



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief May 2023



In Numbers

1020.3 mt of food distributed



US\$11.3 million cash-based transfers made



US\$93.4 million net funding requirements for WFP's Country Strategic Plan (July-December 2023)



1.04 million people assisted



Operational Updates

- In June, monthly rations are to be further reduced to US\$8 per person per month, a significant drop in refugees' food intake (67 percent of full assistance; only 83 percent of energy requirements per SPHERE standards). WFP **urgently needs US\$48 million** to restore full rations from July for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar until end-2023 (as of 12 June).
- On 14 May, **Cyclone Mocha** hit coastal areas along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border, particularly southern Cox's Bazar (Teknaf and Ukhiya), causing considerable damage. More than 140,000 Bangladeshis were affected and left food-insecure by the cyclone, and some 40,000 Rohingya households saw their shelters damaged or destroyed across the 33 refugee camps. WFP is seeking US\$4.1 million through the UN's joint [Flash Appeal](#) to assist Bangladeshis who have lost their livelihoods, replenish and augment prepositioned food stocks, and better prepare for future natural hazards in the camps and local communities.
- In Cox's Bazar, 911,700 refugees continued to receive **e-vouchers** valued at US\$10 rather than US\$12 due to an acute shortage of funds since March. Rohingya families most vulnerable to food insecurity (women, elderly, or child-headed households; households with persons with disabilities) continued to receive an additional US\$3 to purchase fresh food products. Between 13-20 May, 8,500 refugees in Cox's Bazar received over 79,000 fortified biscuits and 11,531 hot meals in WFP's response to Cyclone Mocha.
- WFP continued to provide preventive and curative **nutrition services** to refugees at 45 integrated nutrition sites and Bangladeshis at 132 community clinics to address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. More than 196,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women and children aged 6-59 months were reached in May, including 72,600 refugee children aged 24-59 months who received a US\$3 nutrition-sensitive e-voucher, in lieu of specialized nutritious foods.
- On **Bhasan Char**, WFP supported all Rohingya refugees with a fixed food basket of 11 items and continued phase two of its small-scale e-voucher pilot, reaching 5,300 people. Through its malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes on the island, WFP supported 7,800 pregnant and breastfeeding women, and children aged 6-59 months with specialized nutritious foods. In addition, 9,500 primary-aged children were supported through school feeding on the island. In response to Cyclone Mocha, 5,589 refugees in Bhasan Char received fortified biscuits.
- WFP organized a **school-feeding** learning visit to Japan for high-level government officials of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Directorate of Primary Education. In Cox's Bazar, WFP continued school feeding in schools and camp learning centres and provided fortified biscuits to 251,200 refugee and 60,700 Bangladeshi children.

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 prone to floods and cyclones. Meanwhile, the global food crisis – exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine, unstable exchange rates and a foreign exchange shortage – is jeopardizing the country's post-pandemic economic recovery. Country Strategic Plan 2022-2026 reinforces WFP's commitment to work with the Government to improve the food security, nutrition and resilience of vulnerable communities across the country, while also providing emergency food assistance to people affected by disasters.

Since 2017, in response to the influx of over 745,000 Rohingya from Myanmar to Cox's Bazar, WFP has been providing food assistance and nutrition services in the overcrowded refugee camps as well as life-skills training, disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities and common engineering services. WFP also supports Bangladeshi communities, most vulnerable to food insecurity, near the camps through longer-term nutrition, school feeding, livelihoods and DRR interventions. The UN is monitoring developments at the Myanmar border given reports of shelling in the area (late 2022) and of Rohingya living in a no man's land being forced from their settlements in mid-January 2023.

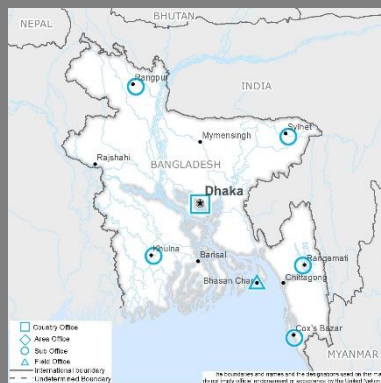
From late 2021, UN agencies have been supporting Rohingya refugees on Bhasan Char, following several small government relocations to the island. WFP provides food assistance and nutrition services to the population, which reached 30,050 refugees by end-May 2023.

Population:
167 million people

Income Level:
Lower middle

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

Chronic malnutrition:
31% of children 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.

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)		
Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
1.62 bn	470.9 m	93.4 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 **self-reliance** programme engaged 26,500 of the most vulnerable refugees in partaking in waste collection, upcycling, Communication with Communities and other activities.
- Ahead of Cyclone Mocha, WFP reached 28,000 Bangladeshis in Teknaf with BDT 4,100 (US\$38) in forecast-based financing in anticipation of forecasted storm surge flooding. Under the **disaster risk reduction** programme, 7,700 refugees conducted 37 84 km of drainage clearance and construction of 711 m of drainage, 470 m of pedestrian pathway, 157 m of access road, 21 brick guide wall and 227 m² brick stairs. In preparation for the cyclone and monsoon season, 158 m of drain was also constructed, and 95,327 tree seedlings maintained.
- WFP conducted a national level strategic consultation workshop to present a series of recommendations to the Central Bank and financial service providers to enable stronger digital financial inclusion within the **Vulnerable Women Benefit Programme**.
- Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, WFP is supporting the Ministry of Food's Open Market Sale **public food distribution programme** which connects marginalized people in urban areas with nutrient-rich food items at a more affordable price. WFP is currently exploring potential scale-up plans with the Directorate General of Food.
- WFP distributed **fortified rice** to 150,000 women in 18 sub-districts in addition to government distribution of fortified rice among 1.7 million Vulnerable Women Benefit programme participants in 165 sub-districts. To improve the monitoring system for fortified rice distribution in social safety net programmes, WFP and Nutrition International organized two workshops for government officials.
- Under the **Urban Food Assistance Programme**, WFP provided unconditional cash transfers and nutrition messaging to 12,800 people in two low-income areas of Dhaka, contributing to longer term evidence generation for urban social protection programmes.

Programme	# of people reached
Food Assistance (Cox's Bazar, Bhasan Char)	940,700
Nutrition (Cox's Bazar, Bhasan Char)	203,700
School Feeding (Cox's Bazar, Bhasan Char)	321,400
Urban Food Security (Dhaka)	12,800

Monitoring

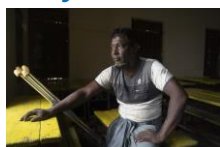
- The WFP community feedback and response hotline received 2,645 calls throughout the month. WFP completed 195 of 203 planned monitoring visits in Cox's Bazar (137 in the camps and 58 in the surrounding communities).
- The latest [WFP Market Monitor](#) found that food basket costs in Cox's Bazar remained 11 percent higher year-on-year, straining households' purchasing capacities. The latest [Mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping](#) found that more than 1 in 10 households are food insecure with 23 percent of households moderately food-insecure.

Challenges

In the cyclone, two integrated nutrition facilities were extensively damaged and 14 were partially damaged.

Photo (page 1): WFP volunteers conduct emergency drain cleaning in the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha (CARE/Babul Akter Akanda)

Story from the field



During Cyclone Mocha, Bangladeshi households living in the flood zone received assistance from WFP's forecast based financing programme. [Hear](#) how this support eased Mohammad Tayeb's struggles.

2023 Donors/Funding Sources

(in alphabetical order including carryover of unspent 2022 contributions)

Governments: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, USA.

Private: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, CANADEM, Royal DSM, IFPRI, Metro A.G., Norwegian Refugee Council, RED R, Share the Meal

United Nations: UN CERF, UN SDG