Mae La Temporary Shelter

**VERIFIED POPULATION** *(AS OF 30 JUNE 2019)*
A total of **35,373** persons of concern to UNHCR

**POPULATION PROFILE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>51% Female</th>
<th>49% Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>60% 18 years and above</td>
<td>32% 5-17 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>93% Karen</td>
<td>4% Burman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>37% Christian</td>
<td>50% Buddhist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*According to Verification Exercise conducted from Jan-Apr 2015 and subsequent changes in population*

Mae La Temporary Shelter is in **Tha Song Yang District**, approximately 8 kilometers from the Thai-Myanmar border and 57 kilometers from Mae Sot. It has a surface area of 454 acres (1.84 sq. km) and is divided into three zones, which are further separated into sections.

**Background**

- Mae La is the largest temporary shelter on the Thai-Myanmar border. Established in 1984, its population largely comprises refugees from Myanmar fleeing armed conflict.
- Mae La, commonly known amongst its residents as Beh Klaw, has become a centre for educational and other community development activities.

**Governance**

- The **Ministry of Interior (MOI)** is responsible for administration in nine camps. The Mae La Camp Commander is the Deputy District Officer of Tha Song Yang District. A refugee Camp Committee is directly involved in the governance of Mae La Temporary Shelter, receiving support from the Karen Refugee Committee (KRC).
- A **Thai Ranger Unit** is stationed near the camp to monitor security. Territory Defense Volunteers, known as Or Sors, are employed and trained by the MOI to provide internal security at Mae La Temporary Shelter.

**UNHCR Activities**

- UNHCR implements protection activities including facilitating refugees’ access to the Thai justice system, addressing child protection concerns through its partner and conducting activities to prevent and respond to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).
- In line with amendments to the Civil Registration Act (2008) UNHCR continues to advocate to the Royal Thai Government (RTG) to ensure every child has their right to birth registration upheld. As of 30 June 2019, 6,738 birth certificates have been issued in Mae La Temporary Shelter.
- UNHCR continues to work closely with the Thai and Myanmar governments, the refugee community and other stakeholders to unlock a multi-solutions approach to find a dignified, sustainable and comprehensive end to the situation of protracted encampment on the Thai-Myanmar border.
- UNHCR works in collaboration with the Resettlement Support Center (RSC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and third countries’ embassies on the resettlement process for refugees with serious protection needs including lifesaving medical care. As of end-June 2019, a total of 32,798 individuals have been resettled from Mae La Temporary Shelter.
- Through the Facilitated Voluntary Return (FVR) programme led by the governments of Thailand and Myanmar with UNHCR and other partners in support, UNHCR facilitates voluntary repatriation for Myanmar refugees who through their own initiative approach UNHCR and express their wish to return home. As of 30 June 2019, a total of 154 individuals (38 families) from Mae La Temporary Shelter have returned to Myanmar through the FVR programme.
Humanitarian Organisations

Health
- The International Rescue Committee (IRC): health services
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
  - Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refuges (COERR): community-based waste management
  - The International Rescue Committee (IRC): water and sanitation

Protection and Community Services
- Catholic Office for Emergency Relief (COERR): child protection, assistance for vulnerable adults*
- Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education Network (DARE): drug and alcohol abuse prevention
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI): mine risk education for FVR*
- The International Rescue Committee (IRC): SGBV prevention and response, access to justice and promotion of rule of law, psychosocial support

Registration
- Ministry of the Interior (MOI): registration and status determination for fast-track PAB*

Shelter
- The Border Consortium (TBC): repair materials for shelters

Non-Food Items (NFIs)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM): NFI distribution for FVR*
- The Border Consortium (TBC): NFI distribution

Food and Nutrition
- The Border Consortium (TBC): food distribution

Livelihoods
- Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugees (COERR): small-scale livelihood activities
- The Border Consortium (TBC): agriculture and marketing for preparedness

Education
- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA): education and vocational training
- Film Aid: awareness raising
- Right to Play (RTP): non-formal learning class and recreation
- Save the Children (SCI): education
- Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA): educational libraries
- World Education (WE): education, skills and knowledge building

Resettlement
- International Organization for Migration (IOM): post-approval resettlement services
- IRC Resettlement Support Centre: US resettlement service

*UNHCR financially supported

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