UNFPA is the UN’s Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) agency with the mission to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person’s potential is fulfilled. During its Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022), UNFPA partnered with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to cover the needs of the most vulnerable populations.

**THEMATIC AREAS**

- Afghan Refugee Women and Girls
- Pregnant Women
- Older Persons
- Data and Evidence
- Women and Girls in Vulnerable Situations

**MODES OF ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNERS**

- Advocacy
- Knowledge Management including research, studies, data generation and collection
- Capacity Development including skills, processes, procedures and resources
- Service Delivery
- Strengthening partnerships
The evaluation of the Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022) for UNFPA Iran found the programme to be relevant, efficient and effective. The evaluation also called for a greater focus on quality of care, a more structured data systems informed by significant attention to people living in vulnerable situations, strategic use of emerging demographic dynamics as the driving force for development; adoption of a holistic life-cycle approach in programming; and a more efficient and effective humanitarian response.

Challenges faced by UNFPA Iran in the Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022) included navigating natural disasters and responding to emerging crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. In spite of challenges encountered, UNFPA was considered a credible partner by key stakeholders and United Nations organizations, with the ability to adapt flexibly to specific contexts.

UNFPA will further invest in supporting the government of Iran towards implementation of action plans and strategies jointly developed for building resilience and empowering youth, women, and older people, through innovation, creativity and partnership. This will be done with the spirit of delivering as One UN in close partnership with our UN sister agencies under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
UNFPA is the UN Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) agency. During the Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022), UNFPA and partners strived to ensure equitable access to quality safe motherhood in an effort to reduce maternal mortality.

**GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE**

1. Khuzestan
2. Hormozgan
3. Khorasan Razavi
4. South Khorasan
5. North Khorasan
6. Sistan Baluchestan

**CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

- **200** midwives in Zahedan (Sistan Baluchistan) trained in conducting natural delivery
- **488** fetal monitoring machines delivered to COVID-free health centers during the pandemic
- **31** portable sonography devices delivered to 31 hospitals in different cities during the COVID-19 pandemic
- **12** Maternal Intensive Care Units in hospitals equipped with life-saving medical devices
- **3** oxygen generator systems delivered to 3 hospitals in Sistan and Baluchistan
- **6** Universities of Medical Sciences equipped with ICT equipment during COVID-19 pandemic
Costed package for maternal health developed

Roadmap on prevention of maternal mortality developed

Antenatal Care & Postnatal Care guidelines tailored to COVID-19 pandemic developed and digitalized

Action plan for the policy document to promote natural delivery with focus on respectful maternity care developed

124 midwives trained nationwide on advocacy planning processes including preparation of guidelines for respectful maternal care and normal delivery

Evidence-based actions plans to reduce preventable maternal mortality developed for 6 provinces with the highest maternal mortality ratios

As a result of sustained advocacy efforts, UNFPA succeeded in reviving its partnership on midwifery with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, international organizations and other UN agencies. The pivotal role of midwives will continue to be reinforced in the next programme cycle, to promote positive childbearing experiences and natural childbirth. Interventions will be targeted to women and mothers in vulnerable situations for their equitable access to quality maternal health services. Research and in-depth data analysis will remain central for evidence based interventions.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- Assessment of midwifery education curriculum based on ICM standards (2022)
- Comprehensive situation analysis of midwifery in I.R. Iran (2022)
- Assessment of behaviors of pregnant women during COVID-19 pandemic (2021)
- Study on maternal mortality trends in the country (2018)
- Situation analysis for maternal deaths in 3 provinces of Sistan and Baluchestan, Hormozgan and Bushehr (2018)
- Situation analysis on preventable maternal deaths (2017)
- Fact sheets developed on causes of Maternal Mortality (MM) and trends (2016-2018)

PARTNERSHIPS

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Health and Medical Education

OTHER PARTNERS: ADC C Enhancing Capacity in Development Asia-Pacific Development & Communication Centre

UN SISTER AGENCIES: World Health Organization, UNICEF

COORDINATING BODIES: Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DONORS: European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid

LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE PLANS

As a result of sustained advocacy efforts, UNFPA succeeded in reviving its partnership on midwifery with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education, international organizations and other UN agencies. The pivotal role of midwives will continue to be reinforced in the next programme cycle, to promote positive childbearing experiences and natural childbirth. Interventions will be targeted to women and mothers in vulnerable situations for their equitable access to quality maternal health services. Research and in-depth data analysis will remain central for evidence based interventions.
UNFPA is the UN Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) agency. During the Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022), UNFPA Iran and partners collaborated to empower women and girls in vulnerable situations. This has been achieved through various programmes and initiatives aimed at improving the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls, and empowering them by enhancing their employability.

**GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE**

- Nationwide

**CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

- **400** female heads of households, including women with disability, provided with employment during COVID-19 in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) production units
- **494** households in a village in Qazvin province covered by community-based program to protect women and girls affected by disaster. This included the formation of local village groups, development of guidelines, and training on prevention and response to domestic violence among community members
- **1,428** teachers and students from selected universities trained on risky behaviors for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, through attending a series of 38 workshops on the topic
- **883** women and youth trained on life skills and vocational skills, jointly with UNDP, and with the support of the European Union (EU)
- **40** women counseling centers across the country trained on harm reduction to provide services to women at most risk of drug use, through various workshops
- **10,500** SRH commodities and **1,240** doses of HPV vaccines delivered to the Ministry of Health and Medical Education to cover the needs of women at risk of HIV
- Single Window of Social Support developed, as an integrated social service delivery platform for social protection programmes offered to Female Heads of Households
UNFPA Iran will continue to support the government in implementing national plans to empower Female Heads of Households through targeted training on life, entrepreneurial, and vocational skills. UNFPA Iran will also work towards developing the capacity of service providers to promote healthy family relationships and provide health and well-being services to women and girls in low-income households. It will generate evidence to scale up the provision of social welfare services for poor women living in vulnerable situations, including older women and women with disabilities.
UNFPA is the UN Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) agency. Using a lifecycle approach - where investment in SRH starting from childhood to youth and middle-age will secure healthy ageing- UNFPA supported its partners during the Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022), to address the needs of older persons.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

113 centers for older persons under the State Welfare Organization equipped with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

120 high level experts from selected cities and municipalities in Iran trained on age-friendly environment

280 professionals from the State Welfare Organization and Ministry of Health and Medical Education trained on health and social care of older people during COVID-19

Isfahan Age Friendly City Model developed and implemented

14,000 older persons including those with disabilities benefited from 1,000 portable oxygen concentrators in 310 centers under the State Welfare Organization (SWO) during the COVID-19 pandemic

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

— Nationwide
UNFPA will continue its long standing partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to intensify its outreach to older persons, especially older women and people with disabilities. This will be done through continued generation of evidence, capacity building including establishment of ageing information and management systems, continued advocacy for age-friendly and disability-friendly environments, promotion of active and healthy ageing, and analysis of various social protection programmes and social security schemes to cover the needs of older persons.
UNFPA is the UN Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) agency. During the Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022), UNFPA and partners worked on enhancing national capacity to collect, analyse, disseminate and utilise disaggregated population data for decision-making and evidence-based policy formulation on the benefits of the demographic dividend - the economic growth resulting from rightly investing in the change in population structure - and for supporting welfare policies.

**CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

- **35** senior managers and experts trained on conducting paperless census
- **60** experts of the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) trained on transitioning to Register Based Census (RBC). RBC relies on data collection from administrative registers, and has the advantage of reducing costs, improving data quality and producing more frequent information
- Post Enumeration Census conducted ensuring generation of quality data

**ADVOCACY**

South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) with Economic Cooperation Organization and Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT) on Register based Census (RBC) used efficiently in the development of an action plan for RBC (2022)

Widespread dissemination of the Population Situation Analysis Report including essential information on key population issues and the evolving age structure across various technical and policy platforms targeting government officials and academics
South-South exchanges with Philippines Statistics Authority on monitoring population related indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals (2019)

South-South exchange with scholars from various Islamic countries on population dynamics and human capital (2018)

South-South exchanges with Statistics Korea (KOSTAT) on Register-Based Census (2019) and Paperless Census (2017)

**Knowledge Management**

- National Time Transfer Accounts Report (2022): Measures intergenerational economic transfers through unpaid work within households
- Household Vulnerability Report (2022): Addresses vulnerability in environmental, social, economic, and health dimensions, providing policy recommendations
- National Transfer Account (2021): Analyzes economic resource distribution by age, informing national development, equity, and public policies
- Demographic Dividend Roadmap (2021): Guides demographic dividend realization, resilience building, and COVID-19 implications
- Realising Demographic Dividend With Emphasis on Covid-19 Implications and Building Resilience (2021)
- Studies on How to Conduct Register-based Census (2021)
- Guidelines on Data Collection at the Time of Pandemic (2020)
- Dashboard On Population Related SDG Indicators (2020)
- Dashboard on Socio-economic Status of Female Heads of Households (2020)
- Socio-economic Implications of Covid-19 on Households (2020)
- Census Monographs and Studies on Women, Youth and Older Persons (2019)
- Age Structural Transition and Demographic Window in Iran (2018): describes the change in age structure of the population and the opportunity it presents for economic growth and development

**Lessons Learned and Future Plans**

UNFPA will continue its partnership with the Government of I.R. Iran aiming at improving quality of disintegrated data; moving towards register-based census and household surveys; utilising real time data for programming and for early warning systems; supporting implementation research on realising the demographic dividend; generating evidence on below-replacement fertility and healthy childbearing; and continuing to generate national inter-generational studies and utilising the evidence in advocacy on the impact of demographic change in economic development.
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GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

Nationwide

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UNFPA is the UN Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) agency. During the Sixth Country Programme (2017-2022), UNFPA and partners covered the SRH needs of the most vulnerable Afghan refugee women and girls and host communities across the country.

**GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE**

- Sistan & Baluchistan
- Tehran
- Khorasan Razavi
- Isfahan
- Golestan
- Kerman
- Fars
- Semnan

**CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

- 21 centers equipped for the provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services country wide
- 21 staff of local and international NGOs trained on protection of women and girls in emergencies
- 156 community volunteers trained on protection of women and girls in emergencies
- 50 Afghan students trained as midwives with Bachelor and Master’s degrees
- Partnership with private diagnostic laboratories to improve access to reproductive healthcare related primarily diagnostic services, amongst vulnerable Afghan women, across the country
- Faculty strategic plan and curriculum developed for the Midwifery Department of Kabul Medical University, through a south-south partnership by carrying out needs assessment and consensus-building workshops in site using Iranian expertise
UNFPA will continue its long-standing partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in humanitarian situations to enhance protection and promote health and well-being of women and girls. Service provision including Afghan community-based interventions and services such as cash assistance to the most vulnerable women and girls will be added to UNFPA programming. UNFPA will further focus on enhancing the capacity of the health system through mobilizing resources and medical commodities required for the immediate health care needs of Afghan women and girls and host communities.