



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Mauritania Country Brief

June 2022



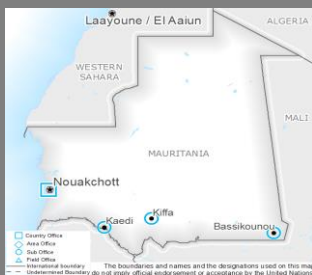
Operational Context

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 impacting the population's productive capacity, resilience, and food security. According to the March Cadre Harmonisé, 878,921 individuals and 36 departments will face crisis conditions (phase 3+) during the peak of the upcoming lean season (June-August 2022). This corresponds to 20% of the population, one of the highest rates in the Sahel region, and reflects an increase of 64% compared to 2021. It is also the highest level ever recorded by the Cadre Harmonisé in Mauritania.

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 remain volatile, resulting in a continuous refugee influx to Mauritania. As of March 2022, 69,368 refugees were registered by UNHCR in the Mbera camp.

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

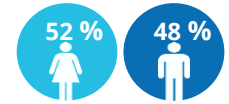
In Numbers

243 mt of food, including specialized nutritious food, distributed

0.5 m cash-based transfers made

USD 50.2 m for six months (July – Dec) net funding requirements

127,886 people assisted
In June 2022



Operational Updates

- **WFP's refugee response in the Mbera camp:** WFP provided food and cash assistance covering May and June to 51,390 highly vulnerable and newly arrived refugees while cash assistance was provided to 73,695 moderately vulnerable refugees. 54 percent of the refugees were women. To treat moderate acute malnutrition, 588 children aged 6-59 months (50 percent girls) and 205 pregnant and lactating women received 3.3 mt of specialized nutritious food and 0.1 mt of oil. To prevent malnutrition, 2,048 children (50 percent girls) and 1,229 women received 20 mt of nutritious food. Schools are closed for summer vacations so the school feeding activity was not implemented.
- WFP signed a contract with the *Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire* (CSA) for the implementation of the **lean season assistance** in the department of M'bout. Through this agreement, WFP's lean season assistance in M'bout will be channeled through the government's Elmaouna programme to cover 34,000 beneficiaries (17,340 women). CSA will undertake the geographical and household targeting, monitoring and evaluation, preparation of payment lists, and distribution monitoring. Lean season targeting was ongoing throughout June in all the departments of Guidimakha as well as in the Hodh Gharbi and Gorgol regions. WFP's cooperating partners are conducting door-to-door verifications to identify an estimated 30,000 eligible households in these regions (185,000 beneficiaries) to receive cash and malnutrition prevention assistance during the lean season. The first lean season distribution was delivered in the departments of Aioun and Maghama, which were also assisted during the pre-lean season. A total of 45,520 beneficiaries (5,492 households) were reached. The distributions in the rest of the departments will be delivered in early July.
- On the **treatment of moderate acute malnutrition**, 5,329 children aged 6-59 months (2,877 girls) and 265 pregnant and lactating women received specialized nutritious foods in 327 health centers located in the three regions where WFP is implementing the resilience package, namely Hodh El Charghi, Guidimakha, and Assaba. WFP continued screenings to identify nutrition treatment needs during the lean season in the Brakna region, where WFP has pre-positioned food. Parallel to this, WFP conducted training on health center management for its Hodh El Chargui cooperating partners.
- As part of the **Food Assistance for Assets** programme, WFP, and its cooperating partners are preparing for the activities planned for the year's second half. Seven monitoring missions took place in the three regions of

Country Director: Kinday Samba

Contact: Farah Kashaf, Partnerships Officer (farah.kashaf@wfp.org)

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

Main photo's credit: WFP/ En Haut !

Caption: Women working the soil, Lifikarine

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2022)		
2022 Total Requirements (in USD)	2022 Available Contributions (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
80 m	30 m	50 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)

Guidimakha, Assaba, and Hodh El Chargui to assess the progress of the activities implemented since the beginning of the year, including school gardens, market gardening, family reforestation, and improved cooking methods. The missions mentioned above enabled cooperating partners to strengthen their technical capabilities further. Within the framework of the Debt Swap project and in close coordination with the National Agency of the Great Green Wall, 50 ha of dunes have been fixed in the village of Boumbeid (Assaba region). In parallel, and as part of the **SAMS program**, four agricultural cooperatives were established in June on the resilience sites of Bouli, Chalkat Amour, El Dhiom, and Moutalag Debaye in Guidimakha. In each cooperative, women and men were represented equally. As part of the SAMS support plan, WFP conducted a first training session to enhance the cooperatives' technical and organizational capacities to maximize agricultural production and implement the tools and procedures for their management.

- WFP continued to engage the government to ensure that the **2022 National Response Plan** was approved. WFP also supported consultations for the Food Crisis Response Fund's operationalization (FNRCAN). In June, WFP and the Mauritanian government signed two insurance policies (one for agriculture and one for livestock) with ARC (**African Risk Capacity**). WFP insurance premium amounts to around USD 1 million and will protect more than 71,000 farmers and herders from extreme drought risk.

- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (**UNHAS**) transported 128 passengers and over 238 kg of light cargo connecting Nouakchott to Kiffa, Nema, and Bassikounou, through 34 in-country rotations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The **June Price Monitoring Bulletin** was published. Prices for basic food commodities increased compared to the five-year average: imported rice + 10%, corn +61%, oil +77%, sugar +50% and wheat + 50%. Some markets experienced an atypical disruption in wheat supply, which can be linked to the disruption of seasonal flows from Mali. It was noted that WFP cash transfers increased the purchasing power of the most vulnerable households, increasing the consumption demand. This demand did not disrupt the price discovery mechanism.

Challenges

- WFP's current priority is to advocate for additional resources to **assist Malian refugees** (Act. 1). Food and cash assistance for refugees for the July-August distributions will likely be **dramatically reduced** to avoid a complete interruption. There is also an urgent need to secure additional resilience funding, particularly for **FFA activities**, facing a 76 percent shortfall. Unless additional funds are confirmed soon, FFA activities will need to be substantially reduced for the second semester.

- A **high level of risk** is associated with an increased threat of terrorism and crime throughout Mali. Violence was resurgent in Timbuktu and Menaka, affecting neighbouring regions and the civilian populations and leading to the ongoing influx of refugees into Mauritania.

Donors

Donors to WFP Mauritania CSP 2019 – 2022 include Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, Mauritania, Monaco, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, and United States. Additional support was provided by the Gimbel Foundation, ARC Replica, UN Adaptation Funds, UN CERF, UN PBF, UN SDG, UNICEF, and UNHCR.