



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief

May 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**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

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

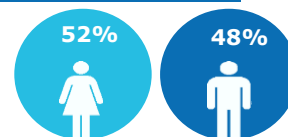
In Numbers

10,314.171 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 4.41 m cash-based transfers made

US\$ 70.23 m six months (June to November 2019) net funding requirements, of which **US\$ 62.05 m** is for the Cox's Bazar L2 Emergency Response

1.23 million people assisted in May 2019



WFP Rohingya Refugee Response in Cox's Bazar

General Food Assistance (GFA)

In May, WFP assisted 880,000 refugees with GFA through a combination of e-voucher (400,000) and in-kind (480,000) modalities. By using e-vouchers, WFP provides an array of food options to the refugees at a time and location convenient for them. By end of the year, WFP plans to scale up e-vouchers to include 80 percent of the entire refugee population. This will be facilitated by 17 e-voucher outlets, of which seven are under construction.

Nutrition Programmes

Over 200,000 refugees and 12,000 members of the host population received assistance under the malnutrition prevention and treatment activities in the camps and host areas respectively. By the end of 2019, WFP plans to include 300,000 refugees across 52 nutrition sites in the refugee camps.

Livelihoods Programme for Women in the Host Community

WFP engaged 20,000 women from the host community through 816 self-help groups, encouraging them to save money through group bank accounts. The participants also undergo a range of skills training, including tailoring and handicrafts, delivered in collaboration with local government agencies.

Situation Update

The Rohingya Emergency Vulnerability Assessment II is at the final stages of publication. Conducted jointly by WFP and the Food Security Sector, this will be critical to understanding the evolving, differentiated needs of both refugees and locals.

Development Programme Highlights

School Feeding

WFP reached over 182,000 children in nine sub districts with micronutrient fortified biscuits and distributed 300 mt of Saudi dates to 115,000 primary school children in Cox's Bazar, Bamna and Islampur. WFP runs a home-grown school meal programme in three sub-districts, reaching approximately 32,000 students. The Government has decided to take up a nutritious school meals programme based on this project, with technical assistance from WFP. This expansion will reach over 410,000 children in 2,100 schools.

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Photo Credit: Kauser Haider

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Jun-Nov 2019 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
969.12 m	488.10 m	70.23m

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

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 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).

Social Safety Net Policies and Programme

WFP has provided technical assistance to the Department of Women Affairs (DWA) under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs for social protection reforms. The DWA is now ready to facilitate payment directly to beneficiaries through a Government to Person Payment process.

776 poor and vulnerable pregnant and nursing mothers from 44 hard-to-reach sub-districts have enrolled in social protection benefits through this pilot process. WFP is planning to expand the payment to 7 sub-districts and continue the enrolment and payment on monthly basis. In addition, WFP will roll out nutrition-sensitive behaviour change communication at the beneficiary level through existing Government platforms.

Monitoring

WFP Bangladesh received 266 calls to its hotline in May, 66 percent of which were made by women. 81 percent of the inquiries and complaints related to distributions.

Voices from the community

Sahara Khatun is 35 years old, the head of her family and the carer for her physically disabled husband, their five children and her four siblings. She uses the WFP Assistance Card to get food for her family. Her older children go to learning centres in the camp, where they also receive fortified biscuits. With her younger children, she visits WFP's nutrition centre; she is happy to observe that their health is improving.

Sahara fled Myanmar after witnessing her parents and brothers being killed. She feels safe in Bangladesh and is grateful to the local people here who gave her family a place to stay, where she can sleep peacefully.

For Sahara and her family this was their first Ramadan away from home. Throughout Ramadan, they missed being able to eat meat or fish and the traditional meals they would prepare at home. Most of their Sehri meals (meal before the fast starts) were mainly eggs that they got from WFP's e-voucher outlets.

Her family has no source income, so Sahara hopes that they will find some work in which her disabled husband can participate. She believes one day they will be able to return to Myanmar.

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, Share the Meal, and Multilateral and Private Donors.