

Activity Name:

Akha Hill Tribe Children- Community Development, Education and Training at Mae Kok Foundation

Location:

Doihang , Muang District, Chiang Rai Province

Project Background:

This project originated as a study tour focused on the natural environment, cultures and traditions of the local communities in various Hill Tribe villages in the northern part of Thailand. The study tour was considered an eye-opening experience as it provided opportunities for its participants to learn about crucial aspects of existing problems that have been widespread among many Hill Tribe villages in northern Thailand. For various reasons in northern Thailand, there is a struggle to have enough land for all the people's needs, for forest protection, and for security; this has brought the Hill Tribes quickly into contact with modern life and has forever changed their situation whilst making some of their traditional practices impossible to continue.

There are now between 25-26 children living at the Mae Kok Foundation ranging from 4-18 years old.

The current Volunteer Project and activities are part of a joint effort between ISV Foundation Thailand and the Mae Kok Foundation. The ultimate goal is to improve the life of underprivileged Hill Tribe children by providing housing, food, education and other vocational training activities. These training activities include improving agricultural knowledge and working skills in the areas of vegetable gardening, welding, building and embroidery, as a way to provide the children with better opportunities for their future dependence.

Volunteer Program:

- Light construction projects around the children's home designed to improve and maintain a safe living environment for the children.
- Creating an education mural painting at the home, designed to educate and inspire creative learning among the children.
- Providing vital English teaching and curriculum development activities with the children. Volunteers will be involved in teaching English and running an English camp to a variety of children with different levels of English knowledge. Volunteer teams will spend time preparing lessons and teaching English speaking and listening skills to primary school aged children using informal approaches, such as activities and games.
- Additional daily activities will include: manual labor around the foundation, assisting with preparation and cleanup before and after meals, and attending vocational and artistic workshops, such as embroidery, as a way to enhance life experience at Mae Kok Foundation.

Leisure Program:

- Visiting children's families at local Akha Village
- Exploring local hot springs and waterfalls
- Walking through local tea plantations where some of the children's families work
- Discovering the famous temples and landmarks of Chiang Rai such as the "white temple" and the "black house" and visiting local markets.
- Visit to the "Golden Triangle" and the opium museum

Itinerary for 14 Days:

Day 1: Orientation and Introduction to the Project

Welcome Dinner and Evening Traditional Akha Dance Performance from children. This evening will be relaxed, as you settle into your accommodation, learn your way around the foundation and meet the children.

Day 2 - 5: Work Project

06:00-07:00am	Morning chores
07:00-08:00am	Breakfast
08:00-09:00pm	Break (Morning reflection time for writing in journals/ creating blogs)
09:00-12:00pm	Morning project- foundation maintenance and food harvesting
12:00pm	Lunch
01:00-04:00pm	Afternoon project- light construction project and mural painting
04:00-05:00pm	Break (Afternoon reflection time for writing in journals/ creating blogs)
05:00-6:30pm	Leisure time: Optional Leisure activities include helping with cooking, visiting local hot springs (10 min walk) or playing sports with the children.
06:30-07:30pm	Dinner
08:00-09:00pm	English learning activities with the children

Day 6: Leisure Day Activities: Visit to Chiang Rai

Today will be a free day designed to give volunteers a deeper *understanding of the local landscape and historical influences in Chiang Rai* and visit some of the unique places in northern Thailand

Day 7 - 10: Work Project Continues

06:00-07:00am	Morning chores
07:00-08:00am	Breakfast
08:00-09:00pm	Break (Morning reflection time for writing in journals/ creating blogs)
09:00-12:00pm	Morning project- foundation maintenance and food harvesting
12:00pm	Lunch
01:00-04:00pm	Afternoon project- light construction project and mural painting
04:00-05:00pm	Break (Afternoon reflection time for writing in journals/ creating blogs)
05:00-06:30pm	Leisure time: Optional Leisure activities include helping with cooking, visiting local hot springs (10 min walk) or playing sports with the children.
06:30-07:30pm	Dinner
08:00-09:00pm	English learning activities with the children

Day 11: Visit to Golden Triangle

Today will be a free day designed to give volunteers a better *understanding of the historical influences and cultural influences of the Golden Triangle* area of Thailand and visit some of the unique places in this area of northern Thailand

Day 11 - 13: Work Project Continues, Final Project Debrief and Farewell Party

06:00-07:00am	Morning chores
07:00-08:00am	Breakfast
08:00-09:00pm	Break (Morning reflection time for writing in journals/ creating blogs)
09:00-12:00pm	Morning project- foundation maintenance and food harvesting
12:00pm	Lunch
01:00-04:00pm	Afternoon project- light construction project and mural painting
04:00-05:00pm	Break (Afternoon reflection time for writing in journals/ creating blogs):00-6:30pm
	Leisure time: Optional Leisure activities include helping with cooking, visiting local hot springs (10 min walk) or playing sports with the children.
06:30-07:30pm	Dinner
08:00-09:00pm	English learning activities with the children

On Day 13, volunteers will meet with the project staff and project leaders for a final project debrief to go over all that they have

accomplished. In the evening volunteers will celebrate with the children and learn some local dances.

Day 14: Depart for Home

Today you will have a chance to say goodbye to all of your new friends, take a few group pictures with the children and then depart for Home.

Note: From time to time there can be unavoidable changes to projects. These can be caused by weather, community priorities, materials supply, or because ongoing projects have progressed more quickly or slowly than originally planned. We ask you to accept the changes – we are sure you will enjoy the replacement projects just as much.



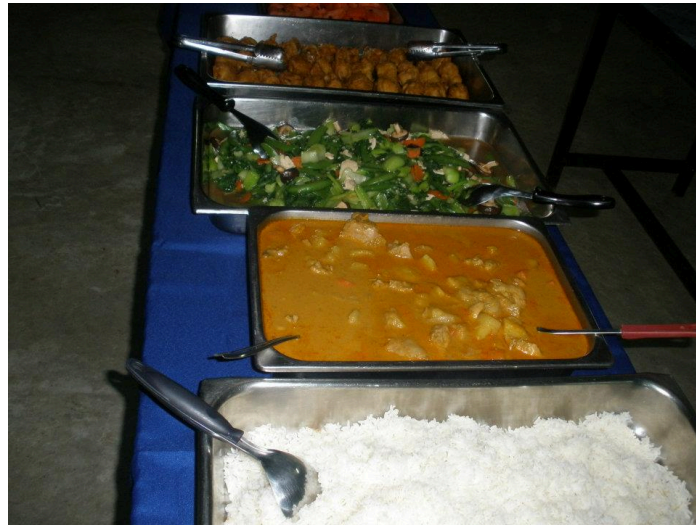
Accommodation:

The volunteers will stay in shared Thai-style accommodations located on-site at Mae Kok Foundation. The accommodation is simple but comfortable. You will share a room and sleep on traditional Thai style cushioned sleeping mats on the floor with a mosquito net, sheet, pillow, blankets and fan provided. Bathroom facilities are available in the building and include hot showers and flush toilets. Volunteers are expected to keep sleeping areas clean and tidy. Laundry may be done on-site with provided washing machine (wash, rinse, and line dry). The facilities may be very different to what you are accustomed to at home (e.g. bedding); however, this is part of your authentic experience in Thailand. As you will be working on a children based project, it is an essential part of the experience to live as the children do.



Food:

Volunteers will be provided with three meals a day. Volunteers will get a chance to help with preparation and cooking, which is another great way to mingle with the children and learn how to cook Thai food. The food is local Thai-style with fruits, rice, noodles, vegetables and meat. Vegetarian options will be made available upon request. All the meals are fresh and delicious and highlight the culinary know-how of northern Thailand.



Accomplishments:

Projects for volunteers were chosen because they meet the needs of the foundation and because they are small enough that volunteers can make noticeable progress in a relatively short period of time.

Without these volunteer efforts, it would be incredibly difficult for a small foundation like Mae Kok to meet the daily needs of its children while continuing to improve its facilities and outreach programs.

The Mae Kok Foundation provides different kinds of help on the local, national, and international levels. Locally, it helps provide the children of the foundation with a better living/future. Nationally, it helps create better-educated, good, hardworking individuals for the Thai Economy. Internationally, it helps develop a sense of understanding about the world for visitors/volunteers to Thailand.

As a volunteer, you will:

- To provide support and assist the Foundation in its needs to develop infrastructure for members
- To provide a healthy and happy living environment for the children
- To provide support in English teaching activities both at the foundation and to children at the local school

Through these efforts, your accomplishments will be far-reaching and long lasting. Through your hard work, you will make a lasting impact on a child's life and your grassroots efforts will help support the daily needs and long-term goals of the foundation.

Project tasks may sometimes seem repetitive – but your efforts will make a huge difference. Enjoy the project locations, your fellow team members, and the fact you are helping to make a difference to sustainable community development in Thailand.