

# DARFUR LIVELIHOODS UNDER SIEGE

## *Executive Summary and Recommendations*

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# Executive Summary

## Purpose

1. The purpose of the research study was to investigate the effects of the current conflict and humanitarian crisis on the livelihoods of selected communities in Darfur, in order to refine strategic humanitarian interventions. The study focused on labour migration, livestock production and trade, and on communities' links with central and eastern Sudan and with Libya.

## Study Approach

2. The study included a background review of literature and liaison with partners. Field work was undertaken in Tripoli, Benghazi and El Kufra in Libya and in Khartoum, Gederaf and North, West and South Darfur in Sudan. The study used a range of qualitative field methods to collect primary data, and its analysis was based on a review of impacts on livelihood strategies, assets and goals at the local level. In addition, the history and origins of the conflict were reviewed in order to better understand their relation to livelihoods, and their implications for subsequent recommendations.

## Livelihoods in Crisis

3. Never before in the history of Darfur has there been such a combination of factors causing the failure of livelihood strategies and the loss of assets. These factors include systematic asset-stripping, production failures, market failures, failures of access to natural resources and constraints on the remittances of migrant workers. Under these circumstances, region-wide famine appears inevitable. While the provision of food aid can partially redress production failures, a much wider raft of interventions is needed to begin to address the other issues.
4. Conflict and peoples' livelihoods are inextricably linked. Livelihoods are integral to the causes of the conflict, the impact of the conflict and therefore will be central to any lasting solutions to the conflict. Moves to find a peaceful solution must take account of livelihoods, while efforts to support livelihoods must consider the political economy of conflict and implications for livelihoods and livelihood interventions.

## Recommendations

5. Major structural changes need to be addressed at the international, national and State levels. These changes include processes of land restitution and compensation; livestock restitution, reconciliation and compensation; and the opening up of transport routes to provide safe passage for people, livestock and goods. Ideally, the wider processes of reconciliation should be linked with livelihood support. Extensive and detailed recommendations cover six broad areas: security, land, livestock, markets, labour migration and international humanitarian response (see below).

## History and Origins of the Conflict

6. The sources of the conflict date back to the nineteenth century. The report traces the evolution of trade routes, tribal territories, systems of administration, land rights and relations between Darfur and the central Sudanese authorities, from the period of the

Fur Sultanate to the present day. It identifies a number of national and local processes that have directly contributed to the conflict. At national level these include:

- a. the economic and political marginalisation of Darfur by the central government, since the nineteenth century;
  - b. wider regional conflicts, which have contributed to the development and deployment of ethnically distinct armed militias, and also to the increased numbers of firearms owned by Darfurians generally. These conflicts include the North–South civil war in Sudan, long-running conflicts within Chad, disputes between Chad and Libya, and the relationships between these countries and Sudan.
  - c. the tactical manipulation of ethnic identities within Darfur by the Government of Sudan (GoS) and political parties, including the mobilisation of armed militias and political mobilisation based on religious and ethnic identity (i.e. Mahdism and later Islamisation and Arabism).
7. At a local level the marginalisation and neglect of Darfur have contributed to:
- a. failing institutions, including the Native Administration, judicial systems and policing, which latterly appear to have favoured certain groups;
  - b. failing development, including that of education, healthcare, transport and veterinary and other services, which have affected different ethnic groups to varying degrees.
8. Other local-level processes include competition for, and pressures on, natural resources within Darfur, partly due to a history of drought and famine. These pressures have led to clear ethnic rivalries and have contributed to local-level conflict. In addition, external influences from Libyan-affiliated popular committees and some political parties (e.g. the Muslim Brotherhood and Umma Party) have contributed to political polarisation between Arab and non-Arab groups in Darfur.

### **Effects on Livelihoods**

9. Rural livelihoods in Darfur are relatively simple to understand, in that all tribes, Arab and non-Arab, cultivate crops and raise livestock to varying degrees. The livelihoods of farmers and herders have converged, although factors such as access to land, differing soil types, rainfall and altitude have all influenced the precise patterns of rural production. Most groups supplement their farming and livestock-rearing activities with strategies such as labour migration and remittances, collection of natural resources (firewood, fodder and wild foods) and trade. Other livelihood strategies are specific to certain groups, including, for example, the production of *tombac* (chewing tobacco), artisanry (leatherwork, metalwork, etc.), membership of the military and a range of illegal activities (smuggling, banditry, brewing, prostitution etc.).
10. Six case studies were conducted, covering all three states of Darfur, in the areas of Kebkabiya, Mellit, Disr, Seraif, Nyala and Geneina. The case studies reflected a diverse range of ethnic groups, both large and small and reflecting different political

viewpoints and experiences of the conflict (including groups supporting the rebels/opposition, pro-government groups and those who were ambivalent).

11. The case studies conducted in Kebkabiya, Disr, Geneina and Nyala give detailed accounts of the attacks carried out on villages by government forces, with support from armed militias, throughout 2003 and into 2004. In all cases, there were direct asset-stripping and destruction of household and community assets. This is in breach of international humanitarian law, which prohibits the use of starvation as a method of warfare and specifies that parties to a conflict must not attack, destroy, remove or render useless objects indispensable for the survival of civilian populations.
12. Beyond the direct impact of the crisis caused by asset-stripping are the continuing processes that indirectly cause the systematic destruction of livelihoods. These processes are attributable to the actions of key players, including the GoS and rebel groups, and are due also to the failures of international humanitarian assistance.
13. The most fundamental problem affecting livelihoods in Darfur is insecurity, which restricts the mobility of all groups. Insecurity is widespread as a result of continued ceasefire violations on the part of both the GoS and rebel groups. Consequently, the towns of Darfur are in a state of siege and IDPs within them have become cut off from their normal livelihood strategies. For rural-based populations the situation is little better, with people fearing to travel or even to cultivate their fields for risk of attack. Although there is local security in SLM/A-controlled areas, all services and markets are located in government-controlled areas (for example in Kutum), which cannot be reached without risk of rape or attack.
14. Limited mobility resulting from insecurity has seriously limited the core livelihood strategies of all groups in Darfur, including cultivation; seasonal livestock migration; trade and access to markets for buyers and sellers; labour migration and remittances; and travel to rural areas for the collection of firewood, fodder and wild foods.
15. While the Khartoum government has manipulated and eroded the Native Administration, local interests in Darfur have sought to gain authority and power through the tribal systems, thereby increasing the politicisation of tribal administrations. Certain groups clearly feel that they have been marginalised within Darfur, in that they have had less access than others to the limited resources that exist, including land, healthcare, education and even international aid. Although their situation is very different to that of IDPs, their livelihoods are under threat and their humanitarian needs will also have to be addressed urgently in the coming months.

#### **Pressure on Labour Migrants and the Blocking of Remittances**

16. Until the recent conflict, remittances from internal and external labour migrants, in cash and in kind, were a regular and stable source of income for Darfurian families and made a substantial contribution to livelihoods. The conflict has caused the sending of remittances to dwindle dramatically: for example, at a conservative estimate, lost income from workers in Libya amounts to roughly \$15 million per

annum. Substantial sums are remitted from other destinations beyond Darfur's borders, and in recent years Libya has ranked only third or fourth in terms of the numbers of Darfurian labour migrants attracted there. However, given Darfur's proximity to Libya, combined with the recent lifting of international sanctions against that country and the likely upturn in its economy, Libya represents a potentially rich future source of income for Darfurians.

17. Labour migration and commerce along the trans-Saharan desert routes to Libya have long been a feature of livelihoods in Darfur. The oil boom of the 1970s and 1980s intensified these existing patterns of migration, as did Colonel Gaddafi's relatively open-door policies. This changed in 1995, however, with a crackdown on migrant workers (including raids and forced repatriation), which has continued intermittently to the present day.
18. The population of Libya is estimated at five million, but there are also thought to be two million foreign workers in the country. Official estimates of the numbers of Darfurian migrant workers in Libya were unavailable but were estimated to be between 150,000 and 250,000. A rapid assessment survey conducted in the Libyan town of El Kufra indicated that Darfurian labour migrants constituted a relatively mature and skilled labour force, and that most had family responsibilities in Darfur. More than half were over 30 years of age, about 75 per cent were married and the literacy rate was double that found in Darfur.
19. Migration to Libya is a reflection of both 'pull' and 'push' factors. The push factors include conscription and compulsory recruitment into the Popular Defence Forces at home in Darfur, limited work opportunities and failing livelihoods as a result of recurrent drought and insecurity. The pull factors include opportunities for better-paid work, the relative proximity of Libya to Darfur, the relative ease of working there illegally and, most importantly, the Darfurian contacts and support networks to be found there.
20. In 2004 further restrictions were imposed on migrant workers, including the need to obtain a 'health certificate' that requires a series of health tests. The tests cost LD70 (\$50), are only available to legal immigrants and must be repeated every six or 12 months. A positive HIV/AIDS result for example, risks the forfeit of identity papers, prison and deportation.
21. Before the crisis, remittances sent back to Darfur ranged from \$40 to \$900 per worker per annum, though most were thought to be in the range of \$40–\$400. Migrant workers in Libya estimated that skilled workers could afford to send about LD90 (\$68) per month, while unskilled labourers could send about LD30 (\$23).

*Closure of the Libyan border and insecurity in North Darfur*

22. The closure of the national border between Sudan and Libya in May 2003, which was associated with insecurity in the northern deserts of North Darfur, has perhaps had the most serious implications for the economy of Darfur and for the well-being of its

traders and labour migrants. The closure has stopped the traffic of migrant workers between North Darfur and southern Libya (effectively trapping several thousand in Kufra), and has blocked well-established and critically important trade routes.

23. Communications and remittances have been seriously affected, as there is no longer the possibility of sending hand-carried messages or remittances back to Darfur. Communications between Darfurian workers in Libya and their families in Darfur are vital for the transfer of remittances and the recovery of livelihoods.
24. El Kufra is a trans-national trade hub, linking Sudan and Chad with Libya and other Arab states, and is an important transit point for migrant workers of many nationalities. Consequently, the border closure has had a significant impact on economic activity in Kufra itself as well as on the livelihoods of migrant workers.
25. The currently limited prospects for migrant workers in Libya, combined with the threat of detention, the difficulties of return to Sudan, and the loss of contact with their families in Darfur and uncertainty about their fate, have created a sense of despair among many migrant Darfurians in Libya. Thousands wait in Kufra for the chance to return to Darfur, while watching the value of their capital erode. Suicide is reportedly on the increase. Elsewhere, along the Libyan coast, many are prepared to risk the dangerous boat journey across the Mediterranean to Italy.

#### *Labour migration to eastern Sudan*

26. Darfur also has a long history of labour migration to eastern Sudan. The vast majority of the Darfurian labour migrants in Gedaref, near the Ethiopian border, have migrated there for economic reasons, in search of work opportunities and cash income that would allow them to support their relatives and communities in Darfur. More than half of them have lived there for more than three years.

#### *Distress migration to Khartoum*

27. In contrast, the study found that Darfurian migrants to Khartoum were people recently displaced by the conflict in Darfur, and were principally women and children (there was one man for every three women). Displaced Darfurians in Khartoum were facing difficulties because of fierce competition for limited job opportunities, difficulties in the IDP camps and difficulties with the local authorities.

#### **The Importance of Livestock**

28. Sudan is the leading livestock-exporting country in the region, and livestock used to generate 20 per cent of national foreign exchange earnings before the discovery of oil. Darfur's contribution, both to the livestock export trade and to the domestic market for meat, has always been significant. For example, before the conflict the region was exporting 30,000 camels to Libya and about 50,000 camels to Egypt each year. In economic terms, livestock has been the primary target of the current conflict. Various sources suggest that the non-Arab population of Darfur has lost between 50 per cent and 90 per cent of its livestock to the Government's armed forces. The issue of livestock is central if lasting solutions to the problems in Darfur are to be found.

Darfur's economy has been seriously eroded and livestock trade, the traditional backbone of its economy, is failing fast.

*Livestock migration routes*

29. A visible outcome of the conflict is changes in livestock migration patterns, which have potentially disastrous consequences. Increasing hostility between Arabs and non-Arabs, and control by the SLM/A of some critical areas along the traditional migratory routes, have resulted in the restriction of access to the wet-season grazing reserves in the north (at Gizou, Wadi Hawa and El Atrun) for the camel-herding (*abbala*) Arabs. Camels and sheep belonging to these Arab groups were confined south of the Jebel Mara mountains during the study team's visit. Similarly, cattle belonging to the Baggara have been confined to areas around the railway line close to Nyala town (the furthest point north they could reach) and to the Nyala–Kas Zalingi road in the west. Concentrations of livestock in confined areas in the dry-season grazing reserves will deplete pasture and water resources and increase the risk of disease, leading to increased livestock mortality.

*The collapse of the livestock trade*

30. The disruption of livestock trade both within Darfur and beyond its borders has signalled a downward spiral of the region's economy. The repercussions of this disruption are felt, in varying degrees, in almost all households and in all segments of the population (pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, traders, middlemen, drovers, etc.). Important secondary markets such as Mellit, where previously some 20,000 camels and 25,000 sheep were processed to Libya annually, have been closed since late 2003. Since then, of the 50 local *toujars* (traders) in Mellit, about 40 have left for El Fasher or Khartoum.

31. In April 2003, insecurity on the livestock trade routes through North Darfur worsened, with the murder of 10 camel drovers and the 'confiscation' of 3,000 camels. Shortly afterwards, the border was closed by the GoS. The total value of business lost since the route was closed amounts to over \$14 million. At least 300 lead drovers and 1,280 assistant drovers have lost their jobs, as well as the possibility of finding employment as migrant workers in Libya. The volume of livestock exported to Chad through Tina, in north-west Darfur on the Chadian border, is far smaller, due to its inconvenient location, difficult terrain and local insecurity.

*Trade to Muwheli (in Omdurman) and Egypt*

32. The northern route through El Fasher is insecure and a substantial reduction is expected in the volume of sheep traveling to Muwheli, both for export and local consumption. Annual traffic on this route was estimated at approximately 450,000 sheep, 48,000 camels and 3,500 head of cattle. The southern route through Nyala and Ed Daein is out of bounds because of insecurity following the capture of some parts of Ed Daein locality by the SLM/A, together with attacks and counter-attacks between tribal groups, and banditry. Recent security incidents on this route include the interception of some 1,300 sheep by the SLM/A at Labado, 60km east of Nyala.

*Crisis trade routes*

33. Some Arab livestock traders in El Geneina are attempting to establish new trade routes to bypass the security-affected areas in the south. These routes are longer, increasing the number of days' trekking by an additional 20 to 40 days, therefore putting greater stress on the animals. These routes were on trial at the time of the study and traders were not certain whether they would be successful (i.e. profitable).

**The Rise in Consumer Commodity Prices**

34. Total and partial closures of strategic trade routes have increased the prices of basic commodities. This is due to increased transport costs, the risk of bandit attack, the need to obtain commodity supplies from new sources, and also to Government embargoes. Price increases are felt all over Darfur but are more pronounced in parts of northern Darfur, which used to get most of their supplies from Libya (via Kufra) and from Omdurman. In addition, large commodity traders, who used to distribute consumer goods on credit to village-level traders, have stopped practising this system.



## **Recommendations**

Recommendations are made relating to six broad areas:

- security, stabilisation and governance
- land
- livestock
- markets
- labour migration, communications and remittances
- international humanitarian response.

All of these are considered immediate priorities, but clearly the time needed to achieve the goals varies.

### **Security, stabilisation and local governance**

1. Peace and security were the universal goal of all those interviewed. Humanitarian access and the currently very limited security of humanitarian interventions are not enough. Security must be extended to all aspects of daily life and livelihoods, including livelihood strategies, mobility, markets and the protection of assets. These aspects of security must be incorporated within the expanded mission of the African Union in Darfur.
2. The study recognises the overriding importance of reaching a political solution to the conflict through the international processes of conflict resolution at Abuja. Any settlement must address the underlying issue of marginalisation.
3. There are two ways in which the Naivasha process can provide a framework for Darfur:
  - a. as a model for the negotiating process between the GoS and rebel groups in Sudan;
  - b. by applying and adapting the contents of the protocols as quickly as possible in Darfur. In particular, there are elements of the protocols where additional provisions for transition areas could be adapted.
4. The North–South peace process and its protocols are not a panacea for peace in Darfur. It remains unclear how the protocols will be implemented once the peace agreement has been signed. There are also important elements missing from the protocols that are critical for the resolution of the Darfur crisis. For example, the protocols do not outline in detail how they are to be applied at the level below that of the State. Neither are the role of the Native Administration nor its relationship to local government articulated. In the context of Darfur, these issues must be addressed.
5. All groups must be aware of, and must understand, the protocols within Darfur, as they apply to all groups, including the Native Administration, civil society groups, citizens (including IDPs) and international actors. This will require the raising of awareness.

6. While the Abuja talks address conflict resolution at the national and international levels, the participation of the tribal leadership and the relevant sections of civil society is needed to address conflict resolution and compensation at the local level and to support the decisions taken at Abuja. There is a critical need to understand and learn lessons from the failures of past reconciliation conferences, including the role of central government. This nuanced understanding is important for the international community, which might also have a role to play in these processes.
7. Talks at the international level should recognise and seek to enhance the function of the tribal leadership, while understanding the fragile and limited capacity of the Native Administration in many areas. It is also important to recognise that the Native Administration is not free from the political influence of the central government, and also that it has its own political agenda. For this reason, it is essential that its functions are de-politicised, clearly articulated, locally specific, authorised by local governing authorities (rebel or GoS) and agreed to locally by all groups.
8. Local governance in Darfur is not uniform, and there is an urgent need to learn lessons from different local approaches to reconciliation and security. This report has identified some localised conflict resolution initiatives, together with examples of good local governance, which are likely to have wider resonance. For example:
  - Local-level dialogue is currently ongoing between the Zayadia (an Arab tribe) and the Meidob in north-east Darfur, regarding disputes over access to pastures and boundaries. The Kawahla from western Kordofan are mediating in this process. The State government of North Darfur has tried to halt the process, but this has been resisted by the negotiating parties. Local-level dialogues should be encouraged and allowed to proceed unhindered.
  - The Beni Hussein have strong local governance, including local security arrangements. Groups like the Beni Hussein which have endeavoured to insulate themselves from the conflict are struggling to maintain this stance. Their efforts must be better understood and supported, where appropriate and possible.
9. Although the study did not explicitly consider violence against women, such violence was frequently encountered, with women putting themselves at risk for the sake of their livelihoods (e.g. gathering firewood, going to market). This raises issues of how violence against women should be addressed, together with the associated potential for an epidemic of HIV/AIDS. At the very least, local capacities to deal with these two co-epidemics need to be assessed, with a view to identifying local networks and institutions through which interventions may be directed. The issue of compensation must be addressed and included in local compensation and restitution processes.

### **Land commission**

10. The study recommends the setting up of a Land Commission covering all three states of Darfur, with representation from relevant parties. This action is in line with the Protocol on Southern Kordofan/Blue Nile. The Land Commission should be responsible for:

- mapping the existing *hakura* and *mass'arat* (livestock migration routes), through local consultation and based on local agreement within all strata of the Native Administration. The mapping work on livestock migration routes should be conducted in close association with the Livestock Reconciliation, Restitution and Compensation Commission (LRRCC; see below);
- administration of land tenure, based on traditional systems;
- ensuring that all groups, including minority groups, are consulted even where they may no longer be represented in their original home area. This includes both Arab and non-Arab groups who have migrated as a result of the conflict but who are not necessarily classed as IDPs;
- rehabilitation of water points in rural areas. This should be addressed on a case-by-case basis for existing rural dwellers or as people return (i.e. it should not be a blanket rehabilitation strategy);
- overseeing restitution and compensation in the case of land disputes.

## **Livestock**

### *Livestock reconciliation, restitution and compensation*

11. The study recommends the creation of a Livestock Reconciliation, Restitution and Compensation Commission (LRRCC), which should cover all three states of Darfur, and all groups within the region. The LRRCC should adopt four complementary approaches to reconciliation and compensation. It should:
  - oversee procedures for registration and verification of livestock losses;
  - oversee the taxation of livestock sold and ensure that all export taxation revenue is used to compensate those who have had livestock looted, including traders who have lost camel caravans and who have had drovers kidnapped by rebel groups;
  - encourage the voluntary return of looted livestock by providing a process for this to take place as part of the local reconciliation process;
  - provide certificates of ownership for all livestock. Export markets may only accept certified livestock.
12. All livestock taxation revenues should be reserved for this process of restitution and reconciliation, and taxation should even be raised for the first year to allow the process to go forward.
  - a. The Government of Sudan should be seen to be one of the major financial contributors to this process, given its failures to protect the livestock resources of rural people in Darfur.
  - b. The work of the Commission should be implemented locally through the Native Administration Council system, which ensures that all relevant groups are represented, plus mutually acceptable neutral third party groups. The LRRCC should start with pilot schemes at primary and secondary markets, ensuring that all species of livestock are dealt with.
  - c. In addition, the markets in Dongola (Sudan) and in Aweinat and El Kufra (Libya) should be monitored for looted camels by Sudanese groups, reporting to the LRRCC.

- d. The closed customs points in Darfur should be reopened and should be involved in monitoring for certificates of ownership.
- e. A joint UN/AU International Monitoring Committee should be created to oversee these processes.

#### *Livestock migration*

13. The opening up of livestock migration routes needs to be addressed at a political level, with agreement between local authorities governing the different sections of the routes, and at a local level. This makes livestock migration an important point of negotiation for reconciliation between groups. Conflicts over migration routes occur not only between farmers and herders, but even between herders with similar political leanings e.g. the Zaghawa and the Meidob. The opening of the routes will only come with local peace and reconciliation processes and the work of the RCC and Land Commission. At present, different groups control different sections of the migration routes. The SLM/A currently controls the wet-season reserves in the north, while the dry-season reserves in the south are controlled by Arabs. There needs to be recognition of the grazing rights of pastoralists for both the wet and dry seasons, with similar provisions to those of the Abyei Protocol.

#### *Livestock health and feed*

14. Sudan has well-developed veterinary services and therefore any interventions must be coordinated, managed and implemented through veterinary departments at federal and State level.
15. There is a shortage of veterinary drug supplies, both through the GoS and from the private sector. The GoS should make supplies available through the veterinary services. Regular vaccination programmes must be carried out, especially where livestock are being kept in confined areas and are unable to access the usual livestock migration routes.
16. There is a high risk of an outbreak of PPR (Peste Petitis de Ruminis) among camels in Darfur, as the Soba Veterinary Department has recently confirmed an outbreak of the disease in Sudan, and conditions are conducive for its spread to Darfur. PPR vaccination is therefore a high priority for camel herds in Darfur. Clearly, a vaccination programme would have to take account of the issue of looted livestock (through the LRRCC) and would also have to reach the herds of all groups. Livestock vaccination has provided opportunities for local-level conflict resolution in neighbouring countries, and this could be explored in Darfur.
17. The coverage of veterinary services and access to them should be reviewed in all areas and for all groups, with a view to expanding coverage through mobile units or community-based animal health workers, who would get their supplies from their local units.

18. The SLM/A should allow mobile veterinary services to pass through their areas and provide services. Equally, Arab pastoralists should allow mobile veterinary services to pass through and work in their areas.
19. Some IDPs, particularly women and children, are putting themselves at extreme risk in order to collect fodder for their donkeys and other livestock. This urgently needs to be addressed as a security and protection issue. The general distribution of livestock fodder for IDPs is considered inappropriate at this time, because few IDPs have livestock (except donkeys) and to do so would encourage local market interests in the continued presence of IDPs. Donkeys are a special case, as every rural household in Darfur needs one to go about its daily life and donkeys will be an essential part of the return and reintegration process. Where there are large concentrations of donkeys in IDP camps, feasibility studies on provision should be conducted, linked with pilot distributions of concentrates (molasses, sugar cane tops, briquettes) and fodder.

## **Trade and markets**

### *Livestock trade routes*

20. The study recommends the controlled opening of all livestock trade routes, including the opening of the national border between Libya and Sudan, the route to Dongola, and the northern and southern livestock routes to Muwheli (in Omdurman). This must be agreed by all parties at the international (Abuja), national and local levels.
21. The extreme southern route (from South Darfur through Burum) should be discouraged or closed, because it is physically longer and more costly and will reduce the prices obtained by producers. There is also a high prevalence of tsetse in this area, and large trade herds risk increasing the transmission of disease and having a negative impact on the environment through over-grazing.
22. There are a number of related issues that must be taken into account:
  - It is recognised that looted livestock will pass through these routes and therefore there must be controls linked with this, through the LRRCC.
  - Livestock is the primary source of taxation revenues for the states of Darfur. Given the present circumstances, taxation should be used to benefit Darfurians, in particular in the form of payments through the LRRCC.

### *Markets: commodity trade routes*

23. There needs to be agreement at Abuja from all parties to protect the main transport routes, to allow the safe passage of goods and people and to minimise taxation. This protection must not be in contravention of the ceasefire.
24. The African Union should patrol key transport routes. Local security incidents linked with looting along transport routes should be monitored and reported by the AU.

### *Free access to markets for buyers and sellers*

25. All restrictions on individuals buying, selling or transporting basic goods must be removed. This includes removing the GoS permit system in Kutum, which restricts and taxes purchases made by anyone coming to market from outside the boundary of the town, including people from the IDP camp. Livestock taxation is a special case and is dealt with above.
26. As the situation stabilises, a number of market interventions may be appropriate, including for example:
- seed and tool fairs, where buyers and sellers are brought together;
  - increasing the size of the food basket (general ration), to allow for the trade and purchase of other essential commodities, especially firewood;
  - purchasing local seed varieties to protect local species and to secure local seed supply for the next growing season;
  - seed multiplication programmes;
  - providing credits to small traders whose capital has been eroded, particularly those whose caravans have been attacked and looted. Livestock trade with Libya is dominated by traders whose capital is small in comparison with those working in the livestock trade and exporting to other countries in the Arab world. The support of these traders will have a multiplier effect.

## **Labour migration, remittances and communications**

### *Communications and tracing*

27. To improve communications between the diaspora of migrant workers and their families in Darfur, which will facilitate the flow of remittances into Darfur, the following immediate steps should be taken:
- Mobile telephone networks and land lines in Darfur should be kept open at all times (at present the networks are frequently closed).
  - Mobile networks should be extended to cover IDP camps in adjacent areas.
  - More landline communication centres should be opened in urban centres hosting IDPs, and in established IDP camps e.g. in Kutum and El Fasher.
  - All groups should have access to these centres.
28. Mechanisms should be provided for migrant worker family tracing. For example, the tracing operations of the International Committee of the Red Cross should be extended to include Darfurians located in all parts of Sudan and in the refugee camps in Chad. The Red Crescent in Libya and Sudan should support family tracing and reunification schemes, with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (or vice versa).

### *Libya*

29. The national border between Sudan and Libya should be opened in a careful and controlled manner, and with the full involvement and agreement of all parties (including the Libyan authorities, the Government of Sudan, the opposition groups and the Native Administration of affected tribes in Darfur). Negotiations and agreements on the opening of the border and the protection of trade routes will require commitments and actions by the opposition parties to ensure security of

access for labour migrants as well as the GoS. This also relates to the recommendations above on trade routes.

30. Efforts must be made to discourage all military recruitment of Sudanese migrant workers in Libya. Sudanese groups already in Libya should be actively supported with training and skills development to equip them for skilled work opportunities in Libya and for their return to Sudan.
31. There are increasing numbers of Sudanese workers in Libya without legal papers and without regular work (in part because of the recent requirement for foreign workers in Libya to pay for health tests and also because workers are unable to return to Sudan due to the border closure). This situation, combined with the insecurity and lack of opportunity in Darfur, puts pressures on workers to seek opportunities to travel to Europe. Immediate steps should be taken by the Libyan authorities to grant an amnesty for all Sudanese in Libya who lack identity papers or a valid health certificate. This would allow them the options of returning to Sudan or of taking the health test and applying for identity papers so that they can work in Libya legally.
32. There should be an end to discrimination against labour migrants in Libya in the provision of services, including the provision of food subsidies, healthcare and education. Health tests for Sudanese migrants should be provided free of charge, at least until the Sudan/Libya border is reopened and the security situation has stabilised.

*Supporting remittance flows and support to migrant workers and IDPs outside Darfur*

33. Remittances are potentially a critical source of income for Darfurians, particularly given the collective failure of other sources of income. Before the conflict, remitted cash and goods were usually either hand-carried or sent through traders and *hawalars*. These mechanisms have all but ceased to operate. Every effort must be made to support both remittance flows and the employment of migrant workers outside of Darfur. The first step is to ensure freedom of movement and an improvement in the security of routes and of public transport, including bus routes throughout Darfur
34. A joint UN/GoS needs assessment of the Darfurians displaced in Khartoum is a priority, followed by activities to address these needs through humanitarian interventions, protection and policy change. In addition to responding to immediate humanitarian needs, the international community should work with local groups to develop livelihood resources and strategies, including education and training opportunities, agricultural skills, access to micro-finance services, etc. Activities should be carefully targeted, and should not be on such a scale that they encourage migration from Darfur.

**International humanitarian response**

35. It is imperative that the international humanitarian community makes all efforts to demonstrate impartiality by responding to the needs of all groups. While the difficulties involved in separating civilians and combatants in rural locations are

greater than in the context of refugee camps, it is nevertheless vital that the international community seeks out the views and experiences of all groups and attempts to address their needs in order to prevent further marginalisation, of Arab groups in particular. Furthermore, if humanitarian aid fails to reach affected Arab groups, this will almost certainly inflame tensions, and could even contribute to harassment or reprisals against humanitarian workers.

36. Humanitarian assessment exercises and interventions should be directed at all groups where possible. It is especially important to include areas and groups that have not previously been included, rather than limiting surveys and assessments to groups already receiving assistance.
37. International organisations should be aware of the ethnic distribution of their staff and should seek to ensure ethnic representation, while remaining sensitive to any specific security concerns. Fielding ethnically representative teams may be impractical and risky from a security point of view. Nevertheless, agencies must ensure that they consider the potential ethnic biases of their teams.
38. Minimum standards can rarely be achieved at the height of an emergency and pragmatic decisions must be made as to the best strategy to achieve the progressive realisation of rights for all affected groups. The strategy among some international groups interviewed has been to expand their operations only when minimum standards have been achieved in their current programme – but this is a strategy for humanitarian containment, not humanitarian action. This type of strategy may be linked with the plethora of evaluations that are currently under way, and therefore it may be helpful to review the purposes of these evaluations to ensure that they are not contributing to the strategy of ‘risk-free’ programming (in other words, the possibility that agencies might play safe and keep their programmes small, manageable and risk-free in order to ensure that they receive the best possible evaluation).
39. The study therefore recommends a careful review of standards, in order to achieve wider coverage and greater general impact. This does not necessarily mean reducing inputs – rather, it may mean simplifying logistics and distribution. In relation to food distribution, for example, this might include simplifying the ration (single or dual commodities, instead of a full food basket) or undertaking blanket rather than targeted distribution. Such decisions would require a cost-benefits analysis and a feasibility study.
40. The risks to IDPs of rape, attack and abduction while they collect firewood represent a serious protection issue that must be addressed, given the critical importance of fuel for cooking. There is clearly a problem with sourcing supplies of firewood, charcoal or briquettes and there is also the issue of sustainability. However, these problems must not preclude the humanitarian imperative of providing appropriate inputs and protection. This is an opportunity for collaboration between the Forestry Department of the GoS Ministry of Agriculture, which has plantations and experience, and agencies such as UNHCR, which have encountered similar problems among refugees



worldwide. The limited work undertaken by agencies with fuel-efficient stoves and cooking techniques is useful, but needs to be expanded and complemented by other initiatives. This action is also urgently needed to prevent the rapid deforestation that is taking place around towns.

41. While it is recognised that the number of NGOs with experience of working in Darfur is very small, nevertheless the international humanitarian community should visibly demonstrate a better knowledge and understanding of local Arab and non-Arab groups, their history, livelihoods and systems of administration and conflict resolution. There is a role for collaboration between experienced NGOs in Darfur and local educational organisations, in terms of providing induction and training for national and international staff working in Darfur. It is important for experienced institutions in Khartoum to work closely with relevant institutions and INGOs in Darfur. This would serve to link local institutions with international organisations, for mutual support and capacity development.
42. Conditions will almost certainly deteriorate rapidly in Darfur, particularly as the limited benefits of the latest harvest have begun to wear off in early 2005. It is imperative that emergency preparedness starts now. One of the single greatest challenges will be the distribution system, particularly in ensuring that this is sufficiently decentralised to prevent drought-induced distress migration. It will be important to establish regional stockpiles on Darfur's borders, including at El Kufra in south-east Libya. Systems of distribution that minimise security risks will also be important.
43. Emergency preparedness on Darfur's southern border with Bahr el Ghazal is urgently needed, in preparation for a likely influx of displaced people from South Darfur. Arrivals have been reported recently. The implications of distress migration into Bahr el Ghazal on the fragile relations between tribes in this area should also be taken into consideration, and their needs considered.

#### *A livelihood strategy for Darfur*

44. In preparation for the time when security conditions improve and mobility is possible, a Livelihoods Task Force should be created under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union, and reporting to the highest office in the Sudan government. The role of this Task Force should be to monitor the conditions affecting livelihoods in Darfur that have been identified in this study, with a view to developing a national strategy for protecting, supporting and rehabilitating livelihoods in the region. This strategy should be developed through participatory processes that involve taking representatives of the GoS, the UN, the AU, and possibly donors, into the field to see local conditions and to seek local solutions with civil society and relevant local institutions. A similar process should be organised for the leadership of the opposition groups. The work of the Task Force should be closely linked with ongoing protection work, and should ensure that critical livelihood issues are considered as part of the relevant political processes.

Figure 1 Humanitarian livelihoods framework

