



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief July 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 880,000 refugees besides implementing a range of livelihood programmes for both the host and refugee communities.



In Numbers

7,074.579 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 4.02 m cash-based transfers made

US\$ 44.29 m six months (August 2019 to January 2020) net funding requirements, of which US\$ 38.4 m is for the Cox's Bazar L2 Emergency Response

1.17 million people assisted in July 2019



Operational Updates

WFP Rohingya Refugee Response in Cox's Bazar

General Food Assistance

In the month of July, WFP served over 838,000 refugees with integrated food assistance. 430,700 refugees received in-kind food distributions while a further 407,671 refugees received e-vouchers which they could exchange for a diverse range of 20 food items available across 11 e-voucher outlets in the camps. Since early July, WFP's rapid response to monsoon flooding has assisted 12,300 refugees with High Energy Biscuits (HEBs) and/or an in-kind food ration. This includes 3,800 individuals who have received cooked meals. WFP has prepositioned another 42.9mt of HEBs in strategic locations to ensure timely and effective food supply.

School feeding

In July, WFP provided fortified biscuits to 139,057 children (Boys: 65,906, Girls: 73,151) in 486 schools daily in Ukhiya, Teknaf, Pekua, Kutubdia and Moheshkhali sub-districts of Cox's Bazar. To improve literacy and nutrition awareness, WFP organised healthy meal preparation events in 25 schools, where a total of 7,530 children participated. In addition, school level quiz competitions were organized in 6 schools with 570 participants.

Situation Update

Heavy and frequent monsoon rainfall during July caused landslides, flash floods, winds and waterlogging in the Rohingya refugee camps. According to the [Inter Sector Coordination Group](#), 50,840 refugees were affected, approximately 6,321 of whom have been temporarily displaced, 1,171 shelters have been destroyed, 9,129 shelters have been damaged and 1,056 facilities require repairs. Compared to last year, site improvement works that were undertaken prior to monsoon season enhanced both pedestrian and vehicular access to the camps during the rains. (see this [BBC article](#)).

Development Programme Highlights

Resilience Innovation

WFP's Resilience Innovation Unit held two orientation sessions in July. The first was on community awareness materials for cooperating partner (CP) staff. The second focused on WFP's Resilience Innovation work and targeted regional and field-level local disaster management committee officials and key government officials.

Population: 165 million

2015 Human Development Index: 139 out of 188

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Photo Credit: WFP/Asif Mahmud

The Resilience Innovation unit piloted the Forecast-based Financing (FbF) initiative, an innovative approach to respond to the recent monsoon floods in the Northwest of Bangladesh. The FbF uses scientific data and weather predictions to determine whether a response needs to be triggered before water levels exceed the danger line. It was activated by WFP for the first time prior to the floods in July.

Nutrition-sensitive Social Safety Nets

WFP is supporting the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) to improve the 'Mother and Child Benefit Programme', which MoWCA launched on 24 July. The programme will provide 7.5 million children with monthly cash benefits to enable them to meet their health and nutrition needs. MoWCA plans to scale the programme up in 64 poverty-prone areas of Bangladesh in the 2020 cycle and will gradually cover 491 upazilas by 2025.

In July, WFP facilitated sessions on behaviour change communication and awareness campaigns. This is part of the Improved Maternity and Lactating Mother Allowance programme, which was prioritised in the 2015 National Social Security Strategy because it addresses the critical period during the first 1,000 days of a child's physical, social and cognitive development.

Monitoring

WFP Bangladesh received 475 calls to its hotline in July, of which 182 of the callers were women. More than 77 percent of the inquiries and complaints were related to distributions.

Voices from the community

In August 2017, Arifa fled Myanmar in the hope of finding a safe place to live. Her husband had died long ago and none of her male family members were capable of working, so when she arrived in camp 20 with her family of seven she had to look for a way to support them.

She recently started working as a cash-for-work participant under WFP's Site Management Engineering Project (SMEP). Her responsibilities include slope protection and stabilization. Working outside the home has been a new experience and Arifa is happy to have the opportunity to work because she is making money and supporting her family.

Major Donors

Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Norway, Russia, Qatar, Switzerland, UN Common Funds and Agencies, UN CERF, the United Kingdom, the United States, Share the Meal, and Multilateral and Private Donors.

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Aug 2019 - Jan 2020 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
969.12 m	481.57 m	44.29 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

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).