

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



Operational highlights

- UNHCR pursued durable solutions for about 1 million Afghan and 42,000 Iraqi urban refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran, with a focus on voluntary repatriation and resettlement. Some 10,000 refugees (almost 8,000 Afghans and over 1,500 Iraqis) were assisted to return home voluntarily, while 410 Afghans were resettled in third countries.
- With the growing recognition that voluntary repatriation and resettlement must contribute to a comprehensive solution for the protracted refugee situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNHCR is giving priority to strengthening refugees' self-reliance and reducing their impact on host communities.
- The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced a universal health insurance plan for registered refugees in the country, while continuing to provide free health coverage for three chronic diseases.
- Resettlement quotas were increased for vulnerable Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The establishment of a Contact Group is expected to strengthen support for refugee programmes in the country and improve prospects for durable solutions.
- The Government registered some 2 million previously undocumented Afghan citizens.

Persons of concern

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Afghanistan	1,027,600	1,027,600	-	-
	Iraq	45,700	45,700	-	-
	Various	80	80	38	40
Asylum-seekers	Afghanistan	1,600	1,600	45	37
	Various	140	140	35	36
Returnees (refugees)	Various	20	-	-	-
Total		1,075,140	1,075,120		

| Working environment |

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran maintained its tradition of providing protection and assistance to refugees, who continued to have access to education, health services and the job market through temporary work permits. However, the lifting of food and fuel subsidies in December 2010 is expected to have a significant impact on refugee households. Assisting registered refugees residing in areas declared “no go” continued to be challenging.

| Achievements and impact |

• Main objectives and targets

Favourable protection environment

A large-scale government exercise in July-August 2010 resulted in the registration of approximately 2 million undocumented Afghan citizens. The legal status of refugees was retained through a re-registration exercise (Amayesh VI), but the final results are yet to be obtained by UNHCR. Settlement dispute committees were reinstated to discuss legal issues related to refugees.

Fair protection processes

- As of January 2010, some 1,022,000 Afghan refugees were registered with the Government and held individual identity documents (Amayesh residence permits). UNHCR advocated for an inclusive re-registration of all Amayesh card holders, and provided financial support for vulnerable individuals to ensure their re-registration.

Security from violence and exploitation

- Registered refugees had access to the country’s legal systems, but were sometimes thwarted by slow judicial processes and lack of familiarity with laws and procedures. Consequently, individuals with minor civil claims who wished to repatriate voluntarily were forced to delay their return until their claims were resolved. UNHCR hired 15 Iranian law practitioners to provide free legal advice as well as representation and assistance when needed. They were supported by 15 registered Afghan refugee focal points. UNHCR-hired lawyers followed more than 4,000 cases involving registered Afghan refugees. UNHCR ensured that all registered refugees had access to legal services on par with Iranian nationals.

As part of a livelihood programme for refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNHCR provided this Afghan refugee with a moulding machine, helping the 75-year-old continue to earn a living.



Basic needs and services

- UNHCR supported the Ministry of Health's efforts to ensure that all refugees benefit from free primary health care services similar to those enjoyed by Iranians. Two health posts were constructed and fully equipped, and UNHCR assisted some 10,000 refugees with their medical costs. Some 13,000 refugee students who were most in need were provided school kits and supplies. More than 4,000 refugees benefited from literacy classes, skills training courses and awareness-raising campaigns.

Community participation and self-management

- In February, UNHCR undertook participatory assessments with the participation of the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs (BAFIA) and NGOs, and identified gaps in livelihoods, health, education and repatriation, both in settlement and urban areas. During the assessments, refugee groups of different ages and genders participated in open dialogue. In total, more than 2,100 registered refugees (almost 1,500 Afghans and over 600 Iraqis) participated in the exercise.

Durable solutions

- Voluntary repatriation and resettlement were pursued as the primary durable solutions for the more than 1 million Afghan and 42,000 Iraqi long-staying urban refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran. More than 10,000 refugees (almost 8,500 Afghans and over 1,600 Iraqis) were assisted to repatriate voluntarily, while 410 Afghans were resettled in third countries. There was growing recognition among all stakeholders, including some agencies within the Government, that local integration would ultimately become the solution for many refugees in the country. UNHCR focused on assisting persons of concern with livelihood-enhancing activities while lobbying the Government to provide an environment where refugees could engage in gainful employment.

External relations

- Relations and contacts with BAFIA, donors, other UN agencies, the media and persons of concern were strengthened in 2010. Donors responded generously to the humanitarian needs of refugees, facilitated by the creation of the Contact Group of donor countries.

Logistics and operational support

- Working through established coordination mechanisms with BAFIA, UNHCR conducted regular monitoring visits to all project sites in the country. Implementing partners received UNHCR training in programme and financial management, which assisted them to comply with financial-verification and audit-report requirements for sub-agreements.

| Constraints |

Administrative procedures, including clearance for field visits and NGO activities, hampered the implementation of planned activities. Assisting registered refugees residing in zones declared "no-go" remained a challenge.

| Financial information |

Funding for the Iran operation has increased steadily over the past three years, but the contributions covered less than 50 per cent of overall operational requirements, given the size of the refugee population and the scale of the needs. Consequently, UNHCR had to prioritize its activities, including life-saving medical assistance for vulnerable refugees. Earmarked contributions for the Islamic Republic of Iran increased from USD 6.9 million in 2009 to USD 15.4 million in 2010. UNHCR conducted regular briefings and field visits for donors and other stakeholders, while donor contributions were publicized and visibility materials installed in project sites and areas.

| Organization and implementation |

UNHCR had a Country Office in Tehran; three sub-offices in Mashhad, Kerman and Ahwaz; a field office in Dogharoun; and a voluntary repatriation centre each in Shiraz and Esfahan. The offices in Dogharoun and Ahwaz enabled UNHCR to ensure that the repatriation of Afghans and Iraqis was voluntary and undertaken in safety and dignity.

| UNHCR's presence in 2010 |

□ Number of offices	7
□ Total staff	117
International staff	10
National staff	104
JPO staff	1
UNVs	0
Others	2

| Working with others |

UNHCR participated in five thematic groups under the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF): poverty reduction, health, drug control, disaster management, and the environment. This effort brought greater prominence to refugee issues in UN Country Team (UNCT) policy formulation and reporting on UN country activities. For the first time, the UNCT and the Government considered including refugee-related issues in the UNDAF.

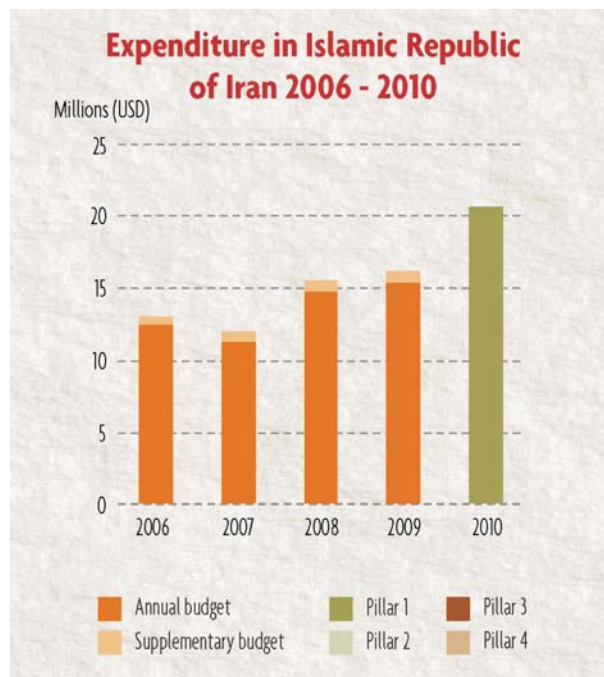
| Overall assessment |

The Iran operation was a complex undertaking which focused on securing durable solutions for refugees; advocating for an environment conducive to refugees' continued stay in the Islamic Republic of Iran; increasing refugees' earning capacity, and increasing the attention of stakeholders to the plight of refugees in the country.

Islamic Republic of Iran

The procedure for disbursing funds to partners was revised to minimize administrative delays. Greater emphasis was placed on building the capacity of national staff and reducing delays in the arrival of international staff in the Islamic Republic of Iran in order to ensure the uninterrupted implementation of activities.

Partners
Implementing partners
Government: Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs (Ministry of the Interior), Ministries of Health and Education, Literacy Movement Organization, Technical and Vocational Training Organization, State Welfare Organization at central and provincial levels
NGOs: Iraqi Refugee Aid Council, Society to Protect Children Suffering from Cancer, Rebirth Charity Organization, Family Planning Association of the Islamic Republic of Iran



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

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
FINAL BUDGET	36,534,955	36,534,955
Income from contributions ¹	15,402,791	15,402,791
Other funds available	5,343,557	5,343,557
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	20,746,348	20,746,348
EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN		
<i>Favourable protection environment</i>		
National legal framework	102,922	102,922
National and regional migration policy	42,076	42,076
Co-operation with partners	26,276	26,276
National development policies	42,076	42,076
Public attitudes towards persons of concern	24,075	24,075
Access to territory	18,639	18,639
<i>Non-refoulement</i>	18,640	18,640
Environmental protection	42,076	42,076
Emergency management strengthened	66,150	66,150
Subtotal	382,928	382,928
<i>Fair protection processes and documentation</i>		
Registration and profiling	154,194	154,194
Access to asylum procedures	54,436	54,436
Fair and efficient status determination	54,436	54,436
Individual documentation	104,751	104,751
Civil status documentation	85,349	85,349
Subtotal	453,166	453,166

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
<i>Security from violence and exploitation</i>		
Gender-based violence	208,232	208,232
Protection of children	205,539	205,539
Freedom of movement	89,851	89,851
Non-arbitrary detention	170,497	170,497
Access to legal remedies	433,043	433,043
Subtotal	1,107,162	1,107,162
<i>Basic needs and essential services</i>		
Nutrition	83,108	83,108
Shelter and other infrastructure	722,126	722,126
Basic domestic and hygiene items	438,412	438,412
Primary health care	3,728,525	3,728,525
HIV and AIDS	183,976	183,976
Education	268,245	268,245
Sanitation services	254,709	254,709
Services for groups with specific needs	502,771	502,771
Subtotal	6,181,873	6,181,873
<i>Community participation and self-management</i>		
Participatory assessment and community mobilisation	229,867	229,867
Community self-management and equal representation	223,008	223,008
Camp management and coordination	173,215	173,215
Self-reliance and livelihoods	335,027	335,027
Subtotal	961,117	961,117
<i>Durable solutions</i>		
Voluntary return	1,487,962	1,487,962
Resettlement	483,693	483,693
Subtotal	1,971,655	1,971,655
<i>External relations</i>		
Donor relations	63,609	63,609
Resource mobilisation	61,852	61,852
Partnership	70,245	70,245
Public information	90,604	90,604
Subtotal	286,309	286,309
<i>Logistics and operations support</i>		
Supply chain and logistics	541,678	541,678
Programme management, coordination and support	1,778,878	1,778,878
Subtotal	2,320,555	2,320,555
Instalments to implementing partners	7,080,886	7,080,886
Other objectives	697	697
Total	20,746,348	20,746,348

¹ Income from contributions includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities – mandate-related" (NAM) reserve. Contributions towards all pillars are included under Pillar 1.