



# 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	53.2 m (43%)	12.4 m

\*December 2017 – May 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 targets nearly 135,000 Mauritians living in rural areas with the highest food insecurity and malnutrition prevalence with: (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 targets some 52,000 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 lactating women; and ii) emergency school meals for children. Host communities living around Mbera are also assisted.

**Main Photo** Credit: WFP/Vanessa Rizzi  
Caption: Nutrition beneficiaries at a distribution site in Kaedi, Gorgol

## Highlights

- The November *Cadre Harmonisé* projections for 2018 lean season indicate that more than 600,000 people will be in crisis or emergency (IPC phase 3-4) situation.
- WFP distributed reduced rations (16 percent reduction) as part of its monthly general food distribution to Malian refugees, because of resource shortfalls.
- UNHAS urgently needs funding to continue operations in 2018. USD 0.9 million are needed for January-March 2018.

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%)	2.3 m

\* December 2017 – May 2018

Under the Country Programme and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the school meals programme targets 73,000 children enrolled in public primary schools in six arural regions. After almost a yearlong suspension due to lack of funding, the school meals partially resumed in March in Hodh Ech-Charghi region for 16,908 students; however, there is no funding perspective for the school meals in the new school year.

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	8.2 m (66%)	0

\* December 2017 – May 2018

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

**1 million** food-insecure people in Mauritania

(Source: FSMS August 2017)

**226,500** planned people to be assisted in 2017, including **52,000** refugees, **133,500** local Mauritians and **73,000** schoolchildren

**People Assisted**  
November 2017  
**83,516**



**November 2017**

## Strategic Planning

- In November, WFP and humanitarian/development partners finalized the joint food security-nutrition response plan for 2018, based on the estimates of the *Cadre Harmonisé*. The plan will be discussed with the Government in December.
- In November, WFP supported efforts of the Zero Hunger Review (ZHR) process. The final ZHR draft was shared and reviewed by the steering committee identifying key national gaps, issues and priorities for ending hunger by 2030. The ZHR represents an essential national document to orientate the government's 2030 Agenda roadmap.
- WFP held its first stakeholder consultations workshop in November around WFP's five-year strategic orientation (2019-2022) in Mauritania. This Country Strategic Plan (CSP) will be anticipated by an interim plan for 2018 that bridges WFP's current project-oriented framework with the new five-year plan. It will be based on the findings of the ZHR.
- The joint WFP-UNHCR-*Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire* (CSA) refugee household profiling ended in November, in partnership with *Action Contre la Faim* (ACF). 13,441 households were surveyed, representing 96.3 percent of planned households (3.7 percent of households were absent at the time of the survey). ACF is analysing the data that will inform the multi-sector and multi-year strategy for refugee self-reliance and host communities' resilience in Bassikounou, which is being elaborated.

## Operational Updates

### Support to Refugees

- Due to in-kind pipeline breaks, WFP assisted 52,000 refugees with a reduced food and increased cash ration. Amongst them, 5,270 were young mothers and children receiving preventive and targeted supplementary nutrition assistance. The same ration is also planned for December distributions. WFP is concerned of long-term negative effects on the food security and nutritional situation of refugees if reduced rations continue throughout 2018.
- WFP resumed the school meals programme in Mbera camp in November, and assisted 4,300 schoolchildren with a hot morning snack of SuperCereal.

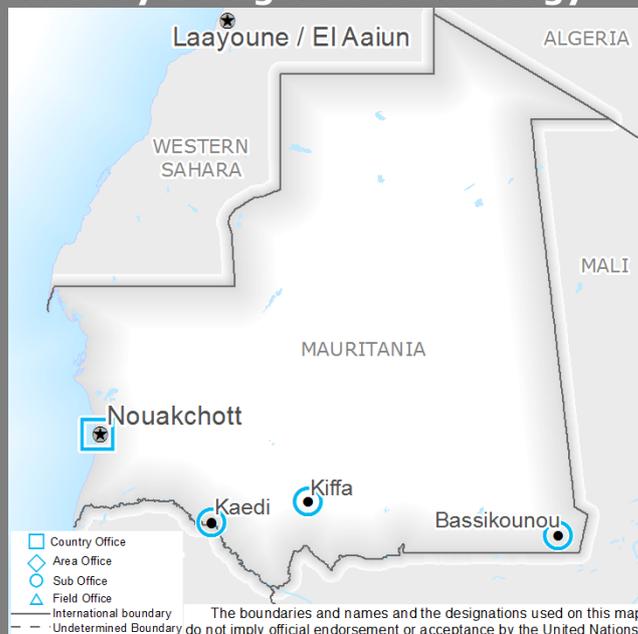
### Support to the Local Population

- In the Gorgol region, WFP distributed the last cash transfer (MRO 34,000 / USD 96 per month) to 67 participating members of a women's cooperative as part of the food assistance for assets (FFA) creation support, to fence and rehabilitate 15 ha (150 m<sup>2</sup>) of degraded land.
- WFP carried out nutrition support in November, in the regions of Hodh el Gharbi, Assaba and Guidimakha reaching some 14,000 children and caregivers.
- Under the Country Programme 200251, WFP provided a hot daily meal to 16,100 schoolchildren in the 100 targeted schools of the eastern Hodh Ech-Charghi region. This represents a one-off monthly distribution for November only. WFP has no more funding to provide school meals during the 2017/18 school year.

### Special Operation – UNHAS

In November, UNHAS transported 294 passengers and 1.5 mt of light cargo through 40 in-country rotations. Multiple users are deeply concerned about UNHAS' imminent closure in December 2017 if USD 0.9 million funding is not secured for the first quarter of 2018.

## 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 is exposed to recurrent cycles of drought resulting in degradation of natural resources and structurally affecting the productive capacity and resilience of populations. Over the past five years, food insecurity rates range from 25 to 30 percent during the lean season with significant regional disparities. Malnutrition rates are also high in children aged 6-59 months and above the WHO emergency threshold of 15 percent (SMART), especially during the lean season.

The protracted situation of Malian refugees in Mbera camp, although significantly improved since 2012, remains fragile and vulnerable to any reduction in food assistance. Seventy (70) percent of the refugees say they depend exclusively on food assistance for their daily food needs

In Mauritania, WFP combines resilience and crisis response interventions for the most vulnerable Mauritanians (adults and children) living in Assaba, Gorgol, Guidimakha, Tagant, Hodh Ech-Charghi and Hodh el Gharbi, and Malian refugees living in Mbera camp to guarantee people's access to nutritious food all year around. The two components are overarching to WFP's capacity strengthening support to the Government, which aims at elaborating a national response scheme for food security and nutrition (currently not available in Mauritania).

WFP has been present in Mauritania since 1964.

Population: <b>3.9 million</b>	2016 Human Development Index: <b>156 out of 188</b>
Income Level: <b>Lower middle</b>	Chronic malnutrition: <b>31% of children between 6-59 months</b>

## Donors

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

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

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

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

**Country Director:** Jean-Noel GENTILE

Further information: [www.1wfp.org/countries/Mauritania](http://www.1wfp.org/countries/Mauritania)