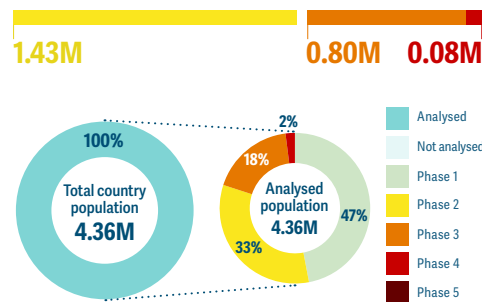


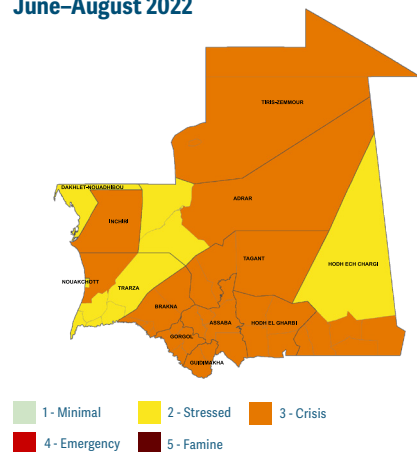
Mauritania

ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PEAK 2022

0.88M people or **20%** of the analysed population in CH Phase 3 or above, June–August 2022



CH acute food insecurity situation, June–August 2022



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: Cadre Harmonisé, March 2022.

Food crisis overview

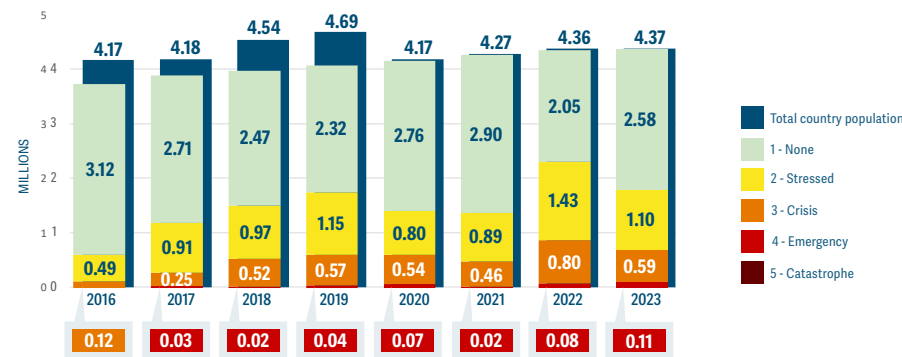
The number of people in Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above) almost doubled between the 2021 and 2022 lean periods to reach 880 000 in June–August 2022, the highest number on CH record.

The sharp increase reflects below-average market supplies and high food prices, stemming from the drought-reduced cereal output in 2021, the impacts of COVID-19, reduced trade with Senegal and Mali, and the high price of imported food as a result of the war in Ukraine (FEWS NET, November 2022; FAO-GIEWS, September 2022).

Slight improvement projected for 2023

A small improvement is projected by June–August 2023, reflecting better 2022 harvests that should help rebuild stocks at market and household level, and satisfactory conditions for crop and livestock production by the end of 2022. Still, around 0.7 million people, 16 percent of the population, will remain in CH Phase 3 or above, and the number of people in Emergency is projected to increase

Numbers of people by phase of acute food insecurity, 2016–2023



Source: Cadre Harmonisé.

by almost 27 percent, largely driven by the long-term effects of economic shocks on food and commodity prices (CH, November 2022).

Acute food insecurity since 2016

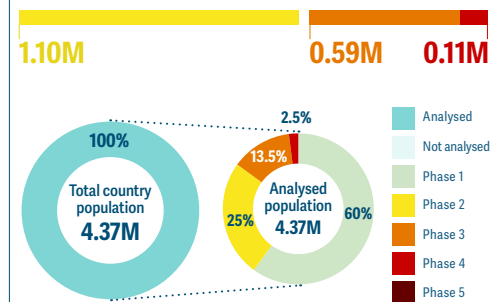
Mauritania has been included as a food crisis in all seven editions of the GRFC due to the impact of weather extremes on food production and income, but has been defined as a 'major' food crisis in this edition, with 20 percent of its population in CH Phase 3 or above in 2022 (CH, November 2022).

Drivers of the crisis, 2022–23

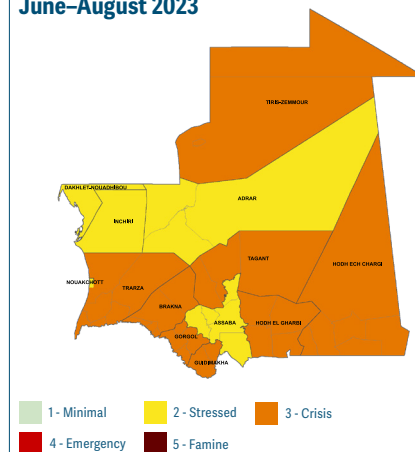
Economic shocks Mauritania's high dependency on wheat imports left it exposed to the effects of the war in Ukraine on international trade and commodity prices in 2022. Between November 2021 and August 2022, it imported only about a third of its annual requirements of wheat, mostly reflecting the interruption of shipments from ports in the Black Sea region, leading to a deficit, especially in southern and urban markets, with a likely

ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PROJECTION 2023

0.69M people or **16%** of the analysed population in CH Phase 3 or above, June–August 2023



Projected CH acute food insecurity situation, June–August 2023



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Source: Cadre Harmonisé, November 2022.

drop in per capita consumption (FEWS NET, December 2022). According to the Ministry of Agriculture, as of November 2022, prices of imported wheat flour were 79 percent above the five-year average, and 60 percent above the previous year's levels (FAO-GIEWS, September 2022).

In December 2022, prices of imported wheat flour were 17 percent above levels of the previous year in Nouakchott (FAO, December 2022).



Weather extremes During the 2021 agricultural season, Mauritania experienced its highest level of drought since 2012, with 34 of

48 regions and around 1.4 million people affected (Africa Times, citing IRFC 2022). The drought decimated local food production, driving up prices and increasing import dependency in 2022.

Torrential rains and flash floods in September 2022 caused extensive damage in areas previously affected by flooding in 2020. South-eastern areas bordering Mali experienced 600 percent higher-than-normal precipitation, flooding several cities including the regional capital and affecting around 153 000 people (US HIU, October 2022).

On the up-side, the rains bolstered crop production and pastoral resources (FEWS NET, November 2022). The 2022 harvests were 8 percent higher than the five-year average and 33 percent above 2021 (PREGEC, November 2022), which could help ease food insecurity in 2023.

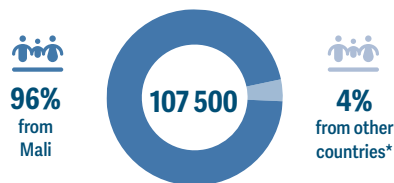
DISPLACEMENT



Refugees Following the resurgence of tensions in Mali, Mauritania recorded an influx of 7 800 Malian refugees as well as over 4 400 Mauritians returning from Mali in 2022. Many had lost assets, properties and livestock as they escaped violence (UNICEF, January 2023).

By the end of 2022, Mauritania hosted nearly 102 000 refugees (about 60 percent of them children) and 5 450 asylum-seekers (UNHCR, December 2022). More than 80 percent live in Mberra refugee camp in the eastern Hodh Ech Chargui region, bordering western Mali from where they have fled conflict since early 2012.

Refugees and asylum-seekers, end 2022



* Includes Central African Republic and Syrian Arab Republic. Source: UNHCR, December 2022.

Pastoralist movements linked to refugee returns are putting further pressure on already scarce resources and sparking fears of tensions with the host population over access to water (UNICEF, January 2023).

Over 80 percent of households in the camp were assessed to have inadequate food consumption, according to data from a joint World Bank and UNHCR/WFP targeting hub survey in 2021. Only 12 percent of working-age refugees (18–59 years) were employed, while about 42 percent reported having a low capacity to meet their needs and about 47 percent reported having a very low capacity, being entirely reliant on humanitarian assistance (UNHCR-WFP, 2021).

The presence of refugees and new returnees, especially in the Mberra refugee camp, created an increased demand on social services (UNICEF, 2022). The prevalence of wasting among children under 5 years in this camp is 'high' at more than 10 percent (SMART 2021).

About 15 280 refugees and asylum-seekers resided in the two major urban centres, Nouakchott and Nouadhibou. Among them, a significant number of children aged 5–17 years were living in education centres that were ill-equipped as accommodation and with poor sanitation (IOM, January 2022). A survey by UNHCR on the socioeconomic conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers in Nouadhibou reported that they faced integration challenges, with two out of three lacking official documents, impeding their access to essential services and income-generating opportunities. About 70 percent struggled to meet their needs due to monetary poverty, and about 40 percent reported being socially excluded (UNHCR, 2019).



IDPs Disaster-related displacement in Mauritania was the highest recorded since IDMC data began in 2008. Heavy rain and flooding from July to early August displaced 28 900 people in Hodh El Gharbi, Assaba and Tagant in southern and central Mauritania following the destruction of their homes (ICRC, August 2022).

NUTRITION

Number of children under 5 years old with wasting, 2022



59 400 pregnant and lactating women acutely malnourished, 2022

Source: SMART 2021.



Two consecutive years of SMART surveys pointed to a worsening acute malnutrition situation in Mauritania.

The 2021 survey found a national child wasting prevalence of 11.1 percent (high), including 1.9 percent with severe wasting. The wilaya of Guidimakha faced a critical nutritional situation with an under-5 wasting prevalence of 22.3 percent (very high), including 4.1 percent with severe wasting. The regions of Assaba, Gorgol, Hodh El Gharbi and Brakna were in the same situation (SMART, 2021).

The 2022 SMART survey showed a wasting prevalence of 13.5 percent, considered 'high' by WHO cut-offs, as was that of severe wasting (2.6 percent). The number of children with wasting under 5 years was projected to increase from about 137 700 in 2022 to 168 900 in 2023. The number of severely wasted children was projected to increase from 32 949 to 44 384 (SMART, 2021 and 2022).

As of 2021, 17 percent of children under 5 were stunted, which is considered a 'medium' prevalence. At wilayas level, the highest prevalence was in Hodh Ech Chargui (28.5 percent) and Mberra camp (28.9 percent) (SMART, 2021).

Drivers of undernutrition



Food insecurity and lack of access to healthy diets The worsening acute food insecurity situation linked to burgeoning food prices is a contributing factor to increasing undernutrition in Mauritania (UNICEF, 2022a, 2023).



Inadequate maternal and child-feeding practices At the national level, the proportion of children under 6 months having benefitted from exclusive breastfeeding is low at 60.1 percent (SMART, 2021), while only 21.7 percent of children aged 6–23 months received the Minimum Acceptable Diet in terms of quality and quantity. About 65.5 percent of children, aged 6–59 months, were anaemic, indicating a severe public health problem (WHO, 2019).



High prevalence of infectious diseases The prevalence of diarrhoea at national level was quite high, at 39.9 percent, but varying between 15.1 percent and 66.6 percent in the wilayas.



Poor household environment The 2021 SMART survey showed that the two main sources of drinking water at national level are tap (57.8 percent) and protected wells (18.2 percent). In Guidimakha, which has the lowest rate of tap water use at 50.4 percent of the population, 35.4 percent of residents use water from unprotected wells as their main source of drinking water, which increases the risk of water-borne diseases such as diarrhoea (SMART 2021).