



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Rwanda Country Brief March 2021



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, as of March 2021 Rwanda hosts 132,996 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.



Population: **12.1 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **157 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower**

Chronic malnutrition: **38 percent** of children between **6-59 months**

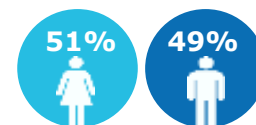
In Numbers

665.027 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 439,849 cash-based transfers made

USD 7.2_m six months (April -September 2021) net funding requirements, representing 30 percent of total requirements.

224,597 people assisted
In March 2021



Operational Updates

Refugee Assistance

In March, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 135,787 people including 73,485 Congolese refugees, 53,385 Burundian refugees, and 200 Rwanda refugees returning home from neighbouring countries, mainly the Democratic Republic of the Congo. WFP also provided school meals to 45,462 children in schools in and around camps, including 8,717 children from the host community attending the same school as refugee children.

Due to critical funding shortfalls, WFP reduced rations of general food assistance for all refugees- by 60 percent. However, WFP continues providing full rations for supplementary nutrition assistance as well as for school meals. As a result of ration reduction, complaints received from refugees have increased and refugees in Gihembe camp addressed a letter to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva appealing for additional support. Negative coping mechanisms, such as money loans, are increasingly observed in the camps.

Throughout March, WFP continued to support the voluntary repatriation process of Burundian refugees. All voluntary repatriating refugees received hot meals and high energy biscuits (HEB) to support them on their journey back to Burundi. As of 31 March 2021, 20,725 Burundian refugees from Mahama camp were repatriated since the first convoy in August 2020.

Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF)

In March, WFP provided school hot meals to 79,624 primary school students. A data collection carried out in March shows that since the start of the programme in 2016, student absenteeism due to illness in WFP-supported schools has reduced from 8 percent to 1.72 percent among female students and from 7 percent to 2.38 percent among male students.

Resilient livelihoods

WFP provided gender transformation trainings as part of the Sustainable Market Alliance and assets creation for resilient communities and Gender Transformation project to 10,640 people through the Gender Action Learning System (GALS), which utilizes a community-led empowerment methodology, to improve household income and promote shared planning and decision making at the household level.

Contact info: Emily Fredenberg (emilyjean.fredenberg@wfp.org)

Country Director: Edith Heines

Photo caption: WFP staff supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) to gather data for the 2021 Comprehensive Food & Nutrition Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA).

Photo: WFP/JohnPaul Sesonga

Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
250.6m	92.2m	7.2 m

Strategic Result 1: Access to food

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

In preparation for the Global Food Systems Summit taking place in September 2021, the Government of Rwanda conducted a National Dialogue for Action Track 1 on “Ensuring Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All” to provide a platform for national discourse on food systems. Action Track 1 was divided into three sub-groups and WFP coordinated the sub-group on increasing accessibility and affordability of nutritious foods.

Smallholder Agricultural Market Support

WFP, as a member of the steering committee for the development of the national post-harvest management strategy, continued to support the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources to develop a strategy that will guide sustainable post-harvest management in the country.

In preparation for the Global Food Systems Summit taking place in September 2021, WFP supported country level dialogue on Action Track Five on “Resilient and Inclusive Food Systems in Rwanda”. The dialogue brought together a diverse group of actors from across the value chain to propose solutions to increase the economic, social, and environmental resilience of Rwanda’s food system in the next ten years.

Monitoring

Comprehensive Food & Nutrition Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) WFP has been supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) to collect data for the 2021 CFSVA, which will provide updated information on food and nutrition security in Rwanda and on how the COVID-19 impacted food and nutrition security. This activity is conducted in partnership with MINAGRI, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), and UNICEF, and will the planning of development programme. Preliminary findings are expected in July 2021, and the final report in September 2021.

Market monitoring inside and around refugee camps

WFP’s regular food price monitoring in and around refugee camps indicated that average basic food items prices decreased by 5 percent between February and March. Maize prices decreased by 13 percent on average in all camps, due to availability of produces from season 2021 A harvest. Bean and salt prices were stable, while vegetable oil price increased by 4 percent on average.

Challenges

WFP requires a total of USD 7.2 million for the next six months (April-September 2021) to be able to implement planned activities. Of this, USD 5.8 million are urgently required to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees. **Due to this urgent funding shortfall, WFP will continue to implement 60 percent ration reductions for general food assistance to all refugees in April.**

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