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 host countries, where protracted volatility is exacerbated by political instability, may lead to the further arrival of refugees in the coming years.

Moreover, according to UNHCR data, as of February 2021 Rwanda hosts 137,975 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

- **781.630 mt** of food assistance distributed
- **USD 1.02 m** cash-based transfers made
- **USD 12.2 m** six months (March - August 2021) net funding requirements, representing 49.4 percent of total requirements.
- **220,327 people assisted** in February 2021

Operational Updates

**Refugee Assistance**

In February, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 132,634 people, of whom 74,486 are Congolese (DRC) refugees, 57,148 Burundian refugees, 75 returnees hosted in Kijote transit center, and 1,000 refugees including new arrivals, refugees relocating from urban areas to refugee camps and refugees awaiting to be registered.

WFP also provided school meals to 45,652 children, including 8,644 children from the host community attending the same school as refugee children.

In transit centers, WFP continued to assist repatriating Burundian refugees and provided hot meals and high energy biscuits (HEBs) to support them on the journey to their home country. As of 28 February, 15,687 refugees have repatriated since the first convoy in August 2020.

WFP, jointly with UNHCR and the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), informed refugees that the food rations they receive would be reduced by 60 percent from March onwards, due to significant funding shortfalls. A total of USD 10.8 million is urgently required to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees from March through August. Should no additional funding be received in the coming months, an additional ration reduction risks to be implemented. Despite a ration reduction for general food assistance activities, WFP continues to provide full rations under its supplementary nutrition assistance activities and school feeding for the refugee population.

A beneficiary targeting strategy supported by the “UNHCR-WFP Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub” was finalized. The Hub aims to assess refugee needs and vulnerability to inform targeting and prioritization of beneficiaries, thus allowing a shift towards needs-based humanitarian assistance from the current status-based assistance for refugees in 2021. WFP and UNHCR will begin community consultations in March.

**Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF)**

In February, WFP provided school meals to 78,974 primary children from 107 schools located in four districts (Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru, Rutsiro and Karongi).
Nutrition

WFP, together with other partners, is supporting the National Child Development Agency (NCDA) to develop a multi-sectoral management information system (MIS) to improve the monitoring of key nutrition indicators and inform timely decision takers. The MIS will compile data from various sectors including health, agriculture, and education. The prototype of the system has been developed and NCDA has provided a demo of the system to WFP. The system is expected to be fully operational by June.

WFP as a global co-convener for the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network (SBN), continued to collaborate with Sight and Life to support the Government to establish the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network in Rwanda. A survey conducted in January to gauge interest of the business community was finalised and will be presented to the Government in March 2021.

Smallholder Agricultural Market Support

WFP in collaboration with partners are mobilizing cooperatives including WFP-supported cooperatives to acquire Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) issued to taxpayers and potential taxpayers and the use of Electronic Billing Machines (EBM) to encourage cooperatives compliance with the Government tax regulations. A unique TIN is a reference number given to any profit-oriented business to facilitate interactions with the Rwanda Revenue Authority.

Monitoring

Regular food price monitoring in and around refugee camps indicates that the average price of a basic food basket in February was 10 percent lower than in January and 7 percent lower than the WFP transfer value. Prices in February were 4 percent lower than in January 2020 and 22 percent higher when compared to January 2019. While bean prices stabilized with a declining trend, maize prices declined in all camps, thanks to availability of season 2021 A harvest products.

Challenges

WFP requires a total of USD 12.2 million for the next six months (March – August 2021) to be able to implement planned activities. Of this, USD 10.8 million are urgently required to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees. **Due to this urgent funding shortfall, WFP must implement ration reduction down to 60 percent of the food basket for general food assistance to all refugees from March onwards.**

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