

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



Operational highlights

- UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of some 18,900 Afghan refugees and some 1,700 Iraqis. Prolonged stay was made possible for approximately 900,000 registered refugees.
- More than 280,000 refugees continued to benefit from primary health care at almost no cost as a result of UNHCR's collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Education. Close to 350,000 refugees were covered by health insurance.
- Refugees' access to the educational facilities of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran was maintained, and there was a 10 per cent increase in school enrolment between 2010 and 2011.

- UNHCR worked with the Governments of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan to prepare an international conference in Geneva in May 2012 which will launch a regional, multiyear solutions strategy focusing on voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance to host communities.

Working environment

UNHCR pursued its policy of improving the predictability of conditions of stay for registered refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran while they await durable solutions. In support of this aim, considerable investments were made in the interrelated sectors of health, education and livelihoods. However, there were unmet needs in view of the immense number of registered refugees in the country: approximately 900,000.

Persons of concern

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Afghanistan	840,500	840,500	-	-
	Iraq	45,900	45,900	-	-
	Various	80	80	39	40
Asylum-seekers	Afghanistan	420	420	38	41
	Various	20	20	46	25
Total		886,920	886,920		

Significant price increases for essential commodities were an immediate consequence of the economic sanctions on the country. The sanctions have also had a drastic impact on the transfer of cash to accounts in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including for UNHCR, which has made it difficult to implement projects. The Government's decision to phase out subsidies on energy and basic food items has hit the refugee population the hardest.

| Achievements and impact |

UNHCR's main objectives for 2011 included improving the health of people of concern; providing them with better access to education; establishing, improving and maintaining shelter and infrastructure; realizing the potential for resettlement and voluntary return; enhancing access to legal assistance and legal remedies; and strengthening self-reliance and livelihoods.

Favourable protection environment

- A UNHCR-Hired Lawyer (UHL) project provided free legal aid to registered refugees and improved their access to the judicial system. In 2011, some 3,900 Afghan and 70 Iraqi refugees sought assistance from UHLs on various issues related to family or rent-related disputes, non-payment of wages, debt, nationality and mixed marriages, as well as in criminal law cases.
- Dispute Settlement Committees, designed to resolve the legal disputes of applicants for voluntary repatriation, were re-established in 10 provinces. Refugees planning to repatriate who had legal problems in the Islamic Republic of Iran benefited from the services of these committees, with UHLs facilitating the administration of justice.

Fair protection processes

- Some 300 peer educators and 30 monitoring experts were trained on how to reduce the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Standard procedures for SGBV were updated and staff trained to implement them to detect and prevent abuse, and to assist victims.

Basic needs and services

- The health insurance scheme (HISE) was initiated in July 2011 through a tripartite agreement between UNHCR, the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs (BAFIA) and the Alborz Insurance Company (AIC). The scheme aims to reduce the financial burden on registered Afghan refugees when using costly hospital services. Two rounds of mass information campaigns were launched to raise awareness of the HISE among refugees.
- By the end of December 2011, more than 325,000 refugees had access to the HISE. Some 2,800 refugees with specific needs were referred to hospitals for medical assistance, while some 300 benefited from UNHCR's Emergency Financial Assistance.
- UNHCR continued to advocate with the Government for educational services for refugees, support the construction of schools and provide those in need with educational materials, school supplies, and transportation. It also offered adult classes to help reduce illiteracy among refugees and increase the participation of community members, especially women, in decision making.

- The removal of subsidies and the accompanying price rises on all items hit refugees without regular incomes the hardest. With many refugee women in serious need of sanitary items, in 2011 UNHCR distributed some 35,300 sanitary kits countrywide, benefiting some 15,300 women.

Community participation and self-management

- To support its livelihoods interventions, in 2011 UNHCR signed an agreement with BAFIA and the Technical and Vocational Training Organization, a government agency, for the provision of skills training courses for some 1,300 refugees in 12 provinces. Courses were matched to labour market needs in the Islamic Republic of Iran and in Afghanistan in order to give refugees better job opportunities.
- In 2011, the Government conducted a registration exercise, renewed Temporary Work Permits and issued new cards for eligible refugees, allowing them to work legally in construction and agriculture.

Durable solutions

- During the year there was an overall increase in the number of refugees who chose to repatriate, with some 18,900 Afghans and some 1,700 Iraqis returning to their countries. UNHCR provided cash grants and non-food items (NFIs) to returning refugees. In 2011, 180 cases (800 individuals) were accepted for resettlement, and 480 people left the Islamic Republic of Iran for new homes in resettlement countries.

| Constraints |

The deteriorating economic environment, characterized by inflation, a shortage of hard currency in the banking system and lack of essential imported commodities, presented difficulties for refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Despite timely follow-up of UNHCR's programme activities, the transfer of funds to provincial offices was often time-consuming, affecting the implementation of projects. The Office experienced challenges in providing assistance to all persons of concern, particularly those who were not able to renew their identity documents.

| Financial information |

As a result of increased donor interest in refugee programmes in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the operation received some USD 16.8 million in earmarked contributions, the highest level in recent years.

| Organization and implementation |

| UNHCR's presence in 2011 |

□ Number of offices	7
□ Total staff	121
International	10
National	102
JPOs	1
Others	8



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| Working with others |

UNHCR, in collaboration with other UN agencies, worked on the development of a livelihoods strategy for refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran. UNDP, UNODC, UNIDO and UNICEF have played advisory roles to strengthen the content of the strategy. WFP continued its assistance to all Afghan and Iraqi refugees living in 18 settlements in the country.

| Overall assessment |

UNHCR's interventions in the Islamic Republic of Iran during the reporting period were generally positive, with asylum space and the civic rights of refugees being safeguarded through registration and the provision of identity documents. The Health Insurance Scheme reduced the financial burden on some 45 per cent of the refugee population, while livelihood activities covering more than 1,500 refugees improved general living conditions. However, the socio-economic situation in the country, which is under multiple international sanctions, has affected refugees.

Partners

Implementing partners

Government agencies: Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs, Literacy Movement Organization, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, State Welfare Organization at central and provincial levels, Technical and Vocational Training Organization

NGOs: Iraqi Refugee Aid Council, Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, Rebirth Charity Organization, Society to Protect Children Suffering from Cancer

Others: Alborz Insurance Company

Operational partners

NGOs: DRC, NRC

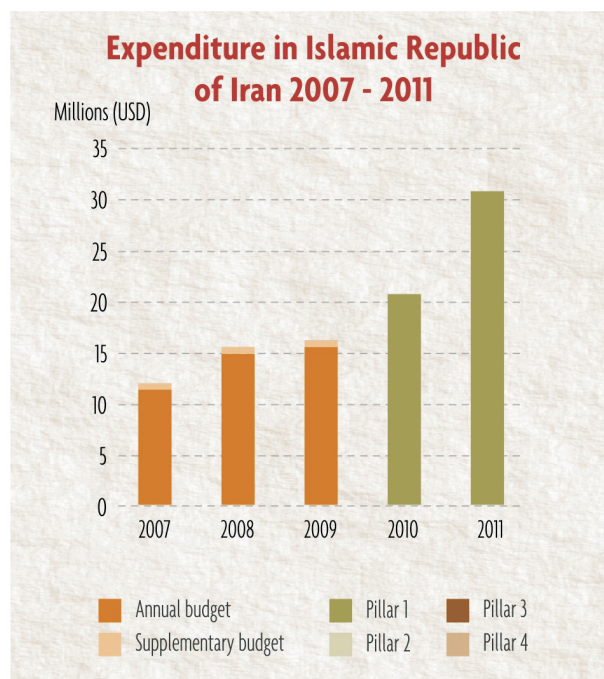
Others: OCHA, UNAIDS, UNAMA, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHABITAT, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, WFP

| Unmet needs |

- Some 28 per cent of vulnerable refugees who approached UNHCR could not be assisted.
- About 2,500 individuals above the primary/secondary school age, and out-of-school refugees could not benefit from literacy classes, and two urgently required schools could not be constructed, depriving at least 1,000 refugees of access to education.

Islamic Republic of Iran

- Only some 20 per cent of the 5,000 refugees who were targeted to be resettled from the Islamic Republic of Iran were able to undergo processing, owing to funding shortfalls as well as insufficient quotas.
- Close to 350,000 refugees provided with medical insurance coverage received a package that did not cover doctors' consultations and out-patient medication, as UNHCR was unable to afford the latter two components.
- More than 7,500 refugees were unable to benefit from training courses in vocational skills.
- Some 2,500 disabled refugees were excluded from community-based rehabilitation projects.
- Only five out of 16 major refugee settlements could be rehabilitated.
- UNHCR was able to provide female refugees of reproductive age with sanitary kits only in settlements, leaving an estimated 20,000 vulnerable women in urban areas unassisted.



Budget, income and expenditure in Islamic Republic of Iran | USD

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
FINAL BUDGET	39,882,139	39,882,139
Income from contributions	16,807,032	16,807,032
Other funds available	14,071,100	14,071,100
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	30,878,132	30,878,132
EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN		
<i>Favourable protection environment</i>		
National legal framework	224,315	224,315
Cooperation with partners	104,424	104,424
National development policies	185,817	185,817
Public attitudes towards persons of concern	102,055	102,055
Access to territory	26,036	26,036
Non-refoulement	13,090	13,090
Subtotal	655,737	655,737
<i>Fair protection processes and documentation</i>		
Reception conditions	102,450	102,450
Registration and profiling	525,448	525,448
Access to asylum procedures	15,853	15,853
Refugee and stateless definitions	84,611	84,611
Fair and efficient status determination	28,456	28,456
Civil status documentation	189,601	189,601
Subtotal	946,419	946,419
<i>Security from violence and exploitation</i>		
Gender-based violence	210,526	210,526
Protection of children	219,972	219,972
Freedom of movement	72,441	72,441
Non-arbitrary detention	85,549	85,549
Access to legal remedies	401,721	401,721
Subtotal	990,209	990,209

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
<i>Basic needs and essential services</i>		
Nutrition	56,112	56,112
Water	271,043	271,043
Shelter and other infrastructure	1,197,887	1,197,887
Basic domestic and hygiene items	332,382	332,382
Primary health care	13,436,062	13,436,062
HIV and AIDS	139,959	139,959
Education	1,676,897	1,676,897
Sanitation services	94,779	94,779
Services for groups with specific needs	349,304	349,304
Subtotal	17,554,425	17,554,425
<i>Community participation and self-management</i>		
Participatory assessment	180,487	180,487
Community self-management	174,615	174,615
Camp management and coordination	121,129	121,129
Self-reliance and livelihoods	596,851	596,851
Subtotal	1,073,082	1,073,082
<i>Durable solutions</i>		
Durable solutions strategy	198,887	198,887
Voluntary return	2,235,784	2,235,784
Resettlement	670,161	670,161
Subtotal	3,104,832	3,104,832
<i>External relations</i>		
Donor relations	145,349	145,349
Resource mobilisation	150,262	150,262
Partnership	155,918	155,918
Public information	179,397	179,397
Subtotal	630,926	630,926
<i>Logistics and operations support</i>		
Supply chain and logistics	292,320	292,320
Programme management and coordination	1,536,294	1,536,294
Subtotal	1,828,614	1,828,614
Balance of instalments with implementing partners	4,093,888	4,093,888
Total	30,878,132	30,878,132