

Annual Results Report

2022

Mauritania

Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Context and Overview

- 1.1 - Changes to the Operational Context
- 1.2 - Progress Against the Desired Impact
- 1.3 - Challenges to Achieving Impacts
- 1.4 - Collaboration and Partnerships

Section 2: Results

- 2.1 - Outcomes and Achievements
- 2.2 - Age, Gender and Diversity

Section 3: Resources

- 3.1 - Financial Data
- 3.2 - Resources Overview

Section 1: Context and Overview

1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

In 2022, UNHCR Mauritania witnessed an influx of around 12,000 refugees (56% women and children in urgent need of assistance and access to basic services following the deterioration of the security situation in Mali. By end-2022, the number of registered refugees and asylum-seekers in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou reached 15,200 (up from 5,700 at end-2020), and 91,200 in Mbera camp and surrounding areas (up from 63 800 at end-2020).

UNHCR continued strengthening its community-based approach and widened the protection space for refugees outside Mbera camp. It registered nearly 7,000 refugees settled in the surrounding villages of Mbera camp during 2022. GBV, child protection and community mobilization activities continued in urban areas.

UNHCR also strengthened the inclusion of refugees in national systems, through new partnerships with the National Employment Agency (TECHGHIL) and the General Delegation for National Solidarity and Fight against Exclusion (TAAZOUR) . As of early 2022, refugees are registered in the DELIL system of TECHGHIL and receive insertion services under same entitlements as nationals, thus further strengthening their employability in the local job market.

Meanwhile, activities contributing to peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities intensified, including through promoting “green peace” amongst youth and women from host and refugee communities as well as on livelihood interventions aiming at promoting self-employment in the Hodh Chargui region.

The Government of Mauritania (GoM) and UNHCR reiterated in August 2022 their commitment to fulfill GoM’s pledges with UNHCR’s support .

In the absence of a national asylum system, UNHCR conducts registration and mandate refugee status determination (RSD) in urban areas alongside other protection activities. Recognized refugees are referred to the Agence Nationale du Registre des Populations et des Titres Sécurisés (ANRPTS) for registration with the national authorities. Early in 2022 UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior signed an MoU that reaffirms UNHCR’s role in conducting mandate RSD. With this MoU, refugees in urban areas will receive government-issued documentation, as in the case for refugees in Mbera camp since the adoption of the governmental arrêté 1128 of 15 December 2020.

UNHCR maintained close collaboration and advocacy with authorities and partners to ensure access to territory, asylum procedures and prevention of refoulement, putting in place an overall capacity for RSD. Outreach and communication with people in need of international protection in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou was intensified, and a referral mechanism with partners like IOM and national and local authorities was established.

1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

By 2022, asylum seekers can access territory and request asylum, in line with international protection standards

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
1.1 Proportion of individuals seeking international protection who are able to access asylum procedures.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	69.88%	99.00%
1.2 Proportion of PoC who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence. [GCR 2.1.2]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%

UNHCR Mauritania has ensured throughout 2022 access to territory and to effective profiling, registration, status determination and documentation to refugees and asylum-seekers in Mauritania. It has done so, in close collaboration with the Government, by providing all refugees with documentation, including those recognized by UNHCR in urban areas and those with prima facie status in Hodh Chargui.

UNHCR contributed to successfully:

- a. respond to the influx of more than 12,000 newly arrived Malians in Hodh Chargui region
- b. expand the protection space in the country through the registration and provision of documentation for more than 7,000 Malian refugees in the Hodh Chargui region in close collaboration with the ANRPTS.
- c. establish a standard operation procedure on disembarkation in Nouadhibou between IOM, UNHCR, the Mauritanian government and other relevant key stakeholders to coordinate disembarkation operations and assistance of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, in accordance with international conventions and Mauritanian laws.
- d. prevent arrest and detention of undocumented asylum-seekers whilst their cases are being processed by UNHCR, by including them in the countrywide campaign to regularize foreigners without residence permit and issue them with a one-year residence permit free of charge.

Efforts were made to reduce risks of gender-based violence so that all survivors benefit from timely access to relevant services. UNHCR also ensured robust case management and awareness raising activities to enhance the protection of children and women-at-risk.

Access to legal assistance for all refugees and asylum-seekers has been expanded, including to Malian refugees in Mbera camp for the first time, also to prevent risks associated with irregular onward movements.

UNHCR supported the national registry to register and issue documentation and birth certificates to people at risk of statelessness, working also with the Ministry of Interior and Decentralization, tribunals, and legal partners on legal remedies; 106 Individuals were assisted to obtain civil status documents confirming their Mauritanian nationality.

In 2022, 28 screenings have been conducted in Nouadhibou where most of the disembarkations takes place. In total 99 people we serve were identified and referred for registration and documentation this year. The Country operation continues to closely monitor the situation, especially in Nouakchott where still need to strengthen coordination and information channels to enable diversity of sources of referrals as it is done in Nouadhibou. Challenges are noted in relation to access to territory for some refugees/asylum seekers because of lack of documentation or expired IDs but they are allowed access once we are informed, and we intervene. Noticeably, UNHCR is not always informed about disembarkation in Nouakchott but it is important to note, as earlier mentioned that most of disembarkations take place in Nouadhibou and all disembarked people from Nouadhibou are always transferred to Nouakchott before potential expulsions which the operation is not notified is not notified of cases. For example, West Africa Bureau with the support of their Mixed Movements monitoring partner based at the border town of Gogui, have shared the list of 221 recorded cases of expulsion from Mauritania to Mali. No information was shared on these expulsions by the Mauritanian authorities with UNHCR to date.

2. Impact Area: Realizing Rights in Safe Environments

By 2022, all persons of concern can enjoy their human rights and safely access basic services.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
2.2 Proportion of PoCs residing in physically safe and secure settlements with access to basic facilities	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	Unknown	89.03%
2.3 Proportion of PoC with access to health services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	89.75%	95.00%

UNHCR has supported refugees and asylum-seekers to meet their basic needs in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 through cash-based assistance. In 2022, cash assistance amounted to approximately \$3.3 M indicating a constant increase from year to year.

Healthcare for refugees is assured through, inter alia, third party payments during the transition to inclusion in national healthcare services (SDG 3 on good health and wellbeing). UNHCR and its partner successfully ensured basic medical care, including secondary and tertiary healthcare, preventive healthcare through vaccinations against Measles, BCG, Penta and effective response to peak in morbidity and emergencies, particularly the influx of refugees in Hodh Chargui region. Urban refugees have continued benefiting from health services under same entitlements as the local population thanks to the collaboration between UNHCR's partner and medical centers and hospitals in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou. During 2022, forcibly displaced people could benefit from obstetric care.

UNHCR further contributed to sustainable housing, environmental initiatives and water management and sanitation (as part of CCCM and WASH initiatives and in line with SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities and SDG 6 on water, sanitation, and hygiene). UNHCR effectively coordinated camp management, environmental initiatives and water management and sanitation. Activities included the transportation of tents and their installations for the benefit of the newcomers; registration and profiling of refugees in and outside the camp ; and the general improvement of WASH through rehabilitations and constructions of water drainage systems, pumping stations, latrines in Mbera camp .

New approaches to livelihoods were explored alongside concerted efforts to ensure the Government's GRF pledge to guarantee refugee access to the same labor market conditions as nationals are achievable.

3. Impact Area: Empowering Communities and Achieving Gender Equality

Refugees and asylum seekers can build self-reliance for better future.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
3.2a Proportion of PoC enrolled in primary education	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	35.92%	37.82%
3.2b Proportion of PoC enrolled in secondary education	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	7.77%	8.21%

UNHCR has strengthened leadership and community initiatives while promoting decision-making and empowerment among youth and women. Efforts were made to increase inclusion of refugee children in the national education system (SDG 4 on quality education), facilitate access to employment services and the formal labor market (SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth) and to build resilience within refugee and host populations in the context of climate change, recurrent cycles of food insecurity and limited local natural resources (SDG 2 on zero hunger).

Of note, on the gradual phasing out from its 'cash for education' programme supporting school fees to refugee children enrolled prior 2020, UNHCR continued advocating and promoting inclusion of all newly registered pupils into the public school system in urban areas through a close work with education authorities. Following consultations with national education authorities and education sector stakeholders in both Nouakchott and Mbera camp, priority in 2023 will be given to including refugees into the Mauritanian national education systems, aiming to reduce parallel systems as well as direct investments to the national public system.

Strengthening employability of refugees through a wide range of services were at the heart of the partnership with the National Employment Agency in 2022. Such services included coaching, apprenticeship programmes, standalone courses in different professions, training on job search techniques (TRE), training on business management (GERME) and financing of income generating activities run by individuals or group of individuals) that were offered for the first time to refugees in Bassikounou, Nouakchott and Nouadhibou alongside local populations.

4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

More persons of concern benefit from a wider range of solutions by 2022

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
4.1 Number of refugees who voluntarily return in safety and dignity to their country of origin. [RF/GCR 4.2.1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	5,421	185
4.2a Number of PoC who departed on resettlement. [GCR 3.1.1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0	29
4.3b Number of refugees for whom residency status is granted or confirmed.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	67,000	91,276

In close collaboration with its partners, UNHCR advocated for refugees to have access to local and national services on par with nationals. Mauritania's Social Registry, with the support of UNHCR and WFP, included urban refugees in its national census of late 2022 through a socio-economic survey to revise the targeting and identify the most vulnerable households in Nouakchott.

In a previous phase (2021), the census included Malian refugees in Hodh Chargui region under the objective to categorize refugee households as per their vulnerability and include the most vulnerable ones into the national social protection scheme, Tekavoul. Likewise, UNHCR succeeded through its new partnership (Taazour/AI Barka) to include Malian refugees in HEC, the economic inclusion programme of the government. 129 Micro Entreprises, from which 114 led by refugees have been selected through Taazour/AI Barka methodology, accompanied into setting their business plans and financed accordingly.

UNHCR also contributed for conditions to be conducive to safe and dignified voluntary return (SDG 10 on reduced inequalities and SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions). In this regard, UNHCR facilitated the voluntary return of 150 Ivorians following the cessation of refugee status of 185 individuals. Additionally, 123 cases were submitted for resettlement.

1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

On Registration, documentation and RSD activities the number of cases including vulnerable cases exceed the processing capacity of UNHCR and its partners, resulting in long waiting periods. Limited resources and technical capacity for the national registry agency to process cases in a timely manner and lack of (census) data on stateless persons hindered efforts to identify and document the people we serve, including those at risk of statelessness. A significant number of births take place outside of formal health facilities, thus delaying or, in some cases preventing the attainment of key documents for obtaining birth certificates.

On access to basic services: While people we serve have access to some key basic services, including health, education and labor, in the same way as nationals, in practice these services often lack capacity/quality to provide adequate support. Limited access to decent employment leave people we serve at heightened risks of exploitation, unmet basic needs and negative coping mechanisms.

On education: Limited opportunities at secondary and tertiary education levels, as well as vocational and technical training. The Mauritanian education system faces significant challenges, both in terms of access and quality, with for e.g. a lack of WASH facilities in some schools, overcrowded classrooms, long distance to schools in some municipalities. The difference in the language of instruction and the mother tongues of people of concern is also a challenge for refugee and asylum-seeking children to integrate into the public education system.

Some People we serve face a risk of arrest, arbitrary detention and refoulement. LGBTI refugees are especially at heightened risk of discrimination and legal and physical protection risks.

Outreach to hard-to-reach groups, such as refugee living in rural areas, or children in vulnerable contexts (e.g., child-labour settings and those involved in begging in the cities) has been identified as a critical need but has not been addressed yet.

On solutions: With a growing number of refugees with acute protection needs, resettlement is the only viable long-term solution, but limited quotas remain a constraint.

1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

In 2022, UNHCR continued to coordinate the refugee response in Mauritania in line with the principles of the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), and in close collaboration with MIDECE, local authorities, UN agencies and NGOs. In this framework, sectoral coordination meetings were regularly organized to exchange information on identified needs, the development of joint responses and sectoral strategies as well as joint fundraising.

UNHCR further strengthened the inclusion of refugees into the national system through new partnerships with the National Employment Agency (Techgil), the General Delegation for National Solidarity and Fight against Exclusion (Taazour/Al Barka programme), the Regional Cell for Development of the Hodh Chargui. As of March 2022, refugees were able to be registered into the informative system of the National Employment Agency (DELIL) and receive support to increase their employability (soft skills training, job placements interviews etc.) under same conditions as nationals. Close cooperation and working relationships have been maintained with local authorities such as the Wali of Hodh Chargui, the Hakem of Bassikounou and the Gendarmerie in charge of security in the Mbera camp, as well as local authorities in Nouadhibou.

In line with the UN reform and to enhance UN coordination, UNHCR actively participated in the UNCT and maintained fruitful partnerships with main UN agencies contributing to the refugee response. In Nouadhibou, UNHCR and IOM continued to coordinate on mixed movements with local authorities and other partners. In Mbera, the work with WFP on socioeconomic targeting resulted in the inclusion of refugees in the national registry, while collaboration with IOM and UNDP was strengthened through the joint implementation of the Peacebuilding Fund projects.

In line with the GCR operationalization, UNHCR developed further its partnership with the World Bank and line ministries to facilitate the implementation of the four IDA 18 Sub-Refugee Window projects that were approved for Mauritania. In this framework, the engagement of UNHCR with the Social Registry, Tekavoul, Taazour and the Ministry of Health developed enormously. The role of UNHCR in these partnerships is to preserve protection centrality, ensure an adequate level of refugee inclusion in the national system and reduce potential shocks during the transition phase.

Similarly, under a multi-year partnership with the GIZ, UNHCR continued implementing a pilot project to enhance refugee inclusion by increasing government capacities, access to basic services as well as access to livelihood opportunities in 2022.

Section 2: Results

2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

1. Outcome Area: Access to Territory, Reg. and Documentation

Refugees and asylum seekers have access to territory and to effective profiling, registration and documentation procedures in Mauritania.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
1.1 Proportion of refugees and asylum seekers registered on an individual basis.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
1.3 Proportion of PoC with legally recognized identity documents or credentials [GCR 4.2.2].	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2022, UNHCR continued to be solely in charge of issuing identification documentation for urban refugees. Early 2022, an MoU was signed between UNHCR and the Mauritanian authorities formalizing the issuance of refugee identification cards by Mauritania. The MoU enhances protection from arrest, detention and refoulement, and facilitates implementation of arrête 1128, enabling the issuance of national refugee IDs for the refugee urban caseload. These cards contain refugees' individual and unique national identification number (NNI), thus also facilitating refugees' access to services, including banking ones.

Registration of asylum-seekers and refugees in urban areas remained a priority for UNHCR. In order to prevent refoulement, UNHCR and its legal partner maintained close collaboration with communities and relevant authorities, which facilitated continued advocacy for access to people at risk of refoulement. In 2022, 99 people of concern were identified in detention.

Regarding access to territory, during the reporting period, cases of denial of access to territory and refoulement were reported by refugees. In some instances, individuals with international protection needs were denied entry UNHCR strengthened its advocacy to promote unhindered access of persons with international protection needs to the Mauritanian territory.

In 2022, UNHCR continued the identification of persons with specific needs and made efforts to enhance the quality of registration information. As of end-2022, a total of 15,282 asylum seekers and refugees (majority Malian) were registered in urban areas in Mauritania.

In Bassikounou, UNHCR Sub-provided assistance and protection to 91,263 refugees (82,816 in Mbéra camp and 8,447 in the villages). In 2022, the Agence Nationale du Registre des Populations et des Titres Sécurisés (ANRPTS) issued less than 7% of adult applicants with identification cards and no birth certificates, exposing children to the risk of statelessness. The low rates of submission and issuance is due to regulatory challenges (cumbersome issuance criteria), the institutional weakness of the ANRPTS and refugees' lack of awareness of the importance of the birth certificate.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Competing priorities on activities between ongoing registration and RSD activities, ad hoc screenings in detention for individuals at risk of refoulement, and the additional needs of the unprocessed/undocumented forcibly displaced people beyond urban centers.

Serious protection risks for the unprocessed/undocumented that include refoulement, arrests, and reduced access to services and assistance. Malians are at heightened risk of refoulement due to immediate proximity of their country of origin.

Impact of the mixed movement context: occurrence of arrests and expulsions, including for people we serve due to the mixed presence of individuals with refugee and migrant profiles in the same locations.

Long waiting periods, especially for Malians falling under the UNHCR non-return position due to limited processing capacities in comparison with the high number of requests for international protection.

Limited access to asylum procedures for most vulnerable forcibly displaced people outside of urban centers due to lack of information/means and absence of outreach from UNHCR and partner.

Additional challenges regarding connectivity, which delays daily V4/BIMS activities and impedes the use of remote processing methodologies.

The main unmet needs are:

Thousands of Malians asylum seekers are still waiting to be registered, and other are not identified because they are not aware of asylum process and/or they are living in remote areas, and they lack means to reach UNHCR.

Appropriate information and communication on registration need to be disseminated among communities, including through outreach missions, to enable people in need of international protection living in locations other than Nouakchott and Nouadhibou to access asylum procedures.

2. Outcome Area: Status Determination

Persons of concern have access to efficient and effective RSD processes.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
2.3 Proportion of individuals undergoing asylum procedures who have access to an effective appeal mechanism after first instance rejection of their claim.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Article 2 of Decree 022/2005 states that “any asylum-seeker on the national territory may be granted refugee status if he falls within the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and if he is recognized as such by an act the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania under the conditions provided for in this decree.” Article 4 defines the mandate of the National Consultative Commission on Refugees (CNCR) in this regard: “Its function is to give an advisory opinion on applications for refugee status.” Further Article 8 states that “the refugee status is recognized or withdrawn by order of the Minister of the Interior.” However, in practice, the CNCR does not conduct Refugee Status Determination (RSD). Despite training delivered to its members over the past years, capacity to conduct a fair and efficient RSD process is still lacking.

In February 2022, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between UNHCR and the MIDECE, formalizing UNHCR’s temporary role in RSD and r The MoU is expected to enhance protection from arrest, detention and refoulement, and facilitate and accelerate issuance of national refugee IDs for the refugee urban caseload in addition to camp-based caseload.

During the reporting period, more than 15,553 asylum seekers and refugees are in Nouakchott and

Nouadhibou, up from 5,735 as of December 31, 2020. In Mbera camp, while there were 63,863 refugees as of December 31, 2020, the figure rose to 91,263 by the end of December 2022.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

During the reporting period, the total number of registered refugees and asylum seekers stood at 15,282 in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, an increase of 9,818 persons compared to 2020. This increase added further pressure on resources and staffing needs, such as the RSD team needing to process more cases in a faster timescale, while maintaining the required standards.

A further challenge is noted on the increasing number of new shows at RSD interviews, mainly due to the fact that many PoCs travel between localities in search of work and/or localities with cheaper rent as a result of an increased cost of living in urban areas.

As a result of the recent regularization campaign undertaken by the Mauritanian Government, hundreds of people who did not intend to apply for asylum while living in Mauritania approached UNHCR to ensure they are registered and issued with UNHCR documentation in anticipation that the authorities would increase raids and arrested on undocumented people in the country. This put added pressure on both the registration teams but also the RSD team in terms of backlog.

While the protection environment remains generally favorable, cases of LGBTIQ+ have been prioritized as well as those with acute physical and legal protection needs, for whom an eventual referral to resettlement needs to be considered.

3. Outcome Area: Protection Policy and Law

Existing HCR procedures formalized with the authorities and a transition process towards adopting a national asylum system is initiated

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Mauritania is a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa but does not have a national asylum law and is not party to either of the Statelessness Conventions. In 2014, UNHCR initiated a second consultative process to draft a "Projet de loi relatif au droit d'asile en Mauritanie" with the National Consultative Commission on Refugees (CNCR). The law was approved by the Minister of the Interior and Decentralization (MIDEC) and the Ministries of Justice, Defense and Foreign Affairs in 2016 but remains pending final approval and adoption.

In the absence of a national asylum law, Decree 22/2005 on the implementation modalities of international conventions relating to refugees applies. It defines a refugee in line with the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. The Decree also includes clauses relating to exclusion (Article 6) and cessation (Article 7). The Decree lightly defines the modalities for access to asylum (see below section V.2. on RSD) and some socio-economic rights (see below section V.4.f). A further ministerial decree of 2018 (1) establishes the legal framework for the issuance of national identification cards for refugees, limiting this to camp residents. The scope of the decree was broadened in December 2020 (2) to enable issuance of cards to out of camp refugees.

In general, the Government of Mauritania demonstrates willingness to address shortcomings in policy and

practice. It has committed on numerous occasions since 2015 to enact the draft asylum law and renewed this as a pledge to the Global Forum on Refugees (GRF) in December 2019. The adoption of an adequate legal framework in compliance with this pledge will need to be followed by the establishment and maintenance of a national asylum institution to ensure fair and quality decision-making procedures for the registration, RSD and documentation of refugees and asylum seekers.

The 2022 MoU was shortly followed by other key changes within the legal sphere related to refugees and asylum seekers in Mauritania: The decree of 2005, which defines the modalities for implementing the 1951 and OAU conventions, was amended and replaced by Decree 2022- 063.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

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Despite a commitment made at the High-level segment on statelessness and at the GRF, Mauritania is not party to either of the Statelessness Conventions. This, added to some gaps in the national legislation increases the risk of statelessness.

4. Outcome Area: Gender-based Violence

Risk of GBV is reduced for all PoC and all survivors have adequate and timely access to services

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
4.1 Proportion of PoC who know where to access available GBV services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	68.00%	80.00%	76.91%
4.3 Proportion of survivors who are satisfied with SGBV case management services.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	71.01%	100.00%	60.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

To prevent violence, 1,459 persons, including 1,138 women, 67 men, 162 girls and 92 boys, were reached by awareness sessions on GBV and sensitization activities with the community were reinforced.

Discussions with women and awareness campaigns such as the 16 days of activism against GBV, International Women’s Day and International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation also took place. The SOPs guiding case identification and management has been adopted by GBV working group and refugees and a confidential referral system has been established in the community to respond to the needs of GBV survivors, including psychosocial assistance and a mental health service unit based in the Camp’s Health Centre.

In terms of coordination, UNHCR supported various partners through focus group discussions and trainings to contribute to the reduction of GBV risks. Regular focal points meetings are also held to reinforce the

coordination, case management, reporting and follow up of the GBV cases. To improve case identification and management, focal points (12 women and 8 men) are set up in the different schools, health posts and health centers, the police and the brigade.

Moreover, UNHCR is working closely with refugee-led associations ; The Comite des Femmes Ressources, the Association Action Contre les violences et the association SOS Nomade are among the more active ones in the sector of GBV prevention. Following assessment of their capacities and needs, UNHCR held training session on GBV types, first response notions and referral pathways within the camp.

A second training on human rights and human rights' defenders' practices was held with the same target, adding women leaders from the host community of Bassikounou,. . All women participated actively and reaffirmed their engagement with these causes.

In 2022, UNHCR assisted 39 survivors of GBV (28 in Nouakchott and 11 in Nouadhibou) and conducted adequate case management. At the end of 2022, GBV case management has partially been handed over to a new implementing partner (AFCF : Association des Femmes Cheffes de Famille). AFCF conducted 16 sensitizations on GBV prevention and response for the persons we serve and has reached more than 1,000 individuals during these sessions.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Persistence of social and cultural burdens Poverty or precariousness of families who think that early or forced marriage is a means of protection.

Frequent change of GBV focal points of the partner thus not allowing for the creation of bonds and confidence with the community Hostile national legal framework on GBV, the lack of capacity and willingness to address GBV, as well as the use of non-judicial dispute settlements by families of survivors. Absence of the government counterpart in charge of social affairs.

5. Outcome Area: Child Protection

Child protection case management system strengthened and children's well-being ensured

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
5.1 Proportion of children at heightened risk who are supported by a Best Interests Procedure.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	59.87%	100.00%	22.99%
5.2 Proportion of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	20.65%	30.00%	23.00%
5.3 Proportion of unaccompanied and separated children who are in an appropriate alternative care arrangement	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	90.91%	100.00%	61.14%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Mauritania ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 and has been working to strengthen its child protection services. In 2022, UNHCR Mauritania continued promoting the inclusion of refugee children in national protection systems as well as community-based child protection systems, while strengthening partnerships with key actors in terms of prevention and response to needs of children at risk, including the MASEF (Ministry of Social Affairs, Childhood, and Family), UN Agencies and key NGOs such as Save the Children and Medicos del Mundo. The operation has identified by end of 2022 a new local partner taking over child protection activities (alongside GBV and community mobilization related activities).

The national standard operating procedures for child protection case management led by the government (MASEF) with UNICEF support and UNHCR inputs continued to be implemented in line with the national protection strategy 2019-2030. The cases of child protection are identified, assessed and followed-up in partnership with governmental institution (MASEF), and partners. Through participation in the WGIP, UNHCR has trained panel members (IOM, UNICEF, French Red Cross...) on the best interest of children procedures. UNHCR staff are recording cases into V4 as per the Guide V4 Module Protection de l'enfance.

Refugee children were particularly impacted by the Covid-19 crisis, with continued negative of the several weeks of school closure in 2021. Child marriage is widespread in Mauritania (18% of girls are married by the age of 15, and 37% by the age of 18, UNICEF, The State of the World's Children 2021), including among refugee communities. UNHCR was unable to work with refugee communities and partners on this to ensure adequate interventions due to lack of resources.

Key constraints are 1) the overall low level of protection services available for children in Mauritania, 2) Limited staffing and resources impacts on the operation's ability to reach to hard-to-reach children (e.g. to the out-of-schools children), 3) no specialized implementing partner in urban areas.

Children have been involved in protection programs through recreational activities, participation in the AGD sessions, and thematic days (June 20, 16 Days of Activism, etc.).

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Weaknesses of state responses, (absence of reception centers, target policies), limited human and financial resources, low impact of our responses to the needs posed (child marriage,) difficulties in changing mentalities anchored in socio-cultural and religious realities.

Female Genital Mutilation, GBV, early marriage and divorce, denial of schooling, lack of recreational activities for youth.

6. Outcome Area: Safety and Access to Justice

Persons of concern have effective access to legal assistance

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In Q1 2022, 104 refugees were assisted by El Insaniya, a legal national NGCO working in partnership with UNHCR to provide legal assistance to forcibly displaced people. 72 criminal cases and 32 civil cases were followed up and 56 prison monitorings were carried out in the Nema and Bassikounou detention centres and security rooms. 53 refugees were released after serving their sentences or following the intervention of the lawyer who succeeded in showing that the offence is not constituted.

During the reporting period, approximately 44% of legal protection cases involved detention, a decrease of 15% compared to cases in 2021 (59%).

The results of the 2022 RMS survey provided general positive feedback on the perceived feeling of security of the people we serve.

Nevertheless, UNHCR recognizes key constraints such as the restrictive legal framework for some groups such as LGBTIQ+, and survivors of GBV; limited outreach capacities for legal interventions outside of Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, and limited sensitization of PoCs on their rights and obligations. UNHCR and partner's engagement in the identification and response to PoCs victims of smuggling and trafficking also remained very limited.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Despite significant progress on access to justice and security for people we serve, some individuals, particularly from the LGBTIQ community+, experience violence (threats, assaults, intimidation...) from host communities and sometimes from members of security forces.

- Lack of awareness on the side of state agents, especially the police;
- Inappropriate behavior of some state agents ;
- Slowness and congestion of the justice system ;
- The bureaucracy and rigidity of procedures that prevail in some state structures.

7. Outcome Area: Community Engagement and Women's Empowerment

There is an effective two-way communication between PoCs and UNHCR; the community is fully engaged into programme design, monitoring and evaluation; and PoCs are able to make informed decisions.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
7.1 Proportion of PoC who participate meaningfully across all phases of the OMC.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	84.51%	95.00%	54.00%
7.2 Proportion of PoC who have access to effective feedback and response mechanisms.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	84.51%	90.00%	50.00%
7.3 Proportion (and number) of active female participants on leadership/management structures.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	35.00%	75.00%	50.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR promotes the community-based protection approach to support community self-reliance, empowerment, and accountability so that people we serve can exercise their rights safely and with dignity. This entails that communities are actively and significantly involved in all the programming aspects that impact them. As such, refugees participate in all the decisions that affect their living conditions in the camp through several community structures. The leader coordination committee, the women committee and the youth committee worked closely with UNHCR and its partners to reinforce the promotion of refugee protection, communicate on key issues related to their life in the camp and involve as much as possible the different groups of refugees to ensure participation of refugees in their diversity. Women participation is at 50% in the refugee leadership and coordination.

Moreover, two veil distributions for schoolgirls and all female personnel in education have already resumed with positive feedback received by the community.

Sectoral committees in WASH, food distribution and environment are also contributing to the identification of solutions and involving communities in their implementation. The sanitation volunteers' group (VRPC) in the camp was supported to enhance awareness raising on sanitation and provided capacity building in maintenance of latrines within the camp. SOS Nomade, Anti fire brigade and VRPC play a key role in reforestation, combating bushfire and making the camp clean through their community initiatives. Their actions were appreciated by both host community leaders and peers. The recognition of the work done by

the anti fire brigade earned it the Nansen Award.

Complaints and feedback mechanism (hotlines, suggestion box, protection desks) are put in place to attend to the needs of our persons we serve .

In urban areas, persons we serve are in different moughataa (communes). Community mobilization was not often easy. In fact, despite the economic difficulties of daily life of , persons we serve the lack of coordination of the community through leadership committee, non-organized or unknown community structures, numerous periodic meetings have been organized with refugees and asylum seekers living in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou. In 2022, these meetings mobilized 1100 individuals, including 260 women and the personnes resources include a committee of elders, customary leaders, religious leaders, youth and student leaders.

For access to education for refugee children, many meetings with personnes resources and parents (, many children were enrolled in school, more than 75% of them in public schools, for a total of 1,058 children (Nouakchott). As for the implementation of cash assistance, parents hoping to receive school entrance assistance brought proof of enrolment of their children to school, unlike in previous years.

In terms of complaints, the setting up of the protection desk has made it possible to collect refugees' complaints on a daily basis in addition to the hotlines. Refugees have been able to receive the feedback to their issues on time including access to health, education, resettlement updates. UNHCR Mauritania plans to harmonize the management of the hotline with a dedicated IP with capacity on receiving and responding to queries through that communication channel. During 2022 Participatory exercise, urban refugees deplored the lack of effective channels and means of communication with UNHCR, including the lack of feedback from UNHCR on their requests. The accessibility of partner services, particularly the legal partner, the lack of integration of refugees and asylum seekers into the host population's community initiatives were also repeatedly raised by the PoCs.

Two hotlines, UNHCR protection desk 5 days a week, individual case by case interviews, community whatApps groups set up for general information to refugees and their community leaders, in no way addressing the problem of refugee protection,

The strengthening of community mechanisms in the urban environment will continue under the new partnership with the new partner AFCF in community engagement. Actions to strengthen UNHCR visibility in the AFCF reception center and the organization of community meetings with refugee community leaders. It is worth noting that the meetings commonly called "Tea time" were organized in Nouakchott with several participants. A total of 450 focus groups were organized over 3 days for each of 6 groups (children, youth, girls, people living with disabilities, LGBTI, elderly).

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Household chores and community-based activities are not equally shared between men and women, with the latter being more occupied indoors and thus being impeded from actively engaging in 'out of house' activities.

Cultural restrictions, share of household responsibilities, lack of awareness and /or information limits the representation of women in community decision-making positions.

Ethnic minority group members, youth and persons with specific needs also complain about being underrepresented in community structures and thus not being able to voice their specific concerns.

Lack of active community involvement to support people with specific needs.

Need to reinforce and strengthen community's engagement against GBV.

The low level of education of women and the culture of the country of origin of some refugees where the woman's voice does not carry much weight are among the challenges.

8. Outcome Area: Well-Being and Basic Needs

Most vulnerable persons of concern can meet their basic needs.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
8.1 Proportion of PoC in need that receive cash transfers or in-kind assistance.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	21.00%	100.00%	76.00%
8.2 Proportion of PoC with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology [SDG 7.1.2 Tier 1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	1.50%	10.00%	13.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

The year 2022 saw the continuing expansion of UNHCR's CBI activities across the operation in line with UNHCR Policy on Cash-Based Interventions 2022-2026. The total amount distributed increased from 3,100,610 in 2021 to 3,501,857 in 2022. Operation have used a wide range of CBIs, including: MPCA for basic needs, Education grants, Livelihood grants, Shelter grants, as well as Hygiene grants (hygiene kit for women and soap for all refugees). 84,378 individuals, including 2232 people from the host community, received a cash transfer from UNHCR. Operation has also demonstrated the capacity for a rapid scale up by the ability to quickly expand cash assistance for shelter and MPCA for PBSSPN during the Malian refugee influx.

More than 5,000 new refugees are already assisted. Cash aid was dedicated to meeting specific protection and solution purposes. 55% of the cash was disbursed unconditionally, meaning that refugees had independent choice on how to spend it. UNHCR's assistance complements WFP's and government's social assistance efforts by contributing an additional safety net for vulnerable refugees and host communities. Mauritania government assisted in a quarterly basis through Tekavoul and El Maouna cash programmes around 7,500 households amounting to USD 2,000,000. The results of the socio-economic survey conducted in 2021 in M'bera camp by the government, with the technical support of UNHCR and WFP, are used as a basis for targeting refugees in the camp.

The majority of UNHCR's beneficiaries preferred cash or a combination of cash and in-kind as assistance modalities (96%). A total of 93% of the households reported having access to key services and goods they needed in the local markets and shops. Cash assistance has been critical for the wellbeing of refugees and others of concern in 2022. 92% of the PDM respondents reported that cash assistance has improved their living conditions.

Moreover, Mauritania operation is now equipped with the necessary systems, tools, skills, and processes to implement and scale up cash assistance programs.

UNHCR is an active member of the Cash Working Group (CWG) in Mauritania. We participated in meetings and technical working groups. Since the launch of the new cash coordination model in March 2022, UNHCR supported CWG members in developing a transition plan to remain compliant with the new policy. At country-level, the Cash Working Group has developed new TORs that incorporate the transition guidelines.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Mauritania Operation is aiming to implement Bassikounou Cash working group by 2023 in line with .

UNHCR's increased and official leadership role in the new cash coordination model in the refugee setting. The national cash working group should be reinvigorated. Discussions and advocacy are undergoing to reach this goal.

9. Outcome Area: Sustainable Housing and Settlements

Persons of concern have increased access to more sustainable shelters.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
9.2 Proportion of PoC that have energy to ensure lighting (close to Sphere).	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	4.30%	10.00%	12.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

As of 31 December 2022, 71 % households are living in adequate dwellings in the camp, a roughly 4% decrease compared to the 2021 record (This may be explained by the increase in the population of the camp with the influx of new arrivals).

750 households identified during the influx of new arrivals as most vulnerable living in inadequate conditions were specifically assisted with the installation of 750 family tent kits. Also, 2650 households (new arrivals) were assisted and improved their housing through the distribution of Cash for Shelter amounting to 12600 MRU (350\$ per household) and a total amount of \$929.267 was distributed. During the period under review, 100% of the identified vulnerable families in need of shelter were assisted with family tents and cash for shelter respectively to improve their housing conditions.

Rehabilitation of 35 community infrastructures was made in the camp, including four health centres rehabilitated and renovated through the INAYA programme, in addition to others such as classrooms, community centres, distribution centres, registration centre, etc., has enabled them to remain functional despite the effects of severe weather conditions and the current ageing of most of the community infrastructure built since the emergency period.

30 new classrooms were built in a sustainable manner in three schools in the camp, in accordance with the norms and standards of the Ministry of Education (of which 6 classrooms were funded by UNHCR and 24 others by UNICEF & ILO support).

The camp urbanization project has been considered by the Mauritanian government among the projects financed by the World Bank-IDA18, which runs from 2020 to 2025, and includes the electrification of the camp. The use of solar lamps and torches are most used by the community to meet household lighting needs. The energy activities to ensure lighting in the camp was not one of the activities prioritized in the UNHCR strategy for Mauritania in 2022.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

In response to the influx of new arrivals, the contingency plan was activated to meet the basic needs and fill the gaps in terms of housing for both new arrivals and former refugees.

As of the end of December 2022, 725 households, approximately 2841 refugees awaiting registration, have not benefited from cash assistance for not having finalised the registration process.

The type of shelters built in the camp, made of semi-permanent materials, requires upgrading every two years in order to guarantee dignified and secure housing for all refugees.

At the end of December 2022, approximately 5373 households require cash assistance to improve their shelter, not counting those expected in 2023 according to the contingency plan.

10. Outcome Area: Healthy Lives

Persons of concern have access to public health services

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
10.1 Proportion of children aged 9 months to five years who have received measles vaccination.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	80.00%	85.00%	91.00%
10.2. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. [SDG 3.1.2 Tier 1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	51.31%	100.00%	85.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2022, a mass measles vaccination campaign was organized throughout the Bassikounou moughataa and in the Mbera camp. The target population was children aged 6 months to 15 years, As for deliveries, 1604 women out of 1887 gave birth in health facilities assisted by qualified health personnel.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

The major challenges in health care remain the availability of human resources, the response to epidemics and the additional costs related to them (human resources, logistics and inputs), the drug supply system, the cost recovery system versus the funds available for the care of all refugees at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. It is also important to continue to improve the provision of care (equipment, medical materials, infrastructure and human resources).

11. Outcome Area: Education

All refugee children have access to quality education.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
11.1 Proportion of PoC enrolled in tertiary and higher education.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0.45%	Unknown	1.30%
11.2 Proportion of PoC enrolled in the national education system. [GCR 2.2.1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	46.68%	55.00%	16.72%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

A limited number of refugees access tertiary education. This can be explained by the low number of refugees ending secondary education as well as the financial and language barriers they face to access tertiary education in Mauritania. UNHCR's scholarships can only support students. Access to national education is also limited as the refugee students in Mbera camp currently follow a parallel system using the Malian curriculum. Inclusion in the Mauritanian education system is being considered and should happen in the coming years. Currently, only refugee students in host communities access the national schools.

UNHCR continued supporting access to education for children in urban areas and in Mbera camp. Additionally, thanks to additional capacities provided but the ProNexus project, UNHCR further engaged with the government in the framework of the ongoing education reform by actively participating in sectoral working groups. The operation refined its inclusion strategy, which was supported by technical and sectoral studies and missions on the inclusion in the education management information system (EMIS) as well as consultations with stakeholders on inclusion. Additionally, together with UNICEF and UNESCO, the operation engaged in the development of the national strategy for out of school children.

In urban areas, following the facilitation in 2020 by the authorities to enroll refugee students in public schools, UNHCR continued to support their access by shifting its strategy. Similarly to the 2021-2022 school year 2021-2022, children enrolled in previous years continue to benefit from cash to cover school fees), all newly recognized refugee children and those reaching school-age received a one-off cash support at the start of the school year and were accompanied to facilitate their enrolment into public schools. To address the needs of refugees living in various areas, UNHCR and its partner enhanced and improved the modalities of follow-up and developed a solid monitoring mechanism for educational activities, enabling to measure both performance and impact of the project (follow-up school attendance, academic success, etc.) and strengthen advocacy with communities on the importance of schooling for children. As a result of the expansion of the protection space in Mauritania, the school-age population in urban areas increased considerably between 2019 and 2022, from 734 to more than 1,700 at the end of the 2021-2022 school year (+140%).

In Mbera camp, students are still following the Malian curriculum, in French, and have access to Arab language courses. Eight primary schools, two secondary schools and 22 preschool centres are up and running. The educational staff is composed of 238 people including 219 primary school teachers and professors, ten directors and nine deputies, mostly refugees. UNHCR, in collaboration with the Mauritanian Ministry of Education and the humanitarian partners is coordinating the education activities. UNHCR is responsible for the remuneration of primary school teachers, two educational consultants and 32 security guards. At the end of 2022, 5,334 children (2,708 boys and 2,226 girls) were enrolled in primary school. The school feeding program ran regularly throughout 2022, ensuring one meal per day for all primary and preschool students. During the year, teachers were trained by the Ministry of Education through its local services (Regional Direction for Education and Departmental Inspection for Education) with the technical and financial support of UNICEF, UNHCR, ESD and Save the Children. These trainings aimed at improving teaching and learning methods and child protection. Support was also provided to the Student Parents Association through training on child rights and development.

The target averaging Basikounou (60%) and urban (49%). This number is based on number of refugees in school "reported" by our partner ALPD / No of refugees 6-18 years old. The number of next year is calculated on the basis of: expected 85% increase in the people we serve population. 20126 -201760 of 6-18 years old.

The literacy programme continued in 2022; in collaboration with its partners, UNHCR supported adult literacy classes inside and outside the camp, as some 1,500 adults have been enrolled in Arabic and French classes.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

- The discrepancy between the language of instruction and PoCs' mother tongues, especially in the public education system posed challenges to many refugee children.
- Lack of alternative forms of education (accelerated learning programme for out-of-school children)
- Refugees remain not included in the EMIS which impedes efforts of inclusion
- Lack of community engagement to support educational activities
- Lack of suitable infrastructures to ensure a safe and pleasant learning environment
- Educational staff lack professional training; gaps cannot be covered with short term trainings.
- The nomadic lifestyle of many of the refugees leading to children's low attendance at school, as they need

to follow their parents in the search for pasture lands.

- Child work, which is culturally approved and promoted, prevents schooling/ regular schooling of children
- Child/early marriage forces girls to abandon their studies
- Capacity building of the teachers and community structures related to education needs to be reinforced
- The funds to support the Education of the refugee students have been reduced, which creates difficulties regarding the development of a quality education in the Mbera camp.

12. Outcome Area: Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Persons of concern access safe water, sanitation and hygiene facilities

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
12.1 Proportion of PoC using at least basic drinking water services [linked to SDG 6.1.1].	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
12.2 Proportion of PoC with access to a safe household toilet [linked to SDG 6.2.1].	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Access to safe and clean water stood at an average of 20 liters/person/day as per the standard despite the continuous influx of new arrivals. In Mbera camp, population could enjoy uninterrupted access to safe water through four motorized boreholes and the maintenance of the pumping systems was realized, two pumping stations (two borehole) have been reinforced by the installation of two new generators of 80KVA. Water quality tests were conducted at the water points which more 90% of the samples showed result of free residual chlorine between 0,2 to 0,6mg/lit. The regular maintenance of the water system equipment ensured safe supply of water in the camp, and especially in the health centers and refugee reception areas as part of the hygienic prevention and control measures.

To facilitate the housing of new arrivals, the creation of five new water points has helped to meet the water needs in the blocks with a high concentration of new arrivals and water trunking was provided by ACF (Wash partner) at the Doueinkara reception point at the border in response to the influx of new arrivals. In addition, 43 new water points have been created to facilitate the watering of 15 ha of reforested area around the camp with the support of the Sosdesert partner working with associations of refugee volunteers mobilised in the restoration of the environment and climate change. This has facilitated the integration of the new arrivals with the old ones through market gardening activities.

In terms of sanitation, 26 latrines were built, and 330 latrines were rehabilitated with emptied pits, increasing the number of functional latrines in the camp to more than 2751 units which maintained the standard of 20 people per latrine to meet the latrine needs in the blocks with a high concentration of new arrival. At the same way, the rehabilitation of 20 drainage systems and water points has allowed for better wastewater management. The 84 washing areas rehabilitate helped to maintain the standard of less than 1000 people/washing area. Also, the distribution of cash for Hygienic kits targeting girls and women of childbearing age to promote menstrual hygiene and reinforce the dignity of women and girls aged 11 to 49. A total of 23591 person were assisted with cash for hygiene kits as well as a total amount of USD 726029 was distributed during the year on monthly basis.

To ensure durability of its interventions, UNHCR helped establish and train 44 Water Management

Committees.

As of December 2022, despite the continuous arrival of new arrivals, refugees' access to quality WASH services has been strengthened and the process of inclusion of the camp's wash activities in the national system has also been supported by UNHCR, through the ProNexus project, to ensure the smooth upcoming transition and inclusion in national services funded by the World Bank IDA-18, as well as coordination with other development actors.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Improvement of the water distribution network in Mbera camp / WB Project
Replace thermal energy with solar energy for water pumping stations: Feasibility study underway with the Flow Project

Consolidate 'WASH in schools' package (sanitation kits) and build additional latrines
Transition of the camp's water network into the national system
Strengthening the WASH package in host communities with high concentrations of refugees (out of camp registration / Nema office) in line with GCR
increased need for fuel, generators, and maintenance of water pumping stations
Hygiene promotion and sanitation:
Strengthen hygiene promotion activities through the development of a sustainable strategy for behavior change

Develop a comprehensive and integrated sanitation plan for Mbera
Improvement the ratio of latrines to max. 3 HH/latrine through the construction of 1097 new latrines & the rehabilitation of other 910 units.
Ensure sustainability of the latrine emptying service through the empowerment of local initiatives (VRPC)
Improve the waste disposal system: improve recycling and waste valorization

13. Outcome Area: Self Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

Refugees have access to decent employment in country of asylum.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
13.1. Proportion of PoC with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider [SDG 8.10.2 Tier 1].	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0.00%	5.00%	6.00%
13.3 Proportion of PoC (working age) who are unemployed.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	32.00%	32.00%	30.51%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2021, the Government confirmed in an inter-ministerial correspondence (2021) that refugees have the same access to the labor market as nationals.

While this is an important step in the operationalization of Mauritania's pledge at the Global Refugee Forum (December 2019), the roll-out of the measure has known little progress. A workshop planned for end of 2021 with the Government has been delayed to 2023, it aims at disseminating this access and engage with

a variety of stakeholders including relevant authorities, public employment services, employers' organisation, unions, the Mauritanian public agency in charge of social security ('CNSS'), refugee and host communities. No support is provided to urban PoCs for vocational training opportunities. Despite these slow progresses, UNHCR held key discussions to enter partnerships in 2022 with Techghil, the public employment service agency, enabling refugees' access to their services in Nouakchott, Nouadhibou and Hodh Chargui region.

The 2022 ongoing efforts on including refugees' country-wide into the national census of the Social registry constitutes an important step to determine eligibility to assistance and social safety nets, and categorization based on their socioeconomic situation. The census is a key milestone towards refugees' inclusion into national programmes. Minimum Expenditure Basket value was updated in 2021 and will be used to inform the revision of the UNHCR cash assistance programme in 2023, based on the analysis of the social registry census data.

The percentage of camp refugees aged 18-59 years having received livelihoods support now stands at 26.7%, up from 25.2% as at last reporting period with 1.5% receiving support specifically in 2022. In 2022, 462 refugees were supported to develop their own business. Estimated 738,000 USD was distributed to MSME.

172 micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises were assisted, and 462 jobs have been created, 61% of them filled by women. Important progress has been made regarding women's decision-making power, and asset ownership. 45% of MSMEs supported by UNHCR were women-led enterprises.

Refugees' unemployment rate fell from 32% to 30.5%. By achieving this result, UNHCR has contributed to close collaboration with partners, to improve refugees access to decent work. Feedback from refugees highlighted that now they can realize their aspirations, improve their living conditions and actively participate in society by playing a productive role. As a result, more than 15.5% of PoCs, have reported positive change in their life.

In 2022, to tackle the pressure on natural resources, UNHCR has successfully supported the Gas market in the camp, that offered opportunities for refugees (linking supply and demands). The Gas pilot project created 34 jobs, supported 17 Small Enterprises (SEs), and increased revenues and sales of assisted SE. UNHCR has assisted 447 households with direct Cash for Gas. A total of 35,005 USD was distributed. 93% of households have used cash to purchase a Gas Kit, according to the information collected from SEs. As the project pilot was a success, in order to move forward in the scale up, the self-targeting based on competitive and "first arrived-first served approach" would be explored in 2023. This will allow UNHCR to conduct larger awareness raising campaigns, avoid targeting issues and adapt the investment in this project to the funds available.

UNHCR has worked with a range of banks (Banque Nationale de Mauritanie, Banque Mauritanienne d'Investissement, Banque El Amana), the national agency on mutuals on savings and credits, PROCAPEC, through Taazour/AlBarka partner, and micro financial institutions (DJIKKE), bringing together efforts to contribute to achieve result.

In this year, 1 871 refugees aged between 18 – 59 years, have opened banks accounts, which represent 6%. Thanks to technical support (financial literacy) and many awareness sessions with refugees, as a result 323 refugees were trained in financial literacy. The way they interact with banking/MFI is changing. Through access to cash and bank accounts, UNHCR has contributed to improved refugees' day to day lives.

The innovation is digital financial services, which comprises a broad range of financial services accessed and delivered through digital channels, including payments, credit, it has become an increasingly important, 1 357 refugees have digital bank account (SEDA BANK). This is an opportunity for refugees to have access to financial products and services. 1 financial complex is being constructed in the camp.

People we serve capacities were improved, the techniques and technologies supported by UNHCR in close collaboration with implementing partners are highly technically sustainable. Refugees and host communities were trained in art and crafts technics. With the MADE51 initiative, 15 refugees have received technical assistance and training from the Local Agent. As a result, 180 pieces have been selling in the UK, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, France and Japan.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

In 2022, on livelihoods component, the operation has faced a challenge, which is to implement in a short time a Project of Income Generating Activities. To overcome this challenge, the team has worked very closely with local authorities and refugee's leader, by planning together taking into account the short time to deliver, and speed up process led to a high level of consensus with refugees and host communities, The refugees has been organized per zone, and they have supervised the process and provided constructive feedback at the right time. The project met progress and quality requirements. This approach, by putting refugees and host communities in the driving seat, has contributed to save a time at different stage, at the end, the project has achieved planned results.

14. Outcome Area: Voluntary Return and Sustainable Reintegration

Persons of concern have the necessary information and resources to voluntarily return in safety and dignity to their country of origin.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
14.2 Proportion of PoC who wants to receive the CoO information actually receives it.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Voluntary repatriation is usually viewed as the most desirable long-term solution by the refugees themselves as well as by the international community. Keeping in line with this, the operation provided support and advocacy to over 300 individuals regarding their option to return home in safety and dignity and eventually facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 185 people throughout the year. Refugees received voluntary repatriation packages via CBI modality .

According to this survey on return intentions conducted in February 2021; 78% of the refugees interviewed were against an immediate return to Mali if the conditions for security and integration were not met.

Moreover, the socio-political instability in Mali, exacerbated by repeated coups d'état and the uncertainty linked to the withdrawal of the international forces, did not favor the resumption of facilitation throughout the reporting period marked by an influx of refugees in Hodh Chargui region. A return movement to Mali is thus not expected in either short or mid term.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Historically, requests for voluntary return have not been high in the operation. However, with the entry into force of the cessation of refugee status for Ivorians on June 30, 2022, a very large number of Ivorians received information about voluntary return through several meetings with the protection team, resulting in the departure of 184 individuals. Limited staff capacity has impacted VolRep activities for Ivorians since this activity does not have dedicated staff, but rather is covered by RSD team members on an ad hoc basis.

Despite improved security conditions in some countries of origin such as Togo, Cameroon, Cote D'ivoire and to some extent the Central African Republic, many asylum seekers do not opt for VolRep because of socio-economic conditions that are not conducive to their return and reintegration into life in their country of

origin.

In the case of Central Africans, a good number have approached the operation requesting assistance to return to their country of origin, but due to UNHCR's no-return position in CAR, there is unfortunately no support or financial assistance to facilitate returns.

15. Outcome Area: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

Solution in a third country (through resettlement or complementary pathways) for the most vulnerable refugees are accessible.

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	DNA	DNA	123

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Access to durable solutions was broadened in 2022. While the focus remained on local solutions, especially through socioeconomic inclusion, the operation increased substantially its resettlement submissions to the US. Several training sessions were organized to other team members and units in terms of Resettlement case identification and referral. The Operation submitted 123 cases this year principally to the US, representing 82% of the allocated quota.

This was achieved despite having only one team member dedicated to RST work, mostly relying on colleagues from the RSD team to provide back up and support during the 5 various RST related missions that the operation has welcomed as part of RST activities. 30 vulnerable people have also departed for resettlement in 2022 making it a very successful year in terms of Resettlement activities.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

The number of vulnerable cases identified and referred for resettlement exceeds the processing capacity of UNHCR and its partners, resulting in long waiting periods.

In 2022, the U.S. was the only country providing resettlement slots to the Mauritanian operation. With a growing number of PoCs with acute protection needs, including physical and legal, in both urban and rural areas, resettlement is the only viable long-term solution, but the limited number of available slots hinders our efforts.

Limited staff capacity also affects resettlement and VolRep activities as both activities do not have dedicated staff, but are covered by RSD team members on an ad hoc basis.

The complexity of cases referred for RST (dual nationality of Central Africans), many cases recognized under the expanded mandate while many resettlement countries only accept cases recognized under 1951. These cases all require re-evaluation of their RSD, which puts additional pressure on staff.

16. Outcome Area: Integration and other Local Solutions

By 2022, refugees are enrolled in national civil and social registries.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

UNHCR has not surveyed refugees and asylum seekers about secure tenure rights. Though, it is estimated the vast majority of refugees and asylum seekers can live in their homes without fear of forced eviction, whether in Mbera camp or in host communities.

In Mauritania, 33% of refugees, representing nearly 35,000 individuals residing in Mbera camp, were covered by social protection floors in 2022. These floors included the Tekavoul (ongoing) and El Maouna (one-off shock responsive) cash transfer programs, implemented by the government and the World Bank with UNHCR technical support under IDA 18 Regional Sub-Window for Refugees and Host Communities' Social Safety Net System project.

Refugees in Mbera camp benefit from these programs based on the National Social Registry surveys conducted with UNHCR support in 2021, which classified households by level of vulnerability with the aim of including the poorest households in national social protection programs.

In 2022, discussions were also held between UNHCR, the Mauritanian government, the World Bank and WFP to conduct additional Social Registry surveys in Nouakchott and Bassikounou to ensure that all households considered as highly vulnerable are fully integrated into national programs – refugees living in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou have not been fully surveyed by the Social Registry yet and are thus not eligible to Tekavoul.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Two main challenges can be noted: a) The deployment of the Social Registry in some urban areas (Nouakchott, Nouadhibou) is slow and has not yet been completed. Therefore, refugees, as locals, living in urban areas do not yet benefit from the national social safety nets b) There is not yet a regular update mechanism of the Social Registry that would allow to survey and quickly target new arrivals. UNHCR and the Social registry have agreed to carry out an additional ad hoc survey/targeting for all new arrivals but it has been delayed and is now only planned for the beginning of 2023. Therefore, the 13,000 refugees that arrived in 2022 cannot yet benefit from the national safety nets.

2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

UNHCR Mauritania ensures its Accountability to Affected Populations throughout the project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases. Activities are consistent with a commitment to accountability to affected populations and a community-based protection approach and comply with UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Policy: working with people and communities for equality and protection. Participation and inclusion of the refugees' views and perspectives are ensured through the participation and involvement of the affected populations in the project planning phase followed by the regular consultations and discussions throughout the implementation phases. Regular consultations with the host community for the promotion of social cohesion and exchange are held as well.

Communication and transparency are realized through the messaging of key information concerning the projects to the affected populations at each phase of the project management cycles while decisions and notable changes made during the project implementation are communicated to the population in a transparent manner through face-to-face and digital communication channels.

UNHCR Mauritania has a multi-channel feedback & response mechanism including UNHCR hotline, email, SMS messaging services, and in-person Protection Desks. These channels of communication allow the affected populations to provide feedback and raise any concerns regarding the projects. Any complaints or suggestions are taken seriously and duly followed-up. UNHCR also provides multiple sessions of training on AAP to its staff and its partners in the past year for enhancing the capacity in this domain.

Initiatives are still underway to set up a centralized global hotline that can be managed by a single partner, with a daily monitoring mechanism for incoming and outgoing calls.

UNHCR has worked with authorities and partners to maintain equal access to services provided for all refugee whether they are women or men. It has diligently deployed efforts in ensuring women's participation in decision making, and thus women were fully consulted in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects. As illustration, women and girls participate equally and meaningfully in all decision-making, community management and leadership structures, and committees of persons of concern. Approximately, 50% of the representation mechanisms' members are women. UNHCR had an updated GBV standard operating procedure, operationalizing the main referral pathways for survivors (safety/security, legal, medical and psychosocial support).

Women represent 85% of monetary assistance to people with special needs. Several focus groups were organized with the communities, including three dedicated to LGBTIQ+, with at least 165 participants, including 30 community leaders. Sensitizations on rights and risk behaviors for LGBTIQ have been carried out.

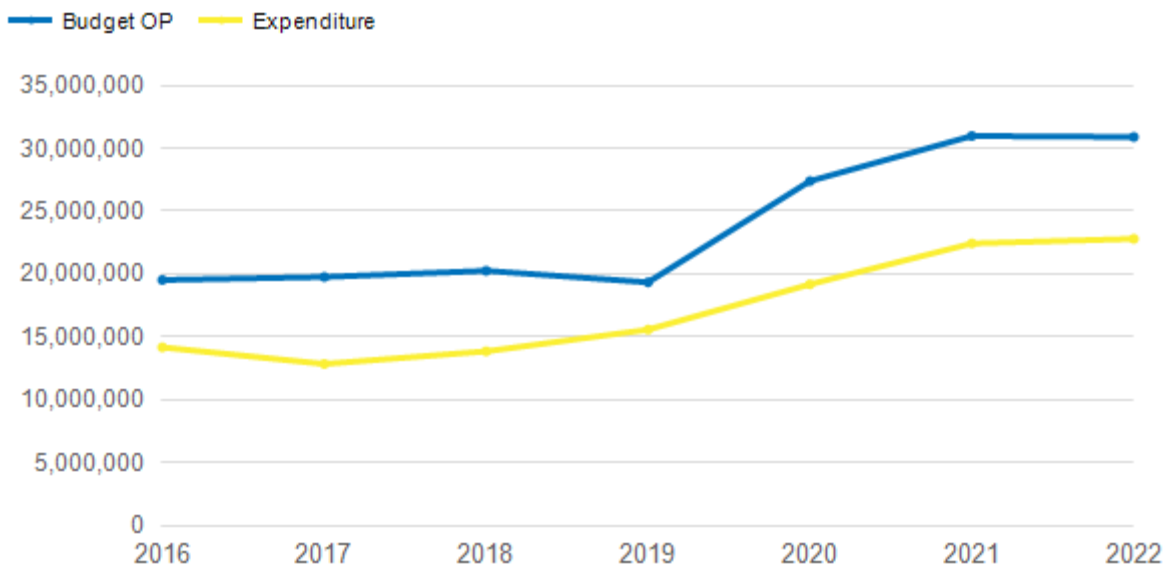
Section 3: Resources

3.1 Financial Data

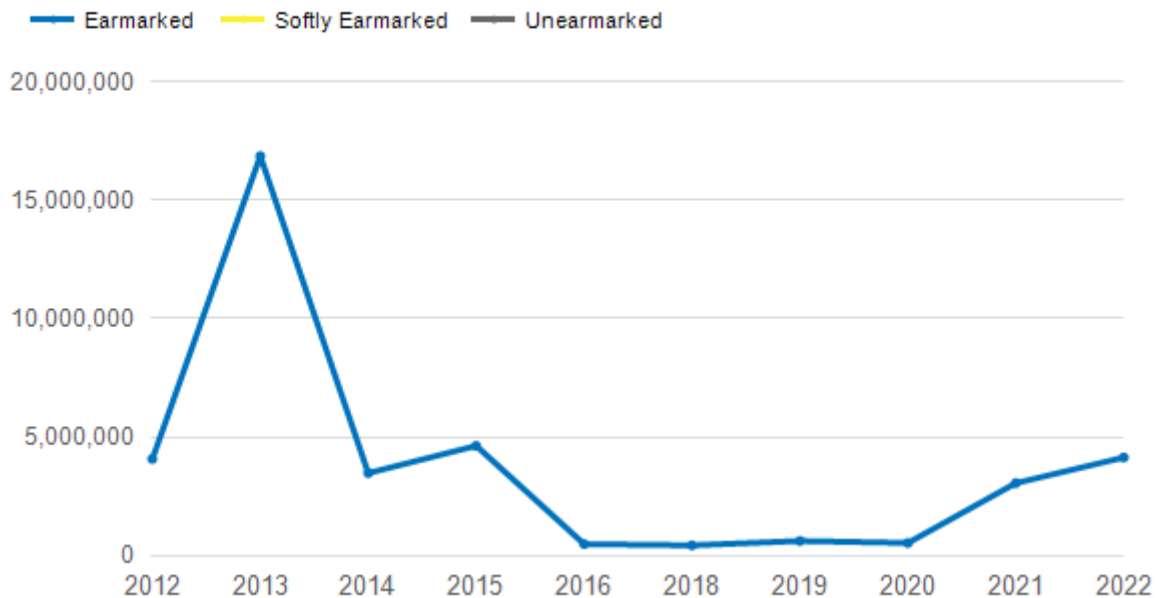
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	4,883,206	5,791,639	118.60%	5,791,639	100.00%
IA2: Respond	17,074,645	12,134,439	71.07%	12,134,439	100.00%
IA3: Empower	5,862,515	2,889,855	49.29%	2,889,855	100.00%
IA4: Solve	3,075,438	1,894,014	61.59%	1,987,514	104.94%
All Impact Areas		338,879	0.00%		0.00%
Total	30,895,804	23,048,825	74.60%	22,803,447	98.94%

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA1: Access/Doc	2,899,737	3,096,026	106.77%	3,096,026	100.00%
OA2: Status	617,729	621,024	100.53%	609,076	98.08%
OA3: Policy/Law	856,872	708,039	82.63%	708,039	100.00%
OA4: GBV	707,531	400,093	56.55%	400,093	100.00%
OA5: Children	761,090	528,771	69.48%	528,771	100.00%
OA6: Justice	508,868	484,162	95.14%	484,162	100.00%
OA7: Community	2,043,379	564,669	27.63%	564,669	100.00%
OA8: Well-being	4,083,358	3,062,257	74.99%	3,062,257	100.00%
OA9: Housing	2,800,785	2,544,449	90.85%	2,544,449	100.00%
OA10: Health	4,267,843	2,490,489	58.35%	2,490,489	100.00%
OA11: Education	2,186,758	1,331,114	60.87%	1,331,114	100.00%
OA12: WASH	2,000,785	1,687,085	84.32%	1,687,085	100.00%
OA13 Livelihood	1,632,379	1,010,208	61.89%	1,010,208	100.00%
OA14: Return	518,159	338,787	65.38%	338,787	100.00%
OA15: Resettle	478,159	314,705	65.82%	314,705	100.00%
OA16: Integrate	2,079,119	1,259,499	60.58%	1,352,999	107.42%
EA17: Systems	1,051,785	579,229	55.07%	579,229	100.00%
EA18: Support	1,401,469	1,701,289	121.39%	1,701,289	100.00%
All Outcome Areas		326,931	0.00%		0.00%
Total	30,895,804	23,048,825	74.60%	22,803,447	98.94%

Budget and Expenditure Trend



Contributions Trend by Type



3.2. Resources Overview

Protractedness of the Central Sahel situation limited political/economic attentions by the international community to Mauritania and limited diplomatic representation in Nouakchott continued to make the resource mobilization challenging. The operation has readjusted its fundraising strategy and shifted its focus to advocacies at field level, including reinforcing relationships with local diplomatic communities and proactive approach to the UN pooled fund as well as regional private sector fundraising. The operation has also worked with the Regional Bureau to align its priorities with the regional ones while considering its specificity, i.e. being mainly affected by the Sahel situation.

Despite these challenges, the operation continued to increase its funding level with 74.6% of the funding covered, 1 percentage point higher than in 2021, despite the reduction of COVID-19 related funding. The United States remained the leading donor with an increased contribution (12.5 M in

2022, against 10,4 M in 2021), continued multiyear funding by the BMZ/GIZ in supporting UNHCR in the implementation of Global Compact on Refugees in Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus, as well as the one-off \$1M CERF contribution towards the emergency level 1 pledge following Malian refugees' influx in the Hodh Chargui region. The operation succeeded again in collaborating with sister agencies (currently with UNDP for the reporting period 2022-2023 and previously with IOM for the reporting period 2020-2021) into implementing UN Peacebuilding Funds.

Competing priorities which stem from dire humanitarian needs and increasing number of POCs both in the camp and urban areas makes allocating limited funds to the health sector challenging. While funding from the BMZ, CERF and RB emergency funds covered most urgent interventions however, additional funding for 2023 on will be needed to support the ongoing inclusion in the national health system as part of the World Bank IDA 18 funding, that introduced a performance-based and user-pay system.

Following fruitful discussions with ECHO on the importance of the nexus in humanitarian contexts such as Mbera camp, the operation prepared a submission for the ECHO HIP funding, to diversify its funding base and ensure inclusion of refugees in national systems. Contacts and discussions have been maintained with the EU delegation in view of the new Multiyear Indicative Planning for Mauritania and the introduction of their new funding tool (NDICI).

Furthermore, UNHCR continued to advocate for the inclusion of refugees into the CPDD processes. The operation boosted the cooperation to effectively operationalize the joint UN actions in the Hodh Chargui where UNHCR and UNDP have been assigned as co-leads.



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