



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Bangladesh Country Brief September 2023



76-year-old Mijui Marma gratefully holds up the emergency cash assistance she received as part of WFP's ongoing response to the August floods in the tribal Chittagong Hill Tracts (WFP/Dip Chakma)

## Operational Context

WFP started operations in Bangladesh in 1974. While significant economic growth was seen in the past decade, nearly one-third of the population still face food insecurity and 20 percent live below the national poverty line. Ranked as the 7<sup>th</sup> extreme disaster risk-prone country, Bangladesh is vulnerable to natural hazards with most of the population residing in areas prone to floods and cyclones. The Country Strategic Plan 2022-2026 reinforces WFP's commitment to working with the Government to improve food security, nutrition, and resilience of vulnerable communities, while also providing emergency 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, as well as self-reliance and disaster risk reduction (DRR) in the camps. WFP also supports Bangladeshi communities most vulnerable to food insecurity in Cox's Bazar through longer-term nutrition, school feeding, livelihoods and DRR interventions. From late 2021, WFP has been supporting the Rohingya population on Bhasan Char Island, home to 30,000 relocated refugees.

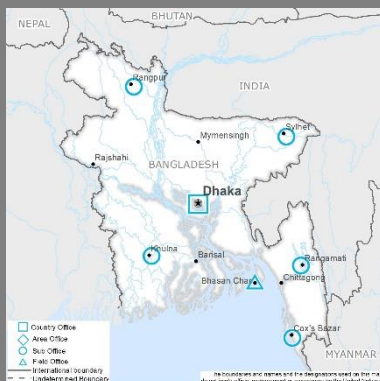
WFP's monitoring report from June 2023, cites 94 percent of refugees with a deterioration in food and nutrition due to the ongoing ration cuts, while borrowing food and money nearly doubled to 51 percent.

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**



## In Numbers

950 mt of food distributed



US\$9.38 million cash-based transfers made



US\$85.8 million net funding requirements under the Country Strategic Plan (Nov'23 – Apr'24)



1.04 million people assisted



## Operational Updates

- Monthly rations for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar remain at US\$8 per person per month, after falling from US\$10 in June and US\$12 (full assistance) before March 2023. As of 12 October, based on confirmed and projected resources **US\$51 million is needed to restore the full ration for the next 12 months**. WFP is grateful for new contributions from Germany, Canada, and Thailand.
- In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, WFP continued to support families affected by **severe floods in August**, providing cash assistance of BDT 5,500 (US\$50) per family to 20,200 people and another 6.5 mt fortified biscuits to 13,000 people. With recent CERF contribution, WFP plans to continue this support for 180,000 individuals over the coming months and requires US\$7.8 million for flood response.
- In September, 912,600 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar received **food assistance** through e-vouchers. Most vulnerable households received an additional US\$3 to enable purchase of more nutritious foods.
- Preventive and curative **nutrition services** were provided to Rohingya and Bangladeshi communities. More than 203,300 pregnant and breastfeeding women, and children aged 6-59 months, including 78,300 Rohingya children through a US\$3 nutrition-sensitive e-voucher. WFP's school feeding programme provided fortified biscuits to 245,600 refugee and more than 60,100 Bangladeshi children in Cox's Bazar.
- On Bhasan Char, WFP supported 29,400<sup>1</sup> refugees, of which 65 percent received an 11-item **fixed food basket**, and the rest through redeemable **e-vouchers**. WFP provided nutrition support to 7,740 pregnant and breastfeeding women and children aged 6-59 months, while school feeding programme reached 11,300 children.
- Under the **disaster risk reduction** programme, 11,980 Rohingya volunteers were involved in reforestation, drainage cleaning, re/construction of walls, stairs, drains and pedestrian pathways. In the surrounding community, 970 Bangladeshis (including 44 persons with disabilities) were engaged in reforestation; slope protection; road construction; and canal and drainage works.
- WFP provided training to 23,600 Bangladeshi women to start micro businesses, who earned US\$327,700 selling produce through 59 aggregation centres.

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Note: Figures may include duplication (some people benefit from more than one programme).

<sup>1</sup>WFP food assistance reached 29,250 beneficiaries due to relocations and absentee households.

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)		
Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
1.62bn	529.8m	85.8m

**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

- In the camps, the **self-reliance** programme engaged 34,300 refugees in homestead gardening, upcycling and communication with communities.
- WFP and the Department of Women Affairs organized a workshop with the Cabinet Division and ministries of Women and Children Affairs, and Finance to review progress from the implementation of the **Mother and Child Benefit Programme** and **Vulnerable Woman benefit Programme** and to develop a strategy for future implementation.
- With the Government of Bangladesh and the National Taskforce and Technical Working Group on Anticipatory Action, WFP convened a second national dialogue on the scale up of **anticipatory action** to support resilience-building of the Bangladeshis in disaster-prone areas.
- As part of WFP's **seasonal livelihoods** programme, 500 participants received a monthly subsistence allowance of BDT 500 (US\$4.5) to ensure participants have enough funds to reinvest in their income generating activities after receiving a one-off cash grant of BDT 15,000 (US\$138) to start their micro-businesses.
- WFP distributed **fortified rice** to 537,000 beneficiaries of the Government's Food Friendly and Vulnerable Women Benefit Programme in 35 sub-districts.

Programme	# of people reached
Emergency relief (Bandarban)	33,200
Food Assistance (Cox's Bazar, Bhasan Char)	942,000
Nutrition (Cox's Bazar, Bhasan Char)	211,000
Resilience (Cox's Bazar, Kurigram)	71,400
School Feeding (Cox's Bazar, Bhasan Char)	317,000
Urban Food Security (Dhaka)	12,600

- Monitoring**
- UNWOMEN, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP conducted a [Rapid Gender Analysis](#) to assess the impacts of the August floods in Chattogram Division. Infrastructure damage and disrupted communication had a greater impact on women and girls due to their reduced mobility and lower mobile phone ownership. Women's participation in decision-making was also flagged as a concern in how families use assistance.
  - In Cox's Bazar, a Joint Monitoring Report from the [Protection Sector](#) revealed that ration cuts have resulted in increased intimate partner violence.

- Challenges**
- Due to procurement delays for fortified rice kernels, government fortified rice distributions did not take place in September.

**2023 Donors**  
*(in alphabetical order including carryover of unspent 2022 contributions)*

Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Thailand, Qatar, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA | Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Buddhist Global Relief, CANADEM, Royal DSM, IFPRI, Metro A.G., WFP USA, UNCERF, UN Sustainable Development Goals Fund

**Success story**

WFP is helping communities build resilience against climate shocks through proactive crisis response tools, such as anticipatory action and climate risk insurance. Read more and follow us on our new WFP Bangladesh X channel [here!](#)