



## BURUNDI COUNTRY BRIEF April 2026

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS



**551,713** people assisted in March 2026  
(50.6% female)



**90 mt** food distributed in March 2026



**USD 3.8 M** cash transferred in March 2026



**USD 54 M** required in the next six months  
(April – September 2026)

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

- A new modality is being piloted for Burundian returnees arriving from Tanzania, allowing direct returns to communes and bypassing overwhelmed transit centres. Transit centres are, however, expected to remain operational for returnees arriving from other countries. WFP now leverages UNHCR's cellular facility to deliver mobile money as the most cost-efficient alternative.
- In March, school feeding dropped to 359,681 children with only 4 feeding days out of 16 planned, due to unresolved cooperative contracts and funding gaps. This underscores the urgent need for donor support to restore continuity.
- Severe flooding at the end of March displaced over 22,000 people, compounding humanitarian pressures and exposing affected households to

heightened risks of food insecurity, disease, and protection concerns.

### SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Burundi's food security situation in March 2026 remained seasonally stable after the harvest, but overlapping pressures continue to drive humanitarian needs. Since December 2025, the country has received over 101,000 Congolese refugees—mostly women and children—alongside the return of more than 100,000 Burundians from Tanzania (cumulative to date since December 2025), straining local markets and fragile food systems. Climatic shocks further eroded livelihoods, with hydric deficits affecting nearly 500,000 people in the north and floods in Gatumba displacing 22,000 individuals.
- While inflation eased to 10.8 percent in March 2026, down from a peak of 45.5 percent in April 2025, high food and fuel prices, fuel shortages, electricity deficits, continue to undermine household purchasing power and coping capacity.
- These dynamics highlight the fragility of current stability and the urgent need to sustain humanitarian support, preposition supplies, and strengthen resilience and social protection system.
- WFP's interventions, from refugee assistance and school meals to nutrition and social protection systems, remain critical to meeting basic needs, improving nutrition and education, and supporting inclusive government systems.

**Photo Caption & Credit:** Neema, 33, and her children head home after collecting their monthly food ration at the Musenyi refugee site, Burunga Province, Burundi. WFP/ Arete/Kibuuka Mukisa

## OPERATIONAL UPDATES

### Overall Trends

- From January to March 2026, WFP assistance declined from 1.1 million to 822,000 and then 552,000 people due to funding shortfalls, ration cuts, reduced school feeding, pipeline delays, and shifting caseloads linked to refugee returns. In parallel, in-kind food volumes fell sharply from 413 mt to 121 mt to 90 mt, while cash transfers remained stable at about USD 3.8 million, reflecting a shift toward cash amid reduced overall support driven by ration cuts to 50 percent for returnees and 75 percent for refugees, and underscoring the need for urgent additional funding to stabilize and rebalance assistance.

### Crisis Response

- In March, WFP assisted 149,118 Congolese refugees across seven sites and two transit centers through a mix of cash assistance and hot meals, providing USD 2,135,133 in cash and 2 mt of food. Assistance declined from February due to continued refugee returns and reduced in-kind distributions at transit centers, as WFP shifted to providing cash to partners who procured and distributed food, with these amounts captured under total cash assistance. At the same time, returns of Burundian refugees from Tanzania accelerated, with 26,200 people assisted in March compared to 24,000 in February, increasing pressure on Burundi's already strained social services.
- Following a tripartite meeting between the Governments of Burundi and Tanzania and UNHCR, it was agreed to close Nduta camp at the end of April and reduce return movements to a maximum of 5,000 people per week, which is expected to gradually slow repatriation. The parties also requested the reinstatement of 100 percent rations for returnees, which remains unfeasible without additional funding.
- In late March 2026, UNHCR and the Government of Burundi began implementing a new returnee reception model that convoys refugees directly from camps in Tanzania to 18 commune headquarters. There, the government issues repatriation IDs and UNHCR provides mobile phones with SIM cards loaded with cash grants of USD 200 plus USD 20 for transport, after which returnees travel to their areas of origin the same

day. This approach has rendered hot meals and in-kind food at transit centers unfeasible, prompting WFP to use UNHCR's cellular platform to deliver mobile money assistance as the most cost-efficient alternative.

### Nutrition

- Nutrition activities focused on refugees in Busuma camp and on national systems. WFP treated 517 children under five and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls out of 2,042 cases screened in February. The lower number reflects that activities ran for only 15 days, as UNICEF and the Ministry of Health had already provided MAM treatment since February. By the time WFP began in mid-March, many previously identified cases had been addressed, and the figures largely represent new cases, which fluctuate month to month. Sensitization and nutrition awareness activities were also conducted in Musenyi refugee settlement and the host community ahead of the French supported food security and nutrition initiative, to prepare beneficiaries and promote local ownership and healthier diets through social and behavior change communication.
- At the policy level, WFP provided technical inputs to the first draft of the National Multisectoral Policy on Food Security and Nutrition to ensure alignment with government and WFP priorities, and supported GRET's food fortification landscape analysis through stakeholder coordination and data collection. Together, these actions strengthened nutrition assistance, awareness, and policy frameworks toward more inclusive and sustainable outcomes.

### School-Based Assistance

- WFP's school meals programme reached 359,681 children, with an average of four feeding days delivered out of 16 planned due to ongoing operational and funding constraints. Contract amendments with smallholder farmer cooperatives under the decentralized procurement model were not finalized in all provinces, halting deliveries, while the funding agreement for school meals in Muyinga commune remained unsigned, excluding that area. As a result, school feeding continued through commodity vouchers and in-kind food but at reduced scale, underscoring the urgent need for sustained donor support to stabilize operations

and restore full coverage across all targeted communes.

### **Social Protection**

- In March 2026, WFP led two complementary initiatives to strengthen national social protection and refugee inclusion. From 3 to 4 March, WFP delivered targeted monitoring and evaluation training under the Merankabandi II social safety nets project, with strong government participation, reinforcing capacities in data collection, analysis, and accountability to support refugee integration into national systems. From 23 to 27 March, the Government of Burundi convened Social Protection Week, bringing together government and partners for policy dialogue and technical consultations, during which WFP led sessions on Social Registry registration and shock responsive social protection, showcased operational progress, and outlined next steps to align humanitarian assistance with national systems.

### **Resilience and Livelihood Support**

- In March 2026, WFP's resilience activities focused on community asset creation through the rehabilitation of 38.88 km of rural roads—15.87 km in Giteranyi and 23.01 km in Muyinga. These works engaged approximately 1,500 vulnerable households, improving access to markets and essential services while strengthening livelihoods and enhancing community resilience to both economic and climate-related shocks, in preparation for conditional cash transfers planned for the end of April.

### **Cross- Cutting Issues**

#### **Logistics**

- Operations remained stable in March, supported by effective supply chain management and strong partner coordination, with WFP distributing 23,000 litres of fuel to NGOs and UN agencies through On Demand Services. While activities continue smoothly, instability in the Middle East poses a potential risk of fuel price increases that could raise transport and logistics costs, although prices remain government regulated and unchanged despite a proposed adjustment by the main supplier. To ensure continuity, WFP has secured 150,000 litres of fuel, sufficient for around six months of its own operations, while fuel coverage for partners through ODS is limited to about two

months, requiring close monitoring and forward planning.

#### **Monitoring and Assessment**

- In March 2026, food prices in Burundi showed mixed trends shaped by seasonal harvest effects and structural pressures. Compared to February, average prices increased by 8 percent for pulses and 7 percent for tubers, while cereal prices fell by 6 percent, with limited harvest impact, particularly for beans. Price increases were strongest in Centre North, Centre East, and Centre West due to climate shocks, while Busoni in the north faced acute bean and maize shortages linked to hydric stress. Although annual inflation eased to 10.8 percent from 2025 highs, food prices remained well above the five-year average, continuing to weaken household purchasing power and heighten food insecurity risks.
- During the reporting period, WFP and partners received 283 feedback cases through the Community Feedback Mechanism, down from 327 in February. Most cases, 52 percent, related to cash assistance for returnees, IDPs, and other food insecure groups, mainly nonpayment and withdrawal difficulties. Other common issues included SCOPE data problems such as family size discrepancies and missing cards, requests for beneficiary inclusion, and appeals for priority assistance linked to vulnerability. Women accounted for 59 percent of users, with the toll-free line and listening tables as the main reporting channels. Overall, 85 percent of cases were resolved, while 15 percent, largely cash and documentation related, remain under review. A small number of sensitive cases, including gender-based violence, distribution delays, and non-assistance after relocation, were also reported, highlighting the need for sustained accountability and timely follow up.

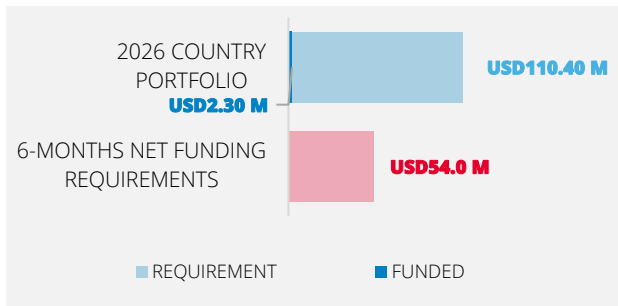
#### **IMPACT OF SHORTFALLS**

- WFP faces severe funding gaps across several programmes that are already reducing food and nutrition support for vulnerable populations. For Congolese refugees, rations have been cut to 75 percent, with funding secured only until June 2026; without new contributions, distributions risk disruption, further worsening food insecurity, while 33,000 refugees have recently returned to DRC, a trend accelerated by reduced rations amid continued insecurity in areas of origin. WFP

urgently requires USD 23.5 million to sustain distributions and reinstate 100 percent rations for refugees over the next six months.

- No funding is available for internally displaced and climate affected communities during the March to May lean season, leaving households in IPC Phase 3 or worse without support. Nutrition programmes face critical shortages of specialized foods, threatening treatment for 38,500 children and 10,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls. School meals have also been scaled back, affecting nearly 800,000 children through reduced rations and fewer feeding days, undermining attendance, concentration, and learning outcomes.

**FUNDING OVERVIEW**  
**Country Strategic Plan (2024-2027)**



**Donors:**

Belgium, Burundi, Canada, China, Cyprus, European Union, France, Germany, Global Partnership for Education, Japan, Monaco, Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America, World Bank.

