



WFP Rwanda Country Brief December 2024

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 2024, Rwanda hosted 134,915 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**

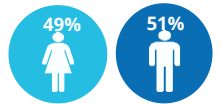
2022 Human Development Index:
161 out of 193

Income Level: **Lower**

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

In Numbers

164,135 people reached in December 2024



USD 714,268 cash-based transfers (CBT) distributed

USD 11.6 million six months (Jan. 2025 – Jun. 2025) net funding requirements

227.58 mt of food distributed

Strategic updates

- During the annual Government of Rwanda-UN Joint Steering Committee meeting on 16 December 2024, WFP presented its Country Strategy Plan 2025-2029 (to be launched March 2025). The session brought together government officials, development partners, the private sector, and civil society to reflect on priority areas and strategize for ongoing collaboration. WFP's upcoming CSP aligns to the 2nd National Strategy for Transformation (NST2) and Vision 2025 and aims to ensure food security and nutrition for all people in Rwanda.
- WFP Rwanda presented its [draft Country Strategic Plan \(CSP\) for 2025-2029](#) to the WFP Executive Board during an informal consultation also on 16 December. The plan focuses on enhancing food security, improving nutrition, and building resilience, particularly for displaced communities and smallholder farmers. It aims to support Rwanda's development goals while addressing emerging challenges related to food systems, climate change, and socio-economic resilience.

Operational updates

Refugee operation

- To address immediate food and nutrition needs, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 128,235 people, including 114,093 refugees and registered asylum seekers, 5,451 unregistered asylum seekers, 8,379 host community children attending the same schools as refugee children, and 312 Rwandan returnees who received three months of take-home food assistance in the form of cash transfers.
- WFP distributed a total of USD 706,788 enabling targeted refugees and returnees to purchase food of their choice. Furthermore, WFP provided USD 7,480 as school feeding contribution to schools that host refugees and 172 mt of food commodities to asylum seekers and households enrolled in nutrition programmes. Additionally, around 3,897 individuals benefitted from Social and Behaviour Change Communication for Nutrition (SBCC-N) interventions.
- Since November 2022, insecurity in eastern DRC has led to the displacement of an increasing number of individuals. As of December 2024, 15,873 Congolese asylum seekers, along with a small group of Sudanese, have sought refuge in Rwanda.

Nutrition

- On December 1, WFP participated in World AIDS Day celebration in Rubavu District under the theme “*End AIDS, My Responsibility.*” Organized by Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC), the event launched a six-month campaign to raise awareness about HIV and m-Pox, combat stigma, and mobilize resources to sustain progress in the fight against HIV and other viral outbreaks.

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Photo caption: 56 lead farmers who were trained in improved post-harvest handling and storage techniques through the Joint Programme on Post-Harvest Losses, a collaboration between WFP, FAO, IFAD, and the Government of Rwanda. Photo: WFP/Gatera Aristide

Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
312 m	203.6 m	11.6 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: Canada, EU (ECHO and INTPA), Finland, France, Gates Foundation, Germany (BMZ and GFFO), Ireland, Japan, 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 participated in the National Child Development Agency's (NCDA) nutrition sector retreat in Rubavu, from 10-13 December, which brought together key government officials and development partners to plan for 2025 and beyond. As a key nutrition partner, WFP will serve on the technical team developing the costed implementation plan for the retreat's 22-point resolution on policy, research, funding, and monitoring.

School Feeding

- In December, WFP provided daily nutritious meals to over 30,000 students in 32 schools across three supported districts (Kayonza, Burera and Gasabo) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and district authorities.
- WFP, in collaboration with MINAGRI, strengthened the capacity of maize farmers in Burera by providing training on climate-resilient post-harvest handling and storage techniques. The training benefitted 150 farmers from 46 maize farmer cooperatives, directly supporting the National School Feeding Programme and contributing to sustainable agricultural practices and food security in the region.

Food Systems

- WFP is actively promoting youth employment in food value chains by equipping young entrepreneurs supported under the Shora Neza project with essential resources. As part of this initiative, WFP distributed starter kits to 300 young entrepreneurs as inputs into their micro-business ventures.
- Through the Joint UN Programme on Post-Harvest Losses, WFP, FAO, and IFAD supported the Government of Rwanda to train 56 lead farmers in improved post-harvest handling and storage. These participants will, in turn, train and demonstrate these practices to their fellow cooperative members, which will enhance overall post-harvest management skills.
- WFP organized business-to-business (B2B) linkage sessions to connect farmer cooperatives with maize buyers for Season A crops. This supports local value chains and creates sustainable market opportunities for farmers.

Monitoring

- In December, the average cost of the monthly food basket was RWF 13,491, although stable compared to November 2024 (13,498 RWF), this is a 25 percent higher than December 2023. The stable monthly food basket cost is mainly due to the harvest of dry beans, and relatively stable maize grain prices.

Challenges

- WFP requires a total of USD 11.6 million to sustain its operations for the next six months (Jan. 2025-Jun. 2025), representing 44 percent of the total funding requirement for planned activities. While some of the key activities are relatively well-funded, critical initiatives like support for refugee self-reliance and social protection remain severely underfunded, highlighting the need for additional support.