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**Draft country programme document for Mauritania
(2009-2010)**

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1	2
I. Situation analysis.	2-4	2
II. Past cooperation and lessons learned.	5-6	3
III. Proposed programme.	7-13	4
IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation.	14-15	6
Annex		
Results and resource framework for Mauritania (2009-2010)		7



Introduction

1. This programme covers the period 2009-2010 and its aim is to support the objectives set out in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for this period. The programme is the result of close consultation between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the relevant Mauritanian ministries on the nature and goals of cooperation that will reflect the priorities of the 2006-2010 Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction (SFPR) and the Government's Priority Investment Programme for the period 2008-2010. The consultation mechanisms used in preparing the UNDAF with civil society partners and donors proved helpful in drawing up the present programme.

I. Situation analysis

2. Mauritania has completed a transition to democracy that culminated in the holding of free, open elections for parliamentary and municipal offices in 2006 and for the presidency in 2007. The new Government has resolutely embarked on a reform programme intended to strengthen democratic institutions and transparency. Fostering social cohesion is one of its priorities. In 2007, a programme was launched for the repatriation of the refugees who had been living in Senegal and Mali since the inter-ethnic crisis of 1989. The Government's determination to attack the structural problems that undermine national consensus was evident in the adoption of a law criminalizing enslavement practices. The economic trends show that growth has stabilized at about 4 per cent annually over the last 15 years, and if the oil sector is not factored in, the economy has grown 6.1 per cent in real terms in 2007. Since the beginning of 2006 oil production, which was valued at \$47.5 million in mid-2007, has joined mineral resources as a major source of revenue. Proper management of these resources and the translation of growth into human development achievements remain the principal challenges in the short and medium terms. Mauritania organized a fifth Advisory Group in December 2007, in the course of which its technical and financial partners made commitments to help put into place the 2006-2010 SFPR, allowing the country to mobilize \$2.1 billion, as against the requested amount of \$1.6 billion.

3. Despite such progress, Mauritania is still ranked among the least developed countries. It has already produced two reports on its follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which indicated that five of the 11 targets would not be met in 2015, essentially the ones having to do with the reduction of maternal, infant and child mortality and with the environment. The per capita gross domestic product (GDP) has more than doubled since 2000 (going from \$420 to \$938 in 2007), but Mauritania suffers from unequal access to wealth, as illustrated by the stagnation of its Gini coefficient at around 0.39, coupled with an inflation rate of 7.4 per cent in 2007. In 2000, 46.7 per cent of the 2,975,000 Mauritania still lived in poverty (59 per cent of them in rural areas), despite the institution of an SFPR using the MDGs as programmatic goals and follow-up indicators, and a national goal of reducing poverty to 25 per cent in 2015. These figures have to be correlated with the worsening unemployment between 2000 and 2004, which went from 29 per cent to 32.5 per cent, and particularly affected women, who accounted for two thirds of the unemployed. Despite the lack of recent, specific data, it is estimated that about 75 per cent of the active labour force is in the informal sector, which is

extremely precarious and vulnerable. This situation is not expected to improve in the short run because of the way in which food prices have shot up globally, imposing serious constraints on a country that meets over 70 per cent of its food needs through imports. The household food security survey done by the World Food Programme in 2008 shows that 29 per cent of households in rural areas and 11 per cent in urban areas do not have a secure supply of food. To deal with this global shock, the Government has since March been operating a special programme of action, aimed at protecting the vulnerable segments of the population through direct assistance and structural changes.

4. These outside pressures are going to weigh heavily on the already limited capacity of the Mauritanian authorities to manage the transition, because the domestic pressures will grow commensurately, keeping pace with the rising expectations of the population for well-being and access to basic services. Aware of the risk, the Mauritanian Government has made more of an effort to: (i) increase growth and investment in order to bring the poverty rate down to 35 per cent by 2010; (ii) build the capacities of public institutions, which are often undermined by tribal and community loyalties; (iii) strengthen national consultation and cohesion; (iv) establish the conditions for sustainable economic and social development, answering to a common vision and taking a long-term perspective (until 2030). Because the situation in a number of areas has not been adequately analysed, one of the national priorities is to expand the statistical system as an underpinning for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of public policies, from the standpoint of the best response to the challenges and the preparation of the next SFPR.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

5. In financial terms, the preceding country programme was a turning point in UNDP cooperation with Mauritania, involving cash payments more than twice as high as those of previous years. The main results achieved were as follows: (i) donors provided support for the electoral process through a managed basket fund totalling \$11 million, which contributed directly to improving the participation of women, who now represent 17 per cent of the members of Parliament; (ii) the National Human Rights Commission was established in 2006; (iii) a plan of action was drawn up to implement the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and technical support was provided for the preparations for the 2007 Advisory Group. As regards improved access to resources, microfinance strategies were adopted and micro- and small-scale enterprises were promoted, regulatory changes were made, and innovative approaches such as labour-intensive poverty alleviation programmes were introduced to encourage the use of local resources and generate employment. As regards the management of natural resources and the protection of the environment, the National Plan of Action for the Environment was drawn up and adopted in 2007, the first strategic document of its kind, specifying the priorities, providing a basis for mobilizing partners and donor financing, and making those involved, especially the non-governmental organizations, more able to manage and protect natural resources.

6. Generally, UNDP has positioned itself as a reliable partner for the Government and civil society in respect of the whole range of sensitive issues, including the resolution of humanitarian problems and the legacy of slavery, issues for which the authorities still rely on the mobilization capacity of UNDP. Some difficulties have

come up, however, as concerns: (i) the unwieldiness of the machinery for programme coordination and monitoring; (ii) the relatively scattered nature of the activities, making it difficult to measure their impact properly; (iii) the failure of the existing system to make much of an improvement in the capacities of the government departments receiving support. Accordingly, new mechanisms will be put in place when this programme begins, and it will also try to focus more on developing the capacities needed for the preparation of the next SFPR.

III. Proposed programme

7. This country programme covers two years, in order to synchronize the programming cycle with Mauritania's next SFPR cycle (2011-2015). The programme is grounded in the national priorities set out in the current SFPR (2006-2010) and detailed in the sectoral plans of action and the Priority Investment Programme (2008-2010). The principal programme strategies are: (i) bringing strategic and technical expertise to bear on the establishment of programmes and policies; (ii) establishing more systematic South-South cooperation; (iii) supporting approaches with direct impact in the field and which are likely to inform national policies; (iv) building national capacities. The proposed programme will contribute directly to the UNDAF for the period 2009-2010. Three main focus areas for cooperation under the UNDAF have been chosen, and UNDP will contribute in a targeted way as follows:

Focus Area: The creation of a favourable environment¹

8. *The national strategy to modernize the public administration is supported and put in place and the oversight institutions are provided with the necessary tools and know-how.* In connection with support in the area of governance, UNDP will help to: (i) devise a national strategy to build the capacity to combat poverty, including a statistical component, in preparation for the next SFPR; (ii) improve performance and streamline services to make them easily accessible, at the local level as well; (iii) strengthen the capacities of the Parliament.

9. *National development policies and crisis prevention strategies applicable to conflicts and natural disasters help to protect and promote human rights, particularly those of vulnerable groups.* In connection with support for crisis-prevention and recovery, UNDP will help to: (i) define an SFPR based on a human-rights-driven approach that involves all the stakeholders; (ii) establish institutional crisis-prevention and natural-disaster-management machinery; (iii) strengthen the judicial and security apparatus in order to reinforce the rule of law.

10. *National policies are effective in protecting the environment and natural resources.* UNDP will provide support for energy and the environment by: (i) mainstreaming the environmental protection imperative in sectoral plans and strategies; (ii) establishing an appropriate institutional framework for integrated management of water resources and sanitation; (iii) setting up pilot projects for the restoration and preservation of natural resources; (iv) establishing institutional

¹ UNDAF outcome: By 2010, good governance, democracy and the rule of law are advanced and reinforced with a view to sustainable social and economic development.

arrangements for the promotion of clean development mechanisms and access to the carbon market.

Focus Area 2: The development of human potential²

11. *The national development policies and strategies and the allocation of resources foster sustainable growth and reflect proper targeting of the most vulnerable groups and areas.* In connection with support for poverty reduction, UNDP will help to: (i) formulate specific programmes to reduce poverty and to narrow social and regional disparities. This will involve using disaggregated quantitative and qualitative statistics, conducting surveys and quantitative and qualitative analyses, and producing data broken down by gender, geographical area and social stratum, all of which give a better grasp of the variables of poverty and, beyond that, of vulnerability, and allow the target groups to be identified. The ultimate aim is to create a national body responsible for monitoring poverty and employment issues. UNDP will also help set up programmes to promote employment, including self-employment, primarily in tourism and crafts. Subsequent activities will centre on young people and women, and on the insertion or reinsertion into society of specific groups like repatriated Mauritians or the people of Adwaba; (ii) establish institutional mechanisms to coordinate official development assistance (ODA) in the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and to ensure that it is used well; (iii) strengthen regulations and institutions that will encourage private investment in the kind of economic growth that helps the poor.

Focus Area 3: Access to basic services³

12. UNDP is the main beneficiary, in funding rounds 2 (phase 2) and 6 of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, of the grants for action against tuberculosis and malaria. The programme timetable envisages that the main beneficiary will hand over its functions to a national body to be designated by the Joint Negotiation Committee. With this in mind, the plan is as follows: in order to provide the people with access to services for the prevention and treatment of highly endemic diseases, the focus will be on strengthening national capacities to procure, monitor, evaluate and coordinate services for the prevention and cure of tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS. UNDP will also support preventive action within the framework of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

13. In connection again with support for energy and the environment, UNDP will help to provide access to energy, clean water and appropriate hygiene and sanitation. It will aim to improve local management and protection of resources and, beyond that, to promote local development through projects generating regular sources of income for the people living in the target *wilayas*, by installing small rural hydraulic systems and mini water-supply pipelines, setting up multi-functional platforms, and making purified water available to 400 market-garden cooperatives for irrigation.

² UNDAF outcome: By 2010, the access of the poor and of vulnerable groups to employment and decent earnings are improved as a result of inclusive, non-discriminatory growth.

³ UNDAF outcome: By 2010, the rights of the vulnerable segments of the population, particularly women, young people and children, to survival, development and protection are better ensured through regular and equitable access to all basic social services.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

14. The preferred way of implementing the country programme activities will be national execution, and UNDP can, at the request of the Government, provide services in support of national execution. 2009 will be the year in which the United Nations system introduces the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), together with joint administration by sister agencies of programme follow-up and monitoring and capacity-building of the partners concerned. The machinery for monitoring and evaluating the country programme will be anchored in the UNDAF inter-institutional Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, and the aim will be to support the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance in its task of “assessing the economic and social impact of government policies”.⁴ At the same time, a programme committee — a UNDP oversight body — will give its judgment of the results, problems and risks related to programme implementation.

15. The regular budget funds allocated for the period 2009-2010 are estimated at \$4.4 million. In close cooperation with the national partners, UNDP will try to mobilize an additional amount of about \$20 million to support programme implementation, including trust fund allocations and bilateral donor contributions, especially the allocations from the MDG Achievement Fund financed by Spain. It will make it a priority to raise funds jointly with other organizations of the United Nations system, especially in the areas of employment (the International Labour Organization (ILO)), the environment (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)), gender mainstreaming (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)), statistical support (United Nations system) and crisis prevention (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). Priority will also be given to securing bilateral contributions to common funds for particular projects having to do with national cohesion. Furthermore, the partnership with the World Bank will continue, particularly for projects related to good management and the national capacity-building strategy.

⁴ Decree No. 091-2007/PM of 17 June 2007 establishing the functions of the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance and the organization of the central administration of the department.

Annex

Results and resource framework for Mauritania (2009-2010)

National goal: Strengthening governance and building capacities

Intended UNDAF Outcome 1: By 2010, good governance, democracy and the rule of law are advanced and reinforced with a view to sustainable social and economic development

Programme component	Country programme outcomes, including outcome indicators, baselines and targets	Country programme outputs	Output indicators, baselines and targets ¹	Role of partners ²	Indicative resources, by Multi-year Funding Framework (MYFF) goal
Strengthening of responsible, participatory governing institutions	The national strategy to modernize the public administration is put in place and the oversight institutions are provided with the necessary tools and know-how	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The national strategy is formulated, including a plan to expand the statistical system 2. The projects to improve performance and streamline services are put into effect and the mechanisms tested, at the local level as well 3. Parliament is better able to exercise its legislative function and to monitor the executive branch 	<p>Indicator: Percentage of strategy implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Policy Letter on capacity-building (2006)</p> <p>Rate of user satisfaction with public services: 35% (2005) with a target of 50% (2010)</p> <p>Target: 15% reduction in the time that procedures take in the five targeted services (2010)</p>	Ministries, Parliament, municipalities, civil society, National Statistical Office, National Statistical Council, World Bank, <u>GTZ</u> , French government cooperation	<p>Regular \$558 000</p> <p>Other \$2 200 000</p>
Capacity-building for conflict-prevention and disaster-risk management	National development and crisis-prevention policies help to protect and promote the human rights of vulnerable groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction reflects a human-rights-based approach 2. The institutional crisis-prevention and natural-disaster-management machinery is in place 	<p>Indicator: Coordinated programme activities and the social charter are defined and implemented</p> <p>– Number of consultations with the various stakeholders</p>	Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Justice, other ministries, National Human Rights Commission, World Bank, municipalities, civil society, UNODC, French government cooperation	<p>Regular \$200 000</p> <p>Other \$3 500 000</p>

		3. The judicial and security apparatus is better able to reinforce the rule of law	<p>Baseline: 2005 Plan</p> <p>– Number of trained operators</p> <p>Target: National plan of action approved and implemented and national commission set up. (Office of the Prime Minister)</p>		
Mainstreaming environmental and energy issues	National policies effectively help to protect the environment and natural resources	<p>1. An operational framework for monitoring and evaluating the impact of public policies on the environment is in place and informs the determination of sectoral policies</p> <p>2. A strategic approach to integrated water resources management and the corresponding priority short-term plan of action have been formulated and adopted by the National Water Council and the Standing Committee of the National Water Council</p> <p>3. Pilot programmes for the restoration and conservation of natural resources are designed and implemented</p>	<p>Indicator: Number of guidelines applied in the petrol and energy sector and in integrated water resource management</p> <p>– Number of regulations adopted</p> <p>– Number of reports on the condition of the environment elaborated and disseminated: target is one report (2009)</p> <p>Baseline: Absence of regulations on the condition of the environment</p> <p>Target: 10 clean development mechanism projects formulated and submitted for funding (2010)</p>	<p>Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Energy, Water Resources, Information Technology and Communication, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Ministry of Decentralization and Land Development, Ministry of Planning, Parliament, civil society, Global Environment Facility, UNEP, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Spanish government cooperation, European Union, African Development Bank</p>	<p>Regular \$500 000</p> <p>Other \$4 300 000</p>

4. Institutional arrangements have been established for the promotion of clean development mechanisms and access to the carbon market

¹ The new targets will be reviewed during the first half of 2009 on the basis of studies done to determine the baselines.

² The list should focus on results-oriented strategic partnerships.

Intended UNDAF Outcome 2: By 2010, the access of poor and vulnerable groups to employment and decent earnings are improved as a result of inclusive and non-discriminatory growth

Programme component	Country programme outcomes, including outcome indicators, baselines and targets	Country programme outputs	Output indicators, baselines and targets	Role of partners	Indicative resources, by MYFF goal
Promotion of inclusive growth, equality of the sexes and achievement of the MDGs	The national development policies and strategies and the allocation of resources foster sustainable growth and reflect proper targeting of the most vulnerable groups and areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Specific programmes to reduce poverty and disparities are formulated on the basis of quantitative and qualitative disaggregated data Institutional mechanisms are in place to coordinate ODA effectively Regulations and institutions are in place that will encourage private investment in the kind of economic growth that helps the poor 	<p>Indicator: Available poverty maps (2009)</p> <p>Baseline: Twenty microfinance institutions developed in targeted regions (2010)</p> <p>Numerous innovative new markets for development of revenue-generating activities, the target being 500 microprojects</p> <p>Percentage of implementation of UNDP plan of action</p>	<p>Ministry of Employment, Integration and Vocational Training, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, Ministry of Decentralization and Land Development, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Tourism and Crafts, National Statistical Office, National Statistical Council, municipalities</p> <p>UNCTAD, ILO, UNESCO, WTO</p> <p>French Development Agency, World Bank, French government cooperation</p>	<p>Regular \$360 000</p> <p>Other \$5 000 000</p>

Intended UNDAF Outcome 3: By 2010, the rights of the vulnerable segments of the population, particularly women, young people and children, to survival, development and protection are better ensured through regular and equitable access to all basic social services

Programme component	Country programme outcomes, including outcome indicators, baselines and targets	Country programme outputs	Output indicators, baselines and targets	Role of partners	Indicative resources, by MYFF goal
Implementation of programmes under the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is accelerated	The population has access to services for the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS	National capacity to procure, monitor, evaluate and coordinate services for the prevention and cure of tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS is strengthened	<p>Indicator: Transfer of functions from main beneficiary to national body by the end of 2009</p> <p>Baseline: National capacities are strengthened</p> <p>Target: Percentage of operators trained</p> <p>– Number of programme staff made available</p>	Ministry of Health, National Anti-Tuberculosis Programme, National Anti-Malaria Programme, Mauritanian Chamber of Commerce, Central Drug Purchasing Agency, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, United Nations system	<p>Regular</p> <p>Other \$3 841 000</p>
Access of the poor to environmental and energy services is expanded	Vulnerable communities have access to basic sanitary and environmental services	Pilot programmes are devised and implemented	<p>Indicator: Two programmes formulated and in the process of being implemented (2009)</p> <p>Baseline: 2007 multiple indicator cluster survey</p> <p>Target: Percentage of households using latrines and having access to drinking water and sanitation</p> <p>– More rural households using sustainable energy sources</p>		<p>Regular \$100 000</p> <p>Other \$1 300 000</p>