



UNITED NATIONS  
THAILAND



COVID-19  
RESPONSE  
VACCINES

# 2020 UN THAILAND RESULTS REPORT



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## FOREWORD

Throughout 2020, UN Thailand repositioned rapidly to support public health and social-economic responses to the COVID-19 pandemic while at the same time ensuring continued progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. In the collaborative work of all UN agencies, the interconnected domains of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership established the priorities for sustainable development and the mandate to Leave No One Behind in the recovery.

Progress towards the 2030 Agenda and Thailand's development goals is founded on the UN's long-term partnerships with Government, the private sector, academia, and civil society and youth groups. This whole-of-society approach leverages UN networks and technical expertise to support the strengths, knowledge and skills of every sector. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all our partners for their collaboration over this uniquely challenging year.

For a more sustainable and equitable country, region and world, the UN values the roles and contributions of every member of society based on human rights

and inclusivity is imperative. COVID-19 has highlighted existing gaps in development particularly affecting vulnerable groups who have been most severely affected by the public health and socio-economic disruption. The pandemic has also highlighted opportunities, however, to re-examine and address development strategies with a focus on targeted interventions that strengthen the resilience and capacity of the country while promoting green and equitable growth. The global UN mandate in response to COVID-19 is to build back better and more equal. Based on Thailand's considerable progress towards the SDGs and strong pandemic response, joint projects undertaken in 2020 lay the groundwork for continued recovery and renewed commitment to a better and more sustainable future for all.



Ms. Gita Sabharwal  
United Nations Resident Coordinator in Thailand  
March 2021

# ACRONYMS ●

|                 |  |                   |  |
|-----------------|--|-------------------|--|
| <b>ASEAN</b>    | Association of Southeast Asian Nations                                 | <b>UNDP</b>       | United Nations Development Programme                             |
| <b>FAO</b>      | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations                | <b>UNDRR</b>      | United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction                |
| <b>LGBTI</b>    | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people                | <b>UNEP</b>       | United Nations Environment Programme                             |
| <b>ILO</b>      | International Labour Organization                                      | <b>UNESCO</b>     | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| <b>IOM</b>      | International Organization for Migration                               | <b>UNFPA</b>      | United Nations Population Fund                                   |
| <b>ITU</b>      | International Telecommunication Union                                  | <b>UN-Habitat</b> | United Nations Human Settlements Programme                       |
| <b>NESDC</b>    | National Economic and Social Development Council                       | <b>UNHCR</b>      | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees                    |
| <b>OHCHR</b>    | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights        | <b>UNICEF</b>     | United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund           |
| <b>RCO</b>      | Resident Coordinator's Office  | <b>UNIDO</b>      | United Nations Industrial Development Organization               |
| <b>RTG</b>      | Royal Thai Government  | <b>UNODC</b>      | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime                         |
| <b>SDGs</b>     | Sustainable Development Goals  | <b>UNOPS</b>      | United Nations Office for Project Services                       |
| <b>UN Women</b> | United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women | <b>UNOSSC</b>     | United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation                |
| <b>UNAIDS</b>   | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS                         | <b>UNPAF</b>      | United Nations Partnership Framework                             |
| <b>UNCT</b>     | United Nations Country Team  | <b>UNV</b>        | United Nations Volunteers  |
|                 |  | <b>WHO</b>        | World Health Organization  |



Health forms are given to passengers who arrived on a flight from Taiwan at Bangkok Suvarnabhumi International Airport in Bangkok on 8 July 2020. Special attention is being given to detecting novel coronavirus infections. © WHO/Ploy Phutpheng

Front cover: A health volunteer takes temperature for a patient during a home visit on the 23 September 2020, in Bang Phut Sub District, Bangkok © WHO/Ploy Phutpheng



# CHAPTER 1:

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COUNTRY

Like many countries around the globe, the key development situation in Thailand was overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the fiscal and technical response initiated to enable economic recovery and steer the country to stay on course to achieve the SDGs by 2030. In January 2020, the country became the second in the world to confirm a COVID-19 infection. Subsequently, Thailand rapidly implemented a national response, successfully flattening the epidemic curve while maintaining a low case fatality rate. Thailand's relatively strong healthcare delivery system and the near-universal health insurance coverage have contributed to effectively containing the spread of the virus, with a relatively low number of confirmed cases and deaths, ranking it among the top-ten most prepared countries to deal with the coronavirus and first among upper-middle-income countries<sup>1</sup>.

Government's effective response to the pandemic included rapid and accurate case detection, isolation, treatment and tracing close contacts of cases in quarantine, and effective communication with the public. More than four decades of investment in primary health care resulted in an excellent health response with hundreds of technical experts trained in disease outbreak investigation and 1 million village volunteers supporting contact tracing in communities. There is significant trust between the community and the health system across the country. Thailand's near universal health coverage has also ensured that no Thai has endured financial hardship for COVID-19-related health services. However, the outbreak response is more challenging in some marginalized populations including non-Thais and migrants, due to difficulties

in accessing documentation, language barriers and distrust among host communities. The RTG addressed some of these gaps by issuing a Cabinet Resolution on 29 December 2020 that supported the regularization of irregular migrant workers, opening access to health services such as COVID-19 check-ups and purchase of the Migrant Health Insurance Scheme.

The Ministry of Finance responded quickly to the virus outbreak by announcing three fiscal stimulus packages worth US\$76.2 billion, or just over 15 per cent of GDP, consisting of measures for households and businesses to tackle negative impacts. Such measures targeted those most at risk of losing their jobs or businesses, recognizing that more than half of the labour force is in the informal sector.

The breakdown of fiscal stimulus packages exhibits Thailand's clear focus on helping vulnerable people, while stimulating economic growth by supporting businesses and creating jobs. Social protection payments provided as part of the stimulus package complemented by household debt alleviation measures have helped to mitigate poverty.

The pandemic has revealed the strength of Thailand's social capital. Community pantries have been voluntarily established across the country to help alleviate the impacts of lockdown and restrictions. Philanthropists have given direct cash handouts and free food distributions for people affected. According to a UN estimate, 35 per cent of the population were involved in sharing food, household supplies and direct cash handouts worth between US\$1.6 billion and US\$2.5 billion for COVID-19 affected individuals during the first half of 2020 alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the 2019 Global Health Security Index.



The UN has partnered with a range of line ministries to facilitate impact assessments of the pandemic across sectors.<sup>2</sup> Public health and social measures, including movement restrictions, business and school closures, curfews and requirements for physical distancing, have adversely affected poverty levels. One of the social services most disrupted has been education with vulnerable populations such as migrant children at particular risk of being excluded. Nearly 13 million students have been affected by school closures and the delay to the start of the new academic year. Some are facing new policies such as alternate school days to ensure social distancing. Maternal and child malnutrition also leads to poor growth in children and increased risk of infection and poor cognition, which affect learning outcomes and potential earnings later in life. There is a risk of the very youngest children becoming the “COVID-19 generation”, for whom there could be long-term implications and inter-generational effects.

Migrants are among the most affected by the crisis with two major COVID-19 clusters having been detected in locations with a high number of non-Thai nationals. Migrant workers have also been among the most vulnerable to the economic and health impacts of the crisis, according to ILO research findings.<sup>3</sup> In IOM rapid assessments, 57 per cent of respondents reported insufficient income as the greatest challenge for non-Thai nationals, with many unable to access basic needs including adequate food, water, electricity, shelter, education and medical care, including personal protective equipment.

According to UN Women, the pandemic is having devastating social and economic consequences for

women and girls, including increased risks of violence. Socio-economic impacts of the pandemic are affecting women disproportionately and exacerbating existing social and economic inequalities. Although COVID-19 is non-discriminatory, vulnerable groups tend to be impacted most severely.

FAO’s rapid impact assessment on food systems, nutrition and livelihoods showed that farm households’ income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19, jointly by drought. More farm households reported income losses and difficulty repaying debts than non-farm households.

There have been improvements to environmental conditions in Thailand because of the pandemic, but these are temporary and demonstrate the impact of human activity, according to UNEP. Long-term trends of ecosystem and wildlife habitat deterioration and the depletion of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including buffering pandemic zoonosis, require renewed efforts to achieve the SDGs and international environmental targets.



The Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Thailand examines the pandemic’s impact on the country, analyses the implications for the SDGs, and outlines key policy directions to guide the recovery process. Published in October 2020, the report was commissioned by the UN Country Team in Thailand and led by UNDP and UNICEF, in partnership with the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council and the Asian Development Bank.

2 COVID-19 Impact Assessments include: Socio-Economic (UNDP and UNICEF); Employment, Labour Migration and Market (ILO); Industrial Sector (UNIDO); Migrants (IOM); Agriculture (FAO); Youth (UN sub-group on young people); Gender (UN Women); LGBTI people and those infected and affected with HIV (UNDP and UNAIDS)

3 Source: [https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/issue-briefs/WCMS\\_746881/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/issue-briefs/WCMS_746881/lang-en/index.htm)



# CHAPTER 2:

## UN DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

UNCT, composed of 21 UN entities,<sup>4</sup> leads UN work in Thailand in collaboration with Government, civil society, the private sector and other key partners. Collaborations are coordinated under the framework of the SDGs in the context of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership, which are the strategic priorities of the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF) 2017-2021 for the joint UN effort to support the RTG on its development trajectory and to achieve the SDGs. UN Thailand leverages its presence as a regional hub by drawing on a broad range of expertise, including that of ESCAP and regional Issue Based Coalitions.

The Tripartite Programme Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NESDC and RCO, provides high-level oversight of UNPAF implementation. In 2020, the Steering Committee was not able to meet formally because of the pandemic. However, close collaboration continued with the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs and NESDC, as the UNCT developed its Socio-Economic Response Plan to COVID-19 aligned with the Government's COVID-19 Contingency Plan, with repurposed funding to support programming and a comprehensive impact assessment of the pandemic.

These collaborative efforts have been complemented by cross-cutting working groups on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, the Southern Border Provinces, UN Joint Team on AIDS, Disability Inclusion, Stateless and Displaced Persons Support, as well as Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. UNPAF programme implementation is supported by the Operations Management Team, the UN Communications Group, and the Data and Partnership Results Group. These interagency coordination mechanisms enable the UN to facilitate joint management of operations, adopt a comprehensive approach to advocacy for the SDGs, and track the delivery of results based on government data.

4 Resident agencies are IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO. Non-resident agencies are FAO, ILO, ITC, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCO, UN-Habitat, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV and UN Women.



### THE UN75 SURVEY AND KEY DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN THAILAND

The three UN survey topics covered: i) recovery from the pandemic; ii) priorities for the UN, referencing long-term global trends; and iii) the world respondents would like to see in 25 years. Responses focused on four key issues in Thailand:

- Better human capital development through improved health and education.
- Addressing inequalities, with a focus on the most vulnerable.
- Climate change, biodiversity and environmental protection.
- Prominent attention to human rights.





## \$2.5 million cost avoidance

due to streamlined UN business operation over the next five years



## 8,100 people

shared their voices in Thailand on “the future we want” through the UN75 survey



## 21 million people

reached through the COVID-19 Communications Response

### Operations Management Team

The Operations Management Team includes staff from more than 30 UN entities based in Bangkok and operating for the region, including Thailand. During 2020, the Operations Management Team continued to increase effectiveness and efficiency through the following efforts:

- The Team was instrumental in facilitating remote working and the return to office for UN staff, enable the return of staff stranded outside of Thailand due to COVID-19 restrictions, and coordinate the vaccine survey for UN personnel.
- The Business Operations Strategy was finalized to promote joint business operations in over 75 service areas to eliminate duplication and maximize economies of scale. Implementation of the strategy will result in an estimated cost avoidance of US\$2.5 million over the next five years.

### UN Communications Group

In 2020, the UN Communications Group continued joint outreach and advocacy to advance the SDGs with the following highlights:

- In partnership with the Department of Mental Health, Facebook and the private sector, the “Unknown Together” social media campaign focused on issues related to mental wellbeing. The campaign raised awareness and provided information and resources to promote wellbeing, resilience and empathy, targeting working adults and youth in university and reaching 11.5 million people on social media. According to a post-campaign online survey, 98 per cent of participants said the campaign had benefitted them.
- Messaging for risk communications was also disseminated via social media and in comic format in Thai, English and 16 languages spoken by marginalized populations across Thailand to promote social cohesion and counter pandemic-related disinformation. From March to May, the campaign reached an additional 10 million people across the country.
- In 2020, the UN marked its 75th Anniversary by starting a global conversation through a creative one-minute UN75 online survey campaign based on the theme “the future we want”. The Communications Group led awareness-raising about the campaign with over 8,100 people participating in the survey – the highest rate in Southeast Asia. About 77 per cent of participants in the UN75 survey were young people and over half were female. The survey was accessible in schools and universities across the country led by youth leaders.

### Data and Partnership Results Group

The Data and Partnership Results Group focuses on the results-based orientation of UN programming. The Group leveraged Regional Offices, in particular ESCAP, in line with the UN reform agenda “Deliver as One in 2020” with the following highlights:

- UN Thailand is one of ten UNCTs worldwide that provided over 70 per cent of programme indicator data points for tracking the national Socio-Economic Response Plan to COVID-19 premised on government data.<sup>5</sup>
- ESCAP, UNICEF, ILO and the National Statistical Office piloted new technology to develop a standardized data exchange platform and national data centre.
- UNFPA and UN-Habitat partnered with the National Statistical Office to pilot the registered base population and housing census.
- UNDRR supported the Government with disaster damage and loss data collection and reporting through the online Sendai Framework Monitor, contributing to the measurement of disaster-related SDGs and national implementation of the Framework as well as increased annual data reporting.

### UN Support to National Development Priorities through the UNPAF

In its recent development trajectory, Thailand has made considerable progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and 17 interlinked Global Goals as a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all”. UNCT builds on the UNPAF in the integrated domains of People, Peace, Planet, Peace and Partnerships from the policy to grassroots levels to advance the SDGs and achieve the country’s development targets. In 2020, there was increasing evidence indicating potential setbacks as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for gender equity, narrowing inequality gaps and the welfare of vulnerable groups, requiring renewed efforts and targeted interventions addressing deficits and improving monitoring and data collection.

5 [https://data.uninfo.org/Home/\\_ReportingStatus](https://data.uninfo.org/Home/_ReportingStatus)

# PEOPLE

## HEALTH

Thailand is one of two countries recognized by WHO globally as a case study for successful COVID-19 health responses.<sup>6</sup> Within the country, WHO provided technical and policy support for the outbreak response focusing on improving surveillance, laboratory capacity and advocacy to ensure health workers and vulnerable groups, such as migrants and refugees, have access to information, personal protective equipment and health services. WHO also supported the Government to pilot a new healthcare model responding to this and future pandemics through a “new normal” of health services, structures and processes to protect health workers and patients, including an emphasis on tele-medicine.

With two outbreaks in migrant communities and large movements of migrants at the beginning of the lockdown, non-Thai populations have been especially vulnerable. IOM and partners have provided food, water and supplies to nearly 14,000 marginalized migrants, and translated and distributed information on COVID-19 transmission to over 35,000 migrants. IOM also provided 85,000 masks, hand sanitizers and infrared

6 source: Joint Intra-Action Review of the Public Health Response to COVID-19 in Thailand



**10 million students**

safe return to school enabled through the Safe School Guidance and Teacher's Manual



**267,000 persons**

were reached with critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies



**35,369 schools**

were equipped with Safe School Operations resource packs and reached with critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies



**8 million people**

benefited through cash transfer programmes technically supported by the SDGs Joint Fund



**5,120 vulnerable persons**

were supported by the UN through cash assistance and care packages since the onset of COVID-19



**170,064 migrants**

benefited from UNs policy advocacy on extending migrant work and stay permits

## CASE STUDY: UN THEMATIC WORKING GROUP ON NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN THAILAND

The UN Thematic Working Group on Non-communicable Diseases is coordinating multisectoral action to promote health and wellbeing, bringing together high-level officials from ten ministries including the Prime Minister's Office, civil society organizations and ten UN entities. The Working Group's coordination has been vital for the introduction of new policies related to non-communicable diseases, such as the regulation

on plain packaging of tobacco products, increase in taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages, and introduction of taxes on “roll your own” cigarettes. Future projects include developing a non-communicable disease investment model for Thailand, a national campaign to promote fruits and vegetables, and comprehensive regulations to restrict marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children.





thermometers to help contain risks of infections at key points of entry to Thailand and locations presenting high risk of local transmission.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of strengthening the integration of the health and disaster management sectors. In partnership with Government, UNDRR, WHO and RCO organized a webinar for disaster risk reduction focal points and Ministry of Public Health officials focused on integration and cooperation.

## Education

In a comprehensive response to education disruption and loss of learning, UNCT has worked with partners to support distance learning and the safe return

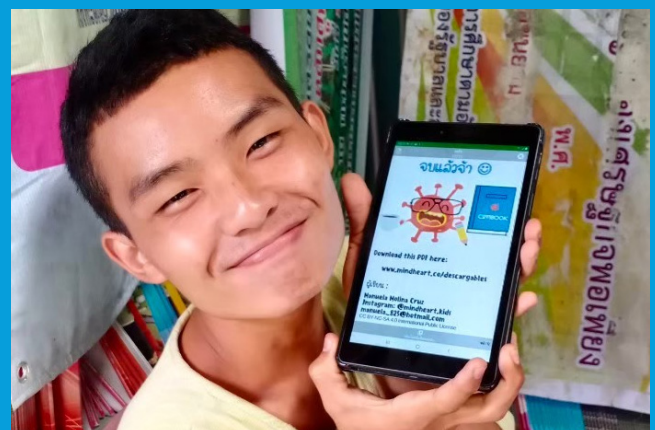
to schools for over 10 million children, including vulnerable learners. UNICEF provided support to the Ministry of Education in developing Safe School Guidance and a Teacher’s Manual (also available in Braille) for 54,000 early childhood development centres and schools nationwide. UNICEF also assisted with the development and dissemination of a guidance on Safe School Operations to more than 35,000 schools and the continuity of essential social services such as meals offered by schools. UNICEF provided critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies and services to almost 165,000 people, including 60,000 children and 105,000 adults – 135,000 whom were also migrants, refugees, stateless and internally displaced persons. IOM, UNHCR and UNODC also provided similar services to an additional 102,000 people for the total outreach to 267,000 people, benefiting from key water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions.

# LEARNING COIN – INNOVATION IN EDUCATION LED BY UNESCO IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The “Learning Coin for Equitable Education” initiative, led by UNESCO in partnership with the Government, private sector and academia, successfully piloted a digital reading programme for learners in non-formal education and learning centres. In 2020, it reached nearly 500 children in the four provinces of Bangkok, Mae Hong Son, Nakhon Nayok and Yala, cultivating strong reading habits for lifelong learning and quality of life, while at the same time helping families financially through scholarships. The initiative includes stateless children and youth and those from ethnic minorities. Daily reading data is logged, analyzed and calculated as monthly scholarships for parents. Learners earn scholarships of up to 800 to 1,200 baht each month, accounting for 10 per cent of average family income.

The Learning Coin project is supported by the Ministry of Education, 69 teachers at 53 Thai public schools and community learning centres, 243 student volunteers

of Chulalongkorn University’s Faculty of Education, together with the Mercy Centre, Foundation for the Better Life of Children and True Corporation.



A non-formal education student of Mae Ki Community Learning Center reads the COVID-19 comic book on the LearnBig app. The student joins the “Learning Coin for Equitable Education” project implemented by UNESCO, Equitable Education Fund and Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education, promoting good reading habits of marginalized children while allowing them to financially support their family based on their reading efforts. (Mae Ki, Mae Hong Son/ September 2020) © Mae Hong Son Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education

ITU, UNICEF and UNESCO are partnering with the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Ministry of Education and National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission to assess the digital divide identifying schools and communities that are unconnected or under connected. The digital divide study examines key infrastructure factors affecting access to and adoption of e-learning and other digital technologies in school, which has emerged as a good practice within the UN system for the Asia-Pacific.

## Social protection

To focus on social protection for vulnerable groups as part of the SDGs Joint Fund, ILO, UNICEF, IOM and UN Women provided the Government with technical advice on social protection contributing to the Cabinet decision to approve a three-month extension as part of social transfers for child, elderly and disability grants. The cash transfer programmes of THB 1,000 (US\$31) per month for three months with a US\$765 million government budget benefitted about 8 million people. The social protection joint programme also initiated the development of a comprehensive Social Protection Diagnostic Review to assess level of accessibility, key challenges, and gaps in policy and implementation for each sector. Analysis focused on the areas of pensions, migrants, gender and the informal economy.

The Government's decision to allow eligible migrant workers to extend their work and stay permits was informed by technical advice offered by IOM, resulting in more than 170,000 migrant workers renewing their work permits to maintain regular migration status. IOM also established Thailand's first online migrant information hub to equip migrants with information in their languages on issues related to the pandemic. Over 30,000 people have received information on how to extend stay and work permits and almost 100,000 flyers were distributed in multiple languages to inform formal and informal migrants of their rights and responsibilities and those of their employers.

Through Migrant Worker Resource Centres and community-based partners, ILO provided humanitarian emergency support to almost 7,500 migrant workers, including food, personal protective equipment, hygiene supplies, and information on health, labour rights, trafficking risks, and preventing violence and harassment. Resource Centres also offered legal aid to about 440 migrant workers to resolve work-place issues arising from COVID-19 conditions. ILO also continued work with the Social Security Office, including the actuarial valuation of the Worker's Compensation Fund investment management as well as policy recommendations in response to COVID-19.

## HIV and AIDS

The UN Joint Team on AIDS<sup>7</sup> continued to support the Government, civil society organizations and communities in fast-tracking HIV response towards ending AIDS by 2030. The Joint Team reinvigorated HIV prevention among key youth populations to inform the national roll-out of pre-exposure prophylaxis as part of universal health coverage, and expanded services for young key populations from 50 to 150 health facilities. Comprehensive HIV prevention was also strengthened to integrate comprehensive sexuality education and evidence-based drug use prevention.

With UN support, the National AIDS Committee endorsed Thailand's participation in the Global Partnership for Action to Eliminate all Forms of HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination, and mobilized partnerships to develop a national, costed, multi-sectoral action plan for 2021-26. The e-learning curriculum to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination reached 20,000 healthcare staff in 123 health facilities, and a crisis response system on HIV-related human rights violations was launched. Data was collected on substance use among LGBTI, stigma and discrimination against Thai transgender people,

7 The UN Joint Team on AIDS in 2020 consisted of UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC and WHO.

and barriers to health care. The UN supported key CSOs to help improve laws related to gender issues.

The Joint Team reprogrammed funding to support the COVID-19 response through a community-led assessment among sex workers, integrating COVID-19 and HIV prevention, and supporting livelihoods and basic needs of LGBTI people and sex workers. The UN also funded training of healthcare staff at prisons and documented human rights abuses, partnering with Government, people living with HIV and key population networks to monitor and address the disruption of access to HIV-related drugs, condoms and services.

## Persons with Disabilities

The UNCT fully commits to a realization of disability inclusion by acting on the leaving no one behind policy. UNDP supported an IT company providing artificial intelligence training and recruiting hundreds of persons with disabilities to scale up its operations to recruit disabled people, as part of a larger programme of support serving vulnerable populations during the pandemic. UNDP also focused on promoting disaster risk reduction and preparedness for persons with disabilities in partnership with the Office of Basic Education Commission. This programme reached over 27,000 schools through the launch of the national guidelines for Tsunami Evacuation Plans and Drills for Schools. In addition, nearly hundred trainers were trained on disability inclusion of tsunami disaster risk reduction, preparedness and drills.



Nichakarn 'Khim' Kaveevorayan, UNDP Thailand, Joined in 2021, as Program Associate for Persons with Disabilities. Khim herself has a visual impairment.  
© UNDP/Sukuma Uttarak

Internally, the UN established the Disability Inclusion Working Group and set the baseline for the implementation of the UN Secretary General's Disability Inclusion Strategy. The UN is including people diversity in its recruitment goals with UNDP, UNICEF, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UN Volunteers (UNV) having hired persons with disabilities in 2020.

## Gender

Gender equity, diversity and welfare are included throughout the UN's work. In 2020, the UNCT Gap Analysis and Needs Assessment of Gender-based Violence Response System in Thailand and Implications for Crisis Responses during COVID-19 helped to formulate evidence-based policy recommendations in achieving quality gender-based violence responses and raise the level of preparedness in times of crisis.

UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women partnered with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security to monitor data on violence recorded by all services during the pandemic and respond to gender-based violence and violence against children, working to integrate local essential services in preparedness and response plans including at local administrative levels, raising public awareness and encouraging reporting of violence to police, hospitals and social welfare services.

UNCT also contributed to policy options for more effective coverage of domestic workers, including migrants, in existing social security schemes, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and consultation with civil society and domestic worker groups.

Prioritizing innovation and digitalization, ESCAP, FAO, ITU and UNESCO partnered with the Ministries of Education and Digital Economy and Society to organize digital empowerment activities to address gender and digital imbalances and support agriculture digitalization.

In partnership with Government, CISCO Thailand, DTAC and the Research Center of Communication and Development Knowledge Management, a training programme in leadership, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and smart farming enrolled 200 young women and girls to prepare them for ICT careers.

LGBTI people remain one of the most vulnerable groups further marginalized by COVID-19. In 2020, UNDP worked with civil society organizations to ensure LGBTI sex workers were given support during the closures of entertainment venues. To promote gender equality and social inclusion of LGBTI people and end discrimination and stigma, UNDP continued to support the implementation of the Gender Equality Act 2015, and work with the Office of The National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission to address stereotyping of LGBTI people in the media, as well as the private sector such as Sansiri and Siam Piwat companies to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

## Youth

Focusing on innovation and entrepreneurship for youth to build back better and leave no one behind, UNCT prioritizes youth engagement and leadership. UNV has stepped up its volunteering programme to reach young people during the pandemic through the V-Force network to support the UN pandemic response and broaden SDG engagement. Over 100 volunteers provided technical support during COVID-19 restrictions including graphic design, translation, research, surveys and outreach for the UN75 initiative. UNV also worked with Friends from Thailand through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide opportunities for youth volunteering abroad to contribute to South-South Cooperation. UNV in cooperation with the UN Office of South-South Cooperation and TICA launched the publication on “South-South Volunteering as a Driving Force for Development: Experiences from Asia and the Pacific” to showcase the impact of the innovative south-south youth volunteering model in the publication.

Under the inter-agency subgroup on young people, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP also conducted an impact assessment of COVID-19 on young people, including youth from diverse ethnic groups, teen mothers, people with disabilities, LGBTI and those from southern border provinces.

## Displaced Persons

To address already vulnerable groups of displaced persons, UNHCR worked with Government and partners to protect refugees and asylum seekers as well as stateless persons and to advocate for inclusion in the national COVID-19 response plan. UNHCR also supported government-led COVID-response efforts to protect refugees on the Thai-Myanmar border by providing face masks to about 90,000 refugees, sanitary napkins to more than 26,000 women and emergency care assistance to almost 4,400 vulnerable people. In urban areas, cash assistance was extended to more than 2,800 vulnerable refugees and families, while 2,260 care packages were distributed to stateless persons and host communities in border provinces. Resettlement operations were able to continue despite COVID-19 restrictions, with IOM supporting 1,190 refugees with safe travel, and cultural orientation classes provided for 545 refugees.



As part of Generation Unlimited, a team of students from Fatoni University in Pattani province nurture the peaceful dialogue skills among children from an early age. Through surveys with teachers and parents, they found that textbooks and workshops on bullying prevention are often not age appropriate for primary school children, who are likely to lose focus. © UNICEF Thailand/2020/Roengrit Kongmuang

UNHCR’s advocacy for expanded alternatives to detention resulted in a 30-per-cent reduction in detention of urban asylum-seekers and refugees and an increase in those released on bail. Nearly 8,000 stateless persons received counselling services and assistance for nationality applications. UNHCR also continued to strengthen the capacity of hundreds of immigration officers on the national screening mechanism and other good immigration practices, contributing to Thailand’s commitment to the Global Compact on Refugees.



UNHCR staff distribute cloth face masks to Myanmar refugees in the Ban Don Yang Temporary Shelter. © UNHCR/Yuwarat Thiplotai

# PLANET

## Air Pollution and Science-Based Evidence Generation

Air pollution is widely recognized as an increasing environmental challenge in Thailand as well as a health concern that requires urgent action. ESCAP has introduced new air pollution analysis through “fingerprinting” air pollution technology using a combination of Big Earth and ground station data as well as machine learning. While there are different contributing factors to air pollution, including industry and vehicle emissions, analyses show that one major contributor is the burning of biomass.

## Climate Action and Transfer of Green Technologies

Technical advice provided by UNIDO on investments for climate action and environmentally sound technologies contributed to Thailand meeting commitments to both the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.



**250 small-medium enterprises**

were supported by the UN on green technologies to build back better



**200 boat drivers**

participated in the cash-for-work initiative to combat marine waste



**22% of Banks**

that are now parties to the UN Principles of Responsible Banking

A Global Environment Fund grant of US\$2.25 million contributed to the adoption of technologies and good environmental practices to incentivize pilot scrap metal recycling facilities, leading to an additional investment of US\$13.5 million by participating facilities, which is expected to reduce dioxins with improved energy efficiency, reduced greenhouse gas emissions as well as health benefits. This contributed to reducing 1.8% of Thailand’s total dioxins released and contributing to fulfilling its commitment to the Stockholm Convention on Pollution on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

## ECO-TOURISM

The national consensus supports a “new normal” in tourism in Thailand in light of COVID-19, moving away from low-value tourism, pollution, congestion and reliance on the informal labour force lacking social protection. Prior to the pandemic, this model was already increasingly questioned regarding Thailand’s long-term competitiveness in the sector.

A new tourism model for Thailand offers the possibility of jobs with higher skills, productivity and wages. Linked to this is recognition that the old tourism model depleted natural assets with environmental impacts threatening tourism’s future. The new model will need to preserve and build on natural assets including Biosphere Reserves and World Natural and Heritage sites, prioritizing environmental protection and biodiversity conservation both on land and under water.

Investment in regenerative burners and improvement of aluminum billet heating systems have resulted in an estimated saving of liquefied petroleum gas consumption of 460,846 kg per year by participating facilities, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

UNDP in partnership with the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning has provided technical support for the third Biennial Update Report, strengthening the integration of gender and social inclusion in public climate finance in pilot projects initiated in Uthai Thani and Maha Sarakham to create evidence-based policy advocacy. To promote private sector engagement in energy efficiency investment, the Private Climate Expenditure and Institutional Review for the Energy Efficiency Sector was conducted, while the Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency has collected data from public agencies for monitoring, review and verification purposes. To connect the public to policymakers, UNDP launched the Peoples’ Climate Vote with 60 per cent of respondents identifying climate change as a global emergency.

The Center of Excellence for Soil Research in Asia hosted in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives under the FAO Regional Soil Partnership programme enhanced its capacity in sustainable agriculture production and natural resource conservation under increasing environmental risks. It also promoted the exchange of knowledge, data, technical cooperation and experience through implementation of the Thailand Soil Laboratory Network. FAO has also been supporting the Department of Agriculture in addressing the knowledge and information gaps on the management of saline irrigation water in the Lower and Middle Tha Chin river which is affected by climate change.

## Greening SMEs

UNIDO has supported over 250 SMEs and large firms to adopt green technological solutions, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and mobilize joint ventures on environmental and climate-friendly investment. In 2020, UNIDO leveraged US\$16.6 million from private and public funding sources to scale up adoption of green technologies and mobilize joint venture investment for environmental and climate-friendly SMEs and large enterprises.

## Biodiversity

With Thailand’s Natural World Heritage Sites, UNDP has provided integrated policy and programmatic support to protect wildlife habitat from community encroachment, foster science-based wildlife habitat improvement, and provide socio-economic incentives for livelihoods. The engagement also includes the promotion of youth indigenous knowledge to convince policymakers to amend legislation to accept the “Right To Live” of indigenous people as the “Watchers of the Wild”.

UNDP work on reintroduction programmes of fauna and flora has resulted in the improvement of the status of the Eastern Sarus Crane on the IUCN Red List, while mainstreaming eco-tourism into the national



UNEP in June 2020 names Alex Rendell, an actor and environmentalist, its new National Goodwill Ambassador for Thailand. © Environmental Education Center

biodiversity management strategy and promoting environment-friendly farming resulting in increasing household incomes.

To integrate biodiversity conservation and livelihood support in Surat Thani province, UNDP contributed to policies raising financing for development, including drafting a municipality ordinance in Koh Tao to legally establish user-charge collections to safeguard the island's natural assets. In parallel, youth have been engaged in biodiversity conservation and environmental management. In the context of COVID-19, additional livelihood support was provided to 200 boat operators through a crowdfunding campaign to fund a cash-for-work project for marine waste collection.

## Disaster Risk Reduction

Thailand is a strong advocate of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and has made efforts to strengthen its systems in this regard, although further investments are needed. UNDRR has provided technical support for the development of a new multi-sectoral national disaster risk reduction strategy and developed a country status report in partnership with the Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre, as well as organized tsunami awareness activities and evaluation drills. In partnership with UNDP, it has produced the publication

"Tsunami Evacuation During COVID-19: A Guide for School Administrators" at the regional level.

## Principles for Responsible Banking

UNEP is partnering with the banking sector to institutionalize UN principles for responsible banking. Over 2020, 22 per cent of the banking sector with a combined asset base of about US\$200 billion, servicing more than 38 million customers, was included.

## Green Agriculture

FAO technical cooperation in support of climate-smart agriculture practices for small farmers facilitated the development of a national programme to support digitalization for agriculture and food systems, contributing to the National Determined Contribution priorities for agriculture. Climate-smart agriculture development plans were prioritized in the Northern, Northeast and Central regions. Through this work, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives regional and provincial networks have been strengthened with increased capacity on climate change, adaptation and climate-smart agriculture profiles. FAO and UNDP also supported the Ministry to integrate agriculture into the National Adaptation Plan.

# PROSPERITY

## Business Resilience

To support private sector resilience, the COVID-19 Small Business Continuity and Recovery Planning Toolkit was developed by ILO, UNDP, UNDRR and UNIDO, in partnership with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to help businesses rapidly take measures that can protect from incoming disruptions and utilize available resources to remain solvent and operational. The toolkit is now available in 11 languages including Thai and has been accessed over 20,000 times since publication.

## Financing Sustainable Development by Private Sector

To meet the SDGs in Thailand, ESCAP estimates that about US\$40.9 billion (THB 1.27 trillion) in additional annual investment will be required from 2020 to 2030. Leveraging partnerships, including national and sub-national governments, civil society and communities, and in particular the private sector, will be vital to the collective endeavor.

To strengthen understanding and highlight the leadership, commitment and preparedness of companies to achieve sustainability, the UNCT and UN Global Compact Network Thailand hosted the multi-stakeholder Business Leadership for the SDGs event in 2020, where private sector leaders committed to sustainable recovery and pledged to collectively invest approximately US\$46.2 billion (THB 1.38 trillion) in 1,088 projects and initiatives in support of achieving the SDGs by 2030.

The UNCT also works to ensure that multinational enterprises contribute to the SDGs, with more than 260 representatives from business and recruitment agencies



**50,000 online users**  
of the COVID-19 Small Business Continuity and Recovery Planning Toolkit



**110 Companies**  
committed to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles

trained on ethical recruitment, employment and skills development of migrant workers. IOM also contributed to establishing the Public-Private Steering Committee on Migrant Employment, gathering representatives from the public and private sectors representing more than 50,000 employers and entrepreneurs.

UNDP's engagement with the private sector encourages businesses of all sizes to move beyond traditional corporate social responsibility to incorporate the SDGs into business operations and strategies. UNDP with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Thai Listed Companies Association and the Global Compact Network Thailand introduced to the role of the private sector in contributing to the SDGs, how to integrate SDGs into their business operations and strategies, and how to measure and manage SDG impacts.

UN Women under the WeEmpower Asia programme in partnership with the European Union also engaged the private sector in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. CEOs of 110 companies in Thailand signed new commitments to the Women's Empowerment Principles committed to strengthen gender-responsive business practices, including gender-equal corporate leadership, inclusive, safe workplaces, and equal pay for work of equal value.





## Trade Competitiveness

ITC in partnership with the Ministry of Commerce contributes to interventions to achieve a more transparent, predictable and competitive business environment, improve efficiency of public expenditure and service delivery, and enhance organic agriculture practices for the benefit of SMEs

## Young Entrepreneurs and Innovation

Support for social enterprises was scaled up by UNDP to support young social entrepreneurs and innovators in response to COVID-19, linking them with counterparts in Singapore, the Republic of Korea and Japan. Youth-led enterprises in rural and semi-urban centres have received support in food processing, retail and marketing to participate in digital market platforms with integrated data for food traceability. To promote young people's entrepreneurship in the context of COVID-19, UNICEF carried out the Generation Unlimited Solution Challenge, while UNDP's Youth Co-Lab incubated innovative projects from ideas to practical solutions to problems that young people face under the pandemic in the context of advancing the SDGs.

## Business and Human Rights

Multiple UN agencies address private sector and civil society monitoring of public accountability and business sector integrity regarding human rights. For example, a UNDP initiative assisted the private sector to conduct human rights due diligence processes to identify risks and mitigate adverse impacts due to COVID-19. In addition, the 4th National Dialogue on Business and Human Rights facilitated a series of dialogues between the Government, civil society organizations and the private sector sharing challenges and good practices on human rights management.

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the National Action Plan on Business and

Human Rights are implemented through advocacy, policy development, technical advisory support, capacity building, innovation platforms and South-South Cooperation.

## Migrant Workers

Migrants are significant contributors to national prosperity. In 2020, ILO and IOM partnered with businessowners, community-based organizations and the Government to protect migrants affected by lockdowns, and business and border closures, with more than 170,000 migrant workers able to maintain regular migration status. Food, hygiene assistance and personal protective equipment were given to 18,000 vulnerable migrants including those in detention. Nearly 66,000 migrants and Thais received health services and education on malaria and COVID-19 prevention, labour rights and work permit extension processes. IOM also supported Thailand to fulfill its commitment on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration by providing technical capacity development on migrant management and good practices, in particular on the identification, referral and protection of victims of trafficking, to thousands of employers and government officials.

# PEACE



**651 officers**

were capacitated on Integrated Border Management, and Human & Drug Trafficking

## Southern Border Provinces

Focusing on social and economic welfare in the region, the UNDP Social Innovation Platform co-created with partners a portfolio of investment prototypes connects development issues in areas of governance, service delivery, social cohesion, youth empowerment and climate change. UNDP also generated recommendations on food programmes for different ethno-religious communities, partnering with Prince of Songkhla University Public Policy Institute to develop a local food system database and support ten subdistrict administrative organizations to implement food initiatives.

UNICEF provided support to Government by gathering data and evidence to prioritize policy implementation, partnering with the Faculty of Nursing at Prince of Songkhla University Pattani to undertake a rapid assessment of challenges facing low-income families. With an ICT teachers' network, UNICEF also conducted training for 150 teachers on remote technologies including 6,000 students and supported a rapid assessment of a distance learning pilot programme to better understand issues of access to and acceptance of technology.

UN Women leveraged its partnership with the Civic Network for Peace on the COVID-19 response and monitoring of gender-based violence. A network of 30 local women's groups provided emergency relief and services to women and children in the Southern Border Provinces, reaching at least 3,000 women who were equipped with personal protective equipment as well as information on health, COVID-19 prevention and gender-based violence through community outreach.

## Parliament

UNCT has worked closely with the legislative branch to promote inclusive and sustainable development, as well as to strengthen institutional capacity through collaboration with and assistance to parliamentarians. UNDP and the Secretariat of the House of Representatives have formalized cooperation to enhance knowledge and capacities of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff in integrating the SDGs in legislative and budgeting functions. UNDP also provided recommendations for the draft Biodiversity Act and Climate Change Act, both of which will be deliberated by Parliament in 2021.

UNICEF's interventions were aimed at mitigating the direct impacts of COVID-19 on children, partnering with the Parliamentary Budget Office to strengthen public finance for children through an increased annual budget for school lunches from the current THB 20 (US\$0.64) per person to reflect the current costs of quality lunches for over 5 million children.

## Corruption

UNDP provided support to key institutions in addressing corruption issues, particularly in terms of prevention. The Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission agreed to improve the Integrity of the Transparency Assessment, a corruption mitigation tool for public agencies. Recommendations from the Private Sector Collective Action Coalition against Corruption report captured perceptions of corruption in public service as the basis for more evidence-based consultation with government entities to address challenges and improve public accountability.



## PUBLIC PROCUREMENT, TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION

UNCT supported the Infrastructure Transparency Initiative for Government to improve transparency in contracts in line with international procurement and trade standards, and empowering communities to better monitor projects. The intended impact of this initiative is the delivery of better and cost-efficient

infrastructure that can bring inclusive economic growth and better people's lives. Over 400 new infrastructure projects are now disclosing procurement data. To date, 408 stakeholders have been engaged in procurement monitoring of infrastructure projects (80 per cent of whom are women and 20 per cent men).

### Capacity Building of Human Rights Defenders

In 2020, OHCHR focused on developing human rights defenders' skills and academic knowledge to enable them to engage more effectively on the protection and promotion of human rights. This focused on creating and enhancing monitoring, documentation, fact finding, reporting and advocacy skills. Specific training was provided for women human rights defenders in Southern Border Provinces, who face heightened challenges, including issues related to violence.

OHCHR also contributed to training human rights defenders on international standards on demonstration monitoring, to support a corps of monitors who can be more effective in protecting human rights.

### Integrated Border Management and Drug Trafficking

Thailand remains a significant transit country and, to a lesser extent, source for drugs and precursor chemicals in the region. Seizures of precursor chemicals in Thailand most commonly occurred in the northern part of the country, as well as in western border areas. The RTG through the Office of the Narcotics Control Board has acted as the main national counterpart for the UNODC Border Liaison Officer network, a regional mechanism to enhance border control cooperation.

Agreement on a more intensive engagement in the Southern Border Provinces has been reached between UNODC and the National Security Council during a joint consultative mission on transnational organized crime with RCO. The mission resulted in a comprehensive analysis of transnational organized crime activities between Thailand and Malaysia as well as existing preventive and responsive measures to enhance border management. At the regional level, UNODC worked with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strengthen ASEAN border control cooperation, assisting Government to develop the ASEAN Border Management Cooperation Roadmap.

IOM also worked with border authorities to support verification of travel documents, immigration data management and analysis, and ensure the protection of travelers and officials at points of entry in relation to COVID-19. Additional eLearning modules on countering smuggling of migrants were also developed for marine police, training over 571 immigration officials and forensic science police.

# PARTNERSHIPS

## Government Partnership through Innovative Co-financing and Capacity Building

As an upper-middle-income country, Thailand has joined and contributed US\$100,000 (THB 3.1 million) to the UN COVID-19 Multi-Partner Trust Fund. In addition, Thailand has recently been elected as a member of the Peacebuilding Commission for 2021-2022 and contributed US\$ 100,000 to the UN Peacebuilding Fund. The Thailand Policy Lab established by UNDP with US\$3 million with cost-sharing by the Government supports innovative policymaking focusing on sustainable tourism, climate change and inequality in 2021, ahead of the 13th National Development Plan. The Policy Lab provides opportunities for social enterprises to access funds for scaling up businesses as well as social impact.

WHO, the Health Ministry and four public health agencies have contributed to a pooled funding mechanism, with WHO's US\$7-million contribution addressing funding gaps in programme areas and leveraging over US\$21 million of un-earmarked funding. This mechanism allows more flexible implementation, reduces transaction costs and encourages participation from other stakeholders in addition to intellectual and social capital.

UNIDO is embedded with the Ministry of Industry through a staffing secondment to build capacity of Ministry staff on inclusive and sustainable industrial development. The agency leverages US\$16.6 million from private and public sources to support SMEs and large enterprises to adopt environmental and climate-friendly technologies.

Through the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, FAO launched a partnership with the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plants Conservation



**\$16.60 million**

leveraged from public, private and global sources for adoption of climate friendly technologies



**2,500 University students**

were inspired about the SDGs through the UNs outreach programme

on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. The Department has contributed US\$825,000 to FAO for assistance developing the Forest Reference Level and the Measurement, Monitoring and Reporting component of the National Forest Monitoring System. FAO and the Royal Forest Department have secured US\$ 3.2 million from the Global Environment Facility for the "Integrated Forest Landscape Management for Strengthening Northeast and Eastern Forest Corridors" project to address challenges facing biodiversity, local communities and ecological integrity by improving forest management at a landscape scale with a focus on critical biodiversity corridors linking protected areas.

The Social Security Office of Thailand has funded a pioneering project to develop and strengthen actuarial and research capacity and expertise, managed by an ILO Senior Actuary who works within the Office to support capacity building and strengthen social security through policymaking and management. Activities include reinforcing the structure and management of the Actuarial and Research Bureau and the development of the skills and expertise of staff; carrying out actuarial valuations; producing analysis and providing input into policymaking and reforms; supporting financing and coverage improvements; strengthening investment,



reporting and communications practices; and improving public awareness of social security.

The UN Office for South-South Cooperation has worked closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Thailand International Cooperation Agency and benefitted from the secondment of staff from the Thailand International Cooperation Agency in support of South-South Cooperation. Thailand with ESCAP and UNOSSC brought together heads of national development and technical cooperation agencies to share experiences and exchange ideas at the 3rd Asia-Pacific Directors-General Forum for South-South and Triangular Cooperation held in November 2020.

Thailand officially become a member of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) in 2020 through collaboration between the RTG and UNIDO. UN PAGE agencies including ILO, UNDP, UNEP and UNIDO in collaboration with the NESDC have secured US\$400,000 from Germany’s Green Recovery Fund to support Thailand’s bio-circular-green recovery efforts.

### Global Fund

The UN Joint Team on AIDS provided technical support to the Global Fund’s Country Coordinating Mechanism, and secured US\$40.5 million from the Global Fund for HIV programme, as well as US\$20.1 million to accelerate and sustain an end to AIDS and tuberculosis in Thailand in 2021-23 by leveraging public-private and civil society partnerships to improve early and sustained access to diagnosis, treatment and prevention among key populations, focused on people who inject drugs. Thailand will invest nearly USD 20 million of the allocation in advanced HIV prevention, testing, antiretroviral therapy, and treatment of co-morbidities, and address the needs of non-Thai migrants.

UNOPS is the principal recipient of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and currently implements the Regional Artemisinin Resistance Initiative, a US\$243-million regional grant to accelerate the elimination of plasmodium falciparum malaria in the Greater Mekong Subregion. In 2020, this initiative

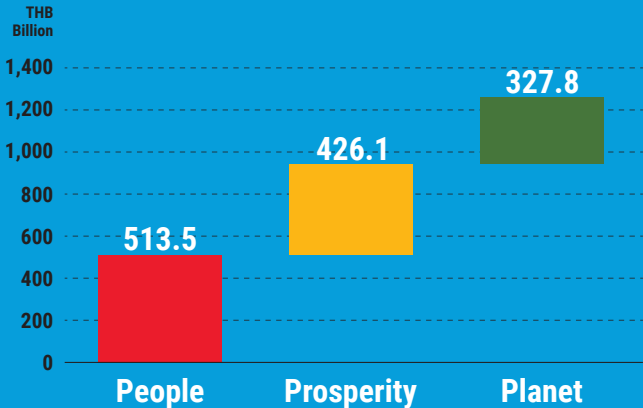
## INVESTMENTS NEEDED TO REACH THE SDGS

Attainment of the SDGs will require a reorientation of investment and efforts, including Government, NGOs, companies and investors. Never has the global community set out such an ambitious agenda – and the need to meet the challenges is urgent. Meeting the SDGs will require an estimated THB 1.27 trillion (US\$40.9 billion) in additional annual investment from 2020 to 2030, equivalent to 50 baht per person per day.

The ESCAP estimate, which was undertaken before the pandemic, consists of investments in people (THB 513.5 billion), prosperity (THB 426.1 billion) and planet (THB 327.8 billion). Leveraging all partnerships, including national and sub-national governments, the private sector, civil society and communities will be vital to the success of the collective endeavour. Besides monetary investments, improving governance

structures, including policymaking through tripartite social dialogue, ensuring freedom of association and collective bargaining rights for workers, is also necessary.

### Preliminary Estimates of Additional Investment Need to Achieve SDGs in Thailand





The SDG Youth Panelists is established as an institutional mechanism for dialogue on development priorities to advance the SDGs. This feedback mechanism also offers youth an opportunity to engage in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Thailand.

investigated suspected cases to further efforts to eliminate malaria with implementation support from IOM and a network of health volunteers in migrant and other communities.

### Partnerships with Education Institutes

A nationally representative poll was conducted in June 2020 finding that SDG awareness of the population is relatively low at 26 per cent. Young people in schools were identified as one of the least-aware groups. In 2020, UNCT prioritized building partnerships with education institutions to raise SDG awareness among students with panel discussions and student activities organized with live broadcasting through social media platforms at the five universities NIDA, AIT, Thammasat University, Chulalongkorn University and Mae Fah Luang University. Four student events were organized with 250 students attending in person and 2,200 people viewing online.

### The SDGs Youth Panel

To include youth’s voices in decision-making, UNCT with the support of the UN subgroup of young people, co-chaired by UNFPA and UNICEF, has established an informal SDG Youth Panel as an institutional mechanism for dialogue on development priorities to advance the SDGs. This feedback mechanism also offers youth an opportunity to engage in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Thailand.



# CHAPTER 3: LESSONS LEARNED, RISK MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

## Key Risks and Management Strategies

To ensure smooth and successful delivery of UN programming, key risks have been identified along with mitigating measures. The identified risks, including contextual, programmatic and institutional risks, are summarized below:

## Key Lessons

The UNCT also took note of the lessons, accompanying strategies on leveraging partnerships and the UN convening role, which was particularly critical during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Collaborating closely and developing successful partnerships is key to maximizing development results.

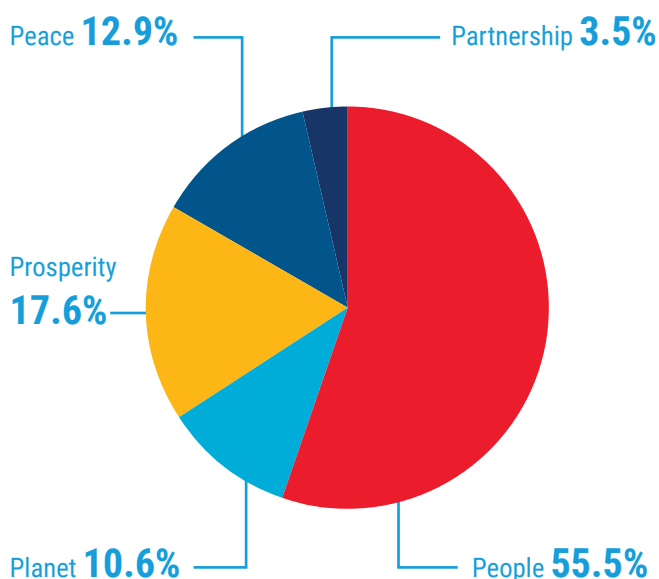
The UN leverages its partnerships with Government, civil society, the private sector and academia to advance development gains. For example, the UN is leveraging its partnership with the private sector through the Global Compact Network Thailand to increase participation of all sectors in sustainable national development and innovative solutions to development challenges. In another example, the SDGs Youth Panel, an informal feedback mechanism from youth to Heads of Agencies, is enabling the meaningful inclusion of youth's voices in decision-making.

| Risks  | Risk Level:<br>Very High<br>High<br>Medium<br>Low | Likelihood:<br>5 - Almost Certain<br>4 - Likely<br>3 - Possible<br>2 - Unlikely<br>1 - Rare | Impact:<br>5 - Extreme<br>4 - Major<br>3 - Moderate<br>2 - Minor<br>1 - Insignificant | Mitigating measures  | Action by             |
|--|---|---|---|--|-----------------------|
| COVID-19 outbreaks jeopardize gains made in recovery and creates new setbacks.                                     | Medium  | 5   | 4   | The UN will continue regular monitoring of the situation and discuss scenario planning both at the UNCT level for programme implementation and Security Management Team (SMT) and COVID-19 Contingency Management Team (CCMT) level for business continuity. | UNCT,<br>SMT,<br>CCMT |
| Prolonged emergency measures may impact social cohesion.   | Medium  | 3   | 4   | Prioritize supporting social cohesion and community resilience to COVID-19 through new programming.  | UNCT                  |
| Policy commitments to deliver on the SDGs may be impacted due to difficulties in coordinating across institutions. | Medium  | 3   | 3   | Foster ongoing dialogue with Government, the private sector, civil society and other partners to ensure a whole-of-society approach to reaching the SDGs.  | UNCT                  |

### Assumptions:

- There is significant commitment by the RTG to respond to COVID-19.
- Effective mitigation measures continue in place to lessen the chance of a second wave outbreak.
- The UN has strong partnerships at the highest levels of the RTG complemented by its reputation as a neutral partner, fostering coordination across multiple stakeholders.

## 2020 Estimated Expenditures in USD



## Financial Reporting

In 2020, 891 UN personnel in Thailand across 21 UN entities delivered programmes at an overall envelope of US\$75.2 million, of which US\$15.2 million was allocated to the COVID-19 health response with US\$60 million directed to “building back better”. An estimated US\$2 million was redirected from existing programming to address the COVID-19 response and cover impact assessments; promote community resilience and food security; reduce the vulnerabilities of at-risk communities including people living with HIV and AIDS, youth, persons with disabilities, the LGBTI community and others; and sustain social cohesion. These figures are estimates self-reported by UN entities in Thailand, and are not audited financial data. This is aligned with UNPAF’s vision in advancing sustainable, people-centred, and equitable development for all people in Thailand

| Agency       | Number of Personnel |            |            | Sustainable Development Goals: |   |   |   |   |                    |    |    |    |    |                     |   |   |    |    |                    |                    | Total               |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|------------|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--------------------|----|----|----|----|---------------------|---|---|----|----|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|              | Nat.                | Int.       | Total      | People                         |   |   |   |   | Planet             |    |    |    |    | Prosperity          |   |   |    |    | Peace              | Partnership        |                     |
|              |                     |            |            | 1                              | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6                  | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 7                   | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 16                 | 17                 |                     |
| FAO          | 2                   | 0          | 2          | \$171,057                      |   |   |   |   | \$546,881          |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$717,938           |
| ILO*         | 8                   | 3          | 11         | \$318,485                      |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$1,708,181         |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$2,026,666         |
| IOM          | 247                 | 24         | 271        | \$6,758,551                    |   |   |   |   | \$78,841           |    |    |    |    | \$9,240,127         |   |   |    |    | \$504,762          | \$0                | \$16,582,281        |
| ITC          | 1                   | 5          | 6          | \$0                            |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$0                 |
| ITU*         | 1                   | 4          | 5          | \$80,000                       |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$15,000           | \$95,000            |
| OHCHR*       | 0                   | 2          | 2          | \$0                            |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$0                 |
| UN Women     | 6                   | 0          | 6          | \$583,512                      |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$217,754           |   |   |    |    | \$60,000           | \$0                | \$861,266           |
| UNAIDS       | 3                   | 0          | 3          | \$216,695                      |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$216,695           |
| UNDP         | 45                  | 4          | 49         | \$1,371,052                    |   |   |   |   | \$3,829,917        |    |    |    |    | \$1,838,157         |   |   |    |    | \$448,992          | \$461,361          | \$7,949,479         |
| UNDRR*       | 0                   | 2          | 2          | \$13,000                       |   |   |   |   | \$25,000           |    |    |    |    | \$55,000            |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$93,000            |
| UNEP*        | 0                   | 16         | 16         | \$0                            |   |   |   |   | \$900,000          |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$900,000           |
| UNESCO       | 48                  | 19         | 67         | \$354,360                      |   |   |   |   | \$12,881           |    |    |    |    | \$50,119            |   |   |    |    | \$2,174            | \$0                | \$419,534           |
| UNFPA        | 6                   | 1          | 7          | \$1,239,796                    |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$1,239,796         |
| UN-Habitat   | 4                   | 4          | 8          |                                |   |   |   |   | \$32,200           |    |    |    |    | \$246,278           |   |   |    |    |                    | \$7,122            | \$285,600           |
| UNHCR        | 99                  | 21         | 120        | \$2,722,500                    |   |   |   |   | \$149,509          |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$3,081,614        | \$1,207,339        | \$7,160,962         |
| UNICEF*      | 74                  | 14         | 88         | \$8,011,570                    |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$1,880,959        | \$49,004           | \$9,941,533         |
| UNIDO        | 16                  | 12         | 28         | \$0                            |   |   |   |   | \$1,678,200        |    |    |    |    | \$47,200            |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$1,725,400         |
| UNODC*       | 37                  | 29         | 66         | \$370,000                      |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$3,750,000        | \$0                | \$4,120,000         |
| UNOPS        | 15                  | 14         | 29         | \$8,504,398                    |   |   |   |   | \$416,728          |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$8,921,126         |
| UNV**        | 27                  | 52         | 79         | \$0                            |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$890,226          | \$890,226           |
| WHO          | 19                  | 7          | 26         | \$11,000,000                   |   |   |   |   | \$0                |    |    |    |    | \$0                 |   |   |    |    | \$0                | \$0                | \$11,000,000        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>658</b>          | <b>233</b> | <b>891</b> | <b>\$41,714,976</b>            |   |   |   |   | <b>\$7,670,157</b> |    |    |    |    | <b>\$13,402,816</b> |   |   |    |    | <b>\$9,728,501</b> | <b>\$2,630,052</b> | <b>\$75,146,502</b> |

\* Includes regional and budget contributing to the Thailand component

\*\* Budget includes UNV funded volunteers only and activities in Thailand, staff includes UN Volunteers in the UN entities in Thailand







# CHAPTER 4:

## KEY FOCUS IN 2021

In Thailand and worldwide, 2020 was an unprecedented year on many levels. While there were many challenges, there were also many achievements and opportunities to build upon for 2021. First, managing the COVID-19 response and resilience recovery will be a top priority. Another important focus will be localizing the SDGs in Thailand. The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which will be developed by the UNCT in partnership with Government, will be one of the top priorities and act as the main instrument for the planning and implementation of UN development activities. Thailand's membership marks its 75th anniversary in the UN and an opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges for future partnerships.

### COVID-19 Response and Resilience Recovery

UNCT is moving forward with the COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Plan, in partnership with Government and aligned with the National Contingency Plan, prioritizing innovation, digital solutions and resilience to build back better. The health response will continue to focus on Leave No One Behind as the national vaccination plan is rolled out.

### Five-Year SDG Implementation Progress and SDGs Localization, Monitoring and Evaluation

In 2021, Thailand will present a Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the UN High-Level Political Forum 2021. Thailand

is also taking stock of its experiences and lessons learned by preparing a five-year progress report of SDG implementation, with UNCT support to increase investment in data of SDG indicators to enhance accuracy of the progress assessment and facilitate progress monitoring and evaluation, which will better inform policymakers.

In 2021, an important focus of UN work will be on localizing the SDGs in Thailand, translating the 2030 Agenda into concrete deliverables for local citizens, supporting civic engagement and helping to reconnect government policy and citizen aspirations and needs. In partnership with the NESDC, the main mechanism for sustainable development will focus on nine pilot provinces and three local administrations.

### Development of New Cooperation Framework

In the final year of the UNPAF, the Cooperation Framework is being developed in partnership with Government as the most important instrument for the planning and implementation of UN development activities. It will be nationally owned and aligned to government priorities, articulating government expectations of the UN development system and the system's collective support. The Cooperation Framework will set out progress towards the 2030 Agenda and describe the UN development system support and include an implementation plan incorporating the UNCT Configuration Framework and a section on Monitoring and Evaluation. The Framework will be underpinned by several cross-cutting strategies





Business leaders show commitment to lead Thailand towards the Sustainable Development Goals at the 'GCNT FORUM 2020: Thailand Business Leadership for SDGs' in August 2020. © Global Compact Network Thailand

including South-South and Triangular Cooperation, the Gender Scorecard, Youth and Partnerships. The UNCT and Thailand International Cooperation Agency completed an analysis this year to inform the UN's South-South and Triangular Cooperation approach by assessing current interventions, existing gaps and how to best bridge them through a collaborative approach in the next Cooperation Framework.

## 75th Anniversary of UN in Thailand

2021 marks the 75th anniversary of Thailand's membership in the United Nations since its inception in December 1946. The Prime Minister of Thailand has said that "The Organization has symbolized solidarity and cooperation and has inspired the world's humanity to trust in the unity of purpose of its Member States in building peace and well-being for all people on

Earth." Throughout the 75 years, Thailand has had an impressive record with the United Nations, including serving as President of the General Assembly in 1956, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 1985-1986, and President of the Human Rights Council from 2010-2011. In addition, Thailand is host to 41 UN agencies in Bangkok.

The 75th anniversary comes at a critical juncture as countries consider policies to recover from an unprecedented global health crisis while at the same time advance towards achievement of the SDGs. Commemoration of this important milestone also serves as an opportune time to reflect on Thailand's achievements and how the international community can come together to address challenges through reinvigorated multilateralism for a more equal, resilient and sustainable world.





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