

Famine Early Warning Systems Network

East Africa

Rwanda

Key Message Update

High food prices and limited access to markets drive Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes

September 2020



October 2020 - January 2021



IPC v3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase

- 1: Minimal
- 2: Stressed
- 3+: Crisis or higher

! *Would likely be at least one phase worse without current or programmed humanitarian assistance*

FEWS NET classification is IPC-compatible. IPC-compatible analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

FEWS NET Remote Monitoring countries use a colored outline to represent the highest IPC classification in areas of concern.

September 2020

Key Messages:

According to the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, the GDP from April to June 2020 shrank by 12.4 percent compared to the same period last year, with GDP in agriculture, industry, and services dropping by 2, 19, and 16 percent, respectively. In August, the COVID-19 restrictions and slow economic recovery helped drive a 17.4 percent increase in food prices compared to last year. The reduction in economic activity, below-average incomes, and high food prices are likely to maintain Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes through January 2021, particularly in urban areas.

Following the government's tightening of COVID-19 control measures from August 27 to September 25, including the closure of two main markets in Kigali City and the prohibition of public transport from district to district, the average number of new daily COVID-19 cases fell from 67 in the second half of August to 18 in the second half of September. Following the drop in cases, inter-district public transport resumed on September 26, and schools will begin gradually re-opening in October. The government is expected to continue enforcing lockdowns to contain COVID-19 if a hotspot is identified.

Some poor farming households that rely on cross-border activity for income in the Western and Southern provinces have lost access to this income source due to the COVID-19 related border closures. These households are reportedly engaging in consumption-based coping strategies indicative of Stressed (IPC Phase 2), with the worst-affected households engaging in coping strategies indicative of Crisis (IPC Phase 3). Existing social programs and humanitarian assistance are expected to prevent a deterioration to area-level Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

Approximately 500 to 2,000 Burundian refugees, mainly from Mahama Camp, are anticipated to begin voluntarily returning home each month. According to UNHCR Rwanda, over 3,600 Burundian refugees have registered for voluntary return. More refugees are expected to enlist if security in Burundi remains adequate, despite ongoing sporadic rebel attacks in several provinces. The estimated 12,000 Burundian refugees in urban areas are likely to wait for more security guarantees before repatriating. Currently, most urban refugees are likely Stressed (IPC Phase 2) due to sustained below-average income and a reduction in oversea remittances, which has impacted household purchasing power.

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<https://fews.net/east-africa/rwanda/key-message-update/september-2020>

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