

UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2017-2022

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UNICEF at a Glance

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was established in the first United Nations General Assembly meeting on 11 December 1946 to help the children affected by World War II and to provide them with food, medicines and clothes. Today, UNICEF is the largest international organization that deals with children's issues and works in more than 190 countries in the field of health and nutrition, education, protection and access to equal opportunities for all children. UNICEF collaborates with a range of governmental authorities, civil society organizations, religious leaders, academia, and private-sector groups. Crucially, UNICEF's work is supported by voluntary contributions from governments and private donors, trusts and foundations from every corner of the globe.

UNICEF's Support to the Islamic Republic of Iran

UNICEF has been supporting the Government in its work for Iran's children since the early 1950s. UNICEF initially assisted in the vaccination of children against tuberculosis and equipped the country's first pasteurized milk factory. UNICEF later focused on supporting children's health programmes in Iran, such as promoting breastfeeding, vaccination and fighting against diarrhea. This collaboration between UNICEF and the Government was later expanded to other areas, including strengthening the country's healthcare system, maternal, neonatal and child health programmes, fighting all forms of malnutrition, HIV prevention programmes, education, and child protection, as well as social protection to contribute to the welfare of vulnerable children such as children with disabilities, refugee children and children in street situations. UNICEF Iran works collaboratively with other sister UN agencies within the UN Country Team to achieve its mandate and mission for children.

Current Country Programme of Cooperation

The current country programme between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and UNICEF, which is from 2017 to 2022, is focused on several areas of collaboration, including our response to COVID-19 since the outbreak started in 2020 while addressing the socio-economic impact of the sanctions on most vulnerable children:



Children in Judicial Proceedings

We help the Government and people of Iran to protect children in judicial proceedings, including children in conflict with the law, child victims and witnesses of crime, and refugee children, in line with national and international instruments.

Some joint interventions with the Judiciary include:

- Train relevant professionals i.e. judges, prosecutors, attorneys, law enforcement forces and social workers on protection of children in judicial proceedings, with a view to promoting application of alternatives to punishment.
- Support strengthening of aftercare programmes for social reintegration of children in conflict with the law.
- Support capacity-building of relevant professionals on application of the newly adopted Law on Protection of Children and Adolescents (2020).
- Development of national guidelines for relevant professionals on protection of children affected by migration and conducting relevant trainings.

Some joint interventions with the National Body on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (NBCRC) under the Ministry of Justice include:

- Support to enhancing capacities of provincial bodies of the NBCRC for promoting child wellbeing.
- Support to establishment of an integrated Child Justice Centre in Tehran for addressing cases of children in conflict with the law in line with the best interest of the child.

COVID-19 response:

- Provision of pulse oximeters, thermometers, simple masks and latex gloves for children in Juvenile Correction and Rehabilitation Centres (JCRC) and incarcerated mothers.
- Provision of diapers and complementary food for infants of incarcerated mothers.
- Enhancing capacities of social workers and mental health experts of the Prisons Organization for provision of psychosocial support to children in JCRCs and incarcerated mothers.

Children in Alternative Care

We help the Government and people of Iran in provision of care and support to children without caregivers placed in alternative parental care.

Some interventions with the State Welfare Organization include:

- Development of three protocols for provision of comprehensive care and support to children without caregivers in nurseries (0-3 years), residential centres, and family-based foster care settings.
- Support to enhancing the quality of care and support to children without caregivers through capacity-building of relevant personnel and provision of essential equipment for nurseries.

COVID-19 response:

- Provision of infection prevention and control items such as pulse oximeters and sanitizing items to protect vulnerable groups of children i.e. children with disabilities and children without caregivers, including those in nurseries and residential and rehabilitation centres across the country.



Protecting Children against Maltreatment

We help the Government and people of Iran in prevention, early detection and response to maltreatment of children, including refugees.

Some interventions with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education include:

- Support to development of a national policy on prevention, early detection and response to child maltreatment.
- Support to pilot establishment of specialized referral health centres for prevention of child maltreatment and provision of specialized services.
- Support to development of positive parenting packages for mental health professionals providing counseling to children, adolescents and their families.

COVID-19 response:

- Development of a standard package on parenting during/after COVID-19 in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education.



Adolescent Health & Wellbeing

We help the Government and people of Iran in promoting adolescent and youth health and wellbeing, their physical and psychological development, prevention of HIV/AIDS as well as the development and roll-out of drug prevention and substance abuse treatment models targeting adolescent girls and boys including refugees.

Some interventions with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, the Drug Control Headquarters (DCHQ), and the Ministry of Sport and Youth include:

- Establishment of eight Adolescent Well-being Clubs (AWBC), four for girls and four for boys in Kermanshah, Fars, Lorestan, Khouzestan, Khorasan Razavi, Tehran and Alborz provinces providing psychosocial support, counseling and related health services to the most vulnerable adolescent girls and boys.
- Roll-out of drug prevention, and mental health promotion programmes for children and adolescents in schools.
- Strengthen adolescent and youth serving organization such as NGOs and Youth Houses, to provide wellbeing and development services to young people.

COVID-19 response:

- Facilitate “Remote Stepped Psychosocial Care and Support (ReSPCT)” initiative through providing telephone counseling for children, adolescents, youth and their parents affected by the outbreak. To do so, UNICEF provides equipment and trains 215 mental health practitioners as well as counselors of Adolescent Wellbeing Clubs, counseling centers, and schools from 31 provinces in coordination with the Ministry of Sport and Youth, and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, Drug Control Headquarters, and Iranian Red Crescent Society respectively.



Children's Education

We help the Government and people of Iran to ensure access of all children, including refugees and children with special needs, to quality educational and learning materials in a participatory environment as well as in emergency situations.

Some interventions with the Ministry of Education include:

- Inclusion of citizenship education in teachers' training curricula, for increased participation and interaction between students and teachers in learning and teaching with a focus on the most vulnerable children.
- Support re-establishment and continuity of education services in flood affected areas.
- Promote inclusive education with a focus on children with disabilities and refugee children.

COVID-19 response:

- Provision of technical support to Ministry of Education on distance learning and safe school reopening for informed decision making since the beginning of this pandemic.
- Support implementation of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) standards for safe school operations targeting 1,000 schools in five less developed provinces of Kerman, Sistan and Balouchestan, Hormozgan, Bushehr and Khuzestan.
- Support distance/home-based learning for 200,000 children in less developed provinces.
- Psychosocial support interventions for students and teachers affected by the secondary impact of COVID-19.

Children in Emergencies

In addition to our response to COVID-19 crisis, we support the Government and people of Iran in building their preparedness capacity and maximizing the response to children's needs in emergencies including through continuous provision of basic services and system strengthening.

Some interventions include:

- Deliver vaccine fridges, cold boxes and carriers, to ensure continuation of vaccination in areas affected by the 2019 floods.
- Procurement of family and baby hygiene kits for promotion of hygiene and sanitation, as well as water pumps and water tanks for safe drinking water for the most vulnerable people affected by the 2019 and 2020 floods.
- Procurement of school equipment including education kits and classroom furniture for schools affected by floods in 2019.
- Localize and integrate a Psychological First Aid (PFA) package for the Iranian Red Crescent Society, Rescue and Relief teams.
- Establish Child Friendly Spaces in partnership with the IRCS to reduce stress and promote healthy behavior among children, as a response to the 2019 floods.

Partnerships and Resource Mobilization for Children

We help the Government and the people of Iran attract public and private sector financial and non-financial support for children, promote Child-Focused Corporate Social Responsibility, Public-Private Partnerships and Advocacy with Business for Child Welfare, develop Innovative Solutions for Children, and expand the Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) nationally.

Some interventions include:

- Support the Ministry of Interior in rolling out the CFCI in Iran with a number of pilot and candidate cities. Iran Child Friendly Cities Initiative: childfriendlycities.org/iran
- Support the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology to develop innovative solutions for children's challenges.

Children's Health and Nutrition

We support the Government and people of Iran in improving access to quality health care and nutritional services for all children and their mothers including the most vulnerable. Special attention is given to the first 1,000 days of life when a child's brain begins to grow and develop and when the foundations for lifelong health are built.

Some recent interventions with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education include:

- Deliver 2 million doses of Injectable Polio vaccines for children.
- Support provision of specific medicine for children's specialized disease treatments impacted by sanctions, e.g provision of specialized wound dressings for children suffering from EB skin disease.
- Train national trainers to Help Babies Breathe, including procuring simulators for neonatal resuscitation, which are models for hands-on training of physicians and midwives.
- Tackle micronutrient deficiencies by:
 - Piloting flour fortification with vitamin D in a less advantaged province with a high number of Afghan refugees.
 - Supplementation of 1 million megadose of Vitamin A among under five children in eight less advantaged provinces.
- Support national programmes on Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS (PMTCT) to achieve Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS in Iran (EMTCT).

COVID-19 response:

- Procurement of a total of 63 metric tons of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) items for health personnel in the frontline of the COVID-19 response. The PPEs were distributed among hospitals admitting COVID-19 patients under medical universities in several provinces including Gilan, Isfahan, Khuzestan, North Khorasan, Sistan and Balouchestan, East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, Qom, Hamedan, Tehran and Alborz.
- Production and airing of educational videos and animations for public and children on prevention of COVID-19, parenting skills as well as tips on coping with the mental impact of the outbreak.
- Development and distribution of messages on exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months and healthy eating among children under five during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Children's Welfare

We help the Government and people of Iran in promotion of a life cycle approach to social protection including for children with special needs and refugee children.

Some interventions with the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare include:

- Enhance efficiency and targeting of national social protection system, programmes and services.
- National adaptation of multidimensional child poverty measurement such as supporting the Government for a comprehensive understanding of different dimensions of child poverty to develop the required actions.
- Map the needs of children with disabilities for opportunities of UNICEF support through provision of inclusive health, education and protection social services.
- Customize child-sensitive single registry social protection systems in partnership with the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPCIG)/Brazil, as the world's renowned centre of excellence.
- Establish a national real-time monitoring system with a focus on children's vulnerabilities within the social protection programmes.

Some interventions with the Statistical Center of Iran include:

- Evidence generated on child related data for informed decision-making e.g through ongoing socioeconomic impact analyses of COVID-19.

COVID-19 response:

- Roll out conditional cash transfer and in-kind support in selected pilot provinces to reach the most vulnerable families and children as a complementary model to national social protection coverage offered by the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare. The conditional cash transfers and in-kind support will provide better access to health, education, and nutrition needs of children.
- UNICEF leads the social protection pillar of the UN Iran 'Socio-Economic Recovery Programme on the Impact of COVID-19' which focuses on strengthening the national health system, improving social protection and creating jobs in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak and its impact.

Public and Media Advocacy for Children

We help the Government and people of Iran in raising awareness among public and media on UNICEF's response to children's needs and priorities in Iran as well as enhancing media capacities on ethical principles of representing children in media.

Some of the interventions with the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance include:

- Raise awareness among journalists and photojournalists on ethical guidelines of representing children in the media specially for vulnerable children.
- Promote child and adolescent participation, engagement and empowerment via support for existing national children's film festivals and the book-reading league.

COVID-19 response:

- Raise awareness among general public and reach out to millions of people through UNICEF Iran website and social media platforms, with the latest standard information material on prevention of COVID-19 and what families and children need to know.
- Keep the public and media updated with UNICEF's latest programme response to COVID-19 and other ongoing programmes.
- Launch art contests to engage children and adolescents in awareness-raising on COVID-19.





Support Us

UNICEF is funded entirely by voluntary contributions. You can help make a difference in children's lives by joining UNICEF in ensuring that children in the Islamic Republic of Iran thrive and develop to their full potential. Together, we are working toward the day when every child has a safe and healthy childhood in our country.

Please follow us on our website and social media channels for the latest update on our work for children of Iran.

For queries, please send us an email at Tehran@unicef.org, or contact us at [\(+98 21\) 22594994](tel:+982122594994)

Kindly note any in-person visit to the office requires advance coordination with the relevant section.