



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief October 2020



Operational Context

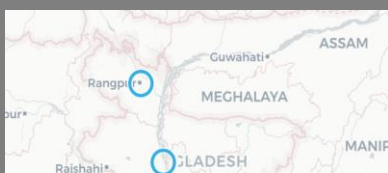
COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh reached 406,364 as of 31 October 2020. This included 4,871 cases in the host community in Cox's Bazar and 336 cases among Rohingya refugees.

Bangladesh is among the five fastest growing economies in the world with an average growth rate of 6.5 percent. However, the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to weaken this growth significantly. The latest South East Asia Economic Focus released by the World Bank estimated that regional growth will fall to a range between 1.8 and 2.8 percent in 2020.

The Government of Bangladesh has ended the national lockdown which had been in place from 26 March until 30 June, resulting in the closure of businesses and markets and causing a loss of employment for many in the informal sector. Wearing facemasks while outside remains compulsory to contain the spread of COVID-19.

WFP has been present in Bangladesh since 1974 and transitioned to a Country Strategic Plan (CSP) in April 2017. The CSP reinforces the commitment of WFP to strengthen the capacities of government counterparts, providing food assistance in emergencies and creating evidence on innovative approaches to resilience.

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 approximately 860,000 refugees besides implementing a range of livelihood programmes for both the host and refugee communities.



Population: **167 million**

2019 Human Development Index: **135 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **31% of children between 6-59 months**

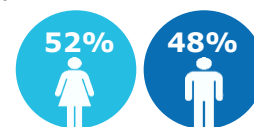
In Numbers

3,325 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$10.3 million cash-based transfers made

US\$67.3 million six months (November 2020 - April 2021) net funding requirements, of which **US\$52.9 million** is for the Cox's Bazar L2 Emergency Response.

1.3 million people assisted
in October 2020



Situation Updates

- In early October 2020, **multiple armed groups in the Cox's Bazar camps fought for over two weeks** to gain control, resulting in over 1,500 Rohingya families fleeing the northeast part of the mega camp. In response to this escalation, **WFP provided rapid response support** (one-off general food assistance, high energy biscuits and hot meals) to over 35,000 beneficiaries. Lack of communications in the camp areas presented an additional challenge for the operating environment.

Operational Updates

- Following the signing of the data sharing agreement between WFP and UNHCR**, WFP now has access to UNHCR's **biometric database (BIMS)**. This system will enable WFP to print new assistance cards using biometrics from UNHCR with updated household data. WFP has **successfully tested three pilots** to ensure the system's efficiency and safety.
- The sixth **budget revision to the [WFP Bangladesh Country Strategic Plan \(CSP\)](#) was approved on 31 October**. The new overall CSP budget (2017-2021) amounts to US\$ 1.4 billion, with US\$ 399 million allocated for 2021.
- In October, WFP provided **food assistance** to 834,221 refugees through e-vouchers at 19 outlets and 24,339 through in-kind assistance at two distribution points. WFP provides food and nutrition assistance to the entire refugee population. **As of October, 97 percent of refugees received assistance through e-vouchers. Building Blocks blockchain technology** is operational in over half of the e-voucher outlets, serving 72 percent of the refugees, with the ambition to cover the entire refugee population by mid-2021. WFP has invited partner humanitarian organizations to join the network to facilitate the distribution of other relief items and services. WFP reopened four **fresh food corners** at e-voucher outlets in the camps to provide fresh vegetables to improve the nutrition status of refugee populations and contribute to the local economy and agricultural production in host communities.

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Country Strategic Plan (2017-2020)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Nov. '20 – Apr. '21 Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
1.4 billion	826.4 million	67.3 million

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:

- Act. 1 Technical assistance and advocacy to enhance the food security and nutrition impact of selected safety nets.
- Act. 2 Technical assistance and advocacy for improved nutrition.
- Act. 3 Technical assistance and advocacy for scaling up post-harvest rice fortification.
- Act. 4 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:

- Act. 5 Deliver an integrated assistance package in Cox's Bazar.
- Act. 6 Deliver an integrated assistance package in Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- Act. 7 Deliver food assistance in emergencies.

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:

- Act. 8 Evidence creation on innovative approaches to enhance resilience.
- Act. 9 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

Activities:

- Act. 10 Capacity strengthening for emergency response.
- Act. 11 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, emergency telecommunication, site maintenance and engineering project crises.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Act. 12 Coordinate the LS/C and provide efficient common logistics services to support the humanitarian community's response.
- Act. 13 Coordinate the ETS/C and provide efficient common services to support the humanitarian community response.
- Act. 14 Site Maintenance and Engineering Project (SMEP).

- **Dhaka urban food assistance:** Through the Dhaka Urban Response, WFP supported 37,000 individuals affected by COVID-19 through cash transfers in October. WFP also provided food assistance to more than 40,000 individuals in quarantine. To ensure the programme feeds into the national government response to COVID-19, a coordination meeting was organized with the Ministry of Social Welfare to brief officials about the Dhaka urban response programme and highlight the potential integration into government safety net programmes.
- **Seasonal livelihood programme:** WFP conducted a three-day virtual entrepreneurship development training for cooperating partner staff at the end of October. Participants received training on how to support beneficiaries in developing essential business skills and business plans for selected alternative livelihoods. WFP is conducting an alternative livelihood assessment survey and drafting the report.
- **Post-flood response:** In October, WFP delivered cash assistance to over 160,000 people severely affected by the flood. Of these, 20,086 beneficiaries had received forecast-based financing and anticipatory action support ahead of the disaster.
- **Nutrition:** As part of COVID-19 programmatic adaptations, WFP continues to implement prevention and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition programmes in the camps and treatment programmes in the host community. In the camps, WFP assisted 181,673 children under 5 and 33,530 pregnant and lactating women at 45 integrated nutrition sites. In the host communities, WFP reached 5,518 children under 5 and 3,490 pregnant and lactating women at 123 community clinics.
- **Self-reliance programme in the camps:** Under the recycling project, WFP recruited 50 Rohingya refugees (including two people with disabilities) who have collected, sorted and cleaned almost 90,000 aluminium WFP product packets to be recycled into usable products.
- **Site Maintenance and Engineering Project:** WFP engaged 8,529 Rohingya refugees and host community members in the workforce. WFP continues construction and maintenance of roads, bamboo retaining structures, canal cleaning and retaining wall work. WFP completed the construction of a Flu Centre at Teknaf Hospital.

Donors

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

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