**Annex: Country info**

**Country:** **Thailand**

**Strengthening socio economic recovery, human security and resilience in Thailand in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak ensuring to Leave No One Behind and safeguard progress made towards the SDGs**

1. **SITUATION ANALYSIS**

Thailand is facing severe socio-economic effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic. At sector-level, initial impact was felt on the travel and tourism sector since the outbreak started in China earlier in 2020. As the number of infected people in Thailand continued to rise and stricter measures are enforced, the health crisis is affecting all the economic and social sectors in Thailand at an unprecedented scale. The Bank of Thailand decreased the country’s 2020 GDP growth forecast from 2.8% expansion to 5.3% contraction — the worst performance since the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997.

The tourism industry is one of the country’s core economic sectors as tourism and tourism-related activities accounted for about 21% of Thailand’s GDP and 20% of its total employment. With the pandemic particularly affecting cities like Bangkok, Phuket, and Chiang Mai, which are among the world’s most visited destinations, the expected GDP contraction in 2020 for Thailand is the largest among the ASEAN economies.[[1]](#footnote-2)

However, the effects of the pandemic have extended far beyond tourism and will likely result in sharp fall in income and consumption, as the sudden stops in economic activities in response to the COVID-19 outbreak has led to businesses shutting down and workers losing their jobs.

While the impact of COVID-19 is already affecting the whole society, those who are economically and socially vulnerable are hit the hardest. Informal workers have been affected immediately, as they lack access to social protection measures and safety nets, as well as entitlements at the workplace, such as paid leave or sick leave. According to Thailand’s National Statistical Office (NSO) Informal Economy Survey, 2019, 20.4 million people or 54.3% of the labour force are in the informal sector.

Additionally, individuals who are the most affected by the pandemic are those at risk of being left behind in development – including women, the elderly and youth, those who work in small and medium enterprises, and marginalised vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities (PWDs), LGBTI people, persons living with HIV, homeless persons, stateless individuals, or persons belonging to ethnic minorities. The country’s poverty and inequality could rise drastically as the number of ‘new poor’ affected by COVID-19 is also expected to increase significantly. The conflict affected southern border provinces of Thailand have been particular impacted by the pandemic, including challenges linked to food security.

As the crisis impacts groups of individuals differently, the most vulnerable and at-risk groups are slipping further behind and inequalities are pushed to new heights. This, in turn, represents significant challenges for Thailand to safeguard progress achieved towards the SDGs. It is therefore critical to adopt an inclusive, gender and human rights-based approach to crisis response.

1. **THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Consistent with WHO’s “COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan”, the United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021) and the UNDP Country Programme Document for Thailand (2017-2021), UNDP will focus on three immediate priorities with Thailand in responding concomitantly across the Prepare, Respond, and Recover phases, ensuring to **Leave No One Behind**. Considering the strong health system in Thailand and that WHO is already providing a strong support to the Preparation phase and support in the health sector in the country, within the framework of this project, UNDP’s proposal will focus on the Response and Recovery phases and prioritise the following two Outputs:

* Output 2: Inclusive and integrated crisis management and responses
* Output 3: Addressing the human rights and socio-economic impact of COVID-19

In view of ensuring that no one is left behind, the UN is advocating and calling for an inclusive and human rights-based response to COVID-19 in view of safeguarding progress towards the SDGs in Thailand. It is crucial to avoid further regression of same – and to ensure a response that takes into consideration the inequalities persisting within the Thai society. Currently, UNDP in partnership with the UN system in Thailand and the Royal Thai Government is undertaking an assessment of the socio economic impact of the pandemic on the country which aims to formulate policy recommendations to address the impact in the short, medium and longer term. In parallel, in partnership with the Tourism Association of Thailand, a comprehensive assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism sector in one of the most affected touristic islands, Phuket, is currently underway with the support of UNDP. These recommendations are expected to also inform Phuket’s longer-term vision and 10-year development plan and will represent an important reference for other islands facing similar challenges in the tourism sector, demonstrating a case of SDG localization. These two important assessments will represent an important basis guiding UNDP’s future interventions in supporting Thailand on its response and recovery to the pandemic.

The proposed interventions included in this proposal will therefore be targeted at both the national and sub national level aligned with the findings of the above assessments. And will have a strong focus on an inclusive, sustainable, gender sensitive and multi-sectoral response to the crisis in addressing its socio-economic impact at country and sub-national level. The focus will be on promoting human security by supporting the survival, livelihood and dignity of vulnerable and at-risk people, groups and communities through people-centred and integrated interventions.

The overall objective is to promote social and economic recovery and strengthen the community resilience of the Thai people – with a particular focus on vulnerable and at-risk groups – to ensure empowerment at both sub-national and national level, and in view of promoting SDG localization efforts. The various initiatives will aim at mapping and addressing the various immediate, mid-term and long-term needs in order to develop targeted, gender sensitive measures to mitigate the immediate challenges and address long-term impact of COVID-19 and to promote sustainable economic and social recovery, as well as inclusive, transparent, equitable, sustainable and people-centred development and the achievement of the SDGs.

In view of the implementation period for this project, UNDP plans to implement the proposed interventions building on existing strong partnerships established at the national and sub national level and leverage on ongoing initiatives linked to **Response** and **Recovery** at local, regional and national level, including the following:

**Respond**: supporting an inclusive and participatory response by working across key sectors to prevent the spread of the virus and to provide the necessary protection for the most vulnerable. As COVID-19 disproportionately affects vulnerable individuals and groups, it is crucial to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met in the development of the government response.

* + ***Output 2.1: Support national and sub-national capacities for planning, coordination and crisis management.***
  + ***Output 2.2: Safeguarding human rights and protecting vulnerable groups***
  + ***Output 2.3: Community engagement for prevention, response and social cohesion.***

**Recover**: Support urgent gender sensitive policy and programme recovery interventions to address the impact of COVID 19, especially for poor and marginalized groups by delivering the outputs listed below.

* + ***Output 3.1: Needs assessments of the most vulnerable and at-risk groups to tailor recovery initiatives.***
  + ***Output 3.2: Policy and programme interventions to address the developmental impacts of COVID-19 and safeguarding progress towards the SDGs.***

**Partnership and alliance**

The activities represent an important platform to collaborate with the Japanese government and across the UN System, government, civil society, private sector, bilateral entities, and other stakeholders – and across both sectors and borders. The initiatives are aligned with UNDP’s global priorities, UNDP’s Global and Thailand specific COVID-19 response, as well as the UN Country Team’s response strategy for Thailand, which focuses on a gender-sensitive, integrated and inclusive response and recovery, while safeguarding results made towards the SDGs.

In view of supporting the implementation of this project, UNDP will leverage on its existing partnership with the government, civil society and private sector actors, in particular, with the National Economic and Social Development Council, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Local government in Chiang Mai and Phuket Tourism Association of Thailand, Thailand Chamber of Commerce and several NGOs which provide support to targeted groups and communities at risk.

**Partnership with Japanese stakeholders:**

UNDP Thailand will collaborate with [**Dentsu Thailand**](https://www.dentsu.co.th/main.html) as well as local partner, [Plan B](https://www.planbmedia.co.th/) for developing contents and amplifying messaging about social distancing and countering trends of gender-based violence and stigmatization.

In addition to the existing partnership with Thai PBS, a national broadcasting organization, [**NHK**](https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/) will be a key partner for the proposed project. Built on the collaboration on [**Japan-UNDP tsunami preparedness in Thailand**](https://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/programmes-and-initiatives/SchoolTsunamiPreparedness/thailand.html) – which was well documented and broadcasted by NHK – UNDP aims to continue the collaboration with NHK to demonstrate the important role of local governments in pandemic response.

In working with local governments, the Department of Local Administration (DLA) under the Ministry of Interior has the mandate to enhance capacities of local government in Thailand. The Department of Local Administration (DLA) under the Ministry of Interior with the mandate to enhance capacities of local government in Thailand, has continuous collaboration with **JICA** on numerous studies to enhance capacities of local government in local development. Building on the established collaboration with the DLA in SDG localization and biodiversity conservation, UNDP will leverage on the collaboration with the DLA and JICA to enhance capacities of local governments. In addition, UNDP will also engage with JICA on possible collaboration in the context of a survey to be undertaken by JICA on the business climate in Thailand and leverage on UNDP’s ongoing programme in Thailand on ensuring a fair business environment.

[**SAP**](https://www.sap.com/index.html) **Japan**, a global leading IT company, has been a partner with UNDP including teams working on youth, disaster, and urbanization. UNDP and SAP Japan are currently working together to strengthen the government’s capacity on data collection and visualization in coping with the pandemics. SAP Japan currently plans a pilot project in **Oita Prefecture in Japan**, which can be extended to Thailand as part of this project. The project could also enhance city to city knowledge sharing between Japan and Thailand.

**Proposed provinces:**

**Phuket and Chiang Mai** are selected for implementing the proposed project as both provinces have been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and UNDP has ongoing partnership with these 2 cities.

* Phuket is one of the well-known tourist destinations and its economy heavily relies on tourism industry. Given a continued lockdown including the closure of the airport in Phuket, it was estimated that over 8,000 people lost their jobs as of April 2020. This project will build on the findings of the socio-economic impact assessment on the tourism sector in Phuket to develop tailor made support towards those most affected groups and communities on the island. UNDP will leverage on its existing partnership with multiple stakeholders in Phuket to implement these initiatives. Of note, in 2017, UNDP-Small Grant Programme (SGP) has collaborated with [**Japan Foundation**](https://www.jpf.go.jp/e/)[[2]](#footnote-3)toward south-south cooperation by hosting the site study and learning exchange under the “Hope and Dreams for Disaster and Environmental Education + Creativity – HANDs Project” to find creative solutions to social and environmental issue at Baan (village) Bang La, Phuket province.
* Chiang Mai is also severely affected concurrently by COVID-19 as well as other challenges such as air pollution and forest fire. UNDP Thailand has an established partnership with Chiang Mai through jointly promoting low carbon city and the establishing a Smart Mobility Alliance Network, a foundation for smart mobility. As Chiang Mai is a sister province of Toyama prefecture from Japan, the project will explore opportunities for promoting knowledge exchange between the two cities.

**2. ANNUAL WORK PLAN BUDGET SHEET**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Applicable Outcome(s) from the UNDP Thailand Country Programme Document:**  Outcome 1: Strengthened social and economic recovery in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak through a human rights-based and gender sensitive approach to progressively advance inclusive, sustainable and people-centred development for all people in Thailand and safeguard and promote progress towards the SDGs. | | | | |
|  | **Project title: Strengthening socio economic recovery, human security and resilience in Thailand in the context of the COVID-19 outbreak ensuring to Leave No One Behind and safeguard progress made towards the SDGs** | | | | |
| **Expected outputs** | **Planned activities** | **Descriptions of activities** | **Budget description** | **Budget amount** |
|  | Output 1: Health Systems Strengthening | | | | |
| Output 1: Health Systems Strengthening  (\*As explained above,  considering the strong health system in Thailand and that WHO is already providing a strong support to the Preparation phase and support in the health sector in the country, UNDP will focus on the Response and Recovery phases – under Output 2 and Output 3 respectively.) | N/A |  |  |  |
| Subtotal for Output 1 |  | | | | |
|  | Output 2: Inclusive and integrated crisis management and responses | | | | |
| Output 2: Inclusive and integrated crisis management and responses  The aim is to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the resilience of the various groups – with focus on vulnerable groups – and sectors, including the gendered impact, and to develop targeted measures, recommendations and policy tools to mitigate the effects and increase community and economy resilience, while safeguarding SDG progress. | 2.1Support national and sub-national capacities for mapping, planning, coordination and crisis management | 2.1.1 Conduct risk assessment and develop Business Continuation Plan (BCP) of key institutions like the parliament and local governments in particular  2.1.2 Conduct risk assessment and develop BCP for key public service such as airport, schools and public areas.  2.1.3 Develop guidelines and regulatory framework for disaster response of local governments.  2.1.4 Conduct capacity building workshop to develop risk-informed and inclusive local development plans.  2.1.5 Conduct feasibility studies with public, private, and other stakeholders to realize the potential of innovative financing mechanisms for crisis management and recovery, in places such as for Phuket and Chiang Mai.  2.1.6 Develop a digital platform to communicate information and track response related to the special benefits provided to citizens. | Consultant – International & National  Contractual Services - Companies (Comm. & Outreach)  Workshop  Printing and Materials  Travel  Contractual Services – Individual  UN Volunteers | $ 120,000  $ 60,000  $ 20,000  $ 10,000  $ 10,000  $ 62,000  $ 52,000 |
| 2.2Safeguarding human rights and protecting vulnerable groups | 2.2.1 Provide policy and technical support to government on the human rights dimension of public health related laws, policies and practices adopted to prevent, control and treat incidents of COVID-19. | Consultant – International & National  Contractual Services - Companies (Comm. & Outreach)  Workshop  Printing and Materials  Travel | $ 50,000  $ 30,000  $ 20,000  $ 10,000  $ 10,000 |
| 2.3 Community engagement for prevention, response and social cohesion | 2.3.1 Provide and disseminate information and communications material related to COVID-19 produced in local languages and tailored to the needs of the various vulnerable persons. This activity will focus on supporting the production and dissemination of existing and new material to ensure everyone has access to crucial information. | Consultant – International & National  Contractual Services - Companies (Comm. & Outreach)  Workshop  Printing and Materials  Travel | $ 50,000  $ 30,000  $ 20,000  $ 25,000  $ 10,000 |
| Subtotal for Output 2 | $ 589,000 | | | | |
|  | Output 3: Addressing the human rights and socio-economic impact of COVID-19 | | | | |
| Output 3: Addressing the human rights and socio-economic impact of COVID-19  The interventions aim at gender responsive ways of supporting targeted vulnerable groups to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on their food security, access to basic services, social protection, livelihoods, etc. through community resilience, as well as innovative and nature-based solutions (NbS). The activities are promoting SDG 2 and 3 for zero hunger and good health and well-being, SDG 5 on promoting gender equality and SDG 12 on ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. | 3.1 Needs assessments of the most vulnerable and at-risk groups to tailor recovery initiatives. | 3.1.1 Comprehensive needs assessment will be conducted for targeted vulnerable groups most impacted by the pandemic in view of developing evidence-based interventions to address their needs  3.1.2 Conduct a study on disability inclusion in Thailand to provide recommendations for a disability inclusive COVID-19 response strategy for both businesses and the government to support a more disability inclusive work environment | Consultant – International & National  Contractual Services - Companies (Comm. & Outreach)  Workshop  Printing and Materials  Travel  Contractual Services – Individual  UN Volunteers | $ 40,000  $ 50,000  $ 50,000  $ 15,000  $ 10,000  $ 62,000  $ 52,000 |
| 3.2Policy and programme interventions to address the developmental impacts of COVID-19 and safeguarding progress towards the SDGs | 3.2.1 Consult with public, private, and other development actors to form policy and programme interventions based on the COVID socioeconomic impact assessment at national and subnational levels.  3.2.2 Support gender sensitive economic empowerment interventions, improved access to basic services and promote food security targeting the most vulnerable and impacted groups including youth, people with disability, ethnic minorities, LGBTI community, victims of gender based violence and those in both the formal and informal sector with low income (for instance, scaling up support towards barbers and hairdressers building on the ongoing initiative between UNDP and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security) through partnerships with local Civil society organizations (CSOs), Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector, academia, government, and local representatives. This will be largely supported through low value grants to CSOs/NGOs.  This Activity will entail providing assistance to the most vulnerable and at risk communities through for instance, the provision of relief goods, basic necessities and PPEs, strengthening their livelihoods and resilience by supporting the establishment of social enterprises and community entrepreneurs through awareness raising, training and other related support. For example:   * Assist entrepreneurs and small businesses at the heart of the hairdressing and salon industry to revive their businesses post pandemic period through provision of necessary PPE, hygiene products, and UV Sterilizer cabinets needed to reopen safely as well as provide online trainings on concrete safety guidelines to ensure the safest conditions possible adapted to the new Covid-19 context. A maximum of 1000 beneficiaries will be targeted across the most impacted provinces in Thailand * Support towards sundried seafood production and installing a sun-dryer in producing dried fishes/seafoods in the case of ethnic minorities * Improve preventive measures for as well as support access to health and social services for LGBTI community   Maximum grants of $ 50,000 per NGO are foreseen. With minimum of 15 NGOs benefiting from grants, with an estimated minimum of 100 beneficiaries per NGO, the total minimum number of beneficiaries of these grants would therefore be 1,500. This is a conservative estimate and a more accurate estimate will be available once the grantees have been selected.  3.2.3 Support young entrepreneurs and SMEs to create Business Continuity Plans to be able to continue their operation in time of crisis with transparent communication to their employees and customers. In parallel, engage with the same groups to formulate recommendations to the government on how to collaborate to build a better, fairer business environment / climate  3.2.4 Promote inter-community resilience, social cohesion and food security in the conflict affected southern border provinces of Thailand through livelihood support and improvement, civil society and people engagement, and technical support to local governments applying a conflict-prevention approach focused on strengthening social cohesion. This will be largely supported through low value grants to CSOs/NGOs. Examples of interventions include the following:   * Pilot social innovation for livelihood improvement at local communities * Establish network of food industry value chain to share information of food production and consumption at local communities. * Enhance capacities of local government for inclusive local planning and implementation   Up to 5 grants are foreseen to benefit around 20 local producers each, totalling 100 local producers. The beneficiaries will not receive cash grants but will receive the above mentioned support | Consultant – International & National  Contractual Services - Companies (Comm. & Outreach)  Workshop  Printing and Materials  Travel  Grants | $ 40,000  $ 30,000  $ 30,000  $ 20,000  $ 30,000  $ 1,000,000 |
| Subtotal for Output 3 |  |  |  | $ 1,429,000 |
| Sub-total for Output 2 & 3 | $ 2,018,000 | | | | |
| Equipment and Furniture |  | |  | $ 40,000 |
| Communication - mobile, on-line meeting |  | |  | $ 10,000 |
| Office Premises |  | |  | $ 10,000 |
| DRR - 25% |  | |  | $57,887 |
| Team Leader x 2 - 25% |  | |  | $ 63,299 |
| Programme Mngt Planning - 10% |  | |  | $ 11,506 |
| Programme Associate x 2 25% |  | |  | $ 34,071 |
| TST - UPL/LPL |  | |  | $ 60,000 |
| **Subtotal DPC** |  | |  | **$ 286,762** |
| **Programme budget total** |  | |  | $ 2,304,762 |
| GMS (8%) |  | |  | $ 184,381 |
| **TOTAL** |  | |  | **$ 2,489,143** |

1. Bangkok Post (2020) <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/1892050/world-bank-warns-of-5-gdp-decline-in-worst-case-forecast> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. UNDP Thailand is continuing the engagement with the senior officer and advisor of the Japan Foundation in exchange of experience and lessons from various development area at rural communities such as disaster risk management for school, youth co-lab and design thinking, youth capacity development. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)