



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Bangladesh Country Brief June 2022



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## Operational Context

WFP started its first operation in Bangladesh in 1974. While it has made significant economic growth in the past decade, the country still faces challenges with nearly one third of the population facing food insecurity and 20 percent living below the national poverty line. Bangladesh is also vulnerable to natural hazards with most of the population residing in areas that are prone to natural hazards such as floods and cyclones.

The country is still recovering from the economic shocks of the COVID-19 crisis. The gross domestic product (GDP) growth is projected to fall to 5.1 percent in 2022 from 8.2 percent in 2019 and the average income of the poor has fell 23 percent below the pre-COVID level.

Since 2017, in response to the influx of over 745,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, WFP has been providing food assistance and nutrition services in the Cox's Bazar camps as well as life-skills training, disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities and common engineering services. WFP also supports Bangladeshis in the host communities through longer-term nutrition, school feeding, livelihoods and DRR interventions.

In 2022, WFP began implementing its new Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2022-2026. This CSP reinforces the commitment of WFP to provide food assistance in emergencies, and to strengthen the capacities of government counterparts and the resilience of vulnerable communities.

Since late 2020, the Government has been relocating a relatively small number of refugees from the camps in Cox's Bazar to Bhasan Char island. UNHCR and the Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2021 which sets the policy framework for the UN's humanitarian response on Bhasan Char.

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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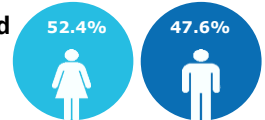
## In Numbers

**1,301 mt** of food distributed

**US\$12.8 million** cash-based transfers made

**US\$45.2 million** six months (July 2022 – December 2022) net funding requirements

**1.35 million people assisted**  
in June 2022



## Operational Updates

- Heavy early monsoon rains, especially runoff from India, caused the **worst floods in northeastern Bangladesh** since 1998. In response, WFP provided 34,000 flood-affected households with 85 mt of fortified biscuits and is appealing for US\$22 million to support emergency assistance to 50,000 households for over six months. The flooding has impacted 7.2 million people and damaged 254,000 hectares of cropland, causing an extensive loss of income and livelihoods.
- Due to the threat of flash flooding in Teknaf, 3,400 households in the Cox's Bazar host community received US\$44 (BDT 4,100) each as part of the WFP **forecast-based financing** programme with some US\$146,000 disbursed.
- In June, NGOs provided food distributions on **Bhasan Char** island; WFP intends to resume in-kind food assistance when funding is available. WFP continued to support pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 on Bhasan Char with specialized nutritious food commodities through its malnutrition prevention and treatment programme. This reached 7,645 individuals on the island.
- In Cox's Bazar, WFP provided **general food assistance** to 889,000 Rohingya using e-vouchers. Through 21 e-voucher outlets established by WFP, refugee households can select from a variety of cereals, fresh food items and spices.
- To 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 130 host community clinics, including a new site in Pekua sub-district in Cox's Bazar. In June, 218,500 pregnant and nursing women, and children aged 6-59 months were reached within the Rohingya and local communities.
- Through the **school feeding** programme in Cox's Bazar, WFP provided 125,000 host community and 256,700 refugee children with fortified biscuits at local schools and camp learning centres, respectively.
- Under WFP's **disaster risk reduction** programme, 9,240 refugee participants engaged in drainage clearance, canal excavation and reforestation, as well as construction of pedestrian pathways, access roads and brick guide walls. This is to mitigate the effects of monsoons and improve passage access in the camp. WFP supported participants with monthly mobile money transfers while they participated in the programme.

- To enhance food security and nutrition among the most vulnerable refugees, 16,900 people were engaged in **self-reliance** activities, including aquaculture and vertical gardening, handicraft production and food packet recycling.

- Under the **urban food assistance project**, WFP supports 3,050 Dhaka households with cash transfers to purchase food, and with social and behaviour change communication activities to incentivize healthy and diversified food purchases. A 12<sup>th</sup> (twelfth) round of monthly cash distributions was made to 3,048 households (13,000 people) in the Bhashantek and Duaripara slums of Dhaka.

- As part of the **seasonal livelihoods programme** in Kurigram, northern Bangladesh, WFP provided 250 new households with one-time investment grants for income-generation. These entailed climate-adaptive activities, such as vermicomposting and hydroponic fodder cultivation. Together with Oxfam and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, WFP began piloting **climate risk insurance** for vulnerable groups.

## Monitoring

- WFP received 218 calls through its community feedback hotline, of which 158 calls emanated from Cox's Bazar.
- In Cox's Bazar, WFP reached 92 percent of its monitoring target, visiting 95 food assistance and nutrition sites (47 in camps, 48 in host communities). From their arrival at WFP e-voucher shops in the camps, refugees waited less than six minutes on average to check out their purchases.
- Post distribution monitoring showed that 95 percent of self-reliance beneficiaries harvested and consumed vegetables from their homestead gardens, which they started with the programme's support.

## Challenges

- High fuel prices affected negotiations with retailers in Cox's Bazar as a result of increased transport costs. Due to rising commodity prices, garlic in e-voucher outlets was sold at varying price levels throughout the month.

## Success Story

Babulong Chakma is a fifth grade student from a poor family in Palong Khali Union, Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar. The roundtrip to school takes an hour and a half on foot, but his parents are strong supporters of education and his efforts have paid off. "Most days in the morning, I come to school without eating anything," Babulong notes, "but I don't have to worry about feeling hungry because I receive a packet of fortified biscuits every day from WFP. I can now focus during classes. I got the first place in the last annual examination of Grade 4 and moved on to Grade 5."

## Donors

Donors to WFP Bangladesh in 2022 include: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States of America. Contributions were also received from multilateral funds, private donors, UN CERF and UN pooled funds.

## Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
1.62 bn	272.14 m	45.20 m

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1: Populations affected by crisis in Bangladesh are able to meet basic food, nutrition and other essential needs during and after crises**

**Focus area: Crisis response**

Act. 1: Provide food, nutrition and self-reliance assistance to crisis-affected populations.

### Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 2: By 2026, the nutrition needs of women, children and vulnerable groups in Bangladesh are met through national institutions that have enhanced capacities to design and implement gender- and nutrition-sensitive social safety net programmes**

**Focus area: Root causes**

Act. 2: Support national institutions in strengthening their capacity to design and implement inclusive and nutrition- and gender-sensitive safety net programmes to meet the nutrition needs of women, children and vulnerable groups.

### Strategic Result 4: Food Systems are Sustainable

**Strategic Outcome 3: By 2026, vulnerable communities in Bangladesh are more resilient to shocks and natural disasters owing to enhanced national disaster management capacity and flexible, nutrition- and gender-sensitive social safety net programmes.**

**Focus area: Resilience building**

Act. 3: Assist national institutions and communities in strengthening their capacity to implement inclusive, responsive and nutrition- and gender-sensitive safety net programmes and in disaster risk preparedness and response to protect the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations.

**Strategic Result 8: Sharing of knowledge, expertise and technology, strengthen global partnership support to country efforts to achieve the SDGs**

**Strategic Outcome 4: Vulnerable crisis-affected populations in Bangladesh benefit from enhanced coordination and improved common services during and after crises**

**Focus area: Crisis response**

Act. 4: Provide coordination and common services to humanitarian and development partners and the Government

- As part of the WFP **livelihoods** programme in Cox's Bazar, 24,650 vulnerable host community women are receiving training and start-up capital to set up their own businesses. A further 19,620 programme graduates continued to receive technical support for market and value chain development, including smallholder farmers linked to local markets via WFP and FAO aggregation centres.