

# WFP Bangladesh Rohingya Refugee Response Situation Report #48 March 2021



A man carries high energy biscuit rations distributed by WFP © WFP/Mehedi Rahman

## WFP Programme Updates

### General Food Assistance (GFA)

- WFP assisted 859,900 Rohingya refugees in 34 camps. More than 98 percent received e-vouchers and the remaining refugees received in-kind assistance.
- Beneficiaries who received e-vouchers were able to purchase 21 items at 21 outlets. Food worth USD 9.7 million was sold by 12 local WFP-contracted retailers.
- Building Blocks, WFP's blockchain-based digital ledger, was operational in 19 e-voucher outlets and served 95 percent of the e-voucher beneficiaries.
- WFP opened three new Fresh Food Corners in March. As one burnt in the fire, there were 13 operational by the end of the month. Through these WFP provided 16 types of locally produced vegetables to 128,393 vulnerable refugees.

### Nutrition Assistance

- Across 45 nutrition sites in the refugee camps, WFP provided malnutrition prevention and treatment services to 41,212 pregnant and nursing mothers and 163,844 children under 5.
- In the host community, WFP provided malnutrition treatment services to 4,617 pregnant and nursing mothers and 7,450 children under 5 at 124 clinics.
- Immediately after the fire, WFP set up breastfeeding corners and opened two temporary nutrition centres with UNICEF to resume services including the provision of wet Super Cereal Plus rations for 2,000 children and 200 women from affected camps.

### Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)<sup>1</sup>

- WFP engaged 17,932 refugees in DRR activities.
- To improve access around the camps, WFP (re)constructed 2,004 m of pedestrian pathways, 2,609 m<sup>2</sup> of stairs and 173 m of access road. In preparation for the monsoon season, WFP constructed 834 m of brick guide walls and 4,373 m of drains, stabilized 1,269 m<sup>2</sup> of slopes, cleaned 29,885 m of drains and re-excavated 2,279 m of canal. WFP also maintained 21,397 tree seedlings together with FAO.

## In Numbers || March 2021

**859,900** Rohingya refugees assisted

**160,200** Bangladeshis in the host community

## Highlights

**WFP responded immediately to the needs of Rohingya refugees following the fire in camps 9, 8W and 8E.** WFP provided 15,200 households with high energy biscuits (HEB), 3,000 people with 900,000 cooked meals and supported the distribution of over 350,000 litres of water. WFP set up kitchens to provide freshly cooked meals until LPG and kitchen sets could be distributed. WFP also provided a one-off in-kind food ration to 126 host community households affected by the fires and over 2,000 Rohingya households hosted in camps not directly affected. See the Fire Response Situation Reports [#1](#), [#2](#), [#3](#).

## Situation Update

- On 22 March, a massive fire broke out in the Kutupalong mega camp. The fire started in camp 8W and spread through camps 8E and 9. The Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) Rapid Joint Needs Assessment conducted immediately following the fire found 48,300 people were directly affected losing their shelters, belongings and food, with a total 92,000 people impacted.\*
- The Bangladesh Government relocated two more groups of 4,000 and 4,750 refugees to Bhasan Char island in March/early April. This brings the total number of refugees on the island to approximately 18,750 people. A UN team completed a first visit to Bhasan Char from 17 to 20 March.
- The Bangladesh Government moved about 2,600 refugees (560 households) from Shamlapur (Camp 23) to the Kutupalong Mega Camp throughout the month.
- COVID-19 cases continued to rise throughout the country in March with 421 new positive cases reported in the host community and 32 in the Rohingya refugee camps.

\* Population residing around the fire affected area within 100 m buffer zone whose shelters had to be knocked down to create fire breaks and/or were using/ accessing services and facilities in camps 8E, 8W and 9.



Scan here to read the latest [WFP in Cox's Bazar Information Booklet \(January 2021\)](#)

## WFP Programme Updates Continued

### *Strengthening Community Resilience in the camp<sup>1</sup>*

- WFP conducted environment and social safeguard screenings of 42 community workfare schemes.
- WFP trained 372 refugees on life skills (trust and friendship, problem solving, managing stress and emotions, positive thinking) and 755 refugees on vocational skills (masonry and plumbing).
- WFP supported the re-formation of 17 Rohingya Food Security Committees.

### *Self-Reliance programme in the camps*

- Since September 2020, over half a million WFP food packets and bottles have been collected from the camps and recycled into 2,171 products.
- In 2021, 1,600 kg of fish was caught and over 1,100 kg of vegetables produced around the 12 fishponds and distributed to 666 Rohingya households.

### *Livelihoods programme in the host community*

- WFP distributed USD 123,063 to 9,936 women as monthly allowance and USD 793,381 to 4,484 women as business grants.
- In March, beneficiaries from 1,060 self-help groups saved USD 37,667 in group activities.
- WFP opened three new aggregation centres and USD 124,340 worth of produce was sold through the 13 functioning centres, with USD 2,190 worth of transactions made through the *Farm2Go* app.

### *School Feeding*

- WFP distributed 228 mt of HEBs to 182,253 Rohingya households and 173 mt to 92,321 students in host communities. Students in Ukhiya and Kutubdia also received hygiene kits.
- WFP partner, Room to Read Bangladesh, reached 25,811 students via an SMS campaign on education and COVID-19 awareness in March.

### *Gender and Protection*

- WFP supported 14 protection referrals from other agencies to facilitate food assistance.
- WFP trained 2,369 partner staff on gender, protection mainstreaming and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- With UN Women and FAO, WFP organized a dialogue at the Women's Market in the camps to celebrate International Women's Day.

## WFP Engineering

- WFP constructed 2 km of road, 1,700 m of retaining wall, 13 pipe culverts and a Bailey Bridge in six camps.
- WFP deployed machinery and volunteers to support the site management agencies in the fire response.

## Common Services

### *Logistics Sector (LS)*

- LS stored 1,490 mt of relief items for 16 organisations across four warehouses in Madhuchara, Balukhali, Unchirang and Teknaf.
- In partnership with Humanity & Inclusion-Atlas Logistique (HI-Atlas), LS transported 683 mt of relief items for 16 organisations using 231 trucks.
- In response to the fire, LS supported four organizations with light towers, ablution units, prefabs, generators and skilled labourers. LS also published a [fire response map](#) indicating items loaned per location and cargo transported.

### *Food Security Sector (FSS)*

- FSS partners immediately responded to the needs of populations affected by the fires by providing emergency food assistance including rapid response, cooked meals, and dry snacks to complement the main food assistance.
- FSS played a key role coordinating partners and ensuring the fire response was as effective and efficient as possible with no overlap. To this end, FSS developed a [guidance note](#) to streamline partners' emergency food response and a [response tracker](#).

### *Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS)*

- ETS provided connectivity to 346 users in 37 sites, including retail outlets, logistic and residential hubs and Severe Acute Respiratory Infection treatment centres. Security telecommunications services were provided to 860 users from 12 UN agencies.

## Funding Outlook

**Operational requirement (April – September 2021):**  
USD 161 million

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**WFP Representative & Country Director:** Richard Ragan

**WFP Senior Emergency Coordinator:** Sheila Grudem

**WFP External Relations and Reports:** Fenella Henderson-Howat, Anika Asgar and Emily Pittman ([coxsbazar.externalrelations@wfp.org](mailto:coxsbazar.externalrelations@wfp.org))

**Additional Resources:** [WFP Rohingya Refugee Response reports](#) | [Inter Sector Coordination Group \(ISCG\) reports](#)

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