WFP Rwanda Country Brief, May 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 data, as of 31 May 2021 Rwanda hosts 127,557 refugees and asylum-seekers, 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: In May, WFP reached 112,240 people with food and nutrition assistance, including 66,449 Congolese refugees, 37,154 Burundian refugees and 300 returnees hosted in Kijote transit center. WFP provided school meals to 45,135 children in schools within refugee camps, including 8,337 children from the host communities around camps attending the same schools as refugee children.

WFP transitioned from blanket assistance towards needs-based assistance for general food needs of refugees. Targeting only applies to general food assistance, school feeding and supplementary nutrition assistance continued with the usual criteria. Under the new targeting approach, refugees who are classified as highly vulnerable continue to receive full food assistance rations; moderately vulnerable refugees receive 50 percent of the full ration; and refugees characterized as least vulnerable are no longer eligible to receive general food assistance from WFP. An appeal mechanism was also put in place for refugees who feel their households were incorrectly classified. Refugees can call a hotline number and their requests are reviewed on an individual basis and decisions are taken based on their eligibility for assistance.

In addition, WFP implemented a new prioritization for general food assistance based on the available funds. WFP continued to reduce rations due to funding shortfalls with considerations for highly vulnerable refugees whose reduction was less severe compared to moderately vulnerable. Highly vulnerable refugees received 80 percent of a full ration and moderately vulnerable refugees received 40 percent of a full ration.

Volcano Eruption Response: On 22 May, the Nyiragongo volcano erupted near the city of Goma in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The volcanic activity continued with increasing frequency and strength causing many earthquakes in both DRC and Rwanda. This prompted the Government of Goma on 27 May to order a mandatory evacuation of several parts of Goma, triggering people to flee into nearby Rwanda. At the request of the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), WFP began supporting those displaced with emergency food and nutrition assistance. WFP provided 4.3 MT of food and nutrition assistance to 4,004 displaced people in Busasamana, Inyemeramihigo, and Nyanza transit centers. In order to respond to these new emergency needs, WFP mobilised internal emergency funds to procure emergency food assistance.

In Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>156.726 mt</td>
<td>of food assistance distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD 572,886</td>
<td>cash-based transfers made</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD 11.1 million</td>
<td>six months (June - November 2021) net funding requirements, representing 45 percent of total requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>205,018</td>
<td>people assisted in May</td>
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Photo caption: Farmers cultivating land on newly constructed terraces as part of WFP SMART project aiming to build climate resilient assets. Photo: ©WFP/Arte/ Fredrik Lerneryd

Population: 12.1 million

2020 Human Development Index: 160 out of 189

Income Level: Lower

Chronic malnutrition: 38 percent of children between 6-59 months
**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>
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<tr>
<td>250.6 m</td>
<td>95.6 m</td>
<td>11.1 m</td>
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**Strategic Result 1: Everyone has 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.

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**Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF):** WFP provided daily meals to 78,528 primary students (49 percent female and 51 percent male). Preliminary findings from the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme’s end line evaluation showed that since the beginning of the programme in 2016, student reading comprehension has increased from 49 percent to 77.7 percent.

WFP, jointly with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) developed School Feeding Operational guidelines which were approved in May 2021. These guidelines will be distributed to all schools nationally, to guide the implementation of school feeding including governance, management, food procurement, food preparation and other relevant areas.

**Nutrition:** WFP and partners supported the National Child Development Agency to finalise the National Community-based Nutrition Protocol. The protocol considers the national nutrition situation, nutrition specific and sensitive interventions, and the integration of early childhood development services as an entry point to deliver nutrition interventions from national to community levels. It is aimed at supporting community actors to implement a minimum package of community-based activities, particularly in nutrition, health, agriculture, and water, hygiene, and sanitation.

**Smallholder Agricultural Market Support:** As the 2021 A sales season closed, WFP-supported farmer organizations have sold approximately 14,700 MT of maize and beans to formal buyers at a value of more than USD 3.2 million which is higher than 11,049 MT sold last year. WFP continues to support farmers in preparation for the next season.

**Monitoring**

**Market monitoring inside and around refugee camps:** WFP’s monthly food price monitoring in and around refugee camps indicated that the average price of the food basket in May 2021 was slightly higher (6,583 RWF) compared to April 2021 (6,554 RWF) and slightly less than May 2019. Prices for vegetable oil increased across camps compared to last month on average by 14 percent, while there was a general decline for bean prices due to the ongoing season 2021 B harvests.

**Challenges**

WFP requires a total of USD 10.6 million for the next six months (June-November 2021) representing 45 percent of the total funding requirement for 2021 planned activities. Of this, USD 7.9 million is urgently required to reinstate full humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees, bearing in mind the new targeting mechanism. Additionally, USD 500,000 is required to continue providing emergency food assistance for those impacted by the volcanic eruption in Eastern DRC.

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