In Numbers

- 4,386 MT of food assistance distributed
- US$ 8.1 million cash-based transfers made
- US$ 38.9 million six months (June - November 2020) net funding requirements, of which US$ 23.25 million is for the Cox’s Bazar L2 Emergency Response
- 1.1 million people assisted in May 2020

Situational Updates

- The nationwide lockdown will end on 30 May. From 31 May, all government and private offices will reopen on a limited scale.
- On 3 May, the Government quarantined over 300 refugees on Bhasan Char Island. The refugees were rescued by the Bangladesh Navy after being stranded at sea in the Bay of Bengal for weeks. In response to the UN Secretary General appeal to move the refugees to the camps, the Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the refugees will most likely live on Bhasan Char Island until they return to Myanmar.
- Across the country, the Government is working on a proposal to implement the zone-based lockdown system to effectively manage the COVID-19 pandemic. From 6 June to 20 June, the Cox’s Bazar Municipality has been declared a Red Zone to effectively contain the COVID-19 pandemic, with gathering and transport banned.

Operational Updates

- In May, WFP provided food assistance to 863,849 refugees: 684,565 through e-vouchers, and 179,284 through in-kind food distributions. As a result of COVID-19 cases in the camps, WFP is looking at alternative options to provide in-kind food for refugees who are unable to visit e-voucher outlets. Across six districts, WFP extended its support to 4,500 individuals at the isolation centres and 70,000 households.
- WFP assisted the Directorate General of Health Services in identifying critical items required for the next three months for the COVID-19 response in a National Action Plan, including items required to support the refugees. Of the total amount required, critical items are estimated to cost over US$ 217 million.
- Cyclone Amphan made landfall on May 20 and caused damages of about US$ 1.2 billion in 19 districts in Bangladesh. In preparation for Cyclone Amphan, WFP prepositioned a contingency stock of 490 mt of high-energy biscuits to provide food assistance to 90,500 families during three days as needed.

Contact info: Liam Kincaid, OIM, Reports and Partnerships Officer, liam.kincaid@wfp.org; Ifunanya Nwokedi, Partnerships Officer, ifunanya.nwokedi@wfp.org
Country Director: Richard Ragan
Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/bangladesh
Mother and Child Benefit Programme (MCBP): WFP repurposed and distributed food rations (10 kg of rice, 3.5 kg of lentils and 1 litre of soybean oil) to over 3,000 pregnant women in six Upazilas. In addition, WFP supported the Department of Women’s Affairs to distribute three-month cash benefits to 19,191 pregnant and lactating mothers under the programme by providing technical support to organize virtual training workshops to scale up the programme from eight to 18 Upazilas.

The Logistics Sector, with the support of WFP, is leading the construction of a common hub in Cox’s Bazar town that will be managed by HI/Atlas Logistique.

Site Maintenance Engineering Project (SMEP) activities are focused on the construction of e-voucher outlets in the camps. As part of monsoon preparedness, SMEP is also performing critical engineering works in the camps.

Resource Innovation: While field-level activities are suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions, WFP developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for forecast-based financing and climate risk insurance targeting for the upcoming flood season. During the flood season, the SOP can be activated to support 30,000 individuals through cash transfers in case of high threat level.

Livelihoods Programmes: In the host communities of Cox’s Bazar, WFP, in cooperation with partners, have started mask production in 8 skills development centres. More than 40 female participants are producing up to 60 facemasks daily.

Rice Fortification: WFP continues to support the Government to distribute fortified rice to 1.5 million beneficiaries across 110 sub-districts under the Food Friendly Programme and Vulnerable Group Development programmes.

Nobo Jatra: WFP supported the conditional monthly cash transfers for critical support to extremely vulnerable women. Through the Nobo Jatra programme, 4,590 women received cash transfer to support their access to nutrition.

Donors

Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, European Union, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vietnam.

Contributions were also received from UN CERF, UN Pooled Funds, Multilateral and Private Donors.