

Two Years On: WFP Rohingya Refugee Response



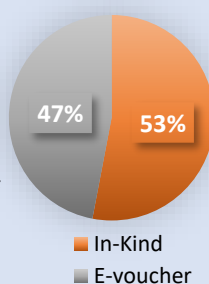
Ramana sat staring at the thatched-roof, two-roomed shelter, tucking her son on one side, recalling how the last two years have passed for her. Her demeanour suggesting how unfathomable the transition has been. Born to a family of farmers, her land and ponds back home had been everything they needed to have a good life. But 25 August 2017 was the day that changed everything: “we started off from our village evading scenes of burnt houses, dead neighbours – it was terrifying. Since, life has taken many turns, gladly, we’ve survived.” Among the hundreds and thousands who reside in the refugee camps of Cox’s Bazar today, Ramana is relieved to have made it through. “I have seen how the camps here have transformed, we changed many homes, we had nothing when we came here, but now life has some stability.”

For decades, the Rohingya people have been subjected to systematic discrimination, statelessness and targeted violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar. Over hundreds and thousands of Rohingyas have arrived in Bangladesh, with significant spikes following violent incidents in 1978, 1991 – 1992, and again in 2016. The largest and most rapid Rohingya refugee influx was triggered in **August 2017**.

In a matter of weeks, over 745,000 fled Myanmar – including more than 400,000 children – bringing the current camp population to more than 911,000. Since the start of the crisis, WFP has rapidly responded to the influx and since provided food and nutrition access to over a million refugees and host population, alongside facilitating essential shared services. Over two years into the multifaceted collaborative response, 88 percent of the refugee population still remain dependent on external-aid.



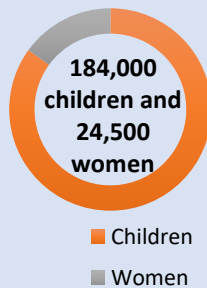
Entire refugee caseload



WFP provides general food assistance to over 95 percent of the entire refugee population through a combination of in-kind and E-voucher modalities of food assistance. WFP has integrated efficient and advanced technological solutions, the SCOPE system, to manage beneficiary data as well as record transaction of services and entitlements. WFP aims to integrate existing local and national markets with the supply chain in the E-voucher outlets, managed by locally-contracted retailers.



WFP operates nutrition activities that target a) children under age of five and b) pregnant and breastfeeding women with dual programme of prevention and treatment of moderate acute malnutrition. In the beginning of the influx, malnutrition rates were higher than the globally accepted rates. This resulted in WFP's tailored package of nutrition assistance.



WFP assists **75 percent** of the entire population with in-kind food (three items) across 19 distribution points.

Ready to use supplementary food scaled up to **28 nutrition sites**.

Two new E-voucher outlets opened increasing the caseload to **47 percent** from **35 percent** earlier.

August 2018

October 2018

December 2018

March 2019

May 2019

August 2019

The remaining, 25 percent of the refugee population, are assisted under E-voucher modality across **six E-voucher outlets** with 20 different food items.

E-voucher assistance scaled up with the opening of two more outlets to include **35 percent** of the entire caseload from 25 percent (additional over **100,000 individuals**).

Rice capping pilot initiated to address any re-selling of food items and improve dietary diversity of beneficiaries.

Year in Review (2018-19): Key Achievements



General Food Assistance

WFP scaled up its E-voucher food assistance i.e., from assisting **25 percent to 47 percent between August 2018-19**, with a range of diverse food items, including fresh fruits and seasonal vegetables. Alongside, gradual scaling-down of the in-kind food distribution continued, this currently supports **53 percent** of the population.

- Four new E-voucher outlets were opened targeting an additional **200,000 refugees** in a span of 12 months, bringing the total to 10 outlets.
- The entire refugee population (except in two camps where International Committee of Red Cross is responsible for food distribution) was registered in the SCOPE system, which now as a pilot is being used for in-kind food distribution for a caseload of over 3,000 households.
- The WFP Assistance card (powered by SCOPE system) was also used for the distribution of humanitarian relief items by other aid agencies, including UNICEF hygiene soaps. Over **87,000 households** were assisted in this process.
- To better represent choices and food preferences of refugees, **eight seasonal food items** were introduced across E-voucher outlets (Flexible List), in addition to a fixed set of food items, (Mandatory List), available.
- WFP rolled out a **pilot to avoid any reselling of food items, rice capping** (fixing the voucher value for rice at BDT 450 or 14.5 kg). As primary monitoring suggest, this has resulted in improved food consumption and dietary diversity on the part of beneficiaries.
- WFP continues to promote gender equity across programmatic interventions; for instance the Assistance card is issued in the name of the most senior woman of the family which improved their decision-making capabilities at the household level.



WFP E-voucher construction site, led by the Engineering team.



Integrated Nutrition Assistance

WFP expanded its nutrition activities to assist close to **184,200 children under five and 24,500 pregnant and breastfeeding women** in the refugee camps across 51 nutrition sites (a significant increase of 20 percent in geographical coverage over the period of one year).

- The Ready to use supplementary food distribution (a nutritional supplement for children vulnerable to severe malnourishment) was scaled up to **28 nutrition sites (from 13 sites in 2018)**.
- WFP successfully integrated its prevention and treatment services with the Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (managed by UNICEF) in **28 nutrition sites**. Through improved inter-agency collaboration, WFP enhanced access to essential nutrition services by the refugees.
- In the host community, over **12,000 women and children** were supported with treatment of moderate acute malnutrition services. A substantive improvement has been noticed in their overall health status



School Feeding Programme

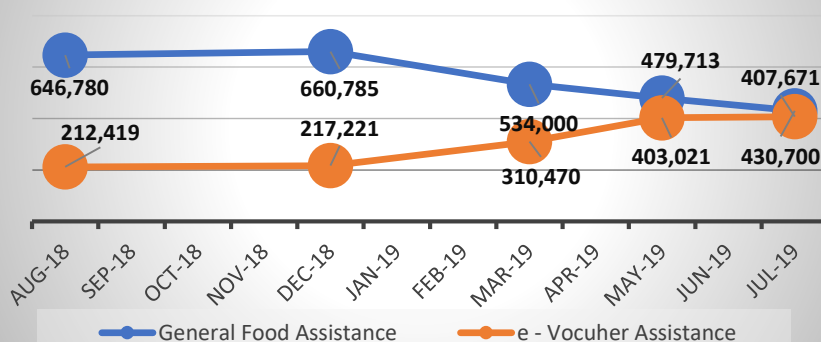
WFP scaled up assistance to include **247,300 refugee children across 3,700 learning centres** with high energy biscuits (HEB) in the camps.

- Every month, close to 500 refugee volunteers were engaged to deliver HEBs against a pre-fixed remuneration of BDT 5,000.
- WFP continued school feeding across five sub-districts (host regions) for **240,000 children in 486 schools**.
- In collaboration with partners, WFP introduced tailored workshops and awareness sessions for students and teachers – such as the Read Play festival, across learning facilities in the camps and host areas.



"When I come to the centre everyday, we learn, we play, we read and we also eat. Mother tells me this is good for my health, and it is tasty too. I don't feel hungry for the entire time when I eat these, and sometimes I save a few for my little sister too."

Transition from In-kind to E-voucher modality of food assistance





Livelihoods Programme

WFP reached **20,000 families** with livelihoods generation and entrepreneurial skill-development activities, which had an overall impact **on 100,000 Bangladeshi individuals**. This includes **721 persons** with disabilities.

- WFP placed emphasis on women empowerment through self-help groups and development of individual businesses. Cumulatively, participants saved 3.1 million (BDT)/35,000 (USD) in 2018-2019 in their self-help groups bank accounts. Moving ahead, WFP will distribute group grants, focusing on financial inclusion and market linkages.



Self-Reliance Activities

In the refugee camps, WFP engaged **6,620 participants** in Self-Reliance activities across **24 skill centres** spanning 16 camps.

- WFP initiated a range of projects tailored to beneficiaries' interests, expertise and market opportunities such as aquaculture, tailoring, embroidery, mobile phone and solar panel repairing.
- WFP, in collaboration with partners, also initiated vegetable gardening with camp residents on shelter-roofs which contributed to improved nutritional status and accessibility to micro-nutrient rich foods.



Site Maintenance Engineering Project (SMEP)



"It is been almost a week that I am working here, construction of the shop and a few road repair activities. It is pretty new for me, as I was used to farming back home. But I see how my work here impacts lives. Working here gives me a lot of satisfaction, nothing comes easy in life but I know I am doing something good for my family and for the people here."

As part of the SMEP, the inter-agency engineering (IOM, UNHCR and WFP led) initiative, WFP constructed **40 km of new drainage** channels and repaired **20,000 sqm** of existing drainage.

- Campsite 4 and 20 were expanded by over 253 acres** of habitable area. The speed at which the ground was prepared for relocation is one of the finest examples of inter-agency partnership to ensure a safer environment for the most vulnerable in the refugee community. Over 40,000 refugees have been relocated to this campsite, from highly vulnerable sites.
- WFP, through SMEP, commissioned design of a **flood risk analysis model** which helped identify essential mitigation measures, including road repairs and drainage clearance, required to reduce the damages from the monsoon and cyclone season.
- WFP plans to install a broader array of meteorological stations in the existing SMEP forward operating bases. These stations would capture in real-time not only rainfall, but also wind and atmospheric conditions needed to conduct better predictive analysis of cyclone conditions.



Common Services



Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS): WFP as the lead for ETS provided regular access to key information and services for humanitarian aid organizations and Government stakeholders.

ETS ensured steadfast internet connectivity to logistics and a common information hub, which supported in community awareness and mobilization activities, humanitarian aid transport and storage.



Logistics Sector: WFP aims to establish the online data collecting tool Physical Access Constraint Mapping, in collaboration with the global preparedness platform.

This would combine information from international and national stakeholders to generate a real-time overview of logistics infrastructure and required repairs. Furthermore, three more logistics hubs were established with a capacity of 15 Mobile Storage Units, with an overall storage capacity of 3,600 mt.



Food Security Sector: WFP as the co-lead for FSS actively engaged in coordinating with partners for prepositioning of food stocks and ensuring uninterrupted food supply.

FSS also liaises with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) responsible for providing food assistance to 42,000 refugees in two camps (where WFP's food assistance is not operational).



Disaster Risk Reduction Activities

WFP continued to undertake **micro- and macro-scale rehabilitation works**, including land terracing and levelling to facilitate refugee relocation, bridge and road construction, drainage clearance, and forest-related activities.

- WFP actively engaged in reforestation activities, planting over **100,000 tree saplings** in an area spanning over 41 hectares.
- Over **80,400 participants** in the refugee and **8,100 host community** were engaged in risk reduction and emergency preparedness related activities against a pre-fixed remuneration.
- In the host areas, WFP and its partners refurbished **40 cyclone shelters** and an **additional 40 refurbishments** are planned for 2019. These shelters can hold 600-2,000 people per location.
- Over **750 vulnerable sites** were reinforced, including construction of emergency shelter and land preparation works for distribution points.
- In the monsoon and cyclone season, WFP promptly responded to immediate asset refurbishment and public infrastructure repair needs. WFP is engaging with local Government to conduct a series of disaster simulations at the subdistrict level.

Vision 2020: Sustainable Innovation, Durable Solutions



Improve existing programmes and experiment with innovative, context-specific programmatic designs



Transition from In-kind to E-voucher modality: WFP aims to bring the entire refugee population under its E-voucher food assistance modality by mid-2020; entire refugee population will receive monthly entitlements on a pre-paid debit card, which they can use across WFP-contracted retail shops to buy 20 different food, including rice, lentils, eggs etc. In addition, WFP will continue to introduce pilots, such as the flexible list and rice capping which has a positive impact on beneficiaries' nutritional status and consumption patterns.

Improving construction and site maintenance: The Site Maintenance Engineering Project (SMEP) is piloting alternative models of building and procuring bricks, stabilizing slopes and constructing roads. Partners will directly involve local communities and refugees in the production of building materials by creating a "start-up", and by obliging stakeholders (i.e. NGOs and UN agencies) to buy construction materials at a fair prices.

Integrated Nutrition sites: WFP aims to integrate all the nutrition sites, providing prevention, treatment services for moderately acute malnourished children as well Outpatient Therapeutic services for severely acute malnourished children (in partnership with UNICEF/UNHCR) at the same place. Towards this end, WFP is actively engaging with local cooperating partners as well as other UN agencies.



Strengthen engagement with host community through an increased focus on medium-to-long term livelihoods approaches



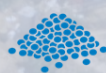
Strengthening market linkages: WFP is exploring ways to more strategically incorporate value chain approaches into its livelihoods activities operational in the host communities. In addition, WFP aims to introduce group grants for women by giving larger financial support to a group of 20-25 women to start their own businesses and undertake savings.

Engagement with International Financial Institutions: WFP is actively engaging with international and regional financial bodies to undertake extensive community-based risk reduction, asset creation works and scale up livelihoods activities. For instance, WFP is engaging with the World Bank that has announced significant funds – nearly USD 500 million – to the Rohingya response. Over the years, WFP has established stronger partnership with long-term donors and partners, whose support has been critical for ensuring continuation of WFP's life-saving humanitarian operation in Cox's Bazar.

Scaling-up Livelihoods programme: In the host community, WFP engages 20,000 participants with skill development activities, with plans to scale it up to include 35,000 more participants, by early 2020. WFP aims to extend the programme period to an additional one year, provided the funding needs are met timely. In addition, WFP plans to strengthen host community engagement through various programmes including farmers market, disaster risk reduction, nutrition and school feeding activities.



Introducing robust technologically-empowering solutions for humanitarian aid delivery



Blockchain technology: As the response expands, WFP aims to explore newer platforms to strengthen existing systems. One such technology is blockchain which would allow enhanced inter-agency collaboration and provide an alternative to transferring beneficiary entitlements with a "closed-loop" system. WFP plans to draw from the experience in Jordan to scope out opportunities for a pilot tailored to the Rohingya refugee response.

Improved service delivery modalities: WFP continues to make sustained efforts to improve service delivery modalities as well as interest of the beneficiaries. In this regard, WFP introduced vegetable corners with the aim of mirroring food assistance outlets as closely possible with the community markets, thus making them more consumer-friendly and accessible. Furthermore, WFP is exploring a range of options to improve its food basket and facilitate positive changes in beneficiaries' purchasing patterns and behaviours. WFP would also seek to incorporate Bangladeshi farmer cooperatives facilitated by WFP and the FAO.

Innovations through SCOPE: WFP SCOPE system was implemented to manage beneficiary database. WFP Bangladesh was the first country to champion the usage of the de-duplication tool and effectively use it to manage duplicates. Furthermore, WFP plans to use SCOPE across other programmatic areas, including Nutrition, Disaster Risk Reduction, Self-Reliance activities.