

Mauritania

15 May 2019

Mauritania hosts **over 2,500 urban refugees and asylum-seekers and more than 57,000 Malian refugees** in and around Mbera camp. Despite the conclusion of a peace agreement in 2015, **large-scale returns of Malian refugees are not expected due to the persistent violence in northern, which has also been spreading to central Mali**. In April alone, almost **1,000 refugees were registered in Mbera camp, including people who had been in Mauritania for a while and had not approached UNHCR before**. Furthermore, **UNHCR registered 70 new arrivals** in the the urban areas of Nouakchott and Nouadhibou. Pending the adoption of the asylum law, **UNHCR works closely with the Mauritanian authorities to enhance the protection of refugees** in Mauritania improving access to documentation and birth registration. In response, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been enhancing collaboration with **development actors to bridge the current gap between humanitarian and development efforts** and ensure that refugees - in particular, extremely vulnerable ones - are not left behind ensuring economic opportunities, and access basic services such as health and education. UNHCR works under the umbrella of the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (CPDD).

KEY INDICATORS

3,120

Newly **registered** from Mali since January 2019

2,086

Voluntary returns to Mali facilitated in 2019

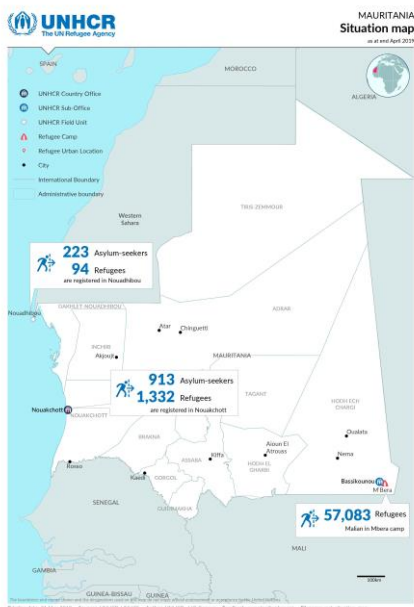
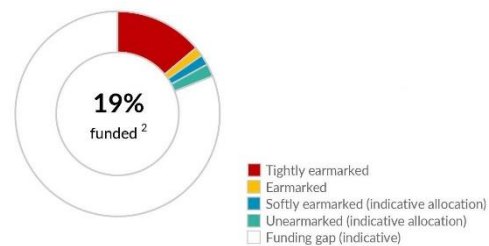
4,610

Malian refugees with **specific needs** (as of 30 April 2019)

FUNDING (AS OF 15 MAY)

USD 19.3 M

3.6 M received. **15.6 M** requested for the UNHCR operation in Mauritania



POPULATION OF CONCERN

Malian refugees in Bassikounou **57,083**

Urban refugees and asylum-seekers **2,562**

A total of **59,645** people are assisted by UNHCR in Mauritania.

High level visits

In April, the ExCom Chair, HE Mr. Boudjemaa Delmi, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Algeria in Geneva visited Mauritania on an official field mission as ExCom Chair to Mauritania. Ambassador Delmi was briefed by UNHCR Representative on UNHCR programme in Mauritania, met with the Head of the National Consultative Commission for Refugees (CNCR), and paid a visit to Mbera camp.

HE Mr Delmi was pleased to see the Global Compact on Refugees implemented in Mauritania especially in this critical stage of transition from humanitarian to development interventions of an operation constantly lacking funds.

From 30 March to 6 April, in partnership with the Arab Institute for Human Rights, a delegation of authorities and civil society members accompanied by the UNHCR Representative in Mauritania visited Tunisia.

The purpose of the visit was to exchange good practices between Mauritania and Tunisia on mixed movement management and refugee protection. During their study visit, the delegation met with Vincent Cochetel, the UNHCR Special Envoy for the Mediterranean Situation, several Ministries including the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign affairs and actors from the civil society.

In addition to Tunis, the delegation visited also the cities of Zarzis and Sfax to assess the Tunisian-Libyan border situation and met with the local authorities. This visit was organized in response to the last year study visit conducted by the Tunisian delegation who visited Mauritania.



HE Mr. Delmi visiting UNHCR registration centre in Mbera camp ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso



The Mauritanian delegation during the meeting with UNHCR Special Envoy for the Mediterranean Situation ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso



PROTECTION

Achievements and Impact

Despite the deterioration of the security environment in the northern regions of Mali, spread now to the centre, in April 2019, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary return of 2,086 Malian refugees to the areas of Goundam (81%), Nianfuke (9%) and Timbuktu (6%). Giving the prevailing circumstances in Mali, at this stage UNHCR does not promote the return of Malian refugees to their places of origin.

During the first quarter of the year UNHCR registered 3,120 new arrivals to Mauritania, reflecting a continuous influx from Mali. The new influx includes more Fulani refugees and refugees who were living in the camp and surrounding areas and who had previously elected not to register with UNHCR. This increase in registration also shows confidence in the protection space offered in Mauritania.

In April, a workshop was held in Casablanca to review the findings of the Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) survey of migrants and refugees in Nouadhibou, with leading RDS expert Lisa Johnston. The workshop was followed by a one day discussion on the development of a regional information management strategy. The survey report, whose estimated date of release is early June, is currently under review.



UNHCR staff assisting a Malian refugee family during the registration process in Mbera camp ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso



HEALTH

Achievements and Impact

In Mbera camp and Bassikounou, UNHCR and partners continued to provide health care to refugees and the host community. During the reporting period, UNHCR continued to facilitate the evacuation of refugee and local patients in the absence of Ministry of Health staff to operate the theatre room at Bassikounou Health Centre. During the reporting period, 33 patients were referred to hospitals to Nema, Kiffa and Nouakchott.



FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Achievements and Impact

UNHCR in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP) distributed **cash** (450 MRU per person per month) with bank cards to **53,647 refugees** (12,381 families). The **introduction of the Global Distribution Tool (GDT)** has enabled UNHCR to enhance its distribution tracking and verification processes, and the protection of children who are sent to collect the food ration on behalf of their families.

In April, WFP and UNHCR introduced the first phase of a progressive implementation of targeted food assistance. **177 households categorised as the “Catalysts” of the camp, stopped receiving food assistance.** The next phase will be taking place during the July food distribution when another group categorized as “Emerging”, will no longer receive food assistance.

During the reporting period, UNHCR facilitated the distribution of rice and oil generously donated by the Kuwaiti NGO al-Rahma to **1,200 people with specific needs.**

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

As of April 2019, WFP faces a US\$ 3.3 million shortfall 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.



PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND SELF RELIANCE

In April, UNHCR participated in two events organized by the National Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment (ANAPEJ). During the “Migration and Labour Mobility” forum and the International Conference on “The role of public employment services in deploying the migration policies in the countries” UNHCR stressed the importance of the socio economic inclusion of refugees in the hosting country. These events were also a good opportunity to showcase how the Agency in Mauritania is working on the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees in urban areas and in the *moughata* of Bassikounou.

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\$ 3.6 million.**

EU	2,329,841
Japan	357,142
Italy	190,467
Monaco	113,766

SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Germany 57.7 million | Sweden 3.3 million | Private donors Australia 2.5 million

Denmark | Malta | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Sweden | Norway | Netherlands | United Kingdom | Germany | Private donors Spain | Denmark | Switzerland | Private donors Republic of Korea
 Algeria | Argentina | Australia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Belgium | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Indonesia | Kuwait | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Qatar
 | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia
 | Sri Lanka | Thailand | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

External / Donor Relations

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