

Evaluation of the ARC Payout Process to the Government for the 2021-22 Season in Mauritania

**Final report
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Evaluation team:

Hugo CHENE, El Yass OULD DIDI, Ould El Houssein YAHIA, Clément CHARLOT

Evaluation supervisor:

Abdou Karim DIEYE, Interim head of ARC monitoring and evaluation unit

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Quote

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List of Acronyms

ANSADE	National Agency for Statistics and Demographic and Economic Analysis
ARC	<i>African Risk Capacity</i> (Mutuelle Panafricaine de gestion des risques)
ARC2	<i>Africa Rainfall Climatology Technology version 2</i> (Climatologie des précipitations en Afrique, version 2)
ARV	Africa Risk View
BCP	Joint Country Report
BEL	Shipment note Delivery
BM	World Bank
CAAM	Market Purchasing and Supply Center
CAB	Needs Assessment Committee
CAD	Development Assistance Committee
CCBP	Certificate of Conformity and Good Practice
CH	Harmonized Framework
CHIRP	<i>Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation</i> (Précipitations infrarouges du Climate Hazards Group)
CHIRPS	<i>Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation with Station data</i> (Précipitations infrarouges du Climate Hazards Group avec les données des stations)
CODEP	Departmental committee
CSA	Food safety commissioner
CTS	Specialized Technical Committee
DAF	Administrative and financial manager
DCAN	National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response System
DGV	Free food distribution
EPCV	Permanent Survey on Living Conditions
EPoA	<i>Emergency Plan of Action</i> (Plan d'action d'urgence)
EE	Evaluation Team
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	<i>Focus Group Discussion</i> (Groupe de discussion)
FNRCAN	National Food and Nutritional Crisis Response Fund
FSMS	<i>Food Security Monitoring Survey</i> (Enquête de suivi de la situation alimentaire des ménages)
GR	Large Ruminant
GTS	Specialized Working Group
TWG	Technical Working Group
HEA	<i>Household Economy Analysis</i> (Analyse de l'économie des ménages)
IA	Food insecurity
IFRC	<i>International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement</i> (Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge)

INPC	National Consumer Price Index
IP	Standing instructions
IPC	<i>Integrated Food Security Phase Classification</i> (Classification intégrée des phases de la sécurité alimentaire)
KII	<i>Key informant Interview</i> (Entretien avec des personnes clés)
MDRC	<i>Modeled Drought Response Cost</i> (Coût modélisé de Réponse à la Sécheresse)
MRU	Ouguiya mauritanien
MT	Thousands of tons
NOAA	<i>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</i>
ODK	Open Data Kit
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
WFP	World Food Program
FIPFIP	Final implementation plan
PNR	National contingency plan
OP	Operational plan
SOP	Standard operating procedures
PR	Little Ruminant
PRMP	Persons responsible for public contracts
CTR	Cost Transfer ratio
REP	Country Engagement Manager
RFE2	<i>Rainfall Estimation Algorithm version 2</i> (Algorithme d'estimation des précipitations version 2)
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
RS	Corporate register
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
SAS	Simple random sampling
SCAPP	National Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
SONIMEX	Mauritanian Import and Export Company
SPPT	[Sampling] Systematic with probability proportional to size
ToR	Terms of reference
USD	US Dollar
ZME	Livelihood zone

Executive Summary

Mauritania was one of the first governments to join as an ARC Member State upon its creation in 2013. The Mauritanian government subscribed to agricultural insurance and pastoral insurance policies starting from 2020. During the 2021-22 agricultural season, the Mauritanian government again qualified to participate in the African Risk Capacity Limited (ARC Ltd) insurance following the validation of its operational plan and the recording of a major rainfall deficit. Meteorological data from the end of September 2021 revealed that 78% of rainfall stations were following a deficit trajectory compared to the average established between 1991 and 2020.

In March 2022, ARC Ltd disbursed USD 1,715,131 to Mauritania. In October 2023, the ARC Secretariat commissioned Key Aid Consulting to conduct a process evaluation to determine whether the Final Implementation Plan developed by the Mauritanian Government and validated by ARC (i) had been implemented in accordance with the approved interventions, (ii) to assess the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation, and (iii) to draw lessons and recommendations. The evaluation, which took place from October 2023 to January 2024, used a mixed methodology approach consisting of a desk review, 27 interviews with key informants, 15 focus group discussions, and a representative survey of 351 beneficiaries (141 men and 210 women).

Overall, the objectives set within the framework of the FIP were achieved, however, the majority of assistance was distributed outside the planned period.

The discrepancy between Africa RiskView rainfall forecasts and field data delayed the activation of the insurance policy by several months (from December to May). In addition to Mauritania, the problem stemming from the use of the ARC2 dataset also affected other countries. Following the confirmation of data failure, negotiations took place between ARC Ltd and its reinsurers.

In accordance with a May 2022 decree, ARC funds were disbursed into a new special allocation budget called the National Fund for Response to Food and Nutritional Crises (FNRCAN). This situation created significant administrative delays that the CSA anticipated by pre-financing the ARC intervention with its own funds.

Although beneficial for coordination, the production of the National Response Plan (PNR), , delayed the start of activities. The PNR was presented in March, leaving little time for registration and targeting before the usual lean period (generally from June to September).

The number of targeted households corresponds to the FIP projections. The final number of households is 26,983 (1,821 additional households), as ARC payment did not exactly match the population identified as beneficiaries of the Free Food Distribution (DGV), based on CH data. The number of households assisted by ARC payment is actually 25,164. To compensate for this difference, the CSA used its own resources.

The CSA preferred to carry out a general food distribution rather than a cash intervention, even though the latter is less costly and less preferred by beneficiaries. This choice is

explained by the CSA's extensive experience in implementing distributions, which constitutes a comparative advantage for this modality.

The evaluation found that the few deviations from Standard operating procedures (SOPs) did not have major consequences for the success of the programme. Some minor deviations were noted concerning the schedule and activities carried out.

The evaluation also found that the cost-transfer ratio of government intervention implementation was good due to efforts made by the CSA (internalization of implementation, economies of scale using the national response PNR).

Overall, beneficiaries were relatively satisfied with the distribution process. Several factors impacted the assistance results. Firstly, comparing the value of provided assistance (181 MRU/person/month) to the recommended assistance (450 MRU/person/month), it seems that the ration distributed by the CSA is lower than what is recommended to maintain an acceptable level of food needs coverage in emergency situations. A second factor impacting assistance results is the relatively late arrival of assistance compared to the lean period. The ARC model relies on advance payment to beneficiaries within three months following the harvest (thus in April for Mauritania), which could not be achieved for this payment. During the interviews, households mentioned that an early distribution would have been preferable.

Despite the positive results of the evaluation, it is necessary to interpret them with caution due to the absence of a monitoring system implemented by the program. Such a system would have provided additional information on the effectiveness of assistance and supported results with other sources. This evaluation led to the identification of various recommendations, which are captured below:

1. Improve and streamline DCAN planning tools, particularly by revising the national plan for anticipated needs and deepening the analysis of response options in the PNR.
2. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation of interventions related to the PNR by integrating the budget for monitoring and evaluation activities into the budget request to the ARC.
3. Review the targeting methodology to reduce exclusion and inclusion error rates by supplementing social registry data with community targeting until data is updated.
4. Continue to customise the model to reduce basis risk by reassessing its sensitivity and involving other technical and financial partners to support seasonal drought-related needs response.
5. Reassess assistance content to ensure adequate allocations for household size and consider solutions to cover transportation costs related to milling commodities for beneficiary households.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Country context

1. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania is the third largest country in West Africa, situated at the intersection of the Saharan desert and the Sahelian steppes. It covers an area of 1,030,700 km²¹. It is bordered to the north by Western Sahara and Algeria, to the east by Mali, to the south by Mali and Senegal, and to the west by the Atlantic Ocean. In 2022, **Mauritania's population was estimated at around 4.4 million**². The population has increased by 8% since 2018, when it stood at 4.2 million, and its annual growth rate is 2.6%. Its density of 3.9 inhabitants per square kilometer makes it the fourth least densely populated country in Africa. Moreover, Mauritania's population is young. In 2021, over 60% of the total population was under the age of 25, and 42% of the population was aged between 0 and 14 years old³. Mauritania's urban population is also relatively high compared to its neighbors, accounting for 56% of the population according to 2021⁴ estimates. Nouakchott, the country's administrative capital, is home to a quarter of the country's⁵ population.

1.1.1 Food security situation

2. **Mauritania's population faces a stable but high level of food insecurity (IA)**, mainly during the lean season (June-September). Figure 1 highlights this repeated trend over the 2018-2023 period. In 2020, the Global Hunger Index 2020 ranked Mauritania 85th out of 107 countries⁶.
3. **The climate in Mauritania is typically arid, marked by low and irregular rainfall**, varying from 450 mm in the southern part (semi-arid climate) to just 50 mm in the northern two-thirds of the country (desert climate). The dry period extends from October to May, while the rainy season, from June to September, brings more frequent rainfall, especially in the southern region. Low rainfall poses challenges for agriculture, particularly rain-fed farming, the main livelihood on the southern border of the country, as shown on the [livelihood map](#) in the appendix.
4. **Insufficient local agricultural production means that food imports are essential to meet the population's needs: 70% of cereals consumed are imported. Mauritania is therefore vulnerable to fluctuations in international food prices, which increases food insecurity**^{7,8}. Recently, the prices of the main imported

¹ World Bank Data, "Land Area Mauritania."

² National Statistics Agency — <https://ansade.mr/fr/>

³ World Bank. "Mauritania Macroeconomic Outlook," 2021.

⁴ World Bank Data, "Urban Population, Mauritania."

⁵ IOM, "Mauritania - Nouakchott - Mapping and profile of migrants", October 2022.

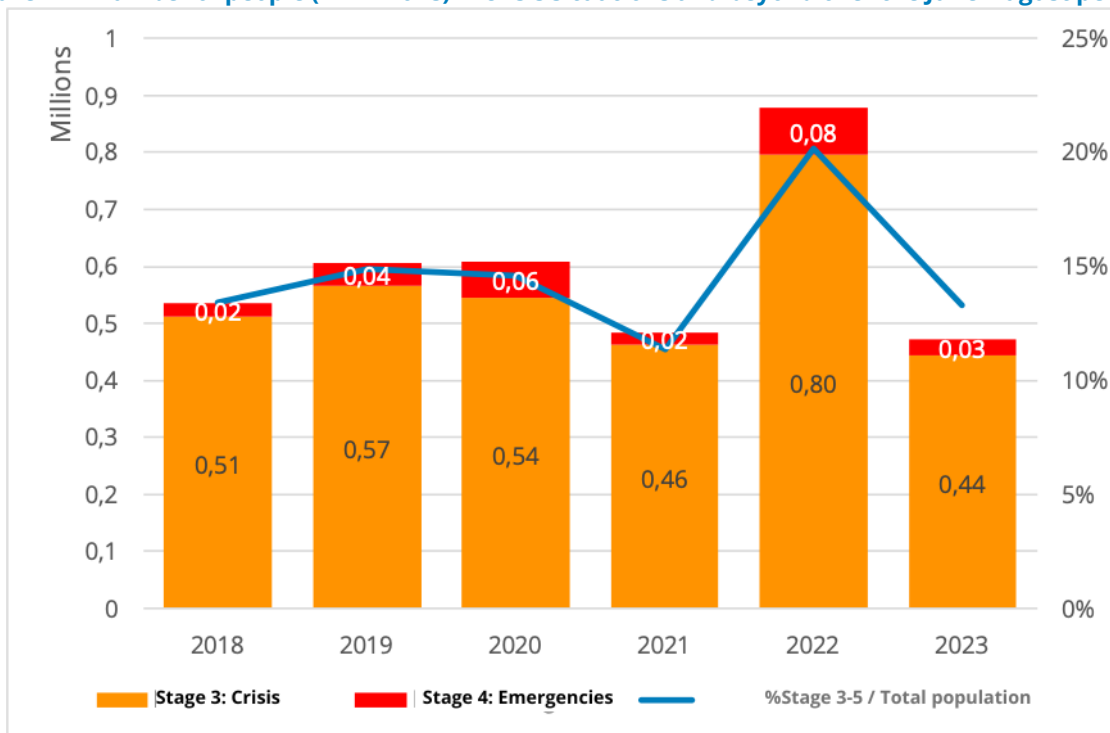
⁶ International Food Policy Research Institute, "World Hunger Index: Hunger and food systems in conflict situations", October 2021.

⁷ FAO et al., « The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) Report - 2023 », juillet 2023.

⁸ Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, "Operational plan to support populations in the event of severe drought", 2020.

foodstuffs have risen sharply compared with the average for the last five year⁹. For example, the price of wheat is 70% higher than in October 2021, and 80% higher than the average for the last five years over the same period¹⁰. This situation directly affects households' access to food security.

Figure 1 — Number of people (in millions) in crisis situations and beyond over the June-August period¹¹



1.1.2 Climate change and vulnerability factors

- Mauritania is vulnerable to climate change. In addition to the risks associated with the fragility of the national economy in the face of shocks linked to the global economy, **climate change particularly affects vital sectors of the national economy, such as agriculture and livestock farming**. Declining vegetation cover and desertification are having a negative impact on livestock breeding and agricultural production. This situation is leading to the impoverishment of the rural population. Some households are forced to send members of their household to urban centers, in particular the capital Nouakchott, which is currently home to around a quarter of the national population. According to the Ministry of the Environment, land degradation is estimated at around 200,000 hectares per year, and bush fires also destroy between 50,000 and 200,000 hectares per year¹².

⁹ Data from the National Consumer Price Index, in its monthly bulletin for September 2023, revealed that prices of food products and basic materials increased in varying proportions in all regions of the country. ANSADE, " Monthly note of the National Consumer Price Index (INPC) ", September 2023.

¹⁰ Results of the Harmonized Framework analysis, Mauritania, November 2022.

¹¹ Harmonized Framework data for the years 2018 to 2023. <https://www.food-security.net/visualise-export/?country=mauritania&area=&period=2023-06&sea=on&neighbour=on&partner=on>

¹² Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, "Desertification", June 2020, <http://www.environnement.gov.mr/fr/index.php/toute-l-actualite/45-desertification>.

6. **Mauritania is experiencing regular droughts, which are becoming increasingly frequent**¹³. Droughts have a significant impact on agriculture, leading to reduced crop yields and loss of livestock due to lack of pasture and water.
7. Poverty remains a rural issue, with **nearly eight out of ten people (77.1%) living in poverty**¹⁴ in these areas. The fragile economic conditions of thousands of poor Mauritanian families affect the standard of living of women and children. Chronic malnutrition (lack of food quality rather than quantity) affects 17.1% of the Mauritanian population¹⁵. Children under the age of five are particularly affected by stunting, with the 18-23 month age group the most affected, with a prevalence of 38%¹⁶.

1.1.3 Gender

8. Despite national efforts to promote gender equality, **most of the country's economic and social indicators are marked by gender-based disparities**. Mauritania ranks 161st out of 170 countries in 2021 on the Gender¹⁷. Inequality Index Multiple factors, both governance-related and socio-cultural, explain this result. These include socio-cultural barriers that maintain patriarchal traditions, the under-representation of women in decision-making, women's poor access to production inputs (such as credit and land ownership), the absence of gender-specific statistics, and limited access to education and training are some of the concrete causes behind this result¹⁸.

1.2 ARC's engagement in Mauritania

9. **Mauritania was one of the first governments to join ARC at its creation**^{19,20}. Initial visits by ARC representatives took place in October 2012. Mauritania ratified the agreement creating the African Risk Capacity (ARC) in 2013. The Mauritanian government was granted a certificate of compliance and good practice²¹ (CCBP) from

¹³ African Risk Capacity and Islamic Republic of Mauritania, " Mauritania: Validation report on the customization of the Africa RiskView (ARV) agricultural and pastoral drought model", January 2021.

¹⁴ ANSADE, " Multidimensional poverty in Mauritania ", November 2022.

¹⁵ Ministry of Health and UNICEF, " SMART Nutrition Survey ", July 2021.

¹⁶ FAO, European Union, and CIRAD, " Profil of the food systems - Mauritania: Activating the sustainable and inclusive transformation of our food systems ", 2023.

¹⁷ UNDP, "Gender Inequality Index", 2021.

¹⁸ United Nations Mauritania, " Common Country Assessment (CCA). Development in response to the Covid-19 pandemic", 2021.

¹⁹ The African Risk Capacity (ARC) was established as a specialized agency under the aegis of the African Union (AU) in November 2012 with the primary aim of strengthening the disaster preparedness and response capacities of its member states in the face of extreme weather events and disasters, particularly by assisting food-insecure populations. Under the patronage and legal protections of the AU, ARC, which operates through its Secretariat, provides member states with a range of capacity-building services, including early warning systems, contingency planning and risk financing mechanisms. It currently has Memoranda of Understanding with 24 AU member countries, and operates under the supervision of a Board of Directors elected by member states and the African Union Commission.

²⁰ The first countries to join ARC are Mauritania, Niger and Senegal.

²¹ To obtain and maintain a Certificate of Compliance and Good Practice (CCBP), a country must: (i) be a signatory to the Treaty; (ii) have a Board-approved Contingency Plan detailing the use of ARC Ltd insurance

ARC in March 2014²². The Mauritanian government has subscribed to the agricultural insurance policy, followed by the pastoral insurance policy from 2020²³.

10. Since 2014, **Mauritania has repeatedly benefited from ARC's insurance policy:**

- In 2015, Mauritania received US\$6.3 million for food distribution to families, which enabled 11,000 tons of rice to be purchased from local suppliers and provided rapid assistance to 250,000 people.
- In 2018, ARC Ltd disbursed US\$2.4 million to the Mauritanian government for pastoral drought insurance. The distribution consisted of livestock feed²⁴.

11. **In 2020, the government of Mauritania re-qualified for African Risk Capacity Insurance Company Limited (ARC Ltd) following validation of its contingency plan²⁵.** The main contractual milestones between ARC and the Mauritanian government are listed below:

Table 1 - Calendar of the main activities of the ARC engagement for the 2021-22 season

Key activities	Date
Acquisition by Mauritania of insurance from ARC Ltd with a premium of 1,499,665 USD ²⁶	12 april 2021
CSA letter on the discrepancy between ARV monitoring and reality in the field	28 october 2021
<i>Negotiations between ARC Ltd and reinsurers</i>	<i>November 2021 — march 2022</i>
Production of a report detailing the calculation of the drought intervention and transmission of the corresponding amount to Mauritania by ARC Ltd for implementation.	8 march 2022
Approval by the ARC Institution's Board of Directors of the Final Implementation Plan (FIP)	14 june 2022
FIP implementation	April-Sept. 2022

benefits, as required by the Treaty³; (iii) have completed the review and customization of the Africa RiskView software; (iv) be up to date with its financial obligations to the ARC Institution; and (v) comply with its approved Contingency Plan. The ARC Secretariat communicates to ARC Ltd the names of countries that hold CCBP and are therefore eligible to join ARC Ltd by taking out an insurance policy.

²² African Risk Capacity, "Criteria for the issuance of Certificates of Compliance and Good Practice ARC/LW3/D004.1209_16", s. d.

²³ Existing ARV approaches to agricultural drought monitoring are based on the Water Requirement Satisfaction Index (WRSI). WRSI is not specifically targeted at livestock farming, which is characterized by heterogeneous vegetation. As a result, one ARV has developed a pastoral model based on the normalized difference vegetation index. African Risk Capacity and Islamic Republic of Mauritania, "Mauritania: Validation report on the customization of the Africa RiskView (ARV) agricultural and pastoral drought model".

²⁴ The number of beneficiaries of this insurance policy is not known, as the monitoring system was not sufficiently effective. IRAM, "Evaluation of the ARC 2017-18 Payment Process to Mauritania", s. d.

²⁵ The contingency plan is made up of the definitive implementation plan (FIP) and the operational plan. Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, "Framework for the definitive implementation plan (FIP)", April 2022; Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, "Operational plan to support populations in the event of severe drought".

²⁶ An agricultural insurance policy for 749796 USD and a pastoral insurance policy for 749869 USD. ARC Ltd, "Invoice for parametric drought insurance policy 2021-22", April 2021.

Payment of 1.7 million USD in insurance indemnities to Mauritania	18 october 2022
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12. Over the same period, Mauritania benefited from a replica insurance²⁷ payment from the World Food Program (WFP). The WFP implemented complementary activities in the Aioun and Maghama moughataa (Hodh el Gharbi and Gorgol) between March and May. **The WFP's Replica response, however, is not covered in this report.**

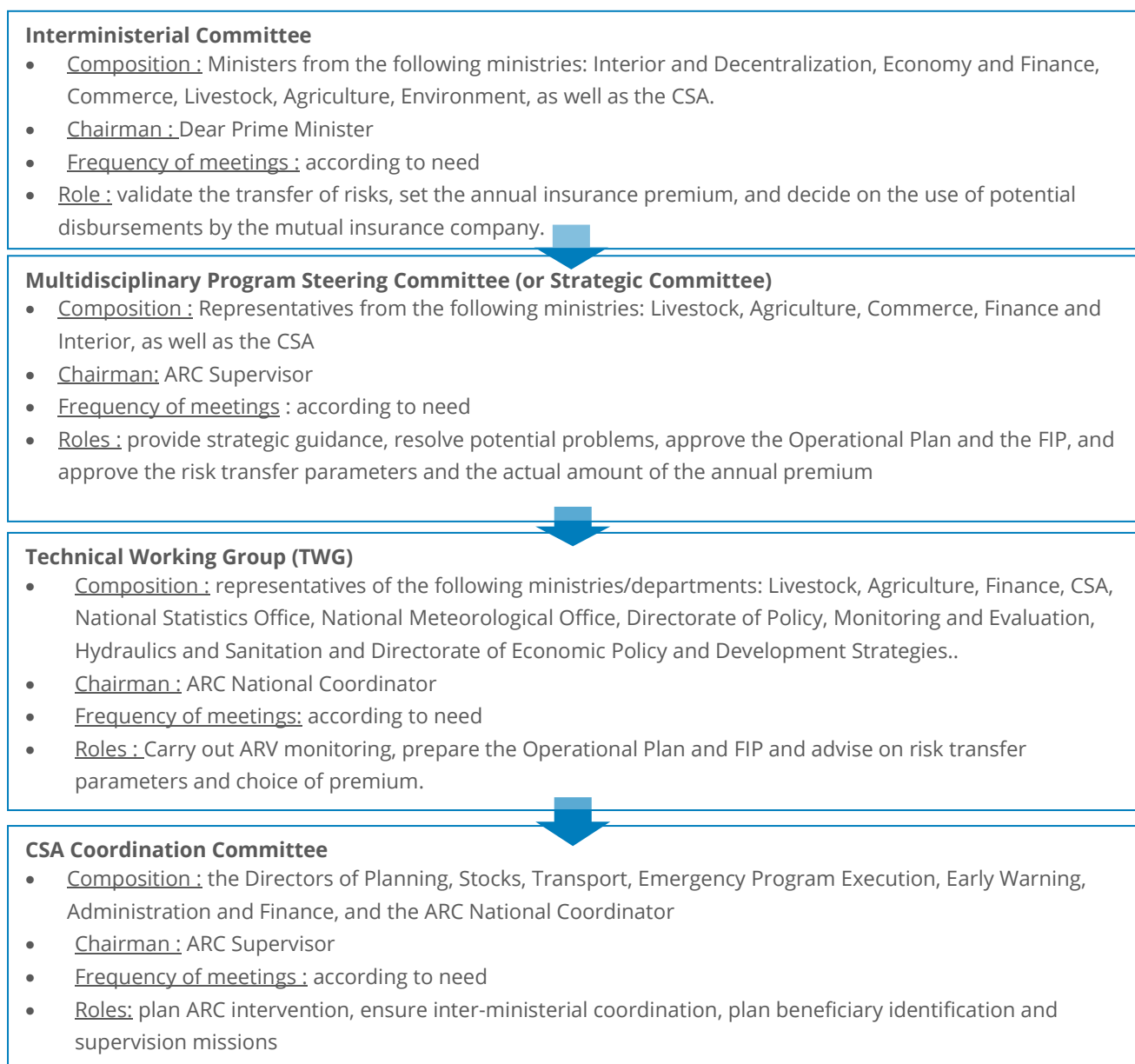
1.3 ARC structure on site

1.3.1 Institutional structure of ARC in Mauritania

13. **Four major committees have been established to oversee and coordinate Mauritania's involvement with ARC.** These committees encompass various ministries and departments, each with distinct responsibilities. Figure 2 below summarizes the structure and roles of each committee.

²⁷ ARC Replica is an insurance product offered by ARC Ltd to WFP and other humanitarian organizations as an innovative approach to extending climate risk insurance coverage to a larger number of people and improving the effectiveness of emergency humanitarian response in vulnerable African countries exposed to climate risks. Under ARC replication coverage, WFP and other partners (replication partners) can match ARC assistance. ARC member countries can then benefit from additional protection through corresponding policies underwritten by WFP or other humanitarian agencies. World Food Program, « ARC Replica : WFP's partnership with the African Risk Capacity (ARC) for the expansion of climate risk insurance », octobre 2018.

Figure 2 - Committee composition and structures in Mauritania ²⁸



1.3.2 Integrating ARC into the government's emergency response mechanism

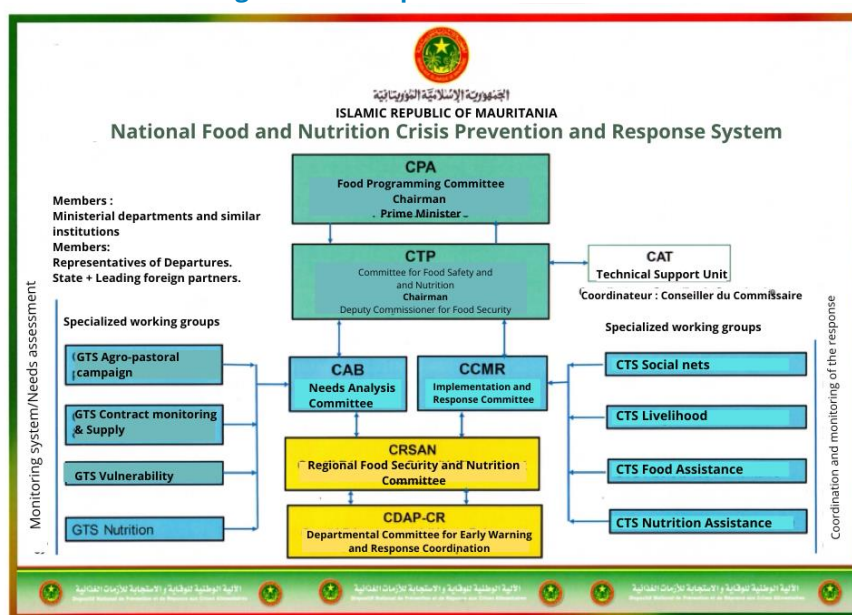
14. Since 2016, **the National Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity (SCAPP-2016-2030)** in line with the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, has been the reference framework for political, economic and social programs in Mauritania. The goal is to "completely eradicate extreme poverty in the country and reduce by at least half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions, by 2030"²⁹.

²⁸ Loosely based on a similar chart produced in Flavio Braidotti, "Process Audit of the African Risk Capacity: Mauritania Report" (Kimetrica, November 2015).

²⁹ Islamic Republic of Mauritania, " National Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity (SCAPP 2012-2030) ", January 2016.

15. **Since April 2021, Mauritania has had a national framework for concerted action on food security**, known as the National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism (DCAN). It is responsible for setting up an early warning system and preparing and implementing response plans to food insecurity and malnutrition shocks. It involves all the departments and players involved in diagnosing and preparing responses to food and nutrition crises³⁰. In order to contribute to the food and nutritional security of vulnerable populations, the government, through the Commissioner for Food Security (CSA) and with the support of its technical and financial partners, implements a series of programs and actions every year.

Figure 2 — Components of the DCAN



1.4 Evaluation objectives and methodology

1.4.1 Evaluation objectives

16. This evaluation, commissioned by ARC, **has a dual accountability and learning objective**. It aims to determine whether the FIP, developed by the CSA and validated by the ARC, has been implemented as planned in terms of process and management. In addition, this evaluation **seeks to provide insight into the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation, the achievement of results, the quality of implementation and beneficiary satisfaction**. It also seeks to **draw lessons and make recommendations** to inform the future design and implementation of ARC payments in Mauritania and other ARC-supported countries.

17. The evaluation of the FIP process covers the following areas, as detailed in the terms of reference (available in the annex [Terms of reference for the evaluation](#))

³⁰ Islamic Republic of Mauritania, " Decree No. 061-2021 of April 21, 2021/P.M/ reorganizing the national framework for consultation on food security and establishing a National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism (DCAN)." (2021).

- Assess the extent to which Mauritania's FIP complies with ARC's standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- Review of interventions carried out with ARC funds in relation to those described in the FIP.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of FIP implementation, as well as beneficiaries' perception of program implementation and results.
- Evaluating how interventions integrate the gender dimension³¹

18. In the event of drought, one of ARC's added values is that funds are released quickly³² — often before other funds become available - reducing the time needed to help vulnerable populations, protect their livelihoods and prevent them from resorting to negative coping strategies such as selling off agricultural assets or going without food. Consequently, **the evaluation focuses on the progress and speed of activities, and attempts to identify any deviations from standard operating procedures.**

19. The evaluation questions addressed in this evaluation are summarized in the table below. The evaluation matrix, with these questions, their evaluation criteria and the source of the data, can be found in the section in the Appendix [Evaluation matrix](#)

Table 1: Evaluation questions

Evaluation questions	DAC criteria
Q1: Coordination with other initiatives during design and implementation	Consistency/Coordination
Q 2 : Achieving expected results	Efficiency
Q 3 : Response efficiency	Efficiency

20. The primary audiences for this process evaluation are the ARC agency, its partners, and the Government of Mauritania through the CSA. The secondary audience for the report is the other member states and the various committees that make up DCAN.

1.4.2 Methodology overview

21. For the purposes of conciseness, the table below describes the main stages of the study. The full methodology is presented in the [appendix](#). The evaluation team used a mixed-methods approach, based on the collection and analysis of primary data (individual interviews, focus groups with beneficiaries [FGD] and quantitative surveys of a representative sample of beneficiaries) and secondary data (program documents, market studies, contextual documents and monitoring data).

Table 2 — Overview of activities carried out throughout the evaluation process

Starting phase	Initiation report: submitted on October 24, 2023, containing an evaluation matrix, data collection methodology and tools used. The	Document review: 76 documents were consulted (internal memos, procedures,
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³¹ For this, the evaluation team will base itself on WFP Office of Evaluation, "Technical Note: Integrating Gender in WFP Evaluations", n. d.

³² African Risk Capacity, « Contingency Planning Standards and Guidelines », n.d.

	final version was submitted on November 6, 2023.	reports, newsletters and completed diagnostics).
Collecting data	27 interviews with key informers ³³ .	15 focus groups with ARC/CSA beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries ³⁴ .
	351 households surveyed as part of the quantitative survey: 113 households in Djigueni (32%); 133 households in Néma (38%) and 105 in Timbedra (30%).	
Analysis and report writing	Qualitative, primary and secondary data were recorded and coded to analyze emerging trends. This was done using an Excel coding matrix, organized by evaluation question. Quantitative data were cleaned and analyzed using descriptive statistics in Excel.	
Deliverables	Final return: January 20, 2024	First version: December 19, 2023 Final report: February 21, 2024

1.4.3 Limits to achieving evaluation objectives

22. **Timing of the evaluation:** It is strongly recommended that the process evaluation and beneficiary surveys be carried out immediately after receipt of the assistance. In the case of this evaluation, approximately one year will have elapsed between the receipt of the commodities and the start of the field survey, which may have impacted on the ability of the stakeholders interviewed to recall details related to the implementation of the FIP. To minimize this limitation, the evaluation team relied as much as possible on the document review to triangulate the information shared by interviewees.

23. **Beneficiaries' confusion as to the interventions received:** Several actions, whether undertaken directly by the CSA or other government entities, were carried out simultaneously with the ARC intervention during the same season and in the same moughata³⁵. Despite the verification measures put in place by the evaluation team³⁶, it is conceivable that some beneficiaries may have amalgamated several interventions and provided responses that do not correspond exclusively to the ARC-funded intervention, especially given the time lag between implementation and data collection. As far as possible, the evaluation team triangulated information to reduce this bias.

³³ The sample of key informant interviews is presented in the appendix.

³⁴ The sample of focus groups with project beneficiaries is presented in the appendix.

³⁵ By way of illustration, of the households surveyed (n=351), only 22% had not received any other form of assistance over the past three years. The majority had mainly received assistance from the Taazour (41%) and Tekavoul (40%) programs. In some focus groups, other interventions such as flood response or Kosmos distribution were also mentioned.

³⁶ Seven questions were asked of beneficiaries, in addition to verifying identification when available, to enable the interviewer to confirm that the household had indeed received assistance from ARC.

24. **Gender mainstreaming:** Gender mainstreaming, a key element of the terms of reference, was not explicitly integrated into the design and implementation of the FIP, nor into ARC's standard procedures. Consequently, the consultants have adapted their process evaluation to focus on gender mainstreaming in targeting and implementation, as presented in the evaluation matrix.

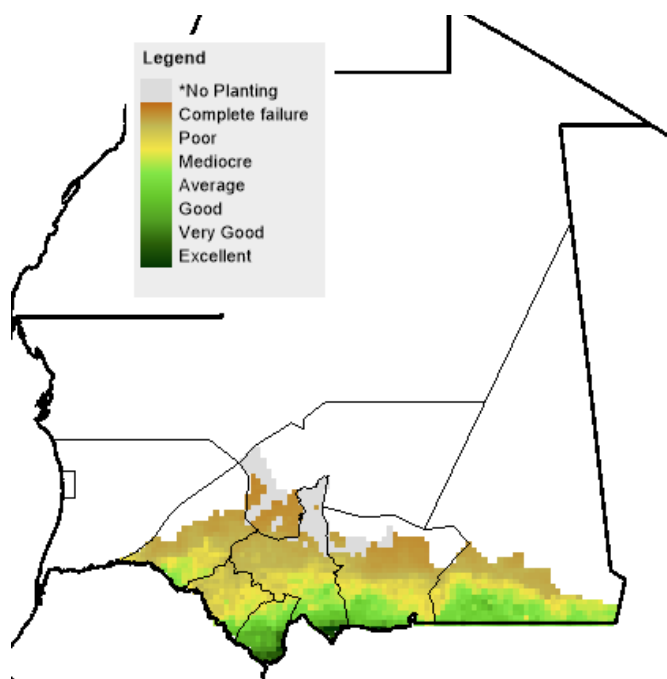
2. Final Implementation Plan (FIP): interventions and expected results

2.1 Food safety assessment and ARV bulletins

25. In Mauritania, **a major rainfall deficit was recorded during the 2021 agricultural season.** Meteorological data at the end of September 2021 revealed that 78% of rainfall stations were following a deficit trajectory compared with the average established between 1991 and 2020³⁷. Reduced rainfall posed a significant risk to rain-dependent crops, leading to a reduction in cultivated land along rivers and downstream. This forecast led the CSA to anticipate a reduction in agricultural production compared with normal levels.

26. **The Africa Risk View (ARV) software did not detect any major deficit in the drought index during the 2021 season,** as illustrated in Figure 5, opposite. A few no-sow zones were identified in the Tagant, Assaba and Hodh Garbi wilayas. These failures had an impact, as they enabled the identification of drought-affected people, estimated at less than 10,000 (7664)³⁸. However, this number was insufficient to trigger insurance payments.

Figure 4 - Drought index at the end of the 2021 season according to ARV



27. On October 28³⁹, **the Mauritanian government issued a letter reporting discrepancies**

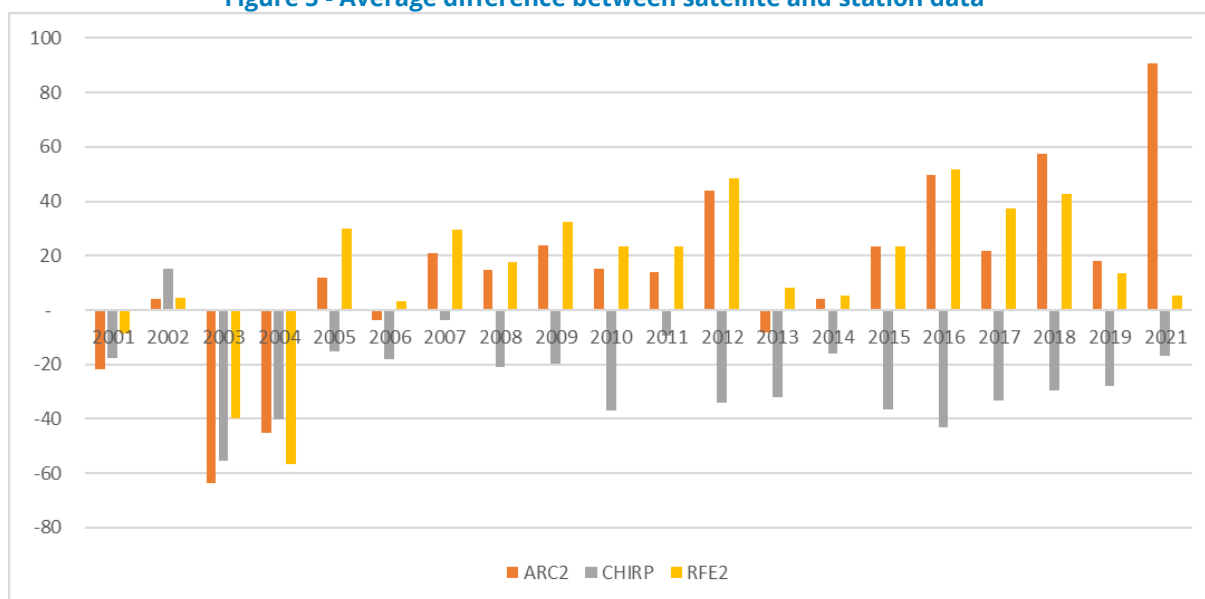
³⁷ Committee for analysis of needs and National Device for Prevention and Response to Food and Nutritional Crises, "Diagnosis of the food and nutritional situation 2021/2022", December 2021.

³⁸ According to interviews conducted by the evaluation team, as early as June 2021, suspicions of discrepancies between ARV and field data emerged, but other institutions such as CILSS mentioned a normal season despite this. The discrepancies identified were analyzed, but it took time to confirm and report the problem.

³⁹ According to interviews conducted by the evaluation team, as early as June 2021, suspicions of discrepancies between ARV and field data emerged, but other institutions such as CILSS mentioned a normal season despite this. The discrepancies identified were analyzed, but it took time to confirm and report the problem.

between ARV and field data⁴⁰. Following this letter, ARC (through its Technical Support Division) considered that the difference between the model's impact estimates and the reality on the ground could be due to the rainfall dataset used in the model (ARC2 dataset provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA])⁴¹. Figure 5 below clearly illustrates the very marked discrepancy between the rainfall data measured by ARC2 and that of two other models.

Figure 5 - Average difference between satellite and station data⁴²



28. Despite these difficulties, the Needs Analysis Committee (CAB)⁴³ within the framework of DCAN has continued its work of monitoring and analyzing food insecurity (IA). In October 2021, the food insecurity rate reached 18.5%, showing a sharp deterioration compared with 2020 and 2019. Forecasts at the start of 2022 indicated a gross production of around 349,189 tonnes for all crops, all speculations combined. **This represents a 4% reduction on the average for the last five years, and a 14% drop on the 2020-2021 season⁴⁴.** The projected situation for June to August 2022 indicated that 36 moughataa would enter crisis phase (IPC phase 3+), with an expected increase in the food-insecure population⁴⁵. **As a consequence, the estimated population in AI was 878,921 (around 20% of the population), of which 678,543 were prioritized**

⁴⁰ Commissioner for Food Safety, " Letter from the Commissioner for Food Safety to the attention of the Director General of ARC - n°410 of 28/10/2021 ", October 2021.

⁴¹ African Risk Capacity, "Performance analysis of the Africa RiskView model - Agricultural and pastoral season 2021 Mauritania", November 2021.

⁴² African Risk Capacity.

⁴³ The Needs Analysis Committee (CAB) is the institution in charge of early warnings within DCAN..

⁴⁴ Committee for analysis of needs and National Device for Prevention and Response to Food and Nutritional Crises, "Diagnosis of the food and nutritional situation 2021/2022".

⁴⁵ Harmonized Framework, "Results of the analysis of acute food and nutrition insecurity current in October-December 2022 and projected in June-August 2023", November 2022.

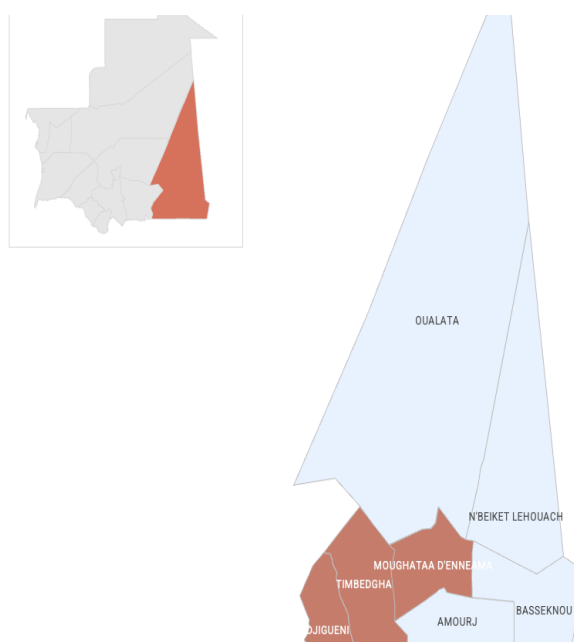
because they were already in crisis⁴⁶. These estimates were the highest since the implementation of the Harmonized Framework in Mauritania⁴⁷.

29. Low rainfall has also affected the livestock sector, with poor pasture availability throughout the country, precipitating transhumance to relatively better-endowed areas⁴⁸. **The CAB estimated that the situation would severely affect households whose main sources of income were agriculture or livestock, depriving them of purchasing power and access to markets, while prices of basic foodstuffs were high**⁴⁹.

2.2 Beneficiary targeting system

30. According to the FIP, 25,164 households⁵⁰ were to be assisted. Targeting was carried out in three stages. **The first stage of geographic targeting consisted in using the CH results to identify areas in crisis** (phase 3) or food emergency (phase 4) during the lean season. The payment was to cover the three moughataas of Hodh Charghi, Djigueni, Néma and Timbedra⁵¹. The selection of these moughataa was supposed to take into account the number of people affected, and the capacity of ARC funds, in coordination with the interventions of other actors⁵².

Figure 6 - Moughataa targeted by the ARC 2021-22 intervention



31. In these moughataa, **the identification of communes and localities (the second stage) was to be carried out according to the harmonized methodology**

⁴⁶ Harmonized Framework, "Results of the analysis of acute food and nutrition insecurity current in March-May 2022 and projected in June-August 2022", March 2022.

⁴⁷ National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism and Food Security Commission, "National Response Plan (PNR) 2022 of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania", March 2022.

⁴⁸ Action Against Hunger "Mauritania Pastoral Monitoring Bulletin No. 15: April-May 2022", April 2022.

⁴⁹ Committee for analysis of needs and National Device for Prevention and Response to Food and Nutritional Crises, "Diagnosis of the food and nutritional situation 2021/2022".

⁵⁰ The number of people to be assisted is calculated by taking the amount of the expected payment and relating it to the cost of the intervention per household. For details, [see Interventions and government budget](#).

⁵¹ Consequently, it's not simply the severity of sowing failure in the wilayas, but rather the result of coordination between actors within DCAN that enables geographic targeting. The most affected wilayas for the 2021-22 season were Hodh El Gharbi, Assaba and Tagant. African Risk Capacity, "Comments on the CSA Mauritania letter", nd.

⁵² According to some interviewees, the amount of the ARC payment is divided by the value of the kit to determine the number of people assisted. The CSA then seeks to match the needs (assessed in the PNR) with this ARC capacity.

of the CODEP (Departmental Commissions) chaired by the Hakem (Prefect)⁵³. These commissions include all deconcentrated technical services, representatives of civil society present in the moughata and mayors. The exercise involves identifying communes and villages during participatory workshops, with a commission categorizing communes according to various criteria such as population percentage, biomass status, rainfall and recurrence of shocks over the past five years. Locality data⁵⁴ are used to select villages within each commune⁵⁵.

32. Finally, **a final targeting stage based on vulnerabilities was to be used to identify households to be assisted.** Beneficiary targeting would primarily use the Social Register (RS)⁵⁶, in line with the methodology agreed within DCAN's Food Assistance Specialized Working Committee (CTS). **Complementary community-based targeting was also to be implemented to complete the lists of beneficiaries received from the RS, with checks undertaken to minimize the risk of inclusion and exclusion errors.** Targeting criteria would be adjusted by livelihood zone, reflecting the specificities of semi-urban localities as decided by the CTS⁵⁷.
33. According to the FIP, the CSA agents were then to carry out a verification **mission to ensure the veracity of the information provided by the RS and the existence of the identified households.** During this mission, the CSA agents were to give a voucher to the assisted households. This same coupon would then be exchanged by the beneficiary household for the assistance when it became available.

2.3 Government interventions and budget

34. The FIP planned to reach 25,164 households.
35. **ARC funding was integrated into the food assistance section of the 2022⁵⁸ PNR.** This section comprised two modalities: general food distribution (GFD) and distribution via cash transfers. ARC funds were allocated to the DGV modality. This PNR DGV activity involved the purchase of 18,041 tonnes of food to meet the food needs of 251,164 households for a period of one month. **Free food distribution (FGD) was planned to cover all 210,000 poor households registered on the RS, in**

⁵³ World Food Programme, " Methodology for targeting households for lean season assistance ", May 2022.

⁵⁴ Using data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

⁵⁵ The data is used to calculate a score between 0 and 500 for each commune, based on thresholds and weightings adjusted to ensure the best possible differentiation between communes. In each moughata, the communes with the highest scores are covered as a priority.

⁵⁶ The social register is a database that collects profiles of the country's poorest households, and serves as an essential tool for social programs in their support for poor populations. For more information on its methodology refer to Islamic Republic of Mauritania, " Operational Manual of the Social Register ", April 2020.

⁵⁷ Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, " Framework for the Final Implementation Plan (FIP) ".

⁵⁸ The interventions planned within the framework of the 2022 PNR are: food assistance: free distribution of food and cash transfers; nutritional assistance; actions to support livelihoods and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations; strengthening the coordination of the DCAN mechanism. National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism and Food Security Commission, " National Response Plan (PNR) 2022 of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania ".

particular the 146,000 households identified in phase 3 or higher according to the CH of March 2022. This one-off intervention was planned for the start of the lean season (May-June), and the overall estimated cost of the operation was MRU 558,080,000.

36. **Within this framework, each identified household was to receive 50 kilograms of wheat, 25 kilograms of rice, five kilograms of sugar and five liters of oil** ^{59,60}. This assistance was to cover the food needs of a six-person household for a period of two months⁶¹. The estimated total quantities of food to be provided under the ARC payment are as follows.

Table 3 - Planned quantities of food to be distributed⁶²

Foodstuffs	Quantity (tons)	Source(s)	Valuation (MRU/kg)	Total value (MRU)	Value per household (MRU)
Wheat	1258,2	National market	19	23 905 800	950
Rice	629,1	National market	28,7	18 055 170	717,5
Sugar	125,8	National market	26,8	3 371 440	134
Huile	125,8	Marché national	75	9 435 000	375
TOTAL	2138,9	-	-	54 767 410	2176,5

37. **The food purchase value per household is therefore estimated at 2176.5 MRU.**

Transport and implementation costs are estimated as follows:

- Transport of (25 kg of rice, 50 kg of wheat, 5 kg of sugar and 5 liters of oil) at an average of 2.5 MRU/kg, i.e. 212.5 MRU.
- Implementation costs (flat rate of 0.4 MRU/kg distributed), i.e. 85 kg * 0.4 MRU, giving 34 MRU.

38. Total other distribution costs are therefore MRU 246.5. This gives a total cost per household of 2,423 MRU. **The total direct cost of the operation for 25,164 households is therefore 60,972,372 MRU or 1,682,461 USD** (exchange rate: 1 USD = 36.24 MRU). In addition to these costs, there are operating [expenses for mobilized staff, communication costs](#), etc. (The detailed budget is specified in the Estimated

⁵⁹ Initially, the operational plan called for the distribution of 25kg of rice, 25kg of wheat, 5kg of beans and 5 liters of oil (i.e. 240kg) per household over a 4-month period. This option was discarded as too costly, and as part of the DGV response, the government preferred to increase the number of beneficiaries and reduce the volume of assistance. Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, "Operational plan to support populations in the event of severe drought".

⁶⁰ It is possible for a country to carry out an activity that is not included in the OP. The country must then seek to modify its plan of operations in accordance with the rules set out in the proposed requirements for submission of the plan of operations for approval. No changes have been made to the OP. African Risk Capacity, "Contingency Planning Standards and Guidelines".

⁶¹ Here an inconsistency has crept in between the PNR and the FIP, as the DGV seeks to "cover one month's needs" (PNR) and then the assistance "should cover the food needs of a household of six people for a period of two months" (FIP). This inconsistency probably explains why the quantity distributed is not sufficient (see paragraph 64).

⁶² There are slight variations in the data compared to the FIP, as rounding has been applied to the higher value in the FIP.

budget vs. payment amount section). **The following amount was used as a basis for planning purposes: 62,080,000 MRU or 1,713,024 USD.**

Table 3 — Provisional budget submitted in the FIP

	Quantity (mt)	Unit cost (MRU)	Total (MRU)
A. Food			
Wheat	1 259	19 000	23 921 000
Rice	630	28 700	18 081 000
Oil	126	75 000	9 450 000
Sugar	126	26 800	3 376 800
B. Transport costs			
Product transport (rice, wheat, oil)	2 141	2 500	5 352 500
C. Personnel and related costs			
Operational staff	2	105 000	210 000
Support staff	2	18 000	36 000
Regional delegates	2	40 000	60 000
Regional delegation drivers	2	15 000	30 000
Central storekeeper	2	8 000	16 000
Regional stores	2	24 000	48 000
Chef service transport	2	8 000	16 000
D. Equipment			
Communications	2	50 000	100 000
Capitalization workshop	1	500 000	500 000
Office consumables (A tablet, scanner, sorter, vouchers-registers-stylos...)	4	40 000	160 000
Vehicle rental	2	75 000	150 000
E. Current expenses			
Fuel	2	207 000	414 000
Unforeseen			158 700
TOTAL COST OF OPERATION			62 080 000

2.4 Expected results

39. **The expected results were that the 25,164 vulnerable households identified (among the 210,000 planned in the PNR), subject to food insecurity, would have received the planned quantities of food to help stabilize their food security.** This assistance would help reduce the risk of households resorting to negative coping mechanisms, including the sale of essential assets, which would jeopardize future food security or other recent gains. The FIP plan called for distributions to take place between June and August 2022.

3. Final implementation plan: actual results

3.1 Effective targeting

40. The methodology described above (see [Beneficiary targeting system](#)) was used throughout the intervention.

- **CODEPs were organized** in each moughata to identify localities to be assisted⁶³.
- A request has been submitted to the SR for the identification of beneficiaries, introducing specific criteria developed as part of the preparation of the DCAN⁶⁴ PNR. These criteria are shared by all participating⁶⁵ organizations. A request has been submitted to the SR for the identification of beneficiaries, introducing specific criteria developed as part of the preparation of the DCAN PNR. These criteria are shared by all participating organizations. The RS submitted the finalized list to the CSA teams in May 2022.
- **Complementary community targeting was not carried out** as part of this intervention.⁶⁶
- **A CSA delegation visited the identified localities to verify the data shared by the social register.**

41. **The targeting method was generally appreciated by beneficiaries**, as shown in Figure 7 below⁶⁷. The main reasons given by respondents were that they received the information on time (86%, n=351) and that the content of the information they received was relatively complete (30%)⁶⁸.

⁶³ Information confirmed by the wali and the hakems interviewed.

⁶⁴ These criteria are listed in the [appendix](#).

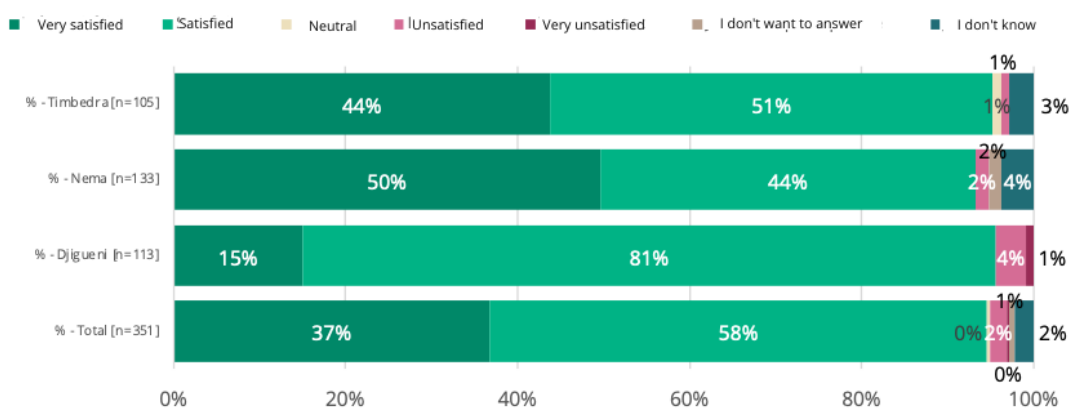
⁶⁵ The WFP, for example, uses the same criteria. World Food Programme, "ARC Replica Mauritania Juin 2022 : report of implementation", June 2022; World Food Programme, " Methodology for targeting households for lean season assistance ".

⁶⁶ As the government pre-financed the operation, not all planned activities were carried out (see paragraph 38).

⁶⁷ The method also received positive feedback in the discussion groups (6/15), while 2 out of 15 expressed satisfaction with community involvement.

⁶⁸ Multiple choice question, which explains why the sum of the percentages exceeds 100%.

Figure 3 — Beneficiary satisfaction with targeting communication and registration process⁶⁹



Percentages may not add up to 100% due in part to the rounding of values.

42. Despite this, **beneficiaries reported a few inclusion errors during the targeting process**. Eleven percent of respondents said they knew people who had received ARC assistance, even though these people did not appear to them to be as vulnerable and therefore as in need of assistance (n=351)⁷⁰. **Exclusion errors are higher, with 37% of respondents saying they knew of households in need that had been excluded from assistance (n=351)⁷¹**. In the Djigueni moughata, this rate reached 49% of respondents (n=113). This result partly explains the significant redistribution of assistance to non-recipients within localities (see [Results obtained \[broken down by stakeholder\]](#)). A likely cause of these perceived exclusion errors could be due to very similar levels of socio-economic vulnerability between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (the majority of the population being vulnerable), which explains why they fail to understand why a particular household is identified. Another element to consider could be that ARC funds may not have been sufficient in relation to households affected by food insecurity (according to the CH classification), especially as food insecurity levels increased between March and August 2022. Most people in Phase 3+ between March and May were mostly covered by ARC assistance (between 59% and 88% of the workforce)⁷². **However, due to delivery delays during the period from June to August, food insecurity levels increased considerably, creating a significant gap between the response provided and actual needs⁷³**. In

⁶⁹ Data from quantitative survey.

⁷⁰ The household data used by the Social Register is not regularly updated. The data has not been updated since 2019, which may explain why the poorest households have not been selected. According to the Social Registry representative we met, the data for Hodh el Charghi is due to be updated in December 2023.

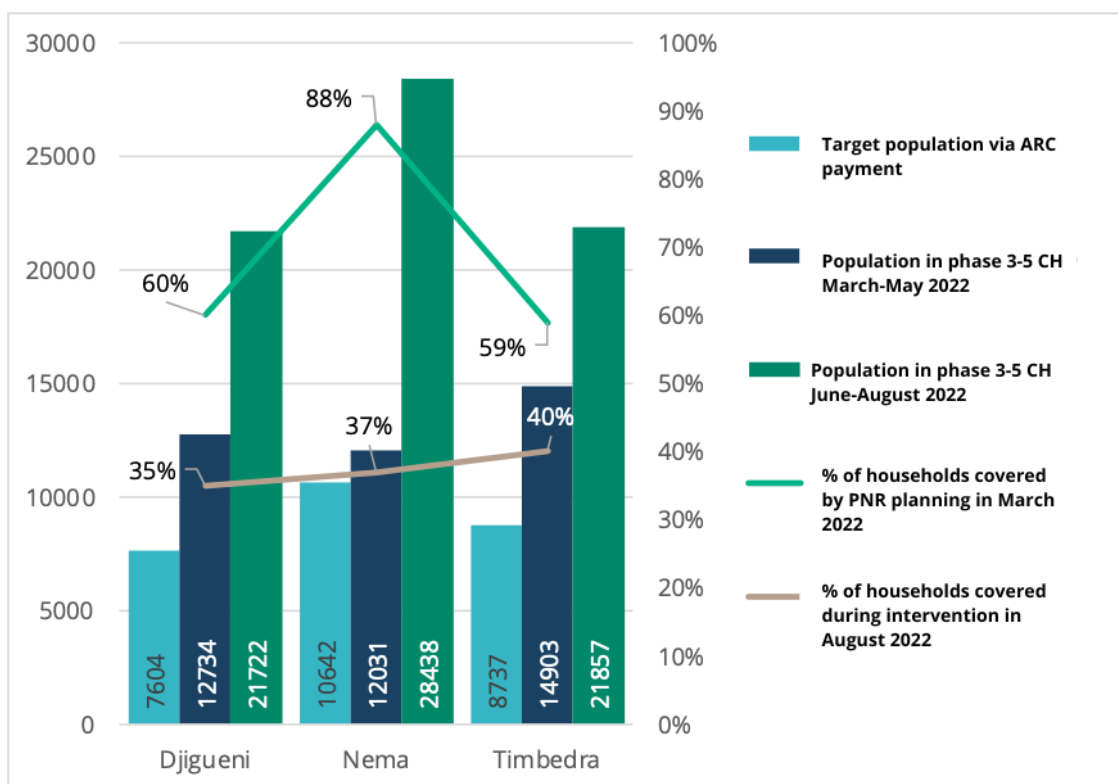
⁷¹ Exclusion errors were confirmed during all the discussion groups conducted with both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (15/15).

⁷² The moughataa were chosen because of the ability of ARC assistance to cover a significant proportion of the affected population in the region, according to CH data from March 2022.

⁷³ This observation underlines the importance of the ARC model's value proposition, which seeks to provide assistance before the lean season. The aim is to prevent households from selling assets and adopting negative coping strategies.

the extreme case of Néma, the coverage rate dropped by 58% between March-May (when the FIP was drawn up) and June-August (when the assistance was distributed).

Figure 8 - Evolution of CH Phase 3+ household coverage with ARC assistance⁷⁴



43. Finally, when targeting, **the CSA did not include in the amount of assistance the fact that beneficiaries were receiving other forms of social assistance at the same time⁷⁵**. Taking these households into account could have made it possible to reach a larger number of people and potentially reduce exclusion errors. In some moughataa, the high percentage of beneficiaries receiving other forms of assistance was not taken into account. For example, in Timbedra, only 1% of assisted households did not receive any other form of assistance (n=105), while in Djigueni the figure was 4% (n=113). On the other hand, the percentage is much higher in Néma, with 54% of households having received no other assistance (n=133)⁷⁶.

44. **Few localities had a formal mechanism for raising complaints or providing feedback on assistance.** Of the 15 focus groups, 11 reported the absence of any mechanism, while the remaining four mentioned a toll-free number. However, all

⁷⁴ Harmonized Framework, "Results of the analysis of acute food and nutrition insecurity current in March-May 2022 and projected in June-August 2022", 2022.

⁷⁵ Under the WFP's Replica Payment scheme, beneficiaries receiving assistance from Tekavoul received a lower level of assistance. This choice in targeting increased the number of households assisted. World Food Programme, "ARC Replica Mauritania June 2022: implementation report".

⁷⁶ In Timbedra, 71% of beneficiary households have received aid from Taazour over the past three years, 38% from Tekavoul, and 14% from an NGO. In Djigueni, 58% received aid from an NGO, 47% from Taazour, and 46% from Tekavoul.

confirmed that this number was not functional⁷⁷. Twenty-seven percent of households surveyed said they didn't know whether such a mechanism existed (n=350). **As a consequence, the CSA had no formal means of ensuring that the intervention was adapted to the beneficiaries, even though this was stipulated in the OP as a monitoring and evaluation measure^{78, 79}.**

3.2 Target beneficiaries by gender

45. **L The number of households targeted corresponds to FIP projections.** The final number of households is 26,983, as the ARC payment did not correspond exactly to the population identified as beneficiaries of the Free Food Distribution (DGV), based on CH data. The number of households assisted by the ARC payment is actually 25,164. To compensate for this difference, the CSA used its own resources to assist affected households in the Timbedra commune, as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5 - Number of households planned and identified for ARC 2021-22 assistance⁸⁰

Administrative level 2	Administrative level 3	Expected number of households (FIP)	Number of effective households (DGV)
Djiguenni	Aoueinat Zbel	1320	1320
Djiguenni	Beneamane 1	688	688
Djiguenni	Djiguenni	1277	1277
Djiguenni	El Mebrouk	1158	1157
Djiguenni	Feireni	1256	1256
Djiguenni	Gasr El Barka	1051	1051
Djiguenni	Ghlig Ehel Boyé	855	855
Néma	Achemim	369	369
Néma	Agoueinit	1349	1349
Néma	Bangou	1287	1287
Néma	Beribave	702	702
Néma	Hassi Etile	850	850
Néma	Jreif	641	641
Néma	Mabrouk	694	694
Néma	Néma	1818	1817
Néma	Noual	676	676
Néma	Oum Avnadech	2257	2257
Timbedra	Bousteila	2153	2153
Timbedra	Etouil	1907	1907
Timbedra	Hassi M'Hadi	1614	1614

⁷⁷ The toll-free number shared was that of the social register.

⁷⁸ Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, " Operational plan to support populations in the event of severe drought ".

⁷⁹ Most of the non-beneficiaries interviewed in the focus groups (4/6) indicated that they had not encountered any unexpected consequences as a result of targeting. The other two focus groups highlighted consequences linked to the organization of distribution that had an impact on beneficiaries, notably the cost of transport, but unrelated to the targeting process.

⁸⁰ Data from the database shared by the Social Register with the CSA.

Timbedra	Koumbi Saleh	1242	1242
Timbedra	Timbedra	Non assistés	1821
TOTAL		25 164	26 983

46. Data on beneficiary households is not disaggregated by sex by the Government of Mauritania. The evaluation team is therefore unable to determine what proportion of women and men received assistance.

3.3 Foodstuffs distributed

47. **The evaluation team considers that the planned quantities to be distributed were almost certainly fully achieved.** This assessment is based on the following information:

- Two follow-up activities were undertaken by the planning manager (one in August and a second in October 2022). In October 2022, he announced that 99.3% of **the activity had been carried out in the three moughataa**. There remained 37 rations in the Néma moughata and 162 in the Timbedra moughata.^{81,82}
- All households randomly** interviewed as part of the quantitative survey confirmed that **they had received rice, wheat, sugar and oil**⁸³. The quantities received declared by beneficiaries are broadly in line with the quantities mentioned in the FIP⁸⁴.
- According to data from the Stocks Department and the Transport Department, consulted by the evaluation team, **the quantities announced were actually transported from the CSA warehouses in Nouakchott to the warehouses in Djigueni, Néma and Timbedra**, representing:

Table 4 - Quantities received declared by beneficiaries

	Rice [n=351]	Wheat [n=351]	Oil [n=351]	Sugar[n=347]
Average quantity received	25,1 kg	49,7 kg	5,0 kg	5,2 L
Median quantity received	25,0 kg	50,0 kg	5,0 kg	5,0 L
Minimum quantity received	25,0 kg	25,0 kg	4,0 kg	5,0 L
Maximum quantity received	50,0 kg	50,0 kg	5,0 kg	25,0 L

⁸¹ Commissioner for Food Security, " Second report on the DGV (free food distribution) operation organized in 2022 with ARC funding ", October 2022.

⁸² Beneficiaries were expected to return with the return of semi-nomads to their homes at the start of the new school year and the beginning of the lowland farming season. If beneficiary families fail to turn up by the next lean season, and to avoid deterioration of the products, undistributed allocations may be reallocated to needy families by the departmental commission chaired by the Hakem..

⁸³ Four households in the Néma moughata would not have received sugar (1%, [n=351]). However, the evaluation team considers these to be data entry errors. After discussions with the enumerators and by observing the results of the focus groups, no household would have failed to receive assistance.

⁸⁴ Data from quantitative survey. The values are globally homogeneous between the different moughataa. The evaluation team considers that the differences are due to the time lag between data collection and receipt of assistance (over a year).

Table 6 - Quantities transported from Nouakchott to the moughataas⁸⁵

	WHEAT (in kg)	RICE (in kg)	SUGAR (in kg)	OIL (in L)
Néma	598 200	299 200	59 845	59 820
Djigueni	380 250	190 125	38 100	38 040
Timbedra	436 850	218 425	43 700	43 680
Total	1 415 300	707 750	141 645	141 540

3.4 Estimated budget in relation to payment amount

48. Following confirmation of the NOAA data failure (see 27)⁸⁶, negotiations took place between ARC Ltd and its reinsurers. ARC Ltd decided to adopt a mixed approach, combining the equal weighted average payments produced by the RFE2, CHIRP and CHIRPS⁸⁷ datasets to obtain a policy payment. This is an exceptional and unique corrective measure to the failure of NOAA ARC2 data⁸⁸. As a result, in May 2022, the final amount paid to the Mauritanian government is USD 1,715,131⁸⁹ (compared with USD 1,713,024 budgeted in the FIP).

49. **As planned, this funding integrated the financing of the country's⁹⁰ à la suite d'une sécheresse étendue** National Response Plan (PNR) following a widespread

⁸⁵ According to data compiled by the authors on the basis of delivery notes and stock levels. Commissioner for Food Security, " Decision of the Commissioner for Food Security concerning the allocation of food quantities - n°104 of 12/05/022 ", May 2022.

⁸⁶ NOAA would have confirmed the failure in February according to qualitative interviews conducted.

⁸⁷ Based on the above calculations :

PFINAL = (1/3) * PRFE2 + (1/3) * PCHIRP + (1/3) * PCHIRPS

PFINAL = (1/3) * \$3 082 217 + (1/3) * \$1 497 426 + (1/3) * \$565 750

PFINAL = \$1 715 131

⁸⁸ ARC Ltd, "MDRC Calculation Report: Republic of Mauritania, West African Growing Season, The 2021/22 Insurance Year", March 2022.

⁸⁹ Representing 62,080,000 MRU, according to the Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, " Framework for the Definitive Implementation Plan (FIP) ".

⁹⁰ National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism and Food Security Commission, "National Response Plan (PNR) 2022 of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania".

drought ([see Integration of ARC into the government's emergency response mechanism](#)). In accordance with a decree of May 2022, ARC funds were transferred to a new earmarked budget entitled Fonds National de Réponse aux Crises Alimentaires et Nutritionnelles (FNRCAN)⁹¹. **This situation created significant administrative delays (creation of a bank account, etc.)⁹² which the CSA anticipated by pre-financing the ARC intervention with its own funds⁹³** (see paragraph 62). Because of the use of its own funds, the government only authorized the implementation of certain emergency activities (distribution and monitoring) **The CSA therefore did not implement all the activities that had been planned**, in particular communication and capitalization activities⁹⁴, which were considered secondary.

3.5 Total current expenditure

50. The financial data gathered by the evaluation team is presented in Table 7 below. As mentioned, the CSA prefinanced these activities. Having still not received the funds from the FNRCAN, the CSA did not carry out all the activities planned in the budget, hence the imbalance with the budget submitted.

Table 7 - Expendure on the Intervention

Description	Quantity	Unit price (MRU)	Total price
Direct operating costs			MRU 60 128 600,00
Wheat	1258	MRU 19 000,00	MRU 23 902 000,00
Rice	629	MRU 28 700,00	MRU 18 052 300,00
Oil	126	MRU 75 000,00	MRU 9 450 000,00
Sugar	126	MRU 26 800,00	MRU 3 376 800,00
Transport	2139	MRU 2 500,00	MRU 5 347 500,00
Indirect costs			MRU 1602000,00
Motivation of supervisory county staff	2	MRU 54 000,00	MRU 108 000,00
Motivation of staff County coordination	2	MRU 84 000,00	MRU 168 000,00
Motivation of support staff	2	MRU 26 000,00	MRU 52 000,00
Motivation for regional coordination	2	MRU 23 000,00	MRU 46 000,00

⁹¹ Like all funding from other technical and financial partners to finance the PNR. Islamic Republic of Mauritania, " Decree no. 2022-068 of May 11, 2022 creating a special allocation budget to finance national food and nutrition crisis response plans (FNRCAN) ", May 2022.

⁹² Payment was made to the FNARCAN account on October 18, 2022.

⁹³ The transfer from FNARCAN to repay the CSA advance was not made until August 22, 2023. Ministry of Finance, " Statement of account 4674: CAS_109: National fund for the response to food and nutritional crises (FNRCAN) from 01/01/2023 to 31/12/2023 ", December 2023.

⁹⁴ Resources for the capitalization activity are still available, and in January 2024 the CSA was planning to program it in the coming months.

Supervision mission August 2022	3	MRU 93 000,00	MRU 279 000,00
<i>Implementation costs (targeting costs) (est.)</i>	25 164	<i>MRU 34,00</i>	<i>MRU 856 000,00</i>
<i>Supervision mission october 2022 (est.)</i>	1	<i>MRU 93 000,00</i>	<i>MRU 93 000,00</i>
Total			MRU 61 730 600,00
ARC payment			MRU 62 080 000,00
Remainder			MRU 349 400,00

51. The evaluation team did not have access to the expenses incurred during the targeting verification mission and has reported here the amount mentioned in the FIP (856,000 MRU). The same applies to the second supervision mission. Details of mission expenses for the October 2022 supervision visit could not be shared with the consultants. The consultants have therefore estimated the amount using the unit amount for the August 2022 supervision mission.

Table 8 - Comparison of actual and planned budgets.

Designation	Budget provisional	Real expenses	Difference
A. Foods	54 828 800	54 781 100	47 700
B. Transport costs	5 352 500	5 347 500	5 000
Total direct operating costs	60 181 300	60 128 600	52 700
C. Personnel and related costs	416 000	374 000	42 000,00
D. Equipment	910 000	-	910 000,00
E. Current expenses ⁹⁵	414 000	1 228 000	- 814 000,00
Indirect costs total	1 740 000	1 602 000	1 740 000
Unforeseen	158 700		158 700,00
TOTAL COST OF OPERATION	62 080 000	61 730 600	349 400,00

3.6 Monitoring and evaluation: the system set up by the government to monitor the FIP as a whole.

52. **The CSA set up a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to oversee ARC assistance, based mainly on the organization of two monitoring missions with associated reports⁹⁶. These reports provided updated data, including the implementation rate, and were shared with ARC. Information on foodstuffs distributed, stored and transported is accessible and archived⁹⁷. Proof of receipt by beneficiaries would also be kept at moughataa level.**

⁹⁵ The costs of targeting and supervision missions have been included in this category.

⁹⁶ Commissioner for Food Security, " Report on the implementation of the FIP ", August 2022; Commissioner for Food Security, " Second report on the DGV operation (free food distribution) organized in 2022 with ARC funding ".

⁹⁷ The evaluation team was able to access the data and check the conformity of a sample of parts.

53. However, **the system put in place is limited in relation to needs**. The monitoring-evaluation plan presented in the FIP is unfamiliar to the various stakeholders in the CSA. The plan is often reused from one FIP to the next, without adaptation to the specific situation or implementation of the tools required for its execution. The CSA has few resources to carry out this monitoring. Monitoring activities are carried out by the planning officer based in Nouakchott⁹⁸. In addition, the absence of a specific budget for M&E activities makes it difficult to implement them. Only one capitalization workshop is budgeted in the FIP⁹⁹.

3.7 FIP's actual results: main findings

54. To report on the results obtained, the evaluation team used the monitoring-evaluation plan proposed in the FIP report.

Table 9 - Updated payment monitoring and evaluation table¹⁰⁰

Results	Indicator	Level of achievement of indicator	Means of control/verification
<u>Effect 1</u> : Improved food consumption by targeted households throughout the duration of the food aid activity.	Level of household food consumption (% of communities with a higher score)	Not measured ¹⁰¹	
<u>Result 1</u> : distribution of quality foodstuffs in sufficient quantities to reach target populations within the allotted timeframe	Number of beneficiaries actually receiving food assistance	25,164 households ¹⁰² or approximately 150,984 beneficiaries ¹⁰³	CSA monitoring reports ¹⁰⁴ Quantitative evaluation survey
	Tons of wheat, rice, sugar and tons of oil	<u>General food distribution</u> : Wheat: 1415.3 t	CSA monitoring reports

⁹⁸ The planning officer is not exclusively dedicated to the ARC project and works on several programs. During the first monitoring visit in August 2022, he was accompanied by the ARC coordinator. Commissioner for Food Security, " Report on the implementation of the FIP ".

⁹⁹ The capitalization workshop was not carried out for this payment, as it was not a priority in the eyes of the Mauritanian government, which pre-financed the activity.

¹⁰⁰ The evaluation team made changes to the headings of the various elements of the monitoring-evaluation table, putting them in bold.

¹⁰¹ No post-distribution surveys were carried out as part of this distribution. The Observatory of Food Security (OSA) carries out an annual survey of household food security. However, this is carried out on a national scale and does not allow us to assess the contribution of the intervention, since it does not take place immediately after the distribution. It was therefore decided not to use this data to report this indicator.

¹⁰² The number of households is considered to have reached 100% (see [Target beneficiaries, by gender](#)).

¹⁰³ Number of beneficiaries based on an average household size of six members. Disaggregated data for the intervention are not available.

¹⁰⁴ Commissioner for Food Security, " Report on the implementation of the FIP "; Commissioner for Food Security, " Second report on the DGV operation (free food distribution) organized in 2022 with ARC funding ".

	actually distributed, by type d'activité et de denrées	Rice: 707.6 t Sugar: 141.6 t Oil : 141,5 t	Summary table of delivery notes Summary table of stock removals
<u>Effect 2:</u> Faster arrival of household assistance	First contact with target beneficiaries within 120 days of receipt of ARC funds by the country concerned	<i>As the funds were delivered at the end of October, the target of 120 days after delivery is not relevant.</i> The targeting verification missions actually took place between May and June as planned.	Quantitative evaluation survey
<u>Effect 3:</u> Quick implementation of ARC activities	Total duration of 180 days from installation to completion	<i>As the funds were delivered at the end of October, the target of 180 days after delivery is not relevant.</i> However, most households received their assistance in August, i.e. after the period. By the end of November 2022, 99.3% of households had received their assistance, four months after the planned period.	

55. **Most of the targets set under the FIP have been achieved.** The planned number of beneficiaries (25,164) was actually reached. However, most of the assistance was distributed outside the planned period (for more details on the reasons for delays, [see Rapid implementation of government interventions](#)), between August and

November¹⁰⁵. Nevertheless, 87% of beneficiaries had received assistance by the end of August¹⁰⁶.





56. **ARC funding and its implementation have been fully integrated into a national response plan, harmonized with the responses of other funding partners.** This integration has led to a few marginal modifications to the operational plan, notably to the content of the assistance and its duration (2 months instead of 4).

4. Standard operating procedures (SOPs): level of government compliance

4.1 SOP evaluation: evaluation grid

57. The traffic-light scoring system below has been adopted to determine compliance with standard operating procedures.

Table 10 - Notation system and meanings

Color	Signification
	Green, successful - no or minor problems
	Yellow, acceptable - the reasons for variations are acceptable, but should be used as a learning tool for the future.
	Red, failure - no-compliance with audit criteria with implications for program success
	Beige, not assessed - the standing instruction does not reflect the situation that has actually been implemented and therefore cannot be assessed by the assessment team.

¹⁰⁵ According to the data collected by the evaluation team, distributions took place from August to October in Djigueni, from July to November in Néma and from August to November in Timbedra.

¹⁰⁶ Commissioner for Food Security, " Report on the implementation of the FIP ".

Table 11 - Permanent instructions (PI) : Conformity levels and assessment results

Standing instruction (number and heading)	Department/person responsible	Estimated completion date	Completion time (in days)	Degree of compliance	Comments	Source(s) Proof(s)
Information and planning processes						
IP1: Intensive monitoring of ARV software and other early warning tools to track the severity and deterioration of the food security situation	DCAN/OSA/CSA/GTT ARC	End of November	Ongoing	Green	Conform: The Observatoire de la sécurité alimentaire carried out regular monitoring over the period. A multidisciplinary mission to monitor the wintering season was carried out by the GTS in charge of monitoring the agropastoral campaign in September 2021. A household food situation survey (FSMS) was carried out in October 2021. The ARC was informed of the basic problem at the end of October 2021 by the CSA.	GTS mission report ¹⁰⁷ Basic problem letter ¹⁰⁸ CAB diagnosis ¹⁰⁹
IP2: Update existing databases of PA/GRS contacts (coordinating groups, implementing partners, additional human resources, etc.).	DCAN	Ongoing updating throughout the operation	Ongoing	Yellow	Partially conform: The DCAN database was not shared with the evaluation team. Nevertheless, the PNR was produced in March 2022 with the participation of the various specialized Committees and Working Groups.	PNR ¹¹⁰
IP3: Work with the group responsible for coordinating the broader national drought response [Committee for Needs Analysis (CAB)] to obtain results of the needs assessment	DCAN (Response Implementation Committee)	End November 2021: Transfer of the CAB diagnostic report (supplement	15 D	Green	Conform: The CAB needs assessment report was shared in January 2022. The harmonized framework workshop actually took place in March 2022 and helped develop the needs analysis in the PNR. The definition of the areas and number of beneficiaries to be covered was discussed during the development of the PNR.	CAB diagnosis PNR Qualitative interview.

¹⁰⁷ GTS in charge of monitoring the agro-pastoral campaign, " Summary of reports from multidisciplinary missions monitoring the progress of wintering 2021/2022 From August 31 to September 9 ", September 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Commissioner for Food Safety, " Letter from the Commissioner for Food Safety to the attention of the Director General of ARC - n°410 of 28/10/2021 ".

¹⁰⁹ Committee for analysis of needs and National Device for Prevention and Response to Food and Nutritional Crises, "Diagnosis of the food and nutritional situation 2021/2022".

¹¹⁰ National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism and Food Security Commission, " National Response Plan (PNR) 2022 of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania ".

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		<i>ed by the CH analysis of March 2022)</i>				
IP4 : Inform implementing partner(s), national and sub-national structures, and those responsible for existing programs (if the intervention is modular) of the payment.					Conform : Local communication took place two months after disbursement was confirmed (March 2022). The FIP was not developed until June 2022.	Letter from ARC Ltd ¹¹¹ Communication to walis ¹¹² Email from ARC confirming FIP validation ¹¹³
IP5 : Organize coordination meetings with all implementing partners to plan intervention(s)	PAM	Throughout the implementation of the operation	Ongoing		Conform : Several coordination meetings were held, notably in connection with the production of the PNR. The modality and the moughataa to be assisted were determined in coordination with the other players.	PNR Operational plan ¹¹⁴ Qualitative interview.
Financial processes						
IP6 : Inform the government institution responsible for receiving ARC funds and transferring them to implementing partners that a disbursement is expected.	DAF/CSA	Until the end of the operation	Ongoing		Conform : The financial institution was informed in August 2022 ¹¹⁵ .	Letter to the Ministry of Finance ¹¹⁶
Operational processes						

¹¹¹ ARC Ltd, " Calcul MDRC Report : Republic of Mauritania, West African Growing Season, The 2021/22 Insurance Year"

¹¹² Commissioner for Food Security, "Letter from the ARC Coordinator to the walis on ARC distribution - n°89 of 12/05/2022", May 2022.

¹¹³ African Risk Capacity, "Email of June 14, 2022 from Mr Papazoumana to the ARC Coordinator concerning the validation of the FIP", June 2022.

¹¹⁴ Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, " Operational plan to support populations in the event of severe drought ".

¹¹⁵ It should be pointed out that this information is late, given the objective of enabling a rapid transfer and launch of operations.

¹¹⁶ Commissioner for Food Security, "Letter from the Commissioner for Food Security to the Minister of Finance informing him of the ARC disbursement - N°318 of August 10, 2022", August 10, 2022.

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IP7 : Identify additional beneficiaries and update beneficiary lists	Emergency Assistance Department/Social Register Department	Early May	15 D		Partially conform: The list of beneficiaries ¹¹⁷ has not been updated. The database was received, somewhat belatedly, on May 16, 2022.	Social Register contact ¹¹⁸ Qualitative interviewing
IP8 : Evaluate the completeness of the list of beneficiaries in each identified district or county	Emergency Assistance Department	15-may	10 D		Conform: Verification missions were carried out and vouchers distributed to beneficiaries. These missions took place between May 20 and June 10 in the various localities. Additional community-based targeting was not carried out.	Qualitative interview Verification team engagement orders
IP9: Increase field staff to deal with registration/beneficiary list issues for expanded operations (if it's a scalable operation)	Emergency Assistance Department	25 may	10 D		Conformity not evaluated: The existing operation has not been scaled up. CSA resources (notably Emel stores) were mobilized to meet needs without the need to recruit new staff.	N/A
IP10: Identify the players responsible for purchasing goods/supplies	PRMP/CSA	20 april			Conformity not evaluated: decision not to go to tender, but to use food from CSA stocks The decision to mobilize CSA stocks was communicated on May 12, 2022, three weeks after the planned date.	Letter from the Commissioner to the Directors of Inventory and Transportation ¹¹⁹
IP11: Check that procurement procedures and sources are functional	PRMP/CSA	20 april				
IP12 : Implement the procurement process						
IP13: In the case of scalable intervention, confirm that existing systems (food/cash distribution/transfer systems, etc.) are in place, functional and able to handle the additional workload.	Emergency Assistance Department	Early May	2 D		Conform: The CSA has chosen to use its own resources (stocks and transport) to enable distribution at lower cost.	Letter from the Commissioner to the Directors of Inventory and Transportation ¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ As mentioned above, there have been no SR updates since 2019.

¹¹⁸ General Directorate of the Social Register and Food Security Commission, "Memorandum of Understanding between the TAAZOUR General Delegation for National Solidarity and the Fight against Exclusion/General Directorate of the Social Register and Information Systems and the Food Security Commission/Emergency Aid Directorate", n.d.

¹¹⁹ Commissioner for Food Security, " Decision of the Commissioner for Food Security concerning the allocation of food quantities - n°104 of 12/05/022 ".

¹²⁰ Commissioner for Food Security.

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IP14: Define the communication strategy to be used between implementing partners (i.e. weekly meetings, monthly meetings, etc.).	CSA national coordinator/com munication unit	1st may	Ongoing		Partially conform: No written strategy has been developed. Nevertheless, a visit by the communications officer was made in August. Since the CSA pre-financed the operation, the government only wished to finance "emergency" activities. Communication activities were not prioritized, so no materials were developed.	Qualitative interviews Communication manager's mission statement
IP15: Identify additional M&E staffing and training needs, as appropriate	The operation coordination committee	Throughout the operation	Ongoing		No conform: No analysis of staffing requirements to meet the M&E framework has been carried out, making it impossible to meet them. No specific budget for implementing M&E activities has been drawn up.	N/A
IP16: Submit monthly reports to the ARC Secretary	The national coordinator/sup ervisor	Every week	Ongoing		Partially conforming: Two follow-up reports have been drawn up and submitted to ARC. No monthly or quarterly reports are provided.	Follow-up reports ¹²¹
IP17: Submit final implementation and financial report to ARC Secretary	The national coordinator/sup ervisor	July			Partially conforming: The first follow-up report submitted in August was considered final by ARC. No detailed financial report was provided to ARC.	Follow-up reports ¹²²

¹²¹ Commissioner for Food Security, " Report on the implementation of the FIP "; Commissioner for Food Security, " Second report on the DGV operation (free food distribution) organized in 2022 with ARC funding ".

¹²² Commissioner for Food Security, " Report on the implementation of the FIP ".

4.2 SOP compliance: key findings

58. Analysis of compliance with standard operating procedures shows that the **few breaches of standard operating procedures had no major impact on the success of the program**. A few minor deviations from the schedule and activities carried out were noted. In other situations, although no deviations were identified, opportunities for improvement remain for the processes or actions concerned, as summarized below.

- **Deviations from the planned schedule:**

- *IP1*: There **was a significant delay of around 4 months in finalizing the ARV software status monitoring (completed in March)** due to negotiations within ARC Ltd, following confirmation of the NOAA data failure¹²³. These delays were beyond our control. (see paragraph 61)
- *IP3*: Publication of the needs assessment was completed on January 3, 2022. The recent creation of the CAB as part of DCAN (April 2021¹²⁴) has led to delays in establishing processes, thus delaying the publication of these analyses.
- *IP4*: The completion of the PNR slightly delayed the publication of the FIP¹²⁵. Being the first PNR, as with the diagnosis of the CAB's needs, the process extended until March 2023, leading to the finalization of the FIP from June 2022 (see paragraph 62).
- *IP13*: Household distributions actually began in July (only for Néma, then in August for the other two Moughataa) due to the supply of transport by the CSA (see paragraph 63). By the end of August 2022, one month after the planned assistance period, 87% of households had received assistance.

- **Deviations from planned activity :**

- *IP8*: The evaluation team encountered difficulties in confirming the actual implementation and dates of a verification mission or additional community targeting (see paragraph 40).
- *IP13*: Contradictory information concerning the method of distribution of assistance was collected by the evaluation team. In almost all the localities surveyed (quantitative survey and focus groups), beneficiaries would have had to travel to the

¹²³ NOAA would have confirmed the failure in February according to qualitative interviews conducted.

¹²⁴ Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Decree no. 061-2021 of April 21, 2021/P.M/ reorganizing the national framework for consultation on food security and establishing a National Food and Nutrition Crisis Prevention and Response Mechanism (DCAN).

¹²⁵ The FIP was submitted between April 04 and April 24, 2022.

moughata chief towns to collect their assistance, contrary to what was indicated in the OP¹²⁶, and without this being specified in the FIP¹²⁷. This would have entailed additional costs for the beneficiaries (see paragraph 73).

- *IP14*: Due to the creation of the FNRCAN and the government's pre-funding of ARC-funded activities to compensate for delays, some activities that were planned but not considered a priority were not carried out by the CSA (see paragraph 49).
- *IP15*: Not all the activities required to complete the M&E plan, i.e. monthly and quarterly reports, have been carried out, as the CSA has not identified sufficient human and financial resources to do so (see paragraph 53).

5. Efficiency and effectiveness of government stakeholders

5.1 Cost-transfer ratio¹²⁸ of implementing government interventions

59. Referring to the data in Table 7, the Transfer Cost Ratio (TCR) for the intervention was 0.13¹²⁹, meaning that each dollar distributed to beneficiaries cost 0.13 USD. **This ratio demonstrates the remarkable efficiency of the program compared with similar interventions^{130, 131}.** The relatively low ratio is explained by the fact that transportation and other indirect implementation costs represent only 11% of the total budget. Some of the costs budgeted for communication and capitalization activities were not incurred. However, it is crucial to note that the costs of the verification mission, as shown in Table 7, are probably underestimated, as some of these costs were covered by the budgets of other social security programs implemented by the CSA.

60. To achieve this ratio, the CSA adopted several cost-cutting measures throughout the intervention:

¹²⁶ The operational plan stipulates: "Loading and routing to advanced delivery points (moughataas), then transport by CSA trucks to the villages and granting of a food voucher to the beneficiary families; follow-up mission after each distribution to compare the number of vouchers withdrawn (each voucher corresponds to a one-month ration) by the transporter and the declaration by the beneficiaries themselves." Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, "Operational plan to support populations in the event of severe drought".

¹²⁷ This situation also contradicts the monitoring report carried out in August 2022. Commissioner for Food Security, "Report on the implementation of the FIP".

¹²⁸ During the inception report, it was agreed that it would not be possible to calculate an efficient cost. Instead, it was decided to measure the transfer cost ratio.

¹²⁹ Using the following formula:
$$RCT = \frac{\text{Implementation costs}}{\text{Amount transferred to beneficiaries}}$$

¹³⁰. According to estimates, the ARC Replica program would have a CTR of 0.41 for a monetary intervention to nearly 44003 beneficiaries (i.e. approximately 7417 households). World Food Programme, "ARC Replica Mauritania June 2022: implementation report".

¹³¹ A meta-evaluation carried out in 2016 showed that, on average, the CTR for programs distributing more than USD 50 was 0.66. ADE and ECHO, "Evaluation of the Use of Different Transfer Modalities in ECHO Humanitarian Aid Actions 2011- 2014", 2016.

- ARC's intervention represents only 62,080,000 MRU, or just 11% of the 558,080,000 MRU provided for in the government's overall hunger response. **In view of the relative volume of ARC assistance, the integration of ARC funds into the overall response to the hunger gap under the PNR made it possible to benefit from the economies of scale** of the PNR's hunger response. This national integration is recommended by ARC¹³².
- The use of social register data meant that no significant costs were incurred for targeting, as the costs associated with registration activities were covered by other programs, such as Tekavoul.
- **CSA has opted to internalize implementation.** For example, it uses CSA vehicles to transport goods¹³³. The CSA also used foodstuffs stored in CSA warehouses and planned as part of other social programs¹³⁴. These foodstuffs, purchased in large quantities each year by the Market Purchasing and Supply Center (CAAM), enable us to obtain advantageous prices in relation to the market (by sourcing internationally and benefiting from framework contracts such as the one with the Mauritanian Import and Export Company [SONIMEX] for rice). CAAM buys in large quantities for various Mauritanian government social programs. General food distribution proved to be a cheaper option for beneficiary households than if they had to purchase the same goods on the market. Comparing market prices with those obtained by the CSA for the purchase of foodstuffs, we find that the prices obtained by the CSA are 2176.5 MRU, compared with 2770 MRU if they had been acquired on the market, i.e. a positive difference of 27%.
- **The CSA preferred to carry out a general food distribution rather than a cash intervention, even though the latter is less costly¹³⁵ and less preferred by beneficiaries** (see paragraph 75). There are several reasons for this choice¹³⁶ :
 - The CSA has extensive experience in the implementation of distributions, which is a comparative advantage for this modality.
 - As part of the PNR, the CSA adjusted the response procedure to make it more efficient. Contrary to what was indicated in the OP, it was decided to carry out a single distribution instead of four, mainly for cost reasons.

¹³² African Risk Capacity, « Contingency Planning Standards and Guidelines ».

¹³³ Commissioner for Food Security, " Decision of the Commissioner for Food Security concerning the allocation of food quantities - n°104 of 12/05/2022 ".

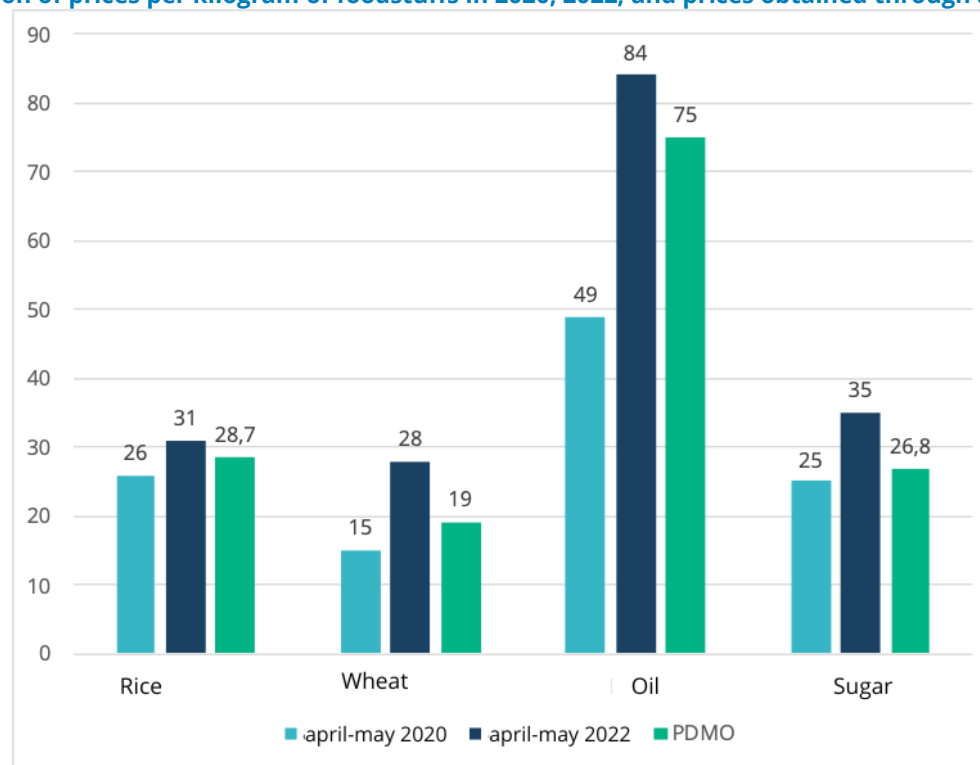
¹³⁴ In particular, foodstuffs for the Emel program, from solidarity stores offering food at subsidized prices.

¹³⁵ Under the DGV response, the estimated total cost of the ration is MRU 1,311 (USD 35) per household per month, corresponding to USD 140 per household for 4 months and USD 23.3 per person for 4 months. In the case of a cash intervention, the unit cost calculation is based on data from the last cash transfer program conducted in 2019 by the CSA. The unit cost is 65 USD + 6.5 USD = 71.5 USD per household, or 14.3 USD per person per month. Commissioner for Food Security and African Risk Capacity, " Operational plan to support populations in the event of severe drought ".

¹³⁶ Only the points are listed here

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Figure 9 - Comparison of prices per kilogram of foodstuffs in 2020, 2022, and prices obtained through assistance (in MRU)¹³⁷



¹³⁷ Action Against Hunger, " Bulletin of information on market prices in the wilayas of Hodh el Charghi, Guidimakha and Gorgol: April-May 2022 ", nd.

5.2 Quick implementation of government action

61. The discrepancy between ARV's rainfall forecasts and field data delayed the triggering of the insurance policy by several months (from December to May). The problem arising from the use of the ARC2 dataset affected not only Mauritania, but also other countries¹³⁸. It also led to an interruption in the use of the ARC2¹³⁹ dataset. In March 2022, the Republic of Mauritania approved the calculation agent's decision to adopt a mixed approach consisting of combining the weighted average payments produced by the RFE2, CHIRP and CHIRPS datasets in order to obtain a payment to remedy the failure of NOAA ARC2 (see paragraph 48).
62. **The creation of DCAN in April 2021**, followed by the decision to allocate funds from its technical and financial partners to a specific fund (FNRCAN), **has introduced administrative complications that have delayed program implementation**. Anticipating delays in the payment of insurance linked to the creation of the FNRCAN, the Mauritanian government chose to pre-finance the amount of assistance offered by ARC. Without this pre-financing, the evaluation team believes that implementation would have been significantly delayed.
63. The CSA also decided to use its own resources to facilitate the implementation of this operation (see paragraph 60). This choice accelerated the bidding process and enabled the use of already available¹⁴⁰ commodities. Nevertheless, **the use of CSA transport services may have slowed down distribution**. In fact, the CSA's transport department has only 40 trucks, which had to be allocated to supply stores in all the moughata as part of the response to the PNR weld. However, several other interventions took place during the period, also mobilizing these same vehicles and delaying the delivery of assistance¹⁴¹. According to the (BELs) consulted, it took an average of 39 days to deliver assistance to each moughataa. Transport began on June 21 for Djigueni and Néma, and on July 4 for Timbedra, ending on August 9. **By the end of July 2022, initially scheduled as the closing period for assistance¹⁴² distribution,**

¹³⁸ They are Ivory coast, Madagascar and Niger.

¹³⁹ African Risk Capacity, "Letter from ARC to all ARC member states regarding the suspension of the use of the Africa Rainfall Climatology version 2 (ARC) satellite dataset from 03/02/2022", February 2022.

¹⁴⁰ Mentioned during four qualitative interviews

¹⁴¹ Two additional factors partly contributed to the delays observed: (1) the significant distance between the supply area and the distribution areas, making private transport uneconomical; (2) the distribution period coincided with the start of the rainy season, resulting in access constraints to the intervention areas due to road conditions.

¹⁴² According to the FIP.

Evaluation of the ARC payment process to the government for the 2021-22 season in Mauritania

only a fraction of Néma's beneficiaries had received assistance. By the end of August, one month later, 87% of households due to receive assistance had actually received¹⁴³ it.

The timeline on the following page compares planned (blue) and actual (beige) implementation periods.

IP	Implementing organisation	2021					2022										
		Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
IP 1. Food insecurity assessment	OSA																
<i>Wintering monitoring mission</i>	GTS	Sept.															
<i>Basic issues letter</i>	CSA		28-oct														
<i>ARC response letter</i>	ARC			28-nov													
<i>Negotiations between ARC Ltd and reinsurers</i>	ARC Ltd				December-March												
<i>MDRC calculation finalised</i>	ARC Ltd						08-March										
IP 2 Update of contacts	DCAN																
<i>Production of NRP</i>	DCAN						March										
IP 3. Results of needs assessment obtained	CH																
<i>Diagnosis of the CAB</i>	CAB				12-Jan												
<i>Harmonised Framework workshop</i>	CH						March										
IP 4. Notification of partners of payment	CSA																
<i>Communication of receipt of payment to wali and hakems</i>	CSA									12-May							
<i>Finalise and submit PDMO to ARC</i>	CSA										June						
<i>Validate PDMO</i>	ARC										20-June						
IP 5 Coordination meeting	CSA																
<i>Launch meeting</i>	CSA							?	?								
<i>Follow-up meeting</i>	CSA									?	?	?	?	?	?		
<i>Closing meeting</i>	CSA														?	?	
IP 6 Notification of funds receipt	DAF																
<i>Decree establishing the FNRCAN</i>	RIM										11-May						
<i>Letter requesting transfer of funds to the Minister of Finance</i>	DAF													10-Aug			
<i>Transfer of funds</i>	ARC																
IP 8 Targeting of beneficiaries	CSA																
<i>Organisation of CODEP</i>	Hakems							?		?							
<i>List of beneficiaries resulting from targeting of the social register</i>	RS										16-May						
<i>Targeting verification mission</i>	CSA										20-May	10-June					
IP 9 Scheduling of food distribution	DAU																
<i>Notification of DS and DTL of distribution</i>	DAU										12-May						
<i>Transport Nouakchott-Djiguenni</i>	DS/DTL											21-June	25-July				
<i>Transport Nouakchott-Néma</i>	DS/DTL											21-June		08-Aug			
<i>Transport Nouakchott- Timbedra</i>	DS/DTL												04-July	09-Aug			
<i>Distribution of goods Djiguenni</i>	DAU																August-October
<i>Distribution of goods Néma</i>	DAU																July-November
<i>Distribution of goods Timbedra</i>	DAU																August-November
IP 10 Coordination of implementation	DAU																
IP 11 Monitoring implementation	CSA																
<i>Supervision mission No. 1</i>	CSA													16-Aug			
<i>Supervision mission No. 2</i>	CSA														Oct.		
IP 12 Capitalisation of the response	CSA																
<i>Not realized</i>	CSA																

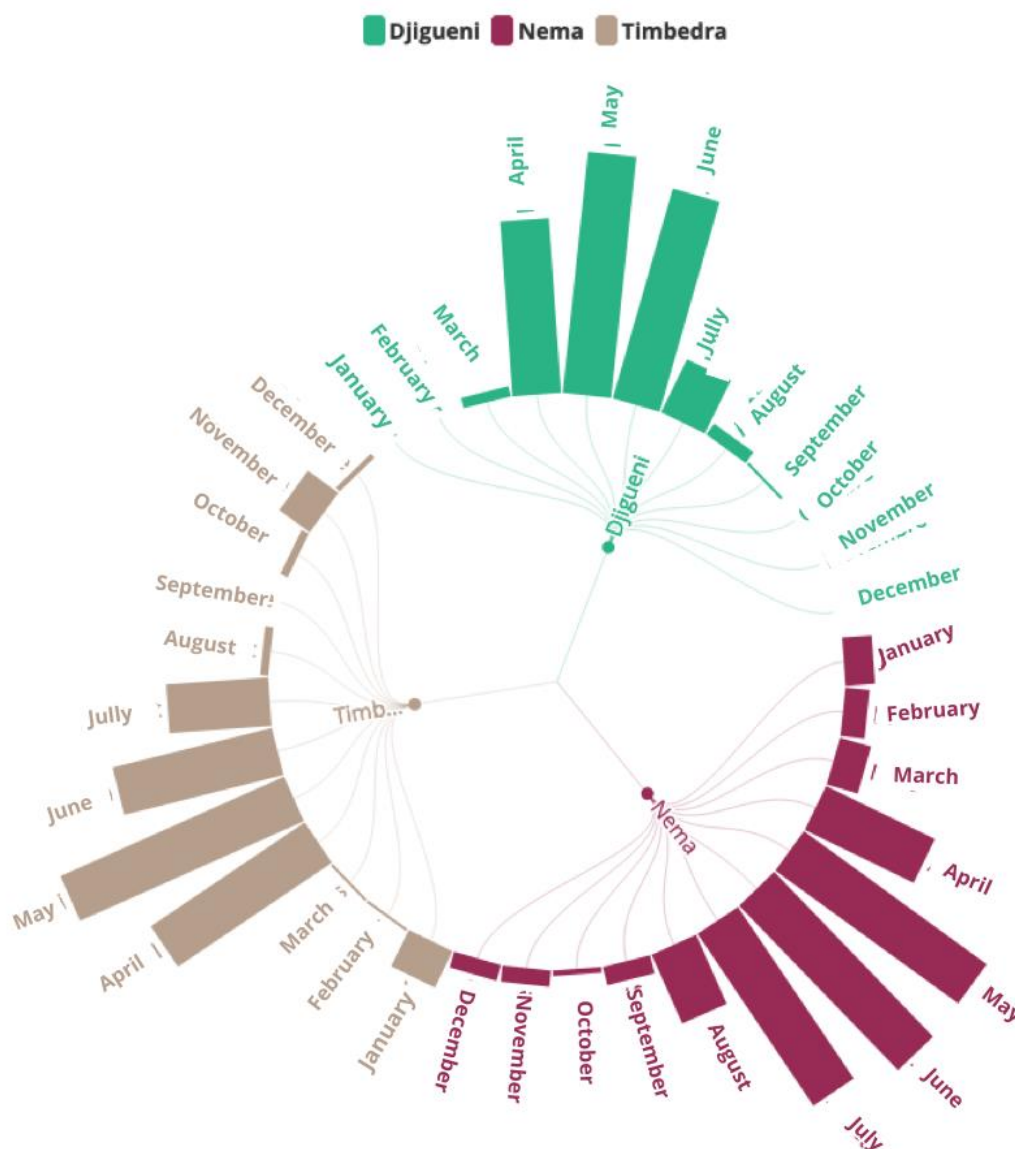
¹⁴³ At the end of November 2022, the execution rate was 99.3%.

5.3 Results obtained (broken down by participant)

64. Extensive information on results can be found in the section [Final implementation plan: actual results](#).
65. The evaluation team observed several factors limiting the results obtained. These are mentioned in the paragraphs below.
66. Comparing the value of the assistance provided (181 MRU/person/month) with that of the recommended assistance (450 MRU/person/month), it seems that **the ration distributed by the CSA is lower than what is recommended to maintain an acceptable level of coverage of food needs in an emergency¹⁴⁴ situation.**

¹⁴⁴ World Food Program, "Minimum expenditure basket applicable in Mauritania: Retrospective analysis", March 2022.

Figure 10 – The right months to receive drought ¹⁴⁵ assistance



67. A second factor that affected the results of the assistance **was its relatively late arrival in relation to the lean season**. The ARC model is based on advance payment to beneficiaries within three months of harvest (i.e. in April for Mauritania¹⁴⁶), which was not possible for this payment (see [Quick implementation of government interventions](#)). When households (n=351) were asked about **the best time to distribute food assistance in response to the drought, 88% mentioned the month of May, followed by June (76%), April (58%), and July (48%)** as follows. Error! Reference source not found.. The walis questioned at moughataa level did not share this opinion, and all mentioned that it would be preferable to distribute from July to November (3/3 KII).

¹⁴⁵ Data from quantitative survey.

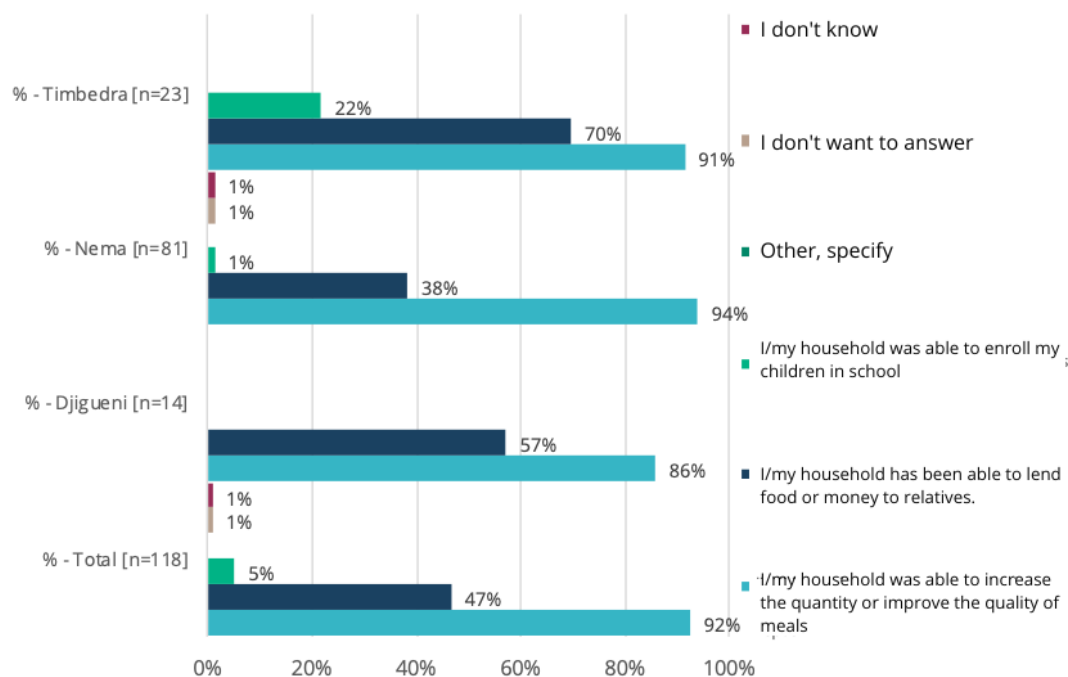
¹⁴⁶ An analysis has shown that payments are required three months after harvest (i.e. in April for Mauritania). Daniel J. Clarke and Ruth Vargas Hill, "Cost-Benefit Analysis of the African Risk Capacity Facility" (IFPRI Discussion Paper 01292, September 2013).

68. **Assistance was distributed later than would have been optimal**, as indicated respectively by 88% and 75% of respondents in Djigueni (n=113) and Timbedra (n=105) who felt that assistance arrived too late. This percentage is lower for Néma with 38% (n=133) where distributions would have started the earliest. **This perception varies from one respondent to another, since most of the beneficiaries questioned in the focus groups expressed a certain satisfaction with the distribution period.** Eight focus groups out of the 10 interviewed mentioned that the period (i.e. July-October) was suitable for meeting their needs. Although the question of receiving assistance before this date was not clearly addressed, households recognized that support during the lean season was appreciated in view of the needs. Several key people at the CSA in Nouakchott shared this perception, considering that the intervention met households' food needs during the lean period, in line with ARC¹⁴⁷ principles, despite the question of early delivery of assistance
69. The effect of assistance delivery on beneficiaries is mixed. Some households reported adopting detrimental coping strategies¹⁴⁸ to cope with the lean period (while receiving assistance from the CSA), as detailed in Figure 11 below. The other households mentioned that the assistance enabled them to avoid adopting harmful strategies, as detailed in Figure 11 below.

¹⁴⁷ Mentioned during four qualitative interviews in Nouakchott.

¹⁴⁸ Among households that responded that they had received assistance too late (n=231), 78% of respondents mentioned that they had had to reduce the quality or quantity of meals," 77% had had to borrow food or money from relatives, and 77% had had to buy food on credit.

Figure 11 - Positive outcomes of the assistance¹⁴⁹



Several answers were possible, the percentages can exceed 100% when added together.

70. Finally, although assistance was mainly consumed by households,¹⁵⁰ 59% of respondents also shared part of their assistance with other households (n=351), reaching two-thirds in Néma (68%, n=133). This indicates that the assistance was not fully used for the intended purpose. Donations or sharing of assistance were mainly made with related households (99%, n=207), but also with unrelated households (54%, n=207). Significantly, 99% of households reported that donations were made voluntarily (n=207)¹⁵¹.

71. Even if these redistribution mechanisms have unexpectedly positive effects on social cohesion within communities, particularly in a context where targeting is only partially understood (see also paragraph 42 on exclusion errors), they may help to explain **beneficiaries' low satisfaction with the quantity distributed**. Indeed, satisfaction with the quantity distributed is relatively low, with 35% of respondents being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (n=351)¹⁵². This dissatisfaction is more marked in Djigueni, where 65% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction (n=113). When asked about the reasons for their dissatisfaction, 98% of the dissatisfied (n=121) mentioned that the quantities offered per ration should be increased to meet their household's needs.

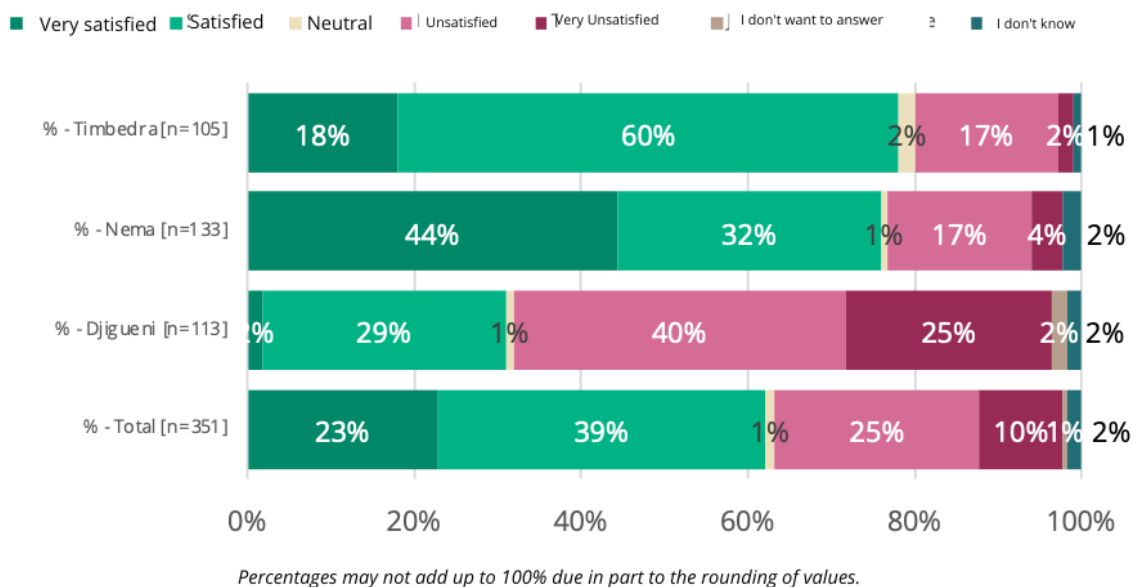
¹⁴⁹ Data from quantitative survey.

¹⁵⁰ 97% of beneficiaries said they had used the assistance for their own consumption (n=351).

¹⁵¹ Two respondents in Djigueni indicated that they had shared their assistance under duress. After clarification, this involved sharing with the driver who took them to Djigueni to collect their assistance in exchange for transport.

¹⁵² Households' perceptions of the quantity of assistance were also reported in almost all FGDs (12/15 FGD).

Figure 12 - Household satisfaction with the quantity of food received¹⁵³



5.4 Positive perception of results

72. **Beneficiaries express a high level of satisfaction with the food they receive, with a satisfaction rate of 95% (n=351), and total satisfaction at Timbedra.** The foodstuffs distributed were broadly in line with household dietary habits, with wheat and rice among the most widely consumed cereals in the region¹⁵⁴. In group discussions, a third of participants expressed a preference for beans. The CSA excluded this legume from assistance because of its propensity to spoil more quickly and its relatively high cost (89 MRU/kilogram¹⁵⁵)¹⁵⁶. **In view of budget constraints, the CSA has given priority to assisting a greater number of people rather than adding a more expensive foodstuff or one preferred by certain households.**

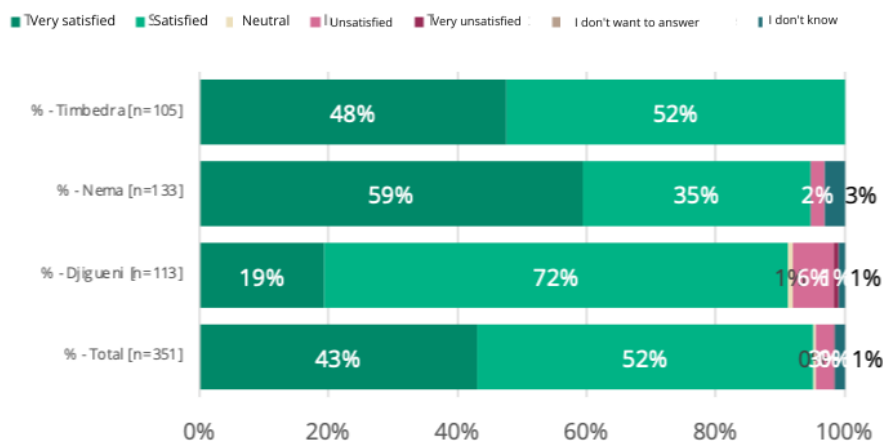
¹⁵³ Data from quantitative survey.

¹⁵⁴ Action against hunger, " Quarterly information bulletin on food and nutritional security in the Wilaya of Hodh El Chargui: September-November 2022 ", December 2022.

¹⁵⁵ Action Against Hunger, " Quarterly information bulletin on food and nutritional security in the Wilaya of Hodh El Chargui: March-May 2022 ", June 2022.

¹⁵⁶ Mentioned by two qualitative interviews.

Figure 13 - Household satisfaction with the quality of food received¹⁵⁷



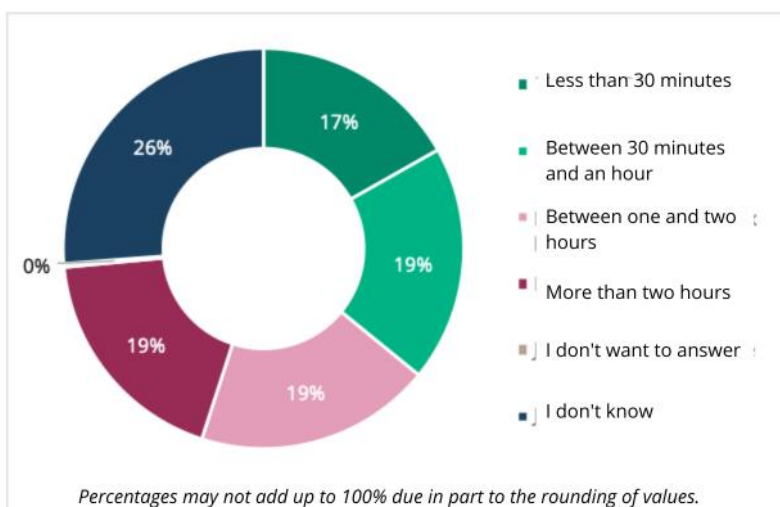
Percentages may not add up to 100% due in part to the rounding of values.

73. Overall, **beneficiaries are relatively satisfied with the distribution process, with 60% declaring themselves completely or fairly satisfied (n=351)**. However, one moughata evaluated the distribution process less positively, with only 16% of respondents expressing similar satisfaction and 44% finding the distribution process not really or not at all satisfactory (n=113). The main reasons cited by respondents were the distance to the distribution site (66%) and the transport costs (35%) that households had to pay to collect their assistance from the moughata chief towns (n=351). Six of the ten focus groups also mentioned the problem of having to travel and pay transport costs to collect assistance. According to the focus groups, only beneficiaries in El Ghassimiye (Néma) reported that distribution had actually taken place directly in their locality. When questioned on this subject, the CSA storekeepers confirmed that visits had been made to each locality. According to them, some households refused to receive assistance when the CSA trucks passed by. The reason given was that, since food is distributed in bulk, households have to go to the moughata chief towns to grind the food. As a result, they chose not to receive their assistance locally, preferring to collect it directly from the chief towns, thus reducing transport costs between the mill and their homes.

¹⁵⁷ Data from quantitative survey.

74. Beneficiaries also raised the issue of oil packaging. In fact, although the planned assistance per household was 5 liters, the oil was packaged in 20-liter cans. As a result, CSA storekeepers refused to distribute assistance to a household until there were at least four members to receive the assistance. **This would have had a partial impact on waiting times at the distribution site (see Figure 15).**

Figure 15 - Average waiting time for beneficiaries on arrival at the distribution site



75. **The choice of modality (food distribution) generated divergent opinions among respondents.** Four out of ten groups felt that this modality was appropriate, while three groups expressed a preference for monetary assistance. According to the quantitative survey, 64% of respondents showed a strong preference for monetary intervention, compared with only 22% in favor of food distribution (n=351). Although the FIP does not fully detail the choice of food¹⁵⁸ distribution, Two respondents to the qualitative interviews mainly justified this decision by the lack of access to markets for the beneficiaries. This reasoning seems unjustified considering that some households had to travel to the chief towns of the moughataa where markets are functional. Data from Action Against Hunger indicate that 48% of sites had low availability in March-May¹⁵⁹, then 15% in June-August 2022¹⁶⁰.

76. **Food distribution had a limited impact on markets.** Only 7% of households surveyed reported a price change following the distribution, while 38% noticed little or no change (n=351)^{161,162}. The availability of food products was also not significantly affected, with only 3% of respondents indicating that certain products were no longer available (n=351)¹⁶³. In interviews, the relatively small size of the distribution network was the main reason given for its limited impact on markets.

¹⁵⁸ The OP states that the choice will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a market analysis. No market analysis is developed in the FIP or in the PNR.

¹⁵⁹ Action Against Hunger, " Quarterly information bulletin on food and nutritional security in the Wilaya of Hodh El Chargui: March-May 2022 ".

¹⁶⁰ Action Against Hunger, " Quarterly Information Bulletin on Food and Nutritional Security in the Wilaya of Hodh El Chargui: June-August 2022 ", September 2022

¹⁶¹ With 51% of respondents saying "I don't know" (n=351)

¹⁶² This situation was confirmed by the focus groups. Nine focus groups (out of ten conducted) reported that distribution had had no effect on market prices. The non-beneficiaries interviewed also confirmed that they had not noticed any change in prices (5/5).

¹⁶³ With 54% of respondents saying "I don't know" (n=351).

77. **The program does not take the gender dimension into account in its planning¹⁶⁴ or implementation (targeting and distribution).** The gender department is a recent creation at ARC¹⁶⁵, and support is planned over the next year to systematically integrate gender considerations into the company's plans.

6. Lessons for future assessments

78. The use of social register data to target the food insecure was not entirely effective. Households interviewed reported numerous exclusion errors and a few inclusion errors. The insufficient frequency of data updates partly compromises the reliability of the database.

79. Bulk food distribution means that beneficiaries have to travel to moughata chief towns or other important local towns, as they have no mills to grind the food. This situation invalidates the argument that food distribution is more suitable for the most remote areas.

80. The evaluation team would also like to highlight a few important points concerning the evaluation.

81. First of all, the delays in retrieving documentation were relatively long. It would be a good idea to draw up a complete list of documents and proofs, scan them and send them to ARC at the same time as the final report. This would help to limit the number of reminders to different contacts, and take greater advantage of the start-up phase.

82. The calendar of this process evaluation comes relatively late in relation to the implementation phase (see [Limits to achieving evaluation objectives](#)). It would be more appropriate to reduce the period between the end of distribution and data collection to a few weeks, or even months, so that respondents have a fresher understanding of the problems and successes of distribution.

83. The evaluation report does not include a developed section on gender or accountability to beneficiaries, although these two aspects are at the heart of the evaluation questions the report is supposed to cover. It would be advisable to revise the structure of the report to include these two topics adequately. This recommendation applies equally to the FIP and the OP, which should include detailed sections on these subjects.

¹⁶⁴ No information about gender and how it is taken into account is mentioned in the OP and FIP.

¹⁶⁵ African Risk Capacity, "ARC Group Strategy 2020-24", 2020.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Follow-up to recommendations from the previous assessment:

84. The previous evaluation of the 2017-18 payment process focused on a feed distribution. As a result, a limited number of recommendations, listed below, were relevant to the current evaluation of the 2021-22 payment process.

#	Previous recommendations	Taking into account	Comment
1	Recommendation 1: Improve the quality of the final implementation plan:		
1.1	Identify measurable indicators linked to the objective and results, and specify their monitoring-evaluation process ;		Not implemented. The monitoring-evaluation plan is a copy-paste of the previous one. Some indicators are still not measurable, as the measurement process is not detailed (e.g., effect indicator 1).
1.2	Adapt the formulation of Standard Operating Procedures and their characteristics (details, responsibility, completion date, lead time, type) to the actual procedures of the selected interventions.		Partially implemented. The standing instructions are broadly adapted to this payment, but could benefit from further fine-tuning when the final FIP is submitted.
2	Recommendation 2: Improve accountability		
2.1	Develop within the CSA a strategy for monitoring and evaluating interventions, taking into account i) data collection, processing, validation and analysis; ii) the required media; iii) means of communication; iv) archiving; etc.		Not implemented. A monitoring and evaluation workshop was held in August 2023. However, the 2021-22 payment did not benefit from this. For

			example, IPs 9 to 12 could have been withdrawn.
2.2	Meet monthly reporting deadlines and adapt report quality to ARC requirements		Applied. ARC requires only two reports for each payment, not monthly reports. The CSA has provided a mid-term report and a final implementation report. However, these two reports could be expanded to provide more information.

7.2 Additional recommendations for the 2021-22 payment process :

#	Recommendations	Matching sections	Responsible person	Provisional timetable
1	Recommendation 1: Continue to rationalize and improve DCAN's various planning tools			
1.1	Proposed action 1.1: Finalize the process of drawing up a national plan of anticipated needs ¹⁶⁶ (which would be available by January at the latest) to prepare the production of the PNR and mobilize the various technical and financial partners. This plan could be developed at the same time as the CAB diagnosis, and would include a needs. budgeting dimension.	Paragraph 62	DCAN	January 2024

¹⁶⁶ DCAN is aware that the production of the PNR in March-April of each year does not allow the implementation of anticipated actions as desired within the ARC framework.

1.2	<p>Proposed action 1.2: Include a more in-depth analysis of response options in the PNR and FIP to justify the choice of modality. This should include a market analysis and feasibility study to support the decision on the chosen modality. It would also be essential to take into account the specific delivery times for each modality, given that ARC is based on the principle of early response.</p>	Paragraph 75	DCAN GTS contract monitoring and procurement	When the next PNR is drawn up (2024)
1.3	<p>Proposed action 1.3: Review existing data, tools, expertise, systems and procedures to assess their ability to ensure gender sensitivity in planned ARC interventions. Identify existing gaps and propose recommendations to fill these gaps in key areas of action, such as ARV personalization, response planning/contingency and risk transfer/financing¹⁶⁷.</p>	Paragraph 77	Gender focal point ARC ARC Coordinator	When drawing up the future PNR (2025)
2	Recommendation 2: Improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for interventions contributing to the PNR			
2.1	<p>Suggested action 2.1: Use the tracking tool developed by the social register, linked to beneficiary numbers. This tool, which is free and accessible off-line, requires identity verification or SMS confirmation to confirm receipt of assistance. It simplifies real-time monitoring of program execution and facilitates post-distribution surveys, consolidating all information on beneficiaries.</p>	Paragraph 47	Social register Emergency Action Directorate Food Safety Observatory (OSA)	At the next PNR meeting

¹⁶⁷ According to the gender focal point contacted for this evaluation, an audit is planned by his department in 2024 to carry out a gender audit and support Mauritania in this exercise.

2.2	Proposed action 2.2: Introduce a mandatory minimum budget to fund M&E activities to measure the immediate results of assistance ¹⁶⁸ .	Paragraph 53	ARC Coordinator Administrative and Financial Department	When drawing up the next OP/FIP
3 Recommendation 3: Review targeting methodology to reduce exclusion and inclusion error rates.				
3.1	Proposed action 3.1: Update social register data to ensure that it is up-to-date and effective in identifying beneficiaries of social programs in Mauritania.	Paragraph 42	Social register	6 months
4 Recommendation 4: Continue efforts to customize the model in order to reduce the probability of basis risk				
4.1	Proposed action 4.1: Continue to update datasets, or establish pilot areas to monitor polygons throughout the season and inform datasets.	Paragraph 27	OSA DCAN	For the upcoming 2024 season
4.2	Proposed action 4.2: Reconsider the sensitivity of the model to avoid over-frequent activation, which currently occurs every three to four years. A business case suggests that ARC should consider limiting payments to a country to an average frequency of once every five years. This approach would enable the insurance model to better cover the most extreme events, while the government, with the support of other technical and financial	Paragraph 42	DCAN ARC Coordinator	Before signing the next insurance policy

¹⁶⁸ The industry norm is to allocate between 3% and 10% of the project/program budget to monitoring and evaluation. IFRC, " Guide for program monitoring and evaluation ", 2011.

	partners, could assume responsibility for the "seasonal" response to drought ¹⁶⁹ .			
5	Recommendation 5: Reassess the content of assistance to ensure an adequate quantity for households			
5.1	Proposed action 5.1: Take into account the size of the household and other forms of assistance already received, in order to personalize the contents or value of the kit ¹⁷⁰ . This approach could potentially extend the scope (horizontal extension) or the needs covered (vertical extension).	Paragraph 43	DCAN ARC Coordinator	When drawing up the next OP/FIP
5.2	Proposed action 5.2: Identify a solution to save beneficiaries the cost of transport to mills, either by providing a mill to beneficiary localities (this could be done via a donation to a cooperative), or by distributing foodstuffs already ground and ready for consumption.	Paragraph 73	DCAN ARC Coordinator	When drawing up the next OP/FIP

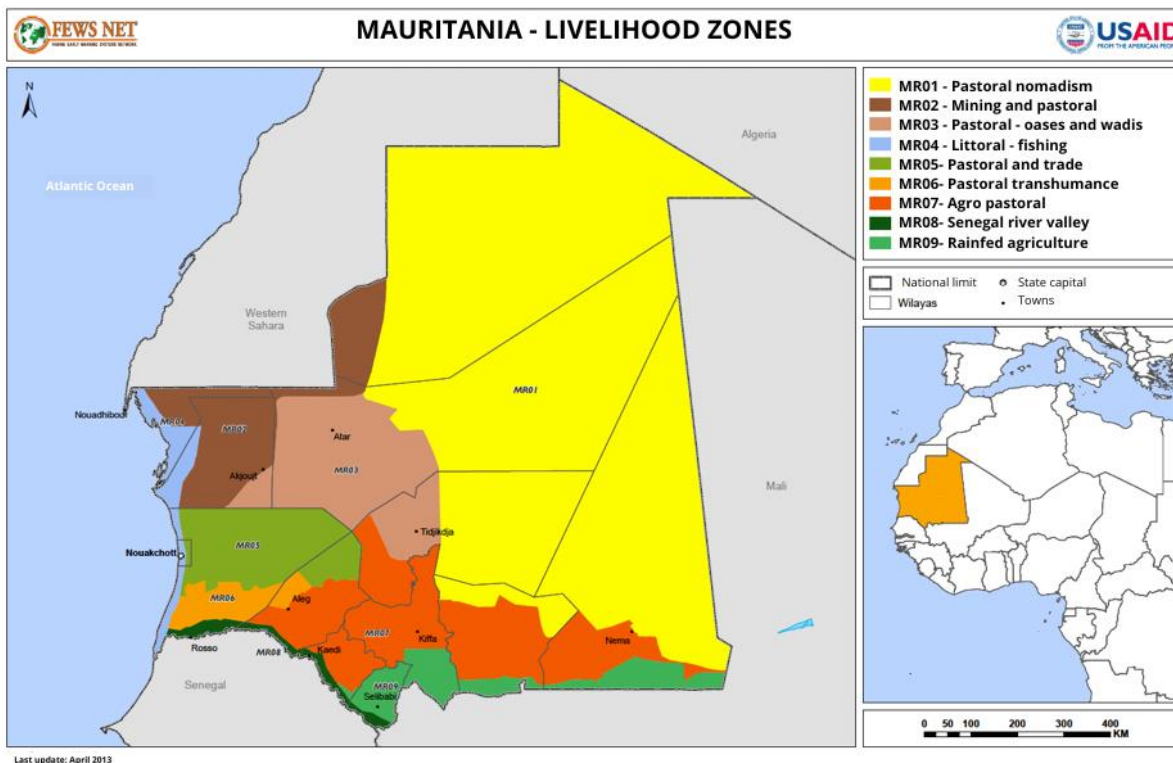
¹⁶⁹ Reducing the frequency of payments to once every eight or ten years on average and increasing the level of coverage for these extreme years would be even better from a welfare point of view, according to : Clarke and Hill, "Cost-Benefit Analysis of the African Risk Capacity Facility".

¹⁷⁰ This recommendation would be more efficient in the context of a monetary intervention than in that of a food response, given that foodstuffs are packaged in standardized containers.

8. Appendix

8.1 Livelihood map

Figure 15 - Livelihood map of Mauritania¹⁷¹



8.2 Targeting criteria based on vulnerability

Table 1 - Criteria used to request lists of beneficiaries in the social register¹⁷²

CRITERIA 2022	EXCLUSION	Explanations
Main occupation	Public employee, permanent private employee, employer	Concerns all people in the household, not just the head of household: if at least one person is in the exclusion situation, the household is excluded.
Consumer goods/non-productive equipment	Equipped kitchen (urban), car, air conditioner, washing machine, generator, modern kitchen (stove with oven), computer, motorcycle	The household is excluded if it uses at least 1 of the goods or equipment listed below, whether owned or entrusted to the household.

¹⁷¹ FEWS Net, "Mauritania - Livelihood zones", April 2013.

¹⁷² World Food Programme, "Methodology for targeting households for hunger assistance"; Directorate General of Social Register and Food Security Commissariat, "Memorandum of Understanding between the TAAZOUR General Delegation for National Solidarity and the Fight against Exclusion / Directorate General of Social Register and Information Systems and the Food Security Commissariat / Emergency Aid Directorate".

Housing type	Rural areas	Semi-urban areas			Households living in this type of dwelling are excluded, whether or not they own the property.
	Buildings, Villa, Apartments	Apartment blocks, Villa, Apartments, Ordinary house, Number of rooms in dwelling >1.			
Number of working adults in the household	>2				Number of able-bodied arms: people over the age of 18 who are capable of working, whether or not they are currently employed.
Maximum household size	>21				Households of more than 21 people are excluded.
Ownership of livestock	ZME	Ratio PR	Nb of PR	NB	ZME : Livelihood zones (according to Household Economy Analysis [HEA] profile) Small Ruminants (SR); Large Ruminants (LR) Ratio : number of PRs owned divided by the number of people in the household. A household is excluded if it meets at least one of the three exclusion conditions. Ex: In a rainfed ZME, a household of 9 people is excluded if it owns 1 cow and 9 small ruminants: it meets the ratio criterion (because $9/9=1$), the number of LR criterion (because $1 < 2$), but does not meet the number of SR criterion (because $9 > 7$).
	Rainfed cultivation	>1	>7	>1	
	River Valley	>1	>7	>1	
	Agropastoral	>1,5	>9	>2	

8.3 Terms of reference for the evaluation

1. Context

In October 2021, the food insecurity rate based on the consumption score was 18.5%, compared with 14.8% for the same period in 2020 and 13.3% in 2019, indicating a sharp deterioration.

The November 2021 Harmonized Framework for Food Insecurity Analysis already identified an estimated 660,000 people to be assisted in the crisis phase.

The results of the March 2022 Harmonized Framework indicate a significant deterioration in the food and nutrition situation. It is in this context that ARC has agreed to make a payment of approximately US\$1,715,000 to the Government of Mauritania.

The chosen activity is the *free distribution of foodstuffs* to enable the needy to emerge from the lean season quickly and safely, while preserving their basic livelihoods.

2. Purpose of evaluation

This evaluation process aims to generate information and lessons learned that the ARC Institution, the Government of Mauritania, other member states and ARC partners will use for accountability purposes, to improve contingency planning and its implementation. The ultimate aim is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of ARC funds, as well as their impact on beneficiaries.

3. Objectives of the assessment process

The aim of this process is to assess whether the implementation of emergency plans is in line with what was initially defined in terms of process and management. It therefore focuses on the operations, implementation and submission of the Final Implementation Plan (FIP) submitted by the government. It also enables us to assess the scope of the program, the quality of implementation and the degree of beneficiary satisfaction.

4. Scope of the assessment process

In 2022, as mentioned above, the Government of Mauritania benefited from an insurance indemnity payment from ARC following the drought conditions recorded during the agricultural season, conditions which led to the triggering of this payment.

The Moughataa deemed most affected by the incidence of food insecurity and which were assisted, are located in the Wilaya of Hodh Echarghi. They are Néma, Timbedra and Djigueni. A total of 21,894 households (131,364 people) were assisted at the end of the intervention.

More specifically, the assessment process will cover the following elements:

- Assessment of compliance of Mauritania's FIP with ARC's standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- Review of interventions carried out with ARC funds in relation to those described in the FIP
- Effectiveness and efficiency of FIP interventions
- Beneficiaries' perception of program implementation and results
- Inclusion of the gender dimension

5. Evaluation questions

The evaluation process must answer at least the following questions:

- To what extent do the activities carried out by the government correspond to those planned in the FIP?
- When were the activities planned in the FIP implemented?
- Who were the people targeted by these activities, and how do they relate to those described in the FIP?
- To what extent is the implementation of the FIP achieving the expected results, including the rapid delivery of emergency aid?
- What were the obstacles/helpful factors in setting up the activities?
- What was the cost-effectiveness of the activities implemented?

- How has the implementation of activities financed by insurance indemnities been coordinated with other emergency aid programs in the country?
- Did the government follow ARC's standard operating procedures when implementing the FIP, and if not, why not?
- Have government interventions taken account of gender equality objectives and rationalization principles?

6. Approach and methodology

A detailed methodology to cover and answer the evaluation questions will be prepared by the evaluation team, following recommendations and using the ARC tools ("*Guidance on program verification* ", see Appendix). The evaluation method will consist of a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis. As a minimum, the evaluation team will be required to carry out the following tasks:

- a. **Review the following key documents** : Operational plans, final implementation plans and their amendments, interim implementation reports of the Government of Mauritania's FIPs, Mauritania's disaster risk management plans and other related legislation, ARV bulletins and other food security assessment reports, 2021-2022 Food Insecurity Response Plan, terms of reference for technical working groups and sub-groups, ARC compliance rules and any other relevant ARC documents.
- b. **Develop an evaluation grid for ARC standard operating procedures** to determine whether the government has taken appropriate action and, if not, to explain deviations from ARC compliance rules.
- c. **Conduct interviews with key stakeholders**, including:
 - The Country Engagement Officer (REP) of the ARC Secretariat
 - The ARC Secretariat's Emergency Planning team
 - ARC Secretariat monitoring and evaluation (M&E) team
 - Director of Operations, ARC Secretariat
 - ARC national coordinator
 - Members of the Technical Working Group
 - Officials from the Emergency Management Prevention and Support Unit
 - Administrative authorities (sub-national scale)
 - Implementing partners (national, sub-national scale and local)
 - Representatives of the main donors and humanitarian actors present in Mauritania
 - WFP officials
 - Community leaders
 - Community organizations involved
 - Beneficiaries (by gender)

7. Requirements

The evaluation team leader must have solid experience in program evaluation related to disaster management and emergency response. He/she must have the experience, qualifications and skills required to deliver a quality product efficiently and on time. The minimum qualifications and skills required of team members are as follows:

Function	Tasks	Knowledge and experience
Head of the evaluation team	<p>Leads the evaluation team</p> <p>Coordinates and manages all activities relating to the planning and execution of the evaluation, in conjunction with the ARC Secretariat and the ARC Country Coordinator</p> <p>Conducts evaluation interviews and spot checks</p> <p>Supervises data analysis</p> <p>Drafts the evaluation report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master's degree in international development, disaster management or related field - At least 10 years' professional experience in humanitarian assessment and/or disaster risk management and emergency response - Solid knowledge of the use and application of monitoring-evaluation systems - Experience working with senior government officials, donors, implementing partners and local communities - Excellent communication skills - Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills - Excellent report writing skills
Researcher	<p>Carry out spot checks</p> <p>Analyzes spot-check results</p> <p>Prepare an analysis report presenting the main findings of spot checks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bachelor's degree in social sciences, economics, development studies or related fields - At least 3 years' professional experience in development research or market studies - Proven experience in conducting field studies: design of data collection tools, interviews with various stakeholders and recording of results - Proven experience in data analysis and report writing - Excellent communication skills - Good writing skills

8. Deliverables and deadlines

The evaluation team is required to prepare and submit to ARC a series of key reports as part of its mandate. These reports will be presented to the relevant stakeholders, reviewed and approved by the ARC before final payment is made. Key deliverables include:

- a. **Initial report:** must be prepared and submitted within **ONE week** of contract signing. The evaluation team will prepare this report after reviewing the key technical documents and discussing them with the CRA. The inception report should cover: understanding of the terms of reference and scope of the evaluation, the methodology to be adopted, the evaluation design and key questions, and the work plan for the assignment. The evaluation team will present the inception report to the relevant stakeholders in Mauritania.

- b. **First findings:** these elements must be compiled and presented to the stakeholders involved in implementing ARC-funded interventions at the in-country information meeting held **FOUR weeks** after contract signature.

- c. **Interim evaluation report:** must be prepared and submitted to ARC **SIX weeks** after contract signature, according to the recommended guidelines (see Appendix). This draft report will require follow-up in the form of comments, questions and

observations from ARC. In addition, the evaluation team will present this document to the relevant stakeholders in Mauritania and to ARC.

- d. **Final evaluation report:** must be prepared according to the recommended guidelines (see Appendix) and submitted to ARC before or at the end of the mandate (**SEVEN weeks** after contract signature), after incorporating comments/observations in the draft report. This includes: one original copy of the final report, four bound color copies, and one electronic version.

9. Reporting procedures

The evaluation team will report directly to the ARC M&E manager.

10. Offer

The offer must include :

- A detailed description of how to understand the specifications
- A description of the evaluation plan, including a detailed presentation of the proposed methodology, sampling and evaluation design, analysis and reporting, as well as evaluation milestones and a schedule of activities
- A detailed budget
- Summary of previous experience (at least three brief descriptions of past or current contracts for assignments of similar size, scope and complexity to the present bid), and a list of references who can testify to the results obtained in conducting similar assessments
- CV corresponding to the above qualifications
- Supporting documents, including mandatory institutional documents such as articles of association

11. Selection criteria

The technical offer will be evaluated according to the following criteria :

Criteria	Max. number of points
Understanding the specifications and purpose of the services to be provided	10
Background, experience and skills of team manager	30
Appropriateness of the choice of other team members according to the expertise proposed	20
Evaluation plan, incl. methodology and design	30
Task organization and calendar	10

Total technical score	100
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The financial offer must include a detailed budget summarizing the following points, in **USD**, and will be scored out of **25 points (maximum)**.

Position	Total cost
Fees (team manager, researcher in Mauritania, translator)	
Cost of key informant interviews	
Cost of spot checks	
Travel, accommodation and daily allowance	
Other costs	
Overheads	
Total cost	

Appendix

General outline of the provisional and final assessment reports

Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Country context : food security situation

1.2 Arc's commitment calendar

1.3. ARC son-site structure

1.4. Objectives and methodology of the assessment process

2. Final Implementation Plan (FIP): interventions and results

2.1. Assessment of food safety and ARV bulletins

2.2. Beneficiary targeting system

2.3. Government intervention and budget

2.4. Expected results

3. Final implementation plan: actual results

3.1. Effective targeting

3.2. Target beneficiaries, by gender

3.3. Products/species distributed

3.4. Estimated budget in relation to payment amount

3.5. Total current expenditure

3.6. Monitoring and evaluation: the system set up by the government to monitor the FIP as a whole

3.7. FIP's actual results: main findings

4. Standard operating procedures (SOPs): level of government compliance

4.1. SOP evaluation: evaluation grid

4.2. SOP compliance: key findings

5. Efficiency and effectiveness of government stakeholders

5.1. Cost-effectiveness of implementing government interventions

5.2. Quick implementation of government interventions

5.3. Results obtained (broken down by stakeholder)

5.4. Positive perception of results

6. Lessons for future assessments

7. Recommendations

References

8.4 Evaluation matrix

Table 12 - Evaluation matrix

Evaluation question	Judgement criteria	Elements of judgment and indicators	Code	Data source
Q1: Coordination with other initiatives during design and implementation	1.1 Degree of coordination in program design and implementation	Degree of involvement of other PNR programmes and stakeholders in the design of the FIP	1.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of secondary data KII with CSA and implementation teams KII with representatives of other PNR programs/stakeholders KII with local authorities
		Existence of and satisfaction with coordination activities carried out by the CSA during implementation to ensure consistency with other programs	1.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of secondary data KII with CSA and implementation teams KII with representatives of other PNR programs/stakeholders KII with local authorities
		Assistance methods and quantities distributed are harmonized between the various PNR programs.	1.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of secondary data KII with CSA and implementation teams KII with representatives of other PNR programs/stakeholders
Q2: Achievement of expected results	2.1 Ability of the intervention to achieve the targets set in the FIP	Proportion of staff surveyed who consider that the activities carried out achieved the expected and rational objectives	2.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KII with CSA and implementation teams KII with representatives of other PNR programs/stakeholders KII with local authorities
		Level of achievement of expected results over the evaluation period	2.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary data review KII with CSA and implementation teams FGD with beneficiary communities Quantitative survey with beneficiaries

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		Beneficiary satisfaction with assistance modality and distribution process	2.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries
		Feedback from beneficiaries on the quantity of kits received	2.1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries
		Factors limiting or helping to achieve intervention objectives	2.1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of secondary data ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with representatives of other PNR programs/stakeholders ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries
		Effects of timely delivery (or non-delivery) on beneficiaries	2.1.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries
	2.2 Ability of the intervention to target food-insecure people following the drought of the 2021-22 season	Suitability of the targeting strategy with the objective of targeting the populations most affected by drought	2.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries

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		Measures put in place to deal with inclusion and exclusion errors at the time of targeting	2.2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries
		Positive or negative unintended effects of the chosen targeting methodology	2.2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities
		Project beneficiaries' knowledge of and access to the complaints management mechanism	2.2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ FGD with beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries
	2.3 Gender mainstreaming measures implemented as part of the intervention financed by ARC	Measures implemented during targeting	2.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ FGD with beneficiary and non-beneficiary communities
		Measures implemented as part of the distribution mechanism	2.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ FGD with beneficiary communities
Q3: Efficiency of response	3.1 Compliance of FIP implementation with ARC standard operating procedures for each of the 17 FIP IPs and implementation periods	Gap between planned completion date and completion of activity/task	3.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with local authorities

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FGD with beneficiary communities ▪ Quantitative survey with beneficiaries
		Gap between activity/task (possibly linked to performance indicator) to be performed and activity/task achieved	3.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with local authorities ▪ FGD with beneficiary communities
	3.2 Extent to which the intervention was able to make efficient use of available resources to achieve its objectives	Transfer cost ratio	3.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review
		Internal or external factors that impacted on the timely delivery of the intervention	3.2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with local authorities
		Measures to reduce costs and lead times	3.2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams
	3.3 Efficiency of the monitoring and evaluation system to steer program implementation at national level	Availability of information through monthly or quarterly implementation reports	3.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams
		Systematic disaggregation of intervention data	3.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams
		Monitoring and evaluation framework and relevance of results indicators	3.3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data review ▪ KII with CSA and implementation teams ▪ KII with representatives of other PNR programs/stakeholders

8.5 Detailed evaluation methodology

85. The proposed methodology combined a mixed approach based on in-depth interviews with project key informants at local and national levels and the collection of qualitative and quantitative data from a representative sample of randomly selected beneficiaries.

8.5.1 Documentary review

86. ARC provided the evaluation team with some basic planning documents and reference guides on the ARC processes to be applied. The evaluation team sought additional documents to deepen the understanding of the context (national sectoral policy documents, emergency interventions carried out with other funding, etc.). This information contributed to the understanding of the context presented in the first part of the initial report. The list of documents made available and consulted by the evaluation team is detailed in the [appendix](#).

8.5.2 Geographic targeting

87. In the case of this evaluation, it was decided to propose each of the three moughataas as a study area. The sampling frame for the household sample is all beneficiary households ordinarily resident in the three study areas (moughataas).

88. Only localities with 15 or more households were included in the first-stage¹⁷³ sampling frame. The target population was estimated at 26,983 households spread over 1,240 localities in the three moughataas. Just under half the localities had 15 households or more (445 localities), while 795 localities had fewer than 15 households.

Table 13 - Distribution of primary sampling units (localities) by study area

moughata	Number of localities of more than or equal to 15 households	Number of localities with fewer than 15 households	Total number of locations
Djiguenni	133	180	313
Néma	163	324	487
Timbedra	149	291	440

¹⁷³ the evaluation team made this choice to avoid problems of unsaturation.

Total	445	795	1240
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89. In the first stage, an **nh** sample of localities was selected using the systematic probability proportional to size (SPPT) method. The evaluation team's objective was to have a sufficient sample size to enable representativeness at the level of each moughata as far as possible. To achieve this objective, the following formula was used, introducing a 6% margin of error:

$$n = \frac{t^2 \times p(1-p)}{e^2}$$

Where, n = expected sample size/t = confidence level deduced from the confidence rate (traditionally 1.96 for a 95% confidence rate) - reduced centered normal distribution/p = estimated proportion of the population with the characteristic studied in the study/e = margin of error (fixed at 6%).

90. To maximize the sample size and in the absence of an estimate of this proportion, p = 0.5 was chosen.

Table 14 - Sample allocation of primary units (localities) and secondary units (households) by moughata

moughata	Targeted households	Household sample	Sample of localities
Djiguenni	7604	120	8
Néma	10 642	150	10
Timbedra	8737	120	8
Total	26 983	380	26

91. The sample was drawn using a two-stage stratified random sample. It was carried out within each study area (moughata) independently of the other. In the first stage, an **nh** sample of localities was selected using the systematic probability proportional to size (SPPT) sampling method. SPSS software was used to select the first-stage samples.

8.5.3 Data collection - qualitative

92. Qualitative data collection included semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in Nouakchott and the assisted moughataas, and focus groups in the sampled communes (see [Geographic targeting](#)).
93. The evaluation team conducted **semi-structured interviews** with governmental, local and international stakeholders supporting the ARC payment process for the 2021-22 season in Mauritania. In total, the evaluation team conducted between 27 individual interviews spread between Nouakchott and the three moughataa that benefited from the assistance. The evaluation team conducted the interviews face-to-face. Some remote interviews were conducted with ARC representatives.
94. The main categories of stakeholders who were questioned via semi-structured interviews are described below, and the list of key informants who agreed to take part in this survey is available in the [appendix](#):
- ARC representatives and staff,
 - CSA representatives and staff,
 - Representatives and staff of other stakeholders in the national drought¹⁷⁴ response plan,
 - Regional and local authorities, clusters and ad hoc committees involved in the operation.
95. **Discussion groups** were held with both assisted and unassisted communities. The main objective of this data collection was to engage in discussions with community members to understand their views on targeting, their assessment of the results of the distribution they received, their level of satisfaction with this distribution, as well as the mechanisms in place to gather any concerns they might have. Separate gender groups were formed to identify any gender-specific issues.
96. For this purpose, homogeneous groups of 5 to 8 people¹⁷⁵ were formed. In each moughata (3), the qualitative methods expert facilitated two focus groups with male beneficiaries, two with female beneficiaries, and one mixed group with non-beneficiaries. All in

¹⁷⁴ National Device for Prevention and Response to Food and Nutritional Crises and Food Security Commission, "National Response Plan (PNR) 2022 of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania".

¹⁷⁵ The discussion groups will preferably take place outdoors and the final number of participants will take into account the COVID measures in force in the country.

all, fifteen focus groups. Information saturation was reached, as it is generally recognized that this occurs after two to three focus groups with each category of beneficiary¹⁷⁶.

97. The evaluation team organized the focus groups in parallel with the quantitative data collection phase, in order to take advantage of the prior awareness campaign and a similar timetable to that of the survey data collection. For logistical reasons, it was decided to randomly select two localities per moughata among those targeted by the quantitative survey. Thus, the qualitative expert will conduct three focus groups in a first locality (one with men, one with women and one with non-beneficiaries), followed by two groups in a second locality (one with men, one with women). The locations identified are listed below.

Table 15 - Locations visited for discussion groups¹⁷⁷

moughata	Selected localities
Néma	El Ghassimiye
	Azdar Nour
Timbedra	Echewayil
	Hassi Mhadi
Djiguenni	El Wouzatt
	Oum Nour

8.5.4 Data collection - quantitative

98. Following the geographical draw, a number *m* of households was selected within each locality chosen in the first degree by simple random sampling (SAS draw). In each locality, the evaluation team randomly selected a master list of 12 people to carry out the surveys. Due to the usual problems of beneficiary absence or travel, and to avoid selection bias, the evaluation team included a waiting list of

¹⁷⁶ ALNAP, " Guide to the evaluation of humanitarian action ", 2016.

¹⁷⁷ The evaluation team has added an additional locality to the list, shown in italics. If, at the time of collection, it proves impossible to visit one of the other two localities or to contact the local authorities, this additional locality will then be considered.

three people, also drawn at random, to replace absent respondents. This gave a total target of 312 beneficiaries to be surveyed in 3 moughataa.

99. Three supervisors and nine enumerators were hired to support primary data collection in Mauritania. They attended a two-day training course in Nouakchott on November 08 and 09. Data collection was completed in 6 days. The field phase also included four days' travel and a one-day awareness-raising campaign with local authorities.
100. The evaluation team carried out a quick survey (approx. 30 min max). Data were collected using mobile data collection software (ODK - Open Data Kit) linked to a secure server based in France. The data was collected on tablets. On the one hand, this method saved time by making the databases available immediately after collection. On the other hand, it enabled real-time verification of the quality of the data collected online, thanks to a script that identified the most common errors made by the interviewers.

8.5.5 Data analysis and reporting

101. Disaggregated qualitative data were recorded and coded according to the evaluation questions and indicators in order to analyze emerging trends. The analysis was carried out iteratively in order to adjust the data collection tools and explore certain trends in greater depth. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in Excel.
102. After the data collection period, the consultants triangulated the various results obtained to produce the **first version of the report on December 19, 2023**. This report presented the results, conclusions and recommendations in a clear manner, following the evaluation criteria defined in the [matrix](#). After receiving feedback in the form of comments on the report, the consultants produced a **final version of the report**. This final version also included an independent executive summary containing key findings and recommendations to facilitate dissemination of the results. The final report was validated by ARC's Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.
103. Prior to submission of the final version of the report, the evaluation team will make a presentation. This will provide an opportunity to present the results and discuss the recommendations collectively, prior to submission of the final version of the report.

8.6 List of documents received

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- . "Results of the analysis of acute food and nutrition insecurity current in March-May 2023 and projected in June-August 2023", March 2023.
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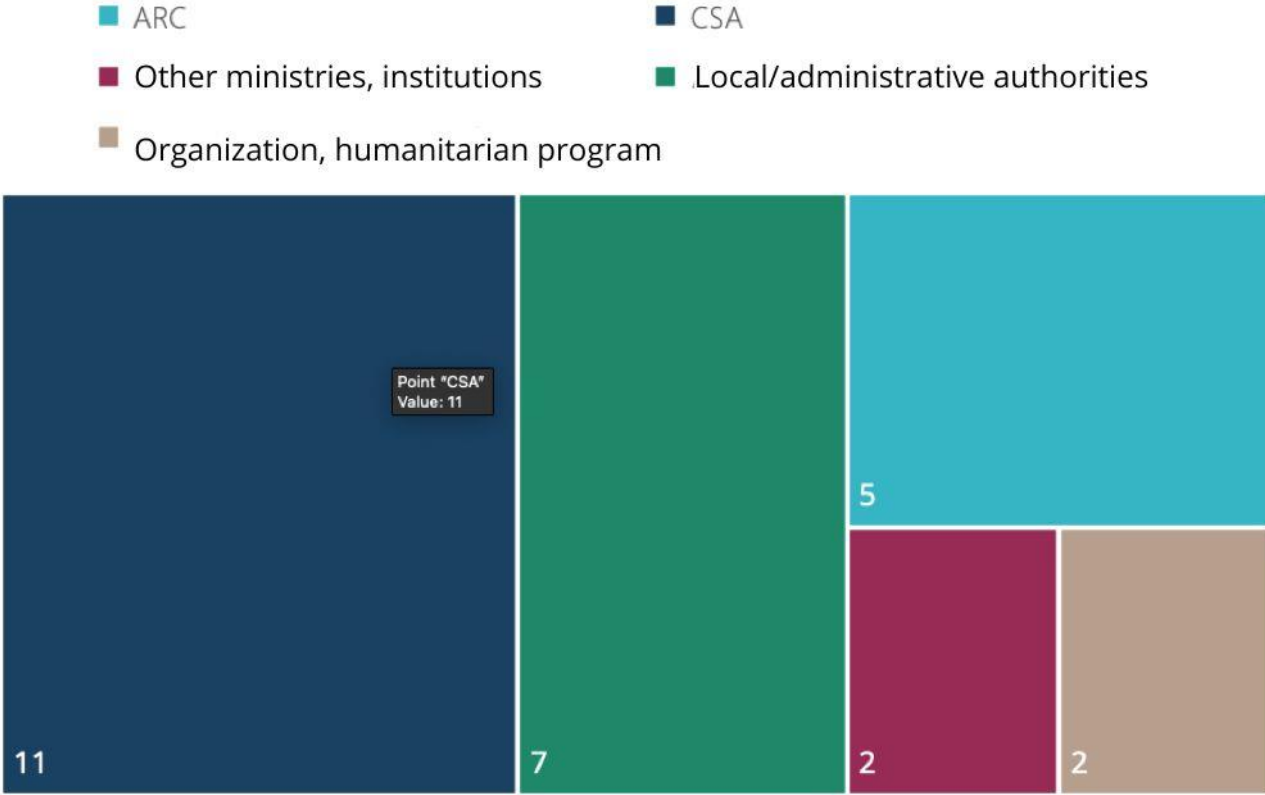
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8.7 Disaggregation of key informants interviewed

Figure 16 - Respondent interviewed by type of organization



8.8 Disaggregation of quantitative household survey respondents

8.8.1 Gender of respondents

Table 16 - Distribution of respondents by gender and moughata

	% - Total [n=351]	% - Djigueni [n=113]	% - Nema [n=133]	% - Timbedra [n=105]	#	Djigueni	Nema	Timbedra
A man	40%	38%	38%	46%	141	43	50	48
A woman	60%	62%	62%	54%	210	70	83	57
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	351	113	133	105

8.8.2 Age of respondents:

Table 17 - Disaggregation of respondents by age group and moughata

	% - Total [n=351]	% - Djigueni [n=113]	% - Nema [n=133]	% - Timbedra [n=105]	#	Djigueni	Nema	Timbedra
0-17 years old	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0	0
18-30 years old	4%	6%	2%	4%	14	7	3	4
31-45 years old	34%	31%	42%	29%	121	35	56	30
46-60 years old	36%	32%	38%	37%	125	36	50	39
61 years and over	26%	31%	18%	30%	91	35	24	32
I don't want to answer	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0	0

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I don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	351	113	133	105

8.8.3 Moughata of origin of respondents

Table 18 - Distribution of respondents by moughata

	% - Total [n=351]	#
Djigueni	32%	113
Néma	38%	133
Timbedra	30%	105
TOTAL	100%	351