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Mauritania

Mauritania: Scenario Comparisons

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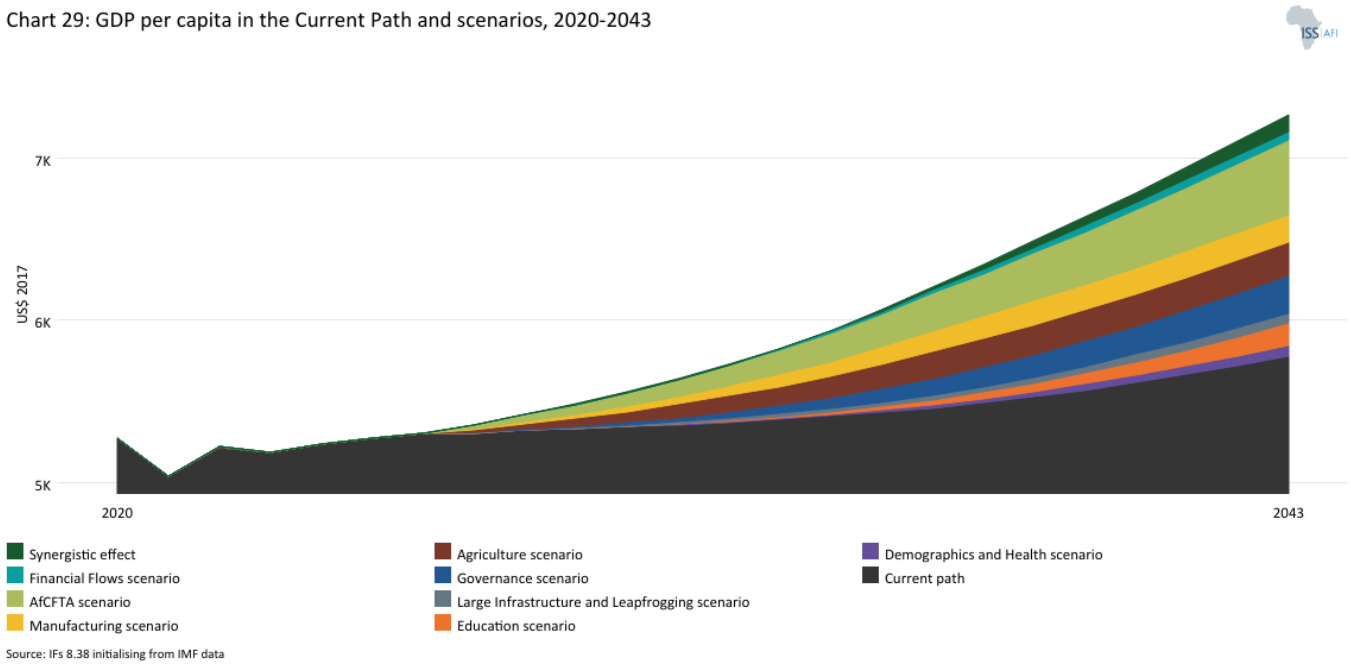
Chart 29: GDP per capita in the Current Path and scenarios, 2020-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from IMF data

Chart 29 presents GDP per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) in the Current Path and each of the eight sectoral scenarios. The data is from 2020 with a forecast to 2043.

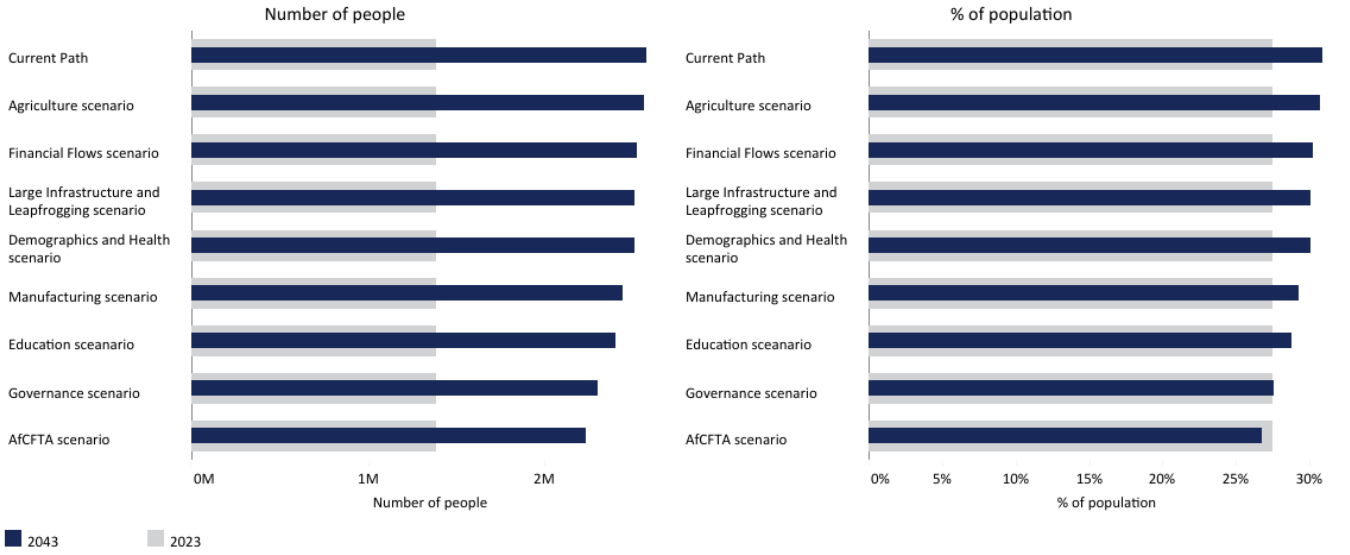
All sectoral scenarios point to an improvement in Mauritania's GDP per capita. The scenarios with the greatest impact by 2043 will be the AfCFTA, followed by the Governance, Agriculture and Manufacturing scenarios. GDP per capita (PPP) in the AfCFTA scenario will rise to US$6 239, representing a 8.0% increase above the Current Path for that year. Thus, the AfCFTA scenario can raise GDP per capita in Mauritania by an additional US$464.3. The full implementation of the AfCFTA agreement therefore represents a major economic opportunity for the country, notably in terms of trade liberalisation in response to increased demand, and also in terms of potential diversification of the workforce and technological imports - which, in the long term, would facilitate Mauritania's positioning in the regional value chain for the country's main goods and services. Furthermore, trade integration with other African countries and openness are crucial to Mauritania’s economic future to take advantage of its comparative advantages.

In the Governance scenario, Mauritania’s GDP per capita will increase to US$6 009 by 2043, which represents an increase of US$233.9 compared to the Current Path in the same year. Good governance and business facilities can undoubtedly inspire investor confidence in the economy and attract more FDI into Mauritania, which can lead to growth. Likewise, good governance in the form of adherence to the rule of law, reduced corruption, good property right protection, improved transparency, business freedom and accountability can lead to more rapid economic growth. In addition, stronger governance creates a stable environment that enables human capital development and economic diversification.

In the Agriculture scenario, Mauritania’s GDP per capita will increase to US$5 953 by 2043, which represents an increase of US$178 compared to the Current Path in the same year. The impact of the Agriculture scenario demonstrates the importance of the agricultural sector to economic growth. This indicates that in order to achieve its development potential, Mauritania should invest in increasing efficiency in the agricultural sector to reduce reliance on food imports. This would free up capital that is spent on importing food for investment across the economy and increase overall economic efficiency, as well as buttress the Mauritanian economy and food supply against the volatile global commodities market.

In the Manufacturing scenario, GDP per capita will increase to US$5 952 by 2043, representing an increase of US$177 or 3.1% more than in the Current Path. This figure confirms the hypothesis that the manufacturing sector can play a key role in transforming productivity structures across the economy. Therefore, it is no surprise that a strong manufacturing sector leads to significant improvements in GDP per capita.

Chart 30: Poverty in the Current Path and scenarios, 2023-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from UNPD population prospects estimate, WDI and PovcalNet data

Chart 30 presents poverty in the Current Path and for each scenario, from 2020 to 2043. The user can select the number of extremely poor people or the percentage of the population.

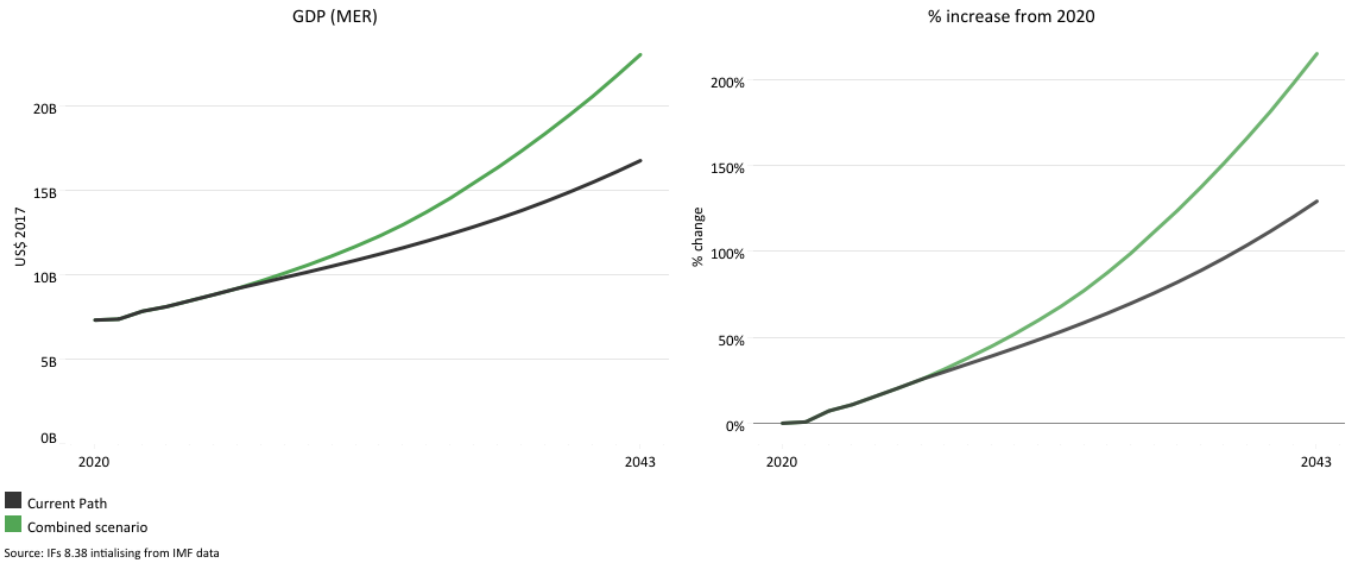
Poverty reduction is a key challenge for Mauritania. Apart from the Financial Flows scenario, all other sectoral scenarios lead to a reduction in poverty. The AfCFTA, followed by the Governance and Education scenarios are most effective at a poverty line of US$3.65 reduction by 2043.

The AfCFTA scenario has the largest potential to reduce extreme poverty in Mauritania. The number of poor living with less than US$3.65 per day will decline to 2.2 million (equivalent to 26.8% of the population), compared to the Current Path of 30.9% by 2043. The liberalisation of the Mauritanian economy through financial flows, international trade and migration should enable a significant knowledge and technology transfer necessary for a better diversification of the economy and more qualified jobs. In this way, the country will reduce extreme poverty.

The Governance scenario has the second-largest impact on poverty reduction in Mauritania. In this scenario, 2.3 million people will live below the extreme poverty line of US$3.65 by 2043, constituting 27.6% of the population. This will be 3.3 percentage points lower than the Current Path and equivalent to a reduction of about 138 600 people living in extreme poverty. The reduction here is likely caused by higher government efficiency leading to better service provision and higher economic activity.

Finally, in the Education scenario, 2.4 million people will live below the extreme poverty line of US$3.65 by 2043, constituting 28.9% of the population. This will be two percentage points lower than in the Current Path and equivalent to a reduction of about 166 000 people living in extreme poverty. Mauritania should improve the quality of its human capital by reforming the quality and quantity of its education system, and in return, it will have a more competitive and productive workforce. As a result, the workforce could enjoy higher wages or incomes as a result of their productive performance, which would enable them to improve their living conditions in terms of poverty reduction.

Chart 31: GDP (MER) in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2020-2043



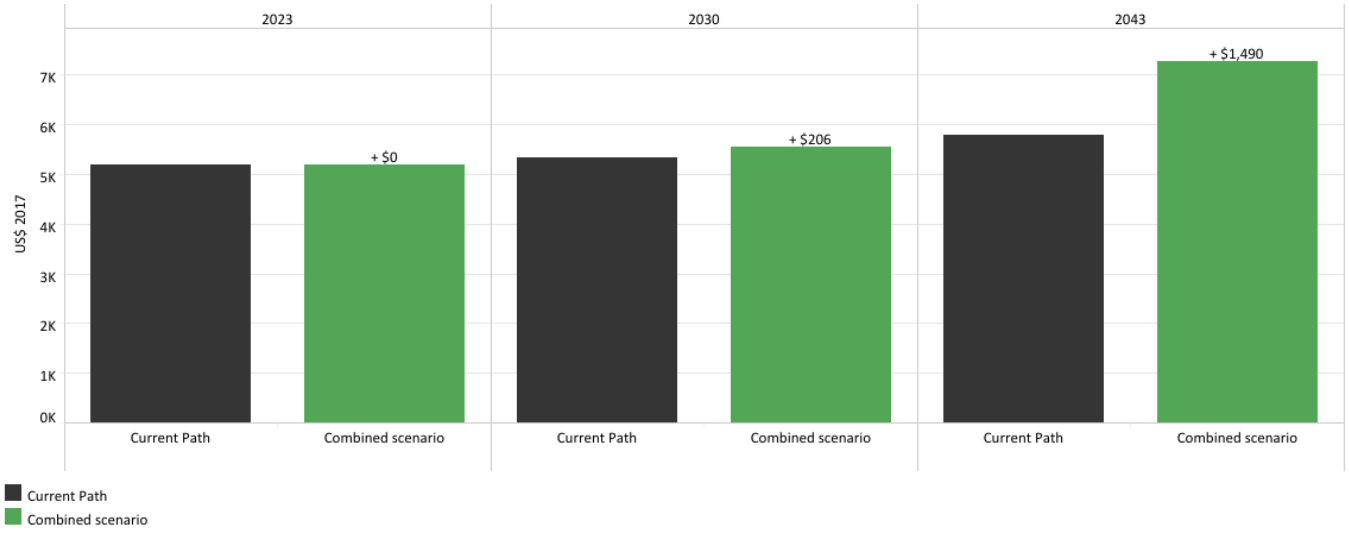
Source: IFs 8.38 intialising from IMF data

Chart 31 presents GDP in the Current Path and in the Combined scenario from 2020 to 2043. The data is in US$ 2017 and at market exchange rates (MER).

The Combined scenario combines all eight sectoral scenarios: Governance, Demographics and Health, Education, Large Infrastructure and Leapfrogging, Agriculture, Manufacturing, AfCFTA and Financial Flows.

By 2043, the GDP of Mauritania will reach US$23.0 billion in the Combined scenario, exceeding the Current Path (US$16.8 billion), meaning that the Combined scenario will increase the size of the economy by an additional US$6.2 billion by 2043(an increase of 37.0% compared to the Current Path). Indeed, in the Combined scenario, the economy is expected to grow at an average of 5.7% compared to the 4.1% in the Current Path. This indicates that an integrated development push across development sectors is the best way to achieve sustained inclusive growth and development in Mauritania.

Chart 32: GDP per capita (PPP) in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2023-2043

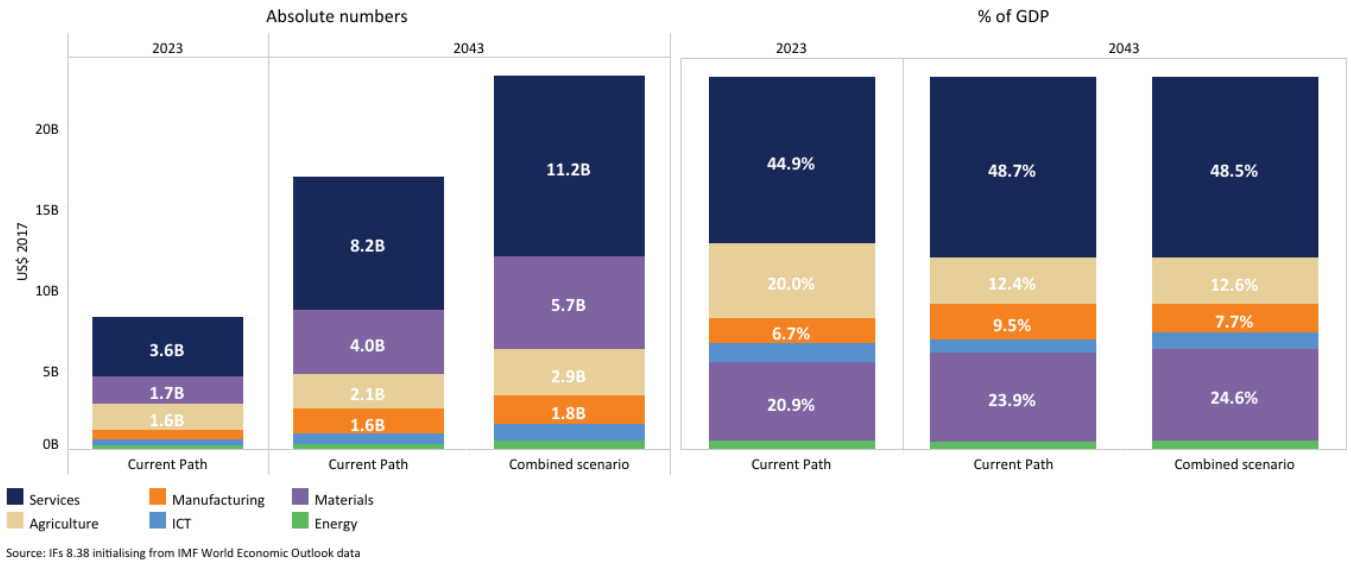


Source: IFs 8.38 intialising from IMF data

Chart 32 presents GDP per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) in the Current Path and the Combined scenario. The data is from 2023 with a forecast to 2043.

In the Combined scenario, the GDP per capita for Mauritania will increase to US$7 265 by 2043. This will be US$1 490 higher than the US$5 775 in the Current Path, meaning that the materialisation of the Combined scenario could improve the living standard of the Mauritanian population. The results reflect the importance of a multisectoral program of interventions to improve average incomes in the country.

Chart 33: Value added by sector in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2023-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from IMF World Economic Outlook data

Chart 33 presents the value-add by sector in the Current Path and in the Combined scenario, for 2023 and 2043. The data is in US$ 2017 and as a percentage of GDP.

Our modelling provides forecasts in six economic sectors namely agriculture, energy, materials (including mining), manufactures, services and ICTech.

By 2043, in the Combined scenario, the services sector will be the largest contributor to GDP at 48.5% (valued at US$11.2 billion). This will be slightly below the Current Path of 48.7% (valued at US$8.2 billion). The materials sector will be the second-largest contributor to GDP in the Combined scenario by 2043 with a share of 24.6% (equivalent to US$5.7 billion).higher than the Current Path of 23.9% (US$4.0 billion).

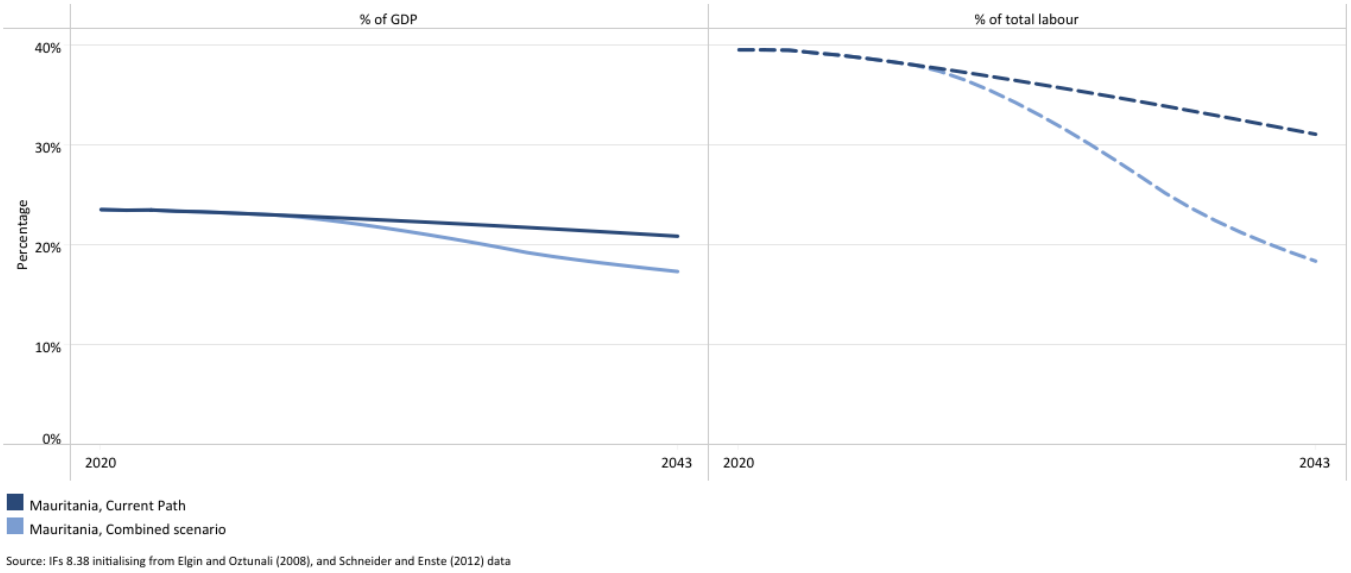
In the Combined scenario, the agriculture sector will stand at 12.6% of GDP (equivalent to US$2.9 billion) in 2043, below the Current Path of 12.4% (US$2.1 billion). The share of the ICT sector will increase to 4.2% (valued at US$975 million) in the Combined scenario compared to 3.5% (valued at US$594.3 million) in the Current Path by 2043.

In the Combined scenario, the share of energy sector will constitute 2.4% of GDP in 2043, i.e. US$536.0 million compared to US$329.3 million in the Current Path. By 2043, the share of the manufacturing sector will decline to 8% of GDP (equivalent to US$1.8 billion), lower than the Current Path of 9.3% (US$1.6 billion).

These results demonstrate the importance of the Combined scenario for further diversification of the Mauritania

economy. Even though the services sector remains the country's key sector, with the Combined scenarios, the economic dynamic tends to move forward with the other sectors of the Mauritania economy as well.

Chart 34: Informal sector in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2020-2043

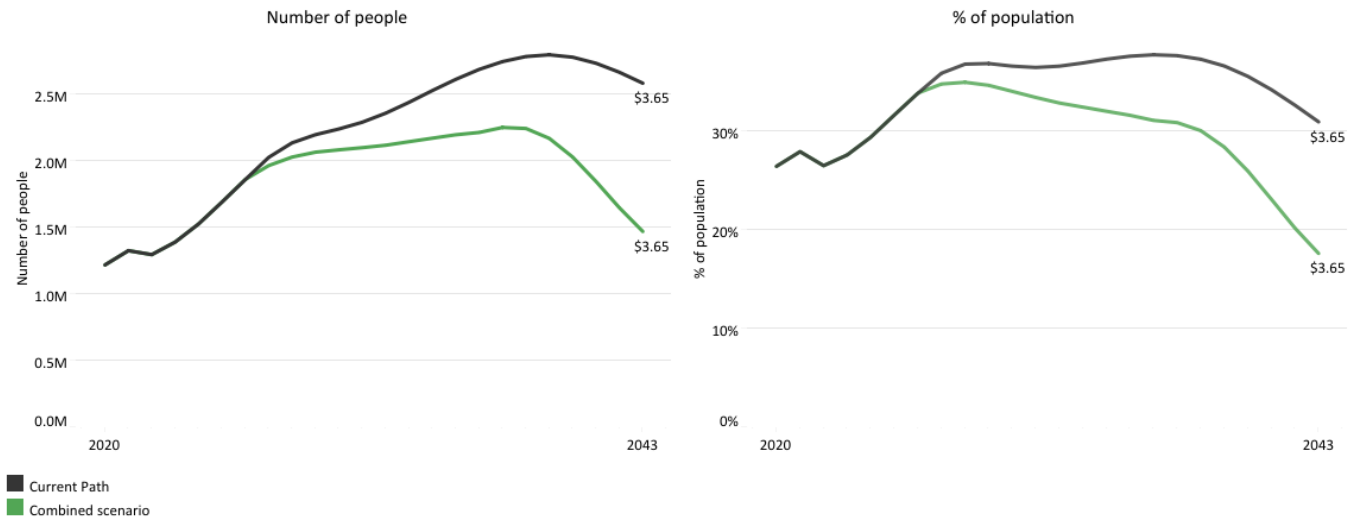


Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from Elgin and Oztunali (2008), and Schneider and Enste (2012) data

Chart 34 presents the size of the informal sector in the Current Path and in the Combined scenario, from 2020 to 2043.

By 2043, the size of the informal sector in Mauritania will decline to 17.3% of GDP in the Combined scenario, lower than the 21.0% in the Current Path. Likewise, by 2043, informal labour will constitute 18.3% of total labour in the Combined scenario instead of 31.0% in the Current Path, which represents a substantial improvement. Increased formal job creation in sectors like manufacturing and services due to governance and economic liberalisation would help draw workers into stable, regulated employment.

Chart 35: Poverty in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2020-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 intialising from IMF data

Chart 35 presents poverty in the Current Path and the Combined scenario, for 2023 and 2043.

By utilising the lower-middle-income poverty line of US$3.65 a day (in 2017 PPP), in the Combined scenario, both the number and the proportion of poor people in Mauritania will significantly decline. Extreme poverty will be reduced such that by 2043, only about 680200 people in the country (17.9% of the population) will be living in extreme poverty. Compared to the Current Path, almost 494000 million Mauritanian people could be lifted out of poverty by 2043 in this scenario.

The Gini coefficient is the standard measure of the level of inequality in a country where a higher score depicts greater inequality while a lower score shows a more equal country. High levels of income inequality have many negative effects including a breakdown of social structure and cohesion, which can result in instability. In 2023, Mauritania's Gini coefficient was 0.32 compared to the average of 0.38 of LMICs in Africa. This makes Mauritania have a moderate level of inequality compared to LMICs in Africa.

In the Combined scenario, inequality will further reduce below the Current Path with a Gini coefficient of 0.29 by 2043 compared to 0.30 in the Current Path. This shows that an integrated development push across all the development sectors will lead to inclusive growth and development in Mauritania.

Chart 36: Life expectancy in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2020-2043

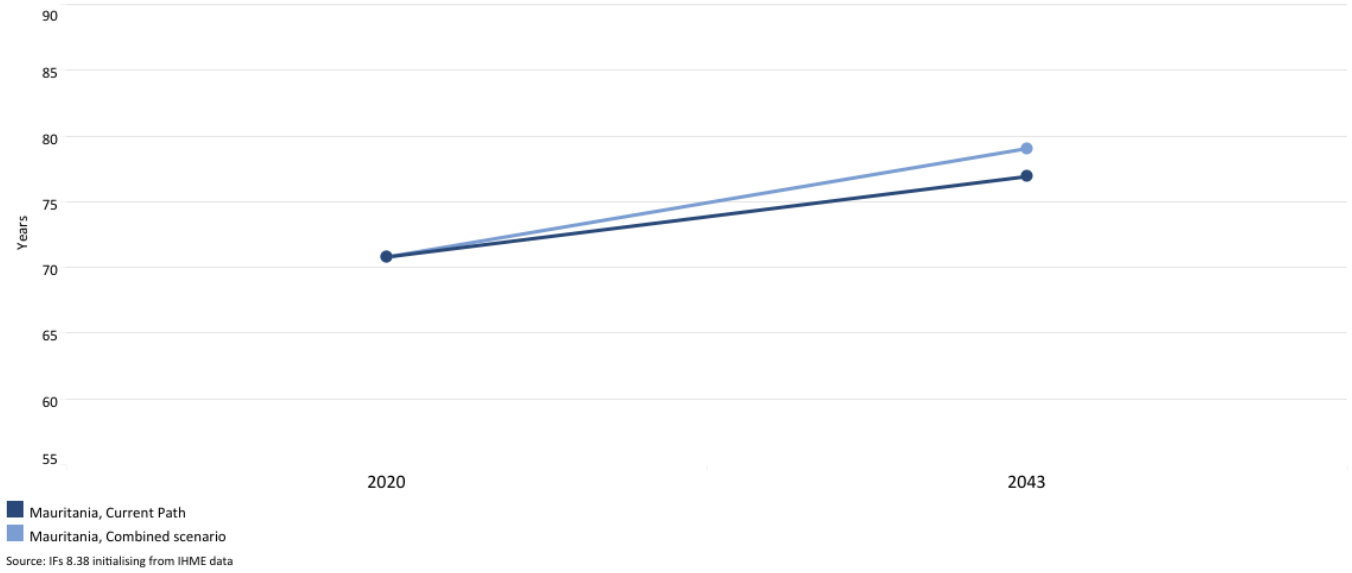
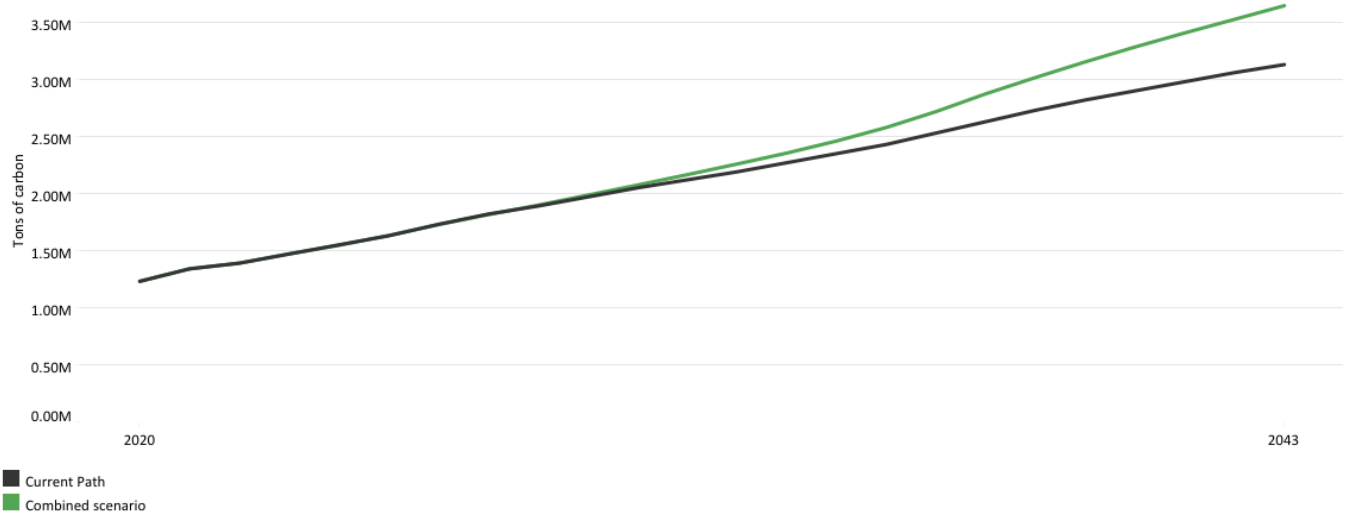


Chart 36 compares life expectancy in the Current Path with the Combined scenario from 2020 to 2043.

In the Combined scenario, life expectancy will rise to 79.1 years by 2043, 2.2 years more than the country's current trajectory for the same year. In both the Combined scenario and the Current Path, women are likely to live around 1.5 years longer than men by 2043. This situation calls for a strong commitment on the part of the Mauritanian government to improve healthcare, infrastructure, access to sanitation and food security.

Chart 37: Carbon emissions in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2020-2043
Million tons of carbon (note, not CO2 equivalent)



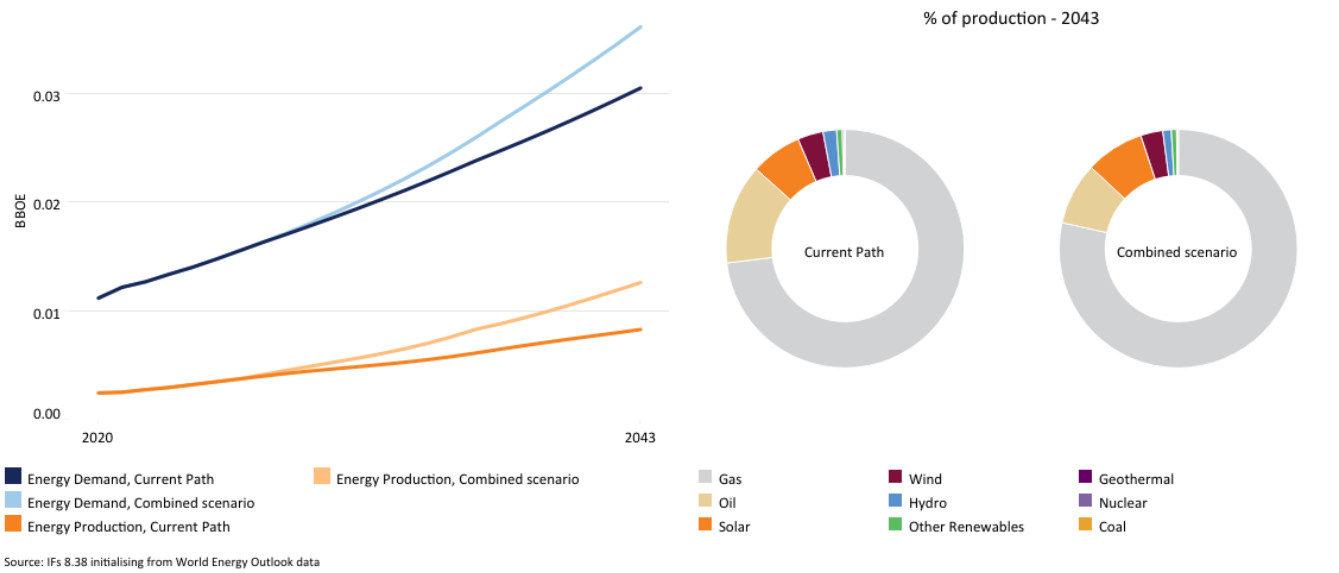
Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center data

Chart 37 compares carbon emissions in the Current Path with the Combined scenario from 2020 to 2043. Note that the data is in million tons of carbon, not CO_2 equivalent.

Like in most African countries, Mauritania's emissions of carbon are very low. In 2023, CO_2 emissions were 1.5 million tons, placing Mauritania in the group of low-polluting countries globally. CO_2 emissions in the country are primarily driven by the energy sector, particularly electricity and heat production. The burning of fossil fuels, including coal, oil and natural gas in power plants is a major source. Additionally, emissions from livestock, agriculture and other land use also significantly contribute to the total. In the Current Path, carbon emissions from fossil fuels will increase to 3.1 million tons by 2043.

In the Combined scenario, Mauritania's total carbon emissions will rise to 3.6 million tons, below the average of 451.4 million tons for LMICs in Africa. This figure shows that the Combined scenario in Mauritania can be achieved. The government should accelerate public initiatives in environmental preservation through the materialisation of the use of renewable energy sources.

Chart 38: Energy demand and production by type in the Current Path and Combined scenario, 2020-2043



Source: IFs 8.38 initialising from World Energy Outlook data

Chart 38 compares energy demand and production in the Current Path with the Combined scenario from 2020 to 2043. Production is done in nine types, namely oil, gas, coal, hydro, nuclear, solar, wind, geothermal and other renewables. The data is converted into billion barrels of oil equivalent (BBOE) to allow for comparisons. Note that energy production could be for domestic use or for export.

In 2023, the total energy produced in Mauritania was equivalent to 2.9 million BOE. In the same period, total energy demand was 13.3 million BOE, leading to a 10.4 million deficit. In the Current Path, total energy demand will further outgrow production so that the demand for energy will be equivalent to 30.5 million BOE, and the total energy production will reach 7.2 million BOE by 2043. The main sources of energy in Mauritania are gas (1.9 million BOE) and oil (0.7 million BOE).

In the Combined scenario, the total energy production in Mauritania will be equivalent to 12.6 million BOE, an increase of more than 4.3 above the Current Path. Over the same period, total energy demand will be 36.4 million BOE. Gas production is expected to increase by 9.9 million BOE in the Combined scenario. Solar energy production should reach 1.0 million B0E, compared to 0.6 million BOE in the Current Path. oil production remains unchanged compared to the Current Path.

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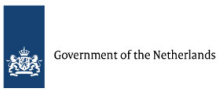

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Dr Pierre Christian Tsopmo is a Research Consultant at AFI. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Yaounde II-Soa. He is an Development Economist with keen interest in political economy analysis, African governance and politics of development, natural resource management, social cohesion, climate vulnerability, climate mitigation, climate governance, sectorial forecasting analysis, FDI, growth, institutions compliance, state fragility, illicit flows and tax literacy, among others.

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