



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief September 2022



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

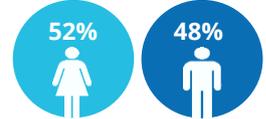
In Numbers

985 mt of food distributed

US\$ 12.8 million cash-based transfers made

US\$ 113 million net funding requirements
(October 2022 – March 2023)

1.2 million people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP is providing in-kind food and cash assistance in response to severe June **floods in northeast Bangladesh**. By end-September, 90 percent of the 18,000 households targeted received 40 kg rice and 4 kg pulses, and over 7,800 households received an unconditional cash grant of BDT 2,500 (US\$ 26) to cover their immediate needs. This follows WFP's immediate lifesaving response in June, which reached 34,000 flood-affected households with 85 mt of fortified biscuits. WFP is appealing for US\$ 22 million to support up to 50,000 households over the next six months.
- In September, WFP food distributions through commodity vouchers on **Bhasan Char Island** reached 22,000 Rohingya refugees. WFP also supported 7,810 pregnant and nursing women and children aged 6-59 months with specialized nutritious food through its malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes.
- In Cox's Bazar, WFP provided **general food assistance** to up to 905,000 Rohingya using e-vouchers. Through 21 outlets established by WFP, refugee households can select from various cereals, fresh food items and spices. WFP's [plastic-free assistance outlets](#) were featured in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s compendium of best practices on waste management.
- To address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in Cox's Bazar, WFP provides preventive and curative services to more than 8,900 Bangladeshis at 130 community clinics along with 194,000 refugees at 45 integrated nutrition sites. Together with the Nutrition Sector, WFP published the full [2021-22 Rohingya nutrition coverage assessment](#), which shows that WFP programme coverage in the camps is satisfactory against SPHERE standards. Separately, WFP and partners jointly published a [SMART survey report](#) measuring the **nutrition** status of vulnerable children and pregnant and nursing women in Dhaka urban slums.
- The Government and WFP are preparing a study to determine the best modality for the upcoming **National School Feeding Programme**, expected to start in early 2023. Through the school feeding programme in Cox's Bazar, WFP provided 114,000 Bangladeshi and 276,000 refugee children with fortified biscuits. In Bandarban District, a further 41,000 primary school children received fortified biscuits.
- Under the Cox's Bazar **disaster risk reduction** programme, 4,070 Bangladeshis were engaged in community infrastructure improvements, including tree planting, canal, road and drainage works. To mitigate monsoon impacts and improve accessibility, 13,300 refugees cleaned drainage systems, and built pathways, roads, drains, guide walls and stairs in the camps.

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
1.62 bn	320 m	113 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

- WFP's Cox's Bazar **livelihoods** programme continued to assist 24,500 vulnerable Bangladeshi women with training to set up micro-businesses with a further 19,600 graduates receiving support with market linkages. WFP engaged 32,600 refugees in **self-reliance** activities to enhance food security and nutrition among the most vulnerable.
- Under **urban food assistance programme**, WFP continued to support 13,000 people in Dhaka slums with monthly cash assistance and nutrition-sensitive behaviour change messaging. On 3 October, H.E. Alexandra Berg Von Linde, Ambassador of Sweden to Bangladesh, visited the project sites with WFP Country Director, Dom Scalpelli, and representatives

from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which provide complementary support to beneficiaries with menstrual pads and market linkages for smallholder farmers and producers, respectively.

- In northern Bangladesh, WFP has been testing an **integrated risk management** package—forecast-based financing (FbF), climate risk insurance (CRI) and seasonal livelihoods—to boost communities' overall resilience to severe riverine flooding. Under CRI, WFP held a workshop with Government to assess the latter's potential long-term role in subsidizing climate risk insurance mechanisms.
- To support the expansion of government **social safety nets**, WFP is working with relevant ministries to develop a mobile application to facilitate online enrolment for the Vulnerable Women Benefit Programme starting from 2023. WFP also assisted in the continued development of the Government's management information system for the Mother and Child Benefit programme.

Programme	People Assisted
Food Assistance (refugee response)	927,000
Emergency flood assistance (food and cash)	84,000
Nutrition	211,000
School Feeding	431,500
Resilience	81,000

Monitoring

- Preliminary results from remote monitoring in September indicated that more than one fourth of households in the Barisal and Sylhet divisions remain food insecure. Khulna and Sylhet division continued to have a greater number of vulnerable households adopting livelihoods-based crisis coping strategies than other divisions.
- Baseline data collection was done for the school feeding programme on Bhasan Char, as well as post-distribution monitoring of food and nutrition activities on the island.

Challenges

- Government distributions of fortified rice are on hold due to global inflation and the economic crisis. Meanwhile, WFP distributions continue in five sub-districts under the country's Food Friendly Programme.

Success Story

Lutfa Begum rears cattle and does tailoring part-time. Thanks to the WFP Seasonal Livelihoods Programme (SLP), she recently started hydroponic farming. Lutfa uses the greens produced to feed her cows with nutritious fodder throughout the year. Based in Kurigram, WFP's SLP is training 4,000 households on alternative income-generating activities, to enable them to earn a living in a sustainable way even when the region is beset by monsoon flooding.

Donors

Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Qatar, 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.