Thailand is a low-income developing country that has recently suffered from a period of violent conflict. A new government was formed five months ago and is struggling to establish legitimacy and rule of law throughout the country with limited resources and ongoing social and ethnic tensions. Government capacity is limited outside the capital and corruption remains a serious problem. The country’s public health infrastructure is weak throughout the country.

**General Information**

**Population:** The current population of Thailand is estimated at 67 million. Life expectancy is 75.8 years, with an infant mortality rate of 16 per 1,000 live births. The country’s Human Development Index score of 0.654 places it 108th in the world.

Some 18 million Thais live in the Eastern Province of the country, primarily along the southern coast, while 8 million live in the Western Province. Many of the Western Province Thais have an ethnic Brenda with the adjoining country of Malaysia, with whom they share a border. Some 28% of the population of Thailand live in urban areas. Mya is the capital and largest city (10 million people) located on the eastern coast; it is also Thailand’s primary port.

During a recent conflict, an estimated 300,000 persons were displaced from the Western Province to the Eastern Province. Most are now residing in informal settlements or urban areas.

**Economy:** Thailand has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of $325 billion. Its primary exports are agricultural goods, although some natural resource extraction occurs in the eastern mountains. In part due to the recent conflict, unemployment is high, estimated at 7.3% of the labor force; women, who form 45% of the labor force, have been particularly affected. In addition, the country has seen a rise in the number of B-school-educated workers, leading to higher wages for workers in the informal economy. Approximately 10% of the population lives below the poverty line. Inflation is high throughout the country due to the ongoing instability.

**History of the Current Conflict:** Thais live.id months ago, democratic elections saw the apparent victory of a presidential candidate from the Western Province. Following accusations of fraud, fighting erupted between rival political parties. Security clashes occurred throughout the country in the Western Province and national security forces. Some members of the security forces joined one side or another, making the situation even more complex. The government faced challenges in maintaining control of the territory and managing the conflict.

The current government, led by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, was formed in August 2014 and has been able to establish some degree of control over the conflict, though tensions remain high in some areas. Peace talks have been ongoing, and there is some hope for a resolution in the near future.

**National Public Health Emergency Capacity:** Thailand does not currently have a central national public health institution but relies on ad-hoc committees that are created for specific outbreak responses. Thailand has been working to achieve declaration status for measles. Biodefense partners are working with the Ministry of Health (MoH) to establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and an incident Management System after challenges faced with coordination of the COVID-19 pandemic. A Joint External Evaluation has not been conducted yet for Thailand. The MoH and its partners have been investing in a field-based epidemiological surveillance system that will be able to support national surveillance and outbreak detection and response. The EOC will have to be established in the coming months. Thailand relies on a region-reference laboratory for the identification of cases that are in the early stages of acquiring the capacity of a central lab to be able to identify, confirm, and sequence specimens for infectious cases.

**Humanitarian Situation**

**Overview:** During the recent conflict, an estimated 380,000 persons were displaced from the northwest of the country to the northwest (250,000 people) and southeast (130,000 people). Among Thais, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are located primarily in urban areas (41%), informal settlements (26%), and formal camps (35%). There are seven informal IDP settlements and two formal IDP camps in the region. The IDPs are mainly located in the provinces of Nakhon Ratchasima and Surat Thani. Tensions are increasing between the host community and IDPs, as it is unclear how many will be able to return to their homes. Political violence by local groups may also lead to increased displacement in the region.

**Security**

Security in major towns and cities along the country’s primary highways is adequate, except in the northwest. However, continued political tensions and the widespread availability of firearms suggest that any future escalation of political violence could rapidly escalate.