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The Impact of Humanitarian Aid Delay and Cuts on the Welfare of IDPs: Evidence from Sudan

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Introduction

- The global humanitarian system is facing an unprecedented funding gap.
 - As of June 2025, only 13.5 percent of the \$44.18 billion needed has been funded (UNOCHA, 2025a).
- In response, humanitarian agencies are cutting rations and reprioritizing
 - Sudan has been affected by these disruptions in humanitarian aid
 - By the end of 2025, just 36% of required funding had been secured, underscoring a deepening resource gap and severe constraints on crisis response (UNOCHA, 2025b)
- Empirical evidence on the potential consequences of these aid cuts and withdrawals remains missing
 - Quantifying these impacts is particularly important for vulnerable populations such as IDPs and refugees who rely on humanitarian assistance

Objectives of the study

- This study evaluates the impact of humanitarian aid delay and withdrawals on household welfare focusing on IDP households.
- We leverage World Food Programme's (WFP) ongoing humanitarian assistance (both cash and in-kind) in Sudan.
- In response WFP reduced rations while also deprioritizing some type of assistance to some states and populations.
- We particularly focus on IDPs located in three states: Blue Nile, Kassala, and Gedaref.
 - Given the uncertainties associated with funding gap and associated priorities, WFP decided to stop CBT to these IDPs since March 2025 while continuing in-kind transfers

Objectives of the study

- *This study examines the impacts of aid delays and cuts on IDP's;*



Food security – Food consumption score (FCS), Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS), Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)



Subjective well-being – Happiness, life satisfaction, and economic condition



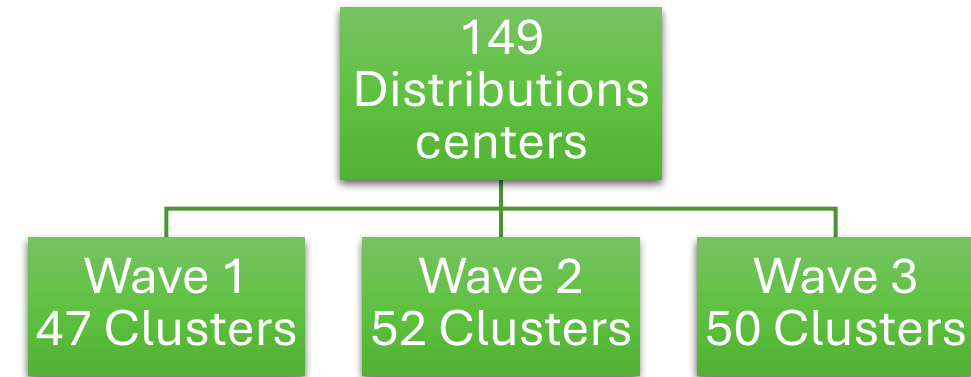
Mental health and overall wellbeing



Agency and social network among IDPs in Sudan

Data and Experimental Design

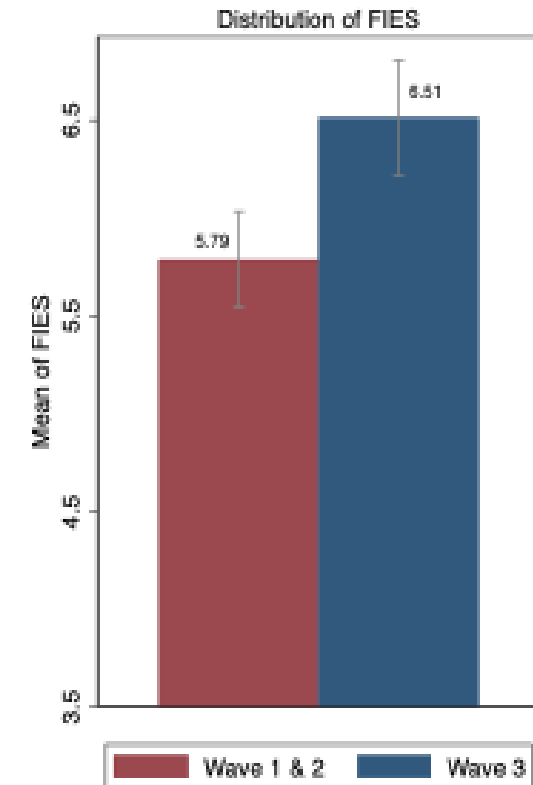
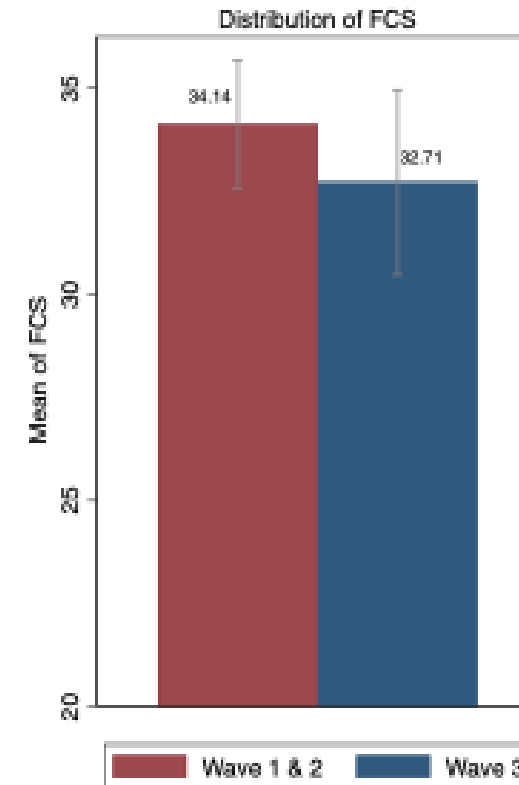
- The data for this study comes from a household survey conducted between July-September 2025 in three states in Sudan: Blue Nile, Kassala, and Gedaref.
- To quantify the impact of aid cut/delay, we generate exogenous variation by randomizing the timing of interview at the distribution centers level.
 - **Intuition:** those interviewed late have experienced longer delay
- We include distribution centers providing either cash or in-kind transfers from WFP
- We randomly assign 149 distribution centers across three waves of survey timing



Impact of Aid Delay on Food Security

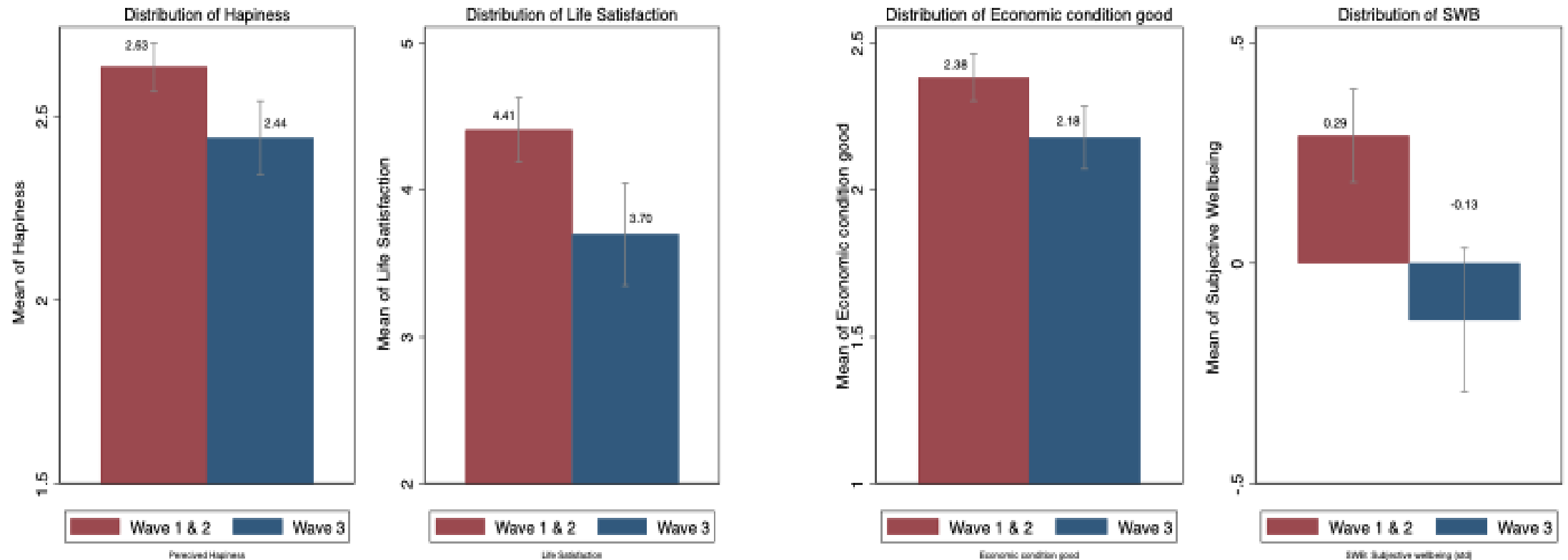
- Humanitarian aid cuts and delay is associated with higher food insecurity
 - Lower food consumption score (FCS)
 - Lower household dietary diversity score (HDDS)
 - Higher food insecurity experience scale (FIES)

	(1) FCS	(2) FCS	(3) HDDS	(4) HDDS	(5) FIES	(6) FIES	(7) Food security index (std)	(8) Food security inc (std)
Wave 2	4.227** (2.074)	4.228** (2.048)	0.589** (0.274)	0.596** (0.271)	0.425** (0.195)	0.469** (0.191)	0.249** (0.122)	0.249** (0.120)
Wave 3	10.111*** (1.907)	10.046*** (1.984)	1.419*** (0.241)	1.396*** (0.251)	0.072 (0.199)	0.221 (0.208)	0.625*** (0.107)	0.613*** (0.110)
CBT	6.684** (2.774)	7.354*** (2.785)	0.820** (0.409)	0.925** (0.403)	-0.228 (0.318)	-0.191 (0.308)	0.395** (0.170)	0.438** (0.168)
Wave 2 # CBT	-2.518 (2.999)	-3.020 (2.931)	0.047 (0.473)	-0.050 (0.458)	-0.835** (0.389)	-0.820** (0.370)	-0.042 (0.192)	-0.080 (0.186)
Wave 3 # CBT	-10.788*** (3.243)	-11.186*** (3.349)	-1.119** (0.442)	-1.176*** (0.449)	0.548 (0.351)	0.450 (0.344)	-0.597*** (0.190)	-0.619*** (0.194)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	2301	2301	2301	2301	2301	2301	2301	2301



Impact of Aid Delay on Subjective Wellbeing

- Humanitarian aid cuts and delay is associated with lower *subjective wellbeing*;
 - Lower happiness
 - Life satisfaction
 - Economic condition



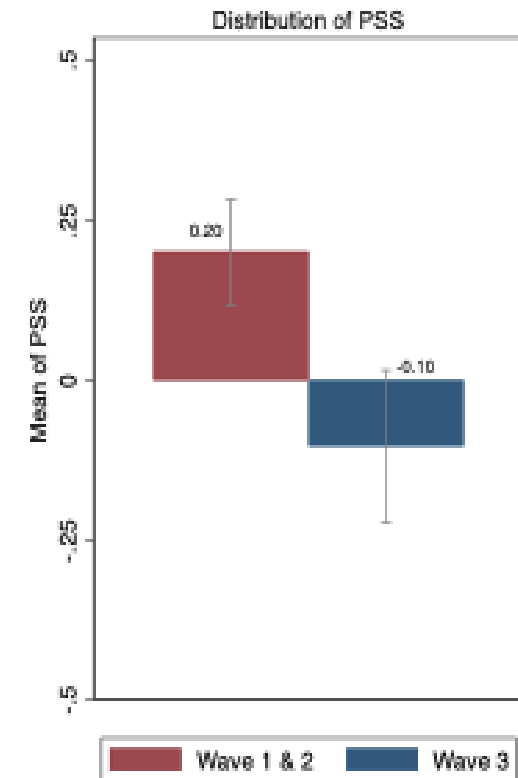
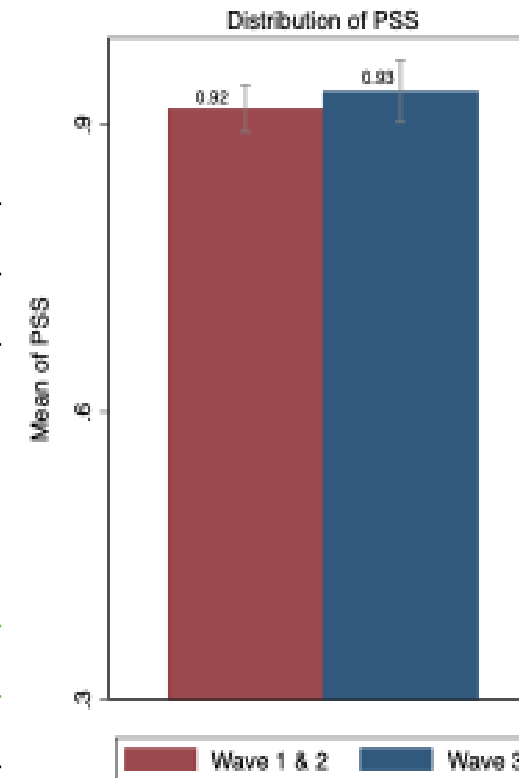
Impact of Aid Delay on Subjective Wellbeing

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Impact of Aid Delay on Mental Health

- Humanitarian aid cuts and delay is associated with lower *subjective well-being*
 - Deteriorated *mental health* (higher stress scores)
 - Lower subjective and mental well-being

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Mental Health				Wellbeing	
	Stress	Stress	Medium stress	Medium stress	Wellbeing index (std)	Wellbeing index (std)
Wave 2	0.721 (0.474)	0.753 (0.489)	0.002 (0.020)	0.004 (0.021)	-0.014 (0.109)	-0.006 (0.107)
Wave 3	-1.205* (0.626)	-0.558 (0.585)	-0.088*** (0.029)	-0.070** (0.027)	0.197* (0.107)	0.122 (0.107)
CBT	-0.462 (0.658)	-0.415 (0.627)	-0.045 (0.030)	-0.050* (0.028)	0.115 (0.128)	0.107 (0.126)
Wave 2 # CBT	-0.878 (0.806)	-0.587 (0.723)	-0.018 (0.034)	-0.006 (0.031)	0.057 (0.179)	0.017 (0.168)
Wave 3 # CBT	1.160 (0.891)	0.774 (0.812)	0.102*** (0.039)	0.094*** (0.036)	-0.432*** (0.157)	-0.379** (0.152)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	2277	2277	2277	2277	2277	2277



Concluding Remarks

- Humanitarian assistance plays a critical role in protecting vulnerable populations during crises
 - However, increasing aid delays and cuts threaten the effectiveness of these interventions
- The findings in this study show that aid delays and cuts significantly
 - Worsen food insecurity
 - Deteriorated subjective well-being and mental health
 - Erode household agency, and weakening individuals' perceived control over their lives
 - Erode social capital, proxied by reduced collaboration and weaker social interactions.
- The findings underscore the importance of timely, predictable, and sustained humanitarian aid delivery to protect vulnerable populations
 - Recovering some of these losses may entail larger cost



THANK YOU

Website: <https://sudan.ifpri.info/publications/>



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