



WFP Rwanda Country Brief

May 2024

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



In Numbers

151,742 people reached in May 2024

USD 725,136 cash-based transfers (CBT) distributed

USD 13.7 million six months (June – November 2024) net funding requirements, representing 57 percent of total requirements

310.3 MT of food distributed

Operational Updates

Refugee operation and emergency assistance:

- WFP provided USD 717,432 in cash-based transfers to 118,760 individuals, including 110,413 refugees, 8,226 asylum seekers and 121 Rwandan returnees. This enabled the recipients to purchase food of their choice and meet their basic needs. Schools hosting refugees received USD 7,705 for school feeding contributions and 216.62 MT of food commodities that were distributed as hot meals to asylum seekers under nutrition and school feeding programmes. Additionally, 2,881 individuals benefited from Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) for Nutrition interventions.
- Insecurity in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since November 2022 has led to the displacement of individuals fleeing to Rwanda. As of end May 2024, 14,449 asylum seekers had sought refuge in Rwanda from DRC. Unregistered individuals receive in-kind food assistance, whereas registered individuals receive cash transfers.
- WFP in collaboration with UNHCR welcomed a joint mission from the European Commission's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (DG ECHO) and the EU Delegation to the Mahama refugee camp and the Nkamira transit center. The visit served to observe the impact of their support, discuss challenges, and identify recommendations considering reduced humanitarian funding.

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 May 2024, Rwanda hosted 135,397 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.



Resilient Livelihoods:

- In May 2024, WFP chaired the Regenerative and Conservation Agriculture (RCA) coalition steering committee meeting. Key stakeholders from its 16 member organizations discussed strategies to advance RCA initiatives across the country and coordinate efforts to enhance sustainable agricultural practices.
- WFP hosted representatives from the Conflict and Development Foundation and the Rwanda Institute for Conservation Agriculture (RICA) to observe conservation agriculture (CA) activities in Kayonza district. The mission objectives were to learn how farmers are adopting CA, understand the challenges they face, explore opportunities for collaboration, and expand the benefits to other farmers. WFP also supported the preparation and execution of a comprehensive study on CA to generate evidence about CA adoption and scale-up in the Kayonza, Karongi, and Rutsiro districts.

School Feeding:

- WFP collaborated with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and district authorities to provide daily nutritious meals to 30,000 students in 32 schools across Kayonza, Burera and Gasabo districts. WFP continued to provide technical support to four districts (Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru, Karongi and Rutsiro), as well as the 108 schools that transitioned from WFP support to the National School Feeding Programme (NSFP) in 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.

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: Jean Baptiste, a WFP-supported farmer in Kayonza district, proudly showcasing a freshly harvested cabbage from his field. Photo: WFP/John Paul Sesonga

Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
304.3 m	191.6 m	13.7 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.

Donors: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Canada, EU (ECHO and INTPA), France, Germany (BMZ and GFFO), 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).

- WFP developed materials for a national Food Safety and Quality campaign for the NSFP. These were approved by MINEDUC and will be used in a nation-wide radio campaign to be launched in June 2024.
- WFP Rwanda school feeding team hosted a colleague from WFP Mauritania for an exchange visit to share knowledge and best practices on implementing the school feeding programme. This included meetings with key ministries involved in the implementation of the NSFP, such as MINEDUC, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), and Ministry of Trade (MINICOM), as well as a field mission to schools in Nyamagabe district that are implementing the programme. This South-South exchange gave an opportunity to learn about NSFP coordination at the central and decentralized levels, as well as lessons to inform Mauritania's school feeding programme and coordination mechanisms.

Nutrition:

- WFP is finalizing a Formative Research report for the social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) strategy development which aims to enhance nutritious food consumption among school-aged children and adolescents benefiting from the NSFP.

Smallholder Agricultural Market Support:

- In collaboration with cooperating partners, WFP organized onboarding sessions for 1,000 Farmer Service Centers (FSCs) participating in the Shora Neza project, funded by the Mastercard Foundation. These sessions were conducted across 10 targeted districts nationwide. The main purpose was to align FSCs with the Shora Neza project vision and create networking opportunities for the FSCs.
- WFP and Impact Hub Kigali launched the third phase of [the IGNITE Food Systems Challenge 3.0](#), inviting startup micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and cooperatives with innovative solutions to enhance refugee livelihoods. The selected ventures will be awarded with up to USD 25,000 in grant funding and tailored technical support from industry experts among other benefits.

Monitoring

- Market assessments conducted in May 2024 indicated that the average cost of the monthly food basket in refugee camps was RWF 8,434, a 1.7 percent increase compared to April 2024 (8,290 RWF), and 36 percent less than in May 2023. The slight increase is associated with a 2 percent increase in the average price of maize grain and a 4 percent increase in the average price of cooking oil.

Challenges

- WFP requires a total of USD 13.7 million to sustain its operations for the next six months (June-November 2024), representing 57 percent of the total funding requirement for planned activities. Of this, USD 13.1 million (loans of USD 4.5 m 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 in the next six months (loans of USD 4.5 m included).
- 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.