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Middle East Situation

7 April 2026



Lebanon, Finding Shelter in Beirut. 17 March 2026 © UNHCR

Key Highlights

- 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**. UNHCR and partners have assisted over **52,100 Afghan refugees in Iran** through helplines, in-person counselling, registration, legal aid, multi-purpose cash assistance, and psychosocial support.
- In Lebanon, more than **1.05 million people remain internally displaced** — 35 per cent of them children — with over 138,500 staying in 678 government-designated collective shelters.

- **~206,500** Syrians and **36,800** Lebanese nationals have crossed from Lebanon into Syria since the start of the crisis; more than **56,911** individuals indicated an intention to return permanently.
- Since 28 February 2026, **81,700 Iranian nationals** have crossed into Türkiye, while **67,000** have returned between 3 March and 6 April. Movement volumes remain below pre-conflict levels, with crossings largely reflecting routine mobility, family travel, and precautionary movement rather than large-scale displacement.
- Returns from both Pakistan and Iran to Afghanistan increased by **33.6 %** over the past week. Over **77,100 Afghans** have returned from Iran and Pakistan since the start of the crisis. Cross-border clashes between Afghanistan and Pakistan (26–29 March) caused civilian casualties, displacement, and disrupted humanitarian access, including at the Landi Kotal transit centre.
- The Iran Flash Refugee Response Plan (Flash RRP) was launched on 26 March, requesting USD **80 million** to support **2.8 million people** in need, including **1.65 million refugees**, across six countries over March–May 2026.

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 5 April, the UNHCR Helpline received around 29,400 calls. Urgent cases were identified and referred for appropriate support. In addition, 1,450 people approached UNHCR offices in person. UNHCR identified specific protection needs among vulnerable refugees and provided counselling, psychosocial support, and cash assistance. Reported concerns include severe psychological distress, loss of livelihoods, financial hardship, and health-related vulnerabilities — particularly challenges in accessing medication for children with chronic genetic conditions.

Afghanistan-Pakistan

- Returns from both Pakistan and Iran to Afghanistan increased notably over the past week. From Pakistan, 16,500 people crossed into Afghanistan between 31 March and 6 April (18 per cent deportees), with 74 per cent crossing at Torkham following its reopening on 31 March after a month-long closure. From Iran, some 9,200 people arrived in Afghanistan (68 per cent deportees) during the same

period. Since Torkham reopened, daily returns and deportations have risen sharply, averaging 2,300 per day from Pakistan.

- With the increase in movement over the past week, flows from Iran have reached around 73 per cent of pre-crisis daily average crossing levels for 2026, while those from Pakistan stand at 82 per cent. Since the start of the crisis on 28 February, some 77,100 Afghans have returned to Afghanistan — 53,100 from Iran and 24,000 from Pakistan — bringing total Afghan returns in 2026 to over 352,800, in addition to the 2.9 million recorded in 2025.
- In Pakistan, insufficient processing capacity at both the Landi Kotal Transit Centre and the Torkham border resulted in long waits for returnees. Conditions are especially difficult amid heavy rainfall, with an overall lack of facilities and support. Hundreds of returnees have reportedly been compelled to stay overnight without adequate arrangements, including under plastic sheeting in the open air.
- Arrests, forced eviction, and detention of Afghans continued as Pakistani authorities reportedly exerted stronger pressure on Afghans to return. Cases of family separation have been reported, with some family members arrested and deported, leaving women and children without male support. The need for emergency cash assistance has increased significantly. Lack of access to health services is reportedly worsening medical conditions for Afghans who avoid health facilities due to fear of arrest.

Turkmenistan

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

Lebanon

- According to UNHCR protection monitoring, nearly 10 per cent of refugees displaced by the escalation of conflict are currently without accommodation. Some Lebanese IDPs are living in makeshift tented sites, including in Horsh Beirut (central Beirut), where around 1,000 predominantly Lebanese IDPs are staying, reflecting severe shortages of affordable shelter. With hosting capacity strained and rental costs unsustainable, UNHCR is prioritising rapid identification and support for refugees without accommodation, particularly in Saida, Beirut and parts of the South, including referrals for emergency cash assistance, psychosocial support, and temporary shelter to prevent secondary displacement.

- Efforts continue to focus on mitigating health and protection risks linked to overcrowding, while improving privacy and overall shelter conditions. Through the Shelter Sector, co-led with the Ministry of Social Affairs, UNHCR and partners are responding to scabies and lice outbreaks in overcrowded shelters, in addition to ongoing efforts to improve living conditions for over 75,900 people in 452 sites through repairs, upgraded sanitation facilities, and the installation of partitions.
- Emergency multipurpose cash assistance is critical to help refugees meet basic needs and avoid premature returns to unsafe areas. To date, 27,000 of the 37,000 vulnerable refugee families jointly identified by UNHCR and WFP are now receiving support.

Syria

- Since 2 March, Syrian authorities report that more than 248,800 Syrians have crossed from Lebanon into Syria, including over 58,690 who expressed their intention to return permanently.
- During the same period, approximately 37,710 Lebanese nationals were also recorded among those crossing.

Iraq

- Shalamcheh crossing (Basra) was briefly closed on 4 April following air strikes on the Iranian side that killed an Iraqi national but has since reopened; all Iraq–Iran crossings are operational. Routine traffic at the Ibrahim Khalil crossing with Türkiye has increased by around 30 per cent, with daily crossings exceeding 11,000 following the closure of Iraq's airspace. Inter-agency contingency planning for a potential Iran-to-Iraq population movement is in place, with roles and coordination arrangements being aligned across agencies.

Gulf Cooperation Council Countries

- No population movements toward GCC countries have been observed to date. Should gradual mixed movements emerge, they would be managed under existing migration and security frameworks, with UNHCR following up on individuals with heightened protection risks in coordination with national authorities.

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 the Eid and Nowruz periods, cross-border movements have begun to stabilise, with arrivals gradually tapering and departures to Iran increasing. Movements continue to be largely routine and seasonal, driven primarily by tourism, business, and family visits.
- Iranian nationals are returning to Iran within a week of entering Türkiye, underscoring the temporary nature of current mobility trends, with no current 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

UNHCR continues to work with the Ministry of Interior to strengthen preparedness, including scaling up registration and reception capacity through the identification of potential sites for registration and temporary accommodation, while engaging inter-agency partners on joint preparedness planning and coordination.

- Since 28 February 2026, over 170 Iranian nationals have approached UNHCR in Armenia both in person and via email. The majority are recent arrivals entering primarily via the Agarak border crossing and, to a lesser extent, Zvartnots airport. Profiles are predominantly individual adult males. Most are seeking information on procedures, referrals, and available assistance. UNHCR provides information and counselling and facilitates referrals to relevant national authorities and partners
- Border monitoring at the Agarak crossing indicates that individuals continue to enter Armenia from Iran daily, with movements remaining limited and manageable. Those observed include commercial vehicles and individuals. Humanitarian needs remain limited.

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. 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.