

Thailand

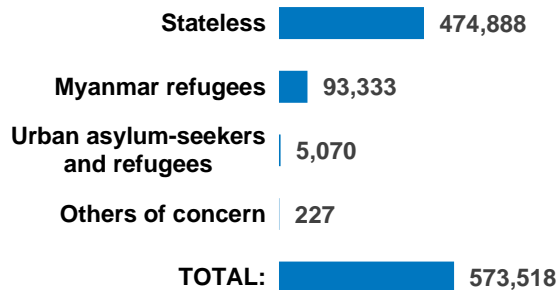
31 December 2019

Populations of concern include **93,333** Myanmar refugees, **5,070** 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 people 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 DECEMBER 2019)

USD 19.6 million

requested for the Thailand operation



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

112 National Staff
17 International Staff

Offices:

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



*Photo: Community mobilisers like Rungnapa, who herself acquired citizenship last year, are helping to facilitate nationality applications and reduce the number of #stateless people in Chiang Rai Province.
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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

- The Prime Minister's Regulation **establishing a screening mechanism** to distinguish people who need international protection from economic migrants was approved by the Thai Cabinet in December 2019 and will enter into force within 180 days. UNHCR is engaged with and continues to support the RTG in the alignment of the Regulation with international standards in support of a more predictable protection space in Thailand. Moreover, UNHCR continues to work together with the RTG in line with the RTG's pledge made in December 2019 during the first-ever Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in Geneva to enhance the capacity-building of its officers involved in implementing the national screening system.
- 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 Suan Phlu IDC as of 31 December 2019. The RTG reaffirmed its commitment at the GRF in December 2019 by pledging to effectively apply alternatives to detention measures for children in need of international protection. UNHCR continues to advocate for alternatives to detention for all Persons of Concern (POCs) to UNHCR from all government facilities.
- During January-December 2019, UNHCR visited **204 Rohingya individuals** in Satun and Songkhla provinces who arrived in Thailand during 2019 to assess 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 urban areas during January-December 2019, UNHCR provided financial support to 2,102 POCs to enable them to **access medical care**. In order to optimize the limited resources available and avoid duplication, during 2020 UNHCR will progressively phase out outpatient department (OPD) support to focus solely on inpatient department (IPD) support and life-saving assistance.
- In urban areas during January-December 2019, 2,248 POCs with specific needs received **cash grants**, 596 received **psychosocial support** and 959 received **legal assistance**. 455 children are enrolled in **primary education**, 58 in **secondary education** and 78 are 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.
- With UNHCR support, **2,678 birth certificates** were issued by District Offices to the registered and unregistered population in temporary shelters on the Thai-Myanmar border through 2019. All urban POC new-borns were also issued with RTG birth certificates.
- UNHCR identifies unregistered individuals in the temporary shelters with **serious medical and protection concerns** and advocated 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-December 2019, all 12 adjudicated cases (62 individuals) were approved.

SOLUTIONS

- **875 refugees** in temporary shelters on the Thai-Myanmar border voluntarily repatriated to Myanmar during 2019, bringing the total to 1,039 since the start of the programme in late 2016. At the **GRF in December 2019** the RTG pledged to follow a development-led approach to help prepare receiving areas for Myanmar displaced persons and local communities, enhance cooperation in the repatriation process of Myanmar displaced persons and provide employment for returnees in accordance with laws and regulations and relevant training prior to their return to Myanmar.
- 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.
- UNHCR continues to identify vulnerable cases for durable solutions. During January-December 2019, **780 refugees** in the whole country were submitted for resettlement.
- Through its partner, UNHCR **submitted 3,091 nationality applications** during January-December 2019. The RTG supported and participated in the **Regional Preparatory Meeting on Statelessness** in Bangkok in May 2019 and made pledges to take further action to reduce statelessness at the global **High-Level Segment on Statelessness** in Geneva in October 2019.

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 in 2019:

France | Denmark | Ireland | Italy | 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, Bahamas, China, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand and the United States of America.

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