



Highlights

- For the next six months, WFP needs USD 14.2 million to avoid pipeline breaks and assist the local population and Malian refugees with self-reliance activities through cash/in-kind assistance.
- WFP's financing gap over the next six months (89 percent) puts at risk food and cash assistance to the vulnerable population during the lean season (May-September).
- USD 0.8 million is also needed to provide schoolchildren with school meals until the end of the school year in June.

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)	121.1 m	44.5 m (37%)	14.2 m (59%)

* April - September 2017

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 to nearly 50,000 Malian refugees in Mbera camp with: i) in-kind and cash distributions; ii) nutritional assistance to 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%)	0.8 m (90%)

* April - September 2017

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.

Provision of Humanitarian Air Services in Mauritania	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)
Special Operation (SO) 200803 (Jan 2015 – Dec 2017)	12.4 m	6.4 m (52%)

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 facilitate humanitarian access to the affected populations in remote areas from the capital, Nouakchott.

In Numbers

492,000 people in food insecurity
218,500 people targeted by WFP including:
47,000 refugees, **135,000** local Mauritanians and **36,500** school children

70,474 people assisted March 2017



Main Photo

Credit: WFP/Vanessa Rizzi
Caption: In-kind (rice) distributions in Mbera refugee camp



March 2017

Operational Updates

WFP Mauritania is working on an interim country strategic plan aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the government's priorities. The plan builds on WFP key strengths and capacities in humanitarian response and recovery and will be WFP's strategic, programmatic and governance instrument in Mauritania from 2018 onwards. It aims to facilitate the implementation of a results-oriented portfolio that meets humanitarian and development needs, as required by the Mauritanian context. The Country Strategic Plan aims also to engage with all country stakeholders and to convene partners around a common approach to eradicate hunger. The country office is preparing to transition to this new strategy from 2018.

The 2017 [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (HRP) in Mauritania was developed jointly by the Government, humanitarian actors working in Mauritania including UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations, and key donors. It aims to guarantee multi-sector humanitarian coordination and planning (water, hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, protection, early warning, health, food security, and multi-sector refugees) in 2017 during the transitory phase from UNDAF 2012–2016 to UNDAF 2018–2022.

Relief and Recovery Operation – Refugee Component

In March, WFP reintroduced in-kind distributions with recent funding. Some 200 new refugees were registered by UNHCR during March and benefitted from assistance. WFP reached 49,300 refugees with a reduced cash and food ration of 1,700 Mauritanian Ouguiya (USD 4), 120g rice and 12g oil per person. To complement the reduced daily individual rations, WFP also distributed 28g lentils.

Malnutrition treatment activities for pregnant and nursing women and children aged 6-59 months in March targeted some 600 vulnerable people. School meals were regularly distributed to 4,400 children in the six primary schools of the camp. WFP also provided school meals for 4,300 Mauritanian children attending schools in Mbera village.

Relief and Recovery Operation – Local Vulnerable Population Component

WFP staff conducted an identification mission of Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) sites in Hodh Ech-Charghi and Guidimakha regions where WFP plans to roll-out FFA in April to ensure sufficient assets are created or rehabilitated to stabilize beneficiaries' livelihoods prior to the lean season. Sites identified through a participatory approach with the communities, included small dams and dikes, as well as rehabilitation and construction of wells.

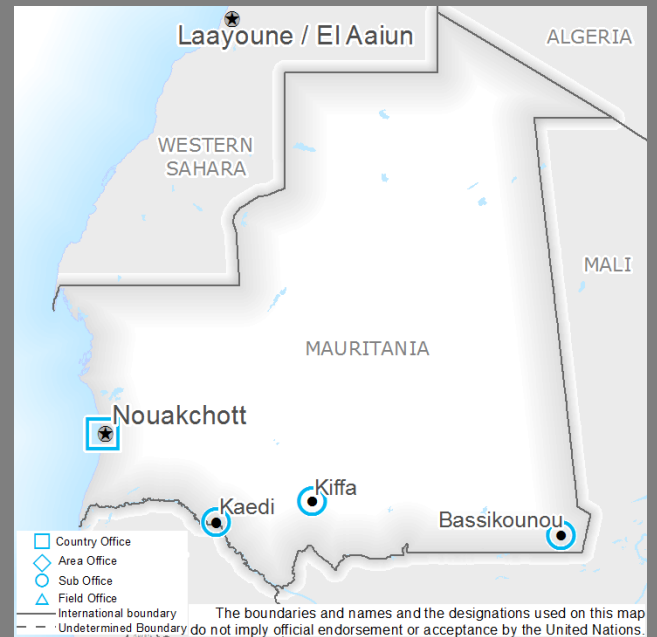
Country Programme – School Meals

WFP partially resumed its school meals programme for 16,800 schoolchildren attending 100 elementary schools in the region of Hodh Ech-Charghi. With private donations from the Japan Association for WFP, the country office was able to distribute two meals (hot porridge and lunch) in March. School meals are a key social protection and social inclusion tool which also boosts nutrition and education.

Special Operation – UNHAS

In March, UNHAS transported 257 passengers and 2,750 mt of light cargo in 35 rotations between Nouakchott and other locations. UNHAS had to cancel four flights during the month of March due to unfavourable weather conditions.

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 close to 49,000 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 46,000 Malian refugees in the Mbera 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**: USA, European Commission, Multilateral, Japan and United Kingdom.

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

Top five donors for **SO 200803**: USA, European Commission, Belgium, Multilateral and Denmark.

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