MANDATE
Handicap International’s goal in Thailand is to improve access to functional rehabilitation services and to empower people with disabilities living in refugee camps and neighbouring host villages. The organisation also aims to prevent accidents and causalities caused by mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). Our projects are concentrated along the Thai-Myanmar border.

SITUATION
Thailand has been a major destination country for asylum seekers and refugees from Myanmar for the past decades. Since 1984, Thailand has provided refuge to people fleeing violence in Myanmar, and more recently to economic migrants. Through policy changes, since 2011, the evolution of the situation in Burma causes a slow but steady decline in the number of refugees in the camps. This population is now estimated at 111,000 people. However, changes are slow and refugees still waiting. Living conditions are extremely poor in the nine camps located along the Myanmar-Thailand border, particularly for people with disabilities. Therefore refugees rely heavily on the humanitarian assistance provided by international NGOs and community based organizations.

INITIAL ACTIONS
Handicap International was founded in 1982 in Thailand by two French doctors. Its first activities were to help refugees living in camps along the Cambodian borders, including the orthopaedic-fitting of amputees injured in mine accidents. Since 1984, Handicap International operates along the border with Myanmar. The main activities since then have been: fitting refugees with locally-produced prostheses, community-based rehabilitation, the empowerment of people with disabilities and their inclusion in local communities (villages, neighbourhoods, etc.), and the prevention of mine accidents.

Handicap International is one of 19 member organisations of the Committee for coordination of services to displaced persons in Thailand (CCSDPT). Handicap International actively promotes collaboration and coordination between international organisations, refugee committees and key operators, such as community-based organisations working with vulnerable communities.

KEY FACTS
| **Human Development Index (HDI)** | 89/187 |
| **Life expectancy** | 74.4 |
| **GNI per capita** | 13364 US$ per year |
| **Population** | 67.01 million |
| **Surface area** | 510,890 sq km |

*UNDP : Human development report 2014
**World Bank 2013

| Oslo convention on cluster munitions | Not joined |

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1 Number of refugees living on the Myanmar/Thailand border at the end of December 2012, according the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).
2 Community-based rehabilitation (CBR) consists in involving and training the friends and family of disabled people in rehabilitation exercises and care to ensure their continuity.
GOAL
Improving access to physical rehabilitation and assistive technology services in five out of nine Burmese refugee camps in Thailand.

METHOD
Handicap International is the only organisation providing rehabilitation services to people with disabilities living in refugee camps in Thailand. These services are organised around:
- Three Assistive Technology workshops producing orthoses, prostheses and adapted technical aids;
- Five rehabilitation centres providing physiotherapy and occupational therapy services to people with disabilities and advice to their families /caregivers;
- A network of community volunteers supplying occupational therapy and physiotherapy services in the homes of people with disabilities.

In addition to rehabilitation services, Handicap International also promotes the early detection of disability in children in partnership with other NGOs (Première urgence /Aide médicale internationale (PU-AMI), American refugee committee (ARC), Malteser International).

Handicap International also works closely with four Thai institutions which help improve the technical quality of services provided to refugees.

BENEFICIARIES
- People with disabilities and/or vulnerable people (including children and victims of anti-personnel mines);
- Families of people with disabilities and/or vulnerable people;
- Partners working in the health sector.

PARTNERS
- PU AMI (Première urgence /Aide médicale internationale);
- ARC (American refugee committee);
- MI (Malteser International);
- IRC (International Rescue Committee);
- Siridhorn National Medical Rehabilitation Centre (SNMRC)
- Siridhorn School of Prosthetics and Orthotics (SSPO)
- Mae Sot General Hospital
- Phrae Hospital

LOCATION
The project is run in five out of nine refugee camps set up along the Thai-Burma border: Mae La, Umpiem Mai, Nupo, Mae Ra Ma Luang and Mae La Oon.
Access to basic services, accessibility and socio-economic inclusion

GOAL
Promoting and facilitating access for people with disabilities to services provided to refugees (including care and occupational training) and fostering their involvement in the social life of refugee camps.

METHOD
Handicap International takes a global approach to promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities, by providing a comprehensive range of services for people with disabilities and operators involved in the social and economic life of refugee camps. This global approach includes:

- Ensuring access for people with disabilities to mainstream buildings (schools, occupational training centres and public buildings) and their communities (information on the rights of people with disabilities targeted at people with disabilities, camp managers, organisations and the general public);
- Improving the physical accessibility of public buildings and individual houses;
- Setting up mutual support groups for people with disabilities and their families;
- Improving access to basic services (health, education and livelihoods) for people with disabilities;

BENEFICIARIES
- People with disabilities and/or vulnerable people;
- Families of people with disabilities and/or vulnerable people;
- All service providers working in refugee camps (health centres, schools administration authorities, occupational training centre, NGOs, etc.).
- Camp authorities (camp management committees);
- Camp general population.

PARTNERS
- ARC (American refugee committee);
- ADRA (Adventist development and relief agency);
- COERR (Catholic office for emergency relief and refugee)
- SI Solidarités International,
- TBC (The Border Consortium).

LOCATION
The project is run in five out of nine refugee camps set up along the Thai-Burma border (see map): Mae La, Umpiem Mai, Nupo, Mae la Oon and Mae Ra ma Luang.

Mine and explosive remnants of war risk education

GOAL
Educating the Burmese refugee population and Migrants in Thailand on the risks of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW).

METHOD
Risk education, which consists in providing refugees/migrants with information on identifying mines and ERW, what to do if they come across these devices, marking/reporting the finds, assisting if witnessing mine accident, and preparing themselves for a journey to suspected area. We use posters, banners and awareness-raising film to get the prevention message across to communities (schools, families and community leaders).

Handicap International has also developed a database of mines and explosive remnants of war accidents & victims to more effectively identify at-risk zones and to provide better information to people crossing the border. This data will also be used to facilitate mine action in Burma when the situation allows.

**BENEFICIARIES**
- Refugees belonging to at-risk groups (people who travel between Burma and Thailand: men aged 15 to 35);
- Students and teachers;
- Camp authorities (camp management committees);
- Camp general population;
- International NGOs/ CBOs active in camps and Burma.

**PARTNERS**
- Karen Refugee Entity for Education (KRCEE)
- Karen Women Organization (KWO)
- Karen Youth Organization (KYO)
- All international NGO members of the CCSDPT (Committee for Coordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand)

**LOCATION**
This project is run in nine refugee camps set up along the Thai-Burma border (see map): Maela, Umpiem, Nupo, Mae La Ma Luang et Mae La Oon, Tham Hin, Ban Don Yang, Ban Mae Surin and Ban Mai Nai Soi.

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**MAIN FUNDING BODIES**

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1 The assessments conducted by Handicap International in refugee camps in 2012 revealed that 82% of the 650 interviewees had never benefited from mine risk education over the last 5 years.