



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Burundi Country Brief January 2024



## Operational Context

The humanitarian situation in Burundi remains alarming. Recurring climate-change natural disasters lead to massive internal displacements and impact the livelihood of the rural population, highly dependent on subsistence farming for their food security. The inflation due to the Ukrainian crisis compounded with the trade and market supply disruptions imposed by the COVID-19 has exacerbated the national economic crisis and food insecurity in the country. The price of food commodities continues to rise, leading to a steady decline in households' purchasing power.

According to the September 2023 IPC survey, 15 percent of the population (1.88 million people) were facing acute food insecurity and required immediate food assistance. Out of these, 164,000 people were in emergency (phase 4 of IPC), an unprecedented figure since 2017. The analysis projects a slight decrease in the number of food insecure people (1.33 million) during the first quarter of 2024. The prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children aged 6-59 months is rated at 55.9 percent, the highest rate in the world.

Burundi hosts a high number of refugees fleeing violence from the Democratic Republic of Congo (56,000 in five camps). Since 2017, more than 200,000 Burundians have been repatriated, adding strain on scarce resources in vulnerable host communities. WFP has been present in Burundi since 1968.



Population: **12.3 million**

2021 Human Development Index: **187 out of 191**

**72 percent** of Burundians live under the poverty line

Chronic malnutrition: **55.8 percent** of children between 6-59 months

## In Numbers

52%



48%



**760,428 people** assisted in January 2024

**USD 589,705** cash transferred under assistance to refugees, returnees and decentralized procurement for school feeding.

**1,463 mt** of food assistance distributed

**USD 10.68 m** six months net funding requirements (March - August 2024)

## Operational Updates

- **Assistance to refugees:** WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 55,649 refugees (44 percent males and 56 percent females). Among them were 15,025 children aged 6-59 months and 2,226 people over 60. Refugees received hybrid rations consisting of 199 mt of in-kind food and cash-based transfers totalling USD 422,296. This amounted to 70 percent of the planned food ration due to resource constraints.
- **Assistance to returnees:** WFP assisted 169 Burundian returnees (49 percent male and 51 percent female) with a combination of in-kind food (7 mt) and cash (USD 1,437). The assistance consisted of hot meals provided at transit centres and a three-month in-kind food and cash return package.
- **Nutrition and resilience project:** Under the KfW-funded project, WFP aims to prevent stunting by providing specialized nutritious foods, conducting social and behavior change communication to educate mothers on healthy feeding practices, and implementing resilience-building activities. In January, WFP reached 18,015 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls (PBWGs) and children aged 6-23 months (6,564 PBWGs and 11,451 children) with 80 mt of nutritious foods across Karusi, Kirundo, Ruyigi, and Rutana provinces.
- **School Feeding Programme:** WFP provided school meals to 667,372 children in 870 schools. Out of a total procurement of 1,077 mt of commodities, 6 percent of school canteens were supplied through the decentralized procurement model, empowering local authorities with procurement responsibilities. This WFP approach supports local economies and the agricultural sector by sourcing commodities from local smallholder farmers. In January, WFP procured local food from smallholder farmers valued at USD 165,972.
- **Treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM):** WFP provided 8,436 moderately malnourished PBWGs and 10,787 children aged 6-59 months with 100 mt of specialized nutritious foods for the MAM treatment across Cankuzo, Ruyigi, Musinga, Ngozi, Kirundo, and Rutana provinces.
- **Africa Day of School Feeding:** Burundi will host the 9<sup>th</sup> Africa Day of School Feeding on 1 March 2024. This event gathers African Union Member States, and partners to highlight Homegrown School Feeding. The main objective of the event is to consolidate the political commitments made at the African Union Transforming Education Summit, and the School Meals Coalition Global Summit in implementing comprehensive school meals programmes. Discussions will focus on sustainable financing, systematic education investment, South-South Cooperation experiences and showcasing ambitious commitments from the School Meals Coalition.

## Monitoring

- **Impact Evaluation in Burundi:** WFP utilizes evidence and knowledge to make programmatic adjustments and refine strategies. An evaluation on local decentralized procurement for homegrown

| Total Requirement (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) | Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>257.96 m</b>            | <b>0 m</b>                       | <b>10.68 m</b>                              |

## Strategic Result 1: Access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Shock-affected populations in targeted areas, Burundi returnees, refugees in camps, can meet their basic food needs all year round.

**Focus area:** Crisis Response

### Activities:

- Provide unconditional food and/or cash-based assistance to refugees in camps and transit centers;
- Provide unconditional and/or conditional food and/or cash-based assistance to severely food insecure households including IDPs and Burundi returnees;

## Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Children 6-59 months, adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, PLHIV, and TB clients in the targeted provinces have improved nutritional status throughout the year.

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

### Activities:

- Provide an integrated nutrition-specific and sensitive package to children aged 6-59 months, adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and other vulnerable groups including people living with HIV/AIDS

## Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Vulnerable populations including school-aged children and food value chain actors in Burundi have access to and contribute to healthier, nutritious, resilient, sustainable and gender-transformative food systems by 2024

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

### Activities:

- Provide nutritious home-grown school meals to pre-primary and primary school-aged children;
- Provide improved access to technologies and capacity development to smallholder farmers and food value chain actors;
- Provide nutrition-sensitive and gender-transformative livelihood support to food-insecure and at risk of food insecurity households

## Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Government and national actors in Burundi have strengthened capacities, systems, and services by 2024

**Focus area:** Resilience Building

### Activities:

- Provide advisory and technical services, skills and assets to Government, Private Sector, Burundi Red Cross and NGOs for the design and implementation of effective and gender-responsive food and nutrition assistance including supply chain, social protection, school feeding, nutrition, sustainable food systems and early warning and emergency preparedness.

## Strategic Result 8: Enhance global partnership

**Strategic Outcome 5:** The Government of Burundi, humanitarian and development partners can reach vulnerable people and respond to the needs and to

**Photo:** Innocent and his classmates eat lunch in their classroom at Ecofo Gatovu school, Muyinga province, Burundi.. © WFP/ Fredrik Lerneryd

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school feeding (HGSF), conducted in collaboration with World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation Research Group, revealed promising results. The study compared centralized and decentralized procurement models in 45 schools, demonstrating significant advantages for the decentralized approach. Notably, the decentralized model showed increased meal days, reduced delivery time from four to one month, and shortened food safety and quality testing periods to 8-15 days compared to 4-6 weeks in the centralized model. Based on the successful pilot, the Ministry of Education and WFP have decided to gradually scale up the new local decentralized procurement model to 50 percent of the schools currently assisted in the school feeding programme by 2027.

- **Impact of El Nino:** Excessive rainfall linked to the El Nino phenomenon (flooding, landslides, torrential rain, hail, violent winds, etc.) persistently disrupts communities in Burundi. Nearly 135,000 people have been significantly affected, with 15 percent displaced, and over 50,000 hectares of crops destroyed since the start of the 2024 A season in October 2024. (Mvam Bulletin, January 2024). This situation is increasing vulnerability to food insecurity. WFP continues to respond with anticipatory actions and food assistance in affected areas within limits of resources availability.
- **Market prices monitoring:** In January 2024, the average price of beans was 6 percent lower compared to December 2023 due to season A harvest, while cereal prices remained stable prices increased by 1 percent nationally. However, prices remain considerably higher than the average of the past 5 years. Notably, the price of beans has risen by 52 percent, cassava flour by more than 86 percent and rice by more than 64 percent. According to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) bulletin for December 2023, the general annual inflation rate is +27.1 percent and the rate for food products is +37.2 percent. (Mvam Bulletin, January 2024).

## Challenges

- **Food assistance for refugees:** Due to resource constraints, WFP has reduced refugee rations to 70 percent since January, a decrease from 75 percent received in December 2023. The reduced ration will continue until May and, with further reduction to 60 percent in June, if no additional resources are secured. This will further exacerbate and already precarious situation among the vulnerable populations. With current outlook, WFP will not be able to provide food assistance to refugees from July – September 2024. WFP Burundi urgently requires USD 8.6 million to restore full rations for 56,000 refugees per month from March to December 2024.
- **Food assistance for returnees:** Despite ongoing efforts, insufficient resources will lead to a complete depletion of food and cash assistance for returnees by April 2024. WFP Burundi urgently requires USD 4.66 million to sustain support for returnees beyond April 2024.
- **The school feeding programme:** Funding challenges hinder the school feeding Programme continuity. WFP needs USD 16 million to sustain implementing the programme during the upcoming school year (from September 2024 and in June 2025), supporting the development of Burundi's human capital and local economy. Currently, the programme aims to cover 25 percent of children attending pre and primary school in Burundi.

**Donors** (in alphabetical order): Burundi, Canada, China, European Union, FEED, France, Germany, Global Partnership for Education, Katherine Rowlinson, Mastercard Foundation, Monaco, Netherlands, Rockefeller Foundation, Russia, Switzerland, United States of America, World Bank, World Vision UK.