



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Mauritania Country Brief

June 2021



Operational Context

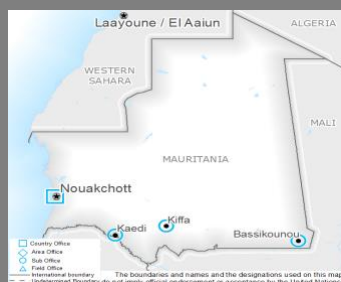
Mauritania is a lower middle-income country in the Sahel with a population of 4.8 million that lives over a vast but mostly arid 1,030,700 km² territory.

Mauritania is exposed to recurrent cycles of drought, resulting in the degradation of natural resources, and structurally affecting productive capacity, resilience and food security of the population. According to the March 2021 *Cadre Harmonisé*, 484,150 people are projected to be food insecure between June and August 2021 (lean season).

Mauritania experienced two waves of the COVID-19 pandemic, between May and July 2020 and recently, a second wave began in mid-November 2020, with a peak in December.

Mauritania continues to host the largest number of Malian refugees in West Africa. The Malian refugee situation entered its ninth years and the security conditions in Mali remains volatile, resulting in a continuous refugee influx to Mauritania. As of May 2021, 65,771 refugees were registered by UNHCR in the camp.

As part of crisis response activities, WFP country portfolio aims to meet the basic food and nutrition needs of affected people as well as to provide United Nations Humanitarian Air Service for all humanitarian and development partners. In parallel, WFP strives to ensure the continuation of resilience programmes, while strengthening institutional capacity and minimizing gender inequalities. WFP has been present in Mauritania since 1964.



Population: **4.8 million**

2020 Human Development Index ranking: **157 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

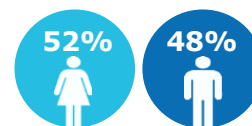
In Numbers

47 mt of food, including specialized nutritious food distributed

USD 0.6 m cash-based transfers made

USD 10 m six months (July – December 2021) net funding requirements

160,465 people assisted
in June 2021



Operational Updates

- As part of the **lean season assistance**, WFP reached 42,599 food insecure people living in the region of Guidimakha. In parallel, WFP conducted additional household targeting exercises in the regions of Guidimakha, Assaba and Hodh El Charghi, reaching 46,369 vulnerable individuals. The rationale behind this new targeting exercise is that in addition to the lean season intervention in the priority departments identified by the *Cadre Harmonisé* analysis, this year, WFP will also provide monthly lean season assistance to the vulnerable populations in sites where WFP already implements resilience activities with the objective of complementing and enhancing the impact of the integrated resilience package.
- As part of the longer-term resilience approach implemented in the regions of Hodh El Charghi, Assaba and Guidimakha, WFP implemented **malnutrition treatment** activities to the benefit of 853 malnourished women and children. Moreover, with the objective of extending the coverage of the malnutrition treatment programme from 6 months to all year round in order to avoid any deterioration of nutrition status, WFP carried out a new targeting exercise in the resilience sites to identify malnourished children and women in need of treatment.
- The Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the national school feeding programme is being formalised between WFP and the Ministry of Basic Education and Reform as outlined in the National School Feeding Policy. In parallel, to enhance education achievements, WFP continued to implement the **school feeding programme**, reaching 48,470 children (23,751 girls and 24,719 boys) in 10 departments of the three targeted regions (Guidimakha, Assaba and Hodh el Charghi) in 374 schools. This month also marks the end of the school year in primary schools, and therefore the end of school meals until October.
- WFP took part in a joint mission with the National Agency of the Great Green Wall (ANGMV) in Assaba region in order to identify new **food assistance for assets (FFA)** sites, where market gardening activities, fixation of dunes and construction of crops' fences to avoid animal raving, will be implemented. Moreover, as part of the UN Peace Building Fund project aiming to consolidate peace by strengthening social cohesion and improving equitable access to natural resources in transhumance areas, capacity strengthening activities were organised by WFP to the benefit of cooperating partners in the Guidimakha region.

Contact info: Maria Ludovica Carucci (marialudovica.carucci@wfp.org)

Country Director: Kinday Samba

Further information: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/mauritania>

Main photo: Credit: WFP/Field monitor

Caption: Targeting exercise in Brakna region

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2022)

2021 Total Requirements (in USD)	2021 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
43.3 m	22.7 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 crisis.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide food/cash assistance (conditional and/or unconditional), school meals, and preventive nutrition ration and MAM treatment to refugees
- Provide food assistance and supplementary feeding to pandemic affected populations/households.

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 governmental 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 for humanitarian interventions
- Provide on-demand logistics services to Government, United Nations and Non-Governmental partners to facilitate effective field operations (CPA Service Provision and platform activities)

- In **Mbera camp**, general food distributions covering rations for May and June took place from 27 May to 02 June. During this distribution, a total of 736 mt of food (rice and salt) was distributed to 56,364 people (30,831 women and 25,533 men). In parallel, 62,520 people (34,199 women and 28,321 men) were assisted through cash-based transfers. WFP reached 399 children (197 boys and 202 girls) and 189 women with 3.5 mt of specialized nutritious foods (Super Cereal Plus) for the treatment of acute malnutrition. A total of 110 children (52 girls and 58 boys) and 48 women recovered and were discharged, while 2,095 children were reached with malnutrition prevention activities. Moreover, 5,435 students (2,772 girls and 2,663 boys) benefited from a morning porridge as part of the emergency school feeding programme (5.2 mt of Super Cereal Plus were distributed).
- Following the signing of the decree establishing the **national preparedness and response scheme for food security and nutrition**, all the members of the Technical Working Group (GTT in its French acronym) designated their representatives to the Permanent Technical Committee, in charge of the operational management of the scheme.
- In June, the **United Nations Humanitarian Air Service** (UNHAS) transported 157 passengers and over 269 kg cargo, connecting Nouakchott-Kiffa and Bassikounou, through 36 in-country rotations. With UNHAS, UK ambassador travelled to Bassikounou on 28 June for a visit to the Mbera camp.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- WFP is finalizing the data collection for the targeting exercise in Mbera camp and preparing for data cleaning. WFP executed data collection for the Market Functionality Index survey and for the baseline survey in Guidimakha.
- WFP hired a service provider to include aerial imagery as part of the territorial diagnostics of the Participatory Community Planning exercise to train WFP staff, implementing partners and technical services in the use of aerial imagery for diagnosis, planning and monitoring of FFA activities; and to monitor and analyse territorial dynamics in the intervention areas. The use of drones will allow to further inform community-driven territorial diagnostic and monitoring of landscapes for activities' design purpose.

Challenges

- WFP faces an estimated funding shortage of **USD 10 million** for the next six months (July to December 2021), representing 46 percent of the requirements for the period (USD 21.8 million). The most concerning situation regards assistance to Malian refugees. For the next 9 months (July 2021-March 2022) USD 7.9 million is urgently required by WFP to continue to provide food and nutrition assistance to Malian refugees. If resources are not immediately secured, a complete interruption of both food and cash assistance will occur in November 2021. Furthermore, due to current funding levels, an interruption of the blanket supplementary feeding programme – aimed at preventing malnutrition among children aged 6-59 months – is expected to happen in July.

Donors

Donors to WFP Mauritania CSP 2019 - 2022 include ARC Replica, Canada, UN CERF, ECHO, France, Germany, Japan, Mauritania, Monaco, Saudi Arabia, Spain, UK, BHA, Un Adaptation Funds, UN PBF, UN SDG, UN agencies.