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Prepared by: NEF-Sudan Staff Members

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Cover Photo: *Hamdan Sagbairoon, NEF IGA Assistant Coordinator (second from left) and Sabir Alkidir, NEF Livestock specialist, (third from right) delivering IGA projects to RLS project beneficiaries. The beneficiaries in the photo received their IGA grants of sheep, which helps sustain their families and provide livelihoods in Zalingei, Central Darfur.*

RESOURCES, LIVELIHOOD AND SECURITY IN DARFUR – RLS DARFUR [USAID/OFDA-NEF]

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DCPSF	Darfur Community Peace and Stability Fund
HAC	Humanitarian Action Committee
HIH	Hand in Hand Organization for Peace and Development
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
NEF	Near East Foundation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RESP	Resources, Economic Security and Peace Project
RLS	Resources, Livelihoods and Security Project
SOHA	Sudanese Organization for Humanitarian Assistance
SVA	Supra-Village Association
ToT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

1. Executive Summary

This report presents the final results of the activities and impact of the Resources, Livelihoods, and Security (RLS) Project. The RLS project focused on promoting peaceful and participatory economic recovery and food security among IDPs, returnees, and vulnerable populations in Central and West Darfur through micro-enterprise development, income generating activities, and agricultural development designed to increase income, create jobs, and diversify household revenue. The project was implemented from September 26, 2012 to March 23, 2015 and operated in 25 villages in 7 localities. It built on the organizational structures, community mobilization, and collaborative planning established under NEF's Resources, Economic Security and Peace (RESP) Project supported by DCPSF. The Supra-Village Associations established under RESP continued to be integrally involved in the planning, implementing and monitoring of RLS activities. NEF's local implementation partners are Hand-in-Hand (HiH) and the Sudanese Organization for Humanitarian Aid (SOHA).

The key project achievements and accomplishments include:

- 2330 beneficiaries were trained in 58 community-level business-training workshops and have received their startup businesses in 8 village clusters. 59% of the total IGA beneficiaries were female and 41% were male. Regarding their status, 49% were residents, 20% were Returnees and 31% were IDPs. 17% of the total who were trained and received business start-up support was youth (30 and under).
- 30 seed fairs were implemented in the targeted villages: 14 seed fairs in 23 villages in 8 clusters in 2013 and 16 seed fairs in 25 villages in 9 village clusters in 2014 to ensure that project beneficiaries had the necessary seeds, tools, and implements prior to the rainy season. Of the 7000 total participants who benefited from the distribution of seeds and tools, 52% were females and 33% were IDPs.
- 23 water pumps were distributed to 460 beneficiaries in 13 villages as part of the conventional and non-conventional agricultural water resources activities. Additionally, 23 agricultural committees were created, trained, and equipped.
- Viewed by the Ministry of Agriculture as a model for other agriculture development initiatives, other NGOs engaged in agricultural activities are being encouraged to adopt the RLS project's farmer-to-farmer extension approach because of its effectiveness and efficiency in reaching targeted farmers.

Throughout its duration, the RLS project benefited those living in towns and camps, in addition to those that depend primarily on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods. This aspect engendered considerable interest among the local communities. Further, interest in the project was generated among groups that have had a history of conflict with each other: farmers, pastoralists, rebel groups, native administrations, and government leaders and ministries.

2. Progress According to Objectives

Sub-sector	Indicators & Targets	Baseline	Project Target	Year 1 Achieved	Year 2 Achieved/reached	Extension Period (Q9 & Q10)	Project Total	Cumulative Target	Cumulative Reached
Objective 1 (Impact 1): To establish and/or support viable livelihoods (farming, livestock, non-farm) for conflict affected and returnee populations and IDPs, in support of early recovery in West (& Central) Darfur.									
Economic Asset Development	Number of people assisted through economic asset development activities	0	2300	773	1557	0	2330	2300	2330
	Number of people using economic assets created to support their livelihood pattern	0	2350	0	1738	-	1738	1000	1738
Objective 2 (Impact 2): To promote sustained food security for conflict affected, IDPs and returnee populations of West Darfur through improved agriculture and livestock production.									
Seed systems and Agricultural Inputs	(Projected) increase in number of months of food self-sufficiency due to distributed seed systems/agricultural input activities	3-4 months of food insecurity	3.45 months (28.75%)	5.38 months (32%)	4.1 months	3-4 months	4.74 months (21.9%)	3.45 months (28.75%)	4.74 months (21.9%)
	Number of people benefiting from seed systems/agricultural input activities	0	4400	4500	2500	0	7000	4400	7000
Livestock Production	Number of animals benefitting from or affected by livestock activities	0	375,000	5958	47866	76145	140,963	375,000	140,963
	Number of people benefitting from livestock activities	0	1000	973	5435	4299	10707	1000	10707
Pest and Pesticides	Number of people trained in pest and pesticide management.	Little to no knowledge of IPM	125 ¹	125	0	0	125	125	125
	Number of beneficiaries practicing appropriate crop protection procedures.	0	4680	610	4354	0	4964	4680	4964
	Number (estimated) of hectares protected from pests/diseases.	0	11907	7742	3933	350	12025	11907	12025
Total Beneficiaries (non-duplicative)		-	6650	5436	3397	20343	11510	6650	11510

3. Activities and Accomplishments

Objective 1: To establish and/or support viable livelihoods (farming, livestock, non-farm) for conflict affected and returnee populations and IDPs.

Subsector 1: Economic Asset Development

At the start of the project, data collected as part of the baseline survey indicated a substantial need for support vis-à-vis livelihoods, as well as for those without access to land or livestock. The data showed that this was particularly the case among IDPs, returnees, and for those who needed additional income during months of food insecurity. The RLS project addressed

¹ This is the number of people directly trained through the project. In turn, they have shared their knowledge with other farmers in their communities through the farmer-to-farmer approach.

this need through business development training followed by financial support for business startups. By the conclusion of the initiative, the result of these efforts was the establishment of over 2330 microenterprise and income-generating initiatives.

Activity 1.1 Conduct business development management training

The business training workshops were designed to benefit two groups of participants. The target groups of the training sessions were: 1) those that wished to start or expand micro-enterprises 2) those that desired to start or expand income-generating activities (IGAs). Smaller scale initiatives in rural areas and those that were home-based were generally considered as IGAs. However, the project team later felt it necessary to merge the activities for microenterprises and IGAs as local communities encountered difficulties distinguishing between these two kinds of activities. This is discussed in more detail later in the report.

During the project, 2330 people were trained in 58 community-level workshops (59% women, 31% IDPs, 20% returnees) held in 8 clusters: Zalingei, Sulu, Abata, Traige, Kereinek, Nertiti, Garseila, and Delaige. 17% of the total was youth (30 and under) who were trained and who received their business start-up support. Notably, one workshop during Year 1 of the project specifically targeted the 25 people trained as paraveterinarians to help to ensure that they were able to run their practices as sustainable businesses and another included 20 people with disabilities. All business management-training sessions were concluded by the end of the second year of the initiative. See table 1 in the appendix for further details.



RLS beneficiaries stand with the materials for their projects after the IGA distribution in Mornei.

Activity 1.2 Facilitate business plan development. Those trained in micro-enterprise development were required to develop business plans. In the first year of the initiative, NEF conducted a participatory market feasibility study, identifying a range of viable business opportunities. Findings were then used to inform criteria, which guided the selection of projects. Following business plan submission, a committee made up of NEF staff, partners, and community members reviewed them, and selection criteria identified in NEF's Contribution Fund Manual were used by the committee to determine which of the proposed businesses should be supported. Over the span of the project, the selection committee reviewed 1050 business plans, and 917 were approved for funding.

Activity 1.3 & 1.4 Facilitate creation of micro-enterprises and income-generating opportunities. Positive impacts on income generation from these activities are evident in

light of the following: output costs for training workshops and the provision of business start-up grants for entrepreneurs were \$265 per participant (for example, in Zalingei, Sulu, and Delaige clusters= 917 participants). Business monitoring showed that entrepreneurs are making up to \$150 - \$250 per month, for example, market gardens – \$150; tea sellers - \$206; tile cutter - \$250. For those making \$150/month, the return rate of this investment for one year is US\$1 : US\$6.80, and for successful businesses, factoring in a 70% business success rate, the rate of return would be US\$1 : US\$4.75.



Two beneficiaries in Kereneik carry some materials procured for their IGA project.

During the final three months of the project, beneficiaries who had not yet received their IGA supplies during the first rounds of distribution in the Abata, Garseila, Nertiti, Traige, and Mornei village clusters successfully updated their business plans and received their in-kind grant support. 1413 beneficiaries in the 5 village clusters mentioned above have received their items based on their feasibility studies.

Project staff procured and distributed, the items needed for all businesses to help ensure successful start-up process. This was done in lieu of cash grants provided directly to beneficiaries. A Procurement Committee comprised of representation from NEF, local government (Taxation Department), the Native Administration, Supra Village Associations (SVAs) and project beneficiaries was responsible for overseeing the procurement and distribution of the diverse range of items required for starting all of the businesses as per NEF procurement guidelines. During the project, 2330 people were provided with start-up support.

Project staff procured and distributed, the items needed for

Thirty-six year old Hava Zakariya is a participant in the IGA program, as part of the RLS initiative. A citizen of Abata in Central Darfur, Hava is a trader and primarily sells garments at the local market in Abata. Brimming with enthusiasm, Hava had this to say about her small business in the context of the RLS project: "I benefited so much from the RLS small business training workshop, which I attended before starting my business; it left such an indelible impression that I still recall every detail of it! For example, my niece is a 28-year-old widow with two children who had recently been going through difficult times economically. Passing on what I'd learned at the IGA workshop, I taught her all about how to do it. And since I had already achieved a good fortune from of my business, I decided to give my niece funds in order to start a business as a traditional foods vendor. She listened attentively to my advice and always applied diligently what she learned. Now my niece has overcome the hardships that had been dogging her, and she is moving steadily onwards and upwards. To see all these positive results coming from the IGA training gives me a profound sense of satisfaction!"

Figure 1: Successful business projects in Zalingei

Assessment and Surveillance Data: Results for this objective were monitored by use of the following processes (i) information recorded during the training workshops for each training participants that is subsequently entered into a database and used to track all further support to each participant, (ii) workshop evaluation forms, (iii) the business plans, and (iv) records of the scoring of business plans according to project criteria. A business monitoring form was then used to document the success and impact of the income-generating and micro-enterprise activities. The results were reviewed and confirmed as part of the mid-term assessment conducted in March/April 2014.

Successes, Constraints and Adjustments:

The project team felt it necessary to merge activities 1.3 and 1.4. It was originally intended that microenterprises would be more formal businesses than income-generating activities, and that microenterprise start-ups would be provided with larger in-kind grants (valued at US\$500 versus US\$250 for IGAs). However, local communities encountered difficulties distinguishing between these two kinds of activities. It also became apparent that \$500 was a higher amount than needed for the types of business activities relevant for current market conditions. NEF's response was to combine the activities and provide start-up support averaging US\$300. The target numbers of beneficiaries for both activities were not affected.

There has been a very positive response to the project's economic asset development activities. Mid-term assessment results showed that community leaders view the opportunities to start/expand microenterprises as being critically important, particularly for the more economically marginalized groups in their areas. Monitoring conducted of 313 funded IGA/enterprise projects in Zalingei showed that 219 (70%) were operating successfully; and that 65% were operating successfully in Delaige and Sulu clusters. There was considerable diversity in the types of businesses that were launched, for example: cheese making; tea making; rickshaw and motorbike spare part businesses; hairdresser; mobile phone scratch-off cards; livestock, poultry and crop trading; among others. Beneficiaries report that project-supported initiatives are continuing to have a transformative effect on their lives with income being reinvested in their businesses, used to pay for crucial quotidian expenses, and to improve overall living standards, as well as being saved for emergency situations.

However, due to delays encountered in the transfer of project funds, the provision of business start-up support for approximately 1413 people, previously scheduled for September 2014 (and later postponed), was finally successfully completed in the last months of the project. NEF staff will monitor their growth as the beneficiaries' start-ups progress.

Objective 2: To promote sustained food security for conflict affected IDPs and returnee populations of West Darfur through improved agriculture and livestock production. [Seed systems, agriculture inputs, livestock, integrated pest management]

Baseline data showed a strong need for agriculture inputs and training (agriculture extension), activities that would alleviate sources of conflict between different groups. Activities to support livestock, particularly those that would benefit pastoral communities were also needed. A regional shortage of seeds affected almost all smallholder farmers. The more economically marginalized (including women-headed households, IDPs and returnees) also showed a strong need for basic agricultural tools and plows to prepare the soil for planting. It was also clear that pastoralist communities had not been reached by development efforts in target areas. Most had minimal, if any, access to animal health services and were increasingly affected by the growing expansion of farmed land.

The RLS project addressed these needs through a comprehensive support program for smallholder farmers: the provision of inputs to almost twice the number of originally targeted beneficiaries, multi-layered agriculture training, and support for government extension services, with particular attention to marginalized groups and targeted interventions for pastoralists. NEF worked in close cooperation with the relevant Ministries in the Central Darfur government in planning and implementing these initiatives, including the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Animal Health, and Ministry of Physical Planning.

Subsector 2: Seed Systems and Agricultural Inputs

Activity 2.1 Facilitate farmer-to-farmer extension and establish on-farm trial plots.

In the first year of the project, the basis for farmer-to-farmer training was established with a training of trainers course for 125 lead farmers selected from the 25 village communities. The course was designed collaboratively with the Ministry of Agriculture. Demonstration plots were identified in most villages where lead farmers implemented the new techniques learned at the training course. In turn, they shared the techniques with their learning group members. Each of the lead farmers organized approximately 5 Farmer Field School (FFS) groups, and the majority of them hosted field days as well as some organized exchange visits with other FFS groups. This provided an opportunity for farmers from different tribes to share the techniques that they use with others. Community-owned land was allocated to returnees and the most vulnerable in 11 villages. Over 100 on-farm demonstration sessions focusing on farming best practices such as crop rotation, agro-forestry, terracing techniques, and new crop introduction (to address the adverse effects of climate change) were organized by LFs for almost 2000 farmers during the second year of the project.

Results from a survey of 250 farmers completed in early 2014 indicated that 86% percent of the farmers attended FFS sessions in their areas (albeit with varying degrees of regularity). Further, half the farmers surveyed reported a positive shift in their attitudes toward new farming techniques as a result of the sessions. In late 2014 and early 2015 a survey (which was hindered by security concerns and logistical constraints which precluded conducting the survey as originally intended as well as access to some of the project's target sites--Mornei cluster, in particular) revealed that approximately 60 percent of farmers confirmed that they attend the FFS meetings regularly compared with only 0.4 % who do not attend the FFS events at all. The rate of attendance results can be seen in the following frequency table derived from that survey:

Rate of Attendance at FFS Sessions	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Regularly	139	60.4	60.4	60.4
Sometimes	57	24.8	24.8	85.2
Rarely	33	14.3	14.3	99.6
Do Not Attend	1	0.4	0.4	100.0
Total	230	100.0	100.0	

Activity 2.2 Distribute agricultural inputs, seeds and basic implements through voucher system and agricultural fairs.

Over the course of the RLS project, 30 seed fairs were implemented in the targeted villages: 14 seed fairs in 23 villages in 8 clusters in 2013 and 16 seed fairs in 25 villages in 9 village clusters were held in 2014 and to ensure that project beneficiaries and, in particular, farmers who are part of the project’s learning groups had the seeds, necessary tools, and other relevant implements prior to the rainy season. It was the success of the distribution of seeds and tools in 2013 that led to the undertaking of the second round of seed fairs 2014.

Vouchers were provided to 4500 beneficiaries in 23 villages in 8 clusters. Approximately 500 people, identified as the most vulnerable by their communities, were given vouchers for dry season usage without the cost-share requirement. 2,500 beneficiaries of the most vulnerable received vouchers valued at SDG 330 for purchasing certified seeds of common vegetable crops including tomatoes, onions and broad beans. This amount is enough to plant an area of 3 feddan. Among the project’s 7000 total participants who benefited from the distribution of seeds and tools – 52% were females and 33% were IDPs. Additionally, over 2500 project beneficiaries received seeds that were identified as the most desirable: Sesame and Millet.

The project team also distributed 250 donkey plows to lead farmers to share with their learning groups. The plows enabled farmers to increase the amount of land they could cultivate with just the use of hand tools.

Over all, beneficiaries have demonstrated a high-level of satisfaction regarding the seed fairs. New crop varieties that were introduced were better able to withstand harsh field conditions such as shortages in rainfall and degraded soils, as well other deleterious effects of global climate change. Because of the RLS interventions, beneficiaries will have more food for consumption than in the previous years, manifesting as a source of seeds for future planting, and crop residue to provide fodder for animals. The seed and implement distribution enabled many farmers and those in vulnerable groups such as IDPs, to increase their amount of cultivated land.

Surveys completed in early 2014 & 2015 assessed production and increased food security achieved through project activities. The average results indicated a 5.38 for year one and 4.1 months for year two for an average of 4.74 months and a 21.9% increase in number of months of food self-sufficiency over the life of the project as a result of the RLS project’s distributed seed systems and agricultural input activities. On average, there was an approximately 21.5% increase in amount of land each year farmed (sorghum, millet, being the primary crops; groundnuts also in year 1) with the households’ average yield for cereal

crops seeing a 21.5% overall increase each year. Yields were substantially higher than for neighboring non-beneficiary farmers, with reports of over three times more.

Jumaa, a 68-year-old farmer from Nertiti in Central Darfur, was gearing up for the upcoming planting season in his usual way. He gathered his farming tools together, hoes, axes, and prepared them for the work ahead. On the morning he was to begin planting, he awoke to discover a thief had made off with his precious tools the night before. He fell into despair realizing that his very livelihood was now at stake. His neighbors were all using their tools for planting, so borrowing them would be very difficult. Buying new ones was prohibitively expensive. Jumaa was in trouble. Just at this time, NEF's Nertiti field agent stopped by Jumaa's place to let him know about the next day's seed fair. This was Jumaa's lifeline. The next day after purchasing some millet seeds, he used the remainder of his vouchers received from NEF to buy the necessary tools for the planting season. Visibly relieved, Jumaa said: "The RLS project came to me at the just the right moment! My problems are solved. There's no way I could have afforded all these items on my own. From now on, I will be more careful and keep an eye on my tools. Now I can cultivate my fields. Thank you so much! God bless you all."

Activity 2.3 Produce seeds and promote seed production Generally, farmers in Darfur have a preference for local varieties of seeds and for seeds with a history of doing well in local growing conditions. For the purposes of local high quality seed production, over 120 youth (65% male and 35% female) with farming backgrounds from the potential seed producing villages of Zalingei, Garseila and Nertiti were selected and organized into 12 groups. In the final quarter of the project, each group



NEF support in the form of generators for water pumps helps local farmers like this young man to irrigate their crops.

member received an IGA grant from the RLS initiative in order to cover production costs and to establish retail outlets for agricultural inputs, including seeds, in his or her village area. The distribution was conducted in collaboration with the Sudanese Ministry of Agriculture of central Darfur in the villages mentioned above. However, due to the constraints caused by funding transfers difficulties during the final months of the project, the success of these activities could not be confirmed at the time of this report.

Activity 2.4 Develop conventional and non-conventional agricultural water resources

By the project's conclusion, NEF, in collaboration with the Supra-Village Associations (SVAs), local leaders, and Water and Environment Sanitation (WES), completed the establishment of several types of significant community water initiatives, including the

rehabilitation of shallow wells, renovation of wells (and equipping them with simple fuel powered pumps), along with the excavation of dykes and water yards for seasonal water harvesting. In all targeted locations water committees have been established and equipped. The committees received capacity building training on organizational management of the water facilities; 23 water pumps were distributed and installed in the targeted villages as illustrated in the table in appendix 1.

Subsector 3: Livestock Production

Activity 3.1 Conduct participatory value chain analysis

An analysis was carried out in March and April of 2013 of the project's first year. The focus group discussions with members of the selected village leaders, representatives of the SVAs, and lead farmers were used as an interactive participatory methodology in 7 village communities: Zalingei, Nertiti, Delaige, Garseila, Sulu, Mornei and Traige. The findings revealed several gaps, needs, and recommendations for value added activities in the production capacity for both farmers and animal herders. The results demonstrated that more than 80% of the population depends on agriculture and livestock for livelihoods. Further, the RLS project team (agricultural and livestock sector) analyzed the livestock value chains in the targeted communities and used a value chain analysis as a framework for working with stakeholders, enabling them to develop an improved understanding of the constraints and opportunities in the sector and to develop relationships with other stakeholders in order to strengthen the sector. Moreover, conveying the importance of such linkages serves as a significant peace-building activity, as the various parties learn how disruption in one part of the chain impacts the rest of it.

Activity 3.2 Improve community pasture areas through enclosures and enrichment planting

SVA Pasture Sub-Committees in all 9 clusters identified 10-hectare plots, which were seeded with high quality seeds brought in from South Kordofan State. The pasture enrichment process facilitated robust growth in the pastures. Vegetation growth was present in the majority of the enclosures, and a variety of fodder species were planted thus ensuring diversification. Despite the fact that, in the first year, 3 pastures were used for grazing too early and vegetation growth was not sustained throughout the entire plot, most enclosures were highly utilized by herders and residents alike. This was particularly the case during the dry season when other food sources were scarce. The pastures played a significant role in reducing a very common cause of conflict between nomads and farmers by keeping livestock off of farmers' fields. Continuing the efforts in the 2nd year of the RLS initiative, NEF once again worked in tandem with the Ministry of Agriculture's Range and Pasture Department and brought in 1.5 tons of certified pasture seed from South Kordofan to over-seed a total of 86 hectares of pasture area. NEF has also worked with the SVAs, assisting them to increase their role in monitoring the usage of the pastures and discouraging early grazing in them. Pasture growth was abundant in Year 2.

Additionally, during the final months of the initiative, community members from the Zalingei, Sulu, Abata, Traige, Delaige Garseila, Nertiti and Surangei village clusters gathered up and collected mixed grasses seeds in the 9 enriched enclosures (average acreage: 25.5 acres). Participants in the seed collection intend to plant the over 1,710 kilograms of mixed

seeds (including seed varieties such as Abu Asabei, Umdufofu, Sheleini, Clitoria, and, Albgel) that they collected and stored at their respective project target sites during the next season.

Activity 3.3 Provide training and targeted support for livestock interventions and marketing

During the second year of the project, technical training and business training and business start-up support was provided in cheese-making, with plans for moving forward with additional technical support to be given in the areas of animal fattening, goat re-stocking, and fodder production. However, by the project's conclusion, the additional training that had been planned was not carried out due to difficulties and delays in fund transfers.

Activity 3.4 Training of community paravets to establish community-based services

As part of the RLS initiative, twenty-five paravets were trained in a 21-day course on animal health care that was prepared and implemented in conjunction with the Department of Animal Wealth of Central Darfur (and followed by three days of business development training to enable participants to sustain veterinarian business services in their communities). The SVAs selected one person from each of the 25 villages, including two women (the first females to become paravets in Sudan) to be trained. Throughout the duration of the RLS project, the MoA Veterinarian Department worked closely with NEF staff to support the 25 project-trained paraveterinarians in providing quality services to all 9 clusters. In the first year of the initiative, paravets received veterinary kits and drugs with half the quantity of drugs identified in the OFDA project agreement. In the second year, they received the remainder of the drug allotment contingent upon a review of their technical and business performances throughout their period of service in their respective communities.

The paravets participate in common veterinarian activities such as MoA vaccination campaigns, meat inspections and the general promotion of best practices for successful animal husbandry. RLS staff has guided the paravets on business fundamentals so that their work will be sustainable beyond the life of the project. By Year 2, the paravets began paying for drugs they received and are increasingly charging for their services. In total, over the duration of the initiative, over 98,854 large and small animals were treated and over 10,707 people benefited from these services.

The target communities were very pleased with these activities as the presence and work of these paravets obviates the need for animal owners to venture into insecure and, at times, dangerous areas in search of veterinary care for their livestock.

Subsector 4: Integrated Pest Management

Activity 4.1 Training of Trainers on Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

In Zalingei, an intensive one-week basic IPM training was organized during August 2013 of the first year of the project for 67 participants, including 28 females, and also including 50 LFs (2 from each project village), partner field agents, and MoA officers. The curriculum was designed in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture's Department of Crop Protection covering:

- Plant diseases
- Common crop pests / disease management
- General insect identification

- Disease causing pest identification
- Biological control agent identification

Although this activity was successfully completed in the first year of the RLS project, those that were trained continued to teach and share skills they learned with other farmers at community-level workshops in 18 villages, whereby an additional 550 farmers were reached. This was accomplished under the close supervision of both a MoA representative and NEF's agriculture specialist.

The success of the training can be discerned in the remarks of one of the IPM trainers, Mohammed Isbaaq from Abata, as he elaborated on his role in imparting IPM knowledge and skills to his peers: "I always tell people in the local community that, if you plant sorghum or other vegetables crops you will definitely have to deal with an infestation of crop damaging insects. However, if there are pests, there are also ways that we know of for dealing with them. These methods are there to help farmers and will reduce the potential damage from the pestilence. Additionally, I talk to them about the danger of utilizing pesticides vis-à-vis the environment as well."

Similarly, Zubeida Zakariya a female IPM trainer mentioned in her feedback on the IPM activities: "IPM has been very profitable for me; we no longer have the problem of trying to buy pesticides in the village which are expensive and cannot be easily found. Now our sorghum and tomatoes are safe, and there are no dangerous residues on them. More importantly, we are protecting our environment."

Activity 4.2 and 4.3 Focus Groups develop community-level IPM action plans and provision of Technical Assistance

The goals for this sector have been achieved. IPM was the topic of 68 Farmer field School sessions conducted throughout the project sites. Almost 3000 people participated in these sessions and, as a result, 12,025 hectares are now under at least one form of IPM. According to the survey conducted in late December/early January 2014, the most commonly used IPM techniques were early sowing of seeds and crop rotation.

Assessment and Surveillance Data:

Results for this objective are measured and confirmed by (i) participant information collected during the lead farmer, paravet and IPM training workshops, (ii) participant evaluation forms for all workshops, (iii) lists provided by lead farmers of participants in their Farmer Field Schools and confirmed during monitoring visits by project staff (iv) records that track the distribution of seeds and implements during seed fairs, (v) paravet records of animals treated, and (vi) a survey to determine crop yields and increase in number of months of food security carried out after the harvest. For the 2013 harvest, a survey was conducted of 10 randomly selected farmers from each of 24 villages. The survey data was combined with the results of focus group discussions involving farmers and key beneficiaries. The Mid-Term Assessment process assisted in confirming and provided more nuanced details of project progress.

Successes, Constraints and Adjustments:

Most targets for this objective were exceeded; most notably in the seed and agriculture inputs subsector in which 7000 people benefitted in total from agriculture inputs (compared to the project target of 4400), and food security exceeded the target (4.74 months versus the

target of 3.45). Additionally, NEF has learned that the Ministry will be using the project's farmer-to-farmer approach as a model for other agriculture development initiatives to follow.

12,025 hectares are now under at least one form of IPM.

Due to the constraints caused by funding transfer difficulties in the final months of the RLS initiative, NEF staff were unable to verify the success of 120 youth who received an IGA grant from NEF in order to cover production costs and to establish retail outlets for agricultural inputs, including seeds.

Technical and business training and business start-up support for the areas of animal fattening, goat re-stocking, and fodder production as part of the training and targeted support for livestock interventions and marketing (Activity 3.3) was not carried out due to difficulties and delays in fund transfers.

The RLS project has distinguished itself by its interventions aimed at pastoralist communities which have addressed the livelihood needs of pastoralists in ways few other formal development efforts in Central Darfur have been able to (as typically there has been a greater focus on agriculture development). Prior to RLS, local communities had not been brought into structured conversations with the pastoralists in a sort of mutually beneficial dialogue. Both of these factors appear to be distinguishing the RLS project in the eyes of communities and government.

Regarding the indicator which refers to the animals that: (1) are treated by project-trained veterinarians, (2) access pastures that have been developed through the project, and (3) benefit from project-supported water activities, by the end of the project, monitoring shows that almost 98,854 animals have benefited from veterinary services provided by Para-veterinarians and 42,109 animals which accessed the developed pastures. Although this is a significant number, it is well below the original target of 375,000 for the treatment and 200,000 for pastures. The primary reasons behind not achieving the target include:

1. Two of the originally proposed target clusters, Mukjar and Um Dukhun (the latter neighbors Mukjar and is also inaccessible; though it was not originally targeted for pasture activities, the animals originally from there come to Mukjar and were estimated into projected figures) were in areas that have high numbers of migratory animals. NEF ended up not being able to access these communities due to security issues, while the remaining clusters have fewer pastoralists. However, the pasture areas that have been developed are significantly utilized and are having the intended result of reducing the number of animals that are grazing on farmland. The animals are grazing longer in the pasture areas than initially envisioned. Moreover, there are not as many large herds passing through, as there would have been had NEF been able to implement this project in all of the originally targeted clusters. As indicated in the quarterly reports throughout the course of the project, the numbers began to increase in the initiative's 2nd year as the security situation began to stabilize somewhat, and the herders, subsequently, started to move towards the northern part of state where the targeted clusters of the project are located.
2. The planting season for the pastures (July to September, each year) constituted a six months loss over the two-year span of the project. During those months there was no access to the pastures for the animals.

4. Overall Project Performance

Overall, the RLS project was a strong success with positive impacts, which continue to have constructive influence in the areas targeted and beyond. Although some activities did not entirely meet their target numbers, others exceeded the target. The project has exceeded the projected total number of beneficiaries by 72%. Moreover, beneficiaries report that project-supported initiatives such as the IGA activities, which led to substantial increases in income generating capacity, are continuing to help them improve their living standards and in addition to providing means to cope with emergency situations. As indicated earlier in the report, because of the RLS interventions, beneficiaries have more food for consumption (and increased food security), a source of seeds for future planting (leading to post-intervention sustainability), and crop residue to feed as fodder for their animals. The seed and implement distributions have supported more farmers and those in vulnerable groups such as IDPs to increase their amount of cultivated land. The RLS initiative's contribution to conflict mitigation was evident, for instance, in the pasture enrichment activities, which played a positive role in reducing a very common cause of conflicts between nomads and farmers by keeping livestock off of farmers' fields.

The RLS project reached the target of 50% female beneficiaries by project's end; the data that has been collected indicated that approximately 33% of beneficiaries are IDPs. The number and percent of returnees (target = 33%) is also broken out where possible. Nevertheless, displacements caused by the disruptive influence of ongoing conflicts in Central Darfur hampered attempts to consistently gather accurate data, particularly as some returnees often do not wish to identify themselves for safety reasons. However, the strong success of the project resulted in significant numbers of IDPs being able to return to their villages, some of which returned temporarily, primarily in order to farm during the rainy season. Therefore, the RLS project team believes these positive results suggest that a continuation and replication of these types of projects would lead to still more settlement and stabilization of communities.

Evaluators who conducted Mid-Term Assessment stated, "The project has demonstrated conclusively that recovery can take place where reconciliation, peacebuilding, participatory community mobilization, and cooperation with authorities and line ministries offer a nurturing environment". They also lauded the formation and capacity development of inclusive Supra-Village Associations and the strategy of building on the DCPSF-funded (RESP) project (which focused on promoting reconciliation and collaborative local-level natural resource management activities); both projects focused on the same communities.

The project established and maintained a positive and fruitful rapport with local and governmental authorities, and with the communities in and around targeted locations. These included HAC, Line Ministries – the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Animal Wealth, the Ministry of Physical Planning, Native Administrations, and our Local Partners. This helped facilitate effective cooperation as well as efficient coordination and smooth project implementation.

5. Overall Cost Effectiveness

During the project, inflation precipitated increases in the prices of some commodities along with substantial price fluctuations, presenting challenges in markets in the areas targeted by the project. At times, such fluctuations negatively impacted various tendering processes necessary for procurements for the IGA/micro-enterprises. Overall, however, there was no substantial impact on the activities budget.

Funding transfer difficulties from headquarters to Sudan presented some significant challenges for the resumption of previously initiated IGA tendering processes and start-up business distributions in some village clusters as well as forcing the delays in the implementation of water projects.

Appendix 1:

Table 1: Number of People Trained and Received Support for IGAs

Region / Village	Trained Beneficiaries	Men	Women	IDPs	Returnees	Residents
Traige	300	125	175	120		180
Kereinek	200	63	137			200
Garseila	301	148	153	112		189
Zalingei	317	65	252	44		273
Sulu	300	176	124	153	147	
Delaige	300	139	161	137		163
Abata	312	99	213		312	
Nertiti	300	140	160	155		145
Total	2330	955	1375	721	459	1150

Table 2: Conventional & Non-conventional Agricultural Water Sources

Region / Cluster	Village	No. of Agricultural Committees Established and Equipped	No. of Beneficiaries (40% Women)	No. of Water Pumps
Azoum	Sulu, Derisa	3	60	3
Wadi Salih	Um Kheir, Tanko	5	100	5
Zalingei	Zalingei, Dankoj, Abata	6	120	6
Delaige	Delaige, Arwala	3	60	3
Nertiti	Jabil Ahmar, Nertiti	3	60	3
Mukjar	Mukjar, Sandol	3	60	3
Total		23	460	23

Appendix 2: Success Stories

Paravets

1) Challenges of a Paravet's Work

Kharif Abdulla, age 37, was a participant in the paravet training conducted by NEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Animal Resources in Central Darfur in 2013. Two years later, Kharif is now one of the most successful paravets in Zalingei. Despite the fact that Kharif has a better life now and extensive knowledge related to animal health, it was not always that way. Before joining NEF's training workshops, he was leading a very difficult life due primarily to the lack of a decent job. However, after attending the paravet training workshop, Kharif began to move forward with his current business as a paravet in Zalingei and the surrounding villages. Regarding his vocation and current success with his new business, Kharif elaborates, "Before attending the paravets' workshop I was leading a very difficult life, because I didn't have a real full-time job to rely on. Thanks to my participation in the workshop, I am now able to practice a profession that I feel is my true calling. Moreover, my personal financial distress has been completely relieved, and now my children are doing well at school as a result of this newfound economic stability. Additionally, now there are more than 50 cattle owners who completely rely on me to look after their animals' health. You can imagine how big my workload is, especially if you take into account that each one of those 50 cattle owners has no less than 150 heads of cattle! Considering this large number of animals, I urge NEF to help us more with the animal vaccines and medicines such as animal penicillin and the Aphonic syrup. Thank you so much for everything, NEF!"

2) Veterinary Extension-Zalingei

44-year-old Hamid, trained as a paravet as part of NEF's RLS initiative in 2013, reveals the following: "First of all, I am indebted and grateful to NEF for its efforts on our behalf. My situation is economically stable now, and I make no less than 300 SDG a day. This is a very good income for my family, and I am so happy! One of the most satisfying aspects as well is that I don't just treat animals, but I also carry out awareness raising activities and veterinary extensions for the pastoralist community on best practices for animal disease prevention. Subsequently, I have noticed a clear decrease in the cases of animal disease in some of the areas that I work in. Honestly, I am doing this because I have noticed that some animal diseases are caused by nothing more than bad practices unwittingly carried out by the animal owners. So I believe that I have a personal responsibility to help raise those pastoralists' awareness of best practices for animal health. Again, many thanks to NEF, as I believe these positive developments are a result of its efforts in Central Darfur."

3) Paravets Have No Enemies

"During the conflict between the Messeriya and the Salamat ethnic groups, the feud reached a point where Messeriya tribe would kill any Salamat tribesman they encountered, and the

Salamat did the same to them”, explains Abdu Ahmed a paravet trained as part of the RLS project. Abdu, however, is well received wherever he goes, even during times of violent inter-ethnic conflict. He continues, “For instance, I remember one time we paravets were called on by some Salamat people to deal with an outbreak of animal disease in their village. In response, six paravets, one of who was from the Messeriya ethnic group went there to deal with the situation. Soon after we arrived at the village, a group Salamat tribesmen tried to attack the Messeriyian paravet, but the Omda and his companions protected the man and prevented the attackers from assaulting him! The Omda explained to them that this person (the Messeriyian paravet) had nothing to do with the conflict between the Salamat and the Messeriya. He was here to help, not to harm, and that they should treat him well and not harm him in anyway.” Abdu was amazed at how being a paravet actually saved his Messeriyian colleague’s life. He said with visible relief, “In the end, we did our job and were then able to leave the village peacefully.”

4) A Female Paravet Saves the Day in the IDP Camps - Zalingei

35-year-old Hayat is one of the female paravets from Zalingei who through her role as a paravet has helped scores of families residing in some of the IDP camps in Zalingei. One woman who was helped buy Hayat and who is from the Taiba IDP camp had this to say: “I have a large quantity of poultry, which I sell in order to earn a living for me and my family. At one point, there was an outbreak of ‘Newcastle Disease’, which afflicted my poultry, and they began to die off in droves. Consequently, I began to lose my business. It was then that I called Hayat to help me with this problem. After assessing the situation, Hayat saved my business by identifying and eradicating the diseased poultry. Moreover, she inoculated the healthy poultry against the affliction. Then she taught me about how in the future to deal with my poultry in the event of a similar outbreak, as well as methods of prophylaxis. I benefited so much from Hayat’s skill, professionalism, and guidance. Now I know how to deal effectively with my poultry when there are such problems. We in Taiba are so grateful for Hayat, as she has helped to save so many family poultry businesses.”

5) Paravet Abdalkarim-Helping Out in Surangei

Abdalkarim, age 44 years old, is one of the paravets from the Surangei locality trained by NEF and the Ministry of Animal Resources. Comparing between his situation before attending the paravet training and after, Abdalkarim relates: “I used to try and assist the pastoralists in treating their cattle, but what I was doing was basically just trial and error. I wasn’t very confident about what I was doing, because I lacked the fundamental scientific knowledge and skills. After the training, I feel far more self-confident, as I know what I am doing, and I can see the positive results of the treatments I administer. What’s more, things are going quite well in terms of business. Now, in addition to my role as a paravet, I have managed to establish a small animal drug store for the pastoralists. Because we live in a remote area where it’s really hard to find animal drugs, especially during the rainy season, this is very useful and convenient for the pastoralists. This has helped us to work around any

delay in the arrival of drugs to the area. Additionally, it has helped save scores of cattle from disease and death, especially the emergency cases that require an immediate veterinary response.”

6) Paravets Can also Be Conflict Managers

Yagoub, a 46-year-old paravet from Rongataz, in the Sulu locality, speaks about how the community reveres paravets, and how their roles sometimes go beyond the treatment of diseased animals. He elaborates: “Since I completed the paravet training course and started my job as a paravet, I have begun to gain considerable respect from the communities I work in, to the extent that now I am involved in some roles in the community that are beyond dealing with animal diseases. With our newfound vocation, the community considers us as trustworthy. This trust is something that has grown steadily as we develop our veterinary activities. There have been multiple occasions where I have taken part in negotiations and reconciliation sessions aimed at resolving a conflict between two disputing parties. So now our role with regards to the community is bigger than it was at the beginning. The good thing is that we are succeeding in dealing with these community issues, and this is great considering that we are part of these communities anyways!”

Agricultural Water Resources

7) Water Pump Generator Helps Young Farmers

Every year, for approximately the last four years, a group of 15 young farmers have been working together as a team, cultivating their farmland and sharing equally the produce and profits they reaped from it. To irrigate their land, they would hire a water pump generator from a dealer who the farmers generally could rely on to assist them with their irrigation needs. Last year, as usual during the planting season, the young farmers rented the hand pump from the same dealer. However, this time the process did not go the way it normally did. The dealer demanded more money for the



The pump provided by NEF leaves the young farmers all smiles.

generator rental. Worse still, the amount of extra money exceeded the group’s ability to pay it. Moreover, the crops were in their final stage of growth. As the farmer collective was unable to meet the higher cost, the dealer took his generator back, leaving the group in a desperate and dire situation. As they had feared, after just a few days of little to no water

supply, the crops began to wither and wilt under the hot sun. It was at this tense time, that the farmers were saved by NEF's irrigation support, which supplied them with a water pump generator. The generator permitted them to begin irrigating their fields again, and the group was able to successfully resume their agricultural activities. Reflecting on the difficult situation, one of the farmers explained: "You can't imagine how grateful we are to the NEF; we were taken advantage of by the dealer, and our crops were on the brink of disaster. Fortunately, our crops have been rescued, and we have succeeded in overcoming what was a very precarious situation!"

IGAs

8) Growth and Expansion of Musa's Kitchen Utensil Business



Musa (left) stands along with some of his inventory.

Musa Adam, a 43-year-old trader in kitchen utensils from the Abata area, 35 kilometers southwest of Zalingei in Darfur, has benefited considerably from the RLS project's income generating activities (IGA) program. Musa relates, "The IGA workshop really had a positive impact and helped to invigorate my business." He continues, "Related to this are two things, in particular, I would like to

mention: Firstly, I've recently been

able to overcome difficulties that, formerly, were inhibiting local women from purchasing the utensils that they sought and which were important to them. I make it easier for them now by selling them these commodities in installments, if necessary, at reasonable prices; this is especially convenient for those who aren't capable of paying in full at the time of purchase. For this reason, many women now no longer find it necessary to travel all the way to Zalingei to buy such items, and they thank me for that. Secondly, through the project, I've been able to expand my business and formulate new ideas for it as well. For example, I'm thinking of applying to the savings bank for a bigger loan in order to start something new in my business such as opening a new branch in the big market in Zalingei. So thank you NEF, and all the best to you in your continuing efforts. You're doing a wonderful job!"

Seed Fairs

9) Catching the Rainy Season

Adam, a 57-year-old farmer from Sulu, was saving some sorghum and millet seeds to plant in his field, as the rainy season was right around the corner. One day just before planting time, Adam opened his grain storage room in his home in order to get his seeds ready for

planting. Adam was shocked to realize that a type of worm, which completely destroys seeds, had infected his seeds, rendering them useless. Soon thereafter, Adam learned from the agricultural extension expert that the worm affliction was caused by inadequate storage methods. Adam would not be able to use the infected seeds for planting. Adam was perplexed and anxious about this unanticipated stroke of misfortune, especially considering that he didn't have enough money to buy grain for his daily use, let alone for buying new seeds for planting. As he discussed his problem with one of the other local farmers, he was advised to go and explain his situation to the Agricultural Committee of Sulu's Supra Village Association. Having told the Agricultural Committee about his case, some of the committee members paid a visit to his grain storage room to see Adam's seed situation for themselves. They confirmed that all Adam's seeds were compromised and unable to be planted. Based on his dire situation, he was able to register for the upcoming seed fair. On the day of the seed fair in Sulu, Adam arrived and received his seeds, which had undergone germination testing to ensure their quality. After having endured the despair over his damaged seed, Adam was so pleased and relieved that he would indeed be able to catch the rainy season and be able to plant his crops. Expressing his satisfaction and delight, Adam explained: "I was about to miss this precious rainy season after my seeds were afflicted. You can't imagine how broke I am. I don't even have enough money to buy millet for my family for food, let alone for planting. I am so grateful to the agricultural committee and to NEF for helping me solve this problem and overcome this dilemma."

Appendix 3: Project Photos



A man receives the implements needed for his income generating activity (IGA).



RLS beneficiaries in Kereneik prepare to return to their villages after procuring the necessary IGA materials.



NEF irrigation support helping target communities to pump precious water into their fields.



NEF's IGA Assistant Coordinator stands with a beneficiary and his IGA materials in Kereneik.