

Crisis response revision of Mauritania transitional interim country strategic plan (January–December 2018) and corresponding budget increase

Gender marker code: 2A

	Current	Change	Revised
Duration	1 January– 31 December 2018	No change	1 January– 31 December 2018
Beneficiaries	288 700	224 500	513 200
Total cost (USD)	37 742 470	21 869 847	59 612 318
Transfer	29 527 846	17 456 300	46 984 147
Implementation	3 398 513	3 078 767	6 477 280
Adjusted direct support costs	2 512 580	-	2 512 580
Subtotal	35 438 939	20 535 068	55 974 007
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	2 303 531	1 334 779	3 638 310

I. Rationale

1. This crisis-response revision of the Mauritania transitional interim country strategic plan (T-ICSP) is proposed in response to a severe drought under way in the country. The drought is affecting agro-pastoralist communities in the central, southern and eastern regions of the country. Irregular rainfall during the 2017 rainy season has led to dry pastures, reduced agricultural production and lower surface water availability in most areas. This has triggered early transhumance and large-scale livestock destocking at low prices. The 2018 lean season is projected to be particularly severe and is expected to start much earlier than normal (in some areas, possibly as early as February rather than June).
2. The food security and nutrition assessments undertaken in the second half of 2017 yielded worrying results, and the food security and nutrition situation in 2018 is of great concern. The November 2017 *Cadre harmonisé* assessment indicated that 379,000 people were either in a crisis or emergency situation – integrated phase classification (IPC) phases 3–5 – between October and December 2017. Projections for June–September 2018 are for 600,000 people to be in a critical or emergency food security situation.
3. An August 2017 national nutrition survey indicated that 21 out of 52 departments in Mauritania were above emergency malnutrition thresholds (global acute malnutrition above 15 percent and/or severe acute malnutrition above 2 percent). Severe acute malnutrition rates stood at 2.3 percent nationally, compared to a five-year average of 1.6 percent. Nutrition trends for 2018 suggest that the situation will deteriorate further.
4. Although food security and nutrition working groups have been active since September 2017, as of January 2018 the Government had not yet officially declared a crisis. Nevertheless, the entire humanitarian community, civil society and government officials in the country acknowledge the severity of the situation.
5. WFP and its partners have prepared an integrated food security and nutrition response plan to complement government interventions in order to address the looming crisis in the most affected areas.
6. Through this revision and corresponding budget increase, the crisis-response component of the transitional interim country strategic plan (T-ICSP) implemented under strategic outcome 2 will be augmented to allow the WFP country office to provide timely assistance to the most vulnerable people beginning in March 2018.

7. However, this revision does not entail an extension of the duration of the T-ICSP or a change in its strategic orientation. Nor does it involve a change in the analysis of the country's hunger and food security situation. Since cyclical shocks are a major risk in the country and the underlying causes of food insecurity remain unchanged, the analysis undertaken through the national zero hunger strategic review in the second half of 2017 remains valid.
8. To ensure the continuity of the country portfolio during 2018 while scaling up the emergency response to encompass the drought, the country office needs to integrate its augmented response plan into this T-ICSP through a revision of the T-ICSP and a corresponding budget increase.

II. Changes

Strategic orientation

9. Although the operational context has changed as a result of severe drought, the dramatic increase in needs and partners' limited capacity, WFP's strategic focus in Mauritania remains on supporting government-led hunger solutions and adaptive social protection systems.
10. To respond to the drought crisis, WFP and partners will need to anticipate and significantly scale up lean season interventions, with a focus on unconditional food and cash-based transfers (CBTs) coupled with malnutrition prevention and moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) treatment in targeted areas. The geographical distribution of humanitarian interventions among partners follows well-defined criteria for comparative advantage, particularly current presence and logistical and financial capacity. To avoid gaps in its response, WFP plans to intervene in areas where no other actor's presence can be guaranteed.

Strategic outcomes

11. This revision of the T-ICSP will eliminate the seasonal shock response interventions from strategic outcome 1 (unconditional food/cash transfers with preventive feeding for children aged 6–23 months) and strategic outcome 3 (malnutrition treatment for children aged 6–59 months and cash-based incentives for pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLW/G) to access comprehensive health services and care), which both correspond to a resilience-building focus area. These interventions will instead be added on as emergency response interventions through the new activity 9 under strategic outcome 2 (crisis response) as follows:
 - Strategic outcome 1, activity 1: “Provide seasonal unconditional food assistance to vulnerable Mauritanian households, including preventive nutritious rations for children (aged 6–23 months)” will be moved to and augmented under activity 9, while activity 2 “Provide school meals to vulnerable Mauritanian children during the school year” will remain under strategic outcome 1.
 - Strategic outcome 2, new activity 9: “Provide emergency unconditional food assistance to vulnerable Mauritanian households, including preventive nutritious rations for children (aged 6–23 months) and PLW/G and provide emergency nutrition treatment to vulnerable Mauritanian children (aged 6–59 months) and PLW/G for an average of two months until recovered between March and October” will be created to include the 2018 emergency drought response intervention in eight regions, with two new regions to be added to the originally planned six.¹ Activity 3 “Provide food assistance (conditional and unconditional) to the food-insecure Malian refugees affected by Mali's crisis, including school meals”, and activity 4 “Provide nutrition assistance to Malian refugee children (aged 6–23 months) and PLW/G for malnutrition prevention for six months (May–October), and Malian refugee children (aged 6–59 months) and PLW/G with MAM” will also remain under this strategic outcome.
 - Strategic outcome 3, activity 5: “Provide MAM treatment to vulnerable Mauritanian children (aged 6–59 months for an average of two months until recovered) between May–October and cash transfers to PLW/G as part of malnutrition prevention activities” will have the MAM treatment component removed and integrated into the new emergency response activity 9 under strategic outcome 2. CBTs for PLW/G will be replaced with

¹ Brakna and Trarza in addition to Hodh ech Chargui, Hodh el Gharbi, Assaba, Tagant, Guidimakha and Gorgol.

food-based prevention and treatment interventions under activity 9. Only the capacity-strengthening component of activity 5, which foresees the training of targeted communities and government personnel to operate, manage and report on malnutrition prevention and MAM treatment activities, will be maintained under strategic outcome 3.

- Strategic outcome 4: no change
- Strategic outcome 5: no change
- Strategic outcome 6: no change

Beneficiary analysis

12. The November 2017 *Cadre Harmonisé* exercise indicated that the drought was predominately affecting agro-pastoralist communities and that 379,000 people were in a crisis or emergency situation (IPC phases 3–5) between October and December 2017. The projections for June–September 2018 suggest that 600,000 people will be in a critical or emergency food security situation during the peak of the lean season.
13. The *Cadre Harmonisé* data are being used as the basis for planning WFP’s response in two phases:
 - Phase 1 (March–May) in areas experiencing a nutrition emergency in the prioritized eight regions, targeting 173,000 people; and
 - Phase 2 (June–September) adding the areas in IPC phases 3 and 4, targeting 421,000 people.
14. Both phases of WFP’s response are fully integrated into the multi-sector response plan and will contribute to reaching the entire 602,000 people with relief food assistance, agricultural support, pastoral support and nutrition and health support.²

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2018. Drought Response Plan - Humanitarian Appeal.

TABLE 1: BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY

Strategic outcome	Activity	Category of beneficiaries	Current			Increase/Decrease			Revised		
			Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total
1	1: (suspended under this revision): Provide seasonal unconditional food assistance to vulnerable Mauritanian households, including preventive nutritious rations for children (aged 6–23 months).	Local Mauritians	64 800	68 700	133 500	-64 800	-68 700	-133 500	0	0	0
1	2: Provide school meals to vulnerable Mauritanian children during the school year.	School children	37 300	38 000	75 300	0	0	0	37 300	38 000	75 300
2	3: Provide food assistance (conditional and unconditional) to the food-insecure Malian refugees affected by Mali’s crisis, including school meals.	Malian refugees	24 400	30 600	55 000	0	0	0	30 600	24 400	55 000

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			Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total
2	4: Provide nutrition assistance to Malian refugee children (aged 6–23 months) and PLW/G for malnutrition prevention for six months (May–October) and Malian refugee children (aged 6–59 months) and PLW/G with MAM.	Malian children aged 6–23 months (prevention); Malian PLW/G (prevention); Malian children aged 6–59 months (treatment); Malian PLW/G (treatment)	3 300	5 200	8 500	0	0	0	3 300	5 200	8 500
2	9: (added under this revision): Provide emergency unconditional food assistance to vulnerable Mauritanian households, including preventive nutritious rations for children (aged 6–23 months) and PLW/G.	Local Mauritanian children aged 6–23 months (prevention); PLW/G (prevention); children aged 6–59 months (treatment); PLW/G (treatment)	0	0	0	207 600	220 100	427 700	207 600	220 100	427 700

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			Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total
3	5: (Transfer components absorbed into activity 9 under this revision, leaving only capacity strengthening.): Provide MAM treatment to vulnerable Mauritanian children (aged 6–59 months) for 2 months on average between May and October, and cash transfers to PLW/G as part of malnutrition prevention activities.	Children aged 6–59 months (treatment); PLW/G (prevention)	16 700	30 000	46 700	-16 700	-30 000	-46 700	0	0	0
4	6: Provide food assistance to food-insecure Mauritanian households for community and household asset creation.	Local Mauritanians	50 100	52 500	102 600	0	0	0	50 100	52 500	102 600
5	7: Provide flight services to humanitarian partners to areas of humanitarian intervention.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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Strategic outcome	Activity	Category of beneficiaries	Current			Increase/Decrease			Revised		
			Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total	Boys/men	Girls/women	Total
6	8: Provide government institutions with training and technical support in policy formulation and activity coordination and implementation related to social protection, resilience, and emergency preparedness and response.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total			135 900	152 800	288 700	111 100	113 400	224 500	247 000	266 200	513 200

Transfers

15. The modalities for intervention will not change, except for the following:
 - While the original T-ICSP included only children aged 6–23 months for malnutrition prevention for a period of four months from June to September, it will now be intended for both children aged 6–23 months and PLW/G for seven months between March and September.
 - MAM treatment will cover both children aged 6–59 months and PLW/G for two months on average for an extended period from March to October (instead of from May to October).
 - CBTs to motivate PLW/G to obtain nutrition and health services (planned under activity 5) will be suspended during the emergency response period to ensure that targeted beneficiaries have more direct and timely access to nutritious foods.

TABLE 2: FOOD RATION (g/person/day) or CASH-BASED TRANSFER VALUE (USD/person/day) BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY																	
	Strategic outcome 1	Strategic outcome 2														Strategic outcome 4	
Activity	Activity 2: Provide school meals to vulnerable Mauritanian children during the school year	Activity 3: Provide food assistance to the food-insecure Malian refugees affected by Mali's crisis, including school meals	Activity 4: Provide nutrition assistance to Malian refugee children (aged 6–23) months and PLW/G for malnutrition prevention for six months (May–October) and Malian refugee children (aged 6–59 months) and PLW/G with MAM					Activity 9 (new): Provide emergency unconditional food assistance to vulnerable Mauritanian households, including preventive nutritious rations for children (aged 6–23) months and PLW/G, and provide emergency nutrition treatment to vulnerable Mauritanian children (aged 6–59 months) and PLW/G								Activity 6: Provide food assistance to food-insecure Mauritanian households for community and household asset creation	
Beneficiary type	Schoolchildren	alian refugees	Malian refugee school children	Malian children aged 6–23 months (prevention)	Malian PLW/G (prevention)	Malian children aged 6–59 months (treatment)	Malian PLW/G (treatment)	Local Mauritians		Children aged 6–23 months (prevention)	LW/G (prevention)	Children aged 6–59 months (treatment)	PLW/G (treatment)	Helpers in ambulatory recovery centres	Caregivers at in-house rehabilitation centres	Local Mauritians (food assistance for assets)	
Modality	In-kind	In-kind and CBTs	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	CBTs	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	CBTs	In-kind	CBT
Cereals	150	250						350						1 000		500	
Pulses	40							30						250		40	
Oil	15	25			20		25	20			20		25	150		30	
Salt	4	5						3								5	
Supercereal	80		60		200		250				200		250				
Supercereal Plus				200						100							
Plumpy'Sup						100						100					
Micronutrient powder	0.5																

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Beneficiary type	Schoolchildren	alian refugees	Malian refugee school children	Malian children aged 6–23 months (prevention)	Malian PLW/G (prevention)	Malian children aged 6–59 months (treatment)	Malian PLW/G (treatment)	Local Mauritanians		Children aged 6–23 months (prevention)	LW/G (prevention)	Children aged 6–59 months (treatment)	PLW/G (treatment)	Helpers in ambulatory recovery centres	Caregivers at in-house rehabilitation centres	Local Mauritanians (food assistance for assets)	
Modality	In-kind	In-kind and CBTs	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	CBTs	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	In-kind	CBTs	In-kind	CBT
Total kcal/day	1 116	2 062	225	787	928	535	1 160	1 434		394	929	535	1 161	5 820		2 222	
Percent kcal from protein	11.7		16.3	16.6	13.2	10.5	13.2	14.1		16.6	13.2	10.5	13.2	11.3		11.1	
Cash-based transfers (USD/person/day)		0.42							0.374						3.333		0.54
Number of feeding days	160	360	220	180	180	60	60	210	210	210	210	60	60	180	12	60	60

TABLE 3: TOTAL FOOD/CASH-BASED TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS AND VALUE

Food type/cash-based transfer	Current budget		Increase		Revised budget	
	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)	Total (mt)	Total (USD)
Cereals	9 884	3 246 275	8 017.20	1 744 385	17 901.67	4 990 660
Pulses	853	512 006	689.98	413 986	1 543.32	925 993
Oil and fats	865	911 270	521.80	534 848	1 387.12	1 446 118
Mixed and blended foods	1 790	1 675 564	980.30	784 759	2 769.84	2 460 323
Other	180	172 955	68.57	7 528	248.57	180 483
Total (food)	13 572	6 518 070	10 277.85	3 485 506	23 850.52	10 003 577
Cash-based transfers		13 205 661		8 626 159		21 831 820
Total (food and CBT value)	13 572	19 723 731	10 277.85	12 111 666	23 850.52	31 835 397

Supply chain

16. Potential supply chain challenges related to the 2018 scale-up of the crisis response are:
 - restricted rice importation from Senegal (transport by road from Senegal cannot be considered);
 - food price increases in local markets;
 - limited access to flooded areas during the rainy season;
 - lack of equipment in partner warehouses and lack of capacity for management of stocks; and
 - delays in lead times.
17. The following measures are envisaged in response to these challenges:
 - buying wheat instead of rice locally or through the the Global Commodity Management Facility;
 - close market monitoring and international food purchases in case of wheat price inflation;
 - pre-positioning for the rainy season;
 - ordering equipment and material for warehouses in advance of the response; and
 - optimizing Global Commodity Management Facility purchases to reduce lead times.
18. The country supply chain concept of operations has been revised to incorporate the 2018 crisis response needs.

Other considerations

19. With the expansion of the emergency operation, the need for additional technical support has been identified for coordination, CBTs and nutrition functions. Monitoring and evaluation systems will be strengthened through additional staff in Nouakchott and sub-offices, as well as through partnerships with NGOs for third-party monitoring.
20. Institutional risks (financial and reputational) include failure to follow the procedures and timeliness for operational implementation. This risk is heightened in a rapid scale-up of emergency interventions including CBT activities. Internal controls, learning and sensitization to business processes and transaction procedures will be prioritized at all levels and in all functional areas. The deployment of a compliance officer is also included in this revision.

21. The urgent approval of this revision and corresponding budget increase is required to sustain WFP's operational readiness, including resource mobilization, food procurement and staffing augmentation and to ensure the timely provision of assistance as of March 2018.
22. Through this T-ICSP, WFP must demonstrate its ability to continue responding quickly and efficiently; the reputational risk of not meeting these expectations highlights the urgency of the revision process.

III. Cost

23. This revision results in an augmented beneficiary caseload and therefore necessitates a budget increase of USD 21,869,847. Of that amount, 80 percent represents transfer value and 14 percent implementation costs.
24. The changes in costs mainly reflect increases in:
 - the transfer values and costs of the augmented response, which principally utilizes unconditional food transfers and CBTs; and
 - the number of staff needed to carry out and monitor the crisis response.
25. Contributions have already been confirmed. WFP expects both new resources and top-ups from traditional and new donors. The country office is very active in the humanitarian country team and has the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs regional office to undertake resource mobilization activities, including an appeal.

COST BREAKDOWN OF THE REVISION (USD)							
		Transfer	Implementation	Adjusted direct support costs	Subtotal	Indirect support costs (6.5%)	TOTAL
Strategic outcome 1	Decrease	-5 585 017	-800 622				-6 385 639
Strategic Result 1 – Everyone has access to food (SDG target 2.1)	Revised total	3 324 034	654 666				3 978 699
Strategic outcome 2	Increase	24 841 378	4 529 931				29 371 309
Strategic Result 1 – Everyone has access to food (SDG target 2.1)	Revised total	37 625 958	5 302 604				42 928 562
Strategic outcome 3	Decrease	-1 800 061	-650 542				-2 450 602
Strategic Result 2 – No one suffers from malnutrition (SDG target 2.2)	Revised total	151 945	-				151 945
T-ICSP increase		17 456 300	3 078 767	-	20 535 068	1 334 779	21 869 847
T-ICSP revised total		46 984 147	6 477 280	2 512 580	55 974 007	3 638 310	59 612 318