



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Burundi Country Brief February 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**

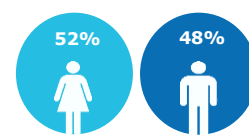
2021 Human Development Index: **187 out of 191**

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

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

## In Numbers

**911,909 people** assisted in February 2024



**USD 2,146,401** cash transferred under assistance to refugees, returnees, Merankabandi II and decentralized procurement for school feeding.

**1,622 mt** of food assistance distributed

**USD 14.49 m** six months net funding requirements (April - September 2024)

## Operational Updates

- **Assistance to refugees:** WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 56,194 refugees (44 percent males and 56 percent females). Among them were 15,172 children aged 6-59 months and 2,248 people over 60. Refugees were provided with hybrid rations of 286 mt of in-kind food and cash-based transfers totalling USD 333,553. This allocation represented 70 percent of the planned food ration due to resource constraints.
- **Merankabandi phase II, assistance to refugees:** In a pilot initiative supported by the Government of Burundi to integrate refugees into the national social protection programme, *Merankabandi*, WFP provided 3,360 refugee households (18,368 individuals) with cash transfers amounting to USD 85,278 in Bwagiriza and Nyankanda camps. These households utilized the funds to address their food and nutrition needs, supplemented by training sessions on social behavior change, entrepreneurship, and digital financial literacy to enhance the resilience and productivity of targeted households.
- **Merankabandi phase II, Cash for Jobs:** The Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) project, financed by the World Bank, aims to mitigate the compounded impacts of climatic and economic crises on food security in Burundi. Targeted households in situations of acute food and nutritional insecurity receive nutrition assistance through unconditional cash-based transfers. In February, 120,050 beneficiaries in Cibitoke, Bujumbura, Kirundo, Bubanza and Ngozi provinces received cash transfers worth USD 1,614,791 in February 2024.
- **Assistance to returnees:** WFP provided 1,270 Burundian returnees (51 percent female) with a combination of in-kind food (6 mt) and cash (USD 17,121). The assistance consisted of hot meals provided at transit centres and a three-month in-kind food and cash return package.
- **Under the KfW-funded nutrition and resilience project,** WFP aims to prevent stunting through the provision of specialized nutritious foods, social and behavior change communication to educate mothers on healthy feeding practices and implementing resilience-building activities. WFP reached 22,311 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls (PBWGs) and children aged 6-23 months (10,794 PBWGs and 11,517 children) with 141 mt of nutritious foods in Karusi, Kirundo, Ruyigi, and Rutana provinces.
- **School Feeding Programme:** WFP provided school meals to 677,700 children in 870 schools. Out of a total procurement of 1,088 mt of commodities, approximately six percent of the school canteens were served under the decentralized procurement model. Through this model, WFP delegates the responsibility of local procurement to local authorities, thereby supporting local economies and the agricultural sector by sourcing commodities from local smallholder farmers. In February, WFP procured local food from smallholder farmers valued at USD 95,658.
- **Treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM):** WFP provided 6,318 moderately malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding women

Photo: Mose Ntunzwenimana's sons eat a meal at the Gitara Returnee Transit Centre, Makamba Province. © WFP/ Irene Nduwayezu

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Further information: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/burundi>

| Total Requirement (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) | Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 257.96 m                   | 0.66 m                           | 14.49 m                                     |

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| Strategic Result 1: Access to food   |
| <p><b>Strategic Outcome 1:</b> Shock-affected populations in targeted areas, Burundi returnees, refugees in camps, can meet their basic food needs all year round.</p> <p><b>Focus area:</b> Crisis Response</p>   |
| <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide unconditional food and/or cash-based assistance to refugees in camps and transit centers;</li><li>• Provide unconditional and/or conditional food and/or cash-based assistance to severely food insecure households including IDPs and Burundi returnees;</li></ul>  |
| Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition   |
| <p><b>Strategic Outcome 2:</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Focus area:</b> Resilience Building</p>   |
| <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li></ul>   |
| Strategic Result 4: Sustainable Food Systems   |
| <p><b>Strategic Outcome 3:</b> 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</p> <p><b>Focus area:</b> Resilience Building</p>  |
| <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide nutritious home-grown school meals to pre-primary and primary school-aged children;</li><li>• Provide improved access to technologies and capacity development to smallholder farmers and food value chain actors;</li><li>• Provide nutrition-sensitive and gender-transformative livelihood support to food-insecure and at risk of food insecurity households</li></ul> |
| Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening   |
| <p><b>Strategic Outcome 4:</b> Government and national actors in Burundi have strengthened capacities, systems, and services by 2024</p> <p><b>Focus area:</b> Resilience Building</p>   |
| <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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.</li></ul>     |
| Strategic Result 8: Enhance global partnership   |
| <p><b>Strategic Outcome 5:</b> The Government of Burundi, humanitarian and development partners can reach vulnerable people and respond to the needs and to emergencies throughout the year.</p> <p><b>Focus area :</b> Crisis Response</p>  |
| <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide on-demand supply chain and emergency telecommunications and shared IT services to Government, development, and humanitarian partners.</li></ul>  |

and girls and 10,232 children aged 6-59 months with 101 mt of specialized nutritious foods for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in Cankuzo, Ruyigi, Muyinga, Ngozi, Kirundo, and Rutana provinces.

- **New WFP Burundi Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2024-2027 endorsed by WFP Board:** The WFP Executive Board formally endorsed the new WFP Burundi Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2024-2027 during its February 2024 session, with implementation commencing on 1 March 2024. The new CSP is aligned with the National Development Plan for 2018–2027, the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan and the 2023–2027 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). It uploads the dual mandate mission of saving lives and changing lives, with ‘sustainable food systems’ a pivotal strategic objective.

Monitoring

- **Market prices monitoring:** February marks the harvest period for the 2024A cropping season (September 2023-mid-February 2024). Despite a relative decline in bean and maize prices compared to the same period in 2023, they remained notably high, surpassing the five-year average for essential foods. The price of beans rose by 67 percent, cassava flour by more than 85 percent and rice by more than 65 percent. The 2024A season was significantly impacted by adverse weather conditions, including excessive rainfall, flooding, hailstorms, and strong winds. These climatic disruptions had a particularly severe impact on bean production.
- **Impact of El Nino:** Excessive rainfall linked to the El Nino phenomenon (flooding, landslides, torrential rain, hail, violent winds, etc.) is persistently disrupting 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. 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.

Challenges

- **Food assistance for refugees and returnees:** WFP is currently providing refugees with a 70 percent food ration, which, without urgent resources, will further decrease to 60 percent by June and continue to diminish thereafter. WFP requires USD 8.3 million to restore full rations for 56,000 refugees for the remainder of 2024. Additionally, Burundi anticipates a significant increase in the number of Burundian refugees returning from Tanzania. To support these returnees, WFP requires USD 3.1 million to provide a 90-day food assistance return package to 7,000 returnees per month for the rest of 2024. Without immediate additional resources, WFP will exhaust assistance for returnees by May 2024.
- **The school feeding programme** in Burundi is facing critical funding challenges. WFP requires USD 20 million to sustain the programme throughout the upcoming school year, spanning from September 2024 to June 2025. This funding is crucial for nurturing the development of the Burundi human capital and local economy.

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