. The community only rely on rainfed agriculture now

These examples show large numbers of farmers who have either abandoned farming or had to dig their own individual boreholes, which is a very inefficient solution to a systemic problem. Since 2019 coup there has been ongoing failed management of irrigation systems, leading to failure of these systems.

Conversely some FCs reported they had no unused land to bring into production – where irrigation is functioning it seems that there is not spare land that can be brought into production, other than fallow land, which is specifically unused to prevent decline in fertility. In Dar El Salaam (Kassala) it was noted that farmers who cannot afford / obtain inputs rent the land to sharecroppers.

Women in farming

There is a very significant variation in women’s roles in farming among, communities and also within communities

- Awadat (Kassala) Halenga majority tribe: women are not allowed to be farmers and have almost no information about the farming activities of their husbands. Women used to be involved in farming, but the controls on women have increased and they have been excluded from farming. Hausa minority tribe: women work as agricultural labour, and get paid less than men.

- Dar Es Salaam (Kassala) Lahaween tribe: only old women or women headed households can work in farming
- Artigasha (Northern) Danagla tribe: women can work in husbands field , they can work as agric. laborers in other farms as well, and get paid.
- Almedina village (Kassala) Mixed Hausa / West Sudanese tribes: women getting increasing role in farming, due to economic needs
- Amri scheme (Northern) Manaseer tribe: 25% of land is farmed by women.
- Wad Sherifai (Kassala) W Sudanese / West African tribes: women are active farmers and in FCs

Women appear to face significant exploitation in farming – The FGDs in Kassala found women sharecroppers retaining 33-50% of their crop, while male sharecroppers retained 75% - thus landowners appear to be exploiting women in particular. In Awadat village (Kassala) women were provided with inputs by an INGO, and granted a plot of collective land to work, but once they had prepared the land and planted the crop it was taken over by the men and the women were excluded. **Any project support to women farmers or sharecroppers needs particular care to avoid supporting their exploitation.** Currently sharecroppers are not targeted specifically.

Tribes and land access

Seasonal labour camps were identified even in Northern State - The existence of separate ‘seasonal labour camps’ – i.e. non ‘native’ tribes that have settled permanently and often many decades previously but do not have land and work as agricultural labour - was already known for Kassala. This was also observed in Northern State, where a satellite village Nuba / West Sudanese tribes without land was located next to a Danagla village with land. While access to these ‘seasonal labour camp’ villages is feasible in Kassala, **access to such communities may prove difficult due to security constraints in Northern State.** This requires additional attention in stakeholder engagement.

IDPs and land

IDPs are engaging in farming on inherited land, and it is not clear whether renter farmers are being displaced as a result – In several locations it was clear that IDPs would not be provided with land, for instance the Amri Scheme (Merowe) and the Arti-gasha FC (Al Bourgaig). IDPs appear to be accessing land through reclaiming inherited land, and there is little known about the effects of this, in particular if there were previously people renting this land (possibly ‘settler’ tribes who do not otherwise have land access). The consultations did not provide insights on this issue. WFP’s other resilience project in Northern State – SEWPP – has worked with IDP farmers in the 2023-4 growing season who have been provided land in FCs, Government Schemes and on inherited lands, so the provision of land to IDPs does occur. The project is not expected to have a significant effect on IDPs re-claiming land – this is driven by war, but the proportion of IDPs in FCs can be monitored and further investigation undertaken if needed.

Farmers with disabilities

Farmers with disabilities are members of FCs – And in some circumstances may have been allocated specific land to help ease obstacles they face.

There are some interesting collective initiatives for people with disabilities (PWD) – In Wadi Halfa a group of men had developed a fisheries for people with disabilities, although this had since disbanded. The Council for Disabilities had plans to develop other collectives for PWD in agriculture, although they were still very nascent (seeking land from GoS).

Children working in agriculture

Children frequently work as agricultural labour – In Northern State 12-13 year olds were common, while in Kassala State 10 year olds were common, and young as 7. In some places they are paid the same as adults, but in some places they are paid less.

Pesticide use

There is a highly varied understanding of, and concern for, pesticides risks:

- People who have been trained (by GoS), who know the dose and manage the waste: Amri scheme (Merowe) Awadat (Reifi Kassala)
- People who are aware of risks but don't know how to manage them, in particular lack of knowledge of what to do with empty containers: FCs in Merowe (Note the Warehouse assessment for SEWPP also identified this problem with old containers being abandoned in warehouses)
- People who claim to know the risks but do not care about them / ignore information on containers: Al Medina (Wad Al Hilau), sharecroppers Korba (Dongola). Note the sharecroppers believed the information on the tin was not applicable to their situation, were experiencing health effects (inflammation, catarrh) but since the effects subsided within 24 hours did not deem them significant. NB no extension workers reach the sharecroppers.
- People unaware of the risks, where empty containers were thrown into the canal / used for drinking water, without any training: Al Medina (WadAl Hilau),

There are homemade pesticides used in Kassala from fermented sorghum. This was not found in Northern State.

SMEs

Chambers of commerce are not a good way to reach food processing SMEs although public health officials could be a better avenue. Chambers of Commerce exist but do not offer a useful mechanism to reach small and medium sized enterprises, as they are not active. The three food processing SMEs interviewed in Northern State were not connected to local Chambers of Commerce. There are no small business offices or other state level organisations supporting small businesses, the only outreach avenue to food processing SMEs of merit appears to be public health officials who undertaken spot checks on food processing businesses, and so are assumed to hold data on food processing businesses. However this may be of limited utility for engaging other value chain businesses of interest. Significant focus will be needed to find and reach SMEs.

Supporting SHF overcome price slumps that result from large harvests through value chain interventions would be a valuable contribution of the project – Cooking oil was highlighted as very

expensive, and could be linked to local production of sesame / groundnut (and in the Amri scheme there were small scale oil processing plants) and onwards to consumer co-operatives. Options to dry products such as tomatoes was also highlighted.

There are few local food value chain actors – which could make supporting value chains difficult. Some of the key actors are GoS (eg the grinding mill in Dongola) and the quality of the flour was insufficient for the local sweet producer who instead imports finely grained flour from Egypt. One small scale women’s food processing initiative was identified in Merowe, established under the MoSW as an income generating activity, but this would likely be excluded in the current Somoud design as its not registered as a business.

There are no people with disabilities working in food processing SMEs – the Council for Disabilities felt this was not discrimination but rather a lack of relevant skills. Conversely the sweet manufacturer stated that PWD couldn’t work “professionally” which seems like a discriminatory attitude.

Consumer Co-operatives

Consumer co-operatives tend to focus on imported goods rather than local produce, or buy now-pay later. Imported items such as rice, tea, oil tend to be the focus, rather than locally produced items. Of the consumer co-operatives (CCs) engaged in the consultations, few were involved in sourcing locally produced food items. The increase in prices for imported items had meant the value of the CC had dwindled and one in Northern State had closed as a result. Several did not offer cheaper prices, but instead a credit system - to buy now and pay later.

Consumer Co-operatives are not connecting to farmers co-operatives - Where CCs sourced agricultural produce from outside the state they typically did this through middlemen/traders, rather than through connections to farmers co-operatives (e.g. in Northern state when tomatoes are out of season they purchase these from Gederef through traders, rather than through direct contacts to FCs). This offers a strong value added for Somoud. The CCs organized around professions (eg teacher’s CC or Engineer’s CC) are much better organized and are involved in sourcing a range of nationally-produced items and moving these between states.

Consumer cooperatives have a history linking them to the old subsidized system under Bashir – and many of these have closed. Stakeholders often link them to special GoS-linked schops and the subsidized sugar system.

Many co-operatives are multipurpose – covering both Farmers Co-operative actions and Consumer Co-operative actions. It may be difficult to distinguish between CC and income generating activities in some instances.

The process of registering co-operatives has been suspended – initially due to the coup and now the war. The consultations identified many people seeking land as a co-operative that had their applications stalled.

People living with disabilities are included in consumer co-operatives, including in the executive boards – This was identified in both Northern and Kassala

Hard to reach communities

While people with partial disabilities were identified as active in Farmers co-operatives and consumer co-operatives, people with significant disabilities are housebound. In several FGDs it was identified that there were people with more significant disabilities who do not leave their home, and if we wish to consult with them, we would need to visit them at home.

There are likely to be some security restrictions affecting reach to some landless 'seasonal labour camps' in Northern State, although there are not such issues in Kassala. River Nile is not known.

Annex 3: Semi Structured Interview / Focus Group Discussion Guide – Stakeholder consultations June / July 2024

COMPONENT 1 – FARMERS ORGANISATIONS
How was this co-operative formed?
<p>Model 1 (Artigasha): people came together, registered as a co-operative, then asked Govt for land, and now the Co-op allocates land among Co-op members . Some people are shareholders in the co-op (and do not farm at all)</p> <p>Model 2 (Amri): land was allocated to people, some joined the co-operative, others chose not to.</p>
How much unused agricultural land is there in this co-op?
<p>Check why it is unused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fallow (ie rotational use to enhance soil fertility) • cannot be cultivated (eg water pump broken) • Lack of inputs (eg not enough seeds) • Other:
What are current practices regarding pesticides?
<p>What pesticides are currently used?</p> <p>Do people understand the problems / risks?</p> <p>Are health or other problems emerging?</p> <p>Who applies pesticides?</p> <p>Are they trained?</p>
Women in farming
<p>Are women involved in farming?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they farm their own land? (NOT kitchen garden but actual farmland) • Work on family farms? • Work as agricultural labour on other people’s land? <p>Are there women in Farmer’s Co-ops?</p> <p>Are there farmer’s co-ops especially for women?</p> <p>What agricultural work is culturally seen as ‘mens’ roles and what agricultural work is culturally seen as ‘women’s roles’?</p>
To what degree are women able to control income generated (as sales of agricultural produce)?
<p>IF WOMEN HAVE OWN FARMLAND</p> <p>when women sell their crops, who handles the sale, and what percentage of the revenue generated is given to the woman?</p> <p>What are successful practices for enabling women to retain control over their income?</p>
What risks do women face when working on fields? How can these be mitigated?
<p>Do women face risks when travelling to/from fields?</p> <p>What are successful practices to reduce / manage those risks?</p>
Who is in the farmer’s co-operative?
<p>Are all the farmers in this area in the farmer’s co-operative?</p> <p>Are there some farmers who cannot join, or who choose not to join? If so, who are they? Why do they not join?</p> <p>Are there sharecropping farmers here, and if so, are they in the farmers co-op?</p>

This project will work through farmers co-operatives as the entry point. Which farmers would be missed as a result of this?
IDPs
Are there people here who have returned from KHT and claimed land they were not previously farming? Was this fallow land or land rented to others? [if rented to others] what happened to the displaced renter farmers? Were they from a different community? Approximately how many renter farmers were affected in this way?
Are there any other IDPs farming around here? What land are they using? How did they get it?
What is the common approach for children to work as agricultural labour?
Do children work in family farms? Do children work as agricultural labour on the farms of others?

COMPONENT 2 - SMEs
What is this SME?
Explain what agricultural processing / transport / food production work this company performs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roughly how many people work here? • How many are men / women? • Where / how is the business organised (eg production facilities, where food products are sold etc)
Women / men working in SMEs
Are there specific roles for men / women? What are the differences in pay for men and women? Do men / women work in the same space or are they separated (eg cake factory has different shifts) What food / agricultural processing roles are culturally seen as ‘mens’ roles and what food processing is culturally seen as ‘women’s roles? Has this changed, if so, how? Is there any stigma or harassment towards women who work in SMEs?
The best means for the project to outreach to possible SMEs
Are you involved in a chambers of Commerce? The project will need to map and reach out to relevant SMEs in agricultural / food processing. What would be ways to reach to businesses like this one? (one idea: there are health and safety inspections made by State govt, and they may maintain a list of food processing companies – is this a good way to map and reach businesses? Are there other ideas?)
What is the common approach for children to work in family businesses?
Do children work in family business? Do children work in SMEs?
Barriers in accessing work in SMEs?
Are there any PLWDs working in this SMEs? (which disabilities). If not, is it that they don’t apply? Or are there practical barriers? Are there any barriers that make it harder for women, or certain communities, to work in an SME like this one?

COMPONENT 3 -Consumer's Cooperative
What is this Consumer's Co-operative
<p>Explain what kinds of things this consumer co-operative does for its members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What products are purchased? Are these locally produced agricultural goods, or are they imported? • Does the consumer co-op do any sorting, processing (eg grinding) or packaging?
Who are the members?
<p>Are there men and women in the consumer co-op? Are there PLWD in the co-op?</p>
Who manages the consumer's co-op?
<p>Are there women in the governance structure? PLWD?</p>
Connections to farmers organisations
<p>Does this consumer co-op have any links to local farmer's co-ops? Are there any links to distance farmers? (eg when you want to buy onions out of season, do you have an arrangement with a farmers co-op in gederef or somewhere else, or do you buy from traders?) Why didn't they do this?</p>