



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Mauritania Country Brief November 2019

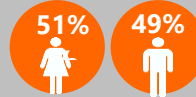
In Numbers

640 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 0.4 m cash-based transfers made

US\$ 10 m six months (December 2019-May 2020) net funding requirements

124,216 people assisted
in November 2019



WFP
SAYS
NO to
GENDER
BASED
VIOLENCE

Operational Context

Mauritania is a lower middle-income country in the Sahel, with a population of 4.7 million, living over a vast but mostly arid 1,030,700 km² territory. Mauritania is exposed to recurrent cycles of drought resulting in the degradation of natural resources and structurally affecting reproductive capacity and resilience of populations. High levels of food insecurity are still recorded, particularly in the eastern and southern regions. The most recent drought in 2017 sparked acute pasture and water shortages, raised food costs and caused livestock prices to plummet, adding further stress to already impoverished households and food insecure vulnerable people. A total of 10,000 pregnant and lactating women and 128,000 children – of whom over 30 percent are suffering from moderate acute malnutrition – need nutritional assistance. Overall, 23 departments out of 44 were identified as the most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition in 2019.

WFP operations are currently focused on development interventions to improve food security, reduce malnutrition, enhance education achievements, minimise gender inequalities, strengthen institutional capacity, and help communities adapt to climate change and reduce exposure to natural shock. Mauritania hosts the second largest number of Malian refugees in the Sahel, with close to 57,000 refugees registered in Mbera camp. WFP has been present in Mauritania since 1964.



Population: 4.7 million

2018 Human Development Index: 161
out of 189

Income Level: Lower middle

Chronic malnutrition: 19.6% of children
between 6-59 months

Operational Updates

- As part of capacity strengthening activities, WFP provided training to the Government's specialised technical groups in configuring the drought insurance index and conducted a study to better understand the link between rainfall deficit and food insecurity (i.e. weather-related food security risks) in Mauritania. Following this exercise, WFP and the Mauritanian Government took part in the annual African RiskView (ARV) customization workshop organized by the African Risk Capacity (ARC) from 19 to 21 November 2019. The technical engine of the ARC risk pool, ARV, is now expected to better reflect the impact of rainfall deficits on agriculture production in Mauritania, allowing the Government to increase the number of people covered by climate risk insurance.
- Preliminary results from the recent food and nutrition security analysis (2019 November *Cadre Harmonisé*) point towards a worrying situation for the next lean-season (June-August 2020). Over 609,000 people will be food insecure (in crisis (phase 3) and emergency (phase 4), representing 15 percent of the country's population (the highest rate recorded across the Sahel region).
- WFP is in the process of rolling-out a home-grown school feeding programme. A study to support the setting up of a national programme was conducted by WFP in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, to better understand how the agricultural, pastoral and fisheries sectors could support school feeding in Mauritania.
- With the aim of strengthening the capacity of national structures and local stakeholders, WFP provided training to 118 auxiliaries in the regions of Guidimakha and Assaba on malnutrition screening and management.
- WFP engaged in the annual campaign on 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in collaboration with other United Nations (UN) agencies and national authorities. WFP took part in the ceremony organised by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Children and Family to launch the commemorative activities of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Various communication activities were also organized with UN agencies to raise awareness on GBV among UN staff.

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Main photo: Credit: UNICEF/Raphaël Peugeot

Caption: Sixteen days of activism ceremony

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

2019 Total Requirement (in USD)	2019 Allocated Contributions in Nov (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
35.8 m	0.3 m	10 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected people, including refugees, are able to meet basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide food/cash assistance (conditional and/or unconditional), school meals, and preventive nutrition ration and MAM treatment to refugees.

Strategic Result 2: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Food-insecure populations, including school-age children, have access to adequate and nutritious food all year.

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities:

- Provide seasonal food assistance to food-insecure Mauritanian populations, including malnutrition prevention and treatment. Provide school meals to vulnerable Mauritanian children.

Strategic Result 3: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Nutritionally vulnerable populations, including children and pregnant and lactating women and girls, have improved nutritional status all year.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- MAM treatment and cash transfers to pregnant and lactating women and girls attending pre/post-natal care.

Strategic Result 4: Improved food security and nutrition of smallholders

Strategic Outcome 4: Food-insecure populations and communities exposed to climate shocks have more resilient livelihoods and sustainable food systems all year.

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities:

- Provide livelihood support to food-insecure and at-risk Mauritanian households, including the development or rehabilitation of natural and productive assets

Strategic Result 5: Country strategic capacities

Strategic Outcome 5: National institutions have strengthened capacities to manage food security, nutrition and social protection policies and programmes, including an adaptive (shock responsive) social protection system, by 2030.

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities:

- Provide training and technical support to government institutions.

Strategic Result 6: Global partnership support

Strategic Outcome 6: Humanitarian and development partners have access to common services that permit them to reach and operate in targeted areas all year.

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities:

- Provide flight services to humanitarian partners, towards humanitarian Interventions.

- In Mbera camp, general food distributions through food and cash transfers reached 47,079 individuals (96 percent of achievement against the plan). A food basket composed of food and cash entitlements was distributed to beneficiaries. WFP also conducted activities for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition, providing lipid-based nutrient supplements to 552 children aged 6-59 months and 202 pregnant and lactating women. A total of 128 children and 40 women were newly admitted; 182 children and 60 women were healed and discharged, while 394 children and 165 women remained in the programme to continue treatment. Malnutrition prevention activities were carried out for six months and concluded in October.
- In November, WFP reached 6,390 Mauritanian children and pregnant and lactating women through curative nutrition activities.
- As part of the ongoing food assistance for asset (FFA) programme, food and cash distributions took place in November, reaching 25,980 people. Six community-based participatory planning exercises were also carried out in Assaba and Hodh El Charghi in order to assess the needs of the communities targeted and discuss on priority areas and activities for the next months.
- Through the school feeding programme, WFP reached 48,519 Mauritanian children in 324 schools (80 percent of the planned figures). Capacity strengthening trainings on canteen management, food hygiene and nutrition-sensitive programming were organized in 89 schools, targeting 178 school committee members.
- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) transported 186 passengers and 778 kg cargo in November, connecting Nouakchott-Nema-Kiffa through over 40 in-country rotations.

Monitoring

- From 7 to 9 November, two joint missions from WFP and the Commission for Food Security (CSA) were conducted in the regions of Assaba, Guidimakha and Hodh El Charghi, where food assistance for assets (FFA) activities are ongoing, to monitor the implementation level of activities, in line with technical standards.

Challenges

- USD 10 million are urgently needed for WFP operations in Mauritania for the next six months, representing 52 percent of the period requirements (USD 17 million). This includes the assistance to Malian refugees, which faces a funding deficit of USD 6.4 million for the next six months, while USD 0.5 million is required for FFA activities.
- Efforts are ongoing to mobilize funds for the rehabilitation works of the Bassikounou airstrip. The rehabilitation is urgently needed to continue providing reliable and continuous air transport services to Hodh-ech Charghi for the humanitarian community, but also because the current authorization to operate Nema (where flights are diverted for the time being) is granted only until 22 December 2019. The UN country team is planning to meet with Mauritanian authorities to negotiate an extension of the current authorization until the airstrip is rehabilitated.

Donors

Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Monaco, Sweden, UN other funds, United Kingdom and USA.