Development in Forced Displacement Settings

UNHCR Mauritania — February 2022

UNHCR’s operational objectives in Mauritania

The refugee response in Mauritania focuses not only on core protection and humanitarian responses but also on several other priorities aimed at securing durable solutions for refugees.

1. Protect refugees and respond to their humanitarian needs

2. Include them in national systems, empower them to build their self-reliance and find long term solutions for their displacement

UNHCR in Mauritania has developed strategic directions for the protection and solutions of refugees, covering the period of 2021-2025. The objectives and interventions are aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees, which represents the political will and ambition of the international community for strengthened cooperation and solidarity with refugees and affected host countries.

UNHCR’s humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach in Mauritania

UNHCR leads, in accordance with the Refugee Coordination Model, the humanitarian response to refugee needs in Mauritania, including support for emergency preparedness in the Hodh Chargui region and along the southern border of Mauritania with Mali.

In 2018, Mauritania became eligible for the IDA-18 Refugee Sub-Window (RSW), through which it is accelerating humanitarian and development cooperation and increasing refugee inclusion in the areas of health care, social safety nets, water management and sanitation, local economies and urbanization projects.

During the Global Refugee Forum of 2019, the Government of Mauritania made a number of key pledges, relating to access to national health systems, the development of a legal framework, access to documentation and the inclusion of refugees in national protection systems as well as access to the labor market.

In this context, UNHCR plays a crucial role in supporting the efforts of the Government of Mauritania, sister UN agencies, development actors, donors, refugees themselves and other partners such as the Alliance Sahel, in full alignment with the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, to ensure greater socio-economic inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in national service delivery systems (see Annex I). Moreover, as part of this objective and to facilitate a smooth transition from a humanitarian refugee response to the gradual inclusion of refugees, UNHCR works with partners on ensuring transparency in the management of integrated development projects in areas hosting refugees.

1 For more information on UNHCR Mauritania’s Country 2022 Strategy, visit Global Focus.
The aim of socio-economic inclusion for refugees and asylum-seekers in national systems is to enhance self-reliance in situations of displacement. UNHCR will work with partners to ensure:

- Access to quality social services is maintained for the most vulnerable;
- Support to accompany the transition from humanitarian actors to the Government of Mauritania, through securing temporary and additional financial backing;
- Investment in climate and environmental activities, supporting natural resource development, plans for reforestation, access to water and sustainable sources of energy; and
- Promotion of labour and economic development by anchoring in local development plans and larger investments.

Malian refugee Zeina fled to Mauritania with her family in 2012. She now grows vegetables in her plot in one of the Mbera refugee camp vegetable gardens. Thanks to her work, she can feed her family and sell her produce at the camp market. “My family used to farm in Mali, but here I learned new techniques,” she said.

Photo by UNHCR / Viola E. Bruttomesso
## Sector

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| Social protection/Cash        | Vulnerable refugees highly dependent on UNHCR (urban and camp) and WFP       | - Refugees are included in the national Social Registry (ongoing)  
- Government-run social transfer services (Tekavoul/Elmaouna) serve vulnerable refugees (planned for February 2022 for camp-based refugees) | - Social protection services supported by more diversified stakeholders, including Government-run programmes |
| Livelihoods                   | - Limited self-reliance (approx. 5% in the camp)  
- Refugees face difficulties in accessing formal jobs challenging | - Large-scale training and green jobs programme launched in Hodh Chargui (Great Green Wall, etc.)  
- National employment services (Techguil) accessible to refugees  
- Access to formal jobs possible | - Large-scale job creation programmes for refugees  
- Refugees access formal job services and opportunities |
| Health                        | - Until mid-2020, health 100% funded and implemented by humanitarians in the camp  
- In Mbera, transfer to the Ministry of Health happened mid-2020  
- Large support form UNHCR continues (camp and urban refugees) | - The offer of specialized care in Hodh Chargui available for refugees and nationals is increased  
- Gradual decrease of UNHCR support and gradual increase of Ministry of Health investments | - Refugees access sustainable health services provided by Ministry of Health |
| WASH and Environmental Protection | - Funded by UNHCR (camp)  
- Environmental protection funded by humanitarian and small-scale funding streams  
- Refugee areas included in the Great Green Wall initiative | - Transfer of WASH systems is effective (expected by end 2022)  
- Ensure access for the most vulnerable (user pay services)  
- Large-scale environmental programmes in Hodh Chargui and Mbera camp supported by diversified funding streams | - Integration in the national WASH system (camp)  
- Great Green Wall a success in Hodh Chargui / Resilient ecosystems and communities in and around Mbera camp |
| Education                     | - Malian curriculum in the camp/ Funded by Unicef and UNHCR  
- Urban refugees attend local schools with UNHCR support | - Hybrid education model (camp)  
- Refugees are self-reliant enough to cover education costs | - Integration in the national education system (camp) to the extent possible |
| Protection                    | - Refugee status determination fully handled by UNHCR  
- Registration done by UNHCR and Government services (ANRPTS) but some refugees are without IDs  
- Response to gender-based violence only funded by humanitarian funding streams  
- Refugees included in child protection national procedures | - Asylum law is passed  
- All refugees have access to IDs  
- GBV prevention/response for refugees, backed by diversified stakeholders | - Legal framework related to refugee protection is reinforced  
- Refugees access effective and sustainable protection services |
| Crosscutting                  | - Limited inclusion of refugees in national surveys / data systems  
- Refugee coordination model fully functional  
- Development coordination needs reinforcement  
- Strengthen linkages between refugee and development coordination | - Refugees (urban and in camp) in the Social Registry (finalized in camp, ongoing in urban areas)  
- Refugees part of the national census of the population in 2023  
- In the Hodh Chargui, coordination mechanisms held at regional and district levels are supported and include refugee issues | - Inclusion of refugees in all nation-wide or local relevant surveys  
- Nexus coordination is strengthened |

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2 Mauritania’s Social Registry, with the support of UNHCR and WFP, included refugees in the national census through a socio-economic survey to revise the targeting and identify the most vulnerable households. Key results of the socio-economic survey can be found [here](#).