



# WFP Bangladesh Country Brief July-August 2022

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



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## Operational Context

WFP started its first operation in Bangladesh in 1974. While significant economic growth was seen 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 hazards such as floods and cyclones.

Bangladesh was the third major export market for Russian and Ukrainian wheat in 2020-21, importing 1.51 million mt of wheat from Ukraine and 1.94 million mt from Russia. The war has caused a global economic shock to which Bangladesh is not immune. In combination with unstable dollar rates, it might jeopardize the country's manufacturing sector and impact the economy widely.

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 surrounding Bangladeshi communities through longer-term nutrition, school feeding, livelihoods and DRR interventions.

Since late 2020, the Government has been relocating small groups of Rohingya from Cox's Bazar to Bhasan Char Island, as of end-July, housed 27,500 refugees. In October 2021, UNHCR and the Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding which sets the policy framework for the UN humanitarian response on the island.

The Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2022-2026 reinforces its commitment to work with the Government of Bangladesh to strengthen partnerships and improve the resilience of vulnerable communities while also providing food assistance to those affected by emergencies.

Population: **167 million**

2021-22 Human Development Index: **129 out of 190 countries**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

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This country brief is based on best available information at the time of drafting. Figures may vary if unique beneficiaries are considered.

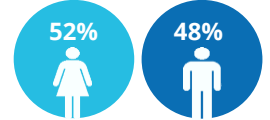
## In Numbers

**4,020 mt** of food distributed

**US\$ 25.7 million** cash-based transfers made

**US\$ 102 million** net funding requirements (September 2022 – February 2023)

**1.2 million** people assisted



## Operational Updates

- WFP is preparing to distribute food and cash assistance to 18,000 disaster-affected families in response to severe **floods in north-eastern Bangladesh**. This follows WFP's immediate lifesaving response in June, which reached 34,000 flood-affected households with 85 mt of fortified biscuits. WFP has appealed for US\$ 22 million to support up to 50,000 households over six months.
- In August, WFP resumed food distributions through commodity vouchers on **Bhasan Char Island**, reaching 21,600 Rohingya refugees. WFP also supported pregnant and nursing women and children under 5 with specialized nutritious food commodities through its malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes.
- In Cox's Bazar, WFP provided **general food assistance** to up to 895,000 Rohingya using e-vouchers. Through 21 outlets established by WFP, refugee households can select from various cereals, fresh food items and spices.
- To address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in Cox's Bazar, WFP provides preventive and curative services to pregnant and nursing women and children under 5. Almost 209,000 refugees were reached at 45 integrated **nutrition** sites in the camps and 9,300 Bangladeshis at 130 local community clinics.
- Through the **school feeding** programme in Cox's Bazar, WFP provided up to 116,000 Bangladeshi and 273,000 refugee children with fortified biscuits at local schools and camp learning centres, respectively. WFP further provided fortified biscuits to more than 41,000 school children in the Bandarban District. Due to budget constraints, WFP plans to withdraw its school feeding programme in Bandarban starting mid-September. The Government and WFP are preparing a study to determine the best modality for the next **National School Feeding Programme**, expected to start in early 2023.
- Under WFP's **disaster risk reduction** programme, up to 1,770 Bangladeshis participated in improving community infrastructure including canal, road and drainage in Cox's Bazar. 8,400 men and women constructed pedestrian pathways, roads, guide walls and stairs to improve access and mitigate monsoon impacts on the refugee camps.
- WFP's Cox's Bazar **livelihoods** programme assisted 24,600 vulnerable Bangladeshi women by providing training and start-up capital to set up businesses via mobile money transfers. A further 19,600 programme graduates received technical support on market and value chain development, including smallholder farmers linked to local markets via aggregation centres managed by WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

## Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
<b>1.62 bn</b>	<b>310.10 m</b>	<b>102 m</b>

### 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

## Donors

Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, the 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 received from multilateral funds, private donors, UN CERF, and UN pooled funds.

## WFP Staff Transitions

On 11 August, WFP Country Director and Representative, Mr. Dom Scalpelli, presented his credentials to H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, M.P., Honorable Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Mr. Scalpelli replaces Ms. Jane Pearce, Country Director a.i., as Resident Representative in Bangladesh.

The outgoing Deputy Country Director, Mr. Piet Vochten, was replaced by Ms. Simone Parchment after more than three years of dedicated service.

- To enhance food security and nutrition among the most vulnerable refugees, 34,200 people participated in **self-reliance** activities, including aquaculture and vertical gardening, handicraft production and food packet recycling.
- Under the urban food assistance programme, WFP continued to support 13,000 people in Dhaka slums with monthly cash assistance and behaviour change messaging.
- WFP is working with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to transform the vulnerable group development programme into a vulnerable woman benefit programme, which aims to sustain graduation from poverty and vulnerability. The Department of Women's Affairs and WFP jointly facilitated programme orientation sessions in July on the expansion of the mother and child benefit programme (MCBP) for district-level stakeholders.
- WFP, in partnership with Oxfam, is conducting a study to assess the existing government policies to explore opportunities to support **climate risk insurance** mechanisms.

Programme	People Assisted
Food Assistance	930,000
Nutrition	227,000
School Feeding	430,000
Resilience	70,000

## Monitoring

- WFP received 329 calls in July and 371 in August via its community feedback hotline, of which in July 257 and 339 calls in August were from Cox's Bazar. In August, WFP resolved 89 of cases countrywide.
- WFP's [remote monitoring](#) in August indicated that 76 percent of households were marginally food secure, and 22 percent of the households were moderately food insecure countrywide. Households in Sylhet are recovering from the adverse impact of the floods and other shocks. Households are using negative coping mechanisms and may not have the ability to stand future shocks.
- WFP and the World Bank jointly published a [research paper](#) on the healthy and sustainable diets in Bangladesh. The paper examined the changes in the nutritional value and greenhouse gas emissions of diets over time, and proposed an aspirational diet for the country.

## Challenges

- WFP had to temporarily halt work at engineering sites in Cox's Bazar due to heavy monsoon rainfall.
- Vendors for transport services and heavy machinery began to request price revisions for long-term agreements due to the nationwide increase in fuel prices.
- Due to global inflation and economic crisis, the government has cut down some programmatic costs from different ministries resulting in budget revisions for fortified rice distribution.