



World Food Programme

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LIVES

## WFP Mauritania Country Brief June 2023

### 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 46 percent compared to March 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 May, there were 85,049 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.



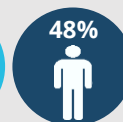
Population: **4.8 million**

2021 Human Development Index: **158 out of 191**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **24.8 percent of children between 6-59 months**

### In Numbers



**175,741 people assisted**

**559 mt** of food assistance distributed

**USD 1.9 million** cash-based transfers made

**USD 15.4 million** six-month (July-December 2023) net funding requirements

### Operational Updates

- **WFP's refugee response** in Mbera camp: As June is the first month of the lean season (June – August), WFP will deliver **food and cash assistance** for group 1 (most vulnerable) and new arrivals, and cash only for group 2 (moderately vulnerable) during the first week of July. WFP plans to reach 85,865 highly vulnerable refugees (55 percent women) with a cash ration and 61,631 with a food ration covering one-month needs. Meanwhile, WFP conducted a complementary targeting of households not included in the 2021 targeting and new arrivals who had not been registered for at least six months. **To manage moderate acute malnutrition in the camp**, 545 children aged 6-59 months (49 percent girls) received specialised nutritious food. In addition, a joint UNHCR-Embassy of Spain mission flew to Bassikounou to visit WFP activities at the nutrition centre in the Mbera Refugee Camp. Since schools are closed for the summer holidays, the **school meals programme** was not implemented in June.
- **2023 lean season response**: WFP finalised its target lists for its 2023 lean season response in four departments (*moughataas*) (Ould Yengé, Mbout, Lexeiba, and Kaédi) targeting 10,451 households (80,918 beneficiaries). The Food Security Commission (CSA) is leading the response in Kaédi and Lexeiba departments and is undertaking the geographical and household targeting, monitoring and evaluation, preparation of payment lists, and distribution monitoring. WFP's lean season assistance in these zones will be channelled through the Government's El Maouna programme to cover 31,000 beneficiaries via cash transfers. The first distribution in Lifkarine and Wouro Hayre villages (in the moughataas of Ould Yengé) reached 754 beneficiaries. Distributions were temporarily halted due to the Eid Al-Adha holiday and are scheduled to re-start on 10 July.
- **School meals programme**: WFP created a committee with the Ministry of Education to oversee the drafting of the National School Feeding Programme Framework that will inform the implementation of the school meals programme and the harmonisation of monitoring and evaluation tools.
- **Food assistance for assets (FFA) programme**: WFP participated in a joint monitoring mission of the [Peace Building Fund project in Guidimakha](#) along with United Nations and Government partners. Community testimonies confirmed that the project contributed to social cohesion by reducing pressure on natural resources and improving access to water.

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)	
Total Requirements (US\$)	Total Received (US\$)
<b>286.5 million</b>	<b>183.4 million</b>
2023 Requirements (US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (July– December 2023)
<b>70.1 million</b>	<b>15.4 million</b>
<b>Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food</b>	
<b>Strategic Outcome 1:</b> Crisis-affected people, including refugees, are able to meet basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of a crisis <b>Focus area:</b> Crisis response	
<b>Activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide food/cash assistance (conditional and/or unconditional), school meals, and preventive nutrition ration and MAM treatment to refugees</li> <li>Provide food assistance and supplementary feeding to pandemic-affected populations/households</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition</b>	
<b>Strategic Outcome 2:</b> Food-insecure populations, including school-age children, have access to adequate and nutritious food all year <b>Focus area:</b> Resilience-building	
<b>Activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide seasonal food assistance to food-insecure Mauritanian populations, including malnutrition prevention and treatment</li> <li>Provide school meals to vulnerable Mauritanian children</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategic Result 3: Improved food security and nutrition of smallholders</b>	
<b>Strategic Outcome 3:</b> Nutritionally vulnerable populations, including children and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, have improved nutritional status all year. <b>Focus area:</b> Resilience-building	
<b>Activities:</b> MAM treatment and cash transfers to pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls attending pre/post-natal care	
<b>Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable</b>	
<b>Strategic Outcome 4:</b> Food-insecure populations and communities exposed to climate shocks in targeted areas have more resilient livelihoods and sustainable food systems all year <b>Focus area:</b> Resilience-building	
<b>Activities:</b> Provide livelihood support to food-insecure and at-risk Mauritanian households, including the development or rehabilitation of natural productive assets.	
<b>Strategic Result 5: Country strategic capacities</b>	
<b>Strategic Outcome 5:</b> 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. <b>Focus area:</b> Resilience-building	
<b>Activities:</b> Provide training and technical support to governmental institutions	
<b>Strategic Result 6: Global partnership support</b>	
<b>Strategic Outcome 6:</b> Humanitarian and development partners have access to common services that permit them to reach and operate in targeted areas all year <b>Focus area:</b> Resilience-building	
<b>Activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide flight services to humanitarian partners for humanitarian interventions</li> <li>Provide on-demand logistics services to Government, United Nations, and Non-Governmental partners to facilitate effective field operations (CPA Service Provision and platform activities)</li> </ul>	

- WFP also supported the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development through organising a workshop on the formulation of the Global Climate Fund project which aims to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and populations in four regional hubs in northern Mauritania.
- Capacity-strengthening:** The Mauritanian Government signed the Agricultural Drought and Pastoral Drought (ARC) Insurance Policy for the 2023 agricultural season. This insurance policy was facilitated by WFP and the African Risk Capacity Group and covers the agricultural season (June - November) against the risk of drought. WFP also signed the ARC Replica policies for Mauritania (drought which impacts agriculture crops and pastures intended for livestock). Moreover, as part of its support for the Early Warning System, WFP donated 100 tablets equipped with data collection and analysis software to the CSA to strengthen their operational capacities. Finally, WFP reviewed the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS).
- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)** transported 163 passengers and 212 kg of cargo, connecting Nouakchott to Kiffa, Nema, and Bassikounou through 33 in-country rotations.
- Gender:** WFP participated in a Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) workshop in Dakar to ensure that proper mechanisms for protection from SEA were adequately in place in its Mauritania Country Office. As such, the three-day training of trainers aimed at strengthening the knowledge of PSEA focal points and NGO Unit focal points from the country offices on the processes, requirements, and mechanisms for successfully implement the PSEA policy.

## Monitoring

- In June, average prices for small ruminants were sharply up (+6 percent) compared to May. This sharp rise in prices can be explained by strong internal and external demand (exports to Senegal) linked to the Eid Al-Adha holiday. Compared to May, the prices of local rice, sorghum, small millet, pasta, and sugar were slightly up. Livestock prices rose slightly in June, with variations of +17 percent compared to the last trimester (January to March).
- The second quarter market price bulletin is available [here](#).

## Challenges

- If no further resources are secured, **WFP will be forced to halt food and cash assistance for refugees** at the end of September, 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. WFP faces a **funding shortage of US\$ 3 million for its refugee assistance**.
- UNHAS operations will come to a complete halt in September** if resources are not immediately secured, with a **funding shortage of USD 1.5 million**.

## Donors

Donors to WFP Mauritania for its 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.