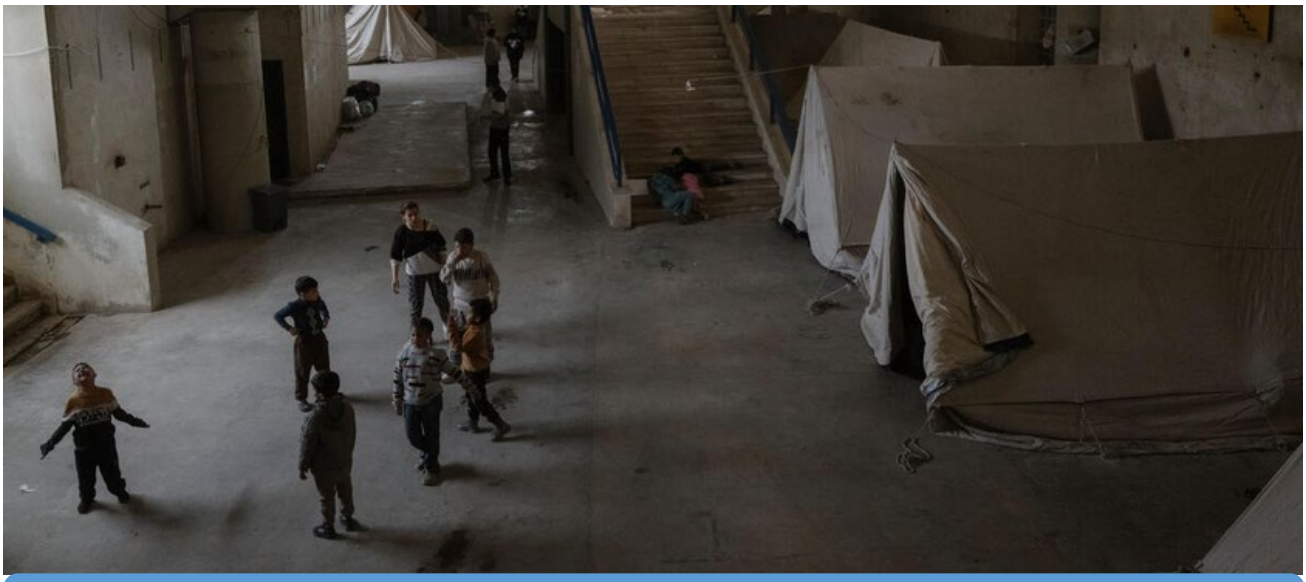
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Middle East Situation

9 April 2026



Lebanon. Displaced by hostilities - 14 March 2026, Emin Ozmen© UNHCR

Key Highlights

- The UN welcomed the **announcement of a two-week ceasefire** by the US and Iran and called on all parties to comply with international humanitarian law.
- On 8 April, more than 100 Israeli strikes were carried out in Lebanon within approximately 10 minutes, resulting in **over 200 fatalities and more than 1,000 injuries**, with search-and-rescue operations ongoing, according to the Minister of Health. The strikes created widespread panic and triggered new displacement across Beirut, Bekaa, and the South. The ceasefire announcement had briefly prompted some families to return, only to face renewed attacks.
- Since the onset of the military escalation, the Islamic Republic of Iran has reported that up to **3.2 million people have been temporarily displaced internally**. Iran continues to host 1.65 million refugees and others in need of international protection. Based on UNHCR helpline data from March, the top three priority needs reported by Afghan refugees in Iran are financial assistance for basic needs and relocation, safe shelter and physical safety from attacks, and access to healthcare.
- In Lebanon, more than **1.05 million people remain internally displaced** — 35 per cent of them children — with over 138,700 staying in 678 government-designated collective shelters.

- **~215,700** Syrians and **38,600** Lebanese nationals have crossed from Lebanon into Syria since the start of the crisis; **60,916** individuals reported an intention to return permanently.
- Since 28 February 2026, around **88,600** Iranian nationals have crossed into Türkiye, while some **72,000** have returned between 3 March and 8 April. Movement volumes remain below pre-conflict levels, with crossings largely reflecting routine mobility, family travel, and precautionary movement rather than large-scale displacement. 52 per cent of Iranians crossing into Türkiye are families.
- Over **88,800** Afghans have returned from Iran and Pakistan since the start of the crisis. **76** per cent of UNHCR-assisted returnees were women and children. Top provinces of intended return are Kabul (10%) and Herat (9%). In Afghanistan, **115,000** people are internally displaced, **73** per cent of whom are women and children. Protection concerns have arisen in displacement sites, with authorities ordering IDPs in seven sites to return to their areas of origin.

For the latest information on population movements, see the latest UNHCR CORE Update and newly launched Operational Data Portal page on the Middle East situation.

Country Updates

Iran

- From 1 March to 8 April, the UNHCR Helpline received around 32,000 calls. 1,800 people have also approached UNHCR offices in person. Urgent cases were identified and referred for appropriate support. Key concerns among those seeking support include urgent need for financial assistance, limited access to essential services — notably healthcare — and psychological distress.
- Since the start of the crisis, UNHCR Iran has assisted over 56,200 Afghan refugees through helplines, in-person counselling, registration, legal aid, multipurpose cash assistance, and psychosocial support.
- Inter-agency coordination to deliver response activities under the Flash Iran RRP continues, alongside active donor engagement to mobilise resources against the USD 80 million required.

Afghanistan-Pakistan

- Since the start of the crisis on 28 February, some 88,800 Afghans have returned to Afghanistan — 56,800 from Iran and 32,000 from Pakistan — bringing total Afghan returns in 2026 to over 364,500, in addition to the 2.9 million recorded in 2025.
- Some 24,600 Afghans crossed from Pakistan to Afghanistan between 31 March and 8 April, following the reopening of Torkham border crossing on 31 March after a month-long closure. Movements through Torkham have continued to increase, with only Afghan returnees and deportees allowed to cross. Returns from Iran remained stable, with some 9,700 Afghans arriving in the past week.
- As part of the joint emergency response in Afghanistan, UNHCR supported inter-agency assessments, preparedness, and mobilisation of relief items — shelter, NFIs, cash, and food — for internally displaced persons, with further scale-up planned.

- In Pakistan, the increasing number of people arriving at border areas is putting significant pressure on national authorities, host communities, and community-based organisations to meet basic needs such as shelter and food. District officials and local welfare groups continue to assist, but the volume of arrivals is exceeding available resources and straining response capacity. Conditions were especially challenging due to heavy rains.

Turkmenistan

- All four border crossings with Iran remain open to all nationalities.

Iraq

- Following the ceasefire announcement, drone and missile attacks across Iraq have reduced significantly. On 8 April, the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority announced a gradual reopening of Iraqi airspace.

Lebanon

- On 8 April, more than 100 Israeli strikes were carried out within approximately 10 minutes, resulting in over 200 fatalities and more than 1,000 injuries, with search-and-rescue operations ongoing, according to the Minister of Health. The strikes created widespread panic and triggered new displacement across Beirut, Bekaa, and the South. The ceasefire announcement had briefly prompted some families to return, only to face renewed attacks.
- Displaced Lebanese and Syrian families living outside collective shelters face harsh conditions, limited support, and growing protection risks, leaving children without safe spaces or psychosocial activities. Restrictions on setting up tents and accessing shelters have deepened vulnerabilities, prompting UNHCR and partners to expand outreach beyond shelters to identify and support the most at-risk families. More than 89,000 people have been reached through information and awareness activities, and over 30,400 children and adults have received mental health and psychosocial support, though insecurity continues to limit access.
- Demand for support has surged, with over 265,000 visits to UNHCR's HELP website since 2 March, following targeted WhatsApp outreach on remote learning, legal residency, and returns under force majeure. Since 1 April, UNHCR has implemented its *Return due to Force Majeure* programme, offering counselling, referrals, and a USD 100 cash grant to refugees with no viable alternative. To date, 352 individuals have been assisted.
- Planned convoys to the South have been repeatedly postponed due to insecurity, and field missions disrupted by nearby airstrikes, severely limiting sustained presence in the most affected areas. Despite these constraints, UNHCR and partners have supported more than 151,640 displaced people across 611 collective shelters with essential items and reached over 31,170 individuals in hard-to-reach locations through coordinated convoys.

Syria

- Since 2 March, Syrian authorities report that 254,270 people have crossed from Lebanon into Syria, including 215,720 Syrians — of whom 60,916 have expressed their intention to return permanently — and 38,550 Lebanese nationals.
- Jdeidet Yabous crossing reopened on 9 April; the recent closure had led to increased traffic at Joussieh, which operated at elevated capacity. Arida crossing remains open for pedestrian movements, though at lower volumes than those observed in early March. Authorities have introduced facilitative measures, including expedited procedures, to help manage flows.
- Humanitarian needs in return areas remain severe and widespread. In Deir ez-Zor, where 1,842 refugee families have returned, assessments highlight poor living conditions, overcrowding, explosive hazard contamination, documentation challenges, and limited livelihood opportunities, leading around 50 per cent of returnees to consider returning to Lebanon. In Ar-Raqqa, 2,304 returnee families have been identified, with urgent needs related to basic assistance, shelter, and access to essential services. In As-Sweida, Dar'a, and Quneitra, 605 returning families continue to face challenges accessing civil documentation, legal status, and essential services. In Tartous and Lattakia, 120 returnee families have been recorded, many entering through unofficial routes, which limits their access to assistance.
- UNHCR Syria and Lebanon continue to strengthen cross-border coordination on return trends, security conditions, and response gaps. The Protection Working Group in the coastal area convened to assess return dynamics, protection risks, and emerging needs.

Türkiye

- UNHCR continues to monitor the situation along the border in close coordination with authorities and partners, with the Kapıköy (Van), Gürbulak (Ağrı), and Esendere (Hakkari) border crossings remaining generally operational. Following a brief post-Eid and Nowruz stabilisation phase, recent figures indicate a renewed increase in arrivals reaching pre-conflict levels, suggesting movement dynamics remain fluid and subject to rapid change. Tourism, business, and family visits remain the dominant reasons for travel, though some individuals have cited recent developments in Iran as their reason for leaving. Iranian nationals are largely returning to Iran within one week of entering Türkiye, underscoring the temporary nature of current mobility trends, with no indications of a shift toward displacement.
- National preparedness plans are being coordinated by the Ministry of Interior's Presidency of Migration Management, while UNHCR is reinforcing coordination with UN agencies and partners in both Ankara and the border regions to enhance preparedness and strengthen information management. Response capacities are being mapped and data coordination consolidated in preparation for potential contingency plan activation.

Armenia

- Since 28 February, 210 individuals have approached UNHCR, predominantly male (69 per cent), consisting mainly of individuals and a smaller number of families. Most requests relate to information on asylum procedures (39 per cent) and legal counselling (17 per cent), followed by accommodation (14 per cent) and financial assistance (9 per cent). UNHCR's response has been largely information and referral-based, including

referrals to the Migration and Citizenship Service and partner organisations, with direct assistance provided on a case-by-case basis.

- Shas remained ongoing and manageable. Movements are primarily composed of commercial truck drivers and individuals or small groups crossing on foot, with profiles predominantly adult males and no specific vulnerabilities or requests for assistance reported. Between 3–8 April, approximately 2,500 individuals entered Armenia and around 2,600 exited to Iran, with daily movement assessed at several hundred persons in both directions. Movement patterns continue to indicate manageable cross-border circulation rather than mass displacement.

Coordination

Inter-agency coordination efforts are continuing across the region through existing structures with governments, UN agencies, partners and communities to respond to the needs of refugees and host communities exacerbated by the conflict, ensure protection monitoring and services and strengthen preparedness efforts in support of national governments.

Financial Information

The Iran Flash Refugee Response Plan (Flash RRP), launched on 26 March 2026, requests **USD 80 million** to support **2.8 million people in need, including 1.65 million refugees and 1 million host community** in need in Iran. Nine inter-agency partners are participating in the coordinated response, with UNHCR as the lead agency (USD 36.2 million), alongside IOM, UNDP, WFP, NRC, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, and INTERSOS.

The Lebanon Flash Appeal, issued on 13 March 2026, calls for **USD 308.3 million** for partners to deliver lifesaving assistance and protection to **1 million people** — including vulnerable Lebanese, displaced Syrians, Palestine Refugees in Lebanon, Palestinian Refugees from Syria, and migrants — over the same three-month period.

UNHCR operations across the affected regions remain critically underfunded at a time when humanitarian needs and operational risks are increasing. In South-West Asia, UNHCR requires USD 454 million in 2026 to support forcibly displaced populations under the Afghanistan situation; as of end-February, only **15 per cent** had been received. Iran is only **8 per cent** funded against a requirement of USD 140 million. In the Middle East, significant funding gaps persist: Lebanon stands at only **14 per cent funded** against a UNHCR requirement of USD 472 million, while Iraq is at **28 per cent** against USD 61 million. In Europe, funding levels currently stand at **42 per cent** for both Türkiye (USD 210 million requirement) and Armenia (USD 9 million requirement).

Severe funding shortfalls risk creating a 'crisis within a crisis' at a time when needs across the affected regions are rapidly increasing. Without additional resources, UNHCR's ability to scale up preparedness, protection and response will be critically constrained.

Contact

For further information on the situation or UNHCR's response across affected countries, please contact the Regional Bureaux: rbapext@unhcr.org (Asia and the Pacific) and menareporting@unhcr.org (Middle East and North Africa). For more information on UNHCR and partners' response across affected countries, please visit the Operational Data Portal and UNHCR website.