

Highlights

Since March, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the already vulnerable host communities in Cox's Bazar. Due to a series of national and regional lockdowns, income opportunities have been significantly lost, impacting households' purchasing power and threatening food security. In response, WFP is providing food and cash assistance to over half of a million people through **Special Support for the Host Community (SSHC)** in all 8 sub-districts, including food assistance to people in isolation and quarantine facilities. Adaptations have been made to Nutrition, School Feeding and Livelihoods programmes to continue delivering essential services while protecting the safety of beneficiaries and staff. In the meantime, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) work on cyclone shelters continued while observing social distancing in preparation for the cyclone season.



In Numbers

(as of August 2020)



700,000 people were assisted in the host communities



540,000 people received assistance package through SSHC



7,215 women and children receiving nutrition treatment



30 cyclone shelters rehabilitated



135,000 children received high energy biscuits

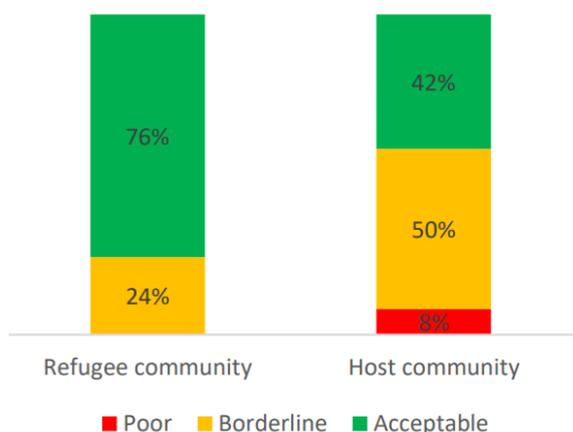


106 clinics providing nutrition service

COVID-19 Impact on Host Community

Food Consumption Score (FCS) in April

(Source: WFP COVID-19 impact on refugees and host communities)



Following government lockdown measures in March 2020, households in the host community reported immediate impact such as reduced purchasing power and diminished quality of diet in April 2020.

- ◆ Almost all respondents reported an average income loss of BDT 2,100 (USD 25) per week.
- ◆ Only 42 percent of households reported an acceptable diet*, dropped from 80 percent pre-COVID.

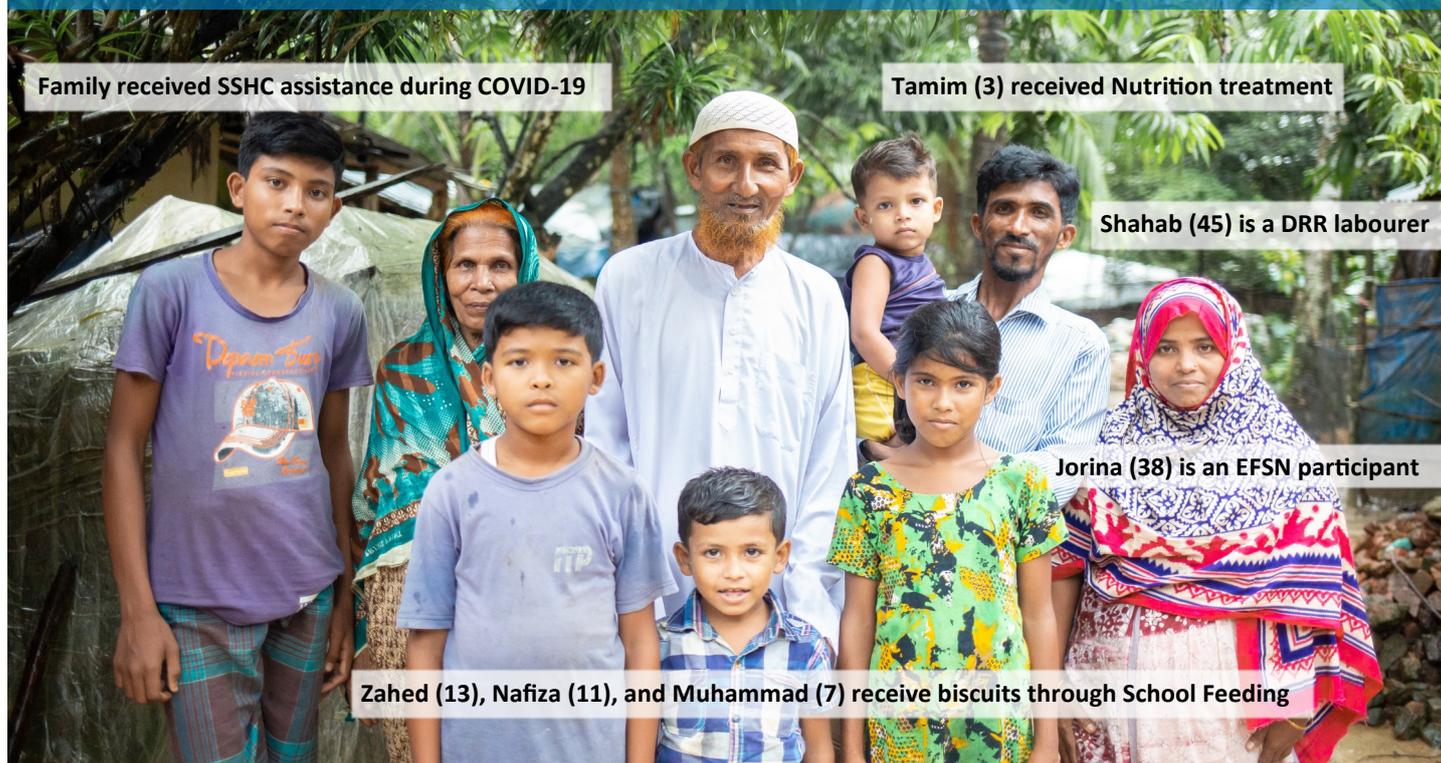
(Source: WFP COVID-19 impact on refugees and host communities, May 2020)

Furthermore, loss of income was reported as mainly contributing to poor diet. Income loss was also reported to contribute to increased risk of gender-based violence.

(Source: WFP Rapid Gender Assessment, June 2020)

***acceptable diet:** Households with an acceptable diet generally consume staples and vegetables every day, frequently accompanied by oil and pulses, and occasionally meat, fish and dairy. (WFP COVID-19 impact on refugees and host communities, May 2020)

In the Life of a Family: Experience with WFP Assistance



Family received SSHC assistance during COVID-19

Tamim (3) received Nutrition treatment

Shahab (45) is a DRR labourer

Jorina (38) is an EFSN participant

Zahed (13), Nafiza (11), and Muhammad (7) receive biscuits through School Feeding

Jorina and Shahab's family of 10 lives in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar / Photo by Nihab Rahmen

Special Support for the Host Community (SSHC)



"We had no income at all during the government lockdown from March 2020. All 10 of our family had to solely depend on WFP special support package for few months."

SSHC supported the most vulnerable populations across Cox's Bazar, targeting over a half million people in the host community from April 2020. WFP provided in-kind rice, high energy biscuits, pulses, oil and cash distribution of 4,500 BDT (USD 53). WFP also provided life-saving food assistance to 4,500 individuals at government supported isolation/treatment centers and hospitals. All SSHC distributions are planned to be completed by October 2020.

Livelihoods (EFSN)

"Among all different types of WFP assistance our family has received, EFSN programme was the best. I now have my own business I can continue expanding."

Jorina (38) started participating in WFP's Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) programme in 2018. She learned how to rear chickens and goats with the provision of BDT 15,000 for her individual business. Through trainings and self-help group (SHG) discussions, she is now more confident in making decisions. During the series of lockdowns, she has been looking after her business. While regular EFSN programme was suspended, 23,543 women participants received one-off cash and food assistance (SSHC). EFSN has engaged 34 participants in the production of over 20,700 masks thus far and resumed regular EFSN activities from July 2020.





Disaster Risk Reduction

“I used to be a daily labourer, but I’m enjoying this new job as I don’t have to worry about irregular income or late payments like before.”

Shahab participates in Cash-for-Work schemes, where he helps with Disaster Risk Reduction projects, such as installing hand washing stations in cyclone shelters in Ukhiya. He works 6 days a week and receives BDT 600 (USD 7) per day. WFP is also conducting awareness campaigns on COVID-19 and cyclone preparedness as well as reforestation work covering over 2,250 acres thus far this year.



School Feeding

Zahed (13), Nafiza (11) and Muhammad (7) enjoy going to school together and love the high energy biscuits (HEBs) and studying materials they receive at the school. Since the school closures in March 2020, they receive HEBs through the WFP’s **door-to-door distributions** conducted in five sub-districts (Ukhiya, Teknaf, Pekua, Moheshkhali, Kutubdia).

From August, children began receiving **two child-size masks with HEBs**. The masks were produced by Rohingya refugees participating in WFP’s Self-Reliance programme.



Nutrition

“Our son was born malnourished and weak, but he is noticeably the healthiest amongst kids his age now.”

Jorina received nutrition assistance for her son Tamim (3), who gradually graduated out of WFP’s Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) service. Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, mothers are trained on **Measure Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) techniques** so they can assess their children at home and limit in-person visits to nutrition clinics. WFP operates 106 nutrition clinics including **16 new clinics** opened in June, where MAM treatment is provided.

Message from Jorina and Shahab



“It is like a dream.

We never imagined we both can work and support the family together. My wife has her business, I also have earnings. We repaid the loan we had before and we also have been saving part of earnings which helped us a lot during COVID19 pandemic. My kids are healthy and we can now feed 10 people in our family. Our family is happier but we are still eager to learn more and get trained more.”

Looking Ahead

Going forward, WFP plans to:



Complete SSHC assistance by October 2020.



Scale up the Livelihoods programme in other sub-districts beyond Ukhiya and Teknaf, starting from Moheshkhali and Kutubdia sub-district.



Extend nutrition services at new clinics (4 in Pekua and 2 in Teknaf in September)

WFP thanks the support of its donors

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