



A JOINT UNHCR-WFP PUBLICATION

FOOD AND CASH ASSISTANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19 IN MBERA CAMP, MAURITANIA

©WFP/Samba Lo

UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) work together both during emergencies and longer-term crises to provide food assistance to displaced people around the world, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children. Through the timely provision of the right quantity and the right kinds of food assistance, UNHCR and WFP seek to ensure the restoration and maintenance of a sound diet through a balanced and culturally acceptable food basket.

In Mbera camp, the two agencies work together since the establishment of the camp in 2012, and this continues amidst the current health crisis.

CONTEXT

Starting in 2018, in the face of diminishing humanitarian funding, WFP and UNHCR re-oriented their strategy towards targeted rather than blanket assistance, which meant that following a process of identifying the most vulnerable refugees, those less vulnerable would gradually see their food assistance reduced or stopped. Meanwhile, the refugees would be supported with livelihoods activities to earn some income that would offset the reductions in food assistance.

But with Covid-19, the restrictions on movement for merchants and the closure of markets, including the Mbera camp market, livelihoods activities slowed down significantly, threatening the self-sustainability of refugees and food security in the camp¹.

WFP and UNHCR decided therefore that exceptionally all refugees² would receive food assistance, and

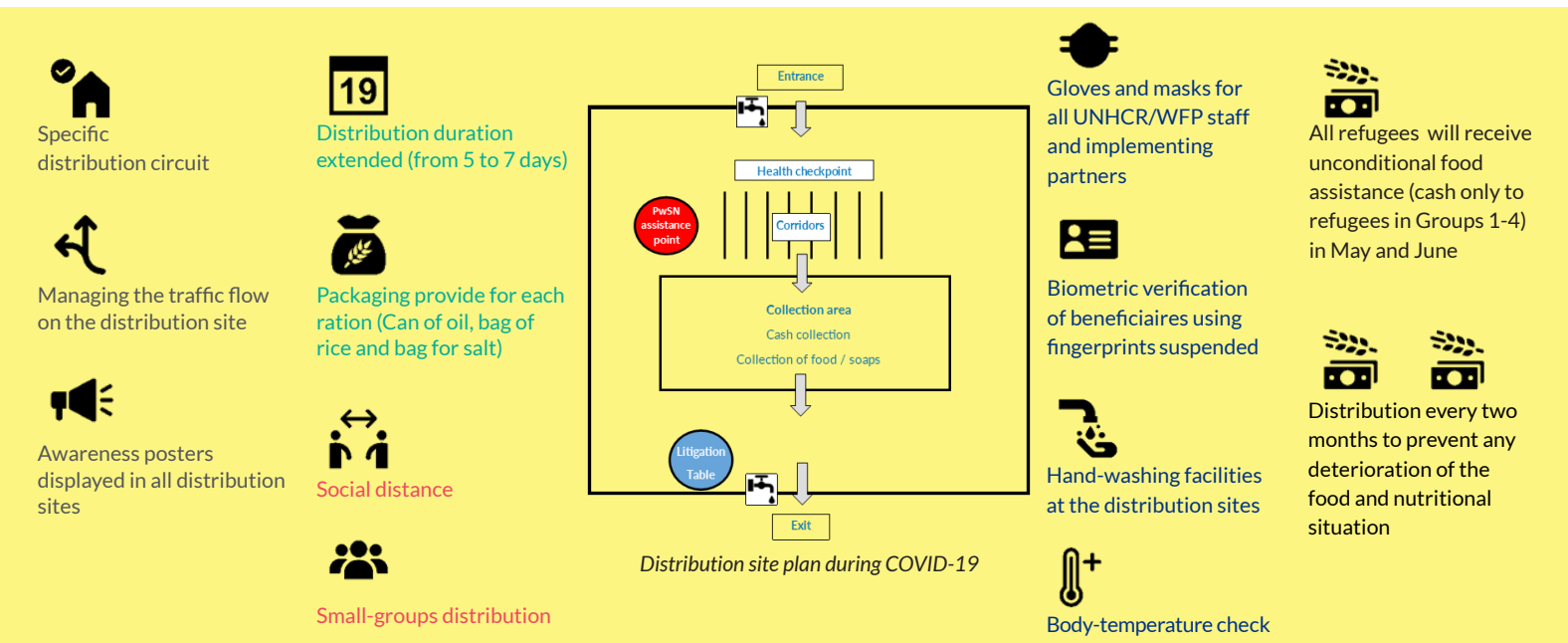
¹ Post Distribution Monitoring survey, April 2020

² Targetting exercise Groups 5 and 6 had their food assistance cut in 2019 and Group 4 only receives 40% of the food ration.

WFP was able to raise the necessary funding for this purpose. At the distribution for the month of May 2020 all Mbera camp refugees received assistance as well as soap. In addition, in order to reduce as much as possible the gathering of large numbers of persons for the purpose of food assistance distribution, in order to prevent the risk of Covid-19 spreading, the May distribution covered two months' worth assistance.

ADAPTING DISTRIBUTIONS OF FOOD ASSISTANCE TO THE COVID-19 SITUATION

The Mbera camp partners had to devise new methods for distributing assistance, to eliminate every risk of contagion.



RESULTS FOR THE GENERAL FOOD DISTRIBUTION IN MAY&JUNE 2020



More than **57,000** refugees received Food and Cash Assistance



More than **13,000** refugee families received soap in the context of COVID-19 response

NEEDS FOR THE COMING SIX MONTHS

Between June and December 2020, WFP's total needs amount to **USD 5,378 million**, of which USD 694,208 for in-kind food distribution and USD 4,683 million for cash-based transfer.

UNHCR's needs are estimated at **USD 2.2 million**, out which USD 1,2 million for cash-based interventions, USD 100,000 for WASH, and USD 150,000 for Camp Management and Coordination.