



SUCCESS STORY

Crop-sharing Improves Lives in Darfur

Farmers earn income and build relationships through crop-sharing



Photo: CHF International

A woman irrigates crops in Kabkabiya camp in North Darfur.

In North Darfur, a project to help local farmers and displaced farmers cooperate in growing crops originally targeted 100,000 displaced people in El Fasher town, Zam Zam camp, and Abu Shouk camp. Its success prompted USAID to expand the project to reach an additional 75,000 beneficiaries in Kabkabiya camp and nearby villages.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Caught in the middle of a deadly conflict that has wracked Sudan's Darfur region since 2003, more than 1.8 million Sudanese have fled to camps for displaced people inside Darfur. USAID has been providing aid to all 200 camps and is striving to improve the standard of living for camp residents and mitigate tensions with host communities.

Among displaced people in North Darfur, 83 percent had relied on agriculture for income. Now, only 4 percent can earn income from farming. Expanding populations and competition for resources have restricted access to the land and inputs needed to cultivate crops, such as fertilizer and seeds, forcing camp residents to rely on assistance for food. Tensions between displaced people and local host communities increased as displaced families settled on agricultural land to stay close to the relatively safe villages nearby.

USAID is supporting a program to resolve these issues in a way that benefits both displaced people and host communities. In Zam Zam, crop-sharing partnerships encourage host farmers to allow displaced farmers to cultivate part of their land in exchange for 15 percent of the harvest. In Kabkabiya, displaced farmers rent farmland from host farmers for about \$43 per *feddan* (1.08 acres), where they produce harvests worth about \$100. Tools, seeds, and training are being provided to increase yields of vegetables and melons. Under this project, displaced farmers cultivated 758 feddans of land between December 2005 and March 2006.

Cooperation between farmers is also restoring trust between communities. Local farmers had regarded camp residents primarily as a source of cheap labor — a sentiment that generated mistrust. After witnessing the improved crop yields resulting from cooperative arrangements, more local farmers began offering farming opportunities. Some even granted free access to their land in order to benefit from the improved harvests the partnerships bring. The initiative has also improved lives of displaced women. One land owner granted 17 displaced women free access to land where they set up flourishing vegetable gardens, irrigated by runoff from the camp's nearby water pumps. Though small in scale, these plots have empowered women to earn income by selling okra, tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, and watermelons in local markets.