



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Iran

COUNTRY BRIEF

May 2026



34,818 people assisted in April
(51% female)



321.078 mt food distributed April



USD 194,506 cash transferred April



USD 20.7 required in the next six months
(May - October 2026)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Despite the escalation in the region, WFP remains steadfast in its commitment to the people it serves. The operation in Iran continues without disruption, with teams on the ground ensuring uninterrupted delivery of food and cash assistance to the most vulnerable refugees residing in settlements.
- As part of the ongoing inclusion of 7,000 newly referred refugees, 829 refugees were added to the wheat flour recipient list in April, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 1,600 since March 2026, with additional eligible individuals expected to be incorporated progressively. The Center for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (CAFIA) paused the documentation processing temporarily due to the escalation but the administrative processing has now resumed.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

The Islamic Republic of Iran, an upper-middle income country of over 91 million people, is among the world's largest refugee-hosting nations, sheltering around 2.5 million forcibly displaced people according to UNHCR, and up to 6.1 million per government figures, including unregistered individuals, mainly from Afghanistan and Iraq, living in urban areas. With no viable return options, sustained assistance remains critical, particularly for over 34,000 highly vulnerable refugees living in 20 settlements nationwide.

WFP Iran's [Interim Country Strategic Plan \(ICSP 2023-2027\)](#) supports over 34,000 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.

In light of the recent escalation in the region and resulting internal displacement in the country, WFP continues to monitor the situation and activated its emergency preparedness capacities to support the Government to meet any emerging needs.

For further details please refer to [Middle East Regional Escalation Emergency Response External Situation Reports](#).

Reporting Period: April 2026

Photo Caption & Credit: During the conflict, WFP assistance continued uninterrupted in refugee settlements. WFP/Photo Archive

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

General Food Assistance

- In April, WFP provided **general food assistance to 34,210 Afghan and Iraqi refugees (7,562 households), through a hybrid combination** of in-kind food and cash-based transfers (CBT).
 - **Under the in-kind food assistance**, WFP distributed **315.6 mt of fortified** wheat flour (ration of 9 kg per person, reduced from 12 kg since the month of November due to funding shortfalls).
 - As part of the ongoing inclusion of 7,000 newly referred refugees, 829 refugees were added to the wheat flour recipient list in April, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 1,600 since March 2026, with additional eligible individuals expected to be incorporated progressively. CAFIA, the Iranian authorities handling refugee status, paused documentation processing temporarily due to the escalation of the conflict, but the process for administrative processing has now resumed.
 - **Under the cash-based assistance**, WFP continued to support essential living costs of vulnerable refugees. Monthly transfers were set at IRR 8 million (USD 5.7) for male-headed households (per person) and IRR 9 million (USD 6.4) for female-headed households (per person). In addition, a supplementary top-up equivalent to half of the monthly entitlement was disbursed to beneficiaries' bank cards.
 - Moreover, WFP provided **additional monthly cash assistance of IRR 3 million (USD 2.1) to 409 refugees** living with disabilities across eleven settlements, **on top of their regular entitlements**. Initially launched in two refugee settlements across two provinces, the initiative was gradually expanded to cover 11 settlements: Saveh, Semnan, Bani Najar, Sarvestan, Bezileh, Abazar, Rafsanjan, Bardsir, Jahrom, Meybod, and Torbat-e Jam.

- WFP's monthly cash assistance continued to support **57** refugee celiac patients with specific dietary needs, providing an extra cash amount of IRR 9.7 million (USD 6.9 per person), to complement their food entitlement.

School-Based Assistance

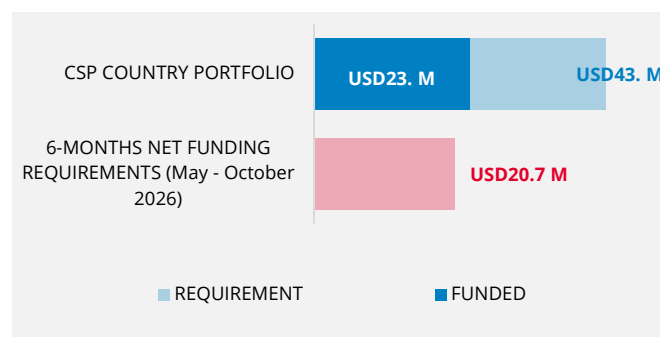
- As schools shifted to remote learning amid rising hostilities, WFP transitioned to take-home rations, distributing biscuits and date bars to **8,303** refugee students and their teachers. Milk could not be procured due to funding constraints and high costs. A total of 3 mt of date bars and 2.4 mt of fortified biscuits were distributed.
- Additionally, WFP provided **2,615** refugee girls with a monthly cash incentive of IRR 2 million (USD 1.4). This is an educational incentive to promote the school retention of refugee girls by providing them with cash.

Resilience and Livelihood Support

- In April, WFP supported 26 income-generating projects in 18 settlements to improve economic resilience and self-sufficiency for **315** refugees, 50 percent of whom were women. These activities included welding, tailoring, baking, farming, and other trades.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)



**NFRs for the next six months include WFP emergency response needs following the escalation*

Donors

The European Union, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, multilateral funds, and private donors.