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**Executive Board  
Third Regular Session**

**Rome, 19 - 22 October 1998**

# REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

**Agenda item 9**



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## PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JANUARY–30 JUNE 1998)— BANGLADESH 5329.02

### Assistance to refugees from Myanmar

Food cost to WFP	1,331,745 dollars
Total cost to WFP	1,868,928 dollars
Estimated total cost	4,965,496 dollars
WFP commodity requirements	4,415 tons
Number of beneficiaries	21,000

All monetary values are expressed in United States dollars.

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## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

### **This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.**

Pursuant to the decisions taken on the methods of work by the Executive Board at its First Regular Session of 1996, the documentation prepared by the Secretariat for the Board has been kept brief and decision-oriented. The meetings of the Executive Board are to be conducted in a business-like manner, with increased dialogue and exchanges between delegations and the Secretariat. Efforts to promote these guiding principles will continue to be pursued by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat therefore invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff member(s) listed below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting. This procedure is designed to facilitate the Board's consideration of the document in the plenary.

The WFP focal points for this document are:

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1. Over 250,000 Muslims from Northern Rakine State in Myanmar left their country between late 1991 and early 1992, and sought refuge in Bangladesh. Most of these refugees have returned to Myanmar and only about 21,000 remain in Bangladesh. They are housed in two camps in the district of Cox's Bazar. The refugee repatriation process has stopped since July 1997. The Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar are engaged in negotiations to find a durable solution for the remaining refugees. The demographic composition of this refugee population is 49 percent male and 51 percent female. Children under 12 constitute 46 percent of the refugee population. About three percent of the total population is over 60 years old.
2. WFP has been providing relief food aid to the Myanmar refugees since April 1992. The refugees are not allowed by the Government to take up employment or undertake income-generating activities in Bangladesh. WFP food aid is therefore the primary means of meeting the basic nutritional needs of the refugee population.
3. WFP is supplying 4,415 tons of food commodities comprising rice, pulses, vegetable oil, blended food, sugar and salt. In addition, condiments are supplied by UNHCR. The daily rations issued to the refugee population meet minimum energy, protein and iron requirements. The blended food is fortified with the required vitamins and micronutrients. The caloric value of the per capita daily ration is 2,128 kilocalories. About 800 of the refugees, mainly expectant and nursing mothers and medical cases, benefit from a supplementary feeding programme. Some 210 children under five suffering from severe malnutrition are assisted through a therapeutic feeding programme which includes dried whole milk supplied by UNHCR. A joint WFP/UNHCR food assessment mission, undertaken in May 1998, has confirmed that the overall nutritional status of the refugee population is satisfactory. The mission has recommended continuation of special feeding programmes and adjusting per capita daily rations to 2,007 kilocalories in conformity with WHO guidelines adopted by WFP and UNHCR.
4. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief has overall responsibility for coordinating donor assistance to the refugees. Responsibility for project implementation rests with the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC). The food storage, distribution and reporting responsibilities at the camp level are carried out by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BRCS). The project's implementation is supervised by the RRRC through committees established at the district and camp level, comprising representatives of the Government's Health and Food Departments, BRCS, NGOs, UNHCR and WFP.
5. Future assistance to the refugees will be determined by a durable solution now being explored by the Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar with the collaboration of UNHCR.

