

Executive Summary

Purpose

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

Study Approach

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

Livelihoods in Crisis

- 3 Never in the history of Darfur has there been such a combination of factors causing the failure of livelihood strategies and loss of assets, including; systematic asset-stripping, production failures, market failures, failures to access natural resources, and failure to transmit back remittances. Under these circumstances regionwide famine appears inevitable. While food aid can partially redress the production failures, a much wider raft of interventions are needed to begin to address the other failures.

Recommendations

- 4 Major structural changes need to be addressed at the international, national and state level. These changes include processes of land restitution and compensation; livestock restitution, reconciliation and compensation; and opening up of transport routes to provide safe passage of people, livestock and goods. Ideally these wider processes of reconciliation should be linked with livelihood support and development inputs.
- 5 Extensive and detailed recommendations cover six broad areas: security, land, livestock, markets, labour migration and international humanitarian response.

History and Origins of the Conflict

- 6 The routes 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 with the central Sudanese authorities, from the Fur Sultanate to the current day. The study 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 marginalization of Darfur by the central government since the nineteenth century.

- b. the wider regional conflicts, which have contributed to the development and use of ethnically distinct armed militias and also the increased numbers of firearms owned by Darfurians generally. These conflicts involve the north south civil war, and the long-running conflicts within Chad and between Chad and Libya, and the relationship between these countries and Sudan.
 - c. the tactical manipulation of ethnic identities within Darfur by the government of Sudan and political parties including; the mobilization of armed militias, and the political mobilization based on religion and ethnic identity (Mahdism and later islamization and arabism).
- 7 At a local level the marginalization and neglect of Darfur has contributed to:
- a. failing institutions, including the Native Administration, the judicial systems and policing, which latterly appear to have favoured certain groups.
 - b. failing development, including education, healthcare, transport, veterinary and other services, which affect all of Darfur, but historically differentially affect ethnic groups.
- 8 Other local level processes include the competition and pressures on natural resources within Darfur which are partly a result of a history of drought and famine. These pressures have lead to clear ethnic rivalries and contributed to local level conflict. In addition, political polarization between Arab and non Arab groups in Darfur has had external influences from Libyan affiliated popular committees and some political parties (Muslim Brotherhood and Umma Party).

Affects 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. Thus, the livelihoods of farmers and herders have converged, although access to land and soil type, rainfall and altitude influence the precise patterns of these rural production systems. Most groups supplement their farming and livestock rearing activities, with labour migration and remittances, collection of natural resources (firewood, fodder and wild foods) and trade. Other livelihood strategies are found but are specific to certain groups, including for example, *tombac* (chewing tobacco) production, artisanry (leatherwork, metalwork etc), the military and a range of illegal activities (smuggling, banditry, brewing, prostitution etc).
- 10 Six case-study areas were drawn from all three States in Darfur, including 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 rebel/oppositions, pro-government, and those who were ambivalent).
- 11 The case-studies in Kebkabiya, Disr, Geneina, and Nyala give detailed accounts of the attacks on villages by government forces with armed militia support throughout

2003 and into 2004, which all included 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 – which means that parties to the conflict must not engage in attacking, destroying, removing or rendering useless objects indispensable for survival of civilian populations.

- 12 Beyond the direct impact of the crisis in terms of asset-stripping, are the continuing processes that indirectly cause the systematic destruction of livelihoods. These processes are caused by the actions of key players, including the Government of Sudan, the rebel groups, and even as a result of the failures of international humanitarian assistance.
- 13 The most fundamental problem affecting livelihoods in Darfur is insecurity, as it restricts the mobility of all groups. The insecurity continues as a result of continued ceasefire violations on the part of the GoS and the rebel groups. As a result of this insecurity the towns of Darfur have become besieged and IDPs within have become cut-off from their normal livelihood strategies. For rural based populations it is little better, with people fearing to travel or even cultivate their fields for risk of attack. In SLM/A areas although there is local security, all services and markets are in government controlled areas (Kutum), which were unreachable without risk of rape or attack.
- 14 The limited mobility resulting from insecurity has seriously limited the core livelihood strategies for all groups in Darfur, including; cultivation; seasonal livestock migration; trade and access to markets for buyers and sellers; labour migration and return of remittances; and travel to rural areas for collection of firewood, fodder and wild foods.
- 15 While the Khartoum government has eroded and manipulated the Native Administration, local interests in Darfur have sought to gain authority and power through the tribal systems – increasing the politicization of tribal administration. Certain groups clearly feel that they have been marginalized within Darfur in that they have had differential access to the limited resources that exist, including access to land, health and education and even international aid. Although their situation is very different to the IDPs their livelihoods are also under threat and their humanitarian needs will have to be addressed urgently in the coming months.

Pressure on Labour Migrants and Blocking of Remittances

- 16 Until the recent conflict remittances in cash and in kind from internal and external labour migrants 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, a conservative estimate of lost income from Libya is roughly \$15 million dollars per annum. In recent years Libya was ranked only third or fourth in terms of numbers of Sudanese labour migrants and therefore substantial sums are remitted from other destinations beyond Darfur's borders. However, given the proximity of Libya to Darfur and the recent lifting of

sanctions and likely upturn in the Libyan economy, Libya represents a potentially future rich source of income for Darfurians.

- 17 Labour migration and commerce across the desert through the trans-Saharan routes to Libya has long been a historic feature of livelihoods in Darfur. The oil boom of the seventies and eighties intensified these existing patterns of migration along with Gaddafi's relatively open-door policies. This changed in 1995 with a crackdown on migrant workers in 1995 (including raids and forced repatriation) which continued intermittently to the present day.
- 18 There are estimated to be two million foreign workers, and five million Libyans in Libya. Official estimates of numbers of Darfurian migrant workers were unavailable but were estimated to be between 150,000 and 250,000. A rapid assessment survey in Kufra indicated that Darfurian labour migrants are a relatively mature and skilled labour force with family responsibilities in Darfur. More than half were over 30 years of age, about 75% were married and the literacy rate was double that found in Darfur.
- 19 Migration to Libya is a reflection of pull and push factors. The push factors include conscription and compulsory recruitment in the popular defense forces, limited work opportunities in Darfur; failing livelihoods as a result of recurrent drought and insecurity. The pull factors were the Libyan government policies, the potential for better paid work opportunities; the relative proximity, the relative ease of working illegally, and most importantly the local Darfurian contacts and support networks found there.
- 20 In 2004 further restrictions were imposed on migrant workers, including the requirement of a 'health certificate' following a series of health tests. The tests cost LD70 (\$ 50), are only available to legal immigrants, and must be repeated every 6 or 12 months. Failing the test risks forfeit of identity papers, prison and deportation.
- 21 Before the crisis receipts of remittances in Darfur ranged between \$40 and \$900, but most were thought to be in the range of \$40 to \$400 per annum. Migrant workers in Libya estimated that previously skilled workers could afford to send about LD90 (\$68) per month, while unskilled labours 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 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 labour migrants and traders. This has stopped the traffic of migrant workers between North Darfur and southern Libya (effectively trapping several thousand in Kufra), and the well established and the critically important trade routes.
- 23 Communications and remittances have also been seriously affected as there is no longer the possibility of sending hand-carried messages or remittances.

Communications between Darfurian workers in Libya and their families in Darfur are vital for the transfer of remittances and recovery of livelihoods in Darfur.

- 24 Kufra is a trans-national trade hub linking Sudan and Chad, with Libya and Arab States, and is an important transit point for migrant workers of all nationalities. Consequently, this border closure has had a significant impact on economic activity in Kufra as well as the livelihoods of migrant workers.
- 25 The current limited prospects for migrant workers in Libya, combined with the threat of detention, difficulties of return to Sudan, loss of contact with and uncertainty about the fate of their families in Darfur, have created a sense of despair among many Darfurians. Thousands wait in Kufra for the chance to return to Darfur, while they watching the value of their capital erode. Suicide is reportedly increasing, while on the coast many are prepared to risk the dangerous boat journey across to Italy.

Labour migration to Eastern Sudan

- 26 Similarly, Darfur has a long history of labour migration to east Sudan. More than half of the Darfurian labour migrants in Gedaref had lived there for more than 3 years, and the vast majority had migrated for economic reasons, in search of work opportunities and cash income that would allow them to support their relatives and communities in Darfur.

Distress migration to Khartoum

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

Importance of Livestock

- 28 Sudan is the leading livestock exporting country in the region and livestock used to generate 20% of the national foreign exchange earnings before the discovery of oil. Darfurs' contribution to the livestock export trade and for the domestic consumption of meat has always been significant. For example, before Darfur was exporting 30,000 camels to Libya and about 50,000 camels to Egypt annually. In economic terms, livestock has been the primary target of this conflict. Various sources suggest that the non-Arab population lost between 50-90% of their livestock to the government armed forces. Solving the livestock issues are central to finding lasting solutions to the problems in Darfur. Darfur's economy has been seriously eroded and the traditional backbone of the economy – livestock trade, is failing fast.

Livestock migration routes

- 29 A visible outcome of the conflict is changes in livestock migration patterns with potentially disastrous consequences. Increasing hostility between the Arabs and non-Arabs and the control of some critical areas by the SLA along the traditional migratory routes have resulted in the restriction of access for the Abbala Arabs to the

wet season grazing reserves in the north (Gizou, Wadi Hawa and El Atrun). Camels and sheep belonging to the Abbala Arabs were confined south of the Jebel Mara Mountains during the mission's visit. Similarly, cattle belonging to the Baggara have been confined around the railway line close to Nyala Town (the furthest northern point they could reach) and to Nyala-Kas Zalingi Road in the west. Livestock concentrations in confined areas in the dry season grazing reserves will deplete pasture and water resources and increase the risk of disease outbreaks leading to increased livestock mortality.

The collapse of the livestock trade

- 30 The disruption of livestock trade within and from Darfur signals the downward spiral of the economy in the region. The repercussion of this disruption is felt, though in varying degrees, in almost all households of different segments of the population (pastoral, agro-pastoral, traders, middlemen, drovers etc). Important secondary markets like Mellit, where some 20,000 camels and 25,000 sheep were previously processed to Libya annually have been closed for the last ten months. Since then, out of the fifty local *toujars* (traders) in Mellit, about forty of them have left for El Fasher and 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 after the border was closed by the Government of Sudan. The total value of business lost since the route was closed amounts to over 14 million dollars. At least 300 lead drovers and 1,280 assistant drovers have lost their jobs and the possibility of employment as migrant workers in Libya. The volume exported through Tina (north-west Darfur on the border with Chad) to Chad is far less due to its inconvenient location, insecurity and the difficult terrain.

Trade to Muwheli (Omdurman) and Egypt

- 32 The northern route through El Fasher is insecure and a substantial reduction is expected in the volume of sheep to be sent to Muweli, Omdurman, both for export and local consumption. In total, the annual traffic on this route was approximately 450,000 sheep, 48,000 camels and about 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 SLA, attacks and counter-attacks between tribal groups and banditry. Recent security problems on this route include the interception of some 1,300 sheep by the SLA at Labado, 60 kms east of Nyala.

Crisis trade routes

- 33 Some Arab livestock traders in El Geneina are attempting to establish new trade routes to by-pass security-affected areas in the south. The closure of the southern route follows the capture of some parts of Ed Daein locality by the SLA, attacks and counter-attacks between tribal groups and the prevalence of bandits. These routes are longer, increasing the number of days trekking by 20-40 days, and therefore puts more stress on the animals. This route was on trial and traders were not certain whether it would be successful (profitable).

The Rise in Consumer Commodity Prices

34 The total and partial closures of strategic trade routes have increased prices for basic commodities due to increased transport costs, risks from bandits, the need to obtain commodity supplies from new sources and also as a result of Government embargo. Price increases are felt all over Darfur but are more pronounced in parts of northern Darfur that used to get most of its supplies from Libya (Kufra) and from Omdurman. In addition, large commodity traders that used to distribute consumer goods for village level traders on credit do not practice this system anymore.