



PASS ON
THE GIFT
HEIFER[®]
INTERNATIONAL

THAILAND STUDY TOUR

November 16 – 25, 2011



TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	.....	Welcome
4	.....	Study Tour Itinerary
6	.....	Staff Joining This Study Tour
7	.....	Map of Thailand
8	.....	Background on Thailand
14	.....	History of Heifer in Thailand
15	.....	Projects to be Visited
16	.....	Resources & Further Reading



WELCOME

Dear Friends,

It is my great pleasure to greet you and share this information packet in preparation for our journey to Thailand. I am happy that you have chosen this study tour and look forward to learning with you.

Our trip will be an intensive educational experience in the world of sustainable community development, focusing especially on Heifer's approach of providing livestock and training to developing communities. We will see, hear and touch Heifer's work throughout the trip by constant interaction with Heifer Thailand staff and by visiting a number of communities with whom Heifer works. You will see Heifer's 12 Cornerstones for Just and Sustainable Development in action, and it is my hope that you will come away with a better understanding and appreciation of the uniqueness and effectiveness of the Heifer model and its strategy of Passing on the Gift.

You will not only learn about Heifer's work during this study tour, but will also learn about the rich and diverse culture of the people of Thailand and the fascinating history that has created this nation. Heifer has a long history in Thailand and our staff there are excited about our visit.

Full participation is one of Heifer's cornerstones, and I will make sure that each of you has a special and fulfilling connection with Heifer. I ask that you come prepared to invest your mind in this completely. We will discuss the topics that the study tour brings to light and will have regular debriefings on what we are experiencing.

It is my expectation that you will return home with a greater understanding not only of Heifer's work, but also of the root causes of hunger, poverty and environmental degradation. But it is my hope is that you will come away from the study tour more committed to helping advance Heifer's work.

Thank you for joining me on what I'm sure will be a life-changing journey to see Heifer's work in Thailand. I look forward to sharing this experience with you!

With hope for the future,

Gary Tabasinske

Gary Tabasinske

Study Tour Leader & former Heifer International Board Member

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL THAILAND STUDY TOUR

Tentative Itinerary: November 16 – 25, 2011*

Date	Activity	Tour Leader	Additional Information
<p>Wednesday Nov. 16, 2011</p> <p>Day One</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afternoon arrival at the Chiang Mai International Airport (CNX) • Heifer Thailand staff or tour agency will transfer participants to the hotel • Welcome dinner with Heifer Thailand staff at the hotel (if accommodating flights are available) 	Noi and tour operator	<p>10-minute drive to the hotel</p> <p>Overnight at the Sheik Istana Hotel http://www.sheikistana-hotel.com</p>
<p>Thursday Nov. 17, 2011</p> <p>Day Two</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel • Welcome and orientation at the Heifer Thailand country office • Lunch at a local restaurant • City Tour of Chiang Mai • Study Tour orientation and basics session • Dinner at the hotel 	Noi and tour operator	Overnight at the Sheik Istana Hotel
<p>Friday Nov. 18, 2011</p> <p>Day Three</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel • Depart for the Mae Ai district to Pong Akha Village • Lunch en route • Visit the <i>Empowering Marginalized Communities in Northern Thailand</i> project (#22-0510-25) • Meet and greet with the Self-Help Group (SHG) • Cook dinner with host families, help prepare for the ethnic minority New Year • Dinner in the village • Overnight with project families 	Noi, Northern Program staff and project partner	<p>Three-hour drive from Chiang Mai to the project</p> <p>Overnight with the Community in Pong Akha Village (bring small overnight bag and leave luggage at the hotel in Chiang Mai)</p>
<p>Saturday Nov. 19, 2011</p> <p>Day Four</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare breakfast with host families • Witness a Passing on the Gift Ceremony • Lunch with the community • Travel back to the hotel in Chiang Mai • Dinner at the hotel • Debrief/reflection session 	Noi, Northern Program staff and project partner	<p>Three-hour drive from the project to Chiang Mai</p> <p>Overnight at the Sheik Istana Hotel</p>
<p>Sunday Nov. 20, 2011</p> <p>Day Five</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel and check-out • Morning flight to Ubonratchathani (7 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.) • Travel by van to Surin Province • Lunch en route • Check-in to hotel in Surin • Welcome and orientation to Heifer's work in the Northeast Region • Dinner with Northeast office staff 	Noi and Northeast Program staff	<p>Five- to six-hour flight</p> <p>Three-hour drive from Ubonratchathani to Surin province</p> <p>Overnight in the Sangkha Hotel in Surin</p>

Date	Activity	Tour Leader	Additional Information
Monday Nov. 21, 2011 Day Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel • Visit the <i>Pilot Sustainable Community Development Project in the Northeastern Region</i> (#22-0510-23); participate in village activities • Lunch with the community • Visit the community forest • Dinner with the village and return to the hotel • Debrief/reflection session 	Noi, Northeast Program Officer, and project partner	30-minute drive from the hotel to the project Overnight in Sangkha Hotel
Tuesday Nov. 22, 2011 Day Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel • Return to the Kanoon Sangpok village for a rice harvest • Lunch with the community • Return to the hotel • Debrief/reflection session 	Noi and Northeast Program Officer	30-minute drive from the hotel to the project Overnight in Sangkha Hotel
Wednesday Nov. 23, 2011 Day Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel and check-out • Visit the Phanom Rung Historical Park in Buriram Province – Ancient Khmer Temple Complex • Lunch • Travel to Ubonratchathani and check-in to the hotel • Dinner at a local restaurant 	Noi	Two-hour drive to the Temple and three-hour drive from the Temple to Ubonratchathani Overnight at the Laithong Hotel www.laithonghotel.net/
Thursday Nov. 24, 2011 Day Nine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel • Final debrief/reflection session • Free afternoon • City & historical tour of Ubonratchathani Province • Farewell dinner with Heifer Thailand staff 	Noi, Northeast program team	Overnight at Laithong Hotel
Friday Nov. 25, 2011 Day 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast at the hotel and check-out • Morning departure flight from Ubonratchathani to Bangkok • Departure flights from Suvarnabhumi International Airport (BKK) in Bangkok – AFTER 5 p.m. 	Noi and tour operator	Participants need to plan their departure flights according to this itinerary or stay overnight in Bangkok if they desire

* Please Note: The itinerary is tentative and subject to change at any time, even once a trip commences.

STAFF JOINING THIS TOUR



Ms. Sangwan Sapma (Noi), Communication & Networking Manager

Noi has worked at Heifer Thailand since July 2008. Prior to joining Heifer Thailand, she worked in the marketing and public relations field in the hotel business. After working in the business sector for several years, Noi joined a nonprofit organization working on HIV prevention and treatment research as an administrative manager. This was the beginning of her social work. Noi received a bachelor's degree in business and her master's degree in

English (literature and linguistic) at Chiang Mai University.



Gary Tabasinske, Tour leader

Tabasinske serves on the Heifer International Board of Directors representing the northwest region. Professionally, he is an architect and member of the American Institute of Architects. He has a special interest in affordable housing and served on the San Juan County Housing Bank Commission and various other organizations with similar missions. He is past chair of the Lopez Community Land Trust, which provides permanently affordable housing for low-income families and assists with sustainable agricultural and rural development. Tabasinske is also a founder and an officer of Lopez Housing Options, a nonprofit group, and is on the Board of Directors of KLOI FM, a listener-supported radio station. His interest in international issues led him to help found Friends of Open House, the U.S. branch of a non-governmental organization based in Ramle, Israel, where he currently serves on the Board as it works toward Jewish, Arab and Christian reconciliation. Tabasinske is a veteran of numerous Heifer International study tours including trips to Ecuador, Cameroon, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania.



MAP OF THAILAND



BACKGROUND ON THAILAND



GENERAL INFORMATION

Thailand is located in Southeast Asia and is bordered by Laos on the north and east, Myanmar on the northwest and west, and Cambodia on the southeast. Thailand's southern peninsula connects the country to Malaysia and is flanked by the Gulf of Thailand and the Andaman Sea. Referred to as Siam until 1939, the country's name means "land of freedom" in the Thai language. Thailand has a diverse population that mixes Chinese, Vietnamese and Indian cultures. The country has been unified as a kingdom since the 14th century, though the name "Thai" has been used to describe its people only since the 20th century.

COUNTRY FACTS

- **Official Language:** Thai
- **Population:** 63,723,953 (2010 estimate)
- **Currency:** Baht
- **Land Area:** 198,115 square miles
- **Water Area:** 861 square miles
- **National Anthem:** "Phleng Chat"
- **Capital:** Bangkok

PEOPLE & CULTURE

The population of Thailand is a mixture of regions, dialects and cultures, the result of generations of migration southward through the Thai mainland to the peninsula. Approximately 75 percent of the population is ethnic Thai. Thai serves as the official language of the country, but different dialects of the language are spoken throughout the country. Thai speakers can also be found in the surrounding countries of Laos, Vietnam and China.

Chinese are the country's largest ethnic group, accounting for 14 percent of the population. Minority groups include Malays (4 percent of the population) and the Mon, who are descended from the residents of Myanmar. Smaller groups include the Khmer people, who live in the east near the border with Cambodia; the Karen, who speak a variety of Sino-Tibetan languages; and the Lawa, who are thought to be the ancient inhabitants of the delta plain but have been since driven to the hills where they live in a voluntary isolation. In addition, there are the Semang people, who continue to hunt with blowpipes and spears. Approximately 95 percent of the population is Buddhist. There are also small groups of Muslims and Christians.

Bangkok (Krung Thep, or "city of angels"), the country's capital and economic center, is the largest city, with an estimated population of 9.1 million. Other large cities include Songkhla, Chiang Mai, Nakhon Ratchasima, and Nakhon Si Thammarat. The majority of the population, however, lives in rural areas, and is concentrated in coastal areas or near rivers.

Although the Thai had contact with European traders over many centuries, their land was never colonized.

EDUCATION

Since 1997, all Thai children are entitled to 12 years of free education. While six years of primary education are compulsory for Thai children, secondary education is not required, and a small minority of students progress to this level. Secondary school lasts for six years, in lower and upper divisions. English is the language of instruction in the country's secondary schools, and is also widely spoken among more affluent people. There are many colleges and universities throughout Thailand. Silpakorn University provides fine arts training, and other universities include the Chula Longkorn University, founded in 1917 and the country's oldest, and Ramkhamhaeng University, founded in 1971. Thailand's average literacy rate is high, at nearly 93 percent overall; for men the number is higher at 95 percent and among women, 91 percent are literate.



HEALTH CARE

Thailand's health care system is not sufficient to meet the needs of the population. Facilities are inadequate, and Thai doctors often leave to practice in other countries where they can make more money. Most of the country's modern medical facilities are located in the Bangkok metropolitan area. Although there are regional health centers throughout the country, many rural residents must rely on mobile medical units. Additionally, the infant mortality rate remains high, at nearly 18 deaths per 1,000 live births, but the average life expectancy is also relatively high—75 years for women and 70 for men. Malaria, once prevalent in the country, has been curbed due to increased use of pesticides. HIV/AIDS, however, is a growing problem, with an estimated 516,000 people infected as of 2009.

FOOD

Chinese, Indian, and Japanese ingredients and techniques heavily influence the country's food. As in many Asian culinary traditions, the staple of Thai cuisine is rice. Chilies, along with fish sauce (nam pla), fresh herbs, limes and vegetables are also key ingredients in Thai cooking. Coconut milk is another common ingredient, especially in the south. Typical Thai dishes include curries, noodle soups and rice dishes, and popular foods include satay, and pad thai, though Thai food varies by region.



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Much of Thailand's art has strong ties to religion. Indian-influenced paintings adorn the walls of Buddhist temples, and sculpture is mainly concerned with Buddhist iconography. Buddhist temples, or wats, may be seen throughout the country, and are the most pronounced artistic expression of the country's religion. The classical music of Thailand is closely associated with the music of Cambodia and Laos. Traditional Thai music includes *luk thung*, a type of country music, and *mor lam*, characterized by its distinctive vocal performances. Thai literature is heavily influenced by the literature of India, particularly the epic "Ramayana." There is a range of newspapers, radio and television outlets within the country, both in Thai and in English. The native martial art known as Muay Thai, or Thai boxing, is the country's most popular sport; its popularity has also grown throughout the world in recent years. Other popular sports include soccer, tennis and *takraw*, which combines elements of volleyball and soccer.

HOLIDAYS

Most holidays celebrated in Thailand revolve around Buddhist ceremonies, such as Mahka Bucha, Wisakha Bucha, and the holy season of Khao Phansa. Songkran, or Thai New Year, is celebrated for several days in mid-April. Chakri Day (April 13) celebrates the founding of the

present dynasty in 1782. Other official holidays include Chulalongkorn Day (October 23), in honor of King Rama V, and Constitution Day (December 10). The birthdays of the ruling monarchs, as well as the date of their coronation, are also celebrated as national holidays.

ENVIRONMENT & GEOGRAPHY

TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of Thailand is diverse and encompasses mountains, plains, fertile alluvial soils, wet rice paddies and tropical beaches. The northern and western regions are mountainous, with granite ridges formed by volcanoes. The average elevation in these areas is 5,200 feet. The peak of Doi Inthanon, in the north, is the country's highest point at 8,530 feet. The Khorat Plateau dominates the eastern part of the country. To the south lies the Cambodian plain, which gradually turns to rolling hills toward the southern peninsula. The central Chao Phraya River basin dominates the landscape, accounting for one-third of the country's area. This lowland area is the country's most fertile region, sometimes referred to as the "rice bowl." Thailand has many islands, some of which are home to tourist resorts. The country's largest island, Phuket, lies off the southeastern coast in the Andaman Sea.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Arable land is Thailand's most important resource, and two major rivers—the Mekong and the Chao Phraya—water the area's fertile soils. The flooding of the Chao Phraya delta during monsoon season benefits rice cultivation. Although the Mekong's high salt content inhibits agriculture, there is a salt deposit mining operation in the river's valley. The southern peninsula is rich in tin, another valuable natural resource. Other mineral resources include coal, zinc, limestone and tungsten. There is also a flourishing gemstone industry, which produces rubies and sapphires. The country is also a leading producer and the largest exporter of rubber, found in its rainforests. The rubber plantations are mostly in the southeast and on the peninsula. Most of Thailand's electricity comes from natural gas and coal, though there are a few hydroelectric plants.

PLANTS & ANIMALS

Half of the country's forests have been lost to logging and deforestation since the 1970s. Most of the remaining trees are palm trees or hardwoods, such as teak. The agricultural sector produces teak and yang hardwoods, but due to deforestation, only a very small amount is allowed for export. Deforestation has also endangered native species like rhinoceroses and tapirs, and there are few wild animal species remaining in Thailand. Domesticated draft animals





include cattle, mules, horses, buffalo and elephant, but even these have been largely replaced by machinery. Reptiles are common throughout Thailand, including lizards, crocodiles and snakes. Silkworms are also prevalent. The government has increased its wildlife conservation efforts, and outlawed the sale of these animals. Still, over-fishing threatens the country's fish and marine life.

CLIMATE

Thailand's climate is characterized as a Southeast Asian tropical monsoon zone. The monsoon season lasts from May until September. In November, the monsoon winds reverse direction until February bringing cooler, drier air. The amount of rain depends on region and topography. For instance, Ranong, located on the peninsula, can receive up to 160 inches of rain annually, while Hua Hin, on the east coast, may receive only 40 inches. The southernmost area of the peninsula, Songkhla, is a true tropical rainforest climate, experiencing heavy rains during the rest of the country's cool, dry season. Temperatures in Thailand are fairly consistent, remaining between 77° and 84° Fahrenheit throughout the year. There is occasional frost, but usually only in December in the northern mountains.

ECONOMY

Thailand has one of the fastest-growing economies in Southeast Asia. A currency crisis in 1997 slowed growth, and the tourism industry experienced a downturn in 2003 and 2004, due to fears of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the Indian Ocean tsunami. The economy is recovering, and relies on foreign investment and the export of manufactured goods and food products. In 2008, Thailand's per capita gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at \$8,239. Approximately 10 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and the unemployment rate is 1.5 percent of a labor force of more than 36 million. The country ranked 87th out of 182 countries on the 2009 United Nations Human Development Index.

INDUSTRY

Most manufacturing activity in Thailand focuses on textiles, machinery, electrical components and automobiles and is mostly centered in Bangkok. Smaller industries include food processing, craftwork and small-scale oil production, which typically take place in the southeastern region.

AGRICULTURE

Approximately half of Thailand's labor force is employed in the agricultural sector, though it accounts for less than 10 percent of GDP. Roughly 40 percent of the land is used for farming. As in other Asian countries, rice is the largest crop and is grown everywhere from the Chao Phraya River basin to the Khorat Plateau. A high duty is charged on rice exports, in order to ensure a consistent supply for the local population. Farm-raised seafood, especially shrimp, is one of the country's top agricultural exports. Small-scale agriculture is also practiced throughout Thailand. The upland Hmong people grow opium, while the Karen grow rice in terraced fields. Tea and coffee are cultivated in the lowlands.

TOURISM

Thailand is one of the top tourist destinations in Southeast Asia. Tourists are drawn to the country's beautiful mountain vistas, tropical beaches, the urban excitement of Bangkok, the many historic Buddhist temples and the resort islands off the Andaman coast. The busiest tourism season is during the dry season between October and March, though the country is so popular it remains crowded year-round.

GOVERNMENT

Thailand's modern government can be traced to 1932, when a military coup overthrew the monarchy. A constitution was established and since then, the country has wavered between governments installed by the military and those elected democratically. The country now functions as a stable constitutional monarchy; its current constitution was adopted in 1997. The king remains the head of state and of the armed forces and is considered sacred. The royal family is the center of Thailand's national life, functioning as a symbol of the country's strength and unity. The king appoints a prime minister, who functions along with a cabinet as the executive authority of the country. The bicameral National Assembly is comprised of a Senate, whose members are popularly elected to six-year terms, and a House of Representatives, whose members are elected to four-year terms. The Supreme Court is called the Sandika, and the monarch appoints its judges. Thai law is based on the Hindu code Manusmṛti, which has been tempered by the influence of Western law since the late 19th century. Thailand is divided into 76 provinces (*changwat*); each with its own popularly elected local government of mayors and councilors. Voting is compulsory for those 18 and older, though citizens can only vote for members of the legislative branch.

HISTORY OF HEIFER IN THAILAND

For 34 years Heifer International has focused on marginalized ethnic minorities living in the mountainous regions of northern Thailand. After the Heifer Thailand office was established in 1986, projects were expanded into other areas including northeast and southern Thailand, as well as Myanmar and Laos. In all, Heifer Thailand has assisted more than 27,800 families in nearly 2,500 villages.



Heifer Thailand promotes livelihood opportunities in communities that are economically and socially marginalized. The country office implements projects with partner organizations that include governmental agencies, non-government organizations, academic institutions and development networks. They are the key part of the coordination between Heifer, our project participants and the implementation of activities in the field.

Heifer Thailand promotes the Values-Based Holistic Community Development (VBHCD) approach in all projects and emphasizes livestock production, natural resource management and gender equity to ensure that its activities integrate well with other issues of concern in the communities. Farmers, both men and women, are trained on sustainable development and regenerative agricultural practices to protect and restore ecological balance. Other trainings include Self-Help Group (SHG) formation, kitchen gardens and savings activities. Heifer Thailand also enables farmers to enhance their dignity by sharing and caring through Passing on the Gift.

PROJECTS TO BE VISITED

#22-0510-23: Pilot Sustainable Community Development Project in the Northeastern Region

With the largest population living below the poverty line, the northeastern region is the most disadvantaged in Thailand. The main cause of poverty is a shortage of water, as drought has hurt main crops like rice, cassava, corn and sugarcane. Most farmers are also unable to afford adequate education and nutrition in addition to their lack of food and water security. Over three years, the *Pilot Sustainable Community Development* project will provide 215 families in Petchaboon, Sakonnakhon and Surin provinces 166 cows, 43 water buffalo, 95 pigs, 2,600 poultry, 7,300 tree seedlings, and 1,400 pounds of crop seeds. These families will Pass on the Gift to another 286 families. The original families will form nine self-help groups—including three women-only groups—and will receive training on Values-based Holistic Community Development, the Cornerstones, personal leadership development, gender equity, savings and credit management and household accounting to encourage sustainability and self-reliance. The project will increase the families' capacity and skills in livestock management, agroforestry, environmentally friendly farming techniques and community sanitation.

22-0510-25: Empowering Marginalized Communities in Northern Thailand

This project will assist 1,170 minority families in nine poor communities in Northern Thailand. The target families—234 original and 936 pass-on recipients—will be empowered through Heifer's Values-Based Holistic Community Development approach. Participants will form a total

of at least 55 self-help groups, and at least 20 percent of those will be women-only groups. The 234 original families will receive 234 sows, 936 piglets, 9,000 fruit saplings, about 5 tons of crop seeds and 258 pounds of vegetable seed. Three grinding mills will be provided to four self-help groups to be used for swine feed production. The SHGs will have a clearly defined business plan to manage the mills' operations, group ownership and pass on. Capacity building activities will include a series of trainings on Cornerstones, group formation and savings, improved animal management, natural resource



management, sustainable agriculture techniques, income generating activities and co-learning among project participants. Within the five-year project period, the original families will pass on all of the received inputs, in equal quality and amount, as well as knowledge gained to the families identified to receive benefits through Passing on the Gift.

RESOURCES & FURTHER READING

US Department of State Travel Information:

Thailand - http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1040.html

Thailand Embassy - <http://www.thaiembdc.org/>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Website:

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/Thailand.aspx>

Heifer Thailand - www.heiferThailand.org (Find detailed information Heifer's work in Thailand)

Wikipedia entry for Thailand - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thailand>

Thailand Tourism - <http://www.tourismThailand.org/>

Thailand News – www.Thailanddaily.com & www.thai-blogs.com

Hill Tribes – www.hilltribe.org

Heifer.org Articles:

“Heifer's Success in Asia and The South Pacific”

<http://www.heifer.org/site/c.edJRKQNiFiG/b.201475/>

“A Journey Toward a Better Life”

<http://www.heifer.org/site/c.edJRKQNiFiG/b.201603/>

World Ark Articles:

July/Aug 2005 – “Clean Water Provides Cure”

Summer 2003 – “Recovering Life”

Spring 2001 – “Taking Giant Steps in Thailand”

You can find these articles and others on the World Ark archives page at

<http://www.heifer.org/worldark>

Further Reading:

Lonely Planet: Thailand by China Williams (August 2007)

Sightseeing by Rattawut Lapcharoensap (2005)

The Dream of a Thousand Lives: A Sojourn in Thailand by Karen Connelly (2001)

Thailand Confidential by Jerry Hopkins (2005)

Bangkok 8 by John Burdett (2004)

Very Thai by Philip Cornwel-Smith (2005)

The Circus of Life by Arkartdamkeung Rapheephat (English 1994)

Four Reigns by Kukrit Pramoj (English 1981)

Time in a Bottle by Praphatsorn Seiwikun (English 1996)

Behind the Painting by Kulap Saipradit

The Force of Karma, Monsoon Country, People of Esarn & Shadowed Country by Pira Sudham

Jasmin Nights by S.P. Somtow

The Judgment (1982) & *Time* (1994) by Chart Korbjitti

The Godfather of Kathmandu by John Burdett

Movies & Television Resources:

Fun Bar Karaoke (1997) & *Last Life in the Universe* (Ruang Rak Noi Nid Mahasan) (2003)

directed by Pen-Ek Ratanaruang

Blissfully Yours (Sut Sanaeha) (2002) & *Tropical Malady* (Sut Pralat) (2004) directed by

Apichatpong Weerasethakul

The Unseeable (2006)