



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief July 2021



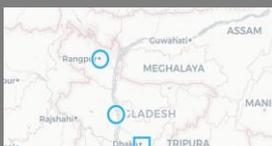
Operational Context

Bangladesh is among the five fastest growing economies in the world with an average growth rate of 6.5 percent. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, weakened this growth significant, with the latest South East Asia Economic Focus released by the World Bank estimating that regional growth fell between 1.8 and 2.8 percent in 2020.

The national lockdown which has been in place from 26 March was extended until 11 August with a temporarily easing of strict stay-at-home orders from 14-23 of July aligning with the Eid al-Adha holidays. Following 11 August, the Government has announced that lockdown restrictions on transportation, markets, factories, and restaurants will be eased. Pandemic restrictions have resulted in the closure of businesses and markets and causing a loss of employment for many, especially those working in the informal sector. Schools have remained closed for in-person learning since March 2020.

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. A new CSP for 2022-2026 has recently been released and will go into effect in January 2022.

In response to the influx of over 745,000 Rohingya refugees in August 2017, the CSP was amended to facilitate WFP's tailored response to the crisis in Cox's Bazar. Since the start of the crisis, WFP has provided food assistance and nutrition services as well as life-skills training, disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities and common engineering services to the camp population every month. WFP also supports host community populations through longer-term interventions, including nutrition assistance, school feeding, livelihoods programmes and DRR activities.



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

1,558 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 11.25 million cash-based transfers made

US\$ 18.97 million six months (August '21-January '22) net funding requirements, of which

US\$ 15.29 million is for the Cox's Bazar L2 Emergency Response.

1.13 million people assisted in July 2021



Situation Updates

COVID-19 cases increased rapidly in July with 4,762 positive cases in the Rohingya camps and 26,336 cases in the host community. As of 31 July, there have been 1,249,484 confirmed cases of COVID-19 nationally with 20,685 deaths.

Since April 2021, the Government has put in place a second nationwide lockdown to reduce the rise in COVID-19 cases. Public movement has been restricted, while businesses have been allowed to stay open on the condition that they maintain appropriate safety protocols.

Operational Updates

General Food Assistance (GFA): WFP provided General Food Assistance to 844,122 refugees, all of whom have been receiving food assistance **through e-vouchers** from end-April. WFP lifesaving assistance is continuing in line with ongoing Government restrictions in the camps, where non-essential activities have been strictly curtailed.

Mother and Child Benefit Programme (MCBP): WFP facilitated new 1,331 beneficiary's self-registration in July and transfer of monthly allowance of BDT 800 to 165,204 beneficiaries enrolled under Mother and Child Benefit Programme following Government to Person (G2P) payment system.

Rice Fortification: WFP continues to support the distribution of fortified rice in government food-based social safety net programmes and commercial markets, reaching more than 7 million beneficiaries. In July 2021, WFP provided technical support to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to distribute fortified rice in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, reaching nearly 360,000 beneficiaries. WFP is also providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Food to develop guidelines and the long-term scale-up plan to mainstream rice fortification across safety net programmes by 2030.

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Photo: WFP/Mehedi Rahman

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2020)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Aug'21-Jan'22 Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
1,367.71 million	1,009.45 million	18.97 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).

Social Safety Nets: The **urban food security programme**, operational in two slums in Dhaka, builds in a cash-back element to incentivise nutrition and dietary diversity among beneficiaries, and is designed to support government safety nets become more nutrition sensitive. The project works through 30 designated shops where beneficiaries can use their monthly stipend to buy nutritious food items and avail cash back top-up of up to 25 percent from the designated shops.

Since August 2020, WFP has provided 181,385 individuals with cash transfers and food. This includes the distribution of in-kind food to 149,885 individuals in quarantine and isolation. In July, WFP provided support to a total of 43,808 individuals (10,332 households) with cash transfers. 6,539 households (36,532 individuals) received cashback incentives, with a total amounting to BDT 9,600,811 (USD 113,089). Each family received up to BDT 750 (USD 8.8) based on their purchase of healthy foods in May 2021. More than 97 percent of the total expenditure by beneficiaries was on healthy food.

School feeding: In July, WFP supported the distribution of nutritious snacks by the Government for **over 3 million pre-primary and primary school children**. In Cox's Bazar, 19,616 students were reached in the host community with 74 mt of fortified biscuits and 180,163 households were reached in refugee camps with 225 mt of fortified biscuits. A total of 37 mt of fortified biscuits were distributed as take-home rations to 10,204 children of Government primary and NGO schools in Bandarban district.

Nutrition in Cox's Bazar: WFP continues to implement the **targeted supplementary feeding programme** across 45 integrated nutrition sites in the refugee camps and 129 host community clinics.

Self-reliance in the Rohingya refugee camps: Twenty-nine women and 13 men were engaged in self-reliance activities in July, including four people with disabilities. They cleaned and collected 7,000 packets and bottles products and produced 72 handicraft products. Over half a million WFP food packets have been recycled since September 2020.

Livelihoods in host communities of Cox's Bazar: WFP supported 43,622 host community women through the Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) programme, plus an additional 500 men and women in the new saline-resistant agriculture pilot. Almost USD 144,934 worth of produce was sold through WFP's 23 food aggregation centres in July.

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.

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