

Sharpening the Strategic Focus of Livelihoods Programming in the Darfur Region

A report of four livelihoods workshops in the Darfur region (June 30 to July 11, 2007)



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Acronyms

ACF	Action Contre le Faim
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEAP	Community Environmental Action Plan
CEMP	Community Environmental Management Plan
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DAI	Development Alternatives International
DFID	Department for International Development (British Government)
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EPI	Expanded Programme of Immunization
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
KSCS	Kebkabiya Smallholders Charitable Society
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	Non Government Organization
PIPs	Processes, Institutions and Policies (part of the Livelihoods Conceptual Framework)
RCO	Resident Coordinators Office
SRM	Sustainable Resource Management
UNAMID	the hybrid UN and AU Mission in Darfur
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID/OTI	U.S. Agency for International Development/ Office for Transitional Initiatives

Summary

It is well known in the Darfur region that peoples' livelihoods have been devastated as a result of the conflict, both as a result of the direct asset-stripping of conflict affected households, but also as a result of the continuous erosion of the livelihood asset base of all groups in Darfur – even those who have not been directly affected by conflict.

Growing recognition among the national and international humanitarian community of the importance of supporting livelihoods in the current context has been offset by the ever present and increasing operational challenges they are facing. Early in 2007 the need for a strategic review of livelihoods programming was articulated by local actors to UNOCHA/RCO. In response to this OCHA/RCO organized a series of four State level workshops, which brought together more than 180 local and international actors, from government, UN agencies, international and local NGOs, members of universities and civil society.

The objectives were to collaboratively develop a shared and common understanding of the impact of conflict on livelihoods, and based on this to develop a more strategic approach for support of livelihoods through humanitarian assistance, as well as a series of more specific recommendations on livelihoods programming. This process was facilitated by a small team from Tufts University, who has been engaged in livelihoods analysis in Darfur since 2004, supported by two independent consultants with considerable Darfur experience. The Tufts team designed a participatory process to develop a comprehensive livelihoods analysis, and using this undertake a programming review and make strategic recommendations.

The success of this novel approach was the result of consistent group work that focused on locally specific livelihood groups and used the livelihoods conceptual framework adapted for conflict settings throughout the two days; and also the commitment to a carefully designed participatory process where local experts served as resource people within each working group.

The results of the participatory analysis were remarkably consistent across the four workshops and confirmed some of the findings of former studies, but it also contributed significant detail and analysis on more recent developments within the different areas. The livelihoods conceptual framework helped to distinguish how conflict has impacted on all components of the framework: goals, strategies, processes, institutions and policies (PIPs) and assets, and helped to identify protection risks and mechanisms through which livelihoods fuel conflict. Important common themes that emerged included:

- Conflict and insecurity are continuing to destroy livelihoods, and the adaptations that particular livelihood groups make, in turn fuel the conflict.
- The continued disruption of markets and trade, particularly impacting those who are still able to engage in some of their pre-conflict livelihood strategies, namely pastoralists and resident farmers.
- The breakdown and failures in local governance, particularly in relation to competition over natural resources and local conflict resolution.

- Acceleration of environmental degradation, particularly in areas of high population concentrations as a result of displacement, but also as a result of the breakdown in natural resource governance and the impact of conflict in constraining livelihoods.
- The inequitable distribution of humanitarian livelihoods programming, with some groups, particularly pastoralists widely neglected.

A review of current livelihoods programming found that there are examples of good practice where interventions are responding to critical livelihood needs, and are serving to promote interactions, even dialogue, between different livelihood groups. But it was noted that even the most successful initiatives will only contribute a part of people's overall subsistence needs, thus leaving a gap that must be met by other humanitarian means such as food aid. And livelihoods programming is still quite limited.

The review also showed the importance of understanding the totality of people's livelihoods in order to identify appropriate interventions or actions. Although much of the current livelihoods programming focuses on supporting or replacing assets, more attention should be paid to context specific processes, institutions and policies (PIPs). In reviewing the breadth of humanitarian livelihoods programmes, five issues of more overarching or strategic relevance became apparent, including:

- 1) The need for comprehensive livelihoods analysis to inform integrated humanitarian programming that encompasses interventions of saving lives and livelihoods as well as interventions to address the wider mediating factors (PIPs) (and wider processes including peace-building).
- 2) More strategic coordination and collaboration on livelihoods assessments, analysis and programming
- 3) The importance of promoting Sustainable Resource Management (SRM)
- 4) Renewed efforts to promote partnerships and strengthening local capacities (to implement more integrated programming and promote dialogue)
- 5) A strategic focus to include marginalized livelihood groups, particularly pastoralists

These workshops clearly demonstrated that this type of collaboration and participatory analysis represents a powerful way forward to develop new and stronger partnerships, building the capacities of all participants, and generating a wealth of lessons learned, new ideas and commitments for addressing the livelihoods crisis in Darfur and building foundations for peace.

In order to build on this understanding and commitment and take many of these ideas forward, broad dissemination and awareness raising of the workshop findings and recommendations will be needed. This should be targeted not only at practitioners and policy makers within the humanitarian community, but also at the development, academic and political actors. Understanding the livelihoods of Darfurians is fundamental to effectively intervening on multi-faceted levels to support livelihoods. A second key step will be for interested, multi-sectoral groups to operationalise these strategic priorities in the form of a plan that will both guide and support livelihoods programming.

1. Background

In the Darfur region the links between conflict and people's livelihoods are well understood/ documented. As summarized recently, *"Conflict and peoples' livelihoods are inextricably linked. Livelihoods are integral to the causes of the conflict and the impact it has had, and therefore will be central to any lasting solutions to the conflict. Moves to find a peaceful solution must take account of livelihoods, while efforts to support livelihoods must consider the political economy of conflict and the implications for livelihoods and livelihood interventions"*¹. Perhaps what is less well understood are the adjustments different livelihood groups have made in their livelihood strategies, their motivations for doing so as a result of the conflict, the multiple contextual factors influencing these strategies, and the consequence that these can have in fuelling the conflict. This is not a static situation; it requires continuous local analysis, understanding and knowledge.

As the conflict in Darfur enters its fifth year, how to support, protect and promote the livelihoods of different groups has become an ever more pressing issue. In the early years of the conflict the international humanitarian response prioritised immediate life-saving interventions, although some agencies undertook livelihoods assessments with a view to introducing livelihoods programming². More recently this interest has expanded with a wider range of agencies paying more attention to how livelihoods can be supported. Over the same time period, the humanitarian community has also begun to respond to environmental concerns within Darfur, which are key to effectively supporting livelihoods in Darfur.

Meanwhile the conflict itself has become more entrenched with deteriorating and unpredictable insecurity in many parts of Darfur, and targeted attacks on humanitarian assets and in some cases humanitarian personnel. One of the consequences has been the significant contracting of humanitarian space. This is the challenging environment in which livelihood support is currently being considered and provided

UNOCHA/RCO staff carried out a consultation within the international humanitarian community across four locations in Darfur in February 2007. This confirmed that there is a widely perceived need to identify the most appropriate and feasible responses to support people's livelihoods, including protecting assets, supporting strategies that "do no harm" (environmentally, conflict mitigating, etc), and reducing exposure to protection threats. How to sustain such interventions in the current context also emerged as a clear challenge. In response, and building upon research and studies that have been completed in Darfur in the last two to three years³, it was decided to hold a series of four state-level workshops on

¹ Young, H., A. M. Osman, et al. (2005). Darfur - Livelihoods Under Siege. Medford, Feinstein International Famine Center, Tufts University.pviii

² These included the International Committee of the Red Cross, Concern International and Oxfam GB

³ These included:

- Bromwich, B., A. A. Adam, et al. (2007). Darfur: Relief in a vulnerable environment. Teddington, Middlesex, UK, Tear Fund.
- Buchanan Smith, M. and S. Jaspars (2006). Conflict, camps and coercion: the ongoing livelihoods crisis in Darfur. Final report to WFP Sudan.
- Young, H., A. M. Osman, et al. (2005). Darfur - Livelihoods Under Siege. Medford, Feinstein International Famine Center, Tufts University.

livelihoods, to provide the reflective space, conceptual frameworks and other resources for these explorations to take place. Recognising the daily logistical, security and other challenges that aid workers are facing in Darfur, there is a real value in providing the space, facilitation and opportunity for those same people to step back and to be able to think more analytically and strategically.

In early July these two-day workshops were held in Al Fashir (for North Darfur), Geneina (for West Darfur), Nyala (for South Darfur), and was planned for Zalingei (for the Zalingei corridor) although this was relocated to Nyala for security reasons. In total, there were over 180 participants drawn from international and local NGOs, UN agencies, the Red Cross movement, the Darfur state governments, academics from Darfur universities, and from donor governments. The workshops were organised and hosted by UNOCHA/RCO (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance/ Resident Coordinators Office), logistically supported by DAI (Development Alternatives) and DSI, and facilitated by a Tufts University team⁴. In each location the facilitation team worked closely with a small team of local resource persons who provided invaluable guidance in identifying livelihood groups in each area and in supporting the workshop discussions. Members of the Resource Teams in each location are listed in Annex 2. The workshops were funded by DFID (Department for International Development) and USAID/OTI (US Agency for International Development, Office for Transition Initiatives).

2. Purpose and outputs

The **purpose** of the workshops were twofold:

1. to sharpen the strategic focus and strengthen the effectiveness of humanitarian action in relation to livelihoods in Darfur now
2. to promote a dialogue among livelihood stakeholders with a view to improved coordination and analysis, and strategic thinking around the issues between key stakeholders at state level (including identifying strategic priorities and practical next steps).

Designed to be highly practical and output-oriented, the specific outputs of the workshop were identified at the outset as:

1. A shared understanding and preliminary analysis using the livelihoods conceptual framework of how conflict has affected livelihoods in the four regions represented at the workshops (North Darfur; South Darfur; West Darfur – Geneina and border areas; West Darfur – Zalingei corridor). This includes identifying gaps in our understanding.
2. A review of effective and feasible approaches for livelihoods programming including assessment, analysis, response and monitoring.
3. An action plan to advance a more strategic approach.

These outputs were achieved for each of the four workshops and are reported upon in more detail below as well as in the annexes. First the report describes the workshop approach,

⁴ Led by Helen Young of Tufts University, the team comprised Abdal Monim Osman of Tufts University, Margie Buchanan-Smith (independent) and Brendan Bromwich (independent, formerly of Tear Fund).

which was designed to be participatory and intended to integrate livelihoods, conflict, protection and natural resource management (guided by the Tufts/FIC humanitarian livelihoods framework (Box 1)). The key findings emerging from this analysis are presented in Section 4, followed by a review of current livelihoods programming in Section 5. The final section presents the conclusions and next steps.

3. Workshop process

In order to achieve the workshop purpose, the process was designed to be as participatory as possible. Workshop discussions took place in small working groups with facilitated summary discussions in plenary. The conventional approach of formal presentations followed by discussion was deliberately avoided. The aim was to engage all stakeholders as active resource persons in developing the analyses, and especially to draw upon the wealth of local knowledge and expertise of the Darfurian participants⁵. This worked well and greatly enriched the discussions and ensured that workshop outputs were owned by the participants.

For each workshop and its corresponding geographical area, a group of local resource people identified a number of different livelihood groups according to the main source of livelihood for that group and also how they had been impacted by the conflict. This resulted in a maximum of six groups being identified in any one area, although usually only four or five of these were explored in each workshop (partly because little was known about some of the livelihood groups, for example those living as part of armed groups, and they would have been hard to explore). Table 1 presents the different livelihood groups identified, explained in more detail in Annexes 3 to 6.

⁵ Although English was the main language of the workshops, periodically discussions and explanations took place in Arabic to ensure that all could participate and contribute.

Table 1 Livelihood groups identified for each of the four workshops

	North Darfur	West Darfur - Geneina	South Darfur	West Darfur - Zalingei
Livelihood groups explored at the workshop	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agro-pastoralists 2. Resident farmers 3. IDPs in and around towns and the urban poor 4. IDPs in rural areas 5. People living on others' land 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pastoralists 2. Resident farmers 3. IDPs in and around towns 4. IDPs in rural areas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pastoralists 2. Resident farmers 3. IDPs in and around towns 4. IDPs in rural areas 5. Recently displaced by tribal conflict 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pastoralists 2. Agro-pastoralists 3. Resident farmers 4. IDPs in and around towns
Additional livelihood groups identified but not included in the workshop discussions⁶	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Organised armed groups 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Organised armed groups 4. Foreigners/ asylum seekers occupying the land of others 5. Returnees 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Organised armed groups 	

Day 1 of the workshop was designed to allow participants to analyse collectively the impact of conflict on the different livelihood groups. Group work, based on the livelihoods conceptual framework, was designed to capture the existing knowledge of participants. (See Box 1). Conflict analysis was integrated as part of this process, to capture the impact of the conflict on livelihoods, specifically the impact on livelihood assets, strategies and the impact on policies, institutions and processes (PIPs). Some emerging new PIPs were identified. The livelihoods conceptual framework was welcomed by participants as a very useful tool that they can continue to use to deepen their analysis using a shared / common language.

Based on the livelihoods analysis from Day 1 and continuing to use the conceptual framework, discussions on day 2 shifted to how livelihoods can best be supported from a humanitarian perspective, again according to the different livelihood groups identified in the area. This started with a brief review of existing livelihoods programming, to inform more detailed discussions about how livelihoods programming can become more strategic and coherent in the future. Discussions were also informed by a recap of the core humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality and neutrality) and what they mean, to ensure a principled approach to humanitarian livelihoods programming.

See Annex 1 for a copy of the workshop agenda.

⁶ Non-poor urban residents were identified at each workshop, but these groups were not considered in detail except the recognition that they provide a significant demand for the trade in natural resources so should be acknowledged

Box 1 - Understanding livelihoods in conflict settings by building a shared analysis using the livelihoods conceptual framework

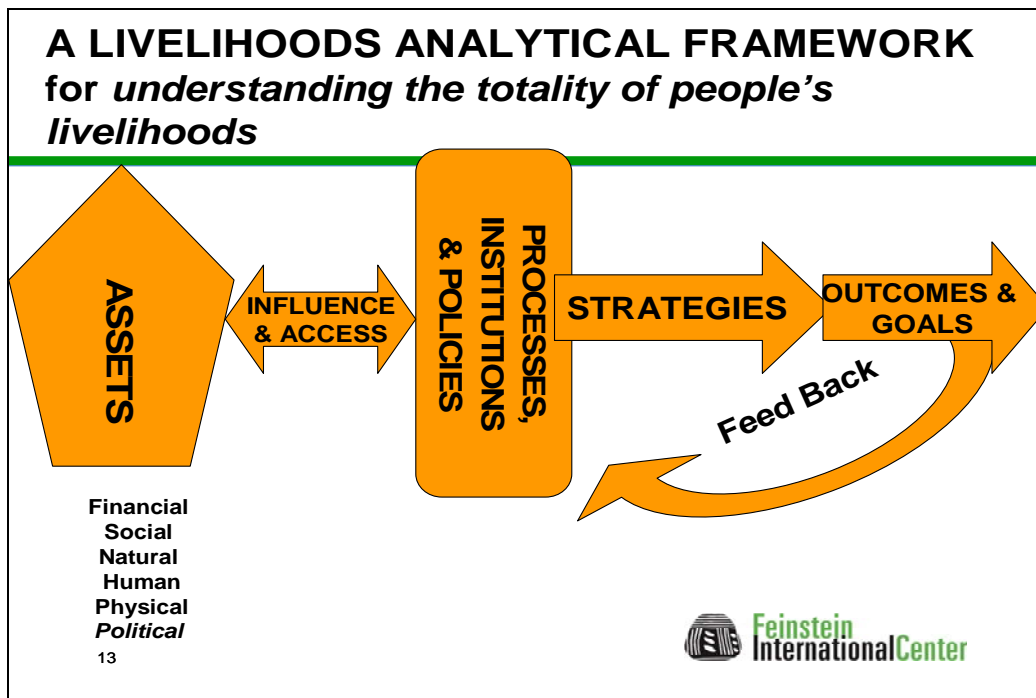
Objectives:

1. Familiarise participants with the livelihoods framework using *local* knowledge to illustrate the component parts
2. Explore how the different parts of the framework relate to each other
3. Develop a shared understanding of livelihoods for specific livelihood groups and to review how conflict affects the different parts of the framework, recognizing that assets may also represent liabilities (protection threats) and that vulnerability is frequently a result of the PIPs and particularly new PIPs emerging as a result of conflict.

Tasks (Steps in the participatory analysis)

Discuss in working groups focusing on a particular livelihood group:

1. What are people currently doing to earn a livelihood? *Identifies the livelihood strategies*
2. Why are they doing this? *Identifies livelihood goals*
3. What do they need in order to do this? *Identifies livelihood assets that the household has access to, plus identifies important policies, institutions and policies of relevance to this group.*
4. How has conflict affected or influenced livelihood strategies, goals, assets and PIPs? *In addition to reviewing the impact of conflict, this exercise reveals new PIPs that have emerged as a result of conflict and clearly illustrates that vulnerability is embedded within the PIPs box, hence the importance of PIPs.*



Integrating livelihoods, conflict, protection and management of natural resources, with a view to sharpening the strategic direction.

The approach of developing a participatory analysis that integrates livelihoods, conflict, protection and natural resource management, and then using this as the basis for a programming review and for developing strategic recommendations, is novel and therefore explained in a more detail below.

Integrating livelihoods, conflict, protection and management of natural resources, with a view to sharpening the strategic direction (continued)

By using the livelihoods framework, participants explored the linkages between strategies, goals, assets and PIPs. For example, livelihood strategies are the different ways a household pursues its prioritized short, medium and long term goals. These goals are in part determined by the assets available to the household. The assets or resources available to the household may be either directly owned or otherwise accessed by the household, and include:

- **Natural**, land, water, forests, (there may be rights of access to grazing land, water points etc)
- **Physical**, livestock, stores & stocks, equipment.
- **Financial**, money, debt, credit, claims and investments
- **Human**, health and nutritional status, adult labour and care-providers, skills and level of education
- **Social**, household social networks, social institutions, social exclusion, norms, trust, values and attitudes
- **Political assets** including networks and connections with local governance institutions, armed groups etc.

While assets influence the strategies that households are able to pursue, they are also influenced by the prevailing policies, institutions and processes. For example, the provision of livestock health services (an institution) influences the subsequent quality and number of livestock raised, while taxation (a policy) influences the financial revenues or capital flowing back to the household following livestock sales. Hence the feedback loop is useful for understanding how the PIPs influence access to assets, and also the final value or quality of assets.

*In a conflict setting livelihood assets may also represent liabilities, and therefore ownership or access to these assets or forms of capital can potentially be a protection threat or risk. For example owning valuable livestock, or carrying cash, can mean that a household/ community in Darfur is particularly vulnerable to attack and looting. This process of ‘**asset-stripping**’ of civilians during wartime and conflict has been documented elsewhere⁷.*

*Asset-stripping may be direct – **systematic** attacks are intended to destroy the livelihoods of people. For example, the tactics of driving people off their land and stealing their assets. In the process of displacement, previous livelihood strategies become impossible and people lose access to other assets such as farmland.*

*Or asset-stripping may be indirect – the **systemic** destruction of livelihoods as a result of processes, institutions and policies, many of which develop as a result of conflict. Young et al (2005 and 2006)⁸ describes the emerging PIPs in Darfur region. These were not reviewed at the workshop, rather participants came up with their own analyses.*

⁷ Keen, D. (1994). *The Benefits of Famine: Political Economy of Famine and Relief in Southwestern Sudan, 1983-1989* (Hardcover) Princeton University Press

⁸ Young, H., A. M. Osman, et al. (2005). *Darfur - Livelihoods Under Siege*. Medford, Feinstein International Famine Center, Tufts University.

Young, H. and A. M. Osman (2006). *Challenges to peace and recovery in Darfur. A Situation Analysis of the Ongoing Conflict and its Continuing Impact on Livelihoods*. Medford, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University.

4. Understanding and analysing livelihoods

Value of the conceptual framework and process of analysis

Working through the livelihoods conceptual framework, it was possible to disentangle the complexity of livelihoods in Darfur for each of the livelihood groups concerned, and to trace some of the key ways in which the conflict has impacted on livelihoods as well as how some livelihood strategies can, in turn, fuel the conflict. A number of workshop participants commented on the value of the framework in enabling sensitive conflict-related issues to be discussed in ways that are not usually possible, partly because of how the component parts are broken down and also because of the discipline of following the step-by-step analytical process described above.

Issues that emerged in this process, common to all the workshops and to the different livelihood groups, indicate the usefulness of the conceptual framework in deepening the analysis and ensuring common and shared understanding. These included:

(1) The **goals** that lie behind and motivate different livelihood strategies are rarely considered in livelihood assessments, yet have often changed during the course of the conflict. For both pastoralists and herders, whose livelihood strategies have been blocked either as a result of restricted livestock migration, or limited or no access to land, then increased farming became a new goal increasing tension and conflict with settled farmers. Similarly, for the livelihood group 'resident farmers living under coercion' in North Darfur (Annex 3), pursuing a sustainable livelihood in the current context in the Wadi Barei area is no longer feasible. Instead, new goals have emerged to do with protecting lives, assets and as far as possible their rural livelihood systems. This means that some families are paying 'protection fees' for their own safety, but have purposely decided to continue living under a coercive regime in order to maintain ownership of valuable fertile land, fearing they will lose it if they join the displaced in towns and in camps.

(2) Most livelihood assessments and analyses **focus on livelihood strategies sometimes assets and rarely pay attention to the processes, institutions and policies (PIPs)**. Whilst the former are important, understanding the key policies, institutions and processes was essential for each livelihood group in order to fully capture the vulnerability of livelihoods as a result of conflict processes which are embedded in the PIPs box. This covered issues such as markets, the impact of the war economy (e.g. fees at checkpoints), deteriorating security and the breakdown of governance. A strong analysis of PIPs also distinguishes the *level* at which they are relevant (local, national and international), as described in the list of emerging PIPs below. This more detailed understanding of contextual PIPs is essential for effective programming response. Without it, programme interventions may be undermined by factors that have not been well understood resulting in minimal benefit to the targeted population, and possibly fuelling the conflict.

(3) *Interactions between livelihood groups, as a result of competing livelihoods, were readily apparent, particularly where one group sought to control access to the natural resources in question.*

In short, working through the livelihoods conceptual framework helped to distinguish how conflict has impacted on all components of the framework: goals, strategies, PIPs and assets, and helped to identify protection risks, and mechanisms through which livelihoods fuel conflict. This in turn can guide decisions about how best to intervene to support livelihoods: for example to impact on assets and/ or PIPs, further discussed below. The feedback loop captures the dynamic nature of livelihoods, including interactions between project inputs and wider PIPs. Once negative feedback loops are identified, there may be opportunities for mitigating them. For example, the provision of permanent water points in rural areas may encourage land occupation and land claims by sedentarized pastoralists and therefore should be avoided, unless there is the agreement of the original land owners.

How assets have been destroyed in the conflict, particularly in the first two years, is well known and well-documented. The workshops captured this, but also the continuous erosion of the asset base since 2003, for all livelihood groups. For example, resident farmers in West Darfur no longer have access to some of their most productive land, such as wadi land, where it is being occupied by others. Blocked migratory routes and concentrations of livestock have increased the incidence of overgrazing, disease and epidemics and resulted in livestock losses for pastoralists. How social capital as an asset has been eroded was frequently mentioned for different livelihood groups. For agropastoralists in the Zalingei corridor this was articulated as deteriorating relationships and loss of trust with other livelihood groups, which has meant that negotiation is harder and the conflict has become more entrenched, a pattern that was highlighted for other pastoralist groups as well. IDPs living in large camps around towns, for example around Nyala, have lost much of their original social capital from the village. Although new leadership and power structures have emerged in the camps, some of which may be exploitative, workshop participants have observed that people have become more individual and less community-orientated.

Particularly interesting and important are the emerging PIPs that are negatively impacting on livelihoods. Common themes that emerged are as follows:

- ***Conflict and insecurity are continuing to destroy livelihoods, and the adaptations in livelihood strategies that particular livelihood groups make, in turn fuel the conflict.***

An example of this is provided in Box 2. Other examples include:

- Competition over scarce natural resources, especially firewood, around areas of high population concentration e.g. around towns and IDP camps. This is an example of how competing livelihood strategies between IDPs and pastoralists have fuelled violence, especially gender-based violence.
- Blocked migration routes, in part a result of inter-tribal conflicts and expansion of farming, has partly encouraged pastoralists to graze their livestock on the fields of resident farmers before the harvest, in turn fuelling the tension between these two groups.

- Some pastoralist groups are becoming increasingly sedentarized as former migration routes are blocked, resulting in some occupying land belonging to others, thus fuelling conflict and creating future problems over competing land claims. It emerged during the workshop that issues around land occupation are poorly understood and require much more research and exploration.
- The measures needed for sound adaptation to climate change (e.g. improved community level collaboration over resource management, shelter belts etc) are at odds with how the crisis is undermining environmental protection activities. For example, intimidation and gender based violence is currently used by some groups to control access to lucrative forestry resources (firewood, which is then sold to the groups who have been denied access).
- The ***continued disruption of markets and trade***, particularly impacting those who are still able to engage in some of their pre-conflict livelihood strategies, namely pastoralists and resident farmers. Before the conflict the market was one of the most important institutions through which different livelihood groups interacted; in many parts of rural Darfur this has just collapsed. The working group considering pastoralists in West Darfur articulated the disruption very clearly: many rural markets are now closed and there is a corresponding loss of reciprocal networks between herders and farmers. Although new routes to access functioning livestock markets have been found, these are risky, usually longer and therefore much more costly. Access to international markets has thus been affected. The collapse of rural markets and of long distance trade in grains and other cash crops has negatively impacted the livelihoods of resident farmers.
- The ***breakdown in local governance*** was often mentioned, affecting all livelihood groups. Two of the most frequently mentioned aspects were, first the lack of services – agricultural and veterinary – to resident farmers and to pastoralists respectively; and second the breakdown of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms as the tribal administration has been severely weakened. This is most evident around land and water resources and the inability to manage competing claims which means that the most powerful (i.e. those who are best armed) usually retain the upper hand. There is little or no evidence of sustainable natural resource management.
- ***Environmental degradation*** is accelerating as a direct consequence of the breakdown in environmental governance. Concentrations of people and livestock in restricted geographical areas is at an all-time high in Darfur, severely depleting timber and water resources in particular. This has been exacerbated by some poorly planned humanitarian programming that has paid scant attention to the impact on the environment⁹, especially for IDPs living in large camps where environmental pressures are greatest. In these areas of high population concentrations and depleted natural resources sustainable livelihoods are unlikely to be achievable in the current crisis for the vast majority.

⁹ Brendan Bromwich reminded workshop participants of some of the processes of environmental degradation that have been accelerated during the conflict in Darfur, described in 'Relief in a Vulnerable Environment'. He also gave an example of an agency building latrines for IDPs that required 7 substantial logs in North Darfur for construction when alternative technology could have been used.

- **International humanitarian action** emerged as another PIP influencing livelihoods, often positively as described in the section below. However, one of the more negative aspects has been the lack of adherence to the humanitarian principle of impartiality. The evidence for this is that almost all pastoralist groups have so far been largely ignored by internationally-funded livelihood support programmes. Not only does this undermine the reputation of humanitarians as impartial, it also perpetuates the long-term marginalisation of these groups and their exclusion from any peace negotiations. The frustration and disillusionment of some pastoralists (particularly the Arab *aballa*¹⁰) means that they are now harder to access. Some of these points are further discussed in the following section. As pastoralist livelihoods are poorly understood by many international agencies, box 3 captures some of the key points that emerged from the analysis of this livelihood group in the four workshops.

Box 2 How conflict destroys livelihoods, and how adaptation of livelihoods in turns fuels conflict: an example from those recently displaced in South Darfur due to tribal conflict

A feature of the shifting pattern of conflict in Darfur is the emergence of widespread and violent conflict between different ethnic groups since 2006, particularly different Arab groups in South Darfur. The working group looking at this particular livelihood group in the Nyala workshop identified the following cycle:

- Pastoralists selling livestock to reduce the risk of attack and looting, which in turn depresses livestock prices
- Pastoralists using the income generated to purchase arms to protect themselves and their assets
- Armed and violent conflict escalating between competing ethnic groups
- Increasing number of displaced – those who have not been able to protect their livestock herds, but who also feel unsafe residing in official IDP camps, and are therefore staying in rural areas thus increasing the burden on host families.

Box 3 Key points emerging from the workshop analyses on pastoralist livelihoods

- Livestock migration is designed to carefully manage limited natural resources – water and pasture. Where migration is blocked transhumant pastoralism is no longer viable. The past 30 years has seen increasing pressures on livestock migration routes as a result of increasing numbers of drought years, the consequent earlier migration southwards (which brings pastoralists into conflict with farmers), expansion in farming in the central rangelands (in part due to pastoralists migrating southwards and taking up farming e.g. the Zaghawa in the 70's and 80's). Combined with an erosion of tribal conflict resolution mechanisms, this has generated increased tribal tensions, conflict between farmers and pastoralists and subsequent closure of routes to some groups (the northern Gizou pastures have been inaccessible to some groups for more than 10 years).
- The livestock trade has all but collapsed in large part because of the closure of the main long-distant livestock trade routes to Libya, Egypt and Omdurman. And the forced displacement of rural farmers has had a negative impact on local rural markets which depended on the mutual trade between farmers and herders, which has been largely destroyed.
- Livestock sales are almost entirely for local consumption rather than export. As migration routes have become blocked and as livestock markets have collapsed, many pastoralists are unable to produce and sell enough livestock to earn an adequate living. They increasingly have to resort to

¹⁰ Aballa: camel herding pastoralists

farming creating issues of land occupation (see below) and to the sale of natural resources e.g. firewood to earn a living. As already mentioned, this fuels the conflict with IDPs over the collection and sale of firewood.

- As livestock movements have become restricted many pastoralists are shifting from large stock (cattle and camels) to small stock (sheep and goats) which are better suited to more sedentary living and are less vulnerable to looting.
- More permanent settlements are springing up for pastoralist groups as their movement and migration patterns are constrained. Sometimes this is on land belonging to others which may result in long-term issues of competing land claims (especially in West and North Darfur).
- Little unity exists between pastoralist groups and tensions are escalating between many of them, especially in South Darfur, where there has been more than four inter-tribal conflicts between pastoralist groups in the past year (see annex 5), but also among the northern Rizeigat in North Darfur.
- A growing culture of militarization, especially among the Aballa youth who are often armed and wearing military dress.
- While the international humanitarian community has relatively little contact with pastoralist groups, the private sector is engaged with this group, meeting their needs, including the shift in demand towards smaller stock, pharmacies selling livestock drugs and water drilling.

5. Review of current livelihoods programming

5.1 What do we mean by livelihoods programming?

Livelihoods programming is potentially very broad in scope, encompassing multiple sectors, a diverse range of actors or stakeholders and different levels of response (international, national and local). In the context of these workshops we have taken livelihoods programming to mean any programming, policy or advocacy response that is based on or emerges as a result of livelihoods analysis for a particular livelihoods group. This naturally narrows down response options to those that affect or influence the prevailing PIPs and portfolio of assets for that particular livelihoods group.

Thus, in reviewing current livelihoods programmes in Darfur, participants in working groups identified any humanitarian initiatives that are affecting or influencing livelihoods of the group in question. Thus food aid was sometimes included where it was felt to be critical in supporting existing livelihoods – either as an income transfer, or a source of livestock fodder. A review of current livelihoods programmes relating to each of the livelihoods groups in each geographic area is presented in annexes 3 to 6.

For example, the provision of veterinary services strengthens the physical capital (livestock) of the participating households, but also is affected by prevailing government policies on livestock health and pastoralism; the availability of and access to existing animal health services; the knowledge and skills of available animal health workers; the private sector supply and demand etc. An intervention that takes into consideration these broader facets will be far more likely to succeed than an intervention focusing solely on animal disease.

For the range of programmes identified, participants went on to consider how their positive impacts could be built upon or expanded, and how any negative impacts could be mitigated. Finally participants discussed and identified new and innovative ideas for supporting livelihoods of these groups. Underpinning these discussions were key points arising from Day 1, including:

- The conflict/ livelihood cycle and how one fuels the other.
- The risks of livelihood asset-stripping and other protection threats associated with livelihoods.
- Awareness of the importance of longer term processes such as environmental degradation caused by population growth and concentration, poor governance and climate change in informing short term programme design..
- Humanitarian principles, particularly the humanitarian imperative and impartiality, and the importance of comprehensive assessments as the basis for allocating resources according to need.

5.2 The limited focus of current livelihoods programming

This review revealed that at present livelihoods programming tends to focus predominantly on supporting people's livelihood strategies and on their assets, with less understanding or consideration of how it influences, or is influenced by, the key PIPs for each group. For example;

- Distribution of seeds and tools without considering access to land,
- Donkey re-stocking among IDPs, without monitoring the potential for increasing protection threats (e.g. from gender based violence as a result of using donkeys for firewood collection and travelling longer distances in rural areas);
- Vocational training and provision of related inputs with inadequate market analysis of the skills or products concerned.
- Drilling boreholes in rural areas without clarifying rights of land ownership or land use by local inhabitants.

5.3 Key findings from the review of current livelihoods programming

All of the workshops found that once a livelihoods analysis had been completed for a particular livelihood group, **the importance of the prevailing PIPs** became obvious, and were readily included as part of more strategic thinking in planning and designing future intervention strategies. This was made easier by the continuity of the working groups focusing on one livelihoods group, and continuing to apply the conceptual framework for reviewing the implications of the intervention i.e. considering its impact on assets, strategies, goals and PIPs. (Examples from resident farmers in S Darfur).

Generally the livelihoods analysis had been extremely pessimistic, clearly illustrating the cyclical nature of conflict between competing livelihoods, particularly between pastoralists and farmers, and the downwards spiral of impoverishment, environmental degradation and entrenched localised conflict. In some contexts this cycle is recognized by a small number

of local and international NGOs who are trying to ensure the impartiality of their livelihoods programming by engaging with all livelihood groups, in turn indirectly supporting initial or ongoing dialogue between groups. Dialogue is a first and much-needed step towards resumption of complementary livelihood strategies, and may ultimately lead to the opening up of opportunities to pursue previously blocked livelihood strategies, access to markets, and natural resources. In the Darfur region, it is around livelihoods that competing groups meet and do business. This is evident in many scenarios. For example, in Zalingei the IDP women purchase firewood from the Arab groups who control firewood collection, and then the IDP women resell the firewood in the camps. The IDP women are doing business with their adversaries. Similarly, groups living under coercion are paying “protection fees” to their adversaries in order to remain on their land and cultivate. Both of these examples illustrate the day to day livelihood transactions that people are engaged in, even where the relationship is essentially coercive.

Examples were given where current humanitarian programming has supported processes of local dialogue and helped break the livelihoods conflict cycle. For example, overland humanitarian access to one group in the Jebel Mara region was secured by the humanitarian agency working with all groups, thus developing relationships with groups that had previously hindered access, as well as those denied access. Similarly there were examples of local markets re-opening as a result of very local reconciliation following humanitarian intervention.

But apart from these very limited and specific examples, understanding among the international community of competing livelihood issues was felt to be very poor. This may partly account for the second key finding, which is the **inequitable distribution of livelihoods interventions among livelihoods groups**, with far less livelihood support of pastoralists compared with IDPs or resident farmers. Pastoralists are not a homogenous group and even within this group there are large differences. For example, the camel herding Aballa who were reviewed as a group in Zalingei were only receiving two international interventions (EPI and livestock vaccination) as compared to almost 15 interventions for Zalingei IDPs. This was further reflected in the lack of humanitarian assessments and actual contact with pastoralist groups¹¹.

Agencies who are pioneering some of the most progressive livelihoods programming are usually focussed on community structures and local governance and on how to strengthen or repair social capital rather than just asset distribution. Examples include work by KSCS in the Kebkabiya area. Building on their long-term relationships with local communities, developed over a 20 year period, they have observed how working to strengthen local community structures within some of the coerced farming livelihood groups has given the communities greater confidence to articulate aspects of the exploitative relationships they

¹¹ More recently pastoralist issues are receiving renewed interest to review, understand and address, and in Nyala UNOCHA has just formed a Nomad Working Group with another already existing in Geneina for several years (although suffering from a lack of strategic coordination and subsequent action).

endure, but also how strengthening community structures and community cohesion has had an empowering effect as they negotiate with their coercers. A second example is provided by CRS in West Darfur. They have pioneered seed vouchers and seed fairs as well as the local manufacture of tools, avoiding the conventional approach of buying seeds and tools outside the area and then distributing them. CRS has consciously worked to strengthen community groups (for example seed fair committees as well as local blacksmith groups) and to support local markets and local traders. They have also used training programmes, for example of fuel efficient stoves, as an opportunity to bring together local communities and to rebuild damaged community relationships.

In conclusion, this brief review has shown that although current livelihoods programming is fairly limited, there are examples of good practice where interventions are responding to critical livelihood needs, and promoting interactions, even dialogue, between different livelihood groups. It is important to note that in a context of ongoing conflict, humanitarian livelihoods programming will never be able to substitute completely for food distribution programmes, and that even the most successful initiatives will only contribute a part of people's overall subsistence needs, thus leaving a gap that must be met by other humanitarian means.

The review also showed the importance of understanding the totality of people's livelihoods, and thus identifying appropriate interventions or actions that influence key PIPs as well as assets and strategies. In reviewing the breadth of humanitarian livelihoods programmes, issues of more overarching or strategic relevance become apparent, including for example, coordination, leadership, and appropriate ways of working, which are reviewed in the final section.

6. Future strategic directions for livelihoods programming

The participatory analysis completed on Day One was crucial for informing the discussions on programming, and the more strategic recommendations (shown for each working group in Annexes 3 to 6). A series of consistent recommendations emerged from all four of the workshops. These were clustered into five groups or categories as shown below.

1) Comprehensive livelihoods analysis to inform integrated humanitarian programming and wider processes

A more comprehensive and informed understanding and analysis of livelihoods is essential as part of assessments and for planning, implementing and monitoring humanitarian action to support and protect livelihoods. This analysis should be based on the livelihoods conceptual framework, and on integrating conflict, protection, natural resource management and gender. It should also be based on participatory, inter-disciplinary and inter-agency approaches.

Specific recommendations related to this include:

- a) *Emphasis on analysis of the context specific processes, policies and institutions, (PIPs) including those that operate at local level, state level, nationally and internationally.*
- b) *More market analysis & interventions, to include more market analysis of trade routes between primary, secondary and tertiary markets; particular commodities (livestock, cereals, food aid); transport constraints and complementary trading systems (livestock and cereals). Support of microfinance services for local businesses and traders. Seed vouchers and fairs (building on CRS experience)*
- c) *In programme design, more emphasis on understanding the links between conflict and livelihoods, particularly how failing livelihoods drive conflict, which in turn impact on livelihoods, thus identifying opportunities to break this cycle.*
- d) *An example of integrated livelihoods programming is among IDPs where a range of complementary interventions are provided e.g. vocational training including business management skills, related inputs, market analysis and support as appropriate, capacity building of CBOs and programme committees.*
- e) *Use two sector reviews (water and food security) to pilot the integration of many of the above key factors into a sector strategy so as to advance these ideas at a practical operational level and at a coordination level.*

2) Strategic coordination and collaboration on livelihoods assessments, analysis and programming

Coordination of livelihoods assessments, analysis and response is essential, and must prioritise critical strategic issues, strengthen cross-sectoral linkages and multi-disciplinary approaches.

Specific recommendations related to this include:

- a) *Improved multi-sectoral coordination (particularly regarding water, pasture, agriculture i.e. sectors affecting multiple livelihood groups)*
- b) *Strengthening /capacity-building the Food Security/ Livelihoods Working Groups to provide appropriate guidance, information, analysis to operational agencies, and to play a more strategic coordination role in the support of livelihoods. Membership of this group should be expanded. Develop a clear strategic plan for agriculture and pastoralism linked with agreed milestones.*
- c) *Specific areas that require better coordination include; working with groups that are occupying land (which would include working with the original landowners as well as the current land occupants); working with pastoralists (already covered in South Darfur by a pastoralists forum, but needs to be expanded and prioritized) capacity development of civil society, including local NGOs, CBOs and programme committees (see point 4 below)*
- d) *Coordinated advocacy on the importance of livelihoods and sustainable natural resource management targeted at grass roots level, to donors, UN agencies, government, parties to the conflict, international actors – UN mediators and incoming hybrid AU/UN mission in Darfur (UNAMID).*

e) *Network for knowledge-sharing, more learning and linking with on-going experiences i.e. lesson learning and sharing.*

3) Promoting Sustainable Natural Resource Management (SRM)

In a subsistence economy, natural resources are foundational assets for livelihoods. In times of crisis livelihoods are unlikely to be sustainable, but support should be provided to livelihoods to promote sustainable management of resources, because without the resource base sustainable livelihoods will not be rebuilt. This puts an emphasis on sustainable resource management¹² in the humanitarian context.

Specific recommendations related to this include:

- a) *Agencies to screen all existing programmes for environmental impact and introduction of sustainable natural resource management.*
- b) *Livelihoods analysis should identify negative feedback loops impacting on resources and seek to mitigate these – such as the depletion of environmental resources which undermines livelihoods that depend on these – both now and in the future.*
- c) *Encourage reforestation (woodlots) and forest management including an ‘anti-logging’ campaign*
- d) *Land use mapping, including analysing the land carrying capacity in relation to livestock needs for water and pasture (relates to points 1 and 5)*
- e) *Apply the 3 basic steps of environmental assessment, identification of: negative impacts; appropriate mitigation and opportunities for environmental enhancement¹³.*
- f) *Support introduction of alternative technologies e.g. alternative building technologies and energy technologies and fuel efficient stoves*
- g) *Monitor environmental changes*
- h) *Promote community environmental management at camps through CEMPs (Community Environmental Management Plans).¹⁰*
- i) *Develop a list of activities that reduce environmental risk and can be integrated into programmes*
- j) *Raise awareness of adaptation to climate change and to disaster risk reduction.*

4) Promoting partnerships and strengthening local capacities (to promote dialogue and more integrated programming)

The importance of partnerships in implementing successful programmes was widely recognized, particularly between international and local Community Based Organizations. Programme committees are also central in the implementation of programmes yet are often

¹² Darfur: Relief in a vulnerable environment p29 for an explanation of the framework of sustainable resource management and subsequent chapters for practical recommendations.

¹³ Integrating environmental issues in the context of Darfur involves the following three steps:

1. Conducting a Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA)
2. Developing a Community Environmental Action Plan (CEAP)
3. As experience based on CEAPs is built up, a Community Environmental Management Plan is developed. From: Bromwich, B., A. A. Adam, et al. (2007). Darfur: Relief in a vulnerable environment. Teddington, Middlesex, UK, Tear Fund. (pages 49-52).

hastily formed and given limited support. Other important local institutions for international actors to partner with include local NGOs, local university departments, including in particular the Peace and Development Centers (Zalingei, Nyala, and El Fasher). A strong cadre of Sudanese professionals are working in Darfur who represent a significant human resource which could be mobilized more effectively as a community.

Specific recommendations related to this include:

- a) A strategic shift from “provisioning” to more local procurement and production focused on seeds and tools, market analysis, local market resuscitation, rebuilding economic relationships and preserving local varieties.*
- b) Capacity development of local institutions is an essential programme activity, which will strengthen institutional and governance capacity, and promote dialogue and understanding. It should not be seen as a means to an end i.e. an add-on to a project proposal intended simply to achieve that project’s goals.*
- c) Through programming partnerships with multiple stakeholders, and programme approaches with multiple livelihood groups, promote dialogue that rebuilds relationships between communities.*
- d) Use partnerships with donors and other national and international organizations for policy related advocacy on the importance of livelihoods and conflict at a policy level (and other specific livelihood related issues – see pastoralism below).*
- e) Learn lessons from experienced agencies of capacity building of CBOs (Practical Action, ACF)*

5) A strategic focus on marginalized livelihood groups, particularly pastoralists

To date, the humanitarian response has favoured certain groups while marginalizing others, in particular pastoralists, who have received much less international support than either IDPs or resident farmers. Livelihoods analysis is a prerequisite for ensuring that resources are allocated according to need between competing livelihood groups i.e. impartiality of humanitarian response, and for appropriate planning/ implementation of future recovery and development. Given the relative neglect of pastoralists and pastoralism as a livelihood system in Darfur, a UN led, inter-agency assessment and dialogue with all pastoralist groups is an urgent priority and planning steps have already been initiated. However this needs to be closely linked with appropriate humanitarian action, and relevant responses.

Specific recommendations related to this include:

- a) All workshops called for more assessments, analysis and response to the needs of pastoralists, including developing capacity to undertake such assessments.*

- b) A participatory community-based review of existing policies and practices on pastoralism with local and national government and relevant international organizations to ensure it is linked with appropriate policy change¹⁴.*
- c) Where groups have become 'hard to reach' as a result of limited contact e.g. Aballa Arabs in Zalingei area, existing interventions (livestock health, and EPI) should be used as an entry point.*
- d) Improve understanding of customary law as it affects pastoralists.*
- e) Establish community based organizations among pastoralists to facilitate awareness, dialogue and participation by NGOs.*
- f) Complement and facilitate appropriate private sector engagement with pastoralists*
- g) Examples of possible interventions; revolving fund mechanisms for inputs; livestock health initiatives and training of community based animal health workers; support of livestock markets by exploring alternative uses of livestock, e.g. slaughterhouses and processing plants, food processing vocational training; on migratory routes support of stopover areas with services; support mobile primary schools, and secondary boarding schools; provide complementary interventions to farmers and pastoralists, e.g. market support, that will promote dialogue;*
- h) Action research needed on; pilot fodder/pasture seed broadcasting; traditional NRM methods/practices.*

4. ¹⁴This could also include: A collection and analysis of all pastoral related interventions and assessments that have been undertaken as part of the humanitarian response; A review of pastoralism related development projects within Darfur prior to the crisis; A desk study to develop lessons learnt from support to pastoralism elsewhere in Sudan and the Sahel (e.g. correspondence with Sahel working group including their recent study following Niger drought – “Beyond any drought”).

7. Conclusions and Next Steps

In these livelihood workshops a participatory approach was highly successful in engaging a wide range of people from government, UN organizations, international and local NGOs, and academics. And the livelihoods conceptual framework enabled potentially difficult and sensitive discussions to take place without major disagreements or delays. All of this was key in producing a participatory analysis and a clear strategic direction for future livelihoods programming.

Evaluations following each of the workshops were unanimous that the objectives were met in full. Participants praised the participatory analytical process and several called for more similar initiatives and had suggestions for broadening the outreach, including for example involving representatives of the livelihood groups themselves. There was wide recognition from both international and national participants of the value of having strong local experts and resource people, some of whom have been working as professionals in Darfur for more than 30 years. Those Sudanese who recently came to Darfur to work with the humanitarian operations should also be acknowledged as their knowledge and experience of the recent dynamics of conflict, challenges of humanitarian response and implications for livelihoods were invaluable.

Several agencies who are already developing livelihoods programmes committed themselves to integrating this new understanding into their work. For example;

- after the workshop ACF in North Darfur applied a similar analytical process in a strategic planning exercise;
- CARE in South Darfur indicated they would be reviewing new project proposals using the livelihood framework lens;
- the Kebkabiya Charitable Smallholders Society (a local NGO) proposed to organize similar workshops with their CBO partners;
- Oxfam GB have committed to integrating livelihoods, NRM, protection and gender and therefore were interested to learn from the wider regional analysis.
- A number of agencies including Tearfund, Concern, CRS, Oxfam, Practical Action, DRC, NCA are pursuing the introduction of alternative building technologies which is an effort to improve the sustainability of the brick industry by providing brick making technology that does not use timber for firing.

Apart from these specific examples, other participants requested the detailed outputs and recommendations from each of the working groups in order to take forward some of what was learned. In particular, the use of the livelihoods conceptual framework in conflict situations (a simple but comprehensive analysis tool); adopting the three step environmental screens for their programmes; and exploring the specific recommendations regarding new opportunities and gaps were considered valuable tools and programming guides to apply.

Key Next Steps

As a follow-up to the wide dissemination of the workshop report, the following steps are essential:

- 1)** Enhance awareness amongst the broader Sudanese, (especially Darfurian civil society), humanitarian, donor, related government and academic community of the lessons learned and recommended priorities which emerged from these workshops.
- 2)** Convene follow-up meetings upon release of the report in each of the four locations across the three States of key agencies engaged in, or supporting livelihoods programming in order to review the strategic outputs, and to prioritize and develop a strategy and support mechanisms to take forward these priorities. Multi-sectoral representation of both UN and implementing partners, both local and international, reflecting a mix of strategic and operational expertise will be important for these meetings.
- 3)** Support the integration of these livelihoods programming strategic priorities into various planning processes including the 2008 UN and Partners Work Plan, agencies strategic planning, donor strategies, government plans, etc

It is hoped these steps can be taken forward in September/ October following the release of the workshop report.