



UNITED NATIONS
Islamic Republic of Iran
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**UN IRAN
COUNTRY
RESULTS
REPORT**

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20**

1 Foreword by the UN Resident Coordinator a.i

2 Composition of the UN Country Team

2 Key national implementing partners and contributor

3 Chapter 1: UN Humanitarian and Socio-Economic Response to the COVID-19 pandemic

9 Chapter 2: UN development system support to national development priorities through the Cooperation Framework

9 2.1: Overview of Cooperation Framework Results

TABLE OF CONTENTS

31 List of acronyms

30 Chapter 4: UNCT key focus for next year

27 Chapter 3: Refugees and Migrants Response

25 2.4: Results of the UN working more and better together: UN coherence, effectiveness and efficiency

21 2.3: Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

10 2.2: Cooperation Framework priorities, outcomes and outputs

10 Environment

13 Health

16 Resilient Economy

19 Drug Control

Foreword

We are pleased to present this UN Country Results Report on behalf of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It illustrates how, in 2020, the UN collectively supported Iran in achieving its national development and humanitarian goals. This support is provided as part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), a strategic and programmatic framework of cooperation between the UN and the Islamic Republic of Iran, currently in its fourth year (2017-2022).

For the Government of I.R. Iran and the UNCT, the year 2020 commenced with a broad national consultation on the UN Technical Assistance Package, convened by the United Nations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Co-Chairs of the UNDAF High-Level Steering Committee. The consultation resulted in the identification of the six joint programmes and operational priorities that will enable the UN to better support the Government of Iran in mitigating the effects of economic sanctions on the Iranian people.

One month after the consultation, the first two Coronavirus cases were recorded in Iran. Globally the number of cases grew exponentially. The effect of COVID-19 on Iran amplified the impact of economic sanctions and became a major humanitarian crisis for the country.

Throughout 2020, the UN supported the Government's efforts to respond to the pandemic and to provide immediate life-saving humanitarian assistance to protect the most vulnerable communities, alleviate the socioeconomic impact and recover from COVID-19. The UN's support to the national COVID-19 response was aligned with the UN Development System Reform agenda, offering a cohesive UN System response to the requests of the government and adopting a whole-of-society approach, and leveraging the critical expertise and delivery capacities of the UN resident and non-resident agencies and international NGOs. The UN Iran developed the Covid-19 Socio-Economic Recovery Programme (SERP), with the support of the Government of I.R. Iran, focusing on the integration of three core areas intervention o (1) health system strengthening, (2) protecting people: safety net for vulnerable populations (3) promotive-measures: building economic resilience through employment generation.

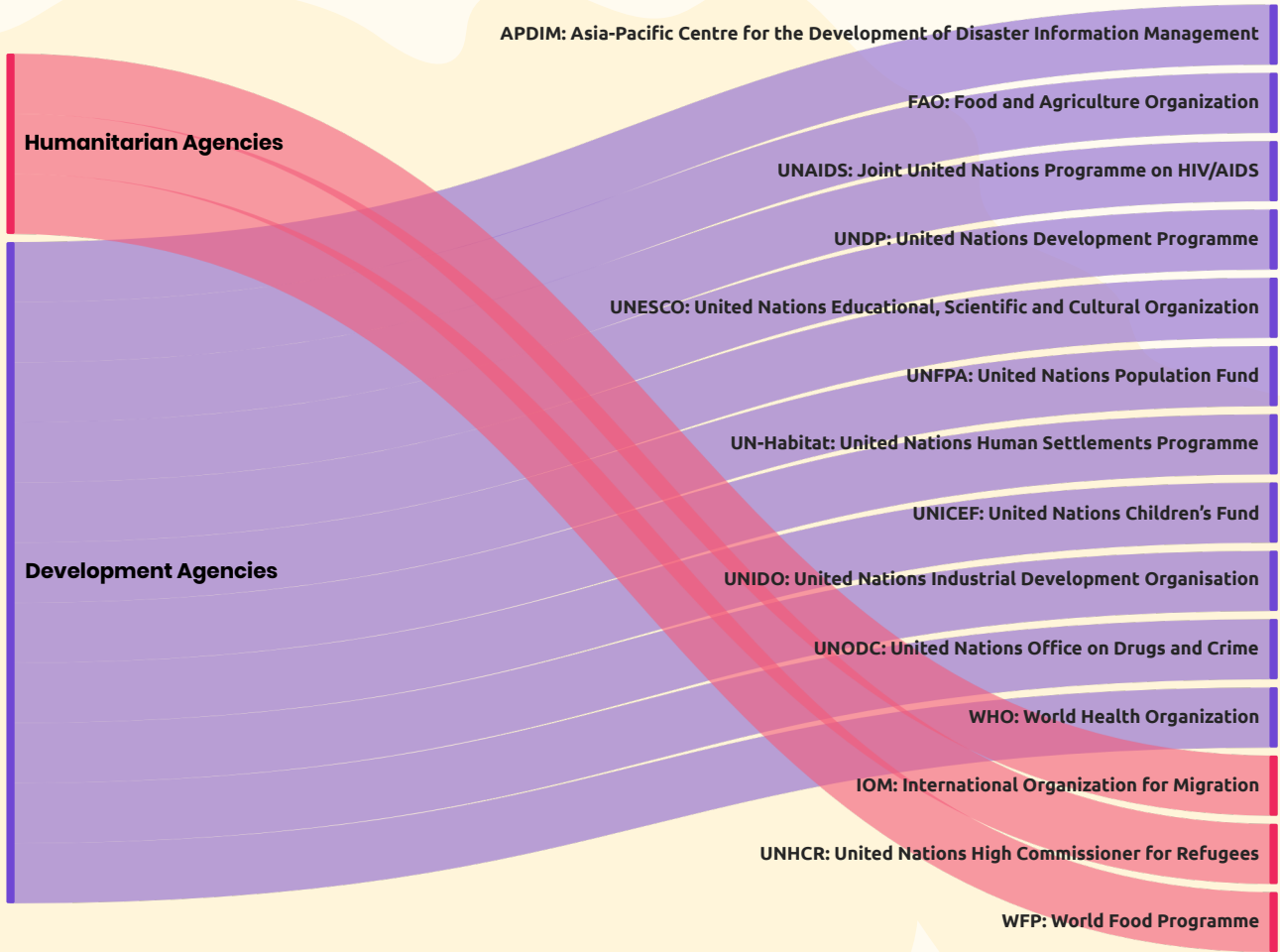
In addition to readjusting its priorities and way of working to address the immediate needs posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN's regular development and humanitarian programmes were largely implemented. The UNCT continued to deliver on its core mandates, resulting in more efficient integrated natural resource management, a healthier population, a more resilient economy, a reduction in drug abuse and supply, and the protection of the most vulnerable populations in the country, including refugees and migrants.

We would like to thank the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and our development and humanitarian partners for their very close partnership, invaluable support and collaboration with the UN System in Iran, that have yielded the development and humanitarian results outlined in this report. Looking ahead, the UNCT counts on the continued support and partnership of the Government and all national and international stakeholders in responding to socioeconomic challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and building the resilient and sustainable Iran.

UN Resident Coordinators ai



UN Country Team¹



Key National Implementing Partners



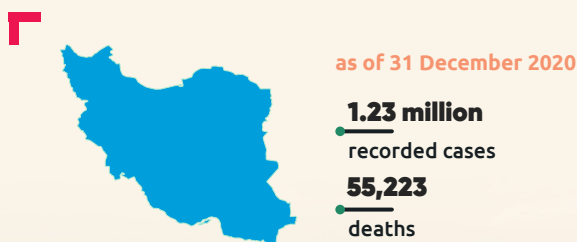
1- The UN system in Iran also works with Non-Resident Agencies as appropriate



Key Contributors



Chapter 1: UN Humanitarian and Socio-Economic Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic



Iran was the country most severely affected by COVID-19 in the Middle East and North Africa region and 15th in the world in terms of recorded COVID-19 cases and deaths. The adverse effects of the continuing unilateral sanctions were compounded by the damaging impact of the coronavirus crisis. This drove the rapid erosion of safe jobs and income-generating opportunities

and a significant fall in disposable income among vulnerable and at-risk population, thus halting and, in some areas, reversing the country's progress on achieving development goals.

¹ UN Funds include support from UNFPA, UNAIDS and Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework, among others



COVID-19 Affected Demographic Groups in Iran



+20 million

People living in rural areas



+8 million

People of over 60 years old



3 million

Women-headed households



+1 million

People with severe disabilities



+12 million

Employees in service sectors



+4 million

Employees in SMEs' sectors



11.5 million

Households below or just above multi-dimensional poverty line



3 million

Children at the age of vaccination and in deprived areas



3 million

Refugees, undocumented Afghans, and Afghan passport holders



3.2 million

children not having access to SHAD distance learning platform in deprived area

In response to the request of the Government in March 2020 and in support of the National Mobilization Plan against Coronavirus, the UN at the global and at the country level pooled all efforts to collectively respond to the health emergency. The UN has been supporting the National Corona Management Task Force in the coordination, planning and monitoring of the COVID-19 outbreak in Iran, in order to enable a coordinated response focusing on mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable population.

The **three critical responses** to COVID-19 pandemic as set out by the UN include: (i) the Health response – the **Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP)** led globally and introduced on 6 February 2020 by WHO; (ii) the Humanitarian response launched on 25 March 2020, articulated in the UN-led COVID-19 **Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP)** with the aim of responding to the immediate humanitarian impact of the pandemic in some of the world's most vulnerable countries, and (iii) the **Covid-19 Social and Economic Response and Recovery** led at the country level by the UN Resident Coordinator.

All three above-listed critical responses to COVID-19 pandemic are embedded in the **COVID-19 Iran Country Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP)** with 13 UN agencies and 2 INGOs involved its implementation.

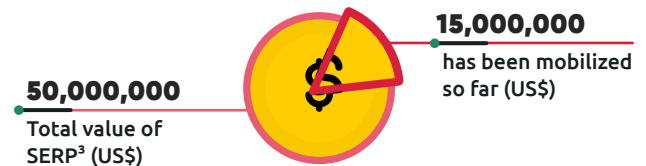


COVID-19 RESPONSE

182 Health response & Humanitarian Response



3 Socio-Economic Response



In partnership with the Statistical Center of Iran the UN supported the national **Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19**, including impact of the pandemic on fertility and mortality trends, education, employment and psychological well-being. Consequently, the **UNCT realigned its programmatic interventions** in 2020 to help address some of the immediate needs that emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, including supporting the Government of I.R. Iran to contain and mitigate the spread of the Covid-19 virus, help protect the vulnerable communities in Iran and address the associated socio-economic consequences of the pandemic.

Through the UN ProHealth mechanism the Government was able to procure essential medicine and medical supplies. The primary healthcare system is functioning and vulnerable groups in the country, including refugees, women and girls, female-headed households, people living with HIV and in prisons, children and persons with special needs and disabilities maintain their access to quality essential health services, including with UN support and coordination of the Government and international community response.

1- CPRP = Country Preparedness and Response Plan
2- GHRP = Global Humanitarian Response Plan

3- SERP = Socio-Economic Recovery Program



COVID-19 effects on essential health services were mitigated by the strengthening of the national health system capacity through UN support - US\$ 80 million mobilized

Establishing international coordination to deliver strategic, technical, and operational support through existing mechanisms and partnerships

Scaling up country preparedness and response operations, infection prevention and control in healthcare settings and awareness raising through risk communication and community engagement.

Delivering emergency health services and life-saving medical supplies to maintain essential health services



Support in procurement of 100 high-performance real-time polymerase chain reaction (PCR) thermal cyclers and 150 ventilators.

Value of more than USD 2.7 million

IMPACT: Early control of transmission, testing capacity of the country's laboratory network and recovery rate of critical COVID-19 patients in 24 provinces increased



COVID-19 Emergency Response Project
Procurement and delivery of life-saving and diagnostic equipment for 136 public hospitals and 43 laboratories scale up hospital and laboratory capacities

Value of Euro 45.7 million

IMPACT: Stronger country's health care system in diagnosing and treating COVID-19 patients

Key Support by United Nations



+100

laboratories and hospitals were equipped with test kits and essential medical supplies



+1,800

vulnerable households, including women-headed households, received in-kind support and cash transfers with soft conditionalities



1,450

adolescents and youth, and 380 parents received psychosocial support



15,000

street children reached through awareness activities on COVID-19 prevention behaviours



+10

tonnes of PPE and medical supplies for prevention of COVID-19 for homeless people and young inmates in the Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centres



+ 9 million

people benefited from the mental health essential services during the pandemic



+200 metric tonnes

of PPE items and medical supplies for front line health workers and health facilities and vulnerable populations



86,412

children, including children with disabilities, children without effective caregivers and in juvenile centres, street working children, and infants of mothers in prison were provided with critical supplies, hygiene items and WASH services



+100

CBOs and NGOs serving key populations and people living with HIV across Iran received PPE



+ 21 million

people were reached and 7 million people engaged via digital platforms with COVID-19 prevention and response messages



6,549

refugee households and 32,000 individuals received cash COVID-19 assistance



+1,800

businesses received integrated support on job generation and social protection



11,000

refugee households received hygiene packages, cleaning materials and awareness raising sessions on COVID-19 led by professional health workers



Mobile health care centers

for vulnerable populations established in remote areas

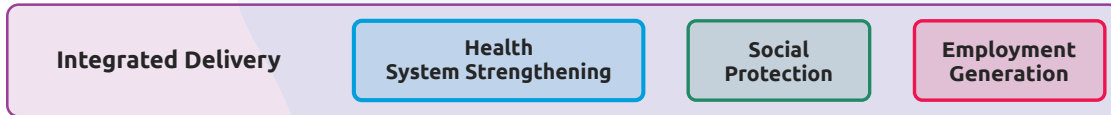


30,000

vulnerable refugees in 20 refugee settlements received food assistance, PPE and hygiene items, counselling and legal advice, and benefitted from improvements of infrastructures within the settlements



A **National Deployment and Vaccination Plan** was finalized with UN support covering the deployment, implementation and monitoring of COVID-19 vaccines across the country, including a phased roll out of COVID-19 vaccination for vulnerable and priority population and the general public at the final stage. The UN worked closely with the Ministry of Health in preparing and strengthening the logistics and cold chain equipment for efficient transportation and delivery of vaccines and supported the government in procurement of vaccines through the COVAX mechanism.



The UN Iran Covid-19 Socio-Economic Recovery Programme (SERP), with the support of the Government of I.R. Iran, focuses on the integration of three core areas intervention of the UNDAF and the 2019 UN Technical Assistance Package to alleviate the impact of sanctions: (1) health system strengthening, (2) protecting people: safety net for vulnerable populations (3) promotive-measures: building economic resilience through employment generation. UN-Iran is undertaking resource mobilization efforts for SERP programme implementation in the amount of US\$20 to 50 million. This offer builds on the global UN Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19, and the UN Technical Assistance Package of UN Iran endorsed by the Government, and is implemented by UNCT in an integrated manner jointly with national partners.

UN Iran Socio-Economic Recovery Programme



Rapid Socio-Economic Response Initiative against COVID-19 (RASER) under UN-Iran SERP

- Conditional transfers, institutional procurement schemes and job generation
- Value of more than US\$ 2.7 million
- IMPACT:** Vulnerable households develop resilience

Intends to support 92,000 vulnerable households through social protection initiatives and employment generation support in 4 provinces

- Establishing 50,000 new micro and small enterprise and employment possibilities
- Conditional Cash Transfer model targeting 42,000 vulnerable households

The RASER, an innovative initiative under UN-Iran SERP led by UNDP with technical collaboration of UNICEF and UNFPA, is being implemented in Tehran, Hormozgan and Lorestan, three provinces most affected by COVID19 in the country. The initiative is implemented in close partnership with the Vice-Presidencies for Women and Family Affairs and, Rural and Deprived Areas, Ministries of Economic Affairs and Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare. In 2020, over 2405 new job opportunities were generated through the promotion of alternative and 'green'

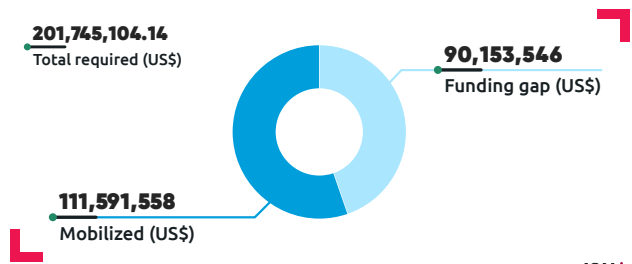


livelihoods and supporting micro and small enterprises in COVID-19 impacted areas focusing primarily on women headed households and women’s cooperatives. This field-tested approach will be scaled up across other provinces in Iran within the next two years.

To reduce economic vulnerabilities caused by the pandemic, conditional cash transfers and in-kind support to about 42,000 households were co-designed by the Government and UN for four pilot provinces severely affected by COVID-19. This complements existing national social protection coverage, with improved access to health care, learning and nutrition. After completion of the pilot phase this initiative will be applied in other provinces affected by the pandemic.

COVID-19 Response Funding and Resource Mobilization

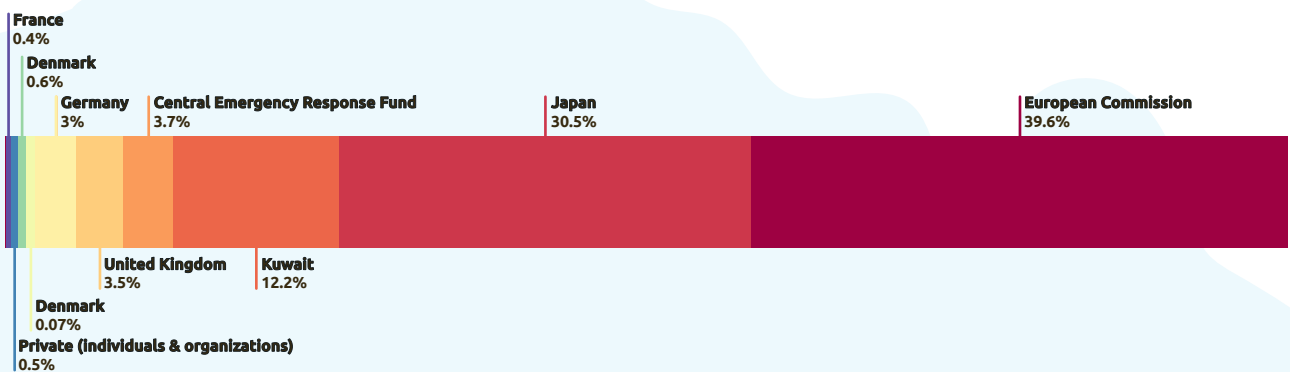
It has been estimated that the resources required to assist the country to control the COVID-19 pandemic would be about US\$201 million, of which about US\$111 million has been mobilized by UN agencies and international NGOs, but there is a remaining gap of about US\$90 million.



UN Iran COVID-19 response by agencies



Largest Contributors of COVID-19 Response



Covid-19 in Iran: Health Personnel between Fear, Courage and Hope

'What I feared the most was that my husband would get infected with Covid-19, and it unfortunately happened. My husband was a nurse at the hospital's emergency ward, and he contracted Covid-19,' says Mohaddeseh Rezazadeh, a young nurse at Tehran's Sina Hospital. 'We had to put him in isolation for 14 days and I was so worried about his worsening health condition all this time,' she says. 'What kept me hopeful throughout these days, was seeing Covid-19 patients hospitalized in our ward getting discharged in complete health.'

Since the start of the outbreak, UN agencies operating in Iran have been supporting protection of Iran's health personnel and front line workers, who have borne the heaviest burden, against COVID-19 through the provision of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including 63.5 metric tons procured by UNICEF.

Mohaddeseh says that having access to PPE is reassuring and heart-warming for her and her fellow colleagues at Sina Hospital. 'When I wear a shield or a mask and go to the bedside of patients, I worry much less if the patient coughs. Though you can never be absolutely sure, but it still feels reassuring.

Fariba Hajimohammadi, a head nurse with over 20 years of experience currently working at Tehran's Sina Hospital, speaks of her conflicting emotions when attending to Covid-19 patients. 'When I step into the ward early in the morning, I feel stressed and worried, but as I enter and look into the eyes of the patients who need me and consider me as someone who can bring them hope, then my worries disappear. At the end of my shift when I leave the ward, I feel so blessed that I was able to do something for them,' she says.

Fariba and Mohaddeseh shared one thing in common as they described their feelings of seeing recovered patients: the sparkle in their eyes and the joy in their voices. 'You don't know what a great feeling it is to see someone who needed oxygen mask to breathe a while ago, has now fully recovered and can walk back home on their own feet,' says Fariba as she returns to the ward with a smile of satisfaction.

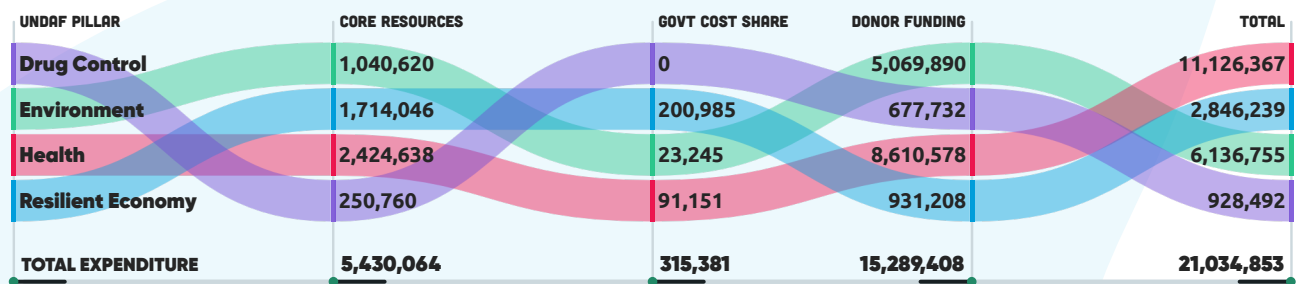


Chapter 2: UN development System Support to National Development Priorities Through the Cooperation Framework

2.1. Overview of Cooperation Framework Results

The UN's work and support to the people in the country became significantly more important with the emergence of COVID-19 in early 2020. Taking a flexible and responsive approach, the UN in consultation with the Government, shifted its priorities, while at the same time implementing, as appropriate, key areas of the work previously planned under the UNDAF. The common strategies of the UNDAF implementation in 2020 were supporting government in developing its institutional capacities, achieving multi-disciplinary approaches to development, policy advice and providing technical expertise, knowledge generation, sharing of best practices and facilitating South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

The results achieved during the fourth year of the UNDAF cycle, through a combined delivery of **US\$ 21,034,853** under UNDAF Pillars representing almost 10 per cent decrease from the previous year, are reflected in the graph below. Of this total, **US\$ 15,289,408** was mobilized from the development partners, **US\$ 315,381** was generated through domestic resources (government cost-sharing) and **US\$ 5,430,064** was contributed from the UN's core resources.



The following table represents the status of achievement of UNDAF 2020 milestones for each Pillar. Milestones and targets were developed by UN agencies at the time the UNDAF was formulated, for accountability and in order to monitor progress annually.

Environment					
Total # of indicators	Total # of milestones	Achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved	No plan for 2020
16	50	17	11	4	18
Health					
Total # of indicators	Total # of milestones	Achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved	No plan for 2020
24	103	46	20	5	32
Resilient Economy					
Total # of indicators	Total # of milestones	Achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved	No plan for 2020
37	69	25	22	4	18
Drug Control					
Total # of indicators	Total # of milestones	Achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved	No plan for 2020
5	21	10	5	0	6
Total					
Total # of indicators	Total # of milestones	Achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved	No plan for 2020
82	243	98	58	13	74

Of the total amount USD 21.03 million recorded as cumulative 2020 UNDAF expenditure, the largest share of the expenditure was spent on **Health (53%)**, followed by **Environment (29%)**, **Resilient Economy (14%)**, and **Drug Control (4%)**.

Challenges

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and its consequent travel and movement restrictions, some of the planned UNDAF activities were suspended, including all incoming and in-country missions, and/or postponed to 2021. On-line meetings, trainings and workshops for governmental and non-governmental experts and experts were conducted by UN to exclude risk of Coronavirus contamination among participants. It is noteworthy that the COVID-19 pandemic and unilateral sanctions complicated production and caused significant delays and disruptions in the medicine and vaccines supply chain, procurement and service delivery, affecting both community-level providers and beneficiaries. The work of the UN in Iran has been impacted by the unilateral sanctions and unilateral coercive measures.

2.2. Cooperation Framework Priorities, Outcomes and Outputs

STRATEGIC PRIORITY PILLAR I: ENVIRONMENT

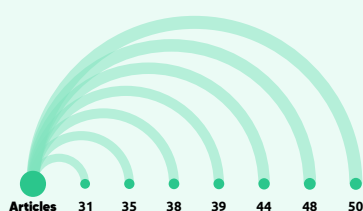
Contributing agencies



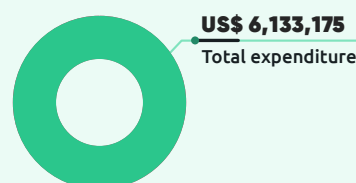
SDGs supported



Alignment with 6th National Development Plan



Expenditure



Status of achievement of 2020 UNDAF milestones under Environment Pillar



Ozone Depleting Substances

(ODS) pollution **minimized in 4 major industrial groups**
Total amount of **225 tons** of ODSs emission reduced in 2020



13 energy efficiency solutions

piloted in 217 residential & 33 public buildings in 2020
1193 tons of CO₂ emission mitigated equal to **8,118,300 (kWh)** energy saving



110 sprayers and 68 metric tonnes of ULV pesticide

delivered to control upsurge of **desert locust** under the **UN-China South-South Cooperation Support Programme**



Key achievements under Outcome 1.1 'Integrated Natural Resource Management'



Policies and Frameworks

Enhanced efficiency in resources management through development of plans and frameworks for sustainable and integrated natural resource management, biodiversity and ecosystem services: 17 wetland management plans were approved and under implementation; 13 additional wetland management planning processes initiated in the new wetlands; protected area business model developed in 5 wetland ecosystems.



Technical Expertise and Policy Advice

Accelerated rehabilitation of Urmia Lake through drought vulnerability impact assessment, identification of water saving hot spots, expansion of the sustainable agriculture water management covering 191 villages with more than 19,000 ha of farmlands and scaling up of the sustainable agriculture model. Sustainable rural development initiatives on carbon sequestration started in 5 new pilots, and upscaling of participatory natural resources management activities in desert and fragile ecosystems initiated in North Khorasan, South Khorasan, Golestan and Yazd provinces.



Institutional Capacity

Strengthened institutional capacities of national experts through knowledge sharing and trainings, including on real water saving in agriculture sector; agriculture stress index system; collaborative crop mapping; environmentally sustainable healthcare facilities; promotion of healthy cities and establishment of a health city network in Iran; healthcare waste management, hand hygiene, environmental cleaning, and sanitation; etc.



Sand and Dust Storms

The UN Iran has started new initiatives to support the country mobilise international expertise on high impact interventions on Sand and Dust Storms.¹ For example, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) links the arms with Iran's Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization (FRWO) under an inter-regional project to catalyse national, regional and international investments and actions to enhance resilience against Sand and Dust Storms in the agriculture sector of the country. In addition, UNDP has launched negotiations on the establishment of a multilateral dialogue on Sand and Dust Storms between Iran and neighbouring countries, including Afghanistan, to manage Sand and Dust Storms, which hit the country from the west and southwest borders. WHO also in early 2020 supported an initiative to review Situation of Health Response to Sand and Dust Storms in Iran. Further, any activities on climate change and health adaptation includes a specific component on SDS, due to the identified health implications of Sand and Dust Storms.



Small Grants Programme

In 2020, Small Grants Programme (SGP) Iran was also involved in COVID-19 response intervention, as a delivery mechanism for implementing the Risk Communication Community Engagement. The SGP was not successful in 2020 in securing GEF allocations. SGP Global through its collaboration for Global Support Initiative Community Conserved Area allocated a fund to GEF SGP Iran in late 2019 to support the work done in community conserved areas. This fund was operationalized and implemented during 2020.

Key achievements under Outcome 1.2 'Low Carbon Economy and Climate Change'



Policies & Frameworks

Improved institutional arrangements in support of the National Mitigation Plan through the establishment of the national White Certificate system for increasing energy efficiency in building sector and carbon mitigation, and customs quota and licensing system to control importation of ozone depleting substances; revision of the 19th of the National Energy Conservation Building code and development of the two new national standards for energy efficiency.



Institutional Capacity

Enhanced institutional capacities of the government partners to meet HCFC and POP phase out commitments resulting in ozone depleting substances pollution minimization in four major industrial groups thus reducing 225 tons of ODSs emission in 2020. A national designated authority office was established through the Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme. National capacity was built in utilizing an updated software for evidence-based planning on air pollution (AirQ+) using relevant data.

1- The present report only presents information on the UN's partnership with Iran and does not cover Government programmes in the country on Sand and Dust Storms





Policy Advice and Advocacy

Improved data compilation and analysis of health system climate vulnerability and impact of climate change on non-communicable disease, communicable diseases, air quality diseases, water, food, and nutrition diseases, and disasters and emergencies in 6 provinces.



Technology

Improved national emission inventory system through streamlining of the national energy monitoring information system, design of a new digital platform energy efficiency in buildings, procurement of equipment and establishment of the measuring and verification (M&V) technology to enforce the new energy efficiency building code. The resilience of Tehran disaster management administration was strengthened through provision of solar panel and solar water heater systems to 9 disaster response centres. Through piloting 13 energy efficiency solutions in 217 residential buildings and 33 governmental/public buildings 1193 tons of CO₂ emission were mitigated equal to 8,118,300 (kWh) energy saving in 2020.

Iran's Lake Urmia: A Collective Effort to Rescue a Dying Lake¹

Lake Urmia, located in a mountainous region in the northwestern Iran, is one of the country's most important ecosystems. It was once the second largest saltwater lake in the world. Since 1995 it began receding due to droughts, dams and overuse of underground water sources and rivers by local farmers. In 2013, its surface area was only 700 km². An estimated 6 billion tons of salt and dust threatened to blow over the surrounding area, devastating farmland and posing a health risk to the local population.

Rescuing the Urmia lake has been an international effort with the generous financial support from the Government of Japan. The national authorities and the Urmia Lake Restoration Program have been supported by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Programme and the United Nations Development Programme. Sustainable agriculture techniques were introduced, including the use of organic pest control and water saving methods for irrigation, as well as initiatives to enhance livelihoods and resilience of the local communities around the lake basin.

The collective efforts of the Government, the United Nations and the local communities to rehabilitate the Urmia lake have seen results. The lake's surface now lies 1,271.75 meters above sea-level, spreading over 3,080 km². There has been a 35% reduction in water use by local farms and a 40% reduction in the use of traditional pesticides. The improving environment is helping new industries to take root, such as ecotourism, bird watching and branding for local products. The brine shrimp, which had disappeared from the lake's ecosystem due to high salinity, is returning. The number of water birds, such as flamingos, has also increased from 4,000 during the worst period to 60,000 in 2019.

In 2020, sustainable agriculture water management practices were further expanded in Lake Urmia Basin covering 191 villages with more than 19,000 ha of farmlands. A technical proposal on an integrated watershed management in one sub-basin of Urmia Lake Basin was developed; and the drought vulnerability impact assessment for the Urmia Lake Basin completed and presented to stakeholders at national and provincial levels. An innovative approach on crop mapping for the Urmia Lake basin undertaken in 2020 allows the Urmia Lake Restoration Program to more accurately assess the water resources and water consumptions in agricultural practices.

The Government and the United Nations continue to work shoulder to shoulder on the lake Urmia restoration to increase its ecological level to 1,274 meters above sea level by 2025.

¹- The present report only focuses on UN's partnership with Iran, it does not include the contribution of the government of Iran to the restoration of Lake Urmia, which was mainly done through an inter-ministerial entity called the Urmia Lake Restoration Programme (ULRP).



STRATEGIC PRIORITY PILLAR II: HEALTH

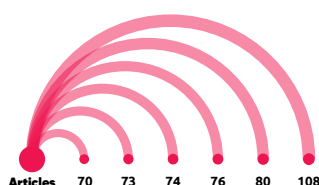
Contributing agencies



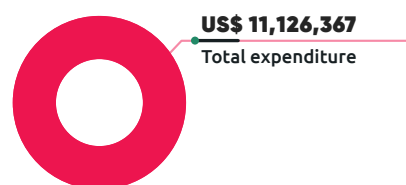
SDGs supported



Alignment with 6th National Development Plan



Expenditure



Status of achievement of 2020 UNDAF milestones under Health Pillar



Key achievements under Outcome 2.1 'Universal Health Coverage'



Capacity Building

Enhanced national institutional capacities on the UHC financial risk protection based on institutionalizing the household income and expenditure survey guidelines and developing training curriculum; development of the PHC country profile and rolling out the online PHC practice training course in the context of COVID-19 with the UN support.



Policy Advice

Strengthened regulatory mechanisms and capacities for vaccine and medicine production and food and drug administration (FDA) through the provision of needed standards for FDA controlled reference laboratories, integration of e-prescription system and prequalification process.

Key achievements under Outcome 2.2 'Prevention and control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD)'



Policy Advice and Frameworks

A comprehensive multi-sectoral mechanism was rolled-out nationwide. The Iran NCD Committee with coordination committees established in 24 provinces of the country. Capacity of national counterparts were enhanced on NCD planning and implementation through organizing a course for mid-managers at national and provincial level. 9 million people enjoyed NCDs and mental health essential services amid the pandemic as the result of development of the NCDs and mental health response plans to COVID-19.



Regulatory and Policy Advice

Enhanced road safety and reduced traffic injuries as a result of selecting Iran as a demonstration site out of 22 countries in the region and piloting a 'Speed management' project in 3 provinces with about 1400 km corridor; revision of law enforcement protocols and SOPs on speed limit setting, speed calming; development of surveillance, monitoring and evaluation framework and social marketing package; scaling up of trauma registry in 10 provinces and development of protocol of measuring severity of crash injuries.



Normative Support and Protection

Healthier population of the country as a result of ongoing project 'Sustainable Waterpipe Elimination' (SWE) accomplished already in 10 provinces; implementation of the Tobacco Free Initiative in 63 cities and 63 villages covering 3 million people and strengthening capacity of UMSs for conduction of tobacco control programme. Tobacco tax VAT bill was submitted and proposal on plain packaging was approved by the President's office in line with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Suffering of vulnerable children was alleviated through procurement and dissemination of 5.8 metric tonnes of specialized wound dressings for children suffering from Epidermolysis bullosa or Butterfly Skin disease.





South-South Cooperation

Enhanced skills and capacity of national institutions to promote the health and social wellbeing of children, adolescents and youth with specific focus on high-risk and hard to reach adolescents as a result of exchange of experiences on Adolescent Wellbeing & HIV prevention between Iran and Kazakhstan, development and piloting a positive life skills training package for high-risk adolescents and trainings of the personnel of the related ministries.

Key achievements under Outcome 2.3 'Prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and other Communicable Diseases'



Normative Support and Protection

Smooth implementation of the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS through key interventions on HIV/AIDS prevention, expediting testing and treatment and to mitigate some of the worst effects of the HIV/COVID-19 pandemic through UN partnership with the National AIDS Programme. The first-ever National Anti-Discrimination Bylaw in health care settings was developed in the context of ethical framework for the 5th National AIDS Strategy. The COVID-19 effect on the key populations (KP) and people living with HIV (PLHIV) was minimized through risk communication and community engagement activities, small-grants support and procurement of PPE items for more than 100 NGOs serving KPs and PLHIV across Iran.



Capacity Development

Strengthened national capacities in surveillance of HIV and STI and developing models for differentiated HIV services for key populations at higher risk, including introduction of HIV self-test; case finding and treatment of malaria through provision of rapid diagnostics, larvicides, insecticides and medicines; coordinated response to anti-microbial resistance, infection prevention and control; the rotavirus surveillance through procurement of rapid diagnostics and equipment; the national COVID-19 laboratory network, clinical management and introduction of the COVID-19 vaccines through the vaccine management study, NDVP cold chain re-assessment.



Awareness Raising and Prevention

Improved information sharing between the private and public health sectors and enhanced capacity for provision of quality Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV and AIDS and adolescent well-being services through the production of 7,000 booklets and procurement of 200,000 rapid HIV tests to encourage HIV testing among pregnant women using private health care providers. 57 000 people who inject drugs, 90 000 non-injecting drug users, 29 000 high-risk-behaviour women, and 293 000 prisoners gained knowledge of their HIV status. At least 108 734 PWID and 51 389 high-risk women accessed HIV prevention services; 7,900 refugees received drug harm reduction services; and 7 adolescent well-being clubs were supported on STI and HIV prevention for at risk adolescents and youth.

Key achievements under Outcome 2.4 'Promoting health throughout the course of life'



Capacity Building and Knowledge sharing

Strengthened national capacities in maintaining reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services through the UN technical support and knowledge sharing, including training and webinars on monitoring baby-friendly hospitals and community breastfeeding initiatives, accelerated action for adolescent health, sexual and reproductive health research. A virtual platform was established at MoHME and medical universities enabling provision of the mental health and psychosocial support during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Protection and Nutritional Security

Adverse impact of the pandemic on children's health and nutrition was prevented through development of a package of interventions for prevention of growth failure and stunting; technical support to the Ministry of Health for flour fortification with vitamin D3 for piloting in less advantaged areas; procurement and administration of 2 million mega doses of Vitamin A for children under age five in 8 priority provinces; delivery of 2,172 food packages to vulnerable children in Sistan and Baluchestan province and 26,518 packages of complementary food for children of incarcerated mothers.



Life-Saving Medicines to Children With Cancer Across Iran

Through its collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education in Iran, the World Health Organization (WHO) brought into the country a number of life-saving medicines for paediatric cancer that were crucial in treating children at risk due to the scarcity or unavailability of specialised pharmaceuticals in light of the existing unilateral sanctions.

The consignment that was funded by the European Union within the framework of a joint project titled 'Responding to emerging needs and enhancing the resilience of the most vulnerable, especially children, youth, and women in Iran' included medicines that are efficacious in treating the most common paediatric cancers in Iran.

In 2020, there were 2,219 childhood cancer cases registered in Iran. Leukaemia, brain and central nervous system tumours, lymphoma, and bone cancer are the most common cancers among children in this country. While insurance companies in Iran cover 70 per cent of cancer treatment services on outpatient level and 90 percent on inpatient level, compensation of the remaining costs is still not easy for families. Nearly 68% of families in Iran go under the line of poverty when a family member is diagnosed with cancer, according to Dr. Ali Motlagh, Head of Cancer Office at Ministry of Health and Medical Education of I.R. Iran.

The re-imposition of unilateral sanctions in 2018 has affected the availability of and access to important medicines in Iran. While the majority of cancer medicines are produced in Iran, most of the raw materials needed for chemotherapy are imported. Despite most medical products being exempt from the sanctions in theory, uncertainty regarding the humanitarian exceptions and sanctions on international financial transfers has led to pharmaceutical shortages in the country and an increase in prices for medicines, which affects severity of morbidity and survival rates.

"I work day and night to be able to afford the expenses for my son, but even when I have the money, I cannot find the medicines," says Arsin's father. Arsin, who has just undergone a bone marrow transplant needs medicines to control the side effects of his surgery. But his mother says they cannot find the medicines, in spite of the medical teams doing the best they can in clinical care."

By the time the project implementation draws to a close, it will have procured and delivered 12 critical cancer medications worth nearly US\$ 2 million to 32 specialised cancer treatment centres or hospitals covering patients in all 31 provinces of the country including MAHAK Charity Hospital in Tehran. The availability of these cancer medicines in the country will not only help lessen the children's suffering, but also contribute to lightening the protracted burden on the affected families.



WHO Iran - Arsin's mother sits next to her son at the childhood cancer treatment ward while his father watches from outside the window.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY PILLAR III: RESILIENT ECONOMY

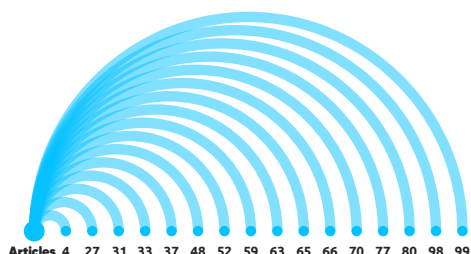
Contributing agencies



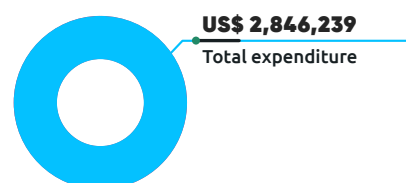
SDGs supported



Alignment with 6th National Development Plan



Expenditure



Status of achievement of 2020 UNDAF milestones under the Resilient Economy Pillar



Key achievements under Outcome 3.1 'Inclusive growth, poverty eradication and social welfare'



Capacity Building

National and subnational capacities were strengthened for data collection and analysis of the situation of child poverty, evaluation of social programmes and policies; design and implementation of integrated child-sensitive social protection programmes and child-sensitive public financial analysis and management. A Situational analysis mapping was completed in four pilot provinces to feed in the development of a multi-sectoral policy note to enhance programme effectiveness and to establish a robust national monitoring and evaluation system for prevention of child maltreatment. Professional capacity of 650 judges, prosecutors, counselors and school principals in eleven provinces was increased on data collection, monitoring and evaluating the situation of children in judicial proceedings.



South-South Cooperation

A partnership with the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth in Brazil (IPC-IG) enhanced national capacities on poverty monitoring and efficiency of the social protection system. South-South exchanges were facilitated through sharing Iran's experience on its COVID-19 education response, Child Friendly City Initiative (CFCI) and social protection including universal basic income. 14 best practices from Iran were featured in the global CFCI Inspire Awards Compendium.



Normative and Technical Support

The national authorities (MCLSW) were supported to synthesize studies and information and consult with stakeholders in order to draft the executive regulation of the Law for Protection of Children and Adolescents, which was adopted in June 2020 and has strengthened protection of the rights of children in the country.

Key achievements under Outcome 3.2 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and improved nutrition'



Policy Frameworks

16 new alternative livelihoods were initiated in Zarivar, Quarter, Helleh and Parishan wetland areas with a specific focus on income generating activities for the poor. Relevant rural development policies and required SOPs based on best practices of the social mobilization and micro-credit funds in the country were developed. A diagnosis analysis was conducted, and a project document prepared to pilot sustainable rural development in 9 pilots across the country.

Key achievements under Outcome 3.3 'Sustainable urbanization'





Policy Frameworks

Improved the efficacy and effectiveness of solid waste management through a new UN's initiative with Tehran Municipality on integrated waste management in Tehran. The diagnostic report of the National Urban Policy Programme was finalized; and a comprehensive conceptual market model to issue environmental education certificate in connection with the pilots and stakeholders' mapping was prepared. The established system for control of harmful gases for environment and greenhouse gases was further enhanced and maintained to ensure systematic control over importation of these gases.

Key achievements under Outcome 3.4 'Natural disaster management'



Capacity Development

Institutional capacities were enhanced to implement integrated policies and plans on risk management, mitigation, resilience to natural disasters and assessment of their impact, as well as protection of the most vulnerable population through mainstreaming of the PDNA model in the national disaster management processes covering 17 sectors; holding 12 technical courses and trainings; incorporation of the psychological first aid package in the IRCS rescue and relief teams curriculum; supporting CPIE interventions, establishment of case management systems and small scale infrastructures and job generation activities in the flood-affected in Golestan and Lorestan provinces.

Key achievements under Outcome 3.5 'Sustainable employment'



Technical Support

Sustainable employment policies and programmes and entrepreneurship policy-making capacities were supported through piloting a new job generation approach called "Innovative Region" in three provinces to be upscaled across the country at the next stage; generation/revival of 2405 new job opportunities, including MSME development, strengthening energy service companies and women cooperatives in the three provinces most affected by the C19 pandemic; creation of 700 job opportunities in IT and 1500 in garment sections; development of 140 business models for home businesses, establishment and equipping of creative tourism and handicrafts HUBs in Kermanshah and Kurdistan.



Policy and Frameworks

Strengthened technical and vocational education policies through supporting development of a framework for establishment of the National Digital Innovation Hub and Digital Business Development Platform; drafting of the laws & regulations on IT business organization; concluding a multilateral agreement with the Tose Taavon Bank and the Cooperative Investment Guarantee Fund on employment and entrepreneurship for youth and female heads of households; and vocational training of 300 people.

Key achievements under Outcome 3.6 'Population and development'



Data and Analysis

Increased availability of population data and analysis to inform national plans and frameworks on the implications and benefits of demographic dividend through drafting a roadmap on harnessing the Demographic Dividend with focus on youth and women empowerment and enhancing the female-headed households monitoring mechanism to include provincial and sub-provincial levels and new indicators, which will be integrated into the single registry system to provide social services to FHH. The Statistical Center of Iran was equipped with a dashboard containing population-related sustainable development indicators, including SDG indicators.



Policy Support

Increased availability of evidence to support national policies and action plans to address population dynamics through a conceptual framework for formulation of the sectoral action plan for the National Document for Older People covering health, empowerment, social support and protection, infrastructure, cultural development and dignity as well as sustained resource mobilization. The SCI is now equipped with the knowledge on indicators related to older people including their demographic, socio-economic and health status.

Key achievements under Outcome 3.7 'Sustainable tourism and cultural heritage'



Frameworks and Capacity Building

Implementation of the national tourism strategy was supported through measures to develop a Sustainable Tourism Masterplan and identification of an international expert to define its scope, timeline, to collect the relevant data and advise on the development of the masterplan content. National capacities were built on safeguarding and risk management of the cultural heritage through workshop for museums managers, curators and fire departments.



Supporting Women-Headed Households 'A story of Burgeoning Hope'

Narges was at her wits' end. The responsibility of supporting her young family was on her slender shoulders. She knew she would have to go out and earn, to meet the needs of the household. But where would she find work?

Azar from Boroujerdi village, a local facilitator of the Rapid Socio-Economic Response (RASER) project, stepped in to give her a choice. She offered Narges a job in the almond-processing unit she had started in the village under UNDP RASER project.

This project is being implemented in over 90 villages in three provinces - Lorestan, Hormozgan and Tehran. With the support of the Government, a total of 5,000 vulnerable households were identified. To date about 2,500 vulnerable population including women headed households have been recruited in either restored or newly established micro, small & medium enterprises.

Azar's almond-processing workshop is an example of a recovered and then expanded micro-business under RASER. For Azar, Narges' comments about how her life has improved are a big boost. "Such words empower me to overcome the challenges an entrepreneur encounters", she says.

Meanwhile, Narges no longer needs to worry about finding a job. Nor does she have to grapple with a long commute. She has found congenial employment in her own village working hand-in-hand with other empowered women. Both Narges and her young son are looking forward to a brighter future!



STRATEGIC PRIORITY PILLAR IV: DRUG CONTROL

Contributing agencies

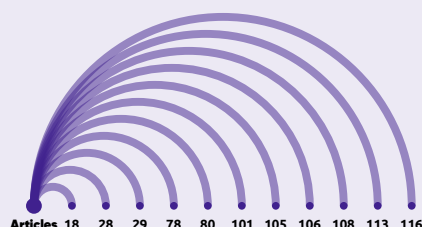


WHO UNICEF UNODC

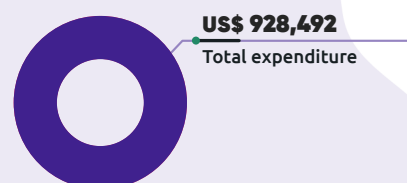
SDGs supported



Alignment with 6th National Development Plan



Expenditure



Status of achievement of 2020 UNDAF milestones under Drug Control Pillar



Key achievements under Outcome 4.1 'Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment'



Prevention

Improved tailor-made and comprehensive school-based programmes for prevention of risky behaviors and addiction among adolescents and youth through implementation of 'Family and Schools Together' programme for 1200 families in pre-schools in 31 provinces; Drug prevention life skills programme 'Payam-e-Man' for 10-13 years old children in 7 adolescent well-being clubs and in the six provinces of the country; Piloting of 'Strong Families' programme in 10 centres for 250 families; life skills programme 'Tahamtan' for vulnerable adolescent 14-19 years old in 6 provinces of the country and in 6 schools for adolescent boys and girls in Tehran.



Protection

Strengthened protection against Coronavirus and improved social behaviour of at-risk populations through training of 120 counsellors on telephone counselling programme ; development and distribution of a brochure on COVID-19 prevention among 6,000 people in drug use hotspots and procurement of personal protective equipment and medical supplies for homeless drug users and inmates.



Treatment

Expanded coverage and quality of comprehensive evidenced informed public health services and programmes on drug use prevention, treatment and care and harm reduction through the development of packages, protocols and SOPs on drug abuse treatment for children and adolescents; translation and dissemination of family drug use disorders treatment programme for youth and distribution among counterparts and centers involved in provision of drug treatment services.



South-South Cooperation

Enhanced knowledge sharing through national, regional and international networking through provision of equipment for Regional Capacity Building and Research Centre in the Iranian National Center for Addiction Studies (INCAS), consultation, research, training and development of eLearning package on the treatment of ATS use disorders. INCAS personnel are now able to provide better drug treatment services using the equipment provided by UN and train Afghan physicians and health workers.

Key achievements under Outcome 4.2 'Drug Supply Reduction'



Regional Cooperation

Enhanced regional and international partnerships and networking through the facilitation of the Joint Planning Cell in Tehran. Regional cooperation among Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan at the field and senior officials' levels was revamped by UN under the Triangular Initiative. In 2020, Iran had 49 cases of information sharing with Afghanistan and 21 cases with Pakistan.





Security

Strengthened law enforcement mechanisms and capacities resulting in more efficient border management, illicit drugs seizures from individuals leaving Iran to third destinations and interdiction of drug criminals through procurement of drug-detecting dogs and training of Iranian Customs handlers, installing a body scanner device for detection of concealments inside human body at the International Airport in Tehran and training of the airport security personnel. The total amount of 1147167 kg of various drugs was seized in 2020, which was a 41% increase, and 2196 criminal groups were dismantled. More than 11.64 kg of various types of drugs were directly seized by using body scanner device at IKIA and the drug detecting dogs are responsible for 12% of the annual country seizure.



Capacity Development

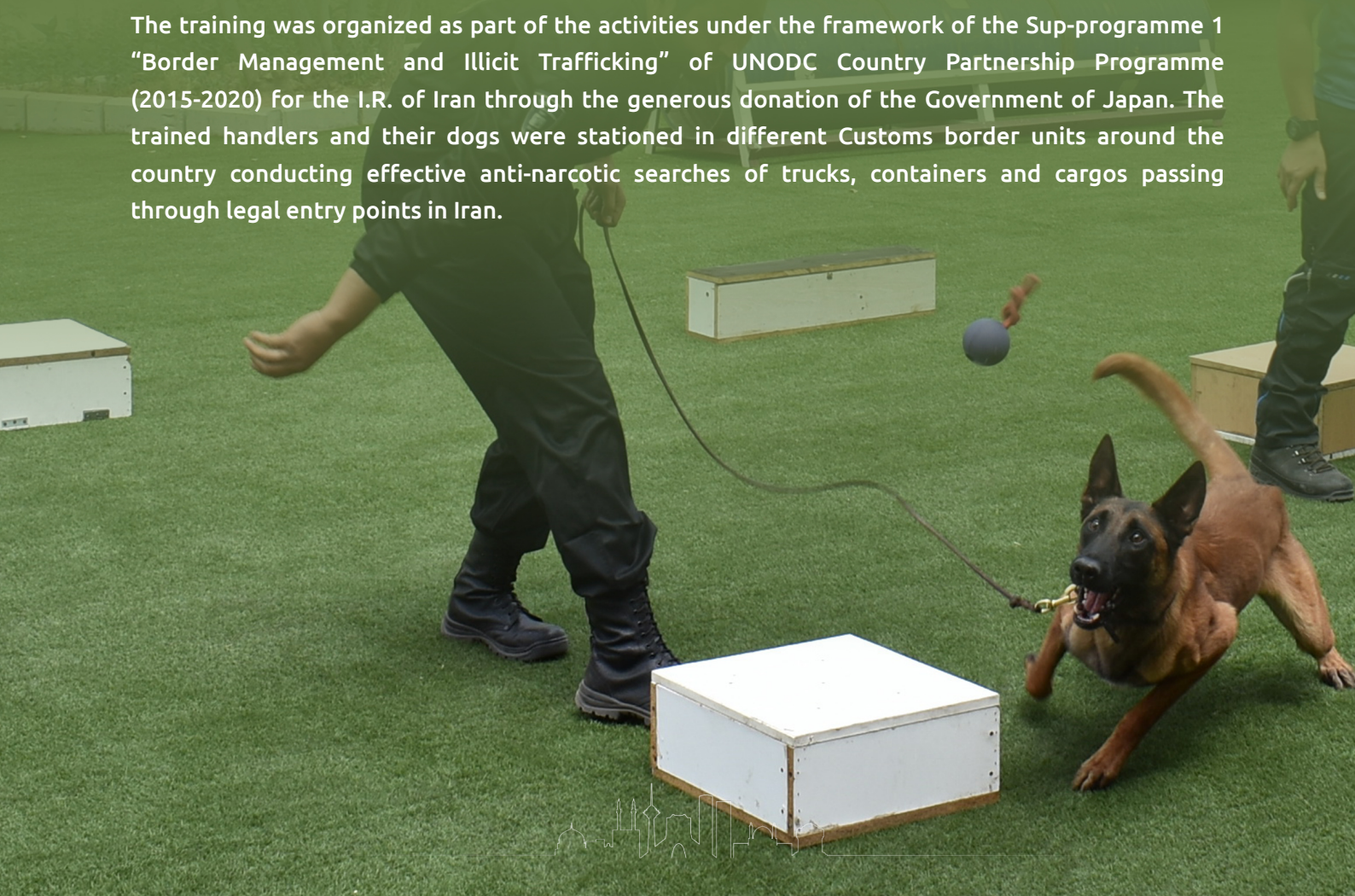
Strengthened analytical and scientific capacities and knowledge through online eLearning sessions on clandestine laboratories and precursors identification for personnel from Anti-Narcotics Police, Customs and Drug Control Headquarters resulting in better identification of seized drugs and precursors by Iranian drug testing laboratories, provision of quality reports to UN laboratories under the International Collaborative Exercise for performance assessment and corrective actions.

UNODC Trains Iranian Customs K9 Units Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic

For the past nine years, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been supporting the work of the Iranian Customs Organization dog-training Center through the provision of technical assistance, drug-detecting dogs and training for both dogs and handlers.

Despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the UNODC successfully arranged for the delivery of three fully trained drug detecting dogs to the K9 Centre of the Iranian Customs Anti-narcotic unit in cooperation with the Drug Control Headquarters of the I.R. of Iran. During the four weeks of both practical and online specialized training sessions, Iranian dog handlers in the Customs K9 Centre became familiar with with essential information on dogs' physiology, healthcare, body language and search techniques for discovering of hidden concealments.

The training was organized as part of the activities under the framework of the Sup-programme 1 "Border Management and Illicit Trafficking" of UNODC Country Partnership Programme (2015-2020) for the I.R. of Iran through the generous donation of the Government of Japan. The trained handlers and their dogs were stationed in different Customs border units around the country conducting effective anti-narcotic searches of trucks, containers and cargos passing through legal entry points in Iran.



Support to Partnerships and Financing

UN Iran contributed to development progress in Iran by bringing a range of expertise under the wide spectrum of agencies' mandates. The UN drew on its access to international know-how, experience and best practices; its risk-informed approach to programming; its ability to innovate to build back better; and its convening power, including engagement with international development partners.

Fostering the UN's Collective Response to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic tested the UN Iran's commitment to deliver better and quicker, and underscored the need for integrated approaches to development. Last year, strong partnerships were central to accelerating results at all levels in support of the Government of I.R. Iran's efforts in COVID-19 response and recovery. The Socio-Economic Recovery Programme (SERP) designed by UN Iran fostered the agencies' collective response to the pandemic and built on the comparative advantages of the different UN agencies to deliver as one.

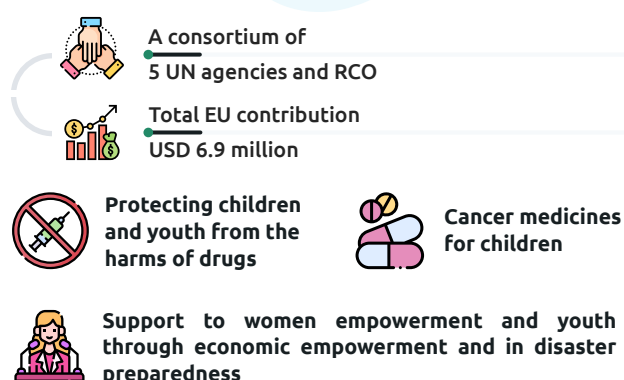
The EU, a Key Partner for UN Iran

Over the course of last year, the UNCT strengthened its collaboration with the European Commission and three strategic partnerships were forged: two joint programmes were funded by the [Directorate-General for International Partnerships \(DG INTPA\)](#) and [Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection \(DG ECHO\)](#), and through the [Humanitarian Air Bridge initiative](#), UN Iran was able to ship COVID-19 supplies into the country.

Partnerships with the EU Forged in 2020

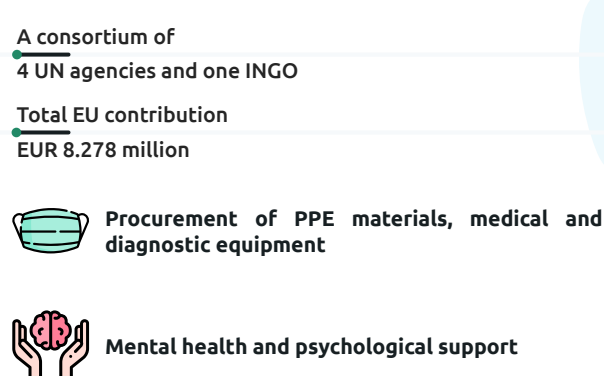
Directorate-General for International Partnerships

Responding to emerging needs and enhancing the resilience of the most vulnerable, especially children, youth, and women in Iran



Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection

UN integrated action to support the efforts of Iran to manage and control the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigate its impacts on the most vulnerable communities



Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection Humanitarian Air Bridge

As part of the EU's global coronavirus response, the EU covered the transport costs and helped deliver 55 tonnes of life-saving medical supplies in Iran.

In addition, within the framework of a multi-year support from DG INTPA, the EU Trade Helpdesk and the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI)¹, in 2020 UN Iran held



the [Europe-Iran Business Forum \(EIBF\)](#), a major international business event focused on economic opportunities in Iran, held entirely online. The EIBF event built on the joint effort of over twenty partners from the public and private sectors, academia, and two international think tanks, including Iran's Trade Promotion Organization, the European House Ambrosetti, the Bourse & Bazaar Foundation, and a number of joint EU-Iran national chambers of commerce. During a three-week period, nearly 3,000 individuals from Iran and European countries attended the industry-focused panel sessions and business networking events, making it the largest-ever summit focused on Europe-Iran economic relations. In addition, 60 Iranian managers (+250 via streaming) received trade-related training, with courses on international business development, web marketing and digital communication, and export markets management.

Strategic Partnerships for Better Results

In 2020 the UN collaborated with the international community, local government, private sector, academia, civil society and others. [A total of \\$156,113,901 was secured, facilitated and spent by United Nations through global funding mechanisms and support from public and private partners.](#)

Last year, UN Iran was also selected by the Government of Iran as strategic partner to implement a 45.7 million EURO grant from the Fast-Track COVID-19 Facility fund of the [World Bank](#) to address the needs of the population most negatively impacted by the pandemic, assist the health sector and increase the availability of selected essential, life-saving medical equipment for the COVID-19 response in the country.

The UN's collaboration with [Vertical Funds](#) - global programs that pool development assistance for a specific issue or theme - was key to strengthening the government's technical capacity on climate finance.

Resulting from the longstanding collaboration with the [Global Fund](#) - the international financing institution designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics - UN Iran leveraged its relationships with national partners, strengthened its work to combat HIV and TB, and supported local health systems during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

Support from the international community was also crucial to advancing sustainable development in Iran. Through the generous support of the [Government of Japan](#), UN Iran was able to promote alternative livelihood opportunities for vulnerable population as well as enhancing sustainability of the fishery industry in the country. In this way, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Iranian Fisheries Organization and local institutions, UN Iran provided technical assistance and promoted Japanese knowhow to improve the quality management system, sustainable fishing practices, and establish a mechanism to monitor and control the stock of yellow-fin tuna.

The UN-International Community Open Working Group (OWG) was established in 2019 as a platform to facilitate partnership and dialogue to calibrate the collective effort of the international community. In 2020, UN Iran regularly met with the International Community through the OWG to share updates, advocate for financial support and coordinate support efforts, especially on COVID-19 response.

1- This partnership was forged by the Non Resident Agency ITC



A consignment of vital UNHCR medical supplies leaves Frankfurt for Tehran, Iran, thanks to EU's Humanitarian Air Bridge.

The UN's work to foster **South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)** grew as a development modality in the partnership with the Government. In 2020, UN Iran worked with national authorities to develop and strengthen the national SSTC policy under the UNDAF and the UN TAP. Catalytic interventions were identified for fostering collective action to help overcome the impact of unilateral sanctions and, under the Socio-economic Recovery Programme, address the impact of COVID 19. Best practices were also identified in the Asia and Pacific region for reducing the risk and negative impact of disasters.

Partnership with **national and international civil society organisations** was also enhanced in 2020 to better respond to the onset of emergencies and support the most vulnerable. Some activities included the procurement of PPE, hygiene and food packages and small grant support to the most vulnerable, including women, children, elderly, people with HIV with disabilities.

The collaboration with the national **NGO Kardouk** empowered about 350 female heads of households in many provinces through job creation and vocational training to produce PPEs during COVID-19. PPEs will be distributed to older person and pregnant women in Elderly Centers and Health Centers.

UN Iran worked closely with the **Norwegian Refugee Council** and, through the Cash Based Transfer platform for refugees, emergency cash was rapidly transferred to support four settlements which were quarantined due to the COVID-19 spread in the country.



Several regional studies in the area of disaster information management were developed by UN

entities with the aim of promoting regional and south-south cooperation including in disaster risk reduction in Asia and the Pacific region. Under the SSTC Framework, support received from the People's Republic of China was crucial to the response to the Desert Locust Infestation in the country and to promoting environmentally friendly management of COVID-19 medical waste in some hospitals in Iran.

Innovation for Development

Innovative solutions were developed to address COVID-19 needs and related implementation challenges. UN Iran in partnership with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology launched a National Innovation Challenge call for innovative solutions to address children and adolescents' challenges during the pandemic. An application using Augmented Reality (AR) to facilitate therapy for the children with autism; an accessible digital library; and a low-cost science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM)-based social robot children can interact with and learn from, were among the 80 innovative solutions developed by start-ups and innovative teams. The winning teams in the National Innovation Challenge will compete in 2021 for the National Innovations for Children Award and receive financial and technical support for the development of their innovative ideas to help the most vulnerable in Iran.

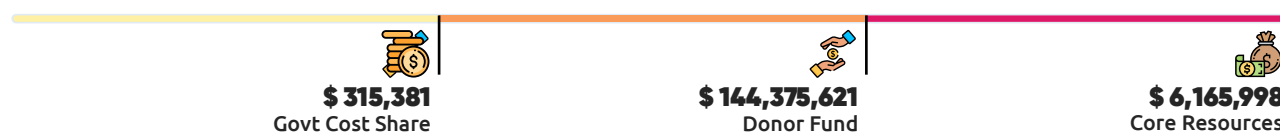
Funding in Numbers – 2020 ¹

In 2020 UN Iran's overall expenditure for development programmes under the current UNDAF, for humanitarian and COVID-19 response amounted to **US\$ 150,857,000**.

¹- The numbers reflected in this session are indicative expenditures, subject to confirmation when 2020 accounts of respective agencies close.

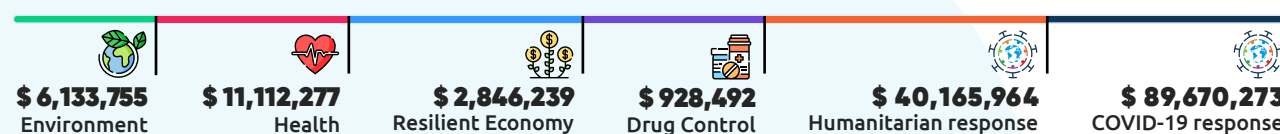


Expenditures by Type in 2020



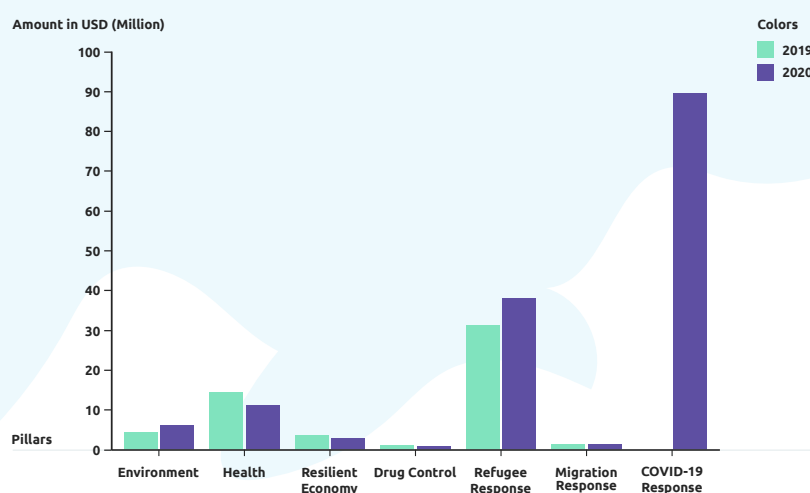
Resources were strategically allocated to UNDAF's pillar and effectively spent, to address humanitarian needs and respond to COVID-19.

Expenditures by UNDAF pillars and Humanitarian response and COVID-19 response



Overall, in 2020 additional 120 % was mobilized and spent compared to 2019, especially for environment, humanitarian support and to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This increase in expenditure stems from significant additional support (+ 173%) received from the donor and partner's community in 2020, especially to provide urgent assistance in addressing COVID-19 related needs.

Expenditures Trends per Pillars, Humanitarian and COVID-19 response 2019 vs 2020



"We live in a complex world. The United Nations cannot succeed alone. Partnership must continue to be at the heart of our strategy. We should have the humility to acknowledge the essential role of other actors, while maintaining full awareness of our unique convening power"

(United Nations Secretary General António Guterres' speech to the General Assembly, 12 December 2016)

Partners' support was crucial to advancing sustainable development in Iran and responding to the needs of the population in Iran. Resources were received from the EU, Member States, pool and Vertical Funds, IFIs and other public and private partners.



Public and Private Partners Provided Support in 2020

 Australia	 Austria	 Belgium	 Bosnia and Herzegovina	 Bulgaria	 Canada
 China	 Denmark	 Finland	 France	 Germany	 Greece
 Holy See	 Hungary	 Indonesia	 Ireland	 Italy	 Japan
 Kuwait	 Lebanon	 Luxembourg	 Montenegro	 The Netherlands	 New Zealand
 Norway	 Poland	 Republic of Korea	 Russia	 Serbia	 Slovakia
 Spain	 Sweden	 Switzerland	 UK	 USA ¹	
 European Commission	 Global Environment Facility (GEF)	 Global Fund (GF)	 Green Climate Fund		
 Iran's Ministry of ICT	 Multilateral Fund for the Montreal Protocol	 OCHA pooled funds	 Poland and Tehran Chamber of Commerce		
 OPEC Fund for International Development	 Sanam Company	 Tejarat Bank	 United Nations funds ²		
 World Bank					

2.4. Results of the UN Working more and Better Together: UN Coherence, Effectiveness and Efficiency

2020 was the second year of the implementation of the **reinvigorated, independent and impartial Resident Coordinator System**, delinked from UNDP, with the UN Resident Coordinator as the highest-ranking representative of the UN Development System at the country level.

The UN reform made the UN Country Team, led by an impartial and empowered Resident Coordinator and supported by capacitated RCO, more agile, united and collaborative yielding **increased inter-agency collaboration, joint analysis and programming, establishment of the new partnerships and joint approaches on harmonization of business operations**. Thus, two new joint programmes were developed and signed with the European Union on “Empowering adolescents and youth in Iran to address their reproductive health needs” and “Mainstreaming of women empowerment and the most vulnerable in disaster preparedness and response”. In partnership with the Government, the UN supported the national socio-economic impact assessment of COVID-19. The UNCT embarked on the development of the new generation Common Country Analysis.

With the purpose of **strengthening the UN coherence and joint approaches** on the ground, six ‘Delivering As One’ core elements were introduced in UN-Iran in 2020, including the formulation of the first ever Business Operations Strategy. It focuses on creating efficiencies in procurement, administration, finance, ICT and human resources. Through the BoS implementation cost savings of about US\$1,5 million is expected to be achieved for the next five-year period (2021-2025).

1- Donations received from US private entities and not from government institutions.

2- UN Funds include support from UNFPA, UNAIDS and Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework, among others.



The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic outbreak served as a litmus test for the repositioned UN Country Team in Iran. At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in Iran, a Crisis Management Team was activated that ensured smooth and timely coordination and implementation of the occupational safety and health measures across all agencies in the country. Amidst unprecedented novel coronavirus pandemic, the **UN delivered on its commitments** articulated in the UNDAF, the Socio-Economic Recovery Programme, the UN Technical Assistance Package and the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees in a coherent and coordinated manner.

While recovering from massive floods in 2019 and economic downturn arising from the impact of the unilateral sanctions, Iran also experienced **severe floods** and **desert locust outbreak** in 2020. National institutions responsible for disaster management were supported by the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM), regional institution of UNESCAP based in Tehran, in responding to floods through provision of international satellite information and imageries.

More than 80,000 people affected by floods in 6 provinces were provided emergency food assistance by UN and 32-ton of flood relief equipment/submersible pumps delivered. 35 heavily flood affected villages of Sistan & Baluchistan province were provided with safe drinking water. Schools in Lorestan, Golestan and Khuzestan provinces that were affected by flooding in 2019 received humanitarian support, including rehabilitation of WASH facilities, provision of educational equipment for 50 schools for children with disabilities and 500 emergency educational kits for 11,156 students and procurement of school furniture and pre-primary education and sports items for 82,100 students. As part of the humanitarian support, 110 ultra-low volume sprayers and more than 68 metric tonnes of ULV pesticide were delivered to the Government to control the upsurge of desert locust under the UN-China South-South Cooperation Support Programme.

In support of the implementation of the new Iran's Disaster Risk Management Law, a **roadmap of the partnership between the UN with the Government of Iran for 2020-2021** was jointly developed with an emphasis on coordination and communication, risk informed planning, people centred preparedness and response, recovery and community-based disaster risk reduction. International and regional technical support were provided to the disaster management system of Iran in developing its National Disaster Management Strategy, National Disaster Risk Reduction Plan of Iran and **integrating disaster risk reduction in the 7th Five-Year National Development Plan of Iran**.

To maximize **advocacy outreach and public awareness** raising in support of its operations and programmes, the UN Country Team harnessed the potential of its social media accounts and traditional communication channels. The UN-Iran's communications outreach, measured by global communications indicators on the number of followers on social media platforms, increased by over 300% in 2020. The UN in Iran also achieved the highest number of placements in the local media of articles and opinion pieces by the UN Secretary-General, 46 in total. Through the UN75 initiative and also through the launch of the new UN Iran website (the first globally with the left to right script, fully translated) the Secretary-General's priorities over the UN75 year were given high profile, as relevant to the local context.



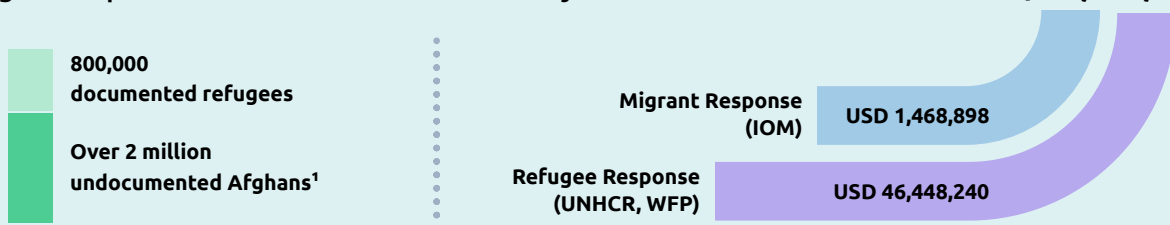
Chapter 3: Refugees and Migrants Response

The Government of Iran generously hosts one of the world's largest and most protracted refugee situations in the world. Iran is also both a transit and a destination country for migrants and others on the move, due to its context, geographic location, demographics and economic opportunities. The 2020 pandemic, natural disasters and socio-economic challenges in Iran had significant impacts on the refugee and migrant situation. These included a significant deterioration in refugees' economic status, challenges in accessing remote education, shortages in medical supplies, and durable solutions for refugees being at an all-time low.

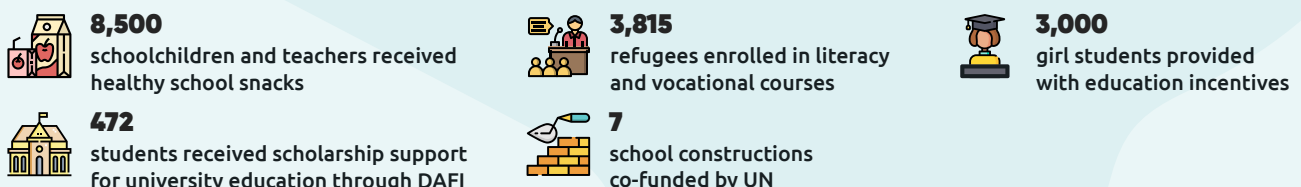
The Government of Iran nevertheless maintained its exemplary services to refugees and migrants and deserves due acknowledgement for its inclusive policies. In line with the overall 2030 objective of "Leaving no one behind," and with the Global Compact on Refugees' emphasis on international responsibility-sharing, a portfolio of projects was devised with the Government of Iran, within the framework of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) Support Platform, with the aim to channel investments into Iran's inclusive public services, work on durable solutions, and push for the documentation of Afghan refugees. The Government granted access to free-of-charge testing and treatment to all foreign nationals, including refugees. Refugees continued to benefit from the inclusive and free-of-charge primary health care system. Access to remote education for refugee and undocumented children was facilitated through television, radio and smart phones.

A regional Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) was advanced through the launch of a Support Platform and Core Group of committed states and entities in late 2019, as well as the development of a portfolio of projects in mid-2020.

The United Nations humanitarian support provided to the government in 2020 on migration and refugees response recorded a combined delivery of humanitarian assistance of **US\$ 48,154,625**



Education



Livelihoods



1- Data received from the Government of Iran (BAFIA) in October 2020. Consultations on figures are ongoing.



Shelter



Reception areas in 8 key locations renovated with UN support



24 shelter projects in 9 settlements targeting 12,500 residents

Health



100,000 vulnerable refugees covered with insurance premium



7,900 refugees benefitted from harm reduction activities



145 refugee children benefited from specialist care (cancer, cardiac, orthopedic and corrective surgeries)



135 refugees received social and psychological counselling and therapeutic services



4 health post constructions and 1 health post rehabilitation funded by UN

Protection



7 community-based projects implemented



4,303 individuals were referred to UN-hired lawyers



12,011 extremely vulnerable refugees received multi-purpose cash assistance



30,300 refugees in 20 settlements received cash and food assistance

Repatriation, Resettlement & Return to Iran



947 refugees voluntarily repatriated to Afghanistan, and 34 qualified Afghans returned



430 migrants-Iranian nationals assisted in return to Iran



346 Afghan refugees resettled in third countries and 110 cases submitted for resettlement



Extremely vulnerable refugees and infected with COVID-19 received one-off cash for basic needs



Cash ration doubled and lentils added to food basket for refugees living in 20 settlements



32,238 refugees received cash support covering a 2 to 3-month period



10,991 refugee households in 20 settlements received 25,582 hygiene packages



Refugee Tailors Ramp up Mask Production, as COVID-19 Lingers in Iran

Roya sets the white fabric under the needle and presses the pedal of her sewing machine, adding finishing touches on the face mask she is making. Around her, rows and rows of other refugees are also churning out masks – much sought-after protection made necessary by the unrelenting COVID-19 pandemic.

“I am proud that I am able to play an important role in the fight against COVID-19,” says Roya, 20, focusing on her stitches. “Every mask I make, I think maybe I or someone I know will wear it, so I make sure it is of the best quality possible.”

Roya works in a tailoring workshop in Sarvestan refugee settlement, in Iran’s southern Fars province, along with around 50 other refugee women. The workshop was established by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and later expanded by the World Food Programme (WFP). It switched its production line at the start of the pandemic to make hygiene masks, in an example of refugees’ direct involvement in the fight against COVID-19, but also of their effort to safeguard their monthly income.

Since February 2020, when the first COVID-19 cases were officially recorded in Iran, Roya and her fellow refugee tailors have produced more than 10,000 masks per day, which are delivered to health and humanitarian service providers across the country.

“We have worked really hard, even during holidays, to make these masks,” says Roya. “I just hope that people will continue wearing masks and taking health precautions seriously, as otherwise our work is wasted.”

“I have not given up on my dreams, but for now, my priority is making sure my family has enough to live on.” Today, the salary she makes helps support her parents and three younger siblings.

UNHCR and WFP continue to support the livelihoods of refugees to build their confidence and acquire marketable skills – making them better able to support their families in the host country and, when the conditions become conducive, in their home country.

“I wish for a world without COVID-19,” says Roya, “but for as long as the pandemic is here, we will produce masks to help our community and the health workers, so that together we can fight COVID-19.”



Chapter 4: UNCT Key Focus for Next Year

Support to the government to mitigate and recover from the socio-economic impact inflicted by the coronavirus epidemic and adverse effects of unilateral sanctions will be the main priority for the UN Country Team. In parallel, the UN Country Team will focus on delivering its commitments articulated in the current UNDAF (2017-22) through coherent and joined up support in attaining of the national development and humanitarian priorities.

Building on the COVID-19 socio-economic impact assessment, the Common Country Analysis and the COVID-19 Socio-Economic Recovery Programme (SERP), the UN will commence the design and formulation the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The UNSDCF will be fully aligned with the Seventh Five-Year Plan of the Economic, Social and Cultural Development of the Islamic Republic of Iran (2022 - 2028). In the context of the new Disaster Management Law, the United Nations will provide support on preparedness and emergency response. The joint undertaking by the United Nations, National Disaster Management Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other related institutions on enhancing preparedness systems, including localization of joint assessment tools, at national and local levels will be continued and enhanced.

In terms of the humanitarian-development nexus through the inclusion of refugees, the Support Platform of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) will be further consolidated and operationalized, through the Core Group of the SP, chaired by the EU in 2021. Such results will be aligned with the portfolio of projects agreed with the Government, which includes support to refugee-inclusive national systems, documentation/regularization of refugees, and durable solutions.

A convening and bridging role in forging partnership and engagement of Iran in accordance with the principles of multilateralism will be pursued by the UN Country Team through the UN-International Community Open Working Group platform.

The UN Country Team in Iran looks forward to working with the Government and its partners in the development of our new Cooperation Framework in the coming months in the spirit of partnership and mutual trust.



List of Acronyms

ATS Amphetamine-type stimulants	BOS Business Operations Strategy	CO2 Carbon dioxide
COVID-19 Coronavirus Disease 2019	CERF Central Emergency Response Fund	CFS Child Friendly Space
CPiE Child Protection in Emergency	EU European Union	FDA Food and Drug Administration
FHH Female Headed Households	GCF Green Climate Fund	GDP Gross Domestic Product
GF Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria	GHRP Global Humanitarian Response Plan	HCFCs Hydrochlorofluorocarbons
HIV/AIDS Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	ICT Information and Communications Technologies	IFI International Financial Institution
IKIA Imam Khomeini International Airport	INGO International Non-Governmental Organization	IPC-IG International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth
IRCS Iranian Red Crescent Society	IT Information Technology	LTA Long Term Agreement
KP Key Population	MENA Middle East and North Africa	MSME Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
NCD Non-Communicable Disease	NDVP National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 vaccines	NDP National Development Plan
NGO Non-Governmental Organization	ODS Ozone Depleting Substances	OWG UN-International Community Open Working Group
PDNA Post Disaster Needs Assessment	PHC Primary Health Care	PLHIV People Living With HIV
PMTCT Prevention of Mother-to-child Transmission	PPE Personal protective equipment	POP Persistent organic pollutant
PWID People who inject drugs	RASER Rapid Socio-Economic Response Initiative against COVID-19	RCO Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator
SCI Statistical Centre of Iran	SDGs Sustainable Development Goals	SERP Socio-Economic Response Plan
SOP Standard Operating Procedure	SPRP Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan	SSAR Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees
STI Sexually transmitted infections	SSTC South-South and Triangular Cooperation	TAP UN Technical Assistant Package
UHC Universal Health Coverage	UBRAF UNAIDS Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework	ULV Ultra-low volume
UNCT United Nations Country Team	UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework	UNSDCF UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks
VAT Value-added Tax	WASH Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	

