



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
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WFP Mauritania Country Brief September-October 2025

Operational Context

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania faces significant challenges related to land degradation and desertification, with vast portions of its territory being arid and only 0.4 percent of land classified as arable. Desertification drastically reduces soil fertility and productive capacity, negatively impacting both agricultural and pastoral livelihoods. According to the March 2025 Cadre Harmonisé analysis' projections, 590,490 people (12 percent of the population) have faced crisis-level food insecurity conditions (IPC 3+) with 11,873 reaching ICP 4 phase during the recent lean season (June–September).

Mauritania hosts the largest number of Malian refugees in West Africa. As of July 2025, Malian refugees account for more than 6 percent of Mauritania's total population, with 293,000 refugees residing in the Hodh El Charghi Region—an increase of 12 percent since January 2025.

WFP's operations aim at responding to basic food and nutrition needs of targeted vulnerable populations, while providing humanitarian air transport service (UNHAS) to hard-to-reach regions for humanitarian and development partners. In parallel, WFP strives to ensure the continuation of its resilience programmes, while strengthening institutional capacities and promoting gender equality. WFP has been present in Mauritania since 1964.



Population: **4.9 million**

Human Development Index (2023):
Ranked 163rd out of 193 countries

Income Level: **Lower-middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **24.8 percent of children aged 6 to 59 months**

In Numbers

83,045 people assisted in Sep

331.1 mt of food assistance distributed in Sep

US\$ 0.7 million cash-based transfers made in Sep

US\$ 27.7 million six-month net funding requirement
(Nov 2025 – Apr 2026)

Operational Updates

- After the JNIM blockade in Léré, Mali, Mauritania received over 1,000 refugees at Douweinkara and informal crossings since 24 October. WFP Mauritania, with the Red Crescent and UNHCR, provided assistance at Humanitarian Service Points and prepositioned in-kind stocks to meet the increasing needs of new arrivals.
- M'bera Camp response:** In September, WFP provided general food assistance—both in-kind and cash-based transfers—to 47,286 Malian refugees in the M'bera camp, Hodh El-Charghi region. This support continued through October. School feeding resumed in October after the summer break, ensuring meals for children in the camp. Additionally, after a 10-month funding gap, WFP restarted out-of-camp food assistance for six months, reaching a target of 82,000 refugees and vulnerable host community members in October, helping address urgent food and nutrition needs.
- 2025 Lean Season Response:** In October, WFP's fourth round of cash assistance supported 19,971 vulnerable individuals in the Gorgol region's Maghama department. Additionally, 356 children (ages 6–23 months) and 314 pregnant and breastfeeding women received extra nutritional support. The Food Security Commission (CSA) complemented these efforts with awareness sessions, explaining the assistance's purpose, duration, ration sizes, eligibility criteria, and key social and behaviour change messages, ensuring beneficiaries understood the program and its benefits.
- Integrated Resilience Package (IRP):** In September, WFP focused on malnutrition prevention in Guidimakha, hosting nutrition sessions on exclusive breastfeeding, prenatal care, and assisted deliveries for 208 participants, including 132 pregnant or breastfeeding women. Attendance rose to 785 in October. Informational sessions on locally grown products reached 174 women in September and 37 in October. Additionally, 13.6 tonnes of food were distributed to 69 WFP-supported schools, serving 13,489 primary students across three regions in October.
- In September, entrepreneurship training was provided to 150 refugees and host community households as part of the Durable Solutions initiative. The initiative will extend to 90 additional refugee households in the coming months.

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Photo Caption: Sall leads a handwashing awareness session at M'bera camp. WFP/Abderrahmane Camara

WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2024 – 2028)	
Total Requirements (US\$)	Total Received (US\$)
417.6 million	98.1 million
2025 Requirements (US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (Nov 2025 - Apr 2026)
86.3 million	27.7 million

Strategic Result 1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs.

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas, including women and children in need of nutrition support, are better able to meet to their urgent needs immediately before, during and after shocks.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Provide refugees with an integrated package of assistance including food, school meals, nutritional support for the management and prevention of malnutrition.
- Provide nutritionally adequate assistance to crisis-affected populations in the form of cash assistance for food security and nutrition-specific purchases.

Strategic Result 3: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods.

Strategic Outcome 2: Communities vulnerable to shocks in targeted areas have sustainable livelihoods, access to basic services, strengthened human capital, reinforced markets, improved nutrition and resilience to climate shocks by 2028.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities: Provide integrated resilience support to communities vulnerable to shocks and strengthen institutional capacities at the local and national levels, including linkages to national social protection programmes.

Strategic Result 4: National programmes and systems are strengthened.

Strategic Outcome 3: By 2028, national institutions have strengthened capacity to establish a robust, effective, and adaptive social protection system, which includes school-based programmes and nutrition and food security policy.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activities: Provide technical support to improve the capacity of government institutions to build a social protection system that adequately addresses food security, nutrition and shock response.

Strategic Result 5: Humanitarian and development actors are more efficient and effective.

Strategic Outcome 4: Government partners and humanitarian and development actors support vulnerable people effectively and efficiently throughout the year.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Provide air transport services and technical assistance for humanitarian and development partners.
- Provide on-demand services at the request of the Government and other partners, in addition to technical assistance.

- In September, WFP’s rural development team delivered environmental and social safeguards training, evaluated new assets, and inspected market gardening areas. Cash assistance reached 3,126 participants in September and 821 in October, each receiving 200 MRU daily. Forty-eight people received training on organic fertilizers and cooperative gardening. October’s market gardening campaign supported 339 cooperative members–88 percent women, providing seeds and equipment.
- In September, WFP supported a national dialogue on Food Systems and Climate Action Convergence in the Aleg department, enabling stakeholders to identify synergies between food policies, climate goals, and development priorities to strengthen Mauritania’s food system.
- WFP’s first 2025 lean season monitoring report for the African Risk Capacity (ARC) issued in September as part of WFP’s participation on the climate assurance technical working group.
- In October, Mauritania participated in the first regional Anticipatory Action dialogue in Dakar, joining 100 participants from 15 countries. The Mauritanian delegation, with a WFP representative, co-led a panel on integrating Anticipatory Action into national policies and addressing institutionalization challenges.

United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)

- UNHAS flights to and from Bassikounou have been suspended since July 2025 due to unsafe airstrip conditions. Renovation is required to meet safety standards, with costs estimated at US\$ 1.8 million.

Gender

- In September, WFP developed and validated its first Community Engagement Strategy for Accountability to Affected Populations (CE4APP) for the period 2025-2028. Additionally, WFP conducted an awareness mission on gender, protection and AAP issues in the Gorgol region as part of the implementation of the third round of the lean season. A data collection mission on gender and climate was conducted in Kiffa in October.

Monitoring

- WFP conducted two post distribution monitoring (PDM) surveys for the lean season response in Maghama; a baseline targeting survey focused on refugees, returnees and host communities outside of the M’bera camp; and a mid-term review of the Integrated Resilience Programme.
- In October, the National Food Security Survey (FSMS) was conducted, providing crucial data for this year’s harmonized framework.

Challenges

- From November 2025 to April 2026, WFP’s refugee response in Mauritania is only half funded, requiring an additional US\$ 16.5 million to meet operational needs. Despite new donor support in 2025, the Integrated Resilience Package still faces a US\$ 9.3 million shortfall, threatening the planned expansion of programme sites through 2026 and 2027.

Donors

Donors to WFP Mauritania’s CSP 2024–2028 include Andorra, the European Commission (ECHO), France, Germany, the Republic of Korea, Monaco, Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain, Finland, Ukraine and the United States of America. Financial support also includes the African Risk Capacity (ARC) and UN CERF.