



World Food Programme

WFP Burundi Country Brief February 2025

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Operational Context

The humanitarian situation in Burundi remains of high concern, with high numbers of vulnerable people and households suffering the effects of multiple and concurrent socio economic and climate crises. Vulnerabilities are linked to weak institutional capacity to manage climactic shocks, high levels of chronic and acute malnutrition and a lack of adequate safety nets.

The economic situation is marked by high inflation and recurrent fuel shortages. According to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) bulletin for November 2024, the general annual inflation rate stands at +18.8 percent and that for food products at +17 percent. The price of food commodities continues to rise, preventing vulnerable households' access to nutritive and sufficient food.

According to the December 2024 IPC survey, 15 percent of the population (1.9 million people including 179,000 in emergency [IPC4]) are acutely food insecure and required immediate food assistance. An additional 6.3 million people (45 percent of the population) are classified as being under stress (IPC Phase 2), bringing the total at risk of acute food insecurity to 8 million (58 percent of the total population). The prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children aged 6-59 months is 52.8 percent and remains the highest in the world.

The number of newly arrived Congolese refugees in Burundi fleeing insecurity in easter DRC has surged to nearly 67,000 and are now sheltered in transit centers and temporary sites across Cibitoke and Bubanza provinces, western Burundi, and Rumonge province in south. As of March 4th, these new arrivals have doubled the number of Congolese refugees in Burundi who depend on humanitarian assistance for their food security

Since 2017, more than 200,000 Burundians have been repatriated, further straining the scarce resources available in host communities. WFP has been present in Burundi since 1968.



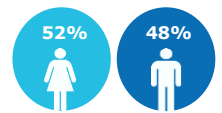
Population: **12.3 million**

2021 Human Development Index:
187 out of 191

72 percent of Burundians live under the poverty line (2.5 USD/day)

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

In Numbers



796,507 people assisted in February 2025

USD 1,354,573 cash distributed through cash-based transfers

1,102 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 37.58 m six months net funding requirements (April - September 2025)

Operational Updates

- **Assistance to refugees:** WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 117,825 refugees and asylum seekers across five camps, one site, and two transit centers. Among them, were 31,813 children (6-59 months) and 4,713 elderly individuals (60+ years). 56,973 refugees in camps received hybrid rations of in-kind food and cash transfers, while 60,852 newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers in transit centres were provided with hot meals since their arrival in country. In February, WFP distributed 540 mt of in-kind food and USD 354,141 through cash-based transfers to the refugees.
- **Assistance to returnees:** WFP provided 4 mt of in-kind assistance to 75 Burundian returnees, including 20 children. Support included hot meals during their stay at transit centers and in-kind food to cover three months of food needs as part of a return package aimed at supporting their reintegration. Few returnees were received because repatriation was suspended since January due to the outbreak of the Marburg virus epidemic in the Ugandan and Tanzanian districts bordering Burundi
- **Assistance to those affected by climatic shocks:** WFP provided assistance to 5,055 people affected by last year's floods. The assistance included 40 metric tons of in-kind food and USD 39,102 in cash-based transfers. The recipients were primarily from the flooded Gatumba district, who had been relocated by the government to Gateri in Cibitoke province.
- **Supplementation of moderate acute malnutrition:** WFP provided 13 mt of specialized nutritious foods to 4,145 children aged 6-59 months for supplementation of moderate acute malnutrition across Cankuzo, Ruyigi, Muyinga, Ngozi, Kirundo, and Rutana provinces. However, due to a shortage of specialized nutritious foods, moderately malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls did not receive supplementation in February 2025. To address malnutrition among the newly arrived Congolese refugees, WFP has moved its existing stock of specialized nutritious foods from Ngozi field office to be distributed in the refugee transit camps.
- **Home-grown School Meals Programme:** WFP provided locally procured school meals to 625,866 children, representing 84 percent of the total planned. In February, WFP distributed 505 mt of in-kind commodities, and disbursed USD 722,460 for local food purchases, sourcing commodities from local smallholder farmers and cooperatives. This initiative aims to improve children's nutrition, support their education, and boost local economies by engaging smallholder farmers.
- **Social protection programme:** The Merankabandi project implemented by the Government of Burundi and funded by World Bank, accelerates the enrolment of the most vulnerable refugee families hosted in refugee camps into the national social protection programme.

***Six Month Net Funding Requirements – The resources needed to fully implement all WFP activities include the upcoming six months of pipeline shortfalls, outstanding advances (such as IRA and WCF) that must be repaid, and confirmed contributions that have not yet been programmed..**

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
257.96 m	1.28 m	37.58 m

Strategic Result 1: Access to food

Country Strategic Plan Outcome 1: Shock-affected populations in targeted areas, Burundi returnees, internally displaced persons and refugees in camps can meet their basic food and nutrition needs all year round.

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

- **Activity 1:** Provide unconditional food and/or cash-based assistance to refugees in camps and transit centres.
- **Activity 2:** Provide unconditional food and/or cash-based assistance to acutely food-insecure households, including shock-affected households, internally displaced persons and Burundi returnees.
- **Activity 3:** Provide adequate and timely nutrition-dense food along with gender-transformative social and behaviour change communication to supplement the diets of acutely malnourished boys and girls aged 6–59 months, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls, people living with HIV and people undergoing treatment for tuberculosis in refugee camps and targeted areas

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Country Strategic Plan Outcome 2: People in Burundi have improved nutrition, health and education outcomes that contribute to human capital throughout the year.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

- **Activity 4:** Provide integrated nutrition interventions that contribute to the prevention of malnutrition among children aged 6–23 months, adolescent girls, pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and people living with HIV and tuberculosis.
- **Activity 5:** Promote safe and nutritious school meals to pre-primary and primary school-aged children in targeted areas

Strategic Result 3: Sustainable Food Systems

Country Strategic Plan Outcome 3: Food-insecure and risk-prone populations in targeted areas, especially women and young people, smallholder farmers, farmer-based organizations and value chain actors, have improved and more sustainable livelihoods all year round through resilient, efficient and inclusive food systems.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

- **Activity 6:** Provide an integrated package of assistance for smallholder farmers and value chain actors that enables them to equitably access and utilize appropriate technology, innovation, skills, inputs and services to improve their productivity and incomes and increase their access to markets.
- **Activity 7:** Provide an integrated package of assistance to food-insecure, risk-prone populations including refugees and support access to nutrition-sensitive, gender-transformative, climate-resilient livelihood interventions

Strategic Result 4: Capacity Strengthening

Country Strategic Plan Outcome 4: Government and national actors in Burundi have strengthened capacities, systems and services to plan, design, implement and monitor food and nutrition assistance, food systems, school meals and social protection policies and strategies, by 2027.

Focus area: *Resilience Building*

- **Activity 8:** Provide systems strengthening support on the co-creation, design and implementation of effective food and nutrition assistance programmes, including for supply chains, social protection, school meals, sustainable food systems and early warning and emergency preparedness systems

Strategic Result 8: Enhance global partnership

Country Strategic Plan Outcome 5: The Government and humanitarian and development partners have access to reliable common services and expertise that enables them to reach vulnerable people and respond to needs and emergencies throughout the year.

Focus area: *Crisis Response*

- **Activity 9:** Provide on-demand supply chain and emergency telecommunications and information technology services to government, development and humanitarian partners

- In February, WFP distributed **USD 190,204** through cash-based transfers to **38,080** refugees' families. These transfers were complemented by training sessions on social behaviour change and entrepreneurship skills, to support the development of income-generating activities and improve the refugees' financial autonomy and self-reliance.

- **Food assistance for Mpox patients:** In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, WFP is providing food assistance to MPOX patients, caregivers, and health care staff in eight isolation centers in the provinces of Bujumbura City, Bujumbura Rural, Gitega, Muyinga and Kayanza. In February 2025, Cooperating partners distributed hot meals worth USD 48,666 to 5,461 individuals.

Monitoring

- **Market price monitoring:** In comparison to January 2025, the average prices of key commodities such as beans, cereals, and tubers remained relatively stable. Bean prices did not change, cereal prices decreased by 2 percent, and tuber prices increased by 2 percent. This stability is due to the positive impact of the first harvests of the 2025A season (December 2024). The decrease in cereal prices was mainly driven by a significant drop in maize prices (-22 percent for maize grain and -15 percent for maize flour). The slight increase in tuber prices was primarily due to an 8 percent rise in sweet potato prices.
- However, the instability in eastern Congo is worsening, particularly due to the influx of over 60,000 Congolese refugees into Burundi. This situation is putting pressure on Burundi's resources, leading to soaring food prices, rising rents, and other economic challenges.
- **Process monitoring:** In February, WFP process monitoring revealed a prolonged (3-month) food stock shortage in the 207 schools supported by the school feeding programme in Gitega province. This shortage was mainly due to a logistical challenge linked to the lack of trucks to transport food. To address this issue, WFP plans to repair four pickup trucks for use and/or borrow trucks from the WFP country office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to strengthen the logistical capacity of the Gitega field office.

Challenges

- **Food assistance for refugees:** In February, WFP continued to provide refugees in camps with a 75 percent food ration, and 50 percent ration for the new refugees in transit centers due to resource constraints. This ration will be reduced to 50 percent for all refugees starting in March 2025 if no new funding is confirmed immediately. Food ration cuts deeply impact the refugee population, forcing many to resort to negative coping mechanisms including accumulating debt, and gender-based risks, including prostitution and early marriage.
- **The school feeding programme:** Funding challenges continue to constrain the school feeding programme. WFP needs USD 15.5 million to sustain the implementation of the programme in pre and primary schools in Burundi for this academic year (from September 2024 to June 2025), as a critical investment in Burundi's human capital development.

Donors (in alphabetical order): Austria, Burundi, China, European Union, FEED, Finland, France, Germany, Global Partnership for Education, Kerry Group, Mastercard Foundation, Monaco, Netherlands, Rockefeller Foundation, Russia, Switzerland, United States of America, UNICERF, World Bank.

Photo: Congolese asylum seekers in a transit site in Cibitoke province, western Burundi, eating cooked food provided by WFP. © WFP/Irene Nduwayezu

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