



World Food Programme

WFP Rwanda Country Brief

April 2025



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 diversify 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 30 April 2025, Rwanda hosted 136,407 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**

2025 Human Development Index:
159 out of 193

Income Level: **Lower**

Chronic malnutrition: **30 percent** of children between **6-59 months**

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Photo caption: Lead farmers in Nyagatare District participate in a joint training by WFP, FAO, and IFAD on climate-resilient agriculture and post-harvest loss management. Photo: WFP/Raissa Iradukunda

In Numbers

163,014 people reached in April 2025



USD 484,489 cash-based transfers (CBT) distributed

USD 13 million six months (May – October 2025) net funding requirements

43.853 mt of food distributed

Strategic Updates

- In support of the Government's Refugee Sustainable Graduation Strategy, WFP has been engaging in consultations with the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) and partners. WFP is working to align its programming to support livelihood initiatives to reduce humanitarian needs.
- WFP and the National Child Development Agency (NCDA) received approval to conduct a study for Modelling and Mapping the Risk of Inadequate Micronutrient Intake (MIMI), aimed at identifying the drivers of persistent stunting in Rwanda. Following this, WFP and NCDA presented the concept note and methodology to the National Institute of Statistics, where all parties agreed to collaborate and share data for analysis. The findings, expected in the third quarter of this year, will provide critical evidence to inform efforts in addressing the country's micronutrient challenges.

Operational updates

Refugee operation

- In April, WFP provided food and nutrition assistance to 130,682 individuals, including 115,622 refugees and registered asylum seekers, 4,910 unregistered asylum seekers, 8,379 host community children attending the same schools as refugee children, and 700 Rwandan returnees who received three months of take-home food assistance in the form of cash transfers. Additionally, 1,071 individuals participated in Social and Behaviour Change Communication for Nutrition (SBCC-N) and livelihood projects, fostering their self-reliance.
- Due to critical funding shortfalls, WFP reduced cash-based transfers for food for all targeted refugees to 50 percent of their entitlements required to meet daily caloric food needs.** However, WFP continues to provide full support for in-kind food assistance for asylum seekers, supplementary nutrition programme as well as school feeding. As a result of ration reductions, complaints received from refugees have increased, and negative coping mechanisms, such as taking on debts and adults skipping meals to prioritize children, could worsen further.
- Following the ration cuts, WFP distributed a total of USD 477,252 to enable refugees to purchase food of their choice. Furthermore, schools hosting refugee children received USD 7,233 as school feeding contribution. WFP also distributed 164 mt of food commodities to asylum seekers and households enrolled in nutrition programmes.
- WFP continues resource mobilization efforts to avert further ration reductions for refugees. **A total of USD 6.3 million is urgently required to ensure continued humanitarian food and nutrition assistance to refugees through December 2025.** Should no additional funding be provided, WFP will be compelled to stop its cash-based transfers for food entirely in August 2025.
- Meanwhile, needs continue to rise as insecurity forces more people to flee their homes. Between November 2022 and April 2025, Rwanda received 16,729 asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), along with a small number of Sudanese. UNHCR anticipates that an additional 15,000 returnees from eastern DRC will arrive in Rwanda by the end of this year.

Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2025)

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, Netherlands, Norway, Novo Nordisk Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Switzerland, UN Common Funds and Agencies, USA (USAID and USDA).

School Feeding

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and district authorities, WFP provided daily nutritious school meals to 32,296 school going children across 32 schools in three supported districts (Kayonza, Burera, and Gasabo).
- WFP began supporting the Government in exploring the possibility of scaling up the use of fortified wholegrain maize meal nationwide. To this end, WFP was appointed as a member of both the scale-up task force and the technical team working on developing a phased scale-up approach to begin in September 2025.
- As part of WFP's continued support to the National School Feeding Programme, WFP provided 30 mt of fortified corn-soy-blend (CSB++) to Kayonza district in April 2025. This contribution supports the district's efforts to provide nutritious porridge to all pre-primary school children in Kayonza, aiming to improve their nutritional health and learning outcomes.

Disaster Risk Management

- WFP facilitated and participated in a disaster emergency simulation exercise in Rubavu district, organized by MINEMA, to evaluate and improve flood response through the Disaster Management Coordination forum. This was part of preparation efforts ahead of the April/May rainy season.
- WFP also collaborated with MINEMA to refine preparedness plans for the rainy season, ensuring effective response to localized disasters caused by heavy rains.

Food Systems

- As part of joint efforts by Rome-based UN agencies to advance food systems, WFP, FAO, and IFAD trained 55 lead farmers in Nyagatare District on improved climate-resilient practices and post-harvest loss management. These lead farmers will cascade the training to approximately 1,000 farmers in cooperatives across Nyagatare.
- Following the launch of a new partnership in March 2025 to scale-up the blended finance [SheCan initiative](#), WFP and World Relief are preparing to further improve financial literacy, digital skills, and credit access for diverse target groups, as well as broaden its regional scope, diversify financial product offerings, and enhance digital integration, with a strong focus on women and youth.

Monitoring

- In April, the average monthly food basket cost was RWF 12,570, a 10 percent increase compared to March 2025 (RWF 11,453) and of 52 percent since April 2024. The cost increased across all refugee camps, with increases ranging between 4 and 18 percent. The rise is mainly attributed to reduced food stocks, which pushed up the prices of key staples. Compared to March 2025, the price of both dry beans and maize grain increased by an average of 7 percent.

Challenges

- WFP requires a total of USD 13 million to sustain its operations for the next six months (May-October 2025), representing 55 percent of the total funding requirement for planned activities. Out of this, USD 6.3 million is urgently needed to restore the previous 75 percent cash rations for targeted refugees which have been reduced to 50 percent due to funding constraints. In addition, critical initiatives such as support for refugee self-reliance and social protection remain severely underfunded, highlighting the need for additional resources.