



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Iran Country Brief March 2019

Operational Context

The Islamic Republic of Iran, a middle-income country with a population of 83 million, is the world's fourth largest refugee-hosting country. The Government of Iran has generously hosted approximately 1 million refugees for the past 30 years. The majority, that mainly came from Afghanistan and Iraq, lives in urban areas. Approximately 30,000 of the most vulnerable refugees live in 20 settlements located throughout the country.

In January 2018, WFP Iran started implementing the [Interim Country Strategic Plan](#). Through a combination of cash and in-kind food assistance, including monthly distributions of 9 kg of wheat flour and cash transfers of USD 9.56, WFP supports vulnerable refugees, enabling them to access up to 80 percent (1,633 kcal) of daily nutritional needs. Following the recommendations of the Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) undertaken in 2016, WFP provides a complementary ration to the most vulnerable woman-headed households, including a food basket estimated at 2,103 kcal that is complemented by a monthly transfer of USD 1.06.

Additionally, WFP continues to support refugees' livelihoods through activities that aim at providing them with complementary skills in view of a sustainable repatriation once the situation is conducive. WFP has been present in Iran since 1987.



Population: **83 million**

2018 Human Development Index:
60 out of 188

Income Level: **Lower middle**

2018 Global Hunger Index:
24 out of 119 (7.3, Low)

In Numbers

29,936 people assisted
in March 2019



289 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 176,693 cash-based transfers made

US\$ 0 m six months (April-September 2019) net funding requirements

Operational Updates

- In March, WFP successfully reached 29,936 refugees as per target. This number includes approximately 8,382 women, 8,382 men, 6,287 girls, and 6,885 boys. The people assisted received a total cash transfer of USD 176,693, 264.5 mt of fortified wheat flour, and 24.5 mt of fortified vegetable oil entitlements.
- The Government of Germany confirmed a contribution of EUR 2 million to the current project.
- The price of food items in the country has increased in the past six months. Therefore, WFP decided to increase the level of its assistance by adding fortified vegetable oil to refugees' food baskets as a temporary measure to ensure the food security of refugees. Since December 2018, each refugee receives a bottle of vegetable oil (810 gr) in addition to 9 kg of wheat flour as a monthly food entitlement.
- In support of the education of female refugees, WFP has shifted from providing in-kind vegetable oil incentives to families to a monthly cash-based transfer (CBT) entitlement. Households with girls who regularly attend school receive a cash entitlement of USD 5 for each student. This is used to encourage families to continue the education of girls which increases school enrolment, maintains retention rates, and reduces the incidences of early marriage. There are multiple benefits to the use of CBT. This modality empowers people to choose what they eat and can contribute to a more diversified diet for improved nutrition. Furthermore, cash transfers can have a multiplier effect on the local economy and strengthen local markets, encourage smallholder farmers to be more productive, and build national capacity.
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Photo Caption: Refugee girls attending school in Saveh settlement.
Photo: WFP/Mohammad Khodabakhsh

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
18 m	10.4 m
2019 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (April –September 2019)
6.1 m	0 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Food insecure refugees in Iran are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs throughout the year.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- Activity 1. Provide unconditional food assistance to food insecure refugees
- Activity 2: Provide conditional support to women and girl refugees to incentivize and facilitate educational and livelihood activities

Monitoring

- WFP Iran, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs (BAFIA) conducted a Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) during the period of 18-25 February to assess the food security and nutrition status of refugees residing in settlements. The four refugee settlements of Saveh, Mohajerin, Rafsanjan and Jahrom were selected for this purpose. The assessment also aimed to provide strategic and programmatic recommendations to ensure the food and related assistance meet immediate needs. The initial findings of the mission indicate the significant positive impact of food assistance on refugee lives and the need to increase WFP assistance. Adding appropriate livelihood activities is one of the recommendations of the mission, to complement longer-term refugee self-reliance initiatives. The mission report is finalized and will be shared with WFP partners in April.
- WFP Iran restarted monthly remote monitoring of cash distributions through phone calls in March.

Challenges

- Due to the devaluation of the national currency that resulted in a high inflation rate in recent months, WFP Iran, in consultation with BAFIA, decided to increase the monthly transfer value to beneficiaries by 25 percent, starting in October 2018. This changed the monthly cash entitlements from IRR 400,000 (USD 5.0) per person to IRR 500,000 (USD 6.2) per person for households headed by men. For woman-headed households, the entitlements changed from IRR 450,000 (USD 5.6) per person to IRR 600,000 (USD 7.5) per person.

It worth mentioning that according to the result of latest Post Distribution Monitoring, despite devaluation of local currency and inflation in the price of food items, refugees managed to keep the same level of food consumption which can be attributed to the increase in entitlements.

Partnerships

- The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and BAFIA are the main cooperating and implementing partners of WFP. BAFIA is responsible for coordinating all matters related to refugees and international agencies. Bi-annual meetings take place between BAFIA, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and WFP. Monthly operational coordination meetings are also held to monitor the refugee situation and discuss appropriate actions.

Donors

Germany, People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, Multilateral funds, and private sector donors.