**Operational Context**

Mauritania is exposed to recurrent drought cycles, resulting in the degradation of natural resources, and structurally impacting the population's productive capacity, resilience, and food security. According to the March 2023 Cadre Harmonisé, 472,275 individuals in 13 regions will face crisis conditions (Phase 3+) during the peak of the lean season (June-August 2023). This represents 13 percent of the population and reflects a decrease of 32 percent compared to November 2022.

Mauritania continues to host the largest number of Malian refugees in West Africa. This year marks the tenth year of volatile security conditions in Mali resulting in a continuous refugee influx into Mauritania. As of April, there were 85,088 refugees registered by UNHCR in and around 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 minimising gender inequalities. WFP has been present in Mauritania since 1964.

**In Numbers**

- **416,187 people assisted** in April and May 2023
- **620 mt** of food assistance distributed in April and May 2023
- **USD 4 million** cash-based transfers made in April and May 2023
- **USD 13.4 million** six-month (June-November 2023) net funding requirements

**Operational Updates**

- **WFP's refugee response** in Mbera camp: In May, WFP delivered **cash assistance** to 59,712 highly vulnerable refugees (55 percent women) with a ration of MRU 450 (USD 13) per person. **To treat moderate acute malnutrition in the camp**, 568 children aged 6-59 months (49 percent girls) received specialised nutritious food. Meanwhile, **school meals** resumed with WFP providing morning porridge to 5,563 children (50 percent girls) in the eight schools of the camp (6 mt of fortified food). You can learn more about WFP's refugee assistance operations in Mauritania through this [video](#) and this [factsheet](#).

- **2023 lean season response**: WFP conducted its fourth and final cycle of urban cash distributions in collaboration with the Food Security Commission (CSA), delivering USD 1.6 million to 106,139 vulnerable Mauritians in Nouakchott’s nine districts at the end of April 2023. Moreover, WFP started preparing for the 2023 rural lean response in Ould Yenge and Guidimakha where it completed the targeting verifications with the support of the Social Registry in May.

- **School meals programme**: in May, WFP provided two hot meals per day to students in 381 schools in the three regions covered by the programme (Guidimakha, Assaba, and Hodh El Chargui). The programme will continue until the end of the school year (June) thanks to prepositioned commodities in the regional warehouses. The country office is now working with its government counterparts on compiling the enrolment list for the new school year (2023-2024) to plan food requirements and organize capacity-building sessions on the lessons learned from last year.

- **Acute malnutrition treatment**: in May, some 6,266 children aged 6-59 months and 1,990 pregnant and breastfeeding women were treated for malnutrition in 449 CRENAMs (Centres de Réhabilitation en Ambulatoire pour malnutris modérés) in three regions (Guidimakha, Assaba, and Hodh El Chargui). Moreover, in April, WFP held a capacity-building session on implementing and monitoring the resilience package for 27 staff in the field office of Selibaby and partners from the Ministry of Health and the CSA.

- **Food assistance for assets (FFA) programme**: In April, WFP finalised the payment to 21,732 beneficiaries who took part in land rehabilitation activities. The cash transfers act as an incentive for community members to work on the fencing of agricultural areas to protect food crops. In parallel, WFP organised a workshop for the sub office staff on aerial imagery in Kiffa in May to monitor the progress of FFA activities.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirements (USD)</th>
<th>Total Received (USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>286.5 million</td>
<td>183.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023 Requirements (USD)</td>
<td>Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (June – November 2023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.8 million</td>
<td>13.4 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 a 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: No one suffers from malnutrition

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: Improved food security and nutrition of smallholders

Strategic Outcome 3: Nutritional vulnerability populations, including children and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, have improved nutritional status all year

Focus area: Resilience-building

Activities:
- MAM treatment and cash transfers to pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls attending pre/post-natal care

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 4: Food-insecure populations and communities exposed to climate shocks in targeted areas 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 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

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April-May 2023

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)

- Capacity-strengthening activities: In April, WFP, in collaboration with the World Bank, provided support to the Food Security Observatory to design the specification of the data server which should house the early warning systems that will enable the 2023 National Response Plan to be rolled out.

- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) transported in May 116 passengers and 371 kg of cargo, connecting Nouakchott to Kiffa, Nema, and Bassikounou through 29 in-country rotations. In April, the UNHAS team organised a training course on aviation security with the support of a regional aviation security officer from Mali. Participants included SAM (Société des Aéroports de Mauritanie), ANAC (Agence Nationale de l’Aviation Civile) staff and UNHAS air operators. They learned about handling passengers and dangerous goods.

Monitoring

- In May 2023, average prices for small ruminants were slightly up sharply (+25 percent) compared to last January – March 2023. Compared to last April (2023), the prices of imported rice, sorghum, and sugar were slightly down in May, while those of local rice, wheat, pasta, millet, oil, milk powder, and maize were up. Compared to May 2022, except for the price of millet (+14 percent), all other local product prices were down slightly (local rice -8 percent, beans -1 percent, maize -1 percent). On the other hand, imported products such as rice, pasta, oil, and milk powder were up slightly.

Challenges

- If no further resources are secured, WFP will be forced to halt food and cash assistance for refugees at the end of September 2023, which will undoubtedly impact the food and nutritional security of over 84,000 vulnerable refugees and may even propagate tensions within the camp as people struggle over existing resources.

- The country office is undertaking several efforts to diversify funding for refugee assistance by reaching out to non-traditional donors and the private sector. WFP Mauritania is advocating for additional funds to implement its 2023 refugee assistance strategy, aiming to strengthen refugees’ self-reliance and cohesion with the host community.

- UNHAS operations will come to a complete halt in September 2023 if resources are not immediately secured.

Donors

Donors to WFP Mauritania CSP 2019 – 2023 include Andorra, Canada, the European Commission; France, Germany, Japan, Mauritania, Monaco, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. Additional support was provided by private donors, African Risk Capacity (ARC) Replica, UN Adaptation Funds, UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), UN Peacebuilding Fund, UN Sustainable Development Goal Fund, UNICEF, and UNHCR.