

Price Monitoring and Analysis Country Brief

Mauritania

January-April 2011

Key Messages

- Increasing food prices on the international market affect food imports in Mauritania; high wheat prices in Nouakchott have affected access to food.
- There is no acute food insecurity in rural areas, except in the centre of the river valley and in south-east. However in Nouakchott periurban areas, 12,000 people are estimated to be food insecure. Nationwide 208,000 people are considered food insecure.
- Security concerns are still high due to continued threats by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Magreheb.
- The government sells food at subsidized prices through the Operation Solidarity (OS) program to support poor households.

Background

In Mauritania, the total population is 3.2 million and the growth rate is 2% per annum. According to latest data, the prevalence of undernourishment is 7%.

Economic Indicators	View Data
Total Population (millions) - 2009 (WB)	3.291
Population growth rate - 2009 (WB)	2%
GNI per capita, \$ PPP - 2009 (WB)	1960
Population below 1\$ PPP per day - 2000 (MDGI)	21%
Rural population - 2009 (WB)	58%
Agriculture, value added (% of GDP) - 2002 (WB)	25%

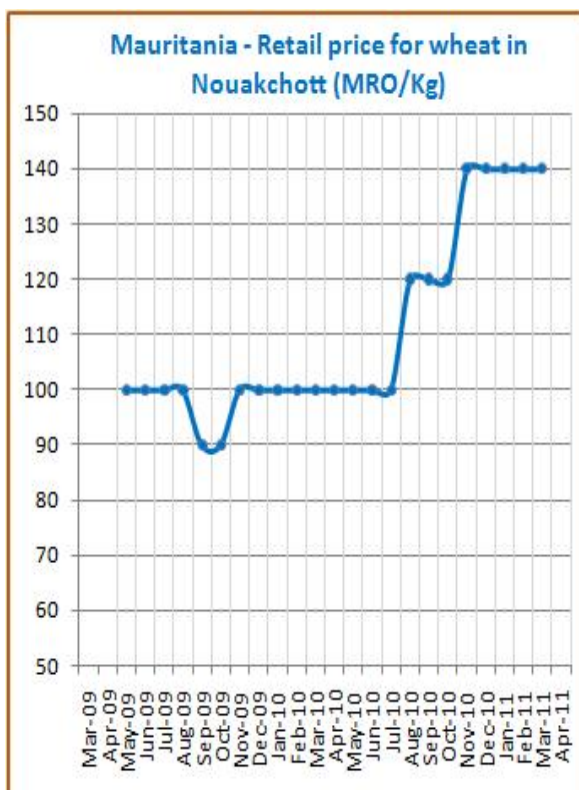
Food Consumption	
Undernourished Population - 2005/2007 (FAO)	7%
Cereal share in total dietary energy consumption - 2007 (FAO)	51%
Meat share in total dietary energy consumption - 2007 (FAO)	5%

Health Indicators	
Pop. with sustainable access to improved sanitation - 2008 (WHO)	26%
Life expectancy at birth (years) both sexes - 2008 (WHO)	58
Pop. with access to improved drinking water sources - 2008 (WHO)	49%
Prevalence of HIV among adults aged >= 15 years - 2009 (WHO)	0.7%

Prices

Cereals: the recent rise in international food prices is likely to lead to high inflationary pressure on the domestic food market, eroding purchasing power of urban and rural consumers, while also hampering the country's import capacity. Wheat prices in Nouakchott were reported to be stable at 140 Ouguiya/Kg in Feb 2011, after rising by 17% since Oct 2010.

Livestock: In Feb, terms of trade were in favour of pastoralists thanks to the high demand for livestock due to religious celebrations. However, according to FEWSNET, livestock prices fell while cereal prices increased between Feb and March.



Source: GIEWS Country Briefs

Food Security Situation Assessment

Poor households in the centre of the river valley and in the south east are moderately food insecure, whereas in the rest of the country, households are presently food secure thanks to food stocks which cover needs until June. There is also a larger volume of grain imports from Mali compared to previous year and increased imports of Senegalese rice. However high food prices constrain access by the poor. An estimated 208,000 people are food insecure, with 196,000 in rural areas and 12,000 in peri-urban areas of Nouakchott. FAO estimates moderately low undernourishment while IFPRI reports serious hunger in Mauritania.

CURRENT EMERGENCY ASSESSMENT

Exceptional shortfall in aggregate food production supplies	Widespread lack of access	Severe localized food insecurity	FAO/GIEWS CPFS 2010
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The lean season has already begun for poor cropping households in the south-eastern area of the rainfed cereals zone, in the center of the Senegal River Valley, and in the northwestern agro-pastoral zone. In the rest of the country, levels of food ...[more](#)

SCALE OF HUNGER (% of Undernourishment)

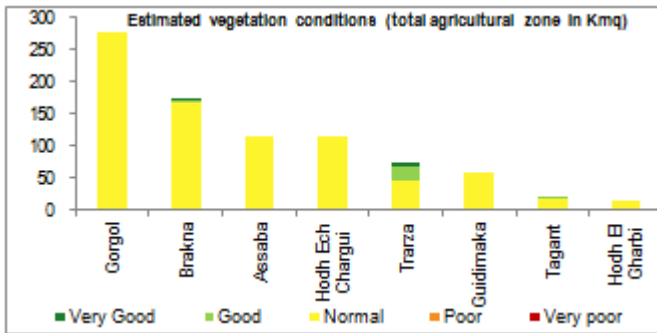
Very high (>= 35%)	High (25-34%)	Moderately high (15-24%)	Moderately low (5-14%)	Very low (< 5% under.)	FAO Hunger Map
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FAO Hunger Map classifies all countries of the world into five based on % of population undernourished.

Extremely alarming	Alarming	Serious	Moderate	Low	IFPRI/2010 GHI
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Vegetation Condition

At the end of the dry season, normal conditions are observed in the major part of the country. The general indicator of vegetation condition provided below is the relative difference between the NDVI for April 2011 and the average of the last 10 years, calculated on the agricultural zones derived from the Cropland Use Intensity dataset (USGS, 1988).



Source: JRC MARS – FoodSec

Crop phase in the reference period

- Sowing** No crops are sowed during the reference period
- Growing** Crops in low lying area - Off-season Rice - Walo crops
- Harvesting** Crops in low lying area - Off-season Rice - Walo crops

Natural Disasters, Drought and Conflicts

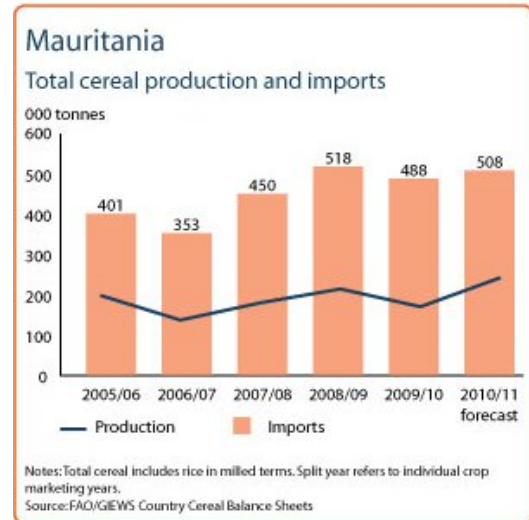
The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has assisted Mauritanian migrants who fled violence in Cote d'Ivoire to return home. Security situation in Mauritania is also very fragile due to continued threats posed by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Magreheb.

Refugees and IDPs	2007	2008	2009
Total in the country	30496	34139	38926
Total outside the country	34125	53421	52067

Source: UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Data extracted on 01/12/2010.

Food Balance Sheet

A recent CILSS/FAO/Government mission provisionally estimated 2010 cereal production at 242,710 tonnes, an increase of 42% over the drought affected crop of 2009. This, in addition to favourable crop prospects in neighbouring countries, particularly in Senegal and Mali, which should result in improved food supply situation in 2010/11. Imports are estimated at 508,000MT, compared to 488,000MT in 2009/10.



Notes: Total cereal includes rice in milled terms. Split year refers to individual crop marketing years.
Source: FAO/GIEWS Country Cereal Balance Sheets

Source: GIEWS Country Briefs

Government Policies

The government is selling imported rice or wheat, sugar and oil at subsidized prices through Operation Solidarity (OS) program which has opened 600 village shops (250 in Nouakchott, with the remainder scattered across other parts of the country) until June. Together with the World Bank, it also implements the 2nd phase of the Integrated Development Program for Irrigated Agriculture.

Consumer and market oriented measures	Price subsidies
Producer oriented measures	Irrigation
Trade policy measures	n.a.
Safety net (increased or introduced)	n.a.

Different sources

Current events to watch (Click to see the full report)

- [Rapport du Rapporteur spécial sur les droits de l'homme...](#)
- [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights o...](#)
- [WFP News: The Newsletter of the World Food Programme i...](#)
- [Bulletin sur le criquet pèlerin No. 390](#)
- [Bulletin sur le criquet pèlerin No. 391](#)

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