



BULLETIN

NUTRITION SECTOR COX'S BAZAR, BANGLADESH

SEP 2025

ISSUE: 11

CONTENTS

#PAGE

Programme and funding update.....	1
Sector highlights (Jul - Sep).....	1
Deworming & VAS campaign.....	2
Workshop on a comprehensive review of Nutrition Sector Priorities.....	2
World breastfeeding week 2025.....	3
Partners success stories.....	4-6

SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

• Due to funding constraints from UNHCR, two INFs were initially planned for closure from October 2025. However, following continuous advocacy by NS, Concern Worldwide has agreed to support two INFs from October to December 2025.

• Conducted Vitamin A supplementation from 13-17 July and Deworming Campaign from 21-25 September along with Mass MUAC screening across 33 camps with technical lead and support of UNICEF, screening over 160,000 children aged 6-59 months (49% girls) for malnutrition. 161,514 children (6-59 months) received Vitamin A capsules (95% of target) while 107,897 children (24-59 months) received deworming tablets (95% of target). Over 60,000 pregnant women and caregivers of young children received tailored IYCF counselling and messages in both campaigns.

• Arranged workshop on 30 July on comprehensive review of the NS priorities for 2026, engaging 42 participants to assess the feasibility of strategic adjustments to INF numbers and staffing structures without compromising quality of service delivery.

• The final health and nutrition integration assessment exercise has been completed by the taskforce team. The task force presented its key findings, challenges and final recommendations and both sectors agreed to strengthen service integration in 2026.

• Completed data collection for Anemia Causal Study, with preliminary result expected in October/November 2025.

• In collaboration with the Health Sector, the Nutrition Sector convened a meeting with all partners interested in implementing SC as part of the Health Sector in 2026, with no additional cost implications. During the meeting, the implementing partners for SC activities in 2026 were discussed and agreed upon. UNICEF supported the capacity building of these identified partners through an Inpatient Management Training which was successfully conducted from 21-25 September 2025.

REFUGEE

2025 TARGET (revised)




PROGRESS (JAN-SEP)

 SAM	14,800	9,599 (NA-903) (65% of target) Cure rate 92.28%
 MAM	U5*- 62,700 PBW- 4,700	U5- 41,258 (NA-3,212) (66% of target) Cure rate 99.19% PBW- 3,238 (NA- 376) (69% of target)
 IYCF	131,000	101,008 (77% of target)
 BSFP*	U2*- 65,400 PBW- 38,800	U2- 65,396 (100% of target) PBW- 36,814 (95% of target)
 NSEP	O2*- 97,100	O2- 90,706 (86% of target)
 IFA	PBW- 35,800 Adolescent- 104,100	PBW- 31,392 (88% of target) Adolescent- 90,054 (87% of target)
 GMP	178,400	170,364 (95% of target)
 VAS	159,800	161,514 (101% of target)
 Deworming	113,900	107,897 (95% of target)

HOST COMMUNITY

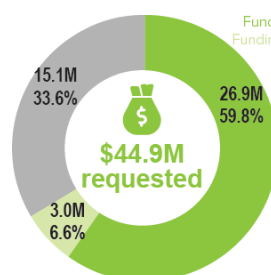
2025 TARGET

PROGRESS (JAN-SEP)

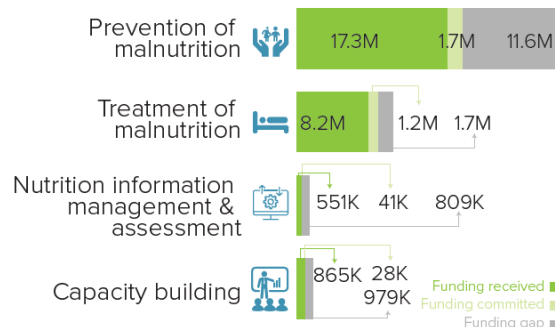
 MAM	U5*- 5,400 PBW- 2,600	U5*- 5,645 (105% of target) Cure rate 99.04% PBW- 1,880 (72% of target)
 IYCF	32,100	32,796 (102% of target)
 IFA	PBW- 14,500 Adolescent- 37,800	PBW- 11,353 (78% of target) Adolescent- 20,010 (53% of target)

FUNDING UPDATE AS OF 10 JUNE 2025

Overall Funding Status



Funding Status by Activity



Note: Prevention and treatment of malnutrition is the most critical priority needs, where the funding gap was USD 13.3M.
Data Source: ISCG Financial Exercise, June 2025

Mass MUAC Screening, Vitamin A and Deworming Campaign

UNICEF, together with the Nutrition Sector (NS) partners - comprising LNGOs, INGOs, and the UN agencies such as UNHCR and WFP, successfully completed two major nutrition campaigns in all 33 refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, upon receiving required approvals from the Civil Surgeon's Office and the RRRC.

Vitamin A supplementation campaign was carried out from 13 July to 17 July 2025, where 161,514 children aged 06-59 months (49 per cent of whom were girls) were screened for malnutrition using MUAC and received vitamin A capsules, achieving 101 per cent of the target. During the VAS campaign, 2,187 children with acute malnutrition were newly admitted. Of them, 461 children were enrolled in the OTP for SAM, and 1,726 in the TSFP for MAM. Additionally, 63,245 pregnant women and caregivers of children aged 0–23 months received age-appropriate IYCF messages. A total of 11,450 children were screened as new arrivals and received vitamin A capsules.



Photo: Vitamin A campaign Round 1. UNICEF/2025

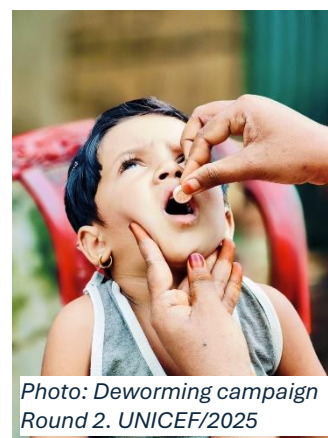
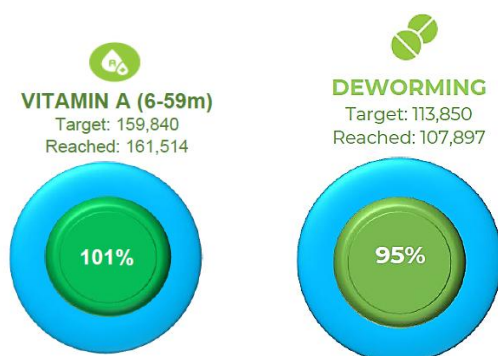


Photo: Deworming campaign Round 2. UNICEF/2025



Deworming campaign was conducted from 21 September to 25 September 2025, targeting children aged 24-29 months for administration of deworming tablets. A total of 107,897 children aged 24–59 months (49 per cent girls) received deworming tablets, achieving 95 per cent of the target. Besides, 160,666 children aged 6–59 months (49 per cent girls) were screened for malnutrition using MUAC, covering 101 per cent of the target. In the deworming campaign, 1,760 children with acute malnutrition were newly admitted, of whom 363

children were enrolled in the OTP for SAM and 1,397 in the TSFP for MAM. Moreover, 60,891 pregnant women and caregivers of young children received tailored IYCF messages. A total of 11,958 children were screened as new arrivals.

Workshop on a Comprehensive Review of Nutrition Sector Priorities

Considering the ongoing funding constraints, all sectors were requested to critically review and prioritise activities to enhance cost-efficiency and optimise resource utilisation. In response, the Nutrition Sector initiated a strategic review process, beginning with a SAG meeting, where the participating members underscored the importance of assessing the feasibility of rationalising the number of INFs and revisiting the current staffing structure to ensure operational efficiency without compromising service quality. To facilitate a more comprehensive and consultative approach - focused



Photo: Participants attending workshop. NS/2025

on comprehensive review of the Nutrition Sector priorities for 2026, the NS organised a daylong workshop on 30 July 2025, with the support of UNICEF, where 42 participants from the Nutrition Sector partners participated.

The workshop resulted in generation of a series of strategic recommendations aimed at optimising the number of INFs, followed by assessing the caseload, population and discussion on accessibility issues, the caseload on holding capacity of INFs, etc. Additionally, the staff structures across the camps were also discussed, and proposed revision was recommended in response to evolving service modality and caseload dynamics. All those recommendations will play a key role in designing the Nutrition Programme of 2026. There were several taskforces assigned to further evaluate feasibility, ensure equitable access, and address logistical implications of the recommendations made in the workshop. Moving forward, the taskforces and sectoral coordination platforms will play a central role in validating these recommendations through the SAG meeting and ensuring that implementation is contextually appropriate and operationally feasible. Since integration of nutrition services in the health facilities (PHCs) is mandatory - as decided by UNRR, this exercise will be applicable.

World Breastfeeding Week 2025 Celebration

The Cox's Bazar Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Technical Working Group (TWG), with the support of the Nutrition Sector partners, led the celebration of the World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) from 01 August to 07 August 2025. The chosen theme for this year - "Prioritise Breastfeeding: Create Sustainable Support Systems" - focuses on the effect of breastfeeding on the environment and climate change. This theme highlights our roles in supporting breastfeeding to create a sustainable environment while simultaneously reducing the impact of climate change caused by artificial feeding.



Photo: Community engagement with influential leaders (GK/2025)



Photo: Quiz competition (Friendship/2025)



Photo: Rally (Concern/2025)

Under the leadership of the IYCF TWG, the nutrition partners (Concern Worldwide, Friendship, GK, and SHED) carried out several awareness events in and around the camps. The events were attended by women, caregivers, community leaders, government representatives, and various other stakeholders. Given the funding shortfall as well as to ensure prudent resource use, the WBW 2025 was celebrated with minimal budget allocation where necessary. The following activities were conducted:

- Rallies with stakeholders, beneficiaries, and service providers
- Quiz competition with mothers and caregivers at the integrated nutrition facilities (INFs)
- Mother-to-mother support group discussions - facilitated by the CNVs and CHNWs
- Community engagement with influential local leaders.
- Organising sensitization sessions for shopkeepers located near the INFs centers who sell breastmilk substitutes (BMS), aimed at raising awareness about the risks of BMS promotion and discouraging its use.

Maa Sha Shu's Transformation from Malnutrition to Wellbeing



Photo: Maa Sha Shu before admission & after discharge. CWW/2025



Ten-month-old Maa Sha Shu, from the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) at Camp 14, was identified as severely acute malnourished during the community screening by Concern Worldwide's outreach volunteer and enrolled in the Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) at an integrated nutrition facility (INF).

During counselling at the IYCF Corner, her mother revealed that she hardly breastfeeds her child after introducing solid foods. The

IYCF counsellor provided a series of guidance on continued breastfeeding alongside complementary feeding, emphasising its role in boosting immunity and supporting growth. Gradually, the mother resumed breastfeeding on appropriate frequency and improved feeding practices.

Throughout the treatment, Maa Sha Shu received ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) and routine home visits for nutrition counselling for her mother and other caregivers. In addition, the child was supported through referral system for seasonal flu. Her parents also dedicatedly attended every follow-up visits. After 56 days of treatment and care, Maa Sha Shu fully recovered and was enrolled in the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme (BSFP) to prevent relapse.

Maa Shaa Shu's mother expressed, *"I've learned that breastfeeding must continue with due importance even after starting solid foods. My baby is now healthy, active, and strong. I'm deeply thankful to Concern Worldwide (supported by UNICEF and WFP) for the services."*

A Mother's Journey of Hope and Breastfeeding Support

In Camp-1W (Site-01), a mother named Ayesha faced an overwhelming challenge in ensuring care for her newborn triplets after tragically losing one child to pneumonia. During their first screening at the INF of GK, her surviving infants, Asma Bibi, Umme Habiba, and Bibi Fatema, were found to be severely malnourished, weighing only 2.6 kg, 1.9 kg, and 2.5 kg, respectively. The family's extreme poverty, combined with Ayesha's stress of raising multiple newborns while already caring for three other children, left her unable to produce sufficient breast milk, plunging the infants into a life-threatening nutrition crisis.



Photo: Triplet children at the age of admission. GK/2025

When admitted to the Under-6 Management programme on 29 April 2025, the nutrition team responded to them promptly. A wet-nursing mother from the community stepped forward, ensuring that the infants could continue benefiting from breast milk. Still, the quantity was not sufficient for all three children. Besides, the nutrition team searched for the other nearby wet nurses, but failed to manage. Therefore, lifesaving breastmilk substitute support was provided for 45 days as the last resort, and guidance from an IYCF counsellor was ensured. In the meantime, Ayesha



Photo: Recent picture of triplet children. GK/2025

received wheat soya blend for her own nutrition from the BSFP for PBW. At the same time, Ayesha was supported with psychosocial care to restore her confidence as a mother.

With consistent follow-ups, home visits, and counselling, the triplets steadily gained weight and were successfully discharged from the Under-6 Management programme on 19 August 2025. Post-discharge, Asma, Habiba, and Fatema reached healthy weights of 4.5 kg, 4.0 kg, and 4.5 kg, respectively. To support their ongoing recovery, IYCF counselling on complementary feeding and childcare was in progress, helping Ayesha grow more confident in caring for her children. The parents were very happy and expressed their gratitude to the GK nutrition team (with support of UNHCR and WFP) for the gradual improvement of their children's nutritional status.

A Fraught Beginning: Sofia's Fight for Survival

Sofia Bibi, a fragile 8-month-old from FDMN Camp-5, was in a critical state upon arrival at Camp-5 INF during one of her visits. She was immediately referred to the nearby Stabilisation Centre (SC) when she failed her appetite test at the INF. During assessment at the SC, she was diagnosed with Marasmic Kwashiorkor with oral ulcers and skin covered in infected scabies, compounded by six days of relentless diarrhoea, and admitted to the SC on 30 June 2025. Her weight was only 4.90 kg with a WHZ of $<-3SD$, placing her far below the threshold for survival.

The challenges were immense. Yet, the dedicated nutrition team immediately began a carefully calibrated treatment plan. Sofia received therapeutic F-75 milk to nourish her fragile system, antibiotics to fight infection, and targeted care for her scabies and oral candidiasis.



Photo: Sofia Bibi during Admission



Photo: Sofia Bibi after admission.
SHED/2025

Sofia showed a good response to the treatment and began to lose weight from the fourth day of admission, indicating the resolution of oedema. Her resilience grew, and by the eighth day, her edema had subsided completely, and she was transitioned to more calorie-dense F-100 therapeutic milk. By this time her medical complications were resolved with the completion of prescribed medications.

On the ninth day (08 July 2025), Sofia had undergone and passed the appetite test with RUTF, and was discharged from the SC to the respective INF. Her mother, Fatema, was very cooperative throughout the stay, and showed how empowering a caregiver with knowledge and support was just as critical as medical treatment for a child's survival. Fatema expressed her gratitude to SHED, supported by UNHCR/UNICEF, and WFP, for their unwavering commitment to helping the child thrive.

Abbreviation

AWG	Average Weight Gain
BSFP	Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme
CMAM	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition
CNV	Community Nutrition Volunteer
FDMN	Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals
GIHA	Gender in Humanitarian Action
GMP	Growth Monitoring and Promotion
IFA	Iron and Folic Acid
INF	Integrated Nutrition Facility
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MUAC	Mid-Upper Arm Circumference
NA	New Arrivals
NCA	Nutrition Causal Analysis
NSEP	Nutrition Sensitive E-Voucher Programme
OTP	Outpatient Therapeutic Programme
O2	Children over 2 years
PBW	Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women
PSS	Psychosocial Support
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SD	Standard Deviation
TSFP	Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme
U5	Children under 5 years
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHZ	Weight for Height Z-score

Nutrition Sector Contacts

Sector Coordinator

Kibrom Tesfaselassie

✉ ktesfaselassie@unicef.org

☎ +880 1701 208902

Information Management Officer

Mohd Mostakim Ali

✉ mmoali@unicef.org

☎ +880 1824 016708

UNV Nutrition Officer

Suparna Das Toma

✉ stoma@unicef.org

☎ +880 1952 251759

About Nutrition Sector (NS)

The Nutrition Sector was established in 2017 during the Rohingya refugee influx in Cox's Bazar, with the goal to provide coordinated nutrition interventions. To ensure effective delivery of nutrition services, the Sector has collaborated with 10 partners, including the Government of Bangladesh, in 2024. This collaboration allows the Sector to operate at the forefront of nutritional interventions. The Sector has a Strategic Advisory Group that advocates for strategic priorities and supports contingency plans. Currently, the Sector comprises three technical working groups (TWGs), namely, the Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergency Working Group, the Community Management of Acute Malnutrition Working Group, and the Assessment, and Information Management Working Group. These working groups guarantee compliance with the national and international standards.

This quarterly bulletin for the Nutrition Sector in Cox's Bazar showcases the sector's achievements, updates, emergency responses, etc. The bulletin highlights the Sector's success in strengthening humanitarian nutrition coordination, which has led to a predictable and accountable response. In addition, it captures the high-level brainstorming workshop that was held to enhance the Sector's capabilities to address potential nutrition issues. Additionally, the bulletin features survey findings and success stories that illustrate its outstanding work. The Sector's commitment to cutting-edge humanitarian responses is evident in this bulletin, which doubles as a testament to its unwavering dedication. Consequently, the Nutrition Sector has been able to provide effective nutritional interventions to those in need.