



COUNTRY PROFILE

JUNE 2008



Children of Burmese migrants attend a USAID-supported school along the Thailand-Burma border.

OVERVIEW

While the U.S. does not have a bilateral relationship with the Government of Burma (GOB) (Myanmar), USAID promotes responsive governance and provides humanitarian assistance to Burmese internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrants, and refugees in the 10 Thai provinces along the Thailand-Burma border. USAID also supports the UN to work with the GOB to prevent outbreaks of avian influenza. The problems of human rights, poverty, inadequate education and limited health care within Burma's borders remain dire. These conditions were greatly exacerbated by Cyclone Nargis which struck in early 2008. As of June 2, 2008 USAID had provided more than \$18 million in disaster relief to the people of Burma in addition to its regular program funds.



Although multi-party elections in 1990 resulted in a decisive victory for the main opposition party, the military junta continues to maintain political and military control in Burma. Under the current regime, social and economic conditions have deteriorated significantly. This has driven many Burmese to relocate along the Thailand-Burma border. Consequently, approximately 150,000 Burmese refugees and over 1 million migrants now live in Thailand. Prior to Cyclone Nargis, it was estimated that 500,000 Burmese were displaced within eastern Burma. Numbers of refugees and IDPs are expected to increase as a result of the disaster, however it is too early to predict the long-term effects of the storm. U.S. Government policies continue to encourage the Burmese government to engage in constructive dialogue with the democratic opposition with the ultimate goal of national reconciliation.

BURMA SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1948
Population: 50.5 million (2005)
Source: World Development Indicators

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.usaid.gov/locations/asia/countries/burma/burma.html

PROGRAMS

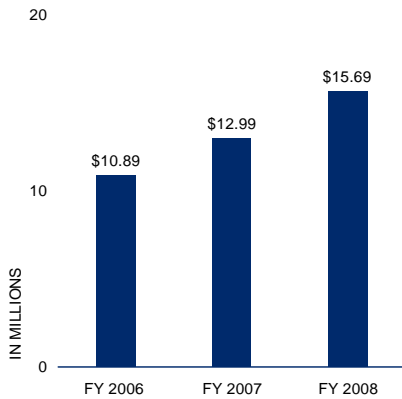
INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

Health programs along the Thailand-Burma border provide basic medical care to Burmese IDPs, migrants and refugees within and outside refugee camps. They emphasize preventative and curative healthcare and give capacity-building assistance to private health organizations and clinics to



COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

USAID ASSISTANCE TO BURMA



Funding Source: Economic Support Funds, Child Survival and Health Funds, and Development Assistance Funds

For more information, see the FY2009 Congressional Budget Justification <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/>

provide high-quality primary health care. Within Burma, USAID supports avian influenza (AI), infectious diseases and HIV/AIDS programs. To prevent outbreaks of AI, USAID supports technical assistance and training for the GOB to develop and implement poultry and wild bird surveillance programs, strengthen laboratory capacity and prepare and equip rapid response teams. To mitigate the spread of HIV/AIDS in the country and throughout Southeast Asia, USAID focuses on HIV/AIDS prevention activities for at-risk people, behavioral research, condom marketing, care and support of people living with HIV/AIDS, and coordination with complementary programs in neighboring countries.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: EDUCATION

USAID provides a wide range of training and capacity building support in most camps along the Thailand-Burma border, as well as in numerous communities of migrant and displaced persons. USAID supports education programs for Burmese IDPs and those displaced in Thailand. It provides primary education, literacy instruction, English-language training, higher education – including university and vocational/technical training – and skills development for work. Support for education also includes teacher training and stipends for Burmese community-based organizations, assistance to develop national education plans, and advocacy for inclusive education. In addition, USAID provides scholarships and ongoing interim education to Burmese within Burma and refugees in Thailand wishing to continue their studies. USAID gives priority to students who want to return to Burma to work for democratic principles and economic growth.

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

USAID supports democracy-focused activities including the training of Burmese journalists and public information workers to improve the quality and availability of news and information for Burmese citizens, refugees, and exiles on the situation within Burma. Reporters and editors are trained to give accurate, unbiased accounts of issues affecting the nation. USAID also supports ongoing education and democracy grant efforts in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: MIGRANT RIGHTS IN THAILAND

USAID supports dialogue with the Government of Thailand to provide legal rights and services to Burmese migrants working in Thailand.

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