



World Food Programme

# WFP Bangladesh Country Brief

## January 2019

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. According to the World Economic League Table, Bangladesh is slated to enter the top 25 economies by 2033.

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**

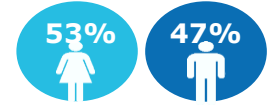
## In Numbers

**12,772 mt** of food assistance distributed

**US\$ 3.64 m** cash-based transfers made

**US\$ 47.6 m** six months (Feb 2019 - July 2019) net funding requirements for CSP

**1.3 m people assisted** in December 2018



### WFP Rohingya refugee response in Cox's Bazar

#### • 2019: A year of transition

Since the onset of the refugee influx in August 2017, WFP has ramped up its response in Cox's Bazar. In the immediate aftermath, WFP provided life-saving food and nutrition assistance targeting the poverty-prone population most vulnerable to climate-related shocks. For WFP, 2019 will be a year of focusing more on long-term solutions to build capacities and resiliency of the community, which would contribute to strengthened livelihoods and sustainable development.

- **Scale-Up Plans:** WFP plans to scale up its food assistance, where over 900,000 refugees are assisted via in-kind food distribution and the e-voucher modality. Presently, e-voucher assistance reaches to over 210,000 refugees, across 18 e-voucher outlets, which would be expanded to 36 new shops. Recently, two new e-voucher outlets have opened in Mainnerguson (considered the largest in the camp) and D5. Complementing that, the school feeding programme aims to expand from 2,200 to 3,000 learning centres by the end of 2019. The livelihood programme for the host community and refugee population will also be strengthened.

### Development Programmes

- **Nutrition Programme:** WFP is exploring the interest and opportunities for a "Fill the Nutrient Gap" situation analysis and assessment of the affordability of health diets providing adequate nutrient intake to inform policy and programme prioritisation of nutrition interventions. WFP continues to provide technical assistance to formulate and agree on recommendations on the minimum nutrition requirements under the draft school feeding policy for endorsement by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Rice Fortification:** The Ministry of Social Welfare has agreed to integrate fortified rice in 14 districts through the State Children Home/Sheikh Russell Children Home in 2019. This year, a total of 200,000 households will be covered under the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme, as well as 16,000 households under the Food Friendly Programme.

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## Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Feb - Jul Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
<b>530.9 m</b>	<b>395.95 m</b>	<b>47.6 m</b>

### 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 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.

### Strategic Result 1: Access to Food

**Strategic Outcome 2:** The most vulnerable population of Cox's Bazar, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and disaster-stricken areas have enhanced food security and nutrition.

**Focus area:** *Crisis response*

**Activities:**

- Deliver an integrated assistance package in Cox's Bazar.
- Deliver an integrated assistance package in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

### Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Innovative approaches to enhance the resilience of food insecure households exposed to climate-related shocks and stresses are validated by 2020.

**Focus area:** *Resilience building*

**Activities:**

- Evidence creation on innovative approaches to enhance resilience.
- Implement the Nono Jatra programme.

### Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDG.

**Strategic Outcome 4:** The humanitarian response system for large-scale natural disasters in Bangladesh can respond with reduced cost and lead time

**Focus area:** *Resilience building*

**Activities:**

- Capacity strengthening for emergency response.
- Lead the logistics cluster and co-lead the food-security cluster.

### Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise, technology, strengthen global partnership to support country efforts to achieve the SDG

**Strategic Outcome 5:** Humanitarian and development partners in Bangladesh have access to reliable services in the areas of supply chain and emergency telecommunication during crisis.

**Focus area:** *Crisis response*

- Coordinate the LS/C and provide efficient common logistics services to support the humanitarian community's response.
- Coordinate the ETS/C and provide efficient common services to support the humanitarian community response.
- Site Maintenance and Engineering Project (SMEP).

- Discussions are underway on WFP's partnership with Shuchona Foundation to support relevant Government agencies in improving training materials relevant to designing safety net programmes such as the child benefit and school feeding programme. Jointly with UNICEF, this partnership will support WFP in promoting inclusiveness and social protection.

- **Nono Jatra Programme:** WFP transferred conditional cash entitlements of BDT 2,200 (USD 26) per individual per month to 12,326 pregnant and breastfeeding women for better nutrition; BDT 1,000 (USD 12) each per month to 4,478 women participants of the graduation/livelihoods programme; and a one-off cash grant of BDT 15,000 (USD 178) each to 161 women participating in the graduation programme to initiate income generating activities.

### A conversation with Princess Sarah Zeid of Jordan

**In January, Princess Sarah Zeid of Jordan made a visit to the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. As the special ambassador for nutrition with WFP, she was thrilled to witness WFP's large-scale integrated operations; from food assistance to malnutrition prevention programmes to engaging women in income-generating activities through ongoing livelihood projects. During her visit she interacted with many of the camp inhabitants. Here is what a woman entrepreneur, who owns a small vegetable garden had to share:**

In the initial days of the influx, Janat Ara and her family fled Myanmar to escape violence and torture. Her life was clouded with uncertainty, whereby she depended on the support of the humanitarian actors and the local Bangladeshi families. She recalls, "those days were hard - we carried nothing with us, no food, no money". In few months' time, however, with targeted assistance, her living standard has started improving. Most importantly, with the self-reliance project of WFP, and partners, she received support to grow her own vegetable garden - which complements her diet with the necessary nutrients. She is receiving training in tailoring to aide her in starting her own business someday - making her more empowered and self-dependent. Though her past haunts her at times, she has begun looking forward to the future with renewed hope and aspiration.

### Situation Analysis

- Following demonstrations by Garment factory workers in the capital, the Government has formulated a committee to re-evaluate the wage structure. While this caused road blocks and considerable delays in regular functioning, the situation is under control now, as reported in the [national media](#).

### 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.