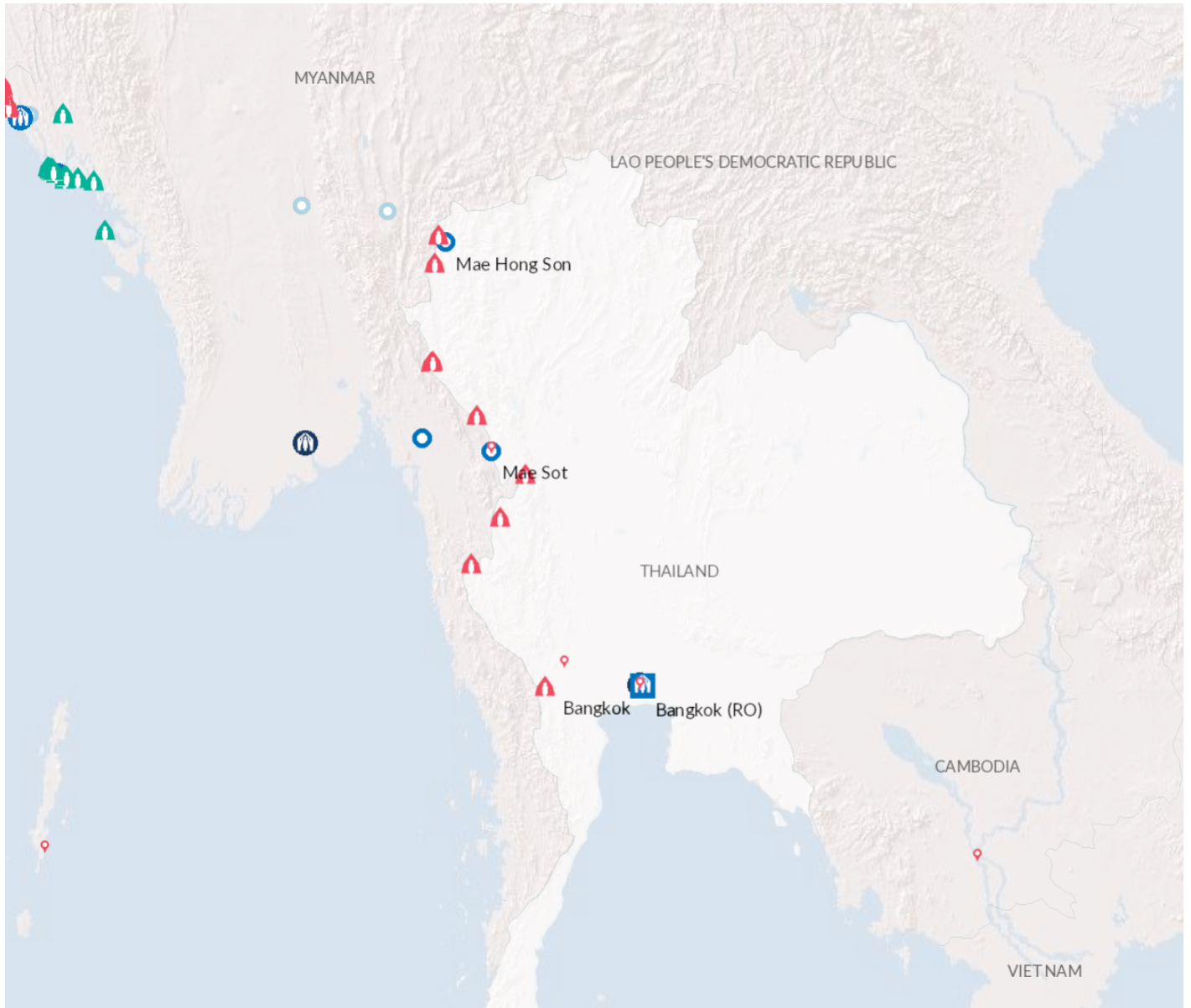


Operation: Thailand

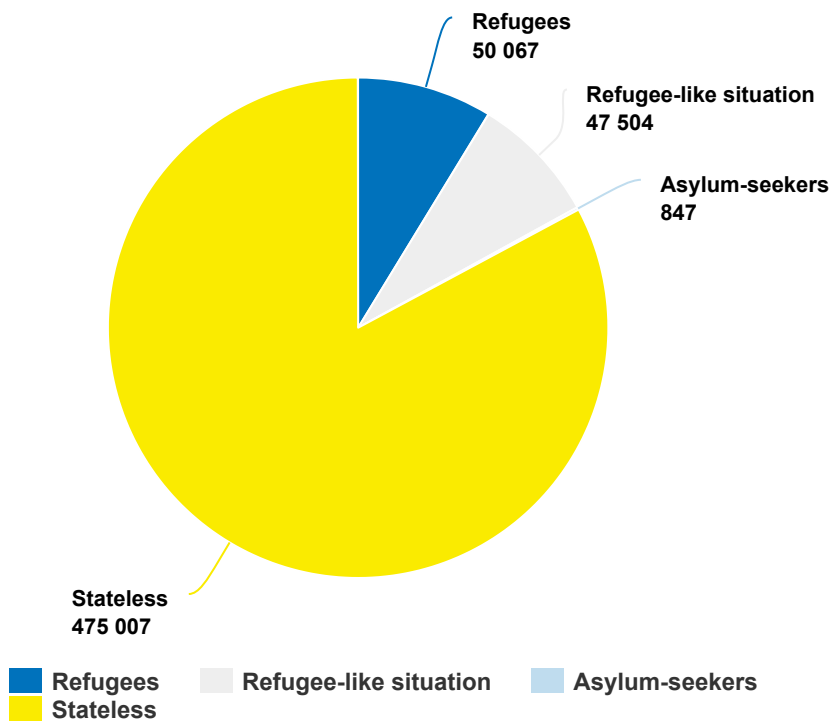


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

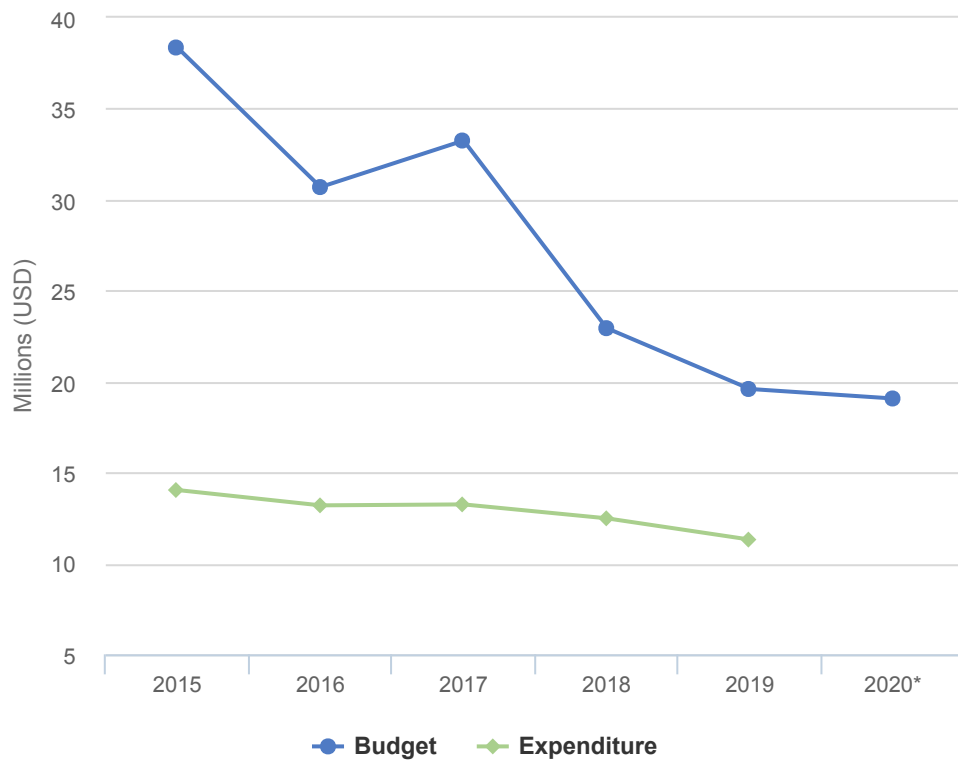
People of Concern

DECREASE IN
1 % 2019

| | |
|-------------|---------|
| 2019 | 573,425 |
| 2018 | 582,130 |
| 2017 | 593,241 |



Budgets and Expenditure for Thailand



Operational context

Thailand, a middle-income country with a growing economy and considerable reliance on migrant workers, is both a country of transit and a country of destination for people on the move. Although it is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, asylum-seekers and refugees are permitted to remain temporarily on Thai territory; however any assistance and solutions remain the responsibility of humanitarian actors. Resettlement was pursued for the most vulnerable cases only.

Progress was made on the protection framework in 2019, in line with the pledges made by the Government in the context of the 2016 Leaders' Summit on Refugees and with additional pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019. UNHCR supported the Governments of Thailand and Myanmar to develop a multi-solutions approach for refugees remaining in the nine camps on the Thai-Myanmar border. Host to one of the largest identified stateless populations in the world, Thailand also put in place progressive measures to address statelessness, including through legislative reforms and administrative measures.

Population trends

- Thailand hosted over 573,000 people of concern, including some 475,000 registered stateless individuals and 5,000 urban refugees and asylum-seekers from some 40 countries. There was a slight decrease in the number of refugees from Myanmar in camps on the border (93,300 including unregistered), primarily due to resettlement departures and small-scale voluntary repatriation, as well as a decrease the number of urban refugees.
- Some 6% of the urban refugee and asylum-seeker population were in detention by year end, while over 200 individuals - primarily children, mothers and people with serious medical conditions - were released on bail.
- Despite the deterioration of the situation in Rakhine State, Myanmar, since August 2017, the Rohingya population registered by UNHCR remained relatively low though increasing in Thailand. During 2019, more than 100 Rohingya were registered and another 100 new arrivals were recorded and processed for registration, more than double the number of arrivals that were registered in 2018. All individuals were detained in government facilities in different areas of Thailand.

Achievements

- In December, Thailand enacted a regulation establishing a screening mechanism to identify persons in need of international protection. UNHCR supported the Government to more closely align the regulation with international standards in view of enabling more predictable protection space.
- UNHCR supported Thailand in pursuing alternatives to immigration detention, enabling the release of over 50 refugee and asylum-seeking children and their mothers. By the end of the year, no children of concern to UNHCR were detained in the main immigration detention centre.
- Over 160 individuals underwent DNA testing with UNHCR support to determine family links. This is an important step in processing and resolving complex nationality applications of stateless persons.
- As part of UNHCR's engagement with the refugee community on the Thai-Myanmar border, more than 5,700 refugees participated in outreach sessions to inform solutions to the situation of protracted encampment.
- The protection needs of more than 200 newly arrived Rohingya in Songkhla and Satun provinces were assessed, and the individuals were provided with non-food items in support of the efforts by the Thai authorities.

Unmet needs

- The operation was funded at 60% by the end of 2019.

- The increased need for protection counselling, resettlement interviews, and emergency assistance through cash-based interventions for children and mothers released from immigration detention could not be met adequately.
 - Reduced monitoring of locations where Rohingya were detained delayed registration and protection assessments for newly arrived individuals.
 - UNHCR could not meet all requests by the Thai authorities for DNA tests required for some stateless persons applying for citizenship.
 - Plans for a youth volunteer programme to support the preparation of nationality applications could not be implemented due to lack of funding.
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