

Highlights

- Iran continues to deal with three simultaneous emergencies; a spike in cases of people affected by the coronavirus COVID-19, flooding and locust invasion.
- COVID-19 infection rate is accelerating with a possible spike after Nowruz travellers return.
- More than 24,000 cases of COVID-19 have been detected, nearly 2,000 people have died.
- UN Country Preparedness and Plan has a funding gap of 28,907,745 USD.
- Heavy rains have affected 11 provinces, 11 people have died.
- Locust swarms' threat to farmland areas in six provinces.

Coronavirus COVID-19



1,934
deaths

Situation overview:

As of 24 March, 1,762 people had been confirmed with COVID-19 cases, 122 people had died due to the virus in the Islamic Republic of Iran the past 24 hours. This brings the cumulative figure to 24,811 confirmed cases and 1,934 deaths.

Humanitarian impact/needs:

Iran's Ministry of Health announced that more than 36 million people have been screened in the national mobilization campaign against coronavirus. The army has been deployed to Qom to control entrances to the city as well as the most crowded sites. Authorities have put in place a task force to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Shopping malls and other commercial centres are closed as of 22 March. The decision will not affect small businesses such as grocery shops, drug stores, bakeries, etc. Screening points have been established at public places such as railways, bus terminals and airports.

For the ongoing Nowruz holidays, the Iran Traffic Police reported more than 1.1 million trips were made within the country on March 18th. The Iran Red Crescent Society reported 3 million travelers from 13 infected provinces left their cities. Inter-province travel restrictions had been announced in the previous week. A spike in new infections may be observed in 2-3 weeks time.



1,762
new cases

Humanitarian response and coordination:

WHO delivered a new shipment of emergency medical supplies to Iran as part of COVID 19 response measures on 19 March, ready for distribution to hospitals across Iran. WFP is building livelihood opportunities for the most vulnerable refugees living in nine settlements by facilitating tailoring workshops for more than 170 refugees. In Sarvestan settlement, refugees are producing masks for the community and for Fars Province in general. A third shipment of medical supplies arrived in Tehran designated for health personal working to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. The cargo held 3.4 tons of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies, including two types of high-filtered respiratory surgical masks, N95 masks and surgical gowns. Since March 1, UNICEF has brought in 8 tons of PPE supplies in total. The contributions are funded by UNICEF's global emergency resources designated for health personnel. Supplies are funneled through Ministry of Health to University hospitals. UNFPA provided hygienic kits/health items to the State Welfare Organization or their public centers caring for people with disabilities and for the elderly. Particularly, older women are vulnerable and exposed during the COVID-19 crisis. The assistance includes 750,000 pairs of gloves, masks and sanitizers to be distributed several provinces. The UN Country Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) for COVID-19, is linked with the National Mobilization Plan and addresses country-level coordination, planning, and monitoring; risk communication and community engagement; surveillance, rapid response teams, and case investigation; infection prevention and control; case management; operational support, procurement and logistics. The total value of the plan is 37,074,722 USD of which 28,907,745 USD is the funding gap.



24,811
reported cases

China, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Japan, Qatar, Azerbaijan and Russia have assisted Iran with emergency medical supplies. Qatar Airways has offered – free of charge - to fly donated medical supplies from all over the world to Iran.

Floods



11
deaths

Situation overview:

Spring floods have caused damage to many urban and rural areas in several provinces of Iran, mainly in the southern parts of the country, and have killed at least 11 people as of 23 March. The rescue and relief operations are underway in the affected regions. Heavy rainfalls over the past days have created flash floods and swollen rivers in several Iranian provinces, including Fars, Bushehr, Hormozgan, Kerman and Sistan and Baluchestan in the southern parts of the country.

Floods have also inundated the residential areas in the northern province of Gilan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province in the west, the central province of Qom, and the northern province of Golestan. Several of these provinces were severely affected by flash flooding last year.



11
affected
provinces

Humanitarian impact/needs:

Torrential rains over the past 24 hours has caused serious damage to urban and rural infrastructures of the region. Mountain landslides have occurred more than 50 times on the Jam-Siraf road, Bushehr and are likely to happen again. Fifteen people from the Berke Choupan, Bushehr had to be rescued by helicopter as they were surrounded by water. The flood has caused US\$15 million damages to the infrastructures in Kerman Province. There are 30 villages in Rigan city, Kerman that have been surrounded by floods. Snowfall in Isfahan province blocked some villages in Poshtkuh District. Road maintenance and transportation organization teams are working to clear the roads in the affected rural western parts of the province.

Humanitarian response and coordination:

The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) and other organizations are carrying out rescue and relief operations in flood-hit provinces. Heavy rainfall have led to authorities in several cities declaring a state of emergency and order evacuation of people from residential areas. IRCS officials in the large province of Sistan and Balouchestan have mobilized to help the flood-affected areas with helicopters. The authorities have made efforts to manage the conditions of the dams more carefully. At present, 40 per cent of the 50 billion cubic meter capacity of the country's dams is empty, which means enough capacity to receive spring flood waters.

Desert locusts



6
affected
provinces

Situation overview:

Desert Locust invaded Iran in late February 2020 and quickly spread to four southern provinces of western Hormozgan, Boushehr, Khuzestan, and southern Fars, where the adults rapidly matured and laid eggs in areas that had received good rains. This breeding will cause a substantial increase in locust numbers once eggs hatch in March, hoppers form bands in April and a new generation of swarms form by the end of May. The southern provinces (along the Persian Gulf) have a very suitable condition for spring breeding and if not effectively managed, two generations could occur, giving rise to a 400-fold increase in locust numbers before the summer.

Humanitarian impact/needs:

Iran is challenged by the capacity of field response teams in control centres and the limited resources mainly off-road vehicles. 4WD vehicles, ground sprayers, spraying aircrafts, procurement of ultra-low volume (ULV) pesticides and trained field staff for survey and control operations. FAO recommends only ULV pesticide for effective and safe Desert Locust control that has minimal impact on the environment and human health. The emergency Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP-E) approved by FAO can only address some of these needs by addressing the procurement related challenges, particularly opening the import channel, due to the large amounts required.

If survey, control and reporting are not effectively conducted due to the shortage of agricultural machineries and chemicals, in particular the ULV pesticides, the current Desert Locust infestations will negatively affect the food security of more than 30% of the population. The provinces of Khuzestan and Fars are the main strategic cereal producers and are considered as the primary bread basket of the country. Other provinces, which may be seriously

impacted by Desert Locust infestations are Bushehr, Hormozgan and Sistan & Baluchistan. Aside from the cereal production, nutrition security may drop drastically as Khuzestan, Fars and Hormozgan provinces are the top three vegetable producers in the country. In addition, some high value agricultural products may be reduced drastically the southern provinces due Desert Locust.

Humanitarian response and coordination:

The Plant Protection Organization (PPO) of the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad expect that the fight against Desert Locust will be extended to more than 1 million hectares of rangelands, farmlands and orchards by the end of the first agricultural season in 2020. Over 500,000 hectares have been subject to tracking operations and the fight against desert locust was conducted over more than 40,000 hectares. FAO has allocated 300,000 USD to enhance national and subnational capacity for early warning, monitoring and control of desert locust. FAO will also work with vendors for timely delivery of needed equipment.