

2. To collaborate with the Western Sudan Agricultural Research Project (sponsored by the Government of Sudan, USAID, and the World Bank). Our goal is to provide WSARP with an extensive baseline study of traditional agriculturalists in the el-Obeid area. WSARP is presently constructing an agricultural research station at el-Obeid which will pursue a research program of integrating crop and live-stock production in the region.¹

Contents of the Report

Tim Frankenberger and Ibrahim Zurgan have completed a preliminary farming system survey of 40 households. Part I of this report is concerned with an initial analysis of these data.

Ed Reeves and Muhammad Majzoub are studying the marketing system. Part II reports their findings. In Part III an assessment is made of the major constraints which limit farming in the el-Obeid area. After describing each constraint, we indicate how farmers are currently dealing with the problem. Finally, we make recommendations about possible solutions to these problems. Part IV, the Appendices, presents data on a wide variety of topics which are too limited or narrow in scope to include in the main body of this report.

The information on food preparation and consumption, was compiled by Sumaya Ahmed Hamid, a new member on our research team. Sumaya has a degree in home economics from Alexandria University and was released by the Kordofan Regional Ministry of Agriculture to assist us. Her objective is to gather information pertaining to nutrition and the family budget.

The Transliteration of Arabic Terms

This report, like the previous one, makes frequent reference to Arabic words and phrases. These are the local Sudanese terms which designate activities, socioeconomic roles, technology, botanical species, and so forth. The reason for including so much of this terminology in the report is to provide the non-Arabic speaking researcher with a basic vocabulary that pertains to agricultural production and marketing in this area of the Sudan.²

A difficulty that is always faced in transcribing Arabic words in English letters is that usually either the transliteration is accurate but difficult to learn and cumbersome to use or it is simple and agreeable to use but almost worthless because a system of transliteration rules is not

¹ Collaborative links have also been established with a number of other development programs and agencies. The earlier research report contains a description of these. We would also like to acknowledge the assistance and advice that we have received from the Department of Geography, Khartoum University, which has a strong tradition of research in Kordofan Region. Our warmest thanks to Dr. Ya'goub Abdallah, Dr. Amna Beshir, Dr. Muhammad el-Samani, and Dr. Siddiq Muhammad Abdallah.

² The terminology may also be of interest to Arabic speakers who do not know the local words for the various agricultural operations.