



WFP2030

Bangladesh Country Strategic Plan (2017–2020)



World Food Programme



For more information contact:

World Food Programme Bangladesh
IDB Bhaban (17th Floor), E/8-A, Rokeya Sharani
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

Tel. Off: +880-2-9183022

Website: <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/bangladesh>

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1. COUNTRY ANALYSIS	3
1.1 COUNTRY CONTEXT	3
1.2 PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 2	3
1.3 HUNGER GAPS AND CHALLENGES	5
1.4 COUNTRY PRIORITIES	6
2. STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FOR WFP	9
2.1 WFP'S EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNED	9
2.2 OPPORTUNITIES FOR WFP	9
2.3 STRATEGIC CHANGES	10
3. WFP'S STRATEGIC ORIENTATION	12
3.1 DIRECTION, FOCUS AND INTENDED IMPACTS	12
3.2 STRATEGIC OUTCOMES, FOCUS AREAS, EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND KEY ACTIVITIES	12
3.3 TRANSITION AND EXIT STRATEGIES	17
4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	18
4.1 BENEFICIARY ANALYSIS	18
4.2 TRANSFERS	18
4.3 PARTNERSHIPS	19
5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION	20
5.1 MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS	20
5.2 RISK MANAGEMENT	20
6. RESOURCES FOR RESULTS	21
6.1 COUNTRY PORTFOLIO BUDGET	21
6.2 RESOURCING OUTLOOK	21
6.3 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY	21
ANNEX: ACRONYMS & TABLES	22

Executive Summary

Bangladesh graduated to lower-middle-income country status in 2015 and enters the era of the Sustainable Development Goals from a solid base, having made progress in reducing poverty, hunger and undernutrition in recent decades.

Numerous policy instruments provide a conducive environment, and emerging programmes supported by reforms, notably in social protection, have the potential to reduce the levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, which remain high, affecting a large proportion of the population.

WFP's work in Bangladesh in 2017–2020 will support the country in ending hunger and reducing malnutrition by 2030 through four strategic outcomes: i) vulnerable groups in rural and urban settings are supported by work to improve nutrition indicators in line with national targets by 2020; ii) the food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable populations of Cox's Bazar, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and areas affected by disaster are enhanced; iii) innovative approaches to enhancing the resilience of food-insecure households affected by climate-related stresses are validated by 2020; and iv) the response system for large-scale natural disasters can respond with reduced costs and lead times.

Given the Government's commitment to increased institutional and financial support for development, this Country Strategic Plan reflects a shift in WFP's focus in that the greatest value added provided by WFP will be through its role as an enabler and supporter of national hunger solutions, thereby maximizing impact and value for money. The emphasis will be on technical assistance, policy engagement, advocacy and the accumulation of evidence, with a view to accelerating the implementation of policies and optimizing the governance, efficiency and effectiveness of national initiatives to enhance the food security

and nutrition of the most vulnerable people. This approach is aligned with the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the work of other United Nations agencies.

Direct assistance will focus on interventions supporting particularly vulnerable populations such as refugees and ethnic minorities and on testing innovative assistance models. Emergency response will remain part of the portfolio. Joint programming with other United Nations agencies will be prioritized and strategic partnerships will be pursued, including with research institutions and the private sector.

Implementation of this Country Strategic Plan will require changes in WFP's operating model and effective risk management. Its development was informed by the strategic review of food security and nutrition in Bangladesh commissioned by WFP, and consultations with the Government, WFP staff and partners.

The Board approves Bangladesh Country Strategic Plan (2017–2020) (WFP/EB.1/2017/7/1) at a total cost to WFP of USD 201.6 million.

1. Country Analysis

1.1 Country Context

1. Bangladesh graduated to lower-middle-income country status in 2015 and enters the era of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from a solid base, having achieved significant progress towards the Millennium Development Goals for universal primary education, gender parity in basic education, and reduced child and maternal mortality. However, geographic, rural/urban, gender and wealth disparities remain, and political and environmental risks persist.

2. Following decades of steady increase, annual economic growth in Bangladesh has averaged 6 percent in recent years. In a period of demographic transition resulting from reduced fertility, per capita gross national income reached USD 1,190 in 2015, a five-fold increase from 1980. Between 1992 and 2010, the incidence of poverty declined from 56.7 to 31.5 percent, and extreme poverty declined from 41.1 to 17.6 percent. Projections indicate a continuation of this trend.

3. With a population of 160 million, Bangladesh is the world's seventh most populated country and the most densely settled, excluding city states. It hosts between 300,000 and 500,000 people who have fled successive waves of violence in the Northern Rakhine State of Myanmar.

4. Two thirds of the population is rural, but urban migration is accelerating as a result of acute population pressure, increasing landlessness and the attraction of export-sector jobs in urban areas. Projections indicate that half of the population will be urban by 2035, which will increase pressure on infrastructure and services, particularly in slums, where 70 percent of the urban population live.

5. Bangladesh lies in the cyclone-prone Bay of Bengal, and its low elevation makes it particularly susceptible to the effects of climate change; between 30 and 50 percent of the country

experiences annual climate shocks, and the frequency and severity of natural disasters are predicted to increase. Because the country is located close to active tectonic plates the risk of earthquake is high, and there are concerns regarding urban readiness for such disasters.

1.2 Progress Towards SDG 2

6. The 2016 strategic review of food security and nutrition in Bangladesh highlighted the significant progress achieved in recent decades, but identified continuing challenges to ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture in line with SDG 2.

PROGRESS TOWARDS SDG 2 TARGETS

7. *Access to food.* Increased production has greatly improved the availability of food, particularly rice. However, although Bangladesh has attained food self-sufficiency at the aggregate level and impressive economic growth at the national level, access to food remains a challenge. A large segment of the poor population still lacks the means for access to an adequate diet.

8. At 16.4 percent, the prevalence of undernourishment has fallen by half in the last 25 years, but an estimated 26 million people are still undernourished. On the other hand, the 2014 household food insecurity access scale shows that a quarter of the population is food-insecure.¹ Of these 40 million people, 11 million suffer from acute hunger and many remain vulnerable to food insecurity as a result of periodic shocks.

9. Progress in the last decade has been uneven among wealth groups, with poor groups improving their food security status more slowly than richer ones. At times of food scarcity in the household, including after natural disasters, it is women and girls who reduce their food intake more often and sooner than men and boys.

¹ The undernourishment index combines measures of food availability with income and calorie intake distribution data. The household food insecurity access scale aggregates several dimensions of food insecurity experienced by a household.

1. Country Analysis

10. Another concern is the slow improvement in the quality and diversity of diets in the last 15 years. Diets are still dominated by rice: for the average rural household, 71 percent of calorie intake comes from rice; in the poorest quintile the figure is 78 percent.

11. *Nutrition.* Between 1997 and 2007, Bangladesh achieved very rapid and prolonged reductions in child undernutrition, but the country still faces nutrition burdens that are estimated to cost USD 1 billion in lost productivity every year, and even more in health costs.

12. With regard to acute and chronic malnutrition, stunting and wasting among children under 5 remain close to the critical thresholds of the World Health Organization. Wasting affects 2.2 million children – 14 percent – and stunting, which affects physical and cognitive development and has negative consequences for school completion, adult productivity and lifetime earning potential, affects 5.5 million children – 36 percent. Stunting among children under 5 is highest in the poorest population quintile and in slums, where it affects 50 percent of children under 5. The 2.5 percent annual decline in stunting from 2007 to 2014 fell far short of the 5.3 percent needed to meet national and international targets.

13. A key determinant of stunting is low birthweight, which affects 38 percent of babies and has decreased only marginally over time. Major reasons for this are continuing high rates of teenage pregnancy related to a pervasive culture of early marriage, which affects 50 percent of girls under 18.

14. The adoption of recommended infant and young child feeding practices has progressed slowly. Rates of exclusive breastfeeding are about 50 percent, and the average period of exclusive breastfeeding is less than three months.

Complementary feeding practices are poor: only 23 percent of children aged 6–23 months consume diets of adequate diversity and frequency.

15. Micronutrient deficiencies remain widespread and contribute to high risk of disease and sub-optimal development. Vitamin A deficiency affects one child in five, and vitamin B12 deficiency one child in three. Zinc deficiency is prevalent, and a third of pre-school children and half of pregnant women are anaemic. Undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are also prevalent among adolescent girls.²

16. *Sustainable food systems.* Climate change could compromise the sustainability of food systems because crop production could be reduced by 30 percent by the end of the century while erosion of the national territory increases, the size of landholdings decreases and migration accelerates. A recent WFP study demonstrated that climate-related shocks and stresses have adverse effects on food security and nutrition: food prices in communities affected by floods or cyclones increase for up to nine months after the event, as does wasting. Potential price increases remain a significant concern for the urban poor.

MACROECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

17. The impressive economic growth in recent years is attributed to: i) structural economic reforms contributing to private-sector development; ii) the world's second-largest export-oriented garment industry, which supports 25 million people; iii) numerous micro-credit options that have stimulated rural entrepreneurship, especially among women; iv) major remittance flows from migrant workers; v) Official Development Assistance; and vi) foreign direct investment.

18. The Seventh Five-Year Plan (SFYP) (2016–2020), which articulates development goals

² In 2012, 30 percent of adolescent girls had low height, and 11 percent were underweight.

1. Country Analysis

supporting achievement of the Government's Vision 2021 for reaching upper-middle-income status, aims for gross domestic product growth of 7.4 percent per annum. Economic growth has proved to be resilient to shocks, natural disasters and political turmoil, but continued political polarization and security concerns are a source of economic uncertainty for Bangladesh.

KEY CROSS-SECTOR LINKAGES

19. Poverty reduction has contributed significantly to food-security gains. The eradication of extreme poverty (SDG 1) remains a cardinal principle of the SFYP, but Bangladesh's Gini coefficient of 0.32 reflects high inequality leading to uneven social gains among wealth groups, and indicates the need to reduce inequalities through inclusive pro-poor growth, to which the Government is committed.

20. The expansion in education (SDG 4) has been significant, but remaining concerns include the quality of education, high drop-out rates as young boys increasingly leave school to work. Girls' enrolment in secondary education increased from 47 to 57 percent between 2008 and 2012, indicating that more future mothers are educated than ever before. This is significant in that these girls and women are likely to be more receptive to advice on behaviour change – maternal education is known to be associated with enhanced inter-generational nutrition outcomes and reduced stunting. Lack of separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls, and high incidence of sexual harassment and abuse in public places contribute to girls' drop-out from school.

21. Despite the rapid increase in educational attainment and policy changes in favour of women, prejudicial social and legal norms in this patriarchal society hold back gender equality (SDG 5). The low social status of women and girls in Bangladesh is reflected in its rankings of 107th in the Gender Development Index and 115th in

the Gender Inequality Index. Violence against women is also widespread: 73 percent of women are subject to domestic violence during their lifetimes.

22. A recent national survey showed improvement in women's empowerment in all dimensions of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index and throughout the country. This is encouraging because women's empowerment is a major pathway to improving food security and nutrition. However, if SDG 2 is to be achieved, much more must be done to address social constraints and discriminatory practices that limit women's independent movement in the public sphere, their social and economic interactions and their decision-making in the household. A fundamental step is to end the practices of early marriage and child-bearing.

1.3 Gaps and Challenges

23. There is a comprehensive set of sector and cross-sector policy instruments relevant to SDG 2, and the first national policy on school feeding is being formulated. Overall progress in operationalizing policies is slow and faces governance issues; urban policies and strategies are lacking altogether.

24. Spending on and coverage of social protection have increased, but the effectiveness of most safety nets is limited in terms of reducing poverty and enabling poor people to cope with shocks. The strategic review noted that this situation was a result of failure to ensure that safety nets and related interventions targeted the most needy, low transfer values, governance issues, and weak systems for planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring. Slums are largely bypassed by the mainstream social-protection system, even though they need special attention.

25. With regard to prevention of malnutrition,

1. Country Analysis

more work is required to ensure that nutrition goals are adequately articulated in social protection schemes and in all relevant strategies, policies and programmes. Despite an explicit commitment to treating moderate and severe acute malnutrition at community health centres, access to therapeutic treatment remains limited.

26. The revitalization of an oversight body under the Office of the Prime Minister is expected to improve coordination of nutrition work, which currently suffers from fragmented responsibilities in several ministries, with overlaps and gaps.

27. The treatment of refugees is uneven. Of the 300,000–500,000 people from Myanmar seeking refuge in Bangladesh, 34,000 are officially registered as refugees. They are hosted in two camps and receive protection and assistance from the Government and the international community, but stringent restrictions on movement outside the camps limit their lawful engagement in livelihood activities and their prospects for self-reliance.

28. The vast majority of refugees, however, are unregistered and live in makeshift sites or among the host population, consequently facing exclusion from social services, safety nets and development opportunities. As “illegal immigrants” under the Foreigners Act, these people are vulnerable to human rights abuses.

29. Durable solutions remain unlikely despite the change of national government in Myanmar in 2016 and the establishment of an international advisory commission to resolve the crisis in Rakhine State, where inter-communal tensions show no sign of relaxing and recent violence has caused further destabilization. The strategy developed by the Bangladesh Government in 2014 for dealing with Myanmar refugees and undocumented Myanmar nationals focuses on national security: it acknowledges the need for

basic humanitarian assistance but excludes provision of opportunities for achieving self-reliance. Resettlement programmes for refugees stopped in 2010 to deter further arrivals.

1.4 Country Priorities

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

30. The Government is developing sector action plans congruent with SFYP targets to guide national-level work towards the SDGs. The following priorities are emerging in relation to SDG 2: i) consolidation of safety nets in line with the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) to enhance food access and utilization; and ii) implementation of the nutrition policy with a view to reducing stunting among children under 5 from 36 to 25 percent, and underweight from 32 to 20 percent by 2020.

31. The 2006 National Food Policy, which provides the framework for food security planning, aims to ensure: i) food security through adequate and stable supply of safe and nutritious food; ii) increased purchasing power and access to food; and iii) adequate nutrition, especially for women and children. Its associated action and investment plans, currently under revision, define targets and indicators and highlight priority investments.

32. The 2015 National Nutrition Policy prioritizes improved nutrition among mothers, children under 5, adolescent girls and vulnerable groups; it promotes development through healthy diets and enhanced living standards. Its National Plan of Action prioritizes nutrition-specific and agricultural interventions with a view to achieving healthy diets and implementing nutrition-sensitive programming in social protection, women’s empowerment and disaster management; it also focuses on obtaining evidence, multi-sector collaboration and the enhancement of data management systems.

1. Country Analysis

33. The 2015 NSSS aims to reform the national social protection system by prioritizing support for the poorest and most vulnerable people, expanding urban coverage and enhancing the disaster response element. It foresees consolidating 140 safety nets into 5 core programmes, adopting a life cycle approach focusing on pregnancy and early childhood, school age, working age and old age, and on disability. The envisaged programmes to support children and vulnerable women have significant potential as vehicles for achieving food security and nutrition outcomes.

UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER PARTNERS

34. The 2017–2020 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) introduces a strategic shift by focusing on the United Nations normative role and formulating outcomes in relation to people in terms of equal rights, access and opportunities, the planet in terms of promoting a sustainable and resilient environment, and prosperity in terms of inclusive and shared economic growth.

35. The following objectives contribute to SDG 2: i) improving social policies and programmes; ii) enhancing resilience; and iii) increasing opportunities for women and disadvantaged groups to contribute to and benefit from economic progress. Progress towards targets for complementary feeding and dietary diversity will be monitored.

36. The many actors who contribute directly or indirectly to SDG 2 include the Rome-based agencies, whose programming frameworks are valid until the end of 2018. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) delivers technical assistance and operations to: i) reduce poverty and enhance food security and nutrition by maximizing food access and utilization; ii) enhance agricultural productivity; iii) improve market linkages, value

addition, and the quality and safety of the food system; iv) improve technologies; and v) increase community resilience to shocks.

37. The strategic objectives of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are to ensure that: i) the livelihoods of poor people in vulnerable areas are adapted to climate change; ii) small producers and entrepreneurs benefit from improved value chains and greater market access; and iii) marginalized groups such as poor rural women are economically and socially empowered.

38. In 2016 the World Bank pledged USD 3 billion to the reduction of stunting and adaptation to climate change. It is also engaged in: i) system improvements for some of the largest food-based safety nets; ii) trials of the income support programme for the poorest, which combines conditional cash transfers to mothers of children under 5 with capacity enhancement for local governments; iii) support for shock-responsive social protection; and iv) promotion of urban resilience.

39. The numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and their networks throughout the country have a proven track record in promoting improvements in food security, nutrition, agriculture, health, sanitation and women's empowerment. Programmes implemented by local NGOs include major government safety nets, and policy advocacy. The extensive programmes of the world's largest NGO and development organization – BRAC (formerly the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee) – contribute significantly to economic and social development, and enhanced food security and nutrition in Bangladesh. The Citizens' Platform for SDGs, a civil society initiative launched in 2016, aims to enhance accountability in delivery on the SDGs.

1. Country Analysis

40. Private investments are expected to account for 80 percent of the estimated USD 409 billion cost of the SFYP. Private-sector enterprises could help to address a number of factors limiting food security and nutrition improvements, for example by increasing the availability of complementary or fortified foods. Private-sector entities include the Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and large food production companies.

2. Strategic Implications for WFP

2.1 WFP's Experience and Lessons Learned

41. WFP's portfolio has shifted since 2011 to institutional capacity development and a gradual reduction in direct operational delivery. Independent evaluations have found this direction to be appropriate given the evolving country context, and highlighted the achievements of WFP's technical assistance initiatives with recommendations that they be carried forward.

42. In particular, WFP has supported the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in enhancing the design, efficiency and effectiveness of the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme, a national safety net supporting 750,000 vulnerable rural women. The strategic review noted that the new VGD model with its nutrition-sensitive and promotional elements had the potential to bring about sustained improvement in the food security of vulnerable women while contributing to the nutrition outcomes of these women and their families.

43. Similarly, technical assistance for the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education has ensured robust design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and accountability for the national school feeding programme in poverty-prone areas that was created in 2010.

44. WFP has worked with public and private partners since 2013, contributing to the establishment of national food quality standards and to local production of fortified rice and related processing capacities. WFP has also facilitated the introduction of fortified rice in the national VGD and school meals programmes; this initiative has shown promising potential in reducing micronutrient deficiencies at scale.

45. Evaluation findings with regard to WFP's

operational role have been varied. WFP's long experience and strong reputation in providing timely and targeted emergency assistance for the most vulnerable people affected by natural disasters was acknowledged. However, the evaluation noted the limited uptake of food-based treatment of moderate acute malnutrition and lack of donor support for cash-for-work and cash-for-training programmes, which resulted from questions as to the continued relevance of this approach in a middle-income country. The evaluation recommended the adoption of new approaches to improving nutrition and resilience, for example by creating evidence for advocacy purposes, which was noted as an area of strength.

46. The 2016 joint assessment mission considered that WFP's new integrated approach to enhancing food security and nutrition in Cox's Bazar, which covers registered and non-registered refugees and vulnerable host populations, had significant potential and recommended expansion to additional sub-districts and inclusion of people residing in makeshift sites.

2.2 Opportunities for WFP

47. Social protection programmes designed, implemented and monitored in a nutrition-sensitive manner are an important means of enhancing food security and nutrition outcomes. Spending on social protection averages USD 3.3 billion – 12 percent of annual public expenditure. In 2010, 8 million households – 24 percent – were covered by safety net programmes. The size and reach of these programmes give them the potential to deliver impact at scale, but work is required to enhance them in line with the NSSS reforms. The strategic review identified a clear role for WFP in making these programmes more nutrition-sensitive and improving their efficiency and effectiveness.

2. Strategic Implications for WFP

48. The review acknowledged WFP's role in introducing fortified rice to the VGD programme, and recommended increasing the use of national food-based safety nets to provide fortified rice for vulnerable populations as a cost-effective means of addressing micronutrient deficiencies and related morbidities.

49. School feeding has been demonstrated to be a powerful social protection measure in mitigating hunger among children from food-insecure households; the strategic review highlighted its role in improving the likelihood of positive nutrition outcomes for future generations. The Government has expressed its intention to expand school feeding beyond the 2.5 million primary schoolchildren currently supported and to transform the largely biscuit-based programme into a school meals programme. WFP is in a good position to support the implementation of these plans.

50. The results of the first census of Rohingyas in Bangladesh, to be released in early 2017, are expected to inform the design of enhanced protection and expanded assistance, particularly for residents of makeshift sites as envisaged in the national strategy. Planned United Nations joint initiatives will advocate for and deliver harmonized multi-sector assistance with potential for transformative impact for the most vulnerable groups in Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

51. The joint assessment mission provided an opportunity for WFP to reshape its assistance. It recommended: i) advocacy for lifting the restrictions on refugees' mobility and work opportunities and expanding assistance to all vulnerable groups regardless of status; ii) a transition to targeted assistance in the camps on the basis of profiling, with a view to balancing the delivery of future interventions to benefit

refugees and equally vulnerable host communities; and iii) the introduction of livelihood interventions to enhance self-reliance.

52. Bangladesh has enhanced its emergency response capacity considerably, but a large-scale disaster would nevertheless require significant international assistance. WFP's recognized expertise in large-scale emergency responses and its lead role in the humanitarian supply chain place it in a good position to enhance national preparedness and coordinate the work of humanitarian partners.

2.3 Strategic Changes

53. Given the Government's commitment and increased institutional and financial capacity to support development through large programmes, WFP's value-added will be greatest when it acts as an enabler and supporter of national hunger solutions rather than an implementer.

54. WFP will therefore expand its advisory and knowledge-sharing roles in support of government agencies working to achieve the SDG 2 targets. Technical assistance, the creation of evidence, and advocacy will support the formulation and operationalization of policies and help to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of national initiatives for achieving food security and improved nutrition for the most vulnerable groups.

55. The enhancement of nutrition and resilience will now focus on enhancing advocacy and coordination for a multi-sector approach to nutrition and on testing and validating innovative approaches for resilience.

56. WFP's operational role will be limited to emergency assistance in response to natural disasters, and delivery of multi-faceted programmes integrated into United Nations

2. Strategic Implications for WFP

initiatives in Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. This Country Strategic Plan (CSP) will promote the targeting of assistance in Cox's Bazar on the basis of vulnerability rather than refugee status, reflecting the harmonization of support among various population groups.

57. This approach is expected to optimize the impact of WFP's operations and maximize value for money. It is in line with the UNDAF's emphasis on enhancing the capacities of the Government and civil society to deliver development results and limiting United Nations interventions to support during natural disasters and interventions to promote equity among vulnerable populations such as ethnic minorities and refugees.

3. WFP's Strategic Orientation

3.1 Direction, Focus and Intended Impacts

58. This CSP is the guiding strategic, programmatic and governance instrument for WFP in Bangladesh; it defines the portfolio of engagement from 2017 to 2020 and operationalizes WFP's Strategic Plan in support of the SFYP and long-term national work to achieve SDG 2.

59. The CSP is informed by the strategic review, evaluations of WFP's past assistance and consultations with the Government and development partners. It is articulated on the basis of four strategic outcomes with related outputs and prioritized activities. The focus is largely on SDG 2, but CSP activities will also contribute to SDG 17 on partnerships for the SDGs and, at the output level, to SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 5 on gender equality.

3.2 Strategic Outcomes, Focus Areas, Expected Outputs and Key Activities

Strategic outcome 1: Vulnerable groups in rural and urban settings are supported by enhanced national actions to improve their nutrition indicators in line with national targets by 2020 (SDG Target 2.2)

60. The Government is committed to minimizing all forms of malnutrition in line with its targets for the reduction of stunting, underweight and micronutrient deficiencies. This work needs to be accelerated, however. Interventions towards this outcome focus on technical assistance and advocacy to enhance national initiatives that have the potential to improve nutrition outcomes at scale such as social protection programmes and nutrition-specific interventions.

Focus area

61. This outcome focuses on root causes.

Expected outputs

62. This outcome will be achieved through nine outputs:

- i) The national VGD programme delivers enhanced food security and nutrition outcomes for its beneficiaries.
- ii) The new national child benefit and vulnerable women benefit programmes take into account nutrition sensitivity, urban coverage and responsiveness to shocks.
- iii) Reliable data on the food security and nutrition outcomes of national social protection programmes are available from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.
- iv) Improved national nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions are scaled up by the Government and its partners in rural and urban areas.
- v) Enhancing complementary feeding practices becomes the focus of increased collaboration among the main stakeholders.
- vi) Targeted groups receive nutrition messages.
- vii) The demand for and supply of post-harvest rice fortification are scaled up by public- and private-sector entities.
- viii) A nutrition-sensitive national school feeding policy is adopted and implemented.
- ix) The national school feeding programme is scaled up in poverty-prone rural and urban areas.

3. WFP's Strategic Orientation

Key activities and focus

63. Activity 1: Technical assistance and advocacy to enhance the food security and nutrition impact of selected safety nets:

- ◆ WFP will continue its technical support to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and governance of the VGD programme while advocating for and supporting scale-up of the improved VGD model, which includes nutrition-sensitive and promotional elements.
- ◆ WFP will advocate with relevant ministries and partners such as the World Bank for the vulnerable women benefit and child benefit programmes of the NSSS to ensure that they: i) are nutrition-sensitive in their design, targeting and monitoring; ii) reach the urban poor; and iii) can respond to shocks. WFP will support the design and implementation of these programmes through technical assistance.
- ◆ WFP will continue its technical assistance to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics to optimize the targeting of programmes and enhance the availability and quality of data related to the food security and nutrition outcomes of social protection programmes.

64. Activity 2: Technical assistance and advocacy for improved nutrition. In accordance with the Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition (REACH) partnership, WFP will advocate with FAO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization, the World Bank and other development partners for nutrition to remain a government priority and the focus of coordinated action, supported by civil society and development partners. In particular,

WFP will:

- ◆ Advocate and provide technical assistance for policies and programmes supporting the scale-up of a combination of preventive and curative interventions, with a focus on enhancing the nutrition sensitivity of social protection programmes and on programmes designed to prevent and treat wasting;
- ◆ Undertake a situation analysis of complementary feeding and collect evidence, in collaboration with major stakeholders, as to the optimum means of maximizing the quality of complementary feeding; and
- ◆ Collaborate with partners from various sectors in advocacy for a large-scale communication campaign that parallels behaviour change communication interventions with a view to encouraging the adoption of sound dietary habits and enhancing dietary diversity, particularly among adolescent girls.

65. Activity 3: Technical assistance and advocacy for scaling up post-harvest rice fortification. WFP will continue to ensure the quality and affordability of fortified rice and to scale up its consumption, notably among women of reproductive age and young children; this will be achieved through safety nets and commercial delivery channels. In partnership with FAO and the Micronutrient Initiative, WFP will also advocate for integrating standards, regulations and policies into regulatory systems and improving the capacity of industry partners and Government with a view to sustaining production and supply.

66. Activity 4: Policy advice and technical assistance for scaling up school feeding. WFP will

3. WFP's Strategic Orientation

continue to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, in line with the Systems Approach for Better Education Results and through South–South cooperation, to:

- ◆ Support development of the first national school feeding policy and ensure that it is nutrition-sensitive;
- ◆ Support continued targeting, implementation, monitoring and accountability for the national school feeding programme in poverty-prone areas as it is scaled up;
- ◆ Support the evolution from a biscuit-based programme into a school meals programme by informing government choices as to design, funding and testing, in collaboration with FAO and UNICEF; and
- ◆ Hand the WFP school feeding programme over to the Government by mid-2018, except in areas where WFP remains operational (see strategic outcome 2).

Strategic outcome 2: *The most vulnerable populations of Cox's Bazar, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and disaster-affected areas have enhanced food security and nutrition (SDG Target 2.1)*

67. Cox's Bazar and the adjacent Chittagong Hill Tracts are among the worst-performing districts in terms of food security and nutrition indicators. They are also home to a mix of registered refugees, unregistered people from Myanmar and ethnic groups, who face particular challenges with access to social services, safety nets and development opportunities. Because there is significant migration of men in search of employment, households headed by women are

common and highly vulnerable to food insecurity in a deeply conservative context where women's mobility is limited.

68. During responses to crises, interventions under this outcome take place in areas prioritized by the UNDAF for continued direct United Nations assistance; they also cover emergency assistance in the event of natural disasters.

Focus area

69. The focus area of this outcome is crisis response.

Expected outputs

70. This outcome will be achieved through four outputs:

- i) The most vulnerable households in refugee camps and makeshift camps in Cox's Bazar receive general food distributions through e-vouchers targeted on the basis of needs.
- ii) WFP-targeted communities in camps and host communities in Cox's Bazar receive an integrated assistance package of livelihood support for vulnerable women, school feeding and a nutrition safety net.
- iii) WFP-targeted communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts receive an integrated assistance package of livelihood support for vulnerable women, school feeding and a nutrition safety net.
- iv) WFP-targeted populations affected by natural disasters receive cash-based transfers (CBTs) or food transfers sufficient to enable them to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements.

Key activities and focus

71. *Activity 5: Deliver an integrated assistance package in Cox's Bazar.* WFP will target the most

3. WFP's Strategic Orientation

vulnerable households among refugees, unregistered people from Myanmar and the host population, delivering an integrated assistance package. To maximize the impacts, this will be coordinated with the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Population Fund and UNICEF. In line with the recommendations of the joint assessment mission, WFP will:

- ◆ Provide targeted food assistance using e-vouchers for the most vulnerable registered refugees – moving away from blanket assistance for the first time – and for the most vulnerable unregistered refugees living in makeshift sites; food assistance for this group will be provided with a view to harmonizing interventions;
- ◆ In the most vulnerable host communities, in camps and in makeshift sites, provide:
 - i) livelihood support through means for investment in income-generating activities, such as grants and training³; ii) school feeding; and iii) prevention and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition targeting children aged 6–59 months and pregnant and lactating women;⁴ and
- ◆ Contribute to policy and advocacy dialogue on issues related to these population groups, under the leadership of the United Nations Resident Coordinator.

72. Activity 6: Deliver an integrated assistance package in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. A similar integrated assistance package of livelihood support,⁴ school feeding and nutrition support will be rolled out in the most vulnerable areas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts as part of the joint United Nations programming initiative with the

Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs and the Hill District Councils, in collaboration with FAO and UNICEF.

73. Activity 7: Deliver food assistance in emergencies. WFP will provide emergency assistance to respond to acute food needs among the most vulnerable households affected by disasters. This will be implemented as required, complementing the responses of the Government and other humanitarian actors and in coordination with the food security cluster.⁵

Strategic outcome 3: Innovative Approaches to Enhance the Resilience of Food-Insecure Households Exposed to Climate-Related Shocks and Stresses Are Validated by 2020 (SDG Target 2.4)

74. Bangladesh is vulnerable to climate-related shocks and stresses, which have significant negative effects on the food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable groups. Innovative approaches to enhancing resilience are required so that improvements in livelihoods, food security and nutrition are not repeatedly lost. Interventions under this outcome will serve to validate approaches that have the potential to enhance the ability of households, communities and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses.

Focus area

75. The focus area of this outcome is resilience-building.

Expected outputs

76. This outcome will be achieved through five outputs:

- i) Evidence as to the effectiveness of WFP-piloted innovative approaches to enhancing resilience is collected and disseminated.

³ To enhance their economic and social empowerment, targeted vulnerable women organized into self-help groups are taught basic business skills and receive cash grants to invest in productive assets and a monthly allowance to protect their investments for up to two years. This is combined with training in life skills and behaviour change communication for improved nutrition.

⁴ Behaviour change communication is carried out through several platforms in parallel to the supplementary feeding programme.

⁵ The CSP caters for small- and medium-scale emergencies; a revision will be prepared to cater for a large-scale emergency response as required.

3. WFP's Strategic Orientation

ii) Local capacity to plan for disaster risk reduction is enhanced in southwestern areas targeted by *Nobo Jatra* (New Beginning) – a five-year assistance programme implemented by World Vision in a consortium with WFP and Winrock International and funded by the United States Agency for International Development.

iii) The livelihoods of vulnerable households targeted by *Nobo Jatra* in southwestern areas are diversified.

iv) Beneficiaries of *Nobo Jatra* receive cash transfers facilitated by WFP.

v) Uptake of successful elements of *Nobo Jatra* is promoted through policy dialogue with the ministries concerned.

Key activities and focus

77. *Activity 8: Creation of evidence related to innovative approaches to enhancing resilience.* WFP will test innovative approaches to reducing and managing risk in disaster-prone areas such as the northern river basin and the southern coastal belt. Such approaches are likely to include micro-insurance for small entrepreneurs and forecast-based financing models to support shock-responsive safety nets.

78. Ministries, research and academic institutions and private-sector companies will be associated with this activity; partnerships will be established with FAO and IFAD. Evidence as to the effectiveness and impact pathways of the approaches will be systematically collected, and policy dialogue will encourage the uptake of research findings.

79. *Activity 9 – Nobo Jatra.* Between 2016 and 2020, WFP will participate in this programme implemented in four sub-districts in the southwest. The programme's integrated approach to

improving food security, nutrition and resilience addresses direct and underlying issues affecting food insecurity such as economic access, women's empowerment, nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions and community-level disaster risk reduction. In particular, WFP will:

- ◆ Enhance the awareness and capacities of local authorities and communities regarding disaster risk reduction and community-level situation analysis, planning and implementation;
- ◆ Implement a livelihood support programme, complementing the work of the *Nobo Jatra* consortium;
- ◆ Manage cash transfers to beneficiaries who are assisted by other consortium members involved in conditional nutrition activities; and
- ◆ Create linkages at the policy level and facilitate policy discussions as to the effectiveness of the programme with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

Strategic outcome 4: The Humanitarian Response System for Large-Scale Natural Disasters in Bangladesh Can Respond with Reduced Cost and Lead Time (SDG Target 17.9)

80. Studies show that investing in preparedness has several benefits:⁶ i) it reduces response times, which in turn saves lives and livelihoods; and ii) it safeguards previous investments, protects development gains and reduces costs by maximizing cost-effectiveness. Interventions towards this outcome will be implemented in

⁶ http://vam.wfp.org/CountryPage_assessments.aspx?iso3=BGD

3. WFP's Strategic Orientation

partnership with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief to enhance capacities for preparing for and responding to large-scale disasters, with a focus on readiness for earthquakes in urban areas.

Focus area

81. The focus area of this outcome is resilience-building.

Expected outputs

82. This outcome will be achieved through three outputs:

- i) The emergency supply chain of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief is optimized.
- ii) A humanitarian staging area is established.
- iii) Emergency coordination mechanisms for logistics and food security are enhanced.

Key activities and focus

83. *Activity 10: Capacity strengthening for emergency response.* WFP will support the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief in enhancing its emergency supply chain and establishing a suitably located earthquake-resistant staging area to facilitate the reception and dispatch of humanitarian assistance in a large-scale emergency.

84. *Activity 11: Lead the logistics cluster and co-lead the food security cluster.* WFP will continue to lead the logistics cluster and co-lead the food security cluster with a view to optimizing partners' preparedness capacities and coordination mechanisms. Activities will include training and simulation exercises under the auspices of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief to ensure common understanding of the coordination requirements of large-scale emergency responses.

3.3 Transition and Exit Strategies

85. This CSP supports nationally owned and operated programmes, and WFP's direct operational assistance will accordingly diminish: for example, the WFP school feeding programme will be handed over to the Government by mid-2018. Interventions in Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts towards strategic outcome 2 will continue until national social services, safety nets and development opportunities cover these areas and durable solutions to the refugee situation come into effect; advocacy by WFP and other United Nations agencies is expected to contribute to these results.

4. Implementation Arrangements

4.1 Beneficiary Analysis

86. The shift “upstream” to technical assistance in support of national initiatives envisages that WFP will contribute to enhanced food security and nutrition outcomes at scale. WFP’s work, particularly towards strategic outcome 1, will hence benefit the 1.5 million vulnerable women – 7.5 million people including their household members – to be assisted by the VGD programme during the CSP and the 2.5 million children supported by the national school feeding programme. The Government has stated its intention to expand both programmes, and support for the new programmes benefiting children and vulnerable women and for the proposed national nutrition campaign is likely to benefit millions more.

87. Table 3 (page 23, Annex) shows that only 6 of the 11 planned activities involve WFP’s direct support to beneficiaries. Beneficiaries of activity 5 in Cox’s Bazar account for half of the total; this proportion will increase over time.

4.2 Transfers

Food and Cash-Based Transfers

88. Table 2 (page 22, Annex) shows that 64 percent of the total transfer value relates to CBTs; Annex III sets out the proposed rations. WFP will continue to use innovative transfer modalities such as biometrically coded electronic vouchers and mobile cash, and will explore other modalities as financial inclusion expands.

Capacity Enhancement, including South–South Cooperation

89. Capacity enhancement is the core of this CSP: two outcomes are devoted to it. South–South cooperation will be promoted, for example

through exchanges on school feeding with the WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil. WFP will also explore opportunities to showcase Bangladesh’s social protection programmes and post-harvest rice fortification expertise for the benefit of other countries through South–South exchanges and other mechanisms.

4. Implementation Arrangements

4.3 Partnerships

90. WFP will maintain its relationships with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and the Planning Commission and will cultivate high-level links with the ministries of finance, social welfare, food and health and family welfare.

91. WFP will coordinate with the Government and development partners through the local consultative groups in the sectors of poverty reduction, food security, emergency preparedness, gender and urban issues. A major CSP objective will be to optimize stakeholders' collaboration for improved social protection and nutrition programmes; WFP will continue to be a member of the Scaling Up Nutrition movement.

92. Overall coordination and operational partnerships with United Nations agencies, particularly FAO, are essential. WFP's activities in Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts will be implemented in the context of multi-sector joint United Nations programming to enhance synergies and impact.

93. WFP will work with reputable research and academic institutions to create evidence, and will continue its partnerships with IFAD, the World Bank and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics to map poverty and undernutrition.

94. WFP's relationships with NGOs range from operational to strategic partnerships such as that with BRAC. As co-leader of the food security cluster and leader of the logistics cluster, WFP will help to optimize coordination and knowledge-sharing among international and national NGOs.

95. WFP will expand its collaboration with private-sector companies to enhance the availability of fortified rice, promote nutrition advocacy and pilot micro

-insurance schemes, bearing in mind the potential for conflicts of interest.

5. Performance Management and Evaluation

5.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

96. The country office performance management plan, which is aligned with WFP's Corporate Results Framework, will guide monitoring and evaluation. Adequate resources have been budgeted for this purpose.

97. Given WFP's focus on technical assistance, policy engagement, evidence creation and advocacy to optimize the outcomes of national initiatives, analysis of its specific contributions will determine the overall effectiveness of its work, particularly with regard to strategic outcomes 1, 3 and 4.

98. Because strategic outcome 2 involves direct assistance, rigorous outcome monitoring will be implemented. Baseline, mid-term and final outcome surveys will use methods appropriate to each indicator. The findings will inform periodic reviews of CSP implementation by WFP and its partners, to inform adaptations as required.

99. This CSP will be independently evaluated by the Office of Evaluation, in line with WFP's Evaluation Quality Assurance System.

5.2 Risk Management

Contextual risks

100. WFP will monitor contextual risks such as natural disasters, political instability or economic volatility with a view to planning mitigation measures adapted to the risk level. WFP will focus on long-term development, but will respond to emergencies as required.

Programmatic risks

101. There is some uncertainty with regard to the Government's plans for dealing with undocumented people from Myanmar, particularly following the listing of people in this population

group, which is targeted by WFP in Cox's Bazar. WFP will continue to monitor the situation, to participate in the regular coordination meetings for Cox's Bazar and to advocate with its development partners for acceptable solutions.

102. Local NGO capacity in Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts is limited, and will be stretched as the joint United Nations programmes expand: this will increase risks related to the quality and timeliness of programme delivery. WFP will assess potential NGO partners rigorously before entering into agreements, advocate with development partners for collective action to enhance local NGO capacities, and contract international NGOs to provide punctual technical support as required to develop the capacities of national partners.

Institutional risks

103. Security risks have recently increased, particularly in relation to militant groups, which could adversely affect staff and operations. Contingency planning will establish mitigation measures that maximize the continuity of operations and functions, and WFP will work with the United Nations Department for Safety and Security to ensure that adequate measures are in place for the safety of WFP staff and offices.

6. Resources for Results

6.1 Country Portfolio Budget

Table 1 - Indicative Annual Budget Requirement (USD)

INDICATIVE ANNUAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT (USD)					
Strategic Outcome	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
1	16 504 487	11 503 006	9 012 722	8 816 700	45 836 914
2	21 544 648	27 050 982	30 576 459	27 228 695	106 400 783
3	10 939 393	11 654 857	7 938 604	4 631 000	35 163 854
4	2 746 446	7 206 406	3 434 454	834 152	14 221 458
TOTAL	51 734 973	57 415 251	50 962 239	41 510 547	201 623 010

104. The budget required to implement this CSP for its 46 months is USD 201.6 million. Capacity enhancement under strategic outcomes 1 and 4 accounts for 30 percent of the total. The largest element – 53 percent – is WFP’s direct operational assistance for strategic outcome 2. Requirements are expected to decrease after 2018 as some activities wind down.

6.2 Resourcing Outlook

105. In 2014/15, USD 8.8 billion was allocated to promoting food security and nutrition in Bangladesh – 57 percent for availability, 41 percent for access, and 2 percent for utilization; 63 percent of the resources came from the Government, which funded the availability and access initiatives as a priority. The remainder was funded by development partners, which allocated most resources to programmes promoting utilization.

106. The cost of the CSP portfolio matches the actual resource levels of recent years. Activity 9 – USD 22 million – is fully funded, and forecasts indicate that the level of contributions will be similar for all activities except the new nutrition and resilience interventions in activities 2 and 8, which will be the subject of specific resource mobilization work.

6.3 Resource Mobilization Strategy

107. Delivery of this CSP will require sustained financial support to ensure uninterrupted engagement to achieve the strategic outcomes.

108. WFP will develop a resource mobilization strategy, and will advocate for long-term and flexible funding arrangements from traditional donors, the Government of Bangladesh – which will provide in-kind contributions – the private sector and other donors. Partnerships with foundations and development banks will be increased, and in-kind technical assistance from private companies will be sought.

109. WFP will also prepare a communications strategy to articulate to stakeholders WFP’s role and value-added in support of Bangladesh’s progress towards SDG 2. It will share information and evidence of progress towards planned results on a regular basis.

Annex:

TABLE 2: TOTAL FOOD/CASH-BASED TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS AND VALUE		
Food type/CBTs	Total (mt)	Total (USD)
Cereals	58 210	22 020 898
Pulses	966	878 200
Oil and fats	593	415 293
Mixed and blended foods	6 631	5 582 674
Other	850	1 294 550
Total food	67 250	30 191 614
CBTs (USD)		54 503 301
TOTAL		84 694 916

TABLE 3: FOOD AND CASH-BASED TRANSFER BENEFICIARIES BY STRATEGIC OUTCOME AND ACTIVITY										
Strategic outcome	Activity	Description	Food/CBTs	Number of beneficiaries					Total*	% women and girls
				2017	2018	2019	2020	2021		
1	4	WFP school feeding	Both	286 000	114 000				288 000	51
		General distribution (camps)	CBT	34 000	24 500	25 250	26 000		34 000	51
2	5	General distribution (makeshift sites)	CBT		15 000	15 500	15 900		15 900	51
		WFP school feeding	Food	341 200	164 200	167 300	170 400		350 400	51
		Nutrition support	Food	45 700	46 500	46 900	47 300		127 000	85
		Livelihood support	CBT	48 000	48 000	53 000	53 000		106 000	51
		WFP school feeding	Both	66 600	66 600	66 600	66 600		66 600	51
3	6	Nutrition support	Food		3 000	5 000	7 300		13 400	85
		Livelihood support	CBT		7 500	7 500	7 500		7 500	51
		Emergency assistance	Both	100 000	100 000	100 000	100 000		400 000	51
3	8	Evidence creation	CBT	20 000	20 000	20 000	20 000		20 000	51
		Livelihood support	CBT	35 000	35 000				70 000	51
3	9	Cash transfers	CBT	59 000	59 000	59 000	29 500		118 000	51
		TOTAL*		1 021 500	685 300	546 050	523 500		1 542 800	57

* Excluding double counting of beneficiaries

Annex:

Acronyms

CBT	Cash-based Transfer
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
SFYP	Seventh Five-Year Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development



World Food Programme

For more information contact:

World Food Programme Bangladesh
IDB Bhaban (17th Floor), E/8-A, Rokeya Sharani
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

Tel. Off: +880-2-9183022

Website: <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/bangladesh>