



# General Food Assistance

In line with international humanitarian standards, WFP ensures all Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh receive a minimum 2,100 kCal of healthy, nutritious food per person per day.

## COX'S BAZAR

WFP delivers monthly food assistance to some 909,000 refugees in 33 camps in Cox's Bazar. Each month, families receive an e-voucher valued at US\$12 to redeem food items of their choice at one of 21 WFP assistance outlets with digital systems in place to enhance accountability. Building Blocks – an online platform for online entitlement delivery and interagency coordination – is used to capture transactions in all but two camps, where WFP's beneficiary management system, SCOPE, is used.

Through its Fresh Food Corners (FFCs), WFP offers direct access to healthy fresh foods, like seasonal vegetables and fruit, and live chicken and fish, at the e-voucher outlets. The most vulnerable refugee households (some 53,000 families) who cannot be engaged in food assistance activities receive an additional US\$ 3 per person per month to buy nutritious, protein-rich foods at the 19 FFCs and increase their dietary diversity. Targeted households

include those headed by a child, a woman or an elderly person, as well as households that have at least one member living with a disability.

WFP offers a porter service at all its e-voucher outlets to help beneficiaries who cannot carry heavy food rations to their homes, and is making accessibility improvements for refugees who use mobility aids like canes and wheelchairs.

At the onset of any camp emergency, affected households receive an immediate six-day ration of fortified biscuits. Crisis-affected refugees are then provided with hot meals and/or one-off in-kind basket until WFP can re-integrate them into regular food assistance.

## BHASAN CHAR

From late 2021, the Government of Bangladesh-UN Memorandum of Understanding on Bhasan Char enabled WFP to begin life-saving food assistance to Rohingya refugees. Through its partner, Islamic Relief Bangladesh (IRB), WFP provided general food assistance to the majority of the island population from March to May 2022 with continuous support from August onwards once a secure pipeline was in place. From December, 100 percent of refugees – some 24,000 individuals – received food (equivalent to US\$ 18 per month) from WFP.

Refugees receive a nutritious and diversified food basket containing 11 fixed items (rice, lentils, oil, onion, garlic, salt, sugar, turmeric, chili, potato, dried fish), which is distributed through an electronic 'commodity voucher' to enable digital tracking. Distributions have been facilitated by Building Blocks based on the joint UNHCR-Government of Bangladesh database, although some beneficiaries are still manually tracked as it continues to be updated.

In December 2022, WFP launched a value-voucher pilot on the island targeting approximately 2,700 people, as part of a potential transition to cash-based or hybrid assistance similar to the assistance provided in Cox's Bazar.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

WFP works with twelve Bangladeshi retailers in Cox's Bazar to ensure sufficient stocks of high-quality food are available to refugees; WFP's e-voucher outlets inject US\$11 million directly into the local economy every month.

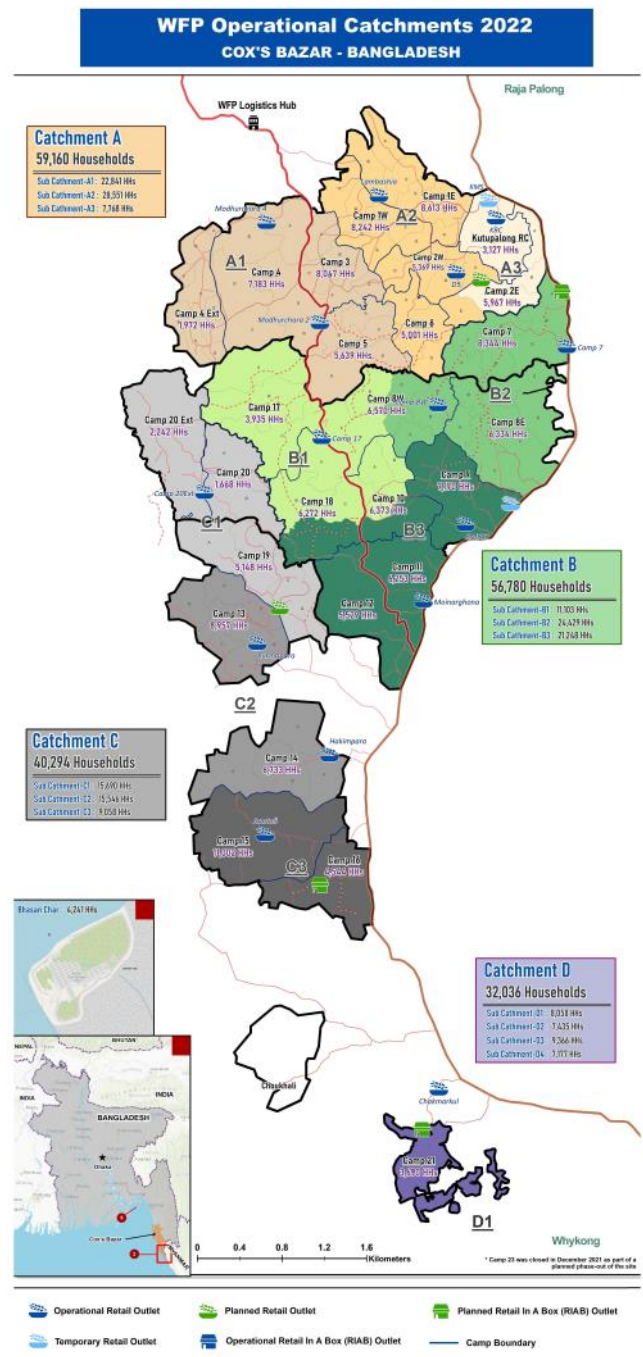
WFP operates 26 food aggregation centres in Cox's Bazar district to promote social cohesion within the overall humanitarian response. While the district's agricultural capacity remains limited, up to 5 percent of the vegetables, eggs, fish, and other food items sold in the camps' Fresh Food Corners come from WFP livelihoods participants and other smallholder farmers from the Bangladeshi community via WFP aggregation centres.

WFP and its cooperating partners set up two community kitchens near the camps, which can produce more than 15,000 hot meals per day in an emergency. In 2022, WFP provided rapid assistance to over 8,200 disaster-affected refugees, including 5,000 affected by large fire outbreaks.

## WFP PLANS

To enhance cost effectiveness in Cox's Bazar, WFP plans to phaseout two e-voucher outlets by February 2023 and shift the caseload to adjacent sites.

If the Bhasan Char value voucher pilot is successful, WFP plans to scale it and set up mechanisms to allow refugees to redeem at both WFP retail outlets and small commercial sites. As there are 26 temporary food distribution points on the island (each serving 295 households on average), WFP will liaise with island authorities to secure fixed locations. Rohingya Food Security Committees, similar to those on the mainland, will be setup in the refugee clusters to act as a conduit for communication to and from the community.



## Annual requirement:

US\$179.3 million for Cox's Bazar;  
US\$15 million for Bhasan Char

**Photo:** WFP retailer packs potatoes into a reusable shopping bag at an e-voucher outlet in the camps (WFP/Sayed Asif Mahmud).

