



Photo: WFP Burundi Country Director in Busuma refugee site. WFP/Irene Nduwayezu

WFP Burundi

COUNTRY BRIEF

February 2026

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

[Burundi](#) | [World Food Programme](#)

- In January 2026, WFP assisted 1.1 million people, delivering 413 mt of food and USD 6.7 million in cash transfers.
- Despite operational challenges, WFP delivered food assistance to the influx of new refugees from the DRC, providing hybrid rations and hot meals using ONPRA/UNHCR lists of registered refugees. In total, WFP reached 160,579 refugees among which 82,015 newly arrived caseload. WFP and its partners distributed reduced (75 percent) rations allowing them to cover only 50 percent of daily food needs, due to funding shortfall.
- WFP delivered school-feeding to 880,000 children this month. WFP also launched home-grown school feeding for 4,500 children in Musenyi site as well as nutrition initiative targeting 7,250 vulnerable children and their accompanying mothers.
- WFP requires USD 49.3 million for Mar–Aug 2026 to scale assistance, preposition supplies and fund reintegration to prevent protection harms and market destabilization.



1.1 million people assisted in January 2026



49.4%
Male



50.6%
Female



413 mt food distributed



USD 6.7 M cash transferred



USD 52.2M (Feb – Jul 2026) net funding requirements

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Since December 2025, Burundi has received over 101,000 new refugees, mainly women and children, fleeing insecurity in eastern DRC, placing severe pressure on local markets and public services. Most were registered in Busuma settlement. Lifesaving assistance has been significantly strained, with rations reduced to 75 percent, underscoring the urgent need to rapidly scale up humanitarian support, preposition supplies, and strengthen protection and basic services.
- At the same time, the current agricultural season has been disrupted by severe climatic shocks. Hydric deficits in the northern provinces affected nearly 500,000 people (about 100,000 households), according to the January 2026 joint rapid multisectoral assessment, while widespread excessive rainfall reported by IOM's displacement tracking matrix affected over 120,000 people, 22 percent of whom were displaced. The northern, western, and eastern regions were the hardest hit, with impacts in the East further compounded by the influx of returning Burundians and Congolese refugees, placing additional strain on already fragile local food systems.
- The economy has been strained by persistent inflation and recurrent fuel shortages. Headline inflation eased to 12.6 percent in January 2026 from 38.1 percent a year earlier, but this largely reflects a base effect; prices remain high enough to erode purchasing power and distort markets. (January 2026 [Consumer Price Index](#) statistics). Although the decline suggests a degree of year-on-year stabilization, it warrants cautious interpretation since the baseline period was marked by exceptionally high inflation; persistently elevated prices continue to erode household purchasing power and distort market functioning, hence undermining any apparent gains.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Crisis Response

- In January 2026, WFP provided hybrid ration (cash-based transfers, hot meal and dry food) assistance to a total of 160,579 Congolese refugees (82,015 newly arrived) – delivering USD 1,615,494 in cash and 413 Mt of foods. Refugee registrations and list reconciliation took place alongside relocation to Busuma site during this month, which led to discrepancies in beneficiary number assisted (inclusion and exclusion errors) with subsequent corrective and adjustment measures being taken for the following distribution cycle. Refugees, old and new, received a reduced (75%) ration due to funding shortfall. Refugees hosted in the Cishemere and Makombe transit centres continued to receive hot meals through WFP's cooperating partners.
- Meanwhile, the humanitarian community, in collaboration with the Government, has been preparing for a large-scale Burundian refugee return from Tanzania. In January, return patterns have increased to reach more than 8,000 individuals. WFP assisted them with 12.9 mt of food in hot meals at transit centers, and CBTs amounting to USD 416,846 to help them reintegrate their communities. UNHCR and partners project a total of 93,000 returnees during the first half of 2026. WFP Burundi has only the capacity to assist up to 59,000 returnees through June 2026, leaving a gap of 34,000 or forcing to consider reduction of assistance for all returnees.

Nutrition

- As indicated in previous country brief, WFP has been facing a full pipeline funding shortfall under this component, hence leading to stopping all activities related to prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition. Thanks to funding received from France in December 2025, a nutrition prevention initiative was officially launched on 27 January 2026 to strengthen food security and nutrition for vulnerable cohorts in and around Musenyi refugee site, targeting 7,250 beneficiaries (5,250 refugees and 2,000 host community members) and prioritizing pregnant and breastfeeding women and children aged 6–23 months.
- WFP joined the UN-Nutrition Catalytic Initiative with UN agencies and the Government, leading the Local to Global Nutrition component to document and scale field-tested interventions that improve diets and service delivery. Planned outputs include policy briefs, photo and video materials to amplify community successes, inform national policy, and catalyze funding. Next steps are to finalize the budget, confirm partners, and schedule field documentation to accelerate evidence-based scale-up. In January 2026, consultations on the new national fortification strategy were relaunched. As part of this process, WFP sought the

technical support of Antrologica to promote fortification, including the design and implementation of a survey that has since produced a detailed report. In parallel, ESARO, in collaboration with WFP, initiated data collection for a landscape analysis on fortification in Burundi. These combined efforts aim to provide an evidence base to guide national policy, strengthen advocacy, and accelerate the adoption of fortification as a key nutrition intervention.

School-Based Assistance

- In January 2026, WFP sustained Burundi's national home-grown school feeding system, ensuring school meals for approximately 880,000 children despite severe funding constraints. Together with partners, WFP also launched a home-grown school-feeding programme in schools attended by refugees and host communities in Musenyi, where refugees' settlement is located. As a result, 4,500 schoolchildren (67 percent refugee children) will now receive school meals, contributing to both nutritional and educational outcomes. The approach also aims to strengthen social cohesion between host communities and refugees.

Resilience and Livelihood Support

- In January, WFP strengthened socio-economic and climate resilience by linking 68 agricultural cooperatives and village savings and loans associations (VSLA) leaders (47 women, 21 men) to the school-feeding supply chain, creating immediate market opportunities for vulnerable households. A dedicated networking session established shared production schemes (50/50 harvest share) and formal sales arrangements, turning scattered smallholders into coordinated suppliers and increasing predictable income for participating families. These linkages are expected to translate into tangible gains: higher productivity through coordinated planting and inputs, clearer market access for cooperative members, and strengthened supply for home-grown school feeding, benefiting both producers and 4,500 schoolchildren. By embedding VSLAs and cooperatives in structured value-chain relationships, the activity boosts household resilience, promotes women's economic leadership, and creates a sustainable pathway for scaling local food systems.

More durable, local solutions

- In January 2026, WFP continued its collaboration with the World Bank by supporting the Government-led Merankabandi social protection programme, including follow-up on commitments made during the December technical meeting. WFP also strengthened government and partner capacities in local stock management, digital beneficiary registration (SCOPE), logistics systems, and integrated refugee-host community response planning. In addition, WFP contributed to the development of a single social registry, working with

the Government and partners to establish a unified database that consolidates beneficiary information across programmes, improving targeting accuracy, reducing duplication, and enhancing coordination of social protection interventions.

- Meanwhile, WFP and the Government of Burundi advanced the Soleil Nyakiriza project to improve energy services in rural schools. Key achievements included preparations for adopting a new prototype of institutional improved stoves, the launch of construction of 549 stoves, and the rehabilitation of 71 kitchen shelters in the communes of Ngozi, Kirundo, and Muyinga within Butanyerera and Buhumuza provinces. A supervision mission was scheduled for February to consolidate progress and ensure quality implementation.

Cross- Cutting Issues

Logistics

- WFP's supply chain operated under acute constraints driven by persistent national fuel shortages and high fuel prices, damaged infrastructure, and challenging last-mile access. Despite these pressures, logistics teams sustained uninterrupted delivery by moving 247 mt of food through WFP-managed transport, storage and dispatch operations, while cooperating partners forwarded an additional 166 mt to targeted locations. WFP also supported emergency reception services for returnees and refugees, moving the equivalent of 57 mt of food since early January. Meanwhile,
- WFP continued to mitigate the impact of fuel shortages on humanitarian operations through its fuel provision service. In January, 14,486 litres were provided to 16 humanitarian and development organizations. To ensure continuity of assistance, support is required for critical supply chain functions including fuel procurement, prepositioning of stocks, surge transport capacity, and targeted rehabilitation of critical access infrastructure.

Monitoring and Assessment

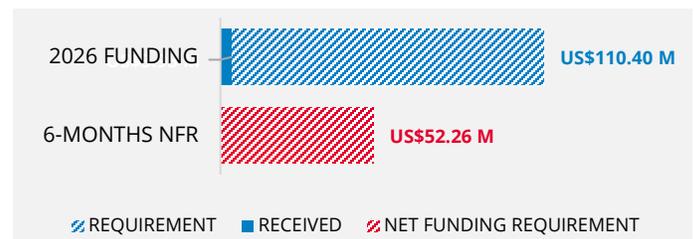
- **Climatic shocks monitoring:** Severe rainfall deficit has affected more than 100,000 households in Kirundo at the end of 2025; excessive rainfall since early 2026 has impacted more than 60,000 people. A significant share of farming households will likely miss out on the 2026A harvest, driving up acute food assistance needs.
- **Market price monitoring** January marks the start of the 2026 A harvest season, enabling a gradual reconstruction of household stocks and easing price pressure. Bean prices fell by 2%, while cereals and tubers registered marginal increases. Markets around Busuma, which absorbed more than 65,000 refugees in late 2025, recorded higher price levels than before, with

further adjustments expected as harvests reach local markets. In Kirundo, food prices have remained relatively stable despite the water deficit. However, household food access has deteriorated sharply due to declining purchasing power: opportunities for agricultural labor have become scarce, and daily wages have fallen from about 5,000 BIF to 3,000–3,500 BIF in the affected localities. The forthcoming April–May 2026 lean season will require solid and regular market monitoring, rapid price reporting, and contingency planning with commodity prepositioning where markets show persistent price spikes or supply shortfalls, to protect purchasing power and prevent negative coping strategies.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

- In January 2026, severe funding shortfalls left WFP Burundi with a 6-month Net Funding Requirement of more than USD 52 million, forcing the reduction of refugee rations to 75 percent and preventing the implementation of any assistance to the food-insecure Burundian households initially planned under crisis response. These gaps also meant that several key programmes could not continue at all, notably MAM treatment for children and pregnant/breastfeeding women, as well as wider nutrition-prevention support (except in Musenyi). School meals were also delivered 9 days out of 18 days this month, due to funding constraints.

Burundi country strategic plan (2024–2027) | World Food Programme



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