



WFP Bangladesh Country Brief November 2018

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Operational Context

Bangladesh is poised to transition into a middle-income country by 2020 and is making significant advances in the nutrition and food security front.

Facing critical levels of poverty and undernutrition, exacerbated by high population density, Bangladesh strives to continue with consistent socio-economic growth in the future. Prevalence of child marriage, adolescent pregnancies and undernutrition in mothers and adolescent girls are considerable impediments to these goals. This is compounded by high rates of stunting in children under the age of 5 that is a perceptible hindrance to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Bangladesh.

WFP, present in Bangladesh since 1974, transitioned to the Country Strategic Plan in April 2017. The CSP reinforces WFP's commitment to capacity strengthening of the government counterparts, facilitating direct provision of food assistance in emergencies and activities aimed at evidence creation.

Furthermore, in response to the unprecedented influx of the Rohingya population in August 2017, the CSP was amended to facilitate WFP's tailored response to the refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar. Presently, WFP is providing food and nutrition assistance to over 870,000 refugees besides implementing a range of livelihood programmes for both the host and refugee communities.



Population: **165 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **139 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **36% of children between 6-59**

In Numbers

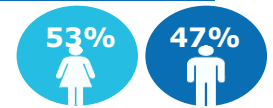
12,464 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 2.9 m cash-based transfers made

US\$ 199 m total confirmed contribution for Cox's Bazar L3 Emergency Response

US\$ 43.01 m six months (Dec 2018 - May 2019) net funding requirements for CSP of which **US\$ 38.83 m** is for Cox's Bazar L3 Emergency Response

1.3 m people assisted in November 2018



Operational Updates

- **WFP celebrated 16 Days of Activism:** WFP remains committed to ensuring gender parity both through its programme and in the office space, that was reiterated in a series of events were organized both in the L3 emergency operation in Cox's Bazar and Dhaka Country Office with participation of all WFP staffs. Some of the highlights were the signing of pledges by staff members, showcasing collective efforts towards maintaining gender parity, and a short rally.
- **Life-saving Food Assistance:** The 27th round of General Food Assistance (GFA) was completed, reaching 145,397 households (668,823) with in-kind food; e-voucher assistance reached 42,332 households (201,305 individuals).
- **Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Programmes:** 200,000 children under five years of age and 41,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women from both the refugee camps and host communities received nutrition assistance.

Country Level Programmes

- **Rice Fortification:** Fortified rice distribution reached 1.2 million beneficiaries through different Government safety net programmes. In collaboration with the Ministry of Food, fortified rice is being distributed in ten sub-districts during October-November covering almost 600,000 beneficiaries.
- WFP is also providing fortified rice through the Vulnerable Development programme in 12 sub-districts in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.
- **Forecast Based Financing (FbF):** An "Agreement of Cooperation" (AoC) has been signed with German Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross to collaborate and coordinate on activities related to FbF.

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Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Dec – May Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
530.9 m	391.37 m	43.01 m

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 1: Vulnerable groups in rural and urban settings are supported by enhanced national actions to improve their nutrition indicators in line with the national targets by 2020.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Technical assistance and advocacy to enhance the food security and nutrition impact of selected safety nets.
- Technical assistance and advocacy for improved nutrition.
- Technical assistance and advocacy for scaling up post-harvest rice fortification.
- Policy advice and technical assistance to scale-up school feeding.

- **Nutrition Programme:** A consultation on the nutrition standards for School Meals was organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with a range of Government stakeholders to highlight further opportunities of school meals for nutrition outcomes in school-aged children.

- **School Feeding:** Economic Relations Division (ERD) and WFP jointly facilitated an inter-ministerial visit to observe school meals programme in Bamna involving high-level Government officials from key lead ministries, including the Cabinet division and local Government officials. In a national-level workshop held on “School Meals: Addressing School Children’s Nutritional Needs” recently, it was decided that a technical committee would be constituted to advise on the minimum nutritional standard for the National School Meals Policy draft.

- **Nobo Jatra Project:** Conditional cash entitlements of 2,200 (USD 26) per individual per month was transferred to 14,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women to improve their nutritional status.

Monitoring

- During November, WFP received 519 calls out of which 73 percent were from female beneficiaries across Cox’s Bazar, Forecast based Financing in Kurigram and Nobo Jatra Project (NJP) in Khulna.
- In Cox’s Bazar, 63 percent of the calls received were specific distribution related complaints: delay in receiving food, distribution schedule and venue queries, duplicate membership amongst others.

- WFP observed through the third-party monitoring that most of the people prefer e-voucher assistance modality, which is in line with WFP’s vision going forward i.e., the ongoing transition from general food assistance.

Stories from the field



“Food Empowers Us”, retorts 15-year-old Taslima.

Escaping violence in Myanmar, Taslima and her four siblings travelled two days in a cramped boat to reach Kutupalong Camp, Cox’s Bazar. In few weeks, she was enrolled into the General Food Assistance cycle of WFP, where her basic food needs were taken care of. Sooner she will be transferred into the e-voucher modality for food assistance, which she reckons will improve their living standards further. As the head of the family, her struggle extends much beyond food needs, however she concedes “Food received from WFP empowers us”. Additionally, they also receive micronutrient biscuits from the learning centre.

“The food we receive from WFP doesn’t only help us survive, it helps us to live with dignity and respect”, goes Taslima.

Challenges

- **General Elections in December:** The 11th Parliamentary election is scheduled to be held on 30 December 2018. The ongoing preparation for elections has a significant impact on WFP operation across the country.
- **Funding Situation:** To continue with the ongoing capacity strengthening support alongside the humanitarian operation in Cox’s Bazar at the existing scale, WFP is actively engaging with donors and partners to strengthen relationships, going forward.

Major Donors

Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, DFID-UK, European Commission, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, UN Common Funds and Agencies, UN CERF, USA, WPD Share the Meal, and Multilateral and Private Donors.