



WFP Bangladesh

Country Brief

February 2024

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Children beaming after a **Little Doctors** training under WFP's school feeding programme. Photo: WFP/Mohammad Ismail

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.

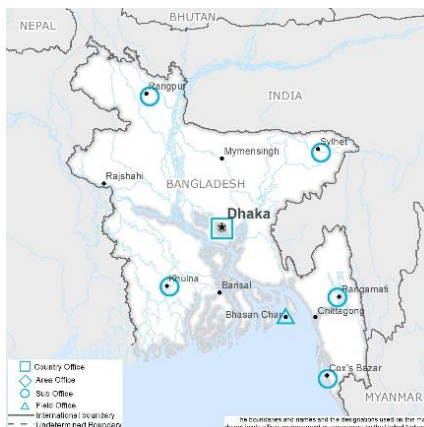
Since 2017, in response to the influx of approximately 745,000 Rohingya from Myanmar to Cox's Bazar, WFP has been providing food assistance and nutrition services, as well as implementing self-reliance and disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities, in the camps. In Cox's Bazar, WFP also supports Bangladeshi 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.

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



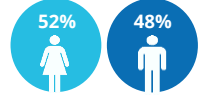
In Numbers

992 mt food distributed

US\$ 11 million distributed in cash-based transfers

US\$ 41.6 million net funding requirements under the country strategic plan (March – August 2024)¹

1 million people assisted



Operational Updates

- 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 address nutrition concerns.
- WFP remains underfunded and still needs US\$34 million to restore the full ration of US\$12.5 for the refugees in Cox Bazar.
- WFP thanks Korea, [Japan](#), UK, and Sweden for their new contributions towards the humanitarian response for the Rohingya refugees.
- A total of 916,700 Rohingya refugees² were reached through **general food assistance** and 229,162 most vulnerable refugees also received an additional US\$3 for fresh foods. WFP provided fortified rice to 261,000 people since its introduction at the beginning of the year and plans to cover all Rohingya by mid-2024.
- Malnutrition **prevention and treatment** services were provided at 177 sites in the camps and Bangladeshi communities with 199,600 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and children aged 6-59 months assisted. **School feeding** activities reached 249,533 refugee and 55,900 Bangladeshi children.
- On Bhasan Char, the entire Rohingya population received **general food assistance** – 68 percent received e-vouchers and the rest received commodity vouchers. WFP aims to fully transition to e-vouchers by the second quarter of 2024.
- Through **resilience programmes**, WFP supported 62 aggregation centres in Cox's Bazar, which promote market linkages for local farmers and by connecting them with WFP-contracted retailers.
- WFP supported 14,720 Rohingya households to produce 497,001 kg of fresh vegetables through homestead gardening under **upcycling/solid waste management** project, with 190 participants receiving training, 146,052 packets collected, and 829 products made.

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Further information: wfp.org/countries/Bangladesh

¹ *Funding needs as of 22 February 2024.*

² *WFP assistance reached fewer refugees than initially planned for the month, 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\$) ³
1.62 b	639.37 m	41.6 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 **urban food assistance** pilot in Dhaka slums has transitioned to longer-term evidence generation for urban social protection programmes. Preparations are underway for the expansion of the government’s **mother and child benefit programme** in Dhaka slums.
- A One UN technical team visited Bandarban District in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) to operationalize the “One UN Vision for CHT” through coordinated programming. Senior UN staff and local authorities visited **emergency flood response** sites and held meetings to discuss integrated **development programming** and coordination mechanisms.
- WFP, with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief concluded a **multi-hazard anticipatory action** programme in Teknaf, Cox’s Bazar (2021-2023) funded by ECHO. The end-line review completed in February highlights proactive measures’ impact on mitigating flash floods and storm surge flooding.
- WFP supported the organization of a project evaluation committee meeting for the upcoming **national school feeding programme**. Following the Planning Commission’s feedback, WFP is providing technical assistance to the Directorate of Primary Education to revise the project proposal, to be submitted by mid-March.
- WFP organized a learning visit to the Philippines for key government officials from the Cabinet Division, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. The purpose was to sensitize officials to undertake steps towards the development of adaptive and shock-responsive social protection programmes in selected climate vulnerable regions.
- As part of evidence generation efforts in partnership with IFPRI, WFP facilitated the transfer of food baskets to 1,047 beneficiaries and provided cash top-ups to 963 recipients under the **mother and child benefit programme**.

Monitoring

WFP completed 513 monitoring visits in Cox’s Bazar and received 663 calls on its toll-free hotline.

2024 contributions - including unspent 2023 balance

Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, European Commission, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Thailand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, USA and other funding sources (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, IFPRI, WFP USA, UNCERF, UNSDG Fund)

Story from the field



[Amina](#), a cooking demonstrator at a nutrition site on Bhasan Char, teaches Rohingya mothers to cook and store specialized nutritious foods. Her work is instrumental in promoting awareness on nutrition, health and hygiene.