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 July, there were 85,942 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

- 143,923 people assisted
- 520 mt of food assistance distributed
- US$ 1.6 million cash-based transfers made
- US$ 13.5 million six-month (August 2023-January 2024) net funding requirements

Operational Updates

- **WFP’s refugee response** in Mbera camp: WFP provided cash and food assistance covering July 2023. Cash assistance was provided to 58,376 people in need (31,391 women) from group 1 (most vulnerable) and new arrivals and food assistance was provided to 58,488 people (31,993 women) from group 2 (moderately vulnerable). **To manage moderate acute malnutrition in the camp**, 573 children aged 6-59 months (269 girls) received 3 mt of specialised nutritious food. WFP provided a morning porridge for summer **school meals programme** to 1,398 primary school children (398 girls) enrolled in seven schools established in the camp.

- **2023 lean season response**: WFP started the first round of lean season cash transfer distributions for the most vulnerable families in the departments of Kaedi and Lexeiba in collaboration with the Commission of Food Security (CSA). In total, WFP assisted 73,493 people with USD 910,992. People who participate in WFP programmes will continue to receive monthly cash distributions until the month of October 2023 as part of the four months assistance for lean season. In addition, WFP will pilot a cash top-up assistance for the prevention of malnutrition for children under two and pregnant and breastfeeding women in the department of Ould Yenge.

- **School meals programme**: Since schools are closed for the summer holidays, the school meals programme was not implemented in July 2023. Moreover, WFP took part in regional consultations to draft the National School Feeding Programme document, the aim of which is to guarantee, by 2030, sustainable school feeding based on enriched local products for all children enrolled in basic education schools (pre-school, primary, lower secondary or rural colleges) and religious education structures.

- **Treatment of moderate acute malnutrition programme**: 6,743 children aged 6-59 months (4,176 girls) and 1,946 pregnant and breastfeeding women received specialized nutritious food in 470 health centres in three resilience regions.

- **Food assistance for assets (FFA) programme**: WFP, in collaboration with the National Agency for the Great Green Wall, prepared the reforestation campaign to kick off August 2023 by conducting awareness sessions on environmental and social safeguards, receiving 90,000 seedlings, and reviewing conditions for implementing the work in the Boumdeid and Kiffa departments.

- **Capacity-strengthening**: The National Meteorological Office and WFP selected three departments, namely Amourj, Barkéol, and Mbout, to monitor the agricultural season/campaign as part of FWF Mauritania Country Brief July 2023

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Photo Caption: Mbera refugee camp person who receive food assistance.
WFP/ Bechir Malum
**WFP Country Strategy**

**Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Result  (2023 Requirements (US$))</th>
<th>Total Received (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>286.5 million</td>
<td>186.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2023 Requirements (US$)</td>
<td>Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US$) (August 2023 – January 2024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.1 million</td>
<td>13.5 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:** Nutrionally vulnerable 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

**Activities:**
- Provide flight services to humanitarian partners for humanitarian interventions

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**Monitoring**

- WFP continued to closely monitor the local market’s prices. The price of ruminant animals continued to rise, surpassing the last five-year average (+11 percent). Except for local corn, basic food prices have improved slightly but are still at high levels: imported rice (+14 percent), sorghum (+12 percent), and wheat (+9 percent).

- WFP conducted the baseline survey in two departments targeted for the lean season assistance.

**Challenges**

- WFP’s current priority is to advocate for additional resources to assist Malian refugees. Given the ongoing conflict in Mali and the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission is set to fully withdraw from Mali by the end of December 2023, which will undoubtedly impact the humanitarian situation, there will likely be a continued influx of refugees to the camp, putting strain on existing resources. Thus, the food and nutrition security situation is likely to deteriorate further unless urgent measures are taken. The absence of assistance could also lead to increased unrest in the camp or breakdowns in existing social cohesion, which will considerably affect the food and nutritional security of over 84,000 vulnerable refugees. WFP faces a funding shortage of US$ 3 million for its refugee assistance.

- UNHAS air services are going through a period of enormous challenges in mobilizing financial resources to support WFP operational and programmatic activities, constraints which are having a significant impact on the services offered. UNHAS forecasts clearly indicate that transport activities will cease at the beginning of September 2023 due to a lack of funding. Faced with this situation, UNHAS is obliged to adopt accompanying measures. Consequently, the number of flights to the destinations of Kiiffa, Néma, Bassikounou and Nouakchott will be reduced from 3 to 2 per week, effective August 2023. This measure will extend the duration of UNHAS services for the time required to complete operations.

**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.