CONTEXT

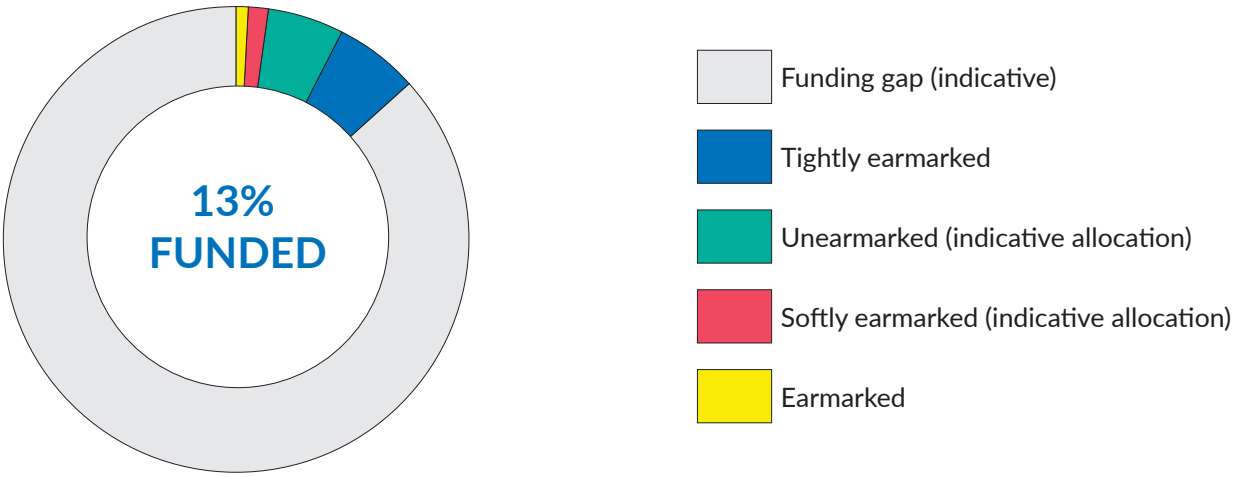
In April, the regularization of legal status for Headcount slips holders continued. All Headcount slip shoulders are required to approach government designated centres to determine their status. Those who do not meet the exemption criteria which enables them to continue their stay in Iran, will receive an Exit LP with a limited validity, during which they are required to leave the country. Complaints were observed on social media by the concerned population about allegedly unfavourable appointment procedures, along with reports of mistreatment at registration centres. Meanwhile, Afghan border officials reported an increasing trend of returns from Iran through the Islam Qala border, with up to approximately 3,000 individuals leaving on a daily basis from Iran.

For those returning through the spontaneous return scheme facilitated by the Government, the financial burden of returning to Afghanistan remains a concern to the most financially vulnerable individuals. The government-facilitated bus journey from Tehran to the border reportedly costs approximately 33,400,000 IRR (around USD 50, based on the April 2025 UN exchange rate). The costs vary from province to province with some report of costs being as high as USD 80.

In April, the Directorate General of Education of Tehran province issued an instruction prohibiting the registration of Headcount slip holder students for the 1404-1405 academic year (starting in September 2025). The new instruction aligns with previous government decisions to limit educational access for undocumented children, including Headcount slip holders. Families with children in school have received an extension of document validity only until 6 July 2025, indicating that there will be no opportunity for these children to continue their education in the next scholastic year.

On 13 April, the Director General of Tax Affairs in Kerman province reported collecting some USD 2.2 million from foreign nationals who previously had no tax records. Authorities stated that these funds were levied on individuals utilizing provincial resources and services, adding that other provinces will adopt similar measures based on Kerman's experience. In response, the Head of CAFIA, Mr. Yar Ahmadi, has indicated plans to expand the tax scheme to other provinces. UNHCR field reports indicate that the scheme's abrupt implementation led to frozen bank accounts for many refugees, impacting their livelihoods. Additionally, legal and technical concerns have been raised by the affected population on the applied criteria regarding calculation methods and the population it targets.

FUNDING UPDATE



USD 140 MILLION
UNHCR's financial requirements 2025

USD 121 MILLION
Funding gap 2025

UNHCR RESPONSE

PROTECTION

Reception, Enrolment & Communication with Communities

During the reporting period from January 1 to April 30, 2025, UNHCR's five sub-offices received a total of **64,029** inquiries from FDSP through the helpline or by visiting UNHCR reception desks: **31,787** contacts through the Helpline and **32,042** in-person visits at reception gates. Each inquiry resulted in appropriate support and counselling relative to the individuals' specific needs. Among those seeking assistance, **16,163** individuals were identified as having urgent specific needs and were subsequently invited for complementary interviews to facilitate UNHCR's enrolment and verification of additional required data for potential support.

In addition to the above, UNHCR processed **12,618** emails and **2,462** letters submitted via mailboxes during the same timeframe. The UNHCR Iran Help Page served as a significant resource, showcasing **1,019,303** views from **508,763** unique visitors. Of these visitors, **42,007** utilized the online contact form to submit inquiries and requests. UNHCR successfully responded to **20,110** of these forms, reflecting a response rate of **48%**.

The primary reasons for contacting UNHCR included requests for resettlement, financial assistance, and enrolment with UNHCR.

Legal Assistance

UNHCR Hired Lawyers supported **2,836** individuals referred by UNHCR in 2025, in addition to **440** who were represented or assisted in Dispute Settlement Committees services. The legal services are key for the forcibly displaced persons to accessing rights and services in line with the national legislation.

Protection of Women and Children & Psychosocial Counselling

Since the beginning of 2025, UNHCR has identified **2,491 children with specific protection needs** the majority of them (1,496) **not attending school or at risk of dropping out**. While all cases were provided counselling, UNHCR has conducted a thorough assessment for 166 cases, prioritized based on their vulnerability. The protection team also carried out best interest assessments for 93 children and provided psychosocial support, legal aid and other available services. UNHCR identified **1,716 refugee women at risk** and 155 of them were provided counselling and psychosocial support, legal aid, cash assistance, and access to health care services.

Additionally, **562 persons have participated in psychosocial counselling sessions** conducted by the UNHCR-hired psychological counsellors since the beginning of 2025. The counselling sessions were conducted both in-person and remotely.

Cash Assistance

The cash instalments provide crucial support to vulnerable refugees, including those with special protection needs and disabilities, helping them meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life by making their own, dignified choices on how to use the support. From January to the end of April 2025, a total of **18,790 individuals** (4,316households) received cash assistance amounting to USD 830,653 . Of this total, 2,255 individuals received cash disbursements in April alone.

Deportation and Returns

From January 2025 to 13 May 20205, **507,3000 Afghans returned** to their country from Iran, including **293,600 reportedly deported** according to the Returns Emergency Response. The dashboard provides updated information about the current displacement trend and cross-border movement.

UNHCR RESPONSE

SOLUTIONS

Education

UNHCR supports Iran's education system, particularly in refugee-hosting areas where classroom sizes reach up to 50 students—far exceeding the national standard. To accommodate all school-age children and reduce overcrowding, the **Government estimates a need for at least 2,000 new schools throughout the country.**

On average, a 12-classroom school, hosting 720 students in double-shifts, costs USD 800,000, to which UNHCR contributes between 70 – 90 per cent, the rest being covered by the Ministry of Education. According to the Government of Iran in 2025, at least 2,000 new schools are needed at both primary and secondary levels to accommodate all school-aged children.

Health

UNHCR, in partnership with Iran Health Insurance Organization (IHIO) and the Center for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs (CAFIA), launched in February the 11th cycle of the Universal Public Health Insurance (UPHI) scheme to ensure refugees have access to essential medical services. This includes primary, secondary, and tertiary healthcare.

As in previous cycles, **95,000 vulnerable refugees** holding a valid Amayesh card, Hoviat card or valid Laissez-Passer —including those with specific medical conditions such as haemophilia, thalassemia, kidney failure, kidney transplant, and multiple sclerosis—can register for free medical coverage at designated government counters nationwide. The Government of Iran cover 100% of the premium fee of an additional 47,000 extremely vulnerable refugees, enabling them to acquire UPHI.

Additionally, thank to Iran's inclusive policies, primary healthcare remains available to all nationwide– regardless of status or documentation.

Livelihoods

Under the Iranian labour law, refugees holding Hoviat or Amayesh cards can obtain temporary work permits allowing them to work legally in specific job categories–primarily in the construction and **agriculture sectors**. UNHCR works in partnership with government institutions and NGOs to support vulnerable members and the host community with skill-building opportunities, aiming to improve prospects for employment and self-reliance. In 2025, UNHCR aims to support some **1,000 refugees** and vulnerable host communities with vocational and technical training.

Resettlement

In April 2025, UNHCR submitted 328 refugees for resettlement consideration to Australia, Finland, and one family to Norway under the global unallocated quota. As of end of April, the total number of submissions from January to April 2025 reached **979 refugees**. Another 79 refugees departed to different countries bringing the departure figure for 2025 to 336 refugees

UNHCR IRAN MAP

UNHCR ACTIVITIES PER OFFICES

	Reception Centres	Protection	Cash Assistance	WASH	Education	Health	Shelter	Resettlement	Voluntary Repatriation	Livelihood
FOT & FUE	●	●			●	●		●	●	●
SOK	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●
SOM	●	●		●		●	●	●	●	●
SOS	●	●				●		●	●	●

REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

On 28 April, the UNHCR Representative held a meeting for RRP partners (heads of agencies/INGOs) to exchange updates and insights on the rapidly evolving operational and protection context in the country. The meeting included a presentation on the latest developments by the newly arrived head of UNAMA and protection updates by UNHCR, including on Iran's regularization plan and increased deportations. Partners were also introduced to the new interactive 4W mapping of RRP activities.

A week before this meeting, UNHCR hosted a technical workshop to enhance partners' understanding of RRP tools, focusing on reporting, information management, and circulation. The session was attended by 21 RRP focal points from the nine most active organizations, preparing them for the first reporting exercise of 2025.

RRP PARTNERS

KEY FIGURES

3.49 M refugees and people in refugee-like situation

2.72 M people in refugee-like situation

out of which **135K** undocumented

770K refugees, out of which

758K are Afghan Amayesh card holders and

12K are Iraqi Hoviat card holders

434,800 total returns

170,200

39%

252,400 deportations

97,000

38%

The **blue figures** above correspond to the period 1 January 2025 to 30 April 2025. While the **navy figures** refer only to those who arrived from 20 March 2025 to 30 April 2025.

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