



WFP Bangladesh Country Brief May 2022

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



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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

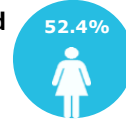
890 mt of food distributed

US\$ 13 million cash-based transfers made

US\$ 20.67 million six months (June 2022 – November 2022) net funding requirements

1.12 million people assisted in May 2022

52.4%



47.6%



Operational Updates

- In **Bhasan Char**, WFP provided a third month of in-kind food assistance through its partner, Islamic Relief, reaching 26,849 people (almost 5,000 more than in April). In June, food distributions on Bhasan Char will be provided by NGOs operating on the island instead of WFP; WFP intends to resume in-kind food assistance and reach the full caseload when funding is available. Meanwhile, WFP will continue to support pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 on Bhasan Char with specialized nutritious foods through its malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes that reached 7,143 individuals on the island in May (almost 900 more than in April due to ongoing screening efforts by WFP partners, including screening of new arrivals).
- In Cox's Bazar **general food assistance** was provided to 889,000 Rohingya using e-vouchers, which allows refugee households to select from a variety of cereals, fresh food items and spices at one of the 21 WFP e-voucher outlets.
- To address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, WFP continued to provide preventive and curative services at 45 integrated **nutrition** sites in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, along with curative services at 129 host community clinics. In May, almost 216,700 pregnant and nursing women, and children aged 6-59 months were reached within the refugee and host communities.
- Through the **school feeding** programme in Cox's Bazar, 125,000 host community and 244,000 refugee children received fortified biscuits from local schools and camp learning centres, respectively.
- The second phase of **disaster risk reduction** programme activities started in Cox's Bazar in May 2022.
- 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.
- In the camps, 112 **Communications with Communities** (CWC) volunteers were engaged in door-to-door messaging on WFP supports, including general food assistance, nutrition programmes, the complaints and feedback mechanism, emergency preparedness and response, social cohesion and COVID-19 awareness.

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
1.62 bn	251.74 m	20.67 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

- Under the **urban food assistance project**, WFP supports 3,050 households in Dhaka with cash transfers to purchase food items, as well as Social and Behaviour Change Communication interventions incentivising healthy and diversified food purchases. In May, WFP and UNFPA provided 1,800 adolescent girls and women from slum households with sanitary pads (an increase of more than 500 versus April).

- With technical assistance from WFP, the Department of Women Affairs transferred the monthly payment of BDT 800 (US\$ 9) to some 212,000 **Mother and Child Benefit Programme** beneficiaries in 66 sub-districts across Bangladesh.

- As part of the **Seasonal Livelihood programme** in Kurigram, northern Bangladesh, WFP provided one-time investment grants to 250 additional households to enable them to start income-generating activities. Several of the 3,100 households engaged in the programme participated in WFP's new- climate-adaptive activities such as vermicomposting and hydroponic fodder cultivation. Together with Oxfam and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, WFP also began piloting **insurance for climate risks** for vulnerable groups in part of Kurigram.

Monitoring

- WFP received 136 calls through the WFP complaint and feedback hotline with 125 calls emanating from Cox's Bazar. The call rate decreased by almost half in May with most calls seeking general programme information or distribution timings in the camps.
- In Cox's Bazar, WFP M&E reached 99 percent of its monitoring target, visiting 82 food assistance and nutrition sites (52 in camps, 30 in host communities). From their arrival at WFP e-voucher shops in the camps, refugees wait less than six minutes to check out with their purchases.
- The VAM team also published the April [edition](#) of its Market Monitor which assesses market functionality and the prices of key commodities used to support the Rohingya refugee response.

Challenges

- Due to global supply chain shortages, WFP continued distributing half rations of SuperCereal Plus (WSB++) to children in its malnutrition prevention programme in both Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char.

Success Story

[Hason Ara](#) is a mother of six and a participant in WFP's livelihoods programme in Cox's Bazar. The programme helps host community women to gain marketable skills, financial literacy and start their own businesses. That's how, four years ago, Hason was able to start her own business selling seasonal vegetables, helping to ensure that her children receive the food to meet their nutrition requirements, and supporting her household's other essential needs. In addition to being an entrepreneur, Hason is also the president of her livelihoods self-help group, which brings together 25 other programme participants and provides a forum for joint initiatives, including group businesses funded by pooled savings and awareness-raising in the community.

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](#), [the United Kingdom](#) and [the United States of America](#). Contributions were also received from multilateral funds, private donors, UN CERF, and UN pooled funds.