



WFP Bangladesh Country Brief December 2021

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



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.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Tom Andrews, visited Bangladesh from 13 to 19 December. He travelled to the camps, the host communities and Bhasan Char and will present a [full report](#) to the UN Human Rights Council in March. His end of mission statement stressed the need to improve security, access to education and health care, sustainable livelihood opportunities, and the importance of voluntariness and freedom of movement in regard to Bhasan Char.

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**

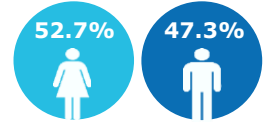
In Numbers

1322.5 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 11 m cash-based transfers made

US\$ 67.35 m six months (January 2022 – June 2022) net funding requirements

1.0 m people assisted
In December 2021



Operational Updates

- In Cox's Bazar **general food assistance** was provided to 887,600 Rohingya via e-vouchers which enhance refugees' dignity and choice. Adjacent to WFP's 19 e-voucher outlets for unregistered refugees, Fresh Food Corners (FFCs) offer fresh produce, and live chicken and fish, to enhance refugees' nutritional status.
- To prevent and address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, WFP continued to provide preventive and curative services at 45 integrated **nutrition** sites in the refugee camps, along with curative services at 129 host community clinics. In December, 212,000 pregnant and nursing women, and children 6-59 months of age were reached from the refugee and host communities.
- Under the **school feeding** programme in Cox's Bazar, 123,000 refugee children received fortified biscuits for attending lessons at camp learning centres. In the host community, a further 135,900 children were reached — more than double than in the previous month — due to growing attendance rates.
- To mitigate the effects of the upcoming monsoon and improve access in the camps, 32,900 refugees engaged in drainage clearance, land stabilization, road repairs and reforestation. Refugees participating in the **disaster risk reduction** programme benefit from Food Assistance for Assets through mobile money transfer.
- As part of WFP's entrepreneurship and life-skills programme, 24,900 vulnerable women in the host community received a monthly subsistence allowance via mobile money transfer. A further 19,000 **livelihoods** programme graduates continued to receive technical support for market and value chain development, including smallholder farmers linked to local markets and FFCs via WFP and FAO aggregation centres.
- To enhance food security and nutrition among the most vulnerable refugees, 14,800 people were engaged in **self-reliance** activities, from aquaculture and agriculture, to food packet recycling and pickle, mask and sanitary pad making.
- WFP continues to support 3,145 households in urban slums in Dhaka with cash transfers and Social and Behaviour Change Communication. To sustain a steady supply of fresh food to beneficiaries, WFP and FAO have established linkages with 500 smallholder farmers and 30 producers. WFP has received an additional USD 2.3 million that will allow the programme to run until 2023.

Contact info: Sharika Tafannum (sharika.tafannum@wfp.org), Emily Pittman (emily.pittman@wfp.org)

Country Director: Richard Ragan (richard.ragan@wfp.org)

Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/Bangladesh

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	67.35 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 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 partnerships to support country efforts to achieve SDG

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).

- With technical assistance from WFP, Department of Women Affairs has reviewed and transferred the monthly payment of BDT 800 (USD 9 approx.) to 183,979 Mother and Child Benefit Programme beneficiaries in 66 upazilas for the month of November.
- Under the Seasonal Livelihood Planning programme, WFP continues to provide trainings on entrepreneurship development and income generating activities to around 250 households. A total of 1,400 vulnerable households received one-time investments grants to kick-start income-generating activities following these trainings. WFP, Oxfam and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) have introduced Climate Risk Insurance on a pilot basis for climate-vulnerable communities in the Kurigram.

Monitoring

- WFP received 143 calls through complaint and feedback mechanisms operating across Bangladesh. Most queries requested general programme or distribution information and 96 percent of beneficiary calls were quickly resolved.
- In Cox's Bazar, WFP achieved 100 percent monitoring coverage, monitoring all 82 planned food assistance and nutrition sites (53 in camps, 29 in the host community). A new complaints and feedback pilot is also underway, which leverages SUGAR client relationship management (CRM) software for managing and tracking beneficiary feedback.
- In addition, an outcome monitoring survey was conducted among 312 host community households in Ukhiya and Teknaf among WFP livelihoods beneficiaries. Survey findings on key food security indicators, women's empowerment and coping strategies will be available in January 2022.

Challenges

- In Cox's Bazar, WFP Engineering (Strategic Objective 5) continued to face a funding shortfall delaying procurement of materials and labour, and difficulties getting government approvals for proposed work.
- WFP continued to distribute fortified biscuits (Strategic Objective 2) as it awaits permission to launch school meals in the host community. UNHCR population figures published at the end of November indicate 913,660 refugees; WFP food assistance reached 887,600 beneficiaries due to relocations and absentee households.

Success Story

Since the COVID-19 lockdown ended, WFP has restarted facemask production as part of its self-reliance programme in the Rohingya camps, focusing on the integration of persons with disabilities to help them support their families. [Watch](#) Minara Begum, a WFP-supported refugee tailor, tell her story.

Donors

Donors to WFP Bangladesh in 2021 include: 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.