



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
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LIVES

# WFP Bangladesh Country Brief February 2019



## 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 stated 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 months**

## In Numbers

**12,592 mt** of food assistance distributed

**US\$ 3.43 m** cash-based transfers made

**US\$ 90.33 m** six months (March 2019 - Aug 2019) net funding requirements for CSP of which **US\$ 83 m** is for Cox's Bazar, L2 Emergency Response.

**1.3 m people assisted**  
in February 2019



## WFP Rohingya refugee response in Cox's Bazar

- **Life-saving food assistance:** WFP plans to continue transitioning the refugee population from general food distributions to e-vouchers, providing them more choice and improving their dietary diversity. Presently, one-third of the refugee population is assisted under the e-voucher modality across eight e-voucher outlets (21 shops).
- **WFP introduces flexible items in e-voucher outlets:** E-voucher outlets provide an option of 20 different food items. Based on regular monitoring and evaluation exercises, to facilitate access to more diversified food, the mandatory items are limited to 12, and additional eight flexible items are introduced. WFP has set guidelines for contracted retailers to sell at least three items of fresh food (including both vegetables and fruits).
- **Durable Livelihoods programme:** Complemented with food and nutrition assistance, WFP implements sustainable livelihood programmes to incentivize women to build their own businesses and have greater access to cash. Tailored life-skills and vocational training is imparted to the participants. Recently, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs (MoWCA), ten women-led community centres were inaugurated in Unchiprang (camp 22) which will engage women from both the host and refugee population.

## Development Programmes

- **School Feeding:** WFP has played a critical role in the government-led school feeding programme. Over 200,000 students across the country are provided with micronutrient biscuits, and additional 15,000 with school meals. School feeding in 23 schools in Lama District will be handed over to the Government.
- **Nutrition:** WFP participated in the regional Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Business Network meeting that was jointly organized with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) in Tokyo to discuss globally lessons learned, tools accessible at country level and opportunities for private sector engagement for greater nutrition programming.

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## Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Mar - Aug Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
969.12 m	404.40 m	90.33 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 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 Nobo 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 service 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).

- **Nobo Jatra:** WFP transferred conditional cash entitlements of BDT 1,000 (USD 12) each per month to 4,500 women participants of the ultra-poor graduation/livelihoods programme; and a one-off cash grant of BDT 15,000 (USD 178) each to 384 women participating in the ultra-poor graduation programme to initiate income-generating activities.

## Monitoring

WFP received over 239 calls of which 211 were responded to immediately. Fifty-six percent of all callers were women. Inquiries and complaints related to access to cash, food distribution schedule, request for inclusion of new members and the quality of food provided. In the context of the Cox's Bazar Emergency Response, 82 percent of the complains were distribution-related.

## Voices from the communities

"There is a sense of self-satisfaction working at the largest refugee settlement of the world", says Rebeka, an e-voucher volunteer in Mainnerghona.

When the refugee influx unfolded in 2017, we couldn't at first grasp the magnitude. Hundreds and thousands of people from Myanmar crossed over in desperation. The situation has calmed down over the last 1.5 years, but there is still so much more to be done. My work in the Mainnerghona e-voucher outlet, one of the eight outlets in the camps, involves engaging with the beneficiaries and making sure they are aware of their entitlements and can encash their smart cards effortlessly. At times, they come to us petrified, everything seems to them very new and alien.

I was born here, my parents came to Bangladesh ages ago, the situation then was very different. Overtime, so much has changed, some of my friends here from the host communities have a very different experience of the influx. I think one's background, context and socio-economic status defines what experience you have and how you perceive other communities.

## Situation Analysis

- As reported in the [media](#), the Government of Bangladesh has decided to action on its decision to move close to 100,000 people to Bhasanchar, a previously uninhabited island.
- As reported, Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque [informed](#) the UN Security Council recently that Bangladesh could not accept more refugees.

## Major Donors

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