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 (33 percent according to the 2019–2020 Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey). 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 January 2021 Rwanda hosts 142,043 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.

In Numbers

- 796 mt of food assistance distributed
- USD 800,770 cash-based transfers made
- USD 13.2 six months (February-July 2021) net funding requirements, representing 53 percent of total requirements.
- 250,389 people assisted in January 2021

51% 49%

Operational Updates

Refugee Assistance

In January 2021, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 132,924 people, of which 74,037 Congolese refugees, 58,687 Burundian refugees, and 200 returnees hosted in Kijote transit center. Schools reopened for lower primary students on 18 January 2021. WFP provided school meals to 42,894 children, including 6,902 children living in host communities attending the same schools as refugee children.

The voluntary repatriation for Burundian refugees continued. As of 31 January 2021, 11,269 individuals were repatriated. WFP continued to support repatriating refugees with hot meals in transit centers before departure and with high energy biscuits to support them on the journey to their home country.

WFP, jointly with UNHCR and the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) undertook joint resource mobilization efforts to avert ration reductions for all refugees. A total of USD 11.8 million is urgently required to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees through February to July. Should no additional funding be availed in February, WFP will be forced to implement a 60 percent ration reduction for general food assistance to all refugees in March 2021.

Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF)

Following the re-opening of schools for lower primary students in January, WFP provided school meals to 110,563 Rwandan children from 107 schools located in four districts (Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru, Rutsiro and Karongi) supported by the programme.

Resilience and Social Protection

The Sustainable Market Alliance and Assets Creation for Resilient Communities and Gender Transformation (SMART) project commenced in Nyaruguru, Rutsiro and Nyamagabe Districts. Activities include land terracing work with approximately 1,100 participants from 17 communities. Community project management committees were also established for collective decision-making at the community level and mobile day-cares were set up to facilitate female participation in the SMART project activities.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>250.6m</td>
<td>74.1m</td>
<td>13.2m</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Strategic Result 1: Access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Refugees, returnees and other crisis affected populations 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.

Donors: DEVCO, Japan, KOICA, MasterCard, New Zealand, NORAD, Sweden, Switzerland, UN Common Funds and Agencies (excluding UN CERF), USAID, & USDA.

WFP Rwanda Country Brief
January 2021

Nutrition
WFP, as a global co-convener for the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network (SBN), is working with partners towards its establishment in Rwanda. WFP supported a survey conducted by Sight and Life to obtain baseline data of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) engagement in-country to define a strategy development. Preliminary findings indicate a high interest of SMEs owners to become SBN members. The platform could become a tool to enhance private sector participation to reduce malnutrition in Rwanda, advocating for the production of affordable nutritious food items and building capacity of young businesses.

Smallholder Agricultural Market Support
WFP continued to facilitate post-harvest handling and storage (PHHS) training to lead farmers: more than 32,000 farmers will be trained in the coming months.

Final preparations for Season 2021A maize harvest and delivery are underway, with sales expected to start in February 2021. WFP-supported farmers pledged to sell 13,000 mt of maize and beans to formal buyers. To ensure farmers meet their objective, WFP continues to build farmers capacity on good agriculture practices as well as on production quality to comply with markets requirements.

Monitoring

Market monitoring inside and around refugee camps
Regular food price monitoring in and around refugee camps indicated that the average price of a basic food basket in January was 4 percent lower than in December and 8 percent higher than the WFP transfer value. Prices in January were 7 percent lower than in January 2020 and 43 percent higher when compared to January 2019. Prices for dry beans declined across all refugee camps by 16 percent on average compared to December 2020, as fresh harvests became available from season 2021A. Prices for maize grain were stable as early harvest from season 2021A became available, with more fresh maize harvests expected to be available on the market in the coming months.

WFP finalized a data analysis of the joint extended Post-Distribution monitoring (PDM) exercise conducted in December 2020 under the “UNHCR-WFP Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub”. The Hub aims to assess refugee needs and vulnerability characteristics to inform targeting and prioritization which will allow a shift towards needs-based humanitarian assistance instead of the current status-based assistance.

Challenges
WFP requires a total of USD 13.2 million for the next six months (February – July 2021) to be able to implement planned activities. Of this, USD 11.8 million are urgently required during to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees. Should no additional funding be availed in February, WFP will be forced to implement a 60 percent ration reduction for food assistance to all refugees from March on.