

# An Analysis of Sesame Crop Value Chain: A Case Study of Kordofan Region, Sudan

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## Abstract

There is an urgent need to improve production and marketing conditions of small holder farmers in Kordofan region of Sudan in order to alleviate poverty and enhance food security. This study was conducted to determine the profitability of the sesame value chain as one of the viable options that can address the challenges of small holder farmers. This study characterized the sesame value chain from producers to processors in terms of material and information flows as well as the inter-relationships between the actors. In addition, constraints and opportunities in the sesame production and processing were determined and marketing costs, value added and profit margin distribution among actors in the chain evaluated. A sample size of 150 respondents (farmers) were randomly selected using multistage sampling procedures. Thirty other actors (assemblers, brokers, wholesalers and processors) were traced and interviewed subjectively using purposive sampling procedures. The study used functional analysis, flowcharts and mapping of the current sesame value chain as well as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis and financial analysis to draw results, conclusions and recommendations. The findings revealed that sesame production is constrained by lack of extension services, civil war and conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers over natural resources and scarcity of farming equipment. Oil processors are constrained by high cost and insufficiency of inputs and oil imports. Sesame producers' opportunities in the region include production of good local varieties and favorable growing conditions. Oil processors have the potential to increase oil production and compete with other oils by improving quality and exporting the livestock cake directly to the world market instead of selling it to brokers who then export the product. Traditional oil processors appeared to have higher profits (1,297.1 SDG/ton) compared to the industry sesame oil and this was attributed to the high cost of oil that was processed traditionally due to increasing demand for organic products and healthy oils. The results also showed that processors were the winners of the chain in terms of profits with the highest profit share of 2705.5 SDG in any ton of sesame that, was processed. The commendations include a call for government to intervene by establishing extension services and routes demarcation to reduce the conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers. Policy makers, agricultural banks and existing small scale programs could form partnerships with relevant organizations to provide financial and infrastructural support to expand the scope and effectiveness of the current initiatives to overcome reported obstacles of access to credit.