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Evaluation of Bangladesh WFP Country Strategic Plan 2016-2019

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation features

1. The evaluation of the Bangladesh country strategic plan (CSP) was timed to provide evidence and lessons to inform the development of the next CSP for Bangladesh.
2. The evaluation covered activities carried out in 2016, prior to the CSP, as well as CSP implementation from March 2017 to December 2019, in order to assess strategic and operational continuity. It was designed to assess WFP's strategic positioning and the extent to which WFP made the shift expected under the CSP; WFP's effectiveness in contributing to strategic outcomes; the efficiency with which the CSP was implemented; the appropriateness of operational modalities for the Level 3 response to the Rohingya crisis; and factors explaining WFP's performance.
3. An independent external evaluation team conducted the evaluation, using a mixed-methods approach, drawing on monitoring data, document review, semi-structured interviews with 264 stakeholders and focus group discussions with 688 community members. Both primary and secondary data were carefully triangulated to ensure the validity of findings. Gender and social inclusion were fully integrated into the evaluation's methodological approach. Ethical standards were applied to ensure the dignity and confidentiality of those involved in the evaluation. The team did not encounter any major constraints that compromised the overall validity of the evaluation.

Context

4. With an estimated population of 163 million, Bangladesh has a fast-growing economy, with 7.6 percent average annual growth in gross domestic product during the period from 2016 to 2019. Bangladesh achieved lower middle-income country status in 2015¹ and in 2018 met the criteria to graduate from the United Nations list of least developed countries in 2024.² Poverty is declining (from 85 percent in 1972 to below 9 percent in 2018)³; however, poverty reduction has been uneven, with persistent geographical disparities in income, food security, education and gender equality.
5. Bangladesh ranks 88th of 117 countries in the 2019 Global Hunger Index, with a score of 25.8 (table 1), compared to 30.3 in 2010. Bangladesh has made steady progress on improving child nutrition over the past decade, although many children suffer from micronutrient deficiencies. Social, economic and ecological factors, including ethnicity, urbanization and climate change, contribute to disparities in food security.

¹ World Bank, 2020. *The World Bank In Bangladesh - Overview*.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/bangladesh/overview#:~:text=Bangladesh%20reached%20the%20lower%20middle,track%20for%20graduation%20in%202024.>

² United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2020. *The Least Developed Countries Report 2020*.

https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/lcr2020_en.pdf.

³ World Bank, 2018. *Bangladesh: Reducing Poverty and Sharing Prosperity*.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/11/15/bangladesh-reducing-poverty-and-sharing-prosperity>.

TABLE 1: SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS		
Year	Indicator	Value
2020	Total population	163 million
2017	Life expectancy at birth	57 years
2020	Annual population growth	1.05 percent
2019	Gross domestic product per capita (based on purchasing power parity)	USD 4 950
2017	Human Development Index score	0.614
2018	Gini coefficient (income inequality)	0.32
2017	Gender Development Index score (gender gap)	0.719
2019	Global Hunger Index score	25.8
2017	Stunting	31 percent
2017	Underweight	22 percent
2018	Share of agriculture in gross domestic product	13 percent
2011	Literacy rate, population age >7 years	51.8 percent

6. Despite the rapid increase in educational attainment and policy changes in favour of women, prejudicial social and legal norms continue to impede the achievement of gender equality (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5). Gender-based violence and high rates of child marriage and adolescent pregnancy are of serious concern.
7. Bangladesh is particularly vulnerable to frequent and severe impacts of climate change that affect agricultural production and cause internal migration to urban areas. Bangladesh continues to host between 850,000 and 915,000 Rohingya refugees⁴ from Myanmar, the majority of whom live in 34 extremely congested camps.
8. The Government of Bangladesh has a strong national policy environment with regard to development, social protection, climate change, gender and nutrition. Its seventh 5-year plan (covering 2016–2020) articulates its national development goals, including achieving upper middle-income status.⁵ Priority thematic areas include poverty reduction, food security and hunger, health and women's empowerment.

Country strategic plan

9. The Bangladesh CSP for the period 2017–2020 was one of WFP's first pilot CSPs and one of the first CSPs to incorporate a Level 3 emergency response. Building on earlier operations (figure 1), it focuses on five strategic outcomes, as shown in figure 2, with the aim of shifting WFP's focus from direct project implementation to technical assistance and capacity strengthening with regard to national hunger solutions.

⁴ The joint Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees /Government registration in September 2019 recorded 914,998 refugees. However, the second registration phase – including biometric identification – recorded 854,000. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/sitrep_december_2019_english.pdf.

⁵ Government of Bangladesh, 2015. *Seventh Five Year Plan: FY2016–FY2020*. <http://nda.erd.gov.bd/en/c/publication/seventh-five-year-plan-fy2016-fy2020>.

Figure 1: WFP operations in Bangladesh (2016–2020)

Operation	Timeframe	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
CP 200243	January 2012 – March 2017	Total requirements (2016–2017) USD 54 485 426 Total contributions received USD 12 275 315 Funded: 23 percent				
PRRO 200673	July 2014 – March 2017	Total requirements (2016–2017) USD 7 929 939 Total contributions received: USD 4 259 386 Funded: 54 percent				
CSP BD01	March 2017 – December 2020			Needs-based plan (2017–2020): USD 969 120 577 Needs-based plan funded: USD 641 426 577 Funded: 66 percent		
Direct expenditures (USD)		190 467 392	46 933 286	183 726 999	124 929 197	N/A

Abbreviations: CP = country programme; N/A = not applicable; PRRO = protracted relief and recovery operation.

Source: WFP FACTORY April 2020.

Figure 2: Bangladesh country strategic plan “line of sight”

STRATEGIC RESULT 2: NO ONE SUFFERS FROM MALNUTRITION SDG TARGET 2.2	STRATEGIC RESULT 1: EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO FOOD SDG TARGET 2.1	STRATEGIC RESULT 4: FOOD SYSTEMS ARE SUSTAINABLE SDG TARGET 2.4	STRATEGIC RESULT 5: COUNTRIES HAVE STRENGTHENED CAPACITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE SDGS SDG TARGET 17.9	STRATEGIC RESULT 8: SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE, EXPERTISE AND TECHNOLOGY, STRENGTHEN GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT TO COUNTRY EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS (SDG TARGET 17.16)
STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1: VULNERABLE GROUPS IN RURAL AND URBAN SETTINGS ARE SUPPORTED BY ENHANCED NATIONAL ACTIONS IN LINE WITH THEIR NUTRITION INDICATORS IN LINE WITH NATIONAL TARGETS BY 2020 USD 51.25 MILLION	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2: THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS OF COX'S BAZAR, THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS AND DISASTER-AFFECTED AREAS HAVE ENHANCED FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION USD 808.75 MILLION	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 3: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO ENHANCE THE RESILIENCE OF FOOD-INSECURE HOUSEHOLDS EXPOSED TO CLIMATE-RELATED SHOCKS AND STRESSES ARE VALIDATED BY 2020 USD 36.39 MILLION	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 4: THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE SYSTEM FOR LARGE-SCALE NATURAL DISASTERS IN BANGLADESH CAN RESPOND WITH REDUCED COST AND LEAD TIME. USD 15.23 MILLION	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 5: HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS IN BANGLADESH HAVE ACCESS TO RELIABLE SERVICES IN THE AREAS OF SUPPLY CHAIN, EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS, SITE MAINTENANCE AND ENGINEERING PROJECT CRISES. USD 57.3 MILLION
Capacity development	Implementation	Innovation	Capacity development	Service delivery
Budget: USD 15.49 million Activity 1: Technical assistance and advocacy to enhance the food security and nutrition impact of selected safety nets. CS/F/CBT 9	Budget: USD 769.47 million Activity 5: Deliver an integrated assistance package in Cox's Bazar. F/CBT 1	Budget: USD 11.26 million Activity 8: Creation of evidence related to innovative approaches to enhancing resilience. CS/CBT 3	Budget: USD 13.49 million Activity 10: Capacity strengthening for emergency response. CS 17	Budget: USD 12.13 million Activity 12: Coordinate the Logistics sector/cluster and provide efficient common logistics services to support the humanitarian community's response. SD 17
Budget: USD 6.7 million Activity 2: Technical assistance and advocacy for improved nutrition. CS/F/CBT 9	Budget: USD 16.75 million Activity 6: Deliver an integrated assistance package in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. F/CBT 1	Budget: USD 25.13 million Activity 9: Nono Jatra. SD/CBT 6	Budget: USD 1.74 million Activity 11: Lead the logistics cluster and co-lead the food-security CS/SD 17	Budget: USD 4.12 million Activity 13: Coordinate the Emergency Telecommunications 17

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