



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

Country Operations Plan 2007

THAILAND

COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN

THAILAND

Planning Year: 2007

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Part I: OVERVIEW

1. Protection and socio-economic operational environment

Thailand is not party to the Geneva Convention but has traditionally maintained a generous asylum policy, hosting some 1.2 million refugees over the past three decades. The status of refugees in the camps is regulated by ad hoc administrative arrangements whilst refugees outside the camps would fall under provisions of the Immigration Law and would be considered illegal migrants. Admissions to the camps are managed by Provincial Admission Boards (PABs) which had ceased to function in 2001 but resumed work in 2005 under an expanded criterion closer to the Convention refugee definition.

A key objective for UNHCR in 2005 was to build a current and credible population database of Myanmar refugees in Thailand. A comprehensive registration operation was conducted in nine camps on the Thai-Myanmar border with the use of the Project PROFILE methodology¹. The exercise generated a total population figure of 139,586, which is very close to the previous estimate of 140,000 persons. This figure includes some 2,000 students who were residing in the camps only temporarily for educational purposes. Following the re-activation of PABs, a total of 25,310 previously unregistered camp residents have had their status regularized through the PAB process, and in view of this positive momentum, it is expected that the residual unregistered camp population will be significantly reduced in 2006. At the end of the year, there remained a total of 10,817 unregistered camp residents pending screening by the PABs, plus more than 10,000 additional persons residing in urban areas. Added to the successful registration exercise was the agreement by the Royal Thai Government (RTG) to issue refugee identity cards to the registered population and discussions are underway on the practical modalities thereof. In addition, there are some 1,300 non-Myanmar refugees and asylum-seekers in Thailand for whom resettlement is the only solution, albeit one that is very difficult to achieve.

For several years, the refugee situation in Thailand has been described as protracted and one of prolonged encampment. Most of refugees live within the confines of the camps for periods extending to almost 20 years. If caught outside the camps they are liable to arrest and deportation and, officially, refugees have no access to employment. This situation contrasts with that of migrant workers who have been progressively afforded more opportunities. Conditions in the country of origin are also not conducive to voluntary repatriation. The prolonged confinement of refugees has created a host of social, psychological and protection problems resulting in increasing mental health needs. Refugees' coping mechanisms have been eroded and restrictions have only increased their dependency on subsistence-level assistance.

In 2004, there were signs of improved prospects for voluntary repatriation, but these faded away later in the year. RTG became more aware of the consequences of prolonged encampment and of the need to allow refugees to live a more productive life and achieve their human potential. The result was a conceptual change within the government towards a transition to durable solutions. The new approach has deservedly been praised by the international community. In discussions held in the framework of the Committee for Co-ordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand (CCSDPT), UNHCR and its NGO partners have been advocating for such a transition. In April 2005, CCSDPT/UNHCR wrote a joint letter to the RTG calling for a comprehensive policy approach to allow refugees more access to education and skills training and engage them in productive activities. This convergence of views was also evident at a meeting convened by RTG in December 2005 with the participation of NGOs, UNHCR and donors. The multi-stakeholder dialogue provided for a solid foundation for the implementation of the new strategy and it led to some key developments in the discussion of the refugee policy in Thailand:

- Increased educational opportunities for refugees, including vocational training, non-formal education and the teaching of Thai language

¹ Project PROFILE also known by its short label proGres is a data management software developed and implemented by UNHCR worldwide to conduct individual registration of all persons of concern

- Finalization of the PABs' procedures and resumption of their work under a new configuration
- Opening of resettlement from all nine camps
- Completion of the registration in the camps which paves the way to the issuance of identity documents
- A sharper focus on protection projects, including on the legal norms applicable in the camps

In 2005, the RTG moved from the restrictive position on resettlement towards a much more open approach. The RTG finally recognized the use of resettlement as a key protection, strategic and burden-sharing tool, and confirmed that resettlement from the camps is now an accepted policy. This new strategic direction has had immediate implications for the office, and resettlement has become an increasingly dominant feature of Thailand operation. Consequently, in 2005 UNHCR was able to turn resettlement from Thailand into a multilateral effort involving some 10 countries. During the year, a total of 13,400 refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration (including more than 10,300 refugees submitted through the Group Methodology to the US and Canada). Developments in 2006 and projections for 2007 indicate that this trend will continue, with upwards of 10,000 Myanmar refugees expected to be submitted in 2007, both on an individual basis and through group referrals.

In the course of 2005, UNHCR continued refugee status determination for asylum-seekers originating from countries other than Myanmar. Although the numbers are not comparable to those from Myanmar, the illegal status of recognized refugees with the consequent risk of arrest and detention, as well as the prohibition against employment, pose serious challenges to the protection of the rights of refugees and to the search for durable solutions other than resettlement. In this regard, UNHCR began in early 2006 a review of the urban caseload with a view to achieve a better understanding of individual situations. The team conducted a comprehensive assessment with a series of household visits, focus group discussions and interviews, and identified appropriate solutions for cases with immediate needs, including resettlement, voluntary repatriation and de facto local integration.

Participatory planning with NGOs – an ongoing process throughout the year – resulted in a Comprehensive Plan which details assistance and protection gaps in the camps, and identifies ways to address them. The present challenge is to capitalize on opportunities provided by the more flexible policy framework. This will require an added effort on the resource mobilization front. There is a well defined division of labour between UNHCR and NGOs. UNHCR's operational budget amounts to some 10% of total NGOs expenditure. It focuses primarily on protection and meeting the gaps identified in the Comprehensive Plan. In the Thailand model, UNHCR is a relatively minor actor in assistance, but its inputs have a strategic value in the implementation of a more forward-looking refugee policy. A cogent example is the project of administration of justice which has now been completed in all 9 camps. It will be complemented by a Legal Aid project which should serve as an outreach of the RTG's judiciary system to receive and deal with criminal complaints in the camps.

In 2007 UNHCR will also aim to address several key areas that characterize the HIV/AIDS situation for refugees in Thailand. Firstly, the HIV prevalence in the general population of refugees is low with infection mostly confined to high-risk groups, particularly mobile males. Greater attention will be given to identifying and reaching those groups that are at greatest risk of infection with HIV/AIDS prevention interventions and services. This will include targeted behaviour change communication and increasing access to quality voluntary counseling and testing. Secondly, refugees are not currently integrated into national or local HIV/AIDS initiatives. To address this UNHCR – especially through the UN theme groups on HIV/AIDS – will continue to advocate for recognition of the vulnerability of refugees and for inclusion in national HIV/AIDS programming at all levels. In addition, UNHCR will continue to work with its implementing and operational partners to provide comprehensive HIV/AIDS services that are appropriate to the phase of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Lastly, particular attention will be paid to the situation of refugee women and children and reducing their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.

The strategy for 2007 – and beyond – revolves around 6 building blocks, each including a clearly defined set of actions. The purpose is to establish a road map for the directions we want to take in 2007. Specific plans have already been drawn for some of the proposed actions, and others are underway.

Building Blocks

- 1. *Improving protection environment in the camps*** (Global Strategic Objective 1.1, Regional Strategy Pillar One)
 - Develop and effectively apply SGBV standard operating procedures for each field location
 - Promote implementation of Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM)²
 - Facilitate the administration of justice in the camps
 - Establish and maintain Legal Aid Centres in the camps
 - Continue capacity-building of camp committees and CBOs
 - Enhance child protection in cooperation with UNICEF and NGOs
 - Strengthen the role of the protection working group

- 2. *Development of the state-owned asylum system*** (Global Strategic Objective 2.2)
 - Promote the effective functioning of PABs
 - Ensure the efficient and timely processing of PAB applications, including existing cases and new arrivals
 - Continue efforts toward capacity-building of PAB members
 - Facilitate the issuance of identification cards to recognized refugees
 - Implement emergency preparedness measures to ensure that PABs are able to function in situations of mass influx

- 3. *Mitigating the consequences of prolonged encampment*** (Global Strategic Objectives 1.3, 3.2, 4.2)
 - Promote a rights-based approach leading to greater freedom of movement
 - Address the disproportionate punishment of refugees caught outside the camps
 - Build on recent indications of a more flexible RTG policy relating to refugees – vocational training, Thai language courses, non-formal education, income-generating opportunities
 - Advocate for refugees gaining access to employment opportunities
 - Address gaps in assistance, particularly with respect to camp infrastructure

- 4. *Strategic use of resettlement as a durable solution*** (Global Strategic Objective 3.4, Regional Strategy Pillar Two)
 - Broaden the strategic use of resettlement as part of a comprehensive solution to the protracted refugee situation in the camps
 - Develop and broaden the use of the Group Resettlement Methodology
 - Improve the current system of identification of refugees for referral
 - Strengthen information dissemination in the camps, including through individual counseling
 - Improve understanding of resettlement among partners (NGOs, CBOs, RTG officials)
 - Streamline planning for selection missions and improve coordination of resettlement selection missions

- 5. *Partnership and participatory planning with NGOs and other stakeholders*** (Global Strategic Objectives 5.3, 6.2, Regional Strategy Pillar Three)
 - Coordinate the implementation of the UNHCR/CCSDPT Comprehensive Plan
 - Broaden focus of joint advocacy efforts to include civil society
 - Undertake complementary efforts aimed at resource mobilization
 - Strengthen efforts aimed at capacity-building for NGO partners
 - Strengthen partnerships on AGDM initiatives

² The AGDM initiative was launched in 2004 to use participatory approaches based on age, gender and diversity considerations in planning, implementation and evaluation of UNHCR assistance and protection programmes

6. Enhance protection and the search for durable solutions for refugees from countries other than Myanmar (Global Strategic Objectives 1.1, 2.2, 3.4, Regional Strategy Pillar Two)

- Strengthen refugee status determination procedures
- Broaden advocacy efforts to ensure that the rights of refugees are respected in accordance with the 1951 Convention and other relevant human rights instruments, with particular focus on the principle of *non-refoulement*, protection of the individual, and access to basic services
- In parallel, explore alternative approaches to the protection of persons of concern through migration and development discourse in the Asian context
- As part of a comprehensive approach, review the existing urban caseload to develop a better understanding of each individual situation and to assess on a case-by-case basis appropriate durable solutions.

In the implementation of this strategy, ROTH A will continue the decentralization process already initiated in 2005. This entails a strengthening of the role of the 3 Field Offices to bring activities and protection closer to the point of delivery. Implications thereof are reflected in our staffing proposals.

In light of the aforementioned building blocks and based on global and regional objectives of UNHCR, as well as in ensuring that the rights- and community-based approaches are reflected in all programmes of protection and assistance, the office will focus on achieving the following strategic objectives in 2007:

1. Strategic Objective 1: Refugee women, men and children of all backgrounds enjoy enhanced physical protection and receive assistance on equal terms:

- 1.1. Refugees are protected against *refoulement*, are physically safe in the camps and urban areas, and enjoy reduced incidents of all forms of violence
- 1.2. Security patrols have increased awareness and knowledge of regulations; are in place in and around the camps, and effectively safeguard the security of all refugees
- 1.3. Refugees have greater access to justice through an efficient operation of Legal Aid Centers (LAC) in the camps and the establishment of a comprehensive referral mechanism linked to the Thai justice system in both the urban and camp contexts
- 1.4. Safety and well-being of refugee women, including survivors of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) and victims of trafficking, are ensured through the implementation of High Commissioner's five commitments and efficient application of SGBV prevention and response standard operating procedures (SOP)
- 1.5. Improved monitoring and care arrangements are provided to separated and unaccompanied children (SCs/UAMs), while a lead agency for tracing family members/relatives is identified and a network with partners and authorities is established to initiate tracing
- 1.6. Refugees have, without discrimination, access to sufficient food, shelter, clean drinking water, sanitation and basic health services, including HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support
- 1.7. All refugee children have access to primary and secondary schooling while adolescent girls and boys have broadened post-10th educational opportunities

2. Strategic Objective 2: Refugee women and men of all ages and backgrounds are empowered to better meet their protection and assistance needs:

- 2.1. Opportunities for self-reliance are maximized with particular focus on vocational training, teaching of Thai and English languages, and income-generating activities
- 2.2. Refugees have greater awareness and understanding of their basic human rights and are able to use camp-based structures to raise protection concerns that affect their lives
- 2.3. Refugee community-based organizations (CBO) and camp committees participate in capacity-building initiatives, sensitization campaigns and receive protection and human rights training

3. Strategic Objective 3: While redoubling efforts at finding durable solutions for refugees, UNHCR uses resettlement as part of a comprehensive protection and solutions strategy:

- 3.1. UNHCR proactively and systematically identifies refugees in need of resettlement and assesses resettlement cases according to established criteria in a transparent, fair and consistent manner
- 3.2. UNHCR ensures that all recognized refugees have equal and fair access to resettlement opportunities regardless of age, gender, education level, social status, religion or ethnicity
- 3.3. Accurate information on resettlement criteria and procedures is disseminated in locations accessible and convenient to refugees so as to avoid malfeasance, corruption and fraud
- 3.4. Refugees have, without discrimination, access to UNHCR resettlement counseling, presented in a gender- and age-sensitive manner
- 3.5. UNHCR resettlement staff prepares well-documented resettlement registration forms and submit them according to established procedures to relevant resettlement entities
- 3.6. Urgent and emergency resettlement submissions are processed expeditiously
- 3.7. International capacity to resettle refugees is fully utilized as a strategic protection tool and a burden and responsibility sharing mechanism
- 3.8. UNHCR encourages authorities to adopt a solutions-oriented policy to allow for the establishment of income-generating projects targeting refugees

4. Strategic Objective 4: Refugees and asylum-seekers have access to fair asylum procedures and are treated in conformity with international standards:

- 4.1. Reception, status determination and registration of refugees and asylum-seekers are effectively performed according to international standards and UNHCR guidelines
- 4.2. Reception centers at field locations are functional and conditions fulfill the minimum standards while asylum-seekers are assisted with registration procedures, accommodation, means of subsistence and access to medical care
- 4.3. Reception arrangements and status determination procedures in field locations are carried out by a trained and capable pool of government professionals through the Provincial Admissions Boards (PABs), are monitored by UNHCR, and interventions are made by UNHCR as appropriate, including advisory and material support
- 4.4. Asylum-seekers are informed about reception centers and are not detained while in the process of submitting asylum claims
- 4.5. PAB members, border guards, immigration officers, police, customs, judiciary and officials involved in refugee matters receive specialized training and participate in sensitization activities
- 4.6. NGOs, civil society and academia are called upon advocating in favor of government asylum procedures in compliance with international standards

5. Strategic Objective 5: Effective partnerships and protection networks are established with Civil Society, refugee communities and government authorities:

- 5.1. Technical and capacity-building support, including training, coaching and skills development, is provided to local NGOs involved in refugee assistance to allow for an improvement in their protection capacity and service delivery
- 5.2. Refugees, particularly refugee women and refugees with special needs, are encouraged and technically assisted to establish their own associations
- 5.3. Refugee protection and assistance programmes are incorporated into national development plans and various poverty alleviation initiatives through UNHCR's pro-active participation in the co-ordination framework of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)
- 5.4. Joint assessments and gap analyses are conducted with NGOs, through participatory approaches, to accurately identify the needs of refugees, design solutions-oriented projects and ensure efficient implementation

6. Strategic Objective 6: UNHCR's external relations are strengthened through expansion of donors and increase of the relevance of UNHCR authority in the refugee-protection community:

- 6.1. Fundraising expertise is established among UNHCR staff
- 6.2. Efforts are increased in private sector fundraising with a focus on multi-national companies with the most active Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) profiles
- 6.3. More NGOs are attracted to address the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers and partnerships with current civil society constituents are strengthened to foster a positive attitude towards refugees
- 6.4. Government officials, local administrations and NGOs are engaged in information campaigns to promote public awareness, tolerance and respect for the human rights of refugees and asylum seekers

7. Strategic Objective 7: UNHCR is an effective, fully engaged, responsive and respected humanitarian agency worthy of public, political and financial support:

- 7.1. ROTHA is able to fulfill its protection role by following the UN-mandated international authority and maintaining financial stability
- 7.2. ROTHA is actively engaged in the UN comprehensive reform by redesigning its organizational structure to become more efficient and cost effective in its operations
- 7.3. Results-based management is institutionalized as a fundamental performance and accountability framework for the organization

ROTHA is a Regional Office which covers also Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos. In all 3 countries, UNHCR aims to participate actively in joint UN planning processes, despite being a non-resident agency in Laos. The policy and strategic support provided to the UNHCR Offices in Cambodia and Vietnam will continue as actively as in 2005. Although it involves relatively small numbers, the Vietnam/Cambodia refugee equation is politically sensitive and calls for sustained and creative diplomacy. ROTHA's senior management has been closely involved in the search of solutions, designing a strategy and networking with Embassies in Hanoi and Phnom Penh.

The need for support is particularly acute in the case of the very small UNHCR Office in Vietnam. Repeated efforts to re-establish an international presence in Hanoi – which drew broad support from the international community – have unfortunately failed. Hence, the international component of UNHCR's work in Vietnam has to be covered by ROTHA. At the same time, UNHCR's activities have become more complex, diverse and time-consuming. An international presence is indispensable for the frequent monitoring visits to the Central Highlands. A protection training project for Vietnamese officials has been recently completed and is also likely to continue in 2007. There finally appears to be an opening on the long-standing issue of the naturalization of the Cambodian refugees (1975 caseload) living in and around Ho Chi Minh City. Implementation of micro-projects in the Central Highlands has already started on a small scale. This programme provides also an additional justification for UNHCR's monitoring visits. However, it is largely dependent on extra-budgetary contributions which have more detailed design and reporting requirements. While the responsibility of supporting the Vietnam operation will be primarily vested in the Deputy Regional Representative, it will in fact necessitate the involvement of ROTHA's Programme Section as well. The nature of ROTHA's regional coverage should not be overlooked, as experience has shown that it amounts to running more than one operation.

PART II: COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS AND PARTNERSHIP

1. Outcomes of joint planning and management of identified gaps

In a complex refugee situation such as the one in Thailand, fostering cooperation with relevant UN agencies and developing partnerships with the civil society is a major condition for ensuring effective

protection and assistance to refugees. The UNHCR office in Thailand has been increasingly engaged in working groups and networks to capitalize on the common efforts and growing competencies, expertise and resources provided by other humanitarian actors, and has strongly advocated for the inclusion of refugee communities in the quest for durable solutions. During 2005, a number of joint actions have strengthened this humanitarian collaborative approach but essentially helped identify gaps in addressing the needs of refugees and mitigating the consequences of the protracted refugee situation in Thailand.

In April 2005, UNHCR together with the Committee for Coordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand (CCSDPT) addressed the Thai Ministry of Interior (MOI) a joint advocacy letter calling for a revised RTG policy concerning refugees and more openness in relation to their employment and education. In response to this joint action, the Thai government brought together humanitarian agencies in a tripartite policy meeting in December and delineated a new level of involvement in refugee matters. Consequently, the Thai office of Non-formal Education Commission of the Thai Ministry of Education (MOE) came up with a proposal to provide broad educational services to refugees, including Thai and English languages, occupational skills and educational materials such as computers and textbooks.

In September 2005, a Camp Management Workshop was organized within the CCSDPT-UNHCR Protection Working Group to analyze risks and threats to physical security of refugees in the camps and to identify means to minimize them. Workshop participants, who represented UNHCR, NGOs, camp-based refugee committees and community-based organizations (CBO), had a chance, for the first time, to openly discuss the militarized aspects of the camps and the negative consequences of these on refugee protection. Security threats were analyzed in view of the traditional justice mechanism currently applied in the camps, and the limited access of refugees to the Thai judicial system. Camp-based leadership structures were recognized as major players in improving the physical security of refugees.

In late November 2005, the office embarked on the application of age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) initiative with a series of participatory assessments in the field and a systematization workshop in Bangkok. Multi-functional teams (MFT) were created with UNHCR field, protection, programme and community services officers, as well as NGO implementing and operational partners. MFT members conducted a range of focus group discussions with diverse groups of refugees, and carried out household visits and interviews to analyze power dynamics within age and gender groups, explore factors leading to inequalities and help identify solutions for equitable access to resources and protection.

The AGDM exercise earned incredible support from NGOs. The joint application of participatory assessments was an impetus for shifting beyond the approach of 'consulting a few' towards a more structured and meaningful dialogue with women, girls, boys and men of diverse backgrounds. Weighed against previous methods of structured or semi-structured interviews, which were seen as suggestive and determining respondents' answers by discussing pre-selected topics, these interactions encouraged refugees to lead the discussions themselves and to outline their own individual prioritization of problems, causes, existent capacities and solutions for better protection.

UNHCR's partnerships with UN agencies and NGOs cover a broad range of topics. The process is supported by working groups set up in Bangkok and in the three field locations, respectively. Interface subjects include, inter alia, child protection with a priority on monitoring of separated children and boarding houses in the camps; capacity-building for traditional justice systems, camp committees, and community-based organizations; addressing the needs of extremely vulnerable individuals and people with disabilities; implementation of the High Commissioner's five commitments to refugee women, including the development of SGBV standard operating procedures; trafficking; ensuring the civilian nature of refugee camps; and the training of NGOs.

Despite some differences in approaches, the quality and maturity of the dialogue with NGOs has been rewarding and offers further scope for creative action. The inter-agency process on trafficking has yielded a much welcome focus on birth registration. UNHCR is actively participating in several thematic working groups, including the one on migration. Cooperation with UNICEF on child soldiers has

substantially progressed, and within the UN Country Team a working group has been established to address child soldiers and children affected by armed conflict. This working group, comprising representatives from UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, UNOHCHR, ILO, and three NGOs (with ICRC as an observer) is tasked with maintaining dialogue with the RTG and other non-State entities, monitoring the situation of child soldiers, developing policies and solutions to address the situation, and ensuring regular reporting to the UN Secretary General.

All these collaborative actions, which attest an increased level of partnership, serve as a central edifying source for the recognition of gaps in refugee programmes and identification of new means to address them. Gaps and strategies for 2006 were encompassed in a first ever joint CCSDPT-UNHCR Comprehensive Plan relating to refugee problems, released in December 2005, which as well distinguishes trends, strategies and funding considerations.

UNHCR and CCSDPT agreed that the major gaps pertaining to UNHCR's direct programme on protection and assistance persist in the following sectors:³

1. Camp Infrastructure. Infrastructure repair and maintenance in the camps have never been assigned to any agency in particular. NGOs, UNHCR, local authorities and refugee committees have usually responded to emergencies during camp relocations or heavy floods in rainy seasons, but the need for systematic planning and maintenance of infrastructure is constant. Several geo-technical assessments conducted in 2005 indicated potential danger of natural hazards, such as landslides and soil erosion, if interventions were not to be taken immediately. A civil engineer joined UNHCR in January 2006 to supervise all geo-technical work, already begun in 2005, and recommend further interventions.

2. Camp Management. Joint assessments and workshops, especially the Camp Management Workshop, highlighted the important role of refugee committees and community organizations in the administration of camps, in ensuring protection to refugees and providing assistance to camp residents. These organizations, however, are under-resourced and needs were identified for capacity building, training, financial support and equipment that can make camp management be more efficient and transparent.

3. Protection. The CCSDPT/UNHCR Protection Working Group (PWG) as well as multi-functional teams (MFT), formed during the AGDM exercise, have used participatory assessments to identify root causes of protection risks and solutions to a range of problems, including child registration, camp justice systems, security in the camps and boarding houses. Some of the most urgent solutions, identified by PWG and MFT members, were an improved administration of justice, the need to establish camp legal aid centers, the possibility to conduct basic protection training for NGOs and camp communities, the urgency of addressing the trafficking of refugee children and women, and the importance to ensure the civilian nature of camps. Refer to Chapter III for detailed finding of AGDM.

4. Education and Occupational Training. Half of refugees are children and adolescents. Many of them were born in camps and never experienced the outside living. While their parents endure chronic anxiety and depression, children grow up in conditions severely impeding the development of their skills and talents. Currently, refugees have limited access to post-10th-grade education and most of them have no meaningful occupation after finishing school. Participatory assessments from November revealed that current facilities in the camps, although very scant, allow for a great improvement of vocational programmes. Refugee adolescents prioritized education among their top problems and deplored especially the quality of teaching in the camps. They asked for an increase in number of training slots as well as for more diversity in schooling, with preference for computer training, English and Thai languages. At the same time, third-country resettlement reinforced the relevance of vocational training in preparing refugees for a successful integration in a foreign culture and brought up the question of

³ CCSDPT/UNHCR, A Draft Comprehensive Plan Addressing the Needs of Displaced Persons on the Thailand-Myanmar (Burma) Border in 2006, December 2005

replenishing the refugee workforce in the provision of education, health, and sanitation services in the camps.

5. Community Services. Gaps identified in this area relate to several different groups with special needs, including separated and unaccompanied children, people with physical and mental disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS and the youth. Adolescents have been reported on alcohol and drug abuse which occur mostly as a result of no meaningful occupation in the camps. Improved monitoring services are required for all disadvantaged groups. There is a need for the development of day-care services for adults with mental handicap, more psycho-social support for adolescents and special assistance to refugees with speech and hearing impairment.

6. Non-food Items. With no prospect for safe repatriation or local integration, refugees have increasingly become dependent on food and non-food items provided by humanitarian organizations. Non-food assistance usually includes delivery of cooking fuel, stoves, clothing, blankets, mosquito nets and sleeping nets. Gaps identified as priorities are soap, water containers and lighting. During participatory assessments, refugees asked especially for more candles or other means of lighting for education and health needs. More electricity can be provided through generators maintained by health and education agencies.

Aside from the aforementioned areas, gaps remain in sectors that are not substantially covered by UNHCR and these include **food, shelter and health**. In recent years blended food has been added to the refugee food basket which now meets international standards in terms of energy and nutritional requirements. However, consultations with refugees recognized the monotonous diet which is seldom diversified unless refugees go outside the camps. In terms of refugee shelters, camps have become incredibly crowded and in some cases do not meet international space standards. More land is required for food production, recreation and training needs. As for health, disease rates in the camps are similar to those within Thailand but many trained health staff are now in consideration for third country resettlement and this presents a major logistical challenge because of the immediate need to replenish the refugee workforce.

Built upon these joint assessments and on issues emerging from last year's key developments, UNHCR organized in March 2006 a meeting with the Thai Government aimed at settling pending decisions and agreeing on a common strategy for future actions. The session allowed for an appraisal of the current policy framework and the policy options for UNHCR to operate further. Government officials representing the National Security Council (NSC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Interior (MOI) and several adjunct departments, confirmed their support for UNHCR and highlighted the need of the government to continue cooperation with UNHCR on issues related to the registration of camp population, issuance of ID cards to Myanmar refugees, functioning of Provincial Admissions Boards, vocational training and resettlement.

Following these joint assessments and the endorsement by the government of activities required to address the needs, the projected funding for 2007 for ROTH and its partners amounts to USD 3,550,000. This figure should be seen in light of the refugee population and significant contributions made by NGOs. It reflects an increase compared to the 2006 appropriation to cover the Legal Aid Centers and support the recent involvement of the Ministry of Education in the camps. In fact, these activities are not additional: they will already be launched in 2006 thanks to two large extra-budgetary contributions that have already been secured.

2. Comprehensive Needs and Contributions

a) Contributions by the host government and NGOs

Of the total budgetary contributions, the ones projected by NGO implementing and operational partners amount to USD 38,561,800. The budget of UNHCR constitutes only 10% of the total contributions of

humanitarian organizations working along the Thai-Myanmar border. The largest contributor is the Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC) with a total of \$24,200,000 budget for emergency assistance, food aid, non-food and relief items and shelter. UNICEF is also part of the assistance framework with an estimated contribution of \$728,000 for psycho-social support for refugee children, baby kits for new born babies and supplies for displaced H'mong people in Petchabun.

b) Financial contributions of partners⁴:

Needs-based budget for the country operation	Total (all figures in US \$)	
Of which, estimated	UNHCR	3,550,000
	WFP (where applicable)	Nil
	Operational partners	40,468,100
	Implementing partners	3,003,189
	Unmet needs	

⁴ At this stage, some NGOs do not have financial projections for 2007. The figure is thus partially based on 2006 contributions.