



WFP on Bhasan Char

In late 2020, the Government of Bangladesh began relocating refugees from the Cox's Bazar camps to Bhasan Char located about 60 km from the mainland. As of the latest UNHCR figures, nearly 27,000 Rohingya refugees reside on the island and the Government plans to relocate up to 100,000 Rohingya refugees to the island in phases.

Recognizing the prevailing humanitarian and protection needs of the refugees, UNHCR on behalf of the UN agencies working on the Rohingya humanitarian response, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government in October 2021 to set the policy framework that will guide the UN's humanitarian response on the island based on humanitarian and protection principles and the Government's priorities and policies. UN

engagement on Bhasan Char is to support and complement the work of the Government, in charge of the overall response, as well as NGOs who are present and have been delivering critical assistance on the island. WFP is guided by the UN's agreement with the Government, stressing the need for protection measures and freedom of movement for refugees relocated to the island.

Along with other UN agencies, WFP has conducted fact-finding visits to Bhasan Char since November 2021. The findings of the multi-sectoral technical assessments conducted provide a comprehensive mapping of gaps and needs that inform the operational plan for the UN to ensure that the human rights, basic needs, and wellbeing of Rohingya refugees on Bhasan Char are upheld and provided for.



In-kind food assistance provided to 21,000 refugees in October through commodity vouchers



Blanket Supplementary Feeding programme supported 14,000 children and pregnant and nursing women, to treat and prevent malnutrition



Established a new food basket to improve micronutrient intake and dietary diversity



School Feeding programme launched in November 2022 for refugee children on Bhasan Char



Internet connectivity provided to four sites since March, including 400 individual users, a temporary UN building and 3 government sites



Commercial transport contracts established which other humanitarian actors can enter into for transporting cargo



First coordination meeting which on Food Security and common services held with NGOs, UN and government actors



First market assessment which examining the functionality of emerging market places serving the population

The Protection Framework of the 2022 Joint Response Plan, which guides the overall humanitarian response for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, will continue to underpin all activities and services of the response in Bhasan Char and Cox's Bazar, and is implemented in full partnership with the Government.

FOOD SECURITY

The Food Security Sector, led by WFP, provides food assistance to the relocated refugee population through monthly ration adjusted based on family size. WFP will leverage existing and appropriate digital solutions and plans to transition from in-kind to e-vouchers, with increased choice of different food items, including fresh vegetables and protein items.

NUTRITION

WFP is part of the Health and Nutrition sector led by UNHCR. WFP works in two integrated nutrition facilities centres to address high global acute malnutrition rates on the island. WFP focuses on children between 5-59 months and pregnant and lactating women suffering from Moderate Acute Malnutrition via its Targeted Supplementary Feeding programme. WFP also operates a Blanket Supplementary Feeding programme and supports an outpatient therapeutic programme to treat and prevent severe acute malnutrition.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Access to skills development and livelihoods activities is a key to ensuring long-term sustainable living conditions on Bhasan Char with a strong focus on market linkage to the mainland. WFP is forming a tripartite leadership with UNHCR and BRAC, and is focusing on coordination and technical assistance for on-farm activities, such as homestead gardening and small-scale fish cultivation to ensure refugees have access to a diverse diet and opportunity to market their produce.

COMMON SERVICES

As sector lead for Common Services, WFP has been supporting humanitarian actors on Bhasan Char establishing common logistics services. This includes coordinating passenger movements to and from the island, cargo transportation, storage management and provision of internet connectivity for partners on the island. WFP is leading accommodation services and the creation of common premises for UN staff.

WFP PLANS

Alongside UNHCR and other UN agencies, WFP will continue to emphasize the two fundamental policy principles central to the Bhasan Char response as enshrined in the MoU with Government:

- (1) relocations and stay on the island occur on an informed and voluntary basis;
- (2) a mechanism for movement of refugees to and from the island will be ensured on a needs' basis.

With adequate funding, WFP will contribute to reduced acute and chronic malnutrition rates, and improved nutritional status among the refugees.



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From the People of Japan



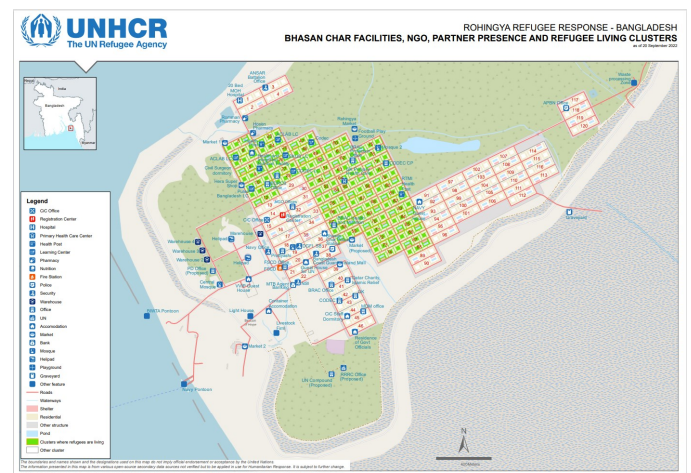
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UKaid from the British people



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Annual requirement: US \$24.1 million

Photo 1: Mothers and children receive targeted supplementary nutrition services at integrated nutrition facilities on the island (WFP/Mehedi Rahman).

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