



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



WFP Iran Country Brief October 2023

Operational Context

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a lower-middle-income country with a population of 87 million. For the past 40 years, it hosted one of the largest and most protracted refugee populations in the world, recently estimated at about 4.5 million displaced people of different statuses who potentially need protection and humanitarian assistance. Most of the displaced people originate from Afghanistan and Iraq and live in urban areas, while some 33,000 of the most vulnerable refugees live in 20 settlements scattered across the country.

The new WFP Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP 2023-2025) was approved by the WFP Executive Board in February 2023. Under the new ICSP, WFP assists 33,000 refugees through cash and in-kind food assistance, a refugee girls' education cash incentive, and a school feeding initiative consisting of nutritious school snacks. Moreover, WFP continues to equip refugees with complementary livelihood skills aimed at supporting their sustainable repatriation to their country of origin - once the situation is conducive. WFP has been present in Iran since 1987.



Population: **89.2 million**

2021 Human Development Index rank:
76 out of 191

Income Level: **Lower middle**

2022 Global Hunger Index:
29 out of 121 (6.5, Low)

In Numbers

33,148 people assisted
in October



472 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 181,132 distributed through cash-based transfers

US\$ 5.8 m six-month net funding requirements
(November 2023- April 2024)

Operational Updates

- WFP provides a monthly hybrid of cash and in-kind food assistance to refugees targeted for assistance.
 - In October, WFP's in-kind food assistance reached 33,148 Afghan and Iraqi refugees and Iranian teachers. The refugees were assisted with a total of 472 mt of fortified wheat flour (12 kg per person per month), vegetable oil (900 cc per person per month), milk, a date bar, and biscuits. Of the total assisted, 28 percent were women, 29 percent were men, 21 percent were girls, and 22 percent were boys.
 - WFP's cash assistance was provided to 32,621 Afghan and Iraqi refugees living in 7,332 households in October. Households headed by refugee men received Iranian Rials (IRR) 2 million (US\$ 5.3) per person, while those headed by refugee women received a slightly higher monthly cash allocation, amounting to IRR 2.5 million (US\$ 6.7) per person due to limited access to working opportunities that may lead to higher food insecurity levels.
 - To maintain beneficiaries' purchasing power amid deteriorating economic conditions, since June, WFP had increased the value of its cash assistance by 100 percent for men-headed households and by 108 percent for women-headed households.
- The school-based programme resumed in October after a three-month summer break (June to September). In October, 7,619 students received school snacks. However, cash incentives distribution will start upon receipt of the list of schoolgirls, which is expected in November.
- Following [WFP's Disability Inclusion work plan](#) for 2023, WFP Iran implemented a pilot initiative in two settlements, Shahid Naseri of Markazi and Mohajerin of Semnan provinces, providing refugees with disabilities a monthly cash top-up of IRR 1 million (US\$ 2.6) in addition to their regular entitlement. In October, the programme successfully reached 93 beneficiaries out of the 100 targeted ones.

Country Director (Ad Interim): Baton Osmani
Contact info: Dara Darbandi (dara.darbandi@wfp.org)
Further information: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/iran-islamic-republic>

Photo caption: WFP staff doing an assessment of assistance provided in Bani Najjar settlement through Post Distribution Monitoring mission.
Photo: ©WFP / Neda Mobarra

Iran Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP) (April 2023 - December 2025)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Total Received (in US\$)
37 m	4.4 m
2023 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (Nov. 2023 – April 2024)
12 m*	5.8 m

*Covering ICSP 2018-2023 and ICSP 2023-2025 requirements

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

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

Focus area: Crisis Response

Strategic Outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations in Iran benefit from improved capacities of national entities and other partners to prevent and respond to emergencies.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activities:

- **Activity 1:** Provide unconditional food assistance to food-insecure refugees and other vulnerable households.
- **Activity 2:** Provide conditional support, especially to refugee women and girls, to incentivize education and enhance livelihoods.
- **Activity 3:** Support national disaster response, especially through the provision of emergency food assistance to crisis-affected populations in Iran.
- **Activity 4:** Provide cash transfer, coordination, or other services to partners.

[WFP Iran 2022 Annual Country Report](#)

Monitoring

- WFP conducted October monthly monitoring to verify the quality and quantity of assistance received, through phone calls to 2.5 percent of refugee assisted households. In October, WFP made 250 calls.
- Together with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), WFP Iran is conducting a joint Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) exercise in October. Through in-person visits to seven of the largest settlements in Iran (Rafsanjan, Bardsir, Torbat e Jam, Bani Najar, Saveh, Mohajerin, and Ardakan), this exercise aims to collect updated data on the food security situation of the refugees.

- The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Organization for Migration (NOM) are the main cooperating partners of WFP in Iran. NOM is responsible for coordinating all matters related to refugees and international agencies. Bi-annual meetings take place between NOM, UNHCR, and WFP. Monthly operational coordination meetings are also held to monitor the refugee situation and discuss appropriate response actions.
- Given the refugee focus of its operations in Iran, WFP also has a long-standing partnership with UNHCR. Together, WFP and UNHCR regularly conduct Joint Assessment Missions (JAM) with the latest assessment being done in April 2022. Joint distribution and joint post-distribution monitoring exercises are critical in understanding and monitoring the state of refugee food security.



Photo caption: WFP staff distributed School Snacks in Bani Najar settlement. Photo: ©WFP / Neda Mobarra

Donors (In alphabetical order)

Australia, the European Union, Germany, Japan, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, multilateral funds, and private donors.