

Emergency Plan of Action Final Report

Mauritania: Food Security Crisis

DREF operation: MDRMR008	Glide number: OT-2017-000112-MRT
Date of Issue: 07 May 2018	Date of disaster: 31 July 2017
IFRC Operation Manager: Romain GUIGMA Manager, Operations, Country Cluster Support Team	Operation timeframe: 11 August to 11 November 2017
Host National Society: Mauritania Red Crescent	Operation budget: CHF 206,067
Number of people affected: 28,100 persons	Number of people assisted: 4,018 ¹ persons
N° of National Societies involved in the operation: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), French Red Cross (FRC), Spanish Red Cross, Luxembourg Red Cross, Climate Centre	
N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation: CILSS/AGIR, FAO, PAM, UNDP, ACMAD, AGRYMETH, GFCS, ECHO, OCHA, OFDA, State structures and community management committees	

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

The 2016-2017 rainy season in Mauritania was characterized by a fifty-eight percent decrease compared to the previous year. Indeed, rainfall deficits exceeding 100 mm were recorded in several Wilayas in the south of the country, notably at the level of the two Hodhs (administrative regions), in *Assaba*, *Brakna*, *Gorgol*, *Trarza* and in *Guidimagha*. The situation greatly affected crop production, particularly rain-fed crops, which in most areas produced low or even non-existent output levels.

This drop in agricultural production impacted on rural populations, particularly in rain-fed areas (along the border strip) and in the traditional areas of Aftout, where the highest rates of food insecurity were recorded during that period. The vulnerable households experienced a decline in their income from agricultural activities, either in terms of self-consumption (cereals) or in terms of income from sales or rural work. In urban areas, the food situation remained stable in general, with a food insecurity rate of less than 20 percent. However, the peripheral areas of Nouakchott, due to the high density of the population, remained in terms of numbers, the main concentration zone of food-insecure populations. It is worth mentioning that in Mauritania, the prevalence of acute overall malnutrition (MAG) is 9.5 percent. This rate also confirmed the trends observed in the different nutritional surveys carried out in the post-harvest period.

Besides, population movements and insecurity aggravated the severity of food insecurity, increasing of the number of persons in crisis or in emergency status on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) scale. As such, a CHF 206,067 support was requested from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to assist the populations of Brakna and Gorgol who had high percentages of malnutrition cases. The target number of persons to receive assistance for the two regions was set to 9,750 or 1,625 households². The DREF operation was geared towards addressing the needs of vulnerable pockets of populations identified in Brakna and Gorgol communes. This helped the Mauritanian Red Crescent (MRC) to take part in the coordination efforts towards supporting communities suffering from food insecurity together with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as well as other partners of the food security cluster.

¹Approximate number of persons reached per household was 4.

² Average number of persons per household planned in EPoA was 6

While responding to the crisis, the MRC also thought of strengthening the resilience of vulnerable households and improve the capacity of national actors to cope with future shocks. Indeed, these objectives aimed at addressing an integrated response including immediate food assistance during the lean season as well as, strengthening or restoring livelihoods (depending on favourable conditions). In addition, this DREF operation equally aimed at conducting an in-depth needs assessment to allow NS develop a long-term plan to address issues pertaining to the food crisis in Sahel region.

The major donors and partners of the DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the USA, as well as DG ECHO, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), AECID, the Medtronic and Zurich Foundations and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the Mauritanian Red Crescent, would like to extend many thanks to all partners for their generous contributions.

Summary of response

Overview of Host National Society

The Mauritanian Red Crescent (MRC) has experience in managing food and nutritional crisis. Since the 2005 food crisis, the National Society has been working to consolidate its operational capacity and has acquired more experience in operations management. In addition to this, the National Society has diversified its response strategies as well as the response tools. This is the case with the cash transfer tool used to respond to crises with modalities depending on feasibility. There is also the systematic involvement of communities in operations. Within the framework of this DREF the following were undertaken by the National Society:

- The early assessment in vulnerability pockets.
- Participation to food security Cluster meetings with partners in country (PNUD, WFP, ECHO, OXFAM).
- Setting-up of community management structures.
- Beneficiaries' targeting/screening.
- Identification of providers for food vouchers.
- Preparation of the distribution tools.
- Training of 38 volunteers.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

- **IFRC** through the Sahel Cluster provided technical assistance to the MRC's operational team for a better organization. IFRC also deployed a Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) member to support the National Society in the implementation of the response activities.
- **ICRC** is present in Mauritania and supports the MRC National Society through cooperation projects, notably in the training of volunteers and organizational support. As soon as the RDRT member arrived, the head of the ICRC delegation in Nouakchott held a meeting with him to discuss the operation and see the possibilities of support. The opportunity was taken to address the issue of security in the area and the instructions to be taken into account in case of deployment. The ICRC was also committed to facilitate a Safer Access session during the National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) training session originally planned in the Plan of action which unfortunately could not be held.
- **The French Red Cross (FRC)** has developed a program focusing on severe acute malnutrition in one of the DREF intervention areas, namely Kaedi department. The deployed RDRT together with the National Society held a working session with the French Red Cross (FRC) head of delegation in Nouakchott to define a coordination strategy between the DREF and the severe acute malnutrition program. Additionally, the FRC sub-delegation in Kaedi supported the operation by providing vehicles and drivers to support the teams in charge of targeting households in some remote areas where access was quite challenging. This support from the FRC was very appreciated as it allowed the activities to be carried out smoothly.

Overview of non-RCRC actors in country

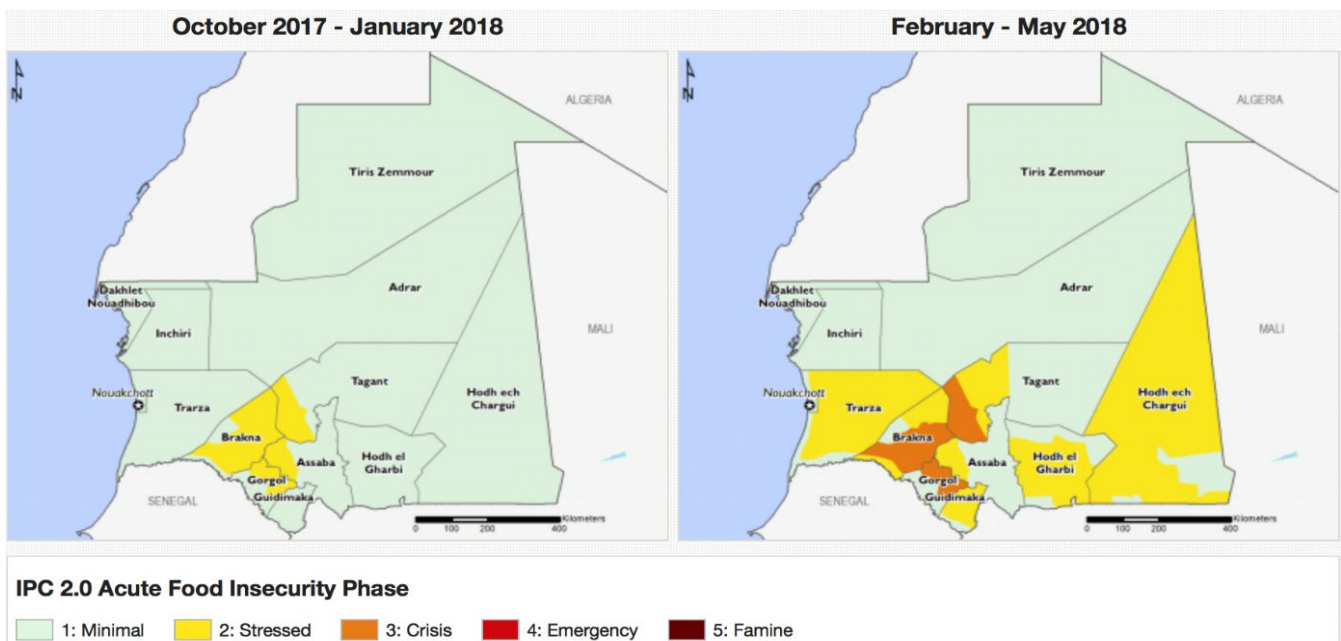
Coordination activities were ensured through cluster meetings (food security and nutrition):

- UNDP chaired a meeting involving OXFAM, USAID, FAO, WFP, UNHCR, UNDP, World Vision, Save the Children, USAID. The head of delegation of the French Red Cross together with the RDRT took part to the above-mentioned meeting whose purpose was to discuss the situation of food and nutritional insecurity in country and the development of a response strategy regarding violent winds that hit a part of the population.

- ECHO convened a meeting bringing together the "ALLIANCE CASH" group members comprising all partners benefiting from ECHO funding and having interest in food security and nutrition. WFP, OXFAM, ACF, SAVE CHILDREN, Mauritania Red Crescent, the French Red Cross and Mauritania's Food Security Commission were among the participants. The DREF presentation, and the national response plan against food and nutrition insecurity in Mauritania, the mapping of actors and their areas of intervention can be listed among the key relevant points of the meeting.
- WFP also chaired a meeting with partners focusing on the presentation of synergy possibilities related to the distribution of nutritional supplements; the harmonization of interventions' strategies in Brakna and Gorgol regions to avoid duplication of actions, Red Cross beneficiaries targeting (children under five years old as well as lactating and pregnant women).
- OXFAM also held a similar meeting.
- Also, with the support of the National Society, the deployed RDRT took part to meetings organized by Mauritania's national food security commission with all its partners to assess the food and nutritional situation in country, identify the partners involved in the response and see the gap in terms of geographical coverage. The opportunity of this meeting was seized to share with the government representatives and all partners, the DREF operation that Mauritania Red Crescent was implementing in Gorgol and Braknar regions with the technical and financial support of IFRC.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

The needs analysis was based on the latest *Cadre harmonisé* (harmonized framework) published in March 2017, which reflected an alarming deterioration of the food situation as mentioned in the "Description of the disaster" section. The analysis was comforted by October's [Fewsnet](#) projection showing worsening food security situation to Crisis level (Phase 3) from October 2017 throughout May 2018. Therefore, through this DREF operation, food assistance activities included a more sustainable malnutrition alleviation and community nutrition scheme which were also included in IFRC's annual operational plan.



B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Overall objective

Contribute to improving the food and nutritional situation of 9,750 persons or 1,625 households affected by the food crisis in Mauritania.

Proposed strategy

The proposed strategy defined the steps of the strategy to address the needs of the affected people in the target areas. It included:

- Responding to the immediate food and non-food needs of 9,750 people or 1,625 households in the regions of Brakna and Gorgol through the cash transfer activities (distribution of food vouchers);
- Carrying out nutrition, health and WASH activities;
- Conducting a detailed needs assessment to give more a comprehensive vision with the lesson learned
- Using the DREF operation to feed-in a three-year Community-based Resilience Programme, which aims at protecting the livelihoods of the target households.

It is worth explaining here that some pending funding issues between IFRC and MRC had to be solved before activities could start. This caused delays in the overall operation. Before the operation ended, a request to extend the operational timeframe by two months was introduced. However, the request was not granted as it was not submitted at the timing allowed by the procedures. This situation, added to a late start of the planned activities, resulted in a low implementation of the operation.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Early warning and preparedness for the emergency intervention/operation
Outcome 1: Few assessments and coordination activities are made/carried out in the framework of the implementation of the Operation
Output 1.1: The food and nutritional status is assessed, and recommendations are made
Activities planned
1.1.1. Early assessment in vulnerability pockets 1.1.2. Advanced evaluation of the food and nutritional status 1.1.3. Final evaluation of the Operation and recommendations to mid-long-term actions 1.1.4. Participation to the RDRT training session
Output 1.2: Reinforcement of the internal and external coordination activities
Activities planned
1.2.1. Communication and visibility on the operation 1.2.2. Internal coordination meetings 1.2.3. Participation to the Food Security (FS) and nutrition Cluster meetings 1.2.4. Participation to Country and Regional humanitarian meetings
Achievements
1.1.1. The early assessment was conducted and helped in the development of this EPoA. 1.1.2. Unfortunately, due to delays incurred in launching the operation, the in-depth evaluation of the food and nutritional status could not be implemented. 1.1.3. A joint lessons-learned workshop, aiming at analysing successes, challenges, best practices and recommendations, which inform better future programs, was conducted in December 2017. The main recommendations of this workshop can be seen below under "Lessons Learned".

- 1.1.4. The deployed RDRT participated in the RDRT training held in Bamako in August 2017. Although the region has solid food security and nutrition capabilities, the need to retrain the basic RDRTs with Food Security profile and nutrition to better support National Societies was an additional asset. It allowed the introduction of new approaches as well as new response tools (monetary/cash transfer, Mega V, ODK, etc.)
- 1.2.1. In terms of communications, the National Society was committed to ensure a visibility of the operation. The MRC's Secretary General usually advocated during all meetings with partners, the government and the United Nations system for the extension of the operation and integration into the national response plan. In the field, the senior administrative officer (*Préfet*) of Monguel³ collaborated with local radio stations to cover the targeting and distribution activities. In addition, a focus was put on communications with communities through the various local channels. During the village assemblies for example, opportunities were seized to invite beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries to discuss about the community targeting approach and the selection criteria. In Magta-Lahjar, the MRC's supervisor shared through social networks the activities carried out, the strategies developed, and the resources mobilized. At an internal level, a WhatsApp group was created by the supervisor to facilitate the coordination between the teams. At an external level, a communication was maintained between the deployed RDRTs through a WhatsApp group to facilitate the sharing of information. In the operation's budget, a communication line was used to allow the coordinator and the two supervisors to better coordinate during the targeting and distribution activities.
- 1.2.2. Red Cross Movement partners in country including French Red Cross and ICRC met with the Mauritania Red Crescent and the deployed RDRT who represented the IFRC in coordination meetings that served as a framework to discuss about their actions and security to ensure for a successful implementation of relief activities.
- 1.2.3. With regards to participation to the Food Security and nutrition Cluster meetings, the deployed RDRT together with the National Society met the Red Cross Movement members namely ICRC and French Red Cross. For the sake of coordination and synergy of actions, he also seized the opportunity to meet with international NGOs such as the UN Agencies, ACF et OXFAM and other stakeholders (Mauritania's Food Security Commission, the Ministry of Agriculture).
- 1.2.4. At Cluster level, IFRC took part to the important coordination meetings (OCHA food security Cluster in Dakar, CILSS concertation meeting in Conakry).

Challenges

In-depth assessment of the food and nutritional status

Due to delays in starting of the operation, as explained on page 3, this activity was not carried out.

Lessons learned

As part of the Lessons Learned Workshop on the implementation of DREF Food Security operations (SECAL), several SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis sessions on this tool were carried out.

The debates in the workshop led to a consolidated list of recommendations for strengthening the DREF tool and approaches focusing on food security. The main recommendations were:

- Considering the short duration of DREF operations as well as the typical long duration and chronicity of food crises, plan for the integration of food security DREF operations into dedicated Appeals;
- In view of the short duration of DREFs, focus more on the key sectors and which NS already has assets. The multisectoral approach would be feasible only when conditions permit;
- Identify the best targeting option (household or individual approach) for Cash initiatives depending on the local context;
- Provide in food security DREF operations, more initiatives focused on strengthening and protecting the livelihoods of food insecure households (IGAs, small ruminants, mothers' club approach, etc.).

Food security, nutrition and livelihoods

Outcome 2: The food and nutrition assistance for vulnerable persons in Mauritania, such scheme was implemented during the lean period (August - September 2017)

³ Urban Agricultural Commune in Mauritania.

Output 2.1: Distribution of cash or vouchers to 9,750 vulnerable persons done

Activities planned

- 2.1.1. Information within communities (the authorities, stakeholders)
- 2.2.2. Community-based management bodies' Process
- 2.2.3. Feasibility studies on assistance tools
- 2.2.4. Targeting/screening of beneficiaries
- 2.2.5. Supply of Equipping with distribution materials
- 2.2.6. Identification and contracting with the financial institutions and the shop
- 2.2.7. Development of distribution tools
- 2.2.8. Distribution of foodstuffs (Monetary/cash transfer, voucher) for one month or distribution of cash
- 2.2.9. Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM)
- 2.2.10. Mid-term evaluation of the intervention/operation

Achievements

2.1.1. Information within communities (the authorities, stakeholders)

Prior to the deployment of the operational team on the field, the National Society sent letters to all administrative authorities (*Governors – Waly – Prefects- Hakim*) and politicians (Mayors of the communes) requesting their support for a successful response operation. Thus, the solicited authorities facilitated the work in giving feedbacks regarding the plan of action; in discussing with the operational team on the mapping of areas of intervention, and the targeting of beneficiaries; in facilitating involvement of the technical services such as the trade service to support in determining the prices of food stuffs.



A village assembly meeting. Photo: IFRC/ MRC

In Monguel, the prefect supported the operation and was even involved in distribution activities and requested the reduction of wheat prices proposed by shopkeepers. In Magta-Lahjar, the prefect was fully involved in the operation and shared his suggestions regarding the implementation strategy and the mapping of the intervention areas as well the target beneficiaries.

2.2.2. Community-based management committees' process

The community management structures were set-up and participated in the beneficiaries' targeting and screening. Indeed, the deployed volunteers succeeded in setting-up 60 targeting committees which identified the vulnerable households as per criteria recommended by volunteers and supervisors. The proposed strategy consisted in setting up two committees in each village or neighbourhood:

- A male committee comprised of the chief of the village, the imam (religious leader), the youth representative, the health district nurse, the school director or a teacher, a local NGO's representative;
- A female committee comprised of the chief of the village's spouse, a women's group leader, the village midwife, a female youth representative and a female leader.

These committees were briefed regarding their role which consisted in identifying vulnerable households. Selection criteria included the size of the household, the number of children from 0 to 5 years old, the malnourished children, the pregnant or lactating women, the number of livestock (sheep, goat, cow, camel etc), the number of hectares of arable land, agricultural equipment, pets (horse, donkey etc.), external income etc... After the briefing, the committees proceeded to the choice of the people they identified to be the most vulnerable and shared the list with Red Cross volunteers. In turn, volunteers conducted some verification before setting up a final list. It is also worth

mentioning that a more precise targeting of the affected areas was carried out by the National Society, with the support of the RDRT, NS partners and technical departments.

2.2.3. Feasibility studies on assistance tools

This activity was not conducted due to delays in the launch and implementation of the operation.

2.2.4. Targeting/screening of beneficiaries

The targeting of beneficiaries followed a strategy consisting in deploying volunteers in pairs in each village together with a supervisor who closely monitored the targeting activity. A total of 38 volunteers and two supervisors were therefore deployed in the targeted 66 villages and neighbourhoods for two days to organize the villages' assemblies with communities. These meetings were geared towards sharing information on the operation (its purpose, the planned activities and strategy); introducing the targeting process steps and the composition of communities' committees; explaining the beneficiaries' selection criteria based on the household economy approach (HEA) profile; sharing the information on the targeted people in their village and all aspects related to accountability to facilitate the management of feedbacks and complaints.

The total number of beneficiaries targeted through this operation was 9,750 people (1,625 households).

2.2.5. Supply of/ Equipping with distribution materials

The preparation was done by both the RDRT and the coordinator with the support from the MRC's Food Security focal point and the Secretary General. The preparation was related to the development of technical data sheets, the identification of resources to be mobilized, the agreements on the areas of intervention and the preparation letters to send to administrative authorities for their information and support.

In terms of logistics, all arrangements were made in Nouakchott prior to the departure of the operational team in the field. They were related to office equipment, photocopies of field tools and others. The inventory of tools sent by the IFRC Sahel Cluster such as vouchers and food distribution books was also done at the National Society headquarters in Nouakchott.

2.2.6. Identification and contracting with financial institutions and shops

The identification of shops in charge of providing the foodstuffs was carried out with support from the Economy, Trade and the National Food Security Commission (CSA) but also in collaboration with the prefects of the targeted areas. The following criteria determined the choice of the shops:

- Proximity: priority was given to local shopkeepers so that the operation could have an impact on the local economy but also to make it easier for beneficiaries
- The proposed prices had to be in accordance with the standards proposed by the trade services
- The quality of the foodstuffs had to be verified prior to their distribution
- The shopkeeper was supposed to provide the requested quantity of foodstuffs in a timely manner
- The shopkeeper was supposed to accept the voucher to be reimbursed within an agreed period as per the contract.

All these criteria were written down in a contract that was signed by both MRC and the 11 selected shopkeepers, who were identified (seven traders in Gorgol and four in the Braknar). For each of these areas, a day was chosen to train shopkeepers on the distribution method, the filling of distribution books, the compilation of distribution data and the payment terms.

Regions	areas	Communes	Number of villages	Number of shopkeepers
Braknar	Magta-Lahjar	Magta-Lahjar	15	2
		Ouademmour	09	2
		Sangrave	11	0
Gorgol	Mounguel	Mounguel	13	4
		Bokol	11	3
TOTAL			60	11

2.2.7. Development of distribution tools

The management and verification of attendance sheets was done by the National Society and their development was done in accordance with IFRC recommendations and procedures. The food vouchers for successful distribution activities were provided by IFRC Dakar cluster in support to the National Society.

2.2.8. Distribution of foodstuffs (Monetary/cash transfer, voucher) for one month or distribution of cash

The strategy adopted was to organize the distribution sites according to the geographical positions of the targeted villages to avoid the long-distance movement of beneficiaries to recover their foodstuffs. Therefore, 16 distribution sites were set-up and 38 volunteers, two supervisors, one support committee from Kaedi, one coordinator and four vehicles were mobilized to support the distribution activities.



Deployment of volunteers and the RDRT in the field. Photo: MRC/IFRC

A total of 4,018 vouchers were distributed in both Braknar and Gorgol regions reaching a total of 2,731 adults, 907 children and 380 pregnant/ lactating women the following table gives more details about the number of beneficiaries reached. This is because the cost of items to be distributed ended up being more expensive than planned in the DREF EPoA.

In terms of distribution of foodstuffs, a total of 50,822 tons of rice, 14,905 tons of wheat, 8,673 tons of Niébé, 6,400 tons of oil, 5,658 tons of sugar and 4,018 tons of salt were distributed covering the food needs of 990 households (respectively corresponding to 4,018 people, for an average of 4 people p/household) out of the 9,750 people targeted. The vouchers distributed contained the following to be distributed to beneficiaries:

Areas	Adults	Children	PLW	Rice	Wheat	Niébé	Oil	Sugar	Salt
SANGRAVE	465	155	75	12,965	3,540	2,008	1,388	1,930	695
MAGTA-LAHJAR	712	230	85	16,391	5,078	2,977	2,024	2,851	1,027
OUADEMMOUR	381	136	23	6,237	2,570	1,539	1,035	1,484	540
TOTAL 1	1,558	521	183	35,593	11,188	6,523	4,447	6,265	2,262
MONGUEL	500	130	98	6,390	1,620	924	826	2,336	728
BOKOL	673	256	99	8,839	2,097	1,226	1,127	3,322	1,028
TOTAL 2	1,173	386	197	15,229	3,717	2,150	1,953	5,658	1,756
TOTAL GENERAL	2,731	907	380	50,822	14,905	8,673	6,400	11,923	4,018

2.2.9. Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM)

To assess the impact of the operation, a PDM questionnaire was submitted to heads of household. They were chosen at random on a sample of 10 percent of the households target as detailed in the following table.

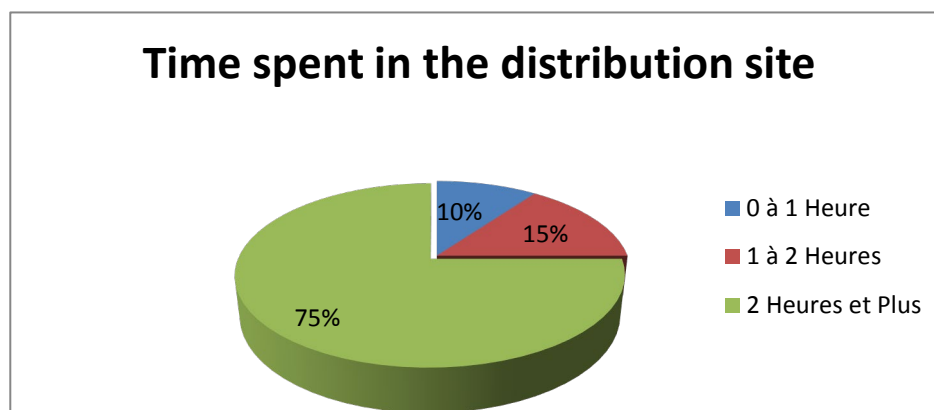
Regions	Areas	Communes	Number of villages	Targets per village	Target surveyed
Braknar	Magta-Lahjar	Magta-Lahjar	15	251	25
		Ouademmour	09	237	24
		Sangrave	11	124	13
		Dionabe	14	210	0

Gorgol	Mounguel	Mounguel	13	169	17
		Bokol	11	209	21
Total			60	1,200	100

The assessment revealed that 92 percent of the heads of households benefiting from the operation were women; 35 percent among them were widowed and 30 percent divorced the 100 beneficiaries interviewed provided answers according to their experience.

Time spent in the distribution sites

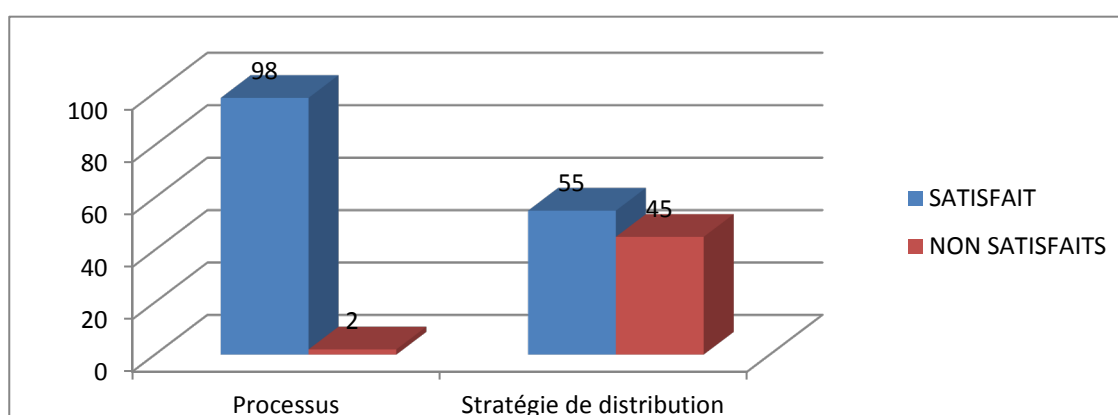
75 percent of the beneficiaries surveyed said that they spent more than two hours in the distribution site before being served, 15 percent among them spent between one hour and two hours and 10 percent less than one hour.



This situation was due to the distribution of vouchers and foodstuffs happening on the same day and the beneficiaries needed to be oriented and assisted by Red Cross volunteers. On the other hand, the distribution was individual, thus requested to consider the kilocalorie values of each person. However, for 100 percent of beneficiaries, the number of vouchers were distributed according to the number of targeted people in the most vulnerable households.

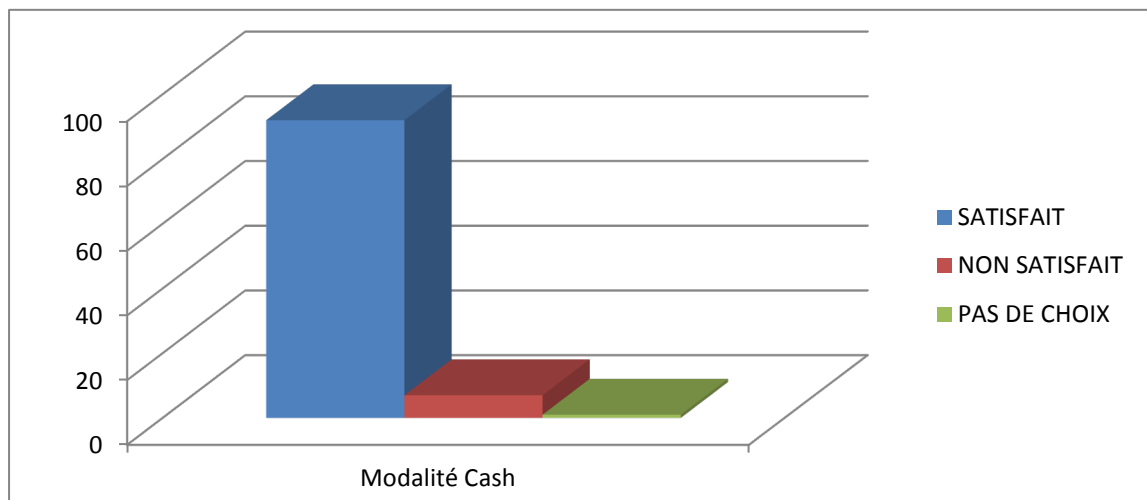
Beneficiaries' satisfaction

- The survey considered the beneficiaries' satisfaction regarding the process and implementation methods of the operation. At this level, 98 percent of respondents were satisfied with the targeting process because they were well informed about the whole process, the foodstuffs were of good quality, the distribution sites were well organized, and volunteers were available and welcoming. However, 45 percent of them said they were not happy with the distribution method because they were obliged to move their whole families including children before getting the vouchers.
- 100 percent of the people interviewed about the coverage of the main needs said that this operation provided an adequate response because it was carried out during the lead period and enabled as well to cover all the food needs of the targeted households for at least one month. They confirmed to have gotten all the foodstuffs free.



Appreciation of the Cash approach

A total of 92 percent of beneficiaries out of the 100 surveyed said that food stamps were a relevant modality for these kind of operations, seven percent said the opposite and one percent revealed not having a choice.



Strategies for households coping mechanism during food crisis.

Given the scale of the crisis, the most vulnerable households developed coping strategies to resist the shocks. The questionnaire tried to highlight these strategies during the last seven days before the reception of the foodstuffs. Thus, three percent of the beneficiaries confessed eating food which was not their favourite one or less expensive at least once, and 32 percent did it twice, 40 percent did it three times and finally 25 percent did it four times. Another strategy, consisting on borrowing food or buying on credit, was adopted by these vulnerable households. At this level, 20 percent of beneficiaries surveyed said having chosen this strategy once during the last seven days, 42 percent did twice, 28 percent did it three times and finally 10 percent did it four times.

Erosive coping strategies

In addition to the above-mentioned strategies, the households surveyed used other coping strategies during the last seven days prior to food distribution. Thus, out of a list of 16 proposed strategies, only three were adopted by the surveyed households. The first was the sale of breeding animals (cattle, sheep, goats etc.). Households that did not get enough food chose to sell these livelihoods at low prices to meet their immediate food needs. Thus, 30 percent of the respondents adopted it once, 27 percent did it twice, 36 percent at least three times and finally 7 percent for four times.

2.2.10. Mid-term evaluation of the intervention/operation

This activity was not conducted due to delays in the launch and implementation of the operation.

Challenges

- The delay in launching the operation impacted in the implementation of the planned activities. Initially it was planned to organize a distribution of food vouchers first and after, proceeding with the distribution of foodstuffs. In coordination with the National Society's technicians, it was decided to proceed with both distributions at the same time and mobilize more human resources.
- Due to the same delay issue, the following activities were not carried out: Feasibility studies on assistance tools; Mid-term evaluation of the intervention/operation. It is worth adding that an extension of the operation's timeframe for two months to complete all the remaining activities was requested however it was not granted.
- The distribution activities reached a total of 990 households (4,018 people) instead of the 9,750 targeted people (1,625 households). This situation can be explained by these important factors:
 - first, in the initial plan of action, it was planned in the strategy to leave a margin of 15 percent regarding the targeting to anticipate exclusion errors and the treatment of complaints that were supposed to be considered.

- Then during the targeting, three villages initially planned in the department of Maghta-Lahjar were not finally targeted because of their remoteness and the related constraints in accessing them.
 - Because of the delay in starting the operation as well as the short period of implementation of distribution activities, Dionaba commune comprising of 14 villages over the total of 60 in Maghta-Lajar and Monguel was not reached.
- The community management structures were set-up and participated in the beneficiaries' targeting/screening. The strategy consisted on setting up in each village or neighbourhood two committees: a male committee and a female one. In some villages, female setting-up female committees was not accepted due to some cultural issues.

Lessons learned

- Consider for the official start date of the DREF, not the date of approval but the effective start date of the activities.
- Promote pre-financing of activities by NS. To this end, develop, with the support of the IFRC, internal SOPs for the NSs applicable in emergency situations.

Health and Care

Outcome 3: The immediate risks to the health of affected populations are reduced

Output 3.1: The prevention and community-based management of acute malnutrition are guaranteed for 1,625 households

Activities planned

- 3.1.1. Routine targeting/screening (test)
- 3.1.2. Referral and counter-referral of acutely underfed children
- 3.1.3. Sensitization of persons who accompany patients on key health/nutrition practices
- 3.1.4. Promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and of an appropriate complementary feeding
- 3.1.5. Management of early targeting/screening/detection by mothers (PBM approach)
- 3.1.6. Community-based discussion/chat sessions

Outcome 3.2: The communities' health status is improved

Output 3.2.1: Water-borne and food hygiene related diseases are reduced in 1,625 households

Activities planned

- 3.2.1. Development of a community-based surveillance system
- 3.2.2. Treatment/decontamination of water in households
- 3.2.3. Promotion of hygiene
- 3.2.4. Training on community-based disease surveillance (CBS), epidemic control for volunteers (ECV) and Wash volunteers

Achievements

For the sake of a better community management of acute malnutrition, it was planned to set up a system comprising screening, monitoring, referencing and sensitization activities. However, only screening and referral activities were carried out. Indeed, the volunteers seized the opportunity of the beneficiaries' targeting to conduct community-based acute malnutrition screening in the 60 visited villages. At the end, 100 percent of the severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) children screened were immediately referred to health facilities for care, through PECMAS program conducted by the French Red Cross in Gorgol Region and by WFP and OXFAM in Braknar region. The following table gives more details regarding the screening activities.

Communes	Number of Children screened	Number of SAM	Number of MAM	Number of healthy children	Number of PLW
Magtalahjar	230	9	23	198	85
Sangrave	155	4	15	136	75
Ouademmour	136	6	21	109	23
Mounguel	130	2	19	109	98
Bokol	256	3	17	236	99
Total	907	24	95	788	380

Challenges

Managing the DREF timeframe was a big challenge during this operation, Indeed, the delays in launching and implementing did not allow for some activities to be carried out. In addition, a request for extension was unfortunately not approved. Indeed, the NS had planned to conduct some of these delayed activities including monitoring of the screening of children through households and sensitization of parents on essential actions to take regarding nutrition. Also, pregnant and lactating women would have been welcomed at the FARN (Learning and Nutritional Recovery Center) which would have been set up in villages and would have enabled to raise awareness on essential family practices (PFE) and especially the use of health services.

Lessons learned

Same lessons learned retained as those under Food security, nutrition and livelihoods section.

The National Society capacities building

Outcome 4: The National Societies (NSs) and Sahel Plus's capacities to cope with emergencies and to implement Food Security (FS), Nutrition and livelihood programmes are reinforced

Output 4.1: Capacity building for NSs and the Sahel plus to enable them to cope with emergencies and to implement FS programmes, Nutrition and livelihood is achieved

Activities planned

- 4.1.1. Training of 20 Volunteers on CTP/CBA and targeting/screening techniques
- 4.1.2. Re-training of 20 volunteers and 10 staff members on Food security /Nutrition and livelihood (NDRT)
- 4.1.3. Re-training of 20 Volunteers on targeting/screening techniques

Achievements

- 4.1.1. Considering the delay in starting the activities and for the sake of time management, the operational team chose to link the training on community-based screening techniques and the targeting orientation session for volunteers.
- 4.1.2. The objective was the compilation of both training and orientation sessions for carrying out targeting activities and seize also the opportunity to screen children in the visited areas.
- 4.1.3. The capacity building of the National Society was ensured through the training of 38 volunteers (18 women and 20 men). Gender balance was considered during this process; indeed, 18 volunteers were trained in Magta-lahjar (10 men 8 women) and 20 volunteers Kaedi (10 men and 10 women). The training took place from 1 to 4 November 2017 in the two implementation areas. The training alternated theory and practice and therefore, included practical simulations. It was meant to refresh and strengthen the volunteers' knowledge on some specific subjects such as:
 - screening techniques for acute malnutrition through Brachial Perimeter method
 - detecting malnutrition signs and referral techniques
 - use of the MUAC for malnutrition measurement,
 - use of the tools and material related to the implementation of some activities such as targeting, distribution, PDM
 - food distribution and post-distribution evaluations
 - the organization of distribution sites, assistance to shopkeepers, how to fill food distribution books, and the quantity of foodstuffs to be distributed to beneficiaries.

Volunteers were also trained on community engagement mechanisms through a participatory and inclusive approach to promote accountability to beneficiary communities. The approach took into consideration local cultural realities, social organization, local customs and traditions.

Challenges

The planned NDRT training session did not take place due to the already mentioned delay constraints.

Lessons learned

Please see lessons learned retained under Food security, nutrition and livelihoods section.

D. THE BUDGET

The overall budget of this DREF operation was CHF 206,067, of which CHF 124,683 were expensed leaving a balance of CHF 81,384, to be returned to the DREF. This considerable balance is due to the initial delay in activities encountered and the impossibility to extend this DREF operation.

Explanation of variances

- Water, Sanitation & Hygiene was unspent due to the delay in starting the activities, which did not allow full implementation.
- Transport & Vehicle Costs was overrun by CHF 1,546 (150%) because there was an accounting coding error on the initial DREF budget.
- Logistics Services was unspent due to a coding error. Indeed, the vehicle rental was supposed to be charged on the Transport and Vehicles Costs line and not on the Logistic Services line, the reason why no expense was charged on the Logistics line.
- Office Costs budget line was overrun by CHF 1,376 (147%) because it was under budgeted as planning stage.

Contact information

Reference documents



Click here for:

- Previous Appeals and updates
- Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

In Mauritania Faso Red Cross Society

- Mr Mohamedou, Raby Secretary General, phone: (222) 525 12 49/659 24 10/525 12 49; e-mail: m.raby06@yahoo.fr

In the IFRC

- **IFRC Sahel Country Cluster Support Team:** Anne Elisabeth Leclerc, Head of Sahel Country Cluster, phone: +22178 6390794; email: Anne.leclerc@ifrc.org;
- Luca Parodi, Sahel Country Cluster DM Delegate, Phone: +221 33 869 30 23; Email: luca.parodi@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Africa Region:** Adesh Tripathee, Head of DCPRR Unit, Kenya; phone: +254 731 067 489; email: adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org
- Nicolas Verdy, Operations Coordinator, Kenya; phone: +254 780 771161; email: nicolas.verdy@ifrc.org

In IFRC Geneva

- Eszter Matyeka, DREF Senior Officer; phone: +41 75 4198604; email: eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org

For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support:

- **In IFRC Africa Regional Office:** Kentaro Nagazumi, Head of Partnership and Resource Development; phone: +254202835155; email: kentaro.nagazumi@ifrc.org

For In-Kind donations and Mobilization table support:

- **IFRC Regional Logistics Unit:** Rishi Ramrakha, Head of Africa Regional Logistics Unit; phone: +254 733 888 022 & Fax +254 20 271 2777; email: rishi.ramrakha@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)

- **IFRC Africa Regional Office:** Fiona Gatere, PMER Coordinator; phone: +254780771139; email: fiona.gatere@ifrc.org;
- Nathalie Proulx, PMER Delegate; phone: +254 780 771136; email: nathalie.proulx@ifrc.org

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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Saving lives, changing minds.



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace

Disaster Response Financial Report

MDRMR008 - Mauritania - Food Insecurity

Timeframe: 11 Aug 17 to 11 Nov 17

Appeal Launch Date: 11 Aug 17

Final Report

Selected Parameters

Reporting Timeframe	2017/08-2018/08	Programme	MDRMR008
Budget Timeframe	2017/08-2017/11	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	PMR017
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

I. Funding

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
A. Budget		206,067				206,067	
B. Opening Balance							
Income							
<u>Other Income</u>							
<i>DREF Allocations</i>		206,067				206,067	
C4. Other Income		206,067				206,067	
C. Total Income = SUM(C1..C4)		206,067				206,067	
D. Total Funding = B + C		206,067				206,067	

* Funding source data based on information provided by the donor

II. Movement of Funds

	Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability	TOTAL	Deferred Income
B. Opening Balance							
C. Income		206,067				206,067	
E. Expenditure		-124,683				-124,683	
F. Closing Balance = (B + C + E)		81,384				81,384	

Disaster Response Financial Report

MDRMR008 - Mauritania - Food Insecurity

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Appeal Launch Date: 11 Aug 17

Final Report

Selected Parameters

Reporting Timeframe	2017/08-2018/08	Programme	MDRMR008
Budget Timeframe	2017/08-2017/11	Budget	APPROVED
Split by funding source	Y	Project	PMR017
Subsector:	*		

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

III. Expenditure

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Raise humanitarian standards	Grow RC/RC services for vulnerable people	Strengthen RC/RC contribution to development	Heighten influence and support for RC/RC work	Joint working and accountability		
	A					B	A - B	
BUDGET (C)			206,067			206,067		
Relief items, Construction, Supplies								
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	870						870	
Cash Disbursement	105,175		83,663			83,663	21,512	
Total Relief items, Construction, Sup	106,045		83,663			83,663	22,382	
Land, vehicles & equipment								
Medical Equipment			0			0	0	
Total Land, vehicles & equipment			0			0	0	
Logistics, Transport & Storage								
Distribution & Monitoring			153			153	-153	
Transport & Vehicles Costs	3,062		4,607			4,607	-1,546	
Logistics Services	3,690						3,690	
Total Logistics, Transport & Storage	6,752		4,761			4,761	1,991	
Personnel								
International Staff	24,500		9,090			9,090	15,410	
National Staff	90		87			87	3	
National Society Staff	16,875		3,125			3,125	13,750	
Volunteers	75		3			3	72	
Total Personnel	41,540		12,304			12,304	29,236	
Workshops & Training								
Workshops & Training	20,840		6,189			6,189	14,651	
Total Workshops & Training	20,840		6,189			6,189	14,651	
General Expenditure								
Travel	11,950		3,315			3,315	8,635	
Information & Public Relations	210						210	
Office Costs	2,940		4,316			4,316	-1,376	
Communications	2,820		2,740			2,740	80	
Financial Charges	393		-215			-215	608	
Total General Expenditure	18,313		10,157			10,157	8,156	
Indirect Costs								
Programme & Services Support Recove	12,577		7,610			7,610	4,967	
Total Indirect Costs	12,577		7,610			7,610	4,967	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)	206,067		124,683			124,683	81,383	
VARIANCE (C - D)			81,383			81,383		