



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Iran Country Brief October 2024



In Numbers

33,664 people assisted
in October 2024



387 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 183,482 distributed through cash-based transfers

US\$ 2.8 m six-month net funding requirements
(November 2024 – April 2025)

Operational Context

The Islamic Republic of Iran, an upper-middle-income country with a population of over 88 million, is one of the world's largest refugee-hosting countries, generously providing 3.8 million refugees and refugee-like persons access to health, education, and livelihood opportunities for over 40 years, as per UNHCR. 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.

WFP Iran's [Interim Country Strategic Plan \(ICSP 2023-2027\)](#) was approved by the WFP Executive Board in February 2023. Under the ICSP, WFP supports around 33,000 food-insecure 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 resilience and preparedness for voluntary sustainable repatriation to their country of origin once the situation is conducive.

WFP has been operating in Iran since 1962, initially for its first emergency earthquake response until 1978, and subsequently reinitiating operations to address the refugee crisis from 1987 onwards.



Population: **89.8 million**

2022 Human Development Index rank:
78 out of 193

Income Level: **Upper-middle**

2024 Global Hunger Index:
38 out of 127 (7.4, Low)

Operational Updates

- In October, WFP provided **33,013 Afghan and Iraqi refugees (7,340 households)** with **monthly general food assistance through a hybrid combination** of in-kind food and cash-based transfers.
 - Under in-kind, a total of 387 mt of food** consisting of fortified wheat flour (12 kg per person) and vegetable oil (810 ml per person) was distributed.
 - Under cash-based transfers**, in October, WFP distributed increased cash assistance to refugee households, with **men-headed households (MHH) receiving Iranian Rials (IRR) 2.5 million (US\$ 5.5) per person**, and **women-headed households (WHH) receiving IRR 3 million (US\$ 6.6) per person**, to address higher food insecurity risks faced by women having limited access to work opportunities. This adjustment followed an increase in transfer values since August, by 25 percent for MHH and 20 percent for WHH to help offset rising living costs amid Iran's inflation and economic challenges.

- As part of **WFP's Disability Inclusion Workplan**, WFP Iran has been providing **additional monthly cash support of IRR 1.5 million (US\$ 3.3) to refugees with disabilities** across eight refugee settlements, on top of their regular aid.

In October, WFP Iran scaled up its response by assisting an additional 38 refugees since September, reaching a total of 249 persons. This follows the programme's expansion in September, covering Kerman, Lorestan, West Azerbaijan, Fars, Khuzestan, Markazi, and Semnan provinces. Initially, the top-up support was rolled out in the Shahid Naseri settlement in Markazi province and the Mohajerin settlement in Semnan province.

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Photo caption: WFP provides school snacks to students in refugee settlements in Iran. Additionally, refugee girls receive a cash incentive from WFP each month upon completing their school attendance. Photo: ©WFP / Yalda Ashtari

Iran Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP)
(April 2023 - December 2027)

Total Requirements (in US\$)	Total Received (in US\$)
43 m	12.1 m
2024 Requirements (in US\$)	Six-Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$) (Nov. 2024 –April 2025)
8 m	2.8 m

SDG target 1: 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

- **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.

SDG target 2: Partnerships

Strategic Outcome 2: Crisis-affected populations in Iran benefit from enhanced coordination and improved capacities of national entities and other partners to prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies all year round.

Focus area: Crisis Response

- **Activity 4:** Provide cash transfer, coordination, or other services to partners.

[WFP Iran 2023 Annual Country Report](#)

- WFP’s cash assistance in Iran continued to include support for **52 refugee celiac patients with specific gluten-free dietary needs**, providing them with an extra cash amount of IRR 7.7 million (US\$ 17.55 per person), complementing their food entitlement.
- In October, through **WFP’s school-based programme, 9,355 refugee students, including their teachers, received daily school snacks** consisting of date bars and/or fortified biscuits.
- To support the income generation and **resilience of 251 refugees** (39 percent women and 61 percent men), in October, WFP continued 20 livelihood activities **across**

17 settlements, including welding, tailoring, baking, and farming.

Monitoring

- WFP conducted 250 monthly monitoring phone calls (approximately 2.5 percent of refugee-assisted households) in October to verify the quality and quantity of assistance received. Findings indicated that all households assisted were satisfied with both the quality and quantity of the fortified vegetable oil and wheat flour provided.
- The 2024 Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) was conducted jointly with UNHCR in October. As in previous years, the mission occurred in seven major Afghan settlements to assess key indicators for both UNHCR and WFP. The findings will contribute to the Annual Country Report 2024, which will be drafted and published in the coming months.

Partnerships

- WFP in Iran works closely with the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Center for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs (CAFIA) to coordinate refugee-related matters. Coordination meetings take place every six months between CAFIA, UNHCR, and WFP to monitor the situation and discuss appropriate response actions.
- Given the refugee focus of operations in Iran, WFP also has a long-standing partnership with UNHCR, conducting joint periodic assessments, including distribution and post-distribution monitoring activities, to track the food security of refugees in Iran. The latest assessment was done in October 2024.

Funding Outlook

- WFP Iran operations are 32 percent funded for the next six months. WFP requires vital funding amounting to US\$ 2.8 million to continue the planned response.

Donors: The European Union (ECHO), multilateral funds, and private donors.