**A Multi- Year Thematic Evaluation of DFID’s Multi- Year Humanitarian Funding Approach in Sudan**

**Summative Evaluation Report, June 2018**

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Acknowledgements

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Disclaimer

The contents and conclusions of this evaluation report reflect strictly the opinion of the authors and in no way those of DFID or its partners.

**Executive summary**

**Introduction**

In early 2014 DFID commissioned Valid Evaluations to carry out a thematic evaluation of their Multi-Year Humanitarian Funding (MYHF) approach in Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and Pakistan. This forms a part of the Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP) and is one of a number of studies into new or emerging humanitarian approaches. This report summarises the findings for Sudan and is one of four summative country reports. A final synthesis report will draw together the overall findings of the evaluation.

The longitudinal study, with substantive research taking place from 2015-2017, set out to answer three questions focusing on resilience, early response and value for money in the context of multi-year funding.

The evaluation used exploratory research techniques, allowing an understanding of the factors which shaped how different people coped with shocks and stresses. An additional study looking at the cost of ill-health was then commissioned.

Primary research took place in five villages in West Darfur and ten in the Beja villages of Kassala. The States were chosen because they were in receipt of DFID MYHF and are subject to different shocks and stresses. The conflict in Darfur attracted international attention with its brutality; Kassala has experienced significant climatic change, driving social change amongst a set of highly traditional ethnic groups. In places it was also caught up in the long running civil conflict with the South.

The evaluation conducted 259 household interviews and 36 focus group discussions over the course of two years, across the 15 villages studied. During this time there was drought and flooding in both Darfur and Kassala as well as ongoing low level conflict in Darfur. A separate survey with a sample of 331 households was conducted to look at the cost to households of ill-health.

**Findings**

Sudan has been in the humanitarian appeals system since its inception in 1992. Over that time period the humanitarian system has raised and spent over $21bn US dollars, and even after the South split in 2011 the appeal is routinely above $1bn a year.

For the most part of this time humanitarian resources have been spent on an annual basis. In Sudan perhaps more than any other place the fiction of humanitarian aid as emergency relief prevails. Crises endure over generations, but the ‘fix’ is assumed to be an annual affair. Worse still, the size and complexity of the country means that the appeal takes most of the year to construct (via a consensual system). It is a never-ending system of short-termism.

The reasons for the engagement of the humanitarian system in Sudan have changed over the years but have always been inherently political. Sudan has been out of favour with the west for decades, and this has led to sanctions and a dearth of official development flows. In its place, humanitarian aid has substituted as a method of political engagement by another name.

There are of course periodic, genuine, humanitarian emergencies. The 1984 famine was catastrophic in Sudan; less than Ethiopia but still deadly. The 1973 famine was worse. The 1998 famine in South Sudan led to mass mortality and displacement. In recent times the Darfur conflict and ethnic oppression led to immediate relief needs, as well as longer term protective care. Throughout that time there have been conflicts on the periphery of the country of various hues, with the war against the South until its cessation in 2011 the most notable.

But the short-term mindset of official humanitarianism leads to perverse incentives and thoughtless approaches. In Darfur, the city of Nyala has seen population doubled on the back of conflict related displacement. It is now the second or third largest city in Sudan. Various studies warn that the aquifer supporting the city has been dangerously exploited as a result of thoughtless emergency water schemes, and over ten years on from the start of the conflict the international humanitarian system is still aiding “IDPs”, with little evidence of pro-active schemes to integrate these populations into the urban economy.

Against such a backdrop the idea of multi-year humanitarian financing is highly overdue. DFID is to be commended for dipping its toes in this difficult and contested water. But the efforts recorded for this evaluation are tentative. DFID funded two medium sized multi-year programmes, although of a very limited duration (more or less for two years) one of which, the JRP, was closed after it had only really just started. The other, quite conventional, programme, in Darfur – focused on agriculture, primarily knowledge transfer and behaviour change. There was also an investment in evidence generation which was welcome and to an extent new, but the uptake pathways for the evidence generated are unclear.

In both areas studied for this evaluation, evidence demonstrates that the lives of households and communities are both changing rapidly, and highly constrained by acute poverty and lack of options. Climate change is a major factor in the lives of people earning their living from rainfed agriculture and livestock herding. Both the meteorological data and the household interviews demonstrate increased weather unpredictability (and heating) in the last two decades. Land tenure is complex and contested; markets and basic service infrastructure are under-invested, and livelihood opportunities are few. Most of those interviewed for this evaluation rely on environmentally destructive charcoal kilns to supplement meagre farm incomes and migrate for work to the urban centres or industrialised agricultural schemes periodically.

This precarity, as elsewhere in the Horn of Africa, leaves them highly exposed to shocks, which take many forms – conflict, floods and drought, health problems, crop pests, banditry and fluctuations in the price of staples, to name a few. The means of coping are few, and generally rely on social solidarity. Whilst this is strong in the communities surveyed – a source of resilience if this is the right term – it is not a deep well. Any sustained or particularly severe shocks quickly exhaust the reserves of community solidarity leading to break down.

The root cause of Sudan’s humanitarian need lies in a centralised, exclusionary political system and a historical ambivalence to the US-led globalised political and economic system. Fundamentally the state has not sought to develop its extensive hinterland, concentrating resources instead in Khartoum and the strip of Nile-based lands to the immediate north. Instead it has sought to quash dissent through military means, exploiting tribal division as a divide and rule strategy. Internationally Sudan has fallen in and out of favour with the US and its allies, and since the late 1980s has increasingly been labelled a rogue, or pariah, state.

Humanitarian actors have tried hard to ignore the fundamentally political nature of Sudan’s ‘crisis’ - despite many international NGOs being expelled from the country and those that remain being subject to intense scrutiny and control through the governments Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). A tacit pact has emerged whereby those NGOs left can do technical work as long as they don’t talk about human rights abuses or do anything the government might not like.

The upshot of this is short term, technical humanitarian action to address a long term, political crisis. Combined with travel restrictions, information gathering restrictions, lack of meaningful data, and a lack of any means of engaging with the population, the chances that humanitarian aid in Sudan is configured optimally are slim.

This evaluation concludes that multi-year humanitarian aid offers a small part of the solution to optimising the $1bn annual assistance that it should be presumed will continue to flow for the next 5-10, and probably 20 years. It starts to address the short-term part of the problem, but when ‘multi-year’ is conceived of as 18 months, or three years at best, not by very much. Neither does it address some of the other, in reality much larger and more significant problems, such as lack of access and politically driven crises.

Humanitarian aid will always be a lifeline for people in places like Sudan, however imperfect or constrained it is. There remains a major role for immediate, lifesaving assistance in a country where the risk of mass mortality (however infrequently) is absolutely real. Maintaining the space and the infrastructure to deliver this is worthwhile in itself. However bad development done in the name of humanitarian aid is not as convincing. Long term agriculture projects delivered with tiny budgets and unrealistic timeframes, or nutrition behaviour-change projects cut short after a couple of years are not optimal. And the ongoing support for IDP populations, seemingly without a plan for their future, seems neglectful bordering on harmful. Certainly, the thoughtless destruction of vital natural resources is deleterious.

This evaluation has seen some good, positive outcomes from DFID’s MY investments. Diets have changed for the better in Kassala, and in Darfur the uptake of new farming techniques shows promise. The revival of conflict resolution committees, whilst uneven, is extremely positive in Darfur. These types of outcomes show promise, and most importantly highlight new ways of working that must be considered if the humanitarian endeavour is to contribute beyond episodic emergency response. However, this evaluation has also recorded the usual egregious stories of poor aid: infrastructure that creates flooding and ruins land; NGOs that train people for jobs that aren’t there; promises of aid that never materialise, or partly delivered projects that are futile because of their incompleteness. Multi-year funding will not fix these problems, which pertain more to the nature of aid than any one funding modality.

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**Abbreviations**

CAFOD Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

CRS Catholic Relief Services

DFID Department for International Development

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

ECHO Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

FAO UN Food and Agricultural Organization

FGD Focus Group Discussion

FTS OCHA Financial Tracking Service

HAC Humanitarian Aid Commission

HEA Household Economy Analysis

HF Pooled fund

HIEP Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme

JRP Joint Resilience Programme

MAM Moderate Acute Malnutrition

MFI Micro-Finance Institutions

MYHF (or MY) Multi-Year Humanitarian Financing

NCA Norwegian Church Aid

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

PPP Purchasing Power Parity

SAM Severe Acute Malnutrition

SHARP Sudan Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Programme

SHF Sudan Humanitarian Fund

SILC Savings and Internal Lending Communities

SLA Sudan Liberation Army

UMCOR United Methodist Committee on Relief

UNHCR United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund

UN OCHA United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

USAID United States Agency for International Development

VE Valid Evaluations

VFM Value for Money

WASH Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

WFP UN World Food Programme

WHS World Humanitarian Summit

WV World Vision

1. **Introduction**

The thematic evaluation of DFID’s MYHF approach in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Sudan and Pakistan was commissioned in early 2014. It is part of DFID’s Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP), seeking to broaden the evidence base and improve practice in humanitarian action.

The study has taken place over nearly four years, with a forecast completion date of August 2018. The purpose of the study is to generate learning and evidence on whether, and how, a MYHF approach has enabled DFID programmes in each country to:

* ensure a timely and effective humanitarian response
* build disaster resilience and
* achieve better Value for Money (VFM).

The evaluation aims to provide evidence to contribute to the management of these programmes at country level, as well as informing DFID’s humanitarian policy more broadly. The evaluation findings are also expected to contribute to: the global evidence base on good humanitarian practice; how to build resilience in the most fragile and conflict affected states; and to the realisation of the resolutions made at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016.

The study in Sudan has been the most difficult to implement of all four country case studies as the team have had very limited access. Visas for international staff were not forthcoming, apart from on one occasion, and only then for Khartoum. Travel permissions for field work were lengthy and time-consuming and survey instruments had to be approved by the Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), meaning that many areas of research proved challenging. As a result, the study has not been able to reach all of its goals.

**1.1 Sudan context**

Since independence in 1956, The Republic of Sudan has been plagued by poor governance, military dictatorship and internal conflict. This has been overlaid by frequent food shortages and famine induced by a changing climate and conflict and, in some cases, both simultaneously. While the Nimeiry government of the 1980s effectively absconded responsibility for the humanitarian response to, in particular, the famine that affected eastern, southern central and western states of the northern part of the unitary Sudan, subsequent administrations under the autocratic rule of Omar al-Bashir have sought to manipulate assistance in support of conflicts with both the southern Sudanese and with those “Arab” and “black Arab” populations of the west.

The long-running war with South Sudan, prompted by religious and ethnic differences and a contest over oil reserves in the “transitional zone” culminated in the birth of a new nation in 2011. Similar conflicts have, at different times, engulfed the Red Sea Hills, the Nuba mountains (entailing both armed violence and kidnapping for slavery), Kassala (including occupation of the northern part of the State by SPLA forces), Kordofan, Blue Nile State and Darfur, although in some cases local competition for resources has been co-opted for wider political purposes. In all cases, simmering conflict and all-out war and displacement have made life for millions at best marginal and at worst untenable.

The imposition of international sanctions in 1997, spearheaded by the US which designated Sudan a sponsor of state terrorism, and their later expansion in 2007 following the Darfur conflict (see below), has done little to abate the internal strife. In 2009, President Omar al-Bashir’s indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur further isolated the country but had little impact on the wars being fought. The exploitation of Sudan’s oil reserves alleviated much of the impact of the sanctions and China’s heavy investment in the country’s infrastructure has helped to mask the massive underinvestment by the government itself.

The lifting of sanctions in October 2017 has seen an attempt to replace oil revenues lost with the independence of South Sudan by the exploitation of, for example, mineral reserves and agriculture, whilst following an economic austerity programme.

**The Economy**

Sudan’s economy has grown intermittently as a result of conflict and international isolation, with development also constrained. Prior to South Sudanese secession the economy grew at a steady 7%, driven primarily by oil flows and Chinese investment. Without access to oil revenues GDP initially collapsed but has subsequently climbed again to a respectable 3-4% annually.

Sudan remains primarily reliant on agriculture, much of it rain-fed, subsistence and prone to droughts and floods. It constitutes about a third of the economy and employs 80% of the workforce.[[1]](#footnote-1) Minerals and oil dominate export income. Inflation is high at 27%[[2]](#footnote-2) and Sudan remains heavily indebted, constraining its ability to borrow internationally (although the lifting of sanctions will have alleviated this problem).

Political and economic uncertainty keeps Sudan towards the bottom of the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI), ranking 165 out of 187 in 2016 (an improvement of one place since 2013, and 6 places since 2012). 46.5% of the population lives at, or below, the poverty line, although this is heavily skewed towards rural areas.[[3]](#footnote-3),[[4]](#footnote-4)

Similar to both Ethiopia and DRC, whilst GDP per capita has shown a steady growth in overall terms (Figure 2), there has been little, if any, measurable change for the general population, and in particular for a large minority in the conflict-ridden areas of Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile State.

**Figure 1: GDP per capita**



Source: Tradingeconomics.com/World Bank, accessed 2 May 2018

Despite the dire situation for a large section of the 40 million population (projected to grow at 2.3% per annum between 2016 and 2030), mortality of children under 5 (U5) fell from 128 to 65/1000 between 1990 and 2016. with 52% of boys and 55% of girls accessing primary education. Secondary school enrolment stands at about 31% and 32% for boys and girls respectively. The literacy rate is measured at 69% for the 15-24 age group. Immunisation coverage is surprisingly high at 93%[[5]](#footnote-5) and 59% of the population has access to safe water.[[6]](#footnote-6) The urban population of 34% is projected to grow at an annual rate of 3.1% to 2030[[7]](#footnote-7)

**Land tenure**

*“Customary land tenure systems exist throughout Sudan and govern the practices of pastoralists in the north, the semi-feudal systems that developed on land close to the Nile, and the practices of southern and western tribes. Customary law varies throughout the country, but tends to share the following general characteristics: land is considered to belong to the people; land is not formally registered; land remains with the tribe or clan and cannot usually be sold to outsiders; most land rights are use rights, and land is considered retained by a household until abandoned [for at least ten years, author’s addition] (and in some circumstances even if abandoned); and rights to land and its natural resources may overlap. Most groups distinguish between land used for grazing and hunting and land used for farming and residences, and different rules apply to the various land categories. Local leaders determine who has rights to land and other natural resources and who must seek permission for use of land” (USAID: Sudan Country Profile; Land Rights and Property Governance, 2014 [?])*

Sudanese statutory law,[[8]](#footnote-8) including Islamic law, overrides customary and community legislation and provides that all unregistered land (estimated to be 90% of the total surface area of the country) belongs to the government. This means that central government is empowered to allocate land as, when and where it pleases.[[9]](#footnote-9)

*Land tenure in Darfur*

While the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement acknowledged the duty of the governments of both Sudan and South Sudan to regulate land tenure issues, nothing has been done to address the problem in the “transitional zone.” The Darfur Land Commission, established in 2007, has insufficient technical capacity, financial resources and political weight to push through changes that would go a long way to addressing the fundamental drivers of conflict and displacement in the region. As a consequence, the Khartoum government continues to tacitly or overtly approve the co-option of land by the various political factions in Darfur, ensuring that the dispossessed remain so for the foreseeable future.[[10]](#footnote-10)[[11]](#footnote-11)

*Land tenure in Kassala*

The conflict between statutory and customary law applies equally in Kassala, where a number of colonial and post-colonial ordinances culminated in the Unregistered Land Act of 1970, which confirmed government ownership over unregistered land and empowered it to use force to establish that right. Thus, customary law (which assigns a number of rights, mostly usufructuary and time-limited according to the duration of the abandonment or non-use of land by the recognised holder) is overridden and populations made potential victims of commercial and political interests.[[12]](#footnote-12)

**Humanitarian need in Sudan**

Sudan has been a beneficiary of the humanitarian appeals system since its inception in 1992. This has resulted in over $21 billion of humanitarian assistance to the end of 2017. While crises have shifted geographically, the underlying causes have been climate extremes and, exacerbating these natural extremes, contested state legitimacy and the inability, or reluctance, of the centre to ensure (or apply) the rule of law at the periphery. The instability engendered has allowed the central authorities to manipulate conflicts between historically antipathetic ethnic, tribal and political groups.

Despite a well-educated and capable urban population, and a competent civil service, the economy, hamstrung by almost constant conflict and appalling donor relations, continues to be largely based on rain-fed smallholder agriculture, while a limited number of extensive irrigated schemes have provided much of the produce for the urban centres. But with lives and livelihoods at constant risk of disruption by weather and conflict, Sudan is caught in a humanitarian vortex. Sudan’s most critical western adversaries are also its biggest humanitarian donors, with the US providing over $234m in 2017 and with DFID consistently contributing the lion’s share of the annual UN-administered Sudan Humanitarian Fund.

The international isolation of Sudan also leaves few options for the big development donors in responding to this need. Loans from international financial Institutions and bilateral development aid are all but impossible because of historical economic sanctions and political differences. The entry of China, India and the Gulf States into Sudan’s extractive and agricultural industries has mitigated this situation, but has had little impact on the conflict issues of Darfur and acute poverty and humanitarian vulnerability in Kassala.

Sudan continues to command a significant proportion of the international humanitarian budget, this despite a falling-off of total annual assistance between 2009 and 2012 and again between 2013 and 2017. The annual appeal for 2018 stands at $1.01billion.

**Figure 2: Global Humanitarian Assistance 2017**

*Source: Development Initiatives, Global Humanitarian Assistance, 2017*

**The conflict in Darfur**

Darfur, with a population of 7.5 million spread over an area the size of France, has seen conflicts of varying intensities since the late 1980s. This has stemmed from inter-tribal (“Arab” vs “non-Arab”) struggles over access to productive land as the Sahara desert and successive droughts have encroached on western parts of the region; conflict in the “transitional zone” between North and South Sudan; and, since 2003, insurrection with its genesis in a perceived neglect of the region by the al-Bashir regime.

The current conflict unleashed regime-backed “Arab” militias against the civilian population in retaliation for the armed activities of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA). This resulted in mass displacement and the sequestration of large sections of the population in camps in Darfur or in neighbouring Chad, served by an international humanitarian community working under severe government constraints and regular security threats.

Although the conflict abated in 2006, with the signing of the Darfur Peace Accord in the same year, the creation of UNAMID in 2007 and the approval of the Doha Document for Peace in 2011, periodic fierce fighting has continued, with a constant shifting of alliances and fragmentation of the various factions, leading to a number of conflicts with different objectives, all playing into the hands of the Khartoum regime. Despite the reduction in the regularity of violent incidents, there were more than 1.76 million IDPs in Darfur in general[[13]](#footnote-13) with around 240,000 IDPs in West Darfur.

**Kassala**

Kassala saw a major transformation in the 20th century from a largely pastoralist or agro-pastoralist economy dominated by two or three ethnic groups, to a multi-ethnic and –national population competing for land rights, as investment in extensive mechanised farming transformed the relationships between existing groups, and between these groups and the in-comers. Accompanying this were refugee flows and insurgent movements in and out of Eritrea and Ethiopia (including movements from the VE research areas) and from South Sudan (Hamashkoreb province was occupied by the SPLA between 1999 and 2000).

Continuing refugee movements from Eritrea and people-trafficking imposed new pressures on the state in the new millenium.[[14]](#footnote-14)

Kassala has always been seen as an important testing ground of the Al-Bashir’s Islamic regime because of its historical links to the Khatmiyya branch of Sufism. Both are challenged by the rise of the Jamat Ansar al Sunna, a vehicle for less powerful ethnic groupings in the state to establish their political power. Kassala is, therefore, roughly characterised by large elite landowners occupying 80% of the rain-fed arable land for mechanised farming, in direct competition with traditional and incoming groups vying for access to a viable livelihood in a context of both drought and periodic devastating flooding of the Gash, Atbara and Rahad rivers. A recent development has been a move by the Rashaida, themselves immigrants from Saudi Arabia, to occupy land made more valuable by dam and irrigation development.

**1.2 Methodology**

As outlined in the introduction, the purpose of the evaluation was to generate evidence and learning on the use of MYHF in fragile and conflict-affected states. The evaluation aimed to answer three main questions:

1. Are vulnerable individuals and households more resilient to shocks and stresses as a result of the work of DFID-funded (and other) interventions? What lessons can be learned about how to best enhance resilience in protracted crisis? How do investments in resilience contribute to or compromise delivery of humanitarian outcomes?
2. Has the availability of contingency funding enabled DFID and its partners to respond more quickly and effectively when conditions deteriorate?
3. To what extent does DFID MY and contingency funding provide better VFM than annual funding for DFID and partners?

To answer these questions the evaluation employed a range of methods, including a qualitative panel survey; a quantitative survey looking at health shocks, and extensive review of DFID partner data accompanied by regular key informant interviews.

The method has combined both inductive and deductive approaches. Primarily – to answer the resilience question in particular - the evaluation has been inductive and iterative in nature. This was felt necessary because of the contested and formative nature of resilience theories at the outset of the evaluation, as well as the newness of multi-year humanitarian financing. However, there has also been a deductive element, considering the VFM aspects. This drew on earlier work around the potential benefits of VFM in multi-year programming, providing a framework that could be tested.

**Health and women in shocks studies**

In addition to the panel surveys – and partly because of the complexity of access and quality issues – the thematic evaluation commissioned two additional studies to explore aspects of resilience. These were intended to mirror companion pieces in at least one other country in the thematic study. The two studies looked at 1) the way women’s role in society had potentially changed as a result of shocks, and 2) the cost of health shocks and the potential role of formal and informal insurance in mitigating these. The women in shocks study was commissioned in Kassala and the health shocks study in Darfur.

In the event, the Kassala study proved extremely difficult to carry out, as noted elsewhere in this report and the data gathered was treated instead as a partial third round of panel data (as some panel households were included). The health study proved more successful and is published as a separate paper.

The health shocks study was carried out in late November and early December 2017 in the five villages subject to the panel interviews. 331 households were randomly sampled, and quantitative data collected on household demographics, the prevalence of ill-health over the previous 12 months for all members of the household and health-care seeking behaviour in each case of ill-health.

Detailed costs were collected for all health care visits (western, traditional and spiritual/religious) for one episode of ill-health from the respondent and for one child in the household. Total costs for the households were extrapolated from the costs for one adult and one child.

Because health costs are highly skewed to large amounts (making average data unrepresentative of most household health spending) the study mixed both standard statistical approaches and hybrid calculations often including median values.

**Substantive research areas**

The evaluation selected two main geographical areas of focus, based on the DFID funded multi-year resilience partners presence. The Taadoud consortium operates across Darfur, but this was too wide an area for detailed enquiry, so, in consultation with the lead agency CRS and the Sudanese authorities, an area in West Darfur was chosen encompassing 5 villages. In Kassala, the research team attempted – again in consultation with UNICEF and FAO as the active partners in JRP – to pick representative villages in their project area. This led us to select:

* West Darfur*:* Dorti, Faiga, Haraza, Hasabona and Nur Alhada villages.
* Kassala*:* Akla, Eissa, Elatyout, Saboon, Timekeet and Umbarakat.

The villages of West Darfur lie between the small regional towns of Habilla and Mornie, close to the border with Chad. They are agro-pastoralist, planting sorghum and millet and a variety of cash crops from peanut to vegetables (in the fertile and irrigated valleys). They also keep small livestock holdings, engage in charcoal production and a variety of on and off farm labour. All of the villages have been affected by the conflict in Darfur to some degree, and several continue to suffer tense relationships with neighbouring cattle and camel herders.

The villages in Kassala are all inhabited by clan members of the Beja [agro]-pastoralist tribe and are a mixture of “old” and “new” settlements, the latter established largely as a result of climate catastrophes over the past thirty years. The people of Timekeet spent seven years in Eritrea as refugees from the occupation of their area by the SPLA and its aftermath. Livelihoods are maintained through crop production and sale, charcoal production and firewood-gathering, migration to river valleys to practice seasonal flood-retreat agriculture, and, for a significant proportion, seasonal migration for pasture or for labour in the cities and commercial agricultural developments in the region.

**Research team composition**

Thanks to the professional connections of the Valid senior national consultant, a team of local researchers was engaged through the Academy of Health Sciences in Khartoum, a reputable and established quasi-governmental research agency.

The intention in Sudan – as with the research exercises in the other three countries – was that there would be intensive training, coupled with field testing, and that other team members would be available to carry out the training. In the event, difficulties in obtaining visas meant that this could not happen and logistical constraints in Darfur also meant that field testing and extensive training did not take place. The first round of interviewing was rushed as a result, and some of the researchers did not prove to be of the right profile.

In subsequent rounds lessons were learned and a researcher from IDS and a highly experienced former country manager from Save the Children were hired to help the senior national consultant with team selection and training (both Sudanese nationals). Whilst this improved the quality of the interviews and write-up immeasurably, major constraints continued both in terms of the quality of researchers available and the space the team had to ask questions. As with all research of this nature, government accompanied the teams meaning that sensitive subjects were difficult to tackle and respondents could not always be forthcoming.

**Table 1: Capture and analysis of the data- household interviews by village and by round**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **West Darfur panel interviews by village and by round** | | |
|  | **R1** | **R2** |
| Dorti | 15 | 7 |
| Faieg | 10 | 10 |
| Haraza | 16 | 8 |
| Hassabona | 13 | 8 |
| Nur Alhuda | 12 | 13 |
| TOTAL | 66 | 46 |

**Table 2: Kassala Panel Interviews**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Kassala panel interviews by village and by round** | | | | | | | |
|  |  | **R1** | **R1** | **R2** | **R2** | **R3\*** | **R3\*** |
| **Locality** | **Village** | **FGD** | **HH** | **FGD** | **HH** | **FGD** | **HH** |
| Aroma | Akla Almahata | 2 | 10 | 2 | 10 |  |  |
| Um-Barakat | 1 | 8 | 3 | 10 | 2 | 9 |
| North Delta | 18 Eissa-Elhaj | 2 | 9 | 2 | 10 | 1 | 7 |
| Saboon | 2 | 9 | 3 | 13 |  |  |
| Telkuk | Elatyout | 2 | 11 |  | 1 |  |  |
| Timekeet Almasjid | 2 | 11 |  | 4 | 2 | 7 |
|  | Al Rashdeen area |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |
|  | Goz Rajab |  |  |  |  | 1 | 10 |
|  | Jabal Habboba |  |  |  |  | 2 | 4 |
|  | Mukram Al Rashdeen |  |  |  |  |  | 9 |
| TOTAL |  | 11 | 57 | 11 | 48 | 9 | 42 |

\*R3 Villages differ as they included some aspects of the gender study.

**Figure 3: Gender breakdown of the respondents**

**Figure 4: Age range for the respondents (in %)**

**1.3 Aid contributions and the DFID portfolio**

As noted earlier, the bulk of humanitarian assistance to Sudan has been provided, historically, by the US and UK governments, with significant contributions from the EU/ECHO. Very little of this, with the exception of DFID, has been multi-year.

Over the period of the research, humanitarian contributions from the three principle donors amounted to approximately $1.12 billion, the largest contributor by far being the USA through the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Food for Peace (FFP) and the Bureau for Population Refugees and Migration (BPRM), and with the vast majority being passed through three UN agencies (WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF), due to the operational difficulties faced by NGOs in general over the period.

**Figure 5: Humanitarian contributions in Sudan, 2016**



Source FTS Sudan 2016

DFID has been the major contributor to the Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF) since its inception in 2006. During the period of the research, the SHF shrunk considerably, with DFID’s share increasing proportionately; in 2017 the SHF had slipped to $36m from $53m in 2015.

In the same period, the destination of the funds has changed. Whereas in 2015 the UN organisations were the major beneficiaries at 54% and international NGOs and national NGOs 46%, by 2017 the balance altered radically, albeit with a smaller total fund, with UN agencies receiving 24% and INGOs and NNGOs 72% (reflecting, presumably, improved access and levels of trust for the latter).

In parallel, DFID has instituted a number of resilience-building initiatives in the period of the evaluation to complement its major humanitarian contribution, mostly in support of the rehabilitation effort in Darfur, and with a complementary programme to the JRP in eastern Sudan. These include:

* **Water for Darfur (W4D) 2015-20**, implemented by Unicef, targeting people living in nomadic and pastoralist communities within a defined water catchment area who often have contested access to water resources and drinking water supply due to competing demands on the scarce resources.
* **Urban Water for Darfur (UW4D) 2015-19** implemented by Unicef, targeting 2 out of 5 State capitals, and assisting IDP camps that have become, effectively, urban settlements.
* **Responding to Protracted Crisis in Sudan: Humanitarian Reform, Assistance, and Resilience Programme 2017-2022,** a multi-partner (Catholic Relief Services (CRS), The British Red Cross Society (BRCS), UNDP and WFP) programme in support of the draft humanitarian response strategy and targeting emergency food supply, nutrition and WASH in Darfur.
* **Water for Three States** (Red Sea, Gedaref and Kassala), implemented by ZOA International (ZI) and targeting urban and rural water supply.
* **Sustain Darfur Programme 2017-2020** implemented by ZI, and addressing the conflict issues arising from water access in Darfur.

None of these initiatives is explicitly mentioned in the Darfur and Kassala interviews, although they might well be recognised as assistance brought by “government” or “organisations”, a common reference at household level

**The DFID humanitarian portfolio**

The Sudan Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Programme (SHARP) business case originally set out a three-year plan (2013/14-2015/16) to respond to both chronic and acute humanitarian needs in Sudan. This included £67 million for UN Agencies, INGOs and the ICRC. Additionally, a further £21 million was budgeted to respond to spikes in need over the course of the Business Case (making £88m in total). The timeframe of implementation for the original Business Case was extended to 31st September 2017, primarily to cover the extended implementation timeframe of resilience components.

The outcome statement for the SHARP Business Case is:

*“In targeted areas existing capacity of beneficiaries to absorb shocks and stresses is enhanced whilst where relevant humanitarian response mitigates negative consequences in a predictable manner.”*

The DFID annual review, 2016 mapped the progress of the project, and highlighted some of the difficulties inherent in implementing a programme in Sudan and the importance of joined-up working:

***Key lessons***

*Despite some initial optimism in the second half of 2015, it seems unlikely that the operational space for humanitarian partners will open up over the course of 2016. DFID should continue to be aware of the potential risks for implementing partners and ensure that we are appropriately prepared to manage such challenges for partners if necessary.*

*In future resilience focused and longer term programmes we should further consider how sufficient flexibility can be built into programme design to enable them to scale up and adapt to sudden shocks or stresses as well as ensuring sufficient timelines for inception.*

*There is scope to improve cross-office planning within DFID Sudan. The challenge around co-ordination on water inputs in Kassala is an important example where improved co-ordination and planning can have a positive impact on programme design.*

**Table 3: DFID contingency funding 2013-16**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DFID Contribution to | 2013/14  Contingency | | 2014/15    Contingency | | 2015/16    Contingency | | Total estimated expenditure    Contingency | |
| CHF | £14.0m |  | £10.0m |  | £7.0m |  | £31.0m |  |
| ICRC | £2.5m |  | £2.5m |  | £2.5m |  | £7.5m |  |
| WFP | £4.0m |  | £4.0m |  | £4.0m |  | £12.0m |  |
| FAO | £1.0m |  | £1.0m |  | £1.5m |  | £3.5m |  |
| INGOs | £3.5m |  | £4.0m |  | £4.5m |  | £12.0m |  |
| Evaluation | £0.3m |  | £0.3m |  | £0.4m |  | £1.0m |  |
| **TOTAL** | **£25.3m** | ***(£7m)*** | **£21.8m** | ***(£7m)*** | **£19.9m** | ***(£7m)*** | **£67m** | ***(£21m)*** |

**Table 4: DFID initial and final contributions to MY humanitarian projects**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Project name | Initial allocation | Final allocation |
| JRP | £13,308,000 | £15,942,009 |
| Taadoud | £11,945,212 | £11,945,212 |

DFID allocated approximately £127 million to humanitarian programmes during the study period.[[15]](#footnote-15)

The SHARP business case covered the projects of interest to Valid, with these constituting 20% of the total investment. The Sudan Humanitarian and Innovation Programme (SHIP), valued at £38.7 million primarily funded WFP for vouchers and the SHF (while some funds were also allocated to research and nutrition assessment through UNDP and UNICEF).

The two Sudan multi-year programmes each had a slightly different focus and were configured slightly differently. The Taadoud programme’s focus was primarily agriculture, with some nutrition education and some community group support. The JRP’s emphasis was primarily on nutrition, with some agriculture and community group support. Taadoud was a CRS-led NGO consortium in a conflict/post-conflict context, JRP a UN consortium led by UNICEF in an environment of climatic shocks and very high levels of malnutrition.

Both projects were independently evaluated, although decisions about their future were taken before either evaluation was available. The Taadoud consortium reported highly impressive gains as a result of their intervention; the JRP evaluation was more circumspect.

**Taadoud: a brief description**

The Taadoud consortium[[16]](#footnote-16) was led by Catholic Relief Services (CRS) with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Oxfam America (Oxfam), United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), and World Vision (WV). The project targeted over 200 communities in 18 localities across all five Darfur states, directly benefitting more than 60,000 households and indirectly benefiting more than 95,000 households.

Its principal aim was to build the ability of local communities and households to effectively cope with shocks and stresses with an overall goal of ***“Increased household resilience to shocks and stresses supported by strong community structures which are integrated with local government services.”***

There were four main components and output objectives:

1. ***Improving household-level food security*: *47,705 farmer and pastoralist households have adopted project-promoted livelihood techniques.*** Household adoption of improved agricultural practices is increased through a series of training activities and community-level follow-up. In addition, households participate in Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) in order to build their financial assets.
2. ***Improving household-level nutrition: 43,456 households have adopted the Essential Nutrition Actions.*** Household adoption of improved nutrition and hygiene practices is increased through the Care Group Model, a peer-to-peer approach for disseminating information.
3. ***Strengthening community-level Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaption (CCA): 242 community support systems established and/or strengthened.*** Community committees better understand the key risks faced by each community, and are able to design and implement activities that help mitigate these risks.
4. ***Respond to El Niño-induced drought: 16,533 HHs in areas with high impact from El Niño-induced drought have received timely appropriate support to protect main streams of income and health.*** Preparedness and mitigation actions that support households in coping with and/or reducing the impact of El Niño-related shocks. Interventions include dry season cultivation input support, cash for work (CFW) activities, livestock vaccination, and malnutrition prevention.

**The Joint Resilience Project (JRP): a brief description**

The JRP consortium was led by UNICEF and included WFP and FAO. Its aim was to, “strengthen resilience to weather shocks, namely droughts and floods, of targeted communities in four selected localities (Aroma, Hameshkoreb, North Delta and Telkok) in Kassala state.”

The JRP targeted 75 villages with a population of approximately 193,000 people. Interestingly – ambitiously – it had as its main indicator a reduction in stunting in under 2-year olds. This was to be achieved over a three year period through five main outputs:

1. **Community owned action plans to strengthen resilience to floods and droughts and improve gender equality through improved nutrition, sanitation and livelihoods are implemented.** This output was led by WFP and community group participants were supported with a food ration to aid their involvement.
2. **Increase access to maternal and child health and nutrition services:** Led by UNICEF but also involving WFP this was the largest component and consisted nutrition behaviour change programmes (IYCF), treatment of severe (SAM) and moderate (GAM) malnutrition, food rations and measles vaccinations.
3. **Increased availability of improved drinking water, use of improved sanitation facilities, and hand washing practices in Aroma locality:** Also led by UNICEF this consisted exclusively of information and hygiene awareness.
4. **Increase the resilience of livelihoods to shocks that impact agriculture, food, nutrition and economic sustainability:** This outputwas led by FAO and consisted of introducing and supporting vegetable gardening, chicken breeding, goat rearing and some improved grain seeds.
5. **Communities are prepared to respond to droughts caused by El Nino by increasing availability of services in nutrition, health, WASH, livelihood and food security:** This output basically became the emergency response to the floods and consisted food aid from WFP, nutrition, medical and NFI response from UNICEF as well as seeds and tools from FAO.
6. **Findings from the primary data gathering**

Much has been written about the conflict in Darfur, and less about how people live in Kassala although the contexts are broadly similar. Both areas are the neglected hinterland of a large and dysfunctional centralised, militarised state. Both have a mix of livestock herding and agriculture as their predominant livelihoods, with poor infrastructure and long terms stresses undermining traditional ways of living. Both have experienced severe climate shocks and conflict (much more so in the case of Darfur). Kassala has some access to larger commercial agriculture schemes and therefore labour opportunities; West Darfur is marginally better off in terms of its soil fertility, although this is largely immaterial in an agricultural economy constantly disrupted by conflict.

What Darfur and Kassala both share however, overwhelmingly – and in common with other country case studies for this evaluation – is their structural vulnerability to shocks. This is intimately connected to their economic and political marginalisation as regions and as peoples, exacerbated by conflict that has its roots in that same marginalisation and accompanying grievance. And, in both places, ancient ways of life and old and established livelihood systems that for the most part worked have come under repeated stress and to some extent buckled. People no longer rely exclusively on agriculture or herding, but increasingly adopt previous distress strategies as routine, and increasingly migrate to towns and cities in search of work. This, too, is similar to the other country case studies in this evaluation, almost certainly accelerated by displacement that often takes people into nearby towns and cities in search of sanctuary where they put down roots, find work, gain access to services and assimilate all these changes into their longer-term coping strategies.

In both of the areas studied there were observable positive impacts from the multi-year programmes. There were also good indications of how multi-year approaches are relevant in long term, protracted contexts. There are also clear limits to what can be achieved in the face of political, economic and social constraints.

* 1. **Livelihoods**

The two evaluation study areas were distinct and separate. The Beja areas of Kassala and populations of West Darfur are quite different historically and socially, but do share commonalities in terms of livelihoods, in that both are very rural, and both combine livestock-rearing and agriculture in challenging terrain.

***In Kassala***, livelihoods have changed profoundly over the last 20-30 years, due to:

Drought, especially that of 1984; regular flooding, and in particular the major floods of 1988 which caused a number of communities to relocate permanently;

Conflict, most notably in HamashKoreb, which was occupied by the SPLA from 1999-2000, and an ongoing insurrection between 1994 and 2006, resolved by the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement of 2007;

Changing land use patterns brought about by large commercial farming developments and the commandeering of land by the Government to that end, in the process overruling customary law and a traditional understanding of land rights and settlement; and, lastly

In-migration of new groups such as the Rashaida, themselves immigrants from Saudi Arabia, as they have seen land values increase and infrastructure improve.

This has resulted in livelihoods now combining:

Settled and seasonal migration for farming;

Traditional seasonal migration in search of pasture and, concomitantly, employment in the commercial developments of New Halfa;

Seasonal or permanent migration to towns and cities in search of waged employment; and,

The adoption of income-supplementing activities such as charcoal production (in principle proscribed by government), firewood gathering for sale in the market or to the brick producers, employment in brick production and, for the women, handicrafts.

Figure 6 outlines the seasonal calendar for the Kassala study area and reflects these changes.

Kassala has one of the highest rates of stunting and acute malnutrition in Sudan, the main reason for its choice as an intervention area. Malnutrition is complex and has multiple causes. It is certainly not as simple as saying, “people are very poor and therefore more likely to be malnourished”. The JRP project in support of the Beja communities has provided a number of interesting insights into poor diet diversity and lack of nutritional knowledge, as well as serious water and sanitation problems.

Nevertheless, these are highly marginal communities. In a good year, when the rivers overfill to provide the “right” amount of flooding to encourage plentiful agricultural harvests, households manage well, and can hope to sell some surplus in the market, supplementing that income with off-farm income from labour, charcoal production and the like. If there is too much, or insufficient rain, then families resort to stress activities, including temporary migration in search of wage and other income. There are very few examples of households that can be termed “well off”, although there are those who clearly make wise investment calculations aimed at raising themselves above this uncertain existence. But, likewise, custom and culture would appear to be an impediment to change.

**Figure 6: Seasonal Calendar and Household Economic Activities in Kassala**



The FEWS-NET livelihoods profile classes ***South West Darfur*** agriculture as Western Wadi Cultivation, traditionally seen as slightly better off than other parts of Darfur. People grow sorghum and millet for consumption and the better-off farmers produce enough to last them through the year. Peanuts are grown as the principal cash crop, pressed for oil which is sold and used in equal measure. Seasonal river beds provide fertile land for vegetable growing which is usually based on pump-fed irrigation.

The cohort of households included in this study all fit this typology to some degree. However, across the five villages studied there were few examples of families who were self-sufficient; the majority relied on charcoal, grass cutting, day labour and other forms of occasional income generation to supplement farming income. Quite a few engage in seasonal labour options further afield, and a handful have jobs such as teachers and policemen.

Charcoal-making yields in the region of 25 SDG per day. All income alternatives are dependent on demand and, in the case of charcoal and grass cutting, on access to the raw materials (impeded by both tribal rivalries and government edict) and the ability to carry out the hard work. And migration for waged labour tends to be over relatively short distances and for limited periods of time.

**Income levels[[17]](#footnote-17)**

Day labour rates appear to be in the range 20-30 SDG per day (equivalent at the time of interviewing to USD $3-5 per day).

The interviews did not attempt to quantify annual household income but do contain enough reliable, if imprecise, information about income levels. Daily or monthly income can be seen in three bands.

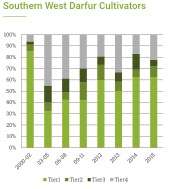
* People with formal employment (eg police) or a viable local business (eg a butcher) earned 800-1,000 SDG per month (then worth $120-150, at the prevailing rate of $1 = 6.6 SDG). This was only a small minority of people.
* Income from charcoal-making (hard and time-consuming work and therefore usually relatively well remunerated) or heavy agricultural labour was around 20-30 SDG per day.
* Lighter work, such as selling in a market (i.e. for a stall with little capital behind it) or women’s agricultural labour (often a shorter day) earned 10-15 SDG/day.

If it is assumed that people depending on daily labour to supplement household income could find work at that same rate for around 18 days a month (or about 4 days a week), and for 11 months in the year, then higher earners might earn $750 p.a. and lower earners around $400. Assuming three adults per household, an optimistic estimate of annual paid income might be $1500.

**Income from crop production**

Crop yields and income from farming are obviously variable, depending on the area of land planted, inputs, and weather. Most of those interviewed in South West Darfur for this study rented land for cash crops, and sometimes for their own production. Land rental prices varied according to the productivity of the land and the rental arrangement (there were several instances of share- cropping), so it is hard to give a single figure estimate. 100 – 200 SDG for a *mkhama* (a little less than 2 acres) was common, although people paid much more for the best plots. Yield in a normal year was about 4 bags of sorghum or millet per *mkhama*, with roughly a bag per month being enough to feed the household. Very few of our cohort farmed this much land, although many estimated their own production would see them through about two thirds of the year.

**Figure 7: Southern West Darfur Cultivators**



Fitzpatrick and Young in their work for the Taadoud consortium[[18]](#footnote-18) have developed an index looking at how people’s income is derived and the extent to which this is own production or day labour, charcoal and so on. They have classified these as *tier one* (light green)– crops and livestock, *tier two* (mid- green) – trade and salaried employment, *tier three* (dark green)– gifts and *tier four* (grey)– charcoal, grass cutting.

As figure 7 shows, in the hardest years, such as at the height of the conflict in 2003, people derived about half their income from what might be thought of as ‘distress’ activities. In 2015, about a quarter of the income of people in south west Darfur came from this type of activity.

The authors highlight the extreme precariousness of this situation, and the reliance of people on natural resource management for their livelihood. Interviews for this evaluation confirm this, but even the patchy data available suggest that this kind of “blended income” is the new normal for the majority. Conflict drives displacement and undermines asset accumulation (see next section). Land rights, always complex and contested in Darfur, have become even less clear with multiple displacements. Urban migration – either seasonal or permanent- is a fact of many families’ lives. And the dramatic heating fed by climate change is putting farming under even greater stress.

* 1. **Shocks**

The recent histories of both Kassala and Darfur have been of climatic catastrophes, conflict, displacement or flight as refugees, and a changing lifestyle.

The main shock in Darfur is conflict, with historical periods of drought, most significantly in 1984, and with regular lesser episodes since, culminating in the el Niño event of 2015-16.[[19]](#footnote-19) The history and detail of the conflict is well documented, with no need to repeat it in this report (except to note that, for most of the villages surveyed, the conflict is far from over, with an uneasy and fragile peace prevailing and, in one of the villages, a recent incident that resulted in a large collective payment being made to avoid active conflict breaking out).

The main effects of the residual conflict from the perspective of the households interviewed appear to be an unwillingness to invest too heavily in livestock, and an ongoing battle to keep herders’ (“cowboys” or “shepherds”) cattle off their farms. People are afraid that livestock (mostly goats, but cattle too) will be stolen and as a result tend to keep them indoors at night.

Cattle invasions appear to be ubiquitous across our cohort surveyed. There is some suggestion that this is connected to the breakdown in symbiotic farming relationships whereby herders were formerly allowed to graze stubble left post-harvest.[[20]](#footnote-20) Whether or not this is the case, it is a main source of tension between the two communities. Communal mechanisms to resolve such disputes exist, whereby compensation can be awarded for lost crops. This is decided by *Ajawid* committees consisting of elders from the two communities (farmers and herders) and involving the police. Cattle responsible for the original damage are held in (police-controlled) pens until compensation is paid. But this mechanism does not seem to function except when police come from nearby towns to impound the cattle.

Moreover, there are several stories where such disputes have quickly escalated. In Faiga, near the Chad border, villagers were accused of raping the daughter of the Sheikh of a neighbouring Arab/ herder community. The villagers were threatened at gunpoint and the Fursha (local administrator) was shot at when he tried to intervene. The village paid the equivalent of $16,000 USD in crops and cash. They also moved as an entire village group to the nearby town of Habila for three months and only returned once they were reassured that the situation had calmed. In another of the surveyed villages goat thieves shot at, and injured, a boy giving chase. A market trader was robbed at gunpoint in a third village.

In Kassala, historically a majority Beja population, the major change has been in the gradual transformation from a pastoralist to an agro-pastoralist existence as land pressure and reduced access to pasture have mounted, and settlement in homogenous village groupings, with the potential benefits that can bring.

*When we came here after the flood (in 1988), we received some support from the government, they gave us sorghum and wheat, plastic sheets, cooking items, blankets. We sold our animals to buy palm mats and our men brought our furniture from the mud. The animals were taken to dry lands; it took them three days to transport the animals. Men used to go for three days to bring sorghum, oil, coffee beans and sugar. It was very hard times, we suffered for three long months, then we were fine, but never thought of going back……We all lost some dear ones during the flood, some of us lost our siblings, parents or husbands. We lost children, women and men….. After we settled, we came to our senses and started funerals to mourn the dead. Even our animals got sick and died and during that time we didn’t even know about veterinary doctors, we came to know about that very recently*. **Kassala**/**Saboon FGD 02-R2**

In Darfur, with recurrent drought and, more recently, high- and low-intensity conflict, the change has been in the form of an agro-pastoralist population seeing an ever-reducing livestock and fixed asset base and uncertain harvests as a result of weather, conflict and tensions between cattle herders and settled farmers or, in the period of the study, a combination of all three

*I had many cattle, 11 goats and 20 cows but during the war they took them. They took 11 goats from our village and the cows from Massagami and this was during the civil war. At that time I delivered my elder son and staying inside the house, I was crying and they came inside the house and asked me about the men, when he saw the little baby they left. After they took the cattle they moved to Massagami. They were Arabs. At the time they burned the village, the government came and traced them, but they ran away and left. At the same time some people took the cattle and we have two cottages, they burned one and I was inside the other one they didn’t burn it. Those people when they came they killed my grandfather and a man was killed in the valley and our neighbour was killed in the cow stable in Massagami. None of our cows were returned, and since that time we didn’t look for cows, except this goat we just bought it. This is what happened in 1997.***W Darfur/Faieg 11-R2**

In Kassala the shocks are mostly climatic, although a history of conflict with the centre, settled in the East Sudan Peace Accord of 2007, the occupation of HameshKoreb by the SPLA from 1999-2000, resulting in flight to Eritrea, and the hosting of Eritrean refugees on Sudanese territory have left their mark. Over the last 50 years there has been a dramatic decline in Sudan’s nomadic population, particularly in the east (see figure 8). In the household interviews it is clear that climatic shocks have led to much reduced herd sizes, as elsewhere in the Horn of Africa, and the move towards large scale commercial agriculture has reduced available land for the indigenous population.



**Figure 8: Pastoralists as a percentage of the population by district over time**

*Our conditions are getting worse. In the past we used to have a permanent doctor and the medical treatment was free. The Gash river was punctual in its flow. Nobody can tell when it will flow and when it will get dry. Water and land distribution are not O.K. land now is given to people who are not inhabitants of the village. The drought has changed all the conditions. Cows have died. We said goodbye to milk, to butter and to all the aspects of abundance. An effort was done last year. People were given permission to plant the government lands and the result was good. We came out with bags of millet and needs to sell to the owners of the animals. Our men are still working in redbrick kilns, and their children who have expelled from schools help them in that. A great part of money gained from their work is paid to the shopkeeper as a price for the lent goods which were borrowed in advance. Saboon FDG.*

Over the course of this evaluation the Kassala villages studied experienced two periods of drought, interspersed with a major flood (as the el Niño effect waned). In 2015 when the first round of interviews was conducted, respondents complained of crop failure (“burning”), a reduction in milk production and severe dust storms. Sorghum had almost doubled in price (from SDG 200 to SDG 350-400 in local markets). The same was true in West Darfur in 2016 where again households complained of crops “burning” and of getting a third of the yield of the previous year.

*The season of rain brought very little rain, and drought prevailed and made life very difficult. We started to buy almost everything; food for us and for our animals. The scarcity of rains affected the production, which had been about 20 bags for the acre (feddan), and dropped to be two or three bags only. Production of dura (our main food), dropped greatly, and the farmers were compelled to sell the dura canes and reeds so as to compensate for the lack of dura. People, who have developed habits of feeding on chicken eggs and meat, could find some solution for their problem, but most of us are not accustomed to it, and, moreover, some think that it causes some diseases. The inevitable expenditure was that which pay for milk. It is our main food, and most of the people buy it.* Akla, HH 1

*Production is not good not like the last year, mkhamas produced last year 8-9 bags of millet, now I gathered two bags only. I planted sesames but I didn’t cultivate it but it will bring 3 kora, last year production continued to the new season and exceeded with one bag, I didn’t take it to the market. This year crops will not take us to the next season but we will make extra jobs. We will rent the cart, month for 100 SDG and go the forest to bring things, if you find people wants to transfer sorghum you take it and they will give you kora. If the cart needs maintenance you have to fix it, wheel plaster is 25 SDG, and* *you have to take it to the market to fix it. This year crops will last for three months only. Haraza 18.*

The drought conditions are consistent with Sudan’s situation as one of the most serious affected countries by climate change[[21]](#footnote-21). Warming is particularly dramatic in Darfur and South Sudan but is also affecting the East. Temperature rises and rainfall reductions for Darfur over the last hundred years. The major spike is the famine causing drought in 1984-85.

Just after the second round of interviews (which took place in May 2016) there was serious flooding across the country,[[22]](#footnote-22) with Kassala being the worst affected.

*Six months ago Gash flooding came and took or destroyed the houses. It was in the evening. We went to Wagar and stayed two months there. After that we came back and found the village empty. We built our houses and swear to Allah there was no help. Then came a very serious disease but Allah be praised we were not infected. We settled again. Focus group, Eissa 18. May 2017.*

The flooding, though severe, had a positive impact for many, bringing the prospect of a bumper harvest for those only moderately affected. The less permanently settled Beja households (those without brick houses) were able to simply move their traditional shelters away from the flooded area. Counter-intuitively, the less well-off were best able to take advantage of the shock.

The other main shocks recorded in interviews are crop pests and diseases and persistent poor health. The biggest crop pest threat, from the evidence of the interviews, appears to be locust swarms, which are managed, at least in Darfur, by aircraft-born spraying on the request of the affected communities. A number of other insect pests attack the groundnut, okra and sorghum harvests, as does striga, itself an indicator of declining soil fertility. And in Kassala, propsopis juliflora is a major preoccupation, invading large areas of the remaining available arable and pasture land.

**Health shocks**

Health shocks stood out in interviews; consistently mentioned by households across the study areas as a major problem. A separate study was undertaken by the evaluation team to try to quantify the impact of health shocks in economic terms – not just looking at the health costs, but also the costs to households from lost labour and therefore income opportunities. The full results are set out in a separate report,[[23]](#footnote-23) and the method outlined in the relevant section earlier in this report.

The economic burden of ill-health is high. Even where households have no particularly serious health problem, sickness is costing them around $250-$600 per year, depending on where they live: this is equivalent to between 15% and 40% of their potential annual household income.

Moreover, these are conservative calculations based on a household income of three working adults. Even in such households such a significant tax on income potential constrains people’s ability to accumulate wealth and therefore move towards being resilient.

The health study also looked at the impact of health insurance in Sudan as a mechanism for reducing the cost burden. Health insurance has seen a major uptake in the villages that were part of this study, and across Sudan generally (see table 4). Two of the study villages had a much smaller percentage of overall households with insurance however, allowing for comparison.

Whilst health insurance did make a difference to cost, it was marginal compared to the overall sum. As the major costs associated with health shocks are lost income and travel and accommodation, reducing the actual cost of health is welcome but it does not change the nature of the shock. Health facilities in the villages (meaning no travel and accommodation costs) would make a much greater difference, and of course prevention would make the biggest difference of all. If we look at the main causes of illness across the five villages it is likely that malaria reduction would make a major difference, followed by good water and sanitation.

**Table 4: Impact of ill-health on food security (using conservative values)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | USD | | % of potential income | |
| Nur al Huda | Haraza | Nur al Huda | Haraza |
| typical potential annual household income | $ 1,550 | $ 1,550 | 100% | 100% |
| direct health expenditure (western only) | $ 46 | $ 171 | 3% | 11% |
| indirect health expenditure (for western only) | $ 94 | $ 182 | 6% | 12% |
| % lost income from ill-health | $ 75 | $ 213 | 5% | 14% |
| expenditure on non-Western health care | $ 10 | $ 70 | 1% | 5% |
| total cost of ill-health | $ 225 | $ 636 | 15% | 41% |
| income, net of health expenditure | $ 1,325 | $ 914 | 85% | 59% |

**Table 5: Cause of ill-health by village**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **cause of illness** | Faiga | Haraza | Hasabona | Dorti | Nur alhuda |
| Malaria | 38% | 64% | 80% | 67% | 65% |
| infections | 33% | 20% | 9% | 16% | 21% |
| stomach | 2% | 3% | 2% | 6% | 5% |
| gastric problems | 14% | 3% | 7% | 11% | 6% |
| injuries | 5% | 4% | 8% | 3% | 1% |
| hypertension | 0% | 1% | 0% | 0% | 1% |
| complications with maternity | 3% | 1% | 1% | 5% | 1% |
| other | 15% | 9% | 14% | 6% | 13% |
| % of households enrolled in health insurance, by village by year of enrolment. | | | | | |
| 2011 | 4% | 0% | 1% | 0% | 3% |
| 2012 | 13% | 2% | 1% | 2% | 7% |
| 2013 | 21% | 5% | 3% | 2% | 7% |
| 2014 | 45% | 7% | 3% | 6% | 25% |
| 2015 | 60% | 8% | 9% | 26% | 37% |
| 2016 | 70% | 31% | 19% | 60% | 63% |
| 2017 | 75% | 39% | 23% | 72% | 69% |

* 1. **Gender**

Household interviews in Kassala for the panel survey originally suggested the role of women in very traditional Hadandawa communities was evolving. Specifically, it seemed that successive shocks had led to a change in women’s economic role, and this in turn had led to an increased role both in decision making within communities and economic life generally. As a result, Valid undertook a separate study to look at the role of women and whether it had changed over time.

Unfortunately, the results of this study were not conclusive. When the team arrived in the study areas it transpired that there would be restrictions in the types of questions they were allowed to ask. Despite this, the study ultimately was inconclusive because the research itself was weak, yielding contradictory results and suffering from the bias of those conducting interviews.

Although this means there is less material than was hoped, and therefore less insight gained, a number of conclusions can still be drawn.

Firstly, in the Hadandawa communities – very traditional, historically pastoral communities – there remain severe restrictions in terms of women’s rights and their role. Early marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the norm; most girls marry soon after their first period and are expected to give birth soon after.

There is a culture of patriarchy, where men have the decision-making power and are the head of household responsible for supporting the family. Men therefore, as well as boys and even male infants are treated with more honour and dedication already from their birth. When a midwife delivers a boy, she is paid more than for a baby girl.

*If the new-born is a girl, the midwife is paid SDG 30 and about 4 kg of sorghum and if the new-born is a boy she is paid SDG 50, about 4 kg of sorghum, half a sack of dates, sugar, and coffee*.

Villagers celebrate a boy’s birth more than a girl and the festivities last longer. For boys’ circumcision there is a bigger gathering and celebration whereas for the girl, when FGM is performed, it is hushed and only a few women are present. The husband decides on the names of his children, how and if they will be educated and who their spouses will be. Newly married women gain their voice (can share their opinion with their husband on any matter) only after their first child is born.

There are a few voices saying that things are changing, that women are slightly more independent with some of them participating in trading activities (selling some goods they produce) or travelling more freely; that they do influence their husbands on the important household decisions and that they have a right to divorce. Those voices however were rare, and it is hard to establish how significant any of those changes are for the individual women we have interviewed. Women (as well as men) tend not to voice their dissatisfaction with traditions. They also respond in a matter-of-fact way when talking about hardships (for example saying that women don’t shout or cry when delivering a baby). It is therefore often difficult to say with any certainty how women feel about the prevailing customs and to what extent they would like them to change. What women openly say is that they would like to have better access to health facilities, education for girls (in the village with female teachers) and more opportunities to engage in livelihood activities so that they and their husbands can gain more income.

In summary, a number of issues are clear from the interviews with regard to women. These are widespread in the villages studied, and almost certainly the case throughout the Beja community, although this can’t be said with total certainty:

* Early marriage is still the norm: usually at 15, but for many as early as 13 once they’ve got their first period. They are usually married to a first or second cousin, and the father arranges this. They are expected to give birth within the first year of marriage. Whilst the age of marriage may be creeping up slightly (from puberty to 15) girls are still taken out of school once they have their first period.
* FGM is still universal: the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) is practiced on all girls from the villages the research team visited in Kassala. Girls as young as 3 are undergoing FGM, with the most severe type of FGM practiced where most of the genitals are being removed and vagina stitched with only a little opening left. Women are also re-circumcised each time after giving birth. Women do not complain openly about this practice (a very sensitive topic and difficult to discuss the attitudes). The only negative aspect they mention is the fact that some women/girls have complications while giving birth. A few mentioned that they would like it to stop, however it is not possible because men would not marry an uncircumcised woman, and if he did unknowingly he would have good grounds to divorce her immediately.
* Women’s movement is restricted, although easier nearer to towns: there is no traveling out of the village without a male relative. The closer villages to urban centres however, have a more liberal interpretation of who can accompany women (older women) and at what ages they can travel and for what reasons (eg to market and hospital).
* Education is limited for girls but growing. In localities where there is a Koranic) school, girls would be allowed to go most likely up to the 8th grade (end of secondary school) after which it would be extremely rare for any of them to continue to go on to university.

*My sister’s daughter is staying with me, she goes to school, and the school is far from us, but we care a lot to educate them, there are female teachers; they brought them this year for girls, because before the school was co-educated and there were male teachers.*

As all of the financial responsibility to sustain the family is on the shoulders of men – fathers, brothers and husbands, therefore it is not worth educating a daughter. People do say that if school was available closer (high school) they would send their daughters there, however very few mention potential benefits of higher education for women. Additionally, girls and women are not allowed to travel on their own, and therefore if a school is outside the village it makes it very hard for a girl to attend, unless she has a companion.

* Women’s economic role is expanding, but overall is still minimal. There is definitely a small degree of economic activity – making handicrafts. Must be working in the field and helping with livestock? Is this any different to the past?
* Land rights and inheritance are predominantly patrilinear. Women get their share of land inheritance according to Sharia, which seems to mostly be determined by the (male) head of the village. In some places women clearly can’t own land or camels. In others women do appear to be able to own land. Women can take the smaller livestock as inheritance, and presumably gold and other possessions. If they have small children, they have to marry the brother in law for economic support/ protection. If the kids are grown up they don’t have to.
* But women are required to respond to shocks alongside men. It’s the role of everyone to respond in a disaster and there do not appear to be gender allocated roles in extremis.

1. **The characteristics of resilience**

A resilient state at the household level depends upon a number of factors. In Sudan, these can be summed up as:

* The willingness and ability to diversify and adapt[[24]](#footnote-24)
* Building, maintaining and accessing social capital
* Building and nurturing family support
* Access to, and provision of, assistance

The first two sections below deal with the first two of these factors. A separate section on assistance follows as this also includes analysis of the multi-year instrument. Family support is split across social capital and assistance.

* 1. **Adaptive capacity (the ability to diversify and adapt)**

The opportunities for diversification and adaptation to a changing environment are limited in both research areas, and in West Darfur far more so than in Kassala. In Kassala, productive agricultural opportunities are shrinking as a result of climate change, commercialisation (assisted by central government’s powers to appropriate land at any time) and population in-migration resulting from the changes in land use, and in West Darfur, climate change, conflict and economic neglect.

Adaptation and diversification entail risk and access to liquid resources. In a situation where certainty and liquid capital are scarce commodities, risk, clearly, is a feature of everyday life. Unsurprisingly, therefore, aversion to risk can dominate decision-making. As a result, for the majority of the adult population investment is in manageable, familiar risk such as petty trade or shop-keeping; sales of farm surplus; charcoal production or firewood collection; seasonal flood-retreat farming; labour migration on a temporary or long-term basis; or “reliable” productive assets such as a cart or a horse or donkey to pull it.

Urban migration is alluded to in West Darfur frequently as a temporary measure, and often directly related to the on-going conflict. But the opportunities to move between geographical areas for income are limited, partly because of the lack of economic development in the region, partly because of insecurity and partly because of distance.[[25]](#footnote-25) Migration in West Darfur, therefore, is often very localised.

Populations in the major urban concentrations in Darfur such as Nyala, el Fasher and al Geneina have grown as a result of conflict-induced internal displacement, imposing huge temporary and long-term strains upon basic services, water supply in particular, as many choose to settle. But the growth in urban population has not brought a concomitant increase in employment opportunities. As Pantuliano et al noted in 2011[[26]](#footnote-26)

*Rapid urbanisation has been accompanied by growing numbers of poor and vulnerable urban dwellers – a significant proportion of whom are displaced populations – who live in abject poverty, are vulnerable to a range of threats to their physical and mental wellbeing and face acute challenges in accessing livelihoods, basic services and land. The economic boom of recent years has mainly benefited an emerging economic, social and political elite, and has offered very little to the majority of the urban population*.

The population of Nyala in South Darfur was estimated at around 300,000 at the time of Pantuliano’s report, having already experienced rapid growth as a result of the Darfur conflict. A recent estimate puts the population at 566,000,[[27]](#footnote-27) with a large proportion living in informal settlements (IDP camps). As noted elsewhere in this report, DFID’s funding strategy has recently focused on multi-year grants to support the development of infrastructure in Darfur, in particular water, to cope with the challenges of both urban and rural life, to reduce conflict and mitigate the urge to migrate internally and internationally.

Labour migration to more distant locations such as Khartoum, Shendi (a marketing hub north of Khartoum, and a centre for midwifery training), the cotton fields of al Gezira or the oil fields of the transitional zone has occurred over many years, and is often referred to in the Valid interviews as having been undertaken by extended family members or, in a minority of cases, direct household members. And sometimes the movement is deliberately temporary, and can be well rewarded.

*Sorghum produces 5 bags, peanut 4 bags, millet 3 or 2.5 bags and sesames 10 kora (Kora is 0.5 kilogram) and this is not enough, so in summer I go to Khartoum to work as a welder with MTN company by a weekly contract and they pay me 40-50 SDG per day.* **W Darfur/Haraza 08R1**

Urban growth has been far less dramatic in Eastern Sudan, [[28]](#footnote-28) but the demand for essential services, especially potable water is no less intense. There are frequent references to the failure, temporary or permanent, of community wells, and the need to purchase water transported by truck or donkey cart from community catchments, from nearby towns or from rain- or flood-fed facilities. This imposes a major household budgetary burden for a significant part of the year, with a barrel costing between 10 and 20 SDG.

*As for drinking water and water for domestic use, we buy a barrel every other day for 15 pounds. This is during the dry season, but in autumn, the time of the Gash flood, the barrel is purchased for ten pounds. Water is brought from the Gash area by a man who has been practicing this trade for a long time.* **Kassala/Eissa 01R2**

DFID funds an urban water development programme in three eastern states, including Kassala (and intended to complement the JRP) to address this need, identifying the historical lack of access to potable water, the growth of the urban population in Port Sudan in particular, and the need, as in Darfur, to reduce migration both internally and internationally.

In Kassala, urban migration appears to be regarded as a permanent option, although it might require ambition and foresight to achieve the goal.

*At first I* [obtained] *a national number, I made it from passport centre in Kassala. I went alone and said it will serve me in the future. I heard about the land tender from my relative in Kassala. I submitted a bid and drew the lot and found a* [plot of] *land in Al Andalus neighbourhood. It has no services, but I took the papers. If my son becomes a Doctor, I will let him work in the city, and reject here………***Kassala/Eissa 08R1**

As in Darfur, the decision to migrate is closely linked to supplementing household income. The decision to move, however, seems to have less far-reaching consequences, possibly because the distances are shorter and the opportunities greater. It might also be a function of the Beja pastoralist heritage which sees no impediment to the whole family moving on a seasonal basis. The proximity of Port Sudan for paid labour, and the irrigated farmlands of New Halfa and al Gezira for both grazing, fodder and paid labour, and the capital, Khartoum, present far greater opportunities for seasonal and longer-term labour and income-generation, although income status has a part in the calculation.

Investment in **education** for both adults, children and young people is seen as desirable and possible, liquid assets permitting. The objectives of obtaining an education, migrating and diversifying can combine in the minds of many, and can be confounded by the risk they entail.

*My guts’ feeling is that our future is bound with our children’s’ schooling. Agriculture has no future in this time of drought. I can see clearly that my opinion about agriculture is proving to be right and correct. Rains are getting less, and consequently the sustenance of the family lies in sometimes far away from animals and crops* **Kassala/Akla 03R1**

And they might combine in surprising ways:

*During study time our son went to Habila for study, but the distance is so far and sometimes he came home late. Sometimes during the rainy season the valley floods with water and he refused to go to school. His father forced him to go to school, so he escaped away towards Nyala and we didn't know his place for 7 months. Suddenly we heard that he had travelled to Khartoum after a working period and gaining money in Nyala, and now we heard that he is studying in the university there in Khartoum. Beside that we still send him some money* **W Darfur/Nur AlHuda 10R1**

**Charcoal** production is the default off-farm activity for many of the households interviewed, this despite tree-cutting being restricted by force or through government restriction.

*Wood and charcoal are becoming a problem, in the past we used to fetch wood from dead trees nearby then we started cutting the trees now we are only allowed to fetch wood from dead trees in the distance. It is about one or two hours walking but mostly towards the border with Chad. It is the Pastoralists who are preventing us from cutting trees* **W Darfur/Faieg FGD 01R2**

Options to **diversify** present themselves, but might not be taken advantage of, for cultural reasons. While many Beja farmers have practiced flood retreat cultivation on the Gash and Atbara river plains for generations, and have consumed the fruits of the river, they might not have considered a permanent riverine existence as an option as fishing and consuming fish is culturally taboo.

And adaptation and readjustment occur as the wheel of fortune turns.

*We have in fact been displaced from our houses, by the flood of the Gash river. This was 4 years ago. As the scarcity of rain was a bad evil, but also more rains than enough was a worse evil. We were not only moved from our houses by the floods, but the flood had also taken the lives of some of our dear ones ….. When we returned we found all the land was well irrigated and ready to be cultivated…... The land became green all over, and our men bought additional animals. We rebuilt our houses, and the sorrows of the past started to fade away.* **Kassala/Akla 01R1**

* 1. **Social capital**

Social capital – help from family, friends, neighbours and the community – are probably the greatest contributory factors to coping observed in this evaluation. When things go wrong or there are communal shocks, people have to rely on these networks.

As a consequence, great importance is attached to the links, both familial and political,[[29]](#footnote-29) that accrue to households and communities, and it is these links that often see these same groups through difficult times and enhance good times.

In the context of a strongly clan-based system such as the Beja population of Kassala, and, to a less marked degree, W Darfur, social capital is strongly related to clan and “tribal” affiliations.

The assistance provided by DFID-funded and other humanitarian partners is rarely attributed overtly to a particular entity (there is frequent mention of “government” in Darfur and “organisation” in Kassala, although local NGOs are more likely to be acknowledged by name). However, the assistance provided by external agencies is seen to bolster social networks and to incrementally empower women in particular, helping to take them beyond their traditional roles in the community (hut-building and reinforcement, cookery etc).

Communities place a strong emphasis on their self-help obligations

*In our village everyone is at the same level, but people help with the little they have, we face the same problems* **W Darfur/Hassabona 01R1**

This self-help applies informally as a cultural norm. This is particularly pronounced in Kassala where, as already mentioned, villages are ethnically homogeneous and family ties very strong. There are both implicit and explicit obligations assist those in short- or long-term need, either through individual donations, or through communal collections or through formal associations such as community Savings and Internal Loans Committees (SILCs or “boxes”) established with INGO support.

*If you do not have money people help you, and sometimes they collect money from the people in market during the market day. Before the problems we had a box, every Friday we pay 5SDG, the village is divided to two places one in the south 25 persons and the north 35 persons [women and men], you may take a loan from the box but you return in additional value, if you take 100SDG you return it 110SDG in specific time. Sometimes they buy sugar and distribute it to the elder people, sick people and weak people. If someone is sick and need to travel for treatment they help you*.

**West Darfur/Faieg 14R2**

In W Darfur, this support network extends beyond the village to embrace surrounding communities. There are many references to the solidarity felt between communities, especially in times of conflict. And the social capital built up through support to the community has its rewards

*One time my husband Yahiya* [a butcher in the market] *faced a problem: the Arabs stole a camel and brought it to him and he bought it from them. The thief and the camel owner made an agreement with each other to take money from my husband two times. They made a police case in Morni, and they told them that they have to bring the thief, and they said that the thief is not existing, they transferred the case to Omshalalia and the judge asked them to pay the camel price. My husband and the butchers were seven. They divided the cost and every one had to pay 13,000SDG. My husband Yahiya doesn’t have this amount of money but the villagers helped us: the women paid 10SDG, and his brothers from Khartoum sent him 3000SDG,and his sister sent 2000SDG from Khartoum and 70SDG. Our neighbours from other villages also helped, I don’t know how much was the price, they collected it and gave the money to the Arabs. My husband Yahiya is good person and he helps all people. That’s why all people helped him.* **West Darfur/Haraza 19R2**

The social capital of mutual assistance can be built in many ways. First and foremost, it is built within the nuclear family. Secondly, it is strengthened through assistance to the extended family (and, in the case of the Hadandawa Beja, the village). Thirdly, it is built within and between communities;

Fourthly, it is built between communities and their traditional leaders and surrounding authorities. The role of the sheikh is very significant in a situation where statutory authority exerts its power in a piecemeal manner. And the efforts of the sheikh on behalf of the community has its own returns

*My brother, who lives and works in Kassala, comes to my aid whenever I need it, which I seldom do. My husband's brother who is married to my sister, and with whom my son lives in Port Sudan, also helps us a lot. He sends us clothes and bed sheets and sometimes money. He also pays the school fees for my son who studies in Comboni School (a Christian missionary school). Eissa 1, R2*

Similarly where the reach of government is limited, and engagement weak, built social capital lies with the communities’ ability to mobilise the security forces to protect threatened assets, mostly field crops and livestock. But sometimes the relationship-building efforts bear few rewards

In Kassala, the support of the nuclear family for the extended family and the community can bear fruit in a number of ways, not least in providing earnings opportunities and remittances in the lean season or other times of stress, and in providing temporary support if remittance channels break down

*My husband works in a shop in Port Sudan town, and he comes here every two months. He lives with my aunt and her married son in one house. My husband has nothing to do with agriculture. He never tried it. ….My husband sends us our petty expenses monthly, but if for any reason they are delayed, my brothers would come to my aid. My aunt herself gives me a big hand from time to time. She helps me with some daily needs, such as sugar, oil, coffee and biscuits for my children. My husband sends the money through the cell phone to my brothers and they buy our needs.* **Kassala/Eissa 04R1**

And built social capital provides access to credit and repayment on reasonable terms in difficult times

*With the help of Jasmar organization we constructed a very useful scheme. We called it the Pregnant Woman's Fund. Every lady in the village pays ten pounds monthly, and the money is used to help ladies who give birth to their children in the village or in Kassala. The money reached more than 4 billion pounds, and it is kept with the village midwife who advices ladies who need an operation to go to Kassala. This money is not only used to help the pregnant ladies, in spite of the name, but it is given as a loan to whoever needs it, on condition that it is paid back. I, myself, was given an amount of money when I gave birth to my youngest daughter. Eissa 1, R2*

1. **Assistance and multi-year humanitarian funding**

As has already been outlined above, people receive a lot of assistance from immediate family, extended family, neighbours and tight-knit community members. This is manifested in several ways:

* Routine help from immediate family: this is the most common form of help and is typically father or brother or mother or aunt giving money, or livestock, or helping practically in some way.
* Occasional help from extended family: many households, especially in Kassala, report getting occasional help from relatives in towns or cities. This may take the form of a one off sum of money, or may be helping by putting up a child who is studying at a higher level.
* Remittances from husbands and children: in both Darfur and Kassala men often travel for work. In Darfur there are a high number of men from households interviewed working in Khartoum, both seasonally and permanently.
* Labour assistance from neighbours: there are traditions (reciprocal arrangements) for calling on neighbours for labour in Darfur. In Kassala the villages are like one big extended family anyway, sharing lots of tasks.
* Routine sharing of essential commodities: such as milk in Kassala.
* Savings and loans schemes: there are many of these, particularly in Darfur. They take all forms as witnessed by the places they have been touched on already in this report – support for medical costs, saving for births, deaths and marriages, saving for investment and so on. They are both indigenous and latterly also aid agency supported.
* Communal help *in extremis*: in Kassala everyone is expected to respond (men and women) if there is an emergency.
* Communal assistance in times of stress: in Darfur as already outlined above the whole village can come together to pay conflict reparations if needed.

There is also a great deal of aid reported. This is much more the case in Darfur than Kassala but in both places households report having received assistance. In Darfur, years of conflict have habituated people to receiving humanitarian aid. Almost all of the households interviewed reported receiving food aid during displacement and initial return, although almost all also reported that this assistance had stopped a couple of years prior to the panel survey. There are also a variety of inputs, such as livestock and nutritional care from DFID funded partners and others in both Darfur and Kassala. Kassala also report receiving food aid as part of JRP activities (although it is not reported by agency).

Finally, there is also a variety of aid from government reported. The most prevalent is the Zakat department that helps people on an annual basis. There appears to be an amount made available that the Sheikh then helps to allocate on the basis of who is judged neediest in the community. There are other types of government assistance reported such as additional land allocation in Kassala and crop spraying in Darfur.

**4.1 The DFID multi-year programmes**

Both DFID multi-year programmes Taadoud and JRP were evaluated. Taadoud was externally evaluated by a company that focuses on resilience measurement; JRP was evaluated according to UNEG norms, managed by the FAO evaluation department.

The Taadoud evaluation reports that in the two/ three years of operation all targets were met and some were exceed by almost three times. The log-frame indicators are reproduced below in table X.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 6: Taadoud log frame indicators** | |  |  | | |
| **Indicators** | | **Baseline (2014)** | **Endline (2017)** | | |
| **Target** | **Achieved** | **% of target achieved** |
| **Outcome-1** | Household Hunger Scale (HHS): % households with moderate or severe hunger | **32.1** | 27.1 | **10.8\*\*\*** | 250 |
| (29.5, 34.8)1 |  | (9.6, 12.0) |  |
| **Outcome-2** | Women's Dietary Diversity Score (WDDS): Mean number of food groups consumed by women of reproductive age group. | **3.0** | 4.0 | **4.3\*\*\*** | 108 |
| (2.9, 3.2) |  | (4.2, 4.4) |  |
| **Outcome-3** | % communities who have moderate and above absorptive capacity | **51.0**  (40.1, 62.4) | 80.0 | **77.6\*\*\***  (68.6, 86.7) | 97 |
| **Outcome-4** | Average crop production (in kg) per farming household (segregated by crop type) | **658**  (577, 739) | 752 | **1,110\*\*\***  (1055, 1165) | 148 |
| a. Sorghum (kg) | 308 | 339 | 444 | 131 |
| b. Millet (kg) | 316 | 347 | 507 | 146 |
| c. Ground-nut (kg) | 285 | 313 | 591 | 189 |
| **Output-1.1** | % farmer and pastoralist households have adopted at least 6 out of 9 project promoted livelihood techniques | **3.9** | 30.0 | **24.1\*\*\*** | 80 |
| (3.0, 5.0) |  | (22.4, 25.8) |  |
| **Output-2.1.1** | % HHs of caregivers with children of 0-5 months who adopted at least 6 out of 9 promoted health, nutrition and hygiene practices | **25.4** | 40.0 | **72.6**\*\*\* | 182 |
|  |  | (67.1, 78.0) |  |
| **Output-2.1.2** | % HHs of caregivers with children of 6-23 months who adopted at least 6 out of 9 promoted health, nutrition and hygiene practices | **18.9** | 35.0 | **56.4**\*\*\* | 161 |
|  |  | (52.9, 59.8) |  |
| **Output-2.1.3** | % HHs of caregivers with children of 24-59 months who adopted at least 4 out of 7 promoted health, nutrition and hygiene practices | **34.1** | 70.0 | **83.2**\*\*\* | 119 |
|  |  | (81.3, 85.1) |  |
| ***1****95% confidence interval*  *\*Statistical significance test from baseline to endline: \*\*\* for p<0.01, \*\* for p<0.05 and \* for p<0.10* | | | | | |

Whilst the headline figures are tremendously impressive – remarkable almost for a programme largely aimed at behaviour change, some caution is needed in over-interpreting the results. Most critically, there was no control, and in the evaluation less analysis of variables other than the project that might account for the results (for instance rainfall). Again, if one examines even the table above we can see that whilst crop yield has increased in a major way (a third more), and hunger has massively reduced as a result (250%), the actual uptake of the project inputs (knowledge and use of different farming practices) is less stunning. In fact, 80% of farmers reported adopting 6 out of 9 improved techniques – still impressive; what we do not have is any detailed analysis of how these new practices have affected yields. Moreover, a cursory examination of the data collected by the project shows a major increase in the land under cultivation between baseline and endline, as well as a significant increase in the use of chemical fertiliser and insecticide (as previously mentioned there is no analysis at all of rainfall patterns in a rainfed-agriculture context). The major increase in land under cultivation alone would probably account for the increased yields reported (it must at least be a contributory factor), suggesting improved farming techniques is only part of the story. Only a control would allow for sensible comparison (given the largely quantitative, baseline-endline approach taken), but lamentably this was not possible.

Whilst analysing the analysis is interesting, this thematic evaluation is not about the impact or otherwise of individual programmes (at least not entirely). What is of direct relevance to this evaluation however, is the multi-year nature of the funding, and therefore the programmes. The premise of the Taadoud programme is that through improved agricultural inputs and techniques, coupled with behaviour change-type education programmes on nutrition, a positive impact can be achieved in terms of food security in Darfur.

There are two aspects of great interest and direct relevance to the thematic study in this premise (and its indeterminate outcome). Firstly, this suggests the root cause of food insecurity in Darfur is poor agricultural practice (or at least practices that can be quite easily improved) and poor nutritional practices (understanding of diet, largely).

The analysis for this evaluation suggests otherwise. Overwhelmingly the household interviews for this evaluation report conflict as the major factor holding back their income-earning potential, with the changing climate and complex, feudal land-owning structures as the other contributory factors. Pests are definitely an issue too, although what the relative effectiveness of integrated pest management (IPM) is compared to the use of chemical pesticides is beyond the technical competence of this evaluation.

In fact, the farming practices in Darfur are reportedly highly innovative and adapted to context. The exploitation of the Goz sandy soils using a specialised technique called Tebeldi led to their exploitation for cash crops groundnut and millet[[30]](#footnote-30). The problem with advancing farming in Darfur, is instead, “the result of a failure of political and economic management at the macro-level”[[31]](#footnote-31).

The Taadoud project also invested in the re-establishment and support of the *Ajawid* community committees and conflict resolution groups. These were definitely identified as active in the interviews for this evaluation. However, two caveats are worth applying to this observation. First, these are long standing mechanisms. Of course, the NGOs involved in the Taadoud consortium know this well and were seeking to re-establish these mechanisms as a way of mitigating conflict. However, the interviews for this evaluation are also clear that these mechanisms do not work very well. The trust has broken down too thoroughly amongst the communities in Darfur for previous cross-communal dispute mechanisms to work as effectively as before the conflict – at least in the short term. People report that the ‘committees’ try to resolve (typically cattle invading farms) disputes but either the ‘Arabs’ don’t abide by the judgement, or the committee members are ‘too tired’.

The JRP evaluation is very different. They report that any observed impact on stunting given the short timeframes involved are to be treated cautiously. They do observe some positive impacts in terms of improved nutritional practices (as does the Valid evaluation). And they also note some improved agricultural yields after prosopis/ mesquite clearance (basically clearing an invasive bush that makes more land available), but they also note the agricultural support was compromised by some overall programme design issues (they ended up with more villages over a much wider distance than they had intended). The JRP evaluation is pretty hard on the programme overall, concluding that a programme set up to help people be resilient to drought and flood instead focused on stunting and was confused as a result.

The household interviews for this thematic evaluation noted several positive outcomes from the JRP. On the nutrition front, the Hadendawa/ Beja peoples, as noted elsewhere in this report historically were culturally averse to eating poultry and fish. As a result of the JRP some villages have now started eating eggs, and there is definitely an observable change in diet. Unlike Darfur, where the results of nutritional education were indeterminate, in Kassala there were clear changes and over quite a short time. This makes sense because the nutritional practices in the Beja communities were extremely traditional, and arguably ripe for change. There were no data to suggest this had an overall observable impact on stunting or wasting.

Less positively, perhaps the largest issue in Kassala – at least in the villages that this evaluation conducted household interviews – was that of water availability. The JRP could not ‘do’ water. This was funded by DFID through another organisation (Zoa), who did not work in the JRP villages (by and large). This led to the rather unfortunate situation whereby JRP started with community consultation, and on being told that water was the most important issue they basically had to ignore this feedback and went ahead and did the project they had agreed with DFID (as another organisation had the funding for water, DFID didn’t want JRP to duplicate).

**4.2 Multi-year funding and Sudan**

The JRP programme was discontinued by DFID after the initial three years.

For the purpose of this MY thematic evaluation however, what is interesting about this decision is the original premise of the JRP, the performance of the JRP and the expectations we should have about MY H funding.

The original premise of the JRP was somewhat confused. It was a resilience to floods and droughts programme with its principal indicator of success a reduction in stunting. The targeting of Kassala, and the Beja areas of Kassala was primarily on nutritional grounds (some of the worst nutrition statistics in the country), so the nutrition indicator makes sense on that level. Equally it is fairly logical to argue that drought leads to food insecurity, which in turn leads to malnutrition. A fairly simple logical premise therefore, might be resilience to drought means less food insecurity, resulting in lower malnutrition. Floods are more tenuous in this equation as the causal link between flooding and malnutrition is not a well-documented one. Again, it is possible to construct an argument that says floods mean lost crops and assets/ income which can lead to food insecurity and therefore malnutrition. But even if this were the case the response would be very different to that implemented under JRP (mitigation and early warning works primarily); and given that most of the communities surveyed for this evaluation depended on alluvial-flood agriculture, the story on floods is at best more complex than JRP was configured to deal with (at least on the surface).

There are two main points that are pertinent for multi-year humanitarian funding.

The first point relates to design. When the JRP was designed a certain population density was assumed from secondary research and the targeting designed on this basis. When the JRP started their initial inception phase, consulting with communities, they discovered a lot of the initial assumptions had been wrong. The multi-year nature of the programme meant they had time to adjust and re-design the programme so that it functioned properly. With a much shorter time frame this would not have been possible. However, this observation needs to be tempered by the fact that the team were told in consultation that water was the highest priority for most of their communities, but they were not able to provide this as another agency had been contracted by DFID to do so. MYH certainly holds the promise of better design due to the longer time-frame, but as illustrated by this point, and the point above there is more to good design than timeframes alone.

The second point relates to timeframes. If multi-year humanitarian funding means more than one year, then how many years is multi? Is it two? Or ten? Or twenty?

The answer to this question quite sensibly must be about what we would like to achieve. If the goal is a short term one – distribute plastic sheeting to people newly displaced so they have shelter, then no need for multi-year funding. A quick shot of financing should suffice. If the goal is help people go home from displacement in a government approved programme (obviously that everyone has agreed to, perfectly safe) that will take two years then two, or maybe three years funding seems appropriate. Maybe four or five? This I’m sure could be debated, but we have at least an order of magnitude.

What of reducing stunting? In an area with very high levels of acute malnutrition (15% or more). In a country under sanctions fighting several internal conflicts, governed by a kleptocratic, militaristic, tribally hostile coterie that has been in power for 50 years? With a massively traditional, closed, pastoral-rural community? (that is arguably so remote that they haven’t even made national geographic documentaries about them yet!). Two years?

The point is over-laboured but is in essence a serious one. If DFID wanted to genuinely tackle serial under-nutrition amongst the Beja this is not a half-hearted 2-year commitment.

In interviews with those involved with the JRP this was clearly understood. The aspiration was that the three-year project would form something like a first phase, with an acknowledgement that to truly have an impact – to truly reduce both stunting and wasting on a significant level the timeframe was more like a decade, or perhaps even longer. In the end DFID was not willing, or able, to buy into this vision.

Interestingly, the JRP did have an impact (albeit limited), as outlined in the evaluation section above. Women in Beja villages started eating eggs and some lean meat, something that had previously been a cultural taboo. This, the JPR evaluation concluded, was, “likely to improve the capacity of the population to reduce maternal and child malnutrition”, however, “behaviour change is a long-term process and results need to be consolidated”.

This evaluation has found that the main barriers to resilience in both Kassala and Darfur are chronic under-development and in the case of Darfur, conflict. These are largely structural causes, and can’t be addressed by quick-fix classic humanitarianism, which anyway is not a tool designed for fixing structural under-development (but is designed to relieve immediate suffering).

What is confounding is when the two collide. Acute malnutrition is certainly immediate suffering. But alleviating it in the case of Beja tribes in Kassala is a long-term project; dietary behaviour change is certainly part of it, but so is fixing the water supply and helping people adapt their livelihoods faced with climatic changes and herd loss. And making sure health services and reasonable quality education is available.

In this context multi-year humanitarian funding starts to look a lot like development by another name. Furthermore, it is not at a scale – and certainly not of a duration – that can make a long-term difference. It is an attempt at development in chronically under-developed and structurally marginal places – much needed, but whether this is the right approach is open to question.

A legitimate question in this context then is whether multi-year *humanitarian* funding is really substituting for a lack of *development* funding. Is there something definably humanitarian, or shock/ crisis related about the work of Taadoud, or is its main thrust more focused on what might be thought of as traditional development work in a different place.

Perhaps the biggest question however, is why there are little or no development projects in such places. In Sudan the answer to this question is political – the politics of Sudan that diverts development resources to Khartoum and a small strip of the Nile north of Khartoum; and the geo-politics that has isolated Khartoum for a decade. However, it is also the logic of development returns – places like Darfur and Kassala are difficult and expensive to work in, and the returns are uncertain. With limited development resources it is far easier to invest in more populated and less risky areas where good results are more likely.

1. **Research questions**
   1. **EQ1: does MYHF help build resilience?**

The households and villages followed in this evaluation could not be described as resilient. As usual with the concept of resilience there are definition issues, and resilience can be examined on a number of levels.

Starting with the most straightforward way of thinking about resilience – whether and how people cope with shocks – the main covariate shocks identified are conflict and climate shocks in Darfur and climate shocks in Kassala. Health shocks are the largest idiosyncratic shocks.

The farmers followed in this study in West Darfur are not resilient to conflict. Whilst the major conflict was in 2003, there have been repeated episodes since and low-level conflict continues to affect households and villages followed by Valid. The most obvious symptoms of the conflict are disputes over cattle invasions of farms, destroying crops.

The ongoing conflict affects villagers’ ability to build income and assets. Their income is reduced by the serial cattle invasions that ruin crops; assets are problematic because traditionally wealth is stored in the form of livestock and these are frequently stolen by the villagers ‘Arab’ neighbours (at least this is how it is reported in household interviews). Fearful of being targeted, or of losing livestock, many villagers do not invest artificially suppressing asset growth.

Moreover, the periodic intensification of conflict can lead to the unexpected depletion of what little wealth people have accumulated. The most obvious example in this evaluation is the village of Faiga where an accusation of rape led to the village having to pay a large fine to their neighbours as restitution. They paid collectively (a good example of social solidarity, picked up later in this section), but the costs were considerable, setting people back significantly. The threat of armed violence in the event of non-payment meant people felt they had no choice.

*Decreasing of rain is not good for us and instability also is hard for us. Since the year 1984 the rain decreased, and the sorghum died, we left the gouz and went to Habilla to work at the buildings and sometimes we bring wood and sell it.*

In Kassala the Beja tribes followed have not proven resilient to the changing climatic conditions. During the course of this evaluation the Kassala villages followed experienced first drought in 2015, then widespread flooding in 2016. This is also true in Darfur where households report unpredictable yields, something that is confirmed by climate data.

In Kassala the lack of climate predictability has driven people in the villages followed for this evaluation out of livestock and pastoralism as a primary livelihood and into agro-pastoralism. Most of the villages included in the evaluation had suffered dramatic livestock losses in the 1984 drought a famine and with government help had settled near the regions two big rivers (the Gash and the Atbara) that offered flood-retreat agriculture options. Even this however, has not proven viable, with households reporting initial good years but more recently – including in 2015 – bad years that meant they were not self-sufficient. This has led most into charcoal production, which appears to be the main livelihoods for many, and to seasonal labour migration to the big commercial agriculture schemes.

Neither are people resilient in the short term faced with such climatic shocks. In both Kassala and Darfur households resorted to coping strategies such as migration for work and borrowing from family, friends and neighbours as well as non-coping strategies of eating less and relief food.

Health shocks are a major drain on household budgets, perhaps even more so even than conflict in Darfur. A study for this report estimates somewhere between 15-40% of households’ income is spent on dealing with health care, and this is the average, not looking at catastrophic health costs. With income and assets so tenuous anyway, this additional burden of the costs of health care means a highly exposed and precarious existence in both places[[32]](#footnote-32).

Faced with long term deteriorating livelihood predictability, periodically laced with conflict and climate shocks, many families have resorted to urban migration either on a temporary or permanent basis. The main cities in Darfur have doubled in size over the period of the conflict, and households in this study report migrating both to nearby towns to escape conflict; using nearby towns for trading and services; but also many are going to Khartoum for seasonal work. In Kassala an equal number of households report migrating either to the large commercial agriculture schemes for seasonal work, or to Kassala either seasonally or permanently.

These urban options whilst superficially attractive also seem unreliable. Many households report fluctuating incomes from family members who have gone to towns to work, and recent studies of the biggest cities in Darfur suggest the IDP camps/ informal settlements do not offer very attractive alternatives.

The main sources of resilience, such as they are, come from community support and from adaptation (although this latter is mostly necessity rather than choice).

There was strong social capital observed in both places followed in the evaluation, with the Beja tribes particularly close knit. This seems to be in every aspect of life – family and neighbours pitch in to help build the huts, they share milk, they share seeds, they contribute if there are medical costs, or education costs, at festivals and so on. If a relative is doing better, perhaps working in town, then they send regular remittance. And there are formal savings schemes for a variety of purposes that also work on mutual cooperation and trust.

This is also true in Darfur, as outlined above in the social capital section. They too have a variety of savings and loans schemes that are used for medical costs, festivals, births, deaths and marriages, and when things go wrong. The villagers also routinely club together to pay extortion from their Arab neighbours as earlier sections of this report highlight. In one case a young man was shot by raiders trying to protect goats and the villagers, including the sheikh paid for medical costs even when he had to go to Khartoum for specialist treatment.

In Darfur, there are also the important mediation committees, or Ajawids. These have been successfully supported by the Taadoud consortium and play an important, albeit circumscribed role. Prior to the conflict these committees would arbitrate in disputes between the farmers and the Arabs, or herders. During the conflict they largely fell into abeyance, but in some villages they are being resurrected. Unfortunately the breakdown of trust means they don’t work at the same level, and quite often their decisions (usually about compensation for destroyed crops) are not respected, but sometimes they are. This gives some hope that communal ties across communities can be restored in time.

Adaptation is another factor in being resilient identified in this thematic evaluation, and whilst much of this is driven by necessity, there are some good examples of where people have adapted to cope with particular shocks. In Kassala during the large-scale flooding in 2016 many of the Beja peoples were able to simply move their households as a result of their temporary nature. They rely on flooding for agriculture and so although the force of the floods damaged property in some places in the evaluation, in others, villagers mostly saw the inundations positively.

Both DFID programmes aimed to build the resilience of communities. In Darfur, the DFID funded consortium focused on reducing food insecurity and exposure to shocks through better farming techniques; better nutritional knowledge, savings and loans schemes and conflict resolution committees.

These were appropriate areas to focus on given the nature of the shocks outlined above, and reasons why people struggle to cope with them. However, as outlined in section 4 above, the programmes were arguably not of sufficient scale to make a real difference, despite some encouraging initial results. The barriers to resilience thrown up by the conflict; the long-term changes to livelihoods as a result of climatic warming and the serial under-development of Darfur seem much bigger issues than projects like Taadoud can address. Whether farming and nutritional practices are really the crux of the issue in Darfur, or whether harder political and economic around conflict, land and inequity are the real barriers to resilience seems a pertinent question to ask.

The JRP has been discussed in some length in the earlier section on multi-year funding (section 4 ). As with the Taadoud project it showed some encouraging results against a backdrop of significant structural under-development and bigger, broader changes happening to the people and places it worked in. But if the question is whether, after three years, the Beja people are better able to cope with floods and droughts than they were before the project then the answer is probably no. At the very most they were equipped in small ways to better survive some shocks.

Both DFID funded projects were to some degree experimental. This was the first time the multi-year instrument had been deployed in Sudan, and the first time that projects explicitly designed to build resilience were commissioned. The question then, is whether this type of funding instrument is appropriate for building resilience in the Sudan context.

Returning to the opening paragraph of this section, to some extent this depends on your definition of resilience building. If the intent is to equip people in Darfur and Beja Kassala with sufficient social, political and economic capital that they can deal with the worst effects of war, drought, flooding and disease without aid help, the answer is a resounding no. The instrument is not of sufficient scale, time duration or sophistication to achieve these impacts. If the intent is something more modest – helping people prepare for and avoid the worst effects of flooding, or adapt cropping techniques faced with significant warming, then these objectives seem more achievable. Reducing both wasting and stunting in poor and under-developed areas seems possible too – and clearly less malnourished people are likely to be more resilient to a host of setbacks. This requires long time frames though, more rounded interventions (i.e do water properly at least!) and a more durable commitment from the donor if there is to be any chance of success.

* 1. **EQ2: contingency and early action**

The Sudan programme had the largest contingency of any of the four countries studied for this evaluation, with roughly a quarter of the resources in the business case reserved for unforeseen emergencies.

In the event the funds were used for two large emergencies (much like Ethiopia on a smaller scale); the influx of refugees from South Sudan and the 2015-16 El Nino that caused widespread drought and flooding. The contingency was also used – in fact its biggest use – to ‘top up’ the Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF).

As set out in the portfolio section 5.1 above, DFID had two business cases running concurrently in Sudan for humanitarian action, the Sudan Humanitarian and Innovation Programme (SHIP) and the Sudan Humanitarian Action and Resilience Programme (SHARP) from which the MYH projects were financed. Both had contingencies.

The SHARP – the primary interest of the thematic evaluation – had £21m over a three-year period, roughly equating to £7m per year. In 2014 the £7m was used exclusively to top up the SHF. As set out in section X of this report, the SHF is a UN humanitarian pooled fund introduced following the first wave of humanitarian reform a decade ago and supported heavily by DFID as the largest donor since. The SHF is DFID’s largest vehicle for humanitarian financing, and these types of pooled funds were championed by DFID across the sector for a number of years.

The contingency allocation of £7m (the full contingency for 2014) was made in September. In 2015 the various contingencies were allocated according to table 7, below. These allocation were also made in September:

**Table 7: Humanitarian Contingency Funds allocations for Sudan in 2015**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Budget:** | **Proposal:** | **Partner/Mechanism** | **Funds remaining unallocated:** |
| **SHARP CONTINGENCY**  **(203387-107)** | | 7.5 |  |  |  |
|  | |  | 5 | SHF |  |
|  | |  | 1.85 | South Sudan Refugees |  |
| Total funds remaining: | |  |  |  | 0.65 |
| **SHIP CONTINGENCY** | | 2 |  |  |  |
| **(204936-104)** | |  | 0.75 | WFP UNHAS |  |
|  | |  | 0.75 | S3M |  |
| Total funds remaining: | |  |  |  | 0.5 |
|  |  | | |

As can be seen from table 7, the largest part of the contingency also went to the SHF, although there were also funds made available to the refugee response. These funds were basically moved into a separate, regional response business case dealing with the refugee response, with the funds ultimately going to UNHCR and WFP.

In the submission (internal note for approving funds) setting out the case for where to spend the contingency funding, it was noted that:

1. The allocation of SHARP contingency funds, £7.5 million of the total amount, should be guided by the principles for use of contingency set out within the original Business Case; specifically that funds would be used in the event of:
2. Large scale acute needs arising from a conflict-related rapid onset crisis;
3. Large scale acute needs arising from a natural disaster-related rapid onset crisis;
4. New needs identified as a result of lack of funding, access to new areas.
5. While there have been no new significant acute needs arising as a result of a sudden spike in conflict or natural disasters, there continues to be a justification to allocate the contingency and other funds on the basis of:
6. Funding gaps to respond to ongoing displacement. Our assessment of established partner performance is that there is scope to absorb further funding and that there are critical partners, in part or wholly funded by DFID, who are able to effectively utilised additional funding.
7. Ongoing needs as a result of the continued crisis in South Sudan. Whilst the signing of the latest peace agreement between the Government of South Sudan may represent a fragile foundation for further stability, tens (hundreds?) of thousands of refugees from South Sudan are likely to remain in Sudan for the foreseeable future.

In 2016 the allocations were made somewhat differently, with roughly £3m in contingency being allocated from SHARP and £5m from SHIP. The £3m breakdown included:

* £1m for the Taadoud consortium to respond to El Nino in Darfur.
* £450,000 for Zoa to respond to water needs in Kassala (arising from El Nino).
* £1m for JRP to respond to El Nino in Kassala.
* £0.3m for UNICEF to procure and supply ready to use therapeutic nutrition foods (RUTF).

The total additional funding give to JRP for the El Nino response was £2.4m so it is safe to assume that the difference between this figure and that above is the result of an earlier allocation from contingency that this evaluation has not seen the paperwork for.

In the submission for the 2016 contingency expenditure recorded above the author notes, “DFID Sudan currently holds £7,389,414 unallocated funds from within the SHARP and SHIP business cases, which need to be allocated by the end of the financial year when the business cases close.”

This last neatly illustrates one of the major tensions in the use of contingency in Sudan. There are clearly unplanned needs – spikes in conflict or natural hazard disasters as outlined in the original justification reproduced above. However, these don’t necessarily happen on an annual basis, and when they do the major channels for supporting are quite similar.

At the same time, there are disbursal pressures within DFID. Having large amounts of funding unspent is unnerving for those in charge, especially in countries with such clear acute and chronic poverty. In practice what this meant in Sudan was that the SHF got the lion’s share of the contingency (as it did of the planned humanitarian resources), and *de facto* as a second annual contribution. Only in 2016 when El Nino led to quite a separate set of needs around drought and flooding emerged did contingency was used differently – and even then, this was to support other existing partners. Again, these allocations were made in July – slightly earlier than in previous years (when they were made at the mid-point of the DFID financial year) – but as the quote above illustrates driven by bureaucratic needs as well as humanitarian ones.

* 1. **EQ3: Value for money**

A consistent theme in partner feedback has been that MYHF allows them to design more effective programmes, that can learn, evolve and adapt over time to maximise efficiency and effectiveness gains,through:

* Better analysis - partners have more time to study the context more carefully and use this in programming;
* Development of longer term relationships with the same population groups, leading to more participatory approaches; and
* Projects can learn, and evolve or adapt over a longer time horizon, permitting more effective strategies.

It has been difficult to establish with certainty the value for money aspects of the two MY programmes in Sudan. Limited access for the project team meant that key informant interviews were less frequent than planned and this meant the VFM enquiry suffered in particular. The communications difficulties also meant that getting good data from the partners was also more challenging than in the other case study countries.

The two consortia programmes did demonstrate aspects of the efficiency and effectiveness gains outlined above, however.

* The **Taadoud consortium** commissioned several pieces of operational research, aimed at helping them understand the drivers of resilience better. Tufts University were engaged to look at aspects of resilience in Darfur amongst the target population, leading to an index being created showing how people’s ability to rely on farming and livestock ebbs and flows with better and worse years. It shows that there is a significant recovery gap in West Darfur. This and other insights gained from the quantitative work undertaken by TANGO fed into the design of the second phase of Taadoud.
* The **Joint Resilience Programme** had a six-month design phase that would not have been available in a short-term project, which was needed as many of the initial assumptions about demographics turned out to be wrong. The design phase allowed the JRP to re-work the programme so that it was better configured to help the population.

Where there is less evidence of value for money however, is in the premature ending of the JRP. The reduction of stunting in the east could not have been achieved in three years, and in fact it took almost half the lifetime of the project to get it properly established. With hindsight DFID should either not have agreed to such an ambitious target – perhaps limiting itself to community action planning for floods – or should have put plans in place for a continuation, based on a realistic assessment of how long such goals take to realise.

Neither project was able to share data with the evaluation team about potential savings from procurement, administration, recruitment or other areas where efficiency gains might be expected over a multi-year period. Whilst the thematic evaluation team tried multiple times to elicit such information, the communication barriers as a result of limited access were simply too great.

1. **Conclusions**

DFID is to be commended for introducing multi-year humanitarian financing in Sudan. The crises that generate humanitarian need are long term and complex; mitigating their worst effects and helping people cope with the fall out is also long term and complex.

The two multi-year financing programmes supported by DFID during the period of study were experimental in nature. They were both consortium programmes and both had ambitious aims – boosting food security in Darfur and reducing stunting in Kassala. In both cases the assumptions inherent in these programmes was that people would be more resilient if these outcomes were achieved.

The thematic evaluation took a twin-track approach – looking at resilience from the perspective of those within the project area and following the programmes themselves. The lack of resilience amongst the two populations under study was stark. In Darfur, years of conflict and displacement have eroded people’s income and asset base, and further weakened their tenuous land rights. The lack of trust engendered between the two communities means that low level conflict continues, artificially suppressing any asset build up. As a result, there is an annual gap in income that needs to be filled by illegal charcoal or labour migration.

In Kassala, traditional pastoralists have largely converted to riverine agriculture following devastating droughts and conflict in the 1980s. This livelihood too has become less reliable, and like in Darfur the majority rely on charcoal production and labour migration to make ends meet. Climate change in both places is making agriculture less predictable, and the cycle of floods and droughts can have serious consequences.

Health shocks are the other significant burden and barrier to resilience. A separate quantitative study for this evaluation estimates that between 15-40% of potential income can be lost through health set-backs. Whilst there is health insurance, and the uptake is generally good, this accounts only for the cost of the health care itself, not the transport and most significantly not the work days lost.

Faced with such deep and long-term drivers of humanitarian exposure, it is no surprise that the populations under study did not become resilient to the major shocks they faced by the end of the MY projects. There were encouraging signs that the projects had helped in the way intended, and that they might be part of some bigger solution. However, with the drivers of conflict and precarity largely political and economic, relatively small and relatively short programmes are not enough to turn back years of neglect and division.

The DFID experiment with MY has also produced significant learning, and should prompt careful reflection on how the instrument can best be used. The Kassala MY programme (JRP), led by UNICEF, aimed to reduce stunting. Kassala has some of the worst nutritional indicators in Sudan, and in fact anywhere in the world. This was not possible in three years however, and DFID did not continue funding beyond the initial programme. This evaluation saw positive outcomes from the JRP, but it was clear the timeframe needed to be much longer. In Darfur, conflict and climate heating seem to require far stronger and deeper policy remedies than enhanced agricultural techniques, however well implemented.

This raises the question as to whether MYH should be used as a substitute for development funding, or whether its aim should be more modest. There are shocks that can be practically mitigated – such as flooding in Kassala, and that do not depend quite as heavily on the political, economic and social wider context. The research that Taadoud commissioned into the livelihoods or farmers and livestock herders is important for understanding how people cope when times get bad – this too might inform programmes design to reinforce such coping strategies. And DFID has been working outside the MYH framework on urban issues in Sudan’s rapidly growing towns and cities. Much of this urbanisation is driven by conflict and climate shocks and transitioning IDPs to more sustainable urban livelihoods would seem another relevant use of an MYH-type instrument.

DFID also reserved a significant amount of the Sudan Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Programme (SHARP) as contingency, to be used for unforeseen spikes in chronic emergencies, or new acute emergencies. In two of the three years this was effectively used as a ‘top up’ for the Sudan Humanitarian Fund (SHF), a multi-donor UN managed fund that finances the UN Humanitarian Action Plan. In both of the years this happened, DFID effectively made the top up in the middle of the year when traditionally UN humanitarian plans are revised. DFID is the largest donor and the principal supporter of the SHF and using the contingency for top up makes sense in this context. With such a fund in place, the disbursal pressure that comes with money ‘sitting around’ can be eased. Without such a safety valve, a large contingency such as the one held by SHARP might prove more difficult to manage.

In the third year of the SHARP business case the strong El Nino effect in the Horn led to both drought and flooding in Sudan, triggering several emergency responses, including from SHARP partners. The contingency funded responses by both Taadoud and JRP, both of which were evaluated positively. Being able to respond quickly with minimal bureaucracy was extremely positive and was possible both because the funding was in place, but also the partner capacity through the MY programmes.

On value for money the evaluation was not able to make robust conclusion due to a lack of data. However, both enhanced design and learning aspects were observed in the two MYH programmes, a feature that has been noted in other country case studies and is only possible with extended time frames.

1. CIA Factbook 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. National Baseline Household Survey 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 57.6% of rural inhabitants are poor compared with 26.5% urban [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Although this is probably a measure of the “accessible” population [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. ditto [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. All statistics State of the World’s Children, Unicef, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Deriving from the colonial Land Resettlement and Registration Act of 1925 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. In rural areas, it is likely that any attempt to reassign ownership under the provisions of statutory law would be met with resistance, land being viewed as owned in perpetuity [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. IUCN Baseline study, 2011 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. However, our interviews consistently refer to land as being either owned or privately rented and seldom, if ever, as a resource owned by government [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This rule of thumb does not apply in areas where new dam projects are being implemented (Kassala and Gedaref) or in the oil-rich states [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. USAID Sudan-Complex Emergency Factsheet #3, 30 March 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Kassala is now an established people-trafficking route, bringing with it a vigorous trade in small arms and, less prominently, drugs [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Approximate because the start and end dates do not exactly align [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In Arabic “Taadoud” means working together towards one purpose, solidarity. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. In the absence of verified data, this paper relies on information from the panel interviews carried out by the Valid Evaluations team in the same villages as those covered by the Taadoud programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Fitzpatrick, M and Young, H: The Road to Resilience. A Scoping Study for the Taadoud Transition to Development Project, USA Feinstein International Centre, Tufts University, November 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Climate data suggests that droughts are intensifying in Sudan generally and in north Darfur in particular. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Fitzpatrick and Young ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. REF. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Although the JRP agencies had made preparations ot respond to the el Niño event [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Levine, S and Kusnierek, A :Counting the cost: assessing the full economic cost of ill-health in West Darfur, Sudan. Valid Evaluations, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Béné (2014) placed adaptive capacity as one of the constituents of a resilient existence. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. although there appears to be no impediment to people migrating to Khartoum for temporary work or medical treatment [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Pantuliano, S et al: City Limits: Urbanisation and Vulnerability in Sudan. Synthesis Report, ODI, London, 2011 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/sudan-population/cities/> accessed 4 June 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Census figures are unreliable, with some sources suggesting static or, in some cases, negative growth [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Sheikhs, for example, feel a strong duty of care towards their particular client group [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. PHD. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. As is explained in some depth in section 3.X the health study was only in West Darfur. However, it is clear from household interviews in Kassala that health care costs are an equal concern for families, so although it is not possible to put a figure to the burden of health care in Kassala it is certainly highly significant. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)