



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief October 2022



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Operational Context

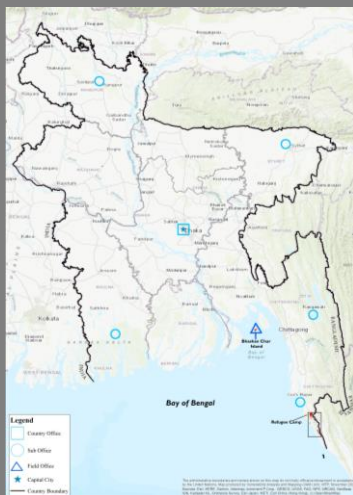
WFP started its first operation in Bangladesh in 1974. While significant economic growth was seen in the past decade, the country still faces challenges with nearly one third of the population facing food insecurity and 20 percent living below the national poverty line. Bangladesh is also vulnerable 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. The conflict in Ukraine 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, which 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.

WFP's Country Strategic Plan 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**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

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

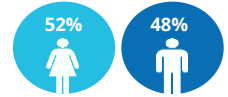
In Numbers

1,495 mt of food distributed

US\$14.1 million cash-based transfers made

US\$68 million net funding requirements
(November 2022 – April 2023)

1.1 million people assisted



Operational Updates

- In response to Cyclone Sitrang that affected Bangladesh on 24 October, WFP prepositioned fortified biscuits in field office and sub-offices. WFP also handed over its [Cyclone Preparedness Programme](#) trainings to the Government of Bangladesh, strengthening the country's disaster response.
- WFP is providing in-kind food and cash assistance in response to severe June **floods in northeast Bangladesh**. By end-October, all 18,000 targeted households received 40 kg rice and 4 kg pulses, and over 17,000 households received an unconditional cash grant of BDT 2,500 (US\$26) to cover their immediate needs. WFP plans to support an additional 5,372 households with in-kind food and cash in November. WFP is appealing for US\$22 million to support up to 50,000 households until the next harvest season in April 2023.
- WFP food distributions through commodity vouchers on **Bhasan Char Island** reached 21,000 Rohingya refugees. WFP also supported 8,320 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 in 21 outlets with various cereals, fresh food items and spices.
- To address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in Cox's Bazar, WFP provides preventive and curative services to 9,000 Bangladeshis at 130 community clinics along with 189,000 refugees at 45 integrated nutrition sites.
- The Government and WFP are preparing a study to determine the best modality for the upcoming **National School Feeding Programme**, starting in early 2023. WFP school feeding programme in Cox's Bazar provided 65,900 Bangladeshi and 275,000 refugee children with fortified biscuits. School Feeding in the Bandarban District has been discontinued.
- The Cox's Bazar **disaster risk reduction** programme supported 5,800 Bangladeshis in community infrastructure improvements, including tree planting, canal, road, and drainage works. To mitigate monsoon impacts and improve accessibility, 15,100 refugees cleaned drainage systems, and built pathways, roads, guide walls and stairs in the camps.
- WFP's Cox's Bazar **livelihoods** programme continued to assist 24,400 vulnerable Bangladeshi women with training to set up micro-businesses and 19,600 graduates receiving support with market linkages. WFP engaged 39,000 refugees in **self-reliance** activities to enhance food security and nutrition among the most vulnerable.

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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.

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
1.62 bn	404 m	68 m

Result 1: Everyone has access to food

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

Focus: Crisis response

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

Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

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: Root causes

Activity 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.

Result 4: Food Systems are Sustainable

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: Resilience building

Activity 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.

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

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

Focus: Crisis response

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

Success Story

Read about how WFP Bangladesh is assisting Hason Ara, a Bangladeshi in Cox's Bazar, by empowering her through the Livelihoods programme. Hason Ara Begum is now the breadwinner for her family. She sells her surplus at the fresh food corner and the local market, directly or indirectly enabling the Rohingya communities to access fresh produce.



- Under **urban food assistance programme**, WFP supported 13,000 people in Dhaka slums with monthly cash assistance and nutrition-sensitive behaviour change messaging. The complementary activities (i.e. distribution of menstrual pads to women of reproductive age by UNFPA, and support to smallholder farmers and producers, and facilitation of market linkages with participating shops by FAO) are also ongoing. WFP is conducting an endline survey in urban slums to assess the result on households' dietary diversity, food consumption, and their knowledge on basic nutrition.
- 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.
- WFP **social safety nets** programme is working with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to reshape the Vulnerable Group Development Programme into a Vulnerable Woman Benefit Programme (VWBP), starting from 2023. WFP assisted the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in developing social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) materials for VWB programme. WFP is working closely with Department of Women Affairs to assess the potentiality of Mother and Child Benefit Programme expansion to eligible workers in leather factories.

Programme	Beneficiaries
Food Assistance	926,000
Emergency Response in Sylhet	84,000
Nutrition	206,000
School Feeding	341,000
Resilience	85,200

Monitoring

- The preliminary results from WFP's remote monitoring in September indicated that more than one fourth of households in Barisal and Sylhet divisions remained food-insecure. Khulna and Sylhet divisions continued to have a greater number of vulnerable households adopting livelihoods-based crisis coping strategies than other divisions.
- WFP conducted baseline data collection for school feeding and a post-distribution monitoring on food and nutrition activities on Bhasan Char.
- Monitoring publications for October include the [Food Security Outcome Monitory Survey \(July 2021\)](#) and the [Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition Programme Outcome Assessment Report](#).

Challenges

- Government distributions of fortified rice are on hold due to global inflation and the economic crisis. Meanwhile, WFP distributed fortified rice to more than 340,000 beneficiaries of Food Friendly programme in five sub-districts.

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.

**Listed in alphabetical order.*