

Mauritania

15 October 2018

Mauritania hosts over **2,000 urban refugees and asylum-seekers** and more than **57,000 Malian refugees** in Mbera camp established in 2012 in the arid south-eastern region close to the Malian border.

Despite the conclusion of a peace agreement in 2015, **large-scale returns of Malian refugees are not expected** due to persistent violence in northern Mali. In September alone, **193 new arrivals** were registered in Mbera.

As the situation in northern Mali continues to be unstable, **Mauritania continues to receive Malian refugees** and to support refugees and vulnerable host communities.

KEY INDICATORS

5,559

New arrivals from Mali since January 2018

No

Voluntary returns to Mali facilitated in 2018

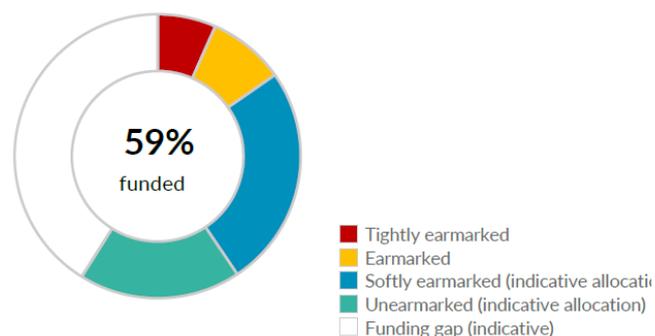
4,891

Malian refugees with **specific needs** (as of 30 September 2018)

FUNDING (AS OF 15 OCTOBER)

USD 20.1 M

11.8 M received. **8.3 M** requested for the UNHCR operation in Mauritania



Aerial view from Mbera camp © UNHCR/Sam Jefferies

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Malian refugees in Mbera camp **57,425**

Urban refugees and asylum-seekers **2,370**

A total of **59,795** people are assisted by UNHCR in Mauritania.

Operational Context

In Mauritania, UNHCR provides protection and assistance to **57,425 Malian refugees** in **Mbera camp** in south-eastern Mauritania and to **1,382 refugees and 988 asylum-seekers in the urban areas** of Nouakchott and Nouadhibou (mainly from the Central African Republic, Syria and Côte d'Ivoire), in the context of mixed-migratory flows.

UNHCR works closely with the Mauritanian authorities towards the **development and implementation of a national asylum system**. Pending the adoption of the asylum law, UNHCR supports the authorities to enhance refugee protection in Mauritania improving access to documentation, birth registration, economic opportunities, and basic services such as health and education.

Since 2012, UNHCR has led the **humanitarian response for Malian refugees** in the Hodh Echarghi region, in collaboration with the Mauritanian Government and other UN agencies, national and international NGOs. Mauritania continues to keep its borders open to new influxes. Despite the conclusion of a peace agreement in Mali in June 2015, large-scale returns of refugees are not yet expected due to the prevailing security situation in northern Mali. In June 2016, Mauritania, Mali and UNHCR concluded a Tripartite Agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Malian refugees. This agreement provides a framework to facilitate voluntary return, when the conditions in Mali allow. In the meantime, it reaffirms the commitment of Mauritania and Mali to protect refugees. At present, UNHCR considers that the conditions in Mali are not conducive to promote the return of refugees. However, UNHCR may facilitate voluntary return upon request and on an individual case basis.

Achievements



PROTECTION

Achievements and Impact

Refugees and asylum-seekers continue to seek safety in Mbera camp with **193 newly registered** in the month of September alone. In urban areas, UNHCR registered **32 new arrivals**.

In collaboration with its partners WFP, LWF, ACF and CSA, UNHCR assisted and accompanied **49 Persons with Specific Needs - PwSN** during the food and cash distribution at four UNHCR distribution centres in Mbera camp.

In urban areas, UNHCR, through the lawyer of its partner in urban areas (ALPD), **provided legal assistance to two Senegalese refugees and one Syrian refugee involved in legal disputes**.

In addition to this, **to discuss about documentation issue and access to nationality**, UNHCR held a meeting with the National Advisory Commission on Refugees (CNCR). UNHCR agreed with the CNCR on **identifying cases falling under criteria to access to nationality and on reviewing them with the relevant authorities**.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

In order to strength and build adequate referral pathways, advocate for inclusion of refugees in all national protection mechanisms UNHCR is meeting with partners in order to bring refugee issues in key child protection ongoing discussions.



*A Central African refugee mother with her children in their tent in Nouakchott
©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso*

**EDUCATION****Achievements and Impact**

In September, to enhance the students level during the school break period, UNHCR and its partners continued to carry out remedial classes for **1,320 students**, including **719 girls and 601 boys**. During September, **66%** children enrolled in support classes attended the courses.

In urban areas, during the academic year 2018/2019, UNHCR is supporting **298 children** to access primary education and **173 students** to attend secondary school in addition to **90** enrolled in tertiary education.

In September, in order to support Malian and urban refugees tertiary education, **UNHCR launched a call for applications for DAFI scholarships for the academic year 2018-2019**. The qualified candidates will be notified at the end of October 2018.



A teacher giving remedial classes to his students in one of the six schools in Mbera camp ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso

**HEALTH****Achievements and Impact**

In September, UNHCR facilitated the evacuation of **35 patients to health facilities** with higher treatment plateaus. **Fifteen refugees were provided cash support to cover medical needs**. UNHCR and its partner, the *Lutheran World Federation* (LWF) ensure medical evacuations for secondary and tertiary medical cases of refugees and host community patients who cannot be treated in the camp or in Bassikounou.

In addition, **331 urban refugees received health assistance** including check-ups, medical visits and surgeries.



A nurse in one of the health posts in Mbera camp ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

Following the announcement of the departure of the main health actor in Mbera camp, *Médecins sans Frontières* (MSF), UNHCR has engaged in advocacy efforts with the Ministry of Health, Unicef and WHO to ensure the provision of basic health services is maintained in Mbera camp from January 2019. As part of these efforts, the Mauritanian Government has expressed its commitment to expand its role in the health sector in the area. Mauritania will need both financial and technical support to take over these activities.

**FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION****Achievements and Impact**

In September, UNHCR in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) distributed **food** (rice 7.8kg/per person/per month, oil 0.78 liters/per person/ per month) and **cash** (100 MRU per person per month) with electronic cards **to more than 51,000 refugees** (12,756 families).

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

Refugees in Mbera camp are dependent on food assistance due to very scarce local resources. From October to December 2018, WFP faces a US\$ 2.7 million shortfall (63% of the 3-month requirements) for its assistance to Malian refugees. UNHCR works with partners to improve access to gardening fields and livestock to reduce refugees' dependency on food assistance. Development interventions are needed in the Hodh Echargui region to help both refugee and host communities become more resilient.



WATER AND SANITATION

Achievements and Impact

UNHCR and its partner *Action contre la Faim* (ACF) ensure that all refugees in the camp have access to clean water and sanitation facilities, including latrines. In September, **14 litres of drinking water per person per day** were available for **refugees in Mbera Camp**.

In September in Mbera camp, UNHCR carried out **hygiene promotion activities** focused on strengthening hygiene practices through different awareness raising techniques (door to door, focus groups, educational talks, meetings, mass session) at households and main meeting points (water points, washing areas, latrines). **The interventions reached out 4,263 men, 4,255 women, 3,278 girls and 2,148 boys.**



*A refugee woman fills her jerry can at one the water point in Mbera camp
©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso*

During the month of September, UNHCR continued with routine monitoring and network management activities **to make the water system in Mbera camp more efficient**. These maintenance works included the change of 17 taps in all camp areas, the repair of 13 faucets, the change of four valves to reduce water loss, the clogging of 5 leaks, and the maintenance of meters. In addition to this, **UNHCR continues with the construction of the new 300m3 water tower.**

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

Water supply in Mbera camp is still highly dependent on humanitarian assistance. An initial investment is needed to ensure a smooth transition from emergency to more durable and sustainable water systems in Mbera camp and its surroundings. These investments are crucial given the current drought risk.



SHELTER AND NFIS

Achievements and Impact

In September, in Mbera camp UNHCR through its partner the *Lutheran World Federation* (LWF) distributed NFIs including blankets and hygienic kits to **191 refugees**, including **68 children and 55 PwSN** provided with, **and 68 breastfeeding women.**

In urban areas, in collaboration with the Mauritanian Ministry of Health **National Program for the Fight against Malaria (PNLP)**, during the month of September the mosquito net distribution for refugees and asylum seekers continued for those who could not receive it at the first distribution in August.



*Mosquitos net distribution to urban refugees and asylum-seekers in Nouakchott.
©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso*

**PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND SELF RELIANCE****Achievements and Impact**

In September, **heavy rainfalls affected the city of Bassikounou and Mbera camp**. UNHCR was appointed by the Mauritanian government as **coordinator for the flood emergency** and carried out an assessment of the situation in the camp identifying damaged areas. **More than 57 refugee families (255 individuals) were evacuated to the various community centres**. Victims of the floods received mosquito nets, jerry cans, and blankets and UNHCR carried out an **emergency food distribution**.

Case-by-case needs assessments and recommendations were made jointly with UNHCR protection partner in the camp, World Vision. Moreover, **UNHCR also distributed CRIs (blankets, mosquito nets, jerry cans, soaps and colanders) to more than 800 families from the host community**.



One of the tents hit by floods in Mbera camp ©UNHCR

**DURABLE SOLUTIONS****Achievements and Impact**

To date, **UNHCR submitted 54 persons to resettlement**. Out of these, **24 persons have already been accepted and 7 of them have already departed**. UNHCR continues to identify cases on monthly basis according to nationalities and specific needs. UNHCR in Mauritania already identified 22 cases.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

There is a considerable number of refugees in need for resettlement in Mauritania. UNHCR continues to identify persons in need of resettlement and conducts advocacy with the support of the Regional Bureau to process cases.

Working in partnership

At the request of the Mauritanian Government, UNHCR coordinates the humanitarian response to the Malian refugee situation in close collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization and local authorities. UNHCR also participates in the United Nations Country Team and Humanitarian Country Team and works closely with national and international NGOs.

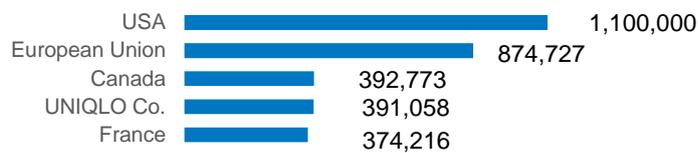
UNHCR, jointly with the Mauritanian Government, representatives of UN agencies and international NGOs signed the 2018-2022 United Nations' Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (CPDD), which integrates humanitarian and development interventions and includes a strategy to strengthen peaceful coexistence and self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Mauritania's border areas.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation. UNHCR also express gratitude especially towards those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with un-earmarked and softly earmarked funds.

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Earmarked contributions for the operation **amount** to some **US\$ 3.1 million**.



SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Germany 46.6 million | United States of America 16.4 million | Private donors Australia 9.9 million | Denmark 5.7 million | Private donors Germany 5.2 million | Sweden 4.4 million | Finland 4.3 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 3.6 million | Norway 3.2 million | Private donors Switzerland 3.2 million | Holy See | Iceland | Liechtenstein | Malta | Romania | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Sweden 98.2 million | Private donors Spain 58.7 million | United Kingdom 45.3 million | Norway 42.5 million | Netherlands 39.1 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 28.5 million | Denmark 25.5 million | Switzerland 15.8 million | Private donors Italy 15.1 million | Private donors Japan 14.6 million | France 14 million | Germany 13.7 million | Private donors Sweden 12.2 million | Italy 11.2 million | Algeria | Argentina | Austria | Belgium | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Bulgaria | Canada | Chile | China | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | India | Indonesia | Ireland | Israel | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Portugal | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | Sri Lanka | Thailand | Turkey | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

External / Donor Relations

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LINKS



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Stories

Annex

Breakdown of the main refugee groups in Mauritania

