



MIGRATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL



MISSION IN THAILAND

Migration Health

Due to a general lack of access to healthcare and difficult work conditions, migrants in Thailand are at higher risk of contracting contagious diseases. Since 1999, IOM has been working closely in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) in responding to the challenges of public health and migration. With the aim of improving health knowledge, awareness, practices and access among migrants as well as their Thai host communities, IOM supports the MOPH in promoting migrant inclusive policies that address migration-related health vulnerabilities. This partnership was further strengthened in 2015 where a new MOU was signed to increase access to healthcare among migrants and vulnerable communities.

IOM delivers and promotes comprehensive, preventive and curative health programmes in Thailand which are beneficial, accessible, and equitable for migrants and mobile populations. A comprehensive approach is taken in addressing public health concerns helps to mitigate and eliminate the impact of communicable diseases, protect migrants and host communities and enhance national health capacity and social services.

IOM is particularly active in the areas of malaria elimination and tuberculosis (TB) detection and has extensive experience in conducting health assessments and implementing behaviour change campaigns as well as water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH) activities in communities.

Through its own network of health assessment centres and laboratories, IOM also provides extensive health services to migrants and refugees such as medical screenings (including laboratory diagnostics, immunization, treatment) and psychosocial assistance so that they can travel and remain healthy throughout their stay in Thailand and abroad.



Locations of IOM Projects with Health Components

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Health Assessments and Travel Assistance

In the context of movement management and resettlement, migration health assessments are among the most well-established services offered by IOM. Assessments are comprehensive and consist of an evaluation of the physical and mental health status of migrants prior to departure from Thailand for the purpose of resettlement, international employment, or for obtaining a visa to countries including Australia, Canada, Malaysia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

All assessments are conducted by a team of over 50 medical professionals. IOM operates three laboratories in Mae Hong Son, Mae Sot and Bangkok that are able to perform advanced diagnostics and handle caseloads throughout Thailand. For migrants diagnosed with tuberculosis, sexually transmitted infections and other chronic physical and mental conditions, IOM provides treatment and arranges appropriate follow up care. Over 117,000 migrants have benefited from IOM's health assessment services since 2011, including 10,611 in 2017.



Health Promotion and Education

To promote their good health as well as that of host communities, IOM implements interventions

focusing on prevention and treatment. These include public education campaigns and water, sanitation and hygiene activities (WASH) to improve living environments.

With decades of experience in managing migration health projects, IOM Thailand is well-positioned to tackle health issues, particularly malaria and tuberculosis (TB). To date, over 120,000 persons from poor and hard-to-reach populations have been screened for TB with over 15,000 suspects tested.

The Mission has also initiated a campaign to contain and eliminate malaria among at-risk groups in border areas. Activities included the training of migrant health workers and volunteers in case detection and follow up, behavioural change campaigns and the distribution of over 100,000 long-lasting insecticide nets.



Health Assistance to Migrants in Detention

For migrants temporarily stranded or detained in Thailand, IOM provides medical check-ups and follow-up treatment with the aim of maintaining the general health of the beneficiaries. Periodic health assessments and screenings are also conducted along with the provision of supplemental nutritional support and hygiene kits.

In addition to this, IOM helps to reduce psychosocial vulnerabilities of these migrants by providing group counselling and individual counselling with the aid of an interpreter. Recreational and educational activities such as sports events, cooking sessions, English classes and basket weaving classes are organized to promote mental wellbeing. Educational sessions on developmental psychology are also offered to beneficiaries.

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