



WFP Bangladesh

Country Brief

March 2024

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Laila Begum, WFP's livelihoods programme beneficiary, stitches the map of Bangladesh on a blanket, showcasing her recently acquired skills. Photo: WFP/Saikat Mojumder

WFP started operations in Bangladesh in 1974. While significant economic growth was witnessed 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 approximately 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 32,574 government-relocated refugees. Due to the ongoing ration cuts, the overall daily nutritious consumption has decreased, 99 percent of Rohingya households are vulnerable without humanitarian assistance per WFP's monitoring report from December 2023, while borrowing food and money has nearly doubled to 46 percent.

In Numbers



976.8 mt food distributed



US\$ 10.7 million distributed in cash-based transfers



US\$ 55.9 million net funding requirements under the country strategic plan (April – September 2024)¹



1 million people assisted



Operational Updates

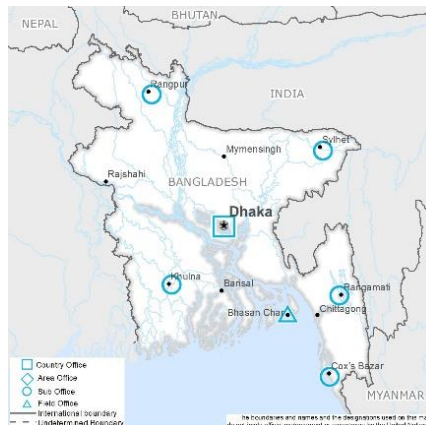
- On 13 March, humanitarian partners, led by the Government of Bangladesh, launched the **2024 Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya refugee crisis**, aiming to secure US\$852 million to assist 1 million Rohingya and vulnerable Bangladeshis. The food security sector requires US\$250 million, with the nutrition and education sectors requiring US\$143.5 and US\$71.6 million, respectively. WFP needs 80 percent of the total requirements to sustain its food, nutrition, and resilience-building programmes.
- Thanks to slightly more favourable funding, WFP was able to increase the monthly food ration for refugees from US\$8 to US\$10 since January 2024. Additionally, **fortified rice** was introduced for the first time in the refugees' food basket to enhance nutritional adequacy and address malnutrition concerns.
- WFP's **general food assistance** for refugees in Cox's Bazar remains underfunded and requires **US\$34 million** to fully restore the ration to US\$12.5 for the remainder of the year.
- A total of 917,500 Rohingya refugees² were reached through **general food assistance** and 234,830 most vulnerable refugees also received an additional US\$3 for fresh food. WFP plans to extend fortified rice assistance to cover all Rohingya by mid-2024.
- Malnutrition **prevention and treatment** services were provided at 179 sites in Cox's Bazar camps and Bangladeshi communities as well as on Bhasan Char island with 209,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and children aged 6-59 months assisted. **School feeding** activities reached 249,400 refugee and 56,000 Bangladeshi children.
- On Bhasan Char, the entire Rohingya population received **general food assistance** – 81 percent through e-vouchers and the rest through commodity vouchers. WFP aims to fully transition to e-vouchers by mid-2024.
- Through the **resilience programme**, WFP engaged 31,285 refugees in skills development activities including homestead vegetable gardening, aquaculture, and upcycling. Additionally, 11,400 beneficiaries received agricultural inputs, while 3,182 items such as bags, household goods were produced by recycling 312,559 food packaging packets collected by refugees.

Population:
167 million people

Income Level:
Lower middle

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

Chronic malnutrition:
31% of children aged 6-59 months



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Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)		
Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six-month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) ³
1.62 b	648.72 m	55.9 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.

International Women’s Day 2024

This International Women’s Day, WFP, through its ‘Nurturing Youth Volunteers in camps’ project, engaged Rohingya youth in activities, such as art competitions, theatrical performances, and educational sessions, fostering self-confidence and bolstering community resilience. [Learn more.](#)

¹ *Funding needs as of 27 March 2024*
² *WFP assistance reached fewer refugees than initially planned for the month, due to relocations and absentee households.*

- Ongoing beneficiary enrolment and other preparatory measures are in progress for the extension of the government’s **social protection programme** across three urban slum areas in Dhaka.
- WFP reviewed the 2023 flood response in Chattogram division to improve its **emergency preparedness and response (EPR) strategy** for faster, coordinated future emergency responses.
- WFP conducted orientation workshops for the local government officials and disaster management committees in northern flood-prone districts to enhance their understanding of **emergency response protocols**, improve coordination mechanisms, and strengthen preparedness efforts within their communities.
- WFP collaborated with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to develop a proposal for the government’s [SMART Bangladesh](#) initiatives with a commitment to establish a **grievance redressal system (GRS)** for the mother and child benefit and vulnerable women benefit programmes.
- As part of evidence generation in collaboration with IFPRI, WFP provided food baskets to 1,095 and cash support to 1,056 the **mother and child benefit programme** beneficiaries.
- With WFP’s technical assistance, the government distributed **fortified rice** to 1.7 million beneficiaries of the **vulnerable women benefit programme** across 165 sub-districts. Additionally, WFP directly facilitated the distribution to 227,000 beneficiaries of the same programme.

Monitoring

In Cox’s Bazar and Bhasan Char, WFP conducted 871 monitoring visits across different activities to ensure adherence to protocols and service standards. Additionally, the toll-free hotline received 1,004 calls, including feedback on the newly introduced fortified rice, which were analyzed to strengthen awareness campaigns and enhance acceptance of its benefits.

2024 contributions

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