



# Highlights

- During the lean season WFP scaled up its assistance reaching 95,935 vulnerable Mauritians, including 25,940 children under 5. Another 51,577 refugees received food and cash assistance in Mbera camp.
- In order to continue providing assistance until the end of the year, WFP still requires USD 4 million for local populations and USD 2 million for refugees. Another USD 0.7 million are needed to ensure the continuation of UNHAS services in December.
- Initial concerns are being raised regarding the state of the 2017 harvest season. The first rains were followed by a long dry spell in July and part of August. Many farmers are sowing for the second time while crops should already be at the heading stage.
- WFP received confirmation that Mauritania will be eligible for the ARC Replica pilot starting from 2018.

## WFP Mauritania Country Brief

### WFP Assistance

Protecting livelihoods, reducing undernutrition, and building resilience through safety nets, asset creation and skills development	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
PRRO 200640 (Jul 2014 – Dec 2017)	124.5 m	52.8 m (42%)	5.4 m (54%)

\*September 2017 – February 2018

**GENDER MARKER 2A** PRRO 200640

Developed in consultation with the Government, United Nations agencies and NGOs, the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) provides assistance to the most vulnerable and food-insecure people in Mauritania and protects their livelihoods. In 2017, as part of its operational and strategic review of activities, WFP will further focus on its various assistance components in convergent geographical areas and targeted households. WFP plans to provide food assistance to nearly 135,000 Mauritians living in rural areas with the highest food insecurity and malnutrition prevalence through: (i) food distributions using cash and in-kind transfers during the peak of the lean season; (ii) nutritional assistance to malnourished children and pregnant and nursing women; and (iii) food assistance for asset creation activities prior to and after the lean season period to help vulnerable communities and households strengthen their resilience to withstand future shocks.

WFP continues its assistance for up to 55,000 Malian refugees in Mbera camp with: i) hybrid in-kind and cash distributions; ii) nutritional assistance for prevention of malnutrition and treatment of malnourished children and pregnant and nursing women; and ii) emergency school meals for children. Host communities living around Mbera are also assisted.

Country Programme Mauritania	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
CP 200251 (Jan 2012 – Dec 2017)	77 m	9.2 m (12%)	1.4 (100%)

\* September 2017 – February 2018

Under the Country Programme and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, WFP plans to provide school meals to 73,090 children enrolled in public primary schools in six rural regions. After almost a yearlong suspension due to lack of funding, the school meals has partially resumed in March in Hodh Ech-Charghi region for 16,908 students.

Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Mauritania	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
Special Operation (SO) 200803 (Jan 2015 – Dec 2017)	12.4 m	7.7 m (62%)	-

The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) established in 2012 at the request of the Humanitarian Country Team provides regular air services to aid workers, reaching six destinations in Mauritania. The service is essential to enhance operational and security capacity and facilitate humanitarian access from Nouakchott to the affected populations in remote areas.

### In Numbers

- ✓ **745,000** food insecure people in Mauritania
- ✓ **226,500** people to be reached by WFP per project planning, including **55,000** refugees, **135,000** local Mauritians and **36,500** school children
- ✓ **147,500** people actually assisted by WFP in August 2017



## Strategic Planning

- After a range of extensive consultations, WFP, UNHCR and the CSA – through their partner ACF – initiated the refugee profiling exercise in Mberra camp. Enumerators and translators were recruited and trained from 28 August, with data collection starting right afterwards. The profiling exercise is a major step towards the provision of tailored, needs-based and livelihood-oriented assistance to refugees in the camp. It will be a key element informing the multi-sector and multi-year strategy for refugee self-reliance and host communities' resilience in Bassikounou.
- WFP continues to support the ongoing national Zero Hunger Review process, which will set forward Mauritania's roadmap for achieving SDG2 by 2030. As a member of the Steering Committee, WFP has been informed of the progress made to date and will facilitate the organization of the ZHR consultation workshop in October. The ZHR recommendations will form the main foundation upon which WFP will produce its 2019–2022 Country Strategic Plan.
- WFP and the CSA received confirmation that Mauritania will be among the set of countries eligible to pilot the ARC Replica initiative starting from 2018 (through generous KfW funding). ARC Replica is an insurance product offered to international and non-governmental organisations that replicates the insurance policies purchased by ARC Member States. It is an innovative approach aimed at expanding ARC coverage and delivering the efficiencies required to narrow the humanitarian financing and delivery gap.
- In August, WFP pursued the pilot consisting in using the National Registry for the targeting of its lean season response (in Mabout). This pilot is part of WFP's broader efforts – together with ACF, the World Bank and other partners – to link humanitarian and development approaches, strengthen national response planning mechanisms and support the establishment of an integrated and shock-responsive social protection system in Mauritania.

## Operational Updates

### Relief and Recovery Operation – Refugee Component

- In August, WFP maintained its adjusted lean season ration for 51,577 refugees with (increased) food and (reduced) cash portions, in order to balance the underfunded cash component while guaranteeing refugees' food intake at times of reduced food availability. Among them, 5,316 were young mothers and children receiving preventive and targeted supplementary nutrition assistance.

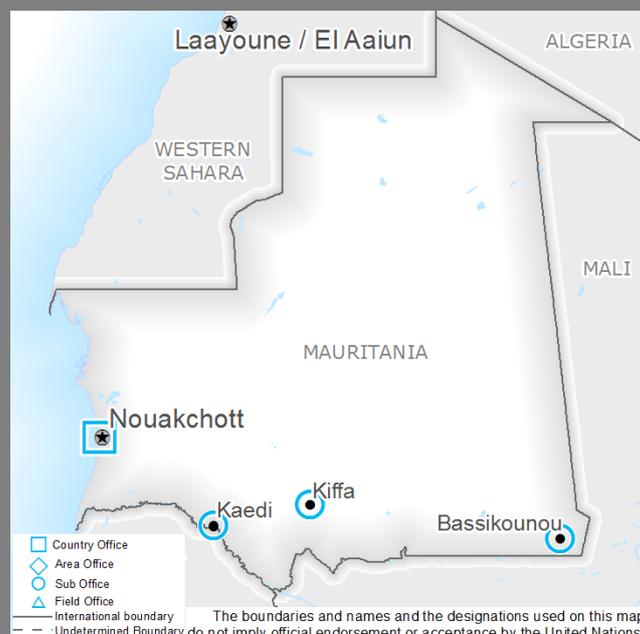
### Relief and Recovery Operation – Local Population Component

- WFP provided assistance to a total of 95,935 vulnerable Mauritians across the six priority Wilayas. The assistance package included General Food Distributions to 68,605 individuals (in the form of cash transfers in Guidimakha, Gorgol and Assaba, and food transfers in Hodh Ech-Charghi), integrated with blanket supplementary feeding for children aged 6-23 months and targeted supplementary feeding for children treated for Moderate Acute Malnutrition. A total of 8,496 individuals also received their last Food Assistance for Assets transfer, with delay due to the unavailability of institutional partners during the pre-referendum period.

### Special Operation – UNHAS

- Taking into account the latest contributions received, UNHAS is now able to expand its operating period until November. Flights will however be interrupted from December onwards should no further funding be secured.
- In August, UNHAS transported 336 passengers and 1.564 mt of light cargo through 44 in-country rotations.

## Country Background & Strategy



Vast and largely desert, Mauritania is sparsely populated and is one of the world's poorest countries. Nearly 23 percent of the population lives below the poverty line on less than USD 1.25 per day (Human Development Report [HDR] 2015). Some 47 percent live in multidimensional poverty with acute deprivation in health, education and standard of living (HDR 2015).

Mauritania faces significant challenges related to food security. The trend analysis of the past five-year data (2011–2015) covering both lean and post-harvest periods based on the Integrated Context Analysis approach suggest that 492,000 people are considered the most vulnerable in the country. Out of the 492,000, some 380,000 people are estimated to be in the six regions reached by WFP. Malnutrition rates are also high in children aged 6-59 months and above the WHO emergency threshold of 15 percent (Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions - SMART).

Mauritania continues to host the second largest number of Malian refugees who have fled their homes following the outbreak of violence in 2012. Latest UNHCR figures count over 51,000 registered refugees.

In 2017, WFP aims to provide food and nutrition assistance to 177,000 people in rural areas with highest food insecurity and malnutrition rates. WFP will also provide life-saving assistance to 55,000 Malian refugees in the Mberra camp and distribute daily school meal to 73,000 primary school children from food insecure and highly vulnerable households. WFP has been present in Mauritania since 1964.

Population: **3.5 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **148 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **31% of children between 6-59 months**

## Donors

Top five donors for **PRRO 200640**: Germany, USA (FFP), Japan, European Union (ECHO) and France.

Top five donors for **CP 200251**: Private Donors

Top five donors for **SO 200803**: USA (BPRM), European Union (ECHO), and Spain.

**Contact info:** Vanessa Rizzi ([vanessa.rizzi@wfp.org](mailto:vanessa.rizzi@wfp.org))

**Country Director:** Jean-Noel GENTILE

Further information: [www.wfp.org/countries/Mauritania](http://www.wfp.org/countries/Mauritania)