



World Food
Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Mauritania
Country Brief
December 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 November 2025 Cadre Harmonisé analysis¹ projections, 500,089 people (11 percent of the population) could face severe food insecurity during the lean season with 301,290 expected to be in IPC 3 or higher during the lean season (June–September 2026).

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



133,806 people assisted in December

1,204.102 mt of food assistance distributed in December

US\$ 1.2 million cash-based transfers made in Dec

US\$ 27.8 million six-month net funding requirement (January – June 2026)

Operational Updates

- **M'bera Camp Response¹:** WFP sustained its assistance to Malian refugees and vulnerable host community members in the Hodh El-Charghi (HEC) region, both within the M'bera camp and in surrounding out-of-camp areas. Within the camp, **7,603 refugees (4,172 females and 3,431 males)** benefited from unconditional cash assistance. In parallel, in-kind distributions reached **44,570 refugees**, with a total of **374.39 mt** provided. Out-of-camp assistance continued in Bassikounou, El Megve, and Fassala departments, with **43,321 refugees** supported through unconditional cash transfers and **44,543 refugees** receiving food assistance amounting to **645.18 mt**.
- **Lean Season Response:** A workshop was conducted the week of 8 December to review and document key lessons learned from WFP's **2025 lean season response** implementation (**June–October 2025**) in collaboration with the Government of Mauritania. Additionally, WFP participated in a national workshop aimed at consolidating insights from the 2025 lean season response as part of the **National Response Plan** (PNR in French).
- **Integrated Resilience Package (IRP):** WFP continued implementing nutrition-sensitive and education-focused activities. Across the **three regions of Assaba, Guidimakha and HEC**, a total of **184.5 mt** of food was distributed, supporting sustained access to nutritious meals for school-aged children. Through the school feeding programme, children continued to receive two hot meals per day in **196 schools**, in HEC.
- WFP continued its malnutrition prevention efforts. In collaboration with community facilitators, awareness-raising activities were conducted through GASPAs² in **129 WFP-supported sites**, strengthening knowledge on optimal feeding practices.
- In addition, **326 farmers** participated in awareness sessions on food preservation techniques, while **539 members** of market gardening cooperatives benefited from training on good agricultural practices, contributing to improved food availability and nutrition at the household level.
- **Social Protection:** On 9 December, WFP led a workshop to present the findings of the agricultural microinsurance study in Mauritania. This activity marked the first milestone of the risk transfer component under the African Integrated Climate Risk Management Programme (AICRM).

¹ Figures contained under Refugee response & School Feeding under IRP activities are estimates

² Community Health Workers

WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2024 – 2028)	
Total Requirements (US\$)	Total Received (US\$)
417.6 million	98.8 million
2025 Requirements (US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (Jan 2026 - Jun 2026)
86.3 million	27.8 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.

The workshop brought together key stakeholders, including the Food Security Commission (CSA) and IFAD Mauritania, to support the development of a financial protection mechanism for agricultural and pastoral producers against climate-related risks.

United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)

- UNHAS provided air services to three destinations: Kiffa (Assaba region), Nema (HEC), and Sélibaby (Guidimakha and surrounding areas). These routes remain critical for maintaining access to regions that are difficult to reach by road, particularly in areas affected by climate-related shocks. The continued suspension of flights to Bassikounou due to airstrip damage continues to limit access to this location; the estimated cost to complete the necessary repairs is approximately **US \$1.7 million**. Without additional funding, UNHAS operations in Mauritania may be suspended from May 2026.

Gender

- In December, WFP, in collaboration with its cooperating partners (GRADD and TENMIYA), conducted an awareness-raising campaign on gender-based violence (GBV) across five localities in the Guidimakha region. The campaign included community-level awareness sessions on different forms of GBV and shared key prevention messages. Emphasis was placed on informing community members about available support services and complaint mechanisms. These activities aimed to strengthen communication at the community level and contribute to increased awareness and prevention of GBV.

Monitoring

- The 2025 Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) survey, an annual nutritional monitoring system established by the Ministry of Health to assess the status of children under five, was conducted in the last quarter of 2025, for the first time since 2022. Findings from the survey reveal alarming levels of malnutrition across Mauritania. Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates are particularly high in Gorgol (**19.55%**) and Inchiri (**15.38%**), while Global Chronic Malnutrition (GCM) peaks in Adrar (**35.64%**) and Hodh El Chargui (**33.26%**). These results highlight an urgent need for integrated strategies that combine prevention and treatment to effectively combat malnutrition nationwide.

Challenges

- From January to June 2026, WFP's refugee response in Mauritania faces a funding shortfall of **US\$ 16.6 million** to meet operational needs. Over the same period and despite new donor contributions in 2025, the Integrated Resilience Package remains **only 40 percent funded**, requiring an additional **US\$ 7.2 million** to sustain operations and enable the planned expansion of sites in 2026.

Donors

Donors of WFP Mauritania's CSP 2024–2028 include Andorra, Austria, ECHO (European Union), 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), UN CERF and UNTFHS.