



WFP Rwanda Country Brief

March 2025

World Food Programme



SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Operational Context

Rwanda has made significant progress over the last few decades, demonstrating the Government's dedication to economic growth. This is evidenced by significant achievements in poverty reduction, gender equality, environmental sustainability, education, and public health, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. With a population of 13.2 million people expanding at 2.3 percent annually and an ambition to become a middle-income country by 2035 and a high-income country by 2050, Rwanda continues efforts to diversifying the economy, enhancing industrialization, and developing human capital.

However, 27.4 percent of the population live below the poverty line and 17 percent are food insecure. Levels of stunting among young children remain high at 29.7 percent (2024 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability and Nutrition Analysis Survey) with regional disparities. 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 March 2025, Rwanda hosted 135,952 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

162,990 people reached in March 2025



USD 702,134 cash-based transfers (CBT) distributed

USD 13 million six months (April– Sept. 2025) net funding requirements

259 MT of food distributed

Strategic Updates

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) hosted the dissemination event of the 2024 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) on 14 March 2025. The exercise was jointly implemented by MINAGRI with the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda and WFP, with findings indicating 83 percent of Rwandan households as food secure, an increase by 4 percent from 2021.
- Following the recommendation from the 2024 CFSVA dissemination to investigate the drivers of persistent stunting in Rwanda; WFP and the National Child Development Agency met to discuss the possibility to conduct the Modelling and Mapping the Risk of Inadequate Micronutrient Intake (MIMI) research in Rwanda, which will provide analysis on the micronutrient status in the country. The concept and approach were presented, discussed, and endorsed and NCDA will chair a new technical working group, bringing together expertise from various sectors to oversee and provide strategic support to the analysis, including the definition of its policy objectives.
- WFP together with other UN country team members visited Rome Based Agencies (RBA) project sites in Ruhango district to understand the joint contribution of FAO, IFAD and WFP to more resilient food systems, improve collaboration and foster a "One UN" approach.
- WFP, in collaboration with MINAGRI, the Rwanda Institute for Conservation Agriculture, and the Mennonite Central Committee, organized the first-ever National Conservation Agriculture Symposium, which was attended by representatives from all 30 Rwandan districts. This paves the way for conservation agriculture acceleration and scale up across the country.

Operational updates

Refugee operation

- In March, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 130,654 individuals, including 115,283 refugees and registered asylum seekers, 5,480 unregistered asylum seekers, 8,379 host community children attending the same schools as refugee children, and 350 Rwandan returnees who received three months of take-home food assistance in the form of cash transfers. Additionally, 1,162 individuals benefited from Social and Behaviour Change Communication for Nutrition (SBCC-N) interventions.
- WFP distributed a total of USD 694,838.90 purchase food of their choice. Additionally, WFP provided USD 7,294.61 as school feeding contribution to schools that host refugees, and 169.409 MT of food commodities to asylum seekers and households enrolled in nutrition programmes.
- Insecurity is displacing an increasing number of individuals. As of March, 16,602 Congolese asylum seekers, along with a small group of Sudanese, have sought refuge in Rwanda.
- WFP undertook resource mobilization efforts to avert ration reductions for all refugees. A total of USD 5.6 million is urgently required to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees through December 2025. Should no additional funding be availed, WFP will be forced to reduce cash rations for food to only 50 percent of entitlements to all eligible refugees in April 2025.

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Photo caption: WFP and the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) disseminated the 2024 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA), which provides updates on the state of food and nutrition security in Rwanda. Photo : MINAGRI

Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
312 m	205 m	13 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, Denmark, 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, Denmark, Switzerland, UN Common Funds and Agencies, USA (USAID and USDA).

School Feeding

- In March 2025, WFP provided daily nutritious meals to over 32,000 students in 32 schools across Kayonza, Burera and Gasabo in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and district authorities. This aims to enhance school attendance rates among school children.
- WFP and MINEDUC cooperated to organize and celebrate the Africa Day of School Feeding on March 7, 2025, under the theme "A Decade of Nourishment: Celebrating the Past, Securing a Just Future." The Vice Mayor of Kigali, the WFP Country Director, and the Minister of Education all delivered messages encouraging stakeholders to support the National School Feeding Programme. During the event, the best-performing districts and schools across Rwanda’s five provinces were awarded, including three WFP-supported districts (Burera, Nyamagabe, and Gasabo) and one WFP-supported school (Ecole primaire Cyili).
- The quarter one 2025 school feeding technical working group meeting, chaired by MINEDUC and co-chaired by WFP, established a clean cooking task force. It will focus on developing a transition plan and supporting projects for the National School Feeding Programme to transition from firewood to more environmentally friendly fuel options.

Social Protection

- WFP attended the social protection sector retreat in March 2025, chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government. The retreat covered the sector strategic plan and identified key priorities for 2025/2026. WFP was named co-chair of the “Short-Term Assistance and Shock Response” subcommittee in recognition of its contributions to the sector, alongside the Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management serving as chair.

Nutrition

- WFP supported the Government in formulating and finalizing commitments for the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) summit, which took place in Paris, France, from 27 to 28 March 2025. The commitments reflect WFP’s support to national priorities in Rwanda, particularly on school feeding, food fortification, and nutrition systems strengthening.

Food Systems

- In an effort to increase access to financial literacy through savings groups and loans, particularly for women and young people, WFP launched a new partnership with World Relief Rwanda to scale up the [SheCan initiative](#). Building on the successful pilot phase from 2022 and a feasibility study from 2024, this phase will seek to enhance the focus on financial literacy, digital skills development, and credit access for diverse target groups, while also broadening its regional scope, diversifying financial product offerings, and improving digital integration.
- WFP launched a new initiative to develop a market-based, multisector approach aimed at reducing post-harvest losses, in collaboration with the Government and UN partners.

Monitoring

- In March, the average monthly food basket cost was RWF 11,453, a 3.9 percent drop compared to February 2025 (RWF 11,923) but a 45 percent increase compared to March 2024. The monthly decline is attributable to the drop in maize grain prices caused by the availability of maize from the season 2025 A production. On average, the price of beans increased by 9 percent in March 2025, while maize grain prices decreased by 12 percent across all camps.

Challenges

- WFP requires a total of USD 13 million to sustain its operations for the next six months (April-Sept. 2025), representing 49 percent of the total funding requirement for planned activities. Out of this, USD 5.6 million are urgently needed to maintain the current 75 percent cash rations for targeted refugees. Also, critical initiatives like support for refugee self-reliance and social protection remain severely underfunded, highlighting the need for additional support.