

Thailand

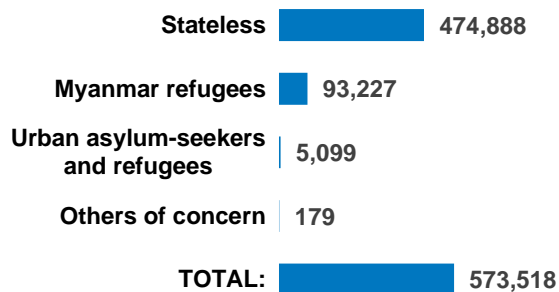
31 March 2020

Populations of concern include **93,227** Myanmar refugees, **5,099** urban asylum-seekers and refugees and **474,888** persons registered by the Royal Thai Government (RTG) as stateless.

Myanmar refugees reside in **9 temporary shelters on the Thai-Myanmar border**, while urban asylum-seekers and refugees and stateless persons reside in **different areas of the country**.

UNHCR works with the RTG, international agencies, NGOs and donors to address the **protection, assistance and durable solutions needs** of these groups.

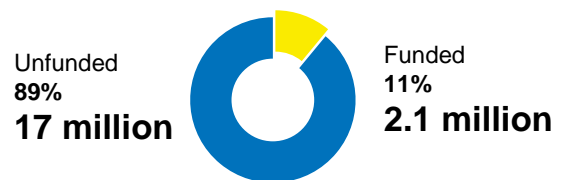
POPULATIONS OF CONCERN



FUNDING (AS OF 31 MARCH 2020)

USD 19.1 million

requested for the Thailand operation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

- 97 National Staff
- 22 International Staff

Offices:

- 1 Country Office in **Bangkok**
- 2 Field Offices in **Mae Hong Son** and **Mae Sot**



PHOTO: In January 2020, UNHCR Thailand Goodwill Ambassador Praya Lundberg visited Chiang Rai Province to explore UNHCR's work on statelessness and speak with formerly stateless persons about their experiences and hopes for the future.
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WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- UNHCR works in **close partnership** with the Royal Thai Government (RTG), UN agencies, humanitarian organizations, and civil society to improve protection and solutions for refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and other persons of concern to UNHCR, while supporting their inclusion in national systems.
- **Strategic alliances** with key international and national NGOs, civil society and faith-based organisations, private sector partners and academia help to address a range of issues including alternatives to detention, improved access to domestic legal and social services, and alternative forms of temporary protection pending solutions.
- **Partners:** Ministry of Interior (MOI), Adventist Development and Relief Agency Thailand (ADRA), Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugees (COERR), Humanity and Inclusion (HI), International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), UN Volunteers (UNV).

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- UNHCR maintains a stock of emergency relief supplies, as well as monitoring, assessment and response capacity which allows it to undertake a stand-alone and/or inter-agency emergency response. Protection, medical and SGBV emergency telephone hotlines are active seven days a week for urban persons of concern.

Main Activities

PROTECTION

- In March 2020, UNHCR **facilitated a training** for some 40 immigration staff as part of its ongoing work to prepare for the entering into force of the Prime Minister's Regulation by June 2020, establishing a screening mechanism to distinguish people who need international protection from economic migrants.
- Following the RTG's signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on alternatives to detention for children** in January 2019, there were no children of concern to UNHCR detained in the main Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) for foreigners as of 31 March 2020. UNHCR continues to advocate for alternatives to detention for all Persons of Concern (POCs) to UNHCR from all government facilities, as well as that their access to healthcare should not be impeded.
- During January-March 2020, UNHCR visited **186 Rohingya individuals** in six provinces who arrived in Thailand during 2019 and 2020 to assess their protection needs and provide humanitarian items in support of the efforts of the Thai authorities. UNHCR continues to advocate for application of the **Thai Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (ATPA)** to Rohingya victims of trafficking to facilitate access to temporary protection, including issuance of temporary stay and work permits, and welfare services.
- In coordination with its partners, UNHCR is advocating that marginalized groups (including persons of concern to UNHCR) in Thailand should be **fully included in government COVID-19 national surveillance, response and planning activities**, and should be able to access COVID-19 testing, clinical care and case management.
- In urban areas during January-March 2020, UNHCR provided financial support to 510 POCs to enable them to **access medical care**. In order to optimize the limited resources available and avoid duplication, during 2020 UNHCR is progressively phasing out outpatient department (OPD) support to focus solely on inpatient department (IPD) support and life-saving assistance.
- In urban areas during January-March 2020, 720 POCs with specific needs received **cash grants**, 200 received **psychosocial support** and 227 received **legal assistance**. UNHCR is aware of the increased level of hardship being faced by POCs in Thailand as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and is urgently exploring how to potentially **streamline and increase support** to POCs to address some of their basic needs.
- Prior to a temporary suspension starting 20 March 2020 in line with WHO advisories to maintain social distancing in the context of COVID-19, 89 POC children were attending **Thai language classes** provided through a partner to equip them with skills to access public schools under Thailand's progressive "Education for All" policy. Prior to the closure of all educational institutions by the Thai Government starting 18 March 2020 to reduce the spread of COVID-19, 457 POC children were enrolled in **primary education** and 58 were enrolled in **secondary education**.
- With UNHCR support, **572 birth certificates** were issued by District Offices to the registered and unregistered population in temporary shelters on the Thai-Myanmar border during January-March 2020.
- UNHCR identifies unregistered individuals in the temporary shelters with **serious medical and protection concerns** and advocates with the Ministry of Interior (MOI) for access to asylum under the Fast Track Provincial Admission Board (PAB) process, initiated by the MOI in 2014 exceptionally for such cases. During January-March 2020, 3 adjudicated cases (13 individuals) were approved.

SOLUTIONS

- UNHCR continues to work closely with the Thai and Myanmar governments, refugee community and other stakeholders to unlock a **multi-solutions approach** to find a dignified, sustainable and comprehensive end to this situation of protracted encampment. The Myanmar Government fielded a multi-agency visit to three of the nine temporary shelters on the Thai-Myanmar border in mid-February 2020. The visit was hosted by the Thai Government, with UNHCR's support, and provided refugees with the opportunity to have direct interactions with senior government officials and to field questions about their options for the future.
- UNHCR continues to identify **vulnerable cases for durable solutions**. During January-March 2020, **305 refugees** in the whole country were submitted for resettlement.
- UNHCR's partner **submitted 891 nationality applications** during January-March 2020. In addition, following advocacy by UNHCR's partner and other members of the Chiang Rai Statelessness Network, a survey of stateless students in five schools was completed and lists submitted to district offices to support the issuance of 13-digit ID numbers and identity documentation.

External/Donor Relations

- Special thanks to major donors of un-earmarked and broadly earmarked funds as well as to donors who have contributed directly to the operation to date during 2020:
Canada | Denmark | Japan | Germany | Netherlands | Norway | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America |
- Un-earmarked, broadly earmarked and direct contributions were also received through private donations from Australia, the Republic of Korea, Spain and Thailand.
- UNHCR has raised funds from the private sector since 2008 for POCs both in Thailand and globally.

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