

Country	Iran					Name	---
Region	AFRO	AMRO	EMRO	EURO	SEARO/WPRO	University	---

AMWHO Conference

Iran: Position Paper

With a rising population, food shortages, and food-related illnesses spreading, the world is facing a food crisis. Within this crisis, there are two areas that need immediate action: food security and foodborne illnesses. Over 124 million people worldwide are food insecure or lacking a sufficient amount of quality and nutritious food. Furthermore, there are over 600 million people diagnosed with food-related illnesses and 420,000 death per year related to these illnesses.¹ The Islamic Republic of Iran has been placing large-scale efforts towards the development of nutrition and health throughout its borders. A country of over 81 million, less than 5.0% of the population of Iran is below the minimum level of dietary energy requirements.² This is due to the rapid growth of the country's economy and poverty levels floating around 8.1% in 2013. The recent National Plan, launched in March 2017, has prioritized universal³ health care and health equity due to equal access to health care being a constitutional right to all Iranian citizens. In 2014, the Ministry of Health and Medical Education launched the Health⁴ Transformation Plan in order to allow for basic insurance coverage for all and less out-of-pocket expenditures which Western sanctions had caused the Iranian to do.⁵

While Iran has created a very robust and sustainable healthcare system, they still have many issues related to food insecurity, the most urgent being malnutrition. Approximately 11% of the children in Iran are underweight, with certain parts of the nation going up to 24% of children being underweight. With this problem, in 2006, the United Nations International⁶ Children's Fund-Iran took it upon themselves to come up with a solution to the rising rates of death and illness, especially in rural areas. They started the Community-based Nutrition Initiative which created Nutritional Counseling Centers in rural areas that would "provide training, facilities and educational materials for mothers, health workers, and volunteers" in areas that were facing heavy nutritional problems. The Initiative implemented 160 centers in four districts⁷ of the Sistan and Baluchestan province. The Iranian government saw significant positive results from the program and have expressed interest in expanding it to the rest of the nation.⁸

Iran has also had an influx of political conflicts and natural disasters. They have seen a rise in refugees coming into their country from Afghanistan and Iraq; around one million refugees have come from these nations since conflicts began. Additionally, Iran has faced severe⁹ sanctions by Western nations such as the United States which has helped in the depreciation of the Iranian economy. Finally, natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and droughts have also caused issues in urban and rural areas. One of these issues is the rise of foodborne illnesses. Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, typhoid fever, and Hepatitis A are also diseases that are carried through animals or contaminated food or water. The problem Iran faced was that it was¹⁰ not able to identify who had these diseases and how they could get to them to help treat them. Starting in 2006, Iran began large-scale surveillance of Foodborne Illnesses to detect diseases so they could be treated by local doctors. The surveillance system was able to reveal a lot about¹¹

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#1: Give a brief overview of the theme

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#2: Describe how the theme play a role in the country and their stance

This and the following paragraph thoroughly explain how and why malnutrition and foodborne illness are prominent issues of the country

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what demographics are affected by certain diseases and how the nation could potentially target them. The program is still relatively new and the Iranian government hopes to continue their work with this program.

Although Iran has been working tirelessly to take care of its citizens and the refugees streaming in from other countries, the country still is in need of dire help. The government hopes to continue building up its healthcare system and advance research in the medical field as sanctions start to rise off the country. They hope to take part in global health diplomacy, or the sharing of research in the health field with nations like the United States. Iran aims to be a ¹² leader within the EMRO region as it champions its primary health care system and surveillance initiatives to other neighboring countries. With the support of other countries nearby and globally, the Islamic Republic of Iran hopes to ensure a healthier, more safer lifestyle for all of its citizens.

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#3: Establish what the country has proposed or has done to address the issue

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#4: Propose future directions or solutions to serve as discussion points

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References

1. Chen, Annie, Jarred Lobo, and Rida Shams. "The Global Food Predicament Theme Brief." UNC AMWHO Accessed January 22, 2019. http://www.uncamwho.org/uploads/2/3/5/0/23504526/2019_theme_brief_1.pdf.
2. "Nutrition Landscape Information System." World Health Organization. 2017. Accessed January 22, 2019. <http://apps.who.int/nutrition/landscape/report.aspx?iso=irn>.
3. "Iran Overview." World Bank. Accessed January 22, 2019. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/iran/overview>.
4. "Iran- Country Cooperation Strategy." World Health Organization. May 2017. Accessed January 22, 2019. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/136898/ccsbrief_irn_en.pdf;jsessionid=132C2E7D8F98B11E073B4E3FB9241BDE?sequence=1.
5. Moradi, Yousef, Fatemeh Khosravi Shadmani, Kamyar Mansori, Shiva Mansouri Hanis, Rozhin Khateri and Hossein Hadavand Mirzaei. "Prevalence of underweight and wasting in Iranian children aged below 5 years: a systematic review and meta-analysis." Korean Journal of Pediatrics (2018). Accessed January 22, 2019. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Prevalence-of-underweight-and-wasting-in-Iranian-5-Moradi-Shadmani/63f798aa986e3d2adbc3a3c0364510250dc4fbf2>
6. Enayatollah Asaei, Eyed. "Iran's Excellent Primary Health Care System." UNICEF. Accessed January 22, 2019. https://www.unicef.org/iran/media_4427.html. 8 ibid.

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#5: Make sure to include references!