



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Bangladesh Country Brief October 2023



Ahead of Cyclone Hamoon, WFP volunteers raised early warning flags and spread preparedness messages to refugee families in the crowded and landslide prone camps. WFP/Arnob Hossain

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. Bangladesh is extremely 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.

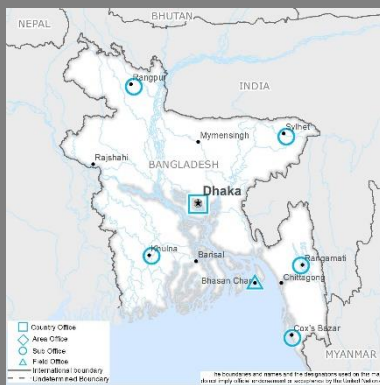
Since 2017, in response to the influx of over 745,000 Rohingya from Myanmar to Cox's Bazar, WFP has been providing food assistance and nutrition services, as well as implementing self-reliance and disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities, in the camps. In Cox's Bazar, WFP also supports Bangladeshi communities most vulnerable to food insecurity through longer-term nutrition, school feeding, livelihoods and DRR interventions. From late 2021, WFP has been supporting the Rohingya on Bhasan Char island, now home to 30,000 government-relocated refugees.¹ Due to the ongoing ration cuts, 94 percent of refugees report a deterioration in food and nutrition, per WFP's monitoring report from June 2023, while borrowing food and money has nearly doubled to 51 percent.

Population:
167 million people

Income Level:
Lower middle

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

Chronic malnutrition:
31% of children 6-59 months



In Numbers

1,162 mt of food distributed



US\$9.4 million cash-based transfers made



US\$90.37 million net funding requirements under the Country Strategic Plan (Dec'23 – May'24)



1.04 million people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP is grateful for new contributions from Germany and France for humanitarian programming in Cox's Bazar, and [flexible funds](#) from Sweden.
- 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. Based on confirmed and projected resources, **US\$47 million is needed to restore the full ration for the next 12 months.**
- WFP took part in a [high-level meeting](#) convened by the UK, US and UNHCR to refocus support for the Rohingya and the countries which host them. The meeting took place ahead of December's Global Refugee Forum, where the international community will gather to pledge political, financial and technical support for refugees worldwide.
- On 24 October, **Cyclone Hamoon**, a category two storm, hit Chittagong Division, causing minor damage to a WFP office and warehouse in Cox's Bazar. WFP volunteers conducted preparedness and early warning activities, and helped with debris clearing and recovery. WFP distributed 134 boxes of fortified biscuits to 709 people and hot meals for cyclone-affected refugees. The cyclone caused significant damage to the homes of thousands of livelihoods programme participants, their individual and group businesses (notably in agriculture) and meeting places, especially in Moheshkhali sub-district. Affected households will be supported to repair their homes through their monthly allowance from WFP.
- In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, WFP continued to support families affected by flooding in August with BDT 5,500 (US\$50) cash assistance. This support was provided to 5,200 families in October. WFP plans to reach 180,000 people total with recovery support for which it requires US\$7.8 million.
- In Cox's Bazar, 911,400 Rohingya refugees received **general food assistance** (GFA) through e-vouchers.² Most vulnerable households received an additional US\$3 to purchase fresh produce. **Malnutrition prevention and treatment services** were provided at 177 sites in the Rohingya and Bangladeshi communities. More than 206,200 pregnant and breastfeeding women and children aged 6-59 months were reached, including 79,400 Rohingya children through a US\$3 nutrition-sensitive e-voucher. WFP **school feeding** reached 307,100 refugee and Bangladeshi children.

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Note: Figures may include duplication (some people benefit from more than one programme).
^{1,2} WFP food assistance reached a lesser number of refugees 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	533.62 m	90.37 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

On Bhasan Char, WFP continues to scale up the use of e-vouchers. WFP supported 29,425 refugees with general food assistance, of which 43 percent received **e-vouchers**, while the remaining 57 percent received an 11-item fixed food basket. WFP provided **nutrition services** to 7,680 pregnant and breastfeeding women and children aged 6-59 months, while **school feeding** reached 11,500 children.

In the **disaster risk reduction** programme, Rohingya and Bangladeshi women and men were engaged for improved monsoon and cyclone preparedness in the camps and local community in Cox’s Bazar respectively. Through the **livelihoods** programme, WFP engaged 23,600 Bangladeshi women, who saved US\$1,480 in self-help groups, while WFP’s **self-reliance** programme engaged 33,920 refugees in homestead gardening, upcycling and communication with communities. In Kurigram, 500 **seasonal livelihoods programme** participants received a monthly allowance of BDT 500 to expand their income-generating activities.

The Department of Women Affairs and WFP launched a joint study on digital financial inclusion (DFI), including learnings from incorporating DFI into social protection programmes. Through WFP-supported learning hubs, 21,130 **Mother and Child Benefit Programme (MCBP)** beneficiaries were reached with 1,000 nutrition-based social and behavioural change sessions. Eight online feedback sessions for 557 government officials on the MCBP management information system were held, along with two training sessions for 157 staff from eight NGOs implementing the Investment Component of Vulnerable Group Development programme.

WFP distributed **fortified rice** to 3.3 million beneficiaries of the Government’s Food Friendly and Vulnerable Women Benefit Programme in 200 sub-districts. Under the **Urban Food Assistance Programme**, WFP provided unconditional mobile cash assistance and nutrition messaging to 12,600 people with US\$84,300 distributed.

# of people reached	
GFA 916,500	Emergency relief 5,200
Nutrition 214,000	School Feeding 318,600
Resilience 58,020	Urban 12,600

Success story



On 26 October, the Department of Women Affairs and WFP [signed](#) a memorandum of understanding to continue working together to strengthen nutrition-sensitive and shock-responsive social protection programmes.

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

Monitoring

WFP completed all 393 planned monitoring visits in Cox’s Bazar (340 in the camps, 53 in local communities) and received 611 feedback calls on its toll-free hotline.

Challenges

On 29 October, the country’s opposition held a nationwide strike, followed by a three-day blockade of major roads, rail and waterways. Protests by garments workers demanding wage increases started the same week. UN remains operational with staff working from home, with only critical staff movement and missions taking place.