



UNHCR Iran

Fact Sheet | February 2012
Asia-Pacific Field Update

Operational objectives

- Preserve asylum space and strengthen protection of Afghan and Iraqi refugees
- Enhance access to health and provide full access to quality education for refugees
- Improve livelihood opportunities for refugees including legal access to the labour market
- Facilitate voluntary repatriation of Afghan and Iraqi refugees and advocate for increased resettlement opportunities
- Identify and support alternative durable solutions strategies with a view to ending the protracted refugee situation

Persons of concern

Population	Total number	Assisted by UNHCR
Afghan and Iraqi	886,468	886,468

Legal and institutional framework

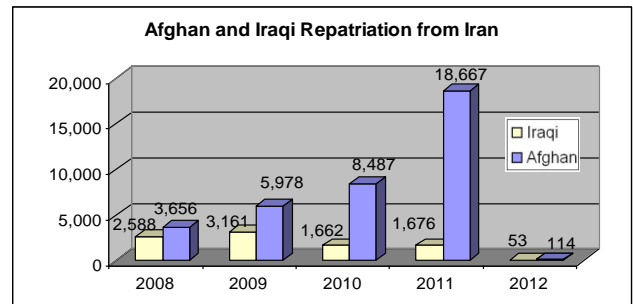
Convention	Dates of Accession
1951 Refugee Convention	28 July 1976
1967 Protocol	28 July 1976
1954 Statelessness	-
1961 Statelessness	-
ICCPR	23 March 1976
ICESCR	3 January 1976
CAT	-
CRC	12 August 1994
CEDAW	-
Who does refugee status determination?	N/A

Durable Solutions

a) Resettlement

Country	Submissions	Departures
Sweden	48	103
Finland		10
Total	48	113

b) Repatriation



Working with partners (all implementing partners)

UNHCR works with the Government and civil society in providing protection and support to persons of concern.

Government: Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs/Ministry of Interior (BAFIA/MOI), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Literacy Movement Organization, Technical and Vocational Training Organization, State Welfare Organization (Behzisti) at central and provincial level.

NGOs: Iraqi Refugee Aid Council (IRAC), Society to Protect Children Suffering from Cancer (MAHAK), Rebirth Society and Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV).

Operational Partners: WFP, UNDP, UNIDO, FAO, UNICEF, NRC, UNFPA, UNODC, IOM, UNAIDS, WHO, UNAMI, UNESCO, DRC

Recent operational activities and highlights

Following re-registration in 2011 Amayesh VII refugee cards were issued for the first time with a validity of one year. To obtain an Amayesh refugee card, refugees are obliged to pay the printing cost and municipality taxes. Municipality taxes vary based on the number of family members and the province where refugees reside. Furthermore, all male refugees between the ages of 18-60 have the possibility to obtain, against a fee, a temporary work permit valid for one year. As of 31 January 2012, over 775,000 refugees have renewed their Amayesh cards.

Solutions Strategy:

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran (GIRI), together with the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan embarked on a joint multi-year solutions strategy for Afghan refugees to support voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance to host countries, an initiative which is a first of its kind. The main themes that underscore the strategy are:

- Creating conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation through community-based investments in areas of high return.
- Building Afghan refugee capital based on livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan in order to facilitate return.
- Preserving asylum space in host countries, including enhanced support for refugee-hosting communities, alternative temporary stay arrangement for the residual caseload, and resettlement in third countries.

Health:

UNHCR Iran interventions in the area of health care services for refugees are three-pronged:

- *Primary Health Care (PHC)* - UNHCR is in the final stages of concluding an agreement with Ministry of Health and Medical Education to contribute to the provision of free of charge primary health care services mainly for reproductive health, mother and child health, pre/post-natal supervision and hygiene education. UNHCR's assistance also focuses on, among other interventions, contribution to the construction of additional and rehabilitation of existing health premises, training on disease control, recruitment of physicians and health workers, vaccinations, procurement of medicine, etc. There are 15 health posts in refugee settlements and 124 health posts in 24 urban sites serving refugees benefiting from UNHCR's support.

- *Health Insurance Scheme (HISE)* – The health insurance scheme was initiated in July 2011 and aims to reduce the financial burden of registered Afghan and Iraqi refugees in accessing costly hospital services and to promote equity in utilization of these services. The HISE has been determined a success and as of December 2011 the total number of refugees joining the insurance scheme is close to 350,000. Following an evaluation of the first six months of implementation, the health insurance package is being revised to provide improved coverage including doctor visits, increased yearly reimbursement ceilings by the insurance company. Discussions are ongoing between UNHCR, BAFIA and Alborz Insurance Company and an agreement for 2012 HISE is expected to be concluded to the coming weeks.

- *Community Integrated Social and Medical Assistance Programme (CISAMAP)* – The UNHCR run programme enhances the assistance level provided to vulnerable refugees. Through direct implementation UNHCR supports extremely vulnerable refugees in need of life saving assistance. The assistance schemes under CISAMAP include 1) emergency financial assistance, 2) counseling-referral-outsourcing cases; and, 3) assistance for out-of-pocket medical bills paid by vulnerable refugees. As at end-February, the scheme has already assisted over 2000 refugees.

Education:

UNHCR is in the final stages of concluding an agreement with the Ministry of Education to facilitate continued access to education by refugees. The number of refugee students in 2011-12 scholastic year is 284,774 which in comparison to the previous enrolment rate represents a 10% increase. The agreement will also include literacy education for over 2000 adult refugees and out-of-school children.

Durable Solutions:

The Contact Group has been active in coordinating and enhancing resettlement activities resulting in an increase of submissions from 966 persons in 2010 to 1,484 in 2011. The submissions in 2011 include 26 persons with special diseases (thalassemia, hemophilia, and renal failure). As of 31 January 2012, 53 Iraqi and 114 Afghan refugees were assisted to return home voluntarily.

UNHCR presence



Offices comprise: Country office in Tehran and three sub-offices (Mashad, Kerman and Ahwaz). One field office (Dogharoon). Four Voluntary Repatriation Centres (Esfahan, Mashhad, Soleimankhani and Shiraz).

Staff comprise: 109 regular national staff and 16 regular international staff incl. 1 NRC, 2 Consultants and 2 ICMCs.

2012 Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Population Group	Budget in USD
Pillar 1 (Refugees & Asylum-seekers)	53,216,250

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