



World Food
Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief

November 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 significantly, 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.

Heightened tensions have characterized the refugee camps since 29 September, when prominent Rohingya repatriation activist, Mohib Ullah, was shot outside his Kutupalong office. Another violent attack occurred on 22 October, killing at least seven people and wounding many others, including children. The UNHCR has called for immediate measures to improve security in the camps, as well as the arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators.

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

2015 Human Development Index: 135
out of 188

Income Level: Lower middle

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

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DAYS OF ACTIVISM
AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

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In Numbers

1,578 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 11.75 m cash-based transfers made

US\$ 63.33 m for six months (December 2021-May 2022) net funding requirements

1.1 m people assisted
in November 2021



Situational Updates

- In late October leading up to the 11 November rural council elections, incidents of civil unrest occurred across Bangladesh. At least seven people lost their lives, including a man killed on 27 October in Cox's Bazar, where several demonstrations took place.
- As of 29 November, there have been 1.57 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Bangladesh with 28,001 deaths. The number of weekly cases reported continued to decrease; from 1,847 cases in the last week of October to 1,659 in the last week of November.

Operational Updates

- General Food Assistance (GFA):** WFP provided GFA to 884,000 refugees, all of whom have been receiving food assistance **through e-vouchers** from end-April. Live fish and chicken were added to one more Fresh Food Corner (FFCs) in the Rohingya camps. All 19 of WFP's FFCs now offer the popular, protein-rich items to enhance refugees' nutritional status.
- Mother and Child Benefit Programme:** WFP facilitated the self-registration of 5,815 new beneficiaries in October and transferred a monthly allowance of US\$ 9 to the 173,580 beneficiaries currently enrolled under Mother and Child Benefit Programme following the Government to Person payment system.
- Rice Fortification:** In September 2021, WFP supported the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and the Department of Women Affairs to increase access to fortified rice for 60,000 beneficiary households (300,000 people) in 19 Upazilas in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- Social Safety Nets:** The **urban food security programme**, operational in two slums in Dhaka, builds in a cash-back element to incentivise nutrition 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 a cash back top-up of up to 25 percent.

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
1.71 bn	1.06 bn	63.33 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:

- 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 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

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).

- Since August 2020, WFP has provided 181,385 individuals with cash transfers and food assistance. This includes the distribution of in-kind food to 149,885 individuals in quarantine and isolation. In October, WFP provided support to 3,202 households with cash-based transfers. A total of 2,763 households received cash back incentives, with a total amounting to US\$ 113,089. Each family received up to US\$ 9 based on their purchase of healthy foods in July 2021. More than 97 percent of the total expenditure by beneficiaries was on healthy food.

- School feeding:** WFP supported the distribution of nutritious snacks by the Government for **over 3 million pre-primary and primary school children**.

In Cox's Bazar, 58,840 host community students were reached with 102 mt of fortified biscuits. In the camps, 102,667 refugee students received biscuits through 1,523 the learning centres that reopened in September. In addition, 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 provide preventive and curative services for malnutrition at 45 integrated sites in the refugee camps, and curative services at 129 host community clinics, reaching 228,000 pregnant and nursing women, and children 6-59 months in November. Of the total, 19,700 children 2 to 5 years old received cash-based transfers through WFP's nutrition top-up pilot.

- Self-reliance in the Rohingya refugee camps: Refugees involved in mushroom cultivation harvested 15.25 kg of product cultivated since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions in August 2021, and shared the yield.** In November, 22,915 women and 3,286 men were engaged in self-reliance activities, including 803 people with disabilities. Participants engaged in Communications with Communities, centre-based training, recycling and agricultural activities and mask making which yielded 77,534 masks.

- Livelihoods in host communities of Cox's Bazar:** WFP supported 43,600 host community women through the Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) programme, plus an additional 500 men and women in the climate adaptive agriculture pilot. US\$ 285,000, worth of produce was sold through WFPs 23 food aggregation centres and 143 women received spectacles in Ukhia and Teknaf as part of WFP's disability inclusion efforts.

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.