



**ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE HUMANITARIAN / RESIDENT COORDINATOR  
ON THE USE OF CERF GRANTS**

<b>Country</b>	<b>MAURITANIA</b>
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<b>Reporting Period</b>	<b>January 1 2007 – December 31 2007</b>

**I. Executive Summary**

A desert country with a population of approximately 2.9 million, Mauritania is one of the world's least developed countries. The country has faced recurrent food crises in the past five years due to a succession of natural disasters. This has exacerbated the state of food insecurity in the south of the country and therefore underscores the need for funding and humanitarian assistance in these areas.

The Food Security of Rural Areas Survey (ESAM-07) conducted by the World Food Programme (WFP), the National Office of Statistics (ONS) and the Social Protection and Food Security Commission (CPSSA) in July 2007 demonstrated a 65,300-person increase in vulnerable population as compared to December 2005. Most alarming was the sharp increase of people at high risk of food insecurity from 180,000 in 2005 to 280,000 in 2007. Populations at risk were concentrated in the southern and eastern regions of the country (Hodh el Charghi, southern Assaba, Hodh el Gharbi, Gorgol, northern Guidimakha, Brakna and Tagant). Screenings conducted in these areas in February 2007 by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Health had shown rates of acute malnutrition over 10 percent among children from 6 to 59 months of age.

Consequently, the number of malnourished children under five and pregnant and lactating women exceeded the capacity of existing Supplementary Feeding Centres and quantities of food products allocated to the WFP nutrition programme. More than 650 centres adhering to the procedures of the National Protocol for Treatment of Acute Moderate and Severe malnutrition were operational under Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) 10359, 0, covering 36,515 malnourished children and 18,610 malnourished pregnant and nursing women throughout the country. The United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocation was needed to cover the exceeding caseload of moderately malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women until the end of 2007.

Having long considered the repatriation of refugees from the Senegal–Mauritania border as a pressing political issue, the government requested the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in undertaking the repatriation operation. The launching of a Special Appeal by UNHCR on 30 August 2007 was the starting point of a fast evolution of the preparation of the repatriation of Mauritanian refugees and the effort to mobilize funding to do so. The size of the operation, according to a census conducted in August 2007, revealed that additional funding would be needed in order to allow UNHCR to support the government in its full capacity, namely by conducting evaluations of reception areas, transportation for refugees, and supplies of non-food items (sanitary kits, knettles, pots and mosquito nets) for the initial arrival. It was essential for both the government and receiving communities to receive humanitarian support to avoid potential strain on the population and long-term resettlement difficulties such as disenfranchisement, displacement and extreme poverty.

Newly returned refugees need an initial three month ration as they will be fully dependent on food aid until they are economically and socially integrated into their new communities. In September WFP initiated a

budget revision of its protracted project underway to integrate additional relief needs, including the refugee component. WFP had not received funds to cover these new needs. CERF funds were needed to allow WFP to preserve the food security of newly returned refugees until the end of 2007.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) sought to mobilize CERF funding in order to finance project intended to provide urgent assistance to the adversely affected population of crop and livestock farmers, and to contribute to the renewal of subsistence activities targeted towards the improvement of food security among impoverished rural households for which agriculture and livestock constitute the sole source of revenue.

CERF rapid response funding allowed WFP and UNHCR to assist the Government and local and international NGOs in the planning of and at the outset of the repatriation operation. WFP's presence and assistance at the outset was required due to the high vulnerability of refugee families and resettlement communities to food insecurity and poverty amid a general climate of rising food prices and food insecurity in Mauritania. UNHCR's support to the repatriation operation was essential in providing technical expertise in the planning process and in providing practical logistical support. The humanitarian role of UNHCR in receiving the refugees and distributing basic non-food survival items was central to the resettlement process.

A CERF underfunded window allocation was used to complete projects financed by UNICEF and WFP within the framework of CAP and that of the regular programme. These funds are indispensable in bridging funding gaps, particularly in the provision of therapeutic food items for therapeutic feeding centres and equipment necessary for the operation of WFP-supported moderate malnutrition treatment centres.

CERF has also greatly assisted in creating a dynamic allowing for the efficient function of the initiative to tackle acute malnutrition, one of the single major contributors to infant mortality. For preventing malnutrition, funding has covered the costs of two of the eight regions currently under-funded in the campaign to promote breastfeeding. Vitamin A supplementation, also assisted by CERF, is a regular program which has experienced a gradual decline in financing.

CERF funds were central to poorly-funded projects for sustaining the livelihoods of small-scale crop and livestock farmers in extremely impoverished rural areas where in agricultural output was endangered due to a protracted dry season and lack of rainfall. This greatly increased the ability of beneficiary families to generate income and as a consequence increased household assets. In the long term, this will increase food availability among these households, reduce levels of malnutrition, and the regeneration of livestock farming

<b>Total amount of humanitarian funding required and received (per reporting year)</b>	<b>Required:</b> \$ <u>1,701,620</u> <b>Received:</b> \$ <u>1,701,620</u>			
<b>Total amount of CERF funding received by funding window</b>	<b>Rapid Response:</b> \$ <u>846,889</u> <b>Underfunded:</b> \$ <u>854,731</u>  <b>Grand Total:</b> \$ <u>1,701,620</u>			
<b>Total amount of CERF funding for direct UN agency/IOM implementation and total amount forwarded to implementing partners</b>	<b>Total UN agencies/IOM:</b> \$ <u>1,701,620</u>  <b>Total implementing partners:</b> \$ _____			
<b>Approximate total number of beneficiaries reached with CERF funding (disaggregated by sex/age if possible)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>under 5 years of age</b>	<b>Female (If available)</b>	<b>Male (If available)</b>
	131,598	22,370		

<b>Geographic areas of implementation</b>	Assaba, Tagant, Hodh el Gharbi, Hodh el Chargui, Brakna, Trarza, Guidimakha, Gorgol, Nouakchott (peri-urban areas), Inchiri
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## II. Coordination and Partnership-building

### (a) Decision-making process:

#### ***Nutrition***

A joint 2007-2008 nutrition project has been established between all nutrition partners concerned with priority interventions and financing gaps. Accordingly, Mauritania has developed a nutrition monitoring system based on two surveys conducted per year. These surveys, conducted during the post-harvest and lean seasons respectively, permit the identification of regions most acutely affected as well as an estimation of the costs of intervention. In 2008, the results of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) survey allowed for the specific identification of regions with alarming levels of food insecurity and malnutrition.

#### ***Refugees***

At the end of October 2007, UNHCR, with the assistance of support missions from Headquarters (MENA Regional Bureau and EPRS) had established two Field Offices, one in Rosso, covering the Trarza and Brakna regions, and one in Kaedi, covering the Gorgol and Guidimakha regions. On the basis of a refugee census carried out in August 2007 by UNHCR Senegal, these four Mauritanian regions along the river Senegal were selected as major regions of origin where the CERF-funded repatriation should take place.

#### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

In Mauritania, despite flooding in the East and South East of the country from July to September, the 2007 harvest in these areas was relatively good. However, this was countered by a lack of rainfall in agro-pastoral regions of the country. These unfavourable conditions aggravated the risk of food insecurity in these areas and the majority of livestock suffered during a protracted dry season, manifesting itself in the form of physical problems among livestock and widespread disease. It was in this context that CERF funds were requested to support rural households who rely on agriculture and livestock farming as a sole means of survival.

### (b) Coordination amongst the humanitarian country team:

#### ***Nutrition***

UNICEF and WFP work in partnership on the basis of a joint action plan for nutrition (updated annually). Additionally, UNICEF, as Cluster Lead for Nutrition, works with WHO and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) under the leadership of the Ministry of Health. Joint coordination meetings and preparation of intervention action plans are regularly conducted with the National Nutrition Service of the Ministry of Health. Nutrition also regularly features as an agenda item in emergency coordination meetings, lead by WFP.

The UNICEF and WFP advocacy under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator allowed for a revised institutional mechanism for nutrition. As a result, nutrition is now attached to the Prime Minister's office.

#### ***Refugees***

Following a government appeal to UNHCR, WFP, and the humanitarian community in Mauritania for assistance with the refugee repatriation initiative, UNHCR has been coordinating activities with local authorities and WFP to deal with the expected repatriation. UNHCR and WFP collaborated to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in which both agencies agreed to provide respectively non-food items and alimentary support to incoming refugee families, in the form of a three month ration to facilitate the reintegration of repatriates into their communities. Accordingly, joint coordination meetings were held periodically between UNHCR, Government, and WFP.

The partnership between UNHCR and the governments of Senegal and Mauritania was reinforced by national consultations with parliamentarians, political parties and large segments of the civil society,

allowing for smooth repatriation movements. This evolution was actively supported by the international community, in particular with a fast reaction from donors who had contributed a sizeable amount by the end of December 2007.

### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

The input of other UN agencies in measuring rainfall deficits and other factors indicating beneficiary needs were crucial in the selection of project sites at which CERF funds were to be used. Following the receipt of CERF funds, FAO was able to recruit four NGOs to reinforce the technical distribution capacity of the Government. NGOs assisted in supervising distribution schemes and beneficiary targeting. NGOs under contract with FAO include: ALPD (regions: Trarza, Brakna, Gorgol et Guidimakha), El Ghad Essihi (regions: Hodh El Gharbi and Hodh Echagui), ARDM (Assaba), and AFWHS (Tagant). Government services were also indispensable in supporting the project (Director of Agriculture, Director of Livestock Farming and Regional Ministries of Livestock and Agriculture) and providing a range of services among which were the provision of logistical means and primary transport (from Nouakchott to regional capitals), as well as secondary transportation (from regional capitals to project sites) of seeds, horticultural supplies, veterinary materials and medications.

### **(c) Partnerships:**

#### ***Nutrition***

The preparation of an Inter-Agency Contingency Plan served to bring together major partners (UN and International NGOs) specializing in nutrition and food security. OCHA Dakar assisted in development of the contingency plan. In addition, an Emergency Coordination Forum involving UN Agencies, national and international NGOs and conducted under WFP leadership provided input for the nutrition programme. WFP contributed to support the operating costs of over 30 national and international NGO partners charged with the implementation of the nutrition programme.

Nutrition interventions supported by UNICEF within the framework of CERF funding are implemented by the Minister of Health through 400 therapeutic feeding centres in health centres and posts and select international NGOs such as the French Red Cross and Sante Sud. Technical assistance, staffing, and expert input are provided on location to WFP to ensure the operation of 500 supplementary feeding centres (CRENAMs) in 2008.

#### ***Refugees***

The inter-agency partnership between WFP and UNHCR is central to the use of CERF funds in implementing the refugee operation consisting of providing transport, food and non-food items to refugees during the repatriation process. In addition, partnership with Government was crucial in the identification of communities receiving repatriated families, which proved useful in WFP's calculation of rations and potential Food for Work activities in these areas as well as playing a leading role in joint government-UNHCR negotiations conducted prior to the repatriation. Sensitization campaigns were conducted by UNHCR among refugee communities with the support and assistance of the Ministry of the Interior and NGO partners.

### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

The WFP-CPSSA Food Security Survey conducted in October 2007, as well as UNICEF's findings on malnutrition levels were essential in providing information to make the selection of project sites possible.

### **(d) Prioritization process:**

#### ***Nutrition***

Allocations were used to bridge the funding gap between Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) financing and the UNICEF nutrition project. The most vulnerable regions in which malnutrition was a concern (with rates over 10 percent) were targeted with these funds: Assaba, Brakna, Guidimakha, Gorgol, Hod El Garbi, Hod El Chargi, Trarza, Tagant and peri-urban areas of the Nouakchott Region. The principal objective of the project was to save lives through direct, high impact nutritional interventions (treatment of acute malnutrition, vitamin A supplementation, deworming and promotion of breastfeeding).

#### ***Refugees***

Following the launch of a UNHCR special appeal, the evolution of the refugee repatriation evolved rapidly amidst government negotiations. The signing of a UNHCR-Govt (Senegal, Mauritania) Tripartite agreement governing the repatriation required the availability of funds to ensure a successful and sustainable repatriation operation.

For WFP, CERF funds were used to address a resource shortage following a budget revision of the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation, wherein the refugee component and additional relief needs were included. Essentially, CERF funds filled the resource shortfall for the refugee component of the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO), allowing for the purchase of the food items necessary for three month rations to be distributed to incoming refugees. The refugee component of the PRRO was prioritized above other components lacking resources due to the need for a rapid response to the imminent repatriation.

### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

Priority was given to interventions supporting the livelihoods of crop and livestock farmers through the implementation of the following activities: Analysis of the situation and evaluation of beneficiary needs in conjunction with the Director of Agriculture and Director of Livestock Farming; acquisition and distribution of market gardening seedlings for vulnerable households; installation of market gardening perimeters and provision of farming supplies; assisting the rehabilitation of agricultural activities. In addition, assistance was provided in safeguarding vulnerable livestock, distribution of assorted veterinary medications, vaccinations, and materials for support to livestock farmers' households.

### **III. Implementation and Results**

#### **Rapid Response projects**

##### ***Refugees***

CERF funding allowed WFP and UNHCR to be present on the ground to assist the Government and local and international NGOs in the planning of and at the outset of the repatriation operation. WFP's presence and assistance at the outset was required due to the high vulnerability of refugee families and resettlement communities to food insecurity and poverty amid a general climate of rising food prices and food insecurity in Mauritania. UNHCR's support to the repatriation operation was essential in providing technical expertise in the planning process and in providing practical logistical support. The humanitarian role of UNHCR in receiving the refugees and distributing basic non-food survival items was central to the resettlement process.

#### **Underfunded projects**

##### ***Nutrition***

CERF funding was used to complete projects financed by UNICEF and WFP within the framework of CAP and that of the regular programme. These funds are indispensable in bridging funding gaps, particularly in the provision of therapeutic food items for therapeutic feeding centres and equipment necessary for the operation of WFP-supported moderate malnutrition treatment centres.

CERF has also greatly assisted in creating a dynamic allowing for the efficient function of the initiative to tackle acute malnutrition, one of the single major contributors to infant mortality.

In preventing malnutrition, funding has covered the costs of two of the eight regions currently underfunded in the campaign to promote breastfeeding. Vitamin A supplementation, also assisted by CERF, is a regular program which has experienced a gradual decline in financing.

##### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

Funds were central to under-funded projects targeted towards sustaining the livelihoods of small-scale crop and livestock farmers in extremely impoverished rural areas where in agricultural output was endangered due to a protracted dry season and lack of rainfall. This greatly increased the ability of beneficiary families to generate income and as a consequence increased household assets. In the long term, this will increase food availability among these households, reduce levels of malnutrition, and the regeneration of livestock farming

#### **(a) Monitoring and evaluation**

##### ***Nutrition***

The UNICEF and WFP projects involves the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the nutrition programme through the collection of therapeutic feeding centres, supplementary feeding centres, and health services data, measuring the efficacy of acute malnutrition treatments and providing support to the December 2007 – March 2008 Nutrition Survey.

##### ***Refugees***

Monitoring of the CERF project/ refugee operation falls under the monitoring system of the PRRO (WFP). UNHCR and WFP hold consultations on a periodic basis with the Government counterpart, cooperating partners, and beneficiaries. The government has created a National Agency for Reception and Insertion of the Repatriates whose operations will monitor the progress of the repatriation in the longer term.

##### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

Monitoring of CERF-funded projects was undertaken by NGOs under contract with FAO and charged specifically with supervising distribution and the quality of beneficiary targeting, provision of equipment, and training.

## **(b) Initiatives that complemented CERF-funding projects**

### ***Nutrition***

NGO interventions as well as the health and nutrition plan management by the Ministry for the Promotion of Women's Rights, Children and the Family complemented the actions of the Ministry of Health (with the support of WFP and UNICEF).

### ***Refugees***

NGO interventions in communities wherein returnees would be settling have been central to obtaining feedback on the success of the operation thus far, as well as in evaluating needs for potential food for work programs. Government initiatives such as the National Agency for Reception and Insertion of the Repatriates for the monitoring of repatriates, as a mission to provide for durable social and economic insertion of the repatriates, will compliment the CERF project through long-term support for refugees.

### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

Government surveillance of areas in which CERF projects were conducted assisted the implementation of such projects logistically and fostered communication with recipient communities. NGO interventions continue to be of assistance in maintaining agricultural projects supported by CERF funds as CERF projects are taking place in zones wherein international NGOs such as OXFAM and ACCORD are implementing programs.

## **IV. Lessons learned**

### ***Nutrition***

The availability of CERF funds allows the reinforcement of a synergy between the interventions of UNICEF and WFP, increasing cooperation and compatibility of operations. CERF funding contributes greatly to saving lives in a context in which the standard of living – in both rural and urban impoverished areas - is progressively degrading due to the recent skyrocketing of basic food items on local (and global) markets. Unfortunately, the limited period of time during which CERF funds must be allocated limits the extent to which interventions can be conducted in a complete and comprehensive manner, signalling a need for advance preparation and extremely efficient collaboration between actors and within the delivery and supply system (which is not always the case).

### ***Refugees***

CERF funds enabled WFP and UNHCR to provide support to the Government for the duration of the refugee repatriation operation, an event with long-term significance for WFP and UNHCR activities in Mauritania due to rising food insecurity within rural communities (such as those to which refugees were repatriated). Due to advance planning, the deployment of UNHCR human/material presence, logistic and assistance delivery capacities proved to be very efficient, considering that by October 2007 the whole set up composed of the UNHCR and NGO teams were in place, as well as efficient coordination mechanisms with the government authorities at central as well as at local level.

It is evident that close collaboration among partners is necessary for operations such as these wherein multiple elements, such as food security and refugee assistance, are at play.

### ***Agriculture & Livestock***

The results attained were due largely in part to the cooperation of NGOs and the technical support of Government partners (Director of Agriculture, Director of Livestock Farming), who ensured that projects were implemented in an efficient manner and with positive results. This allowed for farmers to gain more from crops planted for the 2007-2008 counter-season and from agricultural materials provided for future growing seasons. The expertise provided by two consultants (agricultural and veterinary) in managing the agriculture and livestock-related aspects of the project were a determining factor in achieving the core objectives of the project.

## V. Results

Sector/ Cluster	CERF projects per sector	Amount disbursed (\$)	Number of Beneficiaries (by sex/age)	Implementing Partners	Expected Results/Outcomes	Actual results and improvements for the target beneficiaries
Nutrition and Child Survival	<p><b>07-WFP-051</b> WFP: PRRO 10359.0 Strengthening of the means of subsistence of drought-affected populations (nutrition component )</p> <p><b>07-CEF-066</b> UNICEF: Nutrition and Child Survival Emergency Operations in Mauritania PBA: SM/2007/431</p>	<p>\$340,441 (WFP)</p> <p>\$264,290 (Nutrition)</p>	<p>21,238 children under five, 13,129 pregnant and lactating mothers and 1,016 nutrition auxiliaries in seven targeted regions</p>	<p>NGOs, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, Ministry of Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support operations of existing ESFCs</li> <li>▪ Purchase, position and distribute 373 MT of food products into existing ESFCs</li> <li>▪ Provide therapeutic care and support for children suffering from severe and acute malnutrition in Mauritania</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ UNICEF: Purchase of therapeutic food items and medicines (1,000 kg milk F-75, 8,000 kg de F-100, 1,000 boxes of Plumpy Nut, 35 boxes of Resomal). These will provide for the recovery of approx. 1,200 children under five suffering from severe malnutrition</li> <li>▪ UNICEF/WFP: Purchase of monitoring equipment, staffing and technical support for 500 community treatment centres (CRENAMs).</li> <li>▪ UNICEF/WFP: Training of 113 health agents in two regions</li> <li>▪ WFP: Purchase, transport and distribution of 373 MT of food products</li> </ul>



<p>Assistance to Repatriated Mauritanian Refugees</p>	<p><b>07-WFP-068</b> WFP: PRRO 10359.0 Strengthening of the means of subsistence of drought-affected populations (Refugee component )</p> <p><b>07-HCR-028</b> UNHCR: Return and Reintegration of Mauritanian Refugees</p>	<p>\$193,654 (WFP)</p> <p>\$653,235 (UNHCR)</p>	<p>7,000 returnees &amp; families</p> <p>(35,000 total)</p>	<p>UNHCR, WFP ALPD (national NGO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Purchase, positioning and distribution of 378 MT of food products to 7,000 refugees</li> <li>▪ Returnees receive food rations upon their arrival</li> <li>▪ Returnees receive non-food items (sanitary kits, knettles, pots and mosquito nets) upon arrival</li> <li>▪ Distribution of 1,500 tents</li> <li>▪ Food security and malnutrition are prevented in areas of resettlement</li> <li>▪ All necessary transport equipment to be positioned with the UNHCR FO and the NGO antennas by end 2007.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First three months food ration distributed to refugees since January to March 2008 to 1,369 refugee families amounting to 40 MT in food items.</li> <li>▪ Purchase of food products amounting to 378 MT of various commodities and propositioning in regional warehouses</li> <li>▪ Purchase of 1,500 tents and non-food items</li> <li>▪ Food security monitoring is ongoing in resettlement areas</li> <li>▪ Five pirogues, 12 trucks, two 4x4s and NGO-supplied vehicles and disembarkation equipment were on site for the repatriation in January 2008. Fuel and transport cost for vehicles (12 trucks and two 4x4s from Liberia to Mauritania) was paid by UNHCR.</li> </ul>
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<p>Agriculture &amp; Livestock (FAO)</p>	<p><b>07-FAO-044</b> FAO: Assistance to Vulnerable Farming Populations affected by 2007 Dry Season</p>	<p>\$250,000</p>	<p>7,800 vulnerable rural (agriculture-reliant) households  10,074 vulnerable rural (livestock-reliant) households</p>	<p>NGOs, Government (Ministry of Agriculture &amp; Livestock), Socio-Professional Organisations (GNAP, FNEM)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analysis of the situation and evaluation of beneficiary needs in conjunction with the Director of Agriculture</li> <li>▪ Acquisition and distribution of market gardening seedlings for 3,500 vulnerable households</li> <li>▪ Installation of 50 market gardening perimeters and provision of farming supplies</li> <li>▪ Restoration of agricultural activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All items purchased</li> <li>▪ All items distributed</li> <li>▪ Increased number of beneficiaries/agriculture-reliant households reached (7,800) due to division of Horticultural Kits (following recommendation of Director of Agriculture)</li> <li>▪ Increased production capacity among agriculture-reliant and livestock-reliant households</li> <li>▪ Increased planting for upcoming growing season</li> <li>▪ Provision of basic means for future agricultural output</li> </ul>
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## **VI. CERF IN ACTION: Success stories**

### **Management of acute under-nutrition in peri-urban area of Nouakchott (Basra) affected by the increase of food prices**

The Ministry of Health, with the support of UNICEF and WFP, has installed a system of addressing acute and moderate malnutrition in the impoverished zones of Nouakchott, the inhabitants of which are severely affected by the recent skyrocketing of food prices.

The initiative to address malnutrition consists of two elements:

- Treatment of severe forms of acute malnutrition through the use of therapeutic foodstuffs (F-75, F-100, Plumpy Nut) in Therapeutic Rehabilitation Centres (CRENIs and CRENAAs) located in health centres, wherein children referred from Malnourished Children's supplementary Feeding Centres (CRENAMs) are received. Therapeutic food items are provided by UNICEF.
- Management of moderate acute malnutrition through the distribution of dry rations to children evaluated using brachial armbands in centres managed by contract NGOs.

The Malnourished Children's Feeding and Nutritional Recovery Centre (CRENAM) in Basra, an impoverished neighbourhood on the outskirts of Nouakchott, is in a precarious state, completely lacking a system of running water and sewage management. Families living in this area are predominantly rural migrants and are severely affected by the recent skyrocketing of prices for basic food items. The Centre conducts a bi-monthly distribution of dry rations (to take home) in addition to a bi-monthly nutritional evaluation for beneficiaries. The dry rations include essentials such as oil, sugar, and enriched flour suited specifically to the treatment of moderate malnutrition. WFP provided food items and transportation of food to the Centre; UNICEF provided non-food related technical support. At present, 70 children under 5 years of age are under the supervision of the Centre at Basra.

With extremely limited and unpredictable purchasing power, the majority of families in Basra survive off of less than two meals per day and the support of the WFP-UNICEF Centre to these families – who often have 3 or more children – is crucial. During the WFP Regional Director's visit to this site in December 2007, many women and mothers expressed their gratitude, explaining, « The food provided by WFP allows us to give the occasional breakfast and dinner to our children. These are meals that they are not usually able to eat because of limited access to food since prices began to rise in 2007.»



**CRENAM, Basra**

### ***Refugees***

On the Rosso riverfront, at the crossing point between Mauritania and Senegal, hundreds of chairs had been placed under woven tents to provide shelter from the sun. Here sat ministers and high ranking delegations including UNHCR, WFP and donors surrounded by thousands of people, constituting an enthusiastic and lively spectacle of music and traditional dances.

Upon the returnees' first step onto Mauritanian territory, the sound of women screaming joyously, accompanied by applause and verses of poetry expressing triumph arose from the crowd to welcome the returnees to their homeland. Several minutes later, drinks and tea were served to returnees and an hour later, a hot meal was provided by ALPD, a local NGO in partner with UNHCR for this operation.

UNHCR trucks transported the returnees to install them in sheds erected in resettlement sites pending their reintegration in society. Upon arrival another hot meal was provided by the NGO ALPD. The next day, ALPD teams supported by WFP Food Aid Monitors started distributions of WFP food rations to families for a period of 45 days as a first instalment. This first group of returnees was impressed by this welcome, which has assisted in strengthening their confidence upon their return.

Oumar Ba, a father of six questioned about the operation of the return of refugees expressed himself in these terms: "we have just stepped onto our land after many years of refuge in Senegal. Our dream has come true, and we hope to reintegrate into our territory with dignity. We greatly praise this initiative and thank the authorities for the efforts made for its success. We thank UNHCR and WFP and all organizations that have mobilized to help us return and reintegrate our communities. We also solicit their assistance and support to allow us create our own coping mechanisms in order to embark in our new life independently."

## List of Acronyms

**CAP**- Consolidated Appeal Process

**CERF**- Central Emergency Response Fund

**CPSSA**- Social Protection and Food Security Commission

**CRENAMs**- Childrens Feeding and Nutritional Recovery Centre

**FAO**- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

**MICS**- Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey

**NGO**- Non-governmental organization

**OCHA**- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

**ONS**- National Office of Statistics

**OXFAM**- Oxford Committee for Famine Relief

**PRRO**- Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations

**UNHCR**- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**UNICEF**- United Nations Children's Fund

**WFP**- World Food Programme