

برنامج  
الأغذية  
العالمي



Programme  
Alimentaire  
Mondial

World  
Food  
Programme

Programa  
Mundial  
de Alimentos

**Executive Board  
Third Regular Session**

**Rome, 19 - 22 October 1999**

# REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

**Agenda item 8**

***For information***



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## BASIC ACTIVITY WITHIN A COUNTRY PROGRAMME, APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JANUARY–30 JUNE 1999)— MAURITANIA 6015.00

### Rural Development and Food Security

**Number of beneficiaries** 71,480 workers  
(plus 357,400 dependants)

**Duration of project** Four years

#### Cost (United States dollars)

**Total cost to WFP** 12,134,032

**Total food cost** 2,959,756

**Total cost to Government** 3,573,230

## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documentation and Meetings Clerk (tel.: 066513-2641).



1. The Country Programme for Mauritania, approved by the Executive Board in October 1997, included a “Rural Development and Food Security” activity, to run for four years. The plan of operations was signed by the Regional Director for Africa and the Government on 14 June 1999.
2. In accordance with decision 1999/EB.A/2 of the Executive Board, WFP focuses its development activities on five objectives. This activity addresses objectives 2, 3 and 4 (enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and training; make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets; and mitigate the effects of natural disasters, in areas vulnerable to recurring crises of this kind).
3. With a population of 2.5 million—70 percent of the rural population lives below the poverty line—Mauritania is a developing country with a structural cereal deficit and an average annual per capita income of 480 dollars. Around 85 percent of its cereal needs are imported—about 10 to 15 percent of these imports consist of food aid.
4. The country is vulnerable to drought and desertification. This process is proceeding at a rate of 6 kilometres a year and is progressively diminishing the potential of arable and pasture land, and of rural and urban infrastructure. Socio-economic infrastructure and houses are under constant threat of being buried by sand.
5. The prolonged and repeated periods of drought have caused a severe degradation of the environment, a drop in agricultural output, and a decimation of livestock herds—and consequently, a massive exodus from rural areas to urban centres. This has in turn engendered rural unemployment and worsened the poverty factor.
6. Women are the first to fall victim to drought and poverty. Thus, special priority will be given to the participation of women in the activity’s implementation.
7. Beneficiaries will achieve increased agricultural production, which will improve the community’s access to food. The marketing of surplus production will increase the level of household incomes. Community facilities, upgraded access roads, improved environment, water supply and new employment opportunities are expected to make a significant contribution to improving the living conditions of rural populations.
8. A total of 14,653 tons of wheat, 1,172 of pulses and 586 of vegetable oil will be issued to the workers over a period of four years. For the first year, the physical outputs will comprise the following:
  - a) **Component 1—Small-scale works**: i) increasing and diversifying agricultural production through the construction and rehabilitation of existing structures for retaining and storing water; and ii) strengthening basic infrastructure through the construction of rural dirt roads, wells, classrooms, etc. : 20 dams (1,000 hectares), 40 dykes (1,200 hectares), 56 market garden perimeters (218 hectares), 15 wells (900 linear metres), nine rural dirt roads (180 kilometres) and 10 social infrastructure (500 square metres).
  - b) **Component 2—Protection of the environment**: fixing of dunes, reforestation, regeneration of vegetal cover and exploitation of natural resources: 1,340,000 seedlings will be planted.
  - c) **Component 3—Support for women’s participation in food security and rural development**: imparting functional literacy training and training in techniques appropriate for both preserving vegetables and protecting the environment.

