

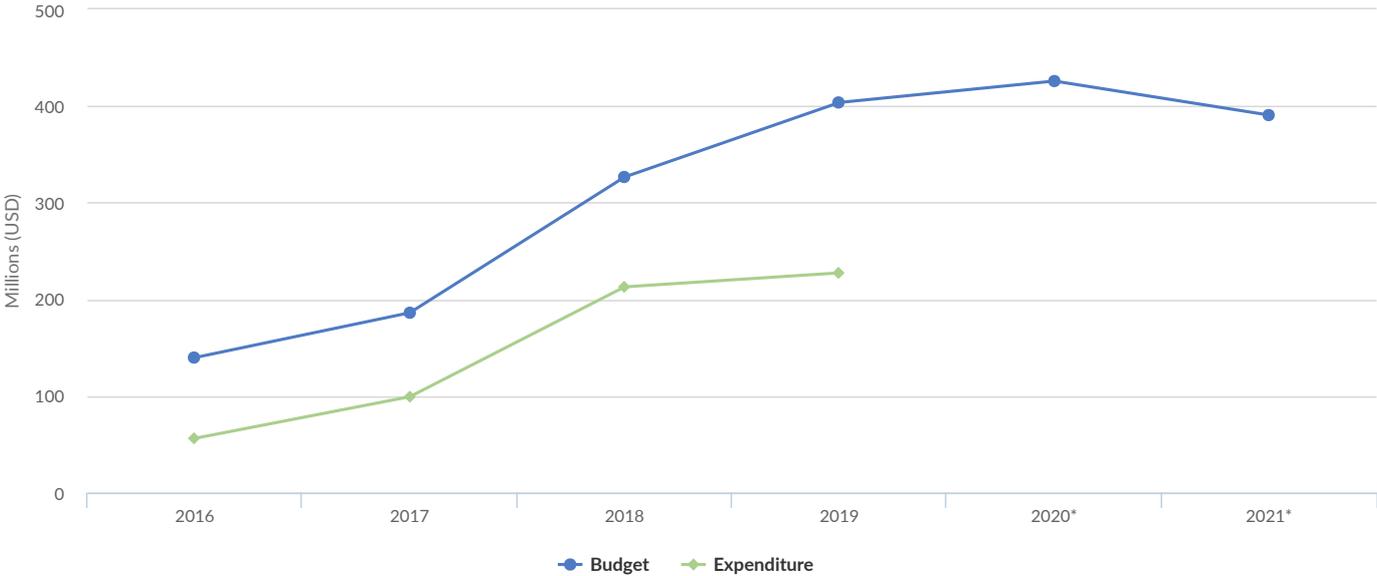
## Subregion: South East Asia

| Bangladesh | Brunei Darussalam | Cambodia | Indonesia | Lao People's Democratic Republic | Malaysia | Mongolia | Myanmar | Philippines | Singapore | Thailand | Timor-Leste | Viet Nam |

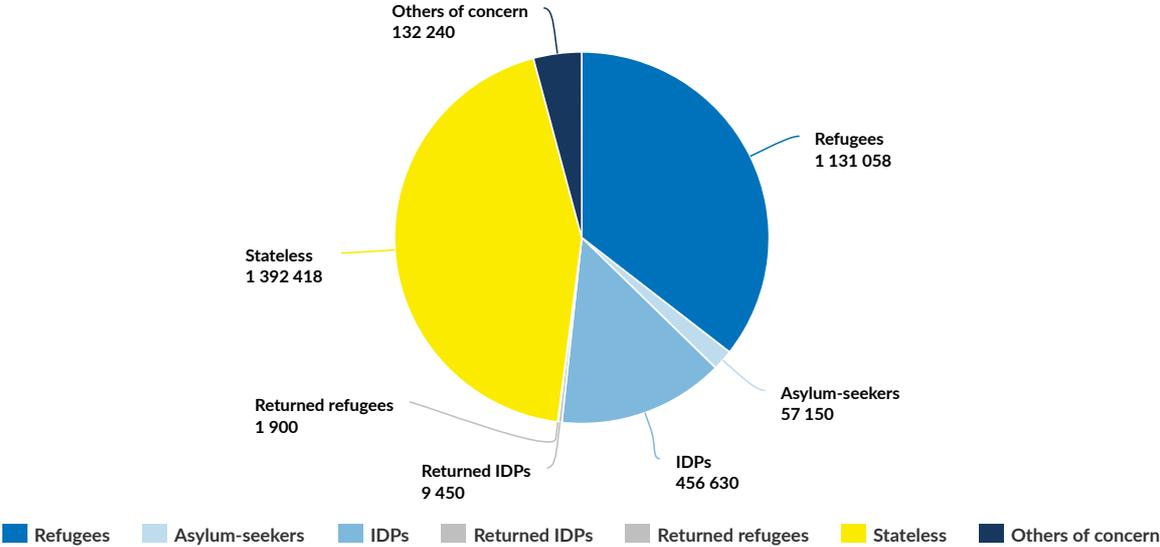


*The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.*

## Budgets and Expenditure in Subregion South East Asia



## People of Concern - 2021 [projected]



## Operational environment

The largest populations of concern to UNHCR in South-East Asia continues to be those from Myanmar, namely the 1.1 million refugees and asylum-seekers from Myanmar hosted in the region; an estimated 600,000 stateless Rohingya who remain in Myanmar, a quarter of whom are internally displaced; and more than 200,000 other IDPs in Myanmar. The vast majority of refugees from Myanmar are Rohingya from Rakhine State, 860,000 of whom are hosted by Bangladesh, with significant populations also hosted by Malaysia and India. Some 93,000 refugees from south-east Myanmar continue to be hosted by Thailand.

Solutions for these populations have remained elusive. The environment in Rakhine State is still not conducive to the voluntary return of refugees, with conditions worsening in 2020 due to conflict between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army, an ethnic Rakhine armed group, while Rohingya remained subject to discriminatory restrictions on their citizenship and movement. The COVID-19 pandemic, meanwhile, slowed progress on return and other solutions for Myanmar refugees in Thailand.

In 2021, UNHCR will seek to reinvigorate progress towards solutions for people of concern from Myanmar. In Myanmar, it will seek an expansion of activities under a tripartite memorandum of understanding between UNHCR, UNDP and the Government of Myanmar to improve conditions in Rakhine State. It will also advocate regional support to renew the Government's efforts to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State and the 2019 national strategy on resettlement of IDPs and closure of IDP camps.

In Bangladesh, while continuing to meet refugees' basic humanitarian and protection needs, UNHCR will work with partners to roll out initiatives that build the resilience of refugees and prepare them for solutions, including a Myanmar curriculum pilot that was delayed in 2020 due to COVID-19-related restrictions. In India, Malaysia and other countries that host refugees from Myanmar, UNHCR will seek more inclusive measures that expand refugees' access to education and livelihoods, and reduce their exposure to the risks of indefinite detention, people smuggling and trafficking. Across the region, UNHCR will advocate a comprehensive approach to solutions supported by key actors in the region and beyond, including through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The main challenge for UNHCR in South-East Asia is the lack of established national legal frameworks and the low accession rate to key international legal instruments particularly the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the statelessness conventions. In 2020, the limited protection space was further exacerbated by socioeconomic impact of the pandemic, which had a profound impact on people of concern and on UNHCR's delivery of protection and solutions. Loss of income, particularly for refugees working in the informal sector and in the urban context, has negatively impacted the ability of UNHCR's people of concern to pay for food and rent, and has had spill-over effects on a broad range of issues. UNHCR will continue its advocacy towards the inclusion of people of concern into national systems and seek to expand the use of cash assistance, as appropriate.

In Malaysia, the ongoing political uncertainty, maritime movements of Rohingya refugees and the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic have stretched asylum space and fueled negative sentiments against refugees and asylum-seekers. Access to detention facilities and access to refugees who arrived by sea were not allowed. The political stalemate has also delayed the development of a national asylum system and the introduction of a refugee policy that would afford refugees and asylum-seekers with temporary stay and access to legal work. In 2021, UNHCR will continue to engage with a view to building a sustainable asylum system, and strengthening outreach and community-based protection.

During the year, the Indonesian province of Aceh saw nearly 400 Rohingya refugees arrive by boat who also require full support in terms of protection and assistance. The impact of the pandemic and the lack of third country durable solutions opportunities has severely impacted their mental health, resulting in a number of deaths by suicide and attempted cases in 2020. UNHCR activities in 2021 will support the Government to ensure protection of refugees, focusing on expanding access to education, vocational training and self-reliance opportunities.

The decline in resettlement opportunities and the legal right to work mean that refugees are finding themselves in Thailand for longer periods and faced with increasing financial insecurity and its associated physical and mental health stressors. A range of solutions will be pursued for refugees in protracted situation while increasingly focusing on community-based protection for urban refugees.

## Strategy: Response and implementation

As part of its responsible downsizing strategy in the Philippines, UNHCR has been working closely with Government stakeholders to build capacity and continues to play a catalytic role in supporting the coordination between the Government and civil society to enhance the protection environment. It also provides support to the Inter-Agency Steering Committee on the protection of refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless persons.

Some of the largest statelessness populations reside in the South-East Asia sub-region including in Brunei, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. In 2021, UNHCR seeks to continue assisting field operations to prevent statelessness, in line with global strategies and the campaign to end statelessness. It will continue to build upon the long-standing relationship it has with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children and expand its work in the promotion of legal identity and birth registration.

## 2021 Budget for South East Asia | USD

Operation	Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	Total
Bangladesh	288,940,721	0	0	0	288,940,721
Indonesia	6,955,979	392,476	0	0	7,348,455
Malaysia	24,263,334	873,100	0	0	25,136,434
Myanmar	5,359,420	27,319,202	0	12,661,737	45,340,359
Philippines	666,236	392,434	0	2,599,348	3,658,017
Thailand Multi-Country Office	18,842,823	1,373,395	0	0	20,216,218
<b>Total</b>	<b>345,028,513</b>	<b>30,350,607</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15,261,085</b>	<b>390,640,204</b>

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