

# Mauritania

September 2017

In Mauritania, UNHCR provides protection and assistance to **over 51,000 Malian refugees** in the arid south-east region where Mbera refugee camp was established in 2012.

UNHCR protects and assists over **2,000 urban refugees and asylum seekers** in the cities of Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, mostly from **Central Africa, Syria** and **Côte d'Ivoire**.

Security in northern Mali is still volatile and largescale returns are not expected. Protracted displacement places considerable pressure on the limited local resources.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

### Host Countries

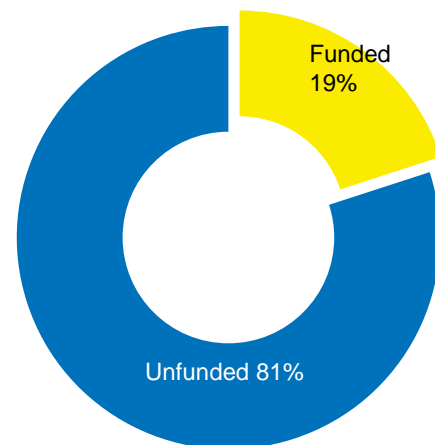


A total of **53,791** people are assisted by UNHCR in Mauritania.

## FUNDING

### USD 19.8 M

requested for the UNHCR Operation in Mauritania



## UNHCR PRESENCE

### Staff:

- 75 National Staff
- 20 International Staff

### Offices:

- 1 Branch Office in Nouakchott
- 1 Sub Office in Bassikounou



## Working with Partners

- 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. Regular coordination meetings are held in Nouakchott and Bassikounou to share information on identified needs and agree on strategies. As part of the Mauritania 2018-2022 UNDAF strategy, UNHCR will continue to work together with other UN agencies to strengthen peaceful coexistence and self-reliance for refugees and host communities in Mauritania's border areas.

## Main Activities

### Protection

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR maintains and updates the refugee biometric registration database; provides tailored assistance to people with specific needs through home visits, psychosocial counseling, support for people with disabilities and carries out awareness-raising activities, training and response to gender-based violence, as well as child protection.
- In urban areas, UNHCR carries out registration of asylum seekers and determination of refugee status. UNHCR also organizes refugee protection trainings for government officials (including police and military officers) and is supporting Mauritanian authorities with the finalization of a national refugee law.

### Education

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR supports primary education with the payment of stipends for 241 school staff members, the maintenance of school infrastructure and the distribution of food in canteens. UNHCR also offers literacy and numeracy classes for 200 adults.
- In urban areas, UNHCR helps 450 refugee children access primary and secondary education by covering tuition fees, providing school kits and offering tutoring. UNHCR also facilitates access to scholarships for refugees who are currently enrolled in Nouakchott universities and advocates for the enhancement of access to higher education for refugees.

### Health

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR supports primary health care for both the refugee and host populations, with the supply of medical equipment and medicine to the camp's health center. Medical evacuations to Nema and Nouakchott hospitals are provided to both refugee and host community members with serious medical conditions for which treatment is not available in the camp's surroundings.
- In urban areas, UNHCR facilitates access to the primary national health care system for all refugees as well as secondary and tertiary health care according to their needs. UNHCR also organizes regular sensitization sessions (in the form of debates or one-day training) at Nouakchott Refugee Women's Center to discuss topics such as family planning, reproductive health, prevention of HIV/AIDS and STIs, and female genital mutilation. UNHCR distributes hygiene kits to women and girls of childbearing age twice a year.

### Food Security and Nutrition

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR facilitates monthly food distributions provided by WFP in the camp. Sixty-five per cent of the food basket is provided in cash and the rest is composed of in-kind food items such as rice and oil among others. UNHCR monitors refugee access to food in sufficient quantity and quality through monthly food basket monitoring as well as quarterly post-distribution monitoring.
- In urban areas, refugees with specific needs benefit once a year from the distribution of basic food items (rice, oil, sugar).

### Water and Sanitation

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR ensures maintenance and optimization of the existing water system, construction and rehabilitation of semi-permanent latrines and the collection, transport and treatment of solid waste. UNHCR supports hygiene awareness-raising activities targeting all refugees to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases. UNHCR also ensures the distribution of hygiene kits for all refugees, with specific sanitary hygiene kits for women of childbearing age.

### Shelter and NFIs

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR ensures replacement of basic items (jerry cans, mosquito nets) and distribution of shelters. UNHCR also ensures maintenance of infrastructure and roads.
- In urban areas, UNHCR distributes blankets in the winter and mosquito nets on an annual basis.

### **Access to Energy**

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR distributes charcoal to 1,200 households with specific needs.
- In 2017, UNHCR distributed solar lamps and phone chargers to every family in Mbera camp.

### **Peaceful Coexistence and Self-Reliance**

- In Mbera camp, UNHCR continues to promote refugee self-reliance through support to 378 income-generating projects launched in 2014-2016, access to vegetable gardens for more than 1,600 women and their families, and the distribution of 570 dairy-goats for the most vulnerable households.
- UNHCR supports community-based structures, such as mixed committees composed of representatives from the refugee and host communities and promotes peaceful coexistence with socio-cultural and focus groups activities. UNHCR also supports quick-impact projects targeting the host population in 10 villages around Mbera camp. These include the rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructures, the fencing of arable land and livestock activities.
- In urban areas, UNHCR facilitates access to micro-credit schemes and promotes vocational training and income-generating activities (IGAs).

### **Durable Solutions**

- UNHCR facilitates the voluntary repatriation of refugees willing to go back to their country of origin. In line with the agreement signed by UNHCR, Mali and Mauritania, UNHCR also facilitates the implementation of a tripartite framework on voluntary repatriation of Malian refugees.
- UNHCR promotes resettlement as a protection tool for the most vulnerable cases.

## External / Donors Relations

### Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds in 2017

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