Operational Context

A small, landlocked country with a population of 13.2 million people growing at 2.3 percent annually, Rwanda is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. In the past three decades, 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 20 percent 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 69 percent of households engaged in crop production or animal husbandry. Irregular 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 30 June 2023 Rwanda hosted 133,671 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.

Emergency Response:

- In June, WFP received USD 1.2 million in contributions to support people affected by floods and landslides that occurred in May 2023. WFP, in collaboration with MINEMA, provided food and nutrition assistance to people displaced by these events, and is preparing the distribution of cash-based transfers (CBT) from August.

Resilient Livelihoods:

- WFP successfully linked 26 smallholder farmers in Murama sector, Kayonza, including 11 female farmers, with schools to participate in the home-grown school feeding program. Through this initiative, they sell various agricultural products such as cabbages, tomatoes, and eggplants, generating a total income of RWF 1,770,050. The farmers utilized the Kinyinya hillside irrigation scheme, a component of the resilience program provided by WFP. This effort demonstrates WFP’s commitment to creating synergy among its programs to foster sustainable development in the community.

- WFP, DUHAMIC-ADRI, and RDO organized a meeting in Ruhango sector, Rutsuro to discuss Bitenga marshlands’ development and prepare farmers for agricultural season C 2023. 75 representatives from farmers’ groups (39 female) attended. The participants were educated on enhancing agricultural productivity and committed to implementing the knowledge gained.

- A seed conditioning facility was built in Ruhango sector to assist smallholder farmers in growing high-quality Irish potatoes. A farmers’ group comprising 42 members was selected to manage and maintain the facility. WFP, DUHAMIC-ADRI, and RDO are actively training these farmers to operate the facility effectively.

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Photo caption: Participants from Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania & Uganda joined the Eastern Africa Regional Network Launch of the global school meals coalition. Photo: WFP/Aristide GATERA

In Numbers
- 597,374 MT of food assistance distributed
- USD 920,018.77 cash-based transfers (CBT) distributed
- USD 24.1 million six months (July–December 2023) net funding requirements, representing 63 percent of total requirements
- 241,266 people assisted in June 2023

Operational Updates

Refugee operations:

- WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 124,266 people, including 105,117 refugees, 9,521 asylum seekers, 8,456 host community children, and 350 Rwandan returnees. USD 929,959 of cash-based transfers enabled eligible refugees to buy food of their choice, and cash to schools for parent contributions. Also, WFP provided school meals to refugee and host community children in Kiziba and at the Mahama Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre.

- Since November 2022, insecurity in eastern DRC has been displacing an increasing number of people due to armed violence in the area. By end-June 2023, 8,961 asylum seekers had arrived in Rwanda, and they are receiving in-kind food and nutrition assistance from WFP.

- The 2023 World Refugee Day was celebrated at Mahama, Kigeme, Mugombwa and Kiziba refugee camps on June 20, and the Nkamira transit site on June 21. UNHCR, MINEMA, District Authorities, and other partners were all present, along with refugees. In Kigali, WFP joined the celebrations at Norrsken house, where refugees came together to share inspiring stories about how community inclusion has brought them hope.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024)

<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>278.3 m</td>
<td>149.7 m</td>
<td>24.1 m</td>
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**SDG target 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.

**SDG target 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.

**SDG target 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.

**SDG target 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.

**SDG target 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 populations.

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**Donors:** Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, EU (ECHO and INTPA), France, Germany (BMZ and GFFO), Japan, Republic of Korea, Mastercard Foundation, New Zealand, Norway, Novo Nordisk Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Sweden, Switzerland, UN Common Funds and Agencies, USA (USAID BHA and USDA).

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**School Feeding:**
- WFP collaborated with the Ministry of Education and district authorities to provide daily nutritious school meals to 118,127 students across 140 schools. This aims improve their health and nutrition, while also decreasing school absenteeism.
- Cash transfers to WFP-supported schools enabled the provision of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as animal protein such as dried fish, enhancing the nutritional value of the meal and provided much-needed nutrients to school children. These are served to students three times per week.
- WFP and the Government of Rwanda co-hosted the launch of the Eastern Africa Regional School Meals Coalition Network. Representatives from nine countries gathered for a two-day event to discuss the state of school meals programmes in the region, opportunities, and challenges, as well as to launch a regional community of practice.

**Nutrition and HIV:**
- In June 2023, WFP concluded the “HIV-sensitive social protection assessment in Rwanda” in collaboration with Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC). The report is currently under review and will be available in the coming weeks.

**Smallholder Agricultural Market Support:**
- In June, WFP onboarded the first cohort of 50 Farmer Service Centers (FSCs) under the Shora Neza Mastercard Foundation-funded project. They received digital toolkits and will undergo a 15-week leadership academy for capacity building.
- The **IGNITE Food Systems Challenge Pitch Event** was held on 20 June 2023 at the Kigali Marriott hotel, to select the second cohort of ventures that will be supported over the next six months. Eight of the thirteen ventures invited to pitch were chosen to receive funding of up to USD 30,000 and four months of tailored acceleration support.

**Monitoring:**
- The average cost of the food basket in June was 13,749 RWF, a 4.3 percent increase from May 2023 (13,178 RWF). The cost of the food basket increased across all refugee camps ranging from a 1 percent increase in Kigeme camp to a 13.7 percent increase in Kiziba camp. However, the price of dry beans decreased across all camps.
- The observed increase is attributed to higher prices of maize grain and cooking oil, caused by poor harvests in the 2023 B season as a result of floods and landslides despite insufficient rainfall overall in May 2023.

**Challenges:**
- WFP requires USD 24.1 million for the next six months (July–December 2023), representing 63 percent of the total funding requirement for planned activities. Of this, USD 22.2 million is required to restore full food rations to refugees hosted in Rwanda, in line with a targeting mechanism where WFP provides support based on vulnerability status, as well as to support new asylum seekers and Rwandan returnees.
- WFP also needs USD 1.2 million in complementary funding for the year 2023 for providing nutritious meals in WFP-supported schools and to strengthen the national school feeding programme.
- WFP is facing a shortfall of USD 400,000 for strengthening the national social protection system, required to meet the technical assistance commitments to the Government for enhanced shock response.
- In addition, WFP needs USD 285,000 to continue nutrition capacity strengthening activities and support the Government’s stunning prevention efforts.