



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief December 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.

In 2020-21, Bangladesh was the third major export market for Russian and Ukrainian wheat, importing 1.51 million mt of wheat from Ukraine and 1.94 million mt from Russia. The conflict has caused a global economic shock, which – together with unstable exchange rates – may widely impact the Bangladeshi manufacturing sector and economy.

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

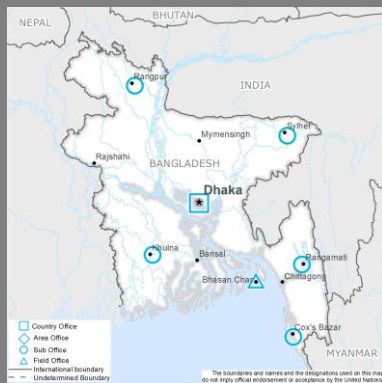
Since 2017, in response to the influx of over 745,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, WFP has been providing food assistance and nutrition services in the Cox's Bazar camps as well as life-skills training, disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities and common engineering services. WFP also supports surrounding Bangladeshi communities through longer-term nutrition, school feeding, livelihoods and DRR interventions. From late 2020, the Government has been relocating small groups of Rohingya to Bhasan Char and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR in October 2021, which sets the policy framework for the UN humanitarian response on the island. WFP has been providing food assistance and nutrition services to the island population, which reached 28,951 refugees by end-December.

Population:
167 million people

Income Level:
Lower middle

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

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

1,200 mt of food distributed



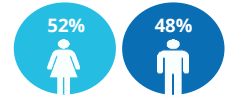
US\$14.2 million cash-based transfers made



US\$77 million net funding requirements (January– June 2023)



1.2 million people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP provided in-kind food and cash assistance in response to severe June **floods in northeast Bangladesh**. A total of 22,800 households received 40 kg rice and 4 kg pulses each, and over 21,700 households received an unconditional cash grant of BDT 2,500 (US\$25) each to cover their immediate needs. This complements WFP's immediate life-saving response in June, which reached 176,800 flood-affected people with 85 mt of fortified biscuits.
- From December, WFP began to support all Rohingya on **Bhasan Char** and launched a small-scale e-voucher pilot on the island, working with small commercial traders, to complement the commodity voucher that refugees receive each month. In total, 28,200 people received WFP food assistance, of which 2,681 received the US\$3 top-up. Through its malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes on Bhasan Char, WFP supported 8,900 pregnant and nursing women, and children aged 6-59 months with specialized nutritious foods.
- In **Cox's Bazar**, WFP provided general food assistance to 907,000 Rohingya using e-vouchers in 21 outlets with various cereals, fresh food items and spices. To address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, WFP continued to provide preventive and curative services to Bangladeshis at 130 community clinics along with refugees at 45 integrated nutrition sites. In total, more than 214,600 pregnant and nursing women, and children aged 6-59 months were reached, including 73,800 unregistered refugee children 24-59 months who received a US\$3 nutrition-sensitive e-voucher instead of Super Cereal Plus. WFP published a study assessing [nutrition coverage](#) in Cox's Bazar with recommendations on how to improve the delivery and uptake of services provided to the Bangladeshi community by WFP and its partners.
- To strengthen **emergency preparedness** in the camps, the Fire Safety and Civil Defence Department and WFP organized fire safety and first-aid trainings attended by WFP partners, retailers and Rohingya Food Security Committees.
- The Government and WFP are preparing a study to determine the best modality for the National **School Feeding** Programme, starting in 2023. In Cox's Bazar, WFP provided 65,900 Bangladeshi and 281,400 refugee children with fortified biscuits, while the Bandarban District programme has been discontinued due to funding constraints. On Bhasan Char, WFP provided biscuits to 8,300 children via the school feeding programme launched in November.

- WFP's Cox's Bazar **livelihoods** programme supported 24,200 vulnerable Bangladeshi women with training to set up micro-businesses and 19,600 graduates are receiving support with market linkages.

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)		
Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
1.62 bn	408 m	77 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

- The Cox’s Bazar **disaster risk reduction** programme engaged 7,800 Bangladeshis 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, guide walls and stairs in the camps.
- WFP engaged 18,500 refugees in **self-reliance** activities, including agriculture, aquaculture, handicraft production and upcycling, to enhance food security and nutrition.
- As part of the **seasonal livelihoods programme** in Kurigram, northern Bangladesh, WFP provided 250 new households with one-time investment grants for income-generation. These entailed climate-adaptive activities, such as vermicomposting and hydroponic fodder cultivation.
- Under the **urban food assistance** programme, WFP supported 12,700 people in Dhaka slums with cash assistance and nutrition-sensitive messaging complemented by UNFPA distribution of menstrual pads, and FAO support to smallholder farmers and producers.
- WFP provided sub-district-level technical assistance to facilitate the selection process for **Vulnerable Women Benefit Programme** participants in 409 sub-districts.
- WFP and Nutrition International organized joint training on the production and quality requirements for fortified rice attended by 178 of the country’s 180 fortified rice blending millers. With WFP technical assistance, the Government resumed distribution of fortified rice to 3 million social safety net beneficiaries. WFP also supported the Department of Women Affairs to transfer monthly payments of BDT 800 (US\$8) to 100,000 beneficiaries of the **Mother and Child Benefit Programme** in 66 sub-districts.

Programme	Beneficiaries
 Food Assistance	935,200
 Emergency Response in Sylhet	114,000
 Nutrition	214,600
 School Feeding	355,600
 Resilience	62,600

Monitoring

- WFP received 889 calls through its community feedback and response hotline with 431 calls emanating from Cox’s Bazar and completed 89 percent of planned monitoring visits.
- WFP’s monthly [Mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping](#) report found that one in ten households in Bangladesh was moderately food-insecure; and seven in ten households faced increased food prices in the six months prior to the survey. Reliance on coping strategies dropped from 63 to 48 percent, however, due to increased opportunities for seasonal rice and vegetable cultivation.

Challenges

- Without urgent funding, WFP will need to introduce food ration cuts among the Rohingya refugee population, which has no means for employment and self-sufficiency. This scenario would be expected to lead to higher levels of malnutrition.

Success Story



In a country where you seldom see women behind the wheel, WFP’s Shahinur Akhter is a driver of change. She is still the only WFP female driver in Dhaka and enjoys her work thoroughly. [Watch](#) how her passion for driving a vehicle gives her the economic independence and the freedom to explore.

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.