

# Mauritania

15 August 2019

(Reporting period 1 June – 31 July)

Mauritania hosts **over 2,700 urban refugees and asylum-seekers and around 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 July, **99 refugees were newly registered in Mbera camp**. Furthermore, **UNHCR registered 172 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 through access to documentation and birth registration. In response to the protracted refugee situation, 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) for Mauritania.

## KEY INDICATORS

**3,772**

Newly **registered** refugees from Mali since January 2019 at Mbera camp

**2,086**

**Voluntary returns to Mali** facilitated in 2019

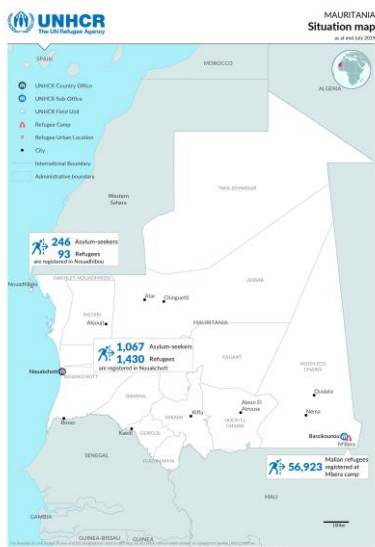
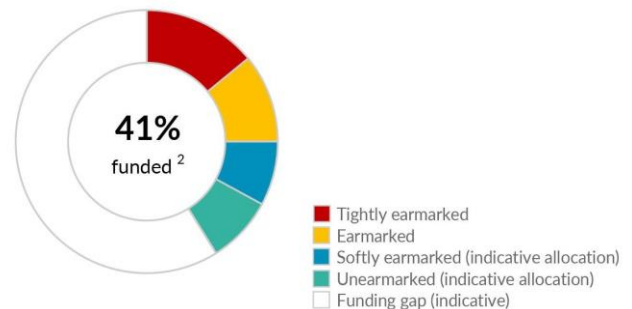
**4,673**

Malian refugees with **specific needs** (as of 31 July 2019)

## FUNDING (AS OF 15 AUGUST)

**USD 19.3 M**

**7.9 M** received. **11.4 M** requested for the UNHCR operation in Mauritania



## POPULATION OF CONCERN

Malian refugees in Bassikounou **56,923**

Urban refugees and asylum-seekers **2,792**

A total of **59,715** people are assisted by UNHCR in Mauritania.

## Achievements



### PROTECTION

#### Achievements and Impact

During the first seven months of the year, UNHCR newly registered **3,772 refugees in Mbera camp, as a result of the 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.

On 16 June, under the theme "**Humanitarian Action in Africa: Children's Rights First**", in collaboration with UNICEF, UNHCR celebrated the **African Child's Day at Mbera camp.** This celebration saw the full mobilization of all humanitarian actors of Bassikounou, the local authorities as well as the refugee community of the camp. UNHCR, in partnership with UNICEF, and in collaboration with partners, organized activities at the camp throughout the week to better raise awareness on children's rights.

On 17 June, ahead of World Refugee Day, UNHCR organized a **Refugee Top Chef competition in Mauritania.** The evening was attended by UN Agencies and NGOs, ambassadors, members of the Mauritanian government and large numbers of refugees who celebrated together for the first time refugees' resilience, talents and diversity. Five teams from Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Syria and Iraq participated in the Refugee Top Chef competition.

In July, UNHCR organized a workshop to validate the results of the survey of migrants and refugees from **Western, Central and Eastern Africa living in Nouadhibou, the second largest city of the country.** The Respondent Driven Sampling methodology used by UNHCR estimates the size of this hard-to-reach population around 10,000 individuals, the largest group among them being Malians. In Nouakchott, UNHCR continued to receive requests for registration from Malian refugees previously not registered.



Leila, the Iraqi refugee winner of the Top Chef Competition during World Refugee Day ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso



### HEALTH

#### Achievements and Impact

In June, UNHCR joined the **Health Sector Coordination Group in Nouakchott advocating in favour of the inclusion of refugees into the national health system** and planning mechanism beyond the region of Bassikounou where a World Bank funded programme will be rolled out in 2020.

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 surgery room at Bassikounou Health Centre. **In June, 35 patients were referred to hospitals to Nema and Kiffa, including 15 refugees while in July 3,925 medical consultation were performed.**

To support the protection and well being of refugees in Mauritania, UNHCR recruited an **expert in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to join ALPD's team, UNHCR partner in urban area.** In July, the MHPSS expert started providing support through counselling sessions with refugees and building the capacity of UNHCR and partner staff to ensure that humanitarian interventions foster the dignity and resilience of refugees.



A mother and her son waiting at Mbera refugee camp health post ©UNHCR/Viola E. Bruttomesso



### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

#### Achievements and Impact

UNHCR continues its assistance to refugees in Mbera, **in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP).** In July, UNHCR distributed **cash and food to 54,336 refugees** (12,574 families).

The progressive introduction of targeted food assistance continued in July. The first cut in food assistance took place in April. 5% of the camp population has now stopped receiving food assistance based on their socio-economic capacities for self-reliance.



## EDUCATION

### Achievements and Impact

**UNHCR continues to fight against adult illiteracy in Mbera camp.** In the month of July, 225 learners (193 women and 32 men) attended adults literacy courses in the main three languages of the camp, namely Tamashek, Arabic and Songhai.

**UNHCR also supported the summer catch-up classes at the camp attended by 1,637 primary school students** (389 girls and 798 boys) to help them bridge the gap between their school results at the end of the year and the required level to enrol at the higher level in September.

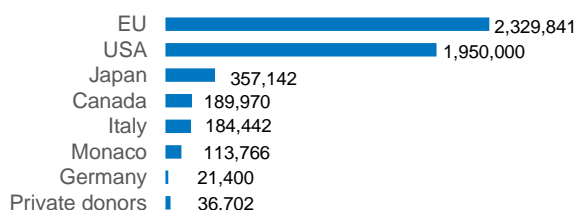
**In June, 23 Malian refugee students graduated from university.** This is the first group of students graduating thanks to the scholarship funded by DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) and the European Union.

## Financial Information

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

### EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Earmarked contributions for the operation amount to some **US\$ 7.9 million.**



### SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS AT GLOBAL LEVEL | USD

**Germany** 10 million | **Private donors Australia** 8.2 million | **Kuwait** 5 million | **Sweden** 3.3 million | **Private donors Republic of Korea** 3.1 million | **Private donors Germany** 3.1 million

Denmark | Estonia | Finland | Malta | Norway | United States of America | Private donors

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS AT GLOBAL LEVEL | USD

Sweden | Private donors Spain | Norway | Netherlands | United Kingdom | Germany | Denmark | Private donors Republic of Korea | Switzerland | France | Private donors Japan | Private donors Italy | Ireland

Algeria | Argentina | Australia | Austria | Azerbaijan | Belgium | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Indonesia | Kuwait | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Russian Federation | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | Sri Lanka | Thailand | United Arab Emirates | Uruguay | Private donors

## External / Donor Relations

### CONTACTS

**Jessica Somé**, Associate External Relations Officer, Mauritania  
 somei@unhcr.org, Cel. +222 42 782 130

**Viola Eleonora Bruttomesso**, Associate Public Information Officer, Mauritania  
 bruttome@unhcr.org, Cel. +222 42 782 305

### LINKS

 -  Facebook -  Stories