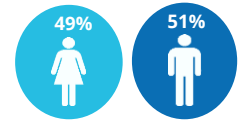




World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Rwanda Country Brief March 2024



In Numbers

166,646 people reached

USD 726,425 cash-based transfers (CBT) distributed

USD 12.5 million six months (April- September 2024) net funding requirements, representing 52 percent of total requirements

309.62 MT of food distributed



Operational Updates

Refugee operation and emergency assistance:

- WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 119,125 individuals, including 110,811 refugees, 8,181 unregistered asylum seekers and 133 Rwandan returnees. The assistance included USD 719,171 through cash-based transfers, enabling eligible refugees to purchase food of their choice. WFP also transferred USD 7,254 to schools that host refugees for school feeding contributions. A total of 229.91 MT of food commodities were distributed as hot meals to asylum seekers under nutrition and school feeding programmes. Moreover, 17,154 individuals benefited from Social and Behaviour Change Communication for Nutrition (SBCCN) interventions.
- Since November 2022, insecurity in eastern DRC has caused displacement to Rwanda, with 14,497 asylum seekers from DRC seeking refuge there by the end of March 2024. Unregistered individuals receive in-kind food assistance, while registered individuals get cash transfers.
- WFP hosted a field visit to the Mahama refugee camp for the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, as well as a handover ceremony at the Nkamira transit center for a contribution aimed at supporting food and nutrition assistance for refugees and asylum seekers, and disaster risk management interventions. The ceremony included the Ambassador for Japan and a Permanent Secretary from the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA).

School Feeding:

- On March 1st, WFP participated in the commemoration of the 9th Africa Day for School Feeding alongside the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and partners. The event took place at GS Kampang, Kinigi Sector, in Musanze District. This year's theme, "Nutrition and Human Capital Development in Africa through Increased Investment in Home-grown School Feeding," underscored the transformative potential of a well-coordinated school feeding initiative in shaping Rwanda's future.
- WFP in collaboration with MINEDUC and district authorities continued to provide daily nutritious meals to approximately 30,000 students in 32 schools across three supported districts (Kayonza, Burera and Gasabo).
- WFP continued to provide technical support to four districts (Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru, Karongi and Rutsiro) and the 108 schools that have transitioned from WFP support to the National School Feeding Programme in September 2023, to ensure that school children continue to receive a daily meal at school and districts are able to implement the new school feeding procurement model.
- WFP in collaboration with the Rwanda Standards Board organized and held a two-day food safety and quality workshop to support the National School Feeding Programme. This equipped participants from all 30 districts with knowledge on the importance of carrying out quality inspection of food commodities along the whole supply chain system (from farm to schools), compliance with food regulations and standard requirements, maintaining good sanitary/hygiene practices in food stores and kitchens, best food preparation practices and the implications of consuming unsafe food commodities to the health.

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 31st March 2024 Rwanda hosted 139,109 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**

2022 Human Development Index: **161** out of **193**

Income Level: **Lower**

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

Contact info: Sarah COLBOURNE (sarah.colbourne@wfp.org)

Country Director: Andrea Bagnoli

Photo caption: WFP Rwanda team joined MINEDUC for the celebration of the 9th Africa Day for School Feeding in Musanze District. Photo: WFP/Gatera Aristide

Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
304.3 m	114.4 m	12.5 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 & 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.

Nutrition:

- WFP conducted a training on child and adolescent nutrition for members of the Sector Plan to Eliminate Malnutrition (SPEM) and of the District Plan to Eliminate Malnutrition (DPEM) in Rutsiro and Ngororero districts. During this session, participants were able to reflect on food and nutrition security in their respective districts and identify key actions to accelerate the reduction of stunting by focusing on nutrition interventions such as promoting small livestock, kitchen gardens, as well as revamping the functionality of nutrition centres by recruiting nutritionists and providing equipment for nutrition screening and reporting.

Smallholder Agricultural Market Support:

- The baseline report for the joint UN programme for Rural Women Economic Empowerment was finalized revealing that: (i) Most women in the programme area are involved in agriculture, aligning with selection criteria for JPRWEE beneficiaries; (ii) Organic fertilizers are widely used among women farmers thanks to the government's subsidy programme (iii) Women predominantly plant pulses (beans, peas, lentils); (iv) Low proportion of rural women engaged in off-farm activities (36.9 percent), with little ownership of revenue streams (1.2 percent of women with off-farm earnings) and an average monthly off-farm income of RWF 23,491 (USD 19). These findings will help strengthen the programme's interventions in its current phase.
- Additionally, significant progress has been made with the Mastercard Foundation-funded Shora Neza project baseline study and is planned to be completed by the end of April.

Monitoring

- In March 2024, the average cost of the food basket was 7,916 RWF, a slight increase from February 2024 (7,843 RWF), and 44 percent lower compared to March 2023. The observed slight increase in the cost of the food basket is associated with a 9 percent increase in the average price of dry beans and a 3 percent increase in cooking oil prices, while maize grain prices reduced by 4 percent. The cost of food basket increased by 13.5 and 12.5 percent in the Mugombwa and Nyabiheke refugee camps, respectively, owing primarily to a rise in the price of dry beans due to reduced stock.

Challenges

- WFP requires a total of USD 12.5 million to sustain its operations for the next six months (April – September 2024), representing 52 percent of the total requirements for planned activities. Of this, USD 10.5 million (loans of USD 4.5 million included) 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 5.7 million is needed to enable the continuation of the current reduced rations until the end of 2024 (loans of USD 4.5 million included).
- WFP continues to advocate and explore funding options in anticipation of the impact of El Niño that could result in floods and landslide. At least USD 1.1 million would be required for WFP to cover the basic food assistance of IDPs in evacuation sites should this materialize.
- WFP is facing a shortfall of USD 0.5 million 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 0.5 million to continue nutrition capacity strengthening and support stunting prevention.

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