

Research Methods and Data Collection

The sources of the data for the marketing side of the study are two: documentary evidence contained in government tax receipts for crop and livestock sales and ethnographic material obtained through observations and interviews. We have collected information about crop sales using government tax receipts for Abu Haraz market and Umm Ramad market. We also have collected from tax receipts information about livestock sales at Abu Haraz market. Before the project ends we will attempt to collect the same data for the crop and livestock markets at Kazgeil. Bi-weekly sales data have been gathered from the government crop market at el-Obeid, and we are keeping a bi-weekly record of grain prices at the urban grain market, which is in the hands of private merchants. Finally, we have collected prices of a market basket of goods sold at village shops and have comparable prices of the same goods at Abu Jahal Market in el-Obeid.<sup>53</sup> We have also mapped the distribution and characteristics of shopkeepers and periodic vendors at three villages - Abu Haraz, Umm Ramad and el-Geifil.

It proved impractical to devote equal time to collecting data about marketing in each village in the sample of fifteen villages. One reason for this is that the marketing system was found to be far more complex than we initially supposed. To deal with this we were obliged to concentrate attention on four marketing centers chosen for their heterogeneity. Seven of the fifteen villages in our sample have a designated area where a periodic market takes place (Table 19). Of these seven, six villages have a registered government crop market. The seventh village has a market square surrounded by shops but lacks a crop market. Two of the villages with crop markets also have registered government livestock markets.

Table 19. Market Villages in the Study Sample

<u>Name of Village</u>	<u>Periodic Market</u>	<u>Crop Market</u>	<u>Livestock Market</u>
Abu Haraz	yes	yes	yes
Kazgeil	yes	yes	yes
Ayara	yes	yes	no
Umm Ramad	yes	yes	no
el-Geifil	yes	yes	no
Umm Kuka	yes	yes	no
Bengedid	yes	no	no

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<sup>53</sup>Villagers prefer to buy in Abu Jahal when they are visting el-Obeid. Prices are lower than at el-Obeid main market.