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WFP in Cox's Bazar | Information Booklet

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES, INNOVATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, SECTORS AND
CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Photos: WFP/Nihab Rahman and Sayed Asif Mahmud

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This Operational Report is based on best available information at the time of production.
Future updates may vary as new information becomes available.



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Emergency Response in the Rohingya Refugee Camps

CONTEXT

By end-September 2021, there were over 918,800* Rohingya refugees living in the Cox's Bazar area ([UNHCR, 2021](#)), including 17,000 living on Bhasan Char island. With population density reaching 60,000 persons per km², ensuring refugees' safety and wellbeing remains a serious challenge compounded by disasters like the massive March 2021 fire and monsoon flooding. The COVID-19 crisis has heightened vulnerabilities among refugees with 95 percent considered moderately and highly vulnerable by the end of 2021 (REVA-5, 2022).

*WFP food assistance reached 888,000 beneficiaries due to relocations and absentee households

WFP RESPONSE

Since the start of the crisis in August 2017, WFP has provided food assistance to the camp population, and nutrition services to women and children. This is complemented with life-skills training, disaster risk reduction activities and common engineering services. WFP also facilitates essential shared logistics and emergency telecommunication services, and co-leads the Food Security Sector. WFP continues to adjust and innovate its programming in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, while ensuring lifesaving interventions continue unabated.

2021 IN NUMBERS

888,000 refugees received food assistance



177,700 most vulnerable received fresh food voucher top-up



195,000 women and children reached with nutrition services



32,700 women and men engaged in self-reliance activities

FFA

145,000 people engaged in food assistance for assets



302,600 students reached with fortified biscuits

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Interventions in the Host Community

CONTEXT

Situated in Bangladesh's cyclone belt, Cox's Bazar is one of the country's most underdeveloped and disaster-prone districts. In 2021, high and moderate vulnerability in the host community remained as high as 2020, reflecting households' limited ability to recover their pre-COVID-19 economic capacity (REVA-5, 2022). This can be attributed to the contractions of the pandemic lockdowns, which has led to a decline in economic activity, especially within the informal sector. Economic recovery continues to be challenged by supply shortages, high fuel costs and inflation, recurrent monsoon flooding and import disruptions.

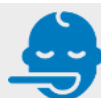
WFP RESPONSE

WFP supports the host community via long-term interventions, such as nutrition assistance at local clinics, school feeding, livelihoods programmes for vulnerable women and disaster risk reduction activities. In 2021 WFP scaled up its aggregation centres, which link local farmers, including WFP livelihood beneficiaries and FAO farmers' groups, to competitive markets and Fresh Food Corners in the refugee camps. WFP also launched its innovative forecast-based financing mechanism, whereby cash assistance is delivered before a disaster strikes, helping to minimize both household losses and the need for humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of climate shocks.

2021 IN NUMBERS

460,000 individuals benefitted from special COVID-19 cash assistance

317,200 host community members supported monthly



29,500 women and children reached with nutrition services



44,000 women engaged in the livelihoods programme



FFA **5,970** people engaged in food assistance for assets activities



136,000 students reached with fortified biscuits



General Food Assistance

2021 in NUMBERS

- › Food assistance delivered to over **887,600** Rohingya refugees in **34*** camps each month
- › **100** percent of GFA through e-vouchers | **100** percent of transactions from non-registered refugees processed through Building Blocks
- › **22*** e-voucher outlets and **19** Fresh Food Corners operational
- › Almost **42,700** households reached with rapid food assistance following the massive March fire and severe monsoon floods from July to August

OVERVIEW

WFP delivers food assistance to refugees throughout the 34* camps in Cox's Bazar. With the transition to e-vouchers completed in April 2021, all beneficiaries receive an electronic voucher to be redeemed across WFP assistance outlets each month. Building Blocks, a shared humanitarian platform for coordinated assistance delivery, is used in all but two e-voucher outlets and all 19 FFCs.

WFP rapid response ensures efficient emergency intervention. At the onset of any crisis, affected populations immediately receive a six-day ration of micronutrient fortified biscuits. Depending on access to cooking facilities, affected households are then provided with hot meals and/or one-off in-kind basket until they can be re-integrated into regular e-voucher food assistance.

**In mid-December authorities closed Camp 23 (Shamlapur) and moved the remaining population to other sites, including Bhasan Char. The 33 other camps are served by WFP's 21 remaining e-voucher outlets.*

OBJECTIVES

- **Ensure all Rohingya refugees receive a minimum 2,100 calories of nutritious food** to meet daily dietary needs.
- **Enhance transparency and accountability** through digital systems (Building Blocks and SCOPE) and complaints and feedback mechanisms.
- **Allow choice and dignity** through e-voucher assistance which gives people more freedom to select a range of foods.

ACHIEVEMENTS in 2021

- WFP delivered food assistance to the entire refugee population every month under the e-voucher modality. Families could purchase up to 26 food items at

WFP's 22* e-voucher outlets, and up to 27 items at Fresh Food Corners (FFCs).

- Following the massive March fire, WFP reached up to 15,437 households with fortified biscuits, supported up to 63,000 people with over 1.3 million cooked meals and distributed almost 350,000 litres of water to complement IOM water distributions. Together with cooperating partners, WFP supported eight hot food kitchens near affected camps providing freshly cooked meals until LPG and kitchen sets could be distributed. WFP also provided a one-off in-kind food ration to over 2,000 households hosted in camps not directly affected.
- During the severe monsoon flooding, WFP reached more than 5,449 Rohingya households with fortified biscuits and up to 18,200 people with two cooked meals a day. WFP partners disseminated general protection messages and public service announcements on how flood-affected households could access WFP food assistance and nutrition services. In the host community, a further 552 households were supported with biscuits at 13 community evacuation shelters and 2,907 people received two cooked meals a day.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Establish three community kitchens near the refugee camps to produce hot meals at scale in case of emergencies.
- Open additional e-voucher outlets to minimize the distance beneficiaries must travel to access food assistance.
- Onboard two new local NGO partners to support localization and efficient access to local resources in Cox's Bazar.

Social Cohesion and Localization of Food Assistance: Fresh Food Corners

2021 IN NUMBERS

- › Up to **20** fresh food items available to refugees at **19** Fresh Food Corners (FFC) at e-voucher outlets
- › Live fish and chicken were added to all FFC sites
- › The **49,500** most vulnerable refugee households (over **177,700** individuals) were provided with an e-voucher top-up of US\$ 3 every month

OVERVIEW

WFP continues to support refugees with monthly food assistance. However, among the most vulnerable, dietary diversity and access to nutritious foods remain poor. With limited income-generating opportunities, refugees are prompted to adopt negative coping strategies, such as reselling assistance, borrowing money and buying food on credit.

Preliminary findings from the Refugee Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA-V), conducted in late 2021, demonstrated that increased dietary diversity continues to reduce the sale of assistance. In addition, 68 percent of refugee households' external purchases are food items, 44 and 38 percent of which are fresh fish and vegetables respectively.

Similar findings in previous years prompted WFP to introduce Fresh Food Corners at its e-voucher outlets to provide vulnerable households with direct access to healthy fresh foods. Since then, WFP has been facilitating market linkages between its contracted camp retailers and livelihoods programme participants, FAO farmers groups, other smallholder producers and petty traders in the host community.

All refugees can redeem a portion of their US\$ 12 monthly entitlement at Fresh Food Corners (FFCs). Moreover, the most vulnerable households who cannot be engaged in food assistance activities receive a monthly top-up of US\$ 3 per person to be redeemed on FFC vegetables, fruit, and live chicken and fish.

OBJECTIVES

- **Improve dietary diversity among the most vulnerable households, especially**

through protein-rich items: Households are targeted based on four criteria: child-headed (up to 17 years); women-headed; elderly-headed (60 years and above), and households with persons with disabilities.

- **Strengthen market linkages between camps and host community:** Most food items will be locally purchased or produced to improve social cohesion by increasing economic opportunities and agricultural production in host communities.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2021

- While one Fresh Food Corner was destroyed during the massive March fire, WFP opened eight new FFCs by August, bringing the total to 19 sites.
- Through the FFCs, WFP made up to 27 locally produced foods available for refugees every month.
- The most vulnerable refugee households (30 percent of the total caseload) received an additional US\$ 3 per person per month to increase their dietary diversity through nutritious, protein-rich FFC purchases.
- Almost 200 livelihoods programme participants from the host community sold their products to FFCs in the camps.

THE WAY FORWARD

- WFP will add additional FFCs to existing sites to reduce the caseload of existing outlets, and scale FFCs to cover 100 percent of Rohingya refugees.
- With partner support, WFP is aiming to link FFC retailers with all WFP and FAO aggregation centres in Cox's Bazar.

Integrated Nutrition Assistance in the Camps 2021 in NUMBERS

- > **200,500** women and children supported at **45** integrated nutrition centres each month. Every month **16,800** children and women received malnutrition treatment with an average of **3,100** new admissions
- > **19,700** children aged 24 to 59 months reached via WFP's new **US\$ 3** e-voucher pilot
- > **2,200** fire-affected children and women supported with two weeks of wet rations after the massive March fire

OVERVIEW

To address malnutrition in the camps, WFP offers services to children below 5 years of age and pregnant and nursing mothers.

- **Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFP):** As part of the prevention programme, children between 6 and 59 months receive Super Cereal Plus (WSB++) while pregnant and nursing mothers receive Super Cereal (WSB+).
- **Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme (TSFP):** In the treatment programme, children under 5 identified as moderately undernourished receive monthly rations of Ready to Use Supplementary Food (RUSF) while malnourished pregnant and nursing mothers receive Super Cereal (WSB+).

WFP is in the process of phasing out the BSFP for children over 2 years old. Since February 2021, WFP has been piloting a US\$ 3 monthly e-voucher top-up per child for attending GMP

centre. Beneficiaries are closely followed and supported with home visits and WFP is providing caregiver training on how to screen children and self-refer.

- **Promoting an inclusive approach:** Breastfeeding corners and tailored services ensure everyone can participate.

ACHIEVEMENTS in 2021

- After two nutrition sites were destroyed in the March fire, WFP and UNICEF opened temporary sites, providing complementary feeding rations for children 6 to 23 months; moderate acute malnutrition treatment for children under 5; and Super Cereal Plus for mothers and children.
- When services became difficult to access during the monsoon floods, community outreach teams conducted home visits to the most critical beneficiaries.
- WFP distributed 11,090 mt of supplementary nutrition rations and

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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_1677

