



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Mauritania Country Brief

July 2021



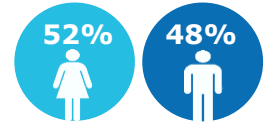
## In Numbers

**588 mt** of food, including specialized nutritious food distributed

**USD 1.7 m** cash-based transfers made

**USD 6.3 m** five months (Aug 2021 – Jan 2022) net funding requirements

**154,825 people** assisted in July 2021



## Operational Updates

- As part of the **lean season assistance**, WFP reached 46,194 food insecure people with cash-based transfers living in the region of Guidimakha, Hodh El Charghi, Assaba, Tagant and Maghama.
- With July marking the end of the school year in Mauritania, no **school meals** distribution took place this month, except in Assaba region where WFP reached 9,438 children (4,693 girls et 4,745 boys) for the last five days of the school year.
- Within the framework of **food assistance for assets (FFA)** activities, WFP provided cash-based transfers to 26,678 beneficiaries in the region of Assaba, Guidimakha and Hodh El Charghi. To ensure the implementation of FFA activities for the second semester of the year, WFP signed new field agreements with five NGO consortia.
- As part of the integrated resilience package, WFP implemented **malnutrition treatment activities** benefitting to 8,216 children and pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWGs) in the region of Hodh El Charghi.
- In **Mbera camp**, July general food and cash distributions will be coupled with August distributions. WFP reached 1,887 children (963 boys and 924 girls) and 551 PLWGs reached with prevention of malnutrition activities (3 mt of fortified food distributed), while 347 children aged 6-59 months (185 boys and 162 girls) and 162 PLWGs were enrolled in the malnutrition treatment programme (3 mt of fortified food distributed). The distribution of school meals did not take place in July due to the school holidays. In addition, the remedial classes that were supposed to start during in July have not yet taken place.
- WFP participated in meetings organised by the Food Security Commission (CSA) and other national actors aimed at operationalising the **National Scheme for Prevention and Response to Food and Nutritional Crises (DCAN)**. In addition, WFP actively engaged with the CSA committee responsible for monitoring and operationalisation of the DCAN to identify actions to be supported by WFP in the framework of a future CSA/WFP agreement.
- In July, the **United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)** transported 108 passengers and over 172 kg cargo connecting Nouakchott-Kiffa and Bassikounou, through 30 in-country rotations.

## Operational Context

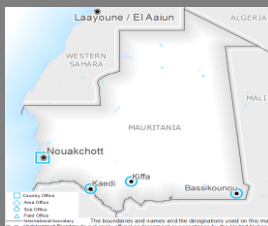
Mauritania is a lower middle-income country in the Sahel with a population of 4.8 million that lives over a vast but mostly arid 1,030,700 km<sup>2</sup> territory.

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, and a third wave began in July 2021. Mauritania began its COVID-19 vaccination campaign in March 2021. As of 23 August 2021, 228,536 people received at least one dose of a vaccine against COVID-19 and 25,619 people are fully vaccinated (0.6 percent of the population).

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 July 2021, 65,800 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 UNHAS flight services 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**

2019 Human Development Index: **157 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

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**Main photo:** Credit: WFP/Boubacar Gadji

**Caption:** General food distribution in Mbera refugee camp

## Country Strategic Plan (2019-2022)

2021 Total Requirements (in USD)	2021 Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
39.6 m	26 m	6.3 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)

## Monitoring and Evaluation

- WFP is undertaking an **evaluation of its Country Strategic Portfolio**, an important step in the strategic evaluation of WFP presence and role in Mauritania. Data collection for the PDM surveys in Guidimakha and resilience sites was also carried out, and the data analysis is ongoing.
- **UNHCR - WFP Joint Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub** continued to support the Social Registry through Taazour to fully update the socio-economic data of registered refugees in the camp. This will have a double objective of revising the categorization of households and completing the targeting process and laying the groundwork for the deployment of national social nets (Tekavoul) in the camp from the second half of 2021.
- The **April-June market price analysis** confirms the upward trend of prices of main commodities both compared to the five-year average (2015 - 2019) and at the same time last year. Consequently, the cost of the food basket remained on an upward trend during this quarter, with a price increase of all basic food commodities.
- A nutrition survey using **SMART** methodology was carried out in July in all regions of the country. The SMART (Standardised Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions) Methodology is a standardized, simplified, cross-sectional field survey method designed to aid the collection of quality, up-to-date and timely nutrition data necessary for decision-making. Preliminary results are expected at end of August.
- According to the **July weather bulletin**, the amount of rain during the period from May to July 2021 was significantly lower than that of the same period last year, particularly in Hodh El Gharbi, Hodh El Charghi, Guidimakha and Gorgol regions. This translates into delays in crop production and below-average vegetation coverage. In the next couple of months, rainfall deficits are expected in Hodh El Charghi, Hodh El Gharbi, south-western Tagant, Assaba, Guidimakha, Gorgol, Brakna, Trarza and the wilayas of Nouakchott. The risk is therefore high for rain-fed crops. The next bulletin will provide a clearer assessment and implications on the progress of the crop season.

## Challenges

- WFP faces an estimated funding shortage of approximately **USD 6.3 million** for the next six months (August 2021 to January 2022) representing 32 percent of the requirements for the period (USD 19.9 million).
- The most concerning situation regards **assistance to Malian refugees**. For the next nine months (August 2021-April 2022) USD 6.7 million is urgently required by WFP to continue providing food and nutrition assistance to Malian refugees. If resources are not immediately secured, drastic reductions of the hybrid food/cash unconditional food distribution ration will continue, whilst maintaining assistance to all refugees deemed food insecure. Malnutrition prevention activities for children will be fully discontinued starting from August due to funding shortfall.

## 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.