



SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Iran Country Brief March 2020

Operational Context

The Islamic Republic of Iran, an upper middle-income country with a population of 83 million, is hosting the world's fourth largest refugee community. The Government of Iran has generously hosted approximately 1 million refugees for the past 30 years. The majority, which mainly came from Afghanistan and Iraq, live in urban areas. Approximately 31,000 of the most vulnerable refugees live in 20 settlements located throughout the country.

In January 2018, WFP Iran started implementing its [Interim Country Strategic Plan \(2018-2020\)](#). Through a combination of cash and in-kind food assistance, including monthly distributions of 9 kg of wheat flour and cash-based transfers (CBT) 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 10.62.

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



Population: **83 million**

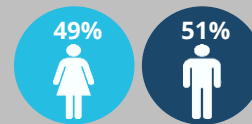
2018 Human Development Index:
65 out of 188

Income Level: **Upper middle**

2018 Global Hunger Index:
31 out of 117 (7.9, Low)

In Numbers

30,341 people assisted
in March 2020



282.7 MT of food assistance distributed

USD 122,440 distributed through cash-based transfers

USD 0 six-months net funding requirements
(May – October 2020)

Operational Updates

- In March, WFP successfully reached 30,341 refugees as per target, of whom 8,495 were women, 8,495 men, 6,372 girls, and 6,979 boys. The assisted people received a total cash transfer value of USD 122,440 and 282.7 MT of fortified wheat flour and vegetable oil.
- Iran has is one of the most-affected countries by the COVID-19 pandemic. Measures to contain the spread of the virus included bans on public gatherings and domestic travel restrictions throughout Iran.
- Despite restrictions in movement, monthly wheat flour distribution to refugees in settlements continued without interruption and bakeries in all refugee settlements remained operational.
- Schools have been closed until 18 April, and consequently the school feeding programme is suspended. However, to continue assistance, school snacks were distributed as a 'home-schooling snack'. Cash transfers also remain operational in Iran.
- The Government of Japan, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, contributed USD 7 million to WFP operations in Iran. 60 percent of this contribution will be used to purchase Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for Iranian Red Crescent Society's volunteers who are responsible for conducting health screenings at the entrance of the cities. The remaining 40 percent of the contribution will be utilized to locally purchase wheat flour and lentils as a supplementary food ration for refugees. The first shipment will arrive in the beginning of April.

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2021)

Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)
19.8 m	19.9 m
2020 Requirements (in USD)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD) (May – October 2020)
7.0 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 and United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) are preparing the Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) report and it will be shared with the Government by the end of April.
- Monitoring of the economic situation in the country indicates that so far there is no shortage of food items.

Challenges

- The country office is monitoring the development of the of the COVID-19 pandemic closely and is in consultation with the Government partners for further possible assistance to refugees and Iranian community. To minimize the health risk of WFP staff, a work from home modality is in place at the WFP country office in Tehran.
- With global shortages of protective equipment and closed borders in Iran and many other countries worldwide, the procurement and delivery of the PPEs poses a major challenge for the country office.

Partnerships

- The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (BAFIA) are the main cooperating and implementing partners of WFP in Iran. BAFIA is responsible for coordinating all matters

related to refugees and international agencies. Bi-annual meetings take place between BAFIA, UNHCR and WFP. Monthly operational coordination meetings are also held to monitor the refugee situation and discuss appropriate response actions.

Success story:

Setareh Tajik is 50 years old and lives in Sarvestan Settlement in Fars province. Her family left Afghanistan nearly 20 years ago and took refuge in neighbouring Iran.

She is one of the six-hundred Afghan refugees living in this settlement. Setareh is mother of five children and her 70-year-old husband is sick and has to live in Shiraz for treatment purposes.

Iran is of the countries most severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a result most refugees' livelihood activities have been suspended for the time being. However, WFP's tailoring workshop in Sarvestan was quick to adapt to the changing environment. After a short period of closure, the workshop was disinfected, and those working there returned to work producing much-needed masks for the province. Today Setareh and more than 100 refugees are working in the workshop.

Setareh could not work with sewing machines, but because her family had no significant source of income managed to start working in the tailoring workshop on the lighter task of ironing. She has now been part of the workshop for several weeks and Setareh was able to create a source of income for her family.

"I am so proud that as an old mother of four married sons and a single daughter, I now have the chance to work and support my family in this tough financial situation and bring hope to my sick husband" Setareh said.

Mrs. Mahmoodi, the head of the WFP workshop, has inspired Setareh to send her daughter to advanced tailoring vocational trainings.

She wishes to see her daughter owning a tailoring workshop when they return to Afghanistan.

Donors

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