



# WFP Rwanda Country Brief

## December 2023

World Food Programme



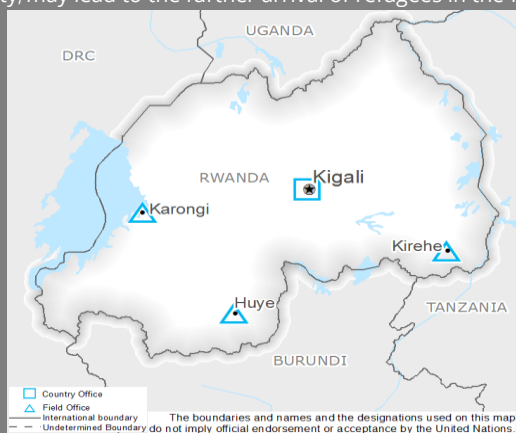
SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

### 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 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 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 31 December 2023 Rwanda hosted 134,593 refugees and asylum seekers, primarily from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 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 future.



Population: **13.2 million**

2021 Human Development Index: **165 out of 191**

Income Level: **Lower**

Chronic malnutrition: **33 percent** of children between **6-59 months**

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Photo caption: Dushimirimana Margarita, a WFP-supported farmer, showcasing a freshly harvested cabbage from her farm which she plans to sell to local schools; a connection also facilitated by WFP.

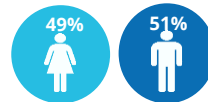
### In Numbers

**283.6 MT** of food distributed

**USD 763,612** cash-based transfers (CBT) distributed

**USD 15 million** six months (January – June 2024) net funding requirements, representing 58 percent of total requirements

**136,642 people** reached in December 2023



### Operational Updates

#### Refugee operation:

- During the month of December, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 125,169 people, including 118,056 refugees and registered asylum seekers, 6,728 unregistered asylum seekers, and 385 Rwandan returnees. This included USD 756,177 of cash-based transfers allowing registered asylum seekers and eligible refugees to purchase food of their choice, and USD 7,435 transferred to schools that host refugees for school feeding contributions. A total of 224.3 MT of food commodities were distributed as hot meals to unregistered asylum seekers and returnees, and under nutrition and school feeding programmes. In addition, 6,253 people were reached through Social and Behaviour Change Communication for Nutrition.
- Insecurity and violence caused by armed groups in eastern DRC has been displacing an increasing number of people. By end-December 2023, 14,314 asylum seekers had arrived in Rwanda from DRC, and all of them received food assistance in December 2023.

#### Resilient livelihoods:

- 103 farmers who benefited from the Kinyinya irrigation scheme sold a total of 15,421 kilograms of produce, including vegetables and fruits from the 2024 Season A harvest. The sales generated an income of RWF 4,888,300 (around USD 3,900) for the participating farmers.
- 30 Farmer Field School (FFS) facilitators from Nyamagabe and Nyaruguru attended a 5-day training in Huye district focusing on pests and diseases control, harvesting, and post-harvest handling. The session concluded with a graduation ceremony in which FFS facilitators received certificates, committing to apply the knowledge in their communities.
- WFP organized a one-day study tour for 56 greenhouse and seed conditioning users from Rusenge and Kaduha, along with their agronomists, to Gatare and Buruhukiro sectors in Nyamagabe district. During the tour, the hosts shared their experience in Irish potato seed multiplication, showcasing the process from vitroplants to basic seeds, and highlighting the benefits of greenhouse usage for both owners and the surrounding community.

#### Disaster risk management:

- WFP and MINEMA co-organized a training workshop for 91 District Disaster Management Officers and District Administration Security Support coordinators in the Eastern and Western provinces. Through tabletop exercises, the training focused on using the post-disaster emergency needs assessment toolkit developed with WFP support and enhancing reporting capacities.

#### School feeding:

- WFP provided daily nutritious school meals to approximately 30,000 students in 32 schools in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and district authorities. This aims to improve their health and nutrition, while also reducing school absenteeism.

## Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
278.3 m	178 m	15 m

## 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 &amp; 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.

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

- 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 providing much-needed nutrients to school children. These are served to students three times per week.
- WFP participated in a 2-day workshop with the ministries of Education, Local Government (MINALOC), Trade and Industry, and Finance and Economic Planning along with Province Executive Secretaries, as well as Executive Secretaries and Directors of Education from all districts. The focus was on reviewing the new procurement model's progress and challenges. Recommendations emerged, targeting issues like low parent contributions, food price variations, improved food safety, quality inspections, and the need for additional staff to support school feeding at district-level.

**Nutrition:**

- In partnership with the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), WFP successfully conducted review and validation sessions for the HIV-sensitive Social Protection Assessment report on December 18th and 19th, 2023. Key collaborators included UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN-Women, RBC, MINALOC/LODA, and some members of the HIV technical working group. The final version is anticipated to be completed by January 2024, aiming to enhance access to social protection for people living with HIV for improved food security, nutrition status and well-being.

**Smallholder Agricultural Market Support:**

- WFP and Impact Hub Kigali organized a peer-to-peer event, bringing together agri-SMEs from the IGNITE food systems challenges 1 and 2. The session facilitated informal networking, and offered a platform for these ventures to showcase their innovative agri-solutions to the WFP team and external partners. Participants presented their progress, highlighting remarkable advancements in the food systems landscape in Rwanda.

**Monitoring**

- In December, the average food basket cost was RWF 10,761, a decrease of 13.9 percent from November 2023 and 26.9 percent from December 2022. All refugee camps saw significant reductions in food basket cost, particularly Mugombwa, Nyabiheke, Mahama, and Kiziba (20.7%, 17.6%, 16.6%, and 13%, respectively), while Kigeme recorded a 2.5 percent decrease.
- At the same time, dry bean prices dropped by an average of 25 percent, with the steepest decline in Nyabiheke at 49 percent, followed by Mugombwa (29%) and Mahama (22%). Kiziba and Kigeme saw smaller decreases of 15 percent and 10 percent. This decrease is linked to ongoing Season A 2024 dry bean harvests nationwide. Maize grain prices also fell by an average of 12 percent in December compared to November 2023.

**Challenges**

- WFP requires a total of USD 15 million to sustain its operations for the next six months (January – June 2024), representing 58 percent of the total funding requirement for planned activities. Of this, USD 13.1 million would allow to restore full cash rations for food assistance to targeted refugees in Rwanda based on their vulnerability status, as well as to support new asylum seekers and Rwandan returnees. USD 9.3 million is needed to enable the continuation of the current reduced rations in the next six months.
- WFP is facing a shortfall of USD 400,000 for strengthening the national disaster risk management and social protection systems, required to meet the technical assistance commitments to the Government for enhanced shock response. In addition, WFP needs USD 279,000 to continue nutrition capacity strengthening and support stunting prevention until June 2024.