WFP Rwanda
Country Brief
October 2020

Operational Context
A small, landlocked country with a population of 12.1 million people growing at 2.4 percent annually, Rwanda is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. Since the 1994 genocide, the Government of Rwanda has recorded significant achievements in poverty reduction, gender equality, environmental sustainability, education and public health, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

However, 38.2 percent of the population continues to live below the poverty line and almost one fifth is food insecure. Levels of stunting among young children remain very high (38 percent according to the 2019 Global Nutrition Report for Rwanda). Agriculture is the backbone of the economy, with 89 percent of rural households practising small-scale farming. Poor rainfall, drought, floods and the limited amount of land that is suitable for agriculture, alongside pests and diseases, continue to pose risks to food security.

Moreover, according to UNHCR data, as of October 2020 Rwanda hosts 147,099 refugees, primarily from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. Many refugees have been in the country for decades and rely almost completely on WFP food assistance. The “forgotten crises” in neighbouring countries, where protracted volatility is exacerbated by political instability, may lead to the further arrival of refugees in the coming years.

Operational Updates
Refugee Assistance: WFP reached 134,227 people with food assistance in October, including 75,172 Congolese refugees, 59,039 Burundian refugees, and 16 returnees. School feeding activities planned to resume in November following the Government’s decisions to re-open higher primary and secondary schools.

The voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees continued in October. Since 27 August 2020, 3,729 individuals from 1,269 households have repatriated. According to UNHCR planning figures, an estimated 8,000 Burundian refugees are expected to repatriate by the end of 2020, and an additional 40,000 by the end of 2021. Refugees repatriating received hot meals while in camp transit centers with WFP food commodities, and a packed lunch from UNHCR for their journey. Starting in November 2020, WFP will provide high energy biscuits to repatriating refugees for their journey back to Burundi.

Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF): To ensure schools’ readiness once schools reopen in November 2020, WFP continued to work with partners to finalize the construction of new permanent handwashing stations in 28 schools as well as kitchens and stoves in 11 schools. WFP conducted regular field visits to 107 schools to assess school’s readiness for reopening within the context of COVID-19. The assessment focused on the infrastructure, handwashing stations, food storage capacities and condition of school kitchens.

Nutrition: WFP sensitized community stakeholders on the importance of maintaining good nutrition practices as a part of social behaviour change communication (SBCC) activities. Stakeholders included nutrition, health, agriculture, education, gender and youth focal points in Nyaruguru and Kirehe districts. Sessions provided a platform for participants to reflect on effective nutrition strategies to support good infant, child and adolescent nutrition and how best to collaborate.

WFP contributed to the final editing of East African Standards, which include standards for fortified edible salt, infant formula and processed cereal-based foods, as a member of the national technical committee for nutrition and foods for special dietary uses.

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WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Result</th>
<th>Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Result 1: Access to food</td>
<td>250.6 m</td>
<td>66.6 m</td>
<td>11.0 m</td>
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Strategic Outcome 1: Refugees, returnees and other crisis affected population in Rwanda have access to adequate and nutritious food at all times.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:
- Provide food and nutrition assistance and basic livelihood support to refugees and returnees.
- Provide food or cash, nutrition support and other assistance to local Rwandan populations in need of assistance, including through provision of WFP services to the Government of Rwanda and humanitarian agencies.

Strategic Result 2: Access to food

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable populations in food-insecure communities/areas have improved access to adequate and nutritious food all year.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:
- Support the design, implementation, and scale up of national food security and nutrition sensitive social protection programmes.

Strategic Result 3: End Malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Children under 5, adolescents, and pregnant, nursing women/girls in Rwanda have improved access to nutritious foods and services to meet their nutritional needs all year.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:
- Provide capacity strengthening support to national programmes that improve the nutrition status of targeted populations.

Strategic Result 4: Smallholder Productivity & Incomes

Strategic Outcome 4: Smallholder farmers, especially women, have increased marketable surplus and can safely access agricultural markets through efficient supply chains by 2030.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:
- Provide support, education, and capacity strengthening services for smallholder farmers and value chain actors.

Strategic Result 5: Global partnerships

Strategic Outcome 5: The Government of Rwanda and the humanitarian community is provided with adequate, timely, cost-efficient and agile supply chain services and expertise necessary to effectively respond to emergency crisis.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:
- Deliver supply chain services and expertise to enable all partners to provide assistance to affected population.

Nutrition (cont.): These standards are developed and harmonized to maintain nutrition and food safety of consumers within East African member states and facilitate trade among these countries.

HIV: WFP initiated an assessment on HIV-related stigma and discrimination among camp-based refugees in Rwanda. Findings from the 2019 WFP-UNHCR Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) showed possible existence of HIV-related stigma and discrimination which may impact the coverage of Nutrition Assessment Counselling and Support (NACS) provided to refugees with HIV and have negative consequences on their nutritional status and adherence to anti-retroviral therapy. The findings are expected to strengthen the NACS programme in refugee camps.

Smallholder Agricultural Market Support: In preparation for the main 2021 season harvest, WFP and its cooperating partners have facilitated contracting sessions between smallholder farmer cooperatives and private sector buyers. The cooperatives represent more than 84,000 WFP supported smallholder farmers (49 percent women), who have pledged to sell approximately 13,000 MT of maize and beans in the upcoming harvest.

Monitoring

Market monitoring in and around refugee camps: Regular food price monitoring in and around refugee camps indicated that the average price of a basic food basket in October 2020 was 9 percent higher than in September 2020 and 14 percent higher than the WFP transfer amount. Prices in October 2020 were still 2 percent higher than October 2019 and 66 percent higher than October 2018.

As the lean season progresses, households’ dependence on markets to source food is anticipated to increase, with prices expected to continue rising until the next harvest season, unless markets receive cheaper imports. The past two consecutive seasons have performed poorly due to heavier than normal rainfall, which negatively affected livelihoods, especially for local food producers.

Challenges

Funding Situation: WFP requires US$ 11 million for the next six months (November 2020 April 2021) to be able to implement planned activities. Of this, US$ 8 million is urgently required during this period to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees.

Success Story

Learn how support provided through WFP’s Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA) is enabling smallholder farmers to boost earnings through new more profitable crop varieties here.

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